



NOV. – DEC. 2023

Orange County Cemetery District

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El Toro Memorial Park to Hold 34th Annual Veterans Day Program

If Veterans hold a special place in your heart, please make plans to attend El Toro Memorial Park's 34th Annual Veterans Day Observance. The event will be held on Saturday, November 11th at 11:00 a.m. This is a wonderful opportunity to show our Veterans that their service and sacrifice is remembered, appreciated and honored!

We are excited to welcome Laguna Woods Mayor, Cynthia Conners as our keynote speaker. Mayor Conners served as an officer in the Armed Forces for 11 years. She entered active duty in early 1975, as a Lieutenant in the Women's Army Corps. As the Army more fully integrated women into the service, she became a transportation officer, and then a JAG attorney, serving as a prosecutor with the 2nd Infantry Division at Camp Casey, Korea. Stateside, she was stationed at Fort McClellan, Alabama; Oakland Army Base, California; Fort Eustis, Virginia; Fort Carson, Colorado; and

the Presidio of San Francisco. Mayor Conners left active duty in late 1985, when she married her late husband, Jim, a retired Army Chaplain and widower who had four teenagers at home. Mayor Conners will be speaking about "Celebrating Women's Service".

The Veterans Day Program will feature special music by vocalist John Huntington. Richard Cook will perform "Amazing Grace" on the bagpipes and bugler, Alfred Lang will close the program with "Taps". Guitarist and vocalist Gene Smith will provide prelude and postlude music.

The program will also include an Honor Guard Firing Salute provided by the Rifle Team of VFW Post 6024, a beautiful wreath presentation by Councilmembers of our surrounding cities, and a color guard provided by the South Coast Chapter SAR. Chaplain Frank Cook of American Legion Post 862 will



Cynthia Conners, Laguna Woods Mayor and U.S. Veteran will serve as the keynote speaker.

also be on hand presenting his educational World War I historical display.

Our many thanks to all the volunteers who help to make this event possible, and our most sincere thanks to all the Veterans this program is meant to honor!

El Toro Memorial Park Gates Close at 5 p.m. on Sunday November 5th

Don't forget to set your clocks back one hour as Daylight Saving Time ends. This also signals the end of extended visitation hours at El Toro Memorial Park. Starting on Sunday,

Nov. 5th, the park will close its gates at 5 p.m. Please plan your visits so that you are leaving the park before 5 p.m. This will help us close the park safely and in a timely manner.

Santa Ana Cemetery and Anaheim Cemetery will continue their regular visitation hours from 8 a.m. to 5 pm. Extended hours at El Toro will return on Sunday, March 10th.

Anaheim Cemetery’s Dia de los Muertos Celebration is Back Nov. 2nd!



For some free, family-friendly fun, come to Anaheim Cemetery on Thursday, November 2nd from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. and enjoy the return of our Dia de los Muertos celebration!

The program will begin with a blessing by Rev. Bill Cao of St. Anthony Mary Claret Catholic Church. Following the blessing the wonderful dancers from Ballet Folklorico Donaji and the talented

students from R.H.Y.T.H.M.O. Mariachi Academy will be the featured entertainers.

Ballet Folklorico Donaji is a local youth dance group that will perform a variety of traditional dances with performers ranging in age from as young as 4 to 21.

R.H.Y.T.H.M.O. Mariachi Academy was founded in 1996 by Gabriel Zavala. Mr. Zavala believed that by preserving, teaching and helping youth to appreciate the history, the art and music of their ancestors, it will help children to have a positive image of the Indian and Hispanic cultural heritage. Sadly, Mr. Zavala passed away on Feb. 26, 2021 due to complications of COVID-19, but

his family is resolved to carry on the mission of the academy.

The Orange County Cemetery District is delighted to welcome back both groups after a three-year absence of this fun, community event.

While supplies last, we will also be passing out free small bouquets of marigolds that families can use to decorate a loved one’s gravesite or to adorn an ofrenda at home. During the entertainment, we will provide free refreshments and Pan de Muertos. Children will also enjoy the free face painting and the craft table where they can color their own skull mask, make a paper marigold or enjoy other fun crafts!

Dia De Los Muertos “To Go” on November 2nd Starting at 3 p.m. at El Toro Memorial Park and Santa Ana Cemetery While Supplies Last



If you can’t make it to Anaheim Cemetery Thursday night for the live program, consider picking up some free Dia de los Muertos treats “To Go”. Both Santa Ana Cemetery and El Toro Memorial Park will have tables set up outside their office buildings starting at 3 pm on Thursday, November 2nd.

While supplies last, cemetery staff will be passing out free small bouquets of marigolds, free craft kits for children to enjoy, and bags of free pan de muerto!



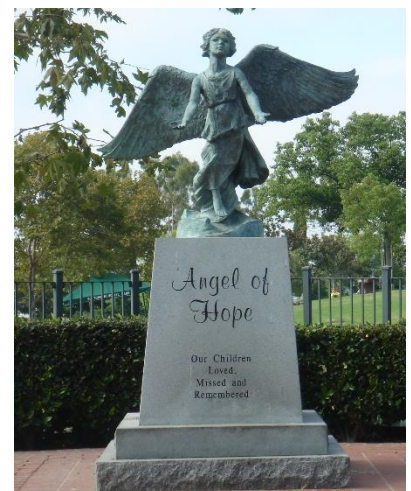
Angel of Hope Candlelight Service – Wed., December 6th at 7 pm

Every year on December 6th at 7 p.m., families gather at the Angel of Hope Statue at El Toro Memorial Park for the candlelight ceremony honoring the memory of the children they have lost.

Parents, relatives, and friends are invited to gather and lay white flowers and other tokens at the Angel’s feet and, most importantly, speak their child’s name. For many, this is the most profound moment of the evening. The program also includes

special guest speakers who share their experiences of loss, poetic readings, and touching musical performances.

The event takes place rain or shine, so please dress appropriately for the weather. White flowers and candles will be provided. It is recommended that you bring a flashlight as lighting at night is limited in the park. Please bring your own lawn chair as seating is not provided.



Join Us for Wreaths Across America on Sat., Dec. 16th at 9 am

Wreaths Across America provides over 1.5 million wreaths worldwide to be placed on U.S. veteran graves during the holidays. Local groups register with Wreaths Across America to seek wreath sponsorships. The sponsorships cover the costs to produce the wreaths and can serve as fundraisers for local groups.

In 2017, a dedicated troop of American Heritage Girls were the first to sell wreaths for El Toro Memorial Park. Each year they lead a beautiful wreath ceremony at El Toro, and everyone is encouraged to place the wreaths that have been sponsored after the ceremony concludes.

At Santa Ana Cemetery, the Santa Ana Elks Lodge is also coordinating a ceremony.

Both programs will be held on Saturday, December 16th at 9:00 a.m. with the wreath placement to follow.

Our goal is to secure enough wreath sponsorships to ensure that every Veteran's grave is honored on December 16th. But we need your help! **We can't place wreaths unless wreaths are sponsored.**

Wreaths cost \$17.00 each. Wreath placements cannot be assigned to specific gravesites and are placed randomly on veteran graves. Also, sponsoring a wreath does not guarantee you will be able to place a wreath. Most years there are not enough wreaths sponsored to cover every veteran who is interred. When wreath placement begins, if you did not sponsor a wreath, please wait at least five minutes to allow those who did sponsor a wreath to have an opportunity to place at least one wreath. Wreaths are delivered directly to the cemetery prior to the wreath placement ceremony on December 16th. **The last day to sponsor a wreath is Nov. 28th.**



To sponsor wreaths for El Toro Memorial Park or Santa Ana Cemetery, please follow these instructions.

1. For El Toro Memorial Park please scan the QR Code above or visit:

www.wreathseltoromemorialpark.org

For Santa Ana Cemetery please visit:

www.wreathscrossamerica.org/casacc

From this page you can sponsor wreaths or volunteer to help place wreaths.

2. If you would like a portion of the proceeds to benefit one of the fundraising groups, scroll down to the bottom of the page to see "Local Groups Supporting Us" and select the group you want to sponsor through.

Your sponsorships make this program possible for our Veterans – Thank you!!

Staff Attend California Association of Public Cemeteries (CAPC) Annual Education Seminar and Area Meeting in Sacramento

The California Association of Public Cemeteries is dedicated to promoting the development of Public Cemetery Districts and Public Cemetery governance through interactive communication, education and legislative advocacy. Every fall they hold an Annual Education Seminar to give members a chance to network and learn from one another's experiences.

This year's conference was held Oct. 6th-7th in Sacramento. Our District sent Santa Ana Cemetery Manager, Julio Amarillas and El Toro Memorial Park Cemetery Associate, Robert Hernandez to the conference. Presentations included: a discussion on Green Burials; Understanding the Brown Act; Best practices for Interment and Disinterment Forms; Interviewing and Hiring Do's & Don'ts; and the

importance of Standard Operating Procedures and use of Checklists. The California Special Districts Association also provided a legislative update and there were breakout sessions where attendees could share common concerns and hear how other Districts deal with similar problems. Our thanks to CAPC for hosting such an informative conference!

ORANGE COUNTY CEMETERY DISTRICT

November/December Board Meetings

The Board of Trustees for the Orange County Cemetery District holds regular meetings the first Tuesday of every month at 10:00 a.m. at the District Office located at 25751 Trabuco Road, Lake Forest, CA 92630. Meetings are now being held in person and are open to the public. Members of the public may also attend Board Meetings remotely. Instructions to join remotely are posted on the agendas.

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

- **Tuesday, November 7th at 10:00 a.m.**
- **Tuesday, December 5th at 10:00 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 and discard flowers and decorations throughout all three cemeteries. Families are encouraged to remove their flowers and/or decorations on Tuesday night. You can then place the flowers back on the space on Thursday morning. Please remember that the District policy only allows for two items to be placed on gravesites. This includes the in-ground flower vase and one other item. If gravesites exceed the number of allowed items, staff may remove and discard the excess items. Please do not leave items of great monetary or sentimental value on gravesites as the District cannot prevent theft.

Throughout the year, various holidays are recognized with extended periods between full park clean-ups. During these times, 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 is greatly appreciated.

In honor of Halloween and Dia de los Muertos, flowers may be placed on Thursday, Oct. 19th and must be removed by Tuesday, Nov. 14th. Items for Thanksgiving, Christmas, Kwanzaa, and Hanukkah may be placed beginning Thursday, November 16th and must be removed by Tuesday, January 2, 2024. During these periods, light clean-up will still occur each Wednesday and only flowers that are obviously wilted will be removed.

Please be advised, during full park clean-ups everything on gravesites are discarded. Please be sure to remove items you do not want discarded before the cemetery closes on Tuesdays.

The 2023 Cemetery Grounds Wednesday Clean-up Calendar is available on our website at www.occemeterydistrict.com. Click on the tab for Flowers, Markers and Rules for more information.

CEMETERY VISITATION HOURS

Anaheim Cemetery and Santa Ana Cemetery are open for visitation, seven days a week, from 8 am to 5 pm.

El Toro Memorial Park will be open until 7 pm through Saturday, Nov. 4th. Starting on Sunday, Nov. 5th, El Toro will close at 5 pm.

Cemetery Offices are open M-F 8 am to 5 pm

All offices are closed on the weekends and on holidays.

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

