

# Members Speak Out

## ■ Ease Budget Crunch by Raising Retirement Multiplier

The City of Los Angeles is treading water trying to figure out what to do next to provide the City services promised in the secession battle, while facing unexpected revenue shortages, a hiring freeze that has resulted in a shortage of personnel, an explosion of people coming to Los Angeles, and the uneasy climate of war.

The City can do much to cover its revenue shortage by encouraging older employees at the top of their pay levels to retire and replace them with new employees who could start at lower pay levels. This can be done by raising the retirement multiplier, an increase that is long overdue. One hundred California cities and counties, and the state, have updated pension rates for their employees. Two years ago, the citizens of Los Angeles voted to raise the pension for police and firefighters, and, in their new contract, some Department of Water and Power employees were granted an improvement in their pension comparable to what other cities in the state have granted their employees. Yet for the rank and file employees of the City of Los Angeles, there has been no such pension improvement. It has been 27 years since the last change in the pension multiplier.

The pension system for these employees has \$3.8 billion over what is needed to cover pension obligations. This surplus is a result of excellent pension fund management.

Three years ago, the federal government made it clear that all overfunded pension funds should reduce that excess by returning it to the employees. Hence the move by many cities and counties to increase the retirement multiplier. The City of Los Angeles' pension fund was built with contributions from the employees and is money that belongs to them and cannot be used by the City for any other purpose than pension payouts.

By bringing rank and file pensions in line with that of the police, fire, Department of Water and Power, and scores of cities and counties, the City can move higher-paid employees into the pension system and reduce its payroll, thereby saving millions of dollars much needed to help balance the City budget and keep intact necessary city services. 📧

— **Michael Nelson**  
Club Member

## ■ Personnel Dept. Remembers One Who Passed Away

Lena Britt passed away Friday; Nov.22. She was part of the Personnel Department Workers' Compensation Division family.

For those who did not know Lena, she was a vibrant person who was full of life and always brought out the good side in everyone she came in contact with. Lena will be deeply missed.

She was more than a coworker but a friend. "A friend is someone who reaches for your hand and touches your heart." 📧

— **Doris Johnson-Govan**  
Personnel Dept.

### Wanna be heard?

Write to us! It's **your** page. *Have something to say? Overjoyed about something? Angered? Just have a question?* Here's your chance to get it off your chest... and get it into print. (We'll print what we can.) Share your ideas with your City family. Don't wait! Send them to [talkback@cityemployeesclub.com](mailto:talkback@cityemployeesclub.com)



From the President & CEO  
**Danna L. McDonough**

## We All Come From Somewhere, Melting Together Into One Pot



With a name like McDonough you probably figured out that I'd celebrate St. Patrick's Day. McDonough is my married name and Warren, a good English name, was my maiden name. Why should all this matter to anyone? Just think about what a mixture most of us are. My mother came off a dirt farm in Kansas. Her maiden name was Flanders, named for an area in France. From all indications she was a little Dutch, maybe a little German, and who knows what other strong country stock. Her grandmother was a midwife on the Potawatome Indian reservation in Kansas. We don't know any farther back than that.

My dad's family was supposedly descended from English royalty, but in later years I learned that was pure bunk. My great grandmother, whose nickname was "Danna," told me at age 5 I was descended from King Arthur's Court. Obviously I grew up with visions of grandeur. The only thing to brag about is the fact that a Warren came over on the Mayflower and two Warrens fought in the Revolutionary War.

As I asked earlier, who cares? Just think, though, I was born in Wyoming, moved to Anchorage, Alaska, in 1939 when it was just a pioneer boomtown. My dad was a commercial fisherman and a territorial representative to Congress. My best friend through elementary school was an Aleut Eskimo, and then I moved to Compton in 1950. Compton was a totally mixed neighborhood and I didn't know there was any difference in any of us; sure we were of different colors and strange last

names, there was more interesting food in some of my friends' homes than in mine, and there were all sorts of churches. I went to most of them at one time or the other. For me the 1950s were a far simpler time. I was oblivious to what was going on in other parts of the country. In Compton all that stuff didn't affect how we felt about one another.

Now I'm (allegedly) grown up. I understand that this world is a very complex, contentious, competitive and sadly dysfunctional global community. But I take heart and solace in living in a city made up of all kinds of people, cultures, languages,

religions, political persuasions and non-political and anti-religious beliefs. In our office alone, we have nearly one of every kind: Mexican, Vietnamese, a Brit, Chinese, Argentinean, Filipino, WASP, Catholic, Buddhist, Christian, an Agnostic (I'm guessing), a Jew and me — probably the most mongrel of our team.

Aren't we blessed to live in Los Angeles, work with all kinds of interesting and diverse people, still working to melt our nation into one pot, maybe even disagree with Congress and free to speak and write our opinions to editors and to the president? As discouraged as we may be feeling about the economy, the war, disheartened by world politics and so many seemingly insurmountable disasters, we can still be grateful for our city, each other and our community's hopes and dreams. Take care of each other. 📧



## El Torito, Acapulco Discounts

### Dining

*Continued from Page 1*

El Torito or Acapulco restaurants, show your Club card, and you get the discount. It's that simple.

(Just make sure you tip your waiter or waitress on the full amount of the purchase. If you like the service, it's the decent thing to do.)

Discounts to these two popular restaurants are just two of the dozens of benefits that come with your Club membership.

If you spend

just \$20 a month at El Torito or Acapulco (and you know how easy that can be, especially if you take your family), you have already paid for your Club membership. In that case, all the other great benefits, including *Alive!*, are a bonus. 📧

**To find a location near you, point your Web browser to:**

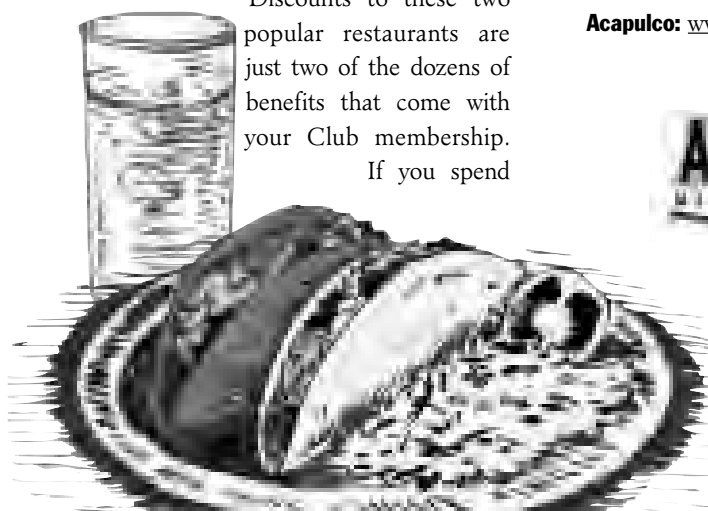
**El Torito:** [www.eltorito.com](http://www.eltorito.com)

**Acapulco:** [www.acapulcorestaurants.com](http://www.acapulcorestaurants.com)

**Enjoy!**

**ACAPULCO**  
MEXICAN RESTAURANT

**EL TORITO**  
MEXICAN RESTAURANT



**Wanna be heard?** What do you think of this great benefit? Have you used your El Torito and/or Acapulco restaurant discount yet? Let us know: [talkback@cityemployeesclub.com](mailto:talkback@cityemployeesclub.com)

## Elections Bring Familiar Faces

### City Hall

*Continued from Page 1*



**Antonio Villaraigosa,**  
Councilmember,  
14th District

the 14th Council District and received about 57 percent of the vote. He unseated Councilman Nick Pacheco, who received about 40 percent.

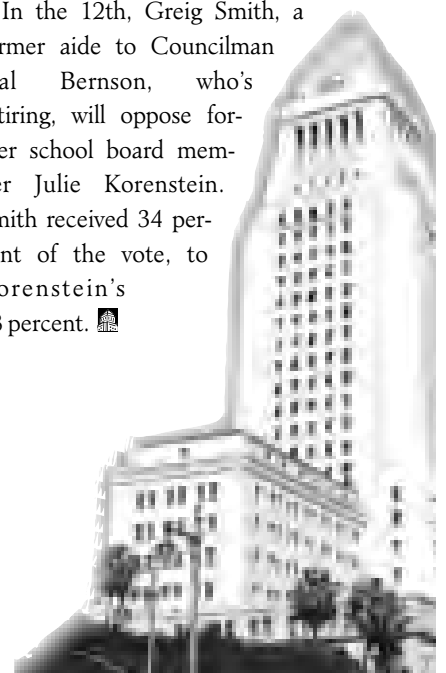
Former Assemblyman Tony Cardenas won his race in the 6th District.

In other races, Wendy Greuel (District 2) and Tom LaBonge (District 4) both won reelection. They were unopposed.

Awaiting runoff elections in May were campaigns in the 10th and 12th Districts. In the 10th District, Deron Williams, former chief

field deputy for Councilman Nate Holden, received 39 percent of the vote. He will face legislative aide Marin Ludlow, who received 26 percent. Holden was prevented from running again by term limits.

In the 12th, Greig Smith, a former aide to Councilman Hal Bernson, who's retiring, will oppose former school board member Julie Korenstein. Smith received 34 percent of the vote, to Korenstein's 28 percent. 📧



**Wanna be heard?** Tell us what you think of last month's elections: [talkback@cityemployeesclub.com](mailto:talkback@cityemployeesclub.com)