



SEPT. – OCT. 2022

Orange County Cemetery District

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New Cemetery Development Update for Gypsum Canyon

The Flagpole is Up!

The Orange County Cemetery District and its cemetery development team have been working with the City of Anaheim and the County of Orange throughout 2022 on the steps necessary to erect a 100-foot flagpole at the Gypsum Canyon property. This is the site where a new Veterans Cemetery and a new Orange County public cemetery will be developed.

The project involved many steps including site surveying, grading, earth drilling, routing of power supply, and the installation of five large light fixtures to properly illuminate the flag once it is hoisted.

On August 25th, the pole itself was finally erected by Finn Construction and Development. Many thanks to all the personnel involved in making this first step of cemetery development a reality.

In September, Supervisor Donald Wagner will be hosting a flag raising ceremony. The same 60' X 30' flag that was unfurled at the site during the groundbreaking ceremony held in December 2021, will become the first flag to fly atop the 100' pole.

Financing The New Public Cemetery

Based on the development team's draft project calendar, the first phase of the new public cemetery should be operational in 2025-26. There will be approximately 11,485 casket spaces, 1,200 in-ground cremation spaces and 1,050 niches. The overall cost for this first phase of development is estimated at \$44 million and expected to take 18 months to complete, once all approvals are in place.

The District has also agreed to set aside acreage in the public cemetery for the creation of two special sections. One will be for the interment of Allied Veterans and government officials. The other section will be for the interment of First Responders. The District is not responsible for providing funding for the development of these sections.

Over the last decade, the District has been diligently saving for a fourth cemetery. Currently, there is \$15,155,000 reserved for this purpose, and that fund is expected to grow to \$18 million by 2023. The District is also able to use monies

from the Endowment Income Fund and may also borrow from the Pre-Need Fund.

At the July Board Meeting, the Trustees approved a lease-purchase agreement from Holman Capital Corp., wherein the District will assume \$20 million in debt on a 30-year term with a rate reset at the end of the initial ten-year term. The interest rate of 4.17% is locked in for the first ten-year term.

The proposed financing plan to cover the \$44 million cemetery development is as follows:

Debt Proceeds	\$20,000,000
New Cemetery	
Reserve Fund	\$12,000,000
Endowment	
Income Fund	\$8,000,000
Pre-Need Fund	<u>\$4,000,000</u>
Total	\$44,000,000

The District is now finalizing the Holman Capital proposal and looks forward to submitting the Development Application to the City of Anaheim in September.

Orange County LAFCO Completes District Municipal Service Review

Local Agency Formation Commissions (LAFCOs) were created in 1963 by the California Legislature. They oversee the logical formation and determination of local agency boundaries that encourage orderly growth and development which are essential to the social, fiscal, and economic well-being of the State.

LAFCOs are required to periodically update the spheres of influence (SOIs) for all cities and special districts. SOIs are established to identify the long-term, probable jurisdictional boundaries and service areas for these affected agencies. In conjunction with this responsibility, LAFCOs prepare comprehensive studies known as "municipal service reviews (MSR)."

MSRs involve reviews and regional studies on future growth and identify how local agencies are planning for their municipal services and

infrastructure systems. MSRs are intended to address the efficiency and effectiveness of municipal service delivery given projected population growth, evaluate service infrastructure and agency finances, address government structure alternatives if feasible, and assist LAFCOs in the review and initiation of changes of organization.

During OCLAFCO's review of the Orange County Cemetery District, it was determined that over the past two years the District has experienced a significant increase in the sales of interment spaces due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and may be impacted by future pandemics and public health emergencies. It also projected that OCCD is expected to completely deplete its inventory of available casket spaces by fiscal year 2025-26 and reaffirmed the need for the creation of a fourth public cemetery.

After thoroughly reviewing the Orange County Cemetery District's operations and finances, it concluded that the District has made significant progress involving the new cemetery development. The preparation of a Master Plan and New Cemetery Development Plan indicates the District's financial ability to adequately fund and operate a total of four public cemeteries. Adding an additional cemetery will increase the capacity of interment services to adequately serve Orange County residents over the following 50 to 100 years.

The Final Draft MSR will be considered by the Commission during a public hearing on Wednesday, October 12th. OCLAFCO staff is recommending that the Commission adopt the MSR Statement of Determinations and SOI Statement of Determinations for the Orange County Cemetery District and reaffirm the current SOI.

Support Our Veterans and Sponsor a Wreath for the Holidays

The holidays may seem far away, but now is the time to make sure as many Veterans as possible are honored and remembered with the placement of a wreath on Dec. 17th at 9:00 a.m. through Wreaths Across America.

To sponsor wreaths for El Toro Memorial Park or Santa Ana Cemetery, please visit Wreaths Across America at the following links:

For El Toro Memorial Park visit:

www.wreathseltoromemorialpark.org

For Santa Ana Cemetery visit:

www.wreathscrossamerica.org/casacc

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". Click on the "View Our Groups" and then select the group you want to sponsor through.

Wreaths cost \$15.00 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. Wreaths ordered are delivered directly to the cemetery prior to the



wreath placement ceremony on December 17th. After the ceremony, volunteers place the sponsored wreaths on military gravesites. **The last day to sponsor a wreath is Nov. 28th.** All sponsorships are appreciated!

Luis Fernando Griego Promoted to District Equipment Mechanic

The District is excited to announce that staff member, Luis Fernando Griego has been promoted from the position of Groundskeeper to District Equipment Mechanic.

The previous District Mechanic, Jesus Lopez, retired in December 2021 and Fernando has been taking on these responsibilities since that time. Over the last eight months, he has done such a good job that he is being officially promoted to fill this important role permanently.

The District Mechanic repairs, fabricates, adjusts and maintains all of the District's cemetery machines and equipment. The Mechanic also recommends when to replace equipment and parts, maintains inventory, and tracks and reports the status and materials used in repairs.

Mr. Griego first started working for the Orange County Cemetery District as a Groundskeeper three years ago. Prior to joining the District, he worked for eight years at

Fairhaven Memorial Park as an Equipment Mechanic, and he worked for eleven years at Surgin, Inc. as a Maintenance Mechanic where he gained much of his experience setting up maintenance and calibration schedules.

Mr. Griego hopes to modernize the District's equipment maintenance by converting from a hand-written system of record-keeping, to utilizing computer software to track work orders, repairs, inventories, and maintenance schedules. This should also allow the District to get more accurate cost analysis of maintenance and repair expenses.

Fernando is a native to Orange County and was born and raised in Santa Ana. He has been married to his wife, Sally, for 18 years and is the proud father of son, Alexander and daughter, Sophia. When he is not busy with work and family, Fernando enjoys riding ATVs and dirt bikes and camping.

When asked about his future plans, we are happy to report that Mr. Griego wants to stay with the District until his retirement. We look forward to many productive years ahead. Congratulations Fernando and thank you for all your dedication and hard work!



District Receives Safety Award at CSDA Annual Conference

We are pleased to announce that the Orange County Cemetery District has been selected by the Special District Risk Management Authority (SDRMA) to receive the McMurchie Excellence in Safety Award for Workers' Compensation Program in the large member category.

The District was selected because in the 2021-22 Program Year, the District earned 10 Credit Incentive Points, had no reported claims, and a 0.63 Emod rating, which measures and rates the risk of individual

companies against other businesses in the same industry. The District earned the necessary Credit Incentive Points by staff and trustees participating in training workshops and seminars, achieving the SDLF District of Distinction designation, and having no claims reported over the last three years.

Each year, SDRMA recognizes Safety Award recipients at the California Special District Association's Annual Conference. This year's conference was held on

August 22-25th in Palm Desert. Board Chair Kelly Rivers attended the conference and accepted the award on behalf of the District.

The conference provided informative training opportunities on a wide range of topics including labor law, finance, operational concerns, strategic planning, cybersecurity, communications and more. The conference also allows participants to network with staff from other special districts and discuss mutual concerns and solutions.

**ORANGE COUNTY CEMETERY DISTRICT
September/October 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. **Until further notice these meetings are being video conferenced, but the public may also attend electronically. Please call the District office for the meeting link.**

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

- **Tuesday, September 6th at 10:00 a.m.**
- **Tuesday, October 4th 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.

CEMETERY VISITATION HOURS

Anaheim Cemetery and Santa Ana Cemetery are open year-round for visitation, seven days a week, from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

El Toro Memorial Park is open year-round for visitation, seven days a week with extended hours from 8:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. Please note beginning on Sunday, Nov. 6th El Toro Memorial Park will close daily at 5:00 p.m.

Offices are open M-F - 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. All offices are closed on the weekends. Offices will be closed on Monday Sept. 5th in observance of Labor Day.

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

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 Wednesday afternoon. 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 flower 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 Labor Day and Patriot Day, flowers may be placed on Thursday, Sept. 1st and must be removed by Tuesday, Sept. 20th. In honor of Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur, flowers may be placed on Thursday, Sept. 22nd and must be removed by Tuesday, Oct. 11th. In honor of Halloween and Dia De Los Muertos, flowers may be placed on Thursday, Oct. 13th and must be removed by Tuesday, Nov. 15th.

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 2022 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.

