



# CLUB SPORTS

News from Sports Leagues sponsored by the City Employees Club of Los Angeles

• Dec. 2011

## Softball Done, Running Picks Up Speed

■ Softball concludes another great season. A runner shares her story.

Photos by Robert Larios, the Sports Dude; and Summy Lam, Club Director of Marketing

### Sign Up Mondays!

Stop by the Club on Mondays (8 a.m.–4:30 p.m.) to sign up for any upcoming Club sports league!

**Come meet Robert Larios, The Sports Dude**



**Contact Robert Larios, the Sports Dude, for registration information:**

sportsdude@cityemployeesclub.com  
(800) 464-0452, ext. 134  
www.cityemployeesclub.com

**Watch your coworkers play, and cheer them on!**

**SOFTBALL:**

Downey Recreation Center  
1772 North Spring St.  
Los Angeles, CA, 90031

Shatto Recreation Center  
3191 Fourth St.  
Los Angeles, CA, 90020

Yosemite Recreation Center  
1840 Yosemite Dr.  
Los Angeles, CA, 90041

**BASKETBALL:**

Expo Center  
3980 Bill Robertson Lane  
Los Angeles, CA 90037

### Softball

The third season of Club Softball ended Oct. 26 with the **LAX Jets** winning their first City Employees Club Championship title versus the two-time champions the **Guzzlers**. The LAX Jets won in a nail-biter, 8 – 7. Fans from both teams were present and added to the excitement of the game with their cheers and jeers.

The Guzzlers came back late in the game to tie the LAX Jets 7 – 7, only to succumb to the Jets when they scored on an error to win the title.

Congratulations to the LAX Jets, the Guzzlers and all the teams that played in the league this year.



### Basketball

The fall season of the Club Basketball League is under way at the Expo Center, 3980 Bill Robertson Lane, behind the Coliseum. Teams including the **Hoopsters** and **105 West** are making a strong showing. Check the Club Website for complete schedule and standings details.



### Running Club



From left: Club Runners Kathy Laskowsky, Genevieve Fernandez, Cecil Tidalgo, and Liz Gonzalez. It was the first half marathon for Kathy, Cecil, and Liz.

**Genevieve Fernandez, DWP, Club Runner, says:**  
"We would like to thank the City Employees Club for sponsoring us for the Rock 'n' Roll Half Marathon. We successfully finished the race. Thank you again to the Running Club for organizing!"

## Running Club

# Start Once, Finish Twice

By Karen Dienhart, ITA, Club Runner

I had already hung up my running shoes many years ago, but recently found myself once again longing for the euphoric days of pounding the pavement in rubber soles. While there are myriad incentives to get moving – a quest for mind-body harmony, a Zen-like experience, the invigoration of increased physical and mental strength, or running to support a cause – I admit that my primary motivation was to get free stuff.

This past summer, *Alive!* advertised free race registration to five of Southern California's premier running events for Club members, with a signup deadline of July 30. After a single phone call to Robert Larios, the Sports Dude, I officially became a member of the City Employees Running Club.

My first Club running event was the Spirit of LA 5K in July at Elysian Park. Despite my initial lack of confidence, I had an enjoyable run over a hilly course on dirt trails, and I was the first woman of the Club runners to cross the finish line. My second Club running event was the very popular Ketchum YMCA Stairclimb Sept. 23, an annual downtown fundraiser. The finish line is at the top of the US Bank building, 75 stories high, 1,500 steps from the start line. Their motto is "Elevators Are for Wimps." This year's event drew more than 2000 individuals, teams and public safety "High Rise Heroes," including more than 200 firefighters in 70-plus pounds of full gear. The fastest finish time was 9 minutes, 38 seconds. The average finish time was 24 minutes, and the average time for High Rise heroes in full gear was an impressive 29 minutes. I finished 422nd out of more than 2,000 people, landing me in the top 10 percent for my age category, which means that there is plenty of room for improvement next year.

The next Club event was the Long Beach Marathon Oct. 9. Intimidated by the 26.2 full-marathon distance, I opted for the half marathon instead. Although I did not even feel adequately prepared to complete the half marathon, I was still motivated by a higher calling, namely, the free registration. My extreme apprehension bordered on self-sabotage, as I woke up late on race day. AT 6:45 a.m., 15 minutes before the starting gun would go off, I realized that I would need an alternate plan to get to the race site. My original plan was to drive to Wardlow Station and ride the Blue Line to Long Beach, but this plan was now out of the question since the race was starting in 15 minutes.

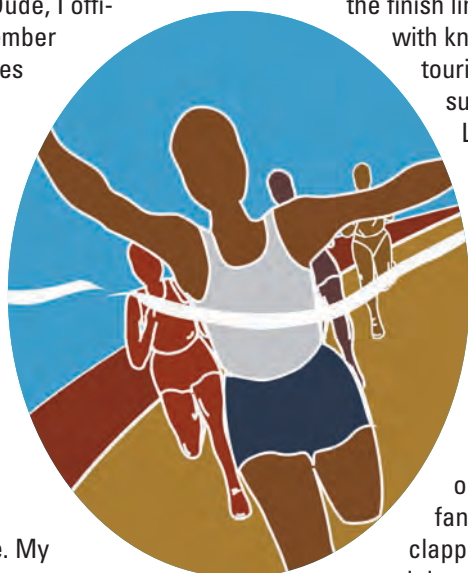
I had not planned on driving to the race site due to heavy traffic and extensive street closures, but I was now out of options. Unsure of which streets were closed and unable to read the small print on the course map, I bolted out the door and packed my mountain bike in the trunk of my car. I drove towards Long Beach, but I soon encountered a roadblock for the marathon and was forced to park my car. Immediately, I mounted my bike and

pedaled furiously towards the start line. Inadvertently, I was ushered onto the marathon course by the traffic police. The official bike race was currently in progress along the marathon course, and I was apparently somewhere near the front! The bike race had begun one hour prior to the running race, and both races followed the same course. At the time I arrived, the lead bicyclists were finishing the course as the first marathon runners were just beginning the course.

I knew that my destination, the start line, was not very far from the finish line, so I continued to follow the bicyclists to the finish line. On my mountain bike with knobby tires, I felt like a tourist at the Tour de France, surrounded by a peloton of Lycra-clad bicyclists in tuck position on their racing bikes with skinny tires. I am sure the bicyclists were wondering how I got to the front of the pack out of nowhere, but the crowd didn't seem to notice that I was out of place in my running gear. I was cheered on by wildly enthusiastic fans who waved their arms, clapped their hands, jumped up and down, waved their hand-made signs, shouted encouragement and rang their clanging cowbells. I guiltily shook my head and tried to explain that I was just a runner who was trying to find the start line, but the cheering only got louder with every passing mile. The more they cheered, the faster I pedaled, now filled with adrenaline to get to the finish line. Finally, the finish line was in sight on the last stretch along Ocean Boulevard. I was careful to dismount my bike so I did not interfere with crossing the official finish line. Even though I was trying to be very discrete, the fans would not back down. Several people shouted "Congratulations!" and "Good job, cyclist!" One spectator even ran up to shake my hand. Although I was now hungry for breakfast and ready to take a break and enjoy some of the festivities, I was well aware of the dreaded 13.1-mile half marathon looming before me.

When I finally got to the start line more than one hour after the official start of the race, I was surprised to find that I was not the last person to get there. There were dozens of latecomers, and there were hundreds of runners, joggers, and walkers strewn throughout the entire course. Spectators were everywhere, cheering like there was no tomorrow. Supportive volunteers handed out water at every mile. At Mile 9, I visited the first aid station where the kind volunteers from the Long Beach Memorial Medical Center treated a blister on my right foot and gave me a shot of muscle conditioning spray to get me back on the road. The last few miles were tough, but my tired legs eventually got me back to the finish line... the second time in one day.

I would like to thank the City Employees Club and Sports Dude Robert Larios for the opportunity to be in the running club and for providing encouragement for members to stay fit and improve our health.



*The Club wishes you...*

Family to love you  
Friends to lift you  
Challenges to inspire you  
The stars and heavens  
to amaze you  
And a big smile knowing  
That life is pretty darn good.

This holiday season, may you be given  
All that you wish for  
Except one thing to grow on.

*Merry Christmas  
Happy Hanukkah*

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Celebrating the City family for 83 years.

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**ROBERT LARIOS**  
CLUB DISCOUNT KING

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