

President's Report – Bill Haller
WVNLB Neighborhood Council
April 27, 2005

West Van Nuys/Lake Balboa is a busy place. Every week, a variety of events can be found in the park, in the street, in our schools, churches and neighborhoods. These events encompass an enormous cross section of ethnicities, religious beliefs, community activism, and recreational activities. In the coming days, as this Neighborhood Council begins the process of appointing new members to the Board, I would like to encourage my fellow members to exercise the greatest care in making sure that the face of this Board truly represents the many faces and facets of our community. We cannot allow ourselves out of friendship, convenience or desperation to make Board member appointments that ignore or under-represent the Latino, Asian, African-American, or other minority voices in our district. According to the US Census 2000, 47% of our neighborhood council district is Latino. That would seem to indicate that for us to be a truly representative body, seven to nine of our council seats should be filled by Latino stakeholders. In no way am I suggesting that we appoint members solely by the color of their skin or the sound of a surname, but this Board must continue to pursue diversity and it falls upon us to collectively and carefully achieve that goal by continuing to reach out to our community and let them know that we are here and we are active. If seats need to be left open until we find those representative voices, then Board members, let patience be our virtue and discernment be our value.

For those who desire to be of service in working toward a strong West Van Nuys/Lake Balboa community, regardless of whether or not you are appointed to the Board, let me emphasize that you are important, most needed and most welcome to lead, join or support any number of valuable committees currently being created. Recently, the WVNLB Neighborhood Council authorized standing committees for Communications/Outreach chaired by John Fairlie, Senior Issues chaired by Linda Pruett, Emergency Preparedness chaired also by Linda Pruett, Public Safety/Code Compliance chaired by Jonezy Melroy, Land Use/Development chaired by Shawn Moradian, Schools/Youth Issues Committee chaired by Steve Leffert, By-Laws Committee chaired by Mark Bower, and the Finance Committee chaired by Luciana Dar. These are just the first of many standing committees that will meet on a regular basis to improve the lives of West Van Nuys/Lake Balboa stakeholders. We are here. You are invited.