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Alive!

EOC LEVEL 1 ACTIVATION

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Where It All Comes Together

The **Emergency Operations Center** – which just passed 200 days on consecutive COVID-19 alert – is the headquarters for battling the City’s critical emergencies.

GO TO PAGE 10



In the Emergency Operations Center are (from left):

Front row: Aram Sahakian, General Manager, 31 years of City service; Gary Singer, Emergency Management Coordinator II, 5 years; and Carol Parks, Assistant General Manager, 22 years.

Second row: Jessica Kellogg, Public Information Officer, 17 years; Crisanta Gonzalez, Emergency Management Coordinator I, 4 years; Jillian De Vela, Emergency Management Coordinator I, 3 years; and Anthony Aguinaga, Emergency Management Coordinator I, 20 years.

Back row: Carmina De Santiago, Public Health Liaison, 2 years; Jon Brown, Emergency Management Coordinator I, 5 years; Veronica Hendricks, Emergency Management Coordinator I, 27 years; and Jaqueline Koci Tamayo, Emergency Management Coordinator I, 20 years.

Alive! photo by Summy Lam

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Making Our Way to the Center

JOHN'S BLOG

by John Hawkins, President and CEO, The Club



Happy New Year, Club Members!

As we greet 2021 after a very difficult stretch that's not over yet, the simple act of wishing you joy and prosperity might seem hollow. But I mean it! Help is on the way, and the City is holding together, significantly because of your hard work over the last ten months.



From left: Carol Parks, Assistant General Manager; Jaqueline Koci Tamayo, Emergency Management Coordinator I; and Jessica Kellogg, Public Information Officer. All are Club Members.

Our series of cover stories on the City's response to the coronavirus has featured the hard work you've been performing. And that series continues – much like the virus itself – with this month's feature, where we get to the heart of it all: Emergency Management's Operations Center.

It's an awesome operation that brings all the chiefs together in one location to manage the City's emergencies. The EOC was ready for the usual assortment of earthquakes, floods, fires, broken pipes, storm surges, and many other calamities. This one, however, is different. I'll let them tell you how they're managing; just read this month's excellent interview.

You should know we're also producing these stories with all protocols in mind. I give a shoutout to **Jessica Kellogg**, Public Information Officer, who worked hard to make our story happen. We also thank **Aram Sahakian**, **Carol Parks** and **Jaqueline Koci Tamayo** for their assistance. (Jessica, Carol and Jackie are Club Members; it never surprises me how Club Members are always in the thick of it in serving the City.)

The Emergency Operations Center is a City bond issue that paid off big for Angelenos. I thank the City for anticipating the need, and making it happen.

Elsewhere in this issue, I'm jazzed that we have a return of old favorite: Letters to the Editor! Apparently last month's cover of me in my pajamas at home caused a reaction! Seriously, though, please write to us anytime to let us know where we did a good job, where we came up short, and what else we can do. And keep telling us about interesting stories and features you think we should cover. We serve you, our Club Member readers, so don't be shy. In fact, I'll repeat the address: talkback@employeesclub.com

We are now beginning the 20th edition of *Alive!*, which we revamped and started publishing again in late 2002. Can you believe it? Here at the beginning of 2021, the Club stands where we have always stood: serving you. Always looking for new ways to make your lives strong and rewarding. Giving you hope, as you have given it to us. As we say Club, now more than ever.

Happy New Year, everybody! Be safe, be healthy, be good.

—JOHN

Be My
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Valentine

CLUB MEMBERS:
Send your loved one a special Valentine...
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Here's how it works:
Send us a favorite photo (high-resolution digital preferred) of you and your loved one(s) (could be a romantic partner, a parent or child, etc.) and two or three sentences declaring your special bond. And we'll print as many as we can in the print and Web *Alive!*

DEADLINES:
January 15 for Print *Alive!*
February 11 for Web *Alive!*

To send digital photos
and your message:
Go to: alive.employeesclub.com/valentines

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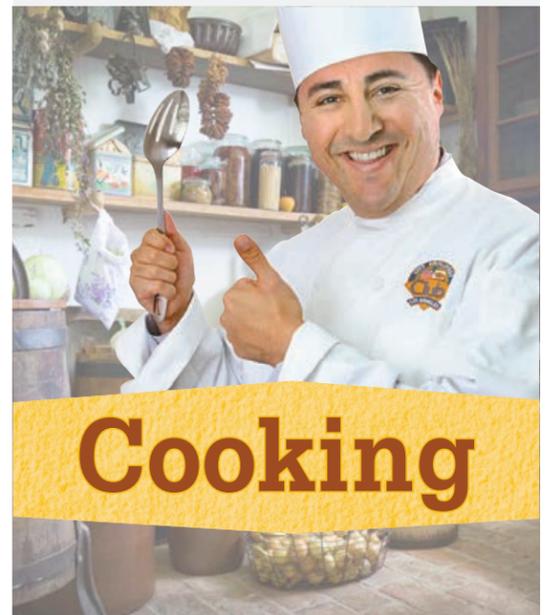


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NEW THIS MONTH ONLINE!

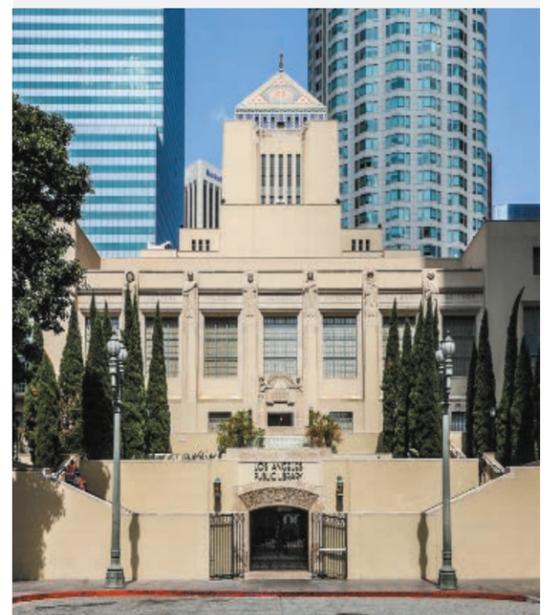
Cooking With the Club

Chef Larios looks back at his three most popular recipes from 2020. Relive the deliciousness!



LAPL's Top Ten –

read what Angelenos were reading and downloading in November .



John's Picture Perfect

See the winners from this month's photo contest.





The Employees Club Responds to 2020



Be Club!

THE VIDEO

To view video, scan this code with your phone



Watch on **YouTube**

Search **Employees Club of California** or **Be Club**

Alive! is now its own Website...

GO TO: alive.employeesclub.com

Yes! *Alive!* is now a great new Website ... and a streamlined, more portable version of the paper you've come to know and love, delivered to your door!



The Club: Here to Help

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

Email us at:

help@employeesclub.com

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

Or call us at: (800) 464-0452

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Ext. 159



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Member Services Counselor
Ext. 136

At the Club Store



Tiffany Sy
Member Services Counselor
Ext. 202

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Alive!

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CLUB ANGELS



Applications for Club's Mukai Scholarship Now Available

Club Scholarship program revises application process, adds simple, preliminary eligibility confirmation.

Fill out the application now for the Joannie Mukai Memorial Club Scholarship on the *Alive!* Website.

The 2021 Mukai Club Scholarship Program, which expects to grant 20 awards and is named after the late Club Board Member Joannie Mukai, is now accepting applications. The Club expects to give each recipient a stipend of \$500.

The Joannie Mukai Club Scholarship program is part of the Club Angels outreach, which reflects the scholarships' nature of giving back.

Preliminary Eligibility Check

The scholarship program has revised its application process to add a simple, preliminary eligibility check to make sure candidates are eligible. Once candidates have been cleared as eligible, they will be directed to continue the formal application process. Those eligible include Club Members, their spouses and their children who are in college or will be attending an accredited college or university in Fall 2021.

COVID-19

If you've been accepted at a four-year university for this fall, but the school has decided to remain closed until January 2022 because of the coronavirus pandemic, that's okay. You still could be eligible for the Club Scholarship.

Deadline

All materials must be completed on the *Alive!* Website and submitted electronically by 11:59 p.m. June 30, 2021.

Respecting Your Time

"We wanted to make the process simpler for applicants," said Robert Larios, Club COO. "This way, you'll know if you are eligible before you go through the formal application process. We expect it will be much more respectful of your time and effort."

"The Club knows that this scholarship program is even more important during the pandemic," said John Hawkins, Club CEO. "Club Members and their families have been facing financial hardships, and we want to be there for you."

"As it has been since we created it, the scholarship program is about honoring achievement and excellence in our Club Members and their families. It's one of the most important ways we celebrate the work and lives of municipal employees every year. We're all about giving back, and the Club Scholarship reflects that."

"We fully support the dedication of our Club families to taking care of the educational needs of themselves and their children," Hawkins added. "We want to help them in every way possible."

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

DEADLINE
11:59 p.m.,
June 30, 2021

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

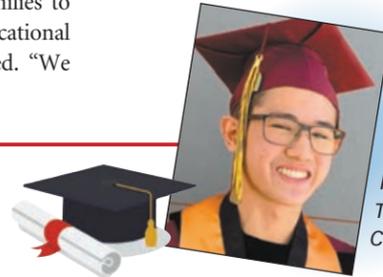


ABOUT JOANNIE MUKAI

Joannie Mukai was a pioneer as the LA Port's Director of Construction and Maintenance. A passionate supporter in the Employees Club and longtime Club Insurance 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," Club CEO John Hawkins said. "That's what the Club Scholarship is all about, and we're delighted to name it after her. It's a perfect way to keep her memory alive."

Eligibility requirements:

- All Club Members and their spouses, children, grandchildren, and nieces/nephews of Club Members, are eligible to apply. Club Members must be in good standing.
- Dependent children and other relatives of Club Members must be under the age of 25. There is no age limit for the member or member's spouse.
- The successful candidate must attend an accredited college, university, or trade school full time in the fall 2021 semester. Current high school seniors matriculating to a four-year school in fall 2021 are eligible.
- Candidates will be judged for academic excellence, community service and financial need.
- Scholarships are expected to be awarded in equal amounts of \$500 (each).
- **Deadline:** Applications must be completed online at the *Alive!* Website by 11:59 p.m., June 30, 2021. 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.



Ryan Facio
Son of Brian Podolsky, Retired, Transportation, City of Los Angeles.

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THE CLUB

Happy Birthday, Red!

Club social media responds to Retiree celebrating his 90th birthday.

Red Martinez

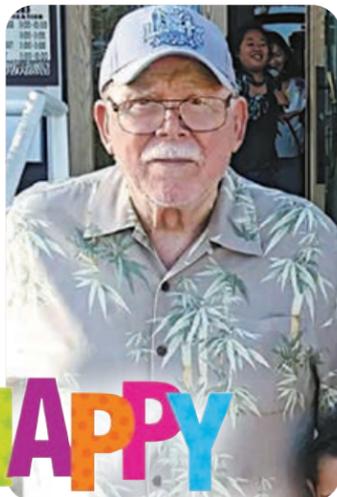
When Maurice "Red" Martinez, Retired Commissioner, Public Works, turned 90 Dec. 7, he had to celebrate safely at home in isolation. He was bummed it would be during the pandemic and he wouldn't be able to celebrate.

We posted the notice on Club social media channels, and City Employees responded with posts and phone calls all evening. Red's big birthday turned out to be memorable indeed.

"Some of his old junior workers called him within the last hour," reported Jessica Ortega, Red's daughter. "He is so excited to be remembered during the pandemic. Thank you."

You're welcome, Red and Jessica. Happy birthday!

Readers are welcome to send Red a happy birthday message by emailing us (we'll forward) at: talkback@employeesclub.com. ■



HAPPY BIRTHDAY

REC AND PARKS

Scout Retires

Park Ranger resident horse retires after 6 years of service.

Rec and Parks announced that Park Ranger Resident horse Scout retired after 6 years of City service.

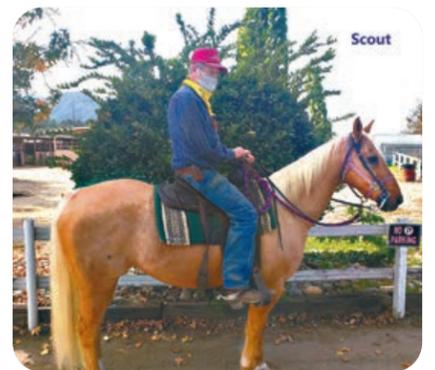
Scout is a 19 year old Palomino Quarter Horse and has been with the Park Ranger Division since 2014. During the past six years, Scout participated in numerous public events and has regularly patrolled the trails of the LA City parks. Over the past year, Scout began to experience medical issues that prevented him from participating in the work required of a service animal.

"While we honor Scout's service to the Department, we believe that discharging this aging horse from the burden of City service is the most responsible and humane course of action at this time," said Chief Park Ranger Joe Losorelli.

"We recognize the stately presence Scout added to official events and ceremonies," said Michael Shull, General Manager. "The Department would like to bestow upon Scout his rightful place of gratitude and honor within the annals of Recreation and Parks history."

Scout has moved into his new home with experienced equestrians Dave and Diana Hoch. Diana is President of Equestrian Trails, Inc. Corral 38 at the Los Angeles Equestrian Center. Dave is a veteran of the U.S. Army and plans to continue taking Scout on short rides in Griffith Park.

Thanks, Scout, for your service! ■



Scout



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CITYWIDE

For the Children

Two of the City's many toy drives
delivered joy for Christmas.



Many City departments sponsored toy drives this year. (Let us know about yours, so we can list it this year: talkback@employeesclub.com.) 2020 was a hard holiday season for everyone due to the coronavirus, but City departments kept coming through.

Here are two toy drives that we were tracking at Public Works/Sanitation and Environment at press time: the Hyperion bike drive, the West Valley Yard's annual giveaway.

Thanks to all who donated, and to the crews who made it happen. ■



Hyperion Treatment Plant's Maintenance Section donated 166 bikes for distribution through the LAFD's Spark of Love toy drive.

Hyperion Maintenance Section/ LAFD Spark of Love

For the 18th year, Hyperion's Maintenance Section collected, assembled and donated bikes. This year on Dec. 16, 166 bikes went to the LAFD's Spark of Love toy drive. Outstanding!



Crews from the West Valley Sanitation Yard deliver toys they collected to the area Guadalupe Center.

West Valley Sanitation

West Valley Sanitation's Brian Sibert and his crew have been collecting toys before Christmas for more than a decade. They work with the neighboring Guadalupe Center for distribution. The yard delivered the toys to the Guadalupe Center on Dec. 16.

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Save on Gear to Work Remotely!

The Club discount is good on all eligible items storewide. Here are some items of note this month:



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Letters to the Editor

Tell us what you think! talkback@employeesclub.com

This Is Tonja Being Home for the Holidays

You all give me ideas for upping my game at home! Here is a picture of our trees this year.

– **Tonja Bellard, Economic and Workforce Development**

Tonja, your interior decorating skills are spectacular! You might think our "Home for the Holidays" cover last month inspired you, but I think you're inspiring us. Thanks for submitting, and Happy New Year! – Ed.



See's Candies Deal Was The Sweetest Gift of All

Your See's Candies one-pound gift certificate was a sweet deal! Especially at \$12.95 per pound. When I visited my local See's to handpick my candy (yes, in Las Vegas, you can still visit the See's store in person and have hand-picked selections), I found out that without my Club coupon, the cost per box would be \$25.50. Naturally, I loaded up on Club coupons, opting to get the maximum 4. What a deal!

– **David Tulanian, Retired, Library,, Las Vegas**



The City Parties!

It's an annual *Alive!* tradition!

In most years, City Departments put aside their hard work and come together for fun and socialization at their festive holiday parties. And *Alive!* publishes as many of your party pics as we can, in print and online.

But as we all know, 2020 was no ordinary year. The global COVID-19 pandemic reduced social activity across the world, sending City holiday parties online, if they happened at all.

Still, we here at *Alive!* want to honor your amazing efforts to create some much-needed holiday cheer. So starting this month, we'll run a screen grab from your virtual party. And we'll continue in the next months as the images come in.

You can still submit a screen grab from your department holiday party here:

www.aliveemployeesclub.com/holidayparty

THIS MONTH ONLINE:



EWDD
At the EWDD virtual holiday party.

LACERS
Some of the nearly 250 participants in LACERS' holiday virtual party.



LAFD Fire Chief Ralph Terrazas (center) and Deputy Chief Graham Everett (lower left) joined the ASB holiday party, hosted by Maria Lozano (bottom middle).



DWP Fleet

More On Web *Alive!*
alive.employeesclub.com/cityparties

Happy New Year

From the Club!

The Club wishes you health, humor and happiness for 2021 ... and a great recovery for us all!

Employees Club of California
Celebrating the Work and Lives of Municipal Employees

Scenes PART 10 From a Pandemic

Alive! continues its documentation of City employees as they take a multitude of measures to combat the COVID-19 pandemic and keep LA safe. (The first part was in our April 2020 issue.) Here are entries from the Club and the City Twitter feeds about City Employees and Club Members at work during this trying time.

The phrases indicated by a # or an @ are Internet search locators that work as shortcuts to help find desired locations online. We included that text here for completeness; if you want to see those locations, simply retype those phrases into your online browser.

Port of LA



"On #ThanksgivingDay, @LAPortPolice hand-delivered 300 meals donated by @cmacgm to #LAHarbor homeless shelters, including the veteran-operated Wilmington ABH, @HarborInterfail's San Pedro ABH and @SalvationArmyUS Sunrise Shelter in San Pedro. #GivingAcrossAmerica #ABridgeHome"



Nov. 26

Chief Michel Moore, LAPD



"Proud to join the men and women of our San Fernando Gardens CSP in helping spread some holiday cheer during tonight's Tree Lighting Ceremony at the San Fernando Gardens Community Center. In a trying year unlike any in recent memory, a small amount of cheer goes a long way."



Dec. 3

LA Port Police



"Los Angeles Port Police Officers provided Marina Safety and Security training to members of the Cabrillo Beach Yacht Club. @San Pedro, California"



Dec. 15

LAPD Hollenbeck Division



LAPD North Hollywood Division



"Blessed to be able to find an organization that will help & benefit so many. @OfcrsForChange is happy to be donating toys to the @LAPDNorthHwdDiv Annual Toy Drive. These gifts will put smiles on the faces to close to 100 low-income & needy children this holiday season. #LAPD"



Dec. 6

Sanitation and Environment



"As we continue to navigate COVID-19 pandemic, our staff is working hard to provide wastewater services 24/7. The health & safety of our customers & employees is a top priority. Our Clean Water team proactively maintains over 6,700 miles of sewer lines. lacitysan.org/cleanwater"



Dec. 3

LAX



"The first batch of COVID-19 vaccine has arrived in Los Angeles at LAX. This is a major milestone for science, our country and our community. Thank you to all those who made this delivery possible, and are part of the incredible effort to distribute vaccines around the world."



Dec. 13

"Today Thankful Thursday LAPD Senior Lead Officers from Hollenbeck & Badge of Heart surprised a family in Boyle Heights that lost everything from a house fire. The family received Toys & food gift cards for Christmas. They were so grateful. Definitely an emotional moment for all."



Dec. 10

PUBLIC WORKS

Story and photos courtesy Pamela Perez, Sanitation

Thanks, Employees!

Sanitation honors its best and brightest virtually.

In early December, Public Works/Sanitation held its annual employee recognition and appreciation event, honoring 39 employees for their excellent work.

The event, hosted by Director and General Manager Enrique Zaldivar, was held online due to COVID protocols.



Enrique Zaldivar hosts the Sanitation and Environment employee recognition event in 2018. This year's event was held virtually.

2020

Sanitation and Environment Employee Recognition Honorees

EMPLOYEE	TITLE	DIVISION
Regina Gallegos	Executive Administrative Assistant III	Exec. Office
Christine Heinrich-Josties	Environmental Engineering Associate IV	WESD
Nesrin Tawadros	Management Assistant	CCD
Kalina Bellamy	Principal Communications Operator	CCD
Tynell Payton	Refuse Collection Truck Operator II	SRSCD
Jeffrey Morse	Refuse Collection Truck Oper II	SRSCD
Sokha Ty	Environmental Engineering Associate III	SRCFD
Sharnette Dawson	Acting Supervisor-South Sewer Mtn. Yard	CWSCD
Ricardo Meza	Supervisor- Stormwater Crew	CWSCD
Jonathan Enriquez	Management Assistant	FMD
Rizalina Hamblin	Sr. Chemist	EMD
Timothy Lane Manion	Chemist II	EMD
Lilia Bedolla-Rivas	Secretary	TI WRP
Salvador Rosales	Sr. Environmental Compliance Inspector	LSD
Anabel Maldonado	Administrative Clerk	LSD
Jennifer Ly	Civil Engineer Associate III	CWNCD
Ruben Maldonado	Wastewater Collection Supervisor	CWNCD
Janet Samala	Environmental Engineering Associate I	RAD
Abbas Rahimdel	Shift Superintendent Wastewater Treatment I	HWRP
Alan Tran	Environmental Engineering Associate IV	HWRP
Richard Reyes	Wastewater Treatment Electrician II	HWRP
Don Jackson	Pipe Fitter	HWRP
Hamed Haddad Zadegan	Environmental Engineering Associate III	WRID
Josue Zuniga	Irrigation Specialist	SRPCD
Rosario Felix	Administrative Clerk	SRPCD
Alfonso Lopez	Labor Supervisor	SRPCD
Burton Smith	Refuse Collection Supervisor	ISCD
David Clary	Sr. Wastewater Treatment Operator	DCT/LAG
Emerlita Alvarez	Environmental Engineering Associate III	IWMD
Rosemary Cubero	Environmental Compliance Inspector	IWMD
William Tran	Programmer/Analyst III	ICSD
Edward Astorga	Refuse Collection Truck Oper II	SRSSD
Fernando Martinez	Maintenance Laborer	SRSSD
Pablo Serrano	Acting Superintendent	SRVCD
Adriana Nunez	Bulky Supervisor	SRVCD
Divina Solomona	Management Analyst	ADMIN
Criselda Pabellano	Accounting Records Supervisor II	ADMIN
Katrina Montgomery	Environmental Compliance Inspector	WPD
Doreen Mallyon	Sr. Clerk Typist	WPD

Congratulations to those honored, and to all Sanitation employees!

PUBLIC WORKS

Adel Named To Road Board



Adel Hagekhalil

Congratulations to StreetsLA Executive Director and General Manager Adel Hagekhalil, who was named to serve on the Board of Directors for the International Road Federation (IRF) "I am honored to have been selected to serve," he said. "I'm proud to represent the Bureau of Street Services and join the International Road Federation as a member of the board at the 72nd assembly Nov. 17-20."

He was the keynote speaker on adapting during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Congratulations, Adel!

LACERS Retired Members:

Sign Up for a Free Facemask

The Club partners with **LACERS, RLACEI** to offer free facemasks for **LACERS Retired Members.**

Retirees: Do you have enough facemasks to keep you and others around you safe? With your continued safety and health in mind, three organizations are teaming up to send a free mask to LACERS Retired Members.

Two associations — the **Employees Club** and the **Retired Los Angeles City Employees, Inc.** (RLACEI) — are teaming up with the **Los Angeles City Employees' Retirement System** (LACERS), a City department, to make facemasks available to their Retired Members who request them. The masks are free and intended to help LACERS Retired Members protect their health.

The masks have been donated generously by two LACERS health plans, **SCAN** and **Kaiser Permanente**. The masks are fabric and designed for nonmedical use, and are different from the masks sold through the Club Webstore.

LACERS, RLACEI and the Club thank Phil Orland, who's active in all three organizations, for working to make this program happen. ■



Requirements:

- LACERS Retired Member.
- Registrants must have an active MyLACERS account. (Those who do not have an active MyLACERS account can request, on the website, a PIN to be mailed to them. This can take up to two weeks in the mail.)
- Limit two masks per household.
- Offer stands while supplies last.
- The masks and shipping are free. It's really that simple.

Request your free facemask by logging into your MyLACERS account:

mylacers.lacers.org

For instructions on how to request your free mask, go to <https://bit.ly/3riOemh>. Your free facemask will be shipped to you free via one of the three organizations.

LACERS RETIRED MEMBERS:

Be Safer With a Free Mask!

Stay safer and be healthy in your retirement with a facemask. It's free, courtesy the Club, RLACEI and LACERS for LACERS Retired Members! (SEE BELOW FOR DETAILS)

Request your Free Facemask today!

Two per household maximum. Must be a LACERS Retired Member with a MyLACERS online account (you can register for a free account when you request your mask). Shipping is also free. Masks are fabric and designed for nonmedical use, and are different from the masks sold through the Club Webstore. Masks are donated by two LACERS health plans — SCAN and Kaiser Permanente. While supplies last.



Scan this code with your phone to login at mylacers.lacers.org

This free program is a partnership with these three organizations, all dedicated to the welfare of retirees:



Club Angels

Help Others in 2021

Many fellow City employees are hurting due to the pandemic.

Can you help?

As the virus pandemic continues into 2021, the hardships faced by some City Employees and their families are even more critical. Club Angels, the charity started by staff members of the Employees Club, invites you to join our efforts to help.



Since the Club Angels appeal began, the charity has provided nearly \$13,500 in grocery assistance to approximately 70 fellow City Employees through your gifts and matching funds from the Club.

If you are facing hardship, please reach out to us. Club Angels is here to help.



Thanks to your donations, these groceries were delivered by Club Angels to a City Employee in need.

The Club encourages City Employees and everyone to contribute to the Club Angels fund, accessed on its GoFundMe page. Donations go to City Employees in need; Club Angels and the Employees Club earn nothing from the transaction. Donations might be tax deductible; consult your tax professional.



To donate, go to: ClubAngels.org

Please be generous.

Club Angels is a separate charity begun by Club staff.



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- Baseball Caps
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Alive! Feature

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Where It All Comes Together

The Emergency Operations Center – which has passed 200 days on consecutive COVID-19 alert – is the headquarters for battling the City’s critical emergencies



Club COO Robert Larios sent a congratulations and thank-you message to the employees of the Emergency Operations Center on their 200th consecutive day of COVID-19 activity.

Beginning with a bond issue in 2002, the City changed the way it manages its emergencies. And 19 years later, that strategic move is paying dividends.

Voters passed Proposition Q that year, a \$600 million Citywide public safety bond issue to improve, renovate, expand and construct public safety facilities. Approximately \$107 million of that bond measure was earmarked for the site/land acquisition, design and construction of the new Emergency Operations Center.

The center brings many critical functions into one modern facility to manage major emergencies like fires, earthquakes, chemical and gas leaks, road collapses, acts of terrorism, episodes of civil unrest, and many other situations.

This, obviously, is the first major pandemic the Emergency Management Dept. has faced, and the critical thinking that led to the building of the EOC is paying dividends. ■

Read the Alive! interview (page 11) for more information about how the City is managing this crisis.



In the Emergency Operations Center
Front row: Aram Sahakian, General Manager; Gary Singer, Emergency Management Coordinator; Carol Parks, Assistant General Manager, 22
Second row: Jessica Kellogg, Public Information Officer; Crisanta Gonzalez, Emergency Management Coordinator; Jillian De Vela, Emergency Management Coordinator; Anthony Aguinaga, Emergency Management Coordinator
Back row: Carmina De Santiago, Public Information Officer; Jon Brown, Emergency Management Coordinator; Hendricks, Emergency Management Coordinator; Jaqueline Koci Tamayo, Emergency Management Coordinator

Survivability

The EOC facility features a number of safety and survivability features designed to keep it functioning during any crisis:

- 30-foot setback from the street
- perimeter fencing
- blast-resistant exterior surfaces
- a video surveillance system
- 24-hour on-site guards
- emergency backup generators
- a centralized uninterrupted power source (UPS)
- reserve water storage tanks
- redundant heating/ventilation/air conditioning systems
- reserve sewage storage tanks.

About the EOC (Emergency Operations Center)

The EOC is the focal point for coordination of the City’s emergency planning, training, response and recovery efforts. The EOC processes follow the National All-Hazards approach to major

disasters such as fires, floods, earthquakes, acts of terrorism and large-scale events in the City that require involvement by multiple City departments. Also co-located in this state-of-the-art, 84,000 square feet, two-story, seismically-base-isolated facility are a new Fire Dispatch Center, the Fire Dept. Operations Center and the LAPD’s Dept. Operations Center. EOC features include a main coordination room (MCR), a media center, a training room, a management section room, a public information officer room, an executive conference room, six flexible-use breakout rooms (including a business operations center), an amateur radio operations room and two storage rooms.

Departments represented in the EOC include the LAPD and the LAFD (including mobile and airborne hookups), Transportation, the DWP, Public Works, Rec and Parks, Emergency Management, Harbor and Airports. The EOC also contains state-of-the-art audio and video communications capabilities and weather and seismic monitoring. ■



Sign Up for Alerts

emergency.lacity.org/notifyla



Keep updated on the latest on all LA emergency news by registering to receive free NotifyLA text alerts.



Center are (from left):
 er, 31 years of City service;
 dinator II, 5 years; and
 2 years.
 mation Officer, 17 years;
 t Coordinator I, 4 years;
 oordinator I, 3 years; and
 t Coordinator I, 20 years.
 alth Liaison, 2 years;
 dinator I, 5 years; Veronica
 dinator I, 27 years; and
 ment Coordinator I, 20 years.

The *Alive!* Interview

'We Are Key'

On Dec. 3, Club COO Robert Larios and *Alive!* editor John Burnes interviewed three from the Emergency Management Dept.: Aram Sahakian, General Manager, 31 years of City service; Gary Singer, Emergency Management Coordinator II, 5 years; and Carol Parks, Assistant General Manager, 22 years. The interview was performed via Zoom due to the Citywide lockdown; the *Alive!* cover photo shoot was performed with social distancing.



Aram Sahakian, General Manager



Carol Parks, Assistant General Manager



Gary Singer, Emergency Management Coordinator II

Thank you Aram, Carol and Gary, for taking the time to speak to us. We know your time is precious as you pass your 200th consecutive day of COVID management. Aram, give us a brief view of your career trajectory and how you got to where you are right now.

Aram Sahakian: I'm an electrical engineer. I started working at DOT in District Operations. I was there from 1989 to 2016. District Operations does a lot of traffic signal and stop sign studies. From there, they promoted me to the ATSAC Center, the Automated Traffic Surveillance and Control Center. You guys have covered that.

Right.

Aram: Four million-plus traffic signals in the City. They are all connected via fiber optic to the ATSAC hub in Downtown LA. From there, I went to Metro LA Construction. I was a Project Manager on a couple of the subway stations, the Blue Line at the time. I saw that they had a special Traffic Operations Division, which managed more than 4,000 events annually, about 300 major events such as the Academy Awards, the Grammys, marathons.

We covered that division, too.

Aram: Yes. So I was the incident commander from DOT on those events, and then when I saw that we really needed to start getting involved in Emergency Response, and when I showed the value of what DOT could do for Police and Fire, their immediate reaction was, "We have a resource here we haven't been using. We need to start working with DOT." My approach was, "Not only DOT, but the Bureau of Street Services in Public Works. You have enough incidents to justify the creation of a civilian agency." They all agreed. It goes back to my working with the LAPD closely for the 2000 DNC convention. We managed all the demonstrations – planned and unplanned. My last two projects at DOT before I was asked to head the Emergency Management Dept. were Carmageddon and the Space Shuttle move from LAX to the California Science Center museum in Downtown LA. That elevated me to a higher level. At that point in 2016 the mayor appointed me as GM of EMD, and here I am.

Thank you. Carol, how about you?

Carol Parks: And just as an interesting aside to what Aram just said, he and I worked together on several events prior to him becoming General Manager. He was key to the Emergency Management Organization as the DOT Representative because like he said, DOT was an important component in the City's emergency operations organization. He would get the late night calls from Police and Fire from our Department to help when emergencies occurred. Little did I know he would be my boss one day. So it's a real small world.

Aram: That's right!

Carol: I'm originally from Atlanta. I began my Emergency Management career at Atlanta-Fulton County Emergency Management Agency and then transferred to Georgia Emergency Management Agency. It was an exciting time in my career because of the upcoming 1996 Summer Olympic Games in Atlanta and I had a major role with hazmat planning. In 1995 marriage brought me to LA and after being here for awhile, I joined the City in 1998 as an Emergency Preparedness Coordinator I. I stayed in that capacity until about 2000 when I became an Emergency Preparedness Coordinator II overseeing community preparedness activities. And then this year in April I was promoted to Assistant General Manager.

The Emergency Management profession has changed tremendously over the last 10 or 20 years. It has proven to be quite valuable. I have enjoyed working with several General Managers both on the East Coast and on the West Coast. Emergency management is a lot different depending on the size of the city, so our role is a very important one because we serve four million people.

Great. Gary, same question.

Gary Singer: I started in Emergency Management in 2002 where I was on a volunteer search and rescue team for the City of Commerce. I worked in that capacity for a little while before joining the City Emergency Preparedness Officer for the City of Commerce. I did that until 2010, when I took a job at Cal State Dominguez Hills as their Emergency Preparedness Coordinator. I was there until 2015 where I took a job here in the City of LA as an Emergency Management Coordinator. I've been here from 2015 until now.

You come from a Fire background?

Gary: Yes. It was a volunteer urban search and rescue team for the City of Commerce.

They didn't have their own fire department. They contracted with the County and they were told that during a major earthquake, resources would be spread thin so there was a chance that they might not have all of the resources they needed. So they trained and staffed a volunteer search and rescue team so if there was an earthquake, the city would have a dedicated resource to help its residents.

History and Size

Let's talk briefly about the history of the Emergency Management Dept. How long has it been in operation?

Carol: Our Department started out as a division within the CAO's Office and in 2000 we became our own department. Our first department name was Emergency Preparedness Dept. We're actually celebrating our 20-year anniversary and voila, look how we're celebrating it!

In covering a lot of the City's COVID emergency stories over the last eight or nine months, it seems like the City is really ramping up its emergency response. Rec and Parks built their own Department Operations Center; Sanitation created the CARES team. And other departments stepped up, too. It seems it was really good timing for the City to ramp up its emergency operations in a lot of different departments before the pandemic hit, and of course yours especially. Is that accurate?

Aram: It is, but unfortunately, our Department's getting smaller. We lost five employees to the separation incentive program. We're a small department, keep that in mind. We're fewer than 22 people for a population of four million. The rule of thumb is 40,000 per emergency management coordinator. Our numbers should be about 60 to 70, but we are already extremely lean. As much as I would like to say that we're growing based on emergencies and responses, the Department is getting smaller as far as personnel resources.

We're trying to become more efficient. We're reaching out to sister agencies to see how they can fill the gap. Unfortunately, some of them also have their own gaps that they need to fill. They lost a lot of people also. So the fiscal situation is uncertain. It's taxing. We don't know what's on the horizon, if there are any furloughs. We are listening to the mayor and the CAO. These are unprecedented times and we are part of history, make no mistake about it. This is a 100-year pandemic. We haven't seen it in our lifetime and we hope we won't see another one. We were dealing with sinkholes and fires and earthquakes. The largest one we witnessed was the Northridge earthquake. I was at the DOT at the time. And honestly, I think it was that earthquake that triggered separating EMD from CAO's office, bringing it from a division to a full department.

We have several emergencies on a monthly basis. It seems like the severity and the frequency of these emergencies keep going up. Seventeen of the largest 24 fires in California history were in the last 24 to 28 months. I don't care what you call it, climate change or whatever, the frequency and severity are increasing. And now we're hit with a pandemic, which is an unknown. It's outside of the comfort zone. With all the preparations we've been doing – preparing our constituency, preparing the departments, looking at our annexes – the timing to invest into the Emergency Management Dept. of the City is now more than ever.

'We connect all the City departments that are leading the response [to the pandemic].'

— **Aram Sahakian,**
 General Manager, Emergency Management Dept.

Where It All Comes Together, continued

One of the tasks of the Emergency Management Dept. is disseminating knowledge to help keep the City safe. That includes NotifyLA, a text server that citizens can register for, to receive alerts.



Carmina De Santiago.



Daniela Pakro.

EMERGENCY OPERATIONS CENTER

Alive! Interview
– continued from page 11

The City's Coordinator

Is the Emergency Management Dept., for lack of a better term, the quarterback of this emergency response, the coordinator of the City's outreach? How would you describe your place in the City's response to COVID?

Aram: I wouldn't say we're the only quarterback because there are many missions out there that are addressing COVID-19. I'll give you an example, the LAUSD [Los Angeles Unified School District]. They are feeding hundreds of thousands of students. They're the quarterback for that mission. Now if they come to us and ask us for support from the EOC as far as logistics, obviously we will go ahead and support that. But they're the quarterback; they're running the show. Now having said that, there are numerous other events that yes, the EOC has been spearheading, assisting and supporting all these missions. It could be testing sites. It could be shelters. It could be quarantining. We're basically sitting and playing chess and ensuring that the soldiers are moved in the right squares assisting all the missions out in the field.

Carol: We are the City's coordinator for the overall response; the Emergency Operations Center is the glue. We connect all of the City departments that are leading the response. We have been activated since day one to look at this issue, and not only are we working with the City departments but also outside agencies at the City, County and State level. We are looking at not only what's happening at the City but Aram is a part of an even bigger network where he communicates with the big cities and gets lessons learned and best practices, and we use that information to inform a lot of the decision making that's happening here. We are key. Daily we answer the phone and put out reports, and we are there as a resource. Many of the City departments are telecommuting, but we are what could be considered "second responders" who have been reporting every day to the Emergency Operations Center monitoring the situation as it continues to go up and down and change. When the numbers [of those infected] were going down, we were there, and now that the numbers are increasing, we're still here playing the same role and sharing information. We collaborate and assist the mayor and the other elected officials in their efforts and provide them information. We are the key coordinators of this response.

Aram: That's right, the key coordinator. I can give you an example. Some of these projects are complicated. For example, setting up a hospital at the Convention Center. Truly, there's no one quarterback. There are several agencies that were extremely important to the process. You have a medical team that basically designs and puts the business plan together. From there you have logistics teams that look at it and decide what personnel resources and what infrastructure are needed. Then all that is communicated to the key agencies, then it comes to the EOC. The EOC looks at it and says, "Fine. We need to sign a contract for nurses." There are not enough



Carol Parks, Assistant General Manager, and Aram Sahakian, General Manager, review the day's task whiteboard.

in the county, so we go to an RN registry. "We need to contract for laundry. We need to contract to set up cots and put in dividers." It has many elements. At some of these meetings you could have up to 25 or 30 agencies at the table. There is no one person throwing the ball. We are all working together. The ultimate decision maker is the mayor on top, but he has confidence in us and he has tasked us with the mission of realizing these important projects.

Gary: There's an important distinction between EMD, the Emergency Management Dept., and the EOC, the Emergency Operations Center. Running the Emergency Operations Center is one of the one or two most important things that this Department does, and it would be fair to say that we are kind of the quarterback of the EOC. We have a good idea of how a good EOC is supposed to run, and it's our job to be the quarterback in there and to make sure that everything is running smoothly.

Aram: That's very true. We are the quarterbacks of the actual Center. We make sure that all the departments and divisions that are needed are at the table coordinating. It's seamless coordination and documentation. But when it goes to the mission outside the Center, we are only a component of it that supports those missions.

The Role of the EOC

So that leads into describing the EOC, then. Tell us what the EOC does.

Gary: I'll give you the Cliffs Notes because there are a number of different things. Number one, the EOC is the brain of the City's response to any emergency. When you have a big emergency, let's say an earthquake or a fire because those are the easiest to conceptualize, you have lots of things going on throughout the City, and every one of them is a 10 on a scale of 1 to 10 in terms of importance for the people on the scene. If we're talking about an earthquake, you're looking at a fire, you're a fire chief and you think that that's the most important thing in the City. But the EOC takes all of the information from throughout the City and it's able to prioritize what's the most important. You get a big picture view of everything that's going on in the City and not a compartmentalized view. Number two, it brings the different departments together into one,

under one roof. You're able to share and communicate information so you're not working in a silo. Having a center where each of the departments involved in a response can go is critically important. A third thing we do is collect, acquire and allocate resources. The City is very resource rich. We have a lot of things at our disposal. But those things that we don't have at our disposal we're able to get. If we don't have it, we can rent it, buy it from the private sector or ask for it from the County of Los Angeles. The County, if it doesn't have it, could ask for it from the State and so forth and so on. A fourth thing that we do is because we're the brain, we're able to disseminate information. We have all the information and we're able to send it out, both internally to the City family and externally to the public. We also are able to send out public notifications via Emergency Mass Notification Systems. So there is a number of different things that the EOC does.

Aram: You guys should have received one last night, right, the order?

Gary: If they registered for Notify LA, you would have got it.

I am registered, and I did get one, yes. The stay-at-home order.

Aram: Registration is easy. Make sure you sign up so you get all our emergency notifications.

Carol: To add to what Gary was saying, the Emergency Operations Center is activated at three levels with Level 1 being the highest. Prior to this pandemic event, most of our activations were at our lowest level, Level 3. This EOC activation is the first time that the EOC has been activated at Level 1 since we've been in this building. Our highest level.

Preparing for a Pandemic

How do you prepare for a pandemic?

Aram: That's our Planning Division. We have a whole division dedicated to ensure that our City agencies and Departments including the Council Offices, operate according to a continuity of operations and a continuity of government plan. So we play the what-if scenarios based on the incident. Obviously, this was something new. It was more challenging than some of the other incidents that we've been dealing with over the years.

Each incident has an annex. This one has a pandemic annex. We always had a pandemic annex, but it did not include a COVID-19 incident. It included some other infectious diseases but not a COVID-19, which is more challenging. Six or seven months into it, we have more data now – the social distancing, the use of PPEs and what have you. We should mention that County Health is the lead on any health-related emergency. We coordinate with them.

In January, we began looking at the pandemic annex. We consulted with health professionals and included the new elements needed to address a COVID-19 pandemic-type of a scenario. This will not be the final form of this specific annex. I'm sure that in the future it will evolve and again, I'm knocking on wood – hopefully we don't have more pandemics. But pandemics are a different animal. It's unlike a fire. It's unlike a sinkhole. It's unlike a mudslide. It has way too many parameters that are unknown, and they evolve. That's why it's a dynamic plan.

In a nutshell, each incident has an annex. It's in the emergency plan and we have a response to it and we keep reviewing those plans on a biannual basis. The departments submit them. We communicate with them, and we submit them all the way up to the Federal level. It's a Federal requirement. There is a very clear incident command system that we need to follow, and that comes down from FEMA. If you need reimbursement to respond to any incident, you need to follow that process.

Carol: In this profession we have to prepare for all hazards – natural, manmade, technological. If there were any level of preparedness for this pandemic it would be attributed to the planning that we do on an ongoing basis. All of our planning documents – and we have more than 40 of them – are living documents, meaning that once they are written they have to be revised. We have to train to them and then exercise them with all of the key players. Within City government, emergency planning is something that we did to prepare. No one on the globe was totally prepared for this pandemic. But the little level of preparedness that we had would be attributed to our ongoing planning, training and exercise program. As far as preparing the community, that gets into our Ready LA Neighborhood Initiative. We've done a lot of work in trying to prepare the public for disaster. We didn't necessarily promote or plan for a pandemic with them. It's mostly been for catastrophic earthquakes. But in all of our preparation and all of our messaging we encourage them to think about how they could develop their own personal preparedness plan for any eventuality that could occur. But as Aram mentioned, this is a novel event with so many different twists and turns that it's just been a surprise element for all of us.

Aram: And honestly, the real emergency is not being prepared. That is the true real emergency.

Carol: Yes.

Gary: We're doing a good job of piggybacking off of each other. In the EOC we're concerned generally about how well and how smooth that facility runs. It doesn't matter what's going on outside of the walls, whether it's an earthquake or a fire or, you know, a planned event like the LA Marathon – as long as the facility is running right and all of the processes and procedures are on point and the staff is trained, it doesn't matter what's going



From left: Crisanta Gonzalez and Jillian De Vela.



Anthony Aguinaga, Emergency Management Coordinator I, checks the temperature of Jessica Kellogg, Public Information Officer, as part of COVID protocols.

From left: Anthony Aguinaga and Jon Brown.



Veronica Hendrix.



EMERGENCY OPERATIONS CENTER

Alive! Interview – continued from page 12

on outside as long as what's going on inside is running efficiently and smoothly. Having trained staff and trained responders show up and know each other and know how to acquire and allocate resources or gain situational awareness, as long as that's done right it helps any hazard that we may run into.

Is it safe to say that the experience and planning gained from this will help the next generation if there's another pandemic?

Gary: Yes. Yes.

Carol: Most definitely.

Gary: I think there's a lot of lessons learned and we're still getting those right now. But pandemics are kind of unique. Sometimes you don't know how they're going to affect, and to what extent, the population. But there are definitely elements in this pandemic that we can capture and use for the future in our plans and annexes.

Aram: It's really important to learn from mistakes. We're human. We all make mistakes. There's always room for improvement. We do after-action reports for each incident. For this COVID-19 incident we hired a private contractor because it's beyond our scope. It's a huge undertaking and we don't have the resources to do it internally. Besides, an outside agency will give you more of an unbiased after-action report so we're not patting ourselves on the back. We're improving constantly but with the pandemic especially, there are a lot of lessons learned, especially when it comes to coordinating and communicating with sister agencies and honestly, navigating the political arena.

Difficult Days, Success Stories

You all seem pretty well adjusted and getting your sleep finally, but there must have been some really rough days, and maybe there are some more to come.

Aram: I'm not sure we're relaxed and resting! Because I can tell you I'm not. These two guys call me at all times of the day.

Carol: I was the Duty Officer when Aram called – it was on a weekend, when time things were just starting to unfold. The Mayor's Office had Aram on speed dial, asking him how we were going to deal with this pandemic and how we could find out what's going on all over the world. I immediately called the Planning Division Chief. His whole team was working. We looked at what was happening with COVID all over the world. And we had to do it in about an hour or two, to come up with this comprehensive report and then figure out the impact on Los Angeles, and how to get the word out using all forms of technology.

Wow.

Carol: That was my big moment with COVID. The next big moment was dealing with the Marathon, and I was the Duty Officer again for that. The

organizers decided to go ahead and do the race but thank God that was a pretty well-run event this year. And last of all, I'll say this and I'll be quiet, the other time I was the Duty Officer we had the major protests for racial justice along with COVID. So I was dealing with emergency after emergency and just trying to keep the staff here calm. They were working really long hours at that time. Part of my job was giving them the confidence that we can get through this. The most challenging thing with this whole COVID situation is we don't know when it's going to end. Normally in all my years of being an emergency manager it follows that the emergency happens, the emergency concludes and then you get into recovery. We're still in response. Recovery hasn't started yet.

Aram: It's relentless. It's one event after the other. Honestly, at least since I moved to EMD, it seems like the numbers have skyrocketed.

I can tell you that when knowing that Carol is the Duty Officer, I am in a comfort zone because I know that everything's going to be addressed with flying colors. It's a stressful job. It's a 24/7 job. I carry my phone in my bed because I'm nervous that I'm going to miss a message. I've had several incidents where my waking up at 4 a.m. and reading an email saved the day. That ping, is in my ear the whole time. The same goes with all our staff. They're dedicated. There is such a thing as exhaustion, but we try to keep morale high. We try to accommodate staff and create a very healthy work environment by giving them the tools we need. And thank God that the light at the end of the tunnel for this event is the vaccine, and right now we're working on the vaccine plan. It's an extremely complicated plan. I had hair when I came to EMD, by the way, a full head of hair!

Gary: Actually I was not in the EOC at the very beginning of the pandemic. I had my first child right in the middle of the first week of community spread.

Congratulations!

Gary: Thanks. But just a week or two after that I was on the phone with the EOC getting back to



Gary Singer, Emergency Management Coordinator II.

work through telecommuting. You could hear it in the voice of the people there that it was hectic and it was stressful; there was a lot to be done and not a lot of time to do it.

Just looking at the national news coverage, LA and LA County were leading the efforts of getting testing out there, and it was good to see that. I was proud to see that the EOC was running smoothly. Even though I wanted to be there, I could say that they were handling it well.

Talk about some success stories that through all of this you can be proud of.

Aram: There are several. Number one, we've been activated for 200-plus days. We have a very high level of activation, and have more than 50 to 60 percent of the responders work virtually and are able to run the Emergency Operations Center. We had to bring in new technology to do that. For example, we brought in VEOCI, our new record keeping request form technology, during the pandemic. Secondly, we signed a contract with Honeywell for N95 masks; they are giving us 1.2 million a month, of which we keep 120,000 based on our burn rate. We give the rest to the private sector because they were running short. So that's another success story. The RYLAN [Ready Your LA Neighborhood] planning program, which we instituted before the pandemic, had families coming and telling us, "Your RYLAN planning saved lives in our complex because as a community we were together and we knew what to do."

Aram: Yes.

Carol: Especially considering that, when we first started back in March, we had five more staff than we do now. That takes a lot of mental stability. We call this a sustained operation. We're not doing just one thing. We're not just here training, for example, but we are contributing to whatever Police is doing, what Fire is doing, the Mayor's Office and all the City departments. Personnel is running the DSW [Disaster Service Worker] program, and we're able to support all of these multifaceted functions that are going on to relate to the COVID response.

Aram: Ultimately, I have no doubt that the work we have been doing in the EOC since March has saved lives. It saved probably many lives, and that's the biggest success story.

Steady Crew

Talk about your crew, the 22 people who work in the department.

Aram: Without them, there would not be an EMD. I tell my team, "I work for you. I want to make sure that you have the tools to do your job." That's the bottom line. And to create a work environment that ensures that they're productive and thriving. They're all dedicated. Several had concerns because they had elderly at home that they were taking care of. We're not COVID-proof. We've had three COVID cases so far in the last several months I believe. We have very tight protocols of PPEs and social distancing.

Carol: Our emergency managers have put their personal lives aside and make coming to work a priority. Some of our employees telecommute and support us in their remote capacity, but those who have been coming into the office every day have really stepped up. Because of

COVID, really we've had to bring all of our emergency managers from their usual job in the various assigned divisions to commit to working in the EOC, and they have taken off their day-to-day hat and put on their EOC hat and stepped up in a lot of different capacities.

Aram: It's unlike any other job because it's not just what you know – what training you have. It's character. You really need to have the character to be an emergency responder because you need to go above and beyond the norm to do your job and to do it right. It takes that emotional EQ to get you to the next level. It's not just your IQ.

Why do you love what you do?

Aram: Because I feel that I was put on this planet to help people. That's my true north. And that's what I've been doing. Personal satisfaction. I love my City. I love Angelenos. And trust me, I would not be here if I didn't love what I do. It's the love of the job that keeps me here.

Carol: Just knowing that maybe something that I did helped to save a life or to make someone else's day-to-day living more beneficial. Just knowing that I have helped inform some other employee or some other Angeleno about the importance of being prepared, that one day when they need it, when it's a bad day in LA that they will remember something that I may have said or done, and it will save their lives or the lives of their family members.

Gary: How am I going to top all that? Come on!

I would echo what Aram and Carol both said. On top of that, this field is very unique. It's a growing field. It's a young field. When all three of us got into it, you couldn't go to school to be an emergency manager, but now universities have degree programs where you could go to school and be an emergency manager. It's a new enough of a career field to where you can shape it. You can be in at the ground floor where decisions are being made that are going to change the course of the profession moving forward. And working in a big city like the City of LA that is ground zero for a lot of emergencies and disasters, we have the experience that we can share with the entire country and entire world on how to respond effectively to emergencies. There are jurisdictions that don't have the type of things that we have here and don't have the experience that we have. So it's unique being in this field, and it's definitely unique being in this City.

Well, thank all of you for your time and your commitment and dedication to the City, especially during this health crisis.

Aram: Thank you for highlighting what we do. We are one small department, and sometimes we're an afterthought, and what *Alive!* is doing will put us upfront. We really appreciate it.

You're very welcome. That's what we do.

Carol: Thank you.

Gary: Thanks, everybody. Take care. Be safe. ■



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

2021 Executive Board of Directors

- Ruth B. Perry, President
- Beverly J. Clark, First Vice President
- Phil Orland, Second Vice President
- Loucin (Lucy) Artinian, Treasurer
- Verkin (Vicki) Keoseian, Secretary

RLACEI DIRECTORS

Dial (800) 678-4145 plus extension

- | | |
|--|----------|
| Beverly J. Clark,
Publicity Director | Ext. 716 |
| Loucin (Lucy) Artinian,
Treasurer | Ext. 718 |
| Dennis Harding,
Entertainment Director | Ext. 704 |
| Tom Moutes,
Health & Legislative Director | Ext. 710 |
| Phil Orland, Golf Director | Ext. 709 |
| Ruth B. Perry,
Membership Director | Ext. 717 |
| Harold Danowitz | Ext. 707 |

RLACEI RETIREE HELPLINE: (800) 678-4145, Ext. 0

For retirement assistance, call the Retiree Hotline and leave a message. A Director of RLACEI will return your call and assist you with your concerns.

RLACEI WEBSITE

Visit the RLACEI website www.RLACEI.org to find the latest retirement news. Call (800) 678-4145 Ext. 0 to make suggestions.
EMAIL: Contact@RLACEI.org

MAILING ADDRESS:

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

Change of Address?

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

Send in your Interesting News Contributions!

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

2021 RETIREE EVENTS

May 6 General membership meeting:
Location to be announced

RESERVATION LINE:
RLACEI: (800) 678-4145, Ext. 701

RETIREES UPDATE

Pandemic-Related Fiscal Woes Grow

by Tom Moutes, RLACEI Director



Tom Moutes

Last month, I wrote about the City's budget issues and their impact on LACERS. Since that time, the City's budget woes have grown to a projected budget gap of \$675 million for the current fiscal year.

On Dec. 4, the City Administrative Officer (CAO) released a report identifying the growth in the budget gap and recommending that the City Council immediately consider a number of actions, including, but not limited to:

- The possible elimination of 1,894 filled positions;
- Additional labor concessions such as more furlough days; and
- The issuance of Pension Obligation Bonds (POBs) next fiscal year.

What Are Pension Obligation Bonds?

Following is the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) explanation of POBs: "Pension obligation bonds are taxable bonds that some state and local governments have issued as part of an overall strategy to fund the unfunded portion of their pension liabilities by creating debt. The use of POBs rests on the assumption that the bond proceeds, when invested with pension assets in higher-yielding asset classes, will be able to achieve a rate of return that is greater than the interest rate owed over the term of the bonds."

In other words, the City would sell bonds to cover some of its annual contribution to LACERS and/or pay down some of LACERS' unfunded pension liability. LACERS would then invest the proceeds from the bond sale in the same manner it invests its other funds.

So, Are Pension Obligation Bonds Helpful?

The short answer is "it depends."

If the investments of the POB proceeds perform well, the results may be a better funded pension system. However, if the investment of the POB proceeds fails to earn more than the interest rate owed over the term of the bonds, it can add to the additional fiscal stress that the City may face.

Frequently, I have compared POBs with "doubling-down" in blackjack – you may come out ahead, but you may also lose more than you would have. At least in blackjack, you would only double-down when the odds are in your favor. Many jurisdictions that implement POBs do so due to financial distress, and therefore they are unable to control the timing of the POB issuance. This makes the odds of a successful POB implementation less than it otherwise would be.

The GFOA, whose mission is "to advance excellence in public finance," is opposed to the issuance of POBs due to the risks involved, the additional debt burden it places on the jurisdiction, the fact that the overall cost of POBs frequently increases the jurisdiction's overall costs, and because credit rating agencies may take a dim view of jurisdictions employing POBs.

We hope that, when the City Councilmembers consider POBs, they will make sure they have all of the necessary facts before them. ■

LACERS BOARD UPDATE

LACERS Fund Tops \$20B; City Contribution Rate Set

by Michael R. Wilkinson, LACERS Commissioner



Michael R. Wilkinson

First, I want to wish all of you and your families a wonderful New Year as we work collectively to put the COVID-19 health crisis behind us.

This is a great time to mark a recent high-water mark for the value of the total fund, which hit \$20.27 billion on Nov. 23. As we have discussed, the total value of the fund will move up and down in the financial markets, so we should not be overwhelmed with the euphoria of the market highs or have bad feelings when the financial markets go the other way. The important thing to note is that LACERS has an all-weather plan that will provide your full pension regardless of the current financial conditions.

Our actuary, Segal Consulting, recently reported LACERS' actuarial valuation and funded ratio. One of the most important reasons for LACERS to use the valuation is to set the rate that the City will pay LACERS to support the pension plan starting in July 2022. The funded ratio is the percentage of the actuarial assets of the plan as a percentage of the promised benefits of the plan (the actuarial liabilities).

The actuary found that funded status for the retirement system moved from 71.3 percent to 69.4 percent funded, while the Health Subsidy Benefits moved up from 84.4 percent to 85.6 percent funded. The health plan continues to benefit from decades of "prefunding" the plan while most pension plans were practicing "pay as you go" and not putting extra money away. The combined funded status moved from 73.1 percent to 71.6 percent funded. This will result in an increase to the total contribution rate that the City pays from 29.12 percent to 32.25 percent of the City payroll.

Why did the funded ratio change? For the retirement plan, the investment returns were less than expected and salary increases were higher than expected. In addition, there were changes in actuarial assumptions such as the reduction of the assumed investment return from 7.25 percent to 7.00 percent. These increases in actuarial costs were somewhat offset by reductions due to the enrollment of new employees in the lower cost Tier 3, health premiums that were lower than projected and other miscellaneous actuarial gains.

I know this is a lot of information. What does it mean to us as Retirees? The big picture is that the City will continue to pay 100 percent of the required contribution determined by the actuary to keep the plan financially healthy. The failure of employers to pay the full actuarial cost each year is what has put several public retirement plans around the country in serious financial trouble as they regularly underfund their state and local pensions. ■

A Note on COVID-19 To Our RLACEI Retirees:

We're almost there! Vaccinations from two pharmaceutical companies have been approved by the FDA. As of this writing, our healthcare personnel and essential workers are slated to begin receiving the first vaccines. We hope that, if all goes well, we can breathe a sigh of relief and began to return to some type of normalcy in the very near future. We've experienced an unusual year like none other for more than a hundred years since the 1918 influenza pandemic.

Hope lies ahead. We can see a light at the end of the tunnel. Please remember to keep yourself and others safe by wearing a mask and social distancing. Continue to stay safe and healthy. Be well as we look forward to a brighter New Year! ■

RLACEI

RETIREES ON THE MOVE

Meet Beryne Beckham Dixon

By Beverly Clark, RLACEI Publicity Chair



Beryne Beckham Dixon

Beryne Beckham Dixon retired in 2009 under ERIP (Early Retirement Incentive Program) from LAPD/Training Division. Beryne worked for the City for almost 31 years. She began and ended her career with the LAPD. During her tenure, she also worked for Transportation and the Community Development Dept.

Beryne has a variety of hobbies to keep her busy in retirement. Of those is music: She often performs live singing solo and with various groups. She enjoys attending jazz festivals, both local and internationally.

Beryne says she is a constant student of life and loves to take classes and listen to podcasts, audio books and documentaries. Additionally, she visits museums, gardens, shops and travels. One of her greatest joys is caring for her two rambunctious dogs.

She also enjoys attending meetings with Jehovah's Witnesses and periodically volunteers with the Los Angeles Jazz Society.



At the Smithsonian.

Any words of wisdom for Retirees or those about to retire?

"Be excited! Plan your activities now! Be willing to help others but also do some things for yourself."

What was the smartest thing you did to prepare for retirement, or did you plan on retiring when you did?

"A few years before retirement, I increased my deferred compensation and purchased a new vehicle so that by the time I retired I would not have a car note."

What do you miss or don't miss about your years of service to the City of Los Angeles?

"I miss the many friendships I acquired during my 30 years with the City. And I can say that the City has the best people hands down! On the other hand, I do not miss rising early, and I appreciate setting my own schedule."

As you reflect on your City career, would you have done anything differently?

"Yes. I enjoyed all my assignments; however, I could have started my promotional ladder sooner. But I am thankful to have obtained the career growth that I desired."



At the Parthenon



Beryne Performing



Beryne

How do you fill your days?

"Oh my! I spend my days doing whatever I want. I have morning tea. Then I work out, make smoothies or fresh juice and start or complete a project. And then there are other days I do absolutely nothing!"

If you could change one thing about retired life, what would that be?

"The City does not pay into Social

Security, so I lacked the 40-credit requirement. After retiring, I rested a few years, then made a goal to acquire additional points prior to turning 65!"

The Shelter-in-Place order has changed our normal way of life. Do you find this time challenging?

"I find it challenging, but working in harmony with my prayers has helped a lot. I read the Bible more, listen to books, enjoy my patio and making fresh juice for infirmed friends."

Are you bored?

"Not at all. I find there are so many things to do to stay busy and active."

How do you socialize now?

"I Zoom concerts, tours and classes, and I FaceTime and phone my family and friends."

What do you miss most?

"Attending my religious services, live music concerts, gadding about town, Macy's and international travel." ■

Thank You, Cliff



Cliff Cannon

Cliff Cannon has retired from the RLACEI Board as of November 2020. Cliff served in many capacities throughout his years on the Board, including

Membership chair and chair of the Audit committee.

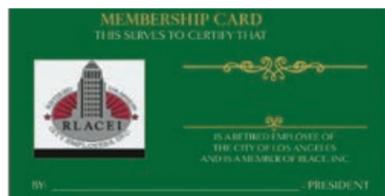
Cliff joined the RLACEI Board in January 2012. One of his greatest visions upon joining was to make the RLACEI Board interactive with its members. He set a goal to assist in the expansion of activities and events for retired City employees through input from our general membership.

Cliff retired from the City after 32 years of service. He began in the Data Service Bureau as a Sr. DP Analyst and retired from the Controller's Office as a Fiscal Systems Specialist II, responsible for managing the citywide payroll system.

The Board is grateful to Cliff for his many years of service and contributions. As the RLACEI moves into a year with new visions and goals, the members of the RLACEI Board and the City retirement community thank Cliff for paving the way! ■

Annual Membership Meeting Now May 6

The RLACEI annual general membership meeting and holiday party, which is generally held in December, was postponed as we all continued to stay quarantined and limit our activities during the coronavirus pandemic. The new scheduled date is May 6. Further information will be provided as we get closer to the date. The installation of Board Directors will take place at that time. ■



Become an RLACEI Member

Retired Los Angeles City Employees, Inc. (RLACEI) is dedicated to advocating for retiree interests. We are over 6,500 strong! Members enjoy all RLACEI events such as the golf tournament, member's picnic, and holiday party. RLACEI membership includes FREE membership in the Employees Club of California with access to all Club group benefits (insurance, discounts, etc.).

Get FREE membership through the end of 2021 for those retiring Aug. 1 through Nov. 30, 2021!

Call (800) 678-4145 x717, or visit our website at RLACEI.ORG and join today!

Sign Up!

YOU COULD WIN A PRIZE



Connect to RLACEI on our Facebook page!

TO ENTER:

RLACEI Members:

Follow us on Facebook

Other City Retirees:

Like us on Facebook and join RLACEI

PRIZES TO FIRST 150!

FIRST 50 WIN

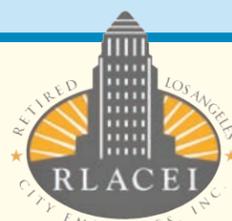
Target \$25 gift card

51-100 WIN

\$5 gift card
(See's or Starbucks)

101-150 WIN

RLACEI reusable cloth bag



Find us: Log on to Facebook, then search for RLACEI

Join at: RLACEI.org
(must be Retired City employee)

The Alive! Kids' Coloring Contest

Coloring with The Club

Deadline for submission:

Feb. 5, 2021

Compiled by Club Customer Service Associates:



Guadalupe Lira



DeAngelo Thompson

Mail completed coloring art to:
 Club Coloring Contest
 Employees Club of California
 120 West 2nd Street
 Los Angeles, CA 90012

The Club will do everything it can to gather all the submissions, but it cannot be responsible for lost or misdirected mail.

Print and Online Schedule

Alive! has moved half of its children's coloring contests online.

In the printed *Alive!*:

January (winners published in March)
 July (winners published in September)

In the online edition of *Alive!*:

April (winners posted in June)
 October (winners posted in December)



SCAN TO DOWNLOAD ART



Download Coloring Art From the Web

You can also download and print art from *Web Alive!*:
alive.employeesclub.com/kidscoloringcontest



We want to know about you! Tell us a little about yourself:

Your name _____ How old are you? _____

When is your birthday? _____ What is the first name of your best friend? _____

What is your favorite snack? _____

What is your favorite television show? _____

Why do you want to go to this park? _____

For parents/guardian to complete:

Name of parent/guardian: _____

Job title and department with the City: _____

Parent/guardian phone number: _____

Child's address/city/zip: _____

Club Membership number: _____





Be Club!

THE VIDEO A CLUB PREMIERE!

A Club Video Recap

Catch the Club's end-of-the-year recap video on YouTube. It was quite a year!

Be Club, the Club's fun but informative recap of 2020 – a year like no other – premiered Dec. 18 and is now available for streaming. Viewing will be open to everyone.

"The Club has never had a year like 2020," says Club COO Robert Larios, who produced the video. "We wanted to show all the ways the Club was strong for its Members during the pandemic. But we also show how municipal employees gave us hope during this very difficult year. You gave us hope, and the Club gave you hope in return. That's what this is all about."

Be Club was produced during October and November, and safety protocols were practiced. The Club thanks Rose Watson and Robert Baker at Rec and Parks for their assistance in the use of Orcutt Ranch for the safe outdoor filming.

To view the video, go to YouTube and search for the Employees Club of California or "Be Club."



Watch on YouTube

Search **Employees Club of California** or **Be Club**

Scan this code with your phone to watch Be Club!




LACERS

LOS ANGELES CITY EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEMS

Plan for the Future With the Family Death Benefit Program

By Tiffany Obembe, LACERS

Peace of mind is key when planning for the future. Make sure your loved ones are taken care of should anything happen to you by signing up for the Family Death Benefit Plan (FDBP). For just \$1.20 per pay period, the program will provide your loved ones with a monthly financial benefit should you pass away before retirement.

Learn more about the FDBP by viewing the FDBP Overview video at:

youtube.com/lacersyoutube

For quicker access, scan this QR code with the camera on your phone to bring you directly to the FDBP Overview video.



FOR RETIREES: How to Handle Medicare Part B Premium for 2021

By Tiffany Obembe, LACERS

As a reminder, all retired Members and their dependents who are eligible for Medicare and enrolled in a LACERS plan are required to enroll in Medicare Part B. Retired Members enrolled in Medicare Parts A and B with at least 10 years of service who are enrolled in a LACERS Senior medical plan or participate in the Medical Premium Reimbursement Program (MPRP) are eligible for a reimbursement of their basic Medicare Part B premium. For 2021, the standard (basic) Medicare Part B premium amount will be \$148.50 per month (not including Income-Related Monthly Adjustment Amounts [IRMAAs] and late enrollment penalties).

If you are a Retiree whose Medicare Part B premium is deducted from your Social Security benefit check and it is less than \$148.50 a month, you will need to submit proof of the amount to LACERS so that your reimbursement amount can be adjusted.

Not Eligible to Receive Basic Medicare Part B Premium Reimbursement

Surviving Spouses/Domestic Partners and health plan dependents are not eligible to receive a reimbursement unless they are also a Retiree with at least 10 years of Service.

Retirees enrolled only in Medicare Part B are not eligible to receive a reimbursement and do not need to submit proof of enrollment.

For more information visit LACERS.org/medicare.



FOR ACTIVE EMPLOYEES:

Sign Up for A Retirement Planning Webinar

By Vanessa Lopez, LACERS



Nathan Herkelrath, LACERS

For more information, visit LACERS.org/attend-seminar.

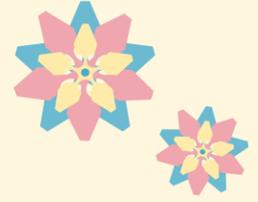
For quicker access, scan the QR code with the camera on your phone to bring you directly to the Website. LACERS looks forward to you joining in on a session!

Active employees, start the New Year off right by learning about your retirement options and benefits! The LACERS Member Engagement team plans to conduct Planning for Retirement webinars via Zoom in early 2021. Dates include Thursday, Jan. 14; Saturday, Jan. 23; Thursday, Feb. 11; and Thursday, Feb. 25.





Life's Important Moments



Share Your Life's Moments

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

Submit digital photos and text online:
 (as high a resolution as you can send)
alive.employeesclub.com/lifemoments

Graduations **Military Service**
Special Achievements **Weddings**
Births

Graduation



Officer William Dorsey Jones Jr. graduated Dec. 12 in his hometown from the University of Louisville with a degree in communications. Jones spent eight years as a Patrol Officer, and three years as a Community Relations Officer in the North Hollywood Division. He began the Officers for Change nonprofit in August.

NOTE TO READERS:

In last month's *In Memoriam* list, we published the name of John Robb as having passed away. That was correct according to the list we received from LACERS. However, in a case of mistaken identities, there is a living Club Member with the same name. The deceased was John O. Robb; John E. Robb, who retired five years ago from the DWP, is alive and we are happy to report well. We apologize for the confusion, and with this month will begin publishing the lists containing middle initials where available. – Ed.

In Memoriam

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

DEPARTMENT	YEARS OF SERVICE	DEPARTMENT	YEARS OF SERVICE	DEPARTMENT	YEARS OF SERVICE
Active					
Douglas, Steven	Public Works	15	Fontes, Paul G.	DWP	36
Gardner, Littleton T.	Public Works	27	Ford, George	DWP	26
Gonzales, David D.	Transportation	18	Galang Jr., Felipe P.	DWP	18
Hernandez, Amaury	Rec and Parks	11	Galloway Jr., Solomon	DWP	34
Loll, Raymond C.	Public Works	17	Garner, Charles J.	N/D	N/D
Stein, Reva	Animal Services	25	Harrill, Marcia J.	N/D	N/D
Walsh, Virginia A.	Airports	7	Hatcher, Henry	DWP	21
Retired					
Aprea, Victor P.	N/D	N/D	Herman, Robert E.	N/D	N/D
Arandia, Peter L.	Public Works	33	Johnson, Lawrence	Airports	31
Bell, Sydney B.	Gen. Services	31	Kapel, James R.	City Attny's Off.	30
Brown, Frank	N/D	N/D	Kendrick, Robert L.	N/D	N/D
Candelaria, Robert	Public Works	43	Knauf, Frederick F.	Gen. Services	16
Castro, Albert	N/D	N/D	Kobata, Harold T.	DWP	31
Castro, Arturo W.	DWP	22	Long, Gerald M.	DWP	3
Cobbett, Raymond C.	Housing	12	Loss, Lawrence	ITA	27
Coleman, William E.	DWP	42	Louie, Helen M.	Bldg. & Safety	26
Comrie, Keith B.	N/D	N/D	Marko, Theodore T.	Bldg. & Safety	28
Coronado, Julio	DWP	33	Matthews, David H.	Airports	13
Croy, Jerry C.	Gen. Services	36	McDonald, James W.	DWP	26
Cruz, Francisco	DWP	27	McLeod, Dorothy L.	N/D	N/D
De La Cruz, Manuel	N/D	N/D	Metzler, Janet	Library	44
Echols, Charles R.	DWP	30	Mochedlover, Helene	Library	41
Fehrmann, Klaus R.	N/D	N/D	Mogge, Dwight C.	N/D	N/D
			Motley, Ethyl	Public Works	20
			Moustafa, Mahrous	DWP	24
			Olsen, Brian A.	DWP	18
			Outterbridge, John W.	N/D	N/D
			Owen Smith, Gail E.	City Attny's Off.	7
			Pace, Gordon H.	DWP	33
			Pagan, Robert	DWP	32
			Payne, Marshall E.	DWP	30
			Pointer, Thomas S.	N/D	N/D
			Power, Cheryl L.	DWP	27
			Pyne, Cuthbert W.	Personnel	12
			Rios, Armando P.	DWP	28
			Robinson, Elnora H.	N/D	N/D
			Roth, Dennis L.	Transportation	36
			Sanchez, Michael	DWP	13
			Santoyo, Albert	N/D	N/D
			Schilling, Louis S.	LAPD	17
			Sistona, Ernesto E.	DWP	17
			Spann, William N.	Rec and Parks	35
			Spease, Robert A.	DWP	34
			Stott, Geoffrey L.	N/D	N/D
			Swank, Donald D.	N/D	N/D
			Tinawin, Eva E.	N/D	N/D
			Vangundy, Roy L.	N/D	N/D
			Velinov, Zdravko S.	DWP	19
			Walker, Darryl W.	Airports	30
			Walton, Herman	N/D	N/D
			Williams, Freddie L.	N/D	N/D
			Wirch, Douglas A.	N/D	N/D
			Wooten, Herman E.	N/D	N/D

N/D = not disclosed

Retirements

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

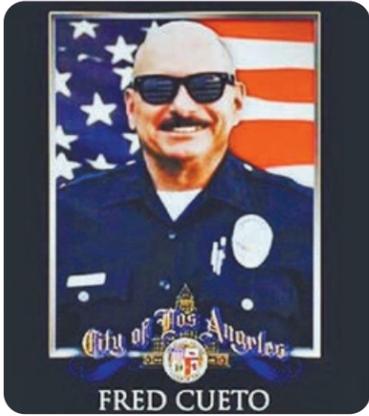
NAME	TITLE	DEPT.	YEARS	NAME	TITLE	DEPT.	YEARS	NAME	TITLE	DEPT.	YEARS
Abraham, Teresa M.	Sr. Mgmt. Analyst	Bldg. & Safety	28	King, Clifford G.	Custodian	Airports	20	Ponce, Sandra	Police Service Rep.	LAPD	42
Adams, Paula A.	Dir. of Airports Admin.	Airports	30	Lacy, Yvonne M.	Airport Guide	Airports	6	Priestley, Errol B.	Police Officer	Airports	30
Aguila, Walter	Fleet Services	DWP	N/D	Lara, Josefina	Custodian	Airports	15	Riser, Timothy A.	Police Officer	Airports	34
Alcantara, Joann B.	Customer Service	DWP	N/D	Lara, Luis A.	Airport Guide	Airports	11	Rivera, Guadalupe	Custodian	Airports	17
Alonzo, Jose M.	Police Officer	Airports	32	Largaespada, Bayardo	Custodian	Airports	17	Rivera Mejia, Veronica	Custodian	Airports	15
Alvarado De Bravo, Gricelda	Locker Room Attend.	Rec and Parks	5	Lemons, Clifford L.	Constr. Inspector	Airports	30	Robles, Carmen	Custodian	Airports	14
Andersen, Steven C.	Power Constr./Maint.	DWP	N/D	Lewis, Darrius Jerome	Police Officer	Airports	34	Rodriguez, Francisco	Custodian	Airports	15
Arnold, Keith Edward	Police Sergeant	Airports	32	Limbo, Alexander A.	Custodian	Airports	17	Ross, Ann J.	Airport Guide	Airports	8
Basquez, Alejandrina R.	Asst. General Mgr.	Personnel	26	Lo, Gordon H.	Acctg. Rec. Sup.	Airports	30	Rubio, Emilio	Maint. Laborer	Airports	15
Bowers, Ronald David	Refuse Coll. Sup.	Public Works	42	Long, Brian D.	Power Constr./Maint.	DWP	N/D	Ruiz, Hermelinda	Custodian	Airports	19
Brown, Merrilee L.	Labor Relations	DWP	N/D	Lopez, Blanca L.	Custodian	Airports	15	Sacvin Jax, Juan	Custodian	Airports	15
Calas, German B.	Eng. Designer	Airports	19	Lopez, Jose R.	Custodian	Airports	17	Saldivar, Eleuterio J.	Water Distribution	DWP	N/D
Castaneda, James A.	Water Operations	DWP	N/D	Lopez Barrios, Emiliana	Custodian	Airports	15	Sharp, Samuel	Power Trans.	DWP	N/D
Claverie, Louis W.	Security Officer	Airports	32	Loya, Roberto R.	Mgr.	Airports	30	Shrode, Richard D.	Police Officer	Airports	26
Cleas, Van	Police Officer	Airports	32	Luke, Thomas	St. Services Worker	Airports	30	Silverman, Erica D.	Librarian	Library	7
Conrad, Todd H.	Power New Business	DWP	N/D	Madsen, Midori P.	Airport Guide	Airports	11	Slattery, Edward C.	Power Trans.	DWP	N/D
Cook, Charles	Comm. Electrician	ITA	17	Magee, Otis V.	Custodian	Airports	14	Smith, Marie Jose G.	Airport Guide	Airports	11
Cortez, Carmen	Power Trans.	DWP	N/D	Magno, Narciso D.G.	Sr. Accountant	Fire/Police Pens.	15	Smock, Lisa Jean	Sr. Police Serv. Rep	LAPD	30
De Bow, Terri L.	Energy Distribution	DWP	N/D	Mariscal, Ana L.	Custodian	Airports	15	Sosa Vasquez, Emma	Custodian	Airports	15
Delgado, Jerry G.	Sr. Detention Officer	LAPD	35	Martinez, Don Gabriel	Maint. Laborer	Airports	15	Suh, Kung W.	Asst. Park Svcs. Attd.	Rec and Parks	3
Deng, Susie	Tax Auditor	Finance	11	Martinez, Eva	Custodian	Airports	15	Taguchi, Roger K.	Power Constr./Maint.	DWP	N/D
Douroux, Lee	Building Inspector	Bldg. & Safety	30	Martinez, Simon	Custodian	Airports	17	Thomas, Renata D.	Sr. Custodian	Airports	18
Dubois, Aaron K.	Police Sergeant	Airports	32	Martinez-Flores, Rocio	Custodian	Airports	15	Tolentino, Virgilio T.	Veterinarian	Animal Services	7
Eagleson, Craig D.	Fleet Services	DWP	N/D	Masry, Marjorie M.	Airport Guide	Airports	3	Torres, Elizabeth	Sr. Personnel Analyst	LACERS	30
Espinosa Luna, Juan	Custodian	Airports	20	Medina, Teresa	Custodian	Airports	17	Torrez, Jesse A.	Power Trans.	DWP	N/D
Espinoza, Jose	Gardener Caretaker	Rec and Parks	24	Mendoza, Jaime Santos	Sr. Admin. Clerk	LAPD	31	Tovar, Margarita	Custodian	Airports	15
Farrington, Dorothy A.	Special Prog. Asst.	Rec and Parks	5	Mendoza, Maria Leilani	Admin. Clerk	LAPD	29	Tran, Jimmy Khac	Comm. Electrician	ITA	24
Figley, Daniel J.	Power Trans.	DWP	N/D	Merenstein, Brett M.	Power Trans.	DWP	N/D	Tran, Kim	Solid Resources Mgr.	Public Works	20
Flores, Irma	Custodian	Harbor	10	Milos, Monica M.	Property Mgr.	Airports	20	Tullai, Mark J.	Chief Mgmt. Analyst	Airports	29
Ford, Jamal B.	Police Officer	Airports	32	Mixon, Kelly G.	Sr. Security Officer	Airports	31	Valenzuela De Jesus, Eduardo	Custodian	Airports	15
Franklin, Penny Marie	Police Service Rep	LAPD	25	Mojica, Bertha	Custodian	Airports	15	Vasquez, Rosendo M.	Custodian	Airports	17
Gage, Daniel Patrick	Constr. & Maint. Sup.	Gen. Services	24	Monterrosa, Ester M.	Custodian	Airports	17	Vaughn, David Brian	Plumber	Public Works	30
Gonzalez, Guillermo J.	Police Officer	Airports	34	Monterroso, Marco T.	Custodian	Airports	15	Vega, L. Bertha	Payroll Sup.	Airports	35
Guzman, Rochelle	Supply Chain	DWP	N/D	Morales, Maria D.	Window Cleaner	Airports	17	Velasquez, Jose A.	Custodian	Airports	17
Hall, Martha G.	Police Sergeant	Airports	33	Morales, Modesta A.	Custodian	Airports	16	Velasquez Paz, Martha	Custodian	Airports	17
Hendricks, Clara E.	Custodian Sup.	Airports	31	Morales, Rosario	Custodian	Airports	17	Virgen, Toribio	Custodian	Airports	16
Hoffman, Louis	Police Lieutenant	Airports	39	Moran, John F.	Supt. of Operations	Airports	32	Warren, Michelle L.	Customer Service	DWP	N/D
Holmes, Troye E.	Police Lieutenant	Airports	32	Morataya Ruano, Evelia	Custodian	Airports	17	Whitehead, Gayle Lorraine	Commun. Info. Rep.	Airports	24
Holtz, Derrick E.	Police Officer	Airports	19	Moreno, Rafael	Refuse Coll. Truck Op.	Public Works	32	Wike, Charles B.	Librarian	Library	4
Hudgins, Gertrude E.	Sr. Admin. Clerk	Public Works	15	Munoz, Aida R.	Custodian	Airports	13	Wilder, Esau	Security Officer	Airports	11
Jackson, Gwendolyn	Custodian	Airports	18	Murillo Rivas, Maria L.	Custodian	Airports	16	Williams, Waynetta R.	Airport Guide	Airports	11
James, Barbara A.	Police Sergeant	Airports	35	Newman, Chona Matias	Commun. Info. Rep.	Airports	13	Woods, Houston S.	Comm. Electrician	ITA	25
Jang, Mikyong	Dept. Chief Acct.	LACERS	22	Nguyen, Hoang A.	Wastewater Treat. Op.	Public Works	38	Zarate, Jose Alberto	Sr. Detention Off.	LAPD	30
Johnson, Curtis	Airport Guide	Airports	6	Oga, Taizo	Gardener Caretaker	Airports	17	Zimmerman, Teresa L.	Legal Secretary	City Attorney	11
Jones, Dormin D.	Traffic Officer	Transportation	27	Payne, Lamar Oliver	Custodian	Airports	11				
Jones, Gladys M.	Airport Guide	Airports	6	Paysinger, Autumn L.	Sr. Admin. Clerk	LAPD	25				
Kagan, Charles M.	JFB/Facilities Mgmt.	DWP	N/D	Pineda Iraheta, Julio	Custodian	Airports	11				
Kamuck, Mary Ann	Admin. Clerk	Bldg. & Safety	34	Platero, Dinora I.	Custodian	Airports	17				
Kaptein, Robert E.	Civil Eng. Assoc.	Harbor	12	Ponce, Filena D.	Custodian	Airports	17				

N/D = not disclosed

LAPD

Sgt. Fred Cueto Passes

Sgt. Fred Cueto, 22 years of City service, succumbs to COVID-19.



Sgt. Fred Cueto

Sgt. Fred Cueto, Foothill Division, 22 years of City service, died Dec. 6 from the coronavirus.

LAPD Foothill wrote on Instagram: "Today Foothill lost a great Sergeant, friend and brother. Our deepest condolences to his family and many friends. You will be missed Sgt. Cueto. Godspeed, our brother. God bless your family and may you rest in peace."

According to statistics released at the time, 1,001 LAPD employees have tested positive for the coronavirus, including 809 sworn officers and 192 civilians.

The Club sends its condolences to the family and friends of Sgt. Cueto. ■

LAPD



Lt. Mike Carodine on his last day.

Goodbye, Lt. Mike

Lt. Mike Carodine, LAPD, 36 years of City service, retired Dec. 1 from the K9 unit at Metro.

Congratulations on your retirement, Lt. Carodine! ■



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• A 'PICTURE' OF 2020 •

John's Picture Perfect

Alive! presents some of our favorite winners from 'John's Picture Perfect' contest from last year.

MORE WINNERS
On Web *Alive!*
 alive.employeesclub.com

Many of us might wish to forget that the year 2020 ever existed at all. But our impressive Club Member photographers and their photographic eyes found beauty in the challenging times.

For the John's Picture Perfect contest's 10th anniversary in January 2015, we printed our favorite photos from contest's entire span. Readers liked it so much that we decided to run an annual recap.

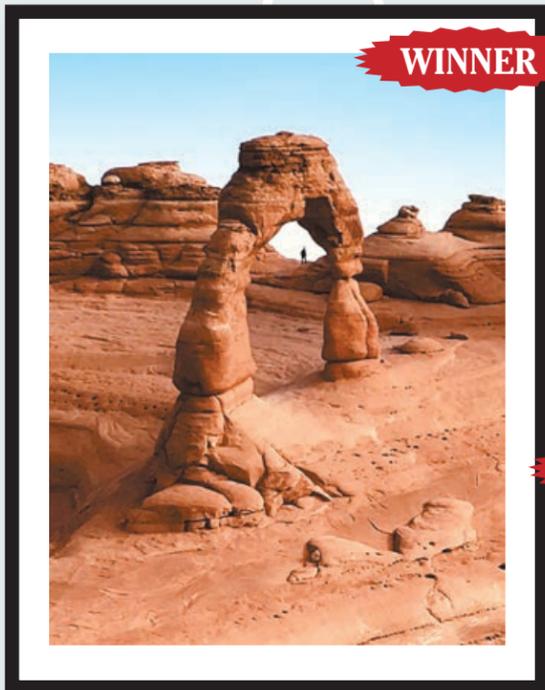
In 2020, Club Members submitted hundreds of entries and many dozens of winners. Here are some of them.

So, as we look forward to better days ahead, we republish John Hawkins' favorites from among the winners, along with his original comments.



Photos compiled by John Hawkins, Club CEO

Keep submitting your great photos, and keep looking up with hope and a grand sense of wonder.



WINNER

"Delicate Arch in Arches National Park, Utah. It was a lot bigger than I thought it would be!"

— **Carlos Aranda, DWP**

John's comment: OMG! I still haven't been here. It looks unreal – and having the person in the background really gives it perspective on how large it really is! Thanks, Carlos!



WINNER

"They can be extremely skittish at times, but once in a while even a suspicious feral cat needs to relax and let its guard down just for a little bit. It was at one of those moments when I was able to take this close-up of a beautiful stray that's recently been hanging out with us in our backyard. (I'm not sure whether it's because we are great company or because of the overabundance of the squirrel population.)"

— **Yves Didier, Airport Police**

John's comment: I'm guessing because you're great company, Yves ... My family has a cat, but I have never gotten this close. Look at that detail! What a miracle the natural world is. Thanks for the reminder.

GENERAL SERVICES

MVPs!

General Services honors its MVP employees virtually.

General Services held Most Valued Performance (MVP) Award ceremony virtually Aug. 28 to honor its best employees from 2018 and 2019.

The Most Valued Performance Awards are some of the highest awards the department gives.

The MVP (Most Valued Performance) Awards are given to General Services employees whom the General Manager finds has performed well above the call of duty. Nominations can be sent by anyone, any time.

The criterion for this award is that the employee has completed or continues to perform an extraordinary work-related accomplishment. Recipients receive a framed plaque and a trophy or cup. The General Manager presents the award to the recipients at a gathering of managers, family and coworkers, and the employee's name is added to a wood scroll in the lobby of City Hall South.

General Manager Tony Royster, Club Member, hosted the event online. "The last several months have been challenging," he wrote in a letter introducing the honorees. "We learned to work our normal jobs under new circumstances, with extra precautions to ensure our health and that of our family and friends – and we will need to continue to take care for the foreseeable future."

"This challenging time gives us more reasons to celebrate and highlight the exceptional accomplishments of our employees. Congratulations GSD 2018-19 MVP winners!"

Congratulations to all the winners from the Club. And thanks go to Valerie Melloff, Assistant General Manager, and David Trice Robertson for their assistance.

Story and images courtesy Valerie Melloff, General Services

HONOREES

MOST VALUED PERFORMANCE AWARD

Real Estate



John-Michael Mendoza



Wayne Lee



Paul Burke



Jennifer Lamb



LeThu Tran

Fuel Services



Joshua Muncie



Sean Sullivan



Jeffrey McKimson



Shannon Gooden



Brian Flores



Fernando Delgado



Shelby Landeros



Steve Martinez

Building Maintenance

Team MVPs



Angelica Collins Quintero, Belinda Manada, Wen Pai, Victor Villa, Monique Atkinson, Imelda De Guzman, Lilibeth De La Fuente, Evelyn Ignacio, Myrna Pilkington, Samantha Bynum, Alfred Lopez, Aida Hernandez, Teiko Leslie, Cecilia Aguilar, Mariflor Alviso, Jacqueline Boucher, Yu Ki Cheng, Verna Chiu, Cheryl Cun, Edmund De Baroncelli, Daniel De La Cruz, Rosemarie Dibene, Evelyn Evans, Orlando Galandeynes, Charito Go, Judy Gomez, Jenny Gov, Sabrina Hilliard, Katy Hoa, Jacqueline Hui, Mildred Jacla, Yeonjoo Jeong, Librado Julao, Alicia Mancilla, Bertha Mata, Tamara McClain, Reiky Mitri, Trena Napute, Juan Nunez, Julie Ocampo, Patricia Rosas, Takako Shimada, Diane Wilson, Helen Ubiadas-Tolosa and Alexander Wong.

Fleet Services



Kurt Aiken, Luis Perez, Richard Butcher, Gregory Navarro and Miguel Perez

Individual MVPs



Maria Pena
Finance



Graham Harrison
Construction Forces

Supply Services Payment



Gonzalo Sarabia and Greg Analian

Publishing Services