Clearing the Logjam

Street Services’ West Valley Urban Forestry Section is the busiest in the City. Come along as the emergency crew trims trees during a December rainstorm.

Visit Web Alive! at alive.employeesclub.com
JOHN’S BLOG

New Era of Alive! Begins

Welcome to the new era of Alive! — a stream-lined paper that will grow even more refined month by month ... and a companion Website, Alive! on the Web, that we promise will be current, exciting and robust.

They’re designed to work together, giving you the best of both worlds: the beauty of print, and the immediacy and flexibility of the Web. Together they’re awesome.

For more than 15 years, Alive! has set a high level of association communications. There isn’t another newspaper in the country that we know of — and our vendors back this up — that does it like we do. Early last year, the Alive! team set out to continue to lead the way with exciting innovations. What you hold in your hand — and what you will see on your computer, laptop, tablet and phone — do just that.

The Alive! team — COO Robert Larios, Director of Marketing Summy Lam, IT Developer Petros Khachatryan, David and Marie Jamgotchian of JILA Associates, editor John Burnes, and others have been hard at work on this project. And of course we have to thank the Retired Los Angeles City Employees, Inc. team, too — new President Ruth B. Perry, President Emeritus Ed Harding, Second Vice President Beverly J. Clark, and the whole RLACEI leadership.

But most of all, I want to hear from you. You’re the reason the Club — and Alive! — exist. Tell us what you love about the powerful new Alive! combination, what we can do better, and how we can tell your stories more effectively. And keep submitting!

A brief word about this column — it’s become a blog! That means I get to write more often on the Web. When I see something that reminds me how awesome municipal employees are, or what a great deal it is to be a Club Member, I’ll pass it along. That way you can read what you want, when you want. (And maybe even watch a little video, too, which I’m really getting into.) Send me your thoughts!

My next blog post in early January will be about our cover story subject, Club Member Scott Harmon, and how he saved the day!

But for now, I wish you and all Club Members a very happy and prosperous New Year, and I’ll see you again soon here in print, and online.

— John

TRIM YOUR DEBT WITH THE SIMPLE1 LOAN

WPCCU’s Simple1 Loan helps you to take control of your finances!* Consolidate debt to a Simple1 Loan and enjoy the flexibility to:

• Pay down debt faster
• Have one smaller monthly payment
• Simple bill paying
• Improve your credit rating

Get started today! Call us or visit a branch.

800-300-9728 wpccu.org

* All credit union loans are subject to credit approval. This loan may not be used to refinance existing WPCCU loans.

MONSTER JAM
ANGEL STADIUM IN ANAHEIM
JAN 12th, FEB 9th, FEB 23rd AT 6:30PM
SEAT SECTION: Terrace 222

RETAIL $56.30

CLUB $34.95

BUY TICKETS
EmployeesClub.com

ANGEL STADIUM IN ANAHEIM
JAN 12th, FEB 9th, FEB 23rd AT 6:30PM
SEAT SECTION: Terrace 222

MONSTER JAM

BUY TICKETS

EmployeesClub.com

MONSTER JAM

BUY TICKETS

EmployeesClub.com

MONSTER JAM

BUY TICKETS

EmployeesClub.com

MONSTER JAM

BUY TICKETS

EmployeesClub.com

MONSTER JAM

BUY TICKETS

EmployeesClub.com

MONSTER JAM

BUY TICKETS

EmployeesClub.com

MONSTER JAM

BUY TICKETS

EmployeesClub.com
IN THIS ISSUE

Cover Story:
8 Clearing the Logjam
Urban Forestry’s West Valley Area is the busiest in the City.

City Department Coverage
Council
87th Hollywood Christmas Parade featured TV’s Nancy O’Dell...........10
Rec and Parks
Banning Museum to host historical lecture on local shipwrecks.................12
Public Works
Sanitation honors 53 of its best employees........14
Airports/Cultural Affairs
New art on display in Terminal 7 at LAX........15

Sections & Columns
Alive! Around the World.................14
Coloring Contest: Kids..................13
Deaths: In Memoriam..................5
John’s Blog: From the CEO............2
Larios in the City.....................12
People We See.......................16
Picture Perfect.....................11
Question of the Month...............10
Sports..............................4
United Agencies at the Club...........16

For Retirees: Best Years........Pages 6-7

In Alive! On the Web
alive.employeesclub.com
Cabrillo Aquarium This Month.........Web
Classified Ads........................Web
Club Team and Counselors............Web
Cooking..........................Web
Discount Tickets!.....................Web
Library Top 10.......................Web
Observatory This Month...............Web
Smart Move........................Web

Classified Ads $$$
Members Marketplace

MORE on the web!
  – Stories
  – Photos
  – Videos
alive.employeesclub.com

Clearing the Logjam

Sections & Columns
Alive! Around the World.................14
Coloring Contest: Kids..................13
Deaths: In Memoriam..................5
John’s Blog: From the CEO............2
Larios in the City.....................12
People We See.......................16
Picture Perfect.....................11
Question of the Month...............10
Sports..............................4
United Agencies at the Club...........16

For Retirees: Best Years........Pages 6-7

In Alive! On the Web
alive.employeesclub.com
Cabrillo Aquarium This Month.........Web
Classified Ads........................Web
Club Team and Counselors............Web
Cooking..........................Web
Discount Tickets!.....................Web
Library Top 10.......................Web
Observatory This Month...............Web
Smart Move........................Web

Classified Ads $$$
Members Marketplace

MORE on the web!
  – Stories
  – Photos
  – Videos
alive.employeesclub.com

DISNEYLAND TICKETS ARE BACK!
The Club now offers Disneyland tickets to Club Members. Choose from a 1-Day to a 5-Day Ticket. Prices vary depending on your date selection. Best deals are for 3-, 4-, and 5-Day tickets.

Get A $25 Restaurant.com Gift Card with every ticket purchase.
BUY TICKETS EmployeesClub.com
**The Club: Here to Help**

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

Email us at: help@cityemployeesclub.com

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

Or call us at: (800) 464-0452

**In-house Counselors**

At Club headquarters

Mary Ann Ordiales Member Services Counselor Ext. 159

Cheryl Marts Member Services Counselor Ext. 136

At the Club Store

Tanya St Member Services Counselor Ext. 202

---

**NORTH DIVISION**

**Great Plays Lead To Great Season**

**Hi Club Softball fans!**

As the season winds down, the East vs. West teams are now battling it out for the number one spot to qualify for the championship game. These teams have fought through the cold and rainy weather to make it through to the end.

On Dec. 19, the Enforcers beat the Sluggers with some outstanding plays. In the fourth inning, Potter from the Enforcers nearly almost knocked it out of the park, which brought in three runs to take up to the Sluggers! What really had the crowd cheering was player #20, Nikki from the Enforcers, who made the game-winning catch in left field, nearly almost diving head first for the ball. There was a loud cheer from both teams, showing their sportsmanship and awe for that amazing play. Both teams played extremely well, and now the Enforcers are moving on to the Championship game to defend their ongoing winning streak against the another great team, the Blue Dragons, coached by Roy Martinez. It’s going to be an exciting and fun game to watch. I encourage everyone to come out and support these very talented players.

The Championship game will be played on Jan. 9 (weather permitting). The location was originally scheduled for Yosemite Recreation Center, but a new location is to be announced by Municipal Sports (Rec and Parks). Check the Club’s social media and the Muni sports Website for more information.

All employees from City, County and State are encouraged to come out and watch this final game to an exciting season. Fan giveaways and media coverage brought by the Employees Club will be present.

I’ll see you there!

— Commish Amanda

**It Ain’t Over team member**

**S O F T B A L L**

**Championship Game Set!**

New Division looking to crown champs Jan. 9.

**FINAL REGULAR SEASON**

**Standings**

(Not including playoffs)

**Yosemite**

Enforcers 8-2

Blue Dragons 7-3

Sluggers 6-5

GameTime 5-5

Openers 0-1

**Shatto**

Sewer Rats 8-3

Kilawatts 7-4

Transformers 5-6

It Ain’t Over 5-6

Dot-Gers 3-7

---

**Club Sports on the Horizon**

The Club Softball League’s North Division has reached its championship game. The final was set for Dec. 19, but rainouts have pushed that to Jan. 9. At press time, the location was still to be determined. Check the Club’s social media channels for the latest information.

After an early December playoff round, the final is set: **Enforcers vs. Blue Dragons**

---

**SUPERCROSS**

**ANGEL STADIUM IN ANAHEIM**

**JAN 5TH AND 19TH AT 6:30PM**

**SEAT SECTION: Right Field Pavilion 245**

**RETAIL $83.65**

**CLUB $59.95**

**BUY TICKETS**

EmployeesClub.com
**In Memoriam**

YEARS OF SERVICE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Department</th>
<th>Years of Service</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Garcia, Christine</td>
<td>General Services</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gabriel-Brown, Norma</td>
<td>DWP</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finley, Debra</td>
<td>DWP</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finchley, Rose</td>
<td>DWP</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fitzpatrick, Miguel</td>
<td>DWP</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feingold, Morton</td>
<td>DWP</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garza, Christine</td>
<td>General Services</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gibson, Wilkie</td>
<td>DWP</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gonzales, Flor</td>
<td>DWP</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Golden, Robert</td>
<td>DWP</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gomez, Chuchun</td>
<td>DWP</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gonzalez, John</td>
<td>DWP</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gonzales, Rudolf</td>
<td>DWP</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grant, Kathy May</td>
<td>DWP</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greer, Charles</td>
<td>DWP</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Griffin, Josiah</td>
<td>DWP</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gunn, Rose</td>
<td>DWP</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hess, Arleen</td>
<td>DWP</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Henson, Winfield</td>
<td>DWP</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hollis, Simon</td>
<td>DWP</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holmes, Louis</td>
<td>Public Works</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Huang, Charles</td>
<td>Public Works</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Huebner, Randall</td>
<td>Public Works</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hutchinson, June</td>
<td>Public Works</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imp, Andrew</td>
<td>Public Works</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Johnson, Laymon</td>
<td>Public Works</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kaye, Roy</td>
<td>Public Works</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keener, Larry</td>
<td>Public Works</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kentner, Roger</td>
<td>Public Works</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>King, Patricia</td>
<td>Public Works</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ladea, Mario</td>
<td>Public Works</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laibach, Michael</td>
<td>Public Works</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laurich, Joseph</td>
<td>Public Works</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lavery, Beatrice</td>
<td>Public Works</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lennon, Thomas</td>
<td>Public Works</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lennon, Robert</td>
<td>Public Works</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lobblins, Jasper</td>
<td>Public Works</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Locatelli, William</td>
<td>Public Works</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lopez, Joshua</td>
<td>Public Works</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lucas, Elisa</td>
<td>Public Works</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lucree, William</td>
<td>Public Works</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malcolm, Shirley</td>
<td>Public Works</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maloney, Mary</td>
<td>Public Works</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mammoliti, Vincent</td>
<td>Public Works</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mann, William</td>
<td>Public Works</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marr, Anthony</td>
<td>Public Works</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matheus, Thomas</td>
<td>Public Works</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Megliorino, Charles</td>
<td>Public Works</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merrick, Freda</td>
<td>Public Works</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McCoy, Robert</td>
<td>Public Works</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miller, Chester</td>
<td>Public Works</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miller, Gary</td>
<td>Public Works</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Million, Samuel</td>
<td>Public Works</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monroe, Betty</td>
<td>Public Works</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morris, Eric</td>
<td>Public Works</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morris, Mary</td>
<td>Public Works</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Montgometry, Wilbert</td>
<td>Public Works</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Munoz, Jos</td>
<td>Public Works</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Munish, Harold</td>
<td>Public Works</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nalap, Emelito</td>
<td>Public Works</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nickell, Kent</td>
<td>LAPD</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noble, Ann</td>
<td>Zoo</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Otto, Paul</td>
<td>Public Works</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Othello, Fitzgerald</td>
<td>Zoo</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parnell, Janis</td>
<td>Public Works</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parrish, Robert</td>
<td>Public Works</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perez, Jorge</td>
<td>Public Works</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perez, Leandrou</td>
<td>Public Works</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peters, Richard</td>
<td>Public Works</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Petrie, Rodolfo Sanchez</td>
<td>LAPD</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Posle, Deymn</td>
<td>LAPD</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radunamer, Frank</td>
<td>LAPD</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rain, Turner</td>
<td>LAPD</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reams, Dean</td>
<td>LAPD</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raphael, Howard</td>
<td>LAPD</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rhodes, Judith</td>
<td>LAPD</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Riley, Allen</td>
<td>LAPD</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rivera, Salvador Martinez</td>
<td>LAPD</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roberts, Julius</td>
<td>LAPD</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romack, Allen</td>
<td>LAPD</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rothchild, Norman</td>
<td>Library</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sambrano, Danny</td>
<td>DHCP</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sanchez, Gilbert</td>
<td>General Services</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sanchez, Joyce</td>
<td>Controller</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sakai, Hiroyuki</td>
<td>Public Works</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sayah, Samuel</td>
<td>LAPD</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schwab, Anna</td>
<td>City Attorney</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shambart, Iris</td>
<td>LAPD</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skinner, Donna Lynn</td>
<td>LAPD</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sloan, Robert</td>
<td>LAPD</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solis, Lila</td>
<td>Library</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sules, Normunds</td>
<td>LAPD</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tarquini, John</td>
<td>General Services</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tasti Jr., Armando</td>
<td>LAPD</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terry Jr., Ivory</td>
<td>LAPD</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tost, Glenda</td>
<td>LAPD</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tranbelli, Olliee</td>
<td>Transportation</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unite, Eddie Marquez</td>
<td>Controller’s</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valencia, Martina</td>
<td>Public Works</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vera, Daniel</td>
<td>LAPD</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wayman, Donald</td>
<td>City Planning</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Webb, Russell</td>
<td>LAPD</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wesley, Cleophus</td>
<td>Public Works</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wilson, Gary</td>
<td>LAPD</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wos, Takia</td>
<td>LAPD</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woods, Charles</td>
<td>Public Works</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Much Accomplished in RLACEI’s Last 24 Years

By Edward J. Harding
President Emeritus

With the holiday season’s pasting and the start of the year upon us, we need to reflect on the last 24 years of events that occurred during the last 12 months. Sometimes a year seems to last forever, and others times it’s over in a blink of an eye. That is how I feel about these last 24 years as the President of RLACEI. It has been my honor to be elected to serve in this capacity for that period of time.

With your membership and support, we have been able to protect and enhance our pension benefits over the years. We obtained a dental plan subsidy that Retirees never before had; we increased the funeral expense allowance from $500 to $2,500; and we continue to advocate on all Retirees’ behalf to protect our retirement fund and achieve parity of enhanced benefits for all qualified. Your membership is critical in allowing us to be your voice before the mayor, the Council, or any other entity that may endanger the welfare of our pension fund.

RLACEI continues to need your support. In my last few months as your President Emeritus, I ask that you allow our organization to continue to represent you.

I will remain to assist RLACEI Directors as President Emeritus and hope that you extend the courtesies allowed to me to the newly installed officers assuming their offices on Jan. 1. These are: Ruth B. Perry, President; Thomas Braverman, First Vice President; and Mary Beetz, Second Vice President, and Harold Danowitz, Secretary/Treasurer, along with all continuing RLACEI Directors: Mary Beetz, Chief Cannon, Dennis Harding, Michael Wilkinson, Michael Karsch, Neil Ricci, Michael Wilkerson, and newly appointed Phil Orlando.

It was wonderful seeing so many of you at RLACEI’s holiday party, in spite of the weather. Dec. 14 at the Grace E. Simon Lodge. I was glad I had the opportunity to personally thank you for your continued membership.

Let’s continue our goal of maintaining the welfare of our members and their dependents. I wish you well and following years. ■

LACERS Well to Focus On Members’ Fulfilling Lives

By Michael R. Wilkinson

The LACERS Board has approved an expanded LACERS Well program with a greatly increased budget to further improve our members’ health and enjoyment of life with a theme of Living a Full Life. Current and previous LACERS Well campaigns have focused on members being aware of their health, staying active through regular exercise, learning

about these last 24 years as the President of RLACEI.

To join the RLACEI team, please contact Neil Ricci, Chairman of the Nominating Committee at (800) 678-4145 Ext. 714 for additional information.

It was wonderful seeing so many of you at RLACEI’s holiday party, in spite of the weather. Dec. 14 at the Grace E. Simon Lodge. I was glad I had the opportunity to personally thank you for your continued membership.

Let’s continue our goal of maintaining the welfare of our members and their dependents. I wish you well and following years.

LACERS Well will continue to use the innovative data-dashboard computer program to track members’ claim data to respond to feedback trends with LACERS members. Membership privacy is protected and the dashboard tracks members only as a group and does not display individual member records. With this information, LACERS can suggest changes in how members interact with their doctors, practice healthy eating and increase exercise habits that will provide improvements to their health and enjoyment of life.

Midterms Unlikely to Affect Federal Pension Laws

Legislative Report: Pension Law and Policy, By Michael Karsch

The November elections saw the election of two new senators that are not likely to succeed because the president will hold the ultimate power of the veto. The MarketWatch voter (Alessandra Malts) noted that both parties were quiet about Social Security and Medicare, and that Social Security is 90 percent funded for the next 20 years. Expectations can be held to be expected in the House on Social Security issues, added. For the area of private pension advocates for individuals seeking to set up their own savings plan, like an IRA or 401(k) plan where they have to pay for Medicare, but do not have a pension but want to supplement it, there is the Department of Labor’s fiduciary rule set up under the Obama administration to apply even to those who advise to act in their “client’s best interests.” This rule was halted by the Trump Administration, but it could be reinstated in 2019.

There appears to be changes to the Medicare prescription drug rules by the Trump Administration. According to the Associated Press in late in 2019, “the president has a number of changes in the debate that the Kaiser Family Foundation: “Some could see cost-sharing for their drugs as a political issue.” For now, to keep the path open to those those advisors to act in the client’s best interests.”

The article notes, “Proposed changes are giving more leverage for insurers to exclude specific drug in Medicare’s six protected classes” of medications (like antidepressants, drugs to treat psychosis, anti-seizure medications, cancer drugs, medications to prevent rejection of transplanted organs, and HIV-AIDS drugs). “Proposed changes could run into strong opposition from patient advocacy groups, which diverted a similar effect by the Obama administration.”

By Ruth B. Perry
President, Retired Los Angeles City Employees Inc.

“A politician thinks of the next election. A statesman, of the next generation.”

Michael Wilkinson
LACERS Legal Representative, Ext. 712

Michael Karsch
Legislative Representative, Ext. 706

Phil Orlando, Health Director, Ext. 709

Ruth B. Perry
Membership Director, Ext. 717

Neti Ricci, Director, Ext. 714

Tom Stemmann, Audit and Golf, Ext. 708

Michael Wilkinson, LACERS Legal Representative, Ext. 712

By Michael Karsch

Michael Wilkinson, Membership Chair, Ext. 716

Michael Karsch, Michael Wilkerson, and newly appointed Phil Orlando.

It was wonderful seeing so many of you at RLACEI’s holiday party, in spite of the weather. Dec. 14 at the Grace E. Simon Lodge. I was glad I had the opportunity to personally thank you for your continued membership.

Let’s continue our goal of maintaining the welfare of our members and their dependents. I wish you well and following years.

Much Accomplished in RLACEI’s Last 24 Years

By Edward J. Harding
President Emeritus

With the holiday season’s pasting and the start of the year upon us, we need to reflect on the last 24 years of events that occurred during the last 12 months. Sometimes a year seems to last forever, and others times it’s over in a blink of an eye. That is how I feel about these last 24 years as the President of RLACEI. It has been my honor to be elected to serve in this capacity for that period of time.

With your membership and support, we have been able to protect and enhance our pension benefits over the years. We obtained a dental plan subsidy that Retirees never before had; we increased the funeral expense allowance from $500 to $2,500; and we continue to advocate on all Retirees’ behalf to protect our retirement fund and achieve parity of enhanced benefits for all qualified. Your membership is critical in allowing us to be your voice before the mayor, the Council, or any other entity that may endanger the welfare of our pension fund.

RLACEI continues to need your support. In my last few months as your President Emeritus, I ask that you allow our organization to continue to represent you.

I will remain to assist RLACEI Directors as President Emeritus and hope that you extend the courtesies allowed to me to the newly installed officers assuming their offices on Jan. 1. These are: Ruth B. Perry, President; Thomas Braverman, First Vice President; and Mary Beetz, Second Vice President, and Harold Danowitz, Secretary/Treasurer, along with all continuing RLACEI Directors: Mary Beetz, Chief Cannon, Dennis Harding, Michael Wilkinson, Michael Karsch, Neil Ricci, Michael Wilkerson, and newly appointed Phil Orlando.

It was wonderful seeing so many of you at RLACEI’s holiday party, in spite of the weather. Dec. 14 at the Grace E. Simon Lodge. I was glad I had the opportunity to personally thank you for your continued membership.

Let’s continue our goal of maintaining the welfare of our members and their dependents. I wish you well and following years.

LACERS Well will continue to use the innovative data-dashboard computer program to track members’ claim data to respond to feedback trends with LACERS members. Membership privacy is protected and the dashboard tracks members only as a group and does not display individual member records. With this information, LACERS can suggest changes in how members interact with their doctors, practice healthy eating and increase exercise habits that will provide improvements to their health and enjoyment of life.

Midterms Unlikely to Affect Federal Pension Laws

Legislative Report: Pension Law and Policy, By Michael Karsch

The November elections saw the election of two new senators that are not likely to succeed because the president will hold the ultimate power of the veto. The MarketWatch voter (Alessandra Malts) noted that both parties were quiet about Social Security and Medicare, and that Social Security is 90 percent funded for the next 20 years. Expectations can be held to be expected in the House on Social Security issues, added. For the area of private pension advocates for individuals seeking to set up their own savings plan, like an IRA or 401(k) plan where they have to pay for Medicare, but do not have a pension but want to supplement it, there is the Department of Labor’s fiduciary rule set up under the Obama administration to apply even to those who advise to act in the client’s best interests.”

The rule was halted by the Trump Administration, but it could be reinstated in 2019.

There appears to be changes to the Medicare prescription drug rules by the Trump Administration. According to the Associated Press in late in 2019, “the president has a number of changes in the debate that the Kaiser Family Foundation: “Some could see cost-sharing for their drugs as a political issue.” For now, to keep the path open to those those advisors to act in the client’s best interests.”

The article notes, “Proposed changes are giving more leverage for insurers to exclude specific drug in Medicare’s six protected classes” of medications (like antidepressants, drugs to treat psychosis, anti-seizure medications, cancer drugs, medications to prevent rejection of transplanted organs, and HIV-AIDS drugs). “Proposed changes could run into strong opposition from patient advocacy groups, which diverted a similar effect by the Obama administration.”
In the United States, someone needs blood or platelets every 29 seconds. While many would agree that the holidays are not the most convenient time to donate blood, the Association of Donor Recruitment Professionals (ADRP) indicates that the winter months leave blood banks at greater risk of depletion. The Blood Centers of the Pacific (BCP) reports that only 13 percent of blood donors in a given year are seniors, despite the fact that only 11 percent of the general population is made up of seniors.

Should Seniors Donate Blood?

While many would agree that the holidays are not the most convenient time to donate blood, the Association of Donor Recruitment Professionals (ADRP) indicates that the winter months leave blood banks at greater risk of depletion. The Blood Centers of the Pacific (BCP) reports that only 13 percent of blood donors in a given year are seniors, despite the fact that only 11 percent of the general population is made up of seniors.

A common medications taken by seniors, treatments/surgery and transplants, and other factors can put seniors at risk for being disqualified from donating blood. This is because some blood types are needed for donations, and some need to be matched with donors. This is why some seniors may be disqualified from donating blood, even if they meet all the other requirements.

Here’s a listing of all those who retired from the City this month.

To continue to bring the highest qual-
ty of service and to continue to serve and advocate for Retired Los Angeles City employees, RLACEI will increase its mem-
berships dues to $3 per month, effective January 2019. Dues have not increased since 2010.

Although dues will increase, members who have insurance products with the City Employees Club will see a reduction in contributions. The Club will no longer assess fees to RLACEI members, and members will continue to receive access!

This does not affect general member-
ships to the Club, which remain the same.

Here’s how to make sure the per-
mission from their parents. Do you want to show off your achievement to your friends? Are you doing it for your school, their accomplish-
ments, what they love to do, how proud you are of them, etc.

Anna Burton, Airports, and her husband, Charles, welcomed their third grandson July 18. Baby Allison Sotela was born to their daughter, Candace, and Randy Sotela, joining older brother Randy (3) and Mia (2). Anna is a 32-year City employee and loves her title of Grammie more than anything.

Show Us Your Grandkids!

In the United States, someone needs blood or platelets every 29 seconds. While many would agree that the holidays are not the most convenient time to donate blood, the Association of Donor Recruitment Professionals (ADRP) indicates that the winter months leave blood banks at greater risk of depletion. The Blood Centers of the Pacific (BCP) reports that only 13 percent of blood donors in a given year are seniors, despite the fact that only 11 percent of the general population is made up of seniors.

Should Seniors Donate Blood?

While many would agree that the holidays are not the most convenient time to donate blood, the Association of Donor Recruitment Professionals (ADRP) indicates that the winter months leave blood banks at greater risk of depletion. The Blood Centers of the Pacific (BCP) reports that only 13 percent of blood donors in a given year are seniors, despite the fact that only 11 percent of the general population is made up of seniors.

A common medications taken by seniors, treatments/surgery and transplants, and other factors can put seniors at risk for being disqualified from donating blood. This is because some blood types are needed for donations, and some need to be matched with donors. This is why some seniors may be disqualified from donating blood, even if they meet all the other requirements.

Here’s a listing of all those who retired from the City this month.

To continue to bring the highest qual-
ty of service and to continue to serve and advocate for Retired Los Angeles City employees, RLACEI will increase its mem-
berships dues to $3 per month, effective January 2019. Dues have not increased since 2010.

Although dues will increase, members who have insurance products with the City Employees Club will see a reduction in contributions. The Club will no longer assess fees to RLACEI members, and members will continue to receive access!

This does not affect general member-
ships to the Club, which remain the same.

Here’s how to make sure the per-
mission from their parents. Do you want to show off your achievement to your friends? Are you doing it for your school, their accomplish-
ments, what they love to do, how proud you are of them, etc.

Anna Burton, Airports, and her husband, Charles, welcomed their third grandson July 18. Baby Allison Sotela was born to their daughter, Candace, and Randy Sotela, joining older brother Randy (3) and Mia (2). Anna is a 32-year City employee and loves her title of Grammie more than anything.
Encino: Tree and Wires
An emergency call came in that two trees were in danger of pulling down communication wires on Libbet Avenue in Encino. When Alive! caught up to the emergency crew, they were just about to take down the first tree.

Canoga Park: Regular Tree Trimming
Next, the Alive! crew caught up with a second crew on West Gilmore Street in Canoga Park, this crew doing its normal operation of tree-trimming. The crew will take one street at a time and trim trees that need it all along the block before moving on.
Street Services/Urban Forestry's West Valley Area is the busiest in the City. Come along as the Club follows the emergency crew trimming trees during a December rainstorm.

History

What is now known as the Urban Forestry Division (UFD) began its existence in 1930, when the Division of Forestry of the Department of Parks was created by City Ordinance. The City of Los Angeles 1932 Olympics ushered in a period of mass tree planting. From 1933 to 1935, approximately 12,000 trees were pruned. During this period State Gas Tax funds were provided for tree work on major streets and state highways and the first two regularly employed tree trimming crews were hired. In 1940, a policy of trimming trees to provide clearance for public utilities was adopted by the Board of Park Commissioners. In 1955, jurisdiction over street trees was transferred to the Board of Public Works. The Street Tree Division was created and the organization became largely what exists today.

Post-World War II, the street tree population experienced a very large expansion due to the population and commensurate building boom that was occurring. From 1945-70, the street tree population grew from perhaps 300,000 trees to approximately 680,000. The Street Tree Division grew coincidentally to the maintenance needs, and by the mid-1980s employed nearly 300 personnel.

The Street Tree Division changed its name to the Urban Forestry Division in 2004 due to the expansion of services the Division provides that includes: street tree emergency response, pruning, removal, planting, permitting, providing arboriculture knowledge to other City agencies, oversight of the City's protected trees, and development services.

Due to the City's financial crisis beginning in 2009 and continuing today, the Division staffing was reduced to approximately 100 personnel. The Division continues to provide emergency services but tree trimming, removal, and planting have been severely reduced. The Division is hopeful the City soon rebounds from these difficult times and an increase in services can occur.

Timothy Tyson, Club Member, is the Division Manager of Public Works' Street Maintenance/Urban Forestry Division.
Robert’s Question of the Month

BY ROBERT LARIOS, Chief Operating Officer
rlarios@cityemployeesclub.com
TWITTER: @robertlarioscoo

Fellow City Employees answer the Question of the Month

What’s your New Year’s resolution?

“Stop eating chips.”
– John Lau, City Craft Assistant

“To love myself more.”
– Donna Lee Harrington, Sr. Clerk Typist, LAPD

“To learn a new instrument.”
– Joshua Miranda, Maintenance Laborer

“To lose weight.”
– Maria Lozano, Sr. Clerk Typist, LAPD

“To travel more.”
– Ralph Drummond, Waste Water Treatment Operator, Club Member

“To be more positive.”
– Ricardo Aguilar, Materials Testing Technician

“To love coworkers as family.”
– Denise Gibson, Clerk Typist

“To get more tattoos.”
– Albert Castarion, City Craft Assistant

“To not make a New Year’s resolution.”
– Juan Delreal, City Craft Assistant, Assistant

“It’s an annual Alive! tradition!

Every year, City Departments put aside their hard work and come together for fun and socialization at their festive holiday parties. And Alive! publishes as many of your party pics as we can.

Starting this month, we cover the City Parties. And we’ll continue in the next months as the photos come in.

Happy New Year!

THIS MONTH:

On Web Alive!
alive.employeesclub.com

COUNCIL

Hollywood on Parade

87th Hollywood Christmas Parade rumbles down the boulevard with City Council sponsorship.

TV host Nancy O’Dell was the grand marshal of this year’s Hollywood Christmas Parade, held Sunday, Nov. 25 in Hollywood. The parade was also scheduled to be aired on the CW Network Dec. 14 and on the Hallmark Channel Christmas Day.

The annual parade is presented in association with the City.

This year’s parade included a long list of performers from TV and popular music.

More than 100 celebrities from film, television and stage and other VIPs were seen in the parade. More than a dozen award-winning bands from across the country were featured. The LAPD’s LA Police Emerald Society Pipes and Drums also participated.

The parade encouraged viewers to give back to the community via the Marine’s Toys for Tots program.

Photos courtesy Hollywood Christmas Parade.
John’s Picture Perfect

Alive! presents our favorite winners from ‘John’s Picture Perfect’ contest from 2018.

Do you like “John’s Picture Perfect” contest? Well, so do we!

In 2018, Club Members submitted hundreds of entries and many dozens of winners. Here are some of them.

As we begin 2019, we publish this look back at the images taken by Club Members who in 2018 pushed their shutters at exactly the right moment, along with the original comments by John Hawkins.

Enjoy, and keep sending in those images!

To enter your pictures in John’s Picture-Perfect Contest, go to:
alive.employeesclub.com/pictureperfect

“My daughter Sophie atop a camel out at the Living Desert Zoo in Palm Desert, waiting patiently for Sophie and camel to pass by. Once in position, I shouted, ‘Smile.’ I got more than I bargained for.”
– Mike Aubin, DWP
John’s comment: Fun photo with great timing. Thanks, Mike!

“A beautiful sunset at Moonlight State Beach. My daughter is holding the sun in a heart-shaped gesture to show her love for our great land.”
– Nino Lovato
John’s comment: Another word I’d use for this awesome photo is hope – in the next generation enjoying the land as much as we do … in being part of a loving family … and in the contentment of a day well spent, with the promise of another tomorrow beautiful!

THE BEST OF 2018

THE CLUB

We Received Great Club Deals!

SAVED 30%

Alive! editor John Burnes took advantage of the self-park discount (30 percent during non-peak times) through the Club for a great deal during his holiday travels. Great job, Club!

Get those deals, and send in your Club Deal Selfies at alive.employeesclub.com/clubdealselfies

Promoting an Event?
Need give away items?
Fund Raisers
Awards, door prizes
Meetings
800.426.0174
rosebud@getpromos.com
“if you can imagine it, we can create it.”
ROSEBUD Marketing Group

Disneyland Tickets Are Back!

– Go to the Club Website for details.
employeesclub.com
Congratulations to Mabel A. Jabido, Retired from Economic and Workforce Development with 30 years of City service.

BY ROBERT LARIOS, Chief Operating Officer • rlarios@cityemployeesclub.com • TWITTER: @robertlarioscoo

All About Shipwrecks

Banning Residence Museum to host historical lecture on local shipwrecks.

Friends of Banning Museum invites the community to join us for our next "Keeping History Alive" lecture at the Banning Museum, 401 East "M" St. in Wilmington.

The lecture and book signing by author Michael D. White, vocational maritime historian and researcher, is set for 11 a.m. Saturday, Jan. 12, in the museum’s historic stagecoach barn.

Mr. White will be sharing anecdotes and images from his 2014 book, Shipwrecks of the California Coast: Wood to Iron, Sail to Steam, as well as information on several recently discovered shipwrecks that had, until very recently, rested on the bottom of the ocean for decades, cloaked in mystery.

There will be a 15-minute question and answer session after the lecture followed by a book signing. Copies of the book will be available for purchase.

Admission to the event is free for Friends of Banning Museum members and children under 12. Non-members are $5. For more details about this event or to RSVP, please contact Friends of Banning Museum at (310) 548-2005. Information on the Museum can also be found at www.thebanningmuseum.org.

The Banning Museum is a Rec and Parks facility and is operated in cooperation with Friends of Banning Museum. Friends of Banning Museum is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to "Preserve History, Promote Education, and Inspire Entrepreneurial Spirit."

REC AND PARKS

Sat., Jan. 12

Get a $50 Arco Gas Card For Club Members if they purchase by JAN. 31

These insurance products are brought to you by the Club’s Partner, United Agencies, Inc. CA Li, #0193256 United Agencies represents Mercury Insurance Group, as well as Chubb Insurance, Hiscox, Fireman’s Fund, Progressive, Civil Service Employees Insurance, Allied, Suffolk, Travelers, Urgard and REinsurance.

United Agencies Inc.

100 N. 1st St., Ste. 301, Burbank, CA 91502
877-801-5522 CA License #0252636

Club Members! Save on your Auto Insurance!

(888) 801-5522
DIRECT LINE FOR CLUB MEMBERS

When it comes to their auto Insurance, United Agencies has been serving hundreds of Club Members for years. We provide a high level of personal service, with some of the lowest rates in California. Come experience the difference in service you get when you say, "I’m with the Club!"

Take a look at how United Agencies stacks up against the competition!

When it comes to their auto Insurance, United Agencies has been serving hundreds of Club Members for years. We provide a high level of personal service, with some of the lowest rates in California. Come experience the difference in service you get when you say, "I’m with the Club!"

Take a look at how United Agencies stacks up against the competition!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Company</th>
<th>91105 Zip Code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Farmers</td>
<td>$1,229</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allstate</td>
<td>$1,229</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geico</td>
<td>$1,311</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auto Club</td>
<td>$292</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Agencies</td>
<td>$876</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These insurance products are brought to you by the Club’s Partner, United Agencies, Inc. CA Li, #0193256 United Agencies represents Mercury Insurance Group, as well as Chubb Insurance, Hiscox, Fireman’s Fund, Progressive, Civil Service Employees Insurance, Allied, Suffolk, Travelers, Urgard and REinsurance.
We want to know about you! Tell us a little about yourself:
Your name______________________________________________________  How old are you? ______________
When is your birthday?_________________________ What is the first name of your best friend?________________________
What is your favorite snack? ______________________________________
What is your favorite television show? ______________________________________
Why do you want to go to this park? ______________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________
For parents/guardian to complete:
Name of parent/guardian: ______________________________________
Job title and department with the City: ______________________________________
Parent/guardian phone number: ______________________________________
Child's address/city/zip: ______________________________________
Club Membership number: ______________________________________

The Alive! Children’s Coloring Contest

Deadline for submission:
Feb. 11, 2019
Submit to:
Club Coloring Contest
Employees Club of California
120 West 2nd Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012
The Club will do everything it can to gather all the submissions, but it cannot be responsible for lost or misdirected mail.

Good luck and have fun!

Download Coloring Art From the Web
You can download and print art from Alive! on the web: alive.employeesclub.com/coloring-contest-for-kids

Win 4 FREE tickets to Aquarium of the Pacific
An award package will be given for each age group:
Ages 5 and under
Ages 6 to 7
Ages 8 to 10
Ages 11 to 13

Win!

Guadalupe Lira
Cristina Ramos
DeAngelo Thompson

The Club
with
Alive!

with
The Club

Guadalupe
Lira

Cristina
Ramos

DeAngelo
Thompson

Compiled by
Club Customer Service Associates:

We want to know about you! Tell us a little about yourself:
Your name__________________________________________  How old are you? ______________
When is your birthday?_________________________ What is the first name of your best friend?________________________
What is your favorite snack? ______________________________________
What is your favorite television show? ______________________________________
Why do you want to go to this park? ______________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________
For parents/guardian to complete:
Name of parent/guardian: ______________________________________
Job title and department with the City: ______________________________________
Parent/guardian phone number: ______________________________________
Child’s address/city/zip: ______________________________________
Club Membership number: ______________________________________

DOWNLOAD COLORING ART FROM THE WEB
You can download and print art from Alive! on the web: alive.employeesclub.com/coloring-contest-for-kids
Dublin, Ireland

Here’s Dearbhla McNulty, Club Social Media Manager, on Grafton Street in Dublin on Christmas Eve.

Barnes in Boston

Club intrepid traveler Capt. J. Michael Barnes, Harbor, visited Boston last year for St. Patrick’s Day.

Story and photos courtesy Heather Johnson, Sanitation

PUBLIC WORKS

Thanks, Employees!

Sanitation honors 53 of its best and brightest.

On Dec. 5, Public Works/Sanitation held its annual employee recognition and appreciation event, honoring 53 employees for their excellent work. The event, hosted by Director and General Manager Enrique Zaldivar, was held at Sanitation’s atrium downtown. Each division nominated two employees they felt were deserving. Congratulations to those honored, and to all Sanitation employees!

For a list of all honorees, and more pictures go to web Alive!: alive.employeesclub.com

The Club wishes you health, humor and happiness for 2019.

Employees Club of California Celebrating the Lives of Municipal Employees
INSURANCE FROM THE CLUB

Long-Term Disability
Term Life Insurance
Long-Term Care
Critical Illness

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

Cheryl Martin  
Member Services Counselor  
cmartin@cityemployeesclub.com  
Ext. 136

Tiffany Sy  
Member Services Counselor  
tsy@cityemployeesclub.com  
Ext. 202

MaryAnn Urdiales  
Member Services Counselor  
mary@cityemployeesclub.com  
Ext. 159

Phone appointments and walk-ins available.

(800) 464-0452

LACEA Insurance Services, Inc. (Employees Club of California) is a licensed insurance agency offering insurance benefits to qualified Club members. The Club’s CA DOI Lic. is #0B98000.

Employees Club of California • Alive! JANUARY 2019

AIRPORTS/CULTURAL AFFAIRS

New Art in Terminal 7

LAX Terminal 7 art gallery explores “Lost in the Sky,”

Los Angeles World Airports (LAWA) and Cultural Affairs present a group exhibition featuring six artists in the newly renovated Terminal 7 gallery on the Departures Level titled “Lost in the Sky.” This exhibit, curated by Lauren Albrecht, strives to evoke the universal sense of awe and wonder experienced while gazing at the sky.

Featured artists Miya Ando, Natalie Arnoldi, Lia Halloran, Bradley Hankey, David Malin and Debra Scacco all celebrate the brilliance of the universe through a wide range of aesthetic approaches. The inaugural exhibition for the new Terminal 7 gallery is on view for ticketed passengers through May.

New Art in Terminal 7

Los Angeles World Airports (LAWA) and Cultural Affairs present a group exhibition featuring six artists in the newly renovated Terminal 7 gallery on the Departures Level titled “Lost in the Sky.” This exhibit, curated by Lauren Albrecht, strives to evoke the universal sense of awe and wonder experienced while gazing at the sky.

Featured artists Miya Ando, Natalie Arnoldi, Lia Halloran, Bradley Hankey, David Malin and Debra Scacco all celebrate the brilliance of the universe through a wide range of aesthetic approaches. The inaugural exhibition for the new Terminal 7 gallery is on view for ticketed passengers through May.

New Art in Terminal 7

Los Angeles World Airports (LAWA) and Cultural Affairs present a group exhibition featuring six artists in the newly renovated Terminal 7 gallery on the Departures Level titled “Lost in the Sky.” This exhibit, curated by Lauren Albrecht, strives to evoke the universal sense of awe and wonder experienced while gazing at the sky.

Featured artists Miya Ando, Natalie Arnoldi, Lia Halloran, Bradley Hankey, David Malin and Debra Scacco all celebrate the brilliance of the universe through a wide range of aesthetic approaches. The inaugural exhibition for the new Terminal 7 gallery is on view for ticketed passengers through May.

Thoughts Interrupted, Bradley Hankey

New Art in Terminal 7

Los Angeles World Airports (LAWA) and Cultural Affairs present a group exhibition featuring six artists in the newly renovated Terminal 7 gallery on the Departures Level titled “Lost in the Sky.” This exhibit, curated by Lauren Albrecht, strives to evoke the universal sense of awe and wonder experienced while gazing at the sky.

Featured artists Miya Ando, Natalie Arnoldi, Lia Halloran, Bradley Hankey, David Malin and Debra Scacco all celebrate the brilliance of the universe through a wide range of aesthetic approaches. The inaugural exhibition for the new Terminal 7 gallery is on view for ticketed passengers through May.

Thoughts Interrupted, Bradley Hankey

LACEA Insurance Services, Inc. (Employees Club of California) is a licensed insurance agency offering insurance benefits to qualified Club members. The Club’s CA DOI Lic. is #0B98000.

Be My Club Valentine

Send your loved one a special Valentine…

CLUB MEMBERS:

Send your loved one a special Valentine…

Here’s how it works:

Send us a favorite photo (high-resolution digital preferred) of you and your loved one(s) (could be a romantic partner, a parent or child, etc.) and two or three sentences declaring your special bond.

Deadline: February 1

To send digital photos and your message:

Go to

alive.employeesclub.com/valentines
People We See

Meet Latrelle “Groove” Manning

Groove is 50 years old, has a 27-year-old daughter and has been living on the street for 35 years. He said his homelessness began when he got out of prison for selling drugs to an undercover officer. He said that when he got out of prison, he was basically dropped off on Skid Row, where drugs are sold and the cycle continued.

I asked him how he began selling drugs in the first place. He said that as a kid living in South Central, as soon as he stepped out of his front door all he saw were pimps, prostitutes and gang bangers. But he acknowledged that there were other people in situations similar to his who didn’t end up on the streets.

He said he knows he made bad decisions. I asked him if there were a defining moment in his life that turned him on way or another. He said it was the first time he smoked a cigarette, when he was 11. He did it to be cool around his friends. From there he started doing other things that his friends were doing. Drinking, then smoking weed, and other drugs and “there I went.”

Where does he want to see himself five years from now? “Anywhere but where I am now.” He said he doesn’t have too many more years left. “A ‘tornado’ is coming and they’ll be walking poodles down this very street soon. The tornado will remove the homeless and I’ll be able to take advantage of resources to help me.”

He said with the situation now most of the people living on Fifth Street are spoiled. “You have everything at your fingertips down here – food, clothes and drugs.”

What would have changed his path? “If I were a parent I’d drop my kid off on Skid Row at 1:30 in the morning. I’d have them see what life is really like” down on the street.

This month’s “People We See” was conducted by Club CEO John Hawkins Nov. 9 at the corner of Stanford and Fifth Streets downtown. John gave Groove sustenance and $20 for expenses. The full interview can be seen soon on the Club’s YouTube channel.