

## Vistra Proposes World's Biggest Battery Storage Facility

By Neil Farrell



Vistra Energy is proposing to build a 600 megawatt Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) at the closed Morro Bay Power Plant. Rendering courtesy Vistra

Morro Bay could become home to the largest electric battery system in the world, if a project being proposed by the owners of the Morro Bay Power Plant is built, bringing a windfall of tax monies to a city left financially reeling due to the coronavirus pandemic response and near shutdown of the tourism economy.

Representatives from Vistra Energy made a presentation to the City Council Jan. 26, proposed a massive, 22-acre complex with three, 40-foot tall buildings, each some 91,000 square feet.

For comparison, Spencer's Market in Morro Bay is 15,000 s.f., and the Family Dollar and Dollar Tree stores share a 19,000 s.f. space.

Vistra spokesman, Brad Watson, told the Council, "This is a major infrastructure project."

Indeed, the company's recently completed "Battery Energy Storage System" or BESS project at the Moss Landing Power Plant at 300 megawatts capacity is currently the largest such facility in the world.

The project being proposed for Morro Bay is 600MW and would double Moss Landing's capacity, though Vistra is also trying to build another 100MW BESS in Moss Landing.

Their plan is to get the Morro Bay BESS online by 2024

to coincide with the closure of the Unit 1 reactor at the Diablo Canyon Nuclear Plant. To do that, Watson said, "We need to start on the property next year."

That may be easier said than done, as the project, which is being sited for the northwest side of the 107-acre power plant property, roughly covers the plant's former tank farm area.

The plant had five, giant fuel storage tanks grouped on that area, but those were removed years ago when the now-defunct Duke Energy North America owned the plant. It's the same spot where Duke had tried to get permits to install a 1,200 MW combined-cycle, natural gas-powered plant.

Though Duke spent over 7 years and an estimated \$35 million, it never did get a permit from the State to build its project. Duke eventually sold the plant and it's changed hands a couple of times through corporate mergers before being shuttered forever in 2014. The plant property was up for sale for the past several years.

Now Vistra, which absorbed Dynegy in 2018, is in charge and this company is making great strides across the nation and in Canada and Japan, turning towards renewable energy and sustainable sources, of which battery storage is essential.

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## Maritime Museum Wants to Expand

Story & Photos By Neil Farrell



This area adjacent to the Embarcadero is where the Maritime Museum wants to build a fishing shack to house an exhibit dedicated to commercial fishing.

Borrowing a nautical term, you could call the Morro Bay Maritime Museum "over laden," that is, it has way too many items for the available space and the museum board plans to ask the City for room to expand.

Situated at the entrance to the "Triangle Lot," a 1-acre property at the northern end of Front Street, the museum consists of a 20-foot by 20-foot exhibit building, four historic vessels on display, along with numerous interesting, outdoor displays of various types of nautical gear and equipment including a diving bell.

It's an interesting collection and Museum Association President Scott Mather said there's a whole lot more to their collection than is on display and people are donating new items all the time.

The museum has a pair of restored Matson Navigation Co., shipping containers stuffed with donated items.

"We're maxed out now," Mather told Estero Bay News, "at the permitted area the City allowed us. It shows how popular we are not just with the tourists but with the locals too."

Museum Association treasurer, Bonnie Jones, said that despite the pandemic and the museum being largely closed for most of 2020, they took in \$53,000 in donations.

Mather added, "I'm thoroughly amazed at how much people appreciate maritime history. I'm absolutely gobsmacked at that. It's refreshing."

With the museum's exhibit hall mostly closed due to the Governor's coronavirus pandemic response, which the County

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## Moving Forward in 2021: Rains Trigger Deja Vu of Morro Bay's 1995 Flooding

By Judy Salamacha

As January 2021 rainfall steadily doused the city for several days, Morro Bay's Village Center Dry Cleaners owner, David Owens, experienced another bout of deja vu. His flashbacks take him back to March 10, 1995 when he and his father, Gary Owens, were called to action rescuing folks from their cars waterlogged under the Hwy. 1/Main Street underpass.

The corridor was flooded all the way to the intersection at Hwy. 46. David recalled. "Both of the trailer parks were flooded from all night rain (9.5-inches in less than 24 hours). A shed got loose and lodged under the highway so the water backed up." The fire department was looking for a boat to rescue folks. David volunteered his inflatable Zodiac. "We used it for diving. It was stored at my parents a couple blocks from the cleaners. My dad (Gary Owens) was home, so I asked, 'Dad, want to go rescue people?'"

They found three or four cars stalled near Radcliffe with "...water up to the roof." Gary noticed..."the bottom of the water was to the top of the street sign. Estero Glass had cars parked with water running over them."



Morro Bay's Village Center Dry Cleaners owners David Owens and son Dak.

Water was almost over his head when David stepped down into the Radcliffe intersection. "It was deep enough to run a 6-horse-power motor. One guy had dropped his keys and Dad dove and found them. Next there were two guys standing on top of their Volkswagen grateful to

Flooding Continued on page 14

## Debut by Local Novelist is Award Winner

By Theresa-Marie Wilson

First kisses, layers of lip-gloss, endless music and a weekend without parents might be considered a quintessential part of being a teenager. A local author has captured that whirlwind of emotions and constantly changing landscape of relationships and written about it in a fresh, engaging way that is earning her debut novel accolades and awards.

Ivy Cayden, 38, is the author of "Everything All At Once" her first novel in the planned multi-book series Chorduroys and Too Many Boys. The book tells the story of Kila Lorens and a group of friends who navigate the ups and downs of crushes, hormones and high school.

"At its heart, it's a story about the things that matter: family, friendship, love, and dreams," Ivy said. "There's a moment in every teenager's life where things morph from ordinary to enthralling. 'Everything All At Once' captures that moment, as it unfolds a little differently for each of the main characters in the story on one life-altering, parentless weekend."

The novel is billed as one for the YA (Young Adult) crowd, but Ivy says it has a wider audience.

"I initially categorized it for readers



Cambrian author Ivy Cayden with Royal Dragonfly Book Awards for her first novel "Everything All at Once." Photo submitted.

ages 15 and up, but I have since had some parents reach out to relay that their 12-year-old children also enjoyed it. (The first book is rather wholesome and only includes kissing.)

"I've also had many, many adult readers say the story swept them right back to the excitement and nerves of their own teen years. I love when readers

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## Work Starts on WRF Pipelines

By Neil Farrell

Work has begun on the second phase of the Morro Bay Water Recycling Facility or WRF project and residents will soon start to see some dirt being dug up and moved around for the pipelines.

“The WRF Program is the largest-ever City infrastructure program,” City Manager Scott Collins said in a news release, “and will meet state water and wastewater regulations, protect the environment and contribute a safe and reliable water source for Morro Bay’s residents and businesses.”

That safe reliable water source will be a stand-by one for the time being, as the City plans to only run the recycled water system a few days a month and in emergencies.

The WRF, which is building a treatment plant on a hillside above the end of South Bay Boulevard at Hwy 1, will need an extensive conveyance system to send the water from the current plant site on Atascadero Road to the new treatment plant. That’s around 3 miles and a few hundred feet gain in elevation.

“The WRF Pipelines include two wastewater pipelines, one [return] pipeline for the water treatment process discharge [into the ocean], and one purified water pipeline, the City said. All the pipelines will be in the same trench though segregated from each other. The purified water line will diverge off at Main Street and run into the rear of the pow3er plant property to an injection well field, which is also part of this Phase of the project.

But a lawsuit over the site for those injection wells and over permanent and construction easements the city needs through the power plant property remains unresolved.

The City sued Vistra, the owners of the power plant, for eminent domain to force the easements, offering \$200,000 for them.

A judge will decide if that’s enough money. Both City officials and Vistra spokes people have declined comment on the lawsuit, with Collins only saying in a recent interview that it’s ongoing.

Collins has said the City’s project can move forward without the lawsuit being completed, however. With eminent domain the only real issue is how much the City should pay for the easements.

The pipeline route will disrupt traffic on Atascadero Road, Main Street, Quintana Road — including at the Roundabout — and South Bay Boulevard during construction.

“The construction,” Collins said, “will include trenching, tunneling, pipe installation, soil backfilling and off-hauling, and road restoration, as well as construction of support infrastructure including two new lift stations.”

Crews will begin work on Quintana Road first, from La Loma Street to South Bay Boulevard, and from Main Street going south on Quintana, which is the segment expected to have the biggest impact on Quintana Road businesses.

Shoppers should approach Quintana’s two shopping centers via Kennedy Way, to avoid the construction zone.

Construction is scheduled from 7 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. weekdays, according to the City. “Weekend or night work may be scheduled, as needed, but neighboring properties will be informed in advance of schedule changes.”

The construction schedule calls for the majority of the work on Phase 2 to be completed by next December (2021).

The schedule calls for the majority of construction activities to be completed by December 2021.

The contract for the pipeline portion went to Anvil Builders, Inc., based in San Francisco, for \$31.49 million, including the project’s third phase, the injection wells, part of the City’s “indirect potable reuse” or IPR system.

“We are thrilled to be breaking ground on the WRF Pipelines and are ready to work with the community and businesses throughout construction,” said Collins. “Pipeline construction is expected to be complete at the end of 2021, and we look forward to the long-term benefits of making investments in our infrastructure.”

The pipeline work will be in the public right of way and the company is supposed to limit impacts to traffic flow.

“Lane closures and, when needed, detours will be in place for traffic circulation and access,” Collins said. “For the safety of the community and construction crews, traffic control mechanisms such as signage, barricades and flag people, will be in place. The City is committed to maintaining business, residential and emergency vehicle access to properties, and minimizing inconveniences throughout construction.”

The City promises to keep local businesses informed on the progress of the project as it affects them. The Chamber of Commerce has been working with the City and Quintana Road businesses to prepare for the project.

“Properties along the construction area will receive printed notices before work begins near their address, and construction notices will be regularly posted on morrobaywrf.com. Email to: wrfinfo@morrobayca.gov or call 877-MORROBAYH2O with questions about the City’s WRF Project. The City promises to respond within one day.

And in case you were worried, the City said the construction crews would “adhere to all health and safety protocols in place for personal protective equipment and physical distancing,” as the City’s continued response to the coronavirus pandemic requires.

## Rat Creek Slide Closes Hwy 1 Indefinitely

By Neil Farrell



This photo from Caltrans shows gaping hole that the Rat Creek Slide of Jan. 27, left on Hwy 1.

Scenic Highway 1 through Big Sur is closed indefinitely after heavy rains washed out a section of roadway at Rat Creek, located just south of the world-famous Big Creek Bridge in Monterey County.

Caltrans had been issuing warnings days before the 3-day, “atmospheric river” event sent torrential rains to the Central Coast.

“Highway 1 on the Big Sur Coast will be closed between Ragged Point in San Luis Obispo County and Deetjen’s Big Sur Inn in Monterey County [44.6 miles] beginning Tuesday Jan. 26 at 5 p.m.” Caltrans Dist. 5 reported Jan. 26.

They expected the closure to last through Thursday, Jan. 28, but as someone said, “Man plans, and nature laughs.”

Monterey County Emergency Services issued evacuation orders for the burn scar area where the Dolan Fire burned last year and, “where this storm brings an increased likelihood of debris flows.”

That prophetic warning came true on Wednesday, when the hillside above Rat Creek started to slide, washing mud and debris over the traffic lanes.

At 5 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 27 Caltrans extended the closure and evacuations through Friday. But the road didn’t last even that long.

“A debris flow from the hillside above Rat Creek on Highway 1 on the Big Sur coast,” Caltrans announced Friday, “overwhelmed drainage infrastructure, flowed across the highway, and eroded the road resulting in the complete loss of a segment of Highway 1 at that location.”

A Caltrans crew found the damage. “On Thursday Jan. 28,” Caltrans said, “Caltrans crews, working from the north doing a post rainstorm assessment of the roadway, discovered debris flow across the highway at Rat Creek. Before dark on Thursday, the lane on the coast side of the road had washed out.”

The State issued a \$5 million emergency contract with Papih Const., of SLO County “to assist with repair of the highway slide out.” But again, it was too late.

When Friday, Jan. 29 dawned, another crew reported some 150 feet of the highway was completely gone.

Dist. 5 posted drone videos of the damage that show a huge scar starting well above the roadway, and extending hundreds of feet down to the ocean. The slide has likely closed Hwy 1 for months if not longer.

That was the case with the May 2017 Mud Creek Slide that happened farther south, nearer to the SLO-Monterey County Line.

The Mud Creek Slide was the largest in the highway’s history, measuring an estimated 6-million cubic yards. Mud Creek (just south of Gorda) was the largest slide during a winter marked with slides, and was the worst of three major disasters on Hwy 1 that year.

Paul’s Slide, near Lucia, came down and blocked the road



A screen shot of a video posted by Caltrans and taken by a Monterey County Sheriff’s drone camera, shows the extent of the Rat Creek Slide that washed out 150-feet of roadway about 30 miles north of the Monterey-SLO County Line near the world-famous Big Creek Bridge.

in January 2017 and in February, the Pfeiffer Canyon Bridge was damaged and had to be demolished after the land under the bridge supports moved and destabilized the bridge.

A new, steel bridge was fabricated in the Bay Area and installed, reuniting Big Sur that October.

Traffic through the Paul’s Slide Area was reopened with one lane in July, but the Mud Creek Slide took from May 2017 to July 2018 for the road to be rebuilt and for the highway to completely reopen.

The closure hurt tourism for SLO County’s North Coast communities — from San Simeon to Morro Bay — especially hard, as they are heavily dependent on tourism, and millions of travelers a year arrive via the Big Sur Highway, including numerous tour buses.

Caltrans announced that the highway is open up to Ragged Point on the south and to Deetjen’s Big Sur Inn on the north.

The Rat Creek Slide is at Post Mile marker 30.2, according to Caltrans, some 30 miles north of the County Line.

Caltrans has a lot of work to do on Hwy 1. “Although the wash out at Rat Creek was the most apparent and significant devastation, it was not the only location on Highway 1 along the Big Sur Coast to suffer damage,” Caltrans said on Feb. 1. Crews were working both south and north of Rat Creek.

“Caltrans and contractor crews working north and south of Rat Creek on Highway 1 continue to clear multiple debris piles, remove slides, remove accumulations of water, clear and repair drainage systems, and stabilize damaged sections of roadway at approximately 60 locations that were impacted by storm damage.”

Rat Creek is so dangerous that Caltrans said people who live nearby will have to wait to go home.

“Several of these locations still need to stabilize and dry out before final cleanup and repair work can restore the highway to allow for public use. Damage to Highway 1 south of Rat Creek remains in such condition that it will delay the ability of residents



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News Briefs

By Theresa-Marie Wilson

Keep Up Heart Care

Dignity Hospitals of the Central Coast recognize American Heart Month and the importance of cardiac health, even during the COVID-19 pandemic. Heart disease is the number one cause of death in the United States.

Adopting healthy lifestyles to prevent heart disease, exercising regularly, maintaining routine cardiac screenings, eating heart-healthy foods, and alleviating stress can make a great impact on your overall heart health.

“This pandemic has been incredibly stressful for many, and has deterred some individuals from seeking out proper health care, including cardiac care,” said Scott Robertson, MD, chief medical officer, Dignity Health Central Coast. “We want to emphasize the importance of maintaining health screenings, including diabetes, blood pressure, and appropriate heart screenings. We encourage community members to take the initiative to get the proper care and make these important screenings a priority.”

Dignity Health Central Coast hospitals encourage community members to maintain important care such as routine screenings and visiting your physician regularly.

Get Active in SLO

The San Luis Obispo City Council adopted the City’s first Active Transportation Plan, a comprehensive collection of policies, programs and infrastructure recommendations that aim to increase the number of people bicycling and walking.

What’s the goal? By improving sustainable transportation such as walking and bicycling, the City can reduce vehicle use and related greenhouse gas emissions. This in turn will place the City on a stronger path to meeting its goal of achieving climate neutrality by 2035.

“From improving bikeways and intersections to making a walk more interesting and enjoyable with public art and parklets, the Active Transportation Plan provides a series of actions to make bicycling and walking easier, cheaper, and safer for everyone in our community,” said Adam Fukushima, active transportation manager.

Beginning in the summer of 2021, community members will start to see the first improvements from the plan, which include a protected bike lane on Marsh Street downtown and improvements for walking such as new curb ramps and high-visibility crosswalks.

Outreach for the Active Transportation Plan was a comprehensive effort, spanning nearly three years and engaging hundreds of community members at neighborhood pop-up

events, the Active Transportation Committee meetings, public workshops, through surveys, interactive online tools, and other activities.

The Active Transportation Plan is in line with the Sustainable Transportation Major City Goal identified in the 2019-21 Financial Plan as well as both the City’s General Plan and Climate Action Plan for Community Recovery.

To learn more, visit [www.slobikewalk.org](http://www.slobikewalk.org).

Property Tax Exemption Deadline

Homeowners, disabled veterans, and eligible non-profit organizations may file Property Tax exemptions.

The Homeowner’s Exemption exempts up to \$7,000 in taxable value of a property if the claim is timely filed or postmarked by February 16, 2021 and up to \$5,600 if filed late (postmarked by December 10, 2021). If you received your Homeowner’s Exemption last year, and you still own and occupy the same property this year, you do not need to file again. Your exemption automatically remains in place.

The Disabled Veteran’s Exemption is available to exempt taxable value of a property owned by a veteran who is 100% disabled due to service-related illness or injury. The exemption could be up to \$221,304 if timely filed or postmarked by February 16, 2021, and up to \$213,927 if filed late (postmarked by December 10, 2021).

To be eligible for either of the above exemptions this year, claimants must have owned and occupied the property as their principal place of residence as of 12:01 a.m. January 1, 2021. County Assessor Tom J. Bordonaro, Jr. office or visit the website for eligibility requirements and claim forms.

Certain non-profit organizations may be eligible for an exemption from property tax if they were using the property for exempt purposes on January 1, 2021. For the full exemption, the organization must file or postmark their claim for Church, Religious, or Welfare Exemption by February 16, 2021. Claimants may be eligible for 90% of the exemption if the claim is postmarked by December 31, 2021.

The Assessor’s main office is located in Room D-360 of the County Government Center, 1055 Monterey Street, in San Luis Obispo. They can be reached at (805) 781-5643. There is a branch office in Atascadero at 6565 Capistrano Ave. Information is available on the website at [www.slocounty.ca.gov/Assessor](http://www.slocounty.ca.gov/Assessor).

Send your news, community and business briefs to [Editor@EsteroBayNews.com](mailto:Editor@EsteroBayNews.com). Be sure to include the who, what, why, where and when information along with a contact person.

who live south of Rat Creek to return to their homes.”

Caltrans moved the closure area from the original 44-plus miles and relocated to the vicinity of South Coast Center near Post Mile 34 on the north side of the slide, Caltrans said.

They planned to install a checkpoint manned around the clock to only allow residents of the area to get through. The plan was to move the checkpoint southward as crews clear the roadway.

The southern closure, first at Ragged Point, was moved north to Willow Creek Rd., at Post Mile 11.2. Where the checkpoints are set up will be an indicator of how the work is progressing.

“In similar fashion as in the north,” Caltrans said, “the southern edge of the closure will continue to move tracking the progress of maintenance and contractor crews as they work north.”

Motorists are advised to expect areas of roadway to be closed down to a single lane as the work continues. Drivers are advised to proceed with caution and to be aware of construction workers and equipment through the construction zones.

Caltrans officials have not yet issued a statement on the assessment its engineers have been doing on the Rat Creek Slide, but with absolutely nothing to hold up a roadbed, it’s not unreasonable to expect that repairs are likely to be complicated, expensive, and take a long time.

Big Storm Caused Little Damage

By Neil Farrell



The Jan. 27-29 storm dumped a torrent of rain on the Central Coast but didn’t cause much damage in Morro Bay, unlike Hwy 1 through Big Sur, which saw a 150-foot segment of roadway washed out at Rat Creek.

But while the damage wasn’t bad, Morro Bay fire and public works crews had a busy time keeping an eye on the local creeks and known trouble spots.

Estero Bay News sent a number of questions to Fire Chief Steve Knuckles and Public Works Director Joe Mueller regarding the 3-day storm caused by an “atmospheric river” of air currents that dropped 6.7 inches of rain at the Downtown Harbor Street Fire House. (For this story, we’ll collectively attribute their quotes

Damage Continued on page 4



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for questions or “take out”. • Visit our Menu at [Baysidecafe.com](http://Baysidecafe.com)

## Featured Listings


New Listing



Atascadero


3680 Arena, Atascadero

Enjoy Light and Treetop Views in this spacious tri-level home nestled on Atascadero’s oak-studded east side. Vaulted ceilings, large windows, and an airy loft bring charm and architectural wonder to this 3-bedroom, three bath home situated on one acre. Priced to sell at \$775,000



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**Damage** From page 3

to “they.”)

The fiercest day of the storm was Wednesday, Jan. 27 when wind gusts reached 60 mph in many areas along the North Coast, and a hard, steady rain fell from around midnight Tuesday, throughout the day and night Wednesday and into Thursday when it finally let up to a light rain.

The rain continued to fall through Thursday and into Friday, finally clearing to blue skies over the weekend.

Among the extensive damage that high winds can do is toppling trees, especially pine and eucalyptus trees that have shallow roots.

“We lost a few trees to the storm,” they said, “but thankfully the wind didn’t do too much damage.”

However, a big tree blew down by Bayshore Bluffs in the 100 block of Main Street. It “tore up part of the public path through there,” they said. “Not aware of any other damage from public trees. No road damage either.”

Historically, Chorro Creek and the bridge on South Bay Boulevard has been the site of many a flood, but with the replacement of Twin Bridges in the early-1990s with the Chorro Creek Bridge, it hasn’t flooded. But January’s storm almost changed that.

“Chorro Creek did rise to 13.3 feet, which is at it limits,” they said. “The County did make some repairs on the Chorro Creek dike but only minor flooding occurred near the 4-H farm,” which is on Chorro Creek Road, well upstream of the Chorro Creek Bridge.

The storm runoff flooded the estuary up to the levee that South Bay Boulevard rides atop. Lower State Park Road flooded at the intersection with South Bay, and State Parks closed the road. But that’s typical for that low-lying spot.

“Yes, we did suffer the typical flooding on Lower State Park Road between South Bay Blvd., and Upper State Park Road,” they said. “SBB also had moderate run off adjacent to the Chorro Creek Bridge, which we did place hazard signs to hopefully reduce the speed of the vehicles on SBB.”

The City put out a map showing that intersection and Quintana Road west of South Bay, as flooded areas. “Quintana south of SBB was flooded for a few hours,” they said, “which is normal during a large rain event.”

In town, concerns turned to Morro Creek. Back in March 1995 the Main Street bridge got plugged with debris and backed up floodwaters from Hwy 46 to the Hwy 1 overpass at Radcliff, in some areas, 6-feet deep.

Floodwaters washed over Hwy 1 closing it and effectively cutting the town in half for several hours.

Eventually the debris cleared the creek bridge and the water quickly flowed out to sea, leaving a large, muddy mess throughout that area. That 1995 storm dropped 13 inches of rain overnight and it continued raining hard all that day. This recent storm wasn’t nearly as bad.

“Morro Creek,” they said, “did rise up to 8.4 feet, which was 3.6 feet from overflowing. We had no events caused by Morro Creek.”

None of the City’s hundreds of storm drains backed up to cause homes to flood, a tribute to the City crews that were out in force keeping an eye on things.

Morro Bay’s storm drain system — including sidewalk gutters — can get overwhelmed by the rainwater’s unstoppable flow down to the sea. There are dozens of drains emptying out along the Embarcadero and the streets can run like river rapids in some places.

The city’s aged sewer collection system, which is subject to massive inflow during rainstorms that greatly increase the flow to the sewer treatment plant.

“We did exceed limits and are discussing that with Region-

al Water Quality Control Board,” they said. “This can happen during large rain events, and is part of the reason we need the new WRF project.”

The City and water board will negotiate the remedy for the violation, which Mueller did not elaborate on. Chief Knuckles said that there were no public health concerns related to the plant’s violation.

Water quality in the bay and ocean is normally degraded with big rainstorms, especially the first big rain of the year when all the dirt and chemicals deposited on the streets by autos gets washed into the bay and ocean through storm drains.

In Los Osos, Cal Fire Sta. 15 Capt. Danny Ciecek told EBN that they got about a dozen reports of telephone and cable TV lines coming down across the town and had one home on Pine Avenue get flooded.

There were no downed trees or big limbs that came down doing any damage. They were prepared for it too, Capt. Ciecek said, with chainsaws and other gear at the ready. They’d also coordinated with County Roads in case they had to put out detours.

There was one house fire, he said, but that wasn’t due to the storm. The kitchen fire on Wednesday was in a home on Seahorse Lane, he explained. The fire damaged one wall and part of the home’s floor but they were able to save the home, and no one was injured. He said the estimated damage was about \$25,000 and the residents were displaced because of the fire.

As for rainfall, Baywood Park received 9.5-inches of rain, according to news sources. Capt. Ciecek said there were no power outages in Los Osos so far as he knew.

As might be expected, utility crews were extremely busy, with Pacific Gas & Electric chasing power outages throughout its territory (roughly from Santa Maria north to the Oregon Border).

From Midnight, Tuesday Jan. 26 through about 4 p.m. Wednesday, PG&E spokesman Mark Mesesan said 575,000 customers had lost power because of the high winds. They restored power to almost everyone by Thursday.

Hardest hit areas included Sacramento and Stockton, and Humboldt and Mendocino Counties.

Closer to home, Mesesan said the wind caused a wire to go down off Hwy 1 near Kansas Avenue at about 4:45 p.m. Wednesday, knocking out power to nearly 50 customers including all of the County Jail facilities.

The power wasn’t restored until about 2:45 a.m. Thursday, some 10 hours in the dark.

Also, 1,300 to 1,600 PG&E customers in North County lost power as well. They also had power outages in Cambria.

Mesesan noted that rainstorms with high winds are dangerous for their workers. “The wind was a challenge,” he said, “and there were periods where because of safety, we could not risk putting our personnel at heights using bucket trucks and had to wait for the winds to subside to allow safe repairs.”

## Vaccine Rollout a Roller Coaster

By Neil Farrell



The San Luis Obispo County Health Department has had a roller coaster ride over the past several weeks with the rollout of the coronavirus vaccine, seeing starts and stumbles with getting people a shot in the arm, but saw some lessening of restrictions on businesses and personal liberties with the lifting of the Governor’s stay-at-home orders.

Jan. 25, the State Public Health Department issued a statement about the changes. “Officials with the California Department of Public Health [CDPH] today ended the Regional Stay at Home Order, lifting the order for all regions statewide, including the three regions that had still been under the order — San Joaquin Valley, Bay Area and Southern California.”

SLO County falls within the Southern California Region, and the announcement simply puts everyone back to the conditions of last December. “This action,” CDPH said, “allows all counties

statewide to return to the rules and framework of the Blueprint for a Safer Economy and color-coded tiers that indicate which activities and businesses are open based on local case rates and test positivity. The majority of the counties are in the strictest, or purple tier,” including SLO County.

### State Thinks Lockdown Worked

“Californians,” Dr. Tomás Aragón, CDPH director and state public health officer said, “heard the urgent message to stay home as much as possible and accepted that challenge to slow the surge and save lives. Together, we changed our activities knowing our short-term sacrifices would lead to longer-term gains.

“COVID-19 is still here and still deadly, so our work is not over, but it’s important to recognize our collective actions saved lives and we are turning a critical corner.”

With the end of the stay-home order, so too ends the State’s curfew. “The ‘Limited Stay at Home Order,’ which limits non-essential activities between the hours of 10 p.m. and 5 a.m., expires with the Regional Stay At Home Order ending,” CDPH said.

So while one may now venture out into the night, bars remain closed and restaurants can’t use their indoor dining rooms. But they can again use the outdoor seating areas many have built.

### Jail Outbreak Over

In one bit of good news, the Sheriff’s Department declared that its COVID-19 outbreak was over. “The San Luis Obispo County Jail’s COVID-19 outbreak, which started Dec. 10, 2020 and infected 63 inmates and seven sworn staff, has been declared over by Public Health,” the Sheriff’s Department announced Jan. 27. “The last positive case linked to the outbreak was diagnosed Jan. 12.”

Of the Jail patients, one had to be hospitalized and two others were sent to the emergency room. “Everyone has been cleared from isolation, and the area of the Jail affected is no longer under quarantine.”

They’ve worked hard on stopping the virus rampaging through a captive population. “Since March, the Jail has been isolating symptomatic individuals, quarantining anyone entering the facility or exposed to the virus, requiring personal protective equipment, performing COVID-19 testing, screening staff for symptoms daily, limiting outside visitors, and increasing cleaning measures.”

With the support of the County’s COVID-19 Vaccine Task Force, they offered the vaccine to jail staff and inmates.

Since March 2020, the County Jail had a total of 84 inmates test positive, as well as 36 Sheriff’s deputies — 16 patrol and 20 correctional deputies, according to the Sheriff’s Department.

### Vaccine Rollout a Bumpy Ride

The County has moved fast to get the vaccine out, opening two full time clinics in SLO and Paso Robles — but following State guidelines has led to a few missteps, including ceasing to vaccinate when a particular batch of the medicine caused several adverse reactions, all at one clinic in Southern California.

But the bigger issue has been supply. “The County is carefully allocating its supply to ensure that recipients get both doses in a timely manner,” the Health Department said on Feb. 1. “On Jan. 18, the County extended eligibility into early Phase 1b, progressing quickly through plans to vaccinate 26,000 people over age 75 currently residing in SLO County. As many as 9,000 residents over age 75 have received their first dose of vaccine over the last two weeks.”

And people who got their first of two shots were told they might have to wait a while to get the booster. “Do not be alarmed if you cannot receive your second dose of vaccine on the exact day that you are eligible to,” said County Public Health Officer Dr. Penny Borenstein. “While the goal is to administer second doses close to the recommended interval, a few-weeks delay poses no health risks to recipients and will not require that they restart the vaccine series.”

By Jan. 27, the County said it had vaccinated 10,539 people with the first dose but only got 9,035, second doses from the State. The shortage was apparently mitigated when the CDC updated its “vaccine administration guidance” to say it is OK to wait 6 weeks for the second needle prick.

### Storm Closed SLO Clinic

A vaccine clinic the County set up at the Health Department on Sierra Way in SLO was relocated in anticipation of the big, Jan. 27 storm.

The County was already planning to move the SLO Clinic to Cuesta College on Feb. 1, but the storm sped things along. The SLO clinic is now at the Cuesta Performing Arts Building on the Hwy 1 campus.

“We continue to ask the State for more vaccines,” Dr. Borenstein said. The County closed its clinics in Paso Robles and Arroyo Grande when it ran short of the vaccine. “We want to continue to vaccinate those who are vulnerable to COVID-19 exposure or serious health outcomes.”

### Adjustments Were Made

With the vaccine supply uncertainty, the County has had to

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be flexible and on Feb. 3 revised its predictions.

The Health Department said “more than 7,300 people in San Luis Obispo County will get a dose of the COVID-19 vaccine at one of the County’s three public vaccine clinics by the end of this week.”

The supply shortage caused the County to suspend appointments for the first dose focusing on second doses.

“We were able to schedule more COVID-19 vaccine appointments in this one week than any other week of the pandemic,” Dr. Borenstein said, “and while we had hoped to book even more appointments, our vaccine allocation from the State this week is not as large as we expected. We do not want to be forced to shut down our vaccine clinics altogether, which has been done in other communities like Merced County, but will if we don’t have vaccines to provide.”

And that’s what happened temporarily at the County’s clinics in Arroyo Grande and Paso Robles, which were to be closed for a week before reopening again.

Call for Appointment

At this point the County is vaccinating anyone 75-over in the Phase 1b category. The County quickly ran through the Phase 1a people, basically medical, residential and in-home health care workers.

There are three County clinics, none of which are on the North Coast. Clinics are currently at: Cuesta College (Harold J. Miossi Cultural and Performing Arts Center), Hwy 1 San Luis Obispo; Paso Robles Event Center (Mid State Fairgrounds) at 2198 Riverside Ave., Paso Robles; and at Arroyo Grande High School at the Clark Center for the Performing Arts, 487 Fair Oaks Ave.

Eligible community members can make an appointment either by visiting [www.RecoverSLO.org/VaccineAppointments](http://www.RecoverSLO.org/VaccineAppointments) or by calling the County’s Phone Assistance Center at (805) 534-2444.

The County will have the latest on when and where someone can get the vaccine.

Morro Bay Update

The City of Morro Bay has been running parallel to the County and in turn the State’s mandates on everything from mask wearing to business closures throughout the pandemic.

Mayor John Heading recorded a new video to give residents an update on what’s going on. The over 9-minute video is posted online at: [www.youtube.com/das\\_captcha?fw=1](http://www.youtube.com/das_captcha?fw=1).

In essence, the City remains under the Governor’s Purple Tier restrictions listed in the “Blueprint for a Safer Economy.”

Schools like Morro Bay High had been hoping to open again at the start of February, but under the Purple Tier, they can’t. A County must be in the less restrictive, “Red Tier” for 3 straight weeks before schools can reopen.

But with the test positivity rate of 8% (eight positive tests out of a hundred) being the threshold for moving into the red, the bar is high for reopening schools.

Recycling Center Proposed at Spencer’s Market

By Neil Farrell



A new recycling center is proposed in Morro Bay at Spencer’s Market.

Morro Bay residents could soon see an end to the dearth of places to redeem their bottles and cans if a proposed recycling center gets built at Spencer’s Market.

The Planning Commission got its first look at the proposal by Edgar Arroyo of Santa Maria, dba AGS Recycling Inc., at its Feb. 2 meeting, when it was asked to approve a coastal development permit and a conditional use permit to install two, 216-square foot cargo containers and covering some 800 s.f. of a vacant lot on the

north side of the market, located at 2650 Main St.

A recycling facility did operate for many years in that same vicinity, except it was on the parking lot pavement, before closing about 4-years ago.

That’s when recycling businesses statewide were shuttered over low payments from Cal-Recycle while costs rose. Cal-Recycle is the State agency that collects the deposits on aluminum cans and certain types of glass and plastic bottles, and runs what amounts to a reimbursement program with recyclers.

The collapse has also been attributed to a crash of the recycling markets, after China quit buying the U.S.’s recycling materials, and the recycling companies were left without the main customer to buy the material.

That continuing collapse has left San Luis Obispo County with just two recycling centers still operating, one in Paso Robles and possibly one in Arroyo Grande, though attempts to contact that business to verify their status were unsuccessful.

There was also one part-time operation in Los Osos behind Grocery Outlet that is only open for a few hours on Saturdays.

Morro Bay had two recycling centers — one at Spencer’s and at the Dollar Tree/Family Dollar shopping center. Both closed at about the same time.

Under State law, retailers who sell so-called CRV bottles and cans — subject to a special tax — are required to also take them back and reimburse the deposits. But if a store can’t accommodate such a facility or simply doesn’t want to, it can pay a fee to the State and escape responsibility.

The State, which has pushed recycling like a mantra for decades, has been working on a solution to the issue but thus far none has been proposed, and enacted into law. And still the State continues to collect the 5¢ CRV tax with every purchase.

The AGS plan calls for the storage containers to be open and manned from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily. How it will work is when one, 9-foot by 24-foot storage container is full, it will be trucked off and replaced with an empty one.

AGS will have one or two workers onsite, according to the company’s application with the City. It will also pay out in cash and not with script that has to be redeemed at the supermarket.

“The facility will be fenced/screened from view from the public street,” reads the City staff report. “The project exceeds the requirements of this policy.”

Each container will have a hydraulic compactor inside it for the cans. Bottles will be stored unbroken.

The zoning on the property allows for the use, according to the City, and there’re no parking requirements. A recycling facility is “ancillary” to the market, which is the main use on the 5.2-acre property that is also home to Taco Temple Restaurant, and a Goodwill Industries drop-off facility.

Also, on Thursday afternoons, there’s a farmer’s market that is a huge attraction for the short time it’s open.

The City declared the project exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and it is located outside the appeal zone for the Coastal Commission. It is however, subject to appeal to the City Council.

There were some negative comments made about the facility with one neighbor opposed because of the noise and smell such facilities can have. That man said he would support the facility if it were on the other side of Spencer’s building in the vacant lot on the south side of the property and far away from his home.

Morro Bay Clean-Up Week, March 1-5

By Neil Farrell

There won’t be a Citywide Yard Sale Weekend again in 2021, after the City of Morro Bay canceled last year’s and this year’s events due to the coronavirus pandemic response.

But, the Morro Bay Garbage Company will hold up its end of the bargain with a Clean-Up Week, set for March 1-5, when residential garbage customers can put extra trash out on the curb and have the company pick it up at no extra charge.

To participate, place your extra garbage on the curb no later than 6 a.m. on your regular garbage pick-up day, according to a news release from the company and City of Morro Bay.

If you are late to the curb, the company said it won’t be picked up.

And don’t pile stuff up blocking your garbage can because they use automated arms to empty the cans.

The company said, “Clean-Up Week garbage may be placed in standard trash cans or tied into bundles. Standard trash containers will be emptied and left on the curb. Boxes and plastic bags will be taken away with your garbage. If you want your non-standard containers left behind, please mark or place a note on them.”

There are of course rules. “Containers or bundles of garbage must weigh 75-pounds or less and must measure 4-foot or less in



The Morro Bay Citywide Yard Sale will not be held again in 2021 due to the Coronavirus Pandemic response, but the garbage company will be holding its Clean-Up Week, March 1-5. In the photo, a happy bargain-hunter holds a treasure she found during the 2018 Citywide Yard Sale.

overall length.

“Garbage, green waste, and recycling combined for six cans, bags, or bundles plus your waste wheelers. Excess garbage will be left on the curb.

“Six standard trash cans [32 gallons each] or the equivalent in bags, boxes, or bundles. Each not to exceed 75 pounds and 4-feet in length.”

If readers have “bulky” items, the company will pick them up but you must call a week ahead of time to arrange for pickup. And while it isn’t free, they have a varying scale on costs. There is a limit on how much of this they will pick up.

The types of items that they will haul off include: TVs, water heaters, couches, washers, dryers, small appliances, chairs, box springs, mattresses and refrigerators. Also, they will pick up over-stuffed chairs, car tires and up to four, wheel rims.

If something is too heavy or bulky for one worker to handle will be an additional cost, which they will quote you when you call them at: (805) 528-7430.

You must call a week in advance and they will not accept same-day calls. Bulky items will not be picked up unless you call first.

“These special prices are valid only during Clean-Up Week. Items must be on the curb to qualify for these special prices,” the company said.

They also will not accept auto parts or hazardous wastes. If readers have old paint, solvents and such they want to get rid of, the City Sewer Treatment Plant on Atascadero Road has a free household hazardous waste drop-off facility open on Saturdays that will take those items and dispose of them properly.

Previous to 2020 and 2021, the Annual Citywide Yard Sale was held in conjunction with Clean-Up Week. The over 100 yard sales held on those weekends, were a chance to get into the spirit of spring cleaning and the ideal of repurposing items, for as they say, “One man’s junk is another man’s treasure,” or something to that effect.


In years past, the yard sale weekend brought over 6,000 people to town.

The event was begun by Morro Bay Beautiful and the City Tourism Bureau took it over in 2019. It was canceled last year due to the pandemic response.

The pandemic’s subsequent drop of tax revenues from a shut down economy led to the Tourism Bureau being dissolved last spring and the City has not actively promoted the town’s tourism industry since last March, when the Governor issued stay-at-home orders to try and stop the spread of the virus.

It’s unclear if the event will return, however, it has the potential to be a good moneymaker, potentially worth several thousand dollars if a group wanted to take it up. It quickly became one of the biggest events in terms of drawing people to town.






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News

County Fire to Sell Surplus Equipment



San Luis Obispo County Fire Department will hold a fire sale of sorts when it disposes of excess and unneeded fire equipment that includes hydraulic cutters and Jaws-of-Life tools.

The equipment comes from the County’s various firehouses scattered from San Miguel to Nipomo and is being stored at Station 98 at the Paso Robles Airport.

“County Fire has assessed each of the items on the attached list and recommend that they be declared surplus,” reads a staff report from the Jan. 5 Board of Supervisor’s meeting. “It is important that this equipment be re-marketed in an expeditious manner to optimize the resale value.”

Once Supervisors declared the items as surplus, it’s left to the County Central Services to arrange for the auction and the monies raised will go back into the County general fund.

The list of equipment that will be sold includes Hurst Power Units, free standing hydraulic pumps that power many of a fire-fighter’s rescue equipment such as the Laws-of-Life. The County has 18 of these for sale.

It has some 24 hydraulic reels, used to roll up fire hoses but can be used to reel up anything.

It has 17 hydraulic cutters; 11 hydraulic spreaders; a dozen hydraulic rams; and one Husqvarna 371K — a handheld, gas powered rescue saw that can cut anything from car bodies to concrete.

But by far the most equipment that the County will be selling is “self-contained breathing apparatus” or SCBA’s. Those devices allow firefighters to enter smoke-filled rooms to fight fires without succumbing to smoke inhalation. The County has some 175 SCBA’s to sell.

The where and when of the auction was not known by deadline, but the County is supposed to advertise the sale in the legal notices section of The Tribune newspaper.

Dial-a-Ride Service Starts in Los Osos

Los Osos Cares is working with Ride ON to provide a Senior Dial a Ride in Los Osos. This service is available Tuesdays and Wednesday from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

“Los Osos has long been needing a community transportation system to for grocery shopping, pharmacy, doctor appointments, etc,” said Linda Quesenberry, vice chair and executive director for Los Osos Cares. “This service will be able to provide seniors with the independence to fill their needs. They will also be able to get to weekly food distribution sites and Free Laundry Love once a month.”

Quesenberry said the merger is the beginning of what is needed to establish daily transportation in Los Osos. “RTA has a bus route that works great for getting to other communities, but it is lacking intercommunity access in this area. Los Osos Cares senior volunteers Carrie Pardo and Shirley Mednick, have been advocating for bus services for the past 3 years and I am happy that their voices are being heard.”

This past year Los Osos Cares sent out two senior questionnaires to find out the needs of seniors in the Estero Bay. The responses overwhelmingly stated that transportation was the main need in Los Osos.

Services began on February 9 and will be free for the month of February. Beginning in March the cost will be \$2 one way/ \$4 round trip. Monthly ticket books will be available for purchase. Riders receive door-to-door service just about anywhere is Los Osos.

To schedule a ride, call Los Osos Dial a Ride 805-541-8747. Some same day service is available, but it is better to call one day in advance of your trip.

County Proclaims Local Emergency Due to Recent Storms

As a result of damages caused from last week’s storm to public Agencies, citizens and businesses throughout the County, a Proclamation of Local Emergency was made by the County Administrative Officer / Emergency Services Director, Wade Horton. Governor Newsom also proclaimed a state of emergency for San Luis Obispo County.

The proclamation was made because local agencies require assistance beyond their capabilities to respond to storm related recovery efforts. This streamlines the approval process necessary to obtain additional assistance and resources. Together, the local and state proclamations allow local agencies to apply for disaster cost assistance through the California Disaster Assistance Act.

At this time, only public assistance to local jurisdictions may be eligible for cost reimbursement. However, the County Office

of Emergency Services is requesting businesses that incurred damages or expect economic losses due to the recent storm to report these damages. The information will be complied and given to state authorities to help determine if the county might qualify for an SBA Economic Injury Disaster Loan Declaration and/or an SBA Physical Disaster Declaration.

The County Office of Emergency Services is requesting damage reports / economic loss report via a form on their website <https://www.recover slo.org/stormrecovery>. Businesses will be asked to provide name, contact phone number, address and a brief overview of damages incurred, including repair costs, if known as well as anticipated economic losses.

Sheriff’s Team Saves Trafficking Victim

The Sheriff’s Counter Human Trafficking Team is seeking a man suspected of human trafficking a 15-year-old girl from Nevada for forced prostitution, after they let him go the first time they had him in custody.

According to Sheriff’s spokesman Tony Cipolla, on Jan. 26 the Human Trafficking Team, comprised of an investigator from the District Attorney’s Office and a detective and sergeant from the County Sheriff’s Office, along with the Highway Patrol and FBI, were answering online sex ads “as part of the statewide effort to curb human sex trafficking under the umbrella of Operation Reclaim and Rebuild.”

“Detectives answered a sex ad in which the female appeared to be very young, likely under the age of 18,” Cipolla said. “Ultimately, a ‘date’ was arranged and the female subject from the photographs in the sex ad showed up.”

They determined the victim was a 15-year-old, at-risk juvenile, missing out of Nevada. Her enslaver got caught too, but they let him go.

“Additionally,” Cipolla said, “investigators identified a male subject that was in the area, and based upon his behavior, believed to be a possible trafficker of the 15-year old. Investigators were ultimately able to contact the subject after he attempted to flee the area once he realized he was being surveilled by law enforcement.”

“The subject was identified,” Cipolla added, “and was tied to the 15-year-old victim at the scene, however, probable cause for his arrest did not exist at the time of the contact so he was released.”

Cipolla said detectives have since linked the man they let go, as “in fact trafficking the 15-year-old and a warrant/criminal filing will be sought for the trafficker(s).”

The department did not give a description or the name of their suspect in the case. The D.A.’s Victim Advocate was brought in to assist the victim in the case. Others helped too.

“The Counter Human Trafficking Team wishes to acknowledge the support and assistance in this case from the non-profit organization ‘DeliverFund,’” Cipolla said.

There was no word before deadline that they’d located their in-the-wind trafficking suspect.



## Volunteers Needed

The City of Morro Bay is seeking for volunteers for the following Advisory Body positions:

- Public Works Advisory Board - (3)\*\***
- Harbor Advisory Board - (2)**
  - Alternate Representative from the Morro Bay Commercial Fishermen's Organization
- Tourism Business Improvement District Advisory Board - (2)**
  - Hotelier (Member-at-Large)
  - Hotelier (50 or less rooms)

Application and eligibility information are available on the City Clerk's Advisory Body webpage or by request to the City Clerk's office at (805) 772-6568 or [cityclerk@morrobayca.gov](mailto:cityclerk@morrobayca.gov)

The deadline to apply is Friday, February 26, 2021 by 5:00 pm.

**\*\*Must be a Morro Bay Resident & Registered Voter of the City**



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Dog-Faced Raiders Fan  
Wanted for Fraud



The County Sheriff's Office is looking for a man wanted in connection to a series of mail thefts and check fraud across SLO County.

The man was seen about 2:15 p.m. Jan. 23 at the Guadalajara Meat Market, 1400 W. Grand Ave., in Grover Beach, allegedly cashing a fraudulent check that was reportedly stolen from a mailbox in the 1400 block of Old Oak Park Rd., in rural Arroyo Grande sometime between Jan. 15-20, according to Sheriff's spokesman Tony Cipolla.

"This suspect may be associated with a number of thefts from mailboxes, which have occurred in the county," Cipolla said in a news release.

The suspect is an adult male, 18-25-years old, medium build, dark hair, and wearing a black baseball cap with the letters "SF" on the front.

He was also wearing a black T-shirt with the NFL Raiders football team logo and reading, "LV ESTABLISHED 1960 RAIDERS FOOTBALL" in camouflage lettering on the front of the T-shirt. He also had a face covering with a silkscreen image of a panting of a dog's face."

The Sheriff's Office is asking for the public's help with identifying the suspected dog-faced Raider fan and suspected thief. Call the Sheriff's Office with any information at (805) 781-4550.

Use of Tear Gas in SLO  
Last Year to be Reviewed

It was an incident that made national news. Now, it is up for discussion. The City of San Luis Obispo will review the use of tear gas by the police department last summer during a Black Lives Matter demonstration in which five people were arrested.

The City is releasing an "after action review" report of the response by the San Luis Obispo Police Department to a protest on June 1, 2020 to the community. The Council along with the city manager requested the police department examine its response to the use of tear gas on protesters, who had entered the US 101 freeway and blocked several downtown streets. The City Council is expected to discuss the report at its Feb. 16 meeting.

After action reviews are a common tool used by police agencies following a significant incident to document the response and provide a foundation for community dialog.

"It's important for the police department, the community and the City Council to fully understand all aspects of this major incident," said Derek Johnson, city manager, in a press release. "We want to understand what made this protest different from the nearly 70 others the City supported last year, what led up to the use of tear gas, what options police leaders had when responding

to the protest, and more. This report will help us all as we collectively move forward to reinforce trust, support the constitutional right to peacefully protest, and minimize the possibility that tear gas or similar tools will be used in the future."

The methodology used for the review was derived from the National Police Foundation process, which is nationally recognized as a best practice for after action reviews. The City contracted with independent consultant James Bueermann of Future Policing Strategies to review the after-action report and provide recommendations, and with independent consultant Kari Mansager, who conducted anonymous interviews with community members to create a safe space for protest participants and community members to provide reactions, perspectives and recommendations based on their experiences. In addition to her consulting role, Mansager is director of Diversity, Inclusion and Outreach at Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo. Finally, recommendations from Gov. Newsom's statewide task force on policing and protests that occurred throughout California this past summer and fall are also included.

Prior to the City Council's Feb. 16 meeting, the police department will review the report with representatives from numerous community organizations through its "Police and Community Together" (PACT) program and SLOPD Roundtable. PACT organizations include Transitions Mental Health, St. Stephen's Episcopal, Tranz Central Coast, Diversity Coalition of SLO County, Central Coast Commission for Inclusive Schools, JCC Federation of SLO County, Women's March SLO, People of Faith for Justice, Elevate Christian Church, GALA, and the Anti-Defamation League. The Roundtable includes representatives from a broad array of community interests, from business to healthcare to industry.

"We take seriously our commitment to partner with the entire community and especially with those who represent diverse perspectives. Input from PACT and Roundtable members -- and everyone in our community -- on the after-action review will give us invaluable insights as we move to heal from the events of June 1, 2020," said Jeff Smith, interim SLO police chief.

The City Council will be accepting public comment regarding this report. Public comment can be submitted in the following ways:

Mail or Email Public Comment

• Received by 3 p.m. on the day of meeting - Can be submitted via email to emailcouncil@slocity.org or U.S. Mail to City Clerk at 990 Palm St. San Luis Obispo, CA 93401. All emails will be archived/distributed to councilmembers, however, submissions after 3 p.m. on the day of the meeting may not be archived/distributed until the following day. Emails will not be read aloud during the meeting.

Verbal Public Comment

- In Advance of the Meeting - Call (805) 781-7164; state and spell your name, the agenda item number you are calling about and leave your comment. The verbal comments must be limited to 3 minutes. All voicemails will be forwarded to the Council Members and saved as Agenda Correspondence. Voicemails will not be played during the meeting.
- During the meeting - Join the meeting/webinar (instructions on the cover of the agenda posted on February 9, 2021).
- For the February 16th meeting only, you can submit your name before the meeting to speak during Public Comment. Send an email to cityclerk@slocity.org.
- During the meeting and once public comment has been opened raise your virtual hand.
- Names submitted prior to the beginning of the meeting will be called first then those who have raised their hands will be called next.

Questions from the public may be directed to the office of the city clerk at cityclerk@slocity.org or (805) 781-7100.

County Seeks Grant for  
Morro Bay-Cayucos  
Bike Path

By Neil Farrell

Work continues on a dedicated bike path connecting Morro Bay and Cayucos, paralleling the beach and running atop the bluff; and if the County is successful in getting a big State grant, it could finally happen, fingers crossed.

Elizabeth Kavanaugh, with SLO County Public Works, recently gave a presentation to the Morro Bay Planning Commission on the so-called "Cayucos-Morro Bay Connector Trail."

It's a project that's been in the works for over a decade and would establish a dedicated bike trail on the west side of Hwy 1, beyond the highway safety fence.

The biggest hurdle -- getting ownership of the former Chevron Dog Beach -- was done in 2020, with the City of Morro Bay owning the southern portion of Dog Beach and SLO County the northern part.

In 1929, Standard Oil built the Estero Marine Terminal, shipping crude oil that was piped to the Coast from the Bakersfield Area to Bay Area and Southern California refineries.

The marine terminal, now owned by Chevron, closed in 1999 after a new oil pipeline was completed. It's unofficially called "Dog Beach" because people are allowed to let their dogs off-leash, a practice that both the County and City of Morro Bay want to continue.

The Cayucos Sanitary District facilitated this ownership change as part of its new water reclamation/sewer treatment plant project being built about a mile up Toro Creek Road.

The CSD took over one of the terminal's two undersea oil-loading lines to use as a wastewater discharge pipe for its new plant.

"This change of ownership is an important step forward for this trail because both property owners want to see this trail built," Kavanaugh said.

Much of the paperwork for what would become a segment of the "California Coast Trail" is done. "The County," Kavanaugh said, "is about halfway done with construction drawings for this trail. Environmental review is complete and we are heading into the permitting phase next.

"We will be applying for a Consolidated Coastal Permit at the Coastal Commission," she added. "We anticipate that process will take a year or so. Construction drawings will be completed once we know what changes Coastal Commission will require. Followed by building and environmental permits."

The County now estimates the project to cost about \$6 million. Needless to say, the County, which is the lead agency for the project, needs the some help.

"Most of our trail projects are built with money received from complete grants," Kavanaugh said, citing as the example a \$3.1 million grant they got to build a trail connecting Santa Margarita to Garden Farms traversing the Santa Margarita Ranch. "SLOCOG has provided grants in the past for the soft costs of the Morro Bay to Cayucos Connector and we have applied for a

Bike Path Continued on page 9

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Police Blotter



Morro Bay Police Logs

- **Jan. 31:** Police responded at 10:45 a.m. to Morro Avenue for a report of someone whose had passed away.
- **Jan. 30:** Police responded at 8 p.m. to a disturbance in City Park. Logs indicated they contacted a husband-wife tag team having an apparent rum-soaked row. He, 39 and she, 49, were nicked for suspicion of getting bent in public.
- **Jan. 30:** Police contacted a 52-year-old woman in Lila Keiser Park who had one felony and a pair of bench warrants. Her hand was folded into County Jail.
- **Jan. 30:** Police stopped a suspicious car at the suspect time of 1 a.m. on Hwy 1 at Morro Bay Boulevard. Logs indicated the driver, 26, was allegedly driving in the horrors and got booked into the County B&B for a life-changing experience.
- **Jan. 29:** Police got a 9-1-1 call at noon from the 700 block of Quintana from a woman who said she'd driven off the road and apparently crashed. The driver, 33, was allegedly driving under the influence of drugs, which explains a lot, and according to logs she "resisted and failed to comply." She was eventually booked without further fuss, after no doubt surrendering to her fate.
- **Jan. 28:** Police responded at 3:45 p.m. to a disturbance in the 500 block of Kern. Logs indicated a cohabitating man and woman were both booked on suspicion of domestic violence, as the fight was apparently a draw, though the fellow was also nicked for being blotto in public.
- **Jan. 27:** Police responded at 1 p.m. to the 300 block of Vashon where some known scoundrel has been trespassing and now has stolen a floor mat, proving once again that people will steal anything.
- **Jan. 27:** At 9:30 a.m. police contacted a 60-year-old apparently troubled fellow outside the police station. He was taken to County Mental Health for some quiet time.
- **Jan. 16:** Police got a report that a man told San Luis Obispo Planned Parenthood that he was sexually assaulted as a child, but he didn't want to prosecute, just to document.
- **Jan. 26:** Some master criminal stole outdoor patio furniture seat cushions from the 1200 block of Morro. Police have no leads but no doubt won't sit down on the job.
- **Jan. 25:** Police contacted a 62-year-old scofflaw at 6:22 p.m. in the 300 block of Vashon who had a bench warrant. He was cited and released with his future second one.
- **Jan. 25:** Police took a report of stolen mail in the 1200 block of Clarabelle Dr.
- **Jan. 25:** Police took a report of a missing 36-year-old man from the 2300 block of Nutmeg.
- **Jan. 24:** Police stopped a suspicious vehicle at 3:50 p.m. in the 100 block of Main. Logs indicated the woman driver, 18, didn't have her license and gave police a fake name. When they discovered the deception, she of course had an out-of-town arrest warrant. That led to a search of the vehicle and logs indicated they discovered "multiple sandwich bags that contained marijuana, a large amount of money and a digital scale." The driver took a cop cab ride to the iron bar hotel. Her 27-year-old passenger was cited and she was released for selling the silly weed without a permit.
- **Jan. 24:** Police contacted a suspicious man at 12:30 a.m. in the

- 1500 block of Main. Logs indicated the 28-year-old fellow was allegedly higher than the stacks on drugs and had a stash on him as well. He was checked into the County detox.
- **Jan. 23:** Police contacted a pair of likely suspects at 10:10 p.m. in the 300 block of Atascadero Rd. A 44-year-old woman had one bench warrant and a man, 36, had four. Both were locked away in the dungeon.
  - **Jan. 22:** Police responded to Lila Keiser Park at 1:35 p.m. where someone reported they had been sexually assaulted. Police are investigating.
  - **Jan. 21:** Police contacted a 46-year-old man at 9:45 p.m. in the 500 block of Kern who had a warrant. He was issued another citation and released to catch again another day.
  - **Jan. 21:** Police responded at 6 p.m. in the 400 block of Avalon where they contacted a 68-year-old woman and arrested her for a hit-and-run accident and no insurance, which might explain the crash-n-dash.
  - **Jan. 21:** Police contacted a suspicious man at 1:21 p.m. in the 700 block of Embarcadero regarding a suspected matter of selling stolen property. Logs indicated he was UTI on drugs, in possession of a crack pipe, and someone else's Master Card.
  - **Jan. 21:** Police stopped a suspicious vehicle at 11 a.m. at Main and Radcliff. Logs indicated the driver, 24, was popped for a double whammy — suspicion of driving honked while on probation — and allegedly had syringes and paraphernalia in the car too.
  - **Jan. 21:** A citizen in the 100 block of Main said someone stole the catalytic converter off his or her car. No word on whom the larcenous mechanic might be.
  - **Jan. 20:** At 1:04 p.m. police and fire responded to a non-injury car crack-up at Main and Anchor. Then 5 minutes later, there was another collision in the 900 block of Front St., an apparent 2-for-1 special.
  - **Jan. 20:** Police stopped a vehicle at noon in the 800 block of Quintana. The driver, 41 was allegedly driving twisted. His lady passenger, 34, was allegedly swinging high on drugs and both were arrested.
  - **Jan. 19:** There was yet another car crash at 1:30 p.m. at San Jacinto and Main. No injuries were reported.
  - **Jan. 19:** Police responded to a disturbance at 3:38 p.m. to the 800 block of Napa. A 50-year-old parolee was violated for suspicion of being loaded in public.
  - **Jan. 19:** At 12:30 p.m. in the 900 block of Morro, police arrested a man, 53, who was allegedly trespassing and in possession of drug paraphernalia. At 3:15, the same mulish idgit was back trespassing again, and was arrested for a second time, proving right Einstein's assessment of insanity once again.
  - **Jan. 19:** Someone stole a car license plate in the 1200 block of Embarcadero.
  - **Jan. 19:** Police responded to Toro Lane where some anarchist vandalized a speed limit sign. They also responded to the 900 block of Quintana for a number of vehicles that were damaged. And on Jan. 18, someone vandalized a utility trailer parked at Coleman Drive and Embarcadero.
  - **Jan. 18:** A woman at Lila Keiser Park told police that her boyfriend choked her and threatened her. Police documented the incident, for when the ugliness escalates.
  - **Jan. 17:** And from the found-lost files... Someone found a vehicle key with a fob on it and gave it to police to unlock the mystery. And someone in the 1500 block of Quintana found a person who'd lost his or her life.
  - **Jan. 16:** Police stopped a suspicious vehicle at 9:18 p.m. in the 300 block of Atascadero Rd. The woman driver, 18, was allegedly shellacked, and was taken downtown, cited and released to a sober, responsible adult.

- **Jan. 16:** There was a vehicle oopsie at 5:15 p.m. on Hwy 1 at San Jacinto. No injuries or arrests reported.
- **Jan. 16:** Police contacted some suspicious men at 11:45 p.m. in the 700 block of MBB. Logs indicated one model citizen, 37, was allegedly in possession of heroin and arrested. The other citizen of the year, 28, had a no-cite felony warrant and while being searched, police reportedly found he had a fixed blade knife hanging around his neck and concealed under his shirt, so police tossed in a concealed bladed weapon charge against him.
- **Jan. 15:** Police responded at 10:30 p.m. to the 900 block of Morro after a woman reported an odd fellow outside her home acting strangely. Police found a man hiding under the woman's staircase who was fit-shaced and unable to care for himself (not to mention creepy). He also had a warrant and so he was off to see the wizard.
- **Jan. 15:** Police responded to a disturbance at 9:48 p.m. in the 400 block of Atascadero Rd. A 34-year-old woman was arrested for suspicion of causing corporal injury and domestic violence. Ol' Xena warrior princess was carted off to the gaol.
- **Jan. 15:** Police contacted a suspicious man at 9:30 p.m. in the 2600 block of Main. Logs indicated the fellow, 50, had a warrant. He was cited and released, 'cause in a fishing village you toss back the little ones.
- **Jan. 11:** Police at the high school documented some kind of problem between a teacher and an "adult student." What? You thought no school means no teen angst?
- **Jan. 15:** Police contacted a regular customer at 12:30 a.m. in the 1100 block of Embarcadero. She allegedly possessed drug paraphernalia, was cited and released. At 11:30 a.m. in the 500 block of Atascadero Rd. The 36-year-old squit was arrested for suspicion of being high on drugs.
- **Jan. 15:** Police responded at 3:10 a.m. to the 2800 block of Alder where some apparent swamp donkey was caught trying to break into a car and then brandished a weapon, which is why you always call police to deal with the dinguses of the world.
- **Jan. 14:** Police contacted a man, 47, in City Park on MBB who had three bench warrants. He was also found to have drug paraphernalia but was cited and released back into the wilds, tagged like a buzzard in Big Sur.
- **Jan. 14:** Police responded to a store in the 800 block of Market where they said someone stole a valuable clothes rack, reinforcing the notion that people will steal just about anything.
- **Jan. 14:** The same lost child, 36, from above was contacted in the area of Sunset and Rockview at 12:30 a.m. and arrested for suspicion of being tore up on drugs, as the carousel goes round and round...
- **Jan. 13:** Police arrested a 43-year-old man who allegedly started an arson fire inside a motel room at the Holland Inn in the 2600 block of Main.
- **Jan. 13:** Police contacted a suspicious man at 2 a.m. in the 400 block of Quintana and cited the shining example, 28, for alleged possession of drugs.
- **Jan. 12:** Police responded to the 600 block of Embarcadero at 3:19 p.m. where a woman said her car was vandalized after she apparently prevailed in an altercation over a parking space, begging the question "Who really won that spat?"
- **Jan. 12:** There was a car crash at 11:30 a.m. at Coral and Emerald Cir., in the Cloisters Neighborhood. No injuries reported.
- **Jan. 11:** Police responded at 4 p.m. to the 100 block of Island where a citizen said their inauguration yard sign was stolen, in the latest sign of the approaching apocalypse.
- **Jan. 11:** Some apparent fraud used a Bank of America debit card at a gas station in the 900 block of the Boulevard, where the price of petrol is the real crime.

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Bike Path From page 7



A planned dedicated bike path will connect Morro Bay to Cayucos.

\$6 million grant to construct this trail through Caltrans’ Active Transportation Program. We are hopeful we will get this grant. Keep your fingers crossed!”

She added that they have other possible funding sources in mind, should the ATP grant fall through.

Though it might seem like a simple project, it’s rather complicated to run a paved bike lane over the top of sand dunes. “The \$6 million construction costs includes 1 mile of new trail and

improvements to existing bike paths in Morro Bay and Cayucos, including a bike light at Highway 1 and Old Creek Road, signs, and striping. However most of the \$6 million price tag is the new 1-mile segment.”

The bike lane needs four “bridges” to span gaps in the bluff top. The biggest of them is at Toro Creek.

“The longest over Toro Creek will be 200-feet long,” Kavanaugh said. “These are the expensive elements of the trail.” Design

plans show a steel girder bridge over the creek, similar to the one the City put in spanning Morro Creek.

In the meantime, Kavanaugh said residents who might want to help the process along, can contribute to the project through County Parks. “County Parks welcomes endowments and gifting for specific projects,” Kavanaugh said.

The County Parks Endowments & Gifting website is: <https://slocountyparks.com/donation/endowments-gifting>.

“Although there is not a specific donation fund set up for the Morro Bay to Cayucos Connector Trail project, if anyone is interested in donating to this project they can contact the County Parks office at (805) 781-5930.”

So if the State approves the grant, when would the project start? “As for a schedule,” Kavanaugh said, “it is hard to predict without knowing when the trail construction will be funded. If we get the Active Transportation Grant we anticipate construction will start in 2023 and be completed in 2024.” Such grants normally come with a deadline to use the money or lose it.

The scope of the project goes far beyond just a bluff top trail. It includes improvements to the North Point Natural Area — paving the trail that will run up the old Hwy 1 route, now degraded into a gravel path, and wind down to connect with the parking lot.

It also improves the bike path that goes up Beachcomber Drive to Sandalwood Avenue and over to the City’s bike path running through the Cloisters, and behind the high school to Atascadero Road.

From there riders can go west to the Embarcadero and the waterfront via the Morro Creek Bridge.

Or they can take the other bike route that goes behind the power plant to Main Street.

On the Cayucos side, improvements will be made at the end of Studio Drive to accommodate more parking and a staircase down to the beach is also planned.

Along the highway, where people park to go down to Dog Beach, the plan is to make improvements there as well.

Though the bike path is some time off, the area will soon become a major construction zone, as Caltrans has a project to replace the northbound bridge over Toro Creek. That project will re-route all Hwy 1 traffic in both directions onto the southbound bridge.

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# Community

## Woods Clinics Open for Spay/Neuter Awareness Month

By Theresa-Marie Wilson



February is National Spay/Neuter Awareness Month, and Woods Humane Society is opening the doors to save lives. The clinics returned to full capacity for public appointments after the most recent state-mandated restrictions to curb the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic were lifted on January 25.

Woods’ spay/neuter clinics, located in both San Luis Obispo and Atascadero, had shutdown briefly at the start of the pandemic before resuming limited services, which also impacted the number of surgeries that could be performed in one day.

“This is good timing as unaltered roaming pets begin to reproduce when it warms up in the spring,” said Humane Education Manager Jamie Relth of Woods Humane Society. “Kitten season typically begins in March or April and goes all the way through the fall on the Central Coast. Hopefully, with our operations at full-steam, we can get ahead of that cycle and reduce the number of litters born by altering local owned and un-owned pets now.”

The clinics have pivoted to an outdoor, curbside, masked pick-up and drop-off protocol, among other precautions, to protect all parties and to remain compliant with all mandated safety and social-distancing protocols.



Help save lives and get your pets spayed or neutered. If you don’t already have a furry family member, adoption could be just what you need. Photo by Theresa-Marie Wilson

### Project M.E.O.W.

Kitten season is right around the cat tree, and Woods has a pawsome goal. The non-profit organization is determined to raising enough Project M.E.O.W. funds to spay/neuter 1000 un-owned community cats in 2021.

Project M.E.O.W. aims to help manage community cat populations by offering a subsidized spay/neuter surgery, in addition to a rabies vaccine and an identifying ear tip, for just \$25. This reduced cost allows local rescues and concerned citizens to Trap, Neuter and Return (TNR) more community cats, both friendly and feral.

“We work closely with local volunteers who trap community cats to bring to the clinic for their surgeries and then return them to their colonies,” Relth said. “Trapping is an unpredictable process, so it is hard to plan precisely for how many cats we will alter each month. Over the last two years, we have strengthened our ties with local cat caretakers and fine-tuned our process so

that—with enough Project M.E.O.W. funds, with our staff and volunteers in place at the clinic, and with some luck—we could achieve this goal of 1,000 cats and greatly contribute to managing the number and welfare of local community cats. We hope to continue to grow the fund to meet the need of even more cats, but for this year, we hope to push the bar to this next level.”

Since its inception in 2019, Project M.E.O.W. has already helped fund 1,913 ultra-low-cost community cat spay/neuter surgeries, stabilizing cat colonies and preventing an estimated 10,908 kittens from being born to a life without a home or basic medical care.

With kitten season coming, and with the estimated mortality rate of un-owned kittens thought to be as high as 75 percent because they are at a high risk of suffering from preventable diseases that would be avoided with basic veterinary care and just one, all-encompassing vaccine, Woods Humane Society says this cause is both humane and urgent.

“Shelters are typically inundated with kittens during that period,” Relth said. “Woods Humane Society, however, does not euthanize for time or space, so none of the cats or kittens that come into our program will be impacted in that way. In fact, the shelters in our area are, thankfully, not typically euthanizing due to overcrowding. What our area could see, in the absence of spay and neuter efforts, is an increase in the number of kittens found sick or injured. Another consequence we can see is a higher incidence of unvaccinated stray or un-owned cats in the community, which can lead to health issues in cat colonies and cause problems of cat fighting, spraying and other issues for home and business owners. Inevitably, we’d also see the growth of the homeless pet population and higher numbers of animals that are brought into the shelter in need of basic nutrition and medical support.”

Even amid the challenges of 2020, Woods Humane Society was able to perform 4,870 spay/neuter surgeries last year, for animals in its own adoption program, as well as for SLO County Animal Services Division and for public pet owners and local animal rescues.

For information about scheduling a spay or neuter surgery for owned pets, visit SpaySLOCounty.org. To schedule a subsidized surgery for a community cat, call (805) 464-5034.

Donate to Project M.E.O.W. at WoodsHumane.org/Project-MEOW.

### Adoption Status

One of the most heartwarming things to come out of the pandemic is the increase in pets that were adopted. Shelters across the country were making news as one after another announced that all animals had been adopted. Is the news as good at Woods?

“Adoptions have been going very well at Woods and we have been grateful to see that the average length of stay for an animal at Woods actually went down across the board in 2020,” Relth told Estero Bay News. “Particularly, in our North County location, the length of stay for cats went from 29 days to 12.4, on average. Additionally, that location was able to empty the shelter completely twice this year and processed more adoptions in 2020 than in any previous year in that location’s history, with 1,037 adoptions. Between both shelter locations, our organization placed 2,472 animals into loving homes in 2020.

“With that said, the pandemic and the related restrictions on travel have kept us from transporting as many animals from other regions of California where shelters are more overcrowded with homeless pets. For this reason, our overall number of adoptions was slightly lower in 2020 than the year prior.

Even more good news, Woods has not seen an uptick in animal surrenders during what has been very difficult times for many people.

“We have also noted a decrease in the number of animals returned after adoption,” Relth said. “This might be attributed

to the fact that many families have more time at home to bond with and train their new pets so that they have a more successful outcome. We do hope to support those families with training tips to ease the transition back to working away from home and away from their pets, as that could be a concern in the future.”

If readers are struggling financially and are unable to care for their pets, Woods recommends scheduling an appointment with their intake team to take in the animal.

“They can also call us to surrender a litter of kittens or puppies for free, with a low-cost spay for the mom, if that is the case,” Relth said. “The worst thing they can do is dump or abandon the animal, leaving it at risk to starve or suffer. It’s a very tough call to make when a person has to surrender a pet. We are very grateful to have the support of the community so that we can be here for them and their pet to make sure that the animal never wants for love or care and finds a new home quickly.”

Check out the animals up for adoption at woodshumane.org. To make an appointment, call Woods Humane Society SLO, located at 875 Oklahoma Avenue in San Luis Obispo, at (805) 543-9316, or Woods Humane Society North County, located at 2300 Ramona Road in Atascadero, at (805) 466-5403.

## Events and Activities

By Theresa-Marie Wilson



**Award-winning performance poet and activist** Sonya Renee Taylor will deliver the keynote address for the 19th annual Change the Status Quo (CSQ) Social Justice Leadership Conference at Cal Poly on Feb. 27 from 10:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.

This year’s event focuses on the theme “Action Over Apathy” and will be headlined by Taylor, a former national and international poetry slam champion and founder and radical executive officer of the digital media and education company The Body is Not An Apology.

“The CSQ student leadership team is delighted that Sonya Renee Taylor is our keynote speaker this year,” said Katherine Arboleda, student chair of this year’s CSQ planning committee. “Her message is a timely one as we explore breaking down institutional racism and other systems of oppression from within. She will help us understand how we can all move into a place of action over apathy.”

Taylor was recognized in 2015 by Planned Parenthood as both a 99 Dream Keeper and a Generation Action Outstanding Partner awardee. That same year, she was included on Yerba Buena Center for the Art’s 100 list, an annual recognition that honors artists, activists and individuals inspiring civic engagement and social and cultural movement in the Bay Area. Taylor was also recognized in 2015 by Bustle Magazine as one of the 12 Women Who Paved the Way for Body Positivity.

Planned Parenthood honored Taylor again in 2016, naming her a Champion of Women’s Health. She was also commissioned to write the official poem for Planned Parenthood’s 100-year

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# Obituaries

## Dale Reddell 1939-2021



Dale Leslie Reddell, age 81, passed away Tuesday, February 2, 2021. He was born in Sacramento, CA to Les and Dorthy Reddell and grew up on a small cotton farm with his three brothers and sister. After high school, while working as an usher at the Porter Theater, he met his wife Billie. They married in 1961 and moved to Morro Bay where his family was residing. Shortly after their marriage they welcomed their first child Randy and later welcomed another son, Rusty.

Dale launched a career in construction in Morro Bay and quickly became known as the premier builder in town. He started by working for other contractors to learn the trade and how to be a business person. Later, he bought his first vacant lot in Morro Bay and built a spec house after work and on the weekends. This transitioned to starting Dale Reddell Construction, which gave him an incredible 50 year construction career. During his career he built countless local homes and buildings, serving as a foundation for families to grow future generations in our beautiful town. Years later Dale taught the trade of construction to his son Randy and they went on to build many homes together in Morro Bay.

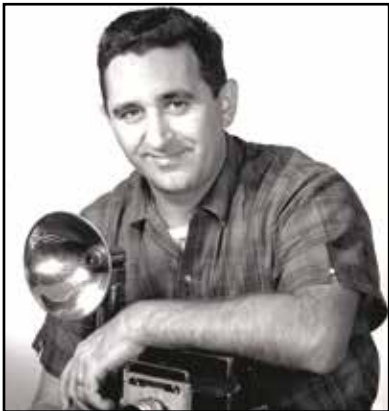
In the 1970's Dale decided to start selling the homes he built, and opened The Real Estate Company on Morro Bay Blvd. His brother Dan picked up the knack for real estate from him and later, after Dale retired, he could be found working with Dan at Bayshore Realty. Visiting the office gave him a local hang out and place to go everyday to hear what was going on throughout the community. In addition to his career in building, Dale was an entrepreneur at heart,

and went on to open Estero Paint and Cayucos Liquor Store. Dale owned Cayucos Liquor for over 25 years and considered Cayucos his second home.

Dale was passionate about community service, serving as a Planning Commissioner, and later as Mayor of Morro Bay, which he served from 1986-1988. He continued his efforts to support our town and was an early member of the Morro Bay Police Department volunteer academy, where he is known for his countless hours volunteering at events, disasters and fund-raising for the K9 unit. In addition, he enjoyed his long time membership with Rotary and the Elks club.

Dale loved Morro Bay and felt honored to raise his children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren with three generations attending Del Mar Elementary and then on to Morro Bay High School. Dale loved attending his children through his great grandkids sporting events, and had a perfect record of never missing a game. He also impressed upon them that there is nowhere more beautiful to live than this small beach community. After a 5 year fight with cancer, Dale died at home overlooking his favorite panoramic view of the ocean with his family by his side. He is survived by his wife Billie, sons Randy and Rusty, grandchildren Morgen and Trevor, great grandchildren Ayden, Coco, and Sawyer, older brother Gene, sister Sheril, and many extended family and close friends. Dale is being deeply mourned and leaves behind an incredible legacy. In lieu of flowers, we ask that donations are made to The American Cancer Society in his honor.

## In Memory of Benjamin DiFatta 1933 – 2021



Benjamin Frank DiFatta, age 87 of Los Osos, passed on January 20, 2021. He was born November 16, 1933 in Baltimore, Maryland to John and Dortha DiFatta, the oldest of five boys.

In 1951, at age 18, he drove the family across country to start a new life in Southern California. He began working at Lockheed Corp. and helped support his family during their transition.

In 1957 he married Isabel Basque, his wife of over 63 years, raising three sons, John, Michael and Thomas, together. After 33 years at Lockheed, he retired from his senior photographer position and moved to Los Osos where he

and Isabel had their new home and large garage built doing as much of the work themselves as they could. His love of photography kept him taking pictures of weddings and special events throughout his life.

He had a background in auto mechanics and a passion for collecting several old Ford and Chevy cars which lead him to acquire a half buried 1936 Ford and completely restoring it. He had a real estate brokers license that kept him busy in retirement along with house and property maintenance, the local old car club and speaking on local political issues at the city council.



## Lupe Never Forgotten 1936-2019

# Community



Original pastel by Joan Sullivan November 2020

Last year, I was commissioned to do a portrait of a friend's dog, Bam Bam, who died early in 2020. The finished art work was given to the owner of the pet as a Christmas gift that year. The fun thing about painting animal portraits is that the subject doesn't have a clue about your attempt to do his or her portrait. He or she is not privy to the event. Even if the animal was on site, it wouldn't know or care about the problems or

end result. There is no critic to keep you on the straight and narrow path of painting a good animal likeness.

Over the year's my animal subjects have included dogs, cats and even a horse. One of my favorite projects was the commission I got from a friend who wanted a painting of his beloved horse Little Bit that I was privileged to ride earlier that year. I took several photos of the aging swayback horse to use as my guide. When the painting was completed and I hadn't gotten a response for my efforts I called his wife. She hesitated but finally told me that her husband remembered his horse from the earlier days and, not looking like an old mare that my photographs portrayed.

Often, and long after a commission has been completed, I continue to rehash the details of the project in my mind. On occasion I have wanted to retrieve a work so I could make changes. I'm sure I'm not alone

in this area. When is a painting finished is a very good question every artist faces? I decided that when I ask myself, 'What should I do now' it's the time to call it quits – It's finished.

I hope you are having as much fun doing your thing as I am during the pandemic, but I look forward to seeing it disappear.

## Pacific Wildlife New Executive Director

Christine Johnson was selected as the first-ever executive director for Pacific Wildlife Care (PWC). Johnson will take the lead at the nonprofit organization that is recognized as one of the premier wildlife rehabilitation centers in California and is San Luis Obispo County's only licensed rehabilitation center that cares for injured, orphaned, sick, and pollution-damaged birds, land/air mammals, and reptiles/amphibians.

Johnson comes to Pacific Wildlife Care with more than two decades of experience in community and nonprofit leadership in a variety of settings. Most recent work experience includes positions with Stand Strong (formerly the Women's Shelter Program) and the Central Coast Aquarium. Johnson also served for four years as an elected city councilmember for the City of Morro Bay and currently volunteers as a board member for Leadership San Luis Obispo.

"It is an honor to be selected by the Board of Directors of Pacific Wildlife Care and to join

a dynamic team of staff and volunteers who are both passionate about SLO County wildlife and respected advocates for how we can coexist peacefully with our wild neighbors," Johnson said in news release.

Johnson's activities for PWC will be two-fold: to support the on-going day-to-day operations of PWC's animal care and public education efforts, and to lead the nonprofit's transition from its current location in Morro Bay to a more centralized site to enhance services across SLO County. A capital campaign will be launched in the near future for the development of a new, expanded animal rehabilitation center on land purchased, with donor support, along Buckley Road in SLO.

Additionally, Johnson confirms that PWC's annual fundraiser, Soupabration, is scheduled for Sunday, November 7, 2021 at the Historic Octagon Barn in SLO.

For more information, contact: Christine Johnson at [christine@pacificwildlifecare.org](mailto:christine@pacificwildlifecare.org) or call 805-305-3759.

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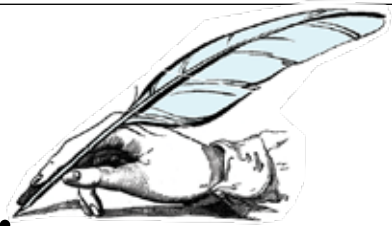
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Letters  
To  
The Editor



Payment Card Problems

Today we would like to share our experience with the recent Economic Impact Payment via the prepaid debit card with the intent to help others navigating the activation and transfer of funds, which was quite frustrating for us.

From a consumer’s standpoint dealing with the prepaid debit card was fraught with problems.

First off, the envelope from “Money Network Cardholder Services” surely looked like junk mail and rightfully prompted warnings in the press and online, such “Don’t throw it away thinking it’s junk mail or a scam.”

When calling 800-240-8100 to activate the card the automated response told us that no action could be taken because our telephone number was not recognized.

So we attempted to activate the card online. We visited the Money Network site and registered for online access, a lengthy process involving the creation of a user name, password, two security questions. A verification code was needed and received via email each time we wanted to log into the site.

We saw the balance and discovered the option “Transfer in U.S.”

After entering all the required fields for a transfer to our checking account, an error message stated “Invalid account status” and the two bank account boxes were highlighted in red leading us to believe the bank account numbers were the issue.

After some research we discovered that the problem was that the card had not been activated yet. It would have been very consumer-friendly if the error message would have stated that instead of highlighting the bank account number boxes.

Back to the phone we went and called 800-240-8100. Unlike a few days earlier, the automated response this time included the remark that our number was “blocked” and the advice to check with our telephone provider to remedy the situation. After re-researching the issue we found that “\*82” would do the trick and we successfully activated the card.

Back at the Money Network site we completed the transfer request online and we are happy to report that the funds were indeed transferred to the correct bank account.

Jack and Petra Clayton  
Los Osos

Capture Rain Water  
for Los Osos

The recent rains have caused the Bay to look like a chocolate milk shake. Much of it is topsoil that has been washed off of the farms in Los Osos Valley.

What a shameful waste of valuable material that we need to grow crops to feed us. A bigger waste is all that water that is so badly needed to supply the residents of Los Osos.

Where is the leadership from Supervisor Bruce Gibson and the Basin Management Committee? Why have there been no plans to capture the storm water runoff?

There is a large area west of the dump that could be used as a retention pond. Let’s capture this water and recharge the aquifer to stop the seawater from creeping in.

Herb Graham  
Los Osos

Thank You From  
the Osprey

Thank you so much for your fantastic article on the osprey platforms installed by the Morro Coast Audubon Society. Everyone on the board commented on it at our last Zoom meeting.

A special thanks to Dean for getting someone out there on that rainy day and to Theresa-Marie for the article.

Roseanne Milkward  
Morro Coast Audubon Society

Impeachment Letter  
Not Representative

During a Jan. 14 Special Meeting, the Morro Bay City Council, in a reported 5-0 vote, decided to send a letter on City letterhead to the United States Congressmen and Senators representing the citizens of Morro Bay.

That letter, dated Jan. 21, calls for the removal from office of President Trump, the impeachment of Donald Trump, and the barring of Donald Trump from holding public office again.

Ironically, the second paragraph of the letter states in part, “Our democracy belongs to the people and we all – Republicans, Democrats, Independents, and members of other political parties must strive to protect it.”

Did the Council poll Morro Bay Republicans, Democrats, Independents, and members of other political parties prior to issuing their letter? They did not.

The letter being sent on City letterhead implies it represents all citizens of Morro Bay. It does not.

Council is reminded again, as it must be all too often, that its deliberations and actions must represent all citizens of Morro Bay, and that Council’s ideology has no place in that representation.

Sending the letter clearly proves that Morro Bay citizens do not have equal representation under this City Council.

Also, it proves that this City Council is willing to involve itself in national controversy, which is inappropriate and outside its mandate.

Simply put, the Morro Bay City Council did not have the right or the authority to send such a letter to Washington, D.C., much less use citizen taxpayer funds to do so.

Apparently, it is necessary to once again remind Council of the many issues facing the very existence of Morro Bay as a city, as well as the pressing needs of its citizens; issues which are the sole responsibility of Council.

Council is advised to stick to the work it was elected to do.

Ron Reisner,  
Morro Bay

Let Me Explain  
how it Works

Let’s go back to November 2016. Trump won the election, not the popular vote, but the electoral college. In January, 2017 he was sworn in. We wished him well, hoped he would do a good job and not screw things up.

Fast forward four years. Well, he did screw up, several times and got impeached, not once but twice. Now it’s November 2020 and Biden has won both the popular vote and the electoral college. Then, in January he was sworn in. We wish him well, hope he does a good job and that he doesn’t screw up. Within days of that we see “Impeach Biden” all over social media.

How pathetic can people be? The man hasn’t been in office for a month and people want him out. That’s not how this works.

This is how it works: we voted him in, if he screws up really bad, I mean breaks the law, then we impeach him. If he does a bad job, and we don’t like what he is doing, in 2024, vote him out and hope the next person does well and doesn’t screw up and then we go on.

I am not making this stuff up. It is actually written down somewhere, I think it’s called the United States Constitution.

It’s OK to voice your opinion and wish that your candidate had won, but to go against the majority of the people and stop doing what the constitution has laid out for us is treason and un-American, in my view. Time to grow up, grow a pair and put our country first. Baring anything illegal, see you in four years and we’ll do this again.

J. Fillmore III  
Los Osos

Please include your full name and town you live in on all letters sent. Although we do welcome longer opinion pieces, publishing is as space permits. Estero Bay News reserves the right to edit for length and clarity. Email letters to editor@esterobaynews.com

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Because of your generosity, in 2020 we were able to:

- Los Osos Cares Resource Center and Estero Bay Womenade, helped over 800 families, seniors and individuals in need, with \$56,000 in emergency funding
- Served free hot dinners at the weekly Community Dinner for 4,170 people
- Offered resources information by email and phone to over 500 people
- Provide a warming shelter on 30 nights during wet or cold temp for 7-10 people
- Conducted two Pre and Post Covid senior outreach questionnaires reaching out to over 600 people
- Gave resource packages to over 150 seniors during and after our drive thru Health Fair
- Created a R U OK senior phone outreach serving 93 in Estero Bay
- Started a Senior Dial a Ride service in Los Osos in collaboration with Ride On

We thank all our donors and sponsors:

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And all our dedicated community members and members of the Womenade program.

We also thank our local partners:

San Luis Coastal Unified School District, City of Morro Bay, Ride On, TMHA, CAPSLO, St. Benedict’s Episcopal Church, People Helping People, the South Bay Community Center, Maharlika Christian Fellowship, Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter Day Saints, Los Osos 4 H, Los Osos Rotary, Abundance Shop, Nifty Thrifty, People’s Self Help Housing, Eckerd Connects, Wilshire Community Services, Independent Living Resource Center, Smart Share Housing, Dept of Social Services, Stand Strong, Rise, Estero Bay Kindness Coalition, Los Osos Chamber of Commerce, MB Senior Center, Alliance for Pharmaceutical Access, Noor Clinic, SLO Village

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Vistra From page 1

Eric Cherness, who assisted Watson in their online presentation, noted that BESS projects increase the reliability of energy sources like solar and wind. Those renewable means of producing electricity have drawbacks in that they can only produce energy when the sun shines or the wind blows and often produce energy when demand is low. With a BESS, that energy can be briefly stored and fed into the power grid when needed.

The company’s presentation said the project would have 2,400MWh of capacity in 180,000 lithium-ion batteries. The batteries are grouped into “racks” and enclosed inside the buildings, each with its own room. The three buildings being proposed total 273,000 s.f. Again as a comparison the parking lot at Spencer’s is about 170,000 s.f.

Each building will have extensive fire suppression systems, as Lithium-ion batteries have been known to overheat and catch fire. Vistra estimates the project to cost \$500-\$600 million and will result in a value of some \$450 million for property tax purposes.

That means they expect the BESS to generate about \$4.8 million a year, of which the City of Morro Bay would get 10.26%, or some \$490,000 a year. That would be a welcomed boost for the City, which has spent down its reserve fund to bridge the gap in funding caused by the pandemic response.

City Manager Scott Collins told Estero Bay News that as he understands it, the taxes are calculated through a complex formula that ties in with the amount of energy it handles. “It’s a moving target,” he said. “But it’s somewhere in the \$400,000 range.”

Collins was cautious not to sound over-eager, as the project has a long ways to go before being approved and built. Among the hoops the project will face is a full environmental impact report, planning reviews, approvals from not only the City, but the Coastal Commission, California Energy Commission, and just about every other agency in the state and federal governments, just as the failed Duke replacement project faced.

Vistra said it expects 300 workers will be on site during the height of construction, with an average of 100 through the duration of the build. When it goes online, they’ll have just 15 employees.

The “Workforce is expected to come from the local area,” according to Vistra’s slide presentation. “We anticipate increases in local business revenues given the size and duration of the construction work force.”

It’s anticipated the job will use union workers like heavy equipment operators, electricians, pipe fitters, welders, and more. On such jobs, even simple laborers could make \$28 and hour or more.

Many of these jobs see workers come into town temporarily, often pulling travel trailers or driving RVs and staying in local RV parks, returning home on weekends.

It’s somewhat of a gypsy lifestyle, but specially skilled workers like these go to where the big construction jobs are and also work on outages at power plants across the state and nation.

The 600MW BESS will store enough energy to power 450,000 homes, according to Vistra.

Sifting through the project details, each of the “low-profile” buildings would be 30-feet high, 350-feet long, and 260-feet wide, some 91,000 s.f. each.

Each building will have 10-feet of equipment on the roof that would be screened, giving the buildings a 40-foot tall profile.

Asked about this, Community Development Director Scot Graham told EBN, “The max height is 30 feet, but the project is located in a Planned Development overlay area where they can request changes to the development standards that apply to the project.”

Each of the three buildings will contain approximately 2,400 battery racks, and 60 “Power Conversion Systems” will surround each building.

The PCS are needed, Watson said, because the energy is stored in “direct current” or DC form, and must be converted to “alternating current” or AC in order to match the power grid.

The BESS will also hook up to Pacific Gas & Electric’s substation on site, which will step up the current from about 34 kilovolts to the 500KV to be transmitted over the high voltage transmission lines that exit the rear of the plant and head eastward to connect with the power grind in the Central Valley. This means that no new wires would need to be strung.

“The substation,” City Manager Collins said, “is what makes it feasible.” It’s also why Vistra wants to time its project to coincide with Diablo Canyon’s retirement, to support the power grid.

Collins noted that fire danger is a big consideration for the City and noted that the City Fire Marshall and Fire Chief will be part of the team that works on the project.

The first BESS project that Vistra proposed in November 2019 was subsequently withdrawn in January 2020. That project was just one, 2-story building, and 200 MW, so this new one is

three times the size and capacity.

There’s also the issue of land use, as the power plant is considered a “coastal dependent use” because of its former use of a once-through seawater cooling system. Without that distinction, is this even allowable here?

“It will likely require some type of land use change,” Graham said. “We are in discussions with Coastal Commission staff regarding this issue.”

So how much money in fees would a \$500 million project bring to the City? Graham said, “Planning fees are approximately \$12,700 excluding environmental. EIR is going to be somewhere around \$150,000 rough numbers. Haven’t run building fees. Property tax will be somewhere in the neighborhood of \$400,000 to \$500,000 per year.”

The siting of the project will also bump up against the area where the City wants to put in recycled water injection wells, part of its \$131 million Water Reclamation Facility or WRF project. Collins said the Vistra project would not impact the City’s well field, which is the subject of a lawsuit the City filed against Vistra under the eminent domain doctrine. The City offered to pay \$200,000 for three permanent utility easements and two temporary construction easements.

Collins noted that the BESS project was in its infancy and there’s a whole lot more to go before any dirt gets moved around. “There will be lots of opportunities for people to comment and engage on it,” he said. “There’s a lot of steps before we get there.”

Asked about Vistra’s stated goal of being up and running by the end of 2024, Collins said, “The timeline is the timeline. We feel it’s more important to follow the right process and that people be able to comment.”

Vistra’s slide show includes a section on the company’s community generosity. “Guided by Vistra Corporate Giving Policy,” reads the slide, “we address community needs through investments that provide meaningful, direct, and sustainable social benefit and align with our business priorities.”

Vistra said it’s “committed \$10 million over the next five years to support the advancement of business and education in diverse communities; donated over \$2.1 million to non-profit organizations in 2020, including funds allocated to our over 50 power plants across the U.S., empowering our employees to direct funding in local communities; raised nearly \$2 million in annual 2020 United Way and TXU Energy Aid giving campaign; and volunteered nearly 1,000 hours in 2020.”

Collins said he didn’t know what kinds of community benefits the City might be able to negotiate from Vistra. “If it moves forward,” Collins said, “the city council would hear from the community about that.”

Flooding From page 1

be rescued.”

They then motored to Preston Lane. People were trapped in an apartment complex. “We rescued two ladies, a guy and their cats. One lady was grateful we rescued her luggage.” When the firemen couldn’t take it, David added, “I had to leave Dad there because I didn’t have room. It was a bumpy ride going against a swift current getting the ladies out.” A lady with a heart condition made it, but one of the cat carriers sloshed out of control until they found the ambulance. David and Gary even rescued a CDF team. “Their turn-out suits filled with water as they were trying to dislodge the shed.”

As for the Owens rescue team, David said his shins “got banged up” from strong currents. They both got poison oak getting in and out of the water and David couldn’t get home, so spent the night with his parents.

It was definitely an experience David recalls every time heavy rain threatens Morro Bay’s infrastructure. “This time I was thinking I was about 24 then, the same age as my son, Dak, and if I had asked him, ‘Dak, do you want to rescue people?’ He’d quit everything and (father and son) would do it all over again.”

In a way Dak has come to David’s rescue once 2021 reveals a new normal. He recently made a career decision while taking business classes at Cuesta College. The business he wants to go into is the family business. With total confidence in Dak, David will be able to return to his dream job officiating in youth sports.

“People don’t always think of it this way, but the officials are the third team on the field or court. That’s what I like - being part of the game.” Over the past twelve years David has done double-duty managing the cleaners and officiating for American Softball Association, recreation basketball, high school volleyball and baseball and had finally graduated up to Cal Poly volleyball and baseball. “It all came to a halt, but anticipating it will start up anytime, we have to be certified. We still pay our association for continued training classes.”

Each member of the family is working through life adjustments during the pandemic. Basically healthy in retirement, Marlene, David’s mom, has remained active in Morro Bay Quota Club as has Gary in Rotary Club of Morro Bay. Both groups have been relegated to Zoom meetings and canceled fund raisers.

“My wife Dawn is head cook at Morro Bay High School,” said David. “They still serve the Special Education students, but without on campus classes they are now assembling a 5-day supply of food for Friday pick-up for the students who used to receive breakfasts and lunches at school.”

After working years at Camp Hopitok, daughter Dari graduated from college with honors June, 2020 excited to begin her dream career as a bilingual speech pathologist. A proud father, David said, “She interviewed one day and was hired the next day by San Luis Coastal.” She was assigned to Baywood School’s bilingual campus, but without students, she’s been one of two serving the entire district as a speech pathologist.”

Her brother, Dexton, finished his two year’s instruction at Cuesta College and was headed to California State University, Bakersfield. With all classes online, David said, “We’re saving money on housing. He has yet to set foot on campus.” Their youngest, Devan, studies online as a junior at Morro Bay High School.

As most business owners, last March 2020 David believed his primary focus would be the cleaners for just a couple weeks, but he’s been the only employee for almost a year.

“When the Governor announced shelter-at-home, I put my five employees on half-time knowing it would be slow, but then March 20 was my last payroll. People working from home, not going out to dinner, weddings and not even church don’t need their dress-up clothes cleaned. I decided to lay-off my employees early so they could get at the front of the line for unemployment. What’s kept the business open has been laundry for people not wanting to go to the laundromat, but that won’t support a payroll.”

Dak Owens is now officially apprenticing and will become the third generation to own and operate Village Center Dry Cleaners located at 750 Napa Ave, Morro Bay,

Expand From page 1



Some of the excess historic items the Maritime Museum has with no place to display it. Photo by Neil Farrell

and City have been following and enforcing, they’ve turned to fund-raising events, like a wonderful smoked chicken and ribs barbecue, coordinated with Tognazzini’s Dockside Too restaurant. The two barbecues they’ve held were yummy successes with cars lined all the way down Front Street to pick up orders.

The Museum has three things they’d like to get done in 2021, according to Mather, completing a Native American focused display, curating a new collection focused on commercial fishing and expanding the museum footprint with the addition of a large Quonset hut to display all the stuff in the containers.

They hope to get the City to give them a space between the power plant’s sound wall and Embarcadero, for the commercial fishing exhibit, and a 15-foot by 20-foot, fishing shack, a building-type that used to be found all over Morro Bay.

“A drawback to the museum’s current operation and the only negative feedback we receive,” reads the Museum’s 2021 Annual Report, “has to do with the museum’s small size. At certain times, especially during a busy summer weekend, we find it difficult to accommodate high visitor demand. The fact is we are outgrowing our current permitted space faster than we anticipated.”

But expanding to the back fence of the property means eliminating five camping spaces the City set up in that area, in response to a loss of revenues from the pandemic business closures.

(The City Council was to receive a report on the success of the Harbor Department’s experiment with camping along the bay at its Feb. 9 meeting.)

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**Kevin says,**  
"Look for the ANT on the Door"



If the City wants to make its camping program permanent, it will need a coastal development permit from the Coastal Commission.

Mather wonders about these in particular. “We want the City to look at what’s the highest and best use of the property?” he said.

Jones said those camping sites were rarely used on weekends and largely empty during the week.

Already the Harbor Department has taken over roughly half of the Triangle Lot for a boat storage yard, which Mather said is a good long-term revenue source. But that storage yard, surrounded by temporary fencing, is only about half full.

Mather said they have a guy who wants to donate a 30 by 40 foot Quonset Hut to the museum, which historically speaking would fit right in.

During World War II, when the harbor was a Naval training base, there were some 62 Quonset Huts that served as barracks for Marines training for the Pacific Theater.

Many of those huts were moved into town when the base closed and a handful are still in use today.

The hut would be used for special things, Mather said, like a small theater to screen documentaries being done for the museum, oral histories of locals from the fishing industry, a public meeting room, and possibly a dioramic display with a surf rescue

boat.

The museum is also hoping to get the Harbor Department to donate its 1983 Radon patrol boat that’s slated to be sold at auction. “We would like to get the old patrol boat,” Mather said. “We have a museum member who’s pledged to donate \$15,000 for this.”

It’s a vessel he’s very familiar with, having spent many years with the Harbor Patrol using that very boat on countless rescue missions. In fact he and another Harbor Patrol officer were rushing out to Montaña de Oro on a rescue mission when a large chunk of fiberglass tore off the bottom of the boat and it started taking on water.

Mather and Jones said the Museum continues with a memorial brick program fundraiser, and the boats on display now have donation containers attached to information kiosks.

“As President,” Mather said, “my goal is to make the Morro Bay Maritime Museum an asset for our community, a museum the citizens are proud of, not just another Embarcadero tourist attraction. We also want to encourage people to join the Morro Bay Maritime Museum and be part of this renewed community spirit.”

The Museum’s Annual Report is available online at: [www.morrobaymaritime.org](http://www.morrobaymaritime.org) if readers would like to learn more about the many strides the Maritime Museum Association has made over the past 2 years.

# A Dose of Good Dogma



## One Size Fits All

By Lisa Ellman

I see this tag in department stores, boutiques and clothing tents. Yes, one size fits all, unless your hips are too big, or if they would just put a teensy more elastic in the waistband. But what does this have to do with dogs? What is my point? My point is that if you read one book, or watch one youtube video, on dog training or behavior solutions it’s probably not going to solve your issues, and you shouldn’t assume you will be successful when the suggested methods are applied to your dog. In other words, one size does not fit all.

There are a lot of well written training books out there to help you with your puppy or adult dog, but sometimes reading these books may result in only confusing the owner. The reason I say this is that although many books provide methods of solutions for typical problem behaviors, those many books may provide different solutions. How do you determine which one is right for you? Or for your own dog?

Although all dogs learn through conditioning and repetitive, consistent training, like humans they’re apt to react differently to any given situation at any given time. For example, some dogs may be shy or submissive and have issues with loud sounds, like a slamming door. Some dogs might have issues with men – this happens quite frequently with adopted or rescue dogs. So, although all dogs are wired to learn the same way, you may need to modify training techniques in a way that is compatible with the temperament of your own dog. The authors of the training books, or people on youtube, can’t know for sure if your particular dog will respond successfully to what they suggest, or their methods, because every dog is different.

Training techniques used for a German Shepard are not necessarily the same ones you should use to train a small mixed breed or a Great Dane. They are two completely different beings. I often suggest to my human students that they read and learn as much as they possibly can about dogs in general. I emphasize that while dog training books can be helpful, reading books about dog psychology (the way they think, what makes them tick), and their co-evolution with humans, offers much more insight on how to avoid problem behaviors altogether and will help them train their dog more than most “how to” training books.

There are a plethora of resources (books, magazines, journals, websites) to help you learn why your dog behaves like a dog, i.e. eating poop, jumping the fence, digging, etc. Dog owners need to be familiar and comfortable with what makes a dog, a dog. Don’t take everything you read in the training books as gospel, use your common sense as well. If you happen upon a method to solve a barking issue and you’re just not quite comfortable with it, don’t be afraid to tweak it a little or combine it with other information you’ve read regarding the same issue. Don’t think that you’re doing something wrong if you don’t follow one trainer’s methods to a “T.” It’s up to you to know your dog better than anyone else.

Here’s a sample of informative, interesting books I suggest:

- Inside of a Dog - Alexandra Horowitz
- Culture Clash – Jean Donaldson
- The Dog’s Mind – Bruce Fogle, DVM
- The Toolbox for Remodeling Your Problem Dog – Terry Ryan

*Good Dogma has been training dogs and their owners since 1996. Contact information and all offered services can be found on their website: [www.GoodDogma.net](http://www.GoodDogma.net). Readers are invited to send dog training questions to [GoodDogma@hotmail.com](mailto:GoodDogma@hotmail.com).*

### Award Winner

From page 1

reach out to me via social media (or via their book reviews) to share their personal experiences with the book. It’s still so surreal to me.”

For curious readers ready to start the Chorduroys and Too Many Boys series, the addition of the letter “h” in the title and why this particular fabric means so much to Kila Lorens is revealed in the second chapter. The “And Too Many Boys” part will click with readers less than halfway through the story.

Combining her love for both writing and music, four years ago Ivy launched My Multi-Track Mind, an online music blog dedicated to rising indie artists. On the site (<https://mymulti-trackmind.com/>), she covers new releases, posts in-depth artist interviews, and shares moody playlists.

Fans of soundtracks can heave a sigh of relief, “Everything All At Once” also comes with a suggested soundtrack created by the author on Spotify. It features a 67-song playlist that leans towards indie-alternative but there’s also some dream pop, classic rock, 90s throwbacks, hip-hop, and even a touch of folk music.

“My characters are just as music-obsessed as I am, and the series needed to reflect that,” Ivy said. “The idea for the first book’s playlist existed long before I had written any of the story. In my mind, I had already associated certain songs with certain scenes. Those songs acted as a gateway from my world into the story’s world, and I wanted my readers to have access to that gateway, too. I wanted the book’s playlist to honor and mimic the intense, kaleidoscopic emotional range of teenagers.”

All of the song names appear in bold print inside the story so they stand out. There is also a section at the front of the book entitled “All About The Playlist,” that tells readers where to find the playlist and provides some easy-to-follow instructions for listening to the songs while you read along. It should be noted that the novel stands on its own and the music is another dimension but isn’t mandatory to relating to the story.

Although Ivy is a relatively new resident in Cambria, her love for the area goes further back. She grew up in a “quaint” coastal town in Rhode Island where she also earned a bachelor’s degree in business from Roger Williams University. Shortly after college, she made the trek across country where she was recruited corporate side of the film industry in Los Angeles.

“On the weekends, I’d adventure up the coast—and that’s how I first discovered Cambria,” Ivy said. “I visited as often as possible and always stayed at the Pelican Inn right on Moonstone. (The room I preferred had a cozy window seat, where I clocked lots of hours writing.) It wasn’t long until I found myself visiting Cambria so much that it made sense to rent a small studio on Lodge Hill. Living in Cambria, even just part-time, felt more like home to me than any place I had ever lived. In 2017, I was able to wave a warm goodbye to LA and establish full-time residency in a little cottage here in East Village.”

That little cottage is where work is underway on the second book in the Chorduroys and Too Many Boys series. Spoiler alert, the first book ends with a cliffhanger, so more reading is in store for fans—Ivy hopes that remains true for years to come.

“Honestly, it might sound strange, but my goal is simply to keep writing,” she said. “I already have an idea for a second series after Chorduroys And Too Many Boy is finished—and I hope I’m still writing and releasing stories well into my golden years.”

With the list of awards for her first novel growing, things look promising for a lengthy career as a novelist. The list of honors includes: Gold Award Recipient, Mom’s Choice Awards, Readers’

Favorite 5-Star Seal, three first place awards from the 2020 Royal Dragonfly Book Awards, the 2020 American Fiction Awards Finalist, Coming of Age and the 2019 Best Book Awards Finalist, Fiction: Young Adult among others.

Being honored with prestigious accolades has made Ivy even more dedicated. She is working on the second novel in the series and is shooting for a 2022 release date.

“I’ve envisioned the whole story as a vibrant saga that follows the tight-knit group of teens into adulthood,” said Ivy. “Regardless of the total number of books, the Chorduroys And Too Many Boys series will continue to feature Kila Lorens, her brother Ethan, and all of their friends. And each book will always have its own intricate playlist.”

As advice to all aspiring novelists out there, Ivy suggests picking a topic you are passionate about because the time you will spend with your characters is likely longer than you could imagine. Perhaps more importantly, she says, “Stay true to the story you want to tell. And tell your story the way you want to tell it—regardless of whatever “rules” you might be bending or breaking.

“Truthfully, it’s still setting in that I’ve released my first book. I’m grateful for each person who has read it, and I’m humbled by all the unexpected accolades it’s received to date. If you are thinking of writing a book (or starting any creative endeavor), dare yourself to do it and don’t look back.”

In addition to being sold on major online retailers and in indie bookstores via IndieBound.org, signed copies “Everything All at Once” are currently available in four SLO County small businesses:

- \*STASH Local Goods in Cambria
- \*Smoobage in Morro Bay
- \*Volumes of Pleasure Bookshoppe in Los Osos
- \*General Store Paso Robles.





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