

san pedro

MAGAZINE

Summer Olympics LSP Style

| by Lori Skalabrin | photos courtesy of Little Sisters of the Poor

While Beijing may seem quite a distance for one to travel to experience the spirit of the Olympic Games, locals will have the opportunity to join in a celebration of champions right here in San Pedro this summer.

On June 21, the Auxiliary of the Little Sisters of the Poor will host their eleventh annual fundraising event, *Summer Olympics LSP Style*, at the Little Sisters of the Poor, Jeanne Jugan Residence in San Pedro. "Our Olympic champions this year are our doctors," explains Carol Stutzke, co-chair of the event, which will include dinner, a silent and live auction, and an award ceremony honoring the doctors who regularly volunteer their time and services to the residents of the San Pedro home.

"They provide a wonderful service," says Rita Swartz, Development Director for the Little Sisters of the Poor. "The residents don't have to be transported to an off-site location which can often be difficult and uncomfortable. Instead the doctors make it so convenient for them by coming to our on-site medical wing."

Eleven doctors, whose fields of expertise collectively include medicine, podiatry, dermatology, psychiatry and dentistry, will be recognized during the ceremony. The list of honorees (and their years of service) includes: Dr. Carmen Capodanno (26 years), Dr. Virginia Gonzalez (12 years), Dr. Russell Grootegoed (25+ years), Dr. Gregg Makovic (25 years), Dr. Carl Mossberg (20 years), Dr. Joseph Rodd (2 years), Dr. Guillermo Rubiano (9 years), Dr. Krupa Shah (7 years), Dr. Peter Sliksovich (21 years), Dr. Pacita Tan (29 years) and Dr. Mark Wagner (8 years).

"We have a dedicated and caring group of doctors who are greatly appreciated by the Little Sisters," says Swartz. "Six of our doctors have been coming to the home for over 20 years."

Proceeds from the event will go to assist the Little Sisters with the financial needs of the home. The residence, which moved from Boyle Heights to San Pedro in 1979, accepts the needy elderly of all ethnicities and religions and cares for them until their death. Because only 40% of operational costs is covered by government funding and other benefits, the Auxiliary, made up of over 200 women from the South Bay and Long Beach areas, formed in 1997 with the mission of raising funds for the Little Sisters' operational costs and special needs.

"This Auxiliary's whole purpose is to help the Sisters with their most pressing financial needs," explains Dolores Sharp, President of the Auxiliary. "Our annual



event has become the vehicle to support the Little Sisters in their mission to care for the needy elderly who live in their home."

When selecting this year's theme, the Summer Olympics seemed the perfect choice. "The Auxiliary has hosted their event at the home in San Pedro about every third year," says Sharp. "When we have it at the home, we try to have a fun theme to add to the excitement. Since this was the Summer Olympics year, we thought we'd use that idea." The theme includes not only an opening ceremony and award recognition, but also a redesigned logo where the traditional Olympic rings have been replaced with five hearts, symbolizing the love and care that the Little Sisters provide for their residents, as well as the endearment the Auxiliary and benefactors have for the Sisters and the work that they do.

Still, the heart of the event comes back to the "champions" that make accessible healthcare possible for the residents of the home. "Because of their dedication," says Sr. Clotilde, Director of Nursing, "our residents have convenient access to the benefits of early diagnostic and follow-up care that both helps to maintain and often improve the quality of their lives. For the significant and long-time contributions of these doctors, we are most appreciative." **SPM**



Tickets are \$175 per person and include a cocktail reception at 6pm, followed by dinner catered by Michael Shafer of the Depot Restaurant in Torrance. Invitations are available in the Development Office at Little Sisters of the Poor: 2100 S. Western Avenue, San Pedro, CA 90732. For more information, please call (310) 548-0625 or visit www.lspocal.org.