



MAY - JUNE 2017

Orange County Cemetery District

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Tim Deutsch, General Manager

SALUTE OUR VETERANS ON MEMORIAL DAY – Mon., May 29th

Please join us on Monday, May 29th as we honor and thank all those who have served, or are currently serving our nation in the Armed Forces. The Orange County Cemetery District (OCCD) will be holding Memorial Day Programs at all three of our locations. Admission is free and the programs will take place rain or shine.

EL TORO MEMORIAL PARK

11:00 AM

The featured speaker at El Toro Memorial Park will be Mr. Fred Whitaker, a World War II Veteran of the Battle of the Bulge. His remarks titled, "Recollections of a Rifleman – Europe 1944-45" will include combat stories to "honor those who sacrificed their lives on the altar of our freedom." Darrell Rivers of the Huntington Beach Historical Society will present "General Logan's Order." Music will be provided by the Master Chorale of Saddleback Valley and a stirring rendition of "Amazing Grace" will be played on bagpipes, followed by a moment of silence in honor of those who have made the ultimate sacrifice. Guitarist and vocalist Gene Smith will also provide prelude and postlude musical selections. VFW Post 6024 will provide an Honor Guard Firing Salute and the Mayors of local cities will participate in a wreath laying ceremony. There will also be a Fallen Soldiers Battle Cross Display.

ANAHEIM CEMETERY

11:00 AM

Congressman Lou Correa will be the keynote speaker for the Anaheim Cemetery Memorial Day Program. Other speakers include Anaheim Mayor Tom Tait, OCCD Trustee Cynthia Ward, and Veteran Ricardo Reyes. The program will also feature several inspirational readings including: "Flanders Field" by The VFW Auxiliary President; "My Mothers Pain" by Legion Commander Paul Deis; and "Freedom is Not Free" by the Legion Auxiliary President. American Legion Anaheim Post 72 and Placentia Post 277 will form the Honor Guard providing the Rifle Volley Salute, and there will also be a beautiful wreath laying ceremony.



SANTA ANA CEMETERY - 10:00 AM

This year's program observes the 100th Anniversary of the U.S. entry into World War I. The keynote speaker is Hugh Crooks, Jr., past State Commander of the California American Legion who represents California to the national American Legion organization. In 2013, Gov. Brown appointed Mr. Crooks to the California Veterans Board, which advises the Governor, the Legislature and the California Department of Veterans Affairs on Veteran issues. Sharon Kaplan will present General Logan's Order and the Orange High School Chamber Singers will perform. There will be a parade of flags, a wreath ceremony, and dedication of the POW/MIA Vacant Chair. The Honor Roll of the Fallen will honor Orange County active duty service personnel killed in action during 2016 around the world. Cooper's Battery will fire three Civil War canon salutes to honor the Fallen, POW's/MIA's and the Unknown Dead. Lynn Johsz will present "In Flanders Field" and the day will conclude with a potluck barbecue at American Legion Post 132 in Orange.

Meet Andrew Trejo – Anaheim Cemetery’s New Lead Worker

The District wishes to congratulate Andrew Trejo for being selected as Anaheim Cemetery’s new Lead Worker. A Lead Worker is the person the District looks to supervise groundskeepers and to oversee the day-to-day operations of the grounds. He reports directly to the Cemetery Manager and will take over Cemetery Manager responsibilities if the Cemetery Manager is away. Being a Lead Worker is an important role, as this person must be able to multi-task all the aspects of the physical operations of the grounds, but also have the knowledge and skills to work directly with families needing to make arrangements for interments or pre-need planning purchases.

Many families who visit El Toro Memorial Park on a regular basis already know Andrew Trejo, who has worked at El Toro Memorial Park for the last ten years as a groundskeeper. In fact, when word got out that Andrew had been promoted and was moving to Anaheim Cemetery, several families commented on how much he will be missed at El Toro. This is no surprise as Andrew said his favorite part of the job is helping families during a difficult time and getting to know the different families out on the grounds as he works. Eventually, Andrew hopes to become a Cemetery Manager.

Andrew was born and raised in Santa Ana and, prior to coming to the District, he worked for a land surveying company. He is married to his best friend Violet Trejo, and he is as busy at home as he is at work. Andrew is the proud father of four children including three sons – Michael, Daniel and Andrew, Jr. and



daughter Navaeh. Their fifth child, daughter Olivia, is on the way!

When asked if there was anything he wanted to tell the families we serve, Andrew stated, “As an employee of the Orange County Cemetery District, I will do my best to provide the best service and treat their loved ones with the utmost respect.

Contract for New Niche Features at Anaheim & Santa Ana Awarded to Fast-Track Construction

At the April 4th Board Meeting, Trustees approved the award of contract for the construction of new niche features at both Anaheim Cemetery and Santa Ana Cemetery to Fast-Track Construction Corporation based out of Culver City. Including a ten percent contingency, the District estimates the project will cost between \$735,000 to \$809,000 to complete.

The project will create a new covered niche columbarium at the Santa Ana Cemetery and will offer 488 new niches. The columbarium will be located directly across the street from the office, near the Garden of the Pines. At Anaheim Cemetery, 240 new niches will be added adjacent to the existing bank of niches that is located next to the Community Mausoleum.

The District wanted to begin this project last fall, however, during the design phase, the County Building Department made some major structural changes to the Santa Ana

covered columbarium that were not anticipated. The plans originally called for a wood gable structure to match the design of the office across the street, but code required the covered structure to be built out of non-combustible materials. All of the materials including beams, trestles, etc. had to be switched to metal which changed the design and cost. In addition, in order to avoid soil grading that would impact adjacent gravesites, the installation of caissons were required that will be drilled eight to ten feet deep at all 16 footings. A dedicated handicap parking spot was also required which mandated the development of concrete curbs, ramps and painting of the handicap parking stall.

The District is very excited for construction to begin, especially since Santa Ana Cemetery is currently sold-out for niche space. We appreciate your patience during construction and apologize for any disruption that may occur while the project is underway.

Santa Ana Cemetery Limiting Pre-Need Space Sales

Due to dwindling inventory of available interment spaces at Santa Ana Cemetery, the District has made the difficult decision to restrict all sales of interment spaces to only those families who have experienced a death and need immediate use of interment space. Santa Ana Cemetery will no longer sell spaces on a Pre-Need basis and 12 month payment programs will no longer be offered.

Santa Ana Cemetery is making every effort to create new interment spaces by closing roads and converting those roads to new lawn areas. In addition, as mentioned earlier in this newsletter, the District will also be constructing a new niche feature that will add 488 new niches at Santa Ana Cemetery.

Casket spaces, cremation niche spaces, and in-ground cremation spaces are still available to purchase on a Pre-Need basis at El Toro Memorial Park in Lake Forest. While Anaheim Cemetery is sold out for casket space, pre-need sales for niches and in-ground cremation spaces are still allowed.

WANTED: LAND FOR A NEW CEMETERY

For several years the District has been saving as much money as possible to purchase land and develop a new public cemetery. To date the District has set aside almost \$6.8 Million dollars for this purpose and has been actively investigating potential parcels of land in Orange County that may be suitable for cemetery development. However, finding 25 plus acres of available land in Orange County that is appropriate for cemetery development is no easy task. We have enlisted the aid of local realtors and have approached the County of Orange for a listing of any available County owned properties.

We are asking for your help as well. If you know of any Orange County landowners with parcels that are 20 acres or more who may be willing to sell, please contact Tim Deutsch, General Manager for the Orange County Cemetery District, at (949) 951-9102 or email him at t.deutsch@orccd.com. The property must be topographically suitable for cemetery development.

The Problem of Gravesite Decoration Overload

At the time interment space is purchased or arrangements are made for a burial, families are provided with a copy of the District's rules and regulations. For many years now the policy regarding flowers and ornaments has been as follows:

“No monument, architectural object, decoration, toy, tree, ornament or device shall be permitted on cemetery interment spaces or placed in or attached to any tree or shrub. Exceptions: Each interment space may have no more than two (2) approved flower containers. One container shall be a flower vase placed flush with the surface of the ground and installed by District employees. The second container may be an additional flower vase OR an approved flower container.”

In an effort to be sensitive to the grief of our families, the district has not made a habit of enforcing this policy. However, recently we are seeing larger and larger displays being left on gravesites and this is resulting in several problems. First, from an operations standpoint, the ever increasing number of elaborate displays cause real maintenance delays and difficulties with staff having to work around these objects for mowing and trimming. In addition, when objects are left on the grass for a

prolonged period, it kills the turf underneath those objects which causes additional work for staff who then have to constantly reseed or even resod grass that has died from being covered. Finally, the District has also received warnings from Vector Control regarding additional flower receptacles holding water that does not get changed regularly resulting in increased mosquito breeding areas.

Apart from operations, on a regular basis, the district office is receiving complaints from families of neighboring gravesites who are angered that flowers and decorations are encroaching on their loved one's gravesite. In addition, for those families who are following the policy, they are confused and frustrated as to why District staff does not consistently enforce the policy when there are gravesites that are in flagrant violation of the rules and have even suggested that staff is showing favoritism by allowing certain gravesites to completely ignore the policy.

Because of these issues, we will now be making stronger efforts to appropriately limit flowers and decorations to no more than two items per gravesite. It is our hope that this will also help to reduce theft from gravesites which has also become a common problem at all three cemeteries.

WE APPRECIATE YOUR COOPERATION!

ORANGE COUNTY CEMETERY DISTRICT

May/June Board Meetings

The Board of Trustees for the Orange County Cemetery District holds regular meetings the first Tuesday of every month at 11:00 a.m. at the District Office located at 25751 Trabuco Road, Lake Forest, CA 92630. The public is welcome to attend.

Agendas are available at least 72 hours prior to each meeting and are also posted on our website at www.occemeterydistrict.com. In May and June, meetings will be held as follows:

- ❖ **Tuesday, May 2nd at 11:00 a.m.**
- ❖ **Tuesday, June 6th at 11:00 a.m.**

If you have any questions or need additional information please contact the District Secretary, Mary Funk at (949) 951-9102 ext. 110.

Flower Removal and Holiday Schedule

Every Wednesday, groundskeepers remove flowers throughout all three cemeteries. Living plants in approved containers or planter dishes and other non-perishable items placed on graves will be taken to the pick-up locations near the maintenance yards at each cemetery and held for a reasonable amount of time. Unless claimed, they will be disposed of.

Families are encouraged to remove their flowers or decorations on Tuesday night; you can then place the flowers back on the space on Wednesday afternoon.

The District does allow for flowers and decorations to be left on the spaces during holidays/events or for special occasions, such as anniversaries, birthdays and for new interments. Please come to the cemetery office and let us know that you have a special occasion and request that the flowers or decorations be left on the space. We do ask that you empty the vase and place fresh water in the container every four to five days to eliminate mosquito breeding sources, which can cause serious health issues. Your cooperation in this regard is greatly appreciated.

In honor of Mother's Day, flowers may be placed on graves beginning Thursday, May 4th until Tuesday, May 23rd.

In honor of Memorial Day, flowers may be placed on graves beginning Thursday, May 25th until Tuesday, June 6th.

In honor of Father's Day, flowers may be placed on graves beginning Thursday, June 8th until Tuesday, June 27th.

A complete listing of the District's extended holiday flower schedule for 2017 can be viewed on our District website at www.occemeterydistrict.com, Click on the tab for Flowers, Markers and Rules, and then click Flower Removal Schedule.

In Observance of

MEMORIAL DAY



MONDAY, MAY 29, 2017

**The offices at
Anaheim Cemetery
Santa Ana Cemetery
And
El Toro Memorial Park
will be closed**

Our Mission Statement and Core Values

The Orange County Cemetery District manages and maintains Orange County's public cemeteries in a manner that preserves their beauty, dignity, historical and cultural values, and offers affordable interment service for County residents.

The Trustees and staff of the Orange County Cemetery District are committed to the following values:

Integrity ■ Respect ■ Accountability
Responsiveness ■ Empathy ■ Transparency
Appreciation for Diverse Needs

