

# Heights Life

A COMMUNITY MAGAZINE  
La Habra Heights Improvement Association  
Serving the Heights since 1939 • May 2026

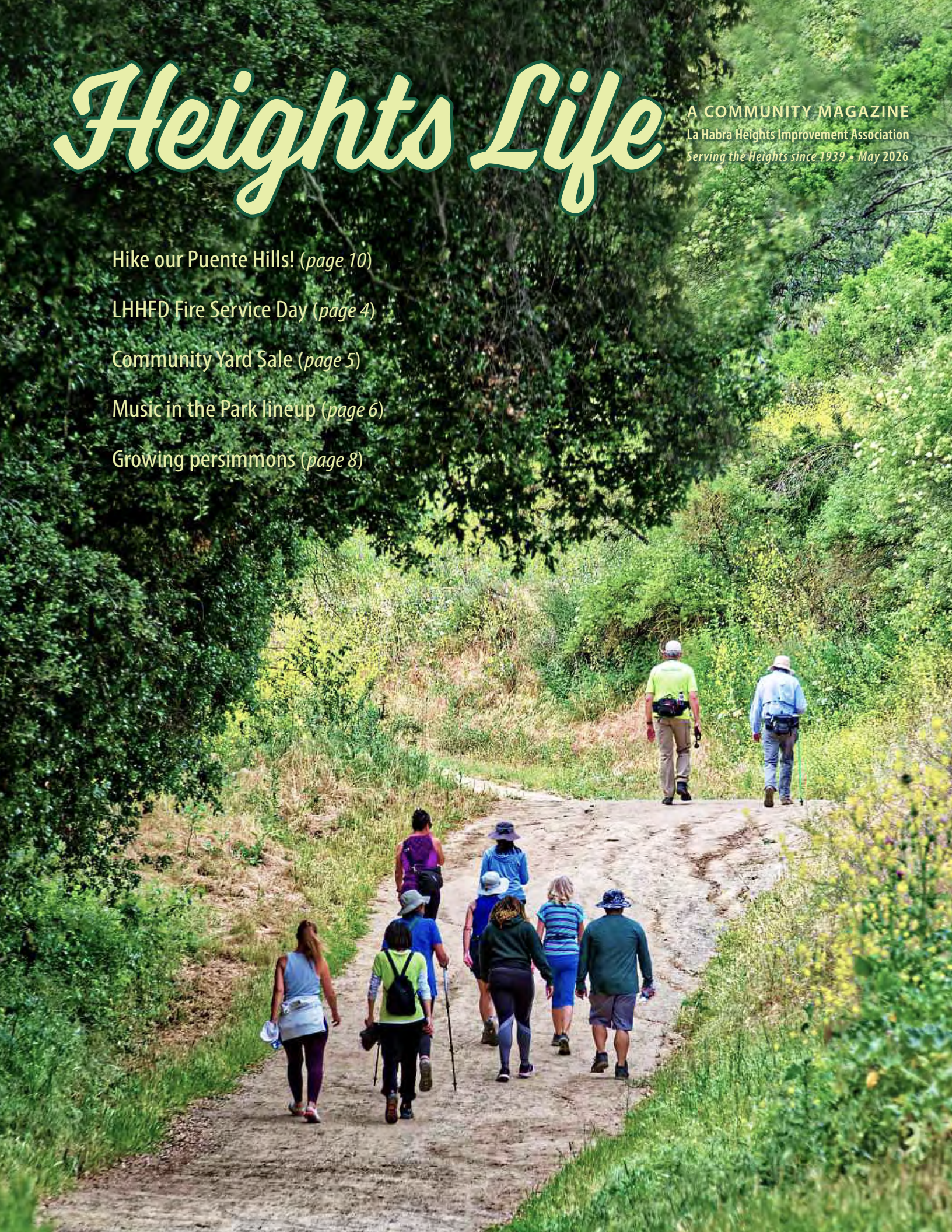
Hike our Puente Hills! (page 10)

LHHFD Fire Service Day (page 4)

Community Yard Sale (page 5)

Music in the Park lineup (page 6)

Growing persimmons (page 8)





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La Habra Heights

# Client TESTIMONIALS

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100+ OF 5 STAR REVIEWS

“ Ray Listed my 91 year old mother’s home and things could not have gone any smoother for her. He helped remove everything from the house, had someone come in and clean it before staging and photography. She had multiple offers, sold well above asking and closed early! Thank you Ray Fernandez and your professional organization!

*Lauren Johnstone - La Habra*

“ Ray Fernandez helped us buy the home of our dreams! He calmly and strategically led us through each phase, every negotiation and many decisions which all proved timely and utterly successful! We love our new beautiful home!

*Kathleen Diaz - La Habra Heights*

“ As a Realtor in Phoenix, Arizona, I was tasked by my family to vet and select a high-caliber agent to handle the sale of a family property in La Habra Heights that had been in our family for over 6 decades. Since the trustee was located across the country, it was vital to find an agent I could truly trust to manage a 100% remote transaction with precision.

We selected Ray Fernandez of NextMove Real Estate for his deep local expertise and his proven ability to navigate the unique nuances of the Heights - large, odd-sized lots, septic systems, fire regulations, etc.. Ray’s approach was calculated and strategic; we listed on a Thursday, and his marketing and pricing strategy led to multiple offers within the first weekend. Ray’s diligent negotiation resulted in us going under contract well over the asking price within days of being listed. He is a skilled negotiator and an exceptional communicator who made a complex out-of-state sale feel effortless. He has my highest professional.

*Jason Cadreau. My Home Group - Scottsdale*



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Statistics pulled from CRMLS date range Jan 1, 2026



# MAYOR'S CORNER



Brian Bergman



## Traffic delineators installed

The heavily travelled intersection at Citrus Road and Avocado Crest has long been a concern of many residents because so many drivers ignore the stop sign and continue straight through the intersection. While traffic patterns on the intersection were being reviewed to determine effects of the new Hacienda Road traffic light, a truck westbound on Citrus Road ignored the stop sign and caused an accident!



The city engineer recommended installation of low-cost delineators on Citrus to prevent westbound traffic from failing to stop. Installed in April, the delineators appear to be working thus far.

## Drainpipe collapse on the east side

After the roadway sank where Vista Road intersects Pine Edge, city staff discovered that a 40-foot section of drainpipe spanning the entire width of Vista Road had collapsed.

A contractor cut the asphalt, excavated the damaged pipe, installed a new pipe section and repaired the road. The cost was \$40,000.



Many city drains that cross roadways are old and deteriorated and will need to be replaced in coming years. If you notice any roadway sinking, please notify the city immediately.

## Possible code changes for walls and fences

The Planning Commission is considering possible changes to codes concerning development standards for walls and fences in La Habra Heights, including:

- Design criteria allowing solid walls in a front yard up to six feet high if the wall is located a minimum of nine feet from the pavement and properly screened with vegetation.
- Prohibiting the use of chain link fencing in front yards and allowing the use of only colored chain link (green, brown or black) in side or rear yards.

The council has authorized the commission to draft code amendments that will come back to the council for review and ultimate adoption.

Your input on these possible changes is important. Watch the Planning Commission agendas online at [lhcity.org](http://lhcity.org). Meetings are held on the fourth Tuesday of each Month at 6:30 p.m. at City Hall.

## Proposed uses for corner of West and Hacienda

The vacant parcel at the corner of West Road and Hacienda Road has drawn criticism from residents (including some at our Saturday workshops) who think the lack of aesthetics is negatively impacting our community's image.

Consequently, the Planning Commission will review potential uses for the parcel and suggest ways to enhance its appearance, ideally while generating income.

Please note that state law limits how a city is allowed to use or dispose of publicly owned land. The State Surplus Lands Act requires a city to prioritize affordable housing when considering the sale or development of such land. The state also limits the ability of a city to lease land.

## California Mandated Housing Requirement

One of the objectives of the State Housing Program is to make information available to the public about housing assistance programs. Please visit [lhcity.com](http://lhcity.com) and go to the Community Development section, Housing Element, for information about and referrals to these programs.

—Brian Bergman



Gil Taylor



## PRESIDENT'S PEN

### LHHIA Annual Meeting on June 3

Let me once again invite all members of La Habra Heights Improvement Association to our 2025 Annual General Meeting of the Membership and Election of the Board of Directors on June 3 at La Habra Heights City Hall, starting with a reception at 6 p.m. and followed by the meeting at 6:30 p.m. Please save the date and join us. We value your input!

### Community Yard Sale on May 30

Our much-anticipated **Community Yard Sale** is scheduled at The Park on May 30 from 7:30 a.m. until 1 p.m. We thank Susan Brooks and Lynn Kelley for chairing this popular event. The cost of a 10-foot x 20-foot space is just \$25, and the space reservation deadline is May 8. See page 5 for sign-up details. Admission is free for shoppers—so save the date and join us for a shopping spree!

### Photo Contest judging will soon begin

We thank all our residents who entered our **Annual Photo Contest!** The LHHIA Board of Directors will judge your images at our mid-May meeting, and results will appear in the June issue of *Heights Life*.

### Calling all Heights graduates!

At this time of year, it's our pleasure to invite all you La Habra Heights graduates to submit your photos and information so that we can congratulate and honor you in our June and July issues of *Heights Life*. We're very proud of you! Please see page 4 for details.

### Music in the Park starts June 17

**Music in the Park** kicks off on June 17 with LHH's all-time favorite band, *The Answer* (they've been entertaining the Heights since 1989)! That concert will also be a memorial tribute to Claire Spothelfer, who founded *Music in the Park* (see page 6). Our thanks to Monica Gunns for once again managing this beloved event.

—Gil Taylor

# FIRE SERVICE DAY



LIVE FIRE  
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**May 9 at The Park • 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.**

Join your La Habra Heights Fire Department for a family-friendly day of fun activities and fire-safety education. See firefighting vehicles and equipment up close and meet your local firefighters and paramedics that serve our community.



## Calling all Heights grads!

Our June and July issues of *Heights Life* will once again celebrate all La Habra Heights graduates (8th grade, high school, college and advanced degrees).

We invite you to submit the following information to [HeightsLifeEditor@gmail.com](mailto:HeightsLifeEditor@gmail.com):

- Name of graduate and school name
- High-resolution photo of the graduate
- Honors, memberships, achievements
- Next school to be attended (if any)

Send us your information by May 10 for the June issue and by June 10 for the July issue. *Congratulations, Class of 2026!* We're so proud of you!

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La Habra Heights Improvement Association

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# Music in the Park 2026



Summer concerts since 1989

Concerts start at 6:30 p.m. Food trucks will be serving—or bring your own picnic! Our June 17 concert will be a memorial tribute to LHHIA Music in the Park founder Claire Spothelfer.

June 17

## The Answer To Classic Rock

This wonderful band was the opening act for our very first *Music in the Park* concert back in 1989—and they've been entertaining the Heights ever since!



July 15

## ACME Time Machine

The ultimate mid-century Rock 'n' Roll revival band, featuring timeless hits of the '50s, '60s and beyond by such pioneering artists as Elvis, Buddy Holly, Ritchie Valens, Little Richard, Chuck Berry, The Beatles, Sam Cooke and Roy Orbison.



June 24

The Kelly Boyz Band specializes in high-energy country/rock with an occasional twist of modern pop. Be prepared to sing along, and make sure to wear your dancin' boots!



July 22

## LA Sheriff's Department's 17-piece SWING BAND

Big band hits!



July 8

With Stratocasters raging, Woodie & the Longboards deliver a surf-vibe tribute, as well as great oldies classic rock from the '60s' and '70s!

## Woodie & the Longboards

Surf's up!



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# WHAT GROWS IN THE HEIGHTS: Persimmons

By David Nolte

A 30-plus-year Heights resident, David is a lifelong member of the California Rare Fruit Growers. He and his wife organically grow about 150 fruit trees and bushes, plus vegetables.

THIRD IN A SERIES

**P**ersimmons are a fall fruit. The taste depends upon the type of persimmon you grow, ranging from a crisp flavor of honey, pear and autumn spices to a custardy pudding like dried apricots mixed with honey.

Persimmons are graceful trees that make a lovely addition to the landscape, providing year-round interest. In spring, they have lovely light green foliage that turns darker as the summer wears on. Bright orange fruit appears in the fall, when the leaves provide the best autumn show of color of any fruit tree in Southern California. Fruit can remain on the tree after the leaves have fallen, resulting in a “naked” look of a deciduous tree with beautiful ornaments.

Heights climate—warm, dry summers and mild, low-chill winters—is ideal for Asian persimmon varieties. In fact, Southern California grows the vast majority of the U.S. commercial persimmon crop.

## Types of persimmons

Although many varieties of persimmons are grown commercially in Japan, China and Korea, only about a half-dozen varieties are readily available in Southern California.

When choosing a persimmon variety, the most critical distinction involves astringency from tannins that cause mouth-puckering and determine how and when you can eat the fruit.

- Non-astringent varieties that do not cause puckering are commonly sold as *Fuyu*, *Jiro* or *Izu*. They have a squat, rounded or flat appearance and resemble a tomato in shape (*below*). When eaten fresh, they have crunchiness similar to apples.



Persimmon trees can be kept relatively small, so you can plant them close to buildings (but not so close that they become a fire hazard).

Persimmon trees are easy to grow and are relatively problem free, and they are a good choice when space is limited. Our La Habra



- Astringent varieties are commonly sold as *Hachiya*, which have oblong, acorn-shaped fruit with a point at the bottom. Without proper processing (discussed below), these fruits are inedible until they become fully ripe and attain a soft, custardy or jelly-like texture. Before achieving this level of ripeness, tannins in the fruit create a severe puckering sensation in the mouth.

However, once they're completely ripe and soft or properly processed, the fruit can be used as a sweet sauce on ice cream and in smoothies, as well as in cookies, breads, puddings and other dishes. The soft fruit gel can also be frozen and available year-round.



*Hachiya (unripe)*



- Some astringent varieties become non-astringent when pollinated; these are called Pollination-Variant Non-Astringent (PVNA) persimmons. In these cultivars, the fruit is naturally astringent when it is unpollinated and seedless. However, if the flowers are pollinated and produce four or five seeds each, the seeds release a chemical that removes the astringency from the fruit. The pollinated flesh typically turns dark brown or develops dark “cinnamon” flecks or streaks. Because of this coloration, PVNA varieties are nicknamed and marketed as “chocolate” (*Tsuru Noko*) or “coffeecake” (*Nishimura Wase*) persimmons.



*Chocolate*



*Coffeecake*

- American (aka “native”) persimmons (*Diospyros virginiana*) are grown mainly in the eastern U.S. and are uncommon in Southern California since they require a greater winter chill. These persimmons are astringent and are much smaller fruit, about the size of a plum.

## Cultivation in the Heights

Asian persimmon varieties have a low chilling requirement (less than 100 hours), which makes them an excellent choice for Southern California.

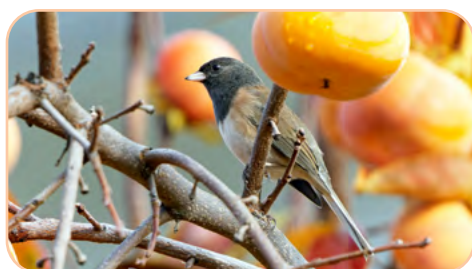
Persimmon trees are also self-pollinating, so you don't need a second persimmon tree to produce fruit.

However, if you want a PVNA tree to bear fruit that will be non-astringent and sweet, you will need to pollinate the tree, usually with another PVNA tree no more than 20 feet away.



For example, a PVNA coffeecake persimmon tree that produces an abundance of female flowers (left) is often pollinated by a PVNA chocolate persimmon tree with plenty of male flowers.

Persimmon trees are relatively disease-free and resistant to insect pests. I have six persimmon trees on my property, representing various varieties, and all of them have been reliable, easy to grow and without problems.



Once fruit starts to ripen, it attracts hungry birds and squirrels—but thus far I have been able to get a sufficient harvest without putting protective netting on my trees.

Plant your persimmon tree in a spot that receives full sun at least 6 to 8 hours daily. While persimmons can survive in partial shade, full sun is necessary for fruit production. When heat is excessive, young trees may benefit from some afternoon shade to prevent leaf burn.



While persimmon trees tolerate a variety of soil types, including the heavy clay in some parts of the Heights, they do not like overly salty conditions, preferring deep, well-drained loam. Once established, persimmon trees are moderately drought-tolerant. However, for the highest quality and largest fruit, regular irrigation is crucial, especially during dry summer months when it may be necessary to water a few times a week.



## Processing astringent varieties

Firm, astringent persimmons can be processed to “de-astringe” the fruit—and stop mouth-puckering—in these ways:

- Use a food dehydrator, which has a heating element and a fan to circulate warm air evenly over fruit on trays, lowering moisture content to a point at which bacteria, yeast and mold cannot grow and preserving fruit for long-term storage while also concentrating flavors. Heat also creates a chemical change similar to natural ripening—but faster. Based on our taste tests, this is the process that our family and friends prefer. Dehydrators are available for less than \$200.



For Hachiya persimmons, cut the fruit into flat slices around a half-inch thick, about four or five slices per large fruit. The dehydration process takes less than 24 hours at 135°F (a good temperature that maintains nutrition). The result is a chewy, sweet product that is shelf-stable for at least a half-year.



- Just leave the fruit on your counter to ripen—which protects fruit from birds and animals that eat ripening fruit on the tree. Accelerate ripening by putting fruit in a closed paper bag with a banana, apple or other fruit that gives off ethylene, a naturally occurring hydrocarbon gas (alkene) that acts as a plant hormone. Wait until persimmons are so soft that they feel like water balloons—then scoop out the sweet, rich pulp.

- Freezing breaks down cell walls and removes tannins. Place firm, unripe astringent persimmons in a freezer bag and freeze them for 24 hours or until solid. When thawed, the persimmons will be soft and non-astringent, though they may have a slightly mushy, brown texture. This method works well if you plan to use the fruit immediately as a puree, for baking or for eating like a sorbet.

- The Japanese prepare persimmons using the labor-intensive *Hoshigaki* method of peeling persimmons, hanging them to dry and hand-massaging them daily for a month or more.

Whether you prefer the crisp crunch of a firm *Fuyu* or the sweet, pudding-like pulp of a soft *Hachiya*, persimmons are a rewarding and beautiful addition to any Heights garden and a perfect seasonal treat.



# Hike our Puente Hills!

This spring, the Puente Hills Habitat Preservation Authority invites the community to experience the beauty of the Puente Hills through docent-led hikes. Twice a week on Sundays and Thursdays, the *10,000 Steps* hike begins at the Black Walnut Trail entrance in Powder Canyon at 4 p.m. To learn more or to sign up for the hikes, visit [meetup.com/puente-hills-preserve-hikers](https://www.meetup.com/puente-hills-preserve-hikers). You'll find a detailed map at [HabitatAuthority.org](https://www.habitatauthority.org), where you can also check trail conditions. Bring plenty of water and wear comfortable shoes and clothing.

Located at the easternmost extent of the Preserve, the Powder Canyon area offers many miles of multi-user trails with connections to the Los Angeles County-managed Schabarum Trail and Schabarum Regional Park. Several habitat restoration projects are



currently underway in this area, amounting to almost 90 acres of native vegetation that can be enjoyed along the trails. This area boasts a regionally significant population of southern California black walnut, a large deciduous tree beloved by wildlife for its walnut fruits. Mature oak trees and black walnut trees line Powder Canyon Trail, offering a cool respite during summer heat, while inclines on Purple Sage Trail and Black Walnut Trail offer more rigorous hiking, biking and riding terrain.

In addition to hikes and a variety of other outdoor recreational activities, the Habitat Authority continues its work to preserve and protect the natural landscape while improving safe public access. Following winter storm damage, the main entrance road to the Powder Canyon Trailhead has been repaired and reinforced to ensure reliable access for visitors and emergency first-responders. Improvements included grading and contouring to direct stormwater more effectively, along with rock-armoring in drainage areas to help prevent future erosion. These efforts support public safety, high-quality experiences in nature and the long-term health of the habitat.





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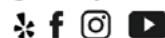
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COLDWELL BANKER  
 DIAMOND

1772 Hacienda Rd.  
 La Habra Heights, CA 90631

Based on information from CRMLS, Inc. as of April 10, 2026 and /or other sources. All data is obtained from various sources and has not been, and will not be, verified by Broker or MLS. All information should be independently reviewed and verified for accuracy. Properties may or may not be listed by the office/agent presenting the information. Coldwell Banker Diamond DRE #01262942

## Community Events

- May 9** **FIRE SERVICE DAY:** 10 a.m. at The Park (page 4)  
**May 10** *Happy Mother's Day!*  
**May 11** City Council meeting: 6:30 p.m. at City Hall.  
**May 21** Emergency Preparedness: 6 p.m. at City Hall.  
**May 25** **Memorial Day** (City Hall closed)  
**May 26** Planning Commission: 6:30 p.m. at City Hall.  
**May 27** Roads Advisory meeting: 6:30 p.m. at City Hall.  
**May 30** Community Yard Sale: 7:30 a.m. at The Park  
**June 3** LHHIA Annual Meeting: 6 p.m. at City Hall  
**June 13** Meals on Wheels Annual Fundraiser (page 14)  
**June 17** *Music in the Park: The Answer*, 6:30 p.m. (page 6)

### Memorial Day



May 25, 2026

P.O. Box 241  
 La Habra, CA 90631

## Emergency & City Numbers

<b>EMERGENCY</b> .....	<b>911</b>
CITY HALL: <i>lhcity.org</i> .....	562-694-6302
SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT.....	562-694-5923 or 626-330-3322
RANGER SERVICES.....	562-698-1446
FIRE DEPARTMENT (non-emergency).....	562-694-8283
LA HABRA HEIGHTS COUNTY WATER DISTRICT.....	562-697-6769
LOS ANGELES COUNTY ANIMAL CONTROL.....	562-940-6898
FIDO COME HOME (report lost and found pets).....	562-694-8090
WARE DISPOSAL.....	877-714-9273

## La Habra Heights City Council

BRIAN BERGMAN.....	562-690-5047	Briansbergman@hotmail.com
CAROL ENGELHARDT.....	562-217-0983	clengelhardt1@yahoo.com
JOHN PESPISA.....	562-694-1371	Jmp100@roadrunner.com
GREG STEFFLRE.....	213-324-0809	gregstefflre@gmail.com
NORM ZEZULA.....	562-697-9914	normzezulaLhh@gmail.com

## Community Service Opportunities

- BSA TROOP 1814 • 951-538-8377 or cookmaster251@yahoo.com  
 BSA TROOP 793 (female troop) • Call Carl Diamond at 562-706-8279 or email Carl@cdiamond.org  
 CUB SCOUT PACK 817 • 562-267-9022 • lahabrapack817@gmail.com  
 • Facebook.com/pack817  
 BOYS AND GIRLS CLUB • 562-694-1805 • ourchildrensfuture.org  
 HABITAT AUTHORITY • habitatauthority.org/waystohelp  
 MEALS ON WHEELS • 562-451-9047 • LaHabraMealsonWheels.org  
 VCC: THE GARY CENTER • 562-264-6000 • vccthegarycenter.org



## BOARD of DIRECTORS • *lhia.com*

<b>Gil Taylor</b> , President (LHHIAPresident@gmail.com).....	562-322-3453
<b>Lynn Kelley</b> , Vice President, <i>Halloween Haunt &amp; Yard Sale</i> Co-Chairperson (lynnkelley91@gmail.com).....	562-371-4603
<b>Pam McVicar</b> , Secretary & Membership Chairperson (Memberlhhia@gmail.com).....	714-504-3415
<b>Diana Garcia Taylor</b> , Treasurer & <i>Morning With Santa</i> Chairperson (Diana@myjesmar.com).....	562-577-4802
<b>Susan Brooks</b> , <i>Easter Egg Hunt</i> Chairperson & <i>Yard Sale</i> Co-Chairperson (susanbrooks827@gmail.com).....	714-222-5091
<b>Angela Owen</b> , <i>Halloween Haunt</i> Co-Chairperson & <i>Yard Sale</i> Co-Chairperson (arowen3@yahoo.com).....	562-201-1119
<b>Carolyn Boehringer</b> , Advertising Co-Chairperson.....	310-849-4582
<b>Monica Gunns</b> , Advertising Co-Chairperson.....	714-412-2667
<b>Amy Perez</b> , Director (armacvean@yahoo.com).....	562-631-1208
<b>Rita Donato</b> , Director (rwdonato@gmail.com).....	626-824-7363

*Heights Life*: heightslifeeditor@gmail.com

Editors: **Dan & Barbara Stracner**..... 562-632-0691

For information about advertising in *Heights Life*, visit *lhia.org* or call:

Advertising Co-Chairperson: **Carolyn Boehringer**..... 310-849-4582

Advertising Co-Chairperson: **Monica Gunns**..... 714-412-2667

**Welcome Wagon**: welcomewagonLHHIA@gmail.com

Chairperson: **Vicki Cooke**..... 562-694-4949



## LHH Fire Report

MARCH 2026

Advanced life-support calls: 18 (13 in LHH, 5 in LA County), Basic life-support calls: 26 (9 in LHH, 17 in LA County), Public assist: 3 (2 in LHH, 1 in LA County), Fire calls: 8 (7 in LHH, 1 in LA County), Traffic collisions: 5 (2 in LHH, 3 in LA County), "LHH Island": 0, Automatic aid into LA County: 27.

**Total calls: 60**



## Sheriff's Report

MARCH 2026

Grand theft: 1, Suspected child abuse: 1, Property lost or found: 1, Elder abuse: 2, Petty theft: 1, Vehicle burglary: 1, Person dead (natural causes): 1 Vehicle repossessed: 1, Traffic accidents: 5, Traffic hazard: 1.

**Total incidents: 15**

## == Become a member ==

La Habra Heights Improvement Association is a 501(c)(3) volunteer organization (Tax ID# 95-2455456) that receives no funding from the City of La Habra Heights—so we rely on your annual dues and other donations to pay for our many community events and projects. Annual membership dues are:

• REGULAR.....	\$35
• BRONZE.....	\$75
• SILVER.....	\$100
• GOLD.....	\$250
• PLATINUM.....	\$500
• DIAMOND.....	\$1,000+
• SAPPHIRE.....	\$5,000+

Pay online at [www.lhia.com](http://www.lhia.com) or mail your check (made payable to LHHIA) to: LHHIA, P.O. Box 241, La Habra, CA 90631.