

ZOO SUPPORTERS WELCOME CONDORS TO NEW EXHIBIT

By **Devon Pettengill** / CASA

ZOO SUPPORTERS AND STAFF

flocked together on a windy Wednesday, April 15th at a private zoo donor party to welcome four California Condors to the newly opened California Trails and Condor Country exhibit at the Santa Barbara Zoo.

“Today we are here to witness a dream take flight,” shared Patricia Griffin, Zoo Board President. “California Trails would not be possible without the staff, volunteers, and donors.”

The event was held in appreciation of all the Zoo’s supporters. Eleven awards of recognition were presented to donors to the California Trails project by Griffin, Zoo Chief Executive Officer Rich Block, and Zoo Director Nancy Toldridge.

“In my 36 years of professional experience,

this is as good as it gets,” Block shared. “We are so excited to be part of the condor preservation effort.”

In 1987, only 27 California Condors remained. Since then, conservation and preservation efforts have brought the population up to over 300 birds, with 167 in the wild and 160 in captivity.

The four condors at the SB Zoo were born at a Peregrine Fund breeding center in Boise, Idaho, two years ago. They will stay in Santa Barbara for several years until they develop their characteristic bald red heads.

The Condor Country exhibit is a 174,000 cubic foot enclosure including trees, perches, streams and pools for bathing, and a rockwork cave for roosting.

The California Trails exhibit also includes renovated exhibits for Channel Islands Foxes, Desert Tortoises, Bald Eagles, and Barnyard animals, and Rattlesnake Canyon, which features reptiles and amphibians from the Los Padres Forest.

“This is so fabulous,” shared Zoo Docent Dean Mars of the new renovations, “I haven’t



Tracy Block, Zoo CEO **Rich Block**, Zoo Supporter Lady **Leslie Ridley-Tree**, Board Member **Fred Benko**, and **Hiroko Benko**



One of four recently arrived California Condors



Development Committee, and Zoofari Ball Committee Member **Kirk Marlin**, **Randee Martin**, and **Finnegan**, a Channel Islands Fox



Condors Sponsors **Ginni** and **Chad Dreier**, and Channel Island Fox Sponsor **Cyndee Howard**



Zoo Director **Nancy Toldridge** and Former Zoo Director **Ted Toldridge**



Alan Griffin, Board President **Patricia Griffin**, Board Member **Melinda Mars**, and Zoo Docent **Dean Mars**



Sue Schwartz, Board Member **Terry Schwartz**, Assistant Zoo Director **Alan Varsik**, and **Cathy Varsik**