

Roundabout Tunneling A Major Undertaking

By Neil Farrell



One of Anvil's trenching crew compacts dirt in the Quintana Road pipeline trench with a Komatsu excavator.

For months work on the pipelines for Morro Bay's Water Reclamation Facility has been diverting traffic off and around Quintana Road, as contractors lay the 3.5 miles of multiple pipes that make up the conveyance system out to the new treatment plant being built above South Bay Boulevard.

And most recently, residents have watched as massive pieces of equipment shielded from view by a green fence, work on the trickiest part of the pipeline job — tunneling underneath the roundabout.

Paul Amico, the conveyance project manager with Carollo Engineering, gave an Estero Bay reporter a tour of the difficult work being done.

Amico said the pipeline project was designed to tunnel under because, "We didn't want to tear up the roundabout," which he described as having a "spaghetti" web of underground utilities.

DOJ Report Condemns SLO County Jail

By Neil Farrell

The San Luis Obispo County Jail violated the rights of mentally ill prisoners and used excessive force on some inmates, according to a stinging report from the U.S. Department of Justice, triggered in response to the in-custody deaths of several County Jail inmates.

The Aug. 31 announcement from the DOJ, which was investigated by the Civil Rights Division, said the jail "violated the rights of prisoners by, among other things, failing to provide adequate medical care and subjecting some prisoners to excessive uses of force. The report calls upon the jail to make changes to address the Constitutional violations found during an investigation."

The report accuses the County Jail and in turn the County Sheriff, of having practices in place that violate the Eighth and 14th Amendments to the U.S. Constitution, and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

"Specifically," the DOJ said, "the department concluded that there is reasonable cause to believe that the jail fails to provide constitutionally adequate medical and mental health care to prisoners; that the jail violates the constitutional rights of prisoners with serious mental illness through its prolonged use of restrictive housing; that the jail violates the Constitutional Rights of prisoners through the use of excessive force; and that the jail violates the ADA by denying prisoners with mental health disabilities access to services, programs and activities because of their disabilities."

"Our Constitution," Assistant Attorney General Kristen Clarke of the Civil Rights Division said, "guarantees that all people held in jails and prisons across our country are treated humanely, and that includes providing access to necessary medical and mental health care."

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They could have done traditional trenching for the pipelines, as is being done for most of the \$31 million pipeline job's run, but they also sought to minimize disruptions to the traffic flow at one of the city's main entrances and busiest intersections.

Amico said Water Works Engineers, the design firm on the pipeline job, studied seven or eight different routes through that area, which included running the pipes on the east side of Hwy 1 instead of up Quintana, as part of a routing study.

Amico said going "trenchless" is three to four times more expensive depending on the conditions of the soil they encounter. But the costs have to be weighed against the potential impacts, especially with so many utilities potentially in the way. "It's a trade-off," he explained.

The contractor for the pipelines, Anvil of San Francisco, brought in a sub-contractor — Vadrans Trenchless

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Keeping up with the Rattlesnakes — Limited Time

By Theresa-Marie Wilson



A pregnant female rattlesnake "babysitting" another female's pups. Photo by Spencer Riffle

The latest reality show might rattle some people, but the creators hope that viewers walk away with a better understanding of the stars.

Cal Poly Biological Sciences Department researchers led by biology professor Emily Taylor have set up what they say is the first ever livestream of rattlesnakes in the wild at bit.ly/snakelivestream.

Several snakes make regular appearances at the rookery including females Fusie Susie, Raven, Macaroni, Sunny and Petunia and a male named Drogon. The two Cal Poly students working with Taylor on the project chose the names.

The cameras first went live in late August allowing viewers to watch expectant mother snakes at a large communal nest located at an undisclosed place in SLO County. As of Sept 7, two snakes gave birth to pups, and more are expected in the coming days.

The purpose of the research is two-fold. The first objective is to study the complex social behaviors between the expecting mothers and then between the mothers and the pups.

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Moving Forward: Morro Bay White Caps To Play at 9/11 MB Birthday Social

By Judy Salamacha



The Morro Bay White Caps, a community band, will play the Sept. 11 celebration of the city's founding 150 years ago.

It was mid-morning Saturday, August 21. Time to walk our dog, CJ. Like many neighborhood locals we headed for the pathway at Franklin Riley Park, overlooking Morro Bay's Tideland Park, soon to be officially dedicated to honor Morro Bay's founder. At a recent Celebration of Life for Councilman Robert "Red" Davis, his fellow Council members honored him, wife Gail, and his family by completing the park signage, one of the few unfinished to-do-list-projects by this dedicated servant of the people.

I knew the emergency sirens were to be tested that afternoon, but imagine my surprise when I heard morning music — beautiful concert band sounds from Phantom of

the Opera. I thought picnickers at Tideland had a CD player with mega-speakers blasting the musical perfection. Then I spied the band. There was an actual live-band set-up concert style entertaining a small audience. Could it be the Morro Bay White Caps were playing again, I wondered? We then met another walker who confirmed Morro Bay's official community band was, indeed, practicing as they had done Saturdays all summer at other Morro Bay locations.

Where was I? My apologies for not knowing they have been playing all summer. Something is right with the world when the Morro Bay White Caps are back playing

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DA - Gala Pride Center Clear the Air

By Neil Farrell

The San Luis Obispo County District Attorney's Office and a local gay advocacy group have reached an understanding about why the DA appeared on a radio show they consider bigoted and have agreed to work more closely together in the future.

District Attorney Dan Dow's office in conjunction with the "Gala Pride and Diversity Center" said in a news release that Dow and Dep. DA Eric Dobroth met with the activist group on July 30 after the Gay And Lesbian Alliance (Gala) objected to his appearance in August 2020 on "Washington Watch," a nationally syndicated radio show of the Family Research Council.

Dow said his staff answered a telephone request from the program's producers asking him to appear after he declared that he would not prosecute anyone ticketed for singing in church. The Governor had forbidden church singing as part of his coronavirus pandemic response.

"Due to time constraints," the news release stated, "the requisite research about the radio show was not performed. DA Dow stated that he would not have appeared on the show had he known the implications to the LGBTQ+ community."

Washington Watch is a part of the Family Research Council and the FRC's President Tony Perkins is the host.

On its website, FRC claims to be "an American fundamentalist Protestant activist group, with an affiliated lobbying organization. FRC promotes what it considers to be family values by advocating and lobbying for policies in government."

The Southern Poverty Law Center however, claims FRC is a bigoted, anti-gay activist group.

Even though it took nearly a year to get the meeting with the district attorney, Gala was reportedly heartened to learn that he didn't appear on the show to deliberately spite them.

"The Gala Pride & Diversity Center's mission is to support and empower people of all sexual orientations, gender identities, and expressions to strengthen and unite our Central Coast community," the news release stated.

Another reported goal of the meeting was "a shared mutual interest to develop a healthy professional relationship between the organizations and increase transparency and trust."

It apparently worked, as Dow and the Gala Pride Center staff, "affirmed a joint priority of ensuring that our criminal and victim justice system treats every human being with dignity, respect, and fairness and in working towards the elimination of bias in the legal profession and in society at large."

Dow invited the Gala Pride & Diversity Center "to provide training to the staff of the district attorney's office. That training will include the history and issues LGBTQ+ people have experienced as a result of interacting with the criminal justice system, both locally and elsewhere, in

order to be better equipped to fulfill prosecutorial duties in a respectful and unbiased manner that fosters trust in our community.

"In turn, the DA's Office has agreed to provide training to The Pride Center's members about the criminal and victim justice system and the role of the district attorney's office."

The two sides agreed to work more closely together on the issues unique to the gay community.

"We know," Michelle Call, Pride Center executive director said, "that being affirming of a transgender person's pronouns or understanding barriers to medical and mental healthcare experiences by LGBTQIA+ individuals lead to better outcomes in all areas, and we are eager to share information with the district attorney's Office that will be useful to staff in their everyday interactions with our community." ("LGBTQIA" stands for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and/or Questioning, Intersex, and Asexual and/or Ally.)

Call added, "Training from the DA's Office will also enable us to increase the depth of our understanding and better serve our constituents."

Dow said, "As district attorney for San Luis Obispo County, I serve all people within our borders and I am firmly committed to treating every individual fairly and equitably when performing my duties and obligation. The district attorney's office has a proven track record of taking an aggressive stance in prosecuting hate crimes that target people based on immutable traits or protected legal status and vigorously prosecuting offenders who target the most vulnerable such as children and the elderly."

The district attorney's office has reportedly adopted several values: integrity, professionalism, accountability, communication, and collaboration, according to the news release.

With the air cleared, the two sides vowed to work more closely with each other in the future. "The Gala Pride and Diversity Center and the San Luis Obispo County District Attorney's Office intend to continue building on the foundation created in this initial meeting."



Cases Surging; County Orders Return to Masking

By Neil Farrell

The San Luis Obispo County Health Department, citing a surge in coronavirus cases, has once again ordered everyone to wear a facemask when indoors, auspiciously to



slow the spread and keep local hospitals from filling up.

In an Aug. 31 news release, SLO County Health Officer Dr. Penny Borenstein said, "This surge is stretching our local health care system too close to the breaking point and if it continues, we risk losing our ability to care for people with common conditions like heart attacks, broken bones or even cancer. We cannot let that happen."

So she issued a commandment to return to mask wearing, with the orders taking effect at 12:01 a.m. Sept. 1, and applying to everyone, even those who are vaccinated. She also reinstated the 6-foot social distancing measure that was employed when the pandemic started in April 2020.

At the time there were 67 people in area hospitals with 20 in intensive care (ICU). According to the County that's the most people here that have been hospitalized in the ICU with COVID-19 at any one time.

During August, the County said, there were 3,543 reported cases and 18 people died. As a comparison, in June, the County said there were 163 new cases and zero deaths.

Masks Make it Easy to Avoid the Virus

Even though mask wearing has had debatable results, short of actually getting vaccinated, the County said it's an easy way to avoid the virus.

"While vaccines remain the most effective tool against COVID-19," the County news release said, "universal indoor masking is the least disruptive and most immediately impactful additional measure to curb the spread of the virus and reduce intense pressure on the health care system."

"Getting vaccinated as a community is our ticket out of hospital surges, out of this increasing drumbeat of preventable deaths, out of restrictions like masking requirements," said Dr. Borenstein. "Today, we must take this step of putting on our masks to stop the surge and protect our community. As we look ahead, I implore you to protect yourself



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and your family with the vaccine.”

The mask order applies to “all indoor public settings, venues, gatherings and workplaces,” such as retail stores, restaurants and bars, fitness centers, theaters, museums, personal care services, family entertainment centers, conference centers and government offices that serve the public.

Businesses are directed to require all patrons to wear face coverings “for all indoor settings, regardless of vaccination status.” They must also post the mask requirements in clearly visible and easy-to-read signage at all entry points for indoor settings, “to communicate the masking requirements to all patrons.”

Exemptions Are Few

The masking order has few exemptions. You don’t have to wear a mask if you are working alone in an office; are eating or drinking; are swimming or showering at the gym; you may remove your mask for medical procedures, like going to the dentist, but only temporarily; and, if you fall under the State Department of Public Health’s list of exemptions, which might include “students, and other persons with medical or behavioral contradictions.”

County Blaming Unvaccinated for Surge

County Health is laying the blame for the surge in cases — driven by the so-called Delta variant a mutated version of the original virus — on people who haven’t gotten vaccinated.

“The large majority of COVID-19 cases, hospitalizations and deaths reported in San Luis Obispo County,” the Health Department said on Aug. 31, “continue to be among residents who are not yet fully vaccinated.” The County said its data shows that since June 15, “residents who are not fully vaccinated have represented 77% of cases, 86% of hospitalizations and 79% of deaths.”

From Aug. 27-31, the County said they recorded 592 news cases of COVID-19 and three deaths. There were some 1,703 “active cases” and 67 people in the hospital. SLO County has about 233,000 residents.

And the spike, unfortunately, appears to be driven by unvaccinated people, but some who’ve gotten their shots are getting sick too.

“We are seeing some ‘breakthrough’ cases,” Dr. Borenstein said, “in which those who are fully vaccinated become infected with the virus and even cases in which a vulnerable fully-vaccinated person has become severely ill — but these numbers pale in comparison to the vast majority of cases among those who are not yet vaccinated. We would not be facing extreme demands on our hospitals if we were looking at only the small number of mostly mild cases among those who have been vaccinated.”

Hospitalizations Drop a Bit

By Sept. 3, the County’s count of new cases had dropped somewhat, but remain high in comparison to just a

couple of months ago.

On Sept. 3, the County said there were 59 people in the hospital with 17 in the ICU. Estero Bay News asked the County what happened to the three people no longer listed in the ICU and was told they don’t follow up on whether an ICU patient recovered or died.

Dr. Borenstein doubled down on urging people to get vaccinated to avoid the horrible effects of the disease. “None of us want our family, friends or neighbors to experience that,” she said, “which is why we must all do our part to slow the spread: get vaccinated, wear a mask indoors, avoid crowded places, wash your hands, don’t go out if you aren’t feeling well, and get tested if you experience symptoms.”

According to the County, August’s case numbers are comparable to what they were seeing last February, about 142 per day over a 14-day period.

Shots, Tests Widely Available

The fight against the pandemic nationwide took a turn Aug. 24, when the Federal Food and Drug Administration granted full approval to Pfizer’s COVID vaccine, elevating it from an “emergency use” designation.

Officials hope that will ease fears many people have had — that the vaccines are “experimental” and not trustworthy. Pfizer’s vaccine is the first to get full FDA approval, and over 204 million people nationwide have already gotten the 2-dose Pfizer vaccine, according to the County.

The FDA decision “comes after an extensive review of preclinical and clinical data on the vaccine, as well as details of the manufacturing process, vaccine quality testing, and inspections of the vaccine manufacturing sites,” according to the County.

The Pfizer shots are one of three in wide use in the U.S. and the others are made by Moderna and Johnson & Johnson (a single dose vaccine).

The County offers free vaccinations by appointment at its public health clinics in SLO, Paso Robles and Grover Beach. Many local private clinics and doctor’s offices give them as well as pharmacies like Morro Bay Drug & Gift, which recently started giving rapid COVID tests as well. See: myturn.ca.gov or call (833) 422-4255 to schedule an appointment at a County Health Clinic. They also take walk-in patients.

Current County Scorecard

With the surge of the coronavirus’ Delta variant, and County Health ringing the alarm bell, the virus’ rampage through SLO County continues.

As of Sept. 3, according to the County’s database (see: www.emergencyslo.org/en/covid19), there were 1,468 active cases countywide with 59 people in the hospital, and 17 in ICU, numbers that include SLO County residents at outside hospitals, like Marian Medical Center in Santa Maria.

SLO County has recorded 26,143 COVID cases since April 2020. Some 24,380 people recovered and 284 are listed as dying from COVID-19.

People 85+ have had 118 people hospitalized and 130 deaths. Those 65-84 had 362 hospitalized and 106 deaths.

People 50-64 had 256 hospitalized and 39 deaths. People 30-49 had 172 hospitalized and eight deaths. And those from 18-29 have had 44 hospitalizations and only one person has died.

SLO County residents under-18 have had just 12 hospitalized and so far, no one under-18 has died, according to the County.

Readers can get COVID-19 vaccinations by appointment at a Public Health clinic in Paso Robles, Grover Beach, or San Luis Obispo, see: myturn.ca.gov or call (833) 422-4255. To find other vaccine providers, see: myturn.ca.gov or VaccineFinder.org.

Man Pulls Gun on Motel Employee

Police are looking for a man who broke into a room at a North Main Street motel, then brandished a handgun at a motel employee who confronted him.

Morro Bay Police responded at 5:51 p.m. Aug. 27 to a report of man who had broken into a room at the Rodeway Inn.

“Suspect was contacted by the victim (a motel employee),” Cmdr. Watkins said, “when an argument ensued and was told he was going to contact law enforcement. At that time, the suspect retrieved a handgun from his waistband and pointed the firearm at the victim. “

The suspect fled on foot. No shots were fired and there were no injuries reported.

Police searched high and low for the suspect and found property and two firearms, “believed to belong to the suspect.

“Witnesses in the area advised suspect was picked up in an unknown vehicle that left the area prior to officer arrival,” Cmdr. Watkins said. Police continue to investigate. The victim in the case is the motel’s manager.

Rodeway Inn has been in the news of late after the owners sought permits to turn the motel into a drug and alcohol rehabilitation center, intended for so-called first responders — police and firefighters for the most part.

Though the proposal raised significant opposition from neighbors, the City was obligated under a State law to permit the change in use. The conversion has yet to be made and the motel continues to be run as a motel.

Anyone with information regarding the incident is asked to contact the Morro Bay Police Department at (805) 772- 6225 or Crime Stoppers at (805) 549-STOP.

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3

City Change in Marketing Moving Forward

By Neil Farrell

The Morro Bay City Council took another step towards reverting its tourism promotions back to the lodging owners under a new non-profit business organization.

The Council's Aug. 16 actions were mainly house-keeping, as the change back to having the Tourism Business Improvement District (TBID) take back control of marketing was approved some time ago and went into effect in July. "The TBID is now overseen by a non-profit board, as opposed to the City," City Manager Scott Collins said.

The TBID was first formed in 2009 at the behest of lodging property owners under a 1989 law (that was replaced in 1994 by a new version) and lets assessment districts be formed by private property owners and collected like a tax. The 2009 City ordinance set the tax rate at 3% of the cost of a room night at motels, hotels, B&Bs and vacation rentals.

The change to the new law required dissolving the original assessment district via a Resolution and reforming it under the '94 regulations, which Collins said was house-keeping, as the change was already approved.

Also, the TBID's significant assets automatically transferred over, along with all members within the district. The "disestablishment" Resolution (No. 28-21), sets the hearing for Tuesday, Sept. 14 during the Council's normal online meeting. Collins said the hearing would essentially take the TBID "off the City's books."

The actions are part of a City move to return control over tourism promotions back to the lodging industry, as the scheme was initially set up and operated, with the TBID forming a non-profit governed by one representative board.

Collins said the new TBID board hired Michael Wambolt as its executive director. Wambolt was with Visit SLOCAL — the countywide assessment district — for many years, Collins said, and prior to that did marketing for hotels.

The first Morro Bay TBID made decisions on where to spend advertising monies, supported special events, operated a visitor's center on Morro Bay Boulevard, and controlled the messaging, too, including catchphrases like "Discover Your Better Nature."

That system worked well, increasing the occupancy rate and the City's transient occupancy taxes annually, until about 2016, when the City Council took control over the assessment district.

The City formed a tourism department within the City Administration and for several years oversaw promotions with the TBID board playing a planning and advisory role.

All that blew up in Spring 2020 when the coronavirus

Moving Foward Continued on page 5

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News Briefs

By Theresa-Marie Wilson

County Law Enforcement Helps with Caldor Fire



San Luis Obispo County law enforcement agencies have deployed personnel to provide mutual aid assistance to El Dorado County in response to the growing Caldor Fire that threatened the resort town of Lake Tahoe.

As of Sept. 7, the blaze had burned more than 216,000 acres and destroyed hundreds of homes since starting Aug. 14. Currently, it is 49% contained, according to the Cal Fire website.

Included in the deployment were 12 members of the Sheriff's Office, along with seven members from allied county agencies including the San Luis Obispo Police Department, California Polytechnic State University Police Department, Grover Beach Police Department, and the Atascadero Police Department.

Staff will assist with evacuations, road closures, and keeping the areas around the Caldor Fire secure.

Morro Bay Releases Parking Study

Morro Bay city officials released the recently completed parking study of the Embarcadero, Morro Rock, and Downtown areas. The purpose of this study, conducted by Walker Consultants, is to understand existing parking needs, how parking is currently being used and how to best plan for parking demands moving forward. The study presents an analysis of existing parking conditions during both summer and off-season periods and includes recommendations for parking management strategies.

It was found that there are parking challenges—particularly in the waterfront area—that could be addressed with several potential approaches, including paid parking.

The study will be presented to the Harbor Advisory Board, Public Works Advisory Board and Planning Commission in September. Input gathered in those meetings and from the public will be shared with City Council during their review in October. Council will consider the study at that time and provide direction to City staff regarding any potential next steps.

The \$50,000 study was paid for through Parking in Lieu Funds; no General Fund revenues were used to support the effort. View the study at bit.ly/3kwpEMb.

Pharmacy Offers COVID Testing

A local pharmacy has expanded its services in response to the continuing coronavirus pandemic.

Dr. Sumanta Paul, owner of Morro Bay Drug & Gift, 600 Morro Bay Blvd., Ste. B, said he is now offering the rapid and antibody tests for COVID-19. This is in addition to the COVID vaccinations the pharmacy has been offering since last February.

They continue to provide the vaccinations, which are being strenuously encouraged after the recent uptick in cases blamed on the so-called, Delta variant of the virus.

Morro Bay Drug & Gift is open weekdays from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Saturdays 9-2, closed Sundays. They also have the regular flu shots. Call (805) 771-9988 for an appointment.

Cuesta College Awards Over \$350k in Scholarships

Cuesta College awarded almost 500 scholarships to 346 students totaling \$357,890 for the 2021-22 academic year.

Scholarship recipients are current students at Cuesta College, incoming transfers, and high school students attending the Fall 2021 semester. Many students received more than one scholarship, which can be used for tuition, books, and other expenses. The scholarships awarded do not include over \$20,000 in Promise Scholarship funds, which offer two years of fee-free education to San Luis Obispo County high school graduates. There were 985 students who received support from the Promise Scholarship during the 2020-21 academic year.

In addition to scholarships and the Promise, every Cuesta College student, regardless of income, is eligible for financial assistance and emergency funds to support college enrollment. Since the pandemic started, over \$4 million in financial aid have been given out directly to students, and over \$240,000 was raised through the Foundation towards Cuesta's Assistance for Student Emergencies fund.

"Our remarkable community continues to respond graciously to support emergency grants," said Dr. Jill Stearns, Cuesta College superintendent / president. "I remain inspired and amazed at the college's ability to respond to this crisis and add our community's strong commitment to our college and students."

Contact the Foundation office at (805) 546-3279 to find out how you can support Cuesta College students.

Part of Tank Farm Road to Close

As a reminder to commuters, a portion of Tank Farm Road is closed for about the next three months as part of the second phase of construction on the new Orcutt/Tank Farm Roundabout.

Tank Farm Road will be temporarily closed between Wavertree Street and Orcutt Road, and travelers are encouraged to take alternate routes, if possible.

Orcutt Road will remain open to provide a temporary bypass to both Johnson Avenue and Broad Street. Those traveling through the construction zone should expect delays, and City officials encourage travelers to plan additional time into their trips and drive cautiously.

For more information, including more project updates, please visit www.cityofslo.org/roundabouts or follow the City of SLO on Facebook or Instagram.

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PG&E Placing Delinquent Customers on Payment Plan

BY Neil Farrell

Protections for utility customers enacted as part of the coronavirus pandemic response will soon end, and the electric company plans to automatically enroll qualified customers in a monthly payment plan so they can get caught up with their bills.

Pacific Gas & Electric (PG&E) announced Sept. 1 that it would “auto-enroll eligible customers in new extended payment arrangements” by the end of this month (September).

PG&E noted that this auto-enrollment comes with the end of the “service-disconnection moratorium” that was put in back in May 2020, during the height of the pandemic scare, and designed to help customers to manage their bills, the company said in a news release. The party, as they say, is apparently over.

“Residential and small business customers with a PG&E bill at least 60 days past due,” the release said, “will automatically be enrolled over the next few weeks starting with their September bill.”

Figuring out the payment plan is a complicated math problem. “The monthly payment plan amount for residential customers will be their outstanding balance equally divided over 24 months. For example, if a residential customer owes \$1,200 the payment arrangement would be \$50 a month. Payment installations for small business customers will be calculated based on no more than 10% of their average bill (5% for customers in disadvantaged communities) over the past 24 months.”

Reraders shouldn’t fret, PG&E is here to help. “We are here to help customers during these times of increasing financial hardships. We want as many customers who are eligible to take advantage of these programs,” said Marlene Santos, PG&E executive vice president and chief customer officer. “Even as COVID-19 customer protections come to an end, our support won’t. The new payment plans were created to assist customers pay down their past-due balance over time and protect them from disconnection of service due to non-payment.”

Customers can sign-in to their online PG&E account to see what their monthly payments would be. It will also be listed on monthly energy statements under the “Account Summary” section.

PG&E spokesman Mark Messen said the programs apply to PG&E’s gas and electric customers, which would blanket almost all of Northern California but excludes much of SLO County.

SLO County lies at the northern edge of SoCal Gas Co.’s service area, with areas north of here where PG&E picks up the gas business too. The company dominates both energy sources in most of Northern California, servicing more than 16 million people across 70,000 square miles.

But all of the incorporated cities in SLO County are signed up to Central Coast Community Energy (3CE), the relatively new-fangled business model designed to promote the use of sustainable, emissions-free energy, and acting as a middle man between the power producers and the customers.

Though electricity is coming through 3CE, PG&E still has a role in transmission and distribution systems, and provides meter reading, customer service and maintenance services and billing, according to Mesesan. The auto-enrollment in a payment plan applies to anyone who is 60 days past due on their bills.

Who isn’t eligible? Mesesan said, “Net energy metered customers; customers with leveled billing [enrolled in Budget Billing]; customers enrolled in existing payment plans; customers participating in the Arrearage Management Plan [AMP will not be auto-enrolled in the plan]. However, PG&E will continue to proactively reach out and offer support to customers who are not eligible for the new extended payment plans.”

The company’s payment plan is designed to help people who’ve fallen behind during the pandemic. “This new payment plan was created to help our customers pay down

their past-due balance over time,” Mesesan said, “protecting them from disconnection of service [gas and/or electric] when the shut-off moratorium ends on Sept. 30. This includes PG&E’s customers who are members of CCAs.”

The payment plans are charged on top of a person’s monthly service bills.

Automatic enrollment in the new payment plan will not change enrollment in other financial assistance programs, PG&E said. They offer several for those struggling to pay their bills, they are:

- Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) offers up to \$1,000 to pay eligible household energy costs;
- Relief for Energy Assistance through Community Help (REACH) Program offers 1-time financial help to qualified customers with past-due bills;
- Arrearage Management Plans (AMP) offers up to \$8,000 in unpaid balance forgiveness, if a customer is enrolled in the California Alternate Rates for Energy Program (CARE) or Family Electric Rate Assistance (FERA) Program, owes a specific bill amount and are more than 90 days past due. (It should be noted that the City of Morro Bay’s water and sewer discount program is based on the CARE eligibility, i.e. if you qualify for CARE, you qualify for the City’s discount, too, but you must enroll for it at City Hall.);
- PG&E’s Medical Baseline Program as well as various external programs such as the California COVID-19 Rent Relief Act help income-eligible households pay rent and utilities, both for past due and future payments. Renters and landlords are eligible to apply.

But with COVID still very much a threat, indeed as SLO County and all of California along with much of the nation revert back to mask mandates, some will still have trouble paying ever-rising utility bills. PG&E’s patience apparently only goes so far.

“Residential customers who miss more than two payments, and small business customers who miss one payment within a 12-month period, will be removed from the payment plan,” the company said. “As a last resort, gas and/or electric service may be disrupted approximately 45-days later, unless payment is received.”

So how widespread is this issue of owing on bills? Mesesan said he didn’t have information specifically for the Estero Bay communities, but the matter is pretty widespread in PG&E’s service area.

“Currently,” Mesesan said, “1.15 million PG&E residential customers are behind on their payments; 430,000 residential and 30,000 small business customers are eligible for the new auto-enroll payment plans. Customers not eligible for the new automatic payment plan program can call to be enrolled in a 12-month payment plan.”

The company offers a lifeline. “Disconnection of service is an action that PG&E does not take lightly. Customers having a hard time paying their bills should contact PG&E immediately at (800) 743-5000.”

For more information about additional resources and financial assistance programs see: pge.com/covid19 or call (800) 743-5000. Financial resources for business customers are also available.

Moving Forward From page 4

pandemic hit and the City locked down, as directed by the Governor, greatly hurting tourism for a few months.

Tourism promotions ground to a halt and the City actually took out ads in the Central Valley discouraging people from coming to Morro Bay. The City also dissolved its tourism department and the marketing company’s contract was suspended from April 2020 to this past Spring 2021.

Though tourism initially tanked under the pandemic response, it rebounded last summer and visitors flocked to a much-changed waterfront. Restaurants were forced to

Vaccine Required to Access Cuesta

Cuesta College will require vaccination for students, employees, and visitors to access its campuses and facilities. In a special meeting on Aug. 25, the San Luis Obispo County Community College District Board of Trustees voted 5-1 to approve Resolution 09-21, directing Cuesta College Superintendent / President Dr. Jill Stearns to develop administrative procedures for a vaccine requirement to be fully implemented by Oct. 15.

“Vaccination is the most effective means of preventing COVID-19, and the resolution passed by the Board of Trustees strengthens Cuesta College’s commitment to protecting the health and well-being of our students and employees,” said Dr. Stearns.

Cuesta College’s vaccine resolution follows the recommendations and directions of federal, state, and local health agencies and the FDA approval of the first COVID-19 vaccine. It is consistent with vaccine requirements adopted by California’s K-12 educational institutions and higher education systems, including the California State University, the University of California, and dozens of California community colleges.

“Our goal is to ensure our students’ completion of their educational goals and provide the safest in-person learning environment as possible, and a vaccinated campus community supports that goal,” said Board of Trustees President Mary Strobbridge.

Cuesta College’s fall semester began Aug. 16 with health and safety protocols under the Safe Reopening Plan. Following CDC guidelines, proper face coverings are required in all indoor public areas and shared spaces for everyone, regardless of vaccination status. In alignment with CDC disinfecting protocols, classrooms and office spaces are regularly sanitized. Mobile air filtration units and ion-enhanced ventilation systems have been installed to improve air quality in buildings.

Cuesta College recently announced incentives to get vaccinated against COVID-19. Students who provide proof of complete vaccination can receive a \$250 cash gift card and be eligible for a \$5,000 scholarship. For additional details about the Cuesta College Vaccine Challenge, visit bit.ly/vaccinateCuesta.

create outdoor dining spaces when the State closed indoor dining for months. That change in itself caused some problems, mostly with trash, as people who normally have sit-down dinners inside, were eating takeout, which significantly increased the amount of trash produced.

The City responded with a “Trash Hero” promotion asking residents and visitors not to litter, put out more garbage cans and brought in portable toilets to compensate for the loss of indoor restrooms at restaurants.

The TBID’s 3% surcharge continued to be collected throughout the pandemic even though no promotions were conducted. Collins said the TBID is currently reviewing applicants for a full time marketing company, and Mental Marketing is back. “The new TBID,” Collins said, “is doing some promotions through Mental Marketing, to include website, social media and influencers.”

The other significant change in all this is that under the new arrangement, the TBID assessment district is for 5 years as opposed to having to be renewed every year. So the next chance for lodging property owners in the assessment district to vote on its continuation would be sometime before the district expires on June 30, 2026.

The 3% TBID charge produces about \$1 million a year, a significant amount greater than was formerly spent on tourism promotions, which before the TBID consisted of the City’s Community Promotions Committee, a board of community volunteers and the Chamber of Commerce (to run the visitor’s center), that had limited budgets greatly determined by the health of City finances.

TBID was begun as a way to increase what was a lethargic occupancy rate, and to augment the City’s annual allocations of funds, which it now replaces.



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News

Golf Resort Charged Sewer Assessment

Los Osos golf course and resort hotel has agreed to pay the County sewer piper and pony up over \$230,000 to officially join the sewer assessment district.

According to a County report, when Supervisors voted to approve the “San Luis Obispo County Wastewater Assessment District No.1,” in 2008, the Sea Pines Golf Resort was left out of the district because it had its own sewer system, while other properties within the district were assessed charges depending on the benefits received.

Because it was left out of the district, the County said, Sea Pines was assessed nothing. But, “After completion of the LOWWS [Los Osos Waste Water System], Sea Pines connected to the LOWWS. Public Works staff recently discovered that this parcel was not charged an assessment despite benefitting from the project.”

The County said the owners agreed to pay the assessment, which the County calculated at \$238,958.59. The County set up a payment plan that will have Sea Pines paying \$11,430.64 a year. This is in addition to monthly sewer charges.

Sheriff Destroys Pot Crop



Growing and possessing small amounts of marijuana may be legal these days, but the war against pot and huge growing operations continues.

The County Sheriff’s Office said on Aug. 20 it eradicated an illegal garden of weeden in the hills outside Santa Margarita.



According to a news release, at about 7 a.m. the Sheriff’s Cannabis Compliance Team, Gang Task Force and Special Operations Unit served a search warrant at a property located in the 3000 block of Las Pilitas Rd., in rural Santa Margarita.

They reportedly discovered an “illegal” marijuana crop of about 1,000 plants. The plants were removed using helicopters and destroyed. No arrests were made but the Sherriff’s Department said it continues to investigate and charges are anticipated to be filed but didn’t release the names of any suspects in the case.





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Community

Sept. 11 — A Busy Day in Morro Bay

What is often a somber day for reflection and remembrance is packed with special events as the anniversary of one of America’s darkest moments has its 20th anniversary.

Morro Bay’s first responders will commemorate the Sept. 11, 2001 terrorist attacks, on Patriot’s Day, Saturday, Sept. 11.

The Morro Bay police, fire and harbor patrol, have invited the community to the Harbor Street Firehouse, 715 Harbor St., at noon on the 11th. The 30-minute ceremony will “honor the lives lost during those tragic events,” reads a news release from the City. The fire department is asking attendees to wear a mask for COVID safety. The ceremony will take place outside the firehouse, and all are invited.

Then after a quick lunch somewhere, people can go over to the nearby Community Center for a celebration of the 150th Anniversary of Morro Bay’s founding by Franklin Riley, sponsored by Morro Bay Beautiful and the City.

The event is from 2-4 p.m., admission is \$1 and there’ll be birthday cake, as well as the unveiling of a special commemorative jigsaw puzzle, featuring original artwork by world-renowned painter and puzzle maker, Eric Dowdle.

Dowdle will be on hand to meet the public and unveil the special painting he’s done of Morro Bay.

Morro Bay Beautiful will be selling the first run of the collectable puzzles as a fundraiser and after that they will be available at local retailers and from the Dowdle Puzzle Co.’s online store, see: dowdlefolkart.com.

Also, the Morro Bay Lion’s Club plans to give away another free car to a deserving local citizen, who is in need of reliable transportation. The car giveaway is scheduled for 4 p.m. at the Community Center.

Readers can get more information about MBB and the 150th celebration online at: www.morrobaybeautiful.org or call 805-772-8117.



By Theresa-Marie Wilson

Community Coalition Meeting

The Los Osos Cares Community Coalition begins meeting in person on Thursday September 16 at 9 a.m. at the South Bay Community Center. Community members and service providers are invite to gather and meet each other to find out the resources and needs in our communities. Organizers say the meeting is essential in keeping the community informed and aware of all that is being done and what resources are available.

Los Osos Cares also received a preventative healthcare grant of \$5600 from SLO County. The grant allows the non-profit to move forward with their programs such as Laundry Love in Morro Bay, Estero Bay RUOK and Los Osos Ride.

Folks looking to fins out more about Los Osos Cares, can send and email to wecareinlososos@gmail.com.

Welcome the Dough Connection

The Morro Bay Chamber of Commerce held a ribbon cutting for the Dough Connection. They produce and sell, safe-to-eat, raw cookie dough. They also have bakeable dough in many different varieties and ways to eat. They are located at 913 Embarcadero next to Hofbrau.

Some flavors they make include classic chocolate chip,



birthday cake, cookies and cream, and cherry chocolate chunk. Follow them on Facebook for updates on flavors and special desserts.

Botanical Garden Receives Grant



The non-profit San Luis Obispo Botanical Garden was recently awarded a \$147,000 grant from the Harold J. Miossi Charitable Trust. The funds will be used to help complete three ADA compliant patios, an entrance plaza, and paths at the Garden’s Education Center. With the completion of this project, the Garden expects an increase in facility rentals, financial stability, visitors, and visitor experience. The first phase of this project begins in mid-September.

The Garden needs to raise \$300,000 to complete the project. They are asking the community to support this project by purchasing commemorative donor tiles, which will be placed artistically in the newly enhanced areas.

Currently, the main entrance to the Botanical Garden is gravel and difficult for many to traverse.

The Garden needs to improve pathways to the gift shop, offices, rental facilities and restrooms to provide easier access for visitors. Donations of all amounts are appreciated.

To learn more about this project and giving opportunities, go to slobg.org/donate, email ruta@slobg.org or call (805) 541-1400 x 303.

Reserve Firefighters Needed

Cal Fire Station 15- South Bay is looking for reserve firefighters. To apply, pick up an application at Station 15 - 2315 Bayview Heights Drive, Los Osos.

Station 15 has primary responsibility for fires, medical aids, vehicle accidents, technical rescues, hazardous materials incidents, natural disasters and public service assistance for residents throughout the Los Osos Community Services District, Turri Road, Clark Valley Road and for visitors throughout Montana de Oro and the Back Bay.

For more information call 805-528-1053

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Community

Costa Gallery Ribbon



Owner and photographer Michael J Costa took a huge leap of faith and launched his dream gallery July 28, 2020 during the pandemic. He celebrated his one-year of business with a ribbon cutting hosted by the Los Osos Baywood Chamber of Commerce with music by Zen Mountain Poets. The Costa Gallery, 2087 10th St., showcases more than 20 local artists' work featuring a diverse assortment of art to choose from: photography, glasswork, jewelry, mixed media, ceramics, textile art, pastels, acrylics, assemblage and so much more.

Michael is already gearing up for his next unique event called a Plein Air Show. Stay connected through social media Facebook Costa Gallery or Instagram @mjcostaphoto.

Are you or a neighbor Taking Care of Business? Submit your awesome local efforts for publication here. Is your business supporting our community? Maybe you're launching a new business, or you're making updates to your current business model, or re-opening. Or perhaps you have a job opportunity, or have been doing some volunteer work, or are collaborating with another business or a non-profit. Or maybe you know someone who is. Fill out our online form at EsteroBayNews.com.

Obituary

George James Perry 1933 – 2021



George James Perry passed peacefully surrounded by family on August 15, 2021. He was born, lived and died on the dairy ranch that his maternal grandparents, Orazio and Teresina Nicola, purchased in 1916. Phillip James Stanuseich was a longtime ranch hand and mentor to George, Ed, and Sharon. George, his mother Evelyn Ethyl (Nicola) Perry, his father George Andre Perry and Uncle Nicolas Nicola ran the dairy until 1960. George then went to work for the San Luis Obispo County Road Department until he retired after 34 years. In 1956 George met and married Barbara Ann Young.

George is survived by their 4 children: Mike, Tim and wife Julie, Jerry, Terrie (Perry) Stoner and husband Gary, brother Edward (Ed) and wife Margie Perry, sister Sharon (Perry) Vaughan and husband Earle, 12 grandchildren, 9 great grandchildren, and numerous nieces, nephews and cousins.

Abalone History Film Now Available



Hot off a rousingly successful premiere, a documentary by a local filmmaker on Morro Bay's history with the abalone fishery, is now available to purchase or rent online or on disc from the Morro Bay Maritime Museum.

Museum Association President, Scott Mather said the movie, "Morro Bay — 'Once' the Abalone Capital of the World," produced by his wife, Lori Mather of Lori Mather Video Service, which debuted Aug. 22 at The Bay Theater, can be had in electronic form or on disc.

That debut, which sold out quickly, saw many of Morro Bay's pioneering families turn out to watch their relatives and friends come to life once again in photos, and 16mm movies shot by Glen Bickford, who moved from Iowa as a boy, and joined the abalone fishery documenting the exploits of hardhat divers both above and below the surface of the sea.

Scott Mather said if anyone wants to buy or rent the movie they can do so through the Museum Association's website, see: www.maritimemuseum.org. Readers can buy a DVD at the Maritime Museum, located at 1210 Embarcadero (look for the giant submarine), or call Bonnie Jones at (602) 526-4367.

All proceeds from the sales and rentals of the movie will benefit the Maritime Museum.

In the photo, producer Lori Mather, celebrates the marquee announcement at The Bay Theater. Photo courtesy Maritime Museum Association.

Events and Activities

By Theresa-Marie Wilson

Cal Poly's Student Affairs division will host Campus Comeback, a series of campus-wide events to be held Sept. 18-28 to help returning students re-engage with the Cal Poly community. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, many students have been away from the Cal Poly campus for more than a year, while others haven't had the opportunity to experience it at all. Campus Comeback will offer a wide selection of opportunities to help students find their sense of community, get familiar with the physical campus and surrounding area, and connect with faculty, advisors and support services. Students will also have opportunities to learn about and sign up for clubs and organizations, meet classmates, locate key campus resources, and attend in-person social events. Campus Comeback features nearly 40 on-campus events, including a Spirit Day and Photo Contest on Tuesday, Sept. 21; multiple welcome events on Wednesday, Sept. 22, by the Center for Service in Action, LGBTQ Campus Life, the Gender Equity Center, Multi-cultural Center, Athletics, and many more; and a community resource fair on Thursday, Sept. 23, among several other

re-engagement activities. For more information and to view additional Campus Comeback events, go to now.calpoly.edu/organization/campuscomeback.



The Morro Bay Art Association will hold an opening reception for the exhibit Visionary Human and to-MORROW's Sculpture at Art Center Morro Bay, 835 Main St., on Sun. Sept. 12 from 2 – 4 p.m. The event features live music by their artist in residence, Everet Lucero, and wine and snacks will be served. Attendees will find a wide scope of two and three dimensional art, including paintings, photography, mixed media, jewelry and extraordinary sculptures by Central Coast Sculptors in their simultaneous exhibit, toMORROW's Sculpture. The exhibit runs through Nov 1.

Art work: Steampunked at 4am Mixed Media by Rene Smoller

...

"Si Se Puede", a presentation by Estella Vasquez, director of the Monarch Program at Cuesta College Monarch Program, takes place on Thursday September 23, at 7 p.m. at the South Bay Community Center in Los Osos. It will focus on DACA students, immigration help, ESL, and inspiration on continuing education. We have also invited our bilingual partners from SLCUSD, TMHA, and Prado. The goal is to motivate parents and students to continue their education and to know what services are available to them.



There is a call for auditions for the San Luis Obispo Master Chorale on Sept. 13 at Saint Paul The Apostle Catholic Church, 800 Bello St. in Pismo Beach. Auditions for new members are held in anticipation of the upcoming performance of "The French Connection," featuring the Fauré Requiem, Poulenc's Gloria, and more. The concert will be held at the Performing Arts Center in SLO on November 21. For more information and to register for the audition, go to slmasterchorale.org/audition.



Morro Coast Audubon will hold a Zoom community program called Birding Fast and Slow featuring speaker Alvar Jaramillo on Sept. 20 at 7 p.m. As many people know, birding can be immensely gratifying. But there is a lot to it that is not thought about. Our brains engage in different ways to identify a bird. You have heard of the "reptilian brain" well there is something to that, and some aspects of what we do as birders is reflexive, other aspects are deeply thoughtful and contemplative. There is perhaps no activity

Events Continued on page 9

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Police Blotter



Morro Bay Police Logs

- **Aug. 29:** Police stopped a suspicious vehicle at 5:51 p.m. in the 1700 block of embarcadero. A 41-year-old Long Beach tomato was nicked for suspicion of driving sauced.
- **Aug. 28:** Police contacted a regular customer at 11 p.m. at Albertsons on Quintana Road who had an RSVP from the judge. She was issued another disappearance ticket and released.
- **Aug. 28:** Police stopped a suspicious car at 8:51 p.m. at Main and Las Vegas. Logs indicated the Paso Robles resident, 29, was cited for alleged possession of drug paraphernalia, her stash no doubt hidden where the sun don't shine and the police won't search.
- **Aug. 27:** Police contacted a suspicious fellow at 12:30 p.m. at Quintana Place and Main. The 36-year-old from Santa Maria had a bench warrant and was cited and released to continue his heathenish ways.
- **Aug. 26:** Police contacted an apparent swizzle stick traipsing about at 11:10 p.m. in the 1100 block of Napa. Logs indicated the 40-year-old man, whose listed occupation is "fisherman," got nicked for suspicion of possessing drugs and a glass crack pipe. He was cited and released.
- **Aug. 26:** Police responded at 11:18 a.m. to a disturbance in the 300 block of Beachcomber. Logs indicated a 31-year-old hombre from Bakersfield was cited for alleged willful violation of a stay-the-hell-away-from-me court order.
- **Aug. 26:** Police responded at 12:18 a.m. to a hit-n-split accident in the 1100 block of Front St. Logs indicated a 36-year-old woman from Yuma, Ariz., was arrested for suspicion of crashin'-n-dashin', a suspended license and

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- driving smashed, which explains a lot.
- **Aug. 24:** Police responded at 10:45 p.m. to a disturbance in the 900 block of Main. A 30-year-old louse from Jonesboro, Arkansas, was arrested for suspicion of domestic battery.
 - **Aug. 24:** Police responded at 10:26 p.m. to a disturbance in the 800 block of Main. Logs indicated a 39-year-old scruffy philistine from Cambria was hauled to the gulag for suspicion of flexing his beer muscles.
 - **Aug. 24:** Police stopped a suspicious car at 7:13 p.m. in the 900 block of Main, the heart of the danger zone. The 56-year-old driver was arrested for suspicion of driving rat-arsed and he was tossed into to the dungeon.
 - **Aug. 23:** Police contacted s suspicious man at 10:17 a.m. at Scott and Morro. Logs indicated the 44-year-old from Oceano had a bench warrant and was given his next FTA and released.
 - **Aug. 22:** Police got a late report of shots fired in the 100 block of Vashon at 3:09 p.m. No arrests were made, as apparently the shooter missed.
 - **Aug. 22:** Police responded at 2 p.m. to Rite Aid on Quintana where they caught a customer allegedly using the help-yourself aisle. A 43-year-old sticky-fingered fellow was cited for suspicion of shoplifting, a hanging offense in these parts but a career path in Frisco.
 - **Aug. 22:** Police caught up to an old familiar face at 1 p.m. in the 700 block of Quintana. The 47-year-old regular customer had an arrest warrant and was checked into the Parkinson Plaza to atone for his delinquency.
 - **Aug. 22:** Police responded to a reported theft the 700 block of Quintana at Burger King. A 35-year-old woman had a bench warrant and was cited for suspicion of petty theft, as apparently she couldn't have it her way.
 - **Aug. 22:** Police responded at 2 a.m., to a disturbance somewhere Downtown. The apparently raucous fellow, 30, was hauled to the clink for suspicion of getting spanked in public.
 - **Aug. 21:** Police were called at 8:36 p.m. with a tip about a guy in the 700 block of Embarcadero who "was reported heavily intoxicated and operating a motor vehicle," according to logs. The 62-year-old borracho was arrested for suspicion of driving deep in his cups.
 - **Aug. 21:** Police responded at 7:30 p.m. to a disturbance in the 200 block of Olive. Police contacted a 28-year-old gent whom they arrested for resisting arrest and suspicion of getting slizzard in public.
 - **Aug. 21:** Police contacted a 43-year-old apparently crankypated woman at 1:45 p.m. at Main and Harbor. She was nicked for suspicion of disorderly conduct and the Mamaluke was reportedly booked into the County B&B.

- **Aug. 20:** Police responded at "4003" hours (sic) to the 2000 block of Seaview for a car crack-up. No injuries reported.
- **Aug. 20:** A citizen in the 500 block of Main said his or her car was entered and rummaged through but the thief apparently didn't find anything worth stealing. Another vehicle at the location was apparently not so lucky, though police didn't reveal the possessions pilfered.
- **Aug. 18:** Police responded to the 2700 block of Hemlock where a citizen said their bicycle had been stolen from the driveway. Logs indicated they later recovered the bike at 2170 Main. It was apparently undamaged, though no doubt traumatized.
- **Aug. 18:** A citizen in the 200 block of Dunes told police that he or she had been threatened via text message, a case where caller blocking might come in handy.
- **Aug. 17:** Police contacted the Three Stooges at 9:14 p.m. camping out at the Community Center. A man, 51, woman, 21, and another fellow, 29 were cited for alleged possession of a crack pipe and illegal camping, nick, nick, nick...
- **Aug. 17:** Police towed away an apparently offensive vehicle parked too long in the 400 block of Rennel.
- **Aug. 17:** Police stopped a suspicious vehicle at 12:09 p.m. in the 800 block of Morro Bay Blvd. Logs indicated the fooliot, 59, had a suspended license and was cited and released. His vehicle however, was jailed at the impound yard. It was the second capture of a guy's vehicle for a suspended license. The first was at 10 a.m. on Atascadero Road down by the beach.
- **Aug. 17:** Two wallets were found by two different Samaritans in two different places and both given to police.
- **Aug. 17:** Police contacted a suspicious fellow at the highly suspect time of 3:18 a.m. in the 300 block of Quintana. A 69-year-old apparent swagman was cited for a bench warrant and released.
- **Aug. 16:** A citizen in the 100 block of Rennel reported vandalism. Police are sending a crime report to the district attorney for possible inaction.
- **Aug. 16:** Police responded to Coast Electronics in the 500 block of Quintana where they reported some master criminal stole a hand-held radio scanner.
- **Aug. 16:** At 9:47 a.m. police spied a suspicious fellow at Lila Keiser Park. Logs indicated the 52-year-old scofflaw had a bench warrant. He was of course issued another slip of paper and released.
- **Aug. 16:** A man in the 300 block of Quintana called police to report a theft of his property from a storage unit. Logs indicated they discovered the victim had two bench warrants, so they cited him, the victim — the guy who got ripped off — because you should never bow before hyenas.

This is How We Celebrate Birthdays in Baywood



COVID-19 may have put a damper on traditional birthday parties, but who needs traditional solutions when you have our beautiful bay?

Paul Irving, Labor Day baby (this year), Estero Bay News music maven, proprietor of Big, Big SLO and one of the unofficial mayors of Baywood Park, ushered in another

trip around the sun with a community paddle to the sandspit. Irving invited his water-bound friends to meet in Baywood and head over to the sandspit to celebrate in a uniquely Baywood manner.

Happy birthday Paul!

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Community

Events From page 7
as complete as birding, in that it can be enjoyed in a multitude of ways, by essentially every type of person. It adds to other outdoor activities, and even to mundane situations like doing outdoor chores. There is a lot to birding, and, perhaps what is forgotten, is that it makes connected with nature. This connection is not only fun, it is vital, and it is absolutely wonderful for your health. The meeting ID is 850 0306 3314 and the passcode is MorroCoast.

The Great American Melodrama presents Frankenstein's Bride Sept. 16 through Nov. 14 at 1863 Front St. in Oceano. This horror story spoof hilariously reconstructs the classic tale by injecting it with musical parodies, pop culture references, and witty one-liners. Fifteen years after the death of Frankenstein's creation, a mad scientist attempts to reanimate the Creature. What could possibly go wrong? Tickets are \$25-\$32 plus a \$4 to \$5 surcharge. They can be purchased at americanmelodrama.com or call the box office at 805-489-2499.
Masks are mandatory for everyone over the age of 2

while in the theater, unless actively eating or drinking. In order to provide the best evening possible for the audience, performers will not be wearing masks on stage. All staff and performers are fully vaccinated.



San Luis Obispo Museum of Art, 1010 Broad Street, presents *Returning Home: Sculpture* by Kristin Lindseth through Sept. 26. This series of sculptures explores the

idea of home through miniature houses mounted on top of metal armatures. Reflecting on her experiences regarding the California wildfires of August 2020, Lindseth considers the implications of vulnerability, loss, and hope. Her sculptures suggest an alternate reality as safe havens from disaster. Their lights and music serve as beacons, welcoming those in their vicinity to safety.

Morro Bay 4-H is getting ready for the new program year. Kids from 5 years of age to 19 are invited to join the club, one of the largest youth organizations in the United States, reaching close to 6 million kids in the U.S. alone. The Morro Bay Club will kick off the new program year at the club's first general meeting on Tuesday, Oct. 5 starting at 6:30 pm held at the club's farm. Information about Morro Bay 4-H and the projects that are being offered this year will be provided at this meeting. The current list of projects to be offered is: beef, poultry, gardening, rocketry, baking, swine, sheep, rabbits, leadership and goats.
For more information contact the community club leader, Carla Wixom, at 805-441-7057. More information is also available at the county website: ucanr.edu/sites/slo4-h.

Walt Whitman Gay Men's Book Club meets virtually via zoom every 2nd Monday of the month from 7 - 9 p.m. This club reads, studies, and discusses books chosen by the group that relate to their lives as gay men.
All are welcome. Contact email@galacc.org for the virtual meeting link.



Art Center Morro Bay presents a free ceramics art demonstration by Shell Voorhees and Aimee Brantley, co-owners of The Ugly Mug Ceramics on Monday, September 13 from 3 to 5 p.m. 835 Main St. During this demonstration, Shell and Aimee will take folks through the steps needed to create a ceramic piece from start to finish. They will make a small planter from clay slab and discuss techniques in hand building and will cover the stages of drying, firing and glazing.
Wear facial coverings while in the gallery and classroom. For more information, call (805) 772-2504 or go to ArtCenterMorrBay.org.

Don't forget the celebration of the 150th Anniversary of Morro Bay's founding is from 2 - 4 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 11 at the Morro Bay Community Center. Admission is \$1 and there'll be birthday cake, too.
Morro Bay Beautiful will also unveil a custom, jigsaw puzzle created by world-renowned artist and puzzle maker, Eric Dowdle, who will be on hand to meet the public and unveil the special painting he's done of Morro Bay.
He will also deliver the first run of jigsaw puzzles created from his artwork that MBB will sell at participating retailers in town as a fundraiser for the organization. The event also recognizes 9/11 and first responders.
For more information, go to morrobaybeautiful.org.

Events Continued on page 10



Kern County Supt of Schools hiring for:
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www.campkeep.org

Naturalist

Located near SLO
\$17.56 - \$21.18/hr;
40 hrs/wk flex schedule M-F; starts immediately
Benefits & Retirement
Deadline: Sept 22 at 5pm
Apply via EdJoin:
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Lead Naturalist

Located near Los Osos
\$19.80 - \$23.86/hr;
40 hrs/wk flex schedule M-F; starts Jan 2022
Benefits & Retirement
Deadline: Oct 13 at 5pm
Apply via EdJoin:
<https://www.edjoin.org/Home/DistrictJobPosting/1432252>
All above naturalist duties. Problem-solve. Student behavior management. Campus organization. Liaison with schools. Conduct staff/ volunteer trainings. Fill in for supervisor.

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Deadline: Ongoing need
If interested email: elkeller@kern.org
Follow established school menu, up to 200 meals/shift. Monitor diet restrictions. Use safe cooking practices in industrial kitchen. Keep facility clean. Positive customer service and flexibility required.

For questions contact Tammy Garcia (tagarcia@kern.org; 661-636-4391)
For more information:www.campkeep.org

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Community

Events From page 9

For more information contact the community club leader, Carla Wixom, at 805-441-7057. More information is also available at the county website: ucanr.edu/sites/slo4-h.



On Saturday, September 18 at 9:30 a.m., the Los Osos Valley Garden Club presents a Zoom Program: Waterwise Gardening. Are you interested in knowing more about waterwise gardening? This program discusses the benefits of gardening in a waterwise fashion, including plant selection and tips for success. It will be presented by Peggy Burhenn, a SLO Master Gardener. To Join Zoom Meeting, use the following link: bit.ly/3kRtZtB. The meeting ID is 864 0896 7390 and the passcode is lovargarden.

...

ARTS Obispo's monthly 2nd Sat Artwalk, "Art & About Los Osos" takes place Saturday, September 11 from 1- 4 p.m. at Costa Gallery, 2087 10th St. This event features an exclusive book signing and photo exhibit with acclaimed Los Osos photojournalist, reporter and college instructor, James Michael Raphael. The guest author will have 24 copies of his book "Life in Focus," with over 400 photos from his career working for Southern CA newspapers and FEMA. Check out his work at raphaelinfocus.wordpress.com. Raphael collaborated with 17 Cal Poly art, journalism and graphic communications students, along with project advisor Frank Ramano, professor emeritus of Rochester Institute of Technology, NY.

Also enjoy plein air painting demos by Costa Gallery artist Katy Smith, with her daughter Adeline's recent artwork, lemonade and snacks. Explore unique new art and fine craft by Costa Gallery's 20 local and West Coast artists, too. Attendance is free and open to the public. See ARTS Obispo's complete list of Los Osos venues and maps at artsobispo.org/art-and-about. Masks required by mandate inside gallery. For more information, call 559.799.9632

Cambria Historical Society Expands

By Jill Turnbow



The Maggetti House in Cambria is now open to the public as the Nancy Moure Research Center. Photo by Jill Turnbow

The Cambria Historical Society, which sits on the corner of Burton and Center St. in Cambria, has opened the Maggetti House to the public as the Nancy Moure Research Center. The Maggetti House, adjacent to the current museum, is often referred to as the Blue House and will serve as a research center for those interested in Cambria's

colorful history.

Slated to be torn down in the 1970's, Marjorie Delyser bought the home in 1978 and rented it to several business to keep it from being destroyed. The building was purchased from the Delyser family by the Historical Society in 2014 and, through a generous donation from local Nancy Moure, was paid off in 2017.

The structure was originally built in 1878 as a doctor's office and a one-story residence. It was the Maggetti family that added the second story for their six children. However, the staircase is a mere 23 inches wide, which has presented quite a challenge for accessing some of the museum's archives.

This new facility will house artifacts and materials such as editions of the Cambrian from 1931 to 2015 as well as other historical newspapers from the 1860s and 70s. It also contains all the Pinedorado booklets and most recently acquired the historical Paul Squibb papers, an informal collection of notes and interviews.

Local artist Art Van Rhyn donated 19 binders of his original cartoons that have appeared in the Cambrian and will be on hand later in October to autograph his new book of cartoons, compiled by Christine Heinrichs.

Melody Coe, president of the Cambria Historical Society and Archivist/Curator of all three of the properties managed by the organization says, "Anyone, locals or visitors, are welcome to come research our fascinating history, look for old photos or historical newspaper articles."

Melody also oversees the old Schoolhouse Project on Main St., which is currently scheduled to open as a museum by summer of 2022.

One of the charming touches of the Maggetti House's renovation is the addition of the front door from the Music House that sits at 2581 Main St. The door was salvaged and is being used as a side gate. The Music House was built in 1865 by George Cole, one of Cambria's founders.

The now named Nancy Moure Research Center is open to the public Wednesday thru Friday from noon to 2.30. The public is welcome to browse the extensive archives, artifacts, and numerous photography collections. Coe will be on hand to assist visitors. The home is across

from the Greenspace Creekside Reserve and adjacent to the Guthrie-Bianchini House, which serves as the main Historical Society Museum.

Folks interested in volunteering at the museum should contact Melody Coe at 805-448-5652. They are currently looking for people interested in helping photograph the archives. Information can also be found on the website, cambria-historicalsociety.com.



The front door from the "Music House" is Cambria was salvaged and is being used as a side gate at the Nancy Moure Research Center.

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Community

Estero Bluffs Cleanup, Sept. 18



The Cayucos Land Conservancy is organizing a volunteer, cleanup, work day to tidy up the Estero Bluffs State Park and its many little beaches.

The cleanup is set for 9 a.m. to noon, Saturday, Sept. 18. Volunteers are asked to meet at “Killer’s” surf spot, a.k.a. the Fig Tree parking lot, at the northerly end of Ocean Avenue (where the tugboat is shipwrecked).

Bring water, a bucket and trash grabber, wear gloves and a hat, too and be prepared for inclement weather (either hot or cold). And be sure to wear sunscreen and good walking shoes.

The plan is to spread out in groups and scour the 4-mile long coastal bluffs for trash and other junk. The cleanup is in coordination with the Ocean Conservancy’s worldwide effort to clean up the earth’s waterways.

According to the Ocean Conservancy website: “Join a global movement to keep beaches, waterways and the ocean trash free. Head out to your favorite beach and use the app to easily record each item of trash you collect. Then share your effort with family and friends” (see: oceanconservancy.org/trash-free-seas/international-coastal-cleanup/cleanswell).

The CLC invites participants to download the app and keep track of the items you pick up for uploading to the OC’s database, as an interesting way to possibly get the kids involved.

And if you can’t make it to Cayucos, The Environmental Center of SLO County (ECOSLO) is coordinating waterway cleanups across the county and is offering cleanup kits to participants. It’s the 37th Annual Coastal Cleanup Day and this year it’s a 2-week long event.

According to the ECOSLO website, “The way it will work is that you will signup for a cleanup kit, which is set up for up to five people, and do a personal trash cleanup at your local park or neighborhood. The reasoning for this strategy is to ensure the health and safety of our volunteers.”

As most everyone would agree, trash in the creeks, rivers and beaches is bad and without regular cleanups, could get much worse, including doing serious harm to the natural environment. Go to: www.ecoslo.org and click on

the link at the top of the home page, to learn more about the kits and the cleanup efforts.

To get involved with the Cayucos Land Conservancy and have professional skills that would benefit the organization, they would love it if you joined their efforts, which right now include working to preserve the Chevron ranchlands east of Morro Bay. Email to: cayucoslandconservancy@gmail.com. See: www.cayucoslandconservancy.org/blogs/news for more on the CLC.

OUT & ABOUT

WITH THE BOOKSHELF WRITERS

The BookShelf Writers consist of four Estero Bay women who have been writing & critiquing together for over five years. For more samples of their work, please visit www.thebookshelfwriters.com

Each issue, this column will feature one of the BookShelf Writers:
Debbie Black, Catherine “Kiki” Kornreich, Judy Salamacha and Susan Vasquez

The Clearing

By Catherine “Kiki” Kornreich

Sandra has come as a guest of my sister’s, but she ends up skiing with Steve and me. This proves to be the beginning of a wonderful friendship, and the start of a fruitful ski history.

She has me doing jumps. Well, she and Steve jump. I bounce. Well, I guess they jump and I really squat. But in any case, she has me doing something, and has all of us laughing like lunatics!

Now, as all serious skiers know, in the 80’s a boda bag filled with red wine is a must on the slopes. Between the three of us, we have to do quite a bit of refilling, but the stops are worth the effort.

As the wine warms our cheeks, we ski harder and faster, taking more risks, and taking more falls. But youth has a way of keeping you upright...even on the slopes.

By now I’m certain that my jumps are of Olympic magnitude, not the quarter inch of air that they find so hysterical.

Another thing that all skiers know, is, if you drink while skiing, one of the downfalls is the frequent need to use the bathroom. After our lunch break, we swear that we’ll hold it until the last run so we can get in as much skiing as possible.

Easier said than done.

Steve, being a faster skier (and a man), is able to pull into the trees, take care of business, and be waiting for us as we sail past, none the wiser.

As we’re getting off the chairlift in the late afternoon, Sandra and I both agree that we aren’t gonna make it til 4:00. In order to get to a bathroom, we’d have to ski to the bottom of this run and take another chair back to the other side of the mountain. “Too much time. Let’s just go in the trees.”

Again, easier said than done.

Sandra and I are both wearing bib-overall ski suits (quite the rage at the time). Quandary number one. We also know that if we step off the skis, we’ll sink pretty deep into

the ungroomed snow. So we both decide to stay perched atop the skis, pull the suits around our ankles, and just carefully squat between our boots.

Men don’t know how good they have it.

So there we are, hidden in a pretty deep forest, bib-overalls bunched below the knee (any higher and you can’t get a clear squat while balancing atop skis), trying to pee. Of course we both struggle with performance anxiety. And our butts are cold. And we start to giggle. And can’t stop.

Sandra, always able to concentrate better than anyone I know, finally succeeds at the task at hand.

As I turn away from her, forcing my own concentration to kick in, my skis turn in the same direction. Which is downhill.

The weather is sunny and warm, creating a crusty surface on the brilliant white snow under the trees, making it quite unmaneuverable.

So there I am, in a little tee-shirt, ski suit around my ankles, big ole bare butt pushed out behind me, squatting over my skis. And I’m picking up momentum!

“Sandra!!!!”

“Oh my god! Stop! Stop!!!!” she’s screaming as she struggles back into her ski suit, trying as quickly as she can to come to my aid.

And now I start to pee.

And now I’m coming out of the trees.

And I’m screaming.

And I’m drawing the attention of everyone who’s on the chairlift, directly above the clearing that I’m entering.

And there’s a little steaming yellow trail, following me every inch of the way.

Catherine “Kiki” Kornreich is a member of The BookShelf Writers. To see more of her work, visit www.thebookshelfwriters.com



Morro Bay Chamber News



The Chamber’s Been Buzzin’



The Morro Bay Chamber of Commerce held the Squeaky Wheel Happy Hour event.

Time has flown by since the June reopening of our economy and the Morro Bay Chamber hasn’t wasted a moment in reconvening our members for celebratory and informative gatherings. We’ve also been very active on the policy and advocacy front, digging into paid parking, City Council goals and objectives, a brand new banner program, CARB rules impacting the sportfishing and recreational boating industries, and BOEM’s extended call area for offshore wind. Many thanks to Peck Planning and Development and DiStasio’s On the Bay for their sponsorship of the Squeaky Wheel Happy Hour event in July!

The Morro Bay Chamber is proud to welcome these new businesses as members:

- San Luis Obispo County Integrated Waste Management Authority
- International Cultural Exchange Services
- David Crye General Engineering Contractor, Inc.
- Absolution Cellars
- Jody Wright Insurance Agency, INC
- SLO Community College District Bond Oversight Committee Member
- Central Coast Lift
- Zen Dog
- Shellie Anderson Therapies

The Morro Bay Chamber is located at 695 Harbor St. They can be reached at 805-772-4467.

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Music

Young Dubliners at Sea Pines



Grab your tickets for Irish Rockers The Young Dubliners as they make a highly anticipated tour stop at Sea Pines Golf Resort on Saturday, September 18. This Celtic Rock powerhouse combines traditional instruments like the fiddle, tin whistle, bodhran, and harp with organ, electric and acoustic guitars, creating a fun, raucous, high energy sound. Be sure to show up on time for the 2 p.m. concert kickoff with Dirty Cello, an equally impressive force of music! Tickets are \$20, Children 12 and under are free, and are on sale now at My805Tix.com. Photo: Young Dubliners

Thu., Sep. 9 • 7:00pm
Allah-Las x Mapache
SLO Brew Rock
855 Aerovista Place, San Luis Obispo

Thu., Sep. 9 • 7:00pm
Con Brio w/Silk Ocean
The Siren
900 Main St, Morro Bay

Thu., Sep. 9 • 7:30pm
Pat Benatar & Neil Giraldo
Vina Robles Amphitheatre
3800 Mill Road, Paso Robles

Thu., Sep. 9 • 7:00pm
Robert Alberts Quintet
The Madonna Inn
100 Madonna Road, San Luis Obispo

Thu., Sep. 9 • 7:00pm
Pat Benatar and Neil Giraldo
Vina Robles Amphitheatre
3800 Mill Road, Paso Robles

Fri., Sep. 10 • 5:00pm
Bill Rotella
Branch Street Deli
203 East Branch Street,
Arroyo Grande

Fri., Sep. 10 • 5:00pm
Truth About Seafood
Concerts in the Plaza
Mission Plaza, San Luis Obispo
Fri., Sep. 10 • 6:00pm
The Dogs @ Halfway Station
Halfway Station
15050 Morro Rd, Atascadero

Fri., Sep. 10 • 8:00pm
The Outlaw Mariachi
The Siren
900 Main St, Morro Bay

Fri., Sep. 10 • 8:00pm
Tommy Castro & The

Paul's Picks

California Honeydrops, Proxima Parada, Wordsauce, and Nicki Bluhm Numbskull

Good Medicine Present a family friendly event at El Chorro Park (home of the Live Oak Music Festival). This day long gathering will feature live performances from The California Honeydrops, Proxima Parada, Nicki Bluhm and Wordsauce. Admission for children 12 years of age and younger is free. This is a great way to get a mini festival experience in before summer winds down. Tickets are \$35 plus fees, and children 12 and under are free. Beer, wine and food will be available for purchase.

Tickets available at GoodMedicinePresents.com. Photo: California Honeydrops



Painkillers
The Fremont Theater
1035 Monterey St,
San Luis Obispo

Sat., Sep. 11 • 8:00pm
CAPYAC & The Bogeys
The Siren
900 Main St, Morro Bay

Sat., Sep. 11 • 3:00pm
Live at the Lighthouse: Back Pages
Band
Point San Luis Lighthouse
1 Lighthouse Rd, Avila Beach

Sat., Sep. 11 • 2:00pm
Route 66
Sea Pines Golf Resort
1945 Solano St, Los Osos

Sat., Sep. 11 • 1:30pm
CA Honeydrops/Proxima Parada/
Nicki Bluhm
El Chorro Regional Park
State Hwy 1 at Diary Creek Rd.,
San Luis Obispo

Sat., Sep. 11 • 12:30pm
Songwriters at Play: The Salty
Suites
Sculpterra Winery &

Sculpture Garden
5015 Linne Rd, Paso Robles

Sat., Sep. 11 • 8:00pm
Ziggy Marley
Vina Robles Ampitheatre
3800 Mill Road, Paso Robles

Sun., Sep. 12 • 1:00pm
Damon Castillo Band
Dinosaur Caves Park
2701 Price Street,
Pismo Beach

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Letters to The Editor



To The Anti-vax Community

The COVID-19 pandemic rages on, and there are still tens of thousands who have yet to get vaccinated, even though the shots are free and readily available. There is no doubt this mindset is prolonging the pandemic.

Back in the early 50s, a polio epidemic swept through this country with a vengeance. I was in grade school back then, and several of my friends came down with it. The result was withered limbs that never recovered full function, and normal lives forever changed. People were terrified. Pools were emptied, and beaches closed. It was a very frightening time.

But then Dr Jonas Salk produced a vaccine that prevented this scourge. The shots, and later the Sabin oral vaccine, were administered to all comers. My own father, the school physician, gave us the injections in the nursing office. Magically, within months, the deadly polio epidemic was stopped in its tracks, and people's lives returned to normal. It was truly a miracle. The same thing could happen now with COVID-19, but you MUST get the shots first. Just do it; you won't ever regret it.

John Winthrop
Cayucos

Cheers for Morro Bay Abalone Movie

I want to take this chance to congratulate the Morro Bay Maritime Museum for the successful premiere of their documentary, "Morro Bay — 'Once' the Abalone Capital of the World"

at the Bay Theater on August 22nd. It was sold out! Anyone who was there had a chance see the colorful history of this town and many of the people who attended were part of that history. After the movie, there was a question and answer session featuring Steve Rebuck, Trudy O'Brien, Dee Dee Pierce and Eddie Pierce.

If you didn't make it, the DVD is on sale at the Maritime Museum.

Special thanks to Lori Mather and Scott Mather for all the time and effort they put into this project. I hope that

the residents of Morro Bay realize what a special history the City of Morro Bay has and do all they can to support the Morro Bay Maritime Museum in it's quest to preserve local waterfront history.
Good job!

Stan House
Morro Bay

Last Sunday the MB Theater was filled to capacity with family members representing MB pioneer families — Bickford, Rebuck, Brebes, Leage, Sylvester, Porter, Reivia, Montgomery and Pierce. I sat alongside 50+ members of my Pierce family as we cheered the images on the big screen. The movie was "Morro Bay — 'Once' the Abalone Capital of the World." Finally someone got the story right.

From the Pierce family we would like to thank the Morro Bay Maritime Museum and their volunteer staff. This little gem sitting on our Embarcadero is simply a treasure. With this DVD the MBMM has put together the creation story of the MB Fishing Industry, and now with this informational documentary we all know it started with the Abalone Industry.

Lori Mather painstakingly put together priceless and timeless underwater video along with the remarkable photos and film captured by MB's unofficial historical photographer, Glen Bickford. She tied this together with a great sound track and spun a human interest story to keep us all on the edge of our seat. This movie should be in every classroom and available at our local libraries. Our city administration could have a movie night and spend 40 minutes in the past so they can go forward with a future we can all be proud of.

The MBMM website <https://Morro bay maritime.org> hosts 19 oral histories captured from 2001 to the present and can be viewed by simply logging on. The volunteers from the museum have captured the flavor of Morro Bay from it's beginning and should be supported in every way we can. Thank you Scott Mather, Bill Steele, and Bonnie Jones, along with your crew of volunteers, you are doing a marvelous job.

DeeDee Pierce Perry
Morro Bay

Just a quick "Bravo Zulu" to Lori Mather for her documentary "Morro Bay — 'Once' the Abalone Capital of the World." The world premier at the Bay Theater was like a sporting event as families of pioneers featured in the film cheered and clapped as they appeared in this historical era.

The work, research and final product was well worth the time and effort, and, as a 40 year resident of Morro Bay, I was moved as I learned a thing or two about some old, dear friends. Thanks Again, Lori ...You done good!

Gary Ryan
Morro Bay

The Bible is not Truth

In regard to Mr. Presnal's recent letter published in the Estero Bay News (vol. 4, Issue 16): I agree that the bible is not fairy tale or pixie dust, but it is not the truth, and we the people are not obligated to believe a word or if, or will we ever be coerced to do so.

Willian Fritch
Morro Bay

Go Estero Bay News

Thank you Dean and all those on staff at Estero Bay News for continuing to publish an actual newspaper with information those of us who live here can actually use AND for doing it with a sense of humor AND a sense of community.

We look forward to each edition. Thank you!
Maryellen Simkins
Los Osos

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

White Caps From page 1

for our community! I had to let EBN readers know where they would perform next. Board President Pat Poremba returned my request for information instantly. We are, indeed, so lucky to have a professionally practiced community band.

Don't miss their next concert at Morro Bay's 150th birthday bash on Saturday, September 11 from 1:15 p.m. - 2:15 p.m. at the Community Center with a possible encore at 4 p.m. after the conclusion of the party. All are welcome for the outdoor event that will also unveil a painting of Morro Bay's cityscape by famed artist and puzzle-maker, Eric Dowdle, courtesy of Morro Bay Beautiful. Puzzles will be on sale and with a \$1 donation celebrants receive cake and ice cream!

President Poremba also mentioned they hoped the city's Halloween event happens. "We always love to play for Morro Bay events." They are working on dates to perform some September and October Saturdays at the community market.

Due to COVID-19, the band endured 15-months without musical practices or performances. Members finally felt safe enough to play again in June of this year "At that point the local cases were very low and many of our musicians were able to get vaccinated," Poremba said. "We make sure to follow all local, state, and federal guidelines for all rehearsals. Practices are outdoors and with social distancing. We encourage all members to stay home if they are uncomfortable or not feeling well. We use masks for our instruments when possible to further reduce any risk of spread."

The MB White Caps currently have 20 regular members with others joining as they can.


"New members are always welcome no matter the skill level, age or instrument they play." Poremba said. "Even though we normally play concert band arrangements, we have a regular violinist. Our members range from very experienced professional musicians and music teachers, to folks like me who picked up a horn decades after playing in middle or high school. I started on sax two years ago after a 35-year break and I'm having the time of my life."

There are no auditions. Their policy was "just show up - we'll find you a place," however, in this current pandemic environment, Board VP and Music Librarian Pat Burbank advised it is now better to contact them by email at mbwhitecaps@gmail.com so they can bring the appropriate sheet music and for everyone's safety-sake bring your personal music stand.

Their current bandleader is Phil Ledesma. He drives six hours up and back from Bishop for each practice and performance. Their current board members are President Poremba who plays sax; VP Burbank on flute; Treasurer and percussionist Bill Swanson; Sheri Aust, secretary on flute; Kathy Chapman, property manager on French horn; Kathy Jorgens, webmaster and clarinetist; and Carol Johnson is also alternate conductor.

According to their website www.mbwhitecaps.com, the Morro Bay White Caps Community Band was created as a way for volunteer musicians from SLO County to gather and play music together. The band provides concerts primarily in the Morro Bay area for non-political public events and fundraisers supporting worthy causes. "We continue an appreciation for, and the preservation of, the community concert band tradition in American music."

Typically their season runs Saturdays during the summertime lately at the Embarcadero Chess Board. Started in 1980 by Edgar "Ed" Smith, the group gained popularity showing up on street corners playing for whoever would enjoy their music. Today they have more structure and are an officially registered non-profit. The group continues to thrive and perform by donations coming from generous attendees at their concerts and events.



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Community

Tunneling From page 18

— that specializes in tunneling operations. Even so, this job is a little unusual.

For one, the job is running two forced sewer main pipes, a return wastewater pipe for discharge into the ocean and another water line — located in a separate trench — that will carry the recyclable water back to a new injection well field located on the northeast corner of the power plant property, adjacent to Morro Creek.

That’s where the recycled water will be injected into the ground to augment the groundwater basin along Morro Creek, which is a main source in the City’s drinking water supplies.

That injected water is intended to act as a block to potential seawater intrusion, should the City need to pump the wells at Lila Keiser Park, as well as adding to the supply.

Laying pipes is a complex construction in and of itself, Amico said. Add boring for some 340-linear feet, at 30 feet deep and it gets even trickier.

Vadnais brought in the biggest tunnel boring machine they have, and have been boring and fitting a 60-inch (5 feet diameter) steel dram or casing (steel pipe in 20-foot segments, connected with a fitting and then tack-welded), that will have all the pipes running through it, including a separate conduit holding a fiber optic cable.

That conduit will be backfilled with sand to fill any cavities.

The boring machine is a giant, hydraulic drill rig, with a cutting head similar to what one might use to drill a water or oil well but drilling horizontally through the soil instead of vertically down into it. It’s a whole lot bigger than a water well bit and the first thing they had to do was dig two massive holes on either side of the roundabout.

The drill rig sits at the bottom of a huge 35-foot deep hole, lined with steel sheeting walls and sitting in the front yard of what used to be a U-Haul store. It’s what lies screened behind the green fence.

The drilling system includes a big pump house that pumps in a drilling solution — Bentonite clay and water — to keep the soil being dug out fluid and easy to remove, but also keeping the hole from collapsing.

A mix of wet soil, water and the lubricant — called slurry — is piped back through the drill and into a hopper. There it is piped into the separator building and the drilling fluid is separated and reused.

The wet soils are dried to what feels a lot like ordinary beach sand though not as gritty, and trucked away and stored off site. It will be used to fill in the holes.

The drill rig has two, giant hydraulic rams that push the casing along with the drill bit, so the tunnel pipe is installed as they go. The rams push against a solid concrete wall that was built down inside the hole. It has 300,000 pounds of “jacking” force, Amico said of the hydraulic rams.

The tunneling job also required digging a “receiver” hole on the other side of the roundabout on Las Tunas Avenue next to the Morro Bay Coffee Co. That 30-foot deep hole is where things got even more complicated.



A massive tunnel boring machine sits 35 feet deep in a hole at a former U-Haul Store site adjacent to the roundabout. The center pipe is a 5-foot diameter steel conduit through which the new sewer conveyance pipes will be installed.

Amico said the City’s consultant, Geotech, had drilled test holes to see what’s under the ground and not surprisingly they encountered silty sands, clay, soil, and water. “We expected to hit water,” Amico said, “the Geotech report predicted it.”

That’s led to a side hole being dug in the sidewalk in front of the coffee company, where they have been steadily pumping out groundwater to keep the receiver hole dry.

That water is being pumped at 100 gallons a minute, into the City sewer line to mix with the flow and be treated at the current treatment plant on Atascadero Road.

The City doesn’t have any water wells in the area, so



A look into a 20-foot segment of 5-foot diameter steel casing pipe that is being installed under the roundabout

up Quintana Road near La Loma Street. From there, it will gravity feed all the way to the new plant.

All this force will be generated by a new lift station being installed in another huge hole on Main Street next to Lemos Pet Supply Store.

The way it will work is that Pump Station-A (on Atascadero Road) will push the flow up to PS-B (at Lemos) and then be pushed all the way to the treatment plant. Also, a pipeline will be run from the existing Lift Station 2 (under the Front Street parking lot by the Maritime Museum), through the power plant and connect with the pipes that will run from Atascadero Road to PS-B.

That will bypass an existing main line that runs down the Embarcadero, under Morro Creek and on to the treatment plant on Atascadero Road. That pipeline drains the Downtown, the Heights and Embarcadero, nearly half the town. That portion of the pipeline job has not yet begun, Amico said.

Tunneling work has progressed pretty smoothly, Amico said, and so too has the pipeline job, despite a rocky start. On the first day of trenching on Quintana at La Loma, they hit a water main and with water gushing 20-feet high, the City had to come out to fix it.

As a City crew was finishing up that mishap, a bypass sewer line they’d put in at the Lift Station 3 (located near the Quintana/South Bay intersection) was bumped by a forklift and started leaking. The City fixed that too.

Work on trenching down Quintana Road is fast coming to an end, as Anvil’s trench crew there is about to start on

Paul Amico, the pipe-line project manager for Carollo Engineers, grabs a handful of the dried soils produced by the tunneling machine.



that groundwater isn’t being used.

Amico said they chose to put the water into the sewer because they’d need a permit from the Regional Water Quality Control Board to use the storm drains.

“You don’t need a permit to go into your own sewer system,” he said.

The pit on Las Tunas is less deep, meaning the roundabout run is going uphill. That’s because the high point in the whole 3.5-mile run out to the treatment plant is further



Anvil’s Quintana trench crew is wrapping up the excavations through the Quintana Road business district. Here one worker lifts out trench bracing so the 8-foot wide trench can be filled in.

its final leg, making a slanted approach to the tunneling site.

Once they finish that small part, Amico said, that crew will move to the end of Quintana and start working towards PS-B at Lemos. So while the disruptions on Quintana Road through the business district will end soon, they’ll shift to Main Street and from there to the bicycle path behind the power plant towards Atascadero Road. At some point they will have to close Main Street to trench through it.

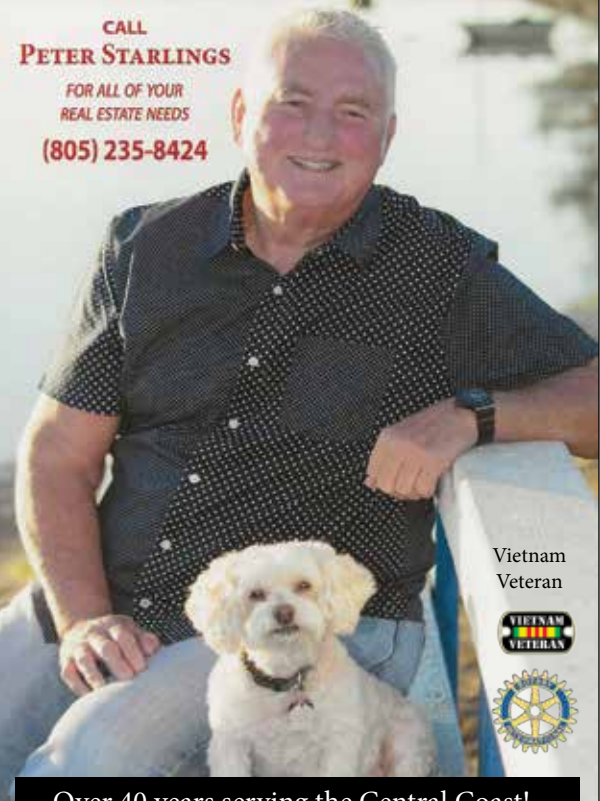
They will also have to tunnel under Willow Camp Creek, a seasonal channel that starts on the hills east of town, runs under Hwy 1 and into a cement channel that parallels Quintana and Hwy 1. That creek channel dives under Main Street and resurfaces along the bike path. Though it isn’t much of a creek, it’s still considered a wetland and they want to avoid digging through it, Amico explained.

Amico said they should be done with the tunneling project in another week or so, provided no further issues are dug up.

Right now, Amico said, there are five crews working at several sites — the roundabout tunnel, two on Quintana Road, and one each at PS-B on Main, and at PS-A on Atascadero Road.

Amico, who has over 30 years of experience on big jobs like this, said he admires Morro Bay for what it’s trying to do with recycle its wastewater, calling it “forward looking.”


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KEVIN O'CONNOR, President

Rattlesnake From page 1

“You can’t do that without having this kind of technology, because we would be disturbing them. If we were to walk up on them, they would start to act defensively,” said Taylor. “By having this camera we can actually do it from afar, they don’t even know we are there.”

Rattlesnakes are ovoviviparous, so they don’t lay eggs instead the female carries the eggs for about three months and then gives birth to live young —in our area six is the average number. Baby rattlesnakes are approximately 10 inches in length. They remain close to their mother for the first week or 10 days of their lives. During that time, much like humans, the mothers will often babysitting for each other.

“The pups shed their skin, the first time in about 10 days or so, and then everyone kind of disperses,” Taylor said. “We don’t really know what happens after that.”

The second reason for the study is to hopefully change the public image of rattlesnakes.

“People can see that rattlesnakes aren’t these blood-thirsty demons like they are shown on TV,” Taylor said. “In fact, they are really peaceful creatures that just want to take care of their babies and be left alone. The hope is that more people will, maybe not like rattlesnakes, but will be willing to respect them and call a service to remove them if they’re in their yard instead of chopping off their little heads.”

The first day the broadcast went live, 6000 people watched and chatted online while doing so. Taylor says the best time to watch is typically around 11 a.m. or noon.

“It’s kind of fun to watch or you’re on your lunch hour,” she said.

Viewers of the livestream are asked to help out by reporting observations on rattlesnake behavior at bit.ly/reportrattlecam. Keep in mind that sometimes snakes will not be visible because they are hiding in the crevices, and sometimes they will be coiled up or passing through, so check back throughout the day.

Taylor says the pups will remain at the rookery with their mothers through mid to late September. After that, the snakes will disperse through the countryside in search of food through late fall and then enter hibernation until spring. The camera will be turned off from the end of September through next spring.

The livestream is part of Project RattleCam, a community science project in which the public helps scientists study rattlesnakes. The project has collected time-lapse images taken in Colorado where they also have DNA samples of the snakes to study familial bonds. The local camera is the latest addition.

“We hope to eventually install cameras on snake aggregations all over the world,” Taylor said.

Next year could be the year of the rattlesnake for Taylor. National Geographic magazine is working on a story about human and rattlesnake interactions and Taylor’s work will be featured.

Taylor’s excitement about the project, and the snakes themselves, is as contagious as it can get when talking about a reptile a large percentage of the population fears. She refers to the snakes by name and even recognizes them individually by their scales.

“I love them,” she said. “I’ve been completely obsessed, they are so wonderful. I sit all day watching them and interacting with people on live chat on YouTube about it. I’ve been looking forward to this livestream camera like it was Christmas all year.”

If you come across a rattlesnake, Taylor says to give it 10-feet of space. If one is on your property, the Cal Poly professor offers a free removal service where the snakes are safely relocated. To find out more about what the snake service does or donate to help fund future rattlesnake livestreams — the camera for this project was \$7,000 funded through Cal Poly’s Research Scholarly and Creative Activities program — go to centralcoastsnareservices.com or call 805-401-0811.

Jail From page 1

Investigation’s Findings

The DOJ found fault with the jail’s actions. “After a comprehensive investigation,” the agency said, “we found that San Luis Obispo Jail harms the people it incarcerates by subjecting them to excessive force and by failing to provide adequate medical and mental health care. The Justice Department hopes to continue to work with the jail to resolve these systemic problems.”

As one might expect, the Sheriff’s Department was none to pleased with the report’s criticism. “We recognize the issues and concerns brought forth in the DOJ report,” reads a news release from Sheriff’s spokesman, Tony Cipolla. “However, the report fails to take into account the many remedial measures undertaken by the Sheriff’s Office since 2018 when the investigation began.”

He lists seven major accomplishments by the Sheriff’s Department, which oversees all three adult jails — Women’s and Men’s Jails, and the County Honor Farm — they are:

- Named an “Innovator County” for the Stepping Up Initiative for work in reducing the number of days individuals with serious mental illness are in County Jail;
- Started a “Jail Based Competency Treatment Program” to restore patients with serious mental illness to competency to avoid long Department of State Hospital wait times;
- Created the Behavioral Health Unit (BHU) and Kansas Max Housing Unit, which provide dedicated space to treat and house patients with special needs, including chronic medical and mental health problems;
- Expanded medical, mental health, and dental care under Wellpath, a correctional health care company, now in year 3 of its contract with San Luis Obispo County;
- Progressing ahead of schedule with Americans with Disabilities Act Improvements per a recent settlement agreement;
- Initiated a Compliance Unit including the chief medical officer position and increased staffing; and,
- Implemented a 40-hour Crisis Intervention Training among other tactical and administrative topics for all staff.

Man’s Death the Trigger

It was the in-custody death of an Atascadero man, Andrew Holland, who suffered from schizophrenia for many years and in January 2017 was having a mental crisis and hurting himself while in custody, which brought these issues to public attention.



Andrew Holland

So jailers tied him naked into a restraint chair and left him for nearly two days.

When Holland was released from the chair, he passed out about 45 minutes later and died, reportedly from an “intrapulmonary embolism” (a blood clot in the lungs), according to the Coroner.

The outrage from that and several other in-custody deaths mainly caused by drug overdoses, medical emergencies, and suicides, made the 2018 Election very tough for both Sheriff Ian Parkinson and District Attorney Dan Dow, who each faced strong challenges.

The Holland Family, which got a \$5 million settlement from the County for their son’s death, contributed heavily to both opposition candidates and also started an advocacy organization for jail reforms (see: andrewhollandfoundation.org).

When a Hanford man, Russell Hammer, in 2018, became the 12th inmate to die at the County Jail since 2012, the FBI was called in by the Sheriff to investigate. This DOJ report is the result.

Hammer’s widow, Margo Benson-Hammer, too filed a claim for wrongful death against the County and Morro Bay Police Department over the arrest in November 2017 of her husband following a domestic violence incident at a Morro Bay RV park.

Russell Hammer was accused of attacking his wife with a knife. MBPD arrested him and he was placed into

a mental health hold at the jail. A judge ordered him to be examined by two psychiatrists but he died in custody before those reports were heard.

The County settled Mrs. Benson-Hammer’s claim just this past June for “nuisance value,” according to the County Counsel’s Office. Nuisance value — the maximum they will pay to settle a claim — for SLO County is \$35,000.

As for the City of Morro Bay’s possible culpability, City Manager Scott Collins said, “The City rejected a claim filed by Margo Hammer related to the arrest of Russell Hammer and was not named in the Complaint for Damages filed in SLO County Superior Court on Nov. 5, 2018.”

Public outrage was compounded when a surveillance video of Holland’s death was obtained by The Tribune and posted to the newspaper’s website. The sheer inhumanity of Holland’s ordeal was shocking.

The Sheriff made changes to the jail facilities and policies, including turning the old women’s jail into a medical facility and bringing in medical and mental health professionals to work fulltime at the jail.

But the DOJ report focuses on the situation as it existed before all that; hence the condemnation with no acknowledgement of improvements.

Inmates Entitled To Protections

“San Luis Obispo County,” Acting U.S. Attorney Tracy L. Wilkison for the Central District of California said, “violated the rights of prisoners in its jail in several ways, including failing to provide adequate health care and subjecting some prisoners to excessive force. Our office is dedicated to defending the civil rights of everyone in this district, including those behind bars.”

The Sheriff was somewhat restrained with his statement. “The Sheriff’s Office,” Sheriff Ian Parkinson said, “has worked cooperatively with the Department of Justice over the past 3 years to investigate deficiencies and determine appropriate improvements to ensure our Jail facility is fully compliant with federal law. We are pleased with our progress so far and will continue to work diligently to provide a safe and secure Jail facility.”

As for claims of excessive use of force, the department said it takes them seriously. “Additionally, the report claims some inmates were subjected to an excessive use of force,” Cipolla’s news release said. “Jail leadership takes complaints seriously. Any allegation of inappropriate force has been investigated by the Professional Standards Unit, and any instances of sustained complaints have resulted in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.”

The DOJ’s Civil Rights Division and the U.S. Attorney’s Office for the Central District of California started the investigation in October 2018 under the Civil Rights of Institutionalized Persons Act and Title II of the ADA, “which authorize the department to take action to address a pattern or practice of deprivation of legal rights of individuals confined to state or local government-run correctional facilities.”

Such investigations are never really closed, so anyone with relevant information about abuse of inmates in the SLO County Jail is encouraged to call the U.S. Attorney’s Office at (844) 710-4900, or email to: usacac.slo@usdoj.gov.



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