



# COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ

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## PRESS RELEASE

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### COUNTY PARK FRIENDS DONATES TO GUTZWILLER MEMORIAL

The Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors voted Tuesday to accept \$83,984 from County Park Friends for the Reimaging Willowbrook Park Project in honor of Sgt. Damon Gutzwiller.

These funds, paired with contributions from the County of Santa Cruz, will be used to construct a memorial seating area and flagpole in the Aptos park, which was renamed in honor of Gutzwiller in May of this year. County Parks will begin the bidding process for this phase in the coming weeks.

Sgt. Gutzwiller, who was killed in the line of duty on June 6, 2020, was a 14-year veteran of the Santa Cruz County Sheriff's Office. He owned his first home in the Willowbrook neighborhood and frequented the park with his family and dog, Shasta. This memorial seating area and eternally flown flag will serve as a place of reflection for his loved ones and the greater community.

"Damon's dedication and sacrifice to his community will be forever felt in this space," said Parks Superintendent Rebecca Hurley. "Through the generosity of our local partners, this memorial is set to break ground before the end of 2022."

Through a collaborative effort by Santa Cruz County Parks, County Park Friends, the Deputy Sheriff's Association, and the Second District Supervisor's Office, more than \$300,000 has been raised for this park dedication and improvement project so far. Following the construction of the memorial seating area and flagpole, the remaining funds for this project will be used for a new and more-inclusive play structure and play surfacing.

Opportunities to be a part of this project are ongoing. For more information, please visit [www.countyparkfriends.org/willowbrook](http://www.countyparkfriends.org/willowbrook).