



# CAPE

California Association of Professional Employees

VOLUME 20 ISSUE 4 WINTER 2013 EDITION www.CAPEunion.org

**THE CAPE  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
AND STAFF**

**WISH YOU  
HAPPY HOLIDAYS  
&  
A PROSPEROUS AND SAFE  
NEW YEAR**

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

### 2013 Gave Us Many Challenges and Some Remain

By Carlos Clayton, CAPE President



CAPE President  
Carlos Clayton,  
P.E. Unit 501, DPW

2013 was a tough year by any measure. Your CAPE Board of Directors and staff had an overly full plate starting on January 1, and more was added as each month passed.

Back to back salary and fringe benefit contract negotiations drew most of our attention and efforts. The extraordinary efforts of CAPE staff and our bargaining teams kept our efforts well focused and coordinated to present our very best positions at the bargaining table. I wish I could say the same for the County officials on the other side of the table. Their frequent delays, eleventh hour surprises, and frustratingly consistent inability to respond to CAPE's detailed and well-justified proposals will be the hallmark of this year's contentious labor relations.

Coming out of the economic downturn this year meant that most County departments have finally restarted hiring among CAPE-represented positions. Of course, that too brings its own challenge as County departments, especially the DPW, are overstaffed with outside contractors performing work that should be done by a County professional employee.

By all accounts, this year's greatest challenge was brought on unnecessarily by County officials at the Fringe Benefit Contract negotiations table. There simply can be no excuse for the late and inappropriate demand by County officials to link discussions about retiree health reform to the CCU's Fringe Benefit Contract negotiations. Retiree health care does not exist as a provision of the fringe contract, and discussions of it are inappropriate at the fringe benefits bargaining table. Even so, it was the late drop of the issue on the fringe table as a demand in exchange for County approval of adjustments to the County's Choices contribution that really angered most County union leaders. Although we persevered and finally achieved a Fringe Benefit Contract agreement, if the County's position had been responsible, it would have been done before the contract expired September 30th and in time for Open Enrollment in October.

In 2014, two of the five seats on the County Board of Supervisors will be changing hands. CAPE has already endorsed Hilda Solis in the First District, and good candidates with new ideas are lining up in the Third District. As part of our discussions with our new generation of County leaders, we'll be trying our best to get labor-relations back to what it was a generation ago, when County officials approached their employees with the respect and admiration for the people who actually do the County's heavy lifting providing the best services for Los Angeles County's residents and businesses.

On behalf of our Board and staff, we wish you Happy Holidays & a prosperous and safe New Year. ■

## CAPE Members Vote Overwhelmingly to Ratify L.A. County Unit Salary Contracts

Tabulation of CAPE LA County bargaining unit members' ratification ballots produced an average 90% 'YES' votes to approve the new 2-year, 6% pay hike agreement secured with County representatives in late September.

The County Board of Supervisors is expected to ratify the new Unit contracts soon, making the first 2% pay raise for CAPE members retro-active back to October 1, 2013. Members should expect to see the pay hike and retro-active amounts in their paychecks no later than January 2014.

CAPE President Carlos Clayton said he is relieved to know the Unit contracts will be ratified by the Board of Supervisors, but the frustrations over the 2013 salary contract negotiations still bothered the CAPE bargaining team members. "CAPE members have gone years without pay raises, and we helped the County through the economic downturn. So we started preparing for the negotiations early," Clayton said. "Our side came to the bargaining table with reasonable proposals that were all well-justified by the research you'd expect from CAPE. So when the County's representatives didn't have any of

that, and were not prepared to respond to anything we put on the table, it was a major disappointment."

Clayton went on to say that CAPE will work to improve the exchanges between employee unions and County managers for the next round of salary contract negotiations. "County officials need to know that we are their workforce and we're dedicated to making sure that County services are provided with the very best and most efficient quality possible. We want to tell CAPE members that County managers are doing the right thing for County workers. After this round of negotiations, we just can't say that about management's performance at the bargaining table," Clayton explained. CAPE representatives will begin preparing in 2014 for the next round of salary contract negotiations in 2015.

More than 750 ratification vote ballots were returned by CAPE LA County Unit members to meet the November 12 deadline. Of those ballots returned, more than 90% voted to approve the tentative agreement. For a ratification vote tally for each of the six LA County CAPE bargaining units, visit the website at [www.CAPEunion.org](http://www.CAPEunion.org). ■

## Fringe Benefit Contract Update:

### CCU, County officials reach Tentative Agreement on Fringe Benefit Contract after months of contentious negotiations

The Coalition of County Unions — CCU — leaders announced a tentative agreement on a new Fringe Benefit Contract with County management on December 5, 2013. The new agreement was achieved after months of stalled negotiations that followed the County's eleventh hour demand for changes to County retiree health benefits for future employees.

CAPE and CCU leaders set the following major goals early in the fringe benefits negotiations process: 1) to protect the existing benefits package, 2) to protect employees from increases in out-of-pocket payments for medical premiums, and 3) to eliminate the current \$112 million cap on County matching contributions to the Horizons program.

By the new agreement, all of these goals were achieved!



## HIGHLIGHTS OF NEW FRINGE BENEFITS CONTRACT AGREEMENT:

- **TERM** – 2 years (October 1, 2013 through September 30, 2015).
- **CHOICES** – The new agreement provides a 7.2% increase in the County's Choices contribution for 2014 and an additional 7.2% increase for 2015.
- **HORIZONS** – Matching fund cap increased and then eliminated: The new agreement provides an additional \$9 million annual increase to the cap on County matching contributions. The cap will increase from the current \$112 million to \$121 million for FY 2013-2014 and to \$130 million for FY 2014-2015. This means that all participating employees should receive their full 4% match on their contributions to the Horizons deferred compensation fund *for the entire year* starting in 2015. The major victory for our side is that the cap will be eliminated entirely effective July 1, 2015.
- **\$500 BONUS in 2014** – The new agreement includes a one-time \$500 per employee contribution to members' Choices plan which will be paid out in two \$250 payments scheduled for January 2014 and July 2014.

Some improvements proposed by the CCU, and rejected by the County, were to increase the current Vacation benefit beyond 4 weeks after 13 years of service, to increase the amount of the Bilingual Bonus, to enhance Bereavement Leave, and to add an additional County Holiday for Cesar Chavez's Birthday on March 31st.

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## IN THIS EDITION

**MEMBERSHIP UPDATE!**

**CAPE's Board, staff, and members welcome all the new members of CAPE. Thank you for making your Union even stronger!**

FIRST NAME	LAST NAME	UNIT	JOIN DATE
RAZMIG	SHAMIM	501 - Professional Engineers	9/11/2013
ERIK	VILLA	511 - Engineering Technicians	9/18/2013
CATHERINE	RICCI	511 - Engineering Technicians	10/1/2013
KENNETH	PARHAM JR	511 - Engineering Technicians	10/2/2013
TIMOTHY	STAPLETON	511 - Engineering Technicians	10/3/2013
THOMAS JR.	CROCKOM	512 - Supervisory Engineering Technicians	10/18/2013
ALENOOSH	SARKISSIAN	131 - Appraisers	11/1/2013
ELLEN	KUCH	511 - Engineering Technicians	11/1/2013
STEPHEN	MOY	511 - Engineering Technicians	11/13/2013
ABDULRAHMAN	HAIKAL	501 - Professional Engineers	11/20/2013
ANJERO	ASPRER	501 - Professional Engineers	11/20/2013
CESAR	MARTINEZ	501 - Professional Engineers	11/20/2013
DANA	ROBERTSON II	501 - Professional Engineers	11/20/2013
HODA	JAHANDARI	511 - Engineering Technicians	11/20/2013
JASON	CUI	501 - Professional Engineers	11/20/2013
JEFFERSON	DU	501 - Professional Engineers	11/20/2013
KAITLIN	HANNON	501 - Professional Engineers	11/20/2013
KARA	DROZ	501 - Professional Engineers	11/20/2013
KAREN	MENDEZ	511 - Engineering Technicians	11/20/2013
LINDA	NGUYEN	501 - Professional Engineers	11/20/2013
LUKE	PELTON	501 - Professional Engineers	11/20/2013
MARTIN	REYES	511 - Engineering Technicians	11/20/2013
MATTHEW	LUQUE	511 - Engineering Technicians	11/20/2013
MICHAEL	KWOK	511 - Engineering Technicians	11/20/2013
NARGISS	MAJROOH	501 - Professional Engineers	11/20/2013
QUIN	ZHANG	511 - Engineering Technicians	11/20/2013
SZE KIN ERIC	CHAN	501 - Professional Engineers	11/20/2013
VANESSA	HERNANDEZ	501 - Professional Engineers	11/20/2013
VERONICA	MARDIS	501 - Professional Engineers	11/20/2013
YEU-JER	CHENG	511 - Engineering Technicians	11/20/2013



*CAPE's newest members from DPW joined during recent new employee orientations in September 2013 (left) and November 2013 (above).*

**CAPE Outreach Program: CAPE, CSULA Scholarship Foundation & CSULA Civil Engineering Department cooperate on academic scholarship program to promote career track development**

Preliminary arrangements have been secured to create a first ever CAPE Academic Scholarship Program in conjunction with the CSULA Scholarship Foundation and the University's Civil Engineering Department Chairman, Rupa Purasinghe. CSULA engineering students will be invited to apply for the annual \$2500 scholarship. Applications will be reviewed by a committee comprised of CAPE members, CSU Engineering Department professors and other countywide stakeholders. The scholarship program was designed as part of a larger effort sponsored by CAPE to enlighten County officials and the public on the vitally important services provided by the County's professional employees and the career tracks of CAPE members, starting with the underlying academic requirements. The first CAPE Scholarship Committee meetings are tentatively set for early next year. For more information about the scholarship program and other outreach and public education programs, please call Sean Stalbaum, Field Services Director, at (213) 484-0400. ■

**A Proposed New Public Employee Pension Reform Ballot Initiative Would Cut Current Employees' Retirement**

A proposed statewide ballot measure promoted by a former San Jose mayor would authorize local government officials to cut pension benefits for current employees. The measure, known as the "Reed Pension Initiative" referring to the embattled former San Jose Mayor Chuck Reed, would allow local governments to reduce pension benefits prospectively for all public employees.

The new ballot measure proposal is more evidence that too many people have too much to gain to allow the public employee pension reform issue to go away. CAPE's Legislative Counsel and Advocate, Tim Yaryan, monitors pension reform policy for CAPE from Sacramento. Yaryan has written a point-by-point assessment of the measure and provided all the background necessary to understand how this wrong-headed measure could become the law in California. California labor leaders are already organizing the public message in opposition to the measure. Unfortunately, the factual issues showing how the measure would violate local governments' commitments to employees and how it could cost local governments more in pension contributions, not less, are not compelling to voters angry about what they perceive as 'overly generous pension benefits'.

All CAPE members are encouraged to read Yaryan's analysis on the CAPE website at <http://www.capeunion.org/news/cape-legislative-alert-december-2013>.

Reed's measure is aimed at placement on the November 2014 ballot. Please DON'T SIGN THE PETITION if you encounter it at your local grocery store, and educate your friends and family to do the same. ■

*Why I Joined CAPE*



***"I joined CAPE because I wanted to help solve problems and be a part of the solution. Being a part of CAPE will help me achieve that goal."***

*Stephen Moy  
Title Examiner II  
L.A. County Department of Public Works  
Union Join Date - 11/13/2013*

**TO CONTACT CAPE**

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**ABOUT CAPE**

The California Association of Professional Employees represents more than 2700 employees of the County of Los Angeles. CAPE's representation extends into the areas of collective bargaining of Memorandum of Understandings (work contracts), collective bargaining of Fringe Benefits, Grievances, Legal Advice, and Health Benefits. CAPE, the Union, was formed in 1964 by professional employees of the County of Los Angeles, who recognized the need for fair and effective representation.

**CAPE IS AFFILIATED WITH MEBA (MARINE ENGINEERS' BENEFICIAL ASSOCIATION) AND THE AFL-CIO (AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR—CONGRESS OF INDUSTRIAL ORGANIZATIONS).**

**CAPE IS ALSO A MEMBER OF THE COALITION OF COUNTY UNIONS (CCU), AN ALLIANCE OF LOS ANGELES COUNTY UNIONS THAT COLLECTIVELY BARGAIN FOR THE HEALTH AND RETIREMENT BENEFITS OF ALL COUNTY "CHOICES" PARTICIPANTS.**

# UPDATES

## Benefit Trust Update:

blue  of california

The Blue Shield Healthy Lifestyle Rewards program for 2013 concludes as of December 31, 2013. If you have not participated yet you still have some time to earn up to \$175. For those participating and have yet to redeem their rewards from this year's program, you have only until December 31, 2013 to do so. Your 2013 rewards are not redeemable after December 31.

Redeeming is easy and fast. Log on to the Blue Shield Healthy Lifestyle Rewards program at [www.blueshieldca.com/hlr](http://www.blueshieldca.com/hlr). Select the My Rewards tab and click Redeem Now. Rewards come in the form of a pre-paid debit card, mailed to you and reloaded each time you earn a new reward.



Starting January 1, 2014, the Healthy Lifestyle Rewards program will be replaced by the new program of Wellvolution – three simple wellness activities (at-home biometric screening, online well-being assessment, and health coach phone consultation) that can earn you up to \$175 in 2014! Visit the website of

[www.blueshieldca.com/wellvolution](http://www.blueshieldca.com/wellvolution).

If you are a new participant in 2014, thank you for your enrollment in one of the CAPE/Blue Shield POS plans! You have made an excellent choice in your medical coverage. If you are new to the CAPE/Blue Shield POS plans watch the mail around January 1st for your ID cards. If you haven't received your ID cards by January 10th, please call the CAPE Benefits Customer Service Team at (800) 487-3092 for assistance. Cheers, to a happy and healthy you in 2014! ■

## L.A. County Professionals in Action:

### Disney / ABC Studios at the Ranch project approved, Department of Regional Planning Staff facilitate multi-agency review behind the scenes

The County Board of Supervisors' initial approval in August of the 58-acre Disney / ABC Studios at the Ranch project followed the review and sign-off of no less than five LA County departments along with several state and federal agencies.

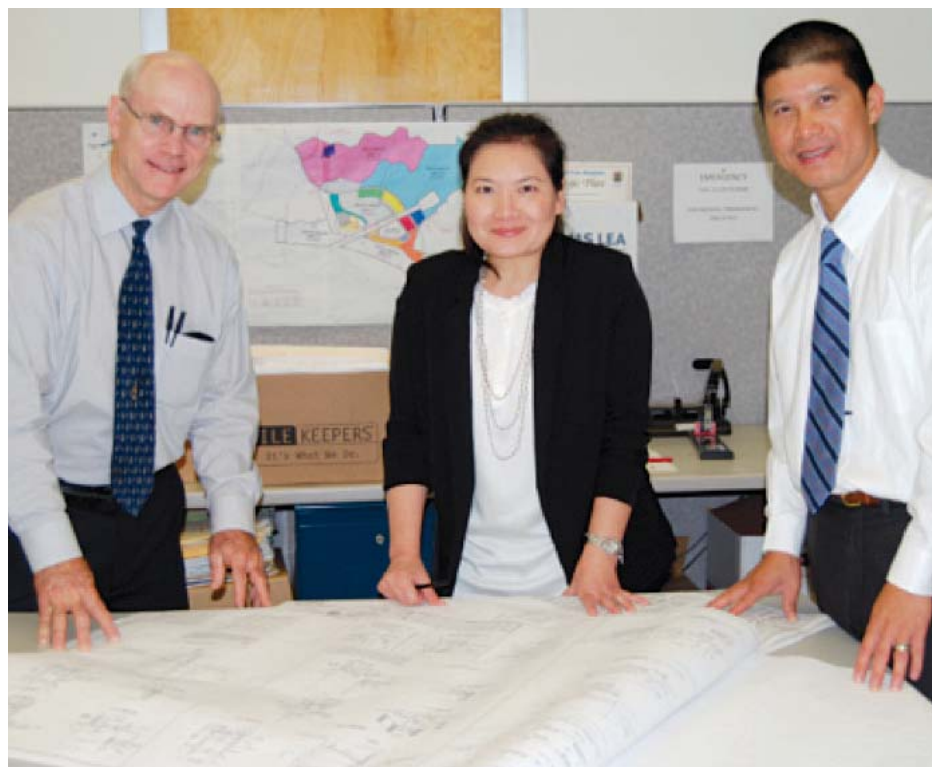
Behind the scenes, among those coordinating the reviews and facilitating the approvals were three County professional employees represented by the California Association of Professional Employees - CAPE.

The complicated land-use issues, entitlements, special use permits and public access concerns made the 4-year approval process one of the more challenging projects for CAPE-represented Department of Regional Planning (DRP) employees Kim Szalay - Principal Regional Planning Asst., Christina D Tran - Senior Regional Planning Asst., and Samuel Dea - Supervising Regional Planner.

Szalay explained that DRP staff work behind the scenes to ensure that all of the necessary inputs from all participating agencies and departments are in place. "The County has detailed requirements in place to make certain the project is constructed properly," Szalay said. "And it's not just for the current owner. The County's permitting and entitlement processes protect any future owners and make sure there are adequate resources like water and sewer utilities."

**Economic Boom:** The Disney project, facilitated by DRP staff and County professional employees from several other departments, will eventually provide employment for more than 2,800 full and part-time studio workers.

For the full report and related project maps and graphics, as well as more stories of CAPE members' compelling public service, please visit <http://www.capeunion.org/members-make-difference> ■



*CAPE-represented employees at the L.A. County Department of Regional Planning, Kim Szalay—Principal Regional Planning Asst., Christina D. Tran—Senior Regional Planning Asst., and Samuel Dea—Supervising Regional Planner, led a multi-agency effort to expedite approval of the Disney/ABC Studios at the Ranch project in the Santa Clarita Valley.*

## L.A. County Board of Supervisors 2014:

### Term Limits Cause Two Supervisors to Retire In 2014

#### CAPE ENDORSED HILDA SOLIS IN FIRST DISTRICT, THIRD DISTRICT DRAWING A CROWD OF CANDIDATES



*Former U.S. Secretary of Labor Hilda Solis*

West Hollywood City Councilman John Duran, former LA City Controller Wendy Gruel, former State Senator Sheila Kuehl and former Santa Monica Mayor Bobby Shriver are all reportedly interested in running for the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors Third District which covers all of West Los Angeles and much of the San Fernando Valley.

Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky is termed out at the end of his current term as Third District Supervisor, a position he has held since 1994.

First District Supervisor Gloria Molina is also termed out of office at the end of next year. CAPE has already reviewed and endorsed the candidacy of Former US Secretary of Labor Hilda Solis who represented the East LA/San Gabriel Valley area as both a member of the State Assembly and the State Senate prior to her election to the US House of Representatives and subsequent Presidential appointment. So far, Solis is running unopposed.

The Third District race could be the most competitive supervisorial election since Second District Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas won a competitive race in 2008 with strong support from CAPE members.

LA County's Third District presents an interesting challenge for candidates. The district covers the West LA area and the San Fernando Valley. Each area has a well-defined identity and deeply held issues and positions that divide the district along Mulholland Drive.

CAPE representatives anticipate formal requests for support from each of the top-tier candidates. CAPE members, especially those who live in the Third District will be notified when and if the association anticipates contemplation of an endorsement in the race. ■

## CAPE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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The CAPE Board meets regularly the second Thursday of every month at the CAPE office. Members are welcome to attend, and may address the Board at 6:30 pm.



THIS NEWSLETTER IS  
AN OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF CAPE

**Barbara Volz, Editor**

## BENEFIT TRUST BOARD OF TRUSTEES 2013

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# CAPE 2013 Retirees

Thanks for your membership in CAPE and best wishes in your retirement!

FIRST NAME	LAST NAME	DEPARTMENT	AGENCY	RETIREMENT DATE
SHERRLYN	MORRIS	Public Works Department	Los Angeles County	5/31/2013

## CALENDAR—UPCOMING EVENTS

### DECEMBER 2013

Wednesday, December 25, 2013

#### Christmas Day

CAPE office closed

### JANUARY 2014

Wednesday, January 1, 2014

#### New Year's Day

CAPE office Closed

Tuesday, January 7, 2014

#### Table at Department of Public Works

Courtyard from 11:30a.m.- 12:30p.m.

Wednesday, January 8, 2014

#### Table at the Hall of Administration

2nd Floor Foyer from 10:30a.m.-1:00p.m.

Thursday, January 9, 2014

#### CAPE Board of Directors Meeting

CAPE office at 2:00p.m.

Wednesday, January 15, 2014

#### New Employee Orientation

DPW from 12:00p.m.-1:00p.m.

Monday, January 20, 2014

#### Martin Luther King, Jr. Day (Observed)

CAPE office closed

Wednesday, January 22, 2014

#### Table at the Hall of Administration

2nd Floor Foyer from 10:30a.m.-1:00p.m.

### FEBRUARY 2014

Tuesday, February 4, 2014

#### Table at Department of Public Works

Courtyard from 11:30a.m.- 12:30p.m.

Wednesday, February 12, 2014

#### Table at the Hall of Administration

2nd Floor Foyer from 10:30a.m.-1:00p.m.

Thursday, February 13, 2014

#### CAPE Board of Directors Meeting

CAPE office at 2:00p.m.

Monday, February 17, 2014

#### President's Day (Observed)

CAPE office closed

Wednesday, February 26, 2014

#### Table at the Hall of Administration

2nd Floor Foyer from 10:30a.m.-1:00p.m.

### MARCH 2014

Tuesday, March 4, 2014

#### Table at Department of Public Works

Courtyard from 11:30a.m.- 12:30p.m.

Wednesday, March 12, 2014

#### Table at the Hall of Administration

2nd Floor Foyer from 10:30a.m.-1:00p.m.

Thursday, March 13, 2014

#### CAPE Board of Directors Meeting

CAPE office at 2:00p.m.

Wednesday, March 19, 2014

#### New Employee Orientation

DPW from 12:00p.m.-1:00p.m.

Wednesday, March 26, 2014

#### Table at the Hall of Administration

2nd Floor Foyer from 10:30a.m.-1:00p.m.

## FRINGE BENEFIT CONTRACT UPDATE *(Continued from page 1)*

The new Fringe Benefits Contract agreement described above was only made possible due to all County unions' forging of a *separate* and very complex tentative agreement regarding retiree health reforms that, among other things, would change the benchmark retiree health contribution for new hires effective July 2014. Retiree health benefits for current employees will remain unchanged.

Labor and County officials committed to jointly advocate for the tentatively agreed on retiree health reforms to LACERA, including supporting any legislation that may be necessary to effect the changes. If LACERA fails to adopt the jointly recommended changes to retiree health care, the Choices and Horizons articles of the Fringe Benefits Contract would be subject to re-opener negotiations. ■



California Association of Professional Employees

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WINTER 2013 NEWSLETTER

[CAPE MEMBERS]

Please distribute this important information to non-members at your work location.

## CAPE MEMBER PERKS

### DISCOUNT MOVIE TICKETS

CAPE offers members movie tickets at a reduced rate from box office prices. Prices are set by the theatres and are subject to change. Some theaters may charge a location surcharge to your ticket. To purchase tickets, please visit the CAPE office, or mail in a completed order form. Forms are available for download from the CAPE website via the Membership tab. Alternately, you may call and request to have a form emailed to you. Tickets will be mailed upon receipt of payment.

- All sales are final. No exchanges or refunds.
- Cash or check only.
- Please make checks payable to CAPE.
- Cash is accepted only in person at the CAPE office.
- Orders over \$75 will be mailed to you via certified mail.
- Restricted tickets may not be used for special engagements.



Theatre	Restricted Tickets	Unrestricted Tickets
AMC	\$6.50	\$8.00
Pacific	\$6.00	N/A
Regal (incl. Edwards & United Artist)	\$7.00	\$8.00

### ENTERTAINMENT PACKETS

Available to CAPE members upon request, Entertainment Packets include discount coupons and web links for various attractions throughout Southern California. Availability of individual discounts is subject to change. Currently, the Entertainment Packet includes discounts to the following:

- Six Flags Magic Mountain
- Medieval Times
- Sea World
- Six Flags Hurricane Harbor
- San Diego Zoo
- Aquarium of the Pacific
- Knott's Berry Farm



Call CAPE at (213) 484-0400 to request your entertainment discount packet today!

## REDUCE PAPER CLUTTER!

REQUEST CAPE COMMUNICATIONS BY EMAIL IN THREE EASY STEPS:

- 1) visit the CAPE website at [www.capeunion.org/news](http://www.capeunion.org/news)
- 2) click the "Go Green" link on the right-side column
- 3) provide your name, employee ID, and home and work email addresses then click "Submit".

*It's that easy to Go Green with CAPE!*