

## SEEN AROUND TOWN

by Lynda Millner

### Celebrity Authors' Luncheon



Two happy Founders and Co-Chairs of the CALM Luncheon Stephanie Ortale and Sharon Bifano

**T**he days are too short for all the books I want to read, all the dreams I want to dream, and all of the time I want to spend with you, dear friend." – **Flavia Weedn.**

Flavia Weedn has designed her 24th cover for CALM's (Child Abuse Listening and Mediation) invitation to its annual Celebrity Authors' Luncheon. As Master of Ceremonies **Jack Canfield** ("Chicken Soup for the Soul" books) told the audience, Co-Chairs and Founders **Sharon Bifano** and **Stephanie Ortale** made only \$285 profit the first year. Now the event raises thousands of dollars for CALM. The late humorist **Erna Bombeck**, who hosted a similar event in Texas where Sharon used to live, inspired the luncheon.

Santa Barbara is a literary haven, claiming about 750 published authors living here. No wonder almost 600 people attended the event. Doors opened bright and early so guests could "shop 'til they dropped" in the "book store"

at Fess Parker's DoubleTree Resort.



Ms Millner is the author of "The Magic Make Over, Tricks for Looking Thinner, Younger, and More Confident – Instantly." If you have an event that belongs in this column, you are invited to call Lynda at 969-6164.

There were thirteen – mostly local – guest authors on hand selling and signing their books, plus the four authors from out of town who were interviewed by **Debby Davison** and **William Hermann.**

After an especially scrumptious lunch, Board President **Shirley Waxman** surprised **Margo Chapman** by giving her the Clair Miles Award for exceptional service to CALM, which included her role as Past President of the Board. **Susan Gulbranson's** mom, Clair Miles, who was a nurse and wife of a physician, launched the



The four CALM authors that were interviewed: Kate Jacobs, Elizabeth Berg, Sandra Brown and Carol Taylor

# Montecito Journal

## April 15, 2010 (Continued)



President Rich Schuette with President of the CALM Auxiliary Shirley Waxman and Emreee Jack Canfield

organization in 1970 in her own home with only a telephone. Susan and her siblings were given strict orders not to answer it. Forty years later CALM is the only private, non-profit group in the County providing child abuse services.

William Hermann questioned Elizabeth Berg who has many best-selling novels, her latest being "Home Safe." She said, "The book was taken from my two daughters and my relationship, but fictionalized." She also has a collection of short stories titled, "The Day I Ate Whatever I Wanted." When William asked what she wears while writing, she replied, "My PJs so the Fed Ex man and the mailman

think I'm still sick."

Kate Jacob's first novel, "The Friday Night Knitting Club," became a best seller in just 14 days. Julia Roberts will star in the upcoming movie. Kate told Debby Davison, "When I was eight I had three hundred characters in a book I wanted to write. My 'Manager' cousin fired me because I was too busy naming the people to write the book. Now that cousin says she may have been a bit hasty. My mother said all writers starve to death so if I was going to stay in New York I should write a best seller novel." Who knew she would?

**SEEN** Page 16 ▶

**Building Peace of Mind**

**GIFFIN & CRANE**  
GENERAL CONTRACTORS, INC.

VISIT OUR WEBSITE  
[WWW.GIFFINANDCRANE.COM](http://WWW.GIFFINANDCRANE.COM)  
PHONE (805) 966-6402 LICENSE 611342

*Award Winning Builders Since 1986*



CALM Author Hosts Pam Van Blaricum, April Theede, Carol Newman and Sissy Taran.

Sandra Brown is author of 58 *New York Times* bestseller thrillers such as "Smash Cut." Her latest, "Rainwater," is a departure and tells of her grandfather's saga during the Great Depression. As she told William, "My husband is more concerned with the love scenes than racism. I was doing a Q & A when a man at the back of the room asked who inspired those scenes. I had to answer it was my husband, because the man at the back of the room was my husband."

Carol Leifer is not only an accomplished stand-up comedian but also an Emmy-nominated writer and producer for television shows such as "Seinfeld," "The Larry Sanders Show," "Saturday Night Live" and the Academy Awards with Alec Baldwin and Steve Martin. Now Carol has a book, "When You Lie About Your Age, the Terrorists Win." She was just kicked off Donald Trump's Celebrity Apprentice show but decided to not leave empty handed and asked him to donate to her favorite charity. He did, and pledged \$10,000. As Carol told Debby, "I feel so young because I live in a senior retirement complex. At forty I turned gay. It was one more way to tick off my mom." David

Letterman discovered her doing her act in a club. She was on his show 25 times.

The CALM luncheon is always an exclamation point in my year. March 19, 2011 will be the date to mark for next year.

### The Remarkable Farkle McBride

It all began when a young Santa Barbara boy, Aiden Gilkes, wanted to give Santa Barbara Symphony Director Nir Kabaretti, a gift because he had so enjoyed Nir when he directed the Children's Choir. Aiden chose a children's book he liked, "The Remarkable Farkle McBride," by actor John Lithgow. It's the story of a small boy who eventually becomes conductor of a symphony orchestra.

Long story short, the Symphony Director of Education Stephanie Miller got involved and permission to use the story was granted. Then a native of Santa Barbara, composer Cody Westheimer, agreed to write the music. His first orchestral piece was performed by the Symphony when he was only 17. Since then his credits have grown dramatically with over 24



Symphony Executive Director John Robinson, Board President Gillian Launie, star of the day Aiden Gilkes and Superintendent of the Santa Barbara School Districts Brian Sarvis at the reception before the show at the Granada