

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.

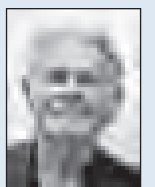
Upcoming Events:

- 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.

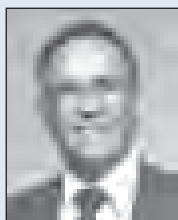
RLACEI:

Cost of Living Increase Should Be Three Percent



By Phil Skarin,
RLACEI Publicity Chair

President Ed Harding reports:



Ed Harding

"I am very sorry to report that Bob Wilkinson has resigned as Director and First Vice President due to health reasons. Bob is currently in the Brighton Gardens at White Oak Avenue and Devonshire Boulevard. Give him a phone call at (818) 366-9282. He will be happy to talk to you.

"Bob was a City Councilman during the 1960s. His district included the Northridge/Chatsworth areas. He did so much for his district that they named the Wilkinson Senior Center after him. It is at Van Alden and Nord.

"Board member Ken Spiker was elected First Vice President, replacing Wilkinson,

and Board Member Tom Stemnock was elected Second Vice President, replacing Ken Spiker.

"Michael P. Karsch was nominated by Ken Spiker as a Director to replace Wilkinson. The Board approved, by vote, his appointment to the Board and will serve until the next election, at which time the membership will decide if he should continue past Jan. 1.

"Michael Karsch was a Legislative Analyst with the City Council for 31 years. He coordinated the City's State legislative programs and lobbying efforts in Sacramento. He was also integrally involved on behalf of the City with advocacy groups such as the League of California Cities and the Southern California Association of Governments. He graduated from U.C. Berkeley in 1966 and received a Master's degree from the

University of Texas at El Paso in 1972. He served for more than four years in the Air Force as a Special Agent in the office of Special Investigations. Michael and his wife, Virginia, live in South Pasadena and have seven children and 10 grandchildren.

"I have appointed Michael to serve on the Legal and Legislative Committee, which Ken Spiker chairs. Jerry Bardwell and I also serve on this Committee.

"I will see many of you at our 30th annual Golf Classic at the Alhambra Golf Course Wed., June 4."

Legislative Update:



Ken Spiker

Ken Spiker reports that the annual cost of living adjustment is scheduled for the LACERS Board of Directors' approval.

The CPI (consumer price index) for the Los Angeles area came in at plus 3.3 percent. Those eligible retirees will receive a 3 percent payment increase effective July 1 and can add .3 percent to their accumulated banked benefit account. The Administrative Code 4.1040 requires the annual adjustment, but limits the increase to 3 percent per year. The bank can be used

to increase your benefit payments to 3 percent when the CPI is less than 3 percent.

Below are some examples of the banked benefits as of July 1:

Retirement Date Banked Benefits

- On or before 7/1/78
28.400 percent
- On or before 6/1/81
11.22 percent
- On or before 6/1/84
5.949 percent
- On or before 7/1/02
3.400 percent

The LACERS Board of Directors was to interview the applicant finalists for the Department's General Manager position on April 8. The three finalists are applying for the position since Robert Aguillo Jr. has submitted his resignation. I'm told all three are well-qualified candidates, and I'm sure whoever is selected can pick up where Mr. Aguillo left off.



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



Times Square.

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
Kenneth Spiker, First Vice President
Tom Stemnock, 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

Michael P. Karsch
Americo Garza
Helen Salgado
Phil Skarin
Dave Wilkins
Jack Mathews
Neil Ricci



A Week in New York Begins

Almost two years ago, Evelyn and I were invited to a wedding of one of my childhood friends in New York City. After we had purchased our airline tickets, the date of the wedding was changed, and we could not attend. These were non-refundable tickets, but we could use the face value, minus \$100 each. The new reservation had to be made within one year of the tickets' original purchase date, and the travel had to be within the next year. So last May I made reservations for us to fly to New York City on March 11 and return one week later. I picked this date because Evelyn was to retire at the end of February.

I used Hilton Hotel points to book a week at the Hilton New York (53rd and Avenue of Americas/Sixth Avenue). I figured that I had already paid for the airline tickets, so for the re-ticketing fee of \$200, we were getting a flight to NYC and one week stay at the Hilton. When our cousins, Don and Myrna, found out we were going, they decided to tag along.

Now, all of us have been to New York City a number of times and have seen most of the sights, but we had never stayed as long as a week. A week would let us enjoy the city at a slower pace than if you only had a couple of days.

We wanted to see a couple of Broadway shows and eat in some of the better restaurants. Evelyn wanted to visit the Culinary Institute of Art in Hyde Park (about 90 miles from Manhattan), and I wanted to visit West Point Military Academy (about 50 miles from Manhattan). After that, we would play it by ear. When I checked the calendar, I found out that the Monday before we would come home would be St. Patrick's Day, so we decided to see the parade. Evelyn wanted to visit with a girlfriend of hers, and I wanted to see my friend and his wife (they did get married).

Out flight on United Airlines from LAX left on time, and the service in business class was very good. We arrived at JFK pretty much on time and, after getting our luggage, we took a taxi into Manhattan. The taxi ride into the city is a fixed price of \$45 plus any toll, which normally adds another \$5. This price is also good for going to JFK from Manhattan.

When people say they are going to New

York City, they usually mean Manhattan, one of the five boroughs of the city. Manhattan is an island of 23 square miles with a population of 1.6 million. Compare this to the City of Los Angeles, with an area of 470 square miles and a population of 3.8 million, and you can see why Manhattan is one of the most densely populated areas in the United States.

Driving into Manhattan, you feel like you are in a canyon with large building completely surrounding you. The sidewalks are filled with people at all hours of the day and night. It is a city that never sleeps.

Our hotel was very busy. I forgot that this week would be the start of spring break and there were lots of high school student in town. After checking in to our room, I didn't like it because it did not have the king-size bed I had requested, and it was also smaller than the other rooms on the floor because it was by the stairwell, which took part of the room. I called the front desk and asked for a different room, which they did provide. Remember that if you have been confirmed for a specific type of room, the hotel has to honor your request or provide some type compensation. Our new room was fine and located on the 22nd floor.

Don and Myrna arrived at the hotel about an hour after we did, and we waited for them to go to dinner. After they arrived, we walked about five blocks toward Central Park and ate dinner at Mickey Mantle's Restaurant (42 Central Park South). It's a great place for a quick bite; the hamburgers are great and the place is filled with memorabilia of the New York Yankees and Mickey Mantle.

The weather during our stay was pretty good; during the day it was in the high 40s and at night in the high 30s. One day it got to almost 60, and on St. Patrick's Day it stayed in the low 30s most of the day. We had a little rain one day, and most of that was during the night. For the most part it wasn't too bad walking around.

There is a three hour time change, so sleeping the first

night was hit and miss, but every time I woke I could hear the noises of the city: horns honking, sirens, the beep-beep of trucks backing up and even the sound of people moving around the city. I thought about the sounds we heard in Africa and how each place has a sound that identifies it.

We met Don and Myrna in the lobby around 9 a.m., and we decided to walk to the Whitney Museum of American Art (75th and Madison Ave) about 20 blocks from our hotel. First I needed some breakfast and we started walking hoping to find a place. After a while we found a fast food restaurant in the city. There is no table service, but they do have tables where you can eat, and you order your food at a counter and then they bring it to the cashier where you pay. It is very orderly with everyone waiting in line, and the food



Hal and Evelyn in front of a pub.



Don, Myrna and Evelyn at the Whitney Museum.



was good and inexpensive.

The Whitney, as its names states, displays American artists, some of whom I liked and others of whom I did not – I'm of the old school, and like it when a tree looks like a tree and not a stick. It just so happens that we were at the Whitney during its biennial program, so we saw a lot of interesting and unusual works of art by emerging artists. The adult cost is \$15 and seniors get in for \$10. They wouldn't believe I was senior, so I had to show them my ID. The admission included an audio program that helps describe the various pieces of art.

We walked back to the hotel to get ready for dinner and the theater. We had pre-purchase tickets to *Is He Dead?*, a play by Mark Twain, and the musical *Gypsy*, and tonight was the play.

[A good place to find discount theatre tickets ahead of time is www.broadwaybox.com – Ed.]

We asked the concierge to make us dinner reservations at a restaurant close to the theater. She recommended Trattoria Dopo Teatro (125 W 44th Street), an Italian restaurant. The food and service were good, nothing special but good for a before-the-theater dinner. The curtain was 8 p.m., so we walked over to the theater a little after 7 p.m. Evelyn noticed that there were no people in front of the theater. I went inside and the box office told me the play closed two days earlier. I asked about my tickets, and they said I had already received a refund on my credit card.

We still wanted to see a show, so we walked over to Broadway and looked around for a theater. We found the Palace Theatre (Broadway and 47th Street), where *Legally Blonde – the Musical* was playing. I had seen the movie and it was cute, but I wasn't sure how a musical would play. We had run out of options and decided to take a chance. We were able to get good seats in the orchestra section and everyone really enjoyed the show. When it comes to Los Angeles, I intend to see it again.

We walked back to the hotel to get some sleep, because tomorrow we were driving to Hyde Park for the day.

When Evelyn decided to retire from work, I knew that we would be traveling more, so I brought a laptop computer to bring with us. I made sure that it was small enough to fit in my backpack. I loaded it with GPS software from Garmin, which I could use in a car. I also got a power strip that plugs into car power plug and lets me plug in the computer to 110-volt power. The software worked well except that it does not announce the names of the street, just that you will turn within a specific distance. You need two people to use it.

I was also able to use my computer in my room to check my e-mail and surf the Web. The hotel charges \$14.95 per day for a wireless connection, which I was willing to pay. When I turned on the computer I found at least five wireless networks that were unsecured, and I was able to sign on to one of them for free.

We'll pick up next month with our day trip to Hyde Park.



On the Move

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

Ken Rents Room to the Finches

Ken Kochakji, regular contributor to the Best Years section, reports that he recently rented a room at his house – to a family of finches. As in birds.

"Ever since my wife hung that straw basket on the patio post a few years ago, the birds have been converging on the nest every spring. The birds are very social, and I've been taking pictures of them about five feet away through the kitchen window."

Good job on renting the space, Ken!



Room taken!



Room for rent.

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



THOUGHT FOR THE DAY:

Retirement

Retirement is just a bend in the river of life, exposing us to new horizons and challenges.

It is a reprieve from the grindstone period of our life.

It is a time for growing, a time to reach up beyond the clouds and view the heavens more clearly, a time to become in tune with the majesties of the Creator.

– 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

RLACEI MEMBER NEWS:

Anna Sklar, former information director for Public Works, has written a book titled *Brown Acres: An Intimate History of the Los Angeles Sewers*. She shines the light on the history of this important infrastructure.

Fred Frazier Jr. and his wife, Johnnie, celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary March 26. Each year he travels to the Super Bowl and Kentucky Derby.

Raquel Barot took a 14-day tour from L.A. to Montreal and then continued on to Quebec. Then she cruised along the New England states.

Carl and Cindy Lundquist are active with the Culver City Senior Center. Carl continues on the staff of RVForum.net., which is one of the most active recreational vehicle forums on the Internet, with more than 12,000 members.

Lewis Nichols has worked in land surveying and has traveled to Italy and Kauai Island and to his son's graduation from UC Berkley Law School.

Peter See traveled to the Philippines for the wedding of a niece. He volunteers at Meals on Wheels.

David Talcott was elected president of the Laguna Woods Men's Golf Club. He will be a marshal at the U.S. Open at Torrey Pines.

Earl Rogers did sketches and other artwork for fellow employees. He wants them to know that he's now listed in "Who's Who in American Art." This should increase the value of his work.

Paul Beecroft moved to Oregon in 1996 and bought a house with an airplane hanger behind it for their Bonanza and a taxiway to the Independence Airport. He has flown his plane to Alaska, Nova Scotia, the Bahamas and throughout Mexico. He has been married to the same wonderful wife for 59 years. Wow!

Luci Torres continues as the caregiver for her 97-year-old mom. "I keep in touch with my good neighbors, Marsha Daidola and Angelo Incardona," she writes.

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.

Hal Danowitz asks you to visit our **Website** at rlacei@verizon.net to find the latest retirement news.

If you have news about yourself or other retirees that you'd like to share, contact Phil Skarin at 5301 Norwich Avenue., Van Nuys, CA 91411-3910 or call (800) 678-4145, ext. 709.



Jack Mathews.



Sam Hochberg.



Ben Reyes.



Bebe Jacobson, LAPD.



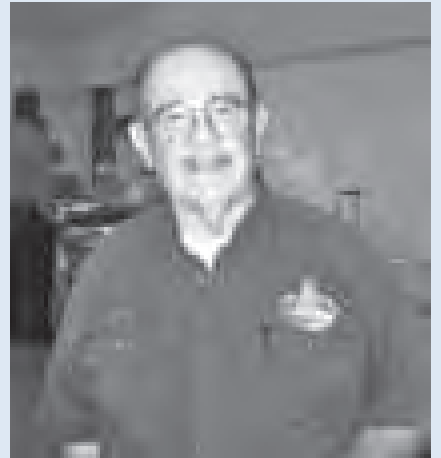
Bob Knox, Personnel.



A large showing graces the Van Nuys Senior Center.



Club Partner Jeff Chonis with The Equity Key Program; call him at (818) 728-9044 to unlock the equity in your home.



Ed Harding, President, RLACEI.



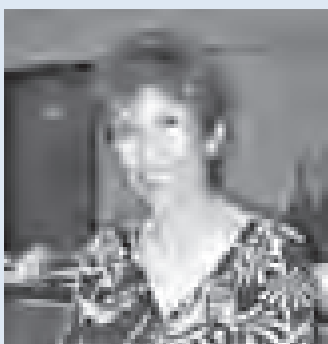
Shirley and Joe Govea.



Sylvester Warsaw Sr.



Mike and Cleone Vraibel.



Lillyan Candelaria.



Arnold and David Port.



Rene O'Malley and Wilma Rebbe.



Mariano Ondoy, Public Works/Accounting.



From left: Club CEO John Hawkins and Henry Starks.

RLACEI's Spring Meeting

■ Retirees Assn. holds annual spring meeting.

Story and photos by Robert Larios, Club Director of Communications and Marketing

RLACEI — The Retired Los Angeles City Employees, Inc. (RLACEI) held its spring meeting April 10 at the Van Nuys/Sherman Oaks Senior Citizens Center.

The food was good and the company even better.

At the helm was Ed Harding (and we swore we saw a parakeet on his shoulder) running the meeting with his usual flair. Ken Spiker, who still has the swagger of a Councilman, gave the membership an update on the City's retirement plan. Helen Salgado made her rounds amongst the membership, brightening up the place as she moved with her friendly and bubbly personality. Phil Skarin flexed his muscles just like the days at Venice Beach. Hal Danowitz (of *Adventures with Hal* fame) hit the stage, answering complicated medical coverage questions from the membership. As always, Jack Mathews attended with his giant smile and warm handshake. Even Ken Kochakji found time between marathons to attend.

Needless to say, the auditorium was full of good friends and happiness. Make sure you see all the pictures and don't miss the next event!

The new RLACEI Officers for 2008 are:

- Edward Harding, President
- Kenneth Spiker, First Vice President
- Thomas Stemnock, Second Vice President
- Jerry Bardwell, Treasurer, and
- Hal Danowitz, Secretary.



From left: Stephen Friedlander and Gus Papas.



The new RLACEI Board and support staff.



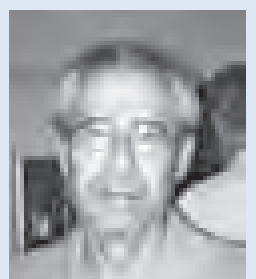
Club Director of Communications and Marketing Robert Larios and Helmar Anderson.



Harry Warshawski.



Ken Kochakji.



Dennis Harding.

Retiree Question of the Month

Alive! asked retirees...

The Best Years



"Lincoln."
- Gus Papas



"Ronald Reagan."
- Lillyan Candelaria



"John F. Kennedy."
- Henry Starks



"Franklin D. Roosevelt."
- Mike Vraibel



"Harry Truman."
- Wilma Rebbe



"Harry Truman."
- Cleone Vraibel



"George Washington."
- Helmar Anderson



"Lincoln."
- Ben Reyes



"Franklin D. Roosevelt."
- Harry Warshawski

Who is the greatest president of all time?



"George Washington."
- Rene O'Malley



"Franklin D. Roosevelt."
- Arnold Port



"Ronald Reagan."
- Shirley Govea



"Franklin D. Roosevelt."
- Sam Hochberg



"John F. Kennedy."
- Jeff Chonis, Club Partner



"Harry Truman."
- Bebe Jacobsen



"Ronald Reagan."
- Dennis Harding



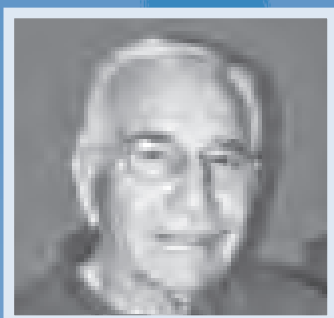
"John F. Kennedy."
- Sylvester Warsaw Sr.



"George Washington."
- Stephen Friedlander



"Harry Truman."
- David Port



"Ronald Reagan."
- Bob Knox



"Abraham Lincoln."
- Ken Kochakji



"George W. Bush."
- Mariano Ondoy



"Richard Nixon."
- Harris Yoneoka