



COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ

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PRESS RELEASE

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WILLOWBROOK SPORT COURTS TO REOPEN

The Santa Cruz County Department of Parks, Open Space and Cultural Services is proud to announce a reopening date for the sport courts at Willowbrook County Park, the first step in an ongoing reimagining of the entire park in honor of Sgt. Damon Gutzwiller.

“This is the first phase in our efforts to reimagine and improve Willowbrook for Damon, his family and our community. The sport courts hold a special meaning to Damon and his family and it will be exciting to see families using these courts,” Supervisor Zach Friend said.

The resurfaced tennis, pickleball and basketball courts will reopen for public use on Friday, May 6. Members of the public are asked not to enter the courts prior to that time in order to allow the new surfaces time to properly cure. Restriping and the final steps of the resurfacing project will be completed in the next 2-4 days.

County Parks along with the Santa Cruz County Deputy Sheriff’s Association and County Park Friends are spearheading the fundraising and renovation efforts for the park, which will include more inclusive play areas and play area surfacing, park entry enhancements and new flagpole on Baseline Drive, and the construction and installation of a memorial seating area on the south side of the pedestrian walkway bridge in memorium of Gutzwiller.

“We are excited to reopen the sport courts just in time for the summer season and even more excited to see the beginning of the entire park renovation begin. County Parks staff are working alongside County Park Friends and the Deputy Sheriffs Association to make sure the entire park reimagining project is wholly funded in the next year.” Jeff Gaffney, Director of Santa Cruz County Parks.

Gutzwiller was a 14-year veteran of the Santa Cruz County Sheriff’s Office who was killed in the line of duty on June 6, 2020. He owned his first home in the Willowbrook neighborhood and lived there with his family, frequenting Willowbrook County Park with his dog, Shasta.

Opportunities for residents and local businesses to be a part of the legacy renovations of Willowbrook County Park are still available. For more information or to learn more about opportunities to participate in this project please visit

<https://www.countyparkfriends.org/willowbrook>.