

Day Tripping: Coastsider Garage Sale and conchitas pibil

# HALF MOON BAY

SEPTEMBER 2014

Flashback

Zaballa House

PROSPECTOR'S  
HOME HAS  
WITHSTOOD THE  
TEST OF TIME

## Keeping it clean

× Local group takes pride in keeping our beaches spectacular

× Navy Seals at the Ritz

FALL FIX UP

× Salt air can be brutal to your house paint. Here's how to keep it looking good.

× Local hardware store caters to Coastsider tastes

× Koi pond transforms backyard into a sanctuary



# Stewards of the beach

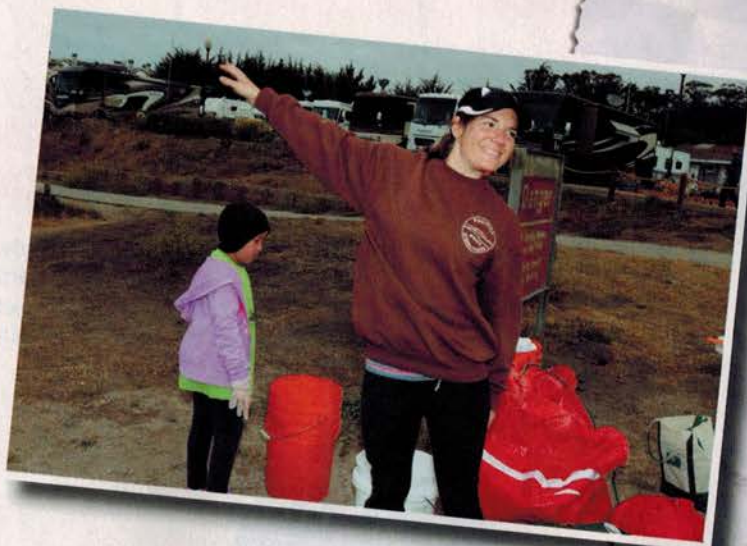
CLEAN UP PARTICIPANTS  
HELP KEEP THE  
COAST SPOTLESS FOR  
THE REST OF US

BY JULIA REIS  
PHOTOS BY DEAN COPPOLA

Céline Gerakin, of  
Princeton, sits near  
one of the many  
Pillar Point Harbor  
beaches she helps  
clean up.



ganizer Céline Gerakin, of Princeton, directs volunteers during a beach clean-up at Pillar Point Harbor on Tuesday.



## "This little beach here gets very dirty."

In Céline Gerakin's line of sight on a strip of sand at Pillar Point Harbor, she can see a brown boot and other, smaller pieces of debris.

After moving onto a boat in the harbor with her husband about a year ago, Gerakin quickly became aware of the amount of litter scattered throughout the harbor – cigarette butts, bottles and the like. It becomes especially bad once crab season starts and harbor traffic increases. One day, a big bag of trash floating on the water caught her attention and spurred her to act.

"I was staring at it trying to find a solution to get it," Gerakin said. "I grabbed plywood and tried to get it back toward us and it worked. The bag was still intact, so I started filling it with trash on the rocks."

She collected trash a few weekends in a row and soon joined forces with the Pacifica Beach Coalition, a nonprofit that regularly organizes weekend cleanups on the coast. She became a site leader for a once-a-month cleanup at the harbor that now attracts 15 to 20



Peggy Ruse at Dunes Beach in Half Moon Bay.

## Join the clean up crew!

There are Coastal Cleanup Day sites throughout the Bay Area, with plenty of opportunities on the Coastside. All meet from 9 a.m. to noon on Sept. 20. Participants can find the required waiver form to sign and bring with them at [flowstobay.org/ccdlocations](http://flowstobay.org/ccdlocations). Those under 18 must have the form signed by a parent or guardian in order to participate. You should wear comfortable, closed-toe shoes, sunscreen and bring your own bucket and gloves. Supplies will be provided if you are unable to bring your own.

For more information, visit [flowstobay.org/ccdlocations](http://flowstobay.org/ccdlocations).

### Mirada/Surfer's Beach

Meet at the trailhead entrance at Magellan Avenue. Free parking along the street, but do not park at Miramar Restaurant. Contact Mary Beth Van Natta for more information at [marybeth.vannatta@gmail.com](mailto:marybeth.vannatta@gmail.com). Sign up at [flowstobay.org/ccdlocations](http://flowstobay.org/ccdlocations).

### Dunes Beach

Meet at the Dunes Beach parking lot on west side of Highway 1. Look for set up just past the restrooms. Contact Peggy Ruse for more information, (650) 465-2664, [pruse@earthlink.net](mailto:pruse@earthlink.net). Email the contact to sign up.

### Francis State Beach

Meet at 95 Kelly Ave., Half Moon Bay. Contact Gregory Becker for more information, (650) 921-5736, [drbeckerdc1@hotmail.com](mailto:drbeckerdc1@hotmail.com). Sign up at [flowstobay.org/ccdlocations](http://flowstobay.org/ccdlocations).

### Half Moon Bay Yacht Club

Meet at 214 Princeton Ave. (At the intersection of Airport Street.) A group of kayakers will be cleaning up trash floating on the water and stuck between the rocks. Coffee and donuts will be provided for early arrivals and a barbecue will be organized after the cleanup. Contact Carliane Johnson for more information, (703) 969-5544, [HMBYC@seajayenv.com](mailto:HMBYC@seajayenv.com). Sign up at [flowstobay.org/ccdlocations](http://flowstobay.org/ccdlocations).

### Pilarcitos Creek

Meet at Oak Avenue Park in Half Moon Bay. Wear sturdy shoes, layers and sun protection. People under 18 must be accompanied by an adult. Light refreshments will be provided. Contact Eric Rutledge for more information, (650) 726-5056, [Eric@CoastsideLandTrust.org](mailto:Eric@CoastsideLandTrust.org). Email the contact to sign up.

### Pillar Point/Mavericks Beach

Meet at 214 Princeton Ave. (At the intersection of Airport Street.) Kayakers will be cleaning up trash floating on the water and stuck between the rocks. Coffee and donuts will be provided for early arrival and a barbecue will be organized after the cleanup. Contact Céline Gerakin for more information, (415) 306-6877, [celine.gerakin@gmail.com](mailto:celine.gerakin@gmail.com). Sign up at [flowstobay.org/ccdlocations](http://flowstobay.org/ccdlocations).

### Poplar Beach

Meet at the parking lot at the end of Poplar Street in Half Moon Bay. Contact Cathy Schultz for more information, (650) 726-5342, [cathyschultz333@yahoo.com](mailto:cathyschultz333@yahoo.com). Email the contact to sign up.

### Gray Whale Cove

Meet at the Gray Whale Cove parking lot just across Highway 1. Contact Tiffany Murzi-Moyce for more information, (650) 364-2760 x16, [tiff@sfbaymsi.org](mailto:tiff@sfbaymsi.org). Sign up at [flowstobay.org/ccdlocations](http://flowstobay.org/ccdlocations).

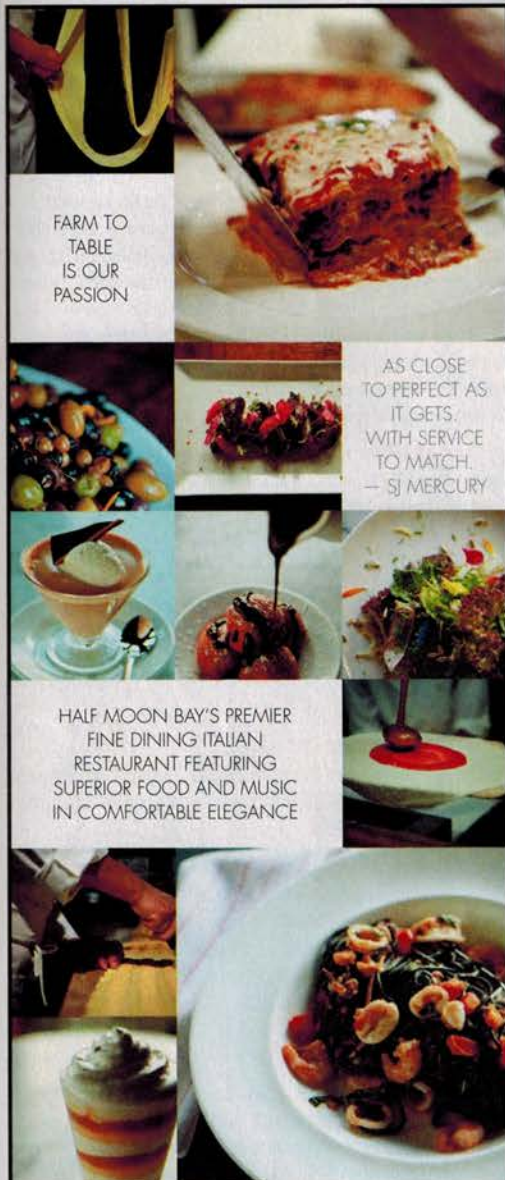
### Pescadero State Beach

Meet at the Pescadero State Beach north parking lot. Contact Gregory Bahr for more information, (650) 533-9952, [jedgregory@gmail.com](mailto:jedgregory@gmail.com). Email the contact to sign up.

### San Gregorio State Beach

Meet at San Gregorio State Beach parking lot, Highway 1, at La Honda Road. Contact Kathleen Dickey for more information, (650) 892-5278, [k8dickey@gmail.com](mailto:k8dickey@gmail.com). Email the contact to sign up.





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## 24,461 pounds of garbage

Last year, nearly 4,000 Coastal  
Cleanup Day participants in San  
Mateo County picked up 24,461  
pounds of trash and recycling.



Volunteer Amy Peterson, of El Granada, searches for trash on the jetty during a recent beach cleanup at Pillar Point Harbor.

people on average.

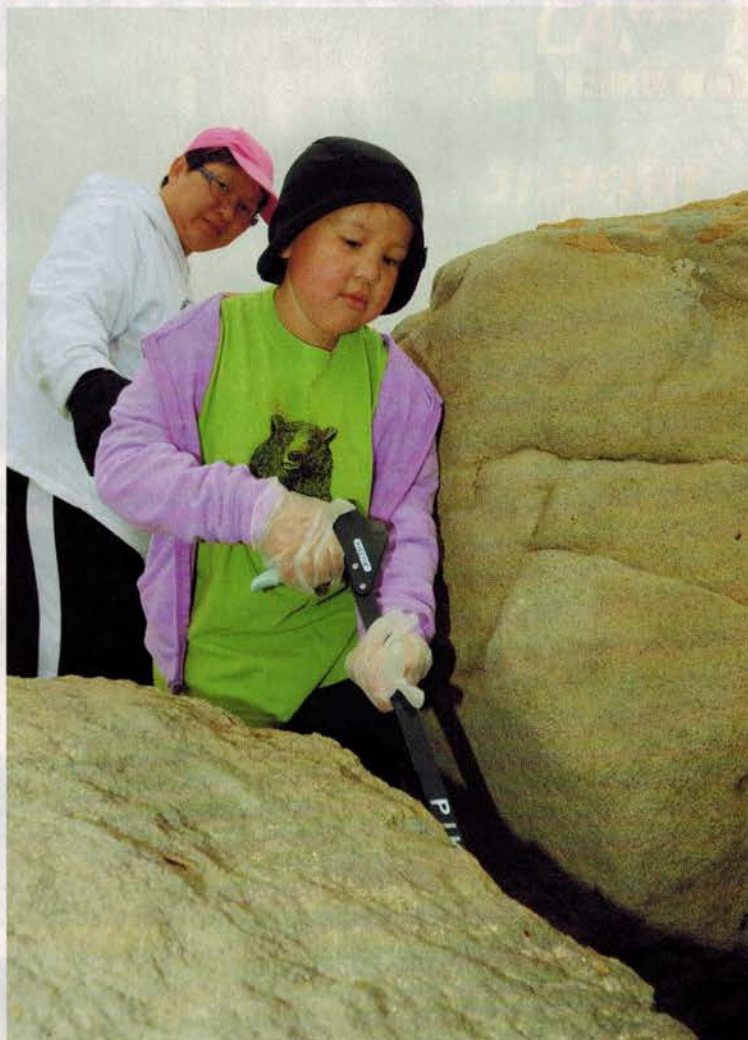
"I'm so involved with it now," Gerakin said. "It's almost a part-time job. Sometimes I think I should slow down because I have a 9-5 job, but I can't. It's stronger than me."

In a few weeks, Gerakin will serve as site captain for a cleanup at Mavericks on California Coastal Cleanup Day, complete with kayakers picking up trash in the water. But for Gerakin and other Coastsiders,

looking after local beaches is a labor of love that can't be contained in a one-day event.

Several other organizations also hold frequent coastal cleanups, including Save Our Shores, Surfrider Foundation and Coastsides Land Trust. San Mateo County coordinated its Coastal Cleanup Day since 2005, and the event grew from 971 volunteers then to 4,490 in 2012. Last year there were fewer volunteers due to rain.





Volunteer Bebe Wiggs, 7, of El Granada, and her mom Nancy Wiggs pick up some trash at Pillar Point Harbor.

"We promote beach cleanliness by focusing on outreach related to waterways that lead to beaches, such as creeks and storm drains," said San Mateo County Health System Public Information and Communications Officer Robyn Thaw in an email. "Outreach efforts include cleanup activities throughout the year, school presentations that emphasize litter prevention, and education through our stormwater inspection program."

El Granada resident Peggy Ruse has served as a site captain for Coastal Cleanup Day for four years, including the upcoming event at Dunes Beach, one of 10 Coastside sites.

"Whenever I'm on the beach, I'm always picking up stuff," Ruse said from foggy Dunes Beach, where she illustrated her point by picking up a plastic wrapper.

Ruse says that volunteering has always been important to her, and living near the beach for the last 14 years swayed her to do a lot

**"WHENEVER I'M ON THE BEACH,  
I'M ALWAYS PICKING UP STUFF."**

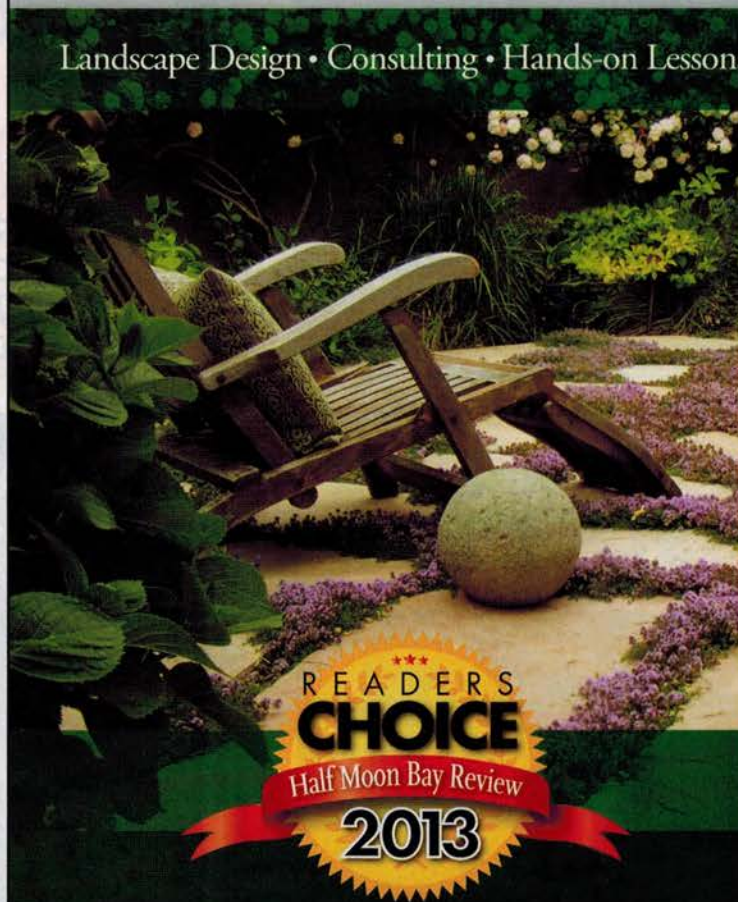
— PEGGY RUSE

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of pollution prevention volunteer work. Her time spent as a Fitzgerald Marine Reserve docent and as a docent at the California Academy of Sciences has shed a light on the ill effects of pollution. At a recent Academy of Sciences exhibit on skulls, Ruse saw a seal skull with a fishing line in its brain cavity.

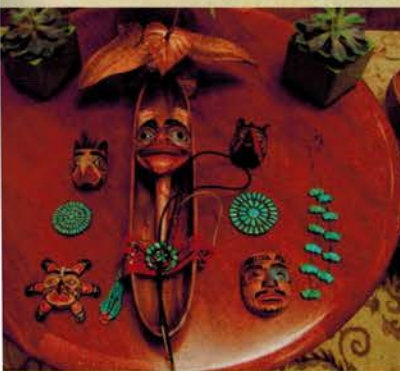
"I've seen firsthand birds and mammals with plastic stuck around them," she said.

At Coastal Cleanup Day, Ruse frequently encourages participants, who come from around the Bay Area, to start cleanups in their own communities.

To Gerakin, only two minutes can make a big difference in improving the health of local beaches and waterways.

"Every time you go to the beach, take two minutes and pick up trash around you," she said. "If everybody did a little bit, we would make a big difference." **HMB**

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## By the numbers

According to Ocean Conservancy, much of the coastal trash picked up internationally is related to food and drink. Here are the top five items collected according to their 2014 report:

**2,043,470** cigarette butts

**1,685,422** food wrappers

**940,170** beverage bottles (plastic)

**847,972** bottle caps (plastic):

**555,007** Straws, stirrers