



# THE GREEN SCENE

## Los Angeles School Named after Parks and Recreation Commissioner Sal Castro



The Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) recently honored Parks and Recreation Commissioner Sal Castro by naming a Los Angeles School after him. The Sal Castro Middle School will be located on the new Belmont High School campus.

Sal Castro is an active member of the Parks and Recreation Commission. Appointed by Supervisor Gloria Molina to represent the First Supervisorial District on the Commission, Castro constantly

strives to raise the importance of education for all youth and always looks for ways in which Parks and Recreation can be a vehicle for this important cause. Sal Castro made history in 1968 during his role in the East Los Angeles high school Chicano "blowouts" that protested unequal conditions in LAUSD. His courage and determination during those tough times provided leadership for other students who might otherwise not have had a voice. Subsequently, Castro was arrested and charged with 15 counts of conspiracy to disrupt public schools and 15 counts of conspiracy to disturb the peace. Though the

charges were dropped in 1972, the experience only inspired Castro to continue to fight for equality and stand up for justice. Today in addition to his continued activism promoting education and student rights, he plays an important role in the Parks and Recreation Department's mission to create community through people, parks and programs.

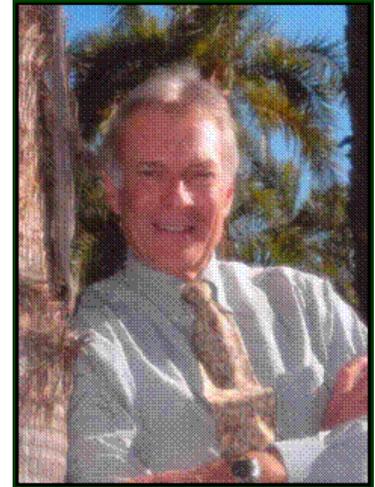
### CONTENTS

DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE	2
2010 US CENSUS	2
AWARDS UPDATE	3
EMPLOYEES RECOGNIZED FOR STELLAR WORK DURING RECENT FIRES	4 - 5
SERVICE ANNIVERSARIES	6
WATER CONSERVATION	7
HIGH FIVES!	8

## Greetings from the Director

As our southern California leaves turn their version of autumn colors, let me wish everyone a happy fall season. Our parks and facilities take a different turn during these cooler climates in the wake of the warm and busy summer months, but our mission remains the same. We still provide enriching programs, healthy outdoor activities and during the holidays focus even more on the “creating community” aspect of our mission. I hope you feel a part of the parks and recreation family and extend that feeling to patrons that consider parks their extended families as well.

Recently, there has been a lot to celebrate in our Department. As you will see in this newsletter, many of our programs and facilities have been recognized with local and national awards. Additionally, we celebrate the service anniversaries of our employees who have served the county for 20 years or more. One employee has been with the county for 35 years. It is fitting that we celebrate these anniversaries and the people who dedicate so much of themselves to bettering the lives of other people. Congratulations to you all!



*Russ Guiney, Director*

## It's in YOUR HANDS

In 2010, the U.S. Census Bureau will issue a call to action for every resident of our nation: “Be Counted”. It is vital that everyone participates in next year’s 2010 Census count.

### What is the Census?

- The census is a count of everyone living in the United States every 10 years
- The census is mandated by the U.S. Constitution
- The next census is in 2010
- Your participation in the census is required by law
- It takes less than 10 minutes to complete
- Federal law protects the personal information you share during the census
- Census data is used to distribute Congressional seats to states, to make decisions about what community services to provide, and to distribute \$300 billion in federal funds to local, state and tribal governments each year.
- The US Census Bureau will be mailing every household in the US a short form questionnaire in February/March, 2010 that takes 10 minutes or less to complete

As part of this Department’s commitment to help spread the word, we have coordinated the acquisition of approximately 2,500 Frisbees from the United States Census Bureau for distribution next year at various park special events and programs. Please contact Mark Lazarus at (213) 738-4729 if you have a special event planned for 2010. You will get the free give away Frisbees and a booth by the US Census Bureau with pertinent census information for the public.

Please help us get the word out – 2010 US Census – “Stand-Up and Be Counted”!

## Awards Update

Recently the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors recognized County Departments for their programs, which received Achievement Awards from the **National Association of Counties (NACO)**. The Department of Parks and Recreation had 3 programs which received awards:

### The South Whittier Educate and Celebrate Event

With the collaboration of Fourth Supervisorial District Park Deputy Andrea Avila and Park Deputy Erin Stibal, the Department of Parks and Recreation staff put on an excellent resource event organized by Bryan Spragg, Southeast District Manager and Dingo Mercado, Adventure Park Supervisor. This special event gave residents of South Whittier an opportunity to learn more about County services, programs and resources available to them.

### The Efficiency Initiative

The Department launched its *Efficiency Initiative*, coordinated by Administrative Services Manager II Irl Stalcup, to encourage staff to take a fresh look at how we do our work. These efforts generated more than 400 different efficiency ideas from employees. Key studies were completed just in time to add 6 "green" efficiency ideas, costing \$30 million, into the Department's \$77 million request for funding as new Federal Economic Stimulus Projects. The Efficiency Initiative Committee members, Ilona Volkmann, Chair Person, Linda Bello, Lori Bennett, Gary Dickerson, Albert Gomez, Dwight LaCroix, Teresa Lam, Frank Moreno and Anthony Montanez, also hosted an **Efficiency Conference** to present recommendations to the County's CEO for saving an estimated \$3 million within two fiscal years. The CEO recently launched a Countywide efficiency site to encourage employees to keep sending forward their efficiency ideas at <http://efficiencyinitiative.lacounty.gov>

### Play for Life!

In 2008, as part of our initiative to promote active, healthy and happy lives, the Department of Parks and Recreation developed a Public Information campaign entitled *Play for Life!* Led by Public Information Officer Imee Perius the program was designed to raise the profile of the department and spread the word about our many wonderful facilities and programs.

*The Los Angeles County Quality and Productivity Commission recently held their **Productivity and Quality Awards Banquet**. Two of our Department Programs were recognized by the Commissioners.*

### Hollywood Indies – Tradition Plaque

Hollywood Producer Stan Brooks contributes to the community in South Los Angeles by working with the Department of Parks and Recreation to create and manage an organized sports league resulting in the "Hollywood Indies," a top-notch youth baseball program FREE to participating kids. The program, managed by volunteer Michael Flowers, also provides uniforms and equipment as well as a healthy social network for kids, teaching them teamwork, sports, and keeping them off the streets. Parks and Recreation provides and maintains the park venue and helps administer the program, whose funds are provided by Mr. Brooks through his ongoing fundraising efforts.



Left to Right: South Agency Deputy Director Joe Mendoza, Hollywood Producer and Hollywood Indies Founder Stan Brooks, and Director Russ Guiney

### Play for Life! – Commissioner's Award for Plain Language

The Play for Life! Public Information Campaign, created by Public Information Officer Imee Perius, uses plain language and catchy phrases that anyone can understand. From Stop and Smell the Flowers, Take a Hike, Chill Out, Make a Splash, Go Fore It, to Walk it Off, Culture Shock, Be One with Nature and Play for Life. The play on words are an effective and simple way to communicate the campaign's message.

Thanks to Productivity Manager Elizabeth Mendez and Alternate Productivity Manager Monica Pollaccia for their ongoing support!

## Department Recognizes Stellar Work of Parks and Recreation Employees During Recent Fires

At the recent Section Head and Above Meeting, Chief Deputy Director John Wicker acknowledged the commendable efforts of our department staff who assisted the Los Angeles County Fire Department and the U.S. Forest Service at the onset and throughout the grueling weeks of two of the largest wildfires recorded in Southern California history, the Station Fire and the Morris Dam fire. Thanks to the quick work and diligent efforts of many of our employees, Parks and Recreation was able to assist helping those in need, from children to firefighters.

The following Parks and Recreation staff were presented Certificates of Appreciation:

### NORTH AGENCY

**Luis Fematt** (Youth Worker);  
**Susana Sandoval-Alvarez** (Recreation Leader-Recurrent); and  
**Maggie Salgado** (Recreation Leader-Recurrent)

The fire was about one mile away from Loma Alta Park and these staff members rushed the 35 tiny tots safely to the gymnasium. They proceeded to contact all of the parents and updated them on their child's welfare. The staff reassured the children that they were safe, and remained calm and composed in this frightening situation.

### SANTA FE DAM RECREATION AREA

**Chris Graham** (Park Superintendent) was in charge of Fire Camp Coordination Development, with the support of Hayden Sohm (Regional Facilities Deputy Director) and Dale Hall (Regional Operations Manager). The Morris Fire / Station Fire incidents began on August 25th and Chris' staff listed below worked tirelessly with the Incident Commanders, the Los Angeles County Fire Department and the U.S. Forest Service throughout both wildfires. These agencies were at Santa Fe Dam for more than 30 days.

**John Norcia** (Assistant Park Superintendent)  
**Cynthia Palacios-Cornejo** (Senior Typist Clerk)  
**Shelia Burns** (Intermediate Cashier Clerk)  
**Michelle Breceda** (Cashier Clerk Permanent)  
**Steve Evans** (Supervising Lake Lifeguard)  
**Billie Bivens** (Supervising Lake Lifeguard)  
**Marc Allen** (Senior Lake Lifeguard)  
**Jeff Jones** (Senior Lake Lifeguard)  
**George Munoz** (Grounds Maintenance Worker Supervisor)  
**Raphael Calvo** (Senior Grounds Maintenance Worker)  
**James Burton** (Grounds Maintenance Worker II)  
**Malinda Miller** (Grounds Maintenance Worker II)  
**Arthur Pena** (Grounds Maintenance Worker II)  
**Gustavo Gavia** (Grounds Maintenance Worker I)  
**Humberto Pedroza** (Grounds Maintenance Worker I)  
**Hernandez Johnson** (Grounds Maintenance Worker I)  
**Dan Barnier** (Grounds Maintenance Worker)  
**Gregorio Hernandez** (Grounds Maintenance Worker I)  
**Joaquin Villa** (Custodian)  
**Richard Huerta** (Grounds Maintenance Worker II)

*(Continued on page 5)*

## Department Recognizes Stellar Work of Parks and Recreation Employees During Recent Fires (Continued)

### DESCANSO GARDENS

The Hall Beckley Canyon water source was damaged because the fire had burned and melted all the PVC portions of the piping system. Over the succeeding days **Louie Guitron** (Garden Manager) identified the problems and led the temporary repair effort, including replacing the burned-out pipe with a flexible temporary replacement; verifying the integrity of the two storage tanks which had been utilized by firefighters and were emptied of their combined 300,000 gallons of water.

### EATON CANYON NATURE CENTER AND NATURAL AREA

**Helen Wong** (Park Superintendent) provided the entire Eaton Canyon parking lot as a staging area for Fire Fighters and was in daily communication for two weeks with Fire Fighter teams while the Station Fire burned toward Altadena and on the North side of Mt. Wilson. Helen also made all preparations for possible evacuation on short notice.

### DEVIL'S PUNCHBOWL NATURE CENTER AND NATURAL AREA

**John "Jack" Farley** (Park Superintendent for the Wildflower and Wildlife Sanctuaries) and **Dave Numer** (Park Superintendent) were on fire watch for more than a week and evacuated live animals, computers and valuables from Devil's Punchbowl twice when the fire threatened the facility. They kept in touch with Fire Crews and staff with bulldozers deployed just at the edge of the Park. In addition, both had to evacuate their own homes.

### PLACERITA CANYON NATURE CENTER AND NATURAL AREA

**Frank Hoffman** (Park Superintendent) assisted Fire Fighters who utilized the Placerita parking lot as a communications site and monitored the Station Fire as it approached the Sand Canyon area.

**David Stives** (Regional Parks Animal Keeper) made the decision with Frank Hoffman to evacuate the animals from Vasquez Rocks to Placerita Canyon Nature Center, due to potential smoke inhalation; the animals were at Placerita for three days and David also took good care of them while there at the facility. His experience with the animals, animal husbandry in general, and emergency animal transport was very valuable to the department and specifically the Natural Areas and Hart Park.

### VASQUEZ ROCKS NATURAL AREA

**Sandy Dininger** (Park Superintendent) and her staff monitored the fire as it approached Acton and potentially threatened Vasquez Rocks. They were ready to evacuate.

### DEANE DANA FRIENDSHIP PARK AND SOUTH COAST BOTANIC GARDEN

**Kim Bosell** and **Stuart Fasolli** monitored the earlier Palos Verdes fire as ashes fell into Friendship Park and they stationed themselves overnight at Friendship Park and South Coast Botanic Garden as a precaution to evacuation.

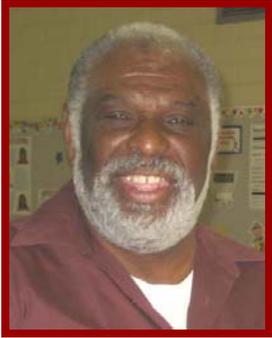
### WILLIAM S. HART PARK AND MUSEUM

**Norm Phillips** (Park Superintendent) and staff at Hart Park were ready to assist with the transportation of any animals from the Nature Centers to Hart Park. They were on constant standby to assist.

## Parks and Recreation Service Anniversaries

*Congratulations to the following employees who recently celebrated 20 years or more with the County of Los Angeles!*

### JULY 2009



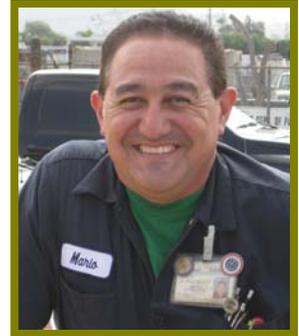
Arthur Jones, South Agency, Assistant Regional Recreation Director—25 Years



Steven Flores, East Agency, Plumber—25 Years



Alice Ying, Regional Parks & Open Space District, Administrative Assistant III —25 Years



Mario Ruiz, Regional Facilities, Warehouse Worker I—25 Years

### AUGUST 2009



Milagros Cruz, Planning and Development Agency, Senior Secretary III—20 Years



Robert Rangel, East Agency, Plumber—25 Years



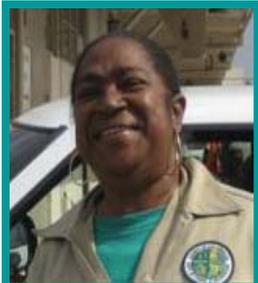
Sergio Almendariz, North Agency, Grounds Maintenance Worker—25 Years



Andrew Morales, South Agency, Plumber—25 Years



Kathleen Ritner, North Agency, Deputy Director —25 Years



Marjorie Taylor, South Agency, Grounds Maintenance Worker—25 Years



Peg Lee, North Agency, Recreation Services Supervisor—25 Years



Irl Stalcup, Administrative Services Agency, ASM II—25 Years



Deloris Rios-Ramirez, Administrative Services Agency Golf Division, Senior Clerk—30 Years

Gary Liebsack, South Agency, Regional Recreation Director—25 Years



Lucius Crenshaw, East Agency, Irrigation Lawn & Sprinkler Fitter—35 Years

## Water Conservation

In July 2008 in response to the current drought, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors mandated that all County Departments conserve water by 20% between December 2008 and December 2009. The Department of Parks and Recreation's Water and Conservation Section from the Development Division put in place several measures to comply and save both water and money. Water Conservation Flyers were distributed throughout our Department to inform staff on the new Water Conservation Ordinance that the Department of Water and Power has instituted. The Department is in the process of negotiating a construction contract to replace 132 of the existing irrigation controllers with Smart Controllers. Weather-based Smart Controllers use satellite weather data

and programmable parameters specific to each landscape, creating a personalized watering schedule for optimum conservation. These weather-based irrigation controller's will conserve 15 – 40% of potable water. The first parks to receive these Smart Controllers are El Cariso Park; Veterans Park; Jesse Owens Park; Frank G. Bonelli Regional Park; Whittier Narrows Recreation Area; Kenneth Hahn Recreation Area; and the Hollywood Bowl. This project has been funded by the Los Angeles County Chief Executive Office in the amount of \$1,000,000. The project is tentatively scheduled to start sometime in November.

Keep up the good work with water conservation efforts!



## HIGH FIVE!

For Those Who Go Above and Beyond...

The Friends of Hart Park and Museum would like to express our sincere appreciation to **Norm Phillips and his staff** for all of the efforts in helping to make this year's Silents Under the Stars a huge success. Because of generosity and folks like you who help us year after year with our fundraiser, the Friends of Hart Park are able to assist William S. Hart Park and Museum with restoration projects, improvements and maintenance of this wonderful facility.

*Dick Meier  
Friends of Hart Park Director  
Los Angeles, CA*

We are writing to express our great gratitude for the **Los Angeles County Junior Golf Program** in which our three children participated this past week. **Tim Smith** and his staff of coaches did a wonderful job with high quality golf instruction as well as valuable life skills, such as respect, integrity, character and honor. The week was a very worthwhile experience, and we hope to participate again in the near future!

*Scott & Ruth Holmes  
Glendale, CA*

We had the pleasure of meeting with **Samuel Adams** and found him to be very open to our suggestions and appreciated his willingness to take immediate action to remedy the problems of Rueben Ingold Park. **Sam** took the time to walk with us as we pointed out areas of concern. All of the walkers were pleasantly surprised to see how promptly you responded to our request for service regarding the park's maintenance. It made all the patrons of the walking trail very proud to see our county representatives quickly address the safety issues as well as the need to preserve a beautiful space in our neighborhood. We applaud your efforts and again appreciate the customer service that **Kaye Michelson** and **Samuel Adams** delivered!

*Malaika Tawasufi  
Rueben Ingold Park Patron*

Thank you for providing the free golf lessons through the **Los Angeles County Junior Golf Program**. Our five year old son has enjoyed the lessons and even won a bronze medal in the putting tournament! The coaches are great with the kids and I'm sure we will take advantage of future lessons.

*Keith & Julie Hartley  
Torrance, CA*

## GIVE Someone a HIGH FIVE!

Do you know someone in our Department who deserves special recognition? Maybe you were on a tight deadline and that person helped you meet it. Maybe you were having a tough work day and that person helped you beat it. You know who those people are, the ones who go above and beyond. Help us recognize them. Email their name and a short paragraph of why they deserve a High Five! to [iperius@parks.lacounty.gov](mailto:iperius@parks.lacounty.gov) and we'll do our best to include them in the High Five! column of The Green Scene.



### County of Los Angeles Board of Supervisors

**Don Knabe**  
Chairman  
Fourth District

**Gloria Molina**  
First District

**Mark Ridley-Thomas**  
Second District

**Zev Yaroslavsky**  
Third District

**Michael D. Antonovich**  
Fifth District

### Department of Parks and Recreation

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**John Wicker**  
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**Kaye Michelson**  
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