



Alive!

"RIGHTEOUS EXALTED ABOVE ALL PEOPLE" SOLOMON

GENERAL SERVICES AND PROJECT RESTORE

The Art of Restoration

A dedicated team is painstakingly restoring City Hall's priceless artwork for its 100th anniversary in 2028.



- PAGE 12



From left: John McNeil, Project Restore and formerly Public Works; Nancy Lopez-Kazarian, Project Restore; Tony Royster, General Services; and Kevin Jew, consultant to Project Restore and Retired, Board of Public Works. Bronze restorers include (top) Joe Martinez and (right) Omar Martinez of KC Restoration.

Alive! photo by Summy Lam



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Looking Our Best

ROBERT'S BLOG

by Robert Larios, CEO, The Club



I craned my neck *a lot* a few weeks ago!
That was when we visited City Hall with the restoration team. When you read our cover story this month, you'll see why. Wow, the spectacular art!

I have been to City Hall hundreds, most likely thousands of times, as have many or most of you. Tell me: Did you know the



From left: Project Restore's John McNeil and Kevin Jew (both Club Members) and Robert Larios, in front of restored tile at City Hall.

amount – and beauty – City Hall contains? We show you just a slice, and it is vast.

That art – installed for the opening of City Hall, in 1928 (our very own Los Angeles City Employees Association was born that year, as well) – tells a very important story of a growing Los Angeles incredibly confident of its future. We can gaze upon it now and feel the optimism. I offer a suggestion: We can feed from that same spirit. For that reason, and others, I recommend you pay another visit to our magnificent City Hall, and ... *look up*. It is truly the best of us.

Much of the restoration work is performed under the direction of Project Restore. But just as importantly, we are honored to showcase the day-in, day-out hard work of General Services, a vital partner as City Hall's facility manager. As GM and Club Member **Tony Royster** points out in this month's interview, the department's important work often goes unnoticed. *Alive!* is delighted to ensure that work gets the attention it deserves.

Looking Our Best, Part II

Speaking of looking our best, I pass along kudos to the strong work of photographer (and Club COO) **Summy Lam** and *Alive!* designer **David Jamgotchian** and his team – what a magnificent and beautiful feature they produced. Gorgeous!

Valentines

Our annual feature on Club Valentines is a treat for many Club Members, and that includes me. Your response this year is impressive ... and they are still coming in. Happy Valentine's Day, Club Members!

One Hundred Years

Congratulations and happy anniversary wishes are due to the LAPD and its stellar crime lab. We were honored to have produced eight cover stories over the years on your amazing facility. Thank you for keeping us safe.

Worth Considering

Have you ever experienced the magical phenomenon where a silver lining emerges from a dark cloud? *Trust. The Process.* Wake up every day with the thought that something awesome is about to happen.



One of *Alive!*'s eight cover stories on the LAPD crime lab.

¡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!

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



Club Mobile is cashless!

For your convenience, now accepting major credit cards and:



Club Mobile Schedule:

The Mobile Team sets up in the North Central Sanitation area the first Monday of every month:

Mondays:
Feb. 5, Mar. 4, Apr. 1
North Central Sanitation
452 N. San Fernando Rd.
6 – 11 a.m.

The Mobile Team sets up in the Downtown area the first Tuesday of every month:

Tuesdays:
Feb. 6, Mar. 5, Apr. 2
Downtown
120 W. Second St.,
10 a.m. – 1 p.m.

The Mobile Team sets up in the Harbor area the first Wednesday of every month:

Wednesdays:
Feb. 7, Mar. 6, Apr. 3
Harbor Boys and Girls Club
100 W. Fifth St., San Pedro
10 a.m. – 2 p.m.

The Mobile Team sets up in the West Valley StreetsLA area the first Thursday of every month:

Thursdays:
Feb. 8, Mar. 7, Apr. 4
West Valley StreetsLA – New!
9324 Topanga Canyon Blvd.
12 – 2 p.m.

For additional Club Mobile visit locations and times, check out our Instagram: @EmployeesClub

To schedule a Club Mobile visit, Contact Lupe Lira, Retail Operations Manager: (213) 819-0350, or mobile@employeesclub.com



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The Art of Restoration 12-15

A team from Project Restore and General Services is restoring City Hall's extensive public art in time for the building's 100th anniversary.

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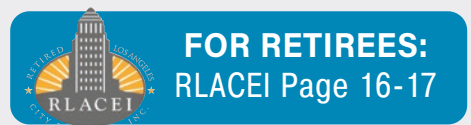
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NEW THIS MONTH ONLINE!

alive.employeesclub.com

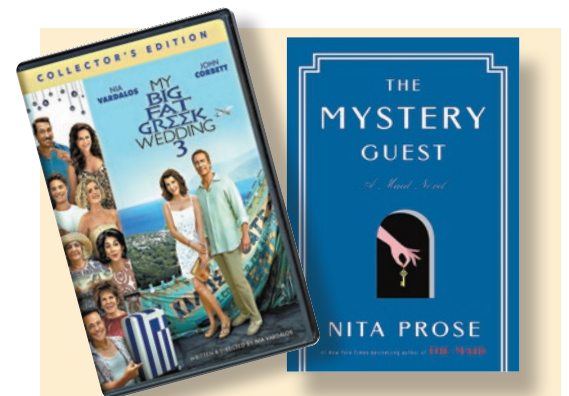
Rest Insured

See the Club's claims paid this month and feel confident in your Club insurance purchase.



Library Top 10

See what your fellow Angelenos are reading, watching and grooving to.



In this month's issue:

Chef Larios gets you ready for the Big Game with a Mexicali black bean soup with the works.
— See page 10



Correction

In the timeline published in last month's cover story on the LACEA CEO transition, we misstated the year when John Hawkins became CEO of the Association. The correct date is July 2004.



THERE'S STILL TIME TO POST YOUR Valentine ONLINE

DEADLINE: February 9, 2024



SCAN WITH YOUR PHONE





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“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



The Club honors the City's public employees with first-rate service and merchandise.




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!

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In addition, the Club strives to publish only those elements that are produced by the Club itself, are in the public domain, or whose rights have been negotiated.

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

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Club Team

Contact our help desk for all your Club needs:
help@employeesclub.com

Member Experience Team

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|  Dorothy Crompton Member Services Counselor |  Cynthia Ha Member Services Counselor |  Scott Hanock Member Services Counselor |
|  Hannah Hawkins Social Media Assistant |  Dylan Herrero Customer Service Representative |  Joseph Koralik Member Services Counselor |
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|  Eduardo Escalona Mobile Operations Representative |  Raul M. Salgado Customer Service Representative |
|  DeAngelo Thompson Mobile Operations Representative | |

Tickets & Benefits Procurement

| | |
|---|--|
|  Mariana Guevara Tickets and Benefits Procurement |  Megan Eckert Tickets and Benefits Procurement Associate |
|---|--|

Claims

| | |
|---|---|
|  Dulce Lopez Claims Administrator |  Mikayla Sprague Claims Administrator |
|---|---|






Business Development


Arlene Herrero
 Vice President of Business Development

Education and Training


John Hawkins
 Club Founder and Training Officer

Accounting

| | |
|---|---|
|  Leigh Thompson Controller |  Clara Flores Senior Accountant II |
|  Trinh Pham Senior Accountant |  Daniel McAlinden Senior Accountant |
|  Frank Ochoa IT Accountant | |

Executive Office

| | |
|--|--|
|  Robert Larios President & CEO, LACEA and LACEA Insurance Services, Inc. |  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 | |

Information Technology

| | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|--|--|--|
|  Petros Khachatryan Director of IT |  Citlali Bon Data Quality Manager |  Edith Bon-Sanchez Data Processing Coordinator |  Alan Bound IT Business Analyst |  Ronald Cortez Assistant Quality Assurance Analyst |  Natalia Guevara Data Processing Coordinator |  Rey Hernandez IT Senior Developer |
|--|---|---|---|--|--|--|



The Crime Lab's employees from both divisions on the occasion of its 100th anniversary.



LAPD Chief Michel Moore gives remarks at the 100th anniversary celebration at the LA Police Museum. On his left is Tatiana Garcia, Police Administrator, Technical Investigation Division. At right is Gabriel Gnanapragasam, Police Administrator, Forensic Science Division.

Congrats, Crime Lab!

Images courtesy LAPD

LAPD'S CRIME LAB, A FOCUS OF EIGHT *ALIVE!* FEATURES, CELEBRATES ITS 100TH ANNIVERSARY.

LAPD: Last October, the LAPD's Crime Lab – consisting of the Forensic Science Division and the Technical Investigation Division – celebrated its 100th anniversary as the nation's first crime lab and the nation's second largest crime lab after the FBI, according to the department.

The department held a press conference and display of abilities Oct. 23 at the LA Police Museum at the old Highland Park Police Station.

Over the years, *Alive!* was privileged to chronicle the modern LAPD Crime Lab in a series of eight in-depth cover stories. The series was used informally by the crime lab as orientation materials for its new hires.

Congratulations, Crime Lab! Thank you for your constant innovation and dedication, and all you have done and continue to do, to keep the citizens of Los Angeles safe. ●



Some of the issues of *Alive!* that chronicled the LAPD Crime Lab.

Displays at the anniversary event.



College Students: Apply for Club's Mukai Scholarship

DEADLINE IS 11:59 P.M., JUNE 30, 2024.



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.

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.

All materials must be completed on the *Alive!* Website and submitted electronically by 11:59 p.m. June 15, 2023. Winners will be notified by July 31 before school starts.



Apply Today
on the *Alive!* Website:
alive.employeesclub.com/scholarship
DEADLINE
11:59 p.m.,
June 30, 2024

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

"It is a vital that the Club gives back to support the future success of our treasured young people," said Robert Larios, Association and Club CEO. "We honor all Club Members for the work they do for LA, and the scholarship program is one way we thank them."

Interested candidates may begin the process directly on the *Alive!* Website at:

alive.employeesclub.com/mukaischolarship

Send questions to the Club Scholarship Committee:

scholarship@employeesclub.com
or call: (213) 873-1843



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."

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.



Maya Cereceres, the daughter of Alfred Cereceres, Public Works/Sanitation and Environment, City of Los Angeles received a stipend last year as part of the Club's Mukai Scholarship Program.

READY FOR RETIREMENT

Resources for Club Retirees and Those About to Retire



YOUR ESSENTIAL GUIDE TO INSURANCE

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

"All you need is love. But a little chocolate now and then doesn't hurt."

— Charles M. Schulz

Love Is in the Air, Retirees!

Tip for Retirement: Retirement is the perfect time to pick up an old hobby or discover a new one, especially if it involves physical activity or exercising your mind! Some ideas could be walking around your neighborhood, hanging out with family members or friends, traveling to a place near or far you have never been before, making a new recipe, or even getting a pet such as a dog or cat! Try something new during this fun chapter of your life.

Give the gift of security and peace of mind to your loved ones this Valentine's Day season by reviewing your Club benefits to make sure you and your family are protected and prepared for the future.

The Club is your resource for saving money through our discount programs, having financial security with our life insurance, and staying connected to your community.

1. Get Your Finances in Order

Organize your money so you can work out what you'll have to live on. Gradually reduce your spending in the time leading up to retirement to make it easier to adjust. The Club partners with

My Club Deals that provides Member discounts on dining, attractions, travel, shopping, services and more. There are more than 75,000 two-for-one and 50-percent-off deals!

2. Get Your Insurance Policies in Order

Review your Club insurance benefits and decide how much life insurance you will need in retirement.

- 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.

Speak to a Club Retirement Specialist. Do not wait!



Questions?

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



VERY IMPORTANT: If you have not contacted the Club yet to complete a form to have your Club Membership and/or insurance deducted from your pension, please do so ASAP! Even if you are not newly Retired, 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. Never worry about a bill or late payment. Pension deduction is the most convenient and easiest way to handle your deductions. Offered to Club Members.



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 and LADWP Retirees Association 2024 events to be announced.

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

Employees Club of California
311 S. Spring St. STE 1300, Los Angeles, CA 90013
(800) 464-0452 - www.EmployeesClub.com

Payroll Deduction Authorization Form
Los Angeles City & DWP

INSTRUCTION:

Please complete the following Payroll Deduction Authorization Form and return it to the Employees Club of California. Your payroll deduction will become effective as soon as the City Controller processes your request. Please note it can take up to two pay periods for the City Controller's office to process your deduction. The Club will do everything possible to ensure your payroll deduction gets processed sooner.

1 Member Information Please print in ink or type.

Member Name (First, Middle, Last):

Home Address: Cell Phone: ()

City: State: Zip: Email Address*:

City: State: Zip: Email Address*:

2 Deduction Status Update (select one)

Please select the reason for your change/update to your deduction.

I've changed departments within the City Other

I've retired/ or will be retiring Retirement Date: / /

I am a Surviving Spouse Date of Birth: / /

3 Payroll/ Pension Deduction Authorization

PAYROLL/ PENSION DEDUCTION AUTHORIZATION

In addition to payroll/pension deductions for group benefits, if any, you will receive all Club benefits for a payroll/pension deduction of only \$6.00 per month (active employees) or \$4.00 per month (retired employees). You authorize these monthly deductions by signing the Payroll Deduction Authorization form.

Member's Printed Name:

Member's SSN: - -

City Dept# City Employee # (5 or 6 digits) DWP Employee #

Controller – City of Los Angeles, or Fire and Police Pension, or City Employees Retirement System, or Paymaster – Department of Water and Power

I hereby authorize the deduction from my salary or pension of amounts sufficient to cover premiums/ membership fees on any of my group benefits provided by the Employees Club of California. In the event any premiums should change due to age, increase in salary or benefits, or a general rate increase for the entire Association, I authorize you to make such change upon notification from the Employees Club of California and such deduction to remain in force until canceled by me in writing.

Must Select One

- City Active
- Hiring Hall
- City Retiree
- DWP Active
- DWP Retiree
- Fire/Police Pension (Officers Only)

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Code: Deduction:

SLAM-1901.02

Member's Signature: Date: / /

Story and photo courtesy Harbor



At the conclusion of last year's Sanitation clothing drive, Sanitation and Environment clothing drive team members delivered some of what they collected to the St. Francis Center downtown and to Sanitation charity programs.

Give to a Clothing Drive

SANITATION'S RECYCLING PROGRAM HOSTS A CITYWIDE CLOTHING DRIVE.

PUBLIC WORKS: Public Works/Sanitation and Environment's City Facilities Recycling Program (CFRP) is collecting new and gently used children's, men's and women's clothing in a charity effort.

Donated clothing will be provided to the St. Francis Center, Sanitation's Livability Services Division and Inside Save participants, agencies that provide support to the City's unhoused neighbors and low-income individuals.

The drive runs through March 1. Donated items can be dropped off at all Sanitation yards. Please be generous!

Times:

Monday-Friday, 9 a.m. – 4 p.m. through March 3

Locations will be closed Mon., Feb. 19 (President's Day)

Locations:

Public Works Building
1149 S. Broadway - Lobby
Los Angeles, CA 90015

East Valley District Yard
11050 Pendleton St.
Sun Valley, CA 91352

West Valley District Yard
8840 Vanalden Ave.
Northridge, CA 91234

North Central District Yard
452 San Fernando Rd.
Los Angeles, CA 90031

West LA District Yard
2027 Stoner Ave.
Los Angeles, CA 90025

South LA District Yard
786 S. Mission Rd.
Los Angeles, CA 90023

Harbor District Yard
1400 N. Gaffey St.
San Pedro, CA 90731

Washington Yard
2649 E. Washington Blvd.
Building B
Los Angeles, CA 90023

Brown Is Chief Engineer

CHRIS BROWN APPOINTED TO CHIEF HARBOR ENGINEER.

HARBOR: In January, Harbor appointed Chris Brown to Chief Harbor Engineer, the lead position overseeing the Port's Engineering Division. Brown replaces Dina Aryan-Zahlan, who was promoted to Deputy Executive Director of Development.

As Chief Harbor Engineer, Brown leads the planning, development and design of infrastructure and facilities that support the diverse operations of the nation's busiest seaport, including wharves, terminals, rail, roadways and public space.

"Chris has been a pivotal player in many Port infrastructure projects over the last two decades, including the award-winning Wilmington Waterfront Park and the current Port-wide electrification program," Aryan-Zahlan said in a statement. "This promotion recognizes all his hard work, dedication and contributions to these critical infrastructure programs. We are excited and proud to see him take on this important leadership role."

Most recently, Brown was the Assistant Chief Harbor Engineer responsible for division sections handling structural, specifications, architectural and electrical elements of Port infrastructure projects. Prior to that, he served as the Harbor Engineer in charge of division sections on structural, specifications, right of way, technology and CADD. From 2000–15, he held various roles—including section head, program manager and designer—on a number of projects, most notably as project manager for the Wilmington Waterfront Park, which won Engineering News Record's "Best of the Best Award" in 2012.

Brown started his career as a student engineer at the Harbor in 1993. Following a four-year stint at Holmes and Narver (now AECOM), he returned to the Port and progressively built his career. He received his Bachelor's degree in civil engineering from the University of Southern California, and his Master's degree in structural engineering from the University of Maryland.

In addition to being a registered civil engineer in California, Brown is a certified construction documents technologist as designated by the Construction Specification Institute, where he serves as a board member. Brown is also a senior certified professional with the Society for Human Resource Management.

Congratulations, Chris, from the Club! ●



Chris Brown



Noelle Kauffman, Club Director of Sales

Noelle's Picture Perfect Contest

Hello Club image makers! I love awesome photos and am so excited to see your best. And a shoutout to John Hawkins, who managed this monthly contest for more than a decade. Let's continue his creativity and have fun!

And don't forget about Club insurance. Do you have all that you need? See page 6 for more information. — **Noelle**

This month's theme was: **Storytelling**



"I love that my grandson Axel is reading and he just turned one. Looks like he is going to be a genius!"

– **Renee Ramirez, LAFD**

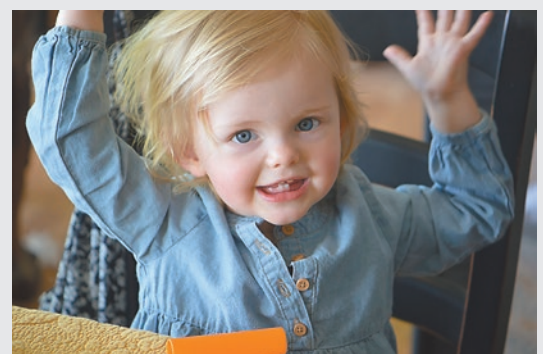
Noelle's comment: I'll back you on that prediction, Renee! Thanks for submitting.

"I came to LA from Germany as a student for flying lessons. Here I became best friends with Jack Harloe, a decorated World War II Army pilot who took me – no pun intended – under his (biplane) wings until I earned mine. Man, I even had hair back then!"



– **Yves Didier, Airport Police**

Noelle's comment: That's the kind of story I like, Yves, especially with the photo to illustrate it. It tells a story!



"This is all about storytelling. Our great granddaughter learns about 'Patty Cake, Patty Cake, Baker's Man' from her great Gramma along with the motions that go with it. From our kids to grandkids to great-grandkids, they all learned the story."

– **John Nance, Retired, LADWP**

Noelle's comment: I think every child learns this song, and your granddaughter could only be repeating that song here, judging from her precious face and arms. No other story is possible!

The next photo contest theme:

Brightening the World

DEADLINE:
Feb. 15



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

ENTER TO WIN
\$50 AMAZON
E-GIFT CARD

Submit your best photos, and be in the running for a prize.



"Taken just before a reading at a delightful book signing with LA author Kim Gruenenfelder. The event was hosted at a remarkably preserved Northeast mid-century home that was once on the cover of *Better Homes & Gardens* in 1954."

– **Shaudi Pishvaie, LAPD**

Noelle's comment: I wonder if the mood of the book was the darkening of sunshine. Very moody and cool. Thanks for submitting, Shaudi!



"Marching On: This is the Pleasant Valley School District Band with the Las Colinas Middle School Dance Club behind. This photo was taken at the Camarillo Christmas Parade."

– **Alex Andrews, Building and Safety**

Noelle's comment: Celebrating Christmas is always a good story. (A question: But why black and white? Just curious!)

Larios In the City

By Robert Larios, Chief Executive Officer

Robert Larios, Club President and CEO, honors Club Members with the coveted Club Retirement Plaque.



Steve S. DiGioia
LADWP, Retired after 36 years of City service.



Christopher D. Tripp
LADWP, 36 years of City service.



William Bolden
Public Works/Street Services, Retired after 33 years of City service.



Paul A. Ramey
LADWP, Retired after 41 years of City service.

FREE! * CLUB RETIREMENT PLAQUE



Retiring soon?

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

* a \$499 value!

Get started here:



From left: Board of Public Works Commissioners Mike Davis and Susana Reyes, Board President Aura Garcia, Gregg Vandergriff, Commissioner Teresa Villegas, City Engineer Ted Allen, and Commissioner Vahid Khorsand.

Story and photos courtesy Bureau of Engineering

Goodbye, Gregg

GREGG VANDERGRIFF, PRINCIPAL CIVIL ENGINEER, RETIRES AFTER 34 YEARS OF CITY SERVICE.

PUBLIC WORKS: Last summer, the Board of Public Works held a special recognition on the retirement of Gregg Vandergriff, Principal Civil Engineer in charge of the Project Award and Control Division. He retired after 34 years of City service.

A native of Oklahoma, he joined the bureau in 1989, working at the Donald C. Tillman Plant, then was promoted to Sanitation and Environment in the Recycling Division. He then was promoted to Sanitary Engineering Associate in the former Environmental Engineering Division, working on treatment plant projects. After a brief stint working for Airports at Ontario when the City owned it, he then was promoted to Civil Engineer in the Central District in the Bureau of Engineering, working many years in the Development Services Program. In 2020, he was promoted to Principal Civil Engineer over the Project Award and Control Divisions.



Gregg Vandergriff

The Board of Public Works gave Gregg a certificate that read in part: "In recognition of 34 years of employment with the City of Los Angeles, the Board of Public Works honors Charles Gregory Vandergriff. Congratulations on your many years of distinguished service and achievement and public service. Your professionalism and dedication to the Dept. of Public Works and the citizens of the City of Los Angeles is to be commended. Best wishes for your future health, prosperity and happiness."

The Club honors Gregg for his many years of innovation and dedication to the City! *Alive!* thanks Mary Nemick and Winnie Harano for their assistance. ●

House For Rent

2 bd., 2 bath. Newly remodeled bath/tub/shower.

- 10 min. to DTLA, near 5, 60, 101 Fwys. Near markets, post office, banks.
- Kitchen open to living room, dining room. Refrig. can be supplied or bring your own.
- Laundry/hookups. Patio in backyard. 2-car pkg. Lg. front porch. No pets. Utilities paid by tenant.
- 1 yr. lease. \$3,400/month. First/last rent required plus \$1,700 deposit

Contact: Rosana, (661) 563-3931



City Engineer Ted Allen presenting the retirement certificate to Gregg Vandergriff.



Gregg Vandergriff



Gregg Vandergriff with his family, including wife, Diana, and daughters Sarah, Christina, Jessica and Kira.

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Gregg Vandergriff with friends and coworkers.

Holiday Roundup

Before we close our folder from Holidays 2023, here are a few noteworthy events sponsored by City departments.



Rec and Parks

Rec and Parks celebrated Santa's visit and gift giveaway with a pajama party at Delano Recreation Center in Van Nuys.



Public Works/StreetsLA Council District 10

StreetsLA partnered with Council District 10 in distributing 1,400 food boxes, along with 1,400 turkeys – that's 70,000 pounds of food in total and assisted with the assembly and distribution of more than 1,000 bikes to Angeleno children.

One of the City's largest outdoor ice rink returns for the 2022 holiday season on Nov. 23. Suitable for experienced and novice skaters. Holiday hours limited. Lockers available for rent. Sessions last one hour.



LAPD Southwest

LAPD Southwest's Officer Chavez passed out Christmas presents to families in need.



CLUB MEMBER EXCLUSIVE PRIVATE PARTY

Medieval Times

DINNER & TOURNAMENT




ROYAL FEAST INCLUDED WITH YOUR SHOW!

CLUB MEMBERS ONLY

WE BOUGHT OUT THE EVENT!

REGULAR

\$72

CLUB MEMBER

\$34⁹⁵

TAXES & GRATUITY INCLUDED

TICKETS ARE LIMITED

BUENA PARK, CA

SUNDAY

FEB 18TH

2:00 PM

ARRIVE AT 12:30 PM TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE CLUB'S MOBILE STORE AND SELFIE STATION!

- OPPORTUNITY DRAWING FOR ALL MEMBERS.
- FUN FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY.
- CLUB MOBILE TRUCK WILL BE ON SITE.

Story and photo courtesy LADWP

Anselmo to the Board

SR. ASSISTANT GM ANSELMO COLLINS CHAIRS STATEWIDE WATER BOARD.

LADWP: Congratulations to Anselmo Collins, Sr. Assistant General Manager, LADWP, for being named chairman of the California Urban Water Agency board. "I'm excited to help lead CUWA's efforts this year with a focus on infrastructure investment, affordability, workforce development and trust in water quality."

Well done, Anselmo! ●



Anselmo Collins

Get Fresh

with Farm Fresh to You deals!

Go to the Club Website for details: employeesclub.com

Medieval Times' Royal Feast Menu:

- Roasted chicken
- Dessert of the Castle
- Garlic bread
- Slushies
- Tomato bisque soup
- 2 rounds of select non-alcoholic beverages
- Sweet buttered corn
- Herb-basted potato



BUY NOW

EmployeesClub.com

LIMIT 6 PER MEMBER

Cooking with the Club

with Chef Robert Larios



Photos: Patty M. Larios



One-Pot Mexicali Black Bean Soup With the Works

Welcome to another episode of Cooking with the Club! Today, we have a delicious and satisfying black bean soup that will blow your taste buds away. This bad boy cooks up in just one pot, meaning less fuss and more time to enjoy your meal. And guess what? It's ready in a quick and easy 20 minutes!

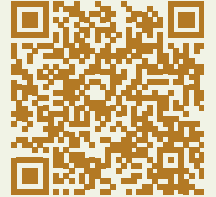
Picture this: perfectly simmered black beans, swimming in a rich and flavorful broth. We sautéed some onions, added tomato paste, and spiced it up with some Southwest seasonings. The result?

A thick and hearty soup that will warm your soul.

But wait, that's not all! We're not holding back when it comes to toppings. Load up your bowl with all the goodness – cheddar cheese, smoky red pepper crema, and some satisfyingly crunchy crushed blue corn tortilla chips. Trust us, it's a serious game-changer.

So, if you're looking for a truly "soup-er" supper, this black bean soup is your answer. Get ready to impress your taste buds and have a bowlful of foodie bliss. *Bon appétit!*

Follow this recipe online:



¡Buen provecho! *Chef Larios*

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 medium white onion
- 1 cup black beans
- 1 tablespoon Southwest spice blend (we used smoked paprika)
- 2 tablespoons tomato paste
- 1 tablespoon Tex-Mex paste (we decided to not use this seasoning or a substitute)
- 1/2 cup veggie stock concentrate (we used veggie stock and adjusted with more salt and pepper)
- 1/2 cup cheddar cheese (contains milk)
- 6 blue corn tortilla chips (contains sesame) – use more if needed
- 2 tablespoon smoky red pepper crema (contains milk) – we used sour cream only
- Salt and pepper (to taste)
- 2 teaspoon cooking oil (we used avocado oil)

Utensils You Will Need

- Small bowl
- Strainer
- Large pot

DIRECTIONS: Total time is 20 minutes

Serves 2



1 Prep - Wash and dry produce. Halve, peel and finely dice onion until you have 3/4 cup (1 1/2 cups for 4 servings). Drain beans over a small bowl, reserving liquid.



2 Start Soup - Heat a large drizzle of oil in a large pot over medium-high heat. Add onion; cook, stirring, until softened, 3-4 minutes. Add Southwest spice blend; stir until fragrant, 30 seconds. Stir in tomato paste and Tex-Mex paste; cook until slightly darkened in color, 1 minute.



3 Finish Soup - Stir 1 3/4 cups water, stock concentrates, beans, and 1/4 cup reserved bean liquid into pot. (For 4 servings, use 3 cups water and 1/2 cup bean liquid.) Bring to a boil and cook, stirring occasionally, until thickened, 5-8 minutes. Tip: Prefer your broth a bit thicker? Simmer a little longer—or simmer a little less if you prefer a thinner broth! You're the chef, after all. Taste and season with salt and pepper. Turn off heat.



4 Finish and Serve - Crush a few tortilla chips. Divide soup between bowls and top with cheddar, smoky red pepper crema, and as many crushed tortilla chips as you like. (Tip: Start with a few crushed chips and add more as you go to keep them crunchy!) Serve with whole tortilla chips on the side.

Cooking Tidbit

This recipe is perfect for adding chicken, beef or steak for your ravenous tastebuds. And guess what? It pairs perfectly with some toasty tortillas. Oh, and if you're tired of the same old black beans, why not give pinto beans a whirl? Get ready to tickle your taste buds in the most delicious way possible!

Food Quote:

"Black beans and tortillas – the dynamic duo that makes every Mexican dish sing."

– **Chef Robert Larios**

Food Lover's Dictionary:



Black Beans : Also known as turtle beans, these dried beans have long been popular in Mexico, Central and South America, the Caribbean and southern United States. They have a black skin, cream-colored flesh and sweet flavor, and form the base for the famous black-bean soup.

Bibliography: Copyright Barron's Educational Services, Inc. 2009, adapted from The New Food Lover's Companion, 2007, by Sharon Tyler Herbst and Ron Herbst.

Recipe: Hellofresh.com - <https://www.hellofresh.com/recipes/black-bean-poblano-flautas-6231eefa9a4e3545ef7bc836> Accessed Jan. 1, 2024.



MEMBER DEAL

Save on HelloFresh Deliveries

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!



Association and Club CEO Robert Larios welcomes Members, staff, business partners and special guests to the Club's annual meeting.

Celebrating 95 Years

CLUB'S 95TH ANNUAL MEETING CELEBRATES STEADFAST COMMITMENT TO SERVING MEMBERS.

THE CLUB: At press time: The Club held its 95th annual meeting Tuesday, Jan. 23 at the California Endowment. With Club Founder and outgoing CEO recently handing the reins of the Los Angeles City Employees Association and its Club subsidiary to Robert Larios, the meeting focused on leadership succession and the Club's steadfast commitment to honoring and serving Club Members since the association's founding in 1928.

The meeting, titled "Celebrate!", also premiered the latest in a series of humorous Club videos. This year's entry was titled "The Truck Whisperer" and focused on the game-changing Club Truck retail delivery van.

The swearing-in of the Association Board took place in December.

Due to the timing of the annual meeting event so close to *Alive!*'s publication date, we're publishing this summary story now and plan to publish a more complete story next month. ●

Thanks, John!

THE CLUB: As Former Los Angeles City Employees Association CEO and Club Founder John Hawkins hands the reins of the LACEA and its subsidiary, the Club, to Robert Larios, we invited everyone to thank John for his decades of service to public employees in California. Here are some at press time.

To John, thanks for all you have done to make the City Club awesome. I am an active Retired member who attends several events and enjoys meeting up with other Retirees. The discounts on tickets are amazing.

"Enjoy your next adventure in life."

— **Cathy Bushey, Retired Club Member**

"Hi John, the Club wouldn't be where it is today without your leadership and guidance. With your tutelage in the transition, the Club will no doubt continue to be a benefit in many, many ways for generations to come.

"Congratulations on your successes and future successes and endeavors.

"Best always."

— **Arceo Ramos, LADWP, former Club Employee**

"Thank you for your years of great leadership, John! Thank you for taking on the helm of both organizations, Robert!"

Juliet Wong, via LinkedIn

"Best wishes, John!"

— **Angie Navarro Rios, General Services, via Instagram**

"If I had to describe John Hawkins, I would describe him as a man with a heart, not just any heart. He has a heart for everything that he does and approaches it with sincerity, creativity and vision. He brought his creative heart to the founding of the Employees Club of California. In that role he showed his heart for creativity and vision. He shows his heart for Members, demanding top-shelf service and value. The Club motto – celebrating the work and lives of California public employees – is a perfect example of his heart for Members. His creative heart has no end as evidenced by the incredible and endless discounts and benefits of Club

membership. His heart for marketing is evidenced by the success of the Employees Club of California's growth, which has expanded to include all public employees in California. His heart for leadership is certainly evidenced by Club employees and partners who embrace and cultivate his desire to bring value to Club membership. His heart for the hurting, lost and lonely is evidenced by his creation of 'People We See,' a series of interviews of people on the street. His heart shows these folks that someone really does care about them, regardless of their lot in life.

"We are thankful to be a part of this journey as a partner of the Employees Club of California and thankful for his heart, leadership and friendship."

— **Patrick Miller, Employer's First Choice, Sacramento**

"John, thank you for all your years of service to the City of Los Angeles and employees and for allowing me to stay in touch [via *Alive!*] ... my heart is full right now with these memories and full of gratitude. See you in *Alive!* When you get to retire, you will be leaving an amazing legacy."

— **Jill Weismann, widow to Robert C. Weismann, Club Member**

"Dear John, working under your leadership has been an invaluable experience that has left a lasting impression on me. Your unwavering motivation and compassionate nature are just a few of the qualities that make you an exceptional leader. Your dedication to continuous growth and innovation has taught me a valuable lesson that I will carry with me forever.

"Thank you for recognizing and valuing my contributions. Your words of encouragement inspire me to strive for excellence in everything I do. Thank you for these wonderful years!"

— **Guadalupe Lira, Club Retail Operations Manager**

"Dear John Hawkins! You are the definition of a great leader. Your empathy, can-do-attitude, vision and influence made the Club the successful and mission-driven organization that it is today.

"I am forever grateful for having the privilege of working alongside you during my Club career. I have learned so much from you and cannot thank you enough for the impact you had on my professional growth.

"You leave behind a legacy that will never be forgotten. We will all miss you. "Onward and upward!"

— **Noelle Kauffman, Club Director of Sales**

"Thank you for your wonderful service, John."

— **Monica Valencia, Library, via Instagram**

Former Los Angeles City Employees Association CEO and Club Founder John Hawkins (left) hands the reins of the LACEA and its subsidiary, the Club, to Robert Larios on the cover of February *Alive!*.

'Club Whisperer' Premiere Set!

CLUB'S FUN ANNUAL MEETING VIDEO SETS YOUTUBE WORLD PREMIERE MARCH 15.

THE CLUB: Grab your popcorn and sneak in some snacks! "The Truck Whisperer" – a fun video promoting the incredible Club Truck that debuted at the Club's annual meeting in January – will have its world premiere on YouTube March 15.

The video tells the story of the Truck Whisperer – played dramatically by Mobile Operations Representative DeAngelo Thompson and voiced by IT Accounting Assistant Frank Ochoa – who channels the Truck vibe and convinces the Club leadership team about the Member Services delivery vehicle.

Mark your calendars for March 15, and be moved! ●



The Club's DeAngelo Thompson is *The Truck Whisperer*.

Tomas to AGM

TOMAS CARRANZA APPOINTED ASSISTANT GENERAL MANAGER.

Story and photo courtesy LADOT

LADOT: Tomas Carranza has been appointed the permanent Assistant General Manager and Chief Technology Officer of the Office of Planning and Innovation, LADOT. In this role, Tomas will oversee the Bureaus of Information Technology, Transportation Planning and Land Use Review, Universal Basic Mobility, and more.

Over his 30 years of transportation planning experience with the City, Tomas has led teams that delivered award-winning programs, including the Pandemic Travel Behavior Study and the Zero Emission Delivery Zone program. He also played a key role in securing more than \$500 million in grant funds for transportation initiatives through the LADOT Mobility Investment Program.

Congratulations, Tomas, from the Club! ●



Tomas Carranza

Heany an FBI Grad

LT. BRIAN HEANY GRADUATED FROM THE FBI ACADEMY.

Story and photo courtesy LAPD

LAPD: Lt. Brian Heany graduated as a member of the 288th session of the FBI National Academy. The graduation took place at the National Academy in Quantico, Va. In December. Nationally, fewer than one percent of Officers have the opportunity to attend the program.

The National Academy offers 10 weeks of advanced communication, leadership and fitness training. Participants must have proven records as professionals within their agencies to attend. On average, these Officers have 21 years of law enforcement experience and usually return to their agencies to serve in executive-level positions.

The 288th session consisted of men and women from 45 states and the District of Columbia. The class included members of law enforcement agencies from 24 countries, four military organizations, and six federal civilian organizations.

Thanks for keeping LA safe, Lt. Heany! ●



Lt. Brian Heany



GENERAL SERVICES AND
PROJECT RESTORE

The Art of Restore

A dedicated team is painstakingly restoring City Hall's priceless artwork for its 100th anniversary in 2028.

City Hall is full of hard-working public employees looking up to the future. But the team of General Services and the nonprofit Project Restore looks up for a different reason – it's the location of so much precious and priceless artwork, including murals, tiles, metalwork, and more.

They're encouraging you to do that, too. General Services and Project Restore are painstakingly restoring more than 50,000 square feet of this artwork in anticipation of City Hall's 100th anniversary and the 100th birthday of the building itself.

If you've walked its hallways, it is almost impossible to escape the beauty that surrounds them. From the ornately decorated vaulted ceilings above the elevator banks to the mythological figures symbolizing the courage, perseverance, progressiveness and energy of the people of Los Angeles, the work of art continues into the East Lobby. The central

dome murals illustrate Earth, Wind, Water and Fire. Other murals depict themes of Science, Civil Engineering, Mechanical Power, Commerce and more. Los Angeles City Hall is perhaps the foremost symbol of our great metropolis.

Originally painted by two famous artisans, Anthony Heinsbergen (Dutch-born muralist who designed the interior of movie theatres including United Artists, Hollywood Pantages and Wiltern) and Herman Sachs (Romanian-born artist, muralist and decorator who contributed designs to important landmarks such as Bullocks Wilshire and Union Station), the murals in Los Angeles City Hall are suffering from flaking and deterioration. After the seismic retrofit and historic restoration of City Hall in 2001, inevitable humidity fluctuations and visitor traffic have caused significant damage. Spotting the damage is sometimes difficult due to the high ceilings, but paint has been gradually chipping and falling to the floor.

Project Restore aims to raise further funding to complete the full restoration of the murals, tiles and metalwork, and preserve the one-of-a-kind elegant ceilings and walls in L.A. City Hall.

Read all about the project in this month's feature.

The Club thanks the restoration leadership team, including Kevin Jew, Nancy Lopez-Kazarian and John McNeil for their welcome and information.

For more information on this or many other projects, go to: www.projectrestorela.org



The famous Greco-Roman film crew; and above City Hall corridors. Below: details of murals found on the ceilings of public areas of City Hall.



From left: John McNeil, Project Restore Works; Nancy Lopez-Kazarian, Project General Services; and Kevin Jew, former and Retired, Board of Public Works. (top) Joe Martinez and (right) Omar...



Alive! Feature

ration



re and formerly Public
t Restore, Tony Royster,
sultant to Project Restore
Bronze restorers include
Martinez of KC Restoration.



THE ALIVE! INTERVIEW

Wall Overhaul



On Dec. 8, Club CEO Robert Larios and Alive! editor John Burnes interviewed the City team restoring the vast treasure trove of murals and other artwork adorning the walls of City Hall. Interviewed were John McNeil, Chief Operations Officer, Project Restore, and previously Public Works, 22 years of City service; Tony Royster, General Manager and City Purchasing Agent, General Services, 30 years; and Kevin Jew, Retired, Board of Public Works, and consultant, Project Restore, 32 years. All three are Club Members. Nancy Lopez-Kazarian, Director, Project Restore, coordinated the interview. • The interview took place via Zoom.

Thanks for joining us today to talk City Hall murals! First, tell us your path – how you got to your current position.



John McNeil
Redevelopment Agency.

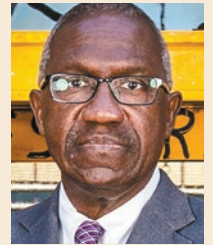
John McNeil: I was an Architectural Associate for the City for about 19 years. I started as a Drafting Technician for two years and then later became an Architectural Associate in the Bureau of Engineering in Public Works, altogether for about 21 years.

I'm fairly new to Project Restore. I've been here for about a year.

I had worked for various Los Angeles architects before I joined the City. I worked for an architectural group that did chain restaurants like McDonald's, Sizzler and California Pizza Kitchen. Also I did some historic architecture projects while working in the city of Glendale, where we designed some Habitat for Humanity multi-family homes and did facade improvement work for the now-defunct Community

I joined the City's Architectural Division in 2001 as an emergency appointed employee. During that time, I was fortunate enough to be involved in both new construction projects as well as historic restoration projects. Some of those were the Historic Italian Hall, the Barnsdall Park Hollyhock House, and the Banning Museum in Wilmington. Currently I'm also working on the Frank Lloyd Wright Residence A restoration project, and that's how I came in contact with working with Project Restore, because I was working under the historic architect for the project, Hsiao-Ling Ting, who has now since retired. After Hsiao-Ling left the project, I assumed the role of the Project Architect and the Project Manager for the Residence A project. Sometime after that, I had the opportunity to join Project Restore, where I now serve the City, preserving its historic cultural monuments.

Tony Royster: I've been at GSD for more than 30 years. I came initially in 1993 as Director of Building Services, then eventually became Chief Management Analyst and Assistant General Manager, then General Manager.



Tony Royster

Kevin Jew: I started my City career as a Buyer in the Office of the Purchasing Agent, General Services. From there I was promoted to Management Analyst I in the Bureau of Contract Administration, Management Analyst II in the Bureau of Sanitation, Sr. Management Analyst I in Community Development, and a Sr. Management Analyst II/Chief Operating Officer for Project Restore, under the Board of Public Works.

Mural Mania



Kevin Jew

In general, describe the mural and artwork restoration project – what it is, how it came about, and then the timeline.

Kevin Jew: We're preserving or saving as much of the murals' original decorative paint as possible. This requires constant and very delicate cleaning, conservation, restoration, and in rare cases, repainting.

Project Restore started the program not long after the completion of the seismic retrofit project back in 2001. Around 2005, we started noticing some deterioration in the murals, and we repaired and restored that damage. Every year we would see more deterioration, and we would repair that and restore that as well. Then

— CONTINUES PAGE 14



'When you think about it like that, it really is one of the largest collections of public art in the City, that anyone can go in and see at any time that the building is open. It's really an incredible resource.'

— Kevin Jew, Project Restore

The Art of Restoration

THE ALIVE! INTERVIEW — CONTINUED FROM PAGE 13

in 2008, we applied for and received a grant from the Getty Foundation to develop the first conservation plan for the decorative paint. This was completed about a year later, and then in those ensuing years we just kept restoring small areas of damage, pretty much as funding allowed. In 2015, we commissioned a large project to develop a condition assessment – we assessed every square foot of decorative paint. That’s more than 50,000 square feet on floors one, two, three and 27. To do that, we hired a conservator. We used scaffolding and lifts to closely examine the paint and then lay hands on it. They submitted a report that recorded the current condition of the paint and their recommendations for restoration.

Since the completion of that report, Project Restore with General Services have slowly been chipping away at the priority work identified in that report. This type of work never ends. Because most of the paint is original and almost 100 years old, I always tell people to think of the Golden Gate Bridge. By the time they finish painting it they have to start over again; that’s how this building is, too.

How many murals are there?

Kevin: We don’t separate it like that; it’s more about square feet. On third floor alone it’s so extensive – it’s in the main access, the north and south hallways, the east rotunda, the elevator lobby and then of course, the public meeting spaces like the Board of Public Works Session room and the Council Chambers, and then through non-public areas like the back hallway into the Council Chambers and the hallway and lobby leading to the Mayor’s Office. There’s decorative paint everywhere. On the first floor, it’s concentrated in the Main Street entrance, as well as the exterior right outside the entrance (loggia), and on the second floor, again, it’s on the north and south ends, as well as the elevator lobby. And then the 27th floor, it’s the whole 27th floor ceiling.

Wow.

Kevin: You have to think of it as public art. It’s a

public building; anyone can come in and admire any of the artwork – the murals, the millwork, the metalwork, the masonry.

John: It’s like a large museum.

Kevin: When you think about it like that, it really is one of the largest collections of public art in the City, that anyone can go in and see at any time that the building is open. It’s really an incredible resource.

Who painted them?

Kevin: Two companies were originally hired – Anthony Heinsbergen and Herman Sachs. Herman Sachs did the main rooms – the Board of Public Works and the Council Chambers, and Tony Heinsbergen pretty much did everything else in the building.

Did General Services, or what version of it there was in 1928, get involved in the creation of the art?

Tony Roy: No. General Services was established back in 1979. I think Public Works, or the Board of Public Works, might have been involved.

Was all the artwork created for the opening of City Hall in 1928, or did some of the work continue after that?

Kevin: It was all done for the opening of the building. When the building opened to the public, the murals were done.

Purpose

Why is this project being done?

John: Our work is constantly ongoing. These murals always need attention and need to be refreshed. But one item that’s important to mention is that we want to gear up for the 2028 Olympics, and the Centennial birthday for the

Los Angeles City Hall. Those are two of the main reasons why we want to refresh the building.

I’m glad you mentioned the Olympics. Most people just think of the sports competitions, but it’s also an opportunity to showcase art and culture, and to work across borders.

John: Absolutely. It is an opportunity to showcase the City’s beautiful historic architecture and art.

Kevin: We get a lot of tourists generally, and will get a lot more in 2028.

John: The Olympics is going to be a world international event. We have a lot planned for that time, including both the Olympics and the City Hall Centennial Celebration. We’re preparing a historic guided tour program that will also be largely educational. It’s called Experience LA. We’re hoping to generate and implement requests from the elected officials to accommodate constituents and VIP guests for special tours. Ultimately there will be two types of tours – the first will be a docent-led tour with a traditional monologue delivered by trained docents that will incorporate history, information, and questions and answers. And we’d like to institute self-guided tours that will be for both the casual visitor and for the people who like to tour buildings, the very avid visitors. We’re hoping to put that together; it’s a matter of funding, and there’s quite a bit of work to do beforehand.

That’s all new to us. We look forward to covering that!

General Services

Why is this project important to General Services?

Tony: City Hall is an extremely important symbol, an iconic symbol every day, but especially for the Olympics and the City Hall Centennial.

We organize numerous special events throughout the City, but this one is extremely important because it represents City history. Several movies incorporate City Hall – *Dragnet*, for example, if you’re old enough to remember.

How does this project show off the capabilities of General Services?

Tony: It exhibits the extraordinary skills that City employees have in maintaining a building of this type. If you look at the murals project – it’s extremely complex with the type of materials that we deal with and the cleaning of the marble floors. It really shows how talented our people are. A lot of people don’t really understand what we do until you see it in *Alive!* You did an article on the City Hall decorative lighting project a

few years ago. That program was completed together with the Bureau of Engineering in Public Works, with General Services designing the decorative lighting. When anything of any type of importance goes on in the City, City Hall is lit to commemorate it. People don’t understand that GSD is behind that. Our special events and building maintenance staff work closely with elected officials, with the community, whomever, to make sure that the City is presented in that way.

Absolutely.

Tony: That’s the first thing. And secondly, it makes our employees very proud of what we do. City Hall really represents the high level of work that we do.

Funding and Other Challenges

What are the unique challenges of this project?

John: Regarding maintaining the artistic murals, the biggest aspect is that there aren’t a lot of people still around who can do this type of work. Many of the people who work with us are very rare and very talented specialists whom we contract with to perform the work. It’s an extremely unique type of work, and it seems potentially to be gradually in danger of becoming a lost art. It’s very sensitive work, and not everyone can perform it. Personally, I find that a lot of the artisans who do this type of restoration work do it out of the love of their craft. They know and they understand just how important it is to preserve our nation’s cultural history. It’s very hard to find these individuals and people with that type of knowledge and passion.

Tony: Some of the challenge is making sure that we have a plan; the Centennial is in four years. We have to get the funding we need to make sure that we can have this work done and done in time. This is not something you can prepare for in three weeks or six months. We have to prepare years in advance to get it done.

John: We look for funding in all forms. We look for funding and donations from all available sources, and we seek grant funding in every possible realm. Also, we look for them from the private foundations, such as the Getty, and also within the City budget and resources from state, and from federal sources as well.

Kevin: There are so many challenges. From the very beginning, it starts with funding, right? As Tony and John said, you have to have the funding. It’s one of the main issues, and that’s why we only take on certain areas at a time. It’s all dependent on funding.

And as Tony mentioned, finding the right people can be difficult. We’re very lucky in that. When I was on the seismic project 22 years ago, I took the contact numbers of all of the muralists who were hired on that job. There were three guys who worked for a company out of Pittsburgh. I include them when I send out requests for proposals and there are a few more local firms. That’s how short the list is.

For this, we send RFPs maybe to six or seven companies, and we’ll get three or four responses. A lot of it depends on availability. These people who we hire work all over the world. One guy was in Eastern Europe restoring churches for a long time. It’s very itinerant work, traveling to wherever the work is. Another person we hired worked in San Francisco and Chicago before that. It’s about finding them, funding them, and then logistics.

Restoration team leaders in front of restored tile.



Murals being restored.



Details of murals found on the ceilings of public areas of City Hall.



The Art of Restoration

Alive! Feature

THE ALIVE! INTERVIEW — CONTINUED FROM PAGE 14

You also have to remember that it's a public building in use five days a week. In the path of travel, it could be very challenging. That's why it's so important that we're working with General Services, as well as LAPD for security, to make sure we can even accommodate the equipment that's required. Sometimes we have to work at night, mainly because of odors and hazardous materials.

Content of the Past

Are there any challenges of cultural appropriateness? Do you ever come across issues of things that might be questionable now that were acceptable in 1928? How do you handle issues when you get into difficulties of cultural inappropriateness, if it exists?

Kevin: Right now there are murals or depictions all over the building, including Christopher Columbus, Fr. Junipero Serra, and a lot of Spanish explorers like Portola and Cabrillo. A lot of them are depicted in either the metalwork or the murals.

This is just my point of view: You have to look at it in the context of that time. I'm big on history, I truly do believe that if you don't know your history, you're bound to repeat it. I come from the point of historic preservation and restoration, and so if it needs work we'll restore it, conserve it and preserve it. If there are questions of appropriateness, I let others answer that.

The Spirit of LA

Do those murals created in 1928 still represent the spirit of LA? Is there a continuity between then and now?

John: Absolutely, without a doubt. The murals foster honor and justice. These are the kinds of things that everybody can understand, and it's everyone's responsibility to protect them. There are a lot of depictions that invoke qualities of human nature, such as courage. There are images depicted of work, of labor. There are agricultural things portrayed there. They carry a lot of information, and you get a spiritual feeling when you look at these murals. That's what art is to a large degree – something that touches the human spirit, and that's what these murals do.

That's a beautiful way to say it.

Tony: You can go back 100 years and come back today. We have the same challenges and the same celebrations. Like Kevin says, you can't understand your future unless you understand your history. The murals remind us of our history, where we've been and where we're going, and appreciate how far we've come from to where we are today.

John: These murals are also a testimony to the progressiveness of the individuals who founded the City. They suggest the resilience and they are a visual statement of the concepts and truths that the majority of Angelenos hold close to them.

Kevin: You have to remember what LA was in 1928. It was something like just a little more than a million or a million and a half people. At the time, the City government took it to the voters for the new City Hall to exceed the height limit. This building was the tallest building in the City. Between that and the murals, they

'The artists in 1928 drew the murals full-size on tracing paper, and this is the way Michelangelo did the Sistine Chapel at the Vatican. It's the same technique.'

— Kevin Jew, Project Restore

wanted to tell everyone that Los Angeles is here on the precipice of becoming one of the world's great metropolitan cities.

And now, here we are in 2023 [the interview was conducted late last year. — Ed.]. The murals still apply – we are here as one of the greatest metropolitan cities. As John mentioned, the murals honored or depicted the industries that were important to the development of Los Angeles as a growing metropolitan city. They have scenes of agriculture, construction, the Port of LA. There's even one of moviemaking that's unique – it depicts Greco-Roman characters, but they're holding a movie camera. You look at those industries that were important in 1928, and they're still important today to the City. It all still applies.

John: Los Angeles is considered the nation's first modern city, being that it's built around the automobile. When you look at older cities, they're built around horses and carriages. Los Angeles is actually the first modern city for that reason.

Are there murals about traffic?

John: I think they wanted to bypass that!

No murals about driving down the 405?

Kevin: No! Too early.

Favorites

What's your favorite part of the project?

Kevin: Climbing up on the scaffolding or the lift and laying hands on the actual murals. It really is amazing to see. I can actually see how they transferred the mural from tracing paper to the ceiling. You cannot see it from the ground, but you have to get very close, probably within two feet – the ceilings are 20 to 30 feet high. The average person is never going to be able to see that. They drew the murals full-size on tracing paper, and this is the way Michelangelo did the Sistine Chapel at the Vatican. It's the same technique. Then they transfer it to whatever the workpiece is, in this case the ceiling, and they poke holes in it with an awl, or it looked like a 16-penny nail, and then they dab it with paint in the holes, or sometimes they use ink. It's like Connect the Dots; it gives them the outline of the mural. On some of the parts of the murals, I could actually still see the dots because normal-



Above and below: Restorers at work.

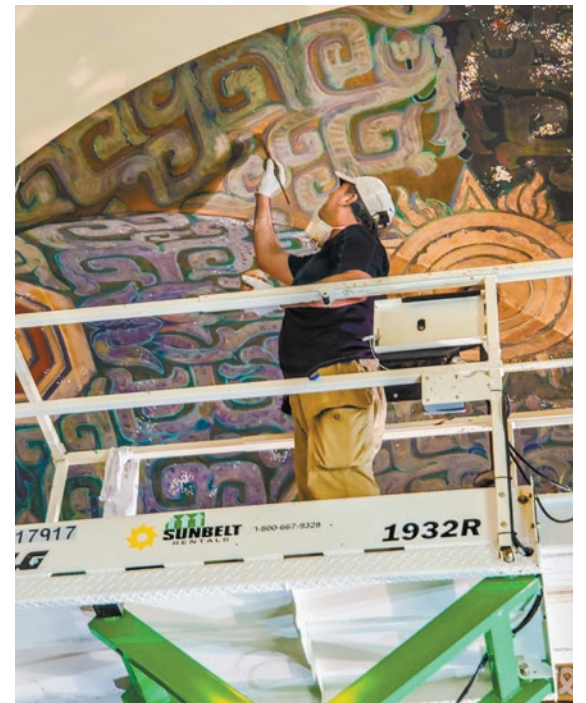
ly you don't see them because they get painted over. We know exactly how they did it. Today, it's much simpler, much faster to create and install murals. You can actually just project it now on the surface, and they just paint it. There are no dots, no grids, nothing like that. It's really something when you can see how they actually did it almost 100 years ago, and then you realize it's the same technique that they've been using for many hundreds of years.

John: My favorite part of doing this type of work is very similar to what Kevin was saying – learning about all of the different types of techniques and procedures, and the materials that were used to actually produce this level of artistry. It's remarkable. All of the artwork that you see here was originally done by hand, and many of these techniques are almost long forgotten and no longer even used in the 21st century. My favorite mural is the one mentioned by Kevin – a modern vignette that's inspired by a Grecian frieze, featuring a human figure operating a modern motion picture film camera, paying homage to the days of the early Hollywood film studios. As we all know, the motion picture industry and the television industry were an integral part of the huge economic growth for Los Angeles for many decades, and continues to be to this very day. It was important for them, I think, to pay some sort of tribute to a combination of the ancient art form mixed with the modern element of movie making.

Kevin: I love it because it's so out of context when you actually notice it. It's a very small detail too, so a lot of people never notice it.

John: It's very different than the other drawings and painted images that you see on all of the other ceilings.

Tony: My favorite part is watching the visitors and the school kids come in to look at them, amazed about what's in City Hall. Because City Hall is not a municipal facility, it's a museum, and it contains and maintains the history of the City. There are probably very few places in the world like City Hall, especially in California or the



United States.

About Project Restore

John, this might be a good time to explain to our readers what Project Restore is.

John: Project Restore is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that works in close cooperation with the elected leadership of the City of ... Los Angeles. Our historic restoration work is contingent and depends on locating adequate funding, and also having the necessary staff requirements to perform the work.

How does it interact with General Services?

John: We depend on the work from General Services to make all of the work for City Hall

— continued from page 25

Details of murals found on the ceilings of public areas of City Hall.





Retired Los Angeles City Employees, Inc.

RLACEI

For Retired
Club Members

CONTACT INFORMATION

Retired Los Angeles City Employees, Inc. (RLACEI)



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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 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 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 LAFCU as applicable.



Beverly J. Clark

Send in your Interesting News Contributions!

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

RETIREE EVENTS

Stay Tuned!

The following events will be scheduled for 2024 with dates and locations soon to be announced:
Spring Fling • Summer Picnic

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.

MEET YOUR BOARD

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



Beverly J. Clark

**Joe Quan
RLACEI Board Member**

The RLACEI Board is pleased to announce the nomination of Joe Quan to serve on the Board as Technology Director. Joe, as an Information Technology Agency (ITA) employee for more than 30 years, brings a vast amount of technological experience to the Board. Some of his skills include the Microsoft Office suite, Google Gmail, Google Docs, Google Sheets, Google Meets, YouTube video posting/editing, Bard AI, Zoom administration, website administration, social media

formats, knowledge with Android and IOS cellphone platforms, and photography.

Joe started with the City in 1989 and worked in the City's department of ITA until he retired in 2019. He is married to Sheung, and they have two sons, Trevor and Travis, who are both second-generation employees with the City of Los Angeles.

Joe has a passion for photography, dining and exploring new places in the world, which he enjoys in his free time.

Joe is an active Retiree who enjoys serving his community and spending time with his family. He serves on several boards, including the Friends of the Chinese American Museum of Los Angeles, where he serves as the Board Treasurer. He also serves as Board Secretary for the Los Angeles Federal Credit Union. Additionally, he is the 3rd Vice President and Financial Adviser for the Summerlin Lions Club and serves on the Coronado IV LMC as Board Treasure.

Why did you join the RLACEI Board?

"To support the board through technology and social media updates for our Retirees."

Welcome Joe to the RLACEI Board of Directors. Joe! ●



Joe Quan



Joe Quan with his family.



Michael R. Wilkinson

LACERS BOARD UPDATE

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

Why LACERS Uses Passive, Active Investing

LACERS diversifies its investments so that we don't "put all our eggs in one basket," as the proverb says. How do we do that? LACERS uses careful asset allocation by buying different types of investments with the aim to not be fully invested in investments that move up and down in lockstep. If this diversification is successful, when some investments go down, others gain. However, there are times when all assets move together.

One other type of diversification is between passive and active investments. Why is this important? Active investing is the kind everyone knows about. A money manager buys and sells investments with the objective of making profits and performing better than a goal called a benchmark. *What is a benchmark?* It is a group of like investments that can be used to measure the performance of an active manager. *What is a passive investment manager?* A passive investment manager is one who uses an index, such as the S&P 500 Stock Index, to buy and hold all the stocks in that index and does not pick individual investments.

Why not always have an active manager if the active manager can always outperform the passive index? Wouldn't that be the best? In certain asset classes, like big U.S. companies, active managers have a difficult time beating the passive manager, using an index, on a long-term basis.

So what advantage does the passive manager have if they must hold all the stocks, the good the bad and the

ugly (sorry I couldn't resist), while the active manager can pick what they think are the best investments? Well one answer is fees, and the other is performance. What matters to LACERS is the return to the pension plan after paying the fees. The active manager charges much higher fees since the manager must pay for people and infrastructure to make the decisions on what to buy and sell. The passive manager can pass on much lower fees to provide a higher return after fees if the performance is comparable. Also, the active manager may have years when they lose money compared to the index.

How does LACERS use passive investing? For some asset classes, active managers have been able to show consistently higher performance to justify their higher fees. In those asset classes, LACERS uses active managers. In private equity, for instance, there is no accepted index, and LACERS uses active managers. In other classes, passive managers excel and LACERS gets the performance of the index at a much lower price.

Here's the breakdown:

- LACERS U.S. Equity (companies) is 79 percent passive;
- Non-U.S. Equity 42 percent passive;
- Core fixed income 22 percent passive; and
- the overall passive investment for the total fund is 29 percent.



Arnette Travis

By Arnette Travis

Author/Activist/Advocate, RLACEI Contributing Author

Money, Time and Energy: Holiday Reflections and Review

We of a certain age have had a wide range of experiences during the holiday season. These experiences usually involve weeks of preparation such as decorating your home, shopping for and wrapping gifts, buying/baking/cooking food items needed for seasonal menu favorites, and hosting or attending social gatherings for family and friends.

The fact that after years of repeating these same actions over and over, year in and year out, might suggest that they are easier to perform. Instead, for many people these have turned into burdensome, unrealistic and for some, unnecessary tasks that cause stress or anxiety.

The execution of these preparations depends on three things: money, time and energy. As we age there might be more or less of these essentials that can lead to stressful feelings. Here are some proven ways to execute these three things without negative impact.

- **Money** - Determine how much you can (or want) to spend on gift giving and stick to it. Spending time with loved ones and being present in the moment is infinitely more valuable and memorable than money spent on gifts.
- **Time** - Make a list of tasks and social commitments, and then prioritize them according to

their importance. Set realistic expectations, and guard against feeling pressured to be perfect in the execution of those tasks, or to attend every social event. Don't hesitate to ask for help from family and friends if you're feeling overwhelmed. Delegating tasks will not only relieve you but serve to teach and empower others.

- **Energy** - Take care of you! Make sure you're getting enough sleep, eating healthy foods, and exercising regularly. Take 10- to 15-minute naps or rest breaks during the day to recharge if you feel run down. You might want to practice relaxation techniques such as yoga, meditation or deep breathing to help cope with any added stress the holidays can bring.

Also remember to:

- **Be flexible** - When things don't go according to plan, being flexible and willing to adjust your plans as needed will reduce stress and open the possibility for new experiences.
- **Focus on the positives** - Focus on spending time with family and friends and creating happy memories.

My wish is for you and yours to own and live in your happiness every day! ●



RLACEI MEMBERS

Not an RLACEI member?

Join and like us on FACEBOOK

Call (800) 678-4145 x706 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!



Beverly J. Clark

By Beverly J. Clark, Publicity Director

Beverly.Clark@RLACEI.org or (800) 678-4145 ext. 716

RLACEI: 2023 in Review

A Year of Gratitude

As we reflect on the service we as Retirees provided to the City of Los Angeles and embrace the joys of retirement, we have much to be thankful for. We have served our City with dedication and pride, and we have earned the respect and appreciation of our co-workers and community. We have also gained the opportunity to pursue our passions, hobbies and interests, and to spend more time with our loved ones. Retirement is not the end of our journey, but the beginning of a new chapter in our lives.

A Year of Challenges

As in every year, there are ups and downs. As we get older, we experience health challenges that just did not exist when we were younger. Some of us may have faced illnesses, injuries or surgeries that tested our resilience and strength. Some of us may have lost friends or family members who were dear to us. Some of us may have struggled with loneliness, isolation or depression. These are not easy times, but we are not alone. We have each other, and we have the support and resources of RLACEI to help us cope and overcome.

A Year of Advocacy

The RLACEI board strives to ensure that City Retirees continue to enjoy the benefits of retirement. In 2023, the board addressed the healthcare costs some Retirees over the age of 65 are experiencing through Income-Related Monthly Adjustment Amount (IRMAA), which is an additional cost assessed by the Social Security Administration based on income. In September, board members spoke before the City Council

requesting a 2.6 percent discretionary cost of living increase (COLA). The board, working closely with LACERS, continued to monitor the performance of our pension fund through our elected LACERS Commissioner representing Retired employees and advocated for the protection and enhancement of our health and dental plans. Retirees were kept informed and updated on the latest news and developments affecting retirement through articles in *Alive!* from Board Director Tom Moutes and LACERS Commissioner Mike Wilkinson, and via Facebook and the RLACEI and *Alive!* websites.



A Year of Celebration

RLACEI held its 50th anniversary at Stevens Steak House in June, a milestone that marked half a century of service and solidarity among City Retirees. Board President Ruth Perry provided guests with a brief history of RLACEI from its inception until now. It was a festive occasion that featured speeches, certificates, entertainment and delicious food. More than 150 Retirees attended the event, and many shared their memories and stories with each other of working for the City and being part of RLACEI. It was a wonderful

way to honor our past and look forward to our future.

RLACEI also hosted a fall picnic in September and a holiday party at Friendship Auditorium in December. At each event, more Retirees joined us in celebrating our retirement and socializing with friends and previous co-workers over a great meal with prizes to boot. These events were not only fun and enjoyable, but also a way to strengthen our bonds and connections as a community of retirees.

To keep Retirees updated and informed about fellow Retirees, throughout the year a Retiree is featured in *Alive!* highlighting their accomplishments and activities in retirement. It is a source of encouragement for Retirees to get busy and enjoy their best years doing whatever may make them happy, no matter how large or small.

Special thanks to Club Founder John Hawkins, LACEA and Club CEO Robert Larios and the staff of the Employees Club of California for their support and partnership throughout the year.

A Year of Hope

As we bid farewell to 2023 and welcome 2024, we have much to look forward to. We have new goals and dreams to pursue, new adventures and experiences to enjoy, and new opportunities and challenges to embrace. We also have the assurance and confidence that RLACEI will continue to serve and represent our interests and needs as City Retirees. We have the hope and optimism that our retirement will be fulfilling and rewarding, and that we will make the most of every moment.

Thank you for being part of RLACEI, and for making 2023 a memorable year. We wish you all the best for the New Year. May it bring you more happiness, health and prosperity. ●



Club Alive! presents one of our most popular annual features – Club Valentines. Enjoy... and happy Valentine's Day!

Valentines



"My wife Cleo and I have been married for 55 years and are blessed to have a daughter and a son and four grandchildren."
– Delio Jacildo, Retired, Building and Safety



"Happy Valentine's to a loving husband and wonderful father! We love you, Yosef."
– Nancy Argueta, LAPD



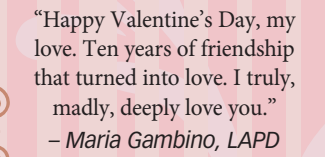
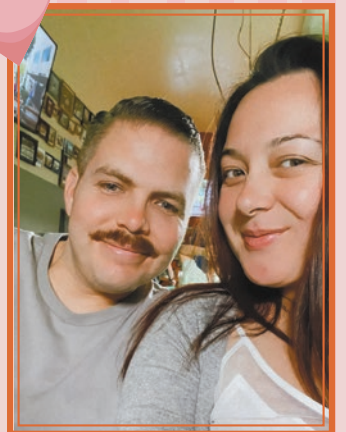
"To many more Valentines together!"
– Bryan Granados, LAPD



"My favorite Valentine is my grandson. He's the most caring and loving person. Grandma loves you."
– Debbie Ferrer, Retired, LADWP



"Happy 27th Valentine's Day with the love of my life."
– Lisa Wiley, LADWP



"Happy Valentine's Day, my love. Ten years of friendship that turned into love. I truly, madly, deeply love you."
– Maria Gambino, LAPD



"I am truly blessed to spend my life with you. I love you with all my heart today, tomorrow and always. Happy Valentine's Day, my love."
– Franklyn Sugiyama, LADWP



"Happy Valentine's Day to the loves of my life. Lots of love from Mom/Grammy."
– Terri Winfield, Public Works

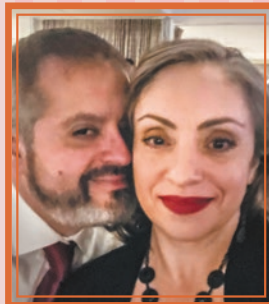
"Happy Valentine's Day, Babi! It's our third Valentine's Day together. Can't wait for our 30th Valentine's Day together!"
– Officer Il Diego Bradamontes, LAPD



"Happy Valentine's Day to the love of my life. Finding you, falling in love with you, and marrying you have been some of my greatest accomplishments."
– Juan Valenzuela, Building and Safety



"Happy wedding anniversary on Valentine's Day. Forty years together. Love is in the air."
– Elliott Porter, Rec and Parks



"Thank you for always loving me the way you do!"
– Elena Sousa for John Sousa, Airport Police



"Happy Valentine's Day, Tiff (my mini-me). Love, Mom."
– Terri Winfield, Public Works



"To the love of my life for more than 40 years – thanks for all the memories we had and the new ones we will make."
– Rhonda Brown, LAPD



"Happy Valentine's Day to my beautiful wife, who is a caring and giving person."
– Thomas Godoy, Retired, LADWP



"Happy Valentine's Day to my sweetheart as we celebrate the beginning of the teenage years of the relationship with more fun memories and adventures!"
– Constance Chang, Public Works



"To the love of my life."
– David Orduno, Retired, Rec and Parks



"Happy Valentine's Day, my love!"
– Edward Santillan, for Vanessa Santillan, Finance



"God sent you to me just when I needed you!"
– Selenia Garcia, Building and Safety



"Happy Valentine's Day to my beautiful fiancé. I love you more than you'll ever know."
– Jaquine James, LADOT



"Happy Valentine's Day to the best girl ever! Love u more!"
– Michael Iniguez, LADWP



"Happy 50th Valentine's Day to my high school sweetheart."
– Cindy Miranda, Retired, Harbor



"Happy Valentine's Day to the love of my life!"
– Officer Valentine Umana, LAPD



SCAN WITH YOUR PHONE

THERE'S STILL TIME TO POST YOUR Valentine ONLINE



"Happy Valentine's Day, Patty. I love doing life with you. The things we do, and the things we see will be etched in my life forever. I love you!"
 -Richard Gallegos, Street Services, LA County



"Happy Valentine's Day to my little family! To my husband, cheers to our first Valentine's Day as a married couple."
 - Candace Velasco, LADWP



"Happy Valentine's Day, my forever Valentines! To amo con toda, mi alma!"
 - Erika Carrillo, Airports



"Happy Valentine's Day, my love!"
 - Cecilia Manzo, LADWP



"This year I got to wish a Happy Valentine to my beautiful wife! It's such a blessing to have you as my partner in life. God bless you, Amor."
 - Erik Munoz, Public Works



"Happy Valentine's Day to the most beautiful woman I know."
 -Caesar Castelo, ITA



"Las amo, BFFs!"
 - Cecilia Manzo, LADWP



"SPAR-ring or courting, we make a great pair. Happy Valentine's Day."
 - John Burnes, Alive! editor

"Thank you for all your love."
 - Motor Officer Carlos Arroyo, LADWP



"You are my love and my life."
 - Selene Aguirre, LAPD



"Dear Ralph: I love you as my wife and beautiful queen here on earth for 48 years. Now Jesus is taking care of you until I catch up to you once again."
 - Ray Garcia, LADWP



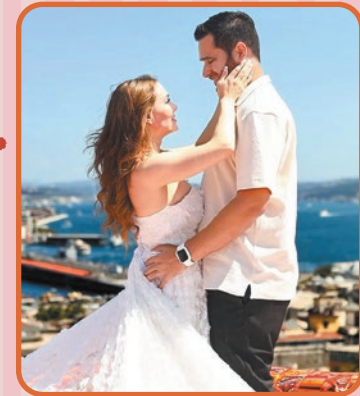
"Wishing you a Happy Valentine's Day, Amy. You're the best wife I could ever ask for."
 - Joseph Diaz, General Services



"To my Cupid in disguise: My one, my all, my love. I couldn't have asked for more. Eternally yours."
 - Jess Rodriguez, City Attorney's Office



"To Mom, my first Valentine: Thank you for teaching me what matters and how to live!"
 - John Hawkins, Club Founder and Training Officer



"Happy Valentine's Day to my fiancé, Avid. Life with you is the greatest gift. I love you forever.
 Love, Noelle"
 - Noelle Kauffman, Club Director of Sales



"Sixteen years strong. Happy Valentine's Day!"
 -Jansen Hodge, Personnel



"Happy Valentine's Day to my beautiful wife, Linda! Thank you for all the wonderful years together, and may we have many more! Love you."
 - Charles Garcia, Retired, Public Works



"I wanna dance with somebody. To my Valentine."
 - Juliet Gagar-Richards, Retired, Public Works



"A mis increíbles padres, Carmen y Rafael, ¡Feliz día de San Valentín! Su altruismo y devoción por brindarnos la mejor vida posible es verdaderamente incomparable. Las palabras no pueden expresar el inmenso amor que tenemos por ustedes dos."
 -Robert Larios, Club CEO



"I am attracted to you like the moon's attracted to the earth, and I will keep circling you forever."
 - Chermaine Fontenette, Public Works/Sanitation, Club Ambassador



"Love you always, and thanks for all you do for our family!"
 - Evelin Moreno, ITA



"Regardless of the season, I love my two Sweethearts. Happy Pre-Valentine's Day. Happy Post-Valentine's Day. Your Papa and Your RDawg always."
 - Rodney Bernaldo, Public Works/Sanitation



"You will always be my little Valentine, Hannah."
 - John Hawkins, Club Founder and Training Officer



"Valentine's Day is the perfect opportunity to express all my love and appreciation for my amazing wife - Patty! Each day, I am so grateful for her presence in my life - she brings joy, kindness and wisdom far beyond what words can describe. Thank you for being by my side!"
 -Robert Larios, Club CEO

Goodbye to Two Who Served Members

LONGTIME CLUB STAFF MEMBERS MONICA ZAMUDIO, NOAH HAWKINS MOVE ON



Monica Zamudio

THE CLUB: Monica Zamudio, the former Club Claims Administrator and Member Advocate, and Noah Hawkins, Mobile Operations Rep, have moved on from their Club careers serving Members.

Over her long tenure, Monica attended to the claims needs of Members who have insurance through the Club. The nature of her critically important work meant she served Members at some of their most difficult times, always ensuring their voices were heard with our insurance partners and helping Members navigate the process.

Over the last several years, Noah's enthusiasm could most often be seen at the hundreds of Club Mobile red tent visits and, starting last year, Club Truck appearances – he always made sure Members had the gear they needed. He also worked tirelessly behind the scenes, shipping out online Club Store orders and serving Members over the phone.

Monica and Noah, on behalf of the thousands of Club Members you served, and the Club staff you worked with over many years, we thank you and wish you the very best. ●



Noah Hawkins

Alive! AROUND THE WORLD

Captain's Log

Traveling with Capt. Michael Barnes,
Retired, Harbor



Letter From Indonesia, Bali

Honeymooners and Monkey Business



Bali Temple

With Valentine's Day fast approaching, why not surprise that special someone in your life with something far more romantic than the standard bunch of red roses or a box of chocolates? Think warm tropical breezes and miles of beautiful golden sandy beaches. No, not Cancun; think a little farther afield, like stunning cascading waterfalls, jungles to hike in, cliffs, volcanoes, and hundreds of ancient Hindu temples to explore, river rafting, ATVs, jet skiing, hot air balloons, and romantic helicopter flights.

The island of Bali is not a country but part of the Indonesian archipelago of 17,000 islands between the Indian Ocean and the China Sea; it is the world's fourth most populous nation and third largest democracy. In contrast to most of Indonesia, which is generally Muslim, Bali is a Hindu-majority island. The Balinese local people are known for their warmth and are very friendly and welcoming to foreigners. Fantastic beaches surround this tropical island, like the 7.5-mile-long surf beaches of Kuta or the lovely white sand coves at Nusa Penida, where you can rent a sunbed and relax in the sun with your partner, drinking endless icy cold adult beverages and be lulled by the sound of the waves as they hit the shore. The rugged coastline along the Bukit Peninsula is perfect for snorkeling, scuba diving, and seeing all kinds of colorful fish and coral. The beach at Jimbaran seems to have endless "warungs" – family-run restaurants and bars serving a great variety of fresh seafood; here, during sunset, you can watch colorful Balinese ceremonies under

umbrellas in the sand.

The island of Bali has become the Australian version of Hawaii and is a popular honeymoon and wedding destination. Generally, the days are stunning in May-September, but the nights can get a little cool, especially if staying inland away from the coast. October to April is the monsoon season when there is frequent and heavy rainfall. However, it passes quickly, and then the sun returns; it's a good time to find a little bar and wait for the rain to stop. The average temperature is 90 degrees throughout the year.

Whether it's romantic walks along the shoreline or trekking through the jungle, pack beachwear and hiking boots; pick one location as a base and make day trips from there. I stayed in a beach location and chose not to rent a car or motorbike, finding it more practical and less stressful to hire a local



Ubud Monkey Forest

The Azores Islands, Portugal



"The Islet of Vila Franca do Campo, off São Miguel Island, is the crater of an ancient submerged volcano. The lagoon inside is a perfect circle with a small opening big enough for boats.

"PS: That's the online version of *Alive!* I left my print copy in the rental car down below this hilltop viewpoint."
Norman Faner, Retired, LADWP

Hi Norman, we love that you used the online version! Well played. – Ed.

driver for around \$60 a day to do sightseeing; driving in local traffic is a nightmare, and just like Amsterdam, everybody young or old has a bike, only here they are motorized. Hotels or AirBnBs will recommend a safe driver, and although taxis are cheap, not all are equal; use only the pale blue ones as the dark blue taxis can cause problems. For younger, bolder travelers, there are small motorcycle taxis that twist and weave through the packed traffic and will carry two if you are slim! However, do bear in mind that you may not be covered by your travel insurance if you are on a bike and involved in an accident, which are very frequent in this island paradise.

Making a special trip to see a rice field... is unnecessary as you will pass through many on the way to visit other sites... Do visit as many of the island's old temples as possible; most are in beautiful locations, like the 1,175-foot-tall Lempuyang Temple, Bali's highest, or the spectacular sunset photo location at the Tanah Lot temple, perched on

— continued from page 25



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.

LIMITED EDITION PERFORMING ARTS PRESENTS

ADORH III

THE STAGE PLAY
WDP BY LADY Y SMITH
CHOREOGRAPHY BY QUEJONNE' CROSS

when the stars... the fan





SATURDAY, MARCH 9, 2024

WILLIAM & JANE BRISTOL AUDITORIUM * 16600 CIVIC CENTER DRIVE * BELLFLOWER

DOORS OPEN 2P * SHOW 3P - WWW.LEWSIC.COM

\$25 EARLY BIRD TICKETS at EVENTBRITE FOR A LIMITED TIME



WIN
\$50
Amazon
Gift Card



Deadline
For submission:

March 9, 2024

Look for winners on
Web Alive! in April:

alive.employeesclub.com

Coloring Contest for Grown-Ups!



HEY CLUB MEMBERS,

Hey Club Members, it's time for another Grown-Up Coloring Contest, so get out your crayons, sparkles and whatnot, and get going!

The prize: a \$50 Amazon gift card.

PLEASE COMPLETE:

Name: _____

Job title and department with the City: _____

Your Address _____

City/State/Zip: _____

PLEASE PROVIDE →

Club Membership Number:

Send Entries to:

Grown-Up Coloring Contest
Employees Club of California
311 S. Spring St., Suite 1300
Los Angeles, CA 90013

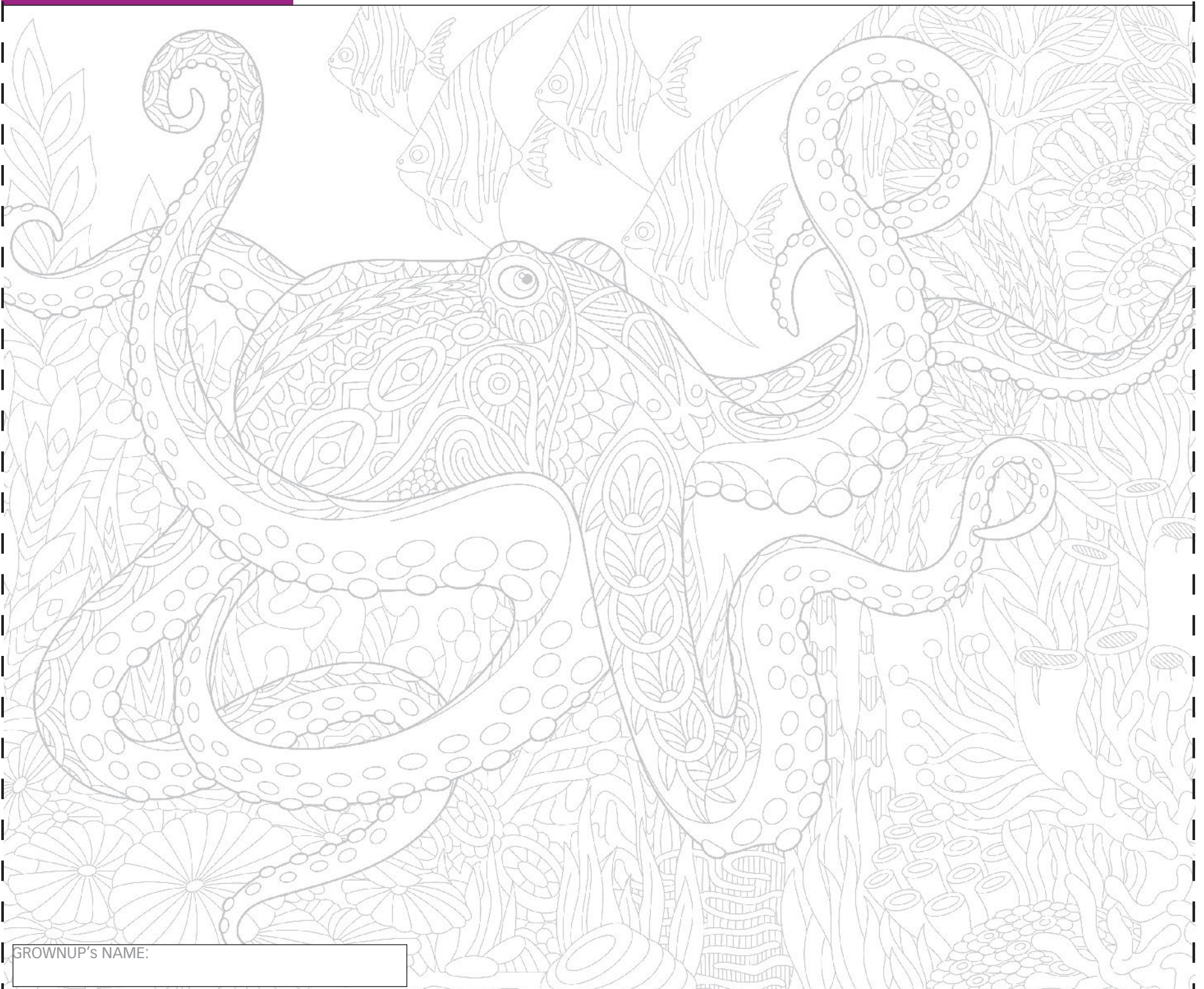
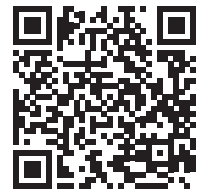
Rules of the Club's Grown-up Coloring Contest:

- Winning contestants must be Club Members in good standing. Everyone is welcome to submit responses, however. (Responses without Club Membership numbers will be accepted but not eligible for the winning prize.)
- All responses must be completed by the person indicated: no ringers (including your children!).
- Winning responses will be determined by official Club personnel. All decisions will be final.
- The contest is all in good fun: The Club cannot be responsible for delays in delivering *Alive!*, or for delays in the transmission of responses.

Download Coloring Art From the Web

You can download and print art from *Web Alive!*:

alive.employeesclub.com/coloring-contest-for-adults



GROWNUP'S NAME:



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*

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

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!

| NAME | TITLE | DEPT. | YEARS | NAME | TITLE | DEPT. | YEARS | NAME | TITLE | DEPT. | YEARS |
|--------------------|----------------------|---------------|-------|------------------------|----------------------------|----------------|-------|----------------------|--------------------------|----------------|-------|
| Anderson, Kevin C. | Deputy City Attorney | City Attorney | 24 | Carpenter, Ulric D. | Sr. Build. Mech. Insp. | Bldg. & Safety | 19 | Nguyen, Lan Pham | Transportation Engineer | LADOT | 30 |
| Arora, Naresh C. | Trans. Eng. Ass. | LADOT | 9 | Chang, Susan B. | Wastewater Treat. Lab Mgr. | Public Works | 34 | Odom, Duane M. | Parking Meter Tech | LADOT | 15 |
| Acosta, Benigno | Power Transmission | LADWP | – | Culp, Brenc K. | Legislative Analyst | Council | 2 | Orta, Benjamin J. | Supply Chain | LADWP | – |
| Arreguin, Samuel | Power Transmission | LADWP | – | Dominguez, Ricardo S. | Power C&M | LADWP | – | Perka, David J. | C&M Supervisor | Gen. Services | 17 |
| | | | | Erlich, Gregory N. | Council Aide | Council | 9 | Placencia, Maria G. | Child Care Associate | Rec & Parks | 11 |
| | | | | Flint, Deborah A. | General Manager | Airports | 4 | Pringle, Weston S. | Transportation Eng. | LADOT | 33 |
| | | | | Garcia, Juan F. | Special Prog. Assistant | Rec & Parks | 9 | Puga, Martha M. | JFB/Facilities | LADWP | – |
| | | | | Gaston, Deborah R. | Police Service Rep. | LAPD | 28 | Puhawan, Ramiro A. | Buyer | Gen. Services | 23 |
| | | | | Grimaldo, Jose L. | Gardener Caretaker | Harbor | 27 | Pulley, Gerald R. | Sr. Administrative Clerk | LAPD | 18 |
| | | | | Hall, Timothy R. | Welder | Public Works | 26 | Rivera, Salvador M. | Water Operations | LADWP | – |
| | | | | Hammack, Robert G. | Facilities | LADWP | – | Rodriguez, Feliciano | Custodian | Airports | 25 |
| | | | | Hart, William J. | Street Services Sup. | Public Works | 35 | Rossi, Daisy M. | Pr. Accountant | Library | 33 |
| | | | | Hernandez Barba, Anita | Witness Service Coord. | City Attorney | 23 | Stafford, Cynthia A. | Sr. Mgmt. Analyst | Public Works | 15 |
| | | | | Kane, Daniel A. | Locksmith | Airports | 26 | Tavera, George A. | Sr. Electrical Inspector | Bldg. & Safety | 11 |
| | | | | Lauri, Kimberly M. | Sr. Systems Analyst | Airports | 22 | Trujillo, Antonio A. | Special Prog. Assistant | Rec & Parks | 9 |
| | | | | Lopez, Peggy A. | Finance/Risk Control | LADWP | – | Vasquez, Daniel J. | ITS | LADWP | – |
| | | | | McCorry, Brandi | Traffic Officer | LADOT | 34 | Williams, Alecia D. | Customer Service | LADWP | – |

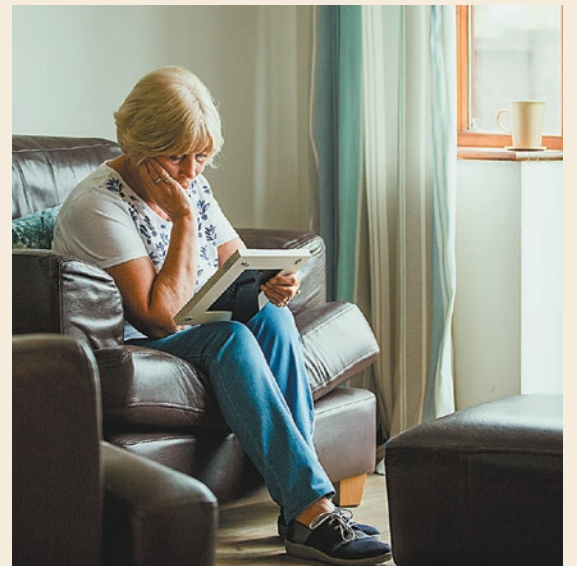


*** NOTE:** If you wish to have a listing deleted from our online posting of Retirement notices, please email us at admin@aliveemployeesclub.com, stating the name and department of the Retired person. The request must come from the actual Retired person. We derive our lists from official public records 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 | | | | | |
| Betsoi, Robert | LADWP | 38 | Garcia, Anatolio C. | LADWP | 25 |
| Cardenas, Esequiel | Public Works | 24 | Garcia, Louie R. | Rec and Parks | 36 |
| Dominguez, Edgar R. | Public Works | 7 | Gilmore, Deonna | Public Works | 36 |
| Pena, Raymond | LAPD | 16 | Gomez, Cruz R. | LADWP | 36 |
| Rivera, Maria I. | Rec and Parks | 14 | Gring, Newton P. | Airports | 29 |
| Sanchez, Robert | Public Works | 1 | Hanson, Norman D. | – | – |
| Tagudena, Eduardo L. | General Services | 23 | Jackson, Wilma | LADWP | 34 |
| Tucker, William H. | LADWP | 31 | Johnson, Eccelle O. | Public Works | 10 |
| Vargas III, Frank M. | LADOT | 6 | Kalfell, Luz E. | LADWP | 14 |
| RETIRED | | | | | |
| Alva, Carmen | – | – | Kiser, Donald I. | LADWP | 22 |
| Apodaca, Nick | – | – | Knokey, David J. | City Attorney | 41 |
| Araujo, Joe | Public Works | 30 | Kruse, Wayne E. | LADWP | 33 |
| Battle, Louis C. | LADOT | 28 | Lopez, Henry D. | LADWP | 31 |
| Bermudez, Martha | General Services | 20 | Loquet, Dixie L. | LADWP | 27 |
| Birt, Edward | Public Works | 15 | Lucky, Gary L. | LADWP | 33 |
| Burley, Dennis R. | LADWP | 30 | Melchor, Robb S. | Animal Services | 25 |
| Calderon, Lawrence M. | Airports/LADWP | 14/21 | Mata, Olga S. | Building and Safety | 18 |
| Campbell, Gerald S. | LADWP | 33 | Matheney, Pearlie W. | LADWP | 30 |
| Cano, Juan M. | Rec and Parks | 33 | McNabb, Danny J. | LADWP | 20 |
| Carr, Nancy C. | Public Works | 18 | Medina, Ruben L. | LADWP | 19 |
| Castaneda, Porfiria | – | – | Murai, Kazuo | – | – |
| Chew, Florence | – | – | Naro, Froilan P. | Public Works | 29 |
| Dodson, James W. | – | – | Nowak, Michael A. | LADWP | 35 |
| Elgin, Raymond C. | – | 25 | Pearson, James H. | – | – |
| Espinoza, Richard A. | Public Works | 22 | Powell, Wayne W. | LADWP | 25 |
| Feldman, Robert L. | LADWP | 24 | Reily, Douglas M. | Public Works | 17 |
| Fernandez, Isabel Z. | – | – | Rivero, Pablo J. | Public Works | 29 |
| Francisco, Rene D. | General Services | 4 | Telles, Richard J. | Rec and Parks | 34 |
| | | | Thagard, Glenn J. | LADWP | 25 |
| | | | Tuyco, Lory S. | LADWP | 32 |
| | | | Tyner, William B. | LADWP | 39 |
| | | | Vann, Anthony N. | Harbor | 18 |
| | | | Vanvakaris, Mark J. | LADWP | 37 |
| | | | Vega, Mike V. | Public Works | 30 |
| | | | Whittemore, Franklin E. | LADWP | 33 |
| | | | Williams, Alex | Public Works | 20 |
| | | | Williams, Kenneth | LADWP | 36 |
| | | | Yamaoka, Teruko | LADWP | 25 |
| | | | Yoseph, Tadelle | LADWP | 37 |



IN MEMORIAM

Danna McDonough Passes Away

RETIRED ASSOCIATION CEO WAS 86.

THE CLUB: Danna McDonough, the longtime President and CEO of the Los Angeles City Employees Association (LACEA), passed away Sept. 13, 2023 in San Pedro. She was 86.

Danna was the Association CEO when the organization created and launched its Club subsidiary in 2002. She was a big proponent of the concept and worked with the Association board to bring it to fruition.

"Danna McDonough, our President at the time, chose ... to re-invent ourselves, to create something that no one has ever done before, to be bigger than ourselves, to give back, and to show the world how awesome the employees are in the City of Los Angeles," wrote Club Founder John Hawkins about the creation of the Club in his remarks in last month's *Alive!* "It was a bold move, revolutionary really; even to this day, no one has matched how much we celebrate the work and lives of municipal employees. She gave this new venture a name: The Club."

Danna joined the LACEA in 1979 and was President and CEO when she retired in 2004.

May she rest in peace. ●



Danna McDonough
1937-2023



FOR ACTIVE AND RETIRED MEMBERS

LACERS Continues Regular Office Hours

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/lacersyoutube 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. ●

FOR ACTIVE MEMBERS

Are You Ready for Retirement?

Here are some current programs to help with your planning.

Webinars

Learn about your retirement options and benefits at an upcoming Planning for Retirement webinar, hosted by the LACERS Member Engagement team. Register via your MyLACERS account. **Upcoming dates include: Wed., Feb. 28 (webinar)**

Check the LACERS calendar as events are scheduled. ● Webinars/events begin at 9 a.m.

Applying for Retirement Online

Members are encouraged to submit their retirement application 60 days before their retirement date when using LACERS' new Retirement Application Portal (RAP). The RAP is a great asset to LACERS Members that helps to streamline the retirement process.

For example, if your desired retirement date is April 20, 2024, you would have aimed to submit your retirement application in the portal on Feb. 20, 2024. **For more information, please visit lacers.org/applying-retirement.**

— SPONSORED AD —

VOTE ★★ ★ SUPPORT ★★ ★ ELECT

VAS SINGH

For Los Angeles City Council

★★ **District 12** ★★



As a Write-In Candidate, my name, Vas Singh, might not appear on the ballot. To vote for me, kindly **handwrite "Vas Singh"** on the ballot and apply the voting stamp next to it.

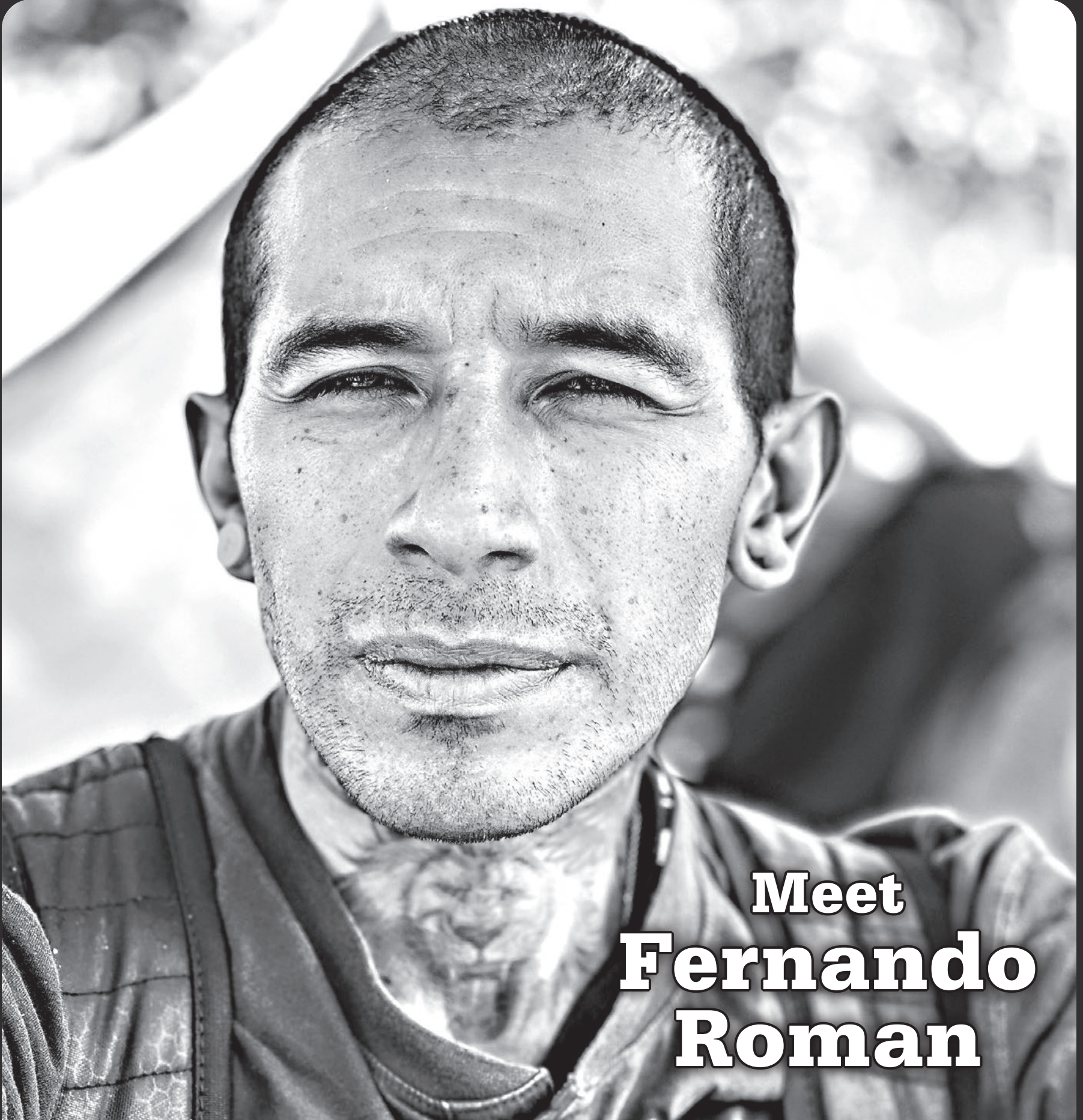
Primary Nominating Election
Tuesday, March 05, 2024

{ Who are the people you see every day? }

No. 113
in a series.

People We See

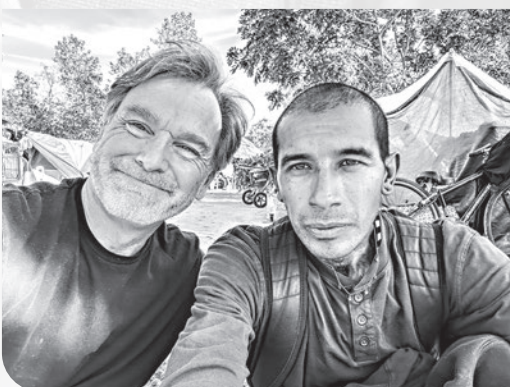
Shelterless in Los Angeles: stories of compassion and humanity



Meet Fernando Roman

INTERVIEW

Note: This interview includes language of the street that might not be appropriate for all readers.



Date of interview: Dec. 14, 2023

Birthplace: East Los Angeles

Birthday: March 2, 1987

Family: "I have two brothers, Jesse and Joe, and two sisters, Joanna and Jessica."

Sports: "I played football in high school. I was an MVP quarterback and passed for 8,000 yards."

What stopped him: "Early in my senior year, drugs took over – weed, pills, Ecstasy," he said, with "late nights in teen clubs."

Next: "Fernando said he was soon into "crystal meth, heroin and fentanyl ... once you start crystal meth, you can't stop, and fentanyl took over the heroin addiction."

After that: "I fathered a child, Janelle, and dropped out of high school."

Job: "After that, I started working for the BSNF Railroad and Union Pacific as a chassis mechanic, making sure the cars were rolling properly."

Favorite movie: "The Matrix."

Favorite TV show: "The Simpsons."

Favorite food: "Tamales."

Favorite candy: "Watermelon Jolly Ranchers."

Injury: Fernando says he was injured while at a farmer's market; he showed me his leg, which appeared swollen. "I wish I had a lawyer to help me," he said.

Advice for young people: "Stay in school, and stick to books. Don't experiment with drugs, especially meth."

Make a wish: "That I never started smoking meth. And that I had a cell phone."

The Club gave Fernando \$40 for his time.

The interview was conducted by Club Founder John Hawkins on Dec. 14, 2023. 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. }

