

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



**Warren B. Braun, 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 9:** General membership meeting at the Friendship Auditorium, 3201 Riverside Dr., Los Angeles 90027.
- April 16:** LACERS Health Workshop on emotional wellness at the Friendship Auditorium, same address.
- June 2:** Retirees Golf Tournament at the Alhambra Municipal Golf Course. See entry form in this issue of *Alive!*
- Aug. 13:** Retirees Picnic at Grace E. Simons Lodge in Elysian Park.

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

## Retirees Corner:

# Voters Approve Plan to Add Fire, Police Partners



By Phil Skarin,  
RLACEI Publicity Chair

### President Ed Harding reports:



Ed Harding

"There's good news for a lot of retirees. The recent March 3 election approved a charter amendment for the Fire and Police Pension Plan, allowing their retirees who have lost their spouse or domestic partners through death or divorce to take a reduction in their pension to provide the new spouse or domestic partner with a share of the pension when the retiree dies. The deduction is actuarially adjusted, so the retiree pays the cost of allowing the new spouse or domestic partner to share in the retiree's pension. This is cost-neutral to the pension plan.

"We have been having meetings with the Retired Fire and Police Association regarding this charter change, and we decided to wait

for the results of this election. Now, we should have no trouble getting the City Council to approve a similar change for our retirees.

"I wish to thank David Dorion, *El Pueblo* editor, and John Hawkins, the Club's CEO, for allowing us to add a column by Mary Beetz, Publicity Committee member, about LACERS activities.

"Remember, April 9 is our general membership meeting at the Friendship Auditorium. Call the RSVP number for lunch reservations, or you may not get fed. We are cutting back on the number of meals ordered."

The Bylaws Committee has proposed new Bylaws. Chairman Hal Danowitz will move for their adoption at the April 9 meeting.



Mary Beetz

### Director Mary Beetz reports:

"MYLACERS is a new Web Member Service that lets retired members view account information. It is easy, fast and very informative. To create your account, Log on to [MYLACERS.org](http://MYLACERS.org). You will be instructed to create an ID and password. Once this is done, you can view past

LACERS Update,  
continued Page 29

### Legislative Update:



Ken Spiker

"The LACERS Benefits Committee had its interviews of bidders for the Health and Welfare Consultant Contract.

"Aon Consulting, Doloitte Consulting, Mercer and Watson Wyatt submitted extensive Requests for Proposal bids. Each of the three finalists received and hour-plus interview. The three-member committee, which I chair, voted unanimously to recommend the contract be awarded to Watson Wyatt.

"Watson Wyatt is a publicly owned company, listed on the New York Stock Exchange and NASDAQ. They have committed

11 personnel to handle the LACERS account. All 11 attended the committee interviews and presented their 'Special talents and experience' related to our needs.

"Committee members were more than favorably impressed with their presentations and answers to our questions. Their financial bid was favorable in comparison with the other bidders.

"With the recommendation, we are looking forward to improved and additional health premiums and affordable premiums.

"It is worth noting that a recent *L.A. Times* article stated, 'The City faces a \$427 million shortfall,

which could more that double due to the pension fund problem.' *Baloney* - don't blame the retirees, look where the real problem lies.

All is quiet in Sacramento on retiree issues as the State budget deficit continues to hold center stage, according to committee staff in the Capitol. The usual advocate groups in the pensioner area are sitting tight, hoping to maintain the benefits they now have. There is an occasional initiative that may make it to the ballot box, but as far as what is proposed in the Legislature, all eyes are on the budget and the economy.

### 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!



Old Faithful.

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
• Mary Beetz	Ext. 711

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

### RLACEI:

#### Officers for 2009

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

#### Committee Chairpersons for 2009

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  
Mary Beetz



## 6,000 Miles, and Still Speaking

■ Hal and Evelyn conclude a happy and memorable road trip through 18 states for his high school reunion.

Evelyn and I took a three-week road trip on our way to my 50th high school reunion in Lansing, Mich. We took a more southern route on the way there and the northern route on the way home. So far in our travels we have traveled from Los Angeles to Arizona, New Mexico, Texas, Oklahoma, Kansas, Missouri, Illinois, Michigan (for the reunion), Wisconsin, Minnesota, South Dakota and Montana. During the trip, Evelyn and I kept a daily log, which we e-mailed to friends, and I have decided to share this log with you to tell the tale of our trip. We left off last month in Red Lodge, Mont.

#### Day 18 – Oct. 5

Last night's dinner at the Pollard was very good – the service was a little iffy, but overall it was fine. Our room included breakfast, and after that we left Red Lodge on US 212 toward the northeast entrance of Yellowstone.

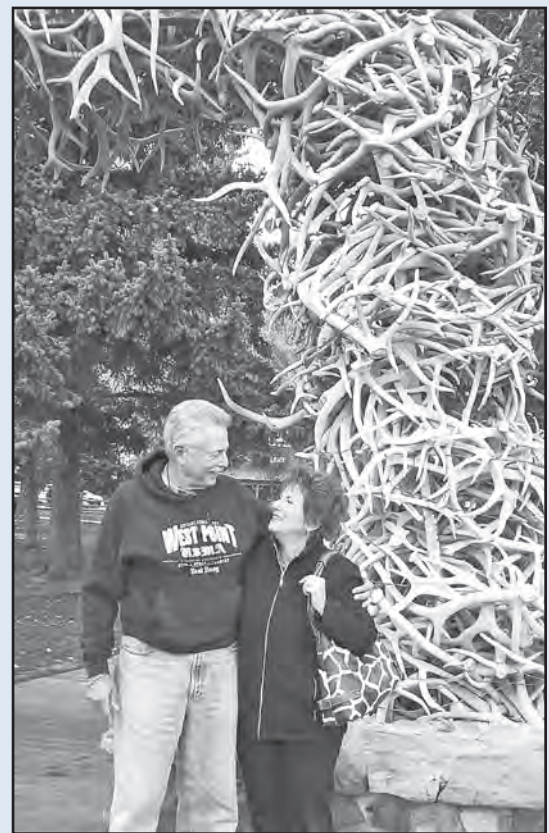
The weather had turned; yesterday it sprinkled and last night it rained. Temperatures were in the mid-40s that morning. The drive on 212 would take us over the Bear Tooth Mountains, which top out at more than 11,000 feet. I had some concerns about the highway conditions, but the road was open. When we left Red Lodge, the rain had stopped, but it was still cold. The drive to the Old Faithful Inn (at the south end of Yellowstone) was only 150 miles but through the mountain pass, and I planned on at least five hours (it took us six hours), but we stopped along the way after we entered Yellowstone.

*Evelyn: Aside from the mild rain, a little sleet, snow that almost stuck and a blustery*

*wind, the weather was great, with blue skies and billowy clouds. The drive is beyond beautiful.*

The road is two-lane and it started to rain and then turned to snow. When we reached the summit (10,800 feet), there was snow on the road, so we drove very carefully. We made it to the entrance to Yellowstone with no problems. With my Gold Age Card, there was no charge to get in (normally \$25 per car), and we drove the Grand Loop to the west and then turned south to get to Old Faithful.

It is hard to describe the beauty of Yellowstone, with its tall mountains and deep valleys, with steams and rivers. And then there are the geysers, which are all over the place. We saw herds of buffalo, some deer, and at the Mammoth Station, elk were all over the place. We saw no bears as of yet. Maybe Evelyn can give a better description.



Hal and Evelyn at the antler arch in Jackson Hole.



Entering Yellowstone.



Hal and Evelyn saw this buffalo in Yellowstone.

## ADVENTURES with HAL!

*Evelyn: The leaves are changing, and in areas where there are Aspen and birch trees, the golden color of the leaves is amazing. For me, a city kid born in Los Angeles, the change of seasons is a 10-degree drop in the daytime temperature. Now I understand what people mean by missing the change in seasons. I hope some of our pictures do justice to the beautiful scenery we have enjoyed.*

We stayed at the Old Faithful Inn, next to the Old Faithful Geyser. In fact, you can see the eruption from the balcony of the Inn. The room was okay – at least it has a bath (some don't).



Hal and Evelyn at the high point of the Bear Tooth Mountains.

*Evelyn: The inn was built around 1929 and added onto more than once. We were in the "new" wing -- it had a radiator for heat. The lobby was four stories high, with balconies on each floor above the first, with very unusual wood details that also looked like they helped support the interior structure. It almost looked like a giant log home or a tree house. There was an optional guided tour of the inn and tomorrow, if we had time before leaving, we thought about taking it. And yes we did see the geyser erupt. It's on a 70- to 90-minute schedule, more or less.*

The next day, we headed to Jackson Hole, Wyo., and then for home.

### Day 19 – Oct. 6

Last night for dinner we ate at the Old Faithful Snow Lodge, just behind the inn. We couldn't get a reservation at the Inn before 9 p.m., so we walked over to the Snow Lodge and had a very good dinner. I had buffalo short ribs, and Evelyn had a small prime rib.

We got up early in the morning to watch another eruption of Old Faithful, this time up close and personal. It rained during the night, and there was ice on the walkways and the car. We decided not to eat at the inn and just got some coffee and started out about 9 a.m. As we headed toward the south entrance, the trees and grounds were covered with snow. Evelyn drove, and she did a good job keeping us on the road, but she didn't see a deer getting ready to cross the road. Luckily the deer decided to wait until she drove by.

As soon as we left Yellowstone, we entered the Grand Teton National Forest. The terrain was different from Yellowstone and had more fall color, I think because the elevation was a little lower and the birch and aspens grew at a lower altitude than most of Yellowstone. We didn't have to climb too high, and the roads were clear. It was only 100 miles from Old Faithful to Jackson, Wyo., and we made it there in about three hours.

We stayed at the Wyoming Inn, just west of the downtown area. Even though we got to the inn early, our room was ready -- a very large presidential-size bed, with a sitting area and fireplace. The bath had both a Jacuzzi tub and a stall shower, with one sink in the bathroom and one sink in the dressing area of the bedroom. I'm not sure how I found this place, seeing there was a perfectly good Super 8 just down the road.

*Evelyn: Very funny! One more Super 8, and I would have had it.*

After we checked in we drove back to the "historic" downtown and had lunch. We then walked the area and purchased our allotment of T-shirts and other kid's items.

*Evelyn: Hal found slingshots with the handles carved in the shape of a wolf. He wanted to buy one, and I said I would kill him. So he*

*bought three, one for each of the girls. The idea is to shoot using marshmallows. At least they will each have one. Oh! They do say "Jackson Hole" on them, so that makes them souvenirs.*

On the way back to the inn, I had the car washed, as we had picked up a lot of mud going through Yellowstone.

The next day we're to drive to Las Vegas, 690 miles from here. We planned to spend two nights in Vegas and be home on Thursday.

*Evelyn: With lots of pictures.*

### Day 20 – Oct. 7

Last night we had pizza for dinner and saved the leftovers for lunch today.

*Evelyn: I am so "fooded" out I can't even tell you.*

The breakfast at the inn was very good. In fact, the Wyoming Inn was the best place we stayed on the trip.

We left Jackson Hole and drove for almost 11 hours to Las Vegas. The weather was clear, with the temperature ranging



Evelyn at one of the hot sulfur springs.



Hal and Evelyn in Jackson Hole with a large bear.

from 31 to 89 degrees. We followed US 89 from Jackson Hole and reached I-15 just above Salt Lake City. Our drive that day took us through five states – Wyoming, Idaho, Utah, Arizona and Nevada.

*Evelyn: I don't suggest this drive for the faint of heart or those who hate driving. It really wasn't a bad drive if your goal was simply getting from point A to point B, and the scenery was varied. But it was one long day. We traded driving about every 200 miles, and that made it easier.*

We were to stay in Las Vegas for two nights and drive back to LA on Thursday. By the time we reached home, we had traveled almost 6,000 miles through 18 states.

*Evelyn: And we were still speaking to each other. In fact, as I wrote this, I reflected on my expectations and the reality of this great adventure. It is said that traveling with another person is the most stressful thing you can do. I had to admit that other than a very few differences of opinion about driving techniques, there was little to disagree about. I learned a great deal about our beautiful country and the regional differences and similarities. We had all types of weather, geography and topography. We are thankful for the beautiful and vast country we have.*

I hope you enjoyed our travel log. The trip was a great experience.

## RLACEI MEMBER NEWS:

**John Fritz**, Camas, Wash., retired in January 1978 as a Street Maintenance Foreman and turned 90 Sept. 25. He enjoys golf, swimming and photography. He has visited all of the United States states except Alaska. He served in the U.S. Navy for seven years, and is a survivor of two ships sunk in World War II, including at Pearl Harbor.

**Michael Westerlin**, Norwalk, retired in February 1984 as a Principal Economic Coordinator for Public Works. He has traveled to China, Japan, Korea, Spain, Portugal, England Scotland and Ireland. He has been a member of a board of education for 14 years and is past Advisory Board Member of the California Youth Authority. He has four sons, eight grandkids and three great-grandkids.

**Nick Apodaca** retired in 1996 after 27 years with Rec. and Parks. He is involved with senior programs in Arizona and has made recordings and performed in various musical programs. He has been on cruises around the world. He would like to hear from his old buddies. Call him at (520) 744-7526.

**Olga Singer**, North Hollywood, turned 93 Jan. 20 and still does her own driving and cooking. She retired in January 1998 as a Recreation Supervisor after 45 years of service. Give her a call at (818) 766-6441.

**Raymond Kellam**, Escondido, has been married for 58 years to Monica. He retired from Building and Safety in July 1986 as a Principal Building Inspector. He is a member of the Escondido Country Club and plays golf and pool there. He builds clocks from scratch and has won second place in a national contest. He has built 14 clocks. Call him at (760) 747-2241.

**George Ewing's** children threw a 60th wedding anniversary party for he and his wife, Peggy, Feb. 14 in Garden Grove. The valentine touch was nice for a pair of old lovebirds. Thanks to Ed Howell for the info.

**William Garber**, Playa del Rey, worked as a Sanitary Engineer at the Hyperion Treatment Plant. Their retirees have a monthly get-together that keeps friendships alive. He and his wife are very involved with the Congregational Church. They spent a week in England tracing the roots of Congregationalism.

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).

An information sheet, "What to Do Upon the Death of a Retired City Employee," is available by sending a stamped self-addressed envelope to Phil Skarin.

If you have news about yourself or other retirees that you'd like to share, send it to Phil Skarin at 5301 Norwich Avenue, Van Nuys, CA 91411 or phone (818) 784-0130.



Ken Kochakji



*Alive!*'s good friend and frequent contributor, Ken Kochakji, Retired, Rec and Parks, grabbed his camera and spent some time at Lake Balboa recently. "This picture of the Lake Balboa cherry blossom trees was taken last week," he wrote in mid-March. "The cherry blossoms will soon be in full glory." Thanks for sending them in, Ken!

# 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](mailto:talkback@cityemployeesclub.com)

## 31st Annual Retirees Invitational Golf Tournament



The 31st Annual Retired Los Angeles City Employees Invitational Golf Tournament will be held on Tuesday, June 2, 2009 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 20th** to: Tom Stemnock, Co-Chairman, 4040 Vineland Avenue, Suite 108, Studio City, CA 91604. For any questions, call either Co-Chairman Tom Stemnock at (818) 487-6789 or Phil Skarkin at (818) 784-0130.

### 2009 Golf Tournament Reservation Form

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
 Amount Included \$ \_\_\_\_\_ \$60.00 for R.L.A.C.E.I. and City Employees Club 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 or City Club
<b>(check all that apply)</b>			
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"/>

Reservation deadline: Wednesday, May 20th. Mail completed reservation form and check to:  
 Tom Stemnock, Co-Chairman  
 4040 Vineland Avenue, Suite 108, Studio City, CA 91604, (818) 487-6789

## LACERS Update, *continued from page 25*

1099R statements, current payment statements, deductions, health deduction information, current address and designated beneficiaries, any time anywhere 24/7 and as often as you like. The information is updated every two weeks to give you the most current information about your account. For more information, assistance with setting up your account or to let us know what you think of MYLACERS Web service, contact LACERS at [lacers.services@city.org](mailto:lacers.services@city.org) or (800) 779-8328.

"LACERS will conduct a health workshop Thursday, April 16 at the Friendship Auditorium, 3201 Riverside Dr. in Griffith Park. The theme is emotional wellness. Breakfast and lunch will be provided as well as drawings for door prizes and giveaways. Look for more details at future LACERS mailings.

"LACERS will hold an election for one of its active member Board of Administration seat on Friday, April 24. A runoff election may be held on Friday, June 5 of the top two candidates in the event one candidate does not receive at least 51 percent of the votes. The incumbent is Shelly I. Smith. Any active member of the retirement system can run for this seat, which is elected by LACERS active members. The board consists of seven commissioners, four appointed by the mayor, two elected by active members and one elected by retired members. Each board member serves a five-year term. In addition to meeting twice a month, each commissioner serves on at least one committee. The Board of Administration is the head of LACERS. Among other things, commissioners are responsible for:

- Determining policies focusing on asset allocation of the retirement fund
- Actuarial funding liabilities, and actuarial funding methods
- Selecting consultant and investment managers
- Overseeing the General Manager in the administration of the department
- Determining eligibility for disability retirements
- Ensuring the integrity of the financial control and reporting system.

Contact LACERS at (213) 473-7190 or the City Clerk Election Division at (213) 978-0444 for more information.



THOUGHT FOR THE DAY:

### *Patience and Courtesy*

*This is the first advice they give you in traffic school. Following this advice would have prevented getting that ticket.*

*This advice is applicable in many areas of life, such as in interpersonal relationships, discussion groups and at business board meetings. Do you listen attentively to what the other person is saying? Are you too quick to disagree, rather than looking between the lines to find something you agree with?*

— 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.

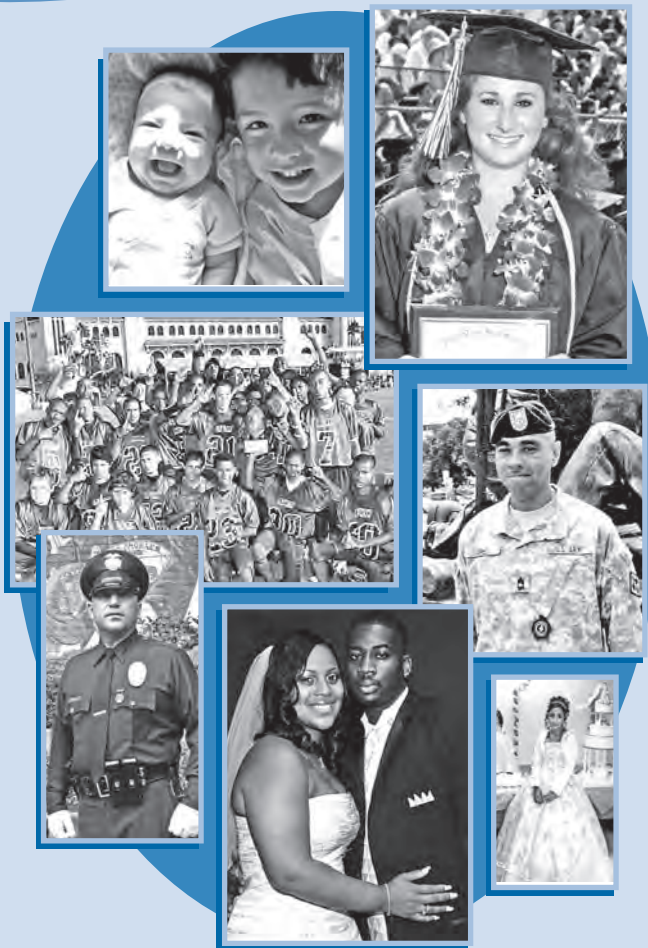
Edward Harding x703  
Harold Danowitz x707  
Phil Skarin x709

Jack Matthews x712  
Michael Karsch x704  
Jerry Bardwell x706  
Tom Stemnock x708

Americo Garza x710  
Neil Ricci x714  
Helen Salgado x713

## Life's Important Moments

# Share Your Good News!



Everyone reads Life's Most Important Moments in **Alive!** Share your news... and send in a photo! Have you gotten married? Had a baby? Graduated? Has someone in your family had a quinceañera? Is a family member in the military? Send in a photo and a paragraph, telling us the details. We love to share your good news.

### We're looking for:

- Weddings
- Babies
- Graduations
- Quinceañeras
- Special Achievements
- **Alive!** in the Military

Send digital photos (as high a resolution as you can send) to: [moments@cityemployeesclub.com](mailto:moments@cityemployeesclub.com)  
OR send paper photos (please don't send the only one you have!) to:

Life's Moments — **Alive!**  
City Employees Club of Los Angeles  
120 W. 2nd Street, Los Angeles, CA 90012

