



CITY OF SANTA BARBARA
PARK & RECREATION COMMISSION REPORT

AGENDA DATE: July 23, 2008
TO: Park and Recreation Commission
FROM: Administrative Division, Parks and Recreation Department
SUBJECT: 2008 Department Annual Awards Program

RECOMMENDATION: That the Commission hear a report on the 2008 Department Annual Awards Program.

DISCUSSION:

The Department held their 3rd Annual Awards Breakfast on July 10, 2008, at the Cabrillo Pavilion Arts Center. Over 100 staff were in attendance, and 53 individual awards were presented. City Administrator Jim Armstrong, Assistant City Administrator Joan Kent, and Commissioner Beebe Longstreet also attended.

Service Awards

Twelve new permanent employees who joined the Department since July 1, 2007, were recognized. Soon to retire, Nancy Woods and Scott Jorgensen, were also recognized for their many contributions to the Department, City organization, and community. Additionally, employees with 10 years or more service were recognized for their contributions to the Department and City organization.

10 Years

Susan Jang-Bardick - Recreation Supervisor I, Recreation
Ricardo Venegas, Community Services Coordinator
Leslie Lund, Recreation Coordinator
Fran McDonald, Office Specialist II
Enrique Alvarez, Irrigation Systems Technician
Karla Megill, Executive Assistant
Brian Debortoli, Senior Grounds Maintenance Worker

15 Years

Santos Escobar, Jr., Parks Manager

20 Years

Billy Goodnick, Landscape Architect
Michael Garcia, Automotive/Equipment Tech
Peter Whittington, Irrigation Systems Technician

30 Years

Rick Daniel, Maintenance Coordinator

Excellence In Teamwork

Inclusion Assessment Team Award

Our department has a long history of providing recreation programs for children and adults with various limitations or special needs. In addition to offering programs designed specifically for people with a particular limitation, such as being developmentally disabled, we provide an Inclusion Program which helps people with special needs participate with everyone else in all of our activities. Over the past few years, we have added an improved customer service in the form of the Inclusion Assessment Team. These members review over 10,000 activity registration forms annually to identify participants with special needs. The information received is confidential and considered highly important in consideration of providing excellent customer service and safety to each participant. This team is special due to the complexity of the program and need for attention to every detail - so no one slips through the cracks.

The team coordinates numerous phone calls to parents, sends requests for additional information, coordinates assessment team meetings with families, determines participant protocol, and works closely with staff to implement said protocol. Staff training, responsiveness to program staff, and solutions to daily challenges are handled professionally and promptly. Each and every one of them cares deeply for the participants and their families, and is committed to providing the best service possible. The service they provide is truly unique in the south coast area and is a model for inclusion programming throughout the state.

Julie Thomas, Inclusion Coordinator
Donna Glenn, Recreation Therapist
Debbie Pentland, Nurse
Kathy King, Program Coordinator

Prop 12 Team Award

Fiscal Year 2008 proved to be an ambitious and successful year for the Department's capital program. It was successful for a number of reasons. First and foremost we completed a number of lingering projects. Second, and perhaps just as important, we came together as a Department and a team of staff to get them done. Third, it was ambitious and critical because we had a deadline to spend Proposition 12 per capita funds, or face losing the funds and therefore our ability to complete the projects. The Prop 12 projects that were completed include:

- Oak Park Bridge Replacement
- Los Baños Discharge Connection
- Tennis Lighting at Muni and Las Positas
- Franceschi Park driveway and parking area improvements
- Dwight Murphy Ball field Mow Strips and Fencing Replacement

The purpose of this team award is to acknowledge the staff that were critical to getting these projects complete. A number of steps are required to "get projects complete." Starting with preparing the grant application, developing project designs and receiving project approvals, preparing Council Agenda reports, coordinating with Public Works staff, putting the projects out to bid, monitoring construction, maintain accurate grant files, documenting project outcomes, and coordinating with State agency personnel, among others. While Project Management Team staff Keven Strasburg and Billy Goodnick are responsible for much of the Department's General Fund capital program, our success this year was due to the active involvement and leadership from a number of department staff.

Billy Goodnick
Keven Strasburg
Cathy Carpenter
Santos Escobar
Terri Yamada
Steve Takaya
Rich Hanna
Deane Carr
Jill Zachary
Mark Rauch
Pete Whittington
Mark Vogel
Richard Brade

Youth Employment Team Award

The primary objective of the Youth Apprentice Program is to provide low-income youth between 14-21 years of age with an opportunity to receive "hands-on" training and experience in a variety of occupational areas within the City of Santa Barbara. The program was coordinated by two youth apprentices, Manny and Wendy. Last summer began with scheduling meetings and presentations for youth in neighborhoods throughout the community to identify youth to fill these positions. Once hired, weekly meetings were held to develop skills required to be a successful employee. The team worked closely with the youth to insure their success. One particular project, creek restoration, also had the added bonus of providing the youth with education on the importance of creeks and community pride.

Most recently, this team worked to expand the Youth Apprentice Program to other City departments, and promoted participation through a presentation to all City supervisors and managers. Additionally, to support the work of the Community Planning Strategy for Youth Violence, this team stepped up to coordinate community youth employment efforts, including; creating a networks for the various youth employment programs, serving as a referral contact for youth seeking job training and placement programs, and working with the business community to secure more employment opportunities.

Antonio Velasquez
Ricardo Venegas
Manny Morales
Wendy Uribe
Sarah Hanna
George Johnson
Amy Burgard
George Jimenez

Curb Appeal @ Garden/Cabrillo Team Award

The Garden/Cabrillo Street median is one of the gateways to our beaches and waterfront area, and for many years it has looked pretty sad. With the help of Santa Barbara Beautiful which helped fund this project, this award is presented to a number of Parks staff and our Landscape Architect who planned and executed this beautiful median renovation. Countless hours were dedicated to eradicating the devil weed called nut sedge. After staff was confident that this weed was under control, new friable topsoil was added to the median. The irrigation system was tuned up, beautiful succulent plantings were added, and fine decomposed granite to serve as mulch was installed. This median is a fine example of sustainable landscape design, and vastly improves the waterfront area.

Steve Takaya
Mark Vogel
Pete Whittington
Dana Versola
Ignacio Valdez
Gabriel Caratachea
Luis Quesasda
Chick Williams
Bob Hames
Frank Bavaresco
Billy Goodnick

Afterschool Sports Team Award

This year, in response to community concerns about youth violence, the City Council provided increased funding to waive fees for all children at our elementary schools to participate in afterschool sports programs. These safe, supervised programs provide children the opportunity to learn sports, develop positive social skills, and be physically active – all in the name of FUN!

Offered at 10 elementary school sites for youth in 2nd - 6th grades, practices and games are played at local school fields. New this year, playoff games were played on Saturdays at SBCC. This allowed more parents to attend to support their kids, and gave students a "birds-eye view" of what going to college might be like!

Thanks to the hard work of a number of staff, participation numbers in afterschool sports programs increased by 67%! Enthusiasm, hard work, and great team work by staff in the Sports Section and Youth Activities Section insured the great success and quality of this program!

Jeff Smith
Kimmie Coley
Terry Brown
Nick Zwart
Beryl Catanese

Peer Awards

Awesome Hourly

- Dependent and reliable
- Maintains a positive attitude
- Works as a team player

2008 Awardee – Jorge Garcia Flores (Parks)

Nominated by several of his co-workers, Jorge has been a dependable and reliable employee for 10 years. He always has a smile on his face and is willing to do whatever it takes to get the job done. This is someone who is always a pleasure to work with because of his positive attitude. You know the end of the work week is near since he works on Thursday and Friday – he gives us another reason to look forward to the end of the week!

Team Spirit

- Motivates and encourages the team
- Mentors co-workers
- Promotes collaboration and communication

- Always has a positive attitude
- Is solution oriented

2008 Awardee – Cindy Leyva (Administration)

Cindy is a very dependable, reliable employee. She is always helpful and positive and never seems to get rattled. She always has a ready smile. She has a depth of knowledge about the Department programs and services, and a willingness to help others. Her easy going personality encourages her fellow workers to come together and work as a team. The front desk staff sometimes seems like a revolving door – it is hard to count all the staff that Cindy has recruited and trained over the years. However, no matter the changes in the faces, the quality of customer service remains excellent, all due to how Cindy works with and trains her staff. She is great leader and a terrific member of the team!

Green Gladiator

- Demonstrates a strong commitment to sustainability
- Routinely encourages green practices
- Thinks and acts creatively to support Green

2008 Awardee – George Gonzalez (Golf)

Part of George's job at the Golf Course is to change the cups at each of the holes. Another duty is to empty all the trashcans on the golf course. George is very dedicated to recycling, and he very carefully separates the recyclables from the trash – although this is a filthy, gross, dirty job at times. As he changes cups, George closely monitors the turf for the destructive Black Turf Grass Ataenius Beetle. When he discovers them, it triggers an application of beneficial non-toxic nemotodes.

The golf course is on a path to becoming an Audubon International Cooperative Sanctuary. George maintains the bird baths and waters the young trees as part of this program. One morning George found an injured pigeon on the golf course – the bird could not fly. George took it upon himself to gently pick up the hurt bird and made sure it was well cared for – a true example of sustainability!

The Innovator

- Thinks outside the box
- Always thinks about how to do things better
- Develops creative ideas for saving money, time or resources
- Creates innovative programs or services

2008 Awardee – Freddie Sanchez (Youth Activities)

Freddie is one of the brightest stars in this department. This was his first year and he stood out from the beginning. He always takes the initiative to be helpful where ever and when ever help is needed. He will do anything from cleaning after meetings, doing office work, or creating curriculum for the afterschool program. There was a

period of time when the A-OK Coordinator position was unfilled, and he came into the office to see if there was anything he could do to help fill the void.

Freddie created and developed one of the curriculum used in the program. He also worked with the sports section, coordinating soccer, training coaches and referees, helped with registration, and lined all 10 fields. Because Freddie's background is similar to many of the children in the program, he encourages them to go to college and complete their education. Freddie is a great representation of what all employees should be – hard working, dedicated, inspiring, intelligent, helpful, and fun to be with. Although he could have gone home and not worked the last week of the afterschool program, especially since his apartment lease was up, his dedication would not let him. He slept on his friend's couch for the week. Now, that's dedication!!!

High Flyer – Always Above and Beyond

- Always gives his/her best
- Consistently provides outstanding service to the program, division, department, or community
- Always goes the extra mile

2008 Awardee – George Jimenez (Parks/Forestry)

George consistently looks for opportunities to make improvements to our Urban Forest without being asked. He is completely self-motivated. George is our Young Tree Care Specialist. To improve our Urban Forest, he creates lists of vacant sites for tree planting and small trees that need to be trained to grow properly.

George regularly acts as a diplomat, mediator, and counselor in his daily activities

- Working with Public Works to coordinate root pruning for sidewalk replacement;
- Planting new trees with Santa Barbara Beautiful;
- Working with the schools for Arbor Day celebrations;
- Working with the Police Department to prune trees blocking the street sweeping signs; and
- Interacting with homeowners and citizens to explain city tree policies and encouraging residents to participate in tree care.

George wears many hats, and truly goes beyond what is described in his job description – he is really one of our High Flyers!

OUTSTANDING SERVICE AWARDS

2008 Parks Division – Artemio Aranda

This past year Artemio has done an exceptional job while working on the Parks Green Team, especially when Parks has continued to reduce pesticide use. Problems with squirrels and gophers create public safety issues, and Artemio has perfected the soft touch to eradicate these varmints. On a daily basis, Artemio demonstrates a positive attitude that is contagious, and he always goes the extra mile to help his co-workers. All Parks staff thoroughly enjoy working side by side with him. Congratulations on receiving this year's Parks Division Outstanding Service Award.

2008 Golf Division – Marcos Mendoza

If an artist was to draw a picture of an individual that embodies all the qualities of an ideal golf course employee, they could draw Marcos Mendoza. Marcos has got "it". He is one of the rare ones who understand what a great work ethic means. He commutes from Oxnard to work at Santa Barbara Golf Club Wednesday through Sunday. On his "days off", he works at Birnam Wood Country Club. Seven days a week, always with a smile, always with a "can-do" attitude.

Marcos is known as the "weekend warrior". Saturdays and Sundays he begins working at 1:00 a.m. He and his long-time co-worker Floyd Hague do literally everything to prepare the course for golfers arriving at dawn – things like mowing greens, changing cups, raking bunkers, spot-watering, cleaning the clubhouse, and detailing the restrooms. And, this is only part of the list! Marcos understands time and works efficiently, all the while paying attention to detail, to golfers, to safety, and to any number of issues that arise unexpectedly. If something requires further attention, the supervisor or manager receives an early weekend wake-up call.

Marcos' instincts are sharp, and we rely on him in difficult situations. He understands what is most important, and this, of course, includes feeding the cat. He is actually evaluated on this task by the cat.

2008 Creeks Division – Autumn Malanca

As a Water Resources Specialist for the Creeks Division, Autumn has made great strides in the development and implementation of the City's Storm Water Management Program (SWMP), water quality enforcement program, development review process, and the Clean Water Business Program. For the past year, Autumn has served as the point person administering the City's SWMP - a process involving six departments. This includes dealing with compliance issues, training operational staff, and quickly responding to an unanticipated request by the Regional Water Quality Control Board for revision and resubmittal of the document.

Autumn has skillfully managed all aspects of the preparation of a technical storm water manual for the City - including an extensive outreach effort with community stakeholders and City staff. She regularly participates with the City's Development Review Team to ensure that creek and ocean water quality concerns are adequately considered before development projects are approved. And, she has also done an excellent job promoting the Creeks Division's "Clean Water Business Program" by enrolling over 20 restaurants in the past two years, and assisted with the development of a countywide "Green Business Program." Finally, Autumn played a key role on a regional water task force that secured a \$1 M grant from the state for lower Mission Creek flood control and creek restoration.

2008 Recreation Division – Cathy Carpenter

Tennis Services Coordinator Cathy Carpenter has provided exemplary service to the Department since 2000. Cathy's work is always high quality; she takes great pride in her work, and it certainly shows in the finished product. She is a positive, dedicated, team player who is always eager to help whenever and wherever needed, and she is active in Department and City committees and in the community. Cathy is a positive and professional representative for our Department in the community. We are proud of the work she does and all that she's accomplished in the last few years...greatly increasing revenue and participation in her tennis program offerings.

Cathy can be a very determined individual when she makes up her mind to accomplish something. Over the past few years, Cathy has worked hard to complete a lighting control project at Los Positas and Municipal Tennis facilities. She moved this project forward single-handedly with great determination...from idea, to design, to bid, to securing grant funding, and construction. In December 2007, the new lighting controls were in place. Tennis players are now able to control lights on each court by a push button with a 60-minute timer and 5-minute warning light. Early utility reports show a drop in electrical usage for both sites.

We commend Cathy for her exemplary service to the Recreation Division these past 8 years and for her determination and commitment to move the Tennis Lighting Control project forward. She has shown that with determination and persistence, one can accomplish his/her goals!

2008 Administration Division – Karla Megill

For years, this person has been the glue which holds the Administrative Division together. Karla Megill provides primary administrative support for the Director and Assistant Director. However, she is the "go to" person for everyone, whether it is a question on City policy or how to get things done. Karla makes sure that the Department always puts its best foot forward when it comes to Council Agenda Reports, advisory committees, the Park and Recreation Commission, and especially our department meetings and events.

Karla demonstrates a Can Do attitude – every day, no matter how busy or frazzled things are. Whether it is a member of the public, a fellow staff member, or department employee, Karla provides excellent customer service with a smile. She is known for being the answer lady, software queen, and is par excellence on formatting of various city reports. Although entitled, as we all are, she rarely complains. And, when she does, she always apologizes first!

The Parks and Recreation Director noted that Karla is her reward for working hard, and that she couldn't function nearly as well without Karla at her side. She keeps the Director on schedule, lets her know where she should be going and what she should be doing, and most especially when something important has slipped to the bottom of the To Do the pile. Karla works hard and is exceptionally dedicated to the Department – she is the model for Outstanding Service.

APPROVED BY: Nancy L. Rapp, Parks & Recreation Director