



December 3, 2004

Volunteers Celebrate 35 Years of Service

Volunteers In Public Schools, known in every Long Beach Unified School District school and office as VIPS, recently celebrated its 35th anniversary.

Now more than 5,000 members strong, VIPS provides direct assistance to thousands of students in classrooms throughout the district.

VIPS contribute by working directly with students or by preparing educational materials and assisting teachers and other school staff. They assist small groups of students or individual children. Some keep classroom records or perform other essential clerical tasks, freeing the teacher to focus special instructional attention where it can be of most benefit to students.

Before setting foot in classrooms, volunteers receive training preparing them for any of the roles they may be asked to fill. This training leads to greater teacher confidence in VIPS and less time spent by teachers monitoring the action of volunteers.

Volunteers are also trained in how to interact with students to maximize motivation and help contribute to creating a positive classroom environment.

"Mother of VIPS" Arlene Solomon, a former Board of Education member, was honored at a recent Board meeting for her key role in founding the organization.

While serving as president of the Long Beach PTA Council, Solomon opened her home to VIPS organizers and led the drive to bring VIPS to all schools. Early efforts drew 12 volunteers that first year but VIPS soon grew into a national model for school volunteer efforts that now numbers in the thousands.

Solomon was praised by the Board for her "continuous, enthusiastic support of VIPS."

Students Send Gifts To Russian Children

Gant Elementary School and Stanford Middle School students have gathered hundreds of books, toys and school supplies to send to children in Beslan, Russia, where a middle school was destroyed in a September terrorist attack.

The donations were coordinated by the Long Beach Sister Cities Organization, which provides ongoing cultural and educational exchanges with Sochi, Russia. Beslan is south of Sochi in Southern Russia. The supplies will go to Sochi this month and be transferred to representatives of Beslan Middle School No. 1, where the attack occurred.

First-grade students from Gant also wrote letters in hopes of starting a pen pal exchange between the two schools.

Seventeen More Teachers Nationally Certified

Seventeen more teachers in the Long Beach Unified School District have earned the highest professional distinction in teaching, National Board Certification.

The newest certifications bring the total number of nationally certified teachers in the school district to 76. The rigorous certification is an exhaustive year-long process that involves writing extensive portfolios, videotaping classroom instruction and answering four 90-minute essay questions during a June exam. Fewer than 1 percent of the nation's 3 million teachers – or about 16,000 – earn the certification each year.

New National Board Certified teachers include Heather Evans, MacArthur; Cindy Galloway, Stanford; Susan Garcia, Powell; Arlene Gilmore, Webster; Cara Hanes, Poly; Nicole Jackson, Tucker; Nina Jackson, Franklin; Bonnie Jones, Cabrillo; Pamela Jones, MacArthur; Julianne Kendall, Whittier; James Laub, Franklin; Paula Libby, Cabrillo; Catherine Lunniss, Stanford; Rita Marks, Poly; Anita Rockwell, Avalon; Robert Rockwell, Avalon; and Vanessa Uy, Burbank.

The latest group of nationally certified teachers includes a husband and wife team from Avalon, Robert and Anita Rockwell. The two supported each other throughout the lengthy process.

"We could cry on each other's shoulders and read each other's papers," said Robert Rockwell, a high school science teacher. "It was nice because we understood what each other was going through. The process really makes you inspect what you do, how you do it and why you do it."

Rockwell and his wife are the second husband-wife team in the school district to earn national certification. Kerrill Kephart and husband Don earned national certification while teaching at Poly in 2001.

The school district has made a commitment to support teachers who are interested in applying for National Board Certification. Teachers who are accepted and successfully complete the pre-candidacy program are eligible for district payment of National Board application fees, a \$2,300 savings.

"The pre-candidacy program really prepared us," Rockwell said. "It helped to answer a lot of questions. I would not have wanted to go into this cold. I'm glad the school district did that for us."

Teachers who obtain National Board Certification receive 5 percent salary increases and, should they choose to serve as mentor teachers, receive additional 5 percent salary increases.

California also rewards its nationally certified instructors with \$20,000 over four years if they teach at high-need schools.

A national credential is not required like a state credential, but to be certified by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards is an extremely high distinction.

The National Board is a nonprofit, nonparti-

san, nongovernmental agency created to establish rigorous standards for what accomplished teachers should know and be able to do. It is a voluntary system to assess and certify teachers who meet high standards, and it advances education reforms to improve student learning. The board was created in 1987 by a team of teachers, policymakers, academics and corporate leaders.

Teachers whose names do not appear in this article but who have received National Board Certification this year should contact Myrna Almas at ext. 2901.



DYNAMIC DUO—Avalon teachers Anita and Robert Rockwell are the second husband-wife team in the Long Beach Unified School District to earn National Board Certification, the top distinction in the teaching profession. The two are among 17 new nationally certified teachers in the school district, bringing the total here to 76. Fewer than 1 percent of teachers nationwide earn the high honor each year.

Coffee With Chris

The next Long Beach Unified Family Committee meeting will be held Monday, December 6, from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. in the Jordan High School Library.

The informal meetings encourage open dialogue between employees and Superintendent Chris Steinhauser. All interested employees are invited to attend.

Rotary Raises Funds For Library Books

Rotary Past President Frank Newell, a Poly High School alumnus and local attorney, raised approximately \$46,000 in donations and matching funds for Reading by 9 books during this week's Long Beach Rotary Club meeting.

During the meeting, Newell and his fellow Rotarians solicited more than \$13,000 in donations from the audience in less than seven minutes. The Los Angeles Times will provide \$10,000 in matching funds, and Scholastic, Inc. will match the entire amount dollar-for-dollar, bringing the total to \$46,000.

These funds will buy thousands of books for Long Beach Unified School District schools with the lowest book-to-pupil ratios in their libraries.

"The wonderful thing about this program is that the librarians get to choose the books and how they are used," Newell said.

Long Beach Rotary was honored by the Los Angeles Times earlier this year for the club's previous contribution of tens of thousands of books to elementary school libraries in the district. Rotary's donation of nearly \$100,000, when matched, purchased \$200,000 in new library books selected by local school librarians.

The club also was awarded 500 new books for Cesar Chavez Elementary School by the Los Angeles Times for raising funds to buy more library books for local schools than any other Rotary Club in Los Angeles, Orange, Ventura and San Bernardino counties.

Each elementary school library in the district has received from Rotary 1,000 new library books over the past several years.

Names in the News

Recently honored as Outstanding Volunteers In Public Schools (VIPS) are **Mary Cole**, MacArthur; **Gina Decker**, Emerson; **Margaret Eddy**, Bixby; **Norma Escoria**, Burbank; **Blanche Harris**, Fremont; **Lori Mae Johnson**, Hill; **Douglas Kimbell**, Gant; **Jackie McPheron**, Lee; **Karen Roa**, Henry; and **Gene Yaffee**, Riley.

Anselmo Feliciano, teacher at Burnett, received the Outstanding Teacher Award from the Riordan Foundation.

Walkers Help Clinic

Participants from the Long Beach Unified School District helped to raise more than \$12,000 for The Children's Clinic at the recent 14th annual Beach Walk.

The Webster Elementary School team was the top fundraising group in the district, followed by the Millikan softball team and International Elementary School.

Students at Webster contributed to the top effort. Two classes that were saving money toward class pizza parties instead donated those funds to Beach Walk when told of the great need for medical services that the Clinic provides to children and families.

Other participating school teams came from Bixby, Burroughs, Central Office, Chavez, Cleveland, Emerson, Grant, Hill, Kettering, Lowell, Monroe, Poly, Rogers, Signal Hill, Tucker and Washington.

Retirement Seminar

Meetings for certificated personnel planning for retirement will be held in the Administration Building Community Room, Tuesday, January 11 and Wednesday, February 2, from 3:30 to 5:30 p.m.

The presentations will cover CalSTRS Service Retirement Allowance, retirement options, updates on legislation and disability and survivor benefits. It is particularly important for members who are eligible for retirement, considering pre-retirement election of an option, interested in the effects of new legislation or making long-range financial plans.

The presentations are sponsored by the Los Angeles County Office of Education. To reserve a seat, call ext. 8214.

W-2s Coming Soon

W-2 forms will be sent to employees by Monday, January 31. To receive W-2 forms, employees should make sure that their home mailing address is current in the school district's computer system. Change of address forms are available through payroll clerks. If addresses are outdated the U.S. Postal Service does not forward W-2 forms.

Job Opportunities

Applications are now being accepted at the Personnel Commission, 999 Atlantic Ave., third floor, for maintenance director and translator/interpreter-bilingual Spanish.

Holiday Shows

High schools in the Long Beach Unified School District will host holiday performances at the following times:

Cabrillo—Wednesday, December 15, 6 p.m.
Jordan—Thursday, December 16, 7 p.m.
Lakewood—Thursday, December 16, 7 p.m.
Millikan—Tuesday, December 7, 6:30 p.m.
Poly—Tuesday, December 14, 6:30 p.m.
(vocal); Thursday, December 16, 6:30 p.m.
(instrumental)
Renaissance—Thursday, December 9, 7 p.m.
Wilson—Tuesday, December 14, 7 p.m.
(vocal); Thursday, December 16, 7 p.m.
(instrumental)

Admission prices vary. Contact each school for information.

SCHOOL BULLETIN

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(562) 997-8000. www.lbusd.k12.ca.us

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HELPING HANDS—Fifth grader Crystal Parada was one of 17 Student Council members from Emerson Parkside Academy who delivered more than 1,500 sack lunches to the Long Beach Rescue Mission last week. As part of a community service project, the school's 650 students donated food and decorated the lunch bags. With the help of 20 parent volunteers, the students assembled meals of peanut butter and jelly sandwiches, cookies, chips and drinks.

Aquarium Essays

The essays of 14 Long Beach Unified School District students were chosen for public reading at the recent Aquarium of the Pacific's forum, "A Healing Word from Local Kids." The event was organized in response to the recent senseless killings of two sharks and a ray at the Aquarium.

Essayists honored at the event were Alyxandra Barker, DeMille; Guadalupe Barragan, Washington; Sophie Benson, Hill; Jennifer Criss, Stephens; Karen Dewey, Newcomb; Samantha Hing, Tincher; Latisha Jackson, Washington; Joseph Lancaster, Marshall; Stephanie Melancon, Marshall; Raymond Mendoza, Monroe; Madison Miller, Sutter; Kyle Setina, DeMille; Savanna Stanford, Stanford; and Glenn Young, Newcomb. The Aquarium received more than 500 entries from area students.

In Memoriam

Michael King
locker room attendant, Jordan
November 5, 2004

Helen Loop
former senior secretary
November 16, 2004

Julia Redgate
intermediate office assistant, Edison
November 24, 2004