



From left, Deborah Goluska, Barbara Gomez, Diane Whetsel and Sage, pose for a photo during the 13th annual Women's History Month Celebration Brunch, Saturday, March 24, 2012

March 25, 2012 nvernau@rdnews.com

The 13th annual Women's History Month celebration brunch was held Saturday at the Roswell Museum and Art Center, where participants recognized achievements of women throughout the generations, and honored the local contributions of Barbara Gomez, Deborah Goluska, Diane Whetsel and Sage the rescue dog.

The 2012 honorees were nominated by citizens, and later were chosen by the celebration brunch committee, which weighed each nominee on her respective community accomplishments.

Sharon Bell, mistress of ceremonies, commented, "It's nice that we set aside a special time to recognize. Women throughout history have accomplished so many things and we should appreciate that every day. But we don't. So this is a nice opportunity to look back. Oftentimes, what I enjoy about it the most is to look at the women in my own history — my mother, my grandmother — just those women who made a big impact on me."

Storyteller Susi Wolf gave an oral presentation of "Silk Stockings: A Celebration of Women through Storytelling," a collection of stories about women from all over the world, and from various cultures.

"These stories reflect many of the stories that I have told for many years to encourage women, to exalt women, to give them courage, to honor them," Wolf said. "There is nothing that will empower people more than story. ... I teach through story, because long after people forget the facts and figures — the data — they will remember the story."

Women's education and empowerment was the theme for this year's celebration, something Whetsel said is the key to progress in society.

"You can't do much of anything without (education)," Whetsel said. "Not these days, especially."

Entrepreneurialism and education go hand-in-hand. Our corporate executives, our political arena — everything, the whole environment has changed since I was growing up as a kid.

"Beyond that, it's doing the right thing. I really want to think that, in the background of everything, no matter what your education is, no matter what field you go into, it's making sure that at the end of the day, you can sit down and say you did the right thing."

Gomez said she also believes education and empowerment remain intrinsically tied together.

"Those two things are near and dear to my heart. Of course, education — the more people know, the more they are empowered to take care of themselves. And this helps them not to have to go without health care, or without food or shelter, or without resources of some sort.

"So, to me, it's a combination, because education is empowering, and empowerment helps people to move forward and feel really confident about themselves."

Whetsel, a licensed EMT, was recognized for her work in search and rescue and animal treatment.

She founded the Sage Foundation for Dogs Who Serve, which provides medical coverage for service dogs.

Gomez was honored for her strong commitment to health, education and business promotion. She has created many community events, including the Baby Boomer Conference & Business Expo, and the Southern New Mexico Medical Conference.

Goluska was recognized for her role with the Altrusa Club of Roswell and for volunteer work in the community, which has included her support of the Roswell Public Library, Roswell Zoo and the Alzheimer's Association.

Bell said the best part of Saturday's event is how it might encourage younger women to look at those who came before them, and appreciate their contributions.

"I hope they'll ask about their experiences, and reap the benefits of that," Bell said. "As young people, we never really thought about our parents or grandparents really being people. I hope that through activities like this, and events, everyone will be encouraged to sit and really communicate with people they care about, and from whom they've really received so much."