

When Ward Johnson moved to his neighborhood he immediately noticed the crosswalk signs on the corners of PCH, Bellflower, and 7th Street were covered in graffiti. He took it upon himself to clean them off. Where graffiti was etched into the sign, he used a small paintbrush and model paint to cover the etchings over to make the signage look unblemished. Some signs were beyond repair and were a safety hazard. So he submitted an online work order to Cal Trans to have them replaced. And they were.

He also noticed issues with the center divider markers on these same streets and intersection. He purchased several gallons of yellow reflective highway paint, brushes, rollers and went to work repainting the faded center dividers and bringing them back to life. He also removed dirt and other debris that had accumulated. Today, because of Wade, this area is winning the war against graffiti and providing a safer traffic environment for us all.

Bellflower Boulevard had become a dumpsite for trash and other debris. Ward made a metal sign to hang on one of the street light polls that read, "DO NOT LITTER" and cited the vehicle code infraction number and police department's phone number. Armed with a rake, hoe and trash bags, he cleans up this area. He rakes the leaves out onto Bellflower Blvd on Wednesday evening.... the day before the street sweepers come through on Thursday morning. He collects bottles from the brush to prevent the sun from hitting them and causing a fire. And he does this every week.

Lastly, driving down Bellflower Blvd between Colorado and PCH you will notice Ward's latest contribution to safety, water conservation and saving the city on maintenance repairs. He has placed tiny orange flags at every sprinkler head to alert pedestrians of their location. A broken sprinkler head creates a geyser of water that is a huge waste during this drought-ridden time, not to mention a safety concern if someone falls.

But the most amazing thing about Ward Johnson is that he has been doing all of this for over 20 year. It's easy to see why he was a semi-finalist for Justin Rudd's 2015 Unsung Hero Award. Thank you Ward for all you have done to shape this community.