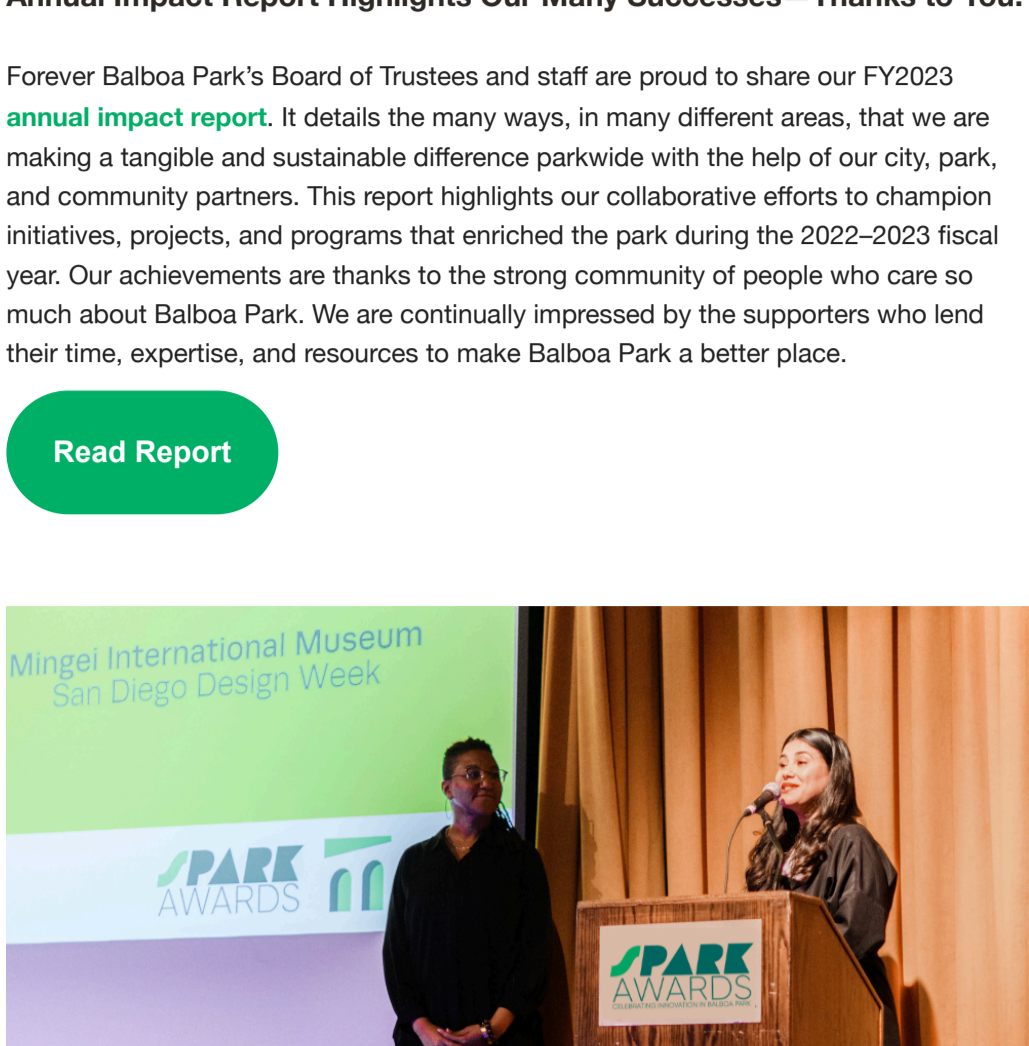


# Your Park Newsletter Sessions



NEWS

## Together, We Make a Difference

### Annual Impact Report Highlights Our Many Successes—Thanks to You!

Forever Balboa Park’s Board of Trustees and staff are proud to share our FY2023 annual impact report. It details the many ways, in many different areas, that we are making a tangible and sustainable difference parkwide with the help of our city, park, and community partners. This report highlights our collaborative efforts to champion initiatives, projects, and programs that enriched the park during the 2022–2023 fiscal year. Our achievements are thanks to the strong community of people who care so much about Balboa Park. We are continually impressed by the supporters who lend their time, expertise, and resources to make Balboa Park a better place.

[Read Report](#)



## sPARK Awards 2024

### Nomination Deadline Extended to April 5

Want to meet some of the most innovative, creative, and inclusive collaborators in our beloved Balboa Park? So do we! Please help us identify the top trailblazers in the park by nominating an individual, organization, or group by Friday, March 15. **Winners in three different categories will receive a \$5,000 prize** toward their nonprofit’s, or nonprofit of choice’s, endeavors to continue shaping the park’s future.

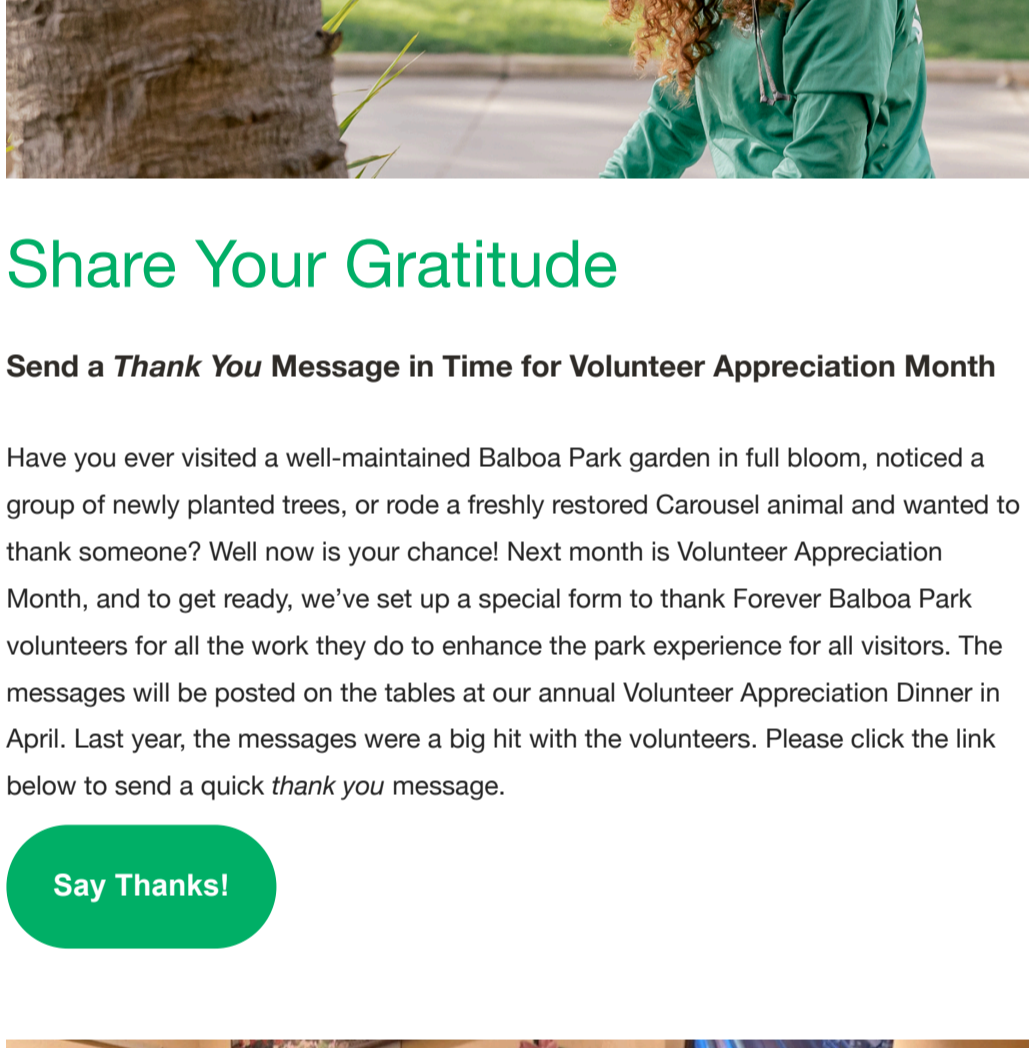
[Submit a Nomination](#)

### Join Us!

May 9, 2024  
5:00–7:00 p.m.  
Pavilion of Flight, San Diego Air & Space Museum

Be sure to take advantage of **early bird ticket pricing**, which ends March 15. Last spring, the inaugural sPARK Awards drew a capacity crowd of festive attendees who enjoyed meeting and networking with a who’s who of fellow park lovers and stakeholders. Tables and sponsorship opportunities are also still available by contacting Janessa Wheeler at [janessa@balboapark.org](mailto:janessa@balboapark.org).

[Purchase Early Bird Tickets](#)



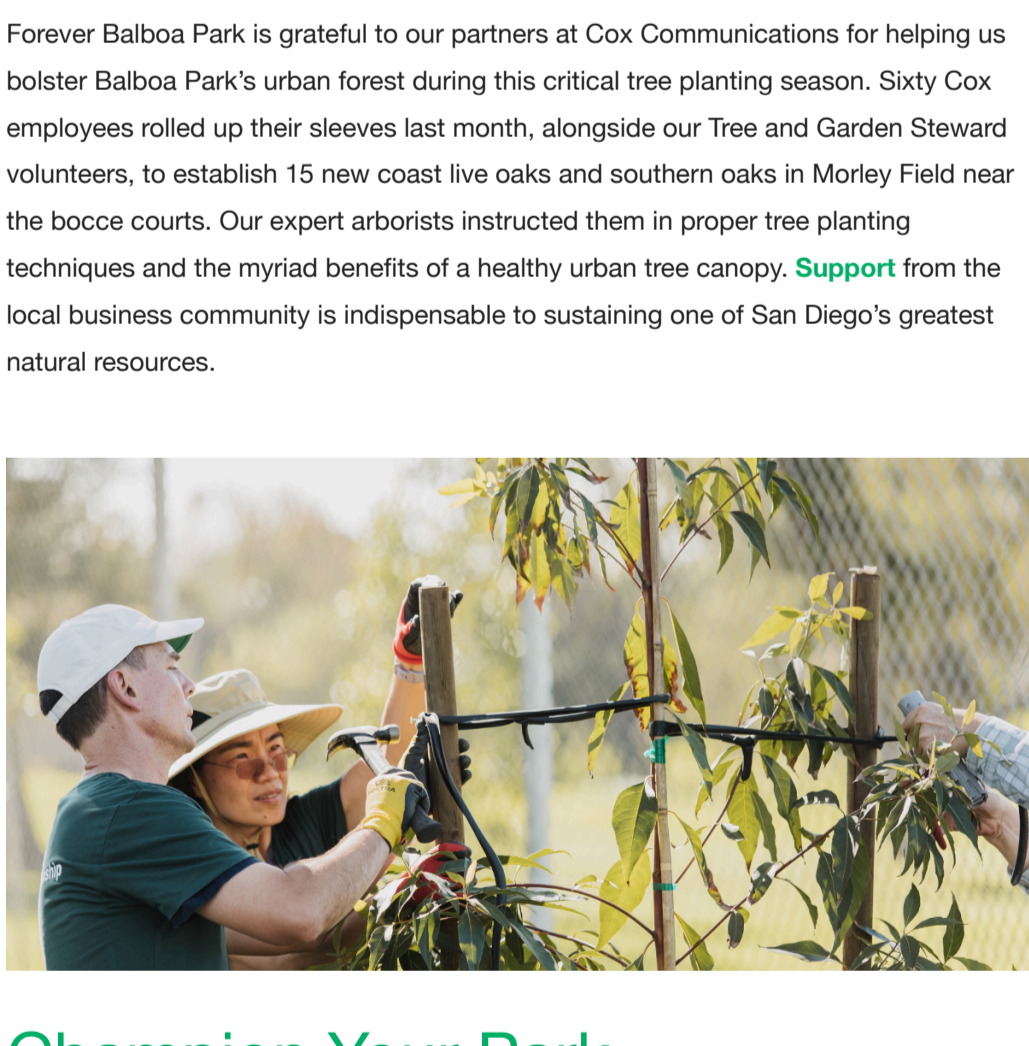
PROJECTS

## Old Cactus Garden Meets New Tech

### Interactive Cactus Garden Map IDs Dozens of Distinct Plant Varieties

The oldest cactus collection in Balboa Park just received the newest tech upgrade. Launching this week, visitors to the Kate O. Sessions Cactus Garden can access in-depth information about the 100+ distinct species in this 90-year-old garden via an interactive online map. This marks another significant step in our ongoing investments in the Cactus Garden, which includes trail restoration work, regular Garden Steward shifts, and installation of new irrigation. Forever Balboa Park staff collaborated with various experts, including a horticulture intern from SDSU, horticulturalists from the San Diego Zoo, the Gnosis Nursery co-founder, San Diego Cactus and Succulent Society members, and San Diego Master Gardeners, to research and inventory the garden’s plants. The interactive map identifies the species found in each bed and provides a photo with information on each species. The map is available on our [website](#), and in the coming weeks, through a QR code on garden signage.

[Check Out Map](#)

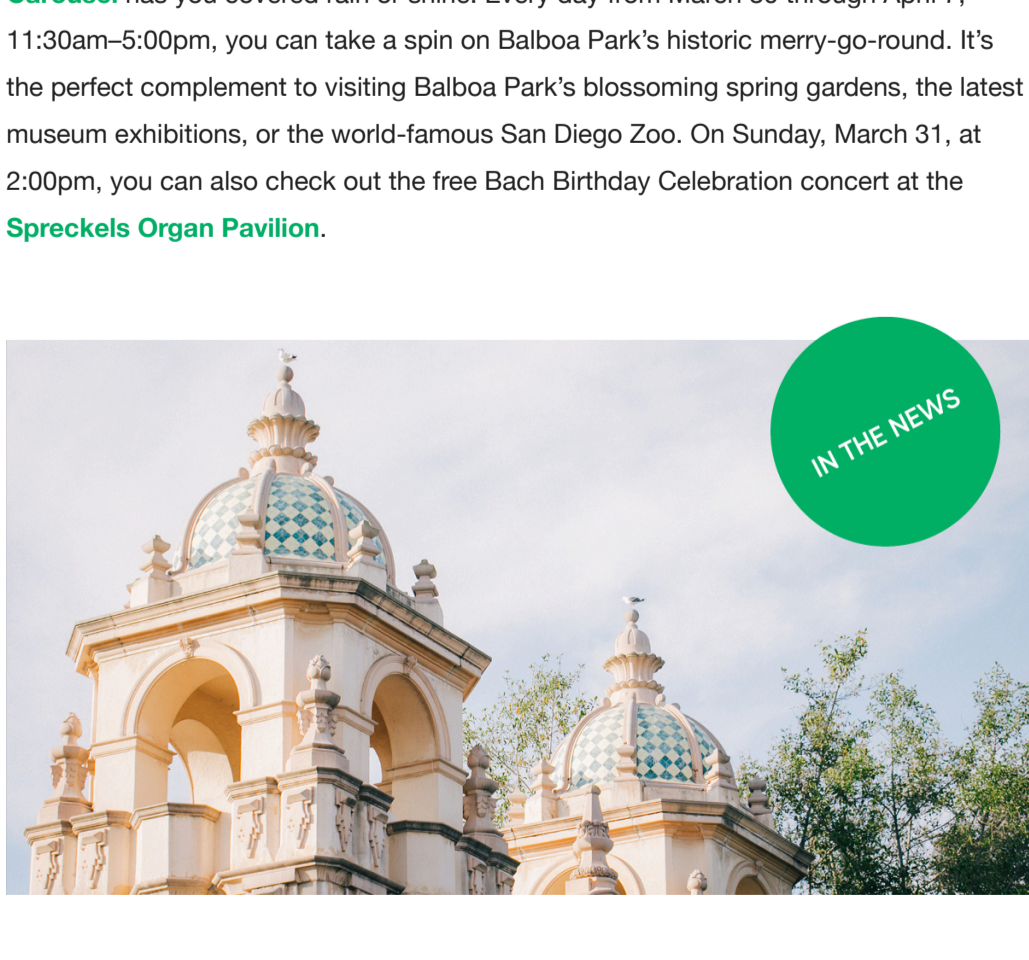


VOLUNTEERS

## Join Team Tree

### Help Balboa Park’s Urban Forest Thrive as a Tree Maintenance Steward

We often share stories about community and corporate partners who actively participate in Forever Balboa Park’s efforts to plant new trees across the entire 1,200-acre park. But none of these new trees would survive without the dedicated, ongoing work of our Tree Maintenance Stewards. Help us create a stronger, more resilient urban forest by joining this essential volunteer corps. Tree Maintenance Stewards support the growth of young trees in Balboa Park by removing encroaching weeds and grasses, watering, and mulching. They also learn to identify tree species in the park and monitor their health. Shifts are scheduled twice monthly on Monday mornings in different areas of the park. Please contact Caroline at [chill@balboapark.org](mailto:chill@balboapark.org) for more information.



## Thank You for Your Service

### US Navy Service Members Make Visible Impact on Park’s Gardens

Last month, two Balboa Park gardens received a huge helping hand when 60 active-duty service members of the US Navy generously volunteered their time and muscle-power as part of a special community service day. They worked alongside Forever Balboa Park staff, board members, and other volunteers to weed and complete other gardening tasks. In Bird Park, they cleared walking paths of weeds and other debris, and in the Trees for Health Garden, they cleared the canyon of fallen and unneeded logs—four truckloads’ worth! Their enthusiastic efforts greatly enhanced the experience of thousands of park visitors, and we couldn’t be more grateful.

## Share Your Gratitude

### Send a Thank You Message in Time for Volunteer Appreciation Month

Have you ever visited a well-maintained Balboa Park garden in full bloom, noticed a group of newly planted trees, or rode a freshly restored Carousel animal and wanted to thank someone? Well now is your chance! Next month is Volunteer Appreciation Month, and to get ready, we’ve set up a special form to thank Forever Balboa Park volunteers for all the work they do to enhance the park experience for all visitors. The messages will be posted on the tables at our annual Volunteer Appreciation Dinner in April. Last year, the messages were a big hit with the volunteers. Please click the link below to send a quick thank you message.

[Say Thanks!](#)



## Volunteer of the Month

### Beth Bushke Distinguishes Herself in Many Roles

Primarily volunteering on the Visitor Services team, Beth Bushke recently made invaluable contributions to the development of a new park tour that highlights the role of women in Balboa Park’s history. Whether she is answering visitor questions at the information desk or working behind the scenes, she approaches every task with alacrity. This includes single-handedly updating and maintaining the Visitor Center’s monthly exhibition list. Also serving on the sPARK Awards Ad Hoc Committee, Beth is facilitating research on event sponsors, assisting with logistical planning, and providing insights from her professional experience. She retired from Mastercard after 20+ years as a tech executive and now enjoys reading, yoga, and sailing. “Volunteering at Balboa Park has introduced me to wonderful people and given me an opportunity to learn about my community while sharing with others,” she said.



SUPPORT

## Tree Planting Partners

### Cox Communications Employees Help Grow San Diego’s Vital Urban Forest

Forever Balboa Park is grateful to our partners at Cox Communications for helping us bolster Balboa Park’s urban forest during this critical tree planting season. Sixty Cox employees rolled up their sleeves last month, alongside our Tree and Garden Steward volunteers, to establish 15 new coast live oaks and southern oaks in Morley Field near the bocce courts. Our expert arborists instructed them in proper tree planting techniques and the myriad benefits of a healthy urban tree canopy. **Support** from the local business community is indispensable to sustaining one of San Diego’s greatest natural resources.



## Champion Your Park

### Become a Love Balboa Park Member

Balboa Park is the heartbeat of our community, and it needs your help to remain a thriving cultural and recreational resource for generations to come. For just \$10 per month, you can join as a **Love Balboa Park Champion**, sustaining Forever Balboa Park’s programs and services. With support from park lovers like you, we deploy hundreds of volunteers parkwide to greet visitors, maintain the park’s gardens and vital urban forest, restore the historic Carousel, and so much more! We also steward important park assets and develop programming to enhance the park experience for all visitors.

[Join Today!](#)



VISITORS

## Your Spring Break Destination

### Balboa Park Carousel Open Every Day During K–12 School Break

No need to spin your wheels wondering what to do this spring break. The **Balboa Park Carousel** has you covered rain or shine. Every day from March 30 through April 7, 11:30am–5:00pm, you can take a turn on Balboa Park’s historic merry-go-round. It’s the perfect complement to visiting Balboa Park’s blossoming spring gardens, the latest museum exhibitions, or the world-famous San Diego Zoo. On Sunday, March 31, at 2:00pm, you can also check out the free Bach Birthday Celebration concert at the **Spreckels Organ Pavilion**.



IN THE NEWS

## In the News

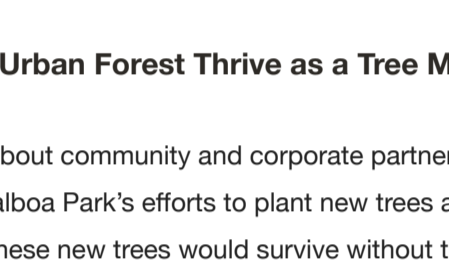
### In Case You Missed It . . .

- **Times of San Diego** featured last month’s tree planting event with Cox Communications.
- Forever Balboa Park’s special use permit agreement with the City of San Diego was covered by **BNN Breaking**.
- **National Geographic** highlighted Palm Canyon and the Kate O. Sessions Cactus Garden in a travel piece titled “Don’t leave San Diego without trying these 9 experiences.”



Forever Balboa Park is a tax-exempt organization under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, tax ID #33-0849518. Forever Balboa Park’s programs and initiatives to enhance Balboa Park and the visitor experience are generously supported by members of the Conservator’s Circle, donors and members, Prebys Foundation, San Diego Foundation, The Favrot Fund, William E. Cole Family Foundation, Dr. Seuss Foundation, Brandes Investment Partners, Hunter Industries, Las Patronas, San Diego Botanical Garden Foundation, and Walter J. & Betty G. Zable Foundation. We work in partnership with organizations like the City of San Diego, the Balboa Park Cultural Partnership, Committee of 100, and the Balboa Park Online Collaborative.

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