



City Manager Kevin Woodhouse contributed a column to the *Pacifica Tribune* to connect with local residents and keep Pacificans informed on issues that are of current interest in the City of Pacifica. Below is the submission for the July 4, 2018 edition of the *Pacifica Tribune*, which focuses on the month of July as “Parks and Recreation Month”.

Parks Make Life Better!

The City Council meeting on June 25, 2018, was eventful: Yes, the City Council adopted the FY2018-19 Budget, culminating several months of budget development work and public meetings. Yes, the Council honored retiring Pacifica School District Superintendent Wendy Tukloff for her many years of service to the schools, community and collaborations with the City. Yes, the Council honored retiring City Clerk Kathy O’Connell for her decades of service to the City (Thank You, Kathy!). I could write entire columns about each of these Council actions, but with summer upon us, my focus for this column is on Parks, Beaches, and Recreation – yes, the Council proclaimed July as “Parks and Recreation Month!”

As I’ve been recently watching world-class athletes battle it out on the soccer pitch in the currently-raging World Cup, I’ve been reflecting on how many children around the globe have had their interest in sports, or nature, or science, or art, or curiosity just about anything, sparked and allowed to flourish by the availability of a park or open space and a formal or informal recreation program to go with it. I know I did. And this influence of parks and recreation usually continues throughout one’s life, whether consciously or unconsciously. This explains the passion in communities about these programs, and the passion of the employees that deliver these programs. Statewide polls reveal that 98% of California households visit a local park at least once a year; two in three households visit a park once a month; 50% of households participate in an organized recreation program; and most park use is with family and friends.

Pacifica’s Parks, Beaches, and Recreation programs are infused with this history and passion, and have sparked more interest, experiences, life-curiosity, and healthy activities for residents over the decades than sparks flying on July 4th in Pacifica. From childcare programs, to seniors programs, to sports, pool/swim, arts, dance, social, adventure, cooking, dance, youth leadership programs and more, the PB&R catalogue of offerings has something for everyone. I encourage you to peruse the PB&R “Play” Activity Guide, available on the City’s website at www.cityofpacifica.org as well as in print form at any City facility, and take advantage of a program that sparks your curiosity, for you or a family member.

The successful provision of PB&R programs is a team effort across all City departments, with two departments most directly involved. The Parks, Beaches, and Recreation Department, under Director Mike Perez’s leadership, provides and manages the programs, while the Public Works Department, under Director Van Ocampo’s leadership, provides and manages the facilities, maintenance activities, and ranger activities. PB&R Commissioners and hundreds of volunteers also play a critical role. Each City employee and volunteer involved should be proud of their work and the benefit it brings to the Pacifica community.

As the Proclamation concludes, the City of Pacifica “urges all citizens to use and enjoy taking advantage of our parks, beaches and recreational opportunities.”
