

# We Create Community



## Houghton Park Community Center Dedicated as Doris Topsy-Elvord Community Center



*Celebrating the Community Center Dedication, L-R: 6th District City Councilwoman Suely Saro, Mayor Robert Garcia, Doris Topsy-Elvord, and Vice Mayor Rex Richardson.*

The City of Long Beach dedicated the newly renovated Houghton Park Community Center as the Doris Topsy-Elvord Community Center in a ceremony on August 21.

Following an item brought forth by Vice Mayor Rex Richardson and approved by the City Council, the naming of the complex recognizes the legacy, contributions and service of community leader Doris Topsy-Elvord.

Doris Topsy-Elvord has lived in Long Beach for more than 75 years and has always been an advocate for equity. She became the first Black woman elected to the Long Beach City Council in 1992 and served twice as Vice Mayor of the city. She also was the first Black person and the third woman to serve on the Port of Long Beach Harbor

Commission. She helped co-found Long Beach's African American Heritage Society and led historic designation efforts on the home of civil rights pioneers Ernest and Lillian McBride.

The new community center, which opened in 2020, offers 30,000 square feet of programmable space, a 6,400-square foot LEED-certified conference area, a social hall, two large multipurpose rooms, a weightlifting gym, computer lab, outdoor courtyards and a sound and plant garden. The original Houghton clubhouse, a historic landmark originally built in 1930, also remains on the site at 6301 Myrtle Ave.



*Brent Dennis  
Director, Long Beach Parks,  
Recreation & Marine and ACS*

The Summer of 2021 took us a few steps into the “new normal” as our Parks, Recreation, Marine and Animal Care Services team embraced the welcomed opportunities to resume more in-person events, programs, and gatherings. Mother Nature cooperated with pleasant weather conditions that made for comfortable experiences for picnicking, outdoor yoga and exercising programs, concert going and movies in the parks. In particular, the return of the Municipal Band under the leadership of our new conductor, Kurt Curtis, was celebrated with impressive audience turnouts during its abbreviated two-week summer concert season.

We welcomed Partners of Parks back to our Parks Administration Office Building at the end of August. Our non-profit partner recently announced a \$1.0 million fundraising campaign to help replace the Admiral Kidd Park playground that was destroyed by fire recently. Partners of Parks ongoing support of youth program scholarships and a variety of community special events in our parks is greatly appreciated.

The presentation of the department's strategic plan will be scheduled for City Council review and approval in October. We appreciate the thousands of Long Beach community members who participated in the survey over the past two years whose voices and input have helped shape many of the recommendations to a considerable extent. Park Planning and Partnerships Bureau team members did an amazing job with community outreach and engagement that will be reflected in a plan that will help lead many aspects of parks and recreation programming and operations in the coming decade.

Summer programming pivoted seamlessly to our ‘After School’ mode as area youth returned to classes. Health protocol compliance continues to be central to all our programs and events this autumn for safe and fun outcomes. Kudos to all our Community Recreation Services team members for their creativity and leadership throughout the summer for our youth, seniors, and families.

Our parks, beaches and marinas were all well maintained throughout the summer crush of use and enjoyment by Long Beach residents and visitors. Quality maintenance remains a high priority for our Marine Bureau and Maintenance Operations Bureau team members. Our department has appreciated the increased interest by neighborhood groups and volunteers to help activate and assist in clean-up and beautification initiatives.

Animal Care Services has the “Adoption Waggin’” out in the community on scheduled Saturdays to promote and make available cats and dogs for adoption and fostering. Autumn may be the best season for you to “fall” in love with a furry friend and welcome it into your home.

We are sharing the excitement of the city for the return of the Grand Prix later this month during the weekend of September 24-26, 2021. Enjoy the beauty of autumn out on our beaches and in our parks throughout the month of September!

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### El Dorado Nature Center: Herons Calling

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Most days there is no need to walk very far past our front gate at El Dorado Nature Center before experiencing the odd and beautiful creatures of mother nature. The small green heron can sometimes be seen standing in shallow water or balancing expertly on a low hanging branch, just off the first bridge! Keep your eyes open for its dark, iridescent wings, chestnut neck, and short, yellow legs. You may even hear it calling - kyowk...kyowk...

Check out this web site to hear for yourself: [bird-sounds.net/green-heron/](http://bird-sounds.net/green-heron/)





## After-School Youth Programs and Adaptive Youth & Adult Recreation Programs Offered

Registration is going on now for programs held through September 30 to safely engage youth after school. In-person adaptive recreation programs are offered through December for middle and high school youth and adults, providing fun and enriching experiences such as art, games and fitness activities designed for people with special needs.



### Free After-School Programs

Fall programs for ages 5 to 12 are offered after-school, at varying times per site, on weekdays through September 30. Homework assistance and enriching activities and games that follow COVID-19 safety guidelines are offered. Visit [LBParks.org](http://LBParks.org) to sign up online or register in-person at each site:

- **Bixby Park**, 130 Cherry Ave., 562.570.1601
- **Cesar E. Chavez Park**, 401 Golden Ave., 562.570.8890
- **College Estates Park**, 808 Stevely Ave., 562.570.1617
- **Coolidge Park**, 352 E. Neece St., 562.570.1618
- **Drake Park**, 951 Maine Ave., 562.570.1625
- **El Dorado Park West**, 2800 N. Studebaker Rd., 562.570.3225
- **Houghton Park**, 6301 Myrtle Ave., 562.570.1640
- **MacArthur Park**, 1321 E. Anaheim St., 562.570.1655
- **Martin Luther King Jr. Park**, 1950 Lemon Ave., 562.570.4405
- **McBride Park**, 1550 Martin Luther King Jr. Ave., 562.570.1605
- **Orizaba Park**, 1435 Orizaba Ave., 562.570.1427
- **Pan American Park**, 5157 E. Centralia St., 562.570.3297
- **Ramona Park**, 3301 E. 65th St., 562.570.1665
- **Scherer Park**, 4600 Long Beach Blvd., 562.570.1674
- **Seaside Park**, 14th Street at Chestnut Ave., 562.570.1625

- **Silverado Park**, 1545 W. 31st St., 562.570.1675
- **Somerset Park**, 1500 E. Carson St., 562.570.1690
- **Stearns Champions Park**, 4520 E. 23rd St., 562.570.1685
- **Veterans Park**, 101 E. 28th St., 562.570.1695
- **Wardlow Park**, 3457 Stanbridge Ave., 562.570.1705
- **Whaley Park**, 5620 E. Atherton St., 562.570.1710



The **Youth ARISE (Adaptive Recreation in a Special Environment)** program is an adaptive program for middle school and high school ages featuring recreational and enrichment activities. The camp will take place at Stearns Champions Park, 4520 E. 23rd St., from 9:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. on Saturdays December 18 (holidays excluded). The fee is \$4 per session.

**ARISE for Adults** at Stearns Champions Park provides art, games and fitness activities for individuals 18 and over with special needs. This program is offered from 2 - 5 p.m. Mondays through Fridays through December 30 (holidays excluded). The fee is \$15 per weekly session.

Register online for both ARISE programs at [LBParks.org](http://LBParks.org). In-person registration is available at Stearns Champions Park by appointment only. An in-take meeting is required for new participants. Call 562.440.2867 for more information. Both programs follow enhanced safety protocols for the health and safety of both participants and staff, and a 5:1 participant-to-staff ratio is maintained.



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## Long Beach Municipal Band Bring Music to the Parks

New conductor Kurt Curtis led the Long Beach Municipal Band through a two-week season of music in the parks in August at five different parks.

The first week's theme of "Strike Up the Band" featured major American music genres including movie scores, musicals, the Big Band era and pop. Popular jazz and blues singer Barbara Morrison performed during the second half of the shows.



*Kurt Curtis leads the Municipal Band in concert, paying tribute to his late father and the former conductor.*

"A Celebration Through Music" theme in week two paid tribute to Mr. Curtis's late father and former Municipal Band Conductor Mr. Larry Curtis, who passed away in June 2019 after leading the band for 27 years. Vocalist Ms. Nicole Kubis joined the band following intermission.

Thanks to sponsors Partners of Parks, Friends of the Long Beach Municipal Band and the Port of Long Beach.

## Partners Of Parks Fundraising Campaign To Rebuild Admiral Kidd Playground



The non-profit Partners of Parks organization has announced a campaign to raise \$1 million to fund the rebuild of the nautical-themed playground structure at Admiral Kidd Park, located at 2125 Santa Fe Avenue.



West Long Beach residents suffered a devastating loss in the early-morning hours of July 18, 2021, when the playground was severely damaged by fire. The original, nautical-themed playground opened in 2011 as part of a park-expansion project.

"Our goal is to rebuild the playground with additional enhancements to 2021 standards and improvements based on input made by the community," said Parks, Recreation, and Marine Director Brent Dennis.

"The destruction of the Admiral Kidd Playground is a tragedy that destroyed a play space after 15 months of relative isolation during a pandemic, in an already park-starved community" shared POP Executive Director, Trinkia Rowsell. "Partners of Parks is excited to rally the community by raising the needed funds to rebuild the playground back better than ever and restoring this safe space for west-side children and families."

Admiral Kidd Park is located in an area of the community that would benefit from more park space and amenities. The park site was formerly used by the armed forces during World War II, according to the City's website. In commemoration, the park was named for Rear Admiral Isaac C. Kidd, who was killed during the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941, which influenced the nautical-themed design of the playground.

The campaign begins September 1st and ends December 1st, and includes a naming opportunity for the top funding level of \$250,000. Funding levels go all the way down to the \$2,500 level and includes opportunities for community members to purchase commemorative bricks on the walkway approaching the playground. Visit <http://weblink.donorperfect.com/KIDD> for funding levels and to donate online.

Partners of Parks is the non-profit that supports programming, activities and neighborhood groups who fund events in Long Beach parks. The organization supports the Long Beach Parks, Recreation and Marine Department by working with donors to fund City programming benefiting teens, seniors and families-in-need; the Youth Scholarship Program helps LBUSD students who qualify to attend PRM fee-based recreation classes without charge.



## El Dorado Nature Center Concerts Welcome a “New Normal” This Summer



*Sligo Rags fiddler Michael Kelly and David Burns on acoustic guitar, perform in the natural backdrop of El Dorado Nature Center.*

El Dorado Nature Center was excited to welcome back music lovers to their summer concert series this year. The shows were presented on every other Thursday evening beginning July 8 and included Corday, the Salty Suites, Big City Hillbillies and Steel Parade. On September 2 Sligo Rags performed their unique blend of Celtic Bluegrass fushion for an appreciative audience. PJ McDermott & Western Bop will close the series on September 16.



## Long Beach Youth Festival to Bring Resources and Inspiration to Local Youth

The Long Beach Youth Festival 2021 will be the inaugural event of the Long Beach Commission on Youth and Families and the City of Long Beach's new Office of Youth Development that will bring together youth, families, and other stakeholders on Saturday, September 25 from 8:30 a.m.–3 p.m. at Houghton Park, 6301 Myrtle Avenue.

The festival will consist of youth-centric seminars and panels for people between the ages of 12-24 covering topics such as Planning for the Future: Economic and Educational Opportunities, Know Your Rights (Housing, Education etc.), Health and Wellness (including Mental Health, Social Connectedness, and Relationship Building), Public Safety and Community Engagement, Environmental Justice, and Leadership and Organizing.

In addition, the festival will offer performances and showcases from local poets, writers, singers, and dancers, as well as interactive/fun activities and a resource fair that will be open to families and children.



The Long Beach Youth Festival and launch of the Office of Youth Development could not have been made possible without the Strategic Plan for Youth and Emerging Adults. The plan was presented and accepted by City Council on Tuesday, February 9, 2021. To view the plan, please visit: <https://bit.ly/3BKDKAB>.

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## New Fall Classes Underway Now



Not your typical chair yoga class! Chair Based Yoga is suitable for beginners as well as experienced yoga students. The class incorporates the use of a chair for various poses and movements. Meditation, breathing and relaxation techniques are also included. Students should bring a yoga mat, two yoga blocks and a yoga strap. Walk in fee available. Register for upcoming sessions: October 6-27 (session 49488) and November 3-24 (session 49489) at

[longbeach.gov/park](https://longbeach.gov/park). To view all current class offerings visit <https://bit.ly/2WYHfnG>.

## Future MacArthur Park Improvements



The City and community groups met at MacArthur Park on August 13 to celebrate upcoming projects and initiatives that will be made possible with funding from the State of California including \$8.5 million for

MacArthur Park improvements that could include renovated sports fields, an improved community center lobby, a new perimeter walking path, fitness stations, public art installations and more playgrounds, goals outlined in the MacArthur Park Vision Plan approved by the Long Beach City Council in 2019.

Mayor Robert Garcia, State Senator Lena Gonzales and Councilwoman Suely Saro received special thank you cards from the MacArthur Park youth for their support in securing the funds.

## Know Your Long Beach Park: Valparaiso Plaza



The .48-acre Valparaiso Plaza sits on a portion of what was formerly Bixby Park. When the beach parking lot was constructed in 1968, Junipero Avenue was extended down the bluff to access the parking lot, separating this half-acre lot from the rest of Bixby Park.

Beachgoers on their way to Junipero Beach pass a canon perched on the bluff that points out over the ocean. The canon guarded the City of Valparaiso for over 100 years and their citizens donated the canon to Long Beach in 1976 as a symbol of the strength of the sister city relationship between the two cities. In the same year, the Long Beach City Council renamed this area of Bixby Park Valparaiso Plaza.

## Marina Staff Creates Colorful Landscaping

The Queensway Bay Maintenance team used their skills to create a stunning floral design for the iconic Grand Prix winner's circle and the dolphin fountain areas along the event track. Each year thousand of race fans attend the Grand Prix and staff always spends time making a colorful impact to showcase the city in the best way possible.



## Congratulations to the July Employee of the Month–Jasmine Smith



Congratulations to July Employee of the Month, Recreation Leader Specialist X Jasmine Smith. She has worked at the Department for the past eight years and is currently assigned to Bixby Park. Here is a little bit about Jasmine:

**What's the last TV show you binge-watched?** Law and Order: SVU and Chicago Fire

**Who inspires you?** My biggest fan and supporter, my mother.

**What is or would be a good nickname for you at work?** It depends (lol), but Jazz.

**What song always gets you onto the dance floor?** It depends on my mood but can't go wrong with anything Beyoncé.

**If you could have a superpower, what would it be?** Time travel.

**Who would play you in a movie of your life?** Anika Noni Rose or Jodie Smith.

**Using one word, how would you describe your family?** Loving.

**A genie gives you one wish. What is it?** Unlimited wishes.

**Would you rather have a completely automated home or a self-driving car?** Self-driving car.

**What's the best thing you've learned in your current position?** Always be prepared for the unexpected and no matter what position I'm in I can always learn.

**What's your own advice that you always follow?** I have the same 24 hours in the day as Beyoncé, use it wisely.

**What's one small thing that makes your day better?** Coffee and music.

## August By the Numbers

### Maintenance Operations Bureau

#### Community Service Workers Program

Attendance figures for the month of August 2021

Number of persons enrolled in the program for August:	54
Total number of hours worked at Beach Maintenance: (Litter pickup along beach areas, parking lots, Belmont Pool area, Ocean Blvd., Peninsula area and maintenance yard)	206
Number of hours worked at El Dorado Park areas: (Litter pickup, custodial and facility sites including Tree Farm and Night Crew)	261
Number of hours worked at Los Cerritos Wetlands: (Litter pickup and vegetation removal of Sims Pond, Golden Shore, Colorado Lagoon and other various Wetlands)	167
Number of hours worked at special clean-ups:	64
<b>Total number CSW hours for August:</b>	<b>698</b>
Work orders completed:	653
Restrooms cleaned on a daily basis bureau wide:	172
Facilities and Gymnasiums cleaned and stocked daily:	28
Park acres maintained	
Park turf:	814
Park landscape	2310

#### Water Use

MOB General Fund Water report for July

Parks Potable	46,478 ccf	\$187,293
Parks Reclaimed	53,483 ccf	\$116,396

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# Calendar

## September

Date	Day	Time	Program	Location
Sept 16	Th		Register now for recreation classes beginning in September	LBParks.org
			Register now for Youth Flag Football, Coed Football and Coed Volleyball	LBParks.org
Sept 17	Fri	3 p.m.	Free After School Recreation Programs (Ages 5-12). Register at LBParks.org.	Citywide Parks
Sept 18	Sat	9:30 a.m.	Adaptive Recreation Program for Middle and High School \$4	Stearns Champions Park
		10 a.m.	Volunteer Wetlands Clean Up. Call 562.570.1745 to register.	Golden Shore Reserve
		5:30 p.m.	Partners of Parks Fundraiser. \$80 at partnersofparks.org.	El Dorado Nature Ctr.
Sept 20	Mon	2 p.m.	Adult Adaptive Recreation Program \$15/wk Register at LBParks.org.	Stearns Champions Park
		3 p.m.	Free After School Recreation Programs (Ages 5-12). Register at LBParks.org.	Citywide Parks
Sept 21	Tue	3 p.m.	Free After School Recreation Programs (Ages 5-12). Register at LBParks.org.	Citywide Parks
Sept 22	Wed	10 a.m.	Registration begins for Fall/Winter After School Programs	www.LBParks.org
Sept 22	Wed	3 p.m.	Free After School Recreation Programs (Ages 5-12). Register at LBParks.org.	Citywide Parks
Sept 23	Th	3 p.m.	Free After School Recreation Programs (Ages 5-12). Register at LBParks.org.	Citywide Parks
Sept 24	Fri	3 p.m.	Free After School Recreation Programs (Ages 5-12). Register at LBParks.org.	Citywide Parks
Sept 25	Sat	8:30 a.m.	Youth Summit	Houghton Park
		9 a.m.	Volunteer Clean Up	Area III El Dorado Regional Park
		9:30 a.m.	Adaptive Recreation Program for Middle and High School \$4	Stearns Champions Park
		2 p.m.	Pressburg Park Dedication	South St & Jaymills Ave
Sept 27	Mon	2 p.m.	Adult Adaptive Recreation Program \$15/wk. Register at LBParks.org.	Stearns Champions Park
Sept 28	Tue	4 p.m.	DeForest Park Environmental Stewardship Center Groundbreaking	6255 DeForest Ave

## October

Oct 2	Sat	9:30 a.m.	Adaptive Recreation Program for Middle and High School \$4	Stearns Champions Park
		10 a.m.	Volunteer Clean Up. Call 562.570.1745 to register.	El Dorado Nature Center
		9 a.m.	Youth Flag Football, Coed Football & Volleyball Leagues Begin	Citywide Parks
Oct 4	Mon	2 p.m.	Adult Adaptive Recreation Program \$15/wk. Register at LBParks.org.	Stearns Champions Park
Oct 9	Sat	9:30 a.m.	Adaptive Recreation Program for Middle and High School \$4.	Stearns Champions Park
		10 a.m.	Multi-Purpose Athletic Field Opening	El Dorado Park West
Oct 11	Mon	2 p.m.	Adult Adaptive Recreation Program \$15/wk. Register at LBParks.org.	Stearns Champions Park
Oct 16	Sat	9:30 a.m.	Adaptive Recreation Program for Middle and High School \$4	Stearns Champions Park
		10 a.m.	El Dorado Park West Multi-Purpose Field Opening	El Dorado Park West
		10 a.m.	Volunteer Wetlands Clean up. Call 562.570.1745 to register.	Golden Shore Reserve
Oct 18	Mon	2 p.m.	Adult Adaptive Recreation Program \$15/wk. Register at LBParks.org.	Stearns Champions Park
Oct 23	Sat	9 a.m.	Volunteer Clean up.	Area III El Dorado Regional Park
		8 a.m.	Boat Auction – Viewing 8 a.m.; Bidding 9 a.m.	Alamitos Bay Marina
		9:30 a.m.	Adaptive Recreation Program for Middle and High School \$4	Stearns Champions Park
Oct 25	Mon	2 p.m.	Adult Adaptive Recreation Program \$15/wk. Register at LBParks.org.	Stearns Champions Park
Oct 30	Sat	9:30 a.m.	Adaptive Recreation Program for Middle and High School \$4	Stearns Champions Park

\*\*Visit [www.longbeach.gov/park/recreation-programs/free-and-low-cost-youth-programs/mobile-recess/for locations](http://www.longbeach.gov/park/recreation-programs/free-and-low-cost-youth-programs/mobile-recess/for locations).



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[www.LBParks.org](http://www.LBParks.org)

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