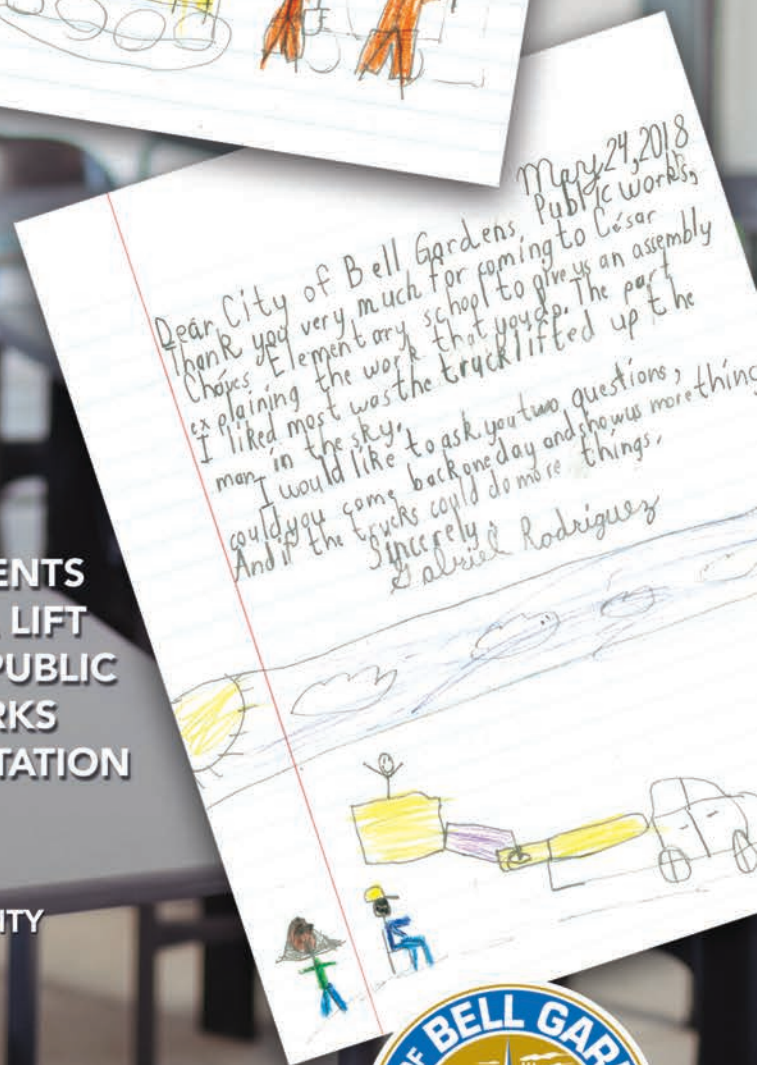
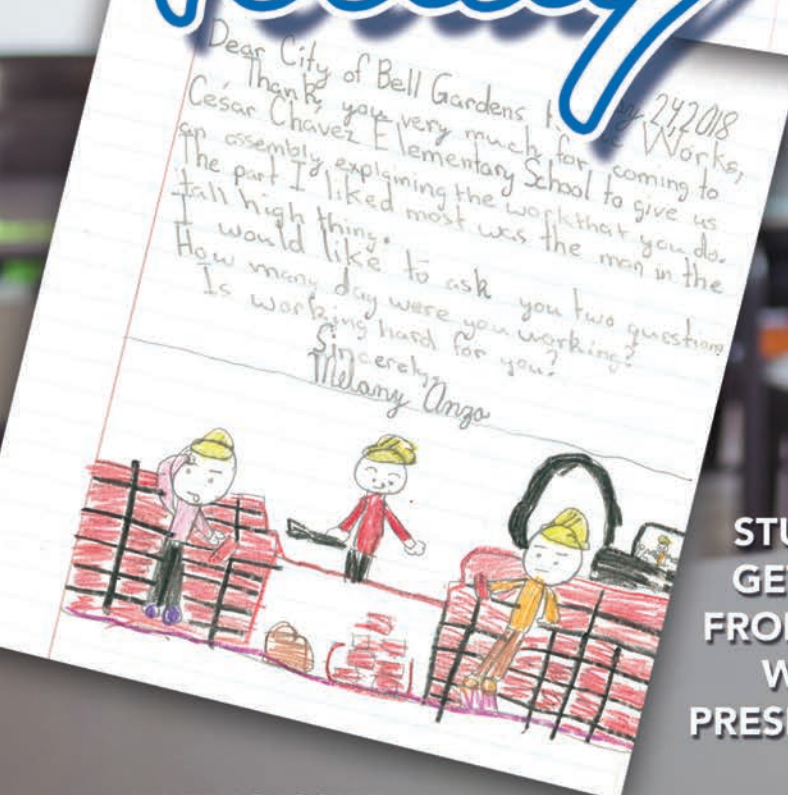
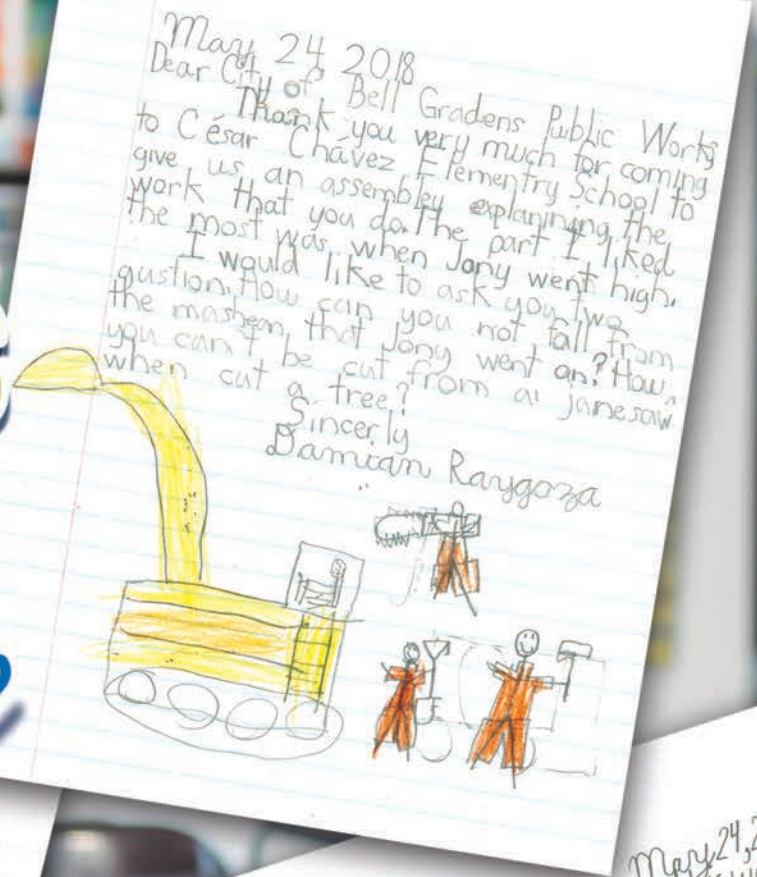


Bell Gardens FALL 2018

Today



**STUDENTS
GET A LIFT
FROM PUBLIC
WORKS
PRESENTATION**

IN THIS ISSUE

- CISTERN PROJECT TO IMPROVE WATER QUALITY
- CITY ADOPTS \$49.8 MILLION BUDGET
- TASTE OF BELL GARDENS
- IMPROVEMENTS EMPOWERED BY SB1 FUNDING
- FAIRFIELD NAMED BELL GARDENS' NEW CHIEF OF POLICE
- SIGNIFICANT DECREASE IN VIOLENT CRIMES



Everything you need for FALL - Complete recreation program information inside.

MESSAGE FROM YOUR CITY MANAGER

This edition of *Bell Gardens Today* gives you a good look into how our City deals with challenging fiscal conditions and continues to provide outstanding services to our residents, with an explanation of the 2018-19 budget, which was recently approved by the City Council.

It also includes stories about collaborative projects with the state and surrounding cities, such as the citywide transportation improvements funded by SB1 and the new flood water filtration project to be built in Ford Park that will benefit the Bell Gardens community as well as several of our neighboring cities, who are all contributing to the cost. It is an excellent illustration of public agencies working together for the best of their communities.

Speaking of the best of, plan to attend the Taste of Bell Gardens on Thursday, October 18. This event, now in its third year, is growing and moving to a new location at Bell Gardens High School and will feature many more local eateries to tempt your taste buds.

The Police Department has been a busy place, under new leadership as Chief Scott Fairfield takes over for retiring Chief Robert Barnes. Two of our most active sergeants have retired, after a combined 60 years of service to the City. Fiscally, the City saved a significant amount of money by rehabilitating two police vehicles instead of buying new ones.

Hard work by the Department has also paid off in lower



crime statistics and everyone at the City is exceptionally proud of Sgt. Aguirre, who saved the life of a Bell Gardens toddler who had stopped breathing. Aguirre credited his training and the teamwork of all the first responders who serve the area.

And speaking of service, if you know Julia Avalos, you know she's a tireless volunteer at the Senior Center. She was recently honored by the City Council and the County of Los Angeles for her dedication. Speaking of dedication, make sure you do your part for your community by voting in the upcoming November 6 election and make your choices on state proposals and a variety of representatives from the nation's capitol to our local City Council.

As always, we want to hear from you anytime you have concerns or questions. There's a super-easy way to connect with City Hall – just email us at Talk2Us@bellgardens.org.

Philip Wagner

CITY MANAGER

SERVING OUR COMMUNITY

AVALOS HONORED AS CITY'S 2018 OLDER AMERICAN



It's been a special last few months for Julia Avalos, a familiar face around the Bell Gardens Senior Center, who was honored by the Bell Gardens City Council as 2018 Older American of the Year. She is known as one of the most reliable volunteers at the Senior Center, where she has spent the last eight years serving her fellow seniors

lunch and helping staff clean up.

Avalos also volunteers at many City-sponsored special events, helping with setup and cleanup. She has been a part of Club Latino for the past five years, where she volunteers for their monthly yard sales and other events.

Her leadership, generosity and commitment displayed in her volunteering is an example for all.

Los Angeles County officials hosted a luncheon at the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion where Julia and other Older American nominees were celebrated. Bell Gardens Recreation Coordinator Ramon Escobedo and Julia's oldest daughter accompanied her to the event, where she met many of the other honorees from other cities in the County. The emotional afternoon included a slideshow featuring all of the seniors that spotlighted their contributions to their communities. Avalos also received a Certificate of Recognition from L.A. County in gratitude for her volunteerism and commitment to Bell Gardens.

CITY OFFICIALS

Bell Gardens City Council

Maria Pulido, *Mayor*

Jose J. Mendoza, *Mayor Pro Tem*

Pedro Aceituno, *Councilmember*

Priscilla Flores, *Councilmember*

Jennifer Rodriguez, *Councilmember*

Philip Wagner, *City Manager*

The public is welcome at all City meetings, which are held in the Council Chambers at City Hall, 7100 Garfield Avenue, Bell Gardens:

CITY COUNCIL

2nd and 4th Monday of the month at 6 p.m.

Notice of Special City Council Meetings will be posted at City Hall and City facilities.

EDUCATION COMMISSION

2nd Thursday of the month at 5 p.m.

PLANNING COMMISSION

3rd Wednesday of the month at 6 p.m.

RECREATION, CULTURAL AND YOUTH COMMISSION

3rd Thursday of the month at 6 p.m.

SENIOR CITIZEN COMMISSION

2nd Wednesday of the month at 6 p.m.

TRAFFIC AND SAFETY COMMISSION

1st Tuesday of the month at 5:30 p.m.

STUDENTS GET A LIFT FROM PUBLIC WORKS PRESENTATION

Members of the Public Works Department visited the students at Cesar Chavez Elementary School recently in observance of National Public Works Week. Nearly 150 students learned about the services provided by the Public Works Department and got to see first-hand the equipment used, including the bucket truck. Students had a chance to ask questions of the workers and they received goody bags with educational materials. After the visit, students wrote letters and drew a few pictures of their favorite parts of the visit.

"Our Public Works crews look forward to visiting the students every year. We take pride in our work and it's our chance to showcase what we do for kids who live in our community and benefit from our services – services that they and their parents may not even notice," said Chau Vu, Bell Gardens Director of Public Works. "We want to remind them that when they turn on their tap water or drive our streets - it's Public Works that handles those services on a daily basis. We hope they take that message home to their parents."

On the Cover:

A sample of the thank you notes sent to Public Works by students at Cesar Chavez Elementary School

CISTERN PROJECT TO IMPROVE WATER QUALITY FOR ENTIRE BELL GARDENS AREA

Changes at John Anson Ford Park are coming soon as the Ford Park Infiltration Cistern Project begins, ultimately improving water quality and bringing to the park new irrigation systems, landscape and hardscape. Bell Gardens will be the lead agency for this project that will improve the quality of water for not only its residents, but also for those of several surrounding cities, as storm water runoff from Bell Gardens, Bell, Commerce, Cudahy, Huntington Park, Maywood and Vernon will be processed.

In accordance with the federal Clean Water Act, the California Regional Water Control Board has imposed stringent measures to prevent harmful pollutants in the storm water runoff from reaching rivers and the ocean. The cities mentioned above, along with the Los Angeles County Flood Control District, have secured a grant of \$10 million to begin construction of the Ford Park Infiltration Cistern Project. The grant requires matching funding from the participants, Bell Gardens is responsible for a payment of \$145,000.

"We can't do this alone, the costs are too high for just one city," said Bell Gardens Public Works Director Chau Vu.

Ford Park was selected as an ideal location because of its drainage location, runoff volume and flow rate. The purpose of the project is to capture trash, nutrients, heavy metals and bacteria and reduce toxicity by installing storm water and dry weather flow diversion, pre-treatment, retention and infiltration facilities. The project will be located along the northern boundary of the park and will bring improvements to the park, including new irrigation systems, trees, a new parking lot and hardscape, exterior lighting, landscaping and park signage, collectively valued at \$500,000.



Bell Gardens Today is published quarterly by the City of Bell Gardens to provide information to the community about the City's programs, services and activities.

Visit us at www.bellgardens.org for updated City information. Questions? Email us at Talk2Us@bellgardens.org

Go to www.bgrecreation.org for recreation programs and events. Follow us on Facebook and Instagram.

CITY ADOPTS \$49.8 MILLION BUDGET IN A CHALLENGING FISCAL ENVIRONMENT

The City of Bell Gardens, like many other California cities, is facing many fiscal challenges which it must balance along with reduced revenues from traditional sources. With staff, administration and elected officials working as a team to protect core services and programs, deferring equipment replacement, postponing capital projects when possible and aggressively seeking grant funding to provide alternative funding to make up for shortfalls, the City Council recently approved a \$49,815,000 budget for Fiscal 2018-19.

The budget included an unrestricted \$32,263,000 General Fund and directed \$200,000 into the City's reserves, which now total \$3.1 million. Due to lower revenues and increases of \$1.2 million in personnel costs primarily from a drastic increase in CalPERS pension contributions, the City's General Fund is facing a deficit for FY2018-19. CalPERS pension costs are expected to surge by 50% within the next six years.

The budget, which is comprised of the General Fund, all special revenues, capital projects, enterprise funds and the Successor Agency, also includes \$4.4 million in capital improvements. This amount represents the projects anticipated for the coming year that were scheduled on the five-year Capital Improvement Master Plan previously approved by the City Council and only those that have the appropriate dedicated funding from grant revenue or restricted state and county transportation funds.

The 2017-18 fiscal year ended with a deficit, mainly the result of a major decline in casino revenue. However, the expected shortfall is mitigated by \$1.3 million in savings projected from current position vacancies and the result of being fiscally responsible through budget reductions and spending control.

The City is always faced with the challenge of maximizing the effectiveness of its resources, and as a result, staff is continuously seeking grant funds to supplement the budget and fund major projects. Applying for grants is a complex and competitive process, and staff continues to successfully secure millions of dollars in outside funding sources to supplement day-to-day operations, and fund capital improvement projects, public safety, and numerous other programs and services.

During this fiscal year, staff will make every effort to preserve and maintain essential services and programs and to avoid layoffs, using a hiring freeze when feasible. Replacement of capital equipment is being deferred as long as safety and efficiency is maintained and General Fund capital projects that can be put off are being delayed until funding is available.

Regardless of any fiscal challenges, Bell Gardens continues to be recognized by independent auditors and municipal proctors for its exemplary governmental accounting and financial reporting, which validates the City's accountability, transparency and financial security.

The City faces some very critical fiscal challenges that cannot be ignored. This includes the increased cost of employee pensions and health insurance, rising liability and workers' compensation insurance, retiree health care, ongoing losses from the city-owned water system, deferred infrastructure maintenance and revenue losses from the state-mandated elimination of the Redevelopment Agency. It continues to rebound from the financial struggles created by the elimination of the agency and the City continues to work proactively with the state to protect our assets and minimize further financial losses.

Staff remains steadfast in focusing on these concerns and will continue suggesting solutions, methods and options to the City Council to address these issues. The solutions will include a combination of proposed revenue increases and expenditure reductions.

One strategy applied this year to confront the growing unfunded liability of future retirement health care was the City Council's approval to begin funding an irrevocable trust. This will help assure that money for benefits earned by City employees today will be there for them many years after retirement. Addressing this long-term obligation is part of a sensible and responsible fiscal management plan, and staff will continue to search for a stable funding source for this employee benefit.

The extraordinary teamwork between the City Council, management, and employees has helped to make the City of Bell Gardens the well-balanced community that it is today. Our objective is to continue operating in a fiscally responsible, transparent and prudent manner to ensure that the City of Bell Gardens remains a desirable place to live, work, visit, play and raise a family.

TASTE OF BELL GARDENS SET FOR OCTOBER 18 IN LARGER LOCATION

It comes as no surprise to locals that some of the hottest foodie spots are located right here in Bell Gardens – Rocio’s on Garfield and El Coraloense on Florence have been written up by international food critics, naming Chef Rocio Camacho the “Goddess of Mole” and Chef Natalie Curie “The Queen of Ceviche,” and bringing visitors here from all over the world to enjoy their delicious food. This culinary fame is helping the annual Taste of Bell Gardens grow into a new location that will allow for more food vendors and services to gather at the table.

On Thursday, October 18, from 5 to 8 p.m., the public is invited to enjoy a culinary adventure highlighting the dishes served by a wide variety of Bell Gardens restaurants and caterers. The Taste of Bell Gardens, which has grown in popularity over the last two years, is moving from the historic Chamber of Commerce offices on Perry Road to Bell Gardens High School, 6119 Agra Street. Visitors will be able to savor the tastes and specialties of local food vendors in an entertaining atmosphere.

“The City is excited to partner with the Chamber on this,” said Abel Avalos, Bell Gardens Director of Community Development. “We are always looking for opportunities to promote businesses and for a city of our size, we have some very well-known, award-winning restaurants. We saw this as an opportunity to promote all the restaurants in the City and to support the Chamber at the same time.”

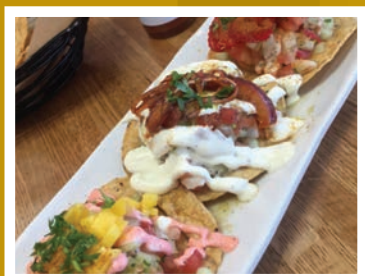
The City of Bell Gardens is working with the Bell Gardens Chamber of Commerce to grow this event and support local businesses. Chamber Executive Director Mike Salazar said that having strong anchor restaurants helps attract some of the smaller establishments to participate, which in turn shines a spotlight on them and their contributions to the culinary landscape.

“We will also have some non-food booths there from local non-profit organizations there, such as Rotary or the Boys and Girls Club,” Salazar added.

Funds raised by this event will benefit the Chamber’s mentoring programs that involve Regional Occupational Program students with Chamber members, providing hands-on skill development in communication and business procedures. In addition, proceeds from the Taste of Bell Gardens will also help the Chamber provide services to its member businesses.

“We like to think of ourselves as AAA (Triple A) for business,” Salazar said. “We help them with paperwork and marketing, whatever they need, we try to help them be successful.”

For more information on tickets and vendors, call the Chamber at (562) 291-0492.



IMPROVEMENTS TO BEGIN, EMPOWERED BY SB1 FUNDING

Streets in Bell Gardens will get a lot safer with improvements made possible by Senate Bill 1, legislation that was passed to provide for road maintenance rehabilitation and critical safety needs for state highways, local streets and road systems using funds from gas taxes, increased diesel fuel sales taxes and vehicle registration fee increases.

After adopting a list of projects, the City of Bell Gardens is scheduled to receive \$728,006 in SB1 funds. The maintenance and rehabilitation can be divided into two categories: citywide improvements and street-specific road maintenance.

Citywide projects include maintenance of streets and alleys by removing and replacing damaged concrete; removing and replacing damaged signs; re-stripping pavement markings, legends and curb painting; repairing potholes and asphalt concrete overlay. These projects are estimated to be completed by June 2019 and the repairs should be good for 15 to 30 years, depending on the extent of the repairs.



Road maintenance rehabilitation projects will be extensive and are anticipated to be completed by the end of the year.

They include:

- *Agra Street from Specht Avenue to the end*
- *Gage Avenue from Darwell Avenue to Garfield Avenue*
- *Hannon Street from Emil Avenue to Perry Road*
- *Toler Avenue to the end*
- *Loveland Avenue from Darwell Avenue to Toler Avenue*
- *Chalet Drive from Hannon Street to Foster Bridge Boulevard*
- *Adamson Avenue from Ludell Street to Lubec Street*
- *Ludell Street from Jaboneria Road to El Selinda Avenue*
- *Ira Avenue from Florence Avenue to Fry Street*
- *Florence Avenue from Scout Avenue to flood control channel*
- *Clara Street from Emil Avenue to Scout Avenue*
- *Gotham Street from Jaboneria Road to Gephart Avenue*
- *Garfield Avenue from Shull Street to Eastern Avenue*
- *Gage Avenue from Garfield Avenue to Perry Avenue*
- *Gage Avenue from Emil Avenue to Chalet Avenue*

The overall investments in local streets, roads and infrastructure with a focus on basic maintenance and safety will have significant positive benefits locally and statewide.

QUICK ACTION BY OFFICER SAVES TODDLER'S LIFE

Young Josiah Jimenez is a healthy toddler today, thanks to the quick action of a neighbor and an off-duty police officer's life-saving skills.

One recent morning, Jazmin Jimenez's 1-year-old son stopped breathing. A neighbor knew that Bell Gardens Police Sergeant Efen Aguirre was in the area and ran to alert the off-duty officer. Aguirre found Jazmin in the front yard of her Garfield Avenue home, holding her lifeless child. He quickly checked for signs of life and immediately began rescue breathing and CPR, to which the child began to respond.

As other Bell Gardens Police officers and Los Angeles County Fire paramedics arrived, they took over lifesaving measures. Josiah was transported to a local hospital for further treatment. Later that day, the Bell Gardens Police

department received a call from Fire Captain Vasquez of Station 39 that credited Aguirre's quick response with saving the child's life.

"We are proud of all of our officers because they perform heroic duties on a regular basis," said Bell Gardens Police Chief Scott Fairfield. "But when this dedication to the community extends to their off-duty time as well, it makes us exceptionally proud."

Recently, the Bell Gardens City Council recognized Aguirre for his lifesaving efforts. A few weeks after the incident, Jimenez family members visited the Bell Gardens Police Department to express their appreciation for Aguirre and his fellow officers help, sharing that Josiah had made a complete recovery.



FAIRFIELD NAMED BELL GARDENS' NEW CHIEF OF POLICE

Captain Scott Fairfield, a 26-year veteran of the Bell Gardens Police Department, was appointed as Chief of Police, taking office July 1. He replaced outgoing Chief Robert Barnes, who retired in June.

Fairfield is well-rounded in his experience with the department, working nearly every assignment and position, including patrol, gang and narcotics detective, field training officer, range master, Special Operations Team commander, general investigations sergeant, patrol watch commander, administrative lieutenant and Captain, where he served as second in command of the Department, working closely with Barnes.

"Law enforcement changes drastically every year," Fairfield said. "We're in a social media-type environment and have to balance pushing out content as well as focus on enforcement. We are fortunate to be able to keep violent crime down."

"Most of our challenges are quality of life issues, such as the homeless situation and dealing with the unintended consequences of legislation like Prop. 47," he continued. "You have to strike a balance, we work with social agencies to provide resources, but we have to look out for the property owners and

businesses too. We have support from the community, but we need to do more events with younger groups, at the junior high and high school levels and get them involved."

A 1992 graduate of the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Academy, he earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Sociology from California State University, Chico, and a Master's Degree in Emergency Management from California State University, Long Beach. He is also a graduate of the FBI National Academy and the Senior Management Institute of Policing.

Since joining the Bell Gardens Police Department in 1992, Fairfield has been active in youth mentoring programs, such as the Explorers and youth boxing. He started the Police Activities League at Bell Gardens PD, the BGPD's social media program, the BGPD Honor Guard and created the holiday Adopt-A-Family program 25 years ago to bring holiday joy to Bell Gardens families in need.

Throughout his career, he has received many accolades for his service. He was named Bell Gardens Police Officer of the Year in 1994 and California Police Officer of the Year in 1996. He was also recognized by the County of Los Angeles for Outstanding Community Service and by the City of Bell



Gardens for his service to the youth of our community.

Chief Fairfield and his wife, Mary, have been married for 29 years and have two adult children. During his off-duty time, they operate a nonprofit organization that they created to help families stricken by serious illness or injuries.

Given his natural involvement in community outreach, Fairfield said that his goals include growing opportunities for officers to get to know those they protect and serve on a personal level. He makes it a point to participate in as many of those events as his schedule allows.

"I get just as much out of it as they do," he said.

POLICE DEPARTMENT GETS TWO VEHICLES FOR THE COST OF ONE WITH REFURBISHMENT

You've heard of reduce, reuse, recycle? Bell Gardens Police Department has done just that, saving the City a significant amount of money by refurbishing two vehicles already in use by the patrol and Gang units, instead of buying new SUVs to carry out the Department's mission.

"The Ford Crown Victoria (Police Interceptor) is favored by many law enforcement officers as their primary choice for a patrol vehicle. Unfortunately, Ford stopped making them in 2011 and the Ford Explorer SUV became the replacement vehicle at a cost, with equipment, of about \$60,000," explained BGPD Lt. Brendan Kirkpatrick. "Refurbishing the Crown Victoria was seen as a cost-saving effort since the interior equipment is still in working order. This cost to refurbish is about \$22,000.

There are 10 Crown Victoria vehicles currently in use by BGPD. The two vehicles refurbished each had more than 80,000 miles on them and were experiencing mechanical problems as well as showing wear and tear. The rehabilitation of both vehicles included rebuilt engines and transmissions from Ford Motor Company with 3-year warranties, upgraded brakes, new suspension and rebuilt rear ends, replacement of steering equipment, upgraded interior and complete painting.

SIGNIFICANT DECREASE IN VIOLENT CRIMES A TEAM EFFORT OF COPS AND COMMUNITY

Proactive programming, working closely with community members and addressing gang activity have resulted in turning around a dangerous trend of increased violent and property offenses, referred to as Part 1 crimes. These are defined in the Uniform Crime Reporting Statistics as the violent and non-violent crimes of homicide, assault with a deadly weapon, rape, robbery, burglary, arson, grand theft and motor vehicle theft.

From 2003 to 2007, increased gang activity and high-profile gang members moving in and out of the prison system caused statistics to fluctuate. In 2008 and 2009, Part 1 crimes decreased, largely influenced by proactive programs by the Bell Gardens PD, which obtained an injunction against a local street gang. A turf war between rival gangs in 2010 and 2011 brought about a significant increase in the number of shootings. During that time, Part 1 crimes increased by 22% and decreased by 20% after the implementation of the gang unit.

In 2011, AB109 was passed by Governor Brown, allowing for the early release of 'nonviolent' offenders from prison. In 2015, Proposition 47 was passed, changing some felony offenses such as drug possession and grand theft to misdemeanors, affecting offenders' sentencing and creating a spike in property crimes. In 2016, Proposition 57 went into effect, emphasizing rehabilitation of offenders to slow the recidivism rate.

"These measures have had a negative impact on our community, as more offenders have been released from prison early and returned to their habits of committing violent acts," said Bell Gardens Police Chief Scott Fairfield, citing the recent murder of Whittier Police Officer Keith Boyer. "All together, these legislative changes have contributed to a rise in Part 1 crimes."

The Bell Gardens Police Department responded by emphasizing resident and business collaboration as well as regional enforcement to combat the effects of these measures. A sergeant and two detectives were assigned to LAImpact for a long-term investigation of the Mexican Mafia; the Special Investigations Unit was restructured and deployed as a

gang intelligence and enforcement team and a new tactical team – the Special Operations Team – was created. These efforts were successful in bringing about a 30% decrease in Part I crimes in 2017.

Other community programs that contribute to the improved safety of the area include working with residents in Neighborhood Watch and Business Watch, as well as clergy meetings and school presentations. Bell Gardens PD is a familiar presence on social media, and interactive events such as Coffee With A Cop help improve relations and communication. In addition, a regional enforcement team and homeless outreach program are addressing other areas of concern for both the community and the Police Department.

Developing a strong network of community, local, state and federal stakeholders has proven to work in decreasing the negative impact from the above-mentioned legislation and the Bell Gardens Police Department intends to continue moving forward with proactive programming. Specific emphasis has been placed on youth programs aimed at providing alternatives to gang involvement and drug use; working closely with the schools and growing the Explorer Program will help accomplish the goal of reducing crime and improving the quality of life for the residents of Bell Gardens.



HENSHAW RETIRES FROM BGPD AFTER COLORFUL CAREER

After nearly 30 years of exemplary service, Sgt. Troy Henshaw retired from the Bell Gardens Police Department on July 2. During his career with BGPD, Henshaw was named Officer of the Year in 1995, received multiple California Highway Patrol 10851 Awards for recovering stolen vehicles, as well as several commendations for heroic acts and assisting community members. He even delivered a baby or two during service calls.



Henshaw began as a patrol officer in February 1989 and worked in many different assignments, including Field Training Officer, Gaming Detective, Narcotics, General Investigations Detective, Special Investigations Detective, K-9, SWAT Team member, Senior Officer, Patrol Sergeant and Gang Sergeant. His final assignment was as General Investigations Detective Sergeant.

"I cannot adequately express my gratitude and appreciation to Troy and all that he has meant to the Police Department," said former Police Chief Robert Barnes. "I wish him and his family much peace, good health and happiness as he begins the next chapter in his life."

His dedication to the department extended to creating innovative programs for his colleagues and the community; he organized several health competitions for members of the Police Department, helped re-launch the department's canine program, designed foul weather gear for officers, obtained an electric park patrol vehicle and served as the department's sketch artist.

CLARK RETIRES AFTER THREE DECADES OF COMMUNITY SERVICE

After nearly 30 years of service, Sgt. Albert H. Clark retired from the Bell Gardens Police Department in July. He began his law enforcement career as a reserve officer with the Maywood Police Department, joining BGPD in 1988 after graduating from the Los Angeles Sheriff's Department Police Academy. While working as a Patrol Officer here, he continued to support the local community by working part-time with the Montebello Unified School District Police.



At Bell Gardens, Sgt. Clark held the following positions: Patrol Officer, Traffic Investigator, School Resource Officer, Field Training Officer, General Investigations Detective (two tours), Senior Officer, and Patrol Sergeant. Sergeant Clark finished his career as the Community Relations Sergeant where he was responsible for the Police Department's Jail Management, Community Service Officers, Community Relations, and the Neighborhood Watch Program.

"Sgt. Clark has been a dedicated officer and city employee who could always be counted on to do the right thing," said Police Chief Scott Fairfield. "I congratulate Sgt. Clark for his commitment to our department and I thank him for his service to this city and to our community."

One of Sergeant Clark's favorite projects was the annual Red Cross Blood Drive which is also known as "Battle of the Badges." Because of his dedication to this event, the Bell Gardens Police Department often came in first place for blood donated based on Red Cross award criteria.

DO YOUR PART – VOTE IN NOVEMBER!

The next election in Bell Gardens is coming November 6 – are you registered to vote? The deadline for registering is October 22 and can be done simply online at <https://registertovote.ca.gov/>. You can also register by picking up a hard copy voter registration form at the DMV, County Clerk or the City Clerk's office at City Hall and filing it by the deadline.

Everyone plays an important part in government and

November's ballot will include many candidates and issues that will impact our community, from selecting City Council, county, state and federal representatives to expressing your opinion on statewide initiatives. Be sure to be part of your local government and vote!

Learn more about elections and the voting process by visiting www.lavote.net. Remember, every vote counts!

