



We Are All Team Seacliff

Rebecca Downing

People love Seacliff. Travelers, friends, and relatives always have the nicest things to say when they visit our neighborhood. When I meet a new resident and ask why they moved here, they often say "Everyone is so friendly." "We used to visit and hoped to live here one day." Or, "I grew up in Seacliff and just HAD to return." We also hear how much our residents care about Seacliff, and it shows.

This year, many of our members volunteered their time and expertise, and made donations to association projects. We have been busy repairing local trails, attending and speaking at RTC meetings, soliciting prizes for our stroll and annual dinner, creating pedestrian participation posters, marching with our banner in the parade, crunching transportation data, and working at the Seacliff Street Fair. The association can't even keep track of everyone's contributions to our community throughout the year because so many acts happen quietly or behind the scenes. We may notice a weed patch gone or trash removed but never see who it was tending to our village. Sometimes a board member learns of a good deed done and we acknowledge it, or we receive a thankful email or note from a member about something wonderful someone did that made a difference. So, thank you!

Examples of your care and creativity are the Seacliff Mini Park and the Mar Vista Garden next to the rail crossing; community volunteers filling a patch with beauty. Another, enjoyed by all of us as we stroll through the neighborhood, didn't even exist when I moved here. Mary and Steve Gibbs moved to Seacliff in 2005 and immediately began gardening along the State Park fence on Seacliff Drive. Each year the garden grew as their neighbors joined in or supported the effort with plants, water and other landscape materials. What began as dirt and weeds has blossomed into a riot of flowers, vines and native plants. Driving by it now, one would think it was always there! Mary especially wishes to thank Sharon Brinzo, Ingrid Marianne, and Cheri (pictured weeding)



From a stretch of weeds to...



A beautiful border!

and Richard Nilsson for their help grooming this Seacliff Garden. It looks beautiful despite the lack of rain this year thanks to their efforts. If you see a spot that could use some TLC, let us know about it. We'll check it out and see how to improve it. And, if you want to help improve Seacliff, contact us at : info@seacliffimprovement.org We have many volunteer opportunities!



Pedestrian Improvements on State Park Drive

Zach Friend
Second District Supervisor
County of Santa Cruz

The Seacliff Improvement Association stroll to Aptos Village illuminated areas of concern for bike and pedestrian access from Seacliff. One of the areas that received the most feedback, as an area for improvement, was the section of State Park Drive between Searidge and

Rancho Del Mar. As a result of this feedback, I contacted Caltrans in San Luis Obispo, the district office that oversees our area, about ways we could improve the two pedestrian crosswalks and safety around the freeway onramps.

As you may have seen, Caltrans has been performing Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) sidewalk upgrades on several highway interchanges in the area, including State Park Drive, Park Avenue and 41st Avenue. My hope was to incorporate our suggested improvements into the work that was already planned to improve mobility access.

Caltrans assigned an investigator to visit the site and review incident data from the last decade. I provided input on ways the two crosswalks could be improved. After a review of the site, the investigator agreed that some upgrades were beneficial and a few improvements, including new highly reflective striping, eye-level signage at the approach with high-reflective coating, new bump outs that provide additional protections at the crossing, and additional markings indicating an approaching crosswalk will all be integrated into the approved ADA upgrades providing improved mobility access for wheelchairs, greater safety with strollers and more.



Aptos Public Safety Center - Earlier this year we opened the first combined public safety center in the County. The Aptos Public Safety Center, located in Aptos Village across the parking lot from New Leaf Community Market, houses representatives from the Sheriff’s Office, District Attorney’s Office, Probation, and our office. The combined location allows for a greater public safety presence in Aptos and the mid/south county and the opportunity for targeted community trainings and outreach. For example, I co-hosted neighborhood meetings with the Sheriff’s Office to discuss property crime, traffic-related issues, and more using the small community room in the new center. Additionally, I co-hosted trainings with the District Attorney’s Office on senior fraud and other issues. This is your space; deputies and other public safety staff are here to address neighborhood issues or other public safety concerns. Sergeant Jordan Brownlee oversees the Aptos area and can be reached at jordan.brownlee@santacruzcounty.us.

If you have questions regarding upcoming trainings with the District Attorney’s Office feel free to contact me directly. As always, I welcome your feedback. Call me at 454-2200 or visit at open office hours in at the Aptos Public Safety Center or my office hours in Corralitos, Watsonville and Seascape.

Fraud Training Class Review

Rebecca Downing

It was standing room only in the conference room at the new Aptos Safety Center for the first community fraud training. So many association members wished to attend that the class filled up quickly and more will be offered soon. The training was conducted by District Attorney Jeff Rosell and Assistant District Attorney Doug Allen from the Santa Cruz County District Attorney's office of Consumer Fraud/Environmental Protection Unit, that investigates a wide range of crimes such as fraudulent business practices of unscrupulous contractors, phone scams, and other "white collar" and criminal fraud complaints.

This unit works on local on fraud and with state and federal agencies on broader investigations. Currently the unit is working on reformation of the skilled nursing home industry, relying on multiple investigations state-wide. The unit also recently completed an action with five other counties resulting in a judgment against the largest Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) loan provider requiring better consumer disclosures and award of \$40 Million in restitution to victims.

Doug Allen reminded us that scams are everywhere, all the time. For every crime report there are one hundred more unreported. Only one percent typically complain, so when six million people report something, it's a national problem. Thieves use personal identification information that is already publicly available. Social Security numbers on the dark web are also used to access bank accounts and change mailing addresses. Criminals use this information, change an account and create a whole new identity leaving the victim to repair their own credit damage.

Attendees learned that public Wi-Fi is a big security risk because criminals can access records including mortgages and bank accounts through unsecured servers. Bank accounts have been hacked this way so criminals can later secure credit cards issued in the victim's name that are then charged up to the limit. Since the credit card company doesn't know this, one can spend up to three years trying to straighten out credit standing because the victim must prove what they did NOT purchase.

The U.S. Mail is another source of fraud. On the Nextdoor website, neighbors share photographs of mail spread on the ground from unsecured mailboxes or share evidence of sifting through recycling or garbage cans. With information collected from these sources, criminals can then go online to gather more personal information to develop a scam. Attendees were reminded to shred EVERYTHING with any personal identification information including one's name and address.

Auto burglaries are also especially troublesome because thieves aren't just after mobile phones or computers; criminal seek identity information. Drivers need to check all accounts after a break-in because thieves use this information to create new identities and accounts. If your car is stolen and you have a garage door opener in it or the keys to your house in your garage, the thief has access to everything in your home using the address from your registration in your glove compartment so consider carrying documents and leave nothing personally identifying in the vehicle.

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A device installed on top of credit card readers at gas stations and ATMs can be used to steal card information. This device can read an inserted card and thieves often watch people enter a pin number to acquire card information. It's important to cover the keypad with your hand while entering codes. Inspecting the card reader device first then checking for a small camera tucked into the shield over the keypad keeps code entry hidden, reducing the chance of theft. There are now devices that can read the magnetic chip that is now installed on most credit and ATM cards, even through pockets and wallets so it is important to keep the number of cards carried to a minimum and secure them in a RFID-blocking wallet.

Contractor fraud, a crime on the increase recently, occurs when a contractor charges too much money upfront and does not complete the job. It is then spent on another job, other bills, gambling or drugs, etc. Contractors cannot demand more money than what they are actually delivering at the time of the work. The contractor's license number is required to be on their vehicle but often the number on the truck is a business license, not a contractor license. It is imperative to look up the contractor license number online and research their record, including insurer before signing a contract. If the contractor has no insurance, the homeowner might become the employer and a worker might end up being an employee if they do not have Worker's Compensation insurance.

Freezing credit with the major credit reporting companies is the best defense against fraud. It can be challenging to freeze all accounts but acceptable unless one is conducting business that requires lots of transactions. These can be unfrozen later using procedures provided by each credit bureau.



ADA Doug Allen describes how to file an identity theft report.

If you are a victim of this type of crime it is important to file a report with the consumer unit and also a federal complaint. Most do not complain so the problem is not addressed by law enforcement. 99% of banks will not investigate anything under \$5,000 because it costs more money and time to investigate than the amount of the loss so a report to the FTC is also critical because they may already be investigating a company and your report will help build their case. Class actions can end up with a result and that is why law enforcement needs a report.

We could not include everything from the training in one article, including many questions from attendees so consider participating in a future class. Supervisor Friend plans to host additional fraud training sessions and the association will issue an email invitation once we learn the dates.

In the meantime, learn more about protecting yourself, your information and the environment. Visit the unit's website: <https://datinternet.co.santa-cruz.ca.us/Home/ConsumerProtection.aspx> and familiarize yourself with the many resources available regarding consumer protection, scam alerts, the Better Business Bureau, and the online county and federal complaint form links. If you don't report it, it won't be investigated!



Join the Seacliff CERT Team

Diana Hayden

Be prepared for disasters and emergencies and protect your family and the Seacliff community by taking advantage of the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training. Basic CERT training and Continuing Education Classes are offered regularly at our Aptos Fire Station.

The Basic CERT Training Course prepares you to handle disaster situations at home and in your community. You will learn what to do on your own, and what to do as part of a CERT team.

The next Basic CERT Course in Aptos will be on Tuesdays Feb 4, 11, 18, and 25 from 6:30-10:00 pm, and Saturday Feb 29 from 8:45 am-5:00 pm at Aptos/La Selva Fire Station, 6934 Soquel Dr, Aptos.



When you complete the 21-hour Basic CERT Course, you receive a Disaster Service Worker (DSW) badge good for five (5) years. If you need to be re-certified and get an updated badge, go to the CERT website:

<https://santacruzcountycert.org> and select Contact us. Continuing education classes will

begin again early in 2020. Please check the website: <https://santacruzcountycert.org/cert-training-classes/> in January. Are you Interested in becoming a CERT Basic Training instructor? We will be conducting a FEMA-certified CERT Train-the-Trainer class at Cabrillo College. It is 3 full days, January 24-26. For more information and to download the application visit:

<https://santacruzcountycert.org/cert-training-classes/instructors/>

Aptos Branch Library Renovation - 3rd Community Meeting

Thursday, Dec 12, 6:30 PM - 7:30 PM

Aptos Branch Library at 7695 Soquel Drive, Aptos

Santa Cruz Public Libraries and the County of Santa Cruz invite you to the 3rd Community Meeting for the Aptos branch library.

Come and participate in the discussion on the library development and learn more about the Design Build Process!

For questions please contact: Damon Adlao, Project Manager, County of Santa Cruz, Department of Public Works at: 831.454.2343.



Seacliff Autumn of Love... Expressed at our 2019 Annual Dinner!



Seacliff Improvement Association Treasurer's Report 2019

...	August	September	October	November	YTD
Ending Balance from Dec 2018					\$30,987.89
INCOME:					
General Donations		\$405.00	\$1,160.00	\$100.00	\$1,915.00
Membership Dues		\$1,180.00	\$2,640.00	\$457.38	\$6,094.85
Return Check fee reimbursement					\$15.00
Annual Dinner Meals paid		\$1,155.00	\$1,820.00	\$70.00	\$3,045.00
Annual Dinner Raffle ticket sales			\$435.00		\$435.00
Beachgate Trail Donations	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$25.00	\$0.00	\$315.00
TOTAL INCOME	\$0.00	\$2,740.00	\$6,080.00	\$627.38	\$11,819.85
EXPENSES:					
Website Hosting and Admin			\$140.00		\$575.88
Newsletter (edit, post, print)			\$593.00		\$2,674.93
Annual Dinner Deposit & Banquet			\$3,406.44		\$3,801.44
Annual Dinner Music			\$225.00		\$225.00
Postage, shipping, FedEx, etc.		\$64.00	\$223.67		\$469.72
Post Box Annual Rental (Oct)			\$106.00		\$106.00
mail member renewal & dinner reso		\$488.22			\$488.22
Insurance (pay in June)					\$563.00
Return Check and fee					\$32.00
Membership Meeting items	\$60.00	\$129.42			\$588.42
Aptos Village Stroll	\$198.57				\$198.57
Sign Contest: Drive Slow in Seacliff					\$393.30
Aptos Parade					\$20.00
Beachgate Trail Expenses		\$402.12			\$402.12
Other projects (trail maint)		\$162.23			\$162.23
Gardening	\$280.00	\$280.00		\$280.00	\$3,641.47
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$538.57	\$1,525.99	\$4,694.11	\$280.00	\$14,342.30
ENDING CASH BALANCE	\$25,518.16	\$26,732.17	\$28,118.06	\$28,465.44	\$28,465.44
Designated \$ for Beachgate Trail Total as of Jan 1, 2019 = 7159.59	\$7,449.59	\$7,047.47	\$7,072.47	\$7,072.47	

New Members!
 Calvin Do and Alissa Tran
 Dan Klitsner and Alicia Alexander
 Lenore Montegna
 Keith Otto
**We thank all 353 member households
 and friends for your continued support.**

If you have a suggestion or a Seacliff neighborhood question write to us at: info@seacliffimprovement.org

Our board of directors meets on the second Tuesday of the month at the Aptos/ La Selva Fire station at 6:30 pm. All are welcome. Contact us to confirm the location.



To report neighborhood concerns, use the **My Santa Cruz County** App:
<https://sccappstore.co.santa-cruz.ca.us/>



Or report it online here: <https://cconnect.santacruzcounty.us/>

Seacliff Improvement Association
PO Box 533
Aptos, CA 95001-0533

Share your newsletter with a neighbor and invite them to join!

Membership Application/Renewal-Newsletter

Annual Dues are \$20.00 (January– December)

Name(s): _____

Seacliff Address: _____

Mailing Address if different: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Telephone Number: (_____) _____

E-mail Address (for newsletters and bulletins):

Email: _____ Email 2: _____



Please include your check and mail to: Seacliff Improvement Association, P.O. Box 533, Aptos, CA 95001

To learn more or join the Seacliff Improvement Association visit: <http://www.seacliffimprovement.org/>