

VNY Airport Guide Volunteers in Cambodia

Behnam A. Nematzadeh
Van Nuys Airport

Dee Lewis, a Van Nuys Airport guide, spent a week in Cambodia last month volunteering her time with the Dick Lewis Smile Mobile Dental Clinic.

Dee's late husband, Dick Lewis, was a dentist who passed away in 2009. In his honor, Dick Lewis Smile was created that same year by Jennifer Mars, a good friend of the Lewis family, who had built a school in Cambodia a year earlier.

Since Mars is well regarded in the Siem Reap region of Cambodia, adding the clinic to her work was a seamless fit. The clinic is partnered with the Shinta Mani Foundation in Siem Reap. The foundation handles the money and arrangements for the clinic. The dental clinic is funded entirely by donations and 100 percent of all donations go to the clinic.

As medical costs are some of the most overwhelming expenses for families in Cambodia many do not receive adequate care and attention. During Lewis' visit, 109 children were



*SPENDING TIME – Van Nuys Airport Guide **Dee Lewis** stands with Cambodian medical association representatives outside the Dick Lewis Smile Mobile Dental Clinic facility in Cambodia. Lewis spent a week in Cambodia volunteering at the facility named in memory of her late husband.*

treated by dentists and 194 were treated by doctors. Dee said that since “many Cambodians are very poor...these clinics provide the only health care they ever receive.”

These dental clinics have now been conducted for more than four years. However, this is the first year a medical clinic has been included. Both clinics are endowed by the Dick Lewis Fund.

AEROGRAMME

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My Best Shot



*SWEET TOOTHES – Maintenance Services Division Director **Ralph Morones** recently snapped this photo of some of the 30 hummingbirds that visit the backyard of his home. To feed his visitors, he places seven feeders out for them each day and uses about five pounds of sugar each week. He believes the mild weather we have been experiencing brought them back to his yard earlier this year. Hummingbirds are among the smallest of birds and the only ones with the ability to fly backwards. They hover in mid-air by rapidly flapping their wings 12–80 times per second.*

AEROGRAMME

NEWSLETTER FOR THE EMPLOYEES OF LOS ANGELES WORLD AIRPORTS

LAX Retiree Walt Garrick “Recalled” to Duty

After 45 years of service to the City of Los Angeles operating LAX’s Central Utility Plant (CUP) and 11 years of happy retirement, 79-year-old Chief Building Operating Engineer **Walt Garrick** was asked to return to his duties for one last run.

The current \$438-million CUP Replacement Project replaces the existing 50-year-old facility with a more modern, powerful, and energy-efficient operating system.

The CUP runs heating and cooling systems for the entire Central Terminal Area, as well as other buildings, keeping the thousands of people who work at LAX each day, and the 66.6 million travelers who pass through the airport each year, comfortable.

When the original CUP first opened in 1961, Garrick was hired as senior building operating engineer to ensure smooth operations of the machinery.

He promoted to chief building operating engineer in 1969 and later oversaw the plant’s first upgrade in 1983.

Since retiring in 2002, Walt made it a point each month to visit the old CUP to have lunch with the current team and share stories about construction and operations. So, when construction began on the



Jay Berkowitz

*“RECALLED” TO DUTY – After 11 years of retirement, former Chief Building Operating Engineer **Walt Garrick** returns to his old haunt in the LAX Central Utility Plant to help retire the old facility and put the new one in operation.*

new CUP that will ultimately power our 21st Century airport, managers knew exactly whom to call to help coordinate the complex transition from the old system to the new – they called Garrick.

Brought out of retirement, Garrick was asked to handle the plant’s transition to its much-larger maximum cooling capacity of 19,560 peak tons of chilled water with an installed capacity of 23,798 tons. In addition it features a maximum heating capacity of 71,000 MBTUs, 8.8 megawatts of electricity to the city’s Department of Water and Power, as well as 90,000 tons per hour of steam from two new combustion turbine generators.

Designed to meet future demand and to replace the outmoded equipment at LAX, the new CUP is located immediately east of the existing facility. On April 1, the existing CUP will be demolished to accommodate a 1.6-million gallon storage tank.

In the new facility, streamlined computer operating systems will drive the plant’s progress – a far cry from the dials and meters gracing the current CUP’s walls. As staff is trained on the new system and learn the CUP operations of the future, managers were left wanting for staff equipped to handle the old equipment. And few people know the operating system from the past like Garrick. So

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My Best Shot

Debbie Mingo: Forty Clients Per Day, 5 Days Per Week

Glenn Cabrera
Security Badge Office

Airport Police Division's Security Badge Office provides credentialing services for airport employees and all individuals conducting business at LAX. If there is a discrete but essential heart of this airport, it undoubtedly resides within the LAX Security Badge Office.

On any given workday, you can find Debbie Mingo at one of the eight Security Badge Office service counter workstations. Although she may greet each customer with a warm "Good morning," the message from her voice and demeanor is more accurately, "Welcome to my world!"

This is not pre-programmed robotic customer interaction. Her sincere motivation to assist stems from her approach that each badge applicant is her peer – an individual who needs a credential in order to perform his/her job at this airport.

In an earlier lifetime, Debbie worked for the Marriott Foundation's Bridges from School to Work Program – designed to help young people with disabilities find

lasting employment. She was appreciative that LAX was a frequent employer within this program and found herself intrigued by the activity and energy she observed at the airport. So, when the opportunity to work at LAX presented itself seven years ago, she seized it.

If you ask Debbie about a memorable experience with a customer, she will tell you about a badge applicant who required expedited service in order to catch a scheduled flight, as his company served numerous airports. She processed his paperwork and gave him



Debbie Mingo

the best short-cut directions to take in order to get to the airline terminal on time. This customer later sought out her email address and sent her a thank-you letter.

Although she is a genuinely "nice" person, she is no pushover when airport security is in question. Like all her fellow Trusted Agents, Debbie will not issue a badge unless the applicant's requirements are completely met. She knows how and when to say "No," but she says it nicely.

When not at work, Debbie has three grandchildren to occupy her time. If the weather is favorable, she bicycles to work. If the weather is even better, this Los Angeles native walks – 17 miles, one way! Obviously, the heart of the heart is pumping quite well.

Debbie is a customer service role model to our new employees and can deliver the answer when an intricacy of federal regulation compliance comes into question.

Like the human heart, Debbie's customer service never misses a beat. Forty clients per day/five days per week, that's the difference she makes at LAX.

Lindsey Discusses Nov. 1 After Action Report

Los Angeles World Airports (LAWA) released its after action report to the public on March 18 regarding its response and recovery efforts following the November 1 active-shooter incident at Los Angeles International Airport (LAX).

"Many of you may have heard the ensuing press coverage criticizing our response and actions. I'd like to counter those negative news reports and share with you that I could not be more proud of our courageous actions and a truly remarkable response to a very challenging situation, LAWA Executive Director **Gina Marie Lindsey** said. "Securing the safety of our passengers and getting the airport up and running within nine hours of an incident of this magnitude is nothing short of tremendous and I thank you all for your role in making that happen.

"I fully embrace the findings and recommendations of the report which Board of Airport Commissioners President Sean Burton characterized as

"thorough, comprehensive and honest." The report is not about finger-pointing and is more about figuring out what went right, what went wrong, and more fundamentally, what we can do better moving forward."

She added, "The Board of Airport Commissioners has expressed sincere support to allow us to harness all available resources to better manage emergency events and to provide appropriate customer care during operational disruptions. "We will report to the Board every quarter to demonstrate our progress and ensure that the report is not just 83 pieces of paper, but a plan of action that is implemented and fulfilled.

"This action plan will impact every single one of us as emergency management has become a way of life for everyone across the country. This is our "new normal." In the very near future, you will hear more about training and other opportunities that we must participate in

to elevate a sense of urgency to make sure we are all prepared and ready to go at all times.:

"An important point of clarification: The AAR is not a "consultant report," as characterized by the media. It is a review that was conducted by LAWA personnel and our partner agencies with consultant assistance -this was us, reviewing the incident in a clear-eyed manner to determine how we might do even better.

"I realize and appreciate that there has been an incredible amount of time and effort that has been invested by many people at all levels of this organization. Through your continued hard work and commitment, I am certain that we will inspire confidence in creating the safest and most secure airport possible." Lindsey concluded.

The full, unredacted report is available at: www.lawa.org/lax.

Employees Participate in L.A. Marathon's Expo & 5K Race

Airport employees volunteered through the Team LAWA program assist in the L.A. Marathon's annual Health & Fitness Expo and 5K Race on March 8. The Los Angeles Convention Center served as the official packet distribution site, where volunteers distributed hundreds of race bibs, time chips, and T-shirts.

With heightened security concerns, that day was the last day for race participants to personally collect their race packets before the race began the next day.

Team LAWA employees also volunteered in the L.A. Big 5K at Dodgers Stadium, the official warm-up race for the L.A. Marathon. The warm-up race included 3.1 miles through the rolling hills of Elysian Park. Marathon officials announced that more than 25,000 runners from all over the world participated in this year's race and regular registration sold out for the second straight year.

Team LAWA volunteers in this year's "Stadium to the Sea" marathon included:

- **Mary Albers** and **Adriana Renteria**, Administration
- **Tanya Baker**, Human Resources
- **Sandra Banks** and **Raquel Romo**, Commercial Development



AIRPORT VOLUNTEERS – **Adriana Renteria**, left, and **Mary Albers** distribute race packets and provide information to registered runners in the LA Marathon.

- **Denise Chang**, Airport Police
- **Angie Hu**, **Sharon Jackson** and **Jennifer Wong**, Finance & Budget
- **Vicky Lit**, Financial Reporting
- **Paula Miura**, Facilities & Engineering
- **Eileen Reed**, Construction & Maintenance

“Recalled” to Duty

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In January, CUP Management asked Garrick and four other retired plant operators – **Al Acuesta**, **Don Ris**, **Ed Callegari** and **Bob Lopez** – to return to work.

“I feel that the Airport has been my home forever,” Garrick said. “I respect it for the nice life it has provided me, so when they called me to come back, I jumped at the chance and the other guys did too.”

On March 11, Garrick was given the honor of completing the transition from the current CUP he helped usher online in 1961, to the new CUP. He flipped the switch before a group of co-workers, supporters, and friends.

“It is truly an honor,” Garrick said. “It’s been great showing the new kids how it’s done.”

And you can bet that although the old systems will be out of commission, Garrick won’t let that stop him from dropping by the new CUP once a month to have lunch with the team and share stories about the old days at LAX.

Officer Maxine Ford: Named Elks Officer of the Year



Officer Ford

Los Angeles Airport Police Officer **Maxine Ford**, a five-year veteran assigned to Patrol Services Section, was honored as Officer of the Year on March 11 at Law Enforcement Appreciation Night hosted by the Westchester Elks Lodge. This event recognizes and honors law enforcement’s finest sworn/civilian men and women, whose service to the Westchester community have set them apart over the past year.

Chief of Airport Police Patrick Gannon presented Officer Ford with the award and said, “I have heard from several supervisors and fellow officers of her great performance, along with her perfect attendance. This is the kind of officer you want in the highest tradition of law enforcement.”

Officer Ford was nominated “for the hard work and dedication she displays not only to the Los Angeles Airport Police, but also to Los Angeles World Airports.”

An example of her hard work and dedication was cited:

Officer Ford recently assisted a Hawaiian family of seven, including four small children, who had been stranded at LAX for four days.

Unexpected events had depleted the family’s funds and they found themselves unable to purchase airline tickets to return home. They attempted to go to numerous airlines for discounts but none was able to help. The family also tried getting help from other sources and even resorted to begging for money from other passengers, but were unsuccessful.

After speaking with the family, Officer Ford, went to several airlines to see if any of them could lower their rates for the family. Eventually, they were referred to Hawaiian Airlines’ corporate office which agreed to accept whatever funds the family had available and scheduled on a flight to Honolulu the following day. In addition, Hawaiian Airlines provided the family with a hotel stay that night.

The following day, Officer Ford followed up with the family at Terminal 2 to ensure that they had a smooth departure.