

## Moving Forward: Cayucos Land Conservancy

By Judy Salamacha

When was the last time you drove north on Highway One? Did you notice the Pacific Ocean on your left, maybe a few cars parked at pull-outs, a couple of hikers, maybe a family — folks like you and me, who stopped long enough to make their way towards an overlook cliff to see crashing waves and feel the salty spray? Traveling farther, were your eyes pulled right to notice cattle grazing on miles and miles of hilly grasslands only interrupted by a few village structures, of course, called Harmony?

Have you ever wondered why these pristine open spaces were not packed with hotels and homes? Why isn't our north coastline drive between Morro Bay, Cayucos, Cambria and San Simeon filled with homes and visitor-friendly shops and restaurants like our south coastal neighbors? Blame them or bless them, you'd be wrong to assume it was the California Coastal Commission or a federal government agency that said no to development — at least for now.

Did I hear a "thank you very much" realizing you were experiencing the same drive or ride or hike our grandparents, settlers, or our Native Americans once saw?

Truth be told, over the years this land has been discovered, claimed, acquired, retained, owned, appropriated etc. etc. I don't have time or knowledge to detail our coastal history. Suffice it to know that in March 2022, this open space property belongs to us - we the people - to forevermore look at, cherish and care for, tread over, study, allow grazing and enjoy gasping at wildlife darting and feeding. But how and why are we so blessed?

Well, according to the Cayucos Land Conservancy website (CLC) "...in 1979 something big happened..." when a "powerful group from southern California" bought



A map of the Toro Coast Preserve Project. Photo via Cayucos Land Conservancy website

275 acres of "...pristine marine terrace..." north of Cayucos. These landowners were able to re-zone the land and get approval from the California Coastal Commission to develop a gated community of 60-homes, a hotel for upwards to 250 guests, plus shops and restaurants. Today we know that acreage as Estero Bay Bluff State Park because some Cayucans were paying attention and refused to accept this plan.

Recently Greg Bettencourt, a founding member and current president of CLC, explained to Morro Bay Rotarians the catalyst behind the creation of the group's initial land trust and conservancy. Essentially, our forever coastal view was preserved into perpetuity because enough Cayucans said the Estero Bay Bluff proposal did not fit the character of a north coast they envisioned.

"It wasn't the homes," Bettencourt said. "What riled up the neighborhood was their 'gated' intent." These emboldened outliers were not going to get away with a financially lucrative take-away of public access on this stretch of

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## Chorro Valley Energy Project Review Begun

By Neil Farrell



A review of the proposed 'Pecho Energy Storage Center' project is underway. Photo submitted

Review of a proposal to build an energy storage facility in Chorro Valley is now officially underway, after the California Energy Commission "docketed" the so-called "Pecho Energy Storage Center" for review and permitting.

According to the CEC's announcement, "The Pecho Energy Storage Center [PESC] would be a nominal 400-megawatt, 3,200 MW-hour, advanced compressed air energy storage [A-CAES] facility capable of flexibly charging and discharging daily."

The project site is on farmland located at 2284 Adobe Rd., a little over a mile outside Morro Bay and off Hwy 1 at Canet Roads. The property sits at the base of Hollister Peak with Chorro Creek passing nearby.

The Pecho plant, "would compress air into a purpose-built underground cavern," reads a project description on the Hydrostor project website, "using electricity from the grid, most likely off-peak, excess, or surplus electricity. The heat from the air compression process would be captured and stored in an aboveground thermal storage system."

"The compressed air then would be stored in the cavern [underground tanks] under the pressure of a hydrostatic head created by an onsite, aboveground water reservoir. When electricity is needed by the grid, the compressed air would be released using the assistance of the hydrostatic head pressure."

Major equipment would include, "four, all-electric air compressor trains, four 100-MW air-driven power turbine generators, heat exchangers, thermal heat storage, an underground compressed air storage cavern, an aboveground water reservoir, auxiliary facilities, and a 3.4-mile electric

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## Grant Would Boost MBFD Staffing

By Neil Farrell

The Morro Bay Fire Department is applying for a federal grant that could mean it goes to full staffing for the first time, perhaps ever, as part of the Coronavirus Pandemic response's largesse from Uncle Sam.

Fire Chief Daniel McCrain recently sought authorization to apply for a "Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response" (SAFER) Grant from the Department of Homeland Security/Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). The 3-year grant, totaling over \$1.5 million, would pay for four, full-time firefighters to fill out the department's staffing needs.

The SAFER grant, "covers 100% of the 'fully burdened' salary, i.e., salary, benefits, etc. of a Firefighter position," Chief McCrain said in a staff report, "which is approximately between \$483,000 to \$524,000 for the four positions annually."

He added that the grants this time around require zero matching funds from the City because of COVID-19. The grants could also help address an upcoming issue the department faces — the potential retirement of three of its long-time serving members.

These retirements "could therefore reduce the overall force by attrition if additional sufficient funds are unavailable after the SAFER grant expires," Chief McCrain said. "Every year multiple grant funding opportunities are made available for Fire Departments around the nation. It is common practice for departments to continually apply for these types of grants to help support firefighter safety through strategic grant seeking and funding."

The SAFER grants this year are intended, "for

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## Morro Bay Harbor Gets an eFoil 'Lift'

By Neil Farrell

It's one of the newest and hottest toys for thrill-seeking, adventurous types, and a new business in Morro Bay is introducing the Central Coast to this latest craze.

Central Coast Lift, is a new business started by Nick Trujillo and Gary Rhodes and located at the Morro Bay Landing, a relatively new development on the waterfront between Harbor Hut and Dockside.

A "Lift" is the manufacturer's name for an "electric hydrofoil," explained Rhodes, who is a certified boat captain driving charter boats like Capt. Stew's bay cruise and Paradise Sport-fishing, they're also known as "eFoils."

It's a mix of hydro-aerodynamics, Rhodes said, and consisting of a board, a mast (protruding underwater), electric motor/battery, wing and a tail. The throttle, which controls the speed of the small propeller, is handheld and wireless.

The Lift is designed to motor through the water, reaching a speed where it lifts up and glides above the surface, like a speedboat when you throttle up.



A new Morro Bay company, Central Coast Lift, now sells the latest watersport toy.

"The 'Airchair' was the first style of this," explained Trujillo, who also owns the Bay Cruisers electric boat rental based in The Boatyard Center, and opened but recently sold to his mom, LaNetta Trujillo, the Boatyard Market. That early version, he added, was pulled behind a boat and appeared back in the 1990s. This modern version is well beyond that.

"Lift has the patent," Trujillo said. "They were the first to add a motor to it."

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‘State of Emergency’ Canceled

By Neil Farrell



At long last, it’s finally over. Not the coronavirus pandemic per se, but the state of emergency, declared in response to the viral outbreak that threw the world a wicked curveball, has officially ended in California and San Luis Obispo County.

SLO County officials announced Feb. 22, the local state of emergency that was first declared on March 17, 2020, would end on Friday, Feb. 25 in SLO County.

County Administrative Officer Wade Horton and County Health Director Dr. Penny Borenstein were handed authority by County Supervisors to manage and handle the pandemic response, handing down whatever orders and restrictions they deemed necessary to fight the pandemic, and mostly taking their lead from the State Department of Public Health’s orders and guidelines.

The enabling Resolution from 2020 said they were to terminate the state of emergency “at the earliest possible date that conditions warrant such termination.”

That day is apparently now. “I very much appreciate the County team,” said CAO Horton, “health care professionals, and volunteers who stepped up over a very challenging and divisive couple of years. I also understand the difficult impact the pandemic has had on our community. Moving forward, I hope we can remember how to extend more grace toward one another as fellow community members as we face future challenges.”

Dr. Borenstein, who has been the local face of the pandemic response for SLO County, said, “While these declarations are no longer needed, the Public Health team and local health care providers continue to respond to this pandemic and provide resources, like vaccines and testing, to help residents protect their health and the health of the community. We remain ready to respond to future surges.”

Both Horton and Dr. Borenstein presented formal letters to Supervisors at their March 1 meeting to formally end the state of emergency.

Statewide, the Governor set 12:01 a.m. Saturday, March 12 as the official lifting of the mask mandates for kids and staff in schools and daycare centers, however, they will still be “strongly recommended.”

The State lifted its indoor mask mandate on Feb. 16 except for so-called “high transmission settings” — public transit, emergency shelters, health care settings, correctional facilities, homeless shelters and long-term care facilities.

On Feb. 16, the County also lifted the indoor mask mandate that it had set up last September with the Delta variant of the virus corresponding with the Governor’s announcement of the same thing.

So how bad was it? As of March 1, there had been 52,426 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in SLO County according to County stats.

Also on March 1 there were 474 active cases in the county and 14 people were hospitalized, with two in intensive care (ICU).

To date there have been a total of 1,519 people hospitalized with COVID, 229 were admitted to the ICU and 453 people had died.

The biggest number of hospitalizations and deaths by far came in the elderly populations. SLO County saw about a dozen people die of COVID who were over 100. There

were 187 people 85-older, who were hospitalized with 172 deaths in that age group.

People 65-84 have seen 590 people hospitalized with 187 deaths. People aged 50-64 had 388 hospitalized with 74 deaths; and ages 30-49 had 252 hospitalizations with 19 deaths.

People from 18-29 saw 75 hospitalizations and one death. For those under-18 there has been 27 hospitalized and zero deaths.

By locations, Morro Bay has recorded 1,517 cases of COVID since the start of the pandemic in April 2020. Los Osos has recorded 1,639 and Cayucos 294. Cambria has recorded 535 cases and San Simeon 74.

San Luis Obispo has seen the most cases with 10,062 and Paso Robles is second at 9,822.

SLO County’s pandemic response has been impressive. They established a massive, emergency, over-flow field hospital at Cal Poly early on in the pandemic when it was feared that local hospitals could be overrun with COVID-19 patients.

And while that over \$4 million field hospital was never used to treat patients, it was an impressive accomplishment nonetheless and provided a blueprint for responding to future pandemics and natural disasters.

It should be noted that SLO County continues to offer testing and vaccinations by appointment, see: [www.slopublichealth.org/covid19](http://www.slopublichealth.org/covid19). Testing and vaccinations are available at most pharmacies and doctor’s offices, as well.

**Not All Faces Are Free**

With the statewide state of emergency for the coronavirus pandemic response now lifted, what does that mean? Do we still have to cover our faces in the supermarket? Do school kids still have to wear masks?

The short answer is “No.” But it’s a bit more complicated than that.

“Effective March 1, 2022,” read the official new masking guidelines from California Department of Public Health (CDPH), “the requirement for unvaccinated persons to mask in indoor public settings and businesses is being replaced by a strong recommendation that all persons, regardless of vaccination status, continue to mask while in indoor public settings and businesses.”

So while you don’t HAVE to wear a mask, the State recommends you do, leaving it pretty much up to the individual and individual stores whether or not they want masks to be worn inside.

As for schools, “after March 11, 2022, the universal masking requirement for K-12 and childcare settings will terminate. CDPH strongly recommends that individuals in these settings continue to mask in indoor settings when the universal masking requirement lifts.”

Despite growing evidence that masks don’t stop you from catching COVID-19 or passing it on, and in the case of school kids, can have other deleterious consequences to their learning abilities and social skills, the State still thinks they are a good idea.

“Masking will continue to be an important layer of protection along with the continued recommendations around vaccinations, testing and ventilation,” the CDPH said, “to keep schools a safe environment, even as case rates and hospitalizations decline.”

The State isn’t simply lifting the mask mandates and freeing up everyone’s faces, there are exceptions.

Anyone on “public transit” — airplanes, ships, ferries, trains, subways, buses, taxis and ride share cars — are still required to mask up to ride. And you also need to mask up at facilities that service public transit — airports, bus terminals, marinas, train stations, seaports, subway stations or “any other area that provides transportation.

Emergency shelters and warming shelters also will still require masks; healthcare settings like nursing homes still require them, as well as jails, prisons, and homeless shelters.

The State is also “strongly recommending” continued mask wearing “in indoor public settings and businesses “ for example, retail stores, restaurants, theaters, family entertainment centers, meetings, and state and local government offices.

And they want you wear “surgical masks or higher level respirators” that would include the N95, KN95 and KF 94

type masks that are engineered to protect against contaminants. A typical KN95 mask is 5-layers thick and designed to filter 95% of all airborne particles, and can be bought in packs of from three to 20 costing about \$1.25 each (see Amazon.com to shop for them). They come in black and white.

When will local residents again be able to yell at their elected leaders in person? Agencies like the CSD in Los Osos, the Morro Bay City Council and County Supervisors, all recently passed continuing Resolutions calling for on-line, virtual meetings, Morro Bay City Council is tentatively slated to resume in-person meetings in April, according to the city manager.

This of course is dependent on whether another coronavirus variant emerges and puts case numbers on the rise again, which under the new CDPH guidelines, could cause an about-face and have the State put in mandates once again.

CAL ID Fees to Double

By Neil Farrell

Fees for a program that stores and analyzes fingerprints against various crime databases could soon double after County Supervisors voted to continue supporting the program through motor vehicle fees.

County Sheriff Ian Parkinson asked Supervisors to double the fees for the “California Identification Program” or CAL ID Program, a minimal fee tacked onto the registration of private passenger and commercial vehicles, collected by the DMV and distributed back to the County.

The fees have been set at \$1 per passenger vehicle and

Correction

A recent story about increased costs for Morro Bay’s Water Reclamation Facility project apparently mixing up some numbers. The City Manager reports that the current budget is \$144.5 million, which is up from the initial estimates of \$126 million in 2018, when the water and sewer rates were set.



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News

\$2 per commercial vehicle registered in SLO County for over 15 years now. The new fees will be \$2 and \$4 respectively.

But first the Supervisors will have to hold a public hearing, which is supposed to happen March 15. If they vote to accept the new fees they would go into effect 6-months later (August).

SLO County joined the CAL ID Program in 1986, initially funding it with traffic violation and criminal fines, with the County Sheriff responsible for coordinating participation and for forming a CAL ID Board to oversee the program.

“This statute [Penal Code 11112.4] mandates that the board must be comprised of the county sheriff, the district attorney, a mayor, two police chiefs, a member of the county board of supervisors, and a citizen member,” Sheriff Parkinson wrote in his report. “The CAL ID Board works on behalf of all law enforcement agencies in the county, and collectively represents community needs as they pertain to public safety programs within the defined purview of the Program”

By 2005, the program funding was starting to come up short, so Supervisors approved adding a fee onto the registration costs for vehicles in SLO County, which was allowed by a recently passed State Law.

Those fees covered the costs until recently, when Sheriff Parkinson said they started coming up short again. In Fiscal Year 2020-21, he said, “the CAL ID Program had an approximate net operating loss of a \$28,500, and for Fiscal Year 2021-2022, will have an approximate net operating loss of \$207,000. Additionally, a detailed analysis indicates that the Program will not have sufficient funds to replace or upgrade critical infrastructure components at their defined ‘end-of-life’ dates, when vendors will no longer support them. Therefore, without an increase in fees the net operating losses will continue to increase, and the Program will require general fund support to supplement any shortages.”

Sheriff Parkinson said the CAL ID Program, “maintains the County’s Automated Fingerprint Identification System [AFIS] and ancillary components such as livescan devices, which are placed within each local law enforcement agency in the county. The Program enhances the capacity of local law enforcement to provide fingerprint identification of individuals who may be driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs, vehicular manslaughter, other vehicle-related crimes, and other crimes committed while operating a motor vehicle.

“The livescan devices capture fingerprint images and photographs of arrestees and electronically transmit them to the AFIS for comparison with county, state, and federal databases. The DOJ requires that arrestee fingerprints be submitted to them electronically.”

Such scanning of fingerprints has greatly improved the quality of what is considered prime evidence in a criminal

matter, as computerized scans are much more reliable than the old ink-rolled fingerprinting done in the past.

“The Program,” Sheriff Parkinson said, “also provides county law enforcement agencies, including the Sheriff’s Office, the ability to search crime scene fingerprints against the SLO AFIS database, as well as the FBI and DOJ databases to identify other criminal suspects, and provides tools and training to increase effectiveness and efficiency in this area.

“Fingerprint evidence analysis is one of the most robust forensic methods for solving crime in San Luis Obispo County.”

But it isn’t all about crime and catching crooks, people can be proven innocent by fingerprints, too. “In addition to being used to identify individuals that may have participated in a criminal act,” the Sheriff explained, “fingerprints are also used to exonerate individuals accused of crimes and are regularly used to identify deceased persons in the county.”

The County’s CAL ID Program is used by city police departments in SLO, Morro Bay, Pismo Beach, Atascadero, Paso Robles, Arroyo Grande, and Grover Beach; and by the police departments at Cuesta College and Cal Poly, according to the Sheriff’s report.

In a budget published with the staff report, the Sheriff predicts that the increased DMV fees will bring in over \$600,000 a year, plus \$43,000 in court fines and \$2,500 in “interest” presumably on program reserves for a total revenue in FY 2022-23 of \$654,500.

On the expense side of the ledger, the Sheriff listed \$301,800 in salaries, and \$224,300 in services and supplies for \$526,100 in total expenses. That leaves a net operating surplus of \$119,300 for FY 2022-23, which is managed by the CAL ID Board.

The County has been involved in the CAL ID Program since the mid-1980s.

Second Fatal Crash on Hwy 1

By Neil Farrell

There’s been another fatal car crash on Hwy 1 east of Morro Bay, as what can be a tricky stretch of the scenic highway sees two terrible crashes within two months.

According to a Highway patrol accident report, at about 6:23 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 26, John Carroll, Jr., 71 of Turlock, Calif., was driving a 2014 Honda CRV and had stopped in the left turn lane on northbound Hwy 1 at San Luisito Creek Road.

Paul Gendron, 50 of Visalia was coming in the opposite direction in a 2013 Kia Optima traveling the speed limit, according to the CHP, when Carroll turned in front of him.

“The front end of the Kia slammed into the right side of the Honda,” the CHP report said. A third car, a 2012

Ford Escape driven by Vivian Young Gong, 66 of Morro Bay couldn’t avoid the collision that happened right in front of her. Gong’s vehicle “collided into the Kia after the initial collision.”

According to a news report, Gendron’s Kia was shoved into the fast lane after the initial collision and right into the path of Gong’s Ford.

The chain-reaction crash sent everyone to the hospital with Carroll, Jr., Gendron and Gong all suffering major injuries. The female passenger in Carroll’s car, who was not named in the CHP report, died at Sierra Vista Hospital from her injuries.

It was the second horrific crash at that same uncontrolled intersection inside of 2 months.

Previously, at about 7:22 p.m. on New Year’s Eve (Dec. 31) Jerome “Jerry” Perry, 62 died in an eerily similar manner, when he turned in front of an oncoming car and was hit and killed.

Perry lived his whole life on San Luisito Creek Road at his family’s ranch compound.

Perry, driving a vintage Chevy pickup truck, reportedly turned in front of a Hyundai Sonata driven by Gerardo Aldama, 38 of Santa Maria, who reportedly slammed on his brakes but was unable to avoid the crash.

The collision pushed Perry’s truck about 80 feet into roadside shrubbery where it caught fire. Aldama was reportedly unhurt in the crash.

The stretch of Hwy 1 between Morro Bay and San Luis Obispo has a history of fatal crashes going back decades when Cuesta College’s two entrances were also uncontrolled intersections.

After several people were killed back in the 1980s and 90s exiting and entering the school, stoplights were erected. And given the County’s efforts to transform El Chorro Regional Park into a vacation destination, traffic at the stoplight can be expected to increase greatly.

From Cuesta to Morro Bay there remain three cross street intersections — San Luisito Creek Road (Canet Road on the other side of the highway), San Bernardo Creek Road (Quintana on the other side) and the entrance to the San Luis Sportsmen’s Club’s Shooting Ranges. Each has left turn lanes.

With the City of Morro Bay currently closing off the Hwy 1 South Bay Boulevard exits due to construction of the Water Reclamation Facility pipeline project, one possible go-around is to turn onto Quintana using the cross traffic left turn at San Bernardo Creek Road.

The overall area is sparsely populated and mainly agricultural lands, however, there are several homesteads down San Luisito Creek Road and along Adobe Road, which parallels the highway.

A few people also live off Canet and Dana Roads and if a proposed electric storage facility gets built in that same area at the foot of Hollister Peak, traffic is likely to increase there and stay that way.



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# County Plans Out Big-Ticket Projects

By Neil Farrell

County Supervisors recently approved an update of a plan for tackling big infrastructure projects over the next several years and the overall price tag is a staggering nearly \$600 million.

Called the “Infrastructure and Facilities Five Year Capital Improvement Plan,” (5-year CIP or CIP) “is a consolidated look at the infrastructure and facilities improvements that are planned to be implemented during the next five fiscal years beginning in FY 2022-23,” reads a report on the plan. “At the end of each year, the plan is revised to add a new fiscal year.”

These major projects can be anything from construction of or improvements to “roads, bridges, water and wastewater systems, and community drainage. Facility projects include the construction of, or improvements to, County offices, libraries, correctional facilities, parks, and airport facilities.”

Most all County Departments had a hand in writing the CIP, setting up a priority criteria to try and tackle the most pressing items first.

Among the documents used were the Master Plans for utility systems; Circulation Studies for Transportation; or Pavement Condition Index for street repairs.

The CIP list can’t be expected to be completed very quickly, as there are some 173 projects listed and money is an issue too

“The majority of infrastructure projects,” reads the report, “are dependent on having an outside funding source or grants in order to proceed with project implementation and be included in the Five Year CIP. These include utility system maintenance and improvement projects funded through rates and charges; road safety and capacity improvements funded through Road Improvement Fee programs and Federal, State, and local grants; and flood control projects typically covered with State/Federal grants and assessments.”

All of the CIP projects are expected to cost over \$100,000, a relatively low bar given the costs associated with any government project.

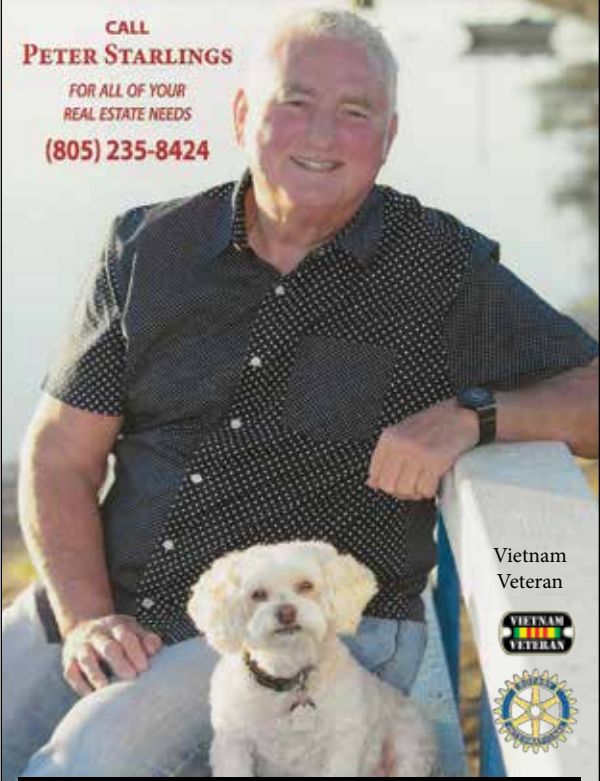
The sum of all the CIP projects tops \$590 million, “spread over communities and rural areas. The plan includes 48 infrastructure projects, with a total estimated value of \$250 million. Of these projects, 25 are expected to be implemented in FY 2022-23, with a total estimated cost of \$29 million.”

The most expensive category is with “facility projects” or upgrades and maintenance of County-owned facilities and properties, some 125 in total at an estimated cost of \$340 million. “Of these projects,” the report said, “38 are expected to be implemented in FY 2022-23 at an estimated value of \$63 million.”

Three criteria were used to rank the projects — evaluation of essential needs, funding, and feasibility. The CIP isn’t cast in stone.

“The Five Year CIP is a planning guide and is not a guarantee that all the projects will be developed or funded.

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


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# News Briefs

By Theresa-Marie Wilson

## Poly Earns ‘Most Promising Place to Work in Student Affairs’ Honor

For the fifth time since 2017, Cal Poly has been named one of the “Most Promising Places to Work in Student Affairs” by ACPA-College Student Educators International and Diverse: Issues in Higher Education.

The university is one of 15 higher education institutions nationwide (and the lone California State University campus) to receive the honor, which recognizes ongoing commitments to workplace diversity and staffing practices through key factors including family friendliness, salary and benefits, and professional development opportunities, among others.

“I’m proud to accept this honor once again because it highlights our commitment to developing and sustaining a healthy workplace culture,” said Keith Humphrey, vice president for Student Affairs. “Student success is our primary focus, but that cannot be achieved without first establishing an environment where every employee is valued for both their talents and the identities they hold.”

Jamie S. Patton, assistant vice president for Student Affairs, Diversity and Inclusion, added that Student Affairs leaders have worked diligently, and will continue to do so, to create a workplace environment that emphasizes diversity, inclusion and respect.

To that end, Student Affairs has provided ACPA membership to staff members since 2019 so that they can connect with the research, scholarship and professional development that is grounded in student development theory, equity and justice. In addition, ongoing engagement efforts, such as the division’s monthly all-staff meetings, allow colleagues additional opportunities to connect, share wisdom and expertise, and engage with Student Affairs leaders directly. Other efforts, such as providing flexible work time for staff to join and engage with faculty-staff affinity groups on campus, are also areas of continued emphasis by divisional leaders.

“This recognition affirms the progress we’ve made; however, we know that our work is not yet completed,” Patton said. “Our division is committed to helping each staff member be their best selves. This is modeled by our divisional leadership, which values recognition of staff and the opportunities to participate in professional development opportunities.”

## Tens of Thousands Support Marine Sanctuary

More than 30,000 people expressed their support for the proposed Chumash Heritage National Marine Sanctuary, according to analysis of comments submitted to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and posted on regulations.gov. The 83-day public comment period, part of NOAA’s scoping process for the Chumash Heritage NMS off the Central Coast of California, ended on Jan. 31.

“The incredible outpouring of support for the

Risks relative to each project need to be assessed prior to inclusion in the annual budget and implementation.”

It’s supposed to be a living document. “The evaluation of priorities and emerging needs will result in changes to the plan,” the County report said. “Changes to the plan will include the addition of new projects and the elimination of projects that have been completed or removed under reconsideration of the Five Year CIP.”

The intent is just to provide a jumping off point and to organize all of the County’s many things that need fixing. The County listed several things that they crossed off the

Chumash Heritage sanctuary shows just how much people care about this incredible part of the world,” said Northern Chumash Tribal Council (NCTC) Chairwoman, Violet Sage Walker, in a press release. “Community members and business owners in Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo counties, scientists, ocean users of all kinds, and indigenous people from around the world spoke out in a strong voice, ‘Protect this sacred place now!’”

NOAA received 22,479 comments during the public scoping process, including several letters signed by thousands of individuals and organizations. Of the 21,828 posted comments analyzed by NCTC, more than 99% indicated support for the sanctuary. NOAA will continue to process comments submitted before the Jan. 31 deadline over the coming weeks.

The NOAA designation process has four steps. The scoping process has just concluded. Next, NOAA prepares draft designation documents and conducts environmental reviews, followed by a second public comment period for input on these draft documents. After considering this public input, NOAA will prepare a final designation document and adopt a final environmental impact statement.

Under the current proposal, organizers say the Chumash Heritage NMS will protect upwards of 7,000 square miles of ocean and 156 miles of coastline from Cambria to Gaviota Creek. The proposed sanctuary will bridge the gap between the existing Monterey Bay and Channel Islands sanctuaries to create hundreds of continuous miles of protected ocean.

The sanctuary nomination was submitted to NOAA in 2015 by Fred Collins, the late chairman of the Northern Chumash Tribal Council, with the support of a group of local environmental organizations. Efforts to designate a sanctuary on the Central Coast date back more than 40 years. Go to [chumashsanctuary.org](http://chumashsanctuary.org), to learn more.

## Assembly District Field Narrows

Seaside City Councilmember and Assembly District 30 candidate Alexis García-Arrazola announced his withdrawal from the race for State Assembly and endorsed Morro Bay City Councilmember Dawn Addis.

García-Arrazola released the following statement announcing his endorsement:

“As a former journalist, I know the importance of integrity and altruism. I entered the race for State Assembly because I believe it is essential that our next Assemblymember fights selflessly for working families, young people, and our most vulnerable. I am endorsing Dawn Addis because I know that she shares these values and is committed to championing them in the State Assembly.”

Addis has served as a classroom teacher and educational program developer. She has worked for the San Luis Coastal Unified School District. She holds a bachelor’s degree in art education and Spanish and a master’s in special education from San Francisco State University. She also holds four different teaching credentials.

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



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News

- A co-located Emergency Dispatch Center (\$32 million);
- A Probation Department Office building replacement (\$26M);
- Pavement Rehabilitation Program 2022-27 (\$75M);
- Bridge Replacement Projects 2022-27 (\$63M);
- Improvements to the Avila Beach Drive Interchange (\$13M); and,
- Los Ranchos and Buckley Roads at State Route 227 projects (\$14M).

It should be noted that each of these projects, while lumped together in the CIP, must each undergo environmental review under the California Environmental Quality ACT (CEQA) and some are already well into that process with others already having leaped over that hurdle.

Also, funding for many of the projects has already been included in past County budgets. “Of the infrastructure and facilities projects [total of \$590 million], \$128 million has been allocated in previous years from a variety of sources, leaving a remaining unallocated budget of \$462 million,” the County report said.

The County taps a lot of different agencies — both State and Federal — for funding these projects.

“Key outside agencies,” reads the report, “which provide funding for County projects by way of direct funding or grants include Federal Aviation Administration, State of California Assembly Bill 900, Senate Bill 81, donations from various non-profit groups, California Coastal Commission, Wildlife Conservation Board, SLOCOG, Caltrans, Senate Bill 1 (SB1), Transportation Equity Act (TEA-21), Transportation Development Act/Senate Bill 235, United States Department of Agriculture, and Federal Emergency Management Administration.

“In addition, funding is provided under existing development mitigation accounts from the County’s Public Facility Fees and various Road Improvement Fee programs.

“It is also anticipated staff will pursue any eligible funding made available by the federal infrastructure bill, formally known as the ‘Infrastructure, Investment and Jobs Act’ and signed by the President on Nov. 15, 2021.”

How the City Spent Your Sales Taxes

By Neil Farrell

In case you were wondering where all those sales taxes you pay in Morro Bay went, a citizen’s oversight committee recently issued a report on the revenues and expenditures of the City’s two special taxes for last fiscal year.

And while Measures Q and E have provided millions, the City hasn’t spent a sizable chunk building up a hefty unspent/reserve account.

Measure Q is a ½-percent local sales tax approved by voters in 2006, mainly as a means to fund the replacement of the City’s old Harbor Street fire station, which was damaged in the 2003 San Simeon Earthquake and condemned.

Measure Q listed fire and police department needs, street repairs and storm drain maintenance as the uses for the monies. The city built its new firehouse and spends some \$81,000 a year of M-Q monies to pay the debt.

Measure E-20 is a 1% local sales tax hike proposed by the City and approved by voters in November 2020. Its intended purpose was to support public safety in the face

of the Coronavirus Pandemic, which cost the City considerable lost revenues with the pandemic response’s shutting down of so-called “non-essential” businesses.

E-20 was also intended to address tight, funding issues the City faces on a near annual basis and to solidify support for public safety.

According to a summary of the Citizens Finance Advisory Committee’s (CFAC) report for FY 2020-21, the total revenues from Meas. Q and E was \$1.98 million with \$1.11 from M-Q and \$869,000 from M-E, which didn’t take effect until Spring 2021. It was projected to raise \$2 million a year in the impartial ballot analysis from the election, given a full year and a normal economy.

The CFAC report said the City spent \$1.32M of the \$1.98M that came in and is carrying a reserve balance of \$1.23M into the current fiscal year. It lists a cash balance of \$439,000.

Of the spending in 2020-21, the Fire Department got \$480,000 with \$330,000 in salaries for personnel to fill in for vacations and for overtime to staff the required 4-man crews. The debt service on the new firehouse was \$83,000.

The fire department bought \$26,000 in safety equipment and paid \$56,000 towards the debt on a replacement engine.

It also transferred some \$282,000 to City Hall to support the general fund.

The City spent \$425,000 on street maintenance and \$132,000 for the Police Department. Of that, \$83,000 went to staff overtime, \$29,000 to the County Sheriff’s Department and \$20,000 in equipment and supplies.

Interestingly, the City didn’t spend one thin dime on storm drain maintenance, which is perhaps not a high priority as the State continues in drought conditions.

City-CHP Sign Helicopter MOU

By Neil Farrell

The City of Morro Bay has inked a new agreement with the California Highway Patrol for continued use of its emergency helicopter for search and rescue operations.

The City Council recently approved a request from Fire Chief Daniel McCrain to enter into a new “Memorandum of Understanding” with the CHP for training and mutual aid of the CHP helicopter, which though based at the Paso Robles Airport, flies missions all over San Luis Obispo County, working with multiple fire and police agencies.

In Morro Bay, the CHP chopper is often used when someone foolishly tries to climb Morro Rock.

“The CHP helicopter,” Chief McCrain said, “is utilized frequently on ocean rescues, and Morro Rock incidents within the Morro Bay response area. The purpose of this MOU is to authorize properly trained Morro Bay Firefighters to assist the CHP flight crew with rescue operations within the Morro Bay response area and automatic aid areas.”

The new agreement is expected to cost just \$3,200 a year for specialized training with the helicopter crew.

The Chief said the CHP has three levels of training. First is “Helicopter Rescue Awareness,” or simply put, operations training for the chopper’s safe landing zone, i.e.

working around a helicopter safely, and how to ride inside of the aircraft.

Second level is “Helicopter Rescue Operations” training, or working under the helicopter “to safely operate rescue equipment, and how to attach and disconnect equipment from the helicopter hoist.”

The third and possibly most familiar type for the layperson is “Helicopter Rescue Operations,” which encompasses the first two and adds “being hoisted by the helicopter, how to safely transition in and out of the helicopter, and flight safety while attached to the hoist.”

Morro Bay’s firefighter would be trained to this third level.

Readers may recall several years ago when a video of a rescue operation of a stuck climber on Morro Rock with the CHP helicopter lowering former MBFD Capt. Todd Gailey, was posted online creating quite a sensation.

The helicopter training just adds to the skills of a fire crew that the Chief said, “are already trained in multiple disciplines of technical rescue and is the lead agency for rescue emergencies within the city. Department members that are part of the County Technical Rescue Team (TRT) currently assist with these operations.”

The MOU means the City doesn’t have to get its own helicopter nor contract for a private one, as the State pays the costs to keep the bird in the air, and the local fire departments simply provide extra personnel to work on non-law enforcement rescue cases.

County Bidding Guardrail Project

San Luis Obispo County is out for bids now on a project to replace numerous guardrails on roads in Cambria and Los Osos.

The so-called “Metal Beam Guardrail Upgrade Project,” is an estimated \$826,000 project paid for through the Federal Aid Project of the Federal Highway Administration, which spends gasoline taxes on road projects. Caltrans manages the funding program in California and is overseeing the County’s project.

The project will replace old guardrails with new ones that meet modern State and Federal standards, according to a report from Genaro Diaz, the County’s Project Manager.

“The existing guardrail currently varies between 4 inches and 9 inches below the allowable height of new guardrail standards,” Ruiz said. “This project will improve the safety for motorists in the event of a collision with the guardrail by making the following improvements:

- Install new guardrail 31-inches in height; and,
- Replace existing wood posts with new wood or steel posts.

Several sites in Cambria — on Moonstone Beach Drive, Windsor Blvd., and Charing Lane — are on the list for new guardrails.

Several sites on Los Osos Valley Road east of Los Osos; and on Ramona, Drive, South Bay Blvd., Pismo Avenue and Pecho Road in Los Osos are also slated for new railings.

The County previously spent \$422,000 on the design and engineering for the project in previous budgets, and it’s now ready to move to the construction phase.



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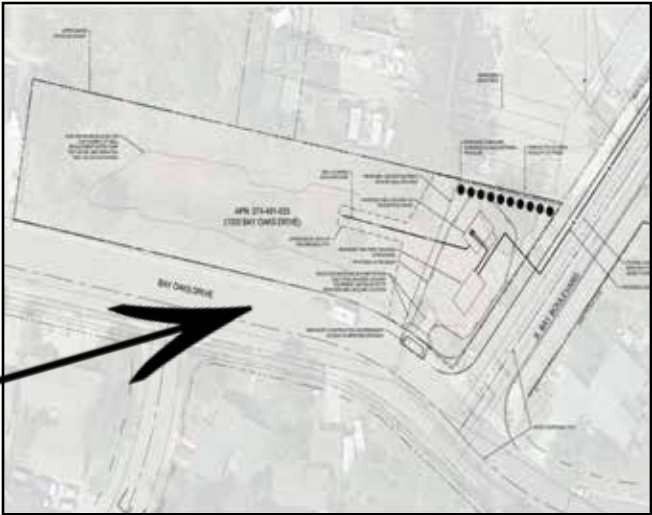
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By Neil Farrell



The Los Osos Well Site Map

It's been in the works for the past 4 years but Los Osos appears ready to dig a new, drinking-water well and start to shore up its limited supplies.

The Community Services District Board was slated on March 3 to approve a bid package for its "Los Osos Basin Plan Program C Well," a pretty deep drinking water well that will be located near the intersection of South Bay Boulevard and Bay Oaks Drive.

According to the bid package, "The work is comprised of providing all necessary labor, materials, accessories, equipment, and supervision to provide a 700-foot deep, 12" diameter stainless steel potable water supply well inside a 22" diameter borehole as shown on the Project technical specifications. The Work includes drilling of the well, well development and completion, disposal of cuttings, disposal of development water, and all other work to make the potable water well complete and functional as specified."

The CSD's consultant, Cleath-Harris Geologists, designed and engineered the project and The Wallace Group, the CSD's engineering firm, prepared the bid documents. Cleath-Harris' "probable" cost estimate is \$531,000 just to drill the well, and the overall project budget is some \$2.1 million.

The drilling budget includes the estimate for the drilling work — \$531,000 then add \$29,000 in contingencies — for a total estimate of \$621,000.

The planning, permitting and environmental review have all been completed and the CSD expects to get a Minor Use Permit from the County on March 4 (post press deadline).

The well portion of this 3-prong project will also need a 400-square foot pump house building, paving, landscaping and more, including a pipeline to connect it to the CSD's water system.

"This is a very complicated project," CSD General Manager Ron Munds told Estero Bay News, "so we divided

it into three phases, drilling, wellhead design and equipping and pipeline. The pipeline phase will be the most complicated part. The [overall] project will take about 2½ years to complete and will cost over \$2.1 million."

The new well will also need some 3,400-feet of new water line laid under the street. Munds said the pipeline route will go from the well down South Bay Boulevard, cross under Los Osos Valley Road and, about 50 yards past LOVR, it will take a left turn and cross over to Mountain View Drive. There it will run up Mountain View to Nipomo Avenue where it will be tied in with an existing water main.

The town has been under a water supply "Severity Level III" designation since the mid-1990s, due to over drafting of the groundwater aquifer — Los Osos' sole source of drinking water.

The Level III moniker pretty much prevents any new development in town, indeed it has been used recently by the Coastal Commission to deny even the building of a single new home and complicated the County's attempts to loosen up rules on secondary dwelling units required by State Housing Laws.

The CSD, Golden State Water, SLO County, and S&T Mutual, the water purveyors in Los Osos, have a court settlement that calls for improvements to the water infrastructure to fight seawater intrusion.

The plan includes the County's community sewer project and its recycled water elements, plus locating and drilling new wells further east in town and away from the seawater intrusion, among other projects.

This new well was approved last June with the 2021-2022 fiscal year budget after years of planning and study.

The deadline for bidding on the well portion is 3 p.m. March 28, that's when the CSD will open the bids and read them aloud, unfortunately the CSD is still under coronavirus pandemic rules and so the office is closed to the public.

Paso Murderer Gets Life

A Paso Robles man convicted of a 2018 murder has been sentenced to life in prison without parole, the District Attorney's Office said.

District Attorney Dan Dow recently announced that Carlo Alberto Fuentes Flores, 45, was given the life/death sentence for the May 2018 murder of Nancy Woodrum, which was "committed during the commission of rape and residential burglary."



Carlo Alberto Fuentes Flores

The case started May 5, 2018 when Woodrum, a Paso Robles business owner, went missing from her Paso Robles home. An extensive search and investigation into her disappearance was undertaken by the County Sheriff's Office and 6-months later, the case broke.

"In November 2018," the D.A. said, "Fuentes Flores was identified as a suspect and brought in for questioning. He had been hired to paint Ms. Woodrum's deck in the weeks leading up to her disappearance. After a lengthy interview, Fuentes Flores led investigators to the victim's remains in a secluded area off Highway 58 in a rural eastern part of the county."

Fuentes Flores waived his right to a jury trial and in a trial presided over by Superior Court Judge Timothy Covello, on Jan. 20, found him guilty of first-degree murder with special circumstances of the killing being committed during the commission of other felonies, in this case rape and burglary. And it was those special circumstances that earned him life without parole.

"Life in prison without the possibility of parole," D.A. Dow said in a news release, "is an appropriate and just punishment for the brutal abuse and murder of Nancy Woodrum. Our hearts remain with the Woodrum Family and her loved ones who will always suffer the pain of her loss."

The case was investigated by the County Sheriff's Office with help from the District Attorney's Bureau of Investigation and was prosecuted by Deputy D.A. Christopher Peuvrelle.

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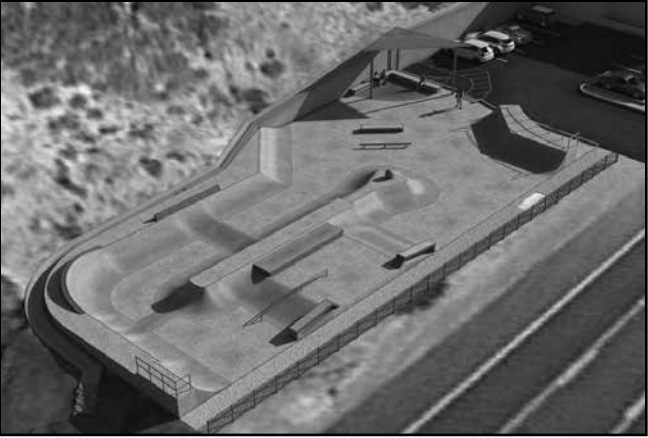
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# Community

## Cambria Skatepark Rolls Closer

By Theresa-Marie Wilson



A rendering shows plans for the skate park in Cambria. Photo submitted.

Two years ago the skatepark on Main Street in Cambria was leveled leaving skaters no place to ride or hang out with friends and enjoy recreation their way.

Soon after, Skate Cambria was formed with a youth run board directors in place along with a core group of adults with the mission to rebuild the park.

“Often Cambria is known to be a retirement community,” said Juli Amodei, Skate Cambria project manager. “I’m here to tell you it is not; there are families in this community, there are children in this community. When they start taking away things that allow them to show themselves, especially a recreational space on Main Street, how do we know there are children besides the school district? You can’t lay everything on the school district when it comes to recreation. The only other thing we have is our county park at Shamel, and that’s a swing set.”

With 3,000 signatures in support of their goals, Skate Cambria began a capital fundraising campaign with an estimated goal of \$650,000. The final cost of the project won’t be determined until it goes out to bid and the County weighs in.

Near the close of last year, the wheels really started turning when the Cambria Community Services District, which oversees the land, passed a resolution to commit a total funding amount of \$178,000, over the time period of 3 fiscal years, in the amount of \$59,333 each year. But the news was even better.

“The caveat is that if we get the park built faster, they will fund it all (the full \$178,000),” said Amodei. “My goal is to have a shovel in the ground, not a park built but at least a shovel in the ground, by the fall of this year. And I think that is very real and very doable based on where we are now.”

Plans for the concrete 6,000 square-foot skatepark are not full of bowls or vert ramps but instead include a mix of street and transition features such as grind boxes and rails that will support skaters with a range of interests and



World Cup Skateboarding’s Dave Duncan will host Skate Day in Cambria on March 12. Photo submitted

abilities. It will be open to skateboarders, roller skaters and scooter riders.

“It’s not meant to be a pro park,” Amodei. “We want kids there and their scooters and to have respectful space so that all different ages can enjoy the park.”

Funds banked for the skatepark are currently close to \$400,000, not bad for less than two years.

“It speaks to people’s passion of understanding the needs for our children,” said Amodei. “Even during a time of uncertainty of COVID, of financial uncertainty, it speaks to how much a community can come together in partnership.”

Skate Day is a chance to close the \$250,000 gap in needed funds. It takes place on Saturday, March 12 in the Vet’s Hall parking lot, 1000 Main St., from 12 to 4 p.m. Fifteen skate pros are slated to attend including skateboard prodigy Lazer Crawford and X Games Skateboard Street gold medalist Ryan DeCenzo.

World Cup Skateboarding’s Dave Duncan hosts the event that features street course sessions with top skaters, vendors, demos and food trucks.

“The Central Coast has never seen anything like this before, not on this level of industry” Amodei said.

All proceeds go to help rebuild the Cambria Skate Park. Entry is free, but donation areas will be set up, so bring your wallet to help out.

“We feel strongly that our people in attendance will understand, by the course of being there and education, what we’re doing and give us a 20 or a five or a 10 whatever they feel that they can do,” Amodei said. “All of it goes to the park.”

For more information or to donate, go to skatecambria.com.

## Los Osos Woman Running L.A. Marathon

By Theresa-Marie Wilson



Los Osos resident Jessica Sandoval will run the LA Marathon for the second time on March 20.

A Los Osos woman will lace up her shoes and hit the streets on March 20 to compete in what is considered one of the biggest footraces in the world — the Los Angeles Marathon.

Jessica Sandoval started running about five years ago when she says she was going through an undiagnosed postpartum depression.

“I found it to be a safe place to be and feel like myself,” said the 38-year-old. “After that, it became a passion of mine knowing all the benefits it was bringing to my life. I was being a better partner, parent, co-worker and woman in general on top of being a role model to those around me by putting health and fitness in the spotlight as a priority. I don’t do it to be skinny, I do it to live a full life and enjoy all that is in it.”

About four months ago, Jessica started a 16-week program, running a little over 400 miles to prepare for the 26.2 marathon distance. In addition to the physical endurance, the training was an opportunity to work on time management and discipline.

Jessica will join an expected 13,000 runners, from 50 nations and all 50 states, but she might be the only one who can thank tamales for getting her there. To pay for the cost of the race entry and use of the hospitality tent, which totals a little over \$350, she sold 21 dozen homemade tamales.

“I was able to raise \$400 after taking out my expenses to make them,” said Jessica.

Out of her running shoes, Jessica is a substitute English learner aide and paraeducator sub for Baywood Elementary, and she recently started a private practice as a life coach.

She has used her love of running to give back to the community. In November of 2020, she initiated a fundraiser for Baywood Elementary School. She and three of her friends raised more than \$1200 for the PTA, which was

Running Continued on page 9

## Ashes to Go

Photo and Story by Theresa-Marie Wilson

Drive-by ashes and prayers were available outside the Abundance Shop at 2025 9th St. Los Osos on Ash Wednesday.

Pastor Carol Hall (pictured left) and Deacon Sharon Dalrymple (right) of St. Benedict’s Episcopal Church, which owns and operates the thrift store, performed the imposition of ashes for anyone who stopped by. Small bags of ashes were also available for folks wanting to take them home to family members.

Last year, during the coronavirus pandemic shutdown, about 35 people took part in the annual event. This year, more that double that stopped by for the blessing while many others waved their support while driving by.

“People are eager to have contact,” Hall said. “Having a prayer is important.”

The sign of the cross in ashes customarily begins Lent as a reminder of human mortality. The church offers the street side service because the “reminder of the need, humility, and healing shouldn’t be confined to a church building.”

St. Benedict’s Episcopal Church is located at 2220



Snowy Egret Lane in Los Osos. For more information, go to stbenslososos.org.



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Police Blotter



• **Feb. 27:** Police responded to a suspicious subject call at 7:23 p.m. in the 1000 block of Main. Logs indicated a 55-year-old man was having a bad day and taken to French Hospital for a 72-hour mental health timeout.

• **Feb. 27:** Police contacted a suspicious man at 9:50 p.m. in the 500 block of Main. Logs indicated a 25-year-old apparent snot waffle was cited and released for suspicion of misdemeanor vandalism. No word on whether he was a tool of destruction or simply a graffidiot.

• **Feb. 27:** Police responded at 8:10 p.m. to a reported assault in the 2600 block of Main. Logs indicated they spoke with an apparently gobsnacked victim but he or she had no

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suspect information or leads.

• **Feb. 27:** Police contacted a familiar fellow at 4:12 p.m. at the police station who was apparently seeking to clear up a warrant. Logs indicated they cited and released him with a new, solemn promise to appear.

• **Feb. 27:** Police responded at 8 a.m. to a store in the 900 block of Main where an apparently unwelcomed pest had returned. The 55-year-old fellow was cited and released for suspicion of “interfering with a business.”

• **Feb. 27:** Police responded at 6:44 a.m. to the 700 block of Quintana where a citizen said his or her bicycle was stolen from McDonalds, leaving them no doubt a few fries short of a Happy Meal.

• **Feb. 27:** Police responded at 6:44 a.m. to The Siren in the 900 block of Main. Some counterfeiting fraud passed five counterfeit \$100 bills during what must no doubt have been an epic night of revelry and debauchery.

• **Feb. 26:** Police responded at noon to a store in the 500 block of Quintana. A 41-year-old sticky-fingered mulish woman was cited and released for suspicion of shoplifting and trespassing.

• **Feb. 26:** Police responded at 12:45 a.m. to the 1800 block of Sunset for a disturbance. A 57-year-old louse was arrested for suspicion of domestic violence.

• **Feb. 25:** Police recovered a stolen trailer in the 1800 block of Main, and the caze is sol-ved.

• **Feb. 25:** There was another traffic crash at 9:25 a.m. at the Roundabout at Quintana and Morro Bay Boulevard.

• **Feb. 24:** At 1 p.m. someone reported a reckless driver in the 1700 block of Embarcadero. No arrest was made.

• **Feb. 24:** A citizen in the 1600 block of Nagano Rd., reported someone sailed off with the license plate off his boat trailer.

• **Feb. 24:** Police responded at 9:35 a.m. to a home in the 500 block of Anchor for a reported theft. Logs indicated it was a “Non consensual distribution of a sexually explicit video.”

• **Feb. 23:** Police responded to a disturbance at 11:11 p.m. in the 400 block of Jamaica. Logs indicated a 40-year-old Mamaluke was nicked for suspicion of getting deep in his cups.

• **Feb. 23:** Police responded to the 2600 block of Elm for an uncivil dispute. Logs indicated a citizen produced a sale receipt for a car that the seller apparently claimed was stolen.

• **Feb. 23:** Police responded at 1:39 a.m. to the 500 block of Main where they arrested a 35-year-old fellow for suspicion of being schwacked on drugs. Then at 3:10 p.m. there was a disturbance in the 700 block of Quintana. The same stinky fellow was arrested for allegedly being lathered up on bath salts, in no doubt another fine example of the benefits of bail reform.

• **Feb. 22:** Police cited a familiar woman, 39, at 9:35 p.m. at the police station who had a warrant, as sometimes they just jump into the boat.

• **Feb. 22:** Police stopped a suspicious vehicle at 5:13 p.m. on Hwy 1 at Toro Creek Rd. Logs indicated the 53-year-old reprobationer was nicked for suspicion of possessing methamphetamine for sale and a probation violation.

• **Feb. 22:** Police contacted a familiar foe at 5:30 p.m. outside the police station who had a bench warrant. The little fish was issued another useless ticket and released to catch again another day.

• **Feb. 22:** Someone stole mail out of a mailbox in the 300 block of Main.

• **Feb. 22:** Police stopped a suspicious vehicle at 3:20 p.m. on Hwy 1 at Main. Logs indicated they arrested a 27-year-old apparent master criminal who allegedly attempted to steal a car “during a vehicle pursuit.”

• **Feb. 22:** Police responded at 1:55 p.m. to a disturbance at an apartment complex in the 700 block of MBB. Logs indicated a 58-year-old ruffian was arrested for suspicion of battery.

• **Feb. 22:** Police detained and committed a juvenile in the 200 block of Atascadero Rd., for a 72-hour timeout.

• **Feb. 21:** Police responded at 11:30 p.m. to a domestic disturbance in the 800 block of Monterey. Logs indicated they arrested an 18-year-old apparent maniac for suspicion of domestic violence with injury.

• **Feb. 21:** Police contacted a regular customer at 9:30 p.m. in the 200 block of MBB. She had a bench warrant and was given another citation to ignore and released.

• **Feb. 21:** Police responded at 6:46 p.m. to the 400 block of Yerba Buena for a runaway juvenile report. They made note of it and no doubt promised to bring the lad or lassie home when they rounded them up.

• **Feb. 20:** The alarm went off at 10:07 p.m. at Morro Bay High School, when most good little hooligans are home in

bed.

• **Feb. 20:** Police responded at 11:30 a.m. to the Inn at Morro Bay where some scalawag damaged an innocent parked car.

• **Feb. 20:** Police responded at 6:44 a.m. to a disturbance in the 600 block of Napa. Logs indicated a 72-year-old woman was suffering a bit of the vapors and was taken to Sierra Vista for a 72-hour timeout.

• **Feb. 20:** Police responded at 1:37 a.m. to The Siren in the 900 block of Main. Logs indicated it was a petty theft at the heart of this kerfluffle.

• **Feb. 19:** Police responded at 10:52 p.m. to a disturbance at South Bay Boulevard and State Park Road. A 44-year-old squit was arrested for suspicion of being schammered in public, which no doubt left him pipped at the post.

• **Feb. 20:** Police responded at 8:50 p.m. to Albertson’s Market on Quintana where they arrested a 29-year-old Jackanapes for suspicion of trespassing.

• **Feb. 19:** At 11:51 a.m. at Hwy 1 and San Jacinto, police arrested a 31-year-old fooliot for suspicion of resisting arrest.

• **Feb. 18:** Police responded at 8:25 p.m. to a motel in the 700 block of Market where a guest said someone forced his way into their room and stole some undiscovered treasures.

• **Feb. 18:** Police took a report of a runaway/missing juvenile delinquent, no word on whether they returned.

• **Feb. 17:** Police responded at 12:45 p.m. to a traffic collision at the infamous Roundabout, in the 900 block of Morro Bay Blvd. No juicy details on injuries were given.

• **Feb. 17:** Police contacted a familiar fellow at 11 a.m. in the 2600 block of Main. The scofflaw had a bench warrant, was issued a second disappearance ticket and released to catch another day.

• **Feb. 16:** Police contacted another model citizen at 8:25 p.m. in the 500 block of Main. The 37-year-old fellow reportedly gave police a false name when asked, and got cited when they discovered the zhlub had a warrant under his real name, which explains his loose affiliation with the truth. At 6:35 p.m. in the 1500 block of Quintana, they arrested another bail jumper, 42, with a warrant.

• **Feb. 16:** A citizen at the Cloisters Park said his or her bike was stolen by some unknown scamboogah.

• **Feb. 16:** Police responded at 7:35 a.m. to the Maritime Museum where some feculent nillionaire vandalized the donation box.

• **Feb. 15:** At 6:46 a.m., there was a reported burglary at the high school, as some sneak thief stole stuff and damaged property. And, another bicycle was reported stolen from the high school later that day.

• **Feb. 14:** Police responded at 6:12 p.m. to Dunbar St., where a troubled juvenile was having an apparent connip-tion.

• **Feb. 14:** Police responded to the 1200 block of Embarcadero for a reported vandalism. The logs indicated there were no suspects and likely the mystery will never be solved.

Hellllo,  
I've been  
awake for  
25 seconds,  
yet no  
food has  
been  
served

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## Running



Jessica after the running fundraiser for Baywood Elementary in November of 2020. Photo submitted

unable to do the traditional fundraising due to the coronavirus pandemic.

“When I created the fundraiser for Baywood, many people got involved in supporting the cause and having fun watching me run on LOVR repeatedly during my trainings,” Jessica said. “Some would honk, others would shine their bright lights to say ‘hi.’ I love the community we live in and how we all have come together to help where we can, to keep us united. I feel the love and encouragement with my running all the time, and it shows in every encounter I have with anyone from our community.”

L.A. will be Jessica's fourth full-marathon after only five years of pounding the pavement.

"I love how it centers me with being focused and disciplined," Jessica said. "Plus, it allows me to put priority into self-care and that is very important to me, being able to keep that balance with life, family work and myself."

She has also competed in other local races that are significantly shorter than the 26.2-mile marathon including City to Sea Half Marathon in SLO County, Rock around the Pier Half Marathon in Morro Bay, the Wine Country Half Marathon in Paso Robles, the SLO Half Marathon, and the SLO Triathlon. Her fastest time to date was her first one, the SLO Marathon, at 4 hours and 52 minutes.

For some of us, running around the block would feel like a lifetime. What does the mind and body do when in motion for several hours at a time?

“It starts with just listening to music, then for the first two or three miles convincing my body that what I feel is not pain,” Jessica said. “It’s a fun brain game, my brain telling me this is hard. After mile three, I start really getting into it and get lost in thoughts of what is happening in my life, my head starts wondering to planning or processing actions I have taken or plan to take. At mile eight, I hit the endorphin zone, and I just feel free, happy and strong. Then I start to focus again on the music and do the cycle all over again as many times as needed depending on the distance.”

When she crosses the finish line, Jessica already knows what she is going to do

"The first thing is I go for a cold beer," she said laughing. After that, her routine is to take what she says is a painful 20-minute ice bath while rehydrating. That is followed a protein shake and normally a two hour nap.

She says her work as a life coach and running are a good fit.

“Some people come to coaching to find the tools to achieve goals that have been hard to reach. I have had coaching in my life for the past 15 years and have learned to use all the tools in all aspects of my life. Knowing what my life purpose is, honoring my values, holding focus on what is really important for me, having awareness of what can be changed, looking at life with different perspectives and mastering time management have been the main tools the coaching has taught me and helped me be successful on my running journey.”

L.A. Marathon participants will start at Dodger Stadium passing through some of Los Angeles' most iconic areas Grauman's Chinese Theater, Little Tokyo, Pantages Theater and Rodeo Drive. It finishes on the Avenue of the Stars in Century City.

For information about her life coach services, email Jessica at [invitationtoempowermentbyjs@gmail.com](mailto:invitationtoempowermentbyjs@gmail.com).

By Theresa-Marie Wilson

**C**heck out a Magical Garage Sale Saturday March 12, 10 a.m.- 2 p.m. in the lower parking lot at Sunnyside School, 880 Manzanita, Los Osos. Proceed benefit Womane Estero Bay, a program of Los Osos Cares

Turning your dusty handbag into a gas card to help a single mother drive to work for two months.

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They are looking for all types of volunteers! Call or text Annette Sheely at 805-234-5755. They are also looking for donations of “quality items” to sell!

Call Annette for pick up or to drop off at 805-234-5755. Framed Art, quality clothing, nice handbags, gently used camping or sports equipment, small kitchen appliances that still work, lamps, space heaters, strollers, gently used pet supplies, quilts in good condition, tools, etc. anything that realistically can be sold for \$5, \$10, \$20 or more.

Not accepting: books, used shoes, furniture too heavy to be easily moved, outdated technology or media. If you're unsure, please call Annette Sheely at 805-234-5755 with questions.

Monetary donations gratefully accepted as well. For more information, go to [WomenadeEsteroBay.org](http://WomenadeEsteroBay.org).



**T**ake part in Friday's for the Future, or FFF, Global Climate Strike on March 25 on Los Osos Valley Road and Doris Avenue from 8 a.m. to 10 a.m. and again from 5 p.m. to sunset. FFF is a youth led and organized global climate strike movement that started in August 2018, when 15-year-old Greta Thunberg began a school strike for climate. Make a sign or two and join them. For more information, go to <https://fridaysforfuture.org>.

...

**R**egister now. The Estrella Warbirds Museum Aviation Youth Program is hosting their annual Aviation Career Day for middle and high school students on Saturday, March 19 from 12 p.m. until about 3:30 p.m. in Thomson Hall at 4251 Dry Creek Road in Paso Robles. This event provides students with the opportunity to explore career opportunities in aviation and space, such as commercial and military pilot, aircraft mechanic, and rocket launch technician. Lunch will be provided at no cost to the guests, as well as a guided tour of the museum. Students and their parents are invited to attend. To register for the Estrella Warbirds Museum Aviation Youth Program Career Day, or if you have any questions, contact Brad Eaton at N39WR@hotmail.com or 805 550-8775, Bill Siegel at Bugsluke@yahoo.com or 305 962-4027, or Mary Allmon at EWMYouthAviation@gmail.com or 510 407-3727. Registrants will receive additional information after the registration deadline of March 15. This is a free event.

...

**A**bus driver in Cambria has launched “Spring for the Pups,” a campaign to raise funds for Wood’s Humane Society in San Luis Obispo.

While at the doctor's office Carl Cubby Cashen received a pamphlet called "Overweight and Healthy Eating,"

**Events** Continued on page 10

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Community

Events From page 9

and it encouraged him to set a new challenge and continue his life-long goal of raising \$50 thousand in his lifetime for animal rescue organizations.

The challenge takes place on March 20, which is the spring equinox. Cub will ride a fat tired mountain bike, that's at least 4-inch wide tires, up and down a dirt road as many times as he can from just before sunrise and to end at sunset. How far and how many feet of elevation will he get?

To make a donation or keep up with Cub's updates, go to [bit.ly/3IMoWVN](https://bit.ly/3IMoWVN).

"I'm just trying to help out in any way I can," Cub said on the Go Fund Me page. "I can always do more!"

For more information, send an email to Cub at [thegreatchiweenie@hotmail.com](mailto:thegreatchiweenie@hotmail.com).



Join the San Luis Obispo Botanical Garden for their Free Admission Day on Saturday, March 26 from 10 a.m.- 5 p.m. The normal admission cost of \$10 for adults and children over 12 and \$8 for seniors, students, and military will be waived. This is an opportunity to spend time outdoors and learn about native plants. There will be a garden themed art activity outside of the Education Center. Art supplies will be provided, courtesy of Rita's Rainbows. They are located at 3450 Dairy Creek Road in San Luis Obispo, inside El Chorro Regional Park. If you can't make it out on the 26, join them for the next free day on Saturday, April 9. For more information, contact [dara@slobg.org](mailto:dara@slobg.org) or call 805-541-1400 x 302.



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.

Instrumentalists are cellist Karlson Can, a music major who will perform the first movement of Edward Elgar's Cello Concerto in E Minor, Op. 85, and violinist Fiona Soetrismo, a computer science major who will play the first movement of Samuel Barber's Violin Concerto, Op. 14. The vocalists, both music majors, are contralto Dylan Benander, who will sing "Mio cor che mi sai dir" from George Frideric Handel's "Rinaldo," and alto Mady Frei, who will perform "Erbarme dich, mein Gott" from Johann Sebastian Bach's "St. Matthew Passion."

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).

The Los Osos Valley Garden Club March Zoom Program is "How to Grow Tomatoes Easily" presented by Dave Freed, "The Tomato Guy" on Saturday, March 19 from 9:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.

Tomatoes are probably the most popular garden vegetable grown and not always the most easily grown. Freed will show how to do it. We are located in a cooler coastal climate and will need to be aware of this, but there is no reason why we can't grow tomatoes to their full poten-



tial. According to Dave, "If you don't have a 'green thumb,' I'll give you one."

He will show participants what specific soils to use, what tomatoes to plant, when to plant, which fertilizers to use, and how to easily take care of those tomatoes whether grown in containers, raised beds or backyard dirt.

Join the Zoom meeting at <https://bit.ly/3pAKlts>. Meeting ID: 753 644 4586. Passcode: LOVGC.

...

The Cal Poly Choirs' Winter Concert, "To the Hands," is a collaboration with students from other majors at 7:30 p.m. Saturday, March 12, in Miossi Hall in the Performing Arts Center's Christopher Cohan Center.

The title piece, "To the Hands," is by Caroline Shaw and will be performed by PolyPhonics and will feature creative engineering projections and lighting by students in the Liberal Arts in Engineering Program, and dancers from the Theatre and Dance Department. The piece explores ways in which homelessness is viewed in society.

The concert will also feature works performed by Cal Poly's University Singers, a small string ensemble of Cal Poly faculty members, as well as the Cal Poly Cello Ensemble.

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).



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Community



The Morro Coast Audubon Society’s March Virtual Community Program, “Fifty years of California Raptor Natural History and Conservation Efforts” takes place March 21 at 7 p.m.

For the past 50 years, Dr. Peter Bloom has studied various California raptors, most notably red-tailed hawks, red-shouldered hawks, golden eagles, ospreys, turkey vultures and Swainson’s hawks. Much of Pete’s research involves banding, tagging, and occasionally transmitting these important predators, each with their own ecosystem needs. By analyzing their movements in Southern California and beyond, these studies have contributed valuable information to conservation efforts throughout California. Pete will share insights gained during these decades-long studies, including what he hopes to achieve with future research.

Join the Zoom meeting at <https://bit.ly/3CaxW4C>. Meeting ID: 257 500 2542. Passcode: morrocoast.



Listen to Ted Wise on guitar and vocals on Fridays from 6 p.m to 8 p.m. at Tre Flamme restaurant, 11560 Los Osos Valley Rd #190, San Luis Obispo. Wise performs classical and contemporary guitar solos and vocal covers from Bach to the Beatles and beyond. Check out his personal recording at [reverbnation.com/tedwiseguitarandvocals](https://reverbnation.com/tedwiseguitarandvocals).

*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.*

Takin’ Care of BUSINESS

By Theresa-Marie Wilson

Free Pet Vaccines



Getting your pets vaccinated could be a lot easier this month. Woods Humane Society is partnering with national nonprofit Petco Love to give pets their best shot for a healthy life by hosting two free pet vaccine clinics this month on March 12 and March 26.

Petco Love established March as “National Pet Vaccination Month” to encourage pet parents to keep their pets up to date on vaccinations and will provide free DAPPv Canine and HCP Feline vaccines to Woods Humane Society for family pets in need. As puppy and kitten season approaches, pet exposure to contagious and deadly diseases – parvovirus, distemper, and panleukopenia – increases, but their risk of contracting these diseases is preventable with a simple vaccine.

Woods Humane Society aims to vaccinate 400 pets through this effort. The free vaccine event takes place on Saturday, March 12 and Saturday March 26 from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at its North County clinic location (2300 Ramona Road, Atascadero). In order to participate, local pet owners must schedule a Wellness Appointment online in advance for one of the two available dates. Space is limited and subject to availability. The free DAPPv Canine and HCP Feline vaccines will also be offered to owned pets scheduled for low-cost spay or neuter appointments at Woods clinics during the month of March.

“Thanks to Petco Love, we can offer these important vaccines at no cost to pet owners,” said Alessandra Bel-loumini, Woods Veterinary Services Manager. “We urge community members to take advantage of this free resource to help reduce the spread of disease and ensure the health and wellness of our community’s pets.”

The Give Pets Their Best Shot initiative makes crucial pet vaccines accessible to pet parents who may be experiencing financial challenges and assures that cost is not a barrier to protecting pets from preventable diseases.

“Treatment for these deadly diseases can be prohibitively expensive for many pet parents,” said Susanne Kogut, Petco Love President. “By providing free vaccines to those in need, we can help these pets live a healthy life. Through this national effort and our other Petco Love Care initiatives, we continue our 22-year history of strategic investments and innovation to end unnecessary pet euthanasia.”

National Pet Vaccination Month is a continuation of Petco Love’s 1 million free pet vaccine campaign, which has helped 400,000 pets to date. Fifty percent of participating pet parents surveyed reported their pets had never been vaccinated against these diseases. With Bissell Pet Foundation as an additional partner this month, Petco Love’s goal is to increase awareness and accelerate the distribution of vaccines.

To book a Wellness Appointment for one of the free  
Takin’ Care of Business Continued on page 12

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**Takin' Care of Business** From page 11

# New Dentist at Los Osos Family Dentistry

A portrait of a man with dark hair, smiling, wearing a white dress shirt and a yellow patterned tie. He is leaning forward with his hands clasped on a dark surface, possibly a table or ledge. The background is a blurred outdoor setting with trees and a building.

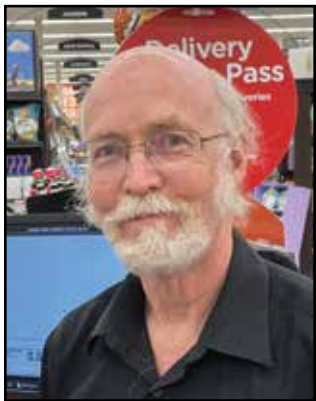
In his spare time, Dr. Wolfe likes to travel, read, and spend time with his family. Los Osos Family Dentistry is located at 2238 Bayview Heights Dr. Suite N. They can be reached at 805-528-4114. For more information, go to [lososfamilydds.com](http://lososfamilydds.com).

## In Print & On Line



esterobaynews.com

Bon Voyage, Tim. Have a great time.



## Let's Talk About Art

While my portfolios are full of work completed over many years, I continue to work as an artist. Floral arrangements are the most compelling these days. I buy floral bouquets from Christine Marshalls' stall off South

**Let's Talk** Continued on page 14

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# OUT & ABOUT

WITH THE BOOKSHELF WRITERS

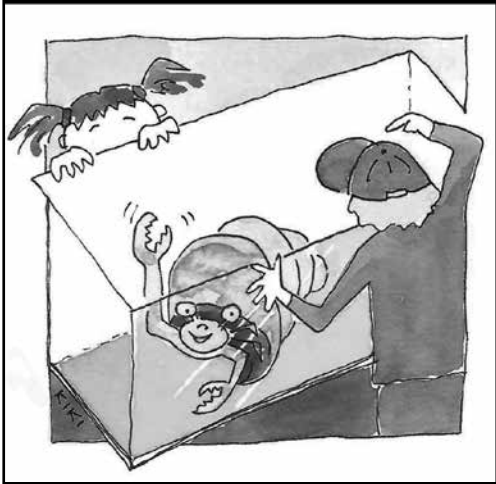


The Bookshelf Writers consist of four Estero Bay women who have been writing & critiquing together for over five years. For more samples of their work, please visit [www.thebookshelfwriters.com](http://www.thebookshelfwriters.com)

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

Lessons from a Crab

Story and Illustration by Catherine "Kiki" Kornreich



Hermit crabs are clever little critters. They devise their own shelter by scouting for a neglected mollusk shell and then tuck themselves in to defend from waves and predators.

I've turned into my own version of a hermit crab. I hide in my home and I'm crabby because of it. The dang COVID virus keeps crashing in, and it just feels safer to stay tucked inside and wait for the storm to pass.

But there's more to the tiny crab than the magical shell you see scurrying along in tide pools. It actually makes a great pet!

I often see kids (ok, plenty of grown-ups, too) squatting down in tidepools to watch the crabs dart around. They can be hard to catch, but unless the hermit crabs are being taken home to be properly cared for, I think it's best to let them play with each other in the sea.


My sister, Maggie, runs a daycare in Los Osos and the toddlers have gotten to know and love their tiny hermit crab, Sam. She bought Sam in a pet store and set up a terrarium filled with sand and gravel. She added in fresh and saltwater trays and natural hiding places such as driftwood and plants. The little fellow has been an entertaining, allergy-free pet for over six years.

The kids get to feed him fruits, vegetables and pellets, and tell Maggie when he needs more fresh water. Then they watch him eat and play, or they try to find his current hiding place.


On special days, a brave child will be allowed to hold out their palm. The others circle around in awe, and watch

## SLOCAL Open in Morro Bay


Photos by Neil Farrell




Max Beach gets some serious air during his heat in the Round of 32.



David do Carmo masters a wave in his heat.



SLO CAL Open winners Sage Erickson and Kei Kobayashi pose together after the Feb. 27 surf contest in Morro Bay, a qualifying event for the World Surfing League



Cam Richards, who finished second at the event, gets crazy air on a wave in the Round of 32.

Great surf conditions highlighted the World Surf League Qualifier surfing contest held Feb. 24-27 at Morro Rock. The professional surfing contest returned to Morro Bay for the fourth straight year, bringing some 96 men and 36 women pro surfers to town for a whale of a ride, as winter surf conditions saw 6-8 foot and up to 10-foot waves challenging some of the best up and coming wave riders in the world in a contest sponsored by French Hospital Medical Center.

The SLO CAL Open saw Kei Kobayashi win the

men's competition over Cam Richards and Sage Erickson take the women's contest over Leilani McGonagle.

Prizes included \$20,000 cash purse and valuable points in qualifying for the WSL Tour that takes surfers to the best surf spots in the world.

See WSL's website at: [www.worldsurfleague.com/posts/496737/dynamic-displays-of-surfing-unfold-to-start-slo-cal-open-at-morro-bay?isearch=true&category=all](http://www.worldsurfleague.com/posts/496737/dynamic-displays-of-surfing-unfold-to-start-slo-cal-open-at-morro-bay?isearch=true&category=all) to watch videos of the action.

as Sam is gently placed on the soft little hand. When he was a baby, Sam would try to run away, but he's become comfortable with these bright-eyed children. Most of them eventually want to hold Sam, and it's often the youngest that like extra visits.

Maggie places a handful of empty mollusk shells of varying sizes into his room, because hermit crabs grow as they age (something else this little crab and I seem to have in common). When it's time to move, they mimic Goldilocks and visit each shell until they find the one that's "just right."

Sam sits at eye level to the toddlers, and they circle

around his cage every day to see if he's darting around his playground. Many times he's simply sleeping, but they love to peek. They'll joyously shout, "Maybe he's at the store!" "Or at the doctor!" "He's on vacation!" "Yeah! A vacation at the beach with his friends!"

If the kids spot him sleeping, Maggie can sometimes wake Sam from his slumber by placing a tiny drop of water on his shell (as kids, Maggie tried to wake me up the same way. But I'd tuck back into the shelter of my bed).

Thank you, Sam. You've taught me some valuable lessons. Sometimes it's perfectly ok to hide out. Avoid things I'm just not ready to face. And simply be a crab.



2022 MORRO BAY CALIFORNIA EST. 1997


### 2022 SCHEDULE

**THURSDAY, May 5th**  
5 PM - 8 PM Evening Pre-Registration  
Ocean View Garage • 936 Main Street

**FRIDAY, May 6th**  
10 AM - 5 PM Daytime Registration  
11 AM Cruise up Coast for Lunch  
6-7 PM Cruise for Registrants Only  
Staging Begins at 5 PM

**SATURDAY, May 7th**  
Show & Shine 9 AM - 4 PM  
11:30 AM - 1:30 PM BBQ  
REGISTRANTS/SPONSORS ONLY  
4PM Trophy Presentations

**SUNDAY, May 8th**  
9 AM - 1 PM Show & Shine  
1 PM Trophy Presentations



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Community

Pancakes for Scholars

St. Benedict's Episcopal Church Tree Planting



School Secretary Carrie Trujillo, Principal Karl Blum and Custodian David Uzonyi serve breakfast to Los Osos Middle School students in recognition of their first semester academic achievements.

Half the student body of Los Osos Middle School celebrated their academic achievements at a pancake breakfast on Friday, February 25. Served by school staff, the young scholars dined on fresh fruit and wholegrain pancakes with all the trimmings prepared by cafeteria staff and members of the Kiwanis Club of Bay-Osos.

“Students who earn all A’s and B’s, have a clean citizenship record, or achieve a significant improvement in grade point average, receive recognition from the California Junior Scholarship Federation,” says school principal Karl Blum. “Our students are being rewarded for their first semester academic achievement.”



Kiwanis Club of Bay-Osos Literacy Chair Deanna Sweeney and President Cathy Nesser prepare pancakes for two hundred Los Osos Middle School students at the Academic Achievement breakfast held on Friday, February 25. Photo submitted

The CJSF is a “state wide organization to honor and foster outstanding California middle school students based on scholarship, service, and citizenship,” according to their website.

“What a great way to return to service,” says club president Cathy Nesser, as she flips another pancake. “Feeding two-hundred kids keeps us hopping.”



Native trees were planted on property owned by St. Benedict's Episcopal Church as part of grant to reduce greenhouse gasses and repurposing aging trees at the end of their life cycle. Photo submitted

Visitors and residents travelling east or west on Los Osos Valley Road will soon have their views enhanced by a grove of newly planted native trees on property owned by St. Benedict's Episcopal Church at the corner of LOVR and Clark Valley Road.

The project was two parts. The first, in January, involved planting fourteen trees including five Coast Live Oaks, five Monterey Cypress and four Island Oaks.

The trees were planted by a crew of 30 enthusiastic volunteers representing the collective efforts of members of St. Benedict's Earthcare Committee; the Environmental Center of San Luis Obispo (ECOSLO), and the Los Osos Valley Garden Club (LOVGC). The project was made possible by the Full Circle Grant awarded to ECOSLO and funded through an Urban and Community Forestry grant from CAL FIRE with a goal of reducing greenhouse gasses and repurposing aging trees at the end of their life cycle.

The Full Circle project begins with a robust tree planting initiative spearheaded by ECOSLO. After a long life of sequestering carbon, the trees are salvaged and processed into beautiful furniture, keeping them out of the landfill and the carbon out of the atmosphere by the local business Deadwood Revival Design.

Full Circle is a sustainable approach to utilizing urban lumber.

<https://www.deadwoodrevivaldesign.com/>

The longstanding partnership between the middle school and the Kiwanis Club brings the two groups together for several events, including support for parent, teacher organizations and the Lions' Robotic Team. Selected Students of the Month attend the club for a special lunch

In February another crew of volunteers with the Los Osos Valley Garden Club successfully planted 36 native understory plants surrounding the trees, including California Lilac and California Currant, purchased through fundraising efforts and donations to the club.

The plants will provide a natural, attractive setting to attract hummingbirds, butterflies, and other beneficial insects that will support the local ecology and help provide an important bridge to nearby remaining wildlands. Research shows that native wildlife clearly prefers native plants.

An additional 16 native trees will be planted in the coming months on the western side of St. Benedict's property, where three of the Coast Live Oaks were planted. “These trees will preserve neighbors' sight lines and bring beauty to that part of the property,” organizers said.

The actual species are yet to be determined, but will also fulfill the Full Circle Grant's requirements by capturing and turning CO2 into living carbon as food for trees to enhance our climate's health.

In addition, funding provided by donations from the church, ECOSLO, and a grant from the Los Osos Rotary Club will be utilized for the repair and extension of a permanent irrigation system to provide routine watering, allowing the plants and trees to be nurtured and thrive to the benefit of all.

program where they receive a certificate and a gift card.

The Kiwanis Club of Bay-Osos begins its fortieth year of local community service. They meet on Wednesdays at noon at the Sea Pines Golf Resort. Guests are always welcome.

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Let's Talk From page 12

A photo from 'Rounding up the Ranches' written by Joan Sullivan.

Bay Boulevard. The still life arrangements require a good meaningful composition. In order to accomplish an

attractive and inspiring setup I refer to my mentor's book “Flower Painting” by Joyce Pike. In 1970 Joyce gave a painting workshop in this area that included several ranches on the coast.

The workshop and the ranches we visited and painted were so awe inspiring that on returning home I convinced my husband to move to this area. Shortly afterward my husband and I returned, and, after spending a day looking for a house to purchase, we found the one I continue to occupy.

Applying my teaching credential I set up art classes. During those early years from 1971 through 1983, I created a Thursday class that was organized to visit ranches around the County. The class continues to meet thanks to those who took over the task of finding locations to paint on that included the coastal region as well as parks and ranches.

As a result of those many years painting on SLO County ranches I wrote a book of my experiences in 2015 titled “Rounding Up The Ranches.”

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Story By Neil Farrell, Photos By Dean Sullivan



The Morro Bay Chamber of Commerce held its annual Installation Dinner Friday, March 4, transforming the Community Center into a Mardi Gras-themed party dubbed, “Morro Gras” and honoring 2-year’s worth of citizens, businesses and non-profits for their contributions to the community.

Canceled last year due to the coronavirus pandemic response, the dinner honored 2-year’s worth of Citizens of the Year, Businesses of the Year, Living Treasures, and Non-profits of the Year.

The 2021 Citizen of the Year is Police Chief Jody Cox, with last year’s winner, Chuck Stoll also being honored.

The new Business of the Year is Coalesce Bookstore & Garden Wedding Chapel with last year’s honoree Fitness Works.

This year’s Non-Profit of the Year is the Morro Bay Lion’s Club, and last year’s inaugural winner was Morro Bay in Bloom.

This year’s Living Treasure awardee was Carole Truesdale and last year’s was

Jack Smith. The Cajun-inspired dinner menu was sponsored by several local businesses — Buttercup Bakery with salad and cornbread biscuits; oyster shooters from Grassy Bar Oyster Co.; beignet pastries by Second Line Beignets; and an incredible shrimp jambalaya and Louisiana bean salad from Pair with Chef Rachel the main course.

Music was by Dante Marsh with “fire dancer” Ariana Filice also performing. Dea-dair Dave, a DJ on community radio station 93.7 The Rock, served as emcee.

The night featured a fabulous silent auction with gift baskets donated by local businesses and including vacation getaways both in town and away.

The new Chamber of Commerce Board was also announced and the out-going board given a rousing “Thank you” for serving during the pandemic, which everyone agreed has been a very challenging time.



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# Music

## Paul's Picks

# St. Patrick's Day Concert at the Siren



**M**orro Bay is the place to be for St. Patrick's Day! The Siren presents Mininova - a 4-piece latin/jazz/funk explosion of rhythm and melody that is danceable and sophisticated. Led by Scott Martin on sax from the band War and Kenny Lee Lewis on guitar from The Steve Miller Band, the band features both original and cover music from iconic latin and jazz artists, and also latin rock and R&B covers from bands like Santana, War, Steve Miller Band, Ray Charles, and blues standards. Jim Stromberg delivers a percussion performance that sounds like three people playing at once and bassist David Keif provides the foundation on bass. You won't be able to sit still! Best of all - it's FREE. The show runs from 7p.m. to 10:30 p.m. and be sure to bring your favorite designated driver!

**Thu., Mar. 10 • 5:30pm**  
Easton Everett Solo  
Big Sky Cafe  
1121 Broad St.,  
San Luis Obispo

**Thu., Mar. 10 • 6:30pm**  
**Jazz Concertt: A Love Affair**  
 in Paris  
 The Fremont Theater  
 1035 Monterey St,  
 San Luis Obispo

**Thu., Mar. 10 • 7:00pm**  
Robert Alberts Quintet  
The Madonna Inn  
100 Madonna Road,  
San Luis Obispo

**Fri., Mar. 11 • 7:00pm**  
The Altons  
SLO Brew Rock  
855 Aerovista Place,  
San Luis Obispo

**Fri., Mar. 11 • 6:00pm**  
Cuesta Jazz Fridays!  
Linnaea's Cafe  
1110 Garden St, San Luis  
Obispo

**Fri., Mar. 11 • 5:00pm**  
**Mark Adams - Friday Night**  
**Concerts**  
 15 Degrees C- Wine Shop, Bar  
 & Restaurant  
 624 S. Main Street,  
 Templeton

**Fri., Mar. 11 • 5:00pm**  
New duo Cynthia Ford & Steve  
Key Debut  
Cape Cod Eatery  
1127 Shell Beach Road, Pismo  
Beach

**Fri., Mar. 11 • 7:00pm**  
Twelfth Night  
Clark Center for the Performing Arts  
487 Fair Oaks Ave,  
Arroyo Grande

**Sat., Mar. 12 • 7:00pm**  
Moonshiner Collective (EP  
Release Party)  
SLO Brew Rock  
855 Aerovista Place,  
San Luis Obispo

**Sat., Mar. 12 • 5:00pm**  
Forever Green  
Sea Pines Golf Resort  
250 Howard Ave., Los Osos

**Sat., Mar. 12 • 7:00pm**  
Twelfth Night  
Clark Center for the  
Performing Arts  
487 Fair Oaks Ave.,  
Arroyo Grande

**Sun., Mar. 13 •**  
Corb Lund with Lauren  
Morrow  
The Siren  
900 Main St, Morro Bay

**Sun., Mar. 13 • 3:00pm**  
It's Magic!  
Harold Miossi Hall  
1 Grand Avenue, San Luis  
Obispo

**Sun., Mar. 13 • 8:00pm**  
**Kenny Wayne Shepherd Band**  
 The Fremont Theater  
 1035 Monterey St,  
 San Luis Obispo

**Sun., Mar. 13 • 7:00pm**  
Twelfth Night  
Clark Center for the Performing Arts  
487 Fair Oaks Ave.,  
Arroyo Grande

**Tue., Mar. 15 • 8:00pm**  
The Cadillac Three's Hillbilly  
Hypnotized Tour  
The Fremont Theater  
1035 Monterey St,  
San Luis Obispo

**Wed., Mar. 16 • 7:00pm**  
The Lil Smokies  
The Siren  
900 Main St, Morro Bay

**Wed., Mar. 16 • 4:00pm**  
**Toan Chau's Open Mic / Jam**  
**SLO Wine and Beer Company**  
**3536 S Higuera St Suite 250,**  
**San Luis Obispo**

**Thu., Mar. 17 • 7:30pm**  
**Christian Elliott - Why be**  
**Good? - Forbes Organ Series**  
**PAC - Harold Miossi Hall**  
**1 Grand Avenue,**  
**San Luis Obispo**

**Thu., Mar. 17 • 7:00pm**  
Robert Alberts Quintet  
The Madonna Inn  
100 Madonna Road,  
San Luis Obispo

**Fri., Mar. 18 • 6:00pm**  
Cuesta Jazz Fridays!  
Linnaea's Cafe  
1110 Garden St,  
San Luis Obispo

# Live Oak Music Festival Returns!



After two years of virtual festivals throughout the pandemic, we are excited to see the return of the beloved Live Oak Festival return to San Luis Obispo at El Chorro Regional Park - right across from Cuesta College on Father's Day weekend: June 17-19. Acts are still being announced, but likely the biggest news is headliner Robert Earl Keen, who has announced his retirement after this summer. This will be one of the last opportunities to ever catch this legend in concert, so if you ever wanted to catch him - this is your last chance. Other acts announced so far include: Delvon Lamarr Organ Trio, The Mother Hips, Ynana Rose, National Park Radio, Damon Castillo Band, Joe Cr The Riverside, Steve Poltz, and Sou festival is always a great time and will better get your tickets as soon as possible after March 31. Tickets, full lineup, See you there!



**Fri., Mar. 18 • 1:00pm**  
**Rava on the Rocks: The Moon-**  
**stone Band**  
**Rava Wines**  
 6785 Creston Road, Paso  
 Robles

**Sat., Mar. 19 • 7:30pm**  
Cuesta Wind Ensemble &  
SLO Wind Orchestra  
Cuesta College CPAC  
Highway 1, San Luis Obispo  
**Sat., Mar. 19 • 5:00pm**  
Beck N Jones  
Sea Pines Golf Resort  
1945 Solano St, Los Osos

**Sat., Mar. 19 • 1:00pm**  
Easton Everett Band  
Four Lanterns Winery  
2485 CA-46, Paso Robles

**Sat., Mar. 19 • 5:30pm**  
For the Folks

Whalebird Kombucha  
3576 Empleo St,  
San Luis Obispo

**Sat., Mar. 19 • 6:00pm**  
Nexus Ballroom Grand  
Opening  
Nexus at SLO Public Market  
3845 S. Higuera St.,  
San Luis Obispo

**Sat., Mar. 19 • 4:00pm**  
The World Famous Glenn  
Miller Orchestra  
Clark Center for the  
Performing Arts  
487 Fair Oaks Ave,  
Arroyo Grande

**Sun., Mar. 20 • 1:00pm**  
The Gipsy All Stars  
Broken Earth Winery  
1650 Ramada Dr, Paso Robles

**Sun., Mar. 20 • 5:30pm**  
 Jack Cimo - Symphony of the  
 Vines  
 Cass Winery  
 7350 Linne Road, Paso Robles

**Sun., Mar. 20 • 12:00pm**  
Cynthia Ford & Steve Key  
Cape Cod Eatery  
1127 Shell Beach Road,  
Pismo Beach

**Sun., Mar. 20 • 1:00pm**  
Rava on the Rocks: Emily  
Smith  
Rava Wines  
6785 Creston Road,  
Paso Robles

**Wed., Mar. 23 • 4:00pm**  
Toan Chau's Open Mic / Jam  
SLO Wine and Beer Company  
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News

MBFD Staffing

critically needed resources to equip and train emergency personnel to recognized standards, enhance operations efficiencies, foster interoperability, and support community resilience,” the Chief explained. “This year’s SAFER Grant has set the highest priority is to assist departments experiencing staffing levels significantly below the ideal staffing level,” under federal standards.

Through various strategic plans and reviews of the MBFD, “our community will be best served with two, 3-person engine companies. This staffing model would create less dependency for off duty personnel to respond from home while meeting the need to respond to medical aids with the ability to contain a structure fire in the room of origin. By increasing our daily staffing to five personnel on duty daily, we are closer to the optimum level of service outlined in these reports.”

The extra crewmembers would also help the department comply with the National Fire Protection Act standards for response staffing.

The NFPA calls for, “a department should provide 16 firefighters on scene within 8 minutes, 90% of the time, for a fire in a single-family residence with the first engine arriving on scene within 4 minutes,” Chief McCrain said, “or 17 firefighters if responding with a ladder truck. Currently, our department operates with 12 full time operational personnel and runs nearly 2,000 calls annually from one fire station.”

So clearly, as hard working and talented as the MBFD is, it’s doesn’t meet what is considered the standard for staffing at fires. It should be noted that the majority of calls for service are medical aids in Morro Bay; which is why every firefighter is required to be a certified paramedic, too. Still, despite the staffing issues, the department does pretty well for its citizens.

“The average response from Morro Bay Fire is currently four paid Firefighters with two on one engine and two on the rescue or second engine,” Chief McCrain said. “The alarm also includes the request for the Fire Chief, Fire Mar-

shal, and reserve firefighters. Local automatic aid contracts bring only one fire engine, one ambulance and one chief officer from neighboring agencies for a staffing level of six.”

The department’s reserve program — what used to be called “volunteer” firefighters — also isn’t up to snuff. “The reserve firefighter program has been successful for many years in Morro Bay, but we have witnessed a dramatic decline in qualified candidates due to training obligations, state training mandates and the limited availability to respond to incidents off duty. This has been a trend throughout San Luis Obispo County with all fire departments. In fact, Morro Bay is one of the last city departments in the SLO County to still operate a Reserve Firefighter Program.”

The issue with reserve programs, is that the training requirements are so high that successful reservists land full time work with other fire departments, taking their training here and putting it to work in other communities, somewhat like a baseball farm team feeds players to the majors.

And, “Our current organizational design also depends on off duty full time personnel responding from home,” he said. “With the change of our reliability of reserve firefighters and the limited full-time personnel responding from home, today we must rely on auto aid and mutual aid response from our neighboring communities.”

In Morro Bay that usually means getting help from Cal Fire in Cayucos and Los Osos. The SAFER grant will make the city, well, safer.

“By funding these four positions, our department will be able to respond five personnel and two apparatus, two Chief Officers [along with 5 firefighters from our automatic aid agencies] within 8 minutes to any single family fire.”

While that won’t meet the NFPA standards of six, it’ll be a lot closer and will allow the other firefighters some relief.

“Additional staffing will also increase the overall health and safety of the members of the department,” Chief McCrain said, “by relieving physical and emotional stress, reducing injuries, and providing for a healthier working

environment. All of these will reduce risk to Firefighters and our community.”

If readers wonder how busy the MBFD really is, in a recent City Manager’s Monthly Update, Scott Collins reported that the MBFD in 2021 responded to a total of 1,925 calls — about 5-1/2 calls a day average. There were 51 fire calls encompassing structure fires, vehicle fires, dumpster fires, wildland-grass fires and more.

There were 1,183 emergency medical aids — both advanced and basic aid. Advanced life support is when paramedics start an IV or use life saving equipment like defibrillators, taking measures beyond simple first aid.

They had 121 false alarms; seven hazardous materials spills including gas spills or leaks, natural gas leaks or spills, and more.

There were 59 “other hazardous materials” calls — downed power lines, arcing wire, etc.

There were also 505 public assists, lift assists, flooding, non-fire electrical hazards, smoke alarm battery changes for elderly folks, and such.

“It is nice to know we have these great trained personnel in our town assisting saving lives,” Collins said.

Asked by Estero Bay News when he might expect to hear if he got the SAFER Grant, Chief McCrain said probably not until summer. “FEMA will begin announcing the awards beginning the Summer of 2022 and end the awards Sept. 30, or until all funds have been awarded. We are hopeful but will not know until this summer.”



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Community

Land Conservancy From page 1



One of the amazing views found from the Toro Coast Preserve Project. Photo by Jody Salamacha-Hollier

California’s coastline.

Check out [www.cayucoslandconservancy.org](http://www.cayucoslandconservancy.org) for more details about this “David and Goliath” triumph. Basically, Cayucan Susan Lyon smelled something funny going on while monitoring the Cayucos Citizens Advisory Council. CCAC is a group elected by their peers to watch over happenings within, or near, their tiny community. She asked her lawyer-husband, Roger, if the developers could be stopped. “Yes,” he said, “but I don’t think the town knows that.”

Susan ran for a seat on the CCAC, then invited ten couples for dinner and recruited them to get the word out to the townspeople that Cayucos was about to change forever.

The developers needed CCAC to recommend their plan so SLO County supervisors would approve water rights on their acquired property. When they officially presented their plan to CCAC, 500 people showed up. Some got rowdy. Battle lines were drawn, and ten years later the property was down zoned to agriculture land by the county. Ultimately, without approval for their plan, the developers decided to sell. However, the formation story about CLC doesn’t end here. Click onto CLC’s website for further details.

Some of you might cry, “Foul play! Land-owners should be able to build on their land.” Indeed, but when a proposal is at odds with the majority of the neighbors, there is another option that might (not always) satisfy the landowner, appease the public, and entrust an agreed upon supervising agency to maintain the forever use of the property in question. In the case of Estero Bay Bluff State Park, the Trust for Public Lands offered 7 million dollars to compensate the developers and purchase an adjacent parcel. The founders of CLC realized there was still work to do to preserve and conserve the property, so they established the organization that continues today.

“Conservation is complicated,” said Bettencourt. “A conservancy/land trust is not a government agency or an advocacy organization. Our group’s original goal was to create a green belt around Cayucos or at least a Hwy 1 separator north and south of us. What we (CLC) do is conserve marketable land by finding willing landowners who will accept fair market value for the land we decide we

want to buy for an amount we can afford to pay.”

Today Estero Bay Bluffs State Park is managed by California State Parks with continued cooperative efforts with CLC to promote access for the public’s enjoyment or education about the area. Additional acquisitions by CLC have been San Geronimo Ranch, parcels on Cayucos Hill-side Lots, aka Hang Glider Hill, and recently the Chevron property between Cayucos and Morro Bay. CLC, the City of Morro Bay, and Chevron agreed the property should be preserved to develop the Coastal Trails Connectors, maintain the only off leash dog beach in the county, and offer a Pacific Ocean view corridor on Hwy 1 for traveling visitors and residents.

And what do you, we the people get out of such conservation efforts besides the pristine view we enjoy as we drive from Estero Bay to San Simeon. CLC continues to create and promote regular public-serving happenings, docent led tours at Estero Bay Bluff State Park, for example. Coming up in March is an onsite program by biologist and birding icon Tom Edell, who will introduce participants to the many birds that frequent SLO County. Also listed on the website is Dr. Joel Germond, a nature lover who has been studying and photographing biodiversity along California’s central coast since 2007, will lead a group hike called “Stalking the Wildlife of Hollywood Hill” - another name for Hang Glider Hill.

CLC and other land conservancy groups get their funding by CLC membership, major donor gifts, grants from nonprofits conservancy groups, Wildlife Conservation grants, Land and Water or Open Space Agriculture Bonds, and grants available from the California Coastal Conservancy Agency.

You don’t have to be a Cayucan to hang out with CLC board members and friends. To join in and get on their mailing list offer up \$25 or more at [www.cayucoslandconservancy.org](http://www.cayucoslandconservancy.org). It’s truly a family with a single purpose — protect the essence of what makes the Central Coast coastal. And when you meet up with Greg Bettencourt shake his hand and say “thank you” for all those determined Cayucans. He was one of them, a lifelong Cayucan along with his parents, his wife Mary, their two sons and grandkids, who all love, live, and play in Cayucos.

Chorro Valley From page 1

cal interconnection to the existing Morro Bay Switching Station.” That switchyard is owned by PG&E and located at the rear of the Morro Bay Power Plant.

Oddly enough, every energy project now being proposed — offshore wind farms and the Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) a battery storage facility at the power plant and Pecho — are banking on that same switchyard for a connection to the grid.

In recent weeks, the company has been doing some test drilling at the site, which apparently isn’t yet know if it is suitable for the project. Neighbors of the site have expressed concerns in recent news articles.

According to the CEC, Pecho “would provide fossil fuel-free and greenhouse gas emissions-free electricity,” a claim that would obviously be dependent on where the initial electricity is generated for storage.

The CEC is just beginning its review, which according to the agency supersede all local permitting and review, satisfying the State’s environmental law — California Environmental Quality Act or CEQA. So while the location is in the County’s permitting jurisdiction, the County will have no authority over the project review, outside being a commenting agency.

Another agency that has already submitted comments on the project is the Morro Bay National Estuary Program or NEP. Executive Director, Melodie Grubbs, in a letter to the CEC said, “The MBNEP is concerned that certain topics within the Pecho Project AFC application appear to be too narrowly focused on the site and its nearby surroundings and don’t fully consider the project’s location within the context of the Morro Bay estuary and watershed. These topics specifically include the biology, water, and land use sections.”

She points out that Chorro Creek, along with tributaries San Bernardo and San Luisito Creeks are the major freshwater source for the Morro Bay National Estuary and, “have been the focus of water quality and habitat improvement efforts for decades.”

Grubbs’ letter said, “Upstream from the project site is the 320-acre Chorro Creek Ecological Reserve, managed by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife for habitat protection and floodplain restoration. An extensive floodplain restoration project was completed in 2019.”

That preserve encompassed the former Hollister Ranch and spans both sides of the highway and San Luisito Creek. NEP helped broker the deal that purchased the property and it was gifted into Fish & Wildlife’s care.

“Immediately downstream from the project site,” Grubbs continued, “is the Chorro Flats Wetlands Restoration Project [80 acres] managed by the Coastal San Luis Resource Conservation District that similarly is intended to restore more natural stream morphology and floodplain sediment capture. This site was restored 20-years ago and provides valuable mature riparian habitat.”

That project in Chorro Flats (previously known as the Domenghini Flats) mainly concerned a levee that farmer’s erected decades before to straighten the creek, drain the area and turn it into farmland. The RCD’s project removed

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the levee and dug a new channel for the creek that meandered into the flats, planted it with willow cuttings, and returned it to a natural habitat, but kept some of the land for agriculture.

It was designed to slow the creek flow down and have it spill over and flood into the flats, as it did before all the changes were done. The idea was to have sediments settle in the flats and not in the estuary, which the NEP has identified as the No. 1 concern for the estuary’s health and lifespan.

“The proposed Pecho Energy Project between these two preserves along Chorro Creek and any additional development should consider impacts to species movement and impacts to water use and water quality,” Grubbs said.

Hydrostor’s initial environmental document mention steelhead trout and red-legged frogs, two protected species, but Grubbs said it needs to do more.

“In addition to protecting habitat for these and other special status species, it will also be important to have an adequate buffer adjacent to Chorro Creek and tributaries [e.g., San Bernardo Creek] to support wildlife migration along the creek corridors and access to nearby upland habitats.

A lot of money and effort has gone into acquiring and conserving lands in Chorro Valley. “Large amounts of money, mostly public, have been expended to acquire stretches of Chorro Creek and its adjacent lands,” Grubbs said, “to protect and restore habitat in and along the creek itself, but also and importantly, to restore the floodplain to more natural functions, with the aim of improved sediment capture and reducing sedimentation in the estuary into which the creek drains.”

The CEC has begun docketing the project’s studies and reports. If readers want to keep tabs on the project, they can have their email addresses added to the project’s server list. See the project website at: [www.energy.ca.gov/powerplant/caes/pecho-energy-storage-center](http://www.energy.ca.gov/powerplant/caes/pecho-energy-storage-center) and follow the instructions to sign up.

eFoil From page 1

According to the Lift website (see: [liftfoils.com](http://liftfoils.com)), “The Lift electric hydrofoil, or eFoil, lets riders experience flight over almost any body of water at up to 25 mph, no waves required. The eFoil takes advantage of modern technology and expert craftsmanship to create a state-of-the-art watersports technology experience combining the best of surfing, hydro foiling, and electric propulsion in an easy-to-use, unbelievably fun package.”

The Lift website runs down the company’s history, which started in 2010 in Puerto Rico. “In 2013, our co-founder Nick Leason — an engineer and avid surfer — came up with the idea for the original eFoil, applying the technology from smart phones, electric vehicles and even drones into a board that would let its rider fly above any body of water without needing to be propelled by wind or waves.”

Rhodes and Trujillo have the rights to sell Lift, with a territory that spans from Ventura to Monterey. The Lift is very new, Trujillo said, with the company’s first shipments going out in May 2018. It’s an expensive toy, too.

“The price is \$12,000,” Trujillo said. “And Lift has a thousand on back order.”

The Lift uses a Tesla battery, he added, that charges, “as fast as you can use it. They’re very new and very exciting.” The battery is housed in a watertight compartment inside the carbon-fiber board.

The two said they were interested in doing a story with Estero Bay News to try and clear up some misconceptions that have been going around in the community, after a fellow who has one, was seen motoring around the bay, which prompted some calls to the Harbor Office from concerned citizens. The speed limit inside the Harbor is 5 mph.

Rhodes said as a boat captain he is, “well versed in the Harbor’s rules and regulations,” and they are incorporating these into their demo routine.

Trujillo stressed that their business is not “renting” Lifts. It’s a dealership and they will only take someone out for a demo/riding lesson if they are serious about buying

one — sort of like a test drive of a new Mercedes.

And they charge \$300 for about 90 minutes for one rider, and more for extra riders, a price likely to discourage someone just out looking for a thrill ride.

The business also rents scooters; they have a couple of Trujillo’s electric boats that he moved from the Bay Cruisers’ location; and they even have a street-legal golf cart for rent.

Right now, Trujillo said, they are hoping to convince the City to designate a spot inside the harbor for their demos but if they can’t, he feels confident they can keep to the speed limit. “You can ‘foil’ at 5 mph,” Trujillo said.

They have a small pontoon boat with a sled and use it to ferry through the harbor to where they can ride. Rhodes added that they do not foil from the dock behind the store. And of course, they can go outside the harbor, too and ride, which is where they can really put the board through its motions.

Rhodes said the board will do 20 knots and a battery charge lasts about 2 hours.

Estero Bay News asked Harbor Director Eric Endersby about this new toy coming to town. He said their focus, “is keeping the speed of these eFoils down to 5 mph or less anywhere inside the harbor, which means any operations over that have to occur outside the harbor.

“The biggest issue with eFoils, to really use them for what they were made for, means you are exceeding the 5 mph speed limit that is throughout the bay.

“From what we have observed, to get on a plane they are right on the ragged edge of 5 mph, and while most of the operations we have witnessed are keeping to that speed, a few haven’t, and what we are mostly concerned about is people who won’t be able to resist stepping on the gas and really zipping around as they were designed to do.

“Which, as you can imagine, the switchboard has already been lit up several times from calls to complain about their speed and proximity to otters, seals and other wildlife.”

Trujillo said they are hoping a spot inside the Harbor Mouth and closer to the South Jetty — sort of a no-man’s area not used much by the public — might be designated as a riding spot, but probably not.

“Our position,” Endersby said, “is eFoils have to stay at or below 5 mph anywhere in the harbor, even in the ‘no-man’s land’ you mentioned. And that they are equipped just like any motorized vessel, because they are one, in that:

- They are state-registered and marked with CF numbers;
- The operator has a PFD [lifejacket] available (and wearing it if under 13-years old);
- They carry the required Coast Guard flares aboard.”

So far, the few eFoil riders that have been in the bay, including professional surfer and skateboarder, Stacy Peralta who Endersby said now lives in Cayucos, have behaved themselves.

“So far,” Endersby said, “both Nick and his peeps and Peralta have been towing the 5 mph line pretty well, but as I said, I think it’s only a matter of time before we start having problems. We are just going to stick to the 5 mph and equipment/registration rules just like any other powerboat, and if they can’t live with that, well, then that’s a problem. EFoils really do belong outside the harbor to operate as they were designed, period.”

Trujillo and Rhodes are fine with that, and reiterated that they are only doing retail sales with demonstration lessons. And at \$12,000 each, renting them isn’t really an option, anyway. “They never go out by themselves,” Trujillo said of prospective buyers. “They have an instructor with them.”

They are putting together a training/certification program for Lift owners and Rhodes said that towing them out with the pontoon boat gives family members a chance to go out and watch a demo from the relative safety of the boat.

Where are they made? Trujillo said the Tesla batteries come from the San Francisco Bay Area and the boards are manufactured in Puerto Rico, so they’re an American-made product.

The eFoil sales, and electric bike-scooter rentals are just some of the offerings the new store will have, as they describe the business as still evolving. Rhodes is an artist in the Lichtenberg method of carving on wood, also called “fractional burning.”

“We’re cranking out art too,” Rhodes said.

All told, the new business is selling eFoils, renting the scooters and electric bikes, as well as whale watching and private yacht charters with Toast the Coast, fishing and more. Call 805-395-1440. Central Coast Lift is at 1215 Embarcadero in the Morro Bay Landing building. See their website at: [www.centralcoastlift.com](http://www.centralcoastlift.com).



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