



## California Lifeguard Towers Transform...Summer of Color

By Pixel | Posted June 10, 2010 | Malibu, California



**CNN PRODUCER NOTE** Pixel told me, 'Kids were loving the bright colors and designs... Some adults liked the traditional blue.'

- hanks, CNN iReport producer

The Southern California lifeguard towers turned from their traditional light blue to bright colors and designs.

Driving down PCH I was quite surprised when I saw this transformation begin. The traditional light blue color has not been touched in the history of the lifeguard towers. I had to find out who and what was behind this colorful face lift for our lifeguard towers. I wasn't quite sure how I felt about it... they were messing with tradition.

With a little research I found it was all for a good cause. Portraits of Hope founders Ed and Bernie Massey are behind this public art and civil initiative. I went down to Zuma beach and Surfrider beach to watch a few of the installations and speak with Bernie and Ed. Many people have volunteered their time and companies their resources to help with the project. Chris Bonas was heading up the project I watched; Gary Trimble and Ryan Strassburg were the installers. Chris' team is in charge of 125 towers! Pretty impressive

This is the largest public art projects in the United States. Bernie states, " It has been created by children ; in schools, hospitals, and after school programs throughout the greater Los Angeles area". Their projects provide creative therapy for children in hospitals, with disabilities, as well as provide a vehicle for children in schools to learn team work, about social issues, and environmental issues. Over 6,00 children were involved in this project!

There are 156 lifeguard towers, extending over 31 miles of beach; including Santa Monica, Malibu and Zuma beach, and no two towers are alike! Travelers and tourist will get an eyeful, the roofs are painted too!

When the projects are over, the panels are donated to social service agencies throughout the world. For example, after Hurricane Katrina, panels were sent to the schools in New Orleans. Haiti will receive some of the panels from this Lifeguard Project.

Portrait of Hope reaches cities all over the U.S. and throughout the world. Some of their projects have included; transforming taxi cab's in New York, airplanes, blimps, and tugboats. They have dreams of covering the globe with their creative therapy for children. Ed said, "If we get that invitation from anywhere, any region in the world, we usually go"

If you want to see our lifeguard towers like you have never seen them before, you have time. Summer of Color will be in effect for 5 months! Welcome to California!

\*Footage of the children is courtesy of Portraits of Hope