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# Alive!

From left: Kadie Seitz, Youth Services Librarian; Kevin Awakuni, Adult Librarian, Exploration and Creativity Dept.; and Keith Kesler, Social Media Librarian. They highlight viral social media post images of Inauguration poet Amanda Gorman and teen punkers The Linda Lindas.



# 50 MILLION HITS ... AND COUNTING

SOCIAL MEDIA

**LIBRARY:** Meet the Library team behind two of the world's biggest social media viral hits during the pandemic, and why that matters.



– SEE PAGE 10

Alive! photo by Summy Lam

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# One for the Books



The Club visits the Library's social team, from left: Club COO Robert Larios; the Library's Kevin Awakuni, Kadie Seitz and Keith Kesler; and the Club's Summy Lam.

What started out as an inside-the-paper story, quickly became cover-worthy.

The Club team follows many City social media accounts so that we can better serve you with maximum value. That social connection has proven especially important in staying in touch with you, our highly valued Club Members, and all municipal employees during the COVID lockdown.

Back in May, we were amused to see the Library posting on Twitter a concert for teenagers in front of the book stacks at the Cypress Park branch. We had never seen anything like it, so we started to prepare a small story on that subject for inside the next paper. But when that Library post went viral in a significant way, being seen and shared by millions of people around the world, we rethought. We realized that the viral post became an avenue for us to talk about a bigger story, the impressive performance of

the Library in bringing its services online during the pandemic. So, onto the cover it went, where we had more space to explore the depth of the story.

I am delighted we did. Thanks to **Kadie Seitz, Kevin Awakuni, Keith Kesler, Justin Pearson** and **Susan Lendroth** for assisting us in capturing the details. I encourage you to read about their great success.

## ROBERT'S BLOG

by Robert Larios, COO, The Club



Speaking of the Library and online, I meant to mention something last month but I ran out of space. As you might know, we publish the Library's Top Ten lists of its most borrowed books, videos and songs every month online. I noticed something very curious in the list last month: "Midnight Train to Georgia," the Gladys Knight and the Pips hit from 1973, on the list! We mentioned this curious fact to the Library, and several Librarians got to work wondering why. (Librarians are wonderful in this way!) The consensus settled on:

1) it had just been featured on "American Idol;" 2) Gladys Knight and the song had just been featured on the PBS program "A Capitol Fourth;" and 3) it continues to be a popular song. Imagine all the fun you can have when you read the monthly lists! Enjoy them at [liveemployeesclub.com/category/columns/library-top-ten/](http://liveemployeesclub.com/category/columns/library-top-ten/)

Thanks to **Alan Westby, Mary McCoy** and **Ani Boyadjian** for doing our legwork at the Library to satisfy our curiosity.

Finally, as Southern California continues to reopen (carefully, as the pandemic is still a challenging reality), remember to check out employeesclub.com for current information on Club deals.

### Top 10 Songs

1. "How Dare You Want More," Bleachers We Made It H.E.R.
2. "We Made It," H.E.R. September James Arthur
3. "Your Side," Calvin Harris feat. Tom Grennan Leave A Light On Modest Mous
4. "Kiss Me More," Doja Cat feat. SZA Sweet Dreams Alan Walker, Imanbek
5. "The Beach," Wolf Alice Last Train Home John Mayer
6. "Lipstick on the Glass," Wolf Alice Bluebird / 口红-玻璃 / 口红 / 玻璃 / 口红 / 玻璃 / Alexis French
7. "Midnight Train to Georgia," Gladys Knight and The Pips Buster BTS, Rob Grimaldi, Stephen Kirk, Ron Perry
8. "Delicious Things," Wolf Alice Unaccompanied Cello Suite No. 1 in G major, BWV 1007: I. Prälude Yo-Yo Ma
9. "Safe From Heartbreak (if you never fall in love)," Wolf Alice River Flows in You See Siang Wong
10. "Last Train Home" John Mayer By Your Side Calvin Harris feat. Tom Grennan

Photos courtesy LAPD

### Communications Division



## An Evening to Build Community

Police Dept. Citywide took part in National Night Out.

### Hollenbeck Division



### Hollywood Division



**HOLLYWOOD**  
**NATIONAL NIGHT-OUT**  
 POLICE COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP

Lake Hollywood  
 Tuesday, August 3rd  
 5:00p - 7:00p  
 A walk, run, ride around Lake Hollywood alongside Hollywood Officers!

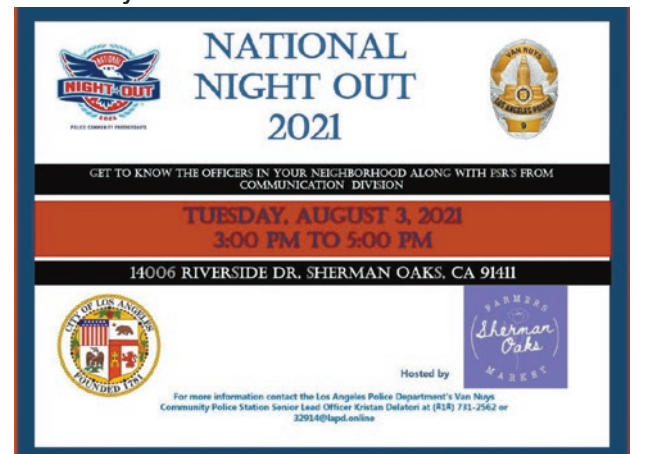
Lemon Grove Park  
 Tuesday, August 3rd  
 6:00p - 7:30p  
 Enjoy ice cream in the park with the Hollywood Senior Lead Officers!

Parking / Welcome tent at the South Entrance (Weldlake Drive) 4859 Lemon Grove Ave

**LAPD:** On Aug. 3, several divisions of the LAPD took part in National Night Out, a nationwide event that brings community and law enforcement together for building the neighborhood, sharing crime prevention tips, and having some family fun.

Many LAPD areas and divisions took part. Here are some images from the evening. ■

### Van Nuys Division



**NATIONAL NIGHT OUT 2021**

GET TO KNOW THE OFFICERS IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD ALONG WITH PERS FROM COMMUNICATION DIVISION

**TUESDAY, AUGUST 3, 2021**  
 3:00 PM TO 5:00 PM

14006 RIVERSIDE DR., SHERMAN OAKS, CA 91411

Hosted by Sherman Oaks Market

For more information contact the Los Angeles Police Department's Van Nuys Community Police Station Senior Lead Officer Kristan DeLator at (310) 783-2562 or 32014@lapd.online

### Rampart Division



### South Traffic Division



### West Traffic Division



Chief Michel Moore

LAPD Capt. Alex Baez with Larry the Clown.







**SOCIAL MEDIA**  
**50 MILLION HITS**  
 LIBRARY — SEE PAGE 10

COVER STORY:

**50 Million Hits** ..... 10-13

Library social media team's two global viral hits highlight the Library's online programming during the pandemic.

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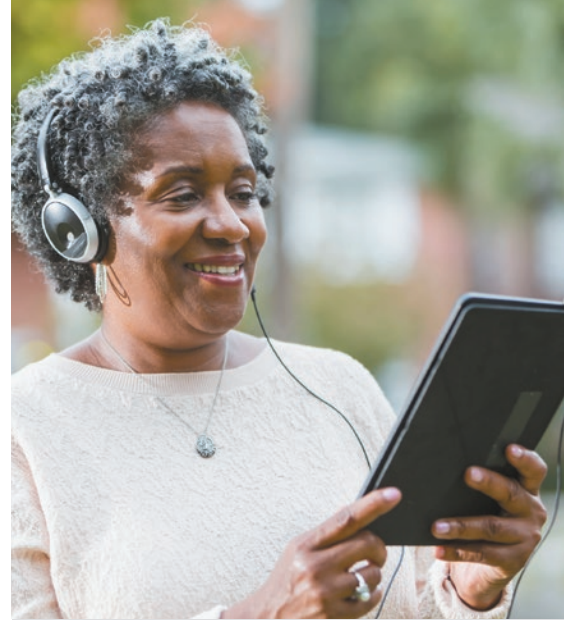
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**NEW THIS MONTH**  
**ONLINE!**  
[alive.employeesclub.com](http://alive.employeesclub.com)

**Library Top 10**

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



**Cooking With the Club**

Chef Larios explores the flavors of Italy with a recipe of Chicken Sausage Rigatoni in a creamy pink sauce with Roma tomato and Parmesan cheese.



**John's Picture Perfect**

Enjoy all the winners from this month's contest, showcasing the theme, generations.



**Coloring Contest Winners**

**Available Online!**



**GO TO:** [alive.employeesclub.com/kidscoloringwinners](http://alive.employeesclub.com/kidscoloringwinners)





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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.

**Contact the Club**

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

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**Physical Club Store Hours:**

Mondays and Fridays only,  
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Due to ongoing pandemic protocols,  
these hours could change without notice.

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# Three Dispatcher Promotions

**Police Dept. promotes three.**

**LAPD:** On July 28, LAPD/Communications promoted three to leadership positions.

Berta Ugas, 31 years of City service, and Susana Robinson, 24 years, were promoted to Sr. PSR IIs.

Lt. II Ricardo Ortega joins the division.

Congratulations Berta, Susana and Ricardo! ■



Capt. Alex Vargas (right) congratulates Lt. II Ricardo Ortega.



The stripes and bars for the new Sr. PSR IIs.



Capt. Alex Vargas congratulates new Sr. PSR IIs Susana Robinson (left) and Berta Ugas.

# Happy 240th Birthday, LA!

On Sept. 4, Los Angeles turns 240 years old (we were founded Sept. 4, 1781). It's looking good for 240, thanks to all City employees who work hard every day making LA the best it can be. ■



Story and photos by Dalila Vielma, Club Counselor

## Vax to the Max

General Services hosts vaccination event for Custodians, City employees.



From left: General Services' Pierre Riotoc, Emergency Management Coordinator II; Brian Baltazar, Management Analyst; Carlos Rivas; Eric Robles, Director of Special Services; Tony Royster, General Manager; and Antonio Muro, LAFD.

### GENERAL SERVICES:

On Aug. 12, General Services coordinated a vaccination drive against COVID-19 for Custodians who were not yet vaccinated. It was also open to all City employees and their friends and families.

The drive was held on the South Lawn of City Hall downtown.

Medical Services assisted, and the LAFD administered the vaccines.

Congratulations to General Services for hosting such an important event. Thanks go to Christal Chacon, General Services, for her invitation and assistance to the Club. ■



From left: Christal Chacon, Sr. Management Analyst; and Eric Robles, Director of Special Services.



At the General Services vaccination event on the south lawn of City Hall.



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Retired Los Angeles City Employees, Inc.

# RLACEI

For Retired Club Members

### CONTACT INFORMATION

**Retired Los Angeles City Employees, Inc. (RLACEI)**



Ruth B. Perry, President  
Terminal Annex  
P.O. Box 86264  
Los Angeles, CA 90086  
PHONE: (800) 678-4145, ext. 717  
EMAIL: Ruth.Perry@RLACEI.org  
ON THE WEB: www.RLACEI.org

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- Beverly J. Clark, *First Vice President*
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- Verkin (Vicki) Keoseian, *Secretary*

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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](http://www.RLACEI.org) to find the latest retirement news. Call (800) 678-4145 Ext. 0 to make suggestions.  
EMAIL: [Contact@RLACEI.org](mailto:Contact@RLACEI.org)

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Terminal Annex  
P.O. Box 86264  
Los Angeles, CA 90086

**Change of Address?**

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

**Send in your Interesting**



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

### RETIREE EVENTS

- Dec. 2021** Annual Holiday Party  
*Date and location to be announced*
- June 2, 2022** Annual Tom Stenrock Golf Tournament  
*Alhambra Golf Course  
630 S. Almansor St.  
Alhambra*

**RESERVATION LINE:**

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### LACERS BOARD UPDATE

## LACERS Increases Dental Coverage, Reworks Anthem

by Michael R. Wilkinson,  
LACERS Commissioner

Email: [MikeWilkinson4LACERS@gmail.com](mailto:MikeWilkinson4LACERS@gmail.com)



Michael R. Wilkinson

The LACERS Board has increased the dental maximum yearly coverage to \$2,500 (from \$2,000) for in-network services. Out-of-network maximums will increase from \$1,500 to \$1,750 per year. The increase was one of several improvements that were part of the health, dental and vision plan renewals that will take effect on Jan. 1.

In addition, LACERS has replaced the current Anthem Medicare Supplement Plan with the Anthem Medicare Advantage Passive PPO, which will have more services and support programs than the current plan.

The Anthem plan will be available to Medicare members who have both Medicare Parts A and B. This plan should be more convenient for members since it will not require the use of two ID cards, Medicare and Anthem, just Anthem. The new plan may be used at medical providers that are out of Anthem's network as well as in-network.

The total cost for the renewal of all the health, dental and vision plans is a reduction of \$2 million, or 1.3 percent, despite the addition of new benefits.

**The new benefits for 2021 include:**

- A meal delivery benefit for the Kaiser Senior Medicare Advantage plan
- Adding an emergency response system and personal care benefit to United Healthcare Medicare Advantage Plan
- Changing the Anthem Blue View vision plan to a self-funding plan to save premium dollars while maintaining full benefits.

**The Anthem Medicare Advantage passive PPO will provide more senior support services, including:**

- 12 non-emergency trips to medical appointments per year
- A personal emergency response system
- A health and fitness tracker, and
- 12 visits for extended footcare.

LACERS will be communicating the details of the improvements in the plans in the coming months. ■

### RETIREES UPDATE

## Two Gifts Mayor Could Give LACERS as He Leaves

by Tom Moutes, RLACEI Legislative Director

Email: [Tom.Moutes@RLACEI.org](mailto:Tom.Moutes@RLACEI.org)



Tom Moutes

Before Mayor Eric Garcetti departs as either the U.S. Ambassador to India (he has been nominated by President Joe Biden) or he's termed out, it would be great if he could give two small but significant LACERS-related gifts on his way out.

**Background**

*LACERS should propose to the City Council that the City Charter be amended to stipulate that an appointed board member may be removed prior to the end of his or her term, but only for cause relating to the board member's fiduciary or statutory duties, and that if an appointed board member is removed from office prior to the expiry of his or her term, that the reason(s) for such removal be publicly disclosed.*

This recommendation is from 2013 Management Audit of LACERS conducted on behalf of the City Controller, City Council, and Mayor – not LACERS. It is not a coincidence that this recommendation was made after two perfectly good LACERS Board members, Roberta Conroy and Jerry Bardwell, were dismissed from the board (their pre-signed letters of resignation were accepted) by then-Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa.

**The Issue**

So, what is wrong with the mayor removing board members? For most City boards, the mayor probably should have the authority to dismiss board members without specific cause, but pension systems are different. By law, the primary duty of California public pension board members is to the members of their pension plan – not to the mayor or anyone else. The California Constitution indicates that, "A retirement board's duty to its participants and their beneficiaries shall take precedence over any other duty." This helps protect the pension systems from political influence, especially in a situation like LACERS, where the mayor appoints a majority of the board members – four of the seven members.

When LACERS board members need to discuss items that may impact the City budget, it can be difficult for them to have that discussion free of political influence – explicit or perceived – if the mayor's representative is pacing in the back of the board room, having a conversation with them in the hallway just before their vote (real life examples), or if they believe the mayor may dismiss them from the Board if they vote in a way the mayor does not like (as Ms. Conroy appeared to be doing in 2011 by Mayor Villaraigosa).

**What Parting Gifts Can Mayor Garcetti Give?**

There are two parting gifts Mayor Garcetti can give to the hard working women and men who have served the City: (1) Don't require pre-signed letters of resignation for pension system board members; and (2) Publicly support the audit recommendation that an appointed Board member may be removed prior to the end of his or her term, but only for cause relating to the Board member's fiduciary or statutory duties, and that if an appointed Board member is removed from office prior to the expiry of his or her term, that the reason(s) for such removal be publicly disclosed.

If these gifts are granted on Mayor Garcetti's way out, they won't impact him, but they will help ensure that support of good Board governance can be one of his legacies. ■

## Facebook Giveaway



Have you joined RLACEI or followed the RLACEI Facebook page? Why not? You could win a prize! (See the ad below for more information.)

### July Winners - \$5 gift card:

- Edward Calvin
- William Flowers

**New RLACEI Members – and Welcome!**

- Rudy Corrales
- Elizabeth Lee
- Mario Cortina
- Hank Murakami

*Congratulations for joining the RLACEI Facebook page!*

## Sign Up!

YOU COULD WIN A PRIZE



Connect to RLACEI on our Facebook page!

**TO ENTER:**

**RLACEI Members:** Follow us on Facebook

**Other City Retirees:**

Like us on Facebook and join RLACEI

### PRIZES TO FIRST 150!

**FIRST 50 WIN**  
Target \$25 gift card

**51-100 WIN**  
\$5 gift card  
*(See's or Starbucks)*

**101-150 WIN**  
RLACEI reusable cloth bag



**Find us:** Log on to Facebook, then search for RLACEI  
**Join at:** [RLACEI.org](http://RLACEI.org) (must be Retired City employee)

## Looking for a Board Member With Computer Skills

**Computer savvy RLACEI Board Director needed!**

Experience and skills in Webpage maintenance, Facebook and extensive Microsoft Office experience particularly wanted. Other computer skills greatly appreciated.

If you enjoy working with and assisting City retirees, join us.

**For more information on this position contact:**

Dennis Harding at: Tel: (800) 678-4145, ext. 706  
Email: [Dennis.Harding@RLACEI.org](mailto:Dennis.Harding@RLACEI.org) or

Beverly Clark at Email: [Beverly.Clark@RLACEI.org](mailto:Beverly.Clark@RLACEI.org)



# RLACEI

Photos by Summy Lam, Club Director of Marketing, and via RLACEI

## MEET YOUR BOARD

### A look at RLACEI Board Members

## Mark Blunk RLACEI Board Member

By Beverly J. Clark, Publicity Director



Mark Blunk

New RLACEI Board Member Mark Blunk retired from LACERS in 2010 under ERIP. He was LACERS' Chief Benefits Analyst for the Benefits Administration Division.

Mark's illustrious career with the City started in the Water and Power Employees Retirement System (WPERP) as a Management Assistant. Like many City employees, Mark has had the opportunity to be promoted and work for several departments during his career.

After working on a new systems development at WPERP, he was promoted to Utility Management Assistant in the Distribution Engineering Section. He feared the possibility of being laid off, so he applied for a position as Legislative Assistant with City Clerk. This position gave him political experience mainly from the perspective of serving Councilmembers and Council Committees.

Mark then was promoted to Sr. Management Analyst working in the LAPD's Office of the Chief of Police Inspection and Control Section as part of the civilization process. He was lead auditor for Internal Management audits and compliance auditing for many of the Chief's directed programs, including Community Policing and change of leadership audits, as well as completing some special investigations.

The Chief's office placed him in leadership training with many sworn Captains and Lieutenants being trained through the West Point Leadership and Command school, which gave him the honor of teaching some classes on inter-group conflict resolution strategies at Lieutenants' schools.

Mark transferred to the Police Academy to serve as a Sr. Management Analyst I, technically the Officer-in-Charge of In-Service Legal Training to gain broader supervisory experience. He was then asked by the Chief of Police to transfer to the Internal Affairs Administrative Division to start the design of a new personnel complaint automated system.

He later was promoted to Sr. Management Analyst II within the Office of the City Controller, working as a new Chief Performance Auditor, assigned to develop new Performance Auditing procedures and teams. He then transferred to LACERS as a Sr. Management Analyst II over the Benefits Processing Section, was promoted to Assistant Plan Manager for the WPERP plan, and then returned to LACERS as a Chief Benefits Analyst.

His years with LACERS involved serving members and dealing with members' issues through staff and hands-on assistance. Mark says his "time spent serving active and Retired City employees has always been and remains some of the most rewarding experiences of my career. My hope is to help serve Retirees again as a Director with RLACEI." ■

# Picnic Time!

Retirees Picnic returns and moves outside after being postponed last year due to the pandemic.

Approximately 100 Retirees and their guests attended the Retired Los Angeles City Employees, Inc. (RLACEI) annual summer picnic, held Aug. 5 outside at Whittier Narrows in Park in Whittier.

The picnic was canceled last year due to the pandemic. By moving it outside this year, the picnic was able to resume.

The Club Mobile Team attended as well, keeping a safe distance and providing Club gear and services to Retirees.

The Club thanks Ruth Perry, President, RLACEI; and Beverly Clark, RLACEI Board Member and Publicity Chair, for their invitation and assistance. ■



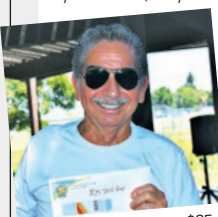
RLACEI Directors (from left) Dennis Harding and Tom Moutes.



From left: Ray Garcia, LADWP, 37 years of City service; and Ralph Garcia, guest.



From left: Alice Tapia, LAUSD, 22 years of school service; Armando Tapia, Public Works/Services, 34 years of City service; Lorenza Cooper, City Attorney's Office, 26 years; Michael Cooper, Building and Safety, 28 years; Maria Roberts, City Attorney's Office, 27 years; Thomas Roberts, guest; Bill Doem, Los Angeles Dodgers (Retired); and Nellie Doem, City Attorney/Mayor's Office, 31 years.



The prize winner of the \$25 Shell gas card, donated by the Club.



Daisy Vasuthasawat.

Carol Takafuji, ITA, 38 years of City service, and guest.



Monica Carillo, guest, and Pete Torres, General Services, 32 years of City service.



Diana Medina, Public Works/Accounting, 37 years of City service; and Alfonso Medina, guest.



Gloria Hirogosa, LAFD, 31 years of City service (back); and Alicia Layton, LAFD, 34 years.



Elizabeth Torres, LACERS, 30 years of City service, and RLACEI Director.



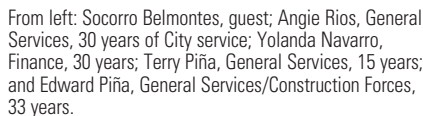
Ruth and Fred Kong, Public Works/Contract Administration, 34 years of City service.



Boyd, Airports, 16 years of City service.



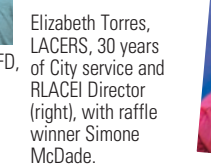
Gary Fox, LADWP, 32 years of City service.



From left: Socorro Belmontes, guest; Angie Rios, General Services, 30 years of City service; Yolanda Navarro, Finance, 30 years; Terry Piña, General Services, 15 years; and Edward Piña, General Services/Construction Forces, 33 years.



Elizabeth Torres, LACERS, 30 years of City service and RLACEI Director (right), with raffle winner Simone McDade.



Robert Larios, Club COO (right), with RLACEI's Ruth Perry, President, and Elizabeth Torres, Director.



Dale Wong-Nguyen, Assistant General Manager, LACERS.



Wishing Hal Well: This group wishes Hal Danowitz, who just retired from the RLACEI Board, well with life after RLACEI. Those from the Controller's Office were subordinates to Hal Danowitz when he worked there. Front, from left: Gary Hart, State of California, 38 years of State service; Mei Wee, Controller's Office, 25 years of City service; and Carol Takafuji, ITA, 38 years. Back: Larry Tamashiro, County of Los Angeles, 34 years; Dorothy Tamashiro, Controller's Office, 38 years; Robert Tam, County of Los Angeles, 25 years; and Shirley Tam, Controller's Office, 33 years.



From left: Joe Zamora, Public Works/Contract Administration, 25 years of City service; and John Vargas, Parks and Recreation, County of Los Angeles, 25 years of County service.



From left: Lou Quan, Housing, 38 years of City service; Rowena Workman, Economic and Workforce Development, 31 years; and Mario Corlino, Rec and Parks, 40 years.



The famous Club Mobile Team (aka Club on Wheels), from left: Cheryl Martin, Member Services Counselor; Marcus Martin, Customer Service Associate; Guadalupe Lira, Store Manager; and DeAngelo Thompson, Customer Service Associate.



Ana Maria Peres Carlos, guest; and Louie Carlos, LADWP, 30 years of City service.

## Become an RLACEI Member

RLACEI is dedicated to advocating for retiree interests. We are over 6,000 strong! Members of the Retired Los Angeles City Employees, Inc. enjoy all RLACEI events such as the golf tournament, member picnic and holiday party with FREE membership to the Employees Club with access to all group benefits (insurance, discounts, etc.).

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## John's Picture Perfect Contest

The Club's online photo contest, organized by CEO John Hawkins

This month's contest theme:

### I Love LA

I Love LA – In honor of LA's 240th birthday, we're theming this month's contest "I Love LA."

Submit your best photos of I Love LA, and be in the running for a prize.

**DEADLINE: Sept. 13**

Submit your photos online here:  
[alive.employeesclub.com/pictureperfect](http://alive.employeesclub.com/pictureperfect)

Club Members only.  
Good luck!

WIN

\$25

Amazon Gift Card

# Capt. Godinez: Firefighter of the Year

**Now-Retired Fire Capt. named top Firefighter for 2019.**



Capt. II Rick Godinez, Retired, Club Member, is named Firefighter of the Year for 2019.

**LAFD:** Capt. II Rick Godinez, Retired, 36 years of City service, Club Member, has been named Firefighter of the Year for 2019. The 2019 ceremony was delayed until July 22 due to the pandemic. He retired in April 2020.

Rick, who left an indelible mark on the Dept., joined the LAFD in September 1984. After graduating from Drill Tower 89, he embarked on a career serving at 10 different fire stations as he was promoted through the ranks. His skills in leading and teaching were recognized early, resulting in instructor positions in Disaster Preparedness and the Drill Tower.

Wanting to contribute even more to the City and his community, Rick also served on the Incident Management Team (responding to large-scale incidents both in the City and nationwide) where he held positions of Plans Manager, Public Information Officer, and Public Affairs Specialist. During this time, he responded to numerous deployments, including the 9/11 Terrorist Attacks, Salt Lake City Winter Olympic Games, Haiti Earthquake, and Hurricanes Katrina, Rita, Gustav, Hannah, Ike, Harvey and Irma. In recognition of his experience and dedication, he was selected to serve on the National Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Public Affairs Work Group for 10 years and served as the Chairperson for two years.

One of Rick's greatest influence and inspiration lay in his role as the Sr. Fire Chaplain for the Department, where he left a positive and lasting impact on the men and women of the LAFD and their families. He led a voluntary team of 11 Chaplains and two trainees in providing spiritual and emotional support while coordinating active duty and Retired memorials, weddings, hospital visits and ceremonies. Rick delivered invocations, benedictions and eulogies for ceremonies, memorials and countless events. Rick also served on the Los Angeles Firemen's Relief Association Board as a trustee for more than 13 years where he helped widows, orphans and disabled firefighters at their most difficult times. As Chair of the Marketing and Development and Scholarship Committees, and founder of the Family Support Group, he exemplified the organization's mission of "Firefighters helping Firefighters."

Capt. Godinez embodies the Department's core values of service, professionalism, integrity, respect, innovation and trust. The LAFD and the City of Los Angeles Firefighters Association are proud to recognize Capt. II Rick Godinez as the 2019 Firefighter of the Year.

"I get asked many times, do you miss the LAFD?" he was quoted saying on CBSLA. "And the answer is yes, a resounding yes, absolutely," he said. "This was my dream job for more than 35 years, and I revered it. It was always what I wanted to do with my life, and I feel so lucky. I was such a fulfilling career for me, and it exceeded all of my expectations."

He also thanked his wife, Terri Godinez, for keeping their family together while he went out on the fire line.

The Club is honored to have covered Capt. Rick's mission trip in Haiti in 2011, and at other times.

The best of congratulations to you, Rick, for this prestigious honor. Enjoy your well-deserved retirement. ■



At the LAFD Fire Station 2 holiday party, 2011: Capt. Rick Godinez gets attacked with hugs by all the kids.

At the 2011 Hope for Firefighters event downtown, from left: Capt. Rick Godinez, Fire Station 2; the Club's Noelle Kauffman; and Manny Castaneda, Fire Station 60.



At the LAFD ASB's holiday party, 2011: Capt. Rick Godinez says a prayer before the raffle and buffet begin.



On Capt. Rick Godinez's mission trip in Haiti, 2011.



Capt. Rick Godinez playing handball in Boyle Heights, 2011.



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# Advancing Diversity, Inclusion

Water and Power names City veteran Monique Earl to lead new Office of Diversity.



Monique Earl

**LADWP:** As part of the ongoing initiatives to advance diversity and equity, Monique Earl was named to lead the newly created Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion at the Los Angeles Dept. of Water and Power in July. Earl will become part of the senior management team reporting to General Manager Martin Adams, and will be responsible for the oversight of policies, practices and programs designed to improve diversity and opportunities throughout LADWP. And, she will position the agency to better serve communities with the highest needs. As a Sr. Assistant General Manager, Earl will also work to provide leadership, guidance and support in the internal and external development and implementation of the department's Racial Equity Action Initiatives.

Earl's career with the City spans 20 years across the legislative, executive and administrative branches of government. During her roles with the City and Transportation, Earl led diversity, equity and inclusion efforts in recruitment, hiring and supplier diversity.

Earl has a strong leadership background, having served as Chief Deputy Controller for City Controller Ron Galperin and Deputy Mayor of Budget and Financial Policy in the administration of Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa. She also has a long record of managing diversity, equity and inclusion efforts with a focus on workforce development, contracting, economic development and community engagement.

"I am thrilled to have Monique join our leadership team," commented LADWP General Manager and Chief Engineer Martin Adams in a statement. "The energy, enthusiasm, and experience she brings will help LADWP move forward in all areas of DEI, both with our internal staff as well as how we serve communities across Los Angeles. Monique will play a key role in helping us make LADWP the best public agency it can be."

The creation of the Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion took on a sense of urgency after Mayor Eric Garcetti issued Executive Directive No. 27. The Directive was issued after the death of George Floyd and unprecedented nationwide demonstrations for social justice and elimination of institutional racism. The Executive Directive instructs all City departments to create a racial equity action plan to promote equity throughout Los Angeles. The broader set of initiatives, along with efforts to address gender equity and other workforce diversity issues, will be led by Earl and the new DEI office.

Congratulations, Monique, from the Club. ■

## Salute to Veterans

Honor the Veteran in your life – family, friend or yourself – for Veterans Day!

In our November issue, we plan to post your photos and messages of the person in your life who has served our country (in uniform, if possible), to honor them for their service. We'll publish in print and online for Veterans Day, Thursday, Nov. 11, 2021.

**DEADLINES:**  
 In print: Monday, Oct. 18  
 Online: Friday, Nov. 5

**Send in your images and messages at:**  
[aliveemployeesclub.com/veterans/](http://aliveemployeesclub.com/veterans/)

*Thank you for your service!*

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1. Call the Club at (800) 464-0452.
2. Speak to Cesilee Castillo (ext. 126) or Genesis Martinez (ext. 226).
3. Wait 72 hours for registration to take effect.
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ALIVE! FEATURE: LIBRARY

Photos by Summy Lam, Club Director of Marketing; Keith Kesler, Social Media Librarian, Los Angeles Public Library; Martin Wong; and courtesy the Library

# 50 MILLION HITS ...AND COUNTING

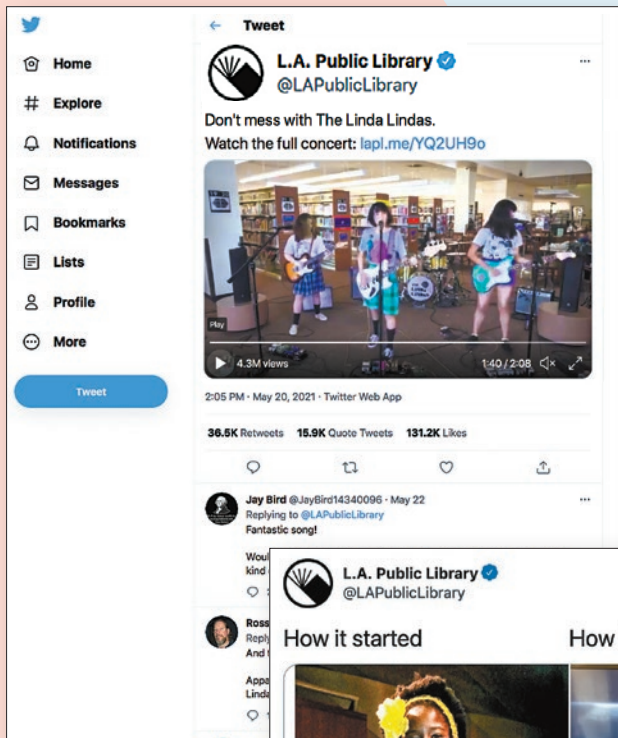
SOCIAL MEDIA



Meet the Library team behind two of the world's biggest social media viral hits during the pandemic, and why that matters.

**THE LINDA LINDAS**

The original Tweet containing The Linda Lindas concert that was posted as part of TEENTastic Tuesdays during Asian American Pacific Islander Month, has garnered, to date, nearly 30 million impressions on Twitter alone.



Wander over to YouTube, Twitter or Instagram, and type in **The Linda Lindas**. Maybe you've heard of the local teenaged punk rock band. Maybe you've even seen their posts already.

Then take a look at the posts of the band on the Los Angeles Public Library accounts. Look behind the teen punkers and you'll see stacks of books - those are the stacks at the Cypress Park Branch of the Los Angeles Public Library. Those LAPL stacks have been viewed something like 30 million times.

Combined with The Linda Lindas posts, that number of impressions rises to approximately 50 million. Fifty million people have seen the Los Angeles Public Library on social media through just those two subjects. Those posts are among the world's biggest social media hits during the pandemic.

It's not by accident. By their own words, the trio of Library professionals who produced the social posts - Keith Kesler, Social Media Librarian; Kadie Seitz, Youth Services Librarian; and Kevin Awakuni, Adult Librarian in the Exploration and Creativity Dept. - had no idea they would go that viral. But posting innovative, cutting-edge content on the Library's social media channels in support of the Library's mission and during a pandemic is by design. There's a lot more to the Library than walking into a branch and checking out a book, as fundamentally excellent as that is.

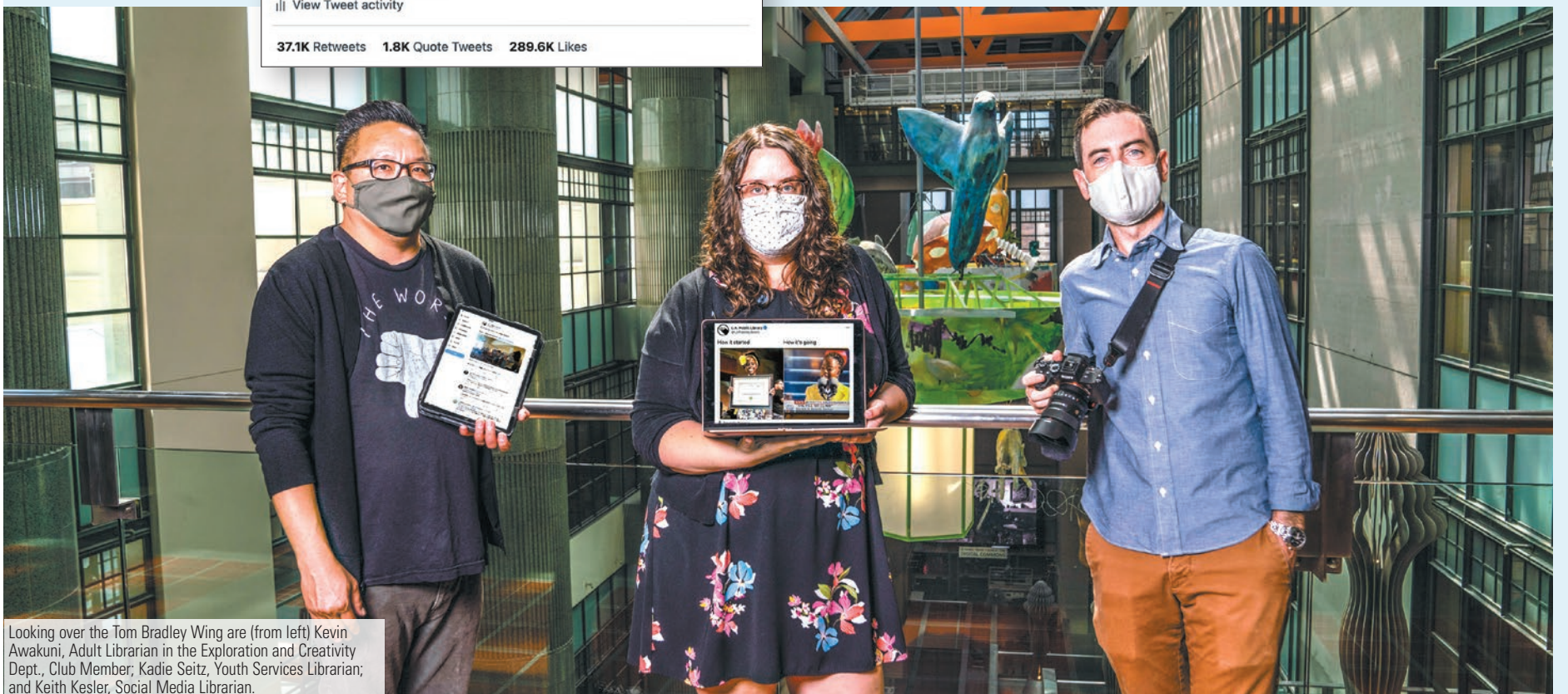
**AMANDA GORMAN**

The original Tweet about LA poet Amada Gorman that the Library posted on Inauguration Day, Jan. 20, has garnered, to date, more than 20 million impressions on Twitter alone.



Then search on Twitter for **Amanda Gorman**, the young poet who electrified the nation at the inauguration of President Joe Biden, and you'll see another post from the Los Angeles Public Library. That post alone has drawn more than 20 million impressions.

Inside, hear from the trio and why they think new ways of reaching out to Angelenos is so important. ■



Looking over the Tom Bradley Wing are (from left) Kevin Awakuni, Adult Librarian in the Exploration and Creativity Dept., Club Member; Kadie Seitz, Youth Services Librarian; and Keith Kesler, Social Media Librarian.





With Robert Larios, Club COO (right) are (from left) Keith Kesler, Social Media Librarian; Kevin Awakuni, Adult Librarian, Exploration and Creativity Dept.; and Kadie Seitz, Youth Services Librarian.

The *Alive!* Interview 1

# LOUD LIBRARY LOVE

On July 1, Club COO Robert Larios and *Alive!* editor John Burnes interviews members of the Library team that put together the now-viral program with *The Linda Lindas* - Kevin Awakuni, Adult Librarian in the Exploration and Creativity Dept., 5 years of City service and Kadie Seitz, Youth Services Librarian, 6 years. The interview took place via Zoom due to pandemic protocols; typically they both work out of Central Library downtown. The interview with the third member of the team, Keith Kesler, who oversees all of the Library's social media postings, follows this one

**Alive:** Kadie and Kevin, thanks for telling us about the Library's post about *The Linda Lindas*, and how it came about.

**Kadie Seitz:** Sure.

The *Linda Lindas* became the Library's most viral post ever. But let's start more broadly and talk about the virtual program where they appeared. I know it was part of Asian American Pacific Islander Month.

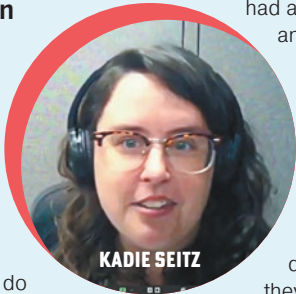
**Kadie:** Right. It was part of our TEENtastic Tuesdays series of programming we've been doing more or less since the pandemic started. I don't think it was labeled TEENtastic Tuesdays until later, but we started doing online programming for everyone in about April or May of 2020, and then it evolved.

TEENtastic Tuesdays is a series of programs we do



KEVIN AWAKUNI

every Tuesday aimed at teens, covering a variety of different subjects and topics. For example, we had a vogueing workshop. We did tarot. We did a panel of people talking about their experience at HBCUs [historic Black colleges and universities]. We've done virtual reality. We've done all sorts of topics, all over the place. The *Linda Lindas* concert was part of that series.



KADIE SEITZ

For the concert, we partnered with Kevin's department, Exploration and Creativity, and their LA Made program as co-sponsor. Another librarian had approached us with the connection to the band, and we thought, "Absolutely. Like, yes." It turned out many of us have connections with them: One of Kevin's kids goes to school with one of the band members. Kevin's boss also has a kid who goes to school with another one of the band members. It ended up being this happy LAPL kind of coincidence.

When it came up initially, we thought about doing the concert from one of their houses. But they told us that they had had some issues with

— Continued, page 12

## Pandemic Programming

During the pandemic, when all of the Los Angeles Public Library's locations were closed to the public, and continuing after the libraries had limited openings, the Library created multiple programs online every day on Facebook and YouTube. The programs, most of which existed in person before the pandemic, ran the gamut from children's storytimes to musical performances, to author talks, home gardening exhibitions, arts and crafts tutorials and much more.

The *Linda Lindas* concert was one of those programs.

Some of the programs were held outdoors and in person when space and protocols allowed.

Here's a sample of just some of the hundreds of programs hosted online by the Library during the pandemic.



Various storytime presentations, hosted online from home and from branches that were closed to the public.



A sustainable garden tour.



Some programs were moved outside when the branches partially reopened.



Posing outside the Cypress Park Branch of the Los Angeles Public Library are *The Linda Lindas*. From left: Bela Salazar, Mila del la Garza, Eloise Wong and Lucia de la Garza.



The *Alive!* Interview 1 — CONTINUED FROM PAGE 11

# LOUD LIBRARY LOVE

noise complaints from neighbors when they played in their yard before. So we thought, “Hey, the Library is still kind of closed.” Some of our locations are still closed to the public from going inside. So we thought, “This might be a nice opportunity to try something kind of different in terms of doing a punk show in the middle of our Library.” We worked it out with the Cypress Park branch; their staff was totally into the idea and very accommodating. The concert was a culmination of many different departments coming together to make it happen relatively quickly too; that day or the Monday before was our first day open for many of our locations for in-person services.

Then it aired. But we had filmed it two weeks prior to that, something like that. It was a long day of filming.

**Had you ever done a concert as part of your program?**

**Kadie:** Not as part of the teen programming, but LA Made has done a lot of music programming. And we’ve done music programs for younger kids.

**Kevin Awakuni:** I’m pretty new to this position. The ball had already started rolling before I got here. It just so happened that my son and Eloise Wong, the lead singer, are in the same class. Before I transitioned into the position I had already talked with The Linda Lindas because I know the parents. I thought, this would be good. And then I learned, through their other Librarian friend, Angi, that they had already approached the TEENtastic Tuesdays folks about doing something, whatever we wanted them to do. Everything was already rolling when I got here.

I don’t recall a punk rock show being filmed in an empty library, either. The concept was super cool. And then the fact that the The Linda Lindas are such heavy Library users – I knew that because I’ve hung out with them before. It was one of the things we talked about when we’d get ice cream with our kids or whatever – they would talk about how much they love the Library. And then a few months later, they did the show. It was just kismet. It was a lot of work, but we said, “Let’s just do it and have a good time with a positive attitude. We’ll see what happens.”

**Kadie:** Keith Kesler, our Social Media Librarian, is really good at filming things, and he has all the equipment and the eye for it.

**Kevin:** The girls had such a great attitude about everything.

**Kadie:** They were skipping around.

**Kevin:** Holding hands and skipping. Dancing and joyful.

**Kadie:** It was very cute.

**Kevin:** That attitude really helped because we had already done another program that morning – TLC Showcase – Teens Leading Change, a civics-minded program for teens. It was a lot of hours, but all part of the job.

**From civics to punk.**

**Kevin:** For sure.

**Kadie:** Yes!

**Was that the loudest event that ever happened in a normally quiet place like the Los Angeles Public Library?**

**Kadie:** I think so. Unofficially!

**Kevin:** I’m assuming!

## A Metaphor for Library Love

**I’m looking at this as a metaphor for how excited they were for the Library and how much they love it. They really couldn’t be contained.**

**Kevin:** A couple of them are heavy Library users, like 20 books at a time. They’ve always enjoyed the Library. Eloise lives right around the corner from one of the branches, and the sisters, Lucia and Mila de la Garza, live close to another branch. They’re incredibly heavy Library users.

**With its success on social media, is this bigger than anything you’ve done at the Library?**

**Kadie:** Absolutely.

**Kevin:** The concert was posted on social media May 1, and it was fine. It had good numbers of views and everything that I was hoping for.

**Kadie:** It was strong.

**Kevin:** And then Keith Kesler tweeted out the clip of the song, “Racist Sexist Boy.” I woke up and Kadie had just sent out an email saying, “Guys, this clip is, like, really popular.” It was a Friday morning when I looked, and the views were like, 325,000. I thought, “That’s bananas.” By the end of the weekend it was at 4.1 million. It went crazy. The Linda Lindas already had a certain level of status and celebrity, because they were in a movie, and they opened for Bikini Kill at the Palladium. They already had a following.

I don’t know what the correct metaphor is, but the post was like a supernova. It just went crazy.

**We enjoyed it all day. We shared it. And then we saw it on the “CBS Morning News” and on a ton of news sites, NPR, and then of course the band was on Jimmy Kimmel.**

**Kadie:** When it first started going viral, I think it was the Thursday toward the end of the week. I said to my husband, if this hits half a million, I’m going to die happy. And then he said, “Yes, it’ll grow.” It just kept growing and growing.

**And now it’s past 30 million.**

**Kadie:** I didn’t think other

people would take video clips of it and post it on their own channels without crediting us. I would say, “But that was the Library.” Most of it ended up being credited back to us, which is fantastic. But that’s not something I would have thought about; I was just happy it was being shared.

By the next day, that’s when the news stories started picking up, and that made it grow and grow and grow. I think first it was shared by *Rolling Stone* or *Variety* and then it was the *New York Times* and NPR and all these places. These are journals I read. It’s going to be hard to beat that, for sure.

**It was the right song at the right time with this incredible fresh energy. The story she says about being inspired to write “Racist, Sexist Boy” made it all come together.**

**Kadie:** Friends of mine from Milwaukee posted about it. Then my mom emailed me. “Did you see this?” she asked me. And I said, “Yes! That’s my program!” That was like a true viral moment.

**Kevin:** Their parents had a really long conversation with them about wrapping their minds around fame and the level of scrutiny that accompanies something like that. They told Eloise that there are haters in the world. It doesn’t matter how pure or authentic your art is, people hate on it just so they can stand out from a crowd. It’s something I’ve never experienced before. I’m a City employee. I don’t expect worldwide fame. They’re still just kids. But that song really struck a chord.

**Kadie:** The band has a very good support system.

**Kevin:** I know that parents, grandparents and sisters were there. The band comes from a very authentic place.

**Kadie:** They actually did a couple of takes of that song.

**Kevin:** Right. They wanted to make sure that the quality of the song and the intro were right. They’re professional performers.

## Rocking the Mission

**How do you think the Library’s programs online and on social media support the Library’s mission? Why is it important that the Library does this?**

**Kevin:** I feel like when something really resonates with people it’s because it’s a reminder that the things that they feel and the experiences that they have are not unique. Art makes them feel not alone. A lot of times the art that really resonates with people, whether it’s music or a painting or a movie, reminds people that they’re not the only person who feels that way. I’m all about trying to give a platform to voices so that everybody can also have these kind of similar experiences. That’s what I strive to do, and that’s what the Library looks for.

**Kadie:** The programs are just like our books and how we collect our materials – they’re windows to things that are new or different for us. They are mirrors that reflect back our own experience. That’s a standard Library thing, and programs work the same way. We really



Kadie Seitz, Youth Services Librarian



Kevin Awakuni, Adult Librarian in the Exploration and Creativity Dept., Club Member

try to represent the City, which is so incredibly diverse in so many iterations of diversity. We try to reflect that in our programming so that we can be representative. So for example, for our children’s programs, we’ve done them in more than 14 different languages. We know that there are so many people who speak so many different languages here. We want them to feel like the Library has something for them, and we do.

**Kevin:** We try to be the most useful resource we can be to the City and provide everything. We’re a non-transactional institution. We don’t require anything. You come in and you take as much as we allow you to take. And we don’t charge fines. We want to give you the most and ask nothing in return. It’s cool to do good for the sake of doing good and not for any monetary value, but simply feeling joy from helping people.

**That’s what public service is all about.**

**Kevin:** Yes.

**Any return engagements? Any talk about doing an encore engagement?**

**Kevin:** I hadn’t even thought about it.

**Kadie:** Not with them specifically. I’ve thought about using potentially other music down the road. But it’s a little bit complicated. And all of our locations are open.

This was only one of many, many programs we offer. The Linda Lindas happened to come at the right time and go viral, but we have so many programs. We have other programs on YouTube and Facebook, but also on Zoom, too, and we’re starting to produce outdoor programming. In the fall, we hope we’ll be able to move indoors.

But we’d welcome The Linda Lindas back. They’re welcome back whenever they want!

**Kevin:** They’re awesome.

**Kadie and Kevin, thank you for your time.**

**Kevin:** Thanks for having us.

**Kadie:** Bye. ■



The Linda Lindas in concert at the Cypress Park Branch of the Los Angeles Public Library.



# 50 MILLION... AND COUNTING

## The *Alive!* Interview 2

# ANATOMY OF A VIRAL HIT

On July 1, Club COO Robert Larios and *Alive!* editor John Burnes interviewed Keith Kesler, Social Media Librarian, 6 years of City service, via Zoom due to pandemic protocols.

***Alive!*: Keith, thanks for joining us. Did you come to work for the Library with your title – Social Media Librarian – or were you promoted within the Library?**

**Keith Kesler:** I worked at the Cahuenga Branch Library. I was there for about a year. A Social Media Librarian position opened up, and I transferred.

**And so your place of work is the Central Library?**

**Keith:** Correct.

**How did you come to be involved with The Linda Lindas post?**

**Keith:** Two people in the Library have the capability to make videos. Some projects I work on, some projects he works on. They asked me to work on this project and to record this performance. So, I put it in the calendar.

At the time, I hadn't heard of them, so I looked them up. I thought, "Oh, this is kind of an up-and-coming band. This should be fun. They're good." For a lot of people, they were brand new, but once I looked at it, they had already done a good amount of stuff. It wasn't their first show, and they had their music available in Apple Music. I thought, "This isn't just a middle-school band that happened to be playing at the Library."

**So you're more involved in the production of the post, not the choosing of the subject.**

**Keith:** Yes, exactly. We met at Cypress Park and scouted it out, and thought, "We should record this in the library." I think this was one of the first ones that was shot on location. A lot of the virtual programs have been recorded in the performers' houses. I don't know when the decision was made, but I remember talking to Kadie Seitz, and we decided, "Let's try to get this one in a library and filmed in a way so that it looks like it's in a library. That would look pretty cool to have a band playing with the books framing it so they're playing with the book stacks behind them."

**That's the first thing that I noticed. How did you go about producing this? Were you worried about the sound and the lighting?**

**Keith:** Not too much. None of the expectations were terribly off the charts when we did it. The library was closed. It seemed like a big enough room that it was going to be okay. There was a nice window there. The natural light looked okay. I brought one of my own lights to make sure that there was enough lighting. We had a big enough space, once we moved some tables, and I figured we were good to go. And then they showed up.

One of the parts we had to figure out was recording the sound. I didn't do the sound. One of the band members' father was the sound engineer. He's in the business. I have the equipment to mic up one person for an interview, but there's a big difference between that and miking up a band and engineering that whole thing properly. They were able to do the sound, and then I felt good about the video aspect of it all.

**How often are you involved in production that heavy for Library programming?**

**Keith:** This one was somewhat a challenge. It's nearly 20-something minutes of music, so getting that all figured out was kind of cool. That's the first time I recorded a band like that. Most of the other production work I do is interviews with staff members, talking about programs – promotional videos and things of that nature. I'm working on a longer project now that's a children's program, maybe 15 minutes long.

## The Viral Progression

**So you produced it and then you posted it.**

**Keith:** Right. We did the program. It aired. By our standards, it had a good amount of viewers, and it kind of sat there for about two weeks with nothing happening that was off the charts. At that point I cut up one of the songs and reposted it on social media, and it got a good amount of views. But in the back of my head, I kind of thought, "This other song – the "Racist, Sexist Boy" song, was also part of the bigger program. I thought that if I pulled that one out, too, and posted it, I felt like that it was going to resonate and could be pretty popular. So I cut that one and posted it on Instagram. I think it posted around 5 p.m. or so, and it was doing really well. But I went to bed thinking it was a pretty successful post. I woke up in the morning, and I was like, "Holy moly, this has gone all over the world."

**That's when I saw it – "Racist, Sexist Boy" had been re-tweeted. Once that got released, it picked up steam pretty quickly, I would imagine.**

**Keith:** Yes. One account picks it up that's bigger, and then another bigger account picks it up, and it just spirals.

**I know it was all over North America and Europe. Was it all across the world?**

**Keith:** Yes. I would see posts in many languages. Sometimes videos like those can lose their attribution pretty quickly. People take it and separate it from its original source, and it lost its association from us. I saw one popular account had taken it, and then people were sharing it from there and giving them credit. I messaged that account. I said, "Look, hey, I'm glad you're sharing, but please, just attribute it to the Library." That guy was in Australia.

**How do you manage to keep hold of things that go viral?**

**Keith:** There's only so much of it you can stop. But that also fuels a success, so you're not going to be too protective.

**I saw it as a re-tweet from the musician Beck. I thought the band in the post was really good. I think Beck's sentence was, "The greatest thing you'll see all day." That's when I started really looking at it, and I said, "Wait, that looks like it's in a library." The re-tweet said, "LAPL." I thought, "Hey, I know those people." That's when I wanted to do this.**

**Keith:** That's how it works.

## Counting The Linda Lindas ... And Amanda Gorman

**Do you have a sense of what the current numbers are on the different platforms, whether it's Instagram, Twitter, or YouTube?**

**Keith:** It's a little tough because the metrics from Instagram don't always match up with Twitter. There have been something like 4.3 million views on Instagram, and 27 million impressions on Twitter. [The post on the Library's

YouTube channel has nearly 700,000 views. The share on Epitaph Records' YouTube channel drew another million. Plus there are **many** other shares. – Ed.]

**That's incredible. I saw The Linda Lindas post the biggest one you've worked on?**

**Keith:** It's the most popular across all of our platforms. The only one that comes close was Amanda Gorman, who performed at the inauguration of President Joe Biden in January. She read her poetry when she was 14 or 15 at the Youth Poet Laureate event at the Library. I grabbed a photo from that event, and snapped a photo of her from the inauguration. "How it started/how it's going" was kind of a popular meme theme on social platforms at the time. I put the two photos together and posted it. That one reached more than 20 million on the Library's own Twitter account alone.

**I saw that. I didn't realize it had gone that big. It was great. Congratulations.**

## Extending the Mission

**How do you feel about extending the Library's mission on social?**

**Keith:** It's creative – you end up in situations you never thought you would be in. All of us were really excited for The Linda Lindas at the time, just because we hadn't seen an actual live music concert in more than a year. My job is highlighting what the Library's doing. Because the Library's doing so many great programs, my job is really interesting as a result of it.

**It was done as part of the Asian American/Pacific Islander Month. How does that spread the message of the breadth of diversity that exists here in L.A.?**

**Keith:** The diversity in L.A. is just everywhere in the community. One of the guys at the Library knew the parents of one of The Linda Lindas because their kids are school mates. You almost don't even need to try – if you're part of the community like the Library is, you're going to find such diversity. Of course obviously you keep it in mind, too, but just being in Los Angeles and looking for great content and stories, you're going to run into diversity. It's everywhere.

**Do you anticipate this phenomena happening again? Everybody wants a viral hit. Can you plan for viral?**

**Keith:** I don't think you can really plan for it. It's kind of lightning in a bottle. You could spend your time chasing after that again, but it might not happen. Or it might. The thing is, you just keep trying to be open to opportunities that might be interesting in producing content that resonates with the community. If you do it right, sometimes it'll take off like that, and other times it'll still be successful. That raised the level of success to a level that's really hard to duplicate.

**What do you love about producing content for the community?**

**Keith:** I like taking a program or something we're doing and



KEITH KESLER

package it so people can understand something that they might not have been able to wrap their head around if they just read about it. I did one recently for a program called BioBlitz, which is about looking for nature in your neighborhood. I met up with a family at the L.A. River and got some footage of them exploring. Seeing that should help somebody understand what BioBlitz is, way more than just reading a Webpage.

There are some really emotional stories out there about how the Library has changed people's lives. Recently, I met up with someone who had graduated from our Career Online High School program during the pandemic. She had done an online graduation but nothing in person, and she wanted to take pictures in the Library. I met her at Central Library, took photos, and then we told her story online. It was really powerful to see the pictures of her and her family, and talk about how graduating high school was a lifelong dream of hers.

**One of the best and most understated things about the whole The Linda Lindas post was their enthusiasm for the Library. Young people are crazy about their library. Is that joy something that you were happy to convey?**

**Keith:** When I'm producing content about one of our programs, sometimes performers are just okay with being in a library, and then there are other times when the people are really hard-core library users. In the case of The Linda Lindas, it was clear they were library users and avid readers. Even during the pandemic, they were picking up books at the library.

When the content went viral, there were comments that went something like, "Why is this at a library?" I have a feeling a lot of people thought it was like a staged music video. A lot of people assumed that right off the bat. It was done as part of the TEENtastic Asian American Heritage Month program, but people who just watched the songs might have missed that. A lot of people had no idea we were producing virtual programming during the pandemic.

**But they learned.**

**Keith:** Yes.

**Keith, thanks for your time and talking to Club Members.**

**Keith:** Okay, thank you. ■



Keith Kesler, Social Media Librarian





# CLUB SPORTS

News from Sports Leagues sponsored by the Employees Club of California

## We'll Be Back!

Missing Club Sports? So are we! We'll be back when masking up, putting on the gloves, flattening the curve and being safe at home are about *softball*, not battling the pandemic!

Seriously, though ... Club Members have written the Sports Dude (also known as Club COO Robert Larios) asking if there will still be a Club Sports League when the City opens up again.

We expect Club Sports to resume when the City Rec Centers could be reopened.

So for now, sit tight, keep doing your thing, and stay safe.

Until then, enjoy some Club Sports photos from previous years.

See you again when all this clears!



**f** **SOFTBALL PHOTOS ON FACEBOOK!**  
The Club has hundreds of great action shots from previous seasons on our Facebook page for you to enjoy.

## Biking for the Fallen

100 cyclists raise money for the families of COVID victims.



**LAPD:** On July 24, approximately 100 bicyclists mainly from the Mission, Foothill and Communications Divisions rode to raise funds and awareness for Officer Val Martinez, the first sworn LAPD employee reported to succumb to the coronavirus.

The ride, exactly a year after the death of Val Martinez, took place in Mission Hills. It began at the Mission Division station and continued through Pacoima, San Fernando, Sylmar and Granada Hills, the communities he patrolled.

PSR III Ray Guerrero of Communications Division and Sgt. Fred Cueto of Foothill Division were also memorialized on the day.

Megan Flynn, Officer Martinez's domestic partner, gave birth to the couple's twin boys in November, after Officer Martinez had passed. The bicycle event was meant to raise funds for the twins. Her GoFundMe page has raised more than \$36,000.

Martinez was the department's first sworn officer, and second employee overall, to die from COVID-19. ■

### At the biking event.



## The Club and Aflac Have Joined Forces to Bring You More Options and Better Service!

### Coverage for the life you love.

The Employees Club of California proudly offers the convenience of payroll deduction on Aflac policies for Los Angeles City Employees.

Aflac can help protect your vacations, your yoga lessons, and even your date nights. Basically, the things you love in life.

Aflac helps pay what major medical doesn't. For more information about applying, plan benefits, and questions about an existing Aflac policy, contact an Aflac insurance agent at DTLA Benefits.



Get your benefits enrollment questions answered, directly from an Aflac insurance agent today.

**DTLA BENEFITS**  
california@dtlabenefits.com  
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CA DOI License #0E200040





At a previous Mobile Team site visit in 2019.

## Site Visits Are Back!

**Club Mobile Team is ready to visit City worksites safely with gear, tickets, insurance, more.**

**THE CLUB:** Say hi to the Club ... in person again!

The Club never stopped working for its Members during the pandemic. But now that the coast is clearing, so to speak, it's time to revisit our Members and Members-to-Be at sites and yards.

The Mobile Team is ready to visit your worksite **Tuesdays through Thursdays**. We can't wait to see everybody again!

For your continued safety:

- The Mobile Team brings and wears safety gear.
- The Mobile Team is accepting only outdoor set-ups for now.

To schedule a site visit, contact Lupe Lira, Club Store Manager: (213) 819-0350, or [mobile@employeesclub.com](mailto:mobile@employeesclub.com)

See you soon! ■

## Goodbye, Chief

**Dep. Chief Pete Zarcone retires after 33 years.**



From left: LAPD Chief Michel Moore gives a congratulatory handshake to Dep. Chief Pete Zarcone, Retired.

**LAPD:** A reception was held Aug. 5 for Dep. Chief Pete Zarcone, LAPD. He retires with 33 years of City service.

Well done, Sir!

The Club thanks LAPD Capt. Lee Sands for providing the photo and content. ■

## Korean-American Milestone

**Deputy Chief Dominic Choi marks historic first.**



Deputy Chief Dominic Choi.

**LAPD:** A community celebration was held in July for LAPD Deputy Chief Dominic Choi, the first Korean-American to reach the rank of Deputy Chief in LAPD history.

Congratulations, Deputy Chief Choi! Well done for reaching this milestone. ■

# PetFirst Pet Insurance

For Employees Club Members  
Los Angeles City, Los Angeles County,  
and California State Club Members

Great pet insurance coverage  
for cats and dogs  
as low as \$24 a month.

Premiums vary by the plan you select and can be payroll deducted.

### A Peace of Mind for Your Furry Family Member

Help take the worry out of covering the cost of an unexpected veterinary visit for your dog or cat with pet insurance offered through the Employees Club of California.

Just like health insurance for you and your family, pet insurance can cover up to 90% of the veterinary care expenses from any licensed veterinarian, specialist, or emergency clinic across the U.S.

### How PetFirst Pet Insurance Works



#### Take your pet to the Vet

Visit any licensed vet, emergency clinic, or specialist in the US. There's no network of providers to worry about.



#### Submit your claim

Pay your bill at the vet, then send in your claims to PetFirst along with vet records and an invoice from the visit.\*



#### Get money back

PetFirst will follow-up with your vet for any missing info. Claims are processed in less than 2 weeks.

### Coverages Your Pets Can Count On

- |                                 |                        |                         |                         |
|---------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| → accidental injury & illnesses | → medications          | → hip dysplasia         | → chronic conditions    |
| → surgeries                     | → hospital stays       | → hereditary conditions | → alternative therapies |
| → exam fees                     | → X-Rays & Ultrasounds | → congenital conditions | → and much more!        |
|                                 | → diagnostic tests     | → holistic care         |                         |



**Employees Club of California**  
For Questions about PetFirst Pet Insurance, please contact a Member Services Counselor  
[info@employeesclub.com](mailto:info@employeesclub.com) | (800) 464-0452



**Check out your Club Member Rates**  
[PetFirst.com/employeesclub](https://www.petfirst.com/employeesclub)

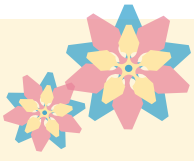
## Go Back to School

With awesome tech ... and save!

See page 9.

\* For covered claims, subject to the terms and conditions of the policy. Independence American Insurance Company ("IAIC") is the insurance carrier for this product. IAIC, a Delaware insurance company, is headquartered at 485 Madison Avenue, NY, NY 10022. Like most insurance policies, insurance policies issued by IAIC contain certain exclusions, exceptions, reductions, limitations, and terms for keeping them in force. For costs, complete details of coverage and exclusions, and a listing of approved states, please contact MetLife Pet Insurance Solutions LLC. MetLife Pet Insurance Solutions LLC is the policy administrator authorized by IAIC to offer and administer pet insurance policies. This entity was previously known as PetFirst Healthcare, LLC and in some states continues to operate under that name pending approval of its application for a name change. The entity may operate under an assumed name and/or fictitious name in certain jurisdictions as approved, including MetLife Pet Insurance Services LLC (New York and Minnesota), MetLife Pet Insurance Solutions Agency LLC (Illinois), and such other assumed names or fictitious names approved by certain jurisdictions. The Employees Club of California (The Club) is a membership program of LACEA Insurance Services, Inc. (CA DOI Lic. #0B98000). L0421013140[exp0423] [All States][DC, GU, MP, PR, VI] © MetLife Services and Solutions, LLC





# Life's Important Moments



## Retirements

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

View Sept. 2021 Retirements online at: [alive.employeesclub.com/retirements-202109](http://alive.employeesclub.com/retirements-202109)

NAME	TITLE	DEPT.	YEARS	NAME	TITLE	DEPT.	YEARS	NAME	TITLE	DEPT.	YEARS
Abellanosa, Cynthia Soriano	Sr. Management Analyst	Housing	23	James, Patricia A.	Sr. Detention Officer	LAPD	25	Rodrick, Joseph C.	Animal Care Tech.	Animal Services	15
Aldama, Francisco	Asst. Park Services Attend.	Rec and Parks	6	Jaramillo, Mario P.	Gardener Caretaker	Rec and Parks	15	Rodriguez, Miguel Sironi	Security Officer	LAPD	9
Alietti, Alan Marshall	Sr. Legislative Asst.	City Clerk	31	Johnson, James K.	Constr. Inspector	Airports	11	Santillan, Edward R.	Sr. Parking Attendant	General Services	35
Alonso, Jose M.	RefuseColl. Truck Op.	Public Works	33	Jolivet, Shanna Nicole	Sr. Forensic Print Spec.	LAPD	30	Senior, Gerald	Gardener Caretaker	Rec and Parks	12
Alvarado, Paul Steve	RefuseColl. Truck Op.	Public Works	15	Jones, Howard E.	Special Prog. Asst.	Rec and Parks	7	Senires, Bernardo	Custodian	General Services	19
Andrews, Lisa Ann	Secretary	Public Works	30	Jones, Russell Eugene	Equipment Op.	Public Works	21	Shavers, Vincent L.	Land Surveying Asst.	Public Works	38
Arellano, Jesus S.	Special Prog. Asst.	Rec and Parks	10	Kao, Nien K.	Power Planning	LADWP	N/D	Simon, Cynthia L.	Commun. Info Rep.	ITA	30
Arso, Gary	JFB/Facilities	LADWP	N/D	Keena, Christopher Paul	Security Officer	Airports	25	Siping, Phillip E.	Maint. Sup.	Airports	32
Assaf, Marisa	Police Service Rep	LAPD	30	Kraus, Richard S.	Librarian	Library	39	Snell, Haroldeane E.	Librarian	Library	11
Bailey, Richard M.	Garage Attendant	General Services	31	Lam, Hiep Minh	Civil Eng. Draft Tech.	Public Works	24	Snyder, Greg K.	Sr. Constr. Inspector	Public Works	21
Baker, Tracy	Commun. Info. Rep.	Airports	32	Lapid, Ambrosio M.	Sr. Env. Compliance Insp.	Public Works	31	Snyder, Wendell J.	Fleet Services	LADWP	N/D
Banos, Jennifer Sivkeang	Deputy Supt. Of Buildings	Bldg. & Safety	32	Lew, Maria Gin	Librarian	Library	44	Solorzano, Rogelio T.	Gardener Caretaker	Rec and Parks	15
Barajas, Pablo	Special Program. Asst.	Rec and Parks	6	Lim, Anna H.	Sr. Mgmt. Analyst	Airports	31	Soriano, Roderic D.	Municipal Officer	LAPD	33
Basilio, John Lucero	Sr. Detention Officer	LAPD	32	Lira, Victoria Ann	Ch. Clerk	Bldg. & Safety	34	Steffen, Darrell D.	Water Distribution	LADWP	N/D
Bauman, Gregory N.	Power Supply	LADWP	N/D	Lopez, Thomas G.	Ch. Investment Officer	Fire/Police Pensions	40	Strand, John Owen	Accountant	Fire/Police Pensions	16
Beaudry, Robert C.	Energy Control	LADWP	N/D	Lovely, Sharon L.	JFB/Facilities	LADWP	N/D	Sturm, Arlen Eli	Truck Op.	Zoo	31
Beltran, Steven J.	Plumbing Inspector	Bldg. & Safety	33	Mackay, Michael L.	Power Transmission	LADWP	N/D	Takami, Anthony B.	JFB/Facilities	LADWP	N/D
Benitez, Juan H.	Pr. Grounds Maint. Supv.	Rec and Parks	34	Marrujo, Joseph E.J.	Build. Mech. Inspector	Bldg. & Safety	16	Tappan, Felecia D.	Power Transmission	LADWP	N/D
Berberabe, Susan Pineda	Env. Compliance Insp.	Public Works	31	Martinez, Jose Epifanio	Custodian	General Services	16	Tarumoto, Brandt K.	Power Transmission	LADWP	N/D
Biboso, Amelito L.	Constr. and Maint. Supv.	Public Works	32	Martinez, Valerie D.	Retirement Plan	LADWP	N/D	Thompson, Jeffrey L.	Security Services	LADWP	N/D
Blabagno, Cecero N.	Env. Compliance Insp.	Public Works	21	Mason, Robert C.	Heavy Duty Equip. Mech.	LAFD	33	Turner, Debra A.	Security Officer	Airports	18
Blair, Derrick L.	RefuseColl. Truck Op.	Public Works	33	Medina, Rafael	Forensic Print Spec.	LAPD	21	Uyemura, Raymond M.	Director of Systems	Finance	33
Boyd, Brenda J.	Security Officer	Airports	18	Mello, David A.	Ref.Coll. Supv.	Public Works	33	Vaca, Marisela Robles	Sr. Admin. Clerk	Public Works	36
Bradley, Timothy E.	Security Officer	Airports	20	Moore, Walter I.	Fleet Services	LADWP	N/D	Vajar, Abbass	Transportation Engineer	Transportation	37
Bradley, Timothy Lamer	Municipal Police Officer	LAPD	29	Negroe, Raul	Admin. Clerk	Rec and Parks	13	Valerio, Miguel	Ref.Coll. Truck Op.	Public Works	34
Bravo, Rodrigo L.	Power Transmission	LADWP	N/D	Parques, Gabriela	Pr. Public Relations Rep.	Airports	30	Vidales, Gabriela	Sr. Parking Attendant	General Services	31
Brumfield, Essie	Crossing Guard	Transportation	16	Palm, Richard	Power Supply	LADWP	N/D	Villagonzalo, Marilou Sotto	Tax Renewal Asst.	Finance	20
Byrd, Debra K.	ITS	LADWP	N/D	Paris, Adeniyi Jacob	Custodian	General Services	20	Wallace, Shawn Yvette	Council Aide	Council	23
Caboor, Robert Eric	Admin. Clerk	Library	32	Phyffer, Lawrence Lloyd	Water Operations	LADWP	N/D	Warnasuriya, Louie A.	Heating/Refrig. Inspector	Bldg. & Safety	35
Campbell, Nell A.	ITS	LADWP	N/D	Piereson, Bryan Raym	Sergeant	LAPD	35	Watson, James R.	Delivery Driver	Public Works	18
Canales, Luis M.	Maint./Constr. Helper	Airports	18	Pina, Felipe L.	Custodian	General Services	16	Watson, Nathaniel	Gardener Caretaker	Rec and Parks	23
Castillon, Juan Manuel	Maint./Constr. Helper	Rec and Parks	13	Pineda, Mark J.	Env. Chem. Lab	LADWP	N/D	Williams, Beulah M.	Sr. Security Officer	Airports	31
Castro, Diana	GM's Office	LADWP	N/D	Quintero, George	Library Asst.	Library	32	Williams, Keith Darryl	Detention Officer	LAPD	26
Castro, Francisco L.	Env. Compliance Insp.	Public Works	30	Ramirez, Bertha L.	Recreation Asst.	Rec and Parks	5	Williams, Lisa M.	Sr. Admin. Clerk	Airports	34
Castro, Robert D.	Clean Grid	LADWP	N/D	Reyna, Sergio	Garage Attendant	Civilian LAPD	18	Williams, Mercio	Bus Op.	Airports	34
Cato, Kevin A.	Metering Services	LADWP	N/D	Reynoso, Vincent C.	Security Services	LADWP	N/D	Wilson, Tony L.	Power Transmission	LADWP	N/D
Chavez, Jesus R.	Sr. Env. Compliance Insp.	Public Works	34	Rice, David R.	Fleet Services	LADWP	N/D	Wong, Nathalie T.	Admin. Clerk	Library	36
Clark, Cheryl Renee	Admin. Clerk	LAPD	21	Rittenberg, Laurie	Asst. City Attorney	City Attorney	26	Wong, Victor	Water Engineering	LADWP	N/D
Claro, Christopher	Power C&M	LADWP	N/D	Robinson, Anthony	Sr. Detention Officer	LAPD	31	Yang, Xinjian	Environmental Spec.	Airports	16
Cole, Michael Dean	Sr. Mngmt. Analyst	Econ./Wkfr. Dev.	28					Yuan, Henry S.	Sr. Environmtl. Engineer	Public Works	31
Cox, Angela	Admin. Clerk	Airports	23					Zaldivar, Enrique C.	Director	Public Works	35
Crittenden, Roderick Carlton	Wastewater Treatment Op.	Public Works	33					Zaragoza, Juan	Equipment Mechanic	General Services	17
Davis, Karen Y.	Integrated Support	LADWP	N/D								
De Leon, Alan Lampa	Pr. Detention Officer	LAPD	33								
De Santos, Antonio	Motor Sweeper Op.	Public Works	25								
Domingo, Jose Diosc Ayson	Instrument Mech. Supv.	Airports	25								
Dominguez, George Gary	RefuseColl. Truck Op.	Public Works	16								
Doss, Betty Fay	Recreation Asst.	Rec and Parks	2								
Dreben, Jacquelleen	Police Service Rep	LAPD	20								
Duenas, Paz	Messenger Clerk	Library	6								
Ennis, Lourdes Lao	Admin. Clerk	LAPD	36								
Estrada, Eugene	Sr. Librarian	Library	41								
Estrella, Emilia G.	Special Prog. Asst.	Rec and Parks	9								
Fernandez, Val M.	Supply Chain	LADWP	N/D								
Flores, Andrew M.	Power Transmission	LADWP	N/D								
Ford, David W.	Equipment Op.	Public Works	32								
Fortenberry, Errol T.	Water Distribution	LADWP	N/D								
Fumar, Fay Almenario	Env. Compliance Insp.	Public Works	31								
Garcia, Juan	Special Prog. Asst.	Rec and Parks	8								
Ghantwala, Ashok	Sr Wastewater Treat. Op.	Public Works	33								
Ghotbi Ravandi, Kamran	Structural Eng. Assoc.	Bldg. & Safety	28								
Giddens, Wallace	Security Services	LADWP	N/D								
Giacomin, Gregory J.	Officer	Airports	27								
Godoy, Cesar R.	Field Engineer Aide	Public Works	12								
Gonzalez, Efrain	Wastewater Manager	Public Works	40								
Gordon, Keela M.	Power Transmission	LADWP	N/D								
Guiao, Samantha G.	Integrated Support	LADWP	N/D								
Gutierrez, Ivy	Police Service Rep	LAPD	31								
Hall, Maxine G.	Sr. Admin. Clerk	Rec and Parks	19								
Hall, Steven Thomas	Ref.Coll. Sup.	Public Works	30								
Harrison, Donald Lee	Recreation Asst.	Rec and Parks	7								
Hawkins, Sandra F.	Sr. Custodian	General Services	32								
Higgs, Zelma A.	Wastewater Treatment Op.	Public Works	34								
Hill, Diana Elise	Detention Officer	LAPD	20								
Ho, Jacquelyn T.	Power Planning	LADWP	N/D								
Huff, Marc R.	Power Transmission	LADWP	N/D								
Hurt, Helen L.	Security Officer	Airports	31								
Ilgunas, Raymond S.	Sr. Asst. City Attorney	City Attorney	37								
Iman, Adan Hassan	Management Analyst	Public Works	27								
Jacot, Daniel E.	Customer Service	LADWP	N/D								

N/D = not disclosed

## Norton Simon Museum is Hiring Retired City Employees for its security team.



Use your mobile phone to scan this code.



**Attention Retired City Employees:** The Norton Simon Museum in Pasadena is looking to fill five part-time positions on its security team. Applicants must live in the area to respond to museum emergencies or other situations. All employees enjoy free parking, free admission to the museum any time, discounts in the store and café, paid sick leave, and a pension program.

Those interested in the open positions can get more information on the museum's Website (all inquiries should be directed there): [nortonsimon.org/about/career-opportunities/](http://nortonsimon.org/about/career-opportunities/)

**Information:** Nels Ortlund at [nortlund@nortonsimon.org](mailto:nortlund@nortonsimon.org)



## Graduations 2021 Graduations



**Christopher Thomason** graduated kindergarten from Hobgood Elementary School in Murfreesboro, Tenn., and plans to begin first grade this fall. He hopes to be a pilot when he grows up. He's the **grandson of Belinda Hill, LAFD.**



**Alana Patterson** graduated from Hobgood Elementary School in Murfreesboro, Tenn., and plans to continue her studies at Whitworth Buchanan Middle School. She looks forward to studying toward becoming a surgeon. She's the **granddaughter of Belinda Wright, LAFD.**



**Brooklyn Wright** graduated from Bursch Elementary School in Compton and plans to attend Enterprise Middle School this fall. She's the great-**granddaughter of Belinda Wright, LAFD.**





# Share Your Life's 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.

**Submit digital photos and text online:**  
(as high a resolution as you can send)  
[alive.employeesclub.com/lifsmoments](http://alive.employeesclub.com/lifsmoments)



- Graduations
- Military Service
- Special Achievements
- Weddings
- Births

## In Memoriam

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

	DEPARTMENT	YEARS OF SERVICE		DEPARTMENT	YEARS OF SERVICE
<b>ACTIVE</b>					
Brinkerhoff, Steve C.	Public Works	25	Holloway, Alden H.	N/D	N/D
Jones, Cornell	N/D	N/D	Jared, William J.	N/D	N/D
<b>RETIRED</b>					
Arps, Michael L.	Transportation	19	Jones, Evelyn M.	Controller's Office	31
Avers, Eileen E.	N/D	N/D	Kehl, Gordon E.	N/D	N/D
Bakhoun, Noshiy	LAFD	17	Kenyon, James H.	LADWP	31
Broadnax Jr., President	LADWP	38	Kim, Yong M.	N/D	N/D
Brown, Cal A.	N/D	N/D	Maxwell, Keith A.	Public Works	18
Budding, Rudolf	LADWP	17	McFarlin, Emma D.	N/D	N/D
Burley, Earnestine	General Services	27	McGee, Dorothy S.	Building and Safety	18
Coate, William O.	Airports	18	Miller, Scott A.	General Services	18
Curtis, Spencer	N/D	N/D	Moquin, Lola S.	Rec and Parks	38
Edwards, Robert	Airports	26	Morales, Ruben H.	LADWP	40
Ellingson, John J.	N/D	N/D	Otell, Margaret Ann	LAPD	30
Finnegan, Michael J.	LADWP	33	Parayno, Emilda A.	N/D	N/D
Floyd, Norman C.	LADWP	5	Rodriguez, Jose A.	N/D	N/D
German, Louis	N/D	N/D	Sanders, Chester F.	Public Works	37
Gray, Ronald E.	LADWP	32	Schweinbold, Charles A.	LADWP	31
Gregory, Roger F.	LADWP	24	Streeter, Garland W.	N/D	N/D
Gutierrez, Esequiel	General Services	22	Takei, Toshihiko	N/D	N/D
Giacopelli, Thomas John	LAPD	34	Trahan, Clarence T.	LADWP	24
Hamilton, John S.	N/D	N/D	Uyematsu, Sue E.	LADWP	34
Hess, Harry C.	LADWP	29	Walker, Edward	N/D	N/D
Hodo, Louis	N/D	N/D	Watson, Earlene	LAPD	10
Hofsommer, Paula L.	Public Works	38	White, Julius J.	LADWP	25
			Willis, David F.	Public Works	38
			Wong, Frank M.	Airports	18

*N/D = not disclosed*

## Special Achievement

**Well done to two Olympians with City heritage!**



**Amanda Longan, daughter of Capt. II Jon Longan** and goalkeeper on the USA women's water polo team, took home the gold medal – the best in the world – after defeating Spain in the final match and a come-from-behind win against the Russian Olympic Committee team in the semi-final.

**Nia Toliver, daughter of Nicholas (LADWP) and Sheri Toliver**, was a member of the USA Sevens rugby team that placed sixth in the field.



**Fantastic finishes for both Amanda and Nia. Congratulations from the Club!**

# Retirees Bulletin Board

*Connect with your former co-workers!*

Welcome to the Retirees Bulletin Board. Want to post your contact information? Invite others to attend a reunion, meet up, go to lunch or hang out in the park? Here's where you do that.

It's not a forum or classifieds, so no politicking or commercial messages. It's just a way to connect. Simple as that!

We'll publish this every month in print only. What you choose to make public is entirely up to you.

Submit any of the following, only what you choose:

- Name
- Dept. at Retirement
- Year of Retirement
- Email address (optional)
- Phone number (optional)
- What's your message?

We'll confirm with you before printing. Submit on the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month for inclusion in the next month's issue.

Submit to:  
[bulletinboard@employeesclub.com](mailto:bulletinboard@employeesclub.com)

*New to Alive!*

*Hi everyone, it's Tony Alvarez from Rec and Parks (and Salvage); 1951 to 1990. Would love to hear from you, call me at (626) 284-8497.*

*Your message here: Announce an event!*

*Happy retirement from the RLACEI Board, Ha! Hal Danowitz is invited to socialize with his former crew from the Controller's Office anytime.*





# Alive! AROUND THE WORLD



Gjirokastra's old bazaar.

## Albania

"After two years, and with the Covid-19 pandemic under control, we resumed our international travel by visiting Albania. Both pictures were taken in the 'Stone City' of Gjirokastra, a UNESCO World Cultural Heritage site."

— **Norman Faner, Retired, LADWP, and Florian Faner, Retired, LAPD, visited Albania.**



Gjirokastra Castle with its clock tower.

## Puerto Vallarta Letter, Part 2

**Capt. Michael Barnes, Retired, Harbor, traveled to Mexico post-vaccination.**



Standing in front of Parroquia de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe.

I just returned after a glorious week in Old Town Puerto Vallarta. Here is part two, featuring fine dining, secluded beaches and exotic bars and street dancers.

Zone Romántica (Old Town) is more for the laid-back and less resort-conscious tourist, having a bevy of gay

beaches, bars and restaurants lining Olas Atlas and the Beach of the Dead (Playa Los Muertos), on the south side of the gringo gulch neighborhood.

Since the days of American film director/producer John Huston making the film *Night of the Iguana* in 1964, and all the notoriety surrounding its leading man Richard Burton and his unofficial girlfriend Elizabeth Taylor, Puerto Vallarta has recently re-exploded into a major tourist destination.

The zone Romántica contains some of the city's best fine dining restaurants, like Casa Kimberly's, Iguana Restaurant & Tequila Bar, in Elizabeth Taylor's old house. There is a statue of her and Richard Burton in the lobby and an incredible sunset view overlooking the bay from the second-floor bar.

The Le Bistro Restaurant by the river on Isla Rio Cuale, next to the John Huston statue and the ever-popular flea market, is scattered about under the shade of the large rubber trees, with all kinds of wild life in the branches, but it only sells tourist stuff. There is also a very interesting cable bridge that swings when you cross over it, definitely not for the faint of heart.



Statue of American producer John Huston

Up on the hill is the Barcelona Tapas Restaurant with its covered terrace and view at night of the Muelle de Playa Los Muertos large sweeping sail, with its ever-changing kaleidoscope of colors. From this pier it is possible to board water taxis to some of the area's more secluded beaches, or for a day of fishing.

There is a wide selection of beachside bars and restaurants, like La Langosta Loco with its thatched roof and delicious fresh fish menu.

At the Devils late-night bar, you can hear the waves roll in while enjoying a potent and reasonably priced cocktail.

At Sayulita Beach restaurant, with its balcony overlooking the bay, you can drink ice cold adult beverages and watch the fireworks show while listening to local punk rock band. For the sports fans and beach bunnies there's Si Señor, with its large TVs and rows of sun beds in the front where visitors can relax.

Back in town we explored all the popular spots. Check out Elizabeth Taylor's Star of Fame outside the entrance to restaurant Andale, and the second-floor Canadian bar Cafe Romma, where the beer prices are good (a bucket of five Corona Light bottles for 139 pesos), and you can watch the wildlife across the road in the trees.



View of the sail of the Muelle de Playa Los Muertos in Zone Romántica (Old Town).

For craft beer drinkers, go to Los Muertos Brewery on Calle Lázaro Cárdenas for an alternative to Corona beer, as it seems to have the largest draft craft beer selection in Puerto Vallarta. That makes them very popular with

ex-pats and tourists alike. Plus there's a nice selection of rock music from the 1960s, '70s and '80s.

Our favorite watering hole in the Romantic zone without doubt was the Margarita Grill - brash and loud with lots of bright colors, especially at night. Its great bar pours really large margaritas in liter aluminum chalice that seem to come in three sizes -- one shot, two shots or four shots. Once we were seated it was difficult to move around with all the activity around us. We enjoyed the live band playing popular song selections. An added bonus is the entertainment on the street outside, performed by indigenous dancers and fire-eaters.

La Noche is a great bar to start your late night out, where you can check out the gay scene. You will find moderately priced drinks and very attentive staff. I enjoyed a couple of very strong gin and tonics. Often there are entertaining drag shows in the downstairs bar, which attracts a good mix of locals and tourists. We enjoyed a very good impression of Cher, who was very funny and sang all her hit songs! The upper level has a two-story rooftop bar, where you will find soft music and dim lights -- a great place to chat and lounge with friends away from the madding crowds.

For the more adventurous diners, check out the El Carboncito for late night authentic street food. Take time to simply sit in the chairs right on the street and marvel at the cooks doing their thing -- preparing some of the best street tacos I've ever had after an evening of drinking. The chorizo is also very tasty here.

The Romantic zone is not for everybody, as it comes alive late at night, with its many restaurants and bars. But for those of you who are bold and who enjoy adventures, then go and explore.



Officer Becky Strong

Officer Becky Strong (left) attending a Women in Law Enforcement seminar, reported in the July 2015 issue of *Alive!*. With her are (from left) Sgt. Valerie Torres, Miramar PD; Dep. Sandy Hawkins, OC Sheriff; and Officer Jennifer Sena, Oakland PD.

## Officer Strong, End of Watch

**Officer Becky Strong succumbs to the coronavirus.**

**LAPD:** Officer Becky Strong, 27 years of City service, died Aug. 2 of complications of the coronavirus.

A Club Member, she was most recently assigned to South Traffic Division.

She is survived by her husband, Bobby Wagner, a retired California Highway Patrol Sergeant. Officer Strong's stepdaughter, Janae Baker, is a California Highway Patrol Public Safety Dispatcher assigned to the Los Angeles Communications Center.

In honor of Officer Strong, Capitol flags were flown at half-staff.

Officer Strong's death increases the reported LAPD/LAFD victims of COVID total to 12 during the pandemic. May they rest in peace.

**The others (previously reported in *Alive!*) who have passed away previously from coronavirus complications are:**

- Sgt. Patricia Guillen, 77th Division, died Jan. 28, 2021 after 22 years of City service.
- Security Officer Dexter De Los Santos died Jan. 29, 2021 after 8 years of City service.
- Sgt. Fred Cueto, LAPD, died in December 2020 after 22 years of City service.
- Detention Officer Erica McAdoo, 39, died in July 2020.
- Officer Valentin Martinez, 45, LAPD, died in July 2020.
- Firefighter/Paramedic Jose Perez, LAFD, passed away in July 2020.
- PSR III Raymond Guerrero, a 911 Operator, died in January 2021 after 24 years of City service.
- Capt. 1 George Roque, LAFD, died in January 2021 after 22 years of City service.
- Sgt. Amelia "Terry" Martinez died in January 2021 after 27 years of City service.
- Officer II Philip Sudario died in January 2021 after 25 years of City service.
- Sgt. Anthony White, Transit Services Division, died April 15, 2021.



### INSURANCE FROM THE CLUB



# Life Insurance

**If anyone relies on your income, you need Life Insurance.**

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

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



# Moving Up the Road

Edward Yu takes new job in Burbank.



From left: Edward Yu, formerly of Transportation; and Robert Larios, Club COO.

**TRANSPORTATION:** Congratulations to Edward Yu, Club Member and former Transportation Engineer in Transportation's Special Traffic and Emergency Operations Division, on his new post as Traffic Engineering Manager for the City of Burbank.

Ed continues in his role as Club Ambassador, spreading the good news and benefits of Club Membership.

Well done, Ed! We wish you all the best. ■



Edward Yu (front and center in the photo at right), pictured with his former Transportation crew in the March 2017 issue of *Alive!* Edward has moved to a new job in the City of Burbank.

## PART 18 Scenes From a Pandemic

*Alive!* continues its documentation of City employees as they take a multitude of measures to combat the COVID-19 pandemic. Here are entries from the Club and the City Twitter feeds about City Employees and Club Members at work during this trying time.

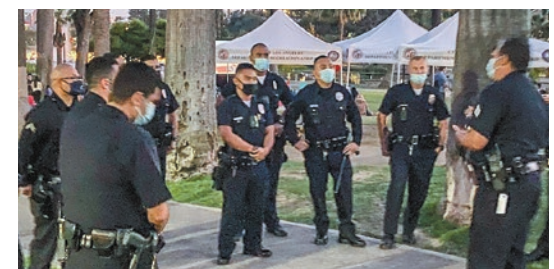
### Transportation



"Today we officially launched the new @ladottransit #DASH #Sylmar route with @MRodCD7. The new service will run 7 days a week between Sylmar Metrolink Station and LA Mission College. Who's ready to ride?"

Aug. 2

### LAPD/Rampart



"In support of Echo Park's "Movie In The Park" our Watch 3 held Roll Call in the park in support of the event and to build relationships in our community. @LAPDALopez @LabradaAl @LAPDHO @LAPDGirmala @LAPDChiefMoore"

Aug. 1

### Library/Stephenson Ranch



"Diana Sanchez and Samantha Avitia, Museum Educators from the @NHMLA, visit the Robert Louis Stevenson Branch Library to teach kids about the birds in and around Boyle Heights."

July 31

### Mayor's Office



"Over the weekend, I visited our mobile vaccine clinic @SanPedroFish Market where Angelenos received their free vaccine. With mobile sites like this, getting the vaccine is easier than ever. Get your vaccine at one of 900+ vax sites in L.A. County: Coronavirus. LACity.org/GetVaccinated"

July 27

### Public Works/StreetsLA



"Today our new General Manager Keith Mozee visited a few of our crews working on our City streets with a focus on workplace safety and COVID safety. @LACityDPW"

Aug. 13

# Celebrate With Cheryl!

Popular Club Counselor Cheryl Martin is turning 63 next year and celebrating in Greece. Sign up now to join the fun!

### IMPORTANT INFORMATION:

- Travel dates: Oct. 13-21, 2022 (nine days)
- Starting price: \$4,069, double occupancy, including air and hotel
- Deposit: \$99 down with monthly payment arrangement, or \$500 down per person at the time of reservation.
- Final payment date: Aug. 4, 2022
- Important notes: Travelers must have their passport information at time of booking. First-come, first-served basis. Seats are limited.

**Mykonos ... Santorini ... and mainland Greece! Head with Cheryl Martin for a once-in-a-lifetime trip to the Aegean in October 2022.**

**"Celebrate my 63<sup>rd</sup> with me in Greece!"**

cmartin@employeesclub.com, (213) 819-0794



To register and for more information, go to:  
[www.grouptoursite.com/cherylmartin](http://www.grouptoursite.com/cherylmartin)  
Reservation tour number 70295428





Story and photos courtesy Zoo

# Toward Biodiversity

Zoo creates its first ever conservation strategic plan.



Dr. Jake Owens, Zoo Director of Conservation

Los Angeles Zoo launched its first conservation strategic plan July 22. This plan is the first in the Zoo's history solely dedicated to wildlife conservation and aligns with the Zoo's renewed efforts to have a collective impact both here in Los Angeles and around the world. This plan guides the Zoo's efforts for the next five years by leveraging its knowledge, expertise, partnerships, and engagement with its diverse communities to focus on changing the landscape of conservation.

"This is historic for both the Los Angeles Zoo and the City of Los Angeles," said Denise M. Verret, CEO & zoo director of the L.A. Zoo, Club Member. "This comprehensive strategy includes every person in our community in the action to save wildlife. Conservation has historically failed the communities most affected by the degradation of our environment. This is our City. This is our world. It will take all of us working together to preserve it. Whether it is working locally with LAUSD school groups or abroad in villages in Costa Rica, engagement and empower-

ment are essential for this plan to succeed." The Zoo's Conservation Strategic Plan directs its effort in six focal areas: 1) social and environmental justice, 2) human-wildlife co-existence, 3) California conservation, 4) illegal wildlife trade, 5) conservation translocations, and 6) evidence-based conservation. To address the critical issues within these focal areas and accelerate success, the Zoo has started key new initiatives with departments and organizations in Los Angeles, such as Pubic Works/Sanitation and Environment and Rec and Parks, including Griffith Park.



Animal Keeper Chandra David with a California Condor egg.

"The conservation challenges facing our world are rapidly growing, and we have to improve the strength and speed of our response," said Dr. Jake Owens, Director of Conservation at the Zoo. "The L.A. Zoo has a celebrated history of conservation successes, including the revolutionary founding partnership with the California Condor Recovery Program. If it weren't for the expertise, trusted partnerships, dedicated staff, and critical resources of the L.A. Zoo, the California condor, L.A.-native southern mountain-yellow legged frog, and other spe-



Animal Keeper Marlowe Robertson-Billet at a MYLF release.

cies would likely be extinct today. But we have to do more and with more intention towards achieving measurable outcomes. This Plan provides us with the tools and focus to make significant strides in our six focal areas over the next five years and beyond, and will help identify and create the partnerships needed to see it through."

By 2026, with meaningful community engagement and the assistance and guidance from both current partnerships and future collaborators, the Zoo strives to 1) effectively remove barriers and increase accessibility to achieve lasting conservation success, 2) create innovative solutions to bridge the gap with wildlife technology, virtual volunteers, and range country partners, 3) leverage our expert resources and partnerships to combat the illegal wildlife trade, 4) promote human-wildlife co-existence, and 5) create evidence-based solutions to conservation challenges.

For more information: [www.lazoo.org/save-wildlife](http://www.lazoo.org/save-wildlife). ■



Denise Verret, CEO and Zoo Director, Club Member (front) and Dr. Jake Owens, Zoo Director of Conservation, at a California condor release.

## Go Back to School

With awesome tech ... and save!

See page 9.



## LOS ANGELES CITY EMPLOYEES RETIREMENT SYSTEM

FOR ACTIVE AND RETIRED MEMBERS:

### Estate Planning Webinars Set

Join LACERS for an estate planning webinar presented by Janet Morris, Esq., Elder Care Consultant, and Erika Brown, Social Worker from the Dept. of Aging. The webinar is scheduled for 9 a.m. to noon Sept. 8 for both LACERS Retired and Active Members.

This presentation will cover topics such as caregiving and living arrangements, grief and loss, wills, revocable living trust, advanced healthcare directives, and much more.

Don't miss out on this informative and valuable webinar.

Spots will fill up quickly, so register today via your **MyLACERS account!**



FOR RETIRED MEMBERS:

### Open Enrollment Is Coming

LACERS Open Enrollment for health plan changes will be held Oct. 15 through Nov. 15. This is the time to enroll in a plan, change your plan, or add dependents, with changes taking effect Jan. 1, 2022.

For those who made enrollment changes effective on or after Feb. 1, 2021, unless you have a qualifying event, your next opportunity to request a change will be Oct. 21, 2022 during the 2023 Open Enrollment period.

FOR ACTIVE EMPLOYEES:

### Sign Up for Retirement Planning Webinar

Active employees, learn about your retirement options and benefits! The LACERS Member Engagement Team is offering Planning for Retirement webinars via Zoom.

Register via your MyLACERS account.

Upcoming dates include (all these seminars begin at 9 a.m. unless otherwise indicated):

- Saturday, Sept. 18**
- Tuesday, Sept. 21 (4:30 p.m.)**
- Saturday, Sept. 25 (Tier 3)**
- Tuesday, Oct. 5**



For more information, visit [LACERS.org](http://LACERS.org) attend-seminar. For quicker access, scan the QR code with the camera on your phone to bring you directly to the Website. LACERS looks forward to you joining in on a session!

FOR RETIRED MEMBERS:

### Anthem Supplement Plan Improves in 2022

The LACERS Board recently approved the 2022 health plan contract renewals. One very important change is that in 2022, the Anthem Life and Health Medicare Supplement plan will be replaced with the Anthem Blue Cross (Anthem) Medicare Advantage PPO plan for Members with Medicare Parts A and B. No action is needed on your part, and LACERS Members enrolled in the current Anthem Life and Health plan as of the end of 2021 will be automatically transitioned into the new Anthem Blue Cross Medicare Advantage PPO plan.

LACERS and Anthem are working to make the change seamless, and LACERS believes the benefits of the new

plan will make it all worthwhile. Some highlights include: no deductible; \$0 copays for medical care whether you see a provider in-network or out-of-network (the provider only needs to accept Medicare); the same pharmacy benefit; and several support programs to help Members stay healthy, such as SilverSneakers, emergency response system (like Life Alert), transportation, home visits, in-home care, nutritional support, caregiver relief, and much more! More than 96 percent of the providers used by our Members enrolled in the Medicare Supplement plan are already contracted with Anthem or accept Anthem plans. The remaining 3 percent are unknown but are likely to accept this plan since

payment will be more efficient than with the Medicare Supplement plan.

LACERS wants to notify Members early of this change so that Members can talk to their provider as soon as possible to let them know of the change and ensure that they will accept the new Anthem Medicare Advantage PPO plan. If the provider has any questions or concerns, they can contact Anthem at (833)-848-8729 (TTY: 711), Monday through Friday from 5 a.m. to 6 p.m., and they will work to resolve any issue. More information will be forthcoming regarding this and other 2022 benefit enhancements.