



**January - March  
2022, Q1**

## Coachella Valley Public Cemetery District Newsletter

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### **Remember the Mowing Days**

Our community has shown great respect for the memory of their loved ones by visiting frequently and leaving memorials at grave sites. We welcome these expressions of love, but we kindly remind the community they come with a responsibility. Items left at the gravesites must be picked up the day prior to mowing or they will be discarded. The grounds must be cleared to perform mowing and edging so we can keep our cemetery beautiful for all.

We are often asked, why can't we retrieve our items after they have been cleared? The short answer is because it is hazardous. Items collected from the grounds often include glass, metal, and many objects with sharp edges, digging through the collection containers is not safe. Once they are removed from the grounds, they cannot be retrieved. That is why it is vital all items be picked up the day prior to mowing. To be safe, you may even want to pick it up two days in advance, so you have an extra day if something comes up. To review the districts mowing schedule, visit our home page at [CVPCD.org](http://CVPCD.org) (located at the bottom of the page).

### **WHAT'S NEW**

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#### **IRRIGATION GOES DARK**

The District has completed an automated irrigation project

#### **STAYING COOL**

Our columbarium has new fans to help keep the public cool during the summer.

#### **NEW WEBSITE**

The District has launched a new website.

## Irrigation Goes Dark

The District has completed the process of converting all irrigation on cemetery grounds to automated controls. Work on the \$108,000 irrigation project began in October of 2021 and was completed in January of this year. The project will allow the District to accomplish all of its irrigation at night utilizing automated controls and remote flow monitoring.

The project is especially significant for visitors to cemetery grounds who will no longer be disturbed by day-time irrigation. The project will also make the District more efficient custodians of their water utilization, significantly reducing day-time evaporation and over-watering. The District was aided in this project by the Coachella Valley Mountains Conservancy who awarded the project a Prop 1 grant in the amount of \$50,100.



## Staying Cool



Our columbarium has new fans to help keep the public cool during the summer. The new outdoor rated fans are made of durable composite materials to hold up to our summer heat, we hope to have them in place for years to come.

In addition to being home to our cremation niches, the columbarium also has an outdoor chapel used for public services. The addition of these fans will help our community stay cool while they honor the memory of their loved ones.

For more information about our niches or use of the outdoor chapel, please contact the office or visit our website at [CVPCD.org](http://CVPCD.org).

## New Website

The District has launched a new website. The site can be found at [CVPCD.org](http://CVPCD.org). The site features enhanced transparency efforts by the District to better connect our community with agency governance. It also has new features to keep the public informed of upcoming events, interment schedules, and cemetery operations. We welcome feedback! If you see something missing or an area that can be enhanced, let us know. Email us at [info@cvpcd.org](mailto:info@cvpcd.org) and tell us how you would improve the site.



## Coachella Valley Public Cemetery District Newsletter



## Memorial Day 2022

On Monday, May 30th, the community gathered at the Veterans Memorial to commemorate Memorial Day. There are over 600 veterans that are interred at the Coachella Valley Public Cemetery District (CVPCD or District), many of whom paid the ultimate sacrifice in defense of freedom.

The event was held under clear blue skies and supported by hundreds of attendees and dignitaries from the local community. The Coachella Valley High School Choir performed the National Anthem, and a Pass and Review was done by the American Legion Riders. A presentation of wreaths and a salute (riffle volley) was performed by the Post 739 Honor Guard. Volunteers with Freedom Flags for Families and local Boy Scout troops helped decorate headstones with wreaths and flags.

The District would like to thank the American Legion for their coordination and support of the event, as well as Councilmember Glenn Miller from Indio for serving as emcee, and our own Board Chairman Ernesto Rosales for his event introduction.

## WHAT'S NEW

### CAPITOL TRIP

The District advocates for our community in Sacramento

### STAYING COOL

Early services, complimentary water part of heat illness prevention

### NEW SERVICE CARTS

Families find comfortable transportation around grounds

## AND MORE...

# Coachella Valley Public Cemetery District Joins Special District Week in Sacramento

The Coachella Valley Public Cemetery District recently joined with other special districts from across California to advocate on behalf of the communities they serve. The event was sponsored by the California Special District Association (CSDA). Special districts are public agencies created by the community to provide one or more specific services, such as water service, sewer service, cemetery, parks, fire protection and other needs critical to the wellbeing of a community.

In addition to guest speakers, the event featured seminars on governance and updates on legislation that could impact our local special districts. The keynote speaker was State Insurance Commissioner Ricardo Lara who spoke on the impact climate change and drought are having on fire protection, parks and recreation, and other districts across the State.

“From climate to workforce development, state lawmakers are making critical decisions that will impact the budget, infrastructure, and operations of our local districts in the Coachella Valley,” said CVPCD General Manager Joshua Bonner. “Our goal in visiting Sacramento is to not only stay abreast of new laws and potential funding opportunities for the District, but also directly engage with elected leaders to create those opportunities through legislation.” Bonner points to the \$57,512 in COVID-19 relief funding the District recently received as part of the COVID-19 Fiscal Relief for Special Districts as an example. “That was a direct result of significant advocacy work being done by the CSDA and their local district partners.”

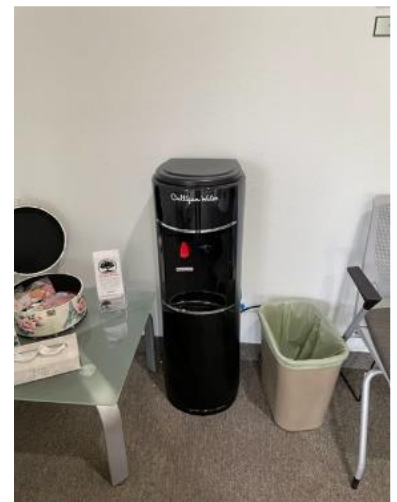
The District was represented in Sacramento by Trustee Marcos Coronel, Jr., Trustee Dr. Bruce Underwood, and their General Manager. They were joined by representatives from five other special districts in the Coachella Valley. In addition to organized activities, the group was able to meet with Assemblymember Eduardo Garcia, representatives from Assemblymember Chad Mays office, and other elected leaders.



CVPCD representatives meet with the State Insurance Commissioner. From left to right, Trustee Dr. Bruce Underwood, General Manager Joshua Bonner, Trustee Marcos Coronel, Jr. and State Insurance Commissioner Ricardo Lara (and guest).

## Summer Heat Reminders

The heat of Summer has arrived, a few kind reminders when visiting the cemetery grounds. During summer we begin services as early as 8:30 AM to allow for cooler temperatures. The District also provides water for all interment services, please take advantage of this service to stay hydrated. There is also water available in the office lobby during our standard business hours. The cemetery has many shade trees throughout the grounds, but umbrellas are also welcomed (please no canopies as they encroach on nearby graves).





## Thousands Visit Cemetery During Mother's Day

The Coachella Valley Public Cemetery District welcomed over 4,000 vehicles to the grounds over Mother's Day Weekend and Mexican Mother's Day. Mother's Day week is one of the heaviest traffic days of the year for the cemetery, along with Día de los Muertos.

This year the District took several steps to ensure the crowds were safe and well organized, including additional parking on the west side of the cemetery, restroom facilities, additional trash receptacles, traffic flow directions and additional security staff. The event went very well, and the District would like to thank the public for their cooperation and all the positive feedback we received from visitors. We continue to look for ways to improve the public's experience while visiting the cemetery and always welcome your feedback!



## New Service Carts



The District has new six-seater carts for serving families. The two new units arrived in April and have been shuttling families around the cemetery grounds. Our shuttles get used for many purposes, including the selection of plot location during at-need and pre-need appointments, assisting families with locating the graves of loved ones, leading the funeral procession into the grounds when they arrive, and more. We look forward to the new units accomplishing these tasks and serving the needs of our guests for years to come.

## CVPCD BOARD WELCOMES PUBLIC COMMENT

The Coachella Valley Public Cemetery District Board of Trustees meets monthly and welcomes feedback from the public. All upcoming board meetings are publicly posted on our website ([HERE](#)). There is time set aside at each meeting for members of the public to offer comments. If you cannot attend the meeting in person, we welcome public comment through email ([info@cvpcd.org](mailto:info@cvpcd.org)) or by phone at (760) 398-3221.



July - Sep  
2022, Q3

## Coachella Valley Public Cemetery District Newsletter

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### Excellence in Safety Award

The Coachella Valley Public Cemetery District (CVPCD) was named the 2022 Earl F. Sayre Excellence in Safety Award winner by the Special District Risk Management Authority (SDRMA).

The Cemetery District was selected as a result of its low loss ratio, longevity in the SDRMA Property/Liability program, and achievements in their Credit Incentive Program. Joshua Bonner, CVPCD General Manager, credits the award to the Cemetery District's on-going investment in district operations. "California has over 3,000 special districts, and many of them are part of SDRMA," says Bonner. "It's a great honor to be recognized by a statewide organization for our efforts. With strong leadership from our Board of Trustees, the District has not only invested in safety efforts, quality equipment, and education for our team, but has maintained a strong focus on quality and care of service at every level of the organization. This award reflects our efforts."

The award was received at the California Special District Association Annual Conference.

### WHAT'S NEW

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#### FUTURE EXPANSION

The District begins future development work

#### DÍA DE LOS MUERTOS

The annual celebration is fast approaching

#### 2022-23 BUDGET BOOK

Review the District's budget and spending priorities

AND MORE...



## Future Expansion

The Coachella Valley Public Cemetery District recently began execution of what is planned to be a major development effort on the property adjacent to the current cemetery. Approximately 30 acres of land to the west hosts the District's maintenance facility, and until recently three buildings that were previously utilized for employee housing. One of the units has since been converted into transitional office space for both administration and Board meeting use, while the other two units were decommissioned by the Board of Trustees and scheduled for removal. The land clearing efforts took approximately two months, with the project being completed in September of this year. The images displayed show demolition of the east building in progress (Right) and completed (Below).



The District currently plans to use the additional 30 acres for cemetery development and possibly future administration building(s). Preliminary engineering studies are currently being conducted and will be part of on-going development planning by the Board.



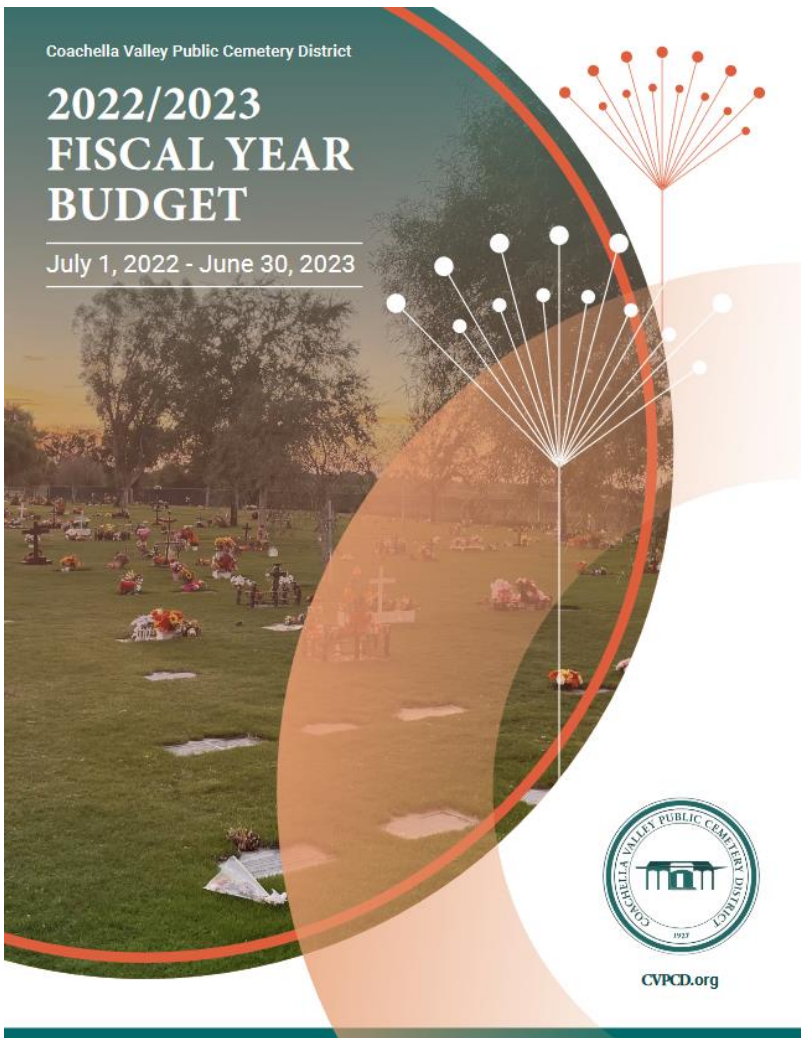
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# Día de los Muertos

The District is already preparing for its annual Día de los Muertos celebration. There will be some significant changes to the event for this year. Jackson St. between Ave. 52 and Ave. 50 will no longer be blocked off for parking during the celebration event on November 2<sup>nd</sup>, instead all parking will be on-site utilizing the empty lot immediately to the west of the cemetery. Additionally, the cemetery will not be open for vehicle traffic on November 1<sup>st</sup>, parking will also be directed to the adjacent lot.

For more information and on-going updates, visit the event [page](#) on our website. You can also follow us on Facebook or like (follow) the Facebook event [page](#).



## 2022-2023 Budget Book

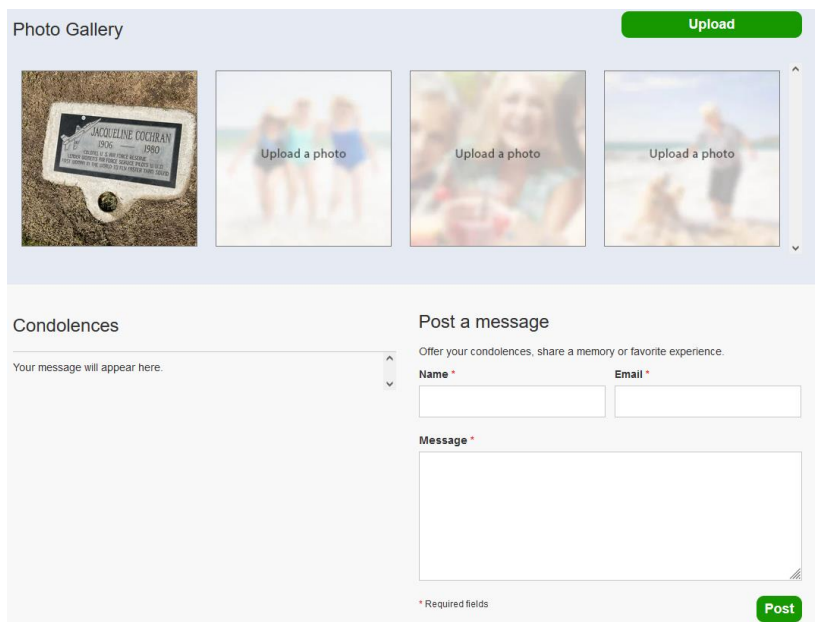
The Coachella Valley Public Cemetery District has released its 2022-2023 Budget Book for public review. The annual document informs the public on the District's fiscal budget for the upcoming business year, as well as detailing its spending priorities.

Some of the highlights of this year's budget include significant investments into capital projects. The District's roads are scheduled to be repaved, which the Board of Trustees has set aside \$500,000 for project completion. The District is also scheduled for needed repairs and replacement parts to its well pump that supplies irrigation water to the grounds, and landscape improvements to the islands located in the road medians. There is also a feature on the District's commitment to investing in workforce development and support.

To view the budget book, please visit our website at [CVPCD.org](http://CVPCD.org). The [document](#) can be found and downloaded from the Transparency section of the site, under Budget and Salary Information.



Photo Gallery Upload



Condolences

Your message will appear here.

Post a message

Offer your condolences, share a memory or favorite experience.

Name \*

Email \*

Message \*

\* Required fields Post

## New Website Features

Visitors to our website will see a nice upgrade in the memorial section. The new feature allows for family members and friends to leave a message of condolence. The District also completed a months-long effort to photograph and record every headstone currently in the cemetery. Each memorial listing will now feature a recent photo.

This section of the website can be found by clicking on "[Find A Loved One](#)" and searching the name of the deceased. The search results will take you to the feature page.

## New Security Team

The District is welcoming a new security team to the cemetery. Please say hello to Southwest Security when you meet them on the grounds. The District has security in place daily to ensure the best possible experience for our visiting public. Southwest Security was chosen as part of a competitive review of our overall security needs.

As with all our on-going contracted services, the District will periodically undertake a formal procurement process for service providers. The Request for Proposal (RFP) process allows the District to evaluate current services and pricing to ensure the best use of taxpayer resources. RFP's are posted to the District's website under the "Public Notices" section. The District welcomes local businesses to monitor and respond to these requests.



### Did You Know – What is a Special District?

The Coachella Valley Public Cemetery District (CVPCD) is a Special District; a special-purpose governmental unit that exists independent from local governments such as counties and cities. The CVPVD is one of over 265 public cemetery districts in California which are supported, in part, by property taxes. A small portion of the property tax revenue that is collected from taxpayers within the Special District is part of the revenue the Cemetery relies on for its annual budget. Individuals who do not reside in or pay property taxes in this Special District are required by law to pay a surcharge to the District for interment in the Cemetery. To learn more about the District, visit our website at [CVPCD.org](http://CVPCD.org)!



Oct. – Dec.  
2022, Q4

## Coachella Valley Public Cemetery District Newsletter

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## Día de los Muertos

The Coachella Valley Public Cemetery District wants to thank the community for another successful Día de los Muertos celebration. An estimated 10,000 attendees visited the cemetery grounds over the course of the two-day event, November 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup>. The festivities included live music and entertainment, traditional Pan de Muerto provided by the District, and temporary lighting that allowed cemetery hours to be extended.

There were many successful changes implemented this year to make the celebration more enjoyable and convenient for those attending. Free parking was available on site, our stage was more centrally located, free water stations were readily accessible at the entrance, and restrooms were placed throughout the cemetery. As the event continues to grow, we are always looking for ways to improve the event and appreciate ideas and feedback we receive from our community.

Thank you again for your support!

## WHAT'S NEW

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### TRANSPARENCY

The District is recognized for  
excellency

### ISLAND RENOVATIONS

Work on cemetery infrastructure  
improvement continues

### WORK ZONES

The importance of work zones  
and public safety

### AND MORE...



OUR COMMITMENT TO TRANSPARENCY



**SPECIAL DISTRICT  
LEADERSHIP FOUNDATION**

# DISTRICT TRANSPARENCY CERTIFICATE OF EXCELLENCE RECIPIENT

[sdlf.org](http://sdlf.org)



**2022**

# Transparency Certificate of Excellence

Coachella Valley Public Cemetery District received the District Transparency Certificate of Excellence by the Special District Leadership Foundation (SDLF) in recognition of its outstanding efforts to promote transparency and good governance.

“This award is a testament to Coachella Valley Public Cemetery District’s commitment to open government,” said, Joshua Bonner, General Manager. “Our Board of Trustees and staff are to be commended for their contributions that empower the public with information and facilitate engagement and oversight.” To receive the award, Coachella Valley Public Cemetery District demonstrated the completion of essential governance transparency requirements, including conducting ethics training for all board members, properly conducting open and public meetings, and filing financial transactions and compensation reports to the State Controller in a timely manner.

“The District has made a concerted effort over the last two years to improve our transparency, and in particular our accessibility to the public,” said, Ernesto Rosales, Board Chair. “Significant investments in the development of a new website, our new Board room facility’s AV capabilities, and organizational training and development all helped to make this recognition possible.”

SDLF is an independent, non-profit organization formed to promote good governance and best practices among California’s special districts through certification, accreditation, and other recognition programs.



*District Trustees (from left to right): Marcos Coronel, Jr., Dr. Bruce Underwood, Chair Ernesto Rosales, John Rios, Vice Chair Judy Vossler.*

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## Island Renovations

The District recently completed a renovation of the island medians located in the main throughway at the center of the cemetery. The islands were partially landscaped with palm trees when constructed, but otherwise retained the original dirt surface. As part of the renovation, decomposed granite (DG), decorative rock and additional shrubbery was added.



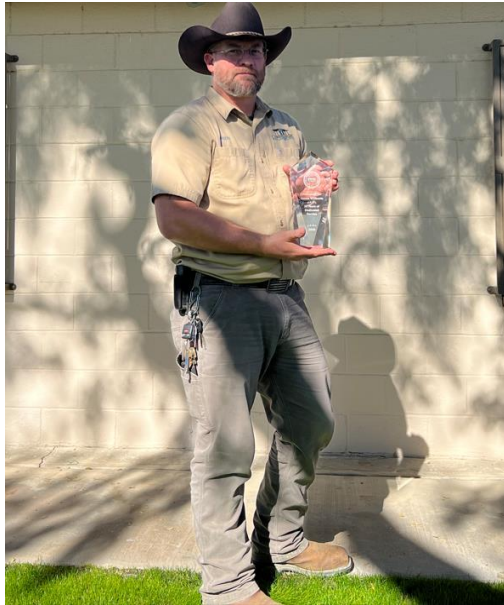
The island renovation is part of a broader effort by the Board of Trustees to improve the overall landscape and infrastructure of the cemetery. The roads located inside cemetery grounds are currently undergoing an engineering study, part of a planned grind and repave project approved for 2023.

## Veterans Day

The District hosted another successful Veterans Day ceremony in partnership with our local American Legion Post 739. The event was held on November 11<sup>th</sup> and was open to the public. The District would like to thank all that supported the event, including local dignitaries and District Trustees in attendance. District Chairman Ernesto Rosales emceed the event that included a performance of the national anthem, a traditional Honor Guard salute, and a benediction.

The cemetery is the final resting place for over 1,000 veterans, many of whom are identified with headstone markings. The Veterans Remembrance Memorial found at the center of the cemetery is a permanent remembrance of their service and sacrifice.





## Employee News

### Jason Wilberts

The District recognized Jason Wilberts (pictured) for his over 20 years of dedicated service, part of our year-end employee appreciation efforts. Jason currently serves as a Maintenance Specialist where he works on many of the District's special projects and infrastructure maintenance.

### Sherry Winder

The District recently welcomed Sherry Winder to our team. Sherry will serve as the District's Financial Analyst and Clerk of the Board. As Clerk of the Board Sherry will handle public records requests, posting agendas and other Board related actions, and assisting our community with important government related communication.

## Work Zones

A kind reminder to the public, please be aware of active work zones inside the cemetery. The normal hours of operation for District maintenance during cemetery visiting hours spans from 7:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. Although work zones may be erected as needed at anytime during the week, these hours are the most prevalent for operations to be active.

If you see the orange "Work Zone No Entry" signs up, please be respectful of the area and refrain from entering while posted. The District operates in potentially hazardous conditions for the public, including the use of heavy machinery and the presence of open trenches. Our work zones are established for the public's safety, and so staff can efficiently complete the work they are tasked to perform. The help and support of our community is greatly appreciated!



### Stay Informed!

Did you know the District offers many ways for you to stay informed of changes to the mowing schedule, office closures, events, and other important notifications? These updates can be found on our District website homepage, located at [CVPCD.org](http://CVPCD.org). You can also follow us on [Facebook](#).

Recently, the District also added email alerts. To sign up for email alerts, please click [HERE](#). Email alerts will be delivered to you only when announcements or other important communication is required. The District does not sell or share this information or use it for commercial advertising purposes.



## Announcements

Upcoming scheduled changes to the District's mowing schedule:

- No Mowing the week of December 26<sup>th</sup> (Christmas)
- No mowing the week of February 13<sup>th</sup> (Valentine's Day)

Upcoming Events:

- Regular January Meeting of the Board of Trustees, January 13, 2023, 8:00 a.m. ([Details](#))
- Regular February Meeting of the Board of Trustees, February 10, 2023, 8:00 a.m. ([Details](#))

