

A Message From the CEO

Blending the Best Of Yesterday, Today

by John Hawkins,
President and CEO, The Club

It doesn't seem that long ago when we started our interesting series of stories on the LAPD's Scientific Investigation Division (SID), the people who use science to analyze evidence and determine whether or not it can be linked to a crime. But it was several years ago when we took our initial tour – let by **Doreen Hudson**, Lab Director, and **Lennard Henkhaus**, Supervising Criminalist. One of the stops on that tour was Questioned Documents. Now here we are, several years later, with only a few more labs to chronicle, and we finally get to cover Questioned Documents for real. Thanks for waiting for us, **Karen "K.C." Chiarodit** and Company, an awesome small group. It was worth the wait.

In some ways, despite its use of modern technology, Questioned Documents is still at least partially old school. I find that kind of cool, using instincts and techniques developed a hundred or more years ago... while they are also very modern, too, when the evidence calls for it.



In the LAPD Crime Lab: Karen Chiarodit, Sr. Examiner of Questioned Documents, and *Alive!* editor John Burnes.

Maybe more than any of the units we've featured, Questioned Documents links to longstanding traditions that I really respect. My dad was in law enforcement, and it makes me feel the City of LA is in good hands by blending the past with the best of today. Thanks to Karen and her crew for telling us their story.

And a quick note of further thanks to veteran **Bill Leaver**, Examiner of Questioned Documents II, who was more than willing to give the *Alive!* team a tour of the Questioned Documents Lab on a day that he probably wasn't feeling his best. That kind of courtesy really means a lot to me. Here's to you, Bill.

Moving on... have you read yet the entries of our **Joannie Mukai** Club Scholarship winners? I hope you do, as they are amazing, as they are every year. I can't help but talk about our scholarship winners. As I write this, it's just a few weeks after our committee finished its work and picked the recipients of our scholarships. And I'm still blown away by the quality of the applicants. With this level of academic achievement and initiative in the candidates, it's no wonder we gave out 20 awards, the same number we gave last year, which was a lot more than we used to. We're proud to do it.

If you worry about the future of the world, do yourself a favor and read these profiles. If you're like me, you'll be glad you did.

The late Joannie Mukai, former City Employee and Club Board Member who passed away in 2010, was a big believer in supporting our youths; that's why we named the scholarship program for her. She would be mighty impressed by this group. Medical students ... volunteers ... performers ... an actual rocket scientist ... graduate students ... those who have succeeded despite long odds ... and on and on. And all related to the Club!

So congratulations to our recipients. And I want to give a nod to those others who applied, but didn't make it this year. You're all winners in my book. Keep on being yourself, and I know you'll be just fine. And before I forget – have you bought your discounted tickets to the L.A. County Fair yet? Don't buy them at the fair, get the Club discount! They are always big sellers here at the Club, so don't wait!

I want to say a special goodbye to Port Police Officer **Rudy Meza**, whose retirement event is covered this month. Rudy has been a good friend of the Club for many years. The Club is very active in the Port, and it seems Rudy was always there, welcoming our Club Counselors or spreading the good word of what we're all about. So farewell and aloha, Rudy. May you enjoy ten thousand sunsets. At least.

And I want to give a shoutout to our ongoing guest photographer, **Juan Guerra**, for his stunning and dramatic photo on page 40 of an LAFD hero at work. We don't always have an extra page of space to celebrate Juan's work, but I'm glad we made room this month. It's worth taking a look at, and then saying a quick thanks that we have our Firefighters, and that they do what they do. We're all the better for it.

Now that it's September and the kids are back in school, you might not have as much time to do things as a family. That's why the Club Store is such a great thing... **Mariana Guevara** and her staff have lots of great family outings at amazing Club discounts. The Club believes in families, so take advantage!

JOHN

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Alive! Cover Picture

Alive! Behind the Scenes

Here's Summy Lam, Club Director of Marketing, snapping the cover shot of Karen "KC" Chiarodit, Sr. Examiner of Questioned Documents, using a light table and lens to examine a signature in the department's lab.