

Gaffney Gets Pinned



Michael Gaffney shows off his pin recognizing City service of 15 years.

Michael Gaffney recognized for service to Griffith Park.

Michael Gaffney, Rec and Parks, was recently awarded for 15 years of dedication and service to Griffith Park.

The pinning event took place Nov. 17 at Travel Town in Griffith Park.

Congratulations, Michael! Keep on making the City look its best.

Newsbrief

FINAL TUNNELING:

Councilmember Ed P. Reyes announced Nov. 15 that the final tunneling stage of the \$160 million Northeast Interceptor Sewer Project has begun and the entire project will be completed this summer.

"Our children were dangerously playing in untreated sewage that spilled onto City streets during the El Niño rains in the late 1990s," said Reyes, who helped secure the funding for the NEIS Project. "The NEIS Project is necessary to handle the wastewater flow, and to protect the safety and health of our communities." Reyes' announcement followed a gathering at the shaft site at Humboldt Street and San Fernando Road where Bureau of Engineering staff showed off the "Ground Hog," the tunnel-boring machine which drilled 135 feet underground for the final construction phase of the NEIS Project. The NEIS Project is an 8-to 11-foot in diameter tunnel that extends 6 miles from the intersection of Mission Road and Jesse Street near 7th Street in eastern downtown, northward to the intersection of San Fernando Road and Eagle Rock Boulevard. The NEIS Project, along with the Eagle Rock Interceptor Sewer (ERIS), will relieve the decaying North Outfall Sewer (NOS) which was built between 1924 and 1930. The NOS has been strained by structural defects resulting from corrosion and population growth.

The El Niño storms of 1997-98 caused a number of sewer overflows and required the construction of new sewers to provide additional capacity. On Sept. 14, 1998, the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board ordered the City to take action to prevent future overflows. The City's Bureau of Engineering and its consultants developed NEIS and ERIS to provide the additional capacity needed to comply with the order and allow for the rehabilitation of the existing sewer. Construction of NEIS began in July 2002.

"Our residents have been extremely patient," Reyes said. "They know how important it is to protect the health of our children, and make sure that the El Niño overflows never happen again."

Ruby Never Forgot

Ruby the Elephant returns to the L.A. Zoo.

Story by Bev Haro, Club Counselor

Photos by Summy Lam, Club Technology Manager

Former Angelino Ruby the Elephant missed home too much. So, on Nov. 13, she came home.

Ruby, the 43-year-old African elephant who was transferred to the Knoxville Zoo in May 2003, returned to the Los Angeles Zoo and Botanical Gardens Nov. 13. The transport truck arrived at the Zoo at 10:30 p.m. and Ruby stepped off the truck and walked into her off-exhibit barn. She immediately started munching apples and bananas.

"I am pleased to announce that Ruby arrived safely and is settling in very well," Mayor Jim Hahn said.

The 40-hour cross-country drive went smoothly, according to the Zoo. Planned Migration, the animal transport company that handled Ruby's trip to Knoxville, conducted the return trip. Prior to the move, the L.A. Zoo elephant curator, principal elephant keeper and a Zoo veterinarian flew to Knoxville to assist in the move and to follow the truck to Los Angeles. The trip was non-stop with the exception of periodic breaks for Ruby and the people accompanying her.

Ruby was originally transferred to the Knoxville Zoo to integrate her with a herd of African elephants to contribute to the longterm propagation of African elephants in North American zoos.



From left: Mrs. LaBonge; Councilman Tom LaBonge; John Lewis, Zoo Director, and Mayor Jim Hahn.



Ruby the Elephant is back home.

"Ruby's move to Knoxville was well-intentioned but, in this instance, she was unable to be fully assimilated to her new surroundings," said John Lewis, Zoo director. "Since Ruby has been away from the L.A. Zoo elephants for more than a year, the staff who care for our elephants will accept Ruby as a new elephant entering the collection. We are currently revisiting present and future plans for all of the Zoo's elephants."

City Councilman Tom LaBonge, who represents the Zoo, added, "The most important thing is that the Zoo do what's right for the animals. I support the Zoo in moving Ruby to Knoxville and in bringing her back to Los Angeles."

A new elephant habitat is under construction at the L. A. Zoo. Prior to the decision to move Ruby to Knoxville, an off-exhibit area covering 8,300 square feet was renovated to accommodate the Zoo's three female elephants. Between that space and the former area, which is still available during construction, there is more than ample room for all four of the Zoo's elephants—Billy, Tara, Gita and Ruby.

Ruby was to be quarantined for 30 days in the off-exhibit elephant compound. She will be sharing space with Tara, a 44-year-old African elephant. Gita and Billy will be on public exhibit in the elephant area in the main Zoo.

Welcome back, Ruby!

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