



### **AIN News – March 2008**

Twenty years ago it wasn't news that congregations responded to calls for help for needy patients from chaplains at L.A. County + USC Medical Center. That had been happening without fanfare from the earliest days of the hospital. What was new in 1988 was that Chaplain Santos Ramos and Ann Mills teamed up to uncover a wellspring of compassion and generosity in congregations and communities all across Los Angeles County and beyond that continues to flow to this day. When people began to hear about the emergency needs of families and babies, they were ready to respond creatively and energetically with neighbor-to-neighbor support.

In 2006 the board of Angel Interfaith Network was pleased to host an event paying tribute to our two extraordinary founders. In 2008 we want to celebrate their vision that has endured for the past twenty years. Won't you join us in the celebration?

*Rev. Donald L. Smith  
Executive Director*

### **20/20 – Celebrating AIN!**

Angel Interfaith Network is 20 years old this year! Founded in 1988 as a project of the Presbyterian Synod of Southern California and Hawaii and the Chaplain's office at L.A. County + USC Medical Center, we've grown – first as Project Angel and now as Angel Interfaith Network, Inc. From a handful of churches and volunteers then to well over 300 faith groups and community organizations plus nearly 2,000 donors today, we serve ever more needy patients and families from the L.A. County + USC Healthcare Network.

So let's celebrate 20s with a gift of 20 nickels (\$1) or 20 quarters (\$5), or \$20, \$200, \$2,000, \$20,000...you get the idea. And if cash isn't what you'd like to give, how about 20 diapers or 20 homeless bags or 20 hours of volunteer time on our next event committee, or inviting 20 friends to join you in assisting AIN through Ralph's Club, GoodSearch or a group gift or other project...use your imagination. All year we'll be celebrating 20. We hope you will too.

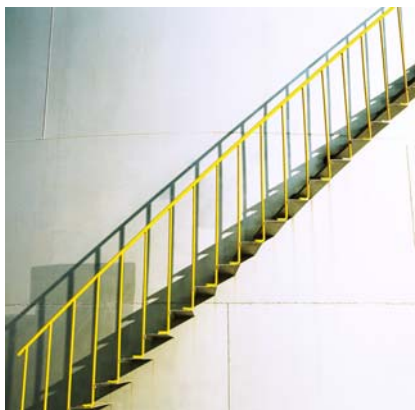
*Karen Bading  
AIN Board Chair*

### **Princess in a Tower**

Samantha is a beautiful princess trapped in a prison tower. She is 17, and just trying to "keep it together." She lives in an apartment at the top of a narrow, steep and dark staircase down to the street, facing Yvonne Braithwaite School. Blankets cover the

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windows.  
There is no furniture except for a bed, dresser and a huge screen TV.



With her, live her mother, her 2-year-old Emily and her sister's 4 month-old baby boy. Samantha's sister suffers from bipolar disorder and is currently incarcerated.

On her way to deliver a crib for the baby, AIN Care Coordinator Ann Mills passed three police cruisers in the neighborhood and noted that the house next door was boarded up. No one answered the phone when Ann called to announce her arrival, but from down below on the street she could hear loud music and unfamiliar voices shouting. She hesitated. But then she realized that the child's voice was not crying.

Ann decided to start up the stairs with the crib mattress, but as she got out of the van the apartment door opened and Ann was welcomed in. A young man helped unload the crib and then disappeared. Washing dishes in the kitchen, Samantha called out a greeting and left Ann to assemble the crib. Only little Emily came in to help.

As Ann spoke with Emily, she came to believe that the little girl was sent by God. She helped Ann to realize that this family was hurting and keenly aware of their depressed conditions. It was the stigma of poverty that seemed to make much interaction with her painful. Emily cheerfully padded around the crib as Ann

worked, and at the end pronounced it a "bed" for "nigh-night."

When the crib was ready, Samantha did come in to inspect Ann's work and offer thanks with a fleeting smile. When Ann asked if there was more AIN could do for her, she mentioned needing a high chair. Ann said she'd do what she could, promised to be back soon and charged her to take care. She was already thinking about community resources that might be helpful, hoping next time to offer more encouragement to a young princess with much to bear at a tender young age.

## Graduation Day!



It's hard to believe that a year has gone by since I made my application to the Executive Service Corps "New Executive Directors' Institute" and received the exciting news that I had a generous scholarship from Wells Fargo. For a recovering church bureaucrat, then less than full-time with AIN, the institute offered welcome coaching in nonprofit management and peer relationships with others in the role of Executive for less than three years. Thanks to ESC/NEDI and coach Tom Kubani, Angel Interfaith Network is now bringing a Strategic Planning process to completion that will guide our development over at least the next three years.

*"Graduation" continued from page 2*

February 8, 2008 was "graduation day" at the California Club in downtown Los Angeles. Pictured (l to r) Jeff Wilcox-ESC Instructor, Tom Kubani-ESC Consultant, Megan Cooper-ESC Executive Director, Rev. Don Smith-AIN Executive Director, Jonathan Weedman-Wells Fargo Regional Vice President,(rear) Karen Bading-AIN Board Chair, David Zuercher-Executive Vice President, Wells Fargo. Of course, the diploma is now proudly on display here in the AIN offices. My heartfelt thanks to a supportive board of directors, a patient and wise coach Tom Kubani, inspiring leadership from Executive Service Corps and the generosity of Wells Fargo. Now watch AIN soar!

## Volunteer Luncheon

There would be no "network" in Angel Interfaith Network without the host of faithful volunteers who help us to serve the emergency needs of patients of the L.A. County + USC Medical Center and its network in many and varied ways. This year AIN showed its appreciation at a luncheon with the theme "Sowing Seeds of Love." This was the seventeenth annual volunteer appreciation luncheon for our network. Each year the ranks of individual and group honorees have expanded to include volunteers, young and old, from throughout the greater Los Angeles area.

This year's honorees:

**Individual Volunteers** - Jane Sell and Ruth Melissa (both from Calvary, South Pasadena)

**Groups** - Tierra del Sol and St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, Valencia.

**Special appreciation to those retiring from formal service in 2008** - Board members Malcolm Blue and Mary Romero and bookkeeper, Fran Yamada.

**Special Thanks to** - FRESH GOURMET for a delicious meal and extra-attentive service and to the following fine folks - Nancy Norris & Girl Scout Troop #191 (Decorations), Bruce & Nancy Irwin (Setup & Music), Dr. Lorna Venkataraman & Phyllis Watts (Registration), Arlene Creitz (Donations), Sister Estelle Kroger (Display Table), Raquel Salinas, Rev. Ann Mills, Rev. Estuardo Bazini-Barakat, Rev. Rex McDaniel, Karen and Jim Bading, Nancy Hogan-Baur, Jane Sell and Ruth Melissa (as ALWAYS) for service above and beyond!



*(l to r) George Stanley, Isela Castellanos and Sarah Cecire of Tierra del Sol are proud of their awards. Volunteers from Tierra del Sol help in the AIN storage room every week. Congratulations to all our friends from Tierra del Sol!*



*AIN Treasurer Jane Sell is pleased with a glowing tribute from Rev. Ann Mills as she contemplates the elaborate scheming it took to get her here today.*



*Chaplain Estuardo Bazini-Barakat and 2007 honoree Rev. Rex McDaniel listen with obvious delight as a surprised Ruth Melissa hears AIN Care Coordinator Ann Mills pay her tribute after she is summoned from out of the kitchen.*



*Rev. Teddy Chuquimia, the new pastor of Emmanuel Hispanic Presbyterian Church in Claremont, is pictured enjoying his meal with members of the congregation.*



*Marta Monterrosa congratulates Lisa Escobar, one of her Sunday hospital worship volunteers.*



*"Anybody thirsty here?," asks Rev. Rex McDaniel. Could anyone ask for more gracious service?*

*Photos from the luncheon courtesy Rusty Mills. Thank you!*