



## City Retiree Associations

### 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: rlacei@verizon.net

#### 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 Mary Beetz, call (800) 678-4145 Ext. 711.

#### RLACEI Upcoming Events

Call (800) 678-4145 Ext. 701 for reservations.

- June 7:** RLACEI Golf Tournament, Alhambra Golf Club
- Aug. 9:** Picnic, 11:30 a.m., Grace E. Simons Lodge, 1025 Elysian Park, Los Angeles
- Oct. 4:** Annual corporation meeting and elections, 1 p.m., Friendship Auditorium
- Dec. 6:** Holiday party, noon, Friendship Auditorium

#### 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.

### DWP Retirees Association



Dolores Foley, *President*  
Phone: (626) 445-7376  
E-mail: [vincedolores@gmail.com](mailto:vincedolores@gmail.com)  
[www.dwpretirees.org](http://www.dwpretirees.org)

### Los Angeles Retired Fire and Police Association (LARFPA)



Bill Quinn, *President*  
Phone: (323) 283-4441  
Fax: (626) 285-1461  
9521 Las Tunas Dr. #4,  
Temple City, CA 91780  
[www.larfpa.org](http://www.larfpa.org)

## Cal Cities Survey Looks At Pension Reform Status

2010 Club Excellence Award Recipient



Ed Harding

By Ed Harding,  
RLACEI President

“For more than 30 years, RLACEI has been purchasing the *El Pueblo* newspaper from ACEBSA for our retired members.

“However, recently, we were asked by ACEBSA to double what we were paying for you to receive *El Pueblo*, which we did. However, it was not enough.

“We have close to 9,000 members and at \$1 per copy, we would have to pay close to \$9,000 per month, or more than \$100,000 per year. I took this request to our board for a vote, and after review of all facts surrounding ACEBSA’s request, the board voted to terminate the *El Pueblo* agreement, as they felt we could not afford the cost without raising the cost to our members – which the board was not in favor of doing.

“We have mailed our newsletter

to all our Retired members, which explains more in detail of our plans.

“Rest assured that we have made arrangements so that our members will continue to receive the same if not more information than you have been receiving.”



By Mary Beetz,  
RLACEI Publicity Chair



Michael Karsch

RLACEI  
Legislative Report  
by Michael Karsch

“A review of city finances around California by Reuters news service showed some problems but concluded that ‘mass bankruptcies are unlikely.’ While Vallejo declared bankruptcy in 2008 and went through it, Stockton is looking at it and is now in mediation for up to three months to work out settlements on what is owed. Moody’s Investors Service lowered Stockton’s bond ratings to below investment grade. San Diego and San Jose are aiming to reduce pension costs with ballot measures. Costa Mesa has slashed its payroll from 611 employees to 450. Santa Ana has turned its

fire protection over to Orange County. The City of Antioch, near Vallejo, faced fiscal distress, but the leadership of the city and the labor unions took quick action in a hiring freeze, furloughs, waiver of pay increases and reduction of the workforce by attrition and layoffs.

“In Sacramento, the retired county workers have a lawsuit against the county over pension check reductions to cover health care costs since 2007. The county moved to dismiss the lawsuit, but a federal judge refused to dismiss it on April 3, thereby postponing final adjudication until June.

“You have probably heard of debates in pension systems over what each predicted their investments would earn them. A prediction is a prediction, so what’s the problem? A predicted rate of return

on a pension system’s portfolio of investments is a mandatory accounting feature that shows how much money is expected to be there to support the expenses (your pension). While most systems have usually predicted 7.75 percent to 8 percent over the years, such earnings have not always materialized. CalPERS reported earning 1.1 percent last year; the Orange County Retirement System earned 0.74 percent last year. CalPERS lowered its 7.75 percent rate of return to 7.5 percent recently; the problem with this change is that the employing entities (cities, counties and school districts) must then face an increase in what they pay into their respective retirement systems. This will mean multi-million-dollar increased payments for all participating agencies.”

## 5 Candidates Want Top Fire, Police Pensions Job



Lee Kebler

By Lee Kebler,  
LARFPA Director

The Fire and Police Pensions Dep. had a very busy month with the search to replace retiring General Manager Michael Perez, who is scheduled to retire May 4. The City’s Personnel Dept. reported 17 candidates for the position and selected five candidates to be interviewed by the Commission. Four of the five candidates are employed by the City. They are Bill Raggio and Robin Wilder, Fire and Police Pensions; Lita Paine, LACERS Pension System; Mary Higgins, DWP; and Schoen (I have no other information on this candidate).

At the same time, an election for the active Firefighter’s position on the Board is being conducted. There are three candidates campaigning for the position. They are Capt. Bill Wick, Capt. Scott Gribbons, and Capt. Ruben Navarro, incumbent. It’s great to see this interest in the active members caring about their future.

The Board has only eight members and is still discussing the health subsidy for the retirees. The health subsidy premium rate increase is nine percent, but the maximum that Fire and Police retirees can receive is seven percent; half of the Board wants to allow a five percent increase, and the other half believes that the retirees should get the seven

percent increase. I don’t know how long this stalemate will go on.

The retirees COLA from the Bureau of Labor Statistics was 2.1 percent, and the Board is reviewing the process. Let’s hope they can make a decision on that.

I’m looking forward to seeing some of you at our June general meeting at Grace Simons Lodge. The business meeting starts at 10 a.m., and the barbeque starts at noon. There will be good music, door prizes, and great food. Our guest speaker will be the newly elected Councilman for the 15th District, Joe Buscaino, a 17-year Police Officer. Come out and meet some old friends.

## LARFPA



## The Best Years



The chef and headwaiter during the chef's table dinner.



Hal and Evelyn wearing chef coats in the galley.

### 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 LAFUCU. For information on problems, activities, meetings or membership. Each officer's extension is listed below.

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

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

• Mary Beetz	Ext. 711
• Cliff Cannon	Ext. 715
• Hal Danowitz	Ext. 707
• Americo Garza	Ext. 710
• Edward Harding	Ext. 703
• Michael Karsch	Ext. 704
• Gary Mattingly	Ext. 702
• Neil Ricci	Ext. 714
• Helen Salgado (membership)	Ext. 713
• Ken Spiker	Ext. 705
• Tom Stennock	Ext. 708
• Michael Wilkinson	Ext. 712

Questions: Ext. 0  
RSVP: Ext. 701

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

### RLACEI:

#### Officers

Mary Beetz: Publicity Chair  
Cliff Cannon: Director  
Hal Danowitz: Secretary/Treasurer  
Edward Harding: President  
Michael Karsch: Treasurer  
Kenneth Spiker: First Vice President  
Tom Stennock: Second Vice President

#### Committee Chairpersons

Mary Beetz: Publicity  
Hal Danowitz: Bylaws  
Americo Garza: Picnic, Holiday Party and Installation  
Neil Ricci: Health and Nominating  
Helen Salgado: Membership  
Phil Skarin: Parliamentarian  
Ken Spiker: Legal and Legislative  
Tom Stennock: Audit  
Tom Stennock and Phil Skarin: Golf

#### Directors

Mary Beetz  
Americo Garza  
Michael Karsch  
Neil Ricci  
Helen Salgado  
Phil Skarin  
Michael R. Wilkinson



2010 Club Excellence  
Award Recipient



By Hal Danowitz,  
Secretary, RLACEI

## Gourmands at Sea

**Hal and Co. continue their 28-day cruise from Europe to Singapore. Part four.**

On Oct. 11, Evelyn and I, with our cousins Don and Myrna, left for Rome, where we were going to board the *Ocean Princess* Oct. 15 to sail for 28 days to Singapore. On the cruise we were scheduled to visit Sorrento, Italy; Athens; Ephesus, Turkey; through the Suez Canal; two ports in Egypt; Aqaba, Jordan; Dubai in the United Arab Emirates; Muscat, Oman; and India. In India, we were scheduled to take a side trip to the Taj Mahal. Finally, the cruise would take us to Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, before ending in Singapore. We both had reserved mini-suites on deck eight. The *Ocean Princess* is a small ship, which accommodates only slightly more than 600 passengers and a crew of 250.

#### Rome to Singapore

That morning we docked in Safaga, Egypt. This port is considered the "gateway" from the Red Sea for ships with tourists going to Luxor, the Valley of the kings and Karnak all on or very near the Nile. The drive is three-and-a-half hours each way. The city itself is not a tourist destination.

There was no shuttle into the town of Safaga, and we were warned that the taxis were a negotiating nightmare. We heard many interesting stories about the ride into town. Our Australian friends had the best experience: They walked to the port gate, got a taxi for \$5 per person. He took them to a shopping area and then to the Holiday Inn for lunch. He picked them back up at the hotel and took them back to the port gate. They still had not given him any money! When he dropped them at the gate he only asked for his original fee, but our friend gave him \$50 for the day.

We spent the day by the pool and played bridge with Don and Myrna.

After dinner we watched the local Folkloric show, which was very good. We saw a Whirling Dervish, who whirled for at least 20 minutes without stopping. It was an unbelievable performance. For those of you who have no idea of what a whirling dervish is, it is a dancer who spins with layers of circular skirts that spin like disks at the waist of the dancer. They can spin continuously and raise a layer above their heads and other variations.

Later we played trivia, and our team came in second.

We were to be at sea for the next six days.

Evelyn and I walked for exercise that morning and then had a light breakfast. We were starting to watch what we ate. I truly believe the salt air or the ship's laundry shrinks my clothes.

There was a qualifying trivia game that morning to select two men and two women to play in a game to find the smartest trivia player. We did not place high enough, although Evelyn did very well.

After lunch we played duplicate bridge, and Evelyn and I came in tied for first place. This was a step up from our usual low placement.

That afternoon the weather turned a little overcast, but it was still warm and muggy; the seas were calm.

That night was a formal night, and our whole table met for cocktails. We provided the appetizers.

We had a great time at the casino bar before dinner. We were very lucky that we had such interesting and nice tablemates; that doesn't happen very often.

The best entree at dinner was lobster; it must have been because it was formal night. After dinner, the show was a movie song review with the ship's dancers and singers. It must have been good, because I nodded off only a couple of times.

Evelyn and I slept in until 8 a.m. the next morning, and it felt good. After breakfast I listened to the port lecturer talk about Dubai. Evelyn went to the bridge lesson. We then waited for trivia to start. Our team was all bridge players, which meant we would come in last. Actually, we finished in the middle of the pack.

We then had a discussion on whether to take a ship tour or use the hop-on hop-off bus in Dubai. We decided to take a ship's tour. We wanted to go to the top of the Burj Khalifa, the world's tallest building, and if took the ship's tour we wouldn't have to wait in line. The ship's tour seemed more time-efficient. A friend of ours lives in Abu Dhabi and sent a detailed list of what to see and where to go. Abu Dhabi is the capital city of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and is about two hours by car from Dubai. We were disappointed that we were unable to see her. She was pregnant, and her doctor restricted her travel.

We complained to Princess about the Petra tour [a four-and-a-half-mile walk], and I received a letter of apology and a 30 percent discount on the price of the tour.



That morning we left the Red Sea and passed through the straits that separate Eritrea and Yemen and entered the Gulf of Aden. We turned east heading to Dubai; to the west of us were Somalia and the Horn of Africa. We now had a naval escort, a frigate from the Indian Navy and its supply ship. They were with us for about two days. Between the "watchers" patrolling the open deck, the naval escort and the "pirate" drill, it all seemed very surrealistic.

That evening Evelyn and I attended the chef's table. There were 11 passengers in the group. We met in the dining room bar and were provided white chef coats. We then entered the galley and were given specific instructions on washing our hands. We entered the galley on deck five, where plating of the evening's offerings and beverage and room service were handled. Within a locked and barred office was the wine and spirits, along with the executive chef's office.

The menus for the passengers and crew are developed by Princess at its corporate office in Santa Clarita. This ensures that the crew gets a balanced diet and that the passengers get the best Princess has to offer, and that there is consistency between ships. Every Princess seven-day cruise has the same menu. This also enables better purchasing of provisions.

We were greeted by the maitre d' Giuseppe Franchina and the executive chef Antonio Costantino. They explained how the food service functioned, and we then toured the galley on deck five before going down a set of stairs within the galley to deck four, where we had appetizers and champagne.

We then took the service elevator to deck 10 to the steakhouse, where a large oval table was set for us. The food was excellent, as were the service and wine.

The menu consisted of six courses after the appetizers, which were a shrimp with avocado and mango served in a martini

## For Retired Club Members

glass, a Big Eye tuna tartare served in a cone with red caviar, and a mini cheese quiche with truffle oil and roasted tomato. The quiche was more like a soufflé with a roasted tomato center. The final appetizer was a potato crisp served with very nice caviar and sour cream. All were wonderful and accompanied very nice Heidsieck & Co. Monopole Blue Label Champagne. According to the maitre d', it was the same champagne poured on the Titanic.

Now seated, we were served a porcini risotto with tiger shrimp, followed by a strawberry and cracked pepper sorbet drizzled with some very good vodka. Next was an entree of lobster Thermidor and roast beef tenderloin with all the trimmings, a warmed Brie served with a port reduction, and Riesling-soaked green grapes completed the cheese course. Any description of the amaretto parfait served next would not do it justice – it was more of a frozen dessert,



somewhere between ice cream and mousse served with vanilla-soaked plums in the most delightful sugar-molded bowls worthy of a prize from the Food Channel. Finally, coffee and truffles completed the meal. The meal was paired with an Italian Pinot grigio, a California merlot and a dessert late-harvest Riesling.

Each lady was given a rose, a princess cookbook (we now have three) and a group picture. For myself, I think I enjoyed the dining experience more than on the Golden Princess, which we took last year. The chef's table cost \$95 per person, and it lasted more than three hours. We highly recommend you try the chief's table on your next Princess cruise.

The next morning, the sun shone bright, but there was a steady breeze of about 15 knots and the ship rocked a little.

Both of us worked out that morning. The gym

was not crowded, as most passengers seemed to prefer walking the track above the pool. The wind was really blowing, and they closed deck 11

and one side of the promenade deck.

We played morning trivia and scored well, but I thought the questions were easy. After lunch we played bridge and scored in the middle of the pack again.

We had cocktails in our cabin that day, and the four of us received two plates of appetizers and a big bowl of guacamole and chips. It was getting to be a bit much. After dinner we played "Name the Face of a Famous Person" and got a respectable 37 out of 50 correct.

Both Evelyn and I were a little under the weather, so tomorrow I planned to just relax by the pool.

Much more to come next month.



Our group enjoyed a drink before dinner.

## 34th Annual Retirees Invitational Golf Tournament



The 34th Annual Retired Los Angeles City Employees Invitational Golf Tournament will be held on Thursday, June 7, 2012 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 25th** to: Tom Stemnock, Chairman, 4040 Vineland Avenue, Suite 108, Studio City, CA 91604. For any questions, call Chairman Tom Stemnock at (818) 487-6789.

### 2012 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 R.L.A.C.E.I.    Member A.C.E.B.S.A. or City Club    Guest

**(check all that apply)**

Name	Member R.L.A.C.E.I.	Member A.C.E.B.S.A. or City Club	Guest
1. _____	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. _____	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. _____	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. _____	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Reservation deadline: Friday, May 25th. Mail completed reservation form and check to:

**Tom Stemnock, Chairman**

4040 Vineland Avenue, Suite 108, Studio City, CA 91604, (818) 487-6789

## For Retired Club Members



By Mary Beetz,  
RLACEI Publicity Chair

## LACERS Update

**“Keep Your Contacts Up to Date:** LACERS wants to make sure our Retired Membership database is up to date. Let us know if you have a new phone number, email address, or home address. To update your contact information, please call LACERS at (800) 779-8328 or (888) 349-3996 (TDD), or email us at [LACERS.services@lacity.org](mailto:LACERS.services@lacity.org).

**“Spring Cleaning:** Please review the dependents listed on your health insurance plan. You may be paying unnecessary premiums for ineligible dependents. Consult your latest Health Benefits Guide for eligibility requirements. If you need to delete a dependent, go to [www.LACERS.org](http://www.LACERS.org) to download the form for health insurance account changes.

**“LACERS Medicare Requirement:** LACERS Retirees can protect their LACERS medical coverage by fulfilling LACERS' requirement to enroll in and maintain Medicare coverage. To qualify for a LACERS' medical plan premium subsidy, LACERS requires Retired Members and their eligible dependents to enroll in Medicare Part B upon turning age 65 and, if eligible to receive it free of charge, Medicare Part A. Failure to meet LACERS' Medicare enrollment requirement or a lapse in the payment of Medicare Part B premium may result in the termination of a LACERS Retiree's medical subsidy and plan coverage.

**“MyLACERS – View Your Retirement Account Information:** MyLACERS is a service that allows Members to view their account information online at [www.LACERS.org](http://www.LACERS.org). As a Retired Member, you can view your 1099R information, current payment statements, designated beneficiaries, current deductions, and health deduction information. It's easy, fast, and informative. Just click on MyLACERS from the LACERS' homepage ([www.LACERS.org](http://www.LACERS.org)) and follow the directions to register for a MyLACERS Account. Once an ID and password are created, you can log on to the secure Website as often as you like. For more information or assistance with setting up a MyLACERS account, contact LACERS at [LACERS.services@lacity.org](mailto:LACERS.services@lacity.org) or (800) 779-8328.”



## Retirees Poetry Contest:

## Results to Be Announced

In the Phil Skarin RLACEI Annual Poetry Contest, Mary Beetz wants to thank everyone for the poems they sent. “There is a lot of talent out there!” she says.

“The poems show a very vivid spectrum of human emotion and perspective meaning of life,” she reports.

Phil Skarin was scheduled to announce the winner at the RLACEI General Meeting April 12 at the Friendship Auditorium, 3201 Riverside Dr. *Alive!* will report the results in next month's issue.

If the winner is present at the meeting, a picture of the winner receiving the prize will be taken. If you are not present but live locally, arrangements will be made to come to you and have your photo taken receiving your prize.

# Congratulations, GRADUATES



## Let the Club family celebrate with you... by putting your photo in *Alive!*

**Club members:** Have you had a family member graduate from elementary school... high school... or college this summer? Send us a photo, and we'll publish it in *Alive!*

### Make sure you tell us:

- The name of the graduate.
- The school from which they graduated. If a college, tell us their major.
- Their future plans (briefly)
- The name and department of the Club member they're related to (and how they're related)

Digital photos are preferred. Send them to: [talkback@cityemployeesclub.com](mailto:talkback@cityemployeesclub.com)

If you have a paper print, send a duplicate (we prefer you not send the original) to: **Grad Photos**

**City Employees Club of Los Angeles**  
120 W. Second St., Los Angeles, CA 90012

Print photos will be returned within two months after publication if you request it, and if you write your name and address on the back.

