



PRESS RELEASE

City of Los Alamitos
Contact: Recreation and Community Services
(562) 430 – 1073
Released 9/25/24

Celebrate Los AI

Los Alamitos, CA – The City of Los Alamitos Recreation and Community Services Department held the Celebrate Los AI event on Saturday, September 14, 2024. The morning started with the 7th annual Serve Los AI event where over 100 volunteers gathered for an assembly at 8:30 a.m. at the Oak Middle School Outdoor Amphitheatre. The event was led by Recreation Coordinator Angel Hernandez. Volunteers were welcomed by Recreation Staff and received a Serve Los AI volunteer shirt and were given breakfast burritos provided by Nick's Deli. Water provided by Golden State Water along with snacks were also available for volunteers to enjoy. At the Assembly, local elected officials addressed the volunteers and thanked them for their volunteer service. Following the Assembly, volunteers gathered for a group photo and dispersed to their project sites.

Alliance Baseball Club brought over 20 volunteers to participate in the Serve Los AI event as they completed the Laurel Park Clean-Up Project and a Senior Resident Landscape Project. Sunburst Youth Academy also brought 50+ participants who completed the Coyote Creek Clean-up Project and Little Cottonwood Clean-up Project. Community volunteers completed the following projects:

- Lil' Oak Preschool Patio Clean-Up & Planting Project
- Little Cottonwood Park Clean-Up
- Precious Life Shelter – Thrift & Gift Shop
- Royal Oak Mobile Home Window Washing
- Los Alamitos, Cypress and Seal Beach Rotary Club – Suitcase Project
- Transitions in Motherhood and We Care Hygiene Kits
- St Isidore Historical Plaza Cleaning Project
- Lestonnac Free Health Clinic - Vision and Glasses

The evening event centered around Pine Street between Katella Avenue and Florista Street in Los Alamitos. The celebration began at 4:00 p.m. and included a carnival, Beverage Garden, game booths, stage performances, Veterans Recognition, Pine StrEATS, airbrush painting, and a Public Safety Fair. The event ended with a vibrant Glow Run, music, and carnival games at 10:00 p.m., promising an entertaining evening outing with friends and family. The primary event leads for the wonderful event were Recreation Manager Jason Bruton, Recreation Supervisor Kristina Villaluna, and Recreation Coordinator Alix Anderson. The Public Safety Fair was coordinated by Training, Events, and VIPS Coordinator Nicole Saiz from the Los Alamitos Police Department and Pine StrEATS, a grant-funded program that featured an incredible food tasting of 15 participating Los Alamitos restaurants was coordinated by Economic Development Supervisor Elisha Boothe from the Development Services Department.

Minutes before the official start time, City Staff diligently scouted the event area to apply any remaining finishing touches. Autumn's warm colors swept through the grounds filled with leaves, pumpkins, and straw bales. The 10 information vendors neatly arranged their tables as the first wave of visitors entered the event at 4:00 p.m. Simultaneously, a burst of energy echoed down Pine Street as the first band, Headshine, began their rock and reggae performance. Early attendees could jam out to some tunes or make their way over to the Public Safety Fair directly next to the stage in the U.S. Bank parking lot. The Public Safety Fair featured the Los Alamitos Police Department, the Orange County Fire Authority, the Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Services Team, and the Community Emergency Response Team offering safety tips and resources. Two police cruisers, a mobile command unit, a motorcycle, and an armored Lenco BearCat vehicle were on display. Visitors were encouraged to ask questions and take a closer look at the emergency response vehicles and special equipment.

While waiting for the carnival to open at 5:00 p.m., attendees could visit the Beverage Garden hosted by the Los Alamitos Community Foundation. This area provided refreshments and seating to sit back, relax, and enjoy the good vibrations. Shaded areas were available, but the mild temperatures provided a pleasant experience regardless of seating position—a welcome experience compared to the scorching heatwave from the weekend prior. Various alcoholic beverages were offered for a modest price of \$5, as well as a couple of non-alcoholic options. For those with the football jitters, a large flat-screen display invited the crowds to watch the game between Washington State University and Washington University.

A long line of guests anxiously began to wait at the ticket booth before the rides opened at 5:00 p.m. Tickets were sold for \$2 each, but those looking to get the most out of their day could opt for an unlimited wristband for \$20. The carnival area invited people to various attractions, including multiple game booths, two Ferris wheels, a zip line, a merry-

go-round, a 20-foot slide, rock climbing, a roller coaster, and more. Tickets were also available for the Pine StrEATS for \$1. Pine StrEATS was organized by the City of Los Alamitos Development Services Department and allowed participants to sample various participating local restaurants, including:

- Taboon Mediterranean
- Mama's Comfort Food & Cocktails
- Wahoo's Fish Taco
- El Pollo Loco
- Thailusion
- Taco Surf
- Local Grind
- Fiesta Michoacana
- Angelina's Famous Pizza
- An Noodles
- Doh-Nut-Hut
- Jimmy John's
- Brew Kitchen
- Teofilo Coffee
- Casitas De Amigos

Back on the stage as the band closed its set, the Veterans Recognition took place for Los Alamitos resident Veterans where local elected officials honored each veteran with certificates of recognition, including:

- Miachel Bell, US Air Force, Airman 3rd Class
- Tom Germscheid, US Army, Specialist
- James Leverentz , US Navy, Lieutenant
- Robert K. Welch, US Army, Corporal
- Bruce Murphy, US Air Force, Sergeant
- John Shanks, US Army, Specialist
- Robert Chesnut, US Army, Specialist
- Michael Claborn, US Army, Specialist
- Daniel Patz, South African Army, Private
- Jordan Nefulda, US Army, Sergeant
- Charles Jerry Kubicka Jr., US Army, Sergeant

Many friends and family joined in the recognition, some flying from out of state for this special occasion, as it was the first time for some of these Veterans to be recognized.

Two of the Veterans were unable to join but still recognized:

- Richard Garcia, US Army, Specialist
- Renald Lapierre, US Air Force, 1st Lieutenant

Following the ceremony the music kicked back up with a line dancing session with instructor Cindi. Brave participants could follow along to 45 minutes of line dance instruction before transitioning into the final performance for the night with the country band JT Harker at 7:00 p.m.

The evening wrapped up at 7:30 p.m. with the fantastic Glow Run & Glide. About 1,000 participants arrived in their dazzling gear for the one-mile night race. Families were encouraged to dress up in their best glow-in-the-dark accessories and join others as they raced and danced through the surrounding neighborhood. The Recreation Staff also set up cold sparklers, a glow-in-the-dark photo backdrop, and a glow tunnel. The Glow Run was a highlight for many residents, who have made it a family tradition. Following a jam-packed day, guests were welcome to enjoy the carnival rides and stage music before closing the festivities at 10:00 p.m. The entire Celebrate Los Al event was a huge success, with over 7,500 attendees coming together to celebrate the lively spirit of the City of Los Alamitos.

For more information about upcoming events and programs, please visit www.cityoflosalamitos.org/recreation or contact the Recreation and Community Services Department at (562) 430-1073.









