

Woman's book helping cause

Sale of 'Palm Beach Entertaining' raises money for charity.

By Mary Thurwachter
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A half dozen years ago, Annie Falk, a Palm Beach social philanthropist who is passionate about cooking, creating tablescapes and entertaining, talked to like-minded friends about putting together a book on entertaining. The book didn't happen then, but Falk resurrected the idea two years ago during a brainstorming session about fundraising for one of her favorite charities – the Children's Home Society and its Transitions program that provides shelter and other assistance for pregnant teenagers.

This time her idea found a warm reception from publishers and, as a result, "Palm Beach Entertaining" came out in September. The book gives readers a peek into the homes of more than 20 of Palm Beach's most celebrated hosts as they entertain family and friends. Each featured party comes with photographs and hosts share their entertaining tips as well as their most tried-and-true recipes.

Proceeds of the book, which sells for \$5 (available at www.chsfl.org/palmbeachentertaining), are being donated to The Children's Home Society of Florida. Assisting Annie in putting the book together were co-authors Victoria Amory, Aime Dunstan and Daphne Nikolopoulos, photographer Jerry Rabinowitz,



Children's Home Society of Florida recognized Annie Falk as Child Advocate of the Year in Palm Beach County. Annie, an event organizer, learned to cook from the legendary chef Roger Vergé at Le Moulin de Mougins in Provence. She has been a loyal supporter of CHS, but most recently created a Palm Beach lifestyle book; proceeds from "Palm Beach Entertaining" are being donated to Children's Home Society of Florida. RICHARD GRAULICH / THE PALM BEACH POST

and stylist Katherine Lande.

In recognition of her support, Falk was recognized by the Children's Home Society of Florida last month as its Child Advocate of the Year in Palm Beach County.

Among her favorite recipes in the book, Falk said, are Victoria Amory's Parsley and Walnut Salad and her own Vegetables Provençal.

"Both recipes are easy to prepare, versatile and satisfy a lot of taste buds

Q&A

What is the most unusual item you own?

A mother and child sculpture that serves as a teapot.

What do you do to get away from it all?

Meditate or sit in the sauna after a hard workout.

What event in history would you like to have witnessed?

My father was serving in France during WWII. He talks fondly of the day France was liberated, how joyful that moment was and the powerful memory of handing a chocolate bar to a little boy who ran up to him, hugged and thanked him. It still puts tears in his eyes.

What is your biggest accomplishment?

My family: Raising my children, being married for more than 20 years and now helping to care for my parents.

What is your most humbling moment?

When my newborn spit up on my designer blouse just as our plane was taking off from JFK to Nice. We were traveling alone and I only brought a change for my daughter. ... the experience made me contemplate my priorities.

What is one thing people don't know about you that would surprise them?

My personal mascot is an elephant with its trunk turned up.

so they are great for a family dinner as well as when entertaining friends," she said.

Born in New York City, Falk said she was raised to consider volunteer work as an integral part of life. Her mother, a foster child who grew up to become a successful chemist who created beauty products, was "always devoted to helping children," Falk said.

After earning a degree in business management and finance at Brooklyn College, Falk, who had done a lot of modeling, acting and dancing as a child, worked as special projects coordinator for Barbizon. While there, among many other things, she wrote a hand-

book for male models.

Falk and her husband, Michael, have two daughters, Kayla, 18, and Gigi, 16.

The family moved to Palm Beach from New York a year after the twin towers were destroyed on Sept. 11, 2001.

She said the family enjoys living in Palm Beach and she loves entertaining and volunteer work.

"I love what I'm doing at the moment and wouldn't trade places with anyone," she said. "A song lyric comes to mind that succinctly expresses my sentiments about trading places: '...the grass is greener where you water it.'"

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