

ANCHOR WATCH



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2009 Port Commission

Toby Goddard, Chairman
Jeff Martin, Vice-Chairman
Bill Lee
Dennis Smith
Reed Geisreiter

Rick Smith: Port Director
Brian E. Foss: Newsletter Editor

Harbor Office Hours:
9:00 am to 5:00 pm daily

Harbor Phone Number:
(831) 475-6161

After Hour Emergencies:
911
(831) 212-4261 (deputy cell)
Coast Guard – Monterey
(831) 647-7303

Web Site (Harbor Cam):
www.santacruzharbor.org

Port District E-mail:
scpd@santacruzharbor.org

Radio Watch:
VHF Channels 9 and 16

SANTA CRUZ PORT DISTRICT • JULY 2009

MAJOR CHANGES ON PORT COMMISSION

Thanks Jim, Ron and Bill

In December, we bid farewell and thanks to Jim Thoits and Ron Merrill. Jim decided not to run again due to family business obligations, and Ron was nosed out in the election. Bill Geisreiter decided to retire in April.

Jim Thoits brought significant skills to the District. His academic and industrial experience in chemistry was invaluable the last few years as the Port District struggled with hydrogen sulfide compliance issues. Equally important was Jim's financial and real estate expertise – he always brought fresh perspective to the harbor's lease and business deliberations. We will miss that. Thanks Jim and good luck in all endeavors.

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STATE OF THE HARBOR *by Toby Goddard, Chair Santa Cruz Port Commission*



With the state of California and local governments all facing severe budget problems due to the ongoing economic downturn, you might be wondering – How is the Santa Cruz Harbor faring?

The state of the harbor is fundamentally sound. This is not to say that the harbor has been immune from the recession. On the contrary; the harbor has been affected, directly and indirectly, as a result of widespread economic effects on local businesses, the maritime industry, and the boating public. We even have slip vacancies for the first time since 1973. At the same time, closure of the salmon fishing season for the second year in a row, coupled with new restrictions where fishing is allowed, threatens the continued viability of commercial and sport fishing on the central coast, which is critical to the success of our harbor. But overall, the condition of the harbor remains strong in this period of economic upheaval and uncertainty. Consider the following:

Budget: The 2008-09 year ended with a projected balance of +\$85,000. The budget for fiscal year 2009-10 is balanced. Unlike local governments, the harbor is a self-supporting financial enterprise that does not rely on local property or sales taxes to function. Its \$6 million annual budget is funded through a mix of different sources including slip rent, concession income, and miscellaneous fees, such as parking, visitor berthing, recreational vehicle, and launch fees. Credit to harbor staff for the current stable condition. Over the last several years, they have taken preemptive action to curb labor and dredging expenses. One area where everyone agrees we can do a better job is funding the harbor's financial reserves, which is one of the Port Commission's long-term goals.

Dredging: The harbor has recently finalized a dredge management plan addressing both entrance shoaling and inner harbor sedimentation problems. Using positive results of recent demonstration projects, the harbor is seeking regulatory approval to increase annual disposal volumes of fine-grained material from the inner harbor and reduce costly hauling of otherwise clean sediments. Also, with legislative help from

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If you would like to receive newsletters, Port Commission meeting agendas, or other notices via e-mail, please let us know. We are building an e-mail contact list for this purpose. Please return the following form to the harbor office, either in person or by mail; or, let us know via email at scpd@santacruzharbor.org.

NAME

EMAIL ADDRESS

INFORMATION REQUESTED

NEWSLETTERS

AGENDAS

MISC NOTICES

SLIP AND DRY STORAGE SPACES ARE AVAILABLE



In the north harbor, there are currently 20', 25' and 30' slips available, which can accommodate power boats, and sailboats with tabernacled masts able to navigate under an 18' bridge.

Dry storage comes with a free, annual launch ramp pass.

CALL FOR AVAILABILITY:
Santa Cruz Harbor
135 5th Avenue, Santa Cruz
(831) 475-6161

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Ron Merrall has been an all around harbor player –former commodore of the Santa Cruz Yacht Club; organizer of the lighted boat parade for 15 years; harbor commissioner for 14 years. Ron was always in the mix of the debate on issues and projects. He came prepared and always made decisions in the long-term, best interest of the harbor. His energy and enthusiasm for the harbor were always evident. Thanks Ron.

Bill Geisreiter retired in April, leaving a vacancy on the Commission for the remainder of his term to December 2010. Bill served 13 years. He was not a boater, but much like his predecessor, Ed Flavell, Bill brought an important community view of the harbor.

Bill always moved to improve the harbor as a place for boaters and the general community. He saw the harbor as an enormously important public asset and his decisions on financing and improvements to this great place never wavered from that viewpoint.

The Port District has lost three great supporters, all of whom spent countless, unpaid hours planning and executing the harbor's future. Here is a list of the major projects completed under their watch:

- Joseph G. Townsend Maritime Plaza
- New visitor docks near Aldo's
- New paddle boat rack and launch facility at "A" dock
- Economic Development Administration parking project near the fishery
- Economic Development Administration fuel pier dock
- North harbor dry storage project
- North harbor engine repair shop
- Yvonne Setzer Rolfe Beach Plaza
- O'Neill Sea Odyssey building
- Walton lighthouse

All of these projects were built with donations or grant funds, or financed on a profit-making basis. Thanks Jim, Ron and Bill – the harbor is a better place for your service.

Welcome to the Dais – Commissioners Dennis Smith, Jeff Martin, Reed Geisreiter

The November 2008 general election produced a new U.S. president and two new commissioners. Four candidates ran for three open seats. Bill Lee was returned to office, and Jeff Martin and Dennis Smith won new seats. Incumbent Ron Merrall was a close fourth. Jeff Martin was the top vote getter. He has been a licensed civil engineer for 13 years and now works for Ifland Engineers. He is a sailor and a liveaboard.

Dennis Smith is a life-long resident of Santa Cruz. After school and naval service, he joined the Santa Cruz Sheriff's Department where he had a 32-year career rising to Lieutenant. He was responsible for administration, contracts, labor negotiations and a myriad of other duties before he retired. Dennis is a long-time recreational fisherman and boater.

During the campaign, both candidates expressed strong views on containing costs and berth rental rates – maintaining harbor infrastructure was also a common goal between them. Jeff was particularly interested in creating cost effective solutions to the inner-harbor shoaling problem. Dennis stressed the importance of ensuring the economic success of the harbor while being responsible stewards of the environment and Monterey Bay.

These are great goals for the new Commission.

Reed Geisreiter came to the Commission in May via a very different route. When a resignation occurs, such as just occurred with Commissioner Bill Geisreiter, it is the responsibility of the remaining 4 commissioners to choose a replacement. Six candidates submitted applications to serve on the Port Commission – Larry Azzaro, Hank Cureton, Reed Geisreiter, Matt Guerrieri, Bruce Krogstad and Ron Merrall. At the special public meeting for the appointment, Chairman Toby Goddard commented that we are lucky



Three new Commissioners take the reins of running Santa Cruz Port District. Left to right: Reed Geisreiter, Dennis Smith, Jeff Martin

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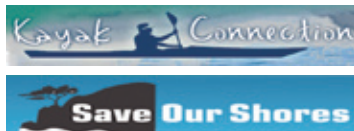
(Continued from page 2) **Port Commission**

to have such a rich pool of candidates – all six candidates were qualified and capable of fulfilling the duties of Port Commissioner. What’s more, they were all running for the right reasons – to make the harbor a better place, and there can’t be a better reason than that. Each Commissioner agreed that it was an extremely difficult choice, and that the harbor community should feel gratified that so many capable members of the community stepped forward.

In the end, the Commission chose Reed Geisreiter to succeed his father. The vote wasn’t sentimental. It was based upon Reed’s strong financial background in banking and corporate finance, as well as his community service contributions. The Commission is especially concerned about the District’s finances over the next 5 years, and Reed’s qualifications spoke to that need.

Other candidates had strong financial backgrounds as well, and it was a difficult decision. The Port Commission encouraged all candidates to throw their hat in the ring at the next election in November 2010, when the public will elect a candidate to a full 4-year term for this seat. In the meantime, we welcome Reed to the Commission. It is an exciting and challenging time for the Port District, and his financial and analytical abilities will be leaned upon immediately. ■

KAYAK CONNECTION SAVE OUR SHORES Win Sanctuary Honors



Each year, the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary honors people and businesses who further the goals of the sanctuary. This year, Santa Cruz Harbor is proud to announce that Laura Kasa, representing Save Our Shores, and Margaret Collins and Mark Pastick, representing Kayak Connection, have been so honored.

Laura Kasa has been the executive director of Save Our Shores for just three years. In that time, she has revitalized this organization. Save Our Shores is healthy and there are a growing number of supporters. The yearly beach clean-up in September has hundreds of participants and their dock-walker program is an important part of harbor environmental outreach. Save Our Shores received the Sanctuary’s 2008-09 conservation award.

Save Our Shores recently acquired grant funds to help the harbor rebuild its oily bilge water pump-out system. This system is now fully operational and available for all our users. It does take a call ahead, because it is an assisted system. If you have oily bilge water in your vessel, call the harbor office at 475-6161. We’ll try to schedule it as soon as possible – certainly within 30 minutes if you call on a weekday during maintenance hours. On a weekend, it may take a little longer, depending on the activity level that particular day.

Kayak Connection was started in Santa Cruz in 1998. It was the dream of Margaret Collins and Mark Pastick, who had a passion for kayaking and hand-powered watercraft. In 2001, they expanded to Moss Landing and Elkhorn Slough. They have run both businesses successfully ever since.

Today, Kayak Connection has beautiful shops in both locations. They, of course, rent kayaks and give kayak lessons, but they’ve also expanded into stand-up paddling, one person trimaran sailing, looking for perfect kayak tours that they can promote. Aside from his business interests, Mark is a renown “waterman.” He has competed in ultra-light sailboat races and kayak surfing all over the globe. He has won at all levels.

The Sanctuary honored the Kayak Connection with their business award because of their long history of marine education and outreach programs on the care and understanding of the ocean.

We congratulate Laura, Margaret and Mark for their contributions to our marine community, and the honor they brought upon Santa Cruz Harbor. ■

Redwood Coast II Returns

Long-time Santa Cruz residents, Don and Anne Taber, recently returned from an extended cruise aboard their self-built 44’ Marples trimaran “Redwood Coast II.” Leaving behind their jobs as electrical contractor and West Marine store manager, they departed Santa Cruz in December 2004, for a cruise to the South Pacific. Originally planning to be gone 3 years, the cruise eventually took 4 ½ years as they continued westward to complete a circumnavigation. Along the way, Don and Anne managed to find temporary work managing a Fijian beach resort, as well as installing a solar array and, while sailing the Mediterranean, set up West Marine’s franchise in Istanbul / Turkey. Friends and family were on hand to welcome the couple back on Father’s Day weekend. ■

Save This Date!

A TASTE OF THE HARBOR

*Thursday, August 27, 2009,
4:30 pm*

Intero Real Estate Services of Santa Cruz is hosting “A Taste of the Harbor,” featuring catering by six local restaurants, a silent auction and live entertainment at their Harbor Beach location. All proceeds donated to the Intero Foundation will benefit O’Neill Sea Odyssey. For more information, or to purchase tickets online, link to Intero Real Estate of Santa Cruz at www.interosantacruz.com ■

ANCHOR WATCH

Congressman Sam Farr, the harbor is actively renegotiating an agreement with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to pay its part of the harbor's annual dredging costs. These two initiatives, along with ongoing preventive efforts to reduce erosion from the Arana Gulch watershed, should go a long way to relieve the future burden on slip renters of the harbor's substantial dredging costs.

Infrastructure: The entire dock system in the north harbor is being renovated

under a multi-year capital improvement project. Crews are making steady progress and are currently working to rebuild "W" dock, while "H" and "I" docks are undergoing redesign to better serve the boating market. The new plastic dock system is far superior in its design, material, and construction. It should provide many years of reliable service for future generations of Santa Cruz boaters. The whole job is expected to take two to three more years, after which major maintenance efforts will shift over to the south harbor to restore pilings and piers.

Staff: Over the past 5 years, permanent staff has been reduced from 25.5 full-time personnel to less than 20, yet the work is still being completed. Daily operations are carried out by a dedicated, experienced, and professional crew that is well-trained and capable of responding to any situation. Whether maintaining the grounds and facilities, staffing the office, managing summertime overflow parking, or performing a perilous marine rescue mission, you can't ask for a better team than our own harbor employees. Their efficient and responsive service to the public is reflected in frequent positive feedback, both from local slip renters and from organized groups visiting the Santa Cruz Harbor.

The harbor has successfully navigated through difficult challenges before and we will do so again. Fortunately, there are some things that the economy can never change: our great location on Monterey Bay and the ambiance that gives the Santa Cruz harbor that special sense of place. Boaters and the general public alike will always be drawn to this area. A guiding philosophy of the Port Commission is always to leave the harbor in a little better shape than we found it, and we're working hard to ensure that Santa Cruz Harbor is a viable operational and financial entity for years to come. ■

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Santa Cruz, CA 95062

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