



Alive!

Building Hope and Home

PUBLIC WORKS

PAGE 12

Engineering's Interim Housing Program designs spaces and tiny home villages to shelter LA's unhoused.

At the City's North Mission Road tiny home village are (clockwise from bottom right) Marina Quiñonez, Sr. Architect and manager of the Interim Housing Program; Mariet Ohanian, Civil Engineer, Club Member; Son Vuong, Electrical Engineering Associate; and Raymond Huang, Building Mechanical Engineer.



Alive! photo by Summy Lam; photo illustration by JILA Associates



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Honoring the Hopeful

Our cover story this month is special. They are all special, of course; that is why we produce them. But this one, even more so.

Generally I find that most people want to do good. I believe in a positive, healing world. But those who actually make it happen hold a very special place for me, and for the Club.

Count these Public Works/Bureau of Engineering employees among those who bring about solutions.



Association CEO Robert Larios (right) with the Interim Housing Program team (from left) Mariet Ohanian, Raymond Huang, Marina Quiñonez and Son Vuong.

Housing the unhoused, even temporarily, changed their careers; as they say in this month's compelling interview, none of the leadership team – **Marina Quiñonez, Mariet Ohanian, Son Vuong** and **Raymond Huang** – was plotting a career move to create interim housing. But they were “voluntold” – a great phrase from Marina – and it changed them. Their accomplishments change all of us.

I say well done to Engineering's Interim Housing team for helping least of the Angelenos.

(Also, thank you to **Mary Nemick** for helping us produce this story.)

Honoring Careers

Retired Club Members, have you signed up to receive your Retirement Plaque? For your career-long dedication to Los Angeles, we honor you with a beautiful plaque. I constantly hear surprise coming from our Retired Members when they see and feel these gorgeous plaques. We love honoring you in this way! Frankly no one honors you as meaningfully as the Club does. Sign up if you are eligible. See page 20.

We also honor you in *Alive!* Speaking of, I say thanks to two major City Employees on their recent retirements. First is **Traci Minamide**, long-time Assistant Director of Public Works/Sanitation and Environment. Traci has graced our cover a few times.



Traci Minamide, Assistant Director of Public Works/Sanitation and Environment on the cover of *Alive!* July 2018.

ROBERT'S BLOG

by Robert Larios, CEO, The Club



And also to **Tina Fermin**, who retired from General Services after 34 years of service. Tina has assisted us in producing stories, including most recently the retirement of **Val Melloff**, and the General Services' holiday party.



Tina Fermin

Honoring You

You might have noticed a theme in my blog this month: *honoring you*.

Members will be hearing more about this. You love our tickets, our insurance, our sports tournaments, and many other benefits we provide for your membership. They are merely parts of the whole; the big picture is that we simply cannot celebrate you enough. It is our mission – it always was, and is now more than ever. That is why the Club exists. We are along for the ride to celebrate you in every way possible. You matter. Your careers matter.

Happy Summer!

¡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		Additional Visits:
The first Monday of every month: June 3, July 1 North Central Sanitation 452 N. San Fernando Rd., 6 – 11 a.m.	Wed., June 12 Rec and Parks Griffith Observatory 2800 E. Observatory Rd. 6-9 a.m.	Wed., June 26 Street Lighting East Hollywood 4550 Santa Monica Blvd. noon – 4 p.m.
The first Wednesday of every month: June 5, July 3 Harbor 100 W. Fifth St., 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.	Thurs., June 20 LADWP ISS 1630 N. Main St. 11 a.m. – 3 p.m.	Wed., July 10 Airports LAX 7301 World Way West 9 a.m. – 2 p.m.
The first Thursday of every month: June 6, July 11 West Valley StreetsLA 9324 Topanga Canyon Blvd., 11 a.m. – 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.



**ATTENTION
SUPERVISORS:**
Raise employee morale! Bring the Club to your worksite!

ClubMobile
See page 2



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to Help**

Contact the Club
if you have an event you want covered in *Alive!*
or if you have questions about insurance.
help@employeesclub.com
(800) 464-0452

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Information courtesy Sanitation and Environment

Four Leaders Say Goodbye

SANITATION BIDS FAREWELL TO MICHAEL SIMPSON, PRITPAL JHAJ, TIM DAFETA AND RICK VEIGA.

PUBLIC WORKS: Public Works/Sanitation and Environment recently said goodbye to four long-term staffers and leaders. They are Michael Simpson, Principal Environmental Engineer, 40 years of City service; Pritpal Jhaj, Sanitation Wastewater Manager II, 37 years, Club Member; Tim Dafeta, Plant Manager, Hyperion Water Reclamation Plant, 36 years; and Rick Veiga, Solid Resources Manager I, 36 years. Here’s some more information about these four leaders.

Congratulations to Michael, Pritpal, Tim and Rick, for their many years of dedication and service. The Club honors you!

Michael Simpson

Principal Environmental Engineer
40 years of City service



Michael Simpson

Originally hired by Public Works/Engineering in 1984, he joined the Sanitation family in 2003 in the Industrial Waste Management Division (IWMD), where he served as Sr. Environmental Engineer until he was promoted to Principal Environmental Engineer in 2016, a position he held until his retirement earlier this year.

In addition to his many professional accomplishments during his years with Sanitation, he also assisted with the Board of Public Works’ efforts to identify young leaders in the engineering field through the Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HCBU) Recruitment Program. Known for his kindness and ability to inspire, Michael has made lasting impacts on the lives of those he’s worked with, and his mentorship has been pivotal in shaping the careers and personal growth of his team members, emphasizing the importance of thinking outside the box and problem-

solving. As the Manager of the Industrial Waste Management Division, he brought forth leadership qualities that have restored a sense of job satisfaction, fulfillment and recognition to the staff of IWMD, as well as unity to the division.

Pritpal Jhaj

Sanitation Wastewater Manager II
37 years of City service
Club Member



Pritpal Jhaj

Initially hired as a Mechanical Helper in 1987 at what was then known as Hyperion Treatment Plant, Pritpal climbed the ranks quickly, first accepting a promotion to Wastewater Treatment Mechanic I in 1988, and advancing to Wastewater Treatment Mechanic II in 1989. Pritpal next was promoted to Wastewater Treatment Mechanic Supervisor at Donald C. Tillman Water Reclamation Plant (DCTWRP) in 1993. He returned to Hyperion Water Reclamation Plant as Sanitation Wastewater Manager I in 2015 for just a few months before transferring to the LA-Glendale Water Reclamation Plant later that year. In 2018, he was promoted to Sanitation Wastewater Manager II at DCTWRP, where he remained until earlier this year.

As a dedicated manager in charge of the Water Reclamation Division’s maintenance section, his leadership, combined with his technical knowledge and hard work, have been a cornerstone for Sanitation.

Tim Dafeta

Plant Manager, Hyperion Water Reclamation Plant
36 years of City service



Tim Dafeta

Timeyin (Tim) Dafeta began his LASAN career in 1988 as a Sanitary Engineering Assistant II at what’s now known as the Terminal Island Water Reclamation Plant. In 1992, he moved to the present-day Hyperion Water Reclamation Plant, accepting a promotion to the role now called Environmental Engineering Associate I. Later in 1992, Tim was promoted to Environmental Engineering Associate II with the Wastewater Research Division. His third promotion that same year was to Environmental Engineer in the Enforcement Division. In 2000, he was promoted to what’s now called Sr. Environmental Engineer in the Industrial Waste Management Division, and the following year, he was promoted to Principal Environmental Engineer with IWMD. In 2013, he became the Hyperion Treatment Plant Manager, and was assigned to the Executive Division in 2017, where he served until his retire-

ment in April.

Tim was a dedicated Plant Manager, arriving at Hyperion nearly every day at 5:30 a.m. and often still in the office at 5 p.m. His Sanitation team members truly appreciated his perfect combination of strengths in technical knowledge and managerial leadership skills.

Rick Veiga

Solid Resources Manager I
36 years of City service



Rick Veiga

Richard (Rick) Veiga started his Sanitation career as a Refuse Collection Truck Operator II in 1988, and was promoted to Refuse Collection Supervisor in the Solid Resources Collection Division in 1996. In 2002, Rick transferred to what’s now known as the Industrial Safety and Compliance Division, where he was promoted to Solid Resources Superintendent in 2004. He accepted a promotion to Solid Resources Manager I in 2021, transferring to the Solid Resources South Collection Division, where he served until February of this year.

Rick’s vast knowledge and passionate support regarding all safety aspects of operations earned him the affectionate title “Sultan of Safety.” His enthusiasm and positive energy will be missed at Sanitation. ●



APPLY NOW!

\$750 Club Scholarships

Final Call for Club Scholarship '24 Applications

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



Mariana Guevara
Chair, Joannie Mukai Club Scholarship Selection Committee

CLUB: The application deadline is fast approaching for the Joannie Mukai Memorial Club Scholarship on the *Alive!* Website. The deadline is 11:59 p.m. June 30, 2024.

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.

“The time is now for applying to the Joannie Mukai Club Scholarship,” says Club Scholarship Selection Committee Chair Mariana Guevara. “Don’t wait – it could be

APPLY TODAY

on the *Alive!* Website:
alive.employeesclub.com/scholarship



DEADLINE

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

QUESTIONS

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

an important part of your future. We wish you the best of luck!”

The Club thanks Mariana and the Committee for their hard work in selecting the best and brightest of the Club family and rewarding them with Mukai stipends.

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.

INTERESTED CANDIDATES MAY BEGIN THE PROCESS DIRECTLY ON THE ALIVE! WEBSITE AT:
alive.employeesclub.com/scholarship



ABOUT JOANNIE MUKAI

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

CLUB SCHOLARSHIP ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS:

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• online at the <i>Alive!</i> 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. |
|--|---|--|

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

"The best way to predict the future is to create it." - Peter Drucker

FOR THOSE ABOUT TO RETIRE



Sign up for your Club retirement exit interview today!

Very Important Information

Beginning in June, the Club will host Retirement Exit Seminars. Just like City or LADWP exit interviews, if you are a newly Retired employee, you have access to attend a meeting with Club Retiree Specialist Counselors that will set you up for success in retirement.

We will be going over topics such as pension deduction, Retiree Life Insurance, Retiree Legal Insurance, the Club's Retiree Mentorship Program, our Retiree Recognition Awards, and other valuable Club benefits.

The Club strives to make your transfer from active to Retired as easy as possible by guiding you through the processes, educating you on new, important topics, and keeping you engaged in our Club Retiree Community.

Reserve Your Spot

To ensure your spot at the next Club Retirement Seminar, please call us at (800) 464-0452, option 4 or email us at info@employeesclub.com

Date: the last Thursday of each month

Time: 1 – 2 p.m.

Location: Club Headquarters
311 S. Spring St., Suite 1300
Downtown Los Angeles

Meet Your Club Counselors



Cheryl Martin
Member Services
Counselor



Cynthia Ha
Member Services
Counselor



Dylan Noel
Member Services
Counselor



Dalila Vielma
Member Services
Counselor

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

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.)

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

LADWP Retirees Association

June 1 68th Annual Retirees Picnic
Whittier Narrows – "The Meadows"
750 S. Santa Anita Ave., El Monte
9 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.

Reservation information:

LARFPA: events@larfpa.org
LADWP Retiree Association:
(213) 367-3146

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*
(213) 367-3146
vincedolores@gmail.com

Fire and Police Pensions (City Dept.)

(844) 885-2377
pensions@lafpp.com

LA Retired Fire and Police Association (LARFPA)

(888) 288-5073
membership@larfpa.org

Retired Los Angeles City Employees, Inc. (RLACEI)

See page 16

Happy Father's Day

Here are the personal messages sent to *Alive!* by some very loving and grateful children who wanted to pay tribute to their dad.



"James, you are the very best father in this universe. Your hard work and love you do for your family goes beyond any human being. We love you."
— For James Scott, LADWP



"Happy Father's Day to the most amazing, hard-working and caring dad. I feel so proud to be your daughter, and I hope to be an amazing parent like you."
— For Robert Lucero, Public Works/ Sanitation and Environment



"We appreciate all you do for our family! Thank you for being the best dad and husband. Happy Father's Day, love you!"
— For Nicholas Dominguez, LADWP



"Happy Father's Day to the hardest-working dada! We love you."
— Marvin Magana, LADWP



"John, thank you for being a loving, dedicated and strong father figure for our children! We're truly blessed to share life with you! Love, Elena"
—Elena Sousa, Airport Police



Send in your **Father's Day tributes!**



GO TO: alive.employeesclub.com/fathersday

DEADLINE: JUNE 12

It's not too late! Pay tribute to your dad, granddad or the dad in your family, and surprise him on his day on the *Alive!* Website and social media!



"Happy Father's Day, Scott! You are a great father, bonus dad, husband and son. WE are so proud and grateful for all you do. Love, your family."
—For Scott Cover, LADWP



"Happy Father's Day, homies. Love you lots, Robert Roehm. — Mom"
— Noemi Garcia, Retired, LAPD



"Dear Dad, I'm grateful for this extra time God has given you after your 60-day stay in Critical Care. Wow, you're almost 83! Love you."
— John Otoshi, Retired, LADWP



"Happy Fathers Day to the #1DAD. You are our provider and protector. We love you; thank you for working so hard for us. Love Vanessa"
— For William Zeledon, LADWP

"Rafael Larios is my dad. Native intelligence, superior work ethic, strong faith, an expert avocado and citrus farmer, entrepreneur, and an immense love for his family. As of May 2023, he retired after 45 years in the farming profession in California. If I can be half the man my dad is, I'll be twice the man I ever thought I could be. Congratulations on your retirement and Happy Father's Day!"

Rafael Larios es mi papá. Inteligencia nativa, ética de trabajo superior, fe fuerte, un experto agricultor de aguacates y cítricos, empresario y un inmenso amor por su familia. A partir de mayo de 2023, se retiró después de 45 años en la profesión agrícola en California. Si puedo ser la mitad del hombre que es mi padre, seré el doble del hombre que alguna vez pensé que podría ser. ¡Felicitaciones por su jubilación y feliz día del padre!

—From Club CEO Robert Larios

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Duesies and Automobile Heaven

By Frank Luke,
City Employee, Club Member

Be honest now, if you were king for a day, what would it be: World peace or a breathtaking, classic car collection? Maybe better not answer this, especially if you were born and raised in Los Angeles, the undisputed car capital of the world. To be fair, when J.B. Nethercutt, the co-founder of LA's Merle Norman Cosmetics, bought his first two vintage automobiles in 1956, world peace was probably not so much at stake as it is today. Nor was he offered to be king for a day.

That said, almost 70 years later, the 1936 Duesenberg Convertible Roadster and the 1930 DuPont Town Car that started his collection are still an integral part of the Nethercutt Collection in Sylmar. Here, more than 250 immaculately restored vehicles can be admired by visitors from all over the world. Of course, first, you have to find them, because many are thoroughly hidden from the public eye in a rather nondescript, windowless 60,000-square-foot building on Bledsoe Street in the San Fernando Valley. However, looks can be deceiving, and once you set foot into the Grand Showroom – lavishly modeled after 1920s-era automobile Art Deco showrooms with sky-high columns made of imported marble – it may just take your breath away. Stepping inside is nothing short of a wondrous “Open Sesame” moment.

Every single car in the Nethercutt Collection is in perfect running condition and 100 percent roadworthy, no matter how old or technically unique it may be. And most are still occasionally being driven up to this day. However, obviously not just anyone is allowed to get behind the wheel of a rare 1930s Bugatti race car or a multimillion-dollar 1920s Rolls Royce Phantom.

“Please come on in,” says Nethercutt Vice President Cameron Richards. He’s holding the door wide open while keeping a keen eye on Zeta, his three-year-old four-legged mutt, a shelter rescue, who is known to make a quick exit when no one’s looking. Richards is one of the very few who actually gets to drive the most valuable cars outside of the museum grounds. If you’d like to be added to the list of drivers, give him a call, though. Just kidding (I tried). After all, you’ll be hard-pressed to match his qualifications: Not only is he an admitted car nut but also – which helps a little – the great-grandson of the collection’s founder.

For people who love automobiles, Nethercutt offers a mind-blowing selection. Most shown marques are of American and European origin, among them Aston Martin, Porsche, Lincoln, Maybach, Bentley, Bugatti, Cadillac, Duesenberg, Ferrari, Mercedes, Rolls-Royce, and many others. They all tell different tales of the past and a few even have a somewhat checkered history.

Take the glistening black 1932 Maybach

PLANNING YOUR VISIT

Nethercutt Museum

15151 Bledsoe St., Sylmar
(818) 364-6464
info@nethercuttcollection.org

HOURS:

Open Thursdays through Saturdays,
9 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

COST: \$10 per person.

Self-guided tours free of charge; guided tours available Thursdays and Fridays at 10 a.m., Saturdays at 10 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. - reservations required.

Other memorabilia: If you are interested in vintage musical instruments, don’t miss Nethercutt’s stunning collection of Reproducing Pianos, Nickelodeons, Cylinder and Disc Music Boxes, Orchestrons, and its Mighty Wurlitzer Theatre Pipe Organ. Concerts are performed in front of live audiences every year. Meanwhile, train buffs will be excited to visit the 1937 Canadian Pacific Royal Hudson locomotive that is displayed behind the museum’s auxiliary wing. It is pulling a restored Pullman Private Car which dates back to 1912. Both can be toured Thursdays through Saturdays at 12:30 p.m. and 3:45 p.m. (No tour on rainy days. The railcar is not handicapped accessible - no walkers, strollers, or wheelchairs.)

for instance, once a Luftwaffe staff car in Nazi Germany. Hermann Göring was allegedly chauffeured around in it on at least one occasion, and the vehicle had quite an adventurous journey to the United States decades ago. “I can talk about it now,” he says. “Everybody involved is long gone.” After the dilapidated car was located in a barn in Poland in 1968, it was discreetly liberated from there in the middle of the night when no one was watching. Eventually, it made its way to Sylmar for a meticulous restoration (except for glass and chrome; all necessary work is done in-house by full-time expert craftsmen). Open the doors to the vehicle today and you’ll catch a delicious whiff of thick, new leather scent that gives this more-than-90-year-old behemoth a distinct “new car smell.”

And what about the 1933 “one-off” eight-cylinder Duesenberg Roadster that is considered to be one of the most beautiful and valuable cars in the world? “It’s a true pleasure to drive and it will easily do 120 mph on

— Continues on
page 25, including
lots more photos!



This rare Bugatti racecar is one of the stars at the Nethercutt. It is also not built for taller people: To drive it, Cameron Richards has to take off his shoes as the gas and clutch pedals are sitting way too closely together for modern standards.

Look for “Out and About” periodically in Alive!

Have a suggestion? Let us know a location you’d like Frank to visit! Send it to: admin@employeesclub.com

Dr. Jan is Top Engineer

DR. JAN GREEN-REBSTOCK IS ENGINEERING’S OUTSTANDING EMPLOYEE.

Story and photos courtesy Bureau of Engineering

PUBLIC WORKS: Dr. Jan Green-Rebstock, Environmental Affairs Officer, Environmental Management Group in Public Works’ Bureau of Engineering, 21 years of City service, is the 2024 Bureau of Engineering’s Rory M. Shaw Outstanding Employee. She was given the award at a Board of Public Works meeting April 12 by City Engineer Ted Allen.

The award is given in memory of Bureau of Engineering employee Rory M. Shaw, who went above and beyond the call of duty every day. He lost his life in the storms of 2005 in the performance of his duties. This award recognizes a Bureau of Engineering employee who, like Rory, has demonstrated exceptional dedication to duty and high commitment to excellence, and has made significant contributions in furthering the Bureau’s mission and goals.

Previous awardees were recognized at the event, including Marina Quiñónez, Ohaji Abdallah, Arsen Voskerchyan, Maria Martin and Essam Amarragy.

Dr. Green-Rebstock leads environmental reviews for multiple City projects, including the LA River, Taylor Yard G2, Silver Lake Reservoir’s master plan, and others.

“Jan works closely with the Environmental Management Group and the Clean Water Division to manage environmental review and permitting for LA River projects, many Safe Clean Water Measure W projects and some Municipal Facilities projects,” explained City Engineer Ted Allen at the ceremony. “Some of these projects include the LA River Ecosystem Restoration Project EIR and EIS, Sixth Street Viaduct Park EIR, Silver Lake Reservoir Complex Master Plan EIR, LA Zoo Vision Plan EIR, the Citywide Cat Program EIR, Paseo del Rio at Taylor Yard EIR, the upcoming Sepulveda Basin Vision Plan, and many, many other projects.”

Prior to joining the Bureau of Engineering, she worked at the Harbor as the Port Sustainability liaison and managing the California Environmental Quality Act and National Environmental Policy Act review process for waterfront development and goods movement facilities. One of her most notable projects was the \$1.5 billion LA Waterfront construction program.

“Thank you everybody for all the kind words,” Dr. Green-Rebstock said. “I’m very honored to be here. My understanding is that Rory Shaw’s legacy was about honesty, integrity, having a strong work ethic, and being a problem solver. I want to highlight the work being done by the BOE’s Environmental Management Group led by Maria Martin, a previous award recipient, and the critical role we play in delivering the City’s infrastructure projects. The environmental review and permitting process provides stakeholders and regulatory agencies opportunities to share their concerns about proposed projects. Our role is to analyze the potential impacts to environmental resources, make recommendations on how to avoid or reduce these effects, share the results in a transparent way, and facilitate the environmental review in a way that informs good decision-making regarding project design and approvals.

“I’m very proud to be part of this team of problem solvers, which is a wonderful resource to the City, to this Board, and to all of the project managers at BOE.”

A Texas native, she earned her undergraduate degree in environmental studies, with minors in philosophy and political science, from the University of St. Thomas in Houston, and her doctorate in policy planning and development from USC.

Congratulations to Dr. Jan Green-Rebstock on her prestigious award, and thanks for all she has done for the City of Los Angeles. ●



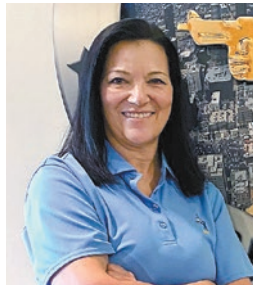
Dr. Jan Green-Rebstock and City Engineer Ted Allen at the award ceremony.



Attending the award ceremony were (from left) Public Works Commissioners Mike Davis and Susana Reyes, City Engineer Ted Allen, PW Board President Aura Garcia, Matthew Rebstock, Jan Green-Rebstock, PW Board Vice President Teresa Villegas, and PW Commissioner Vahid Khorsand.

A Chapter Ends

DET. MITZI ROBERTS, WHO INSPIRED A BOOK CHARACTER, RETIRES AFTER 29 YEARS OF CITY SERVICE.



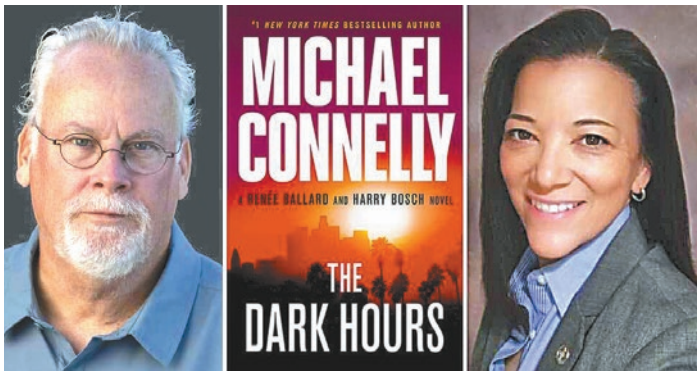
Det. Mitzi Roberts

LAPD: Det. III Mitzi Roberts, one of the department’s most determined crime investigators and who inspired popular author Michael Connelly to create the fictional character Renee Ballard, retired in April after 29 years of City service.

Amongst very many other cases, in 2018 Det. III Roberts of Robbery-Homicide Division tracked down the serial killer who police say was responsible for more than 90 murders, many of which took place in Los Angeles.

“Thank you for your dedicated service, Det. Mitzi Roberts!” Dep. Chief Ruby Flores wrote in a social post. “You left an indelible mark on the LAPD and impacted many lives in the communities we proudly serve. Wishing you the best in your next chapter; and know we are grateful for your service.”

Congratulations on a career of great service, Det. Roberts! Thank you for your dedication to Los Angeles. ●



Author Michael Connelly, Det. Mitzi Roberts, and *The Dark Hours*, a crime novel partly inspired by Det. Roberts.



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

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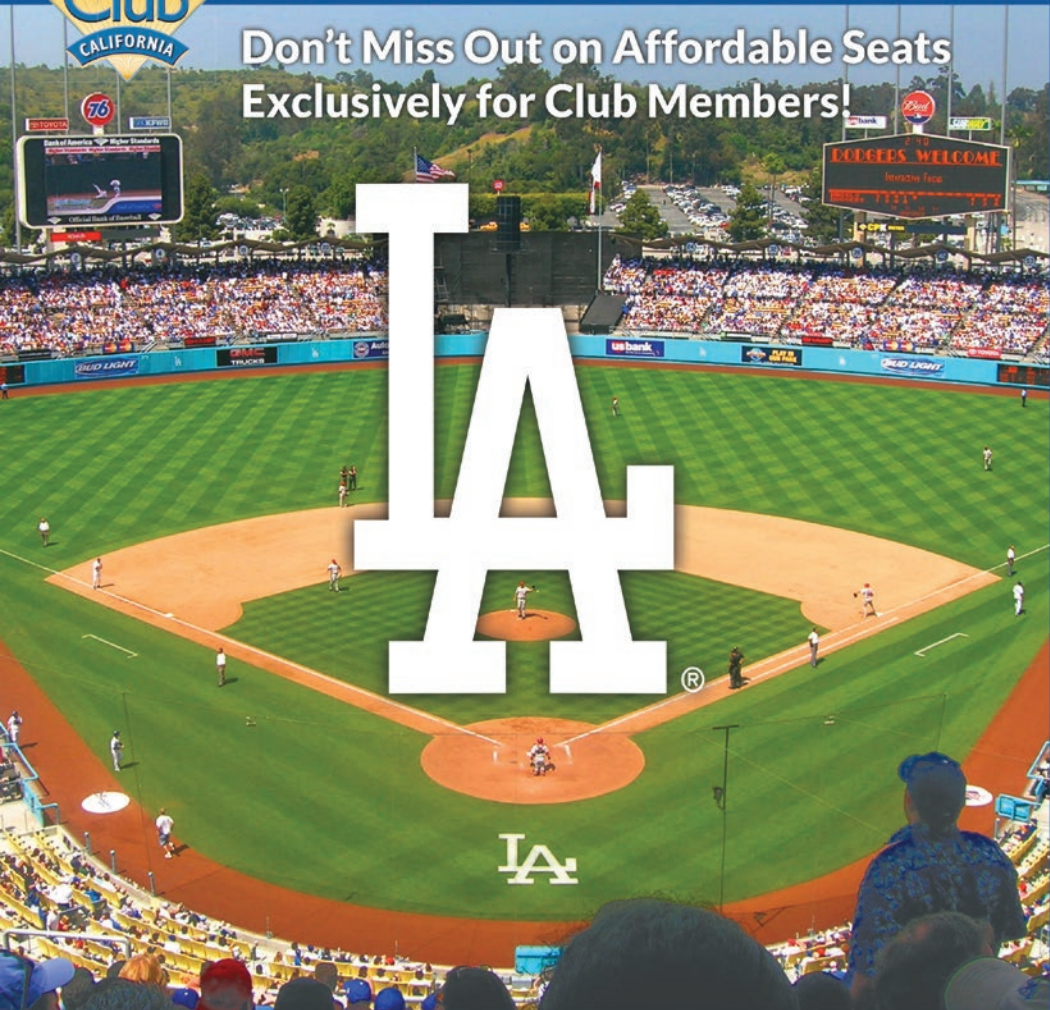
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NOTE: The promotional photo is just a glimpse—the seats offered by the Club are often better and closer than pictured! For the best experience, please confirm the exact location before making your purchase.

Cooking with the Club

with Chef Robert Larios

Photos:
Patty M.
Larios



Peach BBQ-Rubbed Chicken

With Lemon Green Beans and Garlic Rice

Craving a way to pack your meal with flavor without breaking a sweat? Let me introduce you to pan sauce. In just three minutes, you'll blend together savory chicken stock, zesty lemon juice, creamy butter and sweet peach jam into a velvety concoction. Imagine the rich aroma of chicken stock mingling with the bright citrusy scent of fresh lemon juice, creating a tantalizing backdrop for the luscious melt of golden butter. As the peach jam dissolves, it forms a glossy, amber pool of sweetness that perfectly balances the tang.

Drizzle this liquid gold over BBQ-seasoned chicken. Picture the smoky, caramelized crust sizzling

as the sauce seeps into every nook and cranny, infusing each bite with layers of complex flavors. Serve it alongside fluffy, steaming rice that soaks up the excess sauce like a sponge and vibrant, crisp green beans that add a burst of color and crunch.

When you find yourself licking the plate clean, relishing every last drop of that divine sauce, we won't just understand—we'll applaud your impeccable taste.

¡Buen provecho!

Robert Larios

Follow this recipe online:



INGREDIENTS

Serves 2

- 1 clove garlic
- ½ cup jasmine rice
- 10 ounces chicken breasts or thighs
- 1 tablespoon sweet and smoky BBQ seasoning*
- 1 lemon
- 6 ounces green beans
- 1 unit peach jam
- 1 unit chicken stock concentrate
- 2 teaspoons cooking oil
- 2 tablespoons butter (contains milk)
- 1 teaspoon olive oil
- Salt and pepper to taste

**Note: Several brands offer sweet and smoky rubs, including McCormick. If you care to prepare your own, try: 8 parts smoked paprika, 6 parts granulated sugar, 2 parts garlic powder, 0.5 (half) parts black pepper, 1 part dry mustard, 1 part ground cumin, 1 part ground ginger.*

Utensils You Will Need

- Zester: For that perfect hint of zest.
- Small pot: Where the magic begins.
- Baking sheet: Your trusty sidekick for crispiness.
- Paper towels: Because even heroes need a little cleanup.
- Large pan: The stage for your culinary masterpiece.

DIRECTIONS

Total prep time is 20 minutes



1

Preparation:

Adjust the oven rack to the top position and preheat the oven to 425°F. Wash and dry the produce. Peel and mince the garlic, then zest and quarter the lemon.



2

Cook the Rice:

Heat a drizzle of oil in a small pot over medium-high heat. Add the minced garlic and cook, stirring constantly, until fragrant, about 30 seconds. Stir in the rice, ¾ cup water (1 ½ cups for 4 servings), and a pinch of salt. Bring to a boil, then cover and reduce the heat to low.

Cook until the rice is tender, about 15-18 minutes. Keep covered off the heat until ready to serve.



3

Roast the Green Beans:

While the rice is cooking, trim the green beans if needed. Toss the green beans on a baking sheet with a drizzle of olive oil, salt and pepper. Roast on the top rack until browned and tender, about 12-15 minutes.



4

Cook the Chicken**:

Meanwhile, pat the chicken dry with paper towels. Season all over with BBQ seasoning, salt, and pepper.

Heat a drizzle of oil in a large, preferably nonstick, pan over medium-high heat. Add the chicken and cook until browned and cooked through, about 4-6 minutes

per side. Tip: Lower the heat if the chicken begins to brown too quickly. Turn off the heat and transfer the chicken to a plate. Wipe out the pan.

***Note: Chicken is fully cooked when the internal temperature reaches 165°F.*



5

Make the Sauce:

Return the same pan to medium-high heat. Add ¼ cup of water (1/3 cup for 4 servings), peach jam, stock concentrate, and juice from half a lemon. Bring to a simmer and cook until the sauce is reduced and thickened, about 2-3 minutes.

Turn off the heat and stir in 1 tablespoon of butter

(2 tablespoons for 4 servings) until melted. Season with salt and pepper. Return the chicken to the pan and turn it a few times to coat in the sauce.



6

Finish and Serve:

Fluff the rice with a fork; stir in 1 tablespoon of butter (2 tablespoons for 4 servings) and season with salt and pepper. Toss the green beans with lemon zest. Divide the rice, green beans, and chicken between plates. Spoon any remaining sauce from the pan over the chicken. Serve with the remaining lemon wedges on the side.

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Cooking Tidbit

Although the original recipe called for pork, I decided to shake things up with chicken. Whether you stick to the classic pork or dive into my chicken version, you're in for a flavorful treat either way.

To keep those chicken breasts juicy and tender, brine them for 30 minutes to 1 hour before cooking. A simple brine of 1/4 cup salt dissolved in 4 cups of water works wonders.

Need more tips? Don't hesitate to reach out to me at alive@employeesclub.com. Let's make magic in the kitchen!

Food Quote:

"Just like a good brine keeps chicken tender, a little preparation in life makes everything better."

— Chef Robert Larios

Food Lover's Dictionary:

Glaze - A thin, glossy layer applied to both hot and cold foods. A savory glaze might be a reduced meat stock or aspic, while a sweet glaze could range from melted jelly to a chocolate coating.

Bibliography: Herbst, Sharon Tyler, and Ron Herbst. The New Food Lover's Companion. Accessed March 25, 2024. Copyright Barron's Educational Services, Inc. 2009, adapted from The New Food Lover's Companion, 2007, by Sharon Tyler Herbst and Ron Herbst. Recipe: <https://www.hellofresh.com/recipes/peachy-keen-bbq-rubbed-pork-chops-61795d17951b0e24e516bead>. Accessed May 17, 2024

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Carmen to Lead Neighborhoods

CARMEN CHANG APPOINTED NEW GM OF DEPT. OF NEIGHBORHOOD EMPOWERMENT.

NEIGHBORHOOD EMPOWERMENT:

Carmen Chang, formerly the Director of Programs and Organizing at Golden State Opportunity, a statewide anti-poverty organization, has been confirmed as the new General Manager of the Neighborhood Empowerment Dept. by the City Council May 8. Mayor Karen Bass had selected Carmen for the position in April. Interim General Manager Vanessa Serrano had led the department since November, during the transition.



Carmen Chang

"I am honored to be appointed by Mayor Bass and confirmed by the City Council," Carmen said. "I look forward to carrying out Mayor Bass' vision for a neighborhood council system that is inclusive and representative of the many cultures and the diversity of Los Angeles.

"My first priority will be to listen to the Neighborhood Councils, to build relationships with each of them, and to engage and learn from department staff to develop a plan to increase community engagement in every corner of the City. Solving our greatest challenges and improving our communities must always begin with hearing the voices of community members. That is what we will do together."

"Carmen is an organizer who brings decades of experience earning wins for working people, for California immigrants, and centering the voices of the people in advocacy for more economic opportunities," Mayor Bass said in a statement. "Her proven commitment to transparency, trust building and coalition building will help the Department deliver on the Charter's promise for neighborhood representation and begin a transformation that ensures that Angelenos are driving decision-making within their communities."

Carmen Chang is expected to begin as General Manager of Neighborhood Empowerment June 3.

Welcome to the City, Carmen! And thank you for all you have done for the citizens of California. ●

Open Houses Conclude in June

SANITATION'S POPULAR OPEN HOUSES AT FOUR YARDS FINISH THIS MONTH.



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

PUBLIC WORKS: Public Works' Sanitation and Environment continues hosting its popular open houses 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.

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



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

North Central District Yard

June 1

452 N. San Fernando Rd.
Los Angeles

South LA District Yard

June 15

786 South Mission Rd.,
Los Angeles

Harbor District Yard

June 22

1400 N. Gaffey St.
San Pedro

West LA Yard

June 29

2027 Stoner Ave.
Los Angeles

Thanks for the Help!

CD5 THANKS STREETSLA FOR ITS HARD WORK.

COUNCIL/PUBLIC WORKS: In April, Councilwoman Katy Yaroslavsky acknowledged the hard work of the StreetsLA External Relations Team with a Council proclamation. The External Relations Team is StreetsLA's liaison with Council offices, partner agencies and the community.

Well done, StreetsLA ERT! ●



Councilwoman Katy Yaroslavsky (middle right) presents a Council proclamation thanking StreetsLA for its hard work to StreetsLA Executive Director and General Manager Keith Mozee, surrounded by the StreetsLA's External Relations Team.

The Train's a-Coming

AIRPORTS TESTS FIRST CAR OF ITS MASSIVE NEW PEOPLE MOVER TRAIN.

AIRPORTS: On May 2, Airports achieved an important milestone – the first Automated People Mover train car entered testing. It signified ongoing progress as the department works to deliver the innovative project that will transform the LAX experience.

The Automated People Mover is the centerpiece to the massive Landside Access Modernization Program (LAMP), a \$5.5 billion effort that will ferry passengers between the airport's terminals and the regional transportation system, ride-sharing services, passenger pickup areas, bike access, and much more.

The people mover is expected to open in late 2025. ●



The first train car in testing.

ALIVE! FEATURE

Building Hope and

Engineering’s Interim Housing Program designs spaces and tiny home villages to shelter LA’s unhoused.

PUBLIC WORKS

LA Bureau of Engineering’s Shelter and Housing Program – developed quickly to help get the growing number of Angelenos suffering homelessness literally off the streets into humane shelters – is a story of talent and technical know-how, unexpected journeys, and personal transformation.

In 1998, then-Mayor Eric Garcetti declared an emergency shelter crisis due to the burgeoning numbers of LA citizens suffering homelessness and living on the streets. He asked many City departments to step up to the crisis and take action to help those homeless citizens. Public Works’ Bureau of Engineering was tasked with a major role of designing and then managing the construction of new interim shelters, and the new Shelter and Housing Program was created. Principal Engineer Allan Kawaguchi led the early efforts.

Now the dedicated team is led by Marina Quiñonez, Sr. Architect, and advised by Mariet Ohanian, Civil Engineer; Son Vuong, Electrical Engineer Associate III; and Raymond Huang, Building Mechanical Engineer.

Engineering’s Shelter and Housing Program team works with various City departments, agencies and Council Districts across Los Angeles to create interim housing solutions to address homelessness. The various types of housing include Phase One, A Bridge Home (congregate living, double and single occupancies); the current Phase Two, tiny home villages; and the upcoming Phase Three, units potentially designed for families and building renovations.

In September 2018, the first congregate living model was built as A Bridge Home project called El Puente in the El Pueblo area. This pilot project provided 45 interim beds and shared hygiene amenities.

In 2019, Prop HHH allocated funds for homeless housing and services and funded three Navigation

Centers, which cater to a demographic of people who reject housing but are in need of hygiene, laundry and case management services and storage. Prop HHH also funded a women’s shelter in Council District 4. This building, a decommissioned library, had a trauma-sensitive design, and provides case management and hygiene and laundry services to 32 women.

In March 2019, the first A Bridge Home (ABH) project was completed in Council District 13. The Bureau of Engineering built 16 locations in multiple Council Districts throughout LA over a period of 16 months. ABH projects are a congregate living model, with men and women separated within a membrane structure, giving each individual a sleeping module with a bed, cabinet; pets are allowed. The amenities on site are hygiene, laundry,

admin services for case management and outdoor sitting areas with shade umbrellas. A total of 1,360 interim beds have been provided.

In January 2021, Navig8, the last of three Navigation Centers using HHH funding, was built in Council District 8, and the first Safe Sleep site was completed, which provided single or double occupancy tents, daily meals, case management, and hygiene and laundry services.

The first Tiny Home Village in the current Phase Two was built in Council District 2. These facilities have single or double sleeping accommodations, and provide case management, hygiene and laundry services, and daily meals. There is a low barrier to entry, and there are amnesty lockers and a pet area. Exterior communal spaces are also provided.

Since 2022, the Bureau of Engineering has now delivered 12 villages, providing 1,552 interim beds. The Shelter and Housing Program also assisted in building a Home Key site in Council District 12. The site is a congregate living model and offers case management, hygiene and laundry services, and daily meals. Finally, in Council District 1, the team opened the first residential project, New Beginnings (Phase Three). This has multiple occupancy accommodations that could accommodate families, case management, hygiene and laundry services, amnesty lockers, pet spaces, and communal areas.

As of Spring 2024, Engineering has delivered a total of 40 projects for Homeless Services and Housing throughout the City of Los Angeles for a total of 4,078 interim beds.

In this issue, read an interview with the Shelter and Housing Program team about their unexpected journey toward helping the homeless through design and know-how, and about how it changed them.

We thank Marina, Mariet, Son and Raymond for their time, information and candor, and Mary Nemick for her assistance. ●

NORTH MISSION ROAD TINY HOME VILLAGE



At the City’s North Mission Road tiny home village are (clockwise from bottom right) Marina Quiñonez, Sr. Architect and manager of the Interim Housing Program; Mariet Ohanian, Civil Engineer, Club Member; Son Vuong, Electrical Engineering Associate; and Raymond Huang, Building Mechanical Engineer.

Photos by Summy Lam, Club COO; and courtesy the Bureau of Engineering and Lehrer Architects

Home

Marina Honored

Marina Quiñonez was BOE’s outstanding engineer in 2023.

Marina Quiñonez, Sr. Architect and the manager of Engineering’s Shelter and Housing Program, won Engineering’s prestigious Rory M. Shaw Outstanding Employee Award in 2023. The award is in memory of the dedication and excellence in leadership exemplified by the late Rory M. Shaw. The award acknowledges an employee who demonstrates those characteristics that made Rory an extraordinary asset to the Bureau of Engineering.

Congratulations, Marina!



Marina Quiñonez speaks to the City Council after accepting the Rory M. Shaw Award from City Engineer Ted Allen in 2023.



ALIVE! INTERVIEW

Architecture as Advocacy

On April 16, Association CEO Robert Larios and *Alive!* editor John Burnes interviewed the Public Works/Engineering team that designs and manages the construction of the City’s Interim Housing project, intended to get the unhoused off the streets and into temporary housing while awaiting permanent supportive housing. The team includes Marina Quiñonez, Sr. Architect and manager of the Shelter and Housing Program, 18 years of City service; Mariet Ohanian, Civil Engineer and construction manager of the Shelter and Housing Program, 18 years, Club Member; Son Vuong, Electrical Engineering Associate III and electrical engineering adviser, Shelter and Housing Program, 8 years; and Raymond Huang, Building Mechanical Engineer and mechanical engineering adviser, Shelter and Housing Program, 18 years. • The interview took place via Zoom.

What’s been your path? Where did you enter the Bureau of Engineering and then get to where you are now?

Marina Quiñonez: I started with the Bureau of Engineering as a student intern during my undergrad years at Woodbury University. I stayed working as a student intern through my Master’s program at UCLA. During my internship, I saw the impact of design in various communities with the projects that I was involved with, and I realized that working for a public agency would allow me to have more opportunities to interact with various demographics, and that’s how I ended up here.

I started as an Architecture Associate I, then a II, then a III, and then a full Architect. After that I became a Sr. Architect.

Same question for you, Mariet.

Mariet Ohanian: I went to college for a couple of years, then I decided to join the Army. After my military service was over, I went back to school to be a civil engineer. When I finished school, I decided to work for the City because I live in the City, and I like civil service work because it has a variety of projects and there are different things to do; it’s not just one type of project. I got hired as a Civil Engineer Associate I, was promoted to Associate II, then I was an Associate III for a short time before I was promoted to a Civil Engineer.

Son Vuong: I started in the naval nuclear propulsion program, working on submarines for the U.S. Navy. During that time, I fell in love with engineering, so I went to university afterwards to study electrical engineering.



Locations of the Bureau of Engineering’s tiny home villages.

The Bureau of Engineering is my first job after I graduated college. I started out as an Associate I, and then I moved to II, and now I’m an Associate III.

Raymond Huang: I have been in the field of engineering for more than three decades that crossed different specialties. In the first decade of my engineering career, I worked as a maritime engineer in commercial ships that had taken me across the globe, then I followed with a pursuit of working as an aerospace engineer. After I earned my Master’s degree in aerospace engineering from Cal State Long Beach, I was offered a position with the City and thus began my journey as a building mechanical engineer. My career has taken me from the seas to the skies; I’m thankful to say I’m now safe on land! Since starting my career with the City, I’ve risen through the ranks from a Mechanical Engineering Associate I, II, and III. Today, I’m a building Mechanical Engineer.

From the sea to the sky to the land. I like that kind of conceping!

A Bridge Home, to Start

Tell us what A Bridge Home is all about.

Marina: Sure. The City has established a Shelter and Housing program. It encompasses all of the interim housing within the City. It was initially established when Mayor Eric Garcetti declared an emergency crisis in 2018. The first phase of

our program was the A Bridge Home program, which was a congregate living model, meaning that there were no separate walls, people slept in “sleeping modules,” a cubicle-like bedroom space with shared hygiene amenities. That’s essentially what A Bridge Home was. It was a bridge from the streets to permanent supportive housing.

We’ve moved forward to phase two, which is focused on tiny home villages and providing more privacy for individuals. The Bureau of Engineering has been responsible for establishing the design standards, project design and construction management. We have established design guidelines with the help of Son, Raymond, Building and Safety and the Los Angeles Fire Dept.

What have your responsibilities been in the first two phases?

Marina: We’ve been designing with an in-house group of designers. We have architects and engineers in-house. We also project-manage our consultants. The whole process is very fast tracked, so we need assistance. Construction management is Mariet’s expertise. She and her team have managed construction from phase one through phase two and a lot of other facilities we’ve built.

It all started with establishing design guidelines within architecture, electrical, mechanical and structural engineering. Establishing those guidelines helped the process to be fast-tracked during design. And having guidelines established with Building and Safety allowed inspections to go much quicker. We’ve established the foundation for this fast-track process to work.

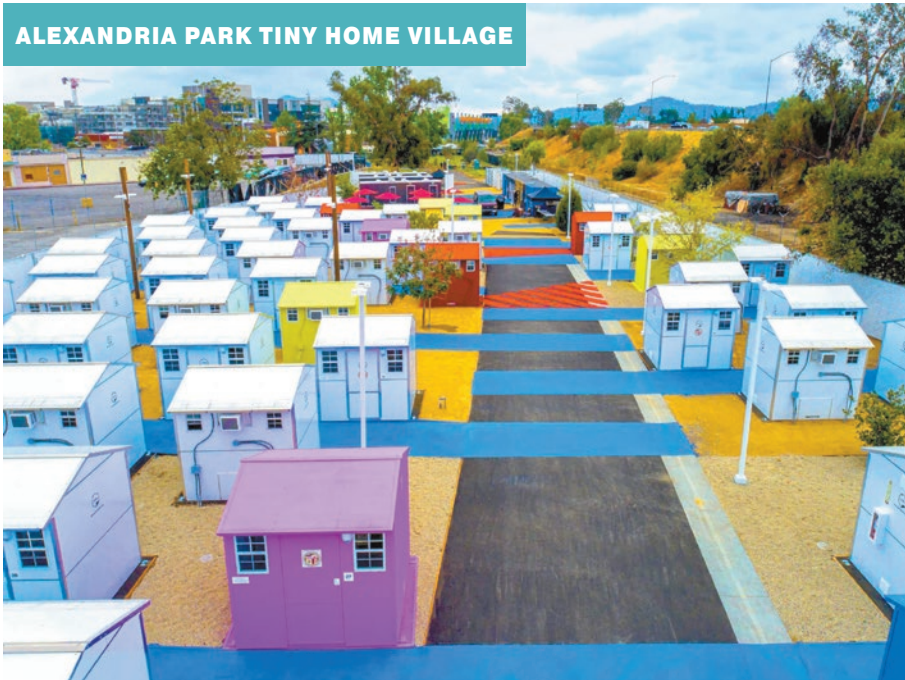
— CONTINUES PAGE 14



The tiny home village on Chandler Boulevard in North Hollywood. Lehrer Architects



At the Branford tiny home village in Sun Valley.



The tiny home village in Alexandria Park in North Hollywood. *Lehrer Architects*

The *Alive!* Interview — CONTINUED FROM PAGE 13

How did the team come together? Did you volunteer to switch to this emergency-needs project, or were you assigned?

Marina: Some of us were “voluntold”! It was assigned as the next project. I had just finished construction for the new Woodland Hills Rec Center, and I needed a project. So my supervisor at the time thought, “Marina, there’s this homeless-related project...”. It was just one project at that time; no one knew it was going to be this big and develop into a program. I was given the one project to manage. Then it became two and three. Then it really exploded into the program we have now, where we’ve delivered so many projects within four to five years. Once our Principal Engineer, Allan Kawaguchi, retired, I took over the program, which has been exciting and stressful.

Raymond Huang: I am always available to support my colleagues in the mechanical engineering aspect of projects. Having worked on multiple projects with Marina, I ensure her ideas turn into tangible solutions. When I was asked by my supervisor and Marina to provide mechanical engineering support for this exciting assignment, I was greatly motivated to be part of the team.



Raymond Huang

Son: I was actually new, just two years in. I had just gotten my license. I have been learning Revit, which is the primary tool used for 3D modeling for the first two years I was here. This opportunity came up and they asked me if I wanted to work on it. I also thought it was going to be a one-off assignment, maybe one or two projects. But it expanded to be so much more.

Mariet: At the time I was also managing construction of a recreation center. Allan said, “We need help with construction management,” and my Principal Engineer asked me if I wanted to look into the homeless shelters because they were a different type of construction. I said, “Sure, that would be interesting.” I got involved and I’m still here. That’s how I got involved.

Update us, please – how many villages, how many residences, how many people have been sheltered?

Marina: So far, we’ve completed 40 homeless-related projects, and we’ve spent over \$200 million in total project cost. We’ve created 4,078 interim beds. People are supposed to live there six to nine months, and then the hope is that they’re placed into permanent supportive housing. So we hope the 4,078 interim beds will house many more people than that over time. We built about 16 A Bridge Home projects. Then we built 12 tiny home villages. So far, we have six more in design, and we also have another residential site that’s in design. We’re looking to move into phase three – more tiny home villages and existing building conversions. We’ll see how that develops.

Other than A Bridge Home and tiny home villages, we’ve also built safe sleep sites, which are parking lots we’ve converted to areas where service providers can bring pitch-up tents. Instead of being on the street, the unhoused are in a safe environment. We’ve also been involved in some home key sites, residential typologies, and also building conversions. It’s been multifaceted because the City understands that some people don’t want to be in a specific environment; some would rather be in the streets. I think providing a multifaceted approach has helped us to reach specific demographics that perhaps weren’t open before to being in a “homeless shelter,”

whatever that means to them. We’re trying to have different ways of addressing what a house looks like for someone so that they’re more open to being helped and receiving services. We’re also looking at how to serve families; we have one site built and one in design for families.

Son: All of our facilities are electric-only. We started building them in February 2018 – our first homeless shelter is in downtown LA across the street from Union Station. Our design team made a conscious decision to make all the new construction electric before any policies were in place to mandate it. They don’t produce natural gas emissions.

Tiny Home Villages

What does a tiny home village encompass? What does it contain?

Marina: A tiny home village is a community – our hope is to build community within that village. It encompasses sleeping cabins that are 64 square feet, about eight by eight feet, for single and double occupancy. The amenities are shared as far as hygiene. There are restrooms and showers on site. There’s also a laundry facility, and there’s case management. Three meals a day are delivered to the site. We have areas where people can sit and have a meal together. The hope is that a tiny home village brings more dignity and privacy to an individual who’s lived on the streets.

A true community model of everything that they might be experiencing when they leave.

Marina: Correct.

How long do they stay in their residences in the tiny home villages before moving on?

Marina: It has varied. The Bureau of Engineering doesn’t get involved past construction, so we don’t know exactly how long they stay. But our hope is that they are there six to nine months, and then they get placed into permanent supportive housing. Permanent supportive housing hasn’t been built as quickly as we’d hoped, and so I would imagine that people are staying a little bit longer, but we don’t know the exact length.

Do the individual shelters come prefabbed? Are they built on site?

Marina: Yes. They’re panelized and fabricated at the warehouse. Then during construction, once the site is ready, they get delivered and assembled on site.

History

How did the project start and develop? It was a response to the homeless crisis, but was it a quick development?

Marina: The mayor’s office asked the Bureau of Engineering to investigate a product called Pallet Structures. That was in early 2020. The standard plan for the tiny home village was established with two pilot projects requested by Council District 2 during an injunction. The City was sued by LA Alliance. There was an injunction in 2020, then also during the rise of COVID-19, the Council office approved \$100 million of COVID-relief funds in July 2020 to create these tiny home villages. The selection of sites started shortly after that. It was a very interest-

ing time of litigation and COVID that really exploded the amount of tiny home villages that were built in 2021-22 and now ’23-’24.

I’m sure you worked as hard as you possibly could to turn it into reality despite the challenges.

Marina: During that time, we also had other homeless projects. We deployed RVs during COVID. Son, Mariet and I were out there with our masks and it was a very interesting time. We had to keep the City moving and we had to continue housing people. The team really came together during that time.

Mariet: COVID created one major challenge for construction, at least for us. We started having issues getting supplies, especially electrical equipment. All our switchgear and panels were delayed for more than a year. It was taking way longer than we expected. These projects were supposed to be done in four to five months, but they ended up being extended more than a year or a year and a half sometimes because we couldn’t get equipment. That created a major challenge for these projects.

How did you overcome the challenge?

Mariet: We tried some workarounds. We started looking into other companies that could build the equipment rather than just ordering it pre-made. We were lucky sometimes to find companies that could provide us with what we needed. We also learned that if we expand on some of the requirements, we have more options, which will save us some time and fast-track the project. But overall, it still impacted our project. We were not able to solve all the problems.

Son: Some of the products like lighting, we would have to let the distributors know about a year in advance that we might be purchasing them. A lot of them helped us out by stocking them ahead of time or even prioritizing our orders. A lot of our project managers wrote letters to these large companies that manufactured panels and equipment for us, letting them know our situation and our needs. A lot of them were very helpful in expediting our order, or even getting us ahead in the line.

Another challenge during COVID was plan check. Traditionally, we would print out these plans on sheets that are two feet by three feet. We would bring them into Building and Safety, the LAFD, the LADWP and other utility companies to get them reviewed, and we’d have to submit the paperwork. During COVID, they weren’t interacting face to face, and the documents we submitted were being quarantined for about two weeks. We lost some time there. We had to work with the different utilities and building departments to change the way we did things. They allowed us to submit electronic documents, which helped a lot and saved a lot of time and paper. It was very helpful that the departments were flexible and worked with us.

Raymond: My forte is domestic water and sanitary sewer infrastructure. Most of the time, when we try to figure out the perfect location to build a shelter, the next biggest problem is where the water will come from and where the sewage will go. Sometimes we have a perfect location to build a shelter, but the water and sewer infrastructure are not readily available. During times like these, we did a lot of additional planning and spent vast resources to overcome these challenges



From left: Mariet Ohanian, the Club’s Robert Larios, and Marina Quiñonez inside an individual dorm unit at the North Mission Road tiny home village.

Is this project a national model? Have other cities looked at the way this is happening in LA?

Marina: Yes, the City has been approached by various cities to understand our process. We’ve shared drawings, we’ve shared our ordinances and our executive directives. We’ve shared a lot of those templates with other cities, and [supplier] Pallet Structures expanded with new business after they worked in LA. There’s been a movement, I believe, nationwide to see our perspective on the tiny home villages and their meaning. We’re providing community, not just a bed. Adding color and vibrancy to our villages has informed other cities. Also, our sense of safety. We give fire life safety a high priority when we’re designing our villages. We’ve seen other cities have incidents where the pallet shelters go up in flames. We hope that they’re also learning the importance of fire life safety.

Lessons Learned

What have you learned from these important projects?

Raymond: People often criticize bureaucracy. But, in the past few years that I’ve been working on this homeless shelter program, I have been blessed to work under dedicated and passionate leadership, such as Marina or our previous program manager, Allan. With this strong leadership, we have been able to combine City resources and make this bureaucracy work for both our program and the City. Through our combined efforts, we can achieve success. To this day, it blows my mind how we’ve managed to complete homeless shelters in less than three months, showing the tangible results of people from diverse backgrounds coming together to work on a common goal.

Mariet: We learned a lot, especially how to work together with all the departments and move projects forward, as Raymond said. One of the issues that Raymond mentioned, for example, was getting utilities to all the sites: We found that it’s beneficial to get utilities at least to the property line before we award the contract to a contractor to build the project. We have been working with LASAN and LADWP to bring the utility meter or the sewer connection point to the property line so we have everything ready before starting the project. The cooperation of all the departments and all the agencies in doing the work in advance has helped move these projects forward a lot faster than it traditionally would.

Marina: I can echo the idea of learning to work together as a City. That’s been a great thing that happened through this process. We’ve delivered housing in record time, like Raymond said. As

'A Bridge Home' Projects

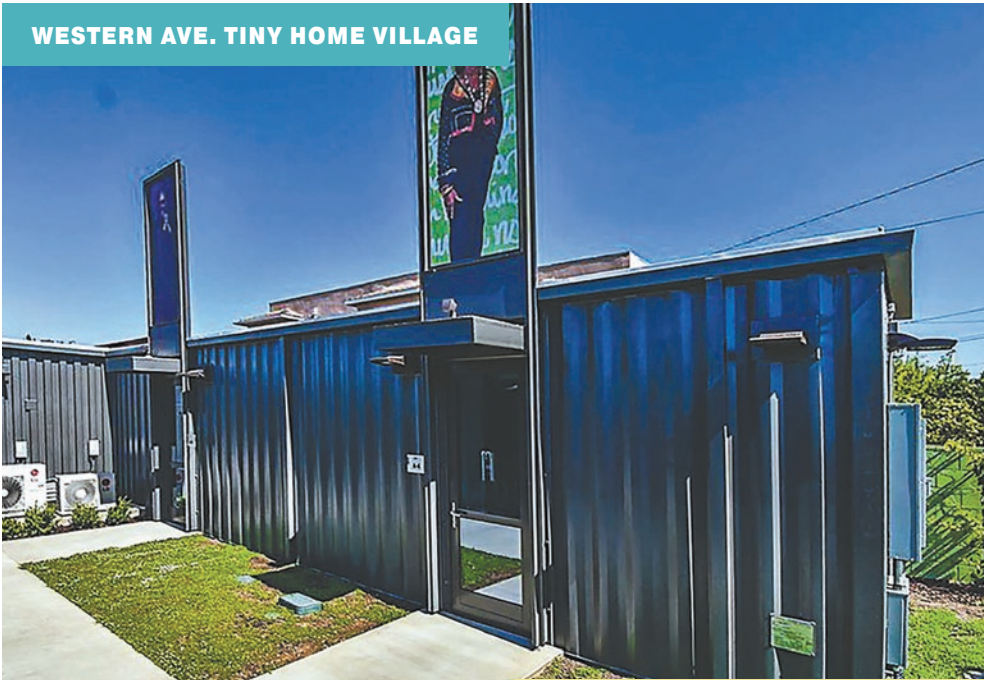
A Bridge Home was the City's first phase of response as it ramped up its efforts to manage the unhoused community in 2018.

LAFAYETTE PARK TINY HOME VILLAGE



Earlier, A Bridge Home project under construction in Lafayette Park.

WESTERN AVE. TINY HOME VILLAGE



A Bridge Home project on Western Avenue.

The *Alive!* Interview — CONTINUED FROM PAGE 14

a whole City, we worked departmentally—LADBS, LA Fire, LADWP, Sanitation—they've all been great partners in successfully delivering these projects. Their staff worked diligently as well, for the LADWP to give us commitment letters at the speed that they've done. That has been really great.

But I think one thing specifically that I've learned beyond that is that I really do work with great people. The people within our division and three or four other divisions have been involved in the homeless program. Raymond, Son and I are in the architectural division. Mariet is in the Construction Division. The Environmental Division does all our CEQA processes. Our Geotech Division does a lot of our site borings, environmental or soils investigations, things like that. The Structural Division and our Survey Division, so many good people. But, more specifically, in our smaller circle, I work with great staff. We work together well. There's a collaboration, a camaraderie that we've built within our group that I think is great. That can never really be replaced. The journey of delivering projects has led to friendship that's very valuable.

Have you grown as a person because of this special project?

Marina: I can share something I've reflected on – to house our unhoused Angelenos has been quite a journey. To understand the impact that design has in communities is really important to acknowledge, but beyond architecture, it's bringing someone home. Hearing stories about lives that are being changed affects you; you grow in gratitude to understand that someone's life was completely altered by a decision they made. A lot of our unhoused Angelenos are not drug addicts. They're not mentally ill. Some of them just had life situations that just didn't go well; I could be one of those people in an instant, if my life changed in the way that some of them have experienced. It keeps you with a level of gratitude that is beyond what I've understood before. I am part of a church and we help the unhoused through organizations, but being hands-on now in this project, I try to understand what they need through case management or through talking to them. It puts me in a different space to understand that our unhoused people have a past and they have a story. I've been blessed to understand that path now in a different way.

Mariet: Most of the time, when we build these projects, the Bureau of Engineering is involved with designing and building this project, but then we pass it on to the service provider, which provides for the residents. We are not overly involved in the personal management of the residents. But a woman came

to speak at one groundbreaking ceremony. She was a resident in one of the shelters, and she shared her story. She said that she fell into hard times. She became homeless. She was on the streets for a few years. Then she noticed that we were building one of the shelters in her neighborhood. She signed up and got a spot in the shelter. She got the help she needed. She got help for her addiction. She went back to school and got recertified as a nurse. She went back to work. She found permanent housing, and she was back to her life. Hearing her story was very inspiring. Knowing you can change people's lives just by providing safety and a place where they can get their life together is empowering. Most people just need that little help to move forward. That makes you feel good that you can do that for someone.

Son: Aside from the Bridge Home and the tiny home villages, we produced other products too. We did tenant improvements on existing buildings. One in particular was a

'Working on the homeless shelters, which I don't think any of us imagined we would be doing, there is a different level of satisfaction. It just feels good.'

– Marina Quiñonez

project in Hollywood for women who suffered from domestic violence. It was an old library that one of our architects, Erik Villanueva, helped bring back to life. It's a gorgeous place. The clients there, individuals who suffered a lot throughout their lives, had no place to go. It was great to see that they now had a place.

Another product we delivered were refresh centers, or navigation centers. One of the refresh centers is in Skid Row. When we were going there to look at the new site, I saw somebody on the street washing their clothes in the gutter, using whatever water was left there. It was really heartbreaking. Months after that, we were able to build a space where they could do their laundry, pick up food, have a safe place to hang out, and have a little bit of their freedom and dignity back.

Raymond: When I participate in the grand openings of these shelters, I feel a sense of joy and purpose as I provide shelter to the most vulnerable in our communities. I feel their hope and draw motivation through making our community a better place. Moments such as these remind me of why I chose my career path. While many think engineers tinker in offices doing much of their work on computers and drawing boards, we bring ideas to life. Changing lives is why I love my job.

Marina: Recently we opened a site at 850 Mission. The Councilmember dealt with a specific demographic, which is mariachis. His district has a group of mariachis who are unhoused. He had them play at the grand opening. That's just one example that homelessness really can touch anyone in any demographic. But him

being able to highlight that at the grand opening was quite special and to give them the opportunity to share their art with everyone present was really touching as well. At every grand opening, there are people who share how our projects changed their lives. That's really impactful.

'Just Feels Good'

What do you love about what you do?

Raymond: I love the intensity and pace at which these projects are completed. Because we must help those most vulnerable in our community, these projects are completed swiftly and with the utmost competence. This project has allowed me to see my designs come to life in a short period, something that I find very satisfying. For context, this contrasts with a typical city project which might take one, two, or sometimes even three years to become reality. Despite this, what brings me the most joy is bringing hope to those most vulnerable in our communities by creating centers for these individuals to seek help and redirection.

Marina: As an architect, I can use design as advocacy. Every time I put a design together, I know that it's going to end up helping someone. Going through school and deciding to be an architect, I never thought I would be housing the unhoused, but it's a form of advocacy.

Son: I've been fortunate to work with this great team who are passionate about helping the public in so many different ways. There are things I never thought about in the past, like art – how art and color could be so important to the built environment. When we go through engineering school, we get taught about functionality and whether it's cost effective or not. But the architects who we work with have been able to bring in another layer, another way to view things. It's not just about how something functions. It's about how people feel and how people connect when they are there, and whether they feel safe. It's been very rewarding in that aspect.

Mariet: Most of us chose to work for the City because we want to improve the lives of people in the community, and by working on the homeless shelters, which I don't think any of us imagined that we would be doing, there is a different level of satisfaction; it just feels good. When I see someone on the street, I think about the projects I can complete to help that person and provide safety for them. I love doing that service and finding ways to do it better and faster, helping the team achieve whatever we can.

Well Marina, Son, Raymond and Mariet, thank you for taking the time to tell us your story on helping to house the unhoused. We thank you and appreciate all that you do for the City of Los Angeles.

Mariet: Thank you for your interest in what we do, and highlighting it.

Our honor.

Raymond: Thank you.

Son: Thanks! ●

A TIMELINE: The Interim Housing Project

In 2018, then-Mayor Eric Garcetti issued a City-wide emergency intended to get the unhoused into temporary housing while they await permanent supportive housing. The response came in three phases: A Bridge Home, tiny house villages, and existing building conversions. Here's a timeline.

2018

- Citywide Temporary Structures working group is established.
- Mayor Eric Garcetti declares an emergency shelter crisis.
- First A Bridge Home project, El Puente, built on Alameda Street downtown.

2019

- Proposition HHH funds two navigation centers and one permanent women's shelter.
- A Bridge Home Schrader Boulevard in Hollywood opens.
- A women's shelter, first Prop HHH funded project, completed.

2020

- Injunction issued by US District Judge.
- BOE begins research on tiny home villages.
- City Council approves \$100 million in CRF funds.
- A Bridge Home in Van Nuys opens.

2021

- Navig8, last navigation center built with HHH funding, opens.
- First Safe Sleep site opens.
- Tiny home village Chandler Boulevard opens in North Hollywood.

2022

- Tiny home village in Eagle Rock opens.
- Trebek Center Home Key site opens.
- Northeast New Beginnings, first residential project, starts construction.
- Mayor Karen Bass declares a state of emergency on homelessness.

2023

- Mayor Karen Bass issues executive directive to streamline affordable housing, create the Safe Inside initiative, and allow emergency use of City-owned property.
- Tiny home village Branford Village in Sun Valley opens.

2024

- Tiny home Village on North Mission Road downtown opens.



Ray Huang (left) and the Club's Robert Larios inside the laundry facility at the North Mission Road tiny home village.



Retired Los Angeles City Employees, Inc.

RLACEI

For Retired Club Members

CONTACT INFORMATION
Retired Los Angeles City Employees, Inc. (RLACEI)



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

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Send in your Interesting News Contributions!

Contact: **Beverly J. Clark**, Publicity Director
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RETIREE EVENTS
Stay Tuned!
The 2024 Summer Picnic's date and location will be announced soon.

TBD, 2024 Summer Picnic
Date and time to be announced

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

RLACEI EVENTS RESERVATION LINE
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Due to staffing, telephone confirmation cannot be provided.



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

Share Your Retirement Adventures!

Time flies when you're having fun!

I can hardly believe that it is already June. It's remarkable to think that we're already about halfway through 2024. The passage of time is a fascinating phenomenon that seems to accelerate as we age. The saying "how time flies when you're having fun" seems to be absolutely true.

I hope each of you is having a fantastic time in retirement, fulfilling your dreams and goals. Whether you have a bucket list of adventures or are simply cherishing relaxation at home, it's all about what brings you joy.

As a City of Los Angeles Retiree, you've completed your first assignment – the working years – and now it's time for the fun part. Remember, there's no such thing as a boring pursuit. Every endeavor, no matter how seemingly mundane, adds color to the canvas of life.

Retirement is the golden phase of life that offers a canvas for us to paint our dreams and aspirations. Whether it's an extensive bucket list waiting to be checked off or simply basking in the comfort of home, Retirees have the privilege of embarking on diverse journeys. Here's a list of adventures to pursue:

- Taking on a second job - not out of necessity but sheer passion. Maybe you're teaching a class, drafting a novel, or even launching a small business. Retirement doesn't mean the end of productivity; it's a chance to redefine it.
- Gardening - it can be more than a hobby; it can be a way to connect with nature and nurture life. From tending to vibrant flower beds to growing your own vegetables, Retirees can find solace in the soil.
- Culinary adventures - maybe you're experimenting with exotic spices, perfecting your grandmother's secret recipes, or hosting delightful dinner parties. Bon appétit!
- Home repairs and creative projects - That leaky faucet? Fixed! The creaky floorboard? Silenced! And that vintage chair you found at the swap meet? Restored.
- Babysitting grandkids – a joyous responsibility. Storytime, baking cookies, and playing board games – these



moments create bonds that span generations.

- Classic Car Enthusiast - dust off that vintage beauty in the garage. Retirement allows you to devote time to restoring classic cars, reliving the nostalgia of years bygone.
- Lunch dates with friends – a wonderful way to spend the day. Whether it's catching up over coffee or exploring new eateries. Social gatherings strengthen friendships.
- Travel - retirement is the passport to explore distant lands or explore destinations close to home.

I've spoken with Retirees who have fascinating hobbies and goals, but they downplay them as "boring." Let me assure you, if you're engaged and finding enjoyment in what you do, it's not boring!

We launched "Retirees on the Move" in 2018 as a platform to highlight your post-retirement activities and exploits, inspire your fellow Retirees, and build connections.

So, Retirees, share your adventures! Whether it's a quiet moment in your garden or a wild escapade across continents, your adventures inspire us all. We'd love to hear about what you're doing in retirement! Tell us all about it!

Email Beverly Clark, Publicity Director, at Beverly.Clark@RLACEI.org or leave a message at (800) 678-4145, ext. 716. Share the adventure! ●



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

LACERS to Receive Crypto Training

The LACERS Board is set to receive training from NEPC, its investment consultant, as part of its regular investor education. The focus of this training will be on a relatively new investment product: cryptocurrency. Cryptocurrency has gained significant attention in recent years due to its decentralized nature and potential for high returns. It's essential for investment professionals to stay informed about emerging trends and asset classes, and this training aims to equip the LACERS Board with the necessary knowledge to navigate the cryptocurrency landscape effectively.

Cryptocurrency is a digital payment system that uses cryptography to store digital coins whose value fluctuates. The big question for investors is, is crypto a legitimate asset class that deserves the recognition that we give to stocks and bonds? Or is it a "flavor of the month" that is pure speculation with no proof of long-term measurable return to investors?

Certainly, some crypto investors have made dizzying returns on the price spikes of the popular crypto coin Bitcoin. However, others have lost their proverbial shirts when the price of this coin cratered when the roller coaster ride went down along the way. The price went from about \$0.10 at the beginning in 2009 to as high as \$73,000 recently (Source: Investopedia).

Investors in another crypto vehicle, the crypto exchange FTX, lost billions due to the fraud of Sam Bankman-Fried, who has been sentenced to 25 years in prison.

While most of the largest brokerage houses offer a chance to invest in crypto and, in fact, hype it, the second largest, Vanguard, with \$7 trillion in assets invested, refuses to offer anything in this area and advises its clients to shun crypto. Why? (Full disclosure: I am a Vanguard investor.)

A Vanguard ETF (Exchange Traded Fund) manager, Janel Jackson, said, "Crypto is more of a speculation than an investment." She added, "[Crypto] is an immature asset class that has little history, no inherent economic value, no cash flow and can create havoc within a portfolio."

By comparison, stocks and bonds have a cash flow that can be measured and real assets that can be evaluated. Crypto-type speculation was not invented yesterday. In the 1630s in the Dutch Republic, the price of tulip bulbs skyrocketed and then spectacularly fell back to earth as the bubble burst. At the height of the bubble a single tulip bulb sold for 10,000 guilders, the value of a mansion on the Amsterdam Grand Canal (source: Investopedia).

The whole concept of speculation is based on the theory of the "greater fool" who will come behind you and pay you more for your ill-advised gamble despite the lack of sound financial reason.

In addition to Vanguard, a column by Michael Hiltzik with the *Los Angeles Times* was a source for this article. ●



GET HAPPY NOW

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

Mental and Physical Health

As my grandson says, I was born in the 1900s. Back then, my only knowledge of mental healthcare applied to people who were institutionalized at the Eastern State Hospital (formerly known as Eastern Kentucky Lunatic Asylum in Lexington), near where I grew up.

Thankfully, due to many years of study by various mental health professionals – psychiatrists, psychologists, social scientists, and the like – “normal” people now know (or should) that mental healthcare applies to everyone. But what does that care look like? Does it require professional help or psychotropic drugs? Can we provide mental care for ourselves?

I am not a mental health professional, but I will share what I’ve found to be effective self-mental health-care during retirement that nurtures and maintains my overall wellbeing during this challenging life phase. (Realistically, every phase of life has its set of challenges, so this is just another in a lengthy line.)

You are worthy of a life filled with joy and happiness!

Invest in yourself. Find purpose and meaning to your life by spending time, energy and if necessary, money, to discover that one thing that excites, motivates and fulfills your soul. Retirement is the time to

“YOUR MENTAL HEALTH IS JUST AS IMPORTANT AS YOUR PHYSICAL HEALTH.”

GET THE MOST OUT OF RETIREMENT
Get happy Now
ARNETTETRAVIS.COM



pursue things and hobbies in which you’ve always been interested. If not now, then when?

Indulge in daily physical activity. While an exercise program is a wonderful way to stay healthy, engagement in physical activities like walking, gardening, housekeeping, dancing, cycling or various sports, are also great ways to maintain your physical abilities and improve your mental health. As per Nike’s slogan: “Just do it!”

Implement stress reduction practices. While it is impossible to entirely eliminate stress, make a conscious effort to avoid situations, environments and people who trigger stress in you. Manage your finances (get help if necessary); cut ties or establish boundar-

ies with negative associations and cultivate positive relationships. Meditation, yoga, tai-chi and breathing exercises are relaxation techniques that will help you manage stress and improve your overall well-being. Release and relax.

What are my options?

Our mental and physical health are connected in a way that is impossible to separate: what happens to one affects the other. Many of us have the ability to tend our own mental gardens. But here’s the rub: Safeguard your mental health or don’t. The choice is yours. Giving priority to protecting your mental health has immediate and long-term benefits. Failing to do so has immediate and long-term liabilities. Choose wisely. ●



The RLACEI Board of Directors, from left: Joe Quan, Lucy Artinian, Vicki Keoseian, Nancy Hammoudian, Ruth Perry, Beverly Anderson, Ann Seales and Leonard Torres.



Hank Murakami, who won a \$20 certificate, with RLACEI President Ruth Perry.



From left: Nancy Hammoudian and sister Barbara Hagopian, Joe Quan, Lucy Artinian, Vicki Keoseian and Beverly Anderson.



LACERS Commissioner Mike Wilkinson (left) and LACERS Deputy CIO Wilkin Ly.



Ruben Vasquez, \$50 raffle winner, with the Club’s Noelle Kauffman.



From left: Former RLACEI Director Tom Moutes; current Director Ann Seales and LACERS Commissioner Mike Wilkinson.



From left: Lynn Trotter, Sr. PSR II, LAPD, 31 years of City service; Cathy Bushey, PSR, LAPD, 30 years; Gloria Ojeda, Sr. Admin Clerk, 32 years; M. Linda Perkins, Sr. PSR, LAPD, 32 years; Kim Antol, Sr. PSR, LAPD, 33 years; Jill Woo, Sr. PSR, LAPD, 32 years; and Lisa Smock, Sr. PSR, LAPD, 30 years



From left: Roberta Martinez, Public Works, 30 years of City service; Joseph Zamora, Public Works, 25 years; Tracie Edwards, Airports, 36 years; and Eric Oppong, guest.



From left: Angelia Simpson, IT, Airports, 32 years of City service; and Patricia Currie, LADOT, 33 years.



From left: Sylvia Whelan, Fire and Police Pensions, 37 years of City service; Leticia Delatorre, guest; Dodie Munoz, ITA, 26 years; and Irene Munoz, ITA, 26 years.



Mavis Seales, guest, with Pat and Sam Aloway, General Services, 30 years of City service.

Spring Fling Fun!

RETIREEES ASSOCIATION HOSTS ANNUAL SPRING SOCIAL.

By Beverly J. Clark, Publicity Director

On May 16, RLACEI members and friends gathered at Whittier Narrows Recreation Park for an enjoyable time.

Everyone enjoyed a delicious catered lunch by Mr. Ardi’s Catering, which included delicious cheeseburgers, veggie burgers, hot dogs, potato chips, potato salad, and cookies. RLACEI offered a new shuttle cart service to transport members and guests from the parking area to the picnic site.

Guest speakers provided valuable updates:

- LACERS Commissioner Michael Wilkinson provided updates, including a new 2.85 percent Discretionary COLA (Cost of Living Adjustment) that LACERS will again send to the CAO for Council approval.
- LACERS Deputy Chief Investment Officer Wilkins Ly discussed LACERS’ investment returns.
- Employees Club Director of Sales Noelle Kauffman provided members with an update on benefits available through the Club.
- Los Angeles Federal Credit Union (LAFCU) Social Media Coordinator Robert Aguirre informed attendees about credit union services and interest rates.

Former RLACEI Director Tom Moutes served as the guest emcee for prize giveaways. In addition to gifts from RLACEI, the Club generously contributed gift cards as raffle prizes. The LAFCU also contributed prizes. Members were thrilled to win practical and delightful gifts.

Everyone in attendance enjoyed the outing. Members had a chance to connect, reminisce and stay informed about retirement-related issues. Stay tuned for the upcoming summer picnic announcement and details! ●

More fun pics on Web Alive!



From left: RLACEI Director Lucy Artinian and Betty Porter.



RLACEI Director Nancy Hammoudian and folding chair winner Raymond Garcia.



From left: Ira Starks and Cynthia Jackson.





Danni McDonald, 5

BIRTHDAY: FEB. 14 • BEST FRIEND: Evilen • FAVORITE SNACK: Slim Jim's, Fruit Snack • FAVORITE TV SHOW: "Cocomelon" • WHY DO YOU WANT TO GO TO THE SAN DIEGO ZOO: To see the monkeys. • PARENT: Felicia McDonald, LADWP



Kenley Ninofranco, 7

BIRTHDAY: Nov. 2 • BEST FRIEND: Christopher • FAVORITE SNACK: Fruit Snacks • FAVORITE TV SHOW: "Bluey" • WHY DO YOU WANT TO GO TO THE SAN DIEGO ZOO: Because I like seeing animals and my favorite animal is elephants. • PARENT: Phyllis Ninofranco, Harbor



Belle Kwan, 8

BIRTHDAY: May 7 • BEST FRIEND: Emma • FAVORITE SNACK: Pringles! • FAVORITE TV SHOW: "Bluey" • WHY DO YOU WANT TO GO TO THE SAN DIEGO ZOO: I've never been there and would love to go this summer! • PARENT: Shirley Ly, Library



Ram Ravid, 13

BIRTHDAY: April 24 • BEST FRIEND: I have 3 best friends. • FAVORITE SNACKS: Oreos with peanut butter #sogood • FAVORITE TV SHOW: "Stranger Things" and "Big Mouth". • WHY DO YOU WANT TO GO TO THE SAN DIEGO ZOO: I love the zoo, and I want to go see the okapis and giraffes. • GRANDPA: Gilberto Barrera, Library



Coloring
The Clubs
with

Compiled by:



Guadalupe Lira
Retail Operations
Manager



DeAngelo
Thompson
Mobile Operations
Representative

Congratulations to the
WINNERS!
of our Club Coloring Contest!

Everyone who turned in a design is a winner in our opinion! But our top four participants win
4 tickets to the San Diego Zoo

Look for our next contest in October,
in the *Alive!* Newspaper and online at:
alive.employeesclub.com/kidscoloringcontest

Honorable Mention

CHILD	AGE	PARENT/GUARDIAN	DEPT.
Riley Chilin	2	Miguel Chilin	PW/Sanitation
Amai Baychue	3	Rhonda Baychue	Retired
Eli Baychue	6	Rhonda Baychue	Retired
Ethan Chili	6	Miguel Chilin	PW/Sanitation
Everly Pham	6	Sing-Ling Liu	LADWP
Jaxon Deliman	6	Gary Kenton	LADWP
Olivia Weaver	6	Shane Weaver	LAFD
Allison McDonald	9	Felicia McDonald	LADWP
Mallary Deliman	9	Gary Kenton	LADWP
Ori Ravid	10	Gilberto Barrera	Library
Emmeline Ninofranco	11	Phyllis Ninofranco	Harbor
Milana Mihalek	11	Gary Kenton	LADWP

Kid's Coloring Contest Schedule

There are two Kid's Coloring Contests per year:

- **April** (winners published in June)
- **October** (winners published in December)



Isabella Jones, mighty fundraiser to support scoliosis care.

You Can Help Isabella Help Others

CLUB DAUGHTER IS RAISING MONEY FOR SHRINER'S.

Scan to donate to Shriners Children's, using Isabella's personalized fundraising link:



THE CLUB: Isabella Jones, 10, daughter of Heather Jones, Deputy City Attorney, Club Member, has scoliosis and is raising money for Shriner's Children's Hospital in Pasadena, a nonprofit medical center. She receives her scoliosis care at the hospital.

Isabella has long been a person who thinks of others. She donated \$450 of her own money, raised through the sales of note cards and magnets featuring art she created, to Shriners. Heather, her mother, also said that, three years ago, Isabella donated money from her cookie sales to Door of Hope in Pasadena, which helps those experiencing homelessness.

"I have scoliosis myself, and have for many years," said Association CEO Robert Larios. "It affects children as well as adults. Catching it early enough is key to successful treatment."

"Isabella is a tremendous young person, who always thinks of others. I ask Club Members to consider supporting Isabella's drive to give back to Shriner's Hospital for her care."

The Club wishes Isabella many years of great health! ●



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A FREE Benefit to members of the Employees Club

These insurance products are brought to you by the Club's Partner, United Agencies, Inc. CA Lic. # 0252636 United Agencies represents Mercury Insurance Group, as well as Chubb Insurance, Hartford, Fireman's Fund, Progressive, Civil Service Employees Insurance, Allied, Safeco, Travelers, Unigard and Encompass.



Noelle Kauffman, Club Director of Sales

Noelle's Picture Perfect Contest

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

This month's theme was: **Outdoor Fun.**

"March 2024: Escaping the city rush, we dashed to Big Bear Lake, chasing the last whispers of winter in a thrilling winter wonderland adventure."

– **Christine Isidro, LAFD**



Noelle's comment: Outdoor fun for sure! It's the dimensions that make this photo come alive – active foreground and background. They're working and he's playing. Ha, just the way I like it! Excellent!



"Two vets training a newbie on how not to burn and melt the marshmallows. If shining a torchlight would help roast it just right, then so be it. I myself am not a fan of the puffy, pasty balls. Now, mini sausages – I wolf them down all day like popcorn."

– **Dominique Daito, LAPD**

Noelle's comment: The magic here, Dominique, is in the light – how it gently reveals their faces, how it tracks from the flashlight to the fire, how it brightens the smoke. Nighttime is made unforgettable with your mastery of light. Well done!

"Hot air ballooning over Morocco. Trying to catch the sunrise over the Sahara."

– **Capt. Michael Barnes, Harbor Noelle's**

comment: I love this photo, Capt.! It's a good portrait to begin with. But then you scan it and realize what you're seeing. I like ongoing dramas like that, in one image. Thanks for submitting!



"I captured my wife spreading her fairy wings at a renaissance fair on Mother's Day at dusk. She said she felt like a kid again. What a beauty!"

– **John Sousa, Airport Police**

Noelle's comment: Your photo takes my breath away, John. Wow! I don't know if all the gentle details of her face are visible in print (make sure to check it out on the *Alive!* website), but I can feel the magic soaring here. Thank you for submitting this beautiful image!



The next photo contest theme:
Things You Value
Send in a photo featuring something that you truly value.

DEADLINE: June 14



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

ENTER TO WIN \$50 AMAZON E-GIFT CARD

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



"My grandson dribbling in to score."

– **John Nance, Retired, LADWP**

Noelle's comment: This moment is all about focus and concentration. All three of the young athletes have only one task – score, or stop from scoring. So much drama in such a simple shot! Thanks for submitting, John, and I hope your grandson was victorious.

Alive! AROUND THE WORLD

Mexico



"My wife and I enjoying the warm waters of Isla (Island) M, Mexico. The food was great – eating ceviche, grilled fish, shrimp and lobster – after touring Mexico City and visiting family members."
— **Thomas Godoy**, Retired, LADWP.



Philippines



"Cresta de Gallo Island is a sandbar out Sibuyan Island, Romblon Province in the central Philippines."
— **Norman Faner**, Retired, LADWP, and **Florian Faner**, Retired, General Services.



Send in a travel picture holding Alive!

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

Captain's Log

Traveling with Capt. Michael Barnes, Retired, Harbor



Letter From Argentina Pampas, Penguins and Patagonia

Argentina is the crown jewel of any trip to South America, so whether you're an outdoors addict or a city slicker, this marvelous country has something for everyone. With Argentina's unfortunate financial crisis, the US dollar goes further every day. Where else in the world can you get a terrific Airbnb for \$40 a night in a capital city or a hotel in the countryside for \$24? If you have the time to explore, make your travel arrangements when you get there; we did.

There is a very modern, efficient coach system to any part of the country, and train and local air travel is available to most popular destinations at very reasonable prices. So why not fly to Salta in the northern Andes mountains and visit the Salinas Grandes salt flats, with their mirror-like reflections after the rains? This is definitely one for your bucket list.

Try crossing the pampas by bus or train to visit Mendoza, nestling at the foot of the mountains covered in vineyards, home to the world-famous Malbec wines, a must-visit for wine lovers with so many wineries and inexpensive places to stay. On the way, stop off and visit a cattle ranch (Argentina is one of the largest cattle-farming nations on the planet), ride a horse like a gaucho (horseback cowboy) on the vast Pampas grasslands, and maybe chow down on some of

that famous world-class beef. It's full-flavored, but because they do not hang their meat, it requires a lot of chewing.

To the south in the jungle, on the border of Brazil and Argentina, is the world's largest waterfall in Iguazu National Park. Stand on the edge of the falls and get totally

a coach. It's a day and a half, but a lot cheaper, and you see much more of the countryside.

Ushuaia is the world's southernmost city, and Tierra del Fuego National Park not only serves as the entrance to Antarctica but is the end of the Pan-American Highway. Also located within the park is the End of the World Train and the only king penguin colony outside the Sub-Antarctic Islands, making it easier for photographers and nature lovers to visit without the expense of an Antarctica cruise (which leave from here).

Decisions decisions! There is so much to see and so little time.

My advice is to pick a couple of things to see, come back next year, and do two more.

— **The Captain**

Did you know there is a colony of Welsh emigrants in Argentina's province of Patagonia? Feeling threatened by English dominance in the 1800s, to protect their religion, language and culture, they thought they were emigrating to Vancouver, BC, but fell victim to a dodgy marketing campaign and ended up here. ●

CLUB MEMBER TRAVEL DEALS

Traveling somewhere fun like Capt. Barnes? Save money with thousands of awesome Club deals!



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wet while watching the water as it thunders into the valley below.

For hiking or skiing enthusiasts, Bariloche in the Andes is great. It has great runs at a third of the cost of California. At the same time, explore the gorgeous lakes nearby and taste their famous German-style chocolate.

In southwest Patagonia, close to the border with Chile, is one of the few glaciers in the world that is still moving forward. To see Glacier Perito Moreno, take a bus to El Calafate and then explore the glacier's face up close from the deck of a small boat.

A four-hour flight south from Buenos Aires to Ushuaia at the entrance to Antarctica is definitely the fastest way to get there, but it's also the most expensive. If you are not in a hurry, then take



Beware of the curious Coatis when exploring the jungle paths

More pictures on Web Alive!



Three Borders Landmark between Brazil, Argentina, and Paraguay

Retired or Retiring Soon?

CLUB RETIREMENT PLAQUE

...a \$499 value!

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

FREE!*

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Caring for the Coast

SANITATION LIVABILITY'S CARE TEAM ADDRESSING UNHOUSED.

PUBLIC WORKS: On May 7, Sanitation and Environment's Livability Team launched a CARE+ team dedicated to the coastal area in Council District 11's coastal areas. The new CARE team – Comprehensive Cleaning and Rapid Engagement – will conduct encampment cleanups and health hazard removal on the City's public rights-of-way and deliver services to individuals experiencing homelessness within the area.

The City established its CARE program in 2019 to conduct encampment cleanups along with trash, litter/debris and health and safety hazard removals. The CARE mission is to deliver services to unhoused individuals within service areas.

In our November 2020 issue, *Alive!* focused on Livability programs that helped unhoused Angelenos stay clean and hygienic. That outreach is part of this most recent activation along the coast.

Well done, Sanitation, for taking care of the least of the Angelenos among us. ●

Barbara Romero, Director and General Manager, Public Works/ Sanitation and Environment, led the CARE program announcement setting up teams along the coast in Council District 11.



Our November 2020 cover story on Sanitation's CARE program that takes care of the hygiene needs of the City's unhoused. That's just part of Sanitation's recent announcement.



CLAIMS MONTHLY

Your Club Insurance Dollars at Work

Claims paid in April: \$608,911

Claims paid since 1992: \$128,674,193

PRODUCT	APRIL	TOTAL SINCE 1992
Life/Accidental Death and Dismemberment	\$301,380	\$74,076,596
Disability Insurance	\$141,170	\$35,758,864
Long-Term Care Insurance	\$156,310	\$13,738,906
Cancer/Critical Care Insurance	\$10,050	\$4,964,250
Accident Plan	[none]	\$135,577
Totals	\$608,911	\$128,674,193

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

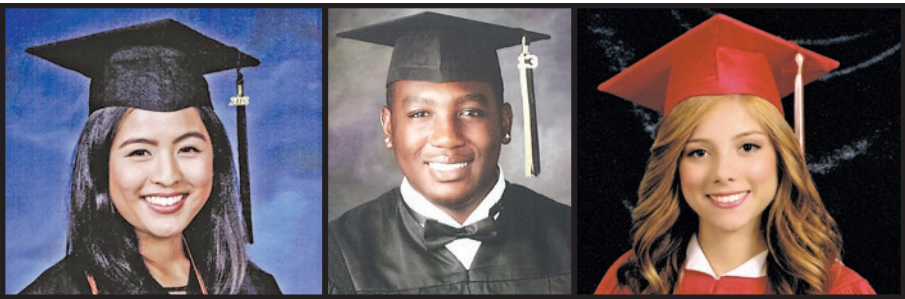


Mikayla Sprague
Claims Administrator

CLUB MEMBERS’ PRAISE

“I rate your service as excellent, the best I have experienced. I had the fortune of meeting one of your employees, Dulce Lopez, Claims Administrator. I was impressed with her help and concern [after] the loss of my wife. She continues to follow up with telephone calls to ensure that my needs are met. She is an excellent employee. I found the book [The Fall of Freddie the Leaf] interesting and fascinating. It helped me realize our purpose for being – all is not loss, especially when we are able to see the whole picture of life.”

— Joseph S. Lee, April 2024



Put your graduation photo in *Alive!*

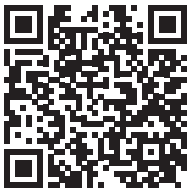
Club members: Have you had a family member graduate from elementary school... high school...or college? Send us a photo, and we’ll publish it in *Alive!*

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

Thanks, Dispatchers!

SAFETY AGENCIES HOST LOCAL CELEBRATION OF NATIONAL DISPATCHERS WEEK.

LAPD, LAFD: The LAPD and LAFD celebrated National Public Safety Telecommunicators Week – popularly known as National Dispatchers Week – April 14-20, honoring their dispatchers with ceremonies and honors.

In 1992, President George H. Bush established National Dispatchers’ Week to honor police dispatchers for providing vital emergency services to their community nationwide. The LAPD and LAFD have been celebrating it ever since.

The LAPD’s Metro Communications and the Valley Communications Centers enjoyed the presence of Mayor Karen Bass, LAPD Interim Chief Dominic Choi and others who stopped by April 18, to say thank you.

KTLA Channel 5’s news celebrities Chris Schauble, Kirk Hawkins and others stopped by on April 19.

The LAFD wrote:

“Every time an LAFD Dispatcher walks onto the floor of the Metropolitan Fire Communications (MFC, or ‘Metro’), they endure under the words: ‘It All Starts Here.’ It’s not just a motto but the foundation for all they do ... we’re grateful for all they do. For all Public Safety Telecommunications across the globe – a special thank you. You’re not the only ones the public sees responding with lights and sirens, but you’re the cornerstone to it all.”

THANK YOU!



Thanks, Dispatchers, for all you do to keep us safe! You are some of the most important safety employees in the City. We honor everyone at LAPD/Communications, the LAFD, Port Police, and all safety agencies for their intensely hard work, discipline and service in keeping us safe!

Photos courtesy LAPD, LAFD



Dispatchers and leadership celebrate National Dispatchers Week at the Valley Center.



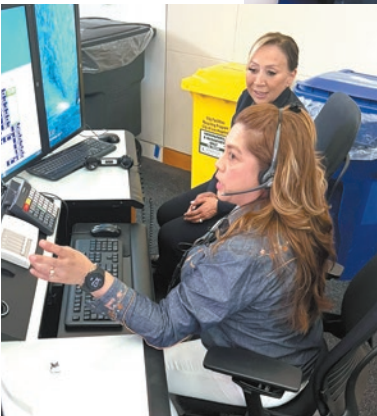
Kenya McCaskill and Interim Chief Dominic Choi.



Dispatchers had fun dressing down.



Mayor Karen Bass, Interim Chief Dominic Choi and Assistant Chiefs Randolph and Blake Chow stopped by Metro to say thanks.



Deputy Chief Ruby Flores (back) gets updated on LAPD Communications operations.



Channel 5's Chris Schauble stopped by.



KTLA's Kirk Hawkins stopped by.



Life's Important Moments

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

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

Send your photos and text online:
alive.employeesclub.com/lifemoments



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



Retirements*

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
Alderete, Luis V.	Facilities Services	LADWP	—	Gilchrist, Mack E.	Motor Sweeper Op.	Public Works	41	Munoz, Alfred P.	Sr. Gardener	Rec and Parks	22
Andrews, Charles B.	Sign Shop Supervisor	LADOT	35	Glover, Lawrence E.	Carpenter	Zoo	11	Murphy, Gina M.	Sr. Admin. Clerk	LAPD	37
Aranda, Manuel	Power C&M	LADWP	—	Gobaton, Edmundo P.	Water Engineering	LADWP	—	Nasatir, Seth A.	Librarian	Library	10
Arzaga, Jaime	Administrative Clerk	LAPD	38	Gomez, William	Sr. Personnel Analyst	Personnel	37	Nguyen, Tam	Instrument Tech	Public Works	22
Bartfai, John C.	Power C&M	LADWP	—	Gonzalez, Margo L.	Administrative Clerk	Animal Services	18	Nower, Colette	Librarian	Library	22
Bautista, Ester	Accounting Clerk	Bldg. & Safety	16	Guerena, Patrick G.	Water Distribution	LADWP	—	Olguin, Richard C.	Power Transmission	LADWP	—
Bautista, Nell Bernardo	Mgmt. Analyst	Gen. Services	18	Hauser, Ruben	Power Transmission	LADWP	—	Olson, Daniel E.	Fleet Services	LADWP	—
Bell, La Cheryl	Emerg. Mgmt. Coord.	Emerg.Prepare.	39	Helin, Gregory S.	Sr. Painter	Rec and Parks	18	Patrick, Matthew M.	Officer Airport Police	Airports	17
Berry, Mark E.	Water Operations	LADWP	—	Heron, Christopher W.	Water Engineering	LADWP	—	Perea, Esther D.	Customer Service	LADWP	—
Bryant, Christle J.	Workers Comp Analyst	Personnel	21	Honore, Victor	Environ. Eng. Assoc.	PW/LADWP	24/—	Perez, Rodolfo	Maintenance Super.	Rec and Parks	26
Campbell, Brian R.	CPD Industrial Prog.	LADWP	—	Ivers, Shawn H.	Power C&M	LADWP	—	Pinedo, Alicia	Personnel Analyst	LAPD	33
Cappadonna, Elena	Integrated Support	LADWP	—	Jackson, Belinda	Assistant General Mgr.	Rec and Parks	22	Quintero, Jose L.	Mechanical Helper	Public Works	41
Carter, Hugh	Sr. Project Coord.	Ec./Wrkfr. Dev.	21	Jones, Melvin	Gardener Caretaker	Harbor	24	Rivera, Aurelio J.	Custodian	Airports	18
Chavira, Daniel	Refuse Coll. Truck Op.	Public Works	33	Kato, Chris A.	ITS	LADWP	—	Robinson, Damita L.	Police Service Rep.	LAPD	24
Chiu, David H.	Power Systems	LADWP	—	Kent, Robert S.	Water Distribution	LADWP	—	Robledo, Ruben	Security Officer	Airports	27
Choychangthong, Ratchanee	Traffic Officer	LADOT	33	Kleinberg, Douglas K.	Power Transmission	LADWP	—	Santos Claro, Lisa	Sr. Admin. Clerk	ITA	35
Christophe, Vanessa A.	Mgmt. Analyst	Airports	19	Kojima, Jennie T.	CPD Industrial Programs	LADWP	—	Scantlin, Paul S.	Water Operations	LADWP	—
Cortina, Ernie	Equipment Operator	Public Works	18	Labat, Debby M.	Traffic Officer	Transportation	22	Sempelsz, Samuel J.	Power Transmission	LADWP	—
Delacy, James D.	Power Transmission	LADWP	—	Le, Quang N.	Civil Eng. Draft Tech.	Public Works	30	Shin, Christina K.	Airport Guide	Airports	12
Eaton, Brandon M.	Chief of Operations	Airports	27	Le, Viet Xuan	Office Eng. Tech.	Public Works	22	Sirakie, Minas R.	Water Engineering	LADWP	—
Elbancol, Abraham E.	Power C&M	LADWP	—	Lee, Demetra Denise	Secretary	Airports	35	Sison, Reynaldo A.	Sr. Environ. Engineer	Public Works	32
Engelhardt, Paul D.	Power Supply Ops.	LADWP	—	Lewis, Floetta	Human Resources	LADWP	—	Srouji, Jamal S.	Security Officer	Airports	21
Espana, Carlos A.	Special Prog. Assistant	Rec and Parks	9	Lontok, Ismael Z.	Environ. Specialist	Public Works	35	Standifer-Barron, Tonja	Commercial	LADWP	—
Evans, Michael D.	Administrative Coord.	City Attorney	14	Lozze, Anthony G.	Security Officer	LAPD	17	Sy, Imelda Dee	Pr. Accountant	Controller's Off.	22
Fermin, Cristina J.	Exec. Admin. Assistant	Gen. Services	34	Macabitas, Romeo M.	Power Supply	LADWP	—	Tanijiri, Randall M.	Sr. Transportation Eng.	LADOT	35
Frampton, Greg	Traffic Officer	LADOT	14	Martinez, Robert M.	Power C&M	LADWP	—	Thatcher, Elizabeth A.	Custodian Supervisor	Gen. Services	25
Garcia Sanchez, Lorena	Police Service Rep	LAPD	26	Martinez, Rudy	Power Transmission	LADWP	—	Troung, Olga N.	Airport Guide	Airports	2
Gardner Brooks, Tracye	Admin. Clerk	LAFD	5	Medina, Antonio	Water Engineering	LADWP	—	Valentino, Dominique	Motor Sweeper Op.	Public Works	32
Gharios, Khalil M.	Solid Resources Mgr. II	Public Works	39	Minamide, Traci J.	Assistant Director	Public Works	38	Webb, George W.	Window Cleaner Super.	Airports	18
Gilbert, Gary F.	Water Operations	LADWP	—	Morgan, Timothy J.	JFB/Facilities	LADWP	—	Williams, Yen	Administrative Clerk	Rec and Parks	6

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

In Memoriam

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

DEPARTMENT			YEARS OF SERVICE	DEPARTMENT			YEARS OF SERVICE	DEPARTMENT			YEARS OF SERVICE
ACTIVE											
De La Rosa, Alejo	Rec and Parks	1	Enriquez, Louis P.	Public Works	26	Pasqualone, James L.	LADWP	37			
Fujii, Russel M.	Finance	20	Estrella, Emilia G.	Rec and Parks	17	Pineda, Jose	Rec and Parks	37			
Njoku, Okey W.	Public Works	22	Fang, Hao	LADOT	18	Quiocho, Josefina T.	Controller's Office	22			
Russell, Paul B.	LADWP	<1	Flores, Meliton B.	Public Works	17	Richardson, Gregory A.	General Services	<1			
				Fortus, Edward R.	LADWP	26	Riley, Glenn R.	LADWP	32		
				George, Billy	—	—	Roberts, Jonathan R.L.	—	—		
RETIRED				Greek, Dana L.	Rec and Parks	37	Robertson, Glenn A.	General Services	27		
Abeyta, Christopher	Public Works	31	Griffin, Marsha A.	Airports	10	Rogers, William M.	—	—			
Afford, John A.	LADOT	36	Hamilton, Helen R.	Airports	23	Ross, Oleg	Library	35			
Aldridge, Donald D.	—	—	Hierro, George H.	Public Works	22	Royal, Kathleen S.	LAPD	26			
Atkinson, Raymond E.	Airports	41	Hill, James G.	Airports	29	Saenz, Robert	ITA	37			
Bolden, Jesse A.	—	—	Hill, Raymond D.	LADWP	31	Shin, Jay	CAO	30			
Brema, Rita A.	—	—	Holt, Lewis B.	Public Works	28	Simelton, Oliver L.	Rec and Parks	12			
Bright, Elnora	LADOT	15	Kaiserski, Robert J.	LADWP	28	Stratton, Stanley D.	—	—			
Burleson, Lionel E.	—	—	Kalivoda, Donald J.	LADWP	36	Suttle, Curtis A.	Public Works	30			
Canicosa, Carmencita S.	LADWP	22	Keeling, Larry D.	General Services	35	Takafuji, Norman K.	—	—			
Canty, Scott D.	Cultural Affairs	30	Kopper, Herbert R.	Rec and Parks	16	Terry, Anna W.	—	—			
Carr, Evaughn P.	Airports	41	Lopez, Maria T.	General Services	20	Teves, Antonio R.	—	—			
Chatfield, Jennifer J.	Zoo	32	Luna, Miguel M.	LADWP	14	Usher, Ronald D.	LADWP	32			
Clayson, Hal S.	—	—	Millard, Robert H.	Airports	44	Velasquez, Joe	Building and Safety	35			
Coleman, Matt E.	—	—	Monk, Marion J.	LADWP	32	Watson, Summer	LADWP	26			
Currier, John E.	LAPD	30	Nelson, Sidney	LADWP	10	Weiss, Martin G.	LADWP	30			
Datuin, Fe Tolentino	Controller's Office	16	Nolls, Jeffrey J.	LADWP	34	White, Phillip C.	LADWP	20			
Dzinovic, Sabina	LADOT	26	Ota, Frank M.	—	—	Wilson, Cecil R.	LADWP	21			
Eastman, Charles M.	LADWP	30	Paguio, Manuel A.	Controller's Office	24						

Graduations



Gianna Giselle Santoni graduated from El Camino Real High School in Woodland Hills and is college bound. She's the daughter of Franco Santoni, Refuse Collection Truck Operator, Public Works/Sanitation and Environment.



Hanna Megumi Burton graduated with honors from Pacifica High School in Garden Grove and plans to study at Cypress College in the fall. She's the daughter of Anna Burton, Retired, Harbor.



Emily Ann-Paul Chavez graduated from Glen A. Wilson High School in Hacienda Heights and plans to attend Mt. San Antonio Nursing School in Walnut in the fall. She's the daughter of Arturo Chavez, LAPD.



Christopher Rios graduated from Vaughn International Studies Academy in Pacoima. He's the son of Chris Rios, Refuse Collection Truck Operator, Public Works/Sanitation and Environment.



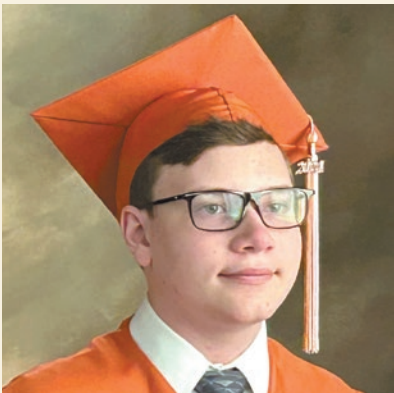
Andrew Burkhart graduated from Sonoma State University with a Bachelor's degree in technical theatre with honors. After graduating, Andrew is looking for a job in technical theatre. He's the son of Stephanie Burkhart, PSR III, LAPD.



Diego Ramorino graduated from Cal State University Northridge and is in line for a Recreation Coordinator position for Rec and Parks, with a number-two rank. He's the son of Monti Ramorino, LADWP.



Cristopher Noriega graduated from Aspire Antonio Maria Lugo Academy in Huntington Park. "Congrats, Chris, we're so proud of you. Love you. From Mom, Dad and Sophie."
— **Claudia Estrada, General Services**



Joseph Burkhart graduated from Castaic High School and plans to attend College of the Canyons in the fall. He's the son of Stephanie Burkhart, LAPD.



Charles Agbonkpolor graduated St. Bernard High School in Playa del Rey and plans to attend San Jose State University in the fall, majoring in mechanical engineering. His goal is "to graduate with his degree and start his career as an engineer." He's the son of Kimberly Agbonkpolor, Public Works/Sanitation and Environment.



Monica Ramorino graduated from Grand Canyon University in Phoenix. The former Joannie Mukai Club Scholarship awardee finished her college in three years and has begun a career as a physical therapy tech. Her final goal is to become a physical therapist. She's the daughter of Monti Ramorino, LADWP.

In Memoriam



RIP, DAVID

David Lara
1959-2024

Building and Safety, 36 years of City service

David (Dave) Lara, longtime employee at Building and Safety who was retired, died May 11 of esophageal cancer. He was 65.

Dave retired as Assistant Bureau Chief in the Inspection Bureau. His primary responsibility was to assist Inspection Bureau's Bureau Chief with the overall operations and management of a staff of more than 340 Inspectors, Supervisors and support staff. The Inspection Bureau performs all inspections and enforces all building, plumbing, electrical, mechanical, elevator and zoning codes for all new residential, high-rise, commercial and industrial structures and various uses of land. The Bureau also handles the issuance of permits and conducts inspections City-wide for all grading (soils), as well as performs the tasks of emergency management (as an integral part of the City's broader emergency management program).

Dave also served as LADBS' Public Information Officer (PIO) and handled all communications with the news media.

He also served as LADBS's Chief of Government Affairs to the Mayor's Office and City Council.

After retirement, he began his own consultancy, Lara Strategic Advisors. He served as the City of Whittier's Planning Commission Chair, and he was appointed to the MTA's Board of Directors Citizen's Advisory Council representing Whittier by Supervisor Janice Hahn, Club Member.

A celebration of his life was scheduled for Saturday, June 1, at the home of friends in Corona.

The Club sends its deepest condolences to Dave's wife and family, and his many friends, former colleagues and extended family in the City of Los Angeles.

The City Council was planning to remember Dave by adjourning in his honor Friday, May 24.
May he Rest in Peace. ●



Dave Lara



Help Us Tell
Their Story

Every month, *Alive!* publishes the names of those current or retired City Employees who have died. But who were they?

Did you know them? If you worked with any of these people, knew a story or two about them or were related to them, consider writing to *Alive!* and letting us know. Tell their story!

- Write a few sentences or paragraphs
- Send in a photo, if you have one
- Let us know your name and connection to the deceased
- Send your memories to: talkback@employeesclub.com
Subject line: *Tell Their Story*

{ Who are the people you see every day? }

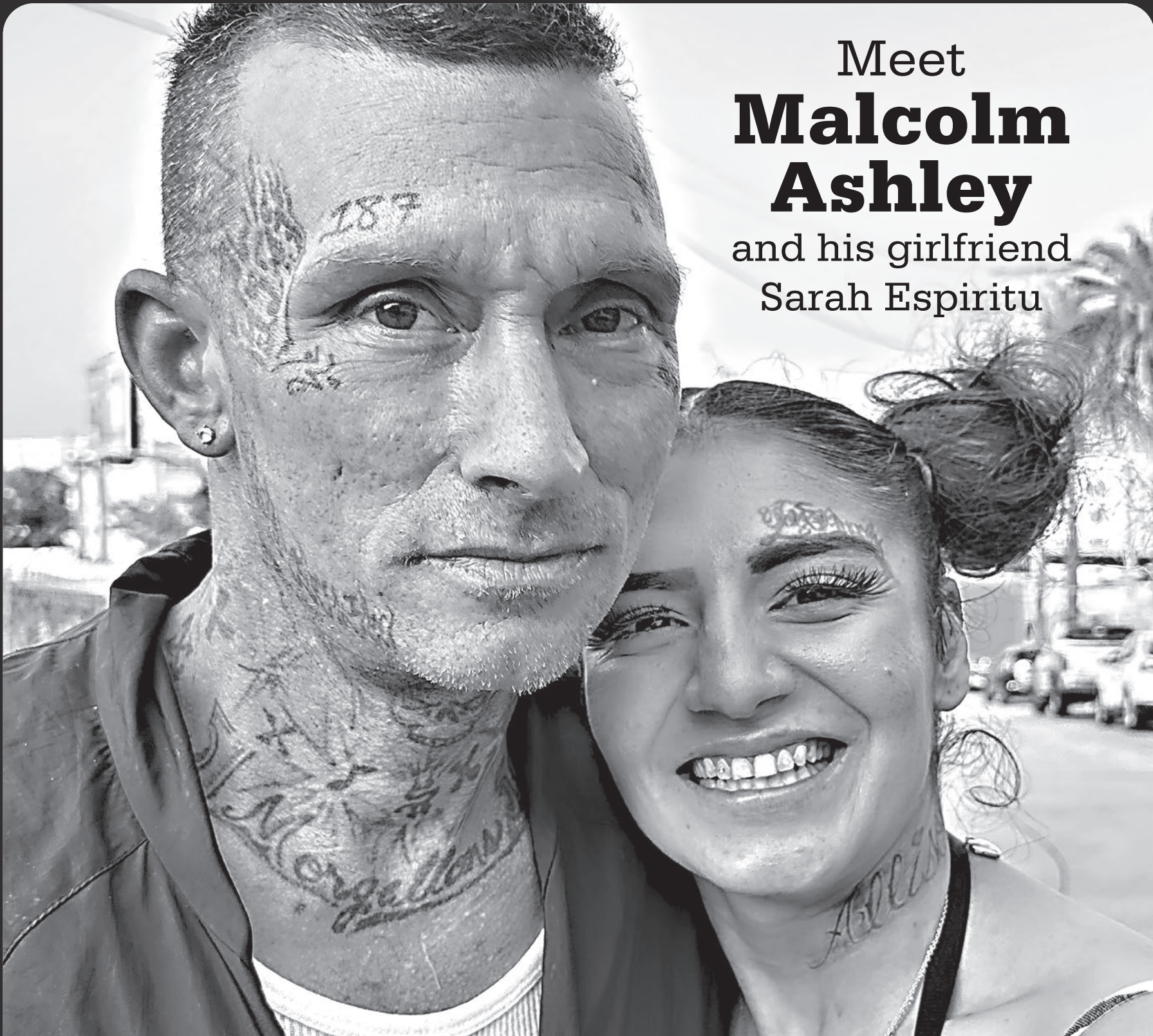
No. 117
in a series.



People We See

Shelterless in Los Angeles: stories of compassion and humanity

Meet
Malcolm Ashley
and his girlfriend
Sarah Espiritu



By John Hawkins
Club Founder and Club Education and Training Officer

**Malcolm was born June 27, 1981
in Hollywood, Florida.**

Favorite candy: Nerds Gummy Clusters

Favorite movie: *Rambo: First Blood*

Favorite book: "I love reading – James Patterson, David Baldacci ... and one of my favorites is Sandra Brown."

"I lived in Florida for 25 years and then moved to Massachusetts, then North Carolina, and then back to Boston and back to Florida. I came to California after being let out of prison in Florida. I got caught with a pistol and manufacturing methamphetamine. They gave me \$50 and said they would give me a bus ticket to anywhere in the United States but not Florida ... no halfway houses, no rehab, nothing. I told them to give me the most expensive bus ticket they got. They said, 'Well that's going to be Los Angeles,' so I said, well, that's where I am going. I went straight from my prison rack to right here."

I asked him about his tattoos and what the latest one was. He pointed to the right side of his face and showed me his "Benjamin" tattoo, which was in honor of his brother. "I have two brothers, all older, and two sisters. I was at the very bottom, the youngest. I have a brother in Massachusetts and a sister in South Carolina; they are kind of all over the place. I even have a sister in Canada."

"It's a long story but my mom put my oldest sister up for



From left: Malcolm Ashley and John Hawkins.

adoption when she was born; it was my mom's first child and she was really young, and my dad he was a really good talker; I guess; he talked her into giving her up for adoption. Anyhow, she works with horses up in Canada. My whole family was into horses. My grandfather was a horse jockey, and my dad was a horse jockey. I was the biggest in the family, if that tells you anything.

"I had a nice little place goin' on in Florida, with five kids." I asked Malcolm what happened, what path got him to where he's at today. "Well, I was working. I had my own landscaping business, but the bills got too much, and then I started using meth and then making it."

I asked him if he felt meth is the worst drug out there, and he said, "Yes, especially long term, what it does to the mind:

You stay up late, you see something over there and in your mind you are really seeing it, and you have that thing in your head, but you know you didn't really see it. You know it really wasn't there, so for the psychological part I would have to say meth is the worst. As far as expenses and affordability meth, is the easiest. It's cheap."

What advice would you give a 16-year-old kid? "Find out what you want to do in life and do it."

I asked Malcolm what he wanted to do when he was 16 and he said, "I wanted to join the Army."

I asked Malcolm what he would want if he was granted three wishes, and he said, "One, take all mental illnesses off the planet. Two, take away all the drugs. And three, take away all the violence." I told him that he didn't wish for anything for himself, and he said, "Yeah, I did." I thought about it for a second and had to keep my composure; it was one of the most beautiful and powerful statements I have heard from a homeless person.

I'll be honest - in the beginning I was a bit intimidated by Malcolm, a bit worried. But, as the conversation progressed I realized he had a big heart, as did his girlfriend, Sarah, and when he gave his three wishes I wanted to just give him a hug and hope.

John Hawkins wished Malcolm well and provided support.

The interview was conducted by Club Founder John Hawkins on May 16, 2024 on Emerald Street off Second Street. The contents described here were transcribed from a video recording.

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

— OVERFLOW TO WEB *ALIVE!*



— CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

the 405," Richards shares. Just don't ask him how he knows. In his personal life, the 26-year-old drives a bright red 1965 Chevy Impala, by the way. He also owns a 2019 Ford F-150 pickup truck for day-to-day driving because, as he puts it, "There's something to be said about having airbags." (His personal dream car is a 2005 Ford GT, but that will have to wait for a while.)

In Richards' view, what makes his family's collection so fascinating is the amazing history of its automobiles and their previous owners. Although some of their fates may be a little murky.

Could this be the reason for some inexplicable occurrences over the years? For instance, on three different occasions groups of visitors reported seeing a little boy playing inside a 1937 Graham sedan. When staff checked, the child was nowhere to be found, nor was his image visible in any of the security camera footage. And what about the old man in suspenders, who keeps staring blankly into an old Ford Model-T that's housed in the museum's auxiliary wing across the street? Eyewitness reports keep coming in, but whenever employees try to find him, he's gone. "We'll never know," Richards surmises, "and that may be a good thing."

Remember when you were a kid, dreaming about hiding in a department store at night, thinking how amazing it would be to explore every nook and cranny with no one around? Richards was no different, and today the keys to an entire museum are jangling in his pocket. So, does he ever sneak in at night to playfully climb behind the wheel of some exotic automobile, making engine sounds? "I'm taking the fifth on that one," he says with a boyish grin: "I'd rather not answer."

Some of Nethercutt's most famous cars can occasionally be seen in shows around the country and have been crowned "Best of" many times. "My great-grandfather would be so proud," he says, although he is itching to leap into uncharted waters: "Being 26 years old, I am part of the *Fast and Furious* generation. I would love to get some of those Japanese racers into the collection." The acquisition of new vehicles is always a family decision, though, and currently, there seems to be little excitement for that idea. (Thank God!) Plus, there are almost too many precious cars to look after as-is.

While exact numbers are not available, according to Richards, the collection's insured value currently hovers around "a few Bs." Yet, he's not overly concerned about possible thefts of any of its treasures: "Most of these cars are so unique and old, I'd be tempted to offer you the keys and the title if you can even get them started." The \$40 million Bugatti Dubos for instance?

"Many tried but only Jay Leno came close to getting the engine going." (I'd still volunteer to give that Maybach a go sometime. Come on, brother Cameron Richards: Throw me a bone!)

By the way, although Nethercutt doesn't often add new vehicles these days, sometimes donations will be accepted. This is how cars that would otherwise not be considered for the collection may still join its illustrious ranks in the end. That yellow 1973 Ford Mustang in the corner over there? It's one of those. Its shiny M-1 paint scheme is immaculate and the car is in mint condition, all original. "The owner offered us the car a while back," he remembers. "He said he wanted it to be a part of the Nethercutt Collection so it could be in automobile heaven." And that, no doubt, it certainly is. ●



The 1933 8-cylinder Duesenberg Roadster will easily do 120 mph on the 405, says Cameron Richards – just don't ask him how he knows. All images by Frank LukeMacintosh HD:Users:yvesdidier:Desktop:Nethercutt_31.jpg



Each of the 250+ vehicles is not only perfectly restored but also kept in street legal driving condition.

