

celebrations • society • stars

On the Town



Leni Fe Bland was among those honored by the Legal Aid Foundation because of her continued concern for those who lack funds and therefore may not receive justice.



Tara Haaland-Ford, a local attorney, pictured here with her husband, Jon Ford, has dedicated her career to helping teens in need. She is president of the Santa Barbara Teen Legal Clinic and a former Teen Court judge.

Real-life heroes among us fight for justice

Heroes come in many forms. There are those who fight fires. Those who fight crime.

And those who fight for justice. Four individuals and two groups are among the latter category, according to the Legal Aid Foundation of Santa Barbara County, which recently presented its Richard Goldman Heroes for Justice Awards. The sixth annual event was held at the Music Academy of the West in Montecito.

Welcoming guests were board president **Garry Tetalman** and executive director **Ellen Goodstein**. The crowd applauded when nearly two dozen judges' names were read off as members of the nonprofit Legal Aid Foundation.

About 230 members and friends were there to congratulate those getting awards, including Judges **Donna Geck, Jed Beebe, Jim Herman** and **Jean Dandona**, Ret. Judge **Bill Gordon**, as well as guests **Ellen Goldman, Andrew Chung, Chris and Pam Haskell, and Arno Jaffe**. They enjoyed nibbles and drinks in the courtyard and anticipated the dessert later in the evening.

Among the honorees was **Leni Fe Bland**, a native of England. She has spent her life as a philanthropist, establishing a foundation in Santa Barbara that has given millions to talented musicians. She also has compassion for women battling alcoholism and helped the Santa Barbara Rescue Mission by building a home for them. She continues to help others in need. It is not hard to love her!



Lorraine D. Wilson

Honoree **Tara Haaland-Ford** is an attorney and has devoted her career to defending those who need assistance. She is president of the Santa Barbara Teen Legal Clinic and a former Santa Barbara Teen Court judge.

Honoree **Dr. Bill Elliott** was the first psychologist for the Goleta School District, having been hired in 1963. A private practice followed, where he served those ages 3 to 98, many of whom were homeless. He has served on the Santa Barbara Mental Health Commission and has offered his expertise to help the Legal Aid Foundation's disabled and elderly clients.

The best introduction was by Superior Court Judge **Thomas Anderle**, who obviously knew his friend, honoree Superior Court Judge **Thomas Adams**, very well. Judge Adams was recognized for starting the Santa Barbara Teen Court program for youthful offenders and founded the Children in the Middle program, designed to help kids coping with divorce.

For some time, the Heroes for Justice Awards have been given only to individuals. But we are all well aware that it is often in groups that we make a difference. Thus began the presentation that recognized The Fund for Santa Barbara, a nonprofit that gives to more than 200 agencies each year. Attorneys from Brownstein, Hyatt, Farber, Schreck, a national agency with a Santa Barbara office, were also honored with the award. They have made a five-year financial pledge to Legal Aid.



Dr. Bill Elliott, presented with a Hero for Justice Award, with his wife, Sue Ehrlich. He was the first psychologist hired by the Goleta School District. He has often helped (pro bono) the elderly and disabled clients of Legal Aid Foundation.



Superior Court Judge Thomas Adams, right, was introduced by Superior Court Judge Thomas Anderle, left, at the event. With them is Legal Aid Foundation Executive Director Ellen Goodstein. Over the years, Judge Adams has helped many people through his efforts, especially teens. He established juvenile clean and sober programs as well as Teen Court.