

Neighborhood Improvement

Neighborhood Grants, Home Improvement Rebates, Neighborhood Cleanups and Graffiti Removal, Community Police Centers, Safety Programs, Shopping Cart Enforcement



North Long Beach Neighborhood Improvement Strategy (NIS) Area Neighborhood Clean-up

On Saturday, December 11, 2010, staff from the **Neighborhood Services Bureau (NSB)** organized a neighborhood clean-up within the **North Long Beach Neighborhood Improvement Strategy (NIS)** area. The event took place at 6900 Muriel Avenue from 8:00 a.m. to noon.



Sixty-eight volunteers came out to support this effort. The volunteers, with the support of NSB staff, collected **nine (9) tons** of trash, debris, and large items.

For more information about the **North Long Beach NIS Area**, please contact **Chantara Nop** at **(562) 570-8280** or e-mail **Chantara.Nop@longbeach.gov**.

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Raising a Reader Program Graduation

On December 15, 2010, the **Long Beach Public Library Foundation** and the **Willmore Community Police Center** presented certificates of completion to **twenty families** for their efforts and outstanding dedication to the **Raising a Reader Program**. The graduation ceremony was held at the **Willmore Community Police Center** located at 910 Daisy Avenue.



A total of **thirty-seven kids** and **twenty parents** had the opportunity to read forty-eight books each of them in a twelve-week period. The Raising a Reader Program is designed to develop a positive attitude towards reading, which is a powerful motivation when children reach school. Part of this educational program is to take the kids to the library to explore a variety of books for children, obtain a library card and learn about library services available for the entire family.



This program inspires parents and children to share books and spend quality time as family. This community literacy program is provided through the **Long Beach Public Library Foundation** and the **Long Beach Public Library**, the **City of Long Beach**, **Neighborhood Services Bureau** and **Willmore Police Center**.

For more information about Raising a Reader, please contact **Teresa Gonzalez** at **(562) 570-1146** or teresa.gonzalez@longbeach.gov.

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Neighborhood Resource Center Helps Four Groups to Win Pepsi Refresh Grants

Four Long Beach community organizations were among the twenty winners of the Pepsi and Super Valu “**Refresh Your Neighborhood**” competition! The **Long Beach Depot for Creative Reuse**, the **Long Beach Branch NAACP Youth Council and College Chapter**, the **30-minute Beach Cleanup** and **Long Beach Grows** were recipients of **\$5,000** to fund projects and programs!

In June 2010, the **Neighborhood Resource Center** shared via e-mail information about Pepsi’s and Super Valu’s “Refresh Your Neighborhood” competition that provided \$5,000 grants to fund projects and programs in the areas of hunger relief, environmental stewardship and nutrition education. The winners were chosen out of a possible **3,000** entries and the \$5,000 that each organization receives will be disbursed through a local nonprofit. The winning entries from Long Beach include:

Long Beach Branch NAACP Youth Council and College Chapter: Recycling is the easiest way people can begin to live sustainably. In collaboration with SA Recycling, City of Long Beach’s Department of Parks, Recreation and Marine, churches, block clubs, and the City Council, the group will set up recycling collection centers. The funds earned from the donated recycled items will go toward scholarships and educational enrichment programs for underserved youth of color.

The Long Beach Depot for Creative Reuse: To bring attention to the importance of Creative Reuse, Pepsi will partner with Long Beach Depot For Creative ReUse to host the first ever "Creative Reuse Day". The day will include Mayoral, County and State Proclamations, invitations to Ed Begley Jr. and other "green" minded celebrities to speak, demonstrations by local artists and workshops on how to make bottlecap magnets, pins, earrings, etc. from Pepsi caps and other "creative reuse" projects.

Long Beach Grows: LONG BEACH GROWS is dedicated to promoting green, healthy, sustainable urban agriculture in Long Beach. They will develop a self-sufficient community farm co-op in the heart of our city, where people can grow and harvest real food together while refreshing the community. They will use this money to develop educational programs on urban agriculture (gardening, animal husbandry, real food, nutrition, safety, preservation, cooking) that provide opportunities for personal growth and that refresh local food security.

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Neighborhood Resource Center Helps Four Groups to Win Pepsi Refresh Grants (Continued)

The 30-minute Beach Cleanup: The 30-Minute Beach Cleanup meets on the 3rd Sat. of each month at 10 a.m. at 1 S. Granada Avenue at Ocean Boulevard in Belmont Shore to help rid the beach of trash and debris. All ages are welcome. Free parking, trash bags, gloves, door prizes, volunteer credit forms and refreshments are provided. With this grant, they will be able to work directly with the youth in our neighborhoods by subsidizing transportation via city or hired busses. They will involve the youth directly.

For more information about the **Neighborhood Resource Center** and grant information and technical assistance, please call **(562) 570-1010** or e-mail **Neighborhood_Resource_Center@longbeach.gov**.

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Social Service Grant Monthly Spotlight: Food Finders

The **Social Service Grant Program (SSG)** was first established in 1986 by the Long Beach City Council to encourage the development of innovative programs to address unmet and emerging social service needs of low-income Long Beach residents. The program also serves to supplement critical health and social services for underserved populations that are presently under-funded. The Social Service Grant Program is supported by Federal **Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)** funds and administered by the **Neighborhood Services Bureau**. In FY 2010, **\$200,000** was available in support for this program to **16** Long Beach nonprofits. This month highlights the accomplishments of an agency funded through this grant, Food Finders.



Food Finders' Network Rescues 82 Million Pounds of Food!

Food Finders, a 21-year-old multi-regional food bank based in Long Beach, has rescued 82 million pounds of food. Food Finders is the connection that takes excess food from over 400 merchant food donors and transports the food to 265 local nonprofit partner agencies. There are 103 nonprofit partner agencies in Long Beach that receive food from Food Finders to assist them with their food line item costs. Food Finders help these nonprofit partner agencies feed more people which allows the agencies to free up funding for other things in their programs such as more counselors or beds.

Food Finders has received funding from the **Social Service Grant** since 1990, receiving **\$15,000** in FY 2010 in order to help Food Finders serve the community better. Every dollar received is stretched by volunteerism and food donations to make more of an impact. For example, in 2009 every dollar that came in to Food Finders provided \$19.42 worth of food. Therefore the \$15,000 grant from SSG last year provided funding for **623,382** meals. That is enough to feed **569** people **3 meals a day for a whole year**.

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Social Service Grant Monthly Spotlight: Food Finders (Continued)

Food is given only to low and very low-income individuals. Homeless families, battered and abandoned women and children, boys and girls in after school programs, the disabled, unwed mothers, seniors on a low fixed income, people who are sick and unable to help themselves, people rehabilitating, people laid off and not able to find work, and people who are under employed and food insecure are all fed and drawn into programs to help them become more self sufficient. Food Finders also provides a referral service to refer people to other agencies where they can go to receive food and other resources.



In a community effort to make the public aware of the hunger problem, Long Beach **Mayor Bob Foster**, **Long Beach schools**, **Toyota**, **the Boeing Corp.** and the **U.S. Postal Service** and other businesses, churches, and organizations run canned food collection campaigns which they donate to Food Finders for distribution. Food Finders actively encourage this by providing Food Finders labeled collection tubs at many locations, including one at the **Neighborhood Resource Center** located at **425 Atlantic Avenue**.

Many people also donate fruit from their backyard trees so others will be fed. Food Finders also purchases protein rich foods with Emergency Food and Shelter National Board Program (EFSP) funds. Because of this, their recipient agencies are able to provide their clients a more balanced nutritious diet.

Food Finders' staff and volunteers pick up and deliver food to service agencies daily. There are approximately 250 weekly routes of pickup and delivery. Deliveries depend on the agency's size and needs. Agencies are supplied as the food becomes available and the agencies' needs can be matched. The agencies do not pay any membership, warehousing or poundage fee.

The uniqueness of Food Finders' program is that Food Finders do not warehouse their food but pickup and deliver on the same day. This ensures less handling and less spoilage. Food Finders volunteers deliver seven days a week, from 8 a.m. to 9 p.m. A typical route has the prepared food delivered from donor to recipient within an hour. Food Finders uses its two 24 foot refrigerated trucks for large quantities of food, such as produce, dairy, and meat. Also large ice chests and thermal blankets help transport meats and cheeses in the vans.

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Social Service Grant Monthly Spotlight: Food Finders (Continued)

For more information on Food Finders, visit their website at www.foodfinders.org. For information on how you can donate or volunteer to **Food Finders**, please call **(562) 598-3003** or amercer@foodfinders.org.

For more information on the **Social Service Grant**, please contact **Suzan Simaan** at **(562) 570-5087** or via email at suzan.simaan@longbeach.gov.

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Anaheim Street Community Police Center (APC) MacArthur Park/Whittier School Neighborhood Monthly Meeting

On Tuesday, December 14, 2010 from noon to 3:00 p.m., the **Anaheim Street Community Police Center** and the **MacArthur Park/Whittier School Neighborhood** hosted a monthly neighborhood meeting on “**Holiday Potluck/New Year Plan**”.



The Anaheim Street Community Police Center staff greatly appreciate residents, community leaders and business owners for their involvement and participation over the past year in improving the quality of life in our neighborhood. This occasion gave them the opportunity to share ideas/experiences and work together for a safe neighborhood. **Thirty (30)** people in the surrounding area attended the meeting with translation provided in Khmer and Spanish. Everybody enjoyed the ambiance and the camaraderie.

For more information about the **MacArthur Park/Whittier School neighborhood**, please contact **Bryant Ben** at **(562) 570-1691** or e-mail **bryant.ben@longbeach.gov**.

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Madres Unidas Holiday Celebration in Lower West Neighborhood

On Friday, December 17, 2010, **Madres Unidas** held a **holiday celebration and potluck** at **Admiral Kidd Park**. Madres Unidas is a local neighborhood group that strives to make a difference in the Lower West neighborhood including cultural events, educational workshops and neighborhood clean ups.



Teresa Gonzalez, from the **Neighborhood Services Bureau**, presented a slide show about Madres Unidas' accomplishments and efforts to make their neighborhood safer and cleaner during 2010. Over **twenty-one** people had the opportunity to enjoy the holiday celebration and children under 12 years old received a free toy donated by anonymous angel in the neighborhood.

For more information about the **Lower West Neighborhood**, please contact **Teresa Gonzalez** at **(562) 570-1146** or e-mail **Teresa.Gonzalez@longbeach.gov**.