



## BETTER TRANSPORTATION CHOICES FOR ALL

COAST provides advocacy, education and outreach to improve transportation options in Santa Barbara County, promoting rail, bus, bike, and pedestrian access.

### How to reach us

COAST

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### E-mail discussion list

Participate in discussions of local and regional transportation issues; receive notices of meetings and events. Subscribing is free and easy. Just visit:

<http://groups.google.com/group/coastsb>

### COAST Happy Hour

Please join us the second Thursday of each month from 5-7 PM at the El Paseo Restaurant in Santa Barbara.

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# COAST NEWS

COALITION FOR SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORTATION

FALL 2009

[WWW.COAST-SANTABARBARA.ORG](http://WWW.COAST-SANTABARBARA.ORG)

## Central Coast Train Day draws big Crowds

By KK Holland

Community members and elected officials gathered at the Santa Barbara Amtrak station on Saturday, July 18<sup>th</sup> to highlight the importance of working regionally to address transportation issues on the South Coast. Many chose to ride from Santa Barbara to Carpinteria and back to emphasize the role rail will play in reducing congestion, and offering commuters more sustainable choices.



“With 20 years of phased construction on the 101, even the bus will get stuck in traffic,” observed **Dennis Story**, Chair of Coastal Rail Now. “We have to look at comprehensive regional solutions, and rail will play a part in this.”

A press conference at the station was moderated by Santa Barbara

[Please see TRAIN DAY, p. 3]



## Walking Wednesdays with *Santa Barbara Walks*

By Courtney Dietz

On Wednesday, July 22<sup>nd</sup>, about 20 people joined **Courtney Dietz** (project director of *Santa Barbara Walks*) for our kick-off of Walking Wednesdays with Santa Barbara Walks. We were joined by **Bob Muller** of the SB Botanic Gardens and author of *Trees of Santa Barbara*. As we explored the Burton Mound neighborhood

Bob taught the group about the various trees that make up Santa Barbara's varied skyline to include the various types of palms so prevalent in our community. For our

walk on August 26<sup>th</sup>, architect **Brian Hofer** led us for a historical/architectural walk to include the area around the Mission that also highlighted some of the City's great pedestrian improvements.

Walking Wednesdays will take place every 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of the month at 6:00

pm with the intent of learning together, enjoying our communities on foot and appreciating the slower pace that walking affords us. Topics and locations will vary so keep an eye on the COAST website for details on upcoming walks or contact Courtney directly.



## How to decrease your carbon footprint



It is well known that Americans own more cars per capita than any other nation. We also drive our cars more miles than any other people, and these miles keep increasing. And yet, there are people who manage to do with much less and feel their lives are better for it. Here is KK Holland. KK and her boyfriend live in Ventura. When they moved there, they looked for a place that would be close to transit and the amenities of daily life. They found it in downtown Ventura, where they can walk to the post office, local shops and a Vons supermarket. KK walks or rides a bike for most of her daily activities around town. Her job as ASERT project coordinator requires her to travel to Santa Barbara often. For this, she rides the Vista bus. About 80% of her trips do not require a car. Primarily, she uses a car to shop at Trader Joe's or when she has out-of-town evening meetings. The greatest challenge she has encountered comes when both she and her boyfriend have evening meetings in different locations. For these situations, she would love to have a car share available. If she did, she figures she and her boyfriend would never be a two-car family. For her, this makes economic sense. "Think about the amount of money the average American family spends to buy and operate their cars. If they could share one car like so many families do in Europe, that would free up so much money that could be used for other needs."

## A vote for crosswalks and mixed-use buildings

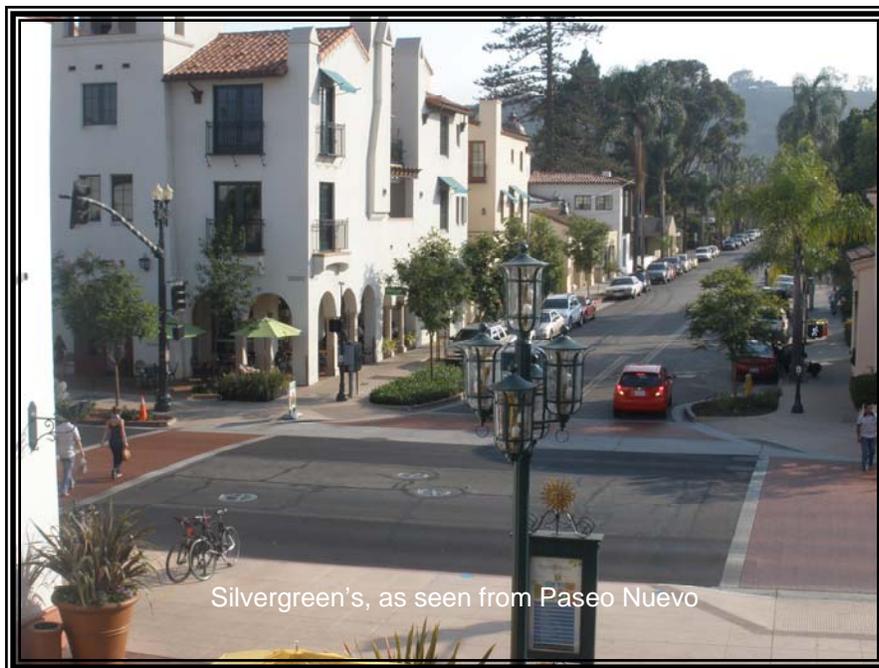
By Alex Pujo

The Millennium wave that polarized politics in Washington and Sacramento for a decade did not spare Santa Barbara. Besides the eternal North County-South Coast divide that clipped the wings of commuter rail and regional transit, another front opened within City limits: a direct challenge of traffic calming and traditional urban policies by car advocates aided and abetted by the local daily paper.

There is nothing inherently partisan or controversial about walking to school, riding a bicycle to work or having a city with a vibrant downtown, so... why are

re-designed its downtown to manage traffic and fend off La Cumbre Plaza. This 'American Riviera' is the celebrated answer to suburban sprawl. Isn't the centerpiece of this Renaissance –State Street- the ultimate bulb-out traffic calming scheme?

Equally disturbing is a measure on the ballot to make all future downtown buildings much lower than currently allowed. It is fair to say that some buildings could have been designed better and have more landscaping but, as a blogger quipped, do you have to chop off your foot because you stubbed your toe?



Silvergreen's, as seen from Paseo Nuevo

these great traditions crowding the ballot in this municipal election?

What is controversial about making crosswalks shorter and forcing traffic to stay within the speed limit? While it is fair to say that some traffic calming devices could have been designed better and have more landscaping, it is disquieting to learn that some candidates running for office actually consider the concept of traffic calming a mistake, a waste of money or (are you ready for this?) *a conspiracy to create congestion.*

Santa Barbara has always been a leader in traditional urban planning, not only during the Reconstruction following the 1925 earthquake but, perhaps more importantly, in the 1960's when it boldly

By sheer consequence of supply and demand our corner of Paradise will always remain distant and hard to reach, but we don't have to unnecessarily aggravate a gentrifying trend. A downtown alive with local residents is essential for the next generation; a dwelling downtown is worth two in the bush.

The image of a vibrant, small European city has consistently guided Santa Barbara's history. The goal of "Living within our resources" must use "our" in a collective and inclusive way, not as the private property of earlier settlers. That is the Santa Barbara spirit. We need that spirit now like never before.

# Montecito Roundabout *By Lee Moldaver*

To boost readership, a local newspaper article was recently headlined, "Welcome to Roundabout Hell."

It referred to the new SBCAG-Caltrans *operational improvement* where Coast Village Road, Hot Springs Road, Old Coast Highway, Cabrillo Boulevard, and 101 meet, off-center, at oblique angles. The article's anxiety is based on a fundamental misperception of what modern *roundabouts* are, and how they work.

The late Barry Siegel (a **COAST** co-founder) once explained to a questioner with similar concerns, "A *roundabout* is just a one-way street, bent into a circle." A talented systems analyst, Siegel found that roundabout's salient virtues are vehicular safety, and congestion management.

Complex intersections controlled by traffic signals or Stop signs, can back up peak hour traffic dramatically, clogging intersections, and reducing *level of service*. We call that a "traffic jam". Roundabouts make entering traffic "yield" only to traffic already in the circle. Otherwise, no *stop* is required. Vehicles needn't wait for a green light, or a 4-way stop, to proceed.

Roundabout traffic moves in just one direction. So *right of way* and visibility are clearer. Speeds are slower.

Roundabouts bend vehicle movement, so serious *head-on* or *broad-side* collisions are uncommon, even if a driver makes a mistake. Vehicle safety improves. Results can be dramatic. The area's first roundabout was at "Five Points", where Salinas, APS, Sycamore Canyon, and a small Milpas *collector* meet, at odd angles, and steep elevations. Rush hour delays and accidents were common ... until a roundabout went in, after petitions from the Riviera and Eucalyptus Hill neighborhood associations. Three months later, delays and accidents had each dropped by half.

The City of Santa Barbara nudged (a cautious) Caltrans to try one at the Milpas-101 interchange, which had a similar history of congestion and accidents. Again, skeptics predicted disaster. Again, traffic flow improved dramatically, while vehicle accidents decreased. There's every reason to believe the new "Montecito" roundabout *will* still reduce many of traffic delays endemic to that interchange. That's why Barry Siegel and I enthusiastically recommended those improvements to SBCAG (and later, Caltrans) as part of a 101 *corridor improvement package 12 years ago*. Kudos to those agencies, and the City of Santa Barbara, for persevering.

## New at COAST



We welcome our newest board member, **Greg Janeé**. Greg is a software engineer who works at UCSB. He is a longtime advocate for bicyclists and pedestrians and was the SR2S champion

at his children's school, Mountain View. Greg lives in Goleta with his wife, Pilar, and two young daughters.

**Cassie Roth** is our intern who works on Santa Barbara Walks. A senior at UCSB, she majors in Environmental Studies. She spotted our booth on Earth Day and thought it was interesting. We are delighted that bright young people like Cassie want to work for us!



## COAST's Solstice Party a Sizzling Success

*By Courtney Dietz*

COAST celebrated Solstice with our 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Solstice Celebration on June 20. We were thrilled with the new location and the generosity of all those at **Business First Bank** who not only donated their amazing, parade-side location at State and Figueroa, but helped us throw a festive event, notably with the help of Debby Deneault, Executive Assistant at BFB. COAST party-goers enjoyed the tasty food provided by Omni Fresco Catering and Aldo's and appreciated having such a strategic location to duck out of the heat and chaos and enjoy the cool drinks pro-

vided by New Belgium Brewery and Jordano's.

Please continue to support our other generous donors who helped make this a successful event: the Upham Hotel and Country House, Four Season's Resort - the Biltmore, COAST Restaurant and Bar, Zen Spa, Cheri Bibi, Drishti Yoga, Our Daily Bread, Sojourner Café, Ablitt's Fine Cleaners, Fresco Café North and Fresco Café, Green Girl Totes, Aqua Nail Bar, Network Hardware Resale, Jennifer Good (licensed massage therapist and acupuncturist) and Larry Good (licensed massage therapist).

## TRAIN DAY, cont. from page 1

City Councilmember **Grant House**, and featured many elected officials, including Assembly Member **Pedro Nava**, 35<sup>th</sup> Assembly District, Santa Barbara County Supervisor **Salud Carbajal**, Santa Barbara Mayor **Marty Blum**, Carpinteria City Councilmember **Kathleen Reddington**, Santa Barbara City Councilmember **Helene Schneider**, Santa Barbara City Councilmember **Das Williams**, and

Goleta City Councilmember **Michael Bennett**. Several representatives of Amtrak were on hand, including **Joe Yannuzzi**, Amtrak General Superintendent, Southwest Division. The event was put on by Coastal Rail Now, and the Alliance for Sustainable and Equitable Regional Transportation (ASERT), and COAST. Special thanks to our sponsors, Omni Fresco Catering, the Santa Barbara Independent, SB Parent.com, and the South Coast Railroad Museum.



Coalition for Sustainable Transportation  
 P.O. Box 2495  
 Santa Barbara, CA 93120

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We thank the **McCune Foundation**, the **Green Park Foundation** and the **J.S. Bower Foundation** for supporting our major projects.

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## Coast Retreat 2009



Front row, from left: Alex Pujo, Courtney Dietz, Eva Inbar.

Back row, from left: Dennis Story, Greg Janee, Lee Moldaver, Ed France, Mark Bradley, Dick Axilrod. Not pictured: Kate Bechtel, Grant House.

### We thank our individual Supporters

We thank these people for making a donation to COAST during the past three months:

**William Deneen, Neil&Barbara Elliott, Sherrie Fisher, Dick&Joyce Axilrod, Marty Blum, Dan Herron, KK Holland, Roger&Eileen Horton, Grant House, Greg Janee, Beebe Longstreet, Bill&Joan Murdoch, Owen Patmor & Doris Phinney, George Relles, Jessica Scheeter, Deborah Winant, Janet and Harvey Wolf, Alex Pujo, Dave&Jean Davis, Timothy Harding, Steve Maass, Jay Parker, Bess Christensen, Gary Gray, Matt Dobberteen, Ralph Fertig, Jason LoCicero, James&Susan Shields, Debbie Castanha, Martha Siegel.**

We appreciate your contribution!

*Looking ahead: COAST's Annual Train Party will be on October 15 at the Santa Barbara AMTRAK Station.*

*Mark your calendar and watch your e-mail for your personal invitation!*