El Niño rains finally came in March — all at once, it seemed — prompting brief evacuations, knocking over trees and triggering mudslides. County crews worked long hours to clear streets and make sure residents could get home. The Board of Supervisors later declared a local emergency to help pay for damage repairs, estimated at more than $11 million.

“Given the amount of rain, our crews did well to respond quickly, prevent further damage and minimize storm impacts on residents.”

- Public Works Director John Presleigh
Recipients of the 2015 Employee Recognition Awards were honored by the Board of Supervisors Feb. 23 for their work, everything from helping convict criminals to developing new ways to access county services. Click the links below to listen to the presentations and hear their stories.

## HUMAN SERVICES

**Gold** | Human Services' Family Stabilization Unit (Barri Dommer, Victoria Regan, Vivian Fenner-Evans, Sarah Mason-Sheely, Maria Sanchez Nolazco, Jim Narragon, Leticia Arteaga); Silver | Human Services' Benefit Representative Training Team (Andrew Stewart, Brittany Smith, Celina Orejel, Michael Rosales, Sean McAdam, Taylor Shellen); Bronze, Margarita Gonzalez, Human Services Department.

## HEALTH

**Gold** | Maria Vazquez, HSA Clinics; Silver (tie), HSA Clinics Homeless Persons Health Project Team (Paul Gendreau, Jean Graham, Matt Nathanson, Andi Wass, Suzanne Samson, Alejandra Bermudez, Georgine Ibarra, Alba Avalos-Sanchez, Mariela Melgoza); Silver (tie), Health Services Communicable Disease Prevention Team (Jessica Oltmanns, Theresia Rogerson, Eloy Mendez, Claudia Llamas-Padilla, Dena Loijos, Ruben Chavez, Suzanne Samson, Cathy Padilla, Denise Parodi); Bronze, Linda Betts, Behavioral Health.

## GENERAL GOVERNMENT

**Gold** | Information Services Department Citizen Connect Team (Aimen Al-Refai, Nada Algharib, Daniel Rubio, Tom Melkonian, Paresh Patel); Silver, Information Services Department Voice Over IP Project Team (Michael Goulter, James Gouin, George Washington, Rusty Ferguson, Tom Daskaloff, Myeong Lee, Tammie Weigl, Nada Algharib); Bronze, Auditor-Controller-Treasurer-Tax Collector Financial System Implementation Team (Laura Bowers, Jessica Renda, Marianne Ellis, Pam Silbaugh).

## LAND USE & REGULATORY

**Gold** | Planning Department Housing Division Team (Julie Conway, Porcila Wilson, Carlos Landeverty, Micaela Lopez); Silver, Parks Department Seacliff Village Park Project Team (Sheryl Bailey, Kim Namba, Jennifer Mead, Annie Morris, Margaret Ingraham, Mary Chavez, Jessica Beebe, Gretchin Iliff, Kathy DeWild); Bronze, Carisa Duran, Public Works.

## JUSTICE

**Gold** | Jeffrey Simpson, Sheriff's Office; Silver, Daniel Cruz, Sheriff's Office; Bronze, Yolanda James-Sevilla, Adult Probation.
County homeless services land $2M in federal grants

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development recently awarded nearly $2 million to Santa Cruz County for homeless services.

Most of the grant money will go toward health care, mental health services and permanent supportive housing, with the goal of giving people a foundation to improve their lives and stay off the streets for good.

“These grants are an important piece of the puzzle in trying to solve a complex problem,” said Julie Conway, Conway, Santa Cruz County Housing Director. “Especially for people who have short-term challenges being able to make rent in a tight housing market, funding can be a critical bridge that keeps them from losing their homes.”

The Santa Cruz County grants were part of $1.6 billion awarded by HUD nationwide. On a given night, more than half a million people are homeless across the U.S.

Who are the 82%, and why do they matter?

The Santa Cruz County Office for Economic Development will hold the inaugural “82% - A Micro-Business Summit” event April 22 at Cabrillo College.

Open to 500 local small businesses, the daylong conference will feature a keynote speaker and two dozen education sessions to help small business owners navigate the marketplace to increase their exposure, grow their business and boost profitability.

“Santa Cruz County has a long tradition of incubating vibrant, successful, one-of-a-kind businesses that employ the majority of our workforce,” County Economic Development Coordinator Barbara Mason said. “This conference is intended to help those just starting out become the next Odwalla or Santa Cruz Skateboards, or even Plantronics or West Marine.”

Tickets cost $49 and are available at https://82percent.eventbrite.com.

Eighty-two percent of county business are classified as small. The event was created by County, Central Coast Small Business Development Center, Sling-shot SV and the San Lorenzo Valley Chamber of Commerce. It is sponsored by PG&E, PayPal, Santa Cruz County Workforce Investment Board, Lighthouse Bank, SCORE, Bay Federal Credit Union, Life Aid Beverage Co., Santa Cruz County Certified Green Business Program and the City of Santa Cruz Certified Green Business Program, Santa Cruz County Bank and more. Local business chambers are also supporting the event.

Citizen Connect

We’ve updated our app to include restaurant inspections, voter registration and more, all at the touch of a finger. Download Citizen Connect for iTunes and Google Play.
Live Oak Clubhouse opens

The Boys & Girls Clubs of Santa Cruz County held an opening ceremony for the Live Oak Clubhouse on Saturday, March 19, with Supervisor John Leopold among the featured speakers.

A packed house got a firsthand look at a first-class facility: numerous computer stations, an industrial kitchen, music room (including mixing studio), basketball court, bumper pool and much, much more.

Years in the making, the project was largely funded by the county’s former Redevelopment Agency, with the Boys & Girls Clubs raising additional funds and Live Oak School District contributing the land.

Together, there is more than 10,000 square feet of education and activity space spread over two floors. Membership is $60 a year. For more information, go to www.boysandgirlsclub.info.

Training Day

March 20-26 was Tsunami Awareness Week. On March 16, staff from various agencies gathered at the Emergency Operations Center to train for a scenario where a large tsunami strikes the county during a summer holiday.

Santa Cruz County Calendar

APRIL 2016
4-10 — National Public Health Week
12 — Board of Supervisors, 9 a.m., County Governmental Center, 701 Ocean St.
19 — Board of Supervisors, 9 a.m., County Governmental Center, 701 Ocean St.
22 — 82% Micro-Business Summit, 8 a.m. -6:30 p.m., Cabrillo College, 6500 Soquel Dr.
30 — Prop 47 Legal Clinic, noon-5 p.m., Youth 4 OWY, 154 E Lake St.

MAY 2016
8 — 2016 Election, June 7 primary mail ballots sent to voters
10 — Board of Supervisors, 9 a.m., County Governmental Center, 701 Ocean St.
15 — Memorial Day, county offices closed
16 — Board of Supervisors, 9 a.m., County Governmental Center, 701 Ocean St.
19 — Board of Supervisors, 9 a.m., County Governmental Center, 701 Ocean St.
21 — Board of Supervisors, 9 a.m., County Governmental Center, 701 Ocean St.
22 — Board of Supervisors, 9 a.m., County Governmental Center, 701 Ocean St.
23 — Board of Supervisors, 9 a.m., County Governmental Center, 701 Ocean St.
24 — Prop 47 Legal Clinic, noon-5 p.m., Santa Cruz Main Library, 224 Church St.
28 — Board of Supervisors, 9 a.m., County Governmental Center, 701 Ocean St.

JUNE 2016
7 — 2016 Election; June 7 primary Election Day
14 — Board of Supervisors, 9 a.m., County Governmental Center, 701 Ocean St.
20 — Board of Supervisors, 9 a.m., County Governmental Center, 701 Ocean St.
21 — Board of Supervisors, 9 a.m., County Governmental Center, 701 Ocean St.
22 — Board of Supervisors, 9 a.m., County Governmental Center, 701 Ocean St.
23 — Board of Supervisors, 9 a.m., County Governmental Center, 701 Ocean St.
24 — Prop 47 Legal Clinic, noon-5 p.m., Santa Cruz Main Library, 224 Church St.
28 — Board of Supervisors, 9 a.m., County Governmental Center, 701 Ocean St.