

For Retired Club Members



The Best Years



By Mary Beetz,
RLACEI Publicity Chair

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:

Oct. 7: RLACEI annual corporation meeting and elections, 1 p.m., Friendship Auditorium, 3201 Riverside Dr.

Dec. 9: RLACEI holiday party, noon, Grace E. Simons Lodge, 1025 Elysian Park.

Reservations: (800) 678-4145, x701.

RLACEI:

Early Retirements Could Be Behind High Picnic Totals

President, Ed Harding reports:



Ed Harding

"The picnic held Aug. 12 at the Grace Simons Lodge was a total success. We had more retirees attending than we have ever had, more than 175. I was happy to hear of the new retirees who attended and am delighted to hear some are RLACEI members. Welcome to RLACEI!

Lita Payne, Assistant General Manager of LACERS, and Alex Rabrenovich, Chief Health Benefits Administrator, and staff were present to assist with retirees' questions and concerns.

LACERS' speakers reassured the retirees not to believe what is being said by the media or written in the newspaper regarding the pensions' financial status or their medical care. Retirees' pensions are secured as well as their medical care. The response to this comment was overwhelming, echoing throughout the park as retirees clapped and roared with relief. Alex further commented that health seminars are being held at various locations so as to reach more retirees. Mailings will

be sent regarding dates, times and locations.

Robert Larios from the *Alive!* Newspaper took pictures as did Edward Rivera from *El Pueblo*.

See you at the Friendship Auditorium Oct. 7 for the RLACEI and LACERS joint meeting. LACERS will discuss health plans and open enrollment. RLACEI will hold election of directors of your choice. Breakfast and lunch will be served. Reservations are requested.

LACERS Update: Mary Beetz, LACERS representative, reports:



Mary Beetz

"Death Notification of a LACERS Member or Beneficiary: Contact the Los Angeles City Employees' Retirement System (LACERS) upon the death of the person receiving LACERS' monthly retirement allowance, continuance, or survivorship. Call (800) 779-8328. TTD (888) 349-3995. www.LACERS.org.

"This person may have been a: retired City Employee; surviving spouse of a retired City Employee; surviving domestic partner of a retired City Employee; or a

dependent receiving a continuance or survivorship benefit.

"Be prepared to provide the deceased's full name and Social Security number. LACERS staff will contact the deceased member's listed beneficiary(ies) for more information and documents as deemed necessary.

"Other organizations you might want to contact:

■ Social Security Administration (800) 772-1213, TTY (800) 325-0778

■ U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs (Veteran Benefits): (800) 827-1000

■ Los Angeles Federal Credit Union (direct deposit or account): (877) 695-2328

■ City Employees Club (if life insurance on file): (800) 464-0452

■ RLACEI (if member): (800) 678-4145, x713."

RLACEI Website

Hal Danowitz asks you to visit the RLACEI Website at 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!

Isabelle and Maddie get ready to surf.

By Hal Danowitz,
Secretary, RLACEI

Retiree Hotlines

Who to call? Call the Helpline and reach the officers of the Retired Los Angeles City Employees, Inc. If you move or change your address, contact Helen Salgado. Also notify LACERS, ACEBSA, and LAFCU.

City Employees Retirement System: (213) 473-7200

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

• Mary Beetz	Ext. 711
• Hal Danowitz	Ext. 707
• Americo Garza	Ext. 710
• Edward Harding	Ext. 703
• Michael Karsch	Ext. 704
• Jack Mathews	Ext. 712
• Gary Mattingly	Ext. 702
• Neil Ricci	Ext. 714
• Helen Salgado (membership)	Ext. 713
• Phil Skarin	Ext. 709
• Ken Spiker	Ext. 705
• Tom Stemnock	Ext. 708
RSVP:	Ext. 701

DWP Retirement Plan Office: (213) 367-1722

RLACEI:

Officers

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

Committee Chairpersons

Hal Danowitz: Bylaws
Americo Garza: Picnic, Holiday Party and Installation
Jack Mathews: Senior Citizens
Neil Ricci: Health and Nominating
Helen Salgado: Membership
Phil Skarin: Publicity and Parliamentarian
Ken Spiker: Legal and Legislative
Tom Stemnock: Audit
Tom Stemnock and Phil Skarin: Golf

Directors

Mary Beetz
Americo Garza
Michael Karsch
Jack Mathews
Neil Ricci
Helen Salgado
Phil Skarin



After the Cruise, the Comforts of Cabo

■ After their monumental cruise, Hal and Evelyn treat their family to their annual trip to Cabo San Lucas.

My wife, Evelyn, and I were recovered enough from our recent cruise [see the last nine issues of *Alive!* –Ed.] to make our annual trip to Cabo San Lucas. Mexico, with the grandkids during spring break. We have an interval ownership unit at Playa Grande Resort, as do Effie and Pierre, the other set of grandparents. The units connect, and combined, we can sleep 10 people. Best of all, we have four full bathrooms.

This year, there was some indecision as to whether Effie and Pierre would go. Evelyn and I decided that in any case we would take the kids, so I booked airline tickets on American Airlines for the first Saturday of spring break. About a month before we were to leave, Effie decided to go along, and then Michelle, our daughter, also decided to go for part of the week. They were unable to get on the same flight as us and had to fly down on Sunday. So Evelyn and I would be flying with the three grandkids (Maddie, 13; Isabelle, 11; and Coco, 9) for the first time by ourselves.

Michelle drove us to the airport, and we checked in with no problems. Every year I prepare a consent form to take minors out of the country, and never have I been asked for a copy. Of course the year we somehow don't have it, we will need it. All the kids have their own passports, of course.

Instead of waiting at the gate, we were able to use the American Airlines Admirals Club by showing our Platinum American Express card. The kids loved it; they could have as many snacks and drinks as they liked.

The flight, at a little more than two hours, was uneventful, and the kids were very good. After going through immigration customs, we headed out the door, ignoring the numerous timeshare solicitors, and found the TransBaja car service. I booked a private car so that we could stop at a market on the way to the resort, and it is just easier. Where the airport access road and the main highway meet is a very large supermarket where we stopped to pick up necessities; breakfast and lunch stuff; bottled water (even though you can drink the water at the resort); beer and wine; and lots of snacks.

We arrived at the resort in the late afternoon and were able to check into both units, even though Effie wasn't with us. After figuring out the sleeping arrangements, we unpacked and decided to eat dinner in the lobby restaurant. Everyone was tired from the long day, so we turned in.

Usually on Sunday we would attend the owners update, but because Effie wasn't here we delayed it until Monday. We just lied around the pool and hung out until Michelle and Effie arrived around 4 p.m. Just from being around the pool area you could see the effect of the

economy and the news about the criminal activities in Mexico. It was easy to get a pool lounge, when in prior years if you didn't get to the pool early you would not get a lounge.

We have been coming to Cabo for a number of years and find it a very safe place to visit. During our stay we walked from the resort to the main area of town both day and night and never had or saw a problem. The area depends on tourists, so the last thing that anyone wants is for a tourist to get hurt.

Effie and Michelle arrived late in the afternoon, and after they got settled we walked toward the central area and had dinner at the Shrimp Factory. We had eaten there on other trips and enjoyed the food and service.

In the morning, Michelle and the kids hung out by the pool, while Evelyn, Effie and I attended the owner's presentation. We do this to get a free breakfast and, if you stay for the sales pitch, a free gift. This year we received two \$55 coupons for a restaurant. Usually it's an easy process, but this time we had a salesman who just wouldn't take no for an answer. We ended up wasting almost four hours. The rest of the day we stayed around the pool. At Playa Granda, we met a family from Santa Monica, and they have a son that is Middies' age, so the girls hung out with him.



Coco in the pool.

Our oldest granddaughter, Maddie, is a very good surfer, and we wanted to give her a chance to surf. I asked the concierge at the hotel, and she suggested we drive up to Cerritos Beach. It is about 45 minutes north of Cabo on the Pacific side. There were six of us, so I wanted to rent a van or SUV, but there were none available, and we ended up with two Volkswagen sedans. We planned to do this later in the week.

We try to do something a little different each year, so the girls decided they wanted to try Sea Trek. Sea Trek is the "world's premier underwater helmet diving experience," according to the promotional materials. We took a boat to a stationary barge in the Sea of Cortez, about 200

yards from shore. We were provided with wet suits (we all used them but Maddie), and after a short set of instructions, we entered the water by using a ladder. Then a 70-pound helmet was lowered over our heads and rested on our shoulders. The helmet had an air hose attached. We climbed down about 20 feet to the ocean floor. We had two guides, and the sea trail had a rope you could use to follow the path. It was very easy and safe. If you got water in your helmet, you just stood up and it would clear. We didn't see a lot of fish, but the guides had a baby octopus and a sea anemone, which we all got to hold. We stayed down around 25 minutes. The cost is \$70 per person. The minimum age is 8, but Coco, who is 9, wasn't big enough to support the helmet and couldn't go down. Those of you who remember those old diving movies with the suits and helmets before scuba, well that's what the adventure was like, and the kids loved it.

I won't bore you with all the places that we ate, but we did find a very good restaurant that serves real local cuisine that we recommend. It's the Hacienda El Coyote; its Website is www.haciendaelcoyote.com.

Thursday was surfing day, and we picked up the two cars and drove to Playa Cerritos. I had called ahead of time to make sure they had surfboards to rent. We drove north on Highway 19 until we reached "Km marker 66," which is the exit for the Cerritos Beach Club. There are no signs, so you have to look for the marker. We found the beach club at the end of the dirt road, located on a very nice sandy beach that had very good waves, according to Maddie. There were a number of beach lounges along the water and we were told to use whatever we liked. There was no charge for the lounges. The family we met at the Playa Granda was also there, so our group numbered around 11 adults and children. We had lunch brought from the beach club restaurant, and we were able to get drinks and snacks during the day. The kids had a great time; I rented a boogie board for Coco, and Isabelle did some surfing using Maddie's board. It was a great place to get away for the day, and I would come back again even without the kids.

The Pacific side of Cabo has a strong rip-tide, so any ocean activities are on the Sea of Cortez until you go some distance north.

Michelle was to return home on Friday, so we had breakfast at the Office, which has become a tradition while we are in Cabo. We walked back to the Playa Granda so we could do some last-minute shopping.

Friday was our last full day, and on Saturday we packed up and returned home. It was another successful trip to Cabo San Lucas.



Annual Picnic



Retirees Assn. hosts annual August picnic.

Photos by Robert Larios, Club Director of Operations

RLACEI – The annual Retired Los Angeles City Employees, Inc. (RLACEI) summer picnic took place Aug. 12 at the Grace E. Simons Lodge near Dodger Stadium.

Ed Harding, RLACEI President, and his hard-working board put on another fantastic picnic. Entertainment was provided by the square-dance caller, Ron Black, and food was provided by Chris and Pitts.

To find out about other upcoming RLACEI events or join the organization, go to www.rlacei.com

