

## Empty Bank, 'Opportunity Site' Goes Up For Sale

Photos & Story By Neil Farrell



Two new Bank of America ATM machines have been installed outside of the Sinclair Gas Station on Morro Bay Boulevard, clearing the way for the bank to put its former branch building, located at Monterey and Morro Bay Boulevard, up for sale.

It's one of the largest buildings in Downtown Morro Bay and for several years now, the Bank of America building has sat empty, its large parking lot taken over for public parking.

But what looks like a frozen-in-time empty shell, could see new life now that the bank has finally listed it for sale. The big red "For Sale" sign went up after Bank of America installed two ATMs outside the Sinclair Gas Station, located down Morro Bay Boulevard at the Roundabout.

That had been the sticking point for putting the property up for sale, as the bank first wanted an ATM site in town. The ATMs at the bank have now been removed and the Bank of America banner signs are gone, too.

The property is being listed by JLL (Jones Lang LaSalle), a global commercial real estate services company, base in the United Kingdom (see: us.jll.com).

The listing goes into great detail about the location, the community, the business climate and potential for redevelopment of the 0.74-acre site bordered by Morro Bay Boulevard, Pacific Street and Monterey Avenue.

The property has an 8,451 square foot 2-story former bank building, with 6,451 s.f. on the ground floor and 2,000 s.f. on the second floor.

It features a large parking lot behind the building and the total area of the property is 32,135 s.f.

It's one of the largest Downtown lots and could mark the

first potential major redevelopment in the Downtown business district since the mixed-use building at Shasta and MBB, where Morro Bay Drug & Gift is located.

Before that, the old Rexall Drug Store at MBB and Morro Avenue was torn down and Ascot Suites built around 2000.

Redevelopment opportunities like this just don't come along very often in Morro Bay's "Old Town" district.

"The Site is part of the City's vibrant Downtown commercial area," reads a description on JLL's website, "and is steps away from the bay. Although the Site is currently improved with a former bank branch and parking lot, it could potentially accommodate a wide range of commercial uses including a restaurant, professional or medical offices, or personal services. The offering presents an outstanding opportunity to acquire a development site within a renowned Central California tourist destination."

In the City's update of the General Plan and Local Coastal Program, the final environmental impact report for which went before the Planning Commission last week, the property is having its zoning changed to "Community Commercial" and "Transitional Mixed Use," according to JLL.

"Community Commercial" zoning is defined as: "Community-oriented uses including retail stores, restaurants, professional and medical offices, and personal services. Residential uses are allowed both above and behind commercial uses with discretionary approval."

## Six-Unit Motel Proposed for Harbor View Site

By Neil Farrell



This rendering shows a 6-unit motel that's being proposed for the corner of Harbor Street and Market Avenue. It includes two, 2-story buildings fronting Market Avenue with a total of four single-story units. Each will have sun decks facing the waterfront.

An old motel site with a million dollar view overlooking Morro Bay's waterfront is being eyed for redevelopment, with the Planning Commission recently being introduced to a conceptual plan seeking comments.

The proposal is to tear down the old Harbor View Motel units, now being rented monthly, and build a 6-unit, 2-story, 5,054 total square foot motel, located at 205 Harbor St., at the corner with Market Avenue.

The applicant/owner is listed as Chung Hsiao of San Diego, with Thom Jess of Arris Architecture designing the project, and Morro Bay's Cathy Novak Consulting firm acting as the agent.

There would be four units on the ground floor and two on a second story that's adjacent to Market Avenue, according to the concept plan submitted to the Planning Commission. It would step down the bluff, keeping the required 50-foot setback from the bluff top.

"First floor space includes a view courtyard, entry court, hotel lobby," reads a staff report by Senior Planner, Cindy Jacinth, "and guest laundry space. The second floor includes a roof deck for guest use. All hotel rooms include west-facing private patios."

The proposal includes seven parking spaces for the hotel with access off Market Avenue, including one handicap accessible space, and two bike parking spaces.

Novak told Estero Bay News that the new owner of the property was looking for a project to do in Morro Bay. This property has known its share of broken dreams.

The property was once the 17-room Harbor View Motor Lodge, before a huge storm in March 1995 caused the bluff to slip and a 25-foot tall retaining wall to fall down in one piece and

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## Moving Forward - Jeff Eckles Living Large on Land and Sea

By Judy Salamacha



Jeff Eckles and his life partner Feydra Potter.

A thoughtful Jeff Eckles pondered, then answered the typical 2020-21 COVID-survival-how's-business question about his Morro Bay House of Jerky. "It's been good at the Jerky shop because tourism has been strong. Increased traffic on the Harbor Walk brought new business our way on the north end of the Embarcadero."

Eckles is also a licensed ship captain who was used to regular sea duty on and out of Morro Bay Harbor. He added, "Bay cruises for the Papagallo and Chablis have been spotty, but for me as a captain, the vessel delivery business has been active. People financially impacted during COVID are selling and others with the resources are buying."

Captain Eckles has enjoyed his 2020 sailing junkets along the Pacific Coastline from Morro Bay to San Diego or north to San Francisco. He's living the good life where he's at peace — out at

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## Hofbrau Celebrates 50 Years of Delicious Service

Photo and Story by Neil Farrell



Stan Van Beurden and his daughter Allison will celebrate the Hofbrau der Albatross' 50th Anniversary in June.

Not many people find their calling right out of high school, and fewer still carry on with it for half a century. But Stan Van Beurden is one of the exceptions.

In June Van Beurden will celebrate the Golden Anniversary of the Hofbrau der Albatross, the Morro Bay waterfront restaurant that he and his family started 50-years ago in a little spot in the HMS Salt Building, which was brand new at the time.

Stan, his late brother Joost and his father started the Hofbrau in June 1971, when Stan was fresh out of high school. They'd already had one restaurant uptown, so the family knew the business.

The late-Jim Maul, an architect, was in the process of building the HMS Salt Building, Van Beurden explained, so the timing was good.

They patterned the Hofbrau after a legendary San Francisco pub, "Lefty O'Doul's," he said while sitting in a dining room greatly restricted in capacity by the State's Coronavirus Pandemic orders.

The Salt Building was one of the waterfront's first "artisan malls," he said. Back then there were seven little shops in the building — a ceramics shop, a jewelry store, a macramé store, a leather shop and a man who made burl wood tables. "It was a party every night," he laughed.

He said they started the restaurant at a most opportune time.

"Back then there were a limited number of restaurants to eat at [on the waterfront]," he said.

San Luis Obispo wasn't nearly as built up then, and he said they got a lot of Cal Poly students who made the trip to the Coast to eat at Hofbrau. "Cal Poly was a huge draw for us," he said. "But not anymore."

They started the Hofbrau with a \$20,000 loan, he recalled. Times have changed. "I just spent \$10,000 on a new oven."

The Hofbrau was "a hit from the beginning. We've never looked back," he said. "We've never had a down year in 50 years." Though he admits that during the 2020 pandemic, not a normal year by any measure, he was down some from the previous year, owing to the fact they were closed for a couple of months at the

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## City Still Needs Volunteers, Deadline March 26

The City of Morro Bay has extended its deadline to fill several advisory board positions, after not enough people applied before the Feb. 26 deadline.

The City extended the deadline to apply for two positions on the Harbor Advisory Board; two on the Tourism Business Improvement District (TBIS) Advisory Board; and three vacancies on the Public Works Advisory Board or PWAB.

The new deadline is 5 p.m. Friday, March 26.

The Harbor Board positions are for one marine oriented business representative and one alternate from the Morro Bay Commercial Fishermen’s Organization’s ranks.

The Harbor Board advises the City Council on the Harbor Department’s issues — policies, development projects, planning and operations.

TBID is seeking a member at large who is also a hotelier and a hotelier from a property with 50 or less rooms.

TBID deals with an assessment district that includes motels, hotels, B&Bs, and vacation rentals and consists of a 3% charge added onto the cost of a night’s stay.

Due to the Coronavirus Pandemic response and the stay-at-home restrictions that have been in place on citizens and restrictions on businesses including lodging, the City hasn’t promoted tourism for a year now.

City Clerk Dana Swanson said the City got four applications for the eight open positions and so they decided to extend the deadline by a month.

They got one applicant for the three PWAB positions and one applicant for the HAB’s marine-oriented position and one of two openings under the MBCFO.

They got one applicant for the TBID’s 50-under motelier spot and none for the other one.

The deadline for applying is 5 p.m. Friday, Feb. 26. Completed applications can be emailed, mailed or returned at the drop box located at City Hall.

For applications and more information, see: [www.morrobay-ca.gov/268/Boards-Committees-Commissions](http://www.morrobay-ca.gov/268/Boards-Committees-Commissions).

## County Adds \$1M to State’s Rental Assistance Program

By Neil Farrell

Low-income households that have fallen behind on rent can turn to the State and SLO County for help getting caught up.

County Supervisors agreed to participate in a State program to distribute over \$17.5 million that was allocated last December in one of the COVID relief packages passed by Congress and the Trump Administration.

“On Dec. 27, 2020,” reads a report by Guy Savage of the County Administrative Office, “the Federal Consolidated Appropriations Act 2021, a \$900 billion COVID-19 relief bill, was signed into law and \$25 billion was allocated to the United States Treasury for the Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP) to assist households that are unable to pay rent or utilities due to the COVID-19 pandemic.”

SLO County immediately got \$8.4M and Savage said they’re entitled to another \$9.1M coming out of the State’s federal allocation.

At the end of last January, the State passed “The COVID-19 Tenant Relief Act” (Senate Bill 91) which extended protections against evictions. SB-91 was due to expire Feb. 1 but was extended through June 30. SB-91 also set up a State system to distribute the \$2.6 billion in ERAP monies it received.

SB-91 gave counties with more than 200,000 population (including SLO County) three options on how to divvy out the money: join the “State Rental Assistance Program” and put out the Federal monies through it; have the money put into a “State Block Grant” program subject to numerous regulations; or, self-administer the federal money and let the State deal with the local jurisdictions (cities) and their allocations.

Supervisors in February formed a sub-committee with Dist. 2’s Bruce Gibson and Dist. 3’s Dawn Ortiz-Legg volunteering. The subcommittee decided the first option of turning over the money to the State Rental Program was best for SLO County.

It came down to logistics. “Option A was selected,” Savage

said, “in large part due to concerns by the County and its local partners about their ability to administer a \$17 million program over such a short period. Many were concerned with the ability to hire enough staff and put the required systems in place within required timelines.

“Additionally, concerns were raised about ramping up such a large program only to have to ramp it back down a few months later.”

The State Rental Assistance Program can also help with utility bills that may have piled up while people have been ordered to stay-at-home and unable to work for over a year now. So who’s eligible?

“The program focus is to stabilize low-income households,” Savage said, “through the payment of rental arrears to landlords. Eligibility is targeted at households at or below 80% ‘Area Median Income’ [AMI] and prioritizes those under 50% AMI. Participating landlords will be compensated 80% of unpaid rent.”

The rub is that landlords must write off that remaining 20%, accepting the program’s payout as “payment in full.”

Landlords don’t have to participate and if they don’t, the program can still award a qualifying tenant 25% of the back rent that’s owed, according to Savage’s report. Landlords and tenants can start applying for the program now.

“The funding,” Savage said, “will mitigate financial hardships and offset losses experienced during the COVID-19 pandemic and should speed the economic recovery within our region.”

The State Business, Consumer Services, and Housing Agency’s website, is at: [www.bcsb.ca.gov/covidrelief](http://www.bcsb.ca.gov/covidrelief) to get information on this.

## Search Warrant Served in Smart Case

By Neil Farrell



The SLO County Sheriff’s Department conducted a search at the Arroyo Grande home of Ruben Flores, the father of the prime suspect in the disappearance of Kristen Smart. Ground penetrating radar and cadaver dogs were used to search the property including under the deck. Photo courtesy of the Sheriff’s Office

The County Sheriff’s Office last week conducted a search of the home of the father of the prime suspect in the Kristen Smart case, the department announced on March 15.

“The Sheriff’s Office,” spokesman Tony Cipolla said in a news release, “is announcing today that it has served a search warrant at the Arroyo Grande home of Ruben Flores. Flores is the father of Paul Flores, who remains the prime suspect in the disappearance of Kristin Smart in 1996.”

The search was to utilize cadaver dogs and ground penetrating radar (GPR), Cipolla said. “This process could potentially take one to two days to complete,” he added.

The search warrant was “sealed” he said, which prohibits the Sheriff’s Office from “disclosing any further details regarding it.”

“The Sheriff’s Office will not be commenting any further and no additional information will be released at this time.”

Paul Flores was a fellow Cal Poly student of Smart’s in 1996, when she disappeared without a trace after an off campus party wherein she got very intoxicated. Flores and another female student helped the 19-year old to the dorms, where the Stockton native lived.

Flores was the last known person to see her alive and came under suspicion shortly after her disappearance.

He’s been the only suspect in her disappearance over the life of the 25-year-old mystery. But her body has never been found, which is a big hindrance in closing the case.

One theory in the case has always been that he had help in disposing of her body. Flores’ mother’s A.G. home has been searched in the recent past including use of GPR.

A few years ago, the Sheriff’s Department conducted an extensive search of the hillside under the Cal Poly “P”, a school landmark on the hill behind the dorms.

Forensic archeologists assisted in that search and the Sheriff’s Department has not said what if any evidence was uncovered.

The Smart case has received much media attention over the past quarter century, including spots on various crime TV shows and an ongoing podcast called “Your Own Backyard” by Chris Lambert, who is credited with keeping the case alive.

Flores, meanwhile, was recently arrested and charged with weapons violations that were allegedly discovered during a search of his home in Southern California in connection with the Smart case.

Memorials to Smart have been erected, including an overlook spot at Dinosaur Point Park in Pismo Beach.

## Sheriff to Buy Laser Scanning Gizmo

By Neil Farrell



The County Sheriff’s Department wants to buy a new, high-tech crime scene investigation gizmo it says will help them better collect evidence and help put criminals in the hoosegow.

“The Sheriff’s Office Detective Division,” reads a report from Sheriff Ian Parkinson, “is responsible for conducting follow up investigation involving all types of criminal activity throughout San Luis Obispo County. Crimes include murder and attempted

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murder, serious assault, robbery, sexual assault, and burglary.”

Currently, he added, crime scenes are processed for evidence by hand, “diagraming the scene, measuring the location of evidence items and other landmarks, and photographing the overall scene along with individual evidence items. Diagrams, measurements, and photographs are then compiled into more formal floor plans and evidence exhibits for case analysis and prosecution.

“Currently, the Sheriff’s Office collects this information manually, using items such as measuring tapes and graph paper. Manual collection of this type of evidence, and the subsequent time it takes to refine the raw information into a more formal format represents a significant employee labor expense.”

So the Sheriff asked County Supervisors to transfer \$75,000 from the “Supplemental Law Enforcement Services Fund” to the Sheriff-Coroner’s Fund so he can buy a FARO Focus laser scanner to use at crime scenes.

According to the company’s website (see: [www.faro.com](http://www.faro.com)), “FARO Focus Laser Scanners create accurate, complete and photorealistic 3D images of any environment or object in just a few minutes. With their intuitive touch screen and compact design, these FARO Focus 3D scanners are as easy to operate as a digital camera — with built-in protection from dirt, dust, fog, rain and heat/cold.”

Essentially, the FARO laser scanner takes a digital “picture” of the immediate environment for wherever it’s set up.

The Sheriff said the scanners would automate their crime scene documentation process, and provide a much higher level of accuracy something that might come in handy is a criminal case.

“It records measurements accurate to within 1 millimeter from a distance of 30 feet,” Sheriff Parkinson said. “It also records GPS location and altitude. The scanner is designed to take a 360-degree scan from multiple locations at a scene. The data from these scans is then combined using FARO software to create a three-dimensional view of the scene. Most scenes can be scanned in less than two hours.”

The scans should provide compelling evidence in court. “It will be possible to take a virtual tour of any scene and note the precise location of every evidence item,” he said. “This will assist not only the investigative process, but the presentation of cases in court, as jurors will no longer have to rely on simple photographs and diagrams.”

Having the equipment for the department will allow it to become a regular part of investigations. “By owning our own FARO scanner, the Sheriff’s Detective Division will be self-sufficient, and will not have to rely on outside agencies who already operate this technology,” Sheriff Parkinson said. “This will ensure our sustained ability to respond immediately to any investigative need.”

FARO’s website, talking about crime scene documentation said, “From blood or impact spatter to bullet defects, everything must be faithfully and carefully documented. And when the control or integrity of the crime scene is dependent on other factors, it’s critical to capture and process crime scene evidence as completely as possible the first time.”

The gizmo comes with a 3-year maintenance agreement from FARO, a company that’s been around for nearly 40 years.

Headquartered in Lake Mary, Florida, with over 25 offices around the world, FARO provides leading-edge measurement solutions, outstanding customer support and steady industry

leadership, according to its website.

FARO, which stands for “Frasier and Raab Orthopedics,” was started in 1981 when PhD students, Simon Raab and Greg Frasier, launched FARO out of a garage, according to the company’s history page.

“They envisioned the start-up as a pioneer for 3D measurement and imaging that would provide precision technology to guide their customers to success.” FARO is also derived from the Greek word, “pharos,” meaning lighthouse.

## Pandemic Restrictions Easing Somewhat

By Neil Farrell

A full year into the worst pandemic the world’s seen since the 1918 Spanish Flu, and San Luis Obispo County finds itself on what appears to be the downhill side of the coronavirus outbreak.

Positive test numbers continue to fall, as have deaths from the virus, and hopes are that the numbers continue down a path that seems to end with the economy being fully opened once again and life returning to normal.

But there’s a long ways to go for SLO County, which is stuck in the “Red Tier” of the Governor’s “Blueprint for a Safer Economy.”

The Centers for Disease Control and State Department of Public Health continue to tinker with the public health guidelines now releasing recommendations for people who’ve already been vaccinated and for how fans can attend sporting events, respectively.

### No Immunity for the Immunized

Though everyone pinned hopes that the approval of multiple vaccines against COVID-19 would mean people would be safe; the CDC’s March 8 guidelines would appear to counter that.

“Anyone who has been fully vaccinated against COVID-19,” the SLO County Health Agency said on March 9, “now has new interim public health recommendations for safely visiting with each other or with unvaccinated people in private, non-healthcare settings, and how to approach isolation, quarantine and testing.”

The County Health Officer, Dr. Penny Borenstein said, “We urge all SLO County residents, including those who are fully vaccinated, to continue taking health precautions in public. Please continue to wear a mask in public, get tested if you’ve been exposed, and avoid large gatherings.”

The CDC did ease up slightly on the lockdown guidelines that have had people staying at home and staying away from each other, so called social distancing. Fully vaccinated people can also:

- Gather indoors with fully vaccinated people without wearing a mask;
- Gather indoors with unvaccinated people from one other household without masks, unless they or anyone they live with has an increased risk for severe COVID-19 illness; and,
- Refrain from quarantine and testing following a known exposure if asymptomatic.

And getting fully vaccinated also doesn’t free a person from the pandemic protections — wearing a mask, washing hands often and social distancing.

And the Governor’s orders to wear masks even when outdoors is still in effect, at least until he’s recalled.

**Vaccines Shooting Up, Eligible Age Lowers**

SLO County reported that as of March 9 some 18% of the county’s population of about 230,000 had received at least one shot of the 2-dose Moderna vaccine.

Some 58 million had been administered nationwide (that number was 100 million as of March 19, according to the President).

Nearly 110,000 doses of vaccine have been administered in SLO County to date, thanks to increased vaccine supply from the State, as well as federal supply to local pharmacies.

The County has lowered the eligible age for getting vaccinated to 50 and older and opened it up to teachers, health care workers and other essential people, as well as those with certain ailments, and continues to have everyone make appointments, see: [www.RecoverSLO.org/VaccineAppointments](http://www.RecoverSLO.org/VaccineAppointments) or call (805) 543-2444. Several pharmacies have begun administering the vaccines as well. The County Public Health Department has enough vaccine supply to administer 10,000 first doses this week and plans to have enough for at least 10,000 first doses next week as well. Other vaccine providers also have more vaccines and will open more appointments throughout the coming days and weeks.

### County Warns of Scammers

As if half a million people dead in the U.S. from COVID-19 weren’t bad enough, the County sent out a warning about scammers trying to bilk people desperate for the vaccine.

“Scammers are using telemarketing calls, email, text messages, social media platforms, and door-to-door visits to perpetrate COVID-19-related scams,” the County warned in a March 18 news release.

In general, the scammers try to get people to sign up for a vaccine appointment, making promises that seem too good to be true.

The County put out tips on how to spot a potential scam:

- Being asked to pay out of pocket to get the vaccine sooner;
- Requirements to provide credit card information for “shipping purposes;”
- Charging a fee to gain access to a vaccine or to add a person’s name to a vaccine waiting list (the vaccines are free);
- Offers by marketers to sell or ship doses of vaccine for payment;
- Receiving ads or surveys for vaccines through social media platforms or unfamiliar email addresses; and,
- Claims of FDA approval for a vaccine or treatment of which you’ve never heard.

Dr. Borenstein commented, “The vaccine brings great promise that we will soon be able to return back to a more normal life. Unfortunately, some people want to take advantage of people’s desire to get vaccinated for their own criminal benefit.”

The County advises that protecting yourself is the best way to combat this skullduggery. “Always verify the spelling of web addresses and email addresses that look trustworthy, as they may be imitations of legitimate websites. However, if you are unsure if a message you receive is legitimate, reach out to family, friends, or the [County’s] Phone Assistance Center at (805) 543-2444 and a staff member will help you determine if the message you received

**Restrictions Easing** Continued on page 4



# Bayside Cafe

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

## Featured Listings

### Los Osos



[www.601LOVR.com](http://www.601LOVR.com)

Spacious Spanish Style three bedroom, two bath home situated on a 10,000 square foot lot in the heart of Los Osos. Gas and wood burning fireplace in living room, arched doorways throughout, and trendy concrete floors. Peek-a-boo views of Morro Rock from the front of the house and from the two car garage. Plenty of storage throughout home and attic with pull down door and stairs. Large, very private backyard perfect gardening and entertaining. Just a short distance to Montana De Oro, \$680,000.

### Nipomo



[www.centralcoastsales.com](http://www.centralcoastsales.com)

Two Homes for the price of one situated on one and a quarter acre property loved to perfection with an established French country garden includes 18 fruit trees and 27 specimen trees. Main house has three bedrooms and two baths with extra large kitchen and dining room . An extra two story unit on 32x52 pad permitted as barn, but with 1 1/2 baths, full kitchen, 2 bedrooms and two single garages with laundry washer and dryer included in spacious garages with its own septic. \$853,500.



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Restrictions Easing

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is real or a scam.”

If readers have fallen prey to these scoundrels, they can report it to:

- HHS-OIG Hotline: 1-800-HHS-TIPS or tips.hhs.gov;
- FBI Hotline: 1-800-CALL-FBI or ic3.gov; or,
- CMS/Medicare Hotline: 1-800-MEDICARE.

County Gets J&J Vaccine

The County got a boost in the vaccine supply March 10 when it received the first shipment of Johnson & Johnson’s single-dose COVID-19 vaccine.

The Health Department sent out some 1,400 doses of the J&J serum to be administered by local pharmacies.

The County’s three vaccination clinics — located at Cuesta College, the Paso Fairgrounds and at the Clark Center at Arroyo Grande High School — continue to administer the vaccines made by Moderna and Pfizer, which are double-doses.

The J&J vaccine is the third that’s been approved for use in the U.S. and “has been through a rigorous testing and review process nationally and additionally by the Western States Scientific Safety Review Workgroup,” according to the County.

Dr. Borenstein said, “The COVID-19 vaccine by Johnson & Johnson is very effective at preventing severe disease, hospitalization, and death from COVID-19. Adding a third safe and effective vaccine to our arsenal will be instrumental in the fight against COVID-19. This is great news for our community.”

This new serum is different than the others because it doesn’t need to be stored at below-freezing temperatures. And like the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines, it doesn’t have any coronavirus in it and so cannot give one the disease.

The vaccines are all three safe and effective according to Dr. Borenstein. The problem has been getting their hands on enough of it.

“From the beginning,” Dr. Borenstein said, “our biggest challenge has been limited supply of vaccine. Adding a third vaccine manufacturer means more supply will be available for SLO County residents to get vaccinated as quickly as possible.”

Sports Return; Some Fans Too

Local schools have reopened at least partially, and some 16 sports teams are playing again at Morro Bay High. But don’t expect to get a wiener and soda and sit down to watch the Pirates compete, unless you are one of the family, literally.

The State Department of Public Health on March 3 gave the go-ahead for sports to start again but then issued restrictions that make it all seem laughable.

“Local officials,” the County said, “have clarified that spectators for outdoor school sports will be allowed with capacity limits and precautions in place to limit the spread of COVID-19.”

The County added, “All participants and attendees must comply with COVID-19 safety precautions, including wearing face coverings and maintaining physical distance from other households. Venues will limit attendance to 20% capacity. Spectators are not currently allowed at indoor events.”

Additionally, “State guidance recommends that schools offer ways for family and friends to watch practices and competitions remotely by live stream if feasible. It also requires organizers of youth sports to mitigate the risk of COVID-19 while returning to play, through steps such as regular testing of players and limitations on tournaments.”

But if you think your softball team’s Friday Night beer league would be exempt, you’d be wrong. “The State guidance applies to all organized youth and adult recreational sports, including school, community programs, private clubs and leagues.”

Hooch Factories Get to Reopen

With the County’s “Red Tier” classification, restrictions on wineries, breweries and distilleries were eased a bit.

“Breweries and distilleries can operate outdoors with modifications,” the County said March 15. “These businesses must require reservations, limit visits to no more than 90 minutes, regularly sanitize tables and surfaces, space tables at least six feet apart, and require use of face coverings by employees and guests [when not seated at their table].”

“This gives our community a chance to safely support these businesses that have struggled over the past year,” Dr. Borenstein said. “Cheers to this step in SLO County’s safe reopening.”

Rent Relief Program Begins

The County has begun taking applications for the “California COVID-19 Rent Relief Program” that can help eligible people pay rent that they’ve fallen behind on due to the coronavirus pandemic response’s business shutdowns.

“Many renters and landlords are struggling right now,” said Dist. 4 County Supervisor Lynn Compton, who chairs the Board of Supervisors. “This program provides much needed relief to help people pay their bills and make ends meet.”

Of course the State-run program is only for certain people. “The State program is for those who have experienced a financial

hardship due to COVID-19; have past due rent or utilities; and have a household income at or less than \$58,800 [which is 80% of the area median household income],” the County reported.

The program has a catch. “Landlords who participate in the CA COVID-19 Rent Relief program can get reimbursed for 80% of an eligible renter’s unpaid rent between April 1, 2020, and March 31, 2021, if they agree to waive the remaining 20% of unpaid rent,” according to the County. “Eligible renters whose landlords do not participate in the program may apply on their own and receive 25% of unpaid rent between April 1, 2020, and March 31, 2021. Paying this 25% by June 30, 2021 can help keep tenants in their home under the extended eviction protections in Senate Bill 91.”

Like many of California’s social welfare programs, you don’t have to be a citizen.

“Applicants will not be asked about their citizenship, nor will they be required to show proof of citizenship.” See: www.RecoverSLO.org/RentRelief or call (833) 430-2122, 7-days a week, from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. to see if you qualify.

For updates on COVID-19 in SLO County, see: ReadySLO.org or call the Public Health Information Line at (805) 788-2903. A staffed phone assistance center at (805) 543-2444 is available 7-days a week, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. to answer COVID-19 questions.

County to Audit Facilities for Energy Savings

By Neil Farrell

San Luis Obispo County’s move toward upgrading facilities with an eye at energy and water savings will take a further step with the awarding of a contract to draw up specs and cost estimates to possibly do the work.

According to a March 2 staff report from County Energy and Water Coordinator, Annie Secrest, the County entered into a \$95,000, design-build contract with Willdan Energy Solutions (WES) at selected County Operations Center (COC) facilities.

In January 2020, Willdan had conducted on-site audits of various County-owned facilities and office buildings assessing them for “energy and water efficiency measures, beneficial electrification measures, and other facility improvements for consideration to make long-term upgrades,” Seacrest’s report said. “The focus of the on-site audit was heavily weighted towards ways to reduce and/or eliminate inefficiencies, increase occupant comfort, and improve site operations for the future.”

The County got that audit done for free by leveraging a “local government partnership” with Pacific Gas & Electric and SoCal Gas Co.

The County is now ready to take that “preliminary audit report” to the next level and put prices to the projects, which range from simply installing low-flow toilets and fixtures, to replacing whole HVAC systems. Many projects involve replacing florescent lighting with LED fixtures that are brighter and use less energy.

And a lot of these buildings are older facilities along Kansas Avenue off Hwy 1 used for maintenance and storage, as well as older office spaces.

Here’s a partial list of buildings and proposed upgrades:

- Maintenance building 1200: replace two rooftop cooling units with “premium efficiency units,” install new LED lights and low-flow toilets;
- Sheriff’s detectives’ office: new LED lights and toilets;
- Sheriff’s storage building (where evidence is kept): new lights, toilets and fans for the walk-in freezer;
- Water Quality Lab: new lights, and install sash-stops for two fume hood/chemical storage cabinets; and,
- Sheriff’s Office and Main Jail: replace hot water boilers with condensing boilers, replace air conditioners, lights and “low consumption fixtures and centralized usage controls for Main Jail.”

And at the Honor Farm, where the most changes are proposed, the study suggested installing ozone and water recovery systems for washing machines, and a heat recovery system for the dryers; new air conditioners, toilets and urinals; and new fans for their kitchen freezers. The Honor Farm does all the laundry for the jails and also has the kitchen that feeds everyone.

The West Jail is proposed to get nine upgrades to its HVAC units; replace packaged air conditioners; new lights and install “destratification fans” in the day rooms.

The destratification fans would also be installed in the relatively new Women’s Jail day rooms.

The company will do all the work. “WES will outline the details of the facility improvement measures, obtain final pricing, and finalize the annual energy and maintenance savings guarantee for the desired improvements.

“WES will also fully produce design and engineering drawings, specifications, bid documents, manage the competitive

pricing process, and completely develop the implementation and measurement and verification plans for the facility improvements.”

“The intent of the IGA,” Seacrest said, “is to develop a self-funded project through an Energy Savings Performance Contract [ESPC]. An ESPC would allow the County to procure energy and facility improvements with no upfront capital by guaranteeing the improvements will generate energy cost savings that will pay for the project.”

It’s the same kind of deal the County worked to have solar power equipment, including a 1-megawatt solar farm off Hwy 1, installed in places like Dairy Creek Golf Course, and the Health Department Campus on Johnson Avenue in SLO. A private company comes in and builds the facilities, guaranteeing a set price for electricity at a price below normal utility rates, with the County having the option to take over the facilities after the contract is up.

WES has a good incentive to make the projects pencil out, as their pay depends on it.

“There are two payment scenarios if WES develops a self-funding project to the County,” the report said.

1. If any of the projects identified in the IGA are executed, the \$95,000 fee for IGA engineering and design services will be incorporated into the construction phase amendment and will not be due to WES under this agreement.

2. If WES develops a self-funded project that the County does not proceed with into construction, the County will owe WES \$95,000 for the engineering and design services.”

Money for the contract is coming out of the County’s Energy and Water Audit Project fund. And any proposed work to be done will have to first be approved by Supervisors.

SLO Robber Caught in Virginia



Jesse Roman

A man suspected of robbing an elderly San Luis Obispo woman and stealing her truck in February has been arrested clear across the country.

Johnny Jesse Roman, Jr., 38 of SLO, is suspected of invading the woman’s home on O’Connor Way in rural SLO, on Feb. 23, according to a Sheriff’s Office news release on March 19. He allegedly stole cash and the woman’s truck and fled the scene.

The Sheriff’s Office put out a be-on-the-lookout bulletin on Roman and the truck, which was found abandoned at a gas station in San Jose. Roman remained on the lam until detectives uncovered evidence as to his possible whereabouts.

Detectives determined the suspect,” Sheriff’s spokesman Tony Cipolla said, “was staying at a residence in Virginia Beach, Virginia.” That was on St. Patrick’s Day, March 17 and Roman’s luck ran out the next day when Virginia Beach Police arrested him. Roman is being held pending extradition back to SLO County.

He faces charges of suspicion of robbery, false imprisonment, elder abuse and vehicle theft.

Use Less Power at Home During Pandemic

The ongoing pandemic has many readers spending more time working from home, and, according to PG&E customer data, the new lifestyle could be adding as much as 10 percent to residential home energy usage.

The company launched a new webpage, (pge.com/hometips), to help customers reduce energy usage during the pandemic. The tips focus on three primary areas that drive higher energy use: electronics, heating and cooling, and lighting.

Electronic devices, keeping our homes warm or cool and keeping lights on all have a direct impact on energy usage when spending more time at home, especially with both work from home and distance learning more prevalent.



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News

“We hope this new resource will help customers learn all about the small changes that can add up and reduce overall energy use at home,” said Aaron August, PG&E vice president of Business Development & Customer Engagement.

Save Energy When at Home

Electronics: Turn off equipment when away for 20 minutes or longer. Sleep or standby modes still use energy. Plug equipment into a smart power strip to easily shut off power to multiple devices when done for the day.

Heating and Cooling: Use a smart or programmable thermostat to control your home temperature. These devices can be programmed to run on your schedule, ensuring you don’t waste money when you’re away. PG&E offers smart thermostat rebates up to \$120 to help these efforts. If programming your thermostat, set it to 68 degrees in the winter and 78 degrees in the summer, health permitting.

Lighting: Rely on natural light if available. Opening blinds or drapes on sunny days can supply light without using other light sources. Replace old lightbulbs with LED lighting. LEDs not only use less energy, but they also last longer.

Customers can also switch electric rate plans in favor of one that is possibly discounted.

Folks can also check if they are eligible for a PG&E Financial Assistance Program to help save you money on your bills or see if qualify for the Energy Savings Assistance Program for no-cost improvements to make the home more energy efficient, safe and comfortable.

You could be eligible for tax credits, if you made energy improvement renovations to your home.

Small business owners or self-employed people could qualify for the home office tax deduction in 2020.

New Cuesta Interim VP of Student Success and Support Programs



Dr. Elizabeth Coria

The San Luis Obispo County Community College District Board of Trustees approved Dr. Elizabeth Coria as Cuesta College’s interim assistant superintendent / vice president of

student success and support programs, campus centers.

“I am pleased to welcome Dr. Elizabeth Coria to the executive team at Cuesta College,” said Superintendent / President Dr. Jill Stearns. “The national search brought forward a top candidate with experience as chief student services officer in California community colleges.”

Dr. Coria has more than 18.5 years of California community college administrative experience, most recently as interim assistant superintendent / vice president of student services at San Joaquin Delta College. She was the associate vice chancellor of student affairs at the City College of San Francisco where she also previously served as dean of financial aid & student success programs overseeing financial aid, EOPS/CARE, CalWORKs, Guardian Scholars, Homeless-At-Risk Transitional Student Program (HARTS), scholarships and student employment. She also served as director of financial aid, scholarships and veteran services and administrator of student financial services at Rio Hondo College.

She completed her undergraduate work in business administration at Whittier College, attained a master’s degree in management from the University of Redlands, and completed her doctoral degree in higher education community college leadership from California State University, Fullerton.

Dr. Coria is from East Los Angeles, California. She is a first-generation college student, and because of her personal life experiences, understands the challenges students face in navigating our educational system, Cuesta officials said. “She is enthusiastic about assisting students to achieve academic success.”

News Briefs

By Theresa-Marie Wilson

Poly Takes First at Grocers Association Competition

A team of four Cal Poly agricultural business seniors won first place, out of five competitors, in the National Grocers Association 2021 Student Case Study Competition for their presentation on how grocers can combat the major economic issues caused by COVID-19 by staying competitive through their “local supply chains” against low-price operators.

The National Grocers Association (NGA) hosts the annual competition, which moved to a virtual platform this year. Each year, the NGA Foundation selects an independent retailer and a pressing industry issue to use as a subject for the competition. The competing schools are all members of the Food Industry University Coalition, which has programs that relate directly to the food retail sector. After months of research, student teams present their findings to a panel of judges, the independent retailer featured as the subject of the competition, and NGA Show attendees.

The Cal Poly team included students Katherine “Scottie” Lester, Joshua Smith, Annika Bertelsen, and Amber Eckert. Agribusiness Associate Professor Ricky Volpe advised the team.

“The competition requires the combination of speaking ability, graphic presentation, data analysis and industry outreach,” Volpe said. “I believe our team began the competition with some aptitude for each of these but grew significantly in all four dimensions as the quarter progressed. I also believe they learned much about collaboration and project management.”

Plan Your Drought Tolerant Landscapes

An interactive website is available to help residents design a beautiful drought-tolerant landscape for their home or business.

The website, [www.slowaterwiselandscaping.com](http://www.slowaterwiselandscaping.com), has a tool that allows users to browse hundreds of beautiful landscape photos and zoom in on a selected plant. Detailed plant photos and plant information are then displayed, enabling users to select and print a customized plant list. The website’s resources section provides additional tips on landscape design, soil preparation, planting, efficient irrigation techniques, and watering

guides for the county’s different climate zones. A video tutorial even shows people how to use the website.

For more information, contact Ron Munds, General Manager, at 805-528-9379 or [rmunds@lososocsd.org](mailto:rmunds@lososocsd.org).

Sheriff’s Dispatcher Recognized



The SLO County Sherriff’s Office recently honored one of its own.

Dispatcher Faith Story was presented with a Distinguished Service Award by COPS N KIDS / International Footprint #73 for her outstanding work as a public safety dispatcher.

“We are proud to have such a highly skilled and professional woman keeping our community and deputies safe,” said Sherriff Ian Parkinson. “Faith, thank you for your exemplary service, we salute you.”

Shower the People Milestone

The County of San Luis Obispo Public Libraries has helped local mobile shower agency Shower the People get more than 5,000 hot showers to unsheltered and critically low-income county residents.

The San Luis Obispo branch has been a partner site for free showers since July of 2019. Shower the People reached its showers milestone Sunday, February 28.

“The library is honored to serve as a hosting site for Shower the People,” said Aracelli Astorga, manager of the San Luis Obispo branch. “We recognize that there is a need for this type of service in our community and our appreciative that the community looks to the library as not only a place that houses books, but also a space for community resources.”

Shower the People, a community-based, interfaith organization, began offering showers in 2018, and is currently the only mobile shower service operating in SLO County during the pandemic. The drop-in mobile shower service is available at the San Luis Obispo Library Sundays, beginning at 1 p.m. The service includes clean towels, washcloths, toiletries, socks, and underwear.

SLO Hires New Police Chief

Following a nationwide search, the City of San Luis Obispo has provided a conditional offer to the city’s next police chief, Rick Scott, who is scheduled to start in this new role on May 13.

Scott currently serves as assistant police chief in North Richland Hills, Texas, a city of over 70,000 residents where he successfully engaged and empowered underrepresented segments of the community on joint public safety initiatives.

“Rick Scott embraces the unique challenges of law enforcement today, with a leadership style that embodies our community’s values around diversity, equity and inclusion,” said City Manager Derek Johnson.

Addressing the historic impact of systemic racism and racial bias in policing was a key consideration in selecting the city’s new police chief, said Johnson. Also, at the top of the list was finding someone who could support and implement meaningful solutions to homelessness, mental health challenges, substance abuse, and other complicated issues that are priorities to address in our community.

“Public safety begins with partnerships and trust, above all else,” said Scott. “That’s why my first step as your new police chief will be building strong and lasting relationships – within the department, the city organization and the community.”

Another top priority for the new chief is completing a detailed assessment of the police department and developing a strategic plan to implement the pillars of 21st Century Policing and other best practices. Scott led a similar effort at the City of North Richland Hills Police Department to better align policing practices with community expectations.

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News

SLO Man Arrested for Domestic Violence, Drugs



Ivan Bojorquez

Sheriff's deputies arrested a San Luis Obispo man for suspicion of felony domestic violence after conducting a manhunt that included a helicopter and police dog.

The incident started at about 9:20 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 27 with a report of a domestic disturbance in the 300 block of Colony Dr., in rural San Luis Obispo.

"Prior to their arrival," Sheriff's spokesman Tony Cipolla said in a news release, the suspect "was believed to have fled on foot. Deputies contacted the adult female victim, who had sustained non life-threatening injuries. A search of the area located his abandoned vehicle and a backpack containing firearms."

Deputies called in a Highway Patrol helicopter and a K-9 unit from Atascadero Police to help them search for the suspect but they couldn't find him for several hours.

Cipolla said about 4:30 a.m. Sunday, Feb. 28 they located the suspect "at a neighboring residence of the original crime scene."

Deputies arrested Ivan Bojorquez, 29 of San Luis Obispo without incident charging him with suspicion of "attempted kidnapping, threatening with intent to terrorize, inflicting corporal injury to a spouse or cohabitant, and preventing a witness/victim from reporting a crime." He was booked into the County Jail.

In a follow-up news release, Cipolla said they'd found evidence that Bojorquez was allegedly dealing narcotics, too.

Two firearms, ammunition and two pairs of brass knuckles were reportedly found in a backpack allegedly belonging to Bojorquez, Cipolla said. "Two pounds of methamphetamine, scales, and packaging material all indicating the sale of narcotics were also found in the backpack," he added.

The victim in the case is doubly tragic. "The victim was pregnant at the time," Cipolla said, "and had to be treated at two separate local emergency rooms for injuries related to two separate assaults."

Dorm Project Progressing



Workers are making visible progress with a project to add dorm rooms to Coast Guard Station Morro Bay. The \$1.4 million project is finished with extensive underground utility work and was pouring footings for a foundation last week when this photo was taken. The job would correct a rather infamous claim to fame — it's believed to be the only Coast Guard station in the U.S. without such facilities and falls well short of regulations regarding equal facilities for men and women. The work has temporarily taken over three parking lots on The Embarcadero, drastically changed the walking paths for people who exercise along the waterfront, and installed an awkward detour through the parking lot at Krill's Saltwater Taffy Store and the Dockside Restaurants. Truck access to the North T-pier and the fishermen's wharf is also affected.

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Community  
Celebrating Children

By Theresa-Marie Wilson

It is often said that "it takes a village to raise a child" and one local organization is doing their part to help ensure that the younger members of our community have opportunities to engage in learning and enrichment programs.

Founded in 1992, the volunteer led Community Foundation of Estero Bay provides participation scholarships to youth, 4-18 years of age who otherwise might not be able to participate in organized youth sports and enrichment programs operating in Los Osos, Morro Bay, Cambria and Cayucos.

"We recognize that there are a variety of elements that contribute to healthy, safe and thriving youth within our community," said Hannah Held, president of the Foundation. "The heart of our mission has been, and continues to be, focused on our young community members and their access to and engagement in recreation and enrichment activities. These programs include organized play and physical activity, the arts, technology, and the all-important opportunity for enhanced social competencies. These scholarships provide Estero Bay area youth with the opportunity to experience healthy recreational activities that impart critical life experiences such as cooperation, commitment and self-esteem."

The Foundation supports kids involved in the City of Morro Bay Recreation Division, South Bay Soccer, Coast Little League, and Infinite Music. Staring in 2020, they supported youth with distance learning and have partially funded participation in the Kids Club Program run by the City of Morro Bay as well as the YMCA program in Los Osos.

To be eligible for financial support a family must qualify for a

free or reduced price meal at their child's school. Additionally, the programs they support have an application process.

Since forming, the Foundation has provided \$460,000 in youth sports and enrichment grants/scholarships. In 2019 and 2020, they provided funding for 347 children for a total of nearly \$78,000.

April is recognized as both the Month of the Child and Child Abuse Prevention Month. The Foundation is one of the partners working with the SLO County Child Care Planning Council to support the importance of early learning and care.

The mission of the SLO County Child Care Planning Council is to plan for child care and development service based on the needs of families countywide. Traditionally, they put on the Children's Day in the Plaza event in Mission Plaza bringing together community organizations and resources that provide learning opportunities to children in a fun filled day of visual, literary and performing arts activities. Like everything else during the pandemic, things are different this year — the 43rd year. Participants were asked to host a virtual live event or pre-recorded message that showcases their services.

The Foundation's annual Morro Bay Sings fundraiser typically held in October is a community favorite featuring music, dinner and live and silent auctions.

Up until the end of its run in 2019, they also participated in The Dixon Spaghetti feed as a partnership with the City of Morro Bay. Becoming a part of the month of recognition and the plaza event seemed like a natural fit for their mission.

"We have been looking for a spring event to take the place of that for several years," Held said. "We decided to try participating in the Month of the Child/Children's Day in the Plaza event for 2021. This gives us an established platform and we can jump off from here. Perhaps in the future we will develop a small spring

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fundraiser.”

The Foundation is asking community members to wear purple ribbons throughout the month in support of the National Association for the Education of Young Children’s celebration every April of early learning, young children, their teachers, families, and communities. The NAEYC is the world’s largest early childhood education association, with nearly 60,000 members and a network of 51 affiliates.

“We are letting the community know that we support NAEYC’s mission and shining some light on the SLO Child Care Planning Council,” Held said. “We are also interested in raising awareness about the Foundation and want people on the coast to know that during the pandemic the Foundations has been meeting monthly and continuing to work to raise money for scholarships.”

The foundation is hoping to hold Morro Bay Sings this year, but that decision will be based on the State’s rules for events during the pandemic. One thing that is guaranteed is the continued support of recreational and enrichment programs that are able to take place.

“Some families may find that through the pandemic their financial situation has become strained,” Held said. “The Foundation is ready and able to support these families.”

For more information or to make a donation the Community Foundation of Estero Bay, go to [communityfoundationestero.org](http://communityfoundationestero.org). Folks can also follow them on Facebook to keep up with future events and opportunities to get involved.

The SLO County Child Care Planning Council is putting together a full calendar of events for the Month of the Child that can be viewed at [sanluischildcare.org](http://sanluischildcare.org)

## Maritime Museum BBQ and Book Signing

The Morro Bay Maritime Museum is holding a “Springtime Cruising” barbecue fundraiser with tickets available now through April 4.

The barbecue, cooked up by the folks at Tognazzini’s Dockside, is a whole smoked chicken for \$15 and/or a rack of fall-off-the-bone smoked pork ribs for \$30.

You can also get a bottle of Kelsey See Canyon Vineyards’ Golden Delicious Apple Chardonnay for another \$20, with proceeds going to support the Maritime Museum, located at 1210 Embarcadero, at the north end of the Front Street parking lot.

Tickets are available at the museum from 10 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays. Or call Bonnie Jones at (602) 526-4367. Deadline to order is Sunday, April 4.

Drive-thru pick-up is set for 5-6 p.m. Tuesday, April 13. And the Museum is also holding a book-signing with Morro Bay native son, Joe Dunlap, author of the historical picture book, “When Morro Bay Went to War,” available at the Maritime Museum.

Dunlap will be at the Maritime Museum from 2-4 p.m. Thursday, April 1 to sign copies of his book.

Dunlap will talk about how WWII transformed the waterfront and set the stage for the tourist destination it is today. Copies of the book will be available at the book signing.

For information about the Maritime Museum and to join the fun, see: [www.morrobaymaritime.org](http://www.morrobaymaritime.org).

## The Natural World It’s Time for Babies

Story and Photos by Ruth Ann Angus



Harbor Seal Pup on a mud flat.

It’s that time of year again for wildlife on the Central Coast. Birds and animals are matching up. Nests and dens are being constructed and new life is entering the world.

Many people are going to come across some newly born species of wildlife and with the best of intentions, will pick them up and move them or take them to wildlife rehabilitation centers when there was no reason to do so. Please don’t do this!

Do not remove young birds from nests. This practice is illegal and it usually results in birds dying from inadequate care.



A starling feeding a hungry young bird.

If you find a baby bird or egg that has fallen from a nest, see if you can place them back in. Parent birds will not abandon them because of human scent. If a young bird is found on the ground and looks like it cannot fly, don’t remove it unless you are certain there are predators such as dogs or cats nearby.

Most young birds, when they first fledge or leave the nest, will stay on the ground anywhere from a few hours to a few days. If you feel you must move the bird, place it under some shrubs, not onto branches on a tree.

Leave fawns alone! Mother deer often leave their fawns in tall grasses or shrubbery while going off to forage. Moving the fawn in any way will cause the fawn to not be reunited with its mother and can be fatal.

The same goes for marine mammals. Baby harbor seals, sea lions, and sea otters are often left either on shore, on shoreline rocks, or afloat in the water while the parent is hunting. The

mothers will return to find their offspring.

Harbor seal babies can swim upon birth and may be seen floating on the surface or most likely perched on top of a mud flat or rock. Pups are rarely abandoned and need to be nourished with their mother’s very rich milk that is near to impossible to duplicate at a rescue center. The survival rate of rescued harbor seal pups is low.



A young sea lion sleeps on a dock with the older crowd.

It’s the same with sea otters that are so buoyant when young they cannot really dive under the water. And while it is rare to find sea otters on land, a baby could be stowed on a beach or a rocky ledge.

Sea otters and harbor seals forage for food for sometimes up to 20 minutes so it is not unusual for a baby to be left alone crying. This does not mean the mother will not return.

While sea lions birth their young in colonies on isolated beaches you might come across a young sea lion on more populated beaches. Sea lions suffer from a variety of diseases and do sometimes come ashore in poor condition. This is a difficult call for observers but a call to a wildlife rescue center or area harbor patrol is not a bad decision. However, never approach or handle any sea mammal seen alone. There are stiff fines for this. Let the proper management people take control. They can make the correct decision as to whether the animal is in need of rescue.

If you are in doubt, or you have observed a baby animal for what seems to be a lengthy period of time without a parent returning, place a call to the appropriate wildlife organization or to local authorities.

Pacific Wildlife Care – (805) 543-9453  
The Marine Mammal Center – (805) 772-1135- or 24-hour hotline (415) 289-7325. Morro Bay Harbor Control – (805) 772-6254

California Department of Fish & Wildlife-Central Region (559) 243-4005



A sea otter with her pup.



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Police Blotter



Morro Bay Police Logs

• **March 14:** Police contacted a regular customer at 7 p.m. in the 400 block of Monterey who had two warrants for failure to appear. She was written a third summons and released to catch again in about 30 days.

• **March 14:** Police were called at 1:50 p.m. to a disturbance in the 700 block of Butte. A 50-year-old apparent lady zhlub was arrested for suspicion of being drunk and disorderly.

• **March 13:** Police spotted a pair of suspicious fellows, 46 and 43, at 11:23 p.m. in City Park. Naturally, they were allegedly high on drugs with one caught holding a crack pipe, and they got pipped at the post.

• **March 13:** Police responded at 11 a.m. to a liquor store in the 900 block of Main for a reported shoplifter. Logs indicated a 91-year-old sticky-fingered gent was allegedly caught using the help-yourself lane at Bottle Liquor. He was cited and released and could no doubt really use a snort about now.

• **March 12:** Police got a report at 9:57 p.m. of an assault at Rite Aid. Logs indicated a woman said her man friend sprayed her in the face with pepper spray “for no apparent reason.” The suspected creep fled the scene. However, all was not lost, as his girlfriend was contacted and she had six arrest warrants. Officers allegedly found meth in her possession, too. Was she nicked? She was issued citations for the arrest warrants and the drugs, and then released from the stationhouse. As for the spray fool, he got away.

• **March 12:** A red-light round-up of sorts was carried out in Lila Keiser Park with no less than seven scofflaws with warrants and suspected of being blasted on drugs were arrested starting at 9 a.m. with a 47-year-old woman. Citations followed at 11:39 (unknown), and at 8 p.m. when two women, 52 and 27, and three men, 28, 28 and 50, were cited and released on warrants. The older woman also was cited for a glass crack pipe, overall an apparent exercise in penmanship and futility.

• **March 12:** Police responded at 1 a.m. to a domestic dispute in the 400 block of Monterey. No arrests made and the dispute was apparently called a draw.

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• **March 11:** Police were called at 5:16 a.m. to the Water Reclamation Facility construction site in the 500 block of South Bay Blvd., where some scoundrels broke into storage containers and stole a small fortune in tools, power tools, construction equipment and supplies, worth a staggering \$150,000, in what's believed the biggest commercial burglary in town history. Thieves also hit storage containers at the pipeline construction site on Quintana Road, though no loss for that has been announced.

• **March 10:** Police contacted a regular customer of the year at 1:18 p.m. in the 1600 block of Main. The apparent anarchist had seven bench warrants and was allegedly in possession of meth. He was cited and released, begging the question, “What’ve you got to do to get arrested these days?”

• **March 10:** Police contacted a suspicious man at 11 a.m. in the 300 block of Embarcadero. They arrested him for suspicion of being high on drugs, and there’s your answer — you’ve gotta be where the tourists can see you.

• **March 10:** Police contacted a suspicious fellow being where he hadn’t ought to be at 8 a.m. in the 1200 block of Main. The apparent swagman, 53, was nicked for allegedly being high on drugs, paraphernalia and trespassing. He got booked into the Parkinson Plaza.

• **March 9:** Police contacted a “sex offender” at noon in the 2600 block of Greenwood. Logs indicated the apparent illuminasty was arrested for suspicion of being high on meth, possessing meth and paraphernalia and a parole violation.

• **March 8:** Police contacted a wanted woman, 37, at 10 p.m. in the 600 block of Quintana. Logs indicated she had six local warrants and was given a seventh and released, apparently not worth the gas to haul to jail.

• **March 8:** Police responded to the 900 block of Main where someone played basketball with a check.

• **March 7:** Police stopped a suspicious vehicle at 9 p.m. somewhere on Main Street and arrested the woman driver, 26, for being half cut at the wheel.

• **March 7:** Someone found a cell phone at the Vet’s Hall and gave it to police. The day before, someone found an iPhone somewhere in town and gave it to police, no doubt the latest victims of cancel culture.

• **March 7:** Police contacted some stumblebum waddling down the 900 block of Pacific at 6:23 p.m. Logs indicate the devotee of Bacchus, 27, was nicked for being drunk and going all wool-ey-booger in public.

• **March 7:** A citizen in the 400 block of Atascadero Rd., said his or her car got boosted.

• **March 7:** Police responded at 1:39 p.m. to a reported trespassing in the 900 block of Morro. Logs indicated a 65-year-old interloper was arrested for suspicion of resisting arrest and trespassing.

• **March 6:** Police contacted a suspicious man at 10:21 p.m. at the Rock and hauled the 40-year-old scofflaw to the clink for five misdemeanors and one felony warrant.

• **March 6:** Police contacted a suspicious 21-year-old woman at 12:35 p.m. on Sunset at Hill who had a failure to appear warrant. She was written another disappearance ticket and released back into the wild.

• **March 5:** Police responded at 9 a.m. to a disturbance in the 2200 block of Nutmeg. Logs indicated a 75-year old was being combative and was taken to Sierra Vista Hospital for a little timeout.

• **March 5:** Police contacted a suspicious man, 28, and woman, 29, at 12:50 p.m. in the 2600 block of Main. He was allegedly in possession of drug paraphernalia and of course she had a bench warrant. They were both cited and released to go about their life’s work.

• **March 6:** At 12:15 p.m. an officer noted seeing two cars racing down Hwy 1 towards Old Creek Road. They were apparently not worth chasing after.

• **March 4:** A business in the 500 block of Morro Bay Blvd., reported getting forged checks.

• **March 4:** Police responded at 9:45 a.m. to a disturbance in City Park on Harbor Street. A 46-year-old raucous, butt-toast was nicked for being buttered in public.

• **March 4:** A 40-year-old apparently penitent fellow came to the police station to surrender on a bench warrant, but was given a new bench warrant and told to go forth and sin no more.

• **March 3:** Police responded at 10:53 p.m. to a disturbance in the 400 block of Monterey where a juvenile was having a bit of a breakdown. He or she was given a 72-hour timeout.

• **March 3:** Police contacted a suspicious woman, 34, at 11 a.m. in the 200 block of Atascadero Rd. Logs indicated she was allegedly trespassing and ridin’ the gas pedal on speed. She crashed in the County detox.

• **March 3:** Police contacted a suspicious man at 8:21 a.m. at Beach and Scott. Logs indicated the apparently cranky fellow, 43, was allegedly in possession of a crack pipe.

• **March 3:** Police responded at 2:10 a.m. to a domestic dustup in the 2600 block of Main. Logs indicated some 34-year-old louse was arrested for suspicion of domestic violence.

• **March 3:** Police stopped a suspicious vehicle in the 300 block of MBB at the suspect time of 2:10 a.m. The 50-year-old driver from Bakersfield had a warrant and was cited and released with his next warrant, as another one arrives on vacation and leaves on probation.

• **March 2:** Police stopped a suspicious vehicle at 4:24 p.m. in the 2800 block of Alder. Logs indicated the woman driver had a suspended license, an out-of-county bench warrant, and was allegedly high something more than life. She was taken to Uncle Ian’s fun house.

• **March 2:** Police responded at 11:38 a.m. to the 200 block of Atascadero Rd., where a woman was having an apparent connip-tion at Motel 6. She was arrested for suspicion of vandalism and being schnockered on drugs, which explains a lot.

• **March 3:** Police were called at 11:43 a.m. to the 900 block of Main where some apparent squit who’s been 86’d was back trespassing at Bottle Liquors. Police discovered she also had a bench warrant and was checked into the County B&B.

• **March 1:** Police responded to a reported assault of a motel employee in the 200 block of Beach at 11:14 a.m., which was apparently long past check-out time for some folks.

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side. Break open  
the treats!

Photo by Cat Noir CC

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# Community

## Events and Activities

By Theresa-Marie Wilson

**The Drop Your Drawers Underwear Drive** is underway and readers are asked to donate. The Morro Bay Rotary Club is reaching out to the community to help the homeless population. Homeless donations rarely include new underwear, but that's one of the top needs. Joining with other area rotary clubs, the campaign is collecting new underwear in unopened packages for men and women in all sizes. Donations can be dropped off at the Morro Bay Fire Department at 715 Harbor where a donation barrel is located in the lobby, which is open M – F from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.



**Register today for 13th Annual Tour of Paso Bike Ride** taking place on Sunday, May 2 to raise funds for local cancer patients. Grit and determination are the hallmarks of those dealing with cancer. Just like those suffering from cancer don't give up, neither has the Cancer Support Community – CA Central Coast. They have rolled with the punches this pandemic threw and moved forward with their plans to host their 13th Annual Tour of Paso, and sign-ups are underway.

Riders of all skill levels, from beginners to advanced, have their choice of two routes – 26 and 50 miles – through the scenic Paso Robles wine country region, all starting and ending from the parking lot of the Omkar Building located at 1310 Las Tablas Road in Templeton.

Proceeds from this bike ride, taking place on Sunday, May 2, directly benefit the Cancer Support Community – CA Central Coast, a non-profit organization that offers social and emotional support, and health and wellness programs to local cancer patients, survivors, and their families free of charge.

To register for the ride, go to [tourofpaso.org](http://tourofpaso.org). Registration is \$75, plus fundraising required minimum of \$200 For those unable to ride, take advantage of the opportunity to participate as a “virtual rider,” raise funds, and receive a Tour of Paso commemorative t-shirt and lunch.

If you would like to explore sponsorship opportunities, volunteer or get more involved with Cancer Support Community – CA Central Coast, contact them at [events@cseslo.org](mailto:events@cseslo.org) or call (805) 238-4411. For additional information about Cancer Support Community – CA Central Coast or the 2021 Tour of Paso, visit [cseslo.org](http://cseslo.org) or [tourofpaso.org](http://tourofpaso.org).

**Spokes, offering resources for non profits**, welcomes Doug Green, senior manager of La Piana Consulting, as the keynote speaker for the upcoming Spokes 2021 Symposium. Doug earned his MBA from Southern Methodist University and

co-founded the Nonprofit Leadership Institute at Pepperdine University. He is informed by diverse experiences with nonprofits and is skilled in communication, analysis, and group facilitation.

Many nonprofits and small businesses are facing unique challenges due to significant economic downturns and disruptions to operations. Many need to explore options such as re-evaluating and streamlining their business models or consolidating operations with like-minded entities. Spokes 2021 Symposium will address current challenges for nonprofits and offer solutions. The virtual event will take place from 12 p.m. to 1:30 p.m. on three consecutive Thursdays, April 13, 20, and 27.

Spokes 2021 Symposium will feature expert guest speakers and panelists with a combination of presentations and panel discussions. Session topics include assessment of financial health and viability, collaboration for long-term success, and the mechanics of nonprofit collaboration and resource sharing. Optional discussion sections will be available each week.



**Morro Bay Art Association** presents world-renowned artist and author, Thomas W. Schaller for a watercolor workshop, “Architecture of Light” April 16 – 18.

Following a 20-year career in New York City as an architect and architectural artist, Thomas Schaller is now based in Los Angeles where he devotes himself full-time to fine art in watercolor. The focus of this workshop is less about technical expertise and more about intent, inspiration, observation and finding your unique artist voice.

Participants will learn about atmospheric expression in watercolor, including depictions of sky, water, and fog. Then take your art to the next level by exploring the tension, resolution, and connections between complements, including warm and cool, vertical and horizontal, man-made and natural. Discover how to make sure all the parts of your painting work in unison to tell a powerfully communicative story! Students may bring their own photo reference – something that resonates with them personally. The cost for the three-day workshop is \$250 for MBAA members or \$310 for non-members.

...  
**Cal Poly Student Opera Theatre** (CPSOT) will present a collection of musical theater duets at 7:30 p.m. Saturday, April 10, during Cal Poly's 28 annual Open House, which takes place virtually April 8-10.

The duets, from some of the most classic and beloved American musicals, will be performed by 17 music majors who have collaborated remotely through extensive virtual rehearsals, recordings and online workshops.

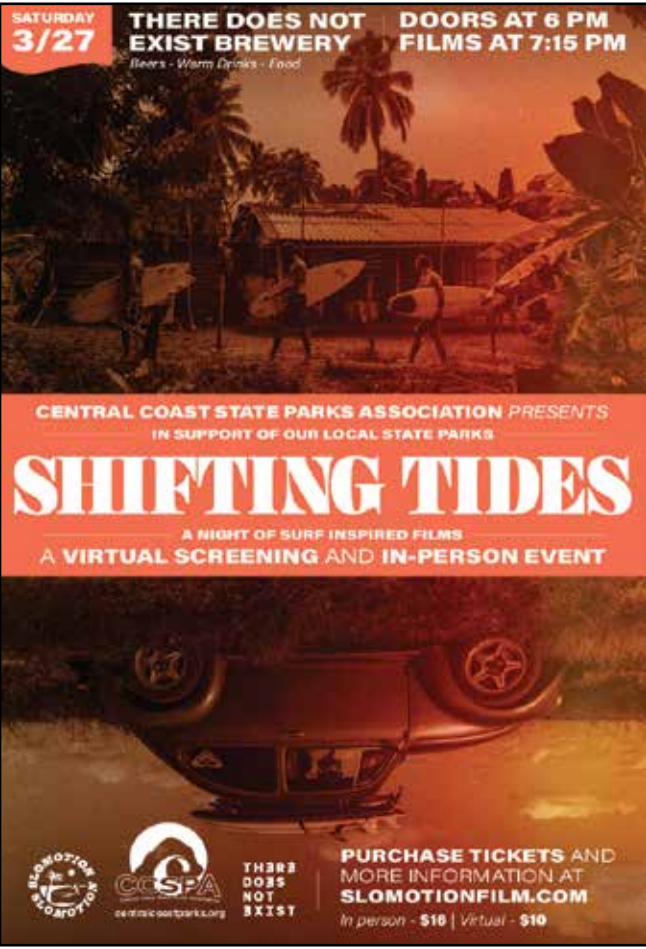
The students produced a series of delightful ensemble numbers, including “Anything You Can Do” from “Annie Get Your

Gun,” “The Rain In Spain” from “My Fair Lady,” “If I Loved You” from “Carousel,” and “All ‘er Nuthin’” from “Oklahoma!”

“Viewers will see two students perform onscreen at once, masterfully gesturing and interacting with one another while miles apart,” said Amy Goymerac, CPSOT producer and director.

Music Department faculty and staff member Paul Woodring provided piano accompaniment for the performances. Music Department faculty member Dave Becker mixed and mastered the recorded performances.

Tickets to the virtual event are \$5 and can be purchased online from the Performing Arts Center. To order by phone, call 805-SLO-4TIX (805-756-4849) between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. Monday through Friday



**The Central Coast State Parks Association** presents an evening of in-person and virtual film screenings as part of the Get Outside! Film Series, a collaboration with SLOmotion Film. “Shifting Tides: A Night of Surf Inspired Films” will feature a selection of current feature and short films examining surfing as cultural and environmental activism on March 27. Doors open at 6 p.m. and the films start at 7:15 at There Does Not Exist Brewery, 4070 Earthwood Lane, Suite 110, San Luis Obispo. Tickets are [www.slomotionfilm.com](http://www.slomotionfilm.com).

There Does Not Exist Brewery will provide an outdoor venue with safe, socially distanced seating for in-person guests. Food and beverages will be available for purchase from BapJo, a food

Events Continued on page 10

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Community

Events From page 9

truck offering Korean-inspired delicacies for in-person attendees. All proceeds from screenings of the Get Outside! Film Series fund public outreach and education that celebrate the biodiversity of the Central Coast, where the land meets the ocean, within our local State Parks. Programs like school group transportation, campfire programs, guided hikes, Western Monarch education and outreach, living history, and public land advocacy are all possible thanks to funds generated by CCSPA.



**The Cal Poly Music Department** will present a virtual panel discussion titled “Addressing Racism and Diversity in Music Institutions” at 11:10 a.m. Thursday, April 8.

The presentation is a continuation of one made Nov. 5 with guest panelists Stephanie Shonekan, associate dean of the College of Arts and Science and professor of music at the University of Missouri (MU), and Keith Jackson, dean of the College of Creative Arts at West Virginia University (WVU). Cal Poly Director of Jazz Studies Arthur White will again moderate the discussion.

“Whether obvious, subversive or unintentional — and for a variety of reasons — racism has long been present in music institutions,” White said. “Recent world and national events have not only given pause to dismissal of discussions related to this issue, but in fact, have proven the necessity for an open and frank discussion about race and diversity in music programs across the country.

“This panel will discuss the realities of racism and experiences in personal careers. It will address why certain literature and pedagogical methods are more pervasive than others and the

potential for affecting change through increasing diversity and inclusion.”

The panel discussion is free and open to the public. Access to the virtual presentation will be available on the Music Department calendar website. For more information, visit the Music Department’s calendar website, email [music@calpoly.edu](mailto:music@calpoly.edu) or call 805-756-2406.

...

**Afternoons with Addis featuring Congressman Carbajal**, hosted by Dawn Addis takes place April 5 from 5:30-6 p.m. via Zoom. Morro Bay Councilmember and Women’s March Founding Member will host Congressman Carbajal on Afternoons with Addis to discuss what he’s working on in Congress that affects the Central Coast. The public is welcome to join. To submit a question ahead of time, email [dawn@dawnaddis.org](mailto:dawn@dawnaddis.org) Zoom link will be shared closer to the event.

*Send your event listing at least three weeks in advance to Editor@EsteroBayNews.com. Make sure to include the who, what, why, where and when of the event and contact information. Please, type out in paragraph form rather than attaching flyers.*

Virtual Reality Art

The Harold J. Miossi Art Gallery at Cuesta College will launch a virtual reality program, VR-To-Go, and plans upcoming events including virtual conversations with artists and alumni and the annual student show.

“For the past ten months, arts institutions have had to adjust how and what they present to their communities, and how they stay engaged with their audiences during this time,” said Harold J. Miossi Art Gallery Coordinator Emma Saperstein. “The Miossi Gallery has put together several ways to engage with contemporary art during this prolonged time at home—programming that is designed to be intellectually stimulating and uplifting.”

The VR-To-Go program allows participants to experience virtual reality at home with a free check-out of a VR Oculus Quest headset. The all-in-one headset will provide students and community members with a curated selection of arts-related content, providing an immersive experience featuring a diverse range of licensed short films from around the world. The virtual

reality program’s first season includes -22.7 C, Le Lac, Daughters of Chibok, and The Real Thing. More information on these short films is available on the Harold J. Miossi Art Gallery website at [cuesta.edu](http://cuesta.edu).

VR-To-Go headsets are now available for reservations with pickups and drop-offs scheduled for Mondays and Fridays from 10 a.m. until 3 p.m. Email [emma\\_saperstein@cuesta.edu](mailto:emma_saperstein@cuesta.edu) to schedule an appointment.

The gallery will continue its ongoing Laboratory Series for the spring semester in collaboration with R.A.C.E. Matters SLO. Black-identified artists are invited to talk about their practice, share their journey with the community, and answer questions. Past featured artists have included Ayana Evans, Cara Hagan, Seitu Jones, Carlos Martiel, and Tsedaye Makonnen. Laboratory Series IX is scheduled for March 25 from 5 – 6:30 p.m. and will be hosted by Demetrius Oliver in conversation with Cal Poly professor Thomas Fowler. Register for the online event at <http://bit.ly/3eKxeBo>.

The annual student show will take place virtually this spring. Student artists will present brief artist statements along with their art pieces. For more details and information on how to participate in these events and programs, please visit the gallery’s website and subscribe to the Harold J. Miossi Art Gallery newsletter.

Morro Bay Rotary to Hold Garage Sale

The Morro Bay Rotary Club will hold a community garage sale at 8 a.m. on Saturday, March 27 at 240 Marina St. in Morro Bay. All proceeds go directly to the nonprofit, Estero Bay Kindness Coalition, which delivers three bags of groceries each week to some of the most under-resourced, food insecure school kids and their families on the Central Coast. Awesome items for sale include North Face tent with rain fly, Coleman Family tent(never used), Tule bike rack, suitcases with wheels, Ace wheelbarrow, stepladder, chop-saw, shopvac, Timpone knee board, 11’6” board bag, Saline board bag, Tomahawk stand up surfboard, computer monitor, leather couch, and more!

The only drop of time for the sale items is Friday, March 26 from 8 a.m.-5 p.m. at 240 Marina Street. Drop off items in a quiet, respectful manner up against the garage in the front yard. No junk or broken items are accepted.

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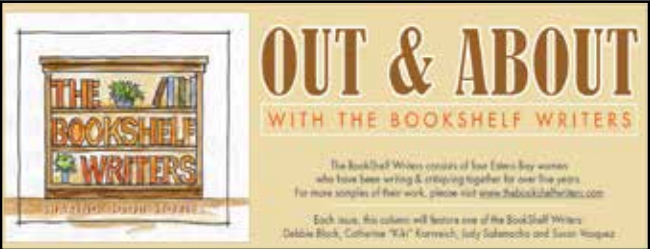
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My Kitty Ate My Mask Today

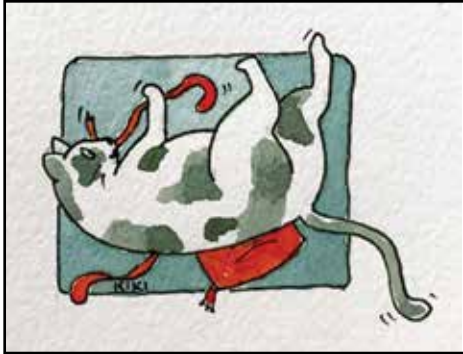
By Catherine “Kiki” Kornreich  
Illustrations by Kiki



My kitty ate my mask today - The one I'd made by hand.  
He flipped it, pounced it, played with it - (he didn't understand).

He'd pulled it from the dryer -You see, I'd washed it so.  
But to him, it was a toy to bat - (he tossed it to and fro).

I called him, “naughty kitty!” Said, “you go put that back!”  
He thought that I had egged him on - (he went on the attack).



I explained the mask was something that I must always wear  
When I go grocery shopping - (he really didn't care).

And just like all the people who simply don't agree,  
He bit the string right off it - (with utter, joyous glee).

I said, “you are a bad boy.” that mask keeps germs at bay!  
“Please bring it over here to me.” (he gnawed it anyway).

Then, like it was a treasure to leave on my doorstep,

He dragged the remnants up to me - (onto my couch he leapt).

It was quite clear he loved it - but not for its intent.  
He did his best to mock me (my kitty was hell-bent).

But then he came in closer and dropped it on my lap -  
Then he laid on top of it (and promptly took a nap).



So I rubbed my kitty's belly - though on MASKS, we disagree.  
I settled in and kissed him - (we live in harmony).

Catherine “Kiki” Kornreich is a member of The BookShelf Writers. To see more of her work, please visit [www.thebookshelf-writers.com](http://www.thebookshelf-writers.com)

Technically Speaking



Email providers and platforms

Customers often come to us with email problems. In our experience, there are some common variables associated with almost every email problem we see. The number one constant we see is the use of Windows's built-in email application.

Almost every person who comes to us with an email problem is using this application. The problem with this application is that it adds an extra step between the user and their email client. This

can cause authentication discrepancies, confused or lost passwords, synchronization issues, and more. Nine times out of 10, this issue is solved simply by using a web browser to check email instead, going directly to the source rather than the offending application. This means using Microsoft Edge, Safari, Firefox, or Google Chrome and going straight to the mail portal related to your email whether it's Outlook, Gmail, Yahoo, or any other provider.

People also ask us which email provider is the best or most reliable. In general, we like to recommend using Gmail or Outlook as Google and Microsoft have the security and infrastructure to keep your email available and safe. We see many accessibility problems with Spectrum and AT&T email services and often find ourselves recommending people switch to Gmail or Outlook and alter their accounts (like Netflix or Amazon) accordingly.

Chad Crawford is the owner of QuickTech in Los Osos located at: 212110th Suite #A. They can be reached at [www.quicktechcomputers.com/](http://www.quicktechcomputers.com/) or (805) 806-0165. Send your questions to [chad@quicktechcomputers.com](mailto:chad@quicktechcomputers.com).



While driving the five mile-long winding road to Montana De Oro recently, it's hard to imagine that this now State Park was once a working ranch. I did a pastel drawing of the visitor's area, while my daughter, Lynne, took a popular trail walk.

In 1892 Alden Bradford Spooner II leased part of an original Mexican land grant — the Pecho Y Islay that he developed into a



Montana De Oro. Pastel painting by Joan Sullivan

9,000 acre ranch. Alden was the eldest of several children born to Reverend A.B Spooner. He began his farming career when the family moved from Ohio to Morro Bay.

Alden had exceptional business and mechanical skills. He developed a method of gathering produce from farmers along the coastline. He transported produce to nearby wharfs using his

Coffee with Joan Continued on page 12

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Community

Coffee With Joan From page 11

horse, Clark, who walked on a treadmill to generate power for the paddlewheel that propelled the boat. His engineering skills transformed the ranch into a productive dairy, cattle ranch and general farm.

Without roads and being isolated, it was a problem to transport his crops of barley, oats and peas, and he created a solution to the problem. He built a landing below the bluff, where boats could come close enough to load their products.

It is an ongoing search for the Pecho Ranch history. I highly recommend reading Dorothy Gates and Jane Bailey’s book “Morro Bay Yesterdays – Vignettes of Out City’s Lives and Times” written in 1982. It’s an enjoyable trip through the ranching days of the Spooner family.

Reference: *Spooners on the Pecho – A history of the Spooner Family on El Pecho Ranch. This is a brochure that can be obtained at the Visitors Center. According to the brochure, the Center is or was open Thursday through Sunday from 11 a.m to 3 p.m.*

Tree Planted at St. Benedict’s Church



Wendy McKeown and Paul Hershfield prepare to plant a New Zealand Christmas tree at St. Benedict’s Church of Los Osos.

On a sunny afternoon in late February Los Osos got a little greener. Two non-profits joined forces and planted a New Zealand Christmas tree at St. Benedict’s Episcopal Church in Los Osos.

The project involved Wendy McKeown, Vita Miller, and John Mottmann of the Los Osos Valley Garden Club (LOVGC), and Paul Hershfield of Los Osos Bear Roots (LOBR).

The 7 ft. tree was relocated from the LOVGC president’s property to make room for a new deck and transplanted to the

church site. Hershfield constructed a gopher basket onsite to enclose the roots, and stakes were utilized to secure the stability of the tree in this windy location.

The LOVGC and LOBR welcome all members of the public to join their organizations, to learn and take part in healthy outdoor activities that beautify and enhance area surroundings with plants and trees. More information about these organizations can be found on their websites:

Los Osos Valley Garden Club: <https://www.lovgarden-club.org/>

Los Osos Bear Roots: <https://www.lososbearroots.net/>

Thanks go out to Liz Maruska of the Earthcare Committee of St. Benedict’s Episcopal Church for inviting the addition of trees on the church property.



The New Zealand Christmas tree newly planted at St. Benedict’s Church of Los Osos.

Poly Faculty Member Earns National Honor



Cal Poly faculty member Anahid Behrouzi (left) in the Concrete Lab as students measure aggregates for use in a concrete mix as part of the Reinforced Concrete Design course. Photo by Cal Poly CAED/Josef Kasperovich

Cal Poly architectural engineering faculty member was honored for excellence and innovation in teaching by the American Concrete Institute (ACI), a leading professional organization in the global concrete industry.

Anahid Behrouzi is the 2021 recipient of the ACI Walter P. Moore Jr. Faculty Achievement Award, which recognizes new faculty members for how they teach concrete design, materials or construction. She has been at Cal Poly since 2016. The ACI Board of Direction bestowed the honor specifically “for blending new technologies, hands-on experiences, and storytelling to motivate

students and to make concrete design concepts tangible.”

In the past five years at Cal Poly, Behrouzi has taught courses in reinforced concrete design, structural analysis and dynamics. She earned master’s and doctoral degrees in civil engineering from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, where she investigated the seismic response of non-planar reinforced concrete structural walls. Prior to that, she received undergraduate degrees in civil engineering as well as Spanish language and literature at North Carolina State University, in Raleigh.

“Teaching reinforced concrete design has been a longtime passion sparked by my very first large-scale experiment of concrete bridge columns for the Alaska Department of Transportation conducted at North Carolina State University during summer 2011,” Behrouzi said. “I will never forget the first time I got to operate a 20-ton crane in the lab, tie the rebar cage and help pump concrete for the column caps.

“Since then, I have sought out every opportunity to build and break concrete of any scale — cylinders, beams, walls — to engage others in the excitement of hands-on research and improving earthquake safety of our built environment.”

Behrouzi is a two-time ACI Graduate Fellowship recipient, a past member of the ACI Student and Young Professional Activities Committee and faculty advisor of the ACI S805 Concrete Collegiate Council. She currently serves on the ACI Scholarship Council and ACI Committee 133, which conducts and reports on disaster reconnaissance.

At Cal Poly, Behrouzi advises and mentors undergraduate and graduate students — as well as at alma maters North Carolina State and University of Illinois — related to research projects, applying to graduate school, industry and faculty positions or fellowships.

The award acknowledges educators who have taught for less than seven years and takes its name from the late Walter P. Moore Jr., an ACI Fellow, former ACI Board member, and structural engineer and educator in Texas.

The American Concrete Institute, a nonprofit technical society and standards-developing organization, likes to say it is laying the foundation for the modern world. Its knowledge and codes have empowered engineers to meet the demands of a changing world through consensus-based standards, technical resources and educational, training and certification programs.

Various forms of concrete have been in use for more than 8,500 years including in the Great Pyramids at Giza. The ancient Romans were first to use this material widespread, creating structures that still stand 2,000 years later.

Portland cement was invented in the 1820s, and by the turn of the 20th century concrete was being used to build homes, bridges and streets. The first reinforced concrete high-rise (16 stories) in America was built in 1903. Reinforced concrete construction is so successful that many of the world’s most famous buildings — including the world’s tallest, Burj Khalifa in Dubai, which at 163 stories rises more than 2,700 feet — utilize this durable building material.

Behrouzi be honored at an award presentation during the Virtual ACI Spring 2021 Concrete Convention, scheduled March 28 to April 1. The convention is the global gathering place for advancing concrete materials, design, construction and repair. It brings together the world’s most well-known industry leaders with professionals looking to learn.

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# Letters To The Editor

## Coastal Commission, Preserve Oceano Dunes

Please preserve and protect the Oceano Dunes. Please support and implement your staff's recommendations for the Oceano Dunes; amend the State Park's Coastal Development Permit to bar night riding and all mechanized vehicles (including e-bikes) access and driving across Arroyo Grande Creek; preserve and protect the snowy plover and leave the Oso Flaco Lake area as it is. Please start the clock now on the phase-out of OHV activity.

The Oceano Dunes will continue to offer unique experiences (for residents and visitors) such as walking, birding, and horseback riding; the kinds of activities that are for the greater good for a greater number of people and, especially the flora and fauna that this unique and beautiful habitat supports.

Please dispense with the fears and economic arguments against doing this, which were rebutted during the park's closure to vehicles from March to October of 2020. Tourism continued, and supported the local economy, as it does the length of California's coast.

The residents of Oceano who try to walk on the beach, with OHV activity, do so with greater risk. As a resident of San Luis Obispo County, I would like to visit, walk and explore the Oceano Dunes but not while the habitat destructive OHV use continues to be permitted. Many other people feel the same.

The unhealthy air from the dunes denuded of vegetation by off-road vehicle activity, continues to stretch from Nipomo to Guadalupe.

All of this is an environmental injustice and a travesty of stewardship. You know this, and you know State Parks is not fixing the problem and has not heeded your directive to come up with a plan to adequately protect the environmentally sensitive habitat. It is past time to hold them accountable.

*Watson Gooch  
Los Osos*

## Kudos for the Police Blotter

I'm a retired technical writer and self-proclaimed humorist that parked my RV in Morro Bay for a week on a first time visit to the area. While visiting one of Morro's premier laundromats, I picked up a copy of Estero Bay News to get a feel for the local personality. Drawn to the Police Blotter for the street level view, I began what I expected to be a dry and plodding read. To my surprise and joy, this piece has soul and wit. Kudos to the writer or writers of that section. No doubt there is a faithful following of fans looking forward to the next crime spree.

*Michael Perry  
Naches, WA*

## No Longer a Tree City

When is a Tree City no longer a Tree City? How do you support a Bird Sanctuary without trees?

The City of Morro Bay through its sewer construction agents has removed 42 trees when only 25 were approved for removal on this project. Twelve trees have been cut and poisoned over the north bank of Bayshore Bluffs Park. Fourteen trees were approved for removal on Cerrito Place next to Cerrito Rock/Eagle Rock. A mature pine street tree was approved for removal on Fresno Street.

This is not to overlook the trees removed by State Parks inside Morro Bay city limits.

Where does it stop and when?

*Betty Winboltz  
Morro Bay*

*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*

## Exotic Car Clubs Speeds Into Morro Bay

By Neil Farrell

The Annual Bay to L.A. Rally featuring exotic European sports cars — from McLarens to Ferraris and Lamborghinis — sped into Morro Bay March 12 for a pit stop at the Great American Fish Co.

Like rolling works of art, these fastest sports cars in the world would normally travel Hwy 1 but with the big Rat Creek Slide closing the roadway for several more months, they had to cross over to Hwy 101 and speed south.

The annual rally is organized by Club Dodici Exotics, an exclusive car club started 6-years ago in the South Bay Area by two Lamborghini owners and dedicated to Italian exotic cars.

"Dodici" is Italian for "twelve" and signifies the dozen initial members of the club. It also stands for the V-12 engines



that Lamborghinis have been equipped with since the Countach of the late 1970s, according to the club's website.

And, 12 is how many different carmakers are allowed into the club. They are: Lamborghini, Ferrari, McLaren, Porsche, Aston Martin,

Maserati, Alfa Romeo, AMG, Audi R8, Lotus, Bentley and all hyper-cars like Pagani, Koenigsegg, Ford GT, etc.

Proceeds from this year's rally were slated to be shared with a local children's hospital.



Photos by Neil Farrell

## Yard Sale

1712 10th Street, Los Osos  
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So, the future for the site is pretty open and at least one local business family had looked into a possible motel for the site. The sale is being done a bit differently, as the listing has no asking price posted anywhere. JLL explains: “This offering is being distributed exclusively by JLL to a select group of pre-qualified investors. The prospective investor will be selected by Owner in its sole and absolute discretion based on a variety of factors including, but not limited to:

- Offer price;
- Financial strength;
- Level of discretion to invest funds;
- Ability to close in a timely fashion;
- Absence of contingencies;
- Level of property due diligence completed; and
- Thoroughness of Property underwriting.”

Last November, during a Chamber of Commerce sponsored walking tour of Downtown business opportunity sites, City Community Development Director Scot Graham commented that the Bank of America property’s split zoning left a lot of possibilities for redevelopment on the table.

Towards the back and above on a second story, Graham said, there could be residential. “The City Council is interested in that,” he said, adding that the planning department had a lot of people come in asking about it. “This could be a real energizer for Downtown.”

Chamber CEO Erica Crawford echoed that sentiment. “Your assessment of this opportunity is spot on,” she told EBN. “It’s a whole half block in our Downtown core and sits adjacent to multiple vacant commercial spaces to the west. Downtown business owners are eager for occupancy on Morro Bay Boulevard between Monterey and Main.”

She noted the City’s 2017 “Economic Development Strategic Plan” said, “For Morro Bay’s Downtown to realize its potential as a strong economic center, concerted efforts to change the retail and service mix to appeal to residents and a broader range of visitors should be a shared priority for the city and business and property owners.”

And, “More intensive reuse of vacant and underutilized properties along Morro Bay Boulevard would also contribute to a continuous flow of retail and service (stores, restaurants, etc.) and with improved public assets (benches, mini parks, landscaping) would help achieve a ‘continuous’ experience between the Downtown and the Embarcadero/Waterfront.”

The Chamber would like to see action. “We’re of the mindset that plans are made for implementation,” Crawford said, “not for shelves. So we will be looking for redevelopment to accomplish some of the plans in both the EDSP and the catalyst projects in the council-adopted ‘Downtown Waterfront Strategic Plan.’”

The new zoning with its emphasis on housing is “a bread and butter issue for our members,” Crawford said. “The lack of housing in our community leads to increased employee turnover and increased cost.”

The Chamber looks forward to the site’s future. “This is an exciting opportunity,” Crawford said, “and one that we have been engaged in for years, since the closure of the branch. Now that the ATM has been successfully relocated and the property put on the market, we have every intention of forging a proactive and positive relationship with the buyer.”

Readers can check out the listing themselves online at: <https://my.rcm1.com/handler/brochure.aspx?pv=V5W-L457a0mECxu7ME8z5QC6uN1ByZOKuLOFthOOPa4>.

Join Los Osos Chamber for Virtual Installation

The Los Osos Chamber would like to honor and thank the following members of our community:

- Citizen of the Year: Jim Quesenberry
- Business of the Year: Quick Tech
- Volunteer of the Year: Christina Grimm

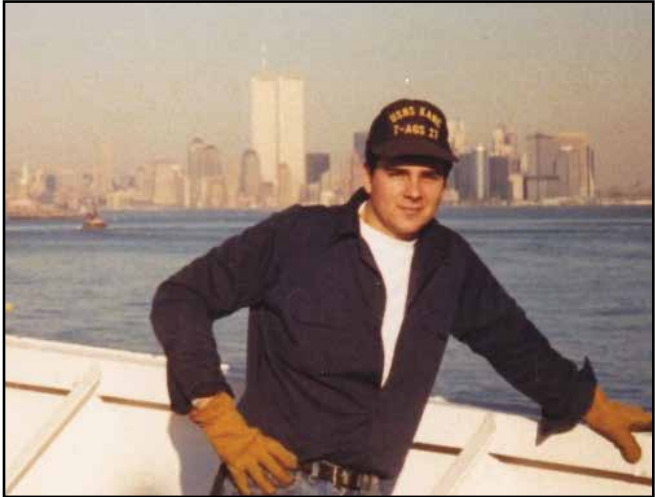
We want to thank our community for coming together and supporting one another during the 2020 year. We look forward to seeing more of your faces in 2021!

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Living Large From page 1



A young seaworthy Jeff Eckles.

sea.

“Deliveries are fun,” he said. “I get paid for what I love to do. The last one I did was deliver a boat to San Francisco Harbor that was bought in Ventura. The owner was not confident yet on the high seas so asked me along. Going under the Golden Gate Bridge never gets old. I remember as a child sitting in the car and driving over the bridge and wanting to be out on the water.” Nostalgic, yes, but deliveries are still work. “There is always risk. Often the vessel has been sitting in a marina for maybe years. It has been known to happen to break down in route.” It’s all worth it, he concluded, “Being out at sea with the whales, dolphins and stars at night, it’s what I love.

Well, not totally what he loves as of 2020. “This year I looked inward and strengthened my spirituality. I also realized I became personally ready to have a partner in life. A prayer was answered and we’re in love.” Eckles announced he and Feydra Potter found each other and are a couple. “I believe all my past relationships have led me to her. I give thanks each day I wake up. Life is good.”

Eckles’ life journey started by the sea and will always remain close to sea. While attending Cal State Long Beach, he discovered his wanderlust. “I had to work my way through school and knew I wanted to travel. There was never the money to do so. At graduation I thought of buying a Volkswagen and traveling around the USA but had no money. One day I was sitting on the beach after surfing and kept watching these ships go by. This was my aha moment. I told myself, ‘I love the sea. I want to travel. Hey, if I work on a ship I will make money and travel.’ I joined the Merchant Marines and spent two years on a 300-foot sailing research vessel.”

He took a break from life at sea to help folks as a financial adviser based in Morro Bay and then became the executive director for the SLO Builders Exchange. “That was a steep learning curve in planning and building from the contractor’s perspective. It was on-the-job training - like getting an AA in Urban Planning.”

His next career move was owner/operator of his small business, Morro Bay House of Jerky, now located at 1130 Embarcadero. “Nearer the water again, I missed not being on the water.”

Len Gentieu, owner of the Papagallo encouraged him to get his captain’s license. “I had been piloting with him so he knew I was capable of handling the Papagallo and I already had the sea-time needed from my Merchant Marine days so I studied and

passed the test on the first try. I now have my 100-ton masters license and have captained for both the Papagallo and the Chablis. I also do some care-taking for boat owners who are tied up in Morro Bay Harbor.” Typically he watches them while owners are out of the area, pilots for them while they are sailing, and recommends contract maintenance as needed.

Eckles continues to be an active community volunteer. “I’m on two nonprofit boards. I’ll start my presidency of the board for the Housing Trust Fund this month (March 2021). Board members are like the trustees of a bank lending funds, but specifically for affordable housing. This mission is so important.”

He is also vice-chair of the board for the Morro Bay Chamber of Commerce and an active member of the Governmental Advisory Committee. He found his experience at the Builder’s



The view sailing into San Francisco under the Gold Gate during a recent boat delivery.

Exchange invaluable when agendas include future planning issues for his city.

He enjoys working with friends on the Morro Bay Chamber Board. “I am so impressed with what the Chamber has done in the past few years. It is great working with a dynamic, collaborative board. We have excellent leadership with Erica (Crawford) and things are moving forward with a strong partnership with city staff and elected officials. I feel the times might be tough right now, but are definitely looking positive for our small businesses.”

Eckles knows life is good for him right now. “I feel more happy, content, even blessed now in 2021. In March 2020 I didn’t know if the shop would stay open or if I would have an income working on the water. But as sayings go, ‘Everyone is a good sailor when seas are calm, but it will test our mettle when the sea gets stormy.’”

What’s gotten him through? He gives credit to his small but close support group of Len Gentieu and winemaker, Ron Denner. “We get together weekly and support each other. I believe my current good fortune and positive trust about life right now is due to the friends that help when we need the help.”

And that includes his family. His twin children, Sophia, who shares duties and does a great job working with him at the Jerky shop, and his son Aiden. Both are almost 18.

“I’ve learned a lot during COVID and much of it is humility. I used to chase happiness and maybe in the wrong places, but now I rely on my faith and friends.” And his love for a lady named Feydra Potter.

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Kevin says,  
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KEVIN O'CONNOR, President

Motel Foward From page 1

crush a parked car down on Front Street.

That caused swift action to remove a swimming pool that had been partially undermined by the landslide before it too slipped down the bluff. It also ended the motel use, and the handful of remaining rooms were turned into monthly rental apartments.

The property is actually six small lots and the project proposes to consolidate them into one. It lies within the Coastal Commission’s appeal jurisdiction, which was the death knell for the last redevelopment project that was proposed for the site.

Over the years since the 1995 catastrophe, several proposals have been made to redevelop it, with the most extensive coming in 2004 when the late-Dan Reddell proposed the “Harbor View Project” a 3-story mixed-use development covering some 17,182 s.f., that stepped down Harbor Street with buildings designed to look like row houses in San Francisco.

The controversial project was touted as a desirable mixed-use development that would have commercial/retail spaces on the ground floor, office/art studios on the second floor, and residences on the third floor.

The Planning Commission denied it primarily because of the size. The City Council approved it however, and it went to the Coastal Commission on appeal, which in the end killed the project over several issues, like the ratio of commercial space to residential, and parking fees.

Novak said local developer Smith held bought it after Reddell’s project fell through, and they were working on a 30-unit motel project with Jess designing it. But when they encountered troubles with the City, Novak said Held dropped the project and put the property up for sale.

The new owner, Hsiao, she said, had Jess design this new project so that it fit inside the proverbial “box.”

“Most of the new building is on the existing buildings,” she explained. “That makes for a lot less grading.” Essentially they decided to work up a project that Novak said “would not be asking for any exceptions.”

The site is zoned Commercial Visitor-Serving (C-VS) and sits in a “Planned Development” (PD) overlay area, which means basically that the City has a greater say in how it’s designed and rules can be bent to achieve a better project.

Novak noted that the conceptual project isn’t using any of the potential exceptions that it might be entitled to under a PD. Their setbacks are all at or near to the City’s requirements and they hope to avoid having to put in another retaining wall by stepping back from the bluff edge and staggering the units to break up the blocky look. “It won’t block the views of the neighbors,” Novak said.

City Planner Jacinth said it is also within the Beach Street Specific Plan area. “This zoning district allows hotels as a conditionally permitted use with a minimum lot area per unit of 750 s.f. Depending on design and layout, the size of the site could accommodate up to 23 units, however, the applicant’s concept plans are for a 6-unit hotel to accommodate larger guest room sizes ranging between 650 to 685 s.f. and to minimize bluff alteration and excavation.”

Novak said their idea is to make larger units suitable for a family to rent. They may also put in kitchens, though the details like that have yet to be worked out.

If they decide to go forward with the project, Jacinth said they would need a Coastal Development Permit (CDP) and a Conditional Use Permit (CUP).

The Planning Commission wasn’t slated to take any official action on March 2, but rather just to comment on the design, as there is not yet a formal application filed.

Novak said commissioners suggested the removal of a couple of cypress trees on the corner and better articulation of what will be the motel’s lobby entrance at the corner. “There were some good comments,” she said. “Thom [Jess] will flush them out.”

They will now have an engineer draw up plans for drainage on the site and more; and a landscape architect will come up with a design. They hope to have a project ready to make application in a few months. She said the owner really hopes to be under construction by the end of this year. “I think it will be well-received,” she said of the final project.

It is at least the fifth motel project currently in the City’s pipeline, with three located in North Morro Bay — two on North Main (a 34-unit and an 8-unit motel) and one on Atascadero Road (83 units) — and another on the Embarcadero at the former Off the Hook Restaurant lease site (11 rooms).

And Rose’s Landing recently completed turning their second story into a 10-room motel, The Inn at Rose’s Landing.

On the other hand, the Rodeway Inn on North Main Street is proposing to be turned into a residential drug and alcohol rehab center, from it’s current motel use.

That project is slated to go to the Planning Commission on Appeal sometime in April. It was approved over the counter by the Community Development Director but appealed by a neighbor.

Hofbrau From page 1

pandemic’s start.

When they started in ‘71, they just served the meat sandwiches, but that didn’t last long. “When we first opened,” he said, “we didn’t have any seafood. But we learned pretty fast you need to have fish & chips.” Within the first year, they introduced fish & chips.

It’s the beef sandwiches — carved off a 25-35-pound USDA Choice inside top round, a massive hunk of meat that some restaurants serve as prime rib — which Hofbrau is famous for.

They custom slice it at the counter giving customers a mouth-watering view of the whole process. “It’s a commodity that not everyone uses,” he said of the giant roasts. He buys the meat exclusively from St. Helen’s Beef Co., after seeing wild fluctuations in the price of beef. St. Helen’s gives him a good steady price. The key is to cook it slow.

Not giving away too many secrets, Van Beurden explained that they cook the beef for about 6 hours at low temperature. Keeping it warm at a low temp (145°) keeps it fresh all day and doesn’t continue cooking it, which would make it tough.

Another key is the bun. “Originally we used San Francisco Parisian Bread,” he said. “Then we switched to San Luis Sourdough. We’ve used Brian’s Breads for the last 20 years. That’s part of the secret, finding the right bread.”

He estimates they’ve made about 1.5 million beef dip sandwiches alone and he’s personally carved up about 250,000 of them. They serve about 40,000 a year now, some 200 a day.

They spent 31 years in the Salt Building and moved to the current location in the Harbor Center — at 901 Embarcadero — almost 19 years ago.

When they decided to move, he said, he threw a big party and about 50 friends and customers showed up with about four trailers. “We took every piece of equipment out,” he said, chuckling at the memory.

The landlord called the police, claiming the equipment was his, but he said he told the officers this was obviously a civil matter and they left. “We moved out overnight,” he said, “and moved in here a week later.”

The current site has 30% more seating and like the original location, there’s often a line out the door with people waiting to order.

His brother Joost was killed in a car crash about 40-years ago, a memory that still saddens him. He’d gone to Vietnam and was running a restaurant in Los Osos when he died.

The Hofbrau is a “family” business, as Van Beurden said his daughters have worked for him and many of his employees — all of whom have kept their jobs during the pandemic — have worked for him for decades. His cook, Jose, has been with him for 35 years, he said.

Now, his daughter Allison is planning to buy the business from him, whenever Stan, 67, gets ready to retire, though he says he’ll always be involved.

His daughter Nicole worked there for about 12 years, he said, and now works for the City of SLO. His 19-year-old granddaughter works for him now.

He also has the master lease next door to Hofbrau, where House of JuJu is located, which he calls his retirement plan.

He just recently finished a major remodel of that building, creating a new dining room area that opens to a new segment of the Harborwalk that he also installed.

He shook his head as he recalled that the project languished for years before he could get it done. They wrapped the pilings, installed the Harborwalk decking and basically replaced the backside of the building. Originally, when he took that lease site over in 2010 the idea was to move the Hofbrau in but it was just too small.

The remodel, which ran \$500,000, added 24 seats to the restaurant and access to the rear deck.

Van Beurden said the best thing about what he does is the social aspect, “and the fact that I’ve made so many friends.” He said he’s got generations of people who come in, the children and grandchildren of those early Cal Poly customers.

One guy was in the other day, he said, who hadn’t been here in 15 years. He recalls being on vacation once with wife Kathy — his high school sweetheart — and someone came up and said “Hi Stan, how you doing?” he laughed.

“People generally are in a really good mood when they go out to eat,” he said. “They don’t want to be miserable. As owners,



Hofbrau is well known for their hand carved roast beef.

we have to make you feel welcome.” Allison has the same attitude. “It makes you proud that you did something lasting and good.”

But the worst thing about all this is the hours, and the responsibility. “It’s never out of your mind,” he said. Keeping up with all the law changes is challenging. “You always worry that you’re doing the right thing,” he said of keeping up with employee laws.

Also, the unforeseen events, like the time a chandelier fell down onto a table where people were eating. “Luckily no one was hurt but that’s the kind of thing you lose sleep over.”

He also worries about the pandemic. “We’ve been very fortunate. I had one employee test positive.” But with a few days off, they recovered, with no further cases.

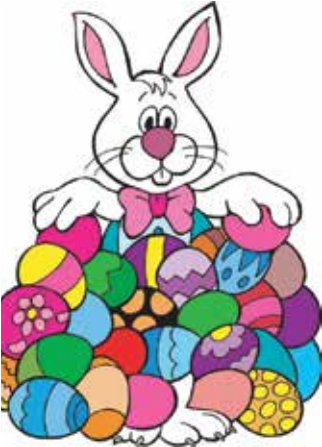
“As a business owner in general,” he added, “those are the things you worry about.”

Last year’s one he’d probably like to forget, as would probably everyone else.

“The last year has been tough,” he said. “It’s been really tough on the employees, especially when you have young kids working. Business was down a bit [about 10%] in 2020 but they got through it.

“We kept the employees on the whole time. And we had a great response from our customers. The tipping’s been good too.”

He said last summer was one for the record books. “We had bigger weekends than I’ve seen in 50 years,” he said.



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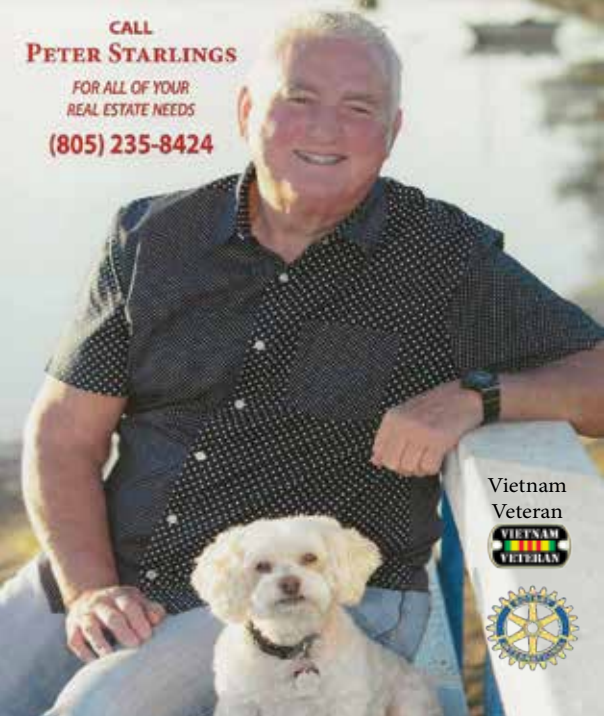
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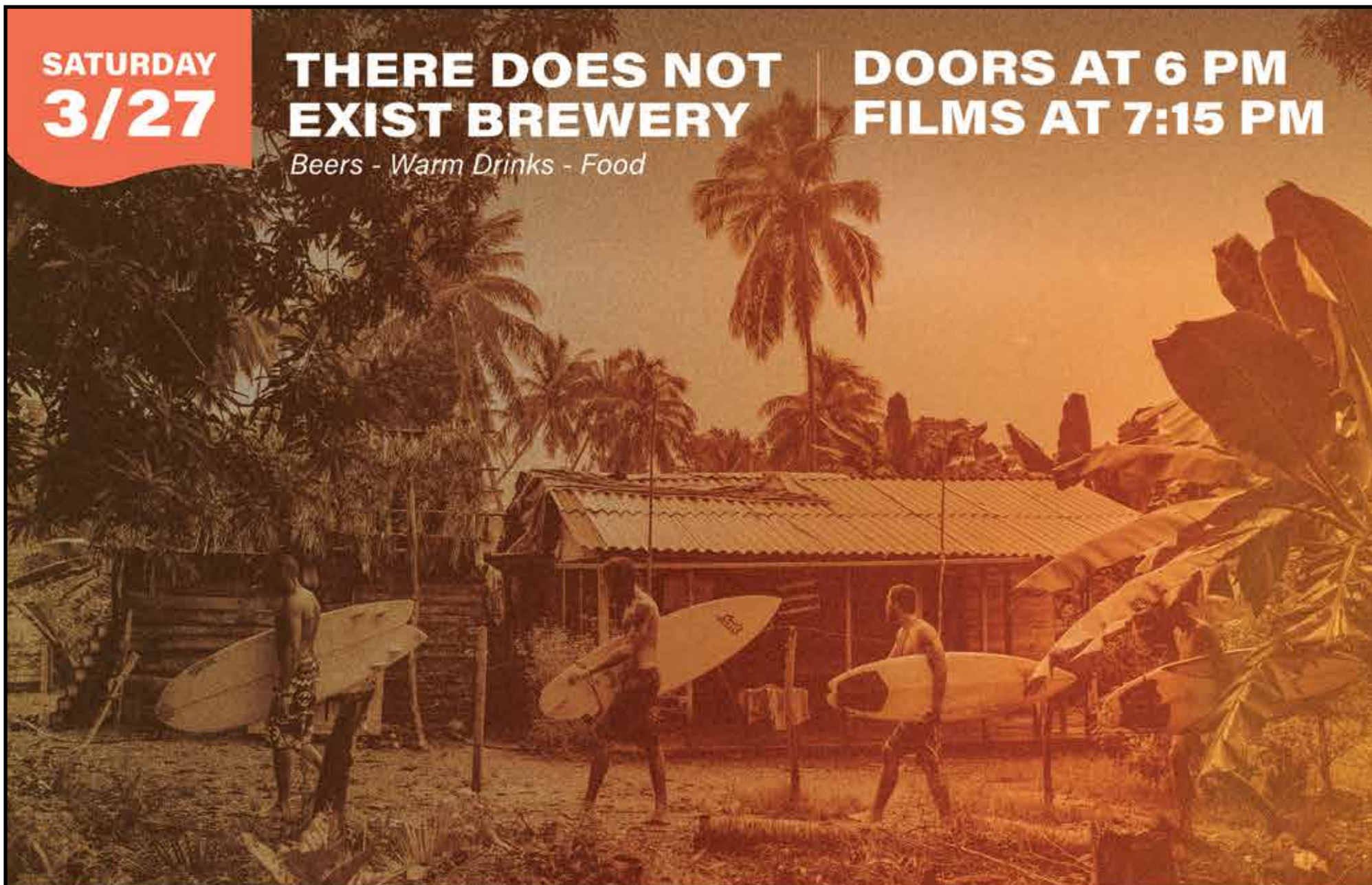
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# SHIFTING TIDES

**A NIGHT OF SURF INSPIRED FILMS**  
**A VIRTUAL SCREENING AND IN-PERSON EVENT**



**THERE  
DOES  
NOT  
EXIST**

**PURCHASE TICKETS AND  
MORE INFORMATION AT  
SLOMOTIONFILM.COM**

*In person - \$16 | Virtual - \$10*