



President's Message

Celebrating 70 Years – Our First Decade 1940's

Over the last 70 years, Assistance League of Long Beach has had so many accomplishments to celebrate that it is difficult to select the top 10 or even the top 100. What is important is to recognize that these various achievements were conceived and accomplished by women, and now men, of all ages with various educational, geographical, political, and cultural backgrounds. We are all different in our glorious ways, but the common thread that binds us together is our mission of providing much needed services to others.

A look back at the history of our chapter provides an interesting reflection of the Who's Who of Long Beach and a chronicle of what our community valued and needed. Our chapter's journey begins in 1940, and the decade's activities revolved around providing needed services that supported the war effort.

In the 1940's, our members' names were Campbell, Walker, Halbert, Miller, Hargrove, Laughlin, and Bixby, and we occupied much of the local paper's society pages in addition to contributing much to the community:

- Staffed a Recreation Room for Army servicemen
- Founded and staffed a 2,000 volume library at the Army base
- Furnished and operated a facility that collected blood for the civilian population at Seaside Hospital
- Opened and operated two Girls' Clubs that offered a recreational place for junior high school girls in Long Beach
- Supported the Red Cross by raising funds for its needs.

The groundwork that these founding individuals laid is the framework that we still honor and is attributable for our successes today. Those members conceived, planned, and carried out fundraisers together, including their inaugural Winter Bazaar that netted \$1,000. In contrast, the 2010-2011 fundraising budget tops \$1.1 million. Philanthropic programs were conceived to fill voids in the community, and today we serve more than 15,000 individuals annually, including clothing 5,700 children in school uniforms. Our founders created the rituals that we still honor by recognizing our volunteer members' contributions, welcoming new members, appreciating our supporters, and reaching out to the community to collaborate. In 1940, we began with 91 members and today our numbers top 900 members, ages 14 to 97.

Our current mission is as relevant today as it was in the 1940's: Create a community of volunteers to identify and deliver philanthropic services.

We offer gratitude to our founders for their vision, and I personally thank our members for their commitment of time and dedicated efforts. Together, we begin the journey of the next 70 years to achieve our goals as we make Long Beach a better community for all.

Faye Alperin

President