



www.mendpoverty.org

(818)896-0246

# MEND

June/July 2005

# matters!



## Letter Carriers "STAMP OUT HUNGER"

The Annual Letter Carriers Food Drive netted MEND 58,000 pounds of food during May, according to Gina Mirabella, Emergency Foodbank Director. She adds, "It was fabulous. This will add tremendously to our food bank supplies during the lean summer months when other donations usually drop off."

Participating post offices included Van Nuys Main, Van

Nuys Civic Center, Panorama City, Tarzana, Sherman Oaks and Sun Valley.

Deserving a round of applause are the more than 200 MEND volunteers who helped sort, pack and load and unload the trucks at the various post offices and at the MEND Center.

Gina further adds, "A special thanks goes to the letter carriers, the post masters, and the community for their generosity. This event does much to enable MEND to assist families in need in the Northeast San Fernando Valley."

## MEND's Calendar

*Please note these upcoming events*

**August 6**

Mervyns ChildSpree

**August 25**

Teeth to Toes

**October 8-22**

Christmas Basket Registration

**November 5 and 12**

Super Saturdays

*(Home Visits to Christmas Basket applicants)*

## It's A Family Affair

Victor and his son, Victor Jr., can be found in MEND's Education and Training Center on many Saturday mornings. Victor, Jr. participates in the Saturday Children's program where his morning includes group reading, individual tutoring in reading, computer time and a snack. Dad says that his son is an excellent student but needs some help with his reading.

MEND's bi-annual computer hardware repair course enticed Victor Senior to enroll. The native of Mexico City is very interested in electronics and computers. He feels his small DJ business would benefit if he could connect everything through a computer to regulate music, lights, etc.

This inquisitive father was recently able to put his newly acquired computer skills to use. His cousin's computer was not working and Victor diagnosed a power supply problem. He replaced the parts and the computer is again operational.

Arriving at age 17, Victor Sr. studied English and went to high school until age 18 when he transferred to adult school. "I was very happy there but left to help my family. I want to finish soon and get my GED. I want to learn about everything and anything."



# PEOPLE HELPING PEOPLE



## PRESIDENT'S LETTER

### We are on our way!

The MEND capital campaign is moving along well. Plans for the new MEND Center are in final plan check at the Building and Safety Department, with previous revisions requested by the city incorporated. As I am writing this article, we are making plans for the groundbreaking ceremony on June 13th. This is our third and largest building venture for MEND. We have always been blessed in each of our capital campaigns by the generous support of our volunteers, churches, businesses, civic groups, schools, corporations, foundations and local elected officials. Los Angeles City Council President Alex Padilla has gone to extraordinary lengths to assist MEND in this capital campaign. Both Council President Padilla and Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky will be assisting us in the groundbreaking for our new 40,000 square foot center. We have reached the 1.9 million dollar mark toward our goal of 6.5 million for the construction.

We are all looking forward to seeing our beautiful new center completed and opened on the corner of San

Fernando Rd and Pierce in Pacoima. But more important is what will be accomplished inside the center that really makes me happy. MEND will be able to enhance our present programs and add additional programs to assist the people in the community. I will write more about this aspect in future articles. First, we need to get the center built. I am asking everyone reading this article to keep the success of this capital campaign in your prayers and to keep a positive outlook for our project. Also, perhaps you can assist us in our campaign by helping us to increase our contacts with foundations, businesses and individuals who might be inclined to be part of such a project. If you know of such persons, businesses or foundations, please do not hesitate to contact MEND. Remember, we are "people helping people" always striving to increase the opportunities for the poor of our community.

### Ed Rose

President and Co-Founder  
MEND Board of Directors



### Executive Director Receives Pioneer Woman Award

MEND Executive Director Marianne Haver Hill, representing Los Angeles City Council District 7, has been presented with the Pioneer Woman Award in recognition of her outstanding contributions to the strength and vitality of Los Angeles.

Created in 1988, this award recognizes the accomplishments of women in their efforts to improve their communities through education, business, sports, arts, science, community health, or government.

The Los Angeles City Commission on the Status of Women, in conjunction with the City Council, sponsors the Pioneer Woman Awards. Each year, the city council members select one woman in each of their districts to be recognized. Council President Alex Padilla chose Marianne for his District's 2005 award.

"I was very pleased to be included in the company of women who are involved in acts of courage and in improving the lives of women in the City of Los Angeles," stated Marianne.

### HERE WE GROW AGAIN!

We are proud to introduce additions and promotions at MEND! **Lupe Acosta**, former Clothing Center Manager, is now our full-time Volunteer Services Director. With 1800 volunteers serving at MEND in 2004, Lupe's role is much-needed!

**Jorge Jimenez**, Director of Finance and Facilities, joined the team in March, just in time to begin work on our 2005-2006 budget. Jorge stepped into the position formerly held by *Maryann Cravotta*, who retired at the end of March.

**Gricelda Gonzalez** is the new Clothing Center Manager. She was acting manager during the time *Lupe Acosta* was out on maternity leave and has served as a volunteer and staff member with MEND in a variety of capacities for many years.

**Rob Baskerville** is on board as Food Warehouse Manager and will also be serving as Partner Relations Manager, assisting *Gina Mirabella* in the solicitation and distribution of food donations.



**Our Mission,**  
as a volunteer-driven organization,  
is to provide services that meet  
the basic human needs of individuals  
who reside in the northeast San Fernando Valley.  
These services are provided  
in a manner that safeguards the dignity of all  
recipients while promoting self-reliance.

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## Volunteer Spotlight

### Volunteer Coordinates Homeless Outreach

Sally Conner faithfully gathers her small group of volunteers to provide hot meals to the less fortunate at Hansen Dam each Thursday at 11 am. Their menu includes a meat dish, vegetable, salad, dessert, and punch. Sally comes a day early with some of her helpers to MEND to pick up the food items they will use in preparing the meal. Cooking is done at the homes of volunteers and the food is then delivered to the Hansen Dam park location where homeless individuals and families have gathered. Along with the meal, the group tries to have a goodie bag for each recipient with soap and clothes. Currently, they are looking for a truck to use in taking the food and other much-needed goods to the park.

Sally will tell you that she first got involved with the homeless through her church in 1989. She gives credit to Brother Robinson and to Deacon Gordon of Calvary Baptist Church, both of whom have supported and inspired her.

This modest woman quickly makes sure you know that six volunteers regularly assist her and deserve to be recognized. They are: Helen Spicer, Trudy Rozar, Emma Raye, Helen Williams, Andre Lomas and Claudia Mayes. The group represents different churches across the Valley. MEND is grateful to all of these caring individuals who extend beyond our walls our mission to "meet each need with dignity"!

### Did You Know?

Your employer may have a program to match your MEND contributions, and many employers more than match each dollar you give, even doubling your donation or more! Your company may also have a program to make dollar matches for volunteer hours you give to MEND. Simply contact your human resources department or personnel manager and tell them you'd like to participate.

If you find that your employer does not have such a program, try suggesting one. It's easy to set up...and beneficial to the business. Companies who make such contributions receive publicity in our MEND newsletter and on our donor wall. Businesses can also be ensured that their contributions remain local, directly serve their surrounding communities, and results from their gifts are tangible. Another attractive feature is that 95% of all revenues go directly to serving MEND's low-income recipients!

Your support of MEND through matching gifts is greatly appreciated!

### Dental Health Fair at MEND

Families filled the MEND Hospitality Center on Saturday, May 14 for a Dental Health Fair hosted by Mission Community Hospital and UCLA School of Dentistry's Department of Community and Public Health Dentistry. Dental residents provided fluoride treatments and screenings for low income adults and children. Over 60 people were treated in mobile dental units in our Hospitality Center as well as the dental chairs we have in our dental clinic. There was also a fun fruit-cutting demonstration to encourage participants to eat more fresh produce, and dental hygiene instruction, as well as the distribution of free toothbrushes and toothpaste. The Dental Health Fair was made possible through grant funding to Mission Community Hospital from L.A. Care Health Plan and The Aetna Foundation.



### Teens enjoy MEND Dress-up Day!

Luz Nava has not seen her brother in a long time. But she wanted to look special and dress up at the welcome home party for him. Fortunately, Luz' mother saw an announcement of a prom dress give away when she was at MEND for food distribution and signed Luz up right away.

A group of young women from Viewpoint High School's Community

Outreach Education (CORE) in Calabasas, had the idea to collect prom dresses and accessories from friends and donate them to girls who might not otherwise be able to dress up for their prom or other special occasions. The project, spearheaded by CORE President Jordan Siegal, Vice President Kourtney Carlberg, and Maggie Engel, Megan Gold and Brighton Ring, brought in over 100 dresses for MEND's teenage recipients.

Luz and about 25 other girls were outfitted in prom and party dresses in a MEND classroom that was converted into a mini dress department for the day. In addition, the girls selected shoes, handbags, jewelry, and makeup. Everyday clothing was also available for the girls to choose from.

The dress selected by Luz had been donated by a 17-year-old leukemia patient at Children's Hospital who is also a Viewpoint student.

### OUR DONORS ARE APPRECIATED!

*Since the last issue of "MEND Matters", 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:*

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## 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  
Writers for Fund Raising Letters

### ITEMS

Toothbrushes/ toothpaste  
Office Supplies: pencils, erasers, glue sticks  
New back packs for school  
Baby wipes & diapers for baby layettes  
Cereal

## WANTED: CHRISTMAS ELVES

MEND is looking for an elf or two to coordinate Family Adoptions in conjunction with our annual Christmas Basket program. The primary responsibility is to match eligible families with businesses, schools or individuals wishing to adopt a family for Christmas.

Dianne Bush, one of last year's coordinators, says that after MEND's Super Home Visiting Saturdays in early November, during which eligibility is determined, the real work of matching up needy families with those wishing to adopt a family begins. The Adoptions Coordinators have finished the majority of their work by mid-December. Sis Wiget, who for many years coordinated the adoptions said, "It's a wonderful feeling to know that a lot of families in very dire situations have a better Christmas because you helped them."

Anyone interested in this important aspect of our Christmas basket program can call Christmas Co-Chair Bob Mayers at 818/360-5928 for more information.

### NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE

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to



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If you want to become involved, please fill out this coupon and return to:

13460 Van Nuys Boulevard  
Pacoima, California 91331  
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June - July 2005

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What would you like to do? \_\_\_\_\_

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