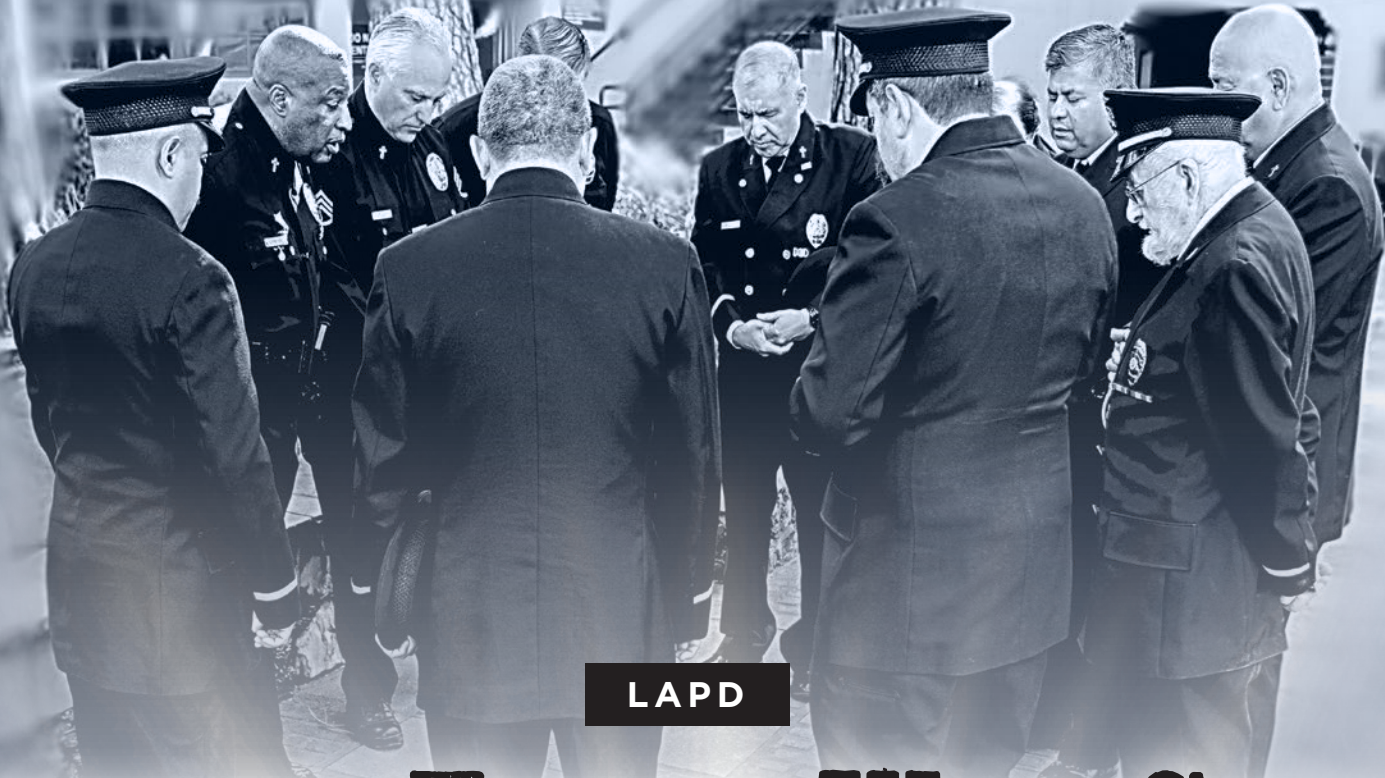




Alive!



LAPD

SERVING THOSE WHO SERVE

PAGE 12

Chaplain Corps comes to the spiritual aide of Officers in their darkest moments.



LAPD Chaplain Corps includes, from left: Chaplain Sgt. Eric Rogers; Chaplain Rabbi Sholom Langsam; Chaplain Pastor Augustin Sahagun; Chaplain Rabbi Israel Hirsch; Chaplain Fr. Sergio Garcia; Chaplain Rev. Kenneth N. Crawford, Chairman; Chaplain Pastor Jose Castillo; Chaplain Fr. Jose Bautista; Chaplain Msgr. Frank Hicks; Chaplain Bishop Juan Carlos Mendes; and Chaplain Lt. Jonathan Larsen.

Alive! photos by Summy Lam; photo illustration by J/LA Associates



Celebrating the work and lives of public employees.

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Mission Critical

A Club event sparked an idea. For our annual luncheon this past January, I thought adding an invocation and benediction to the agenda was a marvelous touch. I had seen a feature on CNN over the holidays about the LAPD's Chaplain Corps, and I connected the two – since we are all about public employees, I should ask the Chaplain Corps whether it performs those beautiful tasks.

I contacted **Chaplain Rev. Ken Crawford**. Indeed they did. That is how we came to be in the presence of **Chaplain Officer Don Jenkins** from South Traffic, who added a layer of enhanced meaning to our annual lunch.

I asked our editor, **John Burnes**, if we had ever done a feature on the LAPD Chaplain Corps. We had not, and with this issue that has been rectified.

The Chaplain Corps, in existence for more than half a century, is so important to the wellbeing of our public safety



Chaplain Rev. Dr. Henry Ellis of the LAPD's Chaplain Corps, with *Alive!* editor John Burnes.

Officers that they hardly need any embellishment from me here. They serve those who protect and serve. They stand in presence with those who see the worst of the worst, who deal with their own tragedies in the service of others, and are somehow expected to stand tall, unaffected. Of course they are affected. Chaplains remind them at such crisis times that they are not alone, they are supported, and that a higher power has not abandoned them.

Our cover story this month is one of the more moving and beautiful we have produced. I suggest you take it in, for its messages are important for us all.

Special thanks go out to Chaplain Rev. Ken, **Officer II Mike McCarty** and our interview subjects for their candidness and welcome, and **Capt. Kelly Muniz** and **Sgt. Bruce Borihan** for their assistance.

ROBERT'S BLOG
by Robert Larios, CEO, The Club

Years of Service

I am delighted that Council District 2 – **Council President Paul Krekorian's** office – and the Mayor's Office teamed up to create the Sapphire Awards, which honor City and LADWP employees with at least 45 years of active service. Since that is precisely what the Club does – celebrate the work and lives of public employees – we couldn't be happier the Sapphire Awards were created to do the same thing! On a related note, congratulations to **Pearlene Wallace**, Finance and Risk Control, LADWP, who just retired after an astounding 51 years of City service. Incredible!

And congratulations to **Carol L. Tucker**, LADWP, on her official retirement. Carol assisted us many times in the early days of getting *Alive!* off the ground. Thank you, Carol!

Worth Considering

No one makes a name for themselves by taking the easy route. Being remembered isn't about doing what's simple. Forget looking for shortcuts and start recognizing the potential in the tough, complicated stuff that nobody else wants to deal with.

Enjoy the flowering of a much-deserved spring season.

¡Gracias por leer!

— Robert Larios

Raise employee morale! Schedule a Club Mobile visit!

The Club Mobile Team will bring benefits experts and Club legendary apparel for purchase at low prices (hats custom-made on site). It's one of the best ways for staff to feel appreciated. Your employees will be grateful!

ATTENTION SUPERVISORS:
Raise employee morale! Bring the Club to your worksite!

At a recent Mobile Team site visit.

<p>Club Mobile Schedule</p> <p>The first Monday of every month: May 6, June 3 North Central Sanitation 452 N. San Fernando Rd., 6 – 11 a.m.</p> <p>The first Wednesday of every month: May 1, June 5 Harbor 100 W. Fifth St., 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.</p> <p>The first Thursday of the month: May 2, June 6 West Valley StreetsLA 9324 Topanga Canyon Blvd., 11 a.m. – 3 p.m.</p>	<p>Additional Visits:</p> <p>Fri., May 10 Street Services Canoga Park 7725 Alabama Ave., noon – 2 p.m.</p> <p>Wed., May 15 Rec and Parks Baldwin Hills 5401 Highlight Pl., 9 – 11 a.m.</p> <p>Wed., May 15 Rec and Parks Mid-City 2459 Motor Ave., 1 – 3 p.m.</p>	<p>Thurs., May 16 RLACEI Picnic/South El Monte 750 Santa Anita Ave., noon – 2 p.m.</p> <p>Fri., May 17 Street Services Van Nuys 15145 Oxnard Ave., noon – 2 p.m.</p> <p>Wed., May 29 Street Lighting East Hollywood 4550 Santa Monica Blvd., noon – 4 p.m.</p>
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To schedule a Club Mobile visit, Contact Lupe Lira, Retail Operations Manager:
(213) 819-0350, or mobile@employeesclub.com

Follow Club social media for other days, times and locations as they are scheduled:

- @EmployeesClub
- Employees Club of California
- @theClubofCA

Club Mobile is cashless!
For your convenience, now accepting major credit cards.

LAPD SERVING THOSE WHO SERVE

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LAPD's Chaplain Corps assists sworn and civilian employees and their families with the gift of presence.

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Get more Alive! content at alive.employeesclub.com

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'TRUCK WHISPERER'

Now Playing!



The Club Mobile Team is ready for you at the next Club Truck visit!

Have fun learning all about the Club's awesome new Club Truck, and all that it can do for you!

That's the message of "The Truck Whisperer" – a video about Club Mobile's incredible Club Truck, with a good bit of fun included. Catch it now on the Club's YouTube channel!

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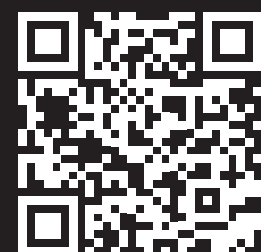
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Coloring with the Club

WIN! 4 free tickets to the **SAN DIEGO ZOO**

CONTEST DEADLINE:
May 13, 2024



Ask an adult to print the coloring page:
alive.employeesclub.com/kidscoloringcontest



The Club Is Here to Help

Contact the Club

if you have an event you want covered in *Alive!* or if you have questions about insurance.

help@employeesclub.com
(800) 464-0452

Alive!

May 2024 • Volume 23 – No. 5

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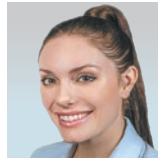
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Club Members who have questions on these points may write to: alive@employeesclub.com

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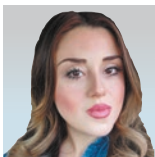
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help@employeesclub.com

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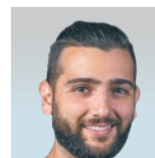
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Brian Trent
Chief Financial Officer, LACEA and LACEA Insurance Services, Inc.



Summy Lam
Chief Operating Officer, LACEA Insurance Services, Inc., DBA Employees Club of California



"Wishing my hardworking dad a Happy Father's Day! We love you, grandpa. Love, Jeremiah."
 — **Stephanie Bernal, Rec and Parks**

Send in your Father's Day tributes!

High-Fives for Dad!

Pay tribute this Father's Day ... with a photo and message of respect, honor and love, published in *Alive!* in print and/or online.

In our June issue, we'll print a photo of you and your dad (or just your dad) ... and a two- or three-sentence message of Happy Father's Day from you. Then you can take your copy of *Alive!* and show him what he means to you.

Act quickly, as our June issue is fast approaching.

DEADLINES:

MAY 15:
published in print and online

JUNE 12:
published online only



"Watching you grow from my amazing little brother to the best daddy in the world fills my heart with joy and love. Happy Father's Day, Tito! Love, Tia Maggi."
 — **Det. Sandra Platero, LAPD**



"We love and appreciate you every day! But Father's Day is a great day to celebrate you and all that you do for our family. Love, Marquas and Kim."
 — **For Burt Smith, Public Works/Sanitation**



"Happy Father's Day to the best dad and husband ever! We love you and hoping you rock on every day!"
 — **For Chris Ewing, LAHD**



To submit your Father's Day tribute, go to:
alive.employeesclub.com/fathersday



Noelle Kauffman, Club Director of Sales

Noelle's Picture Perfect Contest

Note from Noelle: Happy Spring everybody! We received a whole bunch of submissions again this month. Thank you, and keep snapping!

This month's theme was: **Faces.**

"My 12-year-old Pomeranian Libby loves to ride with me in the car. Recently I took her on a four-hour trip. She was so happy riding in the car with the sunshine on her little face. She kept me company, and she absolutely brightens my world."

— **Tina Liburdi, Healthcare Services, State of California**



Noelle's comment: What a precious and funny photo face, Tina! She brightened your world ... thanks for brightening mine, too!



"My son trying to get first dibs on Grandma's traditional home cooking right after the New Year countdown."

— **Dominique Daito, LAPD**

Noelle's comment: I love that the focus of the three women is on the food ... but the young man's focus is on Grandma, who can serve him what he wants! Your exquisite composition makes their intents clear and funny. Well done as always, Dominique!

"Every day we see faces ... how cute is this face? Such an adorable face! Love, love, love it!!"

— **Renee Ramirez, LAFD**

Noelle's comment: I love, love, love it, too, Renee! These are fresh moments that simply cannot be duplicated. Thanks for submitting!



The next photo contest theme:

Outdoor Fun

Send in a photo featuring fun that can only happen outdoors.

DEADLINE:
May 15

Submit your best photos online here:
alive.employeesclub.com/pictureperfect/
 Club Members only. Good luck!



ENTER TO WIN \$50 AMAZON E-GIFT CARD



"Taken during my trip to Turkey. We passed by a small village. There was a group of happy villagers. We could not communicate, but a picture said a thousand words."

— **Elizabeth Lee, Retired, Finance**

Noelle's comment: Right you are, Elizabeth. Their faces tell a thousand stories that language could not. Thanks for submitting this compelling and very human photo.

"My wife took my dad to one of his many doctor appointments. He wanted a snack and got a piece of cake at the cafeteria. He pretended to take a big bite of it."

— **John Otoshi, Retired, LADWP**

Noelle's comment: What a precious and funny photo face, Tina! She brightened your world ... thanks for brightening mine, too!



READY FOR RETIREMENT



Resources for Those About to Retire **and** Club Retirees



YOUR ESSENTIAL GUIDE TO INSURANCE

by Noelle Kauffman, Club Director of Sales CA LICENSE NO: 0H45598

'Let from this month onwards your days become more happier, fulfilling, purposeful, satisfying and joyful.' — Rajesh Goyal

FOR THOSE ABOUT TO RETIRE



It's critically important to consult with the Club — before you retire!

As your financial life transitions into Retirement, you need to make sure you're making all the right financial decisions on insurance, paperwork and of course your Club Membership.

Don't wait. A Club consultation is as important as your LACERS or LADWP exit meetings. Really.

Update your benefits and get all of your questions answered by booking a one-on-one or group presentation appointment with your colleagues at your job site.

Contact your Club Counselor today. It's the smart move!

Email help@employeesclub.com today to request a Counselor visit.

Meet Your Club Counselors



Cheryl Martin
Member Services Counselor



Cynthia Ha
Member Services Counselor



Dylan Noel
Member Services Counselor



Dalila Vielma
Member Services Counselor

Protect Yourself and Your Family with These Benefits Available Through the Club:

- **Life Insurance:** Take the burden off your loved ones
- **Long-Term Disability Insurance:** Protect your paycheck
- **Critical Illness and Cancer Insurance:** Provide financial security
- **Accident Insurance:** Ensure your peace of mind
- **MetLife Legal Insurance:** Access legal help when you need it
- **Pet Insurance:** Cover your furry friend's health

CLUB CHECK-IN FOR RETIREES

It's time to check in, Club Retirees, to make sure you're taking advantage of all the Club offers!

1. Are you on pension deductions for your Club Membership and insurances?

If you are not, please call (800) 464-0452 or email help@employeesclub.com and let us know that you are a Retiree and need to complete a pension form.

2. Do you have Life Insurance for you and your spouse so that your loved ones are protected in the future?

- A life insurance policy can provide an income for your spouse as they wait for your retirement benefits to transfer; cover funeral and burial expenses; and provide for any loved ones who rely on your income.
- Coverage is available for Members, spouses, and dependent children.
- Benefits range from \$10,000 to \$50,000.

3. Have you received your retirement plaque from the Club?

The Club wants to recognize and acknowledge the hard work and dedication you put in each day to make our City and state better places to live and work.

It doesn't matter if you have been Retired for some time, newly Retired, or plan to retire soon, Retired Club Members are eligible to take part in the Club's Retirement Ceremony, where you'll be presented with a customized Club Retirement Plaque as we pay tribute to your career.

We will also feature you in *Alive!* for your friends, coworkers and family to celebrate. Begin the process by emailing help@employeesclub.com and let us know you would like a retirement plaque and a Club representative will get the process started for you! (You have to have been a Club Member for at least five continuous years to be eligible.)

Questions? Don't hesitate to contact our Retiree specialists at info@employeesclub.com • or (800) 464-0452



Retired or Retiring Soon?

Call for a FREE insurance benefits consultation with Member Services Counselor:



Cheryl Martin
(800) 464 -0452, EXT. 136
Work cell: (213) 819-0794
23 years of insurance experience
CA LICENSE NO: 0C12823

2024 Events

LARFPA

June 2 Annual Picnic
LA River Center and Gardens
570 W. Ave. 26, Los Angeles
Noon – 3 p.m.

LADWP Retirees Association

June 1 68th Annual Retirees Picnic
Whittier Narrows – "The Meadows"
750 S. Santa Anita Ave., El Monte
9 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.

Reservation information:

LADWP Retiree Association:
vincedolores@gmail.com
LARFPA: events@larfpa.org

Contact Information

Employees Club of California

Club contact:
help@employeesclub.com

Los Angeles City Employees' Retirement System (LACERS) (City Dept.)

(800) 779-8328
lacers.services@lacers.org

LADWP Retirees Association

Dolores Foley, *President*
(949) 388-1206
vincedolores@gmail.com

Fire and Police Pensions (City Dept.)

(844) 885-2377
pensions@lafpp.com

LA Retired Fire and Police Association (LARFPA)

(888) 288-5073
membership@larfpa.org

Retired Los Angeles City Employees, Inc. (RLACEI)

See page 16

LACERS

LOS ANGELES CITY EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEM

FOR ACTIVE AND RETIRED MEMBERS

LACERS Offers Access Thru Office Hours, Online

LACERS welcomes all current and Retired City employees to its new headquarters at 977 N. Broadway. Regular hours are 7 a.m. - 4 p.m. Monday-Friday. No appointments are needed.

A current government-issued photo identification or City employee badge is required to enter the building except when attending public meetings of the LACERS Board of Administration. Also, parking is not available at the building. Paid parking lots, public transit, and street parking are available nearby.

Additionally, online options will continue to be available to you. Use the LACERS' Secure Document Upload found at lacers.org/secure-document-upload to submit forms or required documents, visit our website at [LACERS.org](https://lacers.org) to obtain benefits information; log onto your MyLACERS account at <https://mylacers.lacers.org> to view your account details; and visit the found LACERS' YouTube channel at youtube.com/lacersofficial where you can find a wealth of benefits videos. Stay up to date on LACERS announcements by checking our website periodically at [LACERS.org](https://lacers.org), contacting us by email at lacers.services@lacers.org, and by phone at (800) 779-8328. ●

LACERS YouTube Channel Has New Handle

The official LACERS YouTube Channel recently received a new handle, youtube.com/@lacersofficial. Same great content, new handle! Please be sure to update and saved links you have to the channel to this new handle. ●

FOR RETIRED MEMBERS

Cost of Living Adjustment Becomes Effective in July

The LACERS Board of Administration has approved the maximum allowable Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA) for eligible LACERS Retired Members and Beneficiaries at 3.0 percent for Tier 1 and Tier 1 Enhanced Members and 2.0 percent for Tier 3 Members. Tier 1 and Tier 1 Enhanced Members are City employees who became LACERS Members on or before Feb. 20, 2016. Tier 3 Members are City employees who became LACERS Members on or after Feb. 21, 2016.

The COLA is based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI) for the Los Angeles area, which has been determined to be 3.5 percent for 2024. The maximum COLA is set by the City of Los Angeles Administrative Code at 3.0 percent for Tier 1 and Tier 1 Enhanced Members and is set at 2.0 percent for Tier 3 Members. Tier 1 Retirees who have been retired for a full year or more will receive a 3.0 percent increase. The remaining .5 percent will be banked and applied in the future when the COLA is less than 3.0 percent. According to LAAC § 4.1080.17, the Tier 3 COLA benefit is capped at 2.0 percent, and there is no banked benefit. Therefore, Tier 3 retirees will receive a COLA of 2.0 percent.

All Tier 1 and Tier 1 Enhanced Members who retired after June 30, 2023, will receive a COLA of 1/12th of the 3.0 percent for each full month of retirement completed by June 30, 2024. Similarly, all Tier 3 Members who retired after June 30, 2023, will receive a COLA of 1/12th of the 2.0 percent for each full month completed by June 30, 2024. The COLA will be included in all eligible Retired Members' and Beneficiaries' July 31, 2024, check or direct deposit.

Celebrating Older Americans Month

Did you know that May is Older Americans Month? The Administration for Community Living spearheads the celebration each year with programming to mark the strength, resilience and unique life journeys of older Americans. As seen through the turbulence we've all experienced together during these past few years, connecting with others in our community is important. To highlight community connectedness, the theme this year is "Powered by Connection." Celebrate Older Americans month and explore ways to get and stay socially connected. For more information, visit acl.gov/oam. ●

EMPLOYEES CLUB OF CALIFORNIA

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Purpose of Mentorship Program

- Share Knowledge and Experience
- Career Development Advice
- Community Involvement
- Networking
- Personal Growth

CALLING ALL PASSIONATE RETIREES!

The Employees Club of California is seeking dedicated volunteers to join our mentorship program, aimed at supporting young professionals in their career growth throughout California. This is a unique opportunity to stay active and engaged while building a lasting legacy. Your collaboration can help create a significant impact on the future workforce!



CELEBRATING & HONORING THE LIFE AND WORK OF GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES!

For participation and other information, please contact us retirees@employeesclub.com

Olympic Art on the Rise

FIRST ARTISTIC SIGNS OF LA OLYMPICS TAKE SHAPE - IN PARIS.

CULTURAL AFFAIRS: LA's Cultural Affairs Dept. is collaborating with Olympic/Para-Olympic officials in Paris to construct murals in the French city in anticipation of its hosting the 2024 Olympics.

Paris and LA will be the next Olympic/Para-Olympic hosts, this year and in 2028.

Through a Cultural Affairs grant, the Los Angeles artist, KATBING is collaborating with Parisian artist, Kekli, to create the work.

As part of the project to promote French-American shared values of inclusion and equity in the public space, Los Angeles-based muralist KATBING and Paris-based artist Kekli will be jointly designing and painting a new celebratory mural overlooking an important transit plaza in the Quartier Porte de Clignancourt neighborhood in suburban Paris. This selected artist-duo was the result of a local open call process administered by Cultural Affairs and a series of community meetings/juries that were facilitated by the City of Paris, the US Embassy, and Paris-based nonprofit Hypermur to select finalists and optimal pairings with French muralists.

The mural to be produced by KATBING and Kekli will be the last project mural that will be premiered before the Paris 2024 Olympics. In this project, KATBING will travel to Paris for a six-week period in May-June 2024 to jointly produce the mural with Kekli. KATBING will be accompanied by a Los Angeles-based videographer to film and document the production process and the public unveiling of the mural in the summer of 2024. A documentary short film of the project will then be premiered in Los Angeles in July 2024 and published on the Cultural Affairs website to present to audiences locally and beyond.

Congratulations to Cultural Affairs and the artists for creating the LA/Paris connection, and beginning more than four years of Olympic fever in LA! ●



A rendering of the Cultural Affairs-funded Olympic mural, to be installed in the Quartier Porte de Clignancourt area of suburban Paris.

Honoring the Service Leaders

FOR THE FIRST TIME, CITY HONORS ITS LONGTIME EMPLOYEES WITH SAPPHIRE AWARDS.

COUNCIL/MAYOR: Active City employees with at least 45 years of City service were honored Feb. 23 with Sapphire Awards.

It marked the first time for the Sapphire Award ceremony, which took place at the John Ferraro Council Chamber inside City Hall.

Of the nearly 50,000 public employees who serve the City of Los Angeles, 60 have served the City for 45 years or longer, and 22 have served for 50 years or longer. In fact, two City employees have served the City for more than 60 years.

Those honored are Firefighters and Electricians, clerical workers and Administrators, Attorneys, Accountants and Engineers. They work for Building and Safety, the Chief Legislative Analyst, the City Attorney, Community Investment for Families, General Services, Library, Planning, Rec and Parks, Public Works/Sanitation, LADOT, and the LADWP.

Council President Paul Krekorian first conceived of honoring the City's longest-serving employees and proposed this recognition. Mayor Karen Bass heartily agreed.

Each honoree was presented with an appropriate trophy to honor a lifetime of service. Those honored at the Council ceremony were the following:

CITY OF LOS ANGELES

45-Plus Years:

Ruby Burley
James Powers
Avak Keotahian
Clifford Anderson
Gilbert Urrea
Masaru Fujinami
Deborah Peoples
Andre Brent
Elton Louie
Horace Romero

John Kostrencich
Charles Rausch
Marcus Woerschling
Paul Medina
Annett Anderson
Robert Anderson
Francisca Arreguin
Sherie Sanford
Michael Patonai
Mellonease Wharton

50-Plus Years:

William Briggs
Honey Lewis
Edwin Krupp
Constance Dosch
Pearl Yonezawa
Patricia Barker
Olivia Mitchell
Thomas Gesinski
Gilda Henry
David Cook

LADWP

45-Plus Years:

Gene Crisp
Larry Gonzalez
Darreld Dolan
Eduardo Oviedo
Theresa Hildebrand
Michael Silverman
Richard Fujimara
Michael Gibson
Patrick Potts
Jeffery Smith

Oscar Carranza
Walter Zeisl
Ronald Jaramillo
Javier Perez
Phillip Vega
William Santana
Bettye Clay
Judy Roles

50-Plus Years:

Robert Hill

Dale Davenport
Charles Durlay
Gabriel Gutierrez
William Murphy
Sherrell Covan
Richard Valenzuela
Robert Castaneda
Gary Jacoby
Clarence Williams
Cedric Yoshimura
Roberto Batriz

Congratulations to all those who were honored with Sapphire Awards. Your examples of service and dedication are stellar and lead the way for all City employees. Well done! ●

THANK YOU! *Alive!* gives special thanks to Hugh Esten and Paola Juarez in Council District 2 for their assistance in producing this article.

Story courtesy Council District 2



Walter Zeisl (center), 45-plus years of service, receives his Sapphire Award from Council President Paul Krekorian and Mayor Karen Bass.



Gilda Henry (center), 50-plus years of City service, receives her Sapphire Award from Council President Paul Krekorian and Mayor Karen Bass.

Things Are Looking Up!

CITY EMPLOYEES CATCH THE RECENT ECLIPSE.

CITYWIDE: On April 8, citizens of the Western Hemisphere from Mexico, through the United States and into Canada, donned their special sunglasses or pinhole cameras to glimpse a total eclipse of the sun.

The eclipse was only about 50 percent partial here in Los Angeles, but LA employees didn't mind – City departments looked up and had a great time.

Here are some photos we gathered from the day. See you at the next eclipse in 2044! ●



Mayor's Office



Councilwoman Traci Park



Mayor Karen Bass and her office.



LA Zoo



Los Angeles Public Library Including Central Library and branches



Councilman Hugo Soto-Martinez



ITA/LA CityView 35



County Supervisor Janice Hahn, Club Member



The partial eclipse as it appeared over Los Angeles. Image by Rec and Parks/Cabrillo Marine Aquarium.

Open Houses Continuing

SANITATION'S POPULAR OPEN HOUSES AT SIX YARDS CONTINUE THROUGH JUNE.



Will Brown, RCTO, 8 years of City service, and his son, Carter, 6 years old, with a young neighbor in the cab.

PUBLIC WORKS: Public Works' Sanitation and Environment continues hosting its popular open houses through June 29.

Each of Sanitation's six waste shed district yards will open to the public in a series of free Saturday events. The Open House program showcases Sanitation's residential curbside collection programs with the promotion of proper recycling practices and information about bulky item collections. Each event will feature trash truck and equipment demonstrations in addition to facility tours, information booths, recycling games, and refreshments.

There is no charge for admission and all ages are welcome, but Sanitation requests that pets be left at home for safety.



At a previous Open House.



The Public Works/Sanitation Open House dates and locations are Saturdays:

East Valley Yard

May 4

11050 Pendleton St.
Sun Valley

West Valley Yard

May 18

8840 Vanalden Ave.
Northridge

North Central District Yard

June 1

452 N. San Fernando Rd.
Los Angeles

South LA District Yard

June 15

786 South Mission Rd.,
Los Angeles

Harbor District Yard

June 22

1400 N. Gaffey St.
San Pedro

West LA Yard

June 29

2027 Stoner Ave.
Los Angeles



A group photo of the 52 LAFD personnel promoted at the event held March 14.

Information and photo courtesy LAFD/Adam Van Gerpen

Well Done, New Leaders

LAFD PROMOTES 52 EMPLOYEES.

LAFD: On March 14, the LAFD honored 52 sworn and civilian personnel who completed the process of promoting in rank or status within the department.

Fire Chief Kristin M. Crowley oversaw a formal promotion ceremony at the LAFD Frank Hotchkin Memorial Training Center.

Individually honored at the event were (listed according to new rank or status):

Promoted to Chief Deputy:
Ronnie Villanueva

Promoted to Deputy Chief:
Jamie Brown

Promoted to Assistant Chief:
Vincent Alvarado
Kairi Brown
Joseph Everett
William Peralta
Timothy Wuerfel

Promoted to Battalion Chief:
Josephe Angiuli
Glenn Baham
Robert Barna
Amy Bastman
Brian Franco
Jason Getchius
Justin Mendence
Adrian Vasquez
Mattias Wikstrom

Promoted to Captain II:
Keston Abe
Andrew Balandis
Benjamin Fazeli
Jamie Heald
Elliot Ibanez
Daniel O'Connor
Kevin O'Connor
Lawrence Salas
Brian Smith
Justin Voyson

Promoted to Apparatus Operator:
Nicholas Bear
Brandon Elliot
Kevin Golledge
Dylan Hoppe
Matthew Mireles
Cody Quinlan
Daniel Stalie
Ryan Thompson
Nicholas Van Blarcom

Promoted to Inspector II:
Antonio Jones
Joe Mendoza
David Steinman

Promoted to Inspector I:
David Arellano
William Heritier
Elton Mashack
Peter Mills

Promoted to Helicopter Pilot V:
Dan Child

Promoted to Supermate:
David Brooks

Civilian Promotions:
Chanel Burgess, Management Analyst I
Karen Estrella, Sr. Personnel Analyst I
Lisa Gerencser, Management Analyst
Michael Hedvig, Management Analyst
Jeimie Hidalgo, Auditor I
Tom Hoang, Sr. Accountant II
Victoria Johnson, Executive Administrative Assistant II
Teren King, Equipment Specialist I

Congratulations to all those whose work and dedication help to make LA the great City it is, and to their families for their sacrifices in making these careers possible. ●

THANK YOU!



The Club thanks these newly promoted LAFD staff for their service.



“Schedule the Club Truck for a visit! It’s good for employees. It’s good for morale!”

— Pete Gomez, Street Services Supervisor I, Public Works, Club Member

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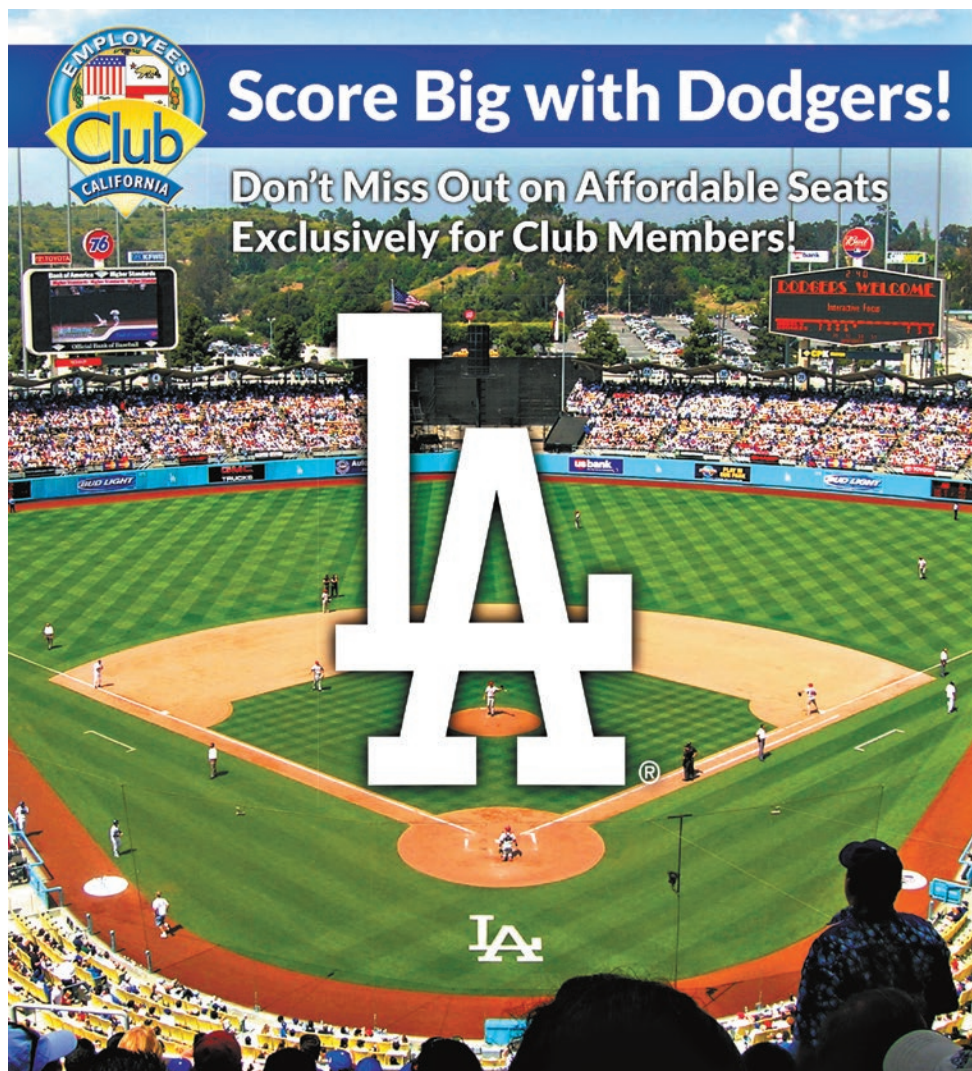
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It’s Fair to Say

the Club has great deals on LA County Fair admission!

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Visit EmployeesClub.com to get the best price on tickets!

For More Information
meckert@employeesclub.com
213-225-1790

Photos:
Patty M.
Larios

Cooking with the Club

with Chef Robert Larios



Easy One-Pan Shrimp Tacos With Sriracha Mayo, Tangy Slaw and Crispy Onions

We're all about shaking things up in the flavor department, especially when we're dancing between sweet and savory, and these tacos are a culinary game-changer. Imagine this: shrimp, bathed in a sweet soy mix until they're glazed in sticky sweetness and perfectly tender. We tuck them into warm tortillas, cradling them like treasures, accompanied by a tangy cilantro-infused cabbage slaw that brings the party to your palate.

And because no taco escapade is truly complete without its crown jewels, we've adorned

these gems with toppings – a creamy, spicy sriracha mayo that lights a fire of delight, and crunchy fried onions that add the final flourish. The cherry on top? You're transitioning from prep to pleasure in just 15 minutes. Life's indeed a box of chocolates when filled with sweet (and savory) surprises like these, amigos.

Follow this recipe online:



¡Buen provecho!

Chef Larios

INGREDIENTS

Serves 2

- ¼ ounce cilantro
- 4 ounces shredded red cabbage
- 5 teaspoons rice wine vinegar
- 1 unit long green pepper
- 10 ounces shrimp (contains shellfish)
- 4 tablespoons sweet soy glaze (contains sesame, soy, wheat)
- 2 tablespoons mayonnaise (contains eggs)
- 1 teaspoon sriracha
- 6 units flour tortillas (contains soy, wheat)
- 1 unit crispy fried onions (contains wheat)
- 1.5 teaspoons sugar
- 1 teaspoon cooking oil
- Salt and pepper

Utensils You Will Need

- Utensils
- Large pot
- Large pan
- Strainer

DIRECTIONS Total prep time is 15 minutes



1

Preparing the Slaw for Your Perfect Meal:

Start your delicious meal prep by washing and drying all your fresh produce. Next, finely chop your cilantro and skillfully halve, core and thinly slice the green pepper for that perfect crunch in every bite.

In a medium-sized bowl, expertly toss

together your cabbage with half of the vinegar (use all if serving four), sprinkle in half of your freshly chopped cilantro, and sweeten the mix with 1 teaspoon of sugar (or 2 teaspoons for a larger serving of four). Add a pinch of salt to enhance the flavors and combine everything thoroughly for a slaw that's as refreshing as it is flavorful.



2

How to Perfectly Cook Shrimp with Sweet Soy Glaze

Begin your culinary adventure by heating a drizzle of oil in a large pan over medium-high heat. Introduce green pepper to the pan, stirring for 2-3 minutes until they've reached a delightful slight softness.

Prepare your shrimp for the spotlight

by giving them a quick rinse under cold water and patting them dry with paper towels. Season these succulent shrimp with just the right amount of salt and pepper before adding them to the pan. Stir them occasionally, allowing each piece to cook evenly until they're beautifully opaque and thoroughly cooked through, approximately 4-6 minutes.

Elevate your dish by incorporating 2½ tablespoons of sweet soy glaze (or 5 tablespoons for serving four) and a measured ½ teaspoon of sugar (double for four servings) into the pan. This is your moment to ensure every ingredient is harmoniously coated with that irresistible glaze, thickening it to perfection in just 1-2 minutes. Once achieved, remove from heat and get ready to indulge.

(Tip: Accuracy matters – be sure to measure the sweet soy glaze as we've provided more to ensure you have just the right amount for a dish that's bursting with flavor.)



3

Crafting the Perfect Spicy Mayo and Warming Tortillas for Tacos

While your main dish is coming together, seize the moment to whip up a zesty accompaniment that will take your meal to the next level. In a small bowl, blend together mayonnaise with sriracha — adjust the amount to suit

your heat preference. A dash of salt and pepper will balance the flavors, creating a spicy mayo that's both bold and inviting.

Next, prepare your tortillas to be the perfect vehicle for your delicious fillings. Simply wrap them in damp paper towels; this little trick ensures they stay moist. Pop them into the microwave for a quick 30 seconds, and you'll be greeted with warm, pliable tortillas ready to be loaded with your gourmet creations.

This easy yet effective method not only speeds up your taco assembly but also enhances the overall eating experience, ensuring every bite is a harmonious blend of warmth, spice and all things nice.



4

Serving Your Gourmet Tacos With a Side of Shrimp: Safety Tips

It's showtime! Distribute the warm, pliable tortillas evenly among the plates. Generously fill each one with the succulently cooked shrimp and your vibrant, tangy slaw (make sure to drain

any excess liquid first). For that final touch of culinary magic, drizzle with your homemade sriracha mayo, sprinkle over some crispy fried onions, and garnish with the remaining fresh cilantro. This is not just a meal; it's an experience, ready to serve.

A quick but crucial note for ensuring every bite is not only delicious but also safe: Shrimp are considered fully cooked and safe to enjoy when their internal temperature reaches 145°F. Keep this tip in mind to ensure your gourmet tacos are not only a delight to the taste buds but also prepared with care and attention to safety.



5

Serve and enjoy!

CLUBDEAL

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Membership Power: Hello Fresh is just one of more than **75,000** discount deals Members can access through the Club! We honor your public service with these deals. Take advantage!

Cooking Tidbit

Shrimp brings a succulent flair to any dish, but don't hesitate to switch it up with other proteins like chicken, beef or tofu based on what you're into or need for your diet. Cooking's all about making it your own; think of the kitchen as your playground. If you're leaning toward vegetarian or vegan, skipping the protein and loading up on a mix of veggies or beans can still whip up a super satisfying and tasty meal. Basically, it's all about personalizing your food to suit your flavors and dietary choices. If you would like additional help, contact me at alive@employeesclub.com.

Food Quote:

"Crafting our Easy One-Pan Shrimp Tacos, where sweet soy-glazed shrimp meets tangy slaw and fiery sriracha mayo, is akin to discovering life's fulfillment—a perfect blend of diverse experiences that make the journey both rich and rewarding."

— Chef Robert Larios

Food Lover's Dictionary:

Taco [tah-koh] - a Mexican-style "sandwich" consisting of a folded corn tortilla filled with various ingredients such as beef, pork, chicken, chorizo sausage, tomatoes, lettuce, cheese, onion, guacamole, refried beans and salsa. Tacos may be eaten as an entree or snack.

Bibliography: Herbst, Sharon Tyler, and Ron Herbst. Copyright Barron's Educational Services, Inc. 2009, adapted from The New Food Lover's Companion, 2007, by Sharon Tyler Herbst and Ron Herbst. Recipe: <https://www.hellofresh.com/recipes/one-pan-shrimp-stir-fry-tacos-65e8d5acad357710d5d55248> Accessed April 16, 2024

Women Walk in Nature

Photo courtesy LADWP

SWE CHAPTER HOSTS ANNUAL WALK FOR WOMEN.

LADWP: On April 6, the LADWP chapter of the Society of Women Engineers hosted this year's Women's Nature Walk at the Encino Reservoir. Employees and their families had the opportunity to enjoy a scenic nature walk around the reservoir.

Well done, SWE! ●



At the nature walk.



At the LADWP's annual Women's Nature Walk at the Encino Reservoir.

Welcome Aboard

Photos courtesy LASAN

SANITATION WELCOMES NEW EMPLOYEES.

PUBLIC WORKS: During the second event in its new "Beyond Onboarding" program April 8, Public Works/Sanitation and Environment welcomed new employees.

Last September, Sanitation introduced its new "Beyond Onboarding" orientation program, which contained presentations, networking, bureau structure information, and core projects.

Nicole Bernson, Assistant Director, External Affairs and Special Projects, was the driving force behind the new employee orientation program. Others on the team included Kenneth Jeong; Cherie Byers; Niesha Louis; Adriene Murphy; Cindie Bassett; Pam Perez; Doug Walters; Deanna Gomez; Samantha Smith; Andrea San Augustin; Rafael Porter; Jessica Aguiano; and Lillian Myrato. Well done, all!

Welcome new Sanitation employees! ●



At Sanitation's "Beyond Onboarding" new employee orientation program April 8.



APPLY NOW!

\$750 Club Scholarships

Club Scholarship Deadline Next Month

DEADLINE TO APPLY FOR CLUB SCHOLARSHIP IS 11:59 P.M., JUNE 30, 2024.



Mariana Guevara
Chair, Joannie Mukai Club Scholarship Selection Committee

CLUB: Applications are now being accepted for the Joannie Mukai Memorial Club Scholarship on the *Alive!* Website.

The 2024 Mukai Club Scholarship Program expects to grant at least 20 awards and is named after the late Club Board Member Joannie Mukai. Scholarships recognize achievement, academic excellence and community service.

Those eligible include Club Members; their spouses; their children, grandchildren, step-children, and foster children; and nieces/nephews who are in college or will be attending an accredited college or university in Fall 2024. There is no age limit for Member or spouse, but all others must be under 25.

"Honoring smart, dedicated future Club Members with financial assistance is one of the most important things we do all year," says Club Scholarship Selection Committee Chair Mariana Guevara.

"We receive more than 100 applications annually, generally," Mariana contin-

APPLY TODAY

on the *Alive!* Website:
alive.employeesclub.com/scholarship



DEADLINE

11:59 p.m., June 30, 2024

QUESTIONS

Send questions to the Club Scholarship Committee:
scholarship@employeesclub.com
or call: (213) 873-1843

ues, "with most coming in at the end. It's very important that candidates submit all their materials in a timely and complete manner. We wish you the best of luck!"

The Club thanks Mariana and the Committee for their hard work in selecting the best and brightest of the Club family and rewarding them with Mukai stipends.

All materials must be completed on the *Alive!* Website and submitted electronically by 11:59 p.m. June 30, 2024. Winners will be notified by July 31 before school starts.

The Club expects to give each recipient a stipend of \$750.

INTERESTED CANDIDATES MAY BEGIN THE PROCESS DIRECTLY ON THE ALIVE! WEBSITE AT:

alive.employeesclub.com/scholarship



ABOUT JOANNIE MUKAI

Joannie Mukai was a pioneer as the LA Port's Director of Construction and Maintenance. A passionate supporter in the Employees Club and longtime Association Board Member, she died in March 2010. The Club's annual scholarship program was named in her honor. "She believed in education and training, and in preparing for success," CEO Robert Larios said. "That's what the Club Scholarship is all about, and we're delighted to name it after her. It's a perfect way to keep her memory alive."

CLUB SCHOLARSHIP ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS:

- All Club Members and their spouses of any age; and children, grandchildren, step-children, foster children and nieces and nephews of Club Members under the age of 25; are eligible to apply. Club Members must be in good standing.
- The successful candidate must attend an accredited four-year college or university full time in the fall semester 2024.
- Current high school seniors matriculating to a four-year school in Fall 2024 are eligible.
- Candidates will be judged for academic excellence, community service and financial need.
- Scholarships are expected to be awarded in equal amounts of \$750 (each).
- Deadline: Applications must be completed online at the *Alive!* Website and submitted electronically by **11:59 p.m. June 30, 2024**. All applications must be completed in their entirety and submitted at that time to be eligible. Sorry, but the Club is not responsible for delays in delivery.
- Decisions will be made by Club personnel and will be considered final.
- Incomplete applications will not be accepted.

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ALIVE! FEATURE

Photos by Summy Lam and courtesy LAPD

LAPD SERVING THOSE WHO SERVE

The LAPD's all-volunteer Chaplain Corps comes to the spiritual aide of Officers and the police family.



How to Reach an LAPD Chaplain

Should you be in the LAPD family and in need of the Dept.'s Chaplain services, here are ways to connect:

**Officer Michael McCarty,
Chaplain Coordinator:**
(213) 216-3545

**Dept. Operation
Command Center (24/7):**
(213) 484-6700

General information:
ChaplainCorps@lapd.online

The LAPD Chaplain Corps includes more than 50 men and women of most major faith traditions. The Corps includes (from left) Chaplain Sgt. Eric Rogers, Vice President of the Los Angeles Police Dept. Chaplain Advisory Board, 10 years of Chaplain Corps service; Chaplain Rabbi Sholom Langsam, 10 years of Chaplain Corps service; Chaplain Pastor Augustin Sahagun, 15 years of Chaplain Corps service; Chaplain Rabbi Israel Hirsch, Los Angeles Police Dept. Chaplain Advisory Board Member, 10 years of Chaplain Corps service; Chaplain Fr. Sergio Garcia, 5 years of Chaplain Corps service; Chaplain Rev. Kenneth N. Crawford, President of Los Angeles Police Dept. Chaplain Advisory Board, 25 years of Chaplain Corps service; Chaplain Pastor Jose Castillo, 10 Years of Chaplain Corps service; Chaplain Fr. Jose Bautista, 2 years of Chaplain Corps service; Chaplain Msgr. Frank Hicks, Los Angeles Police Dept. Chaplain Advisory Board Member, 15 years of Chaplain Corps service; Chaplain Bishop Juan Carlos Mendes, 2 years of Chaplain Corps service; and Chaplain Lt. Jonathan Larsen, 10 years of Chaplain Corps service.



Chaplain Fr. Michael Cooper provides ashes on a recent Ash Wednesday at LAPD HQ.



A menorah lighting ceremony in 2022.



The first LAPD Chaplain, Bill Riddle, LAPD Motor Transport Division Mechanic, volunteered his time performing funerals and special events. Circa 1945.

The Officers of the LAPD help citizens on their toughest days.

But who helps LAPD Officers on *their* toughest days? That would be the Chaplain Corps, a team of 50 religiously trained men and women – some are sworn, most are civilian – who step in to help the Officers and their families deal with sometimes tragic events that cut to the heart of being human.

The Chaplains can be, and sometimes are, lifesavers.

All Chaplains volunteer their time to serve those who protect and serve. The Chaplain Corps is dedicated to providing for spiritual, moral and personal needs and support all Department personnel and their families. Chaplains attend roll calls, join Officers on patrol and spend hours each month at police stations, just to be present and contribute the closeness it brings.

Faiths, including Christian, Jewish, Muslim and Daoist, are represented. Chaplains must be certified in their faith traditions and undergo background investigations before they can



The Chaplain badge of Chaplain Det. III Stan Evans, who recently retired.

be accepted into the LAPD Chaplain Corps, and then go through an extensive training program once they are accepted. Training sessions are every quarter thereafter.

Police Officers face great levels of stress in their jobs, which makes mental health services crucial components of Officers' wellness. Chaplains serve as support systems for those on the front lines and their families. They also serve ceremonial duties, including weddings and funerals. For the first time, the Club enjoyed the presence of an LAPD Chaplain, Officer Dan Jenkins, South Traffic, who delivered a prayer of invocation and a closing benediction.

This is *Alive!*'s first in-depth profile of the critically important LAPD Chaplain Corps. We are grateful for their service to LAPD's Finest. We thank Chaplain Coordinator Officer III Mike McCarty and Chaplain Kenneth Crawford for their great assistance in producing this feature, and for working around their busy schedules during the Christian Holy Week and Easter season. ●



Chaplain Kenneth Crawford (left).

IN SERVICE

Attending department funerals is one of the Chaplain Corps' deepest callings.



Chaplain and Roman Catholic priest, Msgr. Frank Hicks (right and above left) at the funeral of Officer Mario Morales in 2023.

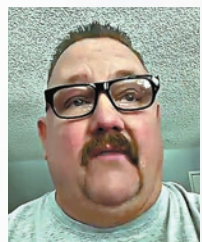
THE 'MINISTRY OF PRESENCE'



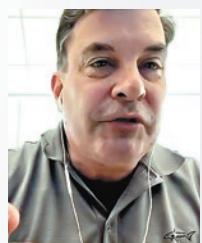
Rev. Kenneth Crawford



Sgt. Eric Rogers



Fr. Michael Cooper



Officer Michael McCarty



Rev. Dr. Henry Ellis

On Feb. 28, Association CEO Robert Larios and *Alive!* editor John Burnes interviewed five members of the LAPD's Chaplain Corps. Those interviewed were:

- Chaplain Kenneth N. Crawford, Retired Officer, and a current Reserve Officer, Level I, LAPD. Chaplain Crawford is President of the Chaplains Advisory Board, which has spiritual oversight for the Los Angeles Police Dept.; Club Member;
- Chaplain Sgt. Eric Rogers, Metropolitan Mounted Unit, Vice President of the Chaplains Advisory Board, 30 years of City service;
- Chaplain Fr. Michael Cooper, Retired, LA County Sheriff's Deputy, 20 years of County service; and an ordained Anglo Catholic priest assigned as Chaplain at Rampart and Transit Services Divisions;
- Officer III Michael McCarty, Chaplain Coordinator, Employee Assistance Unit under the Training Bureau, 29 years of City service; Club Member; and
- Chaplain Rev. Dr. Henry Ellis, civilian, Retired after having served the City in Rec and Parks, LADWP, Airports and General Services; 30 years of City service; Club Member.

The interview was conducted via Zoom.

Thank you all for joining us in your busy season, Lent, leading up to Holy Week and Easter. Tell us about the Chaplain Corps and how it works.

Officer III Michael McCarty: Sgt. Richard Suviate is my boss in the Employee Assistance Unit under the Training Bureau.

I'm in charge of all the Chaplains. I coordinate their background investigations and their interview process with the Advisory Board. I am also essentially the hub, so every time a Chaplain's services are needed, they will call me through the Department Operation Command Center, and I will assign a Chaplain or Chaplains to whatever is needed, whether it's an invocation, benediction, emergency, death, hospitalization, baptism, wedding or other event. Numerous calls go out every week.

I have approximately 50 Chaplains of various faiths under my umbrella. We have sworn Chaplains who are full-time department employees, such as Eric Rogers, and then we have civilian Chaplains that are ministers outside the department. They are volunteers.

How long has it been around?

Officer III Michael McCarty: It goes way back. In 1945, a Los Angeles Police Dept. Motor Transport Division mechanic, Bill Riddle, volunteered to serve as a Chaplain during the police funerals and special events. He was also part of the American Legion of Chaplain Corps. More and more of these responsibilities eventually occurred, and Assistant Chief Bob Vernon, had taken over many of those duties. Bob did the job for a while and realized he would need to recruit other Officers, including Sgt. Jerry Powell, and Ralph Evans, to help. Eventually Bob Vernon, was limited on time, so he turned over all duties to Jerry Powell as the lead Chaplain, and he ran the Dept. Chaplain Corps for

some time. Jerry was appointed by Chief Daryl Gates. Sgt. Powell retired with Chaplain badge No. 1.

When I took over the program in 2007 as the Coordinator, it was unique for a police department to have a sworn Officer dedicated full-time to this position. That's how unique the program is – they're dedicating full-time people to it. I do believe through some research that our Chaplain Corps is the largest in the nation, with approximately 50 members, and a dedicated assigned Officer to it solely.

DUAL ROLES

If you're a sworn Officer and also in the Chaplain Corps, how do you judge the use of your time? You're in Traffic or Homicide or whatever it might be, but then you get a special call to provide Chaplain services? How does that juggling of duties work?

Sgt. Eric Rogers: Hi John and Robert, I'm a Sergeant, so my supervisor duties are at Metropolitan Division's Mounted unit. Being a Chaplain is an ancillary job. Mike is very good as a Chaplain Coordinator in giving us details in advance of what we could be doing. I have open line of communication with my chain of command so that they know how important my Chaplain duties are, and you just have to balance your time. If something exigent comes up, which has happened from time to time, where maybe an Officer has been involved in an accident or there's a catastrophic accident where an Officer's been shot and I'm working at that time, then I pretty much will drop everything and attend to that Chaplain call. My command is very willing to accept that, because that takes precedence over our day-to-day activities. We handle those things, and if it's something that I can't handle because I'm

The *Alive!* Interview

in training that day or something else, we have plenty more competent Chaplains who can handle the duties. But I haven't ever found it that difficult to balance just because of the understanding from the command staff.

Let's say an Officer has a car accident on his way home or there was an Officer who was shot, Mike might call me and say, "Hey, Eric, are you working?" If I am, then I can get to the hospital and find out what the needs are of the particular incident and the Officers, and then I can help coordinate the response from the Chaplain Corps. I'm a Christian Chaplain but I can find out if a different faith background is more applicable. We know how to work with hospital staff and hospital Chaplains. Our immediate concern at that time is not administrative. It's not the department. It's taking care of the well-being of that Officer and his or her family and taking care of them during this catastrophic moment.

Chaplain Kenneth Crawford: I believe all of the Commanding Officers in the department are very sensitive to the fact that when a crisis moment happens, they are gracious enough to give us permission to respond, and bring a holistic response to the Officers and their families in their time of need. We have a great system.

Communication seems critical.

Sgt. Eric Rogers: Yes, and that's where Mike McCarty comes in. He's the hub.

TRAINING AND CERTIFICATION

Are the positions paid?

Officer III Michael McCarty: We have sworn and civilian Chaplains. They're all on equal level administratively and all considered Chaplains. The sworn are paid as part of their regular police duties, and they're issued different equipment because they're Police Officers. The civilian Chaplains are volunteers.

When a candidate is interested in becoming a Chaplain, whether sworn or civilian, they are recommended to me. I will then schedule an interview with them through the Chaplain Advisory Board. The board will review their qualifications to see if they are qualified to be a Department Chaplain. Department Chaplains are solely for the use for our department civilian and sworn employees. There is another program called a Clergy Council; that's for the use of our Police Dept.

ALIVE! FEATURE: LAPD CHAPLAINS CORPS

— CONTINUED FROM PAGE 13

to reach out through pastors and clergy to work with the community. That's a totally different program.

Once the Chaplain is approved, whether sworn or civilian, they will then go through a background process. It's a lengthy one, to look into their criminal history and then check their qualifications to make sure that they are a qualified, ordained minister. Once they've passed that background check, they are then appointed by the Chief of Police as a department Chaplain. They're issued a certain amount of equipment such as an ID card that gets them into facilities, as well as a department badge. They get a bullet-proof vest so they can go out on ride-alongs once a month. They are asked to do a minimum of eight hours a month, minimum. All of them do way more than that to volunteer their time so they get to know the Officers, so they earn their trust and minister to them. There is a two-year probation time for the beginning Chaplains once they're assigned to a Division, and they are mentored by a senior Chaplain. Once they're done with their probation, then they're free to minister on their own as they see fit.

They have an eight-hour quarterly training session every year that's mandatory.

Fr. Michael Cooper: We all come from different faith backgrounds, we all have different training and experience. I'm a Retired Policeman, so I bring a little different set of skills to the table. The scheduled training four times a year covers everything police-related from critical incidents and active shooters to suicide. It really covers the gamut of what we may be called in to assist with and to handle with. And we've already gone through an academy. Our ongoing training is in-house, and it really is good stuff.

Does the department expect you to already be trained in your faith tradition? Is that sort of training mandatory before you become an LAPD Chaplain?

Fr. Michael Cooper: To become a Chaplain you have to be either validly ordained by your faith tradition or licensed or certified or have some pedigree that says you are an official minister. It really depends on the faith tradition. We have our first Daoist member who practices the Daoist faith, and in the Daoist faith there is no ordination process. You align yourself with a Daoist monk, and the faith is passed down that way. My faith tradition includes years of study in seminary and ordination. There's always continuing education within the faith tradition, too, and as a priest we are certainly encouraged by our faith tradition to do continuing education and to constantly study the Scriptures and learn new things. The thing that I think is really amazing is that so much of the training that the LAPD provides for us also assists me in my own parish and in my own ministry within my faith tradition. They piggyback on each other. To be a Chaplain you have to be validly ordained or certified or something in your faith tradition.

Which faith traditions are represented by the LAPD Chaplain Corps?

Chaplain Kenneth Crawford: We have Catholic priests, Rabbis, Christian pastors and various other faiths that are represented in the LAPD Chaplain Corps. I would say not every faith is represented, but for the most part, we are equipped to meet the needs of our rank and file.

Do you see the faith traditions represented also growing and widening? Are you seeing new faith traditions coming in and wanting to be a part of the Corps?

Sgt. Eric Rogers: I wouldn't say we necessarily have new faith traditions coming in. If you look at the makeup of the Police Dept. and probably the City of Los Angeles, the vast majority would be considered Catholic due to a high majority of Hispanic Officers being Catholic. So do we have any other faith backgrounds coming in, more than we have already? Not necessarily, but Mike stays on top of the makeup of the different faith backgrounds. It's essential that we have the proper representation. We have it covered.

Got it.

Fr. Michael Cooper: Any faith that comes to the table that has a desire to be a part of our ministry team, we will always accept an application. We will always accept them to have an interview with our board. Should they pass that interview, they would be recommended for the background portion of the selection process. No faiths would be rejected. All faiths would be encouraged to apply.

A CALLING, AND FAITH TRADITIONS

What kind of a person wants to be, or is called to be, a Police Chaplain?

Rev. Dr. Henry Ellis: The kind of person who I believe would be a good Chaplain is someone who can look beyond the realm of their immediate environment and be able to reach out in the uttermost, specifically those who have a responsibility over our communities and be able to give them a sense of hope without proselytizing them into that particular faith. Hope is something that's common to all men and all women, to everyone, and so there should be a desire to be able to be there for them. For me, I gave it a special name that I could identify with that can encompass everyone, anyone who's there to serve and protect our community. He or she has to be selfless, because it's a volunteer position. It calls for the most sincere and dedicated commitment to do this particular work without compensation.

Chaplain Kenneth Crawford: It's a person who understands the needs of others, and understands the process of what people have to go through in the crisis moment. The very nature of the word "Chaplain" means "a Chapel." When people come to you for whatever advice or whatever counseling, you're that conduit between them and God. I hope there's a desire to give that spiritual counseling, that spiritual oversight, to put them at ease and keep them calm in a moment where through no fault of their own they're having the worst possible day in their life. You can be the ministry of the Divine to them, not to preach at them. We're not there to preach sermons. We're there to be the ministry of presence and to hold their hands and guide them in faith and love and support them as best we can.

Fr. Michael Cooper: It really doesn't matter what faith tradition you come from. I rarely wear a collar into the division. I'm usually in a polo, but sometimes for new Officers it could be a stumbling block. If an Officer asks me what faith tradition I'm from, of course I tell them, but most don't care. They just know that you're the Chaplain. Obviously there are nuances to that. If it's a Catholic family and they want a Catholic funeral then of course I tell them. But on the general ministry of presence, they just care that you're their Chaplain and you're there. We are not allowed to proselytize. We are not allowed to push our own traditions or teachings. We have to sign a waiver to allow us to pray in public. As a Christian I can't evoke the name of Jesus. It has to be generic because the department is sensitive to other faith traditions. You may have Jews and Muslims and other faith traditions in the crowd. God can be God. God is Father, but we can't be specific in our own faith tradition. That's one of the reasons that the Chaplain Corps has been so successful. I would say that not one faith tradition dominates the Chaplain Corps. We have everybody, and our board here is a great representative of that. We've got a couple priests. We've got some Protestant Chaplains. We've got a rabbi. When it comes down to it, the troops are happy that the Chaplain's there. They don't care what faith tradition you're from.

Rev. Dr. Henry Ellis: We're not here to enforce religious beliefs. As a Chaplain, I know what I'm called to do.



Chaplain Ken Crawford from his days as an active LAPD Officer before his retirement.

The Alive! Interview

'We're not there to preach sermons. We're there to be the ministry of presence.'

— Chaplain Kenneth Crawford

WATCHING OVER THOSE WHO WATCH OVER

The motto of the Chaplain Corps is to serve those who protect and serve. You watch over those who watch over others.

Chaplain Kenneth Crawford: Right. As an Officer for 42 years now, 34 active years and now eight reserve years, you see a lot of crisis moments in your career. You see a lot of very distasteful and tragic moments, and you also get to see the same in the lives of the first responders. The one thing I do every single day in devotions is to pray that God watches over the first responders and their families. The Bible calls us to be a watchman, and a watchman means that God calls you to be a person who prays for the wellbeing of the people. So I pray over the LAPD and their families every single day, but I also pray for all City employees and all people across the United States daily in my devotions. It's critically important, I believe, that as the first responders go out and perform their duties daily, that we provide spiritual protection over their lives, over their wellbeing, and over their families. I subscribe to an app called the Officer Down Page, and every single day I get a text message about some Police Officer across the United States who has lost their life in the line of duty. We all need to see that, downrange, bad things are going to happen. The one thing that we all can do is pray for their wellbeing and their protection.

Rev. Dr. Henry Ellis: I serve at Northeast Division, and I've discovered at Northeast there are three ideas that resonate across the ethnicity of people and what they believe. Those three ideas are presence, peace and purpose. Every person ought to take God with them wherever they go. Chaplains are ministers of God. We have to have the purpose to protect and serve. I encourage them not to ever be at rock bottom. We want them at the top or the center in their training and personal lives. "You are still a spiritual person," I tell them. Lay hold of your spirituality so that both the cop and the citizen can go home at night.

STEADFAST, BUT NOT HIDDEN

You work significantly behind the scenes and not necessarily in the spotlight. Is that okay with you?

Fr. Michael Cooper: I wouldn't necessarily say we work behind the scenes. We talk a lot about what we call a ministry of presence, of just being there. But when there's a major incident, especially an on-duty death, we're very much in the forefront. We don't call attention to ourselves; we just do what we need to do. If I have an Officer who has something going on, I certainly will pray for him personally, but I take it back to my parish, too. We add them to our Prayers of the Faithful, so we pray for that individual at every Mass that's celebrated in the parish. We just very, very humbly go on doing what we do, and sometimes that's very much in the forefront. St. Francis of Assisi had a great quote.

He said, "Preach the gospel always, and if necessary, use words." Without even having to open our mouths, we are a testament of our belief and our faith and our commitment to the men and women of the Los Angeles Police Dept.

Officer III Michael McCarty: When I was out in the field as a Police Officer, there was always a man sitting at the back dock of the station. He wore his Pittsburgh Steelers hat and was nice and smiling. I always wondered what he was doing there. His name was Dale Rose. Turns out he was a Chaplain. I didn't know what Chaplains did, and I was a 10-year Police Officer at this time. It brought me solace to know that this man was there day in and day out volunteering his time, and he would just say



Sworn and civilian LAPD Chaplains during a recent training retreat.

— CONTINUES PAGE 15

ALIVE! FEATURE: LAPD CHAPLAINS CORPS

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“Hello,” and it wasn’t anything more than that. It was the coolest thing, the neatest thing, that he was there, just being present. I grew to love this man and his family.

But another point on this – we have a police psychologist team, and we work hand in hand with them. We share information; there are two sides, the psychologist field and the theological field, helping the Officers. But I’ll tell you this as an Officer, and I’ve heard this time and time again: When Officers get into trouble or need help, they’re ordered to see the psychologist. I’ve heard people say, “I’d rather see a Chaplain than be ordered to go see the psychologist.” That means there’s more of a comfort level with the Chaplains throughout the department than being ordered to go see the psychologist. Clearly I’m not putting them down by any means. They’re vitally important, but there’s more of a comfort level going to

Talk about situations that you have been through in helping Officers in the moments of their struggle, to find the meaning in what they do.

Rev. Dr. Henry Ellis: There was one incident back in 2013. I was on a ride-along with one of the supervisors at Northeast, and we went to a hotel or apartment where a man had died inside the bathroom. I went up with the supervisor, and then the supervisor ran up to me and said, “I need you to help comfort the wife of this deceased person who was in the bathroom, because she’s about to just go to pieces.” When I ministered to the wife and she finally calmed down, her daughter took her into another room. The supervisor told me how much he appreciated my help. I don’t look for accolades but when you get one it sure does feel good, and it made me feel like I was there for a real purpose and valued. That was just one incident. But, certainly many others.

Sgt. Eric Rogers: One time when I was working and I was assigned to Hollywood, Mike called me, and I could tell he was frantic. He said, “An Officer’s toddler fell into a pool during a birthday party” and was unresponsive. They were Life-Flighting the child to Children’s Hospital Los Angeles. Could I get over there and meet with the family as soon as possible? That’s when you start praying. What words could I add? There are no words, but we go back to what Fr. Cooper said, the ministry of presence. I was determined to get over there and serve that family in whatever capacity I could. I walked into the emergency room, and I saw a young couple. The mom had a little tiny baby in her arms, and another kid was running around in the hospital room. By the time I had gotten there they had recovered the young boy, and he was without any kind of injury or anything else. He was fine. I was just so happy that, after praying, “God, do your work,” this family knew that we showed up there for them. That we were present.

‘WE ARE HUMAN’

What are the unique challenges for maintaining your own mental and spiritual health?

Rev. Dr. Henry Ellis: Good question.

Sgt. Eric Rogers: That’s a great question. I remember the first time an Officer asked me that, when he knew I was a Chaplain. He caught me off guard. What do I do to stay plugged in? For me it’s staying grounded in my church, and of course in my personal time as well, it’s an essential question. We can help others grow only as much as we’re spiritually mature, so we have to stay on top of our game. We have quarterly training with all the Chaplains. It’s vital in my own personal time, too, to stay in the Word, the Bible, as well.

Rev. Dr. Henry Ellis: I’ve spoken to Ken Crawford about the wellness of the Chaplain Corps as we protect and serve. We’re right out there with the Officers, and we are also just as human as anyone else. I lost my wife last year in May and so it came full circle for me. I’m thankful that I’m serving with brethren who really help me a lot – Chaplains mentoring and Chaplains coming to the ministry of other Chaplains.

I stay connected by constantly reading, and I even had to go back over some of the training that I have had for the Police Officers and use it for myself. So I rely on constant prayer and constant fellowship with other brothers, and expressing yourself about what’s bothering you. Staying grounded mentally.

Officer III Michael McCarty: In their quarterly training sessions, which I coordinate, they speak about some of the cases that they handle to let out of some of what they go through. We



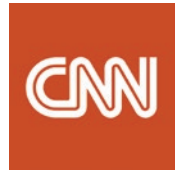
At the annual Chaplain Corps’ annual fundraising banquet (from left) Chaplain Ken Crawford, Chaplain Sgt. Eric Rogers, and Chaplain Martin Morehouse.



Chaplains (from left) Henry Ellis and Joe Castillo.

The *Alive!* Interview

The Corps on CNN

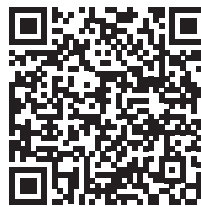


Last year, CNN visited and interviewed the LAPD Chaplain Corps. Their feature story ran during the last holiday season.

The Chaplain Corps has been in operation helping LA’s Finest for many decades, but this was the first time we’ve known they received international recognition.

What the LAPD Chaplain Corps does every day, whether in the TV spotlight or not, is significant. Telling their story on CNN was equally significant. The Club congratulates them.

Scan the code with your phone to see the feature here:



Chaplain Ken Crawford



Chaplain Rabbi Israel Hirsch, who escaped the Holocaust, has been an LAPD Chaplain for more than 45 years.

assigned a Chaplain to Van Nuys for a suicide and she wasn’t quite sure what to say, but she felt comfortable enough to call me and Sgt. Rogers to help her deal with this. The Chaplains are not alone.

In addition, at the end of the year the department puts together a Chaplains’ banquet. Somewhere between 180 to 200 people attend. We present a Chaplain of the Year Award for the Most Prestigious Chaplain, the Chaplain who’s out there doing the most, out there doing a lot. Every year it’s a hard pick because they all do so much.

Chaplain Kenneth Crawford: We teach a class called Taking Care of the Caregiver, in which we address a lot of different incidents or circumstances that can arise from the crisis moments that are handled by our Chaplains. In that training we talk about past incidents that have happened in the lives of the Chaplain that could affect how you maintain calmness in handling certain situations. We need to recognize our limitations. If we’re not equipped for that particular call-out, we need to be honest with ourselves and have the courage to acknowledge it, and defer to another Chaplain.

Debriefs are important, too. We debrief every single incident to become more proficient at our ministry and make whatever adjustments, so that we’re prepared for the next incident.

Second, it’s important that we always have a person to whom we’re accountable, and that person could be another Chaplain or a senior pastor. I can call the Pastor at any time for support, or to request prayers over what is being handled. That has always invigorated, encouraged and empowered my spirit to be that person of calm, that God would give me the necessary words and temperament to be that chapel.

IN SERVICE

What do you love about being a Police Chaplain?

Sgt. Eric Rogers: There’s nothing I’m more passionate about than taking care of the Officers and their families. I would want the same for my family. If something were to happen to me, my wife needs a Chaplain there. She needs a man or woman of God to take care of her. My dedication and affection are for the men and women of the Los Angeles Police Dept. and their wellbeing. That’s the first and foremost reason why I serve as a Chaplain.

Rev. Dr. Henry Ellis: I gave myself a personal assignment as a Chaplain that coincides with the mission of the Chaplain Corps for the Los Angeles Police Dept., and I called it my Cornelius Assignment. It’s a long Biblical story, but a Roman guard named Cornelius was assigned to guard some prisoners. One day there

was a big earthquake and all of the jail walls all fell down. In those days if you were a Roman guard, and your prisoners escaped, your death was imminent. Cornelius was going to take his own life, and his two prisoners, one by the name of Paul, told him, “Don’t do that. We’re still here. We’re staying.” Because his own life was spared, Cornelius then went back and saved his entire household. That story told me that I have a much higher calling to go out and serve the men and women of the Police Dept. so they too can understand there is a God beyond what they’re able to see with their naked eyes. That’s a real high calling.

Chaplain Kenneth Crawford: I have served in the Los Angeles Police Dept. for the past 42 years, and during that time, I have witnessed many tragic incidents in my own personal life and the lives of a number of personnel. My strong faith in God has given me the resiliency and strength to overcome the tough times. I am privileged to come alongside my fellow colleagues in whatever situations that they face, to comfort them and help guide them to a place of spiritual peace.

Fr. Michael Cooper: It’s always nice to feel needed. One of the things that’s always touched me is I’ve handled Officer suicides. I’ve handled two children of Officers who have committed suicide, and obviously it’s a really hard time for everybody. I pray every day that we will never have another Officer suicide again. When I was a Sheriff’s Deputy, I had no idea about Chaplains. I didn’t know the Chaplain at Carson or at Firestone. I didn’t have the need of a Chaplain, so now to be part of a Chaplain Corps is really a blessing.

For me it’s those personal moments seeing families in their vulnerability and in their grief. I hope we’re not afraid to show our vulnerability. We’re not afraid to weep with the Officer and to be moved when we lose somebody in the line of duty. The personal part of it is what appeals to me, and I always think it’s a blessing that God allows me to be a part of these things. As a Retired Police Officer, it’s both of my lives together, my life as a cop and my life as a minister. It’s amazing how God prepares you for everything that He has stored up for you.

Everyone, thank you all for sharing your very personal stories with Club Members. We appreciate you and thank you for your service.

Officer III Michael McCarty: Thank you very much.

Sgt. Eric Rogers: Thank you.

Chaplain Kenneth Crawford: Take care.

Fr. Michael Cooper: Bless you all. ●



Chaplain Rabbis (from left) Israel Hirsch and Sholom Langsam.



Retired Los Angeles City Employees, Inc.

RLACEI

For Retired
Club Members

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Ruth B. Perry

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Please notify Ann Seales, Membership Chair, at (800) 678-4145 ext. 706 or Ann.Seales@RLACEI.org for a change of address or to add or change your email address. Also notify LACERS, ACEBSA, LAPCU, and LAFUCU as applicable.



Send in your
Interesting
News
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Beverly J. Clark

Contact: **Beverly J. Clark**, Publicity Director
Email: Beverly.Clark@RLACEI.org or
Phone: (800) 678-4145 ext 716

RETIREE EVENTS

Stay Tuned!

The 2024 Summer Picnic's date and location will be announced soon.

May 16, Spring Fling 2024
Whittier Narrows Park
750 Santa Anita Ave.
South El Monte
11:30 a.m. – 2 p.m.

Dec. 12, Holiday Party 2024
Friendship Auditorium
3201 Riverside Dr., Los Angeles
11:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.

**RLACEI EVENTS
RESERVATION LINE**

Call: (800) 678-4145, ext. 701
or Email: contact@rlacei.org

Due to staffing, telephone confirmation cannot be provided.



Beverly J. Clark

RETIREES ON THE MOVE

By Beverly J. Clark, Publicity Director
Beverly.Clark@RLACEI.org or (800) 678-4145 ext. 716

**Meet Thomas Boyd:
He's a Retiree on the Move.**

Meet Thomas Boyd, a Retiree on the Move. Tom began his City career in 2003 and Retired after 16 years in 2019. Tom worked as a part-time LAX Greeter, providing directions and travel advice to arriving passengers in the Tom Bradley International Terminal.

Tom relocated with his parents from Connecticut to La Mesa, Calif., in 1948 when he was two years old. He received an Associate of Arts degree with honors from Palomar College in San Marcos, Calif. After graduation, he served in the United States Navy for three years from 1966 to 1969 at Naval Air Station Norfolk, Va.

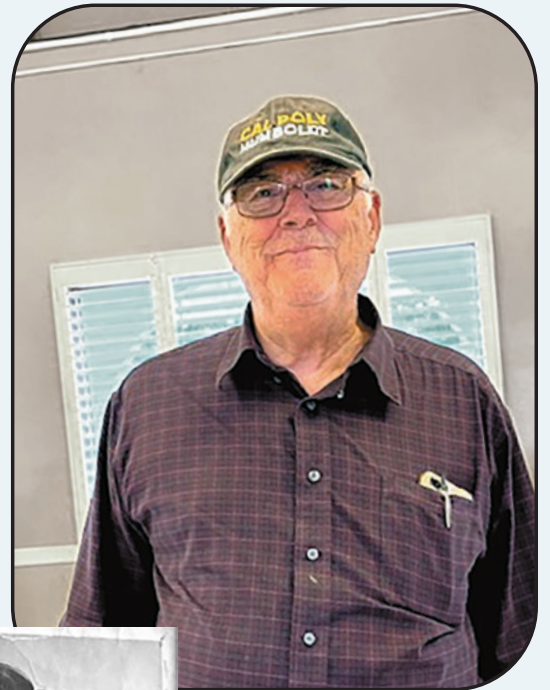
In 1972, he received a Bachelor of Arts degree in business administration from Humboldt State University, Arcata, Calif. He is a proud graduate and is heavily involved in many of its programs, especially the university library. He says, "In another life I would have been a librarian just like my mom was." He donates books regularly to the library, especially books on travel. The library has a cart at the entrance with travel books he has donated. He is excited to be sending two books entitled "2024 The World Almanac" to add to the cart

Tom is intensively happy to note that in 2022 Humboldt State University was renamed California State Polytechnic University, Humboldt (Cal Poly, Humboldt), one of three polytechnic universities in California. He is excited about the construction of new dorms, which will be located a half mile from campus. Construction began May 2023 at an estimated cost of \$200 million on 13 acres and will house approximately 1,000 students.

Tom has been married to his wife, Cecilia, for more than 19 years. He says she loves to keep busy and is always working. Now that he is Retired, he enjoys stock day trading and keeps himself busy as well, but he also enjoys kicking back, watching the Travel Channel, and reading travel magazines. He is also incredibly happy to be the proud great-uncle of twin boys.

Reflecting on Your City Career

"I miss the money! But I also miss how we worked



Thomas Boyd

together with a 'can-do' attitude. We were a close-knit group and did our best with what we had. I liked being a part of the team."

How Do You Fill Your Days in Retirement?

"I am not bored at all. I keep up with sports, especially following the Dodgers. I continue to day-trade stocks, and I am an advocate for soliciting students to attend Cal Poly, which has a student body of only 6,000 students. I believe in giving back and plan to give part of my trust and charitable annuities to the School of Business and the university library upon my passing."

Words of Wisdom

"I enjoy giving back. When I see a weakness, I try to fill it."

Celebration

Tom will be celebrating his birthday on May 15. RLACEI wishes him a very happy birthday! ●



Thomas Boyd, U.S. Navy

LACERS BOARD UPDATE

by Michael R. Wilkinson, LACERS Commissioner • MikeWilkinson4LACERS@gmail.com

LACERS Returns 11.5% For Calendar Year



Michael R. Wilkinson

LACERS' investment consultant, NEPC, recently reported to the Board on the quarterly performance of the plan. While these articles report the return's "net of investment fee," this report will use "gross of investment fee" numbers. The gross return for the calendar year ending Dec. 31, 2023, is 11.5 percent versus the net figure of 11.32 percent.

The reason for the change in fee disclosure for this report is to compare LACERS' performance with other large plans, ranging from \$5 to \$50 billion. The percentile listings illustrate LACERS' standing, with one being best and 99 the worst.

Executive Summary: LACERS outperformed similarly large funds for each period (three months, one year, three years, 10 years, and 15 years) except for five years where it was at the 51st percentile. Also, LACERS outperformed its policy index (benchmark) for the 3-month, 1-year, 10-year and 15-year periods.

Here is the performance and percentile ranking against peers in parentheses:

- three months - 7 percent (37)
- one year - 11.5 percent (38)
- three years - 4.7 percent (48)
- five years - 8.7 percent (51)
- 10 years - 7 percent (41)
- 15 years - 8.9 percent (25)

Note that each period except three years met or exceeded our seven percent assumed rate of return.

What does all this mean? The strength of your pension does not depend on a few good years of financial returns, nor is it defeated by a few bad years. Over time LACERS has experienced and survived in both the up and down financial markets.

With that in mind, it is always encouraging to see a one-year return of more than 11 percent when our assumed long range actuarial assumed rate of return is seven percent. However, we should not expect this to be the new norm. ●



Arnette Travis

GET HAPPY NOW

By Arnette Travis

Author/Activist/Advocate, RLACEI Contributing Author

Are You Truly Connected?

According to an 85-year study at Harvard University, the number one key to a long, healthy and happy life is social fitness: positive relationships with other people. Similarly, Blue Zones founder and *National Geographic Explorer* Dan Buettner distilled nine habits of the longest living people worldwide, a third of which involve other people. Additional extensive research supports these findings and concludes that relationships with other people are essential to our mental and emotional well-being.

Positive relationships increase our self-esteem, empathy and trust, and nurture growth. These unique human characteristics are necessary for good health. Positive interactions increase the production of the feel-good hormones: dopamine, serotonin, endorphins and oxytocin. These are all neurotransmitters that contribute to stress relief, relaxation and a general sense of well-being. These feelings extend beyond the moment and provide benefits for our mental and physical health.

Unfortunately, many of our social connections are severed when we retire, unless we make a commitment to maintain relationships. This commitment must be followed by intentional action to connect on a regular, scheduled basis. How many times have you accidentally run into a former work colleague/friend and you both promise to "get together soon," but somehow never find the time or even remember to do so?

NOTHING IN LIFE IS MORE NECESSARY THAN FRIENDSHIP

- ARISTOTLE

GET THE MOST OUT OF RETIREMENT



ARNETTETRAVIS.COM



Act Now

Make a "hit list" of the people whose company you genuinely enjoy.

- Contact at least one person whom you've lost touch with and schedule to spend time catching up and renewing your friendship. Before you part, schedule another date and time to get together.
- Be open to forging connections with new people, especially younger ones. As we age, death becomes a commonplace occurrence, and we risk running out of friends.

- Make it a priority to engage socially as often as you are inclined to and are able to do so. Your life will be healthier, happier, and longer as a result!

What Can You Do?

If you're struggling with a lack of growth and motivation, find ways to inject purpose and structure into your life to make retirement a time of happiness and freedom. What a great way to start your "Attitude of Gratitude"! ●

RLACEI 2024

Annual "Spring Fling"

Open to Retired Los Angeles City Employees, Inc. members only.

Join today!

Thursday, May 16, 2024
11:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Whittier Narrows Park
750 Santa Anita Ave.
South El Monte, CA 91733

RSVP to (800) 678-4145 Ext. 701

Group Picnic Area #1
Corner of Santa Anita Ave. and Durfee Ave.
Look for the RLACEI Easy-Up Canopy!

RLACEI "Spring Fling" - May 16, 2024, Reservation Form

Name _____ Phone _____ Email _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Number of Attendees: ____ 1 ____ 2

Meal Selection: ____ Beef Burger ____ Beef Hot Dog ____ Veggie Burger

Email to Contact@RLACEI.org or mail to RLACEI, P.O. Box 86264, Los Angeles, CA 90086

** Only RLACEI members will be eligible to win prizes. **

RSVP no later than May 6, 2024. RLACEI member plus one (1) guest at no cost.
To join RLACEI, call (800) 678-4145 Ext. 717.
Only RLACEI members will be eligible to win prizes.

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RLACEI MEMBERS

Not an RLACEI member?

Join and like us on FACEBOOK

Call (800) 678-4145 x717 or visit our website at RLACEI.ORG

Become an RLACEI Member!

RLACEI is dedicated to advocating for retiree interests. We are over **6,300** strong! Members of the Retired Los Angeles City Employees, Inc. enjoy all RLACEI events such as, member picnic and holiday party with FREE membership to the Employees Club and access to all group benefits (insurance, discounts, etc.).

Call (800) 678-4145 Ext. 706,
or visit our website at
RLACEI.ORG
and join today!

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DIRECT LINE FOR CLUB MEMBERS



Home and Auto Insurance Services provided for members of the **EMPLOYEES CLUB**

Get a **\$50 Arco Gas Card**
For Club Members if they purchase by May 31

We also have great rates on Homes, Boats, Motorcycles, RV's, Rental Properties and Apartment Buildings.
A FREE Benefit to members of the Employees Club

These insurance products are brought to you by the Club's Partner, United Agencies, Inc. CA Lic. # 0252636 United Agencies represents Mercury Insurance Group, as well as Chubb Insurance, Hartford, Fireman's Fund, Progressive, Civil Service Employees Insurance, Allied, Safeco, Travelers, Unigard and Encompass.



Photos courtesy Public Works/Sanitation and Environment



Earthy Fun

SANITATION HOSTS EARTH DAY EVENT.

PUBLIC WORKS: On Sat., April 20, Public Works/Sanitation and Environment held its seventh annual Citywide Earth Day LA event at the North Hollywood Water Conveyance Yard, the first time it's been held at a conveyance yard.

Council President Paul Krekorian was commemorated with a wonderful gift on behalf of the Bureau of Sanitation and Environment for his service and leadership.

Attractions included City vehicles for kids to explore, games to play, prizes to win, sustainability workshops, plant giveaways, 50 exhibitors, customer service, and fun for all ages. All exhibits were related to City services and sustainability.

Below are some images of the fun! ●



At the seventh annual Sanitation Earth Day, April 20.





Arlene on the Scene

Alive! follows the Club's Arlene Herrero, Vice President of Business Development, as she meets Club Members.

March 28 On March 28, Arlene and the Club Mobile Team attended the Los Angeles Women Police Officers Association's annual Women's Leadership Symposium at the Skirball Cultural Center. The Club has been a sponsor of the event for many years.



With Angie Roman, Executive Administrative Assistant and longtime Club Member.



With LAPD Interim Chief Dominic Choi and Police Commissioner Rasha Shields.



With Newton Area Capt. Amira Eppolito, Club Member.



Ambassador Christine Rose, longtime Club Member.



With Jeff Cox, William H. Parker LA Police Foundation.



With LA Police Federal Credit Union's Natalie Nahas.



From left: Eddie Escalona and DeAngelo Thompson staffed the Club Mobile table at the symposium.



Xochitl won this fabulous flight jacket donated by the Employees Club.



Happy Mother's Day

From the Club



"Happy Mother's Day to my Queen, Esther. Thank you for your guidance, wisdom and your prayers. I love you, Mom."
Lisa Edwards, Retired, General Services



"Happy Mother's Day, Linda! Thank you for all you do for our family. You are a blessing to all who meet you. Love always, Charlie."
Charles Garcia, Retired, Public Works/ Sanitation and Environment

More Mother's Day Messages on Web Alive!

It's not too late to publish a photo of you and your mom (or just your mom)... and a two-or three-sentence message of Happy Mother's Day.

DEADLINE:
May 8 to appear on Web Alive!

To submit, go to:
alive.employeesclub.com/mothersday



"Happy Mother's Day to my beautiful and incredible wife, Ronda Murray. You are our family's rock. I couldn't imagine my world without you."
Vincent Murray, Airports



"You're my one and only mom, and I'll always have a special place in my heart for you. Happy Mother's Day! Eres mi única madre y siempre tendré un lugar especial en mi corazón para ti. ¡Feliz día de la madre!"
Robert Larios, Club CEO
(pictured: Robert's mom and dad)



"Happy Mother's Day to a beautiful lady."
Chermaine Fontenette, Public Works/Sanitation and Environment



"Happy Mother's Day. Embrace mom, embrace the bond."
Starla Echols, Retired, LA County



"Gracias por siempre apoyarme! Te amo, I love you, Mom."
Rosa Apodaca, Mayor's Office



"Happy Mother's Day, Mom! Your first one as a grandmother. Reyna and I love you. Thank you for all you do!"
Candace Velasco, LADWP



"This will be my first Mother's Day without my beautiful mom, Susan Janes. I love you and miss you, Mom. You're in my heart forever."
Linda Israelson, Library



"Mom, every day should be Mother's Day! You taught all seven of your children to do the best they can, no matter what the job or status, and to treat people just as we would want to be treated. Thank you, Mom; you are my hero!"
John Hawkins, Club Founder and Training Officer



"To the head of our fifth-generation Californian family: We love you, Good Time Sally!"
Susie Davenport, Civil Rights, State of California



"To the world you may be one person, but to me, you are my world. I love you, Mom. Happy Mother's Day."
Officer Rose San Martin, Airports



"Happy Mother's Day to my beautiful and amazing mom, Marlene Brice. We are so blessed to have just celebrated your 90th birthday. We love you."
Chauntel Martin, Building and Safety



"Happy Mother's Day to the best mother and grandmother in the world!"
Capt. II Chris Bustamante, LAFD



"Happy Mother's Day to this wonderful mom who brings joy to her family."
Thomas Hernandez, Public Works



"Happy Mother's Day to the world's greatest mom. You're the best. I love Lucy!"
Taneshia Burrell, Public Works



"Happy Heavenly Mother's Day, Mom (Rafaela Trinidad)! Thank you for all the love, lessons and happy memories! We all love and miss you."
Rachel Griffin, Retired, Convention Center



"Mom, even though your Alzheimer's is progressing and you can't remember much about me, you always hold my hand and have a smile for me. Love you!"
John Otoshi, Retired, LADWP



"I'm so blessed and grateful that God chose you to be my mother. (With Eric Gallegos, former Student Worker, Harbor, and Gramma/Mom.)"
Leonard Gallegos, Retired, Harbor

Alive! AROUND THE WORLD

Southeast Asia



Elizabeth Lee, Retired, Finance, and her husband, Tony, visited their golden travel anniversary country (50th country visited), Malaysia. Melaka and George Town, Malaysia, are World Heritage Cities by UNESCO. Pictures shown are Melaka River and street art "Brother & Sister" by Louis Can in George Town.



Vietnam



Hey, it's our friends, the Cali Passport Posse – stars of our March cover story – traveling again, this time to Southeast Asia. Here they're cycling near rice fields in Vietnam. Pictured are **Greg Hornsby Sr., Trinh Nguyen, Latrice Williams, Zebra Corbin-Rodgers, Aditya Sharma, Ethelinda Reyes, Max Reyes, Steve Starks and Earl Rodgers.** Most are Retired, LADWP.



The Cali Passport Posse on the cover of the March 2024 Alive!

Captain's Log

Traveling with Capt. Michael Barnes, Retired, Harbor



Letter From Chile

Conquistadors, the Irish and Great Wines

South America is an oyster waiting to be explored, so if you are adventurous and have an independent spirit, avoid organized tours and go.

Contrary to popular opinion, South America is safe, and the bonus is that food, travel and accommodation are a quarter of the price of the United States.

Forget Peru, Machu Picchu or Brazil's Mardi Gras; those are all swarming with cruise ship passengers and package-tour groups.

Think of Chile's salt-flat desert, Salar de Atacama, high in the Andes mountains, at 7,900 feet. It is the world's third-largest salt desert. Check out the Laguna Cejar sinkhole whose salt concentration makes it like swimming in the Dead Sea, or the flamencos in Los Flamencos National Park. Chile has many volcanoes, and some are still active. Climbers travel from around the world to hike up these volcanoes, so why not you? If this is too much of an adventure, try trekking around the world's largest waterfall in the jungle on the Paraguayan, Brazilian and Argentine borders. It takes 18 hours on an overnight coach or two hours by local plane to get there from Rio or Buenos Aires.

If you prefer something less strenuous, visit one of the vineyards in Uruguay, Argentina, or the area around Santiago, Chile. All are just a short flight away from LAX on LATAM Airlines. Its economy class has lots of legroom plus attentive cabin staff who cheerfully serve food and drinks.

Chile has been populated since at least 3,000 BC, with its mild Mediterranean climate – hot days and cooler nights in the summer. Its beaches are perfect for tourists; the first one to visit from Europe was Ferdinand Magellan in 1520, followed by lots of Spanish conquista-



Outside the shell shaped Bahá'í House of Worship Chile

dors looking for gold and silver. They stayed for 300 years until Napoleon Bonaparte conquered Spain, allowing local patriots led by Bernardo O'Higgins and fellow Irishman and military adviser John MacKenna with Argentine General José de San Martín to the liberation of Chile.

Bernardo O'Higgins, son of the 1st Marquis of Osorno, a Spanish officer born in County Sligo, Ireland, was never married but acquired a family like his father had. In 1823, Chile was the second country in the Americas to prohibit slavery, after Haiti. The USA followed suit 42 years later, in 1865.

Like most Latin American countries, Chile's national sport is football (soccer). Although Spanish is the official language, English is commonly spoken in the major cities, especially in Santiago. However, never assume that an individual speaks English. It is always

polite to ask.

Chile has produced wine since the Jesuit priests brought vines from Spain nearly 700 years ago. While in the Santiago area, I visited the Cousino Macul winery, founded in 1856 and still family owned. It produces limited quantities of fine wines stored in stainless steel vats and later moved to oak barrels, giving them the distinctive character of the Maipo Valley. They're easy to drink.

In the foothills of the surrounding Andes mountains is the attractive shell-shaped Bahá'í House of Worship, one of the eight temples scattered around the world of this young independent religion from Iran, promoting unity through acts of prayer and service. Designed by architect Siamak Hariri, this 98-foot circular building comprises nine arched "sails" made from marble and cast glass; it opened in 2016. On a smog-free day, from its gardens and picnic tables, there is a panoramic view of the city below. Go late; you will catch the sun setting over the magnificent Andes mountains.

No gold is left in Chile, and the fountain of youth is as elusive as ever, but making fantastic memories is still possible. Be bold and try to visit somewhere new; tours are excellent but very restrictive.

The next stop is Argentina.

The Captain

More pictures on Web Alive!



Send in a travel picture holding Alive!

- Snap a high resolution photo of you holding Alive!
- Go to: alive.employeesclub.com/alivearoundtheworld You'll find a convenient online form to send your text and pics for publication.

CLUBDEALS



Block Party

CLUB BOARD FAMILY HAS FUN AT LEGOLAND.

CLUB: Anthony Virzi, son of Club Board Member Andrew Virzi Jr., Retired, LADWP, and brother of Association Board Chair Andrew Virzi III, LADWP, took his family to Legoland and wanted to share their day out with the Club.

Anthony and his wife, Kaitlyn, and kids had lots of fun, and so can you ... at a Club discount! As the summer fun season is approaching, now's a great time to take advantage and grab your tickets. **Start at employeesclub.com**



Anthony Virzi (brother of Association Board Chair Andrew Virzi III, and the son of Club Board Member Andrew Virzi Jr.) with his wife Kaitlyn and his children at LEGOLAND.

CLUB MEMBER TRAVEL DEALS

Traveling somewhere fun like Capt. Barnes? Save money with thousands of awesome Club deals!



EMPLOYEESCLUB.COM

CLUB RETIREMENT PLAQUE PRESENTATIONS

We Honor Your Service!

Association CEO Robert Larios honors Retired Club Members with a plaque for their many years of dedicated service.



Robert Montoya
Public Works, Retired after 26 years of City service.



Anitra L. Wright
LADWP, Retired after 37 years of City service.



Sonja Hannah
Library, Retired after 43 years of City service.

FREE! * CLUB RETIREMENT PLAQUE
Retired or Retiring Soon? Get started here:

Receive your own personalized Club Retirement Plaque, free! (Must be a Club Member for at least five consecutive years.)
* a \$499 value!

Packing It In

Photos by David Westphal/LADWP

LADWP PERFORMS FINAL SNOW SURVEY FOR THE SEASON.

LADWP: Following the final snow surveys for the 2023-24 winter season, the LADWP announced in April that the Eastern Sierra snowpack measured 103 percent of normal, providing ample supplies through the City's most cost-efficient water supply from the Los Angeles Aqueduct.

This year's snowpack, while initially underwhelming compared to the record-breaking measurements in 2023, increased significantly in February and March and ended up exceeding expectations with above-normal conditions, according to the LADWP.

"While our reservoirs are full following two wet winters, we are still seeing the impacts of climate whiplash across the state," said LADWP General Manager and Chief Engineer Martin L. Adams. "We know we have to stay focused on our investments in local water supply projects as LADWP continues to evolve and balance the needs of our customers with the challenges associated with extreme weather patterns, more than anything else, we encourage our customers to stay vigilant in their water wise practices, which have helped keep water conservation citywide near record highs."

Snow surveys gauge snow amounts and water content of the snow by taking real-time measurements of snow course depth and water content. The collected data is crucial for calculating spring and summer water runoff and water supply projections from the Los Angeles Aqueduct. A typical runoff season lasts anywhere from May to June.

Alive! featured the LADWP snowpack team back in May of 2008.



LADWP Hydrographers (from left) Clay Boyd and Gary Reiser measure the Eastern Sierra snowpack.



CLAIMS MONTHLY

Your Club Insurance Dollars at Work

Claims paid in March: **\$646,673**
Claims paid since 1992: **\$128,101,281**

PRODUCT	MARCH	TOTAL SINCE 1992
Life/Accidental Death and Dismemberment	\$333,713	\$73,811,215
Disability Insurance	\$166,921	\$35,617,693
Long-Term Care Insurance	\$143,058	\$13,582,596
Cancer/Critical Care Insurance	\$100	\$4,954,200
Accident Plan	\$2,880	\$135,577
Totals	\$646,673	\$128,101,281

Trust the Club's insurance and claims services when you need them the most. Contact a Claims Administrator today:

(800) 464-0452



Dulce Lopez
Claims Administrator

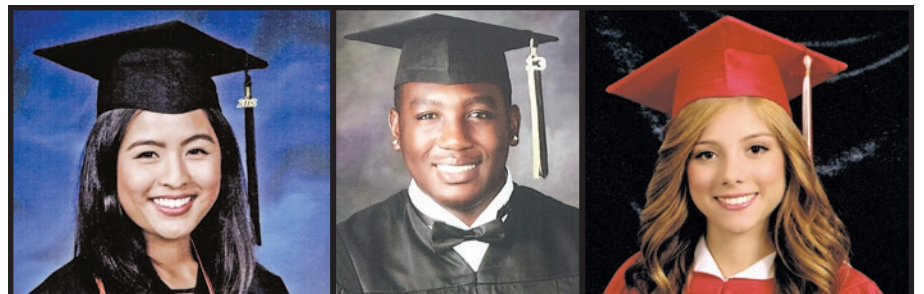


Mikayla Sprague
Claims Administrator

CLUB MEMBERS' PRAISE

"I am grateful to have [former Club Claims Administrator] Monica Zamudio work with me. She is kind and calm, and responds very quickly. She made the process go easily. This is important because it is an emotionally stressful time when a loved one dies. I rate you excellent, 10 of 10!"

— **Tandelyn Weaver, March 2022**



Put your graduation photo in *Alive!*

Club members: Have you had a family member graduate from elementary school... high school...or college? Send us a photo, and we'll publish it in *Alive!*

Make sure you tell us:

- The name of the graduate.
- The school from which they graduated. If a college, tell us their major.
- Their future plans (briefly)
- The name and department of the Club member they're related to, and how they are related



To send a digital photo and your message, go to:

alive.employeesclub.com/graduations



Life's Important Moments

Share your news... and send in a photo!

Have you gotten married? Had a baby? Graduated? Is a family member in the military? Send in a photo and a paragraph, telling us the details. We love to share your good news.

Send your photos and text online:
alive.employeesclub.com/lifemoments



- Births**
- Weddings**
- Graduations**
- Special Achievements**
- Military Service**
- Tell Their Story**



Retirements*

We honor the people who have spent their working lives building, managing and imagining a better LA, and are now Retired. We thank and appreciate all you have done!

Below is a listing of those who Retired from the City. To all we say, welcome to the best years!

NAME	TITLE	DEPT.	YEARS	NAME	TITLE	DEPT.	YEARS	NAME	TITLE	DEPT.	YEARS
Aguayo, Marisela M.	Police Service Rep	LAPD	30	Garcia, John G.	Water Operations	LADWP	—	Ponce, Robert F.	Special Prog. Assistant	Rec & Parks	5
Alaniz, Yolanda J.	Sr. Admin. Clerk	LAPD	33	Gleason, Patrick T.	Power Transmission	LADWP	—	Portillo, Marvin A.	Sr. Traffic Supv.	LADOT	34
Angelo, Susana	Admin. Clerk	LAPD	28	Godfrey, Rosemarie D.	Customer Services	LADWP	—	Roque, Ronald L.	Environ'l Specialist	Bldg. & Safety	33
Angotti, Diane M.	Accounting	LADWP	—	Gold, Steven	Deputy City Attorney	City Attorney	24	Ramos, Luisito S.	Water Distribution	LADWP	—
Ashley, Daniel S.	Traffic Paint Sign Post	LADOT	24	Gonzalez, Henry	Tree Surgeon Supervisor	Rec & Parks	35	Raner, Gerald L.	ITS	LADWP	—
Aspen, Ricky	Painter	Rec & Parks	35	Govic, Ervin	Ship Carpenter	Harbor	15	Reid, John A.	Power C&M	LADWP	—
Bacon, Samuel H.	Sr. Custodian	Airports	23	Grant, Theresa L.	Traffic Officer	LADOT	25	Ruano, Byron E.	Transport. Eng. Assoc.	Transportation	30
Baghdanian, Margarite	Mgmt. Analyst	LAPD	23	Hamilton, James E.	Refuse Coll. Truck Op.	Public Works	30	Russell, Steven W.	Water Operations	LADWP	—
Balbuena, Rebecca S.	Sr. Admin. Clerk	Public Works	24	Herrera, Robert	Power Transmission	LADWP	—	Sahaj, Manuela H.	Power Transmission	LADWP	—
Barajas, Roman	Systems Analyst	Public Works	33	Holck, Laura R.	Water Engineering	LADWP	—	Sardin, De Shun	Maintenance Laborer	Public Works	32
Barton, Sharon C.	Traffic Officer	LADOT	17	Hollins, Selwyn V.	Asst. Director	Finance	26	Serrano, Richard	Power C&M	LADWP	—
Belk, Elaine T.	Admin. Clerk	LAPD	17	Huerta, Bert	C&M Supervisor	Rec & Parks	23	Scott, Monika K.	Police Service Rep	LAPD	24
Bennett, Tina N.	Police Service Rep	LAPD	19	Ingram, Sean T.	Supply Chain	LADWP	—	Shahbazian, Sean	Construction Inspector	Public Works	23
Budrecki, John C.	Water Operations	LADWP	—	Jolly, Peter H.	Golf Starter	Rec & Parks	17	Simon, Mark R.	Str. Services Super.	Public Works	35
Bytheway, Jeff L.	Sr. Build Inspector	Bldg. & Safety	17	Keller, Mike A.	Water Operations	LADWP	—	Smallwood, Scott D.	Supply Chain	LADWP	—
Camacho, Brenda	Admin. Clerk	Public Works	38	Keotahian, Avak	Asst. Chief Leg. Analyst	Council	46	Stallings, Tyrone D.	Asst. Chief	Airports	36
Chen, Amy I.	Water Engineering	LADWP	—	Lammers, Guy C.	Real Estate	LADWP	—	Steffen, April L.	ITS	LADWP	—
Cheng, Emeverto	Environ'l Eng. Assoc.	Public Works	32	Lau, Eric	Buyer	Gen. Services	10	Sullivan, Stella M.	Admin. Clerk	Animal Services	16
Cheng, Michele M.	Sr. Admin. Clerk	Finance	35	Lee, Bobby H.	ITS	LADWP	—	Tenorio, Monique	Witness Service Coord.	City Attorney	35
Chung, Kasey H.	Environ. Lab	LADWP	—	Ma, Wallace Zhi	Heavy Duty Equip. Mech.	Gen. Services	26	Thompson, Garry A.	Power Transmission	LADWP	—
Chung, Timothy J.	Asst. City Attorney	City Attorney	24	Mabin, Reinalda V.	Special Prog. Asst.	Rec & Parks	6	Tinsley, Chel C.	Custodian	Airports	24
Craig, Michael T.	Power Transmission	LADWP	—	Madero, Maria Elena	Procurement Super.	Gen. Services	28	Tisdell, Denise M.	Police Service Rep	LAPD	28
Crail, Timothy K.	Environ. Lab	LADWP	—	Maese, Dora L.	Water Distribution	LADWP	—	Topete, George H.	Gardener Caretaker	Rec & Parks	20
Crawford, Jeffrey A.	Power Transmission	LADWP	—	McKinney-Gregoire, Lynne	Investigator	Public Works	35	Trevgoda, John J.	Asst. General Manager	Gen. Services	31
Dabbaghian, Vahe H.	Water Quality	LADWP	—	McWilliams, Timothy	Asst. City Attorney	City Attorney	22	Trinidad, Waldemar D.	ITS	LADWP	—
Davis, Richard L.	Light Equipment Op.	Public Works	24	Mendez Jr., Federico	Power System Eng.	LADWP	—	Tucker, Carol L.	Corp. Strategy/Comm.	LADWP	—
Delkhaste, Mary A.	Supply Chain	LADWP	—	Mercado, Michael G.	Water Quality	LADWP	—	Vandemeier, Jamie	Power Engineering	LADWP	—
Dunbar, Michael B.	Equipment Specialist	LAFD	17	Miranda, Fernando	Refuse Coll. Truck Op.	Public Works	17	Veiga, Richard	Solid Resources Mgr.	Public Works	36
Dunmire, John P.	Power Transmission	LADWP	—	Mitchell, Darryl A.	Park Services Attend.	Zoo	37	Walls, Kirkland F.	Power New Business	LADWP	—
Dupras, Marlene K.	Civil Engineering Assoc.	Airports	9	Moore, Reginald V.	Refuse Coll. Truck Op.	Public Works	36	Wedlow, Marty O.	Facilities Services	LADWP	—
Ermatinger, Paul C.	Water Quality	LADWP	—	Morejon, Peter L.	Supt. of Operations	Airports	32	Whitehurst, David	Pr. Inspector	Housing	17
Feggo, John	Maint./Constr. Helper	Public Works	20	Mort, Jeff L.	Manager	Airports	31	Whittington, Mitchell L.	Power Transmission	LADWP	—
Franciosa, Edward D.	PDD Dist.	LADWP	—	Nickerson, Demetrius	Special Prog. Asst.	Rec & Parks	4	Wilkie, Charles A.	Sr. Mgmt. Analyst	Rec & Parks	31
Fujimura, Richard B.	Fleet Services	LADWP	—	Offerman, William J.	Water Operations	LADWP	—	Woo, Michelle C.	Power New Business	LADWP	—
Gaal, Collette R.	Water Operations	LADWP	—	Pacada, Nestor A.	Water Engineering	LADWP	—	Yeung, Edward K.	Water Distribution	LADWP	—
Gaither, William M.	Power Transmission	LADWP	—	Palacios, Jesse D.	Garage Attendant	Gen. Services	31	Yu, Jennifer L.	Water Executive	LADWP	—
Gantt, Norma L.	Env. Compliance Insp.	Public Works	34	Parraga, Kori A.	Sr. Personnel Analyst	Personnel	31				
Garcia, Geraldine	Airport Guide	Airports	11	Podpora, Marian	Build Mech. Inspector	Bldg. & Safety	16				

* **NOTE:** If you wish to have a listing deleted from our online posting of Retirement notices, please email us at admin@aliveemployeesclub.com, stating the name and department of the Retired person. The request must come from the actual Retired person. We derive our lists from official public records provided by the City and LADWP.

In Memoriam

We honor those who have passed away and recognize their lifelong service to the City of Los Angeles. Their lives mattered to our City and our region. Our thoughts and prayers are with the family and friends of the following current and Retired City employees who were reported to have passed away.

DEPARTMENT	YEARS OF SERVICE	DEPARTMENT	YEARS OF SERVICE	DEPARTMENT	YEARS OF SERVICE
ACTIVE		Garcia, Elsa	General Services 16	Perrin, Deuk L.	Planning 39
Centeno, Guillermo E.	Rec and Parks 12	Ginn, Ruth E.	ND	Poston, Wilbert	LADWP 31
Longino, Roberta	Public Works 22	Gleason, Charles R.	Airports 33	Powers, Judith C.	LADWP 30
RETIRED		Grimes, David W.	General Services 35	Quiles, Anthony E.	LADWP 33
Adkins, Craig M.	LADWP 30	Hamilton, Janice W.	Finance 39	Radmilovich, Gloria	ND
Antal, Alex G.	Harbor 13	Hanson, Arthur	General Services 35	Ramirez, Enrique Z.	LADWP 33
Bass, Abram	Building and Safety 22	Houghton, Ernest	LADWP 12	Rivera, Jose S.	LADWP 31
Beltran, Rojelio Q.	LADWP 31	Hutchinson, James E.	ND	Roberson, Donald R.	Public Works 36
Bruce, Robert E.	LADWP 29	Jacobson, Martin	ND	Roberson, William N.	Rec and Parks 9
Broschious, Walter J.	ND	Kolbeck, Patricia A.	Public Works 26	Running, Sandra L.	Rec and Parks 16
Bruce, Robert E.	LADWP 29	Lundquist, David L.	LADWP 38	Severan, Bertha L.	LADOT 19
Burbridge, William R.	Public Works 30	Macklin, Ormand L.	LADWP 33	Simonet, Ervin J.	ND
Campbell, Candace T.	Council 8	Matchniff, Leonard J.	Building and Safety 6	Slaughter, Otis	Building and Safety 30
Carrillo, Ronald M.	LAPD 14	McCrocklin, James C.	LADWP 10	Stone, George A.	LADWP 20
Churches, Dwayne R.	LADWP 30	McClain, Michael D.	LADWP 28	Syers, Frederick C.	ND
Drushal, Richard G.	LADWP 11	McLeod, Silvia R.	Public Works 20	Tang, Lavivanh	General Services 28
Einung, Carolyn S.	ND	McMasters, Robert A.	Public Works 44	Wallace, Pearlene	LADWP 51
Faelnar, Arturo C.	Finance 19	McPoland, Donald T.	LADWP 34	Wittorff, Herman J.	ND
Felix, Epifanio O.	LADWP 34	Miles, Marcia E.	ND	Wolters, Louis G.	ND
Fradly, Dennis E.	ITA 5	Moffett, Franklin D.	LADWP 25	Zeitlin, Eugenia F.	Library 5
		Okamura, Paul H.	LADWP 38	Zink, Raymond A.	ND
		Pinchuk, Leslie R.	City Attorney 36		

ND = Not Disclosed

{ Who are the people you see every day? }

No. 116
in a series.



People We See

Shelterless in Los Angeles: stories of compassion and humanity

Meet Amber Marie Causer

By John Hawkins

Club Founder and Club Education and Training Officer

For this installment of "People We See," I decided to go to Olvera Street, looking for someone to interview. I just happened to be there at the same time as Brothers' Helpers, a charity that was passing out dinners to the homeless. I asked about their organization, and they explained that they provide meals five days a week to more than 1,600 homeless people. They said it's a partnership with five different churches – St. Bede's in La Canada Flintridge, Holy Redeemer Church in Montrose, St. James the Less Church in La Crescenta, La Canada Presbyterian Church, and Our Lady Queen of Angels Church (La Placita) in Los Angeles. I'll do some research and publish more info on volunteer opportunities in the next issue.

Brothers Helpers: www.brothershelpers.com

Born June 1, 1986

Amber was born in Denver, Colorado and moved to her mom's house in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania when she was two years old. After a year in Pittsburgh, she moved back to Colorado, and when she was five she and her family moved to San Diego.

"I felt like I didn't have nobody, so I started running the streets when I was eight or nine years old," Amber said. "Not listening to my parents, hanging out with troublemakers, hanging out with gangs, doing drugs." I asked Amber what type of drugs she did that young and she said, "Meth and any drugs you could think of pretty much, and I just got raised by the streets ... that's just how it was. When I was 13, I was taken away from my parents and put in foster care with my other brothers and sisters, all six sisters and four brothers. From there we all got separated and just got back together about three years ago thanks to Facebook.

"I was in and out of jail and rehab; I was in an all-girls school; and then finally I was put in a lockdown school. I was there until I was 21, and I frickin' hated it but I ended up graduating and going into adult-type foster care. I was always in and out of homes but I never felt like I was 'at' home. I was never treated as family, I felt. So three years later I told myself that I am ready to take care of myself, even if I have to be on the streets. So I signed myself out of the system and here I am."

Where do you spend your nights? "In my tent with my husband. In fact, he is there right now with our dog, Bro. I am just here getting food to take back. Bro is six months old and we just got him in January, Bro is my life, I love him so much. We take care of him better than we take care of ourselves sometimes."

If you could have three wishes, what would they be? "The first would be to be able to be off the streets but not worry about where I am having to sleep, or if the cops are going to 'f' with us. But at the same time I like it outside; I don't like being inside." I asked Amber what it was that she liked about being outside and she quickly said, "The freedom – not being couped up, not having to worry about paying bills.

"The second wish would be to stop the drugs, to not always be dependent on drugs and to have a life, to not be messed with by gang members or other people, especially men; and I wish they would just realize I was married and would leave me alone." I asked Amber which drug would be the first she would get rid of, and she said, "Probably the meth because it is so addicting; you just want it, want it,



From left: John Hawkins and Amber Marie Causer

want it. It's a craving, and if you don't get it you feel sick, like you want to throw up kind of sick." I was curious how much meth costs, so I asked her and she told me that for 10 bucks you could get enough to last a couple days.

Her third wish was for her dog Bro to realize that he doesn't need to be scared of people and that there are people out there who care about him.

I asked Amber what's the worst part of living on the streets, and she said, "The gangs – Temple Street Gang, Skid Row Gang."

I noticed she was missing some teeth, so I asked her how she lost them. She said, "The meth, eats your teeth away. That's usually the first thing to go, and then you start looking older."

What's your favorite candy? "Reese's Peanut Butter Cups."

What's your favorite movie? "A Walk to Remember."

Do you read books? "I never fully learned how to read, so it's frustrating. My husband tries to help, but it's really hard for me."

What's your favorite childhood memory? "I remember when I was little, waking up on Christmas morning and my little brother, Christopher, who was sick, opened one of his presents and it was a puppy. He was so excited. He couldn't believe it."

Did you have a doll when you were younger? "My Grandpa, before he died, got me a Cabbage Patch Kid doll. I loved it ... and I kept it until I was 15."

What advice do you have for a 16-year-old kid? "Keep in school, don't do drugs, go and achieve your dreams. Don't let anyone, the bullies, get you down. Achieve your dreams, what you have inside."

What was your dream? "I wanted to be either a Police Officer or a cosmetologist, or a vet."

This was a tough one. Amber seemed like she didn't have a chance from day one. But her attitude was amazing – such a good-natured woman despite facing so many roadblocks and struggles.

John Hawkins wished Amber well and provided support.

The interview was conducted by Club Founder John Hawkins on April 22, 2024 on Olvera Street. The contents described here were transcribed from a video recording.

{ In this feature, Club Founder and Training Officer John Hawkins introduces you to people you see every day, but you might not know who they are. The Club reminds you that we all have names and our stories to tell. }

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