

Indy Book Stores ‘Open’ for Business

By Judy Salamacha



Coalesce Book Store Owner Linna Thomas shows Nancy Ballenger's new book about children's grief now on sale. Call 805.772-2280.



If you aren't reading these days, Volumes of Pleasure Book Shoppe also has lots of puzzles and games for sale. Call owner Carroll Leslie (pictured) at 805.528-5565.

Let's celebrate some good news! Morro Bay and Los Osos still have two independent bookstores and both are "open" for business.

Linna Thomas, owner/operator of Coalesce Book Store (<https://coalescebookstore.com/>) and Carroll Leslie, owner/operator of Volumes of Pleasure Book Shoppe (<http://www.volumesofpleasure-bookshoppe.com/>) are first to admit it took a pandemic to overcome their tech phobias, but folks can now browse their new bookshelves on FaceBook and discover dozens of posted photos showcasing their new and used book offerings and other retail products.

As of this writing customers, need to order ahead by phone or email then arrange a time for pick-up. Once at the book shop "knock three times"—yes, singing is allowed—to alert staff to answer the front door. A muffled, appropriately masked

voice will confirm who's order is being picked up then a gloved hand will reach out to deliver your purchase. You can literally feel the smiles and enjoy sincere words of appreciation for your purchases however large or small.

Thomas has been selling books and staging community events at Coalesce Book Store & Garden Wedding Chapel at 845 Main Street in Morro Bay for over 40 years.

"When this all happened we wondered what we could do," she said. "Our business depends on the revenue from our chapel bookings and April and May were exceptionally busy."

Multiple weddings every weekend, concerts, special events like yoga and Sunday meditation plus book signings by local authors all had to be canceled or postponed.

In fact, the very weekend SLO County sheltered-in-place, Thomas had invited

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Urgent Care Staff Fight on the Front Lines Against COVID-19

Story & Photo By Neil Farrell



Medical Assistant, Ruby Ladkin (left), and Physician's Assistant Dr. John Michalak of Urgent Care in Morro Bay are on the local front lines in the fight against the coronavirus, testing hundreds of local residents for the disease.

They man the local front lines in the fight against the coronavirus pandemic, with doors open to anyone who wants to be tested for the virus.

Urgent Care of Morro Bay Physician's Assistant, Dr. John Michalak, said their office has been testing from seven to 10 patients a day for the past month. And while he wasn't sure off hand of the exact number of nasal swab tests they've done, he knows the number of positive tests they've had — zero.

"We've had two people test positive in the Pismo Office," he explained. "But there've been none here" in Morro Bay.

He cautioned that he doesn't know how many local people had been tested through the County Health Department, but according to figures released on the County's COVID-19 website (see: www.ReadySLO.org), Morro Bay has had just six confirmed cases of COVID-19, the disease caused by the coronavirus. And that figure

has held steadfast for nearly a month.

They are not doing the antibody tests at this time, Dr. Michalak said, which can confirm whether a person has antibodies for the virus, a sign that they have already contracted and gotten over it. He hopes they will have that test available soon, as well.

Meanwhile, though initial guidelines from the County Health Officer were for anyone with symptoms to seek a test through their doctor or local medical clinic, like Urgent Care; now, they want to test everyone they can.

"We're testing anybody and everybody who wants a test," said Dr. Michalak. "We want to test as many people as possible because we want to get a better look at the data" and thus have a better understanding of how wide spread the virus actually is. "And there are asymptomatic cases, too."

Asymptomatic patients are infected and possibly contagious but have none of

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County Reopening Guidelines Hit by Delays

By Theresa-Marie Wilson

Last week, San Luis Obispo County officials unveiled a framework for re-opening the county after much anticipation from business owners and community members, but already there is a delay in when that day will come.

The Steps to Adapt & Reopen Together (START) Guide is a phased approach to reopening during the coronavirus pandemic.

Many were hoping that the guidelines would go into effect May 8th following the State's announcement that California may soon move to an "early Stage 2" of reopening allowing retail businesses to open with curbside pickup and delivery, but no in-store shopping.

It's unclear if SLO County will be allowed to do anything beyond that on Friday, County officials said.

"It's unclear whether the State will give us the latitude to move forward in our own measured way with the approach outlined in our START Guide," said County Public Health Officer, Dr. Penny Borenstein. "This is very disappointing because our community is ready to move forward. We continue to advocate and plan for local control and will revise our START Guide, as promised."

The County cannot implement the framework until three things happen: (1) the State lifts or modifies its shelter at

home order, (2) the State allows for local control, and (3) the County issues another executive order moving to Phase 1. Local officials say the State has not given local control, even with its announcement for "regional variation" to reopening on Friday.

"We appreciate the State's efforts to move toward reopening, but we would like authorization to move forward with our approach as outlined in the START Guide," said County Administrative Officer and Emergency Services Director Wade Horton.

The START Guide, which is superseded by the State, is three phases, each with public health criteria for moving to and from phases. Dr. Borenstein, is responsible for determining the guidelines for reopening.

"I am confident that our community will be able to take steps to adapt and reopen together," said Dr. Borenstein. "This dynamic draft guide provides the public with our desired approach for a phased reopening of our communities and economy."

The County cautions, "Any reopening may be associated with an unpredictable amount of risk. However, given existing scientific evidence and analysis of SLO County's risk profile, these guidelines are proportionate but should be utilized in the

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City's Tax Shortfalls Called 'Staggering'

By Neil Farrell

The tax shortfalls expected to hit Morro Bay from the coronavirus economic shutdown will be more like an avalanche to the City's budget this fiscal year and becoming potentially much worse next year.

The new figures on the economic effects from the shelter-at-home orders and shuttering of "non-essential" businesses, was already expected to hit hard, but the amounts being discussed are according to the City, "staggering."

The City Council on April 28 took actions to help plug an anticipated revenue loss of \$2 million to \$3M in the last quarter of Fiscal Year 2019/2020, roughly 14% to 20% of the annual General Fund.

And the shortfall is anticipated to be \$4M to \$5M in Fiscal Year 2020/2021, or 27% to 34% of the general fund, according to City Manager Scott Collins.

And it could even get worse than that. "Losses could increase beyond that depending on the re-opening of our society," reads Collins' report, "the tourism patterns that emerge from that, and the extent to which there is a second surge of COVID-19 in the fall and winter of 2020/21, which

could result in shelter-at-home orders being reissued."

The Harbor Department "anticipates approximately \$200,000 losses in harbor revenues through the remainder of the FY 2019/20, with an additional cash flow impact of up to \$110,000 in deferred monthly rent revenues in the Harbor Fund."

The Harbor Fund is paid entirely by waterfront leaseholders and City slip holders and is used for maintenance of harbor facilities and the department's personnel.

The City is using economic predictions and guidance from the Government Finance Officers Association's 12-stage, "Financial Recovery Process: Recovery from Financial Disaster and Fiscal First Aid," to draft its plan to weather the storm.

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Fire Safety During the Pandemic

By Theresa-Marie Wilson



Cal Fire South Bay Station 15 in Los Osos. Photo by Theresa-Marie Wilson

The coronavirus has put a stop to many of our day-to-day activities, but it won't stop a fire. Cal Fire South Bay Station 15 operating in Los Osos is prepared for both the pandemic and wildfire season.

The department has made some changes to its day-to-day structure while maintaining a balance between social distancing precautions and necessary emergency responses.

"In terms of our emergency response, we are donning appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) on each incident and decontaminating our equipment after each use," said Danny Ciecek, fire captain and paramedic with Station 15. "We are also limiting personnel that are within 6 feet of patients and only putting our folks in that space on an as needed basis. There have been some adjustments, but it's what we need to do right now. After about 6 weeks of these measures, it has become almost normal for us. But the first couple weeks were very stressful."

Keeping public safety in mind, firefighters are limiting their time out in public to essential projects and grocery shopping. The department has also temporarily suspended commercial occupancy inspections, school inspections, and station tours as well as bi-monthly training drills with their reserve firefighter staff of about 20. All non-essential training has also been postponed or canceled.

Within fire stations, where groups of firefighters co-habitat on shifts — living, eating and working together — vulnerability to the coronavirus is a concern.

"Social distancing is difficult to achieve in a fire station because it has some similarities to home life," said Ciecek "We spend a lot of time together."

We've started conducting daily wellness checks of our staff, with temperature readings. We have plans in place in the event an employee starts showing symptoms. We're following the recommendations from health officials. Operationally, we're trying to stay as status quo as possible, while adding these new steps and considerations."

To date, no firefighter at the station has tested positive for COVID-19.

Although fire safety should be practiced year round, the current situation calls for extra attention to things people may have overlooked.

"Since folks are spending so much time at home, it may be a good time to review or establish a fire safety plan at home," Ciecek said. "Maybe it involves looking at ones electrical equipment, or maybe an escape plan. This time spent at home could absolutely be used to talk about fire safety and preparation."

With many adults and children staying at home during the pandemic, electrical outlets are likely being used more as everyone plugs in to charge phones, laptops and other digital equipment for work, distance learning or bingeing a favorite show. Often this is done in the same outlet, which

can create a fire hazard.

"Overloading the power supply of a home is a real hazard," Ciecek said. "That's why it's so important use powered equipment and accessories in appropriate ways."

Hazards include equipment plugged into extension cords that are then plugged into a surge protector, which is then plugged into a wall socket. Remember, when charging smartphones and other digital devices, only use the charging cord that came with the device, and do not charge a device under your pillow, on your bed or on a couch.

Ciecek said another scenario is anytime temporary lighting, such as seasonal Christmas lights, are used in a permanent setting.

"These are examples of electrical equipment or accessories being used in ways that exceed their intended capacity," he said.

To add to already taxing times, wildfire season, which is basically year round in the state, is reaching the high-risk time of year. Everything from manpower to protective gear could be put to the test.

Locally, Cal Fire has moved from a winter preparedness mode into transitional staffing, which includes fire engines staffed throughout the County as well as aircraft at Paso Robles Air Attack Base. There will also be one more big up staffing of seasonal firefighters in the County in the next few weeks.

"Risk of wildfire is coming, like it always does this time of year," Ciecek said. "Just as we've made modifications to how we respond and handle emergencies with the COVID 19 situation, we will adjust our operation to wildland fire response."

As part of standard procedure this time of year, Station 15 will move forward with annual weed abatement inspections beginning June 1st. Further, information about a community-chipping event to help eliminate waste collected from clearing around homes will come out in the next few weeks.

City Approves Vaping Ban, Smoking Restrictions

By Neil Farrell

An ordinance to ban the sale of vaping products, further restrict where people can smoke, and enacting a new special tax on tobacco outlets was approved by the Morro Bay City Council, starting a months-long clock ticking until it takes effect.

Ordinance No. 632's restrictions on smoking at multi-family (apartments/condos) goes into effect this coming Aug. 1; a ban on the sale of vaping products takes effect on Dec. 1; and a new tobacco retailer's licensing program would start July 1, 2021, according to the City Manager.

The new law ends a lengthy review and debate over beefed up anti-smoking restrictions that were jumpstarted when the American Lung Association gave the City a D-grade in its smoking restrictions, this even though the City has long had an ordinance that prohibits smoking in all public places — from City parks and the beach, to streets and sidewalks.

This prohibition is on top of the State's prohibition of smoking at indoor public facilities and businesses.

Indeed, State law prohibits smoking within 20 feet of the entrance of any public building.

The City Council held public hearings on the ordinance in October, November, and December 2019, in January and on Feb. 11, when the Council appeared split 3-2 on the new law, delaying action for several weeks.

But that delay turned out to be a holdout for additional restrictions to require tobacco retailers to check IDs for every purchase "regardless of what age the purchaser appears," according to an April 6 staff report.

The Community Development Department plan-

ners would also look at further restricting the locations of tobacco retailers, which would come back later for possible action, depending on how that investigation turns out.

Of the provisions in the law, the new retailer's license, banning smoking in apartment complexes and banning flavored tobacco (except menthol) came directly from the Lung Association's report card and are intended to "reduce exposure to secondhand smoke, as well as curtail youth access to tobacco products."

As to the vaping ban, the impetus for action came from Mayor John Headding and his concern over a rise in vaping by local teenagers as revealed in a student poll, and at both the local middle school and high school.

But in a previous interview, Morro Bay High Principal Kyle Pruitt, said the students they've caught with vaping pens of various design and from different manufacturers, were being obtained through websites like Craig's List and Instagram and not from local stores.

The new law bans smoking in individual units and common areas of apartment and condo complexes, senior and assisted living facilities, and long-term care facilities, "except in designated smoking areas."

It requires all new and renewed leases for multi-unit residences to prohibit smoking; and requires landlords to notify their tenants in writing of the new law and post "No Smoking" signs.

The ordinance prohibits stores with pharmacies from selling tobacco products.

It prohibits the sale of single cigars that cost less than \$5, and prohibits breaking apart cigar packs to sell them individually. And it prohibits the sale of packs of cigars containing less than five stogies.

All flavored tobacco products are prohibited except for menthol cigarettes and chewing tobacco.

The vaping ban is complete and covers tobacco vaping

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products but still allows sales of vaping systems with cannabis (pot) and CBD, which is derived from hemp.

Ironically, MBHS Principal Pruitt said his students were more often being caught with cannabis and CBD vaping pens.

However, the City awarded two medical marijuana dispensary licenses that should open some time soon. A large portion of those businesses' sales are vaping delivery systems.

The dispensaries are anticipated to give the City a boost in sales tax revenues, as well as monies from a special 5% tax the City placed on their sales.

Morro Bay's vaping ban is happening parallel to proposed or already enacted bans in the City of San Luis Obispo and SLO County and when those bans are fully enacted, it would force those who use e-cigarettes or vaping systems to drive out of the area to buy them or get their products online, because a ban on sales and restrictions on where one can vape, still does not ban their use for those over 21.

The City got some pushback from a business association out of Sacramento. Jivtesh Gill, chairman of the American Petroleum and Convenience Store Association (APCA), asked council members to oppose the vaping ban and restrictions on sales of tobacco products, including specifically the sale of flavored products.

"The sale of flavored tobacco products are an important part of a retailer's business model," Gill said. "Tobacco sales drive ancillary sales of gas, food, snacks and other items sold at our stores and gas stations. If we lose the ability to sell flavored tobacco products, our customers will go elsewhere. If this ban is adopted, customers will simply turn to ordering flavored tobacco products over the Internet or traveling a short distance to another city that allows the sale of all tobacco products."

He explains why they oppose the ordinance. "We oppose this sweeping sales ban," he said, "as it eliminates an entire category of products from our stores despite the fact that flavored traditional tobacco products [cigarettes, chewing tobacco and cigars] are not attractive to youth."

"Banning legal products at licensed retail locations would undermine the city's and the state's tobacco retail licensing program, which has successfully limited youth access to tobacco, protected consumers from adulterated products, and given government enforcement tools."

The City previously said there were 19 local businesses that sell tobacco products, including two "smoke shop" specialty stores, who would be hit hardest by the ban.

"The tobacco regulations may have an impact on the local economy in a way that would affect City finances," the City admitted, "but the nature and extent of such effects are currently unknown."

Beaches Crowding Discouraged

It's spring and beach weather is settling in on the Central Coast. But residents are being advised to continue social distancing even as you get sand between your toes.

"As the weather becomes more inviting," the County Health Department said in a news release, "officials remind residents to practice physical distancing at beaches and ask out-of-town visitors to delay their travel to SLO County until further notice. Safe and responsible outdoor activity includes gathering only with the people you live with and staying at least six feet away from others."

The County Administrator, Wade Horton, who has led the County's response to the Coronavirus Pandemic, said, "I've said before, that while we normally welcome visitors, now is not the time for tourism. That is still true. We must keep our community as healthy as possible and right now that means acting responsibly in our outdoor areas."

The County has already closed its parks, including the parking lot at Cayucos Beach, the Cayucos Pier. One can still walk or jog, surf on the beach, but the parking lots are barricaded.

In Southern California — Orange County and Ventura — residents flocked by the thousands to the beach April 25-26, seeking relief from a heat wave. Images of people on the beach upset Gov. Gavin Newsom enough that he ordered beaches in Orange County closed.

Thus far the order hasn't been extended to all of the State's 840 miles of coastline but apparently that could change if the Governor so orders it.

For updates and questions on COVID-19 in SLO County, see: ReadySLO.org or call the Public Health Information Line at (805) 788-2903, or the phone assistance center at (805) 543-2444, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. on weekdays, and from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. on weekends.

Economy Halted But Tax Bills Ramble On

By Neil Farrell

The Coronavirus has pretty much shutdown the local economy but taxes march along unabated.

County Supervisors recently approved setting a hearing date for July 7 to consider a Resolution that would put delinquent special taxes and fees onto the property tax roles, a policy that's been done for many years to collect

charges due the County for things like fire protection, weed abatement and sewer service.

If the Supervisors agree, delinquent charges would be placed on the fiscal year 2020-21 (which starts July 1) tax roles, where they can't be avoided without risking the loss of private property.

The County Tax Collector has the authority to seize and sell property for non-payment of taxes, which is why the County attaches unpaid bills to property tax bills, upping the risk for non-payment.

According to the County staff report, customers in Lake Nacimiento's Oak Shores neighborhood, County Service Area 7-A, where the County runs the sewer system, the residents owe \$282,000 in unpaid fees, the most by far of any of the four areas with delinquencies.

Supplemental sewer charge went into effect in February, according to Kristi Smith, an accountant in the Public Works Department. She said the figure could ultimately be much less, as property owners in Oak Shores are still catching up with the new bills, and not all will still be delinquent by the time the hearing comes around in July.

CSA-10, the County's water system in Cayucos has \$1,200 worth of delinquencies for weed abatement, and the Los Osos Service Area — Monarch Grove Subdivision owes \$1,900. This service area is the communitywide sewer system.

And property owners in CSA-1 in Nipomo have \$1,200 in delinquencies for sewer service.

In Cayucos the delinquencies for weed abatement are tied at the hip with the dismantling of the local fire department.

In November 2018, CSA-10 assumed responsibility for fire protection services in all of Cayucos, taking over from the Cayucos Fire District that was disbanded at the behest of the district board. This came after voters rejected a huge hike in the annual fire district fees.

The hike would have raised the district's revenues enough to pay for a full time, fully-staffed fire department. When that vote failed, the district was left with little choice but to disband and ask the County Fire Department to take over.

County Fire is under contract with Cal Fire, so the new firefighters in Cayucos work for Cal Fire, which has already done weed abatements for those who didn't do it themselves.

The County will send out delinquency notices a few weeks before the July 7 vote and any property owners who pay their bills before that, will be taken off the list.



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SLORTA to Build New \$31 Million HQ

By Neil Farrell



The San Luis Obispo Regional Transit Authority is almost ready to start construction on a new \$31 million headquarters on vacant land on SLO’s Elks Lane. Rendering courtesy SLORTA

Work is progressing on a new headquarters for the countywide bus agency, with a recent action by County Supervisors the final hurdle toward financing construction of the \$31 million overall project.

Geoff Straw, the executive director of the San Luis Obispo Regional Transit Authority or SLORTA, said Supervisors’ support for borrowing some \$25 million for the new HQ was one of the final actions needed to finance the new facility.

Straw said the SLORTA along with Community Action Partnership of SLO, a non-profit organization running programs for the homeless among many other services, had purchased a large property on Prado Lane in San Luis Obispo.

CAPSLO along with the County and Homeless Coalition built the “40 Prado” homeless shelter and services facility, completed in September 2018, and Straw said they’ve been working on RTA’s new facility next door for some 9 years.

He said they’ve been going through the environmental review and permitting process with the City of SLO’s planning department, and completed permitting for the project last summer.

The agency went out for bids in March and Straw said they will likely award a construction contract May 6 when the RTA board meets to decide on the final funding scheme.

The RTA got two bids for the job — Specialty Construction Inc., at \$18.3M and Newton Const., at \$17.2M. Both companies are from San Luis Obispo.

The project involves construction of a single-story, 28,650 square foot bus maintenance facility with over 2,600 s.f. of mezzanine/equipment platform located on a 6.44-acre site at 253 Elks Ln., San Luis Obispo, according to a project description posted on RTA’s website (see: slorta.org).

The building would accommodate operations, administration and maintenance functions. There’s also a bus

parking area with an overhead canopy, and includes “offsite improvements, specifically the ‘T-intersection’ for future Elks Lane realignment.”

Under the project schedule, bidding started March 5, and bids were opened April 21. The construction contract is slated to be awarded on May 6, with the start of construction in late May or early June. Completion is scheduled for December 2021.

Straw said they’ve already spent more than \$6M on the project getting it to this point and needed to borrow up to \$25M more to finish it. But as a “joint powers authority” with no taxing powers, the RTA is unable to issue municipal bonds or go into debt without first gaining the approval of County Supervisors, which they did April 21.

RTA is a JPA amongst the County and all seven incorporated cities in SLO County. It runs the South County Transit and the Paso Express bus systems as well as the big RTA buses that crisscross the County multiple times a day and make up the heart of the public transportation system in SLO County.

Currently, Straw said, RTA’s headquarters are in a rented facility located behind the Trader Joe’s store on lower Higuera Street in SLO. The lease for that facility runs out in February 2022 and Straw said they plan to be out of there before the lease comes up for renewal.

On another subject, Straw said they are nearly finished with a complete revamping of the main transit hub in Downtown San Luis Obispo located at the intersection of Osos and Palm Streets.

County Expands Active Virus Testing

San Luis Obispo County is expanding its testing for the coronavirus, following the lead of the State.

“More testing is absolutely essential to understanding the local epidemiology of this disease,” Dr. Penny Borenstein, SLO County Health Officer said in a news release. “This partnership is an important step in the right direction.”

Testing began Monday by appointment only, and will be available Mondays through Fridays from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. at Paso Robles Veterans Hall, 240 Scott St in Paso Robles, and Ramona Garden Community Center, 993 Ramona Ave., in Grover Beach.

Appointments will require people to walk into a facility (not drive through) and will take about 5 minutes.

The County has a list of persons eligible to be tested:

- Healthcare workers and first responders;
- People 65+ or older or any age with chronic medical conditions;
- Residents or employees of congregate care living facilities;
- Persons in essential occupations that includes utilities, grocery, food supply, and public employees; and,
- Any persons exhibiting one or more symptoms of COVID-19 (primarily fever, persistent cough and shortness of breath).

Readers can register for these tests online at: emergency.slo.org/statetesting or register by phone at (888) 634-1123.

The tests are free of charge, and the State will provide the testing materials and staff to conduct the tests.

The tests are to identify people that currently infected with the virus that causes COVID-19. It is not an antibody test to determine whether they have ever been infected.

The County will be evaluating testing capability every week “with the goal to make testing available to all community members.”

County Leases Ranchland to Existing Tenants

By Neil Farrell

County Supervisors have approved a new 5-year lease for ranch property it is in the process of obtaining at the corner of Toro Creek Road and Hwy 1 south of Cayucos.

Escrow was slated to close April 30 on the 258-acre property owned by Chevron — part of a complex land deal put together by the Trust for Public Lands, Cayucos Land Conservancy, Land Conservancy of San Luis Obispo, SLO County Parks Department, the City of Morro Bay and Cayucos Sanitary District.

The deal will eventually include the Chevron Dog Beach, where dogs are allowed off leash, the hillside grasslands, and some of the flatland adjacent to the oil terminal’s shore plant.

In a related action, the Morro Bay City Council on April 28 voted to accept a \$150,000 grant from the State Coastal Conservancy to go towards the purchase of its portion of Dog Beach that is currently owned by the Cayucos Sanitary District.

According to the City report, total cost for the two lots is approximately \$338,050. The remainder of the purchase price [\$188,050] will come from already secured philanthropic funds.”

“The property east of Highway One,” reads a staff report by County Parks Superintendent, Nick Franco, “will be managed as open space until such time that it can be opened to public access. This open space property has been continuously managed by the same tenant and/or tenant’s family for decades.

“This tenant uses grazing to appropriately manage the open space. In addition, the tenant occupies and fully maintains the existing residence and the associated infrastructure. Allowing the tenant to remain and manage the property will significantly reduce the cost of operation to County Parks.”

In the lease agreement, the County is not charging anything for the grazing rights, as Franco explained that cattle grazing the property means the County doesn’t have to deal with weed abatement, fire load reduction, or trespassing, as well as the other potential ills rural property owners must



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Public Notice

Baywood Park Training Area Formerly Used Defense Site Restoration Advisory Board

The Baywood Park Training Area Formerly Used Defense Site (FUDS) is located in Los Osos and Morro Bay, California. From 1943 to 1946, the area was used for military training by soldiers stationed at Camp San Luis Obispo. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is investigating the site under the Defense Environmental Restoration Program for hazards, such as military munitions, that may remain from previous military activities.

The Department of Defense encourages community involvement in the environmental restoration process. A Restoration Advisory Board (RAB) is one method the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers may use to facilitate public participation at FUDS. RABs provide a collaborative forum for landowners, community members, government agencies and other interested parties to discuss and identify the most efficient and productive means to restore the environment. More RAB information is available at <http://www.denix.osd.mil/rab/home/unassigned/rab-rule-handbook>.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Los Angeles District, is evaluating the community’s interest in establishing a RAB for the Baywood Park Training Area FUDS. Community members may provide comments about interest in establishing a RAB no later than May 29, 2020. Inquiries or questions should be submitted to FUDS.SPL@usace.army.mil.



US Army Corps of Engineers

Baywood Park FUDS Project Manager
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, LA District
915 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 930
Los Angeles, CA 90017
Phone: 213-452-3994
Email: FUDS.SPL@usace.army.mil

deal with.

In the lease agreement, John and Kathleen Thomson are named as the tenants and the initial rent is set at \$800 a month terminating April 30, 2025. Starting in 2021, the rent will go up 5% a year.

Franco said, “The tenant occupies and fully maintains the existing residence and the associated infrastructure. Allowing the tenant to remain and manage the property will significantly reduce the cost of operation to County Parks.”

And, “The residential lease is lower than market rate because the burden of repair and maintenance falls on the tenant including the replacement of the roof within the term of the lease. Having a tenant knowledgeable about the history and operation of the land on site to effectively manage the property reduces the liability to County Parks for the operation and maintenance of this property,” Franco said.

They must also draft a “grazing plan” to ensure the property isn’t over-grazed causing erosion.

Rodent Poison Kills Other Animals Too

The Morro Coast Audubon Society’s Sweet Springs Nature Preserve lost one of the breeding Great Horned Owls last week.

“It was discovered bleeding and died the following day,” said Judy Neuhauser, president of the Morro Coast Audubon Society, “The amount of blood around the small wound was unusual for the size of the wound, indicating that the blood was not coagulating correctly. A likely cause is the ingestion of rodents poisoned with an anticoagulant rodenticide.”

A week later, one of the owlets was found in poor shape on the ground. It was taken to Pacific Wildlife Care.

“The vet suspects anticoagulant rodenticide poisoning and has begun treatment with Vitamin K,” Neuhauser said, “This may save the life of this little owlet.”

The Morro Coast Audubon Society warns that rat poison kills more than rodents. Any animal — owl, hawk, eagle,

cat, dog, or fox— that eats one of these poisoned rodents is poisoned. That is how the owl at Sweet Springs most likely died, and it brought poisoned rodents back to its young.

Guidelines From page 1

context of the adaptive response in the event of worsening criteria.”

The guide includes what types of businesses can resume with measures of infection control or modifications to how they can do business. Phases will be a minimum of 30 days. Loosening of restrictions should be considered temporary and could change.

“We hope to be back to almost full normalcy with minimum 60 days after the first phase starts,” said Board of Supervisors Chair Lynn Compton in her daily updates on social media.

Everything will move back to the previous phase should conditions worsen. SLO County is currently in pre-Phase 1.

Phase 1

Many businesses including retail, manufacturing, personal care, body art, food facilities, movie theaters, museums and places of worship will see a phased/partial reopening. Parks, playgrounds, campgrounds, gyms and pools will see a modified reopening. Working from home is still encouraged.

All that reopen partially or with modifications will have to adhere to social distancing, gatherings of no more than 10 people, disinfecting strategies and facemasks among others.

Vulnerable populations will continue to stay at home. K-12 schools will have a partial reopening, but colleges will remain closed.

Phase 2 (Begins at least 30 days after a successful Phase 1)

This phase has the same healthy hygiene practices and distancing practices as Phase 1, but gatherings are increased to no more than 50 people. K-12 schools, childcare centers and summer camps will see a modified reopening as will

massage and spa services. Post-secondary institutions are to be determined.

Phase 3 (Begins at least 30 days after a successful phase 2)

Unrestricted staffing and operations can resume and most institutions and businesses can fully reopen.

However, they must ensure enough hand sanitizer and/or hand washing stations are at strategic locations and common or congregation areas at workplaces must be closed.

Post-secondary, large entertainment and sporting venues institutions will have a modified reopening. Clubs, lodges, and meeting halls will be fully open.

Visits to senior facilities and hospitals can resume with strict physical distancing protocols

Vulnerable populations can resume public interactions, but should practice physical distancing and minimizing exposure.

General population physical distancing will be eased and

gatherings with restrictions on numbers of people is to be determined.

“This slow and systematic approach will help us protect public health and our most vulnerable populations, while also providing residents, organizations, and businesses with a path to reopening our communities and economy with COVID-19,” County officials stated in the report, which can be found on ReadySLO.org.

Finally, the County adds that, “It is possible that the second epidemic wave of the COVID-19 outbreak could occur between summer and fall 2020. That outbreak could be larger, infecting more people than the first. This is especially possible when preventive measures are loosened following the first epidemic curve and Cal Poly resumes on-campus instruction and activities.”

Epidemiologists, pathologists, infectious disease specialists, county epidemiologists, and an employment law attorney along with stakeholder input from 250 community leaders all worked to put together the report.

Because this is a living document that will be updated based on current situations, the Morro Bay Chamber of Commerce is asking for public input so that the can most effectively advocate on behalf of the business community. Let your voice be heard at <https://bit.ly/2xrvqKz>.

Review the START Guide, provide feedback, and get other coronavirus updates at ReadySLO.org, call the recorded Public Health Information Line at (805) 788-2903, or staffed phone assistance center at (805) 543-2444, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. on weekdays, and from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. on weekends.

News Briefs

Face Mask Guidelines



Wearing a cloth face covering may not protect you from getting COVID-19. But, if used correctly, wearing a cloth face covering may provide some additional protection.

These recommendations are in line with the CDC:

Recommended:

- In public places like grocery stores, pharmacies, banks, clinics, and other essential businesses
- When getting take-out from restaurants
- When caring for someone sick or with health issues
- While using public transit
- When the store/business requires it

Not recommended:

- For children under 2 years old
- For anyone who has trouble breathing
- While exercising if able to practice physical distancing
- While at home or just outside your home, such as collecting your mail or doing yard work
- While in your personal vehicle

How to Take off Face Masks

- Before you take off the mask, wash your hands well or use hand sanitizer.

- Avoid touching the mask itself, as it could be contaminated. Hold it by the loops, ties, or bands only.
- After removing the mask, wash your hands thoroughly or use hand sanitizer

Car Sparks Fire, Caltrans Guy Puts It Out

A car pulled over into the grass on the side of Hwy 1 is looking like the cause of a small brush fire that a Caltrans worker extinguished.

According to Morro Bay Fire Capt. Scott Subler, they got a report of a fire on Hwy 1 near the Main Street interchange at about 1 p.m. Wednesday, April 22.

They had trouble finding the fire, as there were no signs of smoke. They eventually discovered a small, burned area on the east side of the highway, just past the Morro Bay Boulevard interchange.

Capt. Subler said a Caltrans worker, who was doing maintenance along the highway, came across the fire as it was just starting. The Caltrans worker extinguished the fire before firefighters arrived, limiting the burn area to a small patch of ground.

There was no damage done and no one was injured.

Capt. Subler said with the weather now starting to heat up they are seeing more and more of these kinds of accidental fires, as motorists pull over onto the shoulders of roadways in vehicles with hot catalytic converters and exhaust systems. Such fires are common along roadways.

Cancer Support Through Telehealth

A local organization continues to offer cancer support to those in need during the pandemic. Cancer Sup-

port Community - California Central Coast (CSC-CCC), a non-profit organization that offers social and emotional programs services to local cancer patients, survivors, and their families free of charge, is offering programs, counseling, orientations, and education available via telehealth program and online platforms, “so that no one faces cancer alone.” They are also currently delivering much needed safety care packets, to some families in need.

“For many cancer patients and survivors with compromised immune systems, this public health emergency may likely be a source of anxiety,” said CSC-CCC Executive Director Shannon D’Acquisto. “Cancer can be inherently isolating, and people have a need to relate to others who are going through similar experiences. These unprecedented times have shown a glimpse of the uncertainty, isolation, and anxiety that cancer patients experience daily.”

For information about the Cancer Support Community – CA Central Coast, programs, or to donate, visit www.cscslo.org.

Foster Homes Needed

The County is seeking individuals and families to provide homes on a short term (3-6 months) or longer (6 months or more) basis to foster local children.

The coronavirus situation has created a severe shortage of homes for children in foster care. In particular, the County needs homes open to children age 10 or older, including teenagers and young adults in extended foster care who have lost on-campus housing.

The County also needs homes that may have the ability to quarantine a sick child. If you are able to help, call 805-781-1705, or visit www.slofostercare.com.

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Community

School Parade An Uplifting Gesture

Story & Photos by Neil Farrell



On May 1, students and parents at Del Mar Elementary School in Morro Bay welcomed a parade of teachers and staffers come to lift spirits and reassure the children they are loved and missed. Pictured here from left are: students Dean Thompson and Avila Haugen, mom Danelle Haugen, student Nora Haugen and in front is their future student, Liberty 'Libby' Haugen.

Staff members of Del Mar Elementary School in Morro Bay organized a city-wide parade May 1 to show their students they are loved and missed by their teachers and school staff.

The parade, away to celebrate the families and boost morale, got some help from the City's Community Volunteer Patrol and the City trolley, which led the parade as it wound through North Morro Bay neighborhoods on both sides of the highway, through the Harbor View Tract, the Heights and Downtown, honking and waving to all the kids and parents who came outside with hand-made signs, balloons and soap bubbles.

Del Mar Principal Janet Gould said,

"It was fun but so very emotional to see all of our families who came out with posters, smiles, and tears to wave us on as we cruised throughout the streets of Morro Bay, past the homes of our Del Mar families."

Gould pointed out that Friday, May 1 would have been the Cruise Night for the Annual Car Show, but it was canceled along with other springtime events. "The car show cruise just took on a whole different look this year!" said Gould.

At the least, the Del Mar Parade was a welcomed, uplifting gesture during a time when there hasn't been a whole lot to cheer about.



I'd like to think there are some old timers left who remember Zelle Defenderfer, the Queen of Baywood Park, as she was lovingly referred to. Zelle was a mainstay of the community. She founded The Baywood Park Women's Club (BPWC), an organization that has had a lasting impact on the community.

I was one of the last members to join the organization, and when they disbanded, they donated their remaining funds and the building on 7th Street in Baywood Park (the former Coastal Presbyterian Church) to Cuesta College. For several years I attended Cuesta College's recognition of donors to the institution that included the BPWC. On one occasion I attended the awards ceremony with Ken Defenderfer, Zelle's son.

The Diefenderfer story began in 1931 when a brochure distributed by the late Richard Otto, Baywood Park developer, filtered back to Lincoln, Neb., and fell into the hands of Ralph and Zelle Diefenderfer.

"I had a sister in Fresno, but she hadn't heard about Baywood, so we came out in 1932 to look it over for ourselves," Zelle said. "We bought the house we now live in and the boat concession which went with it. The children and I stayed on to manage the concession and Ralph returned to work with the CB&Q Railway in Lincoln. We traded the concession for the lot next to the house in 1935 after our son, Gerald, had graduated from San Luis Obispo High School and all of us returned to Lincoln. When Ralph retired in 1951, we came back to stay."

Then Zelle, quickly became the organizer of South Bay activities and a grandmother for



Zelle Defenderfer caught on camera on her way to shop at Monday afternoon Farmers Market in Baywood Park. Photo by Joan Sullivan 1990

the entire community. She made friends with Elsie Hewitt, county home advisor and arranged for a group meeting of women in the South Bay. The Baywood Park Women's Club was the outgrowth, organized with Mrs. Diefenderfer as charter president. No building was available for club or community meetings.

"We'd never have had a clubhouse here in Baywood if it hadn't been for her. She was the motivating factor. And she still is. We have a nice building for the community and it's well kept, said Rilla Flannery."

The clubhouse and community building at 1335 Seventh St. brought Mrs. Diefenderfer one of her titles.

Reference: All About Baywood Park 1994 by Joan Sullivan



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By Ruth Ann Angus

Traffic control moves vehicles and pedestrians safely and expeditiously through or around hazardous areas at the

This is a series on the Morro Bay Citizen's Police Academy that began in September of 2019 and continued for nine weeks. Each article will cover the experiences and knowledge gained by the participants on a variety of subjects including Support Services, Records, Property, Evidence, Use of Force, Narcotics, Traffic, Laws of Arrest, Bias, Range Training, Taser, Budget, Firearms Training Simulator, Drone, Body Cameras, Field Training, Detective, SWAT, and Volunteer Program. Participants also heard from the District Attorney, Fire Department, Harbor Department, School Resource Officer, City Manager, and Police Chaplain.



In May, there are several days that are significant including: May 4 - 10 is National Hospital Week, May 6 - 10 is Nurses Week, May 9 is National Foodies Day, May 10 is Mother's Day, May 11 - 17 is National Police Week, May 12 is International Nurses Day, May 16 is International

Fundraiser Continued on page 10

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Police Blotter



Morro Bay Police Logs

- **April 26:** And from the found-lost files... Someone found something somewhere and gave it to police, and someone else lost his wallet in the 900 block of Morro Bay Blvd.
- **April 26:** Police arrested a 38-year-old possible graffi-diot for suspicion of felony vandalism in the 700 block of Quintana.
- **April 25:** Police responded to an assault reported in the

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- 1200 block of Embarcadero. Logs indicated they caught up to their suspect, 49, in the 2900 block of Cedar and cite-released the ruffian for suspicion of battery.
- **April 25:** Police responded at 11:51 a.m. to a disturbance in the 2000 block of Bayview. Logs indicated a 31-year-old hooligan was arrested for suspicion of assault with a deadly weapon and vandalism.
 - **April 25:** Police responded at 9:36 a.m. to Beachcomber and Panay where a bicyclist said some apparently unleashed mongrel collided with him causing him to crash and suffer minor injuries.
 - **April 24:** There was a minor traffic collision reported at 10:23 a.m. in the 3200 block of Beachcomber, and while there was no apparent harm, it doesn't mean there was no foul.
 - **April 23:** Police responded to an uncivil dispute at 1 p.m. in the 2700 block of Greenwood. They made note of the incident for the inevitable next bit of pettifoggery.
 - **April 23:** Someone in the 2800 block of Cedar lost something and called police to report the Morro Bay felony.
 - **April 23:** Police met up with City parks workers at Lila Keiser Park after some apparently thirsty zhclub vandalized the lock on a City water valve.
 - **April 22:** Police stopped a vehicle at 8:50 p.m. at the Silver City MHP in the 500 block of Atascadero Rd. They cited the 31-year-old scofflaw for a suspended license.
 - **April 21:** Police stopped a suspicious vehicle at 8:20 p.m. at Bayshore Drive and Main. Logs indicated the master criminal had a stolen front license plate and matching registration. The apparently gobsmacked driver started having a medical issue and was taken to the hospital for treatment. Police wrote it up for the D.A.
 - **April 21:** Police stopped a suspicious vehicle at 2 a.m. in the 900 block of MBB. Logs indicated the driver, 25, had a warrant related to drugs, driving under the influence of drugs, and possessing drugs and drug paraphernalia. He was mainlined back to jail.
 - **April 20:** Police contacted a suspicious fellow at 8:18 p.m. at City Park on Harbor Street. The 48-year-old apparent idler was nicked for allegedly being higher than the Rock on illegal drugs.
 - **April 20:** Police responded at 2:41 p.m. to Coast Electronics in the 500 block of Quintana after a sticky-fingered thievin' bilge rat stole something.
 - **April 20:** Police responded at 10:19 a.m. to a traffic collision in the 2800 block of Main at the Del Mar Market, which might not happen if the sheeple would all just stay home...
 - **April 20:** Police responded to the 300 block of MBB at 1:20 a.m. and arrested a 32-year-old man for suspicion of damaging City property, a capital offense in these parts.
 - **April 19:** Police contacted a trespasser at 8:37 p.m. at Main and the Boulevard. The apparent swagman, 61, was canned for suspicion of trespassing and being higher than Black Hill on illegal drugs.
 - **April 19:** Someone turned in shotgun shells he or she

- found in the 900 block of MBB. Someone else charged over to the stationhouse and turned in a credit card they'd found.
- **April 19:** Police stopped a suspicious vehicle at 1:42 p.m. in the 700 block of Embarcadero. The 38-year-old hootin' Andy was arrested for alleged trespassing — driving on private property without permission.
 - **April 12:** Police responded at 12:15 p.m. to a car crash at Hwy 41 and Ironwood. No word on the extent of the carnage.
 - **April 18:** Police responded at 5:17 p.m. to a car crash in the 800 block of Embarcadero. No apparent injuries were reported, not boding well for the lawsuit sure to follow.
 - **April 18:** Police contacted a regular customer, 35, at 1:23 p.m. in the 700 block of Embarcadero who apparently stood up a judge. He was given another piece of paper and released, soon to have another warrant.
 - **April 17:** A citizen in the 400 block of Elena told police that some thief stole his wallet from his apartment, which sounds like an inside job. In an unrelated matter, someone found a wallet lying in the street in the 1000 block of Kennedy Way.
 - **April 17:** Police contacted a 38-year-old scofflaw in the 800 block of Morro Bay Blvd., who had multiple warrants. He was cited once again and released under the State's catch-and-release job security program.
 - **April 16:** A citizen in the 2700 block of Hemlock said someone stole his or her family photos and DVDs from their home, proving once again that people will steal anything.
 - **April 16:** Police contacted a suspicious woman at 7:13 a.m. in the 800 block of MBB. The 44-year-old squit was arrested for suspicion of being on narcotics and was booked into the County B&B without too much malarkey.
 - **April 15:** Police responded at 7:24 p.m. to Albertson's where they'd nabbed a sticky-fingered gentleman. According to logs, the 49-year-old fellow was allegedly deep in his cups and wound up being charged with suspicion of petty theft, drunk driving, and a suspended license. Logs indicated he had a child with him, along with a 36-year-old woman who had two warrants and also got pinched. Logs indicated police wrote a report for alleged child endangerment to send to the District Attorney's Office.
 - **April 14:** Police contacted a suspicious chap at 4:15 p.m. in the 200 block of Harbor. The man, 32, was arrested for suspicion of possessing drug paraphernalia, his stash apparently already shot.
 - **April 14:** An apparently duped citizen in the 2800 block of Dogwood reported fraud.
 - **April 14:** Police are investigating a reported vandalism in the 800 block of Shasta involving a residential and commercial property owned by Horizon Realty and Property Management, according to logs.
 - **April 13:** Some vandal struck the Great American Fish Co., in the 1100 block of Embarcadero. Police have no clue as to who the cowardly scalawag was.

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Community

Cambria Council Feeding Neighbors

Through their “Neighbors Feeding Neighbors” campaign, the Cambria Community Council is working to feed people in need during these unprecedented times and community members can get involved.

The Council has been serving the community since 1947 by providing transportation services to seniors and the disabled and supporting non-profit organizations in San Simeon and Cambria. When the coronavirus landed on the doorstep and a staggering segment of local business owners and workforce employees were hit with unexpected financial difficulty, it was clear they could help.

To do so, the Council began collaborating with local service organizations to provide food to support local citizens. Their primary focus is to make certain that people are receiving groceries and staples that they need to survive on a day-to-day basis. Their role in this effort is twofold — to raise funds for food and to inform those in need where they can receive help. To that end, they started a fundraising campaign that includes a letter to donors and a postcard that provides information on how to give a donation and how to receive help.

In order to facilitate the program, funds were garnered through grants — the organization received four. In the first round, the Council gave \$19,800 to Cambria Anonymous Neighbors (CAN) for 2 distributions per month; the Lion’s Club Foundation to pay restaurants for hot meals; the Cambria Rotary to buying groceries and deliver them in San Simeon, and LINK Family Resource Center.

The Council will meet again in two weeks to check in with the groups and churches for a second round as more funds arrive.

- Weekly Distribution Sites**
- **1st Thursday 3-4 p.m.** Santa Rosa Church at 1174 Main St, Cambria
 - **2nd Thursday noon- 2 p.m.** Vineyard Church at 1617 Main St, Cambria
 - **3rd Thursday** Old Grammar School at 1350 Main Street
 - **4th Thursday noon-2 p.m.** Vineyard Church at 1617 Main St, Cambria
 - **4th Tuesday 5-6 p.m.** Oceanside Apt. in San Simeon.
 - **Weekdays 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.** Coast Union High School for students only.

Donations to this initiative will help support CAN and LINK Family Resources supplement the weekly food distributions; provide Cambria Rotary with funds for food delivery outreach; and assist the Cambria Lions in providing warm nutritious meals through participating local

restaurants.

“Many of us who are not living paycheck to paycheck have decided that the \$1,200 or \$2,400 stimulus check that we are expecting to receive would best be redirected to those in the community who are in desperate need of assistance,” said Director of the Cambria Community Council, Marcelle Bakula. “The Cambria Community Council is proud to be a part of this generous community and sincerely hopes that you and your family stay safe during these trying times.

To make a donation online, go to cambriacommunity-council.org or mail checks to: Cambria Community Council, PO Box 486, Cambria, CA 93428-0486.

Cambria is Over the Rainbow

By Jill Turnbow



Cambria Center for the Arts is hoping to bring some sunshine and rainbows to the community with the Rainbow Community Art Project.

CCA President, Mari Fedrow, was inspired after watching the One World Together at Home Global Concert on television. In one segment the program featured photos of rainbows placed in windows and storefronts to bring hope to children around the country.

“I just thought our community could use a little spirit-lifting as well,” says Fedrow. She reached out to CCA members, artists, students, and friends to start making rainbows to place around town as well as in their own windows. The message is “Together We Shine Through!”

Mari added, “Creating art can bring peace to an artist, and sharing art can bring inspiration to the viewer. And what better way to connect us all than to share rainbows-

the symbol of hope, gratitude, inspiration and joy.”

Anyone in the community can participate. Everyone is asked to use their imagination to create a rainbow, by



drawing, painting, sewing, knitting, or using any medium you prefer. Then display your creation in town or in your home’s window.

CCA Gallery Director, Janet Rooney, has placed a drop off box at Cambria Center for the Arts, 1350 Main St., for those that would prefer the volunteers to place their rainbows for them. You can also post a photo on Facebook or Instagram and tag @CambriaAlliedArts and #CambriaRainbow.

CCA is hoping to see rainbows everywhere to bring inspiration and hope to the entire community.

“The artists are enjoying the burst of creativity during these challenging times,” Rooney said. “Many have responded in such positive ways. It’s just fun.”



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Community

Technically Speaking



Targeted Advertising

Today we need to address a question we have received many times in the past year. “Is Google/Siri/Alexa always listening?” The short answer is yes. In one of our previous articles we mentioned waiving your rights to privacy by simply owning a smartphone.

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This is no coincidence, it is all thanks to carefully constructed programs, apps, websites, and even operating systems relaying this information in the background while you play Candy Crush, or check your email. There is currently no way to fully opt out of this only methods of masking your usage to prevent these companies from building profiles or sharing accurate data.

Chad Crawford is the owner of QuickTech in Los Osos located at 212110th Suite #A. They can be reached at <https://quicktechcomputers.com/> or (805) 806-0165.

Send your questions to chad@quicktechcomputers.com.

Caycuos Chamber Updates 4th of July Events



The Caycuos Chamber is readjusting some events and canceling others due to the current pandemic.

Several elements of the 4th of July celebration, which yearly involves activities planned by community organizations including the Chamber, Caycuos Lioness Club, Caycuos Lions Club, and Caycuos Rotary, plus multiple family, group, and individual sponsors and volunteers, will be postponed until 2021.

“Large-scale activities require months of lead time to engage vendors, print materials, gather sponsors and volunteers, engage public safety plans, and more,” the Chamber website states. “With so many planning uncertainties upon us, the traditional event format cannot proceed as we know it.”

The organization is looking at the possibility for a new format, with plans altering due to changing conditions. The website caycuoschamber.com will have updates as changes come from the State and County.

The July 4th visitors guide is still on track to come out in June. The May Madness Fireworks Fundraiser will not happen this month.

“We’re discussing an alternate event for a later 2020 date, either online or in-person when we are able to do so safely,” the website states.

The July 5 pancake breakfast has been canceled, but many of the traditional events such as the street faire and sandcastle contest remain in discussion.

The Caycuos Lioness Club bingo and pull tabs event is postponed as is the parade and the Lion’s Club barbeque

General questions can be directed to the Caycuos Chamber at caycuoschamber@gmail.com

Letter to the Editor

Police Blotter Isn’t Funny

I’m mostly offended by the Police Blotter. Some of it is funny, but most of items make fun of unfortunate lost souls. Alcohol is not illegal, but drugs are. Driving intoxicated is illegal of course. Most alcoholics and drug abusers have underlying mental health issues, this not something to be laughed at.

The thing that really upset me was from 3-29-20, “a hanging offense in these here parts.” My granddaughter committed suicide by hanging recently and that statement was unnecessary and not funny!

I am interested in the police reports, but why must it be “funny?” Just the facts are needed and appreciated. We are lucky we don’t have rapes or murders locally. Now, that would definitely not be funny.

Janet Meza
Morro Bay

Fundraiser From page 7

Pickle Day, May 17 - 23 is National EMS Week and May 18 - 28 International Pickle Week is celebrated over Memorial Day Weekend.

“The Quick Pickle Kit is a fun DIY and educational activity the family can do together,” Wasko said. “With the Quick Pickle Kit and Spice Packets, children learn science, history, how to make healthy food and reduce food waste. Pickles and pickle juice made with the Quick Pickle Kit are not only great tasting but can also reduce anxiety and can keep your gut healthy to boost your immune system during the coronavirus pandemic.”

Wasko and Gilbert received the 2019 US Small Business Administration (SBA) Award for supporting nonprofits and schools, reducing food waste and providing jobs for disabled adults. The SBA awarded , the owners of Los Osos based Connoisseur Creations, Inc., their Small Business Persons of the Year Award marking the first time that a business from SLO received the award.

Clarification

In our April 23 issue we reported that with the opening up of recreational fishing and the public launch ramp, commercial sport fishing boats (so called “party boats”) would be able to book charters again, so long as they could practice social distancing.

It turns out the County’s orders changed in the time we interviewed city officials and went to press.

Harbor Director Eric Endersby said, “Last week we initially thought that the party boats could operate, but since the County orders weren’t that clear, we inquired further and were informed that party boats could not operate.

“Hence that update that came out with further detail. The order was meant to allow family-type fishing access via private boats or bare-boat type charters, meaning you rent the boat without a captain. Which we really don’t have any of here.”



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View Point

Wait - For the Class of 2020

By Dayna Bennett

Our seniors got screwed. There's no other way to put it. They did. They got screwed out of a lot of great stuff this year. No prom. No grad night. No Senior BBQ. No Senior Ditch Day. No end of year party. And no graduation.

Many left school on Friday the 13th not knowing that was it — the last day of their last year. Now everything is different. They're doing distance learning, can't hang out with their friends, and for those of us with particularly social kids, it's rough. It's a harsh reality, for sure — but this is 2020 and it's Corona Time.

If you're like me, your heart hurts a lot for our kids. But I started thinking about it last night when I read about some people throwing backyard proms for their seniors. And that seems like a cute idea, except for...isn't that sort of missing the bigger lesson here? I mean, why can't they wait?

The one thing I think my generation has collectively failed to do in parenting our kids (and I'm fully throwing myself under this bus) is teach them to WAIT.

Before you think I'm attacking YOUR parenting, non-specific person reading this, just think about it. They don't wait for anything. They're the instant gratification generation. They have never waited for dial-up internet — their pages load instantly. They have never gotten a busy signal and probably wouldn't know what it was if they heard one. They have never had to wait until they got home to get a message on their answering machine. They don't have even have to wait until the end of class to talk to their friends, because they can just text (and obviously that wasn't fast enough, because now they can even text on their watch). Because of Google, they don't have to wait to look up a darn thing. The world is literally at their fingertips. They don't even wait at Disneyland anymore, really, because of FASTPASS! They are the FASTPASS generation.

They don't know how to delay gratification because they've never had to. And we have been their enablers, their accomplices, their dealers — all of us. Our kids are given the keys to the kingdom with the phones and the devices and the computers, and we have given them the keys. We don't know how to make our kids wait.

In the grand scheme of things, not getting a prom and a graduation is far less of a sacrifice than what previous generations gave up. Our kids have no idea and frankly, neither do we.

Of course I am not saying losing prom and graduation and the rest of senior year is not sad. It is! It's a big old disappointment, and we should absolutely acknowledge that and when the time comes, and is safe to do so, honor these kids for their accomplishments!

But isn't this also a chance to teach our kids something about how to deal with disappointment? Instead of throwing your kid a backyard prom now (which would certainly go against our SIP guidelines and potentially put others at risk. Why not take the opportunity to teach them to WAIT?

Think of what a gift and valuable life lesson that is! To give them the tools to do something they rarely have to do, and maybe practice a little ourselves. Cause I think we suck at it, too.

Wait

Wait so that you don't inadvertently sicken someone more vulnerable than you.

Wait so that our community has a chance to get ahead of the virus, because we know spreading the infections out over time saves lives by not over-burdening the system.

Wait so that there is time and opportunity to learn more about this beast we are collectively fighting, so that



when you do get sick with it, or when your grandma does, the experts know more and can treat it more effectively.

Wait so that we have time to get closer to a vaccine.

Wait because they WILL get to graduate, and they will get to celebrate, but won't that be better if more of us are still here?

Wait because the bigger picture means more than this one celebration.

Wait because not everything needs to happen now.

Wait because right now, we don't have to be doing anything extra — we just need to be. And it's enough.

Wait because it matters what kind of citizen you are, and it matters what kind of citizens we teach our kids to be.

Wait because it's not just about you, or me, or them, it's about all of us.

Dayna is a writer and an educator who works with local students in SLO and SB Counties. Her son is a senior at Arroyo Grande High School.

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Education

NASA Selects Poly to Help Develop New Technology

Cal Poly is teaming up with NASA and nine other university teams across the nation to advance small spacecraft technologies that will help pave the way for human and robotic lunar exploration.

“Cal Poly’s CubeSat Lab has a history of collaboration with a number of different NASA centers,” said John Bellardo, who directs the lab — the campus epicenter for the class of small satellites about the size of a loaf of bread. “These awards are further evidence of that. I expect these opportunities to continue into the future.”

Under NASA’s Artemis lunar exploration program aims to return men and women astronauts to the moon by 2024. “SmallSats” — spacecraft that range from CubeSats that Cal Poly helped turn into an industry standard up to larger cousins the size of a refrigerator — will help blaze the trail.

While small satellites mainly operate in low-Earth orbit, those with an altitude of up to 1,200 miles (2,000 km), technological advancements through these collaborative partnerships will more fully realize their potential as they extend the capabilities needed in complex lunar exploration missions.

“As we prepare for the next robotic and crewed missions to the moon, we expect small spacecraft to help forge the path ahead by scouting terrain, prospecting for resources and establishing communications and navigation capabilities in cislunar space,” said Christopher Baker, program executive for NASA’s Small Spacecraft Technology program. “Taking advantage of their small size and shorter development timelines, small spacecraft are increasingly capable as both rapid precursor missions and as cost-effective, in-space infrastructure.”

SmallSats could provide exploration missions with communications relays or navigation services at the moon, similar to role that communications and GPS satellites play around Earth. This capability could play an important role in helping NASA build a sustainable presence on the moon.

The NASA program selected the university teams for its SmallSat Technology Partnerships initiative to mature new systems and capabilities. The technology development projects focus on three technical areas needed for lunar-bound missions:

- Use of small spacecraft to help provide lunar communications and navigation services
- Small spacecraft propulsion for lunar missions and potential return of lunar samples using small spacecraft
- Small spacecraft electrical power and thermal management systems tailored for the distant and harsh environment between Earth and the moon

In addition to Cal Poly, the other selected California schools are: California State University at Los Angeles; San Diego State University, UCLA; and UC Irvine. The remaining universities are: Arizona State University, Tempe; University of Colorado, Boulder; University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign; University of Texas, Austin; and Utah State University, Logan.

Cal Poly will participate in a pair of two-year projects,

both in collaboration with NASA’s Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena, California. The grants are valued at \$200,000. The first, under the SmallSat Propulsion for Lunar Missions area, will team Cal Poly with UC Irvine for a project titled “Variable Specific Impulse Electro-spray Thrusters for SmallSat Propulsion.”

The project will build on existing propulsion technology that uses electrostatic charges to propel liquid droplets to generate thrust. It will further develop and test a more-versatile system capable of operating in either a high-thrust mode when needed, or more efficient low-thrust mode to conserve fuel and save weight. This technology will add mission flexibility to electrospray propulsion systems while keeping within the size suited constraints of small spacecraft.

“Cal Poly will be providing a design for a CubeSat to test the thrusters, including an electrical subsystem that is capable of powering the thrusters,” Bellardo said. “UCI will be focusing more on the thruster side. Cal Poly will be focused on the spacecraft side.”

The second proposal, under NASA’s Advanced Electrical Power Subsystem and Thermal Management Technology area, pairs Cal Poly with Cal State Los Angeles for a project titled “An Additively Manufactured Deployable Radiator with Oscillating Heat Pipes to Enable High Power Lunar CubeSats.”

Compact CubeSats do not efficiently dissipate heat, yet lunar missions will demand even more electrical power, which produces heat as a byproduct that could damage core components of a small satellite. The equipment needed for longer duration missions far from Earth orbit includes more powerful radio transmitters while simultaneously dealing with the harsh cislunar thermal environment. The grant will fund the development of a deployable radiator with flexible oscillating heat pipes to provide more efficient heat transfer than traditional thermal straps.

“The more power a spacecraft needs, the more heat gets generated — both during power generation and consumption,” Bellardo said. “Radiators are part of the solution to keeping the spacecraft cooler. The technology is applicable to other small spacecraft as well.”

Jim Cockrell, chief technologist for the Small Spacecraft Technology program, said partnerships between academia and NASA “help cultivate the rapid, agile and cost-conscious small spacecraft approaches that are evolving in the university community, as well as increase support to university efforts and foster a new generation of innovators for NASA and the nation.”

Moreover, he added, these relationships will also give the space agency “access to the bright minds who will one day lead the journey of exploration.”

The SmallSat Technology Partnerships initiative has four primary objectives: develop needed SmallSat technologies for NASA; engage university students in real-world



SmallSat projects; provide student teams with NASA expertise and facilities; and allow NASA engineers to gain insights into the innovative and rapid development paradigm typical of academia. The program has made five rounds of these awards since 2013. Projects are awarded in amounts up to \$200,000 to the university team for up to two years in collaboration with a half-time NASA collaborator per year.

Managed by NASA’s Ames Research Center in California’s Silicon Valley, the program expands U.S. capability to execute unique and more affordable missions through rapid development and in-space demonstration of capabilities for small spacecraft that are applicable to exploration, science and the commercial space sector. It enables new mission architectures through the use of small spacecraft while seeking to expand the reach of small spacecraft to new destinations and challenging new environments.

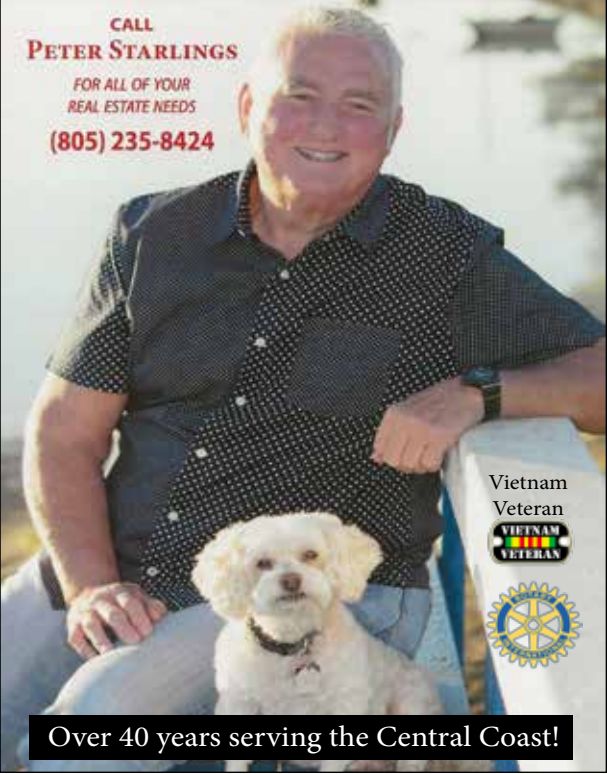
Cal Poly has been at the forefront of small satellite development. CubeSat is a worldwide standard for small satellites originally developed 20 years ago as a collaboration between Cal Poly’s CubeSat Lab and Stanford University. CubeSats give students the opportunity to design, build and launch small satellites into space.

What began as a vehicle for students has been embraced by space agencies, industry, governments and amateur developers across the globe. Hundreds of CubeSats have been launched including nearly dozen built by Cal Poly students.

Bellardo was part of the team that made history last July during the LightSail 2 mission. The Planetary Society, which has partnered with Cal Poly on its two LightSail CubeSats, successfully proved the concept of solar sailing by raising the orbit of the footlong satellite. Bellardo was part of the mission control team that sent radio commands from Cal Poly’s ground station to the craft orbiting 720 kilometers above Earth to unfurl its Mylar sail.

In addition, during the 2018-19 school year alone, the Computer Science professor and his team of 80 students, faculty and staff launched a trio of homegrown Cal Poly satellites and also assisted with the twin MarCO satellites, the first CubeSats to leave Earth’s orbit as a part of the InSight Mars landing mission. The six-unit MarCO pair were briefcase sized satellites that traveled for six months to provide radio relay during a flyby of the Red Planet.

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Community

SLO Cruise Night is Back

By Theresa-Marie Wilson



Folks who have lived in the area for a long time might remember piling into your cars and heading to San Luis Obispo on Thursday nights for a night of cruising Higuera Street. After 4 decades, the Downtown SLO Cruise is back and the next one is May 7.

The cruise started in the 70s and the final ride was on July 3, 1980, according to leader of the pack Matthew D. Herrera. Along with efforts by David Medzyk and Sherry Imel, Herrera and crew are revving up interest in the 2020 version mostly via a Facebook page where reading posts is like a virtual reunion.

According to a Tribune article from 1980, the City Council voted to end the popular cruise night after then Police Chief Roger Neuman said he had received numerous complaints that the event made “shopping along Higuera an unsavory prospect.”

The result was to barricade the one-way Higuera Street from 6 p.m. to midnight. Now folks are used to the street closure on Thursday nights due to the farmers’ market, but that didn’t begin until 1983.

The unofficial rules for the event, posted on facebook by David Medzyk, are a step back in time. “Any car club should be

welcomed to play, but you have to play by the ancient, honorable, and original rules of car cruising.

- 1 There is no planning of a cruise. Cruise happens.
- 2 Try to not get arrested.
- 3 Don’t wreck.
- 4 If she has a curfew, don’t piss off her dad. (I’m just gonna guess that #4 no longer applies to most of us).

I suppose we can add a temporary #5- Social distance while the crisis is a thing.”

The cruise will begin between 7:00-7:30 p.m. at the Wells Fargo parking lot. All mandated safety-distancing rules apply.

Herrera posted that he hopes the return of the cruise will lift the spirits of people.

“I might just also allow them something to look forward to. It might bring a touch of grace and joy to their lives. A means to harmlessly and safely enjoy themselves, and to blow off a bit of steam.”

Plans are in the works to make it a regular Wednesday night event once the SLO Farmers’ Market returns.

For more information about cruise night, go to the Official Downtown SLO Cruise Facebook page.

Luchador/Chef Wrestles Through Virus Shutdown

Story & Photo by Neil Farrell

He spent 26 years wrestling before crowds of thousands in Mexico City and now he’s wrestling with keeping his family-owned restaurant open in the face of the coronavirus shelter-at-home shutdown.

Gonzalo Garcia, a former professional wrestler in the Lucha Libre circuit of Mexico City is owner along with his wife Carla and Maria Gonzales, of Tacos El Viejon, 2780 Main St., in North Morro Bay.

The restaurant celebrated 1-year in business in February when just weeks later the coronavirus pandemic response issued by the State, County and City put into place shelter-at-home orders and closed all non-essential businesses.

That included most of the nearly 50 Morro Bay restaurants, El Viejon included.

Garcia, who traded in his green, red and white wrestling mask for a chef’s attire, wants to offer a special deal to customers who come to the restaurant for a takeout meal from what is truly a mom & pop operation with “¡Los mejores tacos del mundo!” — “The best tacos in the world!”

An honest to goodness “luchador” (wrestler), Garcia performed for some 26 years, he told Estero Bay News, and was a professional in Mexico City for 5 years. Like luchadores of the past, Garcia is a celebrity in Mexico City where the athletic performers are idolized in a sport that goes back over 100 years. Such celebrities retain some anonymity and thus more privacy in public without the masks. But don the covering, and they are immediately recognized.

The inside wall of Tacos el Viejon (Spanish for “the Old Man”) sports numerous photos of Garcia in his heyday



Gonzalo Garcia a former professional wrestler in Mexico City takes a break from fixing a breakfast burrito for a quick photograph. His restaurant, Tacos el Viejon, 2780 Main St., Morro Bay, is open for take-out during the virus shutdown.

in the ring, posing with various Mexican celebrities and including a couple of framed promotional posters of bouts.

The restaurant serves a Tex-Mex menu of tacos, nachos, quesadillas, burritos and tortas, including several dishes with seafood — shrimp and fish. A liquor license notice on the front door signals that they will soon have beer and wine for sale, too.

Tacos el Viejon open at 8 a.m. daily to 9 p.m. for breakfast, lunch and dinner.

Call in an order at (805) 225-1559. See: www.facebook.com/Tacos-el-Viejon-2179766528980784 for a menu and further information.

New Coffee Saloon Opens

By Neil Farrell

One of Morro Bay’s quaint little neighborhood watering holes is seeing new life with an expanded menu of offerings.

Dark Nectar Coffee Saloon had a soft opening May 1 offering gourmet coffees, pastries, typical bar foods, fine wines and lots of beers on tap.

Jeff Bertoni and Joe Hanby are partners in the new business in what is one of Morro Bay’s older establishments, formerly home of the Moose Jaw, Ruby’s Saloon, The Oar House, and most recently, The Buoy Tavern.

“I used to come here as a customer,” said Bertoni.

The property’s owners did some major improvements, Bertoni said, including new bathrooms, new plumbing, new floor joists, a new roof and a handicapped accessible wheelchair ramp in the bar’s outdoor patio.

They kept the customized, curved bar, adding beer taps and an espresso machine.

Bertoni said they put new wood flooring in the saloon, repainted, and installed new linoleum, too. The interior no longer has the decorations of the old Buoy and while they have tables and chairs, they aren’t set up right now during the coronavirus shutdowns. They can do takeout service and eventually the interior will have seating and well as the outdoor patio. Oh, and the giant buoy out back is still there too.



Jeff Bertoni is one of the owners of the Dark Nectar Coffee Saloon, located at 2490 N. Main St., Morro Bay, in the former location of the Buoy Tavern. Photo by Neil Farrell



Bertoni is hoping the community will welcome their new business as it has the other iterations at the North Morro Bay location.

“When it was the Buoy,” he said, “it was a local’s hangout.” So far he said they’ve gotten a lot of support from the community, which has been abuzz with anticipation for

a spot in North Morro Bay where they can get a latte and espresso.

Dark Nectar Coffee Saloon is located at 2490 N. Main St., at the intersection of Main and San Jacinto. It’s open daily from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.



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News

Open From page 1

friends, customers and media to meet Nancy Ballinger, a retired and revered local therapist, who recently published a children’s book in English and Spanish titled “Two Brave Cubs: Finding Help When Children Grieve.”

I had been invited to the festivities so read Ballenger’s insightful prose supported by engaging lion cub illustrations by Marcy Adams and Julie Frankel. I thought children who have lost a loved one or foster children longing for a home or even children with friends grieving would benefit from this book. And who knew how timely the subject would be during 2020!

Thomas opined other events that had to be canceled. “We had a national harp group with thirty to forty people from all over the country coming to stay in Morro Bay hotels. The SLOFolks Concert Series had sold out the Honey Dewdrops. They were already in Los Angeles to start their West Coast tour. Our people were so generous to donate ticket purchases back so we could help them fly back home to Connecticut.”

Wedding contracts normally state no refunds on deposits, but Thomas said they spent their first shuttered days contacting everyone to offer cancellation or postponement options, plus gave refunds. With doors shuttered, she worried how to stop bleeding money and yet stay afloat to keep her employees working.

Meanwhile, Carroll Leslie, owner of Volumes of Pleasure at 1016 Los Osos Valley Road in Los Osos was having similar struggles. The two owners have always collaborated and commiserated more than competed. For example, if a customer can’t find a book at one store they will call and see if it can be purchased at the other. During the coronavirus pandemic they had plenty to cry about, but also decided to work closely to help promote each other.

Leslie and Thomas have always preferred face-to-face contact with customers, so online sales was not their business model. They turned to staff to ask how they could sell books and other retail items they specialized in like candles, clothing items and greeting cards while their doors were locked down tight. Luckily each had a staff member walk them into the digital age. Coalesce had Roxanne Styles and Volumes employed Ellen Perryess. Each earned the title “essential worker” creating digital storefronts on Facebook for customers to see their products.

The owners then took further steps to upgrade their years of support for KCBX-Public Radio with a combined advertising message to let customers know they were open and how to purchase.

We’re here from eleven to three daily or longer if a customer needs us,” Leslie said. “When they call they will talk to a live voice. I think that is important.” Additionally, both stores have delivered purchases to locals who cannot get out.

Thomas said, “When I went to the bank this week I deposited what used to be typical income for one day rather than a week’s sales deposit before this pandemic, but I’m just pleased we’re still hanging on and can keep our employees paid. They need us. We’ve applied for the SB loan, but it hasn’t come in yet. We intend to make it through this.”

So I ask my fellow authors and Central Coast readers, isn’t now the perfect time to get lost in a good book or finish your Christmas shopping? And as our communities’ phases through the coronavirus, 2020 to whatever the new normal will become, we can feel good we helped keep our favorite independent bookstores in business.

“A few years back,” Leslie recalled, “a used bookstore near us closed, and people were surprised and excited when they found out we were still open. I bought a big banner to hang out front to say we were open. I need to find that banner and put it up again.”

“Here to Stay” that banner says. Give them a phone-shout-out to say, “I want you to stay!” AND BUY A BOOK THIS WEEK.

Staggering From page 1

Calling it “Rock Solid Together” the City put together a plan for addressing the humongous losses of taxes, stemming mainly from the collapse of the tourism industry.

“Rock Solid Together,” City Manager Collins’ said, “is built on the foundation that the City wishes to retain local control over core, essential government services. With this foundation, Rock Solid Together is comprehensive and attempts to assist the local business community where feasible and administer fiscal first aide to City finances in light of the significant economic wound inflicted by the pandemic.”

Among the provisions are salary concessions made by nearly every City employee bargaining group. The Peace Officer’s Association, the Services Employee International Union (SEIU), and unrepresented management and confidential employees, all accepted a 5-percent salary cut, with discussions ongoing with the firefighters union whose contract comes up for renewal this summer.

City department heads and city manager also took pay cuts and the City Council and Planning Commission have forgone their monthly stipends. The City Attorney, which is a contracted law firm, agreed to drop their basic rate to \$175 per hour.

“We as City Council are so grateful for the salary reductions taken by our employees,” said Mayor John Headding. “This is a hard time for our staff as they work on the front lines to fight COVID-19 and keep our community safe. It says a lot about their character as individuals and as a team, to step up and make this financial sacrifice to preserve City services.”

The Council has also suspended the contract with Mental Marketing, its tourism-marketing firm, stopping altogether tourism promotions until further notice. With the shelter-at-home orders from the Governor still in effect, tourism is actually being discouraged perhaps for the first time ever in this tourist-dependent town.

The city manager also sent out a letter to the registered owners of vacation rentals calling on them not to rent out their units until the shelter-at-home orders are lifted.

The efficacy of those letters has been mixed, as some residents have sounded off on the Next Door Morro Bay gossip website complaining about visitors continuing to come into town, bringing strangers to their neighborhoods.

Motel occupancy was at about 42% in February and was still strong until the March 19 shutdown ordered by the County Health Officer. Occupancy is now down around 1% at a time when it should be climbing in run up to summer.

City Council deferred rent payments from lease sites on the Embarcadero for March, April, May and June, said Collins.

The Council also deferred payments of TOT from hotels, vacation rentals and RV parks for February and March (until the end of August), and waived late fees for delinquent water and sewer bills.

It wants to explore a “microloan” program wherein it would loan money to local businesses to help them stay in business. The Council shifted \$100,000 out of a \$250,000 windfall it got from offshore energy hopeful, Castle Wind that had initially been pegged to make repairs on the South T-pier, in favor of a loan program for waterfront tenants.

Harbor Director Eric Endersby said, “Any money loaned would of course be paid back [likely at no or very low interest], with the Castle Wind \$250K fund being ultimately made whole again for its originally-approved commercial fishing infrastructure use.”

Details on a micro-loan program will be brought back soon to the Council for possible action.

The Council extended its Utility Discount Program, set up to help with the hike last summer in water and sewer bills to pay for the City’s Water Reclamation Facility project.

The 10% discount program would now be available to anyone who lost a job due to the COVID-19 shutdown.

The Council plans to look at these and other potential actions as part of its next budget and should get the draft budget in late May or early June.

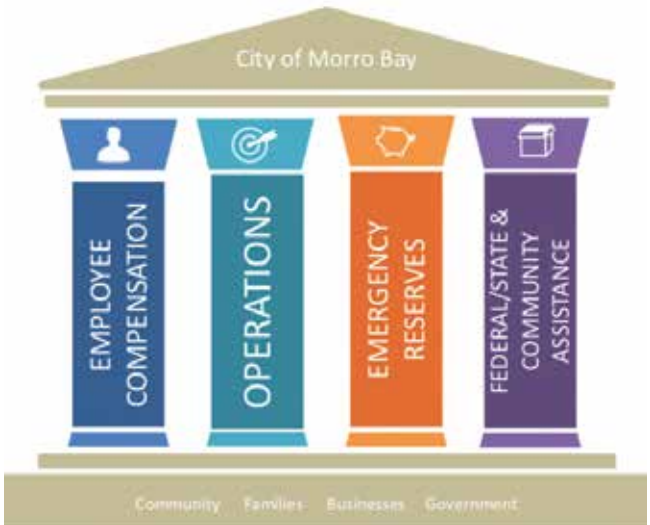
And though law requires a balanced budget, this next one should be a huge challenge given the anticipated revenue shortfalls.

The City was already facing a structural deficit, meaning that revenues were not keeping up with expenses and the City was dipping into its reserves to balance it. This was mainly due to anticipated hikes in the public employee retirement system. CalPERS reportedly lost billions when the stock market bottomed out last month, losses that have yet to be passed on to agencies in the system.

The prediction was that the City would run out of reserves by 2025 if nothing were done about it. But that’s been blown out of the water by the virus and the economic devastation of shutting down most of the town’s economy.

In a Power Point slide presentation, the City predicts its losses since the start of the shutdown on March 19 at \$1.08M to \$1.18M in lost TOT; \$379,000-\$509,000 in sales taxes; \$150,000 to \$573,000 in property taxes (due to slumping home sales from the impending recession); \$278,000-\$303,000 in lost rec department fees; and \$45,000-\$125,000 in lost permitting fees.

They proposed to bridge this with the Council and planning commission stipends (\$8,900); \$73,000 in salary



concessions; \$200,000 by not filling current vacancies; \$6,000 savings from the city attorney’s contract; \$600,000 in operational savings (non-essential services); and taking \$1M out of the general fund reserves.

The reserve balance was \$3.8M and after payments to employees (\$199,000) and paying a CalPERS bill of \$443,000, as well as taking in \$245,000 from the Open Space Alliance for Cerrito Peak, dropping reserves to \$3.4M.

The numbers for FY 2020-21 are staggering. The City anticipates losing \$1.5M to \$2M in TOT; \$684,000-\$919,000 in sales taxes; \$350,000-\$500,000 in property taxes; \$225,000-\$500,000 in permit fees; \$425,000-\$525,000 in other revenue sources for a total loss of revenue of \$3.5M to \$4.9M.

This gap can’t be bridged entirely and the shortfall being predicted runs from \$630,000-\$2.02M.

As for the reserves, the City’s savings account, it’s estimated to be \$2.3M to \$1.6M as of this June 30, and by June 30, 2021, at best it would still have \$749,000 but at worst could have a \$1.3M deficit.

Lifting of the shelter-at-home orders out of Sacramento to really couldn’t come fast enough for this local economy. But that might not even be enough.

“Morro Bay relies heavily on tourism to generate 24% of the City’s general fund revenues via TOT and additional revenues generated from tourism such as sales taxes and gas taxes,” Collins’ report stated. “With such heavy reliance on tourism to generate revenue to fund City services and the absence of key information guiding revenue assumptions, many key unanswerable questions remain, such as when will the City be able to welcome tourists and visitors back to our community and open restaurants and businesses?”

“Also, when the shelter at home orders are lifted, will consumers feel comfortable traveling, staying in hotel rooms and potentially exposing themselves to the virus?”

Through thick and thin Morro Bay’s always been able to rely on having “heads in beds” to fuel its economy. But that could change.

“Will travel look different,” Collins asked, “for example a heavier tendency towards camping? When will recreational activities resume, special events and large gatherings? As we traverse this pandemic and these unprecedented times, staff feels it is crucial to have a multifaceted and adaptable plan to quickly acclimate to changing conditions.”

Front Lines From page 1

the symptoms of the disease or have very mild symptoms. It’s one of the insidious aspects of this pandemic — that a person could feel fine, and yet still be contagious and a threat to all they come in contact with.

Knowing how many asymptomatic people there have been would affect the data on everything from spread of the virus to the death rate.

It’s that asymptomatic aspect in part that’s led to the shelter-at-home orders from the Governor, also adopted by SLO County and the City of Morro Bay, and resulted in the near complete shutdown of the economy — both



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Kevin says,
“Look
for the
ANT
on the
Door”



KEVIN O'CONNOR, President

statewide and throughout SLO County. According to SLO County Health Department, “Symptoms of COVID-19 include fever, cough and short-ness of breath. Less common symptoms include fatigue, body aches, chills, sore throat, and may include runny nose or diarrhea. Older adults and individuals with under-lying medical conditions are particularly vulnerable to COVID-19.”

As one can see, the COVID-19 symptoms are pretty close to what one would suffer with from the flu. And Dr. Michalak said they’ve continued to see patients at the Ur-gent Care suffering with bronchitis, flu and strep throat, all respiratory ailments like COVID-19.

Dr. Michalak said their testing protocols are designed to limit exposure. They accept walk-in patients, he said, but prefer a person call first and let them know when they want to come down to the office.

A patient would drive up and park at the Quintana Road clinic, and the medical staff will come out to their vehicle and swab their nasal cavity. The swabbing can be uncomfortable as it involves sticking a cotton swab far up your nose.

“Most people tolerate it just fine,” said Dr. Michalak. He added that the swabbing might make a person sneeze but it’s over quickly. They send the test swabs off to a lab, either the County Health Department Lab or WestPac Lab, a local private firm, and have been getting the results back in 2-3 days.

As to cost, Dr. Michalak said they charge their normal fee for an office visit, insurance companies are covering the costs, and the government response to the pandemic is also helping cover deductibles.

The County Health Department has declared that there would be no charge for getting tested for COVID-19.

County Health put out a list of places where people can get tested for the virus, they are: Urgent Care of Morro Bay, 783 Quintana Rd., (805) 771-0108; Med Stop Urgent Care 283, Madonna Rd., San Luis Obispo, (805) 549-8880; Family & Industrial Medical Center, 47 Santa Rosa St., SLO, (805) 542-9596; Dignity Health Urgent Care, Pismo Beach, 877 N. Oak Park Blvd., Pismo Beach, (805) 474-8450; Urgent Care, 5920 W. Mall, Atascadero, (805) 461-2131; Medworks Medical Centers, 350 Posada Ln., Tem-pleton, (805) 434-3699; Primary Care Partners, 84 Santa Rosa St., SLO, (805) 591-4727; Dr. Reynaldo Cordero, 350 Posada Ln., Ste. 202, Templeton, (805) 434-3699; Urgent Care of Atascadero, 9700 El Camino Real No. 100, (805) 466-1330; and, Urgent Care, 2 James Way Ste. 214, Pismo Beach, (805) 295-6594.

Readers are advised to call first before going to a clinic to get a test.

Meanwhile, on April 22, the County and City of Morro Bay both eased up slightly on the shelter-at-home restric-tions, allowing some additional businesses to reopen. They were:

- Houses of worship can hold services in their parking lots provided their members stay in their cars.
- Janitorial and housekeeping services can operate, as

long as individuals observe the Public Health Department’s recommendations for physical distancing, face coverings, and hygiene.

- Retail stores that sell fabric can operate, using the current Public Health recommendations; this will allow community members to make face coverings.
- Drive-in theaters can operate and must observe Pub-lic Health Department guidance.

The initial round of easing up on business closures came on April 20 when the County said non-urgent sur-gery and outpatient practice, construction, dog grooming and recreational fishing could reopen.

In Morro Bay the City put restrictions on who can and cannot use the public boat launch.

“Morro Bay Harbor Department,” reads a warning notice posted at the launch ramp, “will conduct a trial opening of the public boat launch ramp to San Luis Obispo County residents only in order to provide recreational fish-ing opportunities. In order for the launch ramp to remain open, we MUST adhere to the State and County Shelter at Home Orders, which specify recreating in your own neighborhood and limiting discretionary travel. Violation of or failure to comply with these orders is a misdemean-or punishable by \$1,000 fine, imprisonment, or both.” Misdemeanor convictions normally carry a maximum of 6 months in County Jail.”

The notice declares that California IDs and boat registrations “will be checked to ensure San Luis Obispo County residents only.” The launch ramp will be open daily from 6 a.m. to 4 p.m. for recreational boaters and commercial fishers.

As violators — i.e. anyone not from SLO County who tries to launch a boat — could be cited for a misdemeanor crime, the question arises as to why this is not a violation of the Constitution’s 14th Amendment and the right to equal protection under the law (which the Supreme Court has interpreted to also mean equal enforcement of the law)?

Did the City get an opinion from its attorneys before issuing this edict?

“I didn’t see the need to consult the attorney,” City Manager Scott Collins told EBN, “as the shelter-at-home orders for the State and SLO County are clear: People should not be traveling far from their homes for non-essen-tial activities.”

Has he gotten any pushback? “No push back from what I’ve heard,” Collins said, “and other California ports and harbors are doing the same thing. The shelter at home order is pretty clear that now is not the time to travel.”

Though a SLO County resident could launch his or her boat and go fishing, they can’t use the fish cleaning station or the boat wash down station.

However, even though one would be far from the next soul while fishing on the ocean, the CDC guidelines follow you everywhere. “Social Distancing is required and enforced,” reads the City notice. “Face masks must be worn at all times when outside your vehicle.”

And of course the City’s \$6 a day parking fee for boat trailers will remain in effect.

As of Wednesday, April 29 the total U.S. cases of COVID-19 topped 1 million with over 58,000 deaths nationwide.

As of April 28, there were 181 confirmed case of COVID-19 in SLO County. Some 135 patients had already recovered; 40 were recovering at home; five had been hospitalized (with zero currently in ICU); and one elderly person from Paso Robles has died.

Morro Bay has had just six confirmed cases, a number that hasn’t moved in nearly a month.

Paso Robles leads SLO County cities with 58 cases; Atascadero is second with 31; Arroyo Grande had 19; SLO and Nipomo had 14 each; and Templeton, San Miguel and Pismo Beach had seven each.

The California Men’s Colony prison had eight cases, and County towns not specifically mentioned — Cayucos, Los Osos, Cambria and San Simeon on the North Coast — are cities with under 5 cases each and total just 10.

And while nationwide, indeed worldwide, it’s been the elderly who have been struck hardest by the virus, in SLO County, it’s the 18 to 49-year olds who represent the most cases with 71. Next are 50-64 with 55 cases and then 65-older with 43. Ages 0-17 had 12 cases.

The County Public Health lab has tested 1,214 people and found just 62 positive results. And private labs — West-Pac Labs, Quest Diagnostics, Pacific Diagnostic Laborato-ries, and LabCorp — had tested a total of 1,608 with 119 positive results (1,489 negatives).

It should be noted that the private labs began reporting their testing results to the County on April 13, nearly a month into the shelter-at-home orders that began March 19 at 5 p.m.

As for the school year, the San Luis Coastal Unified School District announced it would not reopen schools this school year, but continue with learning from home via com-puter for the remainder of the year.

So that means seniors at Morro Bay High School will not have a prom nor a graduation ceremony to mark the end of adolescence and first step into adulthood.

And student athletes will not get to compete in the spring sports like softball, baseball, swimming and diving, tennis, golf or track & field.

SLO County continues to maintain a special website with COVID-19 information, see: ReadySLO.org or call their Public Health Information hotline, at: (805) 788-2903.

A phone assistance center is at (805) 543-2444 and available seven days a week from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. for ques-tions related to COVID-19. To report a business violating the shelter-at-home order, call (805) 788-2222.

The City of Morro Bay also has a website with COVID-19 information, see: www.morrobayca.gov/ covid19 and there’s also a COVID-19 hotline manned by City staffers and volunteers, call (805) 772-6278.

Readers are advised to seek out one or both of these websites and sign up for email updates, as the situation with the Coronavirus changes almost daily.



Take Out Menu

Pick up food at the front door

Thursday – Monday 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

CREDIT CARDS ACCEPTED

LUNCH BREAKFAST

ALL AMERICAN - 2 Eggs, choice of bacon, ham or sausage patty, home fries, cottage cheese or sliced tomatoes. Toast included.....\$13.00

BREAKFAST SPECIAL - 1 Egg, 2 pieces of bacon. Choice of home fries, sliced tomato or cottage cheese + toast.....\$8.50

A LA CARTE - 2 Eggs, choice of home fries, cottage cheese or Sliced tomatoes. Toast included.....\$8.00

EGG SANDWICH - English muffin toasted, topped with scrambled egg, slice tomato and Jack cheese, coleslaw, pickle & carrot.....\$8.50

LOS OSOS SCRAMBLE - 2 Eggs scrambled with snow peas, chicken sausage, mushrooms & Jack cheese, home fries, cottage cheese or sliced tomato. Toast included.....\$14.50

PORK CHOPS & EGGS - 2 Chops breaded with 2 eggs, choice of home fries, sliced tomato or cottage cheese. Toast included.....\$15.00

BREAKFAST BURRITO Bacon, ham or sausage, also includes coleslaw, pickle & carrot.....\$11.50

PANCAKES - 3 Buttermilk cakes.....\$8.00

BELGIAN WAFFLE.....\$9.50

Add: Bacon, ham or sausage.....\$13.50

OATMEAL - Cup.....\$5.50 Bowl.....\$7.00

Add: Blueberries or strawberries...+\$2.00 ea.

CALIFORNIA BAGEL - Toasted bagel layered with cream cheese, tomato cucumber, red onion, avocado, sprouts. Includes coleslaw, pickle & carrot.....\$9.50

LOX & BAGEL Toasted bagel with cream cheese, served with Norwegian smoked salmon, sliced tomato, red onion, capers. Includes coleslaw, pickle & carrot.....\$15.50

BAGEL W/CREAM CHEESE.....\$3.00

BLINTZES Crepes filled with ricotta and cream cheese, topped with raspberry sauceand dusted with powdered sugar. Side of applesauce.....\$11.50

HOMEMADE BISCUIT & GRAVY.....\$8.00 OR ½ ORDER \$4.00

HOMEMADE HASH - 2 eggs, choice of home fries, cottage cheese or tomatoes, toast or

muffin.....\$16.00

12 OZ. NEW YORK STEAK & EGGS - 2 eggs to order, home fries, tomato or cottage cheese and toast or muffin.....\$19.00

BACON OMELETTE - Bacon & tomatoes, with your choice of cheese, avocado.....\$13.50

DENVER OMELETTE Ham, bell peppers & grilled onions with cheddar cheese.....\$13.00

FLORENTINE OMELETTE Fresh spinach, mushrooms & your choice of cheese.....\$13.00

MEXICAN OMELETTE Chorizo sausage, tomato, black olives, mushrooms & cheddar.....\$13.50

VEGETABLE OMELETTE Egg whites only, fresh spinach, tomatoes & mushrooms. Topped with Jack cheese, avocado & sprouts.....\$15.00

GARDEN OMELETTE - Broccoli, carrots & cauliflower with Jack cheese.....\$13.00

SMOKED SALMON OMELETTE - Smoked Salm-

on, tomatoes & scallion. Topped with avocado, sour cream on the side.....\$17.00

SEAFOOD OMELETTE - Bay Shrimp, Crab, Green Onion, Mushrooms & Jack cheese topped with Hollandaise sauce.....\$17.50

GREEK OMELETTE - Sauteed spinach, tomato, black olives and Feta cheese....\$14.00

TRADITIONAL BENEDICT - with ham.....\$13.50

BENEDICT SUPREME - with eggplant, aspara-gus, tomato..\$14.50

COUNTRY BENEDICT - Patty sausage w/ coun-try gravy.\$15.00

VEGETABLE BENEDICT - Avocado & sliced tomato.\$14.00

CRAB BENEDICT - Fresh crab.....\$18.00

LOX BENEDICT - Smoked salmon, asparagus & goat cheese..\$16.00

GREEK BENEDICT - Sauteed spinach, tomato, black olives and Feta cheese.....\$13.50

*BENEDICTS ARE SERVED WITH YOUR CHOICE OF HOME FRIES, SLICED TOMATO OR COTTAGE CHEESE.

bles with pomegranate dressing.....\$12.00

CAESAR SALAD Traditional with Parmesan cheese and crou-tons.....\$9.00

CHICKEN CAESAR Traditional with grilled chicken, tomato, Parme-san cheese and croutons.....\$13.50

SEARDED TUNA CAESAR - Traditional topped with seared tuna, tomato and Parmesan cheese.....\$14.50

SHRIMP LOUIS - Bay shrimp on mixed greens w/tomato, hard boiled egg, cucumber, avocado & homemade 1000 Island dress-ing.....\$14.00

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