

Rancho Los Alamitos Historic Ranch and Gardens

Rancho Los Alamitos
6400 Bixby Hill Road
Long Beach, California 90815
www.rancholosalamitos.com
(562) 431-3541

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Contact: Blythe Paz
info@rancholosalamitos.com
(562) 431-3541

Volunteering in the Historic Gardens

Garden Volunteers
meet Tuesday mornings at 9:00 a.m.
and other times by arrangement



Oleander Walk (left), Paper Whites (above)
Photos by Wayne Olson, RLA Volunteer

LONG BEACH, CA -- Even while Rancho Los Alamitos is undergoing a complete restoration of its historic Barns Area and construction of a state-of-the-art Education Center, the site's beautiful, tranquil gardens, grounds, and ranch house remain open to the public. Every Tuesday at 9:00 a.m., a group of ten volunteers arrives at the Rancho to plant, prune, dead-head, and otherwise groom the historic gardens, readying them for the school children who enjoy their mornings at the ranch, and the guests who will visit the site during its afternoon open hours Wednesday through Sunday.

Volunteers support the Rancho's horticultural staff in maintaining all of the historic garden areas, from the Oleander and Geranium Walks to the Native Garden, from the Cactus Garden to the Rose Garden as well as the Friendly and Cutting Gardens.

In the Cutting Garden, with the aid of correspondence by Mrs. Florence Bixby from 1928 and garden reference materials from the 1920s - 1930s such as garden catalogues of the era, the volunteers aim to provide, for display in the ranch house and for special events, cut flowers that are historically correct for the time period. This past fall, they planted a variety of bulbs, Delphiniums, Sweet Peas, Gladioli, Lilies, Dahlias, Carnations, and Bachelor Buttons some of which are beginning to provide color and texture to the garden. Soon they will be planting Ranunculus, Snapdragons and tall, slender Linaria in an assortment of colors. The volunteers are glowing with pride to find that the pink color of the flowers of the Hydrangea bushes that they planted last year now grace the house in arrangements that compliment the historic wallpaper in the Dining Room.

Garden volunteers at Rancho Los Alamitos have the chance to meet, learn from, and work with horticultural experts in the area as well as with other garden lovers. There is room for more folks who enjoy gardening and would like the opportunity to help maintain this local treasure. Volunteers are welcomed in each of seven general volunteer service areas at Rancho Los Alamitos including Touring and School Programs, Hospitality, Curatorial, Ranch and Livestock, Office and Administration, and Special Events and Public Programs.

Individuals who are interested in joining volunteers in the garden or in another area of interest, may contact the Rancho by calling (562) 431-3541 or via email at info@rancholosalamitos.com. More information is available at www.rancholosalamitos.com.

Rancho Los Alamitos is owned by the City of Long Beach and operated by Rancho Los Alamitos Foundation as a public/private cooperative venture under the auspices of the Department of Parks, Recreation and Marine. The site is open for tours Wednesday through Sunday from 1-5 p.m. School tours and Children's Native American Cultural Workshops are scheduled weekday mornings. Admission is free and parking is normally available on site. Enter though Bixby Hill residential security gate at Anaheim and Palo Verde. For information about the site, tours, or special events and programs, please go to www.rancholosalamitos.com.