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SEEN AROUND TOWN

by Lynda Millner

Women of Inspiration

It's always a treat to head to Carpinteria, where it seems like a step back in time to the 1950s. This time it was to attend the Girls Inc. of Carpinteria "Women of Inspiration" luncheon at their facility. There was a sip of rosé wine and time to meet and greet all the VIPs and guests.

The gym was transformed into a dining room with sun umbrellas, tables decorated with linens in crayon colors, and centerpieces featuring the artwork note cards of the girls. Two of the longtime Girls Inc. girls, **Ana Delgado** (since kindergarten) and **Noelia Romero** were the emcees. They announced, "This is a great time to be women!"

In 2014, Ana was selected as a JASON National Argonaut Scholar and did hands-on marine research in the Bahamas. She studied alongside world-class scientists. Last summer, she spent a week in Washington, D.C., meeting with local representatives, touring sites, museums, and exploring college campuses.

Noelia is a senior at Carpinteria High School. She joined Girls Inc. in 2008 and discovered her passion for working with children. She has served as a counselor in training and mentor during the last five years. Her goal is for college (the first in her family) and to become a pediatric nurse practitioner.

The Women of Inspiration came next: **Gerri Ann Carty**, **Patsy Hicks**, and **Natalie Orfalea**. Gerri has lived in Carpinteria for 34 years and works as a nurse volunteering for nonprofits. She was a Girls Inc. board member and currently serves on many local boards. She is married to mayor **Gregg Carty** and has two daughters.

Patsy has worked at the Santa Barbara Museum of Art for 20 years in various capacities, now as director of education since 2008. She currently serves as trustee on several boards



Girls of Girls Inc. Ana Delgado and Noelia Romero, who were emcees for the Inspiration luncheon



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and was selected as Woman of the Year by the Junior League for her work with literacy development and English language learners. She is married with two children.

Natalie is the co-founder and chair of the Orfalea Foundation. She has provided vision, inspiration, and strategy driving the foundation's initiatives in early childhood education, food system reform, youth development, education, and disaster readiness. Besides raising two sons, the list of more accomplishments goes on for a page.

The inspirational speaker **Arlene**

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Girls Inc. keynote speaker Arlene Samen with Women of Inspiration Gerri Ann Carty, Natalie Orfalea, and Patsy Hicks, and executive director Victoria Juarez

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Co-chairs of Girls Inc. luncheon Amanda Kastelic, Sandra Tyler, Nancy Koppelman, and Nini Seaman with board president Clyde Freeman

Samen was indeed inspirational. A single mother raised her in poverty. She has been a nurse practitioner in maternal fetal medicine for more than 31 years. When the Dalai Lama invited her to come to Tibet, she went to

help where one out of 10 babies died due to preventable causes. She had been there 10 years when the Chinese took over the country and she had to leave everything, including a condo she owned.

Arlene then took her “network of safety” and her One Heart World-Wide organization with its life-saving model to remote villages in Nepal and the Copper Canyon of Mexico. To date, more than 50,000 deliveries around the globe have been safely made. Over half-a-million people have been educated regarding a safe birth environment. Many awards and accolades have followed.

The coordinators of this inspirational day were **Nancy Koppelman, Nini Seaman, Sandra Tyler, and Amanda Kastelic.**

Five-year executive director **Victoria Juarez** explained, “I thought I’d be teaching the girls how to be strong, smart, and bold. Instead, the girls taught me how to be strong, smart, and very BOLD.” She also added that their story was her story growing up. Carpinteria serves more than 700 girls ages 5-18 each year through a variety of programs. To learn more, volunteer or offer support visit www.girlsinc-carp.org/.