

County DIGEST



MAY 1998

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

Department of Parks and Recreation

Something for Everyone!

Since 1944, the Department of Parks and Recreation has been providing the residents of Los Angeles County and visitors from around the world with social, cultural and recreational activities for everyone to enjoy. Currently, the department is gearing up for another busy summer season and is inviting you and your family to enjoy any or all of our fantastic facilities and programs. For brochures about these recreational opportunities or detailed information, call (213) 738-2961 or visit our web site at www.parks.co.la.ca.us.

With over 63,000 acres of parks, gardens, lakes, trails, natural areas and the largest public golf course system in the world, the choices for recreational opportunities are countless. Therefore, to guide you in choosing a destination, the following is a brief description of the facilities:

Local Parks

Generally between 5 and 15 acres, local parks are an excellent focal point for family or individual outings. Most parks feature ball fields, playground equipment, community buildings and picnic facilities. Numerous clubs hold meetings at parks and special interest classes such as arts and crafts, CPR and self-defense are held throughout the year. Regional Parks

These vast locations can include lakes for sailing, water-skiing and fishing; numerous acres for sunbathing, picnicking and playing sports; and miles of trails for hiking, biking and horseback riding. The regional parks include Santa Fe Dam, Castaic Lake, Whittier Narrows, Schabarum, Frank G. Bonelli, Kenneth Hahn and William S. Hart. Call these facilities for the exact programs, facilities

and other countless special activities.

Natural Areas

There are 18 locations throughout the County which offer the most beautiful wildlife and natural areas in the country. With over 6,000 acres to explore, including 8 nature centers with live animal exhibits and flora and fauna displays, these wildlife sanctuaries are both an educational experience and peaceful retreat for all to enjoy.

Swimming Pools

There are many community parks with swimming pools to help beat the heat in the summertime. The pools offer recreational swimming, learn-to-swim classes, competitive swim teams and in one case, scuba diving and scuba certification courses.

Botanic Gardens

These locations provide scenic paths and walkways surrounded by plants and flower collections in bloom throughout the year. Walking tours and picnic sites are available.

Golf Courses

Golf courses are available throughout the County and offer challenging layouts for all skill levels. Our courses offer affordable greens fees, discount programs for seniors and students and an excellent junior golf program.

Cultural Sites

The Hollywood Bowl and the John Anson Ford Amphitheater feature some of the finest classical, jazz and theatrical entertainers in the world. Be sure to fill your summer with fireworks, picnics, and show-stopping performances at these landmark facilities. With all of these great facilities, there is definitely something for

everyone. However, aside from providing programs for the general public, the department also focuses a great deal of attention on our core customers, the youth of Los Angeles County. By providing high-



Sailing at Castaic Lake

quality, supervised, educational and recreational opportunities, the department is committed to giving children safe and structured learning experiences which they may not otherwise receive. These programs have typically included summer and winter lunch programs, after-school programs and summer day camps. However, as we near the 21st century, the department is developing new programs to meet the changing cultural and educational needs of youth.

see Parks on last page

Melvin Knowles

Assisting Residents Day & Night

The storms that pounded Southern California have brought havoc to the lives and properties of County residents. Throughout these and other weather-related disasters, maintenance crews from the Department of Beaches and Harbors' Facilities and Maintenance Division have become heroes for working tirelessly to save lives and homes from the relentlessly rising waters. Among these heroes is Melvin Knowles, a 34-year County Employee.

Knowles, a Power Equipment



Melvin Knowles is flanked by Supervisor Burke, his wife and Stan Wisniewski, director of the Department of Beaches and Harbors.

Operator, was honored as the April 1998 County Employee of the Month. He is responsible for operating heavy equipment vital during storm seasons which build sand berms, repair eroded beach areas, relocate lifeguard towers away from the shoreline, open up storm drains and remove heavy debris brought onto beaches. He even buries dead whales that have washed ashore!

Prior to the arrival of El Nino, he led his colleagues in a race against time to build sand berms that would protect homes and properties along the County's 31-mile coastline. Even though he is stationed at the department's Venice beach facility, Knowles travels wherever needed. He keeps his hand-held radio and beeper on at all times. When he hears a call for help, he

see Knowles on page four

Cheers to CCHRS

Of the 200 entries to the 1998 Public Service Excellence Awards competition, seven government programs were chosen for national recognition. The awards pay tribute to the highest standards of excellence and innovation in federal, state and local government.

Public Employees Roundtable (PER), sponsor of the awards competition, chose for its Intergovernmental Award Los Angeles County's Consolidated Criminal History Reporting System (CCHRS). Los Angeles County Municipal Court Judge Kenneth Lee Chotiner, the program's project director, and some members of CCHRS received the

award on May 4 at the Breakfast of Champions at the Dirksen Senate Office Building on Capitol Hill. The Breakfast is the annual event signaling the start of Public Service Recognition Week, May 4-10, 1998.

The delegation, in addition to Chotiner, was comprised of Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich; John Ruegg, director of the County's Information Systems Advisory Board; Susan Rios, Chotiner's courtroom clerk and chief trainer for CCHRS; Charles Drescher, systems director for the LA Police Department's Information Resources Division; Lt. Charles Van Noy, LA County Sheriff's Department; and Milan Dragicevich, technical writer with the Planning and Research Unit of the County's 24 Municipal Courts.

CCHRS is a state-of-the art computer system that provides accurate, complete and instantaneous criminal history information to judges, law enforcement officers, prosecutors and probation officers in Los Angeles County. The program provides an individual's full

criminal history in less than two and one half seconds by retrieving information from nine incompatible state and county data systems and storing it in a central repository which is accessible by all criminal justice agencies in the County.

By recognizing groups rather than individuals, the award demonstrates the importance of teamwork in public service. CCHRS, custom-designed and developed by an interagency coalition of municipal court judges, law enforcement officials, prosecutors and computer programmers, helps to identify, track and apprehend criminal subjects, including those with multiple aliases, gang members,

murder suspects and habitual offenders. The program has increased the accuracy in identifying defendants seeking bail from 20% to 98%.

One of CCHRS significant features has been the redesign of the hardcopy criminal history report (RAP sheet) to be instantly and completely understood by everyone and not just by a specialist. The system will produce an approximate annual savings of \$12.4 million to the County within two years of implementation, resulting in complete recovery of its development costs.

CCHRS, the first such system of its kind in the United States, is easily transportable and has broad applications in jurisdictions of any size. Since its debut in December 1996, the system has made a major impact on the efficiency of criminal justice operations in the County.



Public Defender Michael Judge accepts a plaque on behalf of the Countywide Criminal Justice Coordination Committee (CCJCC), the governing body that oversees CCHRS. With Judge are members of the Board, several department heads, the Undersheriff, the District Attorney, Judge Chotiner and Municipal Court Presiding Judges Association Chair Judge Philip Mautino.



Department of Beaches and Harbors

It's probably the most unique of Los Angeles County's 38 departments. That's because ...

- it's a dynamic example of public and private sector teamwork;
- it generates millions of revenue dollars for the County General Fund;
- it funds many of its projects through an aggressive marketing program;
- it boasts of having one of the largest small-craft harbors in the nation, as well as clean and modern beach facilities that in 1997 accommodated more than 53 million visitors; and,

•just for fun, it's home to "Baywatch," the television series making County beaches and Marina del Rey a focus of world attention and tourism.

It is the Department of Beaches and Harbors, property manager for one of the County's most valuable assets, Marina del Rey, and operator of 31 miles of public beaches. A tightly knit staff of 119 permanent employees oversees these coastal properties seven days a week, year-round.

The Department negotiates and manages leases with private entrepreneurs who provide boat slips, condos and apartments, hotels, restaurants, shops, businesses and other commercial ventures from which the County derives \$24 million in annual rents. Marina staff also enforces upkeep of these privately-operated parcels, as well as maintains and improves public areas of the Marina, such as its parks, inner road system, beach, view piers, boat storage, docking and fishing facilities.

"Today, Marina del Rey is at a crossroads. Many of the original leases are maturing and second generation development is necessary to keep the Marina competitive in today's market," said Stan Wisniewski, Director. "For that reason, the Department developed and the Board of Supervisors approved an Asset Management Strategy to take us into the 21st century. This plan is designed to enhance recreational enjoyment, bring more visitors to Marina del Rey and increase revenues. It envisions a waterfront promenade, open air plazas and restaurants, an entertainment/retail center and a family-

oriented area for recreation and tourism."

Two other notable developments are ongoing in the Marina. A \$23.5 million Seawall Restoration Project is underway and will give the 7.5 mile seawall another 30-40 years of life. An electrical current system will prevent further corrosion of the reinforcing steel and a tie-back system will tie the 728 concrete panels to the land.

Because of the natural flow of mud and sand into Marina del Rey from Ballona Creek, sediment continually builds up in



Maintenance crews built sand berms to protect public and private property from damage by El Nino-driven storms this winter.

the harbor's entrance channels, blocking navigation which is particularly problematic because the U.S. Coast Guard uses Marina del Rey as its base for LAX air-sea disasters. Over the past four years, the Department has coordinated dredging of its channels on three occasions and a major dredging project to remove contaminated sediments and re-open the waterways to their 1960's design depth is scheduled for the spring of 1999.

The Department pioneered marketing in the County and now has reached out to other public sector venues to establish the Orange Coast Marketing Coalition. Through the Coalition, the State of California, Orange County and five beach cities have become the Department's marketing clients. During the coming fiscal year, Beaches and Harbors Marketing will generate approximately \$1.5 million in revenue and in-kind donations from Departmental marketing, Coalition marketing and products and services for the Fire Department lifeguards.

Marketing revenue supports two youth programs, WATER (Water Awareness, Training, Education and Recreation) and "A Day in the Marina." These programs bring more than 3,000 youngsters to the Marina and beaches each year to "taste" the seashore experience which many have never experienced. This year, the Department has joined with the Department of Children and Family Services to offer the WATER program to children from the County's foster care system.

The Department maintains and operates 21 beaches extending from Cabrillo in San Pedro to Nicholas Canyon near the Ventura County line. Grants and bond funding are used to upgrade vital beach facilities such as restrooms, concession stands, lifeguard towers and parking lots. During the past 15 years, 80% of these facilities have been rebuilt. Another \$26 million refurbishment program for facilities at 13 beaches is scheduled to be completed by the year 2000.

The year's El Niño storms and heavy surf made heroes of the Department's Facilities and Property Maintenance Division crews with assistance from County and City Fire and Public Works Departments. This winter alone, crews built 11 miles of sand berms to protect public and private property along the County's oceanfront.

All of these efforts underscore the Department's goal of providing inexpensive, safe recreational facilities for the County's residents and visitors. For example:

•At Marina del Rey, a low-cost public boat launching ramp makes boating accessible to enthusiasts of all economic brackets.

•More than 70% of the youngsters who enjoy the Department's WATER and "A Day in the Marina" youth programs come from the inner city and are brought to the beach at no charge in vans provided by the Department's Marketing Program. The program also provides them with beachwear.

Parks

continued from page one

An excellent example of this commitment is the newly implemented Computers for Kids Program. This program combines traditional after-school programming (physical activities, arts and crafts, etc.) with a high-tech computer lab. Made possible through federal grant funding and donated computers from various County departments, children are given a hands-on opportunity to utilize computers to complete homework assignments as well as work with specialized language and mathematics software. The response to the program has been overwhelming and expansion into parks throughout the County has already begun. Furthermore, several departmental staff members are receiving new training in providing after-school and summer day camp science programs. Clearly, these programs will serve to enhance the positive recreational opportunities for County youth and will assist them in steering clear of the ever-present negative influences of drugs and gangs.

The department offers holiday programming, cultural festivals, athletic leagues, fishing derbies, exercise courses and unlimited opportunities for family fun. At Parks and Recreation, you can find something for everyone to enjoy!



Beaches

continued from previous page

•Burton Chace Park in Marina del Rey offers guest docks for mariners, a community room for neighbors and a haven for anyone who wants to contemplate water, grass and sun in this peaceful oasis away from the city's bustle and noise.

Youth programs, Marina redevelopment, storm protection, beach upkeep, marketing and revenue creation make Beaches and Harbors an obviously unusual department with a demanding mission.

May Retirees

Congratulations to the following employees who are joining the ranks of the retired after 30 or more years of service to the people of Los Angeles County:

- CHILDREN'S SERVICES:** Gayle L. Adams
- COUNTY COUNSEL:** Joe B. Hudgens
- FIRE:** Richard E. Raabe, William D. Lanford, David Boucher, William R. Crow, Michael D. Lewis, Wayne E. Monical
- HEALTH SERVICES:** Benjamin G. Brown, Kenneth L. Cohen, Patrick Conlin, Frances E. Garner, Lovelle Mansion, Rose C. Schlessinger, Marie Schuermann, Judith C. Wilander, Larry Davis
- INTERNAL SERVICES:** Samuel C. Handy, Richard T. Thomas
- PROBATION:** Mary L. Collins, Wilma J. Starnes
- PUBLIC SOCIAL SERVICES:** Eunice Lisberg
- PUBLIC WORKS:** Adanias Cavazos, William E. Cristiano, Jane Graham, Jack R. Michael, Rudolph Rincon, Stanley M. Sunabe, Claude A. Woodall, Jr.
- SHERIFF:** Yuki S. Yamanouye, George P. Fallis



Knowles

continued from page two

calls and volunteers to come out and work no matter where he is.

Asked what has been his greatest challenge while working in the field, "Being called out at midnight to save homes and lifeguard towers because the task looks impossible but somehow we got the job done."

Knowles trains the department's heavy equipment operators. He mentors younger colleagues on safety precautions, work routines and emergency situations. He is also asked to test heavy equipment prior to the department's purchase because his assessment is valuable.

The award means a great deal to him because "for the past 34 years I was doing something right and setting an example for my family and co-workers."

Congratulations to the following employees who are retiring after serving the people of the County of Los Angeles for more than 25 years:

- ASSESSOR:** Jacob C. Choy
- BOARD OF SUPERVISORS:** Masako N. Morimoto
- CHILDREN'S SERVICES:** Elizabeth A. Frawley
- COUNTY COUNSEL:** Charles J. Moore
- FIRE:** Kenneth A. Fiala, Bruce A. Mitchell, Remedios B. Ylanan, Harry A. Thy, Jr.
- HEALTH SERVICES:** Joyce J. Ancog, Shirley A. Baker, Fran P. Burgess, Lillie B. Hansford, Ethel M. Jennings, Robert Kilman, Bruce R. Krudis, Wendell A. Page, Ernestine Pruiet, Rodrigo M. Serrano, Mary A. Stabler, Esther R. Weber, Bobby N. Johnson
- INTERNAL SERVICES:** Charles Spencer
- PROBATION:** Tonja M. Acker, Richard L. Jones
- PUBLIC LIBRARY:** Madalena M. Bastos-Conne
- PUBLIC SOCIAL SERVICES:** Mirt Clark, Rita J. Padget
- SHERIFF:** Douglas H. Dolan, Richard D. Macali, Arlo K. Thykeson, Dorothy E. Holmes, Lawrence A. Weiner, Joseph A. Guzman, Jon H. Hill

Members of the Board

Yvonne Brathwaite Burke
Chair
Second District

Gloria Molina
First District

Zev Yaroslavsky
Third District

Don Knabe
Fourth District

Michael D. Antonovich
Fifth District

Michael J. Henry
Director of Personnel

Sandra A. Hoodye
Ombudsman/Community Liaison

John S. Mina
Staff