



**MARCH – APRIL 2025**

# Orange County Cemetery District

## TRUSTEES

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Tim Deutsch, General Manager

## Santa Ana Cemetery Now Offering Full Casket Interment Space for At Need Families

The first road closure at Santa Ana Cemetery has been completed. With this first closure, staff were able to create and map 256 new casket spaces and eight cremation spaces. On February 3rd, these spaces became available for sale to At-Need families only. Families who have lost a loved one and are interested in purchasing one of these new spaces should be aware of the following:

Since it is such a limited area, interments must be scheduled so that each lot is fully sold and the first interments completed before opening up the next lot for sale. This means that families will not be able to select which interment space they want, but will need to be willing to accept the space assigned.

At the time of the burial there will be no grass planted yet on the gravesites. Since there will be so much activity and disturbance to the ground from opening and closing graves, staff must wait to plant grass until the activity level in each lot subsides. Once enough interments have been completed in an area, staff will be able to lay sod in that section.



Each gravesite will be marked by a small temporary marker. The installation of gravestones and in-ground flower vases will not be allowed until six months after the initial planting of sod. This will allow the grass on each lot to become fully established before gravestones and flower vases are set. In the meantime, the cemetery will offer plastic cone vases that can be used on a temporary basis for families wanting to place flowers on these gravesites

Santa Ana Cemetery is also nearing completion of the second road closure, which will be located in the northeast corner of the grounds. Staff is currently working on mapping that second road closure, setting lot

pins on the grounds and adding them to our cemetery management computer system. We hope to have this work completed and open these spaces up for sale sometime in March. We plan to generate approximately 260 casket spaces and 45 cremation spaces from this second road closure.

Before we can begin work on the final road closure in the northwest corner of the park, we must complete the bidding process for a contractor to install new cement curbs in all three closures. This is necessary to correctly address drainage concerns for adequate storm drainage on the third road closure. The District hopes to have this contractor in place by the end of March.

## Daylight Saving Time Means Extended Visitation Hours for El Toro Memorial Park from 8:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. Daily

Sunday, March 9, 2025 is the first day of daylight saving time. Don't forget to "spring forward" by setting your clocks ahead one hour before going to bed on Saturday, March 8<sup>th</sup>.

Daylight Saving Time also signals the start of extended visitation hours at El Toro Memorial Park. Beginning on Sunday, March 9<sup>th</sup> the park gates will close at 7:00 p.m. Extended visitation will continue

through Saturday, November 1<sup>st</sup>. On Sunday, November 2<sup>nd</sup> when standard time resumes, park gates will once again close at 5 p.m.

When visiting our cemeteries, please plan to exit the grounds before the posted closing time, so our security personnel can lock the gates in a timely manner. Please do not plan your visits so that you are entering the park moments



before the gates are scheduled to close. We greatly appreciate your cooperation and assistance in this matter. Visiting hours for Santa Ana Cemetery and Anaheim Cemetery are from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. daily.

## Annual Staff Employee Appreciation Luncheon Held February 6th

Every year the District holds an annual luncheon shortly after the first of the year so our Groundskeepers, Leadworkers, and Cemetery Managers can celebrate together and honor those who have reached five-year milestones in their District careers. This year the event was expanded to include office personnel and Trustees.

General Manager, Tim Deutsch led the program and gave a brief history on each employee being recognized. A special congratulations goes to Groundskeeper Alberto Soltero Contreras who has completed 35 years of service with the District, and to Leadworker Tony Gallegos who has served the District for 25 years!! Luis Fernando Griego, the District's Equipment Mechanic and Assistant General Manager, Mary Funk were also recognized.

The event was held at El Toro Memorial Park in the Maureen Rivers Memorial Niche Garden. A wonderful lunch was catered by Taqueria Movil and Cemetery Assistant Kimberly Eazell baked a delicious Tres Leches cake for all to enjoy. The District appreciates the patience and understanding of visitors during those office closures which made participation by all staff possible!



**Alberto Soltero Contreras, Groundskeeper at Santa Ana Cemetery receives 35-Year Service Award.**



**Tony Gallegos, Leadworker for Santa Ana Cemetery receives 25-Year Service Award.**



**Mary Funk, Assistant General Manager receives 10-Year Service Award.**



**Luis Fernando Griego, District Equipment Mechanic receives 5-Year Service Award.**

## Eide Baily, LLP Announces Unmodified Opinion for Annual Audit

While our office is busy year-round, each fall/winter is extra busy for our Finance employees. With an annual fiscal year end of June 30<sup>th</sup>, the responsibilities of the Finance Department kick into high gear with the annual financial audit preparations and presentation of the Annual Comprehensive Financial Report (ACFR) to the Board of Trustees.

The annual financial audit includes internal control testing, transaction samples testing, account variance inquiries, preparing the final trial balance and accompanying schedules, and compiling additional information for the ACFR such as Management's Discussion and Analysis. Once the audit is

complete and our external financial auditors, Eide Baily, LLP, issue their reports, the final step is the submittal of the ACFR to the Governmental Finance Officers Association (GFOA) "Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting" program. We are pleased to announce that this year Eide Baily once again issued a clean, unmodified opinion of the District's financial statements, which is the highest form of assurance that can be given.

After the audit is submitted, the finance staff switch to the development of the District's Annual Operating and Capital Budgets during the spring months. Budget development includes meetings

with staff, management and the District's Finance and Investment Committee to determine rates, overhead formulas, project priorities and goals for the next fiscal year.

Following the adoption of the budget by the Board of Trustees at the June Board meeting, our Finance department updates the supplemental information required for the submittal to the GFOA "Distinguished Budget Presentation" program in the fall. We are proud that the District has been recognized in both categories for each fiscal year beginning in 2018. The current audit and budget documents can be located on our website under the Transparency tab at [www.occemeterdistrict.com](http://www.occemeterdistrict.com).

## El Toro Memorial Park Adds 468 New Niches to the Maureen Rivers Memorial Niche Garden

We are pleased to announce the installation of 468 new niches in the Maureen Rivers Memorial Niche Garden. Construction occurred from February 24<sup>th</sup>-28<sup>th</sup>. Prices will range from \$1,855 to \$3,060, depending on the row height. These niches will officially go on sale on Monday, March 10<sup>th</sup> for both at-need or pre-need purposes. There is a limit of 2 niche purchases per Orange County residential address.

The District purchased the niches from KMI Columbaria in Vista, California, who also provided the installation services. These new niches help to maximize the available space in the Maureen Rivers Memorial Niche Garden, utilizing areas between the columns and lining the block wall utility enclosure. The niche banks that are located under the shade structure have a solid granite surface on top. Please do not place any potted plants or glass of any kind on it as it will cause staining to the surface or fall off and shatter on the ground. We hope you enjoy this new addition.



**These new niches will be available to purchase starting on March 10<sup>th</sup>. To make arrangements to purchase a niche, please call the cemetery office at (949) 951-8244.**



**ORANGE COUNTY CEMETERY DISTRICT**

**March/April Board Meetings**

The Board of Trustees for the Orange County Cemetery District typically 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. Members of the public are welcome to attend and may also join 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](http://www.occemeterydistrict.com). In March and April, meetings will be held as follows:

- **Tuesday, March 4<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 a.m.**
- **Tuesday, April 1<sup>st</sup> 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 ask that you place fresh water in the vase every four to five days to eliminate mosquito breeding sources, which can cause serious health issues. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.



In honor of Persian New Year, flowers may be placed on Thursday, March 20<sup>th</sup> and must be removed by Tuesday, April 1<sup>st</sup>. Flowers may be placed for Easter beginning on Thursday, April 10<sup>th</sup> and must be removed by Tuesday, April 29<sup>th</sup>. During this time, light clean-ups will still occur each Wednesday and only flowers that are obviously wilted will be removed.

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 2025 Cemetery Grounds Wednesday Clean-up Calendar is available on our website at [www.occemeterydistrict.com](http://www.occemeterydistrict.com). Click on the tab for Flowers, Markers and Rules for more information.

**CEMETERY VISITATION HOURS**

**Anaheim Cemetery,  
Santa Ana Cemetery, and  
El Toro Memorial Park**

**are open for visitation, seven days a week,  
from 8 am to 5 pm.**

**El Toro Memorial Park's Extended Visitation  
Hours will resume on Sunday, March 9, 2025,  
with gates closing at 7:00 p.m.**

**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 provides affordable interment services for County residents and taxpayers. We strive to maintain the beauty and dignity of the grounds while preserving their historical and cultural value for the benefit of all.*

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

- Integrity ■ Respect ■ Responsiveness
- Empathy ■ Transparency

