



Foothill Unity Center

*Neighbors Helping
Neighbors*

*Serving Monrovia,
Arcadia, Duarte,
Bradbury and
Sierra Madre*

Our Mission

Our goal is to help local people in crisis attain self-sufficiency by providing food, clothing, crisis services and referrals for other critical services to qualified individuals and families.

We help with love and dignity, as neighbors helping neighbors—offering a hand up, not a hand-out.

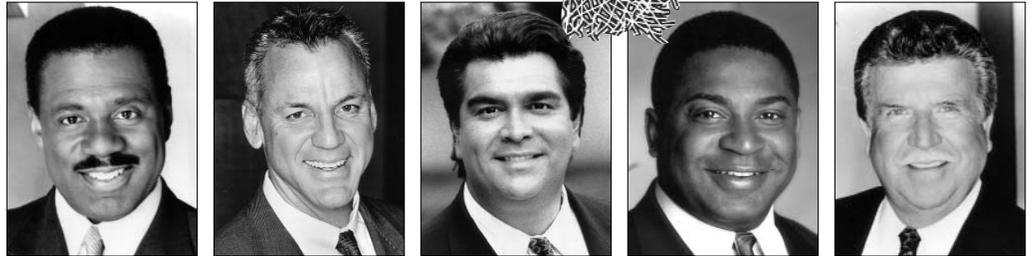
We are committed to making the most of every contribution, large or small, in order to provide the best possible assistance to our clients.

By doing so, we hope to become the charity of choice for those seeking ways to help others in our communities.

NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS

Winter 2002

www.foothillunitycenter.com



CHALLENGE

KABC-TV Celebrity Hoop Challenge

On Saturday, March 9, at Citrus College Gym in Glendora, members of the Southern California #1 rated KABC-TV Channel 7 Eyewitness News Team will take on the hottest community basketball talent in the San Gabriel Valley for a multi-game Hoop Challenge.

Eyewitness News personalities slated to play include Reporter Henry Alfaro, coach, News Anchor Marc Brown, Reporter Sid Garcia, Weatherman Garth Kemp and Reporter Leo Stallworth. Additional Eyewitness News team members will be there to autograph photos for attendees, including Reporters Adrienne Alpert, Miriam Hernandez, John North and Movie Critic George Pennachio. Members of the KABC production staff will also be recruited to support the team.

“This is a first for us, and we’re very excited about it,” says Center Executive Director Joan Whitenack. “It offers local athletes and fans a chance to make a significant contribution to helping local families in need, while giving area companies an opportunity to gain valuable positive exposure in the community by sponsoring the event.”

“The SpeedZone Girls will be helping, and the cheerleaders from Azusa Pacific University (APU) and Occidental College will be leading cheers. Someone will win a chance for a new Toyota by making a center-court hoop. Many local fans and supporters are expected to attend this event, with all proceeds from ticket sales, opportunity drawings and corporate sponsorships to benefit the Center,” says Whitenack. “As our economy struggles through difficult times, our organization has seen a major surge in families seeking our services. That makes this event an especially vital opportunity for us as well as a lot of fun for everyone.”

Tickets are \$10 each in advance, \$12 at the door. Tickets may be ordered online at ticketweb.com (includes a small service fee), by mail, or picked up at the Foothill Unity Center.

An Open Letter to the Community

Dear Friends:

When the proverbial “they” say the world has changed as a result of 9/11, you may ask yourself, “Has it really changed?” You have the same job, same home, and may go through a little more security at the airport—but otherwise you are unaffected.

I was on vacation in Canada on 9/11. When I returned to work a couple of weeks later, I was shocked at the impact the event had had on Foothill Unity Center. For over a month, our donations slowed to a mere trickle. We operate on a month-to-month basis, with a small reserve. We came too close to being out of funds. We cut expenses and prayed.

At the same time the number of families needing our assistance ballooned at an unprecedented rate. Many businesses had slowed down, tourism had dropped dramatically, hotels and restaurants were laying off people in large numbers. By Thanksgiving our number of clients had skyrocketed by 15%, and by Christmas it was up over 25%. Many of those seeking help had never needed our assistance before. Many had lost their jobs and had no reserve to draw on. They couldn’t find new employment, their children were hungry. They were scared. We provided food and toys to over 550 families this holiday season, including 1229 children.

Desperate, we sent a letter asking for your assistance—and you responded generously! We needed your help again to match a Rose Hills challenge grant—and you came through.

At our holiday functions, over 400 volunteers came to work and help. We survived and were able to provide for those who needed. Clearly, our community realizes that we are the emergency safety net for our area.



Joan Whitenack,
Executive Director

Our goal for this year is to build a bigger reserve so the Center is not at risk in times of exceptional need like these. Our high client numbers are continuing to grow. The need for food and emergency assistance in our area is at an all-time high.

It seems inadequate to say thank you. You have helped with your funds, food, toys, hard work and most of all with loving hearts. Only your continued support will enable us to continue to provide our services with love and dignity. Thank you. I love you!

Have a wonderful year—you deserve it!

Love,

Event Calendar

- March 9 KABC Celebrity Hoop Challenge*
7:00 p.m. Citrus College Gymnasium

- April 14 CROP Walk*
1:00 p.m. Church of Good Shepherd, Arcadia

- May 11 Letter Carrier Food Drive*
“Leave Food Donations for Your Letter Carrier”

- May 18-19 Monrovia Days - Parade* - Soap Box*
Downtown Monrovia

- June 5 5th Annual Golden Plate Awards Luncheon*
12:00 Noon Holiday Inn Ballroom, Monrovia

*We need volunteers & participants; for more information, contact Betty McWilliams at (626) 358-3486.

Grants & Donations

- Rose Hills Challenge Grant:** Many thanks to the 200 plus donors who gave from \$5 to \$5,000 so we could claim the full Rose Hills Challenge Grant of \$25,000.
- Food for All Grant:** A grant for \$4,500 to help provide a higher level of nutrition to our very low-families. These funds are generated from Food for All cards purchased at grocery checkout counters.
- A Special Thanks to Some Major Donors:**
- Seidner Collision Centers** had a golf tournament and gave us a wonderful donation. That’s really Good Playing!
- Arcadia Real Estate Professionals**
Through many fundraising efforts, they generated funds for many local charities, and gave us a very nice donation. Thanks!
- Creative Woman**
A longtime supporter (no pun intended), has once again given a sizable donation.

SPOT-
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This issue the spotlight is on Linda Arena, super volunteer. As the founder of Racers 4 Kids, a non-profit organization that introduces children to car racing, Linda contacted the Foothill Unity Center to offer race tickets to our needy families. Linda became more and more involved, and last year she volunteered 150 to 200 hours a month!



Linda Arena

She has helped in almost every facet of the Center. She set up participation of two racecars and drivers in the Monrovia Days Parade and helped with our Soap Box Derby cars and drivers two years in a row. She has overseen the food sorting and inventorying for two Christmas Distributions and last year's Thanksgiving—a huge job requiring many hours of back-breaking work.

She also organized all of our items for the Back-to-School programs and worked at the Westfield Mall gift wrapping fund-raisers. Linda also provided training and staffed the Center's annual client re-qualification last October and November.

When she's not giving her time to the Center, Linda volunteers with the Foothill Unity Center Auxiliary. She designed and is the publisher of their newsletter, *The Auxiliary Gazette*.

When she was told that the spotlight would be on her this issue, she said, "You know why I keep coming? There is no place that you can watch miracles happen literally every day like you do at Foothill Unity Center. I am impressed that the respect at the Center is equal across the board—all are treated equally, it doesn't matter who you are." Then she smiled, "And where else do you get hugged every time you come in? The Center feeds my needs as well—the rewards are outstanding!"

Linda has said, "Wherever you need me, I'll be there." And she will.

Linda- Thank you for your hard work, commitment, willingness and loving support.

A Volunteer's Viewpoint

By Sheila Stone

My first contact with Foothill Unity Center was working on the preparation for the Christmas Food distribution. I was amazed at what I found: a couple hundred volunteers and more food than I had ever seen in one place (including Costco!) all jam-packed into the Monrovia Armory. Let me tell you, this group moved like a well-oiled machine! I grabbed a shopping cart and spent the next three hours circling the building-filling the cart with bags of food, emptying it into boxes and then going around again.

Christmas music played over the loudspeakers and everyone was smiling. There were grandmas and grandpas, middle-aged types (my own demo-

graphic), young adults, teenagers, kids, even toddlers. All colors, all ages, all working together.

I only wish that the Bah Humbug types who proclaim Christmas has turned into a soulless buying frenzy could have been there. But some people are only comfortable pronouncing doom rather than getting involved. Their loss.



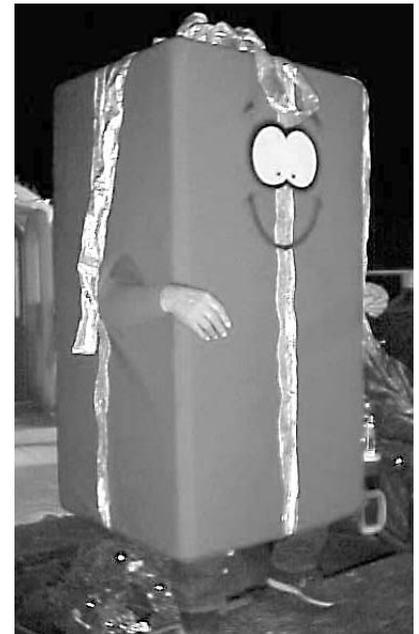
I found MY Christmas spirit in a chilly armory surrounded by a couple hundred selfless people who felt that the most important thing they could be doing two Saturdays before Christmas was giving their time and energy to others less fortunate. I was honored to be a part of it all.

Holiday 2001—More Need,



Thanksgiving . . .

Thanksgiving was more bountiful and beautiful than ever, thanks to all who contributed food, and Albertson's, who decorated the whole armory. Senator Margett and Assemblyman Moutjoy gave over 475 families turkeys that were donated by Southern California Water Company and California Water Company. This was a 15% increase over last year.



Monrovia Christmas Parade . . .

For the past six years, Foothill Unity Center has had an entry in the annual Christmas Parade. This year, Joan and Betty rode in a vintage 1957 Ford Thunderbird convertible owned by Renée Wells. Staff and volunteers rode on the "Float" on a truck driven by Curtis Conyers of Richard Lane Development. Food, a home and a giant present depicted the motto "The Best Gift . . . is the gift of Giving."

...More People, More Food,

More Toys, More Volunteers,

Angel Program . . .



A very special thanks goes to Irene Yamagata-Bermudez, who chaired this critical committee. She recruited volunteers, and sorted and bagged literally thousands of toys and clothing gifts for our 1229 children.

Our thanks to the many individuals, companies and organizations that adopted Angels and made our children happy.



Christmas Distribution . . .



It was a year to remember. Read Across Monrovia provided an age-appropriate book for each of our 1229 children. Albertson's had an Oreo stacking contest and helped with the decorations. L.A. Party Works provided the Giant Bounce, Giant Slide, Obstacle Course and more. Kathy Reese and company provided live Christmas music. Monrovia Kiwanis provided hundreds of red and green balloons. And, Monrovia City Councilman Victor Franco was Santa, his wife Gisele was Mrs. Claus, and daughter Noelle was Santa's Elf.

Every child had a chance to win a special toy—bicycles, Nintendo 64s, Game Boys, and even a "go-cart" and other large gifts. A special gift drawing for families included computers, a quilt, watches and more. Each of our 549 families received a very generous food box and a certificate for Albertson's, and picked candy, *etc.*, from our "gift shop." Christmas trees were donated by Holiday Tree Farms. Everyone was *so* happy!

More Love, More Smiles!

KELLY'S KORNER

By
Kelly Downes

As we continue to press on against the bitter chill of yet another 75-degree southern California winter, I decided to share a couple of heartwarming holiday stories. So sit back, grab some hot chocolate, cozy up under a blanket, and enjoy.

A clean-cut young man came to California from Michigan last February, thinking that it was warm enough to sleep on the beach. Moving from odd job to odd job, he discovered our Center in October, homeless, hungry and 19 years old. Just before Christmas, he came to me and said, "Guess what? I talked to my mom yesterday for the first time in 3 years. I couldn't believe it, she said I could come home." He asked if we had any jobs, or ways to get funds to buy a bus ticket. We asked him to wait for a little while, we were able to arrange a bus ticket for him to leave at 6:30 that night, with enough food to last him for the three-day trip to Michigan. He called his mom, and excitedly told her he would be home for Christmas.

Monrovia Police Department noticed two "special angels" with special needs. The first of these was a very near-sighted young girl of 13 who needed new glasses. She was even willing to put up with "coke bottles" if it meant she could see the chalkboard. The MPD, however, obviously remembered what it was like to be 13, and with help from Lens Crafters provided very nice lightweight and fashionable specs. Needless to say, she was delighted. The second was an arthritic 9-year-old boy asking for a wheelchair. MPD's only question: "Can we give it to him ourselves?" Coldwell Banker helped with a special fund-raiser which, in only a few weeks, resulted in a fully automatic wheelchair and another very happy child.

Rainbow's End Continues to Serve Whole Community

Rainbow's End, a.k.a. the "Nordstrom" of boutique thrift stores, continues to provide quality new and gently used clothing as well as a fabulous assortment of new and used gift and household items. It is really fun to shop in this clean, beautifully arranged store where you find friendly help and really good buys.

All of us at Foothill Unity Center want to thank you, the community, for making our success possible. As Leonore Escalante, store manager states, "It takes everyone's help, whether you shop at the store, donate your no-longer-needed items, volunteer your time and energy or just tell your friends about the great bargains to be found. Working together to help others is what it is all about!"

Stop, see for yourself and say "Hi" to Leonore and her assistant, Pabla. If you don't see what you want, just ask; they'll gladly help you! Happy shopping!

Foothill Unity Center *Neighbors Helping Neighbors*

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Wish List!

It would be nice to have ...

- ♥ **Fresh Fruit** (from local trees—so much falls on the ground and is wasted!)
- ♥ **A Better Telephone System** (it won't take much to beat ours!)
- ♥ **A Professional Steamer** (for Rainbow's End, to remove wrinkles—in clothes, of course!)
- ♥ **A Color Computer Printer for Betty** (that works and isn't frustrating!)
- ♥ **Storage Space—An Unused Garage Or?** (Hopefully free—for food and Rainbow items. It doesn't hurt to dream!)

In 2001, Foothill Unity Center . . .

- . . . distributed over 500,000 pounds of food to more than 1000 local families.
- . . . assisted nearly 4,000 unduplicated local families in the past five years.
- . . . 54% of our clients were children under 17 years old.
- . . . provided after-school snacks to 590 children daily in six local low-income schools.
- . . . worked with local Police Chaplains to make sure emergency food was available evenings and weekends.

Help Us Fight Hunger in Our Community!
Make a Donation Today!

.....

60% of our clients are children and seniors! Yes, I want to help!

Enclosed is my tax-deductible gift of \$25 \$50 \$100 \$ _____

Please charge my donation to: MasterCard Visa Discover

Account # _____ Expiration Date _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Signature: _____ Telephone: _____

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