



# COUNTY CURRENTS

Santa Cruz County

[www.santacruzcounty.us](http://www.santacruzcounty.us)

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## EXHIBIT UNEARTHS HIDDEN CRISIS OF SENIOR ISOLATION



Credit: Gina Orlando

Loneliness and social isolation affect 1 in 3 seniors in Santa Cruz County. Many seniors contact just one person a week; some say they see a visitor less than once a month. The consequences are stark — people 60 years and older who reported feeling lonely saw an increase in risk of early death.

Opening April 5th, “We’re Still Here: Stories of Seniors and Social Isolation” sheds light on this local crisis and gives visitors the tools to help. It also shares solutions to loneliness from different cultures and families around the world. It’s not your typical exhibition; over 180 seniors, advocates, and organizations created this show themselves in partnership with the MAH.

“When we learned about this growing issue affecting senior health and well being, we felt the MAH was in a unique position to address it,” said Stacey Marie Garcia, Direc-

tor of Community Engagement at the MAH. “We’re all about creating connections and hope to ignite stronger links between seniors and the larger Santa Cruz County community through this exhibition.”

To tell this story, MAH worked with the Santa Cruz County Human Services Department and gave seniors the power to design this exhibition themselves, reinvigorating the Creative Community Committee (C3), an action-oriented gathering of 186 seniors, advocates, and organizations that live this issue every day. Over the course of seven months, the group brainstormed big ideas, worked with local artists to creatively articulate the issues, and talked about ways the public can help. The same model was used for 2017 exhibition “Lost Childhoods: Voices of Santa Cruz County Foster Youth.”

“We’re Still Here” runs through Sept. 22, 2019.

### ILLEGAL CANNABIS:

The County Cannabis Licensing Office works to license legitimate operators and reduce neighborhood impacts from black market cannabis. The cannabis pictured here was seized from an unlicensed Scotts Valley operation.



### In This Issue

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## Responding to market forces, County fortifies recycling centers

The global recycling market faces severe challenges, and the County Board of Supervisors has called for a statewide recycling commission.

Across the state, CRV centers have closed, and across the nation some communities are abandoning recycling altogether.



Santa Cruz County is committed to recycling. Through our franchise agreement with GreenWaste, every home and business in the County has access to not just trash pickup, but curbside recycling as well. Drop-off recycling is also available at the Ben Lomond Transfer Station and Buena Vista landfill.

For years, the County managed recycling operations in partnership with valued community partners such as Grey Bears and Valley Women's Club. Those operations have included satellite drop-off centers at select locations. Unfortunately, those contracts are now costing taxpayers in excess of \$100,000 each year.

To protect public dollars, the County is consolidating operations to Buena Vista and Ben Lomond Transfer Station, and we will no longer underwrite CRV. CRV remains available at other locations in the county. If you have not already, we strongly encourage residents to sign up for curbside pickup. Those operations are not affected whatsoever.

Santa Cruz County has been a global recycling pioneer for decades. The strength of County operations will allow us to survive these difficult times. Will remain committed to recycling, committed to the environment, and committed to our planet.



## LEO's, Chanticleer contract awarded, April groundbreaking

Fulfilling a promise to the community, the Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors on February 26 approved a \$3.5 million contract to build Phase I of Chanticleer Park and LEO's Haven playground.

Under terms of the contract, Watsonville-based Granite Construction Company will construct an inclusive playground for children of all abilities, restrooms, paved parking area with security lighting, community garden, picnic area, dog park, pathways and landscaping. The public-private partnership includes a community-led fundraising effort of close to \$2 million and support from Measure G, a half-cent sales tax in the unincorporated area approved in November 2018 by two-thirds of County voters.

"We worked hard to make this day a reality," Supervisor John Leopold said. "Despite the obstacles before us, the County and community worked together with incredible focus and purpose. In particular, Patricia Potts and Mariah Roberts are to be commended

for their dedication to create a park that will delight all of our residents."

Formerly a wheat farm, the 4.5-acre site was once owned by the County's Redevelopment Agency but faced an uncertain future after the dissolution of redevelopment agencies statewide in 2012. In 2015, the Santa Cruz Playground Project and Chanticleer Park Neighbors Association teamed up to create a vision of a community-serving park and LEO's Haven, a playground for children of all abilities.

"This project is a testament to our community's ability to collaborate for the greater good," said Mariah Roberts, director of the Chanticleer Park Neighbors Association and vice president of Friends of Santa Cruz County Parks. "People from every corner of Santa Cruz County -- businesses, public agencies, individuals and groups, have helped build this place. It is created by all of us, designed for all of us, and will serve the community for generations to come."



COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ DEPARTMENT OF

**PARKS, OPEN SPACE AND CULTURAL SERVICES**





**2018-19 PROGRAMS & ACTIVITIES**

Looking for something to do? Whether you're 8 or 85, the '18-'19 Parks Department's Activity Guide is a great place to start. [Check it out!](#)



## ***Focused Intervention Team Pilot Underway***

In January, the County of Santa Cruz and partner cities Santa Cruz and Watsonville launched the Focused Intervention Team pilot program, pairing public safety deputies with mental health professionals to help reduce the impacts from frequent users of public services.

By identifying serial offenders who are change-averse and who have a demonstrated track record of disruptive and criminal behavior in local downtowns and other urban areas, FIT teams — comprised of the Santa Cruz County Sheriff's Office and Health Services Agency — work closely with other local law enforcement agencies to improve public safety and deliver needed behavioral health and other services to address root causes of behavior.

"I applaud Sheriff Hart for developing a program to create accountability for a few offenders who can cause so much impact to the community," Board Chair Ryan Coonerty said. "By deploying the team first in the City of Santa Cruz where there are the most impacts, I'm hopeful that we will see significant increased public safety."

Through high-frequency contacts (including in a custody setting) and evidence-based practices such as motivational interviewing, trauma-informed counseling and cognitive behavioral therapy, the County and partners hope to reduce public impacts and improve outcomes for FIT participants. FIT participants will also be connected to wraparound services including medical and food benefits, housing navigations services and more.

### **Citizen Connect**



We've always updating our award-winning Citizen Connect app to give you access to anytime, anywhere services. [Download Citizen Connect](#) for iTunes and Google Play.



Members of the Downtown Streets Team clean the sidewalk near downtown Felton.

## **Downtown Streets Team Expands Into Felton**

The County of Santa Cruz is pleased to announce the expansion of its partnership with the Downtown Streets Team to include the San Lorenzo Valley.

Under an expansion of an existing pilot contract to provide beach cleanup services along the North Coast, the Downtown Streets Team will provide cleanup services to identified dumping areas near downtown Felton, including Covered Bridge Park and other areas near downtown Felton. Under the expansion, the Downtown Streets Teams' five-member crew will conduct Felton activities on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

"I'm pleased to bring these cleanup services to the San Lorenzo Valley," Supervisor Bruce McPherson said. "Illegal dumping threatens our environment and degrades the quality of life of our communities. We are proud to partner with the Downtown Streets Team, whose motto is 'Ending Homelessness through the Dignity of Work.'"

Downtown Streets Team operates its evidence-based volunteer work experience program in several California counties and provides homeless team members stipends for their volunteer service. Team members also receive access to case management services while taking steps toward employment and housing.

"We have been warmly welcomed into the town of Felton," said Brooke Newman, project manager of the Santa Cruz Downtown Streets Team. "We believe our team can make a real difference and help beautify the community."

DST's activities are funded by a state and local dollars, and include North Coast beach cleanups north of Wilder Ranch State Park. Under a separate contract with the city, DST also operates in downtown Santa Cruz, on the Riverwalk/Levee, in the Harvey West neighborhood and Pogonip Park, as well as at Cowell's and Main Beach.



**Looking for employment?**  
[www.santacruzcountyjobs.com](http://www.santacruzcountyjobs.com)



# Local Homelessness Funding Announced

On March 20th, the County and Homeless Action Partnership announced award recipients through the HEAP/CESH funding process to help address the local homelessness crisis.

In 2018, the State approved unprecedented funding to address homelessness, allocating \$500 million Homeless Emergency Aid Program (HEAP) and increasing funding to the ongoing California Emergency Solutions and Housing (CESH) program. Both programs are administered through the local Watsonville/Santa Cruz City/County Continuum of Care (CoC),

The awards include funding for site acquisition, operation of North and South County navigation centers, safe parking programs, a youth homeless resource center, rapid rehousing and homelessness prevention services, housing navigation, work experience, hygiene services and much more. In total, 35 applications requested more than \$30 million, with 22 projects awarded for a total of \$8,975,556.

"The Santa Cruz County community has significant needs when it comes to addressing homelessness at the local level," Santa Cruz County Homeless Services Coordinator Rayne Marr said.

"Through this unprecedented opportunity, we're significantly enhancing our system of shelter, services and prevention efforts to better serve the community."

Project agreements are expected to be executed in April, with the expectation that all funds will be expended by June 2021 per the terms of the HEAP program.

Through a previous emergency allocation process, the County and HAP awarded \$1 million in emergency HEAP funds through a letter of inter-

## HEAP/CESH AWARDS

Applicant/Project	Total
City of Santa Cruz Land Purchase	\$1,400,000
North County Navigation Center/Shelter	\$1,208,182
Salvation Army South County Navigation Center	\$1,000,000
Encompass Youth Resource Center	\$787,003
Abode Services Rapid Rehousing Program	\$600,000
Paul Lee Loft Shelter Operations	\$555,000
Community Action Board Watsonville Works!	\$459,182
Community Action Board Rental Assistance	\$451,818
Community Action Board YHRT Program	\$422,835
Association of Faith Communities Shelter	\$402,692
Monarch Services Domestic Violence Shelter	\$350,000
Housing Authority Landlord Incentives & Move In	\$320,015
Community Bridges Mountain Community Resources	\$240,478
Association of Faith Communities SafeSpaces Parking	\$237,950
Cabrillo College Emergency Housing Program	\$137,724
MHCAN Shower Room	\$110,994
Congregational Church, Soquel Shower the People	\$61,270
Bill Wilson Center Shared Housing for Youth	\$58,300
Santa Cruz County CoC Lead Planning	\$44,471
Community Technology Alliance HMIS	\$44,471
County Human Services Smart Path to Housing/Health	\$44,471
Wings Homeless Advocacy Vital Records	\$38,700

est process, resulting in immediate and additional shelter and service options for local homeless persons.

## DA's Office hosts human trafficking symposium in Aptos

On March 15, Santa Cruz County District Attorney Jeff Rosell, human trafficking survivor Natasha Herzig, and Chair of the Human Trafficking Coalition for Monterey and Santa Cruz Counties Deborah Pembrook, spoke to various community agency representatives to highlight the problem of human trafficking in Santa Cruz County.

The primary goal of the symposium was to bring a diverse collection of community members together to educate them and raise awareness of this hidden problem in our county. Some of the attendees included law enforcement officers, victim advocates, educators, social service workers, first responders, and other various members of the public.

Human trafficking is prevalent throughout the county, including the two largest industries; agriculture and tourism, and can exploit victims regardless of racial, educational or socio-economical background. For further assistance/information regarding human trafficking, please contact the Santa Cruz County District Attorney's Office at (831) 454-2560, or via email at [HTHelp@santacruzcounty.us](mailto:HTHelp@santacruzcounty.us).



District Attorney Jeff Rosell





St. Patrick's Day in Santa Cruz comes with pit bulls! **St. Pittie's Day** returned in 2019 with a "Pit Stop Pub Crawl" and Adopt-a-Thon to help celebrate a misunderstood breed and find forever homes. For more on Santa Cruz County Animal Shelter programs, services and events, visit on the web at [www.scanimalshelter.org](http://www.scanimalshelter.org).



## Women's Commission Recognizes 2019 Trailblazers

The Santa Cruz County Women's Commission Trailblazers Awards recognize people in Santa Cruz County who, through their professional or personal efforts, are making extraordinary differences in the lives of women or girls. The 2019 honorees are people who have made significant contributions to improving the lives of women or girls, as well as inspiring, empowering, and encouraging them.

Past Trailblazers have been recognized for their impact in a range of social, political, and economic issues affecting women, including in the areas of criminal and economic justice, education, prevention of violence against women and girls, women's healthcare, political participation, and/or various organizations that support the interests of women or girls.

This year, the Women's Commission is honoring the following four individuals for their commitment to improving the lives of women and girls in Santa Cruz County:

**Margaret Cariño-Condon:** Co-founder and Program Coordinator for Salud y Cariño (SyC) a local nonprofit whose mission is to "Open doors for girls to take action and gain confidence through physical activity and healthy choices to live their best lives now and in the future".

**Casey Coonerty-Prutti:** Owner of Bookshop Santa Cruz and Co-Founder of the Alliance of Women Entrepreneurs (AWE) dedicated to creating community in downtown Santa Cruz by shining a light on the unique leadership and community-building strength of local women business owners.

**Nicole Keadle:** Member of the Justice and Gender Advisory Task Force, and advocate and role model to women involved with the criminal justice system.

**Clara Minor:** Owner of Minorsan, empowering women and girls through self-defense and fitness for more than 33 years.



From left to right, Margaret Cariño-Condon, Casey Coonerty-Prutti, Nicole Keadle and Clara Minor.

This year's Trailblazers were honored presented during the March 26 Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors meeting, with a celebratory reception afterward.



## Meet Your Supervisor

### [John Leopold](#)

District 1 includes Live Oak, Summit Road Soquel and parts of Capitola and Santa Cruz.



### [Zach Friend](#)

District 2 includes Aptos, Corralitos, part of Capitola and the South County coast.



### [Ryan Coonerty](#)

District 3 includes much of Santa Cruz and the North Coast.



### [Greg Caput](#)

District 4 includes most of Watsonville and the Pajaro Valley.



### [Bruce McPherson](#)

District 5 includes the San Lorenzo Valley, Scotts Valley and parts of Santa Cruz.



*Click on each supervisor to learn more about them and their responsibilities, including how to reach them during constituent office hours.*

## NACo backs flood improvements

Meeting at its annual conference in Washington, D.C., the National Association of Counties (NACo) on March 2 voted to urge the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and White House Office of Management and Budget to use a more holistic approach emphasizing the risks to low-income and agricultural communities in determining the benefits of federal investments for protection for areas at risk for flooding.



income, high-value communities.

In a proposal brought forth by Santa Cruz County Supervisor Zach Friend and Monterey County Supervisor John Phillips, NACo adopted an interim resolution that asks federal agencies to more equitably determine the costs and benefits of flood control projects in communities such as the Pajaro Valley, which has inadequate flood-control protection in part due to federal funding formulas that favor high-

"The interim resolution is a vote of support by the nation's largest organization representing counties for communities such as the Pajaro Valley, which live in constant fear of flooding but have been left unprotected due to their economic status," Friend said. "This is an important step forward not just for the Pajaro Valley, but for all low-income communities living in the shadow of inadequate flood protection."



The **2020 Census** is around the corner, and the County outreach efforts are ramping up. Stay in touch at [www.santacruzcountycounts.us](http://www.santacruzcountycounts.us).

## Quick Guide

Citizens rely on county government for many needed services. Use this handy guide to find who to call, or come find us on the web at: [www.santacruzcounty.us](http://www.santacruzcounty.us).

**Main Number**  
(831) 454-2000

**Board of Supervisors**  
(831) 454-2200

**Agricultural Commissioner**  
(831) 763-8080

**Animal Services**  
(831) 454-7303

**Assessor's Office**  
(831) 454-2002

**Benefits**  
(888) 421-8080

**County Clerk/Elections**  
(831) 454-2060

**Economic Development**  
(831) 454-2728

**Environmental Health**  
(831) 454-2022

**Health Services Agency**  
(831) 454-4800

**Parks and Recreation**  
(831) 454-7900

**Planning Department**  
(831) 454-2580

**Public Works**  
(831) 454-2160

**Recycling Information**  
(831) 454-2333

**Sheriff/Coroner**  
(831) 471-1121  
(call 911 if emergency)

**Superior Court**  
(831) 763-8060

**Tax Collections**  
(831) 454-2510