

SANTA CLARA NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS

A publication of the Santa Clara Community Organization - Building a Better Community Fall 2023/Winter 2024

Fall – A good time to volunteer in a Santa Clara park

Fall is a great time to begin sprucing up our parks. The ground will be softened by rains and most invasives won't be out of control because they've struggled through a very dry summer.

If you would like to help at any of the parks listed below, please contact the Santa Clara Community Organization at contact@santaclaracommunity.org and you will be directed to the respective park leader.

Here are the parks that have volunteer groups in place:

"Hileman Heroes" – Our most recent addition to the volunteer program is a project sponsored by the Santa Clara Community Foundation to rehabilitate and steward Hileman Landing County Park—a fabulous riparian forest natural area at the end of Hileman Lane. Work parties, begun in March 2023, are held on the last Saturday of each month, 9:30 am - 2:00 pm. After taking a break during summer heat, work parties resumed September 30th this year. The Heroes started by removing invasive species and began planting natives in late spring. The park already is much improved. Drop by to check out the progress. And there's lots more to do in our collaborative workplan with Lane County Parks. Learn more and become a Hero by signing up for a work party shift. Visit <https://santaclaracommunityfoundation.org/hileman/>

Friends of River Loop Park – The River Loop volunteers are made up of area neighbors with the goal of keeping the park clean and safe for use by community members. The group has been active since December 2022. Neighborhood members work regularly on a weekly basis for park cleanup of trash and work with the city on efforts to improve the parks' access, security, and ecology. The group does not have regularly scheduled efforts at this time, but will be looking to hold a fall tree planting to support the City of Eugene. April and Tyler are leading improvement efforts.

Friends of Awbrey Park – Our longest-standing volunteer group is beginning its 16th year in October. Work parties are on the first Saturday of each month from 9:00 am until noon and run from October through April. The year culminates in a Wildflower Celebration in late April or early May. Jesika is the park lead. Visit 'Friends of Awbrey Park – Eugene' on Facebook to see past activities at the park.

Terra Linda Park Volunteers – These volunteers have been active for about 11 months. Work parties do not have a set schedule currently. The Terra Linda Volunteers are led by Robert Crooks and new volunteers are welcome.

Wendover Park Volunteers – We have been working for about 10 years in Wendover Park, which has a beautiful trail along the East Santa Clara Waterway with lots of bird life. In the Fall, Winter, and Spring, we meet on the second Saturday of every month from 10 AM-12 PM. On Saturday, November 11, 10AM-Noon, we hope to have a large party of volunteers to help cover the trails with bark. We are friendly volunteers who mostly come from the neighborhoods around the park, but everyone is welcome. Please contact Karen Lawrence for info.

If you are interested in starting a volunteer group in a Eugene park near you, contact Kelsey Irvine at Kelsey.C.Irvine@ci.eugene.or.us or 541-228-5349.



IN MEMORIAM



On Sunday September 3rd SCCO lost a serving board member Patrick Kerr to a heart attack.

Patrick was one of those rare people who brought brevity and comradery to every event. A longtime volunteer at Awbrey Park, a voice of reason at community meetings, a mentor to youth in the neighborhood, and a friend to any who got to know him.

Patrick will be sorely missed and his large shoes will be difficult to fill. To honor him, take a walk through the forest of Awbrey Park, or better yet volunteer at a neighborhood park work party near you.

Other City Parks in Santa Clara

Arrowhead – 6.0 acres, Developed park
Bobolink – 3.3 acres, Undeveloped 2015
Ferndale – 3.2 acres, Undeveloped 2004
Filbert Meadows – 3.3 acres, Developed
Lone Oak – 3.9 acres, Undeveloped
River Loop Park - 7 acres, Natural area
Ruby Park – 0.9 acres, Undeveloped
Santa Clara Community - 35 acres, Development in progress

Other Lane County Parks in SC

Whitely Landing – Picnic Table and boat ramp
To learn more about each of the parks go to <https://santaclaracommunity.org/scco/parks/>

Highlights of Summer 2023 SCCO Meeting Presentations

Upcoming Santa Clara Transportation and Safety Projects

Beaver-Hunsaker corridor improvements should begin in 2024. Improvements will be primarily along Hunsaker and will include sidewalks and bike lanes. The project is currently in the design refinement phase. One recent change to the design is the extension of the West Bank Path on Beaver Street further to the west from Ross Lane all the way to Taito Street.

Intersection improvements at Hunsaker and River Road will be completed in 2024. The new intersection design includes landscaped, concrete bike separators, green striping, and reflective bollards to protect cyclists from vehicular traffic and additional automobile turn lanes on Irving and Hunsaker. The finished product will create safe spaces for vehicles, pedestrians, and cyclists to coexist while entering and exiting this busy corridor.

A proposed West Bank Path extension is being planned to run along the west side of the gravel pits and connect the existing path on Beaver/Hunsaker north to Wilkes Drive. The city is currently surveying alternative alignments for the path construction and will schedule a public meeting once that process is complete. Construction is likely to begin in 2025.

Roundabouts are being considered for two locations on Division Avenue between Fred Meyer and Taco Bell. There is a high incidence of crashes along Division, including a fatality at the flashing light signal by Taco Bell. Roundabouts are an effective way to slow down traffic, reduce serious injuries, and simplify traffic flow. One roundabout would be installed at Division and Lone Oak with a second roundabout planned west of Lone Oak. Project construction is scheduled to start in 2026 or 2027.

Proposed Safety Projects: Finally, a city bond was recently passed that includes \$15 million for enhancing walking, bicycling, safety, and street tree projects. The draft project list includes additional funding for the West Bank Path extension and the Hunsaker Lane sidewalks, as well as grant match funding for Division Avenue project. Additional overhead street lighting on River Road is also part of the draft project list. The list will be presented to City Council for approval on October 23rd.

Reed Dunbar, Senior Transportation Planner, City of Eugene <https://www.eugene-or.gov/486/Transportation-Planning>

River Avenue Navigation Center

Glenn Porter, Project Director for the River Avenue Navigation Center, described the center: a 75-bed shelter serving as a shelter for the homeless and as a transition center to permanent housing.

The Navigation Center opened September 2022 and houses 177 people including 100 males and 70 females. 140 of the occupants have been diagnosed with mental issues, 120 have chronic health conditions and 48 have physical disabilities. The River Avenue Center is a low-barrier center admitting even those with drug addictions. The average income of occupants is between \$500 and \$1000 and 40% of them are over 55 years of age. The Center links occupants to medical coverage and social security benefits.

For additional information visit: <https://equitable-solutions.com/lane-county-oregon-shelter-programs/>

For other shelter options in Lane County visit <https://www.lanecounty.org/cms/one.aspx?pageId=17381734>

Upper Willamette Soil and Water Conservation District

Dave Downing, District Manager for the Upper Willamette Soil and Water Conservation District gave a presentation to the SCCO Board on the role of the SWCDs. Dave summarized the history of SWCDs which began in 1937. In Oregon there are 45 such districts, with 2 in Lane County. Their concerns are fire, soil, water, wildlife habitat, and pollinators. Traditionally the District has worked mostly with local agriculture. In 2020, Lane County passed a tax base which gives UWSWCD a consistent funding source.

They work with the Pure Water Partners program which protects and improves riparian zones. The District has initiated partnerships with schools to educate children about natural habitat. They support local farms to establish sustainable agriculture and support farmers markets. In urban settings the District helps establish bio swales and rain gardens. After the Holiday Farm fire, the Pure Waters program pivoted to assisting landowner victims in restoring vegetation and mulching to guard against soil erosion. The District works with a large number of community partners to accomplish its goals by offering grants.

Al Hrynshyn, UWSWCD chair, urged people to get involved with the District by offering their names for election. Santa Clara is in zone 2 and Mary Durfee's term, who represents zone 2, will expire soon. To learn more about the Upper Willamette and Water Conservation District visit their website at <https://uwsacd.org/>

SCCO meetings are the first Thursday of each month and should last about 1 1/2 to 2 hours

Meeting minutes and Video presentations can be found at <https://santaclaracommunity.org/scco/scco-meeting-minutes/>



Summer Concert Event Brings Community Connection

The Santa Clara Community Organization hosted a community-wide, free concert event at Awbrey Park on Sunday, August 6, 2023. The weather did not disappoint, as the high reached 86°, and allowed for a mixture of fun in the sun and relaxing in the shade. Three local bands, Sky Lounge, The Nostalgics & Emma Mullen & Friends and singer/songwriter, Mandi Cody, shared their musical passion and talent, while neighbors listened, mingled together, and played games.



Boy Scout Troop 182, chartered by the Irving Grange and led by Ron Lamie, supported the event by maintaining safety in Awbrey's small lot in efforts to ensure safe access for all individuals, and smooth transitions for musicians. SCCO, Santa Clara Community Foundation, and SCCO's Social Justice Committee had tables available offering free lawn signs and info about community endeavors past, present and future.



Special thanks to Ed Kashin for his Sound Tech expertise and to our friends Renee's Loaded Fries & Kona Ice of North Eugene for providing their tasty hot & cool treats for our enjoyment.



The Santa Clara Community Organization would love to host more events like these. If you have ideas about community events you'd like to see offered here in Santa Clara... or would like to help with an event in the future... please contact us at santaclaracommunity.org

Schoolhouse Project update

Quick backstory for those who need it: Santa Clara one room schoolhouse built in 1901, was remodeled to a residence after 1932, on City of Eugene property (currently the Santa Clara Community Park), saved from demolition by optimistic community organization looking to create a gathering place for the folks of Santa Clara. Needs work. For complete details about the project: <https://santaclaracommunityfoundation.org/category/projects/schoolhouse/>

Where we are now: We had hoped to have insurance secured and a contract signed with the City of Eugene in time to begin phase one of the schoolhouse rehabilitation project this fall. We are coming up frustratingly short on finding adequate insurance for the Santa Clara Community Foundation to be able to rehabilitate the structure over more than a 12-month window and to cover the use of volunteers for much of the project's labor. If you have any suggestions, please send them to us at

schoolhouse@santaclaracommunity.org

Our first phase of work will be to secure the exterior- roofing and painting. Once we have that under our hat, it's on to the interior. We are forming partnerships with local businesses to help us mill our lumber for use in the project, to provide us a place to dump our construction waste, and to consult on architectural details and structural issues. This winter will bring a concerted effort to solicit material donations, services, and grants. As always, we welcome the participation of anyone who has interest and enthusiasm for this venture. ***It's truly a community project- by and for the Santa Clara community.***

Would you like to participate in support for neighborhood diversity? To request one of our colorful, free lawn signs, please email sjc@santaclaracommunity.org





**Santa Clara Community
Organization News**
1250 Irvington Drive
Eugene, Or 97404

**Next SCCO
Meetings**

November 2

December 7

January 4

**February 1, 2024
(Board Elections)**

SCCO MEETINGS

1st Thursday of each month

7:00 PM in person or via Zoom. Meetings last about 1.5 to 2 hrs. Find the meeting location and Zoom link on the web at: santaclaracommunity.org



SCCO Board Elections February 1, 2024

Interested in being a SCCO board member?

Any resident, property owner, or business owner within the neighborhood boundaries having attended (and signed-in) at least one Santa Clara meeting in person or via Zoom in the past year is eligible to become a board member.

If you haven't attended a SCCO meeting in the past year, attend a meeting and sign-in at the November or December 2023, or January 2024 meeting and you'll be eligible to vote for board members and/or run for a board position at the February 1st, 2024 meeting.

Four Full-term Board Positions are Open. One Board Position is Open to complete 1-year left on a vacant position. A call for nominations will be taken at the February meeting. We're a WORKING board, not an honorary one. All members are asked to volunteer for various tasks and events all year round.

CONTACT US

Email: contact@santaclaracommunity.org

Visit us on the web at: santaclaracommunity.org

Find us on Facebook under: Santa Clara Community Organization

We are also on X: Find us by searching X (Twitter) for: @sccoorg



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Subscribe to the online blog to receive notifications of new posts by email, and get our regular SCCO e-newsletter, too! santaclaracommunity.org



The Upper Willamette Soil & Water Conservation District works to encourage and promote the responsible stewardship of our natural resources through conservation, restoration, and protection, to enhance the health, economic benefits, and quality of life for the citizens within our watersheds. We also work with conservation partners, providing them with financial support and working across both watershed boundaries and the urban/rural divide. Thanks to our tax base, we are able to reach out to urban residents and landowners to work on conservation within city limits.

We provide assistance to landowners who are interested in improving their soil health, protecting water quality, and increasing wildlife habitat on a voluntary basis. We help plan, design, and implement various conservation projects, which can include planting native plant species to improve pollinator habitat, invasive species removal, and more. We help agricultural producers with issues such as manure and mud management and composting, rotational grazing, and soil testing. Anyone can bring in a soil sample for at-cost soil testing and we provide recommendations for specific soil amendments to increase nutrients specific to planned plantings. We help connect landowners with funding opportunities from various local, state and federal sources.

Some of the projects of which we're most proud include our work with the Pure Water Partners in the McKenzie River Valley, where we are working to restore the land in the aftermath of the devastating 2020 fires. We're also very proud of our Farmers Market Grant program, which helps local markets educate the public and make local food more accessible. We envision a future where our lands and waters are healthy and sustain farms, forests, wildlife, and communities. Our mission is to encourage and promote the responsible stewardship of our natural resources through conservation, restoration, and protection, to enhance the health, economic benefits, and quality of life for the citizens within the District.

UWSWCD Media Outreach

<https://uwswcd.org/>