

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 Dr. 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 10: General Membership Meeting at Van Nuys/Sherman Oaks Senior Center. Lunch at noon, meeting at 1 p.m.
- June 4: 30th annual Golf Classic at Alhambra Golf Course.
- Aug. 7: Annual Picnic at 11:30 a.m. at Grace E. Simons Lodge.
- Oct. 16: Annual Corp. Meeting and Elections at the Van Nuys/Sherman Oaks Senior Center. Lunch at noon, meeting at 1 p.m.
- Dec. 4: Christmas Party at noon at Grace E. Simons Lodge.

For reservations to above meetings and lunches, RSVP to (800) 678-4145, extension 701.

RLACEI:

Payroll Checks With No Postage Re-Sent



By Phil Skarin,
RLACEI Publicity Chair

President Ed Harding reports:



Ed Harding

"March has been a busy month, with re-election campaigns for City Councilmembers. One is for a terrific Councilwoman and Club Member, Janice Hahn, and the other is for Councilman Ed Reyes. Both are good friends of ours, and we ask that you vote for them. Americo Garza attended an Ed Reyes function, and asked for his support on the increase of our burial fee that has been before a Council committee for a long time.

"Hal Danowitz, our Secretary, and I met with Dolores and Vince Foley, who

head the Retired DWP Employees Association; and Robin Welborn, President, and Lee Kebler, Director, of the Retired Fire and Police Employees Association. The purpose of this meeting was to discuss the Survivor Benefit Purchase Program (benefits for spouses married after retirement) that we both are interested in. The Fire and Police Program is scheduled to be placed on the March 2009 ballot.

"We also discussed the plan to merge the Fire and Police and LACERS funds and put them under our management. Of course we are against this. We also discussed the problem with Medicare for LACERS retirees.

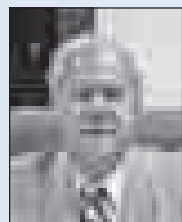
"Hal Danowitz said that these meetings

are helpful in that they allow us to exchange information and ideas on how to maintain and increase the benefits to all our retirees.

Don't forget our General Membership Meeting April 10 at the Van Nuys/Sherman Oaks Senior Citizens Center. Lunch is at noon if you have called one of the officers for a reservation a week ahead, and the meeting is at 1 p.m.

"Late news: Bob Wilkinson, Director & First Vice President, has resigned from the Board because of health problems. The Board voted to make him an honorary member of the Board, and appointed Michael Karsch, a Director, to replace him. Ken Spiker was elected First Vice President, and Tom Stemmok was elected Second Vice President."

Legislative Update:



Ken Spiker

"Our service provider in Chicago, the company that prints LACERS checks, made a mistake. The January 2008 checks for 1,484 retirees were mailed without postage. When the

error was discovered, the company printed duplicate checks and mailed them with proper postage. However, payment was stopped on the first issue.

"We have been informed that corrections have been taken to ensure that this doesn't happen again. Any retiree who incurred an unexpected expense, as a result of this error, is entitled to a reimbursement. You should notify the LACERS Call Center, which will

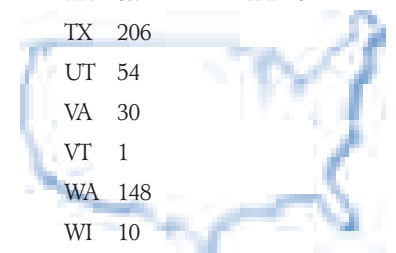
forward your claim to the vendor for reimbursement.

"Since this is not the first error by the company, the Board of Directors will consider issuing an RFP for a different company to provide these services."

Where We Live: Ever wonder where RLACEI members live? Here's a list of the states where the payments went for the December 2007 payroll:

State & Count

AK 6	FL 80	KY 14	MS 32	NV 405	SD 8	WV 2
AL 26	GA 68	LA 62	MT 24	NY 18	TN 32	WY 3
AR 43	HI 52	MA 8	NC 41	OH 23	TX 206	
AZ 265	IA 16	MD 11	ND 3	OK 46	UT 54	
CA 12,857	ID 56	ME 1	NE 10	OR 181	VA 30	
CO 64	IL 25	MI 26	NH 1	PA 12	VT 1	
DC 4	IN 12	MN 14	NJ 9	PR 1	WA 148	
DE 2	KS 20	MO 46	NM 52	SC 21	WI 10	



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 Hal 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!

"Harry" and "Pillow" at the water hole.

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 2008

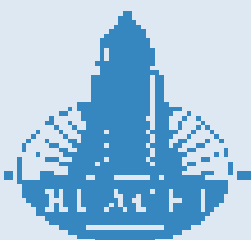
Edward Harding, President
Robert Wilkinson, First Vice President
Kenneth Spiker, Second Vice President
Hal Danowitz, Secretary
Jerry Bardwell, Treasurer

Committee Chairpersons for 2008

Bob Wilkinson, Audit
Jerry Bardwell, Budget
Hal Danowitz, 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
Neil Ricci, Nominating
Phil Skarin, Parliamentarian

Directors

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



The Rest of Zimbabwe

■ Hal and his entourage complete their trip to Africa. **Last of four parts.**

Our flight from Victoria Falls to Makalolo Plains took about 50 minutes. We were met by our guide, Owen, and driven to the camp within the Hwange (pronounced "wankie") National Park.

The park is more than 14,000 square kilometers in size, making Hwange the largest game reserve in Zimbabwe. It has been a park for 70 years and has the densest concentration of wildlife in Africa, with large herds of buffalo and elephants and all the "big five" (lion, leopard, elephant, hippo and rhino).

Makalolo Plains is a raised tented camp much like the two we had stayed in Botswana. We also used open Land Rovers for our game drives, and our guide was armed with a rifle. The camp is situated in a 78,000-acre concession (land lease) in the south part of the park; the camp has exclusive use of this area.

We were shown to our tents and then had an afternoon snack, after which we set out on an afternoon game drive. Because the camp is within a private concession, we were able to do night drives.

The camp is in a wooded area that faces a flat open plain with a number of water holes. From the veranda of our room, we could see a number of different animals at the water holes. We saw Cape buffalo, impala, zebra and a lone wildebeest that seemed to spend the whole day just lying around the water hole. The camp had nicknamed the wildebeest "Screensaver"

because it was always there.

Our first stop was a water hole that was home to two hippopotamus named "Harry" and "Pillow." Harry is an old male who is blind in one eye and had been run out of the herd by younger males. Pillow is a young male who sort of took care of Harry.

The water hole was only a short distance from the camp, but we had to drive a round-about way to reach it. As we sat there, a very large bull elephant started towards us. Our guide told us it was coming to get salt and minerals from the dirt around the water hole. These "salt licks," brought to the surface by the excavation of ants, provide the elephants with minerals and salts, making the water hole a favorite. We watched from no more than 10 yards away as the elephant used his front foot to kick up the ground and then to eat the dirt, which contains the salts and minerals. He never even gave us a look, and we got a great close up view of how he used his trunk.

After we left the water hole, we stopped to watch a large troop of baboons settle down for the night. As we watched, an argument occurred between two males. For about 10 minutes they chased each other from tree to tree, never getting close enough to inflict any damage, but they were very noisy and aggressive. For safety, the baboons sleep high up in the trees. This keeps opportunistic animals, such as lions, from having them as a midnight snack.

On the way back to camp, we ran into a pride of lions beginning their evening hunt. It was very dark, and I didn't know that we had returned to the water hole we had seen earlier. Our guide used a white light, which allowed us to see each animal. One of the lions seemed injured and was being helped by the others to make sure it could keep up. We watched for about



30 minutes and then drove back to camp.

The next morning we were up bright and early and, after a quick breakfast, we started our drive before 7 a.m. Our first stop was the water hole, and we watched a small herd of giraffes approach for their morning drink. We also spotted two jackals waiting to see if breakfast would appear. In all of our driving and walking, we saw very few remains of dead animals or even bones, unless it was a fresh kill. Everything is eaten by some animal on the food chain. As you would expect there were a lot of animal droppings, and we became experts in identifying each animal's. The easiest one to identify was the hyena, which is white from eating bones.

We saw the morning wake-up routine of the baboon troop. They came down from the trees to get a drink of water and then began the search for food. While baboons eat vegetation, they are carnivores and have been known to attack and kill leopards.

When we returned to camp, we found that during the night a leopard had killed a steenbok (a small antelope) and stored it in a tree 25 feet off the ground. For the two days we remained in the camp, the leopard returned each night to eat its kill. One evening after dinner, we were told that the leopard was hiding under one of the raised tents, and we all crept quietly to watch, but I didn't really see anything.

After lunch we decided to look for some more lions. We didn't see any, but we did get to see a large herd of elephants and almost got a charge from a large male Cape buffalo. The lone buffalo was about 30 yards from our



From left: Don, Myrna, Evelyn, Hal, Effie and Pierre.

ADVENTURES with HAL!

Land Rover when for no reason at all it started to bellow and then charged at us. Our guide slapped the side of the Land Rover, and the buffalo turned and ran off. Owen told us this was the first time he had ever been charged by a buffalo and that, while an individual animal will be aggressive, when they are in a group they are less concerned about other animals or humans.

The next morning we were having a nature walk with Dave, the camp manager. He wanted to drive to the other side of the open plain area and then track a herd of buffalo back to the camp. It would be a walk of about 1.5 miles. In addition to Dave, we had with us Humphrey, a guide-in-training. Both Dave and Humphrey were armed. As we began our drive, we ran right into a herd of about 600 Cape buffalo. After waiting for them to cross the road in front of us, we decided to start our walk. First we were in an area with small trees and shrubs. We had to watch where we stepped to avoid the droppings and also the holes in the ground. Dave showed us a number of plants that are used by the natives for medicine, toothpaste and sunscreen, and for making rope. Before a guide is licensed, they need to be able to live off of the land and also have to have killed at least one wild animal, such as an elephant.

When we reached the edge of the plain area in front of the camp, the buffalo were spread out before us. We walked by the water hole and were surprised to see that both hippos were out of the water. This is very unusual during the day. The herd of buffalo was between the camp and us and, as we moved towards the camp, we looked for an opening through which to pass. It seemed as we moved to go around them they would move along with us. We finally were able to get around them and reach the safety of the camp.

The next day after lunch, we left on our flight to Bulawayo, Zimbabwe's second largest city, population 900,000, in the southeast. We were picked up at the airport and driven through the town going south for about an hour until we reached Camp Amalinda in the Matobo Hills. This was the first time that we had been in a



The local witch doctor.



Cape Buffalo in front of the camp.

non-tourist area of Zimbabwe, and we were stopped at a military checkpoint before we reached the lodge. Our driver knew the man in charge, and we were waved through. I asked the guide what they were looking for, and he told me they were doing safety checks on cars. I didn't bother to discuss it any more. Camp Amalinda is built among the natural granite domes. Each room is carved into huge boulders. Our shower was inside a cave. It reminded us of the Madonna Inn or *The Flintstones*.

After a quick snack, we met our guide, "Bagman," and left to see the rock paintings in the Nswatugi Cave. After a short drive, we began a seven-kilometer walk following a rocky path and then climbed up a steep track 200 meters to the cave. Our guide told us about the rock painting of giraffes, zebras, kudu and a hunting party. They are very well preserved. Excavations have revealed human bones more than 40,000 years old. We started our climb down and reached our Land Rover before it got too dark.

The one animal that we had not seen was a rhino. So the next morning I asked our guide to find them for us. The Matobos National Park is home to both the white and black rhino, and we were hoping to see them. Our guide told us that the day before he had looked for more than four hours for a rhino but did not find any. We told him that we had the highest confidence in his ability to find them for us. A few minutes after we entered the park, he spotted some tracks. We began the tracking process following the tracks and doubling back a couple of times when, after about 30 minutes, we saw three white rhinos just off the road. We were permitted to leave our vehicle and followed the guide into the brush toward the rhino. As we got close I could see that it was a large male with a female and a young calf. The guide told us that if we were charged to just step out of the way either to the right or left and let the animal pass by. They have such bad eyesight that the only way they know you are there is by smell. We were able to get within 15 feet of them before they noticed us and then they just turned and ran off. We felt very lucky to have seen them. You get an entirely different perspective of the animal when you are on the ground with it eye to eye.

Our next stop was a local tribal school. We were greeted by the assistant principal and given a tour of first- and sixth-grade classrooms. The boys and girls were all neatly dressed and were very respectful of their teachers. We were treated to songs and poems and we answered questions from the students. Evelyn and I brought with us a gross of pencils, which we gave to the teacher, and we all gave a small donation to the school principal before we left. On the way back to the Land Rover, I took some video of the students and then showed them their pictures, which was something they had not seen before. They all spoke English, which is taught and spoken widely in Zimbabwe.

We stopped at a local home to meet the tribal woman witch doctor. Her husband greeted us at the front of the compound, which contained a number of round, one-room mud huts with thatched roofs. The area was very clean and we were allowed to enter the cooking hut and look around. The witch doctor was busy



Hal on the elephant ride.



An Amalinda cabin.



On the ground with a rhino.

giving a reading to some other guests from our camp, so we had to wait a few minutes before she joined us in the yard. We sat on chairs, and she sat in front of us on a blanket as our guide explained the various things that she could do. We were then able to ask her questions. She told us that while she was able to help people, she also believed a medical doctor was sometimes necessary. It was an interesting conversation, to say the least.

At that point it began to rain; we were riding in an open vehicle, and we started to get wet. Our next stop was Malindidzimu (View of the World), where Cecil John Rhodes is buried, and we didn't want to drive there in the rain. Our guide told us not to worry and drove back to the school where the couple who had been with the witch doctor had stopped, and we switched cars. They got the open Land Rover and we got the van. Of course, they didn't know that until after we had left with the van.

The climb to the grave was a nice long walk, but the view from the top was worth the effort.

The last thing on our agenda was a ride on an elephant. Our camp had two 19-year-old male elephants that were survivors of the last culling of elephants in this area of Zimbabwe. We took about a 45-minute elephant ride and saw giraffes, ostrich and impala. I was holding on for dear life. My elephant was only interested in eating and at one point pulled up a small tree and ate it as we walked. After the ride I tipped the elephant with peanuts and a dollar. He ate the peanuts and gave the dollar to the guide.

This was a great way to end our trip. We had seen all the animals that we could have hoped to see and were able to meet some of the people. It is unusual to take a trip such as this without some problems, but I can honestly say that nothing went wrong on this trip.

In the morning, we drove to the Bulawayo Airport to catch our flight to Johannesburg on our way to our stop in London.



RLACEI MEMBER NEWS:

John Lemons, Morro Bay, has shot his age in golf every year since he retired, except this year when he shot an 87, one over his age. "I'm going to look for an easier course," he said.

John and Frances Schulz, Wofford Heights, had both been widowed when they met, and then were married a year ago. Their love story and picture were featured in the Bakersfield *Californian* as a Valentine's Day special.

Sam and Marie Cabibbo, Temecula, celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary Feb. 1 with family and friends.

David and Martha Thomas, Montebello, celebrated their 40th wedding anniversary June 21. They met while serving with the Peace Corps. in South America.

Ina Mae Overman, Arroyo Grande, writes: "I've been retired for 29 years from Engineering and Contract Ad. I have my second Shelby, a 2007 GT 500. The first was a 1968 Shelby GT 500, which was sold to Bill Herbert, Engineering, in the '70s. I'm still a car nut after all these years."

Shirley Horton's husband of 68 years, David, passed away Feb. 4. His World War II injuries resulted in disabilities that changed his life. Shirley was a City Librarian.

Jane Hanson, Hemet, writes: "Thank you for all you are doing to help others. We appreciate you."

Bob Wilkinson, our First Vice President, has been laid up with serious back problems. Why not send a cheer up note to him at P.O. Box 7457, Northridge, CA 91327.

RLACEI has prepared a sheet titled "**Upon the Death of a Retired City Employee**" revised November 2004. If you would like a copy, send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to Phil Skarin, 5301 Norwich Ave., Van Nuys, CA 91411-3910

If you have news about yourself or other retirees that you'd like to share, send it to Phil Skarin, or call (818) 784-0130.

The County of Los Angeles Willowbrook Senior Center is at 12915 S. Jarvis Ave., L.A., CA 90061. **They have classes** throughout the week on sewing, woodcraft, dancing, computers, etc. Call them at (310) 603-3358 for more information.

Another Marathon for Ken

RLACEI — Ken Kochakji, Retired Traffic Officer, Transportation, completed his 17th L.A. Marathon last month. Good going, Ken!



Family members greet Ken at the Bonaventure Hotel after the marathon. From left: Ken Kochakji, Retired, Transportation; brother in law Kim Spenchian; wife, Ann Kochakji; niece, Terry Kochakji; niece, Alley Kochakji; and sister-in-law, Ann Kochakji.



Ken's official number patch.



Ken runs the marathon.



Ken's medal.

On the Move



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

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

30th Annual Retiree's Invitational Golf Tournament



The 30th Annual Retired Los Angeles City Employees Invitational Golf Tournament will be held on Wednesday, June 4, 2008 at the Alhambra Municipal Golf Course with a "Shotgun Start" at 7:30 a.m. The course is located at 630 South Almansor Street, Alhambra, CA 91801. Check-in is at 7:00 a.m. **SOFT SPIKES MANDATORY!**

- The tournament is open to retired and active employees and friends. The cost is \$60 for R.L.A.C.E.I., City Club and All City Employee Benefits Service Association members (\$70 for all others) and includes green fees, carts, prizes and lunch at the Almansor Court restaurant. Lunch only is \$24.00.
- Those interested in participating must complete the reservation form and mail it with their check payable to **"R.L.A.C.E.I."** by **May 16th** to: Tom Stennock, co-Chairman, 4040 Vineland Avenue, Suite 108, Studio City, CA 91604. For more questions, call either Co-Chairman Tom Stennock at (818) 487-6789 or Phil Skarkin at (818) 784-0130.



RLACEI Golf Tournament

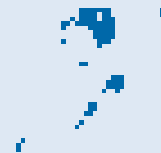
2008 Golf Tournament Reservation Form

Name _____ Phone _____
 Address _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip _____
 Amount Included \$ _____ \$60.00 for R.L.A.C.E.I., City Club and A.C.E.B.S.A. Members (\$70.00 for all others)
 Luncheon: \$24.00

Make checks payable to R.L.A.C.E.I.

NOTICE: SOFT SPIKES MANDATORY!

FOURSOME	Member R.L.A.C.E.I.	Member A.C.E.B.S.A. or City Club	Guest
	(check all that apply)		
Name			
1. _____	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. _____	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. _____	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. _____	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



RLACEI — The 30th annual Retired Los Angeles City Employees Invitational Golf Tournament will be held Wed., June 4, at the Alhambra Municipal Golf Course, 630 South Almansor St., Alhambra. The event will have a "Shotgun Start" at 7:30 a.m. Soft spikes are mandatory.

The tournament is open to retired and active employees and friends. The cost is \$60 for RLACEI, City Club and all City Employee Benefits Service Association members (\$70 for all others) and includes green fees, carts, prizes and lunch at the Almansor Court restaurant. Lunch only is \$24.

Those interested in participating must complete a reservation form and mail it with their check payable to RLACEI by May 16 to: Tom Stennock, Co-Chairman, 4040 Vineland Ave., Suite 108, Studio City, CA 91604. For any questions, call either Co-chairman Tom Stennock at (818) 487-6789 or Phil Skarkin at (818) 784-0130.

Reservation deadline: Friday, May 16th. Mail completed reservation form and check to:
 Tom Stennock, Co-Chairman
 4040 Vineland Avenue, Suite 108, Studio City, CA 91604, (818) 487-6789