

*\* A Message From the CEO \**

# LaBonge Loves LA Like No One Else

by John Hawkins  
President and CEO, The Club

### Greetings, Club Members!

Well, as you can see, this month our main feature is an interview with the illustrious Councilman and Club Member Tom LaBonge. It's not exactly a "normal" interview, as it was done while rolling to the scene of an apartment fire in his district, as well as *at* the fire, and *on* the way back. We took a quick break with the questions when he stopped at a traffic accident to make sure everyone was all right; and then we stopped here and there when he made notes to his staff in the back seat about things amiss in his district, from potholes and errant palm fronds to constituent concerns. But then we kept right on talking, all the way back to City Hall.

I have to say that the rumors are true: Tom LaBonge never, ever stops moving, and he really does love Los Angeles like no one else I've ever met. Read, and enjoy this special *Alive!* Interview.



Tom LaBonge (left), avid photographer, switches sides as he takes a picture of Club CEO John Hawkins during this month's *Alive!* cover photo shoot.

"We landed on a small dirt airfield and were met by our guide, Okwa, in a large Land Rover ..." That sounds like the beginning of a great adventure novel, doesn't it? Well, Hal Danowitz is at it again in his column, *Adventures with Hal*. Make sure you read part two of Hal's adventure to Africa this month; it starts on page 42 and will definitely keep you riveted!

And, as you know, February is the month of love. So, we've brought you two features that celebrate this. The first feature is *Be My Club Valentine*. Every year we print this special feature, where members can post a favorite picture of their loved one along with a personal message. Turn to page 46 and 47 to see what's being said down on Lover's Lane. Our second "love" feature is "Love and the City," another good feature turned in by one of our favorite writers, Club Member Yvonne Liu. It tells the story of seven couples who fell in love while both were working for the City. It starts on page 48 and is a great read.

And there's so much more: *History Comes Alive*, where we learn all about the roots of the French in Los Angeles (page 28); more holiday party round-ups (page 33); another West Point Leadership graduation (page 30); Harbor's entry into the Rose Parade; and the list goes on and on.

As you can see, there's never a loss of interesting things happening with City Employees. Dig in and enjoy!

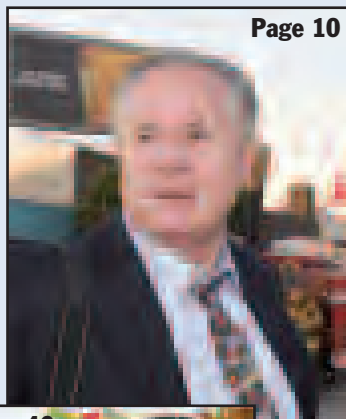
**JOHN**

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## Features

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To interview Councilman Tom LaBonge, first you have to catch up with him.

#### 21 Bomb Squad Building

LAPD opens new facility in the Valley.

#### 27 Campostables

Rec and Parks wins award for program that teaches youngsters about renewable resources.

#### 30 West Point Graduation

The LAPD graduates another class of leaders in the making..

#### 33 Fun in the City

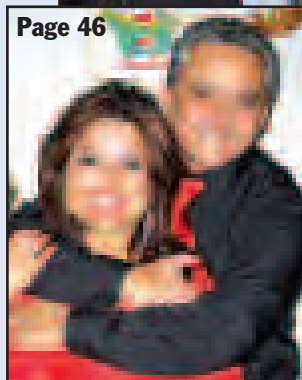
*Alive!* continues its annual roundup of the City's holiday parties.

#### 45 Rose Parade Float

Harbor Dept. provided the City's official entry in the 2008 Rose Parade.

#### 46 Club Hearts on Fire

*Alive!* celebrates Valentine's Day with two features – a story on City Employees who fell in love while working for the City, and a collection of your own Club Valentines sent to your sweeties.



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**Go to Disneyland!**  
**Discount tickets**  
**at the Club Store.**

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