

A Message From the CEO

In Praise of the Pioneering Spirit

by John Hawkins,
President and CEO, The Club

As we enter October, we celebrate pioneers: **Laura Biggie** on the cover, and the Club, celebrating the 11th anniversary of its breakout this month. But more on that in a minute, so let's get back to Laura.

Of the more than 30,000 active and retired City Employees who we are lucky enough to call our Club Members, a large number are, of course, women. And that's saying something, because many of the jobs in the City traditionally were held by men; that was the nature of the beast. As a matter of course, we feature both men and women on the cover and inside the paper; our only criteria are good people doing great things who probably are not on the radar of other media. Bad news usually gets the ink, but not here at *Alive!* We're a good-news newspaper.

For our most recent Father's Day feature back in June, we received a photo from Laura Biggie, Building and Safety, playing the accordion with her father. Fun photo! The Club's **Angel Gomez** investigated it a little further – we always want to know more about our Club Members, and we had not really heard from Laura before – and we found out that she had just been featured by a trade association for being a woman plumber. We were intrigued, and so we investigated further, to find out that she is the City's first woman plumbing Training Officer, teaching men how to do inspections. Strong stuff.



Laura Biggie, Commercial Plumbing Inspector/Training Officer, Building and Safety (left), with Club CEO John Hawkins.

Then we heard a little of her life story and decided she deserved some coverage. So here you are. I won't spoil it by going into her details here, but I really encourage you to read her story. She was a pioneer before she ever came to the City, and it continues to this day. We also visit briefly with **Grace Harper**, Retired, Building and Safety, who came before Laura and helped pave the way.

We only regret we couldn't feature all the awesome women in the City in pioneering positions. We know there are lots, and our space is limited. But we are open to the subject in the future, to go along with our usual assortment of great news coming from the City.

A pioneering spirit is a great thing. From the LACEA's beginning back in 1928 all the way until now, women have played a role. And now, that role is bigger than ever. Laura's pioneering spirit reminds me a little of our own. The LACEA, our foundation association, and the Club, our public face, were both pioneers when they started, and so they continue to this day. There's no one doing what we're doing, and in the way we're doing it. And it's all in the name of great customer service. It's all for you, Club Members. And that's important to remember as we celebrate the Club's 11th anniversary this month. Happy birthday, Club!

Speaking of spirits ... it's Halloween! Can you believe how absolutely huge this holiday has become? It's incredible ... and it's awesome. I love the creepy-cool story in this month's issue about the Zoo. I've heard the rumors of ghosts and weird happenings for a while now ... and now we can read about some of the stories, told by Club Members who work there. Thanks to **Bob Burford**, Lead Electrician and Club Member, for setting up our spooky visit. I encourage you to stop by and say hello ... to the Club Members, not the ghosts!

Halloween is a big deal at the Club Store, too. No, it's not haunted, but it does offer discounts that are absolutely otherworldly! We take your family fun quite seriously. Your Halloween plans should include a visit to the Club Store.

And one more thing about Halloween – shoppers at the Club Store this month can expect a fun surprise they can take away with them. So go investigate!

Speaking of the Club Store, make sure you reserve your tickets for the Club's exclusive date for Medieval Times, Nov. 10. These always sell out and are tons of fun.

As this is the fall, our Club Angels kicks back into action. Not that it was away, but handing out blankets and survival goods to those on the street during the cooler months is one of its primary outreaches. If you don't know of Club Angels, it's the Club's official charity, set up to help take care of those around us who are in need. I ask you to turn to page 29, and consider giving something to help us help them.

Enjoy this month, and don't be afraid of doing something, well, pioneering in your own way.

—JOHN

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Alive! Behind the Scenes

Here's Tom Hawkins, *Alive!* photographer, capturing Laura Biggie, Commercial Plumbing Inspector/Training Officer, Building and Safety. Tom's photo appears on page 23.