

* A Message From the CEO *

Despite Loss, Giving Thanks

by John Hawkins
President and CEO, The Club

It's November, and since Thanksgiving is just around the corner, it's that time of year to be thankful again.

However, I must admit, it's a little hard to be in a thankful mood when so much is being taken away. First, we lost the Club's own Howard Pompel in the tragic Metrolink accident. Then several weeks ago we lost an amazingly wonderful and beautiful lady, Ella Garza, wife of Americo Garza, who is on the Board of the RLACEI (Retired Los Angeles City Employees, Inc.) and a great friend of the Club. And, just a few days ago, John Burnes, the *Alive!* editor in chief, lost his father as the result of a sudden massive stroke.

It's been tough to think about giving thanks, but then I began thinking about all this loss and realized that, without giving thanks for all the joy these people brought into our lives, their passing would be meaningless. So, I am going to give thanks for all the joy that Howard brought to the Club and its members; I'm going to give thanks for all the wonderful memories that the Club had with Ella Garza, and I'm going to give thanks for all the creative genius that Don Burnes passed on to his son, John, which has allowed *Alive!* to be what it is today. Finding something to be thankful for when the chips are down is tough. But it's the best medicine I know of when dealing with loss.

Now, having said all that, we were still able to put together another fantastic *Alive!* In our feature story, Angel Gomez and I had the privilege of tagging along with your fellow City Employee, Curtis Cash, as he and his team from Hyperion assessed the quality of the waters off Santa Monica Bay. After that, John Burnes and I hunkered down for some water-quality straight talk with Dr. Mas Dojiri, Wastewater Treatment Lab Manager III, Public Works/Sanitation's Environmental Monitoring Division. The story starts on the front page; give it a read and check out the pictures!

And of course, we just recently held our annual ClubFest, which was the best ever! We have tons of pictures starting on page on page 16, and we also put hundreds of pictures on the Web. Just go to our Website at www.cityemployeesclub.com to see them all.

And, even though it's sad to see Assistant General Manager Tony DeClue retire from General Services, it makes me feel good to see him beaming with so much happiness as he looks forward to his new life. He and Laurie have some serious plans as they set sail into retirement. Read all about them, beginning on the cover.

We were also able to acquire some up-close and personal images of our fellow City heroes in action, fighting the Sesnon, Marek and Sepulveda fires; see the dramatic and full color images on pages 42 and 43.

In closing, I realize that I have a lot to be thankful for. I have an amazing staff and Board of Directors here at the Club; I have an incredible wife and kids; and I have the opportunity to work with the greatest team of City Employees in the country. So, on that note, have an excellent Thanksgiving everybody.



Martha Harding and Ella Garza, having fun at one of the many Retirees Association events, from May 2007.

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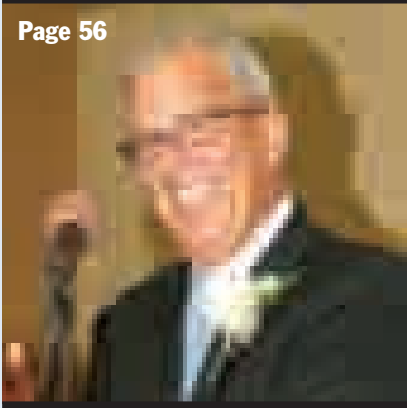
The LAPD unit opens its operations for guests.

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The Club will be returning \$300,000 to eligible Members who have Club insurance.

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Enjoy these photos of the best ClubFest ever.



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