

FOR RETIRED CLUB MEMBERS



The Best Years

City Retiree Associations:

DWP Retirees Association



Dolores Foley, President
Phone: (626) 445-7376
E-mail: vinmar@altrionet.com

Los Angeles Retired Fire and Police Association



James Chastain, President
Phone: (323) 283-4441
Fax: (626) 285-1461
E-mail: larfpa@pacbell.net or
9521 Las Tunas Dr. #4,
Temple City, CA 91780

Retired Los Angeles City Employees, Inc. (RLACEI)



Ed Harding, RLACEI President
www.rlacei.com
Contact him: (805) 584-9417
or via E-mail:
postmaster@rlacei.com

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.

Have News About Yourself?

Contact Phil Skarin, 5301 Norwich Ave., Van Nuys, CA 91411-3910, or call (818) 784-0130.

Upcoming Events:

- June 3: Retirees Picnic (DWP).
- June 5: Get-together and lunch, Rogue Valley LAPD retirees. Grants Pass, Ore. Information: quag50@aol.com (LAPD)
- June 6: Annual Retirees Golf Classic, Alhambra Golf Club. (RLACEI)
- June 6-8: 24th annual LAPD Las Vegas Reunion. Information: Al Fried, (702) 269-7627; Bob Carleton, (928) 680-4308; or Rolph Lucke, (909) 597-1653. (LAPD)
- June 15: Retired Fireman's Lunch. Reservations: (323) 464-2727. (LAFD)
- June 18-25: Western States Police and Fire Games. Information: www.wspfg2006.org (police and fire)
- July 14: Desert Refuge for Peace Officers Golf Tournament. Information: Ann, (661) 406-6399 or (213) 202-5487, or e-mail: abrunzell@msn.com (all retired peace officers)
- July 24: 9th annual LAFD Invitational Golf Tournament. Call Fire Relief: (213) 380-2900, ext. 14215 or ext. 14265. (LAFD)
- Aug. 10: Annual Picnic, Grace E. Simons Lodge (RLACEI)
- Aug. 12: 19th annual barbecue, sponsored by the Northwest Coeur d'Alene (Idaho) Retired LAPD group. Information: Arnie Moyens, admoyens@aol.com; Gene McCloskey, mccloskey@adelphia.net; or Bud Arce, roy187@aol.com or (208) 762-8155. (LAPD)
- Aug. 26: Shootin' Newton 75th Plus One Year Reunion. Information: Det. Kelle Baix or Det. Rich Arciniega, Newton Homicide, (323) 846-6556, or Newton Watch Commander, (323) 846-6547. (LAPD)
- Oct. 2: 2nd annual LAFD Historical Society Charity Golf Tournament. Look in the June and July issue of the Grapevine for the application. (LAFD)
- Oct. 12: Annual Meeting and Elections - Van Nuys/ Sherman Oaks Senior Citizen Center - Lunch at noon, meeting at 1 p.m. (RLACEI)

Club, Retirees Talk About Fund for Needy

By Phil Skarin, Publicity Chair, RLACEI



Ed Harding, RLACEI President, reports:

The deadline to enter our 28th annual Retirees Golf Tournament June 6 has passed, but if you call Phil Skarin at (818) 784-0130, he may find an opening for you. Phil and Tom Stennock do a great job in chairing this event.

I hope to see you at our great Annual Picnic Aug. 10 at the Grace E. Simons Lodge in Elysian Park for a fabulous lunch. There will be free taxi service from the parking area to the lodge, courtesy of Mr. Ahmed, President of the Independent Taxi Owners Association.

On April 17, I met with the following organization and their representatives: Retired DWP (Dolores Foley, President); Retired L.A. Fire and Police Association (Jim Chastain, President, Rob Welborn, Vice President and Lee Kebler, Director); and Los Angeles City Employees Club (John Hawkins, President/CEO). Some of the subjects we discussed were:

1. "How will the recent generous salary increases given to DWP employees impact other City Department during their negotiations?"
2. "How Medicare "D" affected the various agencies and the insurance premiums this year and what will happen to the premiums next year.
3. "What a good Long-Term Care program L.A. City Employees Club has.
4. "What happens to our retirees who have a lot of bad luck, bad health or anything that causes them to need extra assistance? How do we help these people now? LACERS retirees don't have any formal program, but could help these people with many different methods, collections, fundraisers, etc. The L.A. City Employees Club suggested that some formal process be established to help all of our retirees that need extra assistance. This will be investigated further.



Sandra Dyson, who has been in charge of Health Plans for LACERS, retired April 12. She writes, "I hope to continue sharing my knowledge of your Board and my fellow retirees. My thanks to you and the RLACEI Board for the respect and generosity you have shown me over the years." She will be replaced by Monette Carranceja.

Legislative Update:

Ken Spiker reports:

- The consulting firm actually has reported that it would cost the fund \$1,541,529 to provide Medicare Part B premium reimbursements to surviving spouses and domestic partners. Currently there are 3,238 retirement members who do not receive this benefit.
- LACERS staff had recommended that the file be 'Received and Filed.' The subject originated in my Benefits Committee and should have been referred to this committee. When I requested the file, the President and Board honored my request and it will now get a fair hearing.
- I hope to obtain committee approval and ultimately the Board's approval. I realize that only the Mayor and City Council can grant this benefit, but there is no person that prevents the Board from asking for their approval.
- The retirement fund is in good financial condition and in my opinion can afford paying for this benefit for those who need it."

Other News:

- Helen Salgado, Membership Chairperson, reports that our recent membership drive resulted in more than 1,000 members in the Retired Los Angeles City Employees, Inc. We hope to see some of them at our picnic in August. Nice job, Helen.
- The L.A. Federal Credit Union is offering 9.9 percent APR personal unsecured loans for the summer to qualified members, until June 30.
- The Department of Aging provides many services to seniors. They have 16 multi-purpose senior citizen centers throughout the City. Call them at 311 or (800) 834-4777.
- If your job is caring for a loved one or having them care for you, you may receive care-giving assistance from a program titled "A Solution for Caregivers." As a LACERS group retiree member, you may call (866) 895-1895 to get more information.

Visit www.rlacei.com to find out the latest retirement news.

The Best Years



The Diamond Princess.



By 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 (323) 728-4930 (membership)
- Americo Garza (562) 928-2051
- Neil Ricci (310) 394-1971

DWP Retirement Plan Office: (213) 367-1722

RLACEI:

Officers for 2006

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

Committee Chairpersons for 2006

- 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



Asian Cruise: Nagasaki's Ground Zero

■ Hal and his entourage cruise from Japan to China. Part 3.

We were aboard the Diamond Princess for a 16-day cruise from Beijing to Bangkok. Our first day at sea was used to explore the Diamond Princess and try to find our way around this very large ship. I felt like leaving breadcrumbs to find my way back to our cabin.

Our first port of call was Nagasaki, Japan (population 450,000), on the southernmost island of Kyushu, considered the birthplace of Japanese civilization. We know it better as the site of the second atomic bomb of World War II. It is special to the Diamond Princess, as it was launched there Feb. 26, 2004. This was its first return to its place of birth, and there were a number of ceremonies scheduled throughout the day.

Our tour included a visit to the Atomic Bomb Museum, which was so crowded with school kids that it was hard to see anything; the Peace Memorial Park, laid out around "ground zero;" and the Atomic Bomb Hypocenter ("ground zero") to see the monument marking the center of the bomb blast. We also saw some of the city as we drove to the Park. Because of the hilly terrain of Nagasaki, it did not suffer the same destruction as Hiroshima. Even so, more than 75,000 people were killed that day, and many more died from radiation. It was very sobering to be standing at "ground zero."

The ship was not scheduled to sail until 8 p.m., so we had some time in the afternoon to explore the harbor area on our own. We were only a short walk from the Glover Gardens. Named after Scottish merchant Thomas Glover, the gardens are the home to Glover House - Japan's oldest example of Western architecture. It was also in a shopping area, so we shopped our way to the top of the hill to see the gardens.

Nagasaki is not a tourist destination for Westerners, so there was somewhat of a language barrier. I would not recommend making a special trip to this area.

Our next day was spent at sea sailing a southwesterly course through the East China Sea to our next port, Shanghai, China. So far the weather had been very good: no rain, and temperature in the mid-70s. I hung around the pool area for most of the day and, in the late afternoon, I attended the wine tasting in the International Dining Room. The cost was \$7.50 per person, and they gave you a \$5 credit toward purchasing a bottle of wine. We sampled six different wines and bought a few bottles to drink at dinner. We signed up for another tasting that cost \$25 per person that would be held

toward the end of the cruise, where we would taste some of the better wines on board, including Opus One. More about this later.

That evening, we attended the variety show, which featured a comic who was the worst I have ever seen. It was one of the few times that we left in the middle of the show. Overall, the big room entertainment on the Princess wasn't that good, though the lounges and nightclub had very good music.

We docked in Shanghai at 4 a.m.; actually, we were still more than an hour from Shanghai, as the Diamond is too big to dock closer to the city. The city is the cradle of the Chinese Communist Party and the center of industrial and commercial center of China. Shanghai, home to more than 13 million people, features streets that are packed with people, cars and bicycles.

We had booked the Best of Shanghai tour. The tour bus picked us up dockside



Hal and Evelyn by Peace Fountain in Nagasaki.



Effie and Evelyn shopping in Nagasaki.



Jade Buddha in Shanghai

and drove toward the city. Seeing we had about an hour drive, our tour guide briefed us on what we would see and then answered questions that we had about China. She was very open to talking about herself and her family. She grew up during the Cultural Revolution; her parents secretly taught her English. Luckily the by the time she was ready for college she was allowed to attend. When she graduated she was assigned to the Agency of Tourism because of her language skills. She said at first she didn't like it, but as she was allowed travel she now enjoys it. She has one child, a daughter, who is 16 and has already spent a year studying in the United States. We asked about the one-child rule, and she explained how it was applied. She was very open with us, and it was very informative.

Our first stop was the Jade Buddha Temple to view the white jade Buddha that was brought from Burma in the late 19th century. As we got off the bus, we were surrounded by people selling hats, watches and post cards. We found this to

be true at all of the places where we stopped. I even bought a few hats for a \$1 each, and you could get any make of watch for \$5.

Our next stop was the Yu Garden and Old Town. Old Town is a series of narrow alleys, the heart of old Shanghai and lined with small shops. The gardens are of the Ming Dynasty, and we had a guided tour through the more than 30 halls and pavilions. Evelyn finally had a chance to shop and bought a very pretty perfume bottle.

Lunch was at the Central Hotel, where we were service a lunch family-style that was very good.

After lunch, we toured the Shanghai Museum with its fine collection of Chinese art. A lot of schoolchildren were in the Museum, and I noticed the difference in dress between the Japanese students whom we had seen in Nagasaki who were all wearing uniforms, and the Chinese kids, who were all wearing jeans and T-shirts advertising American products. These kids would have at home in any mall in the United States.

We stopped for about an hour to shop at the Friendship store that offered a large selection of Chinese goods. It was much different from what we saw on our last visit. We bought T-shirts for the grandkids, and the store had a Starbucks, so Evelyn brought a mug that said Shanghai. (She would have brought one in each city that had a Starbucks if I hadn't stopped her.)

Our last stop was the Children's Palace, an after-school program for gifted children. We were entertained by two very talented young girls playing instruments I didn't recognize. We then stopped at a dance class for five-year-olds, and of course we had to dance with the kids. It was very nice. They had a small gift shop, and we brought a tea set for the grandkids. Later in the cruise, I brought another set in Hong Kong for half the price.

After a short drive through the Bund, we had the bus drop us off in the shopping area. We met up with Lanny and Elaine and did a little shopping in the silk store. We had to pay \$10 each to take the bus back to the ship. This was one of the differences between Princess and the Celebrity cruises.

The next day was spent at sea on our way to Okinawa.



Shanghai Bund.

Retiree Question of the Month

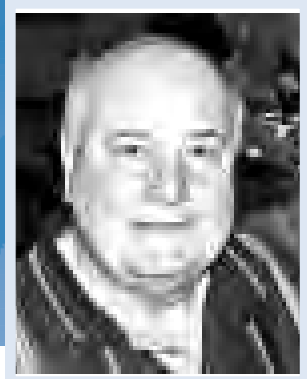
Alive! asked retirees...

What was your first Summer Job?



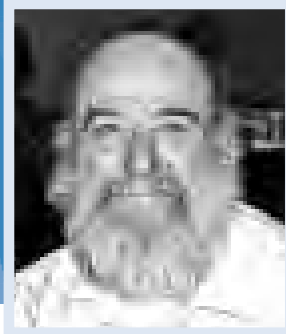
"Supermarket box boy in Detroit."

—Sam Hochberg, Convention Center.



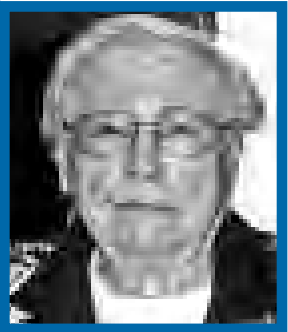
"Gas station attendant in Highland Park."

—Art Minazzoli, Street Maintenance.



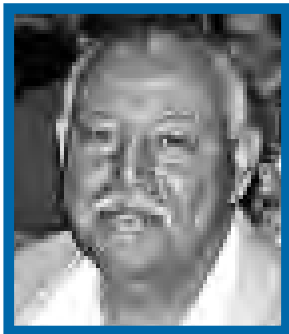
"Gardening in the Valley."

—Terry Michaels, Fleet Services.



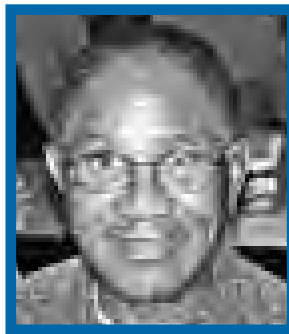
"Babysitting all day for 35 cents in Indiana."

—Wilma Rebbe, LAPD.



"Selling ice cream in L.A."

—Leroy Richards, Sanitation.



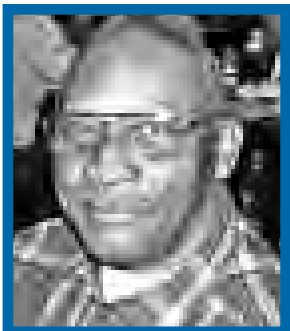
"A paper boy in L.A."

—Robert Perry, Waste Water Collection.



"Van Nuys Records."

—Sharyn Gunter, LAPD.



"A painter in St. Louis."

—Pablo Rivero, 30 years of service.



"A shoe salesman in Downtown L.A."

—Chauncey "Bill" Pruner, City Clerk.



"Farming in Illinois."

—John Shadle, Building and Safety.

The Best Years

Poetry Contest

The 11th Annual Retirees Poetry Contest deadline is Oct. 1. Send your typed entry to Phil Skarin. Separate categories for members and spouses. Everyone will win a prize.

RLACEI MEMBER NEWS:

About 200 friends of **Jack Mathews** helped him celebrate his 80th birthday April 28 at the South End Racquet Club. Other Board members attending included **Hal Danowitz**, **Neil Ricci** and **Phil Skarin**, plus many LAFCU staff members.

Neil and Teresa Denering will celebrate their 55th anniversary Aug. 4.

The City of L.A. has a new program where participating households will split the cost of sidewalk repairs. 535 agreed, but 137 of them were in Councilman Rosendahl's district, thanks to the effort of **George Wolfberg**, President of the Santa Monica Canyon Civic Association.

Phil Skarin called Street Services about the deteriorating condition of his street in Van Nuys. Within a few days, a City employee came to inspect the street and observed Phil's wife, **Miriam**, digging up weeds in the garden and said to her, "Why don't you get Phil to help you do that."

Gil Garnas and **Irving Leemon** recently wrote letters to the editor of the L.A. Daily News. Their comments reflect an intelligent understanding of City government.

If you have any news about a retiree that you would like to share, or constructive comments about this column, send them to:
Phil Skarin
5301 Norwich Ave.
Van Nuys, CA 91411-3910
or phone (818) 784-0130.

Working Together, Planning Together

Leaders from the core retiree groups serving City employees held their quarterly brainstorming session April 16 at Taix Restaurant. Among the topics discussed were ways to improve the welfare benefits of retired and active City employees from all departments as well as ways to secure the history of the DWP and Fire Department with their museums.



At the retirees quarterly brainstorming session were, from left, are Dolores Foley, President, DWP Retirees Association, and her husband, Vince; Lee Keebler, Los Angeles Fireman's Relief Association (LAFRA); Ed Harding, President, Retired Los Angeles City Employees Association (RLACEI); and Robin Welborn and James Chastain, Vice President and President, Los Angeles Retired Fire and Police Association (LARFPA).

The Best Years



From left: Bruce Barbour and his mom, Hanna Barbour (her husband is Bruce Barbour Sr., LAPD, 27 years); and Elizabeth and Doug Close, LAFD, 27 years.



Carlos Galindo, LAPD, 30 years (foreground), and John Carrolle, 27 years, LAPD.



From left: Ray Case, LAFD, 27.5 years; John Hawkins, Club CEO; and Jim Chastain.



From left: Violet Delgado, LAFPR Secretary, 9 years, and Maureen Incontro, coworker, 5 years.



From left: Bobbie Squire, LAPD, Retired, 32 years; Bob Fishel, LAPD, Retired, 28 years; and Gustie Bell, LAPD 25 years.

Picnicking With Fire, Police Retirees

■ LAFPR enjoys a day in the sun.

Photos by Robert Larios, Director of Communications and Marketing

LAFPR — On May 3, the Los Angeles Fire and Police Retirees Association (LAFPR) held a picnic at the Grace E. Simons Lodge in Elysian Park.

There was catered food and live music. Raffle prizes were handed out toward the end of the picnic. The day was cool and overcast, which calmed everyone's nerves on the perils of hot weather.

Former employees and families from both LAPD and LAFD came together for a few hours. Vice President John Kitchens of the Los Angeles Firemen's Relief Association also came to visit.

The Club thanks the LAFPR for the invitation.



From left: Marjerie Regan, wife of Michael Regan, LAPD, 26 years; Hans Wolf, LAFD, Retired, 25 years; and Jack Rogers LAPD, 28.5 years.



From left: George Garret, LAPD, 20 years; Don Forrest, LAFD, 43 years; Lyle Hall, LAFD, 32 years.



From left: Jim Chastain, LAFPR President, LAFD, 30 years, Loyd Tanner, LAPD, 30 years, Sgt. Trotsky, LAPD, 30 years, and Will Gatland, LAPD, 43 years.



Foreground: Al Romero, LAPD, 27 years, and his wife, Frances. Back: Christine and Donald Peterson, LAPD, 30 years.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY:

Faults and Virtues

An engineer, in reviewing plans of a structure, looks for weaknesses that might result in failure.

But, in people, we should look for qualities that will make their lives a success.

Look for their good points, their talents and skills.

Try to identify areas of potential and encourage their development.

Accept their individuality, even if it is different from yours.

Look at the whole person, their ability to give, to love, to understand and appreciate others.

— Phil Skarin, RLACEI



Reverse Mortgages For Senior Homeowners

"You've worked hard to own your own home, now let it work for you!"

- Receive monthly payments instead of making them
- Make no payment of your loan as long as you live there
- Use the money for home repairs, health care, buying a car - whatever you choose!

Please call for a Reverse Mortgage Guide.



Jerry T. Cohen
Reverse Mortgage Consultant
818-947-7865 Direct • 818-631-1110 Cell
jerryt.cohen@wellsfargo.com

*Must be at least 62 years old. Call for more detailed program information. Wells Fargo Home Mortgage is a division of Wells Fargo Bank, N.A. © 2006 Wells Fargo Bank, N.A. All rights reserved. 034229 6/16/06

