

City to Allow Sidewalk Vendors, Outdoor Restaurant Seating

By Neil Farrell



Morro Bay changed its ordinance on temporary vendors to bring local laws in line with State law but regulations severely restrict the place where vendors can set up for business.

The Council voted to approve changes to Ordinance No. 634, Title 5 of the municipal code, adding Chapter 5.60 — sidewalk vendors, and amending Chs. 5.08.150(A) (1), 5.40.020 and 10.40.120 “to regulate sidewalk vendors within the City of Morro Bay.”

According to a report from Community Development Director, Scot Graham, in September 2018, Senate Bill 946, was approved and took effect Jan. 1, 2019. SB 946 “places limits on the ability of cities to regulate sidewalk vendors,” Graham said.

“Local authorities may establish requirements regulating the time, place, and manner of sidewalk vending, as specified, if the requirements are directly related to objective health, safety, or welfare concerns.”

The City regulations bring City law into compliance and protect public health and safety, and are also intended to ensure that people can enjoy outdoor public spaces, “while also creating economic opportunities for vendors.”

The new ordinance regulates both “stationary” and “roaming” sidewalk vendors. “Roaming sidewalk vendors are defined as ‘a sidewalk vendor who moves from place to place and stops only to complete a transaction,’” Graham said. “A stationary sidewalk

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Sewing for a Cause

By Theresa-Marie Wilson



Los Osos resident Morgan Berden has made and donated more than 700 face masks during the coronavirus pandemic. Photo submitted

When stay at home orders took effect in March, face masks were almost as difficult to find as toilet paper and flour. That is when 25-year-old Morgan Berden of Los Osos decided to help.

“I had seen videos online of hospitals asking for people to make and donate masks,” said Morgan. “I saw a couple tutorials for the Olson Mask pattern and figured I would give it a go with what little fabric I had just bought from Picking Daisies in SLO online.”

To date, Morgan has made more than 700 masks using a combination of donated materials as well as her own supplies.

“I had only gotten my sewing machine about a week before the virus had traveled

to the U.S. and had only began sewing once masks were in need,” she said. “I learned as I went along making masks getting tips and tricks from others online and from my lovely mother. I grew up watching her sew all the time, and so I would video call her anytime there was a crisis.”

Morgan also has help cutting the material from Susan Jonas, who found the mask maker on Nextdoor, a social networking site designed for neighborhoods.

“The masks have 6 pieces total and before her help, I was working 18 hour days and staying up until 2 a.m. cutting the next days batch,” Morgan said. “She makes a ‘drop’ almost daily if not two times a day. I generally make batches of 20 at a time, and

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New Museum Board Member An Old Salt

Photo & Story By Neil Farrell



Scott Mather, standing amidst the display of the CFV Spindrift, is the newest member of the Morro Bay Maritime Museum’s Board of Directors. Photo by Neil Farrell

The newest member of the board for the Morro Bay Maritime Museum is an old salt, with a long, marine history both here and abroad, including brushes with some historic boats.

Scott Mather of Cayucos, who retired from the Morro Bay Harbor Patrol at the end of 1999, was recently accepted onto the Museum’s board joining a dedicated panel that’s struggled to get an exhibit up and running and keeping it going through the Coronavirus Pandemic.

Mather, who first came to Morro Bay in 1972 after graduating from high school on Catalina Island, worked for the harbor department starting as a reserve harbor patrolman in 1996. In 2011, he was hired full time and retired at the end of 1999.

Reading the bio paper he gave to the Museum along with his application for

the board, Mather said his first waterfront job was at the log gone Morro Bay Marina (now Marina Square), managing the slips and moorings, and working with the public renting sailboats, power boats, fishing poles and clam forks.

“I ran the ‘Clam Taxi’” Mather wrote, “taking six people at a time to the Sandspit. On a minus tide, clammers with forks and gunny sacks in hand would be lined up, waiting for their turn for a ride to the Sandspit to dig their limit of Pismo clams. Because we took passengers for hire, I earned my first US Coast Guard Captain’s license while at Morro Bay Marina. Morro Bay Marina was an invaluable insight into how truly unique Morro Bay’s working waterfront is.”

Mather’s bio talks about his time work-

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Change Orders Push Sewer Project Over \$130 Million

Photo & Story By Neil Farrell



Work is progressing on the City of Morro Bay’s now \$74 million water recycling facility or WRF, on a hillside past the terminus of South Bay Boulevard. Photo by Neil Farrell

Just 10 weeks into a 2-year construction project and Morro Bay’s Water Reclamation Facility or WRF is already costing millions of dollars over its original price tag.

Carollo Engineers, the City project management consultants, presented the council with a quarterly project update at the May 26 meeting. The item included authorization to make some 26 “project change orders” or PCOs, many of which originated with the initial request for bids and others resulting from the City’s chosen “Design-Build” project method.

The so-called DB contract means the same company that builds the project will also design it, an uncommon delivery method that’s supposed to reduce the need for change orders.

In a staff report by City Engineer Rob

Livick, the total cost for the 26 PCOs is \$5.9 million and raises the construction contract from \$68.9M to \$74.9M.

The added costs were to be taken out of the original \$126M project’s contingency funds and according to Livick would overdraw the amount specifically set aside for the treatment plant by some \$1.4M. It would also raise the overall cost of the project from \$126M to \$130.6M.

But despite the new total costs, rate-payers will not yet be effected.

“It will not impact the existing water and sewer rates for Morro Bay residents and businesses,” Livick’s report said.

The contractors, Black & Veatch and Filanc in partnership, originally bid a maximum price of \$67.2M but previous change orders last fall had bumped that up

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Personal Care Service Next on Open List

Personal care services in non-health care settings – such as spas, nail salons, massage therapy and body art facilities – in San Luis Obispo County may soon reopen with modifications.

California health officials issued new COVID-19 industry guidance on Monday for reopening for the personal care services industry in “variance counties,” which includes San Luis Obispo County.

According to the State, only California counties whose Public Health Officers have attested to their readiness to reopen will be allowed to reopen these additional industries with modifications no sooner than Friday, June 19, pending the review of the local health officer.

“It’s good to see State release reopening guidance for more industries,” said County Public Health Officer, Dr. Penny Borenstein. “I appreciate the community’s patience as I review the State guidance and local health data prior to approving the reopening of these industries locally. I urge personal care businesses to review the State guidance at ReadySLO.org and take the necessary steps to ensure that they can reopen very soon.”


The new State guidance addresses facials, electrolysis, waxing, skin care, cosmetology services, nail salon services, body art, tattoos, piercings, and massage therapy in non-healthcare settings. As with other industries that have reopened during the COVID-19 pandemic, businesses in the personal care services industry across the state may not reopen until the local Health Officer approves the sector’s reopening after reviewing the State guidance in the context of current local public health conditions.

In the meantime, business owners and managers can review the relevant industry guidance at ReadySLO.org,

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City to Allow Adult-Use Pot Sales

By Neil Farrell



It’s two licensed cannabis stores are months away from opening, but the Morro Bay City Council isn’t wasting time in expanding the products the two pot shops will be able to sell.

The city council approved an amendment of the City’s cannabis ordinance (Ord. No. 633, Ch. 5.50 Commercial Cannabis Operations Regulatory Program) that would allow sales of the so-called “adult use” (formerly known as “recreational” cannabis), at the two pot shops that were licensed last fall but have yet to open. The vote was 4-0-1 with Councilwoman Dawn Addis abstaining.

Demolition work has started at the pot shop for Natural Healing Center at the corner of Napa Avenue and Morro Bay Boulevard; but no activity has been observed at the other shop, owned by Perfect Union and located at the corner of Quintana Road and King Street.

Both stores were originally licensed for medical marijuana sales only, including both bags of the evil weed, as well as tinctures, potions and lotions made from CBD the active ingredient in hemp that can’t get a person high (as opposed to the THC in cannabis).

The changes also allow for delivery services in town.

It was long thought that the City’s hoped-for tax boost from the medical pot shops, and the special 5% tax the City levied on all their products, would not amount to much unless, or until, the City allowed adult use sales.

“If the City allows adult-use cannabis retail sales,” reads a staff report by City Attorney Chris Neumeyer, “the City is expected to realize greater cannabis tax revenues than presently anticipated from only medical cannabis retail sales. Any estimate of revenues is speculative. The City initially estimated that tax revenues to the City from two medical cannabis retail operations would annually be from \$25,000 to \$225,000. Allowing both medical and adult-use cannabis retail sales reasonably may double to triple the cannabis tax revenue to the City, generating anywhere from \$50,000 to \$675,000 in cannabis tax revenues from two cannabis retail operations. The middle range of this estimate is consistent with estimates provided by one of the two current medical cannabis retail permittees.”

Getting a new tax source bringing in even a moderate amount (\$400,000-\$500,000) would be a welcomed

blessing for a City now reeling from a staggering loss of tax revenues as a result of the Governor’s orders to shelter-at-home to slow the spread of the Coronavirus that took effect locally on March 19 and the subsequent closing down of the State’s economy.

It would have appeared to work locally, as Estero Bay Communities — Los Osos, Morro Bay and Cayucos — have been relatively virus-free, at least the cases that have been identified.

But while the virus hasn’t killed anyone locally, it’s a death spiral for the City’s budget. Morro Bay is staring in the face of a multi-million dollar deficit in the current fiscal year and millions more in the next.

And while past councils said they wanted to go slow with bringing in the newly legalized drug, seeking to try their hand at medical pot first and then deciding later on whether to expand it to adult use.

The virus-caused budget crisis has clearly thrown that out the window. Indeed, the City’s plan to come out of the virus’ economic shutdown relies in great part to the cannabis taxes they hope to collect.

The ordinance amendment would do two things:

- Allow the two licensed cannabis stores “to also engage in commercial adult-use retail operations, and that [wholesale] distribution and delivery also be permitted to engage in adult-use cannabis operations; and,
- Authorize “issuance of additional rules and regulations for the administration and implementation of Ch. 5.50 by the Community Development Director.”

Those potential changes would allow flexibility to address “administrative and ordinance implementation issues,” that might pop up as the two businesses get ready to open. It was also the only issue the Council had with the amendment, as Councilman Jeff Heller sought to clarify what adjustments might be needed. Attorney Neumeyer said the clause was his idea and he was seeking to have the community development director handle adjustments that might be needed in the ordinance’s requirements, to handle unforeseen issues that might arise.

Once the businesses open,” he said, “they have 20 pages of regulations in the local code to meet. We may need to refine the code, short of making changes to the ordinance.”

It should be noted that ordinance changes, especially those that involve land use issues, need Coastal Commission approval, too.

The Council held a first reading of the changes June 9 and will have a second reading, probably via consent agenda and then go into effect 45 days later, likely to be before either pot store opens.

More Industries Allowed to Open



State health officials issued new guidance for several business sectors to reopen no sooner than this Friday, June 12.

Locally, County Health Officer, Dr. Penny Borenstein, reviewed each guidance document and has approved the reopening for those additional industries.

The new State guidance addresses:

- Statewide: Schools; childcare (updated); day camps; casinos operated by sovereign tribal nations; entertainment production (music, film and television); and professional sports without live audiences; and
- Counties with variances: Campgrounds, RV Parks, and outdoor recreation; hotels, lodging and short-term rentals; cardrooms, satellite wagering facilities and race-tracks; family entertainment centers and movie theaters; restaurants, bars, and wineries; museums, galleries, zoos, and aquariums; and fitness facilities.

“As stay-at-home orders are modified, it is essential that businesses take all steps necessary to ensure the safety of workers and customers,” said Public Information Officer Michelle Shoresman in a news release. “Key business practices include physical distancing to the maximum extent possible, use of face coverings by employees and patrons, frequent handwashing, regular cleaning and disinfecting, and training employees on their COVID-19 prevention plan.”

Businesses planning to resume operations on June 12 or thereafter must review the State guidance, conduct a risk assessment, and complete the self-certification form

available at [Emergencyslo.org/reopening](https://www.emergencyslo.org/reopening).

“The County is committed to moving forward and re-opening our communities,” said Dr. Borenstein. “I reviewed the State’s guidance documents and our most current local data prior to approving these industries to reopen.”

The County Health Department and California Department of Public Health will continue to monitor local indicators.

At this time, the State continues to discourage out-of-area tourism. Organized sports that involve physical contact such as basketball, baseball, soccer, and football are currently not permitted by the State; in addition to playgrounds, waterparks, sauna, steam baths, and spas.

It is recommended that fitness facilities and other venues designate special hours of operation for seniors and medically vulnerable populations. The County does not allow indoor group fitness classes and will reevaluate this guidance in three weeks

For COVID-19 and specific industry reopening updates, visit ReadySLO.org. A staffed phone assistance center at (805) 543-2444 is available Monday through Friday, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. to assist with COVID-19 related questions.

Renters Still Protected from Eviction

Renters impacted by COVID-19 in San Luis Obispo County are still protected from eviction until 90 days after the Governor lifts the state of emergency.

Those unable to pay rent on time due to COVID-19 should work with their landlord on a repayment plan. Tenants should also continue to pay their rent if they can afford to.

“No one should be forced out of their home because of the spread of COVID-19 in our county, said County Emergency Services Director and County Administrative Officer Wade Horton. “When this pandemic first started, the County of SLO issued an executive order prohibiting evictions to protect those who are financially impacted by COVID-19. Since then, the courts have put in place rules that protect renters in a uniform way across California. We did not continue our local executive order, as it was no longer needed.”

The State Judicial Council sets and administers policy for the entire state court system in California. With the new Rules of Court in place at this time, California Courts

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are prohibited from issuing a summons in any new eviction case (residential or commercial) unless it is necessary for health and safety concerns. Likewise, any existing case where the tenant has not yet filed an answer can't proceed. Existing eviction trials are also postponed by at least 60 days.

The State Judicial Council Rules do not prevent landlords from:

- Asking tenants to pay rent and otherwise follow their rental agreements.
- Serving tenants with notices to pay rent or follow their rental agreements. Such notices are the last step before an eviction lawsuit.
- Filing eviction lawsuits. Courts will likely resume issuing 5-day summons after these rules expire, allowing these lawsuits to then proceed. These rules also do not prevent Sheriff's Deputies from locking out tenants who already have eviction judgments entered against them.

For more information, visit: <https://www.emergencysilo.org/en/eviction-clarification.aspx>.

Supervisors Cut \$26.2 Million From 2020-21 Budget

The coronavirus has so far killed one person in San Luis Obispo County but fighting it pretty much killed the County Budget.

Last week, County Supervisors were given a budget that balances the tremendous loss of taxes caused by the economic shutdown in response to the pandemic by dipping deep into reserves, internal cutting and employee salary concessions.

According to County Budget Director, Emily Jackson, the Supervisors addressed a \$26.2 million projected deficit for the next fiscal year (2020/21), "related to the Coronavirus Disease 2019 [COVID-19] pandemic," Jackson said in a news release.

"The reductions include \$6.5 million in departmental budget cuts," Jackson said, "use of one-time reserves in the amount of \$12.8 million, and \$6.9 million in voluntary savings directly from employees."

Dist. 4 Supervisor and Board Chair Lynn Compton said, "This pandemic has affected our County in so many ways, including unprecedented budget impacts. The County faces a staggering budget gap as county residents need our services the most. The Board will strive to do what is

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News Briefs

Relaxed Hospital Visitation Policy

After receiving updated information and guidelines from the San Luis Obispo County Health Department, Arroyo Grande Community Hospital and French Hospital Medical Center are modifying their visitor policies.

The new policy guidelines are as follows:

- All visitors must be 16 years of age or older.
- One visitor per patient is allowed in the hospital, with exceptions for individual situations requiring special consideration.

- Visiting hours are from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. with exceptions for individual situations requiring special consideration.

- Patients and visitors may enter through the main hospital entrance, and Emergency Department entrance, and at FHMC, the Pacific Medical Plaza entrance.

- All community workshops and classes, bariatric seminars and support groups, prenatal classes, birthing tours and classes will be offered electronically until further notice.

- Only one labor and delivery care partner is permitted at FHMC.

- We are offering patients the convenience of electronic communication options, including video availability, as an alternative to hospital visitation.

Everyone that enters the hospital will be screened using the standards established by the San Luis Obispo County Health Department. Additionally, masks are required at all times.

LOCAC Virtual Meeting

The Los Osos Community Advisory Committee will hold a virtual meeting on June 25 at 7 p.m. The meeting, held via Zoom, is open to the public. The link will be posted on the agenda at <http://locac.info/>, which will be available three days prior to the meeting.

There will be a special presentation by County Planner Kylie Hensley about the growth management ordinance, resource summary report and Los Osos water supply. The documents are available for review and comments are due June 26.

E-Waste Recycling

Recycle your e-waste on June 20 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Trinity United Methodist Church, 490 Los Osos Valley Rd at Pine. Drop off your working or not computer monitors, TVs, laptops, printers, phones, VCRs, stereos, fax machines, scanners, computers, keyboards, DVD players, and cameras.

No large appliances or batteries. Proceeds benefit the good works of the Rotary Club of Los Osos, www.LosOsosRotary.org

County Lifts Two Local Executive Orders, Issues Another

Two local executive orders were lifted related to the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19), and another was issued.

The County lifted an executive order limiting occupancy rates of short-term lodging facilities. The County also lifted a public health officer order restricting visitors and non-essential personnel from hospitals and certain types of licensed residential facilities and replaced it with another order to continue visitation restrictions at skilled nursing facilities.

"COVID-19 is also known to be especially dangerous at skilled nursing facilities, causing high rates of serious illness and fatalities," said County Health Officer Dr. Penny Borenstein. "For this reason, we continue to restrict visitors to skilled nursing facilities."

The short-term lodging order was intended to reduce the risk of transmission from out-of-area travelers and the original visitation order was put in place to protect medically vulnerable individuals. Now that the State has issued guidance and best practices for both hotels and for hospitals and residential facilities, the County is lifting the related local orders.

"We continue to emphasize that now is not the time for leisure travel and to remind potential visitors that the statewide order restricting non-essential travel remains in effect," Dr. Borenstein said. "The greatest public health vulnerability in our county is the spread of COVID-19 from other areas experiencing high rates of infection. We ask everyone in SLO County and in our neighboring counties to respect the statewide order."



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Story and Photos by Neil Farrell

County Seeks \$7.4 Million in SB1 Projects

San Luis Obispo County has formalized a list of roads that will get resurfaced under the State’s Senate Bill 1 program for routine maintenance, and Cayucos will see most of its residential streets fixed.

The SB1 2020/21 projects list totals some \$7.4 million and will be sent to the California Transportation Commission for final approval.

Called the “Road Repair and Accountability Act of 2017,” SB1 was signed into law in April 2017 and intended to address deferred maintenance on State highways and local road systems, according to an April 21 County staff report.

SB1 was the first increase in the State gas taxes since 1991, and added a 12-cents-per-gallon tax on gasoline and a 20-cents-a-gallon tax on diesel fuel.

Vehicle registration and use fees were also hiked, according to the County’s report.

“SB1 raises approximately \$5 billion annually in California,” the County report said, “with half of the revenue going to local jurisdictions for their maintenance needs. SB1 provides funds for road maintenance and rehabilitation, traffic safety, traffic control devices, and complete street components. To receive SB1 State funds, the County is required to adopt, by resolution, a list of projects at a public meeting.”

Among the repairs is 19.5 total miles of repaving in Nipomo (12.6 miles), San Miguel (1.2 mi.), and rural west Paso Robles (5.7 mi.).

Roads to be surface treated (slurry sealed) total 59.4 mi. with 8.4 mi. in rural west Paso Robles; 16 mi. in rural east Templeton; 21.7 mi. in rural Cayucos and Morro Bay; and 13.3 miles of Cayucos’ residential streets that includes all the streets to the west and east of Ocean Avenue.

It also includes the length of Ocean Avenue from Hwy 1 junction through town to the Hwy 1 south on ramp at 13th Street, as well as the streets off Cass Avenue.

Most of Southern Cayucos — off Ocean Boulevard and Studio Drive — are not included in this round of work, with the exception of a short portion of Old Creek Road starting at the highway, as well as one block each on Shearer and Flores Avenues on the east side of Hwy 1.

The County also shows Old Creek Road being resurfaced from Montecito Creek Road all the way to Hwy 46, plus a segment of Santa Rita Road where it connects with Old Creek.

There’s also a lengthy segment of Cayucos Creek Road near Picachio Road that is slated for surfacing.

In rural Morro Bay the roads to be resurfaced include Toro Creek Road, San Bernardo Creek Road and Little Morro Creek Road.

Of the \$7.4M the County expects to get from SB1 this year, \$2.2M will pay for overlays on North County roads; \$4.4M for overlays on South County roads; and \$800,000 for the surface treatments.

Budget From page 3

best for our community.”

The County Board of Supervisors held a public budget hearing for Fiscal Year 2020-21 (FY 2020- 21) Recommended Budget this week to consider staff’s recommendations for balancing the budget for the coming fiscal year, which begins on July 1.

The departmental budget cuts, Jackson said, include a 4-percent drop to the level of General Fund support provided to non-public safety departments.

“In recognition of the County Board of Supervisors’ prioritization of public safety departments,” Jackson said, “County staff recommended a 1-percent reduction for public safety departments, as well as an additional \$2.4 million in reductions to public safety, due to an expected loss of Proposition 172 revenue specific to those departments.”

Supervisors didn’t go for that. Jackson said the board dipped further into reserves “to backfill the loss of revenue to significantly reduce the budget cuts for public safety departments.” Public safety mainly includes the Sheriff’s Department, County Jails, District Attorney’s Office, Courts and Probation (juvenile hall).

Jackson said the original General Fund budget was for \$577 million but they’d had a “significant loss” in funding due to the Coronavirus shutdown, while seeing higher demand for County services.

The County Administrator, who headed the County’s virus response, said, “The cuts we are facing are larger than any single year during the recession,” said CAO Wade Horton. “These next few years will be challenging, but we will work closely with department heads and the board to weather the storm.”



Photos of the June 6 protest march in Morro Bay. About 300 people turned out to raise their voices for equal justice and Black Lives Matter.

Some 250-300 people turned out Saturday, June 6 for a protest rally and march in response to the recent murder of Minneapolis, Minn., resident, George Floyd, while in police custody.

The event was organized by Morro Bay resident, Nathan Moran, 20, who told Estero Bay News that he had attended the San Luis Obispo events in prior days and felt it would be good to bring the issue to Morro Bay.

“I wanted our community to get out there and join them,” Moran said.

At the rally he said through a megaphone that he’d lived in Morro Bay since he was 4-years old, and “I’ve never seen it show up like this.” He encouraged everyone to make their voices heard.

The protest started at City Park on Harbor Street with a public gathering that included a kneeling, 8 minutes and 46 seconds moment of silence, which is how long Mr. Floyd was filmed with a police officer’s knee pressed to his neck, constricting his breathing until he died.

The moment of silence, which felt as if it went on forever, was a powerful moment to reflect on Mr. Floyd’s suffering, as he died face-down on the street, with a trio of police officers who failed to stop his killing.

Moran, to his credit and to the credit of those attending, was able to lead the march down Harbor Street to Embarcadero and then out to Morro Rock, in a peaceful manner and not have it devolve into chaos, as has happened in cities across the nation.

And that’s a good thing too, for while New York City has 35,000 police officers, Morro Bay has about 17.



And while many protest signs said things like “Defund the Police,” and “End Police Brutality,” the Morro Bay Police Department worked with Moran on a safety plan and, along with community volunteers, protected the marchers along the lengthy route through town and the waterfront.



The department issued a statement on Facebook; “The Morro Bay Police Department would like to thank the peaceful protest organizers and community members who participated in the event this past Saturday for exercising their rights in safe and constructive manner. Overall, it was a peaceful demonstration.”

There was apparently one incident that occurred on the Embarcadero. MBPD “is aware, however, of an incident that occurred between protesters and counter protesters on the waterfront during Saturday’s protest.

“We are investigating the incident to determine the events as they occurred and to also make adjustments for

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Four Police Officers Shot; Gunman Killed After Manhunt

By Neil Farrell



Sheriff's deputy, Nicholas Dreyfus, 28, has his badge pinned on by his wife upon joining the Sheriff's Department in October 2018. Photo courtesy SLOSO

A transient man from Monterey on an apparent killing spree who opened fire on police in Paso Robles, severely wounded one deputy and injured three others participating in a massive manhunt, was killed by law enforcement after a near 2-day search.

According to Sheriff's spokesman, Tony Cipolla, the disturbing events started about 3:45 a.m. in the 900 block of Park St., at the Paso Robles Police Station.

"Staff on duty at the Paso Robles Police Department," Cipolla said in a news release, "observed a male subject outside their building who was armed with a firearm. The suspect began shooting at the police building."

Paso PD requested Sheriff's and Highway Patrol assistance but when officers arrived on scene the gunman started shooting at them. A Sheriff's patrol with two deputies was among them, searching for the suspect in the Downtown area.

"At approximately 4:19 a.m.," Cipolla said, "the two Deputies were searching the downtown area when they came under fire from the suspect. One of the deputies was shot in the face by the suspect. The second deputy returned fire at the suspect. This Deputy then grabbed his wounded partner and removed him to a position of relative safety where he rendered medical aid."

The wounded deputy, later identified as Nicholas Dreyfus, 28, who started with the Sheriff's Department in October 2018 and works out of the North County Sheriff's Station in Templeton, was shot in the face, Cipolla said, and was flown to a trauma center out of the area where he underwent surgery.

"The surgery was successful," Cipolla said. "He is listed in guarded condition and his prognosis is good. Dreyfus is married. His wife and family members are with him as he recovers."

The suspect was identified as Mason James Lira, 26, a transient from Monterey with a long, violent criminal history. Lira eluded capture and a search began with the assistance of numerous agencies.

With the manhunt in full force, at 7 a.m., Paso Robles police received a report of a dead body near the train station. The body was determined to be a 58-year-old transient man and Coroner's Investigators determined that he had been murdered. He is suspected to be a victim of Lira's spree.

With the entire county on alert and a manhunt underway, the search lasted into the early afternoon of June 11.

According to Cipolla, "at approximately 2:10 p.m. the Sheriff's Office received a report of an officer shot in the area of Ramada Drive and Volpi Ysabel Road in Paso Robles. Law enforcement officers were stationed in this area as part of a containment team assigned to keep the suspect, Mason Lira, from evading officers who were beginning a search of the riverbed."

Officers were able to pull the wounded officer away, and he was taken to a local hospital. "Officers arrived at the scene and conducted a search for the suspect," Cipolla said, "when the suspect opened fire on the officers, wounding two of them. These officers were also evacuated and transported to local area hospitals for treatment. Officers continued their search for the suspect along the Salinas

Update on Wounded Deputy Sheriff

The San Luis Obispo County Sheriff's Office released an update on their deputy who was shot in the face last week by a rampaging man in Paso Robles, and the prognosis looks good.

"Tyler Dreyfus, the wife of wounded Deputy Nicholas Dreyfus," reads a news release from the Sheriff, "has sent the Sheriff's Office and the community the following update on his condition: 'Currently Nick remains in critical care but is stable. He has undergone several procedures and continues to be evaluated on a daily basis. Doctors have provided very positive feedback regarding his current condition and prognosis and remain optimistic for a positive outcome. Nick is surrounded by family and fellow Deputies and his spirits are high!'

'On behalf of Nick and his family, we want to thank all of those whom have reached out and shown concern and compassion. All of your support is appreciated and welcomed. Thank you.'"

River when they encountered Lira, who had been hiding in the riverbed."

Lira tried to flee and headed towards Hwy 101 through a vineyard when he was shot and killed by officers.

"Officers found Lira in possession of two handguns that are believed to have been stolen from a commercial burglary in the City of San Luis Obispo a few days before the shooting of the Sheriff's deputy on June 10," Cipolla said.

Lira's crime spree took a toll on law enforcement with four being shot and wounded in the exchanges of gunfire. Cipolla said the officers shot on June 11 were with the Highway Patrol, the Arroyo Grande Police Department and the Kings County Sheriff's Office. The officers were taken to a nearby hospital with non-life threatening injuries.

According to KSBY-TV report, Sheriff Ian Parkinson said Lira had a box of ammunition with him when he was killed and more ammo was found by a maintenance man in a hidey-hole beneath the movie theater in Downtown Paso Robles, where police believe Lira had been camping.

Sheriff Parkinson said the FBI investigated the hideout and items linked to Lira were reportedly discovered.

"Authorities believe Lira had been staying at that location for the past several days and may have been in the area for up to a week," according to KSBY.

Lira has an extensive criminal history, having been arrested several times in at least three counties — Monterey, Santa Cruz and Tulare. He'd been released from Monterey County custody June 3.



Surveillance photos show Mason James Lira, 26, a transient suspected of going on a violent spree that included a suspected murder, shooting up the Paso Robles Police Station, and shooting and serious wounding a Sheriff's deputy. Photo courtesy PRPD

Dynegy Pulls Battery Project

By Neil Farrell

It looks like plans to have the Morro Bay Power Plant become part of the State's energy future are questionable, after the owners of the plant pulled plans for a giant battery storage facility.

Dynegy (now a part of Vistra), the plant's owner, had proposed last November to build a 200-megawatt battery storage facility sited directly behind the main power plant building, in a space next to a Pacific Gas & Electric substation.

The "Battery Energy Storage System" or BESS was purported to be part of the infrastructure that will be needed as the state moves further towards sustainable, carbon-free energy, utilizing sources like wind and solar.

The problem is that wind and solar energy can't always be counted on when demand is high, and being able to store that energy in battery facilities is a way to match up

the supply with the demand.

At the time, Meranda Cohn, Director of Media Relations & Corporate Affairs for Vistra Energy, said, "Customers in California continue to express interest in battery energy storage options, and Vistra Energy believes there will continue to be potential for these projects across the state."

"With that in mind, Vistra has taken the first steps in anticipation of potential future development of a battery system at the company's retired Morro Bay Power Plant by applying for an interconnection and taking the initial application steps for California Environmental Quality Act permitting."

But through some apparent difficulties the company said it had with the City, the proposal was withdrawn on Feb. 14. In an email to City Planner Cindy Jacinth, Vistra's Eric Cherniss said, "I would like to withdraw our application for approval of Coastal Development Permit #CDP19-041 and Conditional Use Permit #CUP19-14 for the proposed 200-megawatt Battery Energy Storage System project located at 1290 Embarcadero Road, Morro Bay, California."

"We enjoyed working with you and the City and wish you all the best."

Asked by EBN why they pulled the project, Cohen said, "With battery energy storage developments underway in both Moss Landing and Oakland, Vistra would like to extend its battery capabilities at its retired power plant site in Morro Bay — and remains willing to do so."

"Unfortunately, we've reached a stalemate with the City of Morro Bay about the long-term ownership of the site impeding development of the property, which could contribute economic activity and tax revenues to the community."

She added that the company is weighing options. "Under a contractual arrangement with the City," Cohen said, "Vistra has the opportunity, until at least 2033, to redevelop the property and either build a conventional power plant and/or develop the property for an alternative use, including battery storage."

"We are hopeful that we can reengage with the City on a productive basis in the future to accelerate the development of the property for battery storage and work toward a mutually beneficial use for the remainder of the property."

EBN asked City Manager Scott Collins what the stalemate with Vistra was. He issued a statement, "The City is willing to proceed with review of a potential battery project at the power plant site, if or when Vistra decides to pursue it."

On another track, the City wants a utility pipeline easement running from its lift station under the Front Street parking lot, through the power plant to Main Street, as part of its Water Reclamation Facility project's conveyance system.

Collins said the BESS is a separate issue. "That potential project is unrelated to the easements needed for the WRF," he said. "The City is committed to continuing good faith negotiations and seeks to reach mutually agreeable resolutions with Vistra on the easements."

The BESS project would have constructed a 45,000 square foot, 2-story building (90,000 s.f. total floor area); housing 60,000 "battery modules" arrayed in 2,240 "battery racks."

They'd planned to use either lithium-nickel-manganese-cobalt batteries or lithium-iron-phosphate [lithium-ion] batteries, each with its own room, with fire barriers and safety systems, according to the application.

Morro Bay Fire Chief Steve Knuckles and Fire Marshal Matt Vierra toured a similar battery facility at Dynegy's Moss Landing Power Plant.

Chief Knuckles told EBN, "Wow. I was really impressed with the technology, with the fire suppression system. I was impressed with the concept of storing the energy from when it's generated during the day to when it's needed at night."

They went to Moss Landing "To make sure it would be safe for our community," Knuckles said. "We're not like Moss Landing, which sits out by itself. Our power plant is in the middle of town."

With lithium-ion batteries there is considerable fire danger and the Moss Landing BESS had about 70,000 fire sprinklers arrayed in groups of about 100, an impressive amount of suppression but also a potential maintenance and inspection issue, as such systems must be tested every year.

"They had triple redundancy with the sprinkler heads," Chief Knuckles said, adding that he believes that they could make a BESS in Morro Bay work for the community.



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San Luis Obispo County Democratic Party Selects New Officers

The San Luis Obispo County Democratic Party’s (SLOCDP) Central Committee has elected a new slate of officers.

With 50 members meeting on-line, the Central Committee elected Rita Casaverde to the post of chairperson. Casaverde is a professional with a background in engineering, design and software development, who is described as “a true force of nature” as a SLO County activist. In selecting Casaverde, the Central Committee also voted to approve five Democratic Party stalwart leaders to serve with her in key roles on the executive committee.

The outgoing chair is Rosemary Wrenn, a teacher educator at Cuesta College and Cal Poly, who helmed SLOCDP for the past three years while also pursuing her Ed.D. in educational leadership at California State University Fresno. She expressed “great admiration and confidence” in Casaverde stating that her successor, “has demonstrated time and again in her multifaceted career and exemplified in her positive activism the vision, energy and temperament of a great leader.”

In addition, Wrenn warmly welcomed the incoming Casaverde-led slate of officers, noting that the two vice chairs, Ellen Beraud and Gabriel Granados, the recording secretary, Gail Bunting, the corresponding secretary, John Alan Connerley, and the treasurer, Tim Jouet, “will provide a powerhouse of experience and skills” for SLOCDP.

“Each one of the team has demonstrated their commitment to democratic success through collaboration, coalition building, and actively campaigning for our candidates,” Wrenn said.

Casaverde, who immigrated from Peru to the U.S. and San Luis Obispo County eight years ago, said that, “I am enormously proud to be an American citizen by choice, and I am both humbled and energized that San Luis Obispo County Democratic Party’s members have chosen me to be their new chairperson.” Casaverde says that a positive message is vital for success, and promises to “focus on what brings us together, rather than what pulls us apart, especially as we adapt to the COVID19 crisis in these unprecedented and challenging times.”

The two new vice chairs bring a wealth of experience and expertise to the executive committee, according to Committee officials.

Beraud, a healthcare professional and small business owner who has lived in Atascadero for the past 20 where she served as mayor, is especially focused on increasing

Democratic voter registration in that corner of the county. Granados, a lifelong resident of San Luis Obispo County, is a Cal Poly graduate in psychology, and for the past eight years has worked with the County of SLO Behavioral Health Department.

“While building partnerships and coalitions to elect Democrats at every level of government, I want to ensure that the best interests of our community’s most vulnerable neighbors are protected,” Granados said.

Bunting served previously as SLOCDP’s Vice Chair and is a co-organizer of the Women’s March SLO.

A professional musician and diplomat, SLOCDP’s Connerley will serve as the organization’s press officer.

Bunting and Connerley also are both senior volunteers with the Dawn Addis California State Assembly campaign and look forward to ensuring close coordination between SLOCDP and Addis’ efforts.

Jouet, a life-long environmentalist and avid bicyclist, was reelected by SLOCDP to the position of treasurer.

The San Luis Obispo County Democratic Party (SLOCDP) is the California State Democratic Party’s official governing body in the County. In addition to its efforts to elect Democratic candidates to local, county, state and federal offices, SLOCDP organizes and supports Democratic clubs throughout the county, and the clubs in turn support the party with activities and events.

For more information about the San Luis Obispo County Democratic Party, see its website at: <https://slocdp.org/>.

Low Income Housing Project Approved — Funding Delayed

By Neil Farrell

It’s been years since Morro Bay’s seen a low-income housing project built, but there could soon be nearly three dozen low income apartments for rent, unless something happens to trip up the project.

The Planning Commission on June 2 approved a project submitted by the Housing Authority of San Luis Obispo or HASLO to build some 35, one, two and 3-bedroom apartments in four, 2- and 3-story buildings at the corner of Atascadero Road and Sunset Avenue, 405 Atascadero Rd. The property is 0.94 acres.

The design has all apartments opening into a center courtyard area with a parking lot on the southern side adjacent to Atascadero Road (Hwy 41) but accessible off Sunset.

Most residents that sent in comments on the project worried about bringing too many people to the busy area, additional traffic and parking, saying that Sunset Avenue is too narrow to handle overflow parking they predict will come with the project. Most complainants lived on Rockview Street at the back of the project property.

They complained that the project showed only 33 parking spots for the 35 units.

“This project calls for 35 families to occupy 35 apartments,” wrote project critic Chuck Harkins. “Most families, especially working families, have a minimum of two cars and some three. Where will they park?”

The project was approved by the commission, which started an appeal period of a couple of months. The project is out of the appeal jurisdiction of the Coastal Commission.

The City Council, which was on June 9 set to discuss making a \$500,000 “loan” to the project, out of its housing in-lieu fund and deferred payment of impact and building fees, decided at the behest of Mayor John Headding, to table it until its June 23 meeting.

Headding said that would give time for any appeal to be made before the project is considered for funding. But the city attorney pointed out that the appeal period will still be in effect June 23.

Councilman Jeff Heller wondered why the Council was looking at contributing funding when it hadn’t even seen the actual project?

In a letter to the City, HASLO said it and builder Jim Rendler are partnering on the project and had worked together on affordable housing projects throughout SLO County.

“This project would feature 55-plus year affordability restrictions for all units, less one onsite manager unit, for individuals and families at or below 80% of ‘Area Median Income’ (AMI) with an average income level of 60% AMI or below,” HASLO’s letter said.

HASLO is asking for funding from sources: \$150,000 loan out of the City’s Affordable Housing In-Lieu Fund. That fund has \$222,000 in it now, and derives from fees paid by developers who do not wish to include affordable housing in their developments.

Under proposed terms, HASLO would not have to repay that loan for 55 years, the length of time the project will be deed restricted for low income tenants.

HASLO also asked to defer \$350,000 in impact and permit fees, again to be repaid with interest after 55 years.

“The estimated permit and impact fees to the City of Morro Bay for this project are approximately \$650,000,” reads the staff report, “not including an estimated \$100,000 in school impact fees, which are payable to San Luis Coastal Unified School District and are not available for deferral. The deferred permit loan will include deferral of building

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permit, plan check and development impact fees.”
The report continued, “The deferred permit loan will result in a delay in receipt for fees that would typically have been due and payable in the year the project is issued a building permit,” the staff report said. “Any repayment of the deferred fees may not occur until after the deed restriction period has lapsed [55 years]. Loan terms are proposed to include 3% simple interest with no payment due for 55-years.”

That would seem a tough pill to swallow for a City that’s projecting a multi-million dollar budget shortfall this fiscal year and millions more next year due to the Corona-virus shutdown of the economy and staggering loss of tax revenues, mainly from the hit to tourism.
The City has done this sort of financing before, most recently for the 21-unit, Morro Del Mar Senior Housing facility located in the 600 block of Main St.

“Morro Del Mar received approximately \$600,000 in City financial assistance, which aided in the project being successful in its tax credit application,” said the report. “Prior to the Morro Del Mar project, the City has not had a 100% affordable project since 1996 [Oceanside Gardens] and has not had any project this large since 1989 [Ocean View Manor Apartments]. Projects that provide 100% low income rental units require multiple funding sources to be successful. The proposed HASLO affordable housing project will be a great addition to the community, and it needs loan assistance from the City of Morro Bay to be successful. Staff recommends approval of the HASLO funding assistance request.”

For more information on HASLO and the various housing projects underway countywide, see: www.haslo.org.

Rodent Poison Kills Great Horned Owl

By Theresa-Marie Wilson



Two owlets born at Sweet Springs Nature Preserve in Los Osos. Photo courtesy of Morro Coast Audubon Society
Test results confirmed that a deceased great horned owl found at the Morro Coast Audubon Society’s Sweet Springs Nature Preserve in Los Osos was poisoned.

There has been a breeding pair of owls at Sweet Springs Nature Preserve for at least 10 consecutive years. In April, a male was discovered bleeding and died the following day.

The CA Dept. of Fish and Wildlife recently confirmed that the owl died as a result of ingesting anticoagulant rodenticide.
“Testing has been completed on the great horned owl,” said Fish and Wildlife Senior Environmental Scientist Krysta Rogers in a report. “Three different anticoagulant rodenticides were detected in the owls’ liver including Brodifacoum and Difethialone, at relatively high levels, and Bromadiolone, at a trace amount. Given that there was evidence of coagulopathy in the absence of trauma and anticoagulant rodenticides were detected in the liver, cause of death for this owl was anticoagulant rodenticide toxicosis. All three of the rodenticides detected are second generation anticoagulant rodenticides and must be applied by a certified applicator (e.g. pest company) for use in or around buildings or other structures.”

Rodenticides kill rodents by causing them to hemorrhage. This is not an immediate death. The rodents come out of their burrows looking for water. They are weakened and thus are easy prey for predators such as owls, hawks, foxes, even cats and dogs. The poison is passed on to the animal that eats the poisoned rodent. These poisons do not break down for months, some for more than a year, poisoning every animal that eats a poison-weakened animal.

For example, one week after the adult owl died, one of two owlets was found in poor condition on the ground nearby. It was taken to Pacific Wildlife Care (PWC).

“An animal can kill all of its young by bringing back poisoned rodents, or alternatively, the parent eats poisoned rodents, dies and the babies starve since there is no one to feed them,” said Judy Neuhauser, president of the Morro Coast Audubon Society.

“We actually found the other owlet, or perhaps I should say we found what was left of it — feathers and a few bones. The question for that one is: how did it die? If it died of rodenticide poisoning, did the poison now move into the scavenger (fox, cat, dog, coyote, skunk, possum, vulture)? These rodenticides can stay in the liver of the affected animal for up to 120 days — that is 4 months.”

In the case of another owlet, a vet suspected anticoagulant rodenticide poisoning and began treatment with Vitamin K, which saved the life of this little owlet that continues to be cared for in the rehabilitation unit at PWC. The owl has gained weight and is no longer receiving Vitamin K treatment for coagulation problems. Being released back into nature is the ideal outcome

“The question of release is a bit more complicated. These owls stay with their parents for an extended period of time, up to several months,” said Neuhauser. “PWC usually likes to release animals where they were found, but this owlet does not have parents to feed him and teach him. They also would prefer to release in a relatively safe environment. Considering the history of rodenticide poisoning in this area, it is unclear where they would release him.”

The local owl is one of many such victims throughout the state. Last October, 21 environmental organizations sent a request to Governor Newsom for an emergency moratorium on these products while the California Department of Pesticide Regulation reevaluates the products as the result of a lawsuit filed by Raptors Are The Solution in



A great horned owl in Sweet Springs Nature Preserve recently died of rodent poisoning. Photo courtesy of Morro Coast Audubon Society

2018.
“There is not presently a moratorium on these rodenticides,” said Neuhauser. “We would like for there to be a moratorium.”

Although the state pulled these products from consumer shelves in 2014, professional companies are allowed to use them. Rat poison has infested the food web, from owls to hawks to cats, dogs, mountain lions, bobcats, and endangered species like the Pacific fisher.

These raptors are efficient predators. They can each kill and eat over 30 rats every month. By inadvertently poisoning these raptors, we are killing off our best natural predator controls.

Not all the news is bad for birders and ornithologists here on the North Coast. Breeding is necessary to the survival of a species and nature may be taking its course at Sweet Springs.

“Two adult great-horned owls were seen near the Preserve in the past couple of days,” said Neuhauser. “It is possible that the female has found a new mate, though it is late in the year for a new nesting attempt. If they stay in the area — and do not succumb to rodenticide poisoning — we may have a mating pair again next year.”

Morro Coast Audubon Society has about 900 members. For more information, go to <https://www.morro-coastaudubon.org/>

Other Ways to Keep Rodent Populations Under Control

For the past 10 years, many California cities have managed their rodent problems using alternatives to second generation anticoagulants. Some pest control companies have switched to traps, exclusion, or other less damaging rodent control products.

The first step is to assess the area and remove rodent attractions.

- Remove access to any other food source. Bring pet food in at night, keep garbage in a tight container, clean up spilled bird seed and fallen fruit.
- Keep dense mats of vegetation - such as ivy - away from the house foundation. Ivy provides not only shelter, but also food (snails) and water to rodents!

Great Horned Owl Continued on page 12

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Police Blotter



Morro Bay Police Logs

- Morro Bay Police Logs
- June 6: Police responded at 9:17 p.m. to a disturbance in the 700 block of Harbor. Logs indicated they arrested a 57-year-old alleged inebriate for suspicion of gettin’ jiggered in public.
 - June 6: Police responded at 4:30 p.m. to the 1300 block of Quintana for an unoccupied 2018 Honda Accord that apparently sustained a hairy crack up and was abandoned.
 - June 6: Police responded to Albertsons at 12:17 p.m. where the store manager apparently caught a thirsty fellow, 68, stealing a bottle of hooch. He was nicked for suspicion of shoplifting.
 - June 6: A man called police at 9:44 a.m. and said while he was filling up at the Shell Station, some apparently opportunistic swamp donkey deleted his laptop from his unlocked car.
 - June 5: A man in the 900 block of Quintana told police that someone stole his vehicle. Logs indicated he, “made contact with an unknown subject who had his vehicle, stating it was sold to him on Facebook,” in yet the latest example of why Facebook is evil. He was able to get his vehicle back.
 - June 5: Police responded at 1:39 p.m. to the 3300 block of Toro Lane, where a City employee wielding a weed eater at North Point, kicked up a rock that shattered the window of a parked car, also called an oopsy.
 - June 5: Police responded at 10:30 p.m. to the 400 block of South Bay for a car crash. No injuries reported.
 - June 5: Police responded to a report of suspicious activity at 11:36 p.m. at a motel in the 200 block of Beach. Officers hit a little honey hole, as they arrested a 28-year-old man for suspicion of being high on drugs; a 45-year-old woman for suspicion of orbiting the moon on meth and possession; and a 50-year-old belle for suspicion of possession of drugs for sale, possession, and UTI.
 - June 3: Police towed away an unregistered vehicle from the 800 block of Market, a minor victory over anarchy in our midst.
 - June 3: Some filthy bilge rat stole something from a business in the 1000 block of Front.
 - June 2: Police responded at 5:10 p.m. to a report of a gunshot in the 600 block of Morro Bay Blvd. Police arrested an apparent negligent man for suspicion of discharging a firearm in a negligent manner, and of course being rat-arsed in public, which explains a lot.
 - June 2: Police responded at 4:30 p.m. to a disturbance at City Park on Harbor Street. Police arrested a 42-year-old zhlub for suspicion of being squished on meth and possessing a glass crack pipe.
 - June 2: Police responded to a disturbance at 11:23

- a.m. in the 1200 block of Embarcadero. Logs indicated they arrested a 64-year-old man for suspicion of felony domestic violence and assault with a deadly weapon.
- June 1: Police stopped a suspicious vehicle at 12:47 p.m. in the 400 block of Pacific. The driver, 48, was arrested for suspicion of driving while on drugs, possession of meth and paraphernalia, and child endangerment, as apparently mommy dearest couldn’t find a sitter while she got twisted.
 - May 31: MBPD sent a contingent to San Luis Obispo at 10 a.m. to help SLOPD deal with an angry mob of peaceful protesters.
 - May 31: Police responded at 11:36 p.m. to a disturbance in the 700 block of Morro Bay Blvd. Logs indicated they arrested a 39-year-old allegedly soused woman, no doubt scoring about a six or seven on the crazy cat lady scale.
 - May 31: Police were called at 4:30 p.m. to a domestic dustup in the 400 block of Monterey. Officers made note of it for their no doubt inevitable return.
 - May 31: Someone reported a fellow causing a disturbance at 3:52 p.m. in the 2600 block of Main. The apparently right foul git, 23, was nicked for being schmammered.
 - May 31: Police towed an abandoned vehicle out of the 1100 block of Allesandro that had apparently outstayed its welcome.
 - May 31: Police contacted an apparently aggravated pair of swizzle sticks having a row at 1 a.m. in the 1000 block of Main. The fellow, 21, and woman, 22, were tossed in the hoosegow to sleep it off.
 - May 30: Police responded to the 1200 block of Embarcadero after some master criminal vandalized a chain link fence.
 - May 30: At 1:41 p.m. a police volunteer saw two men tipping back a few in the parking lot at Albertsons. Logs indicated they arrested one guy, 19, for “several violations,” and a juvenile companion was cited and turned over to his proud mother.
 - May 30: Police responded at 10:10 a.m. to the Harborwalk at Coleman Park where an elderly man on the bike path reportedly got tangled up with his dog and tumbled to the pavement. No word on injuries but that’s gotta hurt.
 - May 30: Police stopped a suspicious vehicle at the highly suspect time of 12:24 a.m. at Main and Harbor in the heart of the danger zone. The driver, 31, was nicked for suspicion of driving gassed.
 - May 29: Police responded at 8:12 p.m. to Rite Aid for a report of a fight in progress. Police broke up the skirmish and sent a scorecard to the district attorney for a decision.
 - May 29: Police responded at 11:51 a.m. to Beach and Front where a woman said her credit cards were stolen out of her car while she was walking her pooch on the beach.
 - May 29: Police found some missing 17-year-old hooligans in the 200 block of MBB and returned them to their apparently worried parents.
 - May 29: A woman in the 700 block of Quintana said she was assaulted by an unnamed man and police sent a report to the D.A. for possible inaction.
 - May 28: Police responded at 3:21 p.m. to the 300 block of Surf St. for a report of an altercation between two elderly women, no doubt a real knock down-drag out affair, too.
 - May 28: A man came to the police station at 11:40 a.m. apparently to turn himself in for a warrant. Police cited and released the yo-yo.
 - May 28: Police stopped a suspicious vehicle at 11 a.m. in the 500 block of Embarcadero. The driver, 68, was cited for “exhibition of speed and expired license,” for as Confucius never said, “Man with no license, best to take lead foot off gas.”
 - May 28: Police stopped a suspicious couple at 8:08 a.m. in the 1000 block of Front St. Logs indicated a man, 22, was arrested for suspicion of being pickled in public and giving a fake name, understandable considering he was out on bail for some other no doubt nefarious activity in Fresno County; and a woman, 20, was nicked for suspicion of being fizzled on drugs, and possession of cocaine and Xanax, in yet another case of arrive on vacation —

- leave on probation.
- May 28: Police stopped a suspicious vehicle at 12:19 a.m. in the 800 block of MBB. Logs indicated the scofflaw driver, 44, was cited for fake tags on her car.
 - May 27: Someone found a wallet and gave it to police. No word on where they’d discovered the treasure. And someone in the 100 block of Main gave three handguns to police for safekeeping. No word on the possible perils avoided.
 - May 27: Police responded at 12:30 p.m. to the 400 block of Bonita. Logs indicated they arrested a 55-year-old sinner for suspicion of elder abuse and violating a court order.
 - May 26: Someone found a road bike and a backpack full of clothes in the 700 block of Quintana, as some apparently naked urban mountaineer is a bit lighter these days.
 - May 26: Someone tried unsuccessfully to break into a parked car in the 300 block of Embarcadero. Police have no leads on the gang that couldn’t shoot straight.
 - May 26: Police were called at 5:51 a.m. to Albertson’s market because the caller said an Albertson’s employee was causing continued disturbances, but they didn’t want to press charges.
 - May 25: Police responded at 7:10 p.m. to the 800 block of Embarcadero where a man, 64, said someone stole the car keys out of his unlocked vehicle, as the car was apparently not worth so much.
 - May 25: Police were called at 6:30 p.m. to a disturbance in the 2700 block of Main. Logs indicated a 24-year-old inebriate train wreck was arrested on suspicion of battery and public hoochery.
 - May 25: Police responded at 2:42 p.m. to the 200 block of Pacific for a reported burglary. Logs indicated a man, 39, was arrested for suspicion of burglary, vandalism and giving police a fake name. He was burrowed down the County’s rabbit hole.

County Inks New Public Defender Contract

By Neil Farrell

County Supervisors approved a new 4-year, over \$4 million per year contract with a San Luis Obispo law firm to act as the public defender in county courts.

The firm, San Luis Obispo Defenders, also sought permission to transfer its existing contract with the County from former firm owner, Patricia Ashbaugh (the “primary public defender”), to a new owner, Steve Rice (formerly the assistant public defender), who has reportedly been with the firm since June 2018. There’re also new monetary considerations in the contract.

The contract was slated to expire this month, and under the contract the County was required to negotiate a new one before that happened. The County administrative officer negotiated the new 4-year contract, the first year of which is for \$4,856,934 (fiscal year 2020/21) and, “As part of the contract renewal discussion, the Primary Public Defender firm is requesting continuation of the application of a CPI [Consumer Price Index or the inflation rate] to their base compensation, application of the CPI to the portion of the contract funded by 2011 Public Safety Realignment funds, and additional resources beyond the CPI increase totaling \$22,070.06 in FY 2020-21 and \$7,200 ongoing due to a failing, outdated telephone system and increased subcontracting expenses,” reads the County staff report.

According to the County the State Constitution “requires that counties provide for the legal defense of indigents accused of crimes. According to statute [California Government Code Section 27706] and case law [Gideon vs. Wainwright, 372 U.S. 335 (1963)], the County Public Defender is required to accept appointments of all indigent clients. Appointments are made by the Superior Court of the State of California, San Luis Obispo. This workload is impacted by changes in the law, the general economy, and filing decisions by the County District Attorney.”

There are actually three agreements or levels for public

Public Defender Contract Continued on page 12



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Community

Music Returns to Stolo Vineyards

By Jill Turnbow

Summer is here and many businesses are taking small steps to give the season a sense of normalcy. Finally, the wine industry is opening its doors. Many tasting rooms are now able to welcome guests for wine tasting, although with some new precautions. Several, including Stolo Vineyards in Cambria, are offering bottle service on the lawn and asking visitors to bring a picnic and enjoy the afternoon outdoors. Stolo is open every-day from noon to 5 p.m. by appointment.



Will Breman, a top ten finalist on "The Voice" will be featured at Stolo Vineyards in Cambria Sunday, June 21. Photo submitted

"We are so happy to see people return to the vineyard. We have missed our club members and visitors. It's exciting!" says owner and manager, Maria Bennetti. "We are closely monitoring the county's guidelines and are following all the mandated protocols. We want our guests to feel safe."

Also popular is the return of the summer concert series at Stolo Vineyards. They are the only vineyard along the coast, and their expansive meadow allows for proper social distancing while still enjoying views and great music. The old rustic barn provides a nice backdrop and Stolo recently added two new baby goats to the property.

"We adopted two goats, named Abbey Road and Penny Lane, from the Stepladder Creamery," said General Manager, Scott Wills. "Apparently they weren't good milking goats, but they sure seem to like people."

Reservations are required for a spot on the meadow. It is marked off in 10 x 10 grids so that each space can accommodate from 2 to 6 guests. Wine is sold by the bottle only and guests can take the glasses home with them. Employees are taking all the proper precautions as well, remaining masked and providing hand sanitizer, and sanitizing the tables.

"We are really happy to welcome the musicians, many who have been here before," Wills said. "We worried about how much work they have been losing so it's great to be able to invite them back."

And the musicians have been ecstatic about keeping the gigs. For many, the concerts at Stolo will be the first chance to play in several months. Jill Knight and Eric Williams have already returned and had a fantastic time with the smaller crowd. "We love playing here," said Jill Knight. "The crowds are off the chain!"

The lineup for the summer series is impressive, featuring some returning favorites like The Belmores, Marcus DiMaggio, and Dulcie Taylor. Will Breman, who was a Top Ten Finalist on The Voice will be featured Sunday, June 21st, followed by The Mighty Croon Dogs the next week. All concerts are now on Sundays this summer, from 3 to 5 p.m. For the complete lineup, check out Stolo Vineyards website at stolofamilyvineyards.com/Live-Music. Reservations are required.

Stolo Vineyards is located on Santa Rosa Creek Rd, just about a mile and a quarter from Main St. where they are growing Pinot Noir, Syrah, Chardonnay, Sauvignon Blanc and Gewurztraminer. Call for an appointment at 805-924-1313.



Turri Ranch Adobe



Pencil drawing By Joan Sullivan 1975

During these trying times of the coronavirus and of maintaining a safe healthy distance from our neighbors, it is a pleasure to recall fond memories of the many ranches I visited with my Thursday Location Painting class between 1973 and 1983.

We painted on more than 70 ranches throughout the county. Many of these ranches are long gone, but as we see cattle still roaming the hills it is evident many pioneer family ranches continue to own and operate their homesteads.

I kept notes and recorded interviews with family members when we painted on these ranches. The collection of information I gathered encouraged me to publish "Rounding Up The Ranches in 2015."

I was privileged to paint on the oldest family-owned and family- operated ranch in Los Osos Valley, the Warden Ranch (Highland Ranch) that is still owned and operated by the Warden family.

We were invited to return to the Turri Ranch Northeast corner of Los Osos Valley Road and Turri Road) several times over the years and we did.

The Turri family moved from Cambria to their ranch on Los Osos Valley Road and Turri Road in 1901. The Ranch has a two-story 90-foot adobe on it that historians believe was built in the time of the missionaries, the early 1800s, although credit is given to Captain John Wilson for building the adobe.

Captain Wilson and Ramona Carrillo were married in 1935 two years after her first husband was killed in a battle, Captain Wilson bought Rancho Los Osos de Canada Y Pecho Y Islay – the entire valley amounting to over 32,400 acres.

The couple lived in the adobe and raised Ramona's two sons on the ranch. One of the first things I learned when I moved to the area was that Captain Wilson's step-son Romualdo Pacheco became the first native born son to be the 12th Governor of California in the 1850s.

Mariano Pacheco Wilson, his brother, became the first superintendent of schools in 1853. We have had a very notable array of residents who lived in Los Osos Valley

Captain Wilson eventually built a house for Ramona in San Luis Obispo across from the Mission (corner of SLO Museum). He built it for Ramona because it was too far for her to travel to church in a horse-drawn cart every day from the ranch to the Mission Church she loved. Word has it that she could be heard traveling the sandy dirt road often twice daily to attend mass.

REFERENCE: Books by Joan Sullivan, "Rounding up the Ranches," "Los Osos Valley" and "One Room Rural Schools."

Botanical Garden Presents Docent-Led Garden Tours



Small family groups can now take docent-led tours at the SLO Botanical Garden. Photo submitted

Knowledgeable docents will lead your small family group on a fascinating tour through the two-acre botanical garden or their sustainable facilities.

Tours can be scheduled every day, except Tuesdays. They generally last about an hour and must be scheduled in advance. Under normal circumstances, we usually offer school tours for college classes and K-6, with elementary school tours aligning with State of California Content Standards and Common Core Curriculum Standards. Due to COVID-19, we will only be offering small family group tours by appointment. Tours must be scheduled several weeks in advance. We encourage a donation of \$2 per group member.

San Luis Obispo Botanical Garden is celebrating its 30th year of sowing seeds and growing together. The Garden is located at 3450 Dairy Creek Rd. It is spread out on 150 acres in El Chorro Regional Park off Highway 1 between Morro Bay and San Luis Obispo. When the master plan is complete, the Garden will be the only garden of its kind in the United States exclusively devoted to the ecosystems and plants of the five Mediterranean climate regions of the world.

To book a small family group docent-led tour, email Joscelyn@slobg.org or visit www.slobg.org/gardentours for more information.



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Community

Golden State Water Donates More Than 10,000 Meals



Golden State Water Company recently donated \$1,500 to the Food Bank Coalition of San Luis Obispo to provide more than 10,000 nutritious meals for vulnerable populations in San Luis Obispo County.

With Golden State Water’s donation, the SLO Food Bank is delivering food to more than 1,000 self-isolating seniors and the medically fragile during the COVID-19 pandemic.

“Golden State Water serves over 80 communities throughout California, and we are able to make a big impact through donations like this to provide meals for those who may otherwise go without,” said Tony Lindstrom, Los Osos superintendent for Golden State Water. “We appreciate our partnership with the Food Bank Coalition of San Luis Obispo and we are proud to help ensure everyone in our community has access to nutritious food.”

“We know that the recovery is going to be a long road for many of our neighbors,” said Garret Olson, COVID emergency operations manager for SLO Food Bank. “We anticipate it will be years – not weeks or months – before we are back to our pre-COVID level of hunger in our region “When combined with food we are able to source from donations, grants and gleaning operations, this gift turns into 10,500 meals!”

The majority, 85 percent, of the SLO Food Bank’s operational funds come from donations. Any contribution is extremely valuable and will help provide food to the one in six individuals in San Luis Obispo County who are food insecure. For more information on how to donate or assist, visit www.slofoodbank.org/donate or call (805) 238-4664.

Dear God,
This dog thing, we agree
it was a mistake, right?

Photo by Cat Noir CC

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Birds and Bay Critters – The Great Egret

By Ruth Ann Angus

Probably the most recognizable birds in the estuary at Morro Bay are the herons. Of these large wading birds great egrets are most noticeable with their bright white plumage. Once named common egret, the great egret is seen worldwide. There are two other egrets seen in California, the snowy and the cattle egret, both much smaller than their cousin the great. In Florida and the Gulf coast you can find the reddish egret, which is more bluish with reddish breast feathers, and has a white morph.



Great Egret in breeding plumage
Photo by Ruth Ann Angus

While the name egret is specific to these birds, scientifically they belong to the heron species along with the great blue heron, green heron, night heron, little blue heron, yellow-crowned heron, tri-colored heron, and the great white heron.

Other wading birds lumped together in this family are bitterns, glossy and white ibis, roseate spoonbills, wood storks and even flamingos.

As you can see all this variety can make for an exciting adventure of discovery depending on what part of the country or world you are in. In the United States coastal areas, the Atlantic, Pacific and the Gulf waters, are the best places to find these birds although some can be found at inland locations. Here on the Central Coast, and particularly in Morro Bay, egrets and herons are easily found.

Of the two egrets common in the estuary the great egret stands out due to its height and coloring. It has a long yellow bill and long black legs. Egrets will search for food in saltwater and fresh marshy areas, streams, lakes, ponds, mud flats, rice fields, and other open fields. It feeds on fish, frogs, snakes, mice, salamanders, crayfish, grasshoppers, moths, crickets, and other aquatic insects. Unlike other herons, the great egret does not feed at night.

Great egrets are all white all year and stand about 37 to 41 inches tall. They have a wingspan of approximately 55 inches. In flight they extend their long black legs straight back and have a deeply bowed neck. During breeding season from February through July they grow a long, graceful cape of filmy plumes. It was these plumes that almost drove the species to extinction by 1900. The feathers were highly prized for adornments on women’s hats. Largely thanks to protection efforts by the National Audubon Society the practice was stopped, and the birds recovered.

These birds nest and roost in large rookeries in trees. Many of them used to nest along with great blue herons in the eucalyptus and Monterey cypress trees located between the Inn at Morro Bay and the Natural History Museum. During the 1980s and into the 1990s double crested cormorants began nesting there and the caustic guano from these birds caused a die-off of the trees. Only a few egrets attempt nesting at this site now. They lay three to four pale blue-green eggs in the nest and young are hatched from 23 to 24 days after laying. The young take flight in 42 days and must find their own hunting territory away from the parents.

Poly Students Enhance Rodeo Program



Cal Poly construction management students Ryan Fiorio (left) and Timothy Smith collaborate on building a rodeo observation deck in the rodeo arena designed to record the practice runs of student riders. Photo by Joe Johnston

Two Cal Poly construction management students are putting the finishing touches on their senior project, a rodeo observation deck designed to record the practice runs of student riders.

Ryan Fiorio, of Gilroy, California, and Timothy Smith, of El Cerrito, California, partnered with Cal Poly’s Rodeo Program and head coach Ben Londo to conceive a platform in the practice arena to mount Soloshot cameras that automatically track a rider in motion to record the runs for later analysis and team improvements.

The students, who will graduate this summer from Cal Poly’s College of Architecture and Environmental Design, met more than a year ago with Londo to learn about the project.

“We wanted to help students elevate their riding skills,” Fiorio said. “We liked the challenges that this project presented to test our skills and we knew it would allow us to learn new things while constructing it.”

The project included design, fundraising and construction. Fiorio and Smith worked through some construction issues with Londo, a Cal Poly construction management alumnus, and their senior project advisor Dan Knight, a construction management faculty member. The students also collaborated with Arroyo Grande-based Harris Architecture and Design on drawings for the 1,200-square-foot project to ensure the deck was safe to accommodate the recording equipment and up to 75 people.

As the project was getting off the ground, the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic presented a major challenge for the students.

“The fast-changing environment and economy significantly reduced our ability to fundraise as well as complete many other tasks,” Smith recalled. “We needed to raise close to \$17,000 and persevered to raise the funds by reaching out to our contacts made through Cal Poly and summer internships.”

So far, the students have raised \$11,000 for the materials. They are still seeking funds to complete their goal.

Londo praised their accomplishment: “These students have created a sturdy deck that provides a significant improvement in viewing practice runs, and its versatility enhances team meetings and creates a VIP viewing area for rodeo sponsors during events.”

As the deck nears completion, Fiorio reflected on the experience.

“Through this senior project we’ve both learned so much,” he said, “such as how to work better as a team and draw on each other’s various skills to create a unique solution to some of the problems that arose.

“This project feels like the perfect end to our college career even amid the current circumstances. It’s awesome for us to be a part of Cal Poly history and to build something that we can come back to and admire in the future. We feel our hard work will contribute toward maintaining Cal Poly’s Rodeo Program as one of the top programs in the

Rodeo Program Continued on page 15

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Technically Speaking



Tech Support Scammers

Tech support scamming is the most common type of scamming in the present day due to the prevalence of the internet in our daily lives. Usually, this comes in the form of a phone call from someone claiming to be Microsoft and telling the victim that they owe money or that they have a virus on their computer. In the former situation, the

scammer attempts to get the victim to give them their credit card info over the phone and then steals and uses that info for themselves. In the latter, the scammer will try to convince the victim to download software that will give them control over their computer, stating that they are trying to remove the virus. Once they have control, often times they will lock the user out of the computer and tell them they must pay to unlock it again. This is called a “Ransom Attack” Often automated into an illegitimate software you have probably heard of before called Ransomware. The fact of the matter is that Microsoft or Apple Or IRS or SSI will NEVER contact you in this way. In today’s world, viruses mostly can only make their way onto your computer if you let them in, and knowing how to stay safe online is important. Don’t download anything you aren’t sure about, and never allow anyone to connect to your computer unless you asked them to or are completely sure they are who they say they are.

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.

Business

Local Girl Comes Back To Rock Espresso Bar

By Neil Farrell



Local girl, Melissa Catalli, is the new owner of The Rock Espresso Bar in Morro Bay, a place she knew well as a teenager growing up and where she worked for 3 years. Photo by Neil Farrell

Rotary Awards Scholarships



The Rotary Club of Los Osos recently awarded individual \$500 scholarships to some Morro Bay High School students. The awardees were chosen based on academic success, community service, participation in school activities and

personal challenges. The winners are: Justin Brian Castillo, Breanna Hixon, Rihanna Malawi, Evelyn Moylan, Variant Tapano Padgett, Joseph Ruddell, Faye Vavra and Jenna Wheeler (not pictured).

It’s one of the oldest coffee houses in Morro Bay and now boasts one of the newest young entrepreneurs, a former employee and local girl who caught the coffee bug in high school. Melissa Catalli, 28, who grew up in Morro Bay from middle school on, bought the Rock Espresso Bar in mid-May from former, long-time owners, Jason and Amanda Birdsong. “I got the keys on Mother’s Day [May 10],” she said, “and had a grand opening the following Saturday. It was the best birthday present ever,” she said. Catalli was born in Richmond, Calif., and came to Morro Bay in 7th grade, she explained. She attended Morro Bay High and graduated in 2010 from Pacific Beach, the school district’s continuation high school. “I was a little trouble-maker,” she laughed at her somewhat misspent youth. She worked at Rock Espresso for three years starting in 2010, she recalled and has also worked in other coffee shops, too, so she knows her way around an espresso machine. Back then, the Rock was the bomb. “This was my hangout in high school,” she said. “This is where we’d meet up and hang out after school.” She isn’t married but the Paso Robles resident said her boyfriend of 3 years, “helped me get sober and get my life together.” She’s wanted a coffee house of her own since first working at Rock Espresso Bar, at what has to be one of the worst times to start a new business, in the midst of a pandemic. She’s had to deal with the Coronavirus, its shelter-at-home orders and subsequent economic shutdown. But again, she feels lucky. “It’s been a little different,” she said. “I had to get used to not letting people dine in. But it was only a couple of weeks and now they’re able to dine in. Luckily, I got the tail end of the COVID. So I got to ease into it.” She’s continuing with the Rock’s menu of specialty coffees and espresso drinks including something she calls, “a coffee milkshake.” She’s also sporting a pastry case with a variety of delicacies including an apple pie turnover, muffins and other delicious treats, many of which she bakes herself. They offer one of the largest breakfast burritos in town. She wants to barbecue tri-tip for burritos on weekends, and offers a variety of sandwiches and more, all made to order for take out, and now to eat in, including the Rock’s under-utilized rear garden. That’s a mostly blank canvas she has big plans for. “I definitely want to do more with the backyard,” she said. “I want to have live music on weekends.” She laughed because since she opened, people have been bringing her plants for the garden and a regular customer who is a landscaper has been helping her out, too. She admits the first few weeks have been tough, as she adjusts to being the boss and all the accompanying duties that crop up without warning. “It was rough for a couple of weeks,” she said. “I was always running out of something.” She’s gotten a warm response from the community. “I’ve been really blessed with everyone in the community helping me out,” she said. “It’s really cool.” Rock Espresso Bar is located at 275 Morro Bay Blvd., across from Mike’s Barbershop. Catalli said her hours are somewhat flexible right now, but she is open daily from 6 a.m. to 5 p.m. through the summer. But if it gets really slow, like most other small business people in Morro Bay, she might close early, maybe hit the beach or the waves or tackle that long commute from Paso Robles. Call (805) 225-1752 to order food in advance and check out their Facebook Page at: www.facebook.com/rockesspressobar.

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Poly’s Virtual Summer Accelerator Programs for 2020 Cohort

As California universities take their classes, incubator programs and even graduation ceremonies virtual, Cal Poly’s Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship (CIE) is also taking its signature 12-week summer HotHouse Accelerator program virtually with eight new startups.

“Every summer, the CIE brings together a talented and motivated cohort of Cal Poly student entrepreneurs to help them launch their startup companies,” said CIE Executive Director John Townsend. “This summer is no exception. We are entrepreneurially minded and are built to thrive in uncertain times. We have prepared a great virtual program that will propel these young entrepreneurs’ businesses forward.”

The program provides selected teams with \$10,000 in capital, and throughout the 12-weeks, the startups will work with their advisors, learn from expert speakers, engage with their cohort, and participate in skill-building workshops, office hours and much more.

The CIE Accelerator program begins June 22. At its conclusion, participants will have the opportunity to debut their startups to the community during Demo Day, to be held Sept. 11.

The startups represent a variety of concepts, including tactical robotics for emergency responders, leveraging technology to connect health professionals, increasing productivity in co-working spaces, and providing access to healthy snacks on the go.

“We have an outstanding group of high-growth startups participating in this year’s accelerator,” said Jose Huitron, director of student innovation programs, who oversees the program. “We are excited to match these companies with mentors in their industries and make them part of the San Luis Obispo entrepreneurial ecosystem so they can grow and make a lasting impact locally and throughout the world.”

This year’s ventures include:

- Blueline Robotics provides emergency response teams with cost-effective tactical robotic solutions. It was developed by Geoffrey Smith, aerospace engineering, and Ryan Pfarr, a Cuesta College student.
- Bridge is a web-based collaborative networking service connecting licensed mental health professionals and providing them with an online directory, a referral management tool and a secure messaging platform. The platform was created by Nathan Brickman, agricultural communications; Ryan Murtaugh, biological sciences; Sam Rogers, art and design; and Fletcher Easton, Maxwell Taylor and Tim Newman, software engineering majors.
- C[A]DU provides online service for homeowners, realtors and developers to add an Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) to their properties and transform their underutilized garages and backyards into income. This service was

conceived by Amirsalar Pardakhti and Nooshin Shafiee, both pursuing a master’s in architecture degree.

- Fruji is a lifestyle brand that seeks to reinvent the gelatin snack category by making it easier for people to choose nutritious, delicious organic snacks made with real ingredients that have functional benefits. It was created by Vince DeSantis, business administration, and Morgan McKean, graphic communication.
- Imperium strives to maximize the usability and productivity in co-working spaces by providing their customers with limitless access to power for their devices through a streamlined charging system. The team is conceived by Jamie Jenkins, mechanical engineering; Dan Seplovich, industrial technology and packaging; Sierra Swanson, mechanical engineering; Braden Coates, and Patrick Schneider, aerospace engineering.
- Perch is an intelligent sensing platform that leverages existing power grid infrastructures to accurately and efficiently measure local environmental conditions, supporting an abundance of potential applications, including early wildfire detection, smart governance and urban resilience. The platform is the brainchild of Emil Erickson and Michael Tuttle, electrical engineering; Reed Slobodin, computer engineering; and Virginia Yan, electrical engineering.
- Remit is a blockchain payment system that allows users to transfer money regardless of currency type through text messaging. The system was conceived by Kenny Lau and Eddie Aung, computer science, and Dandy Vo, computer engineering.
- Snack with Soph is a healthy snack subscription box delivered straight to your door. This service was crafted by Sophia Shapiro, business administration.

PG&E Enters Plea in Camp Fire Case

On May 16, PG&E entered its plea in Butte County Superior Court related to its role in the 2018 Camp Fire. In accordance with the agreement PG&E reached in March 2020 with the Butte County District Attorney, the company pleaded guilty to 84 counts of involuntary manslaughter and one count of unlawfully starting the fire that also destroyed more than 13,900 homes.

PG&E Corporation CEO and President Bill Johnson delivered, in part, the following statement: “I am here today on behalf of the 23,000 men and women of PG&E, to accept responsibility for the fire here that took so many lives and changed these communities forever.

“I have heard the pain and the anguish of victims as they’ve described the loss they continue to endure, and the wounds that can’t be healed. No words from me could ever reduce the magnitude of such devastation or do anything to repair the damage. But I hope that the actions we are taking here today will help bring some measure of peace.

“Our equipment started the fire that destroyed the towns of Paradise and Concow and severely burned Magalia and other parts of Butte County. That fire took the lives of 85 people. Thousands lost their homes and businesses, and many others were forced to evacuate under horrific circumstances.

“I wish there were some way to take back what happened or take away the pain of those who’ve suffered. But I know there’s not.”

Johnson went on to say that the utility is “taking to heart” the lessons learned and is focused on reducing the risk of wildfire, improved inspection and operational protocols are making their energy more resilient.

Great Horned Owl From page 7

- Determine where the rodents are entering your house/garage/storage shed. Plug any holes.
- **Traps:** With all traps, you can feed your bait without setting the trap for a few days to accustom the rodents to the trap before you actually set the trap. The dead rodents from these traps are non-toxic to any predator that might eat the dead rodent, so there is no secondary wildlife poisoning.
- Snap traps: These come in sizes for both rats and mice. The best location to place them is in a hidden area next to a wall. Rats and mice prefer to keep their bodies in contact with their world, and therefore tend to scurry along walls or dense vegetation rather out into an open space. Change up the bait if they stop taking the one you offer. Keep these away from areas your pets, other wildlife, and chil

- Zapper traps: These use batteries to electrocute the rats or mice resulting in a quick death. They cost around \$45 and need to have the batteries replaced or recharged often. They are quite effective.
 - GoodNature A24 CO2 Trap: This trap uses a CO2 canister to power a piston that kills the rat or mouse instantly. The trap has the advantage that it “resets” and is ready to go again immediately. It can kill up to 24 rats before needing a new canister. This is rather expensive, but has the advantage of killing many rats/mice in a single night.
 - Never use sticky traps - they also trap hummingbirds and other small birds!
 - Attract Barn Owls with a nest box. A single Barn Owl can catch 1,400+ rodents a year!
- For more information: <https://www.raptorsarethesolution.org>

Public Defender Contract From page 8

defender services, according to the report, including: the Primary Public Defender, the Conflict Public Defender, and the Conflict-Conflict Public Defender.

“The Primary Public Defender handles most indigent defense cases appointed by the Court. If the Primary Public Defender has a legal conflict of interest and cannot represent a defendant, the Conflict Public Defender firm takes the case.

“If the Conflict firm has a conflict as well, the Conflict-Conflict Public Defender firm represents the defendant. If this firm also has a conflict, the Court will appoint an attorney from the public defense bar, who will then invoice the County for the cost of the defense, subject to review and approval by the Court.”

San Luis Obispo Defenders has been the primary since 2016 and the other two levels are held by the Law Office of J. Barry Schiavo (the Conflict Public Defender), and the Law Office of Jere N. Sullivan (Conflict-Conflict Public Defender).

And the Law Office of Adams and Lucero provides legal defense for mentally disordered offenders and involuntary medication cases (so-called Qawi cases). This “contracted services” model is also used in 18 other California counties, according to the report.

The existing Primary contract did have a clause for a 2-year extension, but the County said, “Significant items, such as the proposed transfer of ownership; a major case management system replacement project request; the desire to put the Primary Public Defender on a different contract renewal cycle from the other public defender contracts; and considerations surrounding the RFP clause in the contract,” which made them decide not to just extend the old contract.

The other two contracts, plus the mental health defender’s contract, were each extended for 2-years and will now be on a staggered schedule for renewal from the Primary defender’s contract.

Despite there being a contract in place, it’s flexible and subject to increases, many due to changes in law. “On Jan. 23, 2018,” the County report reads, “the contract with the Primary Public Defender was amended to add an ongoing \$84,000 to the contract for an additional half-time attorney to address the increased workload associated with the passage of Senate Bill 190. On Aug. 20, 2019, the contract was further amended to add an ongoing \$145,000 for a full-time attorney to staff additional court calendars added by the Court and to assist with ongoing capital cases.”

The new contract runs through FY 2025-26, with the same terms and possible increases and extensions as before.

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Letter to the Editor

A Concerned Citizen



I'm sending this letter to you today as a concerned citizen and resident of San Luis Obispo County. My name is Alexa Ford, and I am a graduating senior from Morro Bay High School. I've recently enlisted in the U.S Navy, and would like to do all I can before my time comes to make my hometown as safe as possible for all people, and I believe the following is an imperative step in the right direction. Police violence is distributed disproportionately, with black people being 3x more likely to be killed by police than their white counterparts. It's a horrifying reality in which its application is justified by policies governing our police officers.

Campaign Zero started a project in 2015 known as the "Police Use-Of-Force Project", or "8 Can't Wait Campaign". The purpose of this being to reduce the use of force by police departments. According to their extensive research and accumulated data, if all eight reforms are adopted by police departments, civilian fatalities at the hand of police officers could drop by as much as 72%.

The eight common sense restrictions are as listed below:

- Ban chokeholds & strangleholds
- Require de-escalation
- Require warning before shooting
- Exhaust all other means before shooting
- Duty to intervene & stop excessive force by other officers
- Ban shooting at moving vehicles
- Require use-of-force continuum
- Require comprehensive reporting each time an officer uses force or threatens to use force

The city of San Luis Obispo has implemented two of the eight policies; requiring a warning before shooting, and the duty to intervene. While this may be a start, it is not enough.

Police departments will and have said that implementing these will make it harder to police/be effective, but that's just not true. It's been proven that in cities where there are more restrictive force policies, the communities are historically safer.

It is important that San Luis Obispo strives to implement more reforms with the population of young people inhabiting it. It's a city that has always been a pillar for change, and we can lead by example here - we must. So I'm calling on you, Mayor Heidi Harmon, Sheriff Ian Parkinson, District Attorney Dan Dow, and Chief Deanna Cantrell to pledge to implement all eight reforms as soon as possible.

After the death of Micheal Brown in Ferguson, Missouri in 2014, there were riots in the streets. Protesters were given empty promises of change. Following the death of George Floyd, David McAtee, Breonna Taylor, Tamir Rice, Walter Scott, Stephon Clark, Bothom Jean, Eric Garner, and countless others, we're here to make sure real change gets made, and we will not accept "no" for an answer.

With gratitude and great urgency,

Alexa Ford
Morro Bay

Kudos and Gratitude

I do not write letters to newspapers. However, I have been moved to write to you. My husband and I have been regular visitors to Cayucos since 1983. "Someday" finally arrived, and we purchased a second home here when we retired in 2010. Since then we have spent about 10 days a month on the Central Coast. Our first stop on arriving in town was always to pick up a copy of The Bay News, to catch up on what was new.

Since you have reimagined it with The Estero Bay

News, the improvement has been remarkable. Much of the former tired, lackluster reporting has been replaced with vibrant, pertinent, high quality reporting and editing, which makes the paper a valuable and enjoyable information source. The Estero Bay News now reflects a more personal interest in what is going on in our community, which seems to align better with the culture of this area.

I simply want to congratulate and thank you and your staff on a job well done.

Kathy Harlan
Cayucos

P. S. The only lingering feature I'm not fond of is the "humorous" interpretation of the Police Blotter. I thought it was hysterical the first time I read it, and the second time I read it. But there are only so many synonyms for miscreants and their behavior, and it becomes tedious really fast. I do like the information, just not the humorous spin.

Class of 2020

Congratulations to Aly and all the 2020 high school graduates! It was so uplifting to see their beautiful smiles. For several years I've missed the Tribune publishing the names of our graduates. For their neighbors, friends, and former teachers it is a special moment also.

A big "thank you" to Daddy Dean for generously publishing all the wonderful photos.

Linda Olson
Los Osos

Hold Off on Opening Dunes

Respect, cooperation and common sense have empowered the residents of our County to "flatten the curve," to begin to carefully re-open our businesses, and to avoid the worst aspects of the COVID-19 pandemic. So far.

At this critical juncture -- because we cannot afford errors that would undermine the process of reopening our businesses, revitalizing our local economy and safeguarding our residents' well-being -- I am writing to you on behalf of the South County Democratic Club of San Luis Obispo to urge that you, the five members of our Board of Supervisors, work together as colleagues to notify the California Department of Parks and Recreation that reopening the Oceano Dunes State Vehicular Recreation Area (ODS-VRA) too soon would be a serious mistake.

As our County Health Officer, Dr. Penny Borenstein, wrote on May 15, "Leisure travel should not take place during a pandemic. Increases in new COVID-19 infections further delays our ability to adapt and reopen together under the State's Resilience Roadmap." "Leisure travel" means tourism, driving for hours to go to a beach. It's that clear.

The Oceano Dunes are a precious asset and the ODS-RVA consistently draws many thousands of out-of-county tourists to the South County. During normal times, the influx of visitors is to be expected. However, these are not normal times. For those reasons, to re-open the ODSRVA while the pandemic continues to buffet our county, our state, and our nation would be a reckless gamble, one contrary to your constituents' best interests.

Again, I urge that you use your influence to protect the people and businesses of San Luis Obispo County -- particularly those that live and work in the cities of Arroyo Grande, Grover Beach, and Pismo Beach, as well as the communities of Nipomo and Oceano -- by ensuring that the California Department of Parks and Recreation does not re-open the Oceano Dunes State Vehicular Area too soon and without our concurrence.

Cheryl Storton
President, South County
Democratic Club of
San Luis Obispo County

Opinion

Police Chief: 'We Can Do Better'

By MBPD Chief Jody Cox

As your Police Chief, I have been continually monitoring the tragedy that occurred in Minneapolis.

Like all of you, members of the Morro Bay Police Department were shocked and saddened by the senseless death of George Floyd. It is my personal belief that this incident could have and should have been handled differently.

I cannot speak to the training or tactics taught by the Minneapolis Police Department, or to the personal thoughts the involved officers may have had during this incident, but I can speak to over 32 years of my personal experience as a law enforcement officer, a trainer, a supervisor, and now as a Police Chief.

I was personally heartbroken for the Floyd Family, and for law enforcement as a profession. We are better than this. Your Morro Bay Police officers are better than this.

It is my responsibility to ensure that our officers are properly trained and have the required mindset to function as a police officer in our community, and I take that responsibility very serious.

Our officers receive the best training in such topics as Use of Force, De-Escalation, Cultural Diversity, and dealing with Mental Health related issues to name a few, however, no amount of training can prepare us for when an individual makes a poor decision. We have yet to be able to master human behaviors, or what makes good people do bad things. As law enforcement officers, we will continue to evaluate this incident, learn from it, and continue to strive to be better.

Throughout my career as an investigator, I have been personally involved in numerous internal investigations leading to the termination of officers who were unfit to serve in this profession. I still adhere to those same professional standards and require the same of all Morro Bay Police personnel.

It is difficult for me to comment on this situation, as a trained investigator, I know there is much more information to be discovered in both the personnel and criminal investigation, so I will withhold my personal judgment.

However, I will say again, based on my experience, background and training, I absolutely believe this situation should have been handled differently, and I also believe it would have been handled differently by members of your Morro Bay Police Department.

We, as a society need to continue to work towards removing the scourge of racism in our country, as law enforcement professionals it cannot and should not be tolerated at any level.

This incident is not representative of our law enforcement profession, we can do better, we must do better.

We will continue to "Represent Well" and to balance the needs of our community with our oath to serve and protect all members of our community equally.

Sincerely,

Chief Jody Cox
Morro Bay Police Department



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Restaurant From page 1
vendor is defined as ‘a sidewalk vendor who operates from a fixed location.’”

As examples, a roaming vendor might be something like an ice cream truck that drives around stopping to sell ice cream while a stationary vendor would be something like a serving table set up outside a restaurant, selling food-stuffs during street affairs like the Car Show, or Farmers’ Market.

Given the unique character of Morro Bay, Graham said, the Ordinance includes permit requirements that regulate time of operation, operational requirements for vending carts, signage, trash receptacles, limitations on the type of merchandise for sale, how vendors are to interact with the public, fire safety, limitations on location, penalties for violation, general liability insurance requirements, and City indemnification (insurance) requirement.

Sidewalk vendor regulations include prohibiting setting up in the street or on sidewalks less than 10 feet wide. It also prohibits setting up on beaches, scenic paths, State owned property (without State Parks’ authorization), within 100 feet of a police or fire station, within 15 feet of a fire hydrant, within 15 feet of a transit (bus) stop, adjacent to any loading zone, within 100 feet of a farmers market, or within 100 feet of a City permitted special event.

Before readers rush out and invest in a taco truck, the ordinance requires all sidewalk vendors to get a City permit, a City issued business tax certificate, California seller’s permit (for sales tax purposes), and if it’s a food business, a certificate from the County Health Dept.

As for locations, the ordinance makes most everywhere off limits to sidewalk vendors. Permitted vendors can set up on or adjacent to the Harborwalk, the Embarcadero, Coleman Drive and the Morro Rock parking lot.

It also includes restrictions “pertaining to proximity to entrances and exits to buildings, and emergency vehicle access ways, and establishes distances between vendors.”

Vendors on sidewalks must also maintain at least 4-feet of unobstructed sidewalk so people can walk pas and not have to go out into the street to get by.

And you’ll have to be self-sufficient. As the ordinances prohibits being connected to any public utilities, presumably including the electrical outlets along parts of Morro Bay Boulevard and Main Street that were installed by the City for the purpose of providing power during events like street fairs. There are also significant insurance requirements including naming the City as an “additional insured.”

Of course there’s a fee involved. The Council is expected to approve a change to the master fee schedule at the June 23 meeting adding a \$325 a year fee for the sidewalk vendor permit. Penalties for violators are harsh, with a \$100-=\$500 fine for violations and a \$250-\$1,000 fine for operating without a permit.

The regulations will also help local restaurants to reopen successfully, given that restrictions are still in effect on occupancy of dinning rooms, by allowing them to create outdoor seating in public areas.

That part of it got some positive feedback from some local eatery owners.

Paul Van Beurden, owner of Dutchman’s Seafood House, wrote to the City Council and said, “I am respectfully asking that you give staff direction to implement policies for reimagining public spaces that will help our restaurant and my staff survive.”

Van Buerden said his restaurant lost 85% of its business after shutting down on March 29 for the lockdown. He said the outdoor dining idea before the Council was “nothing new.” He added that allowing use of outdoor public spaces for seating would help businesses recover “a percentage of the space lost due to COVID-19 safety precautions.”

He adds that opening up the outdoor spaces “would allow businesses to expand and encourage visitors easier access to our shops and restaurants and create a more welcoming experience for all.”

At Dutchman’s half the tables were removed from

the dinning room and the rest spread out with portable walls placed between the tables. He’s also using an existing waterside patio for additional seating.

Ken MacMillan of Distassio’s at Shasta Avenue and the Boulevard in Downtown, said, “This will definitely help the recovery effort for those restaurants that have small indoor seating which has now been cut by at least 50%. Each available table will be critical for survival in the near term.

“In addition to the economic benefit to the restaurant and the city of more diners, I believe that this lends itself to a more welcoming vibrant visual for the city. Yes we will have the challenges of space on the sidewalk. Much of that can be accommodated by property owners agreeing to share space with neighbors. The visual of outside diners, for me anyway, says ‘Welcome.’” Distassio’s also has an existing outdoor patio area.

Local businessman, Don Maruska, who led the City’s 2015 Local Economic Action Plan or LEAP, agreed. “The tasteful use of outdoor tables and seating would not only support social distancing but also help the community and visitors see that some welcoming business activity is coming back to life.”

But Maruska’s been around long enough to know that such concessions by the City can get out of hand. “I do recall, however, the concerns some years back about the haphazard proliferation of sandwich board signs, so I hope the tables and seating will occur in a tasteful way.”

Under the City rules, sidewalk vendors are prohibited from setting up at any State Park property (without their permission) including the golf course; and from North Point Natural Area, Dog Beach, all public beaches including parking lots, Eagle Rock, the launch ramp, the estuary and State Park Marina boardwalk, or the trailhead at Black Hill.

There are limited opportunities at the Harborwalk south of Pacific Street; between Pacific and Harbor, and from Beach Street to the Rock and the Morro Creek pedestrian bridge. They will allow stationary and roaming vendors at City parks — Anchor Memorial, Bayshore Bluffs, Centennial Parkway, City Park, Closters, Coleman, Del Mar, Lila Keiser, Mariner Memorial, Monty Young, Tidelands, Franklin Riley (Morro Avenue Bluff), and the Morro Rock parking lot.

That last one is a huge change as the City has turned down many requests by vendors with food trucks or hot dog carts from setting up by Morro Rock, believing it led people to go up the Embarcadero to eat at one of the rent paying restaurants.

Also part of the Council’s approval was a blanket encroachment permit and temporary use permit to allow restaurants to put up outdoor seating areas. The Chamber of Commerce supported this aspect. In a letter to members from CEO Erica Crawford, she said the actions “allow businesses to replace lost indoor seating to the outdoors, with the former allowing for use of the sidewalk and the latter allowing private parking lots to designate parking spots for outdoor seating areas. Both are accessible to restaurants and retailers — and the fee for both programs is zero dollars.”

The City was to post a 2-page application on its website for potential business people to access (see: www.morro-bay.ca.us). The Chamber said it would also post the application on its website (see: http://morrochamber.org).

Or Crawford said business people could contact her at: erica@morrochamber.org to request an application when it becomes available and the Chamber is also offering to connect business owners with someone to help them design an outdoor space for their business.

But nothing’s ever easy in Morro Bay, especially when it comes to the waterfront, which isn’t under ultimate control of the City.

The whole outdoor dining space program has to be approved by the Coastal Commission or at least by the Commission staff. Comm-Dev Director Graham was in talks with Commission staff on a possible waiver for the outdoor eatery spaces on the Embarcadero where the Commission holds “original jurisdiction.”

individuals attending an indoor religious service or protest is still capped at 100 people or 25 percent of a building’s capacity, whichever is less. Strict physical distancing policies should also be in place.

This new State guidance replaces the one issued in May and does not obligate places of worship to resume in-person activity. It is strongly recommended that places of worship continue to facilitate remote services and other related activities for those who are vulnerable to COVID-19 including older adults and those with co-morbidities.

Anyone with symptoms of COVID-19 should stay home to help prevent the spread of COVID-19. Symptoms of COVID-19 include fever, cough, and shortness of breath. Less common symptoms include fatigue, body aches, chills, sore throat, and may include runny nose or diarrhea. Older adults and individuals with underlying medical conditions are particularly vulnerable to COVID-19. Anyone with these symptoms should get tested at one of the many no-cost testing sites throughout the County.

Old Salt From page 1

ing for Antone Sylvester’s Tug Service pushing around oil tankers in El Segundo for Chevron, and working on the famous tug, M/V Ranier, built in 1916 and one of three boats that responded to the December 1941 sinking of the oil tanker SS Montebello by the Japanese off the Coast of San Simeon. Another of the trio of tugs, the M/V Alma (the Estero was the third) is actually on display at the Maritime Museum.

“Second historical note,” Mather wrote, “in 1991, I was honored to have Dick Kelsey (of Sylvester’s Tug) take me out on the M/V Alma to spread my father’s ashes at the Estero Bay radar buoy. Four years later, Keith Kelsey, again on the M/V Alma, took me out to spread my mother’s ashes, joining my father.”

Mather was also captain of the fateful F/V San Mateo out of Graham’s Landing, which was involved in the most famous local shipwreck in Morro Bay history, when in 1983, she was capsized by giant waves at the harbor entrance sending more than 30 passengers and crew into the turbulent waters. All on board, including some 28 school children from Paso Robles out for a whale watching trip, were rescued by the Harbor Patrol and Coast Guard. Mather said he’d left the job on the San Mateo the year before for another captain’s gig running crew boats to the Santa Barbara offshore oilrigs.

Over the years, Mather said he’s run oil response vessels, various service and for-hire cruise boats, in such places as the Gulf of Mexico, Lake Tahoe and Morro Bay.

Working on the waterfront on and off for nearly 50 years, he knows the waterfront about as well as anyone alive. “While my job at the Morro Bay Marina gave me a unique insight into our working waterfront, my Harbor Department employment gave me invaluable insight into the harbor and city politics. Both of these insights would benefit the Maritime Museum.”

Mather joins a museum board that’s brainstorming to come up with ways to bring in donations to the non-profit organization, now that the exhibit building has been closed nearly 3 months.

Museum Board Vice President, Larry Newland, told Estero Bay News that they hope to soon reopen the exhibit building, located at the north end of the Front Street parking lot, and putting together a plan for what that will look like in the time of social distancing.

They will probably open for small groups, he said, families, four to five maximum, people who have been sheltering together anyway. They will probably ask people to wear masks if they have them and Newland said the volunteers working the museum will be wearing masks.

“In the meantime,” he said, “We’ve been working on the outdoor displays.” He noted that they’d completed the stairs and viewing walkway for the CFV Spindrift, their most recently restored historic boat added to their three other vessels.

They want to make the area around the Spindrift in a “commercial fishing” display including a steel, shipping containers that Newland said, “Changed the world,” for safely shipping goods.

Eventually through signs, the Museum will be an outdoor, self-guided tour with little “maritime vignettes” explaining the displayed gear.

Also, the Salinan Tribe is planning sometime this summer to install a display near the Museum entrance revealing the tribe’s maritime history. Newland said they will then touch on the area’s maritime museum starting in pre-historic times to the present.

In the meantime, the Board now consists of President Charlie Yates; V.P. Newland; Treasurer Bonnie Jones; Secretary and Membership Coordinator, Dale Johnson; and board members Bill Steele; Keith Kelsey, Mather, Katherine Gillen, Chuck Stohl, Gina Strong, and Jack Hunter.

The virus shutdown affected their operations like everyone else, and Newland said they are short on donations and starting a membership drive to again raise interest in what is Morro Bay’s only real tourist attraction.

“We’re looking for someone,” Newland said, “a volunteer or even paying someone to manage our social media.” He added that the person wouldn’t have to write copy, just set up and manage accounts on Twitter, Facebook and other platforms.

“It’s the technical aspects that we need help with,” Newland said.

With the exhibit building shuttered so long, one of the steady funding sources — sales of souvenirs — has been left high and dry. So they’ve been emphasizing their dedication brick program.

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a larger brick (8X8) for \$250.

“It doesn’t have to be about someone who died,” Newland pointed out, adding that he and his wife bought bricks for foreign exchange students they hosted. They also have a memorial bench program that will help turn the small plaza area by the Spindrift into a gathering place.

The Museum website, see: www.morrobaymaritime.org, has information on these programs. Bonnie Johnson is the contact person for the bricks and benches programs, as well as the social media contact if a reader would like to help with that. Call (602) 526-4367.

Mather summed up his desires to join the noble effort to help the Maritime Museum grow and prosper. “I watched the persistence of Larry Newland and the crew of the Morro Bay Maritime Museum pay off,” Mather said, “bringing a first-class educational attraction to Morro Bay’s waterfront. I feel my history and local knowledge of Morro Bay would be beneficial to the Morro Bay Maritime Museum continued success. I want to help the Museum expand, to be a waterfront asset that all citizens of Morro Bay will be proud of.”

Peaceful Protest From page 4

future events if needed, as Morro Bay Police is committed to continual improvement and excellence.” Police didn’t hear about this incident until afterwards and that was via social media.

Estero Bay News asked MBPD Cmdr. Amy Watkins for information on this and she responded via email: “As the protest march returned to the City Park from the rock, some protesters were walking along Embarcadero toward the rear of the march and trailing a distance behind the main group when they were contacted by counter protesters. A verbal argument between two males [protester and counter-protester] occurred and officers patrolling along the protest arrived to assist. Both parties separated after a brief verbal exchange then the protester continued on the route.”

Los Osos Protests



A few hundred Los Osos residents turned out for two protests in as many days. One on June 11 began at Los Osos Community Park and ended at the corner of South Bay Blvd and Los Osos Valley Road with an 8 minute 46 seconds moment of silence representing how long a police officer kept his knee on George Floyd’s neck before he died. The second demonstration was held



June 12 at the the corner of South Bay Blvd and Los Osos Valley Road where people again held signs supporting Black Lives Matter. Photos by Dean Sullivan

Rodeo Program From page 10

nation.”

The public is invited to help the students reach their senior project fundraising goal by clicking this secure link: <https://bit.ly/cp-rodeo-deck> to Cal Poly’s giving site.

Some recognition levels include tickets to a future Poly Royal Rodeo in Spanos Stadium. A formal dedication is being planned for a later date.

The rodeo observation deck, office (Building 77T) and practice arena are located on campus off of Mount

Bishop Road. An online photo gallery of the construction process and nearly completed deck can be viewed at: <http://www.caed.calpoly.edu/construction-management-rodeo-deck-photo-gallery>.

Sewing From page 1

that usually takes me about 5-6 hours (including snack and mind wandering breaks). I have a set up with my laptop usually playing some video while I sew, so the time really does fly by.”

So far, masks have been donated to many people including high-risk individuals, prison workers, healthcare workers and grocery store employees as well as organizations and businesses including The SLO County Food Bank, SLO Hospice Morro Bay Fitness Works, Pacific Wildlife Care, Art Center Morro Bay and SLO Eye Associates. It should be noted that these are not N95-type masks such as those worn by healthcare professionals.

As more of the state opens and coronavirus lockdown measures ease, cloth face masks still remain high on the list of recommendations to help limit the spread of COVID-19 in areas where social distancing of six feet is difficult.

Currently, Morgan said she has the fabric she needs, but that could change.

“I had about 90lbs of fabric donated and have bought some myself,” she said. “I have also had over 100 spools of thread donated. All has been either donated to me from people who saw me on Nextdoor or knew someone that told them about my work, most of which has been cut and sewn into masks” Morgan also set up a no-touch system in her yard where people can place the fabric in the driveway either under a tarp, if it is raining, or nearby the mask pick-up table.

“I thought very few people would be in need, but little did I know I would be making over 700,” said Morgan. “I

kept my first few masks; they were a bit shabby and had some parts inside-out etc. But now that I have made so many, I know I can try to apply it to other things.

When will she stop?

“I recently had 1,000 flash in my mind, but I know if I did make it to 1,000 and people still needed them, I would make them,” said Morgan, who originally bought the sewing machine to make hammocks, beds, and pouches for the home rehabilitation volunteers for Pacific Wildlife Care “My goal is to keep making masks as long as people need them. I understand how difficult it is to try to find them in stores and those are usually disposable. My masks are machine washable and reusable and don’t have a price tag. I want everyone to be able to feel safe during this time regardless of financial status.”

For more information, send an e-mail to OliviaM-Berden@gmail.com or find her on FaceBook under Morgan Berden.

What the CDC Says:

“Cloth face coverings may slow the spread of the virus and help people who may have the virus and do not know it from transmitting it to others. Cloth face coverings fashioned from household items or made at home from common materials at low cost can be used as an additional, voluntary public health measure.”

- Wash your hands before putting on your face covering



- Put it over your nose and mouth and secure it under your chin
- Try to fit it snugly against the sides of your face
- Make sure you can breathe easily
- Keep the covering on your face the entire time you’re in public
- Don’t put the covering around your neck or up on your forehead
- Don’t touch the face covering, and, if you do, wash your hands

Change Orders From page 1

to \$68.9M.

Last October, with the City ready to start construction, the project developed a frog in its throat when the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service formally called for a “consult” on the project’s environmental impacts, in particular regarding impacts to the threatened California red-legged frog.

That delay of about 6 months resulted in a \$1M change order for exclusionary frog fencing that must now be installed around the entire project area.

“I call it the most powerful amphibian in the State of California,” City Councilman Jeff Heller told Estero Bay News in an interview prior to the May 26 meeting.

Heller wanted to discuss the change orders and to stress his concerns about the changes, the cost increases and the project’s direction, saying that in his opinion the City has lost control of its project.

Heller believes the changes related to the frogs and the environmental review should be eaten by Carollo, because they should have approached the F&WS much sooner in the process.

“The first thing you do,” Heller said of such projects, “is you bring in all the agencies. We hired Carollo in 2018 and they didn’t contact Fish & Wildlife until 10 months later.”

He added that the red-legged frog impacts weren’t included in the environmental review either. “They should have made contact immediately,” Heller said. “So who pays? I consider that a mistake and Carollo should eat it. That’s Program Management 101.”

He expressed continued frustration with his fellow council members who don’t seem concerned with these cost hikes, so long as the staff tells them it won’t raise rates. “Their justification for the bump,” Heller said, “is the cheap WIFIA money — at 0.83% interest rate.”

At the council meeting, project manager Eric Casares

of Carollo was asked about this and said they did contact F&WS last June in connection with the Environmental Protection Agency, and the Water Infrastructure Financing and Innovation Act (WIFIA) Program, one of two main funding sources the City is tapping to finance the project.

He said F&WS didn’t respond to EPA’s call for comments for several months and when it did, the agency said it had no issues with the impacts identified for the tidewater goby and banded dune snails, but did take issue with the frog portion.

Essentially the treatment plant is being built on designated critical habitat for the frogs and F&WS wasn’t satisfied with the lack of proposed mitigations.

The frog fencing made up some \$1M of the new changes and another million was attributed to the delay. Heller wanted to know why if this was known in October was the Council just now in May hearing about it?

Caseras said they knew they would get hit with an increase when the frog delay happened but not how much. The contractors sustained extra costs from the delay, first on the fencing and then having to pay idled staff and other expenses inherent with such delays.

Casares noted that the biologist that wrote the environmental review found no evidence of red-legged frogs on the property and that F&WS has thrown a blanket over nearly all of SLO County and declared it frog habitat. He also added that no one from Fish & Wildlife has ever visited the site.

The plant site has a seasonal creek — really just a wash through the hills that drains runoff — that the feds considered a “transitory site” for frog movements and there’s another drainage near the highway off ramp at South Bay Boulevard.

The environmental review did note frog habitat in nearby Chorro Creek and because the project is not close to the creek, the frog impacts were considered low.

The discussion also revealed a dustup with the Cali-

fornia Department of Fish & Wildlife, which is requiring a “stream alteration permit” because of the seasonal wetlands.

Other changes were the product of the project reaching design milestones, which uncovered needs that were left out of the original scope of work and other changes in design due to different equipment being chosen. Some of the changes were “holes” in the RFP, Caseras said, and some saved money, too.

Caseras explained that every change order was analyzed by the project team, and haggled over and negotiated on price with the contractor before being agreed to, and then brought to the City Council for approval.

City officials said the change orders will still not lead to another rate increase, as the rates now are \$191 a month for water and sewer bills combined, for up to 5 water units a month (one unit is 750 gallons). The rates include a \$41 per month surcharge on top of the actual water usage.

In a letter to the Council and included in the agenda packet, former Councilwoman and project critic, Betty Winholtz, wrote, “Here is one of those ‘good faith’ statements — “Not to exceed \$126 million” — repeated over and over again that now causes the community to question your believability.

“While it is wise that, ‘Despite the overall increase in the estimated total cost of the WRF project, it will not impact the existing water and sewer rates,’ ratepayers expect decreases in their bills from the low interest rate of the WIFIA loan, not the same maximum charge due to change orders that eat up cost savings meant for their pocketbook.”

Winholtz summed up the feelings of many residents, “Is the City Council and the citizens being taken for a ride?”

That’s what Heller, who in his professional life was project manager on numerous large, public works projects, fears is happening. “Watching this project is painful to me,” said Heller.



WELCOME!

We are so happy to welcome you back to the cafe!

Most importantly, we want you to know that we're following the latest health recommendations to be sure you can safely dine in-house with us, but we're also happy to offer to go orders for anyone who prefers that option.

I, personally, want to thank you for your support and for standing by us during this challenge. Our community is so great, and I look forward to seeing you all again, safely and tastefully!

Best wishes,
CELIA



BREAKFAST

Beverage Special
SLO Roasted Coffee
Fresh Squeezed OJ
Split of Sparkling Wine
\$11.50
\$2.00 savings

All American
Select: Bacon, Ham or Sausage
2 Eggs to order, Home Fries,
Tomatoes or Cottage Cheese
and Toast or Muffin.
Bacon, Ham or Patty Sausage \$14.00
Smoked Polish \$14.75
Chicken Asiago \$14.75

Los Osos Scramble
2 Eggs Scrambled
with Snow Peas, Chicken Sausage,
Mushrooms and Jack Cheese.
Home Fries, Cottage Cheese or
Tomatoes and Toast or Muffin...\$14.50

Breakfast Burrito
Select: Bacon, Ham or Sausage
Combine with Two Eggs, Home Fries
and your choice of cheese.
Wrapped in a Spinach Tortilla with
sour cream, pickle & carrots...\$13.00
Add \$2.50 Avocado

Pork Chop and Eggs
2 Chops breaded, Applesauce
and 2 Eggs to order. Home Fries,
Cottage Cheese or Tomato and
Toast or Muffin...\$15.75
with Smoked Chops...\$16.75

NY Steak & Eggs
New York Steak with 2 eggs to order.
Home Fries, Mushroom or Cottage
Cheese and Toast or Muffin...\$19.00

Chef's Specialty
Homemade Corned Beef Hash
Served with 2 eggs. Choice of
Home Fries, Cottage Cheese or
Tomatoes and Toast or Muffin...\$16.00

Omelettes
Served with Home Fries, Cottage Cheese
or Sliced Tomatoes and Toast or Muffin.
Seafood
Bay Shrimp, Crab, Green Onion,
Mushroom & Jack Cheese Topped
with Hollandaise Sauce...\$17.50
Vegetarian
Egg Whites
Mushroom, Tomato & Spinach
Topped with Jack Cheese, Sprouts
and Avocado...\$15.50
Garden
Broccoli, Carrots & Cauliflower
with Jack Cheese...\$13.50
Greek
Sautéed Spinach, Tomato, Black
olives and feta cheese...\$14.00
Smoked Salmon
Smoked Salmon, Tomato and
Scallions Topped with Avocado,
Sour Cream on Side...\$17.50
Eggplant
Eggplant, Zucchini, Spinach,
Tomato, Mushrooms and
Jack Cheese...\$14.00
Mexican
Chorizo Sausage, Tomato
Black Olives, Mushrooms and
Cheddar Cheese...\$14.00
Bacon
Bacon & Tomatoes
Topped w/Avocado
Your Choice of Cheese...\$14.00
Denver
Ham, Bell Pepper & Grilled Onions
with Cheddar Cheese...\$14.00
Florentine
Spinach, mushroom and cheese.
\$13.50

Pita or Wrap

Celia's Curried Turkey
Hand carved turkey, currants, dates,
red bell pepper, rice celery, red grapes
and mild curry dressing...\$12.50
Chicken Caesar
Caesar salad, chicken breast,
tomato and Parmesan cheese...\$13.50
Seared Tuna Caesar
Caesar salad, seared tuna,
tomato and Parmesan cheese...\$13.50
Vegetarian
Garden vegetable patty,
mixed lettuce, tomato and
homemade 1,000 Island dressing...\$11.50
Devil Egg Salad
Lettuce, tomato and red onion...\$10.00

Deli Sandwiches
The Sub
Soft French roll, roasted turkey breast,
salami, red onion, Pepperoncini, black
olives, lettuce and tomato...\$12.50
Turkey Club
Roasted turkey breast, bacon, lettuce
and tomato on Whole Wheat bread.
\$12.50
Cold Turkey
Roasted turkey breast, lettuce,
tomato, red onion and
mayo on Whole Wheat Bread...\$11.50
Health Nut
Avocado, tomato, cucumber, sprouts,
Jack cheese on Whole Wheat bread.
\$11.00
Corned Beef
Thin sliced Corned Beef, Swiss cheese,
tomato, mustard and sauerkraut
\$11.00
BLT
Whole Wheat Bread and mayo
\$9.50
Deviled Egg Salad
Wheat bread, lettuce, red onion
\$10.00

Avocado Salad

Tomato stuffed with cottage cheese
served on a bed of lettuce with slices
of creamy avocado, carrots, red
onion, hard boiled eggs and
Kalamata olives. Served with
house balsamic dressing and toast.
\$14.50

Garden Salads

Orange
Sweet oranges and chicken breast
on mixed greens with red onion,
avocado and homemade soy dressing.
\$14.50
Cobb
Roasted turkey, tomato, bacon,
avocado, sliced egg, mixed greens and
blue cheese crumbles with
homemade blue cheese dressing.
\$14.50
Shrimp Louis
Bay shrimp on mixed greens with
tomato, hard boiled egg,
cucumber, avocado and homemade
1,000 Island dressing...\$14.50
Greek
Salami, calamita olives, cucumber,
Pepperoncini, red onion and Feta
cheese on mixed greens with
homemade Greek dressing...\$14.50
Seared Tuna Caesar
Traditional Caesar salad topped
with seared tuna, tomato,
Parmesan cheese and croutons...\$14.50
Hot Chicken Caesar
Traditional Caesar salad topped
with grilled chicken, tomato,
Parmesan cheese and croutons...\$13.50
Garden Caesar
Romaine lettuce tossed with croutons,
tomato and Parmesan cheese
\$9.50
Spinach Salad
Fresh Spinach topped with red onion,
hard boiled egg, blue cheese crumbles &
pine nuts in a pomegranate vinaigrette
dressing served w/toast
\$13.50

Blinitzes

Crepes filled with Ricotta and
cottage cheese topped with
raspberry sauce, dusted with
powdered sugar and served
with apple sauce...\$13.50

Hot Cakes

Buttermilk...\$8.00
7 Grain almond granola...\$9.50

Pan San

2 Buttermilk
Cakes with
2 eggs to order and a choice of
bacon, ham or sausage...\$14.00
Cinnamon Swirl
\$11.50

French Toast

\$10.00
ADD Bacon,
ham or sausage...\$4.50
Fresh fruit + \$2.00 ea.
Sugarless Syrup Available

Belgian Waffle

ADD Bacon,
ham or sausage...\$4.50
Fresh fruit + \$2.00 ea.
Sugarless Syrup Available

Oatmeal

Brown sugar, milk and raisins
Bowl \$7.00 / Cup \$5.50
Add: strawberries, blueberries or
bananas \$2.00 each

Fresh Fruit

Side Dish...\$4.00
Cup...\$6.50 / Bowl...\$8.50

Parfait

Yogurt or cottage cheese
layered w/fruit and granola
\$9.50

A LOCAL FAVORITE

Eggs Benedict
Select: home fries,
cottage cheese or tomatoes.
Traditional
With ham...\$14.00
Country
Patty sausage with country gravy
\$15.50
Supreme
Eggplant, asparagus & tomato
\$14.50
Vegetable
Avocados and tomato. \$14.50
Greek
Spinach, tomato, goat cheese
and Kalamata olives...\$14.50
Crab Cakes
"FRESH CRAB" ...\$18.00
Lox
Smoked salmon, asparagus
and goat cheese...\$16.50

Lox and Bagel
Norwegian smoked salmon
served with a toasted bagel,
sliced tomato, capers, red onion
and cream cheese...\$16.00
Lox Scramble
Norwegian smoked salmon
scrambled with 2 eggs
and chopped tomatoes
served with home fries, tomato or
cottage cheese and toast or muffin
\$15.00

Homemade Fresh Biscuits Sausage Gravy...\$8.00
1/2 ORDER...\$4.50



LUNCH

Tom Turkey or Pork Chops
Hand Carved Turkey Breast with
Dressing and Cranberry Sauce or
Breaded Pork Chops with Apple Sauce.
Both served with whipped potatoes
and gravy, fresh vegetables & toast.
\$15.50

Quiche
Homemade Daily Selections
Served with Green Salad
\$14.50

Burgers
All served with lettuce, tomato,
onion mayo and pickle.
SELECT: Cole Slaw or Potato Chips
1/3 lb Beef Patty \$9.95
Chicken Ortega
Chicken Breast, Pepper Jack Cheese,
Ortega Chili and Avocado \$12.95
Teriyaki Chicken
Chicken Breast w/Teriyaki Sauce
and Pineapple \$11.95
South Western Garden
Vegetarian patty,
Ortega chili & jack cheese \$9.95
BBQ Beef
Beef patty w/BBQ sauce, red onions,
bacon and cheddar cheese \$12.50
Chili
Beef patty with Ortega chilies and
Jack cheese \$ 11.95
Mushroom
Beef Patty, mushroom and
pepper jack cheese \$11.95

Soup

Cup \$4.50 / Bowl \$6.00
Homemade...with crackers

Melts...\$11.95
Sourdough Melt
Thin slice roast beef, Ortega Chili
and Jack cheese on Sourdough bread.
Turkey Melt
Hand carved turkey, Jack cheese,
sprouts and tomato on Whole Wheat.
Veggie Melt
Sautéed mushrooms, onions, red and
green bell peppers, Kalamata olives &
Goat cheese on Sourdough bread.
Chicken Melt
Spinach quesadilla with chicken breast,
Jack cheese, red onion, tomato and
fresh cilantro.
Patty Melt or Tuna Melt
Served on Rye bread with grilled
onions & Cheddar cheese...\$10.50

Hot Sandwiches
Classic Hot Turkey
Hand carved turkey served
open faced on white bread with
whipped potatoes, gravy and
Cranberry sauce. \$12.95
French Dip
Thin sliced sirloin roast beef served on
a soft French roll with au jus \$11.95
Philly Cheese Steak
Soft French Roll filled with beef steak
topped with grilled onions and
bell peppers \$11.95
Saucy Ruben
Corned Beef with Sauerkraut &
Swiss Cheese on Rye Bread \$11.95
New Mexican Grilled Cheese
Cheddar cheese, Ortega chili, tomato,
grilled onions and cilantro on
sourdough bread \$10.00

Lite-Menu

No Substitutions

Breakfast Special
One egg and two pieces of bacon.
Choice of home fries, sliced tomatoes or cottage cheese and
toast or muffin. \$9.00

Cinnamon Swirl French Toast
One half order dusted with powdered sugar and served
with two pieces of bacon. \$8.50
(Sugarless Syrup Available)

California Bagel
Toasted bagel topped with cream cheese, tomato,
cucumber, red onion, avocado and sprouts and served
with coleslaw, pickle and carrot. \$11.00

Egg Sandwich
English muffin toasted and topped with sliced tomato,
one scrambled egg and melted Jack cheese.
Served with fresh fruit. \$9.75

A La Carte
Two eggs to order, choice of home fries,
sliced tomatoes or cottage cheese and toast or muffin. \$9.00

Biscuits and Gravy
Buttermilk biscuits smothered in our homemade
Country sausage gravy. \$8.00
1/2 order \$4.25

Potato Medley
Sautéed home fries with fresh spinach,
red and green bell peppers, onion and mushrooms. \$11.00

1/2 Sandwich with Soup or Salad
Cold Turkey, Tuna Melt, Deviled Egg Salad,
Health Nut, Curried Turkey and BLT. \$11.00



We Offer: In-Door or Patio Dining • To Go

Open Mon-Fri 8:00 am to 2:00 pm - Sat & Sun 7:30 am to 2:00 pm

Closed Wednesday

1188 Los Osos Valley Rd., Los Osos • (805) 528-5711