

Rio del Mar Improvement Association Summer 2020 Newsletter

Summer 2020 RDMIA Newsletter Highlights:

- Members are the Heart of the Association
- Zach Friend, 2nd District Supervisor, Community Updates
- In Memoriam
- CERT Community Response
- SAVE LIVES SANTA CRUZ COUNTY
- Aptos Strong Chamber of Commerce
- RDMIA Beautification



RDMIA Board meetings continue by Zoom. We look forward to coming together in October 2020. Tentative meeting date is Wednesday October 21st.

Stay safe, stay well, stay healthy



Membership Renewal and Information Update

The Rio del Mar Improvement Association annual membership per household is \$30 by check or \$32 by PayPal (includes \$2 PayPal fee). A \$500 lifetime membership is also offered.

Ways To Join

- Complete membership form online at www.rdmia.org and pay via PayPal (\$30 + \$2 = \$32)
- Complete membership form online at www.rdmia.org and mail check payable to RDMIA (\$30)
- Print out membership form, complete along with check payable to RDMIA (\$30) and mail

Please mail to **RDMIA, P.O. Box 274, Aptos, CA 95001-0274** along with your payment. Your contact information is used solely for newsletter and RDMIA communications, and is not shared with any other member or 3rd party.

Membership Information

Please print legibly – thank you

Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Rio del Mar Address (if different) _____

Primary Email _____ Secondary Email _____

Telephone number _____ I have no computer access _____

____ New Member ____ Renewing Member Referred by _____

Please send the RDMIA Newsletter by email to save printing/ mailing costs Yes ____ No ____

Get Involved?

____ I want to volunteer or contribute (time, \$, or in-kind) for RDMIA projects. Please call or email me

____ I am interested in becoming a RDMIA Board member

What do you value most about RDMIA? (check all that apply)

Community Outreach

____ RDMIA newsletter membership ____ General membership semi-annual meetings

____ RDMIA website ____ Presenting interesting speakers

Community Advocacy

____ Interfacing with local government ____ Updating RDMIA Facebook

____ Information concerning local issues such as transportation/roads

Beautification

____ Public area landscape improvements and maintenance

____ Helping to maintain our beaches

RDMIA Members are the Heart of the Association

Thank you to all our members who continue to support RDMIA's mission to beautify, advocate and are a part of community engagement.

If you have not renewed for 2020 or have been on the fence to join we hope the news we share will change your mind to support RDMIA. Your membership matters!.

Ways to Join or Renew:

Complete [online membership form](#) and pay via PayPal (\$30 + \$2 = \$32) using Donate button

Complete [online membership form](#) and mail check payable to RDMIA (\$30)

[Print out membership form](#) and complete along with check payable to RDMIA (\$30) and mail

Forms and fees should be mailed to
RDMIA, P.O. Box 274, Aptos, CA 95001 – 0274.



Enhancing our neighborhoods through beautification, advocacy and engagement



RDMIA continues the work of maintaining landscapes throughout Rio del Mar
[Learn more](#)



RDMIA hosts community public meetings during the year with local officials sharing current events and news to keep you informed.
[Learn more](#)



RDMIA volunteers continue to dedicate time and engagement to Save Our Shores beach clean-ups, Hidden Beach Park improvements, and our neighborhoods. [Learn more](#)

Community Updates from Zach Friend

2nd District County Supervisor



Vacation Rental Policy Changes and Addressing Fireworks

Growing concerns over the loss of housing and the commercialization of neighborhoods led the Board of Supervisors to request a set of new restrictions for vacation rentals. Recently, the Board unanimously approved a set of guidelines for new restrictions including a moratorium on new rentals (pending Coastal Commission approval).

What are the current regulations?

Until a few years ago there were no caps, and very limited regulations, on vacation rentals throughout the county. The Board initially instituted per block and per designated area caps (for example, the coastal areas including Rio Del Mar) on vacation rentals and also some permit requirements that must be adhered to in order to renew permits. For vacation rentals that fell outside of these designated zones there were no limits and no renewal requirements.

What is proposed?

- Freezing vacation rentals at current rates in the Seacliff/Aptos Designated Area and other designated areas in the County. This would mean that new permits wouldn't be issued unless a permit became available through non-renewal, revocation, transfer of ownership etc. This provides for current levels of supply but limits additional negative impacts on long-term housing.
- Adding La Selva into the restrictions (currently La Selva is not folded into the designated areas)
- Creating new parking requirements (to minimize on-street and neighborhood impacts)
- Increasing the level of review for new permits so neighborhoods could have a public process to express concerns and receive mitigations (or even denial of an application)
- Create more formal revocation procedures for rentals that are creating impacts
- Establish a waiting list program for those looking to apply for permits as they become available
- Create a moratorium on new permits pending the outcome of this process

The existing vacation rental regulations state that the number of overall vacation rentals cannot exceed 15% of eligible parcels in the greater Seacliff/Rio Del Mar area. While rates in these areas were below the caps the Board of Supervisors felt that the current levels were already high enough additional rentals would have a continued impact on the housing market and commercialization of neighborhoods. As a result, the Board supported capping the numbers at current rates, which is approximately 5.5% in the Seacliff/Rio Del Mar area.

Given the number of local vacation rentals, hotels, motels and other options there are adequate visitor-serving uses locally but significant challenges in our housing market. If the ordinance is approved, no new

permits would be issued in any of the designated areas until such time that number of vacation rentals falls below the applicable percentage cap.

Transitioning into fireworks and issues surrounding July 4th holiday -

As we hit summer the number of complaints for fireworks begins to increase. Over the last few years our office, the Sheriff's Office and State Parks, have received numerous complaints about fireworks – from concerns about the noise to fire and environmental concerns - many coming from Rio Del Mar.

This year, there was a reduction early on (mainly due to the shelter-in-place order) and call numbers, according to the Sheriff's Office are down a bit, but as we get closer to the 4th an increase is expected.

The exact location of the discharge is often difficult to pinpoint, as the sound reverberates throughout the coastal area, but there are some known hotspot locations on state beaches and some county beaches in the unincorporated area.

Over the last few years the Sheriff's Office has tried different enforcement approaches while the County has done educational (including paid advertising outreach) to address the issue. The County's position has been that since fireworks, even safe and sane fireworks, are illegal in the unincorporated area, there should be enforcement on this issue. Realistically, there are significant barriers to effective enforcement: the difficulty in pinpointing the exact location of the discharge, the delay between the report and arrival of law enforcement (as people that are discharging them often leave the scene), call prioritization (if there are other active calls that officers are on then they won't be able to respond immediately) and more. But the County is still committed to helping to reduce the issue.

Fireworks are sold legally in neighboring jurisdictions (including Watsonville) and often brought illegally into our community and fired off on the beaches, in the neighborhoods and even along the rail corridor and local parks. Over the last few years the County has increased the fines for fireworks (fireworks violations are subject to triple fines during July 4th, which means a citation can cost well over \$1,000 after court costs are added on.)

Here are some elements of this year's plan:

- Making triple fines for fireworks
- Producing public service announcements and other media outreach to local and regional media outlets about enforcement plans and the danger of fireworks
- Expanding digital signage near hot spot neighborhoods about enforcement
- Working with 9-1-1 dispatchers regarding how these calls are handled and also for education to the caller about the best information to provide to ensure proper enforcement
- Working with vacation rental owners to educate them about visitors bringing illegal fireworks and also the consequences associated with it
- Increasing police patrols
- Sending letters to neighboring jurisdictions that sell fireworks encouraging them to partner with us on the issues their fireworks cause
- Outreach to State Parks for improved and increased enforcement on state beaches and parks during July 4th and other peak times.

Illegal fireworks activity will continue but the goal is that this approach will have a positive impact on the environmental and other issues it causes. I appreciate any feedback you may have on this (or any other County issue). You can read my regular updates on social media at www.facebook.com/supervisorfriend

In Memorium

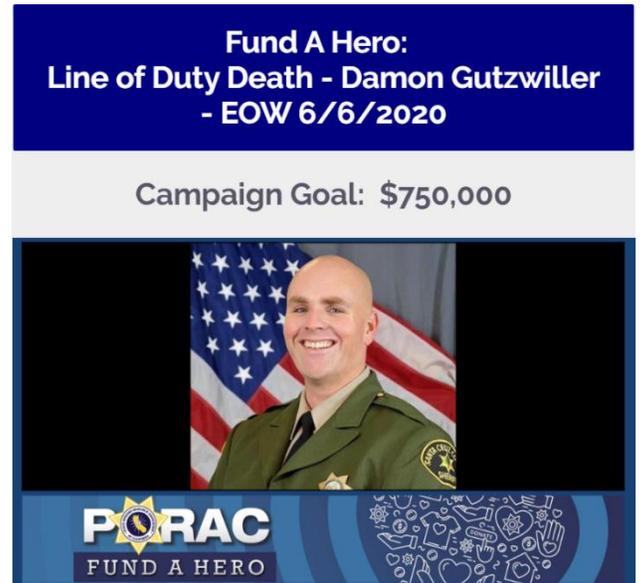
Our hearts are saddened by the loss of these lives taken way too soon.

Sergeant Damon Gutzwiller

Sergeant Damon Gutzwiller is a hero killed in the line of duty after serving 14 years with the Santa Cruz Sherriff's Office. Sgt Gutzwiller grew up in the County, was an AHS graduate and attended Cabrillo College. He is survived by his soul mate, Favi who is expecting their 2nd child this month and his adored 2-year-old son Carter. He was a kind, beautiful good man with an infectious smile. The community shares in the grief of his tragic death.

A Line of Duty Hero's Fund was established for the Gutzwiller Family. The Rio del Mar Improvement Association, on behalf of our members, is proud to have donated \$500 to the Line of Duty Hero's Fund in Sergeant's Gutzwiller's name. We hope, as community partners we can share in the pride of the SC Sherriff's department feels for Damon and that this gesture will ease the pain for his family. It is unimaginable the sense of loss that is felt.

If you would like to contribute to this fund, please visit the [Fund A Hero](https://porac.org/fundraiser/line-of-duty-death-damon-gutzwiller-eow-6-6-2020/) Peace Officers Research Association of California. (<https://porac.org/fundraiser/line-of-duty-death-damon-gutzwiller-eow-6-6-2020/>)



Jett Ramsey

Jett Ramsey was a spunky and vibrant little boy who sadly succumbed to brain cancer in April 2020. In tribute to his memory and family the DeBernardo Group, along with Friends of Santa Cruz Parks is fundraising to build the new playground at Hidden Beach Park. The Park was a favorite place for Jett.

RDMIA is pleased to donate \$1,000 towards this worthy cause. The Association and our members have long believed the park is a jewel in the community and desired to see improvements made. We are saddened by the the Ramsey's loss of their beloved son Jett and are honored to participate in this tribute.

We hope in the coming years for many to appreciate and enjoy Hidden Beach Park and playground. And as families, friends and neighbors return and gather, we can celebrate Jett and his family's everlasting memories.

If you would like to contribute to the Hidden Beach Playground fundraiser please visit [County Parks Friends](https://www.countyparkfriends.org/hiddenbeachplayground.html). (<https://www.countyparkfriends.org/hiddenbeachplayground.html>)



Allison Endert

Our condolences are extended to the Board of Supervisor's Office and to Ms. Endert's family and friends for the tragic death of Allison. Allison was killed while walking in the Seabright neighborhood.

Her commitment to public service marks many achievements in Santa Cruz County. Allison was a UCSC graduate and worked in local politics with former state legislator John Laird, former mayor Neal Coonerty and current Supervisor Ryan Coonerty. Supervisor Zach Friend said of Ms. Endert that she had "one of the most beautiful souls in our community".



RDMIA sympathize Allison's passing and our hearts are saddened by her death.

Supervisor Friend's Tuesday Telecom Townhalls

While we all have been sheltering in place, days and weeks have certainly blended together. But easily one of the week's highlights are Zach's Tuesday townhalls, featuring new guest speakers each week. These telecom town halls are very informative and help keep the community engaged as we all navigate and cooperate for our collective safety.

- Tuesday Townhalls 6-7pm
- 831-454-2222 Meeting ID: 145384#

Callers are welcome to speak about any issue during the town halls or you can call Zach at 831.454.2200.

Thank you Zach and to all your speakers for facilitating these important discussions. If you have not been able to join in, recordings are available by reaching out to Supervisor Friend's office at 831.454.2200 or email at zach.friend@santacruzcounty.us.

- Dr. A. Marm Kilpatrick, UCSC Professor in the Department of Ecology & Evolutionary Biology and an infectious disease expert
- Dr. Nan Mickiewicz, President of Dominican Hospital
- Tom Am Rhein - Santa Cruz County Farm Bureau's COVID 19 Task Force
- Dr. Clay Angel of Watsonville Hospital/Kaiser
- Susan True – CEO, Community Foundation of Santa Cruz County
- Ray Cancio, Community Bridges CEO and Lead Pastor Rene Schlaepfer, Twin Lakes Church
- Dr. Faris Sabbah, County Superintendent of Schools
- Dr. Gail Newel, County Health Officer
- Carlos Palacios, County Administrative Officer
- Sheriff Jim Hart
- Dr. Larry DeGhetaldi, Santa Cruz CEO Sutter/PAMF
- Mimi Hall - Director of the Santa Cruz County Health Services Agency
- Aptos/La Selva Fire Chief Aaron Lowe

SAVE LIVES SANTA CRUZ COUNTY

Recognizing the challenge COVID-19 poses to the community, SAVE Lives Santa Cruz County is a partnership between the County of Santa Cruz and Community Foundation of Santa Cruz.

The partnership is based in a framework to safely move forward that protects residents and aligns with State public health authorities, based on measurable objectives, to increase community resiliency.

For more information visit the site [here](#).

The community-based plan is designed to facilitate progress based on four principles:

***SLOW THE SPREAD - ADAPT AND ADJUST -VACCINATE
AND TREAT - ELEVATE READINESS***



Lessons Learned from COVID-19... CERT is here to help

In what seems like a nano-second, we have transitioned from non-stop news coverage of COVID-19 to reports covering the civil unrest that is impacting cities across our country. Change is in the air. Can you feel it?



We are learning on the fly regarding how to best respond to COVID-19 at all levels of governance. Masks? Stay-at-home directives? Ultraviolet light? We will know a lot more about what really works in combating this novel virus in the weeks and months to come. The problem is, the next disaster, whether natural or manmade in origin, may require a totally different set of responses. You never know. That's life.

And while our little beachside community may seem like the perfect “refuge in the storm,” it pays to remember that we live in a county that purportedly has more geological hazards per square mile than any other in the State of California.

Given the odds that something COULD happen in idyllic Rio Del Mar and that help from over-extended professional first-responders could be delayed, there are two questions that each of us should probably be considering:

- 1) Am I prepared to “go it alone” and sustain myself, my family, and the pets in my house for an extended period of time? And,
- 2) Once I have determined that things are “OK” in my house, do I have the training, equipment, and organizational support to help some of my less fortunate neighbors in the immediate aftermath of a major disaster.

This is where the **Community Emergency Response Team (CERT)** concept comes in. CERT provides both the training and the organizational support to help individuals prepare for, and respond to, anticipated disruptions www.rdmia.org

and potential hazards following a disaster. CERT is about readiness, people helping people, rescuer safety, and the credo: *Do the greatest good for the greatest number*. The CERT training component was first developed by the Los Angeles Fire Department following its study of the Mexico City earthquake.

Some of your neighbors have been hard at work to create a **Communtiy Emergency Response Team (CERT)** in our Rio Del Mar Flats area and to date captains have been identified for six of the twelve designated “neighborhoods.” We recently acquired MURS hand-held radios that have been assigned to neighborhood captains and we conduct monthly radio checks. We’ve even recruited local licensed ham radio operators for our Rio Flats team to maintain lines of communication with the outside world should the need arise. We’re getting there but we could still use your help.

We have six neighborhoods in need of a captain: #2 (bordered by Treasure Island, Moosehead, and Spreckels), #4 (bordered by Winfield Way, Aptos Beach, Moosehead, and Marina), #6 (bordered by Aptos Beach, Venetian Rd., and Stephen), #8 (bordered by Stephen, Marina, Aptos Beach, and Venetian Rd.), #9 (Lake Court neighborhood), and #12 (Glen Drive neighborhood).

Questions or interested in helping us with this work? Consider participating in the next **free CERT Aptos training course**. Find out more at www.santacruzcountycert.org. Please contact anyone of us about being a neighborhood captain:

Lori Nielsen	lorinielsen2000@yahoo.com
Eve Majure	evemajure@earthlink.net
Rob & Dondi Gaskill	beachnit@pacbell.net
Jerry Cannella	jerry@aljers.com
Chuck Melton	chasmelton@hotmail.com
Tim Barroca	timbarroca@msn.com

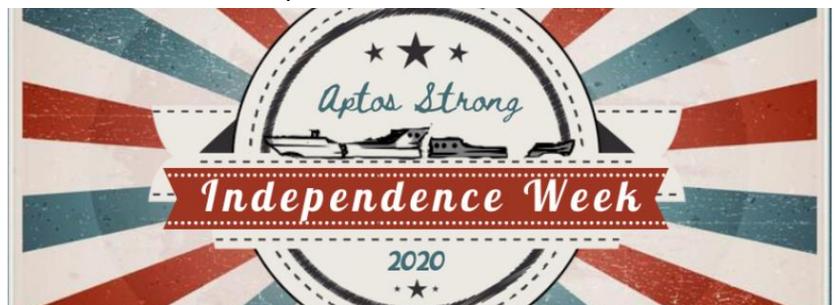


Aptos Strong – How Will We Celebrate the Fourth of July?

By John Hibble

What if you gave a party and nobody was allowed to attend? The 4th of July is America’s birthday and many communities have parades to celebrate that fact. The freedom to determine our own future was at the center of the founding of our country. The “World’s Shortest Parade” in Aptos is also about self-determination but it was not originally about America’s birthday.

In 1959, a zoning change was proposed to allow a concrete batching plant in Aptos Village. The community organized to defeat the zoning change. The first “World’s Shortest Parade” was held in



1961 on the fourth of July to celebrate the community’s success. For 58 years the parade has continued down Soquel Drive. However, this year, because of the Corona virus pandemic, we cannot celebrate with an organized parade, a pancake breakfast and a party in the park.

Are there creative ways to continue to celebrate our country's birthday and our freedoms? The Aptos Chamber would like to celebrate Independence Week from July first through the fifth. Decorate your car, whether it be an antique, a classic or a clunker, and drive around town and show off during the week. Please do not pack your car with friends, immediate family only. Car clubs can do the same thing but please do not extend the invitation to your out-of-county members. Let's keep it local. There are no entry fees but donations to the Aptos Chamber would be appreciated.

We are also encouraging local businesses, (open or not), to participate in our Red White and Blue patriotic decorating contest. Show your spirit. Businesses that would like to participate can call the Aptos Chamber at (831) 688-1467 or go online at <http://aptoschamber.com/independence-week/>. Register for \$25 and we will email participation information including a judging number and rules. Participants will be added to our website and social media platforms. Why \$25 to participate? The Aptos Chamber is not independent. We rely on the community for support. During these difficult times we cannot hold events to raise the necessary funds to pay our expenses. We would appreciate any donations to help stay afloat until we can all return to normal. Please send donations to 7605 Old Dominion Court, Suite A, Aptos, CA 95003. Thank you!

The community at large gets to vote for the contest winner. You be the judge. Drive by and select the most patriotic business display by number. Judging will start on July 1st and end at midnight on July 4th. Vote at www.aptoschamber.com. The winners will be announced on July 5th.



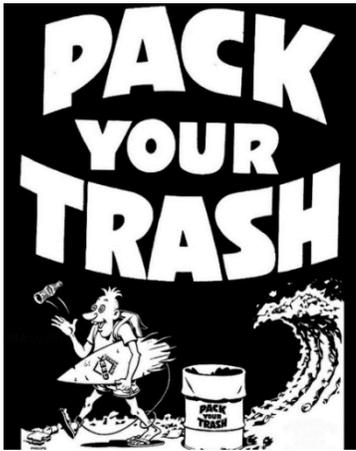
The Aptos Chamber will be selling patriotic masks and a very special commemorative T-shirt for this year. The design is on our website and shirts will be available at Deluxe Foods, Aptos Feed and Pet Supply and through the Aptos Chamber. We will also be making a celebration banner for the rail road trestle over Soquel Drive. Businesses and anyone who wants to be listed on the banner can call the chamber or sign up on our website. Let freedom ring!

One hundred years ago the world was seized by a devastating pandemic called the Spanish influenza. We are reliving history and making history at the same time with Covid 19. Let's find a way to celebrate while keeping safe.

We are Aptos strong! Together, let's celebrate our Fourth of July Independence Week!

Save Our Shores and RDMIA

RDMIA continues to support Save Our Shores efforts. Currently there are no formal beach clean-ups, so we rely on each of us being good stewards of our beaches and that everyone remembers to Pack your Trash.



Now that the beaches are open, we likely will see copious amounts of visitors during the 4th of July holiday.

Please consider taking a beach walk first thing July 5th for a DIY Star Spangled Beach cleanup. Bring your own cleanup supplies and remember to wear a mask and social distance from other walkers or volunteers. Thanks for pitching in to keep our beaches pristine.



For more details and status about future beach clean-ups please visit Save Our Shores at <https://saveourshores.org/annualcoastalcleanup/> and <https://saveourshores.org/eventscalendar/>

RDMIA Appreciates New Members and Renewals

Welcome to our new members and thank you for joining!

Margaret Graziano



Acknowledging and Appreciating our LifeTime members

Vicki Bates

Joel Busch

Jerry & Alice Cannella

Carolyn Chiesa

Herbert Finkelman & Edda Tusinac

Jerry & Jan Finney

Bill & Nancy Jackson

Bill Jensen

Suzanne Jensen

Julie Lambert

Lorin Leyendre

Kirk Lingenfelter

Shanna McCord

Michael & Ellen Mellon

Barbara Robinson

Peter & Donna Townsend

Mark & Deborah Vanderwoude

Athena Wolfe

Visit RDMIA.org to [renew or join today!](#)

Board Member Outreach and Volunteer Call Out

The Association welcomes members that are interested in volunteering time and expertise to fulfill the mission to “enhance our neighborhood through beautification, advocacy and engagement.”

We especially need your skills in these areas:



- Secretary
- Social media
- Landscape coordinator

Current Board members:

- President: Dan Rothenbush president@rdmia.org
- Vice Pres: Jerry Canella vicepresident@rdmia.org
- Treasurer: Sam Nazzal treasurer@rdmia.org
- Secretary: **open** secretary@rdmia.org
- Director: Donna Townsend info@rdmia.org
- Director: Peter Townsend website@rdmia.org



RDMIA Appreciates New Members and Renewals

Welcome to our new members and thank you for joining!

Margaret Graziano



Acknowledging and Appreciating our LifeTime members

Vicki Bates
Joel Busch
Jerry & Alice Cannella
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Jerry & Jan Finney
Bill & Nancy Jackson
Bill Jensen
Suzanne Jensen

Julie Lambert
Lorin Leyendre
Kirk Lingenfelter
Shanna McCord
Michael & Ellen Mellon
Barbara Robinson
Peter & Donna Townsend
Mark & Deborah Vanderwoude
Athena Wolfe

Please visit RDMIA.org to [renew or join today!](#)

Member Spotlight

RDMIA is grateful to Patrick and Caroline Kelley who got into the dirt and rejuvenated and replanted water wise and low maintenance ground coverings in the Treasure Island median and the at the intersection of Sumner Drive and Rio del Mar Blvd.



Patrick shares it was "one and done" with the turnover of the old to the new within an hour! Thank you both for your time and talent!

Do you have one hour to spare and volunteer? There are other landscape projects on the horizon and RDMIA would appreciate the help. Please contact RDMIA at info@rdmia.org to volunteer.

"Let the Sunshine In" was the common theme for the recent round of RDMIA community improvements

Many thanks to Board members Jerry, Dan and Sam who completed the solar lighting upgrade improvements on two important Rio del Mar signs.

New solar lighting was installed at the brick wall at the Hwy One offramp illuminating our community name, Rio del Mar. How wonderful to be greeted in the evening as we head home or tourists exit the highway to visit.



In addition to the offramp lighting, the Roundabout now shines bright with solar too!

Rio del Mar Welcome Sign at Clubhouse and Rio del Mar Blvd

You may recall that RDMIA spearheaded and constructed the Welcome sign on RDM Blvd in 2014-2015. The project was led by valued member Melanie Freitas who raised over \$13,000 and engaged local businesses, Fuch Construction and Allterra Solar for this addition to our community. More details can be found [here](#) on the rRDMIA website.



Over time the adjacent magnolia trees have matured and begun to obscure adequate solar exposure for sufficient lighting. Fast forward, it's time for tree trimming.

Thanks to a generous donation from the Finkelman Family Foundation of \$500 dedicated to landscape improvement along with member funds, RDMIA is moved forward with La Selva Tree Care Service.

When we met with Nick Ragsac of LSTC and described our needs and the mission of RDMIA, Nick took the added initiative to provide a competitive bid for our non-profit.

Thank you La Selva Tree Care for being such a good community partner! Jacob and his crew did a fantastic job!

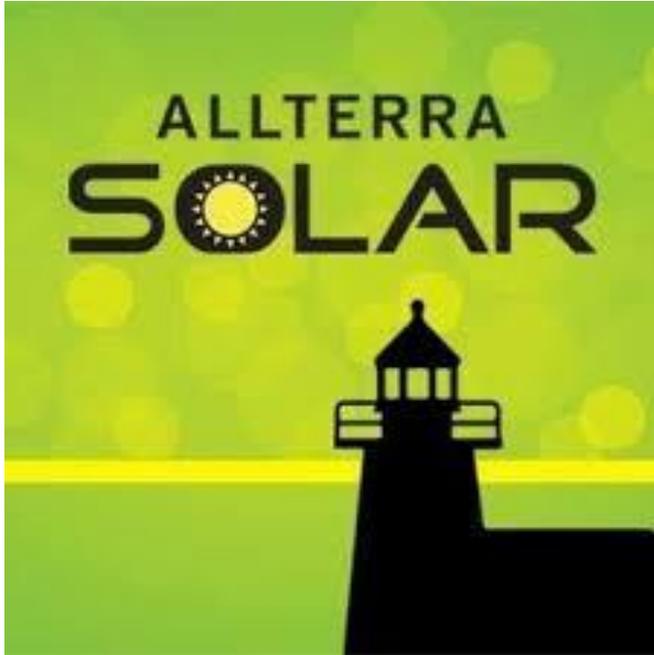
We are grateful to the Finkelman Family Foundaton who generously contributes to RDMIA annually.



Now solar lighting on the sign will be improved, and additional holiday decorations will shine brightly. These types of beautification projects are made possible because of our valued members and continued support who care about Rio del Mar.

We hope we can count YOU as part of the team and take pride in every job we do!

Thank You to Our Sponsors!



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YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD
like your neighbor!
REAL ESTATE WITH A
PERSONAL TOUCH!

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annemarie@serenogroup.com
CABRE# 01406660

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