BEHIND THE SCENES

They work mostly unnoticed, inspiring kids, feeding the hungry and providing comfort. They don’t ask for recognition, but they deserve it. Today we take a look at three volunteers—a small selection of a cadre of others in San Clemente who make a difference—devoting their time and effort to make our community a better place for us all.

JAY BELLAMY
The 54-year-old organizes weekly food runs to the needy with support from local businesses and supermarket.

DONNA LONGO
Her day usually consists of taking care of 45 of her closest friends—cats at the San Clemente Cat & Dog Animal Shelter.

CARLOS HENSLEY
The 78-year-old mentors youth as leader of the Orange County Sheriff’s Explorer Tri-Cities Division Post 44/1.

INSIDE TODAY
See a list of agencies that need your help and learn how to get involved as a volunteer. See Page 2.
**Carlos Hensley** is hopeful the example he sets helps kids make good decisions.

Hensley leads the Orange County Sheriff Explorer Tri-Cities Division of Post 449, a collection of youths who help sheriff’s deputies.

During a recent inspection, he was peppered with questions by nervous Explorer candidates preparing for their biggest review of the year.

Hensley, a 2012 San Clemente High School graduate, remembers his parents and grandparents getting ready in similar fashion each day for their jobs in law enforcement. The scene in the briefing room reminds him of their service—dedication to the community.

As an Explorer, summer days can mean hours of volunteering.

He doesn’t mind. Community service and mentoring others is important.

“It’s time consuming, but I like giving back, dedicating my time to efforts that help a greater cause.”

**Donna Longo** cleans out filthy litter boxes, refills food dishes and tops off water bowls for 45 of her closest friends—cats at the San Clemente/Dana Point Animal Shelter.

For nine years, she’s cuddled and kanoodled, coaxed and stroked and swaddled hundreds of feline friends. But nurturing, loving and caring for others is what has fulfilled Longo her entire life. Before cats, she was a nurse.

Now she rescues kittens and cats, finding them a good, safe home in their new world.

She can tell you the quirks about Pluto and the personality of Cassanova. That’s the only way she can help make a perfect adoption between a cat and their new human parents.

Many of the felines come in pregnant or in need of extended care. Volunteers such as Longo take them home—to rebuild trust, provide care and strengthen the bond.

She currently has six furry rescue friends at home—Bella, Daisey, Spencer, Quincy, Lilly and Henna.

**Jay Bellamy**, 54, searches for the hungry. In the alleyways, at the liquor stores, in the nooks and crannies of San Clemente that no one else cares much about.

For 30 years, Bellamy lived on and off the streets in San Clemente, working as a tile setter and at odd jobs. He knows what it’s like not to have anything to eat. Still, even then, he knew others had less.

Through Talega Life Church, Bellamy organizes a weekly food run. Local small businesses and supermarkets donate food that is taken to about 100 people in San Clemente.

Bellamy drives the church’s van looking for the hungry throughout the “Spanish Village by the Sea.” On a recent afternoon, he found a few kids to give food to, but not many others. It was OK, though. It meant his work donating food in the preceding weeks was successful.

“Thanksgiving was great this year,” Bellamy said.

“We really loaded them up.”