



by James Buckley

## Another First Thursday



Whimsical lifeguard "Station 6" by Belinda Montgomery

Man, those "First Thursdays" come along quickly. Thursday, June 6, is yet another one of Santa Barbara's popular special days of the month. And, while, for example, **Lynn Adams'** Santa Barbara Arts is always worth visiting (everything they sell is made in the U.S.A. and most of the inventory is produced in the Santa Barbara area), as is **Holly and Bob Murphy's** Coast 2 Coast Collection nearby, 33 Jewels, at 814 State Street in El Paseo, just a couple blocks down, is also a favorite hub of activity. 33 Jewels is nominally a jewelry store, but owner **Diane Garmendia** seems to spend at least as much time decorating her shop with art created by Santa Barbara artists as she does filling it with a fascinating array of gold, silver, diamonds and jewel-encrusted items.

Last month's exhibit featured **Cynthia Burt's** dramatic plein air and nocturne oils. Beginning this First Thursday, June 6, 33 Jewels will have on display (through Wednesday, August 7, the images of **Belinda Montgomery**.

You may know her as *Doogie Howser's* mom in that TV series, as Sylvie Gallagher in *Days of Our Lives*, Sarah Miller in *Aaron's Way*, or as Caroline Crockett (**Don Johnson's** ex-wife) in *Miami Vice*, or heck, more recently as Grandma Flynn in 2010's *TRON: Legacy* (though she doesn't look like anybody's grandma); although Belinda continues to take TV and movie roles, her real passion is painting.

We caught up with her by telephone as she was visiting her 91-year-old father in a Los Angeles rehab center.



Actress/Artist Belinda Montgomery set to exhibit her latest art at 33 Jewels in El Paseo

"I used to have a house in Santa Barbara, in the San Roque area," she tells us, but admits ruefully that she "never spent one night in it"; she was too busy shooting *Doogie Howser* in L.A. at the time.

Her father, **Cecil Elliott Montgomery**, was a Canadian actor of some renown via his work on the BBC in Canada and England. He was a prominent voice on the radio in the 1950s and played an old Irishman on the air. "I used to go in with him when he did his radio shows," Belinda says, explaining how she began in show business. "One day, a boy didn't show up and the director asked, 'Can Belinda do this?' I had a deep little boy's voice for a girl and I played the role. So, that was the start of my show business career. I was eight years old." Cecil, by the way, played a judge in

## COMING & GOING



"Santa Barbara Gazebo" by Belinda Montgomery



The artist in her studio finishes painting a Porsche just in time for her upcoming show

### Roman Polanski's *Chinatown*.

"I've played doctors, lawyers, and many victims and terminal patients. If they needed someone who could cry, they'd say, 'Let's get Belinda,'" she laughs. In a dig at type-casting, she says that, "Until *Doogie Howser*, I was considered a dramatic actress and did a lot of very heavy scenes. After *Doogie Howser*, they'd say 'She does comedy,' but I'd say, no, I am a serious actress."

Belinda has a soft spot in her heart for TV producer **Steven Bochco**, creator of *Doogie Howser, MD*. When her father was taken ill, Bochco's response was: "I know things are tough for you; if you find someone who can

help you, anywhere in the world, my plane, my jet, will take you there. Don't worry."

As for her art, she only began to paint "seriously" about eight years ago, but has "always painted. Painting was my first love, but acting got in the way," she explains. Belinda paints both in acrylic and oil and has up to now had very few gallery shows; most of her work is and has been done on commission. For the upcoming 33 Jewels exhibit, she has compiled a collection of some of her favorite recent paintings.

We recommend you drop by to admire her work, either on First Thursday, June 6, or any day 33 Jewels is open from then until August 7.

Dedicated to helping children develop a healthy smile.

Let us take care of your family's dental needs.

Come visit us at Riviera Smiles.

**RIVIERA SMILES**  
advanced adult and children's dentistry

Ana R. Martinez, DDS 1187 Coast Village Road, Suite 11, Santa Barbara 805.617.0686