

Celebrations: MB Chamber Gala to Honor Top Citizen, Business, Treasure, & Non-Profit

By Judy Salamacha

It's the party of the year! Morro-Gras Down on the Bay-Lou is happening on Friday, March 4 from 5:30 p.m. – 9 p.m.

"We are excited to finally celebrate with all of you," said Erica Crawford, CEO of the Morro Bay Chamber of Commerce. "Join us as we transform the Community Center into a venue worthy of Bourbon Street. We'll greet you with colorful beads and entertain you with live music from Dante Marsh and fire dancing by Ariana Filice. Our talented chefs at local eateries are preparing a New Orleans-style menu. Isn't it time to finally celebrate?"

This is also the evening they honor this year's award winners: Chief Jody Cox, Citizen of the Year; Coalesce Book Store, Business of the Year; Carole Truesdale, Living Treasure; and Nonprofit of the Year Morro Bay Lions Club. And we will be officially introduced to the 2022 Chamber Board of Directors.

But before we let the good times roll let me remind you Estero Bay News featured Coalesce Book Store and the Morro Bay Lions Club in the January 13 issue (www.esterobaynews.com) and it is now my honor to introduce you to Chief Jody Cox and Carole Truesdale.

Morro Bay Police Chief Jody Cox, Citizen of the Year

When Chief Cox was sworn in to protect and serve Morro Bay, he was already involved in the Morro Bay community. Jody Cox lives, works, plays, and contributes his off-duty hours giving back to several community organizations.

He serves on the executive board and operations committee that produces the Cruisin' Morro Bay Car Show scheduled for May 5-8, 2022. He volunteers annually for Project Surf Camp and Operation Surf and is an active member of the Rotary Club of Morro Bay. He's a regular at meetings and works the grill with his grandson, Chase, at Carla's Kitchen for Rotary's fundraising tri-tip barbecues. Chief Cox is typically visible at community events, and, while woodworking is a hobby, his unique creations have supported several Morro Bay fundraising events.

I learned firsthand that Chief Cox doesn't just sit back and accept invitations to be involved in community events — he reaches out to offer his help. Bonnie Jones and I co-chaired the inaugural SLO County Anti-Human Trafficking Summit at the Community Center in Morro Bay. During Chief Cox's first week on the job, he called us to offer his service to help make the sold-out event a success.

Cayucos School Superintendent to Retire

By Neil Farrell

Cayucos Elementary School District will need a new leader after the Superintendent announced his retirement effective the end of February.

It's been a rocky start to the new year for Scott Smith, who has been Superintendent for both the Cayucos Elementary School District and the Coast Union School District in Cambria for several years.

The unique shared-leader situation has long been in effect for the two tiny districts.

Cayucos is a 1-school district that goes from kindergarten through 8th grade. Cayucos 8th graders can then go to Morro Bay High or Coast Union H.S. in Cambria, a situation which Smith was able to negotiate a few years ago in an solution that had eluded district officials for years.

Under the agreement with Coast Unified School District, when a student chooses to go to MBHS, half of the property taxes his or her parents pay into the schools follows them, with Coast Union getting to keep the other half.

Smith said in a news report that he would retire from Cayucos District at the end of February. It is unclear if he intends to continue on as the Coast Union superintendent.

Estero Bay News contacted Smith via email to try and sort out what was a confusing news report but he declined to answer any questions.

"It has been an honor and a privilege to serve the students of Cayucos Elementary for the past five years," reads a letter Smith sent to parents, staff and board members. "I want to thank the trustees for their recent vote of confidence and pay increase that they have provided for me. Despite their best efforts to get me to delay my retirement a little longer, I intend to submit my retirement notice

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Morro Bay Police Chief Jody Cox is the Morro Bay Chamber of Commerce Citizen of the Year. Photo by Dean Sullivan

His belief in community involvement for his officers is more than a lip service. As America's law enforcement departments have experienced intense suspect and attack, Chief Cox's advocacy for a strong community-policing program was already in place. Not only has he continued meet-ups with Morro Bay residents at National Night Out, and Caroling Cops during the holidays, but he expanded the "Coffee with Cops" program at various local coffee

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Re-Growth at Local Libraries

By Theresa-Marie Wilson



Library Associate Diana Hammerlund stands in front of the seed library in Los Osos. Photo by Theresa-Marie Wilson

Spring is right around the corner, and local libraries are busy updating their inventories with more than books. Both the Morro Bay and Los Osos branches of the County of San Luis Obispo Library System maintain stocks of seeds that the public can "check out" to plant in their gardens, flowerpots, and yards.

The process works pretty much the same as checking out your favorite book, or DVD; visit the library to select seeds that you would like to plant, and take some home for free.

"The seed library serves the gardening novice, as well as the gardening veteran," said Kat Holland, library associate in Morro Bay. "It is a great resource for family activities and learning. It provides a way for us to be active and connect with the land, can motivate and inspire our sense of advocacy and stewardship, and help enhance our feelings of well being."

Local Libraries Continued on page 18

Los Osos Dog Park Progress

By Theresa-Marie Wilson



The Los Osos Dog Park concept plan as of Jan. 17, 2022 completed with donated time by the Wallace Group and the Los Osos Community Services District Parks & recreation Committee.

The cost of management and maintenance is one of the biggest issues.

"We can talk concept and get this to a point of even construction, but if we don't have a means to manage and maintain it won't move forward," CSD General Manager Ron Munds said. The example everywhere else, especially in this county, is a nonprofit that would agree to take it on for maintenance or management and maintenance. We have

Park Progress Continued on page 19



**Art
for All
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**Police
Blotter
Page 8**



**Monarch
Moon
Page 11**



Election Season Opens; Council Seat Up for Grabs

By Neil Farrell



Election season has officially started in Morro Bay with the nomination period now open to file for one city council seat that will be contested in the June Primary Election.

The City Clerk's Office said nominations for the seat currently held by Councilwoman Jen Ford opened Monday, Feb. 14 and will close at 5 p.m. Friday, March 11. Nomination papers and other relevant paperwork are available through the City Clerk's Office at City Hall, and potential candidates must make an appointment. Call 805-772-6568 or email to: cityclerk@morrobayca.gov. The Primary Election is set for Tuesday, June 7.

And if Ford decides not to seek election to the seat she was appointed to, then the filing deadline will be extended to March 16. Whoever wins the election will serve out the remainder of the term, facing voters again in the November 2024 General Election.

The late Councilman Red Davis had won re-election in November 2020 and was sworn in that December. But Davis died in July 2021 and Ford was appointed to fill his seat.

Under the City Municipal Code, anyone appointed to a council seat must stand election within a certain number of days, however, the City Council set the June Primary to hold that election instead of holding a special election.

Ordinarily, Morro Bay wouldn't have anything on a primary election ballot, but this year could have two items — the council seat for sure and potentially a citizen's initiative that would ban camping on The Embarcadero and at Morro Rock.

The City Council on Feb. 8, unanimously directed the staff "to return with a report of the effect of the proposed initiative at the March 8 Council Meeting," City Clerk Dana Swanson told Estero Bay News. "At that time, the Council can either adopt the ordinance as presented or submit the ordinance to the voters as a proposed measure at the June Special Election or November General Election."

So whether or not that initiative appears in June or November or is accepted into law by the council and not submitted to voters remains to be decided.

Swanson is recommending anyone who is thinking of running for City Council should carefully review the "Candidate Handbook," see: www.morro-bay.ca.us/Document-Center/View/14534/2022-Candidate-Handbook-?bidId=.

Candidates for office in the City of Morro Bay must be citizens of the United States and at least 18-years old on Election Day. Candidates must also be registered voters of the City and reside within the City limits of the City of Morro Bay "at the time nomination papers are issued," according to the muni codes.

And to be eligible to vote at the June Primary Election, you must be registered to vote by filling out an online application no later than Monday, May 23 or your can conditionally register — for those who turn 18 just before the election — and vote at the County Clerk Recorder's Office in the County Government Center in Downtown San Luis Obispo after the 15-day voter registration deadline.

For more information regarding voter registration or to obtain a vote-by-mail ballot, see: <https://registertovote.ca.gov>.

To get the City's election information sheet, see: www.morrobayca.gov/735/Election-Information.

City Hires New Engineer



Eric Riddiough is the new Morro Bay City Engineer.

Morro Bay has a new City Engineer, one that deep roots in the Central Coast and who actually lives in Morro Bay.

Public Works Director, Gregory Kwolek, selected Eric Riddiough to be the City's new City Engineer, replacing Rob Livick, who is retiring.

Riddiough was selected out of six people who applied for the job that was posted last year. Kwolek said he put everyone through a "comprehensive interview process that included interviews with community members, public works, and other city staff." Riddiough starts work with the City on Monday, March 7.

"Eric is a public works rising star on the Central Coast," Kwolek said, "and I'm excited for him to join our team. One of our City Council's main priorities is implementation of our capital projects, and Eric's experience as a leader and a project manager make him well poised to help the City improve and maintain our critical infrastructure, such as our water and sewer systems, roads, parks, harbor, and major facilities.

"Eric's openness and positivity matches the Department's way of doing business. I am thrilled for Eric to come on board to develop a vision for City infrastructure in collaboration with the City Council, Public Works Advisory Board, and the Morro Bay community."

Riddiough has over 15-years of experience as a registered Civil Engineer in different capacities, Kwolek said, including managing capital and construction projects, and he has equal experience in a supervisory role in managing a business area in the construction and materials processing industry.

Riddiough attended Cal Poly for his in Bachelor's Degree in Civil Engineering and UC Berkeley for a Master's in Geotechnical Engineering.

"I am delighted and honored to have the opportunity to be the next City Engineer for the City of Morro Bay," Riddiough said. "I grew up on the Central Coast and moved back to the area in 2012. My family and I live in Morro Bay, and I am excited to work and contribute in the community that I live. As a resident, I know the City faces many important challenges as it nears the completion phase of the Water Reclamation Facility project and transitions its focus to the upkeep of its assets and infrastructure. I'm looking forward to helping to shepherd this transition."

Kwolek said Riddiough will oversee the Public Works Department's Engineering Division, which has two other full-time employees and manages traffic issues, encroachment permits, development reviews, and over a dozen active capital projects.

Capital projects include, water and sewer projects, pavement management, sidewalk repairs, way finding signage, intersection improvements at the Route 1/Route 41 intersection, electric vehicle charging stations, and others.

He will also be finalizing an update to the City's engineering standards as well as development of long-term capital planning, Kwolek added.

Diablo Panel Needs Members

San Luis Obispo County residents that want to be involved in the future of Diablo Canyon can apply for a seat on Pacific Gas & Electric's, Decommissioning Engagement Panel, which is acting as liaison between the public and the company.

Applications for the Panel are being accepted now through March 8.

The 11-member Panel is a local, non-regulatory stakeholder group that has been taking community input since 2018 on the decommissioning planning.

The Panel has up to four vacancies to fill and anyone interested in participating on the Panel can get information on how to apply online at: diablocanyonpanel.org or pge.com/engagementpanel.

PG&E representatives and departing Panel members not seeking being reappointment will select candidates.

The Panel will continue to hold public meetings for opportunities to learn about the technical aspects of the decommissioning process and take public input.

These forums will also discuss the 10,000-acre plant property's potential future use of the pristine coastal lands that surround Diablo Canyon and potential repurposing of the facilities.

Public meetings occur — virtual during COVID-19 — on a quarterly basis and are open to the public.

Correction

We had the date wrong for the Rotary Toptracer Golf Tournament. The event takes place Feb 26 at Dairy Creek. Sign-ups are at www.morrobayrotary.org.

We ran a painting last issue on page nine and did not have the artist's name. The beautiful work was done by Carol Paulsen.

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 Briefs
By Theresa-Marie Wilson

Addis Takes First at CDP
Pre-Endorsement

Morro Bay City Councilmember Dawn Addis secured 69.15% of the vote at the California Democratic Party's Pre-Endorsement Conference, well over the 50% threshold required to proceed to a vote at convention. At the California Democratic Convention, 60% of the vote of district delegates is required to secure the endorsement recommendation for California Assembly for the 35th District. Addis' nearest competitor, Jon Wizard, secured 24.47% of the vote.

"We are headed to convention!" Addis said in a statement. "I am so grateful to the Democratic Party, to the delegates, and to all our volunteers who made this victory possible. We earned 69.15% of the vote, and are going to work even harder at convention to ensure we reach the 60% threshold. I'm running for Assembly to deliver change for our state and results for the Central Coast."

The Addis campaign also recently announced the endorsements of Senator Limón and Assemblymember Bennett, who join a growing list of elected officials, local leaders, and organizations supporting Addis' campaign. The Addis campaign also received endorsements from IBEW Local 639, Congressman Salud Carbajal, former Congressman Sam Farr, and all three Democratic Central Committee Chairs in AD-30.

SLO Start to Orcutt Road
Project

For the third time, Phase 3 of the Orcutt/Tank Farm Roundabout project has changed. Instead of the expected Feb. 22 start date, it is now Mar. 7, due to "unforeseen scheduling delays."

A portion of Orcutt Road north of Tank Farm Road intersection will close to through traffic for about two and half months. Work takes place from 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday. Some night work may occur on an as-needed basis from 8 p.m. from 5 a.m. Monday through Friday. This segment of Orcutt Road will be closed 24 hours a day, 7 days a week through the anticipated construction duration.

Mission County Clean
Up Week

Mission Country Disposal will hold Clean-Up Week the week of February 28-March 4.

Clean-Up Week is a community service provided free to single-family residential garbage customers. Place your Clean-Up Week garbage on the curb no later than 6 a.m. on your regular garbage collection day. Remember to keep access to your containers because they still run automated trucks. Customers can set out up to six bags, 32 gallon capacity size, each not to exceed 75 pounds and 4 feet in length.

Readers with metal, electrical or bulky items, call the office at 805-543-0875 to schedule pick up. Special pricing for these items are \$13.63 each, limit of two like items and is valid only during Clean-Up Week. You must call no later than Friday, February 25 to schedule the pickup of the items. They will not be picked up unless you call.

LOCAC Community
Town Hall

Mark your calendars. The Los Osos Community Advisory Council will participate with local organizations for a fun, informational, family event on May 1 from 2-5 p.m. at the Red Barn.

Information covered:

- Curious about what LOCAC does why it matters?
- Want to know what the Basin Management Committee is up to regarding our water?
- Do you know the services Los Osos Cares provides?
- Want to learn about a new sidewalk being planned in Baywood?
- Want your children to bike safely to and from school?
- Tell them what you believe should be prioritized in terms of alternative transportation, developments, parks, trees and more.

LOCAC elections are also in May. They are an 11 member volunteer group that advises the San Luis Obispo County Board of Supervisors, the County Planning Commission, and County staff. If you are concerned about the future of Los Osos and have thoughts on land

use, transportation, bike lanes, school safety, developments and more, then consider running.

LOCAC has two elected representatives from each of four residential districts within Los Osos. The term of office is four years. Only people that live within the residential district may vote for the candidates from that district.

Each LOCAC member is expected to be a member of at least one committee in addition to participating in the monthly general meeting. A LOCAC member who is not an officer can expect to spend approximately 6-8 hours per month on LOCAC business.

For more information, send an email to trishbar-tel00@gmail.com.

California Cash Crops

More than 2 million farms in the United States, about 98% of which are operated by families, individuals, family partnerships, or family corporations, according to the American Farm Bureau Federation.

California's agricultural abundance includes more than 400 commodities supplying more than a third of the country's vegetables and two-thirds of the country's fruits and nuts.

California's top-10 valued produce crops are:

- Almonds — \$5.62 billion
- Grapes: \$4.5 billion
- Pistachios: \$2.9 billion
- Strawberries: \$2.0 billion
- Tomatoes: \$1.2 billion
- Walnuts: \$957.7 million
- Lettuce: \$930.5 million
- Oranges: \$858.1 million
- Tangerines: \$795.0 million
- Broccoli: \$782.1 million



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News

Police Arrest Suspected High School Burglar

Morro Bay police have cracked a case involving several incidents and thefts at Morro Bay High School that had been ongoing for months.

MBPD Cmdr. Amy Watkins said in a news release, “Beginning October 2021, an investigation was being conducted into several incidents where a male suspect was entering the campus of Morro Bay High School, after hours and committing crimes of burglary, criminal trespassing, vandalism, and theft.”

The department’s school resource officer and patrol officers worked the case and it all came to a head on Feb. 7.

Cmdr. Watkins said that at 6 a.m. Feb. 7, “a school employee located the suspect inside one of the classrooms on campus. The male suspect fled the scene. Morro Bay Police Officers and the School Resource Officer responded to the campus and were able to locate evidence leading to the identification of the suspect.”

A few hours later, at 10:30 a.m., police reportedly located their suspect nearby the high school and arrested him.

Royal Elijah Ebright, 21 of Morro Bay was booked into County Jail on suspicion of burglary, trespassing, vandalism, and theft.

In a potentially related matter gleaned from department media logs, on Feb. 11 police reportedly found video equipment belonging to Morro Bay High School in the 2000 block of Sunset Avenue. It was unclear if the two incidents are related.

Cmdr. Watkins asked anyone with information about this incident to call MBPD at 805-8772-6225 or SLO County Crime Stoppers at 805- 549-STOP.



Inaugural #CaliforniansForAll College Corps Program



Cal Poly was selected as one of 45 higher education institutions to implement the statewide #Californians-

ForAll College Corps program on its campus.

The #CaliforniansForAll College Corps is an initiative by Gov. Gavin Newsom that aims to provide 6,500 college students statewide with service-learning opportunities over the span of two academic years to tackle statewide challenges in climate action, K-12 education, and food insecurity. All told, the #CaliforniansForAll College Corps program is the largest state-level investment in a college service-based program in state history and includes state-funded opportunities for AB 540 eligible Dreamers.

The implementation of the program on Cal Poly’s campus will be a collaborative effort between student affairs and academic affairs.

“I am proud to see Cal Poly create new opportunities for students through this innovative statewide program,” said Keith Humphrey, Cal Poly’s vice president for student affairs.

Cal Poly will serve as the lead institution for the Coastal California Civic Leadership Consortium, which also consists of CSU Long Beach, Cuesta College, and Allan Hancock College. The consortium will receive an initial grant award of \$6 million to implement the program on their respective campuses and collectively offer 315 fellowship opportunities to students — including 165 at Cal Poly and 50 at each of the others. Pending a successful first year, the program will receive another \$4,725,000 to support another cohort of 315 fellows.

The consortium will focus its service-learning model on K-12 education, climate action, and food insecurity. Climate action efforts will include partnerships with regional organizations such as Ecology Action, Community Climate Solutions, SLO Climate Coalition, Monterey Bay Economic Partnership, Ecologistics, Community Environmental Council, and the CSU Council on Ocean Affairs, Science & Technology.

“We are excited to participate in this program, as it has the potential to drive real action in these three key areas, while providing financial support to students to support their educational goals and get engaged in meaningful work,” said Jason Mockford, Cal Poly’s director of leadership and service. “This program will provide more access to higher education for students who may not otherwise be able to attend, including our Dreamer students.”

The statewide effort also aims to address college student debt. To that end, participating students will receive \$10,000 (including monthly stipends and an educational award at the conclusion of service) that they can apply toward their college education, while providing them with valuable service-learning experiences and skills along the way.

“Cal Poly’s Initiative for Climate Leadership and Resilience has developed partnerships with a variety of educational institutions, nonprofit organizations and governmental entities,” said Dr. Erin P. J. Pearse, professor of mathematics and director of the Initiative for Climate Leadership and Resilience. “We are thrilled at the opportunity to engage students in working with these partners to tackle the biggest challenges of the next generation.”

For additional information about the #CaliforniansForAll College Corps program, go to californiavolunteers.ca.gov/californiansforall-college-corps.

Safe Parking Lot Scene of Deadly Fire

Tragedy struck the County’s safe parking space for the homeless set up on Kansas Avenue, when an early morning fire destroyed an RV and killed a woman living in the vehicle.

Cal Fire, which responded to the call, said the fire began about 6:30 a.m., Tuesday, Feb. 15. Cal Fire spokesman, Adan Orozco, told The Tribune that the 54-year-old woman, who had not been identified by the Coroner’s Office before Estero Bay News’ deadline, was badly burned and died along with several pet cats. A cause of the blaze has not been released.

“There are multiple people who reside on this lot and numerous people attempted to save her who said that she was their friend,” Orozco said. “They tried to break windows and get inside but it was just too hot. They did use several small fire extinguishers, but the fire was too great for those.”

According to County Administrative Officer, Wade Horton, there are typically 80-90 people staying at the site on any given night.

The safe parking lot on Kansas was put in last summer partly in response to a huge buildup of homeless camping in vehicles and tents on Palisades Avenue in Los Osos.

Public outcry was such that the County decided to provide a free and safe place where people living in their vehicles can park and not get hassled by the Sheriff’s Office, which responds to 9-1-1 calls and citizen complaints in Los Osos.

There are also safe parking spaces in San Luis Obispo at the Prado Road homeless center and the railroad depot.

Other residents of the Kansas lot told the Tribune that everyone was trying to put the fire out and they could hear the woman, who hails from Oceano, screaming but they were too late the fire was out of control.

Photos supplied by Cal Fire show the RV gutted by the fire. Witnesses interviewed by The Tribune said the RV wasn’t operational and as it was a cold night, she may have had candles lit to try and keep warm.

One local homeless activist, Becky Jorgeson, who founded Hope’s Village of SLO to try and get a tiny home village built, seemed incensed when she told The Tribune, “We’ve been asking for a tiny house village for 10 years. Do you think this tragedy could get us going in the right direction, instead of our local un-housed residents dying in fires in old rat trap vehicles?”

Jorgensen said they will host homeless advocate Charles Durrett to speak about possible housing solutions at 7 p.m. March 19 at Mountainbrook Church at 1775 Calle Joaquin in SLO. Durrett’s talk is titled, “A Solution to Homelessness in Your Town.”

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Gang Members Plead Guilty in 2019 Murder

A trio of admitted gang members has been found guilty in the April 2019 murder of an Arroyo Grande man who was riding his bike down the street when they shot him in the back.

SLO County D.A. Dan Dow announced Feb. 16 that the men had pled guilty after hearing the case laid out at a preliminary hearing before Judge Jacquelyn Duffy.

According to Dow's news release, Robert Joseph Garay, 30, his younger brother, Gabriel Luis Garay, 23, and Nathaniel Alexander Jara, 24, entered "guilty" pleas to various charges in the murder of Daniel Fuentes, 41 of Arroyo Grande and to sentencing enhancements for being admitted members of the Oceano 13 criminal street gang.

The three men were driving in a car on April 3, 2019 with Jara behind the wheel, when they came upon Fuentes riding a bicycle. "All three exited the vehicle and Robert Garay fired a handgun at Mr. Fuentes," D.A. Dow said, "striking him twice in the back resulting in his death." All three had criminal histories.

Robert Garay pled guilty to second-degree murder and active participation in a criminal street gang. He also admitted to a prior conviction for assault with a deadly weapon in 2010, which the D.A. pointed out counts as a strike under California's "Three Strikes" law. "As a result of his plea, it is anticipated Robert Garay will be sentenced to 30-years to life in state prison."

Little brother Garay pled guilty to voluntary manslaughter and to active participation in a criminal street gang. He too admitted a past crime — an "assault by means likely to cause great bodily injury" in 2015, which is also a strike against him.



Robert Joseph Garay



Gabriel Luis Garay



Nathaniel Alexander Jara

Dow said Gabriel Garay would likely be sentenced to 13-years and 4-months in state prison.

Lara pled guilty to voluntary manslaughter and active participation in a street gang and he also had to admit to a 2018 conviction for "possession for sale of a controlled substance for the benefit of a criminal street gang," which also counts as a strike. Jara is expected to get 13-years and 4-months in state prison.

All three men remain in County Jail awaiting official sentencing set for April 20, at 8:30 a.m. in Superior Court. The County Sheriff's Office investigated the case along with the D.A. Bureau of Investigation. Deputy D.A. Lindsey Bittner prosecuted the case.

Teen Arrested in Nipomo Shooting Incident

Sheriff's deputies arrested a Guadalupe man and a Nipomo teenager after a domestic disturbance involving the teen's girlfriend's father that saw numerous shots fired apparently as some kind of warning, as no injuries were reported.

According to a Sheriff's Department news release, at 9 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 9 deputies responded to a residence in the 1000 block of Summer Ln., in Nipomo for a report of shots fired.

"Witnesses reported a truck speeding off after the shots were fired," Sheriff's spokesman Tony Cipolla said in the release. "Deputies and detectives began an investigation into the incident and began searching for the vehicle."

The investigation reportedly revealed that a 14-year-old girl had gotten into an argument with her father and her 16-year-old boyfriend arrived on scene with another man in a pickup truck. The girl reportedly willingly got into the truck.

"The 16-year-old male then got into an argument with the father," Cipolla said, "and fired one round from the fire-arm into the ground in front of the father. As the three left in the truck, the two males fired approximately 8-10 rounds into the air. No one was injured."

Later, at 2 a.m. Feb. 10, the truck was spotted near Madonna Road and Spooner Drive in San Luis Obispo, "with all three occupants inside," Cipolla said. "All three were detained without incident."

He said the adult male, identified as Brandon Gonzalez, 23 of Guadalupe, was arrested on suspicion of assault with a deadly weapon and booked into County Jail. The teenage boyfriend, whose name was not released, was also charged with suspicion of assault with a deadly weapon and booked into the County Juvenile Services Center (JSC). The teenage girl was turned over to Child Protective Services.



Brandon Gonzales

SLO Welcomes First Diversity, Equity, Inclusion Manager

The City of San Luis Obispo announced the appointment of Beya Makekau as its first diversity, equity and inclusion manager.

Makekau's first day was February 17.

"We are committed to making San Luis Obispo a welcoming, inclusive, and safe community for everyone and Beya has already proven herself as a local leader in those efforts," said City Manager Derek Johnson. "We are so excited to bring Beya on board to strengthen relationships and help us embed DEI in all of our practices, policies, and processes and work towards our goal of all people deepening their sense of belonging in San Luis Obispo."

Makekau is currently Cal Poly's Director of Student Diversity and Belonging, and in her new role will establish and manage the City's Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI). She will lead and collaborate with senior City leadership to create, coordinate, and manage all DEI programs, including learning content, staff development, policy and practice improvement, and community engagement efforts.

Last year, the City hired Makekau as a consultant to support San Luis Obispo's DEI Task Force, which developed recommendations that the City adopted. The first recommendation was that the City adopt diversity, equity and inclusion as a major goal, which Council did for FY 2021-23. The second recommendation was for the City to establish an office dedicated to DEI and the forward-facing commitment to structural and lasting change.

"I am honored to serve in this inaugural role, and I am eager to use my expertise in partnership with City leaders and our community to contribute to building a San Luis Obispo rooted in equity, inclusion, and belonging. A community empowered by its commitment to its fellow person". Makekau said. As a queer Latina I deeply believe in the beauty of diversity, the necessity for equity, and the power of inclusion. Let's get to work!"

The City set out to hire its first ever DEI Manager in November 2021. Unfortunately, that recruitment effort was unsuccessful. Rather than restart the process, the City offered the position to Makekau, a regarded champion of DEI in our community.

Makekau holds a bachelor's degree in ethnic studies/English/Spanish from the University of Oregon, a master's degree in ethnic studies from San Francisco State University, and is completing her Doctorate of Education from Cal State University, Fresno.



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Community

Free Little Art Gallery in Morro Bay

By Neil Farrell



Katherine Heistand has created a 'Free Little Art Gallery' in the front yard of her home at 524 Monterey Ave., Morro Bay. Photo by Neil Farrell

For years people everywhere have been building and stocking Little Free Libraries, offering to share books with whomever wants to borrow or leave one. Now a Morro Bay woman has taken this idea of sharing in a new direction, setting up a "Free Little Art Gallery" in her front yard at 524 Monterey Ave. Katherine Heistand said she got inspiration from Stacy Milrany of Seattle, who created a Free Little Art Gallery (FLAG) in her town and posted about it online. "It's the whole concept of sharing," Heistand said, "and modeled after the Free Little Libraries." She added that Milrany "created the FLAG at the height of the pandemic to share art and spread joy." She added that the concept was in Canada before coming to the U.S. where it has since spread throughout the nation. She likes the concept because of its access for all and inclusivity of sharing, a concept that is really appealing to her. She built the little gallery herself, she said with a bit of pride, and painted it to match her little house on Monterey Avenue. She said the idea is that people can leave a piece of art or take one, but they need to leave the small figurines, easels and other furnishings. "That preserves the ambiance," she said. She put her FLAG up just after the first of the year and has gotten a good response, as she's shared the FLAG on Instagram. A designer and editor for an educational publisher, Heistand describes herself as a hobby artist. "I get to be creative in my days at work," she said. So far she's had people leave oil paintings, acrylics, watercolors, sketches and photographs. She grew up in Cambria and has been in Morro Bay for

11 years, she said. She built the FLAG herself. "It was my first attempt at using a power saw," she laughed. While she designed and built her FLAG herself, she said you can go online and find kits for sale. "I wanted mine to be unique," she said, painting it the same light green with white trim as her little cottage. "We are such an artistic community," she said. "I wanted to provide a platform to start doing it here. This is such a wonderful community, they've been so welcoming to me." Thanks to the Internet, she's gotten art pieces sent to her from South Dakota, New York, Michigan, and it's only the beginning, as she's only had the thing for about six weeks. The art gallery has a couple of signs describing what it is and how it works and she may have to add something, as when she was interviewed for this piece, it was windy, which played havoc with the little art pieces, blowing them about when a reporter opened the glass case. She also asks that artists sign their work so she can give them credit when she posts photos on Instagram (see: @flagmb).

Takin' Care of BUSINESS

By Theresa-Marie Wilson

PG&E Achieves Perfect Score

Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) has earned a spot in the "Best Places to Work for LGBTQ+ Equality 2022" as measured by the Human Rights Campaign Foundation's 2022 Corporate Equality Index, the nation's foremost benchmarking survey and report measuring corporate policies and practices related to LGBTQ+ workplace equality. "We're very proud to have achieved a perfect score for 18 consecutive years on the Corporate Equality Index. A diverse, inclusive and equitable environment is critical to achieving our purpose of delivering for our hometowns, serving the planet and leading with love," said Jamie Martin, PG&E Vice President and Executive Co-Sponsor of PG&E's PrideNetwork Employee Resource Group. "Our PrideNetwork Employee Resource Group is one of the oldest such groups in the nation, and our community of LGBTQ+ coworkers and allies are dedicated to the continued advancement of LGBTQ+ rights. We won't stop working to continuously grow and improve," said Andy Williams, also a PG&E Vice President and PrideNetwork Executive Co-Sponsor. For the 18th consecutive year, PG&E received a perfect score on the CEI, which rates companies on detailed criteria falling under four central pillars: • Non-discrimination policies across business entities; • Equitable benefits for LGBTQ+ workers and their

families; • Supporting an inclusive culture; and • Corporate social responsibility. PG&E has been one of the leading corporate voices in the LGBTQ+ community for many years. Examples of the company's support include: • Being the first corporate sponsor and participant in the San Francisco Pride Parade (1986); • Having one of the oldest LGBTQ+ employee resource groups (PrideNetwork) in the nation; • Being the first utility to actively recruit LGBTQ+-owned enterprises in its supplier diversity program; • Creating internal and external awareness about LGBTQ+ rights and issues; and • Being the first major company in California to support the campaign against Proposition 8 in 2008, the ballot measure banning same-sex marriage. "We're proud the Corporate Equality Index has paved the way for countless LGBTQ+ workers in America and abroad. But there's still more to do, which is why we're raising the bar yet again to create more equitable workplaces and a better tomorrow for LGBTQ+ workers everywhere," said Jay Brown, senior vice president of programs, research and training for the Human Rights Campaign Foundation.

Generous Grant to French Meidical

French Hospital Medical Center (FHMC) received a \$500,000 gift for the Beyond Health campaign from John Couch, a former Apple executive and author. This gift will support the hospital's current \$150 million expansion project for "Your New French Hospital," which includes the addition of a new Patient Care Tower featuring single patient rooms. Couch became interested in supporting FHMC after learning about the impact "Your New French Hospital" will have on health care on the Central Coast and the increased focus on including holistic healing spaces in the design of the expansion, hospital officials said. Healing spaces are being incorporated throughout the new campus, aimed at supporting the emotional, mental and spiritual needs of patients and families. This includes a meditation room and a serenity garden located adjacent to the new main lobby (in the new tower) for ease of access by patients, visitors and staff. In recognition of his gift, John Couch's generosity will be recognized with the naming of the Mary Lou Couch Mediation Room and Serenity Garden, in memory of his late mother who passed away in 2021. "I am honored to support French Hospital and its vision for the future," said Couch. "And I am truly touched to name this important healing space in recognition of my mother. She was a deeply spiritual woman and to honor her in this way is very meaningful to our family." Couch, one of UC Berkeley's first computer science

Takin' Care of Business Continued on page 8

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- Trucks
- RV's
- Motorcycles
- Trailers

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Police Blotter



• **Feb. 13:** Police responded at 10:14 a.m. to Morro Dunes RV Park in the 1700 block of Embarcadero where they said several RVs had been burglarized on numerous occasions, apparently by the nefarious pixies living in the forest. Police returned at 11 p.m. for a report of a trespasser at the RV park by the beach but the interloper and, no doubt, pilfering nodcock had gone.

• **Feb. 13:** Someone in the 500 block of Embarcadero said his or her car got stolen, as apparently the tourist tax is levied once again.

• **Feb. 13:** Someone in the 2200 block of Emerald Cir. found something somewhere and gave it to some cop who'll do something with it, but if someone doesn't claim it in 30 days, it's finders keepers.

• **Feb. 13:** Police at Morro Rock contacted an apparent victim in a domestic violence incident, but no crime report was written.

• **Feb. 12:** Vandalism was reported in the 600 block of Napa. A task force was not formed. A second vandalism case was reported in the 700 block of Quintana, and still no task force was formed despite the apparent crime wave sweeping the city.

• **Feb. 11:** Police in the 2000 block of Sunset reportedly found video equipment belonging to Morro Bay High School. The gear was apparently returned.

• **Feb. 11:** Police contacted a citizen in the 800 block of Market who'd reported a stolen vehicle.

• **Feb. 10:** Police responded at 11:52 p.m. to the 2600 block of Coral where a vehicle was being repossessed by a tow truck, apparently to keep the peace.

• **Feb. 10:** Police responded at 12:51 p.m. to the 500 block of Quintana where a 41-year-old woman "stole a can of

dust removal spray" from Radio Shack and ran off after the apparent nillionaire was refused service. Police later caught up to the master criminal and cited her for suspicion of petty theft.

• **Feb. 10:** Two cars went boom at high noon at Pacific and Piney Way. No injuries reported.

• **Feb. 9:** The roundabout strikes again, as two cars went boom at 3:55 p.m. at the MBB-Quintana demolition derby circle of destruction.

• **Feb. 9:** Police responded to the nhc dispensary in the 400 lock of MBB where an apparent anarchist, 26, damaged their Charpoint Station electric vehicle charger. No word on if he got a charge out of it.

• **Feb. 9:** Police responded at 10:12 a.m. to Miner's Hardware in the 500 block of Atascadero Rd., where a 34-year-old sticky-fingered sneaky fellow was arrested for suspicion of shoplifting and check forgery.

• **Feb. 9:** Police contacted a regular customer at midnight at Coleman Drive and Embarcadero. The 25-year-old woman had a FTA warrant and was issued a second disappearance ticket and released back into the wilds.

• **Feb. 8:** Police contacted a 27-year-old man at 3:30 p.m. in the 700 block of Quintana who had nine outstanding bench warrants. The scofflaw went to the hoosegow where the judge will surely be glad to see him, and welcome him with open arms.

• **Feb. 8:** Police contacted a regular Yosemite Sam, 37, at 9:42 a.m. in the 800 block of Quintana. He was taken to jail despite just one misdemeanor warrant.

• **Feb. 8:** Police responded at 8:43 a.m. to the 800 block of Quintana. Logs said a 41-year-old, known suspect, allegedly burgled Chuck's Towing.

• **Feb. 7:** Police espied a 45-year-old woman at 9:54 p.m. at Main and Atascadero Road. She had a failure to appear warrant and so naturally was issued a second one and released.

• **Feb. 7:** Police responded to a burglar alarm at 5:59 a.m. at the high school in the 200 block of Atascadero Road. At 10:30 a.m. they arrested a local transient man, 20, for allegedly burglarizing the high school and other charges, no doubt setting a new record for quickest crime solving in these parts.

• **Feb. 7:** Police stopped a suspicious vehicle at 5 a.m. at Main and MBB. The driver, 25, was cited for suspicion of reckless driving and released.

• **Jan. 30:** Police stopped a suspicious vehicle at 11:11 p.m. at Harbor and Monterey. A 40-year-old woman driver was cited and released for the unholy trinity — no license, no registration and no insurance — consequently she has no car, as it was hauled to impound.

• **Jan. 30:** Police responded at 5:18 p.m. to a disturbed fellow causing a ruckus in the 400 block of Quintana. A 36-year-old annoying flesh monkey was tossed into the pokey for suspicion of being stultified in public.

• **Jan. 30:** Police contacted a regular customer at 3:36 p.m. in the 300 block of Surf. A 68-year-old lady squit was issued a "Notice to Appear" citation for a "Failure to Appear" bench warrant, as the cult of idiocracy strikes again.

• **Jan. 30:** Police responded to the 400 block of Morro

Bay Blvd., where some fellow said that while he was riding his bike up the Boulevard, a woman driving a black truck "pointed a firearm at him," according to the logs. Police deemed the matter "unfounded."

• **Jan. 30:** Police were called at 10:46 a.m. to Rocky's Teen Center, 231 Atascadero Rd., where an apparent miscreant got into a fight with another hooligan. Logs indicated one of the little darlings "started to smash things."

• **Jan. 30:** Police responded at 4:53 a.m. to a disturbance in the 400 block of Rockview. An apparently upset fellow, 59, was taken for a 72-hour chill-out at Sierra Vista Hospital.

• **Jan. 29:** Someone abandoned a car in the 600 block of Fresno Ave., which might be normal in Fresno, but in Morro Bay, the fuzz sends out the wrecker.

• **Jan. 27:** Police stopped a suspicious vehicle at the highly suspect time of 11:18 p.m. at Bernardo and MBB. While we might expect the worst at that time of night, the driver, 63, could only be got for a suspended license.

• **Jan. 27:** Police responded to Anchor where some pastor "wanted to relay information of possible rape that occurred within the city," according to logs.

• **Jan. 26:** Police stopped a suspicious vehicle at Shasta and Harbor, not where one should be at 11:41 p.m. The driver, 37, got cited and released for suspicion of driving deep in his cups.

• **Jan. 26:** Police responded at 5 p.m. to the 700 block of Quintana where a citizen reported being assaulted by a 56-year-old local scamboogah. A report was sent to the district attorney, so he's in trouble now.

• **Jan. 26:** Police reportedly found a 25-year-old man who was reported missing, apparently safe and sound.

• **Jan. 26:** Police responded to the Harbor Office where someone had surrendered a deadly weapon. Police took possession of the pellet rifle making the world safer for seagulls and pigeons.

• **Jan. 26:** Police stopped a suspicious vehicle at 12:15 a.m. heading north on Hwy 1. A 22-year-old rookie was slapped with suspicion of driving spanked.

• **Jan. 25:** Police contacted a suspicious fellow at 8:47 p.m. in the 400 block of Quintana. The 54-year-old driver had a bench warrant and was cited and released, and no doubt praising the Lord that he wasn't buzzed.

• **Jan. 25:** Police responded at 11 a.m. to the 2200 block of Nutmeg for a report of a trespasser. Logs indicated the homeowner returned home to find a known man, who's apparently some kind of ne'er-do-well, "walking down his driveway."

• **Jan. 24:** Police responded at 3:41 p.m. to a traffic collision at Main and Hwy 1. There were apparently no serious injuries but no further juicy details were available.

• **Jan. 24:** Police noted the violation of a stay-the-hell-away court order that apparently occurred at the high school.

• **Jan. 24:** At 11:13 a.m. police in the 300 block of Embarcadero recovered a vehicle reported stolen out of Santa Maria. The thieves apparently got away.

• **Jan. 24:** A man came to the police station and handed in some ammunition he was aiming to be rid of.



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Takin' Care of Business From page 1

graduates, was Apple's 54th employee. He eventually became its first vice president of software and, later, the first vice president of education. Following his career at Apple, Couch pursued other business ventures and co-authored several books. He recently relocated to San Luis Obispo.

With this gift, the hospital has \$137 million committed, with \$120 million being invested by Dignity Health and the balance coming from many private donors in San Luis Obispo County. To date, the Beyond Health campaign has raised \$17 million.

In addition to the Mary Lou Couch Mediation Room and Serenity Garden, the "Your New French Hospital" expansion project will include:

- 56 new private patient rooms, bringing the total licensed bed count to 180 making it the largest hospital in San Luis Obispo County
- The new Stan and Barbara Clark Neonatal Intensive Care Unit – a 16-bed unit with state-of-the-art private family oriented rooms
- An additional 10 Intensive Care Unit beds, bringing the total to 21- all private rooms
- New front entrance, lobby and dining area
- Swanson Family Chapel – a new interfaith chapel

- Harold Miossi Garden Terrace providing space for sensory stimulation, socializing and outdoor activities
 - Expanded space for imaging, labs, pharmacy, food preparation, and more
 - Enhanced and advanced technology and services
 - A heliport helicopter landing pad for critical emergencies
 - New parking structure
- A four-story 85,000-square-foot Patient Care Tower and one story parking structure will be built to accommodate the growth, with construction on the parking area to start this year. The expansion is planned for completion in 2025.

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



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Community

Events and Activities

By Theresa-Marie Wilson



Check out the “You and Me Tour: An Evening with Drew & Ellie Holcomb” on Fri, Mar 4 starting at 9 p.m. at the Freemont Theater in SLO. Doors open at 8 p.m. for this all ages show. Check with the venue for COVID-19 protocols. Tickets are \$25 to \$120 and are available at eventbrite.com.

Drew and Ellie Holcomb are a husband and wife Americana duo from Nashville, TN. Shortly after their marriage in 2006, the couple began touring together with Drew Holcomb & The Neighbors.

Ellie is no longer a touring member of The Neighbors, and has found success in a solo career as a Christian singer/songwriter, winning two Dove Awards and topping the Billboard charts.

Drew Holcomb still tours nationally with the band and their most recent album, “Dragons,” is their most critically acclaimed release yet.

An Evening with Drew and Ellie Holcomb is a special engagement event, allowing the Holcombs to collaborate once again.

Cal Poly’s Winter Wind Bands Concert will feature the Wind Ensemble and Wind Orchestra at 7:30 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 26, in Miossi Hall of the Performing Arts Center.

The concert — the second in the bands’ season series — is titled “Afterimage.” Director of Bands Christopher J. Woodruff said, “Like a flash of light against our retina, life events can leave impressions. Music is way we can share those impressions with others and extend those moments across time. The program will explore this idea through works expressing joy and wonder.”

Guest percussion soloist John Astaire will perform Mutsuhito Ogino’s “Concerto for Percussion and Wind Ensemble.”

Other works from the Wind Ensemble include Music Professor Antonio G. Barata’s “Winds of Change” and Joan Tower’s “Fanfare for the Uncommon Woman, No. 5.” The group will conclude its set with Julie Giroux’s “La Mezquita de Córdoba.”

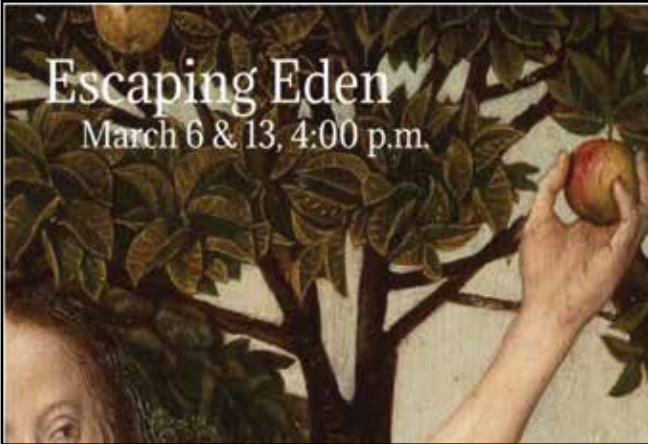
The Wind Ensemble will perform these and other works for the 2022 College Band Directors National Association Western/Northwestern Division Conference to be hosted March 16-20 at the University of Puget Sound in Tacoma, Washington. The ensemble is one of only eight selected to participate.

Tickets are \$15 and \$20 for the public and \$10 for students. Event parking is sponsored by the Performing Arts Center. Tickets are sold 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).

...

Take a Women’s Self Defense Workshop through Cuesta from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. on March 5 or May 21 in the SLO campus. This is a hands-on, comprehensive self-defense workshop designed for women who wish to learn real-world defense strategies, in a safe and supportive environment, taught by a qualified martial arts instructor. The Workshop covers the self-defense mindset where knowledge is power; managing an unknown person in one’s

physical space; learning and practicing simple striking, gross-motor combative skills targeting and defenses against common ambush attacks, and escapes. The cost is \$150 and registration is at cuesta.edu and type in Women’s Self Defense in the search bar. Lunch will be provided. Scholarships and family discounts available.



Erma Stauffer presents two performance only of her world premiere solo show, Escaping Eden, on Sunday, March 6 and 13, at 4 p.m., in the newly renovated Milking Parlor at the Octagon Barn in San Luis Obispo.

A talking snake, Mennonite preachers, smorgasbords, a red dotted Swiss dress, and the Statue of Liberty, all have central roles in this witty, insightful solo show. Escaping Eden is one woman’s take on life, liberty, and the pursuit of potato salad.

Erma Stauffer graduated from the American Academy of Dramatic Arts and spent many years performing and directing before coming to teach theatre and communication studies at Cal Poly, SLO, for 23 years. Her recent retirement allowed her time to pursue her long-term goal of collecting stories from her past and present into a theatre piece.

The show is directed by Al Schnupp and Zoe Saba. Original artwork by Ron Roundy, well-known Los Osos artist, will be featured in the show.

Proof of vaccination and masks are required for attendance. This show is not recommended for those under 13 due to adult themes and language. Go to escapingeden.bpt.me to purchase tickets. Further information: escapingeden01@gmail.com.



Cuesta College’s spring semester art gallery exhibition Nobles Among Us: material thoughts on a poetic ecology by Sommer Roman at the Harold J. Miossi Art Gallery runs through Apr. 1.

Local multi-disciplinary artist Roman uses recycled materials, discarded clothing and linens, nature objects, and building materials to create works embedded with themes of everyday life, domesticity, the body, and the wild.

In this new body of work, Roman plays with French philosopher René Descartes’ famous words, “I think, therefore I am.” She uses the locus of the head as a starting

Events Continued on page 10

Advertisement for NHC (Natural Healing Center) SLO County's Premiere Cannabis Dispensary. The ad features a large image of a dispensary cabinet filled with various cannabis products, including a jersey with the number 34. Text includes: "SLO COUNTY'S PREMIERE CANNABIS DISPENSARY", "Jeeter x Highman", "ATHLETES FOR CARE", "LEARN MORE AT ATHLETESFORCARE.ORG", "FUNDAY SUNDAY", "PICK ANY DEAL ALL DAY!", "SCAN TO VIEW DEALS!", "FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA @nhcslo", "EXPERT 1-ON-1 SERVICE", "CBD & MEDICALLY FOCUSED PRODUCTS", "SENIOR & VETERAN DISCOUNTS", "GROVER BEACH 998 Huston St.", "MORRO BAY 495 Morro Bay Blvd.", "LEMOORE 338 West D St.", "Shop in-store & online for express pickup and delivery", "NHC DISPENSARIES.COM", "OPEN DAILY 7AM-9PM", and "GROVER BEACH LICENSE # C39-000288 LLC MORRO BAY LICENSE # C39-000287 LLC LEMORE LICENSE # C39-000284 LLC".

Advertisement for LIVING TRUST. Text includes: "LIVING TRUST", "WILLS = PROBATE", "Without a Trust, the courts decide who gets all your property and... WHO RAISES YOUR CHILDREN... The Government or your family", "PRESERVE YOUR ASSETS!", "In-home Appointments!", "A complete Living Trust", "For only \$400", "Call Edward at: 805-772-2655", "Call now for your peace of mind • ELH Trust", "Lic# 095935-03".

Community

Events From page 9

point to question this site as the source of intellect and knowledge and as a rationale to seeing ourselves as above and apart from that which is non-human.

An artist talk with Roman is scheduled for Thursday, Mar. 10 at 5:30 p.m. in Room 6304 on the San Luis Obispo campus. Live streaming of the event is also available at bit.ly/noblesamongus. Admission to the gallery is free. Visit the gallery webpage or call (805) 546-3202 for a schedule of exhibits and hours of operation.

Students, employees, and visitors who access Cuesta College campuses and facilities must provide proof of vaccination against COVID-19 or a negative test within 72 hours of the campus visit. Following CDC guidelines, proper face coverings are required in all indoor public areas and shared spaces for everyone, regardless of vaccination status. Find out more about Cuesta College's vaccine requirement at cuesta.edu/vaccine.

...

Monthly Trans Therapy Group on the fourth Monday of every month from 5:30-7 p.m. through June 28 at the GALA Pride and Diversity Center located at 1060 Palm Street, San Luis Obispo. Join the therapist led group for local trans* community members. Email therapists@galacc.org for a screening interview prior to your first group. Offers in-person and video-conferencing options. Sponsored by GALA Pride and Diversity Center and Tranz Central Coast at 805-762-4598.



Iranian-American writer, abolitionist organizer, and creative educator Hoda Katebi will serve as this year's keynote speaker to kick off Cal Poly's 20th annual Change the Status Quo (CSQ) Social Justice Leadership Conference on Saturday, Feb. 26. Hosted by the university's Center for Service in Action, the annual conference aims to empower attendees to use Cal Poly's Learn by Doing spirit to challenge social norms, ask critical questions, demand solutions and make lasting social change. The event is open to all college and high school students and the general public.

Katebi is a founding member of Blue Tin Production, an apparel manufacturing workers co-operative run by working class women of color that is setting new international standards in labor and sustainability within fashion supply chains. A celebrated author whose writing has

appeared in Newsweek, The Washington Post, and the Columbia Journalism Review, among other publications, Katebi penned "Tehran Streetstyle" in 2016. She is also a contributing writer to the book "I Refuse to Condemn: Resisting Racism in Times of National Security."

Additionally, Katebi is the host of #BecauseWeveRead, a radical digital book club and discussion series mobilizing local communities. The club consists of more than 25 chapters globally. The conference will also feature a mix of 30-minute presentations and 60-minute interactive workshops focused on racial justice and allyship; service, leadership and social justice; intersectionality; socio-economic justice; gender and sexuality; environmental justice; and Jewish culture and antisemitism. Tickets to attend Katebi's keynote address from 9-10 a.m. are \$15. To purchase tickets, visit the CSQ Eventbrite page.

...

Alex Sanfilippo will share how he and others are shaping the future of podcasting and how you can get involved. A networking mixer will immediately follow. It takes place on Feb. 28 from 5 to 7 p.m. at StoryLabs at 102 Cross St, Suite 220, San Luis Obispo. Come learn more about Softec's monthly TechBrew Meet-up. For more information, call 805-225-1251.



The countdown begins for the 14th Annual Tour of Paso Founder's Team Challenge, and sign-ups are still underway. Proceeds from the bike ride that taking place on Sunday, April 3, directly benefit the Cancer Support Community – California Central Coast, a non-profit organization that offers programs and services to local cancer patients, survivors, and their families free of charge.

Riders of all skill levels, from beginners to advanced, have their choice of two routes – 50 and 26 miles – through the scenic Paso Robles wine country region, all starting and ending at Niner Wine Estates.

In his eighth year as chairman of the Tour of Paso and Cancer Support Community board member, Mike Milby

of Paso Bike Tours is making it easy for those that may not own a bike to participate in the Tour of Paso by offering free rentals for the first 20 riders requesting a bike. Contact him at (805) 440-5085 to reserve your bike.

Register at tourofpaso.org for \$75, with a required fundraising minimum of \$200. Prizes will be awarded to both the team and individual that raises the most money. For additional information about Cancer Support Community – CA Central Coast or the 2021 Tour of Paso, please visit cscslo.org or tourofpaso.org

...

The Cal Poly Symphony's Winter Concert will showcase the talents of student soloists at 7:30 p.m. Friday, March 11, in Miossi Hall in the Performing Arts Center's Christopher Cohan Center. In addition, the symphony will perform four works by Mexican composers: Arturo Márquez' "Danzon No. 9" and "Conga del Fuego Nuevo," Blas Galindo's "Poema de Neruda," and Silvestre Revueltas' "Sensemayá."

The concert will highlight performances by two instrumentalists and two vocalists, all winners of the Cal Poly Music Department's Solo Competition in November. Tickets are \$15 and 20 for the public and \$10 for students. Event parking is sponsored by the Performing Arts Center. Tickets are sold 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).

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

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New Spa Continued on page 12

New Spa From page 11



One of the private couples massage rooms at Monarch Moon Spa.

Salon for many years, before they packed up at the start of the pandemic and reopened a shop in Cayucos. Shortly after the space was vacated, it was part of a tour of Downtown “Opportunity Sites” the Chamber of Commerce was helping to market. That particular tour included the former Rio space and the old Bank of America just a few doors down. Both of those now have tenants, with the bank being remodeled into a coffee house and roasting facility.

Lin has sunk a tremendous amount of work and money into the new spa, with two private single person treatment rooms, a pair of couples massage rooms, a tub/shower room, and chair massage areas too. All of her massage rooms are simply adorned and give off a soothing vibe with the soft sound of running water, music and aromas of various incense.

Lin used to have a massage business further down Morro Bay Boulevard at the Top Nail Salon and wanted to expand her offerings. When she saw the vacant space, she took a bit of a leap of faith.

“Here I can do more services,” she said. Lin is a graduate of three massage schools in the Seattle area, she explained. She’s studied cupping, herbal medicines for pain relief, deep pressure massage, relaxation massage, and facials, too. “I have certificates for all these methods and treatments,” she said.

In her flyer listing services, she offers full body massage; foot massage; hot stone; Shiatsu — cupping — waxing; essential oil therapy; herbal medicine therapy; and something called “lymphatic drainage.”

Her prices seem reasonable, \$65 for a 1-hour full body massage, Swedish massage, foot & body; lymphatic treatments, and neck and back massage.

Deep pressure, hot stones, essential oils, maternity and cupping are about \$10 more for an hour’s worth of bliss. She also has 90-minute rates.

Her facials run from \$120 for a deep cleaning facial to \$75 for a mini facial.

And the shower service, which is done in a private room with a shallow tub that has water jets all along the sides, runs from \$30 with exfoliation cream to \$90 for a scrub down in red wine.

Right now, she’s a bit lonely; as the spa is so new she hasn’t yet filled several positions. She’s looking to hire two massage therapists, she explained, and a receptionist, as she anticipates that once residents give her a chance to heal what ails them, she’ll get busy soon.

Monarch Moon Spa, 330 Morro Bay Blvd., next to the former Founder’s Bank building, is open daily from 9 a.m. to 10 p.m. Call 805-225-1060 or 805-800-5856 to book an appointment.

New Location for Gaia’s Garden

Photos & Story By Neil Farrell



Sierra Mace and Summer Birchell, pictured here in a photo from the store’s Facebook Page, have moved their business, Gaia’s Garden, to a new larger location at 875 Main St., Ste. C and expanded their holistic offerings.

A Morro Bay mother-daughter team of businesswoman have moved their crystal and plant shop to a new, larger location in the heart of the Downtown.

“Gaia’s Garden,” a crystal, house plant and gift shop, opened last August in a space at Shasta Avenue and Morro Bay Boulevard that once held the town’s first crystal shop, “Ruby Dragon.”

Mother-daughter, Sierra Mace and Summer Birchell,

opened the store in a space owned by the late-Penny Harrington, who also had Ruby Dragon.

Birchell said after Harrington died, her family wanted to sell the property to settle her estate and Gaia’s Garden had to uproot and move. Mace had said in a previous Estero Bay News article about the store, that they took inspiration from Harrington and her belief in the power of crystals and holistic healing.



Here’s a look inside of the new Gaia’s Garden store

Ironically, when it came time to move, they found a location at 875 Main St., Ste. C in the old Circle Inn Building, which also holds long time businesses Sabetta’s Pizza and Legend’s Tavern. It’s the same space where Harrington moved her crystal shop years before and operated until she retired.

“We felt guided and supported in coming here,” Birchell said of the new location, which at over 1,900 square feet is huge compared to the first store.

That’s allowed Mace to delve into other passions, herbal teas, apothecary, and holistic wellness. Birchell, who formerly had Summer Expressions Hair Salon on Napa Avenue, and is working on setting up a small styling salon at the new location, said they’ve been able to take a broader approach to what they offer.

“This is more of a ‘wellness shop’ than a crystal shop,” she said. The store has a beautiful bar with stools where folks can sit and enjoy a cup of herbal tea, surrounded by some exotic green plants while listening to soothing sounds of a waterfall in the center of the store. And this new store has both a house dog and cat, Birchell laughed. They are pet-friendly, she said.

Their expansion has also been into apothecary, as Mace has become certified in the ancient healing art.

Customers can buy holistic wellness remedies, organic and wild herb blends and special teas she mixes up herself to address different ailments.

Gaia’s Garden Continued on page 13



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Have you ever wondered what it would be like to volunteer for hospice?

Wilshire Hospice is looking for caring individuals to be **Hospice In-Home Volunteers**. This rich, in-depth, on-line volunteer training program will be held over four sessions.

Fall 2021 training dates are October 20, 27 & November 3, 10. Trainees should plan to attend all four sessions to complete the training.

Volunteers are needed in all areas of San Luis Obispo County and North Santa Barbara County.

While staying safe and current with all infectious disease protocol, Hospice in-home volunteers are still providing support and companionship for Hospice patients and their families.

Though the training is offered online, **your volunteer experience will be “live and in-person.”** Our Wilshire Hospice Volunteer Training is designed to provide a soulful opportunity for personal growth while equipping you with the skills and support you will need for a meaningful volunteer experience. Spanish-speaking volunteers a plus.



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For more info, contact Pamela Harwood at 805-772-1222
You can also come by the tackle shop at:
1169 Market Ave., Morro Bay and fill out an application

A Dose of Good Dogma



Park Place

By Lisa Ellman



Understand why some people are not advocates of dog parks. It's infrequent, but occasionally scuffles or fights breakout and that can be traumatic. I am a trainer that often advises clients that it can be really beneficial to their dog, and themselves, to evaluate and consider spending some time there. Sometimes, when I go out of town, I visit the local dog park. It's like being in a classroom, Dog Play 101. There are so many nuances and subtleties of canine play and communication. Go hang out, it's fascinating!

I often remind people, in a gentle way, that, unlike children, humans cannot teach dogs how to play with other dogs. We can't. Just accept it. Dogs teach other dogs how to play. Normally, they will learn it from their littermates. Although sometimes puppies that have been taken away too early, or too late, may have missed the opportunity.

I consider the benefits of dog parks to outweigh the risks. Here are some suggestions to make the dog park less intimidating for both you and your pup.

- The first is, of course, follow the rules. They are posted at the entrance.
- There is a space between the two entrance gates a "staging area". This is where you unleash your dog. Do not let your dog into the park while still leashed. It can create chaos and fear.
- Remove choke chains or pinch collars. During play, a tooth or nail hung up in a metal loop can cause great injury to a dog.
- Watch your dog like you watch your child at the playground.
- Do NOT bring food into the dog park.
- Mounting behavior is NORMAL. It is not a sexual act. It is a dominance or play behavior. Males mount males, females mount females, and they may all hump your leg. You cannot yell at your dog loud enough to stop it. Try pulling

Gaia's Garden From page 12

"We try to empower people in cultivating their own well being," Birchell said. As with the first store, they are also going to have people come in to do Tarot Card readings, Reiki and intuitive readings, Birchell said. It's something they call "practitioner work," working with people's energies to help them feel better. They have space now to bring in more locally made products like essential oil blends, incense, candles and more. Their plants are from local nurseries and Birchell, who

your dog off, and it will go right back. The mountee will let your dog know when its had enough.

- Keep your big dog out of the little dog section.
- I suggest not bringing small children into the large dog section. They can easily be knocked down, frightened or hurt by the spunk and focus of dogs at play.
- Learn to read your dog's body language and style of play. Some dogs are very vocal and like to play rough, others only want to chase or be chased. Keep in mind that there will be dogs that your dog just does not like or want to play with. Don't force them. They will pick their own friends.
- If your dog is bullying, you must step in. The bully dog will pin a dog to the ground and not let it up to continue play. The bully dog is the dog that sets its sights on one single dog in the park and chases and nips at it relentlessly. Give the bully dog a time out or leave the park that day. Maybe return at a quieter time with your dog.

If you encounter an "aggressive" dog, or a dog that makes you nervous, leave the park and return another time. I've noticed that the closer your dog is to you when meeting other dogs, the more likely it is that a scuffle will be set in motion. Whether the dog is being territorial or more confident because you're there, I don't know. DON'T hover over your dog. If you walk away from your dog at that point, it's much less likely that any scuffle will occur.

Dogs need to run, full out run. Chasing a ball or running circles in the back yard usually isn't enough, especially if your dog is a young, active, social type. Running helps build muscle mass and contributes to stronger bones as your dog matures.

Consider these options and suggestions next time you have doubts about taking your pal to run and play at the dog park.

Good Dogma has been training humans and their dogs since 1996. Readers are invited to submit questions to gooddogma@hotmail.com. Contact information and all services can be found on our website www.GoodDogma.net

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

Forgiveness and Second Chances

Courtesy of IBM and Ticonderoga
By Debbie Black

Mr. Thomas was every high schooler's nightmare of an English teacher. Heaven help you should you have the horrible misfortune to answer a question incorrectly in his class. He'd glare at you from the front of the room with hawk-like eyes, raise one bushy eyebrow, then stride down the aisle to stand directly in front of you. He'd grasp both sides of your desk with long, skinny fingers, and slowly lean

does much of their crystal buying, said they are looking at importing plants as well. The variety of plants, coupled with the waterfall sounds, and the aromas of the herbal teas, makes a visit to Gaia's Garden a sensory treat. In a posting on Gaia's Garden's Facebook Page, the women said, "We are so grateful for all of you during the 8 months we've been open! This community is so special, and we are blessed." Gaia's Garden is open Tuesdays-Sundays 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Check them out on Facebook, see: www.facebook.com/gaiasgardenmb or [@gaiasgardenmb](https://www.instagram.com/gaiasgardenmb).



forward until his nose was about two inches from yours. "Are you sure you belong in this class?" he'd ask. It was always the same question, no matter what the transgression. What did he mean, anyway? Did you lack the courage to be in his class? Was honors English too tough for you? Were you too sloppy, too lazy, or just plain dim? All the students reacted in the same manner — sinking down in their seats, red faced, and sweating, shamed and disgraced for simply answering a question wrong. Written errors were no less humiliating. Mr. Thomas was hardly discreet when handing back graded papers. He'd call a student's name, then turn the paper around and hold it up as he walked down the aisle. Grades were written in big red letters for all to see. Thick red circles indicated every one of your stupid errors. The more red on your paper, the worse you felt. Every student in Mr. Thomas' English class lived in fear of making a mistake. Typing a ten-page term paper was a painstaking effort of concentration because those were the days of yore — the days of manual typewriters. One tiny error would result in the paper being yanked out of the typewriter, wadded up in frustration, and thrown at the overflowing wastebasket accompanied by a stream of whichever expletives were allowed in your household. Those were the days that spawned nervous perfectionists. Those were unforgiving days. The days before computers, Word, and Ctrl Z (undo). But help came to us poor souls. The good folks at IBM invented the self-correcting electric typewriter. Hallelujah! All was good. Thank you, IBM.

Somewhere out there is a Mr. Thomas still trying to intimidate his students into becoming careful writers, thinkers, and orators. They may still shrink in their chairs to avoid the raised eyebrow and critical glower. But their youthful, creative spirit won't be completely hamstrung. They won't worry about making a typo in the last sentence of a carefully typed page or misspelling the word antidisestablishmentarianism. They'll have chances to make mis-

Out & About Continued on page 14



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Kevin says,
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KEVIN O'CONNOR, President

Community

Tickets on Sale for 'You're A Good Man, Charlie Brown'



Music Director Jeff Mar, Simon Lowell as Linus and Eric Bolton as Charlie Brown warming up for their first rehearsal Cambria Center for the Arts Theatre's production of 'You're A Good Man, Charlie Brown.' Photo submitted

Happiness is a return to live theatre. March 25 through April 10, Cambria Center for the Arts Theatre presents their opening production of the 2022 season, "You're A Good Man, Charlie Brown." Spend a little time with your favorite Peanuts characters, Lucy, Linus, Schroeder, Sally, Snoopy and ,of course, the beloved Charlie Brown. Filled with fun and uplifting tunes, the show takes us back to our childhood as Charlie Brown longs for the little red-headed girl, attempts kite flying and takes advice from the local psychiatrist, Lucy. Snoopy battles the Red Baron and sings of his favorite time of day, supptime! Linus sings of his love for his blanket and of course, Schroeder pays homage to Beethoven. The CCAT production is directed by Bryce Prunty and stars some local favorites as well as new cast members. Cambrian, Eric Bolton, stars as Charlie Brown. Eric was recently seen in "The Best Christmas Pageant Ever." Laura Richie brings the hilarious Lucy to life. Many will remember Laura for her outstanding performance in "Harvey." Rounding out the ensemble is Gary Hernandez-Borjan as Schroeder, Simon Lowrie as Linus, Joan Hurwit as Sally, and Moorea Prunty portrays Snoopy. Musical direction is by Jeff Mar. Enjoy the live music and their newly improved sound system. You're A Good Man, Charlie Brown plays Friday and Saturday evenings at 7 p.m. and Sunday afternoons at 2 p.m. Tickets are available online, at the Cambria Center for the Arts website, Cambriaarts.org. Adults are \$30, CCA members \$25, and students are \$20. Seats are reserved and could be limited due to social distancing. Masks will be required while indoors and proof of vaccination will need to be shown at the door. CCA will continue to monitor the current protocols and will adjust according to the county mandates. Check the CCA website for updates. Cambria Center for the Arts Theatre is located at 1350 Main St, in the old Grammar School, right in the heart of Cambria.

Carrying on a Family Tradition

By Neil Farrell



Annette Mlnarik has joined the family business at Morro Bay Appliance.

It's one of the longest tenured family businesses in Morro Bay and a recent change in management only furthers that along. Mike Mlnarik, owner of Morro Bay Appliance, 935 Main St., announced that his wife, Annette, has joined the family business as the office manager, in a business that has had but three owners over the many years. Bob and Rhoda De-Somer opened the store in the 1960s, Annette explained. "Mike's parents, [Jim and Sherry Mlnarik] had it for over 25 years, and we've owned it now almost 11 years." She said her in-laws are "happily retired" and enjoying life. "They're super excited Mike and I are working together. Sherry said, 'You're taking after us.'" Like for most everyone, the coronavirus pandemic has been tough. Annette had to give up her business at Casa de Flores where she had a hair salon for nearly two decades. She had been considering joining Mike at the appliance store for several years, but her job at Casa de Flores was a joy, until the virus changed everything and the facility was pretty much locked down. "I miss my people at Casa de Flores," she said. "It was hard to leave. I was there 17 years and have been doing hair for 40 years. I started at 15 and just turned 58." Doing hair can be a hard occupation. And with the lockdown for COVID-19, she hadn't been working for some time. Cutting hair takes a toll on your body, she said, especially the hands from the various chemicals used in cosmetology. She was on and off of work for 2 years, she explained. "It was very unnerving. I do miss my people and I couldn't even see anyone and say good-bye." At the store, they've also had some turnover, as two employees — a service tech and deliveryman — retired and they also lost their former office manager to another job. But that woman has returned for part time work,

which Annette said has been good because she is helping her learn the business. Because of the employee turnover, "It just seemed like the right time to make that change." Changing jobs after so long is difficult for anyone but she sees it as a new challenge. "It's pretty awesome actually," she said, "I'm learning a lot more things now." Morro Bay Appliance offers several brands of washing machines, dryers, ovens, microwaves, microwave hoods, dishwashers, and more, including several sizes of refrigerators — from mini fridges to full sized ones. Mike is an appliance repair technician; so he's constantly out make service calls. "We're booked for service calls through the end of the month," Annette said. "Mike's been pulling all the weight. But we still have our lunches every day," that's something they've made a point to do, even while she was at Casa de Flores. She added that the store also has a lot of refurbished, used appliances Mike has fixed, and one other interesting feature — a window display of antique appliances that Mike started when he took over from his parents. Morro Bay Appliance is open Mondays-Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and closed Sundays. Call (805) 772-2755 to book a service call or drop by the store.

2022 Poly Royal Rodeo Tickets on Sale March 1

The 80th annual Poly Royal Rodeo is returning to its roots to commemorate eight decades of history at the Cotton Rosser Rodeo Complex on campus. The Poly Royal Rodeo Finals, open to the public, will be held at 6:30 p.m. Saturday, April 9, and will be followed by a concert by a headlining country music band, which will be announced soon. Tickets go on sale March 1. The Poly Royal Rodeo is the marquee event on cam-

pus during Cal Poly's annual Open House. The event will feature the top collegiate rodeo athletes from around the West Coast who have advanced to the championship performance from the weekend's earlier rounds. Athletes will compete for a championship title in events such as barrel racing, team roping, breakaway roping, tie down roping, saddle bronc riding, bareback riding, bull riding and steer

Rodeo Tickets Continued on page 15

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Out & About From page 13

takes, changes and corrections. They'll have help. Computers and word processing software may be commonplace now, but I'll never take them for granted. I've lived through the inky-dark years before their advent. As a writer, I can't imagine more helpful tools. As a landscape architect who transitioned from hand drafting to CAD (computer-aided design), I'm eternally grateful for the speed and versatility at my fingertips. However, in both my practices, I spend a lot of time with a pencil in my hand — sometimes a mechanical pencil, but most often my buddy is a nicely sharpened #2 Ticonderoga. I can easily make notes, sketch, jot things down in the margins—all with the ease of knowing I can erase or change. My trusty yellow pencil never judges me for making a mistake. It simply says, "Here, just flip me over and use my eraser. Then you can try again." It allows for changes or mistakes. Second chances.

To this day, I marvel at my colleagues who bravely take meeting notes in pen. Or those who do crosswords and Sudoku with a ballpoint. And artists who sketch in ink? What courage! What conviction! It had better be right the first time. One mistake and it's all over. I cannot live within those restrictions. I'm a recovering Mr. Thomas student. I don't need reminders of the mistakes I've made. I need an eraser, some forgiveness and a second chance. Thank you, Ticonderoga.

Debbie Black is a member of The BookShelf Writers. To see more of her work, please visit thebookshelfwriters.com. Ticonderoga® is a trademark of Dixon Ticonderoga Company. IBM® is a trademark of International Business Machines Corporation.

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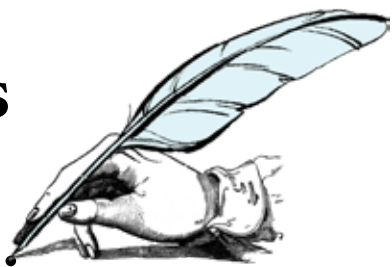
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14 February 24, 2022 - March 9, 2022 • The Estero Bay News • Your Community, Your News

Letter's
To
The Editor



Help Me Stay on My
Medication

How can this small San Luis Obispo County community allow a human to be put in jail more than once to be (re)- diagnosed for an illness “schizophrenia/ bi-polar,” wait months for a court date to make another court date and then be court ordered to be forced medicated. This is called “Deemed Incompetent.”

Then they “rehearse” understanding how to speak in a courtroom setting; answer to the judge and their charges. Things they did deep in their illness.

There are some young people sitting in the SLO jail for many months without any medical help for their brain disease. Often, the ill person has to wait for a bed to be available at a state hospital to receive the court ordered treatment. This treatment works and psychotropic medications are used.

So, if a person is sent to a state hospital to help someone with a severe mental illness, court ordered medication to understand basic court stuff! Why would the much needed medication be taken away? As the mother of a severely mentally ill adult child I am grieving to understand how to change this.

Learn and understand the illness is provided at the end of this letter in a YouTube video.

SLO County provides some programs that are available only when court ordered. These court ordered programs provide some housing miles away from the 2-hour four to five days a week program based on drugs and alcohol, not

their mental illness.

Medication for life long illness is also court ordered and if the program is not working for the person struggling with the diagnosed illness and the program dismisses the ill person from the program, the court ordered medication is also stopped. So now the ill person has broken their court ordered plan and if they do not do something to get rearrested waiting on court dates can be months and the ill person is often now becoming very ill due to lack of psychotropic medications. They have no money, nowhere to live and they are hungry.

Where is the common sense? How can this community allow a first time diagnosed schizophrenic to have to be re-arrested to get the proven help they need! Worse, this happens to many in our community who have gone through what we call the “revolving door “ a half dozen times or more.

Scars remain on the ill from the horrific treatment they endure while in psychosis. This affects them mentally and emotionally and, from the chains they are forced to wear, physical scars remain.

Psychosis affects people in different ways. You might experience it once, have short episodes throughout your life, or live with it most of the time.

How can we *remove the screws and stop oiling the “revolving door”. How can we *talk to our courtrooms?

How can we *allow family / caregivers to be always involved? www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mv-TukNhHqs

Dawn Marie Anderson
Los Osos

Watch the Slurs

I really enjoy your newspaper, but I have an issue with Vol # 4, Issue #2.

On page six is a story entitled “Irish Molester Gets Prison.” On the next page the article isn’t titled “Black Man Gets Prison for Attacking Women.” The next article doesn’t say “Jew Re-arrested for Stealing Misplaced Gun.”

In the future you should strive to edit out any racial or ethnic slurs. Thank you for your time.

Kerry Keltz,
Los Osos

A few Corrections on
‘Kid’s’ Cove Article

Hi folks, thanks for the article on the MB Maritime Museum and its latest addition, the “Kid’s Cove.” I enjoyed reading the article and really appreciated seeing some well deserved publicity for the project. However, I feel I must correct some of the misinformation in the article regarding the cannon. First off, the recent origin of the cannon is not the Kelsey winery (however the Kelsey family is storing another smaller gun that the MBMM museum acquired years ago. That acquisition also included several cannon balls that are part of this display. Both the cannon and cannon balls were salvaged from the Niagra River by the late Andy Zatco of Morro Bay).The gun on display in the “Kids Cove” was donated by the Santa Barbara Maritime Museum in 2019. At the time I was the board Vice President the SB Maritime Museum curator contacted me about some artifacts they wished to donate to the MBMM. Initially the item that garnered my interest was the early 20th century harpoon cannon (Bofors Foundry of Sweden). A team of volunteers went to the storage facility of the SBMM to load the Harpoon Cannon and while there I spotted other items and asked if they could be donated as well. This included the tiny orange experimental submersible, the whaling tri-pot and the cannon and truck. Based on the limited provenance provided by their curator, I can tell you that the cannon was donated to the SBMM years ago by a volunteer who moved to California from Florida’s Atlantic coast. It was explained to me that the gun was a decoration at a restaurant and was given to the gentleman from Florida who eventually ended up in Santa Barbara. The specific origin and history of the cannon is unknown and to my knowledge has not been researched, but according to their information it is probably of Spanish (not

Letters Continued on page 16

Rodeo Tickets From page 14

wrestling.

“This is our big comeback event,” Coach Ben Londo said. “These students have been working hard behind the scenes for the last two years while COVID-19 precautions limited their ability to compete. Now, they get to shine.”

A special guest will be a part of this year’s Poly Royal Rodeo. The Cal Poly Rodeo Team is working with the Make-A-Wish Foundation to fulfill the wish of 12-year-old Maddie Owens, of Winton, California, who at age 10 was diagnosed with Ewing sarcoma, an aggressive form of bone cancer. After treatment, surgery, and the fortunate circumstance of an early diagnosis, she is now ready to saddle back up and spend more time doing what she loves — riding horses. With the help of Sierra Spratt, assistant coach and member of the Cal Poly Rodeo Team, Maddie was invited to practice on campus several times leading up to the big event. She will make a cameo appearance as barrel racer at this year’s 80th annual Poly Royal Rodeo as a special guest of Cal Poly.

In prior years, the annual Poly Royal Rodeo was held at the Spanos Stadium, offering two full nights of entertainment. However, a \$3.2 million turf replacement project has temporarily closed the stadium — leading the event back to the campus rodeo grounds where it began 80 years ago. To accommodate the expected large crowds, a special ASI-sponsored student night has been added to the week’s offerings on Wednesday evening.

The Saturday evening event is slated for 6:30 p.m. April 9. Tickets are \$20 for children ages 2 to 12; and \$40 for general admission. Admission is free for children under 2. Tickets are at <https://tickets.calpoly.edu>. All proceeds from the event will benefit the Cal Poly Rodeo Program.






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Poly Logging Team Takes First Place in Timbersports Competition



“I am proud of the team’s hard work to earn the championship title and the outstanding way they represented Cal Poly,” said Ruzzo, who was recently named the College of Agriculture, Food and Environmental Sciences honored alumnus and serves on the Natural Resources Management and Environmental Sciences Department’s advisory council.

This Pollinator Poster Contest entry was drawn by a Los Osos Middle School student in the sixth grade.



Photos submitted

Janice Peters
Morro Bay



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Community

Parcel Tax Website Launched

By Neil Farrell

A group of citizens circulating petitions to place on the ballot a parcel tax on private property to support maintenance of City-owned harbor facilities has a new web page if residents want to learn more.

The Friends of the Morro Bay Harbor Department, a non-profit organization that raises money to support the Harbor Department, has launched a web page on its official site (see: friendsofthemhbhd.org) that discusses the “Harbor Infrastructure Parcel Tax Initiative,” which a trio of local businessmen developed and are working to get placed on the November 2022 General Election Ballot.

The leaders of the effort are Bill Luffee, Homer Alexander and Ron Reisner.

Luffee is a former Harbor Advisory Board chairman and started the Friends group. Reisner, a marine surveyor by profession, is also a former HAB member and chairman and Alexander is a former City Financial Committee member who has long been involved in local politics and worked to get Measure Q — a half-cent sales tax measure passed in 2006. M-Q was intended to provide money to support the police and fire departments, street and storm drain repairs.

The three had been discussing ways to raise revenues for the Harbor Department, which gets all of its money through lease payments for Tidelands Trust properties, slips and dockage fees. It's not nearly enough to pay for all of the department's unmet needs.

“There is just enough revenue to fund a streamlined Harbor Department [public safety] operation, with very little leftover for harbor infrastructure maintenance,” the website reads, “much less needed harbor infrastructure replacement.”

The web page goes on to note that with the exception of the rebuilding of the South T-pier, which was destroyed in an October 1988 fire that destroyed 13 boats and killed two people, the harbor hasn't gotten much investment.

It lists some of the current high-ticket maintenance items that need to be addressed, including:

- Piers and wharfs — \$600,000;
- Seawalls — \$3.4 million;
- Revetments — \$1.6 million;
- Docks and slips — \$50,000; and,
- Restrooms — \$1.5 million; for a total of \$7.15 million “for those items alone.”

It also lists unfunded liabilities for replacement of certain facilities to include \$6.14 million to replace old docks and slips, and \$2.2 million to repair the public launch ramp.

The Harbor Department has been trying to put together a project to rebuild the launch ramp, which has huge holes in the concrete ramp and side docks that are tweaked

and rotted and need replacing. That project also seeks to build a new fish cleaning station and add a new ramp specifically designed for launching kayaks.

These two items total some \$8.34M and the list is by no means complete, either.

With funding holes like these, it's fairly obvious that with the current funding scheme, the department may never catch up and facilities will further deteriorate.

The petition drive is ongoing and the proponents have until May 9 to gather the 827 valid signatures of Morro Bay registered voters, to be placed on the November 2022 ballot.

Alexander in a previous EBN article (Dec. 16, 2021) said, “This has been going on for years,” adding there's been a lot of talk about the problem but nothing gets done.

Indeed for several years, since 2014 when the Harbor Department lost a \$250,000 a year lease payment from the power plant owners, the City Council has over and over again discussed how to increase revenues for the harbor.

They green-lit putting in a parking kiosk at the launch ramp and charge for day use parking of trucks and boat trailers in the launch ramp parking lot; and allowed a pilot program to establish a handful of RV camping sites at three locations on The Embarcadero, which has gone well but is in trouble.

Though the City has applied to the Coastal Commission for a coastal development permit (CDP) to make the camping program permanent, a citizen's initiative has been qualified for the ballot that would ban the RV camping along the Embarcadero and at Morro Rock.

With many options to raise revenues that have been floated over the years, Reisner said they looked at them all before deciding to try for a parcel tax. “The three of us,” Reisner said, “kicked the issue around and drafted basic concepts, then we sent it to our attorney to ‘legalize’ it.”

What's emerged is a proposal to set a tax of \$120 per year on all privately owned property within the City Limits, both residential and commercial. It works out to \$10 a month and would be added to property tax bills, which are normally paid semi-annually, and collected and dispersed through the County Tax Collector's Office.

Because it is a citizen's initiative, it needs 50-percent plus-1 vote to pass. If it were the City Council promoting it, and because there is a specific use for the monies, it would need two-thirds majority to pass.

But asking voters to tax themselves is always an iffy proposition and as it is a citizen's initiative, neither the city council nor the staff nor can play an active part in the campaign.

If readers want to learn more about the harbor infrastructure parcel tax initiative, see: friendsofthemhbhd.org.

Obituary

Stephen Ruth Voorhees 1926 - 2022



Stephen Ruth Voorhees was born in Hollywood, California. She was the only child of Charles and Olive Voorhees. Her father was a professional photographer and that is where Stevie got her love for photography.

> When she was younger she worked as a press photographer for The Hollywood Citizen News and The Harold Examiner.

In the mid 1970's, she moved to beautiful San Luis Obispo and worked for social services in the Employment Development Department and also helped with at-risk teenagers. In the early 1980's, she opened Bayside Gallery with her friend Joan Sullivan to showcase her photography and prints. Later she worked at Hearst Castle in the ticket office and retired from there after 22 years.

Stevie, as she was known, loved spending time with her family. She regularly visited her sons Richard and Patrick and their families in Pennsylvania and Colorado, and helped her daughter Carole raise her three children. She loved traveling and visited Mexico, Canada, Hawaii, Asia, France, Germany, and Italy.

On February 13, 2022, Stevie passed away peacefully in her sleep at 96 years old.

She is survived by her children and their spouses: Richard & Marissa, Patrick, and Carole & Robert. Her seven grandchildren: Christine, Lyssa, Ryan, Echo, Cameron, Johna and Drew, and seven great-grandchildren: Adin, Nora, Talon, Blaze, Hope, Lilly and Barrett and two great-great-grandchildren.

Stevie was a very loving and positive person. She was very outgoing and loved talking to friends and strangers. She is loved and will be missed by all who knew her.

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Community

Chamber Gala From page 1
houses to an evening event so daytime workforce families might join him and his officers at Pizza Port.
Chief Cox took his belief in community policing a step further and implemented a strategy he designed, the Neighborhood Police Program. The goal strengthens Neighborhood Watch. Two officers are dedicated to each segment of Morro Bay’s community. The officer’s goal is to understand a neighborhood’s character – it’s residents and happenings - building mutual trust and support when circumstances are unusual.
Chief Cox and wife Kelly have four children, 13 grandchildren. Besides community and woodworking, his off-duty passions are spending time with his grandchildren and taking cross-country Harley rides to check out Americana with his best buds.



Carole Truesdale is the recipient of the Morro Bay Chamber of Commerce Living Treasure award. Photo submitted

Carole Truesdale, Morro Bay Living Treasure
Carole Truesdale’s first reaction to receiving the honor of Living Treasure was, “All I can say is, WOW. I did not think that trying to be kind and supportive had an award. It is just the right thing to do in all ways, always!”
She wanted all to know she is humbled to join the roster of previous Living Treasures, including Jack Smith, Jeremiah O’Brien, Lu Chi Fa (Gordon Lu), Lori French, Nancy Castle, Marlene Peter, Bud & Rita Anderson, Bertha & Dean Tyler, just to list a few although she preferred to list then all. “To stand with these individuals leaves me speechless,” she said.
Carole Truesdale, however, was nominated because she takes the time to volunteer and advocate for whatever she is passionate about at the time – always respectfully and with a smile.
Lately, most of her time is spent serving as the events coordinator at the Morro Bay Senior Center.
“Every Monday afternoon I welcome guests to our center,” she said. “I answer questions, disseminate information about senior Meals that Connect, the free Emeritus classes, Tai Chi, Pace, and our walking and ping pong activities. We have discounts at MB Aquatic classes. I’m so proud to offer our mature Morro Bay citizens a chance to come together and safely socialize in a friendly environment.”
She is also very busy as the president of the Neighborhood Watch Association. She hosted “Let’s Talk Food and Wine” for five years on-air at Morro Bay’s Community Radio 97.3 THE ROCK and still completes the trio for their monthly radio show collaboration, “Bodacious Ya Ya’s.”
Carole knew by the late 1980s she would someday live in Morro Bay and as “life took its curves” she accepted a job based in San Luis Obispo. She rented a small home in Morro Bay but worked and traveled so much she never had the chance to get involved in the community. In 1999 she purchased her home and then met the love of her life, Larry. They remodeled it to accommodate their special interests. He’s a woodworker. She continues to cultivate her painting. Together they enjoy pairing a local wine to the latest recipe they are trying.
She’s a strong advocate for “the preservation of this beautiful City of Morro Bay” she said. “I monitor the City Council meetings . . . speak, ask questions, and send my questions to our City Manager, Scott Collins, for further discussion.
“Moving to a new community is the beginning of a new adventure,” Carole said to encourage all to get involved in something. “It is one’s opportunity to open new chapters and meet new people, share life’s passions with. Morro Bay has so many opportunities to get involved.”



The current seed library at the Morro Bay branch before the new one is in place in early March. Photo submitted

The Los Osos branch makes use of the now defunct card catalogue system. Instead of flipping index cards in drawers to find the call number for a book, patrons choose among varieties of plants, trees and grasses. You can also see some of these plants growing in the drought-tolerant pollinator garden around the library. It was planted by the Los Osos Valley Garden Club.
“People like to look through the card catalog because it is kind of old fashioned,” said Antoinette Padgett, library associate in Los Osos. “We have seeds from various local sources, seed exchanges, and seed companies such as Seed Savers Exchange, Botanical Interests and All Things Organic. We strive to offer organic, open-pollinated, non-GMO seeds when available.”
At the close of 2021, the Los Osos branch had just received 100 packets to add to their collection of vegetables, flowers and over 25 varieties of California native plants that were gifted by the San Luis Obispo Botanical Garden.
The seed library in Morro Bay is, in fact, growing. On March 1, they expect to roll out a 16-drawer, artist painted seed catalog to replace the current small wooden boxes. When fully stocked, the library will hold about 500-600

seed packets with more than 80 varieties including 45 that are exclusive to Morro Bay.
“We have vegetables, fruits, 16 herbal varieties, flowers and natives,” Holland said. “Many are organic or heirlooms, including endangered and local heirlooms.”



A sign with a quote from Cicero at the Morro Bay Library. Photo submitted

Seed-sharing programs can expand access to crops and educate the public. Depending on the library in your area, gardeners are encouraged to save seeds and donate them back so others can access them. Padgett said that there is a rulebook to go with the process, so check before you save.

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Community

“Patrons who wish to save seeds from what they grow and return them to the library help to create a self-sustaining source of seeds,” said Padgett. “We have information available on how to save seeds for replanting, as well as growing information for the seeds we have.”

Readers that frequent other parts of the county can find seed libraries at the Arroyo Grande, Morro Bay, Nipomo, Shell Beach, Los Osos and Santa Margarita branches — availability varies among branches.

Seed librarians have also participated in community outreach events such as seed exchanges, educational fairs and festivals to promote SLO County seed libraries.

“Seed libraries enable people to grow and enjoy their own food,” Padgett said. “It provides an activity that the whole family can participate in together and it is a great learning experience for kids.”

Prior to the pandemic and the shutdowns that followed, the public was invited to attend Seed Stories three times a year to participate in discussions on various topics including how to pack seeds, how to prepare certain types of seeds for saving, and how to separate seeds from chaff as well as an opportunity to share what people were growing, their successes and failures.

Plans are in the works to hold related presentations, classes and seed exchanges in the very near future as pandemic regulations change. Keep an eye on the events calendar at slolibrary.org to find classes.

The Los Osos Library is located at 2075 Palisades Ave. The Morro Bay Library is located at 625 Harbor St.

Retired From page 1

before Feb. 30.”

Smith was sharply criticized by parents in January after both districts voted to increase his pay, which rose to a combined \$220,000 a year with each district paying \$110,000.

The salary issue was the latest issue between Smith and the parents, as they’ve clashed several times over the course of the coronavirus pandemic over rules being instituted at the school.

Smith was criticized by some for not strictly adhering to the State guidelines about facemasks.

Nevertheless, Smith was gracious in his good-bye letter. “I consider what we have done together as an overwhelming success that has benefited students. I am proud of our work together. As I move into this new season in life, I wish you and your children happiness and success.”

School District to Address Super’s Retirement

The President of the Cayucos Elementary School District Board said they were all a bit stunned when earlier this month the district superintendent announced his intentions to retire and will delve into the process to replace him at an upcoming special meeting.

Cayucos School Board President, Pete Schuler, told Estero Bay News that the special meeting on Feb. 29 (6:30 a.m.) they would “discuss our options and determine a plan of action in closed session.

“Mr. [Scott] Smith remains our superintendent. He has put forth a date for his retirement and intends to submit his stipulated, 120-day notice at the end of this month.”

Smith made a surprise announcement at the Board’s recent meeting, announcing that he intended to put his retirement papers in by the end of February. Schuler said that gives them some time, as the process is supposed to do.

“This, as intended,” he said, “should provide our board the time to plan for the future and allow us to follow a thoughtful and deliberate plan of action. Of course, if needed we could pursue an interim, but I, personally, do not expect us to shortcut the recruitment process.”

Schuler added, “We hope the hiring process will be quick, but we do not intend to hurry. Hiring a Superintendent is a critically important task for a school board, so we shall adhere to our, yet to be determined, process and make the best decision for our district.”

The school districts in Cayucos and Cambria are a somewhat unusual situation, as the Cayucos District is just one, K-8th grade school; Cambria School District is one elemen-

tary school and a junior high; and the Coast Union School District encompasses both Cambria and Cayucos but also just has the high school and continuation school.

Smith was superintendent of both Cayucos Elementary and Coast Union, deriving half his salary from each district, and despite the announcement nothing has changed yet.

“It would be premature to consider a NEW shared-services agreement at this point,” Schuler said. “The current agreement was set in place based on circumstances and personnel situations that are currently evolving.”

Is the loss of Cayucos’ superintendent an opportunity to re-think the whole triple-district arrangement, perhaps a chance to look into unifying the three?

“Combining districts is not something we have ever discussed as a board,” Schuler said, “so it is unlikely to be part of our immediate plan.”

Why hasn’t the Board issued any statements? “We have not issued a statement on Mr. Smith leaving,” Schuler said, “because we have not been able to meet as a Board. Our small quorum at the last meeting, three of five, determined that any statement should come from the entire board. Although, I think we may all still be a bit stunned by Mr. Smith’s announcement 10 days ago.”

Estero Bay News contacted Smith via email asking for an interview, and he declined at this time.

Park Progress From page 1

yet to find that nonprofit. That’s going to be a grassroots effort. People really want this dog park, the CSD can be the lead but this is going to be a community project. This isn’t going to be miraculously funded by the county. They’ve made it very clear they’ll have no financial involvement, at least at this point in time.”

Before the concept plan can be finalized, a size has to be agreed upon. PRAC members Shaunna Sullivan and Alissa Feldman supported expanding the space.

“I don’t understand why we aren’t making it bigger as opposed to all the landscaping, berming and setbacks,” Sullivan said. “The goal of this is a dog park where a dog can actually run without such confining space. It just seems to me we’re doing a lot more than just the dog park, for the dogs. It seems to be more of a landscape, beautiful park setting kind of thing.”

Part of reason for the space dedicated to outer landscaping and the setback is to provide screening for the neighboring church and residential areas.

The most recent design includes 66,295 total space, with 23,236 square feet for rover to romp with a 16,857 square foot sand area for large breed dogs and a 5,748 sf area for small breed dogs, drinking water supplies, some parking, trees, seating areas, decomposed granite walkways and drought-tolerant vegetation. A bathroom and some of the parking spaces were removed from the previous plan.

Water supply is an issue with all new construction Los Osos and the dog park is no different. Irrigation and drinking water for the dogs are a priority.

“It is going to be rather complicated or it may not be gold since it’s in Golden State’s water service area,” said Munds.

“They may just say we’ve got to establish a point of connection to their system, get a water meter and pay a water bill because the county and Golden State haven’t negotiated out recycled water yet. We may be on the hook for using potable water for the landscape irrigation.”

Munds said that the County and Golden State are trying to convert the irrigation at the Community Park from a well onsite to recycled water.

“I know it’s going to be expensive,” he said.

At this point, the community garden and pickleball courts, proposed by members of the public, are not a part of the plan.

“We received public comment about a potential garden at our last Parks and Rec meeting,” said Matthew Fourcroy, PRAC chair. “We discussed that item pretty vigorously, and the committee has decided that we’re going to focus on just the dog park for now. That could be a second phase.”

Next Steps

• Approval of the Los Osos Habitation Conservation Plan (HCP) by the Coastal Commission and U.S. Fish and Wildlife is still pending and no projected approval date has been released at this time.

• Approval of the Los Osos Community Plan, which was submitted to the California Coastal Commission in December of 2020 and is expected to be approved sometime in early 2022.

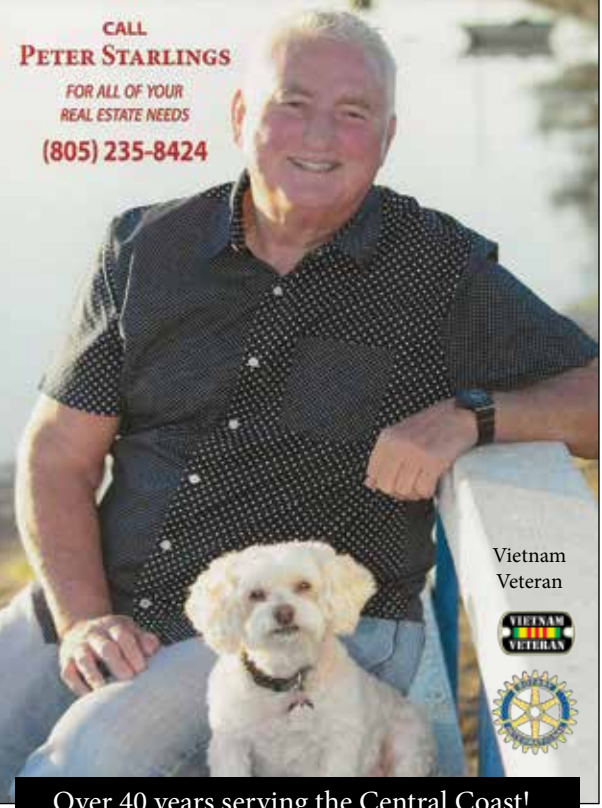
• Finalize design details including: dog park surface materials, fencing materials/style, landscaping, parking, etc.

• Develop a project cost estimation in order search for grant and other funding opportunities, which is expected to be complete before the next fiscal year starting July 1.

• Identify a partner (i.e. nonprofit, service blue) to oversee operation of the park.

Readers who want to be involved with this anticipated project, can go to the at <https://www.losososcscd.org/los-osos-dog-park-concept-plan> or email info@losososcscd.org

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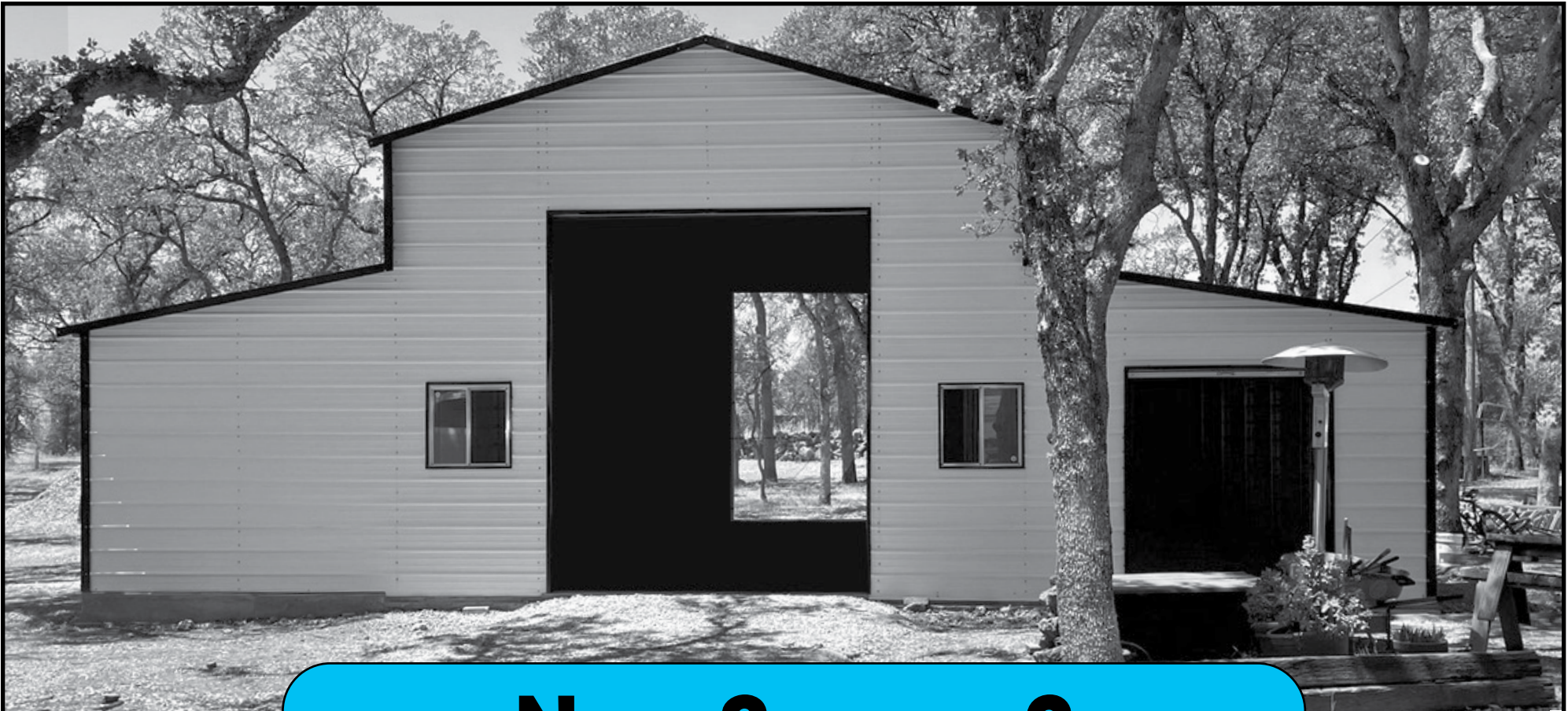


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