

REC AND PARKS

A Poem for a Bridge

Crew restores the Echo Park Bridge, an L.A. landmark.



The Echo Park Bridge, restored to its original glory.

Not only is the Rec and Parks' Griffith Metro Facilities Repair crew great at repairing stuff – they did a great job restoring the Echo Park Bridge, an L.A. classic – but they're even good poets!

Louis A. Suarez, Carpenter, Griffith Metro Facilities Repair, Rec and Parks, put paper to pen and crafted an ode to the crew's pride and joy, the restored bridge. We are happy to reprint the epic! Thanks for bringing it to our attention, and further thanks for doing a great job restoring the bridge. Excellent work!

Alive! ran the story a few years ago of the bridge's restoration – the crew pretty much took on the job on their own because they wanted to restore this L.A. classic, seen in the movie *Chinatown* and in others. It was an eyesore and not able to be enjoyed by the City. But it's now back to its former glory, thanks to the crew:

- Larry Mottler, Supervisor
- Rod Nisperos, Carpenter Supervisor
- Marty Barba, Paint Supervisor
- Darryl Mack, Electrical Supervisor
- Otis Morgan, Fred Shaw and Figgy Figueroa, Welders
- Louis A. Suarez, Omar Vargas, James Shakir, Brian Kelly and Jose "Pepe" Ramos, Carpenters.

Without further ado, here's the poem about the bridge. (And thanks for sharing it with *Alive!* readers.)



Carpentry crew, from left: Omar Vargas, James Shakir and Jose "Pepe" Ramos. Not pictured: Brian Kelly.



Scaffolding is up on both sides of the bridge, which is ready for rebuilding.

An Ode to the Echo Park Bridge

By Louis A. Suarez

For years the bridge called out for repair in its own way,

Each broken board, each rotten post, calling out! One day, one day!

Well, that day is upon us you have been heard!

We will rebuild you, stronger than ever.

Your glory days are back, you have our word!

Otis, Fred and Figgy, the welders, always ready and willing to apply their trade,

Without hesitation correcting the one mistake that I had made!

That's the true spirit and nature of a professional tradesman

Never did I hear "It can't be done" – rather it was – yes we can!"

Two union carpenters, Omar and James, came on board to work their skill,

The kind of men who are strong of will

We had Pepe our helper, what an asset he was to our crew,

Bringing materials, setting up our tools, he knew exactly what do to!

Then there was Bryan, our apprentice carpenter, working with the journeymen and carrying his load,

Yes, he was our Huckleberry when it came to moving barges, later down the road.

Safety was of prime consideration, our boss Larry Mottler made sure of that,

providing cables, harnesses, and the old hard hat!

As the dismantling of the bridge began, I could I clearly tell,

That the crew I had would do their job well!

Larry asked, "Will the bridge be ready for the lotus?"

Confident in my crew, I said, "Yes it would, and that's not bogus!"

Was I sticking my neck out? Not a chance! The bridge was ready a week in advance!

Why was it possible to do this?

Well, encouragement, commendations, this was something Larry did not miss!

The pin job was done by Marty's crew,

With each stroke, with each roll its beauty grew.

Again, in its own way, the bridge spoke, "Thank you, thank you!"

Again, I say the mark of the true craftsmen is when they say, "Yes We Can!"

Paul, Rick, Jim, William and other painters proved that as they worked on the span!

Competing the bridge was indeed a big deal,

To show their appreciation, Phil and his boys prepared for us all a big barbecue meal!

Our Super, Mark Mariscal, and anyone who was a V.I.P.

Crossed the bridge onto the island for fireworks to see!

The beauty of the Echo Park Bridge will be there for others to enjoy,

Behind the scene are the tradesmen that made it possible, and that gives

Me the greatest of joy!

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