

# Kelly, Wilder Honored At SLV Annual Dinner

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By DENISE SIEBENTHAL  
Sentinel Staff Writer

Nearly 225 people cheered a Catholic priest and a venerable "lady in the red hat" Thursday night as Father James Kelly of St. Michael's Church in Boulder Creek and Alice Earl Wilder of Ben Lomond were named ~~San Lorenzo Valley's~~ man and woman of the year for 1980 (see photo on Page 1).

The surprise announcements were made by Ray Scott during the 55th Annual SLV Chamber of Commerce installation dinner at Costella's Chalet in Felton.

After Scott listed the many ways in which Father Kelly has lent a helping hand to Valley residents, the priest brought the house down with laughter in stating, "I hope the good Lord some day will be able to say the same words that Ray said tonight."

The chuckles continued as Father Kelly exclaimed, "Behind every good man, there's a good woman. But as priests, we don't have women. We only have people like you."

Warm applause greeted Wilder as the familiar lady with the red hat was led to the podium by her son, Beverly Wilder. Known as the "sixth supervisor" for her continual attendance at county supervisors' meetings where she has been outspoken on many issues, Wilder was a woman of few words Thursday night.

"All I can do is say thank you," she smiled.

Both Father Kelly and Wilder were presented with redwood desk sets that contained digital clocks and calendars. The woman of the year also was given a huge bouquet of flowers.

In describing the accomplishments of Father Kelly since he came to St. Michael's as

pastor in 1973, Scott noted that the Irish priest has worked with youngsters as well as the sick and elderly.

Father Kelly has sponsored youth soccer teams and Little League teams and holds an annual golf tournament from which proceeds go to youth activities, Scott explained.

Once a week, the priest visits the boys at the Ben Lomond Conservation Camp who are serving time for crimes. "He gives them hope for the future," Scott said of Father Kelly.

"He has the uncanny ability to know when people are sick and confined," Scott continued, noting that Father Kelly makes daily visits to Valley residents who are in the hospital and to the sick who are confined to their homes.

His aid is given "regardless of religious denomination and social status," Scott said of the 1980 Valley man of the year.

In describing Wilder, Scott said, "Her name is synonymous with the San Lorenzo Valley and Santa Cruz County. She's known all over the state for the services she's done for this county."

At 91, Wilder has spent most of her adult years in this area working for the community. She moved permanently to Ben Lomond in 1934 into a house that her father had built as a summer residence.

While her list of titles, honors and accomplishments is almost unending, Scott was able in a few minutes to give the crowd an idea why Wilder was selected 1980 woman of the year.

She served many years as a director and recording secretary for the SLV chamber, as director and secretary of the Ben Lomond

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Recreation District, member of the county Board of Education, trustee of the SLV School District and as a chairman of the Community Chest, which is now the United Way.

Wilder still serves as secretary to the Boulder Creek Recreation District, member of the county Mental Health Advisory Board and as recording secretary for the chamber.

She's easy to pinpoint wherever she goes, always wearing a red hat.

This isn't the first time Wilder has been honored as a woman of the year, Scott noted. She was named 1966 woman of the year by the Santa Cruz Area Chamber of Commerce, and woman of the year by the Business and Professional Club of Santa Cruz County in 1968.

The evening was entertaining with the lively introduction of guests by emcee Carl Conelly and with music provided by guitarist Steve Goodman and songs of the 1920s presented by cast members of "The Screaming Roaring 20s" now at the Holiday Host Barn in Scotts Valley.

A main portion of the evening was the installation of 1981 chamber officers and new directors.

Installed as 1981 president was Shirely Beneke. Other officers are: First Vice President Polly Doyle, Second Vice President John Ferguson, Treasurer Marion Boze and Secretary Edna Smith.

New directors installed included Nancy Rores, Romona Poston, Mary James Chambers, Smith, Boze, Hal Chase and Bob Slawinski.