

THE KITCHEN TABLE

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF LONG BEACH FIREFIGHTERS

REST IN PEACE
**JAVAN
SETTLES**

**HAROLD
OMEL**

RETIREE SPOTLIGHT P. 3

**ANTHONY
CHRISTIAN**

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**LOCAL 372
STANDS STRONG**

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**1933
EARTHQUAKE**

ARTICLES OF INTEREST P. 20



VISION AND MISSION STATEMENT

THE 372 COMMITMENT

AS PRESIDENT OF LOCAL 372, I am committed to leading with transparency, accountability, and open communication to ensure that every member has a voice in shaping our union's future. Together, we will break away from the status quo and demand more from an antiquated system that no longer serves us.

OUR GOALS

To strengthen our union and secure the best possible future for our members, we will focus on the following key priorities:

1. Transparency & Effective Communication

- Provide clear, consistent updates on union initiatives and decisions. We have bolstered our comms with a new website, app and email as well as intensified our social media presence to help accomplish this goal.
- Foster open dialogue and listening with intent where every member is informed and engaged because you are heard so that decisions are made based on being informed by those that matter – the members.

2. Increasing Member Activism

- Encourage and empower members to take an active role in union matters. The core strength of what our brand provides requires our ability to organize and unite.
- Build solidarity through increased participation in union meetings, events, and voting matters.

3. Expanding Resources & Support

- Ensure members have access to the tools and assistance they need to succeed through sound communication strategies and resources.
- Advocate for improved benefits, training, and workplace protections. We will work to expand access to critical resources that improve your careers, health, and financial security.

4. Strong & Strategic Contract Negotiations

- Approach upcoming negotiations with a unified, well-prepared strategy represented by a diverse committee. This will allow us to focus on balanced decision making so that no single perspective dominates, and all members – regardless of rank, background or experience is best represented.
- Demand fair wages, better working conditions, and benefits that reflect our sacrifices with a priority on service and resources.



OUR CALL TO ACTION

Real progress requires every member to put skin in the game—passive support is not enough. We must stand together, push for change, and refuse to accept anything less than what we deserve. The time for action is now.

By committing to these goals and working as one, we will build a stronger, more resilient union that protects, empowers, and advances the interests of all members of the Long Beach Firefighters Local 372.



SCAN QR CODE TO WATCH PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

THE KITCHEN TABLE

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It is with deep sadness that we learned of the passing of Chief Harold Omel Jr. in January. We thought it would be nice to revisit his bio, reprinted from the first Kitchen Table published (Volume 1, Issue 1) in 2019.



HAROLD OMEL

HAROLD WAS ELECTED PRESIDENT of the Long Beach Fire Fighter's Association in 1972 and retained that position until 1994 when he was appointed Fire Chief for the City of Long Beach. Along the way, Harold was Vice President and Secretary-Treasurer of the California Professional Firefighters and staff Representative for California for the International Association of Fire Fighters. Harold was Chairman of the I.A.F.F. Grievance Committee, handling grievances at the National Convention for Fire Fighters from the United States and Canada for 12 years.

Harold retired as Fire Chief in 1997. During his tenure, he accomplished many projects including: Integration of the Life-guards and Fire Department, upgraded many department vehicles, initiated the city's first Technical-Heavy Rescue Unit and expanded the city's Civilian CERT Teams as well as the Swiftwater Rescue and Dive-Rescue Teams.

In 1982, Harold received the Long Beach Fire Department's Meritorious Award for saving the lives of 2 victims in a fiery crash on the 710 freeway. The Los Angeles County Protectors Award was presented to him in 1985 for his county-wide service to the community and in that same year, the Long Beach City Council dedicated Long Beach Fire Station #1 to Harold for service to the community.

Harold came out of retirement in 1999 to serve as Fire Chief for the City of Inglewood

and held that position until 2001. Fire Station # 1 in Jiquilpan, Mexico, the city of Inglewood's Sister City, was dedicated to Harold in 2001 for his help in establishing a full-time fire department in that Mexican city. Harold is probably the only Fire Fighter in the U.S. to have two fire stations dedicated to him in two countries.

Harold was appointed by two Governors to serve on State Boards; Gov. Deukmejian Appointed him to the State Board of Fire Service and Gov. Wilson appointed him to the Underground Pipeline Safety Commission. He was also appointed to President Carter's committee to study pre-school education for children from working families.

Harold's wife Patti, as a member and President of the Fire Fighters Auxiliary helped raise funds for the California Fire Fighters Lady Auxiliary and the Alisa Ann Ruch Burn Center. As a member of Sandlarks she helped raise funds for the Children's Home Society, The Long Beach Day Nursery and Children Today.

For more than 50 years Harold and Patti have worked for many local and national charities. They continue today with active participation in Camp Fire USA. Each fall their home turns into a basket manufacturing assembly center; Harold is painting



and Patti is designing auction items to raise money at the event.

They were also active in the Greater Long Beach Chapter of the American Red Cross. Harold served as Chapter Chairman and is presently on the Board. Harold was deployed to Hurricane Katrina as a Government Liaison.

Harold and Patti have been married 56 years. They have two daughters. Robyn and her husband Kevin live in Washington. Suzi and her husband Jim live in Long Beach and are on a mission in Ecuador. They have five grandchildren: Matthew, Emily, Andrew, Jacob and Lily.

Harold and Patti enjoy traveling throughout the country and the world with family and friends. They love anything on the water: boating, water sports, cruises etc. They love hosting dinners and gatherings in their home. Patti is a talented artist and Harold is a terrific cook and loves to play the frustrating game of golf.

Dear Fellow Firefighters,

As members of the fire service, we face unique challenges every day that require not only physical strength but also mental fortitude. In our line of work, the pressures we encounter can take a toll on our emotional well-being. That's why we, the Peer Support Team, want to take a moment to emphasize the importance of resiliency and share ways we can enhance it together.

UNDERSTANDING RESILIENCY

Resiliency is our ability to bounce back from adversity and stress. It is crucial for maintaining our mental health, improving job performance, and fostering stronger relationships throughout the department. Resilient firefighters are better equipped to handle the demands of our profession, ultimately leading to better service for our community.

WAYS TO ENHANCE RESILIENCY

- 1. Engage in Training:** Participate in the wellness program and incorporate the skills learned from all the staff and clinicians. These sessions provide valuable tools and techniques to build our emotional strength.
- 2. Utilize Mental Health Resources:** Remember, it's okay to seek help. Our

department provides access to counseling and peer support services. Don't hesitate to reach out if you're feeling overwhelmed.

- 3. Prioritize Physical Wellness:** Regular exercise, balanced nutrition, and adequate rest play significant roles in our overall well-being. Let's encourage each other to maintain a healthy lifestyle.
- 4. Practice Mindfulness:** Consider incorporating mindfulness techniques into your routine. Simple practices like deep breathing or meditation can significantly reduce stress and improve focus. Many of these are available through podcasts and the internet.
- 5. Participate in Debriefings:** After critical incidents, actively participate in debriefing sessions. These are vital for processing experiences and sharing coping strategies with one another.
- 6. Foster a Supportive Culture:** Let's work together to create an environment where we can openly discuss our feelings and support one another. A strong team is built on trust and understanding.
- 7. Maintain Work-Life Balance:** Make it a priority to disconnect from work when off duty. Engage in hobbies and spend time with loved ones to recharge your spirit.



By focusing on these strategies, we can enhance our collective resiliency and create a healthier workplace for everyone. Remember, we are a Team and supporting each other is essential for our well-being.

Thank you for your dedication, and commitment to one another. Let's continue to uplift each other and build a stronger, more resilient department.

CISD/PEER SUPPORT INFORMATION

LBFD PEER SUPPORT MEMBERS

- | | | | | | |
|----------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| A. ANDERSON 805-901-8525 | T. TAYLOR 562-644-3310 | L. HILL 951-553-8062 | C. CABRAJAC 805-624-2044 | C. MILBURN 714-420-8167 | S. DIXON 562-685-3102 |
| J. AVILA 760-224-2849 | R. TULAY 562-708-8204 | M. MARTIN 949-306-9221 | D. CAREY 562-822-9729 | J. ORTIZ 626-536-1031 | J. FRASER 562-715-9151 |
| C. BLATNER 971-226-3661 | E. VOLIVITCH 714-742-5783 | W. NASH 562-400-5310 | M. CARTER 714-673-1837 | M. THURSTON 559-759-9215 | M. HANNAN 909-725-3806 |
| J. CASH 562-279-4954 | R. WHALING 562-936-8103 | C. TERHUNE 949-888-1109 | C. DUFFY 951-552-3262 | D. TORRES 909-680-9092 | D. GARRETT 562-544-6823 |
| P. CHEEK 562-673-6562 | J. ARNOLD 619-279-7750 | I. WENGER 562-900-5921 | S. FAGAN 562-229-2042 | R. WARD 562-754-0499 | R. GREGO 714-553-9151 |
| N. KAY 909-471-9075 | L. BERNAL 562-607-4485 | A. ZINTSMASER 310-936-3874 | P. GONSAL 626-483-5806 | C. ABEL 562-810-2311 | J. HEFLIN 949-500-1224 |
| B. MAUGA 949-874-1122 | D. CURETON 562-230-5355 | K. ANE 714-943-6950 | W. HALLER 562-889-0707 | C. BROWN 562-450-4488 | K. KACOUILLAS 562-787-0386 |
| P. McCLANAHAN 949-322-7595 | M. GOMEZ 714-773-2495 | A. BEHRENS 760-413-5906 | J. JENKINS 323-513-3293 | J. CRABTREE 562-833-2182 | C. LICKHALTER 310-406-7908 |
| E. SMITH 562-233-6836 | B. HEALY 714-421-0877 | J. BREEDEN 323-972-6888 | K. KELEHER 310-593-3449 | J. DAVIS 562-743-9247 | N. MARKOUIZOS 562-822-6126 |
| | | | | | K. RINDONE 714-267-8772 |

PROFESSIONAL THERAPISTS

For each employee (Sworn and Civilian) and each member of the employee's household, the Fire Department will pay up to ten (10) confidential visits to one of The Counseling Team International (TCTI) therapists per year.

1-800-222-9691
thecounselingteam.com

EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Provided by Anthem Blue Cross through the Mental Health Network. Mental Health Network offers six (6) face-to-face, phone, or web-video sessions with licensed professionals in their network. Anyone who resides in the employee's home is eligible for EAP services through the Mental Health Network.

Contact: 1-888-426-0025 or visit: mhn.advantageengagement.com and use Company Code: **LBBEWell**

LBFD CHAPLAINS

Duaine Jackson
Firefighters for Christ
(714) 675-3066

Caleb Brown
Firefighters for Christ
(562) 450-4488

THE BIG LIE
EXPOSING THE UNFAIR PROCESS IN IDR CASES



APPROVING OR DENYING an Industrial Disability Retirement (IDR) used to be straightforward and accurate. When treating and evaluating doctors within the worker's compensation found that a safety member could not perform their usual and customary duties on a permanent basis due to a work injury, local agencies would merely ensure the medical opinion had a reasonable basis. If so, they would tell CalPERS and the member would be entitled to IDR benefits through CalPERS. If the member was not substantially incapacitated from their duties, IDR benefits would be denied. Now, this process has been distorted.

Cities are now being pressured to use outside medical evaluators to determine whether the safety member qualifies for an IDR. The claim that this is beneficial for local agencies is false. It is The Big Lie.

While the reasonable approach is for local agencies to use the existing medical reporting and evaluation from the work comp case to support or deny an IDR, this new flawed approach requires cities to ignore the existing medical findings and instead forces local agencies to pay for another medical evaluator. Those pushing this agenda most commonly suggest an evaluator with little experience and a sever lack of expertise for the injuries at issue.

While this approach wastes time and money, it also often leads to a lack of consistency in the findings. What we have seen is the City's 'hired gun' denies the IDR, forcing the member into a painful and costly litigation process, where they must hire a medical expert to testify at a hearing! In the City of Huntington Beach, this approach was used over a couple years and led to dozens of safety members to be left in limbo. While each of their work comp doctors found that they were found "unable to perform essential job duties" this same "hired gun" stated the members were completely fine and able to perform all the requirements - even emergency response duties - of their job. This meant these safety members - some suffering from severe orthopedics injuries and others with significant cardiovascular limitations - to be out of a job and not receiving any industrial disability retirement benefits.

This flawed approach re-creates the problem the IDR process was meant to resolve.

With our help, the City of Huntington Beach resolved this issue by eliminating outside evaluators who are not connected with the work comp process and focusing on finding out the whole and accurate truth - whether the member substantially incapacitated or not. With our system, the City avoided the madness and got dozens of officers the IDR they deserved.

Unfortunately, other PERS agencies have swallowed The Big Lie. They are being sold a bill of goods and are unaware of the massive litigation costs of The Big Lie with no benefit on the backend. Importantly, PERS is not giving the agencies any remuneration or benefits to contest these IDR cases. Moreover, the costs, inconsistencies, and inaccuracies only increase when this approach is used. The only party that wins are the vendor law firms that represent the agencies in the IDR cases, billing them for thousands of dollars for no benefit. The member faces a terrible fate- entering the wasteland where they will wait years for a hearing or be forced back to full duty and risk a greater injury. A natural question then follows - why are the agencies wasting so much time, money, and resources to deny IDR's when substantial medical opinions support approving it? The only logical answer is that local agencies are unaware that this approach is deeply flawed. They unknowingly believe The Big Lie.

The Industrial Disability Retirement (ID) process is complicated for safety members. To qualify for an IDR under PERS, a member must show through a

medical evaluation and report that they are permanently and substantially incapacitated from duty and that the disability has lasted or is expected to last more than twelve months. Most often, the medical evidence from a safety members workers' compensation case is relied on to help support the IDR determination. But now- "The Big Lie" is changing this standard process to a ligated and costly process. There are solutions to "The Big Lie" like the one we launched in Huntington Beach.

There are three distinct processes that all safety members must understand. The stages from workers' compensation to the Interactive Personnel Meeting (IP Meeting)

Continued on pg. 7



- Workers' Compensation
- Labor Negotiations
- Internal Affairs / Critical Incidents
- Criminal Defense
- Personal Injury
- Employment Litigation
- Disability Retirement

805.373.5900

SERVING PUBLIC SAFETY THROUGHOUT CALIFORNIA

ANTHONY CHRISTIAN



ANTHONY IS PART OF THE 2022B CLASS and his journey to LBFD is anything but ordinary. He and his sister grew up in northtown on 59th and Walnut - his dad was a pastor, his mom taught at Jordan. In high school, he moved to northern California and played travel hockey and began earning his pilot's license. (Fun fact: he flew an airplane by himself before ever driving a car.) He earned a nomination to the U.S. Air Force Academy where he continued his pursuit of being a fighter pilot. A highlight as a cadet was dogfighting F-16s in Alaska during his senior year.

After graduation, the Air Force needed cyber operations officers, and Anthony was sent to a 10-month cyber warfare schoolhouse. He served 5-years active duty and separated in 2015. He and his wife, Kayti, then decided to sell everything and backpack around the world - so they did! Three months through Europe and northern Africa, a month in Nepal then onto Southeast Asia, and 6 months in South America.

Upon their return, they brainstormed how to live abroad, not just travel abroad. Kayti applied to international grad schools while Anthony worked for Patagonia. An acceptance letter arrived one day from the University of London, so Anthony flew up to Alaska where he worked a commercial fisherman to fund Kayti's school.

While in London, Anthony poured pints at a local pub as he searched for another new career. He volunteered at a brewery in southwest London until earning a full-time spot. He went to brewing school and continued brewing in the UK for the next two years. As visas expired and school wrapped up for his wife, they moved back to the states where he continued brewing for Smog City.

He and Kayti are approaching 50 countries visited - they've lived out of van in Patagonia, caged dived with great whites in South Africa, trekked the Himalayas to Mount Everest base camp, and most recently, completed the Tour du Mont Blanc (100 miles through France, Italy, and Switzerland).

Without question, the highlight of all highlights, after 14 years of marriage, years of infertility and multiple rounds of IVEF, he and Kayti are expecting! Baby girl will be here June, 2025.



THE KITCHEN TABLE

Quarterly Newsletter
(digital & print publication)

Distributed to over 1,000 current/retired Long Beach Firefighters

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Continued from pg. 5

to the IDR process are connected. The safety member must have the proper medical evidence so the agency or city can grant the IDR application and show at the IP Meeting they are unable to work. This fact is important for the next IDR stage.

THE BIG LIE EXPOSED:

PERS does NOT require a separate medical report outside the work comp process. A QME, AME or IME in the work comp case can complete a Physician's Report on Disability. To ensure that the med expert will do it, the form will need to be included in the Joint letter-medical addendum packet explaining that the parties need this form completed. That is all PERS requires!!! Local

agencies spending thousands of dollars for another medical evaluation in addition to the work comp evaluators makes no logical or financial sense.

IMPACT OF THE BIG LIE:

There are several issues that may arise if the IDR application has been stalled. First, we must consider the financial benefits the safety member is currently receiving. At the IDR stage, the member has typically exhausted 4850 and is either burning accrued sick/vacation or being paid Long Term Disability (LTD). A delay in the PERS process will extend the timeline for the safety members burning their own time or extending the LTD benefits. The safety member will need to be vigilant in securing the PERS forms and further pressing the city to

begin Advance Disability Pension Payment to avoid any gap in benefits.

It is critically important to make sure the safety members connect with an expert in workers comp and PERS-IDR to make sure their case is on track and their benefits are secure. If the city of PERS agency denies the IDR application, the member now faces hiring an attorney and a medical expert to handle the administrative hearing, costing the member tens of thousands of dollars. The financial hit to both the city and the member is massive. Just as we did with the City of Huntington Beach, we continue to work with cities to expose The Big Lie and implement our efficient solution that is focused on determining an accurate outcome without wasting the city and safety member's money. We must end The Big Lie.



REST IN PEACE
**JAVAN
SETTLES**

Our brother Javan left a lasting impression with everyone he met. His passion for life was evident in everything he did. A greeting from him was never a simple handshake, it was an over the top hug followed by a genuine question of how things were going in your life. His compassion for people made him a light that attracted the best from all of us.

He will be deeply missed but more importantly, never forgotten!



LONG BEACH
FIREFIGHTERS
LOCAL 372
**BOARD
MEMBERS**



LAMONT NGUYEN
PRESIDENT
405-209-5846 • lamont.nguyen@gmail.com



REX PRITCHARD
GENERAL SECRETARY-TREASURER
714-225-3351 • rdp372@mac.com



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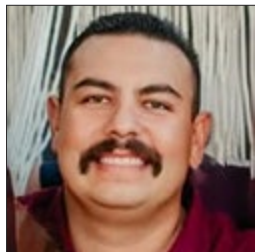
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MATT WU
DIRECTOR
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CORY GIRARD
DIRECTOR
949-310-60268 • cdiggs007@yahoo.com



LOCAL 372 MEMBER EQUIPMENT POINT-OF-CONTACT

Local 372 members have a long history of taking care of our tools and equipment in-house. Below are the members you can call to get information about tools and equipment.

Anthony Gardea, 11B
James Avila, 10C
Adam Gjersvold, 6B
Jacob Castaneda, 10A
Matt Wu, 1B
Brad Robideaux, 6A
Jon Daniels, 16A

Nozzles
Ladders
Hurst
Flashlights
Thermal Imagers
Saws
Radios

Brad Smith, 19C
Station 5
Jimmy Addante, 1C
Jake Atwood, HQ
Station 24
Mike Martin, 16C

Turnouts
Hose
SCBA
Fleet
Gas Monitors
EPCR

LONG BEACH FIREMEN'S MUTUAL BENEFIT ASSOCIATION



SINCE 1929, THE MUTUAL BENEFIT ASSOCIATION (MBA) COLLECTS, MANAGES AND DISTRIBUTES MONEY AND BENEFITS TO HELP EACH OTHER IN TIMES OF NEED. TOGETHER WE GROW STRONGER FOR THE FUTURE.

LONG BEACH FIRE CAPTAIN DAVID ROSA SCHOLARSHIP

Hello members,

It's a fact that our membership is very young in its years on the beloved LBFD. Because of this, I would like to solemnly remind you of the tragedy that struck our department on June 25, 2018. During a high-rise structure response, Fire Captain David Rosa was shot and killed in the line of duty. It was unfathomable for us to think that an event like this could happen in that moment and we have suffered as a whole with his loss. On that day, we lost not only a dedicated Fire Captain, but a devoted husband, father, and friend.

To honor Dave's legacy, we humbly offer the LONG BEACH FIRE CAPTAIN DAVID ROSA SCHOLARSHIP. Captain Rosa was committed to educating our firefighters throughout his career. The creation of this scholarship will honor his memory and the passion he had for developing future generations through education.

The funding for the scholarship came from a generous donation from the Rosa Family with the intent to create a lasting legacy for LBFD firefighters and their families

On behalf of the Rosa Family, Long Beach Firemen's Mutual Benefit Association (MBA), the Long Beach Firefighter's Memorial Association (LBFFMA) and Long Beach Firefighter's Local 372, we are excited to announce the 4th Annual Long Beach Fire Captain David Rosa Scholarship. This Scholarship will support first year post High School education and will be open to the immediate families of our firefighters.

Please note the completed application must be mailed and postmarked on or before April 29th, 2025. Please see your department email and see the application for further details.

For any specific questions related to the scholarship, please reach out to any MBA board member.

Good luck to all applicants,

Doug Carey
1st Vice President

If you have any questions regarding MBA benefits, please call the Board of Directors:

- PRESIDENT **Mick Hannan**
- VP1 **Doug Carey**
- VP2 **Brian Fisk**
- TREASURER **Jack Crabtree**
- DIRECTOR **Jon Breeden**
- DIRECTOR **Rex Pritchard**
- DIRECTOR **Mark Spoolstra**
- DIRECTOR **Brad Robideaux**
- DIRECTOR **Caleb Brown**

"Together we grow stronger for the future"

JUST IN TIME FOR SUMMER

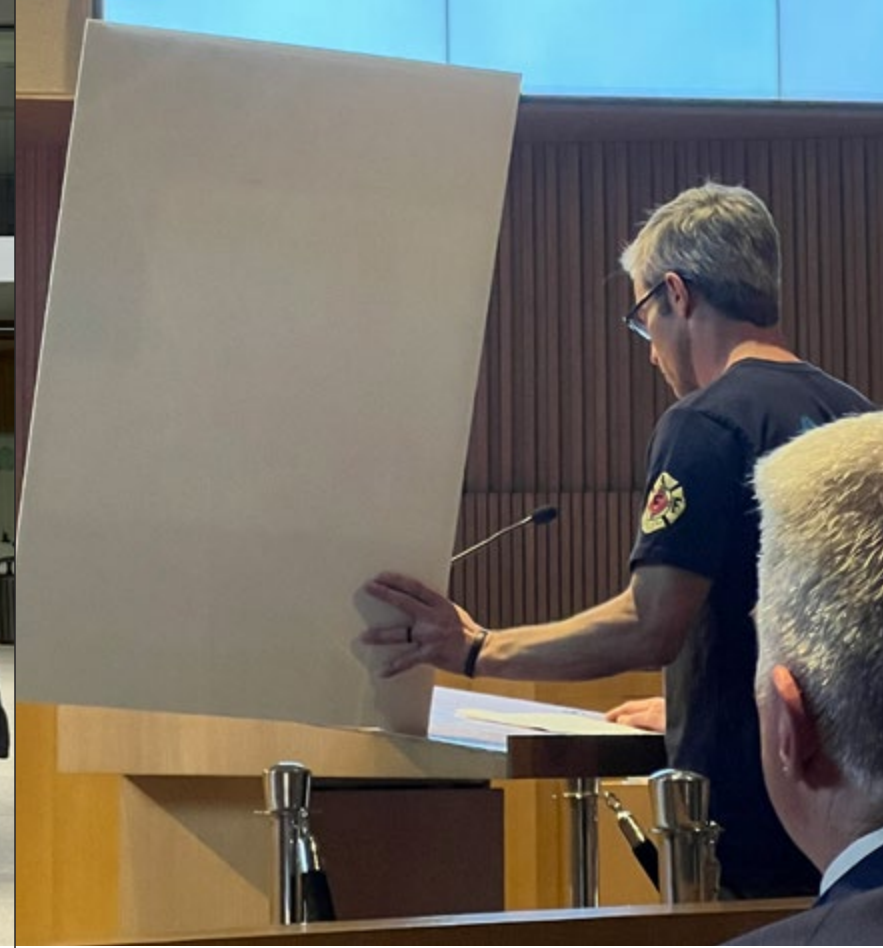
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CITY COUNCIL MEETING

LONG BEACH CITY HALL



LOCAL 372 STANDS STRONG AT MARCH 4 CITY COUNCIL MEETING



Full Version

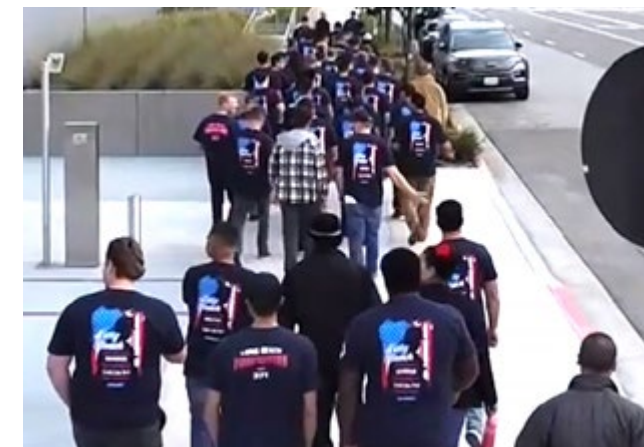
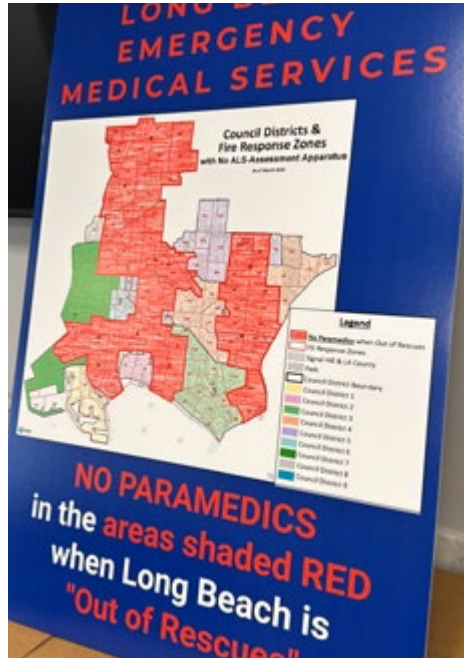


Condensed Version



President message for March 4

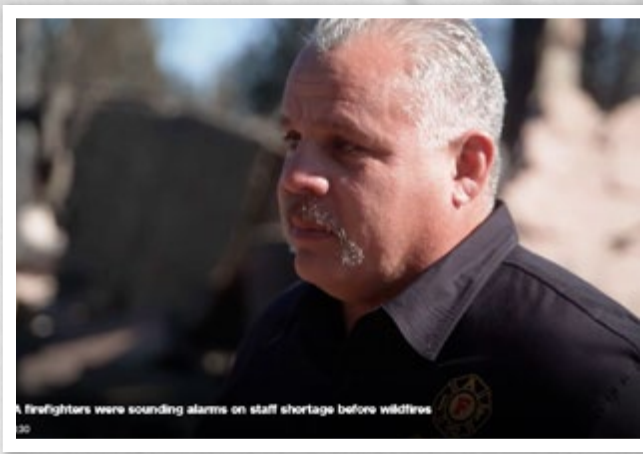




LONG BEACH FIREFIGHTERS IN THE NEWS



SoCal man celebrates birthday cards from strangers, receives special visit from Long Beach firefighters



'Beyond the brink': Data shows LA Fire Department among the most understaffed in America



"The fight for fairness"



E10 at the Eaton Fire



457 LB

DEFERRED COMPENSATION PLAN



Heroes,

Something I want to touch on right out of the gate (because it is now a real thing), is **The Social Security Fairness Act**. It was signed into law in January and it is going to mean something for many of you. It brings significant changes to the Social Security system by eliminating two provisions that previously reduced benefits for certain public servants: the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) and the Government Pension Offset (GPO). In a nutshell, these two provisions which have been in effect since the late 70's and early 80's respectively, significantly reduced any social security benefits you were entitled to. The typical scenario is that you were hired with LBFD in your 20's or 30's and had paid into social security up to that point. Only to find out upon retirement that your monthly social security payment is raked by the feds. Congress (rightly) finally came to the conclusion that people who paid into the system for years (you still need your 40 quarters) are en-

titled to social security payments regardless of if they also receive a public service pension.

The repeal of these provisions means that individuals who were previously affected will now receive full Social Security benefits without reductions due to non-covered pensions. The Social Security Administration (SSA) has begun issuing retroactive payments as well.

If you want to see where you stand, visit the Social Security Administration's official website. Go to <https://ssa.gov/> and create an account. They have how much you have ever paid into the system based on tax returns, it is also a trip down memory lane from the summer job you had at 15 1/2.

The city is currently working through the RFP for our third party record keeper and more information on SECURE 2.0 is coming down

the pipe. One major change that is being voted on at our next quarterly meeting, may introduce a profound change in the variety of investment vehicles available to us through Mission Square and the online portal. I don't want to give too many details until it is voted on but rest assured, I will update you via the next KT on the results and what changes you can anticipate. If you have any questions, please reach out to Tish or myself.

PARKING REMINDER



Taking
CARE OF OUR OWN
 A ONE-DAY TRAINING PROGRAM

MAY 28, 2025

PROGRAM SPONSORED

National
**FALLEN FIREFIGHTERS
 FOUNDATION**

FIRE DEPARTMENTS DON'T KNOW WHEN THEY WILL HAVE A LINE-OF-DUTY DEATH OR SERIOUS INJURY. DO YOU HAVE A PLAN IN PLACE? DO YOU KNOW HOW TO NOTIFY SURVIVORS IN A TIMELY AND PROPER WAY? ARE YOUR PERSONNEL RECORDS CURRENT? DO YOU KNOW HOW TO ACCESS FEDERAL, STATE, AND LOCAL BENEFITS?

TAILORED FOR ALL FIRE SERVICE PERSONNEL, THIS COURSE COVERS PRE-INCIDENT PLANNING, SURVIVOR NOTIFICATION, FAMILY AND COWORKER SUPPORT, AND BENEFITS AND RESOURCES AVAILABLE FOR SURVIVORS.

LOCATION

ONTARIO FIRE DEPARTMENT TRAINING CENTER
 1408 E. FRANCIS
 ONTARIO, CA 91761

CLASS TIME

9:00 AM - 4:00 PM



CHAPLAIN'S MESSAGE

DUAINE JACKSON

THE LOUDEST VOICE IN YOUR LIFE

Is it possible that what we perceive to be relational, emotional, and spiritual problems are actually hearing problems—ears that have been deafened to the voice of God? And it's that inability to hear his voice that causes us to lose our voice and lose our way.

Let me make a bold statement: Learning how to hear the voice of God is the solution to many of our problems! It's also the key to discovering our destiny and fulfilling our potential.

His voice is love.
 His voice is power.
 His voice is healing.
 His voice is wisdom.
 His voice is joy.

If your life is off-key, maybe it's because you've been deafened by the negative self-talk that doesn't let God get a word in edgewise! Maybe you've listened to the voice of criticism so long you can't believe anything else about yourself. Or maybe it's the enemy's voice of condemnation that speaks lies about who you really are. If you don't silence those competing voices, they'll eventually deafen you. You won't be able to sing God's song because you won't be able to hear His voice.

Is God's voice the loudest in your life?.... That's the question. If the answer is no, that's the problem.

I issue you this challenge. Pray (which is just talking) to God about this. And then be still; which is the hardest part, wait and listen.



This excerpt is taken from the devotional "Whisper: How to Hear the Voice of God" by Mark Batterson. Available on the app, 'Holy Bible'.

RETIRED FIREFIGHTER ASSOCIATION

TONY MEJIA



LONG BEACH
**RETIRED
 FIREFIGHTERS**
 ASSOCIATION

HELLO SISTERS AND BROTHERS,

Hope this message finds you as healthy and happy as possible. Just a few updates to share with you in this issue.

We are sorry to report that this year's Irish Wake was one of our biggest. We lost many good men in the past 365 days. One we need to share with you was Harold Omel, who served in many positions not only for the Fire Department, but as a labor leader. Most notably, the longest serving President of Local 372 and was also elected as the Secretary/Treasurer

of the California Professional Firefighters. He was serving in an Advisory role for this organization, the Long Beach Retired Firefighters Association, when he passed. Rest in peace brother Omel and the same to all of other beloved brothers.

We will be hosting this years Wellness Social Event in June. At that time we will share how to participate in the Department's Wellness Program and what is included with signing up. As well as any other offers that may be available at that time. An email reminder with date and time will be sent when it becomes available.

Finally, it's that time again to renew your membership with the LBRFA. If you currently have the Credit Union transferring your dues out of your account, there is nothing further you need to do. If you usually send us a check please do so now. Dues are \$9.00 a month or \$108.00 a year. We schedule our renewal date for dues in April and May so that it is not around the Holidays and the end of the year when we tend to be spending a lot more money than usual. These dues help us pay for the three social events we sponsor (Irish Wake, Wellness Social, Retired Firefighters Day) and donations to local charities.

Any questions about the organization, dues or changes in addresses or emails please contact Kirk Storey or Tony Mejia. All the best!

LBRFA Board

WHAT IS LONG BEACH'S WILDFIRE RISK?

An emergency management expert weighs in

By Jacob Sisneros
Jan 13, 2025 • Updated Jan 14, 2025



Long Beach firefighters attack a blaze on a two-story building during a two-alarm fire at an abandoned house near Downtown, Monday, Oct. 11, 2021. Photo by Thomas R. Cordova.

LAST WEEK, WE ASKED our readers what they wanted to know about the wildfires still causing devastation across Los Angeles County. One that came up again and again: What's the risk of catastrophic fires here in Long Beach? And what can be done to mitigate it?

We put those questions to Steve Jensen, a professor of emergency management services at Cal State Long Beach with over 30 years of expertise in emergency services leadership, fire prevention and the interface between urban and wildland areas. He spent 16 years as a fire responder in Long Beach, including 10 years as a firefighter. Jensen has also spent time in advisory roles with the Los Angeles County Fire Department, FEMA and the American Red Cross.

Here's our interview with him. It's been lightly edited for length and clarity.

Q: What topics do you teach in the Emer-

gency Services Administration Master's Program at Cal State Long Beach?

I look mostly at leadership, policy and organizational theory. So the idea is: organizations are the big tool that we've got to bring about change. Whether it's a fire department or a city or the American Red Cross, those organizations are the big tool, but we need to know how to use those correctly particularly as things are changing fairly rapidly as our societies become more complex, but also more integrated.

Q: What is your expertise related to wildfires?

Well, I fought wildland fire for quite a few years, but mostly I've been involved in reducing risk where I can, so either through building codes or land use, or the way we manage vegetation, or the way we work with our communities. We try to reduce risk so that when

a fire does occur, it's more limited in its scope.

Q: Why were the Eaton and Palisades fires so devastating?

It was a combination of factors that came together, the perfect storm.

To begin with: the wildland areas of vegetation — the fuels have not been managed well over the years. They've been allowed to get overgrown without the kind of proper maintenance and thinning that's required when you're living close to these wildlands.

And then we've had a period of abnormally dry time. We haven't had any rain for eight months, any rain to speak of. And before that, we had two extraordinarily wet years. So we had a lot of growth, and then very dry, and the lighter fuels and the grasses dried out. So it just created this bomb out there.

And then the third thing happens, we get Santa Anas. It wasn't just an ordinary Santa

Ana. We had a couple of weather systems set up to the south and north of us that compressed the flow of the Santa Anas, causing these extraordinarily strong Santa Anas. Normally, they'd come down through the canyons and you'd see the fire follow these particular corridors. In this case, the Santa Anas were so strong they came up over the top of the mountains and then just blasted down with sustained 60 mph winds and gusts up to 100 mph and the direction changing quite a lot.

All those things together were diabolical. But then it gets worse, because we've built our cities right in the mix of all this stuff. And I don't think it's a problem that we're building there. It's just we need to do it intelligently in the way we use the land, the way we manage vegetation and the way we build our houses. Then, most importantly, the way we regard our role there, where we're living.

Q: Could Long Beach or nearby cities like Seal Beach and its wilderness preserves be prone to similar fires?

I'm not so worried about that. What we need to understand is that Palisades, the Eaton fire ... these are fires that started in the wildland but they really quickly moved into the urban areas, and they became urban conflagration. So the wildland fire was almost like a fuse that lit this urban conflagration, and that's what we need to focus on, and that's where we're vulnerable, in Long Beach as well — is urban conflagration.

Q: Are there any particular areas in Long Beach that are more at risk for that urban conflagration?

Well, you could look at it in three ways. You could look at how close the houses are together, so it's easy for a fire to spread from one house to another. You can look at the way the houses are constructed [and whether] there is wood siding or wood shingles. And then you can look at the vegetation. You know the beautiful ways in which we landscape our homes, but it also leaves them vulnerable, if not done correctly, to fire spreading from house to house. So when you put those three combinations together, you could look at places like Marina Pacifica or perhaps the Peninsula that are particularly vulnerable to seeing widespread fire.

Q: In mid-December, a 1-acre brush fire scorched 20 palm trees near the Los Cerritos Wetlands, just a few hundred yards from shopping centers and other populated areas. Under extreme wind conditions could a fire like this spread to the nearby neighborhood?

Yeah, absolutely. You could see that in Seal Beach, in the area known as Gum Grove. Beautiful eucalyptus groves all through there and light grasses and everything, but vulner-

able to fire starts, and it could get going and find its way into the neighborhood. It doesn't have the momentum like it would in some of the canyons in the periphery of the city, but it still leaves us vulnerable. I think the main thing is to understand the conditions for urban conflagration. And it's not like the whole city is vulnerable to it, but specific areas are, and again, in the right kind of wind conditions, we have to be extraordinarily careful and have the right pre-planning in place in case it does start.

Q: Is there anything inherent in Long Beach's geography that protects it from extreme wind events or other conditions that drive massive wildfires?

The Santa Anas are very unique in that they tend to wrap around the periphery of the city. So the Los Angeles metropolitan area is surrounded by beautiful mountain ranges and the Santa Anas tend to funnel through those ranges and follow around the perimeter of the city.

You see Santa Anas affecting the core of the city, in the Palos Verdes Peninsula area, Long Beach, Seal Beach and all that. But we're really the last to get affected by it since we are really in the core of the metropolitan area, or the LA basin. That's a big factor. We don't get the sustained, super strong, gusty Santa Anas like they do up in the mountains, in the canyons [and] around the edge of the city.

Q: How do drought conditions impact Long Beach and its wildfire preparedness?

Nothing like the wildland areas around the periphery of the city. We irrigate things even in the [El Dorado] Nature Center or other places where there's wildland stuff. We're able to keep the grasses under control. We have very few problems. But again, I would emphasize it doesn't mean that [Long Beach is] out of the problem of widespread fire, it's just less likely in conditions of extreme drought, as compared to other parts of the metropolitan area.

I would say that there are other conditions that could lead to urban conflagration. For example, if there's an earthquake, it affects some buildings, homes, electrical services are compromised, or maybe we get a natural gas break, and that leads to fire. The buildings, perhaps are damaged and opened up a bit, so it's easier for flames to take hold in that building, spread to neighboring buildings, and then we're vulnerable because it's harder for us to get access to them and perhaps even water supplies are compromised after an earthquake. So the problem of fire following an earthquake is one that we have to pay very careful attention to in a place like Long Beach and our fire department is very aware of that and works diligently to make sure they

have plans in place to be able to work in a situation where there may be fire following an earthquake.

Q: Do you see the wildfire risk changing in Long Beach over the next 5-10 years?

It's not a problem here. It's not a major problem at all. It's something that's relatively easily managed. There's places where we've let some very limited grassland and wildland areas get out of control, but it's quite easy to get those managed better. We don't need to let them get so junky looking and overgrown. It's not like going and trying to trim up the Santa Monica Mountains or the San Gabriel Mountains. This is something we could handle in a few days with a couple of weed whackers.

Q: How can Long Beach residents be prepared?

I think it's just important to have very basic preparedness measures in place. Again, where I am most concerned is the problem of fire following an earthquake and it would follow basic earthquake preparedness. You would understand how to shut off the gas service, if necessary, shut off your electric service if necessary. How you could help your neighbors do such things after an earthquake, understanding what you could do with a small fire extinguisher if a small fire does occur. Understanding when it's going to be too big and you have to get out of the way and let others help you with it.

The main thing is, in the scenario of an earthquake with multiple ignitions around the city, the fire department is very quickly going to be overtaxed and it's going to be hard to get help from other parts of the metropolitan area. So it's incumbent upon homeowners, for people, neighbors, to be able to help each other and as quickly as they can put out small fires where there's still small fires. That's understanding how to use an extinguisher, how to get those things out, how to do this quite quickly and keep these small fires from becoming large fires.

Q: What about the local government? What steps should they be taking before disaster hits?

Yeah, the Long Beach Fire Department does an excellent job. They've got the CERT (Community Emergency Response Teams) training in place. That's a great mechanism for being able to leverage the work of the fire department and get communities engaged in fire prevention and building safer neighborhoods. And, should an earthquake occur, being able to respond as a community, as a neighborhood, helping each other get through these things. So by all means, working closely with the fire department and becoming part of those networks is the best thing we could be doing.

THE 1933 LONG BEACH QUAKE, A DISASTER FOLLOWED BY RESILIENCE AND REBUILDING

This article was originally published in 2023 on the 90th anniversary of the Long Beach earthquake.



Fallen debris from buildings along Fourth Street following the Long Beach Earthquake on March 10, 1933. Photo courtesy Long Beach Public Library.

THE LONG BEACH EARTHQUAKE rocked this city and others nearby 90 years ago today at 5:54 p.m.

The city at the time wasn't built like it was expecting such an event, despite the disastrous 1906 quake in San Francisco. Homes were built on substandard foundations; larger buildings, including schools, were built largely with unreinforced masonry that virtually flew off the structures onto cars, streets, sidewalks and the occasional citizen.

Though there was no way of measuring earthquakes aside from anecdotal evidence of its destruction, it was estimated to have been 6.4 on the now-outdated Richter scale, and it killed 120 people and injured thousands more.

There was panic and mayhem for the first few hours as people bolted from their homes, which continued to shake with aftershocks, and stood around outdoors in a daze before gossip of an impending tidal wave sent hundreds scurrying for higher ground atop Signal Hill, where some slept in their cars, while others sat around wide-eyed and witnessed the fires in the city. Some were caused by the quake itself, while others were bonfires that people set in yards, parks, streets and vacant lots throughout the city.

It's safe to say that Long Beachers didn't get a lot of sleep that night. Few returned to their homes and instead slept outdoors, jarred awake if they had managed even to fall asleep, by the continuing aftershocks in addition to the mounting worries of each person wondering how they were going to get on with lives and the lives of their children and other family members.

But this isn't a story about the horrors of the quake or the loss of lives, but rather about how the city rebounded in the few days following the quake.

Among the thoughts of many after the initial terror was a feeling of relief and gratitude about the small mercy of the earthquake's timing. While survivors even decades later recalled how it had interrupted the evening's dinner plans, virtually everyone was thankful for the fact that it occurred after school when students had returned home for the day.

Just a few hours earlier, when children were in their classrooms, the death rate would have risen radically and tragically. Thirty-one of the city's 40 schools were either demolished or battered beyond repair.

The city began rebuilding almost immediately, and former city manager Charles S.

by Tim Grobaty
Mar 10, 2023 • Updated Mar 12, 2025

Henderson was put in command of the city's rehabilitation, relief work and reconstruction.

Henderson issued his first public statement on March 12 declaring that removal of debris in the streets had proceeded with amazing rapidity, and within 18 hours of the quake, practically all streets including those in the Downtown business district were cleared.

He added as a warning to would-be morbid opportunists, "Any attempts to profiteer will be met with immediate revocation of city licenses. There has been practically no pillaging, but it is my order to shoot on sight if the occasion demands."

With thousands of residents displaced and rendered homeless by the earthquake, food stations were set up the morning following the disaster. A reporter from the Pasadena Post newspaper wrote, "Bonfires glowed in Lincoln Park. Above the fragrance of flowers and the pungent odor of eucalyptus came the aroma of coffee and the appetizing smell of hot soup."

"Side by side, smartly attired women and Boy Scouts scraped carrots and peeled potatoes.

Men with sleeves rolled up cut bread for sandwiches and dished soup to a never ending line.

No questions were asked of that line. Every outstretched hand was supplied, whether it was large or small, grimy or daintily manicured."

The line of hungry survivors stretched around the library in Lincoln Park and from 6 a.m. Saturday, the morning after the quake, until noon, between 10,000 and 15,000 people were served meals under the direction of the Salvation Army.

The Salvation Army and other volunteers duplicated their efforts at strategically located sites, including the National Guard Armory at Seventh Street and Alamitos Avenue, the Belmont Shore Police Station on Second Street and on Long Beach Boulevard at Plymouth Street in North Long Beach. In Bixby Park, shelter tents, food supplies and general relief corps and kitchen equipment was set up in the streets facing Bixby Park to care for all homeless and needy persons.

ruckloads of carrots and potatoes, along with crates of oranges and baskets of bread came in from relief organizations, and 200 workers were in charge of preparation and distribution. Flowers, too, were brought in and were passed to the Red Cross tents where first aid was given and older and nerve-shaken people rested.

For more serious injuries, an emergency

tent area with a team of 26 doctors and 45 nurses worked day and night, treating more than 700 cases ranging from skull fractures to skin lacerations in the first 18 hours. Lighting was provided by movie colonies in Hollywood and Los Angeles.

A good part of the immediate post-quake work was the further destruction of the quake-crippled buildings that were beyond repair and constituted a peril as aftershocks continued to work at crumbling structures, sending masonry crashing to the streets in thundering salvos.

In addition to the efforts of Long Beach's Fire Department, seven wrecking crews using three power cranes as well as dynamite worked throughout the most heavily damaged parts of the city doing the heavy work, while 3,000 civilian workers on relief payrolls of the Reconstruction Finance Corporation began the tremendous task of clearing thousands of tons of debris from streets.

Maintaining civic order amid the chaos and destruction was a force of 10,000 Navy seamen and Marines from the fleet stationed just offshore, complemented by soldiers from Fort MacArthur in San Pedro. The men led relief expeditions into the city, establishing virtual martial law at the principal centers of destruction, while every available relief and welfare agency was brought into the quake area to provide emergency aid for the injured and homeless thousands.

In subsequent days, the city slowly began to operate somewhat normally, though largely outdoors. Libraries brought reading material outside in the city's parks, restaurants hauled their cooking equipment outside to prepare meals to outdoor diners, using pieces of wreckage for fires, and school, too, took to the outdoors to conduct classes on their athletic fields and in nearby parks.

The students were, in the days immediately after the earthquake, "on vacation" as the spring break was moved to those days. School resumed on April 10, and while many classes continued to be held outside in "open-air classrooms," 103 tent houses were erected for junior and senior high school students. To help keep students on track, Long Beach radio stations KFOX and KGER broadcast two supplemental lessons each day.

The state, too, learned its lessons from the fact that the Long Beach area had dodged the horror of the death and injury of thousands of students.

Just a month after the quake, the California Legislature approved the Field Act after it was determined that the effects of



United States military personnel, armed with rifles, assist with the clean up and guard against problems in the quake aftermath. Photo courtesy Long Beach Public Library.



Jefferson Junior High School destruction. Photo courtesy Long Beach Public Library.



Displaced earthquake survivors were fed at area parks. Photo courtesy Long Beach Public Library.

the quake were magnified by the city's loose subsoil, shoddy workmanship and substandard materials.

The Field Act authorizes the Division of the State Architect to review and approve all

public school plans and specifications and to furnish supervision of the construction work.

Since the enforcement of the Field Act, no school has collapsed because of a seismic event, and there has been no loss of life.

LOCAL 372 FAMILY PHOTOS



Scan to fill out survey:

CHIPS
(Demo vs. Ma)

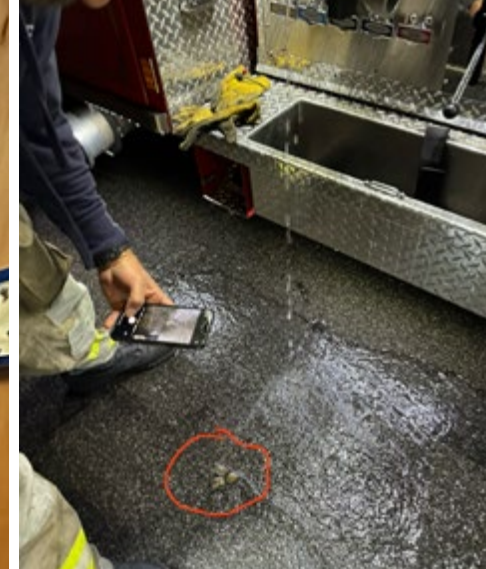




3 day old E11



Don't pencilwhip the monthends



3/4-inch gravel coming out of a hydrant



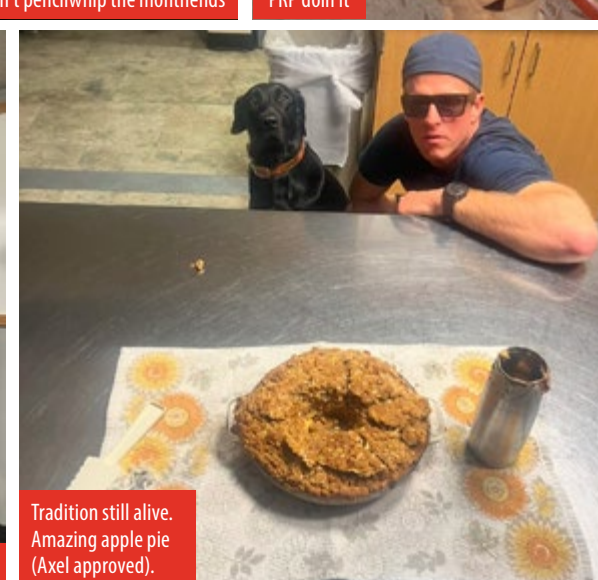
Elevator USAR Training



PRP doin it



Senior permanent chef at Training



Tradition still alive. Amazing apple pie (Axel approved).

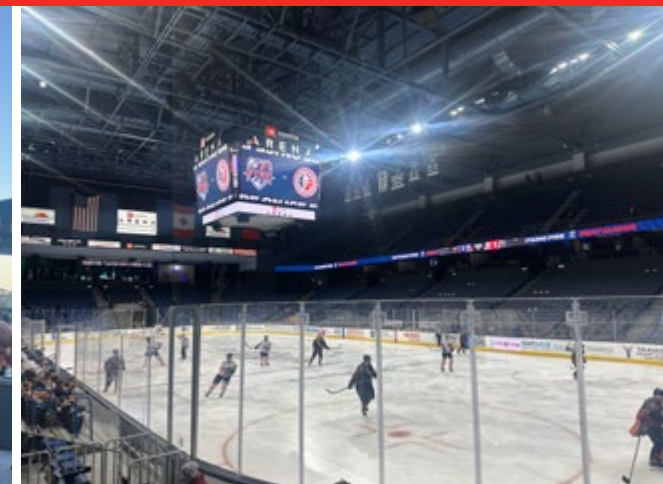


USAR Training at AES Plant in HB



Multi-agency REMS Training

OFD v LBFD Hockey Game in honor of Javan





Helicopter parenting prohibited at Drill School



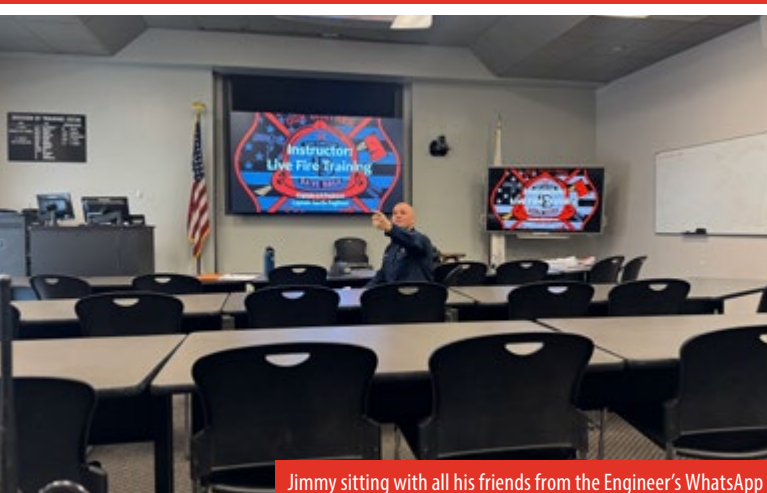
Mammoth Board Meeting 2025



Was nice while it lasted



USAR in 17s area



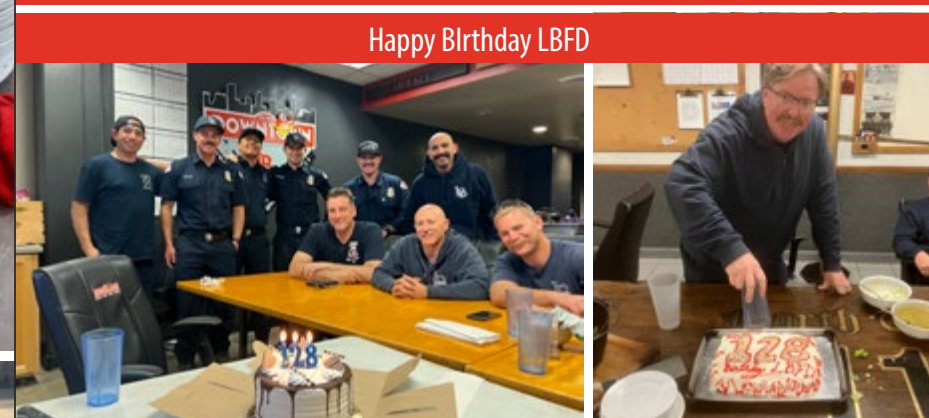
Jimmy sitting with all his friends from the Engineer's WhatsApp



When your last rookie finally gets off the truck



Congratulations to the newlyweds



Happy Birthday LBFD



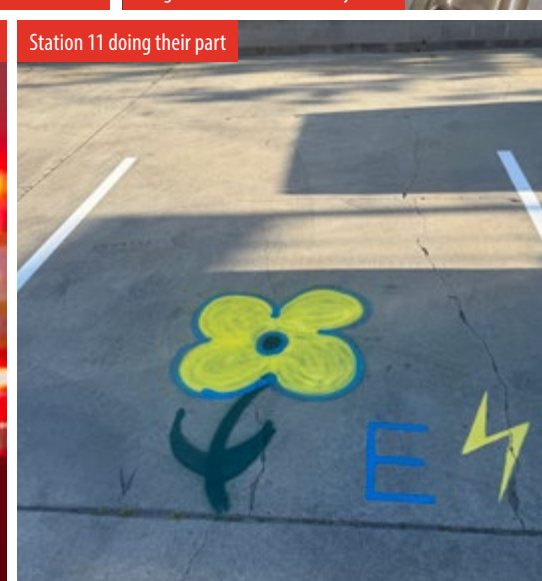
Tweakers in action



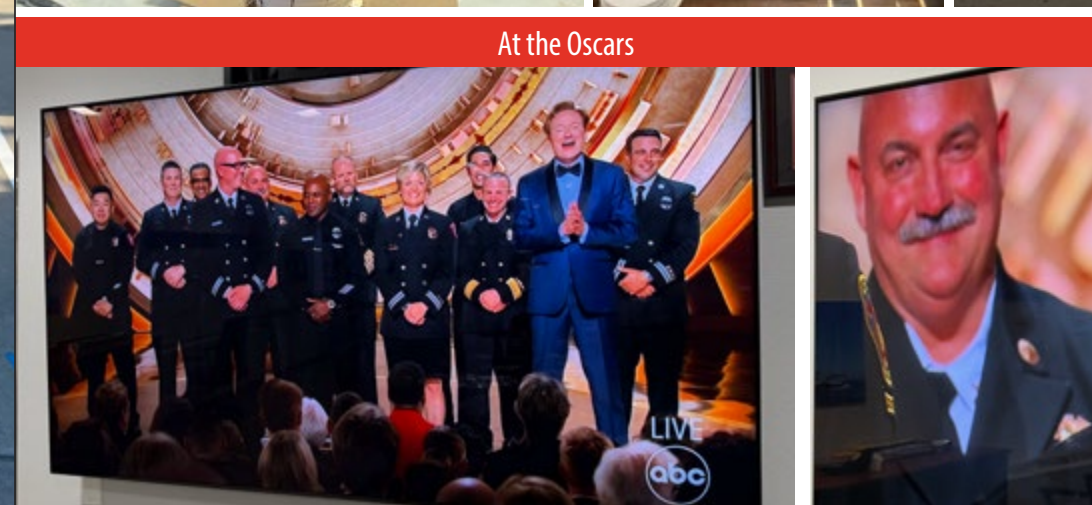
Dick



He strikes again



Station 11 doing their part



At the Oscars

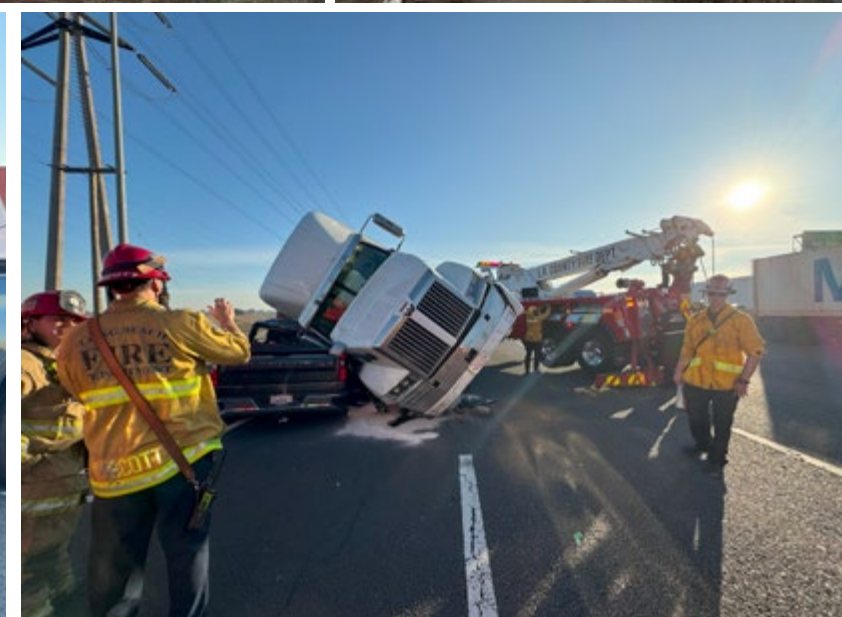
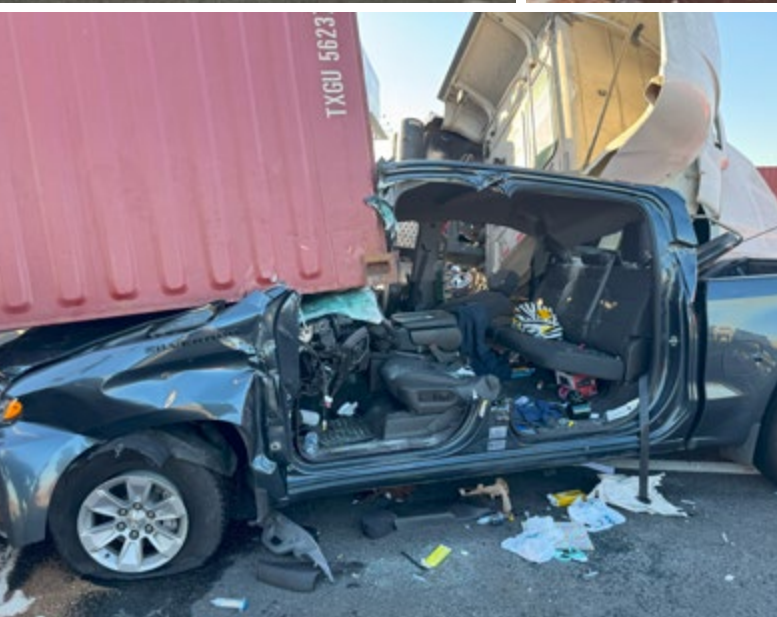
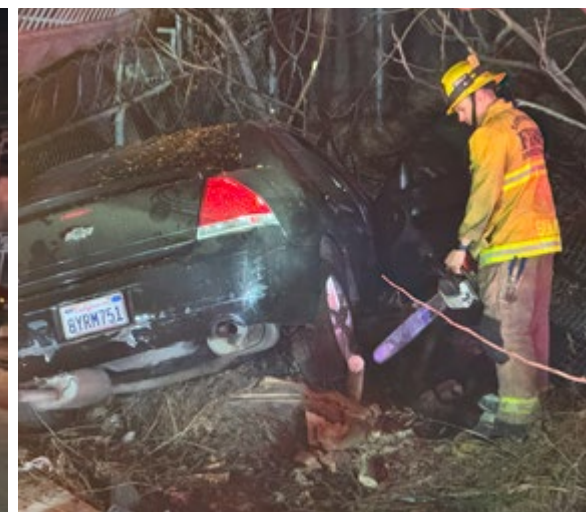
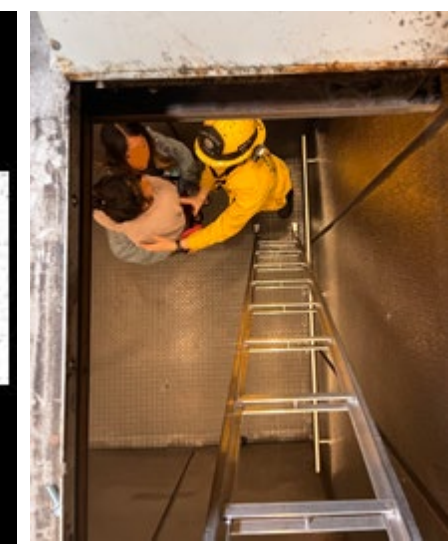




Boat 15 makes debut in Catalina



**STRAIGHT
OUTTA
RESCUES**





FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA

LIST OF LBFF LOCAL 372 SOCIAL MEDIA OUTLETS



Long Beach Firefighters



@longbeachfirefighters



@Lbfirefighters
(Long Beach Fire)