



**APRIL, 2016**

# THE WAVE *At Crystal Cove*



Crystal Cove Alliance is the non-profit, cooperating association dedicated to education, restoration, and conservation within Crystal Cove State Park



## Spotlight

### NEW WHEELCHAIRS ARRIVE JUST IN TIME FOR SUMMER!

Thanks to all of the generous donors who supported CCA's [year-end campaign](#) to increase accessibility at Crystal Cove State Park, new specialized beach wheelchairs have been added to our fleet. With your help, we were able to successfully raise funds that will provide elderly and disabled visitors an opportunity to experience Crystal Cove's beautiful beaches firsthand.

The new beach wheelchairs are already being tested by park visitors. CCA purchased two different types to trial over the next couple of months: a more traditional version with four wheels, and a second variation with three wheels. One visitor to the Cove, Tammy, was already raving how the new beach wheelchairs had allowed her son Johnny to get close to the waves, despite not being able to walk due to recent surgery on both of his legs.

"I heard that Crystal Cove had special wheelchairs from my sister, who brought her son every day for eight weeks when he was healing from knee surgery," Tammy says. "Today, Johnny was able to be a kid again while his brother David raced him up and down the beach in the wheelchair. We wouldn't have been able to have our family beach day if it wasn't for these wheelchairs!" The new wheelchairs are currently located near the entrance to the Historic District, where guests can check them out to use and give feedback during their visit. Once the results are in, CCA will purchase several more wheelchairs, which will be available just before summer. "Our donors absolutely came through for us," says CCA Director of Partnership Development Kate Wheeler. "Every time I walk by the beach wheelchairs, or see them in use, I think of the donors and how delighted they would be to know how much they are used and appreciated by people with disabilities."

Thank you again to all of those who contributed to CCA's [year-end campaign](#)! Without you, opportunities like these would not be possible.



## Making A Difference

### CELEBRATE EARTH DAY AT CRYSTAL COVE STATE PARK

On Saturday April 16, you and your family are invited to celebrate Earth Day with Crystal Cove State Park. In partnership with the California State Parks Foundations and Edison International, volunteers for CCSP's Earth Day event will help beautify Crystal Cove's beloved Historic District.

"The Historic District can always use some love," says CCSP Interpretive Naturalist Winter Bonnin. "It's a hub of activity and one of the busiest places in the park."

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## Making A Difference – cont.

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CCSP's Earth Day event will take place from 9am – 1pm. Volunteers can park and meet at the Los Trancos lot, with day-use fees waived for participants. Some of the projects that volunteers will be able to help out with include planting new plants, painting gates and fences, and a major beach clean-up along the sand adjacent to Crystal Cove's twelve-acre Historic District.

After a morning of gardening in the park, volunteers are welcome to spend the rest of the day amongst the sand and the surf. "Spending a Saturday morning beautifying Crystal Cove State Park is in itself a rejuvenating thing to do," says Winter. "Giving back to the Earth and helping restore the area can allow you to take ownership and pride in this place that we all love."

If you're interested in registering for CCSP's Earth Day event, or for more information, please visit the [CalParks](#) website.

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### From the Field

## OLLIE THE OTTER" VISITS CRYSTAL COVE!

If you visit the park this month, keep your eyes on the water. Last month, Crystal Cove was visited by a very unusual guest: a Southern sea otter, dubbed "Ollie the Otter" by keen-eyed CCA staff, who was spotted munching on lobsters and octopuses along the shoreline south of the Historic District.

Crystal Cove is well outside the current range of the Southern sea otter, which is federally endangered. However, before they were hunted for the fur trade in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, sea otters were once abundant from the Pacific Northwest all the way down to Baja California. Thanks to conservation efforts, Southern sea otters now range from San Mateo County to Point Conception, and have a population of about 3,000 individuals.

Some scientists believe that the sea otter populations up north have reached their maximum capacity in their current range due to limited food availability, so our visiting otter could have ended up this far south to take advantage of the food sources here.

Since Crystal Cove's waters are designated as a State Marine Conservation Area and fishing is regulated, there are plenty of invertebrates for otters to snack on. Ollie just might be the first of many sea otters to come to Crystal Cove. Let's hope he decides to stay and that many more follow!



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### Then and Now

## COTTAGE #26

In the 1950s, one of the cottages on the North Beach, Cottage #26, was purchased by Carl and Mary Browning. Originally from British Columbia, the Brownings used the cottage as a summer getaway, hosting countless celebrations for family and friends along the way. One of the Brownings' favorite traditions was an annual costume party and charades night, which they hosted in their living room. Each attendee had to wear a costume made of items found at the cottage or scavenged from the beach. One year, someone came dressed as a Crystal Cove shower—complete with a shower curtain, towel, and unwashed shampoo. This represented being caught in the shower after the water pressure got so low that the water cut off and the person was not able to rinse their hair!

(CCA), and California State Parks are currently working on restoration plans and permitting for the final 17 cottages along the north beach. The projected \$26 million dollar project (\$13 million for infrastructure and \$13 million for actual cottage restoration), will mark the culminating achievement that CCA has been striving towards for the past 16 years. For the past 3 years, CCA and State Parks have been working closely with the California Coastal Commission to secure the permits for the project. CCA is hopeful that the permits will be granted sometime this year. As with all major endeavors at Crystal Cove, the timing of the project will be driven by the success of CCA's fundraising initiatives. The California Coastal Commission and CCA have spent the past eight years negotiating \$5 million in mitigation funding to benefit the final phase of the restoration. This assistance would greatly improve CCA's ability to begin work on this project much sooner.

If you're interested in becoming a part of a special community devoted to preserving the historical and cultural assets of Crystal Cove, we invite you to make a [donation](#) today or sign up to become a [CCA member](#). Donations can be made in any amount and are completely tax-deductible.



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## Membership

### BECOME A MEMBER OF CRYSTAL COVE ALLIANCE

Our partners are all in this together! For as little as \$50, you can become a member of Crystal Cove Alliance. Our new program includes benefits such as discounts at the Park Interpretive Store, invitations to special events, a one-day parking pass, up to four shuttle passes, the CCA monthly newsletter and lots more. Don't miss out – [sign up](#) today as a new member to be entered into a drawing for a two-night stay for two in a Crystal Cove Cottage.

