

TOASTMASTERS

Anniversary Open House

City of Angels Toastmasters Club hosts an anniversary open house.

Story and photos by Carmen Steward, Fire and Police Pensions

More than 50 people attended the City of Angels Toastmasters Club held an open house Oct. 20 in City Hall South's first floor Conference Room. The City of Angels club used the open house, which noted the club's 31st anniversary, to showcase its programs, gain visibility and encourage membership. Guest presenter Irene Key gave an excellent speech titled "Book Covers Lost." This spunky City retiree addressed the attendees.

Guests were invited to participate in the Table Topics portion of the meeting, which involves answering spontaneous questions in a two-minute, thought-out speech. Heinz Roesner, Senior Storekeeper, General Services, let participants choose a fortune cookie and answer the question of how the fortune cookie's message corresponded to their life.

Toastmasters International helps to develop and promote members' speaking and leadership

skills. If you're interested in becoming a better presenter, overcoming nervousness while speaking to a group, then Toastmasters International is the team for you. Visit the City of Angels meeting each Tuesday, from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., Room 103, City Hall South. Contact Club President Suki Lagman, (213) 473-7060, for further information.



At the open house, from left: Toastmasters Club President Suki Lagman, General Services; Division D Governor Ron Code; and Toastmasters Club Immediate Past President Dely Villanueva.



City of Angels Toastmasters Club members at the open house included, from left: Novella Jordan, Public Works; Cheryl Robinson, Retired, ITA; Sandra Humphries, Public Works; Toastmasters Club President Suki Lagman, General Services; Carmen Steward, Fire and Police Pensions; Williana Johnson, LAPD; and Heinz Roesner, General Services.

LAPD

Charlie Beck,
Chief of Police,
LAPD.



New LAPD Chief

Charlie Beck, former Deputy Chief, appointed Chief of Police, LAPD.

Chief Beck now oversees the third largest police department in the United States, managing 10,000 sworn officers, 3,000 civilian employees, encompassing an area of 473 square miles, a population of approximately 3.8 million people, and an annual budget that exceeds \$1 billion. Major components of current LAPD strategy, according to a prepared statement, include the mitigation of crime, the reduction of gang violence, the containment of terrorism, and the continuation of the reforms that brought the department into compliance with the Consent Decree.

Chief Beck was born in Long Beach, in 1953 and attended Cal State/Long Beach. He was appointed to the LAPD in March 1977 after serving two years with the Los Angeles Police Reserve Corps. In June 1984, he was promoted to Sergeant, to Lieutenant in April 1993, to Captain in July 1999, and Commander in April 2005. In August 2006, he achieved the rank of Deputy Chief, the same rank his father, a retired Los Angeles Police Officer, had attained.

As an officer, Chief Beck's patrol assignments have included Rampart, Southeast, Pacific and Hollywood Areas. As a sergeant, his assignments included Harbor and Southwest Patrol, South Bureau C.R.A.S.H. and Internal Affairs Division. Upon being promoted to captain, he was initially assigned to Southeast Division followed by terms as the commanding officer of Juvenile Division, Central Area and finally Rampart Area. As a Commander, he was the Assistant to the Director, Office of Operations. Upon his promotion to Deputy Chief, he assumed command of Operations—South Bureau. Chief Beck went on to become

Chief of Detectives, where he implemented innovative, far ranging and visionary changes to the Detective Bureau.

Chief Beck is known for his ability to forge traditional policing methods, community outreach programs, tempered with the input of diverse stakeholders to form enduring crime abatement programs. During Chief Beck's tenure as Central Area's Commanding Officer, he formulated the original Safer Cities Initiative. He was charged with reforming the beleaguered Rampart Area in the aftermath of the Rafael Perez scandal.

While Commanding Officer of Rampart Area, Chief Beck also formed an alliance of community and political groups to reclaim MacArthur Park for the citizens of Los Angeles. This effort involved the support and funding from a diverse group of public and private entities. This included the City Attorney, the Mayor's Office, the Local Council Office, the United States Forest Department, Rec of Parks, the Central American Resource Center, multiple businesses and the general public.

Another change enacted by Chief Beck was the melding of Gang Operations Support Division and Narcotics Division into Gang and Narcotics Division. This new Division facilitates the efficient targeting and dismantling of narcotics trafficking and violence by gangs and effectively undermines the gang's ability to perpetuate as an ongoing criminal enterprise.

Chief Beck is married with three children. Two of Chief Beck's children are LAPD Officers.

Congratulations, Chief Beck, from the City Employees Club!

REST INSURED



BY JEFF GELINEAU

Vice President of United Agencies,
The Club's Auto and Home Insurance Partner



'Tis the Season For House Fires

One of the saddest news stories of the year always comes up about this time – someone's home burns to the ground during the holiday season.

Here are some safety tips for surviving this holiday season without having to call your insurance agent.

First, let's deal with the Christmas tree. Even though everyone knows they can catch fire, you never think it is going to happen to yours. Every year, Christmas tree fires cause more than \$990 million in damage, claim more than 400 lives, and injure almost 2,000.

Here are some tips on preventing Christmas tree fires:

- Pick a winner! Needles on fresh trees should be green and hard to pull back from the branches. If the tree has been freshly cut, the needle should not break. The trunk should be sticky to the touch. Old trees can be identified by bouncing the tree trunk on the ground – if a lot of needles fall off, the tree has been sitting around too long, has dried out, and is a safety hazard.
- Hug your tree! Don't place your tree near a heating vent or a fireplace. Heat dries out a tree very quickly. Don't smoke near the tree. Dropping or flicking ashes on the tree can spell trouble. Keep your tree stand filled with water at all times.
- Know when to say when. The biggest mistake people make is leaving their tree up for too long. Do not leave a tree up for more than two weeks!
- Time to decorate the tree! Use only nonflammable decorations. Make sure that what you are putting on the tree is flame-retardant or nonflammable. If you are using an artificial tree, make sure it is also flame-retardant. Never put candles on any tree.
- Time to say goodbye! Never put tree branches or needles in a fireplace or a wood-burning stove. Sure, it sounds like a good idea, but it can burn so fast and quickly that it might cause a problem. When the tree becomes dry, discard it promptly. Recycle it, don't burn it.

Test your lights first. Inspect your holiday lights every year before putting them up (either on your house or on your tree). Look for frayed wires, bare spots, gaps in the insulation, broken or cracked light bulb sockets and excessive kinking. When you are assured that the lights are good, use restraint! Don't overload your electric

outlets. Never link together more than three strands of lights. Periodically check your wires and cords. They should not be warm!

Another major source of fires in the winter is the improper use of heaters.

Here's a quick checklist of things to watch out for with your heater:

- Have your heater inspected to make sure that it is in good working condition.
- If you use a kerosene heater, be sure it has an emergency shutoff in the event that the heater is tipped over.
- Always properly vent your room when using a kerosene or propane heater.
- Never use any other type of fuel than what is recommended for that heater.
- If you use a fireplace, be sure to keep a glass or metal screen in front of the opening.
- Have your chimney inspected for creosote buildup.
- Keep flammable materials away from your fireplace.
- Be sure your fire is out when you go to sleep.

There's no greater feeling than being inside your warm house with your family on a cold winter night. But there is also no worse feeling than standing outside in your pajamas watching your house burn to ground. Be careful this time of year!

Feel free to call our agency if you have any questions about what we can do for you, would like to know what it would cost to buy your insurance through us, or would like a question answered on any type of insurance.

United Agencies is the Club's partner in helping members with their home and auto insurance, and related products. We specialize in creating personal relationships with our customers, and serving their needs in a prompt, efficient and friendly manner.

Call United Agencies today at (888) 801-5522. United Agencies Burbank. (CA License # 0252636.)

Have a question? Is there something about insurance that you've always wanted to know, but were too ashamed to ask? Maybe something that you've just always been curious about? Feel free to send me an email at jgelineau@unitedagencies.com, and I will try to answer your question in one of our monthly columns.

Be safe and have fun!

Call United Agencies Burbank today at (888) 801-5522.

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