

MEND

April/May 2005

matters!



Padilla Party benefits MEND's Capital Campaign

A great time was had by all at L.A. City Council President Alex Padilla's Birthday Extravaganza at the Skirball Center on Tuesday, March 29th. Alex, who grew up just blocks from MEND's Pacoima offices and who volunteered here as a youngster, graciously offered to assist MEND's capital campaign efforts by hosting a fundraiser in honor of his birthday. The event was kicked off with a cocktail hour and buffet. Guests were welcomed by our favorite Vulcan, Leonard Nimoy who introduced County Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky who spoke of his long relationship with Alex Padilla and with MEND. Alex thanked donors and sponsors and expressed his support for our organization. This was followed by presentations by MEND Executive Director

Marianne Haver Hill and Chairman of the MEND Capital Campaign, Jeff Klein. To cap things off, Mr. Spock "beamed guests up" to the amazing Einstein Exhibit.

We were thrilled by the success of the event that brought out more than 200 guests and raised over \$210,000! Special thanks to event planner Charlotte Dobbs and her staff for organizing the wonderful evening!

MEND's Calendar
Please note these upcoming events

May 14
Letter Carriers' Food Drive

June 23
Groundbreaking for Additional MEND Building

Student Heroes

MEND is so fortunate to partner with numerous schools throughout the San Fernando Valley in fulfilling its mission to "meet each need with dignity" for the thousands of low income people who come to our agency for assistance. Two examples of outstanding service to MEND are **Alfred E. Nobel Middle School** in Northridge and **Abraham Joshua Heschel Day School**, also in Northridge.

In **Nobel's Math, Science and Technology Magnet Center**, students in Steve Helm's student government and leadership classes learn life skills and put them to use as they organize and run activities for organizations such as MEND. The Valley Teacher of the Year in 2000, Helm says that Nobel teachers try to instill in students life skills that will stay with them. Helm cites the annual Christmas collection for MEND as an example of how the students carry out an activity. The students decorate crates, place one in each classroom between Thanksgiving and Christmas, collect contents, and use a room as a giant staging unit for their collection efforts. Counselors and teachers also take up a collection to buy toys and a car club also makes a donation. Helm first heard about MEND through a flyer in the mail and it has now been about ten years that the school has been helping MEND.

(con't on page three)



Marianne Haver Hill, Executive Director, with Outstanding Fundraising Volunteers, Jan Mayers and Carolyn Rose, and Volunteer of the Year, Steve Brown.

Volunteer Recognition & Board Installation

Family and friends gathered on Saturday, March 12 for the annual Volunteer Recognition Party and Board Installation at the MEND Center. The festivities included tours of MEND, great food and entertainment, dancing and raffles.

Under a beautiful blue sky, Executive Director Marianne Haver Hill and Program Director Jenny Gutierrez presented community, business and individual awards; Nominating Committee chair, Paul Collins announced board election results; and the Honorable Richard Alarcon, State Senator representing the

(con't on page two)



Executive Director's Corner

We have some exciting updates on our capital expansion project for the new 40,000 square foot building MEND is planning to construct on the corner of San Fernando Road and Pierce! We recently passed the first \$1 million mark toward our goal of \$6.5 million for the construction!

Some of the developments on this project include:

- ◆ LA Council President Alex Padilla designated MEND to be the beneficiary of his annual charity birthday party March 29, and he personally raised more than \$210,000 in business and personal contributions toward our capital campaign.
- ◆ Kaiser Permanente has donated \$100,000 toward the construction of the new medical clinic in our project, in addition to \$25,000 for our present clinic operations.
- ◆ Capital pledges have been received from The Weingart Foundation (\$650,000), The Ahmanson Foundation (\$600,000) and the Carrie Estelle Doheny Foundation (\$100,000).
- ◆ The Los Angeles City Council approved a waiver of up to \$35,000 in permits and fees, and after the vote, Council President Padilla announced that the balance of these expenses (\$70,000 or more) would be paid out of a 7th District Trust Fund.
- ◆ Our conditional use permit was signed off by the zoning administrator in record time. The architectural plans for the new facility have been submitted to the City for final approval.

Stay tuned for information on our groundbreaking event which MEND is planning for June! We are happy to once again be working with design-build firm RE Lee Design and Construction, and they anticipate that they will begin construction in July.

The goal of all this activity is to do a much better job of providing services to our clients and empowering volunteers to do their jobs in facilities that help us to "meet each need with dignity". Thanks to all of you who are supporting MEND in this process!

Marianne Haver Hill

Play and Silent Auction went MEND's way!

Bingo anyone? That was the theme of MEND's latest fundraiser held at St. Bernardine Catholic Church in Woodland Hills. We were treated to a play called "It's Not Going My Way." More than 400 tickets were sold, and our Silent Auction was the best ever with more than 150 baskets and items for sale. Financially, this event was the largest moneymaker for a traditional MEND fundraiser, bringing in more than \$35,000!

Special thanks goes to Event Chair Jan Mayers and her outstanding committee. As usual, Jan and her group did a fabulous job!

(Volunteer Recognition and Volunteer Appreciation con't from page one)
Pacoima area, installed the board.

Outgoing board president Steve Brown was honored with the President's Award/Volunteer of the Year award; Girl Scout Troop 969 and Conservation Corps Clean and Green were awarded Community Awards; Hamer Toyota received the Business Award; Gigi Gomez was awarded the Leadership Award; and the Outstanding Service award went to Pat Hall.

A program Volunteer of the Year was honored in each of MEND's departments as well as volunteers with 1000+ hours and 500+ hours of service. And finally, to ALL volunteers who contributed so generously of their time this past year, we salute you.

Our special thanks to the following groups and people who helped make our Volunteer Recognition Party a success: *Councilman Alex Padilla's office, DJ Bobby Arias; Rondalla musicians "Los Rayos Del Sol"; Anja's Court for entertainment; Girl Scout Troop 969, flag ceremony; photographer David Jimenez; MaryAlice Sears for graphic design; Norsal Printing for program printing; Juan Zamora for designing the volunteer banner; Jacques Hay of Award Winners for donating awards/ plaques; Clean and Green and Victory Outreach. Kaiser Permanente; Computer Associates; Joe Ramos (AMC theatres movie passes); and Associated Students-CSUN who provided promotional giveaway items.*



A Fond Farewell to MC!

MEND's Director of Operations, Maryann Cravotta, retired March 31 after 9 years of outstanding service to MEND. A farewell and birthday party was held in her honor at the MEND Center on March 16, and more than 75 current and former

volunteers, staff, family and friends turned out to wish her well. Affectionately known as "MC", her duties included everything from overseeing MEND's book-keeping and financial reports, donor acknowledgments and providing support to fund raising volunteers, bulk mailings, supplies procurement, building maintenance and repair, and much, much more. During her tenure, MEND grew from serving about 10,500 clients each month with a volunteer force of 800 to helping more than 38,000 recipients monthly with 1800 volunteers in 2004. All this growth meant that the activity level in the Business office grew exponentially! MC promises to return to MEND as a volunteer after taking a break to travel and do some home remodeling projects. We thank her for her dedication and hard work for MEND, and look forward to her warm smile and big hugs when she comes back!

Volunteer Spotlight



...And the MEND
2004 Volunteer
of the Year
Award Goes to...
Steve Brown!

Fifteen years
ago, MEND
volunteers
asked Steve
Brown if they
could use some
of his ware-

house space for their annual Christmas Basket Program. He said yes and has been helping MEND ever since. Steve has served MEND in a variety of capacities, twice as President of the Board of Directors, and through several committees and projects, most significantly on its current capital expansion committee.

After the October 18, 2004 fire at the MEND, Steve took an entire week off work to supervise the clean-up and construction crews, using his many years of experience in contracting to get the agency operating again quickly.

Steve served his first term as president in the mid- 90's. At that time MEND was doubling the size of its current facility. By his second term in 2004, Steve donned his property development hat once again and oversaw the purchase of land for a new building so that MEND could triple its program capacity. He has also donated countless hours to work with the city, the architect, zoning officials, and others to make MEND's plans for a 40,000 square-foot additional building a reality.

During our recent Volunteer Party, we were delighted to honor Steve Brown with our top volunteer award for 2004 because of how he has motivated so many others to move MEND forward, and because of his generous commitments of time and resources!

Welcome Our Newest Volunteers!

Join us in welcoming our newest volunteers...they are the cutest babies!

In order of arrival, we present:

Jose Manuel, born Dec. 8, 2004 to **Erika Ibanez**, our Clothing Assistant Manager, and **Christopher**, born Feb. 19, 2005 to **Lupe Acosta**, our Clothing and Volunteer Director.

(Student Heros - con't from page one)

Abraham Joshua Heschel Day School "tries to teach values such as the importance of being aware of one's community and responsibility to the world we live in," says Barbara Klaristenfeld, Heschel Family Education Coordinator. For example, students in grades 6-8 do community service as part of the curriculum and MEND has been fortunate to be one of the recipients of the required hours. Last October, students at the school collected over 70 bags of clothing to help replace the loss suffered by MEND's clothing department after a fire destroyed its entire inventory. Students from the school also reported for sorting duty to help separate the mountains of donations received from Heschel and other donors. Community service hours, Mitzvah Day in early November and the ninth grade Project Mitzvah are some of the school-sponsored projects that have benefited MEND over the years with the student body participating in wrapping toys, collections of food, clothing and household items, and book drives.

OUR DONORS ARE APPRECIATED!

Since January 2005, MEND has gratefully received grants and cash donations from the following foundations, businesses, churches, schools, and community groups for this period. A special thanks to our donors:

Capital Campaign Donors -

Alex Padilla's Party Sponsors

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Capital Campaign

Foundation/Business Grants

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QueensCare
Special Service for Groups
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Wal-mart Foundation
WellPoint Associates Giving Campaign



WISH LIST

The following are needed by MEND at this time.
Can you help?

VOLUNTEERS

Dentists - 3 hrs mo
Dental Hygienists - 3 hrs mo
Pharmacists - 3-6 hrs mo
Registered nurses 3-6 hrs mo
Christmas Adoption Program
Coordinators Needed (Oct - Dec)
Other Christmas Program Coordinators Needed
For more information contact Jenny Gutierrez

ITEMS

Toothbrushes/ toothpaste
Office Supplies: pencils, erasers, glue sticks
Gently used men's clothing, children's clothing
Gently used shoes for children

IN MEMORIAM

The people of MEND offer their condolences to the family of John Deegan who lost his fight with brain cancer in January, 2005. He began his work with MEND over thirty years ago and had become part of the MEND family. He helped out in any way he could. In the early years, John and his wife Edie oversaw the Donor Acknowledgement Program. After he retired from Lockheed Martin, John was the Co-Chair of the Christmas Program, and he drove the MEND trucks to pick up donated food and clothing throughout the year. "He had a wonderful sense of humor. He always had a joke or an encouraging word to say. He is truly missed." said Marianne Haver Hill, Executive Director. John is survived by his wife, four children, and 8 grandchildren

NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE

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April/May 2005

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I wish to make a donation of \$ _____ (All charitable donations are tax deductible)

My check is enclosed

Please charge to VISA MasterCard Exp. Date _____

Account # _____ Signature _____

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What would you like to do? _____

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