

A NEW Section for Retired Club Members



The Best Years

ONLY FOR RETIREES ONLY

INSIDE:

- Upcoming Events Listing
- Members News
- Smart Money Column
- Adventures With Hal Danowitz
- Volunteer Opportunities
- Crossword Puzzle Contest!
- Important Phone Numbers
- Question of the Month Feature
- Thought for the Day Feature

HAVE NEWS?

If you have news about retirement activities that you'd like to share, call **Phil Skarin**

at (818) 784-0130, or write to
5301 Norwich Ave., Van Nuys, CA
91411 or fax (818) 906-3722.



Ed Harding is the President of Retired Los Angeles City Employees, Inc. (RLACEI), one of three major retirees associations for the City of Los Angeles. Contact him: (805) 584-9417.

Ed Harding, RLACEI President



By Phil Skarin, Publicity Chair, RLACEI

Officers Re-Elected at Annual Meeting

Ed Harding, RLACEI President, welcomed a small group of retirees at our annual Meeting and Elections Oct. 6 at the Van Nuys/Sherman Oaks Senior Center. He thanked those who had made reservations for a delicious lunch, but many lunches were left over.

The City Employees Club donated valuable door prizes.

Neil Ricci presented these nominations for Director of the Executive Board, all incumbents (their year of coming onto the Board is in parenthesis): Bob Wilkinson (1995), Hal Danowitz (2000), Americo Garza (1995), Neil Ricci (1999), Phil Skarin (1993) and Tom Stemnock (1996). The nominations were approved unanimously, by acclamation.

Their two-year terms begin on Jan. 1. The Executive Board will select one of the Directors to be the First Vice President for a one-year term beginning on Jan. 1. Bob Wilkinson is the current vice president, whose term is ending.

Officers who have one year remaining on their terms of office are:

- Ed Harding, President
 - Ken Spiker – Second Vice President; and
 - Jerry Bardwell, Jack Mathews, Helen Salgado and David Wilkins, Directors.
- The immediate past president position on the Board had been vacant since the passing of Larry Jones.

President Harding said, "As I am completing my tenth year as your president, I want to thank all of the officers and com-

mittees for all doing a great job, year after year, and making me look good, but they deserve most of the credit."

Legislative Update:

Ken Spiker, our elected Commissioner to the Los Angeles City Employees Retirement System Board (LACERS), has expressed his concern that retirees are not getting their benefit requests heard by the City Council's Employee Relations Committee. Only recognized employee negotiations groups can be heard, and retirees don't qualify.

The LACERS Board of Directors unanimously approved increasing the Death Benefit allowance from \$2,500 to \$5,000 on April 26. State and County employees already have this allowance. Ken is hoping the City employees negotiating groups will include this item in their negotiations package. He is also seeking a Dental Subsidy for spouses as well.

Ken also reports that the LACERS Board has approved of his request to allocate funds for an actuary to determine the cost of providing a Part B Reimbursement for surviving spouses who have Medicare Part A and Part B as now provided for other retirees. Ken would like our 3,184



surviving spouses to be treated the same as their spouse is.

The Administration and Benefits Committee, of which Ken is chairman, recommended and approved increasing the health subsidy from \$883 to \$928.

Sandra Dyson, LACERS, urges you to review all the material they have sent you regarding your health plans. For those who are in a LACERS-sponsored health plan, you do not have to do anything to enroll in the new Medicare Part D. They will arrange it. Do not enroll individually!



RLACEI Holiday Party – December 8, 2005

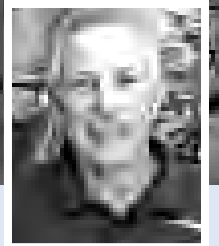
The RLACEI's Annual Christmas Party and Installation of Officers is scheduled for noon Thursday, Dec. 8, at the Grace E. Simons Lodge. The Lodge is at 1025 Elysian Park Dr., near Dodger Stadium. Chairman Americo Garza has promised a light lunch (sandwiches, salad and drinks), entertainment and valuable door prizes. You must make reservations at least a week ahead. Guests welcome. Call one of the officers on the Retirees Help-lines. Free Taxi service can take you from the parking area to the Lodge.

- SEE "UPCOMING EVENTS," PAGE 69 FOR DETAILS

The Best Years

ADVENTURES
with HAL!

Hal at the Berlin Wall

Off to
Denmark and GermanyBy Hal Danowitz,
Secretary, RLACEI

Retiree Hotlines

Who to call? Following is a list of contacts for RLACEI and for the DWP:

City Employees Retirement System: (213) 473-7200

RLACEI Retirement Counselors:

• Edward Harding	(805) 584-9417
• Phil Skarin	(818) 784-0130
• Robert Wilkinson	(818) 886-1000
• Jerry Bardwell	(818) 782-5568
• Harold Danowitz	(310) 472-0224
• Jack Mathews	(310) 762-1942
• Helen Salgado (membership)	(323) 728-4930
• Americo Garza	(562) 928-2051
• Neil Ricci	(310) 394-1971

DWP Retirement Plan Office: (213) 367-1722

RLACEI

Officers for 2005

Edward Harding, President
Robert Wilkinson, First Vice President
Kenneth Spiker, Second Vice President
Hal Danowitz, Secretary
Jerry Bardwell, Treasurer

Committee Chairpersons for 2005

Bob Wilkinson, Audit
Jerry Bardwell, Budget
David Wilkins, Bylaws
Ken Spiker, Legal and Legislative
Helen Salgado, Membership
Phil Skarin, Publicity
Tom Stemnock and Phil Skarin, Golf
Americo Garza, Picnic
Americo Garza, Holiday Party and Installation
Jack Mathews, Senior Citizens
Neil Ricci, Health
David Wilkins, Nominating
Neil Ricci, Special Needs for Retirees
Hal Danowitz, Parliamentarian

Directors

Thomas Stemnock
Americo Garza
Helen Salgado
Phil Skarin
Dave Wilkins
Jack Mathews
Neil Ricci



■ Hal and his entourage continue their European cruise.

We awakened on Sunday morning to our first day at sea as we sailed the 692 nautical miles from Dover, England, to Copenhagen, Denmark.

Our first stop was the gymnasium for our morning workout. We always start a trip with good intentions on keeping to an exercise program, but most times I fail and Evelyn, as she did this time, sticks to the exercise program. The gym was nicely equipped and had a great forward view.

After our workout we had breakfast in the Seaside Café, open around the clock. On most days we had the breakfast buffet, but you could also eat in the main dining room, which we did twice, or have a full breakfast in your stateroom, which we also did a couple of times.

After breakfast we decided to explore the ship. The *GTS* (gas turbine system) *Constellation* was built in France in 2002. It weighs 90,280 tons and is 965 feet long and 107 feet wide, with a top speed of 24 knots. It has eleven decks and can hold 2,449 passengers in 1,019 staterooms. The nationality of the officers was Greek, and there are 999 crew members.

In addition to the San Marco Restaurant and Seaside Café, there are the Sushi Café; the Pizza Café; the Seaside Grill, which made hamburgers and hot dogs; the Cove Café for pastries and coffee; the Aquaspa Café, which served healthy choices all day long (I tried not to go near the Aquaspa Café); and the Ocean Liner's Restaurant, which had a la carte dining each night for a \$30 per person cover charge. Between 11:30 p.m. and 12:30 a.m., waiters passed trays of bite-size snacks in the public lounges. Believe me there was no way you would go hungry on this ship.

The *Celebrity* Theater had nightly entertainment, and there also was a movie theater that showed movies during the day. The ship had a full-service spa and an acupuncture clinic.

The first thing we noticed about the ship was the wonderful art and the large number of fresh flowers through out public areas. On our tour we discovered a large floral boutique like a greenhouse and another area that was an art gallery. Park West held art auctions and, of course, we ended up buying two small pictures.

There was both an Internet café and a computer center. There were a number of Internet access packages you could purchase, and they offered computer classes for a fee for beginners. I never saw the computer training area without people. There were a number of Internet connection hot spots around the ship so if you had a laptop you could go wireless.

There was a large swimming pool and a therapy pool, a sauna and whirlpools, both indoors and outdoors.

I also heard there was a deck for topless sunbathing, but I never found it.

In the evening besides the regular entertainment there were many lounges with different types of music and dancing in each, and of

course a full-service casino.

The *Celebrity* is a very pretty ship, and is well maintained by the crew. Even with more than 2,000 passengers it never seemed overcrowded; I could always find a private space to be alone.

The evening was a formal night, and we got decked out in our tuxedos. A lot of cruise ships have become less formal, but the *Celebrity* still has an evening dress code. During our cruise there were three formal (tux or dark suit) nights, five informal (coat and tie) and six causal (sport shirt and pants). I enjoyed the formal nights

because I was able to use my tux, which has stayed in style for more than 20 years, with just a few alterations in the waistline. The rest of the nights should just have been causal, because a lot of passengers didn't bother to follow the dress code and the ship did nothing to enforce it.

Monday was our first port, Copenhagen. Denmark is a constitutional monarchy covering more than 16,600 square miles of the Jutland peninsula, of which Copenhagen is the capital. I had been to Copenhagen before so we decided not to take a ship tour, but to do it on our own. It also helped that you can walk to most of the sights and that English is spoken by many of the citizens. After World War II, most of the old center of Copenhagen was made accessible by foot, making it easy for visitors to enjoy the Danish hospitality and of course to shop.

The ship provides a lot of information on our ports, so we were armed with maps and pamphlets when we left the ship. After getting our bearings we walked toward the old part of town along the waterway. Our first stop was the statue of the Little Mermaid, where we took our picture with the statue in the background. Less than a mile from the Little Mermaid are the four state mansions that comprise the Amalienborg Palace, home to the royal family.

Following the white-painted footprints on the sidewalk we reached the main shopping area called Stroget. It is one long street, which runs from the old town waterfront to the Tivoli Gardens. A lot of the museums are closed on Mondays so we spent most of our time walking and stopping in the different shops. At the Tivoli Gardens, we stopped for lunch at a small restaurant on the waterfront. After lunch we took shuttle provided by the ship back to the dock.

Evelyn was disappointed that she had not seen more of the attractions of the city, and we decided that we would take at least the basic

city tour in each of the ports. In hindsight we should have taken the Copenhagen tour and forgot about the rest of the small ports, but more about that later.

The ship departed Copenhagen for the 220-nautical-mile sail to Warnemunde, Germany, at 6 p.m. The port is in the northeast part of Germany on the estuary of the Warnow River. Warnemunde, together with Rostock, form one of the country's major shipping centers. For us it was the starting point for our trip to Berlin.

The ship offered five different excursions to Berlin, and we chose the 20th Century Experience. The duration of the tour was 12 and-a-half hours, and it began at 7 a.m. Tuesday morning with a two-and-a-half-hour train ride to Berlin, the capital of Germany. During the ride we had a chance to see the countryside, which consisted mostly of farmland and a few small towns. On our arrival we boarded tour buses and drove through what was East Berlin on our way to the Berlin Wall.

The buildings in the East sector were the ones built by the Soviet Union and were in the process of being repaired. We saw the same style of buildings in our visit to St. Petersburg and the Baltic countries that were once part of the Soviet Union. It is interesting to note that most of Berlin's attractions are in the old East sector.

Our first stop was to see what was left of the Berlin Wall, built in 1961 to divide the American, French and British part of Berlin from the Soviet sector and to stop the flow of East Germans into West Germany. The wall served as a barrier between the two countries and the city until it was taken down in 1990 and East and West Germany were reunited. We stopped at Checkpoint Charlie, a passageway into East Berlin, and took our pictures.

After Checkpoint Charlie, we stopped at Temple of Air, famous for the Berlin Airlift, which kept the city supplied after the Russians cut off

access by road and train.

After lunch at a hotel we continued our tour, passing by Schoeneberg Town Hall, where President Kennedy made his famous "Ich bin ein Berliner" speech. We stopped at the Brandenburg Gate, designed by Carl Gotthard Langhans, as a symbol of peace. The gate has been restored to its pre-war condition and is very impressive. After leaving the gate we walked passed the Reichstag, now the home to the Germany Parliament.

We made a shopping stop in the Kurfurstendamm area and brought a few souvenirs to take home.

Our last stop was the Allied Museum, which focuses on the Allied occupation of Berlin from 1945 until 1994.

We caught our train for the ride back to the ship; because of a heavy rainstorm, the ride took almost three hours. By the time we got back to the ship we were really tired. We had missed dinner, so we ate in the buffet and then went to sleep, because tomorrow was Stockholm.

More next month.

Retiree adventurer Hal Danowitz writes a monthly column on his travels and welcomes your questions or comments. Send them to adventureswithhal@cityemployeesclub.com



Hal's first Formal Night dinner aboard the *Celebrity* included, from left, Evelyn, Hal, Pierre, Effie, Myrna and Don.



From left: Effie and Evelyn on the Copenhagen waterfront.

Retiree Question of the Month

Alive! asked retirees...

What are you most thankful for?

And, what is your favorite thanksgiving food?

The Best Years

To be alive and healthy. Cranberry salad.
—Wilma Rebbe



Being alive. Sweet potato pie.
—Beverly Etheredge



Thank the Lord that enabled us to rise up this morning and come to this meeting. Pecan pie a la mode.
—Sylvester Warsaw Sr.



Being provided a good life by working for the City. Turkey.
—Paul Jamgochian



Great granddaughter, Bonnie, and having this music on a compilation CD: 'Aura of Indigo. Turkey.
—Fred Hoepfner



A wonderful wife. Turkey with dressing.
—Henry Gervais



Beautiful friends. Pork.
—Tony Alvarez



To be alive. Sweet potatoes.
—Marilyn McPherson



RLACEI Upcoming Events:

Christmas Party and Installation of Officers

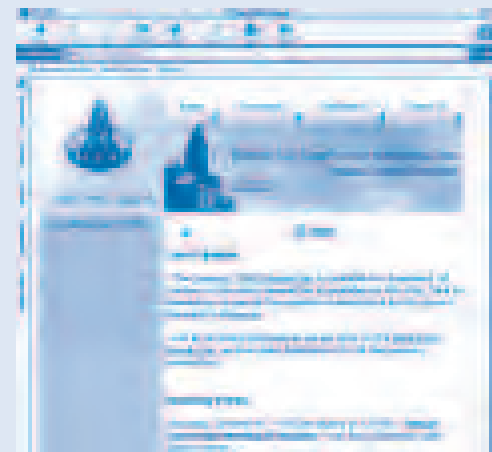
— Thursday, Dec. 8, noon to 3 p.m. at the Grace E. Simons Lodge

28th Annual Retirees Golf Tournament

— Tuesday, June 6, 2006 at the Alhambra Golf Course.

Change of Address?

If you change your address, notify Helen Salgado, Membership Chair, at 323-728-4930, or write to her at 5423 Dewar St., Los Angeles, CA 90022. Also notify LACERS.



RLACEI Website

Hal Danowitz asks you to visit our Website at: www.rlacei.com to find out the latest retiree news.

The Best Years

Financial Advice



Planning and Managing Your Retirement

The Smart Money



Eric Garcia, Smith Barney

Your Club Financial Partners

The Club wants to make planning your financial future easier and more confident. To that end, there are now two separate Club partners to choose from: Eric Garcia, Smith Barney; or James Ocon and Kevin Wright, Wachovia Securities.

Remember that all financial decisions are yours; the Club offers these partners as a courtesy to you and offers no financial/securities advice of its own.

Alive! will feature these two partners in this space in alternating months. As the two partnerships may or may not have separate views on financial matters, they don't necessarily endorse the others' views. But they stand by what they write in the columns with their name(s) on them.

Feel free to contact them at your earliest convenience:

Eric Garcia: (626) 683-4621

James Ocon and Kevin Wright: (818) 907-4209



Eric Garcia



Kevin Wright

Housing Prices: Should You Be Worried?

As a homeowner or residential real estate investor, you may have a high percentage of your net worth invested in your home or other properties. If so, you are no doubt following news reports of escalating U.S. home prices. Should you be worried about a bubble?

To be sure, today's real estate market is anything but typical: the Office of Federal Housing Enterprise Oversight reports that the average U.S. home increased in value by 13.4 percent between the second quarters of 2004 and 2005. Even the average increase doesn't tell the full story. In Nevada, homes appreciated by 28.1 percent. In California, prices increased by about 25 percent.

What a Bubble Is—and Isn't

As property prices continue to move higher, some economists and other observers are voicing concerns about price bubbles—and the risk that prices in some markets might drop substantially. If the drops are significant and widespread, the impact could spread beyond home prices and potentially slow the U.S. economy.

Definitions of a housing market bubble vary, but the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation's perspective is often used. According to the FDIC, a local real estate market is considered a "boom" market when prices have appreciated by at least 30 percent in the previous three years. According to the FDIC, 55 of the 362 U.S. metropolitan markets met this definition in 2004, and those boom markets comprise 40 percent of the value of residential real estate in the United States.

Property prices rarely drop suddenly—it typically takes a combination of both supply- and demand-related factors to reverse an upward trend. Here are some factors to keep in mind if you're concerned that your local market is overheated:

Declines need catalysts

The past few decades have shown that it takes a significant economic event to reverse strong housing markets. For example, Southern California's price declines in the early 1990s were exacerbated by job losses in the defense industry and a national recession. But when that area's technology industry slowed recently, property prices continued to increase based on sustained demand from homeowners and investors.

Prices can soften without plummeting

The Australian real estate market experienced a string of double-digit price increases in the early 2000s, as real estate became the investment of popular choice. The country's

central bank responded by raising interest rates—as our own Federal Reserve Board has done—and the state of New South Wales imposed a transfer tax on the sale of investment properties in a bid to dampen property speculation. These efforts popped the bubble but didn't cause a crash. Home prices have been largely unchanged for the past year, although some major cities have seen slight declines. Property owners who cannot receive their asking price are pulling properties from the market, leading to a reduced supply even as demand falls.

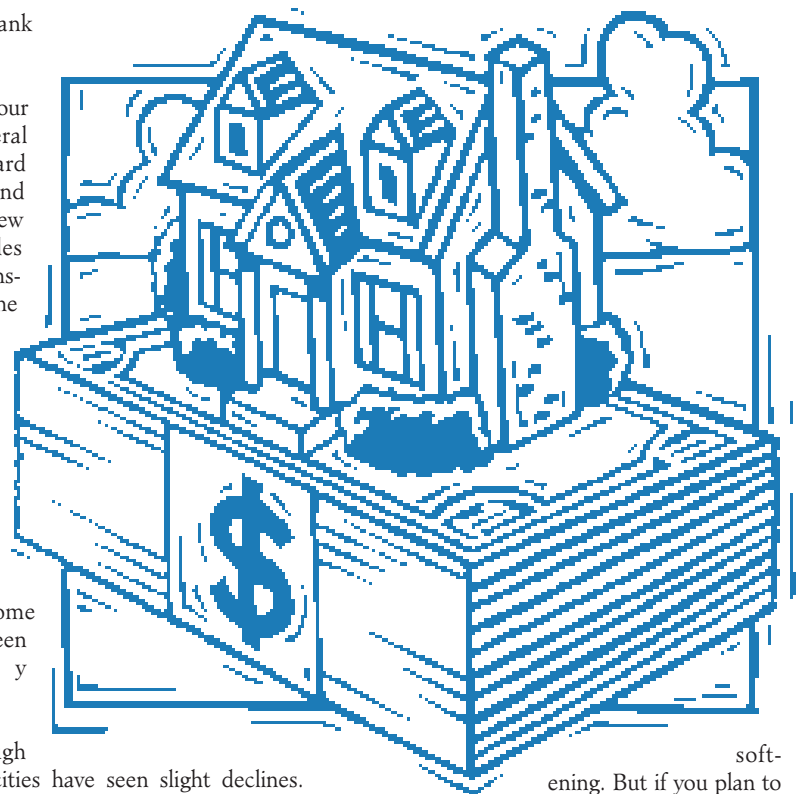
Choosing your mortgage

Your mortgage plays a role in the loss exposure if your property's value declines. Each mortgage type has a unique set of advantages and risks, and your specific circumstances and needs will determine which mortgage works best for you.

If you own property in a boom market and are concerned about potential softness, however, you should consider a loan that requires regular principal payments. The logic: If you finance a property with an interest-only or negative amortization loan and subsequently need to sell during a market decline, you'll face a loss that may require an outlay of cash. In contrast, if you had been making principal payments during the life of the loan, you would have reduced the loan's balance and softened the loss's impact. The economic results will be essentially the same in either scenario, but periodic principal payments reduce the cash-flow impact of selling at a loss.

Looking Ahead

Real estate investors and homeowners who live in boom markets and plan to sell their properties within the next five years should monitor their local markets closely for signs of



softening. But if you plan to hold your property for the medium or long term, the media's obsession with national property bubbles shouldn't be a cause for concern. Real estate prices move in long-term cycles, and property owners whose mortgages fit their financial circumstances will be in a good position to sit tight through the cycles.

Information is power. If you're concerned about your exposure to a potential real estate bubble, consult your advisers to discuss the options available to you.

Eric Garcia is a Financial Planning Specialist with Smith Barney located in Pasadena, Calif., and may be reached at (626) 683-4621.

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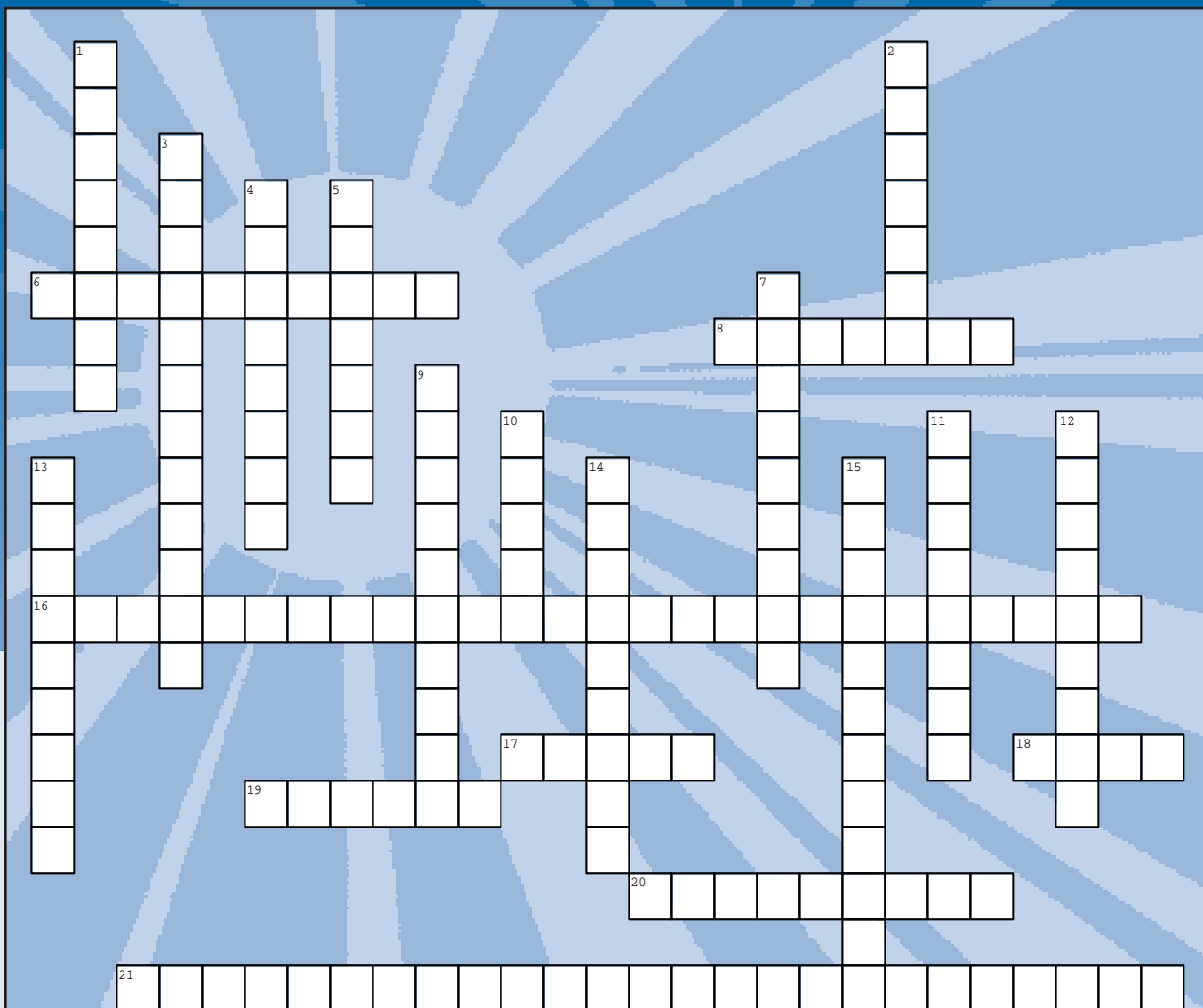
This article is based, in whole or in part, on information provided by the Planning Services Department of Smith Barney.

Send Eric your questions at smartmoney@cityemployeesclub.com. Use "Smart Money" in the subject line.

The Alive! Crossword Puzzle

For Retired Members, Created by Club Events Guru Michelle Moreno

THE BEST YEARS



Here's a new fun feature for Alive's retired readers... and a new contest!

Introducing the *Alive!* Crossword... a monthly puzzle with a theme relating to the City of Los Angeles and the Club. We'll print the answers the following month.

And here's the contest:

The first retired Club Members to complete the puzzle and send in the correct results will win a Ralphs grocery gift certificate for \$25.

But: You also have to tell us what the theme is. The theme could relate to:

- The City
- The Club
- A topic of interest to retirees, from the past (or the present)

So grab your pencil, and let the fun begin!

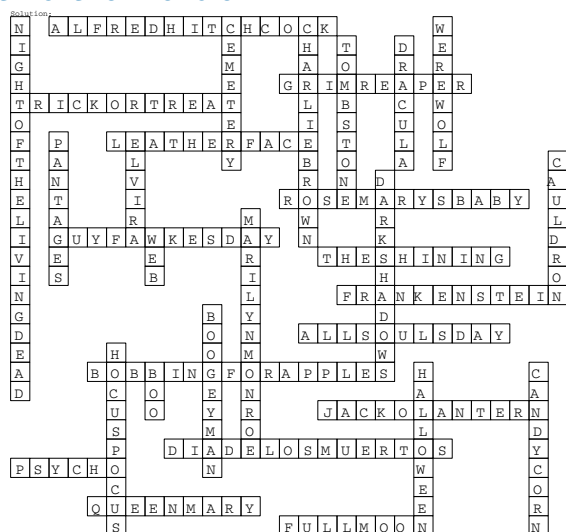
ACROSS

8. First President to issue a Thanksgiving Day Proclamation
16. (4 words) Famous 1987 film starring Steve Martin and John Candy
17. Number of days that the "First Thanksgiving" lasted
18. Popular Thanksgiving side dish 19 Most popular food to have in November holiday
20. Name of ship where pilgrims traveled on
21. (4 words) Movie of the Month in "Who's Got The Popcorn"

DOWN

1. Part of the turkey used for wishing
2. Name of "Indian" that helped the Pilgrims survive
3. Holiday observed on the 4th Thursday in November
4. Month where the "First Thanksgiving" took place in
5. (2 words) Location where Pilgrims first landed
7. State first in turkey production
9. (2 words) Famous November dessert
10. Famous November Parade celebrated in New York
11. Most popular sport to watch in November holiday
12. Which President did not want to have a national Thanksgiving Day
13. Native American tribe involved in the "First Thanksgiving"
14. Wisconsin leads in production of this berry
15. (2 words) Name of location where Pilgrims settled--

Last Month's Answers



This month's theme:

Crossword puzzle contest rules:

1. Mail your completed puzzle (and your guess at the theme) to the Club Headquarters, 350 S. Figueroa, Suite 700, Los Angeles 90071
2. Deadline: The 10th of the month.
3. Anyone can enter, but only Club members with valid Club registration numbers can win.
4. This puzzle is for retired Club Members.
5. It's all in good fun: The Club is not responsible for delays in delivery of *Alive!* or the transmission of entries.



THOUGHT FOR THE DAY:

The recent hurricane Katrina resulted in many deaths. Many of the survivors have lost everything.

Homes, jobs, clothing – all gone.

They have lost many of the things that hold a human life together. Basic necessities including institutions that anchor them such as churches, schools, neighborhoods, friends, family members, personal treasures.

What people can't take away from you is your education, training, drive or your faith.

In our lives we may experience a variety of crises such as: loss of a family member or close friend.

Financial or employment problems.

Mental or physical impairments .

Inability to live and function with independence.

When any of these situations occurs, we may feel shock, anxiety and

psychological distress. Will we have a safety net of levees to keep us from becoming overwhelmed?

Are your relationships with your family, friends, neighbors and God in good repair?

RLACEI MEMBER NEWS:

Here are some recent wedding anniversaries:

- 59th: John and Marguerite Shadle, Burbank
- 59th: Merlyn and Barbara Grable, Apple Valley
- 59th: Ray and Miriam Norman, North Hollywood
- 55th: Philip and Miriam Skarin, Van Nuys
- 50th: Al and Rosa Jue, Los Angeles

Sid Cheshire, 90, lives on a ranch in Wellington, Nev. He raises sheep, horses, goats, but no cane.

Sampson and Ruth Wilson have moved to an assisted living facility: Claremont Place, Apt .260, 120 West San Jose Ave., Claremont, VA 91711.

James Ogg is back at his apartment in North Hollywood, after a bout with amnesia. Give him a call at (818) 982-6791.

Gary Boehm, Van Nuys, works as an LVN at the VA Hospital in Van Nuys.

Hal Danowitz, Santa Monica, is pictured on the cover of *Alive!*, holding two huge dead fish, which he claims to have caught in British Columbia. Call him at (310) 472-0224 if you want to know the "reel" story.

If you have any news about a retiree that you would like to share, send it to:

Phil Skarin

5301 Norwich Ave.,

Van Nuys, CA 91411

or call (818) 784-0130.

The Best Years

Elections, and a Party

■ RLACEI elects new officers, has annual meeting and party.

Story by Arlene Herrero, Club Counselor
Photos by Michelle Moreno, Events Guru

RLACEI — The RLACEI (Retired Los Angeles City Employees Inc.) held its annual meeting and elections luncheon Oct. 6 at the Van Nuys/Sherman Oaks Senior Center. Several attendees received raffle gifts sponsored by the City Employees Club.

The following directors were re-elected for two-year terms beginning Jan. 1:

- Harold Danowitz
- Americo Garza
- Neil Ricci
- Phil Skarin
- Tom Stenmoch
- Robert Wilkinson

Other director positions will be up for re-election next year. Officers are named directly by the directors.



From left: Rene O'Malley, Wilma Rebbe and Olga Suppa.



Helen Gervais wins a \$25 Ralphs Gift Card, courtesy of the City Employees Club.



Beverly Etheredge wins a \$25 Albertsons Gift Card, courtesy of the City Employees Club.



Cleone Vrabel wins a \$25 Ralphs Gift Card, courtesy of the City Employees Club.



Ray Norman wins a \$25 Ralphs Gift Card, courtesy of the City Employees Club.



Ken Spiker, Second Vice President and LACERS commissioner, provides the legislative update.



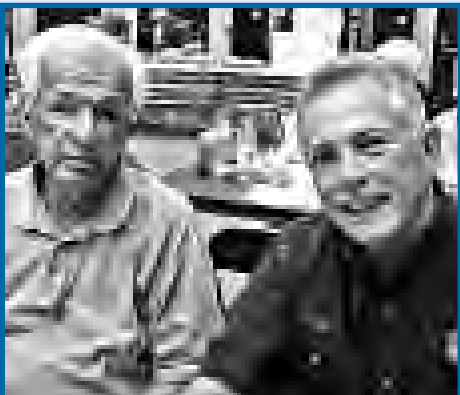
RLACEI President Ed Harding begins the meeting.



From left: Julian Gottlieb and Howard Steinberg.



Henry and Helena Gervais.



From left: Ray Norman and *Alive!* columnist Hal Danowitz.



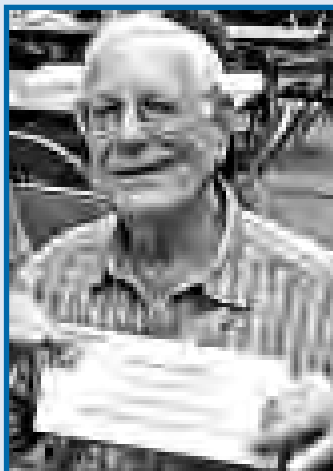
Ella Garza and Martha Harding.



Paul Jamgochian wins a \$25 Albertsons Gift Card, courtesy of the City Employees Club.



Wilma Rebbe wins a \$25 Albertsons Gift Card, courtesy of the City Employees Club.



Leonard Rosstent wins a \$25 Albertsons Gift Card, courtesy of the City Employees Club.



From left: Sylvester Warsaw Sr., Leroy Richards and Robert Perry.



Beverly and Joe Etheredge.



From left: Cleone and Mike Vrabel with Sam Hochberg.



From left: Jinny Peebles, Tony Alvarez and John Peebles.

The Best Years



Retirees on the Move Get Involved!

By Michelle Moreno, Club Events Guru

Thanksgiving Provides Ways to Volunteer

By Michelle Moreno, Club Events Guru

Hello retirees!

Once again, welcome to Retirees on the Move, your guide to some great volunteer opportunities that are just waiting for wonderful people like yourselves, to participate in. Once again, I'm Michelle, a.k.a. Events Guru. I hope you enjoyed last month's issue and found some great ways to help out your community. If not, but still would like to, or if you're eager to do more, let's find something perfect for you.

Since Thanksgiving is almost upon us, there are some great ways for you to help out those who are less fortunate, including creating a gift basket for a low-income family or helping to feed the homeless. I've listed three places looking for help, but I'm sure you can find more in your communities: schools, shelters, animal shelters, missions, churches, etc.

If you're looking for other great things to do, a great place to go is the Volunteer Center of Los Angeles. Here they have a Retired and Senior Volunteer Program that matches folks like yourself with the perfect volunteer opportunity. They have hundreds of opportunities available and are looking for eager people with a heart of gold.

If you are currently volunteering somewhere and would like to share your experience with your fellow retirees, please send me a letter or e-mail. I would very much enjoy posting stories of retirees who are helping out the community.

That's it for me for this month. Always keep an eye out for Retirees on the Move every month, and if you would like to list some events or opportunities, please send them in to retirees@cityemployeesclub.com or 350 S. Figueroa St. Suite 700, Los Angeles, 90071. You can also call me at (800) 464-0452. Thanks for reading and have a great Thanksgiving.

Some of the listed volunteer opportunities were found at:
www.idealists.org
www.volunteermatch.org
L.A. Works
(323) 224-6510
www.laworks.com

Volunteer Center of Los Angeles
Retired & Senior Volunteer
Program
(818) 908-5070
www.vcla.net

November

Please note that some events are ongoing and run through December. *Events subject to change.

Sponsor a Family for Thanksgiving

The St. Francis Center in Downtown Los Angeles is looking for Thanksgiving baskets to distribute to low-income families around the area throughout November. Some suggested items include: one large can of meat (ham, chicken, roast beef, or tuna), gravy mix, vegetable oil, canned yams, instant potato mix, cranberry sauce, package of biscuits/rolls, canned fruit/vegetables, cereal, jello/pudding mix, beans, fruit mix, and rice. Their goal is 500 baskets. Please contact Christine for further information.

Date(s): Through Nov. 23
Location: 1835 S. Hope St.,
Downtown Los Angeles
Contact: (213) 747-5347 or
www.stfranciscenterla.org

Thanksgiving Celebration for Homeless Youths

Covenant House California is a multi-service agency that provides a wide variety of services to runaway and homeless youth ages 18-21. Our annual Thanksgiving Celebration, usually held the Tuesday before Thanksgiving, spreads the holiday cheer to our residents, who often do not have family they can reach out to at this very special time. Volunteers are needed to help with: Food preparation, Set up, Food service, decorations, donation drives, and clean up

Date(s): Nov. 21 and 22
Event time: 9 a.m. – 3 p.m. (Nov. 21);
9 a.m. – 9 p.m. (Nov. 22)
Location: 1325 N. Western Blvd., Hollywood
Contact: (323) 461-3131 or
www.covenanthouse.org/about_loc_la.html

Twelfth Annual Thanksgiving Homeless Feeding in Playa del Rey

"One Incredible Family is a charitable service organization that produces and facilitates community service projects. This project benefits our homeless 'family members' in shelters throughout the County of Los Angeles. Volunteers will prepare more than 1,600 meals, create artistic and uplifting banners, assemble and package meals, deliver and serve meals at shelters, and clean-up facility." Volunteers must be at least eight years of age.

Date(s): Nov. 26
Event Time: 7:30 a.m. – 7:30 p.m.
Volunteer Time: Three hours
Location: Westchester Masonic Lodge
7726 West Manchester Ave.,
Playa del Rey
Contact: (310) 313-0123

December

Gift Wrapping for Holiday Gift Giveaway for Connections for Children

"Every year we host a Holiday Gift Program, distributing unused gifts to more than 1,000 children who otherwise might not receive a gift at holiday time. We need volunteers to help wrap and label all the wonderful gifts that are donated." (Website)

Date(s): Dec. 5-15
Event Time: 9:30 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.
Location: 2701 Ocean Park Blvd., Suite 253,
Santa Monica
Contact: (310) 452-3325 or www.cfc-ca.org

Ongoing

*Events subject to change. Please call or visit Website to confirm.

Friends of Animals Foundation – Volunteer

"The Friends of Animals Foundation is a no-kill shelter that rescues abused, abandoned and needy dogs and cats and places them in good homes. We will be walking dogs, feeding cats, and socializing both dogs and cats." (L.A. Works Website)

Date(s): Daily
Event/Volunteer Time: Varies
Location: West Los Angeles
Contact: (310) 479-5089 or
www.foafla.petfinder.com

Los Angeles Zoo Volunteer

There are several volunteer opportunities available at the L.A. Zoo, from docents to office work to special events. If you like animals and kids, this event is for you.

Date(s): Daily
Event Time: 10 a.m. – 5 p.m.
Volunteer Time: Varies
Location: 5333 Zoo Dr., Los Angeles
Contact: (323) 644-4703 or
www.lazoo.org/volunteering.html

Project Angel Food

"Project Angel Food's mission is to nourish the body and spirit of men, women and children affected by HIV/AIDS and other serious illnesses. The Project Angel Food Program delivers free nutritious meals prepared with love." Volunteer opportunities include: delivering meals, preparing meals at the Hollywood location, assisting in the office and participating in events.

Date(s): Mon. – Fri., Sun.
Event Time: 8 a.m. – noon, 1 - 4 p.m.
Volunteer Time: Two to four hours
Location: 7574 Sunset Blvd., West Hollywood
Contact: (323) 845-1816 or
www.angelfood.org

Tutor at the Remedial Reading Center

This organization is looking for volunteers to help tutor inner-city youths with math, reading or writing skills. Grades 1 - 7.

Date(s): Daily
Event Time: 3 – 7 p.m.
Volunteer Time: Varies
Location: 2239 W. Washington Blvd.,
Los Angeles
Contact: (323) 732-1350

Reading to Kids

If you like reading and like helping kids learn, then this opportunity is perfect for you. The Reading Club meets every Saturday and provides children with a great educational experience.

Date(s): Saturdays (call to confirm)
Event Time: 9 a.m. – noon
Volunteer Time: Three hours
Location: Elementary schools near
Downtown L.A.
Contact: (310) 479-7455 or
www.readingtokids.org

Feed the Soul While Helping Feed the Hungry at L.A.'s Food Bank

"We need to make care packages for women with infants, children and senior citizens. If you want to volunteer this is a great way to help out your community."

Date(s): Saturdays (call to confirm)
Event Time: 9 a.m. – 1 p.m.
Volunteer Time: Three hours
Location: L.A. Food Bank, 1734 East 41st St.,
Los Angeles
Contact: (323) 234-3030 or www.lafightshunger.org

PetSave: Animal Interaction – Rabbits

"PetSave and the spcaLA helped to rescue 400-plus neglected rabbits in 2002. PetSave's mission is to continue to care for these rabbits until all have been adopted into good homes. Volunteers are needed to help with the daily care of the rabbits, including assisting with feeding and cleaning cages, brushing and socializing the rabbits, and helping to clean and organize the shelter."

Date(s): Saturdays
Event Time: 10 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
Volunteer Time: Two hours/week
Location: 522 West Ninth St., San Pedro
Contact: (310) 833-7333 or www.petsave.org

Mentor for the "I Have A Dream" Foundation

"Mentors provide a window to the world. They motivate and coach their mentees to create and achieve their dreams. Mentors are matched with individual dreamers and commit to at least a year of monthly in-person visits and weekly phone or mail contact. This is not a financial commitment, but rather an opportunity to expose a child to new cultural and educational experiences and opportunities outside their communities."

Date(s): Monthly
Event Time/Volunteer Time/Location: Varies
Contact: (213) 572-0175 or www.ihadla.org

Hospice Volunteer Opportunity

"Do you enjoy working with an energetic team in the office? This is an opportunity to enjoy being with an energetic team who are each working to serve each patient and family member we have during the end of life's journey." Several volunteer opportunities are available.

Date(s): Thru Dec. 20
Event Time: 9:30 a.m. – 5 p.m.
Volunteer Time: Four hours/month
Location: Odyssey Healthcare,
1900 W. Garvey Ave. #200,
West Covina
Contact: (626) 851-4005 or
www.odysseyhealth.com

Retired Teachers for Pawprints Literacy Plus Foundation

"Pawprints Literacy Plus Foundation helps fight illiteracy by using animal stories to involve kids -- and adults including seniors -- in reading and creative writing, plus listening and speaking exercises. We are looking for: ability to work effectively with youngsters grades 1-12 (any combination of grade level useful). Must be proficient in language arts, able to manage discipline without a heavy hand. Ability to talk with others in the L.A. community, to help in fund raising efforts -- training provided for both program and fundraising."

Date(s): Thru Dec. 31
Event Time: Varies
Volunteer Time: 10 hours per week
Location: Brentwood Village
Contact: (310) 471-5048 or
www.inaspawprints.com

Public Education Ambassadors for Multiple Sclerosis Association of America

"Public Educational Ambassadors use their communication skills to represent the Multiple Sclerosis Association of America and America's Charities at public speaking events. These events include workplace-giving campaigns, health fairs and regionally organized public education events. We are looking for people who have good public speaking skills and can convey our mission to people in a public setting."

Date(s): Through Dec. 20
Event Time: Varies
Volunteer Time: Three hours
Location: Varies
Contact: (800) 532-7667 or www.msaa.com