



# Alive!

# THE FRONT LINES



Go inside LA's housing crunch with 3 inspection managers meeting it head-on.



Inside the Echo Park public counter — one of the locations where the inspection process begins — are (from left) Karen Baggio, Principal Inspector, Club Member; Kristine Ritzke, Sr. Housing Inspector; and Xanat Rosas, Sr. Housing Investigator and Customer Information Manager, Club Member.

Photo by Pedro Barrera/LAHD; photo illustration by J.L.A. Associates



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# Building Our First House

We created *Alive!* in October 2002 to tell the stories of the good things that City employees do every day. And in the nearly 22 years since, somehow we have never featured the critically important Housing Dept. on our cover.

The last few months we focused on ending that oversight.

You can read the result of that effort in our cover story. Welcome to our first big story on the LAHD. The department with many Club Members has changed its name over the recent years, but it is now solidly Housing. The LAHD.

It is fitting that we use our first LAHD story to cover a pressing issue in our City (and seemingly every city) – not enough affordable housing. Those confrontations are addressed building by building, unit by unit, person by person and family by family by the incredibly patient and hard-working LAHD Housing Inspectors (and others, of course). Inspectors represent both sides – tenants and landlords – and follow the codes that dictate the rules of the game.



From left: LAHD's Karen Baggio, Kristine Ritzke and Xanat Rosas with *Alive!* editor John Burnes at the department's public counter in Echo Park.

Their real stories from the field give a historic record of what is happening in Los Angeles. We thank Club Members **Karen Baggio** and **Xanat Rosas**, and **Kristine Ritzke** for sharing their stories and giving us their time during these busy months; and **Sharon Sandow** for facilitating our production.

Do you have a story idea for *Alive!*? Let me know!

## ROBERT'S BLOG

by Robert Larios, CEO, The Club



### Sailing Into Congratulations

Congratulations and a profound thank-you are due to all those honored at the LAFD's 2023 Valor awards, for conduct beyond the call of duty by LA's finest Firefighters. The stories are inspiring! (We thank the LA Fire Dept. Foundation for the information.) And further high-fives go to the all-female sailing team organized by the Harbor Dept. for winning the TPM24 Regatta and Yacht Race. (Thanks to **Rachel Campbell** for the tip.)

### More Fun Around the World

Last month we enjoyed **Andrew Ko's** adventures when a deer ate his copy of *Alive!* Not to be outdone, this month we laugh with **Pablo Ninofranco**, whose copy got drenched. Send in your own! (It is perfectly acceptable if your copy stays whole and dry.)

### Worth Considering

In every moment, find something to be thankful for. It's those little bits of gratitude that stitch together the vast tapestry of our lives. The small joys? Hold onto them tight. One day, you'll see they were the giants.

Enjoy the beautiful springtime!

*¡Gracias por leer!*

— Robert Larios

# Raise employee morale! Schedule a Club Mobile visit!

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



At a recent Mobile Team site visit.

## Club Mobile Schedule

**The first Monday of every month:**

**April 1, May 6**

**North Central Sanitation**

452 N. San Fernando Rd., 6 – 11 a.m.

**The first Wednesday of every month:**

**April 3, May 1**

**Harbor**

100 W. Fifth St., 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.

**The first Thursday of the month:**

**May 2**

**West Valley StreetsLA**

9324 Topanga Canyon Blvd., 11 a.m. – 3 p.m.

## Additional Visits:

**Thurs., April 4**  
**Livability Services**

2110 N. San Fernando Rd.,  
1 – 3:30 p.m.

**Fri., April 5**  
**Harbor Sanitation**

1400 Gaffey St., 1 – 3:30 p.m.

**Mon., April 8**  
**West Valley Sanitation**

8840 Vanalden Ave., 1 – 3:30 p.m.

**Wed., April 10**  
**West LA Sanitation**

2927 Stoner Ave., 1 – 3:30 p.m.

**Mon., April 15**  
**East Valley**

11050 Pendleton St., 1 – 3:30 p.m.

**Fri., April 17**  
**Griffith Observatory**

2800 E. Observatory Rd.,  
9 – 11 a.m.

**Fri., April 24**  
**Rec and Parks Central LA**

3900 Chevy Chase Dr.,  
11 a.m. – 2 p.m.

**Thurs., May 2**  
**Street Services**

9324 Topanga Canyon Blvd.,  
11 a.m. – 3 p.m.

**Wed., May 15**  
**Rec and Parks**

2459 Motor Ave., 1 – 3 p.m.

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

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

@EmployeesClub

Employees Club of California

@theClubofCA

## Club Mobile is cashless!

For your convenience, now accepting major credit cards and:







Photo by Pedro Barrera/L.A.H.D., photo illustration by JULA Associates

COVER STORY:

**The Front Lines** ..... 12-14

The rental housing inspection service is often on the front line of LA's housing crunch. We go inside.

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FROM THE CLUB DEAL DESK

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**EmployeesClubCA**



# Coloring with the Club

# WIN!

4 free tickets to the **SAN DIEGO 2024**

CONTEST DEADLINE:  
May 13, 2024

Ask an adult to print the coloring page:  
[alive.employeesclub.com/kidscoloringcontest](http://alive.employeesclub.com/kidscoloringcontest)



The Club Is Here to Help

### Contact the Club

if you have an event you want covered in *Alive!* or if you have questions about insurance.  
[help@employeesclub.com](mailto:help@employeesclub.com)  
(800) 464-0452

# Alive!

April 2024 • Volume 23 – No. 4

*Alive!* is the official publication of the **Employees Club of California**

311 Spring St., Suite 1300  
Los Angeles, CA 90013

TELEPHONE: (800) 464-0452

CONTACT US: [admin@aliveemployeesclub.com](mailto:admin@aliveemployeesclub.com)

*Alive!* (USPS P7960) is published monthly, 12 times per year by the Employees Club of California, 311 Spring St., Suite 1300, Los Angeles, CA 90013.

**ALIVE! EDITORIAL OFFICES:**  
311 Spring Street, Suite 1300,  
Los Angeles CA, 90013 • (800) 464-0452

**POSTAGE:** Periodicals postage paid at Los Angeles, CA and at additional mailing offices.

**SUBSCRIPTIONS:** Annual subscription price for *Alive!* is included in the membership dues and is nonrefundable.

**POSTMASTER:** Send address corrections to *Alive!*, Employees Club of California, 311 Spring St., Suite 1300, Los Angeles, CA 90013.

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

Club Members who have questions on these points may write to: [alive@employeesclub.com](mailto:alive@employeesclub.com)

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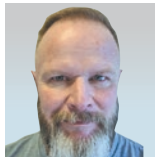
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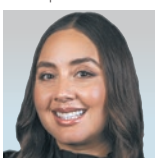
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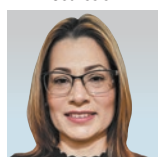
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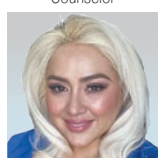
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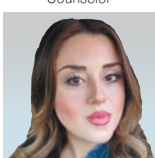
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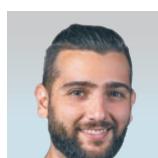


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Contact our help desk for all your Club needs:  
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**Mikayla Sprague**  
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Chief Financial Officer, LACEA and LACEA Insurance Services, Inc.

### 2023 PRESIDENT'S AWARD WINNER



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



# Pay Tribute to Your Mom!

Pay tribute to your mom this Mother's Day ... with a photo and message of lifelong love, published in *Alive!*.

In our May issue, we'll print a photo of you and your mom (or just your mom) ... and a two- or three-sentence message of Happy Mother's Day from you. Your tribute will also appear on *Web Alive!* (if received by April 16), starting just before Mother's Day.

**Send in your digital photos and your message now!**

To submit, go to: [alive.employeesclub.com/mothersday](http://alive.employeesclub.com/mothersday)



**DEADLINES:**  
 Publication in print and online: April 16  
 Online only: May 8



StreetsLA has begun a pilot program using electric cargo bikes to inspect bike lanes.

Photos courtesy StreetsLA



Some of the 10 new BEAM electric chargers for StreetsLA's yards.

## Charging Ahead

CENTER FOR GREEN INNOVATION ADDS NEW TOOLS.

**PUBLIC WORKS:** StreetsLA's Center for Green Innovation, profiled in *Alive!* last year, has added two new tools in its arsenal toward sustainable energy.

First, StreetsLA has begun a new pilot program featuring an electric cargo bike for bike lane inspections. The initiative combines sustainability with efficiency to enhance the City's infrastructure. *Alive!* expects these electric inspectors, if they progress beyond a pilot program, to play an even bigger role with the HLA proposal passing in last month's election. HLA, a mobility plan, requires the City to prioritize a number of green features, including bike lanes, as it rebuilds its streets.

Secondly, in continuing to enhance electric power at its yards, StreetsLA has accepted an additional 10 BEAM EV charging stations. While not all of its yards have electrical charging stations permanently installed, these units can be moved from yard to yard to keep the division's electric units charged.

Well done, StreetsLA. ●



Our September 2023 issue featuring the Center for Green Innovation.

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# READY FOR RETIREMENT



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



## YOUR ESSENTIAL GUIDE TO INSURANCE

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

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

## Club Check-In for Retirees

IT'S TIME TO CHECK IN, CLUB RETIREES, TO MAKE SURE YOU'RE TAKING ADVANTAGE OF ALL THE CLUB OFFERS!

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Speak to a Club Retirement Specialist. DO NOT WAIT!**

## Meet Your Club Counselors!

### SCHEDULE A RETIREMENT CONSULTATION!

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

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

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

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



**Cheryl Martin**  
Member Services Counselor



**Cynthia Ha**  
Member Services Counselor



**Dylan Noel**  
Member Services Counselor



**Dalila Vielma**  
Member Services Counselor



### Questions?

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



## Retired or Retiring Soon?

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



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

## 2024 Events

### LARFPA

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

### LADWP Retirees Association

2024 events to be announced.

**Reservation information:**  
LADWP Retiree Association:  
vinedolores@gmail.com  
LARFPA: events@larfpa.org

## Contact Information

**Employees Club of California**  
Club contact:  
help@employeesclub.com

**Los Angeles City Employees' Retirement System (LACERS)** (City Dept.)  
(800) 779-8328  
lacers.services@lacers.org

**LADWP Retirees Association**  
Dolores Foley, *President*  
(949) 388-1206  
vinedolores@gmail.com

**Fire and Police Pensions** (City Dept.)  
(844) 885-2377  
pensions@lafpp.com

**LA Retired Fire and Police Association (LARFPA)**  
(888) 288-5073  
membership@larfpa.org

**Retired Los Angeles City Employees, Inc. (RLACEI)**  
See page 16





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

**\$750**  
**Club Scholarships**  
**APPLY NOW!**

**ABOUT JOANNIE MUKAI**

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



# Scholarships Offer Stipends for College

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

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

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

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

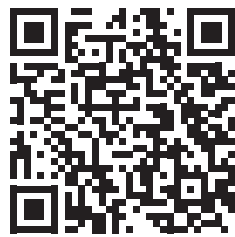
All materials must be completed on the *Alive!* Website and submitted electronically by 11:59 p.m. June 30, 2024. Winners will be notified by July 31 before school starts.

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

"With college costs rising, the Club honors public employees in California with the Mukai Scholarship," says Association CEO Robert Larios. "We want to help develop the next generation of smart, dedicated Club Members with this financial assistance."

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

[alive.employeesclub.com/scholarship](http://alive.employeesclub.com/scholarship)



**Apply Today**  
 on the *Alive!* Website:

[alive.employeesclub.com/scholarship](http://alive.employeesclub.com/scholarship)

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

**ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS:**

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

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

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**MYCLUBDEALS**  
 by *entertainment*

## Deputy Mayor Named For Homeless Services

*Story courtesy Mayor's Office*

DR. ETSEMAYE AGONAFER IS CITY'S FIRST FOR HOMELESS, COMMUNITY HEALTH.

**MAYOR'S OFFICE:** On Feb. 13, Mayor Karen Bass appointed Dr. Etsemaye Agonafer as the City's first deputy mayor for homelessness and community health.

Dr. Agonafer will focus on improving the coordination and delivery of social, health and behavioral services to homeless people and those at risk of becoming homeless, according to the statement. She will be tasked with building a team and leading efforts on housing and health outcomes for homeless Angelenos.

"We must continue to address this homelessness crisis with urgency and comprehensive strategies that work," Mayor Bass said in a statement. "We know that health, both physical and behavioral, is a vital part of bringing stability to unhoused Angelenos, and Dr. Agonafer's diverse experience and deep understanding of healthcare and homelessness in Southern California will be a crucial

step forward in addressing the homelessness crisis and supporting those with health challenges."

Dr. Agonafer began working with Mayor Bass' office in May 2023, serving as the community health adviser as part of the Office of Housing and Homelessness Solutions. During that time, she supported Bass' Inside Safe initiatives and designed a substance-use disorder pilot program for people in the City's interim housing sites.

According to the Mayor's Office, Dr. Agonafer has experience in advancing health equity and justice for vulnerable populations because of her work as an internal medicine physician, educator and community researcher. She previously served as an Assistant Professor in the Dept. of Health System Science at the Kaiser Permanente Bernard J. Tyson School of Medicine in Pasadena.

In 2021, she was appointed as a White House Fellow in the Biden Administration and was placed in the Office of the Secretary at the U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development. In addition to her policy work, Dr. Agonafer provided clinical care for individuals entering and leaving one of the nation's largest jails, in the Inmate Reception Center at the Los Angeles County Twin Towers Correctional Facility.

She has a Master of science degree in health policy and management from UCLA, where she was also a national clinician scholar. She completed her internal medicine residency and chief residency at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center.

Dr. Agonafer earned a Bachelor's degree in biochemistry from USC, and a Master of public health and medical degree from the UCLA/Charles R. Drew University PRIME-LA dual-



**Dr. Etsemaye Agonafer**

degree program.

The Club welcomes Dr. Agonafer to a cause we believe in, too. ●



{ Who are the people you see every day? }

**No. 115**  
in a series.

# People We See

*Shelterless in Los Angeles: stories of compassion and humanity*



## Meet Sean Caffey and Heidi



March 21, 2024

### Sean Caffey and Heidi

Born: Huntsville Texas on February 12, 1978

Meet Sean Caffey and Heidi who I met just outside of the car he lives in parked at a curb on Cesar Chavez Blvd. Sean told me that he has been living out of this car for about a year now.

Sean moved to LA when he was 5 years old, growing up in San Gabriel and graduated from John A. Rowland High School, whose notable alumni include Aja Naomi King, the star of the TV show *How to Get Away With Murder*. After High School he went to Cal Poly Pomona where he studied horticulture science. "I didn't quite finish college, which I regret, I was just 30 units out but stopped because I went on tour doing stand up comedy...that didn't pan out and I ended up doing a bunch of different jobs including jobs in the entertainment business. I had my own business down on the Westside; I am an artist, metal sculptor mainly; I've blown glass at one point; I also work with plastics and wood... I paint, oil and acrylics, been to Burning Man ten times. I have a permanent installation at Holy Cow in San Francisco... which is a bunch of metal roses over the DJ booth; and it pulses to music."

"I had cancer 8 years ago, so I sold my business because I was sure I was going to die. But then I beat it, but my life fell apart after that...and that's why I am here. Before I had cancer I only smoked weed, but after my cancer scare that's when I started doing hard drugs; heroin, meth, speed, cocaine. I went to rehab at one point but wasn't able to kick everything."



From left: Sean Caffey and John Hawkins

**Advice for a 16 year old kid:** "Go to college and finish, do what you love and do it every day. Stay away from drugs, people think marijuana is not a gateway drug but I think it is. And alcohol is just as bad. But more people on the street are on meth than anything else. Its super cheap and easy to get. People are on it because they want to stay up and not be victimized...but, people need sleep. And meth messes with your head, most people get crazy...but there is no alternative that can give you the high that meth can. Fentanyl on the other hand is the new heroin...and here's the thing, fentanyl you don't have to inject it, which actually may have saved lives because they are not getting the diseases associated with injecting...but, people are dying because they are overdosing because its really strong."

**Favorite movie:** DC Movies

**Favorite book:** "In Dubious Battle, by John Steinbeck, it's a really good book"

**Favorite TV show:** "The Simpsons."

**If you could give your parents a message what would it be?** "That I love them and don't worry about me"

**If you had a studio, what would be the first piece that you would create?** "Probably metal flowers, like the piece I did for the Holy Cow."

**Favorite candy:** "Watermelon sour candies. But it's hard to eat candy as I got jumped in Hollywood two years ago and lost most of my teeth. They stole all my tools and art things... I was going to get back into it but they stole everything... I thought they were going to kill me."

**Have you ever been married?** "No"

**Where do you go to the bathroom?** "I use the Starbucks or Burger King when I need to use the bathroom and sometimes a friend lets me shower at their place; and laundry."

**Do you have any brothers or sisters?** "Yes, an older sister; she has 3 children"

**Where do you see yourself in 5 years?** "Hopefully not here. Hopefully I'll have a business, with employees and a wife."

**If you had 3 wishes, what would they be?** "A place to make art, a studio, with a welder, the other wish would be to have a car that works, and third, an apartment. I mean I could make money if I had a welder. I had a welder but somebody stole it."

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





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

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

## SUPERVISORS:

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



At the retirement reception for Assistant Chief Dean Zipperman.

Story and photos courtesy Councilwoman Nithya Raman

## Adieu, Dean

ASSISTANT CHIEF DEAN ZIPPERMAN RETIRES AFTER 36 YEARS OF CITY SERVICE.

**LAFD:** A retirement reception and Council presentation were held in December for LAFD Assistant Chief Dean Zipperman, who retired after 36 years of City service.

Assistant Chief Zipperman joined the LAFD in February 1986. He was promoted to Apparatus Operator in 1997, to Capt. I in 2004; to Capt. II in 2008, to Battalion Chief in 2014, and to Assistant Chief in 2020.

“In Chief Zipperman, I have found something really remarkable – a true partner in the City to help overcome our challenges,” said Councilwoman Nithya Raman on Instagram. “Since my first day in office, he has answered all of my questions, met me with the same level of urgency for protecting CD4 residents, and served as a regular source of wisdom and comfort in the many meetings and conversations we’ve had to troubleshoot various fire and life safety challenges faced during my tenure as Councilmember.



Chief Dean Zipperman, as he appeared in the March 2016 issue of *Alive!* (photo by Juan Guerra)

“The time he invested in understanding the way in which our office wanted to work on certain issues, and spoke up to advocate for the resources we needed as a district to address issues particularly related to homelessness and our parks allowed us to bring real change to the City. “Today, we celebrate him and his well-deserved retirement, extending deep gratitude for his immense knowledge, courage and penchant for leadership and teamwork.

“To his family, his wife, his children, and his grandchildren, I know you’ll be grateful to have him back in your lives. To Chief Zipperman, I wish you many more mornings of sleeping in.”

*Alive!* featured then-Battalion Chief Zipperman in our occasional photo feature, *Everyday Heroes* in March 2016.

The Club honors the service and dedication of Assistant Chief Zipperman upon his retirement. ●



Councilwoman Nithya Raman and Assistant Chief Dean Zipperman.



At the special Council presentation for Assistant Chief Dean Zipperman.

**Arlene Herrero**  
 Vice President of Business Development

## Arlene on the Scene

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

March 23

**At press time:** On March 23, Arlene represented the Club at the 2024 Baker to Vegas Challenge Cup Relay in the desert and “ran” into LAPD Interim Chief Dominic Choi and Newton Area Capt. Amira Eppolito, Club Member. (Baker to Vegas is produced by the Los Angeles Police Revolver and Athletic Club.) See lots of photos and recaps in an upcoming *Alive!*

From left: Arlene with Newton Area Capt. Amira Eppolito, Club Member.

Arlene with LAPD Interim Chief Dominic Choi.

# It’s a Zoo Out There

The Club has your discounts for LA Zoo admission!

Go to for details: [employeesclub.com](http://employeesclub.com)

The Cheapest Movie tickets in the state are at the Club!



# Cooking with the Club

with Chef Robert Larios



Photos: Patty M. Larios



## Creamy Garlic Ricotta Ravioli

Get ready to treat your taste buds to a delightful culinary adventure with our heavenly ravioli creation. Imagine tender ravioli filled with a scrumptious mix of savory tomato and creamy ricotta – a flavor combo that’s sure to make you smile with every bite.

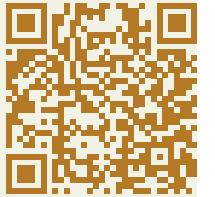
To make this dish even more special, we coat these mouth watering ravioli in a creamy sauce that’s packed with fresh zucchini, tasty scallions and a hint of zesty lemon. This blend of ingredients adds layers of yumminess to each forkful, making

every taste a delightful surprise.

And as a final touch, we sprinkle some crunchy buttery breadcrumbs on top, giving your dish a satisfying texture that’ll have you coming back for more. So go ahead, take a bite and let the flavors whisk you away on a delicious journey.

Can you feel it? It’s the excitement in our hearts, beating with joy for the love of pasta and the happiness of sharing good food with good company.

Follow this recipe online:



¡Buen provecho! *Chef Larios*

### DIRECTIONS Total prep time is 20 minutes

### INGREDIENTS

Serves 2

- 1 zucchini
- 2 scallions
- 1 lemon
- ¼ cup panko breadcrumbs (contains wheat)
- 9 ounces fresh ricotta and tomato ravioli (contains wheat, eggs, milk)
- 4 ounces cream sauce base (contains milk)
- 1 unit veggie stock concentrate
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 1 teaspoon cooking oil
- ¼ teaspoon sugar
- 2 tablespoons butter (contains milk)

### Utensils You Will Need

- Utensils
- Large pot
- Large pan
- Strainer



**1 Prep** - Fill a large pot with salted water and bring it to a boil. (Pro tip: Cover the pot with a lid to speed up the boiling process.) Wash and dry the produce. Trim and halve the zucchini lengthwise, then slice it into thin half-moons. Thinly slice the scallions, keeping the whites and greens separate. Quarter the lemon for later use in the recipe.



**3 Cook Ravioli** - Melt 1 tablespoon of butter (or 2 tablespoons for 4 servings) in a large pan over medium heat. Add the panko breadcrumbs, a pinch of salt, and pepper. Cook while stirring occasionally until the breadcrumbs turn a lovely golden brown, usually taking about 3-5 minutes. Once

done, turn off the heat and transfer the toasted breadcrumbs to a plate. Don’t forget to wipe out the pan for the next step.



**2 Toast Panko** - Melt 1 tablespoon butter (2 tablespoons for 4 servings) in a large pan over medium heat. Add panko, a pinch of salt, and pepper; cook, stirring occasionally, until golden brown, 3-5 minutes. Turn off heat; transfer to a plate. Wipe out pan.



**4 Cook Sauce** - While cooking the panko breadcrumbs in a pan over medium heat with butter, you can prepare the next steps. Heat a drizzle of oil in the same pan over medium-high heat. Add the sliced zucchini and cook until golden brown and softened, typically for about 2-3 minutes, stirring occasionally. Season with salt and pepper. Next, add the

scallion whites to the pan and continue cooking until they are softened and emit a fragrant aroma, usually taking around 30-60 seconds more. Then, incorporate the cream sauce base, stock concentrate, garlic powder, ½ cup of the reserved pasta cooking water, ¼ teaspoon of sugar, and juice from half the lemon (adjust quantities for 4 servings). For 4 servings, use ¾ cup of pasta cooking water, ½ teaspoon of sugar, and juice from the whole lemon.



**5 Finish Ravioli** - Once the zucchini and scallions are cooked to perfection, add the drained ravioli to the pan with the sauce, ensuring they are well-coated. Let the mixture simmer until the sauce thickens, typically for an additional 1-2 minutes. Afterward, turn off the heat and stir in 1 tablespoon of butter (or 2 tablespoons for 4 servings) until it melts and blends smoothly. Taste the dish and season with salt and pepper as needed. For a creamier consistency, gradually add more pasta cooking water if required, a splash at a time.

To serve, divide the ravioli among plates and sprinkle the toasted panko breadcrumbs on top. Finish off the dish with a garnish of scallion greens and serve with any extra lemon wedges on the side.

## CLUB DEAL

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

### Cooking Tidbit

When preparing the creamy sauce, slowly incorporate the ingredients to allow their flavors to meld together harmoniously for a rich and delightful taste. If you would like additional help, contact me at [alive@employeesclub.com](mailto:alive@employeesclub.com).

### Food Quote:

“Savor the blend of flavors in ravioli, embrace life’s surprises with joy, and cherish the journey with good company as a recipe for happiness.”

– **Chef Robert Larios**

### Food Lover’s Dictionary:



Ricotta cheese is a fresh Italian whey cheese made from sheep, cow, goat or Italian water buffalo milk whey left over from the production of other cheeses. Ricotta, which literally means “recooked” in Italian, is a soft, creamy, slightly grainy cheese with

a mild flavor. It is commonly used in both sweet and savory dishes, including desserts like cannoli and savory dishes like lasagna.

Bibliography: Herbst, Sharon Tyler, and Ron Herbst. The New Food Lover’s Companion. Accessed March 25, 2024. [https://books.google.com/books/about/The\\_New\\_Food\\_Lover\\_s\\_Companion.html?id=AppgwYOWleYC](https://books.google.com/books/about/The_New_Food_Lover_s_Companion.html?id=AppgwYOWleYC).

Recipe: Hellofresh.com - <https://www.hellofresh.com/recipes/ricotta-tomato-ravioli-in-garlic-cream-64ca51b7d1320bb7c7146aed>. Accessed March 15, 2024



Photos courtesy LADOT, Public Works/StreetsLA, LAFD

# Stars Behind the Scenes

DEPTS. PROVE CRITICAL IN SUCCESSFUL RECENT EVENTS.

**LADOT/PUBLIC WORKS/LAFD:** Let's hear it for the dedicated City teams that made two recent LA events – the Academy Awards and the LA Marathon – hugely successful. We honor them for their service and dedication!

The 2024 marathon was held March 17. The Academy Awards were held March 3.

Many City departments played significant roles in the success of these events. Here are just a few images. ●

**THANK YOU!**

The Club thanks all City employees, including those from LADOT and Public Works, for their very hard work making our City shine for this internationally famous event. Well done!

A huge shout-out goes to LADOT's Special Traffic Operations Team for their hard work supporting road closures and managing traffic.



At the LA Marathon, LAFD's Med Cart 1 was on the scene for emergency health issues.

## LA MARATHON



Public Works' StreetsLA crews were on hand, as they are every year, to clean up after the LA Marathon and make sure the roads were ready for commuters later that day (March 17) and for the Monday morning commute.



## ACADEMY AWARDS

**WE'LL PAY YOUR UNIVERSAL STUDIOS HOLLYWOOD PARKING THIS APRIL!**

**APRIL 1 - 30, 2024**

**WE'RE THANKFUL FOR MEMBERS LIKE YOU!**

Thank you for your dedication and hard work as a public employee in California. We appreciate your unwavering loyalty as a valued member of the Employees Club of California.

APRIL



**CLUB MEMBER EXCLUSIVE BENEFIT!**

The Club will reimburse the Universal Studios Hollywood parking fee (up to \$32) for the first 500 qualified Club Members who submit their parking receipt. Limit 1 refund per member.\*

### INSTRUCTIONS

1. Park at Universal Studios Hollywood between April 1-30, 2024.
2. Save your parking receipt.
3. Submit a photo of your receipt via <https://join.employeesclub.com/FeesBack>.
4. Members eligible for refunds will receive them via Zelle, whereas those who have not arranged for Zelle payments will receive a check by mail.
5. Enjoy your day at Universal Studios Hollywood!

\* Valid for Universal Studios Hollywood parking receipts dated April 1-30, 2024. Limit (1) refund per Club member in good standing who has paid dues and been active since at least November 1, 2023. Maximum refund value of \$32. Receipt must be submitted through online link.



**SEND RECEIPT**

<https://join.employeesclub.com/FeesBack>

Photo courtesy LAPD



Dominic Choi is sworn into his new position by Mayor Karen Bass.

## Choi Is Interim Chief

ASSISTANT CHIEF DOMINIC CHOI APPOINTED TO TOP JOB IN INTERIM.

**LAPD:** On March 1, Assistant Chief Dominic H. Choi, LAPD, was unanimously appointed by the Los Angeles Board of Police Commissioners as the Interim Chief of the LAPD. He is the first Asian American to lead the LAPD.

"This appointment will continue our work to make Los Angeles safer," said Karen Bass. "I look forward to working with Interim Chief Choi in the coming months as he provides steady and stable leadership for our police department. Interim Chief Choi's more than 28 years of service to this City as a member of the police department put him in a unique position to not only lead, but to grow and improve our department. I want to thank Interim Chief Choi for his willingness to accept this appointment as we work to make our City safer for all."

Former Chief Michel Moore retired at the end of February.

The son of Korean immigrants, Interim Chief Choi was raised locally and began his career with the LAPD in 1995 after earning his Bachelor's degree from the University of Southern California. He worked patrol assignments in a variety of divisions, rising through the ranks to Detective, Sergeant and Lieutenant. In 2014, he was promoted to Captain, serving in both Foothill Area and Pacific Area. In 2017, he was promoted to Commander of Operations Central Bureau and later the Department's Homeless Coordinator. He remained in that position until he was promoted to Deputy Chief in 2019.

Congratulations to Interim Chief Choi! ●



ALIVE! FEATURE

LOS ANGELES HOUSING DEPT.



# THE FRONT L



Inside the Echo Park public counter – one of the locations where the inspection process begins – are (from left) Karen Baggio, Principal Inspector, Club Member; Kristine Ritzke, Sr. Housing Inspector; and Xanat Rosas, Sr. Housing Investigator and Customer Information Manager, Club Member.

## THE ALIVE! INTERVIEW

### The First Face

On March 7, *Alive!* editor John Burnes interviewed Xanat Rosas, Sr. Housing Investigator and Manager of the Rent Division's Public Counters, Hotline and Information Section, 18 years of City service, Club Member. The interview took place via Zoom. • Her first name is pronounced Sha-NAT.

**Thanks for talking to *Alive!* readers today. Tell us a little about your position.**

**Xanat Rosas:** Sure. I am responsible for managing LAHD's Rent Division's public counters and hotline. We are the department's first point of contact. All inquiries regarding housing issues are directed to us in person, over the phone, or virtually. The information we provide pertains to all aspects of housing. We are committed to providing excellent customer service.

**How many counters are there?**

**Xanat:** We currently have four public counters. We also have a virtual counter. [[See the sidebar story for locations. – Ed,]]

**Xanat, tell us about your career, and how you got to where you are.**

**Xanat:** My employment with LAHD began in October 2005 as a contractor at-will paralegal investigating complaints regarding alleged violations of the Rent Stabilization Ordinance (RSO).

I officially began my career with the City of Los Angeles in May 2007 when an opening for a Housing Investigator position became available.

As time progressed, I was promoted to Lead Housing Investigator, which involves supervising a group of Investigators as well as handling more challenging cases. I was promoted to Sr. Housing Investigator in December 2018 in the Customer Service and Information section. I am proud of the progress I have made in my career and excited to continue developing in this role. I am determined to continue working hard and furthering my career.

**Before you started as a contractor in 2005, was there anything that led up to this career?**

**Xanat:** Yes. While attending paralegal school, I worked in a law firm as a paralegal since 1999. As part of our firm's practice areas, we handled unlawful detainers, which gave me a good understanding of the unlawful detainer/eviction process, as well as a better understanding of the housing issues that landlords and tenants face and, of course, allowed me to become a regular LAHD customer for the firm's clients.

An interesting and humorous event occurred then. I was informed by my supervisor at the time that the office would be closing and that I would need to begin searching for alternative employment. My search for employment began right away, and as part of the process I uploaded my resume to Monster.com. However, the firm did not close, and I continued to work there. Years later, I was contacted by a work agency that invited me to apply for the Paralegal position with LAHD. My resume posted online provided the agency with my contact information. It was through this experience that I was able to secure a position as a Paralegal for LAHD several years later.

### The Public Counters

**Explain how public counters work.**

**Xanat:** LAHD provides a variety of services at its public counters. We provide education and guidance to landlords, tenants, community advocates, attorneys and constituents in general on the LAMC regarding the RSO, the Just Cause Evictions Ordinance and all housing-related laws. We intake complaints about alleged violations of the LAMC related to housing matters. These include possible illegal evictions, illegal rent increases, failure to pay relocation assistance, or habitability cases that require repair. We provide resources and referrals. We also process transactions and accept payments for annual registration fees, Systematic Code Enforcement Program (SCEP) fees, inspection fees, and other fees. A



Xanat Rosas

couple of important fees are collected once a year, which are due by the end of February. Landlords are required to pay the registration fee to be able to collect or demand rent from properties subject to the RSO. The second fee is the Systematic Code Enforcement fee. This is associated with the Systematic Code Enforcement inspections conducted by our Code Enforcement staff every three to five years. We also address billing concerns such as appeals of fees, exemption requests, etcetera and notify relevant staff of any discrepancies. We assist constituents with completion of the rent registry forms and other LAHD forms. We receive and process records requests. We also receive and upload documents for Housing Investigators, LAHD Inspectors, or other LAHD sections.

— CONTINUES PAGE 14





Photos by Pedro Barrera and Sharon Sandow, LAHD; photo illustration by JILA Associates.

## *Alive!* goes inside LA's housing crunch with 3 inspection managers who are meeting it head-on.

Everywhere in the City of Los Angeles, housing is tight. And expensive. And for those on the margins, an emotional roller coaster of insecurity.

Los Angeles Housing Dept. faces the challenge every working day of taking care of citizens in need, all according to housing code.

On the front lines of the crunch is the department's inspection services. At their public counters and through their hotlines and internet portals, the inspectors receive the complaints and execute regularly scheduled inspections, and are usually the first to be confronted with tough situations.

The Code Enforcement and Rent Divisions face citizen struggles to stay in housing, to make sure landlords are keeping up their properties and not evicting renters illegally. At the same time, the divisions also serve landlords, protecting them from renters who are taking advantage of situations against code. Simply, the LAHD divisions are in it to find and execute ethical resolutions to housing issues.

This month, we spend time with three inspection managers – Karen Baggio, Principal Inspector, Club Member; Xanat Rosas, Sr. Housing Investigator and Customer Information Manager, Club Member; and Kristine Ritzke, Sr. Housing Investigator; to get a look into the challenges that LAHD faces and better understand what's happening on the front lines. We deeply honor them for their service and dedication to the City.

We thank Karen, Xanat and Kristine for their time and honesty, and we thank LAHD's Sharon Sandow, Dana Webster, Sophia Steiner and Pedro Barrera for their assistance.



# INSPECTIONS

## THE ALIVE! INTERVIEW

### Livability and Advocacy

On March 5, Association CEO Robert Larios and *Alive!* editor John Burnes interviewed Karen Baggio, Principal Inspector, Manager of the Central Regional Office, Code Enforcement, 26 years of City service, Club Member; and Kristine Ritzke, Sr. Housing Investigator, Supervisor of the South Regional Office for Complaints, 16 years of City service.

**Karen and Kristine, thanks for joining us today to talk about a big part of LAHD's response to the City's housing crisis – the very important inspection function. But first, tell us your career path – how you got to your current position.**

**Karen Baggio:** Sure. I began my City service in 1998 with Public Works/Sanitation in its City Wide Days group, maintaining and conducting inspections of large City sewer systems. From there I took a couple of lateral positions. Once I found out about the Assistant Inspector program, I took the civil service exam for Assistant Inspector and in 2005 I joined the LAHD's Assistant Inspector program. I came up through the ranks of LAHD's Assistant Inspector training program, after which I was promoted to Housing Investigator. I was a Housing Investigator for six years and then received another promotion to Sr. Housing Investigator. I held that position for six years, and in 2022 I was promoted and became our department's first female Principal Inspector.

**Were you doing anything related to housing inspections before you joined the City?**

**Karen:** Before I joined the City I had some experience with property maintenance and property management. But the bulk of my knowledge and experience came from the training I received via the Assistant Inspector program.

**Kristine, same question.**

**Kristine Ritzke:** I started with Building and Safety as an Assistant Inspector, and I was there for two years. I then became an Assistant Inspector with the LAHD. I was an Assistant Inspector III for about two years, and then I was promoted to a Housing Investigator for four or five years, and then to a Sr. Housing Investigator.

Before I joined the City, I worked with the City of Anaheim in code enforcement. I was part-time there, and I worked both jobs to figure out which city I wanted to work for. One was part-time and it was a graveyard shift, from 1 a.m. to 5 a.m., and then in LA our start time was 7 a.m., so I did both for a while.



Karen Baggio



Kristine Ritzke

## Inspections

**Explain to the non-housing experts the inspection function in general terms – what it does, what the inspectors are tasked to do, why they're necessary, and how it developed.**

**Karen:** LAHD's two main inspection processes are SCEP, the Systematic Code Enforcement Program, and complaint-driven inspections. In SCEP, we conduct inspections for all residential properties with two or more units on site, where at least one of those units is a rental unit. We do a thorough inspection of all the properties, checking the plumbing, electrical, weather protection, and maintenance of the property to ensure safe and habitable conditions and to verify compliance with standards outlined in the applicable building and housing

codes. The SCEP cycle has a target of inspecting every rental unit every four years. In addition to that, if there are complaints to report or issues within that four years, individuals can call in and file a complaint. Once we receive and schedule the inspection, the Complaint Inspector will make a site visit to determine if code violations exist. If they are found to exist, the Complaint Inspector will then cite those violations and issue a notice to comply.

The SCEP inspector looks at the entire property, whereas the Complaint Inspector focuses on the specific complaint. However, if the Complaint Inspector sees significant deferred maintenance at the property, they can request the case be converted to a SCEP inspection.

**For a SCEP inspection, what conditions are you looking for?**

**Karen:** Fire, life-safety issues, smoke detectors, carbon monoxide detectors, exit



**ALIVE! FEATURE**

**LOS ANGELES HOUSING DEPT.**



The staff at the Central/Echo Park public counter includes (from left): David McDonald, Administrative Clerk, 18 years of City service; Vileny Mercado, Administrative Clerk, 2 years; Xanat Rosas, Sr. Housing Investigator I, 17 years; Melvina Adlersberg, Principal Clerk, 17 years; Rocio Arevalo, Administrative Clerk, 4 years; and Paulino Saucedo, Communication Information Representative III, 18 years.

**HOW TO CONTACT LAHD**

Renters and landlords can contact LAHD's representatives with issues, concerns or questions through the following portals:

**PUBLIC COUNTERS**

LAHD operates four public counters:

**CENTRAL:**

1910 Sunset Blvd., suite 300  
Echo Park

**EAST:**

2130 E First St., suite 2600,  
Boyle Heights

**VALLEY:**

6400 Laurel Canyon Blvd., suite 610  
North Hollywood

**SOUTH:**

8475 Vermont Ave.,  
South LA

**PHONE**

(866) 557-7468, or 3-1-1, the City's information line

**ONLINE**

Information is available, and many forms and applications can be submitted, at [housing.lacity.org](http://housing.lacity.org)

Virtual public counter visits can also be scheduled through the LAHD website.

**THE ALIVE! INTERVIEW**

**The First Face,** continued from page 12

**Right. We talked to Karen and Kristine about the systematic inspections.**

**Xanat:** In addition to these services, there are many others which are requested of us but are not provided by us such as information regarding Section 8, legal and civil matters. As a result, we provide alternative resources or refer people to other agencies when services are not available at the LAHD. We provide as much information as possible to ensure that people are able to access the resources they need. We also offer advice on finding housing options and resources. We are always happy to answer any questions and provide assistance to the best of our ability.

Constituents can meet with us in a variety of ways. We would be glad to assist constituents personally at one of our public counters, virtually through a virtual appointment, by phone at (866) 557-7468, or online through [housing.lacity.org](http://housing.lacity.org). We also provide online tools for constituents to ask questions about housing services, submit applications, and request assistance. Constituents can contact us directly for assistance or visit our website for more information. Alternatively, they can call 3-1-1, the City's information line.

**So, basically, the job ticket begins with the public counters.**

**Xanat:** Yes, it begins with us. There is a great deal of responsibility involved. People typically want to tell their whole story at the public counters before they are able

to get to the issue at hand. The counter staff are very well trained and patient, and I am extremely impressed with their abilities. We need to hear these stories; our constituents need to understand how important it is to us as well, while keeping the discussion focused on the issue at hand. It is imperative that we have a full understanding of every allegation the tenant has, or the Housing Investigator or the Housing Investigator will not be able to enforce the alleged violation(s). For example, when filing a CODE enforcement complaint regarding housing conditions in need of repair, the tenant must include a detailed listing of each alleged violation, otherwise the Housing Investigator will not be able to cite a violation even if it is observed on site (unless it is an urgent or emergency situation). This is where the counter staff plays a crucial role, since we must ensure that all participants are

informed of the procedures and that each alleged violation is noted on the complaint form.

**To get it all down at the very beginning.**

**Xanat:** Yes, exactly. It is not only important for the Housing Investigator, but also for the complainant to ensure that any issues are addressed and that the customer is satisfied with the service provided.

*Emotional Moments*

**LAHD can be one of the most emotional aspects of our lives.**

**It's where people live, raise families, and so much more. You must encounter and manage some very emotional moments at the counters, on the virtual visits, and so forth.**

**Xanat:** Every day, we hear stories ranging from instances of tenants receiving notices of rent increases that they are unable to afford, to instances of constituents facing homelessness as a result of eviction because they cannot afford the rent. In addition to that, there are also stories where people claim that the roof is collapsing as a result of the heavy rain. There could also be a landlord who constantly harasses a tenant in various ways to force the tenant out, or a landlord who is losing their

property through foreclosure because they are not receiving any rent. These stories illustrate the difficult situations facing landlords and tenants in the present day. In light of this, LAHD always strives to ensure that residents have access to affordable and safe rental housing as well as that landlords receive a reimbursement for their investment. LAHD works to bridge the gap between landlords and tenants by providing resources and assistance to those in need.

**With the pandemic over, evictions returning and housing in LA in crisis mode in a lot of areas, it must be a really difficult time. Are you feeling the tension at your counters?**

— CONTINUES ON PAGE 25



**THE ALIVE! INTERVIEW**

**Livability and Advocacy,** continued from page 13

pathways, egress doors and windows. We're also looking for maintenance issues, and that there is a habitable living environment. We're looking to make sure that this is a safe environment for people to live in.

**Are you looking at structural issues, too? Is seismic retrofitting part of it?**

**Karen:** Yes, we do cite any structural violations seen during an inspection.

**Kristine:** For seismic review, that period has already come and gone. Anybody who has not done their seismic retrofit at this point would be in violation. And, the enforcing authority on that is Building and Safety.

The new review coming up is balconies. This is also known as Elevated Exterior Elements, a relatively new state law requiring these elevated elements to be inspected for signs of decay and or structural deficiencies that could develop over time related to wood framing.

**Got it. How long have there been housing inspectors in the City of L.A.?**

**Karen:** In 1997, the Blue Ribbon Citizens Committee on Slum Housing released a report documenting the deterioration of housing conditions in Los Angeles, and determined that the City needed to make drastic changes to its enforcement process.

This Committee found that the City of Los Angeles needed to take a more proactive stance in dealing with rental housing stock and the enforcement of applicable Health and Safety laws. In 1998 the SCEP, Systematic Code Enforcement Program, was enacted and the LAHD began hiring Housing Investigators and conducting these systematic code enforcement inspections.

**What was the growth of the program in 1998?**

**Karen:** Before 1998 the system in place was largely reactive. Because of some growing deteriorating conditions that existed at the time, we needed a more proactive system. That's when the Systematic Code Enforcement Program came into effect, to do the work proactively on a routine basis.

The LAHD existed before 1998, but they weren't responsible for conducting these types of inspections. Building and Safety was responsible for every building in the City of Los Angeles, including residential properties. After the Blue Ribbon committee's report was released, the Los Angeles Housing Dept. developed and championed the creation of a Systematic Code Enforcement Program that moved the jurisdiction of code enforcement of multi-family housing away from LADBS and to LAHD. LAHD was then tasked with the responsibility for inspections of multi-family residential units.

**Kristine:** I believe at Building and Safety it

was referred to as the Conservation Bureau. The Conservation Bureau was a big thing historically on the west side, in the Venice area, because Venice had been annexed to the City of Los Angeles and there were all of these apartment buildings there; the City wanted to inspect them.

**That's interesting. Let's now talk about the complaint-based inspections.**

**Kristine:** Sure. Anybody can file a complaint with the City of Los Angeles, and as long as it's under the jurisdiction of the LAHD, which would be any multi-family residential rental unit, we accept that complaint. At Complaint Intake, the Complaint clerical staff reviews the complaints and schedules the Regional Inspector for that area. The Inspector goes out, verifies whether or not the alleged violations exist. If they exist then a notice to comply is issued.

**How do the complaints come in?**

**Kristine:** Renters or landlords can call 3-1-1 or the LAHD Hotline directly at (866) 557-7368. We also have a hotline that accepts code enforcement complaints. They can also file a complaint on our public website, or they can actually walk in and file a complaint at the public counter.

**How does the Notice to Comply process work? Do you transfer that to a different division within Housing?**

**Karen:** If violations are cited, a Notice to Comply will be issued and a 30-day compliance period is given. Once the compliance

date on the notice has passed, we come back for a re-inspection to see if the property owner has made the required corrections and complied with the notice. If they have complied, the case is closed. If property ownership has not complied, meaning they have not corrected the violations, then the property owner may be subject to further enforcement via a General Manager's Administrative Hearing with possible escalation to the City Attorney's Office and the Rent Escrow Account Program or REAP. There is the possibility of an extension of time only after the first re-inspection and if staff determines that significant progress has been made.

**So you get involved with the City Attorney's Office if it goes that far?**

**Karen:** Inspection staff sometimes may be called to testify or to give a deposition. We do have a court liaison unit that works with the City Attorney's Office.

**Do you hope it doesn't get that far?**

**Karen:** We, of course, always hope for compliance. And historically we have achieved, I believe, nearly 99 percent compliance, with only about one percent going to the City Attorney's office.

**Kristine:** The ultimate goal of the LAHD, whenever we do issue an order, is compliance. Get it fixed, make it safe, get the work done; it's a benefit for the property owner as well as the actual tenants. We work tirelessly to make it happen.

— CONTINUES ON PAGE 25





"Wishing my hardworking dad a Happy Father's Day! We love you, grandpa. Love, Jeremiah."

— **Stephanie Bernal, Rec and Parks**

# Send in your Father's Day tributes!

## High-Fives for Dad!

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

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

Act quickly, as our June issue is fast approaching.

### DEADLINES:

**MAY 15:**  
published in print and online

**JUNE 12:**  
published online only



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

— **Det. Sandra Platero, LAPD**



"We love and appreciate you every day! But Father's Day is a great day to celebrate you and all that you do for our family. Love, Marquas and Kim."

— **For Burt Smith, Public Works/Sanitation**



"Happy Father's Day to the best dad and husband ever! We love you and hoping you rock on every day!"

— **For Chris Ewing, LAHD**



To submit your Father's Day tribute, go to: [alive.employeesclub.com/fathersday](http://alive.employeesclub.com/fathersday)



Noelle Kauffman, Club Director of Sales

## Noelle's Picture Perfect Contest

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

This month's theme was: **Spring Forward.**

"Cherry blossoms at Mt. Fuji, Japan."

— **Jesica Montano, Rec and Parks**

**Noelle's comment:** Your lovely photo is not only set in Japan, but it carries the traditional style of woodblock prints, too. Beautifully composed. Thanks for submitting!



"I took this photo at the Chilliwack Tulip Festival in Vancouver, Canada. I've always wanted to attend this festival because tulips are my favorite flower, and tulips reminds me of spring!"

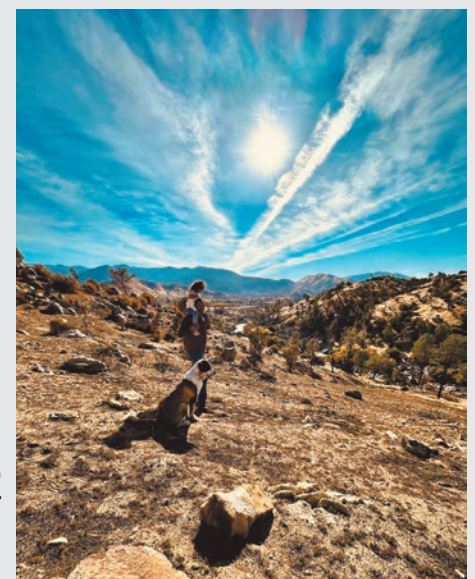
— **Velver Grant, Retired, Airports**

**Noelle's comment:** Me too, Vелver! And your extreme framing creates an infinity effect of color forever. Well done!

"Lake Isabella, during a hike. Sometimes you forget that the sky can speak volumes if you just stop and take a moment and just look up."

— **Dena Nasih, City Attorney**

**Noelle's comment:** I love the effect of high contrast to make the subjects blend into nature, Dena. They are book-ended by streaks of clouds on top, and earth that is ready to bloom. It's nature on the edge of becoming something new! Thanks for submitting. (And I wonder what they're staring at! Now you have me wondering!)



The next photo contest theme:

### Faces

Send in a photo featuring one or more happy, sad, surprised, laughing, crying ... faces.

DEADLINE:  
April 15

Submit your best photos online here: [alive.employeesclub.com/pictureperfect/](http://alive.employeesclub.com/pictureperfect/) Club Members only. Good luck!



**ENTER TO WIN \$50 AMAZON E-GIFT CARD**

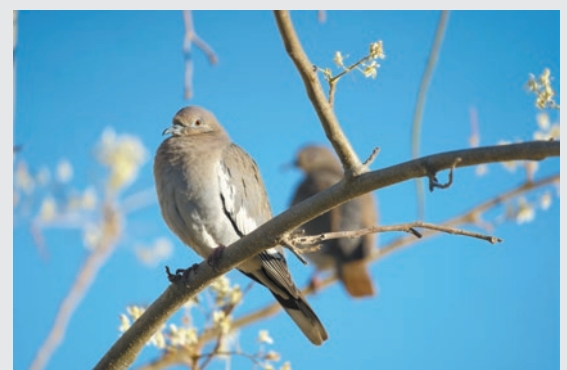
Submit your best photos, and be in the running for a prize.



"Nature's Wonder and Human Art-chitecture sharing the same frame. They say that your best camera is the one you always take with you. Well, pigs are flying somewhere and Hades is forecasting winter, since this spring day (May 2023) was shot with an iPhone."

— **Dominique Daito, LAPD**

**Noelle's comment:** I like that phrase, Dominique. I think it's true of most things in life! I'm glad you had it with you for this gem of an angle of Disney Hall and sky I've never seen before. Thanks for submitting!



"I took this picture while having my morning coffee in my front yard. This dove was resting on my moringa tree and I didn't hesitate to run inside my house and get my camera."

— **Rose Serrato, Retired, LAPD**

**Noelle's comment:** That was the right instinct, Rose! And I like to think that the dove waited for you to return! Anyway, thanks for the feel of spring here.





# Retired Los Angeles City Employees, Inc.

# RLACEI

## For Retired Club Members

### CONTACT INFORMATION

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



Ruth B. Perry

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

#### 2023 Executive Board of Directors

- Ruth B. Perry, *President*
- Beverly J. Clark, *First Vice President*
- Mark Blunk, *Second Vice President*
- Loucin (Lucy) Artinian, *Treasurer*
- Nancy Hammoudian, *Secretary*

#### RLACEI DIRECTORS

##### Dial (800) 678-4145 plus extension

- Beverly Anderson, *Nominations Chair* Ext. 702
- Loucin (Lucy) Artinian, *Treasurer* Ext. 718
- Mark Blunk, *Audit Chair* Ext. 704
- Beverly J. Clark, *Publicity Director* Ext. 716
- Nancy Hammoudian, *Secretary* Ext. 705
- Vicki Keoseian, *Entertainment Chair* Ext. 719
- Ruth B. Perry, *President* Ext. 717
- Joe Quan, *Technology Director* Ext. 703
- Ann Seales, *Membership Director* Ext. 706
- Leonard Torres, *Director* Ext. 707

#### 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 news.  
Call (800) 678-4145 Ext. 0 to make suggestions.  
EMAIL: [Contact@RLACEI.org](mailto:Contact@RLACEI.org)

#### MAILING ADDRESS:

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

#### Change of Address?

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



Beverly J. Clark

### Send in your Interesting News Contributions!

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

### RETIREE EVENTS

#### Stay Tuned!

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

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

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

#### RLACEI EVENTS RESERVATION LINE

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

*Due to staffing, telephone confirmation cannot be provided.*

### RETIREES ON THE MOVE

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



Beverly J. Clark

## Meet Marlene Brown She's a Retiree on the Move.

Meet Marlene Brown, a Retiree on the Move. Marlene retired in August 2016 after 35 years of City service. Marlene's positions with the City were as a part-time Program Assistant with Community Development; Clerk Typist with Animal Regulations; and Clerk Typist and Sr. Clerk Typist with Sanitation and Airports. She retired from LACERS as a Sr. Clerk Typist and Benefits Specialist with LACERS.

"I moved to California at age 18," Marlene says. "My mom and brother also live here in California. We relocated from Massachusetts. The weather in Massachusetts got down to 30 degrees below zero. I would often say that the weather was not fit for man or beast. I have two dogs, Bailey and Baxter, who I affectionately call my sons. Bailey and Baxter are both rescue dogs. Shelters offer a variety of pets, all needing loving homes. Consider adopting rather than purchasing an animal, and save a life!

"My hobbies include gardening: cultivating fruits and vegetables; and emergency preparedness food for sustainability.

"In retirement, I keep busy by running a dog-sitting business and assisting my retired neighbors to join the business as well. I also have a part-time job as a Program Instructor.

"My travels have taken me to Canada, England, Jamaica and the Bahamas.

"Since retirement, I have become involved with LACERS Well, and as an RLACEI member I attend many of the RLACEI functions. I feel that it keeps me connected to my City of Los Angeles family.

"I am a member of Cottonwood Church and have volunteered for 33 years as a Children's Church Worker."

#### Community Involvement

"I work at a nonprofit in Santa Clarita where I reside. I have worked there for six years working as a Program Instructor teaching life skills to adults with disabilities. It is an opportunity to give back. The position is very rewarding as I feel I do make a positive difference in the clients' lives. Some of my activities as a Program Instructor are as follows: teaching a Skills to Pay the Bills class; teaching an online class, Touring the World; teaching an Art for Beginners class, which is considered a soft employment skills class (listening and following instructions). I have participated in taking students to Ventura to tour a bee farm, a fish hatchery, and the Fillmore Museum. We have taken the train to Olvera Street to tour the Chinese museum, the Fire Fighter Museum and tour the shops. We have toured Chinatown and Little Tokyo. We also took the train to Ikea in Burbank. Students learn money and shopping skills, typing, laundry, mobility, cooking and self-determination, etc.

"An important point to note regarding my part-time position: I did not pay into Social Security because I worked for the City of Los Angeles. As a teenager I paid four years into Social Security. Now, my position as a part-time Program Instructor has qualified me to receive Social Security benefits as I now have my 40 quarters. I will not have to pay the medical subsidy aside from the IRMAA (Income Related Adjustment Amount). I advise Retirees

to check with Social Security for additional information."

#### Words of Wisdom for Retirees or Those About to Retire

"Be sure you retire to something. Have a hobby, part-time work, etc. in place as the honeymoon period of retirement gets old really fast. Believe it or not, you will get tired of traveling. You must keep busy! The wall of retirement will hit you like a brick wall and it will be unexpected, as retirement is not associated with emptiness. It is a place that you have not been in life because you have been busy working. It is at this point you must find purpose in life. If you don't, you will not thrive. I speak from a vantage point of experience."

#### The Smartest Thing You Did to Prepare for Retirement

"One of the smartest things I did is that I took the advice of the manager who hired me and retired when I was eligible. A lot of people don't realize that a lot of the deductions such as LACERS retirement contributions go away after you retire. I did not need to have 40 years of service to retire comfortably!"

#### What Do You Miss About Your Service to the City?

"I don't miss working because I had to get up at 4:30 a.m. and had quite a commute. I vanpooled and spent a minimum of two hours a day commuting. I am now living more on my terms. I get up at 6 a.m.; my workday begins at 8 a.m.; and my workday ends at 2 p.m. I work locally with relatively no commute, and I take naps in the daytime!"

#### Reflecting on Your City Career

"I would not have done anything differently. I am thankful to have worked for the City of Los Angeles."

#### How Do You Fill Your Days?

"I initially provided dog sitting services free of charge for many years. My love for animals is what launched me into my dog-sitting business. You must have a love for animals to do this type of work. I have a thriving dog -sitting business with many high-end clientele. I refer some clients to others in the dog business at times. I have to walk the dogs daily, so they keep me moving and have aided in my mobility. A treadmill is no match for a dog because a dog must be walked! Exercise must be a part of our lives and we need to find whatever is suitable for us."

#### Would You Change Anything About Retired Life?

"I am very happy in retirement, and as I have stated I am doing life more on my terms now!" ●



Marlene Brown

### LACERS BOARD UPDATE

by Michael R. Wilkinson, LACERS Commissioner • [MikeWilkinson4LACERS@gmail.com](mailto:MikeWilkinson4LACERS@gmail.com)



Michael R. Wilkinson

## LACERS Sets 2024 COLA at 3 Percent

The LACERS Board of Administration has set the Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA) at three percent for Tier 1 members effective July 1. The COLA is based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI) for all urban consumers in the Los Angeles, Long Beach and Anaheim area as determined by the Federal Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Los Angeles Retirees' Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA) is based on inflation (CPI). Tier 1 Retirees will get a COLA raise of three percent this year; the extra .5 percent will go into a COLA bank for future low-inflation years. This system helps ensure Tier 1 Retirees keep up with inflation during high-cost years, while still providing some raise in low-cost years. Tier 3 Retirees will receive a COLA raise capped at two percent without a savings pool.

The accumulated COLA bank percentage is determined by retirement date and ranges from 20.2 percent to .5 percent. For Tier 1 members retiring after July 1, 1980, the bank is 5.7 percent or less.

There is no longer a Tier 2. Tier 3 is made up of members who

started with the City on or after Feb. 21, 2016, unless they qualified for Tier 1 membership.

Whenever we talk about COLAs, there is always a temptation to ask why "the grass is always greener on the other side of the fence," to quote the old proverb. I frequently get the question on why this pension plan or that pension plan or Social Security has a higher COLA. The answer is that the laws are different, and the plans use different CPIs and different dates to set the CPI. Sometimes the other plan is higher and some years it is lower.

It's important to remember that COLA isn't guaranteed everywhere. Some plans don't offer COLA adjustments at all. Others have lower caps on annual increases or might even skip COLA payments entirely if the plan isn't financially healthy. Additionally, some plans don't factor previous COLA raises into future calculations, which can significantly reduce the overall benefit over time. This clarifies that COLA is a benefit, but not a universal one, and highlights some potential limitations to be aware of. ●





Arnette Travis

By Arnette Travis  
Author/Activist/Advocate, RLACEI Contributing Author

## Happy Leap Year

*'Let this be the year you're ready to leap into the life you're meant to live. Ready, set, fly!'*

To celebrate the extra day we're given every four years, here's what I call The Mental and Physical Fab Four, along with a bit of info on how they play into our daily life.

### 1. What's Eating You?

We know that we should eat nutritious foods and exercise to be healthy. But if you are not getting the essential nutrients your body needs, your body's ability to function in the way nature intended is limited, and in some cases, disabled. If you eat too much or too little, lack of proper nutrition can interfere with the ability to focus and concentrate, and recent research suggests that the risk of dementia can be lessened by diet choices.

- You are what you eat, so don't be fast, cheap, easy or fake. Your diet should include beans, fresh fruits (avoid fruit juices), green leafy vegetables and nutrient-dense vegetables (e.g. cabbage and broccoli), fatty fish, avocados, peppers, mushrooms, tomatoes, onions, garlic and dark chocolate. Eat meat sparingly and in small amounts. (Consult your doctor when making diet changes.)

### 2. Wet Up

Water is essential to all life forms and makes up about 60 percent of the human body. The main reason we need to drink water is to replace bodily fluids lost through exhaling, sweating and eliminating waste. As we age, the physical sensation of being thirsty can dull and may not occur often enough to prevent dehydration.

- Drink half your body weight daily in ounces of water to ensure proper hydration. Set a reminder (maybe wear a rubber band around the wrist) to drink water throughout the day.

### 3. Sleep Time

Lack of sleep impairs physical and mental function, and sufficient sleep boosts your physical and mental functions. Sleep affects growth and stress hormones, the immune system, appetite, breathing, blood pressure and cardiovascular health. On average, adults need seven to eight hours of sleep every night to achieve the maximum restorative benefits of sleep.


- Go to bed at the same time each night and get up at the same time each morning.
- Limit the use of electronics before bed.
- Relax before bedtime. A warm bath or reading might help.




### 4. Work It Out

Our cars and household conveniences have severely limited our physical movement so that we don't have to expend great amounts of energy in the performance of daily activities. But this easy life has a dark side, as sitting has more detriment than benefit. Our bodies were made for movement, and when we don't move enough, we pay the consequences in the form of declining physical ability and health. In other words, move it or lose it.

- Just because you can, doesn't mean you should. Start out slowly and add to your exercise regimen over time if you haven't been physically active for a while. Being sore after exercising usually means that you've pushed your body too far, too soon. (Consult your doctor before beginning an exercise program.) ●



# RLACEI 2024




## Annual "Spring Fling"

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

Join today!

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



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

RSVP to (800) 678-4145 Ext. 701

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

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

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Attendees: \_\_\_\_ 1 \_\_\_\_ 2

Meal Selection: \_\_\_\_ Beef Burger \_\_\_\_ Beef Hot Dog \_\_\_\_ Veggie Burger

Email to [Contact@RLACEI.org](mailto:Contact@RLACEI.org) or mail to RLACEI, P.O. Box 86264, Los Angeles, CA 90086

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

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



LIKE US ON

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**RLACEI MEMBERS**

Not an RLACEI member?

**Join and like us on FACEBOOK**

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



**Become an RLACEI Member!**

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

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

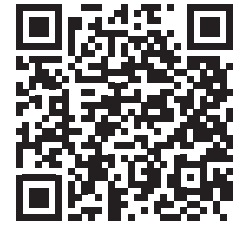




# MEDAL OF VALOR

Dept. honors 8 for heroic acts.

READ THE COMPLETE STORY OF ALL THE HONOREES ON WEB ALIVE!



**LAFD:** On Nov. 13, the LAFD hosted its annual Valor ceremony at Dodger Stadium. The ceremony, sponsored and produced by the LAFD Foundation, honored eight who performed over and above the call of duty during

*Congratulations to all! Following are abridged narratives of the events for which the Firefighters were honored. Narratives are courtesy the LAFD Foundation.*

## HONOREES

### MEDAL OF MERIT

Firefighter Kari Field  
Firefighter/Paramedic Jason Lawrence  
Apparatus Operator Tai Trinh

### LETTER OF SPECIAL COMMENDATION

Capt. I Florin Sarbu  
Apparatus Operator David Duran  
Firefighter/Paramedic Darren Lloyd

### UNIT OF THE YEAR

LAFD Arson Counter-Terrorism Section:  
Batt. Chief David Reddix  
Capt. II Stephen Phillips

Also highlighted were:

### FOUNDATION OF THE YEAR

SophiaGrace Foundation

### CORPORATE IMPACT AWARD

Cedars Sinai

### Medal of Valor

The Medal of Valor is awarded to sworn personnel who have demonstrated bravery at great risk to their own lives, beyond a doubt and clearly above the call of duty, whether on or off-duty.

### Medal of Merit

The Medal of Merit is awarded to sworn personnel who distinguish themselves by performing an act where the individual's actions, if not taken, would have resulted in serious injury or present imminent danger to life. The individual must have demonstrated a conspicuous act of bravery with calculated personal risk to his or her own life.

### Letter of Special Commendation

A Letter of Special Commendation is awarded to department members who perform an act requiring initiative and/or ability worthy of recognition during emergency or non-emergency conditions.

### Corporate Impact Award

The Corporate Impact Award is presented to a company that exhibits philanthropic excellence in the community, outstanding corporate citizenship, and longstanding support of the Department and its personnel.

### Community Impact Award

The Community Impact Award is presented to an organization that provides invaluable service to the community and outstanding support for the people of Los Angeles.

### Station/Division of the Year Award

The Station/Division of the Year Award is presented to the men and women assigned to one specific station or division, who collectively exhibit exemplary service, professionalism, bravery and compassion.

### MEDAL OF MERIT:



Medal of Merit  
Firefighter Kari Field



Medal of Merit  
Firefighter/Paramedic Jason Lawrence

### Firefighter Kari Field Firefighter/ Paramedic Jason Lawrence

Fire Station 83, Encino

Lawrence and Firefighter Kari Field ran into complications with their bee hoods as they attempted to fit them over their new gear. Undeterred, the pair prepared to confront the bee threat head-on—hoods or no hoods.

Upon arrival at the scene, Firefighter/Paramedic Lawrence described the sight as being right out of a horror movie; thousands of bees were swarming multiple houses and ravaging anyone who ventured within 30 yards of their domain.

Amid the chaos, Firefighter/Paramedic Lawrence and Firefighter Field noticed a UPS driver who had exited his truck to deliver a package, completely unaware of the swarm. LAFD members attempted to warn the driver using the fire engine's

PA system, but it was too late. The driver was quickly overtaken by an onslaught of aggressive bees...

On May 15, 2023, the LAFD responded to a report of thousands of bees attacking and swarming a particular neighborhood.

As Firefighters sped toward the scene, Firefighter/Paramedic Jason

### MEDAL OF MERIT:



Medal of Merit  
Apparatus Operator Tai Trinh

### Apparatus Operator Tai Trinh

On Jan. 9, 2023, torrential rainstorms drenched the San Fernando Valley, leaving the City grappling with the aftermath of flooding and destruction. Amid the chaos, a frantic call reporting a traffic accident led members of the LAFD to a terrifying scene.

Two vehicles were teetering precariously on top of each other in the mouth of a sinkhole on Iverson Road. LAFD units converged to confront the challenge and quickly discovered that two victims were trapped in the lowermost vehicle. Their lives hung in the balance as the sink hole threatened to collapse further.

The team initially provided a 35-foot extension ladder along with a 24-foot straight ladder to get to the vehicle in hopes of reaching the trapped passengers. However, the individuals were too afraid to climb out. The LAFD crew knew the hole was unstable and could collapse completely at any moment. They needed to act fast.

Apparatus Operator Tai Trinh, who was trained for high-angle rescue operations, descended into the active sinkhole and retrieved the individuals from the chasm, one person at a time. The LAFD on-scene units coordinated to employ a two-line rope system, a tactic used for technical rescues that require rope to access patients...

### DIVISION OF THE YEAR:

### LAFD Arson Counter-Terrorism Section:

### Battalion Chief David Reddix Capt. II Stephen Phillips



Battalion Chief David Reddix

When a string of intentionally set fires put residents of Los Angeles's Fairfax district on edge through May and June of 2023, LAFD's Arson Counter-Terrorism Section (ACTS) worked tirelessly to identify a suspect.

The suspected arsonist was arrested June 14, 2023.

Later, on Sept. 20, 2023, ACTS investigators identified and arrested an individual alleged to be responsible for setting four fires that were part of a series of fires over a 72-hour period in the Reseda area. ACTS investigators went to work interviewing multiple witnesses, combing through debris, gathering evidence, and reviewing surveillance footage. This led to the prompt apprehension of the arsonist alleged to be involved.

With more than 50 arrests in 2023 and a 95 percent...



Capt. II Stephen Phillips

### LETTER OF SPECIAL

### COMMENDATION: Capt. 1 Florin Sarbu

Drill Tower 40, San Pedro

### Apparatus Operator David Duran

First Station 15, University Village



Capt. 1 Florin Sarbu



Apparatus Operator David Duran

On Sept. 11, 2022, the LAFD found itself confronting a harrowing situation at Victory Baptist Church, a historical landmark and religious haven for the Black community in South Los Angeles.

Capt. Florin Sarbu and his team arrived on-scene and entered the sanctuary, initially only encountering light smoke but quickly discovering a fire blazing in a bathroom on the ground floor.

While Sarbu and his team called for reinforcements to assist with interior salvage operations, the roof team reported a growing blaze from the church's attic. Capt. Sarbu rallied resources with Apparatus Operator David Duran to breach the ceiling and access the attic, and LAFD members went to work carving ventilation holes into the ceiling and discharging water into the space.

Suddenly, a colossal expanse of the ceiling fell, immediately trapping an LAFD member beneath its weight.

A "mayday" call reverberated through the chaos, signaling to all surrounding firefighters that one of their own was down. However, the debris made efforts to free the trapped member extremely difficult.

Thinking quickly and strategically, Capt. Sarbu, Apparatus Operator Duran and the other members channeled their collective strength into breaking apart and shifting the fallen ceiling debris. This coordinated...

### LETTER OF SPECIAL COMMENDATION:

### Firefighter/Paramedic Darren Lloyd

Fire Station 83, Encino



Firefighter/Paramedic Darren Lloyd

On Nov. 3, 2022, Firefighter/Paramedic Darren Lloyd, a member of Rescue Ambulance 7 (RA7), received an urgent call to North Cedros Avenue. The report was alarming: A 30-year-old mother had just given birth, and there were fears that her newborn was not breathing.

When RA7 arrived, the team was shaken; three years before, they had responded to a call involving the same woman. The LAFD alleged that she had overdosed on drugs and, shockingly, delivered her first child. Despite their intense rescue efforts, the baby did not survive, traumatizing everyone involved.

Firefighter/Paramedic Lloyd and his team were facing a near repeat of the previous incident. The newborn showed signs of distress, and they knew they needed to act fast. He convinced the mother to go to the hospital. During the trip she made several attempts to escape, which further complicated the situation.

At the hospital, Firefighter/Paramedic Lloyd explained the situation to the charge nurse and emphasized the high risk that the woman would leave with her baby if not closely monitored. When he left briefly and returned later, he received devastating news that the mother had cut the baby's umbilical cord and left the hospital with the child, without treatment or care for the infant.

For the rest of their shift, Firefighter/Paramedic Lloyd and his team desperately combed through surrounding areas where they had found the mother previously...

### Community Impact Award:

### Cedars-Sinai



Receiving their honor from LAFD Chief Kristin Crowley (center) on behalf of Cedars-Sinai are Ryan Tuchmayer (left) and Zeke Triana.

Cedars-Sinai has fostered a collaborative long-term partnership with the LAFD Foundation to address a multitude of LAFD medical, safety and behavioral health needs. In 2022, Cedars-Sinai saw 11,581 LAFD ambulance transports and has directed nearly \$900,000 to a wide range of impact areas that support the LAFD over the years.

In 2020, to address Firefighter health and safety concerns, Cedars-Sinai partnered with the LAFD Foundation to purchase new hoods that inhibit exposure to harmful particles and contaminants.

Cedars-Sinai spearheaded funding for the launch of the first LAFD Advanced Provider Response Unit (APRU) in 2018. During the 12-month pilot program, the APRU was linked to 968 emergency medical incidents and was able to fully evaluate 579 patients. Of these 579 patients, 217 were treated, released on scene, and referred to primary/preventative care, avoiding the need for ambulance transport to the emergency department.

Cedars-Sinai has supported the LAFD's Behavioral Health Program to ensure that all members and their families have prompt access to counseling and psychological services...

### FOUNDATION OF THE YEAR AWARD

### SophiaGrace Foundation

Since 2017, the SophiaGrace Foundation's work has been guided by two ideals: wisdom and compassion. This private foundation has supported local, national, and international nonprofits that have dedicated their work to climate and environmental protection, international humanitarian work, social and economic justice, and disaster prevention and response.

In 2018, during California's deadliest wildfire season on record, the SophiaGrace Foundation realized that all these causes were interconnected. Wildfires have significant negative impacts on the climate, environment, and human welfare.

In the thick of this season, the SophiaGrace Foundation was moved by LAFD members battling these fires and protecting life and the environment. They felt the desire to make a difference and needed a local partner who could respond to the community's needs. This desire was the catalyst for an ongoing partnership between the SophiaGrace Foundation and the LAFD Foundation.

Over the past five years, the SophiaGrace Foundation has partnered with the LAFD Foundation to secure more than \$850,000 in equipment and resources. The SophiaGrace Foundation has assisted with the purchase of invaluable wildfire fighting equipment, including ALERT Wildfire cameras and equipment, ...



Receiving their honor from LAFD Chief Kristin Crowley (center) on behalf of SophiaGrace Foundation are Cindy Yao (left) and Christina Singleton.



# Success on the Sea

Story and photos courtesy Harbor

ALL-FEMALE TEAM FROM HARBOR AND PARTNERS WINS CHALLENGE CUP.



The Harbor's winning team included (front row, from left) Stephanie Magnien, Legislative Representative, Harbor; Regina Rojas/CMA CGM; Katherine Kronheim/Yusen Terminals Inc.; Sarah Sangmeister/Peacock Piper via TraPac; and Kelly Kontogiorgi/Fenix Marine Services; Back row: Fran Ohlheiser/Yusen Terminals Inc.; Beatriz Rebollar/EverPort Terminal Services; and Flora van der Schoot/APL.

**HARBOR:** In February, an all-female team of Harbor employees and its port vendors won the highly competitive TPM24 Challenge Cup Regatta and Yacht Race. The race took place March 3.

The Port is a sponsor and participant in the race.

The Harbor team was the first-ever that included all women, appropriate for concluding Women's History Month.

The fourth Challenge Cup featured on-the-water team building, networking, and competitive racing aboard the famous fleet of Catalina 37 racing yachts owned by the Long Beach Sailing Foundation and used in internationally prestigious regattas such as the Congressional Cup. The Los Angeles Yacht Club, the body officiating the regatta, presents the historic Morrow Cup to the winning team.

Vendors who participated in the Harbor's entry included APL, CMA CGM, Everport Terminal Services, Fenix Marine Services, TraPac, Yusen Terminals, and Peacock Piper Tong + Voss.

The Harbor team was coordinated by Eric Caris, Director of Cargo Marketing, Harbor, a sailing enthusiast – it was his idea to put together the all-women's team this year. He coordinates the race on behalf of the Harbor with TPM each year.

Congratulations, Port of Los Angeles Team!



The winning team aboard their vessel.



The race is on!



FOR ACTIVE AND RETIRED MEMBERS

## LACERS Offers Access Thru Office Hours, Online

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

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

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

## LACERS YouTube Channel Has New Handle

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

FOR RETIRED MEMBERS

## Cost of Living Adjustment Becomes Effective July

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

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

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

### 2023 1099-R FORMS

LACERS has mailed its 2023 1099-R tax forms to Retirees and beneficiaries. The 1099-Rs were sent to the address on file with LACERS. If you have changed your address or plan to, please complete and submit a **Change of Address form**, found at [lacers.org/forms](https://lacers.org/forms). If you have not received your 1099-R, you can either download a copy via your MyLACERS account or call and request a duplicate to be mailed to you. ●



# CLAIMS MONTHLY

Your Club Insurance Dollars at Work

Claims paid in February: **\$583,824**

Claims paid since 1992: **\$127,454,608**

PRODUCT	FEBRUARY	TOTAL SINCE 1992
Life/Accidental Death and Dismemberment	\$261,043	\$73,477,502
Disability Insurance	\$113,978	\$35,450,771
Long-Term Care Insurance	\$138,391	\$13,439,537
Cancer/Critical Care Insurance	\$70,150	\$4,954,100
Accident Plan	\$260	\$132,697
<b>Totals</b>	<b>\$583,824</b>	<b>\$127,454,608</b>

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

**(800) 464-0452**



Dulce Lopez  
Claims Administrator



Mikayla Sprague  
Claims Administrator

### CLUB MEMBERS' PRAISE

"On a scale from 1 to 10 I would evaluate your [claims] service as a 10-plus. From the very first call with Monica Zamudio, I was treated with respect, kindness and compassion. She always displayed patience and complete knowledge of the submission process. She treated me more like a member of her family."

— Keith Williams, May 2022

## Looking for Promotional Products?

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[www.RosebudMarketing.com](http://www.RosebudMarketing.com)



# Alive! AROUND THE WORLD

## Philippines



"My friend Jacqueline Basuel (Public Works/Contract Administration) invited me to go to her birthplace, the Philippines. This was my first time visiting Asia but our first time visiting the island of Boracay. We spent five days there but a total of 25 days in the Philippines. The hospitality displayed from her family was superb."

— Lisa Adams, LAPD



## Thailand



"#TikTokmademedoit - Carp Cafe, located in Chiang Mai, Thailand. I saw this Japanese restaurant on TikTok, and it did not disappoint. The food was delicious, the service was great and the koi fish were ready to eat."

— Minerva Gutierrez, Airports

## Zimbabwe



Pablo Ninofranco, retired employee of the Harbor Department, and his wife, Josie toured Africa. "These pictures were taken at Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe, Africa in February 2024. All wet!"

— Pablo Ninofranco, Retired, Harbor

## Captain's Log

Traveling with Capt. Michael Barnes, Retired, Harbor



## Letter From Paris

### Brides, Firemen, Vin de la Maison

Bonjour mes compagnons de voyage. It's April in Paris!

Over the years, I have visited Paris many times, flying from New York on the Concorde, hitchhiking there regularly while serving in the British military, and even driving a 1979 Stutz Bearcat that looked somewhat like the Batmobile from Málaga, Spain and the City of Lights never lost its romantic charm. With sight-seeing of the Eiffel Tower, Louvre Museum, Basilica of Sacré-Coeur de Montmartre, etc. behind me now, there is nothing finer than the smell of freshly baked baguettes and coffee in the morning or a late-night dinner with friends sharing a bottle or two of vin de la Maison around the Latin Quarter and La Place de la Contrescarpe as James Joyce and Earnest Hemmingway did before me.

People-watching is a great way to spend a hot afternoon in Paris. Once, while sitting outside Café La Contrescarpe opposite the square's small central park drinking adult beverages, a group of young ladies accompanied by a whistle-blowing escort appeared and proceeded to secure two of their group with duct tape to a lamppost; once finished, they all retired to the café, ordered drinks and cheered on their friend's antics while trying to escape. Apparently, this is how an "Enterrement de vie de fille" (bachelorette party) is celebrated in Paris.

April is an excellent time for a first-time visit to Paris, as it's the start of the tourist season. Hotels are cheaper, and the crowds are also smaller than in summer. Easter Monday falls on April 1 this year (Lundi de Pâques) and is a public holiday (jour férié) when people spend time with family or friends, shops and businesses close, and public trans-



The Arc de Triomphe de l'Etoile

operas and ballets tends to be fancy, so if you do attend an event, have a little fun and dress to impress. During the intermissions while drinking champagne in the Grand Foyer, check out the ornate, gilded architecture and paintings on the ceiling; they were inspired by the Hall of Mirrors from the Palace of Versailles.

Once, while I was talking to one of the custodians, she explained that there was an urban legend that, at the turn of the century, during certain romantic or tragic operas, people in similar situations would gather in a small area in front of the stage to commiserate each other. She also informed me that ten meters beneath the stage lies a 25-by-50-meter artificial lake surrounded by vaults, built during the theatre's construction in 1860 to relieve pressure from groundwater infiltration and to help maintain the foundations of this enormous building. Unfortunately, tourists have no access to it. Still, its long-submerged labyrinth-like corridors are like a subterranean parking lot, and firefighters from all over France come to practice mock rescues in its dark waters just in case of flood in similar buildings.

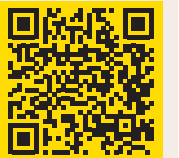
I hope that my letter inspires you to visit and explore Paris independently. ●

port runs on a Sunday schedule.

The guidebooks and bus tours make it easy to see all the famous sights, so try something special like a performance of the Opéra National de Paris at the Palais Garnier, which was built between 1862 and 1875 and designed by the 35-year-old architect Charles Garnier, this 118,404-square-foot building has the largest stage in Europe and can hold up to 450 artists. It was initially called "Salle des Capucines" because of its location on the Boulevard des Capucines but changed to "Palais Garnier" in memory of its architect, Charles Garnier. The mythical hall is open to the public, and it's straightforward to take a self-guided tour when the auditorium is closed (with or without an audio guide); there might even be a rehearsal, but nothing can replace the experience of a live performance.

The dress code for Parisians attending the

More pictures from Paris on Web Alive!



### Send in a travel picture holding Alive!

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



## Open Houses Are Back This Month

SANITATION'S POPULAR OPEN HOUSES AT SIX YARDS BEGIN APRIL 20.

**PUBLIC WORKS:** Public Works' Sanitation and Environment begins its series of popular Open Houses April 20, running through June 29.

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

In 2019, more than 6,000 residents



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

attended the open houses with more than 230 City Employees who volunteered their time to give back to the neighborhoods they serve.

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

By combining solid resources, clean water, watershed protection, and recycling education, and recycLA information with refreshments, music and games, Sanitation has succeeded in capturing the attention of families across the City.



### Earth Day Celebration

Saturday, April 20, 2024

North Hollywood Water Conveyance

10801 W. Chandler Blvd.

North Hollywood

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

East Valley Yard	West Valley Yard	North Central District Yard	South LA District Yard	Harbor District Yard	West LA Yard
<b>May 4</b>	<b>May 18</b>	<b>June 1</b>	<b>June 15</b>	<b>June 22</b>	<b>June 29</b>
11050 Pendleton St. Sun Valley	8840 Vanalden Ave. Northridge	452 N. San Fernando Rd. Los Angeles	786 South Mission Rd., Los Angeles	1400 N. Gaffey St. San Pedro	2027 Stoner Ave. Los Angeles



# CLUB RETIREMENT PLAQUE PRESENTATIONS

## We Honor Your Service!

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



**Thomas Godoy**  
LADWP, Retired after 35 years of City service.



**Alfreda Abdul-Ahad**  
State of California, Retired after 38 years of State service.



**Bobby H. Lee**  
LADWP, Retired after 33 years of City service.



**Sharon Lyons**  
LADWP, Retired after 25 years of City service.



**Gregory Ramirez**  
LADWP, Retired after 36 years of City service.



**Cynthia Hill**  
LADWP, Retired after 33 years of City service.



**Adrian Chavez**  
LADWP, Retired after 37 years of City service.



**Ramon Villanueva**  
Airports, Retired after 30 years of City service.



**Kevin M. Schilling**  
LAFD, Retired after 36 years of City service.



**Charles B. Andrews**  
LADOT, Retired after 35 years of City service.



**Elaine Belk**  
LAPD, Retired after 18 years of City service.

### FREE!\* CLUB RETIREMENT PLAQUE

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

\* a \$499 value!



Scan to get started.



The Taxco Theatre's newly renovated performance incubator spaces.

Photos courtesy Cultural Affairs

## Performance Time



The Taxco Theatre.

### CULTURAL AFFAIRS OPENS RENOVATED TAXCO THEATRE IN CANOGA PARK.

**CULTURAL AFFAIRS/COUNCIL:** Cultural Affairs and Councilman Bob Blumenfield celebrated the grand re-opening of the Taxco Theatre in Canoga Park with a reception and performance Feb. 26.

The Taxco Theatre was acquired for Cultural Affairs with the support and leadership of Councilman Bob Blumenfield in 2019. The theatre reopened following a \$1.4 million renovation that transformed the neighborhood mainstay into the only publicly owned facility in the area providing opportunities for local artists, nonprofit organizations, community organizations, and performing arts students to develop and produce new work. The Taxco Theatre's vision is to provide an innovative space to bring music, dance, and theater productions to life.

"The Taxco Theatre is going to provide affordable space and creative guidance to a new generation of artists, and I'm thrilled that our dream is now a reality," Blumenfield said in a statement. "There was no blueprint on how to create public incubator space like this, but I'm very grateful for Cultural Affairs and our Canoga Park neighbors for joining together to help get this done."

"Thanks to the support of Councilmember Blumenfield, we are proud to see this initiative come to fruition, further developing the foundation for arts and cultural programming for the residents of the City of Los Angeles in the San Fernando Valley," Cultural Affairs General Manager Daniel Tarica said in a statement. "In partnership with DCA's Madrid Theatre and Canoga Park Youth Arts Center, this investment will create new opportunities for programming for young people and adults. We could not have done this without the support of the City's Bureau of Engineering, General Services, the staff of our Performing Arts Division, and our community partners."

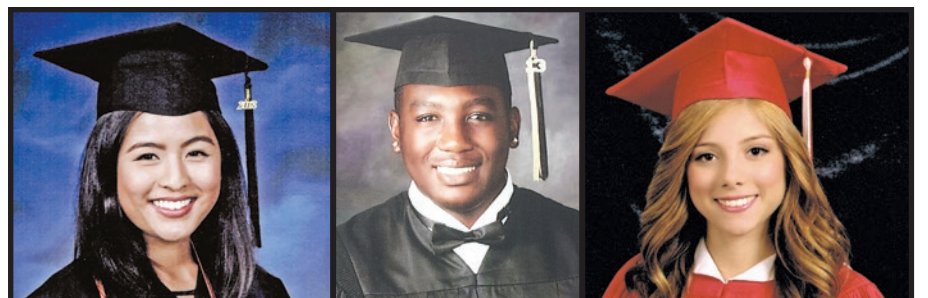
Congratulations to Cultural Affairs, Councilman Bob Blumenfield and all who brought back the Taxco Theatre!



The reopening reception showed off the theater's renovated spaces.



From left: Councilman Bob Blumenfield and Cultural Affairs GM Daniel Tarica cutting the ribbon on the \$1.4-million renovation.



## Put your graduation photo in *Alive!*

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

Make sure you tell us:

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



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



[alive.employeesclub.com/graduations](http://alive.employeesclub.com/graduations)





# Life's Important Moments

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

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

Send your photos and text online:  
[alive.employeesclub.com/lifemoments](http://alive.employeesclub.com/lifemoments)



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



## Retirements\*

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

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

NAME	TITLE	DEPT.	YEARS	NAME	TITLE	DEPT.	YEARS	NAME	TITLE	DEPT.	YEARS
Abel, Darla D.	Sr. Safety Eng. Elev.	Bldg. & Safety	22	Flores, Arthur M.	Tree Surgeon Super.	Rec and Parks	34	Roesner, Heinz D.	Sr. Storekeep/Supply Chain	Public Works/LADWP	–
Abraham, Shelly A.	Motor Sweeper Op.	Public Works	23	Fratianne, Robert J.	Exec. Asst. City Attor.	City Attorney	28	Salvador, Albert A.	Structural Eng.Assoc.	Bldg. & Safety	10
Acevedo, Mario	Water Operations	LADWP	–	Frost, Wayne D.	Power Supply	LADWP	–	Sanchez, Deborah L.	Deputy City Attorney	City Attorney	18
Acevedo, Setta	Accounting/Financial	LADWP	–	Garcia, Eden	Accountant	Fire/Police Pens.	19	Sanders, Emmitt	Floor Finisher	Rec and Parks	19
Acosta, Dabra J.	Crossing Guard	LADOT	7	Gilligan, Kevin A.	Assistant City Attorney	City Attorney	31	Shin, Jay	Sr. Admin. Analyst	CAO	30
Aguilar, John L.	Power Ext. Energy	LADWP	–	Glasco, Renee A.	Legislative Analyst	Council	38	Simpson, Michael A.	Pr. Environ. Engineer	Public Works	39
Aguilar, Salvador	Environ Eng. Associate	Public Works	31	Hernandez, Maricela	Sr. Project Coordinator	Ec./Workforce Dev.	32	Smith, Bridget B.	Assistant General Mgr.	LADOT	8
Allen, Robert J.	Pysician	Personnel	29	Huang, Frieda H.	Financial Mngmt. Spec.	Controller	32	Smith, Bryan	Custodian	Airports	32
Allen, Sylvia W.	Administrative Clerk	Airports	15	Ingersoll, Timothy L.	Energy Distribution	LADWP	–	Solomon, Eskel H.	Assistant City Attorney	City Attorney	32
Anbessaw, Abebaw Z.	Water Operations	LADWP	–	Jhaj, Pritpal Singh	Wastewater Manager	Public Works	36	Stanick, William K.	Energy Distribution	LADWP	–
Anderson, Anson A.	Pr. Detention Officer	LAPD	35	Kemp, Darrell L.	Signal Systems Elect.	LADOT	27	Subia, Trina M.	Administrative Clerk	Rec and Parks	16
Arend, Kurt L.	Engineer	Harbor	35	Kohls, Daniel J.	Energy Distribution	LADWP	–	Tajerian, Ardem A.	Sr. Librarian	Library	29
Barber, Ulonda C.	Custodian	Airports	22	Lavender, Jovonne	Chief Mngmt. Analyst	Controller	35	Tarroja, Adorlita R.	Management Analyst	CAO	22
Bell, Ronald L.	Shift Supervisor	Public Works	39	Lee, Eveline	Power System Eng.	LADWP	–	Tatro, Scott M.	Environmental Manager	Airports	31
Browne, Jeffrey S.	Solid Resource Supt.	Public Works	34	Liaw, Tiffany Ma	Dept. Chief Accountant	Finance	19	Thomas, George C.	Metering Services	LADWP	–
Bugarin, Eddie	Water Distribution	LADWP	–	Lohr, Corazon G.	Sr. Systems Analyst	ITA	24	Thompson, Charyl D.	Police Service Rep	LAPD	29
Burgess, Rick A.	Power CM	LADWP	–	Mao, Michelle	ITS	LADWP	–	Thompson, William J.	Sr. Building Inspector	Bldg. & Safety	20
Burman, Jim	Sr. Civil Engineer	Public Works	38	Mariglia, Robert	Power CM	LADWP	–	Tootle, William K.	Water Distribution	LADWP	–
Carwile, Rita K.	ITS	LADWP	–	McMorrow, Sean P.	Fleet Services	LADWP	–	Torres, Henry	Security Officer	Airports	37
Chang, Chieh M.	Equipment Mechanic	LAPD	25	Muhis, Valerie L.	Water Operations	LADWP	–	Trammell, Reverdia	Administrative Clerk	Cultural Affairs	15
Chang, Rafael E.	Power Supply	LADWP	–	Nguyen, Cuong M.	Systems Programmer	ITA	33	Tung, Guang Min	Civil Engineer	Bldg. & Safety	23
Chavarria, Jesus	Power New Business	LADWP	–	Niemand, Johnny T.	Power Transmission	LADWP	–	Ulbrich, Kurt J.	Sr. Park Srvc. Attend.	Rec and Parks	27
Chiu, Weibing H.	Accountant	Harbor	34	Okamoto, Chris L.	Aquarist	Rec and Parks	32	Urrea, Robert	Shift Supervisor	Public Works	35
Clark, Freneshia L.	Compl. Program Mgr. I	Public Works	36	Park, John H.	Sr. Environmental Eng.	Public Works	34	Valenciano, Yvonne M.	Child Care Associate	Rec and Parks	8
Contin, Laura A.	Sr. Librarian	Library	37	Pasillas, Ramon P.	Elevator Mechanic	Gen.Services	11	Vargas, Manuel R.	Housing Inspector	LAHD	21
Contreras, Roberto R.	Special Prog. Assistant	Rec and Parks	5	Perea, Jon W.	Safety Officer	Airports	10	Wendt, Beth	Build. Maint. Dist. Supv.	Gen.Services	17
Danbury, Sonia J.	Administrative Clerk	Airports	20	Peters-Lawler, Christine	Council Aide	Council	9	Williams, Jeffrey A.	Power Transmission	LADWP	–
Davis, Brian W.	Metering Services	LADWP	–	Portlock, L'tanya Lj	Legal Secretary	City Attorney	15	Williams, Johnny L.	Refuse Col. Truck Op.	Public Works	29
Demoss, Timothy J.	Environmental Affairs	Harbor	32	Pulciano, Sylvia	Sr. Administrative Clerk	Rec and Parks	34	Yancy, Winifred J.	Power New Business	LADWP	–
Edwards, Lisa L.	Sr. Custodian	Gen. Services	27	Robinson, Terry A.	Maintenance Supervisor	Airports	36	Yoder, Kyle R.	Wastewater Manager	Public Works	34
Figueroa, Hilda	Council Aide	Council	11	Robles, Jesse E.	Tree Surgeon	Rec and Parks	37	Zamacona, Joaquin	Fleet Services	LADWP	–

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

## In Memoriam

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

DEPARTMENT	YEARS OF SERVICE	DEPARTMENT	YEARS OF SERVICE	DEPARTMENT	YEARS OF SERVICE			
<b>ACTIVE</b>		Evans, Mark S.	LADWP	17	Myles, Spencer H.	LADOT	32	
Ek, Aaron	LADWP	8	Farrell, Donald R.	–	–	Neal, Gayle L.	Fire/Police Pensions	39
Mantel, Joseph A.	LADWP	25	Fitzgerald, Keith H.	Airports	33	Nelson, John H.	LADWP	33
Navarro, Ezequiel	Rec and Parks	19	Garcia, Manuel	Airports	11	Nichols, Kenneth E.	General Services	19
Stiles, Judith A.	LADWP	29	Garcia, Richard S.	LADWP	32	Ortiz, Jaime O.	LADWP	31
<b>RETIRED</b>		Garrido, Jose F.	General Services	28	Palacios, Josephine	ITA	38	
Akers, Robin M.	General Services	11	Henry, Bertha M.	–	–	Pennington, Harold J.	LADWP	33
Anderson, Helen	–	–	Hernandez, Eddie R.	General Services	31	Perez, Josephine	Rec and Parks	1
Asiain, Jesus C.	LADWP	27	Ho, James F.	LADWP	11	Poplawski, Denny E.	LADWP	40
Bassett, Daniel A.	Airports	33	Hopkinson, Henry R.	LADWP	44	Prelow, Clifford N.	LADWP	32
Bilezikjian, Albert	–	–	Hornbeck, Lark J.	–	–	Rasmussen, Ina M.	General Services	30
Brizuela, Carlos M.	–	–	lalongo, Patricia S.	Planning	25	Roth, Lidia I.	–	–
Brown, Chester N.	Public Works	35	Isaac, Bernel A.	Rec and Parks	29	Ruiz, Angel	LAPD	31
Butcher, Vernon S.	Airports	17	Jackson, Donald N.	Public Works	24	Santos, Christina J.	LADWP	45
Chan, William D.	LADWP	32	Kaprielian, James D.	Building and Safety	34	Schmidt, Robert H.	LADWP	14
Childers, Kerry D.	Public Works	31	Lane, John C.	–	–	Schreiner, Harold W.	LADOT	12
Clardy, Charles L.	–	–	Leduc, Larry D.	LADWP	35	Shaw, Patti C.	LAPD	30
Consoli, Ronald R.	LADWP	40	Lindley, Charles C.	Public Works	21	Shum, Edwin	–	–
Cook, Carolyn A.	LADOT	29	Lopez, Neponuceno	Rec and Parks	40	Sledge, Thomas L.	–	–
Cortez, Freddy	LADWP	33	Lu, Be Van	ITA	18	Tanabe, Clarence	–	–
Coscia, Michael E.	LADWP	19	Lucero, Joseph R.	LADWP	44	Taylor, Richard H.	Airports	15
Crespy, Harvey M.	City Attorney	40	Luna, Albert D.	Public Works	24	Thompson, Glenn E.	LADWP	32
Danne, Terry D.	–	–	Mann, Zona	–	–	True, Deryck T.	LADWP	23
Deak, Joseph	–	–	Marquezdominguez, Emilia M.	LADWP	32	Tyler, Joseph W.	Public Works	25
Duffy, James D.	Rec and Parks	18	Mason, Pamela M.	Library	32	Vega, Robert L.	Public Works	34
Esperjesi, Ernest W.	LADWP	39	Mason, Wayne R.	–	–	Watridge, Donna J.	Controller	30
			Matsuura, Walter W.	–	–	Williams, Bettye J.	LADWP	31
			Millon, Patrick	LADWP	29	Yorita, Kenji	General Services	24



# Ongoing Staff Training

CLUB HOLDS LATEST STAFF SEMINAR TO KEEP ON TOP OF CURRENT INSURANCE INFORMATION AND PRODUCTS.

**THE CLUB:** On March 21, Club Founder and Education and Training Officer John Hawkins held his first training session for Club staff regarding the Club's Long-Term Disability Insurance.

The Club holds staff training sessions periodically, to ensure the Club offers its Members the very best insurance products, and the very best prices anywhere.

"We have a long history of internal staff training sessions to keep up with the very best information, and ensure we're right on top of the marketplace," John Hawkins said. "But this was my first time leading it.

"I can say we're renewed and right on top of our game.

"Long-Term Disability insurance is critically important for our Members to have," he continued. "I can't stress enough how important it is. Talk to a Member counselor at your earliest chance. Really.

"We work hard for our Members, and this session was part of that. Your financial health is important to us." ●

**Contact a Club Counselor for all the latest information, and to get you started on your financial wellbeing.**

At the most recent Club insurance seminar to share with staff the latest information to assist Club Members.



## GROWNUP COLORING CONTEST

WINNER!

**Billy Yuen**  
**LADWP**

**Billy**  
 received a  
\$50  
**Amazon**  
 Gift Card

**Once again, the grown up Club Members have blown us away!**

*Alive!* publishes its Grownup Coloring Contest only once a year. But when we do, Club Members go above and beyond, and send us some amazing works of art.

Thanks for your contributions, and look forward to another Grownup Coloring Contest in the future!

### Other Notable Entries

MEMBER NAME	DEPARTMENT
John Sousa	Airports
George Gonzalez	Retired
Elmer Parada	LADOT
Marlene Chilin	Public Works
Jesica Montano	Rec and Parks
Eduardo Hernandez	Rec and Parks



The floor show included Knights of Medieval Times readying themselves in their quest to victory.

*Photos by Club staff*

# Good Times!

AFTERNOON AT MEDIEVAL TIMES MARKED RETURN TO THE CLUB'S PRIVATE PARTIES.

**THE CLUB:** On Feb. 18, the Club's private parties for Members made a glorious comeback at Medieval Times.

The event, which included a big discount to the admission price, was a sellout.

The Club's private party renaissance underwent delays due to the pandemic and a labor dispute at Medieval Times.

Club Mobile was present to showcase great Club gear to Members and their families.

Special thanks go to all Members who attended and made the Club's Private Party a massive success!

We look forward to a return visit by the Club to Medieval Times. ●



Members and their families enjoyed the Club shopping experience of exclusive merchandise offered by Club Mobile.



Noelle Kauffman, Director of Sales, and her family were ready for an exciting show.



At a previous Sanitation Earth Day event.

# Honoring the Earth

SANITATION TO HOST SEVENTH EARTH DAY SUSTAINABILITY EVENT IN NORTH HOLLYWOOD.

**PUBLIC WORKS:** On Sat., April 20, Public Works/Sanitation and Environment plans to hold its seventh annual Citywide Earth Day LA event, this year at the North Hollywood Water Conveyance Yard. (The event last year was held at the Hyperion Treatment Plant in Playa del Rey.)

Plans include City vehicles for kids to explore, games to play, prizes to win, sustainability workshops, plant giveaways, dozens of exhibitors, customer service, and fun for all ages. Free beverages and snacks will be available while supplies last. All exhibits will be related to City services and sustainability. Plans are subject to change. ●

## EARTH DAY LA 2024

LOS ANGELES VS. PLASTICS  
A ZERO WASTE EVENT

SATURDAY APRIL 20, 2024  
10 AM - 2 PM | FREE ADMISSION

NORTH HOLLYWOOD WATER CONVEYANCE YARD  
10801 W. Chandler Blvd., North Hollywood

## Earth Day LA 2024

- Hosted by Public Works/Sanitation and Environment
- 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.
- North Hollywood Water Conveyance Yard - 10801 W. Chandler Blvd.
- Free
- Limited parking at venue



# 66% OFF Fine Jewelry

## Exclusively for Club Members



### Show MOM your love and appreciation with some shimmer and bling.

Huge selection of bracelets, rings, engagement rings, pendants, earrings, gold jewelry, and more online!



✓ No Credit Check    ✓ No Interest Payments    ✓ No Fees    ✓ 30-Days Return

### HERE'S HOW IT WORKS

- Register online and start shopping.
- Make zero payments today.
- Payroll deduct your purchase with zero interest.
- Make equal installments over 12 months.



[EmployeesClub.com](http://EmployeesClub.com)



**THE ALIVE! INTERVIEW**

**The First Face,** *continued from page 14*

**Xanat:** Certainly, tensions are high on the front lines. Between the years 2022 and 2023, customer traffic at the public counters increased by 76 percent as a result of the increased number of rental properties requiring LAHD's enforcement and different new municipal laws providing new or updated renter protections. According to the number of counter appointments handled during January and February 2024, it is projected that by the end of 2024, it will reach approximately a 56 percent increase over 2023. In addition to the influx of customers at the counters, the volume of telephone calls is another significant indicator. In January 2024 alone, we received more than 40,000 calls at our call center compared to the monthly average of about 19,000 in the past. This surge in counter traffic and calls has put an extra strain on our customer service team.

**Wow.**

**Xanat:** However, we are trying our best to accommodate everyone who needs help. We are working hard to provide additional resources and support to our customer service team. We are committed to providing the best customer service during this difficult time.

**I'm sure your office tried to ramp up knowing that this influx was coming. But 40,000 calls in a month, that's unbelievable.**

**Xanat:** We've had to adjust our operations to accommodate the influx of customers seeking help. We have also implemented new strategies to streamline the call process and provide faster response times. We've had to hire more staff, extend our hours, work overtime, and come up with creative solutions to help those most in need. It's been a difficult but rewarding experience for us.

*LAHD's Front Lines*

**Can you share a few stories that were either happily resolved, or that were difficult?**

**Xanat:** Yes. One story that comes to mind is about a family living in a rent-controlled apartment. During and following the pandemic, the family encountered financial hardship as a result of COVID-related reasons and had difficulty paying rent. The family was concerned about being evicted and therefore homeless, and due to the high costs in Los Angeles, it was extremely difficult to find a rent-controlled unit that would be affordable. We assisted them in finding resources and solutions that enabled them to remain in their home. We offered them referrals to legal advice. The ULA Renter's Assistance Program allowed us to assist the family in catching up on their rent arrears and providing them with the financial assistance they needed to remain in their home. Additionally, we were able to provide them with resources to assist them in managing their finances in the future. In the end, this family kept their home and remained safe and secure. It was a rewarding experience for us and the family. Many families experience situations similar to those experienced by this family. We are committed to providing assistance and resources to those in need. We strive to make a positive impact in the lives of those around us.

In contrast, landlords also face similar challenges, including rent payments not being made, resulting in a high risk of foreclosure. Landlords need to manage these risks by implementing eviction and rent collection policies. We are responsible for providing resources and information about their rights and responsibilities. In addition, we keep them informed of any new legislation or regulations that may affect their businesses. We strive to create an environment where landlords are treated fairly and respectfully.

**Landlords are free to call you, too.**

**Xanat:** Of course.

**Your job is to protect life and livability, but also to follow the law or the code.**

**Xanat:** Exactly.

*Be Prepared*

**What do you wish people knew about the whole process?**

**Xanat:** To be prepared with all your information, complaints, and concerns from the onset of your interaction with LAHD. Do not be afraid to voice your concerns and provide all the information you can obtain. LAHD staff want to understand your situation and provide you with the support you need. Be prepared to answer questions and be open and honest with staff. This will help them provide the best service possible. Neither LAHD nor its staff will ask for your immigration status. We will respect your privacy and protect your information. LAHD staff will not ask you to provide any information that you are not comfortable sharing.

*Wanting to Help*

**What do you love about what you do?**

**Xanat:** As a public servant, my responsibilities go beyond fulfilling my basic duties; they include the ability to make sound decisions, manage resources efficiently, and maintain high ethical and transparency standards. I must also strive to represent my community's best interests, and keep the public informed. Information is knowledge, and knowledge is power. Therefore, I must ensure that I provide the public with accurate and up-to-date information.

A significant part of what I enjoy and love about my job is the satisfaction and impact it has on the community. I'm proud to know that my work makes a difference in people's lives. I'm also grateful for the opportunity to work in an industry that is so rewarding. By doing this, I am able to make a positive impact on society and contribute to my community's development.

**That's an amazing power that the City has invested in you.**

**Xanat:** I must use this power responsibly and honestly. I must also keep the public informed of any changes and developments that affect them. My actions must always be in the right interests of those I serve, and I must be held accountable for them. It is important for me to act with integrity and fairness at all times.

**Xanat, thank you for taking the time to tell us about how your area of LAHD works, and for serving everyone in Los Angeles at a difficult time.**

**Xanat:** Thank you so much. ●



**THE ALIVE! INTERVIEW**

**Livability and Advocacy,** *continued from page 14*

**Keeping the buildings updated adds to the wealth and the value and the stock of the City of Los Angeles. It's good for the entire City.**

**Kristine:** Absolutely, and particularly in the Southern regional office area, where the majority of our housing stock is duplexes. Most of those duplexes are in excess of a hundred years old. So we support maintaining these buildings versus knocking them down and building something new.

**How many inspectors do you have?**

**Kristine:** In our complaint staff group, I believe 99 percent of our inspectors work what we call a 9/80 schedule. We do have some who work a 5/40. A 9/80 means we work five days one week and four days the next week, in a two-week time frame. We have approximately 15 Inspectors assigned to Complaints, and they respond to approximately 25 inspections per week.

**Karen:** Currently there are 55 inspectors assigned to the SCEP program. On average, SCEP Inspectors inspect approximately 100 rental units per week.

*International Codes*

**You don't create the code, you just enforce it, correct?**

**Karen:** LAHD doesn't create the various codes we enforce, but as a Principal Inspector it is my job to correctly interpret that code during difficult situations. We are the enforcement arm for the multi-family properties in Los Angeles.

**Do you get a chance to give them feedback on code?**

**Karen:** I have not done so personally.

**Kristine:** No I have not, either.

**Who creates the code?**

**Kristine:** In the City of Los Angeles, Building and Safety creates and maintains the Building Codes based on Codes adopted by the State of California, with local amendments due to Los Angeles's ever-changing conditions.

*Issues and Education*

**What are the big issues inspectors see? Plumbing, vermin, electricity, a mix? What are you seeing a lot of?**

**Karen:** We have a lot of older stock, so most violations are for maintenance and repair issues. Especially lately due to the inclement weather or the age of the property, a lot of the paint and weatherproofing is happening as well. And then of course wear and tear on the property. Also – tenants sometimes take down the smoke detectors because they were cooking, or whatever reason. We see that a lot, but it comes with the job.

**Kris, what kinds of complaints are you seeing?**

**Kristine:** The majority of the complaints that we get in the cold weather season are malfunctioning heaters. And because of the rain, we're getting a lot of weather protection issues with leaky roofs, and water intrusion into units. It can include floor coverings, carpet that's ripped, holes in walls, peeling paint.

**Is education a big part of what you do?**

**Kristine:** Absolutely. When we go out to a property and you're pointing out a leaky faucet or a toilet that's running, we tell the landlord, do you realize how much money that's costing you in your water bill? When you're educating property owners on these issues, they are more inclined to go ahead and get the repairs done in a very timely manner.

**Karen:** I'm always encouraging our inspection staff to explain exactly what violations they're citing, and how it would benefit the owners to maintain their properties. Also, if a property owner fails to comply within 45 days of the compliance date, they are required to attend PMTP, Property Management Training Program, where they get additional information.

**Are you seeing a lot of livability conditions worsening now because of the housing crunch, and not enough housing for the people who want it? Are you seeing a lot more livability issues now than you saw perhaps 10 years ago?**

**Karen:** I think those are two different things because the housing crunch has caused a different situation. What we saw before – around 2005, maybe up to 2008 – was way worse as far as livability conditions, when we saw so much illegal construction or unapproved use, or people living in sheds or garages, things like that. There was a lot of that kind of thing going on. We still have people living in converted garages, but not as much or in the same conditions. With ADUs now, people can build those and convert them more easily, so that's helping out a lot. We still get that occasionally, but I think the livability conditions have improved since then. Now, with the housing crunch, what we're seeing is more people in those units. We are dealing with a different issue where the occupancy levels are taxing the plumbing and the maintenance more. The livable conditions have improved but the use of them and shared living is more of an issue now.

**Kristine:** One of the biggest problems with trying to legalize Unapproved Dwelling Units is the size of the lot and the parking. The UDUs and the Accessory Dwelling Units allow you to go ahead and not have to have all those other items to get that housing stock added into the inventory. As for occupancy, four people in a one-bedroom apartment is not unusual at this point.





**THE ALIVE! INTERVIEW**

**Livability and Advocacy,** continued from page 25

*Challenges*

**What are the unique challenges of what inspectors do? As in is your safety ever at risk?**

**Kristine:** One of our big things on the complaint side is no different than the postman – there are dogs running around, so dog bites. Another big safety issue we deal with is driving to the locations. We’re driving all over the place, especially in complaints. The South Region is a large area – from one end to the other is 30 miles and from the east to west can be 20 miles. It is not unusual for an inspector to drive anywhere from two to three hundred miles in two weeks. Inspectors use their personal vehicles. We are mileage employees, so of course we’re reimbursed by the City for all the miles that we drive on City time.

**Karen:** As Kris said, there’s always some risk being out in the field. I’ve heard of inspectors driving down the street or pulling up to an inspection, and having items thrown at their vehicles. We’re always concerned with risks and remind staff to be concerned with their safety and mindful of their surroundings while walking down the street, and during inspections. We recommend they remain vigilant even when deciding where to park their vehicles and always have a route out.

Also, Inspectors have to be a problem solver and a mediator. Meditation skills are key, especially in complaint inspections. We have an older housing stock, so we don’t know what was there historically; we need to rely on experience and research to make determinations. For example: Why is the unit count off? This is supposed to be an eight-unit building, but now it’s a 10-unit building. Is this a false wall? We have to be able to recognize through knowledge and experience, that there is an anomaly to determine what it is we need research on. The owners now welcome us more, as opposed to when we first started – you would run across some owners who were offended that we were telling them what to do with their property. Now they know we’re coming and they know, I hope, that they’ll benefit in the long run, and it works out better for everyone.

*Stories of the Crunch*

**Tell us some stories about situations you saw that broke your heart, either positive or maybe tough situations.**

**Kristine:** About two years ago, it was a complaint inspection and I was the Supervisor. My Inspector was scheduled to go out for that complaint inspection. He arrived on site and knocked on the door. There was no answer at the door, so he called the complainant. No one answered, but when he was standing on the stoop, he heard a faint cry. It sounded like a female calling for help. So he called me. I got hold of LAPD, and we coordinated. LAPD arrived on site. They heard a faint cry for help as well, so they broke down the door. An elderly female was on the floor and had been there for two days like that. The Fire Dept. took her to the hospital. Together we saved this woman’s life. When we arrive, we make every effort to try and contact the complainant. But if we can’t contact them then the complaint is closed because we’re not observing any violation. But in this case my Inspector took that extra step to say I think I hear something, let me call my Supervisor. We followed up on it and she survived.

**Karen:** I haven’t had anything that dramatic, but the one thing I recall is that stories of older people always get to me. Years ago I was inspecting an unreinforced masonry building, an old brick building. When I walked in, there was a long hallway with the stairs going up. The owner or the manager suggested we skip the first unit because it had a bad smell, and that the older woman didn’t take care of the unit. He didn’t want to go in at all, but suggested we could go in last because the odor would then fill the hallway, and we might not be able to continue. So I agreed and we held it for the last stop.

When we got to it, this little old lady was sitting in her recliner, alone, and the place was terrible, just horrendous. The carpet was matted and covered. I think she had a bird, and there were bird droppings all over the carpet. Her own feces were also on the floor back near the bathroom, and the smell was terrible. I didn’t want to make a face; I wanted to go in and do my inspection and let her keep her dignity. I talked to her the whole time that I was in there. How are you doing; is there anything in particular in the unit you want me to look at; what’s going on? She said she was fine, keeping quiet even though the world around her was terrible. Eventually, I asked her if she wanted someone to help her take care of things. She said yes, so I made some referrals, especially with the Dept. on Aging. She was given help to get things cleaned up. We’re advocates for them beyond just the regular inspection; there’s a human portion to it. That always gets to me.

Helping fix a broken window in a kid’s bedroom or turning on the hot water in the morning – these situations are out there. We’re in the cold season right now, and people need their heaters. A lot of heaters are not functioning. I recently received a call from a woman in her 70s; the boiler system wasn’t working, and she was freezing. What can I do for her? We wrote what’s called a two-day order, an urgent repair that had to be done to get the boiler system back up. Afterward, she called back to thank everyone involved in the process. I take pride in my work, and I’m glad I’m able to make a difference for people.

**What do you wish people knew about City Inspectors?**

**Kristine:** We’re doing a job and we’re there to help them. That’s the key.

**Karen:** I hope tenants know we are there to help and that property owners know we’re not there to make their life difficult, or make issues for their property. Our primary purpose is to make sure that we are providing livable healthy safe environments for all concerned.

*The Reward*

**What do you love about what you do?**

**Kristine:** The reward of helping people. The first time somebody said thank you, I was parked at a red light, and I thought, wait a minute. Am I getting carjacked here, or what’s happening? It was a young gentleman and he said, “Thank you, you helped my grandma. She is so happy.” I was like, oh my God, that’s great, to be recognized. Karen, you’ve been with the department longer than me. How many thousands of inspections have we done? I got a phone call once, and they asked, “Do you remember me?” My first thought was, how did you get my phone number? “You were so helpful, so I figured I’d call,” they said. The reward of helping people is powerful.

**Karen:** I get the same phone calls. They call to say you were so helpful to them back then. The satisfaction of helping folks is strong. I remember one little boy who was so thankful that I got him a heater in his unit. To know at the end of the day that you’ve helped so many people, I appreciate that. A job that goes beyond earning a living but also allows you to make a difference, I love that. I love this job.

**Kristine:** My job is fun. Where else can you get paid to do all of this, and help people?

**Karen and Kristine, thank you both very much for contributing your time to explain what you do and to tell your stories.**

**Karen:** Thank you for shedding light on the LAHD. I appreciate that.

**Kristine:** Thank you! Bye-bye. ●