



Summer  
2014

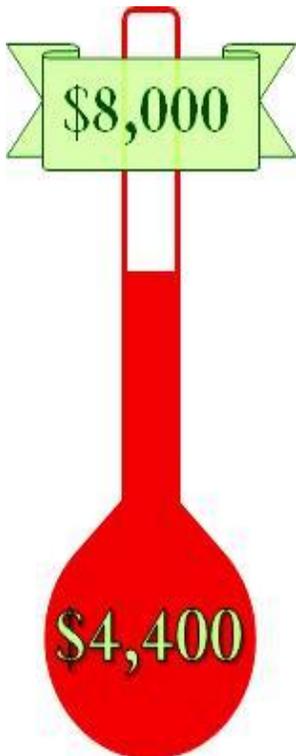
## Seacliff Undergrounding Awaits RTC Approval

Will Roblin

Many residents wonder when the undergrounding of utility poles in the village will finally begin. This project must be completed before the village streetscape beautification can start. The utilities are currently preparing application documents for the Regional Transportation Commission to receive right of way at the railroad tracks on State Park Drive. All utilities must run under this crossing.

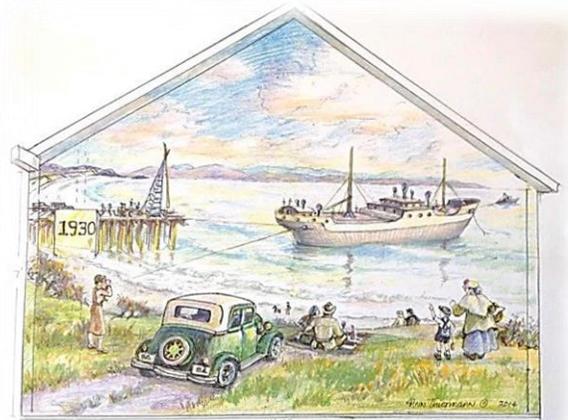
The project has now risen to the top of the list of undergrounding projects for the county, and Patrick Mulhearn, analyst with Supervisor Zach Friend's office reports the County's Real Property agent is satisfied with the current pace of progress. Patrick notes several previous obstacles have included the public and private collaboration of state and county agencies, two private corporations and a public utility; the evolving scope of the project, challenges with bidding; and budget constraints.

Patrick and a representative from the County's Real Property Division will meet with the Seacliff Village Committee at its quarterly meeting, Thursday September 4th at 7pm, upstairs at the Aptos/La Selva Firehouse 6934 Soquel Drive. Interested SIA members are invited to attend.



### *Ahoy Neighbor! The SS Palo Alto Mural Launches this Month*

If you are enjoying a scoop at Marianne's, look up - above and beyond the shops across the street and you may see muralist, Ann Thiermann in action.



Thanks to generous donations from Ben Strock Realty, Manuel's Mexican Restaurant and the Seacliff Improvement Association, the creation of the mural depicting the arrival of the SS Palo Alto will begin this month.

These generous donations sent fundraising just over the halfway point so please help us reach the rest of the \$8,000 required by making a donation to this beautification project. Those making a donation of \$500 or more will be acknowledged on a plaque at the mural site. Visit our website and donate via PayPal today: [www.seacliffimprovement.org](http://www.seacliffimprovement.org)



## Proposed Cannabis Business Tax

Zach Friend  
Second District Supervisor  
County of Santa Cruz

In November county voters will be asked to weigh in on whether our county should have a cannabis business tax. Over the last year the Board of Supervisors has worked with neighborhood groups, medical marijuana providers, patients and public safety personnel to craft policies surrounding the cultivation and dispensing of medical marijuana. The goals were to provide safe access but also mitigate environmental and neighborhood issues

that have occurred with irresponsible cultivation and zoning difficulties from lack of regulations for dispensaries. Throughout this process, the County and local medical marijuana industry realized that these regulations proposed a unique set of challenges. Ensuring that environmental protections were maintained, neighborhood issues were resolved and only responsible medical marijuana businesses that operate within our local ordinances be allowed, would require additional County work. During the legislative discussions the local Association of Standardized Cannabis (a collective of medical marijuana dispensaries) agreed that a cannabis business tax could provide funding to the County for these types of services.

The Board of Supervisors unanimously voted to place the Cannabis Business Tax on the upcoming November ballot. If approved, Measure K, will levy a seven percent tax specifically on local medical marijuana dispensaries. The Association of Standardized Cannabis, and many local medical marijuana supporters favor this tax as a way to help provide the County with new general revenue. This revenue, which stays in the County, can be used for General Fund purposes such as public health and safety, environmental protection and fire services.

Other California communities, including Oakland and San Jose, have responded to the changing regulatory environment for the cultivation and dispensing of medical marijuana by approving a similar type of tax. The Santa Cruz County tax structure is modeled after a similar tax in San Jose that has been shown to meet the balance of interests. The City of Santa Cruz will also have a tax on their November ballot that mirrors the County’s proposal. If approved, this will provide a standardized dispensary tax in the county.

For years Santa Cruz County voters have strongly supported state and local laws that provide for the compassionate and safe use of medicinal cannabis by prescription. During the local debate over cultivation and dispensary ordinances I heard from many that advocated the need to ensure safe access to medical marijuana as well as balancing environmental and neighborhood protection. As a result, our district will have a chance to vote on the Cannabis Business Tax in November to help balance these issues. As always, I’d love to hear your thoughts. Feel free to contact me at 454-2200.

### **SIA Board Comments on *Parks Forward***

Rebecca Downing

After reviewing the Parks Forward (<http://parksforward.com/>) Commission Plan Draft to transform the California State Parks system, our board saw nothing that addresses the impacts parks have on neighborhoods and local businesses. The board recommended adding a “Good Neighbor” section, stressing the importance of the relationships between parks and their host communities. We asked for inclusion of strategies to improve relations with local governments and surrounding neighborhoods with associated policy recommendations. Issues that impact surrounding communities, like ours, include traffic, overspill parking and the maintenance of entry ways and service yards.

Santa Cruz County is home to 14 popular state parks on ten percent of our land. For the health of our communities, there must be policies and practices that foster relations with local state parks. We are certain that other counties would benefit from “Good Neighbor” policies and goals included in the plan.

# Spring 2014 Beautification Awards

Niki Derby and Coni Hendry

**105 Longleaf** - When Jeffery Johnson found this great little beach bungalow with an ocean view in 2005 he knew it was time to move back to Seacliff. It had been a rental for quite a few years and definitely needed some TLC. He has redone much of the inside of the house and the yard---new bath and kitchen and installed hardwood floors and then replaced the large window in the living room when a bird flew into it shattering it.

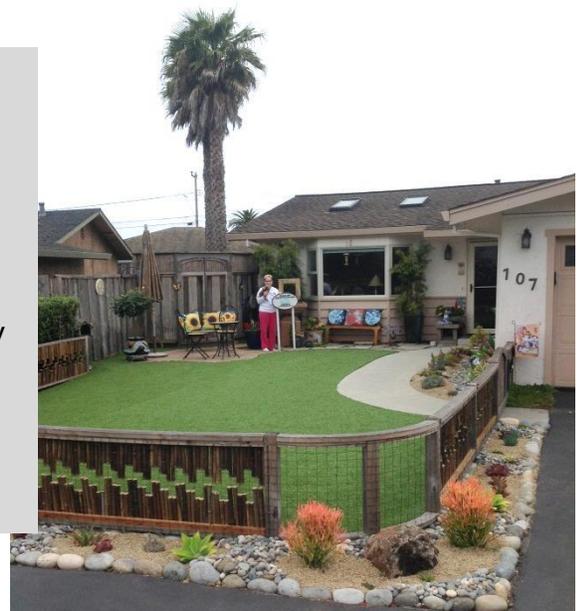
This year he has added even more flagstone to his yard---forming several distinct areas---an eating area, a lounge area with a gas fire pit with stained glass decoration and a new hot tub with an ocean view. This "Sweet Spot" has a clean, inviting look that says Seacliff Beach.



**249 Center** – Me, Myself, and I Hair Salon...Lidia Avelar opened her hair styling studio six months ago. She has enhanced the yard in front of her business which has a small fenced area in front of the studio with lovely flowers. Drought tolerant plants mingle with a place to sit and enjoy the scenery. It is a restful spot near busy streets, curb parking and businesses.

Lidia has been a hair stylist in Aptos for the last 31 years, working at Let It Shine, Campus Styling and Moxie. She is very happy to have her own place with her partner Kevin, serving their clients in very peaceful environs.

**107 Valencia** - Sue Barthol bought her cute 2 bedroom, 2 bath Seacliff cottage in 2005, downsizing from her Mesa Viewpoint home above Cabrillo. Since that time, she has remodeled the inside and continually works on her very efficient garden, which she shares with Lola, her toy Chocolate poodle. In 2008, she installed the faux grass and more recently added lots of succulents and mulch to further conserve water in these very dry times. Most of her succulents came from "Succulent Gardens: The Growing Grounds" near Moss Landing. Check out their website: <http://sqplants.com/>. She's already accomplished what many of us still need to do.



*Our Beautification Committee is out searching for our second round nominees right now so stay tuned!*

## Meet the Soquel Water District Candidates



Since there are so many candidates running for the Soquel Creek Water District Board of Directors, we thought our members might wish to hear directly from them before the election this November. Following are briefs submitted by eight of the nine candidates who replied to our request for statements:

**Carla Christensen** -My background is public service with integrity. During my career as a scientist at Stanford Research Institute, I also chaired two ethics committees. As a retiree, I served on the Parents Club Board for Capitola Junior Guards, so I value and have practice working as a team to benefit our community. If I'm elected, I'll work with others to protect the environment and our water supply for future generations. I'm a candidate because I'm concerned about the number of big business-backed candidates on this ballot who offer an unbalanced response to our water problems.

**Doug Deaver** - Solving our water challenges requires strong leadership that can communicate unbiased information to our community and foster a collaborative environment with agency staff, other agencies and most importantly, district customers. As a long time local resident I have decades of experience managing complex projects and staying on budget. I recently retired from Cabrillo College and am active in the community. I have a B.S./M.S. from Purdue in management and industrial engineering. My commitment is to inform and involve you in the district's decisions. I'm endorsed by many community leaders including Supervisor Zach Friend and would be honored to have your vote.

**John Hughes** - I am a 70 year old retiree having spent my entire working career as a senior business manager with The New York Times. I am now an Aptos resident and a long time Soquel Creek Water District customer. Have recently been attending open meetings of our water district and become absolutely convinced that although the board appears to have all the right credentials, they are in due respect not listening to their customers.

**Bruce Jaffee** - Saltwater has recently entered our aquifer because of pumping in the 1980s and 1990s that lowered groundwater levels below sea level. Raising groundwater levels to keep seawater from polluting our groundwater basins is my number one priority. Rick Meyer agrees with me on this. Conservation by our customers is already raising groundwater levels. A supplemental source will also allow rising groundwater levels to protect our water supply. You, the voters, will decide that source.

**Bill McGowan** - Our water district needs strong thoughtful leadership to solve the water supply challenges facing our community. As a board member, I will study the issues, listen to the customers, support and guide district staff and work collaboratively with other water and county agencies to provide high quality and affordable water to our community. My experience in water infrastructure working for Granite Construction Company for over 25 years gives me a local perspective and technical understanding of our water system and community. I'm endorsed by Mary Solari and Supervisor Zach Friend and would be honored to have your vote.

**Rick Meyer** - When re-elected, Dr. Bruce Jaffe and I will allocate water fairly during the current shortage and back the best new source of supplemental water, ending water budgets. You, the voters, will decide that source. Our leadership brings smart conservation, better science, effective outreach and transparent governance. As a high tech VP and product manager in Silicon Valley, I managed resources like the District's cost-effectively. Now my small business helps homeowners lower energy costs. Special interests would return to ruinous overpumping, threatening our wells with further seawater pollution. Instead, vote for the team that's already creating the balanced solution. [www.ProtectWater.info](http://www.ProtectWater.info)

## Water District Candidates cont.

**John Prentice** - I'm fortunate to live and raise my family in Aptos. However, the direction of water policy set forth by the current Soquel Creek Water District board doesn't reflect the needs of our community. I believe now is the time for new vision, effective leadership and responsible long-term planning. As a small business owner I understand the value of community input and engaging positively with the public. I look forward to starting these conversations with you and I would be honored to work with you on finding solutions. Vote John Prentice for Soquel Creek Water District.

**Michelle (Shellie) Roy** - Conservation cannot solve 30+ years of overdraft. The peer study identifies incremental solutions that don't have the negative economic impact of a moratorium or desalinization plant. My focus will be to work with all stakeholders to evaluate and act on these and other practical solutions needed to construct a sustainable aquifer. Due to my 8 years of experience as a County Supervisor in Colorado, I have both experience solving environmental and infrastructure issues and the political expertise needed to convert agreements into action. As a newcomer to the area, I also bring a fresh perspective to the issues.

## Sustainable Santa Cruz Draft Report Released

Will Roblin

A draft report of a nearly three-year study of jobs, transportation and housing in the mid-county area was released by the county Planning Department last week. Within the constraints of limited natural resources and the county's Climate Action Strategy and California's Clean Air Act laws - the county nonetheless faces ongoing mandates for providing affordable housing. The report indicates several new directions for the Planning Department from community feedback about transportation, jobs, and the environment.

Focusing primarily on the unincorporated Highway 1/Soquel Drive corridor, the report includes the prospect of significantly greater density, the potential for new streets and a review of current parking policies. Redefined housing types and mixed-use buildings, which foster residential and commercial synergy, will be encouraged through incentivized zoning as the county tries to reduce VMT - Vehicle Miles Travelled - considered by some to be the nuts and bolts of sustainability.



An example of mixed-use building shown in a simulation infill project at the corner of Center Avenue and Broadway

The Aptos portion of the study focused primarily on transportation including a potential roundabout at the Soquel and State Park Drives intersection, a pedestrian/cycle bridge reconnecting Mar Vista Drive over Highway One, a revived bus route through to Rio Del Mar and a pedestrian route from Center and North Avenues in Seacliff over the RR tracks to Aptos Village. Alignment of on and off ramps envisioned at State Park Drive might also relieve back-ups in that area. Copies of the draft report, which includes an interesting chapter about looking forward, can be found at:

<https://placeworks.sharefile.com/d/se2e37987a51435fb>



## Not Just Another Brick in the Wall

Rebecca Downing

There are many opinions about the wall at the border of Seacliff State Beach and the homes on Las Olas. Posts on Nextdoor and letters to newspapers are full of emotion and hope for resolution. Looking into some of the questions raised about the wall has yielded the following information that may help us better understand the situation.

Many who put up memorials thought the wall was on State Park property but the wall is actually privately owned. In this matter, the County has no direct authority over the action of the homeowner or State Parks. The construction of the wall was approved by the County with a variance for height and location.

The removal notice was placed by State Parks on behalf of the homeowner. The homeowner was advised that items attached to the wall constitute vandalism since they are on private property. The owner then filed a claim with the sheriff's office that took a report but declined to pursue the matter because there was no proof of intent.

Supervisor Zach Friend's office suggested mediation and spoke to a family representative who said they are willing to discuss the situation with the county and state parks. The homeowner claims people have climbed the wall, the surrounding trees, drilled into and caused other damage to the wall. The homeowner offered to build a wall in another location and relocate the memorials but current State Park policies do not allow construction of memorial walls on park land.

When the Seacliff Improvement Association receives requests for memorial plaques in the Mini Park, which is also located on State Park land, we refer inquiries to the California State Park Foundation's picnic table and bench program: <http://www.calparks.org/donations/documents/2014-program-packet.pdf>

## Come see CERT in Action on September 7th!

Mary Edmund



The recent Napa earthquake makes one realize the need for planning and being ready for the next big earthquake here. Fortunately the Annual "Dangers in Paradise" Disaster Preparedness Fair will be Sunday, September 7th at Home Depot on 41st Avenue from 10am-4pm. This community service, provided by Home Depot, offers ways to prepare your family for emergencies with demonstrations by local Firefighters, PG&E and other emergency responders. Booths will present an array of emergency supplies and information with free handouts and surprises for children. Mark the date and plan on attending for it will be well worth the effort. CERT qualified individuals also have a chance to refresh their skills at the fair with special training in search and rescue, triage, fire suppression, cribbing and communications.

If you are interested in helping the Seacliff community be prepared in the event of a disaster, sign up for CERT training. CERT is designed to help neighborhoods prepare for effective disaster/emergency response through training and pre-planning. You will learn to:

- Manage utilities and put out small fires
- Treat the three medical killers
- Provide basic medical aid
- Search for and rescue victims safely
- Organize new volunteers to be more effective in a disaster
- Collect disaster intelligence to support first responder efforts

Contact Mary Edmund at phone: 475-2633 or email: [medmund4@gmail.com](mailto:medmund4@gmail.com) for more information.

Seacliff Improvement Association

Treasurers' Report 2014

	<u>YTD</u>
Beginning Balance:	\$27,081.97
<b>INCOME:</b>	
Donations	\$3,560.00
Membership	\$3,617.19
Human Race	<u>\$2,117.25</u>
<b>TOTAL INCOME:</b>	<b>\$36,376.41</b>
<b>EXPENSES:</b>	
Web Host and Design	\$749.88
Newsletter Publishing	\$2,688.52
Postage	\$537.71
Mini-Park Maintenance	\$28.12
Insurance Expense	\$288.50
Other Expenses	\$989.89
Road signs	\$605.83
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES:</b>	<b><u>\$5,888.45</u></b>
<b>ENDING CASH BALANCE:</b>	<b>\$30,487.96</b>

Special SIA Projects

Monies currently in our account designated for:

<u>Project</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Seacliff Neighborhood Park	\$816
Seacliff Mural	\$4,400

**Welcome New Members!**

Lidia Avelar  
 Toni and Jon Bloom  
 Hamish Brewer  
 Peggy Hillis  
 Kelly Sims  
 Dennis and Kaari Terrill

*We thank all 347 member households and friends for your continued support!*

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

*Check out our Newsletter Archive:*  
<http://www.seacliffimprovement.org/sample-page/newsletters/newsletter-archive/>

*Write to us at:* [info@seacliffimprovement.org](mailto:info@seacliffimprovement.org)

**Mark your Calender:  
SIA 2014 Annual Dinner  
Saturday, October 25<sup>th</sup>.**



**Details with reservation form and membership renewal headed to your mailbox soon!**

**Seacliff Neighborhood Park Progress Report**

Kate Minott, Santa Cruz County Parks & Recreation Commission

Following a small hiccup, the plans and documents for coastal development permits for Phase I of our Seacliff neighborhood park at the corner of Searidge Road and McGregor Drive have been accepted by the County Planning Department. Phase I improvements of the 1.25-acre park site include grading for drainage and infrastructure, a new walkway along McGregor Drive, walkways throughout the park, a play area, a picnic area, parking and drought-tolerant landscaping.

During the lull in processing the park plans, the County received very good news that our park has received a grant of over \$146,000 as part of the State's Housing Related Park Grant Program for construction of the Phase I improvements. It's anticipated the park plans for the coastal development permit will move forward for consideration of approval by the SC County Planning Commission in October with construction to commence in 2015. On October 20, 2014, the SC County Parks & Recreation Commission is scheduled to hear a park progress report from SC County Parks Department staff and will consider public input on a name for the park.

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

*Do you have a new neighbor?*  
*Invite them to join the Seacliff Improvement Association*

Membership Application/Renewal  
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 send my Quarterly Newsletter via US Mail:  (check here)

The SIA does not give out membership lists or phone numbers except to a fellow member for valid membership purposes. If this policy does not provide sufficient privacy, please check one of the two choices following:

Consult me before giving out my address or phone number to any SIA member

Or

Do not give out my address or phone number to any SIA member

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