

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



Robin J. Welborn, 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: (800) 678-4145 Ext. 703
or via E-mail:
postmaster@rlacei.com

Change of Address?

If you change your address, notify Helen Salgado, Membership Chair, at (800) 678-4145 Ext. 713, or write to her at 8372 Arnett St., Huntington Beach, CA 92647. Also notify LACERS.

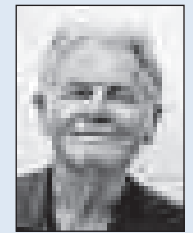
Have News About Yourself?

Contact Phil Skarin, 5301 Norwich Ave., Van Nuys, CA 91411-3910, or call (800) 678-4145 Ext. 709.

Upcoming Events:

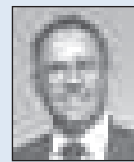
- April 12: General Membership Meeting, Van Nuys / Sherman Oaks Senior Center. Lunch reservations must be made at least a week in advance.
- June 6: Golf Tournament
- Aug. 9: Picnic
- Oct. 11: Annual Corp. Meeting and Elections
- Dec. 6: Christmas Party

RLACEI: Groups Look to Support Post-Retirement Spouses



By Phil Skarin,
RLACEI Publicity Chair

President Ed Harding reports:



Ed Harding

"As I reported last month, this is my 13th year as your president. I can't believe the last 12 years have gone by so fast. I've enjoyed working with all of our Directors. They have done a bang-up job! All of the benefits that our retirees enjoy have been due to the efforts of our Directors.

"In January, Hal Danowitz, our secretary, and I met with Dolores Foley, President of the Retired Water and Power Employees, and her husband, Vince; and Robin Welborn, President Warren B. Braun, Vice President, and Lee Kebler, Director, all of the Fire and Police Retirees Association, Inc.

"The Fire and Police Retirees

Association has been working hard to have the new spouses that the retirees married after they retired, eligible to receive a pension. This is one of the four benefits we are trying to get for our retirees. The Fire and Police believe they can get this proposed benefit on the May 2008 ballot.

"I'll look to see you at our general membership meeting at 1 p.m. Thursday, April 12, at the Van Nuys/Sherman Oaks Senior Center. You may come at noon for a free lunch **only** if you have made a reservation by calling one of the Officers on the Retirees Helplines at least a week ahead. You may bring a guest.

"Please note that we now have a toll-free 800 number to call our officers from anywhere in the United States, thanks to Hal Danowitz."

Legislative Update:

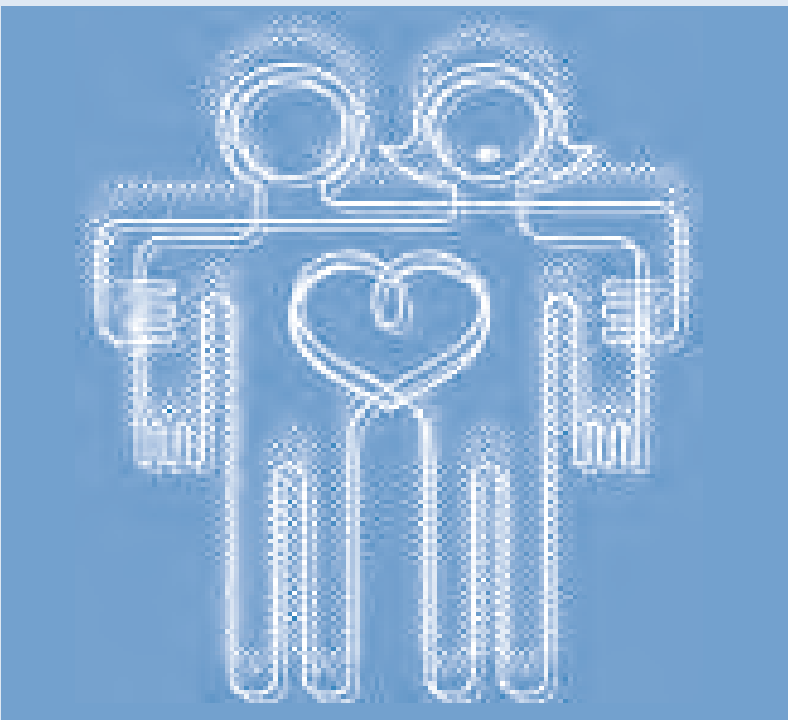
Ken Spiker, our elected commissioner, is pleased to report that as a result of a recruitment process completed last month, Tom Moutes has been appointed to serve as LACERS Assistant General Manager. Tom fills the position previously held by Sally Choi, who is now serving as Deputy of Finance for Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa. Congratulations and best of luck to Sally in her new position.

Since 1983, Tom Moutes has held a number of positions with the City of Los Angeles. He started his career as a messenger clerk, worked for the Library Department, LAPD, the Personnel Department, Information Technology Agency, and the City Clerk prior to joining LACERS in 2001. He has served as Chief Management Analyst, heading the Retirement Services Division for four years and the Administrative Services Division for a year and a half, prior to becoming Assistant General Manager.

Tom earned a Bachelor of science degree in business administration and a Master of science degree in Public Administration from California State University Northridge, and a Certified Employee Benefit Specialist designation from the International Foundation of Employee Benefit Plans and the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania.

Tom is well qualified for the position and will contribute significantly to the retirement system in his capacity as Assistant General Manager.

Ken also reports the annual cost of living index for 2006 is estimated at 4.73 percent. The report should be considered by the Board in late February. When approved, retirees can expect a 3 percent cost of living increase effective July 1 with any extra amount banked for future use.



RLACEI Website

Hal Danowitz asks you to visit the RLACEI Website at www.rlacei.com to find the latest retirement news. If you find it helpful, or have suggestions for improvement, call Hall at (800) 678-4145 Ext. 707.

Contact LACERS

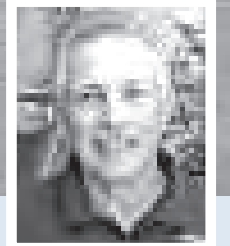
The Los Angeles City Employees Retirement System is at 360 E. Second Street, second floor, Los Angeles, CA 90012. Phone (213) 473-7200 or (800) 779-8328. Contact them to arrange direct deposit of your retirement checks, change your tax withholding or beneficiary, or for questions about your health plans.

The Best Years

ADVENTURES with HAL!



The world-famous Sydney Opera House, designed to mimic the sails on Sydney Harbor.



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 and Retiree Helplines: (800) 678-4145

• Edward Harding	Ext. 703
• Phil Skarin	Ext. 709
• Robert Wilkinson	Ext. 704
• Jerry Bardwell	Ext. 706
• Harold Danowitz	Ext. 707
• Jack Mathews	Ext. 712
• Helen Salgado (membership)	Ext. 713
• Americo Garza	Ext. 710
• Neil Ricci	Ext. 714

DWP Retirement Plan Office: (213) 367-1722

RLACEI:

Officers for 2007

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

Committee Chairpersons for 2007

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, Nominating
Phil Skarin, Parliamentarian

Directors

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



Cruising Down Under

■ Hal and Entourage begin a cruise from Australia to New Zealand.

Last March, our travel group – Myrna, LDon, Effie, Pierre, Evelyn and I – decided to plan a cruise from Australia to New Zealand. After some research we selected the Holland America Line's *MS Statendam*. We had sailed around South America on its sister ship and had enjoyed the experience.

We booked a cabin with a balcony, and at the time I made the reservation I asked for a quote for an upgrade to business class for our air transportation. I was told that it would be \$3,600 each, and knowing that the current price for business class was more than \$6,000 per person, I decided to take the upgrade. In July I was told the price had raised to \$4,600 each, which was still below the normal cost, but then I was told that I would also have to pay the economy class fare of \$1,400 in addition, which made this no longer a bargain. I declined and searched the Internet to see if I could get a reservation using United Airlines mileage, which, it turned out, was not available. I was aware that Air New Zealand was "partner" with United and I tried to use mileage for their flight but they didn't allow it, even though I would get United miles if we flew Air New Zealand. While I was dealing with Air New Zealand, I discovered that they had a class of service called premium economy, which had the same service as their busi-

ness class (they have no first-class), but the seats were not as large. The cost was \$1,000 more than economy class, and we and Myrna and Don decided to try it out. Effie and Pierre had taken the economy class air offered by the cruise line and were leaving one day before us.

The whole airfare thing really upset me, so I wrote a letter to the president of Holland America, whose offices are in Seattle. I received a reply from his executive assistant who apologized for the problem and offered us \$200 credit on our shipboard account. It goes to show you that it doesn't hurt to let management know when there is a problem.

Our next task was to book hotels in Sydney and Auckland. We would be in Sydney for two nights and Auckland for one night. In Sydney we stayed at the Sheraton on the Park and in Auckland at the Hyatt Regency. Both were excellent and in perfect locations.

Our flight left Los Angeles on New Year's Day evening and because of the International Date Line we arrived in Sydney in the morning Jan. 3.

On every trip I try to get Evelyn to take as few clothes as possible, but I fail every time. This trip we had three large bags and one smaller bag, and we each had one carry-on. I was concerned that we would be over the

weight limit, but when we checked in they weighed all of our bags at the same time, and we passed.

After checking in, we used Evelyn's membership in United's Red Carpet Club to get into the Air New Zealand international lounge. It was a nice place to spend the two hours before our flight, with lots of food and free drinks. We boarded our 747 and took our seats upstairs. After dinner I took a sleeping pill, which I had not done before, and awoke in time to have breakfast before we landed in Auckland, where we changed planes for our flight to Sydney. We arrived in Sydney around 10 a.m., and after clearing customs and immigration we took a taxi to our hotel.

The Sheraton at the Park is directly across the street from Hyde Park and is very centrally located. It was still early in the day, and of course our rooms were not ready. Effie and Pierre had arrived the day before, and they were to book a half-day tour of Sydney for this afternoon. They were not at the hotel when we arrived, so I called them on my international cell phone and they returned to the hotel. They had booked a private city tour for us at 1:30 p.m., so we stored our carry-on bags in their room and set off.

Gregg, our tour guide, picked us up at the hotel and gave us a good overview tour of the City. The tour lasted about four hours and cost AU \$550 (US \$425) for the six of us. Sydney Harbor is the largest natural port in the world, and most Australians live within 30 minutes of the water. We started by stopping at the Rocks, the city's most historic area, which is next to Circular Quay (pronounced "key"), the main harbor area. From there we had a great view of the Sydney Opera House and the Harbor Bridge, Sydney's most famous landmarks. We then drove around the Royal Botanic Gardens, stopping to see the spectacular harbor views. We then drove to some of the other city areas, including Glebe, which has a hippie culture, and a drive by the famous Bondi Beach. Our last stop was at Manly, which you can reach from Circular Quay by water ferry. It has a number of good seafood restaurants. The weather was overcast and we had some hard rain, but by the time we returned to the hotel, the sun had come out and the rest of our stay in Sydney was sunny, with temperatures in the low 70s.

We walked to Darling Harbor for dinner and ate in a waterfront café. The food was so-so (mostly we ate fish and chips), and the



The Sydney Harbor Bridge, well known as the location for fireworks.

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Hal and Evelyn on a Sydney Harbor cruise.

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We walked to Darling Harbor for dinner and ate in a waterfront café. The food was so-so (mostly we ate fish and chips), and the



service was far worse. There is very little tipping in both Australia and New Zealand, and the service reflects it.

They were long waits for our food, and not all the orders were brought at the same time. Not something Americans are used to. I don't think the service was intentionally bad or rude, but culturally different. After dinner the time change was catching up with us and we returned to the hotel.

In the morning we stopped at the local Starbucks, a must for Evelyn, as she tries to buy a coffee mug with the name of each city we visit. She was not able to find one with Australia or Sydney on it, but in New Zealand she was more successful.

After our coffee we walked to Circular Quay and took a one-hour harbor cruise, which showed us the same sights we had seen on our tour yesterday, but from the water. There are longer cruises, but one hour was long enough.

After the cruise we walked around the Rocks and did a little shopping. Evelyn brought a large mask to hang on our wall, and we had it shipped home. The shipping cost more than the mask, but it was worth it not to have to carry it on the rest of the trip.

We walked to the end of the Quay toward the Opera House and found a café for lunch. This time the food was good, but the service continued to be poor. Everyone is very nice, so it must be just the way things are done



The Adventures with Hal traveling group.

here. We walked around the Opera House and then walked back to the hotel to take a nap before dinner.

We walked back to Circular Quay for dinner at Doyle's, a famous fish restaurant. The food was very good (more fish and chips) and the service was somewhat better, but not great. It was dark as we walked around the Quay and there was a full moon directly above the Opera House.

In the morning we stopped at another Starbucks (Evelyn was still looking for a Sydney coffee mug), and on our walk we found the oldest Jewish temple in Sydney next to our hotel. We walked back to the hotel through the park and got ready to head to our cruise ship.

Next month I will continue telling you about our cruise.



Evelyn and Myrna with new friends Down Under.

RLACEI MEMBER NEWS:

Rodney Haraga's five-year term as Director of Transportation for Hawaii has ended. He now works for the city of Honolulu.

Bonnie McCaskey retired from the Ontario Airport in 1986. She'd like to hear from her co-workers. She is at: 300 Lake Ridge Dr., Seguin, TX 78155. Phone: (830) 557-5707.

Grady Mullen's great grandmother was a Cherokee Indian.

Frank Heffler, Las Vegas, called. "You're doing a great job, and your poetry is nice," he said.

Helen Wright has published a book of her inspirational poetry titled *The Voice in My Head*. For \$23.79 she will be happy to send you a copy. 107 Seventeenth St., Battle Mountain, NV 91499-3910.

Steven Ferguson has moved to South Dakota, where he has relatives. He was an LAPD Station Officer.

Fran and George Lugo write: "We lost our father, Ruben Lugo, Dec. 15. Thank you for the information sheet."

Dan Watson, Hemet, former president of ACEA, and building inspector, writes: "All of the officers of RLACEI are doing a great job." Call him at (951) 927-2132.

Sam Sperling says he has recovered from the injuries he received last Dec. 5 when he was struck by a car while crossing the street. He now writes a regular column for the *Tolucan Times* titled "Trouble Finder," which deals with City problems.

Helen Salgado, Membership Chair, has moved to 8372 Arnett Dr., Huntington Beach, CA 92647. Notify her if you move. Also notify LACERS and *Alive!* If you need a new green membership card, send her a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

The information sheet "What to do Upon the Death of a Retired City Employee" will be sent if you send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to Phil Skarin at 5301 Norwich Ave., Van Nuys, CA 91411.

Visit our **Website** at www.rlacei.com to find out the latest retirement news.

The 12th Annual Retirees Poetry Contest will have separate categories for members and retirees. Deadline is Oct. 1, 2007. Send typed copies to Phil Skarin, including your category, address, and phone number. Everyone wins a prize.

LACERS office is at 360 E. Second Street, 2nd Floor. Phone (213) 473-7200 or (800) 779-8328. Contact them to arrange Direct Deposit of your retirement checks, change your tax withholding or beneficiary, or for questions about your health plans.

Phil Skarin has begun his 14th year as Publicity Chair. If you have news about yourself or other retirees that you'd like to share, send it to Phil at 5301 Norwich Ave., Van Nuys, CA 91411 or call (818) 784-0130, or use the 800 number.



THOUGHT FOR THE DAY:

The Greater Good

When you are involved as part of an organization, you often have to compromise what is best for you with what is best for the organization.

Individually, you may want to make a major impact, but thinking of the greater good or the organization is not always the easiest or most popular route to take.

But it can be the most meaningful, in the long run.

—Phil Skarin

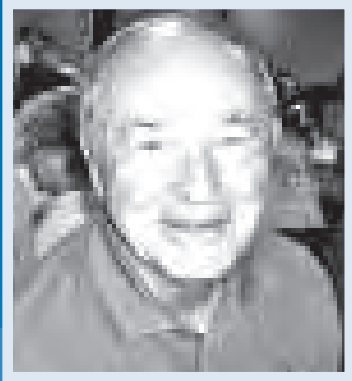


Retiree Question of the Month

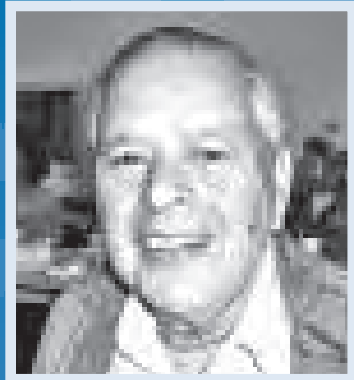
Alive! asked retirees...

What advice would you give to someone about life?

The Best Years



"My mom always said, 'Get an education.'"
- Ray Bureika



"Retire now."
- Manuel Lopez



"Just relax. Go with the bumps; eventually everything will smooth out."
- Paul Thomas, with his daughter, Cameron



"Work hard."
- Earline Cowan



"Stay healthy and take care of your finances."
- John Gomez



"Always be thankful."
- Rosario Bureika



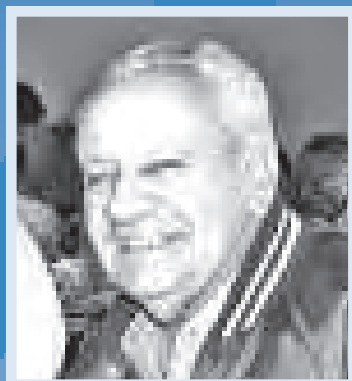
"Retire early."
- Marie Baley



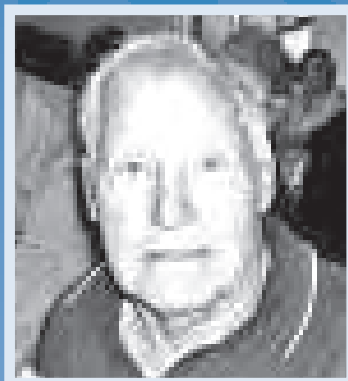
"Take care of your health and money."
- Lee Burrell



"Enjoy life, travel, and always look on the positive side."
- Arlene Tom



"Be square with everyone."
- Tony Alvarez



"Keep moving."
- Jess Baley

LACERS New A.G.M.

Retirement System names Thomas Moutes as Assistant General Manager.

LACERS — On Jan. 27, the Los Angeles City Employees Retirement System (LACERS) announced the appointment of Thomas Moutes to Assistant General Manager.

Moutes has served as interim assistant general manager since September. While serving as interim assistant general manager, he has remained head of LACERS' Administrative Services Division, a position he has held since July 2005. Prior to that, Moutes was manager of LACERS Retirement Services Division.

"We could not ask for a more qualified person than Tom to serve as assistant general manager," said Eric L. Holoman, president, LACERS Board of Administration. "He has worn several hats at LACERS during his tenure."

"Tom is a natural leader and an expert in pub-



Thomas Moutes

lic pension plans," said Robert Aguillo Jr., general manager of LACERS. "We expect great things of him and the entire LACERS staff in the upcoming years."

Moutes is a 22-year veteran with the City of Los Angeles, working at the Office of the City Clerk prior to joining LACERS in 2001. He holds a Master of science degree in public administration from California State University in Northridge. He also holds a Certified Employee Benefit Specialist designation from the International Foundation of Employee Benefit Plans and the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania.

LACERS is responsible for the administration of the City's pension plan to more than 27,000 active employees and 14,000 retirees. LACERS has \$10.5 billion in assets.

RLACEI's Toll-Free Number

RLACEI — The Retired Los Angeles City Employees Inc. group has established a new toll-free helpline number that can be accessed free of charge throughout the United States.

The number is: (800) 678-4145

Call the Helpline to reach the officers of RLACEI. For information on problems, activities, meetings or membership, call the helpline. Each officer's extension is listed below:

Edward Harding x703	Jack Matthews x712	Americo Garza x710
Harold Danowitz x707	Robert Wilkinson x704	Neil Ricci x714
Phil Skarin x709	Jerry Bardwell x706	Helen Salgado x713