



GREEN SCENE

December 2013

HOT ON THE TRAIL



Excitement greets the opening of the Eastern Ridgeline Trail at Kenneth Hahn State Recreation Area.

As a staff member at the Baldwin Hills Conservancy, Gloria Dangerfield is well-acquainted with Kenneth Hahn State Recreation Area. That’s why her reaction to the newly-opened Eastern Ridgeline Trail, as she walked briskly around its walking path on a recent morning, took on a particularly meaningful resonance.

“I can see the results of all the hard work and time involved to create a well-paved walking trail -- which was sorely needed -- and the delightful outdoor equipment and sculptures,” she said. “This will truly contribute towards making Kenneth Hahn State Recreation Area a world-class park to be enjoyed by visitors and residents for decades. I personally utilize the trail and other walking trails on a weekly basis, as well as employees from Verizon whom work in my office park. Kudos to you for a project well done!”

Similar sentiments held the day on Sept. 20, as Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors Chairman Mark Ridley-Thomas, Department of Parks and Recreation Director Russ Guiney, Baldwin Hills Conservancy board members and a host of others were on hand to dedicate the new Eastern Ridgeline Trail.

Funded by a Proposition 40 grant

provided by the Baldwin Hills Conservancy, along with a grant from Chairman Ridley-Thomas’ office, the ¾-mile walking trail is the first completed segment of the planned “Park to Playa” Regional Trail. When fully completed, the Park to Playa trail will be the first non-vehicular route from Baldwin Hills to the Pacific Ocean.

“This \$3 million investment will make Kenneth Hahn State Recreation Area more accessible to all the communities that live on its east side – including the residents of View Park and Windsor Hills,” said Ridley-Thomas. “No matter what time of day it is, the views along the ridgeline are incredible and will give users a great taste of what the entire ‘Park to Playa’ experience will be like once the regional trail is completed.”

Along the scenic Eastern Ridgeline trail, visitors to Kenneth Hahn State Recreation Area will find amenities that include a play area tailored for families; four fitness zones with exercise equipment; child-friendly animal sculptures; benches for relaxation; and native, drought-tolerant landscaping. The project also includes accommodations in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, and a new crosswalk at the “five points” intersection of La Brea Avenue, Stocker Street and

Overhill Drive.

“Everyone I speak with the Eastern Ridgeline Trail love it! I design and maintain the Kenneth Hahn Park Walk/Run Club website and have posted great pictures of the trail for park users to see. I visit the park four to five days a week to ... walk the ridges and the paths, and then end my walk with a workout. It’s about health.”

Many Department staff members worked very hard to bring this project to the community, and special thanks go to Hayden Sohm, Roy Williams, Jane I. Beesley, Francine Choi, Shawn McAdory, Jaheel Dixon, Dwight Ponder, Chester Kano, Dwight LaCroix, Daniel Abratte and Kevin Kane.

This exciting addition to the existing trail network at Kenneth Hahn State Recreation Area was made possible by a partnership between Chairman Ridley-Thomas’ office, the Los Angeles County Chief Executive office, the Baldwin Hills Conservancy, the Department of Parks and Recreation and the Department of Public Works.

– Joyce Fitzpatrick



DIRECTOR'S DESK RUSS GUINEY

By now, many of you have taken part in the course provided to

Department employees by Los Angeles County Sheriff's Deputy Chris Knox of the Center for Defensive Driving.

On the day I took the class, it gave me great pride to see our employees — who are among nearly 10,000 people who have taken the course this year alone — give such

thoughtful attention to Deputy Knox's excellent presentation.

All of us who drive understand the importance of safe behavior behind the wheel, and the course was a welcome reminder of our responsibility to always demonstrate the utmost care and courtesy on the road. Whether using County vehicles or personal automobiles, those qualities are of particular importance when driving on behalf of the department.

Taking this course was

more than just fulfillment of a job requirement. It was confirmation that each one of us takes seriously the privilege of representing Los Angeles County. You have my gratitude for that commitment, and my full confidence that your behavior as motorists will always reflect the professionalism that each of you bring to the Department of Parks and Recreation each and every day.

FEELING SUPER ABOUT OUR HEROES

Park and recreation professionals from throughout the region gathered under the stars at the Los Angeles River Center and Gardens on Nov. 18, for People for Parks Los Angeles' 12th Annual Parks Celebration. Three staff and volunteers from the Department of Parks and Recreation were honored with Park Hero awards!



Bill Hottran. As Regional Grounds Maintenance Supervisor for the East Agency, Bill (pictured left, with Deputy Director Frank Gonzales) supervises operations for nearly three dozen parks in the Department of Parks and Recreation. His work ethic and leadership style have made him an excellent supervisor and invaluable member of the department for 42 years. He is known for always excelling but never taking credit for the important work he performs each day.

Yecxarely Gonzalez. A volunteer at Valleydale Park, where she serves as vice president of the Youth Council for Change Teen Club, Yecxarely is known as a compassionate, hard-working, dependable and inspirational young woman. She channels her ambition and drive into volunteering for her community and motivates her peers to do the same.



Roberta Garzon. A volunteer with Ringgrove Park's cheer and dance teams, Roberta (who was represented at the ceremony by Karla Mercado) is the president of the Dazzlers Booster Club. She is dependable and helps park programs run smoothly and efficiently. Her leadership and contributions to the park make her an outstanding and well-respected volunteer.



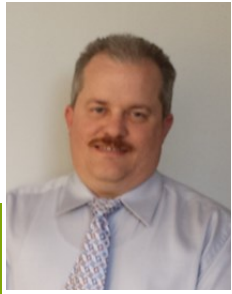
WHERE IN THE DEPARTMENT



IS THIS ???????

ANSWER ON PAGE 5

20 YEARS



Christopher Kinney
Administrative Services

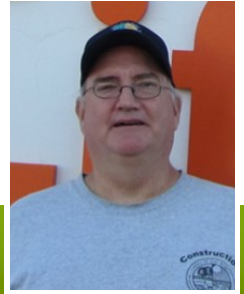
25 YEARS



Donald Houston
North Agency



Alfred Robinson Jr.
Regional Facilities Agency



Paul Wilson Jr.
North Agency

35 YEARS



Ralph Beltran
Regional Facilities Agency

40 YEARS



Jose Guitron
Regional Facilities Agency



James Sorrell Sr.
Regional Facilities Agency

PQA HONORS RECOGNIZE DEPARTMENT EXCELLENCE!



A pair of Top 10 awards are among those bestowed on Department by the Productivity and Quality Commission.

The Department was deeply honored to be recognized twice among L.A. County's Top 10 projects at the 27th annual Productivity and Quality Awards, held Oct. 16 at the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion.

We were awarded the County Image Enhancement Award for the Los Angeles County Arboretum & Botanic Garden exhibition "Forces of Nature," which grew out of art created from trees felled by a devastating 2011 windstorm.

In addition, the Department shared in the Best Teamwork Award with Public Library and the Departments of Mental Health and Probation for the program "Parents as Partners: Growing

Stronger Families." And that's not all: We are very proud to have received a Special Merit Plaque for our innovative Quagga Mussel Inspection and Education Program!

Thanks to all who worked on these amazing initiatives. Among those representing the Department at the luncheon: Russ Guiney, John Wicker, Lori Bennett, Elizabeth Mendez, Hugo Maldonado, Richard Schulhof, Leigh Adams, Joseph Walsh, Melinda Mayoral, Monica Pollaccia and Mika Yamamoto.



Relive the ceremony: <http://bit.ly/15IEhW>

See more about "Forces of Nature": <http://bit.ly/Vk8bBU>

Get the details on "Parents as Partners: Growing Stronger Families": <http://bit.ly/1bC9ar9>

Learn about the Quagga Mussel Inspection and Education Program: <http://bit.ly/17NPj3Y>

FINDING A PLACE FOR THE PLAQUE

How a chance discovery led to a permanent home for a piece of baseball history at Jackie Robinson Park. **By Heather Larson**

Sadly, it is not an unfamiliar sight: heaps of miscellaneous rubbish lying on the side of the road. Old memories jumbled together with empty bottles, bits of paper and tattered clothing.

Knowing they are destined to wind up in a landfill, most of us think little of these seemingly random piles – other than seeing them as yet another reminder of why we should not litter.

These scenes are even more commonplace to those charged with keeping our neighborhoods clean. But when he happened to discover an item that clearly deserved a better fate than the refuse heap, one man with that responsibility – Los Angeles County Sanitation District employee Richard W. Caulkins – used his sleuthing skills to give that relic a second chance.

About two years ago, when Caulkins was making his rounds in Palmdale, he came across what he described as “a pile of trash, and it was really bad. It looked like an apartment had been cleaned out and dumped.”

In that pile, he noticed a plaque bearing the logo of a Major League Baseball team, given to a man for contributing time and energy to the betterment of his community. The honoree: Sammie Haynes, a beloved baseball player who once played alongside such greats as Jackie Robinson and Satchel Paige. Bestowing the honor was the San Francisco Giants.

Haynes’ name may not be instantly familiar to anyone but the most ardent fans of America’s pastime, but from 1942-45 he was a star catcher for the Kansas City Monarchs of the Negro League.

Just two years before Robinson broke the color barrier and forged a path that Haynes was certainly talented enough to follow, his baseball career was cut tragically short by glaucoma – an affliction that would eventually leave him completely blind.

Rather than slow down, Haynes then dedicated his life to helping others by founding the International



Recreation Services Supervisor Peg Lee and a group of local children hold a plaque dedicated to baseball star Sammie Haynes. The plaque now hangs on the Jackie Robinson Park Wall of Fame, alongside memorabilia associated with the Los Angeles County park’s namesake.

Society of Athletes – an organization dedicated to providing support to former athletes who have fallen on hard times and require assistance with medical bills and other necessities.

Haynes, who died in 1997 at age 77, also performed volunteer work with the Special Olympics. His dedication to the community earned recognition from President Bill Clinton and others, including the Giants.

After researching Haynes’ history, Caulkins was moved to find a proper home for the plaque. “His legacy doesn’t deserve to have anything to do with a trash pile,” he said. “His legacy deserves to be honored.”

In his search for answers, Caulkins contacted the office of Los Angeles County Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich. An aide to the supervisor suggested that the plaque be donated to Jackie Robinson Park, located in Littlerock.

Today, the plaque has a place of honor at the park named for one of America’s all-time heroes.

Said Peg Lee, Jackie Robinson Park Recreation Services Supervisor: “We are glad to ... have a place for it on the Jackie Robinson Park Wall of Fame.”



BOWLED OVER!



From Oct. 16-20, Arcadia Community Regional County Park played host to lawn bowlers from across the United States, as they gathered to compete in the 2013 Bowls USA National Championships. Popularly known as lawn bowling, bowls is played in more than 40 countries and continues to grow in popularity. In both singles and pairs competition at the National Championships, the top male and female bowlers from throughout the U.S.

viewed for one of the sport's most prestigious titles — and Frank Gonzales was honored with the task of tossing out the first ball! With four beautiful greens set against the backdrop of the San Gabriel Mountains, Arcadia Community Regional County Park is home to the Santa Anita Bowling Green Club, and has become a premier destination for bowlers from across the world. In April, it hosted a competition that attracted more than 400 contestants from the United

States, Canada, South Africa and Australia. “Bowls is an exciting, challenging sport that can be enjoyed by people of all ages,” said Cheri Cabot, president of the Santa Anita Bowling Green Club. “With so many of America’s elite bowlers gathered in one place, the National Championships allowed people to learn more about the sport -- and to see it played at a high level, on some of the world’s most impressive and highly-regarded bowling greens.”



Photo by S. Savanapridi

← LOOK THE PARK

On Halloween, members of the Department’s Grants team showed up for work dressed as some of our most beautiful parks and facilities. Can you guess who was costumed as what? (Answers below)

*Joe Matthews as The Eastside Eddie Heredia Boxing Club, Tatevrik
Magkyan & Violet Daniel as Deane Dana Friendship Park , Luz
Restrepo as Sunshine Park, Faith Pardocho as Devil's Punchbowl
Natural Area*

WHERE IN THE DEPARTMENT

ANSWER—This photo shows a park ranger on patrol during the early days at Puddingstone Dam, at Frank G. Bonelli Regional Park. The photo was taken in 1959, a year of great development for the park: Water skiing on the reservoir was initiated; new patrol boats were acquired; picnic tables and grills were installed; volunteers planted trees; and various parking areas and access roads were constructed. A tree planting program was also instituted with the L.A. County Department of Forestry, as hillsides were mainly bare at the time. — **Ansley B. Davies**



NATURE, FIRST

FOR PARTICIPANTS IN S.M.O.R.E.S., AN INTRODUCTION TO THE NATURAL WORLD IS THE START OF A LIFELONG RELATIONSHIP.



Photos by S. Savanapridi

For many in a group of young people who camped under the stars at Castaic Lake State Recreation Area in September and Santa Fe Dam Recreation Area the following month, the excursion was their very first overnight adventure in the outdoors. And what a foray into nature it was: In addition to sleeping in tents, participants learned about native flora and fauna during docent-led hikes, cooked their own food outdoors, learned about astronomy and much more.

It was all part of Start Mentoring Outgoing Resourceful Environmental Stewards (S.M.O.R.E.S.) – a State of California Habitat Conservation Fund (HCF) grant-funded program of the Department of Parks and Recreation aimed at helping youth ages 4-17 establish a deeper connection to nature.

At each S.M.O.R.E.S session, there are approximately 150 youth participants – along with adult mentors and natural area leaders from the Department of Parks and Recreation – taking part in a variety of activities, including: birding, camping, astronomy, hands-on workshops in hiking and trail safety, fishing and much more. Among the campers, one of the most popular features are the live animal demonstrations.

Volunteers from Los Angeles County Natural Areas also assist with activities and mentoring – all

focused on supplementing science and nature education by providing opportunities that are not available in a regular classroom setting.

“S.M.O.R.E.S. is a fantastic program, because it gives a great group of young people real, hands-on exposure to the wonders of the natural world – many for the very first time,” said Natural Areas Administrator Kim Bosell. “We are excited to play a part in bringing this experience to them, and look forward to each one of these events.”

A host of Department staff, volunteers and others gave their time and effort to make those events very successful. Special thanks go to Faith Parducho; Mika Yamamoto; Kim Bosell; Melinda Mayoral; Francine Choi; Violet Daniel; Imee Perius; Ricardo Ceja; Jeff Dorst; Susan Brown; Colleen Mac Kay; Lori Bennett and Castaic Lake staff; Chris Graham and Santa Fe Dam staff; staff from the Natural Areas Division; volunteers from Pasadena Audubon, San Fernando Valley Audubon, Friends of Castaic Lake, Vasquez Rocks Nature Center Associates, Placerita Canyon Nature Center Associates, Eaton Canyon Nature Center Associates, Whittier Narrows Nature Center Associates, San Dimas Canyon Nature Center Associates, San Gabriel Mountains Regional Conservancy and the Santa Fe Dam Nature Center.

Donations of food, equipment and giveaways for campers came courtesy of California State Parks, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, City of El Monte Department of Parks and Recreation, Orchard Dale Water District, Rowland Water District, Rose Hills, Tampico Beverages, Eaton Canyon Nature Center Associates, Friends of Castaic Lake, Friends of Santa Fe Dam Support Group, Gallion’s Market, Whittier Narrows Nature Center Associates, Santa Fe Dam Nature Center, Wheels of Fun Rentals, Devil’s Punchbowl Nature Center, Department of Public Social Services Toy Loan Program and Eaton Canyon Nature Center Associates docents Erica Hahn, June Hirsch and Clem Padick.

Next spring, the program comes to Kenneth Hahn State Recreation Area and Whittier Narrows Recreation Area – where, by exposing them to biodiversity-rich natural areas in Los Angeles County, the Department looks to continue helping young people develop positive habits that foster a sense of environmental stewardship in future generations.



S.M.O.R.E.S. 2013 Castaic Lake

Arturo Lopez, Recreation Services Supervisor - *South Agency*

Ann Luong, Administrative Services Manager I - *Administrative Services Agency*

Tenesha Ware, Recreation Services Supervisor - *South Agency*

Jose Cueva, Administrative Assistant III - *Administrative Services Agency*

Ryan Lim, Procurement Aid - *Administrative Services Agency*

Vivencio Tapangco, Carpenter Supervisor - *Regional Facilities Agency*

Juan Renteria, Grounds Maintenance Worker I - *Regional Facilities Agency*

Olivia Pinkney, Grounds Maintenance Worker II - *Regional Facilities Agency*

HIGH FIVE

RECOGNIZING YOUR SERVICE TO THE COMMUNITY



On Sunday morning, Oct. 6, I was jogging with my dogs on a trail near Vasquez Rocks Natural Area Park. One of the dogs alerted me to something in the bushes, and a red-tailed hawk suddenly appeared. The hawk was a magnificent, full-grown young male, obviously in distress and unable to fly. I immediately called a neighbor who is familiar with the handling of exotic animals.

A call was placed to the local Vasquez Rocks Interpretive Center. Park Animal Keeper Dave Stives responded within 10 minutes, and we directed him off the trail to where the hawk was hiding in the brush. By chance, Dave is an expert hawk-handler -- what a lucky day for Mr. Hawk! Using only a heavy glove, Dave safely and swiftly captured and examined Mr. Hawk, who was suffering from a broken right leg. Ranger Dave then immediately transported the hawk

to a Simi Valley facility for proper medical attention.

The residents were amazed, relieved and grateful for his swift response on a Sunday morning, which undoubtedly saved this gorgeous red-tailed hawk's life. Mr. Stives and the Interpretive Center at Vasquez Rocks Natural Area Park are valuable assets and resources in our local community.

Patricia Blake, *Agua Dulce*

The enclosed card triggered my desire to give a good report about El Cariso Park in Sylmar.

My primary focus is the pool, which I've swam in for about 3 years. I have never had a more enjoyable park experience that the one at El Cariso pool. It's clean all the time, safe as safe can be, and one gets a sense that every person at the pool is important.

I've always found the staff to be exceptionally helpful and friendly.

As you know lifeguard staff change through the seasons but El Cariso Pool lifeguards always seems to have a high degree of involvement and helpfulness season after season. Michael Baham has been the head lifeguard for as long as I have been there. His enthusiasm for swimming, swim teams, and the pool community is exceptional. He is the one that makes El Cariso what it is. I just want to say thanks for putting him at El Cariso and thanks for all you do for the people of Los Angeles through our parks.

Sincerely,

Chris Stanton, *President, Mission Bridge*



This is a letter of gratitude for the fine efforts of Lake Lifeguard Dustin Miller in rescuing my son's Go Pro camera last Saturday at Castaic Lake State Recreation Area.

Please let Dustin know that we very much appreciate his efforts in successfully locating the Go Pro.

By the way, the Go Pro was still operating when Dustin located it in 15 feet of water- the video can be found at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SxSQDm2f9HE>

Best Regards,
Dimitri Orloff

Dear Mr. Gonzales:
The Spirit of Life Bible Church Feeding Ministry greatly appreciates the participation of the Associated Park Council during the outreach on Oct. 5, 20 13.

Their assistance allowed us to provide meals to over one hundred people, in under two hours. In addition to being very helpful in serving those less fortunate, the Council members were courteous, hard-working, and well-behaved. It is very challenging to work with those that are disadvantaged. Having help that does not need constant oversight relieves a lot of stress and allows everyone to focus on the tasks at hand.

We commend you, and those that work with the Associated Park Council for instilling the people in your charge with the right attitudes and disciplines to be an asset in their community. You and your staff are doing a very good job!

Thank you again for the assistance from your group.

Regards,

Lisa Atmore Director, Spirit of Life Bible Church Feeding Ministry

Dr. Frederick 'Fritz' Wilson, Chaplain/Elder

Danny Knott, Pastor



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