

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:

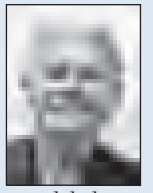
**Oct. 23:** 23rd annual Corporation Meeting and Election at the Friendship Auditorium, 3201 Riverside Dr., Los Angeles 90027. It's just east of Los Feliz Boulevard. Thomas Guide 594 C2. Lunch at noon.

**Dec. 4:** Christmas party at Grace E. Simons Lodge, 11:30 a.m.

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

RLACEI:

## Health Premiums Rise 8.8%; New Dental Provider Proposed



By Phil Skarin,  
RLACEI Publicity Chair

### President Ed Harding reports:



Ed Harding

"We had a great time at our picnic Aug. 7. It is always nice to see people that you worked with. We had 150 who showed up and enjoyed barbecue ribs and chicken, put on by Chris & Pitts BBQ. I wish to thank Beth Figuls, Editor of El Pueblo, for taking pictures of our retirees, and for donating six gift certificates for door prizes. Also, thanks to the City Employees Club for sending Robert Larios who took pictures and donated four \$50 gas cards for our raffle. We missed John Hawkins, CEO of the City Employees Club, who was out of town.

"I am very sorry that Americo Garza, who put on this picnic, was unable to be there and enjoy all his hard work. But his wife, Ella, who also helps, is in the hospital.

"Neil Ricci, our health director, and his committee have attended and had a table at several of the LACERS health seminars at the Friendship Auditorium. We so enjoyed the Friendship Auditorium that we are going to have our annual corporation meeting and elections there on Thurs., Oct. 23, and not at the Van Nuys/Sherman Oaks Senior Center on Oct. 16. We will have a

great lunch, so be sure to call and make reservations so we can order enough meals. We have also arranged to have our April 2009 general membership meeting at the Friendship Auditorium, 3201 Riverside Dr., just east of Los Feliz Boulevard. There's plenty of parking.

"Lastly, I wish to thank LACERS for including us in their health meetings, and for sending Alex Rabrenovich, Sarah Hill and others to our functions and talk to our retirees about health plans and help with our problems."

"See you Oct. 23 at the Friendship Auditorium."

### Legislative Update:



Ken Spiker

"Thanks to legal advice and opinions, Retiree Commissioner Steven Uranga and I will be able again to vote on items that would affect us personally. The San Diego case that prevented us from voting has not yet been heard by the California Supreme Court. Fortunately, during the hiatus we did not miss any votes that would have directly impacted upon retiree benefits. We were able to support and vote for the annual cost of living adjustment.

"The LACERS health care con-

sultant and staff have finished their negotiations with the providers and have recommended continuing with the current providers for the 2009 year, except for the dental provider. All benefits will remain but with an average premium increase of 8.8 percent (\$5.8 million). The individual premium increase will depend upon the usual claim/loss history. I am hoping that the annual subsidy vote will help reduce the premium increase for those retirees most affected.

"Separate evaluations were

made with the dental and vision providers. VSP Vision provider is recommended to be continued. Moving to another provider would cause too much disruption to current users, and no other service proposed any additional services or price advantage. However, regarding dental coverage, the health care consultant recommends MetLife for 2009 in place of the current Blue Cross claims experience. MetLife provides significant cost savings and offers more service coverage, including implants."

### 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 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



Rocks at the tip of Baja.

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
• Michael Karsch	Ext. 704
• Jerry Bardwell	Ext. 706
• Harold Danowitz	Ext. 707
• Jack Mathews	Ext. 712
• Helen Salgado (membership)	Ext. 713
• Americo Garza	Ext. 710
• Tom Stemnock	Ext. 708

**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  
Tom Stemnock, Audit  
Americo Garza, Picnic  
Americo Garza, Holiday Party and Installation  
Jack Mathews, Senior Citizens  
Neil Ricci, Health  
Neil Ricci, Nominating  
Phil Skarin, Parliamentarian

### Directors

Michael Karsch  
Americo Garza  
Helen Salgado  
Phil Skarin  
Jack Mathews  
Neil Ricci



# Todos Santos, for Artists

## ■ Part 2 of Hal's adventures in Cabo San Lucas.

Evelyn and I were in Cabo San Lucas at our timeshare (Playa Grande Resort) with our daughter's in-laws, Effie and Pierre. We spent our first day at a timeshare presentation, and then we were ready to start enjoying our vacation.

Each year we attend an update on our resort. They update us on the status of the timeshare and what new offers they have and always try to sell us additional weeks or a more flexible plan. It includes a breakfast and free gift, usually a \$50 certificate useable at the resort. It only takes a couple of hours, so it is not big deal.

Without having our grandkids with us on this trip, we had a lot of time to ourselves and spent most mornings around the pools. In the afternoons, we would walk into town and have a drinks and then dinner.

At our first timeshare presentation, we received two \$100 restaurant certificates, one to the V.O.S. and one to Las Quesadillas. It seems that both restaurants were in the same location -- the V.O.S. was upstairs and the Las Quesadillas was downstairs. They were on the corner of Lazaro Cárdenas and Boulevard Marina in the downtown area.

Our first choice was V.O.S., but the upstairs was closed, when we asked about it we were told we could order off the V.O.S. menu in Las Quesadillas. The menu featured tapas, and we ordered a number of dishes to share and of course a lot of beer. The food was very good and we really enjoyed the experience. The check totaled about \$80, so I told the owner to give the rest of the \$100 to the waitress. He told me he could not do it because the certificate could be used only for food, so we ordered dessert, and tipped the waitress ourselves.

On all of our trips to Cabo we have never gone out of the tourist areas, so this time we decided to rent a car and drive to Todos Santos, an artist community about 42 miles north of Cabo.

We rented a car from Advantage Rent-a-Car at our resort, and we could use the one-day-free car rental that I received at the resort timeshare presentation.

All of us have heard the horror stories about driving in Mexico, but I found it not a problem. The roads were well maintained and easy to follow. All of the drivers followed the rules of the road and, except for staying out

the way of the large trucks, it was a very easy and picturesque drive to Todos Santos.

Todos Santos is on the Tropic of Cancer on the Pacific side of Baja. The town is on a mesa to the west of the Sierra de La Laguna mountain range. It has become a haven for artists and craftsmen who enjoy a very mild climate and healthy lifestyle. It has a large number of art galleries, boutiques and historical sites.

We parked on the main street close to the Hotel California. It is rumored that this Hotel California is the hotel that the Eagles sang about in their 1977 single. The rumor is not true, but was started by the owner of the hotel to attract tourists, which he seemed to accomplish. And the falsity of the rumor doesn't stop the picture taking or the sale of T-shirts.

We walked around the town for a few hours visiting the galleries. Many of the streets were still paved with dirt and the sidewalks are not ADA-compliant. If you are interested in a nice day trip from Cabo, this is the place.

Picking a restaurant for lunch was not easy, as there was a large number to choose from. We picked the Tequila's Sunrise Bar and Grill (across the street from the Hotel California), which had a very good Mexican menu. The food was really good, and one of the highlights of the restaurant is that the walls are covered with the names of people who have dined there. Not one to pass up an opportunity to write on a wall, I managed to inscribe our four names, which should last until the next paint job.

The drive back to Cabo was just as easy, and my only problem was finding a gas station to fill up before returning the car. The first one I saw was on the wrong side of the highway, and then I missed the one in the middle of downtown Cabo. So I ending up at the Marina, but its station was only for boats. In the end I made my way back to the downtown station and got the full-service treatment. You can't pump your own gas in Mexico, and they don't take credit cards. We drove back to the resort and turned in the car and were very pleased with our little adventure.



A church in Todos Santos.



That evening, we used our remaining \$100 restaurant certificate for dinner at the Las Quesadillas. I found the food and drink to be good and we had a nice time.

One of the reasons we attended the time-share presentation was to get the dinner cruise aboard the *Caborey*. It is advertised as a sunset dinner-cruise with entertainment. We didn't know what to expect, but we were willing to take a chance.

The ship docked across the street from our resort, so we just walked over to the dock. The dock was the same one used by the cruise ships, so we had to go through security before we could board the ship.

because it wasn't spring break, and I was correct. There was a line at the Mexicana check-in counter, so the porter who had our bags dropped our bags close to the counter so we would not have to carry them while in line. Our flight was not checking in yet, but he said something to the person in charge and next thing I know they opened the check-in line for our flight and the line started behind us. After I tipped the porter, the security guard who had moved us to the front came over and I gave him a nice tip, also. It was nice not to have to wait in line. Going through security was no problem; our plane was almost on time, and we arrived back in Los Angeles on schedule.

We all enjoyed our time in Cabo without the grandkids and without spring break, but that will change next year as our week falls once again during spring break. We are already planning to rent a van and drive to La Paz for the day. But you'll have to wait to next year to hear about that.



Aboard the *Caborey*.

Our first stop was the dining room, where we were shown our table. It turns out that it was a sit-down dinner with table service. We then found a table on the outside deck and had a cocktail from the open bar. There was a rock band playing and everyone was having a good time. The ship left the dock and sailed around the harbor for about an hour, stopping at the rock formations at the tip of the Baja Peninsula for picture taking.

The dinner service was very good, and it was the best food we had had on this type of cruise. After dinner there were a couple of dance teams that performed, and they were very well received. The ship docked after the performance and we walked back to our resort feeling that it was a worthwhile cruise.

On our last night in Cabo, we decided to have dinner at the Galeon, which, while not part of the resort complex, was highly recommended by the Resort and just a short walk. It was an Italian restaurant with a great view of the marina. I found the food to be fair and nothing special. The highlight of the dinner was the Mexican coffee, which came with a great performance for which they turn off all of the lights so you can see this fiery coffee being poured from about three feet into your cup.

On our last morning, we always go for breakfast at the Office on Medano Beach, on the other side of the Marina. Tables were on the sand, and it was a great experience with great food.

Our car and driver picked us up at the resort for the trip to the airport. Last year, which was during spring break, the lines were so long you waited almost an hour to get through security and almost as long to get your boarding pass. After that, the plane was four hours late. It wasn't a pleasant experience. This year I didn't expect the same problems



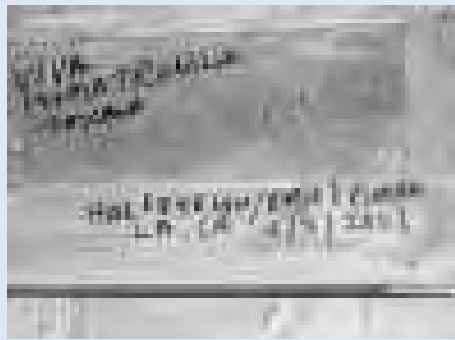
The Hotel California in Todos Santos.



Dinner at Las Quesadillas.



Hal and Evelyn aboard the *Caborey*.



On the wall at the Tequila's Sunrise – at least until the next paint job.

## RLACEI MEMBER NEWS:

**Americo Garza's wife, Ella**, recently had a pacemaker installed, and then had an operation to remove a tumor. Send her a get well card to 8815 Tweedy Lane, Downey, CA 90240. Send a prayer for her, also.

**Elaine Iverson** has quilted many blankets for needy children.

**Sisto Sandoval** teaches CPR/AED for the Red Cross. He also speaks to high school students on having respect and honor for veterans and military personnel.

**Hugo Sase**, while in the service in WWII, served in France, Germany, Austria and Italy. After retiring as an administrator in Public Works/Sanitation, he has traveled to England, Italy, France, Morocco, Portugal, Singapore and the Spice Islands. He and his wife, Sdako, have two daughters and three grandkids.

**Hal Lindgard** lives on the Lost Lake Resort on the Colorado River and loves water sports. He winters in Mexico. He and his wife have a boy, two girls and six grandsons.

**Roger and Linda Oldenkamp** are enjoying retirement in an age-restricted development in Lincoln, Calif. "There are two golf courses and many amenities to keep us busy. I enjoy reading your columns each month," he says.

**Ron Black** provided musical and vocal entertainment at the recent RLACEI picnic. He is also a square dance caller and gives country and line dance instruction for parties. Call him at (818) 752-6810.

**The 14th Annual Poetry Contest** will be held this year. Entries are accepted in any style or subject that will be of interest to retirees. There will be separate categories for members and spouses and family members. Send typed copies, including your address, phone number and category by Oct. 15 to Phil Skarin, 5301 Norwich Ave., Van Nuys, CA 91411. There will be valuable prizes for everyone.

Hal Danowitz asks you to visit our Website at [www.rlacei.com](http://www.rlacei.com) to find the latest news. You can also e-mail us at [rlacei@verizon.net](mailto:rlacei@verizon.net)

**If you change your address**, notify Helen Salgado, Membership Chair, at (800) 678-4145, ext. 713 or write her at 8372 Arnett Dr., Huntington Beach, CA 92647. Also notify LACERS and the City Employees Club.

**The Los Angeles City Employees Retirement System** is at 360 E. Second St., Los Angeles, CA 90012, 2nd floor. Phone (213) 473-7200 or (800) 779-8328. Contact them to arrange direct deposit of your retirement check, change your tax withholding or beneficiary, or for questions about your health plans.

**If you have news** about yourself or other retirees that you'd like to share, send it to Phil Skarin, or call him on the Helpline.



RLACEI President Ed Harding.



Miriam and Phil Skarin, RLACEI Publicity Chair.

# Retirees Picnic

■ **RLACEI hosts annual summer picnic.**

*Photos by Robert Larios, Club Director of Operations*

RLACEI — The Retired Los Angeles City Employees, Inc. (RLACEI) held its annual summer picnic Aug. 7.

The picnic was held at the Grace E. Simons Lodge in Griffith Park.

Thanks to Phil Skarin and Ed Harding for their invitation.



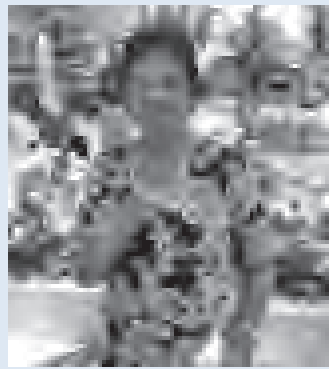
Tony Alvarez.



RLACEI Officer Tom Stemnock shuffles the tickets for the raffle prizes.



Martha and Ed Harding with Elmira Valencia Tarin.



Martha Harding wins a raffle prize.

# Rogers Re-elected

■ **Rick Rogers re-elected to LACERS Board of Administration as employee representative.**



Rick Rogers.

LACERS — On May 13, Los Angeles City Employees Retirement System (LACERS) Board of Administration adopted the certified results of the election for Board of Administration for the 2008-09 fiscal year, meaning that Los Angeles City Employees have re-elected Rick Rogers as a board member. He will serve through June 30, 2013.

Rogers is an investment officer with the Los Angeles Fire and Police Pension System, where he analyzes and reviews the investment of domestic and international stocks, bonds, real estate, alternatives and cash. The City's Fire and Police Pension System, like LACERS, is a multibillion-dollar public pension plan.

Rogers graduated from the University of California, Riverside with a degree in history, and later earned a Master's degree in business administration from California State University, San Bernardino.

LACERS Board of Administration is comprised of four Mayoral appointees, two elected Active City Employees and one elected Retired City Employee. LACERS administers the City's pension plan to more than 30,000 active employees and 15,000 retirees and beneficiaries. LACERS has \$10.9 billion in assets.

# On the Move



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



Here's the Club's good friend, Ken Kochakji, Traffic Officer (retired), Transportation, after taking first place (men) at the July 4 Lakeside two-mile race in Calabasas. Keep on running, 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)



THOUGHT FOR THE DAY:

## Break Out

*Break out of traditional ways  
Traditions are not innately restrictive,  
so what's the problem?  
We get stuck, no flexibility.  
Flexibility is needed to determine the methods  
most workable and appropriate.  
Be creative, flexible, sensitive, open and enthusiastic.  
Listen seriously to constructive suggestions.*

— 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 | Michael Karsch x704 | Neil Ricci x714    |
| Phil Skarin x709     | Jerry Bardwell x706 | Helen Salgado x713 |
|                      | Tom Stemnock x708   |                    |