

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 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 (800) 678-4145 Ext. 709.

## Upcoming Events:

**Aug. 9:** Picnic at Grace E. Simons Lodge, Elysian Park, 11:30 am

**Oct. 11:** Annual Meeting and Elections at the Van Nuys/Sherman Oaks Senior Center. Lunch at noon, meeting at 1 p.m.

**Dec. 6:** Christmas Party at the Grace E. Simons Lodge, Elysian Park, 11:30 a.m.

Please call one of the RLACEI officers for reservations for each event.

## RLACEI: Will LACERS, Fire Police Pensions Be Combined Into One Department?

### President Ed Harding reports:



Ed Harding

Our next big event will be our annual picnic at the Grace E. Simons Lodge in Elysian Park Thursday, Aug. 9 from 11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Chris & Pitts BBQ will again serve a great lunch. Ron Black will provide musical entertainment. But you must call one of the officers on the Retirees Helpline at least a week ahead for reservations. You may bring one guest.

"I have just returned from our 29th annual Golf Tournament June 6 [see the article and photos in this month's Alive! -

Ed.]. Ninety-two retirees and friends, and some still active City Employees, made their way around the beautiful Alhambra Golf Course before adjourning to the Almansor Court banquet room for lunch, awards and drawings for some great prizes. We met a lot of old and new friends and shared memories. Our thanks go to Co-Chairmen Phil Skarin and Tom Stemmok for doing a fabulous job. Americo Garza and Alice Walder checked everyone in very efficiently at 7 a.m., and Bob Okuda, for the 29th year, and his crew came up with all the golf winners using Bob's handicapping system that gave everyone a chance. It was a great team effort!

"Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger, by

executive order, created the Public Employee Post-employment Benefits Commission, consisting of 12 members. The governor appointed six members and the leaders of the Senate and Assembly appointed the other six. The purpose of the new Commission is look at retirement and health care benefits, and particularly at unfunded liabilities that exist, and recommend changes. New accounting rules require governmental employers to calculate and disclose their potential liability.

"I will see you all at our great Picnic Aug. 9 at the Grace E. Simons Lodge, at 1025 Elysian Park Drive."



By Phil Skarin,  
RLACEI Publicity Chair

### Ken Spiker, our elected Commissioner to the LACERS Board of Administration, reports:

"I've been informed, though I have not seen the report, of an audit recommendation to combine the investment functions of the Los Angeles Fire and Police Pensions and the Los Angeles City Employees Retirement System.

"The independent audit conducted for the City Controller recommends eliminating LAFPP and LACERS and creating a new Department of Pensions. The new department would have nine members, five appointed by the Mayor and two members from each of the existing systems. The report estimates and annual savings of approximately \$7.8 million.

"I envision major disadvantages to current and future retirees under such a merger. I will oppose implementation every chance I get. Will keep you informed."

"Our pension fund has reached an all-

time high of more than \$11.1 billion. I give credit to the Board of Administration's investment policies and an outstanding investment staff.

"The board has unanimously approved a program to allow post-retirement purchases of retirement allowance continuances. The program will permit registering a spouse or domestic partner if:

- Their spouse/domestic partner, at the time of retirement, predeceased the member;
- The member divorced their spouse subsequent to retirement; and/or
- The member's retired as single and entered into marriage thereafter

"The selection of the new program will be expensive and will not impact financially on the retirement fund. The program sill requires Mayor/City Council

approval of an Administrative Code change.

"The Board also approved the implementation of the Medicare Easy Pay Program. Members who are now paying for Medicare benefits will receive a notice explaining the program.

"The Mayor and City Council have appointed a new retiree to the Board of Administration. Steven D. Uranga, who retired from Rec and Parks, should take his seat at our next Board meeting. He is a current member of RLACEI and is one of our better golfers. I look forward to serving with him and with his help to improve retiree benefits.

"The Board has allocated more than \$62 million in annual subsidies for 15,000 retirees, beneficiaries and dependents for health benefits."

### RLACEI Website

Hal Danowitz asks you to visit the RLACEI Website at [www.rlacei.com](http://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!



A view of the ship – and downtown Auckland – from the Sky Tower.



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



## Hello, Auckland; Goodbye, Down Under

■ Hal and Friends say goodbye to Australia and New Zealand after two weeks at sea.

Our travel group, Myrna and Don, Effie and Pierre, and Evelyn and I were aboard Holland America's *MS Statendam*, sailing from Sidney, Australia, to Auckland, New Zealand.

On our 13th day on board, we sailed from Napier to Tauranga, New Zealand, our last port before we ended our cruise in Auckland.

The ship gave its normal disembarkation talk, which spells out the procedures for getting off the ship and settling our account. The usual on-board gratuities are now added to your account at \$10 per day per person and are divided between your cabin steward and dining room waiter. Evelyn and I felt both our cabin steward and dining room waiter had done an excellent job, and we decided to give both of them extra money personally.



Evelyn and Myrna on dockside 5-K walk.

The ship is a sponsor of the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation, and there was a 5-K walk around the promenade deck, with Evelyn and Myrna participating. I helped out by taking their picture and marking their miles.

That day was also the final day for Bingo; the jackpot was more than \$5,000, and it had to be won that day. Evelyn, Myrna and Effie had been regulars at Bingo, but I play only for the big money. As it was, none of us won. The show that evening was Leo Ward the comedian-magician and Laura Compton the singer. Both were excellent, and we really enjoyed the show.

On the morning of our last full cruise day, we docked in Tauranga, the principal city of the Bay of Plenty, discovered by Capt. Cook in October 1769. The port is one of the largest export ports in New Zealand, and the area enjoys one of the highest proportions of sunny days in New Zealand. It is also the center of the kiwi-growing region.

As we left the ship, there was a number of tour guides waiting for us. After some negotiations we hired Michelle, a school-teacher who spends the summer as a tour guide. She turned out to be excellent.

After a brief drive around Tauranga, we stopped at a kiwi farm and had a chance to see how they are grown. We then headed to Rotorua, a resort and wilderness area built atop an active volcanic area. As we drove around, nearly everything was steaming and gurgling.

We visited the Rotorua Museum, which used to be a health spa, but now tells the history of the area. Rotorua is the heart of the Mori people who settled in the area in the eighth century. Believing the bubbling ground divinely inspired, they used the pools for cooking and bathing. European settlers recognized the region as natural health spa. We stopped at a local park and walked around the various pool and steaming rock piles. I was fairly impressed with the area, which I had not given much thought too.

Our last night on the ship was spent packing and saying goodbye to new friends we had met. In the morning we docked in downtown Auckland, the largest city in New Zealand. Getting off the ship was easy and, after passing through securities check, we hired a taxi to take the short ride to the Hyatt Regency Hotel. We had planned for an overnight stay and wanted to see as much of the area as we could before our plane left the next evening.



A kiwi farm.



Looking at the steaming ground in Rotorua.



The Rotorua Museum.





We had not made any plans, so I decided to see if the hotel tour desk could recommend a city tour. I then got a brilliant idea: Seeing that our flights were in the early evening, maybe we could book a tour for the next day that would then drop us off at the airport. We could then use the rest of today to see the downtown area of Auckland, a five-minute walk from our hotel. It took some doing, but I was able to convince my fellow travelers that taking the tour tomorrow was the best use of our time.

After a short wait we got our rooms. They were on the club floor, which gave us access to the Regency Club Lounge. For some reason Evelyn and I had a nice suite.

Auckland is built on a cluster of extinct volcanoes and is very hilly. It is known as the "City of Sails" for the 70,000 sailing crafts and private powerboats in the greater Auckland region. The streets are filled with pedestrians, cyclists and joggers, as Aucklanders like the outdoors.

We walked down the hill from the hotel and made our first stop at a Starbucks for coffee and to see if Evelyn could find an Auckland mug, which she did.

We wanted to visit the Sky Tower, the tallest tower in the Southern Hemisphere. At 228 meters (more than 1,000 feet), it is taller than the Eiffel Tower and the Skyway Tower in Sydney. The glass floor elevators can transport 225 people to the main observation level every 15 minutes. Below the main level is a café and above it is a revolving restaurant. At the top is the skydeck viewing platform. From there you get a 360-degree view of Auckland landmarks. The more adventurous can sky jump 192 meters to the ground at a speed of 85 kph in approximately 14 seconds. Unlike bungee jumping, you are not upside down and it looked a lot safer, not that any of us would try it.

After lunch we walked around downtown, looking for things to bring home. Before dinner, we all met in the Club Lounge to have a drink and watch our cruise ship sail on its next cruise. We all wanted to have a last lamb chop before we left for home, so we had dinner at Lord Wellington in the downtown area. Each order of rack of lamb had eight chops and was too much for us to eat.

After breakfast, our guide picked us up for our tour of the Auckland area and to drop us off at the airport. We started off by

driving around the harbor area and then stopped at the Dove-Myer Robinson Park, which had a great lookout point. We then stopped at the Auckland Cathedral with its beautiful stained-glass windows. The wives wanted to do some last-minute shopping, so we stopped for lunch in Parnell, which had a lot of shops and art galleries.



The Sky Tower in Auckland.

Our last two stops were at the Auckland Museum and then a trip up Mt. Eden to see the extinct volcano and a wonderful view of the city.

From there it was a short drive to the airport to catch our flight home.

We really enjoyed being in New Zealand, and taking the cruise was a good way to see it. I was a little disappointed that we didn't spend more time in Australia, but maybe we can do that again.



Last chance for shopping, in Auckland.



The Auckland Museum.

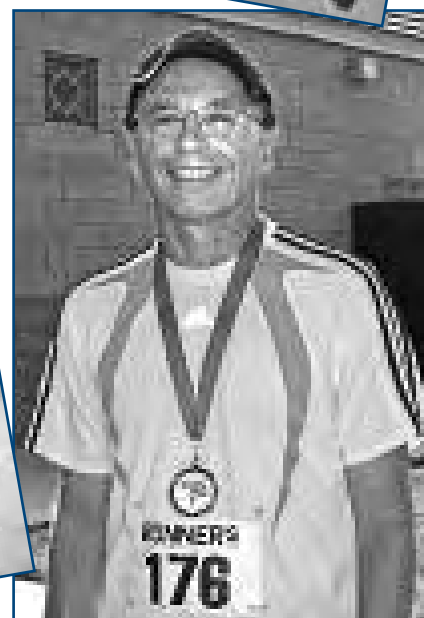
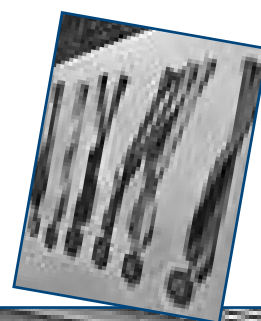
# On the Move



Alive! catches up with Retirees who are active, involved ... and Alive!

## Ken Keeps Running

We last caught up with Ken Kochakji, Retired, Transportation, in May after he completed the L.A. Marathon. This time, he completed the Gator Run in Ventura to support the Ventura County Fire Department's Fallen Firefighter Memorial Fund. Over 3.1 miles (5-K), he finished in 27 minutes, 43 seconds. Congrats, Ken!



Are you On the Move? Write to us and tell us what you're up to! It's even better if you send us a photo. We'll print what we can! [talkback@cityemployeesclub.com](mailto:talkback@cityemployeesclub.com)

## New LACERS Commissioner

■ Steven Uranga named to LACERS Board.



Steven Uranga named to LACERS Board.

LACERS — The Los Angeles City Employees' Retirement System (LACERS) announced the appointment of Steven D. Uranga to its Board of Administration. The appointment, made by Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa, was confirmed by the City Council June 6.

A 31-year employee with the City of Los Angeles, Uranga retired as a Senior Management Analyst II from Rec and Parks, having also worked at Community Development. His professional experience includes managing social service grant programs and capital grant programs including Federal Employment and Training programs designed to serve disadvantaged populations throughout the City. These programs included those for veterans, at-risk youths, seniors, and those on public assistance.

He holds a Bachelor of science degree in business administration from California State University, Los Angeles, and has served in the United States Air Force. In a volunteer capacity, Uranga served on the Citywide Affirmative Action Committee, and the Los Angeles City Employee Chicano Association.

Uranga will fill the vacancy created by the resignation of Adolfo Nodal, who resigned from the Board in late March. Nodal left the LACERS Board to serve as Commissioner for the Department of Cultural Affairs.

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 \$11 billion in assets.



Dolores Foley, President, and Vince Foley, Chairman, Retirees' Health Care and Benefits Committee.



From left: Hannah Childs, wife of Willie Childs; and Dorothy Lindsey, Retired, DWP, 33 years of service.



From left: Victor Yasuhara, Retired, DWP, 31 years of service; and Art Loya, Retired, DWP, 34 years of service.



From left: Terry Foreman, Customer Service Representative, San Pedro Branch, 21 years of service; and Tori McNeel, Energy Solutions CCC, 20 years of service.



From left: Mary Claiborne and Louis Carter, Retired, DWP, 27 years of service.



From left: Eva Fresquez, wife of Ramon Fresquez; Beatriz Rodriguez, wife of Herman Rodriguez; and Dolores Mijares, wife of Robert Mijares.



Liz and Frank Fowler, Retired, DWP, 33 years of service.



Ellen Nakamine, Retired, DWP, 25 years of service.



## DWP Retiree Picnic

■ DWP Retirees Assn. enjoys the sunshine at annual summer picnic.

Photos by Robert Larios, Club Director of Marketing and Communications

DWP RETIREES ASSN. — The DWP Retirees Association held its 54th annual picnic for retirees, friends and families.

The picnic was held June 2 at the Whittier Narrows at the Meadows. Big thanks to Vince and Dolores Foley for inviting the Club to the festivities.



Josie Saleapaga, Retired, DWP, 30 years of service, with granddaughters Rebekah and Lorlei.



From left: Rena Stram and Ken Gardner, Retired, DWP, 26 years of service.



Rozella and Alfred Fowler, 31 years of service.



From left: Russ Majors, Retired, DWP, 32 years of service; and Jim Boccignone, Retired, DWP, 31 years of service.



From left: Peg Romano and Dale Litzinger, Retired, DWP.

## Retiree Question of the Month

Alive! asked retirees...

# What's your favorite Disneyland ride?



"The Matterhorn and Mr. Toad's Wild Ride."  
— Fred Hoepfner, retired from Public Works/Engineering in 1996



"The Matterhorn."  
— Art Minazzoli, retired from Public Works in 1994



"It's a Small World."  
— Ella Garza, wife of Americo Garza.



"Pirates of the Caribbean."  
— Cliff Rich, retired from Transportation in 2006



"Autopia."  
— Trudy Kaye, retired from City Planning in 1990



"Pirates of the Caribbean."  
— Ken Kochakji, retired from Transportation in 2000

# The Best Years





From left: Stephen Hill, Retired, Public Works; Oliver Cunningham, Retired, Public Works; Billy Johnson; and George Walker, Retired, General Services.



From left: Joe Nogano, Archie Estrada, Doug Dow and Gary Mattingly.



From left: Adam Birkenbach, Retired, Harbor; Matt Dizda, Retired, Harbor; and Dennis Ogren, Harbor.



From left: Gail Draper, Retired, ITA/LAPD; Dennis Frady, Retired, ITA; Jim Hamilton, Retired, LAPD; and Dan Koenig, Retired, LAPD.



From left: Norm Gottlieb, Retired, CAO; Leon Gottlieb; John Bobo; and Jim Goss.



From left: Philip Moore, Retired, Public Works; and Diana Moore, Retired, Public Works.



From left: Dominic Rescineo, Retired, Building and Safety; Tad Brown; Dan Dodd; and Ralph Gutierrez.



From left: Harry Yamatsuka, Henry Martinez, Gil Alberio and Andy Hippert.



From left: Tom Moutes, Assistant General Manager, LACERS; Mark Blunk, LACERS; Linda Aparacio, Public Information Director I, LACERS; and Lita Payne, Chief Benefits Analyst, LACERS.



From left: Richard Telles, Gregg Telles, Ray Reyes and Mike Reyes.



From left: Charles Blake, Retired, Transportation; Mack Bolden; and Fabian Romano, Retired, Planning, and his wife, Trinidad.



From left: Kevin Rodriguez, Convention Center; Leroy Plummer, Convention Center; Art Ross, Convention Center; and William Jones, LAPD.



From left: Dick Hovious, Retired, Building and Safety; Phil Skarin, RLACEI Committee Chairperson and Director; Gil Garnas, Retired, Planning; and Larry Miller, Retired, Sanitation.

# RLACEI on Par for Fun

## ■ Retirement association hosts annual golf tournament.

Photos by Robert Larios, Director of Marketing and Communications



RLACEI — The Retired Los Angeles City Employees, Inc. association had its 29th annual golf tournament June 6 at the Alhambra Municipal Golf Course.

### Here's a list of the winners:

#### Low Net

Men, Members: Ed Itagaki  
Women, Members: Diana Moore  
Men, Guests: Ralph Gutierrez

#### Second Low Net

Men, Members: Charles Blake

#### Low Gross

Men, Members: Harry Yamatsuka  
Women, Open: Trinidad Romano  
Men, Open: Jim Goss

#### Low Gross, Front 9

(all): Dick Hovious

#### Low Gross, Back 9

(all): Henry Martinez

#### Closest to the Pin:

Hole 7: John Leon  
Hole 8: Gerald Takaki  
Hole 11: Robert Jacques  
Hole 13: Oliver Cunningham  
Hole 15: Greg Telles

#### Longest Drive, Hole 2

Men: Kevin Rodriguez  
Women: Chris Stemnock

#### High Gross

Men: Neil Ricci  
Women: Linda Apparicio

Congratulations to all the winners, and thanks to Ed Harding, Phil Skarin and the other officers, chairpersons and directors for their invitation.



From left: Earl Clark, Retired, Harbor; Louis Dolton; Robert Dearborn; and Tom Granstrom.



From left: Ray Jantz, Retired, Planning; Jeff Jantz, LAPD; Fred Ige, Retired, Planning; and Ed Lubrin, Retired, DW.



From left: Juvencio Aguilar, Retired, Finance; Dan Caballero, Retired, Rec and Parks; Richard Cooper, Retired, Building and Safety; and Guy Leacher, Retired, General Services.



From left: Steven Urang, Retired, Rec and Parks; Ruben Munoz, Retired, Rec and Parks; Hans Markus; and John Leon.



From left: Bob Rogers; Tom Stemnock, RLACEI Committee Chairperson and Director, and his wife, Chris; and Robert Jacques.



From left: Hal Danowitz, *Alive!* columnist ("Adventures With Hal") and RLACEI Officer; Marv Walker; Neil Ricci, RLACEI Director; and Jack Mathews, RLACEI Director.



From left: Robert Gomez, Retired, Transportation; Mike Stawicki, Superintendent I, Transportation; Max Cardenas, Traffic Poster III, Transportation; and Jess Ramirez.



Rob Welborn, Association President.



From left: Barney Boronich, Ben Vandender and Bert Furnald.



Charlie Loust, LAPD.



From left: Jean Monico, Barbara Worden, Christina Armas, Mary Schmidt, Pat Lucke and Pat Lietz.

# Retired Fire, Police BBQ

■ The Retired Fire and Police Association hosts annual summer picnic.



Photos by Angel Gomez, Member Services Manager

**RETIRED FIRE, POLICE** — The Retired Fire and Police Association hosted its summer picnic June 7 at the Grace E. Simons Lodge in Elysian Park.

The association also held an official membership meeting first.

The Club thanks the association for inviting us to their fun picnic.



From left: R.H. Lucke, Lou Monico, Abel Armas and George Desroche.



From left: Violet Delgado and Maureen Incontro.



The band.



The raffle winner Bill Hall.



From left: Elizabeth R. Downen, Barbara Van Cleave, Art Johnson and James D. Downen.

## RLACEI MEMBER NEWS:

**Andrea Beasley** volunteers at the Pasadena Humane Society.

**Esco Hollins** now lives at 4930 Waverly Ave., Kansas City, KS 66104. Phone: (913) 287-5102. Give him a call.

**Ivan Forbes** and his wife celebrated their 54th wedding anniversary in June. Ivan was the subject of a big feature in last month's *Alive!*, documenting his solar-powered house.

**John and Stella Bogdanoff** celebrated their 56th wedding anniversary on Easter Sunday, with their family in Whittier.

**David Lessley and Phil Skarin's wife, Miriam**, both serve on the Committee on Ministry of the San Fernando Presbytery.

**Grady Mullen** passed away May 14 in Van Nuys. He had been a frequent winner in our annual poetry contest.

**Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger** has kicked off a program to encourage businesses to have their retirees become teachers. There is a need for math science and special education teachers.

The **LACERS Office** is at 360 E. Second, Los Angeles, CA 90012. Phone (213) 473-7200 or (800) 779-8328. Call them for questions about your health plans, retirement checks or tax withholding.

**If you move**, notify Membership Chair Helen Salgado at 8372 Arnett Dr., Huntington Beach, CA 92647. If you need a new green membership card, send her a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

**If you have news** about yourself or other retirees that you'd like to share send it to Phil Skarin at 5301 Norwich Ave., Van Nuys, CA 91411 or phone (818) 784-0130.

To find out the latest retirement news, visit [www.rlacei.com](http://www.rlacei.com)



### THOUGHT FOR THE DAY:

#### Healthy Relationships

*In a healthy relationship,  
You expect your partner to be  
close and supportive when times are rough  
But, that isn't enough.*

*How do you respond to one another's success?*

*Ideally, you respond positively,  
with approval, praise and validation.*

*Less desirable is to show indifference,*

*Rejection or to diminish  
an accomplishment's importance.*

*What would you want to hear?*

*How would you want to be treated?*

— Phil Skarin

## 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.

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