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## A Message From the CEO

### A Different Kind of Party

by John Hawkins,  
President and CEO, The Club

Our cover story this month involves a party, as it often does each January. But this year, it's a little different kind of party.

On Dec. 6, Convention Center's former employees whose positions were removed during the center's privatization held a fantastic farewell party downtown. I'm delighted that **Adria Ybarra** invited *Alive!* to the Convention Center's farewell party.

A farewell party sounds sad, doesn't it? But I beg to differ. Yes, all those who made great friends while working together will no longer be able to see each other every day. But there was pride, too, the kind of joy that comes from knowing you've done a good job. That's the way I see it, and that's easy to see when you look at the stories we've done on the Convention Center over the past 11 years.

We've done stories on great achievements, especially making the aging facility very "green." And we've done stories on how the Convention Center employees formed friendships and the kind of substitute families we all dream of having at our workspaces. Those are both great successes in my book.

Executive Director **Bud Ovrum** said it very well in his farewell letter to the staff when he wrote: "The decision to 'privatize' was based on broader considerations ... as you leave the building for the last time, I hope you hold your head high. You did an outstanding job!"

He's right. We here at the Club like to say that we celebrate your lives, because we really do. This is no different. So read our feature and remember all the great things that you've done. We're celebrating your lives; you should, too.

Which brings us to the other kind of parties we feature each January – the City's awesome holiday parties! Regular *Alive!* readers – and that probably means you! – know that every January we print coverage of the many sparkly holiday parties the City departments host. It's usually the most festive feature we run all year. Our counselors make a big effort



Here are Club CEO John Hawkins and then-Convention Center staffer Rey Castro in a story from April 2009 about making the facility environmentally friendly.

to cover as many as possible. And this year is no exception – they're here in a big way, starting on page 28. So dig in and enjoy the recap!

Moving on... more congratulations are in store, this time for the General Services election transition folks. I've worked with the City for nearly two decades, and yet I had little idea all the work that these folks do at election time and afterward. There are newly elected officials coming in and old ones going out; there are new staffs to manage and orient; new locks and other office equipment are required; and on and on. I'm always grateful when Club Members – in this case, **Richard Wuerth** and **Eric Robles** of General Services – alert us to City happenings. Congratulations to good Club friend **Tony Royster**, Club Member, and his General Services staff for making the transition smooth and efficient. It's sometimes said that the most amazing thing about America is how smoothly power is passed on to the next administration. In this case, we know who to thank – General Services – for making it happen.

Please welcome our two new Club Counselors, **Isabel Marquez** and **Dalila Vielma**. I'm happy for you to meet them because I know they will continue the Club's reputation for great customer service. Keep your eye out, and say hello.

Meanwhile, even though we're just staring the New Year, it's not too late to send in your Club Valentines! Another great *Alive!* tradition is just around the corner. I'm talking about "Be My Club Valentine," where we invite Club Members to send in a photo and a few lines professing your appreciation for a loved one, and we print them in the February issue (next month). It's a really fun feature, so send 'em in!

Finally, as this is the New Year, that means I make a fresh commitment to serve you, our Club Members, in new and innovative ways. We celebrate your lives every day, and let's make 2014 the best of all! Happy New Year, everyone.

**JOHN**



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# YOU CAN BUY LOVE

WITH VALENTINE'S DAY  
Specials at the Club Store!

— SEE PAGE 47