

*"Providing thread to help stitch together the fabric of the city management community."*

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## 2007 League of California Cities Annual Conference Experience



Common sense dictates that each of us experience programs and events from different perspectives. We all have individual insights and make our own observations. Of course, we all develop

acquaintances and friendships at our own pace and in our own manner. We all interact with others through our own individualized familiarities and experience.

What we take from any conference is a combination of group and individual perceptions. We have been attending League of California Cities' Annual Conferences since the 1960s, and it is our observation that many of the pressing issues of today are quite similar to those of the past. Retaining local control and adequate revenues are always municipal government concerns.

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Of course there are always issues and concerns that transcend the boundaries and authorities of cities, but are of such grave importance that city officials must take notice.

For instance, this year Attorney General **Jerry Brown** and Seattle Mayor **Greg Nickels** addressed a General Session about Global Warming, and urged cities to do their part to reduce Global Warming and its affects.

California cities are most fortunate to have the highly professional staff of the League of California Cities led most capably by Executive Director **Chris McKenzie**. City government effectiveness is heightened through the League conferences and training sessions and lobbying efforts throughout the year. Municipal government in California is protected and enhanced by the League and its staff.

We found the 2007 League of California Cities Annual Conference in Sacramento a most commendable program. We are taking this opportunity to share some of our observations, interactions and impressions of the Sacramento conference. Of course, our focus is on California city managers. We hope you enjoy this light hearted and "fun attempted" presentation.

### Women Leading Government

An Initiative of the CalHCMA Coaching Program

**Organized by women public managers, WLG is designed to assist female managers in their career development. Please check out the WLG website:**

<http://www.womenleadinggovernment.org/>

Every California City Manager should be a member of the  
**California City Management Foundation**



[www.cacitymanagers.org](http://www.cacitymanagers.org)

## 2007 Conference Experience

Returning from Broken Arrow, Oklahoma between midnight and one o'clock Tuesday morning, our laundry and packing turn-around for Sacramento was somewhat compressed. Driving from Cerritos with a departure time of 6:05 a.m. had us parking in the Hyatt Regency Sacramento parking structure a little before noon.

After greeting our favorite Hyatt Bellman "Rusty" the Oakland "A's Fan" and checking in with the always-excellent and gracious Hyatt staff, I met Huntington Park City Manager **Greg Korduner** and Azusa City Manager **Fran Delach** in the lobby. As I approached they were sharing some stories with Covina City Manager (and fellow Cerritos resident) **Paul Philips**. Following a satisfying lunch with the friendly folks at the Esquire Grill, I slipped across the street to the Convention Center to pick up my conference registration.

There was plenty of time to greet old friends and chat prior to the short walk to the Memorial Auditorium for the Opening General Session. And, by the way, the 3-ring binder portfolio presented to each conference registrant is very nice and quite useful.

Long-time Lakewood City Manager **Howard Chambers** looked down on the registration crowd and waved from the second floor. Former Fremont City Manager **Jan Perkins** spoke among friends. New Sierra Madre City Manager **Elaine Aguilar** was greeted by Soledad City Manager **Noelia Chapa** and others.

League President **Maria Alegria**, Mayor of Pinole, presided at the General Sessions, and at the Opening Session, following the ceremonies and a legislative orientation and annual report by Executive Director **Chris McKenzie**, and the NLC update, it was time for **Mark Sanborn**'s presentation "From Ordinary to Extraordinary Leadership and Service." He described the "Fred Factory" showing that passion can take your endeavors from ordinary to extraordinary.

Following the Opening Session the crowd was treated to some marvelous drum performances outside the auditorium, and, though it was "hot" the City of Sacramento hosted an outstanding "City of Festivals" reception on the street outside of the conference center.

City managers and friends from throughout California attended. **Greg Ramirez** of Agoura Hills was there. Arcadia's "retiring" City Manager **Bill Kelly** and his wife Chris, a City of Chino Hills executive, was there. **Marshall Linn** of Urban Futures and **Lloyd de Llamas** of HdL chatted to their clients and prospective clients. Turlock City Manager **Tim Kerr** talked to old friends, as did Beverly Hills City Manager **Rod Wood** and Moreno Valley's **Bob Gutierrez** and **Chris Vogt**.



**Glenn Southard**,  
City Manager  
City of Indio &

Member of the Board of  
the California City  
Management Foundation

<http://www.indio.org/>

California City Management Foundation President and Vista City Manager **Rita Geldert** was there. One of California's finest young city managers **Jason Caudle** of Tehachapi gave some back-slapping greetings. The crowd among the food stations included: West Covina City Manager **Andy Pasmant**, **Brad McKinney** and **Karl Rectanus** of eCivis, **Fran Mancina** of MuniServices, Diamond Bar City Manager **Jim DeStefano**, and long-time City Attorney and Redevelopment Attorney **Mike Montgomery**.

Bishop City Manager **Rick Pucci**, a long-time friend was there. Indio City Manager **Glenn Southard**, a member of the CCMF Board of Directors like Atascadero City Manager **Wade McKinney** & Half Moon Bay's **Marcia Raines** were all there. San Gabriel City Manager **Mike Paules** checked out some of the finger food and chatted among friends in the crowd.

**Andy Pasmant**,  
City Manager  
West Covina

<http://www.westcov.org>



California Contract Cities Association Executive Director Sam Olivito chatted with Calabasas Council Member **Dennis Washburn** and Lancaster City Manager **Bob LaSala** by the iced sodas. **Dwight Stenbakken** of the League greeted his way through the crowd, as did South Lake Tahoe City Manager **David Jinkens**. Of course there were many, many more people at this successful event.



**Joe Tanner,**  
City Manager,  
City of Vallejo &

Member  
League City Managers'  
Department Board

<http://www.ci.vallejo.ca.us>

We closed out the first enjoyable conference day with some conversation with Piper Jaffray's **Mark Curran**, an important member of the CCMF Board of Directors, and Vallejo City Manager **Joe Tanner**, new member to the League City Managers' Department's Executive Committee. Nearly retired Pomona City Manager **Doug Dunlap** was also there for a "Howdy," and MuniFinancial's **Paul Whitelaw**, **Mark Risco** and **Brian Jewett** headed off to bed just before us.



**Jeff Kolin,**  
City Manager,  
City of Santa Rosa

President, League  
City Managers' Department &

Member of the Board of the  
California City Management  
Foundation

<http://ci.santa-rosa.ca.us>

The Annual City Managers' Department Meeting was held Thursday morning and it was well-attended. While walking to the meeting room with Atascadero Assistant City Manager **Jim Lewis** he received a cell phone call from his wife Debi announcing that she was just selected for a lead stage production roll. Congratulations to Debi and Jim, as his **USC** Trojans are still ranked No. 1 in NCAA football!

Finding a seat on the aisle midway on the left side of the room, **Bill Kelly** and **Fran Delach** joined us. Poway City Manager **Rod Gould** (the "good Rod") and Beverly Hills City Manager **Rod Wood** (the "evil Rod") sat in the same row of seats. Belvedere City Manager **George Rodericks** said "hello" and found a seat nearby.

Department President, Pasadena City Manager **Cynthia Kurtz** presided and introduced the Department Officers for the coming year (2007-08), including: President, **Jeff Kolin**, City Manager, Santa Rosa; President-Elect, **Bob LaSala**, City Manager, Lancaster; Vice-President, Mountain View City Manager **Kevin Duggan**; Director, Poway City Manager **Rod Gould**, Southern California Representative from cities over 100,000, Santa Clarita City Manager **Ken Pulskamp**; Southern California Representative for cities under 100,000, **Bruce Channing**, Laguna Hills City Manager; Northern California cities over 100,000, **Joe Tanner**, Vallejo City Manager; and Northern California representative for cities under 100,000, **Linda Barton**, Livermore City Manager.

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## 2007 Conference Experience

Clovis City Manager **Kathy Millison** presented a report, and Brea City Manager **Tim O'Donnell** told of the on-going "Next Generation" program efforts. California City Management Foundation President **Rita Geldert**, Vista City Manager, reported on the CCMF program, and retired City Manager **Mike Garvey** reported on the successful U.C. Berkeley City Manager Training Seminar. Soon-to-retire Fairfield City Manager "Grandfather" **Kevin O'Rourke** told of ICMA's International Exchange Program with Australia. He identified many past participants in the audience including **Howard Chambers**.

Department President **Cynthia Kurtz** urged everyone to participate at the **February 6-8, 2008 League of California Cities' City Managers Department Meeting** at the Hilton Torrey Pines, La Jolla. The registration and housing deadlines are Monday, January 14, 2008. Santa Fe Springs City Manager **Fred Latham** warmly greeted me following the meeting.

Conference programming was its usual high caliber. Executive Director **Chris McKenzie** was informative and set the League's advocacy program...which can be reviewed on the League's website: <http://www.cacities.org>

*I ain't gonna live forever  
I just want to live while I'm alive*

*-Bon Jovi song lyrics*



There, of course, were many extraordinary sessions. Paramount's Community Services Director **Vince Torres** addressed his community's gang resistances efforts. Many other wonderful presentations received good reviews too.

California Attorney General **Jerry Brown** addressed the General Session on Thursday and charged up the crowd regarding global warming. The former Oakland Mayor and California Governor urged each city official to pursue local actions to reduce global warming and its effects. He preceded Seattle Mayor **Greg Nickels** who delivered a similar message.

League officials recommended that each attendee bring a good supply of business cards as the Conference is an excellent networking opportunity. They were right! It was like "old home week" with old friends everywhere and boundless opportunities to make new acquaintances.

As a constituent of Cerritos, we were pleased for the opportunity to talk with City Manager **Art Gallucci** and Council Member **Jim Edwards**. Somehow I missed **Bruce Barrows**. The "Gonsalvi" were out in force on Thursday evening and easily spotted at Citipac's Second Annual Casino Night fundraiser. **Anthony & Evelyn, Jason, and Paul and Jamie** were all there. **Tracy** was missing as she was doing what mothers do with daughter Taylor and son Joe. **Brad Kilger** of Ceres was in the crowd.

While on the Hyatt patio discussing potential future activities and opportunities with former City Manager **Wes Wolf** of Wolf & Company, we were greeted by the Indio group, including City Manager **Glenn Southard** and Director of Engineering/Public Works **Jim Smith**. Retired West Sacramento City Manager **Joe Goeden**, who continues to contribute to the craft as a Northern California Range Rider, was also there. **Roy Stephenson** of Bureau Veritas stopped by to chat as did Willdan's **Bill and Donna Pagett**, and **Ken Rukavina**.



*The Key to Life Breast Cancer Screening Assistance Program*

<http://www.abcf.org/>

2007's Exposition provided many occasions to gain information and network. A complete list of those we saw there and in the immediate vicinity would be extremely long and completely tax my "old" brain's fading recall ability. However, in addition to those already chronicled here are a few folks we crossed paths with: retired City Manager **Mike Garvey**, who chatted a bit about the success of the 2007 City Manager Institute at Cal Berkeley; **Phil Carter** of PMC, a former public manager; McFarland City Manager **Jerry Forde**; Gateway Cities' Executive Director **Dick Powers**; **David Jones** of Emanuel Jones; Bradbury City Manager **Jennifer Vasquez**; former Hawaiian Gardens City Manager, **Leonard Chaidez**, retiring as a Council Member; Brea City Manager **Tim O'Donnell**; Claremont City Manager **Jeff Parker**; **Lyle Defenbaugh** of CalTrust, and **Bob Murray**. I talked to **Tom Robinson** of La Mirada, one of the Award winning cities.

At the Citipac program Simi Valley City Manager **Mike Sedell** and Assistant City Manager **Dan Paranick** chatted over the excellent reception buffet. Turlock's **Tim Kerr** was there too hitting the buffet line and the blackjack tables. American Canyon City Manager **Rich Ramirez** dropped by to say "hello" and to catch up on old times. Stone & Youngberg's **Scott Sollers** and **Steve Heaney** were there to point out the best buffet items. Rolling Hills Estates City Manager **Doug Prichard** and Covina City Manager **Paul Philips** asked directions to the event and went off to participate. Citipac sponsor Willdan was represented well at the event. Among those giving us a "Howdy" were: **Dave Hunt**, **Lisa Penna**, **Max Bridges**, **Mort August** and **Cindy Schaer**. It was good seeing **Ross Khiabani** of Arroyo Geotechnical, and **Vic Thies** of American Homeland Solutions. **Bob Hornaday** of Keenan & Associates talked of his brother Ron's success on the NASCAR Truck Series between business discussions. **Kristine Guerrero**, **Jennifer Quan**, **Eric Figueroa**, **Tracy Petrillo**, **Kanat Tibet** and the other League staff folks did an outstanding job.

It seems that each year some city manager is liberated from their position while attending the Conference. This year it was Los Alamitos City Manager **Luci Romero-Serlet**. On the positive side, it was announced during the Conference that long-time friend **Don Penman**, former San Fernando and Baldwin Park City Manager, was appointed from his Arcadia staff position to replace the retiring **Bill Kelly** as City Manager. Congratulations to Don and best wishes for every future success.

## 2007 Conference Experience

Some were notable for being missing in action. Retired Rosemead City Manager & MuniFinancial President & CEO **Frank G. Tripepi** missed the Conference due to hip replacement surgery. Laguna Hills City Manager and CCMF Board Member **Bruce Channing** was on a European vacation.

**Jennifer Lewis** announced that she resigned her position with the League to accept an administrative position with **Rod Gould's** Poway management team. **Terry Dugan** is coming back from retirement to fill in for Jennifer until a permanent replacement is appointed. City Manager **Oliver Chi** dropped "interim" in Rosemead. And then the resignation of Redding Assistant City Manager **Randy Bachman** was also noted.

One of my last late-night Conference encounters was when Norwalk City Manager **Ernie Garcia** and I walked back to the Hyatt and met up with Paramount City Manager **Linda Benedetti-Leal**, Paramount Community Services Director **Vince Torres** and the new Long Beach City Manager **Pat West**. Fun! This "much laughter" session was good for the soul! Pat noted that Long Beach's **John Keisler** is the incoming MMASC President and one of the very best young public managers on his way up.



<http://www.trackdownmanagement.net/>



**Kurt Starman,**  
City Manager,  
City of Redding

<http://ci.redding.ca.us/>

Most certainly we have missed mentioning someone we saw, greeted or chatted with during the Conference. It was a full agenda and a well attended program...at least by city managers, which is our primary focus in the newsletter. However, please understand that we have not slighted anyone on purpose and we sincerely apologize for our blunders and omissions. Please let us know where we goofed. This is merely one person's historical recollection of a very good League Conference.

*"Proactive preparation will help the  
'Next Generation'"*

Once again, Congratulations on a job well done by the League Executive Board and **Chris McKenzie** and his staff. We enthusiastically look forward to the next major League meeting.

We hope you enjoyed this meager chronicle as some of our recollections and contribution to California City Manager history. Please do not hesitate to let us know where our memory dimmed to the mistake level. We apologize for any errors.

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