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City, County and
State Employees

Alive!

Ship Shape

CITY PLANNING

Bill Lillenber, 91, Retired, City Planning,
and US Navy Veteran, served at Midway
Island just after the war, then
joined the NSA at the
beginning of the
intelligence era.
Here's his story.

- SEE PAGE 10

Above right: The USS *General Ernst*. Bill Lillenber served aboard this ship in the Pacific Ocean during the second half of his first Navy stint. Middle: Bill serving at NAS Midway circa 1946-47.



Alive! main photo by Summy Lam

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JOHN'S BLOG

by John Hawkins, President and CEO, The Club



Patriotism, Family and City Service

When we asked **Bill Lillenberg**, City Retiree and Navy Veteran, what freedom meant to him, he said it meant that he could raise his family in the manner he wished.

That manner was service – to the City, and to the country.

Bill had a fascinating military career. He served from just after World War II at NAS Midway to the beginning of the intelligence era at the National Security Administration (NSA).

That's what the team at *Alive!* was ready to talk to him about when we first made contact. (Read all about it in this month's feature story; our July cover stories most years are centered on Independence Day.)

We were in for a surprise. He and his late wife, Mary Alice, taught their kids to work hard and serve well. We didn't realize just how dedicated they were to service: three children (**Mark, Kevin and Amy Lillenberg**) are Retired from the City, too (LAFD and LAPD), and one grandson, **Josh Lillenberg**, is currently a Captain in the LAFD. (Another grandson, **Christopher Lillenberg**, is a dentist in the U.S. Air Force.)

As far as I know, that's the most City-focused family we've encountered since we restarted the paper more than 200 issues ago in 2002. Good to meet you, Lillenbergs!

There's another family connection – this time, mine. You'll see my daughter, **Hannah Hawkins**, in a couple of the photos from the day we interviewed Bill. She's studying World War II in school, and she wanted to come along. Great idea, Hannah!

Thank you, Bill and family, for your service to the United States and to the City. We are grateful.

Moving on ... as I type this the City is starting to reopen from the coronavirus pandemic, slowly and managed. (The challenges remain.) In some ways we're looking to do the same here at the Club, and look for more timely updates on the Club's Website and social media channels. The main goal, of course, is keeping staff and Club Members safe.

Don't forget to invite our Counselors to your next digital meeting! City employees, like everyone else in the world, are managing business by teleconferencing on Zoom, Webex, GoToMeeting, Facetime, Microsoft Teams, and just about any other platform. So are we! Counselor **Dalila Vielma** participates in digital meetings with City departments nearly every day, and is happy to join yours. Contact **Noelle Kauffman** at info@employeesclub.com to get started.

A final note on family: I love seeing all the sons and daughters of Club Members graduating. Keep those photos coming! (Submit at alive.employeesclub.com/graduations/).

Have a fantastic and meaningful Fourth of July with your family.

JOHN



From left: Club CEO John Hawkins; Retiree Bill Lillenberg; Hannah Hawkins; and *Alive!* editor John Burnes.

Alive! AROUND THE WORLD

Carlsbad

Capt. Barnes Goes to Carlsbad

Intrepid Club traveler Capt. Michael Barnes, Retired, Harbor, takes us to Carlsbad after stay-at-home eases.

By Capt. Michael Barnes, Retired, Harbor

With the opening up of southern California for Memorial Day weekend, we decided to take a safe-distance trip to Carlsbad. On the way down we practiced safe distancing, and we did not get too close to other cars, making it in just over an hour and a half.

We stayed with our Italian cousin in their lovely apartment overlooking the beach. They also just happened to own a couple of Italian restaurants in downtown Carlsbad on the beach, so we could maintain social distancing quite easily while enjoying a cocktail or two. All bars and restaurants in this part of the world displayed the no-mask, no-service sign, which is nice for the service staff.

Our late mornings and afternoons were spent sitting on the balcony sipping ice cold adult beverages while watching the surfers and beach crowd both in and out of the water. Most people obeyed the rules and wore an assortment of facemasks while maintaining social distancing, but there was always the odd moron who thought it did not apply to them. What's the saying, "Give me liberty or give me death." Tip: It's not about you, it's about other people. If you do not want to conform, stay home and we will be safe.

New York City

"I was in New York City in the Philippine Embassy in July 2019."
Corleto Manuel, Building and Safety

Take *Alive!* with you, wherever you go!

- Bring your recent copy of *Alive!* with you when you travel.
- Snap a **high resolution** photo of you **holding *Alive!***
- Go to: alive.employeesclub.com, click "SEND TO ALIVE!" in the menu. You'll find a convenient online form to send your text and pics for publication.

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NEW THIS MONTH ONLINE!

Cooking With the Club

Prepare your own portion of Kimchi Fried Rice!



John's Picture Perfect

See the winners from this month's photo contest.



Library Top 10

See what the City is downloading during the coronavirus pandemic.



Bulls Bikes:

The Best Deal on Wheels!

Club Members save 14 percent when they purchase from the incredible Bulls Bikes, one of the best electric pedal-assist bikes in the world.

SAVE 14%

For more information on Bulls Bikes, go to:
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Alive! is now its own Website ...

Yes! *Alive!* is now a great new Website ... and a streamlined, more portable version of the paper you've come to know and love, delivered to your door!

GO TO: alive.employeesclub.com

The Club: Here to Help

Club staff is dedicated to helping our members receive the maximum benefit from their membership. If you have questions, concerns or suggestions about your Club, our counselors are ready to help.

Email us at:

help@employeesclub.com

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

Or call us at: (800) 464-0452

In-house Counselors

At Club Headquarters



MaryAnn Urdiales
Member Services Counselor
Ext. 159



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Member Services Counselor
Ext. 136

At the Club Store



Tiffany Sy
Member Services Counselor
Ext. 202

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CITYWIDE

Heroes of the Unrest

Departments help clean up after the civil unrest.

At the end of May and beginning of June, Los Angeles experienced peaceful protests and civil unrest in reaction to the death of George Floyd in Minneapolis. LA City crews were kept busy on patrol and cleaning up.

When preschool-aged children in his TV audience were frightened by tragedy or protest, Fred Rogers of "Mr. Rogers' Neighborhood" mentioned the advice his mother gave him at the same age: "Look for the helpers. You will always find people who are helping."

We salute these City helpers who worked to facilitate peaceful protests, clean up after destructive actions, and return to normal. We wish the City healing and peace.



This LAFD crew from FS 8 extinguished fires set along Melrose Avenue May 30. (Photo by Juan Guerra)



Public Works/Sanitation helped clean up after civil unrest May 31.



Public Works/StreetsLA cleaned up large portions of downtown, Melrose Avenue and in other locations.



The LAPD patrolled downtown and kept the peace near this pile of smoldering trash.



Club Customer Service Rep DeAngelo Thompson (right) helps supervise the boarding up of the store windows.



"Focus on the helpers:" Two from Sanitation – Edgar Dominguez and Francisco Gallardo – saw what had happened and stopped to help clean up the Club's broken windows. From left: Club CEO John Hawkins; Edgar Dominguez; Club Customer Service Rep DeAngelo Thompson; and Francisco Gallardo.

Windows at the Club Store downtown were broken during the night of civil unrest May 30 (the Club Store has been closed since mid-March due to the coronavirus pandemic). Club CEO John Hawkins, Club Store Manager Guadalupe Lira and Customer Service Rep DeAngelo Thompson came in early the next morning to clean up and supervise the boarding up of the windows.

A Public Works/Sanitation truck drove by and noticed the Club crew cleaning up the mess. The RCTO crew stopped and helped clear the windows of the broken glass, and then take the broken glass away. Thanks, Sanitation crew!

Invite the Club to Your Online Meeting!

The Club is in full operation at home, bringing exclusive Club benefits to City and DWP employees every day. Invite a Counselor to your next meeting on Webex, Zoom or any other platform!

On June 22, Counselor Dalila Vielma participated in another presentation about Club benefits by participating in departmental Webex meetings. We prepare Club materials and drop them off in advance.

Bring great Club benefits to your next meeting! Invite us to your next Webex presentation. To book: info@employeesclub.com



Last month, Club Counselor Dalila Vielma (middle row left) presented the Club story and benefits to DWP new employees using the Webex teleconference app.

DWP RETIREES

Connect Via Facebook!

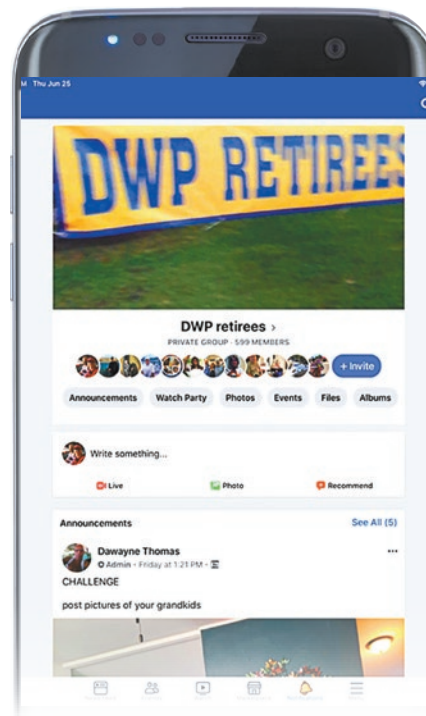
Hey DWP Retirees, there's a new page on Facebook dedicated to you and your fellow Retirees. It contains discussions, photos, memories and other content. The page requires approval to join, so its mission and purpose should remain pretty much on target.

Find it here, and ask to join:

www.facebook.com/groups/585097075697275/

You can also just search on Facebook for DWP Retirees, and you should be able to find it that way, too.

For more information, please contact Dawayne Thomas: sportsmanlikeluv@yahoo.com



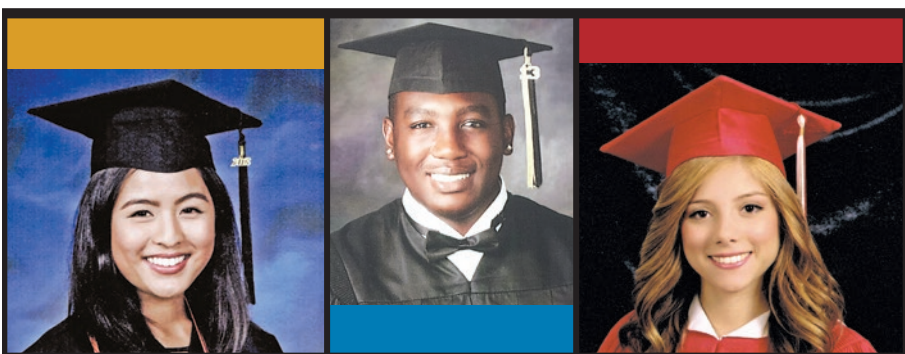
The DWP Retirees page on Facebook.

Save on Skechers

Club Members save 30% on Skechers every day.



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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



Long-Term Disability Insurance Is the Most Important Product You Can Get at the Club



Get it today. Here's why:

- Protect your monthly income! You never know what might happen to you.
- How would you pay your bills if you couldn't work?
- City and DWP employees have limited sick time or salary continuation and no State Disability Insurance (SDI). The Club's Long-Term Disability Insurance is more than an option - it's vital.

To learn more about your insurance options, schedule a visit with the Club's insurance experts:

 Cheryl Martin Member Services Counselor <small>cmartin@employeesclub.com</small> Ext. 136	 Tiffany Sy Member Services Counselor <small>tsy@employeesclub.com</small> Ext. 202	 MaryAnn Urdiales Member Services Counselor <small>urdiales@employeesclub.com</small> Ext. 159
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Phone and virtual meeting appointments available.

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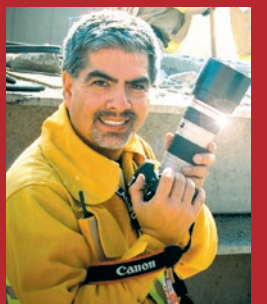


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Extinguishing Civil Unrest

**Everyday
Heroes
in Action**

Firefighters from LAFD Station 73 (Reseda) and LA County Fire Stations 63 (La Crescenta-Montrose) and 93 (Palmdale) knock down a fire in a retail establishment on Melrose Avenue during civil unrest May 30.



**Juan Guerra,
Photographer**

PANDEMIC 2019-2020

Scenes PART 4 From a Pandemic

Alive! continues its documentation of City employees as they take a multitude of measures to combat the COVID-19 pandemic and keep LA safe. (The first part was in our April 2020 issue.) Here are entries from the Club and the City Twitter feeds about City Employees and Club Members at work during this trying time.

The phrases indicated by a # or an @ are Internet search locators that work as shortcuts to help find desired locations online. We included that text here for completeness; if you want to see those locations, simply retype those phrases into your online browser.

City Clerk



"Our COVID-19 testing site at Dodger Stadium will allow us to test up to 6,000 people per day quickly and efficiently. Tests are free and no insurance is needed."

June 11

LAFD



"On Monday, our @LAFD launched a new high capacity testing site in Skid Row to offer free access to COVID-19 testing for residents who walk up or who are referred to street outreach teams."

April 23

City Planning



"A big shout-out to City Planning's Tom Rothmann and @LACitySan 's Renell Jones, who are helping as Disaster Service Workers to monitor businesses that are producing face coverings to #SlowTheSpread of #COVID-19. Thank you, Tom and Renell! #LALove #MaskingForAFriend #LAProtects"

June 11

Harbor



"#PortofLA Executive Director Gene Seroka and Chief of Public Safety & Emergency Management Tom Gazsi board the USNS Mercy to formally thank the @USNavy with a Harbor Commission resolution noting their support and assistance in Los Angeles in response to the #COVID19 pandemic."

May 14

General Services



"Men & women that work tirelessly 24/7 to keep our city running – @LACity custodial staff. Your work does not go unnoticed. Your work is appreciated & critical. Our most sincere gratitude."

June 11

**Public Works/
Sanitation and Environment**



"Our staff at Terminal Island Water Reclamation Plant keeps the plant running 24/7. TIWRP has the capacity to purify #wastewater beyond #tertiarytreatment standards. The Advanced Water Purification Facility will help maintain the City's water supply."

June 4

LAPD



"Today our 77th Street SLO/CRO Officers are with the teachers of Fremont High School, celebrating the culmination of the Senior Class of 2020. We will continue to build and maintain the great relationships that we have developed within our community."

June 12

Public Works/Sanitation



"Another busy work week around the City providing essential services to Angelenos. From the mechanic crew cleaning up wastewater tanks at Hyperion, to the CARE teams on our streets removing tons of waste, to the water biologists testing the water quality in the LA River."

June 12

Thanks to your donations, these groceries were delivered by Club Angels to a City Employee in need.



Help Your Fellow City Employees in Need



During this virus pandemic, some City Employees and their families are facing hardships. Club Angels, the charity started by staff members of the Employees Club, invites you to join our efforts to help.

Since the Club Angels appeal began, the charity has provided more than **\$8,000 in grocery assistance** to fellow City Employees through your gifts, and matching funds from the Club.

"Thank you to all Club Members who have contributed to the Club Angels charity, and helped your fellow City employees," says Arlene Herrero, Club Angels President.

"The ability of Club Angels to help City Employees in need relies on your donations.

"I love it when gratitude and positive emotions are created through donations and from those who have reached out to Club Angels for assistance," said Club COO Robert Larios. "People reaching out to help strengthen and remind me of the lifelong impact Club Angels is making to members and their families."

"Club Angels thanks everyone who has donated," Arlene Herrero said. "And if you are facing hardship, please reach out to us. Club Angels is here to help."

The Club encourages City Employees and everyone to contribute to the Club Angels fund, accessed on its GoFundMe page. Donations go to City Employees in need; Club Angels and the Employees Club earn nothing from the transaction. Donations might be tax deductible; consult your tax professional.

Please be generous.

Club Angels charity has helped nearly **60 Club Members in need.**

**To donate, go to:
ClubAngels.org
Please be generous.**

Club Angels is a separate charity begun by Club staff.

34,000 and Counting



50,000 members

34,000 members called since March 25

The Club "Care Calls" project continues its efforts to call all 50,000 active Members to say hello and check on how you're doing during the current coronavirus pandemic.

If you've already heard from your Club rep on the phone, great! We trust you enjoyed the call. The Club has reached about 34,000 active members so far, so if you haven't been contacted, we'll be calling everyone!

CLUB CALLERS

Some 30 Club staff members are calling all 50,000 active Club Members as part of the Club "Care Calls" project. Pictured here are some of those staffers. Tell them we said hello!





Life's Important Moments

Share Your Life's Moments
 Submit digital photos and text online:
alive.employeesclub.com/lifemoments

Retirements

Here's a listing of all those who retired from the City this month. To all we say, welcome to the Best Years!

NAME	TITLE	DEPT.	YEARS	NAME	TITLE	DEPT.	YEARS
Ahlander, Laurie	Animal Keeper	Zoo	30	Lee, Jimmy	Sr. Systems Analyst	Econ./Wrkfr. Dev.	30
Almanza, David E.	Bldg. Op. Engineer	Airports	25	Lewis, Cary	Power Constr.	DWP	N/D
Alvarado, Frank L.	Roofer Supervisor	Gen Services	32	Liberman, Adi Eddie	Council Aide	Council	6
Aros, James	Metering Services	DWP	N/D	Lockwood, Dirk	Power Trans.	DWP	N/D
Awakuni, Kit N.	City Planner	City Planning	30	Lopez, Martin	Supply Chain	DWP	N/D
Babikian, Gabriel	Water Operations	DWP	N/D	Lopez-Salvador, Juan	Fleet Services	DWP	N/D
Bagheri, Mahmoud	Engineer	Transportation	22	Luna, Gabriel	Metering Services	DWP	N/D
Bancale, Michael	JFB Facilities	DWP	N/D	Marashi, Shokoufe	Environmental Super.	Public Works	30
Barksdale, Barry W.	Electrician	Rec and Parks	16	Mattera, Georgia A.	Ch. Deputy Control.	Controller's Off.	25
Burnett, Fred W.	Geologist	Public Works	36	McNeel, Tori	Customer Services	DWP	N/D
Campos, Mary Helen	Exec. Admin. Asst.	LAPD	34	McDevitt, James	Power Constr.	DWP	N/D
Carlos, Ferdinand	Water Distribution	DWP	N/D	McNeil, Helenia R.	Admin. Clerk	Public Works	35
Catsoulas, Michael	Power Constr.	DWP	N/D	McMahon, Huong	Power Supply	DWP	N/D
Chapman, Shawn	Water Operations	DWP	N/D	Mendoza, Sergio	Power Constr.	DWP	N/D
Chic, Aldous L.	Structural Eng. Ass.	Bldg. & Safety	30	Mejia, Samuel	Carpenter	Gen Services	14
Chiu, Sungly	Power Planning	DWP	N/D	Minton, Juliette T.	Library Assistant	Library	33
Chu, Judy	Parking Attendant	Gen Services	16	Mosser, Maribelle	Corp. Safety	DWP	N/D
Chung, Sherry	Syst. Programmer	ITA	31	Nakata, Mark Nobu	Sr. Manage. Anyst.	Public Works	30
Clemens, David	Env. Chem. Lab	DWP	N/D	Nguyen, Minh M.	Sr. Systems Anyst.	Public Works	26
Coats, Aarne	Water Operations	DWP	N/D	Niebla, Juan M.	Gardener Caretaker	Rec and Parks	20
Collins, Jay M.	Sergeant	Airports	14	Onyejiji, Catherine C.	Correctional Nurse	Personnel	20
Constancio, Tina	Customer Service	DWP	N/D	O'Toole, Kevin	Power Trans.	DWP	N/D
Corber, Randall	Ptd. Transmission	DWP	N/D	Perez, Roberto	Water Distribution	DWP	N/D
Cortez, Jesus A.	Gardener Caretaker	Airports	35	Petch, Wisarn	ITS	DWP	N/D
Covington, Genela	Metering Services	DWP	N/D	Pham, Cindy H.	Sr. Civil Engineer	Public Works	27
Dai Core, Yan	Civil Engin. Ass.	Public Works	30	Police, Ganise A.	Manage. Analyst	LAPD	35
David, Jesus	Metering Services	DWP	N/D	Polnitz, Sylvia	Power Constr.	DWP	N/D
De Guzman, Elizardo A.	Comm. Electr.	Airports	21	Quintero, Annette	Power Constr.	DWP	N/D
Decker, Eileen Maura	Deputy Mayor	Mayor's Office	20	Raad, Antoine	Power New Bus.	DWP	N/D
Devorss, Thayne	Water Engineering	DWP	N/D	Ramirez, Gregory	Power Trans.	DWP	N/D
Diaz, Myrna C.	Pr. Accountant	Harbor	32	Rodriguez, Guadalupe	Admin. Clerk	Personnel	15
Dinu, Valentin F.	Asst. City Attorney	City Attorney	32	Rosolowski, Karen C.	Instructor	Rec and Parks	2
Farkas, Deborah	Law Librarian	City Attorney	23	Royal, Kathleen S.	Polygraph Exam.	LAPD	26
Felix, Elaine A.	Storekeeper	Gen Services	38	Rubio, Angel E.	Maint. Laborer	Public Works	32
Fletcher, David E.	Str. Services Super.	Public Works	31	Saboury, Massoud	Real Estate	DWP	N/D
Fox, Mitchell J.	Deputy City Att.	City Attorney	34	Sanchez, Eduardo	JFB Facilities	DWP	N/D
Friedman, Aaron R.	Deputy City Att.	City Attorney	30	Sarno, Lisa W.	Asst. Gen. Mgr.	El Pueblo Hist. Mon.	22
Fu, Timothy T.	Structural Engin. Ass.	Public Works	33	Siedorf, Debra	Deputy City Att.	City Attorney	34
Gallegos, Marco	Metering Services	DWP	N/D	Sison, Nemesia T.	Accounting Clerk	Public Works	30
Gilani, Cyrus A.	Sr. Civil Engineer	Public Works	27	Smith, Keith A.	Maint. Super.	Airports	23
Godoy, Thomas	Supply Chain	DWP	N/D	Spain, Bryan A.	Structural Engin. Ass.	Bldg. & Safety	5
Gomez, Douglas	Power Trans.	DWP	N/D	Stedman, Bryan E.	Comm. Electr. Super.	LAFD	35
Gomez, John	Supply Chain	DWP	N/D	Stepp, Karen L.	Animal Control Off.	Animal Services	18
Gomez, Manuel	Solid Waste Disp. Supt.	Public Works	30	Tabares, Diego Romo	Forensic Print Spec.	LAPD	30
Gregos, Gordon	Equip. Mechanic	Gen Services	12	Tam, Esther	Systems Prog.	City Planning	31
Hamai, Gary	Metering Services	DWP	N/D	Thompson, Dale	Sustainability	DWP	N/D
Harms, John	Motor Sweeper Op.	Public Works	31	Ulibarri, Linda	Power Trans.	DWP	N/D
Hernandez, Nora B.	Police Service Rep.	LAPD	31	Underwood, Glenn	Power Supply	DWP	N/D
Holme, Robert N.	Survey Party Chief	Harbor	28	Valenzuela, Richard J.	RCTO	Public Works	28
Hour, Rom	Power Constr.	DWP	N/D	Vanderput, Dan	Fleet Services	DWP	N/D
Howard, Beatrice J.	Sr. Admin. Clerk	LAPD	35	Verger, Paul	Systems Analyst	City Planning	35
Huynh, Cecilia	Water Operations	DWP	N/D	Virgo, Mark R.	Security Officer	Airports	21
Huynh, Todd	Water Distribution	DWP	N/D	Wang, Jenny M.	Manage. Analyst	Gen Services	33
Jones, Robert A.	Construction Insp.	Public Works	16	Warren, Sheldon	JFB Facilities	DWP	N/D
Karr, Craig	Metering Services	DWP	N/D	Webb, Peter	Water Distribution	DWP	N/D
Kazman, Nisan	Supply Chain	DWP	N/D	Weng, Winston V.	Systems Analyst	Finance	25
Keehn, Maryanne T.	Ch. Manage. Analyst	Personnel	22	Wilson, Phillip M.	Civil Engin. Ass.	Public Works	30
Lao, Julius Mendoza	Sr. Admin. Clerk	LAPD	36	Wong, Nathan Danyo	Electrician	Public Works	15
Law, Helen	Sr. Chemist	Public Works	34	Yeomans, Donald A.	Welder Supervisor	Gen Services	30
Lee, Henry	ITS	DWP	N/D	Yew, Edmond	Pr. Civil Engineer	Public Works	35

N/D = not disclosed

In Memoriam

Our thoughts and condolences are with the family and friends of the following current and retired City employees who have passed away.

DEPARTMENT	YEARS OF SERVICE
Active	
Camou, Victor	Gen Services 5
Haldeman, John	Airports 21
Hobson, Cristal	DWP 5
Jones, Curtis	Transportation 30
Licea, Arely	Public Works 5
Trujillo, Leslie	Bldg. & Safety 32

DEPARTMENT	YEARS OF SERVICE
Retired	
Adrados, Pablito	Gen Services 5
Armen, Kevork	DWP 28
Arreola, Margaret	DWP 35
Biggles, Ronald	N/D N/D
Bingham, John	Controller's Off. 17
Blodgett, Ilmi	N/D N/D
Burke, Leola	DWP 26
Caballero, Arcadia	ITA 28
Casaletta, Richard	Gen Services 31
Charlap-Hyman, Paula	N/D N/D
Christian, Frank	N/D N/D
Cleary, Diane	DWP 15
Colvin, Floyd	Public Works 33
Dow, Walter	N/D N/D
Foster, Carl	N/D N/D
Freeman, Curtis	N/D N/D
Freeman, SD	DWP 3
Garcia, Joe	DWP 32
Gilmore, Willie	Transportation 38
Gordon, Calvin	N/D N/D
Grijalva, Margaret	Transportation 10
Henderson, Bonny	DWP 30
Herrera, Jess	DWP 35
Houston, Timothy	Airports 31
Howard, CH	N/D N/D
Ige, Wayne	LACERS 23
Jones, Arthur	DWP 37
Jones, Edson	DWP 24
Kosche, Esther	N/D N/D
Landeros, Raul	Rec and Parks 34
Lockwood, Bobbi	Rec and Parks 17
Lyons, Chester	N/D N/D
Miller, Robert	Harbor 39
Milspaugh, Joseph	N/D N/D
Miyatake, Masashi	N/D N/D
Molette, Anthony	Transportation 33
Moore, Velma	DWP 14
Morgan, Leon	N/D N/D
Nakamura, Yoshiharu	DWP 29
Nobles, Leo	DWP 27
Ordway, Donald	DWP 37
Osollo, LF	Public Works 40
Perez, George	N/D N/D
Pizzo, Americo	DWP 24
Pope, Thomas	Bldg. & Safety 33
Reschke, Kurt	Public Works 32
Reiersen, Odd	DWP 25
Reinmuth, Vern	DWP 31
Reyes, Richard	DWP 20
Rouso, Mico	N/D N/D
Russell, Ruthie	DWP 25
Sakai, Rodney	Econ./Wrkfr. Dev. 32
Salais, Alicia	Rec and Parks 15
Salter, Tom	N/D N/D
Samonte, Oswaldo	Harbor 12
Satalich, Miro	N/D N/D
Schnadt, William	DWP 21
Smith, Stanley	DWP 23
Stanfield, Jimmie	N/D N/D
Sterner, Robert	N/D N/D
Strawn, Gerald	DWP 24
Stricklett, James	DWP 29
Tafoya, Rose	DWP 17
Tanimoto, Shikuo	N/D N/D
Vierra, Albert	N/D N/D
Vo, Joseph	N/D N/D
Wilber, John	N/D N/D
Williams, Oddie	N/D N/D
Word, Walter	Public Works 16
Zurita, Clarence	DWP 20

N/D = not disclosed

Special Achievement

47 Years and Counting!

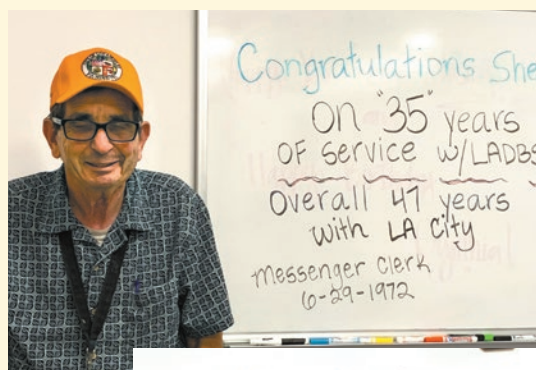
Sherman Stark, Building and Safety, is celebrating 47 years of City service. Awesome!

"He started as a Messenger as an Exempt in Library on June 29, 1972," explains officemate Corleto Manuel, Building and Safety. "He spent 35 years of service with Building and Safety.

"Everybody loves him," Corleto continues. "He's a workaholic, a dedicated and happy worker for the City."

Sherman recently had a service celebration with his office mates, celebrating 47 years. At the end of June, he will reach 48! Congratulations, Sherman!

Special thanks to Corleto Manuel for sharing Sherman's amazing achievement.



Sherman Stark



Officemates celebrating Sherman's 47 years of service.

Share Your Life's Moments

Everyone reads Life's Important Moments in *Alive!*

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.



Submit digital photos and text online:

(as high a resolution as you can send)

alive.employeesclub.com/lifemoments

Graduations

No graduation cancellations here!

Ceremonies might have been canceled throughout the country due to the pandemic, but the Club is happy to post your graduations here and online. Congratulations to all in the class of 2020 – your future is bright!

Have a photo to submit? Go here: alive.employeesclub.com/graduations/

Congratulations!



Grant Kitahata graduated from the Illinois Institute of Technology with a degree in mechanical engineering and a Master's degree in aeronautical and mechanical engineering. His future plans are "to get a job and enjoy life!" He's the **son of Capt. II Tommy Kitahata, LAFD.**



Jade Garcia Cabrera graduated from the University of San Francisco. "We are so proud of my daughter, an honors graduate majoring in media studies with a minor in film studies. My love and support always." She's the **daughter of Sophia Garcia, Office of the City Attorney.**



Savannah Garcia graduated from Cal State Fullerton. "So proud of my daughter, who graduated from Cal State, Fullerton, majoring in child and adolescent studies. My love and support always." She's the **daughter of Sophia Garcia, Office of the City Attorney.**



Angelina Suarez graduated from Simi Valley High School and plans to attend Northern Arizona University in the fall as a nursing major. She wants to become a forensic nurse. Angelina is the **daughter of Raymond Rodriguez, Public Works/Sanitation.**



Jessica Chavez graduated from Los Angeles Senior High School with honors. She plans to attend Los Angeles Community College in the fall, majoring in theatre arts. She's the **daughter of Rosa San Martin, Airport Police.**



Jessica Arriaga graduated from Cal Poly Pomona with a Bachelor's degree in education. "Mom, Dad and brother are so proud of you." She's the **daughter of Daniel Arriaga, DWP.**



Donna Cox celebrated the 45th anniversary of her graduating from Perris High School's class of 1975. She **works for DWP's Fleet Services.** Congratulations, Donna!



Alyssa Parra graduated from Granada Hills Charter High School. She plans to attend Cal State Northridge in the fall, studying biology, then earn a doctorate and become a pediatric neuropsychologist. She's the **daughter of Arnold Parra, Public Works/StreetsLA.**



Sierra Thompson graduated from King Drew Magnet High School and plans to attend Cal State Fullerton in the fall, majoring in nursing. She is a Club intern and is the **sister of Club staffer DeAngelo Thompson.**



Irene Mendez graduated from Knight High School in Palmdale as valedictorian. Also, she received the California Scholarship Federation award. She plans on attending a community college before transferring to a four-year university, looking ultimately to earning a doctorate in English literature. She hopes to become a high school principal. **Irene is a Customer Service Rep for the Club.**



Jessica Wren graduated from Cal Poly Pomona with a Bachelor's degree in management/information science. She has accepted a position on the technology risk team at Ernst and Young. She's the **daughter of Lily Wren, LAPD.**



Mikaela Campos graduated from Sacred Heart High School in Lincoln Heights. She plans on attending Northern Arizona University in the fall, joining the ROTC program and majoring in criminal justice with a minor in psychology. She's the daughter of Renee Pizano, LAPD; the granddaughter of Jovita Pizana, also LAPD; and the **goddaughter of Gene Alvarado, Public Works/StreetsLA.**



Madisun McNair graduated from Warren High School in Downey. Graduating with a 4.0 GPA, Madisun plans to attend Full Sail University in Florida in the fall, where she will study sports-casting. She's the daughter of **LaCarol Black, LAPD.**



Kaily Spain graduated from Alta Loma High School in Rancho Cucamonga. She was accepted into the nursing program at the University of California, San Bernardino. She's the **daughter of William Spain, General Services.**



Arianna Alarcon graduated from Chino High School and plans to attend college and play water polo and soccer. She's shown interest in the LAPD or LAFD. "Love ya, kiddo – Dad, Mom, sister so proud of you." She's the **daughter of Charlie Alarcon, DWP.**



INDEPENDENCE DAY 2020

CITY PLANNING

Ship Shap

Alive! photos by Summy Lam and John Burnes, and courtesy the Bill Lillenberg family



Are You a Veteran?

The last few years, *Alive!* has been telling the stories of American veterans as part of our Fourth of July issue. We know many of you are veterans. For now, we're looking to interview veterans of World War II or Korea who also were City employees. We might not be able to interview you all right away, but we'll do our best.

Contact us at:
talkback@employeesclub.com

THANK YOU!

Bill Lillenberg, 91, Retired, Planning, and US Navy veteran, served at Midway Island just after the war, then joined the NSA at the beginning of the intelligence agency. Here's his story.

In 1946, Bill Lillenberg went from his high school graduation in Iowa to Navy boot camp and Radioman training in San Diego just a few weeks later. Then he went on to Pearl Harbor and finally Midway Island a few months after that. When he arrived to begin two years in the middle of the Pacific, signs of the critical Battle of Midway four years earlier were still visible, although they were largely cleaned up. He even worked alongside several Navy seamen who actually remembered the battle, and battle debris would wash ashore almost daily.

His military career ended in the early 1950s when, as a Naval reserve Officer, he was recalled by the Navy back to full service during the Korean Conflict. The reason: Bill had developed strong skills

managing messages over the radio waves. He was tasked to do just that in a brand-new US intelligence service, the National Security Administration (the NSA). He was part of the very beginning of what is now one of the world's top intelligence-gathering bureaus.

And that was all before he left for California with his late wife, Mary Alice, and began what would be a more-than-38-year career with City Planning.

He's lived a full life of service. And now, as part of *Alive!*'s annual tribute to the servicemen and servicewomen on Independence Day, we asked Bill to tell us about his service career, and what freedom means to him.

Here's his story. ■

The *Alive!* Interview

From Midway to the Capital

On June 4 – the 78th anniversary of the Battle of Midway during World War II – Club CEO John Hawkins and Alive! editor John Burnes interviewed Bill Lillenberg, Retired, Associate Zoning Administrator, City Planning, 38 years of City service, at his home in Granada Hills. Bill, 91, served in the United States Navy at Midway Island less than a year after the end of the war and, later, was on staff of the National Security Agency (NSA) in Washington, DC, just after the famous intelligence agency was formed. (Hannah Hawkins, John Hawkins' daughter, 15, is studying World War II in school and contributed to the interview.) Club crew remained safely distanced.

Alive!: Thanks for inviting us into your home today, Bill, and having your family here.
Bill Lillenberg: Sure.

Let's start with your department. You retired from Planning, is that correct?
 City Planning. It was called City Planning then.

Okay. And what was your title when you retired?
 Associate Zoning Administrator.

And what did that entail?
 I was like a judge who handled land-use matters. People who were developing subdivisions, shopping centers, hospitals, churches came in to apply for permits. If they didn't meet the zoning code, they would have to file a variance. I was the judge who listened to their application and would write a report saying whether I approved it or disapproved it.

Got it.
 I got a lot of liquor stores.

Really?
 Yes. You had to be in an industrial zone or a commercial zone. If you had a massage parlor or a liquor store, you always had to file an application for that. And the Police Dept. would always check with me whether there was a high crime in that area.

How long did you work for City Planning?
 Thirty-eight-years.

When you came out to LA with your wife, did you go right into City employment or did you do something else?
 We came out here and we lived with [wife] Mary Alice's sister and parents for a few years, and then we got an apartment by ourselves. I was going to Valley College. A lot of veterans were going there at the same time.

So after you were discharged from the Navy, you returned to your home in Davenport, Iowa to attend college at St. Ambrose University.
 St. Ambrose. I was at St. Ambrose only one year. Before St. Ambrose I worked for Alcoa, an aluminum mill just north of Davenport. I was foreman there.

Why did you stop going to school in Iowa after only a year?
 I had joined the Naval Reserve. I finished one semester at St. Ambrose and I got recalled back into the Navy. The Navy sent me to Washington, DC. And that's where I met my wife.

Okay we'll get to DC in a few minutes, for sure. You joined the Navy after graduating from high school in Davenport?
 Yes. I graduated from high school in June 1946 and joined the Navy in July of '46 at the age of 17.

– continues page 12

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Alive! Feature

The USS General Ernst. Bill Lillenberg served aboard this ship in the Pacific Ocean during the second half of his first Navy stint.



A Family of Service

Bill and (the late) Mary Alice Lillenberg raised a family dedicated to City and national service. Their offspring:



From left: Mark Lillenberg, Amy Lillenberg, Bill Lillenberg, Joshua Lillenberg, Kevin Lillenberg and Deborah Lillenberg, Kevin's wife. Inset: Capt. Christopher Lillenberg, a dentist in the U.S. Air Force

Sons

- Eng. Mark Lillenberg**
Retired, Engineer, LAFD (FS 95 at LAX) with 30 years of City service.
- Eng. Kevin Lillenberg**
Retired, Engineer, LAFD (FS 97 off Mulholland Drive) with 32 years of City service.

Daughter

- Det. Amy Lillenberg**
Retired, Detective, LAPD (West Valley Division/Burglary) with 25 years of City service.

Grandsons

- Capt. I Joshua Lillenberg**
Active Capt. I, LAFD (FS 48 in San Pedro), 17 years of City service.
- Capt. Christopher Lillenberg**
Dentist in the U.S. Air Force.



From left: U.S. Navy Veterans Bill Lillenberg and Club CEO John Hawkins.



The *Alive!* Interview – continued from page 10

You were just under the threshold, so they let you in.

That's right. I went from Davenport on a really long train ride to San Diego for boot camp.

My first tour with the Navy took about three-and-a-half years. Then I got out and was out in the Naval Reserve for about a year before they called me back. When I was out during that year I took all kinds of jobs I could get to make some money so I could go to college.

I had a friend who said, "You should get in the Reserves. You go to a meeting once a week and you get a little extra pay. Don't worry, they're not going to call you back!"

But they did.

Yes. I got a nasty letter from the Navy that just said, "Report." They gave me four days. And that's when I went to a little base north of Chicago to start training again.

Why did they call you back?

The Korean War had just started. They called me back to do exactly what I was doing before. They wanted me because I was in Communication.

Right. A Radioman.

Yes. When I got there in Washington, DC, I had to take all these exams about my background. They hooked up a lie detector.

Yes, I imagine.

The guy running the lie detector would go up into a little booth and look down on me to see if I was going to fool around with that lie detector! About five minutes later he'd come back down and he'd look at the machine and say, "Okay, you pass."

They wanted you because you were a Radioman – you were very good at picking up signals through various communications methods right?

That's right. Yes.

Did they ask you if wanted to be part of the NSA?

I had no choice. I didn't want to go to the NSA; I wanted to go back into the Navy. But NSA was just forming [in 1952]. I had to wear an ID tag around my neck showing that I had clearance.

Right.

I was still part of the Navy. The branches were all there.

How long was that second stint in the Navy?

About two years.

Okay. And then you got out, got married, and came west. And then the schooling started.

Yes. I transferred out of Valley College and into UCLA on the GI Bill, where the Navy would pay my expenses and my rent. And then to USC for my Master's degree.

Okay, thanks for that rundown. We'll get back to all that.

Sure.

★ City Career

Let's go back to your City career for just a minute.

All right, go ahead.

Did you enjoy working for the City?

Oh, Yes. Yes, I liked it a lot. I would have worked longer but 38 years was a long time.

You must have enjoyed what you were doing.

Yes.

Did you train for that at UCLA?

No. After graduating from UCLA, I got a job in Burbank making parts for aircraft. The war was winding down and they weren't building those airplanes anymore, and they went bankrupt. I told my wife, "I can't work with these kind of jobs. I want to have something that's more definite and permanent." That's when I started looking for a job in either the City or the County.

I was unemployed and I went down to City Hall and the Personnel Dept. I looked on the bulletin board to see what they had available. City Planning looked like about the only thing I could get into. I couldn't get into Engineering or Water and Power or Police or Fire. I applied there. They checked my background, took my application and gave me a test.

Right, a Civil Service test.

Yes.

What are your best memories of working for the City? What did you really like about it?

Equal opportunities. You had to work hard and get good ratings. At the end of every year, they'd rate you on how well you did the job. And then they would give you a test if you wanted to move up to the next level. It was very competitive.

Who was your favorite mayor to work for?

Tom Bradley.

He was good?

He was very good.

What made him good?

He was concerned about all the departments. He would tour through the Planning Dept. and see how things were going.

He was a boots on the ground kind of guy.

He was. He was easy to approach. There was another mayor who was a lawyer.

Richard Riordan?

Yes. He owned a restaurant downtown.

He still does.

He would call me down to his office all the time to sit down with people who were having trouble with the Planning Dept. I would sit at this conference table with these developers and answer their questions and tell them what they had to do and what they didn't have to do. He called me all the time.

As the Associate Zoning Administrator?

Yes. But I was kind of the assistant to the Zoning Administrator. When he would go on vacation or when he was out of town, I would get his phone calls and all his problems. I remember one time I got a phone call and the man said, "I'm the head of security at a City park. We have a helicopter coming in to you with Frank Sinatra."

Frank Sinatra?

Frank Sinatra!

Of course. He always arrived in a helicopter!

He came in with his two or three assistants. They were having concerts or programs or something next door to the park, which was an outdoor area. After his thing was over, he wanted to come back to the park and get in his helicopter and fly back to his home in Orange County where he was living.

Do you remember what park that was?

The biggest park in the City of Los Angeles, with a big water fountain.

MacArthur Park?

Yes.

He flew his helicopter into MacArthur Park?

Yes.



Bill Lillenberg, Retired, City Planning, at his home.

Your three children all worked for the City. Did you recommend your kids and grandson to join the City?

I told them, "Get a job where you won't get fired every time the economy went down. I want you to get a job that's stable and predictable and they treat you right." And they all went into the Police or the Fire Dept. My daughter went into the Police Dept. and my sons went into the Fire Dept. And my grandson is now a Captain with the Fire Dept., down in the Harbor.

We've been doing this version of the *Alive!* newspaper for 17 years, but we have not come up with a family with that much City Employee experience. Not that I remember. Especially at high levels.

Nobody ever asked me about it before.

★ To Midway

So you were in high school when World War II ended.

The war was over when I was in Radioman school in San Diego.

How did you get from Iowa to San Diego?

By train. In those days nobody flew. If you went on the train you were either a troop, sick, coming out of a hospital, or you were a passenger trying to get out of someplace else. People who flew were the executives or congressmen or the presidents and people like that.

So you went to boot camp in San Diego and then immediately to Radioman school.

Yes, right out of boot camp. They were in the same place, just a half-block away.

Why did you choose the Navy? Or did the Navy choose you?

No. I had family members who were in the Navy and they seemed to like it. The draft was just about over but I didn't want to go in the Army.

How did you choose to be a Radioman?

As I got through with boot camp, they looked up my high school education and they said, "We've got the people we need in two areas, and you can pick the one you want." I said, "Which ones you got?" They said, "You can be a Hospitalman helping the doctors." I was no nurse. "Or you can be a Radioman." I said, "Is a Hospitalman the one who draws blood, and gives you shots in the arm?" They said yes. And I said, "I'll be a Radioman."

The Radioman works in a pretty secure environment, right?

Yes, right. You had to work around the clock. I used to work a week of days, a week of evenings and then work a mid-shift. I did that all the time.

You had top clearance.

Yes. the reason we had the clearance is because the messages were coming in and were were reading them before the Captain got them. They want to be sure that we were cleared because the Captain's going to have to use this for this is his orders from the Pentagon.

It was a pretty big deal.

Yes.

Tell us what a Radioman did. You were at Midway Island, not on a ship. What did you do?

Well, I didn't do Morse Code very much. It was fading out. Most of the work we got came via Teletype from Pearl Harbor in Hawaii.

You would hear those signals on an earpiece?

No. It printed out on a typewriter. We had one unit – if it was important for the Captain, we would pull out that report and make a copy of it and run it across the hall to the Captain. And if we wanted to change frequencies, we would call our office nearby and they would change the frequency for us. We'd change the frequency at nighttime. The signals were stronger at night.

What did you do after Radioman school?

That's when I went to Midway.

For how long?

Two years. But when I got there it was only supposed to be for one because that's such a miserable place to be. It's just a pile of sand on a small island. Then they extended it three more months. I just kept working, and they didn't say anything about extensions after that. After two years, they said, "You're going."

How did you get from San Diego to Midway?

On a Navy ship. It was also carrying cargo.

What was your first impression of going there?

I was disappointed.

Why?

I said, "What kind of a ship is this?" And they said, "Just get on board! You'll be all right!"



Alive! Feature

The Alive! Interview

– continued from page 12

What was your impression of Midway Island? After hearing all the stories about the famous battle that happened there.

It was an island that was mainly sand and there were a lot of gooney birds everywhere. The radio room was underground – it was still recovering from the war, and it was a deep underground vault-type place. You'd walk down some steps and you'd go through these steel doors, and that's where the radio room was. Next to the radio room was a conference room where the Captain held his meetings when they were under attack. There was a machine where you could turn on the electricity if the power went out.

There were some bunks and a little kitchen across from the radio room where people could stay overnight if they couldn't get out, when the island was under attack during the war.

You've been back since.

I went back there as a civilian with my wife. The Navy had left and it was taken over by the federal government as a park or reserve area. People would come there and go fishing and surfing. We stayed a week.

Yes. Was it different when you went back?

It was all closed down. I stayed in an Officer's quarters and I was a civilian at that point, so that was kind of nice for me.

When you went there the first time, right after the war, was there any debris or destruction that had been cleaned up, or still in existence? Could you see any damage from the Battle of Midway?

No. The damage was all cleaned out. They still had a lot of food leftovers, though. Our food was all in cans.

C-Rations?

C-Rations. We never had any milk and we had coffee. But we never got anything fresh.

Was anyone still stationed on the island who was there during the war? Was anybody still there?

A few. They were all the second-class and the first-class Petty Officers. They were getting ready to leave. They wanted to go back home because the war was over. I was taking their place.

How did they treat you?

Like hell. Like, "Get out of my way, you punk." I lived in a barracks on the second floor, and all the Radiomen were in that particular area. The Seabees who built everything were transferred to Kwajalein [Atoll, in the Marshal Islands] later because they didn't need them anymore on Midway.

Did you go to any of the other islands near Midway Island?

Yes, I did. The Captain or his assistant would make trips up and down to the other adjoining islands to see if everything was under control. I went on that trip twice. I went on as a Radioman. We usually would take a Nurse with us and an Engineer to run the engine. And we would take food to last us for our lunch before we came back. It was quite a trip getting out there and along these little islands. You could see all kinds of debris from ships that had been sunk and lifeboats that had washed up. During the war, Marines were stationed up on the hills on top of these islands. We could see where they had been.

As a Radioman, were you handling almost entirely U.S. communications or were you also intercepting foreign communications?

Just the U.S. communications. It was all stuff that came from Hawaii to the Captain.

Was it coded in any way?

No. It was plain letter. He would come in after about 5 p.m. when everybody else had left. He'd come by and look at the Teletype and look at all the messages that came in. One day, the Chief Petty Officer came by and said, "The Captain wants you to raise your elbow next time you shave because your sideburns are getting too long." That's a true story!

Oh, that's funny.

He wouldn't talk to me personally. The Captains never talked to the people. It's always down the line.



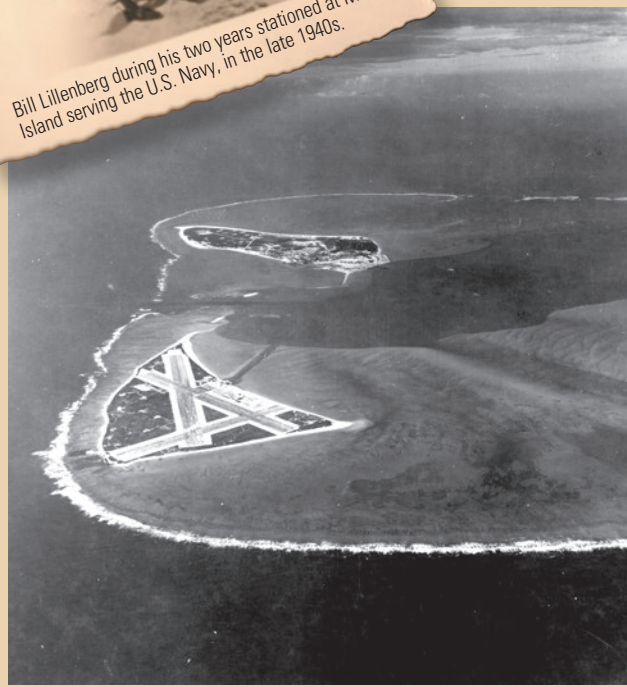
A collection of photos from Bill's days stationed at Midway Island, late 1940s.



Bill Lillenberg during his two years stationed at Midway Island serving the U.S. Navy, in the late 1940s.



Bill Lillenberg's senior portrait from Davenport (Iowa) High School, 1946. He would be stationed at Midway Island a few months later.



An aerial view of Midway Atoll in November 1941, just before the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor a month later. Eastern Island (foreground) contained the air base; Sand Island contained the US Navy installation, where Bill Lillenberg was stationed beginning in 1946.



Mary Alice Lillenberg, Bill's late wife. They met in the Navy while working for the NSA in Washington, DC, where they were married.

When you settled in at Midway, were you thinking, "I hit the jackpot. This is awesome. I love this warm weather and the beach?"

No. I said, "What did I do to get this place?" I thought I was going to go aboard ship someplace.

But then after Midway, you did.

Right. After being stationed on Midway for two years, I went home for about three weeks, and then I had to get back to San Diego.

You were being reassigned to a ship.

Yes. I was a Radioman on a passenger ship, the AP-133 [The USS General Ernst, decommissioned by the Navy in 1946 and transferred to the US Army]. Most of the passengers were enlisted men, but sometimes it would take Officers and their families to Hawaii and drop them off. Or it would take Marines towards China or other places.

And how long were you on that?

About 18 months.

Pretty much the rest of your enlistment.

Yes. Most of the time we went from Midway back to Pearl Harbor. I went to Guam once. I picked up a division of Marines and brought them back to San Diego, and then they went up to Camp Lejeune by bus.

Were you glad you were on a ship and not on Midway?

One thing I liked about the ship was that we had a chance to see different places. I went to San Diego and then up to San Francisco, and I could get off there and go through the Harbor, that big harbor they have up there in San Francisco.

Do you have fond memories both of being on Midway and on the troop ship?

Not Midway but on board the ship – I kind of enjoyed that. I like traveling. And we didn't have just sailors. We had Marines and Officers and their children and wives when the War was over. And on board the ship we started getting fresh food. They could pull into port and get some milk. Everything had to come to Midway by airplane and or ship.

Did anything happen to you on Midway that you would consider unusual, or scary, or funny, even?

Each department had to provide one person to get rid of the trash that accumulated on Midway, and they put it on a flat barge. A tugboat would take them out. We would get on that flat barge and it would pull us out maybe about two miles from Midway. Our Chief Petty Officer and we would push this trash off, and it would sink down into the ocean. It was all things that they couldn't burn or get rid of on the island.

Like metal and debris?

Yes. That's the way they got rid of it.

Anything scary?

One time we got a report that there was an earthquake up off of Alaska and it said these waves were coming down towards Midway and we had two hours to take precautions because it was going to wash right over the island. The whole island went to general quarters. I went to the radio room and we were all standing there waiting for that storm and that wave to hit the island, and it missed us.

Wow.

We found out later that it turned and went toward Hawaii. It didn't hit us after all.

★ On to the Reserves, And Intelligence Work

So then you you finished your enlistment, were discharged, and you're finished with your Navy service. You go back to Iowa, back home. And you work for Alcoa.

Yes. After Alcoa, I had a couple other little jobs waiting for the semester to start at St. Ambrose.

You got into the Naval Reserve.

Right. When I was working there, a friend of mine in the Navy said, "Let's join the Navy Reserve. If we join the Navy Reserve, we can go to meetings one night a week and get some money for it." I said, "What do we do with the Navy Reserve?" Oh, it's kind of communication work, too, he said. "But it's security work. They might have to check your background." I was clean; there was nothing to see. And so we joined, and I did that only for maybe about six weeks and then the Korean War broke out. And it took about five days to get that letter in the mail – "Report to the base north of Chicago." It was called Great Lakes.

We called it Great Mistakes. Great Mistakes!

So because you're in the Naval Reserve it made you eligible for the Navy to call you back?

Yes. I should have joined the Foreign Legion or something!

Except you eventually met your wife through that.

Right. Then they moved me to Arlington, Va. Quarters K. Just south of DC, near the cemetery.



The Alive! Interview

— continued from page 13

Just a block away from where all the veterans are buried.

In front of that was Fort Myer, a ceremonial place where they had horses. If there was anything going on down at the White House they would be part of the parade that would carry the horses and people in the parade. They would guard the president.

They called you back because you had extensive experience as a Radioman, right?

Yes.

But that job had grown. You weren't just receiving messages, you were in I guess the intelligence service now.

Yes.

My dad was in at the same time, during the Korean War. He was sent to Germany with the Army, and he was in the Counterintelligence Corps.

The stuff that he got was probably sent to where I was in DC That was the center of gathering all the information from Europe, the foreign broadcasts, past and present. We would get messages from Russian planes that were flying over and photographing the American Navy.

My mother said, "Billy, where you working now? The FBI is coming around asking all kinds of questions about you! And not only me, but the neighbors. They want to know what kind of person you are – do you drink a lot, are you trustworthy?" And I said, "Mom, don't worry about it. I'll clear that."

That's when you were a part of the NSA. It's what your training led you to.

When I got there, when I was waiting for a clearance, I worked in the dental office. Here we had a medical and a dental office next to this Navy base. It was guarded by Marines, and I said, "When am I going to get my clearance?" And he said, "Well, they're working on it and I'll let you know when you get it." Turns out the [superior] was holding up my clearance because he was getting first-class service getting his teeth cleaned and examined. They were shorthanded of people and I was taking the appointments and helping the dentist doing extractions, and I was learning all kinds of things. The dentist asked me if I wanted to stay on. And I said, "Well, I'm a Radioman. I can't do any dental work here." I pushed the issue with the JG, and two days later I got my order that said to report [to the Naval service within the NSA].

That's all it took.

Leave and go.

So what did you do at Quarters K?

It was a mixture – everybody who wasn't married and were lower staff were stationed there. The women were up the street and the men were down the street. In the middle were the kitchen and the dining area where we ate. I would come out of my barracks and get on the bus, and it would take me to work.

I went to this Army base post that was turned into the NSA to use to create their organization. We would take messages from around the world that came in on Teletype, and we just rolled all the tapes up and send them out to the different areas that would monitor those areas. These people were trained to break down foreign broadcasts and read the foreign messages.

What did you tell people you were doing? That you were working for the NSA?

I just said I'm still in the Navy.

When I was doing Radioman work, the National Security Agency referred me to the CIA, and I had two interviews with them. They wanted me to go to Italy. "We could use you there," they said. And I said, "No, I'm getting married about this time. I don't want to leave the country."

How did you meet Mary Alice?

On a bus going to work. A shuttle bus would take us up to this Army post that was taken over by NSA. She worked across the hall and she worked for I think a Navy Admiral, and she was kind of the secretary.

The Yeoman.

That's exactly correct. I worked across the hall in the Communication area. She couldn't come into my area because she wasn't cleared.

What was that first meeting like?

She wouldn't talk to me. She thought I was too young for her, until a friend of hers told her I was a year older than she was. And then we became good friends. All the WAVES (US Naval Women's Reserve) were looking for husbands. A lot of WACS [Women's Army Corps], too.

It probably gave her confidence that you had been through all that security.

She didn't care. She didn't ask me about my background.

She didn't?

She didn't care whether I saluted the flag or not. She just wanted a husband who was going to be stable so she could get married!

And she got one.

Yes. She did.

How long did you stay with the NSA after you got married?

About six months. In the WAVES, they said if you get married, you could get out within six months. So we got married and then I worked at the NSA as a civilian until she got all out of the Navy. Then we put everything that we had in the car and drove to California where she was from.

How did you feel about the job you were doing?

I was treated fine but the job was difficult. They kept telling us, "You keep your mouth shut. You don't talk about this job." We had a couple of guys who were new and they were on minesweepers or destroyers or something. After work we were sitting in the bar and a couple of those guys came in and said, "Hi, how you doing? What's your name? Do you work around here? What work do you do?" They were gone the next day.

They could have been spies.

Yes. It happened to me several times.

We would get off on the evening shift about 11 and go in a car. One of the guys had a car. And we'd drive a car to a small restaurant nearby and we'd order a pitcher of beer. We'd all sit around this table. And we'd go up to this counter and order our sandwich. While I'm waiting for my order to come, this guy would walk in – one guy would stand by the door and one guy walked to me and said, "Hello, there. Are you working around here somewhere? I think I know you from back home."

Yes. "You look familiar."

And I said, "I don't know you and you don't know me and I'm getting my sandwich and I'm leaving."

Good for you.

They warned us about that. They said, "You don't talk about what you're doing here."

Would you consider yourself a code breaker?

That was somebody else's job. Towards the end I was. I didn't set out to make a career of it, but the code breakers were down the hall in another area.

So your job mostly was to receive the signals and prepare them for other people.

Yes. And send them on down to them.

What I did was – you would look at the time of day and you put the certain type of disk into this machine that would break the code. I would run that machine and it would come out in English and then I could print it.

So they were already using computers to break codes and things?

Yes ... well, I don't know if they were or not because I didn't work in that area, but I know that we had a Teletype.

We were doing that right after World War II, and it just kept going on. There were all kinds of military conflicts after World War II. If it wasn't for Russia, it was for the Middle East or China. It was always some country.

From left: Alive! editor John Burnes; Bill Lillenber; and Club CEO John Hawkins and his daughter, Hannah, who's studying World War II in school.



You were at the dawn of the Cold War, which was crazy.

Yes.

And the nuclear age. Did you ever have any experience or run-in with the nuclear testing that was going on in the South Pacific?

No. They came in after I left.

What were your thoughts about MacArthur?

MacArthur was kind of a stubborn, and not a very friendly person. I never met him. He was in the Army. I was in the Navy. I didn't know him personally. I felt that he did a good job, but he didn't have the personality that a lot of people should have in that kind of high rank.

If you didn't know him you probably liked him because there was a lot of publicity about him. And his father was a very important man. They always showed him with his wife and they were in the Philippines and things were going just going great. But [in reality] he was a hell of a person to work for.

Okay. Then you moved out to California, went back to school, started a family and eventually started working for the City.

Where did you live?

North Hollywood, Pomona for a while and ... you know, different places.

But back at the NSA now, which has grown into just an enormous agency – is that not something that you wanted to do the rest of your life?

I would have stayed in, but they didn't want me to stay in the country. They wanted me to go to foreign stations in Europe or Africa. When I got near graduation time at UCLA, I got interviewed a couple more times, and they asked me if I wanted to come back because I had the experience a lot of these kids coming out of the school didn't have. They sent me letters and they interviewed me a couple of times. And I said, "No, I don't think I want to go back anymore."



The Meaning of Freedom

Do you consider yourself a patriotic person?

Very. I put the flag up every Fourth of July and Veterans Day.

Are you proud of your service?

Yes, I am. I never got in the brig!

What does freedom mean to you?

A right to do what I please within the laws of the country. To raise my family the way I want to have them. And to serve my country if necessary.

Would you recommend serving our country to young people?

If you want to go in for a temporary time just to kind of get away from home and see what it's like, do it because it's a good experience. But don't go into the Army or don't go into the Marines. Go into the Navy or the Air Force.

What other advice would you give?

Get married. Have children. Teach the children the right way to live. Get a good education because if you don't have a good education you can't get a job.

Yes.

I mean a job that lasts. If you're going to have children you've got to be able to support them.

I understand you have some favorite sayings – "Don't leave that door open. What are you trying to cool off the neighborhood?" "Life is what you make it." "No pain, no gain." "Work hard."

Yes they sound familiar!

Bill, thank you very much for your service to our country, and thanks for sharing your stories with us.

You're welcome. ■



Freedom means
'to raise my family
the way I want. And
serve my country
if necessary.'

— Bill Lillenber

The *Alive!* Kids' Coloring Contest

Coloring with The Clubs

Deadline for submission:

Aug. 5, 2020

Submit to:
 Club Coloring Contest
 Employees Club of California
 120 West 2nd Street
 Los Angeles, CA 90012

The Club will do everything it can to gather all the submissions, but it cannot be responsible for lost or misdirected mail.

Print and Online Schedule

Alive! has moved half of its children's coloring contests online.

In the printed *Alive!*:

January (winners published in March)
 July (winners published in September)

In the online edition of *Alive!*:

April (winners posted in June)
 October (winners posted in December)



SCAN TO DOWNLOAD ART



Download Coloring Art From the Web

You can download and print art from *Web Alive!*:
alive.employeesclub.com/kidscoloringcontest

Compiled by Club Customer Service Associates:



Guadalupe Lira



DeAngelo Thompson

We want to know about you! Tell us a little about yourself:

Your name _____ How old are you? _____

When is your birthday? _____ What is the first name of your best friend? _____

What is your favorite snack? _____

What is your favorite television show? _____

Why do you want to go to this park? _____

For parents/guardian to complete:

Name of parent/guardian: _____

Job title and department with the City: _____

Parent/guardian phone number: _____

Child's address/city/zip: _____

Club Membership number: _____





Retired Los Angeles City Employees, Inc.

RLACEI

For Retired Club Members

CONTACT INFORMATION

Retired Los Angeles City Employees, Inc. (RLACEI)

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2020 Executive Board of Directors

Ruth B. Perry, President
Beverly J. Clark, First Vice President
Phil Orland, Second Vice President
Harold Danowitz, Secretary/Treasurer

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RLACEI RETIREE HELPLINE:

(800) 678-4145, Ext. 0

For retirement assistance, call the Retiree Hotline and leave a message. A Director of RLACEI will return your call and assist you with your concerns.

RLACEI WEBSITE

Visit the RLACEI website www.RLACEI.org to find the latest retirement news. Call (800) 678-4145 Ext. 0 to make suggestions.
EMAIL: Contact@RLACEI.org

MAILING ADDRESS:

Retired Los Angeles City Employees Inc.
Terminal Annex
P.O. Box 86264
Los Angeles, CA 90086

Change of Address?

Please notify Ruth B. Perry, Membership Chair, at (800) 678-4145 ext. 717 or Ruth.Perry@RLACEI.org for a change of address or to add or change your email address. Also notify LACERS, ACEBSA, LAPCU, and LAFUCU as applicable.

RETIREES ON THE MOVE

Meet the Personnel Breakfast Group **Part 2**

by Beverly Clark, RLACEI Publicity Chair

This lively group of Retirees on the Move was introduced last month. Here's a quick recap:

The Personnel Breakfast Group, which also refers to itself as the Golden Girls and the Bronze Girls, all worked in Personnel and are now Retired. They meet once a month, generally. The ladies who meet regularly are: Mary Fletcher, Rita Gardner, Fern Johnson, Linda Lanier, Theresa Richardson, Beatrice (Bea) Smalls and Patricia Taylor. Mae Gaddis was also part of the group for many years.

Now, here's the rest of their story;

Since the shelter-in-place mandate, how do you spend your time? What do you miss most?

Mary Fletcher: I spend more time keeping up with my four grandchildren. My nails have truly missed my manicurist. I also miss my church. However, an online Mass is offered every day and I actually prefer this, although I do miss the other parishioners. I enjoy walking up the scenic overlook.

Rita Gardner: During this "Stay at Home" period, I spend my time praying, reading the Bible and Holy Scriptures, doing power walks, conducting weekly Religious Education Zoom Class Meetings, working crossword puzzles and word scrambles and having a weekly FaceTime session with my children and grandchildren. I also miss watching various live sports on TV.

Fern Johnson: I am doing everything that maintains my life (e.g. hygiene, devotional, food preparation and eating, clean the house, walk the dog) at a leisurely pace. I am organizing things and de-cluttering. I watch more TV and movies and connect with people via telephone.

Linda Lanier: My time is spent reading, watching TV, talking on the phone, Zoom parties with friends, texting with family, exercising and line dancing with Zoom classes, walking in the park, sitting outside watching the neighbors and working out with my son (the personal trainer). I also attend virtual church weekly. I miss, of course, seeing my family and friends. And I really miss being able to actually go to a line dance class.

Theresa Richardson: My days consist of looking at the four walls, reading, and transporting to the dialysis center. I especially miss going out to restaurants ... yes, I hate cooking!! I miss that and fellowship with parishioners and socializing with friends. I would have to say I miss going out to eat with friends and some family the most.

Bea Smalls: Well, I miss everything that I was involved in, especially going to church, my breakfast buddies, friends, and family. I deeply miss not being able to get together the way we used to.

Patricia Taylor: I miss going out and meeting with friends for lunch and

dinner and having that "feely, touchy" experience.

How have you been impacted, and do you find yourself getting bored while in quarantine? What has changed during this time?

Rita Gardner: I have been impacted during this "Stay at Home" period by having groceries delivered, not being able to go out and do routine errands, playing tennis, interacting with my family, friends, relatives and students, attending Mass and receiving Holy Communion.

I keep busy and involved as part of three groups that meet via Zoom on a weekly basis, so I don't consider myself bored but I am tired of some of the nonsensical politics

Mary Fletcher: "Are you bored?" Absolutely not. I miss not being able to catch up over coffee and eggs with the breakfast group and seeing my grands on a regular basis. In fact, I love the fact that traffic is so light, and I don't have to go anywhere.

Fern Johnson: I'm not really bored, just not as focused as I'd like to be. Time seems to be speeding by. I used to run to the store frequently for greeting cards, gifts and fresh vegetables. I also liked eating out. Can't do that anymore. What has changed since the quarantined? Going out to a restaurant, getting personal grooming, for example, hair, nails, visiting my place of worship and spending time with family and friends.

Linda Lanier: Since I cannot go out, I'm having to find ways to keep myself entertained. I am spending a lot of time on Facebook. I try to keep a regular routine each day doing housework, exercising, planning and making meals, contacting friends, getting outside, etc. Sometimes I'm bored.

Theresa Richardson: I have more allergy problems with having to wear a mask. It's hard to breathe ... but breathing is overrated!

I'm not really bored. I can somewhat tolerate myself. I fill my days by brushing my



The Personnel Breakfast Group. Standing: Mary Fletcher, Bea Smalls, Rita Gardner, Beverly Clark. Seated: Fern Johnson, Theresa Richardson, Patricia Taylor. Not pictured: Linda Lanier.

teeth, washing my face, showering, preparing food (I can't use the "cook" word - I don't do that!), eating, reading, texting, and numerous bathroom breaks.

Beatrice Smalls: I am not bored because I believe if we do as the scientists, governors and mayors ask us to do, this too will pass.

Patricia Taylor: I find that I am not very much impacted, and I am not bored at all. I have decided to replace my flip phone with a smart phone. So that will be my new project while in quarantine.

Many groups have taken advantage of meeting virtually to keep in touch with each other. Does your group meet virtually?

The ladies have not taken advantage of virtual meetings with each other; however, they keep in touch by text and phone calls, and have suggested that they may meet virtually in the future.

In summary, do you have any suggestions or thoughts?

Rita Gardner: Find a cure/vaccine for COVID-19 and its mutations to end this pandemic. Go out and vote for anyone who is running against the current president!

Fern Johnson: Because we have so much more time at home, we can really do a lot of the things we said we wanted to do rather than running around all the time. I enjoy my own company so I'm fine as long as I connect or make contacts with at least four family members or friends each day.

Linda Lanier: It's important to keep active during these times.

Theresa Richardson: I think it's good if everyone does what they are supposed to do. It appears this virus is not going away. I don't know if going back to staying at home is the answer, but it seems to reduce some of the positive cases.

Patricia Taylor: I wish that all of this were over!

MEET YOUR BOARD

Verkin (Vicki) Koeseian, RLACEI Board Member

by Beverly Clark, RLACEI Publicity Chair



Verkin (Vicki) and Sam Koeseian.

Verkin (Vicki) Koeseian retired in March after 37 years of City service. During Vicki's extensive City career, she worked for City Planning, Personnel, Rec and Parks, LAPD and LAFD.

She began her City career with City Planning as a Clerk Typist working for the Chief Zoning Administrator's Office in 1982. Soon after, she was promoted to Sr. Clerk Typist, Personnel, in the Folders Unit supervising staff in calculating the seniority points for promotional candidates and maintaining all City employee folders.

With a desire to work closer to home, she transferred to Rec and Parks in the Valley. She then was promoted to Secretary at the LAPD's North Hollywood Division. She became an Executive Administrative

Assistant II in the LAFD and then an Executive Administrative Assistant III working for the General Manager of Personnel. Before retiring, she worked in Personnel as a Management Analyst working on contracts and budget.

Vicki and her husband, Sam, have been married for more than 36 years. They have two sons, two daughters-in-law and one granddaughter. Their eldest son and daughter-in-law just had their first baby girl, Elia, whom Vicki says is the light of her and Sam's lives.

Vicki enjoys cooking and helping take care of her granddaughter. So that their children and spouses do not have to worry about preparing meals with their busy work schedules, Vicki and Sam enjoy preparing meals and dropping them off to their children. Vicki loves spending time with family and friends and taking care of her parents. She and Sam also enjoy traveling, and a favorite pastime is visiting wineries.

Vicki joined the Board to help ensure all LA City employee retirees' benefits are safe.

Send in your Interesting

News Contributions!

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

2020 RETIREE EVENTS

Summer Picnic - Thurs. 8/6

Holiday Party - Tues. 12/8

RESERVATION LINE:
RLACEI: (800) 678-4145, Ext. 701

LACERS BOARD UPDATE

LACERS Reports Its Earnings in Private Equity

by Michael R. Wilkinson



Michael R. Wilkinson

LACERS provides your pension and health benefits in large part by returns from investments, while a lesser amount is from contributions from active members and the City.

Since there is no one “all weather” investment that combines all we need, the LACERS Board and investment staff invest in a mix of investments from super-safe US Treasury securities that pay very low returns, to high-returning assets such as private equity and real estate that are also higher risk. By using a mix, we aim to get a reasonable return on our investment without taking a dangerous level of risk.

This month we will look at our quarterly report of one of the highest paying asset classes, private equity, for the period ending Dec. 31, 2019. A few years ago, the LACERS Board reviewed and made changes to its asset allocation, increasing the share of private equity to 14 percent of all the plan assets. This is our new target and we currently have an 11.2 percent exposure.

We invest in private equity because it has the promise of high long-term returns. However, the challenges include high volatility (the investments can go down as well as up) and a lack of liquidity. That means that we make investments that may have a life span of 10 to 12 years from the first investments until the fund is finished and all the money is paid out. For the most part you cannot get out of an investment early if results are disappointing.

A successful private equity plan makes regular investments every year since we never know in advance which years will be great for investments and which will be terrible. In addition, we diversify over investment type and geography.

Interestingly, looking back, the highest-performing years are for investments made when the investment world is in chaos, and the lowest for investments made when everything seems to be going great, but then of course, prices are very high.

An added bonus for a mature private equity plan (meaning it has been around for several years) such as ours is that it has been cash-flow-positive, meaning it has paid out more in distributions than we have paid in for investment, during most of the past 10 years.

The private equity program returned (internal rate of return, IRR) the following: 12 percent for 1 year; 12.9 percent for 3 years; 10.8 percent for 5 years; 12.5 percent for 10 years; 11.3 percent for 20 years; and 11.2 percent since inception (1995). The 20-year returns beat the benchmark of the Russell 3000 stock index plus 3 percent, while the other time periods lagged the benchmark.

This is not unusual; since the stock market was having a bull market it was difficult for private equity funds to match the performance. The Russell 3000 is a broad market index that matches investments in all US stocks. ■



A Note on COVID-19

To Our RLACEI Retirees:

The Board is confident that all of you are taking the proper precautions to stay as healthy and as safe as possible and are following all the policies that governmental agencies are recommending. Please be reminded that most of us are in the age group that is most vulnerable. In recent days, it has been about reopening. Living in this new reality of post-lockdown is promising but will also most likely be as equally confusing and uncertain.

Until a vaccine is discovered, our lives will be overshadowed by the threat of coronavirus. Social distancing and other safety measures will be the norm. It will be a time of adjustments after the lockdown is lifted. The impact of the coronavirus and the actions taken by various government agencies will become evident slowly over the next few months, especially social distancing measures and the economic impact of the lockdown. Stay safe and stay healthy.

Almost Picnic Time! RSVP by July 31.

RLACEI 2020

Summer Picnic



Open to all Retired Los Angeles City Employees, Inc. members!



Thursday, August 6, 2020

11:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Grace E. Simons Lodge

1025 Elysian Park Avenue

Los Angeles, CA 90012

RSVP to (800) 678-4145

Ext. 701



RSVP no later than July 31, 2020. RLACEI member plus one (1) guest at no cost. Limit two (2) additional guests per RLACEI member, \$5 each cash at the door. We look forward to seeing you!



RLACEI 2020 Picnic Reservation Form

Name: _____

Number of Attendees:

Phone: _____

Register by phone, or complete this form and mail to:

Email: _____

RLACEI
PO Box 86264
Los Angeles, CA 90086

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

LEGISLATIVE REPORT: PENSION LAW AND POLICY

COVID-19's Wreaking Havoc With State Budgets, Pensions

by Michael Karsch, Legislative Representative



Michael Karsch

There are a lot of gloom and doom commentaries out there in the world on every kind of fallout from the novel coronavirus on every aspect of life it seems. I am just interested in how dire the impacts are on public pension systems.

California faces a \$54 billion shortfall in 2020-21, the next fiscal year, per the Department of Finance. In 2008, the financial recession, California suffered a loss of \$40 billion for comparison. Our state's income tax rate, 13.3 percent, is the highest of any state, and it relies on the rich, whose revenues stem from dividends, capital gains and bonuses (*City Journal*, May 19, 2020). These sources mostly vanish in recessions, hence increasing the pain. Our state added new taxes on those earning more than \$250,000 a year, and increasing the state sales tax. These increases were added after the 2008 recession as temporary, but were extended in 2016 for another 15 years. There is a prediction by the Public Policy Institute of California, made before the coronavirus struck, of revenue shortfalls of \$22 billion a year for the next four years; a more “severe” impact, like the pandemic, could increase the total impact to \$170 billion over five years. With not only this growing debt, add the cost of homelessness and pensions in the public sector, and we have a challenging agenda in our laps. Our government pensions are protected by the “California Rule,” which guarantees the pension that a government worker could expect from the day he or she was hired. Just within the last 20 years, the California pension system for state and local governments, CalPERS (to which the City does not belong), has grown from less than \$400 million in 2000 to \$15 billion last year. Public pensions are funded by the employee contributions while working, returns on the fund's investments, and by what their employers will have to contribute annually to make up any unfunded liability. With the stock market having more ups and downs, the reliability of high-investment

returns may force large increases in contributions for the cities, counties and state governments. Yes, there was a rainy day fund set up by former Gov. Jerry Brown, now amounting to \$17 billion. But that amount is far from enough.

The Financial Standard reported in late May 2020 that several US public pension funds are approaching a “point of no return.” They identified the worst funds as Kentucky, Illinois, New Jersey and Connecticut. A measurement used by Moody's to compare the assets held by each is then projected for how many years of retirement benefits each could pay for, which is an asset-to-payout ratio. These four states had assets equal to just a few years' worth of benefits. The stronger states had assets guaranteeing 20 years or more of payouts before the COVID-19 pandemic hit. Kentucky is the weakest state with just enough assets to cover 2.5 years of fund benefits. Illinois has six funds ranking among the weakest in the nation. New Jersey's Teacher's Fund has \$26 billion to cover just six years of benefits. Their state public employee plan can cover just eight years of benefits. If the pandemic lasts for the rest of this year, New Jersey won't have the liquidity to pay pensions in full, or not at all. If funds run out, what then? It would become a pay-as-you-go arrangement, hopefully finding enough in the annual state budget to cover it all. Chicago was rated as junk bond status by Moody's before the pandemic hit. In April, Illinois sought a bailout from the pandemic bailout by Washington: \$20 billion in the total COVID relief of \$42 billion is supposed to be for public pensions across the nation, while Chicago already has a pension debt of \$240 billion!

It all sounds pretty bad, but we are in a far better picture than those states. And by “we” I mean the City of Los Angeles. Everyone will have to take a hard look at how our own public pensions in California can be better run. At the same time, the State Supreme Court is hearing a case of alleged pension spiking in Alameda County Deputy Sheriff's Association vs. Alameda County Employees' Retirement Association. Stay tuned for updates on that case. ■



Retired Los Angeles City Employees, Inc.

RLACEI

– CONT. FROM PAGE 17

THE LACERS BOARD

The City's Annual Contribution to LACERS

By Tom Moutes, RLACEI Director



Tom Moutes

LACERS, the City's department handling the pensions for most Retired Employees (exceptions include DWP and Fire/Police Retirees), receives funds in three ways: contributions (payments) from the City (thanks to the taxpayers); contributions from City employees; and investment returns.

The City's annual contribution to LACERS is calculated by multiplying the payroll the City adopts during its budget process for employees covered by LACERS times the necessary percentage of pay (as calculated by a LACERS actuary).

In the early 2000s, the City's contribution to LACERS was well under \$100 million per year. This year, the City's contribution is \$676.7 million. Yes, \$676.7 million – up well more than 600 percent!

Let's take a quick look at the factors impacting that huge increase in the City's contributions to LACERS:

As noted above, the City's annual contribution to LACERS is calculated by multiplying the payroll times the necessary percentage of pay. The City's payroll for employees covered by LACERS has almost doubled since the early 2000s. All other things being equal, that alone would have caused almost a doubling of the City's contribution to LACERS.

The other component, the percentage of pay as calculated by a LACERS actuary, has increased dramatically – mainly due to LACERS investment return experience and assumption changes adopted by the LACERS Board.

- LACERS investment return experience has been mixed since 2000, with some excellent years such as plus-18.6 percent (2004); plus-19.5 percent (2007); and plus-22.6 percent (2011). But it has had some down years as well, including minus-4.8 percent (2002); minus-5.8 percent (2008); and minus-19.5 percent (2009). Because LACERS assumes it will make 7.25 percent per year, on average, any year it earns less than that puts some pressure on the City's contribution.

LACERS' actual investment returns over the next five to seven years – pursuant to its own expert consultant – are expected

to be below LACERS assumed rate of 7.25 percent. If this turns out to be true, it will require further increases to the City's contributions to LACERS.

- Assumption changes include such things as lowering the assumed rate of investment return; recognizing fewer employees are leaving the workforce than anticipated; and retirees are living longer than expected. It is important to ensure that the assumptions are reasonable to help assure the proper funding of LACERS and that today's taxpayers are not pushing the costs of today's services on future taxpayers (this is referred to as intergenerational equity).

The LACERS Board reviews these assumptions approximately every three years, and the resulting outcome on the City's contribution to LACERS is seldom good news for the City.

While the City experienced record revenues in recent years, it did little to help improve LACERS funding status and continued to have a structural budget deficit (outflows exceeding inflows) during that time. Now that the economy has soured and City tax revenues are drying up, in part due to the Covid-19 pandemic, it is going to be even more difficult for the City to pay its annual contribution to LACERS. Fortunately, the budget shows the City paying its full contribution for fiscal year 2020-21.

Tom served at LACERS for approximately 16 years, the last seven of those years as the General Manager of the pension system. He retired in 2018. Tom can be reached at necessarypensionconversations@gmail.com.

*Note: On Tuesday, June 23, 2020, the LACERS Board of Administration is expected to take action on proposed assumption changes. Story to follow in the August issue of *Alive!**

HARBOR

Welcome, Officer Cabrera

Port Police welcomes new Officer.



From left: Officer Leo Cabrera with Port Police Chief Tom Gazzsi.

On June 8, the Harbor welcomed Port Police Officer Leo Cabrera.

The Wilmington native graduated from Banning High School and served with the U.S. Air Force.

Through his training days at the LA Police Academy, he was a squad leader.

His sister works for LAFD Deputy Chief Ronnie Villanueva, and his father is Retired, Harbor.

Welcome, Officer Cabrera!



Officer Leo Cabrera flanked by his parents.



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Larios in the *Digital City*

BY ROBERT LARIOS, Chief Operating Officer

Robert Larios, the Club's Chief Operating Officer, honors Club members with the coveted Club Retirement Plaque.



Club COO Robert Larios resumed his honoring of Club Members retiring by presenting the Club's coveted retiree plaque – digitally.



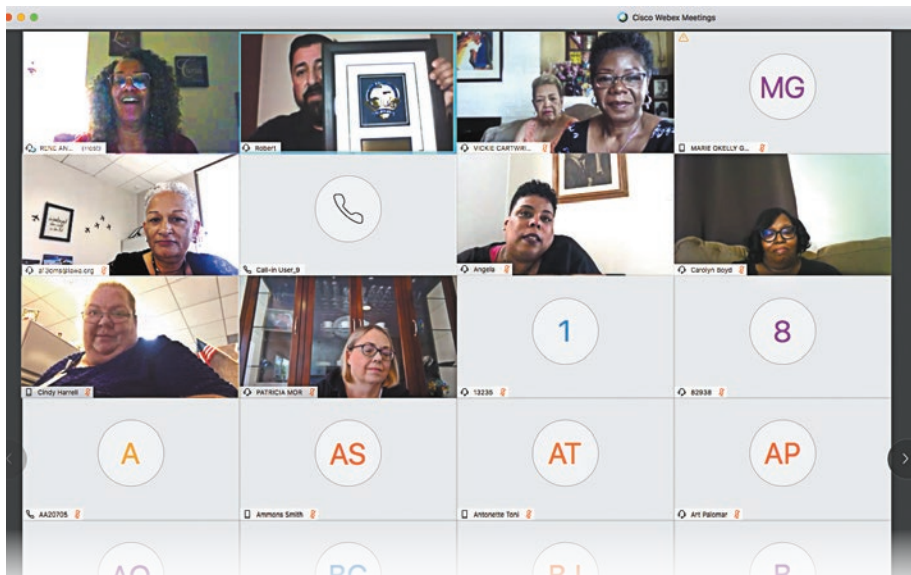
Vickie Cartwright-Adams

The coronavirus pandemic has forced everyone to rethink everything including retirement parties. Rene Anderson, and Francisco Serrano, Personnel, Airports reached out to Club COO Robert Larios about participating in a stay-at-home digital retirement celebration (via Webex) to honor **Vickie Cartwright-Adams**, Personnel, Airports, 34 years of City service. (Vickie also worked in the Controller's Office early in her City career.)

And thus **Larios in the Digital City** was born.

But what matters, as always, is that the Club honors and celebrates the careers of City employees who are retiring.

The Club congratulates Vickie for her excellent City career, and will get the Club retirement plaque to her as soon as possible.



Participating in the June 18 retirement party for Vickie Cartwright-Adams were (top row, from left) host Rene Anderson; Club COO Robert Larios, presenting the Club's coveted retirement plaque; and Vickie. (Others participated, too.)

Congratulations Vickie!



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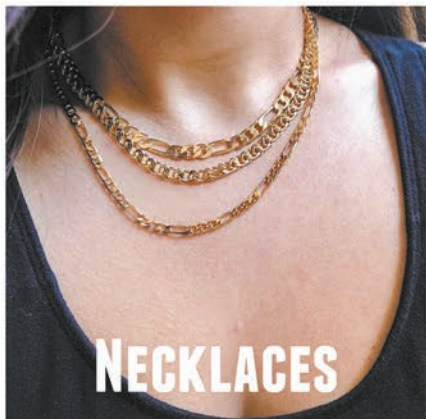
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