

We Create Community

CITY OF LONG BEACH PARKS, RECREATION
& MARINE

DECEMBER 2023 | VOLUME 12
ISSUE 12

LONG BEACH PARKS, RECREATION AND MARINE 2023 YEAR IN REVIEW



Parks, Recreation and Marine (PRM) is proudly looking back on the past year at the many programs and services that advanced the new PRM Strategic Plan and enriched the quality of life for all its residents and visitors.

PRM hosted four job fairs throughout the year to recruit for recreation programs including Day Camps, Summer Fun Days, Youth and Adult Sports, Be SAFE, Senior Centers, and WRAP. Staff were on hand to share their experiences with individuals eager to learn about a day in the life of a Recreation Leader Specialist. Candidates had an opportunity to apply for open jobs during the fairs.

Free supervised recreation programs were offered at parks throughout the city during winter, spring and summer school breaks. Youth enjoyed free games,

crafts, sports tournaments, field trips and holiday celebrations. Teens participated in free recreation activities at Admiral Kidd, Cesar E. Chavez Park, Houghton Park, McBride and Silverado Parks and the Freeman Community Center.

Free, drop in after-school programs for children ages 5 to 12 took place at varying times per park, on weekdays during the school year. Participants received homework assistance and enjoyed enrichment activities and games.

PRM in partnership with the Los Angeles Galaxy Foundation, U.S. Soccer Foundation and Herbalife Nutrition, **refurbished soccer mini pitches** at DeForest Park. Two of the park's three futsal courts received asphalt repair, acrylic resurfacing, new striping and soccer goals.



Director's Corner

BRENT DENNIS, DIRECTOR, LONG BEACH PARKS, RECREATION & MARINE



The 2023 Trees on the Bay, featuring 68 trees, was officially illuminated on Thanksgiving night. The popular Trees on the Bay holiday tradition in Long Beach delights residents and visitors throughout the month of December. A special thanks to our Marine Maintenance team for their great work in the installation of the trees. The display will be in place into the first week of the new year. The colorful and symbolic City Christmas tree, standing 67-foot tall with more than 500,000 lights was lit in Downtown Long Beach on the Terrace Plaza on November 28th, complete with Santa, live music, local food trucks, and fireworks.

Out on Alamitos Beach last month, the new Gaucho Beach & Café was celebrated with a Grand Opening. The latest addition of significantly enhanced dining experiences on the beach front in Long Beach has been attracting local patrons as well as visitors and convention and meeting attendees. Gaucho Beach & Café offers a unique menu of Argentinian and Californian culinary choices amidst an equally unique and scenic setting with amazing views. Located at 780 East Shoreline Drive, the current hours of service are Monday through Thursday 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. and Friday through Sunday 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. Reservations are not required as walk-ins are seated on a first-come, first served basis.

Pickleball Progress Continues....eight new, dedicated pickleball courts were opened at DeForest Park recently with eight additional new, dedicated pickleball courts being brought online in the new year at Veterans Park. These 16 new courts will go a long way towards meeting the recreational demands for this paddle sport on spaces that step beyond shared/dual use courts with tennis. As the courts are completed, ribbon cuttings and debut tournament matches will be scheduled. These new courts will be open for drop-in play, while our two tennis & pickleball centers at El Dorado Park West and Billy Jean King tennis centers are available for reserved courts time for a nominal fee. Stay tuned to the Department website for details on these new recreational amenities.

**Parks
Make
Life
Better!**

The Park Ambassador program is entering its seventh month with noticeable improvement in the cleanliness and welcoming qualities of our park restrooms. The second shift team of ten Ambassadors have been very visible as they traverse the City to tend to the 55 free standing park restroom facilities with extra attention to the deep cleaning, graffiti abatement, vandalism repairs, and the day's end locking of the restrooms and mini parks after the 10 p.m. park closure time on a nightly basis. This new additional maintenance staffing model will greatly enhance the park visitor experience.

Long Beach Animal Care Services resumed the Pet Adoption Presentations at the City Council meeting last month with a continued 100% success rate of placing the featured dogs into caring homes. Heading into the holidays, our facility offers fostering and adoption opportunities for adorable animals through the LBACS website as well as on-site during operational hours Wednesday through Sunday.

Congratulations to our El Dorado Nature Center staff and volunteers led by Meagan O'Neill for their successful Native Plant Sale that concluded last month. Hundreds of quality varieties of beautiful and beneficial California native plants were available for people to enhance their gardens, patios or balconies, while increasing habitat for wildlife.

The Employee Recognition Committee champions an 'Adopt-A-Family' program during the holidays as another important initiative in support of our Parks, Recreation, Marine, and Animal Care Services team members. Congratulations to our October Employee of the Month, Yeselin Martinez for her well-deserved honor. Our Department will also be celebrating the December Employee of the Month at the December 12 City Council meeting. The ERC planned and presented a Department holiday event, "Woodsy Winter Bash" at the POA Park, as another great program in support and appreciation of our dedicated team members.

The holiday season in Long Beach promises to be vibrant in colorful, fun ways. Events that add positive activation of our parks, beaches and open spaces continue to make a big difference in the safe, welcoming quality of these areas. We hope to see the month of December bring the community together to celebrate the holidays in our parks and on our beautiful beaches! Parks Make Long Beach...Parks Make Life Better!

LEARNING TO FISH AT EL DORADO EAST REGIONAL PARK'S ANNUAL YOUTH FISHING DERBY



PRM, in partnership with the Daniel Hernandez Youth Foundation, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, and Partners of Parks held their annual Youth Fishing Derby on November 18 at El Dorado East Regional Park.

More than 500 youth participated in this unique experience to learn to fish, and build self-confidence and self-esteem. There were also opportunities to win prizes

like fishing gear and gift cards. Fishing poles and tackle were provided to participating youth to use for free during the derby.

Daniel Hernandez is the host of "Sport Fishing with Dan Hernandez" on You Tube Live and founder of the Daniel Hernandez Youth Foundation, a 501(C) 3 non-profit organization that funds fishing programs for youth. For more information, visit: www.danskids.org.

CLASSES, EXPERIENCES, UNIQUE LOCAL HANDMADE ITEMS SHOP THE HOLIDAYS WITH PRM

Long Beach Parks, Recreation and Marine (PRM) is a great place to shop

for the holidays and offers a wide variety of unique items for sale. PRM gift certificates, redeemable for classes, facility reservations and El Dorado Regional Park parking passes make gift giving easy. The certificates are available for sale at the Department Administration Office at 2760 Studebaker Road, Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

The El Dorado Nature Center Bookstore, at 7550 E. Spring Street is open Tuesday through Sunday from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. and offers a wide array of merchandise including T-shirts, jewelry, wind chimes, nature-themed books, field guides and soaps.

The Rancho Los Cerritos Museum Shop, 4600 North Virginia Road, offers books on California history, note cards, jams made from the garden's bounty, handmade scented soaps and pressed flower candles, and old-time

children's toys. The Rancho Los Alamitos Museum Gift Shop, 6400 E. Bixby Road continually features a variety of high-quality, unique, and affordable products including jams stationery items, candles, books, jewelry, and kitchen and garden items. Both Rancho Museum Shops are open Wednesday-Sunday between 1-5 p.m.

So, skip the mall and enjoy a visit to the park instead where you can relax, have fun and find great gifts for the holidays.



THE MUSEUM SHOP AT RANCHO LOS CERRITOS

LONG BEACH PARKS, RECREATION AND MARINE 2023 YEAR IN REVIEW



In March, PRM collaborated with the Cal Poly Pomona College of Environmental Design and the Long Beach Community Design Center to present the **Young Community Planners of Long Beach program** for a second year. Teens got hands-on experience in the urban planning process.

The popular inflatable **“Wibit” aquatic playgrounds** opened again for summer at Alamitos Beach and Bayshore Avenue daily through September 4 to offer residents and visitors of these Long Beach beaches free, family-friendly fun and active water play.

On July 21, Community Recreation Services Bureau staff hosted the **Day Camp Jamboree**. More than 450 youth from 12-day camps enjoyed a fun day of water play, crafts, and games at the El Dorado Regional Park Golden Grove with support from the LA Kings Hockey team.

Many **accomplishments were realized** as PRM staff worked to implement the Parks, Recreation and Marine Strategic Plan which will guide PRM's operational, staffing and budget decisions through 2023.

PRM celebrated **Older American's Month** in May with activities for older adults to be engaged, independent, and included in their communities through programs offered by PRM.



Since 2017, a **Los Angeles Dodgers Foundation (LADF) grant** has allowed PRM to provide T-ball, baseball and fastpitch softball programs to over 3,000 Long Beach youth, including over 950 players participating at 23 parks each summer.



The **“Be S.A.F.E.” program** extended free supervision hours at 11 parks on weekday evenings from June 20-August 25. Arts and crafts, outdoor games, sports, science activities, computer labs, yoga, Zumba dance, movies and more were offered.

For the 44th year in a row, Parks, Recreation and Marine offered the USDA Summer Food Service Program to provide **free, nutritious meals** to Long Beach children and youth over the summer months. The program ran weekdays for 10 weeks.



A **new nautical-themed playground** at Admiral Kidd Park opened on August 19, replacing the equipment that was destroyed in a fire in 2021. A zipline, accessible path to the playground, shade structures and lighting upgrades are featured.

The Long Beach **Municipal Band celebrated their 114th season** with free concerts in Long Beach parks, from June 27 - August 4. The series was made possible with sponsorship from the Department of Energy Resources, Long Beach Environmental Services Bureau, the Port of Long Beach, Partners of Parks and the Friends of the Long Beach Municipal Band.

The Model Boat Shop at Colorado Lagoon is a **beloved 75-year-old tradition** in Long Beach. This summer a seven-week session was offered from June 20 - August 4. A total of 65 youth learned to saw, sand and paint model boats. They also experienced the thrill of sailing their creations in the Lagoon at the end of the program.

The **free Summer Fun Day program** gave youth ages 5 to 12 safe, secure places to play and engage in spontaneous supervised fun such as sports, games, arts and crafts, and special events. The program ran weekdays for ten weeks at 22 parks.



Over the weekend from August 20-21, PRM staff worked to minimize potential damage from Tropical Storm Hilary. **Beach Maintenance staff fortified protective sand berms**, kept storm drains operational,



Parks, Recreation and Marine's (PRM) **Park Ambassador program** increased staff presence in parks throughout the City to enhance the cleanliness of facilities and improve the experience of visitors.

managed downed trees, and made a shelter available for displaced persons.

(CONTINUED) LONG BEACH PARKS, RECREATION AND MARINE 2023 YEAR IN REVIEW

Staff worked to close facilities and cancel programs that were affected by the weather.

On August 12 the City celebrated the **60th Anniversary of their Sister Cities** relationship with Yokkaichi, Japan. The event featured a re-dedication of the Yokkaichi Friendship Garden on 7th and Federation at Recreation Park.



Volunteers made a difference at the **California Coastal Cleanup Day** on September 23. A total of 1,638 volunteers registered and removed over 3,800 pounds of debris at the five sites in only three hours. City staff provided educational materials to the community to inform the public about marine debris issues and inspire local environmental stewardship.

El Dorado Nature Center and Long Beach Animal Care Services (LBACS) hosted a family-friendly **Howl-o-ween Festival** on Saturday, Oct. 21. Attendees enjoyed trick-

or-treating along the Nature Center trails, hearing tales from the South Coast Storytellers, crafts, face painting and bounce houses. At Long Beach Animal Care Services, people visited the animal education village, “and a Día de los Muertos pet memorial in remembrance of the spirits of pets passed.

More than 500 youth and their families joined the annual **Youth Fishing Derby** on November 18. Parks, Recreation and Marine hosted the event in partnership with Partners of Parks, the Daniel Hernandez Youth Foundation and California Department of Fish and Wildlife



Long Beach Animal Care Services held **adoption events and donation drives** across Long Beach throughout December. The public was able to adopt animals with the fees waived, participate in raffles to help fundraise for shelter pets, donate treats and toys to animals.

Youth participants in the **Walk & Roll program** led by Long Beach Health and Human Services at PRM WRAP sites attended the 5th Annual Motion Equals Healthy Bike Give-away sponsored by the Bahati Foundation at Dignity Health Stadium Sports Park in Carson and received new bicycles.



PARKS, RECREATION AND MARINE SENIOR CENTERS CELEBRATE FRIENDSGIVING



On November 16 participants from the Department’s seven Senior Centers boarded buses and gathered at El Dorado Park West for a Friendsgiving celebration. Guests enjoyed a delicious holiday lunch served by senior center staff, dancing, crafts, and games. Most importantly, the event gave seniors the opportunity to give thanks to old friends and make new friends.



LINCOLN PARK FAMILY FUN EVENTS IN DECEMBER

FREE GAME NIGHT AND MOVIE NIGHT

Parks, Recreation and Marine is offering free, family events at Downtown



Long Beach's Lincoln Park for families, teens and older adults.

A Free Game Night will take place Thursday, Dec. 21 from 5 to 7 p.m. Fun, competitive games for family and friends will be provided and an obstacle race. Residents are encouraged to bring lawn chairs and family and friends.

A Free Movie Night will take place on Thursday, Dec. 28. Families can enjoy cookie deco-

rating, Grinch arts and crafts, and games beginning at 3 p.m. The movie, "The Grinch" will begin at dusk. Residents are encouraged to bring lawn chairs, picnic-style dinner and their family and friends.

"These great events will bring Downtown residents together for an evening of fun at the City's oldest, yet newest park having been redesigned in 2022," said Parks,

Recreation and Marine Director Brent Dennis. "With great features like discovery zones for children, fitness equipment, a universally accessible playground for all ages and abilities, a synthetic turf sports field, skate park, dog park, half basketball court, and grassy areas, the park offers recreational opportunities for all ages and interests."

Complimentary parking for event goers will be available in the West Broadway Parking Structure, located on the corner of Broadway and Chestnut Avenue adjacent to the Billie Jean King Main Library.

For additional information about the Lincoln Park event series, call 562.570.3551.



FOR NEARLY THREE QUARTERS OF A CENTURY TREES IN THE BAY LIGHT UP LONG BEACH WATERS



2023 marks the 74th year that Long Beach residents and visitors have enjoyed colorful, festive tree structures floating

in the City's waterways including Alamitos Bay, Belmont Veterans Memorial Pier, Rainbow Lagoon, Rainbow Harbor, Spinnaker Bay, and Colorado Lagoon. Good Neighbor, Heartwell and Scherer Parks are also displaying festive decorated trees.

The tree program is managed by Parks, Recreation and Marine's Marine Maintenance staff who prepare the trees for lighting ceremonies on Thanksgiving weekend. Staff repairs and paints the wooden structures, strings trees with colored lights, and tows to their positions where they are anchored and strung with electrical wire.

The first floating tree in the bay was cast in 1949 by a local resident. The City became involved in the 1950's and since then the forest of floating trees has grown to over 65 trees.

OCTOBER EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH YESELIN MARTINEZ



“Above and Beyond” are words that describe the approach and work


that Recreation Assistant Yeselin Martinez demonstrates as she oversees the Volunteer program, Movies In the Park and Lincoln Park. As the central coordination point for the volunteer program she processes applications, conducts fingerprint scans, tracks hours and provides resources for supervisors and volunteers.

and Be Safe programs. She obtained licensing, scheduled staff, and planned new creative audience interaction components held before each MIP. Shortly before summer started, Lincoln Park was added to Yeselin’s responsibilities which meant scheduling and supervising park staff, and liaising with community groups for park programming and activation. Many times, Yeselin managed this under the difficult circumstances that can occur with encampments and PEH at Lincoln.

Yeselin is also instrumental with processing and monitoring Financial Aid awards for Day Camp programs. Despite such a full plate, she is active in multiple committees such as ERC, Training and Day Camp where she showed an exceptional diligence to all tasks associated with her responsibilities and even enhancing her programs by adding a new teen volunteer handbook, implementing the interactive experiences at movies and including teen volunteers in staff training, as well as arranging for their recognition at the Youth and Families Commission. Congratulations to Yeselin.

The success of our Movies in the Park program is due to her creating the movie schedule for both the regular

PRM MAINTENANCE NOVEMBER BY THE NUMBERS

 **72 CASES OF
GRAFFITI REPORTED**

**11 KID ZONE SIGNS INSTALLED
BY PARK AMBASSADORS**

**9 SITES POWER WASHED
BY PARK AMBASSADORS**

**COMPLETED: MAJOR PLUMBING REPAIR
DUE TO VANDALISM AT CHAVEZ PARK**

9225 SQUARE FEET OF WOOD FLOOR RESURFACED AT VETERANS PARK

LEARNING HUBS COMMUNITY



Free hubs provide a safe space with high-speed internet for students to participate in enriching after school activities, academic support, sports, fitness and more.

LBParks.org

HOUGHTON PARK (562) 570-1640	ORIZABA PARK (562) 570-1427
MCBRIDE PARK (562) 570-1605	VETERANS PARK (562) 570-1695

Learning Hubs are open Monday-Friday: 3-6 p.m.

DECEMBER 2023 CALENDAR

Th.	14	8-9:30 a.m.	Free Bird Walk	Rancho Los Cerritos
Fri.	15	Varies M-F	Free After School Recreation Program	Visit LBParks.org for hours and sites
Sat.	16	10 a.m. – noon	Volunteer Wetland Cleanup	Jack Dunster Reserve
		11 a.m. – 2 p.m.	Pet Supplies Plus Adoption Event	2086 N. Bellflower Blvd.
		3-5 p.m.	Howliday Wrap up Adoption Event and Donation Drive	Long Beach Animal Care Services
Sun.	17	8-10 a.m.	Morning Bird Walk	El Dorado Nature Center
Mon.	18	Varies M-F	Free After School Recreation Program	Visit LBParks.org for hours and site
Tue.	19	10-10:30 a.m.	Free Children's Story Time	Rancho Los Cerritos
Wed.	20	Varies M-F	Free After School Recreation Program	Visit LBParks.org for hours and sites
Th.	21	Varies M-F	Free After School Recreation Program	Visit LBParks.org for hours and sites
Fri.	22	Varies M-F	Free After School Recreation Program	Visit LBParks.org for hours and sites
Sat.	23	9-10 a.m.	El Dorado Regional Park Cleanup	Past El Dorado Frontier in Area III
Mon.	25		Christmas Holiday	
Tue.	26	noon – 5 p.m	Free Winter Fun Days Youth Recreation Activities	Visit LBParks.org for locations
Wed.	27	noon – 5 p.m	Free Winter Fun Days Youth Recreation Activities	Visit LBParks.org for locations
Th.	28	noon – 5 p.m	Free Winter Fun Days Youth Recreation Activities	Visit LBParks.org for locations
Fri.	29	noon – 5 p.m	Free Winter Fun Days Youth Recreation Activities	Visit LBParks.org for locations

JANUARY 2024 CALENDAR

Mon.	1		New Year's Day Holiday	
Tue.	2	noon – 5 p.m	Free Winter Fun Days Youth Recreation Activities	Visit LBParks.org for locations
Wed.	3	noon – 5 p.m	Free Winter Fun Days Youth Recreation Activities	Visit LBParks.org for locations
Th.	4	noon – 5 p.m	Free Winter Fun Days Youth Recreation Activities	Visit LBParks.org for locations
Fri.	5	noon – 5 p.m	Free Winter Fun Days Youth Recreation Activities	Visit LBParks.org for locations
Sat.	6	10 a.m.-noon	1st Saturday Stewards Volunteer Cleanup	El Dorado Nature Center
Mon.	8	Varies M-F	Free After School Recreation Program	Visit LBParks.org for hours and sites
Tue.	9	Varies M-F	Free After School Recreation Program	Visit LBParks.org for hours and sites
Wed.	10	Varies M-F	Free After School Recreation Program	Visit LBParks.org for hours and sites
Th.	11	8-9:30 a.m.	Free Bird Walk	Rancho Los Cerritos
Fri.	12	Varies M-F	Free After School Recreation Program	Visit LBParks.org for hours and sites
Sat.	13	10:30 a.m.	New Volunteer Open House RSVP at 562.206.2040	Rancho Los Cerritos
Mon.	15		Martin Luther King Jr Birthday Holiday	
Tue.	16	Varies M-F	Free After School Recreation Program	Visit LBParks.org for hours and sites
Wed.	17	Varies M-F	Free After School Recreation Program	Visit LBParks.org for hours and sites
Th.	18	Varies M-F	Free After School Recreation Program	Visit LBParks.org for hours and sites
Fri.	19	Varies M-F	Free After School Recreation Program	Visit LBParks.org for hours and sites
Sat.	20	10 a.m. – noon	Volunteer Wetland Cleanup	Jack Dunster Reserve
		11 a.m. – 2 p.m.	Pet Supplies Plus Pet Adoption Event	2086 N. Bellflower Blvd.
Mon.	22	Varies M-F	Free After School Recreation Program	Visit LBParks.org for hours and sites
Tue.	23	Varies M-F	Free After School Recreation Program	Visit LBParks.org for hours and sites
Wed.	24	Varies M-F	Free After School Recreation Program	Visit LBParks.org for hours and sites
Th.	25	Varies M-F	Free After School Recreation Program	Visit LBParks.org for hours and sites
Fri.	26	Varies M-F	Free After School Recreation Program	Visit LBParks.org for hours and sites
Sat.	27	9-10 a.m.	El Dorado Regional Park Cleanup	Past El Dorado Frontier in Area III
Mon.	29	Varies M-F	Free After School Recreation Program	Visit LBParks.org for hours and sites
Tue.	30	Varies M-F	Free After School Recreation Program	Visit LBParks.org for hours and sites
Wed.	31	Varies M-F	Free After School Recreation Program	Visit LBParks.org for hours and sites

Free Mobile Recess Programs

December 26-29 – Jan. 2-5	Wednesday and Friday	10 a.m.– noon
December 26-29 – Jan. 2-5	Tuesday and Thursday	10 a.m. – noon
December 26-29 – Jan. 2-5	Tuesday and Thursday	1:30-3:30 p.m.
December 27 & 29	Wednesday and Friday	1:30-3:30 p.m.
January 3 & 5	Wednesday and Friday	1:30-3:30 p.m.

Visit www.longbeach.gov/park/recreation-programs/youth-programs/mobile-recess for more information

Register on Site

Grace Park, 361 E. Plymouth Street
Rose Park, corner of Orizaba Avenue and 8th Street
Hudson Park, 2335 Webster Ave.
Orizaba Park, 1435 Orizaba Ave.
Sparks at Midtown, 1900 Long Beach Blvd.

LBUSD Students Free Community Learning Hubs ages 5-14, through June 14, 2024

Monday-Friday 3-6 p.m.

Register online
Houghton, McBride, Orizaba and Veterans Parks

To enroll, visit your desired location. Academic support with high-speed internet, sports, fitness and more. Registration is on a first come, first serve basis. Visit www.longbeach.gov/park/recreation-programs/youth-programs/community-learning-hubs for details.

LONG BEACH PARKS, RECREATION AND MARINE

WWW.LBPARKS.ORG



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