

A Message From the CEO

A Good City Keeps The Best of the Old

by John Hawkins,
President and CEO, The Club

There's a lot of hubbub these days over a potential new football stadium downtown, built in the shadow – and footprint! – of our Convention Center.

But for a City to be great, it has to respect its history. Honor it, take care of it. And when necessary, bring it back.

That's what I was thinking when I was driving past Echo Park a month or so ago, and I saw the work that was beginning on the lake (hard to miss that!) and the super-cool Echo Park Boathouse, as you can see in our cover story this month.

It's getting fixed, and I think that's awesome.

Further cool is that four City Departments are coming together to make it shine again – Public Works/Engineering, which is designing and supervising the project; Rec and Parks, which owns the building and is overseeing its progress; the City Council, notably Eric Garcetti's office, which is managing the process with the public, and finding the money to get it done; and General Services, which is doing the actual construction work, instead of hiring an outside contractor that probably wouldn't do as good a job on it, anyway. There are a lot of City Employees involved in this project, which isn't the biggest. But it's that important.



Boathouse project supervisor Ohaji Abdallah, Public Works/Engineering (right), talks about the rehab process with *Alive!* editor John Burnes.

I remember visiting the boathouse when I was a kid growing up in Los Angeles, so maybe I'm placing more emphasis on this than others might. And yet ... there's a bigger story here. Great cities take care of their histories. And great City Employees take pride in making that history come, well, alive. That's what's happening with the Echo Park Boathouse project. I can't wait to see it rehabbed and back to its happy self ... and maybe then even try to squeeze into a paddleboat ride with my family, when the lake is filled again. I'll do it for old time's sake. But I'll do it for the future, too.

Special thanks to **Ohaji Abdallah** and **Michelle Vargas** of Public Works; **Andrea Epstein**, **David Attaway** and **JuanCarlos Chan** at Rec and Parks; and the **awesome construction crew** from General Services, for making the story possible.

Meanwhile, we move on. Can you believe it's November already? Well, as I write this, we're still on the good side of Halloween -- meaning, the amazing Halloween events that **Ticket Gal**, Rachael Brecher, has for our Club Members are still being snatched up at a fast pace. (Good for you!) But soon the temperatures will dip, the light will shorten, and Thanksgiving will be ours once again. (**Chef Larios** is really on top of this – he's already making turkey leftovers! But I can't wait to try it.) This season always flies by so quickly. I'm happy to remind all our Club Members that our Club Store is a great destination for holiday needs because it's true. And there are holiday events to schedule and attend, and other seasonal appointments to keep us busy.

But don't forget to give a quiet – or otherwise – moment of thanks for all that you have. We live in the best country, we have work for our hands to do, and we have our loved ones in our lives. I know I am hugely thankful for my life, my family, my staff, and getting to know all our awesome Club Members every day, every week, throughout the years. Just like the boathouse, old-fashioned things are worth preserving, and being thankful for.

Happy Thanksgiving from the Club to you and your families.

JOHN

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Alive! Behind the Scenes

Club photographer Tom Hawkins photographs Ohaji Abdallah, project manager of the Echo Park Boathouse rehabilitation project, outside the boathouse.