

# Home of the Brave



## ■ LAFD hosts fifth annual Benefit for Our Bravest Street Fair.

Story by Bev Haro, Club Counselor  
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**FIRE DEPT.** — Starting as a spontaneous fundraising event for the families of fallen New York firefighters, the Benefit for Our Bravest has grown in scope to both raise crucial funds and honor through public celebration the role of America's

"Bravest" -- those who selflessly put their lives on the line for the greater good.  
The event took place Sept. 24 at the Valley Inn Restaurant, 4557 Sherman Oaks Blvd.  
Funds raised go to Adopt-a-Fire Station, LAFD Division 3, which is a special project fund of the California Community Foundation. The Fund is designed to enhance life safety in City communities by coordinating the efforts of individuals, groups and corporations.  
The first Benefit for Our Bravest in 2001 was a response by four best friends to the bravery and selflessness exhibited by public servants on Sept. 11, 2001. The first fundraising event was two weeks after the 9-11 tragedy. The \$25,000 raised at this first event was sent to the families of fallen NY firefighters.  
This first event was attended by many local firefighters, who were so appreciative of the community response that, by the end of the evening, it was decided that the benefit would happen annually as a tribute to our local heroes who serve and protect.  
This year was the fifth annual event, and the originators were joined by local police and sheriff's departments. The event has grown from the side dining room of the Valley Inn Restaurant to a three-block outdoor street festival.  
Congratulations to the organizers of this excellent event.



Fire Stations 72, 39, 74 and 89 share the barbecue duties.



The band entertains the crowd.



From left: Apparatus Operator De La Cruz and Firefighter Alavarez 1.5 years, with his son, Anthony.



Children enjoy the fair



From left: Lead Paramedic Gerlich, 19 years, with Firefighter/Rescue Ambulance Driver Jesse Ortiz, 35 years, Station 28.



From left: Firefighter Rogers, 25 years, and Inspector Jordan, 19 years.



From left: Engineer Charlie Sullenbarger (Ventura County) and Captain Ed Spafford (Ventura County).



From left: Apparatus Operator Perez, 16 years, and Captain Arriola, 20 years.



From left: Engineer Jared Bennett, 10 years; Firefighter Bustamante, 10 years; Firefighter Winn, 3 years; Firefighter/Paramedic Rubio, 3 years; Firefighter Bage, 3 years; and Firefighter/Paramedic Brian Simon, 10 years.



Captain Brazley, 25 years, with Club Counselor Bev Haro



An antique ambulance on display.