

County Supervisors Redraw Districts, Anger Many

By Neil Farrell

The future looks very different for San Luis Obispo County voters, in so far as their respective Supervisorial Districts will look.

A split County Board of Supervisors voted 3-2 on Nov. 30 to adopt a new district map submitted by South County resident, Richard Patten, and rejected over a dozen other maps, including a status quo map, that were developed by a diverse list of people — from a County staff redistricting committee, to the SLO Chamber of Commerce.

Patten's map was also endorsed by the local Republican Party, and coupled with the majority of County Supervisors being conservative leaning (County Supervisors are officially non-partisan offices), has Democrats in the County crying foul and leveling accusations of Gerrymandering.

With the so-called, "Patten Map," each supervisory district is changed dramatically, but none more so than Dist. 2, where Supervisor Bruce Gibson has held the seat for four, 4-year terms and has already announced intentions to seek a fifth term in 2022.

Currently, Dist. 2 encompasses Los Osos, Morro Bay, western SLO, Cayucos, Cambria and San Simeon, all very like-minded communities that favor environmental protections and slow-growth.

But the Patten Map cuts out Morro Bay and Los Osos from Dist. 2, and adds all of Atascadero and San Miguel. So Gibson would lose his two biggest areas of supporters in Morro Bay and Los Osos, and pick up constituents in Atascadero that tend to be more conservative.

It also dilutes the weight of North Coast voters, throwing them in with the folks of the North County.

Dist. 3 has perhaps the oddest changes, as currently, that district represents Pismo Beach, about a third of SLO, Grover and Avila Beach.

Under the Patten Map, Dist. 3 is reduced to a thin strip of land that encompasses nearly all of SLO — including the residential areas around Cal Poly — and stretches out the Chorro Valley/Hwy 1 corridor to include all of Morro Bay.

Current Dist. 3 Supervisor Dawn Ortiz-Legg, who along with Gibson voted against the new map, commented that this



San Luis Obispo County redistricting, or Patten, map.

new Dist. 3 only has about 1,300 residents that actually live in the County's jurisdiction.

Los Osos would be moved into Dist. 5 along with Avila, Grover and Pismo Beach, plus Oceano, and including the County Airport and Oceano Airport as well.

Currently, Dist. 5 is mainly in the North County, and includes Atascadero and Santa Margarita plus chunks of Templeton and SLO. The Patten Map makes Dist. 5 a coastal district.

Dist. 4 also severely changes both its shape and constituency, as the new 4th District would include Arroyo Grande, Nipomo, and the sparsely populated Eastern SLO County (California Valley), and even include the Oceano Dunes OHV Park as it wraps around the southern edge of the County Line.

Dist. 1 changes the least of the five and would encompass Paso Robles, Templeton, Shandon, Creston, and Santa Margarita, as well as the vast empty in the northeastern part of the County.

With his once safe district now carved into three pieces, Dist. 1 Supervisor Gibson was not happy. "The Board majority, to no one's surprise, pushed through their outrageously gerrymandered map," Gibson said. "From start to finish, they fought desperately to exclude some key information: a simple analysis of voter registration numbers shows their map explicitly favors Republicans — a violation of state statutes."

In a post to the County's Facebook Page the SLO County Democratic Party wrote, "By selecting the Patten map, super-

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Citizen Group Seeks Parcel Tax to Help Harbor

By Neil Farrell

A small group of concerned citizens says the Morro Bay Harbor Department is sorely underfunded and in need of a revenue boost to catch up on much needed maintenance of City-owned facilities.

Bill Luffee, Homer Alexander and Ron Reisner have launched a voter's initiative petition drive to get a "parcel tax" on all private property in the City included on the November 2022 Ballot, pledging that all the money raised will be used to restore and preserve the jewel of the City, it's harbor.

Alexander, Luffee and Reisner sat down with Estero Bay News to discuss the issue and why they feel a tax is warranted.

Alexander said they've come to the conclusion that the Harbor Department needs more revenue in order to fix a long list of deficiencies in its maintenance. "This has been going on for years," he said, adding there's been a lot of talk about the problem but nothing gets done.

Normally, a taxing measure is placed before voters by the city council, as was done in November 2020 with Measure E-20, a 1% sales tax put on the ballot by the council. Taxpayers rarely seek to tax themselves, but the three said the situation is critical,



This photo by Ron Reisner of the rock revetment at the Morro Rock parking lot that's been washed away, is an example of the types of maintenance work that's needed in Morro Bay, which he and others hope to address with a parcel tax on private property.

as the list of unfunded maintenance needs grows longer and more costly as facilities — T-piers, slips, docks, sea walls and the public launch ramp — fall further into disrepair.

Reisner said, "The three of us kicked the issue around and drafted basic concepts, then we sent it to our attorney to 'legalize' it."

He and Luffee know the situation firsthand, as both have

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From Me & CJ to You: Merry Christmas & Best Ever in 2022

by Judy Salamacha



Photo of CJ Salamacha taken by his favorite trainer and BFF Mike Nelson, owner Second Chance Dog Training

Dearest EBN readers, Gratitude has been on my mind this holiday season. So before 2022 passes by as fast as 2021 is winding down, please, indulge me while I say as, "THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU" — along with a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all of you and my family and friends who have brought joy into my life. Indeed, blessings found targets to touch my heart even during these never-ending years of worldwide pandemic.

A first thank you must go to Dean and Shari Sullivan for investing in the Estero Bay News when we almost lost our community newspaper. As soon as The Bay News announced its last issue, the Sullivans stepped up and announced their intention to continue the "good news" format under the banner, Estero Bay News. Where else do we find in-depth information about our communities written by professional journalists like Neil Farrell and my editor Theresa-Marie Wilson. A note for those who might not know or remember: the Sullivans originally developed The Bay News many years ago and trusted it would be missed by local residents, community groups and business owners. Support was instantaneous. Every other Thursday, we can find community news about Morro Bay, Los Osos, Cayucos and Cambria in printed copies picked up at high traffic locations or online at www.esterobaynews.com.

Another thank you also goes to Dean and Theresa-Marie (we fondly call her T), for encouraging me to come out of retirement

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Bobcat 'Aces' Released Back Into the Wild

By Neil Farrell



A bobcat kitten found abandoned alongside a country road in Paso Robles has been given a second chance at life after being raised and released on a ranch in the hills east of Cayucos.

Cathy Duncan, a wildlife educator and rehabber with Pacific Wildlife Care, said the kitten was just a few weeks old when a couple in Paso Robles noticed her sitting alone by the side of the road.

"She was an infant when they found her," Duncan said. Her rescuers at first left the tiny fur ball alone, hoping that its mother was nearby. They passed it again hours later sitting in the same spot and Duncan said they decided to call the California Department of Fish & Wildlife to ask what they should do. They were told to leave it alone, Duncan said.

When the kitten still didn't move, they decided to catch the baby and take it to PWC's rehabilitation center located on the Morro Bay Power Plant property. That was April 29.

PWC transferred the little bobcat to the Wildlife Education and Rehabilitation Center (WERC) located in Morgan Hill, Calif.,

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News

LOCSD to Vote on Switch to District Elections

By Neil Farrell

County Supervisors might not be the only ones with radically different elections going forward, as the Los Osos Community Services District board is also weighing major changes.

Currently, all five LOCSD board members face election in a community-wide vote every 4 years. But the winds of change are blowing up a storm in Los Osos and the CSD is seriously looking at switching to a district-based voting scheme.

LOCSD General Manager Ron Munds said the board voted to approve a district-wide election format in response to “The California Voting Rights Act,” the State’s voting equity law.

That means a city, county or CSD must investigate whether there are any “protected (minority) populations living huddled within a jurisdiction and then change to a district-style election format to ensure those communities aren’t divided up to diminish their voting strength.

The law leaves open the possibility of lawsuits being filed to challenge whether or not an agency is violating the voting rights of a protected population (i.e. minority communities within a jurisdiction).

In Los Osos, they had a consultant look over the demographics using the latest Census information to discern whether there were such pockets of peoples in Los Osos. Turns out there weren’t.

“The protected class of voters,” Munds said, “is well dispersed through the community. The problem is that doesn’t protect the CSD from lawsuits since the only ‘safe harbor’ is districting. So it is a Board decision to gamble on whether or not receiving we will receive a demand letter. If a demand letter is received, it is an automatic \$30,000 payment to the claimant and attorney.”

In essence to avoid someone filing a predatory lawsuit, similar to suits over the Americans with Disabilities Act, they have to make the change.

So the LOCSD in January will decide whether to switch to districts, a decision that could have consequences with future elections, because the CSD has trouble finding candidates to run for office.

Indeed, in November 2020, the CSD didn’t even have an election, and adding a requirement that each voting district be represented by someone who lives within that district could make matters even trickier.

“A candidate will have to live within the voting area boundary,” Munds said, “which will be interesting to see how that works out considering we didn’t have an election in 2020 since there were the exact number of candidates running as there were seats.”

With no contested races on the ballot, Los Osos didn’t get to vote for any CSD members in 2020.

The new districts have been drawn in such a way that each of the five current board members lives in one of the districts, with no overlap. So when 2022 comes around, none of the incumbents has to bow out due to the new district boundaries.

“There are three seats up for re-election in November 2022,” Munds said, “and each of the current three incumbents will be able to run for their particular district if they choose. If the Board decides to choose a map where there is overlap, the Board would decide on a sequencing plan that is more involved in terms of explanation.”

But the board could also in January choose to reject the new format and while that might not prevent someone from suing under the Voting Rights Act — anyone can sue anyone for just about anything these days — it should provide some measure of defense, having at least done the exercise to investigate whether the agency is violating the act.

Munds said, “It would be a minimum \$30,000 gamble on our side if we don’t move forward. For a small district like ours, \$30,000 is a lot of money.”

He added that there is a challenge to the law currently before the State Supreme Court that addresses the matter. But there is no timeframe for when that case might be decided and no guarantee it will be decided favorably for the agencies.

And since the CSD does not have its own set of election rules but instead uses the California laws, the people get no say in this. “The CSD does not have election rules in their municipal code but operate under California Government Codes,” Munds said. “The Government Code stipulates that a special district can change to district-based elections by adopting a resolution doing so.”

Munds added that there have been plenty of opportunities for the public to interject. “The Board has the authority to adopt the districting map by resolution,” he said, “no vote of the people required. There have been five public hearings so far with minimal input from the community.”

A Heartfelt Thank You

As I ponder over this past year, I think about how grateful I truly am. They say, when you do what you love, you’ll never have to work again. As the person who is the most visible person out there with the paper, I am just a small piece of a very wonderful puzzle.

If you are one of our loyal readers and enjoy what we do, please thank an advertiser. Without them, this newspaper would not exist. It is their support that allows us to put the paper out. There are some advertisers who have supported this endeavor for over 32 years. They are the ones who support this publication that we put out for you to read. To all you who do run ads in the newspaper, I truly want to thank you, and again, if you are reading this, please take the time to thank them too.

I also want to thank everyone who contributes to the newspaper. Theresa-Marie Wilson, AKA “T” (who I call my favorite consonant) is the backbone to the editorial part of the paper. T has been a friend to my wife since they were in elementary school and a friend of mine for more than 22 years. She works very hard bringing all the articles, writers, and other content together to keep us informed about our area. As a writer, she also finds the stories that share the good work people do in our community. Her devotion to this publication is greatly appreciated and everyone I know, loves and respects her. Can you say “Awesome Sauce”?

Neil Farrell is another very big part of this newspaper. He’s the man who can write 15 inches of copy on what he had for breakfast and keep you reading and wanting more. Neil is a true newspaperman with a resume that speaks for itself. He takes the complex issues of our cities and the people who run it and delivers that information so we can all understand and keep up to date.

We also are lucky to have very talented columnists and writers who fill this publication with their take on people and events including Judy Salamacha, Jill Turnbow, The Bookself Writers and of course, my 96-year-old mother, Joan Sullivan, with her art, history and other fun writing. When I started The Bay News in 1989, the joke was that she was the only one who could type and spell. When I started the paper back up three years ago, she asked, “What would I write about?” and I replied, “Anything you want.”

That brings me to my best friend, my true partner, my wife Shari. Without her, I would not be able to do half as many things as I have. Smart, talented and hardworking, Shari is an artist, writer, computer genius and so much more. When I found out



Publisher, Dean Sullivan. “Yes, I know I need a new photo of myself”.

there was an opening to start the Estero Bay News, as I walked back and forth thinking, I looked up and she simply said, “You know your going to start it again, just do it.”

Shari supports me, the paper, her friends, kids and anyone else who is in need. We have three kids who are just wonderful people who I thank Shari for helping raise and support. That in itself is big, especially nowadays. I hear people complain about today’s youth, I just sit back and think, not my kids.

With that note, I have to take a moment and again be thankful for how truly blessed I am for everything I have in my life. A loving family, great friends, an absolutely beautiful place to live and a business that is well loved and respected, due to those I mentioned above.

Please take a minute, look around and give thanks for what is in your life. It’s never perfect, but focusing on the good things is good for the soul. My wife always reminds me that, “perfection insults the Gods.”

We will take two weeks off for the holidays, but we look forward to seeing you and writing about you next year.

State Close to Closing Book on Power Plant

The state agency charged with protecting public health at industrial sites has decided there isn’t enough pollution at the Morro Bay Power Plant to force cleanups at this time, but there could be future issues after the power plant and stacks are removed.

In its draft “Statement of Basis,” the State Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) has analyzed eight “Areas of Concern” or AOCs at the 131-acre power plant property. The pollution found at one site so far, was over what would be considered the maximum levels of pollution (mostly hydrocarbons) to allow unfettered reuse of the property, i.e. use for residential housing.

Back in 2006, DTSC and Pacific Gas & Electric entered into a “Resource Conservation and Recovery Act — Corrective Action Consent Agreement,” that identified the AOCs. They are: AOC-1 is the former fuel oil tank farm; AOC-2 is the “beach valve” area; AOC-3 is Firehouse No.1; AOC-4 a storage area; AOC-5 the PG&E switchyard; AOC-6 is a multi-use area; AOC-7 is the power building; and AOC-8 is the waste metal cleaning ponds.

DTSC said they couldn’t at this time evaluate the soils under AOC-7 the power plant building until plant owners Vistra remove it, which they have pledged to do under an agreement with the City by 2028 or pay the City \$3 million. The stacks are slated for removal, too.

AOC-8, the waste metals pond was already addressed back in 2008 with the Recovery Act process and the switchyard is still in operation and is expected to be far into the future, as there are now two proposed energy projects that want to use its access to the power grid.

AOC-1, the former tank farm, was the only spot that tested above the unrestricted reuse level but that roughly 22 acres is where Vistra proposes to build a 600-megawatt Battery Energy Storage System or BESS, and if approved and constructed would continue the industrial use on that spot for the 20-year lifespan of the BESS.

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Estero Bay News Staff

Dean Sullivan

Owner - Publisher
dean@esterobaynews.com

Theresa-Marie Wilson

Editor
editor@esterobaynews.com

Neil Farrell

Reporter
neil@esterobaynews.com

Shari Sullivan

Marketing Director
shari@esterobaynews.com

Joan Sullivan

Jill Turnbow

Ruth Ann Angus

Judy Salamacha

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News

South Bay to Close Dec. 27

By Neil Farrell



Estero Bay Area residents will soon have to deal with another major road closure as part of Morro Bay’s Water Reclamation Facility project. Carollo Engineering’s Paul Amico, the project manager for the pipeline portion of the WRF, said they plan to completely

Power Plant

From page 2

A Canadian energy company, Hydrostor, recently applied to the California Energy Commission to build a 400 MW energy storage and generation plant out in Chorro Valley at Hwy 1 and Canet Road and use the high voltage wires crossing Hwy 1 and the PG&E switchyard for its project.

The DTSC-PG&E agreement also placed a “land use covenant” or LUC (deed restriction) over the plant property that dictates what future uses are possible and who will be responsible for cleaning up any contamination that might be found if they want to redevelop beyond industrial uses.

“The LUC,” said a City report, “would not allow residential use on any of these AOCs and would require a soil management plan to verify that future soil use complies with commercial/ industrial use at these AOCs. Also, groundwater would be restricted, not allowing potable or drinking uses. These restrictions require annual inspection and reporting that this remedy is still protective of human health and the environment.”

So even though the State has decided that any contaminants that might be there don’t need to be cleaned up, Vistra will be responsible for that ongoing monitoring.

DTSC is expected to finalize the work on the power plant sometime next year. After that the State and City will work to record the LUC with the County.

As for the future of the waterfront property, Vistra has said that it looks forward to working with the City on what redevelopments might be sought.

close South Bay Boulevard from Quintana Road to Hwy 1 beginning Dec. 27, as the pipeline trenching makes the turn towards the new treatment plant site, located on the hills above the terminus of South Bay.

The roadway will be closed for some 8 weeks, he said, weather permitting. “Highway 1 will be fully accessible via Quintana Road and Morro Bay Boulevard,” Amico said, “while construction is south of the ramps, and we are still working out the details with Caltrans on how we will control traffic as the pipelines are constructed within their right-of-way.”

Originally, they were hoping to keep traffic flowing on South Bay, but Amico said, “It will not be possible due to the ground conditions in the area and our concern for worker and public safety while trenching through that area.”

He explained that the contractor Anvil Inc., as it trenched up to South Bay on Quintana ran into high groundwater and an odd soil type — runny ground with lots of organic materials, which threw some level of uncertainty into keeping traffic flowing through one lane.

To be on the safe side, he said they decided to just close that short stretch of South Bay all together rather than risk having the roadway start to crumble away while traffic tries to drive on it. It makes sense there’s lots of organic matter as that whole area is actually part of the flood plain for Chorro Creek.

The City and project contractors know that it’s a heavily trafficked area. “We are aware that South Bay Boulevard is a thoroughfare for school traffic and Los Osos traffic,” Amico said, “and we specifically selected this timing for the start of the closure due to reduced traffic and the school break during the holidays.”

While the official detour will steer people to the Morro Bay Boulevard interchange off Hwy 1, another potential route is to get off the highway at San Bernardo Creek Road, where Quintana meets the highway. That stretch of Quintana will remain open and is another way to circumvent the construction zone without having to go all the way into town. Quintana Road will be open in both directions, Amico said, from Main Street to Hwy 1. There could however, still be some traffic controls in place depending on the progress of the job.

Readers going to and from Los Osos to Morro Bay could also take State Park Road during the closure and avoid the construction area all together. Also, access to the Casa de Flores senior living facility will remain open and construction vehicles also need access to the work site.

In a future curfluffle, the trenching work will eventually reach the highway on and off ramps and the South Bay overpass. Amico said they are working with Caltrans on how to handle that and it may be that they do that segment of work at night to minimize disruptions. That area should be reached in about 6 weeks, he said.

As for another job site, he said the work being done now on Main Street — from Quintana to Lemos Ranch — will be closed up and the area will be open during the Christmas Holiday.

Readers are reminded to drive carefully through the project’s various construction zones — on Main Street, Quintana Road and Atascadero Road by the old sewer treatment plant — and to be mindful of workers and heavy machinery.

City Commits to Roundabout at Main-Hwy 41

By Neil Farrell



This computer rendering shows the layout of a proposed roundabout for the intersection of Main Street and Hwy 41 in Morro Bay. Rendering by Omni-Means Engineering Solutions

The Morro Bay City Council has doubled down on a commitment to build a roundabout at another of its troublesome intersections, and in turn dress up the main entrance to town for visitors.

The Council voted to send a letter to the San Luis Obispo Council of Governments (SLOCOG), the regional agency that doles out Federal and State highway monies garnered mostly through fuel taxes, funding major projects throughout SLO County stating their continued support for installing a roundabout at Main Street and Hwy 41 and a commitment to foot the City’s share of the bill, which could reach as much as \$3 million.

City Manager Scott Collins told Estero Bay News, “Council stated its continued support for intersection improvements at Hwy41/1, and authorized the City to send a letter to SLOCOG outlining the City’s commitment to fund its portion of a future project there.”

But after about 20 years of planning, SLOCOG, Caltrans and the City have not pulled the trigger on a project that — at \$8.9 million current estimates — has become wildly expensive.

“The roundabout is considered the preferred alternative,” Collins said, “based upon engineering studies, but the final decision on what project is pursued has not been made. That will come after the environmental work is complete.”

The City is currently in the midst of that environmental review to essentially fix what is now a part-time problem with traffic flow, that’s anticipated to grow untenable in a couple of decades.

“Improvements to the SR1/SR41 and Main Street intersection to resolve issues with congestion and delays have been under City consideration for over 20 years,” reads a City Public Works report, “with plans to design a roundabout at this intersection abandoned in 2002 due to funding issues. After reinitiating the capital project in 2014, the State required an Intersection Control Evaluation [ICE], a 2-step process that was completed by the

Roundabout Continued on page 4

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Peace on Earth

Warmest thoughts and best wishes for a wonderful and joyous holiday.
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Roundabout From page 3

City’s consultant, GHD, Inc., in 2016 and approved by Caltrans in 2020.

“Importantly, the ICE evaluation determined the existing intersection configuration will fail at full build out of the City by the year 2040.”

That ICE study developed options to solving the problem that essentially boiled down to a traffic signal or roundabout. But the intersection, similar to the Quintana Road-Morro Bay Boulevard intersection, where the City already installed a roundabout years ago, is in close proximity to Hwy 1 on and off ramps.

“The SR41/Main intersection and the SR1/SR41 intersection,” the report said, “are about 75 feet apart; due to close intersection spacing and the existing controls, the two intersections operate as one un-signalized intersection with six approaches and exits.

“This intersection’s current configuration creates several issues, including congestion, confusing traffic patterns, unfavorable pedestrian crossings, poor bicycle pathways, and increased carbon emissions from cars that must stop and go several times before clearing the intersection. As the gateway to Morro Bay for visitors from communities to the east and northeast, the intersection leaves a deficient first impression of the City.”

The ICE study picked the roundabout option “due to its reduction of congestion, construction of pedestrian and cyclist improvements, and creation of environmental benefits.”

The environmental review, which was begun over the summer, is evaluating both options. Meanwhile, SLOCOG, which has been alarmed at the quickly rising costs, asked the City in October to take a stand or potentially lose the money it’s been setting aside for years.

“In late September, SLOCOG staff notified the City of their need to justify to the SLOCOG board their continued efforts to reserve \$5.89 million in transportation funding for the SR1/SR41 and Main Street intersection improvements in lieu of programming funding for other projects in need across the County.”

SLOCOG was worried about perceived City foot dragging. “SLOCOG staff expressed general concern about the City’s slow progress on the project and requested the Morro Bay City Council adopt a resolution pledging a funding commitment to demonstrate the City’s resolve.”

The City said without a commitment, it could lose all that money and “will result in an uncertain future for the much needed, and expensive, intersection improvements to create a user-friendly, attractive entrance to the City,” the report said.

But the Resolution of course isn’t binding. “While the adoption of the proposed resolution does not obligate the City to expend funds on the project, it does give staff direction to continue the environmental evaluation, public input process for the two alternatives for intersection improvements from the ICE by completion of the Caltrans required Project Authorization and Environmental Determination phase of the project.”

So where is this money supposed to come from? City Manager Collins said, “Funding could come in the form of grants or City’s General Fund, or Measure Q/E [local sales taxes] as examples. Don’t know the specific amount of the City’s share at this time, but estimate around \$2 million to \$3 million.”

The staff report said that should the eventual project be a traffic light, there won’t likely be as much money available from SLOCOG. State rules require the City to look at a roundabout solution because it supposedly provides environmental benefits by not making cars sit at idle for several minutes waiting for the light to change.

Roundabouts are also theoretically safer because they force drivers to slow down to an average of about 15 mph, when going

through.

But as readers who’ve driven the existing roundabout at Quintana and MBB can probably attest, a lot of drivers just blow through the traffic circle, not slowing at all.

Nevertheless, “The roundabout alternative provides many benefits the signal alternative does not,” the City report said. “First, it would offer protective pedestrian and bicycle facilities for Morro Bay High School and visitor coastal access. Pedestrian crossings would be provided on all legs of the Roundabout with separated path from driving lane, and bicycles would be accommodated by navigating through the Roundabout in two ways — take the travel lane and travel through the Roundabout as a vehicle or take the separated bike ramp/shared use path and travel around as a pedestrian.”

As the project stands now it will provide 2,300 feet of new bike lane; 1,070 feet of new or reconstructed sidewalks; 10 new handicap ramps at the corners; traffic islands (refuges) for pedestrians; and traffic calming.

It will also require a complete rebuilding of the intersection including re-aligning the off and on ramps, and cutting into the corners of the Chevron Station and a vacant lot that used to be a Shell Station (approved for a Sonic Burger).

Concerns have been raised regarding the Hwy 1 North on ramp that parallels Main Street, as the designs for the roundabout show an extremely tight turn for large delivery trucks, which transverse the area daily.

The City first considered roundabouts with a study about 20 years ago that looked at three troublesome intersections — Quintana/MBB, Main/Hwy 41 and the San Jacinto-Main-Hwy 1 intersection.

The study recommended roundabouts at all three but the one at San Jacinto/Main was rejected outright by the city council. A roundabout was built at Quintana and MBB, and has worked well, leaving the Hwy 41/Main to be decided.

SLOCOG is slated to discuss the matter at its January meeting, Collins said.

City Conserves 19 Acres of Frog Habitat

An endangered amphibian has led to the conservation of over 19 acres of open rangelands by the City of Morro Bay, in order to comply with terms of its low-interest federal loan for the Water Reclamation Facility Project.

The City Council approved the designation of a conservation easement over the unused lands at the WRF’s treatment plant, located at the terminus of South Bay Boulevard by Hwy 1.

City Engineer, Rob Livick’s staff report points out that the City must comply with federal laws — namely the Clean Water Act and the Endangered Species Act — in order to meet the terms of a “Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act” or WIFIA loan. The City borrowed some \$62 million through WIFIA at an interest rate below 1%, funding much of the WRF project’s \$71



million treatment plant.

As part of the loan process the City got a biological opinion from the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service that required mitigation of the loss of 17 acres of red-legged frog habitat. The plant site lies with the local protected habitat of the protected frogs, as it affected a seasonal stream on the property.

To satisfy the permit, the City has officially set aside the remaining 19.5 acres that isn’t needed for the WRF plant, recording the change with the County Assessor’s Office and notifying the U.S. EPA to in essence “check the box” for the loan.

The action addresses one of the early snafus that befell the project — the delayed start of construction as EPA and USF&WS worked out their administrative process and rewrote the terms of the loan.

“The City,” the report said, “is required to record the subject conservation covenant protecting 19.5 acres of the WRF site to protect endangered species in order to comply with the terms of the City’s agreement for the low interest EPA WIFIA loan, the Biological Opinion, and federal statutes.”

According to the USF&WS’ website, “The California red-legged frog is the largest native frog in the western United States. It ranges in size from 1.5 to 5-inches long [4 to 13 cm].”

As for habitat, “California red-legged frog habitat includes nearly any area within 1-2 miles of a breeding site that stays moist and cool through the summer,” the F&WS said, “this includes non-breeding aquatic habitat in pools of slow-moving streams, perennial or ephemeral ponds, and upland sheltering habitat such as rocks, small mammal burrows, logs, densely vegetated areas, and even, man-made structures [i.e. culverts, livestock troughs, spring-boxes, abandoned sheds].

The red-legged frog is believed to be the type of hopper made famous by Mark Twain’s 1865 short story, “The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County.”

Serving as Interim Vice President



Terrance Harris, currently serving as interim vice president for Strategic Enrollment Management at Cal Poly will fill the position permanently following a nationwide search.

“I am honored and excited for the opportunity to continue to serve a campus and community that mean so much to me,” Harris said. “There is no other place that I would rather be leading this work than right here at my alma mater.”

Harris has served as interim vice president since June 2021. In this role, he sets the strategic vision for the division, collaborates with university partners on short- and long-term enrollment goals, and leads the development of strategies and practices that leverage financial aid awards. He also leads the creation of marketing and communication campaigns designed to attract and yield

Interim Continued on page 22

PLEASE PLAN AHEAD!

South Bay Boulevard Closure: Monday, Dec. 27

South Bay Boulevard between Quintana Road and Highway 1 will be closed for City of Morro Bay construction starting Monday, Dec. 27, for about eight weeks. Please plan extra time for your commute – the detour to Highway 1 is Quintana Road and Morro Bay Boulevard.

Thank you for your patience!

Learn more at morrobaywrf.com

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News Briefs
By Theresa-Marie Wilson

Sheriff Warns of
New Scam



The County Sheriff’s Office is warning citizens about a phone scam making the rounds and using the name of the Sheriff’s Department.

“Residents,” said a news release, “have reported being contacted by someone claiming to be a Sergeant with the Sheriff’s Office. The caller indicates the resident can clear their case by purchasing gift cards and providing the gift card numbers to the caller.”

For obvious reasons, the calls are bogus. “We want to caution residents that this is a scam,” the release goes on. “The Sheriff’s Office reminds you that it is not our practice to contact residents by phone regarding these matters. Deputy Sheriff’s will never request money or gift cards in lieu of bail.”

If readers get one of these scam calls, they are encouraged to report it to your local police or call the Sheriff’s Office at 805-781-4550. “We encourage you to please inform your family and friends about this scam so they can be prepared in the event they receive a call like this.”

MB Soars in Christmas
Bird Count

Morro Bay ranked in the top of the Audubon Society’s stat collectors for the 121st Christmas Bird Count period.

Counts with more than 100 participants include Morro Bay, San Diego, Palo Alto, Rancho Santa Fe, Western Sonoma County, and San Francisco, topped off by Santa Barbara’s 253 participants. For numbers of species, counts with 200 or more include Morro Bay Rancho, Sante Fe with San Diego the leader with 219. Overall numbers of species were average for most counts.

The state saw 97 counts completed with a total of 358 species recorded (including documented rare species) plus four only seen during count week. Thirty-six counts were canceled due to COVID-19 concerns.

For a detailed listing of birds counted throughout the California, go to audubon.org/news/the-121st-christmas-bird-count-california.

Crossing Safely Im-
provement in Cayucos

A project to increase safety for the traveling public and pedestrians is underway

The County of San Luis Obispo Department of Public Works has started work on new flashing crosswalk lights, also known as beacon systems, on crosswalks in Avila Beach, Cayucos, and Nipomo.

Cayucos will see construction at the North Ocean Avenue at the mid-block crosswalk between Cayucos Drive and D Street. It includes new concrete bulb-outs with curb ramps.

Temporary traffic control measures including closed shoulders, lane shifts and one-way controlled traffic with flagging may be required between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday. Motorists are advised to adjust their travel plans and consider alternative routes. Please refer to the attached maps for the project locations.

Souza Construction of San Luis Obispo, CA was awarded the contract for \$281,087 via funding through the Federal Highway Administration’s Highway Safety Improvement Program, and County Road Fund.

In Avila the crosswalk will be installed on Ontario Road at Bob Jones Bike Trail Crossing and in Nipomo at Tefft Street at Dana Elementary.

Depending on weather conditions, all work is expected to conclude by April 2022.

For more information, contact Jimmy Tomac at (805) 781-4476.

Protect Against Virus
Over Winter

The Omicron variant of COVID-19 has been identified in California, and local health officials encourage San Luis Obispo County residents to strengthen their protection against a potential winter surge.

“It’s a matter of time before Omicron reaches our community and while this is not cause for panic, it is cause for action,”



said County Health Officer Dr. Penny Borenstein in a news release. “There’s much we don’t yet know about it but we do know how to protect ourselves. While breakthrough cases are possible, it’s very likely that vaccines will provide protection against this variant. While it’s natural to feel frustrated and concerned at the news of a new variant at this unstable time, I want to remind our community that we are not powerless. With Delta, we are already facing a variant that spreads more quickly than the virus that filled our hospitals last winter. We have tools we didn’t have then: life-saving vaccines and the hard-earned knowledge and tools to make this winter different.”

With any strain of COVID-19, winter brings the potential for a surge in cases, hospitalizations and deaths as colder weather drives more activities indoors, holidays inspire more gatherings, and other viruses like flu put pressure on the health-care system.

Vaccines remain the most effective tool against COVID-19 and simple precautions like frequent handwashing and staying home when sick are also key, officials say. Masking continues to offer a strong layer of protection and is still required in indoor public places in SLO County.

Vaccines—both boosters and primary series—are available at no cost at pharmacies, doctors’ offices, Public Health Department clinics, and mobile clinics countywide. To schedule an appointment, visit myturn.ca.gov or VaccineFinder.org, or call (833) 422-4255.

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



THE CITY OF MORRO BAY

IS ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS FOR THE FOLLOWING ADVISORY BODY POSITIONS:

- Citizens Oversight/Finance Advisory Committee (4)
- Harbor Advisory Board (2)
 - South Bay/Los Osos resident (1)
 - Member-at-Large (1)
- Recreation & Parks Commission (2)

Application and eligibility information are available on the City Clerk’s Advisory Body webpage (www.morrobayca.gov/advisorybody) or at the City Clerk’s office:

City Hall
595 Harbor Street
Morro Bay, CA 93442
(805) 772-6568
cityclerk@morrobayca.gov

The deadline for application submission is Tuesday, January 4, 2022 by 5:00 pm. Interviews are tentatively scheduled on January 11, 2022. Applicants should be present at the interviews to be considered by the City Council.



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City Council
Seeks Advisors

The City of Morro Bay is looking to fill several seats on citizen boards that advise the City Council with the deadline to apply set for early January.

The City needs four people to sit on its Oversight/Finance Advisory Committee, which oversees the City’s expenditures of its two special sales tax measures — Measure D and E-20, which total 1.5% and bringing in an estimated \$3 million a year in a good economy.

“The Citizens Finance Committee, formerly the Citizens Oversight Committee,” reads the City’s advisory board webpage, “was established to review the semi-annual expense report of the City relative to activities funded with the additional general purpose local sales tax monies. The Committee is to present its findings and conclusions to the City Council for its review not later than Dec. 31 of each year.” It is also one of two boards along with the Public Works Advisory Board that reviews expenses for the Water Recycling Facility (WRF) project currently under construction.

The Finance Committee meets once a month in January, February, April, May, August, November and December at 3 p.m. on the third Tuesday of those months at the Veterans’ Memorial Building, 209 Surf St.

The City also needs two Harbor Advisory Board seats filled, but these represent specific stakeholders. The City needs a South Bay/Los Osos resident to represent that area, and a member at large.

“The Harbor Advisory Board reviews, advises, and makes recommendations to the City Council on items pertaining to use, control, promotion, and operation of vessels and watercraft within the harbor, docks, piers, slips, utilities, and publicly-owned harbor facilities and water commerce, navigation, or fishery in the Harbor,” according to the City’s website. “The Board also reviews and recommends rates, tolls, fees, or other payments to be made for use or operation of the Harbor. The Harbor Advisory Board makes reports and recommendations on these issues to other City Boards and Commissions on harbor-related matters and when requested, will review items referred to them by other City Boards, Commissions, or the City Council.”

The next year should be interesting for the HAB if a group of citizens’ petition drive is successful in getting an annual parcel tax on private property placed on the ballot, and intending to supplement the revenues of the Harbor Department, and pay for needed maintenance projects that have been piling up. It could be expected that some HAB members will be active in that effort.

The HAB meets at 5:30 p.m. the first Thursday of the month — except for January, April and July — at the Vet’s Hall.

The City also has two seats open on the Recreation & Parks Commission. It’s main duty is to “Act in an advisory capacity to the City Council in all matters pertaining to parks and public recreation and to cooperate with other governmental agencies and civic groups in the advancement of sound recreation and parks planning and programming.”

Rec & Parks meets at 6 p.m. on the third Thursday of each odd-numbered month (January, March, May, July, September,

November) at the Vet’s Hall.
The deadline to apply is 5 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 4 and City Council interviews will be held on Jan. 11. Applicants should plan on being present for the interviews, however, it should be noted that currently all of the City’s boards and commissions, as well as the City Council are still meeting online via Zoom, so applicants should plan on attending via computer.
Also, these board meetings are all so-called “Brown Act” meetings, meaning they are open to the public and taped for broadcast online at slo-span.org, and on Charter Cable Ch. 20.
Get applications off the City Clerk’s webpage, at: www.morrobayca.gov/advisorybody, and email the city clerk at: cityclerk@morrobayca.gov for more information.

New MBPD
Sergeant Named



Sgt Will Marvos

Morro Bay Police have reached within their own ranks to fill a sergeant vacancy.
Det. Will Marvos was recently promoted to Sgt. Marvos, filling the vacancy that opened up with the retirement of Sgt. Mark Martin.
Sgt. Marvos has more than 15 years of law enforcement experience, according to an announcement by the police department. Sgt. Marvos, “will be a valuable addition to our supervisory team,” the department said.
In other department news, on Nov. 22, Caltrans cleaned up a couple of homeless encampments along Hwy 1 around the Morro Bay Boulevard intersection. “MBPD staff had been receiving numerous complaints related to the encampments,” police said, “as they became more visible from the highway and from businesses along Quintana Rd.”
Police and Caltrans workers cleared two encampments considered “Level 1,” meaning they were too close to the roadway and unsafe.
As readers can attest, encampments along Hwy 1 are a continuing issue. “MBPD continues to work with Caltrans to address unsafe encampments along the highway,” the department said.

County Awards Huge
Slurry Contract



County Supervisors recently awarded a huge contract for maintenance work on about 60 miles of County roads, including nearly every street in Cayucos.
Supervisors awarded the 2020-21 Surface Treatment contract, designed to help preserve the County maintained roads in an acceptable condition and slow their inevitable deterioration further, to Intermountain Slurry Seal, Inc., for over \$3.7 million.
Intermountain Slurry is a multi-state corporation started in the 1950s in Utah, and is now a division of contracting company, Granite Const.
The County engineering’s estimate was over \$4 million, so the low bid came in 8% lower than the County’s estimate. The County also has a contingency amount of \$370,172 rolled into the overall project budget for a final total construction amount of \$4.07M.
Intermountain was the second lowest of five bidders but the lowest bidder, Roy Allan Slurry Seal, Inc., withdrew its \$3.4M bid after discovering it made a math error.
“To summarize,” said a County report, “incorrect tonnage numbers were used to calculate the unit prices and resulted in an approximate decrease in the Roy Allan overall bid amount of \$287,000 making their bid materially different.”
The other bidders were VSS International, Inc., \$4M; American Asphalt South, Inc., \$4.3M; and Pavement Coatings Company, \$4.7M.
“This surface treatment contract is part of the Department of Public Works’ Annual Roads Maintenance Program,” the County said. “This Program provides for the resurfacing of existing paved roads to extend the service life of the pavement and to reduce time spent by the road crews on pavement patching.”
The work will “provide for surface treatment on approximately 60 miles of various County maintained asphalt concrete roadways, with no expansion of the current paved area, and

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Go see the lights!

Pack up some friends or family, or go solo, with some hot cocoa or tea and check out the early-bird entrant to this year’s holiday decoration contest.

Are you that person who starts planning holiday decorations in January? Then we have a contest for you. The rest of you mere mortals who decorate later in the year are welcomed to join too. Use the buttons above to enter or scroll down.

Just decorate your home or business – making sure it’s publicly viewable. Then enter below, depending which town you are in. Judges will review all submissions and announce winners here on the website. Our last print publication of 2021 is December 16. We take a couple of weeks to spend with our families, and our first 2022 print issue will be January 13. So all winners will be featured here and on our Facebook page.

Go to www.esterobaynews.com/holidays

Here are some of the houses ready to be seen.

Los Osos	Morro Bay	Cambria
359 Los Osos Valley Road	437 Arcadia Ave.	451 Dorset st Cambria
1675 14th St	Morro Bay	
1610 13th St		5546 Windsor Blvd
1661 18th Street	1170 las tunas st Morro bay	Cambria
495 Henrietta Ave		
1667 18th Street	Morro Strand RV Park 221	
1903 9th street	Atascadero Rd Morro Bay	
2350 Alexander ave		

Sponsors

includes upgrades to ADA ramps and parking stalls consistent with the ‘ADA Transition Plan for Public Rights of Way.’ The road segments selected for surface treatment are identified through the County’s Pavement Management system and on-site inspections. “Of the 60 miles of treatments, Cayucos will be the big winner with 34.4 miles of streets getting the coating. The contract also includes 18.5 miles in the Paso Robles area, 6.8 miles in the Templeton area, and four-tenths of a mile of South Bay Boulevard, from the Morro Bay City Limits to Santa Ysabel Avenue. The contract has already had four change orders, which includes addressing “the rumble strips on South Bay Boulevard in Los Osos” and adding some ADA improvements to sidewalks and curbs in Cayucos. The County is using Senate Bill 1 (SB1) gas tax monies for the project.

SLO Burglar Gets 25 to Life

A man who broke into an elderly San Luis Obispo woman’s home, tied her up and robbed her, stealing her truck to make his getaway, has been sentenced to a lengthy prison term, under the State’s Three Strikes Law. According to a District Attorney’s Office news release, Johnny Jesse Roman, 25, was sentenced to 25-years to life in prison for his conviction “for violent crimes committed during a home invasion robbery in rural San Luis Obispo in February 2021.”



Johnny Jesse Roman

The incident took place on Feb. 13, 2021 and involved Roman forcing his way into the home of a 75-year-old woman, whose name is being withheld because she was the victim of a crime. Roman tied her up and stole thousands of dollars in cash from inside the residence and then stole her 2006 Chevy Silverado pickup truck. After Roman fled the scene, the victim remained tied up for several hours, until she was rescued by a family member that had come to check up on her. Roman fled the state and a police bulletin was sent out nationwide. Roman was apprehended in Virginia in March 2021, after being on the lam for about a month. He was extradited back to California to stand trial. On Oct. 19, Roman pled no contest to one count of residential burglary, one count of first-degree residential robbery, and one count of grand theft automobile. The crimes were committed outside the City of SLO in the County Sheriff’s jurisdiction, and the Sheriff’s Department was the lead investigator helped by the D.A.’s investigative department. Roman was previously convicted of two violent felonies that counted against him under California’s Three Strikes Law, the D.A. said. “These prior convictions were: residential burglary in 2005 and robbery in 2006. His plea to the current crimes and

his admission of the prior ‘strike’ convictions subjected him to a maximum sentence of 41-years to life in prison.” The County Probation department and prosecutor, Deputy D.A. James Graff-Radford had asked Judge Jesse J. Marino to impose the maximum sentence, but he reduced the sentence down to 25-life, forgiving the extra 16 years recommended by the prosecution even though Roman’s victim was an elderly woman and along with his previous crimes showed a pattern. The D.A. said Roman didn’t contest the charges hoping for a lenient sentence and he apparently got it. “Judge Marino exercised his discretion to provide a lesser sentence by striking the additional 16 years in prison that was allowed under California law for these convictions,” the D.A. said. Because he pled no contest, he can’t appeal the convictions. The D.A. was disappointed. “Violent crimes,” D.A. Dan Dow said, “committed by career criminals against vulnerable victims deserve especially strong sentences. Our office takes seriously the obligation to protect our community through aggressive and fair prosecution of crime while protecting the rights of crime victims. We will continue to advocate for strong sentences in cases like this in order to prevent future crimes by a particular defendant and to deter others from committing similar crimes.”

Diablo Canyon Chief to Retire

The Diablo Canyon Nuclear Power Plant will soon have a new chief, after Pacific Gas & Electric’s top guy announced his retirement. James “Jim” Welsch, PG&E’s Senior Vice President, Generation and Chief Nuclear Officer (CNO), is set to retire Dec. 31, after 37 years of service. “Jim,” Adam Wright, PG&E executive vice president, operations and chief operating officer said, “has done an outstanding job leading our nuclear and power generation operations, elevating our Diablo Canyon Power Plant to a best-in-class nuclear facility. We’re going to miss his contributions and are grateful for his service to our coworkers and hometowns. I am confident in the continued safe, reliable and affordable operation of PG&E’s generation assets because of the team and depth of leadership we have.” Paula Gerfen, currently the company’s Site Vice President for Diablo Canyon Power Plant and a 30-year veteran of the nuclear industry, has been named the Senior Vice President and Chief Nuclear Officer. “Gerfen will serve as PG&E’s lead contact with the Nuclear Regulatory Commission and the Institute of Nuclear Power Operations,” the company said. Welsch joined PG&E in 1984 and held various leadership roles at Diablo Canyon prior to his current position. He has been responsible for the utility’s electricity generation assets, the company said, overseeing more than 2,000 employees “committed to the safe, reliable and affordable operation of the company’s nuclear, natural gas, hydroelectric and renewable generation resources.” He was also overseeing the company’s power plant decom-

Chief to Retire Continued on page 4



By Clement Clarke Moore

Twas the night before Christmas, when all through the house Not a creature was stirring, not even a mouse. The stockings were hung by the chimney with care, In hopes that St Nicholas soon would be there.

The children were nestled all snug in their beds, While visions of sugar-plums danced in their heads. And mamma in her ‘kerchief, and I in my cap, Had just settled our brains for a long winter’s nap.

When out on the lawn there arose such a clatter, I sprang from the bed to see what was the matter. Away to the window I flew like a flash, Tore open the shutters and threw up the sash.

The moon on the breast of the new-fallen snow Gave the lustre of mid-day to objects below. When, what to my wondering eyes should appear, But a miniature sleigh, and eight tinny reindeer.

With a little old driver, so lively and quick, I knew in a moment it must be St Nick. More rapid than eagles his coursers they came, And he whistled, and shouted, and called them by name!

“Now Dasher! now, Dancer! now, Prancer and Vixen! On, Comet! On, Cupid! on, on Donner and Blitzen! To the top of the porch! to the top of the wall! Now dash away! Dash away! Dash away all!”

As dry leaves that before the wild hurricane fly, When they meet with an obstacle, mount to the sky. So up to the house-top the coursers they flew, With the sleigh full of Toys, and St Nicholas too.

And then, in a twinkling, I heard on the roof The prancing and pawing of each little hoof. As I drew in my head, and was turning around, Down the chimney St Nicholas came with a bound.

He was dressed all in fur, from his head to his foot, And his clothes were all tarnished with ashes and soot. A bundle of Toys he had flung on his back, And he looked like a peddler, just opening his pack.

His eyes-how they twinkled! his dimples how merry! His cheeks were like roses, his nose like a cherry! His droll little mouth was drawn up like a bow, And the beard of his chin was as white as the snow.

The stump of a pipe he held tight in his teeth, And the smoke it encircled his head like a wreath. He had a broad face and a little round belly, That shook when he laughed, like a bowlful of jelly!

He was chubby and plump, a right jolly old elf, And I laughed when I saw him, in spite of myself! A wink of his eye and a twist of his head, Soon gave me to know I had nothing to dread.

He spoke not a word, but went straight to his work, And filled all the stockings, then turned with a jerk. And laying his finger aside of his nose, And giving a nod, up the chimney he rose!

He sprang to his sleigh, to his team gave a whistle, And away they all flew like the down of a thistle. But I heard him exclaim, ‘ere he drove out of sight, “Happy Christmas to all, and to all a good-night!”

Clement Clarke Moore (1779-1863) wrote the poem ‘Twas the night before Christmas also called “A Visit from St. Nicholas” in 1822. It is now the tradition in many American families to read the poem every Christmas Eve. The poem redefined the image of Christmas and Santa Claus. Prior to the poem, St. Nicholas, the patron saint of children, had never been associated with a sleigh or reindeers. Moore was a reticent man and it is believed that a family friend, Miss H. Butler, sent a copy of the poem to the New York Sentinel, which published the poem with the condition that the author would remain anonymous. The first publication date was Dec. 23, 1823 and it was an immediate success. It was not until 1844 that Clement Clarke Moore claimed ownership when the work was included in a book of his poetry. Clement Clarke Moore came from a prominent family and his father, Benjamin Moore, was the Bishop of New York who was famous for officiating at the inauguration of George Washington. The tradition of reading ‘Twas the Night Before Christmas on Christmas Eve is now a worldwide institution.

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Police Blotter



Morro Bay Police Logs

- Dec. 5: Police responded at 1:42 p.m. to a restaurant in the 1100 block of Embarcadero, where some scurvy dogs dined-n-dashed out on the check.
- Dec. 5: Police contacted a suspicious woman at 12:35 p.m. down by the launch ramp. Logs indicated the 29-year-old scoff-law had a bench warrant and was cited and released with her cross-my-heart-and-hope-to-die promise to appear.
- Dec. 5: Police responded at noon to a reported assault down by the launch ramp. Logs indicated they cite-released a 67-year-old apparently angry bird for suspicion of battery and making criminal threats, at the request of the person on the receiving end of his venomous vitriol.
- Dec. 4: Someone in the 3000 block of Beachcomber found suspected drug paraphernalia and asked police to destroy it.
- Dec. 3: A citizen in the 1900 block of Sunset reported a burglary and deletion of a \$600 laptop computer.
- Dec. 3: A 24-year-old apparently repentant fellow with a warrant turned himself in at the police station. He was of course cited and released, and no doubt absolved of the prior sin.
- Dec. 3: Police contacted a familiar dude, 45, at 8:41 a.m. in the 800 block of Olive. He had a warrant, so they issued him another disappearance ticket and he slithered away.
- Dec. 2: A citizen in the 400 block of Anchor said someone rode off with his bike.
- Dec. 2: At 2:45 p.m. police contacted a regular customer in the 1100 block of Embarcadero who had a warrant. He was cited and released, because here we throw back the little ones. At 2:15 in the 2400 block of Main they caught up to another criminal mastermind with a warrant. That apparent snot waffle, 27, was also cited and released.
- Dec. 2: Police at the high school took a juvenile for a timeout at County Mental Health.
- Dec. 2: A 34-year-old woman with five bench warrants ap-

- peared at the police station to apparently face the music. She was cited and released with number six.
- Dec. 2: A citizen came to the police station to report a case of stolen identity and the fraudulent purchase of no doubt worthless crap potentially staining his or her good name.
 - Dec. 1: Police responded at 9:41 p.m. to Bottle Liquor in the 900 block of Main where a man told them some guy pulled a knife on him. No injuries were reported and Jack the Nipper apparently got away.
 - Dec. 1: Police contacted a suspicious fellow at 7:55 p.m. in the 1600 block of Main. The wanted man, 42, had an “extraditable warrant” out of Santa Clara County and actually got took to the hoosegow.
 - Dec. 1: A woman in the 1700 block of Embarcadero said someone stole her purse out of her unlocked car, a case of extracting the local tourist tax.
 - Dec. 1: A citizen in the 100 block of Grand Ave., in Grover Beach said his rear license plate was stolen off his vehicle while in Morro Bay.
 - Dec. 1: Police responded at 12:43 p.m. to a car crash at Tide and Oahu. Logs indicated a 28-year-old man was arrested for suspicion of driving a vehicle with stolen plates on it, felony hit-n-split, and resisting arrest. The model citizen also had three bench warrants.
 - Nov. 30: Police responded at 10:52 a.m. to the 500 block of Main where a woman said someone got into her unlocked car and stole an envelop filled with cash and her front tooth, which totally bites.
 - Nov. 29: Police took a report of suspected child abuse in the 900 block of Pacific Street.
 - Nov. 30: Police stopped a suspicious vehicle at 12:08 a.m. in the 900 block of Embarcadero. The driver, 49, was arrested for violating a criminal protective order, knowingly driving on a suspended license and while intoxicated no less, plus a bench warrant. The naughty boy was nicked for the night.
 - Nov. 29: A car was broken into in the 300 block of Sequoia. No word on the pinched booty. In the 100 block of Terra, someone forced himself on a parked car.
 - Nov. 29: Police responded at 11 a.m. to a reported burglary in a vacant building in the 1200 block of Main.
 - Nov. 27: Police stopped a suspicious vehicle at 5:19 p.m. at Main and Atascadero Road. Logs indicated the driver, a 40-year-old fellow, was cited with the fab four — suspended license, expired registration, no insurance and a bench warrant.
 - Nov. 27: Police responded to Rite Aid at 11:18 a.m. where some homicidal maniac slashed to death a car’s tires.

- Nov. 26: Police contacted some bent swizzle stick in the 1000 block of Main at 9:49 p.m. Logs indicated the toddy stricken gent was nicked for suspicion of disorderly conduct and being schnock-ered in public.
- Nov. 26: Police responded at 11:31 a.m. to a disturbance in the 2600 block of Ironwood. Logs indicated two subjects were arrested for alleged involvement in a “domestic physical argument,” which is apparently more than a spat but less than a brawl.
- Nov. 26: Police responded to the 1100 block of Las Tunas for a report of a stolen baby stroller, proving once again that people will steal anything.
- Nov. 25: Police responded at 11 p.m. to a disturbance in the 400 block of Kodiak. Logs indicated a 19-year-old rookie was tossed into the gaol for suspicion of flexing beer muscles in public.
- Nov. 25: Police responded at 2:30 p.m. to the 300 block of Embarcadero at the launch ramp. They arrested some 24-year-old Popeye for piloting a boat poop-eyed.
- Nov. 24: Someone turned in a driver’s license and a cell phone they found somewhere in town. On the 23rd, someone turned in a set of keys they’d found, leaving police to unlock the mystery.
- Nov. 24: Police responded to the 3000 block of Main at 6:45 p.m. where they arrested a 60-year-old apparent hothead for suspicion of arson.
- Nov. 24: Police stopped a suspicious vehicle at 4:15 p.m. at Spencer’s Market in the 2600 block of Main. Logs indicated they cite-released a 78-year-old geezer for suspicion of driving deep in his cups.
- Nov. 23: Police towed off a trailer from the 1100 block of Front St., for violation of the City’s 72-hour move-it or lose-it law.
- Nov. 23: Vandals struck in the 500 block of Atascadero Rd., and frankly, nobody really cares.
- Nov. 23: Police took a report for vandalism and thievery in the 400 block of Quintana. Police have no leads on the master criminal.
- Nov. 22: Police responded to KOA where someone checked into the great campground in the sky.
- Nov. 22: Police contacted a suspicious fellow at midnight creeping around Main and Surf streets. The 30-year-old apparent night owl had a bench warrant out of Ventura County. He was cited and released with a future SLO County bench warrant.
- Nov. 22: Police contacted a 47-year-old fellow at 12:38 p.m. in the 800 block of Quintana. Logs indicated the apparent zhclub is a suspect in a vandalism and trespassing case and police are going to rat him out to the D.A.

Time to get cleaned up for the holidays?

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Reserve only

Book now

Chief to Retire From page 7

missioning process, a multi-billion dollar undertaking that’s expected to take many years. He’s got an impressive resume.

A veteran of the U.S. Navy’s Nuclear Submarine Service, Welsh holds a Senior Reactor Operator License. He is a graduate of the Institute of Nuclear Power Operations’ Senior Nuclear Executive Seminar and the Hudson Institute of Coaching Certification Program. Welsh holds a B.S. in Nuclear Technology from Regents College in New York.

Gerfen started at Diablo Canyon in 1991 as a Digital Engineer and has been moving up the ladder since. She earned a Senior Reactor Operator License in 2007, and is a graduate of the INPO Senior Nuclear Plant Manager course, as well as the Nuclear Operational Risk Management course at MIT.

Prior to joining PG&E, Gerfen served in the U.S. Air Force and earned a Computer Science Bachelor’s Degree from Cal Poly, SLO.

Adam Peck will become the new Site Vice President for Dia-

blo Canyon Power Plant and will oversee all plant departments and functions, including operations, maintenance, engineering, security and radiation protection.

Peck too is a Navy veteran having served as an officer on a nuclear submarine before he joined PG&E in 2009. He has a Bachelor’s Degree in Electrical Engineering from the Naval Academy and a Masters of Organizational Leadership from Gonzaga University.

PG&E has remained steadfast with its decision to close Diablo Canyon when the operating licenses for the two reactors expire in 2004 and 2005. This despite recent news stories and reports wherein scientists, academics and even the Federal Energy Secretary have urged reconsideration of the closure of what is California’s largest power plant at 2,500 megawatts and the last operating nuclear plant in the state.

Some have suggested that closing Diablo Canyon down would mean California won’t be able to meet its ambitious climate change goals.

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

KEVIN O'CONNOR, President

Community

Eagles Deliver With Toy Drive

Photo by Neil Farrell



Some school kids at Del Mar Elementary in Morro Bay will get a special delivery for Christmas, courtesy of the local Eagles club.

The Morro Bay Eagles Aerie No. 3693, which has a clubhouse on Main Street just a few blocks from the school, recently delivered a cache of toys and gifts they collected during club dinners and raffles held throughout the year, said Cindi Cagle, the Grand Conductor at the Aerie who lead the toy drive.

She and Eagles President, Joshua Howell, Trustee Terry Stoner, and Eagle Carolyn Shively delivered the toys and gifts to the school's new Principal, Mike Wood.

The donations included a variety of unwrapped toys for boys and girls plus gift cards to Spencer's Market, also a short distance away from the school.

Wood explained that the gifts would be handed out to kids in all grades whose families were picked as needing some assistance this year by the staff.

Pictured from left are: Del Mar Principal Mike Wood, Eagles Trustee Terry Stoner, Eagle Carolyn Shively, Grand Conductor Cindi Cagle, and Eagles President Joshua Howell.

Takin' Care of BUSINESS

By Theresa-Marie Wilson

Operation Gobble



Bobby deLancellotti of the Estero Bay Kindness Coalition receives a five hundred dollar check from President Cathy Nesser of the Kiwanis Club of Bay-Osos. A contribution from the Golden State Water Company as part of their Operation Gobble program to aid local charities made the donation possible.

A service club, a business and a non-profit walk into a community and . . . A philanthropic organization recently received more funding to continue the good work they do on the North Coast.

The Kiwanis Club of Bay-Osos donated \$500 to Bobby DeLancellotti, founder of the Estero Bay Kindness Coalition. The contribution was made possible by a gift from the Golden State Water Company. Funds from their annual Operation Gobble program are given to aid local charities.

"The money will buy five \$100 dollar food gift certificates for families in need," said DeLancellotti.

"Operation Gobble has become an important part of the

holiday season for all of our employees who understand the significant impact these donations can make for our neighbors who have limited resources," said Ronald Moore, Golden State Water's Operation Gobble project leader.

The Kiwanis Club's Spiritual Aims Committee Chair Al Strunk selected the Kindness Coalition to receive the funds "so our resources can help local families with kids. Serving children is the primary mission of Kiwanis, internationally and at the local level."

An additional contribution from Golden State Water allowed the Kiwanis Club to provide additional turkeys to a Los Osos church food pantry program.

Operation Gobble has been a Golden State Water Company tradition for 31 years. The Kiwanis Club of Bay-Osos has served local children since 1984. The club meets for lunch on Wednesdays at noon at the Sea Pines Golf Resort in Los Osos

Welcome Citrine and Sage Aesthetics





The Morro Bay Chamber of Commerce celebrated one of its newest members with a ribbon cutting.

Citrine and Sage Aesthetics, 685 Main Street Ste. B, Morro Bay, is dedicated to helping their clients attain beautiful skin.



Their philosophy is a belief that "everyone can achieve beautiful healthy skin, no matter what your skin type or age. We not only believe in beautiful, healthy skin, it is our commitment to

Takin' Care of Business Continued on page 12

Thank you all so much for your support this past year.
Merry Christmas and Happy New Year
to all my friends, family & community.
Tim Cowan



Tim Cowan
Real Estate Agent, Realtor# 02021716
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Holiday Events



Season's Greetings

During this holiday season, we wish you all the best.

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Community

Events and Activities

By Theresa-Marie Wilson

The Morro Bay Fire Department hosts the annual Season of Hope toy and food drive through December 17. They are collecting non-perishable food items as well as new unwrapped toys. Collection bins are in the front lobby of the fire station at 715 Harbor St, Morro Bay. Operation Santa Clause will distribute the toys will be distributed by and the San Luis Obispo Food Bank will distribute food.



The Cal Poly Theatre and Dance Department presents the Orchesis Dance Company's 52nd annual concert, "Convergence," on Friday and Saturday, Jan. 14-15, and Thursday through Saturday, Jan. 20-22, in the Spanos Theatre. Performances will begin at 8 p.m. on all days, with a matinee scheduled at 2 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 15.

The Orchesis Dance Company celebrates its return to the concert stage after live performances were canceled due to the pandemic. In celebration of the theme of convergence, the point at which we come together, performances will include choreography by faculty, student, and guest choreographers in multiple genres.

The concert features original dances created during fall quarter, directed by Professor Diana Stanton and assisted by faculty member Michelle Walter. Cal Poly staff member Clint Bryson serves as both lighting designer and technical director.

Boasting an impressive career and over 180 works to his credit, guest artist Wade Madsen of Seattle has returned to create a new piece for the dance company. Madsen engaged with Orchesis

Takin' Care of Business Continued on page 9

enhance the positive psychological impact of a professional facial through the use of our patented hydrafacial system," their website states.

For more information, go to citrineandsageaesthetics.com or follow them on instagram @citrineandsageaesthetics. They can be reached at (805) 225-3887.psyc

Donations to Festival Mozaic Double Goal

Festival Mozaic reported receiving more than \$170,000 in total contributions to-date for the fourth quarter.

More than \$50,000 in contributions were made as a result of a \$25,000 Matching Challenge Grant from board member Len Jarrott. All donations from new donors or upgraded contributions from existing donors from October 1 through November 30 up to \$25,000 were matched by Jarrott.

"I hope this success motivates our community in ways we have not yet seen," said Jarrott in a press release. "My wish going forward is that each year someone new gets to experience the joy of challenging our community in this extremely rewarding way."

This news comes on the heels of Festival Mozaic announcing a robust Spring Season of concerts and events in January, February and April of 2022. Rising star violinist Abigael Kralik has been named the 2022 Mozaic Artist-in-Residence, a role in which she will curate two concerts and will be prominently featured in the July 2022 Summer Festival. Music Director Scott Yoo will return in February to lead one of his signature Notable Encounter Weekends, assisted by violist Ben Ullery, cellist Jonah Kim, and pianist Anna Polonsky. Pianist Stewart Goodyear, who was a guest star last year on Scott Yoo's PBS program Now Hear This, rounds out the spring lineup with a solo recital at the Performing Arts Center's Miossi Hall in April.

For more information, go to www.festivalmozaic.org.

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dancers via Zoom in an entirely virtual collaborative process. Theatre and dance faculty members Stanton, Walter, Horacio Heredia and Kathleen Helm each created new work based on the "Convergence" theme. Local choreographer Lisa Deyo created "Just Gettin' Started," an impressive and upbeat concert finale featuring all 28 Orchesis dancers. Tickets for "Convergence" are \$20 for the public and \$12 for students, seniors and children. They can be bought at the Performing Arts Center Ticket Office from noon to 6 p.m., Monday through Saturday. To order by phone, call 805-SLO-4TIX (805-756-4849). Tickets can also be purchased online at pacslo.org.



Learn beginning fused glass with Larry Le Brane through Jan. 29, 2022 at Central Coast Glass Blowing and Fusing, 1279 2nd Street, Los Osos. Call or email host for more precise info on workshop dates because they vary. Make fused-glass home/garden décor, gifts, dishware, or use in your own artwork. No previous art skills are needed. All materials for 3-5 projects are included in \$135 fee. For 4-6 students. No drop-ins. Registration at larron4@charter.net 805-528-8791. Say hit to Larry on Facebook at www.facebook.com/larry.lebrane

Join Art Center Morro Bay, 835 Main St., for their Winter Market on Saturday, Dec. 18 from 1 – 7 p.m. and Sunday, Dec. 19 from 1 – 4 p.m. Saturday features art, holiday music and treats on

the patio plus a Free Demo Make it/Take it - Alcohol Ink Ornaments. Bring the whole family.

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Pianist and Cal Poly Music Professor Emeritus W. Terrence Spiller will give a recital at 7:30 p.m. Friday, Jan. 7, 2022 in the Spanos Theatre on campus. Spiller will perform works by Clara and Robert Schumann, who Spiller calls two of the most important musicians from 19th-century Germany as well as one of the most famous married couples in music history.

The second half of the program will feature French repertoire: Frédéric Chopin's "Fantasy in F Minor," Op. 49; Francis Poulenc's "Trois mouvements perpétuels"; Maurice Ravel's "Pavane pour une infante défunte"; and Claude Debussy's "L'Isle Joyeuse."

Spiller teaches applied piano at Cal Poly, though he recently retired from full-time teaching. Tickets are \$20 for the public and \$10 for students. Proceeds will benefit the Music Department Scholarship Fund. Event parking is sponsored by the PAC. Tickets are available at the Cal Poly Ticket Office between noon and 6 p.m. Monday through Saturday. To order by phone, call 805-SLO-4TIX (805-756-4849).

EventsContinued on page 13

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OUT & ABOUT

WITH THE BOOKSHELF WRITERS



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

Each issue, this column will feature one of the BookShelf Writers:

Debbie Black, Catherine "Kiki" Kornreich, Judy Salamacha and Susan Vasquez

Cayucos Dog Park-
From Humble Beginnings
and Humble Still

By Debbie Black



The proposed structure at the Cayucos Dog Park.

If El Chorro Dog Park is the Great Dane of dog parks, and Del Mar is the lofty poodle, and Vineyard is the highly groomed and glamorously adorned Best in Show, then Cayucos Dog Park would be the scrappy little good-natured mutt that cheerfully greets everyone and offers to share its well-loved toys.

No longer a pup, Cayucos Dog Park turned 10 last year. The pandemic, that unfortunately precluded any birthday celebration, drove a record number of people and dogs to the park — a safe place for both to burn off cabin fever.

There would be no Cayucos Dog Park were it not for a quiet, dedicated community volunteer named Donna Dawson. In 2009, she was asked to shepherd along the nascent idea of building a dog park at the yet-to-be-built Norma Rosa Park near the cemetery (and she didn't even have a dog).

After convincing County Parks to shoehorn the diminutive dog park into the existing plans, Donna set about garnering funds and labor. Help came from all directions, including raffles, rummage sales, private donations and a Community Projects Grant from the county. By May 2010, Cayucos had its fenced dog park welcoming dogs and their people from the entire Estero Bay community, as well as our many visitors.

The term "grassroots" couldn't be more applicable than in the case of the Cayucos Dog Park. The park is run completely by volunteers, and is currently administered by Donna Dawson, Claire Townsley and this writer with a grateful shout-out to the

Events From page 12

Don't miss the exhibits at Gallery at Marina Square, 601 Embarcadero Suite 10, Morro Bay, through Dec. 29, from 11 a.m.-5 p.m.

Enjoy fine art photography by Kerry Drager, a photographer, writer, and instructor who lives in Morro Bay. He is the author of three photo how-to books and the co-author of two photo-essay books, all nationally published.

While there be sure to check out jewelry artist Lisa Kanofsky's work. Lisa's jewelry encompasses a mix of pendants and beaded necklaces accented with creativity and love.

The art continues with Don Doubledee, a Cal Poly graduate in architecture and a resident of Morro Bay since 1970.

For more information, go to www.galleryatmarinasquare.com. Image Kerry Drager.



The Feline Network of the Central Coast needs volun-



The third canopy wrecked by the wind at the Cayucos Dog Park.

men in our families who respond to emergency repairs with continued good nature. It operates solely on donations, both monetary and in-kind, including the much-appreciated loads of chipped bark delivered by County Public Works and coordinated by Supervising Park Ranger Lasca Gaylord. Ongoing expenses include Mutt Mitt dog waste bags, repairs, maintenance and insurance. Since there's no water onsite for thirsty dogs, volunteers have diligently brought water from home for eleven years. Some sign up for a month, checking the water buckets about once a week. Others simply bring a gallon to contribute whenever they visit.

Throughout the years, volunteers have planted, watered and maintained the landscaping around the park. Young trees will someday provide needed shade. In the meantime, a community member donated a 10x20 pop-up structure. It was well used for several years until offshore winds recently shredded its third replacement canopy, and the metal structure succumbed to coastal rust. The time has come for a more permanent solution.

Enter more volunteers. My husband, Garth (Kornreich), has donated his architectural services to design a wooden structure with sturdy replaceable canopies of nursery-grade shade cloth. He's in the midst of processing the project through County Parks, Planning and Building departments. Walter Cerny of WC Engineering donated his engineering services for the structural calculations. Hayward Lumber has offered a lumber discount. Thank you all!

This feels like a good old-fashioned barn raising, coastal style. Yet, even with all this help, the preliminary cost estimate for the shade structure is still \$5800. Tax-deductible donations of any amount are greatly appreciated, payable to SLOPOST-CDP (mention that it's for the shade structure), and can be mailed to Donna Dawson at 2709 Orville Ave, Cayucos, 93430. Donor plaques are available for donations of \$100 or more (give us your contact information). We can't thank you enough.

This sturdy, dependable little dog park belongs to our community whose ongoing support will ensure its future. It'll continue to be a favorite gathering spot for well-behaved dogs and their people.

You and your pup can reach Cayucos Dog Park by taking Highway 1 to Cayucos, exiting at Ocean Blvd (just north of Old Creek Road exit). Turn left toward the cemetery.

Come join us. We'll be the ones with the exuberant golden retriever fixated on her favorite tennis ball. Yep, that would be our Chase. And if you can, please bring a gallon of water.

Debbie Black is a member of The BookShelf Writers. To see more of her work, please visit www.thebookshelfwriters.com

ters to provide foster homes for foster kittens or cats with special needs. The Feline Network pays for food, litter, and any medications needed. Volunteers also needed to help with humanely trapping and transporting feral cats for spay/neuter. For more information or to get involved, call 805-549-9228.

Morro Bay Art Association presents two workshops. The first is a practice of sketching everyday on Monday, Jan. 3 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. with Vicky Hoffman. This workshop is designed for artists looking to jump-start the daily practice of sketching, or for novices looking to explore sketch booking for the first time.

The cost is \$50 for members and \$60 for non-members. All materials are included in the cost of the class.

The second is a workshop in watercolors with artist Virginia Mack on Jan. 4, 11, 18, and 25 from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. The goal is to discover new, and satisfying, directions in your use of the medium. The cost is \$120 for members or \$135 for non-members for the four day workshop. Basic Materials are available, but there is a needed materials list online.

For more information, call 805-772-2504 or go to www.artcentermorrobay.org.

Send your event listing at least three weeks in advance to Editor@EsteroBayNews.com. Make sure to include the who, what, why,

Lion's Give Away
35th Car

By Neil Farrell



Donny Peluca of Morro Bay is the 35th person to receive a free car in the Morro Bay Lion's Club's Car Giveaway Program. Peluca, at far right, gets the keys to a 2008 Toyota Matrix and a congratulatory handshake from Lion Bill Todd who started the program. Also pictured are Lion's Club members taking a quick timeout from the Thanksgiving Community Drive-Thru Dinner on Nov. 25. Photo by Neil Farrell

A tireless volunteer is the latest person to be gifted a free car by the Morro Bay Lion's Club's car giveaway program.

Morro Bay resident, Donny Peluca, received the keys to a 2008 Toyota Matrix SUV at the Lion's Club's drive-thru Thanksgiving Community Dinner in honor of the many volunteer activities the 64-year-old does on a regular basis. Peluca said he volunteers at the Lion's Monday Night free dinners at the Vet's Hall, secures food for the event from local stores and helps with the group's bottle and can drives.

He heads to Los Osos to help Los Osos Cares with their dinners and volunteers with the weekly food bank program. He's lived here permanently for 12 years, he said, but first became familiar with the area in 1982. "It's very beautiful here," he said. Oh, and he also volunteers with his church. All that requires reliable transportation and the little Toyota was a welcomed gift he will put to good use.

Lion, Bill Todd of Todd's Garage and one of the co-founders along with Estero Bay Alliance for Care's, Sharon O'Leary, of the quarterly car giveaway program, which with Peluca's ride brings their totals to 35, said the car belonged to one of his customers at the shop who no longer needed it. The Lions bought the car from him and now it belongs to Peluca. It's the 35th free car they've given way.

Usually, Todd and his son Mike go through the vehicles for the program, fixing anything that's wrong and making sure they pass smog check. With this car, "It didn't need anything." And he knew the car's maintenance record, because his shop did the work on it.

Todd said they might have already found their next car to give away, a Nissan Versa with just 55,000 miles on it. It too was owned by an elderly customer who is no longer able to drive.

But there's a man in town that lives in a van with four dogs and the van won't pass smog anymore and in California, that's a vehicle's death sentence. He's in dire need of new wheels, Todd said, but a Nissan sedan won't do. Todd said they are trying to find a nice van for the guy.

Lion's Give Away Continued on page 18

Jim Marshall

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Sunday - December 19, 3pm: Christmas Carols at St. Ben's

A Los Osos tradition. Enjoy carols from the centuries and a lively sing-a-long of familiar carols. presented by the St. Benedict's singers and community musicians. Concert is sold out but will be streamed online here: facebook.com/stbenslosos

Tuesday - December 21, 5:30 pm: Blue Christmas

If the holiday season brings up memories of the past, of loved ones lost, or if there are reasons why this year is not especially bright, please join us for a short simple service which acknowledges that Christmas can be a difficult time for many of us. This will be on Facebook and in person.

Christmas Eve - December 24

Carols & Communion around the Crèche - 4:30pm
Sung Festival Eucharist - at 8pm, carols at 7:45PM

What could be better on Christmas Eve than a warm church decorated with candles, flowers and greenery and all your favorite carols in a joyful service of praise to God? In person and on Facebook.

Join us for Your Christmas Celebrations

Saturday - December 25, 10:00 am: Christmas Communion

Quiet Communion Service with carols - 10am
In person and on Facebook.
Followed by a light brunch

Christmas Lessons and Carols - Sunday December 26

Christmas Lessons and Carols Service - 10:30am

This simple service follows the Christmas story through the words of the Bible, combined with hymns and Christmas music to lift your spirits and put you in the holiday mood. Please join us on Facebook.



St. Benedict's
Episcopal Church
A Place For All People

More information: StBensLosOsos.org

*All Services Offered In Person and Streamed On Facebook Live

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ESTERO BAY NEWS

Why fight the throngs at big box stores only to struggle with empty shelves thanks to supply chain delays? Double your gifting power and buy locally! Every sale is a gift to a small business owner.

Our county is home to a wide array of local artisans, writers, and small businesses offering unique items and experiential opportunities for your holiday gifting needs.

Read through this local guide for ideas to jumpstart your local holiday shopping.

We've gathered an assortment of ideas and resources to get you started covering handmade items, carefully curated shops, outdoor experiences, gifts to support and encourage self care, local food finds and options for gifting a donation.

More can be found at:
esterobaynews.com/holidays.

2021 Holiday Gift Guide

Christine Silbaugh, Back Bay Pottery



GIFT In a Glass

By Shari Sullivan

The winter holidays are often more of a chaotic shopping event than a celebration of friends, family and/or faith as we scurry about buying for everyone on our list.

A physical gift certainly can convey the magic of the season, but a gift that just crosses a name off a list is another matter. As an alternative to the latter, the gift of an experience is a great solution.

Earlier this month, I took my in-laws wine tasting – a totally new experience for them. We spent a beautiful afternoon enjoying a stunning property, enjoying a bit of wine and a few bites. Everyone had fun but more importantly it allowed the time and space for conversations we never would have had at my house or theirs. In our family, these experiences last much longer than hastily purchased items.

Our family's visit was to Talley Vineyards which requires a reservation in advance as do most tasting rooms now. The \$30/person tasting fee is waived for wine club members (Club memberships are also a great gifting idea.)

Personally, I belong to two wineries. Talley, talleyvineyards.com, and Daou, daouvineyards.com, which allow me to bring up to three additional people for no charge. I consider the waived tasting fees when calculating the cost of membership. Thinking of membership this way, I get early access to new vintages, tasting notes, regular shipments and free tastings throughout the year for myself. Joining wineries in different regions is a great way to experience how terroir and climate affect the final wines.

...

Our county is blessed with a selection of wineries that borders on ridiculous. Wine and tourism organizations (see sidebar for a few suggestions) are great starting points to find tasting rooms, getaways, tours and more.

Additional Experiences

Looking for adventure? We are blessed by an embarrassment of riches if you are in search of fun, outdoor experiences. Rent bikes, kayaks and more or choose a guided tour. Whichever way you wish to go, you're sure to find something to suit any level of physical exertion.

...

Kayak, standup paddle board and bike rentals and tours, surf lessons and other outdoor experiences.

...

Rent a bike (standard or electric), gift a surf lesson or set up an e-bike tour through Cal Coast Adventures, calcoastadventures.com/centralcoast.

...

Central Coast Outdoors, centralcoastoutdoors.com, has been hosting hiking, biking and kayaking tours (a few self-guided) throughout the central coast since 2003.

...

Estero Adventures can be found online at esteroinn.com/estero-adventures and offers electric pontoon boat rental in addition to kayaks, bikes and more.

...

Morro Bay Paddlesports, paddlemorrobay.com, has an array of standup paddle board lessons if you are gifting, or were gifted, a shiny new SUP for the holidays. They also offer an interesting array of kayak tours and a nature tour on an 8-person SUP.

...

Looking for more options for surf lessons? Morro Bay Surf School has locations in Morro Bay, Avila and Pismo, so you can choose your break. You can find all of their location information at morrobaysurfschool.com.

...

Book whale watching tours or a bay tour on a clear-bottomed boat at Sub Sea Tours, morrobaywhalewatching.com.

...

Gift your loved one a chartered yacht, hour-long excursions to overnight get-aways, from Toast the Coast, toastthecoast.com. Hopefully, they'll invite you along!

...

Prefer to stay on land? Tour the coast on a scooter from Central Coast Carts, centralcoastcarts.com. Staff will help you select two-, three-, or four-wheeled carts depending on the size of your group and your tour needs.

...

The Museum of Natural History in the Morro Bay State Park, is a great excursion for people of all ages. Fun, educational, and interactive exhibits cover the natural habitats of the area. After touring the museum, there's a number of gentle walks in the surrounding area where you may see some of the wildlife from the exhibits.

Finally, if you are looking for a low-cost experience this season, consider packing a picnic and heading out to one of the many state parks for a day. Whether you are planning for a group with young children, physical limitations, or one looking for an intense workout, the Central Coast State Parks Association's website, centralcoastparks.org, is a great starting point for planning your day.

San Luis Obispo Coast Wine Collective
www.slocoastwine.com

SLO CAL

www.slocal.com/things-to-do/wine-country

Wine Country:

www.winecountry.com/regions/san-luis-obispo-county

Wine Country also covers a lot of other regions if you wish to gift travel with your wine

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Photo Claudia Gwinn



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EVENTS and Activities

This time of year, go-go-go is the speed everyone is operating at. Take some time to slow down with family and friends and enjoy activities that celebrate the magic of the season and bring out the kid in everyone.

The Morro Bay Fire Department hosts the annual Season of Hope toy and food drive through December 17. They are collecting non-perishable food items as well as new unwrapped toys. Collection bins are in the front lobby of the fire station at 715 Harbor St, Morro Bay. Operation Santa Clause will distribute the toys will be distributed by and the San Luis Obispo Food Bank will distribute food.

...

Holiday Magic at the Charles Paddock Zoo is on Dec. 18 from 10 a.m. – 1 p.m. Zookeepers have stepped in as Santa's elves to prepare gifts for the animals. Santa will be at the Zoo to help welcome visitors and deliver gifts to the animals. Gifts will be delivered to the animals throughout the three hours along with activities for the entire family to enjoy throughout the day. New this year is a strolling magician to engage all ages. For more information about the Zoo, go to charlespaddockzoo.org.

...

Join Art Center Morro Bay, 835 Main St., for their Winter Market on Saturday, Dec. 18 from 1 – 7 p.m. and Sunday, Dec. 19 from 1 – 4 p.m. Saturday features art, holiday music and treats on the patio plus a Free Demo Make it/Take it - Alcohol Ink Ornaments. Bring the whole family.

...

See Margery Williams' classic children's tale come alive on stage by Ballet Theatre SLO on Fri., Dec. 17 and 18 at 7 p.m., Sat., Dec. and Sun., Dec. 19, 2 p.m. at Cal Poly's Spanos Theatre. Each performance also includes a grand skate with "Les Patineurs (The Skaters)". Tickets are \$28-48, and on

Friday evening, all seats \$33. They can be purchased at bt-slo.org/holiday-program-2021. For more information, call 805-756-7113.

Don't miss the Great American Melodrama's Holiday Extravaganza Wed. – Sun. through Dec. 31. See Scrooge find his Christmas spirit in a heart-warming tale of holiday magic, laugh until your sides ache at the zany characters in a fractured fairy tale opera, and celebrate the music of the season in our Holiday Vaudeville Revue. The Melodrama is located at 1863 Front St. in Oceano. Tickets can be purchased at americanmelodrama.com.



The Salvation Army needs volunteer bell-ringers for numerous locations around San Luis Obispo County during the holiday season, through Dec. 24.

Salvation Army donation kettles are located outside large stores around the county to attract shoppers as they enter and leave the stores. Volunteers are not required to solicit donations – just ring the bell.

Shifts are normally two hours, and all donations go to help families and individuals in San Luis Obispo County. To volunteer for a time and location, call Roger Aguilar at (323) 316-7097.

The annual Kettle Campaign is The Salvation Army's most important fundraising event of the year. And this year, demand is particularly high because of the economic impact the pandemic has had on many local residents. As a result, the Salvation Army is being called on to assist even more families in need.

Kitty Ditty Sing-Along

By Catherine "Kiki" Kornreich



I saw Puppy kissing Kitty-Paws
Underneath the Christmas tree last night.
They didn't see me creep
Down the hall to have a peep:
They thought that I was tucked up
In my bedroom fast asleep.

Then, I saw Kitty tickling Puppy Dog
Underneath her whiskers snowy white.
Oh what a thrill it would have been
If my friends had only seen
Puppy tickling Kitty-Paws last night!

Then, I saw Puppy sniffing Kitty's paws.
Claws came out as Kitty sussed his plight.
Oh, how sad I would have been
If they'd ended it just then:
Puppy sniffing Kitty's paws last night!

And then my Puppy tackled Kitty-Paws,
Tumbling round under the Christmas lights.
They never saw me peeping
Nor 'round the corner sneaking!
They kicked gifts, and whew! They didn't fight!

Then Kitty reached his paw up casually...
Flicked a bright red orb right off the tree!
My Puppy looked perplexed
As kitty reached up next
And tapped Puppy's face gleefully!

Soon, I saw Puppy nudging Kitty-Paws,
Then snuggling up on such a chilly night.
Back up the hall I snuck,
I couldn't believe my luck!
My babies bring me such delight!

THE GIFT of Giving

The holidays are a great time to donate to organizations supporting our community's needs. A donation in someone's name makes a great gift for folks who already "have it all."

Most local service organizations facilitate charitable donations. Check with your local group or visit our online gift guide for more contacts.

...

Family Care Network funds immediate and ongoing needs for youth and families. Donate at fcni.org.

...

Woods Humane Society serves, protects, shelters and rehomes homeless companion animals. Donate at woodshumanesociety.org.

...

SLO Food Bank works to alleviate hunger in our county. Donate at slofoodbank.org.

...

Estero Bay Kindness Coalition Make partners with for-profits, nonprofits, churches, and schools to benefit the greater good and those living on the margins in the Estero Bay community. Make a donation at esterobaykindnesscoalition.org.

In Print and On Line



esterobaynews.com



No Purchase
Necessary

Stop by and complete a short entry form for our holiday drawing of fun gifts. Drawing will be Saturday, December 18, 2021 at 4:00 pm.

Need not be present to win.

1st Prize

Lovely Hoola-Hoop

2nd Prize

Gift Certificate for TWO Waffle or Crepe Meals which always include choice of coffee, tea, cocoa AND a side of REAL frozen yogurt or REAL Almond Milk

3rd Prize

Pop-Beads – Choice of Colors

4th Prize

Gift Certificate for a Large REAL Frozen Yogurt or REAL Almond Milk

Morro Bay's Community Band, "The White Caps" plays holiday music in our courtyard, "The Gathering Place" during the local Farmer's Market, Saturday, December 18, 2021 from 2:30-5:00 pm. The vendors have some wonderful gift giving ideas. Our downtown locally owned shop owners welcome your holiday greeting.



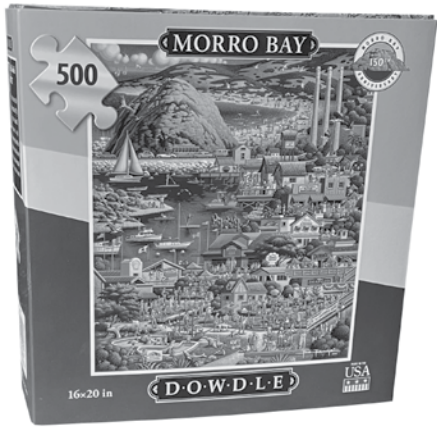
This is the 9th year Grandma's and Womenade have sponsored our high schoolers by donations of items as needed.

This year we ask that you purchase a backpack and spiral note book and drop it off at Grandma's either during the Farmers Market Saturday's or anytime during our open hours.

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Community

Collectible Puzzles
Still Available



Morro Bay Beautiful has sold out of its stock of collectible Morro Bay jigsaw puzzles but they are still available at several local stores.

Artist and renowned puzzle maker, Eric Dowdle, unveiled the image he produced to represent Morro Bay in puzzle form at a special celebration for the City’s 150th Birthday on Sept. 11.

Morro Bay Beautiful had commissioned the puzzle and had a number of them to sell for a fundraiser. The puzzles are still available at several local stores: Sun n’ Buns Bakery, The Shell Shop, Morro Bay Oyster Co., Giovanni’s Seafood Market and Galley, The Dutchman’s Seafood House, Coalesce Bookstore, Coastal Treasures Gift Shop, and Hungry Fisherman Restaurant.

They are also at Etc. Etc. in Cambria and available at the Saturday Downtown Farmer’s Market (2-5 p.m.) until Christmas.

MBB’s Ann Reisner, who headed up the project, said she has the answers to where the puzzles are. Call 805-772-8117 if you need help finding one.

Tickets on Sale Now for
Cambria Film Festival

By Jill Turnbow



Tickets are now on sale for the 5th Annual Cambria Film Festival, February 3 thru the 6, and if you grab them now, you will benefit from early bird prices. This year’s festival features a hybrid format with regularly scheduled in-person screenings and events as well as a virtual festival.

“We’re excited about the hybrid option,” said Dennis Frahmman, chairman of the festival. “We tested it last summer and it works very well. The virtual screenings give audiences the option of seeing more films whenever they want, from wherever they want.”

The upcoming festival features films from more than 16 countries. “I think these are some of the strongest films we’ve had,” said Frahmman. A panel of judges has narrowed down the

Lion’s Give Away From page 13



If readers have a vehicle they no longer need they can donate it to the program and receive full Blue Book value as a tax write off. If it doesn’t run, Todd said they can use it for a parts car, sell it or scrap it to support the program. They also accept cash donations, which are needed to pay for necessary new parts. Call Bill Todd at 805-772-1985 if you have a car for the program.

If you are a deserving person who needs reliable transportation and would like to ask about the car giveaways, contact O’Leary at the Resource Connections Office, 805-225-1991.

They are scheduled to give away their 36th car in March or possibly April, Todd said, and are taking applications now. “Hopefully there’re more people deserving of a car.”

screenings to seven feature films and 47 shorts. They festival will also offer talks with some of the filmmakers and screen some local community short films as well.

The Cambria Film Festival stands out amongst other film festivals for its unique theme, “Share the Love.” All the films submitted must center around stories of romance and the complexities of love.

“A broad topic to be sure and it is fascinating to see how each filmmaker approaches the subject,” said festival judge, Robert Tieman.

Tickets are selling quickly with an early bird price of \$95 for an all-festival pass, which includes all screenings and in-person events, including the closing night gala. Or readers can purchase a virtual pass for unlimited screenings plus livestreamed Q&As with filmmakers, and the livestream of the closing night party for \$50. Individual film passes are also available plus rush line tickets will be available for single screenings at the various venues.

Cambria Center for the Arts, 1350 Main St. in Cambria serves as the festival’s hub, but other venues will host various events, too. The festival kicks off with an opening night party at the Hearst Ranch Winery and wraps up with a closing night gala at the Cambria Vets Hall. That night, awards are handed out for Best Feature Film, Best Short, Best Animated Film, Audience Favorite Awards, and the Nancy Green Founder’s Award for Best of the Fest.

Anticipated highlights of the festival include a musical romance from Japan titled “Make-Believers,” a LGBT love story from Namibia titled “Kapana” and “They/Them/Us,” a kinky romantic comedy that won the 2021 Paris Independent Film Festival award. Also, a wide variety of independent shorts on subjects as varied as a comedy about the desire to make a baby called “Collapse,” a love story featuring typewriters called “Tyndall Typewriters,” and a subway meet-cute with sign language called “Noisy.”

A complete schedule of films and events are on the website, CambriaFilmFestival.com. Tickets are available on the site along with tips on planning your visit. Tieman adds “Many of the screenings sell out, so it’s good to purchase early and you can take advantage of the discounted prices until December 31.”

Why the Hawk Screeches

On a recent trip to the store in Downtown Morro Bay, the quiet was pierced by the loud, screeching call of a hawk. Grabbing a camera, the red tail hawk was espied atop a lamp pole at the corner of Morro Bay Boulevard and Monterey Avenue. Was the raptor screaming out a warning — ‘This town is MINE!’ Perhaps it was a shout to its mate or to a potential mate? We can speculate, but as Bokononism tells us, ‘Tiger got to hunt, bird got to fly, man got to sit and wonder why, why, why? Tiger got to sleep, bird got to land, man got to tell himself he understand.’



A publicity shot from “Make-Believers,” a feature film from Japan that will show at the Cambria Film Festival.



A
Dose
of Good
Dogma



Finding Your
(Inner) Trainer

Ok, you’ve got your dog, the bed, the food, collar, leash, rolls of poop bags, maybe a crate, the explosion of toys; what comes next? The training of course. Training your dog can actually be fun for the whole family. Finding the right trainer might be a bit more challenging. There are probably dozens of dog trainers out there in your community; some come to your home, some have classes and some take your dog.

Here’s a brief description, and my own pros and cons, of each type.

Private instruction: Basically one on one work with you and your dog. It can take place at your home or at a location elsewhere. Pro: Customized to your specific needs, whether behavior issues, basic manners or specific commands. The entire family can participate. Builds a strong, trusting, leadership connection between you and your dog. Con: you must be consistent, able and willing to put in the time and homework everyday.

Group training classes: Several dogs learning the same thing at the same time in a structured environment. Pro: A great way to socialize your dog in a controlled environment and work with distractions. Develops your dog’s confidence in social situations. The entire family can participate. Builds a trusting leadership relationship between you and your dog. Con: Structured classes focus more on commands. Not much attention to addressing any behavior issues of your dog. Some trainers do not use positive reinforcement training. You have to be able and willing to consistently do the homework.

Remote training: You send your dog away for training. Pro: You get a break from your dog. Someone else does the work. Con: Expensive. No one in the family learns about the dog, how the dog learns, or how to reinforce what the dog has learned. Your dog doesn’t see you as the leader. You have no idea what methods they are using. No relationship built between you and your dog.

When looking for the right person to help you train, ask questions and keep these things in mind:

- Is the trainer listening to you and asking you questions about your dog?
- Do they interrupt with how they can solve your issues? Do they seem to know everything?
- Do they understand your goals? Your dog?
- Are you comfortable with them and their methods?
- Are they good communicators, speaking with you instead of at you?
- Are they breaking down and explaining the learning?
- Are they insured? Will they provide references?
- Does your dog like them?

In addition to training, I like to provide my clients with a list of books that will help them learn about how a dog thinks and learns. All dogs learn the same way, via classic and operant conditioning, but learning styles and motivation can vary, just like with humans.

Books that I recommend to people do not include titles like, “How to train...” or “Teach your dog to...” I suggest books like “Inside of a Dog” or “The Dog’s Mind”.

Once you learn how your dog’s mind works, how they communicate, and how they think, the actual training can be fun and stress free.

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



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Community

Viewpoint

Letter From District 2 Supervisor

From anywhere near Morro Rock on a clear day, you can see the City of Morro Bay to the east, Los Osos to the south, and to the north, Cayucos and our northern coast.

This panoramic vista encompasses the essence of San Luis Obispo County’s 2nd Supervisorial District, which I’ve been proud to represent since 2007.

Even before I took office, I knew the North Coast values its sense of community. Since even before our county was founded, we’ve been bound by our neighbor-to-neighbor interactions, by our shared life in the coastal hills and on the wide Pacific Ocean, and by our reverence for the remarkable landscape that surrounds us.

We are now amidst the once-a-decade struggle to revise the political boundaries that divide our county – and the North Coast has been ravaged in that process. In an action virtually certain to have occurred on Dec. 14 [post press time], the three hard-right supervisors of the board majority will have carved our coast into three separate pieces—scattering Los Osos, Morro Bay and Cayucos into three different and radically-redrawn districts.

This obviously diminishes our political voice, subsuming our fragments into the political power centers of Paso Robles, Atascadero and San Luis Obispo. We fall easy prey to the interests of our inland neighbors.

But it also degrades our county’s government: Imagine a single supervisor, of whatever political ilk, effectively serving constituents spread from Lake Nacimiento to San Miguel, Atascadero, Cayucos and San Simeon. Imagine what attention Los Osos might get from a supervisor centered in the Five Cities.

The audacity of this cynical power grab is sadly unsurprising, given the track record of the board majority. What’s striking, however, is their craven refusal to take responsibility for it.

The map was drafted by one of their fellow partisans and promoted by their political party’s county committee – yet, they have the temerity to deny it favors their political interests, even as political party registration data show it clearly does. The majority, when any of them speak at all, simply repeat their party’s talking points and desperately refuse to acknowledge the data that expose their deceit.

The fate of the new map seems likely to be determined in the courts, but the redistricting exercise has awakened many to the majority’s disdain for governance. So, I’m hopeful that the good citizens of this county will in the end prevail. Next year’s elections will be pivotal.

*Bruce Gibson
Los Osos*

Opinion

Another Marine Sanctuary is Unnecessary

In 1974, President Ford established the first National Marine Sanctuary (“NMS”) off North Carolina- The USS Monitor National Marine Sanctuary. It was established to protect the shipwreck, and is currently being considered for expansion to protect additional shipwrecks. Currently, there are five NMS off the West Coast, four of which are located off the coast of California. California also has 124 Marine Protected Areas with an additional five Groundfish Conservation Areas. Here on the Central Coast the waters off of Diablo Canyon Nuclear Plant and Vandenberg Air Force base are restricted and hinder our ability to provide you with fresh seafood sustainably harvested. Another protected area is just not needed off the Central Coast.

While there may be discrete areas worthy of designation within the footprint of the proposed Chumash Heritage National Marine Sanctuary (CHNMS), it cannot be claimed that the entire area is. The proposed CHNMS is approximately 7,000 square miles. The total area of the NMS vastly exceeds what is thought to be necessary to recognize and preserve Chumash tribal history NMS seeks to protect. How large of an area is necessary to protect these discrete locations?

It should be noted that the original map area of the proposed sanctuary has been changed to exclude the proposed Morro Bay 376 Wind Energy Area (WEA) - the first large-scale industrial offshore wind farm off the U.S. west coast). While the WEA has been excluded from the proposed NMS, what about the infrastructure necessary to get this unproven resource ashore such as substations (fixed and/or floating) and transmission cables? It is

likely that these high voltage components of the wind farm will have to cross through the proposed Sanctuary.

According to the Potential Economic Impacts of the Proposed NMS - a study prepared for the Sierra Club, the proposed CHNMS could, and this is a very BIG could, add 23 million dollars per year and create almost 600 jobs.

“1. Government expenditures on Sanctuary offices, staff, and infrastructure, as well as additional research money raised by Sanctuary staff.

2. Money raised by local NGOs and academics to conduct Sanctuary-related research.

3. Increased coastal tourism and the increases in relevant business revenues from it (due to both market signaling and improved ocean and coastal resource stewardship.)

4. Increased property values, property taxes, and business, local, state and federal tax revenues due to Sanctuary proximity.”

Government money spent on Sanctuary offices and infrastructure is linked to construction and provides temporary jobs. According to the NMS of California Average Budget Per Sanctuary, 2005-2014, there were 18 Federal and Contracted jobs. The Potential Economic report, using employment multipliers from IMPLAN (economic modeling software) predicts a TOTAL of 44 new jobs. This is a very far cry from the touted 600. We must also be cognizant that jobs may be lost as a result of the Sanctuary’s designation. Between 2010 and 2017, local fishermen landed. On average, 5 million lbs. of seafood with ex-vessel revenues of \$8.75 million dollars. It bears noting, ex-vessel revenues are dollars paid to local fishermen and does NOT include the downstream economic benefits, which surely exceeds the \$23 million boasted by proponents of the Sanctuary. In effect, there may be a net economic loss to the local economy if the Sanctuary greatly impacts commercial fishing in the area.

There is no clear link and no current research that connects a NMS with increased tourism. The Potential Economic Report also associates a NMS with UNESCO Heritage Sites for increased tourism. The proposed CHNMS is NOT a UNESCO site. People already come here for the clean beaches, wildlife, the Rock, fishing, and water sports. We have plenty of tourism already. The proposed growth and jobs coming from increased tourism are not head of household jobs, and put a strain on local infrastructure and housing. While the proponents of the NMS opine that tourism will benefit from its designation, it fails to provide how. If you are standing on the beach looking out from any of the 156 miles of coastline, encompassing approximately 7,000-square miles of ocean – it won’t look any different than it does today. Sure, there may be a few more signs and a visitor center, but the ocean won’t look any different.

The Proposed Economic Impact Report States that the CHNMS would “prohibit the sighting of offshore oil and gas rigs that would likely get built without the NMS designation.” California blocked any new oil and gas drilling in 1969. Senator Feinstein has introduced a bill, The West Coast Ocean Protection Act, which would permanently ban oil and gas drilling in Federal Waters off the Coast of California, Oregon and Washington. Currently President Biden has put in place a temporary moratorium. The people of California have a vested interest in protecting their coastline from contamination from oil spills--as does the fishing community.

While dredging is still permitted within a NMS, the commercial fishermen of Morro Bay have some concerns over the spoils removal. Currently, the spoils are taken offshore and dumped. The concern is the spoils may have to be taken farther out at an increased cost. An increased cost could jeopardize the regular maintenance of the harbor, something the commercial fishermen have fought for over 34 years after veteran Al French lost his life on a routine return to Morro Bay.

Water quality is a huge part of the Monterey Bay NMS and since the NMS’s implementation an entire industry of water quality control testing and reporting has sprung up for the area growers. Every year the costs associated with the testing and reporting of wells goes up and becomes more cumbersome for our local growers.

As for climate change claims, many commenters opine that establishing the CHNMS will help in addressing the impacts of climate change. Without regard to the veracity of that statement, merely establishing a NMS will not, in any way, address the underlying causes of climate change nor mitigate against its impacts.

Commercial fishermen of the Central Coast also have a rich history with the local waters and that should not be ignored. There is strong pride in being able to provide a healthy food source from our local waters to the public who might not otherwise have access. Commercial fishermen strive to protect the ocean that sustains their livelihoods, but feel that another layer of protection is just not needed where there are already a wide variety of protected areas off of the Central Coast in addition to Federal and State management measures protecting the fisheries.

*Lori French
Morro Bay*

Letters To The Editor

Watch for M.B. Government Changes



I’m writing to inform you about some recent developments in Morro Bay City government. I thought the community might want to know what is taking place.

The City is in the process of updating the local zoning codes. A significant new change includes allowing accessory structures up to 120 square ft. and less than 8 ft. in height to be built without any consideration of setbacks at lateral and front lot lines and without any input from neighbors. Currently this is not allowed.

Additionally, the City has stopped publishing electronic correspondence from citizens to the rest of the community as it has in the past. This has the effect of suppressing and limiting community input and involvement in the decisions that are being made by the council and advisory boards. They say they are doing this out of an abundance of caution to be in compliance with the Brown Act but it seems that the logic is missing in the policy.

*Ryan Garcia
Morro Bay*

Give Coastal Access Back

As a lifelong Los Osian, I am dismayed to see that access to a beloved coastal access location, the Pecho Road Bayside Land and Public Easement Trail, has been blocked by the new owners who recently purchased that parcel. That land is not able to be developed because it is in a tidal flood zone.

I understand that people should be able to do as they please on their own property, but this is an epic trail that hugs the back bay, and not only hosts us humans who love and take very good care of it, it is also a major artery for the greatly varied species of wildlife whom we are lucky enough to share it with. Creating new and different access to the back bay in order to circumvent its blocked access would create unnecessary harm to the established landscape and its wildlife inhabitants.

I implore the new owners to please find a way to maintain the trail for this community so that we may continue to enjoy a truly magical space. Thank you,

*Linda Martin
Los Osos*

Offshore Energy Questions Need Answers

How much energy would be produced by the offshore wind energy plant proposed for the Central Coast? And how can we put that into terms the average resident can understand?

Several recent news reports have said the installation would produce about 3-gigawatts of energy. Period. Full stop.

Is that 3-gigawatts per hour, per day, per year . . . or from now until the end of time? And how great a contribution would that be to our total energy supply?

During The Tribune’s recent panel discussion on wind energy (as reported in The Tribune’s Nov. 27 issue), the question was asked: “We hear that this project will produce nearly 3-gigawatts of electricity. What does that mean for our electricity grid and powering our homes?”

California Energy Commissioner Karen Douglas responded, “Three-gigawatts is a large amount of electricity.”

Well, that really answers the question, now, doesn’t it? According to the state Energy Commission, San Luis Obispo County uses more than 1700-gigawatts of electricity per year. If this offshore plant is only going to produce 3- gigawatts per year, is it really worth the trouble?

It’s time for us to demand some clear, detailed, specific answers.

*Jayne Scott
Morro Bay*

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

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Community

Want to Make the Best Meal Ever?



It's pronounced (/su:'vi:d/; French for 'under vacuum'). Some of the finest restaurants cook their steaks this way. It is also known as low temperature long time (LTLT) cooking. I have used this technique with big fat steaks, baby back ribs and more. Everyone is better then the one before.

Sous vide cooking is characterized by low-temperature cooking, a longer cook time, a container (such as a plastic bag) that separates the food from its heating environment, and a pressurized enclosure using full or partial vacuum.

Start off with the cut of meat of your choice, and season it to your liking. The best way is to use a Seal-a-Meal, but you can get away with a large Ziplock bag, just make sure the meat stays under water and that water does not get in the bag. You can clip the opening to the edge of the container.

The temperature is much lower than normally used for cooking — typically around 130 to 140 °F for red meat, 150 to 160 °F for poultry, and higher for vegetables. The intent is to heat the item evenly ensuring that the inside is properly cooked without overcooking the outside as well as to retain moisture.

Sealing the food in sturdy plastic bags retains juices and aroma that otherwise would be lost in the process. Placing the packaged food in a water bath, with the temperature set at the desired final cooking temperature of the food,

prevents overcooking, because it cannot get hotter than the bath it is in, as in bain-marie. By contrast, with conventional high-heat cooking, such as oven roasting or grilling, the food is exposed to heat levels that are much higher than the desired internal cooking temperature, and it must be removed from the heat prior to reaching the desired temperature. If the food is removed too late, it becomes overcooked, and if it is removed too early, it is undercooked. You can find the desired temperature and time on the Internet.

Once the food has been cooked perfectly, then comes the fun part. Most of us have been told to sear the meat first to seal in the juices; in this case, you sear the food last, since it retains all the juices when cooking. Pull the meat out of the bag and dry off any moisture from cooking it. Once done, use a grill, an iron skillet very hot or, my favorite, a torch. Find a safe place to torch that bad boy to your liking.

There are several types of sous vide devices to choose from, starting under \$100. New York steaks were from Morro Bay Butcher where they cut them to my liking.

Want to dazzle and entertain your guest this holiday, try to sous vide your next main course, you will not be sorry. Perhaps practice making it for a friend before making the holiday meal for the entire family.

Happy holidays.

Pirates Win CIF, Regional Championships



Morro Bay High's Varsity Football Team made history this year, shaking off a so-so regular season where they finished third in the Ocean League; but catching fire in the CIF Play-offs and battling their way to a Central Section Div. VI CIF Championship. It was just the second CIF Championship ever won by the school's football program, the other being the 1995 Team. The Pirates followed that up with a hard-fought 35-27 win over Loara High of Anaheim at home before a packed crowd to take the Div. 7AA Regional Championship and setting up the school's first-ever chance at a State Champion-

ship against Falls River High of McArthur, Calif., which is up in the Mt. Shasta Area. The post-season 4-game win streak allowed third-year head coach, Jake Goosen-Brown, the privilege of adding some impressive hardware to the school's trophy case. But Falls River proved too tough for the Pirates, as the Bulldogs prevailed in the State Championship Game 43-13 ending the magical run for Morro Bay with an 8-7 overall record. The Pirates are shown here after the win over Loara High and capture of the CIF Div. 7AA Regional Title.

Tourism Board Seeks New Member

Visit Morro Bay, the destination marketing organization for Morro Bay, California, is seeking applicants to join their board of directors, beginning in January 2022. The board member seat is dedicated to the vacation rental industry as identified in the bylaws of Visit Morro Bay and will serve a two-year term from January 2022 to June 2024. "This is an exciting opportunity to weigh in on the tourism strategy for Morro Bay and work closely with community members who offer unique voices from the local tourism industry as a whole," explained Michael Wambolt, executive director of Visit Morro Bay. "We value input from a broad sector of local businesses and lodging partners to drive a cohesive, thoughtful marketing plan for the region."



Applications are accepted through January 7, 2022. The current Visit Morro Bay Board of Directors will make a decision during the January board meeting. Currently, the board has seven seats, including hoteliers, city representative, business member, and a vacation rental representative. Those interested in applying for the position are encouraged to visit <https://www.morrobay.org/board-of-directors/>.

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Obituaries

Arnie Setran



June 2021

Arnie Setran, long-time resident artist of Los Osos, passed away on June 11, 2021, at the age of 85.

Arnie and his brother Bob, the only children of Arnold T. Setran and Myrtle Carr, were born and raised in South Los Angeles. The Setran brothers grew-up poor, with their father always between jobs while the family resided in public housing. Both brothers exhibited exceptional athletic prowess, achieving all-conference status throughout their high school playing years. Following a stint in the U.S. Army (1954-56), where he was a U.S. Armed Forces divisional boxing middleweight champion, Arnie played semi-pro football for the Orange County Rhinos (1958-63).

Arnie worked as a civil servant for the Dept. of Navy at the Long Beach Naval Shipyard from 1959-79. Arnie gained a bachelors of arts degree (1977) from Long Beach State in business administration. Following divorce and retirement in 1979, Arnie spent the next decade traveling around the world while making Los Osos his home base.

Arnie always travelled solo and gravitated toward remote places. During the 1980s he visited six continents including many exotic locations such as New Guinea, Siberia, and Easter Island. He created beautiful silk-screens from his travel and birding photography. Over the years Arnie's art work gained notoriety within the local community, along with his generosity, as he mostly gave his art away.

Arnie always leaned on his experiences as a youth in "The Projects" and his stint in the Army when it came to dealing with adversity and providing advice. Arnie was very easy-going and was a master at turning any hardship or negative situation into a humor-laden perspective, making him one of the funniest, most enjoyable persons to be around. Arnie enriched all that knew him and he is deeply missed, especially by his children, their spouses, and his grandchildren.

Jodie Setran



June 2021

Long-time and intermittent resident of Los Osos, Jodie L. Setran passed away on June 15, 2021, at the age of 63 years. Jodie leaves behind her brothers, Dominic, Aaron and Laine, their children and spouses, and her soulmate Chris Ghostdog, whom she loved very much.

Jodie was born and raised in Southern California, attending Rosary Catholic High School in Fullerton, graduating in 1976. Following high school Jodie primarily worked outdoor jobs for the likes of the National Park Service, California State Parks, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Alaska), and the US Forest Service on a hot-shot crew fighting fire. Jodie loved the outdoors, and spent many a summer backpacking in the Sierras with her friends and family.

Jodie was a complicated person, but there was a fun, playful,

and loving side to her, which could often predominate her personality. For those that knew her well, she was always "upbeat" and loved to laugh. She was very proud of her Native American heritage (Wiyot Tribe of Northern California), loved her nieces and nephews, and adored her animals, Jack and Buddy.

Jodie claimed to be a spiritual medium and psychic and believed strongly in her abilities and encounters with matters not easily explained. Those that knew Jodie cannot readily dismiss her unique talents, as throughout her life she experienced numerous strange encounters and events, which often defied logical explanation.

Ever since Jodie was a little girl, the most important person in her life was her father, Arnie Setran. She loved her father more than anything in her life, and the day Arnie passed away Jodie went into the hospital for a blood clot, passing three days later. The timing of Jodie's passing is, for lack of a better word, apropos; Jodie is with her dad.

Melody DeMeritt



1951 – 2021

Melody Anne DeMeritt spent half of her 70 years on a hill in Morro Bay in a 100-year-old house. You may recognize her name from the four years she spent on the Morro Bay City Council, the three decades she spent teaching English at CalPoly, or the 50 years she spent actively working for the environment. It wasn't just environmental lip-service and meetings, but literal on the ground picking up trash for Beach/Creek Clean Up Days, and along Highway One and the Sandspit for Morro Bay Beautiful.

Reflecting on her untimely and impending demise, Melody wrote, "Obits make a big deal out of a person's occupation.... when I look back at my life those are not the memories that call to me. It's the adventures I have had around the world."

Her top three adventures were climbing up to Dixie Pass in SE Alaska with a 50-pound pack through grizzly territory, touring Croatia and Bosnia solo, and riding 3 hours in a beat-up Mercedes-Benz taxi across Morocco.

Her spunkiness and sharp intellect are sorely missed, as well as her advocacy for limiting human damage to Mother Earth. Thank you, Melody.

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