



SEBASTOPOL COMMUNITY CULTURAL CENTER

seb.org | 707-823-1511 | sccc@seb.org | 390 Morris St ~ Sebastopol, CA 95472

November 2019

Annual Support Request

We'd like to start with a BIG thank you to our wonderful community who embraced the Sebastopol Community Cultural Center in a BIG way this year! What a year we've had.

Let's take a moment to reflect on 2019. We opened the year, humming along for a few weeks, enjoying our classes, rentals, **Guitarfest** and the adorable **Sebastopol Talent Show**; and then came the February flood.

When we anticipated that the floodwaters would reach our building, we reached out to our community for help. Within a few hours, kids play equipment, offices, classrooms, even the floor, were moved to safety. Over 50 of our supportive community members got involved and took action in our time of need. When over 3 feet of water came into our Main Hall, the items we moved remained high and dry!

Once the waters receded, the Main Hall damage was removed and our doors reopened in record speed. A big thank you to all who attended the flood fundraisers and donated. This allowed us to make a handful of urgent repairs and fill in the gaps of lost revenue.

Critical discussions began with City Staff, City Council and FEMA to provide **Flood Mitigation Measures** for the Center to keep the waters out once and for all. These measures are required in order to make improvements to the Center that are long overdue.

Our wonderful coalition of Board, Staff and expert volunteers began creating a vision for improvements to the Center that better meet the needs of the community. This includes a commercial kitchen, café, performance stage with quality sound, external bathrooms with showers, and beautiful outdoor social area with a sprinkler park. We've shared this vision with you and have heard your tremendous support!

Then in August, a little miracle happened, our State Representative, **Mark Levine** secured \$1.5 Million in Flood Recover Funds for the City of Sebastopol and the Community Center qualifies for these funds.

The **City Council Meeting** on October 15th saw overwhelming support for the Community Center and **endorsed the vision for improvements**. They **approved funds** to provide Flood Mitigation Measures and invited us to return with plans for improvements.



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Thank you to all who attended the meeting, spoke in support, sent in a postcard or signed our petition. You have shown how important protecting and improving the Center is to our community, and we are dedicated to building a Center the community deserves.

Meanwhile, as this facilities work continues, we are busy delivering the activities and services you love! This summer we offered more children's summer camps than ever before. We've hosted Author Talks, including **Elizabeth Gilbert and Congresswoman Jackie Speier**. Nearly every weekend we have hosted a private event: a family celebration, a concert or non-profit fundraiser.

Our proudest achievement this year has been the launch of our collaborative project, the **Sebastopol Teen Club**; check it out at sebteens.org. A passion project between the Community Center, the Sebastopol Library and Cittaslow Sebastopol, we have created a "distributed" teen club with organizations across town to host facilitated teen activities afterschool. The successful **Chop's Teen Club** in Santa Rosa has shared their best practices and provided mentor training to our fledgling group in Sebastopol.

Embracing our teens by making them feel comfortable, supported, and nurtured has immeasurable benefits. The number one indicator for a teenager turning toward success is when a teacher or mentor reaches out and makes a connection with them. We are so proud to have built a program that we can fill with opportunities for our Sebastopol area teens to engage, connect and discover. Activities include everything from free movies at the **Rialto Cinema** to DIY bath bombs at the Library, to volunteering at **Ceres**, to yoga at the Community Center, to photography in **Ragle Park**.

2019 has also been our first full year offering **Need Based Youth Scholarships** to youth 18 and under. One in four families in Sebastopol qualify for subsidies and the Community Center is committed to ensuring that all of our children have access to classes and camps regardless of their economic status. This was made possible by donations like yours.

So, as you can see, dear supporters of the Community Center, we are busy keeping Sebastopol vibrant and connected! Thank you for all your support this year, your engagement and contributions allow us to provide services that we otherwise would not be able to offer. Donating to the Community Center is donating to the well-being and enrichment of our community.

In gratitude,

The Board and Staff of the Sebastopol Community Cultural Center