



# RELAC newsletter

Your Pension and Health Care Watchdog

60 Years of Dedicated Service to L.A. County Retirees

Nov/Dec 2018 Vol 53-6

## President's Message

by Dave Muir

This is my last column for 2018. As I look back, I'm pleased with our many successes. We celebrated our 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Our newsletters, published every other month under the direction of our outstanding editor Judy Hammond, continued to receive accolades. We were instrumental in the adoption of legislation that will enable more than 85 disabled retirees to recover disability retirement benefits covering the period of time they were disabled but before they submitted their applications to LACERA. We formed a new Community Support Committee, chaired by Linda Hopkins, which works to provide RELAC members with opportunities for volunteerism, charitable giving and community support. We mounted a team to participate with the County in the March of Dimes "March for Babies" event, raising over \$5,000 to support research and medical care to help premature babies lead a healthy life.



I'm pleased to advise that we will be enhancing the benefits available to our members, starting in January 2019. Most significantly, our Board of Directors has approved a scholarship program for our members and their immediate family. We intend to award five \$1,000 scholarships during 2019. Two awards are designated for RELAC members, and the remaining three are set aside for immediate family members. This is a one-year pilot project. Continuation of the program in future years is dependent on the success of the results in 2019. I believe this will be an important benefit for our members. A recent report in the L.A. Times noted that student loans are now the second-largest category of household debt in America, topping \$1.4 trillion.

There will also be an improvement in the supplemental dental and vision insurance offered by RELAC, effective Jan. 1, 2019.

The supplemental dental insurance policy will include a "savings account" benefit that allows members to bank some of their unused funds for later use. Any enrollee who uses less than \$750 of their annual benefit will automatically have up to \$400 per year of their calendar year maximum banked for use in future years.

Benefits under the vision insurance policy will increase as follows: (1) single vision lens increases from \$40 to \$65; (2) bifocal lens increases from \$60 to \$90; (3) trifocal lens increases from \$75 to \$125; (4) progressive (no-line bifocal) lens increases from \$80 to \$155; (5) lenticular lens increases from \$80 to \$155.

On behalf of our Board of Directors, I extend to all of you our very best wishes for the holidays and a happy and successful year in 2019.

Thanks to all our readers for your membership and support. Your membership and continued support keeps us strong as your **PENSION AND HEALTH CARE WATCHDOG.**

## Vision/Dental Plans Enhanced

Pacific Group Agencies, Inc. (PGA) has announced it will offer enhanced vision and dental benefits to RELAC members in 2019. Enrollment for these plans and others offered by PGA is open through Nov 19.

Members should receive their benefits guide in the mail by Oct. 31. Available insurance and supplemental benefits, offered exclusively to RELAC members, include home, auto, dental, vision, legal services, identity theft protection, pet care, travel, accident coverage and hearing aids.

The dental plan will provide higher coverage for dental work not covered by the LACERA plan and the vision plan has significantly higher benefits. While members may enroll in most of the benefit plans throughout the year, they may sign up for dental and vision coverage only during open enrollment or with a qualifying event, such as marriage or moving out of the service area of their current insurance provider.

Current coverage in any RELAC benefit plan will automatically continue for 2019 if you are not making changes. If you have any questions, contact PGA directly at (800) 511-9065.

## RELAC to Offer Scholarships to Members and Their Families

The RELAC Board of Directors has approved a one-year pilot scholarship program for members and their families. The RELAC Scholarship Committee will now continue its work drafting the required policies, procedures, forms, timeframes and award details.

The project is designed for members interested in exploring their continued educational goals, their enhanced personal development and/or the educational goals of family members. Two scholarships will be reserved for RELAC members and three will be designated for members' immediate family, defined as a child (including adopted children and stepchildren), grandchild or great-grandchild.

Eligibility and criteria for five \$1,000 scholarships will be finalized by December 2018.

The Scholarship Committee is targeting a formal announcement at RELAC's Annual Recognition Luncheon on Jan. 16, 2019. Scholarship program information and details will NOT be available prior to the luncheon.

In late 2019, the program will be evaluated, with recommendations submitted to the RELAC Board of Directors on the continued interest and need for a second-year program and appropriate funding.

# Retirement Board

by Les Robbins  
Retiree Representative  
LACERA Board of Retirement



Summer is over and there is a great deal going on in the world of public pensions, not only in California but around the country. Far too many pension systems find themselves in a poor funded status, with plan sponsor contributions that are weighing very heavily on those members of the various systems, whether they be cities, counties, special districts, or even states.

There is currently an election ongoing with CalPERS and I have been reading some of the campaign literature that is being disseminated by some of the candidates for a position on the CalPERS Board. There seems to be a great deal of unhappiness and concern with respect to the decision making that has taken place, some of which has put into question their fiduciary responsibilities. CalPERS is currently funded at a much lower level than LACERA, with a reported funded status of under 70%. Not sure what it really is, and frankly I don't care. What I do know is that at LACERA our funded status is 80% and more importantly the plan sponsor contributions are not choking the County of Los Angeles, like we see in so many other systems. So far, our Board of Investments has been able to resist some of the politics that seems to have invaded the investment policy at CalPERS. I, for one, surely hope that our Board of Investments can continue to remember that its fiduciary responsibility is priority No. 1.

We just closed our books for fiscal year 2017-2018 and our total return for our fund was 9%, which is above our assumed rate of return. This is very good news and should make all of us who are members feel good about LACERA. We also enjoy retiree health insurance that is still affordable for most all of us. I had breakfast this morning with two friends, both of whom are CalPERS members, one retired and the other just starting his career in public service working for the California State University system. They showed me their new insurance premiums and their insurance QUADRUPLED in cost. Their portion of their insurance also quadrupled in cost. I told both of them that they had better hold on because this may be the wave of the future, at least in the next several years.

In closing, if any of you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact me via my e-mail address: Leslasd@aol.com.



# News From LACERA

by JJ Popowich  
Assistant Executive Officer



I hope everyone is enjoying their summer.

In my last article I wrote about security of information and the steps that LACERA takes to validate members when they phone our Call Center or visit us at the Member Service Center. We also covered the very real and present need for all members to protect their password information for My LACERA. Privacy and security are always on our minds at LACERA.

I was reminded once again just last month about how fragile privacy and security are when Facebook announced it had another privacy breach, this time impacting 50 million users. In that instance, the breach was by a hacker who used an exploit in the company network to get personal data. This is one of the risks our systems division is constantly on the lookout for. We employ a suite of software that constantly monitors our network to detect any potential efforts by someone to break in. We also conduct regular testing where a consultant does his best to find a way into the system's network.

We also spend time educating staff about some of the social engineering attacks that people may employ to get staff members to give them access to the system. You may have heard of the term "phishing," which is one of the very common ways used to try to trick people into giving up their password. I don't know about you, but I routinely get junk e-mail where someone tries to mimic a well-known company who is contacting me to report an urgent problem with my account. The e-mail usually instructs me to log in to my account using the link provided to update my account information or find out what I need to do to ensure my account isn't closed. These e-mails look official, often showing the company's logo, and the link (if I clicked on it) would no doubt take me to a website that spoofs (mimics) the company's actual website. These criminals are hoping you'll log in and they can capture your user name and password and then any other data they may "need" to fix whatever problem they claim exists. Right now I am seeing a lot of these "phishing" e-mails where the person is trying to mimic Apple.

How can you tell it's not an official e-mail? One of the two methods to detect these as "phishing" e-mail is to look at the grammar (usually they are very poorly written) and then look at both the originating and return e-mail address. One or both of these addresses will usually appear to be from somewhere other than the company they claim to represent. If you ever have a question about an e-mail you receive, find the company's customer service phone number and call to check if they have sent e-mails. For me, I simply delete these from my inbox.

Online security and attempts to defraud people are examples of the dangerous world we live in. Twice a month, the L.A. County District Attorney's Office releases a public service announcement called the Friday Fraud Alert to warn the community about current financial scams (some perennial, some seasonal or tied to current events). As a service to our members, we share these alerts under the "Defend Yourself Against Fraud" section of LACERA.com.

Well, that's about it for this month. Until next time, I hope you enjoy every moment of your retirement. You earned it!

## LACERA is One of Largest Institutional Investors

The annual survey by the Pensions & Investments magazine places LACERA as the 78th largest institutional investor in the U.S., with an investment portfolio of \$53.8 billion as of Feb. 5, 2018. CalPERS (State of California retirement fund for non-teachers) is ranked No. 7 with \$335.1 billion, and CalSTRS (State of California retirement fund for teachers) is ranked No. 11 with \$215.3 billion. The largest fund in the world is the Government Pension Fund of Japan, with \$1.4 trillion.



## Volunteers Needed to Recruit New RELAC Members

by JP Harris, Chair  
Recruitment & Marketing Committee

Could you spare four hours per month to help RELAC enlist new members? Eight? How about eight hours every other month? Whatever amount of time you can give, RELAC needs your help to keep your retirement secure.

RELAC is venturing out into the workplace to actively inform soon-to-be retirees about the importance of membership in RELAC. One of the primary strengths of RELAC is the fact that all three retiree seats on the LACERA Boards of Retirement (two) and Investments (one) are held by RELAC Board members. This is important to you as RELAC is the only organization that is exclusively dedicated to the well-being of Los Angeles County retirees!

A strong membership is essential to ensuring that RELAC remains a strong presence at LACERA to protect your retirement benefits. The best way to ensure this happens is to maintain a strong RELAC membership base.

How can you help? Anyone can volunteer to assist the Recruitment & Marketing Committee in providing information to soon-to-be retirees. We will be setting up a table at 12 County locations on various days each month to provide information about RELAC and the benefits membership provides to its member retirees. This would be a great opportunity to reconnect with former workmates as you could choose to go to the site where you formerly worked. If you prefer, you can choose a different location that may be closer to your home. The locations are the medical centers at Harbor-UCLA, LAC+USC, Olive View, Rancho Los Amigos and High Desert Regional Health Center. Additionally, we will set up at the Ferguson Complex in Commerce, Hall of Records, Internal Services headquarters in Downey, the Hall of Administration, Public Works in Alhambra, Registrar-Recorder in Norwalk and the Zev Yaroslavsky Family Support Center in Van Nuys. We will set up tables at each of these locations once per month except at the Hall of Records and Internal Services, which we will do every other month.

We are planning a training session at the RELAC office to give you all the information you need to be successful and hopefully have some fun in the process. Please contact the RELAC office at (800) 537-3522 if you are interested in participating in this endeavor to make RELAC even stronger to better protect your retirement benefits!



## Hypertension Discussed at RELAC Meeting

by Mary K. Rodriguez, Chair  
General Membership Committee

Almost 150 members joined us at the General Membership meeting at the Arboretum in Arcadia on Sept. 25 to hear guest speaker Gabriela Hernandez, Kaiser health educator, present information on hypertension. For those unable to attend, here are some presentation highlights.

Hypertension, more commonly known as high blood pressure, affects a large percentage of people. It is a widespread problem where lifestyle, genetics, medicine and environmental factors can cause some people to have trouble staying within a healthy blood pressure range.

Blood pressure is a measurement of the force of the blood pushing against the arteries, as the heart pumps it through the circulatory system. This measurement is given a number over a second number. The number could be written as 120/80mmHG or pronounced as "120 over 80." The top number is known as systolic pressure and the bottom number is known as the diastolic pressure.

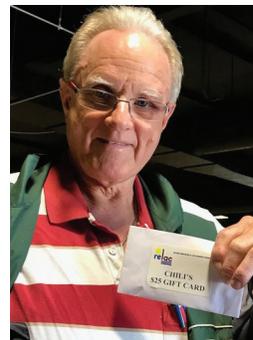
High blood pressure can cause many problems, including artery, heart, and kidney damage.

To prevent and treat high blood pressure, eat a healthy diet of fruit, vegetables, fat-free dairy products, whole grain breads and cereal, nuts, seeds, beans, peas, lentils, and foods that are not high in fat and sodium (no more than 2,400 mg per day). Additional tips included moderate physical activity for 30 minutes a day, five days a week. For additional information on hypertension, contact a Kaiser facility near you or your physician.

General membership meetings are planned to provide RELAC members with information on a healthier lifestyle, an opportunity to meet friends, enjoy life, and yes, maybe even win a door prize! We hope to see you at the Dec. 11 membership meeting in Carson.



Guest speaker Gabriela Hernandez



### Lucky Winners

RELAC members Bob Porlier and Mei Lin, shown above, were the lucky winners of \$25 gift cards, while both Annette Baker and Maxine Ellis won \$15 in cash. (Photos by Evelyn Gutierrez)

## Oct. 13 Picnic Canceled

Due to unforeseen circumstances, RELAC's Board of Directors canceled the annual picnic that was scheduled for Oct. 13.

RELAC regrets having to take this action and we sincerely apologize for the resulting disappointment and inconvenience.

Thank you for your understanding and we look forward to seeing you next year.

## RELAC Supports Toy Drive

by Linda C. Hopkins, Chair  
Community Support Committee

L.A. County firefighters are once again getting into the holiday spirit by promoting and supporting the annual "Spark of Love" toy drive for underserved children.

RELAC's Board of Directors cordially invite our members to join us in supporting the toy drive. New, unwrapped toys and sports equipment for teens are needed to provide low-income families with holiday gifts for their children and teens.

Starting Saturday, Dec. 1 through Dec. 24, toy donations may be dropped off at any County fire station or at the RELAC office at 1000 S. Fremont Ave., Ste. A0-101, Alhambra. RELAC members attending the Dec. 11 General Membership meeting in Carson may also bring new, unwrapped toy donations for pickup by a County firefighter attending the meeting.

Thank you for your generosity and community support, especially during the holidays.

Your donations will be greatly appreciated.



RELAC Board of Directors donate toys for the "Spark of Love" County Fire Department annual toy drive.

## What's Happening?

by Evelyn Gutierrez, Chair  
Special Events Committee

As you prepare for the coming holidays, we hope you can attend a few County holiday celebrations. Committee members have identified fun and exciting events that may be of interest to you. We hope you enjoy good times during the holidays.



Oct. 27-28, Saturday & Sunday – Marina Spooktacular 10 a.m. - 8 p.m. FREE  
Enjoy a family-friendly harvest celebration during the day and spine-tingling thrills at night. Enjoy the haunted pirate ships, games, arts, crafts and pirates at Burton Chace Park, Marina del Rey. Call (424) 526-7900.

Dec. 1 - 31 -- Marina Lights 4 p.m. – 10 p.m. FREE  
Enjoy a magical display of festive lights every night in December. Saturdays at the Marina, you can also enjoy live caroling from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. and outdoor holiday movie screenings from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. Bring blankets and dress warmly. Hot cocoa and coffee will be available for purchase.

Dec. 8, Saturday -- Snow Wonder Noon - 6 p.m. FREE  
Marina del Rey Burton Chace Park. Enjoy real snow sledding, arts and crafts, live DJ and food trucks. For additional information call (424) 526-7900.

Dec. 8, Saturday -- Holiday Boat Parade 6 p.m. – 8 p.m. FREE  
Festively decorated boats sail around the main channel of the Marina del Rey Harbor. Dress warmly. Call Marina Visitors Bureau at (424) 526-7900.

Dec. 24, Monday -- L.A. County Holiday Celebration 3 p.m. – 6 p.m. FREE  
Enjoy the County's annual multi-cultural holiday celebration presented by the County Board of Supervisors. L.A.- based artists and community groups will showcase their talent and artistry at the Music Center Dorothy Chandler Pavilion, 135 N. Grand Ave., L.A. The three-hour production features instrumental music, choral music and dance performances. Parking is FREE. This event is also broadcast live on PBS SoCal (KOCE). Call (213) 972-3099.

Dec. 31, Monday -- New Year's Eve Fireworks & Glow Party FREE 7 p.m. – midnight, Marina del Rey Live DJ, dancing and jumbo screen live broadcast of New York/East Coast celebration - 8:59 p.m., and L.A./West Coast celebration and fireworks -11:59 p.m.

Dec. 31, Monday -- New Year's Eve Celebration - Grand Park FREE  
200 N. Grand Ave., L.A. (Temple and Grand Avenue). The NY/East Coast celebration will be showcased at 9 p.m., with the L.A./West Coast celebration and fireworks at midnight!! Visit our website [www.relac.org](http://www.relac.org) for new postings and updates. Thanks for your support and participation in RELAC's special events.

### See's Candies Discount Available to RELAC Members

As in the past, See's Candies will honor your RELAC membership card to confirm eligibility for special holiday discount rates for their products. These discounts apply to pre-boxed candies of milk chocolates, dark chocolates, soft centers, assorted, and nuts and chews in one pound or larger quantities. Significant discounts also apply to their fancy gift-boxed candies and specialties, which make great gifts for the kids.

To get the discount, call (800) 877-7337, tell the See's representative you are a RELAC member, where you live, and ask for the location of the quantity order shop nearest your home. Be prepared to show your RELAC membership card at time of purchase.

RELAC's discount eligibility is valid from Dec. 1, 2018 through Oct. 31, 2019.

### Happy Birthday, RELAC Centenarians

Happy birthday to our members who will be 100 and older in November and December.

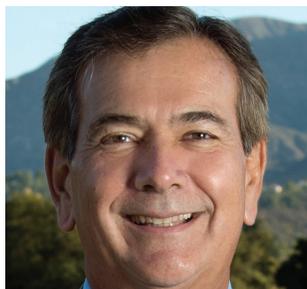
- Irene B. Baker, 100, John Wesley Hospital, Dec. 31, 1918
- Ruth L. Burk, 100, associate member, Dec. 15, 1918
- William D. Collins, 100, USC Medical Center, Nov. 21, 1918
- Isabel Estrada, 100, Health Services, Nov. 17, 1918
- Winifred Fershing, 100, Public Social Services, Nov. 16, 1918
- Hadassah M. Snider, 100, Community Development, Dec. 15, 1918
- F. Jane Baker, 101, Community Services, Nov. 5, 1917
- Naomi Brown, 101, Health Services, Nov. 16, 1917
- Ivo Lazzeroni, 101, Communications, Dec. 5, 1917
- Virginia J. Weaver, 101, Public Social Services, Dec. 5, 1917
- Evelyn B. Lee, 103, Auditor, Nov. 13, 1915

RELAC

# Annual Recognition Luncheon

Wednesday, Jan. 16, 2019

Almansor Court, 700 S. Almansor St., Alhambra



Keynote Speaker

**John Wicker, L.A. County Parks & Recreation Director**

**The inspiring TSA Chorus will perform.**

(Transportation Security Administration)

The L.A. County Sheriff's Color Guard will present the flags.

\$25 per luncheon ticket: tax and tip included.

Meal costs will be partially subsidized by RELAC.

Entrée choice of prime rib of beef or pancetta chicken breast.

A vegetarian plate, vegetable lasagna, is also available.

No-Host Cocktail Hour: 10:30 a.m. – Noon

Luncheon and Program: Noon – 3 p.m.

Free Parking

Reservation Form  
Annual Recognition Luncheon  
**Wednesday, Jan. 16, 2019**  
Almansor Court, Alhambra

Member \_\_\_\_\_

Spouse/Guest(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

Additional Guest (s) \_\_\_\_\_

**A - Pancetta Chicken Breast**

**B - Prime Rib of Beef**

Member/Spouse \_\_\_\_\_ \$25/ea. = \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Member/Spouse \_\_\_\_\_ \$25/ea. = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Guest(s) \_\_\_\_\_ \$25/ea. = \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Guest(s) \_\_\_\_\_ \$25/ea. = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Total A \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Total B \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Total Enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Make check/money order payable to "RELAC" and mail to:  
RELAC, 1000 S. Fremont Ave., Unit 15, Alhambra, CA 91803-8802  
Confirmation and payment deadline is Jan. 7, 2019.

## Annual Recognition Luncheon Scheduled for Jan. 16, 2019

by Evelyn Gutierrez, Chair  
Special Events Committee

RELAC's Annual 2019 Recognition Luncheon has been scheduled for Wednesday, Jan. 16. This special event will kick off a new year of RELAC events, programs, activities and networking opportunities. We hope you can join us and start the year by connecting with other County retirees and friends.

RELAC members, spouses and friends are invited to join us at the Almansor Court banquet room in Alhambra. The program will start with an inspiring, patriotic performance by the TSA chorus and Ernest Perez. Presentation of the flags by the L.A. County Sheriff's Color Guard will also open the program.

Keynote speaker is John Wicker, L.A. County parks and recreation director. Wicker directs and operates 173 parks, 19 golf courses, eight wildlife nature centers, four arboreta and botanic gardens, and the world-famous Hollywood Bowl. The department's motto is "Parks Make Life Better." Departmental senior programs and services that promote a healthy lifestyle and strengthen the community through diverse physical, educational and cultural programming will be highlighted.

Special recognition awards will be presented to the 2018 RELAC Volunteer of the Year in celebration of Older Americans Month and RELAC's 2018 Walk for Babies Team.

Cost for this great event is \$25, with a no-host cocktail hour from 10:30 a.m. to noon. The menu entrée choice is prime rib of beef or pancetta chicken breast. The vegetarian plate is vegetable lasagna.

Please contact the RELAC office to confirm your attendance and menu choice. The **reservation deadline is Jan. 7, 2019**. Tickets must be purchased in advance and will be available at the registration table on the day of the event.



# RV Outing Notes

by Jeanne Klauk  
Assistant Coordinator of the RV Club



Klauk and Mike Reyes, coordinator

On Sept. 16 our RV group descended on the wonderful Chula Vista RV Resort. It is a gorgeous park on San Diego Bay. We had a small group, but we had a very grand time. Those attending were: Mike and Veronica Reyes, Bob and Linda Reyes, Norm and Chickee Nelson, Ron and Betsy Morgon, Dave and Jan Coleman, Ernie and Christina Blanchard, Dian and Leon Stegall, Dorie Fregeau, and me, Jeanne.

Our visiting updated us on the summer occurrences of the members of our group. Monday and Tuesday, we enjoyed our hors d'oeuvres and potluck meals. As a bonus, our clubroom was adjacent to the park's Tuesday patio party and music, so we were able to enjoy it as well. The Reyeses provided great breakfasts. Many of our group went into town to visit the casino or just to tour the city. On Wednesday we went to the Fish Grotto Restaurant, where once again we had music to dine by. The gas card was won by Ron Morgon, and the 50-50 drawing was won by Mike Reyes.

Our bad news is that this exceptional park is going to be demolished, and a hotel and convention center will be built on the property. So this was our swan song to Chula Vista. Our upcoming campouts in 2019 are Pechanga on Jan. 6 and Banning Stagecoach on March 17. Please come join us at one of these events; we have a very good time. Of course, we manage to work in numerous card games!

## What is in a Last Name?

(We asked RELAC member Dr. Lakshmanan Sathyavagiswaran, retired chief medical examiner-coroner/director, to explain why his wife and daughter have his first name as their last name.)

In south India where we come from, we just have the given name. All children who have a last name have their father's first name as their last name. Girls take the first name of their husband as her last name after marriage. So Sathyavagiswaran is my father's first name. My wife and daughter have Lakshmanan as their last name. Specific last names indicated at times you are from a privileged background and became a hindrance to admissions to good schools or prestigious jobs. Using first names kept it simple and indicated whose child or wife you might be.

--Dr. Lakshmanan Sathyavagiswaran



Left to right: Daughter Ashwini Lakshmanan, Lakshmanan Sathyavagiswaran, granddaughter Divya Lakshmanan Sundaram, son-in-law Vinay Sundaram, and wife Vijay Lakshmanan.

# Golf News

by Gil Sandoval  
RELAC Golf Director



The Lakewood tournament is scheduled to be played after this newsletter has gone to the printer, so you can get the results on the RELAC website: [www.relac.org](http://www.relac.org). Follow the link to activities (Golf).

We have had a decent year for RELAC golf this year. I want to thank all the golfers who have supported the RELAC golf program throughout the year and hope those of us who have had illnesses, injuries and surgeries (knee replacement for me) will recover fully and with the Lord's blessings have a healthy and hearty year in 2019.

We hope that next year we can get more of the ladies and other retired members to join our golf program. We invite suggestions to make our golf more interesting and enjoyable for everyone. In any case, we need more golfers to keep this part of RELAC viable for the future. The latest change for the ladies is that all par 3s closest to the pin are now two shots so that there is a better chance to win prizes.

Our next tournament is Dec. 3 at Whittier Narrows Golf Course. First tee at 8 a. m.

I would love to see as many people as possible for the enjoyment of playing with their friends.

Diane and I wish to extend all the blessings of the holiday season to all of you and your families. Have a great holiday season and a great year in 2019!

### NEXT TOURNAMENT:

Dec. 3 at Whittier Narrows Golf Course  
Entry deadline: Nov. 15.

Cost: \$32 per golfer.

Send checks, payable to RELAC, to: RELAC, 1000 S. Fremont Ave. #15, Alhambra, CA 91803-8802.

## RELAC NEWSLETTER

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Number 6

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9 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Monday - Thursday

Closed Friday,

Saturday, Sunday &

Public Holidays



## Letters To The Editor Write On!

After reading my RELAC newsletter for September/October, I just thought I needed to say thank you for all you do for all of us! Sincerely,  
**Dee Parrish, Van Buren Township, Michigan**

Sad news. I just got the most recent edition of the RELAC newsletter and it listed in the obits that our former co-worker Shirley Haworth passed away. She came to the Community Services Department from Children Services when Stephanie Klopfleisch was brought in as chief deputy. Shirl was tough, but fair and a great supporter of the department's various programs. She was the best. Rest in peace, my dear.

**Bill Yaney, San Pedro, California**  
(Retired, Community and Senior Services)

I was sorry to read about the passing of Dr. Martin Finn. I worked with him when he was head of the El Monte Health District. Nice man, good boss. One of the health education assistants working under me got sick once upon a time at night. She called him and he went to her home and gave her medical attention. That was the kind of man he was.

**Tom Hibbard, Loma Linda, California**  
(Retired, Health Services Department and Board of Supervisors)

Thanks for another great newsletter. It is so much more interesting since you started editing it. I noted with sadness in the September/October issue the passing of Martin Finn. There weren't any details. So here's my small tribute. I hope you'll include it in your next issue. I was hired into the AIDS Program Office in 1987 to assemble the first "unmet needs" budget for HIV for County funding of AIDS (later HIV) in L.A. County. Martin was my best source of information for what was needed, both inside and outside of the County. He's the one who first pointed me to "alternatives to inpatient care," such as hospice care, home health care and day care. He's also the first one who alerted me to funding community agencies through contracts. Fast forward about five years, and I was named the director of the AIDS Program Office in 1992. Martin was my invaluable medical director for those years, until I was "kicked upstairs" into Public Health after Mark Finucane came to the County. After Dr. Finn retired from the County, he provided HIV care to patients at the AIDS Healthcare Foundation clinics for many years. We used to have lunch periodically, but ultimately lost touch. He and his partner gradually moved to the desert, from my understanding. I'll always appreciate his support.

**John Schunhoff, Los Angeles, California**  
(Schunhoff served 25 years in the Departments of Health Services and Public Health, including almost three years as DHS interim director.)

I hired Nadia (Looper-Wiggins) for the PR job in the Chief Administrative Office after working with her at DPSS. Smart as a whip. I tried to persuade her to go to law school, but she had a mind of her own. Sorry to get the news of her death.

**Harry Hufford, Santa Rosa, California**  
(Hufford was chief administrative officer of the County from 1974-85 and in 1993.)

I had previously sought and been granted reprinting privileges of some RELAC newsletter articles for publishing in the newsletter of Lake Park La Mirada (my senior community) called "The Breeze", of course acknowledging the RELAC newsletter as the source. In this September/October issue, I was so inspired by the article titled "My Second Act" and would like your permission to reprint it in the Breeze. We have a book reading club and I believe many

of my neighbors would love to read the book after the overview in this article. Thanks so much.

**Wedad Khalil, La Mirada, California**  
(Retired, Department of Children and Family Services)

Thank you so much for the copies of the newsletter with my article in it. I really like how it turned out, including the photos. And, thank you for sharing the request to reprint the article in a retirement community newsletter. I love sharing my story with people and hope to inspire them to find their own "second act." That's what my public talks are all about. Again, thank you so much for publishing my story. It's been a fun experience.

**Lee Gale Gruen, Walnut Creek, California**  
(Retired, Probation Department)

You do such a good job with the newsletter; we are so lucky to have you.

**Marianne Reich, Moreno Valley, California**

I was very pleased and surprised that there were mentions of the article about me in a second RELAC newsletter. I was particularly moved by the responses you published from (former Chief Administrative Officer) Harry Hufford and my son, Craig. I have a great deal of respect for Harry, my former boss, and was surprised to see he responded. At Christmas time, I make a great batch of fudge that I give to friends. It looks like you have made the list this year. Thank you.

**Charles A. Norris, Hacienda Heights, California**

A great issue (September/October) on a publication that you consistently turn out so well. For a government junkie like myself, superb reading. THIS particular issue of the newsletter was just packed with a great, amazing mix of powerful stuff...columns, deaths, bios, County's own criminals, and hijacking of technical functions into the political influence sphere (compensation/classification). Judy (Hammond) outdid herself. A mixture of sadness, upbeat, comedy, tragedy, violation of public trust (always bother me the most) and political intrigue. I've edited a newsletter or two and it is a task! GREAT JOB!

**Rene Topalian, Alhambra, California**  
(Retired, Health Services Department)

Dear RELAC and Outreach Committee: Thank you so very much for the birthday card. It was a surprise and very much appreciated. I had a very happy birthday at 97 years old and you folks played a part! Love to all.

**Margaret Walker, Azusa, California**

RELAC and Outreach Committee: Sincere thanks for the remembrance of my birthday, as I recall so many memories. Thank you.

**Elaine Webb, Compton, California**

Thank you for sending me a beautiful birthday card on my birthday. It is nice to be even remembered at this age of 91. It is very much appreciated.

**Emie Obata, Torrance, California**

# Keeping Up With Retirees

We asked three RELAC members to let us know what they have been doing since retirement. Their articles follow.

David Janssen and wife, Jeannie



Terri Maguire and grandson, Ian

## TERRI MAGUIRE

I joined the County family late in my career, having previously been assistant director at the Palmdale City Library, followed by six years as the director of the South Pasadena Public Library. In 2003 I joined the County Library as chief deputy county librarian and remained in that position until my retirement at the end of July 2010. Those seven years were undeniably the most challenging and rewarding of my career.

In 2003 the County Library, under the direction of County Librarian Margaret Todd, was slowly emerging from a long period of tight budgets and reduced services. Over the next seven years we updated the department's computer system and website, planned and constructed eight new libraries, refurbished a number of other libraries, designed a new logo and worked with a consultant to develop a new standardized signage package for all of our libraries. We also focused on staff development through numerous workshops, a new librarians' forum, active participation in the Eureka leadership program hosted by InfoPeople, and support for staff attending professional conferences.

Following retirement, my husband, Michael, and I relocated to Hilo on the Big Island of Hawaii. Much of our time since has been spent working on our 1932 plantation-style home. We've done a number of upgrades both with and without professional help, and the work continues. I also tried my hand at gardening, but gave up when I discovered that the bugs in Hawaii grow as fast as the vegetables, and farmers' markets are cheap and plentiful. My only success has been my lime tree, which keeps us and our friends well-supplied for gin and tonics. My other ongoing activity has been volunteering at the Lyman Museum and Mission House, a small local museum dedicated to telling the history of Hilo and the mission families who had such a big impact on the community.

2018 has definitely been the most interesting and challenging year yet. In early May we were hit by a 5.4 magnitude earthquake, followed several hours later by a 6.9, which is huge for Hawaii. Those quakes signaled the start of a major new eruption of Kilauea Volcano. In the space of about a week, 20 fissures opened in the Lower East Rift Zone below the Kilauea summit. Some fissures released small amounts of lava, numerous others vented large clouds of hydrogen sulfide and sulfur dioxide gas, while one, Fissure 8, sent fountains of lava 150 feet in the air. Luckily, the rift zone is about 35 miles from Hilo and downwind so we weren't directly impacted, but watching from our kitchen window as the red glow reflected off the clouds at night was a startling experience. Over the next 140 days, 700 homes were lost to the lava. Numerous others were spared but inaccessible due to being surrounded by lava. Lakes, bays and tidal pools were covered over and buried under as much as 35 feet of lava, making major changes to the landscape.

## DAVID JANSSEN

It is hard to believe that it has been 11 years since I retired as chief administrative officer of L.A. County. We regrettably made the decision, for economic reasons, to move back to S.D. County. Unlike many San Diegans, we loved living in Pasadena (the commute was quicker than my commute had been in San Diego). We also loved living in downtown L.A. in a high-rise condo for two years (that was an even quicker commute). People who do not like L.A. County have never traveled off one of the many, many freeways. Truly a wonderful place to live and work.



I loved working for the County and even the Board of Supervisors -- most of the time. I was very fortunate to have had the same hard-working Board members for my 11-year tenure, and even more fortunate to have the freedom they gave me to help department heads administer the varied programs for which the County was responsible. I think we as a team were able to accomplish much through our strategic planning effort to guide the organization in a way that was collaborative, inclusive and forward-thinking. (We even successfully involved Board staff in that undertaking.) I miss the people, the policy challenges and, of course, the Tuesday Board meetings!!

I was unwilling to leave local government completely after retiring, so I taught a class on local government at UC San Diego for five years. It was eye opening to see how few of the students knew anything about local government, or, for that matter, little about state government. But it was a full-time job to keep up with all the changes in California government, so I finally let it go. I do, however, take the L.A. Times so I know the challenges are still there; and we apparently did not solve all the problems during my tenure!

The best part of our lives now have been our daughter's marriage and our two granddaughters, now 7 and 4 1/2. Although they live in the Bay area, we try to visit them every couple of months, whether they like it or not. Grandchildren truly are a blessing. Taking them to Disneyland and Hawaii last year was truly special.

We also have done quite a bit of traveling ourselves -- including an African safari, trips to China, Egypt, Europe and Russia, to name a few. What a great way to keep in perspective how fortunate we are to live in the United States. We spend our summers in Lake Tahoe as much as possible. Jeannie and I were fortunate enough to celebrate our 50th wedding anniversary in 2016 in Venice, Croatia, Verona and Vicenza.

I play tennis twice a week, golf once a week and bridge the same whenever we are home in Poway. So while working for the State for 11 years, San Diego County for 13 and L.A. County for 11 was an amazing journey, retirement has been all that I could hope it to be.

It is unfortunate that many people in this country do not appreciate the incredible work that government employees do on their behalf. County government, in particular, is the heart and soul of California, and working for Los Angeles County was the best of the best.

## RICHARD (DICK) KUHN

I was hired in 1946 by the County Surveyor, which soon had a name change to County Engineer. They knew my background as a Caltech graduate and Seabee officer on five islands in the South Pacific. There was not very much going on because of a shortage of building materials, but then in 1947 it all exploded and the department was flooded with new subdivisions. From then on, I was extremely involved until retirement in March of 1980.

I was responsible for the construction of seven miles of sewers, making the recordation possible of new tracts, which finally became new cities. Then in 1967 considerable construction started in the north county, all that area north of the mountains. I was appointed the regional engineer in charge of the county engineer services in this area. This was long before there were incorporated cities in this whole area. When I returned to the basin area, I was in charge once again of the design of all sewer plans and their maintenance. I was known as the "clean water guy."

Then I was appointed the division engineer in charge of all design projects, a job which did not last long due to the passage of Proposition 13. The department was cut about 30 percent, so I was transferred to save the mapping division.

My collateral jobs during this tour of duty consisted of providing engineering expertise for the Southern California Association of Governments, helping Avalon get funding for its wastewater treatment plant, serving as an officer in the State Water Pollution Control Association and as chairman of a countywide committee to standardize manholes, covers, etc., which saved lots of money for all construction in the county. I was honored to receive an American Public Works Association award for developing a new treatment process to pipe-treated water to a new park and fishing lakes north of Lancaster.

I retired at age 56 to rest up, but that didn't last long. After some trips and doings, I had to go to work. I was just too young. So, I organized my own engineering consultant company and my first job was with the County Engineer, preparing a state-required report of all the areas in the County without sewers.

Three years later I decided to finally retire to spend more time with my wife, Alice. I also became a member of Torrance's Environmental and Energy Commission, where I served for eight years. I volunteered for over 18 years in a program called "Company Call" at the Provident Little Company of Mary Hospital. This program consisted of calling senior citizens who had no one to check on them. I also volunteered to be the scoutmaster of a Boy Scouts troop in Torrance.

I have been active in many clubs and organizations during my whole life and was an officer in many of them, including ones in Torrance, where I have lived since 1960. The Torrance organizations include the YMCA, Library Association, Travelers, Little Theater, Madrona Marsh Preserve, Historical Society, Auto Club, Methodist Church, and a senior exercise group.

I have traveled all 50 states and throughout Europe, Canada, Mexico, Iceland, Africa, Central and South America, and taken numerous ship and river cruises. Most important to me is my family. All through life, I have had the full support of my family, which has certainly helped me get through all these years. I have four children and two stepchildren still living; and my brother, Marty and his wife, Eleanor, who now reside in Coos Bay, Oregon. I lost my wife, Alice, in 2008.

A great love in my life has been the summer and winter Olympics. My father took me to the 1932 Olympics in the Los Angeles Coliseum. He did not have enough money to get in, so we stood outside and listened to the radio announcer. Then, when they returned to the Coliseum in 1984, I got two



tickets for every day during the full two weeks. Now, I watch the Olympics every two years on the television.

I am now 96 years old with many good memories of Los Angeles County and the great people who worked there.



*Kuhns' home, a stately Spanish Colonial Revival built in 1940, was the featured home in the 2014 annual tour of historic homes in Torrance. He purchased it in 1960 for \$30,000, after persuading the seller to reduce the purchase price by \$5,000. "I'm a civil engineer so I know about building homes," said Kuhns. "I like it because it's really built. A 2-by-4 in this house measures 2 by 4 inches. The stucco on there – it's hard to pound a nail into it, inside and outside."*

## Hawaii Three O: It's Getting Harder to Hang Loose

by Margaret Donnellan Todd  
RELAC Member, Former County  
Librarian



So far in 2018 we have had a nuclear ballistic attack alert, an erupting volcano and a Category 5 hurricane. Because of our location and geographic features, hurricanes are practically unheard of in Kailua Kona. However, in mid-August, they were predicting that Hurricane Lane would turn west and, while not making a direct hit, it would come close enough to the west side of the Big Island to bring heavy prolonged rain, a storm surge and 70 + mph winds. So everyone bought their supplies and waited. Luckily, the storm path changed and weakened so we actually had no wind and very little rain. Unfortunately, the east side of the island took a huge hit from prolonged heavy rain. So what plague comes next -- locusts?

*(Margaret Donnellan Todd moved to Kona, Hawaii in 2015 when she retired as head of the County Public Library.)*

# Retirees Stay Connected Through County's Management Council

by Victoria Pipkin-Lane  
Member, Newsletter Committee



RELAC Vice President Brian Berger in 1999 became the first retiree representative on the Los Angeles County Management Council Executive Committee. RELAC member Fred Hungerford is the current retiree representative.

Los Angeles County retirees have many options on how they choose to spend their time after leaving full-time employment.

Where are 70 former managers, who were active in the Los Angeles County Management Council (LACMC), spending some of their leisure time these days? They're going to LACMC seminars and conferences.

"Retirees stay connected through the LACMC," said Ruth Wong, LACMC Executive Committee member. "They share their institutional knowledge of the County, really acting as ambassadors. They have been there and done that, and can help new talent coming into County management."

Gen. Wong, U.S. Air Force (Ret.), who is director of the Military and Veterans Affairs Department, said LACMC welcomes RELAC members. "It's a win-win situation for both organizations."

Eligibility to join the organization is based on the retiree's payroll classification while working, and generally all classes within the Management Appraisal and Performance Plan (MAPP) are eligible.

As a member of LACMC, retirees pay monthly dues of \$2 and receive many benefits, including invitations to spring and fall conferences, monthly seminars, social networking events and voting privileges. The cost of membership is minimal in comparison to the benefits, said Wong.

RELAC member Fred Hungerford, who retired as chief deputy County librarian after 42 years of service, is the retiree representative on the LACMC Executive Committee. "He is an active and valuable member, helping to identify venues for our meetings," said Wong.

Hungerford, who is on a 120-day assignment with the LA County Library as a management advisor to up-and-coming division chiefs and managers, says he has always supported the Management Council's mission of "Creating and Strengthening Leaders."

LACMC's seminars and conferences, he said, are good for active members and retirees. "Networking with former colleagues, keeping one's skills current, and remaining active" are some of the benefits of membership, he said. Seminar topics have included "Financial Planning for Retirement," "The Art of Listening" and "Estate Planning."

LACMC's holiday party is scheduled for Dec. 7 at the County Natural History Museum and the spring conference is May 2-3, 2019 at the Hyatt Regency in Indian Wells. These events provide a great opportunity to reconnect with former friends and colleagues.

RELAC Vice President Brian Berger, who served on the LACMC Executive Committee for more than 20 years, including twice as president, was appointed the committee's first retired representative in 1999.

"Those contacts don't end when you retire, and I won't bother to count the many times since 1999 that it was the Management Council and its network that guided me through one issue or another," he said. "That network was then and continues to be a place I can look to for guidance. Just because you have retired doesn't mean that they are not still there."

For more information on LACMC and its events, contact Hungerford at fredmh@sbcglobal.net or log onto the organization's website at <https://managementcouncil.lacounty.gov>.

RELAC members who were former LACMC members and want to rejoin can obtain a retiree membership application and LACERA payroll deduction card at [https://managementcouncil.lacounty.gov/Files/Documents/8/Retiree\\_1822\\_001.pdf](https://managementcouncil.lacounty.gov/Files/Documents/8/Retiree_1822_001.pdf)



## Terri Maguire cont. from p.8

Just as the volcano quieted down, we were hit with the beginning of hurricane season. During our first seven years here we were hit with only one tropical storm. This year we have been impacted by three storms already and hurricane season doesn't end until Nov. 30. The biggest hit to Hilo was from Hurricane Lane, which dumped 45+ inches of rain over the course of three days. Rivers and streams flooded, flood channels overflowed, landslides blocked both of our major roads, and Hilo's downtown was inundated. Three weeks later County crews were still cleaning logs and boulders from the Bayfront soccer fields.

While this year has been a little challenging, we are still enjoying our retirement in "paradise." We have made frequent trips to Wisconsin to visit our daughters and spend time with our grandson, Ian, who we are sure is the world's smartest 6-year-old. Planning is currently underway for his first trip to Disneyland, and we can hardly wait. While I don't miss the pressure and stress of working full time, I do miss my friends and colleagues at the County and invite them to stop and visit if they are ever on the Big Island.



## Letters cont. from p.7

We appreciate the RELAC pocket calendar, which is very well made. It provides a good paper quality and large square boxes in which we are able to write in to fill all of our coming appointments and events. It is a wonderful calendar. Thank you, RELAC, we appreciate it. Happy wife, happy life.  
**Craig Post, Upland, California**  
(Retired, Sheriff's Department)

## Nadia (Looper) Wiggins Dies

RELAC member Nadia (Looper) Wiggins, former L.A. County public affairs director and a 35-year employee, passed away from brain cancer on Sept. 20, a few months shy of her 76<sup>th</sup> birthday. She died peacefully in Las Vegas, Nevada, with her husband, Bob, and her family at her side.



Nadia and Bob Wiggins

Upon her retirement from Los Angeles County in July 1995, Wiggins moved to Las Vegas and worked for five years for the City of Las Vegas as a planning supervisor.

She began her career in the Los Angeles County Probation Department in 1960, moving to the Department of Public Service (DPSS) after several years. She served more than 20 years as the special assistant to two DPSS directors (Ellis P. Murphy and Keith Comrie), providing the public information function as well as being the Board of Supervisors' liaison for DPSS.

RELAC member Harry Hufford, chief administrative officer at the time, said he hired Wiggins to head the Public Affairs Office after working with her at DPSS. "Smart as a whip," he said. In the Chief Administrative Office she worked directly with the CAO, the County supervisors and the press.

RELAC member Tom Hibbard, former chief deputy to Supervisor Pete Schabarum, said he always enjoyed working with Wiggins. "I always appreciated that when she was asked to take on something that it was possible to say what you wanted and never had to check on the progress. What was asked was always done with incredible efficiency and thoroughness."

Wiggins and her husband traveled in their motorhome throughout the United States and Canada – where Bob had his roots. They also traveled throughout Europe. "Together, as a couple, they were the envy of many because of the strengths they both brought to their relationship and deep love for each other," said Gwen Andrizzi, who served as Wiggins' executive assistant in the Public Affairs Office.

"Nadia was loved by many for the special friendship and love she shared with all those she loved and will be remembered by all for her great mind, her outstanding culinary skills and the genuine and loving person she was to many," said Andrizzi. "She will be missed gigantically by all her family as well as her many friends."



## RELAC Member Paul Laderfoged Recognized

Paul Laderfoged, who worked in the power plant in the Mechanical Department before retiring, was recognized at RELAC's recent meeting in Arcadia. Members aged 90 and older attending RELAC's events are always introduced to show our gratitude for their continued support. Laderfoged turned 90 on April 4 of this year.

(Photo by Linda C. Hopkins)

## RETIREMENT NOTES



### ROGER GRANBO

It's a wrap, says Roger Granbo after receiving retirement scroll from Supervisor Janice Hahn at presentation recognizing his 33 years of service with the Office of County Counsel. The retirement didn't last long, however. He came back as a 120-day employee to work on settlement of a Department of Justice investigation of the Sheriff's Department's practices in the Antelope Valley.

### MANUEL RIVAS

Supervisor Hilda Solis presents retirement scroll to Manuel Rivas at Board of Supervisors meeting ceremony. Rivas, who worked for the County for 28 years, was most recently the assistant chief executive officer responsible for legislative affairs and intergovernmental relations.



## FOR SALE

**CEMETERY PLOTS** -- Oakdale Memorial Park, Glendora, California. Location: Eternal Peace, two lawn crypts. Asking \$9,000 for both plus transfer fee. Contact Sherry or Dennis at (951) 258-1584.

**CEMETERY PLOTS** -- Rose Hills Memorial Park, Whittier, Garden of Affection, one plot, single, \$5,500 (no more plots available in this garden). Two single plots, Greenwood Gardens, \$5,500 each. Buyer pays for transfer fee and endowment fee. Contact Alicia P. (626) 359-9326.

# Passages

Compiled by Judy Hammond, Newsletter Editor

## ELECTIONS:

**Herman B. Santos** re-elected to the LACERA Board of Investments and **Vivian H. Gray** re-elected to the LACERA Board of Retirement, with three-year terms beginning Jan. 1, 2019.



Richard Garcia



Antonia Jimenez

## APPOINTMENTS:

**Ricardo Garcia**, who served 17 years as a trial attorney and supervising attorney for the Public Defender's Office and the Alternate Public Defender's Office in San Diego County, named L.A. County's first Latino public defender at \$338,000 salary. Four acting department heads appointed to permanent positions: **Dr. Christina Ghaly**, director of health services, at \$412,275 salary; **Celia Zavala**, executive officer of the Board of Supervisors, \$262,911; **Antonia Jimenez**, director of public social services, \$329,644; and **Joseph Nicchitta**, director of consumer affairs, \$250,341. Nicchitta will continue overseeing the Office of Cannabis Management, which had been under the jurisdiction of the Chief Executive Office. **Alan Bernstein** selected as Supervisor Sheila Kuehl's appointee to the LACERA Board of Investments, effective Jan. 1, 2019. **Stephen Scott** appointed manager IV of facility operations and crafts in Department of Health Services, at annual salary of \$181,398. **Mala Nanda** named deputy, management programs in Health Services at base salary of \$219,000.



Celia Zavala

## RETIREMENTS:

**Roger Granbo** retired from County Counsel's Office after 33 years, nine of which as head of the law enforcement division, but immediately reinstated as a 120-day retiree to provide legal advice concerning the settlement of the Department of Justice investigation of the Sheriff's Department's law enforcement practices in the Antelope Valley. **Manuel Rivas**, assistant chief executive officer responsible for the legislative affairs and intergovernmental relations branch of the Chief Executive Office, retired after 28 years with County.



Roger Granbo

## DEATHS:

**Tom Salata**, 82, 16-year member of the County's Civil Service Commission, appointed by Supervisor Mike Antonovich. **Dr. Eugene Kunzman**, 81, appointed in 1985 as medical director at the County's Central Men's Jail, where he remained until retiring in 2010. **Bruce Rubenstein**, deputy director of policy and planning for the Department of Children and Family Services from 1991 to 1997, who helped create and implement the family preservation and family support programs. **Marty Carr**, former deputy to Supervisor Pete Schabarum, after long struggle with COPD. **Capt. Wayne Habell**, 13 years with the Fire Department, an avid motorcyclist and member of the County Fire Hog Club. **Jacob Williams**, who began his County career in 1978 as intern in Internal Services Department and in 1995 promoted to principal facilities project manager in Public Works, after year-long battle with cancer. **Celia Zager Owens**, former senior program consultant with the County Human Relations Commission, hired in 1984 to oversee publicity and public affairs outreach. **Nadia Looper Wiggins**, former County director of public affairs and director of administrative services in Chief Administrative Office, 75, from brain cancer. Former Municipal and Superior Court Judge **Carlos Edward Velarde**, 88, who retired in 1969. **Sheriff's Lt. David Haliscky**, who retired in 2000 after almost 34 years; **Sgt. Walter Streeton III**, who retired in 1982 after 23 years of service; and **Sgt. Tom Moore**, who retired in 1995 after 25 years. **Dr. Vincent Carter**, 83, former faculty member in Departments of Emergency Medicine and Orthopedics at LAC+USC Medical Center.



Celia Zager Owens

## COURTS:

Former Sheriff's Deputy **Kenneth Collins**, 50, who charged up to \$250,000 to protect large shipments of drugs being transported out of state, is scheduled for sentencing in November after pleading guilty to conspiring to distribute methamphetamine, cocaine and marijuana. **Thomas Shepos**, 68, who acknowledged accepting \$434,000 in bribes and kickbacks over seven years while working in the Chief Executive Office real estate division, pleaded guilty to two felonies in a plea deal that requires his cooperation in the ongoing federal investigation.



Christina Ghaly



Joseph Nicchitta

# Inside LA County

by Judy Hammond  
Newsletter Editor



Auditors found the County still needs a lot of improvement in handling employee accusations of sexual harassment. The County Equity Oversight Panel (CEOP) was created in July 2011 to handle sexual harassment claims, but auditors said the panel is slow to discipline offenders and County departments often impose less stringent penalties than recommended by the panel. In a sampling of 50 cases, it took on average 18 months after a complaint was filed for the employee to be disciplined, and discipline recommended by the CEOP was only enforced an estimated 34 percent of the time. The penalty was reduced or no action taken in 44 percent of the cases, with no action possible in the remaining cases because there was a pending appeal, a need for further investigation or the employee had left County service. There were 28,340 complaints filed with the CEOP through last December, with only 28 percent deemed to merit investigation.

The Sheriff's Department now has its own theme song. Robin DiMaggio, musical director to the United Nations and The Arsenio Hall Show, wrote the "In Service" theme and presented it as a gift.

Saying it wished to increase affordable housing and improve the quality of life for residents, the Board of Supervisors asked staff for recommendations on how to develop an affordable mobile home park model in which the County would serve as the landlord and lending agency for mobile-home buyers.

Supervisors approved drafting an ordinance that would limit rent increases in unincorporated areas to 3 percent annually and allow landlords to evict tenants only with just cause.

Pointing out that two-thirds of the nation's law enforcement agencies use body cameras or are implementing plans to do so, County supervisors said they want the Sheriff's Department to expedite putting cameras on all deputies. A pilot program was initiated in 2014, but has stalled due to cost concerns and questions about policy in releasing the recordings to deputies and the public. Supervisors authorized the hiring of a consultant to resolve these issues, with recommendations due by January. "We are a little late to the party," said Supervisor Kathryn Barger.

The 2018 Greater Los Angeles Homeless Count found that an estimated 9,100 vehicles are being used as residences, up from 8,500 in 2017. Because many of these are substandard or hazardous RVs, County supervisors ask for an ordinance to prevent tow-lot owners from auctioning off substandard vehicles, curb the rental of such vehicles, and minimize the improper dumping of waste. They also ask for recommendations to implement "safe parking" programs for people to park and sleep overnight, and to provide outreach to connect these individuals with social services.

The state will audit the County Department of Children and Family Services to see if it is doing enough to protect LGBTQ children, following the death of a 10-year-old boy who had been the subject of 13 calls to the department and may have come out as gay before his death. Legislators said LGBTQ children are more likely to be abused and rejected by their families.

The Metropolitan Transportation Authority is the first in the nation to use body scanners to detect suicide vests and other improvised explosives, deploying several portable units that can be moved to any of its 93 subway and light-rail stations.

Deputy public defenders who protested the interim appointment of Nicole Davis Tinkham to lead the department are quite happy with the selection of Ricardo Garcia as public defender. Tiffany Blacknell, one of the leaders of the protest against Tinkham, said she was "more than excited" about Garcia's appointment. "All we ever wanted was quality leadership to further our great cause and we believe Ricardo Garcia to be such a leader," she said. Garcia, most recently a supervising attorney in San Diego's Office of the Public Defender, was described by supervisors as one of California's most accomplished and respected criminal defense attorneys. Supervisor Kathryn Barger, however, defended Tinkham's appointment and performance in the interim role. "While she – or I should say we – faced fierce criticism by many for a lack of experience in the criminal defense arena, she has proven to be a strong and effective leader."

Noting that first responders are more likely to commit suicide than die in the line of duty, County supervisors have asked for a comprehensive plan to provide these employees with mental health care and support.

Supervisors issued an official apology to the 200 women who were coerced into getting sterilizations at LAC+USC Medical Center during 1968-1974 and ordered

a plaque or suitable work of art be installed at the hospital to express sincere apologies to the women and their families. The supervisors are also supporting proposed state legislation that would compensate victims of state-sponsored sterilization. Supervisors Chair Sheila Kuehl said that while the County did not have a program of forced sterilizations, some of the patients were sterilized without truly informed consent. "Many of these women had to live the rest of their lives with decisions that they did not understand having made, and some did not even understand until later that they had been sterilized." She said these women were deemed "unfit for reproduction" because of racism and discrimination towards immigrants, people of color, poor people, unmarried mothers, the disabled and the mentally ill.

County supervisors have instructed the Medical Examiner-Coroner's Office to send letters to doctors notifying them when their patients die of an opioid overdose. A study in San Diego has shown such letters reduce opioid prescriptions.

A new clinic at Harbor-UCLA Medical Center will provide services to children from birth through age 18 who are involved with the Department of Children and Family Services.

The Fire Department's urban search and rescue swift-water team spent 14 days in North Carolina assisting with the response to Hurricane Florence.

A new outpatient building and expanded inpatient facility at Rancho Los Amigos National Rehabilitation Center in Downey will centralize patient services and improve campus accessibility.

A record number of vouchers for local farmers markets were distributed this year to older adults in L.A. County. As of Sept. 1 the Workforce Development, Aging and Community Services Department had given out 7,050 of the \$20 vouchers, which are provided by the state Department of Food and Agriculture for low-income seniors.

A redesign of the Parks and Recreation Department website -- [Parks.lacounty.gov](http://Parks.lacounty.gov) -- makes it much easier to find parks, programs, and details needed to plan a fun day at the County's 182 parks.

A redesign of the Chief Executive Office website -- [ceo.lacounty.gov](http://ceo.lacounty.gov) -- is the first since the site was created.

The County welcomed dogs at seven of its pools on Labor Day. The small dogs got the pool from 5-6 p.m. and the big dogs got their turn from 6-7 p.m. The dogs' owners weren't allowed to join in the fun.

The LA County Library has begun replacing many outdated computers with newer models, adding more RAM to slower machines, and upgrading to Windows 10 to improve service to library users throughout the system; with completion set for summer 2019.

The Department of Animal Care and Control's 2018 "Clear the Shelters" event resulted in the adoption of 591 dogs, 342 cats and nine rabbits.

A \$14.3 million award was approved to the family of a man shot to death in 2014 by a deputy who mistook him for an armed suspect. In reality, the man was trying to escape his house after a gunman burst inside. And a federal appeals court for the second time upheld a \$4.1 million payout for the 2010 shooting of a homeless couple staying in a friend's backyard by sheriff deputies searching for a wanted parolee.

A ribbon-cutting ceremony in San Gabriel marked a significant step in the largest project in the Alameda Corridor-East grade separation program.

# WHY RETIREES NEED TO JOIN RELAC

by J.P. Harris and Linda C. Hopkins  
Members, RELAC Board of Directors

As its name implies, the Retired Employees of Los Angeles County (RELAC) is dedicated to the needs of retirees of Los Angeles County. So how is that different from any other group created apparently for the same purpose? The answer is simple: RELAC is the only organization for retirees that is dedicated exclusively to the needs of Los Angeles County retirees.

But what does that really mean?

Other organizations that have active employee constituent committees with a sub-group for retirees may have a built-in conflict of interest and possibly a lesser commitment to retirees.

Why is that a problem?

When you belong to an organization with a broad-based membership, that group will tend to focus its attention on the issues affecting the larger group of which you, as a retiree, may not be part of their basic, core mission. Now that you are retired, you no longer have a seat at any bargaining table. The best any retiree organization can do, including RELAC, is to ensure that your benefits are not allowed to be eroded.

Again, so what?

When organizations with active and retired employee constituents seek enhanced benefits, they are interested in one group and one group only: active employees. But if the employer (for instance, Los Angeles County) has only one pot of money to spread around for active employee pay raises and benefit enhancements and to fund the retirement system to ensure you get the promised benefit, one group will probably come up short. Any organization that represents active employees and retirees must make a choice as to whose interests are more important. If the only way active employees can get a pay raise is to eliminate funding for retirees, it is likely that future retirees may suffer.

Here is an example. Through contract negotiations, active employees received a pay raise which was partially funded when the County eliminated the subsidy for retiree medical insurance to cover the spouses of new hires. Active employees won, and future retirees lost.

Organizations who advocate for employee pay and benefits are critical to ensure employees receive fair and equitable pay and benefits. But retirees need an organization solely dedicated to protecting retirement benefits. The assaults on our pension systems are in full swing. Many systems are in financial difficulty and those that are not (LACERA falling into that category) are still in jeopardy. There is a steady drum beat to reduce the costs associated with public pensions, limit taxpayer liability and eliminate unfunded liabilities. There is also an unending chorus of experts urging changes to assumptions made regarding the rate of return on investments. There are many who want the selection of retirement system investments to be driven by social considerations apart from earnings. As a retiree, you need to be concerned with all of these issues and you need to align yourself with a group that is solely dedicated to protecting your retirement benefits. Many organizations claim to be concerned, but they have too many other interests competing with yours, the retiree. As the adage goes, you cannot please two masters.

Help keep RELAC strong. Recruit a new member today!

## Medicare Card Scam Alert

*(Information Provided by District Attorney's Office)*

New Medicare cards are being mailed nationwide to prevent fraud and identity theft, but seniors should beware of a scam arising from the distribution of these new cards.

In the new Medicare card scam, fraudsters call seniors and tell them they must provide their Social Security number or other personal information or make a payment to receive or activate their new Medicare cards. That isn't true.

Medicare enrollees should receive their new cards automatically from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. The agency began mailing the new cards, which no longer include Social Security numbers, in April and will continue through April 2019.

Don't share your Social Security number, personal information or Medicare number except with legitimate health care and insurance professionals with whom you initiated contact.

Don't make any payments to receive or activate your Medicare card.

## WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

August – September 2018

**Children & Family Services** – Raymond Bracamonte, Susie Quon

**Community & Senior Services** – Ken Camp

**County Counsel** – Mary Wawro

**Fire** – Gary Quick

**Health Services** – Carrie Billups, Maureen Flannery, Susan Frank, Haggerty Ulda, Lolita Jimenez, Mary Knox, John Lee, Valerie Rodgers-Owens, David Talan

**Internal Services** – Rudolph Zamora

**LAC+USC Medical Center** – Rhonda Brewer, Maria DeLaCruz, Gloria Draffen

**Mental Health** – Margarita Billbrew, Yvonne Liu

**Probation** – Minerva Casanas, William Chandler, Michelle Pierson

**Public Defender** – Marsha Barrett-Jue

**Public Health** – Socorro Kirk, Ricardo Solis, David Dassey

**Public Library** – Annalie Tupai, Theresa Maguire

**Public Social Services** – Sol-Angel Campuzano, Charles Medlin Jr.

**Public Works** – Roland Romain, Michael Davis, Richard Preston

**Sheriff** – Gregory Boagni, Robert Blume, Cheng Ying Lee Chou, Sam Lee

**Superior Court** – Renee Martine, Carole Teranishi, Donald Webber

**Department Not Designated** – Mary Lou Gutierrez, Mary Grant Williams

**New Associate Members** – Douglas Barrett, Kenneth Billbrew, John A. Billups, Shelby Boagni, Patricia A Bracamonte, Tony Brewer, Lucy B. Davis, Jose Lois DeLaCruz, Robert Flannery, Joseph Haggerty, Renato H. Jimenez, David O. Knox, Minh Hien T. Lee, Michael J. Maguire, Peter Morrison, Thomas Owens, James Pierson, Martha Solis, Tom Teranishi, Karita Webber, Teresa Zamora

## Thanks for New Member Referrals

We would like to thank the six members and two non-members who recruited colleagues to join RELAC during August and September. Due to our aging membership, we must remain vigilant in signing up new members in order to remain a strong organization to protect your hard-earned pension and health benefits. We are the only organization that exclusively serves the interests of Los Angeles County retirees, so help us help you. For membership applications and brochures, call the RELAC office at (800) 537-3522, e-mail [admin@relac.org](mailto:admin@relac.org) or go online at [www.relac.org](http://www.relac.org). Be sure to tell the new member to put your name on the application as making the referral.

Our thanks to these RELAC members (shown in bold) for referring new members (shown in italics): **Alice Ayala**, *Renee Martin*, Superior Court **Nancy Block**, *Minerva Casanas*, Probation **Emily Crosby**, *Richard Preston*, Public Works **Judy Hammond**, *David Talan*, Health Services **Barry Hunt**, *Maureen Flannery*, Health Services **Margaret Todd**, *Theresa Maguire*, Public Library

We also thank non-members **Richard Preston** and **Lydia Ventura** for referring *Michael Davis*, Public Works, and *Sol-Angel Campuzano*, Public Social Services, respectively.

# IN MEMORIAM

*This list includes retired employees, both RELAC members and non-members.*

**Agricultural Comm./Wts. & Measures** – Albert D. Habacon, Phillip T. Livesey

**Aids Program** – Constance Braithwaite, Michael A. Squires

**Alcohol/Drug Programs Admin.** – Jordan Wesley

**Alternate Public Defender** – Oran P. Franklin Jr.

**Assessor** – Clinton E. Evans, Ella M. Hines, Eva P. Kardouni, Patsy E. Medlock, James R. Moore Jr, Anthony W. Pasano, Naomi O Randall, Olga L. Zar

**Auditor-Controller** – Vilma M. Davidson

**Board of Supervisors** – Michael S. Bohlke, Paul L. Byrne, Odella Harrison, Celia Zager

**Charities** – Harriet L. Shimmin

**California Children's Service** – Clarice D. Pyles

**Chief Executive Office** – Manuel D. Talamantes

**Chief Information Office** – Elmer A. Gibson, Oliver L. Perry

**Child Support Services** – Aurora S. Holguin, Gary H. Ogawa, Frances Scott

**Children & Family Services** – Alma L. Augustus, Marcia J. Futowsky, Antonio P. Garcia, Holly Lamb, Caroly B. Lee, Maple Newman, Diane Owens, Peggy A. Smith

**County Counsel** – Damaso S. Gabriel, Amparo Marilao

**District Attorney** – Phil H. Aghbashian, Robert W. Ewen, Grace Kaulia, Harold C. Martin, Joann Smith, Ruth Spigal, Robert E. Trigon

**Engineer** – Vernon W. Chandler, Harold C. Martin

**Fire** – Gary J. Bedo, Jerry Mc Craner, Philip K. Hatch, Donald L. Kemp, Tellus O. Mitchell, Eugene W. Mushinskie, Marvin A. Paske, Luis E. Rios, William H. Robb, Howard E. Wallace, Donald C. Wilson

**Flood Control** – Robert R. Klesert

**Harbor/UCLA Medical Center** – Taghreed Abdel-Sayed, Bryan D. Baxter, David Enochs, Sebastiana Fernandes, Brenda J. Joiner, Bernice Kotkin, Celestine W. Lang, Herbert D. Medlock, Shirley J. Mitchell, Ozie B. Newman, Silas P. Tolliver Jr.

**Health Plan Administration** – Barbara A. Clemmons, Betty J. Terrell

**Health Services Administration** – Adelbert Cramer, William G. Crary, Varnell R. Henderson, Betty J. Terrell, Katie L. York

**Internal Services** – Ernest L. Barrera, Faith M. Cushingberry-Barbush, Pete A. Esquivel, Robert W. Fischer, Leo P. Gonzales, Relliford Hygh Jr., Jay R. Martin, William J. Nevious, Jimmy L. Stratton, Leighton A. Tennell, Bobbie Ward, Joseph E. Wells, Orrie A. Wilner

**Juvenile Court Health Services** – Luella Craft

**King/Drew Medical Center** – Frances R. Aubry, Wardine Bridges, Vijana Krishna, Carlotta Marshall, Raymond Otero, Nila Parker, Anita L. Williams

**LAC+USC Medical Center** – Esperanza Acuna, Ronald Battle, Vincent S. Carter, Abigail T. Cuevas, John R. Daniels, Cora L. Eves, Zack Franklin, Gerda A. Gallo, Don R. Gatewood, Andrew Gonzales, Flor C. Gonzalez, Silvia L. Janetzko, Betty Hemphill, Ronald K. Kimble, Susan L. Lacerte, David Madrid, Peggy B. Peck, Roy G. Price, Susan L. Lacerte, Helen S. Mc Donald, Sharon L. Quinn, Shirley Ricks, Rebecca D. Rivera, Martha Salvador, William Shin, Claudia Simmons, William Speight Jr., Brenda J. Smith

**Mechanical** – Thomas P. Dann, John L. Olson

**Medical Examiner-Coroner** – Brenard E. Bodley

**Mental Health** – David G. Guzman, Shanthi H. Keshava, E. E. Kunzman, Paulette Michel, June C. Morgan, Hal K. Platts, Jose A. Perez, Rey Francis Abejar

**Olive View/UCLA Hospital** – Heather Ba Than, Anna M. Bailey, Rickie Garcia, Willie O. Stringer, Esther R. Thomaseec, Raquel Villanueva, Linda M. Wilhelm

**Parks & Recreation** – Omega L. Freeman, Clare R. Peterson, Sharron E. Thompson

**Probation** – Dennis Adams, Barney G. Bartelle, Carolyn A. Binegar, Arthur G. Bragg, Leon Brent, John G. Bolaris, Arvis P. Bruveris, Reynaldo Fimbres, Charles L. Johnson, Gregory W. Jones, Frances Littlefield, Barbara M. Lopez, Tangee A. Manning, George R. Mayhorn, Robert E. Mc Dowell, Katherine J. Mc Govern, Annie L. Roberson. Milton Robinson Jr., Lorraine Tobak

**Public Defender** – Jeffery G. Elias

**Public Health Program** – Alicia T. Corvalan, Louis A. Frizzi, Therese M. Jackuback, Ellen K. Kan, Michele Y. Lewis, Doris L. L'Hommedeu, Esperanza Lucas, Ronald W. Poulson, Richard H. Rinaldi, Robert M. Seino, Ruth Woods

**Public Library** – Connie A. Mitchell, Rita L. Norton

**Public Safety** – Milton W. Triggs

**Public Social Services** – Aramais Abrahamyan, Linda R. Angelo, Mary V. Altamirano, Cheryl J. Bittle, Luz L. Caluza, Nieves Casals, Martha O. Clark, Walter L. Clark, Wilma J. Diamond, Leonard Dowell, Ina L. Ellis, Rose M. Gaines-Roberts, Clara J. Gamble, Doreen L. Gay, Juanita N. Guevara, Darlene P. Hammonds, Alberta Long, Robert Manukyan, Alice F. Martin, David Meza, Cheri A. Miller, Florence Movsessian, Virgilio A. Neri Jr., Alina Nersesyan, Elaine Pardlow, Liam A. Smith, Ella-Mae Swinburn, Yolanda Victoria, Edward White, Mattie Williams, Susan C. Wood

**Public Works** – Ella M. Carter, Hobart F. Chastain Jr., Stephen L. Cserhalmi, Jacqueline Davis, Henry Eng, Carl D. Ford, John T. Huff, William A. Law, Victor M. Nepomuceno, Stephen J. Porrino, Ricardo Renteria, Frank Rios, Willie B. Rowe, Melchior Senteno Jr, John C. Sholtis, Mildred L. Veith, Agapito Viescas, Gregory P. Williams, Frank Zerillo

**Rancho Los Amigos Hospital** – Doris E. Flair, Helen L. Pautsch, Maria Mota, Leroy Smith, Esther Torres, Agnes S. Tsuchiyawa, William Hinman

**Reg.-Recorder/County Clerk** – Constance F. Fields, Jack E. Flores, Samson Palencia

**Sheriff** – Ernest P. Alegre, Charles Allen, Robert D. Bingham, Alfred G. Bluff, John M. Brady, Paul Bradley Jr., George W. Byas, Glidell J. Champ, Robert D. Cotterman, Armand Cruz, Carolyn L. Davis, Lois J. Frederick, Christophe Guzzeta, David M. Haliscky, Beverly Hammonds, Charles C. Kammerer, Tay S. Kim, Garnold A. Kimball Jr., Sylvia E. Kuly, Patricia L. Larkin, Martin F. Lorenzini, Chester R. Mitchell, Tommy G. Moore, Thomas L. Morris, Raymond E. Nail, Arthur S. Peterson, Carlos A. Rosario, Joseph M. Rosenberg, Robert A. Shaw, Evelyn Solorzano, Eleanor Tapia, Ruthie M. Williams

**So. Coast Air Quality Mgmt. Dist** – Paul K. Chu, Earl G. Roberts

**Superior Court/County Clerk** – Silva L. Attarian, Gary M. Cramer, Anthony C. Filosa, John C. Gunn, Helen F. Hajek, Errol Hunter, Templin P. Kauschen, Phyllis E. Petrou, Beatrice Steward, Janice A. Whitbord, Gloria D. Williams

**Treasurer & Tax Collector** – Edith W. Livings, Kenneth Livingston

**Workforce Dev., Aging & Comm. Services** – Virginia W. Smith

**Department Not Designated** – Pearl L. Allison, Costas Gatsoulis, Yvette M. Hosmer, Betty Jones, Larry O. Otis, Loren L. Seseman, John C. Surek, Fred S. Tellez, Earnestine Vaughn



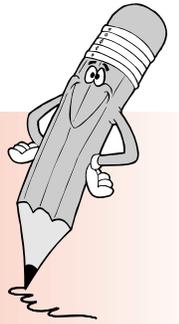
RETIRED EMPLOYEES  
of LOS ANGELES COUNTY  
1000 South Fremont Ave. Unit 15  
Alhambra, CA 91803-8802

Return Service Requested

NON-PROFIT  
U.S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
PERMIT #66  
PASADENA, CA

# General Membership Meeting

Mary K. Rodriguez, Chair, Program Committee



**Tuesday, Dec. 11, 2018**  
Carson Community Center  
801 East Carson St., Carson

**HOLIDAY ENTERTAINMENT**  
Provided by the always enjoyable  
Bill Hyland Band with Vocals by Jennifer Gates

9 a.m. - COMPLIMENTARY REFRESHMENTS  
10 a.m. - HOLIDAY FESTIVITIES BEGIN

A SPECIAL GIFT FOR ALL ATTENDEES  
~ LOTS AND LOTS OF DOOR PRIZES ~  
Please bring your RELAC membership card



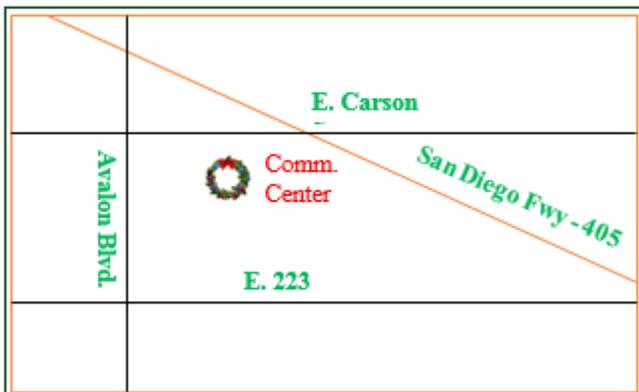
**Toy Donation Optional**  
Please bring a toy for RELAC's support of the Fire Department's "Spark of Love" holiday toy drive for needy children.

**IMPORTANT!**  
*Are you moving?  
Did you change your  
name, address or  
e-mail address?*

Cut out the address portion of this newsletter, correct it and mail to:

RELAC  
1000 S. Fremont Ave.,  
Unit 15 Alhambra, CA  
91803-8802 or  
Phone:  
(800) 537-3522  
(626) 308-0532  
Fax: (626) 308-2901  
Email:  
admin@relac.org  
website:  
www.relac.org

Note: It is important that you mail this to RELAC or contact RELAC by phone as we DO NOT receive your address change from LACERA.



Route I-405 South to Carson Street. (Exit 34). Turn left onto E. Carson Street. Go 0.3 miles to 801 E. Carson St.

Route I-405 North to Carson Street. West Exit (Exit 34). Merge onto E. Carson Street. Go 0.3 miles to 801 E. Carson St.