



City Employees,  
On Their Own Time

# A Fireman, Making a Difference



John Hicks,  
Firefighter/Paramedic,  
in Thailand.

“I may not be able to change the whole world, but I hope I can at least make a difference in a small part of it.”

■ Firefighter/Paramedic John Hicks is also an author and missionary ... and a family man.

FIRE DEPT. — What do a firefighter, an author and a missionary have in common? In this particular case, they happen to be the same person: John Hicks.

A 22-year veteran Firefighter/Paramedic of the LAFD and Club Member, John is also an accomplished author of five books.

You might think this married father of three would have his hands full just being a firefighter and an author, but lately, John has also added the title of missionary to his lineup. He has just recently returned from an 11-day trip to Thailand, where he was accompanied by 15 fellow teammates from his church. Under the guidance of ZOE International ([www.gozoe.org](http://www.gozoe.org)), a nonprofit organization based out of Santa Clarita, John and his fellow missionaries visited many local children's homes and even a leper colony, ministering to hundreds of children and adults throughout Thailand and Laos.

John also brought his skills as a paramedic with him, teaching first aid and CPR to staff and children at the ZOE Children's Home. This large, plantation-style home, with more than 60 children living in it at one time, is where Mike and Carol Hart, the founders of ZOE International, decided to start their crusade to help the many children of Thailand who are at risk of being enslaved into the world of prostitution. Besides being a sanctuary for the children, it is also a place of love and learning where the children are brought up in a safe environment, being ministered in the faith of God, and also in the lessons of school work so that one day they can be productive members of society. ZOE also runs a school for young adults teaching Bible studies and preparing select individuals for the world of ministry. It is ZOE's hope that one day they will have the resources to house up to a thousand children, meeting the growing needs of at risk children throughout the world.

Station 18 in Granada Hills. He is active within the department, attending school the past few years in the pursuit of his State Fire Officer Certification, and he is on the Captain's promotional list. John is also a frequent member of the Brush Clearance Task Force formed yearly to control the growth of brush within City boundaries and reduce the fire danger.

## Children's Author

John's second passion in life, his writing career, started in 2000. What was supposed to be a 10- or 15-page treatment for a movie soon became 200 pages, and his first book for children was born. He has since written four other titles and has done nearly a hundred book signings throughout California. Most recently, he completed a number of events at Downtown Disney.

He is in the progress of releasing his newest title, *The Day Charlie Lost His Weirdness*, a young reader's title for children ages 7 to 11. Look for it at your local bookstore or online at all major retailers. You can also get a peak at his work at John's website, [WWW.QuietManPublishing.com](http://WWW.QuietManPublishing.com).

John's love for writing lead him down another path. Besides writing the books, John travels throughout Southern California talking to children of all ages on the importance of reading. His 30- to 40-minute presentation, "The Magic of Reading," combines an inspirational message on the importance of reading combined with magic tricks to reemphasize his words. "If you don't have the time to read, you don't have time or the tools to write," he says. These words of wisdom, which he credits to Stephen King, are only part of his words of encouragement to the future leaders of our community. If you are interested in him doing a presentation for your school or organization, contact him through his Website, although his dates book up fast.

Lastly, his love for working with children has brought him to his true passion — helping those who can't help themselves. John's recent trip to Thailand has given him a whole new perspective on life. The sites that he saw and more importantly, the people that he met, have made him realize what is truly important in life — helping out those in need. "I may not be able change the whole world," he says, "but I hope I can at least make a different in a small part of it."

Besides planning on returning to Thailand in the near future, John has also committed himself in working with ZOE locally in doing whatever he can to spread the message of its existence.

"You hear about a lot of charitable organization nowadays, but I have worked first-hand with this wonderful group of people. I have seen the tireless work they have already done, and have glimpsed their hope for the future. It is my hope that many others will have the chance to see it too!"

If you would like to know more about John and the important things in his life, visit his above-mentioned Website, or just simply stop by Fire Station 18 in Granada Hills and say hello!

The ZOE International children's home in Thailand.



John plays soccer with some children in Thailand.



John's latest book, *The Day Charlie Lost His Weirdness*.

## First, the LAFD

Born in 1965 with 11 brothers and sisters, John was raised in the San Fernando Valley. At 15, a neighbor told him about the Explorer Program for the LAFD. He started attending meetings soon after. At 18, he began the testing process for the department and was subsequently hired a year later. In 1991, John attended paramedic school, graduating high in his class and obtaining the rank of Firefighter/Paramedic.

During his career, John has been assigned to various stations throughout the City, starting out in the Crenshaw district. His other assignments have included stations within the airport district, West Los Angeles, and the San Fernando Valley, where he is assigned at Fire



John Hicks with the children he's helped in Thailand