



# COUNTY CURRENTS

Santa Cruz County

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

Fall 2016

A publication of the County Administrative Office Susan A. Mauriello, County Administrator



## Santa Cruz Slow Jam



Nov. 8 may be one of the most consequential elections of our lifetimes, deciding not only the next president, but the fate of the death penalty, cannabis legalization and more. Locally, several key measures are on the ballot, including Measure D, which proponents say would improve the county's transportation system for bikers, walkers, drivers, public transit users, the elderly and the disabled. Learn more about Measure D at [www.sccrtc.org](http://www.sccrtc.org), and register to vote at [www.votescount.com](http://www.votescount.com).

### MEASURE D FACTS

- Raises \$500M over 30 years
- 30% to local roads
- 25% to Highway I corridor, including new auxiliary lanes and bike/ped bridges
- 20% to transit and paratransit (serves elderly/disabled)
- 17% for the Monterey Bay Sanctuary Scenic Trail
- 8% for rail corridor maintenance and future rail study
- 1/2% sales tax is 25 cents for every \$50 spent

*Hotelier Pravin Patel recently received the green light to begin renovations on the main part of the historic Brookdale Lodge. The County's Office for Economic Development is assisting with the project.*



### In This Issue

- Twin Lakes project underway
- Teen birth rate down
- Property tax deferral program opens
- Reducing recidivism
- Labor deal reached
- County nabs tech award



## County, SEIU reach labor agreement

On Friday, Sept. 23, negotiators from SEIU Local 521 and the County reached a tentative agreement on a new contract.

The deal averted a possible strike, and union members were set to vote on the proposed agreement before it is formally ratified.

No details of the agreement have been released, but the Board of Supervisors is tentatively set to vote on the agreement on Oct. 11.

# A long time coming...

## After two decades, work on Twin Lakes improvements begins

More than 20 years in the making, work is officially under way on a beachfront improvement project at Twin Lakes State Beach.

With Secretary for Natural Resources John Laird, Supervisor Ryan Coonerty and others on hand, the County and several project partners broke ground in September on \$4.7 in improvements that will result in improved pedestrian, bicycle and disabled access along East Cliff Drive between 5th and 7th avenues at Twin Lakes. The project includes numerous visual and visitor improvements at the most popular beach in unincorporated Santa Cruz County.

“In Santa Cruz County, coastal access is one of our strongest community values,” Secretary Laird said. “I was pleased to be able to align state support for this project so that this community could once again demonstrate these values on behalf of residents and improve the public space for the benefit of all.”

“Once completed, this project will improve the visitor experience and public safety for all who come here, whether they arrive by two wheels or four, by transit or by foot. Twin Lakes neighbors have been eager to see this project move forward, and I am pleased work is finally underway,” Supervisor Ryan Coonerty said.

With construction expected to last into early summer 2017, the project realigns the street and adds bicycle lanes and sidewalks, stabilizes the roadway, creates more pedestrian beach access, reclaims public right-of-way for public benefit, improves coastal access for the disabled, and protects against future climate change.



*The future Twin Lakes beachfront.*



*The 2016 Parks & Rex fundraiser at Simpkins Swim Center was a huge success, raising nearly \$10,000 for children's programs and the Santa Cruz County Animal Shelter.*



COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ DEPARTMENT OF  
**PARKS, OPEN SPACE AND CULTURAL SERVICES**



**2016-17 PROGRAMS & ACTIVITIES**

Looking for something to do? Whether you're 8 or 85, the Parks Department's Activity Guide is a great place to start. From trips to language classes, there's something for everyone. [Check it out!](#)

## Teen births at all-time low

The percentage of Santa Cruz County children born to teenaged mothers is at a historic low, according to a new report by the Santa Cruz County Health Services Agency's Public Health Division.

Countywide, just 4.9 percent of births were to mothers 19 years of age or younger, and there were no births to women younger than 15, according to the 2015 Santa Cruz County Birth Report. At 138, the number of births to teen mothers is barely half the number from 2011.

However, while the teen birth rate is also falling among Hispanics, the number remains disproportionately high compared to whites and other ethnicities.

"We're extremely happy that the teen birth rate is dropping so fast, and this is great news for local women and families," Santa Cruz County epidemiologist Will Forest said. "But we still have work left to close the unacceptable disparities among all populations of Santa Cruz County residents."

Local figures reflect state and national trends, which experts have attributed to increases in the use of highly effective contraception, greater access to information about pregnancy prevention and a decline in the number of teens engaged in sexual activity.

Nationally, the teen birth rate is 22.3 births per 1,000 women. In Santa Cruz County, that figure is 14.9.

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*Santa Cruz County is full of wonders. Do you know where this oasis in the redwoods is? Find out more about us by following us on Twitter @sccounty, or like us on Facebook, [www.facebook.com/CountyofSantaCruz](http://www.facebook.com/CountyofSantaCruz). (Answer: Land of Medicine Buddha)*

## National recidivism expert brings message to Santa Cruz County

With criminal justice reform one of the major issues of our time, the Santa Cruz County Probation Department recently hosted a talk by Dr. Edward Latesa, one of the preeminent scholars in the field of criminal justice behavior and reducing recidivism.



One of the nation's leading criminologists, Latesa heads the School of Criminal Justice at the University of Cincinnati and has published more than 110 works in the area of criminal justice, corrections and juvenile justice. His award-winning research has contributed to his work with more than 600 correctional programs throughout the

U.S.

In a talk for corrections professionals, policymakers and the public, Latesa discussed the latest evidence-based practices and how to improve correctional programs, including a discussion of the major predictors of criminal behavior and ways to reduce recidivism and make communities safer.



**Looking for employment?**  
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## 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.

## County nabs major digital tech award

The County of Santa Cruz was recently named the 8th-most digital friendly county in the nation by the Center for Digital Government and the National Association of Counties.

The award recognizes innovation in local government by looking at counties' technology programs and plans. In recent years, the County has taken a number of steps to improve its technological profile, including:

- Adoption of a "Dig Once" ordinance to improve broadband infrastructure;
- Moving to machine-readable PDFs, indexed video archives and online comments for Board of Supervisors' agendas and materials;
- Offering online solar applications, electronic plan checks and other web-based services;
- Improving its web and social media presence and citizen interactions
- Offering a free, one-stop "Citizen Con-



- "nect" app to report local issues, research critical information and receive emergency notifications;
- Improved use of GIS mapping to track vector control and other issues, and much more.

"For several years, we have been working to upgrade all of our infrastructure to better support residents and County staff," Information Services Director Kevin Bowling said. "On behalf of my dedicated staff, it's an honor to see all that hard work pay off."

## Seniors, disabled may be eligible for property tax deferral program

Did you know? Seniors and disabled residents who earn \$35,500 or less annually, have a minimum 40 percent equity stake in their home and meet other criteria are eligible to defer their property taxes?

Santa Cruz County Auditor-Controller-Treasurer-Tax Collector Edith Driscoll is encouraging people to consider applying for the recently launched California State Property Tax Postponement Program.

Information and applications are available online at [http://www.sco.ca.gov/ardtax\\_prop\\_tax\\_postponement.html](http://www.sco.ca.gov/ardtax_prop_tax_postponement.html).

Under the program, the State pays the County taxes on the homeowner's behalf. Repayment at 7 percent interest is due if the homeowner moves or sells the property, transfers title, defaults on a senior lien, refinances, passes away or obtains a reverse mortgage.

## 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