

THE HUNTINGTON

Library, Art Collections, and Botanical Gardens
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NEWS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Tickets to be Required for Entry on “Free Day” at The Huntington

*New procedure is being instituted to help manage crowds
on the first Thursday of each month*

SAN MARINO, Calif. (June 7, 2007) -- In an effort to minimize overcrowding and provide a safer, more enjoyable experience to visitors, a ticketing system is being introduced for The Huntington’s monthly “Free Day” on the first Thursday of every month. A limited number of tickets will be available online or by phone a month in advance of each free day. The new procedure goes into effect in September.

Since The Huntington first introduced “Free Day” in 1996 as a way to accommodate visitors who found it difficult to pay admission, attendance on first Thursdays has skyrocketed. As many as 10,000 people have streamed through the gates on a single day, compared to an average of 2,400 on an average Sunday—typically the busiest non-free day.

“It’s extremely gratifying to know that so many people enjoy coming to The Huntington,” says Huntington President Steven Koblik. “But the logistics of dealing with such large crowds pose a very serious challenge. Our staff quickly becomes overwhelmed, our collections are at risk in overcrowded galleries and gardens, our parking lot is not big enough to handle the numbers of vehicles, and our neighbors have been affected by traffic and parking issues. Plus, it’s not much fun for visitors. They come expecting a lovely day in a peaceful place, but what they get feels like Grand Central Station at Thanksgiving.”

The new ticketing procedure will make “Free Days” more manageable and more enjoyable for all. Beginning in September, all non-member visitors will be required to have a ticket on “Free Day.” Members do not need tickets, but they are being asked to consider planning their visits for a different day of the month to help in the effort to manage the first Thursday crowds.

“Free Day” tickets can be reserved by calling The Huntington’s ticketing agency at 800-838-3006 or by linking to it via The Huntington’s Web site at www.huntington.org. Tickets become available on the first of day of the month preceding the following month’s “Free Day” (for instance, visitors can begin calling Aug. 1 for the Sept. “Free Day”).

The Huntington will set aside a group of tickets each month for buses carrying non-profit and K-12 school groups to help ensure access for special needs visitors and school children. Non-profits seeking bus reservations should call: (626) 405- 2240; K-12 groups should call: (626) 405- 2127.

Visitors with general questions should call (626) 405-2100 or log on to www.huntington.org

The Huntington is a collections-based research and educational institution serving scholars and the general public.

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