

SANTA CLARA NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS

A publication of the Santa Clara Community Organization - Building a Better Community Spring/Summer 2024

Summer 2024 Events

FUN, FREE & LOCAL: SCCO & SCCF HOST 2ND ANNUAL CONCERT AT AWBREY PARK



As Summer approaches, neighbors in Santa Clara are looking for FUN, FREE and LOCAL events available right here in the neighborhood. Topping the list of favorites are gatherings that offer live music, games for kids, face-painting, food trucks, and lots of opportunities to build community connections.

Well, mark your calendars because you'll find this event right here in Santa Clara!

Sunday, August 4th, 2024 from 1-4:30pm... the Santa Clara Community Organization and Santa Clara Community Foundation are hosting the **Concert at Awbrey Park 2024**. Bring a lawn chair or blanket to relax and make memories with family and friends! This year, our musical guests include singer/songwriter, Cece King and 3 local bands: The Nostalgics, Sky Lounge, and Wrong Mama. There will be games in the park for kids along with two food truck/trailers, El Taco Taco and Justice Shave Ice.



Did we mention the first 100 shaved ice treats are **FREE!** The Concert at Awbrey Park is sponsored by a grant from the City of Eugene's Art in the Park program and hosted by neighborhood volunteers (SCCF and SCCO).

Terri R, SCCO Event Coordinator

**If you own a small business here in Santa Clara and would like to showcase what you do, we invite you to host a table during the event. Space for tabling is limited and selected vendors will be notified by June 20th. If you're interested, please send correspondence to contact@santaclaracommunity.org



GAME NIGHTS AND A MOVIE IN THE PARK – FREE

June 25th 5-7pm game night Arrowhead Park

July 30th 5-7 pm game night Wendover Park

August 16th 5:30pm game night, then at 8pm sit outdoors to watch a family-friendly movie. Presented in collaboration with the Scouts BSA Troop 182, at Irving Grange. Check the SCCO website in July for the movie title, and RSVP link.

August 27th 5-7pm game night Ruby Park

There will be lots of activities for all ages. Everyone is welcome to join in the fun: play games, bring chairs and a picnic, meet neighbors, and learn more about Santa Clara.

Check the SCCO website for announcements, Santa Clara news, and additional events at <https://santaclaracommunity.org/>

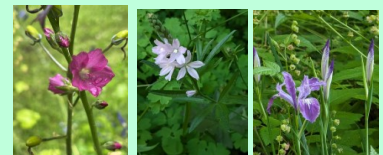
13th Annual Wildflower Celebration at Awbrey Park Play and learn in the rain



On **May 4** an early, heavy rain let up in time for wildflower lovers to take a tour of Awbrey Park, play games, do some rock painting, listen to live music, and take home native plants courtesy of the Native Plant Nursery at Alton Baker Park, the Santa Clara Community Foundation, and the Friends of Buford Park Native Plant Nursery.



The Friends of Awbrey Park designed a treasure hunt to earn a native plant. Visitors to the park could also meet representatives from the Master Gardener's Mobile Plant Clinic, two Emergency Preparedness groups, Scout Troop 182, the Santa Clara Social Justice Committee, and Eugene Parks and Open Spaces. Be sure to visit Awbrey Park this summer and check out the new flowers in the Pollinator Garden as well as new projects on the north trail and in the forest portion of the park.



Gary H and Jesika H—Friends of Awbrey Park

SANTA CLARA COMMUNITY GARDEN

Garden plots (about 240 sq/ft) are available in the Santa Clara Community Garden, located behind St. Matthews Episcopal Church, 4110 River Road, about a block south of Awbrey Park.

You can rent a plot for \$60/yr. which covers water, tools, and other expenses. For more information and securing a plot, call Peter at: 541-321-0798.

LTD Board Votes "No" On EmX Service On River Road

Lane Transit District's Board of Directors voted unanimously Wednesday, May 15, 2024 to **not** add EmX service on River Road due to escalating project costs. LTD will continue its focus on enhancing service and safety on the thoroughfare.

The proposed addition of EmX service on River Road was part of a package of transportation improvement projects known as MovingAhead,

Since MovingAhead got underway in 2015, construction costs for the EmX have escalated by over 30%. Additionally, ridership estimates for EmX on River Road were lower by about 30%. Creating an "Enhanced Corridor" that addresses service and safety provides similar benefits for less money such as: bus lanes allowing the bus to "jump" ahead of other traffic at intersections using a separate signal; construction that makes walking, cycling, and using mobility devices safer; the installation of Business Access and Transit (BAT) lanes; and enhanced pedestrian and bike crossings. LTD will continue to work with the [SC and RR] neighborhoods and the City of Eugene to improve transportation and safety measures along River Road. - Pat Walsh, LTD CMO

Santa Clara Community Foundation is looking for folks interested in volunteer board and committee participation, especially Community Engagement and Financial Oversight. Volunteering for SCCF board and committee roles offers several benefits:

1. ****Skill Development****: Enhances skills like leadership, financial literacy, and strategic planning.
2. ****Networking****: Provides opportunities to connect with diverse professionals and community leaders.
3. ****Community Impact**** Directly contributes to positive changes and improvements within the Santa Clara community.
4. ****Personal Growth**** Fosters a sense of accomplishment and personal satisfaction from giving back and achieving communal goals.

Tim F. - SCCF Board President <https://santaclaracommunityfoundation.org/>

Highlights of Spring 2024 SCCO Meeting Presentations

SCCO HOSTS PUBLIC SAFETY FORUM AT MADISON MIDDLE SCHOOL

On Thursday, **May 2nd** four organizations came together to present both the vision and challenges of public safety in River Road and Santa Clara neighborhoods. The conversation, hosted by the Santa Clara Community Organization, included Lane County Sheriff's Office, Eugene Police Department, Lane County Behavioral Health (Mobile Crisis Services- Lane County program) and CAHOOTS (Crisis Assistance Helping Out on the Streets). We are grateful all these organizations made the time to attend and share their work with neighbors and other interested folks.

Santa Clara and River Road neighborhoods are a checkerboard of city and county properties. Calls made to 911 indicate a crime is being committed, there is a medical emergency, or someone is having a mental health crisis. Response and responders vary based on where the call originated.

Community members asked various questions ranging from funding sources, clarification of jurisdictions, to best practices to handle recurrent issues with a neighbor. When a 911 call is made emergency dispatchers work with the caller to determine what kind of response is needed. Life threatening emergencies will get an immediate response whether the address is incorporated or not. Lt. Mike Ware, of EPD confirmed that sometimes a city officer may respond to a call at an unincorporated address due to availability and proximity and then hand it off to LCSO when they arrive. If the situation is deemed a mental health or behavioral health issue, a crisis response team can help to de-escalate a person who may be spiraling.

The Sheriff's Office responds to safety issues across thousands of miles of Lane County roads and oversees the Lane County Jail. There are three deputies on at any one time to respond for all of Lane County. The jail services 350,000 residents and has 400+ beds. For an area our size jails usually have closer to 800 beds. Since the passage of the public safety levy in 2015, Lane County jail has not had to release inmates due to capacity issues. The pre-trial services available in Lane County help divert offenders from incarceration and empower those who can navigate the court system from outside jail to do so. This allows them to operate at about 300 beds daily. They are the model for jail reform across the state of Oregon. Sgt. Olsen reiterated that there is a unit at the jail devoted to mental health issues and provides services to inmates which in turn lowers rates of recidivism.

Ryan Skiles is the manager of the Crime Analysis Unit for the Eugene Police Department. He reviewed local and city-wide crime data over the past few years. He highlighted the community court program which puts offenders in front of service providers so that several of the top 10 types of police calls have decreased since 2022 which is good news. Crimes like theft from motor-vehicles are declining, but the data shows rates of overdose have increased 13% since 2019. Although our two neighborhoods make up about 20% of the city's area, we generate only 6% of the call volume annually.

Many of us have witnessed someone experiencing a mental health crisis. Some of us have been in need of care ourselves or sought care for a loved one. Teams like CAHOOTS, currently in partnership with Eugene/Springfield Fire, have been recognized nationally as a missing piece of the puzzle when it comes to gaps in our systems of care. Lane County is launching its own mobile program similar to CAHOOTS called MCS-LC (Mobile Crisis Service-Lane County), which is set to begin on July 1st. They are currently hiring mental health professionals to assist when policing isn't warranted. They may respond with or without officers alleviating the burden for police to operate as counselors or social workers. Terri R, - SCCO Board

April 4 - Housing and Homelessness

SCCO's Social Justice Committee hosted a panel of guest speakers for an evening on the topic of housing and homelessness. We had several dozen neighbors in attendance, and a lively – at times heated-- discussion. Homelessness is a hot topic these days, especially in cities with many unhoused people – and Eugene has one of the highest per capita rates of homelessness in the US. Here's what we learned.

First we saw a short video featuring Gregg Colburn, co-author of the book "Homelessness Is a Housing Problem". The authors ask an important question: why do rates of homelessness vary so much from one city to another? And guess what their research shows? Homelessness isn't caused by homeless people migrating where the weather is milder, or where better public services are available for them. It isn't caused by drug addiction or mental illness. The twin problems that DO correlate consistently with increased homelessness in a community are: high rents, and low vacancy rates. In short, when housing is scarce and expensive, more people end up on the streets (1). This is especially relevant to our local area, because Eugene is a severely rent-burdened city, with 31 percent of the population spending more than 50 percent of their income on rent and utilities (2).

Next we heard from a guest speaker, Heather Quaas-Anza, Director of local non-profit Community Supported Shelters (CSS). CSS provides shelter and social support to over 200 unhoused people at 14 sites around our city (3). Heather let us know that one reason homelessness is so visible here in Eugene is that 80% of the homeless population in Eugene are unsheltered, compared with 35% nationally. Our final speaker of the evening was Karen Saxe, Director of Policy and Advocacy at DevNW, an affordable housing developer which serves six counties in Oregon, including Lane County. DevNW provides financial counseling and other services to help first time home buyers get organized for their big purchase (4).

So, how can we solve the problem of homelessness? With more housing. In 2017, Minneapolis leaders saw a trend of rising population in their city. They took action: by making changes in land use policy, parking requirements, and building heights, their city built out a lot more housing, of all kinds. From 2017 to 2022, Minneapolis increased its housing stock by 12%, while rents grew by just 1%. During the same period, the rest of the state increased housing only 4%, and rents went up 14%. Homelessness surged 14% statewide in Minnesota but fell by 12% in Minneapolis (5).

As the Minneapolis example shows, increasing the amount of housing not only reduces homelessness, it benefits the community as a whole. We all want to see the problem of homelessness solved in our community. And we all want our adult kids to have access to housing that's decent and doesn't cost more than 30% of their paycheck. The solution to both problems is the same: build more housing, with special attention on policy changes that will help increase our community's stock of affordable housing.

Martha J - SJC member

1. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0APR7dt-uZ8> Interested in reading the Colburn book? SJC has a few loaner copies. Contact sjc@santaclaracommunity.org
2. <https://wholecommunity.news/2023/12/16/severely-rent-burdened-eugene-doubles-housing-production-targets>
3. <https://www.communitysupportedshelters.org/safe-spot-communities>
4. www.devNW.org
5. <https://www.pewtrusts.org/en/research-and-analysis/articles/2024/01/04/minneapolis-land-use->

NEW!

SCCO General Meetings are held the first Thursday of January, February, April, May, July*, August, October, and November. Should last about 1 1/2 to 2 hours. Meetings are in person and via Google Meet. Meeting minutes and Video presentations can be found at <https://santaclaracommunity.org/scco/scco-meeting-minutes/>
*No meeting July 4, 2024

RRSC NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN APPROVED

On April 22nd and April 23rd, the Eugene City Council and Lane County board of commissioners approved the River Road Santa Clara neighborhood plan. Over six years in the making, this neighborhood-led effort to determine how our two neighborhoods will grow and change over the next 30 years, is finally down to implementation.

Thousands of neighbors participated in crafting the vision and creating the policies to get there. The process was an unprecedented collaboration of RRSC, SCCO, Lane County, and the City of Eugene, with the participation of our special districts.

Adoption of the plan gets us to the starting line. Now we are poised to use the action plan portion of the work to guide projects and initiatives, advocate for resources and programming, and to make real change we can see, feel, and enjoy. To guide implementation, City and County staff will hold an annual coordination meeting with RRSC and SCCO to identify where our projects can fit into their workplan and how we can create synergy to address high priority items.

Additionally, the City Council passed a motion to hold 2 work sessions before January of 2025 to:

- discuss possible options for addressing on-street parking issues in the River Road and Santa Clara areas.
- Hold a separate work session on voluntary annexation that partners with street parking session

More information on how to get involved with ongoing implementation of the plan will be featured on the SCCO website as opportunities arise.

Find the plan at: <https://www.eugene-or.gov/3558/River-Road---Santa-Clara-Neighborhood-PI>

Kate P - SCCO Board Chair

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

Upcoming SCCO Meetings

General meetings:

August 1
October 3

Board meetings

June 6
September 5

SCCO MEETINGS

NOTE: The SCCO meeting schedule is changing:

General meetings are held 8 times per year on the first Thursday of January, February, April, May, July*, August, October, and November, starting at 7:00 pm. General meetings are offered in person or via Google Meet. Meetings last about 1.5 to 2 hrs. Find the program agenda, meeting location, and Google Meet link on the web at: <https://santaclaracommunity.org> *No meeting July 4, 2024

Board meetings are held 4 times per year on the first Thursday of March, June, September, and December. SCCO residents are welcome to view the live meeting via Google Meet and speak during the public comment period at the start of the meeting. But will not be able to participate. Find the agenda and Google Meet link on the web at: <https://santaclaracommunity.org>

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

CONTACT US

Email: contact@santaclaracommunity.org
Visit us on the web at: <https://santaclaracommunity.org>
Find us on Facebook under: Santa Clara Community



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Subscribe to the online blog to receive notifications of meeting and event announcements, new posts, and our regular SCCO e-newsletter <https://santaclaracommunity.org>