

Mission Statement

COAST is a Santa Barbara County regional organization promoting environmentally, socially, and economically sustainable transportation and reduced dependency on automobiles.

How to reach us

COAST

P.O. Box 2495

Santa Barbara, CA 93120

Phone: 875-3562

info@coast-santabarbara.org

www.coast-santabarbara.org

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 send a message to:

Coast-subscribe@lists.riseup.net.

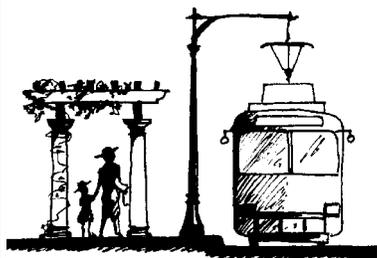
Leave the subject line and the body of the message blank.

Events

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

Join COAST

Support COAST by becoming a member. Just use the enclosed envelope. Thank you!



Local Artists to Benefit COAST

On Saturday, March 24, from 4 to 7 pm, a reception and benefit for COAST will be held at the Weldon Ranch Gallery, home of well-known Oak Group artist Larry Iwerks. Paintings done by Larry and by dozens of other local artists will be on display and for sale, with 10% of all proceeds going to COAST.

Larry Iwerks is a long-time member of the Oak Group, a group founded by Ray Strong which includes many of the area's best known landscape artists. The COAST benefit will be part of the new show "Nature and Abstract" which will be opening on Friday, March 23rd. Our reception will begin at 4 pm on Saturday the 24th, and will feature snacks, refreshments, music, and an entire houseful of wonderful paintings. We will also take the opportunity to honor longtime COAST Board member and benefactor Barry Siegel. In addition, the show will be open to the public from 1 to 4 pm on Saturday and Sunday, and if you buy a painting during that time and mention this article, 10% will go to COAST. The show is at 958 Weldon Road, off Cliff Drive just across from the SBCC West Campus entrance. For more information, call 875-3562.



Larry Iwerks with his painting of Ledbetter beach



COAST will be the beneficiary of a ten mile marathon along the beautiful Santa Barbara waterfront. The event, Santa Barbara Running, will take place on April 21st at 8 a.m., starting and ending at Leadbetter Beach. It is brought to you by Jose Gonzalez and his organization, Santa Barbara ActionPro. Jose, a native of Mexico City, is a marathon runner and triathlete himself. He is also a PE teacher with the Santa Barbara School District and has been organizing events and kids' sports camps for 20 years. "I love to work with kids," said Jose. Come to the marathon to run or to cheer and support COAST! For more information, visit www.sbactionpro.com. There will be a raffle to benefit COAST with many cool prizes. Tickets will be sold at the event and at our website.

What to do about Measure D?

Measure D, the ½ cent sales tax for transportation enacted in Santa Barbara County in 1989, will sunset in 2009. Our organization fought long and hard to renew this program in 2006 because it proposed to allocate 43% of revenues to alternative transportation: local and regional buses, commuter rail between Oxnard and Goleta, bike-ways, safe routes to school, and transportation demand management (TDM) programs.

Support for D-2006 was very strong in the South Coast. In spite of intense opposition by the News Press, the Montecito Journal and the Taxpayers' Association; lukewarm support from businesses, lackadaisical attention from politicians, limited funds, a compressed timeline and confusion generated by competing State bonds on the ballot, 63.77% of South Coast residents voted to raise their taxes to pay for transportation improvements. Not a small feat.

North County was a different story: only 42% heeded our call.

State legislation now requires a super-majority (2/3 approval) to renew a tax measure that in 1989 passed with 54% of the vote. We showed that to be feasible in the South Coast but, how do you do it county-wide?

Measure D currently generates \$35 million annually. If Measure D fails in 2008, several cities will attempt to levy their own sales tax to make up for it. Their success will bring a windfall to the cities, but it will devastate the unincorporated areas of the County.

After the election, our leaders at the Santa Barbara County Association of Governments (SBCAG) did what they usually do: nothing. It took some prodding from COAST and their own Staff to get the subject back on the agenda.



Where are we now?

A consensus is emerging in support of a 1/2 cent tax (instead of 3/4 cent) with one expenditure plan for the North County and another one for the South Coast. Some call for an extension of Measure D in its current format (70% local/30% regional); others call this proposal D.O.A. ("dead on arrival"). The discussion has now shifted to the North County and South Coast sub-regional planning committees of SBCAG. Stay tuned.

A Fuel Tax Instead of "D"?

Note: There has been a lot of talk lately about taxing gasoline at the local level (instead of a sales tax) to pay for transportation. Our research indicates that:

State law allows a county-level fuel tax if approved by the voters, but no county in California has ever put such a tax on the ballot.

Fuel tax revenues can be spent on the construction and maintenance of roads, sidewalks, bike lanes, separated bus ways and train tracks. Transit operating expenses, transit vehicles, separate ("Class I") bike paths, or Transportation Demand Management (TDM) programs cannot be funded with State fuel taxes.

Fuel can only be taxed by a fixed number of cents per gallon, not as a percentage of its retail price.

200 million gallons of gasoline are sold in Santa Barbara County every year.

Measure D currently generates \$35 million per year.

A 17.5 cents/gallon tax would be enough to replace Measure D revenues today, but inflation and increased fuel efficiency would make future tax increases necessary.

About Sales Taxes

State law regulates the assessment and use of tax revenues.

A specific-purpose tax (i.e., a tax to pay for transportation improvements) requires 2/3 voter approval, but a general purpose tax (e.g., a tax without specific use) requires only a simple majority to pass.

Santa Barbara County can impose a sales tax county-wide, but it cannot apply it only to a sub-region, i.e., the South Coast. This would require a change to the state statute.

Municipalities can levy sales taxes within their jurisdictions

The Metropolitan Transit District (MTD) may have the authority to propose a sales tax within its jurisdiction (the South Coast) to pay for transit improvements.

In Santa Barbara County, the lion's share of sales taxes is collected by the cities of Santa Barbara, Santa Maria and Goleta.

Currently, 55% of sales tax revenues are generated in the South Coast and 45% in North County. Both sub-regions have roughly equal number of residents.

Meet our SR2S Team

Catriona Gay has joined Debbie Castanha to help her coordinate our flourishing SR2S project.

Debbie is a mom with two young children at Monte Vista School. During the past several years, she was the school's volunteer SR2S champion, organizing a multitude of programs from event days to the school's successful Walk'n'Roll Challenge. Her position as COAST's SR2S coordinator allows her to do what she loves to do on a much larger scale. We appreciate the enthusiasm, energy and creativity she brings to her job.

You can reach Debbie at Debbie@coast-santabarbara.org.

Catriona, who hails from the Isle of Man in Britain, is a professional planner with a degree in urban and regional planning from Oxford Brookes University. She has held various positions in the planning field before becoming a full time mom to her daughter Isabella, now 8. She will be focusing primarily on secondary schools. We are excited about Catriona joining our team. She can be reached at

catriona@coast-santabarbara.org.



Catriona Gay (left) and Debbie Castanha

Spring at SR2S

With another new year come new opportunities for our Safe Routes to School (SR2S) Program. This winter, we've been reaching out to schools in Goleta who haven't introduced the program to their students yet, and we're looking for new ways to communicate safety messages with junior high and high school students. I've been exploring ideas for new props for our bicycle rodeos for the elementary school-age students, and trying to expand the fantastic safe cycling classes for children offered by Bicycle Coalition's "Cycle Smart" Instructors.

Currently, SR2S is looking for a sponsor for Bike to School Day, May 15 to help offset the cost of giveaways and prizes for participants who ride or walk

to school. (The goal is that they find it so delightfully enjoyable, that they'll do it more often!) Please contact me if you know of an organization or individual who might be willing to contribute \$1,500 to be our major sponsor of Bike to School Day in 07! Of course, we're always on the alert for new volunteers and/or donations to the program, so don't hesitate to call and find out what you can do to make safer routes for all kids!

Debbie Castanha

687-0011

debbie@coast-santabarbara.org

COAST's Safe Routes to School Coordinator

Montecito Families Desire Safe Routes to School

Recent surveys taken at Cold Spring and Montecito Union schools show that between 60% and 80% of respondents would walk or bike to school if they had safe paths. Evidently, Montecito parents and children appreciate the benefits of walking and biking for their beautiful community, for our planet and for their personal well being. "It gets the brain working," wrote one student.

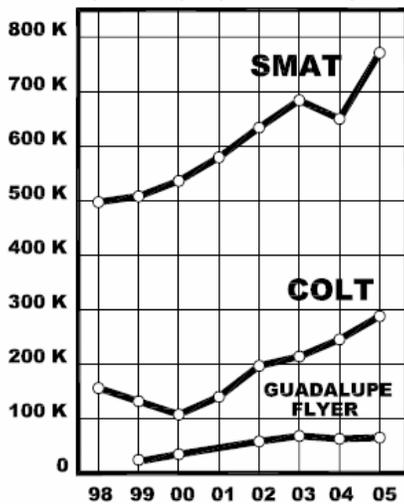


Gary Gray, Kiwanis Club of Santa Barbara member, and parent Kelly Turk help hand out low-cost and free helmets to students at local school in November. We appreciate Kiwanis for partnering with us in the SR2S project.

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

More people in North County ride the bus since we started our Unmet Transit Needs program.

North Co. Transit Ridership
(Boardings by Fiscal Year)



COAST Board of Directors:

- Mark Bradley, President
- Eva Inbar, Vice President
- Alex Pujo, Secretary
- Dick Axilrod, Treasurer
- Dennis Story, CoastalRailNow
- Grant House
- Soumil Mehta
- Lee Moldaver

Advisory Board:

- Rick Margolin
- Steve Maas
- Jonathan Maguire
- Jessica Scheeter
- Barry Siegel
- Helene Schneider
- Jan Atkins

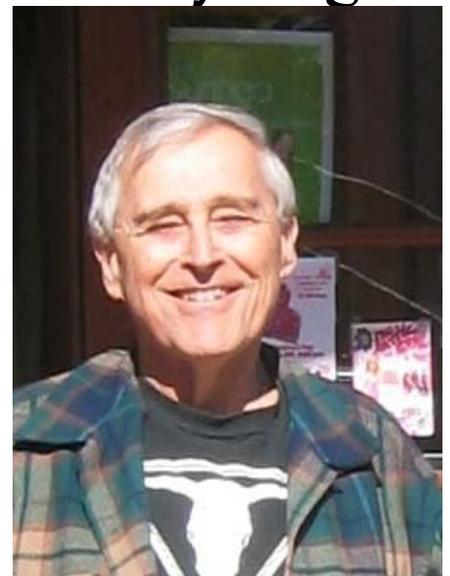
Executive Director:

- Katharine Bechtel

People with COAST : Barry Siegel

We will be honoring Barry Siegel for his lifelong advocacy for sustainable transportation, land use and social justice on March 24th at 4 p.m. at our reception at Larry Iwerk's art gallery. (See front page.)

Barry is a native of New York City and moved to Santa Barbara in 1993 upon retiring from his job as an aerospace engineer in Los Angeles. He and his wife, Martha, settled in Montecito. Just then, Santa Barbara erupted in anger over a Caltrans proposal to widen the 101 freeway. With a long history of activism in transportation issues in LA, he could not say no when Naomi Schwartz asked him one day at the Montecito Farmers Market if he wanted to be involved in planning the 101 corridor.



He went on to become the vice chair of the Hwy 101 Corridor Task Force and the author of the famous Siegel reports of SBCAG meetings. He served on the City's Transportation and Circulation Committee and on the Montecito Association board as well. We appreciate Barry's intelligence, experience and dry humor as he continues his activism on the COAST advisory board. Please join us as we honor Barry Siegel on March 24th.

Become a COAST Member

Our newsletter will be appearing quarterly from now on and will be mailed to our members. To continue to receive this newsletter, and to help us promote sustainable transportation, please join COAST by returning the enclosed envelope. Thank you.

We thank our supporters

We thank the Green Park Foundation and the American Public Transportation Association (APTA) for their generous grants this year. In addition, we thank the 28 individuals who made contributions large and small this year to date. We couldn't do it without you!