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Hope Ranch

**HOPE RANCH WOMEN SUPPORT
THE WOMEN'S FUND OF SANTA BARBARA**

COVER STORY BY
CAROLYN JABS
COVER PHOTO BY
LINDA BLUE
FROM LEFT, REBECCA
CRAIG, CAROLYN JABS,
SARAH DE TAGYOS AND
STINA HANS

DELIVERING NEIGHBORHOOD CONNECTIONS

FROM FAR LEFT: Jan Kopf, Sarah de Tagyos, Jane Atwater., Adrienne Schuele, Diana Katsenes, Stina Hans, Marie King, Rebecca Craig, Cindy Feinberg and Barbara Lowes.
FRONT ROW: Roberta Ainciart, Carolyn Jabs, Sally Matthews and Bonnie Paul.



Hope Ranch Women Giving Back to the Community with the Women’s Fund of Santa Barbara



From left Adrienne Schuele and Carolyn Jabs

BY CAROLYN JABS, RESIDENT WRITER
PHOTOS BY LINDA BLUE, LINDA BLUE PHOTOGRAPHY

Fall is traditionally a season for gratitude. And, for many people in Santa Barbara, it doesn’t take long for gratitude to turn into generosity. In Hope Ranch, a growing number of women regard the Women’s Fund of Santa Barbara as an important part of their giving portfolio.

Many of those women met recently for a reception in Hope Ranch at the home of Stina Hans, a long-time Women’s Fund member. *“Women’s Fund matters to me because it gives women a way to become more informed philanthropists, by pooling their charitable dollars and deciding together where those dollars will have the most impact,”* observes Hans.

Rebecca Craig, a co-host at the reception, agrees. She and her husband moved to their home in Hope Ranch right before the pandemic. “We didn’t know anyone or anything about our new community,” Craig recalls. *“Thankfully, one of my Hope Ranch neighbors introduced me to the Women’s Fund where I made immediate connections*



From left:
Bonnie Paul,
Rebecca Craig
and Roberta
Ainciart.

with neighbors, met new friends, and gained a wealth of knowledge about philanthropy in the “Santa Barbara style.”

For Women’s Fund members, that style eliminates fundraising events and emphasizes research. The women who founded the organization years ago wanted to streamline their charitable giving. Instead of fundraisers and silent auctions, they decided to simply pool their contributions so they could make significant grants to local non-profits that make a difference in the lives of women, children, and families in south Santa Barbara County.

Rigorous research is a critical part of the process. Each year a committee investigates nonprofits with promising projects that could be brought to life with grants of between \$50,000 and \$200,000. *“I’ve been on the Research Committee for the past three years,”* says Craig, *“And I thoroughly enjoy the stimulating, in-depth discussions with my colleagues as we learn about the needs of our local nonprofits.”*

At the end of the process, the Research Committee submits a ballot to members. Voting occurs in March. A contribution of \$2,750 earns one vote, and many Hope Ranch residents become Individual Members by donating that amount. Others pool their contributions by joining groups. Currently, the Women’s Fund has more than 100 groups including some like *Hope Ranch Living*. Group members contribute a minimum of \$275 and groups earn one vote for each \$2,750 they collect.

Women’s Fund groups vary in size and how often they get together, but they all meet in the spring to discuss the ballot and decide how to cast their votes. *“Being able to talk with other women about the needs in our community and how they are being addressed by non-profits is a unique*

benefit of Women’s Fund,” says Hans. *“Our members regularly tell us that deciding how to vote each year deepens their understanding of the community and makes them more thoughtful about philanthropy.”*

The balloting results are announced at a Celebration of Grants event in May. In 2024, grants totaling \$1.125 million were awarded to ten agencies. Among other things, Women’s Fund grants paid for new refrigeration equipment for Unity Shoppe, a renovation of the Teen Center which houses the Santa Barbara Police Activities League, and the construction of a childcare center at the village for unsheltered families being built by Dignity Moves. (A complete list of grants is available at <https://womensfundsb.org/gifts.html>)

With over 1,300 members including over 60 in Hope Ranch, the Women’s Fund of Santa Barbara is one of the largest Giving Circles in the United States. Because the organization is led and run almost entirely by volunteers, 94% of every expense dollar goes into the grants pool.

Fall is an especially good time to become a Women’s Fund member. Anyone who signs up before December 31st will be able to vote on the ballot next spring. *“There truly is something for everyone at the Women’s Fund—from those who have a few hours to spare to those who want to be all in,”* says Sarah de Tagyos, a Hope Ranch resident who has been a Women’s Fund member for almost 20 years and has held almost every volunteer position the organization has to offer. As she puts it, *“There are committees, member groups, and other ways to support the organization, and in each of them, everyone is welcome and valued!”*

To find out more about the Women’s Fund of Santa Barbara go to: www.womensfundsb.org



FAR LEFT BACK ROW: Suzi Schomer, Sarah de Tagyos, Liz Heitmann, Karen Carey, Margie Larkin, Marsha Roberson, Kathy Dunlap and Cindy Feinberg.
FROM LEFT FRONT ROW : Linda Lorenzen, Jane Atwater, Stina Hans, Carolyn Jabs and Monica Lenches. Photo courtesy of Women's Fund of Santa Barbara.

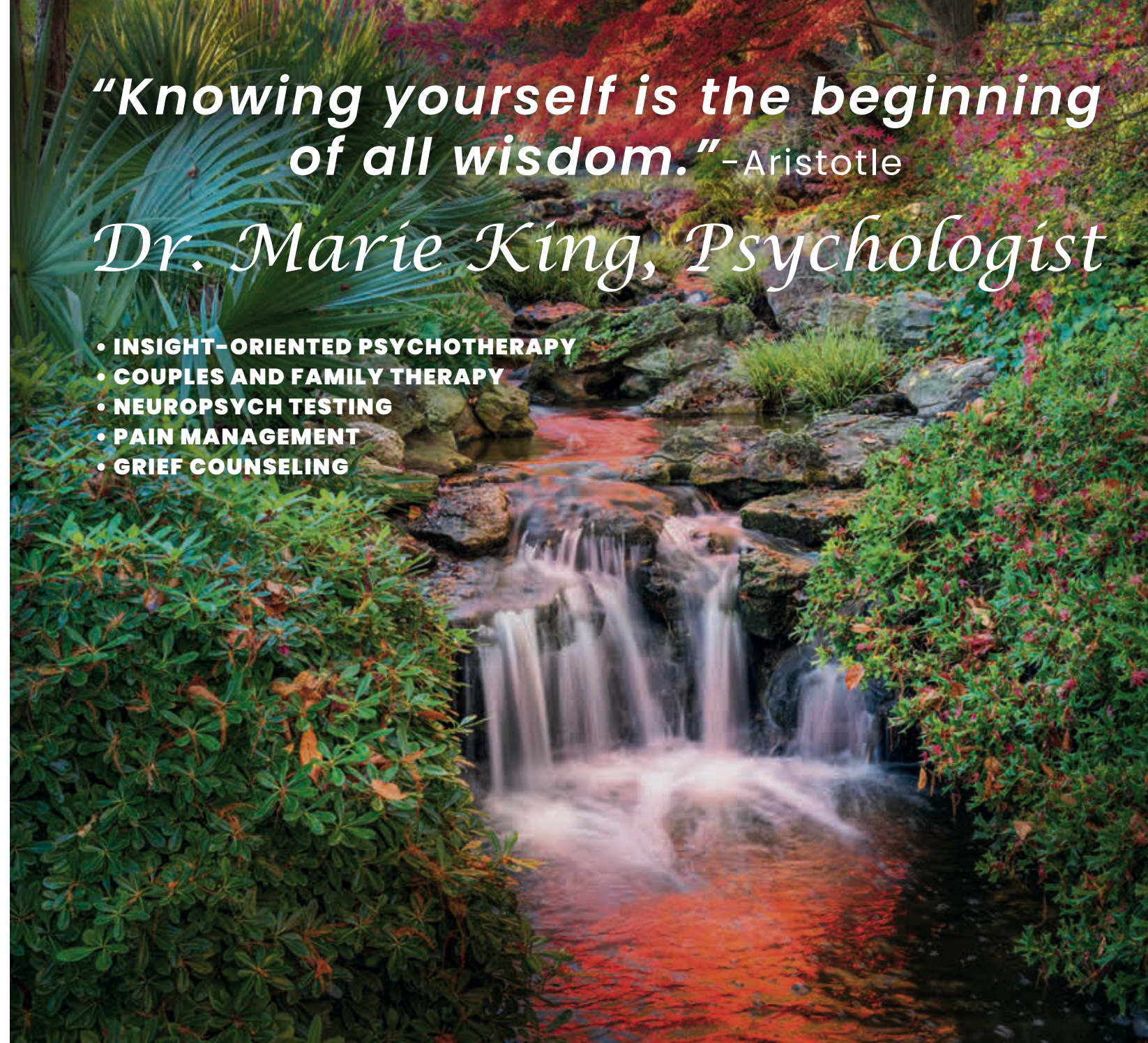


From left, Jan Kopf, Jane Atwater and Sally Matthews.

"Knowing yourself is the beginning of all wisdom." –Aristotle

Dr. Marie King, Psychologist

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