

# twigs

Newsletter of  
Children's Hospital Branches, Inc.  
**Winter 2019**

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As you enjoy the colorful pages of this issue of Twigs, you might be reminded of the wonderful experiences you enjoyed at one of several events this fall. Whether it was sipping wine while enjoying views atop Salesforce tower, tapping your feet to the beat at Cacao's Jazz Jam, or picking up treasures at the Bambino Shop's Holiday Open House, the many volunteer hours as well as financial support you have provided will help insure the Branches reach our fundraising goals.

Reflecting back on the many high points of the All Branches Sips in the City event, I was struck by the realization that our 105 year old organization has risen to the challenge of finding new ways to adapt to our ever changing world. This is nothing new to our legacy and the Branches have in fact evolved continuously to meet the needs of our beloved hospital. Sips in the City called upon our past traditions while being launched as a 'first of its kind' event. We not only needed our entire

there were other events that some of our Branches decided to forego due to changing capabilities and manpower within their ranks. BUT, as the old saying goes, 'where there's a will, there's a way' and in June the opportunity came to fruition for Sips in the City. In the last issue, I alluded to how enjoyable it was for the committee to work together. This was never more evident than in the friendships that were forged through our many hours spent planning and organizing. I thank each of these amazingly talented women as well as all the family members who also stepped up to make the evening possible and feel so fortunate to be in the midst of such dedication.

As we approach our year's end, congratulations are in order for the Branches many fundraising successes and we will be able to make a significant impact in providing much needed equipment for the hospital. The fundraising year will wrap up with a holiday letter you will find inserted in this issue of Twigs. Thank you all for your consideration to provide a bit more support to our hospital and finally, a most beautiful event to ring in the holiday spirit, Hill Branch's Winter Ball, is an outstanding way to give while dancing the night away to the beautiful strains of Dick Bright's Orchestra.

## "Fundraising for our beloved hospital is such a gratifying experience and brings all of us together in a common purpose"

Branches organization to take a role in the many demands necessary to create this magical evening, but it also required us to take a focused view of how we can sustain our fundraising goals. With the needs of the hospital never being greater, developing new Branches fundraising avenues is critical to our success. By working together, the Sips in the City Committee was able to share the broad spectrum of talents that exists within our membership and ultimately create an event that was greater than the sum of our individual talents. I'm deeply appreciative of all I've learned from my fellow committee members.

Speaking of the Branches adapting in a variety of ways, one of the challenges we face is being able to gauge our fundraising successes at the start of the year. As we entered 2019, it was not abundantly clear where our goals would be realized. While we could count on certain key 'tried and true' funding sources,

I am deeply honored that you have entrusted me to serve as your president. It would be an impossible undertaking without the endless commitment of all of you. I give you my thanks and look forward to an exciting year of fundraising successes and friendship!

### 2019 Board of Directors

Lucy Talbot.....	President
Kristina Smith.....	V.P.
Wendy Dunn.....	Treasurer
Mary Lou Carter.....	Secretary
Eileen Caponio.....	Rowan
Sheila Challey.....	Rowan
Julie Davidson.....	Lombardy
Fredora Darmstedt.....	Chinquapin
Marianne Malenk.....	Chinquapin
Sandra Carpenter.....	Cacao
Carol Miller.....	Teak
Kerry Plain.....	Garden

Cece Werson..... Parliamentarian, Advisory



# Sips in the City

Thick fog threatened all afternoon on October 19 as the scores of dedicated Children's Hospital Branches volunteers set up the 61st floor of the Salesforce Tower with a robust silent auction, neurosurgery Virtual Reality interactive demo and multitude of premiere winery tasting tables. The fundraising gods were summoned and the skies cleared just as the 300 guests began arriving to Sips in the City in time to see a spectacular sunset. This was an exclusive event indeed as the Ohana Floor of the Salesforce Tower is only open to non-profits for events on a limited basis. Since the Children's Hospital Branches raises funds for UCSF Benioff Children's Hospital Oakland, which bears Salesforce CEO's Marc Benioff's name, it seemed like destiny. A total of thirty-four dedicated Branches volunteers from 8 different Branches worked diligently to prepare the circular "Ohana Room". They were supported by a few husbands, sons and daughters, with an extra boost from Branches and hospital foundation staff.

"It's been a lot of work, but I have had a great time getting to know members from all the other Branches, and working with them to raise funds and awareness for the needs of the hospital and the children we serve," said Teak member Carol Miller. "It is so satisfying to see it all come together!" Carol worked on collecting donations to put together for silent auction prizes, collaborating with Eileen Caponio of Rowan Branch and Kerry Plain of Garden Branch.

Guests sipped wines from twelve of the finest Napa and Sonoma vintners while strolling the 360-degree views. Many wines were exclusive, limited access wines and guests were heard ooh-ing and ah-ing in delight. The experience was further elevated by the gorgeous custom engraved tasting glasses provided by Frank Maxwell of Fortessa Tableware, which doubled as a party favor.

One of the wineries who so generously donated their wine and time was our own Lynne Edminster (Hill Branch). Along with husband Brian Atwood and Henry and Christine de Lopez, Lynne is the co-owner of Sylvie Estate, a small Napa Valley winery

located in Oakville. They produce limited quantities of coveted wines usually only available via their small wine-club or at renowned Napa restaurant "French Laundry".

"Pouring our Sylvie Estate wine at this event was so meaningful to us. The hospital is very close to my heart and I could not be happier with our participation," expressed Lynne.

A sumptuous buffet was catered by Urban Organics to the backdrop of music provided by the lively youth jazz trio from the SFJAZZ All Stars. Guests also had fun commemorating the evening by having their photos taken by Jake Proctor (son of Hill Branch Winter Ball Co-chair Sydney Proctor), who generously donated his virtual photo booth service. The evening's program featured a passionate talk from pioneering pediatric neurosurgeon Kurtis Auguste, MD, preceding a paddle raise to support expansion of the Virtual Reality neurosurgery technology to other Children's Oakland departments.

"The Branches have been a tremendous source of support for over 100 years and seeing the members at Sips in the City was an inspiration! Their fundraising prowess was on full display and the support they've provided for our VR program will help Benioff Children's Hospital Oakland long into the future." said hospital President Mike Anderson, MD, another distinguished speaker of the evening.

The guests were thrilled to see the unique space that is limited to only a very few guests, and to enjoy amazing food and wine while supporting the hospital we all love.

"We are blessed to have the world class gem of Children's Oakland so close. You hope you never need it but are relieved to know it would provide excellent care for my kids as well as for the most vulnerable children in our region," said Oakland resident Malinda Hardtke.

A special thanks goes the vintners who so generously donated their wines and time. They are: The Boisset Collection, Chateau Montelena,

Dumol Winery, Ferrari-Carano, Garden Creek Ranch, Grgich Hills Estate, John Anthony Vineyards, Long Meadow Ranch, Long Fellow Wine Company, O'Brien Estate Winery, Sarita Estate Vineyards/ Sylvie Wine and the Spire Collection.



Erin Hickey (Assistant Vice Chancellor, UCSF Benioff Children's Hospitals), Dr. Mike Anderson, MD (President of UCSF Benioff Children's Hospitals), Lucy Talbot (Branches Board President and event co-chair) and Kristina Smith (Branches Board VP and event co-chair.)



Branches President and event co-chair Lucy Talbot with husband Al Talbot.



Alex Smith of Surgical Theater giving guests a virtual tour of a patient's brain.



Bridget Harris with Hill Branch President Gretchen Gibson and husband Tom Gibson.



Dr. Anderson addressing the crowd.



A beautiful spread was offered guests on the top floor of the Salesforce Tower, high above the city. (Photo credit: Graham Gibson)







Hill Branch members Carollee Morrison and Sue Smegal enjoying the evening. (Photo credit: Graham Gibson)



Daphne Seymour and Janice Alamillo, both of Rowan. (Photo credit: Graham Gibson)



Guest Lisa Spiegler and Lombardy member Susan Candell. (Photo credit: Graham Gibson)



Brittany Schramm, John Lehrkind, Nancy and Tom Lehrkind. (Photo credit: Graham Gibson)



Amy and Reid Settlemer with Branches V.P. and event co-chair Kristina Smith and her husband, Chris Smith. (Photo credit: Graham Gibson)



Guests enjoying a bountiful spread. (Photo credit: Azita Ansari)



Live entertainment was provided by SFJAZZ All Stars youth jazz program. Stunning backdrop: the entire San Francisco Bay at sunset! (Photo credit: Graham Gibson)



Alison Lowe ready to sell raffle tickets for the coveted prize: a special pair of earrings donated by D&D Jewelry. (Photo credit: Graham Gibson)



Nazie Shakerin and Azita Ansari of Rowan, with their guests. (Photo credit: Azita Ansari)



Marsha Broqudis, Sandy Porter and Kathi Honegger of Garden Branch (Photo credit: Susanne Simas)



Dr. Kurtis Auguste, Alex Smith and Whitney Lai of Surgical Theater. (Photo credit: Graham Gibson)



Wendy Dunn (Lombardy), Nazie Shakerin (Rowan), Clare McDonald (Lombardy), Penny Robb (Hill), Alison and Beth Lowe (Rowan), ready to welcome and check in guests. (Photo credit: Susanne Simas)



## A Musical Christmas at Bambino Shop

It was “A Musical Christmas” at Bambino’s on Sunday, November 10th for the Grand Opening of the annual private shopping event, attended by approximately sixty volunteers and friends. Chaired this year by Chris Caporicci, Colleen Lund and Susan Sperry, Teak members, the event proceeds totaled \$8,000! This year monies generated from Sunday, November 10th to Saturday, November 16th are being dedicated to Dr. Kurtis Auguste, Children’s Hospital Neurosurgery Department. Shoppers had the pleasure of hearing Dr. Auguste describe the use of the Virtual Reality (VR) goggles as a diagnostic tool in his medical practice, followed by experiencing the goggles themselves.



Santa's special helpers and event co-chairs, Susan Sperry, Chris Caporicci and Colleen Lund (Teak).



Dr. Auguste and Joy Faussner.



Teak members Carol Miller and Susan Sperry, with shop manager and queen elf, Lani Rambaoa.



# Golden Gate Fields Wine Tasting

An All Branches Event for 28 Years

Wine tasting fundraising events are not an entirely novel concept in the Branches. Our more-than-century-old group may have never produced an event on the 61st floor of a building before, but we certainly have hosted amazing wine tasting events in the past.

Starting in 1956, the Branches began a long-lasting tradition for an All Branch wine tasting event in the Golden Gate Fields Turf Club in Berkeley. Assisted by members from many Branches, Bertie Bertillion chaired this event for many years. The wine tasting event was very well attended drawing around 2,000 guests to taste Napa Valley wines from eight to ten wineries. To understand the magnitude of the Branches' reach, in 1959, there were 78 different Branches with a membership of 3,500. At that time, there were about 200 different events and projects organized by the Branches. What a task for the Branches leadership to manage, with Minnie Oliver at the helm!

Bertie Bertillion oversaw several sub-committees tasked with planning and carrying out the event. According to the Bambino Newsletter Winter edition from 1972, sub-committee chairs hailed from Laurel Jr., Acorn, Azalea, Bamboo, Birch, Fir, Live Oak and Teak, but of course the assignments varied from year to year. The key areas they chaired were tickets, clean-up, refreshments, arrangements, glasses, hostesses, decorations and check stand.



Bertie Bertillion (far left) with husband Everett Bertillion (far right) and their daughter Marie Collins and her husband Hon. Leonard Collins at the wine tasting event in 1972. Even though the wine tasting was not a formal affair, the group was dressed for a black-tie dinner they were attending later in the evening. ("Bambino" 1972 winter edition)

In 1966, an astonishing 145 pounds of cheese and 110 loaves of bread were served, and, according to Robin Orr (Society Editor of the Oakland Tribune at the time), the donated nibbles disappeared at alarming speed that year. In fact, they ran out! The guest count that year was 2,059. Ms. Orr referred to this event as "easily the biggest wine tasting party in Northern California" in 1966.

"Tastings were set up by varietals: dry white wines first, poured by all participating vintners," remembers Branches Ex-President and Acacia Emerita Betty Jo Olson. "It was one of the most popular events of that time and dozens of branches were involved in putting it on. It really was great fun."

"Our Branch was usually in charge of the kitchen," says Dee Farkas of Fir (now an Emeritus Branch). Fir Branch members still like to get together for lunch once a month. "One special member of Fir Branch is Jackie Bertillion," says Dee. Jackie's husband is Allen Wright Bertillion, son of Bertie and great nephew of one of Bertha Wright, one of the two founding members of "The Baby Hospital". One of the Bertillions' four children, Allen grew up aiding their mother with her Branches efforts. He fondly remembers helping his mother and the Branches volunteers prepare for the huge event. Current President Lucy (Farkas) Talbot helped as well. "I was just a little girl but I remember preparing huge trays of cheese and bread to place on the tables for the ladies and gents," reminisces Lucy.



Bertie Bertillion is congratulated by event committee members Judy Gates and Mary Freely on a successful 21st year chairing the wine testing event. ("Bambino" 1977 winter edition)



Prior to the 24th annual wine tasting event in 1980, Betty Brendell of Hilltop Branch said: "This year, wine buffs may take their glasses home as a souvenir." The ticket price that year was \$5 and the event brought in \$6,000 for the hospital ("Bambino" 1980 fall edition). The idea of a tasting glass to take home as a party favor was picked up again by Branches President Lucy Talbot for the 2019 Sips the the City event at Salesforce. Gorgeous custom etched wine glasses were donated by Frank Maxwell of Fortessa.

Inspired by the women from a bygone era, the great wine tasting event was recreated 61 floors above San Francisco at the top of Salesforce Tower. This was on a different level indeed, and about 63 years after Bertie Bertillion's initial event at the Golden Gate Fields Turf Club. It is with great joy and pride that the Branches continue this wonderful tradition to benefit the hospital! Thanks to many tireless volunteers and supporters out there in our community. The children will surely benefit from the fruit of our labor well into the future! Cheers!



Guests sharing a toast at the 1971 wine tasting event at Golden Gate Fields Turf Club. ("Bambino" 1972 winter edition)

## ABOUT BERTIE BERTILLION

"Bert" or "Bertie" Bertillion was a very active woman, deeply involved in several organizations in the East Bay. She joined Cedar Branch in 1933, served as chairman for Cedar Branch three times, was a member of the Branch Executive Council, was chosen "Woman of the Year" for (at least) 16 consecutive years and was chairman of the All-Branch Wine Tasting for 27 years.

As if that was not enough, Bertie was also chairman of the Camellia Ball for the East Bay Opera League, Chairman of the men's department for Oakland Museum's White Elephant Sale, a member of the Grand Jury in Sierra County, President of the East Bay Opera League, founder and life-member of Berkeley Women's City Club, and unbelievably, the list goes on! Bertie Bertillion was an impressive woman, to say the least!

(Source: "Bambino" 1975 fall edition)



Long-time Branches chairman Minnie Oliver with Bertie Bertillion.



# JAZZED ABOUT JAZZ

The block of Addison Street in Berkeley was live-ned up on the afternoon of Sunday, November 3. Guests were welcomed by the scent of street tacos from the taco truck parked outside Freight & Salvage. Once inside, guests were warmly welcomed by the Cacao ladies donning their matching new Cacao t-shirts. A bright and fun display of raffle prizes were tempting guests to try their luck to win!

The 130 guests enjoyed performances by three youth jazz combos: "Wombo Combo", featuring middle school and high school students from Lafayette, "Last Minute" featuring high school juniors and seniors from Oakland Tech and Oakland School for the Arts, and "Jacob's Ladder" featuring high school sophomores and juniors from Walnut Creek, Pleasanton and Lafayette. After pure instrumental jazz, the program concluded with a beautiful choral performance by the Oakland Interfaith Youth Choir. The choir's youngest member, Jazz Hardict, is a lifelong Children's Oakland patient and has Sickel Cell Disease. In addition to belting out beautiful tunes with the choir, the aptly named Jazz also sold raffle tickets and helped pull the winning tickets.



In between acts, fantastic Emcee Kevin Blackburn shared some jazz lessons and drew raffle tickets with the assistance of a few of Cacao's youngest helpers including Jazz. A high note was hit when Kevin challenged the audience to a bidding contest to name a piece written by 16-year old musician and composer George Rogers of Lafayette. The composition was untitled as performed by "Jacob's Ladder". Craig Jorgens was the fortunate highest bidder, and the previously unnamed song is now beautifully titled "Drive to Mendocino". George is a sophomore at Acalanes High School in Lafayette and a promising young talent!

Congratulations on a wonderful event, Cacao Branch!



The "Last Minute" combo, led by senior Isamu Ishimaru on tenor sax (yellow shirt), is comprised of students from Oakland Tech and Oakland School for the Arts.



"Wombo Combo" was the youngest group of jazz musicians, comprised of students ranging from 8th to 11th grade. They are all from Lafayette and Orinda middle and high schools.



"Jacob's Ladder" consists of juniors from Northgate, Acalanes and Amador Valley High Schools.



Members of the Oakland Interfaith Youth Choir lent their voices to raise funds for the hospital. Their youngest member, Jazz Hardict, is a patient at the hospital and is seen in the very front.



Event co-chairs Sybil Gatling and Sandra Carpenter enjoying the musical performances.



Krsitina Smith with Jazz Hardict, a sickle cell patient, Jazz Jam event helper and Oakland Interfaith Youth Choir singer.



Cacao member and Jazz Jam event co-chair Sandra Carpenter with guests.



Guests checking their raffle tickets with much anticipation after the music performances concluded.



Organizers and Cacao members Karen Gordon, Nia Blakeney, Sybil Gatling and Sandra Carpenter, surrounded by members from other Branches (Fir, Rowan, Chinquapin, Hill, Teak and Garden Branches are represented.) (Photos: Susanne Simas)

## All Branches September General Meeting

A general meeting took place in late September. After a well-deserved summer break, nine of the Branches and one Emeritus Branch (Fir) were in attendance in the gorgeous CHORI library.

The hospital topic of the day was young asthma patients and how to best treat them once they arrive in distress in the hospital's ER. Our Bay Area is a beautiful place to live but the air quality is among the worst in the country and our children suffer because of it. Dr. Howard illuminated this topic, sharing information and hope in treating respiratory illness using Heliox gas.

While hearing about several Branches' springtime successes, we learned more about Lilac's Fashion show which specifically focused on fundraising for the Heliox adapter in their quite successful "Fund-a-Need" efforts. Dr. Howard expressed his gratitude to the Lilac ladies and to the Branches at large for funding this life-saving piece of equipment.

Meeting guests also learned about Lombardy's and Rowan's successful springtime events. Those shopping themed events drew many guests from several other Branches, so there was a nice mix of guests among the

crowd. We also heard about what the Winter Ball debutantes have been up to. They've been quite busy! Hill Winter Ball co-chair Carol Ann Barber shared a brainstorming poster that the young women participants worked on after their tour of the hospital this past spring. Acorn gave an update on their letter-campaign, raising funds for rocking chairs for weary hospital families. They have raised over \$10,000 so far! Acorn Branch is still happily accepting donations towards this campaign.

A very special person joined the meeting to introduce herself to the Branches members: Beverly Ingram, our new Foundation Liaison. She was given a warm Branches welcome.

Furthermore, the Branches members were introduced to our highly capable new office manager, Sara DeVries. Notably, three "generations" of office managers were in attendance: seasoned veteran of 17 years, Viki Cebers, Susanne Simas and Sara DeVries.

After the program, a lovely lunch was provided to our members, courtesy of the Hospital Foundation. The Branches are grateful for the strong partnership!

### SAVE THE DATE!!

Hill Branch invites all CHB members and their guests to attend the

## 62nd Annual Winter Ball

Saturday, December 21, 2019

Ritz Carlton, San Francisco

Cocktail Reception 7pm

Presentation 8:30pm

Dinner and Dancing to follow

Tickets \$375 Age 16-30 \$225

*Sponsorships available: \$2,500, \$5,000 and \$10,000*

For further information, please contact [WBChair@hillbranch.org](mailto:WBChair@hillbranch.org)

## General Meeting Monday, February 24, 2020

9:30-11:30

9:30 Coffee & Pastries

10:00 CHB Business

10:30 Hospital presentation and Q&A

OPC Auditorium

UCSF Benioff Children's Hospital Oakland

747 52nd Street

Oakland, CA 94609

## Family House



### Holiday Help



Main courses and sides are needed for upcoming holiday meals. Items can be dropped off:

**December 23rd or 24th ANYTIME**  
**On Christmas Day December 25th, you are welcome to drop off between 9am and noon.**

Please call Family House at (510) 428-3100 to let them know which dish you plan to bring!

Family House is happy to accept gift cards from Safeway, Whole Foods, Trader Joe's and Costco.

Katrina Rozelle Pastries has generously donated desserts so none are needed.

Thanks for your support!

5222 Dover Street, Oakland CA 94609

**Lilac Celebrated** Long-Term Supporter and honorary member Helen Lyall's 90th birthday in September. Helen has helped Lilac produce their annual fashion show for more than 35 years! Happy birthday, Helen!



Lilac's Joyce Spinelli with Helen Lyall.







## Children's Hospital Branches, Inc.

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## UPCOMING BRANCH EVENTS

### **December 21, 2019 (Saturday)**

### **Winter Ball**

**Hill**

Ritz Carlton, San Francisco at 7pm

No host bar. Complimentary champagne and light hors d'oeuvres, deb presentation, dinner and dancing

Tickets \$375 (Guests age 16-30 \$225) For more information, email [WBChair@hillbranch.org](mailto:WBChair@hillbranch.org)

### **February 24, 2020 (Monday)**

### **General Meeting**

**All Branches**

OPC Auditorium UCSF Benioff Children's Hospital Oakland. 9:30am-11:30am

### **March 5, 2020 (Thursday)**

**Lombardy**

Save the date. Details to come soon.

### **April 22, 2020 (Wednesday)**

### **Luncheon & Fashion Show**

**Lilac**

Hilton Garden Inn, Fairfield. Featuring helen lyall fashions.

For information email [Lilacbranchch@aol.com](mailto:Lilacbranchch@aol.com) or visit [www.lilacbranch.org](http://www.lilacbranch.org)

### **April 29, 2020 (Wednesday)**

### **Volunteer Recognition Appreciation Luncheon**

**All Branches**

Sequoia Country Club. \$50 RSVP to your Branch Chair

### **May 5, 2020 (Tuesday)**

### **19th Annual Luncheon & Shopping Spree**

**Rowan**

Blackhawk Country Club. For tickets visit [www.rowanbranch.org](http://www.rowanbranch.org)