



Transforming South End Urban Landscape Into a Work of Art

Boston Scientologists teamed up with the New England chapter of Artists for a Better World to transform the wall of one of their new properties into a work of urban art.

Boston, MA, June 12, 2008 --(PR.com)-- The Church of Scientology of Boston purchased two buildings in January--once restored and renovated they will be the new headquarters for Scientologists in New England. But before the Church acquired them, the buildings stood vacant for years, and local Scientologists did not want to wait till the planning for these buildings was completed to begin upgrading the neighborhood. So, on a sunny day in May, 2008, they teamed up with the New England chapter of Artists for a Better World to transform the wall of one of their new properties into a work of urban art.

The group enlisted the talent of children's book illustrator Trish Rouelle, who created the basic design and outline for the neighborhood project and helped the children and adults who came to contribute their time and talents to creating the mural. Families also enjoyed music provided by musician and songwriter, Kelly Riley, and kids of all ages rounded out the afternoon by learning how to create balloon animals.

Although the Church of Scientology of Boston is located at 448 Beacon Street, Scientologists have been involved in projects in the South End Lower Roxbury neighborhoods for the past several years. In fact, one of their main projects, the Boston Volunteer Ministry, is housed in a storefront facility just a few doors down from the new property the Church just purchased.

The story of their presence in this neighborhood is simple. In 2004, tired of hearing about the crime and violence in their city, a group of Boston Scientologists decided to do something about it personally. They knew that people who can't study are often unable to get or hold down jobs. Hopeless, demoralized and feeling disenfranchised, such people often seek solace in drugs and alcohol and resort to crime to support their habits or just to get by. So, to do something effective to help the community, they opened the Boston Volunteer Ministry in Dorchester, MA and in 2006 moved the project to larger premises in the South End/Lower Roxbury. But this Volunteer Ministry was not an entirely new concept. In fact, Boston Scientologists have been providing community service through the Scientology Volunteer Ministers program for the past thirty years.

The Boston Scientology Volunteer Ministry is manned entirely by volunteers who tackle the problem of illiteracy with free tutoring and phonics classes, not only for children, but for people of all ages. The ministry also participates in community projects. For example, in 2006 they got 1000 guns off the streets of Boston by volunteering to be an official drop-off point in the police department's Boston Gun BuyBack Program called "Aim for Peace."

Gerard Renna, President of the Church of Scientology of Boston said, "We enjoy working with other community groups, the Boston Police Department and the Mayor's office to help improve the quality of life in our City."

In the mid-1970s, L. Ron Hubbard, the founder of the Scientology religion, concerned about the rise in



immorality and an increase in crime, created the Scientology Volunteer Ministers program. He wrote, "If one is going to find fault with something, it implies that he wishes to do something about it and would if he could. If one does not like the crime, cruelty, injustice and violence of this society, he can do something about it. He can become a Volunteer Minister and help civilize it, bring it conscience and kindness and love and freedom from travail by instilling into it trust, decency, honesty and tolerance." These Boston Scientologists have taken his advice to heart, and are serving their city through their volunteer activities.

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