

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

**James R. Wilke, 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 8: Annual membership meeting, 1 p.m.,**  
**Friendship Auditorium, 3201 Riverside Dr.**  
**RSVP: (800) 678-4145, x701**

**June 3: 32nd annual Retirees Golf Tournament,**  
**7:30 a.m., Alhambra Municipal Golf Course,**  
**630 S. Almansor St., Alhambra.**

## RLACEI:

# Will Cost of Living Mean Eight Percent Reduction?

### President, Ed Harding reports:



Ed Harding

"On Jan. 19, our Treasurer for the last 15 years, Jerry Bardwell, resigned from our board. However, Jerry was kind enough to attend our February board meeting to assist Michael Karsch, our new Treasurer, with the transition to his new duties.

"I cannot say enough of how valuable Jerry has been to our organization and to me. He has made the last 15 years that I have been your President much easier and pleasant ones. Again, con-

gratulations to Commissioner Bardwell. You will be an asset to LACERS Commission Board.

"The Retired Fire and Police Association reported that the Post Retirement Benefit Program, which allows a member to remarry or marry after retirement and which provides the new spouse with a portion of the member's pension, is well on its way. There have been 150 applications requested, and 28 members are enrolled in the program. The sta-

tus of this benefit program is waiting for an actuarial report. This is being discussed with LACERS.

"Don't forget to call and make reservations for lunch at our General Meeting April 8 at the Friendship Auditorium, at 3201 Riverside Dr.

Reminder: When you receive voter's ballot for LACERS' Commissioner, we urge you to "Vote for Ken Spiker for Board of Administration Commissioner." Submit your ballot prior to April 9.

### Legislative Update, Ken Spiker reports:



Ken Spiker

"A preliminary report indicated the COLA (cost of living) figure for July 1, will be minus-8 percent.

The City Attorney's representative is reviewing the City Ordinance and may recommend that the COLA Bank, for all 15,000 retirees, be reduced by 8 percent. I have notified the Board that I do not agree with that interpretation and will oppose any vote to make that reduction.

I will also like to ask for assistance from retired City Attorneys to review the statutes and give us their opinion. I am also going to suggest to the RLACEI Board of Directors that we fund an opinion from a private law firm.

The real threat is not the loss of 8 percent from our COLA bank, but the threat to the word "vested." Does the word "vested" mean the benefits earned are ours or can they be taken away from us?

Until better interpretation or clarification is presented, I will oppose my vote to make the reduction.

Recession and Politics Killing Initiatives, by RLACEI Treasurer, Michael Karsch: "Several pending

initiative petitions for the state ballot are facing dim prospects of qualifying for the ballot due to tightening money donations which have a lot to do with the recession as well as politics. The initiative affecting public agency pensions on which we have reported previously, pushed by the California Foundation for Fiscal Responsibility (previously pushed by former Assembly Member Keith Richman), has lost the support of Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger and leading Republican gubernatorial candidate Meg Whitman. The Sacramento Bee reported that this is "the death knell for the initiative" because the promoters were counting on these two politicians' support to help collect signatures, both as publicity and as money raisers. Schwarzenegger and Whitman had urged cutting public employee pension costs due to the unfunded liability they impose on government budgets. According to the Bee, political consultants explained that this initiative (which would only affect new hire government employees) would mobilize the public employ-

ee unions to bring more liberal voters to the polls in November. A Foundation spokeswoman said they would come back with a tougher measure to replace defined benefit pensions for new-hires with a 401(k) type defined contribution plan. This would mean an initiative for one of the 2012 ballots.

"Other pending initiatives are also doubtful of their ability to collect signatures for the fall ballot, due mainly to lack of money to fund the signature drive. California Forward, chaired by Robert Hertzberg, former Speaker of the Assembly, has two initiatives in need of signatures and money. The key initiative issue is lowering the vote requirement for passing a state budget from two-thirds to a simple majority. Proponents have raised only \$132,000 of the \$2 million needed to qualify a petition for the November ballot, but the signature-gathering must be done by mid-May. Another group, the Bay Area Council, announced it is suspending its initiative to call for a constitutional convention, due to weak financial support."

### 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



Santorini from sea level.



By Hal Danowitz,  
Secretary, RLACEI

## Retiree Hotlines

Who to call? 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 below.

**City Employees Retirement System:** (213) 473-7200

### RLACEI Retirement Counselors and Retiree Helplines: (800) 678-4145

• R.S.V.P.	Ext. 701
• 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
• Neil Ricci	Ext. 714

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

## RLACEI:

### Officers

Edward Harding, President  
Kenneth Spiker, First Vice President  
Tom Stemnock, Second Vice President  
Hal Danowitz, Secretary  
Michael Karsch, Treasurer

### Committee Chairpersons

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



## ■ Hal, Evelyn and Co. continue their Mediterranean cruise. Part 5.

*Evelyn and I took a 35-day trip, which included a self-guided week in Italy and then a 28-day cruise with ports in Italy, Croatia, Greece, Spain, Morocco and Portugal, with an ocean crossing to Fort Lauderdale, Florida. This month, we pick up our travels in Corfu, Greece, on board our Holland America (HAL) ship, the Oosterdam.*

Corfu is a small island between the heel of Italy and the west coast of mainland Greece. It was one of the first to attract large amounts of tourists in the 1960s. The ship docked in the port, and we walked the 1.5 miles into town. The weather continued to be wonderful -- no rain, lots of sun and moderate temperatures. A lot of walking seemed to take the place of formal exercise in the fitness center. We had seen the fitness center, but that's close as we got to it. So far the walking substitute seemed to work, with no large weight gains (*yet*). The town was renovated for a European Union summit in 1994 and is now one of the most elegant island capitals in the whole of Greece. We stayed in town a couple of hours. In the afternoon, we played a little bridge and did the team trivia again. We almost won, or at least did better than yesterday.

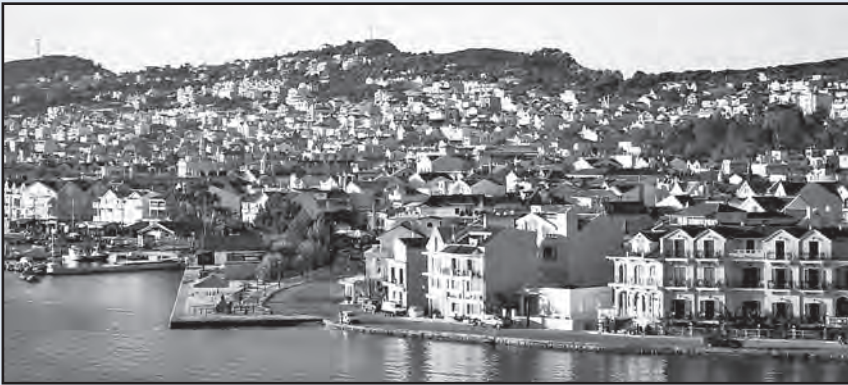
The evening show was Leo Ward, a comedic/magician who was very entertaining. The star of the show was our traveling companion, Myrna, who became the magician's assistant. She had started to form a fan club.

The next morning, we docked in Argostoli, Cephalonia, Greece, in the Ionian Sea. We were to tender into shore,

but a new dock recently opened, and the ship was allowed to use it. This made it easy to disembark. It was a short walk into town, a very picturesque fishing village with tile roofs, whitewashed buildings and a lot of quaint churches. The town was very clean, and the water was so clear that you could see to the sandy bottom. There was a walking street, which was dotted with cafés and gelato stands and had all the major shops. We spent about two-and-a-half hours just looking around. After we came back to the ship, we had lunch and then tried our hand at trivia again; this time we came in second. The ship sailed a 3 p.m. for Santorini, and we were to arrive there at noon the next day. The entertainment that night was Preston Coe, a tenor, who was very good and sang all types of music, including rock and roll.

after the ship disembarked the tours, we were able to go ashore.

Santorini was the first port where we used tenders. The operation was very well organized, and we were on shore about 2 p.m. The capital is Fira, about 300 meters about sea level. The only way to reach it is either by mule or cable car. You can also walk, but you need to stay out of the way of the mules. We opted for the cable car (Myrna, Don and I opted for the cable car, and Evelyn voted for the mule. (*How can a grown-up person be afraid of a mule? -- Evelyn.*)) The cable car cost \$4 each way. Santorini is a real tourist town -- all the buildings are white, and there are lots of souvenir stores and restaurants, which are not inexpensive. We walked around for a few hours and then headed back to the ship. We weren't to sail until 11 p.m., and



Argostoli, Greece.



Myrna, Don and Hal sit by the dock in Argostoli.

We met a lot of people on this cruise -- during breakfast and lunch we often shared tables with other people, and we heard all kinds of stories, some happy, some sad. That day, we had breakfast with a woman who just divorced her husband of 41 years. People tell you many things when they don't think they will ever see you again.

That morning we continued our sail to Santorini in the Aegean Sea. As we didn't arrive until noon, we played trivia and took a tour of the galley in the morning. The ship reached Santorini about noon, and

the next day was going to be a sea day and an opportunity to hit the gym. Santorini was really pretty. It almost wanted me to stand up and sing the soundtrack from *Mamma Mia*.

The night sky was filled with points of light from all of the buildings perched on the top of the cliffs. It is truly a very romantic city, both day and night. Its season was just about to end and the locals take off during the winter, although I was told the weather still remains pretty mild.

That night we had dinner in the





Canoletto dining room, a specialty restaurant that serves Italian food. It was very good. Afterward, we sat out by the pool and joined the Lido Pool Party. You haven't seen anything until you see a lot of senior citizens doing a conga line.

That was our seventh day on the cruise, and our first day at sea since we left Venice. We didn't feel the need for a day off from touring, but it was nice to just relax and not have to get off the ship. Evelyn and Myrna did the 5-K walk for the Susan G. Komen "Walk for the Cure" to fight breast cancer, which they also did on the last Holland America ship we

were on. Don and I cheered them on. Evelyn and Myrna ate lunch in the dining room just to try it out; I went to the Lido; and Don skipped it. We had to start cutting back or we would be getting off as freight. We played bridge for about two hours and then joined our trivia team; we didn't fare as well that day.

We had a great discovery -- two more drawers. I found them in the bottom of the small sofa. I hoped to find another bathroom soon.

Overall we were very pleased with the service and the food on the ship. It seemed to be at a higher level than we had had on other Holland America ships. The staff was very friendly and tried to learn our names and how we like our coffee or adult beverage.

That night was the second formal night, and we dressed for the event. I'm even considering getting a dinner jacket one of these days. I don't know if you can wear a dinner jacket anywhere but on a cruise. Oh well, that is a discussion for another day. The show was just mediocre -- an ensemble of dance numbers. It seemed just too disjointed and rushed. We had



Corfu.



Don by the hop-on, hop-off bus in Catania.



Myrna and Hal at the evening cocktail party.



Evelyn finishing the Komen "Walk for the Cure."



The central square in Catania.

21 more days to go, so I'm sure we will have both good and bad talent.

The next day, we were in Catania, Sicily. We docked early that morning within walking distance of the tourist area. We left the ship around 9 a.m. and intended to walk around the area. We found a hop-on, hop-off bus to take us around the city for \$5, plus \$2 for the earphones. It was a nice 40-minute ride, which ended at the Piazza Duomo, a short walk back to our ship.

Catania sits at the foot of Mount Etna, which continues to destroy the city on a regular basis. The city had lots of smells, most of them bad. It was a lot like Rome, but without the glitter. It's not high on my list to return to. Other cruise ships stop at Messina in Sicily, which is considered a better stop. We were hopeful that when we left later that evening,

we may have a view of the Stromboli volcano on a nearby island. It rises 3,031 feet about sea level and is considered active.

That night at dinner, we celebrated Canadian Thanksgiving, and, with our Canadian dinner mates, we ate turkey and all the familiar fixings.

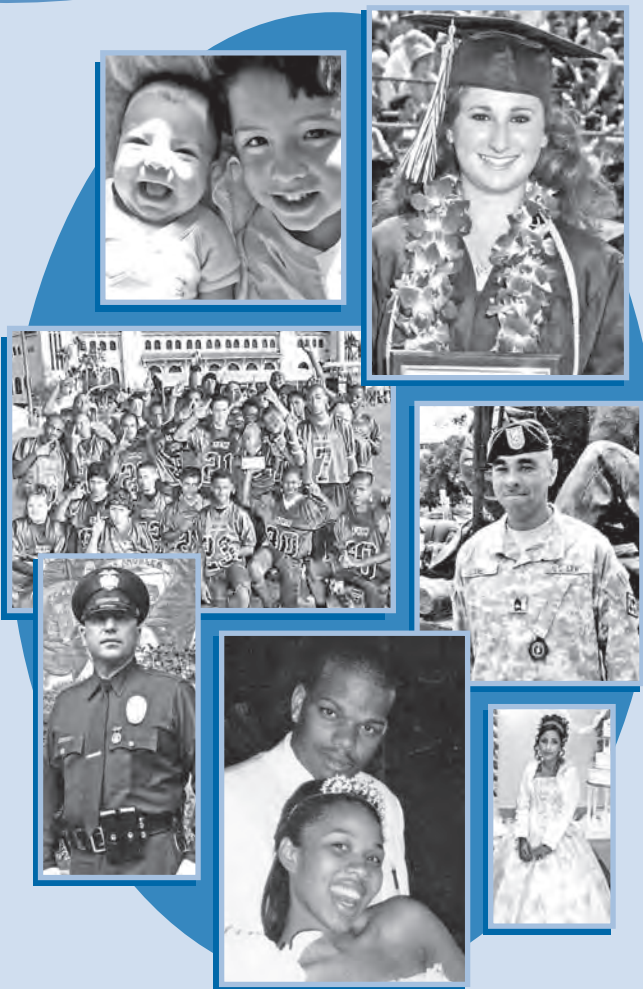
After dinner, the weather turned bad, with rain, heavy winds and rough seas. The ship really was moving. Luckily it was late in the evening, so most people were in their cabins. They locked the doors closed on the promenade deck to keep you inside. We never got to see the volcano.

We sailed through the Straits of Messina, which separates the mainland of Italy from Sicily. In the morning we were scheduled to dock in Naples. We'll continue our cruise story next month.

For Retired Club Members

## 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 West 2nd Street, Los Angeles, CA 90012







# LACERS Update

**RLACEI LACERS Correspondent Mary Beetz reports:**

“The City Clerk of Los Angeles will mail LACERS retired members a ballot of candidates to serve on the LACERS Board of Administration to represent LACERS Retired Members for the term July 1, 2010 to June 30, 2015. The ballot will contain each candidate's qualifications.

“Beginning March 13, members must mail in their ballot or deposit it in the election box located in the City Clerk's Election Division during regular business hours of the seven calendar days, preceding the April 9, 2010 election. All ballots must be received no later than 5 p.m. on Election Day. The Election Division is open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. and is located at:

Piper Technical Center  
555 Ramirez St., Space 300  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Here are the candidates in the order they appear on the ballot:

- Earl Anschultz
- Shelley Smith

- Ken Spiker
- Kurt Neswald
- Gary Boehm
- Oscar Peters, and
- Leo Rosen.

LACERS Surpassing Numbers: “During the Early Retirement Incentive Program (ERIP) discussions, LACERS committed to retiring at least 350 members per month until the 2,400 ERIP retirements are completed. LACERS retired 360 members in March and is set to retire another 365 in April. As of today, LACERS has retired 1,561 members as part of the ERIP. To help the City achieve the maximum possible General Fund savings, LACERS has been retiring as many General Funded members as possible each month.

“LACERS hold large Medicare Workshop for Retirees and ERIP Applicants. The largest Medicare workshop to date was held Feb. 11 at the Friendship Auditorium. Nearly 200

retirees and their dependents attended the workshop to learn about LACERS Medicare requirement that members need, to enroll in Medicare Part B upon turning age 65 to continue receiving their medical plan subsidy.

“LACERS Medicare workshops are held for members turning age 65 and attendance is by invitation only, due to the increasing numbers. On hand were LACERS staff, representatives from LACERS health plans, as well as representatives from the Retired Los Angeles City Employees, Incorporated (RLACEI).

Spring Wellness Workshop: “The next LACERS carrier-sponsored wellness workshop is scheduled for Thursday, May 27, at the Friendship Auditorium in Griffith Park. The workshop is entitled Bone Up on Your Health and will feature presentations on bone and joint health. LACERS retired members will receive an invitation in the mail about one month prior to the event. Attendance is by reservation only. Members should RSVP soon after receiving their invitations because these wellness workshops fill up quickly.

News and Notes: “Gary Mattingly is our new RLACEI Director. He retired after 38 years with the City. After a stint in Public Works, he spent about 12 years in the City Administrative Office. His last 23 years were as General Manager of Fire and Police Pensions.

“He graduated from Cal State LA with a degree in finance. He was later honored with an Outstanding Alumnus Award from the same university. In his spare time, he enjoys golf, stamp collecting and investments. He and his wife enjoy their place in the desert and visiting his home state of Kentucky. He has three children and two grandchildren”

“To find out the latest retirement news, visit [www.rlacei.com](http://www.rlacei.com)

“If you have any news about yourself or other retirees that you would like to share, send it to: Publicity Chair Mary Beetz, 137 Westmont Dr., Alhambra, CA 91801. (800) 678-4145. You may also Email her at [mbeetz4841@aol.com](mailto:mbeetz4841@aol.com)”

## 32nd Annual Retirees Invitational Golf Tournament



The 32nd Annual Retired Los Angeles City Employees Invitational Golf Tournament will be held on Thursday, June 3, 2010 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 \$65 for R.L.A.C.E.I., City Club and All City Employee Benefits Service Association members (\$75 for all others) and includes green fees, carts, prizes and lunch at the Almansor Court restaurant. Lunch only is \$25.
- 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 Chairman Tom Stemnock at (818) 487-6789 or Phil Skarkin at (818) 784-0130.

### 2010 Golf Tournament Reservation Form

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Amount Included \$ \_\_\_\_\_ \$65 for R.L.A.C.E.I. and City Employees Club Members. (\$75 for all others)  
Luncheon: \$25

**Make checks payable to R.L.A.C.E.I.**

#### NOTICE: SOFT SPIKES MANDATORY!

### FOURSOME

Member Member  
R.L.A.C.E.I. A.C.E.B.S.A.  
or City Club Guest

**(check all that apply)**

Name

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
2. \_\_\_\_\_  
3. \_\_\_\_\_  
4. \_\_\_\_\_

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