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Village Santa Cruz has Launched!

By Michael Oppenheimer (<http://www.tpgonlinedaily.com/author/mikeopp/>) on March 7, 2017

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By C.J.

(http://www.tpgonlinedaily.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/SIA-VillageSC_Jacques-becomes-



member.jpg)This Village has a simple mission — to support community members to live independently as they age in their homes by providing social connection, inter-generational interaction, and practical assistance.

The launching is a celebration of the efforts of an advisory committee and the community that has been receptive to the idea. In April of 2015 a few Santa Cruz County residents began researching the village model of aging in community.

They found the leadership through a national organization, Village to Village Network (VtV). It all

started when some folks in Beacon Hill, a small neighborhood in Boston, began a support group, They had no idea or intention of beginning a movement, however, today there are over 350 Villages nationwide. That is a lot of growth in only 15 years.

(<http://www.tpgonlinedaily.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/03>

/SIA-VillageSC_VTV.jpg)A Village is not a physical location or brick and mortar place to move into. It is somewhat of a collective — an organization of neighbors helping neighbors with daily tasks, providing a long-term social community and dedicated to aging well. It is a program set up to enact connecting seniors in the county who want to be active, connected and remain in their homes for as long as possible.



Village Santa Cruz is an intergenerational organization whose purpose is to bring out the civic mindedness and neighborliness we know is in the heart of Santa Cruz County and support a continual age-friendly community. The good beginning in 2015 has been championed and is gaining motivation with energies from people of many ages.

The Village Santa Cruz launching means that people sign up and become members. Minimal dues are required to pay the cost of hosting social and educational events, administrative costs and a staff coordinator.

A dynamic and charismatic coordinator has been chosen and introduced to the local community as part of the launch. Village Santa Cruz offers a Basic Membership to get to know each other as we build our programs. People can join on a quarterly, semi-annual, or annual pay schedule and annual memberships will become Founding Members and receive the benefits of Founding Members. Those benefits include post-office months for the price of twelve, ground-floor input into the programs, activities, and events offered, and your name on the website as a Founding Member. Additionally Household Memberships are available for residents with more than one senior in the same home, and subsidized memberships ensure that the village will be inclusive.

A Basic Membership creates community building social activities, free or reduced access to a variety of Village Santa Cruz presentations on subjects important to elders, a place to find/share information including an on-line bulletin board to connect with members with similar interests, find buddies to attend social/education events and more as can be found on the website.

Aging is a foundation of creativity and insight and a village can bring the spotlight on this wisdom. Part of the role of a Village is to counteract some stereotypical concepts of “old people” as having no worth. At the same time acknowledging that our bodies do decline with age and this can be discouraging and depressing. It takes an inner strength to accept some of the frailties we are faced with due to our aging bodies and it is so much easier to find this strength when we don’t feel abandoned by our community – a lonely journey. Villages eliminate isolation and provide connections that inspire and enhance our personal development.

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To get involved and learn more about memberships: info@villagesantacruz.org

831 824 2404 or 831 359 5814

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