

A Message From the CEO

This Issue Notes Hellos, Goodbyes

by John Hawkins,
President and CEO, The Club

This June means hellos, goodbyes... and a ton of father shoutouts!

Hello to the LAFD's Disaster Preparedness motorcycle unit, led by **LAFD Capt. I Craig White**. We here at *Alive!* had read about the intrepid team during Carmageddon. And, as Capt. White says in this month's interview, the concept seemed simple and clear to everyone he encountered... just like it did to us. When there's ridiculous traffic in L.A. (despite the best efforts of our friends in Transportation), it's obvious that LAFD equipment is going to have trouble getting to where it needs to. And that's not even talking about having to navigate fire roads and trails in the mountains and canyons. Hence, putting an experienced LAFD crew on maneuverable motorcycles is just a great idea brought into existence.

During Carmageddon, the motorcycle program was in a trial phase. We waited a year or so until the team was permanent before we reached out. When it looked like all signs were positive, we contacted Capt. White, and he was more than happy to invite us to a training exercise.



Club CEO John Hawkins (left) with LAFD Capt. Craig White. You can see Capt. White without the helmet in this month's feature, starting on page 6.

Capt. White gets it right when he sees the big picture and talks about innovation. Some cities have units like this, but few if any have units that can handle the dual nature – both streets and trails. This is innovation pure and simple, and we applaud it.

It reminds me of a cover story we did a few months ago on Animal Services' rescue team. Just like in the situation with the LAFD's motorcycle program, the Animal Services team was borne of a need, and of a great City Employee – in that case, **Armando Navarrete** – spending the energy to create a team, where none existed. Both of these cases constitute awesome civil service.

So, congratulations to Capt. White and to Armando on the new services you're bringing to the citizens of Los Angeles. Here's to continued success!

That concludes the "hello" portion of my thoughts. And now to some goodbyes.

First and foremost, we bid a happy retirement of sorts to our longtime history columnist, **Hynda Rudd**. It makes for a second retirement, of course. Hynda was already retired from her position as the City's first full-time archivist when we met; in fact, I met her at an RLACEI retirement meeting, where we got to talking. And, I recruited her on the spot to write for us! That was in 2005; and now, nearly 80 columns later, Hynda relinquishes her column; we'll tell you about our future plans for the space at a later date.

I thought I knew a lot about L.A., but I learned something with each of Hynda's columns. And I know a lot of other Club Members did, too, judging from the number of people who would comment on them. The *L.A. Times* used to cover the history of our City more than they do now, it seems. With her columns, Hynda provided a really important role as teacher and entertainer.

I write retirement "of sorts," because Hynda promises to send us a contribution or three every year. I don't doubt that will happen; but Hynda, I say, your time is yours now. We wish you the best with your current projects.

There are a couple of other retirements I wanted to mention. I see that two great friends of the Club have moved on to the next phase of their lives. They are **Al Sosa**, DWP, and **Cora Soriano**, CDD. We'll have more in the future on Al's career, but a little more of Cora's appears in a story in this issue. Cora has impressed us with her dedication – to CDD, of course, and as a longtime Club Rep. She's also the president of LAFACE – the City's Filipino American employees association. This is a strong group, and Cora deserves some of the credit for that. Thanks for all your help and support, Cora; enjoy your retirement.

Moving on... I love the Father's Day tributes in this month's *Alive!* Just like last month, when we featured Mother's Day tributes, the large number of your contributions is because, I think, we sent notes around in our e-newsletter. The response has been awesome! It's more proof that if you haven't signed up for the Club's e-newsletter, then you're missing out! Go to the Website and sign up right now!

Speaking of missing out, if you didn't go to the Club-exclusive party at Magic Mountain – just look at all the happy faces of those who did go! If you haven't been, these parties that the Club arranges are incredible. Affordable prices, almost no lines at the rides to speak of, hanging out with your fellow City Employees... what's not to like? So we'll see you next year, then, right? *Right!*

Well, that about does it for me! Enjoy your own kind of hellos and goodbyes – the end of the school year (goodbyes) and the beginning of family time (hellos)! See you next month.

JOHN

jhawkins@cityemployeesclub.com

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Alive! Cover Picture



Here's John Hawkins, Club CEO (left), photographing LAFD Capt. Craig White (foreground) and the LAFD's new Disaster Preparedness motorcycle unit, during training exercises at the LAPD's Davis Training Facility in Mission Hills.

Alive! Behind the Scenes

