

tive and clues evening that tested the little grey cells of every one of the 170 guests.

After dinner catered by the Biltmore, the invitees, including **Leslie Ridley Tree** and **Mike and Anne Towbes**, clamored for their cards giving 20 clues, all revolving around works of art in the museum's spacious galleries, which had been set by **Jamie Fleming** of Los Angeles, an extremely erudite clue master.

As a latter day Hercule Poirot and his loyal sidekick, Capt. Hastings, I teamed up with **Lynda Millner**, a fellow *Montecito Journal* columnist, to sleuth out the "crime scenes."

"The clues really are quite diabolical," **Mary Garton**, the board president, cheerfully admitted. "You have to be more clever than the clues. People tend to read too much into them, or not enough."

Lynda and I, suitably equipped with large magnifying glasses thoughtfully provided on the dining tables, managed to complete our task in 45 minutes and got a respectable 16 out of 20.

But the top winners at the event, co-chaired by **Carol Sysel** and **Harriet Mosson**, only had two incorrect answers or less, with the eventual winner being board member **Kathleen Waltrip**, who only missed one clue and was the 15th guest to turn in her sheet.

For her efforts she won two nights at the Ojai Valley Inn & Spa in the Hacienda Penthouse, a splendiferous 1,900-sq-ft suite, along with unlimited golf and spa treatments, to help relax those overworked "little grey cells."

It's hoped the fun event will raise around \$70,000, which helps support major exhibitions at the museum, including the "Masterpieces of 19th Century French Art," featuring the works of Monet and Delacroix, among others, set to debut in January...

Machu Picchu Love Affair

Machu Picchu, the Lost City of the Incas, in Peru has a mesmerizing effect on everyone who visits the site, one of the few places not plundered by the Spanish.

But the 600-year-old landmark on a mountain ridge of the Urubamba Valley deeply impacted former Santa Barbara resident **Carol Cumes**, who first visited in 1984 and, after returning annually for ten years, settled permanently in Peru, establishing the Willka T'ika Garden Retreat Center and Chakra Gardens.

Carol, originally from South Africa, wrote her first tome, "Journey to Machu Picchu: Spiritual Wisdom from the Andes," in 1994 and followed this up with her latest book, the lavishly illustrated 256-page "Chakra Gardens: Opening the Senses of the Soul," which she launched with an intimate



Author Carol Cumes launches "Chakra Gardens: Opening the Senses of the Soul" at Tecolote

bash and slide show at Tecolote, the bustling bibliophile bastion.

"Woven into the book are stories of healing and personal transformation," Carol, - whose children, **Paul** and **Romi** still live in the area -, tells me. "My center is on four acres and the most natural thing to do is sit and take it all in."

Her love affair with Machu Picchu continues, having now visited the World Heritage site more than 200 times. Profits from her books help fund four schools and communities in the area...

Monty Python Reunion

Montecito funnyman **John Cleese**, who has been in England working on a new film script and started his new one-man show tour in Norway the other day, just reunited with his Monty Python castmates at New York's enormous Ziegfeld Theater to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the groundbreaking TV series.

The five surviving members of the cast, - John, **Terry Gilliam**, **Eric Idle**, **Michael Palin** and **Terry Jones** - complete with a cardboard cut-out of dead member Graham Chapman, attended a special showing of a new documentary chronicling the life of Python.

Six hours of footage and interviews from "Monty Python: Almost the Truth - The Lawyer's Cut" are airing on the Independent Film Channel, coinciding with the anniversary.

Having watched the series when it was originally launched in the '60s, it should be quite a show...

The Momentum Continues

The Santa Barbara Symphony launched its new season "Crescendo! The Momentum Continues..." with a bang at the Granada on Saturday as resident maestro, **Nir Kabaretti**, took the orchestra through its well honed paces with works by Schuman, Mozart and Tchaikovsky.

Italian violinist, **Augustin Hadelich**, who I last saw play at the Arlington two years ago and has since debuted at New York's Carnegie Hall, was in top form with Mozart's concerto No. 5 in A major, playing the complicated work with consummate ease.

The performance, dubbed "From The Top," concluded with Tchaikovsky's symphony No.5 in E minor, with the four movements in the 50-minute piece, thematically linked in a most stirring work, complete with trumpets and horns.

A wonderful portent of the season to come...

Green Gala

It seemed more than appropriate when a line of "green goddesses" - fetchingly clad young hostesses - greeted the 200 guests attending the Community Environmental Council's ninth annual "Green Gala" at the Rockwood Woman's Club.

The "eco-chic celebration," which is expected to raise around \$50,000, was an early sell-out.

"It gets more popular each year as people turn to the cause, which is about renewable energy and energy efficiency in the county," says **Dave Davis**, executive director of the council, which celebrates its 40th anniversary next year.

"We currently have a campaign 'Fossil Free in '33' and we hope to be off fossil fuels in one generation. It is quite achievable!"

Before the dinner, guests quaffed "greentinis" on the patio and had their photos snapped at an "eco-booth."

And in one of the shortest live auctions ever, "staycations" at the Biltmore and Ojai Valley Inn & Spa went to the highest bidders.

Throughout the event "greenpoints" were awarded for special prizes to guests who came by hybrid car, carpooled, or surprised the organizers with other creative, low-fuel methods of getting to the **Merry Brown Events** bash...

Key to the Cure

Saks Fifth Avenue was hopping when the State Street luxury goods emporium teamed up with Breast Cancer Resource Center of Santa Barbara to kick off the third annual four-day-long "Key to the Cure" charity shopping event, with a percentage of sales going to the cause.

"Last year it couldn't have been at a worse time, given Wall Street markets were plummeting," remembers **Silvana Kelly**, the center's executive director. "But the economy is now much more encouraging."

More than 50 Saks stores across the U.S. participate in the event, which has German supermodel **Heidi Klum** as its spokesman.

Specially designed T-shirts by New York based **Michael Kors**, a judge on the popular cable TV series "Project Runway," were also on sale...

Walk for Water Challenge

"Walk for Water," a fundraiser organized by the Community of Montecito

Churches with World Vision, attracted 200 volunteers to help raise money to build water wells in Ethiopia.

Participants followed a two and half mile loop route from All Saints by-the-Sea - a typical distance to fetch water in Africa -, stopping at Butterfly Beach to fill their buckets to briefly experience what it is like to carry a load of water over a distance.

All money raised from the novel event is being matched dollar for dollar by the Hilton Foundation.

Jeff Witten of World Vision says that each well costs \$12,500 to drill, as well as to train communities to maintain them...

Riven Rock Art

Homeowners on the 87-acre Riven Rock estate recently opened their tony enclave to many of Santa Barbara's most noted artists for the first time.

More than 60 participated in the venture, capturing the essence of the historic estate created by Stanley McCormick, son of Cyrus McCormick, inventor of the mechanical reaper in 1831.

Frank McGinity, a Riven Rock resident, gave them the history of the property and a list of the top sites to paint," says **Bill Foster**, who helped organize the project.

The artists' handiwork goes on show at the Santa Barbara Club on Sunday for five days from 2 to 6 pm. **Dr. Judy Larson**, the new director of the Reynolds Gallery at Westmont College, will judge the top three works of art at the exhibition, which is being sponsored by the SB Art Foundation...

Taste of Carpinteria

Girls Inc. of Carpinteria attracted 300 guests and raised \$50,000 from its "Taste of Carpinteria" garden party featuring restaurants, caterers and winemakers from the area.

A two-and-a-half-carat diamond ring was auctioned off for the cause.

"As the economy improves, donations are on the up and we've sold a lot more tickets," said a delighted **Mary Crowley**, a board member...

Sightings: **John Leguizamo** joking with the waiters at Petit Valentien... **Michael Keaton** at Garrett's Old Fashioned Restaurant... No Doubt rocker **Tony Kanal** in animated form at Olio e Limone...**Brooks** and **Kate Firestone** at Ca Dario before checking out the State Street Ballet...

Pip! Pip! for now.

Readers with tips, sightings and amusing items for Richard's column should e-mail him at richardminards@verizon.net or send invitations and other correspondence to the Journal