



The Friends of CA Citrus Park

Spring 2025

THE 3RD ANNUAL CITRUS FESTIVAL WAS A SUCCESS!



On April 5, 2025, the Friends of CA Citrus Park celebrated the height of the citrus industry at CA Citrus State Historic Park!

Guests enjoyed 15 varieties of citrus at the Citrus Tasting Tent supported by Board Members and volunteers.

The Tent was constantly visited by happy guests, some of whom came from out of state JUST for this event!



Guests also enjoyed live music & entertainment, cooking demos and kids activities! In addition, there were a lot of booths for shopping, eating, and learning about local non-profits and cultural resources.

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT

Local band, Raincross Drive, performed live music from the 70s throughout the day!

Ballet Folkloric Aztlan, Taiko Mix and the Satin Dollz also performed exciting sets.

Taiko Mix even invited guests on stage to join them!

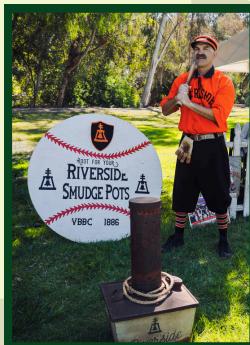
DJ Mark played fun songs throughout the day and kept guests informed about upcoming activities and performances.



Saboree Catering & Events held three cooking demos featuring recipes made with citrus.



KIDS ACTIVITIES



Kids and their families were able to participate in a lot of fun activities ~ face painting, painting classes, crafts, a theater workshop, games, & so much more! Guests were even able to meet a tortoise!



FOOD, BEVERAGES, BOOTHS, & MORE!



There was a VAST ARRAY of food vendors, craft vendors, cultural, educational & resource vendors for guests to enjoy!



THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS!



CalWest
Tropical
Nursery

CARBON NATION
BREWING



A.Y. Nursery Inc



Chuck Tobin



THANK YOU TO OUR VOLUNTEERS, MEMBERS,
BOARD MEMBERS, STAFF & EVERYONE ELSE
WHO MADE THIS DAY POSSIBLE!



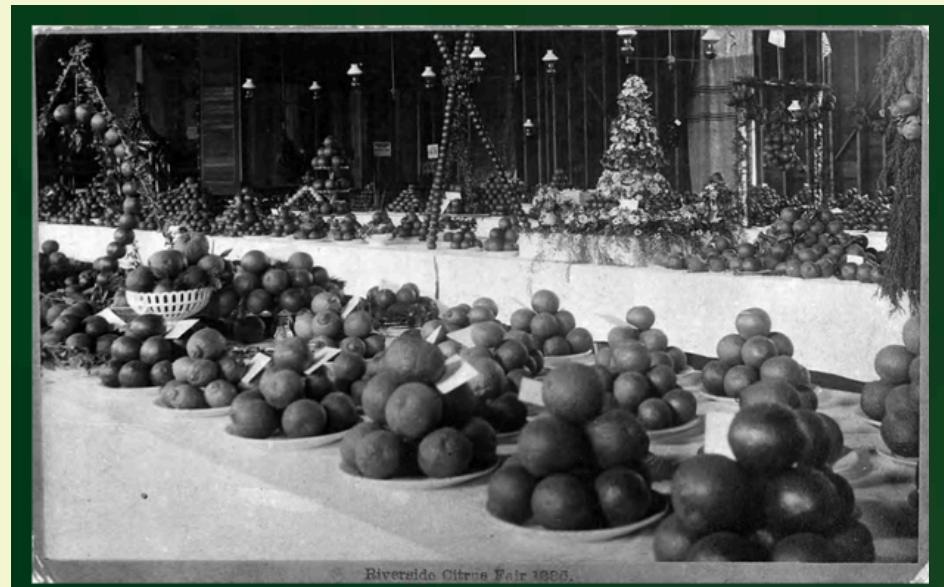
HISTORY FLASH BACK!

1885 Citrus Fair

Back in 1885, Riverside held its first Citrus Fair! This fair was held for many reasons, but mainly to celebrate the Washington Navel Orange. This citrus is what made Riverside famous and even won medals at the New Orleans Exposition.

The Citrus Fairs.

These splendid horticultural exhibitions are coming. The approach of the vernal equinox brings them. The Riverside *Press* of last week sounded the note of preparation. San Gabriel valley is already at work. The last issue of the *Pasadena Valley-Union* says: The committee selected to make arrangements for an exhibit of the citrus fruits of the San Gabriel valley are making good progress, and will soon be prepared to report a definite plan. It is proposed to have this display early in March, and there should be an enthusiastic interest in its success by all our fruit growers. Such an exhibit should be calculated to advance one of the most important fruit growing interests of Southern California, and will, we believe, show the comparative excellence of our citrus products. It should settle for all time, the adaptability of this valley to the production of superior oranges and lemons. Let there be care in selecting the best of our fruit, and after the display here an attractively arranged exhibit should be forwarded to the New Orleans Exposition, where the world may see that the Southern California Paradise not only produces fruit fit for the gods, but adapted to the purposes of commerce.



Riverside Citrus Fair 1885.

<https://calisphere.org/item/ark:/86086/n2zp45j9/>
<https://calisphere.org/item/ark:/86086/n2hh6k5b/>
<https://cdnc.ucr.edu/?a=d&d=PRP18850117.2.10.1>



Directions:

In a medium bowl, combine grapefruit, avocado, black beans, corn, red onion, jalapeño, cilantro, honey & salt.

GRAPEFRUIT-AVOCADO SALSA

Ingredients

- 2 medium grapefruit, peeled, sectioned and chopped (about 1 1/4 cups)
- 1 medium avocado, halved, seeded, peeled and chopped
- ½ cup canned black beans, rinsed and drained
- ½ cup frozen whole kernel corn, thawed
- ¼ cup finely chopped red onion
- 1 fresh jalapeño pepper, seeded and minced
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh cilantro
- 1 - 2 teaspoons honey
- Salt to taste

TRY IT ON:
FISH, CHICKEN, PORK, & TACOS!



SPOTLIGHT

Thank you to our Members and Donors!

2024

(Those we missed in the last newsletter) ☺

Citrus Steward

Marla & Stephen Jones*
Abigail Lowe*
Carole Stadelbacher*

Citrus Trustee

Chris & Lea Thirkettle*

Citrus Guardian

Walter & Betty Parks*

Eliza Tibbets Society

John Brown & Nancy Johnson*

Donors

Selina Bremenstuhl*
Mark & Pam Bals*
Roger Ransom*

*multi-year donor



2025

Citrus Friend

Katherine Emery*
Katherine Hyett*
Ruben & Carol Saenz*

Citrus Steward

Andrew & Karen Emery*
Gary Feller*
Ronald & Alana Krueper*
Steve Lech*
Jim & Ethel Sanborn*

2025

Citrus Guardian

Chris & Jolyn MacArthur*
Tracy Kahn & Norm Ellstrand*

Eliza Tibbets Society

Chuck Tobin*

Donors

Selina Bremenstuhl*
Katherine Hyett*
Kristina Parker
Doris Rhine*
Ruben & Carol Saenz*

Other Giving

Kroger – Ralphs Rewards – Customers Designated the Friends - \$143.58
Provident Bank Community Partnership - \$287.59
Bushfire Kitchen Fundraiser - \$80.62
All Points Brewing Fundraiser - \$2,095.00**

**\$2,000.00 - All Points Brewery/\$50.00 - Chili Palm Grill/\$45.00 - RSVB BBQ

Grove & Plant Spotlight!

Nagami Kumquat



Fortunella margarita, also known as the Nagami Kumquat is one of the more popular kumquats. This oblong citrus is about the size of a grape and has a sweet rind while the flesh is acidic. It is meant to be eaten whole! Rind and all! Flowering season typically happens in the summer and the fruit is ripe and ready to eat by winter.

<https://citrusvariety.ucr.edu/crc3877>

American Wisteria



American Wisteria a native woody vine known for its gorgeous flowers and delicate aroma. It also is known to attract bees and butterflies! American Wisteria is a safe alternative to the invasive Chinese Wisteria. This elegant plant can be found draped over arbors in the lower area of the park. When you find it in the park, tags us on Instagram & Facebook!

Gift Shop Spotlight!

BrickMoose

BrickMoose was created by local Riverside STEM Academy student, Aiden Grover. BrickMoose creates & sells kits using LEGOs that are inspired by Riverside architecture. Aiden's latest kit is a replica of our very own Orange Stand! This fun item is available to purchase at the gift shop.



Come on by!

Currently, there are 4 kits available for purchase at the gift shop:

Citrus Park Entrance Building - \$25
Orange with Raincross - \$16
Orange Magnet - \$16
Lemon Magnet - \$16



INTO THE GROVES!

Grove Clean-up Event



On February 8, 2025 we had the honor to work along side the UCR Black Alumni Chapter, the Riverside East Rotary Club, and individual volunteers, to clean-up the lower varietal groves in preparation for the 3rd Annual Citrus Festival. There were about 30 volunteers total and countless bags of fallen fruit and other garbage cleaned from the groves. Thank you to everyone who helped including the State Park Staff and the Friends of Citrus Park Board Members!

Master Gardener Workshops



Master Gardeners came to CA Citrus State Historic Park on February 28th & March 28th for two exceptional workshops! UCR's Tracy Kahn shared in February about advancements in citrus research, scion development, and fruit varieties, followed by hands on demos led by Tom Spellman. In March, Tom shared his expertise in citrus and led the group again into the groves for hands-on learning. They even took down part of a tree that was causing itself much harm!

UCR Givaudan Citrus Variety Collection Tour



UCR Curator and Citrus Breeding Program Leader, Tracy Kahn invited Citrus Park State Staff and the Friends of Citrus Park staff to tour the Givaudan Citrus Variety Collection where everyone learned more about Givaudan, the breeding program and new varieties of Citrus. Attendees were able to try several newer breeds of citrus including Smith Red, Duncan Grapefruit, Bergamot, and Valentine. Hopefully these will be more readily available for the public to enjoy someday soon.

Kelly's Adventure



Once a month, Inland Empire District Superintendent Kelly Elliott invites State Parks employees to join her on "Kelly's Adventures". During Winter-Spring staff visit nearby State Parks to learn about the different parks outside of the ones they work at. In March, we had the pleasure to have over 50 State Parks Staff visit CA Citrus State Historic Park. The first stop was to visit the Western Engine to hear from the volunteers who run it as they explain what it takes to do so. The engine was fired up for everyone to see and hear!

Afterwards, Relevancy and History Coordinator Adam Brodner took half of the group on a tour of the groves discussing the individuals who worked tirelessly in them. During that time, Interpreter Jose Cabello took the other half back to the visitor center to

make fresh squeezed juice. The day ended with lunch, citrus tasting, and shopping at the gift shop!

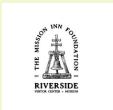


UPCOMING

Wednesday, June 25, 2025 @ dusk ~ Lilo & Stitch

Come enjoy Lilo & Stitch on the lawn! Fun for all ages!

Brought to you by CCEM



Thursday - Saturday, July 10, 11 & 12, 2025 @ 7p.m.

Full Circle Players are returning to Citrus for two exciting plays!
Pre-show La Mujer Dormida - 7p.m. & Romeo and Juliet - 7:30 p.m.
At the amphitheater in the lower lot!



Sunday, July 27, 2025 @ 1:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m.

A special joint meeting of the Riverside Historical Society and
The Mission Inn Foundation featuring an exciting presentation on the
deep-rooted connections between the rise of Riverside through the
citrus industry and the evolving legacy of the Mission Inn.
@ the Sunkist Center



Wednesday, July 30, 2025 @ dusk ~ Wicked

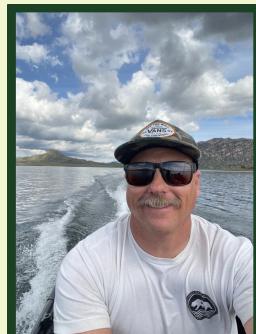
Come enjoy Wicked on the lawn! Fun for all ages!

Brought to you by CCEM



MEET & GREET

John Rowe - CA State Parks Superintendent III -



John has been with CA State Parks in law enforcement for over 20 years. Starting out as a Lifeguard for Lake Gregory and Lake Perris at 17, he then became a reserve officer for the San Bernardino Police Department. At 22, he was hired as a full time law enforcement officer with State Parks. He was eventually promoted to Sergeant and in 2009 moved into the Superintendent series. In this new role, he managed both California Citrus State Historic Park and Chino Hills State Park. He returned to Lake Perris in 2011 when he took on his current role as Superintendent III. For the last 6 years, John's responsibilities expanded to include Citrus and Chino Hills Parks. John delegates day-to-day operations to the onsite manager, but is closely involved in all aspects of the work being done at Citrus and Chino Hills.

John grew up in San Bernardino and started visiting Lake Perris at the age of 3 with his World Record holding Father Gilbert J. Rowe, an avid bass fisherman. During high school, he participated in several sports but come his Sophomore year he joined the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve. After 8 months of intense training, he obtained his AA in Liberal Arts and BA in Business Administration. John has been married to his wife Jessica for nearly 20 years. They met during their time as lifeguards at Lake Perris. Jessica is now an ICU Nurse. They have two children 18 & 13 who are currently following in their parents footsteps. Their daughter will be attending nursing school next spring and their son will be playing water polo and wrestling when he attends high school next year.



When asked "What would you like to see for the future of CA Citrus Park?" John shared:

"I'm excited about the recent efforts from Friends of CA Citrus, working with local legislators to secure funding for park expansion and the completion of the long-envisioned General Plan from 35 years ago. I look forward to seeing school groups visiting and volunteers dressed in historical costumes, telling the stories of life on a citrus farm 115 years ago."

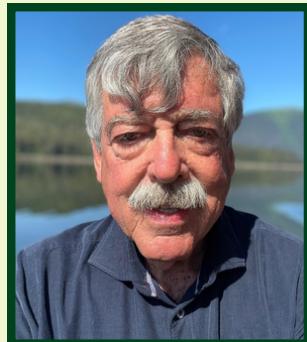
John enjoys the varietal groves at the park, although he has been through there many times, he still finds something new each time. He was asked if he were a citrus, which one would he be? John shared that he'd be a Navel Orange because it may seem simple and common, but the Navel Oranges arrival in Riverside is what made CA Citrus State Historic Park possible.



MEET & GREET

- *Continued* -

John Brown - Friends of CA Citrus Park, Vice President-



John Brown was born in Blissfield Michigan, a small town with a population of 625. Blissfield was a trading post for furs in its early years and by the 1950s, it was selected to operate a sugar beet factory due to the sugar shortage during World War II. At the age of 10, John and his family moved to Anaheim, CA, where his dad began working as a Social Studies High School Teacher and ended his career some 25 years later as the Assistant Superintendent for Anaheim Union High School District. In his teen years, John enjoyed riding his bike each day to work at Disneyland and at Hill Brothers Coffee House. He shared how Anaheim was much smaller in the 1950s and was full of citrus and walnut groves that he would play in as a child. During the expansion of Disneyland and housing in the area, he remembers watching big, beautiful citrus trees being taken down, full of fruit and left to dry. The trees were then hauled off in large dump trucks leaving construction sites in their place. He compared the Victoria Avenue ambiance with what Katella Avenue used to look like before the area became industrialized.

John notes that California was experiencing tremendous growth and needed more homes for people moving from other states and countries to work in several in-demand industries. During this time, grove owners were realizing that they could profit more from selling their land to developers than staying in the agriculture field.

While the history of the citrus industry recognizes several immigrant groups who came to California to work in the groves, John notes that history has shown immigrants coming to California to work in several industries including the gold rush and building the railroads. In describing the importance all these cultures have had to the growth of California, John said:

"I think it not only created a melting pot but a different texture and vibrancy to the life in California that didn't happen in a number of other industrial centers in the Midwest."

He also noted the important role women played in the citrus packing houses. This job was one of the few available for women during the early to mid 1900s. The hours were long, and the work was not easy. He expressed the value they brought to Riverside in addition to all of those culturally who helped Riverside grow.

After completing college and law school, John joined Best, Best & Krieger law firm, where he began a long illustrious career (45 years) providing legal services to many public agencies in the region. Early in his career, John served as the Assistant City Attorney of Corona in the late 70s. At that time, he remembers Corona being filled with citrus groves and was known as the lemon capital. In that role, he witnessed developers, mainly from beach cities, promoting the shift from agriculture to housing and industrial land use that began to change the landscape across the Inland Empire.

Best Best & Krieger encouraged their employees to participate in the community. With that encouragement, John has served on the Boards of many organizations, including the Riverside Art Museum, the Riverside Public Law Foundation, the California Historical Society in San Francisco, the Mission Inn Foundation, and eventually he made his way to serve on the Friends of CA Citrus Park board with the encouragement of Ron Loveridge. John is currently serving as Vice President of the Board. John notes how California is realizing that their success has come from accidents, such as the gold rush and how well the navel orange grew in Riverside. He believes that what is happening at CA Citrus State Historic Park is important not only to Riverside, but to California by preserving the history of what made these areas a success.

John was asked which citrus he would be and why. He shared his fondness for limes, he noted that they pack more of a punch than other citrus, and he enjoys the color in addition to food and drink that uses limes as its main ingredient.



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Ronald Loveridge - *President*

John Brown - *Vice President*

Kenneth Noller - *Vice President*

Heather Ross - *Treasurer*

Andrew Emery - *Secretary*

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Lynn Brown-Summers

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Pauline McGuigan

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Greg Neal

Tom Spellman

Alan Washburn

Ted Weggeland

STAFF

Susan von Zabern -
Executive Director

Stephanie Breads -
Community Outreach Coordinator

Jenna Brockman -
Program Assistant

With your help, the Friends are able to maintain the unique varietal grove collection in the park that is available to visitors year-round.



CA STATE PARKS

Kelly Elliott - *Inland Empire District Superintendent*

John Rowe - *Superintendent III*

Kimberly Reyes - *Chino Sector Manager*

Teri Pope - *District Interpretive Chief*

WEDDINGS & EVENTS

Classic Coordinating & Events Management (CCEM)

Shelby Loomis

Jett Kopchak

For tours of the Sunkist Center for private events email citruspark@cceminc.com or call (951) 515-6689

The Friends of California Citrus Park are planning more events!

Follow us on Social Media for updates.



Want to give back to the community?
We are always in need of volunteers!



Please send correspondence & donations to:

California Citrus State Historic Park
Non-Profit Management Corporation (NPMC)
(dba Friends of California Citrus Park)

P.O. Box: 21292
Riverside, CA 92516
(951) 333-6786

cacitruspark@outlook.com

Location
Corner of Van Buren Blvd. and Dufferin Ave.



Friends of California Citrus Park
P.O. Box 21292
Riverside, CA 92516

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U.S. POSTAGE PAID
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