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Sustainable City Commissioner Spotlight

Carla Dillon

Carla has worked in the public sector for nearly 25 years as an environmental engineer, and also has extensive nonprofit experience. She holds a Doctorate in Public Administration, a Master of Science in Civil Engineering, and is a licensed Professional Engineer. Carla is an international Jennings Randolph Fellow, with the unique opportunity for a study tour and idea exchange in New Zealand on wastewater treatment and environmental practices.

Donna Bergeron-Birge

Donna is a 22-year Long Beach resident and retired LBUSD Spanish language teacher. While teaching, she established an after-school native plants gardening, recycling, and fundraising club. Currently, she serves on the 8th District SAC where her primary objective is the “greening” of our senior community. Her personal goal as a citizen is to raise awareness on community. Her primary objective is the “greening” of our senior community.

Q & A With Gardener Kelsey

Kelsey runs our Edible Garden, and has been producing lots of veggies over the last few months! Do you have gardening questions for Kelsey? Email your questions to us at Courtney.Chatterson@longbeach.gov or reach out on Facebook or Instagram (@SustainableLB) and it could be featured on our website.

Q: What is your favorite part about being a gardener?
I like the garden to table connection. When you see food at the grocery store, it doesn’t occur to you where it came from. When you garden you see from cradle to grave and what it takes to grow things.

Q: Do you have any favorite tips or tricks you’d like to share with your fellow gardeners?
Everyone has a black thumb and also a green thumb. I have spent probably equal amounts of time killing plants as I have growing them. You just keep going, and don’t be discouraged. That’s also why something like succulents or herbs are really good, because they are less likely to perish or get infested by bugs. It bolsters your confidence.

Q: What is the biggest challenge new gardeners face?
I think it is killing things and getting discouraged. Also if you’re living in an urban area it’s not having enough room. But it’s amazing what you can grow in something small. With just a small box that you can fit on your dining room table you can grow a little kale plant. I like growing leafy green vegetables because you just snap off a leaf and it keeps growing. Herbs are another good option because you can snap off pieces as you need them. Just make sure to plant something you will use.

Edible Garden Workshops

Garden workshops are resuming just above our old location. Enter the Civic Center Plaza from Ocean Blvd. and enter the gate on your right to go up the stairs to the new garden.

Monday May 1st (12-1pm):
Summer Planting Basics

Monday June 5th (12-1pm):
Compost, Mulch, and Water Conservation in the Garden

Call (562) 570-5927 to RSVP or to make alternate ADA arrangements

Sustainability Spotlight

We work hard at the Office of Sustainability to make Long Beach a more sustainable city, but we’re not the only ones making progress. The Sustainability Spotlight series was created to highlight the great efforts towards sustainability across City departments and community organizations. You can view the full articles online.

Environmental Services Bureau

We’re putting the spotlight on Long Beach’s Environmental Services Bureau for their efforts to increase recycling and reduce waste in Long Beach.
Read more: http://bit.ly/2nEz8tO

Long Beach Fleet Services

We’re putting the spotlight on Long Beach’s Fleet Services Bureau for all the progress they’ve made to make City trucks and vehicles greener and cleaner.
Read more: http://bit.ly/2kk5mrr

Climate Central: Did You Know?

- Unplugging electronics when you aren’t using them can account for 10% savings in your monthly electricity bill.
- Eating one less burger per week is equivalent to taking your car off the road for 320 miles each year.
- If 20% of American households received and paid bills online, an estimated 3.9 billion pounds of CO₂ could be saved annually. The equivalent to establishing 1.6 million acres of new forests.
- If you dedicated just 2 minutes each day to watching an environmental video or reading environmental articles, you’d set aside 12 hours a year to improving your eco-knowledge.

Meet the Team

Get to know our staff! This quarter we’re starting up Edible Gardening classes again; so it’s time to get more familiar with our garden manager Kelsey.

Kelsey Forster

Kelsey Forster joined the Office of Sustainability in July 2016. She will be teaching the Edible Garden’s monthly classes, as well as training the Sustainability interns on gardening techniques.

Kelsey is also a gardener in the Farm + Food Lab, a demonstration garden in Orange County Great Park, and loves sharing urban agriculture techniques and ideas between her work at the two gardens.

Prior to working with the Office of Sustainability, Kelsey earned her B.S. in Environmental Science and Policy from California State University, Long Beach. During her time as a student, she interned with Long Beach Organic, a network of several different community gardens throughout the city, which was her introduction into a passion for urban agriculture and community gardening.
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