



San Diego Municipal Employees Association

Newsletter

Spring/Summer 2014

Employees at the Point Loma Wastewater Treatment Plant show off their view

viewpoint





on the cover

The Point Loma Wastewater Treatment Plant recently celebrated its 50th Anniversary. The Plant treats 175 million gallons of wastewater each day!

For more information on how the facility safely and effectively treats wastewater for the City of San Diego and 15 other cities and districts, please turn to page 6.



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President's Message

Through the years, I have learned that disappointment is a part of life, and that things don't always go the way we had planned.

We can honestly say, however, that in the case of MEA, more often than not, our initial disappointment has turned into opportunity. With all of the ups and downs that have taken place at the City, we can take pride in knowing that we have achieved some major victories. MEA has a five year contract, we were successful in our defense of employee assets in the Substantially Equal litigation and we are recognized as key players in the local political process. All of these achievements have been possible because of the vision and determination of our Union. We also continue to demonstrate our strength and resilience, especially in the face of strong opposition because we link arms and flex our collective strength!

We will have another opportunity to help shape the direction of the City in the near future. MEA has endorsed two strong, hard-working and intelligent City Council candidates, Sarah Boot in District 2 and Carol Kim in District 6. Along with supporting them, we will also help our good friend and Council ally, David Alvarez,

in his bid to be San Diego's next Mayor. We engage in these endeavors because it is one of many ways to preserve, protect and enhance our wages, benefits and working conditions. We can't do it alone though, and I ask that you commit a little of your time, voice and most importantly, your vote.

Looking back, 2013 was certainly an eventful and unpredictable year. Your Union has stepped forward and taken the lead time and time again in order to defeat the anti-public employee interests that wish to take what we've worked so hard for. Ann Smith has



been amazing in the courtroom, Mike Zucchet has demonstrated to the City how to construct an honest budget, our professional labor representatives and stewards have protected your professional rights and your Officers and Boardmembers have guided the operations of your organization. Our Union has and will continue to work for you. We look forward to what 2014 will bring, while being mindful that we must continue to stay focused, proactive and vigilant. Take pride in our Union and our achievements because together, we are helping to create a better workplace for employees and a better City for everyone.



Officers

Bob Cronk	President
Greg Woods	1st Vice President
Jan Lord	2nd Vice President
Candi Mitchell	Treasurer
Lisa Goehring	Secretary

Executive Committee

Sam Cerrato	Library
Mary Enyeart	Police
Francine Howell	City Attorney
Ramone Lewis	Business Office
Pete Lynch	Development Services
Joe Miesner	Library

Board of Directors

Brian Anthony	Park & Recreation
Maurice Brown	Engineering & Capital Projects
Isabelle Camacho	Engineering & Capital Projects
Kathryn Campbell	Library
Sam Cerrato	Library
Rebecca Cesena	Park & Recreation
Stephanie Clark	City Attorney
Bob Cronk	Library
Mary Enyeart	Police
Sarah Erazo	Park & Recreation
Jennifer Geran	Library
Lisa Goehring	Water
Howard Greenstein	Planning
Francine Howell	City Attorney
Graham Hufford	Engineering & Capital Projects
Rene Kaprielian	Environmental Services
Ramone Lewis	Business Office
Jan Lord	Human Resources
Pete Lynch	Development Services
Gabrielle Mead	Police
Joe Miesner	Library
Candi Mitchell	Water
Helen Phillips	Retirees
Steve Ramirez	Environmental Services
Catherine Rivera	Police
Beverly Simmons	Risk Management
Susan Taylor	Real Estate Assets
Cody Wilkinson	MWWWD
Greg Woods	Treasurer
Roy Wurth	Transportation & Storm Water

MEA Stewards

Ramone Lewis	Chief Steward
Adele Campbell	Police
Michele Chicarelli	Park & Recreation
Alice Daniels	Purchasing & Contracts
Mary Enyeart	Police
Teresa Helmski	City Attorney
Francine Howell	City Attorney
Graham Hufford	Engineering & Capital Projects
Shanae Hymon	Water
Sherry Jones	Treasurer
Renee Kinninger	Development Services
Jan Lord	Human Resources
Cassandra Maslowski	Police
Gabrielle Mead	Police
Tony Moore	City Attorney
Steve Ramirez	Environmental Services
Tia Ramirez	City Attorney
Leon Sauls	Transportation & Stormwater
Janice Stevenson	City Attorney
Sammie Taylor	Public Utilities
Kimberly Vance	Public Utilities
Greg Woods	Treasurer



For the City of San Diego and its employees, 2013 certainly brought its share of highs and lows. Although 2013 was in many ways a tumultuous year—especially in terms of City politics—ironically it also brought its share of stability and hope for our City and particularly for City employees.

For starters, we reached a five-year labor agreement that provides for the elimination of mandatory furlough and other cuts that were implemented when the financial crisis and global recession hit in 2009. The contract also provides for improvements in flex benefit allotments and other non-pensionable compensation increases, some of which began last year.

There is more to come beginning on July 1, 2014, when all mandatory furlough will be eliminated, flex allotments for MEA-represented employees will increase another \$700, and employees hired before July 20, 2012 will pay less out-of-pocket for their pension. For most MEA-represented employees, these improvements will combine to increase take-home pay by more than 3% of salary. MEA-represented employees will also continue to receive two bonus discretionary days off with pay each year.

These improvements have and will continue to make a positive difference for employees. They also represent forward progress, which after years of concessions and compensation cuts is a welcome change and provides a good foundation for future years' negotiations.

In addition, the alternative to not reaching an agreement in 2013 is now clear. Recall that the decision point last year was to agree to a five-year deal with three years worth of positive—but modest—compensation improvements

(the last two years of terms will be negotiated in the future), or to take a one-year contract with no compensation improvements and come back to the bargaining table this year hoping for budget surpluses and better politics. In hindsight, the decision was a no-brainer.

Given the political turmoil and, perhaps more importantly, given the City's budget showing marked improvement but no significant surpluses for at least the next year, there is just no doubt that reaching the 5-year deal was a tremendous win for MEA-represented employees. Had we not reached the deal, we would likely be bargaining right now with the City discussing another "one-year zero" and hoping for better times next year. Instead, we will continue to reap the benefits of modest compensation improvements for another two years, and then we'll be back at the bargaining table at a time when increasing tax revenues suggest that the City budget will be in much better shape to support the level of compensation improvements deserved by City employees.

In the meantime, the City continues to rebuild. 2013 marked the beginning of significant hiring by the City to fill the hundreds of vacancies that have gone unfilled in recent years. Simply filling vacancies has already made a difference in many workplaces, where over the last few years employees have been asked to do the same or an increased amount of work with fewer resources and colleagues. City budgets have not yet allowed for significant creation of new positions and increased services, but modest improvements in those areas combined with the filling of existing vacancies should continue into 2014 and result in improving workplace conditions in many City departments.

2013 also brought the end of a significant lawsuit initiated by City Attorney Jan Goldsmith in 2010. MEA attorney Ann Smith details the City's surrender of its meritless "Substantially Equal" litigation in her report on page 5. Ann's article is worth a read, as well as a big thank you to Ann the next time you see her! This litigation, and years of other pension-related legal fights, have done nothing to move our City forward and have only served to demoralize City employees being attacked by their own employer. The end of this lawsuit is another step toward the end—hopefully—of an era of counterproductive pension litigation initiated by City Attorneys Mike Aguirre and Jan Goldsmith.

Finally, 2013 brought another year of solid improvement in the City's pension fund. Gone are the days of bankruptcy talk and "unsustainable" pension costs for San Diego for all but the most wild-eyed political propagandists on the right.

The latest projections from the SDCERS actuary have San Diego's pension costs decreasing over time and decreasing very significantly in the not-too-distant future. That is the opposite of unsustainable. And those costs decrease even though our pension fund relies on some of the most conservative actuarial assumptions of any public pension system in the country. Demagogues who mention Detroit and San Diego in the same breath don't have a factual leg to stand on, which of course won't stop them (or our local newspaper) from milking all the pension politics they can from every issue. The facts, however, are quickly catching up with them.

So forgive me for giving such an upbeat report on the state of our City. I am certainly no Pollyanna, and I am not saying that everything is rosy for the City and its employees. To be sure, local and statewide threats remain on various political, legal and fiscal fronts for 2014 and beyond, and MEA will be here to anticipate and vigorously fight every one of those threats. But after years of real pain and plenty to be down about, it seems worth noting that things on a number of important fronts are beginning to stabilize and look up for City employees.

Looking forward to 2014, we hope to be able to build on the progress made in 2013. Politically, we are preparing for a new Mayor and two City Council elections that will significantly affect the overall balance of power on the Council. On the legal front, MEA and its counsel Ann Smith will continue to defend the legal rights of employees in the ongoing Purchase of Service Credit litigation and our challenge to Proposition B, the "pension reform" initiative passed by voters in 2012. We will continue to work with the City's newly appointed Chief Operating Officer Scott Chadwick and his management team to help the City run smoothly and efficiently, while at the same time treating its employees fairly and with respect. We will continue to be fully involved in the City's budget process to ensure that essential City services are funded in a way that serves citizens and also supports the ability of City employees to successfully get the job done. And we will continue to vigorously fight for your rights in the workplace, representing individual employees in need of representation and groups of employees bargaining with the City over various workplace issues and challenges.

In the meantime, and as always, please don't hesitate to reach out to me or anyone else at MEA. Give us a call at 619-264-6632 or visit our website at www.sdmea.org to find a list of staff email addresses. Happy New Year and hope to see you soon!



City Surrenders On “Sub-Equal” Pension Litigation

After three years of litigation – with MEA opposing the City in court at every turn – the latest threat to City employee paychecks has ended in the City’s complete surrender. There will be no change in how SDCERS determines what the City versus the employees must pay into the pension plan when investment losses occur. The additional contribution burden which the City sought to shift to employees will not occur. The City Attorney’s stated litigation goal (per e-mail to the UT in September 2010) of causing employee contributions to SDCERS to get so big that employees would be forced to give up their defined benefit pension plan altogether, failed miserably – just as former City Attorney Aguirre’s litigation goal of rolling back your pension benefits had also failed. In both landmark cases, MEA took the lead as your litigation voice in defeating the City’s claims.

The City’s latest piece of pension litigation against its employees began when the SDCERS pension plan took an \$800 million hit from investment losses at the peak of the recent recession. In response, City Attorney Jan Goldsmith filed suit in May 2010 arguing that 60 years of plan history (giving the City the benefit of all investment gains) -- and the

related legal protections -- should be ignored, and that the City was entitled to a Court order directing SDCERS to charge employees for half of these (and other) losses. Fastening on certain “substantially-equal contribution” language in the City Charter (Article IX, section 143), Goldsmith argued (1) that this language was “clear and unambiguous” in dictating the relief he sought, and (2) that SDCERS and its actuaries had gotten it wrong since 1954 when they failed to allocate half of all system losses to employees. Ironically, as recently as 2004 (50 years later), in an “Impartial Legal Analysis” authored by a former City Attorney and published by the City in connection with a Charter amendment to section 143, the City itself had informed voters that these losses were entirely the City’s not the employees’ responsibility.

No matter . . . undaunted by decades of history to the contrary, the City Attorney pursued his bogus “theory” through three years of costly litigation. He continued the unnecessary legal battle even after Superior Court Judge Joseph Zimmerman had ruled that the disputed language was actually ambiguous when the City Attorney’s success depended on an opposite finding – i.e., that the language was “clear and unambiguous” in establishing the new meaning the City Attorney assigned to it. Goldsmith continued the battle even after the City was forced to retreat from its motion for summary judgment in the wake of a crushing opposition filed by MEA and three other employee unions who had also intervened in the case (Firefighters Local 145, San Diego POA, and AFSCME Local 127), as well as by SDCERS (with whom we were aligned in opposition to the City). And Goldsmith continued the battle even after the City’s expert actuary was shredded in deposition – on the facts and on credibility.

Awaiting Court’s “Good Faith” Determination

The City Council approved the “settlement” (i.e., the City’s surrender) by an 8-1 vote on

11/21. The SDCERS Board approved it on 11/25. All Parties have signed a Settlement Agreement which now awaits Judge Zimmerman’s approval based on a determination that this settlement has been made in good faith. The City filed a motion on December 17, 2013, asking for the Court’s approval. SDCERS and the four Intervenor Unions, including MEA, filed a response to the City’s motion agreeing that the Court should approve the settlement.

As this Viewpoint went to print, Judge Zimmerman had not yet taken action (1) to sign the proposed Order approving the settlement, or (2) to set a hearing date on the Motion as the City requested.

MEA’s Motion for Attorney’s Fees Comes Next and Will Be Heard in May

Assuming the Court approves the settlement, the terms also permit MEA (and the other three Intervenor Labor Unions) to seek a recovery of attorney’s fees against the City. In accordance with the settlement agreement, each Intervenor has notified the City in writing of its intent to seek fees. Whether or not MEA (or the other Intervenor) will be awarded its attorney’s fees will be a matter for the Court’s discretion and will not be decided until a hearing takes place in May on a date yet to be set by the Court.

Congratulations to all of you for winning this latest legal battle – by paying your dues or agency fees, you assured yourselves a voice and a strong advocate in the courtroom. “Justice for all” doesn’t happen on its own; in the end, justice comes with a price tag and your unity makes it more likely to be achievable. Happy New Year!



Ann M. Smith, Esq.

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Metro Tier 1 San Diego for: Employment Law Individuals and Labor Law - Unions

Celebrating 50 Years of Sewage System Success

Most of us don't tend to think too much about what happens after we flush the toilet. Prior to the early 1940's, raw sewage was simply discharged into San Diego Bay and the ocean.

In 1943, a plant was built on East Harbor Drive which collected and processed up to 14 million gallons a day (MGD) of wastewater. With the end of World War II, many military servicemen and their families decided to make San Diego their permanent home. Although the plant was enlarged in 1950, it simply couldn't keep pace with the region's burgeoning population.

In 1963, the Point Loma Wastewater Treatment Plant was built near the Cabrillo Monument. Today, wastewater generated from more than 2.2 million residents from the City of San Diego and 15 other cities and districts is collected and processed at the Point Loma facility. Unlike the 14 MGD that was produced in the 1940's, now the Point Loma plant processes 175 million of gallons each day!



Just like in 1968, the plant's control room is the nerve center of the plant and is staffed 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

25,000 miles of pipes transport sewage using interceptor sewers which all converge at Pump Station 2 on Harbor Drive. From there, the wastewater is pumped to the Point Loma plant. As you can imagine, there is a fair amount of debris in the wastewater. For this reason, the wastewater passes through large, rake-like screens which remove solid debris including plastic, cloth, wood, and yes, even troll dolls.



Just some of the many items removed by the screening process.

The next step is for the wastewater to move into grit chambers where heavier solids (including sand, gravel, coffee grounds and egg shells) settle out. The grit is removed, de-watered and sent to the landfill. The wastewater is then piped into sedimentation basins where chemical polymers are added which cause the smaller organic particles to clump together and settle to the bottom. Meanwhile, "scum" (including cooking oil and grease) floats to the surface and is skimmed off, de-watered and sent to the landfill. At this point in the process, approximately 85% of the total solids in the water have been removed.

It's now time for the treated wastewater to pass through one additional set of screens and to then enter the outfall structure. The outfall pipe extends 4 ½ miles out to sea and ends in a y-shape diffuser in water 320 feet deep.



This is a section of the outfall pipe.

In order to ensure that the Point Loma Wastewater Treatment Plant meets federal and state regulatory discharge requirements, thousands of biological and chemical samples are taken from every aspect of the marine environment ranging from the deep ocean to the shoreline, sediment dwelling organisms to fish popular with sports fishing.



MEA member and Senior Wastewater Operations Supervisor David Huntamer holds a sample of treated wastewater.

The plant also produces a great deal of energy. A bi-product of the digestion process is methane gas. This gas is collected and used to power two large engines and produces 4.5 Megawatts (MW) of power. Less than

half is actually needed to meet the plant's power needs, and the rest is sold to the local electrical grid.

Excess heat captured from the engines is re-circulated to heat the digesters. This co-generation of power saves the City hundreds of thousands of dollars each year. Energy is also created by the flow of treated wastewater on its way to the ocean outflow. A hydro-electric turbine is powered by the flow of the water that drops 90 feet from the plant into the ocean outfall. This continuous energy source produces 1.3 MW of green energy that is sold to the local electric grid. In total, the Point Loma Plant generates enough electricity to power more than 4,300 homes!

Clearly we have come a long way since the days of simply discharging all of the region's raw sewage into the ocean and bays. Today, the City's metropolitan sewage system is able to process the wastewater from more than 2.2 million residents throughout a 450 square mile area. Although the facility and its many employees might not always get the credit that they deserve, the Point Loma Wastewater Treatment Plant is the backbone of our region's sewer system by safely and efficiently treating what we all produce. So the next time we flush a toilet, perhaps we'll better appreciate the treatment process that allows us to have a clean ocean and bay.



Photo of Dan Bois from the 1980's. You haven't aged a bit!

Special thanks to Dan Bois, KC Shankles and Cheryl Lester for their time and institutional knowledge of the Point Loma Wastewater Plant.

MEA Is Working For You...



Cathleen Higgins briefed MEA stewards and boardmembers on reaching out to members regarding the Mayoral election.



General Manager Mike Zucchet sat down with NBC News reporter Gene Cubbison regarding projections related to the City budget.



Staff members Dawn Kealaluhi and Cathleen Higgins served pizza for kids and their families at the annual MEA Children's Party.



General Manager Mike Zucchet appeared on Politically Speaking and discusses various City issues alongside SDCERS Chief Executive Officer Mark Hovey and Voice of San Diego reporter Lisa Haverstadt.



Supervising Labor Relations Representative Nancy Roberts congratulated members in the Fire Rescue Department who have recently been promoted (please turn to page 21 for the names and photos of those members).



Boardmembers on the Membership Committee stayed late to make goody bags for those members who attended the Holiday Party.



Senior Labor Relations Representative Kelly Cruz met with four supervisors from Fleet Services Division to discuss a matter before the Civil Service Commission.



MEA President Bob Cronk and Boardmember Pete Lynch called their fellow Union members to remind them to vote in the Mayoral election.

Jennifer Geran

Library

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, stories about your siblings and family, etc.

I grew up in Georgetown, Kentucky, a small town near Lexington, the second youngest of eight kids. I am three minutes older than the youngest, my twin brother, Jeffrey. I have lorded those three minutes over him ever since. Some of my favorite memories are the times my siblings and I acted in my oldest sister's high school plays at the convent school she attended. I was an orphan, an angel, a baby in a manger, and a munchkin. The nuns made a fuss over us and were later our teachers at the elementary school.

I graduated from the University of Kentucky with a BA in Russian Language and Literature and completed my master's in Library and Information Science at the University of Illinois in Urbana-Champaign. I worked in academic libraries in Lexington, Urbana and Houston. While I was in Houston, I worked in several oil company libraries as a consultant. I took some time off to write and while I was doing that, I visited a college friend in San Diego. I knew I wanted to live here. I went back to Texas, loaded up a U-haul and drove back out within the month.

I worked at the United Way for a year and a half while applying for City jobs. It was a nice break from library work, but I was glad to be back in libraries and thrilled to work in a public library for the first time.

What is a habit that you did as a kid and still do today?

I make my bed every morning.

Which singer or band could you recite all of their songs when you were in high school?

I want to lie and say Fleetwood Mac, but I'm telling the truth here: it was and always will be Joan Chandos Báez. I googled her middle name and added the accent mark so that you would know the level of my devotion.

What was the make/model of your first car?

It was a 1969 or 70-ish Dodge Dart that one of my sisters lent me to pick up her kids after school. It was so light that the back end would go airborne if you took a corner too fast or went over a hump in the road. One of our favorite activities in the car was to drive really fast over an undulating country road so that we could feel the roller coaster drop on the other side. If the car had seat belts, we didn't use them. All of my nieces and nephews survived and are my friends on Facebook, although they have never allowed me to babysit their children.

How would your friends answer this statement about you, "I know you wouldn't think it, but Jennifer... can really fool mechanics into thinking she knows everything about car repair."

What brought you to the City?

A U-Haul.

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

I was new to public libraries when I started with the City. I had lived here for about a year and used two branches in the North Park area and the Central Library downtown. I thought that was all there was. My first assignment was at a branch a few blocks from my house that I didn't even know was there. Imagine my surprise as I worked as a substitute librarian and eventually worked in most of the thirty five branches in San Diego. That's when I really got to know the city.

What is one goal that you have set for yourself this year?

I have finished National Novel Writing Month (NaNoWriMo) challenge five years in a row. I would like to finally force myself to edit my writing and publish an eBook. Also, I learned how to knit last year and I can knit a hat like nobody's business, but socks defeat me. I would love to learn to knit a good sock. Or even two.

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

I am a good listener; I want to know your story. I'm a good advocate; tell me your concerns.



Me, age 4, center with four of my siblings, my twin is to my right



Selfie of my knitting success

19th Annual Adopt a Senior Event

For the 19th year in a row, MEA's Adopt-A-Senior Committee put on another special event for nearly 50 deserving Park and Recreation Department senior volunteers. Both Interim Mayor Todd Gloria and Councilmember Myrtle Cole took a great deal of time to acknowledge and thank this special group of seniors for their many contributions to the City of San Diego.

Senior volunteers field calls and assist guests to call and visit various public locations including Balboa

Park's Senior Lounge and the City Administration Building (CAB). In total, senior volunteers account for over 1,000 volunteer hours each month!

We are so fortunate to have such a willing and knowledgeable group of volunteers who lend their time and institutional knowledge to assist others. Every year, MEA looks forward in taking part in this event in order to highlight the volunteer efforts of our fantastic seniors.

This event would not be possible without the generous donations from Ann Smith, Fern Steiner and the law firm Smith, Steiner, Vanderpool & Wax, California Bank and Trust and Mark McMahon and Bruce Knowlton from Moss Adams LLP.



Healthy Habits to Work into your Work Day

The key to achieving and maintaining a healthy weight isn't about short-term dietary changes. It's about a lifestyle that includes healthy eating, regular physical activity and balancing calories consumed, with calories your body actually needs.

With busy work schedules and family obligations, it isn't always easy to find time to exercise regularly. Many of us also have jobs that require us to be deskbound and in front of our computer screen for large portions of the workday.

According to the *European Heart Journal*, the damage done by sitting too much during the day could not be reversed, even for those who exercised moderately to vigorously after work. The good news is that with a little creativity and a commitment to staying healthy, there are practical ways to increase your movement and activity in your workplace.

Rodale Institute's Leah Zerbe recommends simple modifications to your workday like taking the stairs instead of the elevator, walking over to a co-worker's desk, rather than sending an email, standing up while talking on the phone and even using a restroom on another floor. All of these activities promote additional movement and combat sedentary and monotonous workdays.

A healthy eating plan which includes a wide variety of foods like fruits and vegetables, calcium-rich foods, grains and proteins is also crucial to healthy living. Yet "healthy" doesn't necessarily have to replace "delicious" in your vocabulary and on your taste pallet. *Women's Health Magazine* suggests several dessert recipes which combine a variety of fruits with great flavor. The next time you reach for a cookie or that ice cream carton, try one of these simple desserts instead.



Moroccan Pomegranate Mint Yogurt

1/2 cup nonfat Greek yogurt (such as Fage)

1/3 cup pomegranate arils (the pulpy seeds)

2 tsp thinly sliced fresh mint

(about 5 leaves)

Fold mint into yogurt. Layer yogurt mixture and pomegranate arils in a clear dessert dish.

Makes 1 serving.

Per serving: 145 cal, 0 g fat (0 g sat), 69 mg sodium, 19 g carbs, 4 g fiber, 16 g protein



Honey-Lime Fruit Cup

1 cup fresh fruit (such as pineapple, kiwi, and assorted berries)

1/2 Tbsp honey

1 small lime

Place fruit in a medium serving bowl. Zest and juice the lime. In a small bowl, whisk 1/2 teaspoon lime zest and 1/2 tablespoon lime juice into honey until well blended; drizzle over fruit salad and toss gently to mix.

Makes 1 serving.

Per serving: 109 cal, 1 g fat (0 g sat), 3 mg sodium, 28 g carbs, 3 g fiber, 2 g protein

Labor Representative Overview

August - December 2013

A total of 69 new cases were opened in the last half of the year, resulting in a total of 206 cases for 2013.

Labor Representatives assisted members with a wide range of issues including grievances, fact findings, terminations, supplemental employee performance reports, EEO investigations, Long Term Disability and industrial leave benefits, workers compensation and ADA Requests for Reasonable Accommodation/Interactive Process.

There were also meet and confers regarding reclassifications in the Public Utilities Department, the Landfill Managed Competition and Public Works contracts. In addition, there were meetings with the City regarding an upcoming Optimization Study in Public Utilities. Labor Representatives also worked with the new managers regarding the split of Development Services and Planning into two separate departments. MEA helped in the large scale project of moving City employees from 600 B Street to 525 B Street.

Labor Representatives participated in reviewing and proofreading the new MEA Memorandum of Understanding prior to it going to print.

In order to help prepare for the opening of the new Central Library downtown, MEA attended and provided coffee and bagels to all of the employees at their all hands meeting. Congratulations on a very successful grand opening!

Goodbye to a Cherished Staff Member

It is with a heavy heart but warm wishes that we announce that MEA Senior Labor Relations Representative Gwen Phillips has retired. With her wealth of knowledge and experience, Gwen has been a tireless advocate for employees' rights for 15 years here at MEA. Although we all are going to miss her tremendously, her retirement is well deserved. Gwen will now have more time to spend with her friends, family and especially her many grandchildren and even great grandchildren! We will miss you Gwen!



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 Article 62 of MEA's MOU, "The City acknowledges that an employee's Constitutional right 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 law, by the employee application for Industrial Leave or LTD 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 or absences due to illness have resulted 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. Based on an employee's right of privacy, the City forms 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!

Congratulations

Congratulations to the following MEA members who are celebrating their 25th anniversary with the City of San Diego. Thank you for your commitment to public service and your quarter century of dedication!

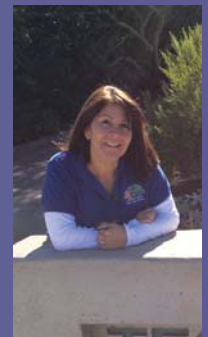
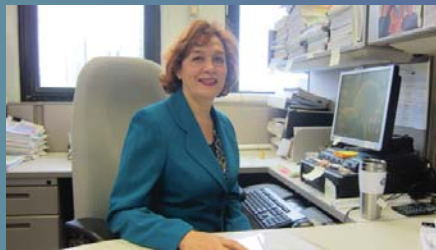
Mario Abeyta
Glen Aguero
Vince Aikels
Sepideh Amir Azizi
Barry Ayers
Phyllis Bailey
Jerald Bennett
Colletta Brooks
Mary Brown
Diana Bryant
Miguel Castillo
Cindy Rose Catapia
Nabil Chehade
Kai-Yu Chiang
Michele Chicarelli
Lina Chim
Ann Claret
Tina Clifford
Bonnie Colston
Laura Colvin
Salvador Coria
Maricela Coronel

Hugh Curfman Jr.
Jerry Czajkowski
Wayne D'Adamo
Ken Dang
William Dauphin Jr.
Paul Davies
Lauri Davis
Jennifer De Loria
Thomas Deeds
Linda Degreef
Alena Dominguez
Gregory Edwards
Evan Fickling II
Diana Flores
Steven French
Jose Gallego
Marci Garcia
Arturo Gasca
Marla Gilmore
James Golden
Carl Gross
Edith Gutierrez

Hana Hanigan
Jeffrey Harkness
Derrick Hill
Rodolfo Jauregui
Gustavo Jimenez
Theresa Johnson
Lisa Johnson-Walton
Gary Jones
Rebecca Kinnear
Paula Labond
Ian Lawless
Christopher Lee
Hazel Joy Licudan
Michael Littlefield
Steve Lopez
Paul Lutes
Pete Lynch
Farah Mahzari
Donald Mangum
Michael Marks
Michael Marquez
Jeffrey McAnally

Margaret Merino
Timothy Mountain
Albert Munoz
Norma Nunez
Ana Osante
Laila Othman
Stephen Palmer
Jo Ann Papitto
Nathaniel Parker
Gary Pence
Tony Perez
Anita Peyton
Leonard Przybylo
Lorraine Ramirez-Ortiz
Michael Rasmusson
Robert Rodriguez
Roy Ruffin
Mellissa Santagata
Leon Sauls
Regina Seaton
Douglas Sensabaugh

Mehdi Shadyab
Ernest Shipley
Mark Sholan
Dan Silvaggio
Boniface Simbwa
Michael Simpson
Timothy Stebbins
John Stohr
Sharon Stokes-McPherson
Thomas Sturdivant
Glynis Terry
La Tisha Thomas
Simon Torres
Rod Van Orden
Roland Veal Jr.
Ronald White
Barry Woods
Angela Zamichieli





mea children's holiday party

With another year came another great Children's Party. MEA members and their families enjoyed a Saturday afternoon of pizza, games, goody bags and a special visit from Santa Claus himself! The kids were all smiles and had a great time playing the arcade games and riding the amusement rides at The Boardwalk.

For many youngsters (and those young at heart), this has become a family event that they look forward to every year. Thank you to the Social and Recreation Committee, Committee Chair Francine Howell and MEA staff members who volunteered on their day off in order to help make the Children's Party so successful.

We are already planning for next year's event and we look forward to seeing how much all of the babies and kids will have grown by December!



Supporting Each Other During Tough Times

2013 was filled with some bright moments as well as some very challenging times for us all. For two special members, this past year's obstacles were immense, but so was the love and support from those around them.

MEA member Henrietta Woods-Martin has worked for the City for more than 25 years and has been in the Police Department as a 9-1-1 dispatcher for the last nine years. This past July, Henrietta's 16 year old son was diagnosed with Stage 3 Non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma. Although his

cancer treatments, appointments and hospitalizations have been incredibly consuming, Henrietta has continued to come to work each day with a smile and willingness to serve. According to fellow dispatcher, Mary Enyeart, "Henrietta is the first to step up and lend a hand to anyone who needs help. We are so lucky to have her in PD Communications."

MEA member Kathy Redding has worked for the City for nearly two decades. She is currently battling breast cancer and some additional health issues. Kathy has been

regarded as an incredibly committed and hard-working employee in Fleet Services. MEA Senior Labor Relations Representative Kelly Cruz describes Kathy as the ultimate advocate for the underdog. That sense of compassion and justice is most evident in her advocacy on behalf of her co-workers.

Although this year will inevitably be filled with a number of challenges for both Henrietta and Kathy, their family, friends, co-workers and Union family will continue to be there to support them as they face these challenges head-on.



Stepping Up to Serve: Introducing your MEA Board of Directors

At the September Board meeting, MEA was pleased to have former California State Assemblymember and Mayoral candidate Nathan Fletcher as the guest speaker who delivered the installation oath to the new Board of Directors. The Boardmembers were thanked and acknowledged not just as members of MEA's leadership, but also as City employees who continue to demonstrate their commitment and dedication to public service.

The Board of Directors serves a two year term and meets every month to discuss and make decisions on behalf of the nearly 4,000 City employees who MEA represents. The Board is also responsible for approving the organization's budget and for setting policy on MEA matters.

In January, the Board elected its at-large Executive Committee members who will serve a two year term. Thank you to everyone who sacrifices so much of their time to serve on behalf of all members.





Robert Cronk
President
Library



Greg Woods
1st Vice President
Treasurer



Jan Lord
2nd Vice President
Human Resources



Candi Mitchell
Treasurer
Public Utilities



Lisa Goehring
Secretary
Public Utilities



Sam Cerrato
Executive Board
Library



Mary Enyeart
Executive Board
Police



Francine Howell
Executive Board
City Attorney



Ramone Lewis
Executive Board
Purchasing



Pete Lynch
Executive Board
DSD



Joseph Miesner
Executive Board
Library



Brian Anthony
Park &
Recreation



Maurice Brown
Engineering &
Capital Projects



Issy Camacho
Public Works



Kathryn Campbell
Library



Rebecca Cesena
Park &
Recreation



Stephanie Clark
Public Utilities



Sarah Erazo
Park &
Recreation



Jennifer Geran
Library



Howard Greenstein
Development
Services



Graham Hufford
Public Works



Rene Kaprielian
Environmental
Services



Gabrielle Mead
Police



Helen Phillips
Retired
Representative



Steve Ramirez
Environmental
Services



Catherine Rivera
Police



Beverly Simmons
Risk Management



Susan Taylor
Real Estate Assets



Cody Wilkinson
Public Utilities



Roy Wurth
Transportation &
Stormwater

2013 MEA Holiday Party

December wouldn't be the same without ringing in the holiday season with your Union family at MEA's Holiday Party. This is the first year that the event sold out before Thanksgiving, and we encourage you to get your tickets well in advance in order to secure your place. The 250 guests who were lucky enough to have a ticket enjoyed a delicious dinner, took funny pictures in the photo booth and danced late into the night thanks to DJ Nate (also a City employee).

In between the song sets, 1st Vice President and Membership Committee Chair Greg Woods called out the winning raffle ticket numbers with several lucky partygoers winning some fantastic prizes. Thank you so much to MetLife, VSP and Liberty Mutual who generously provided some great prizes to raffle off.

Thank you to everyone who came out and made this such an enjoyable and lively event. We hope that you had as much fun as we did! If you weren't able to attend this time, we hope that you can make it to next year's night of fun and festivities.





Reflecting Back and Looking Forward

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



Frances Cavanaugh

I started my career with the City 31 years ago in the San Diego Police Department. As a dispatcher, I have worked countless critical incidents, including cover calls, shootings, bank robberies, home invasions, SWAT incidents, airplane crashes and vehicle pursuits. My most memorable on-the-job experience, however, was early on in my career. While I was still in training, my supervisor, Gil O'Dell, told me that I needed to complete a ride along with a police officer. He asked me what command I wanted to learn about and I told him I wanted to ride in the Western Division, which was the division for North Park at the time. I grew up in North Park on Louisiana Street and I wanted to know more about what the officers did in my area. I

was supposed to report for Western's patrol lineup at 1310 (1:10 PM), but I didn't report until 1410 (2:10 PM.) Being on time has never been one of my strongest attributes. Unfortunately, the officer I was supposed to ride with had already gone into the field so Sergeant Dave Pearson assigned me to ride with Officer Dave Cavanaugh. It was clear that Officer Cavanaugh did not want to have a trainee do a ride along with him that evening, especially not someone from Communications. Yet somewhere during that 8-hour ride along, we fell in love. Two years later, we were married. We now have 3 amazing children and we'll celebrate our 30th anniversary this year.

Generally, my co-workers were very helpful. As you can imagine, working in an environment where life and death decisions are made each minute, it can get very stressful. We did our best to support one other and help when needed. Sometimes, one employee would have a heavier load and we would step in to help. Even with the stress, we found ways to lighten the mood. One day, an officer and I (let's call him Officer Bob) pulled an April Fool's Day joke on another officer (let's call him Officer Tom) who had just been outfitted with a set of hearing aids. After calling the owner of the business and getting him on board, I dispatched Officer Tom to a "fake" burglary alarm at the hearing aid store. When Officer Tom walked into the business, he asked if there was an alarm going off at the business. Without skipping a beat, the clerk replied, "Can't you hear it ringing?" To this day, it still makes me laugh every time I think of it. My only regret is that I wasn't there to see Officer Tom's face when he realized he had been duped.

Retirement brings me the opportunity to finally complete my college degree. My children and husband have theirs, so it's now time for me to earn my degree. I'm also looking forward to slowing down a bit, although my friends think this will be impossible for me. I definitely want to travel and see more of my beautiful country.

I am going to miss the people that I worked with the most. I have served with some of the very finest people in the City. Their compassion, dedication, knowledge, expertise and commitment are unparalleled. They are really the unsung heroes of the Police Department. We are dispatchers! Every day, we save lives and with some luck, help to catch the bad guys!





Terri Bumgardner

I worked for the City for 25 years and was in the Planning/Development Services Department for 23 of those years. I will take with me a ton of memories, including the time that I addressed a Councilmember by their first name, instead of being more formal. Although I was embarrassed at the time, they insisted that I continue to call them by their first name. Technically, that was a faux pas, however, it also happened with a Planning Commissioner and I made great friends that way.

Most of my co-workers were funny, intelligent and creative people. I'll never forget the time that Glen Gargas dressed up as a bride for Halloween (you had to see the dress!) Though I guess the rest of us shouldn't have been that surprised since he used to dress up all the time for holidays. That is, until the day that he dressed up as a bride with his hairy chest showing. One of the female managers got upset with his bridal rendition (this particular manager was very prim and proper). The rest of us thought it was pretty darn funny!

I was hoping for more free time, but it seems like I am even busier than before. We have been travelling and I have a new puppy, Riley, which is much like having a new baby in the house. We travelled to Kentucky to get Riley, then we drove back through 5 states in 3 days to get home. For Valentine's Day, we are going whale watching at San Ignacio Lagoon.

The best experience of my life was serving on MEA's Negotiating Team and Board of Directors. The saddest part of retiring was when I had to step down from the Board. I will also dearly miss all of the people that I worked with. In the scheme of things, the people you work with are much like your family.



MEA members Making Us Proud

Kudos to Park Ranger Andy Quinn

From: Marla Gilmore
To: Steve Haupt

Hi Steve, I know that you are already aware of the good work that Andy Quinn is doing in the Tri-Canyon Parks area but I wanted to share something with you. Last week Andy was doing a clean up in Mission Valley Preserve and I went to the preserve to bring Andy a battery for his radio. I was shocked at the amount of trash and debris that was in the preserve just under the 5 freeway and how much work was going on in there.

Andy organized the clean up and coordinated with SDPD, Environmental Services, Code Compliance, Tri-Canyon Rangers, Mission Bay Rangers and GMWs, and the San Diego River Park Foundation. All of these groups had to get in and out before high tide came in so timing was a big factor.

I have included some of the pictures. I am so impressed with the work that Andy has done in the preserve and I just wanted to share with you. He has taken it upon himself to create good relationships with other agencies in order to get the job done.

I am proud to work with someone who really cares about his job and makes a difference.



Shout out to David Lanni

This letter is to recognize the outstanding customer service to the Mission Bay Women's Golf Club. The entire staff does a wonderful job for the ladies, but this letter is to highlight the special efforts that David Lanni afforded us during our celebration. He ensured the area for the city proclamation presentation was immaculate and ready for the event. It was a wonderful day for all the ladies and we wanted to let David know how much we appreciated his efforts.

David has continually gone out of his way to help our club on a weekly basis. Thank you David for an outstanding job.

Sincerely,
Doris A. Cronkhite

Recognizing Ranger Heidi Gutknecht

Dear Ranger Heidi,

I would like to say thank you for being our ranger at the Old Mission Dam. The hike was amazing, especially while crossing the log. I was actually quite afraid, thinking I'd get drenched in the water. The amount of information you knew on the Kumeyaay was extremely impressive! You are by far the best ranger the world has ever known! (Please don't tell any other rangers!)

Your friend,
Andrew
4th Grader at St. Michael School

Thanks to Center Director David Lanni and the San Ysidro Community Activity Center Staff

A quick note to say- THANK YOU!

You and your staff provided excellent service to the Citizens' Review Board on Police Practices

during the two meetings we held in your community room. Positive interactions with each staff member, great facility, very helpful support with room set-up—it was all great.

Thanks so much for supporting a citizen's board and showing such a great public service attitude.

Danell Scarborough, Ed.D.
Executive Director
City of San Diego Human Relations Commission

Congratulations Judy, Marta and Kimberly!



Congratulations to Judy Kinslow, Marta Brandes-Miesner and Kimberly Alexander for being selected by the National Management Association (NMA) for their exceptional customer service. There was a tremendous response to the request for nominations, but these three were of the most deserving candidates. In the eyes of their fellow City employees, they have set a very high bar.

Congratulations to the following MEA members who have recently been promoted in the Fire Rescue Department:



Nick Wright, Maroun Bsaibes and Cynthia Gonzales have all been promoted to Fire Dispatch Supervisors. Sharon Brown has been promoted to Training Coordinator and Michelle Hughes to Payroll Supervisor. Congratulations on your promotions!



SHOW US YOUR VIEWPOINT

The Viewpoint features a section of MEA members photographed with their Viewpoint in different locations throughout the world. 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.



Even at 19,000 feet, Kathleen Simmons was able to hold on to her Viewpoint on top of Mount Kilimanjaro.



Manny Briseno remembered to take his Viewpoint when he travelled to the Coliseum in Rome.



Natalie de Freitas took her Viewpoint to Ho Chi Minh City (formerly Saigon), Vietnam.



Natalie also brought her Viewpoint to Angkor Wat in Cambodia which is the largest religious monument in the world.

Catastrophic Leave Requests

The following MEA members have established catastrophic leave accounts and request your generosity in helping donate annual leave in their time of need. If you are able to help, please contact your Payroll Specialist for the proper paperwork. Every hour helps!

Daun Worthington

My name is Daun Worthington and I am a payroll specialist in the Public Utilities Department. I would greatly appreciate any donation of hours while I am caring for my mother who is very ill. Thank you so much for your consideration.

Pamela Glover

My name is Pamela Glover and I have been employed for 12 years in the City of San Diego Purchasing and Contracting Department. In October 2013, I was diagnosed with fallopian cancer, a very rare cancer. I had surgery in November and currently I am going through a series of strong chemotherapy treatments. I hope to be able to return to work in March 2014 but I have exhausted my annual leave. I appreciate in advance any donations you are willing to contribute at this time.

Celia Navarro

I've been employed with the City of San Diego for 10 years and currently work for the Public Works Contracting Group. I am a two time breast cancer survivor and the most recent remission I had was last year. However, in August of this year, I started having problems breathing and after a trip to the emergency room, I was told that I had fluid in my lungs and would have to have it drained. The results of that procedure showed that I had a mass of cancer cells in my chest as well as some suspicious cells in the lining of my lungs and liver. I ended up having 6 fluid draining procedures since then and at the end of September, I started receiving my chemo treatment. Treatment is scheduled for every three weeks until January, pending test results as to whether or not the treatment is working. The side effects of each treatment have significantly taken a toll on my ability to return to work, and I've had to take about 3 days off after each treatment in order to recover as best as possible. I have just about depleted my 211 hours of my accumulated leave time because of doctor's appointments and scheduled treatments. I am humbly and painstakingly asking for donations of any size that can be contributed as every little bit counts. I graciously appreciate any help that you can provide along with your thoughts and prayers. Thank you and may God Bless you!!

Sue Benson

My name is Sue Benson and I work as a Legal Secretary in the City Attorney's Office. I am asking for any donations that you can spare for my catastrophic leave bank. My husband is in the second go around with an ongoing battle with lung cancer. As I pen this, he is currently in the hospital trying to decipher what is causing him to move in and out of lucidity. With this battle he has had excruciating, debilitating and chronic pain. As a result of his condition, hospitalizations, doctor appointments, and just plain care, I have exhausted my leave again. If you can contribute anything, it would be greatly appreciated. As always, prayers are also welcome, appreciated and warranted. Thank you for your consideration, and God Bless.

new MEA members

Leonardo Alarcon
Shontel Alexander
Delores Banks
Karen Benito
Terek Bethany
Joberto Brazile
Danielle Caestecker
Luis Carrillo Jr.
Joseph Castro
Marisol Christilaw
Tony Dao
Elizabeth Del Colle
Nam Do
Cindy Dunn
Kelsey Dye
Leticia Felix Reyna
Margaret Gonzalez
Jessie Goodwin
Charles Grayson
Eileen Hauser
Rebecca Hays
Melissa Jazo Garcia
Amanda Jennings
Aaron Johnson
Shabnam Karimi
Anas Kaziha
Ho Jun Kong
Faamalo Lutu
Jeffrey Lyons
Rebecca Malone
Duncan McClane
Francisco Mendoza
Laura Molyneux
Afrodety Moros
Angela Muffley
Emerald Muz
Glenn Risolo
Monique Ross
Jeremy Shortless
Jesse Sun
Miguel Tamayo
Arlyn Tan
Iovanka Todt
Julia Ulloa
Zachary Vanslager
Juan Villasenor
Brian Wang
Kara West
Nathan White
David Yanez
Niki Zamora

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	\$39.00	\$46.00
Children (Ages 3-11)	\$30.50	\$36.00
San Diego Safari Park Deluxe Package		
Adults	\$39.00	\$46.00
Children (Ages 3-11)	\$30.50	\$36.00
Legoland		
Day Pass	\$59.00	\$78.00
Hopper Pass	\$68.00	\$97.00
K1 Speedway (Must be 4'11")	\$15.00	\$25.95
AMC Restricted	\$6.50	
AMC Unrestricted	\$8.00	
Reading	\$7.50	
Regal Restricted	\$7.00	
Regal Unrestricted	\$8.00	

Prices subject to change without notice

New ONLINE ticket program for Sea World and Six Flags Magic Mountain!

Visit our website, www.sdmea.org to purchase and print tickets for Sea World and Six Flags Magic Mountain...all from the convenience of your own computer!

March

6: Finance and Executive Committee meetings
9: Daylight Savings Time
12: Executive Committee and Board of Directors meetings
17: Saint Patrick's Day
25: Steward Meeting and Passover begins
27: Executive Committee Meeting
31: Cesar Chavez Day

April

3: Finance and Executive Committee meetings
9: Executive Committee and Board of Directors meetings
15: Tax Day
20: Easter Sunday
22: Steward Meeting
23: Administrative Professionals Day
24: Executive Committee Meeting

May

1: Finance and Executive Committee meetings
11: Mother's Day
14: Executive Committee and Board of Directors meetings
22: Executive Committee Meeting
26: Memorial Day
27: Steward Meeting

June

5: Finance and Executive Committee meetings
11: Executive Committee and Board of Directors meetings
15: Father's Day
24: Steward Meeting
26: Executive Committee Meeting

July

3: Finance and Executive Committee meetings
4: Independence Day
9: Executive Committee and Board of Directors meetings
22: Steward Meeting
24: Executive Committee Meeting
27: Parents' Day

August

7: Finance and Executive Committee meetings
13: Executive Committee and Board of Directors meetings
21: Senior Citizens Day
26: Steward Meeting
28: Executive Committee Meeting



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