

LADWP

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those of other local government agencies, they are still slightly lower than the pension payments received by police and firefighters.

The average monthly pension is just shy of the \$5,309 monthly payments for Los Angeles police and fire department employees, according to the audit.

The analysis is required every five years and allows city officials to monitor the pension system at the LADWP, a separate entity that is ultimately overseen by city officials.

The audit report comes as watchdog organization, Transparent California, released data on individual pension payments received by LADWP's more than 7,000 retirees in 2016. The data, posted on the organization's website, showed LADWP issued at least \$435 million in pension checks in 2016.

In the controller's audit, the LADWP pension payments were compared with a dozen other public plans for agencies close by, including the cities and counties of San Diego and Orange, as well as San Bernardino County.

The LADWP plan's "average monthly retirement compensation is within range of its peers for all years in the scope period," the report concluded. "It is moderately higher than the peer system average and median monthly retirement compensation paid."

David Lewin, a professor of management at the UCLA Anderson School, said LADWP compensation — including retirement benefits — tends to be on the higher end because the utility competes with private-sector agencies for qualified executives.

Unlike other public agencies, LADWP operates like a "quasi-private" agency and usually recruits from the same pool of executives being eyed by companies like "ExxonMobil ... and other energy companies, including solar and wind in the private market," Lewin noted.

But unlike purely private sector companies, which tend to offer 401K-style retirement benefits that do not tie up funds for years to come, LADWP offers pension benefits.

Such plans are a "defined benefit," which means an agency is on the hook ahead of time to pay a certain benefit amount, based on the employees' salary

and years they worked, rather than the market, he said.

Lewin said LADWP is in the same boat as many public agencies nationwide that are now dealing with the challenge of whether they "can afford" to make the payments promised years ago.

"And if they can't, they have to find the money somewhere, whether it's through tax increases" or other methods, Lewin explained.

The controller's audit also examined the reasonableness of the LADWP's assumptions, when setting aside funds to make future pension payments.

Auditors found that the LADWP's pension system "has been diligent in reviewing the appropriateness of its actuarial methodology and assumptions," which "appear to be sound and reasonable."

The last time the pension system re-evaluated its assumptions was in 2013. At that time, the system lowered its expected investment return rate from 7.75 percent to 7.5 percent, and the inflation rate from 3.5 percent to 3.25 percent.

They also reduced the salary increase assumption from between 5.35 percent to 10.5 percent to



STAFF FILE PHOTO

Retires from the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power, located downtown, received an average monthly pension payment of \$5,212 in 2015, an audit said.



COURTESY PHOTO

A fundraiser today at Brazil Strength gym in Torrance will help former bodybuilder Katherine "Kat" Portillo of Manhattan Beach, cover long-term medical costs since she will soon lose coverage for 24/7 care when she is medically discharged from the Air Force, she said. She became a quadriplegic and husband Pavel Ythjall, above, was injured in a crash in 2015.

Fundraiser

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but I haven't regained any mobility," said Portillo, who used to participate in marathons, triathlons and bodybuilding competitions.

Discharge coming

When Portillo is medically discharged from the Air Force later this year, she said her VA health care will only cover a nurse for five hours a day.

Ythjall, who runs a fitness company, Fighter Diet, estimates they will have to come up with \$100,000 a year for the remaining 19 hours of care every day.

Today, Brazil Strength, a gym in Torrance that offers adaptive training for individuals with disabilities, is hosting a workout fundraiser to help with Portillo's long-term costs.

All are welcome to the

event from 10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. at 2230 Amapola Court, No 5. A donation is required to participate in a workout that is friendly for all experience levels.

Portillo and Ythjall will be there.

The day also will feature raffles, prizes and a Bison Burger Truck for post-workout grub.

Those who can't attend can donate online.

Gym owner Chai Brazil offered to do the fundraiser after running into Ythjall, who has an office nearby, and hearing his story.

"We train a couple of gals that are paraplegics, so we're a little bit more familiar with the struggles of having less ability to do things," Brazil said. "We're very happy to do the fundraiser. No donation is too small."

So far, Ythjall said, more than \$50,000 has been raised for Portillo's long-term care.

No full pension

Because Portillo is two years shy of hitting the 20-year mark in the Air Force, she said she is ineligible to receive a full pension. She said she is working on a last appeal for one. Since the accident, Portillo said she has been able to do some work from home with a laptop provided by her co-workers. She also has served as the presiding official at a sergeant's promotion ceremony and taught resilience classes about mental strength and suicide prevention.

"Not only did I have the accident and feel like a part of me is dead, but I've lost my job," Portillo said. "I've been dedicated to the Air Force for half of my life and to not be able to do that is like another separation anxiety. Not being able to be productive, to go out and exercise to relieve stress, is a quick halt to everything." She said she thanks her

colleagues and friends, including those who held a fundraiser for her back home in Belize, for their outpouring of love since the accident. But most of all, Portillo is grateful for Ythjall, her "hero," for daily support and encouragement.

Although they had a wheelchair lift system installed in their apartment, Ythjall prefers carrying his wife in his arms.

"I try to be active for us both and to be her arms and legs," he said. "That's our workout."

Ythjall believes years of commitment to fitness gave them both mental strength and perseverance.

"When we said, 'For better or for worse,' they were just words, but now we're living it," he said. "This has made us stronger. We fought for each other."

For more information, or to make a donation, visit strongwithkat.com.

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Albert William (Bill) Klunk

December 3, 1923 - June 22, 2017

Mr. Albert William (Bill) Klunk of Hesperia, CA, and previously a 20-year resident of Gardena, CA, passed away at home on June 22nd, 2017 surrounded by his family. He was 93 years old.

Bill was born on December 3, 1923 in Baltimore, MD to Edwin and Florence Klunk. With Bill being the second oldest of five and the country in the midst of the great depression, he had to start working at a young age to help provide for himself and his younger siblings.

In March of 1943 with the country engaged in World War II, Bill was drafted into the Army. He participated in Operation Overlord and landed on Omaha Beach during the invasion of Normandy. He remained in Europe until after the end of the war.

After the war Bill returned to Baltimore with his first wife, Marcel whom he met in France at the end of the war, and they soon welcomed their first child Marjorie into the world. Bill's first marriage didn't last but a couple of years and soon after his divorce he met and married his second wife Deane. Bill and Deane had three children, Michael, Timothy and Debbie and in 1961 relocated to Southern California. In 1963, they welcomed their fourth child Sean to the family but their relationship was on the rocks and within a couple years they were divorced.

In 1969 Bill met Susan Millar the woman who would become his third wife and they were married on August 29, 1971. Bill and Susan had five children, Christopher was born in 1973, Daniel in 1977, Erik in 1979, Kelly in 1980 and their only daughter Lori was born in 1982. The third time was the charm and they remained married for 45 years until his passing this June.

Bill was admitted to the hospital for dehydration on June 18, 2017. He went home on June 20 and passed away peacefully two days later surrounded by his wife, children and grandchildren.

Bill is survived by his wife Susan Klunk, his brother Leonard Klunk, his half-brother Arthur Klunk, his children Michael Williams, Debbie Simon, Christopher Klunk, Daniel Klunk, Erik Klunk, Kelly Klunk and Lori Harris; and his 32 grandchildren. He was preceded in death by his daughter Marjorie Shockley, Timothy Klunk, Sean Mize, his brother Edwin Klunk Jr., his brother Francis Klunk and his sister Doris Galford.

A memorial will take place on July 23, 2017, in Hesperia, CA at 2:00pm.

In lieu of flowers please donate to one of the following:

- Army Emergency Relief Fund
- National Military Family Association
- Fisher House Foundation

Please sign the guest book at www.dailybreeze.com/obits.



Lynn Lavarini

Lynn Lavarini, 17 year resident of Palm Desert, CA, passed away suddenly on July 11, 2017. She was 64 years old. Lynn was a Realtor for over 10 years and retired in 2016. She was married to John F. Lavarini for 29 years. Lynn enjoyed quilting, cross-stitch/needlepoint and sewing, especially custom made purses. She had an outgoing personality and made friends easily. Lynn is preceded in death by her mother, Betty Spadafora, and sister, Dawn Trumble. She is survived by her husband, John, her sister, Susan Schultze Stehman, father Herbert Schultze, sisters Donna Schultze Morrell (Dave), Debbie Schultze Novak (Dan), Dianne Schultze Strickland (Vance) and brother, Robert Schultze (Patti), step-daughter, Julie Lavarini Ellis (Bob), step-sons, Frank Lavarini (Natalia) and Richard Lavarini, along with 2 nieces, 5 nephews and numerous grandchildren and great grandchildren. Lynn will be laid to rest at Green Hills Cemetery, Rancho Palos Verdes, later this month, with a private service. Sign guestbook at dailybreeze.com


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