

Addis to Run Again for State Assembly

By Neil Farrell



Dawn Addis

Morro Bay Councilwoman Dawn Addis will try once again to move up the political ladder, announcing Nov. 11 that she was running again for State Assembly in 2022.

Addis, a first term City Councilwoman and a Progressive Democrat, tried unsuccessfully in 2020 to unseat incumbent Assemblyman and Republican, Jordan Cunningham for the 35th Assembly seat.

In a news release on her candidacy, Addis said, “I believe our communities deserve leadership that reflects our values and commitment to solving the challenges we face. Climate change is a real and present danger to the Central Coast. Drought, wildfires, habitat loss, and coastal erosion threaten our way of life.”

Addis, who is a local teacher by profession, is also a political activist and co-founding member of Women’s March San Luis Obispo, a political organization formed in 2017 after the election of President Donald Trump, and working to encourage and support women candidates for office, as well as women’s, environmental and social justice causes.

“If elected,” she said, “I will fight every day to protect and improve the quality of life in our neighborhoods, advance equity and justice in public policy, create jobs that pay a living wage, and protect the most vulnerable among us. I believe that housing, health care, and education are human rights, and that as one of the most prosperous states in the most prosperous nation in the world, we can afford to meet the basic needs of every Californian.”

She said her work as a teacher, councilwoman and married mother of two boys makes her well suited for the job. “I believe



Jordan Cunningham

that my experiences, as a councilmember, a classroom teacher, and a mom, have prepared me for the work ahead. I look forward to talking to thousands of residents in the coming months, and starting a conversation about the future of our state.”

Assemblyman Cunningham was asked for comment on the rematch with Addis and Matt Rexroad from the Cunningham for Assembly Campaign didn’t pull punches. “In the highest turnout election in history, Central Coast voters made it clear that they wanted an Assembly member who would fight for a more affordable Central Coast.

“Dawn Addis announced on draft district maps. That alone shows she is inexperienced and unable to effectively represent the Central Coast in the Assembly. We need thoughtful and intelligent leadership. And we don’t need higher taxes, which she has a record of supporting. The Central Coast is expensive enough already.”

In the 2020 election Addis garnered over 103,000 votes in her loss to Cunningham (55% to 45%), who is seeking re-election to a fourth term. But the political landscape in 2022 is likely to be very different, as the California Redistricting Commission works on redrawing state Assembly and Senate district boundaries, as well as congressional districts. And the preliminary maps the Commission released last week show marked changes here.

Currently, Assembly District 35 includes all of SLO County and Northern Santa Barbara County (Santa Maria to Lompoc). If the draft maps released by the Commission hold, the new Assembly district would start in Santa Cruz to the north, follow the Coastline down to include Monterey and Carmel, and all of SLO

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City Wants Paid Waterfront Parking

By Neil Farrell



The Morro Bay City Council has given the green light to put together a pilot program to charge for parking on the Embarcadero, after a study showed spaces are at a premium during certain times of the day and week.

The Council voted unanimously on Nov. 90 to have the staff come up with a paid parking program that would decide where, when and how much it would cost to park on both the street and City-owned parking lots.

The study, by Walker Consultants, counted parking on two days in August 2020 — a week day and a weekend day — and two days in November 2020, which occurred during last year’s coronavirus pandemic response, which saw restaurants serving mainly outdoors, as their indoor dining rooms were restricted. Nevertheless, Walker said the study’s timing, when restrictions had been eased a bit, was still indicative of the parking usage on the waterfront. They were also tasked with looking at Downtown parking and parking at Morro Rock.

“Parking occupancy counts,” Walker’s report said, “were collected at a time when there were fewer public health restrictions for restaurants, retail, and hotels than during periods of peak restrictions. Therefore, with fewer restrictions on commercial businesses, patronage of businesses and the area appeared generally high, reflecting relatively normal busy weekday and weekend conditions.”

The study checked availability of on-street and off-street (parking lots). They counted on-street parking every 2 hours from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m., and off-street parking at noon, 2 p.m. and 6.

The study counted a total of 383 on-street parking spots and 753 off-street spaces for a total of 1,136 on the Embarcadero. It also reported 457 Downtown spaces and 384 at Morro Rock.

The study concluded that peak parking demand was at noon on Saturdays when 981 spaces were taken up and 155 still available, which translates into an 86% “utilization rate.”

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Moving Forward – Carrie Raya & Buttercup Bakery & Cafe of Morro Bay

By Judy Salamacha

At a recent Morro Bay Chamber of Commerce gathering, I was totally mesmerized by Carrie Raya, owner and chief baker of Buttercup Bakery & Cafe located on Morro Bay Boulevard next to the Bay Theater. She described what it meant to be a small business owner in Morro Bay, especially during the 2020-21 pandemic. I said to myself, I couldn’t have written it better, certainly couldn’t have said it better. I asked her to share her presentation with my readers. I guarantee Carrie’s words are worth the read.

Carrie is a graduate of Cal Poly where she met her husband, Rich, when they worked at the University Union. He lived in Morro Bay near downtown when they married and where they are raising their three children, Lucia, Avery and Isaiah.

Enjoy Carrie’s entrepreneurial journey: “I recently had an interesting comment said to me that has made me think about how people perceive me and what I do. This person who I have known for years and who wants to own his own cafe someday made this comment after finding out that I was a catcher on my softball team both at Yreka High School and Siskiyou College. He was impressed that my position was behind the plate, as catch-



Buttercup Bakery & Café employee Brent Griffiths shows off a cake. Photo courtesy of Carrie Raya

ers are usually really aggressive, and tough, and are willing to get down and dirty - and most of you who know me probably think I don’t exude those qualities.

“But this person said to me, ‘Wow, a catcher, huh. I thought you were just a prissy little baker.’ Well, after holding back from punching him in the face, I stared at him in amazement for a just few seconds, and thought to myself...

“If only you knew what it’s like being the first person in the county to start a home based baking business in 2013 with

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Fighting Climate Change with Fungi

By Theresa-Marie Wilson



Don Maruska pitches a forkful of the wet leaves, hay, and horse manure mixture that will feed the fungi in the bioreactor built on the property at St. Benedict’s Episcopal Church in Los Osos.

As world leaders convene in Glasgow, Scotland this month to tackle climate change, a local group is working toward improvements at home. A group of folks met at St. Benedict’s Episcopal Church in Los Osos to make a positive environmental impact that goes beyond curbing energy use via efficient appliances or driving less.

“We are in a climate crisis,” said volunteer Project Manager Don Maruska, a member of St. Benedict’s Episcopal Church and

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News

Cambria Christmas Market Somewhat Closed

By Theresa-Marie Wilson



On the heels of receiving approval for a permit to resume operations, organizers of the popular Cambria Christmas Market announced that the event wouldn't be open to the general public like it has in years past.

The event features 2 million twinkling Christmas lights, complete with themed vignettes, visits from Santa, fire pits, food and drink and an authentic open-air German Christmas Market selling many handcrafted and specialty items.

It all takes place on the grounds of the Cambria Pines Lodge, operated by Pacific Cambria, LLC, and the adjacent Cambria Nursery. It was canceled last year, when the previous 5-year permit would have expired, due to the pandemic.

On Oct. 22, the San Luis Obispo County Planning Commission voted in favor of extending the operations permit for 2021 as covered in Estero Bay News (Vol. 3, issue 21). Post press time, to multiple appeals were filed against the decision. Timing stood in the way.

Because the Board of Supervisors would have to weigh in and the process allows for a 10-day period before it could be appealed to the California Coastal Commission, there was not enough time.

The expansive light display will be set up at the Cambria Pines Lodge from 5 p.m.- 9 p.m. every night from Thanksgiving through New Year's Day, but entry is reserved for overnight guests, or dinner patrons who partake in a special German-style or other dinner-fare. The German Christmas Market will not be part of the festivities.

"There will still be plenty of holiday shopping at the Cambria Nursery and all of our 2 million holiday lights will be up," Market Coordinator Mike Arnold told Estero Bay News. "We will have live music and Santa will be here every night. Many of our guests enjoyed the reduced occupancy from 2020 and I think they are looking forward to the reduced crowds of 2021."

People who bought tickets earlier in the year are not out of luck as far as the lights go. An email to advance ticket holders stated, "We will still honor your tickets! There is nothing else you need to do, just arrive on the date on your ticket and get ready to make some amazing holiday memories among our 2 million lights!"

"Any tickets that have already been purchased for this year's event will receive access to the light display and the option to upgrade to a ticket including a delicious German dinner. Going forward, purchasing dinner tickets or an overnight stay package from one of our partner hotels are the only ways to gain access to the Cambria Christmas Market.

"Our neighbor, the Cambria Nursery and Florist, will have a variety of food options for you to enjoy. You can do your Christmas shopping at the Cambria Nursery and Florist, which hosts gift shops and offers wares from some of our favorite vendors! After 5 p.m., Christmas activities at the Nursery are available to guests of the Cambria Christmas Market only and are not open to the public."

Guests can park onsite or they can utilize one of the offsite parking lots with shuttles to the Lodge. Parking information can be viewed at cambriachristmasmarket.com/parking.

The appeals were likely expected following an online petition, "Stop 2021 Cambria Lodge Christmas Market" on Change.org posted by Cambria attorney Russell Read. As of Nov. 12 it had 256 signatures.

The petition states, in part, that the market would be a COVID-19 superspreader event that will endanger the public, takes away customers from other businesses, uses excessive water, and creates traffic congestion, and noise.

Although the Christmas Market is smaller scale this year, organizers are looking forward to 2022.

"We are working with the county on our future permits and hope to get everything squared away early next year," Arnold said. "Obviously, COVID has had continuing impacts on the planning

process and has continued to slow down our efforts to get back to the event we had in 2019. The Christmas Market has become a tradition for many people over the last 20-plus years we have been operating and we want to continue offering this amazing holiday event for them and their families."

To see about hotel or dinner reservations, go to cambria-christmasmarket.com

New Fire Chief Settling In

By Neil Farrell



Chief Daniel McCrain leads the Morro Bay Fire Department.

He's just the ninth fire chief in the history of Morro Bay Fire Department and Daniel McCrain is settling into his new role as Morro Bay's top firefighter.

Chief McCrain, 46, says he was born in Fresno and grew up in the Sierra Nevada town of Oakhurst. He attended Yosemite High School and explains that was when he first became interested in the fire service and emergency medicine.

"I started out as an explorer with CDF ("California Department of Forestry" now Cal Fire) in high school," he says. "At 18, I joined the Madera County Fire Department as a paid, on-call firefighter."

He says he spent several years with Madera County Fire before hiring on with the U.S. Forest Service stationed in the Sierra National Forest. He was assigned to a wildland Type-3 engine on seasonal assignment for five fire seasons.

Offseason he worked as an emergency medical technician or EMT with Sierra Ambulance Service, he says. After those five seasons, he left to go to flight school to become an air tanker pilot. He says it was hard to find jobs, so he moved back to Oakhurst. The ambulance service paid to send him to paramedic school and 16-years ago he and his family moved to the Central Coast, where he worked for San Luis Ambulance for a year before getting hired by the Cambria Ambulance District.

He praised his former employers at San Luis Ambulance — Frank and Betsy Kelton — as "very caring. I enjoyed working there." Betsy Kelton recently died, and McCrain expressed sorrow for her loss.

In Cambria he was the District's operations manager for six years, and was a reserve for the Cambria Fire Department too, as an engineer. He finished up an Associate's Degree in fire technologies at Hancock College in Santa Maria and attended Waldorf University out of Forest City, Iowa, he says.

In 2016 he applied for an open captain's position with Cambria Fire and got the job. "I went from the ambulance to fire department just a few days short of five years on the job.

Several months ago, with former Chief Steve Knuckles set to retire in July, he applied for the Morro Bay chief's job and "Thankfully," he says, "I was selected."

He and wife Stephanie, and their two daughters, Madison, 14, and Louie, 8, live in Paso Robles on a couple of acres that they bought 7-years ago. He added that they homeschool the girls through the Heartland Charter School.

He's practically in heaven with MBFD, which has a new fire house (built in 2014), the three engines, paramedic truck, and ladder truck are all relatively new and the department is on pretty solid footing, with both a dedicated added revenue source (Measure D sales taxes), and a community support system with the Friends of the Fire Department, which raises money to support scholarships to paramedic school and other department needs.

The facilities "are very nice" he says, and the crews "are utmost professionals." In interactions with the public, he says they are supportive of the department. "They've been very welcoming of me," he says. "They've given me a chance to earn my place here."

He adds, "Respect is earned. There's an inherent respect for the position but you have to earn trust. They've been very generous in accepting me. We're working well together."

His immediate task is recruiting for a 12th full-time firefighter position, as the city council recently gave him the go-ahead to hire one more full time person to fill out his three fire crews.

The department has for many years relied on reserve firefighters to fill that spot on the regular crews but with the requirements for reservists — essentially that they receive the same training as full time firefighters — using that fill-in system is getting harder.

They have some reserves that fill in when needed, respond to large emergencies and fires, and work with the department's fire safety outreach.

And, "They are instrumental is the mutual aid system," he says. That means they help staff the department's on-call wildland fire engine, which responds to major fires and natural disasters anywhere in the state.

This past summer, he says, they sent a crew to both the Dixie and Alisal Fires. With the massive 963,000-acre Dixie Fire up in Lassen County, the MBFD had crews deployed for two months in different capacities.

It was the same for the Alisal Fire in Southern California. The department is busy as ever.

"By year-end," he says, "we'll be close to 2,000 calls. That's a lot for a single-engine station."

He will continue the department's policy of sending two, 2-man crews, on two engines to every call, so if there're simultaneous calls, the second crew can respond from the scene. "It allows us to cover more with a small pool of personnel," Chief McCrain says. But, "Our requests for service are increasing."

They maintain good mutual aid agreements with Cal Fire/County Fire. For example, a recent fire on Trinidad Street had a Cal Fire engine, and an engine from CMC respond. Chief McCrain says when they have big incidents, "We'll go and assist them as well."

His philosophy? "We are the agency that will solve public issues no matter what it is. We're the people who are called when people don't know who else to call."

As for policies, "Everything is being evaluated but there's no reason to change now."

They will keep the standard that all full timers must be certified paramedics. "It makes sense to have paramedics," Chief McCrain says. "We're very busy and they do a phenomenal job."

He's grateful for the hard work and accomplishments of the previous chiefs. "I was handed a well-functioning department that operates very efficiently. My goal is to be forward thinking and anticipate the needs of the community."

They've ordered two new command vehicles — a Tahoe and another truck — he says. They are adjusting their staffing and training to meet the new demands.

The fire department will play a large role in an upcoming development too — the Battery Energy Storage System or BESS — a 600-megawatt battery plant being proposed for the Morro Bay Power Plant property.

Fire is a main concern with these large lithium-ion battery

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Happy Thanksgiving

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News

Decennial Redistricting Underway

By Neil Farrell

Though it happens on a decennial basis, County Supervisors are working on potentially re-drawing the district lines in San Luis Obispo County, now that the population information from the 2020 nationwide Census is in.

And as one might expect, it's controversial. It's controversial in both the methodology being used, and the make-up of the committee that will study the matter and put forth suggestions and options for the every-10-years re-districting exercise.

And while SLO County hasn't grown much, indeed, under the law, no changes are required in the existing district boundaries due to growth or population shift, there are several proposed maps that raise issues, each in its own way.

A final decision is due in December and Supervisors are well into the public process that must be undertaken as per the U.S. and state constitutions.

Supervisors voted last January to form a "County Staff Advisory Committee" to do the job — one of three possible methodologies available. The other two were to form a citizen redistricting committee or hire a consultant. In the end the staff committee did enlist a consultant — Redistricting Partners — to help them crunch the census numbers.

According to a staff report, the estimated SLO County population is 279,207, which means there would ideally be 55,841 residents in each of the five supervisor districts.

Each district has gained or lost a few thousand people with Dist. 4 — Arroyo Grande, Oceano, Nipomo — gaining the most at 4,849 (Dist. 4 had 52,797 after 2010 Census and 57,646 in 2020). That's a 9.2% population gain, according to the County.

Dist. 1 — Paso Robles, San Miguel and part of Templeton — came in second in the growth rate with a 4,168 gain or 7.7%. Dist. 1 had 53,814 in 2010 and 57,982 in 2020.

Dist. 5 — Atascadero, Santa Margarita, parts of Templeton and SLO — gained 3,429 people or 6.5%. Dist. 5 went from 52,571 to 56,000.

Dist. 3 — Pismo Beach, Avila Beach, Grover Beach and part of SLO — gained 2,166 people, a 4.1% growth rate. Dist. 3 went from 52,660 to 54,826.

Dist. 2 — Los Osos, Morro Bay, Cayucos, Cambria, San Simeon and most of Cal Poly — actually dropped in population,

facilities and the fire department will be charged with reviewing and approving the new plant's fire suppression systems.

"I'm just starting to educate myself on the BESS," he says. "The technology is constantly evolving with monthly updates on best practices. If the City moves forward, my job is done when it's as safe as possible."

He likes the idea. "There's an opportunity there for the betterment of the whole state," he says of the BESS and its role in renewable, carbon-free energy.

He plans to be here a long time. "My intent," he says, "is to retire from this agency and make positive changes for the community and this department."

losing 4,980 people — more than Dist. 4 gained — for a growth rate of -8.6%.

Dist. 2's population went from 57,733 to 52,753, which was primarily caused by the state changing how prison inmates (at CMC) are counted, to have each one counted in his hometown but perhaps a lesser degree, increased cost of living and flat-lined growth in housing.

Indeed, Los Osos and Cambria continue to be stuck in moratoriums and tight water supplies that have kept their growth essentially at zero for decades. Morro Bay has not added very much new housing either.

Cayucos and Morro Bay have seen many of its homes turned into vacation rentals. The county as a whole saw a slow population growth rate of 3.6%.

According to the County report, each district must be within 10% of that 55,841 magic number, which all five districts currently are, leading to the first option — status quo — being presented to Supervisors.

But adding here and taking away there might seem an easy enough solution, it's tricky when you consider that districts must be drawn with certain considerations like geography and commonality of certain neighborhoods. And in SLO County that means Cal Poly.

"Under the California Elections Code," (the California Voting Rights Act) the report said, "new supervisorial districts must be redrawn using the following criteria, in order of priority:

- To the extent practicable, districts must be geographically contiguous;
- To the extent practicable, districts must maintain the geographic integrity of neighborhoods and communities of interest;
- To the extent practicable, districts must minimize division of cities or census designated places;
- Boundaries must be easily identifiable and, if possible, bound by natural/artificial barriers; and,
- To the extent practicable, districts must not favor or discriminate against any political party."

Residents who have commented thus far have had a few themes, according to the County:

- Keep the town of Oceano in the same District as Arroyo Grande and Nipomo as a community of interest/Keep District 4 the same as existing;
 - Keep Cal Poly within one District and/or keep Cal Poly and City of San Luis Obispo out of "North County" COI (community of interest);
 - Keep the North Coast towns within one District; and,
 - Keep the City of San Luis Obispo in multiple Districts.
- Currently, the Cal Poly campus is in Dist. 2 and the City of SLO is divided up into three pieces.

The County is analyzing four proposed maps, plus a couple that were submitted by residents. The first map — Draft Map A — makes minor changes, simply adjusting the boundaries where three districts come together. This is to make the district boundaries match the current Census tracts, according to the report.

Draft Map B's major change would bring all of Cal Poly into Dist. 2, a move that could shift some voting power away from the North Coast Communities.

It would also give Dist. 2 the highest percentage of voting age adults — 18-older — at 88% or some 47,551.

Draft Map C drastically changes the lines in SLO, cutting the

City of SLO out entirely from Dist. 5 and adding that population to Dist. 2 (10,771) and Dist. 3 (3,913).

But, it would also redraw the line between Districts 1 and 2 extending the North County out to the Coast and placing Cambria and San Simeon in with Paso Robles. The new boundary would follow Hwy 46. This also requires Dist. 5 to add more of Templeton to its territory.

Dist. 5 would expand down into Edna Valley and take population and area away from Dist. 4. Under this scenario, all districts would be within 4% of that 55,841 number.

Under Draft Map D, which uses school district boundaries as a guide, they would also have to split up some towns to keep the populations even.

According to the consultants, all of these potential maps would comply with the law.

So how do the North Coast towns feel? The Morro Bay City Council has voted to recommend Supervisors keep the boundaries as they are, with the North Coast communities in Dist. 2.

And in Los Osos, the Community Services District Board has voted to send a letter to Supervisors endorsing either Map A or B, LOCSD General Manager Ron Munds said. They will also oppose Maps C and D, he added.

Supervisors are slated to move quickly, with another meeting Nov. 30 to take more comments, and an initial reading of the proposed ordinance setting the new boundaries set for Dec. 7 and a final vote on Dec. 14.

For information about the County's redistricting process or to provide input, see: www.slocounty.ca.gov/redistricting.

City Taking Bids on WRF Injection Well

By Neil Farrell

The City of Morro Bay is getting ready to start on the final portion of its Water Reclamation Facility (WRF) Project, asking for bids on the recycling part of the scheme.

The City issued a "request for proposals" or RFP on Nov. 2 for "Injection Well No. 1" that would inject highly treated wastewater from the new treatment plant into the ground in the Morro Creek underground aquifer.

It's been 8 years since the Coastal Commission denied the City's first project, and ordered any treatment plant project be moved away from the coast to avoid so-called "coastal hazards."

And while readers might think they've got it all figured out, especially since construction started in May 2020, the RFP said, "This project includes the construction and installation of one fully-operational injection well as specified herein. The purpose of the proposed well is to inject highly-treated recycled water and to determine aquifer characteristics and for additional injection wells in the future."

And while the City sold the project to ratepayers at \$126 million, and promising it could supply 80% of the City's drinking water needs, the plans for the recycling part of what's now a \$144 million project, have changed dramatically.

Now the City plans to use the injection well(s) about once a

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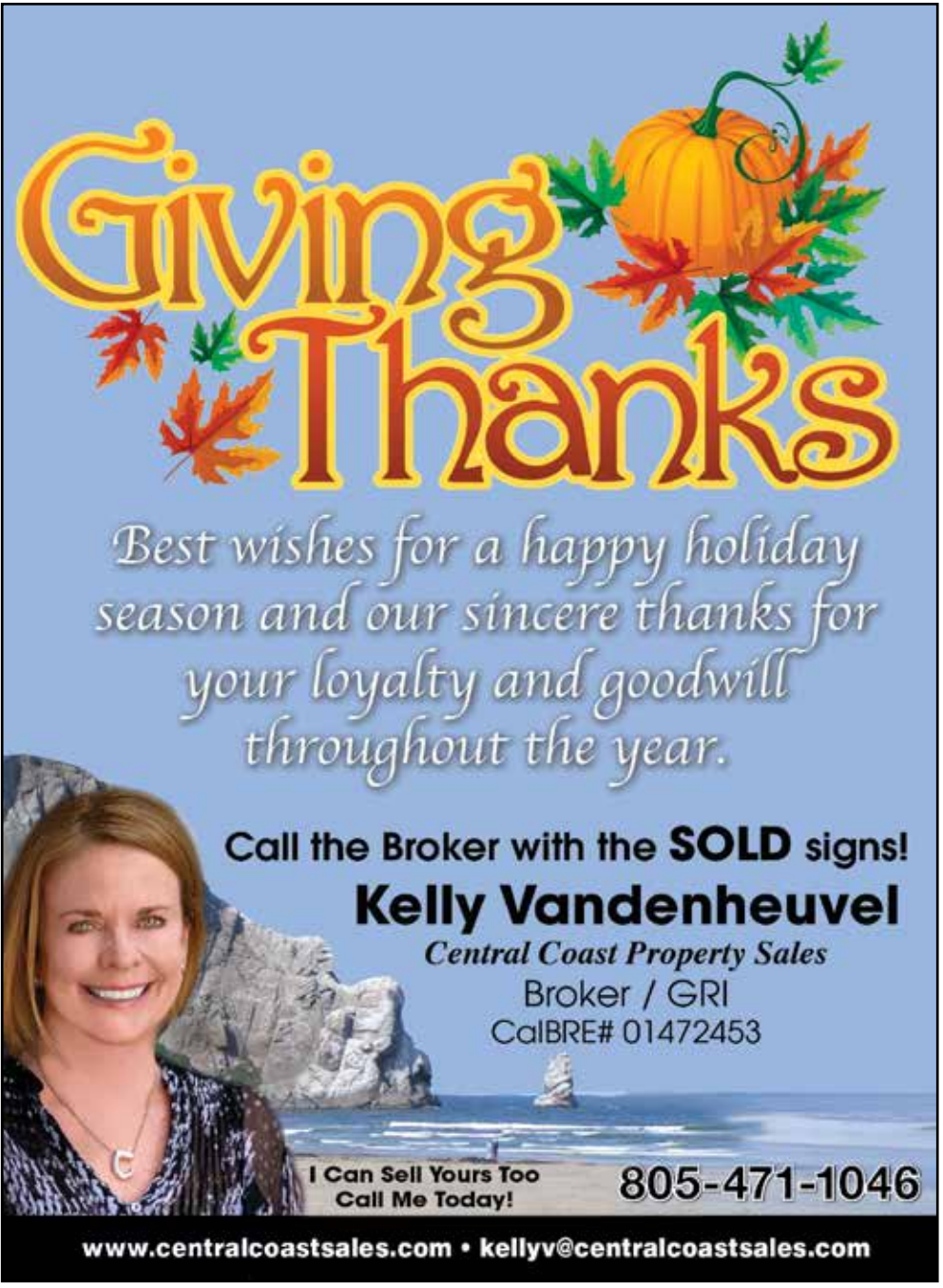
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month to provide a block on seawater intrusion, which could contaminate the Morro well field at Lila Keiser Park. That seems to be the City’s lone remaining steady and reliable water supply.

Though today the State Water Project provides the vast majority of drinking water to the City and will for years to come, talk in Sacramento about the project and it’s environmental impacts could lead some day to costly changes, including building underground tunnels under the Delta to preserve river habitat for migrating salmon and other fish species, and at some point the State will need more reservoirs for storage in wet winters.

The injection wells would be located on the Morro Bay Power Plant property’s northeast corner near the creek. The injected water, in a technical memorandum by the City’s consultant GSI Water Solutions, Inc., is predicted to flow down towards the well field and between the wells and the ocean.

The City is concerned that if it has to fully pump the Morro wells and extract the 581-acre feet a year it’s allowed, seawater will come seeping in.

In the RFP, the City’s estimated costs for just that one injection well is \$250,000 but the actual price will be set by whoever gets the contract.

Thus far, every contract that’s been awarded has come in much higher than estimates. For example, the estimate for the 3.5 miles of piping and two lift stations — the WRF’s conveyance system — was \$27 million when the City sought bids, and the contract awarded to Anvil of San Francisco was for \$31 million.

The City scheduled a walk through for prospective bidders for Thursday, Nov. 18. Bids are due by 10 a.m. Tuesday, Dec. 7. Readers can see the RFP online at: www.morro-bay.ca.us/bids.aspx?bidID=100.

Prospective bidders can view the plans at the Public Works Department during regular business hours or get a copy of the plans at ASAP Reprographics, 365 Quintana Rd.

In another project update, the City announced that it was waiving a provision that would have shutdown Main Street during the holidays. Now, Anvil will be able to go ahead with that short run across Main so long as they keep the roadway open to traffic in both directions, though traffic controls will be instituted.

“The balance of safety, construction efficiency and community impact is critical at this point in the project. The maintenance of two-way traffic will help minimize impacts as the holiday season approaches,” reads an excerpt form the monthly city manager’s October newsletter.

That announcement included turning the stoplight at Main and Quintana back to full red-yellow-green cycling on weekends, so long as the work site is safe. The stoplight has been in a flashing red mode for months, and when combined with heavy equipment being moved about, has made traffic back up on Main to Beach Street on some occasions.

And in the continuing saga of snake-bit events, the trenching along the southern portion of Quintana Road hit a second water main recently, causing extensive flooding of the trench, with water overflowing into the streets and running down the gutters to storm drains.

The break was the second for Anvil, which broke a water line on the very first day of trenching, further up Quintana Road. City crews came out both times to fix the damage.

And if you have a business on Quintana, the City said, “Properties along the construction area will receive printed notices before work begins near their address, and construction notices will be regularly posted on morrobaywrf.com. Please contact wrfinfo@morrobayca.gov or 877-MORROBAYH2O with questions about the City’s WRF Program, and a team member will get back to you within one business day.”

The City did not however, lift a restriction on working on Quintana Road between the Roundabout and Main Street from Nov. 1 to Jan. 15 during the “holiday season.” Trenching work on that stretch of roadway has stopped and is largely completed.

The trenching is now turned to the Power Plant bike path, a dedicated bicycle and pedestrian pathway from Atascadero Road to Main Street. That area is completely closed to everyone while the constriction project is underway, including on weekends when the job goes idle.

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News Briefs

By Theresa-Marie Wilson

City Seeking City Engineer

The City of Morro Bay is looking for a new engineer as the retirement of long-time City Engineer Rob Livick fast approaches.

The City sent out a “request for qualifications” or RFQ on Nov. 12 seeking a firm or an individual to bring under contract to provide City engineering services. The deadline to apply is Nov. 29.

“It is the City’s intent to engage these services from a qualified individual(s) or firm(s) through an evaluation and comparison of past performance, project team resumes, appropriate references, prior experience in other municipalities and cities similar in nature to Morro Bay, as well as the criteria that will be used in evaluating the qualifications of firms and or individuals submitting proposals,” reads the announcement.

The City said it may use more than one firm or individual “to adequately satisfy our needs for engineering services. Accessibility to and a timely response from these firms is essential to the position. The level of involvement by the engineer will be defined by the Public Works Director, as well as the requirements of active and proposed projects within the City. The engineer will work in coordination and partnership with the City’s Public Works team.”

Morro Bay has used an engineering firm before, in particular, North Coast Engineering out of Paso Robles, whose major accomplishment in Morro Bay was replacing the old and often flooded Twin Bridges on South Bay Boulevard with the new Chorro Creek Bridge, a project that was stuck in bureaucratic limbo for about 40 years.

November is Adopt a Senior Pet Month

In honor of National Adopt a Senior Pet Month in November, Woods Humane Society is waiving adoption fees for all senior pets (pets over seven years). The adoption promotion, which will run through Tuesday, November 30, aims to help the shelter’s “more mature” pets find comfortable, loving homes for the holidays, and on into their golden years.

Woods says it currently has about a dozen older dogs and cats available for adoption, and the length of stay for these senior pets is typically longer than that of younger animals.

“Senior pets come with a lot of great benefits for new pet owners,” said Jamie Relth, Woods’ communications manager, “They have a lot of love and gratitude to show their new families, and often they are already house-trained. They know their way around living with people and can often make a smoother transition into a home than a younger pet who may require more training.”

To view all of the currently available senior pets at Woods, visit www.WoodsHumane.org/adopt. To meet a pet, complete an adoption application before visiting the shelter locations in San Luis Obispo (875 Oklahoma Ave., San Luis Obispo and North County (2300 Ramona Road, Atascadero), during open hours, Tuesday through Sunday from 12 - 4 p.m.

For more event information, visit www.WoodsHumane.org or call (805) 543-9316.

SLO Transit Wins Award

The San Luis Obispo’s public transportation system (SLO Transit) recently garnered international recognition for its inclusive and enhanced bus-riding experience.

SLO Transit was one of just three transportation agencies in North America to earn an Innovation Award from the American Public Transportation Association (APTA). SLO Transit earned the award for being the first public transportation system in the world to, in collaboration with Bishop Peak Technology, integrate reactive smart lighting on its buses to better communicate with individuals who have hearing, visual, cognitive, or selective-cognitive impairments.

“Being internationally recognized by APTA is truly an honor. SLO Transit is pleased to introduce innovative technology to benefit our riders and community” said Matt Horn, public works director. “The City will continue to introduce technology and innovation that will improve the rider experience and encourage public transportation as the preferred method of travel in the City.”

Local Image on National Magazine



Pismo Beach photographer had an image selected for the cover of the AAA Westways magazine as part of the publication’s photo contest open to members of the Auto Club of Southern California, AAA Northern New England, and AAA Hawaii.

Wayne Angeloty’s first place image captured a great egret at Sweet Springs Nature Preserve.

First prize was a trip for two to Ohau for 4-night stay that includes private tours, meal certificates, car rental and gas and a parking pass, all at an estimate \$5200.

Hospitals Recognized for Patient Safety

Several area hospitals received an “A” for performance based on 28 safety measures.

The Leapfrog Group, which focuses on patient safety, recognized Dignity Health Central Coast hospitals, which include Arroyo Grande Community Hospital (AGCH), French Hospital Medical Center (FHMC), and Marian Regional Medical Center (MRMC). Additionally, FHMC has received straight “A” grades since 2012.

Tenet Health’s Sierra Vista Regional Medical Center and Twin Cities Community Hospital also received “A” grades.

The Leapfrog Group awards hospitals based on safety, quality of care, and value metrics. All figures in the Hospital Safety Score are a combination of publicly available data from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid and voluntarily submitted information by the hospital on the Leapfrog Hospital Survey. All data are used to generate a simple letter grade from A to F. The score includes twenty-eight safety measures. Ten of the measures are process and structural measures and represent fifty percent of the score. Eighteen of the measures are outcome measures and represent the final fifty percent of the score.

The ratings represent a hospital’s overall capacity to keep patients safe from preventable harm. A full analysis of the data and methodology used is available at www.hospitalsafetyscore.org.

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Cloister Small Subdivision Approved

By Neil Farrell

The Morro Bay City Council approved plans for a small subdivision that would effectively end development at The Cloisters. The vote brings to an end a nearly 30-year odyssey for this 0.99-acre vacant parcel at the corner of San Jacinto Street and Coral Avenue, part of the original Cloisters subdivision of the early-1990s that created 120-buildable lots, a public park, bike and pedestrian trails, an 8-acre strip along Hwy 1 left in open space, and preserved the coastal dunes into the State Parks system. The initial subdivision, which won a nationwide design award at the time for RRM Design of San Luis Obispo, also deeded the vacant lot to the City to be used for a North Morro Bay fire station. This new project was also designed by RRM.

That station idea had been around for a long time, as the City wanted to cut its response times to the far north end of town, and having immediate highway access was seen as advantageous for cutting response times.

The City has a small fire station on Bonita Street, which used to be the firehouse for the “Town of Del Mar,” which is what they called the north Morro Bay area before the City incorporated in 1964 and unified the city under the Morro Bay moniker.

The vacant lot’s purpose changed in 2007 when the City decided to build a brand new fire station on Harbor Street on the site of the old station that was condemned and closed after the December 2003 San Simeon Earthquake damaged the apparatus bay.

The City had tried to then sell its Cloisters property, first asking well over \$1 million, a price that was based more on the City’s needs than the actual value of the land. After several potential buyers fell through, the City approved a 6-lot subdivision in a project that was eventually rejected by the Coastal Commission, stating that all the buildable lots within the coastal development permit for the original Cloisters subdivision had been used up.

The City left the subdivision plans in limbo and in the end sold the lot for \$650,000 to Morro Bay Ventures, LLC. That company reworked the 6-lot subdivision, changing the permits at Cloisters to include the new lots, and was approved once again by the City, only to have the Coastal Commission make major changes in 2018, including dropping down to five lots and making what was a public street into a common driveway with no on-street parking. The Coastal Commission approved those plans in March 2020.

That lack of visitor parking raised the ire of the Cloisters



This rendering by RRM Design of SLO shows the layout for a 5-lot subdivision on a 0.99-acre vacant lot in The Cloisters.

Homeowners Association and its design committee, which opposed the new configuration, claiming that it doesn’t match the rest of the neighborhoods.

They didn’t think it was proper to have visitor parking to those five homes parking on Coral Avenue or San Jacinto, both of which are wide streets with ample on-street parking space on both sides of the street.

But the City countered that all of the Cloisters properties can use the streets for visitor parking and also said the new configurations included expanding the size of the lots (from 6 to 5 means more land for each) and including double wide driveways to accommodate some of that visitor parking.

Now the five lots will be from 7,826 square feet to 10,070 s.f., plus two of the lots can have granny units (accessory dwelling units).

Homes are limited to 14-feet in height and many of the mature eucalyptus trees on the site will be removed, though the project is conditioned to save what they can and replant new trees for whatever is taken out.

The interior roadway will be a shared driveway, but still have room for fire engines to respond. The design of the five new homes will have to be taken out of approved plans form the Cloisters, which includes several types of homes and particular color schemes that all the 120 homes already built have had to adhere to.

Comments Sought for Marine Sanctuary

By Neil Farrell



This NOAA map shows the area being proposed for the Chumash Heritage National Marine Sanctuary. NOAA is taking comment no on the matter. Map courtesy NOAA

The Federal Government is starting to move forward with establishing a new marine sanctuary in local waters, and the public is invited to send in comments and take part in upcoming virtual meetings.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration’s (NOAA) “Office of National Marine Sanctuaries,” has begun a “scoping” process for the “Chumash Heritage National Marine Sanctuary,” a 156-mile long stretch of ocean from Cambria to Gaviota, bestowing on it certain protections, most notably to keep the area free of offshore oil and gas developments.

According to NOAA’s website (see: <https://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/chumash-heritage>), “The Northern Chumash Tribal Council [NCTC] submitted the sanctuary nomination in July 2015, and NOAA is considering sanctuary designation to protect the region’s important marine ecosystem, maritime heritage resources, and cultural values of Indigenous communities.”

The sanctuary would “...recognize Chumash tribal history in the area and protect an internationally-significant ecological transition zone, where temperate waters from the north meet the subtropics, providing a haven for marine mammals, invertebrates, sea birds, and fishes.”

The Sanctuary Office said the area faces “numerous threats... to resources within the proposed area. The NCTC believes a national marine sanctuary offers solutions in guiding coordinated and comprehensive ecosystem-based management, including organizing and stimulating marine research, education, stewardship, tourism, and recreation, as well as providing protection for important native cultural sites.”

The proposed area covers some 7,000-square miles of ocean stretching from the mouth of Santa Rosa Creek in Cambria to Gaviota Creek in Santa Barbara County. It also stretches out to sea to include the Santa Lucia Bank, Rodriguez Seamount, and Arguello Canyon.

The area has extensive kelp forests, vast sandy beaches and coastal dunes, NOAA said, plus wetlands, and “important habitat for many threatened and endangered species such as blue whales, southern sea otter, black abalone, snowy plovers, and leatherback sea turtles. There are many nationally significant shipwrecks throughout this maritime landscape.”

The proposed area for designation includes the offshore area (Morro Bay Call Area, 399 square miles) that has been proposed for a huge development of offshore wind power and NCTC acknowledges that the Sanctuary proposal came in long before the President’s recent executive order calling on at least 4 gigawatts of offshore wind be developed in the Pacific Ocean.

“NOAA’s proposed sanctuary designation is based on the nomination submitted by the Northern Chumash Tribal Council in July 2015, excluding any geographical overlap with the proposed for offshore wind development.”

While one might think this is easy to support, there are some who are very concerned about establishing a marine sanctuary here. Among the most vocal are the commercial and sport fishing industries, who fear the sanctuary will mean another layer of government oversight, and placing even more waters off limits to them.

They also argue that given the State’s various marine protection designations, the local area is already protected.

Cities and Counties are concerned because of potential future environmental regulations that might accompany such a designation, including ocean discharges of treated wastewater — as both Morro Bay and Cayucos do now — to having to collect and treat storm runoff before it reaches the ocean among potentially others.

The Morro Bay City Council, back in the 1990s, when the Monterey Bay NMS was being proposed, took a stand against having it extended down to here. The feeling at the time was instead to have a separate sanctuary for this area. The current council has not weighed in on the matter but could be expected to do so at some point.

The Chumash Heritage NMS would also set a precedent with just its name. None of the other sanctuaries in the U.S. are named after a person or a people, but rather, they are named after the dominant geological feature of the area.

For example off the West Coast are the Channel Islands, Cordell Banks, Greater Farallons (Islands), Monterey Bay and Olympic Coast sanctuaries.


And in the Southern Region there is the Florida Keys, Flower Garden Bank and Gray’s Reef sanctuaries.

Morro Rock would seem to be the dominant geologic feature of this proposed area, which also has Point Arguello, Point Conception, Point Buchon and Point Sal, as well as the Oceano Dunes.

Supporters of the designation want the extra protections it

Marine Sanctuary Continued on page 8

experience



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COVID Test Site Closed Monday Afternoons

By Neil Farrell

San Luis Obispo County Health Department is trying to clear up a minor snafu it's been having with scheduling COVID-19 tests in Morro Bay that it's also trying to get fixed.

Michelle Shoresman, the Health Department's pandemic spokeswoman, said the testing site at the Morro Bay Vet's Hall, 209 Surf St., being run by a contractor for the County, is advertised as open Mondays-Fridays 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. but that is actually incorrect.

Shoresman said the site is only open from 7 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. on Mondays, as they have to close the testing down in the afternoon to allow the volunteers for the free Monday Night Community Dinners program to come in and set up for the evening's supper.

"People can make appointments online for Monday afternoons," she said, "but there's nobody there to do the testing."

The contractor is working on fixing the issue and Shoresman asked Estero Bay News to help them alert residents to the problem.

The Vet's Hall testing site is open the full 12 hours on Tuesdays-Fridays, she said; it's just Mondays that they have to close early.

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The County is recommending anyone who has been exposed to the virus and those feeling ill with flu-like symptoms — high fever is the most common COVID-19 symptom — should make a testing appointment by going online to: www.emergencyslo.org/en/testing-locations.aspx or call 1-888-634-1123.

The County currently operates four testing sites: the Paso Robles Train Station, 800 Pine St.; SLO Vet's Hall, 801 Grand Ave.; 1336 Ramona Ave., Ste. A, in Grover Beach; and, at the Morro Bay Vet's Hall, 209 Surf St.

All of the sites are open Mondays-Fridays with only Morro Bay having to shut down on Monday afternoons. Regular hours are 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. The testing sites close for lunch from 11-noon and from 4-5 p.m. for a dinner break.

It should be noted that many pharmacies, like Morro Bay Drug & Gift, also have COVID-19 testing and administer the vaccines, too. Check with your pharmacy on details.

The County is asking people to bring their insurance cards if they have insurance. Testing and the vaccines are at this time free to all but if you have insurance, they want to bill them. However, there are currently no co-pays for COVID tests and shots.

Child Shots Ok'd

The Health Department on Nov. 3, gave the green light to vaccinate children ages 5-11, after the Pfizer vaccine's approval by Federal officials

The Pfizer-BioNTech manufactured vaccine — a double dose plus a booster for some adults — was approved for the young age group by the U.S. Food & Drug Administration, Centers for Disease Control & Prevention, and Western States Scientific Safety Review Workgroup, according to the County.

"This authorization," reads a County news release, "follows a large-scale clinical trial with volunteers aged 5 to 11, which demonstrated the two-shot vaccine, a smaller dose of the same vaccine available for ages 12 and older, is safe and effective in preventing COVID-19. Children in the trial experienced the same mild side effects as many adults did during clinical trials, including arm soreness, fatigue, fever, or chills that lasted a day or two."

The County added, "Pediatricians across SLO County will be offering the vaccine at their offices, and appointments will also be available at local pharmacies and Public Health Department clinics."

County Health Officer Dr. Penny Borenstein said, "We are fortunate today to stand on the shoulders of previous generations who worked to develop and distribute life-saving vaccines, and the hundreds of millions of Americans who have already been vaccinated. My heartfelt message to parents is: give your child this protection, and talk to your pediatrician if you have any questions about the vaccine."

Appointments for kids 5-11 for the smaller-dose vaccines are available now at Public Health Clinics in Grover Beach, Paso Robles, and San Luis Obispo, and from pediatricians and local pharmacies. To schedule an appointment, see: myturn.ca.gov or VaccineFinder.org, or call your child's pediatrician.

COVID Deaths Continue

On Nov. 9 the County announced three more deaths from COVID-19 raising the total number of people in SLO County who've perished from the coronavirus pandemic to 352 since the pandemic's beginnings in April 2020.

All three of these latest deaths were people in their 70s and 80s, continuing the virus' devastating impact on the elderly.

From Friday-Monday, Nov. 5-9, the County recoded 127 new cases of COVID-19, with 22 people in the hospital and six in intensive care. The County averaged 14 new cases a day over the previous week.

Dr. Borenstein said, "We strongly urge our community members continue to mask up in indoor public spaces and get vaccinated to prevent the continued spread of a virus that results in serious illness and death."

Vaccine Rate at 66%

The County said on Nov. 9 that 73.4% of the people eligible to receive the vaccine (ages 12-older) had gotten at least one of the required two doses (Pfizer and Moderna vaccines), and 66.7% — over two-thirds — were fully vaccinated.

The Johnson & Johnson vaccine is a single dose, but the County hasn't detailed its stats on how many of each vaccine has been administered to that level.

The vaccines continue to be free and available at numerous locations in SLO County.

Boosting Booster Shots

The so-called "booster" shots of the vaccines — intended for those who are immunity-compromised — are also available at the County clinics, pharmacies and doctors' offices.

The boosters for the Moderna and Pfizer vaccines would be the third inoculations and the second for the J&J single-dose vaccine. Apparently the vaccines are not performing as hoped and immunity has been discovered to wane after a relatively short time.

The CDC is recommending the booster shots for about 3% of the population, essentially for who are "moderately to severely immune-compromised due to specific conditions, at least 28-days after receiving their second Moderna or Pfizer vaccine," the County said.

Immuno-compromised people "sometimes don't build enough of a protective response after the first two doses, and a third dose can help," the County added.

The booster shots are available by appointment wherever the vaccines are being given however, third doses are not available as walk-ins or at mobile/pop-up clinics.

Who Should Get Boosters

The CDC has released a list of conditions and illnesses that warrant the recommendation to get the booster. They are:

- People who've been receiving active cancer treatment for tumors or cancers of the blood;
- Those who've received an organ transplant and are taking medicine to suppress the immune system;
- Those who've received a stem cell transplant within the last 2 years or are taking medicine to suppress the immune system;
- Those with moderate or severe primary immunodeficiency (such as DiGeorge Syndrome, Wiskott-Aldrich Syndrome);
- Those with advanced or untreated HIV infections; and,
- Those in active treatment with high-dose corticosteroids or other drugs that may suppress your immune response.

The CDC is recommending people speak with their doctors about their medical condition and whether they should get the booster shots.

To get a COVID-19 vaccine at a public health clinic in Grover Beach, Paso Robles, or San Luis Obispo, see: myturn.ca.gov or call (833) 422-4255 to choose location, time, and vaccine type. See hours for pop-up clinics at: www.RecoverSLO.org/Vaccine. To find other vaccine providers, see: myturn.ca.gov or VaccineFinder.org.

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Police Blotter



Morro Bay Police Logs

• Nov. 3: A citizen in the 500 block of Atascadero Road reported a phone scam but thus far they’ve been able to thwart the scoundrels, because you never bow before hyenas.

• Nov. 3: Someone’s a little lighter in the fanny after losing a fanny pack, which was turned over to police.

• Nov. 3: Police contacted a suspicious woman at 11:36 a.m. outside 501 Embarcadero at the Embarcadero Inn. The belle of the ball, 32, was allegedly in possession of drug paraphernalia and cited, her stash no doubt already spent.

• Nov. 3: At 12:26 a.m., police contacted a suspicious fellow in the 1700 block of Embarcadero. The apparent swagman, 37, had eight failure-to-appear warrants and was of course issued his future ninth FTA and released, no doubt snickering.

• Nov. 2: At 3:30 p.m. police responded to the 2700 block of Alder for a reported sexual assault.

• Nov. 2: At 12:31 p.m. police responded to a disturbance in the 600 block of Bay. Logs indicated a 32-year-old hombre was arrested for suspicion of domestic battery, petty theft, violating a stay-the-hell away order, and false imprisonment, which is where this poijo ought to be heading.

• Nov. 2: Police responded at 10:19 a.m. to a disturbance in the 2700 block of Elm, where they took another restraining order violation report that was forwarded to the District Attorney.

• Nov. 1: Police stopped a suspicious vehicle at 10:35 p.m. at Errol and Main for a code violation. Logs indicated the driver, 35, was cited for a bench warrant and released, the code violation apparently forgiven.

• Nov. 1: A citizen in the 1900 block of Sunset had his wallet and license plate stolen out of and off his vehicle, which poses a dilemma — navigating the DMV without an I.D.

• Nov. 1: Police contacted a man at 2 p.m. in the 500 block of Quintana. The 29-year-old scofflaw had a misdemeanor warrant and was issued a disappearance ticket.

• Nov. 1: Someone found something somewhere at Morro Bay High School and turned it over to police.

• Oct. 31: Someone found something else somewhere at the high school, a clear pattern of behavior that must be stamped out.

• Oct. 31: Police responded at 7 p.m. to the 700 block of Embarcadero. Logs indicated a 22-year-old woman was arrested for suspicion of driving smashed after she reportedly crashed into three parked cars.

• Oct. 31: Police responded at 2:14 p.m. to the 1100 block of Monterey where a citizen said some scalawag boosted their car while it was parked outside their apartment no doubt minding its own business, too.

• Oct. 31: Police responded at 1:51 a.m. to a report of some creep creeping around in the 900 block of Piney Way. A 29-year-old fellow was arrested for suspicion of trespassing.

• Oct. 30: Police responded at 7:09 p.m. to an apparent drive-by shooting in the 500 block of Morro Bay Blvd. Logs indicated a woman said she was walking her dog when a dastardly fellow passing her in a car fired a rifle of some sort and hit her causing injury. Logs indicated police suspect someone with a BB gun or an air soft gun was the culprit.

• Oct. 30: Someone in the 800 block of Embarcadero reported felony vandalism apparently by a known vandalass, as a report was sent to the D.A. to file charges.

• Oct. 29: Some graffidiot struck in the 1700 block of Main leaving their foul filthery for someone else to clean up.

• Oct. 28: At 11:36 p.m. police encountered a swizzle stick traipsing down the 600 block of Quintana. The fellow, 36, was nicked for suspicion of belting the grape in public.

• Oct. 28: Police responded at 9:25 p.m. to Rite Aid in the 700 block of Quintana. A 23-year-old man was reportedly caught trespassing and police cited the intruder and released him to catch again another day.

• Oct. 28: Police responded at 4:40 p.m. to a disturbance in the 300 block of Tahiti. A 44-year-old rogue was allegedly trespassing and issued a ticket, so he’s in trouble now...

• Oct. 22: Police investigated a possible case of alleged child abuse on North Main but logs indicated it was apparently unfounded.

• Oct. 18: Someone found a wallet somewhere in town and turned it over to police to hunt up the owner.

• Oct. 27: Police responded at 11 a.m. to Rite Aid where they’d caught some sticky-fingered alleged shoplifter, 47, who apparently thought he was in San Francisco.

Marine Sanctuary

From page 5

offers for the marine environment, especially keeping offshore oil exploration and development out, among other issues.

NOAA’s Office of National Marine Sanctuaries serves as the trustee for a network of underwater parks encompassing more than 620,000 square miles of marine and Great Lakes waters from Washington State to the Florida Keys, and from Lake Huron to American Samoa.

The network includes 15 national marine sanctuaries and Papahānaumokuākea and Rose Atoll Marine National Monuments. Through the National Marine Sanctuaries Act, NOAA can identify, designate, and protect areas of the marine and Great Lakes environment that have special national significance.

If the nomination is approved and the sanctuary established, the process would moves to selecting a management advisory council as well as a headquarters office for the administration of the sanctuary program.

NOAA plans three, virtual, scoping meetings in December

• Oct. 26: At 8 p.m. police responded to a disturbance in City Park, 734 Harbor. A 33-year-old raucous fellow was involved in some sort of nincompoopery. He was checked into the Parkinson Plaza to sleep it off.

• Oct. 26: Police contacted a suspicious fellow at 3:23 p.m. in the 900 block of Morro Bay Blvd. Police were stimulated to arrest a 23-year-old fellow for suspicion of being high on stimulants. They booked and later released the over-stimulated model citizen.

• Oct. 25: Police responded at 11:18 p.m. to the 700 block of Quintana for a suspicious subject call. Logs indicated they contacted a 47-year-old regular customer who had a warrant, which led to a search where they allegedly discovered drugs and paraphernalia in his possession. Still, he was cited and released.

• Oct. 25: Police responded to the 300 block of Dunbar where a citizen claimed to be the victim of a burglary and a .45-caliber handgun was stolen. Logs indicated family members told police he might have misplaced the gun. Police said “Nature of missing handgun unknown,” which isn’t very comforting. In an unrelated matter, someone in the 2200 block of Emerald Cr., turned in a rifle and ammunition for police to destroy, as the universe reaches another shaky equilibrium.

and January to give people a chance to comment on the sanctuary. The first is set for 6-9 p.m. (Pacific Time) Wednesday, Dec 8. To register for that meeting, see: attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/5934702389309680399.

A second virtual meeting is set for 1-4 p.m. Monday, Dec. 13 and the registration for that one is: attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/1642653198337341710

And the third meeting is from 4-7 p.m. Thursday, Jan 6 and that registration address is: attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/2954174857204428046.

Readers can also comment on the proposal through Jan. 10 via variety of methods.

Email comments to the Federal eRulemaking Portal at: www.regulations.gov. The docket number is NOAA-NOS-2021-0080. Click on the “Comment Now!” icon, fill in the required fields, and then enter or attach your comments.

Mail written comments to: Paul E. Michel, Regional Policy Coordinator, NOAA Sanctuaries West Coast Regional Office, 99 Pacific St., Building 100F, Monterey, CA 93940.

Not a Case of Whatever Floats Your Boat

As a reminder following the big boat cleanup at her Cuesta Inlet this weekend, the boats are not up for grabs! The property is private. All of the boats are privately owned.

Every year Celebrate Los Osos tries to remind boat owners to honor the property’s owners requirements: contact info and a current license if required by law are required if people want to leave their boats at the inlet.

Organizers are getting the message out that just because an owner isn’t following the requirements does not mean someone can take the boat.

“Over the weekend several people were at the inlet picking out a ‘free boat’ because they thought the boats were up for grabs,” said CLO President Pandora Nash-Karner. “Several people were caught writing their names on other people’s boats. The thinking appears to be that if there is no name on the boat I can have it for free.

“Residents along the inlet and regular boaters are all on the alert now and will call the Sheriff’s Department if someone looks like they are attempting to steal a boat. Or if someone puts their name on a boat that is not theirs, that’s theft!”

For the past several weeks CLO worked to get the word out to boat owners at Cuesta Inlet to make sure they have current registration (if required by DMV) and contact information. The contact information must be permanent; a black Sharpie marker is not permanent. They recommend stick-on letters, paint or a decal made by someone like Goofy Graphics.



Photo by Dean Sullivan

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News

Cambria Road
Maintenance Upcoming

Morro Bay Man Busted
for Drug Sales



Numerous roads in Cambria are about to get a lot smoother after County Supervisors approved a \$5.29 million contract for pavement overlays.

CalPortland Const., of Santa Maria was the lowest bidder for the “Cambria Project,” the lowest of three bids the County got for the job. The other bidders were: Papich Construction Co., Inc., at \$6.27 million; and Granite Construction, Inc., at \$6.46 million. The engineer’s estimate was \$5.9 million, so CalPortland came in 10% below the County’s estimate.

The project will overlay hot asphalt mix over the top of al-ready paved roads throughout Cambria, “to extend the service life of the pavement to reduce time spent by the road crews on pave-ment patching. This work is necessary to halt further deterioration of these paved roads, and to improve safety and operation,” reads a staff report from Public Works.

A total of 11.75 miles of roads will be overlaid, but there will be no expansions of the roadways. The contract also calls for repairing existing ADA ramps — part of the County’s ADA Tran-sition Plan for Rights of Way.

The County did inspections on the segments of roadway to be overlaid using its Pavement Management Plan.

As is often the case with such projects, the County patched together \$6.48 million culled from various sources. The County is using Senate Bill 1 (gas taxes) Road Maintenance and Rehabili-tation Account for \$3.48 million and the Road Fund — Pavement Management Account for \$3 million more.

It is also getting \$57,500 from the Cambria Community Services District “for utility trenching repair work,” according to the report.

That left the County over \$663,000 short, so they transferred monies from other projects, including: \$20,600 saved from paving projects in South County; \$57,100 in savings from North Coast paving projects; and \$585,600 out of the 2021-22 Asphalt Overlay Project for various other County maintained roads.

The report said that fund has over \$6.5 million in it. The money was to be in the next paving round, but the report said that project won’t be ready until mid-2022, and by then they believe they can replenish it with SB 1 monies.

West Village roads that are slated to be overlaid include: Cornwall Street, Croyden Lane, Weymouth Street, Wellington Drive, Charing Lane, Buckley Drive, Kathryn Drive and several smaller streets in that vicinity.

In the East Village, streets include: Santa Rosa Creek Road, Village Lane, Bridge Street, Wood Drive, Schoolhouse Lane, Eton Road, and Yorkshire Street, among several others.

Readers are advised to watch out for workers and street clo-

tures, and follow the detour signs when they are posted.

There was no indication when the paving would start but typically, such contracts have to get underway within 30-45 days of contract award. Weather will also have a hand in how the job progresses.

DA Warns of
Robo-Call Scams



The district attorney is warning everyone that so-called robo-call scams are on the rise and asking people to report receiving the bothersome come-ons to local law enforcement; this as new federal rules are being drafted to fight the scammers.

“If you are tired of getting yet another robo-call during din-ner,” DA Dan Dow said in a news release, “and more constantly throughout the day, you should know the federal government is trying to stop them.”

Robo-calls are unwanted spam calls and texts about your car’s warranty or the credit card you don’t even own, he said. “Even worse, the criminals who robo-call often pose as government rep-resentatives with the intent to defraud people out of their money.”

It should be noted that you should never trust anyone calling you and claiming to be from the IRS, the Security of Homeland Department or the Department of Treasury, and claiming that you owe back taxes or are about to be arrested or fined.

The IRS — as well other government agencies — doesn’t communicate with taxpayers via the telephone. The IRS sends letters through the U.S. Mail demanding money and setting dead-lines to comply.

Dow added that many robo-calls originate in foreign countries. How big of a problem are they? More than 59 million Americans say they have lost money from phone scams over the last year, according to a report by TrueCaller, a company that produces spam-blocking apps (see: www.truecaller.com).

The Federal Communications Commission, a regulatory agency, has proposed new rules designed to reduce robo-calls, including requiring phone companies to use new technology that screens robo-calls when they originate in foreign countries.

DA Dow added, “If you are aware of any fraud associated with robo-calls in San Luis Obispo County, please contact your local law enforcement agency who are then able to submit com-pleted investigations to our office.”



A Morro Bay man was arrested by the Sheriff’s Department at the San Luis Obispo Train Station after arriving in town on the Amtrak bus.

According to Sheriff’s spokesman Tony Cipolla, at 12:30 a.m. Tuesday, Nov. 2, the Sheriff’s Narcotics Unit and County Probation were waiting at the train station for a suspect wanted in Fresno County for violating his probation on a previous drug conviction.

The man, identified as Brent Abisalih, 55, got an unpleasant welcome after Fresno County authorities alerted the Sheriff’s Department of his travel plans.

“As Abisalih emerged from the Amtrak bus,” Cipolla said, “he was detained by detectives. A Sheriff’s K9 alerted to his luggage and a plastic container Abisalih was holding, with what appeared to be plastic bags of methamphetamine.”

They also reportedly found “three digital scales, which are commonly associated with drug sales,” Cipolla added.

Detectives seized just over a pound of suspected metham-phetamine with a street value of approximately \$2,000, Cipolla said. Abisalih was arrested for suspicion of possession of a con-trolled substance for sale, transportation of a controlled substance for sale, and probation violations, Cipolla said.

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Community

Lady Maxine Floated and Towed to her Grave

Photo and Story by Neil Farrell



She stuck stubbornly to the bottom of the bay, the final resting place for a once proud commercial fishing vessel. But the Lady Maxine was eventually floated again, towed to the launch ramp where an excavator dragged her up to be crunched into a millions pieces, loaded into a dumpster and hauled to the landfill.

It was the final end to the saga of another of Morro Bay’s aged fishing fleet.

The Harbor Department had brought in Jim Sanders of California Marine & Salvage to try to raise Lady Maxine immediately after she sank in late July, but they were unable to float the wooden hulled vessel.

They did however remove the boat’s outriggers and other gear, which lessened the dangers to navigation from the sunken vessel.

So she sat for a couple of months, with just the main mast sticking above the surface until help arrived on Wednesday, Nov. 10.

That’s when the Sheriff’s Dive Team came out and working off the Harbor Department’s work barge, was able to deploy enough lift bags to re-float the vessel, where the Harbor Patrol tied her off to a patrol boat and towed her to the launch ramp.

Negranti Const., was waiting with an excavator to finish her off.

But not so fast, the little wooden vessel said. She wasn’t quite ready to meet her demise.

While towing the boat to the launch ramp, she got stuck and sank again.

The launch ramp, which is made of concrete, comes to a sudden stop about 5-feet off the bay bottom. The Lady Maxine’s bow got caught on that little hump and she refused to budge.

The next day, Nov. 11, the dive team returned and repositioned the air bags to raise the bow enough for the excavator to grab hold. And on Friday morning, Nov. 12, she was dragged onto shore and Negranti’s excavator did its work.

It was the second boat to be destroyed, as Negranti also made quick work of another derelict 41-foot sailboat that had also begun to sink and be a potential pollution problem in the bay.

That boat apparently went along quietly.

The Lady Maxine’s deteriorating condition was well-known to the Harbor Department, as the Coast Guard had long ago removed all the fuel and oil and other potential pollutants from the boat. So when the ship sank, after a pump stopped working, it didn’t need to have an oil containment boom encircling it.

However, as she was being freed from the muck of the bay bottom, she did release a small amount of fuel or oil causing a minor sheen to escape the vessel.

The Lady Maxine marked the third derelict boat the department had to deal with since July. They had also, previous to the Lady Maxine’s demise, dealt with a steel hulled boat, the “Big Traveler,” which had partially sunk in 2020 while tied to mooring in the harbor.

A diver had patched the hole in her hull and she was moved to the Harbor dock at the North T-pier where the owner had removed what he wanted from the boat. They cleaned up Big Traveler, removing all fuels, oils and hazardous materials and were given permission from the Federal EPA to sink her offshore.

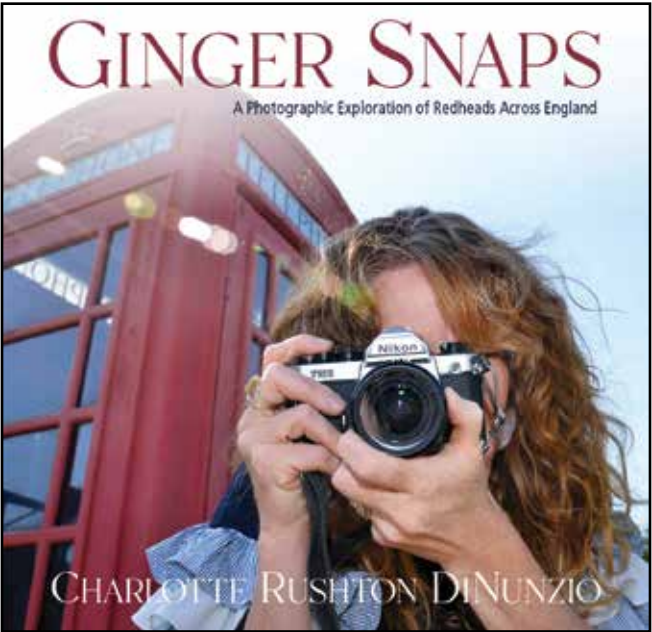
Harbor Director Eric Endersby said Maritime Logistics was hired to tow her 50 miles offshore on Aug. 15 and sink it creating an artificial reef.

In the photos, the Sheriff’s Dive Team uses airbags to re-float the Lady Maxine so she could be towed to shore and destroyed.

Takin’ Care of BUSINESS

By Theresa-Marie Wilson

Local Photographer Releases Book



Pick up your copy of the new photo book “Ginger Snaps” by Morro Bay photographer and photojournalist Charlotte Rushton DiNunzio. The book praises the often overlooked and mocked genetic inheritance of ginger locks, according to publishers, Inspirebytes Omni Media.


Most folks will recognize DiNunzio as the owner of Sand-Prints Photography in Morro Bay. Additionally, she has taught photography at Cuesta College in San Luis Obispo for the last twelve years.

DiNunzio combines her love of photography and passion for redheads in this collection of portraits from all across England, asking those she meets to reflect on what it means to stand out, and how it’s impacted their life. Each page offers varied layouts of portraits showcasing redheads of all ages from DiNunzio’s journeys, with an introduction on the history of redhead stereotypes, her own upbringing as a redhead, and new mentality on embracing what makes you different.


“Ginger Snaps” is a visual exploration of identity, which DiNunzio hopes to use in teaching readers, both redheaded and non-redheaded alike, that uniqueness is important.

“I hope viewers of my redhead portraits will come away from this book with a new sense of wonder at how amazing red hair is. I created this project to celebrate redheads for redheads,” says DiNunzio. “So those of us who are feeling ‘less than’ because of our hair color can actually hold their head up high. It is such an extraordinary color. It makes me sad to think that someone who


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Edward Jones
MAKING SENSE OF INVESTING

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Community

has red hair feels low about it.”
The book is recommended for all ages and is available now on Amazon with worldwide distribution.

Fundraiser Raises Hope

Thanks to support throughout San Luis Obispo County French Hospital Medical Center (FHMC) Foundation raised over \$133,000 with its “Share Hope” fundraiser held last month. In its second year, more than 300 community members contributed helping to support the Hearst Cancer Resource Center (HCRC) at FHMC.
The HCRC is a unique resource center offering patient navigation, classes, support groups, and more, in both English and Spanish that provides all services free of charge to cancer patients and their families. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the HCRC currently offers many services virtually.
“All proceeds stay local and directly benefit cancer patients in need,” Alan Iftiniuk, FHMC President and CEO. “This support is especially crucial because of the additional financial challenges and obligations our patients have faced because of the pandemic.”
This year’s proceeds will specifically benefit Hearst Cancer Resource Center’s Angel of Hope Program. The Angel of Hope Fund provides cancer patients in need with assistance and support through the cancer program.
Since the HCRC opened in 2008, the center has had 114,000 visits and contacts. Since then, the Foundation has raised more than \$10 million to support the HCRC, enabling the HCRC to provide all services free of charge to patients.

Nature Black Friday

On Black Friday (November 26), head to the Pismo Monarch Butterfly Grove and the Morro Bay Museum of Natural History to shop clearance items and holiday gift sets! A sale table will be set up from 10 a.m. - 2 p.m, and the normal store hours will remain the same. Some of the gift sets will only be available for in-person purchase on Black Friday only.

Walk and Talk with M.B. Chamber

Everyone is invited to join the Property Walks and Talks with the Morro Bay Chamber of Commerce on Nov. 17. It is holiday season again. They are encouraging people to shop local and think outside the box with your gift giving ideas!
The Chamber will talk with local businesses about their holiday shopping needs as part of Small Business Every Day.
Schedule:
• 1 p.m. UPS Store
• 1:30 p.m. Natural History Museum
• 2 p.m. Central Coast Cart Rentals
The fun continues on Dec. 3 with visits to:
• 1p.m. Bay Cruisers
• 1:30 p.m. Central Coast Lift
• 2 p.m. Morro Bay Maritime Museum
For more information, give the Chamber a call at 805-772-4467.

Cayucos Car Show Returns

Photos by Neil Farrell

The 30th Annual Cayucos Car Show took over downtown Cayucos on Nov. 6 with about 300 beautiful, classic, custom cars, trucks, a few rat rods, a McLaren road racer, and even one stylish hot rod golf cart. Hundreds of people turned out on a clear and warm day by the beach, as the car show made its return after being canceled last year due to the coronavirus pandemic response. It marked the second big public event on the North Coast to return from the virus hiatus after the Cambria Scarecrow Festival in October, and will hopefully mark the start of a return to normal.





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_____	12 for \$28.00
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Community



Better Gnomes
and
Gardens Workshop

Morro Bay Art Association, presents a workshop in ceramics with ceramic artists Shell Voorhees and Aimee Brantley Mondays Nov. 22, 29, Dec. 6, 13 from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. The first two Monday’s will be hand-building your gnome and planter. The pieces will be bisque fired and ready for glazing on the third and fourth Mondays. Connect with other artists and learn the love of working with clay. This workshop is designed for beginners over 16 to adults and is appropriate for intermediate artists as well. Each participant will take home two completed (glazed) pieces (gnome and planter) in time for the holidays. The cost is \$150 for members and \$165 for non-members for the 4-day workshop. All materials are included. It all takes place at Art Center Morro Bay, 835 Main Street, Morro Bay. Reserve your space online at artcentermorrobay.org/index.php/shop.

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

Join local artist and illustrator Judy Maynard for a book signing of her new Zen Colorbook, “From My Brain to Yours,” on Nov 20 from 12- 2 p.m. The book is hand illustrated and full of beautiful illustrations for folks to color just in time for the holiday. Judy will be on hand at her studio gallery in Cambria to greet and sign her book where you can also see more of her whimsical alcohol ink paintings.. Enjoy lite snacks while enjoying the garden setting located at 2024 Main St. in the back of the Garden Shed Shops. For more information, go to Artwithjudyann.com





The Morro Bay White Caps Community Band has two more concerts planned in which they will perform with the SLO County Community Band to finish off 2021. The Santa’s Arrival concert is on Friday, Nov. 26 from 9:30-10:30 a.m. at the SLO Mission Plaza steps. The music continues at the Morro Bay Lighted Boat Parade on Saturday, Dec. 4 from 5:30 – 8 p.m. at the Morro Bay South T-Pier at 1185 Embarcadero. Photo credit: Frances Gaul Photography

Six Pirates Sign College Letters

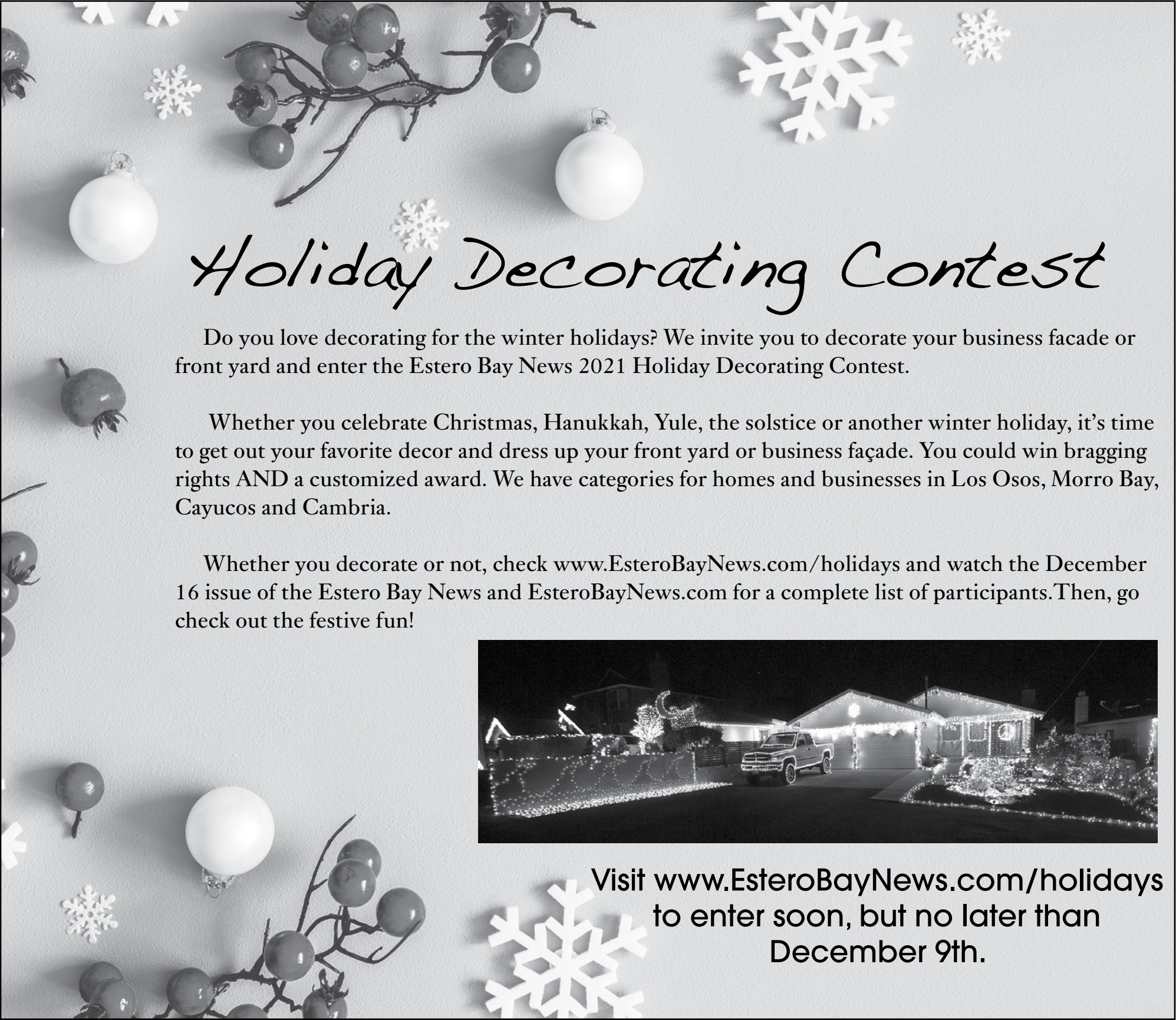


Six Morro Bay High School athletes will continue competing on the collegiate level after signing National Letters of Intent to play college sports on Nov. 10. In the photograph from left are: Morgan Codron who will play baseball at the University of Portland in Portland, Ore.; Jackson Howell will play baseball at St. Mary’s College in Moraga, Calif.; Peyton Schemmer will play softball at Syracuse University, Syracuse N.Y.; Dayton Robinett volleyball, Azusa Pacific University, Azusa, Calif.; Carson Spahr will play soccer at Cal Poly SLO; and Wesley Wilson will wrestle at Cal Poly. Photo courtesy MBHS

In Print & On Line



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Holiday Decorating Contest

Do you love decorating for the winter holidays? We invite you to decorate your business facade or front yard and enter the Estero Bay News 2021 Holiday Decorating Contest.

Whether you celebrate Christmas, Hanukkah, Yule, the solstice or another winter holiday, it’s time to get out your favorite decor and dress up your front yard or business façade. You could win bragging rights AND a customized award. We have categories for homes and businesses in Los Osos, Morro Bay, Cayucos and Cambria.

Whether you decorate or not, check www.EsteroBayNews.com/holidays and watch the December 16 issue of the Estero Bay News and EsteroBayNews.com for a complete list of participants. Then, go check out the festive fun!



Visit www.EsteroBayNews.com/holidays to enter soon, but no later than December 9th.

Music

The “Do Not Miss” Ska Show



If you love ska music, you cannot afford to miss this show! Step into the time machine and imagine 60’s Jamaican ska played in a 20’s big band format with a 20-piece ska orchestra. Our friends at The Siren have lined up this blockbuster show featuring the Western Standard Time Ska Orchestra and the Central Coast’s own Upside Ska. WSTSKO includes Greg Lee from Hepcat on vocals and guys from The Aggrolites, Beastie Boys, Gogol Bordello, See Spot, Mobtown, Kingston 10, The Debonaires and some of the best horn players in Southern California. The show is December 18 at 7:30 at The Siren in Morro Bay. Tickets are \$20 in advance and on sale now at TheSirenMorroBay.com. This will sell out, so grab tickets today and clear your calendar for this one.

Photo: Western Standard Time Ska Orchestra

Thu., Nov. 18 • 7:30pm
Hoobastank w/Eat The Wolf
The Siren
900 Main St, Morro Bay

Thu., Nov. 18 • 7:00pm
Robert Alberts Quintet
The Madonna Inn
100 Madonna Road,
San Luis Obispo

Fri., Nov. 19 • 4:00pm
Atascadero Fall Festival
Soundhouse Headlines
Sunken Gardens, Atascadero

Fri., Nov. 19 • 7:00pm
Jim Barnett Trio
AMSTRDM
725 13th Street, Paso Robles

Sat., Nov. 20 • 4:00pm
Atascadero Fall Festival
Pato Banton Headlines
Sunken Gardens, Atascadero

Sat., Nov. 20 • 8:00pm
Corduroy - Pearl Jam Tribute
The Siren
900 Main St, Morro Bay

Sat., Nov. 20 • 1:00pm
The Jump Jax
Broken Earth Winery
1650 Ramada Dr, Paso Robles

Sat., Nov. 20 • 4:00pm
Pink Floyd Laser Spectacular
The Fremont Theater
1035 Monterey St,
San Luis Obispo

Sat., Nov. 20 • 5:00pm
Ras Danny
Sea Pines Golf Resort
1945 Solano St, Los Osos

Sat., Nov. 20 • 2:30pm
Sound Investment
The Siren
900 Main St, Morro Bay

Sun., Nov. 21 • 4:00pm
Atascadero Fall Festival
Bear Market Riot Headlines
Sunken Gardens, Atascadero

Sun., Nov. 21 • 8:00pm
Dawes
The Fremont Theater
1035 Monterey St,
San Luis Obispo

Dawes performs
at the
Fremont Theater!



In support of their latest album, Good Luck With Whatever, Dawes will be making a tour stop in San Luis Obispo at the Fremont Theater on Sunday, November 21 at 8:00pm. This rock band has a solid history of crushing every show they put on and leaving the audience wanting more. Frontman and guitarist Taylor Goldsmith will captivate you with his amazing storytelling, great guitar playing, and infectious enthusiasm. Special guest Erin Rae will open the show. Grab your tickets now at FremontSLO.com and buckle up for a great evening. Photo: Dawes

Sun., Nov. 21 • 7:00pm
Nekromantix, SLO Brew Rock
855 Aerovista Place,
San Luis Obispo

Sun., Nov. 21 • 4:30pm
The Siren Sunday Jazz Jam
The Siren
900 Main St, Morro Bay

Sun., Nov. 21 • 12:00pm
SLO Vibes Trio
Blue Moon Over Avila
460 Front St., Avila Beach

Thu., Nov. 25 • 7:00pm
Robert Alberts Quintet
The Madonna Inn
100 Madonna Road,
San Luis Obispo

Fri., Nov. 26 • 7:00pm
Jim Barnett Trio
AMSTRDM
725 13th Street, Paso Robles

Fri., Nov. 26 • 8:00pm
Whose Live Anyway?
Clark Center for the Performing Arts 487 Fair Oaks Ave,
Arroyo Grande

Sat., Nov. 27 • 8:00pm
China Cats: A Grateful Dead Celebration
The Siren
900 Main St, Morro Bay

Sat., Nov. 27 • 7:00pm
Starlight Dreamband
The Madonna Inn
100 Madonna Road,
San Luis Obispo



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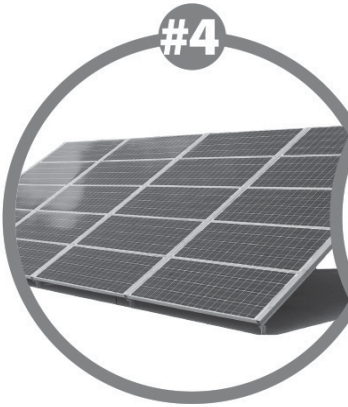


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Community

County Supervisors Recognizes Retired Teachers Week



The San Luis Obispo County Board of Supervisors recently recognized the contributions to the community made by retired teachers. They passed a resolution that proclaimed November 7 – 13 as California Retired Teachers Week.

Accepting the certificate on behalf of California Retired Teachers Association Division 23 are front row, left to right, Nancy Rye, Karen Beatty both of North Oceano School, which is now Fairgrove School, Susan Huls, Arroyo Vista Elem. School in South Pasadena who moved to the local area four years ago, and President Bruce Badrigian, who taught English at Morro Bay High School for 33 years and currently in his 22nd year teaching English at Cuesta College. Back row, left to right, supervisors Debbie Arnold, Dawn Ortiz-Legg, Lynn Compton, John Peschong, and Bruce Gibson. For information on how to join CalRTA, go to CALRTA.org.

Santa Wears a Badge



Santa Claus will be wearing a badge again this year when the Sheriff's Office holds the 32nd Annual Christmas Bicycle Giveaway, presenting youngsters with free bicycles for Christmas. The Sheriff's Office has been giving away bicycles during the holiday season since 1989, when Ed Williams was Sheriff.

"This program," Sheriff's spokesman Tony Cipolla said in a news release, "was created to promote the holiday spirit by giving away refurbished bicycles and new helmets to children in need in San Luis Obispo County. Due to the generosity of the people of this County, the program has continued to be a big success."

How it works is people new or slightly used bicycles at the County Honor Farm where inmates repair and refurbish them to be given away to county children up to age 15.

"The program instills in the inmates a positive work ethic, self-respect, and a sense of worth to the community," Cipolla said. Cipolla added, "we will be accepting adult bicycles, but we

prefer children's bicycles since they are in high demand. If you know a child [up to 15-years of age] in need of a bicycle, please email: sh-bikereports@co.slo.ca.us to request a Christmas Bicycle Application or see: slosheriff.org and click on 'Resources' at the top of our homepage and then 'Forms and Applications' on the drop down menu."

And the Coronavirus Pandemic looms large over the program. As a result of the pandemic, Cipolla said, new bicycles, replacement parts and accessories are in short supply this year. "We are seeking the public's help by asking for new bicycles, new helmets, or monetary donations for replacement parts."

And the program will also be adhering to COVID safety protocols, which means they will schedule pick-up times for people who applied for a bike from Dec. 6-10 at the Honor Farm, 880 Oklahoma Ave. (off Hwy 1 at Kansas Avenue).


The Sheriff is asking everyone to wear a facemask when they come in to pick up their bikes. Applications are due by Nov. 24.

Individuals and businesses that want to donate new children's bicycle helmets in their original packaging can bring them to any of the Sheriff's Office Patrol Stations or to the Honor Farm. To make a cash contribution for the purchase of parts or helmets, send a check to: Sheriff's Advisory Foundation, Attn: Bicycle Fund, P.O. Box 3752, San Luis Obispo, CA 93403.

Cipolla added, "The Sheriff's Office could not continue this program without the help and generosity of groups like Rita's Rainbows, which donates money to buy bicycle helmets; Bike SLO County, which donates many hours to helping inmates refurbish the bicycles; The Sandlot Group of San Luis Obispo for donating new bikes; and the Sheriff's Advisory Foundation which donates time and money to the cause."

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" Komreich, Judy Salamacha and Susan Vasquez

Walking With a Sky View

By Susan Vasquez



What price do you pay for a memorable walk? Most times, when I walk, my eyes are aimed safely downward. But I pay a price for that view: I lose a fabulous, here-in-this-moment-lost-in-the-next chance to see the spectacular view above. My reward is safety. I see most of those stubby clefts that might cause a fall. And since I fall often in life, downward is a good view for my wellbeing.

On my usual safe walks, looking down past my toes, I see the shore birds. They stroll along our plentiful tide line, arguing over food, but without a heartfelt clamor. They may squabble, but in the end, they share the bounty. It's the wind that ruffles their feathers.

I also see the glorious transition of rock to pebble to sand. On packed wetness near the rolling waves, with my eyes aimed downward, I take a geological journey through time – sedimentary, igneous and metamorphic lay themselves at my feet. It is nature's best classroom as I walk along this learning curve of salty water licking the roughness from stone.

Strolling with my safe step, I see what I've seen before. Maybe the walk has become habit, but it still contains some little magic. Mist lifts from the incoming tides and floats past my feet. I step around the shore birds' droppings, having been warned by past experience and present sight. Tangled ropes of Giant Kelp, Dead Man's Bootlaces, Bull Whip Kelp, and Turkish Towel wrap themselves around the tide, which comes and goes every day, just like me.

Because I walk this shore daily, a routine litany of views repeats along my path. Stones, sand, seaweed, shore birds. As my eyes aim downward, keeping me safe, I see usual life-assuring sights.

Then the unusual call of a sea hawk interrupts me. I haven't heard it often, and the sound itself pulls my eyes to the sky. There it is: a seasonal newcomer to the neighborhood.

I stop and watch as the young Osprey dives toward the water, at the same time flapping wings and stretching claws. This new king of the tide comes away with a shining, struggling fish, then flies away to the tall eucalyptus. As I continue to lift my eyes, I see the fish tail protest its tragedy, and the Osprey settle onto the tallest limb of the tree.


I change my trail and follow. 'Lift up,' I tell my feet, unused to this path. Since my sight is engaged in the sky escapade, I can't guarantee my own safety. When I get nearer the eucalyptus, I see that the Osprey has begun its meal. Its head bends for a bite, pulls away with a satisfied tug. Then, against the sky view, I see another

Sky View Continued on page 16

Estero Bay News

Holiday Gift Guide

Your guide to local makers and experiences



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Community

Family Caregiver Month

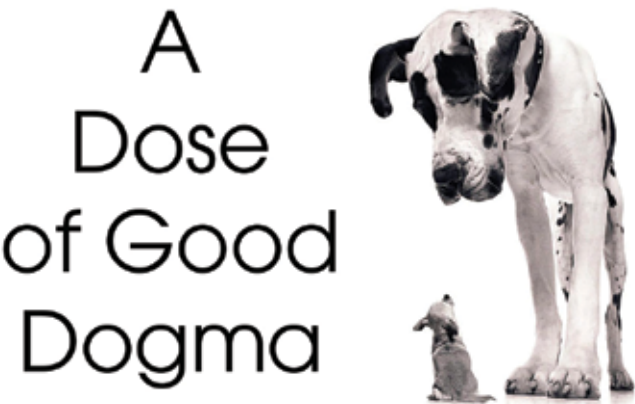
November is Family Caregiver Month, a time to recognize the nearly 1 in 5 adults in the United States who provide care for an older adult family member or other loved one. Most are “informal” unpaid caregivers and many do not see themselves as “caregivers” because their loved one is in a nursing home, assisted living or other care facility.

The family and friends of people in long-term care are caregivers even though they are not doing daily tasks like bathing or dressing loved ones. Join Long Term Care Ombudsman Services of San Luis Obispo County (LTCO) and the Alzheimer’s Association California Central Coast Chapter to learn how informal caregivers can help get older adults with dementia and other care needs the highest possible quality of life. LTCO and the Alzheimer’s Association are organizing an on-line Family Council open to anyone who has a loved one or family member in a long-term care facility in San Luis Obispo County.

The first Family Council meeting is in January 2022. In the meantime, LTCO and the Alzheimer’s Association will send out tip sheets for family caregivers with suggestions on how they can support their loved ones and care for themselves during the holiday season.

“The family caregiver’s role changes when a loved one moves into a long-term care setting,” said Linda Beck, LTCO staff Ombudsman. “There are different challenges, like helping your loved one adjust to their community and learning to work with staff. The caregiver’s role changes, but it does not end. Family caregivers need information and support wherever their loved one lives.”

To sign up for tip sheets or the Family Council, email ombudsman@ombudsmanslo.org before December 1. Long Term Care Ombudsman Services of San Luis Obispo County is a 501(c)(3) organization that provides residents of care facilities with access to advocacy services, complaint investigation and resolution, facility monitoring visits, and witnessing advanced health care directives.



Framing the Big Picture

By Lisa Ellman

Clients often ask me, “How long will it take to train my dog?” Or “How many sessions do you think we’ll need?” These are questions I can’t answer. It doesn’t depend on me, or the dog for that matter. It depends on you, the dog owner. How much time are you willing/able to give to your training? The time that your dog spends with me, about an hour, or any trainer (not including board/train facilities) is trivial. My job is to train and educate

you, the owner, and provide you the necessary tools for what to do with the other 23 hours you spend with your dog. I’ll give you homework, but if it’s not done, well, you know.

I like my clients to take into consideration that there are two types of training. I refer to them as “formal” and “informal”. Formal training includes setting aside time to teach physical, concrete commands, like stay, come, down, etc.

Informal training refers to the dynamics in every way you engage your dog throughout the day. Keep in mind that everything you do with your dog can be called training. This includes snuggle time or feeding time. You don’t want your dog chewing on you or pawing you when you snuggle. You don’t want your dog jumping on you as you attempt to put its feeding dish on the floor. You also may not want the dog in the kitchen with you, underfoot, as you prepare a meal. So rules and boundaries must be learned. This can be as simple as using “uh-uh!” to distract and redirect the dog, or using a body block to keep the dog from entering a room, or simply getting up and walking away when play gets too rough. I consider this informal training; it happens spontaneously as the dog is behaving in a way you want to change.

It’s still work, make no mistake, and requires your focus, but it can be fun! Training is a process because learning is a process. When you’re aware that every day, every minute, with your dog is a training opportunity, you are looking at the big picture. Which, in my opinion, is to ultimately bring forth a well socialized, attentive, happy, responsive dog.

To support either type of training, consider your dog’s learning style; be aware of what “drives” your dog to learn. Is it treats, praise, toys? All of these? Switch it up! These are all tools you can utilize to motivate and hold your dog’s attention when training, formally or informally. Does your dog need to run and play before training or after? Is your dog getting the exercise and activity it needs to be able to focus on learning? I like to use the analogy of kindergartners. They are a squirmy bunch with short attention spans. In all fairness, if they weren’t able to get out to run and play a few times a day, that pent up energy would be so distracting that it would be extremely difficult for them to focus, learn or retain any information being taught.

So, spend time on formal training, but remember to think about the big picture; the end result of time, consistency, activities and connecting every day with your dog.

Good Dogma has been helping dogs with people problems since 1996. Readers are invited to submit questions to gooddogma@botmail.com. Contact information for all offered services can be found on our website www.GoodDogma.net



Los Osos Valley Road median



Planted by Celebrate Los Osos

Many of our community’s residents work diligently - without payment or recognition. They continue to work and share their talents without the community they live in being aware of their contributions. Such an entity is called Celebrate Los Osos.

Following the never-ending sewer debacle an idea occurred to several Los Osos community residents. They were looking to find a way to heal the nagging sewer-war differences that lingered even after the sewer was installed. The idea was formulated by two hard working activists, Pandora Nash-Karner and Mimi Kalland. Their goals were to give the community a positive outlook; to improve its appearance and at the same time conserve its resources. Their projects continue to benefit us all and are many to list.

Some of the many projects they worked on include: The bear mural inspired George Kastner to form a community-building group called Los Osos Community Organization (LOCO), which planned the second mural for the Bay-Osos Ace Hardware store on Ninth Street at Los Olivos Avenue in 1990. About 120 people chipped in \$5 to paint on the wall. Janice Sharman-Hand designed a Chumash village at Spooner’s Cove in Montaña State Park. Sharman-Hand’s assistants were Ann Calhoun, Jeanne Fennerman, and Martha Wright. It was public art by the people and for the people.

If you are a new resident to our community and would like to become involved with Los Osos citizenry and community’s ongoing projects, you can contact: Info@CelebrateLosOsos.org or Volunteer@CelebrateLosOsos.org.

Sky Views From page 15

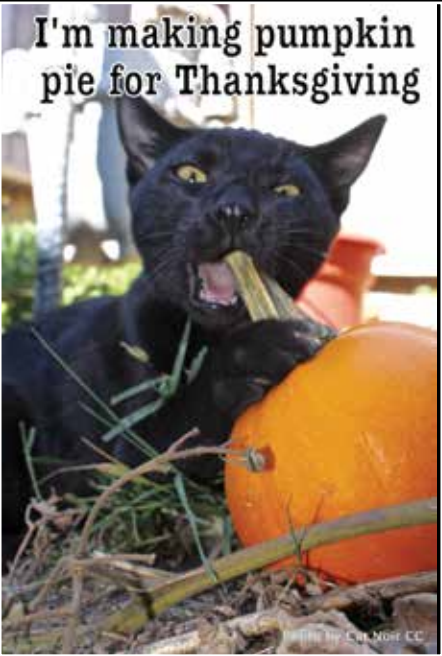


fresh sight. Stepping into the cluster of trees, I am greeted by monarch butterflies. Into the tall branches they flit, in and out of the sunlight, delightful and light-hearted against the feast that is occurring three floors up in this small forest. I count 25 butterflies along one small branch.

I have been aiming my sight skyward for quite a while now, and haven’t yet fallen. At times, I feel dizzy. But nature’s action is happening against the sky today, so that is where I must look.

So often in life, the spectacular is mine for the moment, and gone too quickly. I won’t experience it, if I always choose the safe route, eyes aimed cautiously downward, saving myself from the harm I think is there, but forever closing my view to happenings I may not even imagine. Fabulous happenings like ospreys and Monarch butterflies.

Susan Vasquez has taken walks in many of the world’s most interesting spots, but especially enjoys her strolls around Estero Bay. She is the author of four books and blogs at One Small Walk.



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Don't Let County Shred
the North Coast

North Coast residents from Los Osos to San Simeon should be up in arms over proposed SLO County redistricting maps that would slice and dice Los Osos, Morro Bay, Cayucos, Cambria and San Simeon.

Three members of the Board of Supervisors have called some of these maps "interesting." Are you interested in lumping Cambria and San Simeon with Paso Robles, Creston and Shandon or splitting Los Osos and Morro Bay into separate districts?

The North Coast communities share many common interests - tourism, agriculture, and the Coastal Commission's governance. But will the Board majority be more interested in creating safer voting districts for themselves at our expense?

This is illegal gerrymandering, according to California Election Code 21500(d), which states that the Board "shall not adopt supervisorial district boundaries for the purpose of favoring or discriminating against a political party." Further, the Board is required to preserve to the extent practicable communities of interest like the North Coast.

I urge North Coast residents to protest. Email your concerns to the Supervisors at redistricting@co.slo.ca.us and speak in person at the Board's special hearing, 9 a.m., Friday, November 19, and final action Tuesday, November 30.

Don Maruska
Los Osos,

Highway Funding

I am deeply fascinated by Dwight Eisenhower's Interstate Highway System because it is celebrating 65 years from 1956 to 2021. My favorite Interstate Highway is 5, known as the Golden State Freeway and Santa Ana Freeways through Los Angeles and Orange Counties, which replaced old U.S. 6 and 99 through the San Fernando Valley and downtown Los Angeles on the Los Angeles Basin and old U.S. 101 going very close to Disneyland, my favorite theme park in Southern California.

During the year of 1964, the "great" renumbering of highways through the California Division of Highways (Now Caltrans) was put in place. It renumbered U.S. 99 as California state route 99 during the year I was born, 1966, from Mettler to Sacramento, to Red Bluff. I used to live in Visalia, and the former U.S. 99 was to the west of my hometown.

I have purchased a book called "Freewaytopia" by the Paul Haddad, on Amazon where I discovered this book on the Free-ways of Los Angeles Facebook page. My birthplace of Glendale was affected by the system for the Ventura Freeway, CA 134. In closing, we should keep funding available for the California Free-way and Expressway System on a monthly basis.

Scott C. Presnal
Morro Bay

Letter's to The
Editor Policy

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

CCAT'S Door to Open for The Holidays

By Jill Turnbow

Cambria Center for the Arts Theatre has been shut down for almost two years. With the exception of three recent concerts, the stage has been dark, and the seats have been empty. But that is about to change. On December 18 and 19, CCAT will open its doors for a staged reading of Barbara Robinson's beloved story "The Best Christmas Pageant Ever."

Many will be familiar with Robinson's popular book telling the story of the Herdmans, the worst kids in the history of the world. They lie, they cheat, they steal, and then one year they find themselves involved in the church's Christmas pageant. Their wild antics and hilarious revelations turn the Christmas story upside down, making the pageant a whole lot better.

"This is a really fun, uplifting show. It's simple and heart-warming," said Bryce Prunty, a representative for the theatre. "I think everyone will really enjoy it and find some holiday spirit in it."

Prunty is the newest member of the Cambria Center for the Arts Board of Directors and will direct a musical in the spring. "We haven't announced the title yet, but I think everyone will be surprised and excited about it."

CCAT will announce a season very soon that will include three major productions, one being the spring musical and a straight play in the fall. This summer will finally see the opening of the long-awaited "Cambria the Musical" written by Cambria local, Ed Hughes. The season will also include other staged readings and several concerts throughout the year.

"We can't wait to have audiences back in the theatre, to hear some laughs and applause," said CCA President Mari Fedrow. "We are thrilled."

Mari said that the theatre will follow the most up to date COVID-19 protocols at the performances. At this writing that will include proof of vaccination before entering and masks must be worn at all times indoors.

Tickets for "The Best Christmas Pageant Ever" are on sale now through the center's website, CambriaArts.org. They are \$10, with proceeds going towards the purchase of some needed equipment for the upcoming season. Seats are reserved and limit-



ed due to social distancing. "If things continue to improve in our county, we hope to open the seating to full capacity," Fedrow said. "We will be watching the county updates closely."

Performances are Saturday evening, December 18 at 7 p.m. and Sunday afternoon, December 19 at 2 p.m. Cambria Center for the Arts is located at 1350 Main St. in Cambria in the old grammar school.

"During the pandemic, the board has worked hard to make a lot of improvements at the center - new décor, paint, improved lighting in both the gallery and the theatre," Prunty said. "We can't wait to show off the renovation!"

Morro Bay Community Awards Nominations Open



Photo of the 2020 Morro Bay chamber board.
Photo by Dean Sullivan

The Morro Bay Chamber of Commerce wants community input for nominations recognizing some outstanding people and businesses.

"One of the most enjoyable things we do on behalf of our members and in service to our Morro Bay Community is to honor the best among us," said Chamber President/CEO, Erica D. Crawford. "In 2022, we look forward to announcing recipients of these various awards, but we need your help to do so."

Don't delay. The Chamber's Awards Committee, composed of prior year recipients spanning back decades, will review nominations in mid-December. Get your nomination forms back no later than December 7. Go to morrochamber.org/community-awards for forms and more information.

We are calling on all members of the community to nominate exceptional individuals for consideration in the following categories:

Living Treasure,

Citizen of the Year,

Business of the Year

Non-Profit of the Year

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News

State Assembly From page 1
County down to the Santa Maria River (the county Line).
That would swap out the more-conservative area of North-
ern Santa Barbara County and bring in the decidedly more liberal
and Democratic communities of the Monterey Bay area.
The new “Monterey Coast District” as it’s being labeled by
the Commission, would have a total population of 477,032 with
some 360,819 voters, according to the Commission’s website.
But the re-districting is not completed, as the Commission
is currently taking public comments on its new divisions. Some
folks are upset at the draft maps.

According to a Nov. 10 story on CalMatters.org, the com-
mission’s “foremost duty is to ensure every district in the state
— 52 for Congress, 80 for state Assembly and 40 for state Senate
— has about the same number of people. That’s about 761,000
Californians in each congressional district, about 988,000 in state
senate districts and 494,000 in Assembly districts. That can get
complicated fast while trying to meet other requirements, such
as not diluting any ethnic group’s vote and keeping districts geo-
graphically compact.”
And for the first time ever, California’s population actually
dropped from the 2010 to 2020 Census.
“It’s even more complex this year,” the article continues,
“because California is losing a congressional seat for the first time
ever — and much of the tension centers on those maps. A series of
marathon and at-times confusing meetings isn’t helping matters,
either.”

If she does well in the Assembly race, Addis might have to
forego a re-election bid for city council. First elected in 2018 to a
4-year term, she would have to run for re-election in November
2022 to stay on the Council.
With State offices, the top two vote getters in the Primary
— even if there are just two candidates or both are from the same
party — go into a run-off in November. That’s what happened in
2020, as Addis finished behind Cunningham in the March Prima-
ry and they faced off again at the November Presidential Election.
She would have to give up her council seat if she’s still in the
running next November, as the City’s election ordinance says that
anyone seeking higher office can’t also run for city council in the
same election.
It’s also possible that this redrawn district will bring people
out of Monterey, Carmel or Santa Cruz to challenge for the seat,
with three or even more candidates possible in the June Primary.
If Addis doesn’t make the November runoff, she would be
eligible to run for city council again.

Waterfront Parking From page 1

The heart of the Embarcadero — from Pacific to Beach
Streets — “experienced a higher parking demand, including 100%
occupancy for the noon and 2 p.m. counts on Saturday,” the study
said.
It pegged peak Downtown usage at 72% (noon Saturday) and
the Rock at 89% (at 2 p.m. on the weekend).
As for turnover — meaning how often a parking space is used
by a different person — on Embarcadero most spaces were used
for 1 or 2 hours. It also reported 50 cars parked in the Embar-
cadero for 3-plus hours, which it assumes are employees working
on the waterfront. Embarcadero has some 24 eateries alone, plus
numerous gift shops, fishing landings, motels and more.
“If 50% of these cars represent owners or employees of
businesses that could park elsewhere,” the report said, “25 spaces
could have parked customers. With a turnover of approximately
every 2 hours, this could mean a capacity of 75 to 100 or more
customer cars on busy days.”

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The decrying over employees taking up limited parking
spaces is nothing new to Morro Bay, as every time the City con-
siders the parking issue, it’s identified as a problem. Indeed, in the
1990s, the City Council passed an ordinance that placed a 3-hour
time limit on street parking from Dunes Street to Marina, painting
the curbs green and posting signs. But the City never really
enforced the regulations and in the early 2000s, under Mayor Bill
Yates, removed all the parking signs in a move to de-clutter the
sidewalks.
In the November counts, Walker reported that at noon on
Saturday the Embarcadero saw 67% utilization with peak parking
— from Beach to Pacific — at 756 spaces used vs. 380 unused. On
Saturday at noon, 95% of the spaces were being used. Off-season
parking wasn’t an issue in the Downtown (52% utilization) or at
the Rock (67%).
And with those stats, the Council decided to move forward
with paid parking, and a so-called “parking management pro-
gram.”

Collins said the Council wants him to develop a management
program to include the use of parking kiosks and possibly an app
to take payments but the area will likely not see a line of parking
meters, waiting to be fed with money.
He said they would now engage so-called stakeholders in
what it will look like. “We would need to establish parameters of
the program [the hourly rate, what parking spaces would be paid
parking, where free parking would be maintained, how it would be
enforced, the type of parking technology we would use — definite-
ly not parking meters, though we will consider kiosks and phone
apps, etc.] following those discussions, and bring a proposed pilot
back for Council consideration before moving forward.”
They will also have to get a coastal development permit from
the Coastal Commission, as the entire Embarcadero is under the
Commission’s ultimate jurisdiction.
“I do believe, though I’m not fully sure,” Collins said, “that
we would need a coastal development permit for a pilot program
on the Embarcadero.”
And parking on the Embarcadero isn’t just for tourists; there
are employees, business owners, liveaboards and fishermen to
consider, all of who likely wouldn’t turn over the spaces in just 2
hours.

“Council further directed staff to check in with Coastal
Commission staff as well as get input from parking user groups in
that area [businesses, employees, Harbor Board members, lease
holders, liveaboards, etc.] to help inform development of the pilot.
“A key component will be retaining free parking area(s) on
the Embarcadero for those who work on the waterfront and for
other core users.”
A staff report estimated the paid parking program would
cost \$10,000-\$50,000 to implement and could bring in as much as
\$200,000 a year or more with paid parking.
“This is a conservative estimate according to Walker,” reads
the City staff report, “as it includes only 300 paid parking spaces
and \$1 per hour charge.
“Both of those factors could be adjusted up, thereby increas-
ing revenues.” That money comes with a catch over how it can be
spent, as the City can’t simply bank the money and spend it on
other needs.
“Parking revenues are intended to cover the cost of the
parking system,” Collins said, “and any additional revenues over
expenditures could be used to maintain and improve coastal access
infrastructure in that area [roads, harbor walk, sidewalks, lighting,
etc. as examples].”
A management program would need staffing, and a decision
will have to be made whether to hire City parking employees or
contract with a private company.

Collins said the pilot program would probably be for one
year to be able to see how it works over an entire year. “I believe
the City would run it for 12 months to fully test the concept and
understand fluctuations throughout all the seasons,” Collins told
EBN. “If a pilot moved forward, the City will evaluate how it
works, and make tweaks as needed and could look at finding addi-
tional parking capacity if it is warranted [per your question below
on acquiring vacant parcels on the waterfront for parking].”
There are two sizable vacant lots on the Embarcadero — one
at the corner of Marina Street and the other at Harbor that the
City might consider obtaining. This is particularly true since it is
actively trying to sell one of its largest parking lots at 714 Embar-
cadero, which used to be an RV park.
As for the numbers, which one could interpret to show there
really isn’t much of a parking problem except for certain times of
the day and week, Collins said they signal that something should
be done.
“The parking consultant [Walker] said that many cities
move forward with parking management solutions when they
experience 70-80% occupancy,” Collins said. “The Embarcadero
regularly experiences 80% or higher occupancy, even on offseason
weekends.”

It also experiences gridlock with people coming and going
to the beach when heat waves in the Central Valley bring a rush
of people escaping to the cooler temps on the coast. In recent
years, and on numerous occasions, traffic has been backed up from
Beach Street to Morro Rock with folks trying to leave the beach.
Some have suggested the Morro Creek Bridge be opened to vehi-
cles to help ease the congestion.
“In addition,” Collins said, “the City is going to evaluate the
Morro Rock parking area further. There is no Council direction to
move forward with paid parking near the Rock at this time.”
The Harbor Department has been busy trying to corral what
can be a willy-nilly parking at The Rock, putting in parking bumps
and chalking in spaces, as well as putting up barriers — cement
blocks and chain, to control the entering and exiting at the rock
parking lot. It seems to have better organized how people park at
the beach.
So why is this an issue? Collins said, “Paid parking helps
create a more efficient parking system, where there is greater turn-
over of cars, and people are less likely to park their cars for many
hours on end [such as employees or business owners — they would
seek cheaper or free parking a bit further away].”
Collins didn’t know when the matter would be brought back
to Council.

Buttercup From page 1

Buttercup Bakery & Cafe owner/baker Carrie Raya baking a
tasty treat at the shop located in Morro Bay.
Photo courtesy of Carrie Raya

3 toddlers ages 4, 2 and 9 months at the time; a husband that
worked full-time to financially support you as you pursue your
dream; and technically not being allowed to use your teeny-tiny
kitchen for production if any kids or pets were popping in and out,
meaning all my work had to be done after they went to bed. So, I
started baking at 8-9 at night, and would finish up around 2 a.m.,
then try to get some rest, although my youngest was still a baby
and would wake up frequently at night while the other two would
be up early.
“The rest of our day we spent delivering the cookies I made
the night before around town, with 3 kids and dozens of cookies
all piled onto a stroller — we were quite the sight.
“If only you knew what it’s like to take the biggest risk of your
life and open a brick and mortar a few years later - again with 3
kids who are still pretty young, your husband working the night
shift at his job so that he can take care of the kids during the day
while you’re at work, and this being your first restaurant where
you had to borrow money from your generous and trusting family
and you’re now responsible for employees, a successful product
line, an enticing menu, equipment, licenses, insurance, quality
customer service, the whole she-bang.
“If only you knew what it’s like being a baker, waking up at
3 or 4 a.m. most mornings, working 10-12 hour days, coming
home to take care of kids while your husband is at work, relying
on your dear friends, like Hilary Saner, Patricia Nolan and Leslie
Gayle Fillmore-Mascorro, to help you with everything to get the
business going — hoping there will be some money left for you
to take home after you’ve paid all of your bills and employees in
those first few years.
“If only you knew what it’s like pouring your heart and soul
into creating products that are consistent, exciting, flavorful,
picture-worthy, and finding employees you can trust, like Jordan
Alban Vallat, my manager, who is incredible, and Brent Griffiths,
who has been there through thick and thin, and many others. And
(employees) who are skilled enough to replicate what you do so



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Kevin says,

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KEVIN O'CONNOR, President

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News

that you don't have to be there every minute of every day even though you truly love it.

"If only you knew what it's like carving out a niche in the community — to be a place that people truly want to come to — being the best you can be for these people, whose tastes and affection you are whole-heartedly seeking.

"If only you knew what it's like having all that come to a halt when the pandemic hits, but you still have bills to pay and employees to take care of.

"If only you knew how many changes we made just to make it — people we had to let go, inventory we had to cut, production we had to down-size, grants we were awarded like the one we were given from the amazing City of Morro Bay.

"If only you knew how determined we were for our families, for our employees, for our community.

"And if only you will know what it's like someday to see your success from the grit and tenacity you have, the success of keeping your head down to grind through when things are about to fall apart; the success of keeping your chin up and not letting the pressure get to you; the success of your employees still coming to work and working extremely hard to keep the business going because they believe in it, and they believe in you; the success of people in your community still coming to support you now more than ever before — people like Morro Bay City Manager Scott Collins having his meetings on our patio, Morro Bay Chamber CEO/President Erica Crawford coming two times a day some days when I ask her to meet up with me, and she already has a meeting planned here for later in the afternoon, like Jamie Irons volunteering to work the counter and washing dishes for us during our events, like St. Timothy's Father Ed (Holterhoff) snatching up anything chocolate, and only chocolate, to serve to his parishioners and a family he is hosting, and the list goes on of the amazing people in this community.

"If only you will know the success of accomplishing what you set out to do. It has always been my dream to own my own bakery, and sometimes I can't quite believe we are still in business and busier than ever before. It is with great pleasure and honor that I am fortunate enough to serve this amazing community, even if I am 'a prissy little baker.' Thank you."

Applause, applause, applause! And if you couldn't stop reading make sure you stop by Buttercup Bakery & Cafe and let Carrie Raya know. And if you are a fellow small business, thank her for eloquently expressing what it means to be a small business owner in Morro Bay. Why not stop in during the holidays? Butternut Bakery is baking pumpkin and pecan pies, holiday dinner rolls and whatever baked goods you will need to entertain family and guests this season.

Fighting Climate From page 1

its EarthCare Team. "While many people and governments are wringing their hands about what to do about climate change, we can take action right now in our communities. Trees and plants have been removing CO2 from the atmosphere for eons; working with nature we can improve climate health."

Scientific consensus states that there is too much CO2 in the atmosphere caused by oil, coal, and other fossil fuels being burned for energy. This excess has led to global warming.

To learn how they could make a difference, members of the church's Earthcare and Landscape teams, Rotary Club de Tolosa, Los Osos Valley Garden Club, and Rotary Passport Club met with Tim LaSalle, Ph.D., professor emeritus at Cal Poly College of Agriculture and co-founder of the Center for Regenerative Agriculture and Resilient Systems. The goal of the meeting was to build a simple bioreactor on the church's property that would feed and concentrate naturally occurring mycorrhizal fungi.

Mycorrhizas are beneficial fungi growing alongside plant roots that increase the plant's ability to absorb more nutrients and water from the soil. They also increase plant tolerance to different environmental stresses, which would increase yields and crop quality, improve drought tolerance, help control soil erosion, and maintain soil quality and nutrient cycling.

"We want to boost the productivity of our soils and their ability to convert CO2 into living carbon in the roots of trees and plants," said Maruska. "This will enable our congregation to support a program to plant 30 trees on the property and other efforts that tap nature's ability to solve our climate crisis."

A bioreactor is a simple structure that is a little larger than a standard garbage can. It uses dried leaves, aged horse manure, dry hay, and other natural materials and a watering system which keeps it moist for 12-14 months. The process allows naturally occurring mycorrhizal fungi to grow. Food scraps are avoided because they don't provide a good nutrient source for the fungi.

Unlike compost piles, which breakdown plant material with an anaerobic process, the bioreactor is aerobic or air-based. This means that a well-functioning bioreactor does not create odors or



Professor emeritus at Cal Poly, Tim LaSalle Ph.D., shows how fungi enhance roots, plant productivity, and carbon.

attract pests. It costs less than \$300 for the materials to make one. The bioreactor works well in a setting where the concentrated product can have multiple uses. While readers can build home bioreactors, Maruska suggests sharing the product with other properties.

The big question is whether bioreactor technology can make



The bioreactor construction team takes pride in its successful efforts. Pictured are: Jeff Priolo (Rotary de Tolosa), John Wallace (Rotary de Tolosa), Vita Miller (Los Osos Valley Garden Club), Mike Eggleston (St. Benedict's Earthcare Team), Wendy McKeown (Los Osos Valley Garden Club), Caro Hall (lead priest, St. Benedict's), Tim LaSalle (co-founder, Center for Regenerative Agriculture), Terri Main (Rotary Passport Club), Don Maruska (member of St. Benedict's and Rotary de Tolosa), Liz Maruska (Landscape Committee, St. Benedict's), and Brian Metcalf (Rotary de Tolosa).

Photos courtesy of St. Benedict's Episcopal Church

a significant impact in problems like loss of sea ice, accelerated sea level rise and longer and more intense weather events.

"Yes," Maruska said. "The bioreactor effort is part of a larger movement to support regenerative agriculture. That means agriculture that keeps our soils alive (and holding carbon) with no-till or low-till techniques. As noted in the documentary "Kiss the Ground" (available on Netflix), if half of U.S. agriculture used these practices, it could remove all of the excess CO2 in the atmosphere. We need to get people aware and acting to make this possible."

The mycorrhizal fungi created using the bioreactor will be



One part of the team stitches the plant cloth to the mesh frame that forms the outside of the bioreactor. Pictured are: John Wallace, Liz Maruska, Jeff Priolo, Vita Miller, Mike Eggleston, Wendy McKeown, and Brian Metcalf

used to accelerate the growth and carbon-capturing capacity of the St. Benedict's planned 30-tree orchard. Additionally, the Climate Action Team from Rotary de Tolosa plans to build additional bioreactors to benefit tree planting and other projects in San Luis Obispo.

The church's EarthCare team is actively involved in the organization's efforts to be good stewards of creation.

"It has active members from our congregation and others in the community who want to learn and take action together," said Maruska. "We've led book discussions, held Earth Day services, and created a Beginner's Guide to Creation Care and the Climate Crisis. All events are free and open to the public.

"We want our example to inspire other faith-based communities, service clubs, and commercial agriculture to see how aligning with nature offers practical solutions to the climate crisis."

For more information about EarthCare resources and activities at St. Benedict's Episcopal Church, go to www.StBensLosOsos.org. More information about regenerative agriculture is available at CSU Chico's Center for Regenerative Agriculture and Resilient Systems at csuchico.edu/regenerativeagriculture.

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