

Rec and Parks

Photos by JuanCarlos Chan, Rec and Parks

Lotus Festival Blooms Again

Annual festival returns after three-year absence.

The Lotus Festival, one of the signature cultural celebrations in the City, returned after a three-year absence to a newly renovated Echo Park Lake. The 34th Lotus Festival, co-sponsored by Rec and Parks, took place July 11-13. (Dates coincide with the blooming of the lotus flower.) Admission was free.

The festival attracts an estimated 100,000 people.

The free program featured an outdoor movie premiere of a 24-minute film that depicted life in Echo Park. The movie was accompanied by a live musical performance from the Echo Park City Symphony. The film was commissioned by Councilman Mitch O'Farrell's office and produced by the Echo Park Film Center.

During the event, visitors saw a return of the popular dragon boat races on the historic lake, as well the opportunity to enjoy food and music and the lotus flower beds that are in full bloom.

The event made its debut in 1972 as the "Day of the Lotus" and takes place in July to coincide with the blooming of the lotus flowers that are cultivated in the lake beds by City crews. The celebration was designed to promote awareness of the contributions by Asian Americans in our local communities. This year, the festival honored the culture and traditions of the Filipino community.

Over the past two years, the Lotus Festival was placed on hold while the City embarked on a major Prop O stormwater improvement project, as detailed in the August 2013 edition of *Alive!* The voter-mandated restoration helped protect water quality, enhance the Los Angeles River watershed, and maintain flood control functionality.

According to the Echo Park Historical Society, the Echo Park Lake lotus beds are considered to be the largest in the Western United States.



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- RARELY SEEN PHOTOS & ARTIFACTS
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11 A.M. AND 1:30 P.M.

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