

San Diego Municipal Employees Association

Quarterly Newsletter January - March 2011





on the cover

MEA Stewards represent employees on a wide variety of issues ranging from written warnings and counselings to annual performance reports and formal grievances. In their duties of representation, stewards have had written warnings/counselings completely overturned or reduced to an oral warning/ counseling, have had negative comments removed from employee performance reports and have resolved most grievances at the first level. If you are interested in becoming a part of the steward team, please contact Senior Labor Relations Representative Kelly Cruz at 619-264-6632.



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our leadership



President's Message

As most of us anticipated, this past year was filled with an array of tough decisions, difficult obstacles and a few surprises. Yet during the most

challenging of times, we came together as a union and strengthened our resolve to fight for what we know is right and just.

This hasn't always been easy, especially when San Diego's media outlets consistently demonstrate their subjectivity and biased nature, and many of the citizens we serve go along with the politics of the day. Although the media doesn't provide us with the same proportion of air time and sound bites as certain politicians, we continue to find creative ways to get our message out. You can also help to communicate our message that "Nobody Does it Better" by continuing to serve San Diegans with your dedication, integrity and attentiveness.

We have also had to endure Carl DeMaio's incessant rants which have vilified City employees, spewed inaccuracies and monopolized airtime with what we all know to be his campaign platform for his 2012 mayoral run. In order to sway voters and to paint himself as the savior elected to "clean up" the City, DeMaio will continue with his questionable tactics and attacks on City employees. Yet just as Michael Aguirre swooped in (with the support of the Union-Tribune I might add) as the white knight ready to slay the corrupt City beast (and then swooped out with a lopsided re-election loss!), I strongly believe that the electorate will not be fooled twice by the same misleading guise.

2011 will bring some new and old challenges for our union to address. This year's budget shortfalls are going to force the Mayor and Council to once again fill the gaps by making cuts to City services. We commit to fighting for every single position and keeping you abreast with the most updated information. You are also encouraged to contact MEA if you have any questions or concerns throughout the entire process. We know that budget deliberations bring doubts and concerns

which tend to be heightened when rumors are more abundant than factual information in the workplace.

Retiree health benefits will continue to be a contested issue in 2011. Although some have attributed the debacle to "greedy labor unions," the truth is that the benefit was created in 1981 by then-Mayor Pete Wilson who needed to plug some holes in the City's budget. Over the past 30 years since that decision, it has gone through various enhancements by almost every Mayor including Mayor Hedgecock and Mayor Golding. The 40-page retiree health report that was released in September and produced by both the City and the labor organizations document the detailed factual history of the benefit and discuss various legal positions of the City and the unions. Negotiations with the City on retiree health should begin soon, so stay tuned for updates from Ann Smith and the rest of your negotiating team.

This past year, we also agreed on a Managed Competition Guide which represents more than three years of tough negotiations and successful litigation. The agreement details the rules that will govern the implementation of the 2006 ballot measure. Although we do not support outsourcing and managed competition, we do believe that this guide represents our best chance of a fair fight. As it has been demonstrated in other jurisdictions like the County of San Diego, our City employees will win the majority of competitions conducted on a level playing field because we are already the most efficient, leanest and most effective providers of City services.

Although 2011 will be another challenging year, 2010 showed us once again that we are a hearty group that has not, and will not, back away from obstacles and trials. We will address any challenge head on and will maintain open lines of communication to ensure that we are one united front. At the end of the day, we're in this together and we will get through this together. Thank you for your support and stay strong!

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Bob Cronk 1st Vice President
Jan Lord 2nd Vice President
Candi Mitchell Treasurer
Kyle Wiggins Secretary

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Mark Chrysler Development Services
William Craig Environmental Services
Lisa Goehring Water
Francine Howell City Attorney
Steven Ramirez Environmental Services
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Greg Woods

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Treasurer



Bankruptcy Baloney

There's been a lot of talk about bankruptcy in the City of San Diego in the last five years. Most of that talk, of course, was

instigated by none other than Michael J. Aguirre shortly after he was elected City Attorney six years ago. Aguirre's political agenda was simple—feed the public the most extreme and irresponsible rhetoric possible (facts be damned), and then portray himself as the only one capable of rescuing "the people" from the hole he had just told them they were in. Calling for the City to declare bankruptcy fit right into Aguirre's approach, and thanks to a willing and hysteria-hungry local media, it proved to be a successful political strategy for some time.

But then Aguirre's dismal litigation record (he was after all elected to be an effective attorney for the City right?) and his personal attacks and charges of corruption against anyone who dared disagree with him finally caught up to him. San Diego's general public, business interests, labor interests, and even the local media grew tired of him and as a result Superior Court Judge Jan Goldsmith won a very lopsided victory for City Attorney in 2008. Aguirre quietly left the public stage, went back to private practice, and everybody got on with the business of actually trying to run the City.

But Aguirre is back. Perhaps he got bored or perhaps he couldn't resist being out of the spotlight any longer. He started calling press conferences again. The local and national media once again found themselves unable to resist seeking out quotes from the most sensational interview in town.

And that means that the San Diego bankruptcy talk is back. No matter what the topic, Aguirre finds a way to make his personal crusade for bankruptcy become the center of the story. The online news website *voiceofsandiego.org* even called Aguirre the "bankruptcy apostle." The national media has also caught on to the fun, so now anytime there is a story

about the specter of a municipal bankruptcy in the *USA Today* or *New York Times*, Aguirre is quoted saying something to the effect of "don't forget about San Diego—we're bankrupt too!"

It would almost be funny if it weren't doing so much direct and indirect damage to the City of San Diego.

For his part, San Diego's actual City Attorney Jan Goldsmith has expressed his opposition to bankruptcy with equal vigor to Aguirre's support. Goldsmith calls the bankruptcy talk "nonsense" and correctly notes that 1) the City is not insolvent (a somewhat important detail when it comes to bankruptcy filings!), the City would not benefit from bankruptcy, and in fact the cost would exceed \$100-200 million in legal bills, 3) it would result in years of legal haggling, public acrimony, and national embarrassment, and 4) there is no legal precedent whatsoever to change or discharge public-sector pensions through bankruptcy, which is the stated purpose of Aguirre and those who support declaring bankruptcy in the first place.

Goldsmith may not be the best ally of City employees, as he seems to spend an inordinate amount of his time trying figure out "legal" ways for the City to get out of its own promises, but on the topic of bankruptcy Goldsmith deserves kudos for resisting the politics of the day and forcefully telling it like it is.

The problem is that it's not nearly as much fun for the media to quote people saying boring things like "bankruptcy is not an option." For example, the *Union-Tribune* recently ran an incredibly misleading article (surprise!) about a bankruptcy filing in the City of Prichard, a small town outside of Mobile, Alabama. The UT article proclaimed that the "bankruptcy debate" in San Diego is "mirrored" by Prichard, and that "if Prichard successfully reduces its pension debt through its reorganization, pressure will likely grow in San Diego for a similar approach."

Really? San Diego is the "mirror" of Prichard, Alabama and what happens there is applicable to our future? Prichard's population is about 25,000 while San Diego's is 1.2 million; Prichard is insolvent and hasn't made a pension payment to its retirees since 2009, while San Diego is not insolvent, its pension fund has never missed a payment, and in fact SDCERS has \$5 billion in assets in the bank; and Prichard has defaulted on countless

other debts and has a long list of creditors demanding payment, while San Diego has never defaulted on a debt and has relatively high reserves and bond ratings compared to other jurisdictions in California. In fact by any demographic or financial metric, Prichard and San Diego are about as similar as New York and National City. For the UT to make a front page story out of a non-existent relationship is simply absurd.

But one of the problems with this type of media "reporting" is that intelligent people believe it. In fact, the above-referenced UT article and other media coverage has started to concern some of you. I have fielded more than a few phone calls and e-mails in the last few months from employees and retirees genuinely concerned that the City is about to file bankruptcy, or that what happens in a courthouse in Alabama will suddenly dictate what San Diego does next. It's just not true. (By the way—and not that it matters much—a bankruptcy court in Alabama dismissed Prichard's bankruptcy filing, which the UT dismissed as "a technicality.")

Anybody who tries to guarantee you anything about the future when it comes to San Diego politics is probably a fool. But we can say with some certainty is that a bankruptcy filing by the City of San Diego is about the last thing a City employee or retiree should worry about. The impact of the bankruptcy *talk* is indeed something to fear and needs to be addressed, but there is simply no prospect of an actual bankruptcy filing in San Diego's future.

Don't get me wrong, the fiscal state of the City is not great to say the least: service cuts will continue to be made; the public has no interest in paying for their fair share of the services they receive; our City cannot rectify 30 years of underfunding pension obligations overnight; and pay raises for employees seem like a faraway dream.

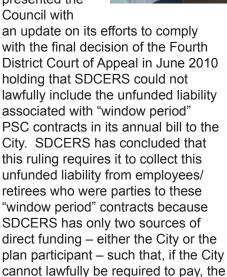
But bankruptcy for San Diego? That is not reality—that is simply the political and rhetorical tool of people who have agendas that have nothing to do with actually moving San Diego forward. So while Mike "Bankruptcy Apostle" Aguirre runs through another cycle of media attention for himself, please stay focused on your job, on your family, and on your health, and leave the worries of bankruptcy to insolvent cities like Prichard.

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Purchase of Service Credit Update

As many of you already know, MEA sponsored an informational meeting at the Balboa Park Club on November 18, 2010, related to the purchase of

service credit controversy. This was followed by a City Council session on November 29, 2010. At that time, representatives of SDCERS presented the



As you also likely know, the SDCERS Board has adopted a Resolution identifying a list of "correction options" designed to conform to the requirements of the Court's

decision (as it has interpreted the decision and applied it to the facts here). SDCERS' representatives presented the highlights of these options to the City Council on

employee must do so.

November 29th
– together with certain hypotheticals to demonstrate the impact of each. In sum, while the options will produce

different results based on individual circumstances, the "bottom line" is that an employee/retiree will either forfeit service credits (and, in some

cases, become ineligible for a service retirement – whether already retired in fact or retired as an active DROP participant), or be permitted to preserve the original PSC contract and pay an additional amount for the service credits with

interest. Another option is to elect to rescind the prior contract – with the amount previously paid being fully refunded with interest (calculated at the assumed rate of return for the

system – i.e., 8% or 7.75% depending on the period involved), and enter into a new PSC contract based on current salary and purchase rates.

However,

this option may prove to be more expensive for most employees because SDCERS has adopted a matrix of purchase rates based on the employee's age and years of

service at the time of purchase. Since all employees are now roughly seven years older than they were in 2003 -- with seven more years of service earned since the date of their original "window period" PSC contract -

- being forced to

enter into a new purchase contract at the new rates will be harmful to employees and will not restore them to the position they would have been in had there been no "window period."

In addition to its "informational" update, SDCERS' representatives asked the City Council to decide whether to exclude any group of affected employees/retirees from the "correction" process. While SDCERS does not believe that the Court decision leaves it any room to exclude anyone on its own, SDCERS does believe that it can ask the City Council, acting on behalf of the City, to do so by agreeing to pay the unfunded liability associated with some or all of the affected PSC contracts. This question has now been asked and the City Council will answer it after a closed session

> discussion with the City Attorney in January – likely on January 25, 2011. After the City Council informs SDCERS of its decision, SDCERS will begin implementation of its "correction" plan -- with or without changes. This

means that each affected plan participant will receive a letter from SDCERS describing the impact of each option with a deadline for making an "election" of the options before SDCERS imposes a "correction" on the employee/retiree by unwinding the affected PSC contract.

I addressed the City Council on behalf of all affected MEArepresented employees to raise the issues which demonstrate that viable legal claims can and likely will be made against SDCERS and the City based on the facts and law.





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Purchase of Service Credit Update

...continued from page 5

Among other points, I informed the City Council that, when the SDCERS Board voted to approve the "window period" on 8/15/03, three City representatives

served on the Board and voted in favor of the "window period" – the City Manager's designee, the City Auditor's designee and the City Treasurer. These City representatives



were joined in their favorable vote by former SDCERS trustees of some fame – Dick Vortmann and Diann Shipione. If these trustees acted unlawfully - as the City has since asserted – the City must defend and indemnify them against the claims which will likely be made because the City agreed by Resolution to do so (and the Courts have previously enforced this Indemnification Resolution). I also noted that City employees relied on the lawfulness of the SDCERS Board's action since SDCERS employed and was regularly advised by its attorneys on all matters related to the proper administration of the plan. Among those legal advisers when the 8/15/03 action was taken was Deputy City Attorney Roxanne Parks who was SDCERS' Associate General Counsel.

Since she now works for City Attorney Jan Goldsmith, I urged the Council to inquire whether she could shed light on the decision-making process at SDCERS and where and how it

went wrong to the detriment of so many employees and retirees. Moreover, I explained that both SDCERS and the City – through its managers,

supervisors and many payroll clerks

– gave notice to employees regarding
the deadline for entering into PSC
contracts at the "old rates" without an

iota of a suggestion that acceptance of this invitation would be improper for any reason. Indeed, if the City had disagreed with the SDCERS Board's interpretation of the Charter or Municipal Code when making its 8/15/03 decision, the City, through

the City Attorney's Office, surely had the opportunity (and the duty) to say so and to do something about it. Instead, the City did the opposite – encouraging employees to sign these

PSC contracts, to make the significant financial investments involved, and to rely to their detriment on the legality of doing so. Furthermore, the City – including

the City Attorney,

Mayor and City Council – had actual knowledge of the fact that PSC contracts, including the "window

period" contracts, were creating an unfunded liability and that the SDCERS Board may have acted in violation of the Municipal Code. The fact of this knowledge was included in a confidential attorney-client privileged Memorandum which

the City has since disclosed pursuant to a waiver of privilege. Moreover, the Mayor, City Council and City Attorneys discussed this matter in closed sessions of the City Council as early as January 2004; they made the determination to use this issue as leverage against SDCERS in getting a settlement of the Gleason Class Action case – on which judgment was entered in July 2004. The City never took any other action to address the issue – nor did the City inform its employees that it contested the validity or legality of the PSC contracts they were then and there signing and believing in good faith to be valid. Nor did the City raise this issue during the McGuigan Class Action case when the City was compelled to do so in response to employee claims that the City had underfunded its pension plan. Judgment in McGuigan was entered in December 2006.

In short, I urged the City Council to

understand that viable legal claims are available to employees and retirees under the circumstances, and that a prudent and business-like approach to this controversy should involve an effort to identify "compromise" or

"settlement" options – to be added to the limited options which SDCERS has identified and which place the entire burden of this situation on the employees/retirees. Such "settlement" or "compromise" options would be designed to resolve these legal claims by a release or waiver in exchange for a better outcome than what SDCERS has proposed. I will continue to work on this issue in preparaton for the Council's closed session in early January, and will keep will keep you updated as events unfold.

In the meantime, I hope you all had a wonderful holiday season and I wish you all the best in the year ahead.

Warm regards, Ann M. Smith



MEA Is Working For You...



Senior Labor Relations Representative Kelly Cruz met with Streets Division employees, Leon Sauls, Joe Castillo, Rocky Kelly and John Scampone to discuss the upcoming Labor Management Committee.



Senior Labor Relations Representative Gwen Phillips discussed the goals and agenda in the Wastewater LMC at the Point Loma Wastewater Treatment Plant.



Boardmember Steve Ramirez, General Manager Mike Zucchet and Senior Labor Relations Representative Gwen Phillips stay after a meeting to talk with member Jose Ysea.



GM Mike Zucchet and Senior Labor Relations Representative Kelly Cruz listen to input from Streets Division employees before meeting with Local 127 and City management at an LMC meeting.



Mike Zucchet photographed with panel participants and members of a pension forum hosted by the San Diego County Bar Association and The Federalist Society.



Mike Zucchet debated both Councilmember DeMaio and City Attorney Jan Goldsmith on the challenges and potential solutions to the City of San Diego's pension issues.

MEA Officer Election Results

We would like to thank the more than 800 members who took the time to vote in the 2010 MEA Officer Election. MEA would also like to thank committee chair Lisa Goehring and all of the Elections Committee members, as well as those retirees who volunteered their time to verify and count the ballots. The results were certified on November 1st and the following MEA Officers were re-elected:

President: Tony Ruiz
First Vice President: Bob Cronk
Second Vice President: Jan Lord
Treasurer: Candi Mitchell
Secretary: Kyle Wiggins

The officers will serve a two year term and were sworn in at the December Board meeting with Councilmember David Alvarez delivering the oath of office.





One Special House Call for Two Special Boys

MEA's staff was happy to lend a hand to member Makia Simpson and her family on December 21st.

Makia's two sons, Mason and Milan (Mason was recently diagnosed with bone cancer) were presented with gifts and toys for the holiday season.

Both boys were even more excited when San Diego Chargers Antonio Garay and Darrell Stuckey surprised them with more presents and Chargers apparel. Special thanks to Antonio and Darrell for braving the rain and stormy weather to make Milan and Mason's day all the more special!





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MEA's First Vice President, Bob Cronk, and his committee put on another great Adopt-a-Senior event this year. On December 14th, Councilmember Todd Gloria and MEA Board members and staff presented 50 deserving seniors with stockings containing healthy snacks and grocery and drug store gift cards.

Many of these senior volunteers are former City employees who now donate their time and institutional knowledge. Senior volunteers account for over 1,000 volunteer hours each month, field countless calls and assist guests that visit various locations including the City Administration Building and Balboa Park's Senior Lounge.

This is MEA's 16th year of donating and we look forward to taking part for years to come in order to acknowledge the volunteer efforts of our seniors.

Special thanks to California Bank & Trust and the law firm of Tosdal, Smith, Steiner & Wax for their generous donations!



Labor Representation Quarterly Overview

October - December 2010

In October, we had 21 new cases opened, 31 cases in November and 25 cases in the first half of December. The types of cases range from fact findings, terminations, supplemental performance reports and written disciplines.

There are also two Civil Service Commission appeals scheduled for January 2011. The first appeal is for a termination case for an employee accused of wrongly claiming overtime for approximately two hours. The second case is a two day suspension for insubordination and conduct unbecoming for sending unauthorized emails to a manager.

The Labor Representatives have also had a number of supplemental performance report appeals and reprimand appeals. In addition, there are quite a few warning and reprimand cases coming out of the Treasurer's Department regarding personal use of the city email and internet systems. We are advocating for the lowest level of discipline that will affect a change in the behavior, while also working to ensure fairness and consistency.

There are two additional grievances being processed regarding employees being denied their right to representation in a fact finding, and a grievance concerning OCA in the City Attorney's Office.

There are numerous meet and confers Labor Representative staff are actively involved in including a pepper spray policy for Code Compliance Officers in Fire Prevention, new badges for Parking Enforcement Officers, Station 38 night staffing, Fire Communications staffing policy consolidation and supervisors use of working files, Facilities Maintenance Handbook revisions, Park and Recreation Department Instructions revisions and reviewing implementation of a "push to talk" cell phone in Facilities Maintenance with impacted supervisors.

Streets Division had two Labor Management Committee (LMC) meetings in December, and the Library LMC is scheduled to to begin January 21, 2010.

Public Utilities Bid to Goal

All MEA-represented employees in the Public Utilities Department received a copy of the letter sent to the new department director, Roger Bailey, which expressed our concerns about the delay in pay outs and the approval of the new MOU's. We received a response from Mr. Bailey on December 7, 2010, though it did not provide any new information nor did it answer our questions regarding additional incentives for employees who continue to work toward meeting the goals without a MOU in place. He did state however, that the department plans to present the FY2009 AKT annual results audit and the request to award a fourth option year to AKT for the FY2010 annual audit at the February 2011 Audit Committee meeting. Mr. Bailey also stated that the Office of the City Auditor will present their findings at the February 2011 meeting, after which they will begin the process of making the FY09 Gainsharing payments.

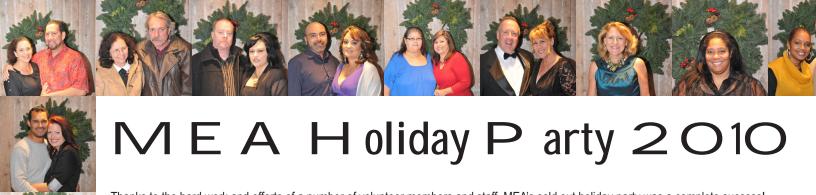
Know Your Rights:

Confidentiality of Medical Information

It is always a difficult and stressful time when dealing with an illness or health-related condition. Hopefully, you can take some comfort in knowing that the City, its officers and employees must respect the confidentiality of your medical information and must abide by the guidelines that are set forth in Personnel Manual Section J-4.

According to Section 62.2 of MEA's MOU, "The City acknowledges that an employee's constitutional rights of privacy entitles an employee to decline to disclose or to permit his or her physician to disclose the nature of an illness, diagnosis or prognosis unless otherwise required by Workers' Compensation statute, by the employee application for Industrial Leave or Long Term Disability benefits, State or Federal Law, application for employment, or required as part of a City mandated physical examination. To the extent that an employee's absence(s) due to illness have or may result in discipline or placement on a "doctor's list", the employee, at his or her own option, may disclose these details to the appropriate person in his or her chain of command or directly to the Department Head if the employee wishes. Because of this acknowledged right of privacy, the form for an employee's request for a leave of absence shall not require disclosure of the nature of an illness or require authorization for release of a medical provider's records."

Please do not hesitate to contact your MEA labor representative if you are being pressured or required to disclose your medical condition and/or health information. We are here to protect and enforce your rights!



Thanks to the hard work and efforts of a number of volunteer members and staff, MEA's sold out holiday party was a complete success! The 200 MEA members and their guests in attendance enjoyed a night of great food, company, and entertainment with their fellow City employees. After dinner and dessert, DJ Nate (also a City employee! See his ad on page 9) kept the dance floor full with great music and dancing that went late into the night. In between songs, Committee Chair Greg Woods called out winning raffle ticket numbers for some great prizes for lucky partygoers. If you weren't able to attend this year's holiday party, we hope you can make it to next year's night of fun and festivities. MEA's Holiday Party has definitely become a much anticipated end of the year event!

































City Lakes

Many of us have had the opportunity to enjoy a day of outdoor activities including

fishing, boating, jet skiing, hiking and picnicking at one of the City's nearby lakes. While we are enjoying a day of sun and aquatic

activities, we don't always think about the dedicated City employees who help to ensure that the water is clean, the surrounding habitat is preserved and protected and that the appropriate personnel are close by in the event of an accident. Yet that is precisely what the City Lakes Section does on a daily basis.

San Diego's lakes are actually reservoirs which make up the City's municipal water supply system. With the acquisition of the region's nine reservoirs, City Lakes was established to manage raw water quality, to protect the surrounding environment and to accommodate the public's access

and safe use of the reservoirs.

As the region's population has grown, the section has seen its share of changes in department oversight, number of

employees and an expansion in the range of duties and responsibilities. Currently, there are 78 employees who

> are divided into three groups-Reservoir staff, Ranger Divers and Construction staff. The Reservoir staff is tasked with monitoring over 40.000 acres of watershed property! This includes reporting off-

road activity, dumping and habitat destruction, monitoring water quality and assisting the public. The

Construction staff is also responsible for an expansive amount of land as they must inspect and repair 70 miles of raw water pipelines, 9 miles of conduit and 20 miles of access

roads. As you can imagine, both groups are incredibly busy with managing such a vast amount of

> territory and infrastructure. Ranger Divers also play a crucial role in public safety, water quality and dive support. The team has even been asked to assist in a search and recovery in Puerto Vallarta

and also helped with the Chelsea King search efforts.

Due to ongoing and increased seasonal use, City Lakes staff works a variety of hours with some shifts starting as early as 4am and others that end as late as 9:30pm. Many staff members are also on-call at all hours of the day and night and work weekends and holidays. Staff is often personally thanked for the time they put in and have also been acknowledged for their tireless search and rescue efforts, for keeping nearby residents abreast on construction projects and have even been thanked for helping to recover a World War II plane at the Otay Reservoir.

So the next time you're enjoying an

afternoon of outdoor activities at one of the nearby reservoirs, take a moment to appreciate your surroundings and to thank the City Lakes staff who have helped to preserve and protect the region so that we might enjoy

all that it has to offer.

Special thanks to Kevin Kidd-Tackaberry for his assistance and section profile.



If you would like your section or division featured in MEA's quarterly magazine, Viewpoint, please contact Lora Folsom at Ifolsom@sdmea.org or at 619.264.6632.



The night of November 2nd proved to be exciting for some, disappointing for others, and inconclusive for a few. For MEA-endorsed City Council candidate, David Alvarez, the early election results left him cautiously optimistic, which then turned to elation as each electoral update put him further and further ahead. By the time all of the District 8 precincts were counted, David had garnered more than 58% of the vote.

MEA is proud to have supported and endorsed David prior to even the

primary election. His intellect, passion and commitment set him apart from the very start, and we are looking forward to working collaboratively with David to find meaningful and long term City solutions.

We would also like to congratulate MEAendorsed candidates Toni Atkins and Ben Hueso, who were both successful in their bids for State Assembly. We wish them the best and know that they will both represent the region with the utmost commitment and enthusiasm. Lastly, MEA would like to acknowledge all of the members and staff who donated their time to volunteer on our candidates' campaigns. A great deal of the candidates' success was a direct result of the calls you made, the precincts you walked and the time you spent talking to your friends, neighbors and coworkers about the importance of this election. We greatly appreciate your time and efforts to help get dedicated, qualified and intelligent candidates elected.



ights Out!

Although many drivers were frustrated by the stormy weather that made for slow commutes, no group was more inconvenienced than Fire Communications on September 10th. That day, lightning actually struck their building which disabled fire dispatch 9-1-1 phone capabilities. The lightning fried half of their 9-1-1 phone circuitry

so the hard-working dispatchers had to rely on a combination of radio transmissions and administrative phone communication from the Police Department in order to field many of the calls and to dispatch emergency services. The group also created a makeshift command post in a small conference room to ensure that

all emergency service calls were accounted for.

So the next time you have a long day and rough commute, remember the individuals at Fire Communications who work tirelessly, even when faced with lightning strikes!





Your journey to best health starts here www.BestHealthSanDiego.com

Please provide a brief history of yourself-where you were born, where you went to school, some jobs you had before working for the City, names of your family, age of any children, etc.

I was born and raised in Orange County, CA. Just like any OC-based TV show, I lived in a nice, middle-class suburban home. I'm the oldest of three children, went to private schools, played little league and drove a Toyota. Some of the many jobs I have held include pizza delivery driver, bus tour guide, sign flipper, rock band roadee, dishwasher, pager text typist, balloon animal twister, doorto-door knife salesman, cold call insurance appointment setter, document courier and flyer distributer. My good fortune would lead me to San Diego State University where I received a degree in Economics and would eventually have an opportunity to work for and would eventually have an opportunity to work for America's Finest City.

> I don't have any children just yet, but do have a horrific cat named Jub-Jub and my dog and my best pal, Tank.

When you were a kid, which star did you have a crush on?

Elle McPherson!

What is the funniest prank you have played on someone, or someone has played on you?

My favorite prank is to steal a friend's phone and take a picture of myself smiling. Next, I text the picture to a random person on their contacts list and ask them who the smiling person in the photo is. The results are mixed...

What brought you to the City?

After I was laid off from Countrywide Home Loans, my future wife found a Management Trainee posting on the City's Employment web site. I was lucky enough to get an interview and with my talent, education, charming smile, quick wit, smooth delivery and my sharpest suit, my dreams of working municipal finance were fulfilled!

What was your first week like at the City? Any good "transition" stories?

I remember receiving warm greetings from the staff followed by instructions from my manager to read what seemed like an unending stack of binders. There was also a lot of commotion on my first day because a bond was closing that day. I remember my new desk being a terrible mess and having to first clean it before I did anything else.

How long have you worked for the

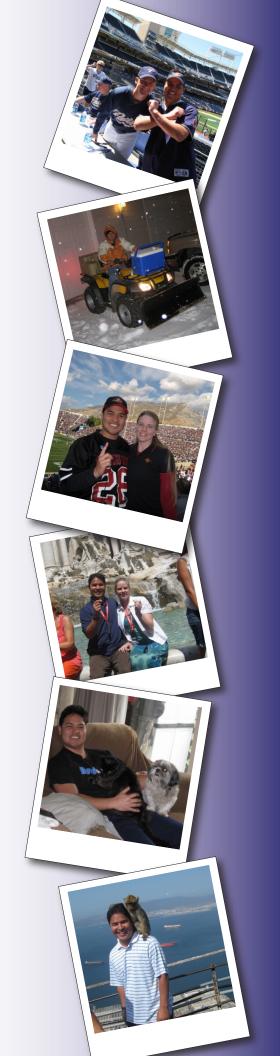
This month marks my fourth year.

Do you have any hidden talents?

I don't have any "hidden" talents because I force-feed all my talents to anyone within arm's length.

What is something you would like MEA members to know about you?

I would like MEA members to know that I am proud to be a part of such a strong organization with leaders who work tirelessly for the sole purpose of improving thousands of lives, protecting the lifestyle of working families and protecting diminishing employee rights on the political battlefield each and every day.



Reflecting Back and Looking Forward

MEA would like to acknowledge the many contributions and years of service of recently retired MEArepresented City employees. We wish you all the best as you embark on this next chapter of your life.



Brad Jacobsen

I started working for the City in 1974 as a Library Aide at the Central Library, while also pursuing a degree in English Literature from SDSU. As luck would have it, I realized that I wasn't cut out to be a high school teacher around the time I graduated. At that time, I had also passed the exam for Engineering Trainee and happily spent the rest of my career in the City's Engineering Department.

My initial assignment was to process traffic accident reports from the SDPD. By the time I was promoted out of that position, I had processed over 50,000 reports! I later oversaw the expansion of the residential permit parking district near SDSU and provided assistance to the Travel Forecasting Section. Eventually, I moved into Interagency Coordination where I served as

one of the department's liaisons to Caltrans, SANDAG, CCDC and a few other organizations. I was also involved with the initial efforts to silence train whistles downtown and helped to create the City's pedicab regulations.

I suppose that one of my proudest achievements was working with the other chief developers and being the primary author of the traffic and parking plan for Petco Park. It was a lot of fun, provided some of the best (and definitely the worst!) work days of my entire career and made for far too many Baja Fresh and Grab-N-Go lunches at my desk.

My final day at my desk was on my 55th birthday, after which I took six weeks of vacation in Europe then stayed home to relax and work on little projects. As a retiree, I'm really looking forward to getting back into action and meeting up with my co-workers who are also involved with the Retired Employees' Association.



Craig Warner

I began and concluded my career with the San Diego Police Department, both in the Supply and Property Rooms. During my tenure, I was responsible for ordering supplies, processing police equipment and receiving and processing evidence from officer impounds. I also helped with the opening of the Western and Southeastern substations.

There are so many memorable experiences during my 32 years with the Police Department. I remember getting a call one Saturday night to see if I could help some officers collect impounded property after an arrest. It began to rain right after three co-workers and I arrived to the location. We didn't finish picking up the 20 refrigerators, washers and dryers until 6am the next morning. Although we didn't expect it, we were all presented with commendations from the department for our efforts that weekend. It definitely meant a lot and that memory has always stuck with me.

I used to think about all of the things that I would be able to do once I retired. I would work on the little projects around my house and would catch up on all of the things that I had never gotten around to actually doing. I am also looking forward to traveling to places that I've never been to as well as those places that I simply haven't been to in awhile. Now I can do it all!

I will definitely miss the people I have worked with over the years. We had a really great crew in Supply and I will remember all of my co-workers who helped make my time with the City so special and memorable.



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MEA Members Making Us Proud?

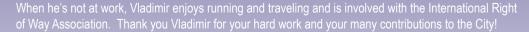


Congratulations to MEA member Mohsen Maali for being named Employee of the Quarter. Mohsen is a Senior Civil Engineer and has worked for the City for more than 11 years. In addition to being in charge of the Standards & Quality Control Section of the Project Implementation and Technical Services Division, Mohsen has also assisted the Equal Opportunity Contracting Department with the implementation of the Small Local Business Enterprise Program (SLBE). EOCP Director Debra Fischle-Faulk is just one of many who have found Mohsen to be "a team player who routinely extends himself beyond the E&CP Department borders. He's the ultimate 'can-do' person; he's patient with us non-engineers and has the unique ability to explain things in a way that you don't feel dumb. He works tirelessly and always with a smile. There hasn't been a curve ball thrown that he hasn't hit!"

When he's not working hard for his and other various City departments, Mohsen enjoys spending time with his children, watching movies and reading about Theoretical Physics. Thank you Mohsen for your hard work and dedication!

Congratulations to MEA member Vladimir Balotsky who was named Employee of the Quarter. Vladimir has worked for the City for 18 years and has been with Real Estate Assets, Asset Management Section since 1995. As the Supervising Property Agent, Vladimir has been managing lease agreements with SeaWorld, Belmont Park and all of the hotels on City property. He also completed a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the Mission Bay Sports Center which resulted in a proposed agreement which will almost double the City's revenue for the site!

Vladimir's work is consistently described as precise, timely and professional. He has also developed a reputation for working extremely well both with his co-workers in Real Estate Assets, as well as those in the various City Departments including Park and Recreation and Engineering.







Congratulations to Fleet Services team members for being recognized in the 2010 Government Green Awards. The annual competition is open to all federal, state and local fleets that have a demonstrated record of implementing short and long term environmentally-friendly practices. The City of San Diego's Fleet Services Division was recognized and ranked 19th out of 38,000 candidates! Congratulations and thank you for your leadership and efforts in making San Diego America's finest (and greenest!) city.



CITY OF SAN DIEGO RETIRED EMPLOYEES' ASSOCIATION

City retirees and our Retired Employees' Association Board have had to address several issues that might be of interest to you:

- (1) Information concerning SDCERS and the purchase of service contracts can be accessed on our website, www.csdrea.com
- (2) SDCERS is no longer allowing

REA to mail information to City retirees (even though there is no cost or disclosure of personal information)

(3) The City's Park & Recreation Department will start to impose room-use fees on REA's meetings (with charges in excess of \$400 per meeting!). So don't be surprised to find us meeting at non-Balboa Park sites in the future. Please contact me if you have a big room available that can fit up to 150 people.

Thank you for continuing to support REA and for stepping up and speaking out on behalf of all of our retirees!

-Jim Baross, REA President

SHOW US YOUR VIEWPOINT

The Viewpoint features a section of MEA members photographed with their Viewpoint in different (and hopefully exotic) locations. So on your next trip, don't forget to pack your Viewpoint and take a picture. If your photograph is featured, you will receive a pair of movie tickets.



MEA Boardmember Sarah Anderson celebrates her honeymoon aboard the New Amsterdam in Dutch Port at Saint Maarten.



MEA Member and regular contributor, Phet Guiney, remembered her *Viewpoint* on her scenic vacation to Niagara Falls.

A special BIRTHDAY WISH

for the following MEA Board members:

JANUARY

1st Helen Phillips 1st Natalie de Freitas 4th Issy Camacho 27th John Sylvester

FEBRUARY
1st Francine Howell

MARCH

1st Becky Cesena 5th Howard Greenstein 17th John Quigley

Pumpkin Roll

Bill Craig currently serves on MEA's Executive Committee, Scholarship Committee, Health and Welfare Committee and chairs the Communications Committee.

Ingredients

Cake:

3 eggs

2/3 cup cooked pumpkin (from a can)

3/4 cup flour

1/2 cup sugar

1 tsp. baking soda

1 tsp cinnamon

1 tsp. ground nutmeg

3/4 cup chopped walnuts

Filling:

18 oz. package cream cheese (cold)

2 tbsp. softened butter

2/3 cup powdered sugar

1 tsp. good vanilla

Instructions:

Preheat your oven to 375 degrees.

Briefly whip together all of the cake ingredients except the walnuts, scraping down the sides with a rubber spatula.

Line a 10" X 13" (or larger) cookie sheet with waxed paper.

Carefully pour the mixture into the lined pan, keeping it an inch or so away from the edge of the pan (so that you have an inch border of the waxed paper). Try to smooth it out to a consistent thickness. You want to have a beautiful rectangle of the batter about 3/8 to $\frac{1}{2}$ of an inch thick. Note that this is very tasty batter and

should be licked from all possible surfaces. Sprinkle the walnuts evenly on the batter then bake it for exactly 15 minutes.

Once you remove it from the oven, let it cool for a few minutes then invert the cake onto the center of a standard sized smooth dish towel that you've moistened with water (or bourbon if you're so inclined). Let it cool for five minutes then take a sharp knife and carefully remove the waxed paper from the back of the cake. Flip the towel up snuggly over the edge of the cake and gently (but firmly) roll it as tightly as you can into the shape of a tubular jelly roll then twist the ends of the towel so that it looks like a big tootsie roll. Let it cool for thirty minutes (you may want to re-roll it at this time to get it a little tighter) then place it into the fridge for at least an hour. Note that the nuts may stain the towel so don't use one that you highly value.

In a mixing bowl, thoroughly combine the filling ingredients (using a good potato masher makes this task easier). Pull the cake out of the fridge and open it up. Gently move the cake out of the towel and onto another sheet of waxed paper that is about the size of the towel. Open the wound-up cake enough to enable yourself to spread the filling onto it, making sure that you get plenty of it in the tight part of the roll and keeping it at least 1/2 inch from the other side (you don't want it squishing out when you re-roll it). Once you've filled it, place the cake in the center of a large piece of waxed paper, re-roll it and twist the ends of the paper like another tootsie roll and refrigerate for at least an hour. It will then retain its shape and can be re-wrapper in plastic wrap.

Cut it into rounds.

Eat it.

members in need

My name is Sue Benson and I work in the City Attorney's office. My husband was recently diagnosed with lung cancer after a year of pain and misdiagnosis. Due to my own health, dental, and recent surgery, I have exhausted my leave time. I will need leave hours to assist my husband during his chemotherapy, radiation, and prayerful recovery. Any time that you can contribute to my catastrophic leave bank would be greatly appreciated. Blessings and thanks for your kindness.

Sue Benson

My name is Makia Simpson-Siam Awadien and I work for the Neighborhood Code Compliance Department. On November 15th, 2010 my ten year old son, Mason, was diagnosed with a bone cancer called Osteosarcoma. He will have to receive chemotherapy anywhere from 31 weeks to a year. He will also have to undergo two major surgeries to try and save his left arm due to bone deterioration from the cancer. I am a single mother of two boys and have exhausted all my leave time. Any catastrophic leave donations you are able to bless me with will be greatly appreciated.

Thank you, Makia

My name is John Iuli and I work for Public Utilities-Water Customer Support. I've been with the department for 17 years and with the City since 1984. I was diagnosed in May 2010 with Avascular Necrosis of bi-lateral hips. On Oct. 26th 2010 I received Right hip replacement and will have Left Hip replaced soon as R-hip heals. Unfortunately I will be exhausting all of my annual leave and your generosity will be greatly appreciated. I hope that I someday return the favor.

Thanks in Advance, John I. Iuli

My name is Lauren Yepiz and I have worked in the City Clerk's Office for 10 years. I was recently diagnosed with Non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma Stage II and have started treatment, which is one day a week for four weeks. After the treatment, it will still be some time before I will find out if the Rituxman is working or if chemo will be necessary. Due to the treatment and appointments, I have exhausted all of my leave. Any leave time that you can donate would be greatly appreciated.

Thank you, Lauren Yepiz

My name is Debra Ballard and I am requesting catastrophic leave in order to assist my mother in Louisiana who was recently diagnosed with stage 4 brain cancer and has just undergone brain surgery. Although I have been fortunate enough to spend a few days with her prior to her surgery, I have exhausted all of my leave time. In consideration of the fact that her diagnosis is terminal, I am requesting your generosity in sharing your leave time with me, so that I am able to care for her through this difficult time. Thank you for your consideration in this matter and please keep us in your prayers. Thank you and God Bless.

Debra Ballard

My name is Lois Bennett and I work in the Public Utilities Department at Chollas. I am having major surgery and will be off of work for 6-8 weeks. Any donations to my leave bank would be greatly appreciated! If you would like to donate, please contact your payroll specialist. Thank you!

Lois Bennett

My name is Sherry Cole and I am a PEO for the SDPD Parking Enforcement Division. I have been battling cancer since 2008 and have undergone surgery and chemotherapy. I am once again facing surgery and possible chemotherapy. Unfortunately I will be exhausting all of my annual leave and your generosity will be greatly appreciated. I hope that I can someday return the favor.

Thanks in Advance, Sherry A. Cole

My name is Issy Camacho and I work in Engineering and Capitol Projects. I am off work pending knee replacement surgery and have exhausted all of my leave. Any donations would be greatly appreciated.

new members

Thank you for making our union strong by joining your City brothers and sisters in their commitment to work to improve the quality of wages, hours and working conditions of those we represent. MEA is proud to have these new members join us:

Fernando Aguirre Leo Alo Kiariie Broussard Theresa Burda Andrew Carmel Jana Kay Carter Amanda Cavanaugh Tanner French Peggy Furtado George Gazallo Ryan Hay Kristin Huston Michelle Huynh Michelle Hyde Amanda Jamil George Katsikaris Kiflom Keleta Thomas Kenaya Ian Lawless Adrian Martinez Rex Narvaez Yralinoska Perez David Prevost Dean Rauscher Toniann Rebick Mark Rogers Stephanie Shook Michael Simpson Desmond Stecher Zachary Sullivan

MEA Discount Tickets for Members

Please call or stop by the MEA office for your discount tickets.

Discount Ticket	MEA Price	Regular Price
San Diego Zoo Deluxe Package Adults Children (Ages 3-11)	\$33.50 \$25.00	\$40.00 \$30.00
San Diego Wild Animal Park Deluxe Package Adults Children (Ages 3-11)	\$33.50 \$25.00	\$40.00 \$30.00
Sea World Day Pass Adults Children (Ages 3-9)	\$55.00 \$48.00	\$69.00 \$55.00
Legoland Adults Children (Ages 3-11)	\$49.00 \$49.00	\$63.00 \$53.00
Six Flags Magic Mountain Adults Children (Under 48")	\$24.00 \$15.00	\$59.99 \$29.99
K1 Speedway (Must be 4'11")	\$15.00	\$25.95
AMC Restricted AMC Unrestricted Reading Regal Restricted Regal Unrestricted	\$6.00 \$7.50 \$6.00 \$6.50 \$7.50	



February 2, 2011 Groundhog Day

February 3, 2011

MEA Finance & Executive Committee meetings

February 6, 2011 Superbowl Sunday!

February 9, 2011

MEA Board of Directors & Executive Committing meetings

February 14, 2011 Happy Valtentine's Day!

February 21, 2011

MEA Office Closed...Happy President's Day!

February 22, 2011 MEA Stewards meeting

February 24, 2011 MEA Executive Committee meeting

March 3, 2011

MEA Finance & Executive Committee meetings

March 9, 2011

MEA Board of Directors & Executive Committee meetings

March 17, 2011 Happy St. Patrick's Day! March 20, 2011

First Day of Spring!

March 22, 2011 MEA Stewards meeting

March 24, 2011

MEA Executive Committee meeting

March 31, 2011

MEA Office closed in observance of Cesar Chavez Day

April 1, 2011 April Fool's Day!

April 7, 2011

MEA Finance & Executive Committee meetings

April 13, 2011

MEA Board of Directors & Executive Committee meetings

April 24, 2011 Happy Easter!

April 26, 2011 MEA Stewards meeting

April 27, 2011

Happy Administrative Professional's Day!

April 28, 2011

MEA Executive Committee meeting

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