

A Message From the CEO

# Waiting for Project Was So Worth It

by John Hawkins,  
President and CEO, The Club

Patience is a virtue, I sometimes think, if only I had more of it!

Let me explain. This month's cover story involved a lot of patience – waiting since 1932 (that's only four years after our association was formed) for the proper treatment of a masterpiece, and also waiting since last summer for its successful completion.

Last summer, I received an email from good Club Member **Frank Rinaldi**, Public Works/Contract Administration. He wanted to let us know of a project he was working on involving a mural from the 1930s on Olvera Street. I dispatched it to my editor, **John Burnes**, who followed up. So last July, we ran a small story with some photos about this one-of-a-kind project in the making. I saw the story, thought the project was interesting, and moved on.

But it didn't prepare me for the absolute coolness that awaited me when I headed over to meet new friend, **Chris Espinosa**, General Manager of El Pueblo Historical Monument, and old friend **Mahmood Karimzadeh**, Public Works/Engineering and Club Member, to explore the completed project. We met on Olvera Street, and Chris and Mahmood gave an extensive tour of the project – nothing short of a masterpiece, to showcase a masterpiece the City already had.

Public Works, El Pueblo and lots of other City departments came together to build this amazing new facility, which contains both an interpretive center to help explain Siquieros' important mural from the 1930s, *América Tropical*, and a major viewing structure by which to see the mural itself.



From left: John Hawkins, Club CEO, chats with Mahmood Karimzadeh, City Architect, Public Works, and Chris Espinosa, General Manager, El Pueblo Historical Monument, on the Siquieros mural viewing platform.

It's too bad it took exactly 80 years for the City to put the mural on proper display again, but if it took any less time, it might not be nearly as good. And I'm glad we at *Alive!* waited almost a year for the project to be completed before we gave it our cover. It's so much better now than it was a year ago. Putting together this story was a lot of fun for a guy like me – cool photo opportunities, interesting history, accessible technology, and being proud of City Employees who came together to make it happen. Bravo, City Employees. Everyone in the City should go check it out.

Moving on... I want to thank the people who responded to our newest idea, "Tell Us Their Story." Every month, we run a list of those current or former City Employees who have passed on. But for the most part they're just names; we don't have much, if any, info on who these people were. But this month we know at least a little more about two people. If you knew any of those people we've listed as passed away, consider sending us a photo and a paragraph. It will help us remember them properly.

Now it's my turn – I see from the list that **Marlene Greefield**, who we placed on our cover several years ago, has died. In case you didn't know Marlene, she worked for more than 60 years (that's not a typo) for the LAPD. We did a story on Marlene and the old days of working for the City. Marlene finally retired in 2010, and she passed away on March 15. Thanks, Marlene, for setting a new standard of dedication, and for being a link to decades past. Rest in peace.

I also want to say happy retirement to **Paul Mahony**, General Services/Fleet Services, who set up one of our most fun cover stories ever – a feature we did on the mayor's parade car, a 1950s Chrysler Imperial. Hanging with that car – and the Fleet Services crew that takes care of her – was a blast. Thanks, Paul, for setting that up, and have a great retirement!

I hope by now that I can say I saw many of you at the Club-exclusive party at Magic Mountain (these Club-exclusive parties are the absolute best). These benefits that our Club staff sets up for our members are second to none, really. We work hard to celebrate your lives, and we're glad that so many of you take advantage.

It's May, so please get outside and enjoy the longer days with your family. If you don't know where to start, follow the lead of our great **Angel Gomez**, and go for a hike. He'll tell you where, each and every month, in *Be Alive!* So get active and have fun. See you in June.

**JOHN**

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## Alive! Behind the Scenes



Here's Tom Hawkins, *Alive!* photographer, on the roof of the Italian Hall on Olvera Street, photographing (from left) Mahmood Karimzadeh, Public Works/Engineering, and Chris Espinosa, El Pueblo Historical Monument, in front of the recently conserved *América Tropical* mural. This same angle was used on the cover by John Hawkins.

