

For Retired Club Members



# The Best Years

## City Retiree Associations:

### DWP Retirees Association



**Dolores Foley, President**  
Phone: (626) 445-7376  
E-mail: vinmar@altrinet.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:

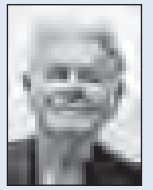
**Oct. 23:** Annual Corporation Meeting and Elections, 11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. at the Friendship Auditorium, 3201 Riverside Dr., L.A. 00027. It's just east of Los Feliz Boulevard, Thomas Guide p594 C2.

**Dec. 4:** Christmas Party at noon at Grace E. Simons Lodge, 1025 Elysian Park Dr., Thomas Guide p 594 F6

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

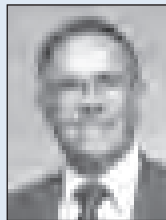
RLACEI:

## Apologies to Retirees Who Received Letter by Mistake



By Phil Skarin,  
RLACEI Publicity Chair

**President Ed Harding reports:**



Ed Harding

"I apologize and LACERS apologizes to retirees who received a letter stating that they were not RLACEI members, but who were actually longstanding members.

"This long awaited mailing was intended to go to LACERS members who were not RLACEI members, inviting them to join RLACEI. More than one hundred of these mailings went to retirees who were already members. LACERS apologized and explained that they caught the mistake about halfway through the process and made sure that the remainder of the letters only went to non members of RLACEI."

Annual Corporation Meeting:

"Please note that the correct date for our Annual Corporation Meeting and Elections is Thurs., Oct. 23. There is *not* a meeting on Oct. 16 as was advertised earlier. Call our RSVP number for reservations. You may bring a guest."

"We are making changes! We'll be electing Directors for 2008-09-10. Coffee, cookies and a box lunch will be provided.

"Neil Ricci, Nominating Committee Chair, moved that Mary Beetz be appointed to the Board to fill a vacant Director position. It was approved. Ricci then reported that the following nominations will be made at the Oct. 23 Meeting: Ed Harding, Jerry

Bardwell, Jack Matthews, Helen Salgado, Many Beetz and Ken Spiker for two-year terms as Directors beginning Jan. 1, and Michael Karsch for a one-year term as Director beginning Jan. 1.

"The 2008 Corporation and Membership Meeting takes place at 11:30 a.m. Oct. 23 at the Friendship Auditorium, 3201 Riverside Dr. 90027."

Helen Salgado, Membership Chair, reports: "Our recent Membership Drive mailing to non-members was very successful. More than 500 responses have been received so far. We're looking forward to increasing our membership to more than 9,000 soon."

### Legislative Update:



Ken Spiker

Ken Spiker, our elected Commissioner to the LACERS Board of Directors, reports that final contracts with LACERS Health and Welfare Program providers for 2009 will increase by \$4.4 million (6.1 percent) to \$76 million. This is well below the actuarial trend of plus 8.2 percent.

The LACERS Board of Directors has adopted the 2009 medical plan premiums, which will represent a 7.0 percent increase over 2008.

LACERS staff and the Benefits Committee has unanimously recommended to the Board a 2009 monthly medical plan premium subsidy of \$1,120. The current 2008 subsidy is \$1,022, thus a monthly increase of \$98.04.

The Los Angeles Administrative Code restricts the Board not to exceed the dollar increase in the Kaiser two-party non-Medicare plan premium. With the Boards approval, the subsidy recommend will match the maximum permit-

ted by law. The average monthly medical plan subsidy benefit will increase \$35.03 to \$490.56.

Payroll deduction and subsidy will depend upon years of service, number of dependents, Medicare status and plan selection.

### 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

## ADVENTURES with HAL!



The Gateway Arch at the Jefferson National Expansion Memorial National Park.



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 Stenmuck	Ext. 708

**DWP Retirement Plan Office:** (213) 367-1722

### RLACEI:

#### Officers for 2008

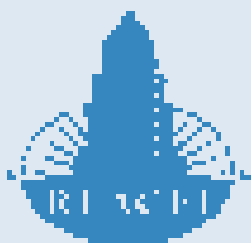
Edward Harding, President  
Kenneth Spiker, First Vice President  
Tom Stenmuck, Second Vice President  
Hal Danowitz, Secretary  
Jerry Bardwell, Treasurer

#### 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 Stenmuck and Phil Skarin, Golf  
Tom Stenmuck, 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



## Meet Hal in St. Louis

### ■ Hal travels to the Gateway to the West.

One of our best friend's daughters was graduating from Washington University, and we were asked to attend. Wash. U, as it is known, is in St. Louis. Neither Evelyn nor I had spent any time in the St. Louis area, and we decided to go to the graduation and stay a few extra days to visit. The graduation was in the middle of May, a good time to visit the Midwest. The graduation was on Friday, so we flew out to St. Louis on Thursday and returned home on the next Tuesday. This gave us three full days to sightsee.

The wife of our friends was raised in St. Louis and still had a lot of family in the area. We stayed at the Hilton in Frontenac, which is in the western suburbs, about 10 miles from the airport.

As usual, I had our laptop with the GPS system, and I had also printed out directions from the airport to the hotel, a little like having both a belt and suspenders. I used the printed directions and made a wrong turn and finally had to fire up the laptop and use the GPS. This helped, but the main highway that we needed (Interstate 64) was closed for major rebuilding, and that was exactly where we needed to go. It took us almost an hour and a half to get to the hotel, when it should have been a 15-minute drive. You can believe that Evelyn was not a happy camper.

St. Louis is on the Mississippi River, just a few miles south of where the continent's other major waterway, the Missouri River, joins it. In 1703, Catholic priests established

a small mission just south of what is now St. Louis. French fur trappers founded the actual settlement in 1764 and named it for the French king and saint. The city was acquired from France in 1803 as part of the Louisiana Purchase and was incorporated as a town in 1809. The Lewis and Clark Expedition left the St. Louis area in May 1804, reached the Pacific Ocean in the summer of 1805, and returned on Sept. 23, 1806. Both Lewis and Clark lived in St. Louis after the expedition. After Missouri became a state in 1821, St. Louis was incorporated as a city in 1822. The 1904 World's Fair and 1904 Olympic Games were held in St. Louis. St. Louis is known as the "Gateway City," as it is seen as the dividing mark between the Eastern and Western United States.

The city proper, small in size, has a population of 350,000, but the metropolitan area has almost three million people, making it the 18th largest metropolitan area in the United States.

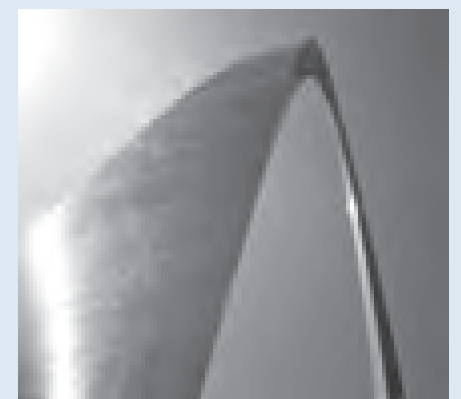
Thursday evening and Friday was taken up with graduation activities. We had dinner Thursday evening at the home of the aunt and uncle of the graduate, and Friday morning we attended the graduation ceremony and then a celebration dinner that evening.

Washington University in St. Louis is a private university, founded in 1853 and named for George Washington.

Saturday morning we started our sightseeing, and our first stop was the Gateway Arch. The 630-foot stainless steel arch is a memorial to St. Louis' role in the westward expansion of the United States from 1803 to 1890. The Arch is meant to form a symbolic gateway that frames the primary view of downtown from the Mississippi River. It stands on the site of the original fur-trading town that Lewis and Clark left from in 1804.

To get to the top of the Arch, you ride in a tram (a round pod, resembling a huge clothes dryer) that seats six very friendly people for about a five-minute ride to the top. If you don't like tight spaces, you might not want to take the ride. Once you get to the top you have a wonderful view of the surrounding area. The cost for the tram ride is \$10.

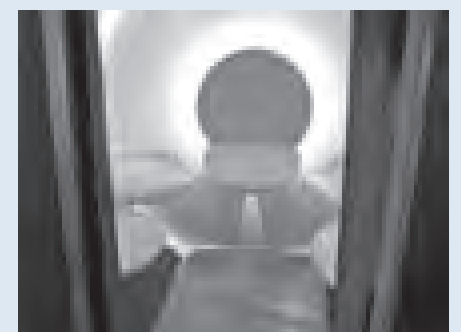
Beneath the Arch is the Museum of Westward Expansion, dedicated to the events touched off by Thomas Jefferson and the



The Gateway Arch.



Evelyn waits to take the ride to the top of the Arch.



The pod that you ride to the top



Hal at the top of the Arch



Evelyn and Susan at the Anheuser-Busch brewery.

## ADVENTURES with HAL!

Louisiana Purchase. I was very impressed with the displays in the museum, especially the series on the Lewis and Clark Expedition. Allow at least three hours to see both the Arch and the museum.

No trip to St. Louis would be complete without a visit to the Anheuser-Busch brewery. Budweiser, "The King of Beers," was born here in 1876, and forgoing a trip to its birthplace would be downright un-American. Free tours of the brewery run seven days a week, and after the tour, if you are of age, you get to sample a few of the brews.

Before we took the tour, we had lunch at the Sage Restaurant (1031 Lynch St.), just across the road from the brewery parking lot. I would recommend this as a combination lunch and then the tour.

Anheuser-Busch has a large presence in St. Louis. Everywhere you go you see the name, and the company has contributed a lot to the community. While we were there, the talk was about the pending takeover by InBev, an overseas company, and what effect it would have on the St. Louis area.

That evening we had dinner with the group at Lorenzo's Trattoria (1933 Edwards) on the Hill, the old Italian area. They serve great Italian food in a warm local ambiance.

Sunday, we decided to start our tour by going to an art fair across the Mississippi River, in Belleville, Ill. I plugged in the location in the GPS and off we went. Well, I entered "Bellevue" instead of Belleville, and we ended up in the opposite direction from our destination. We ended up at the Golden Eagle Ferry crossing, where there was no ferry. I thought I was in the movie *Deliverance*. We headed down a dirt road with water on both sides and stopped at the ferry dock. I turned around and got out of there as fast as I could. I finally figured out that I had put in the wrong name, but by then it was too late to go to the art fair. Again, Evelyn was not a happy camper.

I had read in one of the tourist magazines that that day was Lewis and Clark Heritage Day at Frontier Park in St. Charles. St. Charles is Missouri's largest historic district on the western bank of the Missouri River. This is where Lewis and Clark started out for parts unknown. In the park, there was an encampment set up, and people were dressed in costumes of the times, living as people did in 1803. The Main Street of St. Charles has a large collection of 19th-century buildings that house a number of retailers, restaurants and galleries.

Our last stop that day was the Ulysses S. Grant National Historic Site, 7400 Grant Rd. in south St. Louis County, adjacent to Anheuser-Busch's Grant's Farm. The Grant estate, White Haven, was acquired by Frederick Dent, who was Grant's father-in-law, in 1820. It was here that Grant met his wife, Julia, and they lived there prior to the Civil War. After the war they purchased it from Julia's father. Even after they settled in New York after Grant retired as President, they continued to return to White Haven. The park guides provide a short tour of the house. One of the questions most often asked is why it is called White Haven but painted green. Previous Dent family residences in England and Maryland were called "White Haven," so the familiar name carried over to this property. The Paris green color dates to the 1870s, and was quite popular during the era.

On the way back to the hotel, we stopped at the White Castle for one of their famous burgers. An event not to be repeated! [Hal, you were less than a mile from where I grew up! - Ed.]

When we woke on Monday morning, we discovered that it had rained during the night. As we expected to spend most of the day outdoors, we were a little concerned about the weather. Our luck was good: The day was very nice and rain helped cool the temperature.

Our first stop was the Missouri Botanical (Shaw's) Garden, which opened to the public in 1859. There are 79 acres of trees, formal gardens and conservatories. Open daily, Shaw's Garden costs \$8 for adults, and children 12 and under are free. There is a one-hour tram tour that gives you a great overview of the gardens. After the tour, we spent two



The St. Louis Zoo.



The main drag in St Charles.



Hal in front of Grant's House.



Evelyn in St. Charles by the Missouri River.

more hours just walking through the various gardens. Normally this would not be on my tour agenda, but I would recommend this to all visitors to St. Louis.

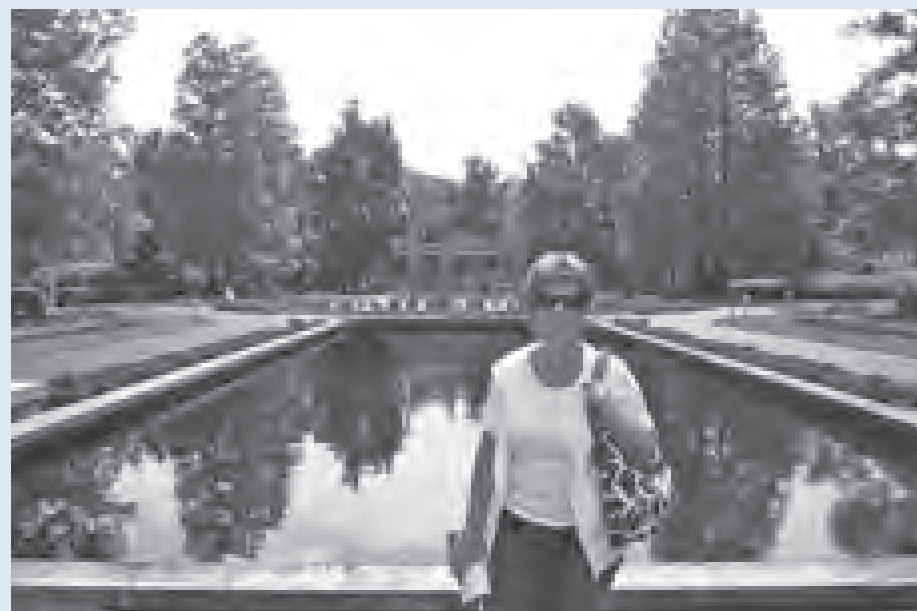
We then headed over to Forest Park, one of the largest municipal parks in the United States. Forest Park covers 1,300 acres in the middle of St. Louis. It is home to the St. Louis Art Museum, the St. Louis Zoo, the St. Louis Science Center, The History Museum and the Jewel Box floral conservatory.

Friends told us to go to The Boathouse for lunch. It is on a large lake and, while you wait for a table, you can rent a paddleboat and get in some exercise before eating. After a good lunch, we visited the St. Louis Zoo.

The St. Louis Zoo has free admission and is open every day of year except for Christmas and New Year's Day. The zoo covers more than 90 acres and has more than 11,000 animals. We started our tour by taking a train ride (\$10) around the zoo and then walked around the different sections. This zoo is rated number one by the Zagat survey, and I can agree with that. (And admission is free.)

That closed out our trip to St. Louis, and I'm glad that we took the extra time to see the area. There is much history here that effects how the western part of the United States was developed and settled.

If you have any questions you can reach me at [hdanowitz@verizon.net](mailto:hdanowitz@verizon.net).



Evelyn at the Missouri Botanical (Shaw's) Garden.

## RLACEI MEMBER NEWS:

**Nick Buckroff and his wife, Lillie**, travelled to the Grand Canyon; Meteor Crater; Tombstone and Sedona, Ariz.; and the Old Town in Albuquerque; plus the casinos in Laughlin, Nev. Nick was Recreation Director.

**Marsha Kawamoto** has traveled to the Caribbean, Hawaii, Lake Tahoe and Disney World. She likes line dancing and performing at assisted living facilities. Her daughter is a doctor in Citrus Heights.

**Carl Wiegand** volunteers to prepare income tax returns for military personnel at the Los Angeles Air Force Base, El Segundo, every year. He retired from the Navy and Navy Reserve with 43 years of service. He also had a 43-year retirement credit when he retired from the City in 1999.

**Charles McKeever** volunteers with the Neighborhood Watch in Houston, Tex. to provide security for homes.

**Edward and Amanda Hernandez** belong to three RV clubs. They have traveled three times across the United States in the past five years in their diesel pusher motor home. They volunteer in RV campgrounds. They enjoy visiting small towns across America.

**Dorothy Komarow** turned 98 on Aug. 5. Send her a card to 3995 Overland Ave., Apt #222., Culver City, CA 90232-3722

**Many members have written** comments, including "You are all doing a great job." "I appreciate it." "Thank you for all your efforts." "I enjoy reading your column each month." "I love your Thought for the Day." These comments really make all of our efforts satisfying and constructive suggestions are also appreciated.

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 x 713, or write her at 8372 Arnett Dr. Also notify the Club.

**The Los Angeles City Employees Retirement Systems** at 360 E. Second St., 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.

**Poetry Contest:** The 14th annual Poetry Contest will be held this year. Poetry will be 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 your typed entries including your address, phone number and category by Nov. 1 to Phil Skarin at 5301 Norwich Ave., Van Nuys, CA 91411. There will be valuable prizes.

**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.

# On the Move

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



"After the run, I headed to Pheidippides Running Center to meet up with The Basin Blues Running Club and champion runner Rod Dixon for our annual running shoe program giveaway for cross country student athletes. Rod, a world-class cross-country champion himself, gave an inspiring speech to our young student athletes. We gave away 120 pairs of new running shoes to the cross-country teams of Reseda, Poly, Canoga Park, and Monroe High School."



## Keeping Up With Ken

On Sept. 14, Ken Kochakji, Retired, Rec and Parks, competed in the Women's Health Cancer Run in Studio City. "I won a gold medal and first place in my age group."



*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:

## After the Olympics

*After the races are over,  
After the cheering is done,  
After the medals are all passed out,  
And you're standing all alone.*

*What will you do for an encore?  
What else can you do to win praise,  
What hurdles are left to jump over,  
What else do you have to prove?*

*In life you will find there are contests  
That go on inside of you,  
The struggle to rise above doubt and despair,  
The battle for power and wealth.*

*So, gird up the muscles of conscience,  
Keep the sinews of character strong,  
Keep your eye on the goal at the end of the road  
And not on the things that go wrong.*

— 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.

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|----------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| 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   |                    |