

Boatyard Dreams Fading

By Neil Farrell

Hopes of a full service boat haul out and repair yard being built in Morro Bay have floated about for years, but now appear to have hit the proverbial iceberg and look to be sinking like the Titanic.

Harbor Director Eric Endersby said the haul out facility and repair yard idea was a City Council goal “two cycles ago” and the Harbor Department staff was diligently working on it for a few years but “It all kept coming down to money.”

Eventually, the haul out facility dropped off the Council’s radar and as of 2-years ago, was no longer among the Council’s goals, Endersby said. “No one was interested in investing \$5 million to get it built.”

So recently, Endersby asked the Harbor Advisory Board, which had been the biggest champions for a haul out facility, to drop the idea until something significant happens, like an investor emerges.

Endersby said the Harbor Board’s purpose is to help the City Council implement the goals and initiatives, but with the boatyard no longer on the list of goals, he thought it might be time to let it go. The Harbor Board’s subcommittee on the boatyard should quit working on it and focus on other things.

Endersby said while a study of the needs, as in are there enough boats here to keep a full service yard busy, showed there was, the numbers weren’t there to make it profitable.

He said that nobody has been able to show how, with 450 boats in this isolated harbor, it could attract boats from other places like Santa Barbara or the Bay Area. “You need a bigger pool of boats,” Endersby said.

He added that most of the big fishing boats in the har-



This graphic is from RRM Design’s 2016 concept plan for a boat haul out facility and repair yard in Morro Bay and where facilities might be placed and the direction a travel lift might use. Photo from City of Morro Bay

bor haul out and make repairs when they are off fishing in other ports, making it part of their fishing trip to save the costs of transiting to a haul out yard.

Or they take the boat to places like Ventura and even Mexico, where they can get the work done cheaper.

Locations for a travel hoist have varied over the years, including Coleman Park, an area next to the power plant’s intake building, and most recently, at the Beach Street docks, with boatyards being proposed for the grassy area along the 1500 block of Embarcadero (the sand dunes along the power plant’s western fence) and most recently the so-called Triangle Lot.

“When the Triangle lot became ours,” Endersby said of the former power plant property at the end of Front Street where the Maritime Museum is now located, “about 5-years ago, we had Henry Pontarelli and Lisa Wise Consulting do a market analysis — expecting ‘X’ number of boats for ‘X’ number of days.” That study showed promise and Endersby said they sought to conduct an economic

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Rite Aid Takes Over M.B. Drug & Gift

Story and Photos By Neil Farrell



Morro Bay Drug & Gift, the last independent pharmacy in Morro Bay was recently bought out by Rite Aid and closed. All the stores customers are being referred to Rite Aid, but you must have your doctor transfer prescriptions.

With little warning, Morro Bay’s only locally owned pharmacy shut its doors last week bought out by the pharmacy giant in town.

Morro Bay Drug & Gift, which was started by Dr. John Headling who is now Morro Bay’s Mayor, was purchased by Dr. Sumanta Paul in 2019. Dr. Headling had opened the Morro Bay store after many years having a pharmacy in Cambria. He sold when he retired.

A sign on the front doors indicated that Rite Aid had bought out the little independent drug store. The sign says prescriptions are available at the Rite Aid on Quintana Road, and then gives the store’s hours and address but no other information.

A peek in the window revealed empty store shelves and display racks, with paper and debris scattered on the floor, looking much like the place was emptied out quickly.

Estero Bay News spoke with a manager at Rite Aid’s



Sign on pharmacy door

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Back Better Than Ever: 34th Annual AAUW Garden Tour April 24

By Judy Salamacha

Estero Bay gardens are blooming with colorful blossoms. Citrus and stone fruit are ripening. Passion fruit is falling off the vine. And Monarch butterflies have come back to flirt with hummingbirds seeking sips of sweet nectar. I can almost hear the birds chirp, “It’s time to get outside and smell the roses.”

The members of American Association of University Women (AAUW), Morro Bay Chapter are excited to be back in living color again supporting scholarships for Estero Bay’s young women. On April 24th from noon to 5 p.m., you can help them send several 7th grade girls to a 2022 summer science camp in Santa Barbara with your generous donation of \$15 to attend AAUW’s 34th Garden Tour.

View four uniquely designed gardens representative of the personalities and lifestyle of the homeowners who have created them. Stroll through each garden at your own pace — two in Morro Bay and two across the street from each other in Los Osos. Where else, would the AAUW



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A Cup, a Bite and Nostalgia at Nautical Bean

Story and Photos by Theresa-Marie Wilson

Looking for a new place to get your morning jolt, enjoy a bite or hang out with friends? The highly anticipated Nautical Bean Coffee House and Bistro in Baywood is officially open.

The coffee shop opened April 4, post deadline, at 1399 2nd Street inches from the pier overlooking the estuary. This is the third location the family owned business operates. Owners, husband and wife, Bob and Dee Jones, and their son Brett also have shops at 11560 Los Osos Valley Road and 2010 Parker Street, both in San Luis Obispo.

Most independent coffee shops have their own vibe that can be almost as important to customers as the coffee itself.

“I’d say we are non-pretentious, very casual,” Brett said. “Sometimes people get intimidated when they come into a coffee shop; ‘How do I order? What do I do.’ I don’t want anyone to feel like that. I want to be laid back. We’re kind of three generations here, because we have my mom and dad and myself. All of my daughters have worked at one. It’s more of a community feel, a local’s feel.”

Brett, who learned the coffee business working at the



Brett Jones is a businessman and pop culture fan. Here he shows off some of the collectible lunch boxes decorating the interior of the Nautical Bean in Baywood.

shop on LOVR before he and his family bought it 20 years ago, says Nautical Bean is considered part of the second wave of coffee. Meaning, in the evolution of consumer culture that first brewed in the 1990s, a demand for higher quality and better tasting beans and flavored coffee drinks — a break from the same old grind in cans at grocery stores.

The shop serves six drip varieties and has a list of house drinks, most of which can be made hot, cold or blended. Everything from an Americano, hot water added to a shot of espresso, to a Rainforest Latte, a soy chai matte latte, are on the menu board. Hot and iced teas as well as

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News

Police Get New Records Software

By Neil Farrell

The Morro Bay Police Department is getting an upgrade to its record keeping software that while costing tens of thousands a year in subscription fees, will bring the department in line with new State issued police reporting requirements.

According to a staff report from Police Chief Jody Cox, the new "Record Management System" from software company, Mark43, will cost \$173,500 to install and \$26,500 a year over the subsequent 4-years. The initial start up costs meant the City Council had to adjust the police budget up by some \$64,000. Money for the new system is coming out of the Measure Q and E local sales taxes.

The department, Chief Cox explained, has been using the Records Management System (EIS) for 9-years now and as of Jan. 1, had new State and Federal laws to contend with.

"Legislative changes," the Chief's report read, "mandate that Police Departments transition the method by which statistical data is reported to the State and Federal agencies from the old Uniform Crime Reporting [UCR] to the new, California Incident Based Reporting Systems [CIBRS]. The new reporting requirements became effective on Jan. 1, 2021, but our current system does not have the upgraded capability to produce the reports necessary to comply with the new reporting standards."

The County Sheriff's Department along with five other police agencies in 2017 started looking into new RMS systems, the report said. MBPD officials attended many of the meetings to talk with RMS vendors "to meet our needs and which would allow all of the neighboring agencies to

continue information sharing."

Last year the police department decided it would be best to do a separate request for bids and posted the RFP last September, and they got half a dozen bids.

"We received six proposals," Chief Cox said, "and the department reviewed each written proposal and consulted with the City of Morro Bay Information Technology Department. The top vendors were selected for presentations and demonstrations. Finalist presentations were evaluated on (1) System suitability and ability; (2) Knowledge of California specific legislation requirements; (3) Proven customer service record; (4) Ease of integrating with other software; and, (5) Intuitive and straightforward data entry masks. Mark43 came on top.

Mark43's system "is a cloud-based solution, offering unlimited storage on the Amazon Web Services' Government Cloud, which is Criminal Justice Information Services security compliance through the U.S. Department of Justice. Upgrades, regular releases, patch fixes all get delivered as part of the subscription, without the system requiring downtime during maintenance and the need for City IT staff to monitor upgrades."

The new system should protect the police department from outside cyber attacks.

"The Mark43 platform and the Department data," the report said, "will run on multiple geographically dispersed data centers to ensure maximum redundancy and resiliency in the event of a cyber-attack, natural disaster or other security risk."

The new software will lead to "improved workflow,



Morro Bay Police have recently begun using 'The WRAP' a new-fangled restraint system designed to more safely control a combative suspect. Photo courtesy The WRAP

customization, security and analytics, Mark43's benefits over the current RMS system include integration with software programs related to Dispatch/CAD, the D.A.'s Office, other County systems and notices to appear in court are available as well, as they have CIBRS reporting capabilities that is recognized as one of the best in the field."

In another police news item, the department recently began using a new suspect restraint device called "The WRAP."

"This is a better way for us to safely control overly combative subjects," MBPD Cmdr. Amy Watkins told Estero Bay News. "This type of restraint is used only on extreme cases where the subjects combativeness poses a safety threat to themselves and/or officers. SLO County



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33rd Annual Bay-Osos Kiwanis Club Easter Egg Hunt!

WHEN: Saturday, April 16th, 2022

WHERE: Grass area by the South Bay Community Center

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10:30 am: Contest Entries Due
10:30am: Story Time Presented By Los Osos Library
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By Theresa-Marie Wilson

Jail uses the same system.”

Manufactured in the USA by Command Sourcing, Inc., according to the WRAP website (see: www.command sourcing.com/wrap), “The WRAP is a safe restraint system, designed to protect subjects, officers, and staff by reducing the possibility of injury and death.”

It basically consist of an upper body harness with a ring in the back where handcuffs go to prevent someone from slipping their hands in front of them; and a leg re-strait that wraps a person’s legs together so they can’t kick out.

It also have storage pockets for things like spit masks and safety gloves, according to the website. It also locks someone into an upright sitting position, which doesn’t put pressure on a person’s chest, like being held to the ground, facedown does.

“This is another example of how MBPD uses training and equipment to keep our citizens and officers safe,” Cmdr. Watkins said.

COVID-19 Test to Treat Sites Launched

Seven pharmacies and clinics in San Luis Obispo County have launched COVID-19 Test to Treat services to provide rapid testing for the virus, a medical consultation as appropriate, and prescription treatment for anti-viral pills Paxlovid if appropriate for the patient.

Test to Treat was developed to address the need for quick, lifesaving treatment for those facing high risk for severe illness from COVID-19, particularly those who are age 65 and older or have health conditions that increase the risk for severe COVID-19. Treatment is most effective when started within the first few days of illness, before symptoms become severe.

Test to Treat hours vary by location. Sites generally charge a fee for testing and medical consultation, and most will bill insurance for this cost. The medication itself, if prescribed, is free of charge. The county said it is a good idea to call ahead to confirm hours and ask any specific questions about cost. For Cambria Drug & Gift and Best-Care Pharmacy, treatment may not be immediate but will be within 24- 48 hours.

COVID-19 treatment is also available at other pharmacies and clinics in SLO County, by prescription or physician referral. Health officials encourage those who are at high risk for severe COVID-19 to test early and call their doctor if the test is positive. A new online Treatment Locator Tool helps individuals locate treatment nearby. It is at <https://aspr.hhs.gov/TestToTreat/Pages/default.aspx>.

Additional SLO County Test to Treat sites are expected to launch in the weeks ahead.

Nature lovers have a new reason to celebrate in Los Osos. The Morro Coast Audubon Society has purchased several parcels that will expand the Sweet Springs Nature Preserve.

The new, approximately one-acre, space is bounded by Pismo Avenue where it intersects with 3rd St, along Pismo to 4th, and up 4th to the house on the corner of Ramona.

“The Preserve,” Judy Neuhauser, president of the Morro Coast Audubon Society says, “offers sanctuary for wildlife of all kinds, resting areas for migrating birds, nesting and feeding habitat for local birds, places for endangered plants and animals to thrive, and a tranquil natural habitat for people to replenish their spirit and to observe and learn to love the local flora and fauna.”

The new parcels, referred to as the “Pismo Avenue Wetlands” are valuable willow thicket and pygmy Coast Live oak habitat that is presently under-represented in the Sweet Springs Nature Preserve.

“The purchase allows MCAS to permanently protect this valuable willow and coast live oak habitat,” said Neuhauser.

Both habitat types are designated as Environmentally Sensitive Habitat, making them important targets for preservation along the coast of California. They provide rich surroundings not only for nesting species including Wilson’s warblers, California quail and California towhee at the Preserve, but also for migrating and wintering songbirds that use the thickets for resting and to find food among the oaks and willows in the form of caterpillars, other insects, and protein-rich pollen. Even resident deer are often seen entering the oak woodlands.

The latest acquisition is adjacent to the Preserve along the eastern boundary, and will easily integrate into the Preserve. It will be designated as off-limits for habitat preservation, except for a planned footpath leading from 3rd Street and Pismo Avenue into the eastern edge of the Preserve.

“There has been an informal path through this



An overhead view of the new parcel that is part of the Sweet Springs Preserve.

property for a number of years,” Neuhauser. “We closed it about eight months ago, with permission from the previous owner, when someone started cutting our ADA rope that guides sight-impaired visitors through Sweet Springs East. Once we have plantings and borders in place to direct people to the main Preserve and to keep people out of the environmentally sensitive areas of the new purchase, we will re-open that informal foot-path.”

The purchase of the lots at \$250,000 was made possible by an “extremely generous” donation from community members Carole Maurer and John Dilworth.

“When someone like these two individuals makes a gift enabling the preservation of ecologically valuable land, it is a gift to everyone,” Neuhauser said. “Morro Coast Audubon is deeply grateful for their donation and community spirit, as well as for the decision on the part of Kathryn Donovan, owner of the parcels, to sell at a price that the Morro Coast Audubon Society could afford.”

MCAS will hold fundraisers and write grants to cover costs to remove and replace what the group laughingly refers to as the Frankenfence that would keep people out of the environmentally sensitive areas, remove the broken down gate on Pismo Avenue and replace it with a pedestrian stile, fund a new welcome sign explaining the purpose of the Preserve and remove invasive plant species while providing plant barriers to the areas that will be left entirely for wildlife use,

The Preserve is now a little over 33 acres stretching

Preserve Expands Continued on page 4

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from the Coastal Access point on Doris Ave to 4th Street. The marsh area between the Doris Ave access and the platform at Broderon Avenue is completely off-limits to people since it is home to both the Savannah Sparrow, which has been endangered in California since 1974 due to habitat loss, as well as the endangered plant species salt-marsh bird's beak and sueda Californica.

"There are pedestrian paths through the Sweet Springs Central parcel and Sweet Springs East has an ADA improved path suitable for wheelchairs and those with sight impairment," Neuhauser said. "Numerous benches around the Preserve give people a place to quietly sit, watch what goes on in this Nature Preserve, and regain their own tranquility.

People frequent the Preserve to enjoy the bird watching platforms, relax on benches and traverse pedestrian paths. As beautiful as the surroundings are, it should be noted that the area is not meant to be a stomping ground for exercise enthusiasts or a playground for children; it remains a place for wildlife.

"We encourage quiet, reflective activities like photography, painting, bird watching, meditation, and allowing oneself to be immersed in the sounds, sights, smells and rhythms of this wonderful natural environment," Neuhauser said. "While we do allow public access to the Preserve, it is with the idea that this is primarily a place where wildlife can thrive and go about their lives with minimal disturbance from humans. We feel strongly that people need to experience the wonder and tranquility of nature in order to love it and hopefully dedicate themselves to preserving what is left of Earth's natural systems and wildlife."

During the winter, the estuary is home to thousands of waterfowl that can be seen from the two viewing platforms. Raptors such as bald eagles, peregrine falcons, osprey, red-tailed and red-shouldered hawks, American kestrels, and coopers hawks are often seen from the Preserve. All together, over 220 species use the Preserve and at least 40 have been documented breeding in the Preserve.

"Our world has lost about one third of its birds over the past 50 years," Neuhauser said. "We need to provide them spaces to live, rest, and breed — that is the main purpose of the Sweet Springs Nature Preserve."

Maintaining the property of the Preserve comes with a price of about \$40,000 per year, and the new fence is expected to come in at \$3,000. The group also plans to grow the Lands Endowment so it is able to support maintenance of the Preserve in perpetuity. Morro Coast Audubon hopes donations will help pay for necessary projects. Readers can donate via their website: www.morrocoast.audubon.org.

The Sweet Springs Nature Preserve is not done growing yet. There in one final small parcel embedded in the recent purchase that is undergoing negotiations for purchase. It will also be funded by the donation from Carole Maurer and John Dilworth.

Local Earns Women of the Year Award

At the close of Women's History Month in March, Rep. Salud Carbajal announced the winners of the fifth annual Congressional Women of the Year Award.

The six winners are: Reverend Doctor Caroline Hall of Los Osos, Dee Lacey of Paso Robles, Barbara Levenson of Pismo Beach, Lawanda Lyons-Pruitt of Santa Maria, Linda Tyler-Ryles of Buellton, and Sigrid Wright of Goleta.

The Congressional Women of the Year Award honors exceptional women across the 24th Congressional District who have left a positive impact on their communities. Winners span a variety of backgrounds and professions and represent the thousands of women working tirelessly to improve quality of life on the Central Coast.

"The recipients of this year's Women of the Year Award are all doing outstanding work to make the Central Coast an even better place to live, often without the recognition or compensation they deserve," Congressman Carbajal said. "I am honored to recognize these remarkable, trailblazing women for their indelible contributions to our community."

Carbajal will recognize the winners by entering a special written tribute for each woman into the official Congressional Record, preserving their stories and their impact on the community. An award ceremony will be held at a later date and each honoree will also receive a special congressional pin.

Below are the biographies for this year's honorees:

Rev. Dr. Caroline Hall, Los Osos

Rev. Dr. Caroline "Caro" Hall is a tireless advocate for the homeless, for the LGBTQ+ community, for the environment, for social justice, for children, and for our furry and feathered friends. She believes that being part of the solution is required for all of us to make our community, country, and world a better place for everyone.

Reverend Hall was a founding director of Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) for SLO, founding organizer of Los Osos Cares, founding member of Central Coast Clergy and Laity for Justice, member of People of Faith for Justice, former member of SLO County Homeless Service Oversight Council, and current member of Los Osos Advisory Councils Unhoused Residents committee. She organizes the Los Osos winter warming center and still finds time to volunteer with the National Estuary Program, Sierra Club, and ECOSLO.

Dee Lacey, Paso Robles

Dee Lacey is a longtime Paso Robles cattle rancher, dedicated to North County causes and cattle ranching heritage. Her lifetime of service has supported education as Paso Robles School Board for 20 years and member of the



Cuesta College Board of Trustees. She has represented the cattle ranching community as a member of the California Mid-state Fair Board of Directors, the SLO County Farm Bureau Board of directors, the Cattlemen's Association and the Cattlewomen's Association, of which she was president, has been honored as both SLO County Cattleman of the Year and SLO County Cattlewoman of the year.

Dee's commitment to the community at large has contributed to founding the Paso Robles Library Foundation as well as the Paso Children's Museum and membership in the SLO County Community Foundation, the Cuesta College Foundation, CAPSLO and Studios on the Park. She has previously been recognized as a Paso Robles Citizen of the Year, Cuesta College Woman of Distinction and the 33rd Assembly District Woman of the Year.

Barbara Levenson, Pismo Beach

Barbara Levenson is passionate about helping others with no expectation of recognition. During her 27-year career at Atascadero State Hospital, Barbara spent her time off working at Atascadero's Wellness Kitchen and as a member of the Flying Samaritans, providing free medical services around the world. She was recognized as an "unsung hero" by the SLO Tribune for her quiet dedication. Now she devotes her retirement to a variety of local causes.

She is the Chair of the SLO County Behavioral Health Board, a scholarship application reviewer for the Community Foundation of San Luis Obispo, member of Central Coast Friendship Bridge empowering Guatemalan women, Arroyo Grande Library volunteer, SLO NAACP member and member of the SLO County Diversity Coalition.

Lawanda Lyons-Pruitt, Santa Maria

Lawanda Lyons-Pruitt retired from the Public Defender's office and a career in advocacy and now serves as president of the NAACP of Santa Maria and Lompoc. As NAACP president, she keeps the public informed, sending out almost daily information about events and opportunities to participate in their community. She was activated to a new calling as a result of COVID, advocating for vaccines, especially among communities of color.

Lawanda is the organizer of Black History events

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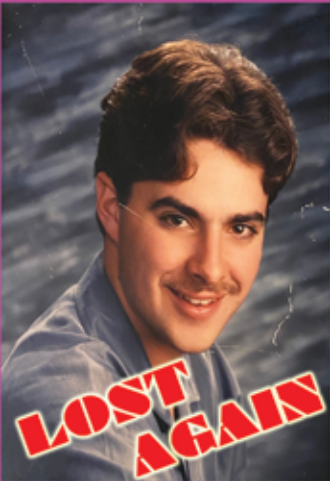
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This message has been approved by the Commissioner of the League of Ordinary Gentlemen



News

throughout the Santa Maria-Lompoc communities and serves as the record-keeper of family stories of so many important Black families in our county, assuring they are properly recognized during every Black History Month celebration. Lawanda’s energy and leadership encourages community involvement on every level.

Linda Tyler-Ryles, Buellton

Linda Tyler-Ryles is a retired Santa Barbara Research Center/ Raytheon Business Manager who was previously recognized as a Girl Scouts “Woman of Distinction” by Raytheon. Linda is a former President and Recording Secretary of Endowment for Youth [EYC], a 30+ year member and Treasurer of George Washington Carver Scholarship Club, Santa Ynez Valley Woman’s club, the Santa Maria NAACP, and an Advisory Board member of Santa Barbara’s Martin Luther King Jr. Committee, recruiting students to participate in the Poetry and Essay Contest.

A literacy advocate, Linda assisted elementary school readers in the Buellton Library “Tail Waggers” program as well as adults learning English in the library’s Adult Literacy Program. She is a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha sorority and advises undergraduate members. Linda is also an active member of her church volunteering in the nursery, a church usher, and Hospitality Committee member.

Sigrid Wright, Goleta

Sigrid Wright is a passionate leader in environmental and climate change advocacy on the Central Coast. She is the CEO of the Community Environmental Council, co-founded the Central Coast Climate Justice Network as well as the Central Coast Climate Collaborative, is the co-author or editor of more than a dozen policy documents, including the Santa Barbara County Regional Energy Blueprint and has led the annual Earth Day Festival production team for more than 15 years.

Sigrid’s dedication to advancing social, economic, and environmental justice extends to the advisory board of the Food Action Network, Leading from Within and the Santa Barbara Foundation’s Collaboration for Social Impact.



County Spends \$4M of COVID Relief

By Neil Farrell

Small businesses in San Luis Obispo County could see some relief in the aftermath of the coronavirus pandemic response’s impacts to the economy, and child care businesses and agencies could see six times as much. County Supervisors on March 15 approved allocating some \$4 million of its share of the \$1.9 trillion “American

Rescue Plan” or ARPA (COVID-19 relief monies from 2021), funding a \$500,000 COVID-19 Small Business Grant Program; and \$3 million “for child care projects,” according to a staff report from the County Administrative Office.

The County Office of Education (COE) will be the “fiscal agent for a coalition of child care organizations.” President Biden’s economic stimulus spending plan was approved in March 2021 and was intended to “speed up the United States’ recovery from the economic and health effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and the ongoing recession,” reads the County report.

However, the ARPA gives until 2026 to spend the money, but, the County said ARPA monies “must be committed by December 31, 2024.”

These latest allocations are part of a larger doling out of the ARPA’s largess. Altogether, the County was in place to get some \$55 million of ARPA monies.

Last June, County Supervisors voted to allocate \$9 million of that to businesses, non-profit organizations, and child care programs and companies to “mitigate the negative economic impacts” of the pandemic.

Last January, Supervisors further broke down how they wanted the \$9 million doled out: \$500,000 for small business grants; up to \$2.5M for business technical assistance, workforce development, and job training; \$3M to non-profit groups; and \$3M for child care.

The small business grant monies will be split 5-ways with \$100,000 being awarded in each of the Supervisorial Districts, according to the report.

From there, “Businesses with 10 or fewer employees may receive \$5,000 and businesses with 25 or fewer employees may receive \$10,000, meaning that between 10-20 grants would be available per district,” reads the report. “If there are unspent funds in one district after the close of the application window, the remaining money will be allocated to a district with higher need.”

Grant awards are on a first-come first-served basis, according to the report, and eligible businesses must “have been impacted by the COVID-19 public health emergency. Similar to the two prior rounds of small business grant funding, the Workforce Development Board will serve as the fiscal agent.”

The Paso Robles Chamber of Commerce is teaming with the County and representing the Central Coast Coalition of Chambers, “to provide support with application intake technical review, and outreach to the business community.”

The grant application process was to begin on April Fools’ Day (April 1, 2022).

Laura Fielder with the County Administration Office, said the small business grants could go to any business in SLO County, including those in the incorporated cities. And anyone wanting to apply should call 805-238-0506 or email to: support@pasorobleschamber.com.

She explained that the Paso Robles and Arroyo Grande Chambers of Commerce are acting as the liaisons for the grant programs, in conjunction with the other Chambers in SLO County.

Information on eligibility is available online at: SLO-

County.ca.gov/bizgrants.

As for the child care millions, the County report said that back in January Supervisors directed the staff to put together a coalition of service providers and come up with an implementation plan.

In February, the coalition members met with a Supervisor’s committee — Dist. 5’s Debbie Arnold and Dist. 3’s Dawn Ortiz-Legg — and hammered out a framework for doling out the ARPA millions.

First the County Office of Education, run by an elected Superintendent, will oversee the awards. Something called the SLO County Child Care Planning Council will provide “governance and program oversight of overall ARPA implementation and assist in technical assistance and outreach.”

The Child Care Resource Connection — part of CAP-SLO — will provide technical assistance; First 5 SLO County will do “facilitation of Initial planning and communication;” and “other partners” are expected in time to jump on the ARPA childcare bandwagon by “joining the Child Care Planning Council” through “alignment of work efforts, and/or recipients of ARPA funding.”

How’s the money to be spent? According to the report, some \$1.2M would be in direct financial assistance “to all currently/licensed/active child care providers, [i.e. centers and family child care homes], in SLO County.”

The County money would match State funds allocated by the “Community Care Licensing Division of the Calif. Dept. of Social Services, as a way to extend relief and stabilization efforts.”


This segment of the grant program would also ensure school-aged childcare is supported as well.

They plan to spend \$900,000 developing an application and selection process to apply for a grant, “for applicants who want to expand their existing program or start up a new program.”

CAP-SLO and the Planning Council’s involvement will allow the program “to leverage additional funding sources, technical assistance during the grant application process.”

And an additional \$900,000 will be used for “reinvigoration of the child care workforce,” reads the report. The money would subsidize the cost for training people interested in getting into the childcare field “by expanding on existing funding for the Ticket2Teach apprenticeship program;” and to “upskill” existing child care workers “to increase compensation and professional development through the Quality Courts Program.” (EBN looked up the meaning of “upskill” and no matches were found, however, we believe the seemingly made-up word meant to say, “improve one’s skill set” so as to be more employable and make more money).

These ARPA monies are apparently meant to tide these businesses over until the State and Federal governments make more money available. “The plan also offers a transitional bridge of support pending anticipated and potential state and federal funding dedicated to this sector in the coming years (e.g. additional state funds toward child care stabilization, universal transitional kindergarten, and expanded preschool; federal investments/appropriations)” the County report said.



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News Briefs

By Theresa-Marie Wilson

Poly Awards Over \$108,000 in Grants for Research

Cal Poly has awarded more than \$108,000 to support 33 student research projects through the university's Baker/Koob endowments, which support hands-on, project-based learning opportunities for individual students and groups. Student projects will focus on issues including space exploration, machine learning and climate change.

Students from four of Cal Poly's six colleges were awarded funding and will work with faculty advisors to complete their projects. For many, the projects will serve as part of senior projects or master's theses.

Funding for these projects comes from the Warren J. Baker Endowment for Excellence in Project-Based Learning and the Robert D. Koob Endowment for Student Success. Because of the endowments' similar purpose, distribution of the two endowments are pooled and used to fund multiple student projects via a competitive process.

Funds may be used for, but are not limited to, student support; student and faculty travel; student and faculty expenses associated with participation in student research; group projects; conferences; competitions; and equipment and materials related to student research.

"The Baker/Koob endowments provide a great opportunity for students to take the lead in research projects and to get involved with ongoing faculty research," said Dena Grossenbacher, assistant professor in the Biological Sciences Department, who has served as an advisor on several Baker/Koob projects focused on the impacts of

recent climate change on alpine plants in California national parks. "Thanks to this funding, my students have been able to travel across the state identifying plants that hadn't been relocated since the 1980s."

A full list of the projects is available on the provost. calpoly.edu/ website search for Baker Koob.

No-Cost Antigen Tests

San Luis Obispo County Public Health Department COVID-19 testing sites are offering faster antigen and PCR tests at no cost. Tests are available at community testing sites in Grover Beach, Paso Robles and San Luis Obispo. The site in Morro Bay closed on March 30 due to a sustained decrease in demand.

Antigen test results will be available in less than two hours (often within 30 minutes), and PCR test results will generally be available in less than two days, Public Health said in a new release. "Since the pandemic began, we have been working toward a day when residents could easily access free, plentiful COVID-19 testing with results available quickly," County Health Officer Dr. Penny Borenstein said. "This is now a reality in SLO County."

Folks with COVID-19 symptoms who receive a negative antigen test will be offered the more sensitive PCR test. All tests will be performed on-site by a clinician and will not be distributed for use at home. Home tests may be ordered at no cost from CovidTests.gov and are available for purchase, with insurance reimbursement, at pharmacies and other retailers.

Health insurance is not required to receive a test, and public health officials recommend making an appointment to be tested at slopublichealth.org/testing. Walk-ins are accepted as availability allows.

All sites are open 7 a.m. – 7 p.m. and are closed from 11 a.m. – 12 noon and 4-5 p.m. The Grover Beach site is closed on Fridays.

Morro Bay Tree City 2021

Morro Bay was named a 2021 Tree City USA by the Arbor Day Foundation for its commitment to effective urban forest management.

Morro Bay received the honor after meeting several requirements for recognition, these being: forming a tree board or department, creating a tree care ordinance, having an annual community forestry budget of at least \$2 per capita, and an Arbor Day observance and proclamation.

According to a press release by the Arbor Day Foundation, urban tree planting can help in reducing energy consumption up to 25%, which reduces general energy costs as well as help with over all cooling in the city, and increase property value among other benefits.

"Tree City USA communities benefit from the positive effects that an urban tree canopy has year after year," said the foundation's president, Dan Lambe. "The trees being planted and cared for by Morro Bay ensure that generations to come will enjoy a better quality of life. Additionally, participation in this program helps cultivate a sense of stewardship and pride for the trees the community plants and cares for."

The program is sponsored by Arbor Day Foundation in partnership with the U.S. Forest Service and the National Association of State Foresters. Arbor Day Foundation will celebrate its 50th anniversary this year.

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

Child Molester Gets 16 Years

A Pismo Beach man has been sentenced to a lengthy prison term after being convicted of two counts of child molestation, the District Attorney's Office announced.

District Attorney Dan Dow on March 25 said that Donald Keith Roberts, 43 of Pismo Beach, got 16-years in state prison for two counts of child molestation that occurred in 2014.

"Roberts also admitted that he suffered a prior conviction in 1999 for attempted murder, a violent felony under California's Three Strikes Law," the D.A.'s news release added. "By admitting the prior 'strike' Roberts' prison term was doubled."

The molestations occurred in Pismo Beach in 2014, the D.A.'s release said, "and involved a young family member. After committing the crime, Roberts moved to the State of Washington where he has resided since."

The victim also moved out of state and in late 2019 reported the crime to out-of-state authorities, which notified Pismo Beach Police Department. PBPD investigated the crime, which resulted in the filing of criminal charges.

In 2020, investigators with the D.A.'s Bureau of Investigation got a "Governor's Warrant" authorizing Roberts' extradition back to California and went to fetch him from Washington and return him to SLO County for prosecution.

On Jan. 28, 2022, Roberts pleaded no contest to the charges against him.

"The survivor," D.A. Dow said, "was courageous when reporting the crime years after it happened and by doing so provided the opportunity to hold this predator accountable. We thank our law enforcement partners in Washington State for assisting in the initial investigation, and Pismo Beach Police Department for quickly investigating this crime so that it could be successfully prosecuted, and the victim afforded justice."

This case was prosecuted by Deputy District Attorney Melissa Chabra who is assigned to the Sexual Violence Unit and was investigated by Marysville Police Department in Snohomish County, Wash., and Pismo Beach Police with the assistance of the D.A.'s Bureau of Investigation.

Wrong-Way Driver Causes Hwy 101 Crash

A Santa Maria man was arrested on suspicion of drunk driving after he caused a collision on the Cuesta Grade while driving on the wrong side of the freeway.



Donald Keith Roberts



And You're Invited Saturday, April 16



Grandma
Beverly



Gramps
Lenny Blue

Grandma Beverly (and, Gramps Blue) will be retiring and invite you to our retirement celebration party scheduled for Saturday, April 16, 2022 starting at 10:00 am. We will be closing for our final time at 8:00 pm. Serving our regular menu with special discounts, LIVE MUSIC all day long, and some give aways as our way of thanking the community and out of town guests for all the support over the past almost 9 years. Please welcome the new owners, "BABYDUDES" Tali & Hannah... be watching for their grand opening with some YUMM menu changes on the horizon.

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101 Crash Continued on page 9

Police Blotter



• **March 27:** Police responded to the 700 block of Quintana where they encountered a suspicious fellow, 63, who it turned out had four misdemeanor warrants and one felony warrant, and as they say, five will get you 20 months.

• **March 27:** Someone in the 400 block of Atascadero Rd., reportedly found a wallet in the trash bin and turned it over to police, who said it had been reported stolen by Atascadero police, who apparently came to fetch it.

• **March 26:** Police responded at 11:30 p.m. to a reported assault in the 3200 block of Nutmeg. Logs indicated a 37-year-old apparent ruffian was nicked for suspicion of battery with great bodily injury. The disagreeable cur was tossed in the County kennel.



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• **March 26:** Someone turned in some junk they'd found along with undisclosed drug paraphernalia apparently in the 1600 block of Main.

• **March 26:** A citizen in the 1700 block of Embarcadero reported that his or her black, Segway Bird electric scooter was stolen.

• **March 25:** Police responded at 7:43 a.m. to the 900 block of Main where some apparently unwelcomed lay-about, 55, got himself cited for trespassing at two different locations.

• **March 24:** Police responded at 10 p.m. to the La Serena Inn in the 900 block of Morro to deal with an apparent snot waffle making a pest of herself. The 47-year-old belle of the ball trespasser had five bench warrants and was allegedly in possession of drug paraphernalia but she was just cited and released.

• **March 24:** Police contacted a suspicious fellow at 2:30 p.m. in the 500 block of Atascadero Rd. The fellow, 39, was nicked for suspicion of being higher than the stacks on drugs.

• **March 24:** Police responded at noon to the 1700 block of Embarcadero where someone at Morro Dunes RV Park said his or her electrical bicycle had been stolen.

• **March 23:** Police received a tip about a guy sitting in a car in the 1200 block of Embarcadero who was smoking methamphetamine and in possession of two firearms. Logs indicated police contacted Rambo at his home and he was arrested for suspicion of possessing two loaded firearms, being under the influence of drugs and possessing paraphernalia.

• **March 28:** Police documented a request from County Adult Protective Services to investigate a possible case of elder financial abuse at some undisclosed location in town.

• **March 23:** Police stopped a suspicious vehicle at 1:24 a.m. in the 1700 block of Embarcadero. Logs indicated the driver "was removed from his vehicle after an apparent rifle was observed in the vehicle." The apparently suspicious, armed man was not arrested.

• **March 22:** At 3:22 p.m. police responded to City Park in the 700 block of Harbor for yet another drunken fool acting like an idjit. The culprit this time was a 51-year-old fooliot who was nicked for suspicion of being drunk and disorderly where decent folks can see you. He was booked and released, free to continue reeking havoc on the senses.

• **March 21:** Police responded at 9 p.m. to a suspicious circumstances call in the 300 block of Dunbar. Logs indicated a juvenile was placed in a 72-hour mental health hold "after posing a danger to others."

• **March 21:** Police responded at 5:20 p.m. to City Park where a 52-year-old man apparently conked out from smoking meth was rushed to the hospital. He reportedly had a glass crack pipe in his pocket, too. A report will be sent to the district attorney for possible inaction.

• **March 21:** Police responded at 2:41 p.m. to a reported shoplifting at Rite Aid on Quintana. A 21-year-old sticky-fingered woman was busted for suspicion of trespassing and petty theft.

• **March 21:** Police responded to the 1100 block of Morro at 7 a.m. for a reported stolen car. Logs indicated the car was found in SLO before the ink was dry on the crime report, how's that for service!

• **March 20:** At 3:15 p.m. in the 1500 block of Quintana ol' officer Eagle-eye spotted a parked car with 2022 tags but in reality had expired registration past 6 months, which is a no-no and will get your car arrested, as was done here.

• **March 20:** Police contacted some all too familiar fellows at 9 a.m. at the Community Center. Logs indicated one had eight failure to appear warrants and the other slacker just one FTA, so naturally both were cited and released again, no doubt drunk on the fumes of victory.

• **March 20:** Police contacted a swizzle stick sailing down the street at 12:30 a.m. in the 700 block of Quintana. Logs indicated he was three sheets to the wind and was rounded up into the hoosegow.

• March 18: Someone found some doohickey somewhere in the 1600 block of Main and gave it to some police officer, who was no doubt winsome over the whatchamacallit.

• **March 18:** At 9:15 p.m. officers contacted a regular customer in the 1600 block of Main. Logs indicated the fellow, 37, had four bench warrants and was given his fifth disappearance ticket and returned to the wilds.

• **March 18:** Police were called to a disturbance at 8:30 p.m. in the 400 block of Jamaica. A 27-year-old borracho was nicked for suspicion of being stultified in public.

• **March 18:** Police responded at 12:10 p.m. to yet another kerfuffle at City Park in the 700 block of Harbor. A 63-year-old squirt was nicked for suspicion of flapping-out where the tourists can see him.

• **March 18:** Police responded to the 300 block of Quintana where some apparent maniac damaged a chain link fence.

• **March 18:** Police recovered a reported stolen car in the 800 block of Embarcadero, but the thieves apparently slithered away.

• **March 18:** Police responded to a disturbance at 3:31 a.m. in the 3100 block of Tide. Logs indicated they arrested a man who was having an apparent conniption for suspicion of assaulting a police officer.

• **March 17:** Police got a report at 6:15 p.m. of a vehicle committing several moving traffic violations and driven by a suspected drunk driver. Logs indicated the car was slow to yield under the blues and reds, but the driver wasn't drunk but apparently is just a really crappy driver.

• **March 17:** Someone turned in a key that they'd found apparently hoping police can unlock the mystery.

• **Mach 16:** Police at the high school took a courtesy report for information only to document some undisclosed idiocy.

• **March 16:** At 4:38 p.m. police responded to Sinclair Gas Station in the 900 block of Morro Bay Blvd., for a suspicious subject. They contacted an apparent swagman, 26, who reportedly confessed to abusing fentanyl and methamphetamine, and possessing fentanyl. The model citizen was rushed to the hospital.

• **March 16:** Some poor dude reported getting scammed out of \$1,200.

• **March 16:** Police responded to the 2300 block of Main for a reported fraud case, the loss was listed as \$1,299.99, as apparently fraud losses don't include sales tax, which no doubt is a different kind of theft.

• **March 16:** Police were called to Rite Aid on Quintana Road for a fellow being a pest. Logs indicated the 27-year-old gent was arrested for suspicion of trespassing and being schwacked on drug, which explains a lot.

• **March 16:** Police responded at 6:16 a.m. to the 2600 block of Laurel for a car crash. No gory details were available.

• **March 16:** Police responded at 6:16 a.m. to the 3200 block of Main for a stolen car report.

• **March 15:** At 11:53 a.m. police contacted a familiar woman, 45, who had four bench warrants. She was of course issued a fifth ticket and unleashed back upon an unsuspecting world.

• **March 15:** Police were called at 3:22 p.m. to a disturbance in the 400 block of Quintana. A 41-year-old apparently perturbed battleaxe was nicked for suspicion of being fit-shaded in public and disorderly conduct.

• **March 15:** Police took a report of suspected child abuse in the 1000 block of Balboa.

• **March 14:** Police stopped a suspicious vehicle at 11 p.m. on Hwy 1 at Yerba Buena. Logs indicated the 49-year-old driver was surprisingly not lubricated but the scofflaw did have two bench warrants, for which they issued another apparently useless citation and let the rascal go.

• **March 14:** Some apparent scamboogah vandalized an innocent vehicle in the 1000 block of Market.

• **March 14:** At 1:37 p.m. police contacted a suspicious fellow in the 900 block of Main. The 55-year-old interloper was arrested for suspicion of trespassing, a hanging offense in some parts.

• **March 14:** Police responded at 10:12 a.m. to a disturbance in the 500 block of Kings. Logs indicated a man said some tool threw a wrench at him while he was sitting in his car. The wrench reportedly smacked the car door and dented it. No word on what caused the wretch to throw the wretched wrench.

• **March 14:** Police contacted a suspicious woman at 9:30 a.m. in the 1100 block of Quintana. Logs indicated they cited and released the apparent rookie who had but one bench warrant.

• **March 14:** Police responded at 3:21 a.m. to the 1100 block of Napa at the old Morro Elementary School, where they arrested a not too bright 20-year-old fellow for suspicion of burglary.

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Nipomo Man Gets Life for Sex Crimes

And, "In a third incident, occurring around 5:30 a.m.



Murderer's Parole Reversed

Greenwell was convicted in 2013 of taking part in that brutal murder. The State Parole Board had granted Greenwell parole last November, which caused SLO County D.A. Dan

D.A. Dow said, “I am grateful for Governor Newsom’s decision to reverse the Board of Parole Hearings’ decision. We agree with the Governor’s conclusion that Greenwell currently poses an unreasonable danger to society if released from prison at this time.

Lopez, the wrong-way driver, reportedly tried to continue along on the wrong side of the freeway but stopped a short distance away. The CHP responded and took Lopez into custody and charged him with suspicion of driving under the influence of alcohol. The investigation continues.

Lic# 095935-03

9

June Primary Ballot Set

By Neil Farrell



The June Primary Ballot is now set and voters will have a number of contested races to decide, but also a fair number of races that will be walkovers for the incumbents. According to information from the County Elections Office, in the race for Superior Court Office No. 1, Judge Gayle Peron is unchallenged and will retain her position. Also, Judge Erin Childs will also win a walkover for the No. 10 seat on the court.

Two men are vying for the No. 12 judgeship with attorney and rancher Paul Phillips vying against Deputy D.A. Mike Frye, a Morro Bay resident.

County Superintendent of Schools James Brescia will not face a challenge and will win another 4-year term. District Attorney Dan Dow and Sheriff Ian Parkinson will also not face challengers this time around.

County Assessor Tom Bordonaro will not be challenged for his seat this time nor will Tax Collector James Hamilton.

It's a far cry from four years ago when Dow, Parkinson and Bordonaro each faced tough re-election challenges.

Dist. 2 Supervisor Bruce Gibson will face perhaps his toughest re-election campaign thus far, as he tries for a fifth, 4-year term.

But this time he'll be running in a much-change Second District, which under the new supervisorial district map removed Morro Bay, San Luis Obispo and Los Osos from District 2, and inserted San Miguel and much of Atascadero.

That means Gibson will face challengers from outside what had been a very safe district.

Gibson is being challenged by Bruce Jones, Geoff Auslin and John Whitworth all of Atascadero.

Dist. 3 Supervisor, Dawn Ortiz-Legg will have to run to retain her seat, which she was appointed to in 2020 after former Supervisor Adam Hill died shortly after being re-elected but before taking the new oath of office.

Under the County Election Laws, Ortiz-Legg must face voters in what would have been mid-term for Hill had he not died. It also means that Dist. 3 will use the old supervisorial district map, which included much of South SLO, Pismo, Avila and some of Grover Beach.

Ortiz-Legg will face Arnold Ruiz of SLO and Grover Beach businesswoman Stacy Korsgaden who lost a very close head-to-head race to Hill in the March 2020 Primary.

Oddly enough, should Korsgaden win in June to serve out Hill's term, she would be ineligible to run in 2024, when the new district map would apply to the redrawn Dist. 3. A judge ruled that Ortiz-Legg had to run this year using the old map. But in 2024, when Hill's term would naturally have ended, the new Dist. 3 kicks in.

In the Dist. 4 race, incumbent Lynn Compton tries for her third term in a rematch of the 2018 race with Arroyo Grande Councilman Jimmy Paulding.

Los Osos, which was moved into Dist. 4 with the new map, should vote in this race.

In the Clerk-Recorder's race, appointed incumbent Elaina Cano will have two challengers. James Arthur Baugh, a military consultant from Paso Robles is running, as is SLO attorney, Stewart Jenkins. Cano was appointed last year after former Clerk-Recorder Tommy Gong resigned and took a similar job in the Bay Area.

And in Morro Bay, appointed incumbent councilwoman Jen Ford will square off against retired businessman James Costanzo for the right to serve out the remaining time on the council term of the late-Red Davis, who died last summer just a few months into his second term, which he'd won in November 2020. Whoever wins in June will not face voters again until November 2024, when Davis' term would naturally run out.

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Water Tank Rehab Contract Amended

The City of Morro Bay is embarking on a major project to repair and rehabilitate its main drinking water tanks and address issues with its lesser tanks as well, a project that tops \$2.6 million.

In early March, the City Council approved a contract amendment with Superior Tank Solutions to rehab its storage tanks at the Kings Street tank farm, that's where the City receives its State Water allocations and mixes it with other sources, mainly the groundwater from the Morro Creek aquifer wells at Lila Keiser Park, before delivering it to customers.

The initial contract for a "factory rehab" was awarded last November to Superior for \$2.03 million, and this first amendment adds some \$326,000, increasing the total contract to over \$2.3M, according to a staff report from the Public Works Director. The project has an approved budget of some \$2.69M, so with the amendment the remainder on the budget was to be \$53,000.

But some costs are still being worked on. "The costs of Contract City Engineering Services, Tank Mixer Electrical Connection, Engineering Services During Construction, Construction Management and Coatings and Special Inspection are budgetary estimates at this point," according to the report.

The job is to recoat the interior and rehab the water tanks at Kings Street and on Blanca Street, too, which is in North Morro Bay. After they awarded the contract, the City decided to add more tasks and address some issues with its other storage tanks "to better protect the City's water storage tanks and improve the operability of the City's water system." Those included:

- Factory rehab at Blanca. With actual costs and credits now better known, the staff decided it would be cost effective to also factory rehab tanks Nos. 3 and 4 at Blanca Street.

- Tank mixers that blend water better in the Kings Street tanks would be installed to, "Improve the capability for City Staff to utilize supplemental disinfectant to in-

crease the chlorine residual for water entering the distribution system to help better protect public health."

- New tank couplings installed at both the Kings and Blanca tank farms to increase sampling ports and better be able to test the water and "to adequately characterize water quality."

- Ridgeway tank to be included in the maintenance contract. "Included as part of the Kings/Balance Tank Rehab Project is a 10-year Asset Management Program, which includes annual inspections, coatings repairs, and periodic tank washouts and touchups." The tank on Ridgeway was not part of the maintenance plan and would be added in, "to provide enhanced inspection and coatings repair to extend the useful life of the Ridgeway Tank."

- Elena tanks need washout and spot repair work. The City plans to take out its tanks at Elena Street in favor of adding storage at the Nutmeg tank farm atop the ridge in North Morro Bay, but until that happens, "the Elena Tanks are deteriorated and in need of spot repairs to extend their life until they are decommissioned. Washing out and performing spot repairs will temporarily extend the life of the Elena Tanks to allow them to operate until their replacement as part of the Nutmeg Tank Project."

- A contingency fund is being established. "Due to the number of tanks included in the Kings/Blanca Tank Rehab Project, it is anticipated that additional rehabilitation or replacement needs could arise during the remainder of the project. To better prepare the City to be able to address any additionally identified deficiencies it is recommended that a Contingency amount of \$101,981 or 5% of the original contract be included in Amendment No.1 with STS for the Kings/Blanca Tank Rehab Project. The use of this Contingency would only be allowed under the authorization of the City Manager."

Money for these repairs is coming out of the City's Water Fund paid for by commercial and residential customers.

James Costanzo
for Morro Bay City Council

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10

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South Bay Bridge Replacement Costs Rising

Story By Neil Farrell - Photo Bay Paul Irving



A project to replace a key roadway bridge connecting Los Osos and Morro Bay has hit more bureaucratic obstacles, forcing a fifth amendment to the engineering contract and pushing those costs alone past the \$1.2 million mark. The County has been working on a project to replace the Los Osos Creek Bridge on South Bay Boulevard for over 6 years now and in February increased the engineering contract with Dewberry Engineers, Inc., another \$327,000. Dewberry’s initial contract was for \$795,000, and four previous amendments pushed it up to \$933,000. This latest, fifth amendment brings Dewberry’s contract up to \$1.26 million, according to a staff report. The Los Osos Creek Bridge is on South Bay Boulevard, the main artery between Morro Bay and Los Osos, and is also part of the evacuation route under the Diablo Canyon Nuclear Plant’s safety plans. “The bridge,” the County report said, “has been identified as seismically deficient and subject to liquefaction

related collapse during a sizable earthquake. In addition to seismic concerns, some of the existing concrete piles have deteriorated over time. Replacement of the bridge, rather than seismic retrofit and pile repair, is the most cost effective alternative.” The so-called “South Bay Boulevard Bridge Replacement Project” proposes to replace the existing bridge with a modern concrete girder bridge, the report said. The new bridge will be constructed alongside the old bridge, according to the County, and the old bridge torn down. The area where the old bridge stood will be restored to a natural state. The project is eligible for Federal Highway Administration funding under the FHA’s “Highway Bridge Program.” The County hired Dewberry in 2015 to guide it through the environmental review and permitting process, which has had a rough go of it so far. “Since commencement of the original contract,”

the County report reads, “the Project has completed the required California Environmental Quality Act [CEQA] review. However, other environmental analysis and permitting is ongoing since the Project is located within the Morro Bay Estuary and Morro Bay State Park, home to numerous special status plant and animal species. “The area is also considered archaeologically sensitive. Archeological reports completed for past projects in the vicinity have resulted in significant archaeological finds. The Project is under the jurisdiction of numerous regulatory agencies, which occasionally, have divergent and conflicting environmental requirements resulting in several permitting challenges that County staff and Dewberry are working to resolve.” And then there’s the Coastal Commission to contend with. “Further, the California Coastal Commission, which must issue a Coastal Development Permit for the Project to move forward, has requested that the County continue to evaluate a range of alternatives to restore estuarine habitats that were impacted when the original road and bridge were built. “The CCC also requested that the replacement bridge include a pedestrian and bicycle path to connect to a future coastal trail, requiring the County to consider additional alternatives and initiate coordination with stakeholders.” All this has elevated the project into the bureaucratic stratosphere. “As a result of the Project’s environmental and cultural sensitivities,” the County report reads, “and due to ongoing negotiations with permitting agencies, the Project’s pre-construction phase has taken longer than expected. “The environmental process normally takes one to three years to complete for a typical bridge project. However, the process for South Bay Boulevard Bridge has taken over six years due to the complex analyses required to identify a Project alternative that meets all regulatory and permitting requirements and reduces project impacts while minimizing costs to the County. The environmental review and permitting phases are expected to be complete by 2024.” Such issues are not new to bridges through the estuary. Replacing the old Twin Bridges, just a few miles down the road at State Park Road, took 40 years to work through, as at one point, some 35 different agencies were involved in reviewing the project. Taking so long to permit a project runs the risk of the laws changing underneath you, which in turn leads to changes in design and to further delays and in turn increased costs. This project is a pretty good example. “Due to the time needed to navigate environmental permitting for this project,” the County report said, “the seismic and bridge design codes, which govern bridge design, have undergone significant changes since Dewberry originally scoped the Project in 2015. These code changes have resulted in the need to re-engineer parts of the bridge superstructure and substructure.” There are a number of agencies involved in the replacement of this roughly 50-yard stretch of roadway. The County said Caltrans controls the funding and environmental review under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Other agencies involved include the Coastal Commission, Regional Water Quality Control Board, Army Corps of Engineers, and California Department of Fish & Wildlife. The funding package promises to be as complex as the permitting has been. The County plans to tap the FHA’s Highway Bridge Program using “Toll Credits,” the Regional and State Highway Accounts, Urban State Highway Account, State Aid — Nuclear Planning, and the County’s Road Fund. So far the County has allocated \$2.24 million for the project, which is spread out over several budget years. The final estimated cost to construct the replacement bridge is about \$20 million.

Crash at Hwy 1 and Old Creek Rd.



Morro Bay businessman, Mike Mlnarik of Morro Bay Appliances, took this photo of a crash that happened Wednesday, March 23 at Hwy 1 and Old Creek Road in Cayucos at about 4 p.m. as he was returning from a service call in the area. No details of the apparent T-bone accident were available, however, a Highway Patrol spokesman said the crash was an injury collision but not a fatal crash, as was rumored in the community. That intersection has had a stoplight on it for decades and still there is always the possibility of a crash.

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News

Suspected Child Molester, Rapist Caught Fleeing U.S.

The San Luis Obispo County Sheriff's Office arrested a suspected child molester and rapist catching the scoundrel before he could flee justice and hop a plane to South America.

According to a new release, Sheriff's investigators were notified on March 28 that an 11-year-old girl in San Luis Obispo was being molested by her stepfather.

When interviewed, the girl reportedly told detectives that the stepfather had been molesting her since she was 5.

The next day, the girl's mother, 31, disclosed that she too was a victim and for the past 3 years she had been forced to have sexual intercourse with him and forced her to "orally copulate him on a daily basis," the release said.

The girl's mother said the suspect had reportedly become suspicious and packed his bags and left the home intending to catch a plane at Los Angeles International Airport with a 1-way ticket to South America. Acting quickly, detectives contacted the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (HSI).

"With swift coordination between the Sheriff's Office and HSI," the release said, Sheriff's Detectives and Special Agents were able to locate and arrest the suspect at LAX, "on a multiple count, felony, no bail arrest warrant."

The suspect, Daniel Ramirez Gutierrez, 36 of SLO County, was arrested and brought back and booked into the SLO County Jail. Ramirez Gutierrez was charged with suspicion of lewd or lascivious acts with a child under 14 by force; continuous sexual abuse of a child; sexual intercourse or sodomy with a victim under 10-years old; rape by force/fear, and rape by threat of retaliation. All are felonies.

The Sheriff praised his detectives and HSI. "I am proud of the great work by our Detectives which took a dangerous and predatory criminal off the streets," SLO County Sheriff Ian Parkinson said. "I am grateful for the close cooperation we had with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security Investigations to bring this case to a successful conclusion."

HSI agents were happy to help. "Homeland Security Investigations," Acting HSI Los Angeles Special Agent in Charge Eddy Wang said, "works daily with our state and local law enforcement partners to ensure the safety and security of our communities. This arrest is another example of how the dedicated HSI Los Angeles special agents work with the San Luis Obispo County Sheriff's Office to prevent a suspected child predator from fleeing the United States to avoid justice." Neither of the two victims in the case's names were released.



Daniel Ramirez Gutierrez

Community

Poly Dean Elected to National Deans Council Committee



Amy S. Fleischer, dean of Cal Poly's College of Engineering, will play a significant role in providing vision and leadership to engineering education across the nation as a member of the executive committee of the Engineering Deans Council (EDC).

The EDC is a consortium of deans from all the engineering colleges affiliated with the American Society of Engineering Education and currently has over 350 members, representing 90% of all US engineering deans. Fleischer's election was announced during the ASEE Engineering Deans Institute annual conference, which was attended by more than 150 engineering deans March 7-10 in Las Vegas.

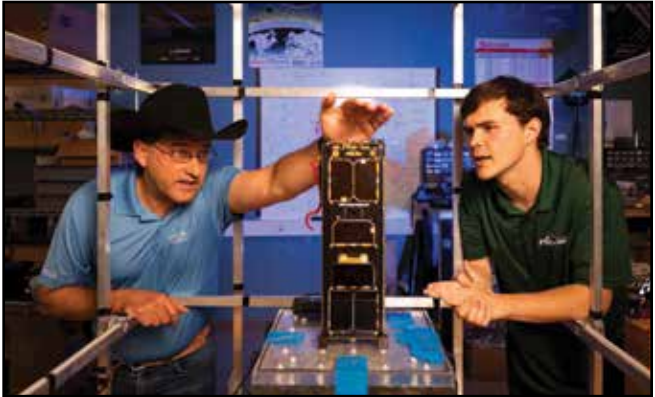
"I'm really excited about the opportunity to help shape engineering education, which we know has such a positive impact on quality of life," Fleischer said. "And it's an honor to be selected by peers, who recognize Cal Poly's excellent reputation for engineering education."

The council has several objectives including: having an influence on U.S. public policy regarding engineering education research and management; exchanging information among its members; and promoting diversity and inclusiveness in all aspects of engineering education, research and engagement.

Fleischer, who has been dean of the College of Engineering since 2018, co-chairs the EDC's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee. She was also one of the organizers of the conference's first sessions, Discussing Current Topics for Deans at Primarily Undergraduate-Focused Institutions.

"Dean Fleischer has consistently demonstrated a deep commitment to the objectives of the Engineering Deans Council," said Cynthia Jackson-Elmoore, Cal Poly provost and executive vice president for academic affairs. "I am thrilled to see Amy be recognized by peers across the country for her leadership and dedication to the success of students and colleagues in the College of Engineering."

Technology Co-Created at Poly Heading to Hall of Fame



John Bellardo, left, a Cal Poly professor and advisor to the Cal Poly CubeSat program, inspects a CubeSat designed and manufactured at Cal Poly while Ryan Hunter, a computer science and mathematics major, looks on. Photo by Joe Johnston | Cal Poly

Mini satellite technology co-created at Cal Poly, which has substantially contributed to the expansion of space exploration and research worldwide, will be inducted into the Space Technology Hall of Fame during the 37th Space Symposium in Colorado Springs April 4-7.


Jordi Puig-Suari, a former Cal Poly aerospace engineering professor, and now-retired Stanford University professor Bob Twiggs created the CubeSat platform, a class of research spacecraft built to standard dimensions (units or U) of 10 cm (about 4 inches) per side, as a teaching tool in 1999. Initially intended to give students experience in satellite functionality, the standardization of the invention — they can be 1U, 2U, 3U or up to 16U in size, and typically weigh less than 3 pounds per unit — made it relatively simple and affordable for other schools, governments, and private organizations to create satellites that could be launched into space and used for research.

Puig-Suari compared the invention to a sandbox, where the industry learned to conduct space work in a different way.

"Faster, smaller, taking more risk and leveraging the technological developments of non-space industries, such as the commercial electronics sector — those new ways of doing business that were introduced by CubeSats form the basis of many of the new missions being developed by space companies," said Puig-Suari, who retired from Cal Poly in July 2018.

CubeSats have become a regular feature of important space missions and developments, including the twin 6U MarCO communications relay satellites that launched from Vandenberg Space Force Base in 2018 as part of the Mars Insight lander mission and the Planetary Society's two 3U LightSail projects that demonstrated the feasibility of solar


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sailing propulsion. CubeSats are also regularly launched from the International Space Station.

“Not only have thousands of students from all over the world been able to launch a satellite, it has turned into a billion-dollar industry and has played a major part in bringing about a renewed enthusiasm about space that hasn’t been there since the Moon landing,” said Ryan Nugent, director of the Cal Poly CubeSat Lab.

According to the Nanosats Database, the largest organized collection of information for launched, planned and canceled CubeSat missions, more than 1,660 CubeSats have launched to space as of Jan. 1, 2022. The database estimates that more than 700 are planned for this year alone, including over 300 from companies. And it all began with Cal Poly.

“Any discussion of the evolution of CubeSats should include Cal Poly’s prominent role,” said John Bellardo, a computer science professor and faculty advisor to the program.

The induction from the Space Foundation, whose leadership includes a former NASA astronaut and several space industry executives, does just that — and more.

“This distinction is also a validation of the idea that the ‘traditional way of doing things’ isn’t always the best and can be an inhibitor to innovation, which we hope to continue as we strive to provide our students with hands-on experience with cutting-edge space technologies,” said Nugent, who worked on CubeSats as an undergraduate and graduate student at Cal Poly.

Last year, a CubeSat launched on a Virgin Orbit rocket released from the wing of a Boeing 747 was the 12th mini satellite designed, assembled and tested at Cal Poly that has been launched into space. One of the current CubeSat projects will look at a new radiator technology.

“The radiators are a critical component of spacecraft because they allow waste heat to be rejected from the vehicle, a necessary process for both higher-powered missions and missions that operate in a hotter environment for an extended period of time,” Bellardo said.

Helping future missions, an upcoming partnership with the Air Force Research Laboratory will provide access to newer equipment, facility upgrades and experts in the field.

“While we proudly claim a major role in the advent of the CubeSat, we want to remain relevant with this important technology,” said Associate Dean Eric Mehiel, an Aerospace Engineering faculty member who plans to attend the induction ceremony with Puig-Suari. “This partnership will help Cal Poly continue to push CubeSat innovation well into the future.”

Go to www.polysat.org for more information on the Cal Poly CubeSat Lab.

A Modern Crosswalk for ‘The Town That Time Forgot’

Photos and Story by Neil Farrell



SLO County recently installed a modern crosswalk in Downtown Cayucos to increase pedestrian safety. Some say it’s out of character for the Downtown’s Old West theme.

It stands out in stark white fashion, a modern take on an old idea but one that doesn’t necessarily fit in with Downtown Cayucos’ theme of an Old West town that time forgot.

For many years, people in Cayucos have longed for a safer mid-block pedestrian crosswalk in the 100 block of Ocean Avenue, in the heart of the Downtown tourist district.

With the influx of tourists that flock to the town every summer, pedestrians crossing willy-nilly over what can be a very busy Ocean Avenue, can be somewhat risky.

People on vacation at the beach are not the most attentive. So many in town have longed lobbied for something safer. But as they say, “Be careful what you wish for.”

The new, modern crosswalk isn’t simply a pair of striped lines traversing a street that relies on cars respecting the rules of the road, which in California gives the right of way to pedestrians in crosswalks over vehicle traffic.

But what the County has delivered apparently isn’t what some were expecting.

The new fangled crosswalk on Ocean Avenue between D Street and Cayucos Drive features wide, white striped lines crossing from Café Della Via to the Cayucos Surf Co.’s new store.

John Waddell of SLO County Engineering told Estero Bay News that they normally try to avoid mid-block crosswalks but that the Cayucos one that’s been there forever was an exception and warranted an upgrade.

Waddell explained that the modern crosswalk design

includes things like bulb-out curbing to protect pedestrians from oncoming traffic, flashing lights, handicap ramps and other features.

The Ocean Avenue crosswalk has concrete bulb-out curbing, plastered a brilliant white due to a concrete sealant (which should fade in time); flashing yellow caution lights activated via a crosswalk button; a voice box that alerts pedestrians that the yellow lights are flashing; yellow, bumpy rubber mats that alert the blind there’s a crosswalk; and fluorescent signs that light up with headlights installed in the center turn lane — in the middle of the street — warning drivers that pedestrians have the right of way.

All together there are eight safety features with the new crosswalk.

Waddell said the Ocean Avenue crosswalk cost \$159,000 and was part of a three-crosswalk project awarded to Souza Const., of SLO last November for some \$281,000.

That contract included new crosswalks in Avila Beach at the Bob Jones Trail and Avila Drive, and Nipomo on Telford Street at Dana Elementary School, with differing degrees of upgrades.

The money for the project came from the Federal Highway Administration’s “Highway Safety Improvement Program,” (gas taxes) and the County Road Fund.

Waddell said the Cayucos project isn’t finished yet, as the County is currently doing a major street resurfacing project all over Cayucos that will eventually get around to the 100 block of North Ocean Avenue.

That resurfacing will allow the County to reconfigure (restripe) the angled parking spaces to fit in better with the new crosswalk’s bulb-out curbs and improve pedestrian sight lines of traffic. They will also have to repaint the crosswalk stripes.

Waddell didn’t know exactly when that work, which will require traffic controls, would start but it will be sometime this spring, to be completed before the summer hits.

The new crosswalk was reviewed last year by the local citizen’s advisory council, which voted to recommend approval to County Supervisors.

And while it will take some time to get used to, a kerfuffle over change shouldn’t be too unexpected. A few years ago, the County put in new stop signs on Ocean Avenue at Cayucos Drive, creating a 4-way stop, which caused a similar reaction.

For the Birds, Tree Ordinance in Effect

By Neil Farrell

Some might say Morro Bay is for the birds, and it’s no more so than right now.

The City announced the start of bird nesting season (Feb. 1 to June 30), which activates the City’s special municipal code that regulates tree removals during the spring nesting season.

“The City’s adopted ‘Major Vegetation Guidelines,’” reads a news release from the City, “only allow for tree removal on private property in cases of emergency during this timeframe. If a homeowner wishes to remove a tree that cannot wait until after June 30th, then a report is

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required to be submitted by a certified arborist that documents the hazard and reason for removal.”

The notice explained that the City staff would come do a site inspection of a tree that’s proposed for removal, “to determine if removal can be authorized under the guidelines. Tree trimming is allowed unless nesting birds are present.”

The staff would also decide cases where a tree might be a City street tree and the City’s responsibility to maintain, or on private property and the responsibility of the property owner.

If readers want more information on a tree you’d like to have taken down, for whatever reason, contact the Public Works Department at 805-772-6261 or see: www.morrobayca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/7775/Major-Vegetation-Guidelines?bidId=.

Under the City’s tree ordinance, you might need a permit for the removal of any tree that has a trunk at least 6-inches in diameter at 4 ½ feet off the ground (about chest high); or any multi-trunk tree that has at least one trunk 6-inches in diameter at chest height.

The staff would also check to make sure a tree doesn’t qualify for “major vegetation” status, which is regulated under the Coastal Act and requires a Coastal Development Permit (CDP); which takes the matter into a whole new ballgame.

“Planning Staff,” reads the city ordinance, “will assist in determining if there is major vegetation removal proposed by evaluating if natural riparian vegetation, a creek, threatened or endangered species or significant habitat or other significant factors exist on the site where the vegetation is to be removed. A site visit may be necessary if staff is not familiar with the property.”

If they can’t determine if a tree is major vegetation, the ordinance says the property owner may have to hire an environmental expert to make that determination.

And if a CDP is needed, there are requirements that must be met, or it can’t be issued, those are: that the major vegetation removal, as mitigated, will not significantly impact any threatened or endangered plant or animal habitat area; that reasonably calculated mitigation measures are in place to avoid dangerous soil erosion or instability resulting from the removal; and, that the major vegetation removal will not adversely affect the character of the surrounding neighborhood.

But as with most planning rules, there’s a way around. “In the event that a Coastal Development Permit is denied under the terms of these guidelines,” the ordinance reads, “and said denial is the sole cause that the property owner is reasonably unable to develop the property, the City may waive the provisions of this ordinance in such a manner as to make reasonable development possible.”

The City’s site visit is free; a CDP is not. The CDP application fee for a tree removal in the City’s newest Fee Schedule is \$582, and if one decides to buck the law and remove a tree in violation of the law, the standard fine is two times the permit fee plus \$51 per day starting from the date of a notice of violation until the violation is settled.

And if a tree company takes out a tree in violation of the City Ordinance, the law says the City would “notify the appropriate certifying body and/or licensing board to inform them of the name of the professional responsible for the unauthorized removal and the circumstances of the violation.”

And if you went the CDP route, the ordinance requires major vegetation trees be replaced at a ratio of two, 5-gallon trees or one, 15-gallon tree for every tree removed.

If the tree is in an “Environmentally Sensitive Habitat” zone (ESHA), such as an identified wetland or a stream corridor, the ratio is three, 5-gallon trees or two, 15-gallon trees for every tree removed.

Replacement vegetation may be planted on site, on City property as directed by the Public Works Department, or on property designated in the “Trees Wanted List,” the ordinance reads.

The Trees Wanted List is a list of local property owners who would like to have free trees planted on their property and promise to maintain them until they are

established.

The Coastal Act does not consider some tree types to be “major vegetation” and thus are not subject to the CDP process. Those include agricultural crop trees and ornamental edible fruit trees; diseased, damaged and/or aged trees that pose an imminent danger to persons and/or property; also, single family residential homes “shall not require a Coastal Development Permit for the removal of less than three trees in any twelve (12) month period.”

Any tree removed that is too small to be considered major vegetation doesn’t have to be replaced but the City encourages you to do so anyway, voluntarily of course.

City Hires New Utilities Manager

The City of Morro Bay has a new utilities manager, as a long-time engineering employee gets a promotion.

Public Works Director, Greg Kwolek, announced last week that Damaris Hanson would become the City’s Utilities Division manager on April 4, replacing former utilities chief, Joe Mueller, who is taking on a new, temporary role in the start-up of the City’s rebuilt sewer collection system and treatment plant.

Hanson, who started with the City over 14-years ago as an engineering technician III, most recently acted as the City’s Environmental Programs manager. Kwolek said she’s been managing the City’s Stormwater Program, and other



Damaris Hanson, a 14-plus year Morro Bay City employee has been named the City’s new, Utilities Division Manager, replacing Joe Mueller, who has taken on a new role with the City. Submitted photo

environmental issues including the dinking water permits.

“It’s no secret,” Kwolek said in a news release, “that in the next few years, the Utilities Division will be involved in significant operational transitions, such as the running of cutting edge indirect potable reuse and wastewater treatment facilities, as well as an incremental modernization of our existing infrastructure, and I can’t think of a better person to set to manage these changes.

“I’m especially grateful and proud that Ms. Hanson, a longtime Public Works employee, will bring in her expertise and talent to take on this big role.”

Hanson got the job over a pool of several applicants through “a comprehensive interview process” that included interviews with a panel of SLO County water and wastewater agencies and City staff.

Hanson, who is married with two sons, said, “These are very exciting times for Morro Bay and specifically for the Utilities Division. The new Water Reclamation Facility will support the City with a sustainable and drought-resistant water supply, which is necessary for securing Morro Bay’s water supply stability for the future. Additionally, we have a lot of opportunities to improve and maintain our existing water and wastewater infrastructure, with several projects currently in progress. I look forward to working on these improvements and I am thrilled to be part of the remarkable and hardworking Utilities team that will bring them to reality.”

She also contributed “to the development of the Morro Bay OneWater Plan,” Kwolek said, “and the Urban Water Management Plan, the City’s long-range water planning documents. She also has over 18-years of regulatory compliance experience.”

Hanson earned a bachelor’s degree in soil science with an emphasis in environmental studies from Cal Poly, SLO. Her qualifications include several state certifications related to water and soils, such as the Qualified SWPPP Developer; Qualified SWPPP Practitioner; and Water Treatment II certifications.

Hanson and her family enjoy hiking and make treks all over SLO County, Big Sur, and the Sierra Mountains, too.



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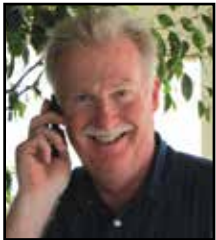
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She will oversee a Utilities Department with 16 full time employees and is responsible for “delivering water and wastewater services to Morro Bay ratepayers,” Kwolek said. “The division is also currently involved in several critical infrastructure projects, including the Nutmeg Pressure Zone, Kings and Blanca Tank Rehabilitation, and various sewer main improvement projects.

Estero Bay News asked Kwolek what happened to Mueller? He said, “Joe Mueller is now in a new role as the City’s ‘Operations Interface Manager,’ which supports a successful start up of the new WRF plant. The position is part-time and expected to last through plant start up.”

Hanson is the second management position that Kwolek has filled since coming to the City in May 2021. On March 7, the City’s new City Engineer, Eric Riddiough, replaced the retiring Rob Livick.

The City has not posted a job listing on its website to fill Hanson’s old job as environmental programs manager. However, it is currently advertising for a new “maintenance supervisor,” as changes at Public Works will apparently continue.

Chablis Hauls Out for Repairs

Photo by Neil Farrell



The harbor cruise boat, Chablis, has been in dry dock down at the public launch ramp for the past several weeks, undergoing repairs that include new, more efficient engines.

According to the Harbor Department the Chablis must haul out and work there because the harbor has no boat-yard large enough to accommodate it.

And the City’s been unable to fund anyone interested in building one after several years trying, so there likely won’t be a yard built here to accommodate larger boats like Chablis.

Indeed, there isn’t a boat hoist or travel lift within 100 miles that can lift the overly wide Chablis. The boat is also not allowed under Coast Guard regulations to leave the har-

bor and travel by sea to such a boatyard. Thus the Harbor Department and the owners have reached an agreement to allow the boat to be hauled out on a special trailer and a work fence erected around it.

“Hauling at the launch ramp in the off-season,” the Harbor Department said in a recent City Manager Newsletter, “when the ramp is virtually empty is the only option.”

Also, with the annual rockfish closure in full swing from Jan. 1 to April 1, there hasn’t been the normal flood of sport fishermen using the launch ramp or the parking lot.

The Chablis runs harbor cruises and Sunday brunch cruises. It features a catered kitchen, can serve beer and wine and is a popular platform for weddings and other celebrations.

The boat originally plied the San Francisco Bay waters until it was purchased and brought to Morro Bay, after a daring one-way voyage, back in April 2007.

The Chablis is owned by Big Rock Charters, LLC, which is Annie Clapp, Shasta Rouch Birkey, and Patti Rouch, with Annie’s husband, executive chef, Rodney Clapp, handling the kitchen duties. According to the Chablis website (see: www.chablisrcruises.com) Annie and Rodney Clapp met in cooking school and both are classically trained. Annie’s sister, Shasta, is retired from the U.S. Navy after a 20-year career.

Chablis is docked between Harbor Hut and Great American Fish Co. The plan was to be done with repairs and back on the water in time for an April 2, 2-hour chowder cruise, with Sunday brunches starting up again April 10.

Call 805-203-6575 for customer service or email to: support@chablisrcruises.com. You can also book a cruise via the website.

Rotary Club Spiffing Up Police Station

Members of the Morro Bay Rotary Club are in the midst of a community project to clean up and repaint the outside of the Morro Bay Police station, which included a refurbished garden bench installed out front of the stationhouse for folks to sit on while waiting to speak to an officer or just to rest their tootsies. The overall project includes a power washing of the station’s exterior and new coat of paint.

The bench is an Edwardian-style, lion’s head, wrought iron bench that was refurbished by Estero Bay News reporter, Neil Farrell, one of several he’s done over the course of the coronavirus pandemic response. Neil calls refurbishing iron benches a “side hustle,” and was happy to sell this one to Rotary for their MBPD Station project. Last summer he donated a very similar bench but with chrysanthemums instead of lion heads for a Project Surf Camp fundraiser.



Pictured here from left are: MBPD Chief, Jody Cox, Rotary Past President and retired SLO County Undersheriff (and a former MBPD Chief) Tim Olivas, Rotarians Greg Hardcastle, and Mike Williams, and MBPD Cmdr. Amy Watkins. Front row from left are MBPD Support Services Manager, Bonnie Johnson, Rotarian Judy Salamacha and Current Rotary President, John Solu.



Farrell said if any EBN readers have an old iron garden bench whose wood has rotted out and they just want to be rid of it, to email him at: neil@esterobaynews.com. Submitted photo

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Expires April 30, 2022.



News

The Cambria Center for the Art 1350 Main St in Cambria, has a call for fiber and textile artists for the Gallery's next show: Entanglements III, which opens May 7 and run through June 26.

Cambria Center for the Arts' Gallery seeks to exhibit the best of contemporary, as well as traditional fiber art and invites submissions that reflect this wide range of textile creations; and to include innovative works rooted in traditional fiber processes, structure, and material. For more information, send an email to gallery@cambriaarts.org or call 805-927-8190.



The Morro Coast Audubon Society Community Zoom Program: Birds of SLO – 2021 Part 1 is presented by Dave Keeling with music by Oliver Glynn. It takes place Monday, April 18 at 7 p.m. Join the Zoom meeting at bit.ly/3CaxW4C and use meeting ID: 257 500 2542 and passcode: morrocoast. Birds of SLO, 2021 Part 1 is a slide show featuring outstanding images of birds taken in San Luis Obispo County between January and May of last year by some of our finest nature photographers. The photos are amazing, and their impact is heightened by the live piano accompaniment provided by Oliver Glynn. Among the highlights will be some heartwarming baby pictures of great horned owls, pied-billed grebes, American kestrels, and a few from the heron rookery in Morro Bay. Also featured are the elusive Streak-backed Oriole, another first for the Birds of SLO series.

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



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By Theresa-Marie Wilson

Heart Castle Reservations Open

Folks looking to tour Hearst Castle can once again make reservations to visit the landmark that is expected to re-open on May 11.

The Castle closed to the public following a storm in late January 2021 resulting in damage to the road that connects the Hearst Castle Visito Center to Hearst Castle.

California State Park staff and the Heart Corporation worked together to complete the project to fix 27 culverts along the 2.25-mile, upper one-way section of Hearst Castle Road.

Make your reservation at hearstcastle.org or by calling 800-444-4445. Tickets will be available for purchase at the Visitor Center, but advance reservations are strongly recommended.

Hospitals Receive LGBTQ+ Recognition

French Hospital Medical Center and Marian Regional Medical Center were recently recognized as an LGBTQ+ Healthcare Equality Leader and Top Performer in the Human Rights Campaign Foundation's 2022 Healthcare Equality Index (HEI). French attained the "Leader in LGBTQ+ Healthcare" status, receiving the maximum score in each reporting section. Marian is ranked as a "Top Performer" due to its adherence to the Ethical and Religious Directives.

In the 2022 report, 496 facilities earned HRC's "LGBTQ+ Healthcare Equality Leader" designation, earning an overall score of 100. Another 251 facilities earned the "Top Performer" designation with scores between 80 and 95 points and at least partial credit in each section. With 82% of participating facilities scoring 80 points or more, health care facilities are demonstrating concretely that they are going beyond the basics when it comes to developing, adopting, and implementing policies and practices in LGBTQ+ care. French and Marian are among dozens of Dignity Health care sites recognized in the 2022 HEI.

The HEI is the nation's foremost benchmarking survey

of healthcare facilities on policies and practices dedicated to the equitable treatment and inclusion of their LGBTQ+ patients, visitors, and employees.

The HEI evaluates and scores healthcare facilities on detailed criteria falling under four central pillars:

- Foundational Policies and Training in LGBTQ+ Patient-Centered Care;
- LGBTQ+ Patient Services and Support;
- Employee Benefits and Policies; and,
- Patient and Community Engagement.

Carizo Plain Photo Contest

Ecologistics, Inc. is holding its first Carrizo Plain Photo Contest. The contest is open to all photographers who love to photograph the Carrizo Plain. Contestants may submit up to three photographs in three categories – flora, fauna and open. Entry fee is \$5 and the deadline to submit is April 10, 2022.

Prizes of \$100 first place, \$50, second place and \$25 third place will be awarded in each category. Winners will also receive a 12x18 digital print of their winning image and will be honored at a reception at the Costa Gallery in Los Osos at a date to be announced in May. Judges for the contest are professional photographers Brittany App, Donald Quintana, and Michael Costa.

The photo contest is sponsored by The Coastal Awakening and is being held in conjunction with the bi-annual Carrizo Colloquium, a celebration of the biodiversity of the Carrizo Plain. The Colloquium takes place on Friday, May 6 at the Atascadero Library.

For more information about the photo contest and to enter your photographs, go to <https://bit.ly/3u1BnIk>.

New Scam Warning

The Sesloc Federal Credit Union sent out an email warning customers about a new scam that everyone should be aware of.

"Recently there has been a rise in phishing and browser-based scams locally on the Central Coast," the email read. "Please beware of emails, text messages or browser ad pop-ups that appear to be from Microsoft, with headlines or subject lines such as "MS Security Defender" or "Windows Defender - Security Warning."

"The alerts assert your PC or computer is infected or has been hacked. It is a fake warning sent by fraudsters designed to scare you into downloading malware or make you share sensitive personal information such as Online Banking passwords and accounts. The information could later be used in financial fraud or identity theft."

If you receive a suspicious email, text message or browser pop-up ad:

- DO NOT click on any links.
- DO NOT contact the company from a link or phone number provided in the message.
- DO delete the emails, texts and others like them.

Suspicious email, text or pop-up ads can be reported to the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) at ReportFraud.ftc.gov.

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

estero bay news . com

A black and white photograph of a black cat sitting and looking towards the camera.

You are late and you reek of dog!

Photo by Cat Noir CC

Follow Cat Noir CC on Facebook for daily photos and read the blog at CatNoirCC.com. Every Color Deserves a Forever Home

Community

Spring-Summer Events Returning

In another sign that life is returning to normal, several annual special events will be returning to the Estero Bay area communities, and will make for a busy May and summer.

Visit Morro Bay, the promotions arm of the Tourism Business Improvement District (TBID) announced the return of public events after, in some cases, a 2-year hiatus due to the Coronavirus Pandemic response.

Cayucos Dog Parade

The Annual Easter Dog Parade returns at noon on Saturday, April 16 at the Cayucos Pier. See local pups and their humans parade through Downtown Cayucos in their best Spring attire and fanciest Easter bonnets. Sponsored by the Cayucos Lioness club.

Kite Festival

The Annual Morro Bay Kite Festival will again soar over Morro Strand Beach from Friday-Sunday, April 29 to May 1. Admission is free and kite flyers are encouraged to break out their flyers on the beach.

Visit Morro Bay said they are working on updating the festival's website and will have more information available soon.

Cayucos Antiques Street Faire

Shop for antiques, vintage and collectibles at the Semi-Annual Antiques Street Faire, set for May 1 in Downtown Cayucos. Details still being worked out by the Chamber of Commerce. Email questions to: cayucoschamber@gmail.com. Vendor spots still available.

Morro Bay Car Show

The Cruisin' Morro Bay Car Show will again take over the streets of Downtown from Thursday-Sunday, May 5-8, with Cruise Night set for Friday evening and the Show 'n Shine Car Show all day Saturday and Sunday morning.

As many as 600 custom cars, trucks and hot rods will be on display from all over California. See: morrobaycarshow.org for more information.

Citywide Yard Sale

The Annual Citywide Yard Sale Weekend is scheduled for Saturday-Sunday, May 14-15, at locations from one end of town to the other.

Avocado-Margarita Festival

The chamber of Commerce is bringing back its popular salute to the local king of fruits the avocado, washed down of course with a Margarita, Friday-Sunday, Sept. 9-11. Details are being ironed out now so mark your calendars and the particulars will be forthcoming.

Fourth of July is Back

Cayucos will again have a full celebration of the Fourth of July complete with a Sand Sculpture Contest, a Doo-dah Parade, Lion's Club barbecue, and street fair. Applications for the parade are available now, with the limit

of 65 entrants, on a first-come first-served basis. See: www.cayucoschamber.com/july4th for information.

Order Tuna Enchiladas Now

The Central Coast Women for Fisheries, a non-profit commercial fishing advocacy group, is taking orders now for its famous Albacore Enchilada Fundraiser.

For \$15 per tray of four each, you can get green chili sauce with corn tortillas, or red chili sauce with flour tortillas. The enchiladas are like the traditional Mexican dish with one exception — they are made with albacore tuna instead of beef or chicken, making for a unique eating experience.

Call Sharon Rowley at (805) 674-4854 or email to: srowley303@gmail.com, or email the women fishers at: ccwf@womenforfish.org to place an order.

To order: specify the number of trays you want and what type — red or green. Include your phone number, too.

Pick up is from 1-5 p.m. Saturday, April 30 at the Morro Bay Community Center, 1001 Kennedy Way. Have payment ready when picking up or pay over the phone.

The Women for Fisheries group is a non-profit advocacy organization that supports the commercial fishing industry on the West Coast, and the Central Coast in particular. See their website at: www.womenforfish.org and on Facebook for more information on their activities and causes.

Masons Honor Local Firefighters



Fire fighters from local departments were recently honored for exemplary community service by King David's Masonic Lodge, No. 209 F & AM in San Luis Obispo.

"These individuals, by their zeal and endeavor, have been of significant and outstanding service to their communities," said a Masons representative.

Honorees included Sam Watson, an engineer/paramedic with Morro Bay Fire Department; Chad Eicher, a captain with Cal Fire; and Nick Forbes, a firefighter with San Luis Obispo County Fire.

A \$2,500 donation in honor of the fire fighters was made to the Alisa Ann Ruch Burn Foundation.


Each honoree received a framed certificate at the awards banquet in San Luis Obispo.

Pictured: Sam Watson, engineer/paramedic, Chad Eicher, captain, and Nick Forbes, firefighter.



OUT & ABOUT

WITH THE BOOKSHELF WRITERS

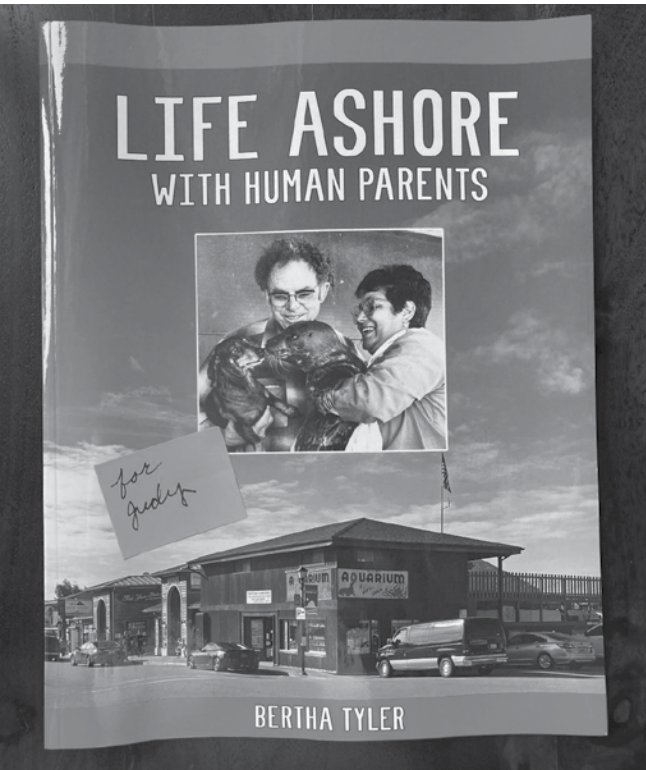


The BookShelf Writers consist of four Estero Bay women who have been writing & critiquing together for over five years. For more samples of their work, please visit www.thebookshelfwriters.com

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

In Remembrance of Bertha Tyler, Morro Bay Author

By Judy Salamacha



Caption: Morro Bay has been graced with amazing people who move here then share their talents and resources with their adopted city. I'm not sure why Bertha Tyler "adopted me," but I am forever grateful she chose me to play a small part in her short-lived, but inspiring author-life. At 92, she published her only book, "Living Ashore with Human Parents." Her story includes 125-1960s photos of the early days when she and the love of her life, Dean Tyler, rescued the Morro Bay Aquarium and marine mammals that needed them.


They operated a rehabilitation center seventeen years before the concept was considered by the U.S. Marine Mammal Protections Act of 1972. Always a favorite souvenir shop, it was closed in 2018. Annually 200,000 visitors from all over the world were entertained up close and personal by the barks and antics of the mammals rehabbing — some ultimately becoming permanent residents.

When the original owner threatened to close it, Dean offered to make it work. An already savvy restaurant owner in Morro Bay when they met, Bertha said, "Why would you buy something that isn't making money?"

His passion for the Morro Bay tourist attraction and sea life won her approval. They sold the successful eatery Chat 'N Chew and invested all into the Embarcadero facility. Local children attended birthday parties for the otter, Birdie, and Bertha and Dean would share insights and barks by their "fostered children" at the elementary school and senior centers.


We lost Dean in 1915, then Bertha in 2019, but copies of the book are still for sale at Morro Bay Coastal Treasures & Gifts at 601 Embarcadero. The shop is owned by John (Bertha's grandson) and Stacy Alcorn.

Morro Bay



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



KEVIN O'CONNOR, President

Community

We launched her book at Coalesce Book Store. Bertha wrote it; I became her promoter. We were told it was the largest audience and highest sales for any new author book signing at Coalesce. She was too nervous to talk. I suggested we do it together. I would interview her so all she had to do was answer questions. She agreed, but I only had to ask her one question before she mesmerized the room with her stories about the rescued marine mammals — otters, sea lions and seals — the so-called first children Dean would rescue, and together they would feed, find veterinary care, and even take home to bathe and stay-overs in their home.

Bertha and I went on “book tour” together. We traveled as far as Cambria’s Book and Author’s Fair. She presented to Quota, Rotary, Lion’s Club and historical society members. She talked from her heart. People loved her charm, her smiles and her independent style. One Cambrian said Bertha was the first speaker to make him laugh and cry at the same time.

She always began by saying, “I wanted to do something for my Dean.”

In fact, that’s how she invited me into her world. After presenting to Quota Club about the Morro Bay Maritime Museum’s (MBMM) fund development campaign, Bertha came up and said, “I want to do something for my Dean.” She invited me to her home. I arrived thinking I was picking up a check for her to become a MBMM charter member, but she wanted to talk about the book she wanted to publish for Dean. Had I wrongly interpreted the purpose of our meeting? Was she was going to ask me to help her write her book? She showed me hundreds of pictures on her dining room table. I sweated how I could turn down Bertha Tyler, a 2006 Morro Bay Living Treasure!

But Bertha didn’t ask me to help her write her book. It was written and the photos already selected. She wanted my opinion about whether anyone would read her book. “Are you kidding me?” I said. “Morro Bay needs a history of the Morro Bay Aquarium’s early days.”

She asked if I might work with her and Bill

Charlesworth, Central Coast Books, to proof the galleys he would prepare at her direction. I was overwhelmed by the honor. Instead of her asking me to help her write her book, I ended up asking her if I could write an introduction, coordinate the back cover supporter blurbs, and help promote sales. She had me all the way.

Want to read a true-life love story to your children that will make you laugh and cry at the same time? Dean taught Bertha to love their rescues. She wrote, “They loved me even when I had to use a feeding tube, they would trust me.”

And, by the way, before I left her home that day, Bertha had also already written out a bigger check than I was asking for to become a more than generous charter member of MBMM— all for her Dean.

Audubon Society Meeting Uses Zoom

The Morro Coast Audubon Society Community Zoom Program: Birds of SLO – 2021 Part 1 is presented by Dave Keeling with music by Oliver Glynn. It takes place Monday, April 18 at 7 p.m. Join the Zoom meeting at bit.ly/3CaxW4C and use meeting ID: 257 500 2542 and passcode: morrocoast. Birds of SLO, 2021 Part 1 is a slide show featuring outstanding images of birds taken in San Luis Obispo County between January and May of last year by some of our finest nature photographers. The photos are amazing, and their impact is heightened by the live piano accompaniment provided by Oliver Glynn. Among the highlights will be some heartwarming baby pictures of great horned owls, pied-billed grebes, American kestrels, and a few from the heron rookery in Morro Bay. Also featured are the elusive Streak-backed Oriole, another first for the Birds of SLO series.



Morro Bay Chamber Corner

Join the Chamber on Wednesday, April 20 at 7:30 a.m. for our second ever “Breakfast on the Bay.” This newly launched program’s tagline is “Estero Bay’s place to get the news first.” The Breakfast provides a venue for members of the business and non profit communities in all of Estero Bay to come together for networking and inspired programming each and every month. Breakfast is provided by a rotating roster of local businesses with coffee by sponsor SLO Roasted Coffee. In April, we’ll be focusing on using your voice to start a business, to live your mission, to cast your vote, and to entertain.

Confirmed speakers are TBA but we are delighted to welcome By the Sea Productions to perform a brief segment of their upcoming staged reading of “Now and Then.”

Breakfast on the Bay is open to members and future members. Registration and more information can be found at morrochamber.org/events.

Ribbon Cuttings



It as a weekend of celebration at Morro Bay Veterinary Clinic. We stopped by for a ribbon cutting as well as a meet and greet with the new owners. We are beyond excited to welcome them to the community. Have you stopped in? The office is warm and welcoming with beautiful murals and a wonderful staff. 10/10 we highly recommend.



A business born out of a friendship originating in Perth Australia home to beautiful beaches and world class Pristine reefs. The creators of Sweet Reef, Jared and Russel, graduated high school together in Australia but went separate ways and returned to their native borders to pursue an education in engineering and geology.

As fate would have it, Jared’s education and career brought him to the gold mines of Nevada and reconnected with Russel in the closer but not so close Bakersfield California where Russel was flourishing as an engineer.

After working for big corporations for a few years the creators decided to go into business for themselves and create a business that would reflect their values and provide opportunity and services to others that they could not do as employees.

Sweet Reefs offerings and culture, including boba and taiyaki, are a reflection of not only their taste buds but a reflection of their upbringing and travels to over 30 countries collectively. Sweet Reef is a culmination of willingness to explore and be different while building relationships and being a positive influence on our peers and community.



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Music

Sea Pines Concerts on the Green Returns!

Paul's Picks

It's that time of the year where Los Osos kicks off its shoes and runs its feet through the lush green grass dance floor at Sea Pines Golf Resort all spring, summer, and fall! Mark your calendars for Saturdays from 2 p.m. to 6 p.m. as Sea Pines presents some of the area's best talent. Here's the lineup for the Spring Season: 5/14 - Stevie Nicks Illusion • 5/21 - DV8D Band • 5/28 - Route 66 • 6/4 - JD Project • 6/11 Stellar Band • 6/18 - JJ Brown • 6/25 - Carbon City Lights. Be sure to get there early to catch the opening act (2 p.m. - 2:45 p.m.) and please - no outside food or drink. These concerts are free and open to all ages. They even have bounce houses to keep the kiddos entertained.



Photo: Stevie Nicks Illusion

Deborah Gilmore brings Live Jazz to SLO



Mo Betta Jazz is on a roll bringing high quality live jazz to the Central Coast. She has a knack for bringing great musicians together and presenting a unique show. Make plans to come out to a dinner show on Tuesday, April 12 at The Penny in San Luis Obispo, a gorgeous wedding venue tucked away in Downtown SLO. You'll find a great mix of jazz and R&B, featuring these performers:

- Deborah Gilmore - vocals • Dave Becker - saxophones • Sean Sullivan - drums • Edmond McGinley - piano • Jacob Cherdak - guitar • Ben Geil - bass • Justin Perkins - percussion

Doors are at 6:45 p.m. giving you ample time to enjoy a delicious fajita dinner by Chili Peppers of SLO, dessert, and a beverage. Thirty dollar tickets include dinner, dessert, and a beverage, \$20 tickets include dessert and a beverage. Grab your tickets at My805Tix.com. Photo: Deborah Gilmore

Fri., Apr. 8 • 7:00pm
Balto
The Siren
900 Main St, Morro Bay

Fri., Apr. 8 • 6:00pm
Cuesta Jazz Fridays!
Linnaea's Cafe
1110 Garden St,
San Luis Obispo

Fri., Apr. 8 • 7:00pm
Dante Marsh & The
Vibe Setters
Liquid Gravity Brewing
Company
675 Clarion Ct,
San Luis Obispo

Fri., Apr. 8 • 7:00pm
Los Lobos
Presqu'ile Winery
5391 Presquile Drive,
Santa Maria

Fri., Apr. 8 • 5:00pm
Mark Adams - Friday
Night Concerts
15 Degrees C- Wine Shop,
Bar & Restaurant
624 S. Main Street,
Templeton

Fri., Apr. 8 • 6:30pm
SLOFolks Presents: Tony
Furtado Trio
Castoro Cellars Winery
1315 N Bethel Rd,
Templeton

Fri., Apr. 8 • 7:00pm
Superchunk w/ Mike Krol
SLO Brew Rock
855 Aerovista Place, San
Luis Obispo

Sat., Apr. 9 • 7:30pm
Ben Rosenblum Trio: Jazz
Federation

Mt. Carmel
Lutheran Church
1701 Fredericks Street,
San Luis Obispo

Sat., Apr. 9 • 5:30pm
Blimp Pilots
BarrelHouse Brewing
3055 Limestone Way,
Paso Robles

Sat., Apr. 9 • 5:00pm
Burnin' James Duo
Sea Pines Golf Resort
1945 Solano St, Los Osos

Sat., Apr. 9 • 8:00pm
Parsons Dance
PAC: Harold J. Miossi
Center
Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo

Sat., Apr. 9 • 7:30pm
Metalachi
The Fremont Theater
1035 Monterey St,
San Luis Obispo

Sat., Apr. 9 • 8:00pm
SPONGE w/Rusted Stone
The Siren
900 Main St, Morro Bay

Sat., Apr. 9 • 6:30pm
The Taproots
Savory Palette
601 Embarcadero, Suite 5,
Morro Bay

Sat., Apr. 9 • 8:00pm
TESTAMENT - The Bay
Strikes Back Tour
The Fremont Theater
1035 Monterey St,
San Luis Obispo

Sun., Apr. 10 • 7:00pm
Cal Poly Presents: The
Romeros
Harold J. Miossi Cultural
and Performing Arts Center
Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo

Sun., Apr. 10 • 7:00pm
Carolyn Wonderland
The Siren
900 Main St, Morro Bay

Mon., Apr. 11 • 7:00pm
D.O.A.
The Siren
900 Main St, Morro Bay

Tue., Apr. 12 • 6:45pm
Send One Your Love - Jazz
Concert
The Penny
664 Marsh Street,
San Luis Obispo

Wed., Apr. 13 • 7:00pm
Bluegrass Night: Never
Come Down & Miss Leo
The Siren
900 Main St, Morro Bay

Wed., Apr. 13 • 4:00pm
Toan Chau's Open Mic /
Jam
SLO Wine and Beer
Company
3536 S Higuera St Suite
250, San Luis Obispo

Thu., Apr. 14 • 7:30pm
Cal Poly Presents: Nassim
Spanos Theatre
Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo

Thu., Apr. 14 • 7:00pm
Robert Alberts Quintet
The Madonna Inn
100 Madonna Road,
San Luis Obispo

Thu., Apr. 14 • 7:00pm
Robert Cray
The Fremont Theater
1035 Monterey St,
San Luis Obispo

Fri., Apr. 15 • 6:00pm
Cuesta Jazz Fridays!
Linnaea's Cafe
1110 Garden St,
San Luis Obispo

Fri., Apr. 15 • 8:00pm
The JD Project
The Siren
900 Main St, Morro Bay

Fri., Apr. 15 • 7:00pm
Riding With Alice
The Pour House
525 Pine Street,
Paso Robles

Sat., Apr. 16 • 5:30pm
Carolyn Sills Combo
BarrelHouse Brewing
3055 Limestone Way,
Paso Robles

Sat., Apr. 16 • 2:00pm
Lady Goodman
The Siren
900 Main St, Morro Bay

Sat., Apr. 16 • 4:00pm
Spring Concert Series with
Back Bay Betty
Atascadero City Hall
6500 Palma Ave, Atascadero

Mon., Apr. 18 • 7:00pm
Phil Johnson and Roadside
Attraction
The Siren
900 Main St, Morro Bay

Tue., Apr. 19 • 9:00pm
Keb' Mo'
The Fremont Theater
1035 Monterey St,
San Luis Obispo

Wed., Apr. 20 • 7:00pm
Jared Mattson / High Pulp
SLO Brew Rock
855 Aerovista Place,
San Luis Obispo

Thu., Apr. 21 • 7:00pm
Jake Blount
Octagon Barn
4400 Octagon Way,
San Luis Obispo

Thu., Apr. 21 • 8:00pm
Leven Kali & Kyle
The Fremont Theater
1035 Monterey St,
San Luis Obispo

Thu., Apr. 21 • 7:30pm
RENT - THE MUSICAL
PAC - Harold Miossi Hall
1 Grand Avenue,
San Luis Obispo

Thu., Apr. 21 • 7:00pm
Traveling Songwriters Tour
The Siren
900 Main St, Morro Bay

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Community

Nautical Bean From page 1



Brett Jones, co-owner of the Nautical Bean, opened the third coffee house in Baywood.

blended juices are also available. The décor inside the shop is a quick trip back in time to plastic school lunch boxes, framed music and art posters and a few nods to music legends David Bowie and Johnny Cash. Of course, it wouldn't be a Nautical Bean without skateboard decks hanging on the walls. "I'm into mostly all things pop culture," said Brett "I was born in the seventies, so I am really big into the 80's stuff." Don't think you are going to go hungry while sipping your favorite beverage; the Nautical Bean serves breakfast all day featuring burritos, bagels, sandwiches, and bowls. "It is all made to order," Brett said. "Nothing is just warmed up, it's all fresh." Unique to the Baywood menu item is the Navy Special, an open-faced, toasted bagel with cream cheese, lox, tomato, onions and capers. The sandwich is named after the Baywood Navy, a group of regulars who frequented the location when it was the Back Bay Café. Although the interior of the shop is small, plenty of tables will be available outside and heaters are part of the

plan for colder days. The shop is also serving guests of the neighboring Back Bay Inn and the Baywood Inn. As of opening day, there are eight employees running the show including Brett, a general manager coming from the Parker Street location, and six new local employees. There is a possibility that two more positions will open. The coffee shop is open from 6 a.m. to 2 p.m. Mon. – Fri. and 7 a.m. to 2 p.m. on the weekends. Brett says he hope to



extend the hours. "Ideally, I would like to be open a little later; there is a lot going on here." Another big thing on Brett's agenda is his wedding to his fiancé, Megan, in May. The couple will blend their families and share five kids. "We've been together for two years now, but we've known each other for a long time," said Brett. "We both like to say our timing, when we got together, was serendipitous." Come June, maybe Brett can take time to sit back and enjoy his own cup of coffee with new friends in his home away from home on the North Coast. "I'm a firm believer that if your pour into your community, it will come back ten-fold. I think one of my first posts [on social media] about what we were doing here got over 150 comments, and it was all positive. That was really encouraging to see."

Letters to The Editor



Thank You for Support

I am sending out a sincere thank-you to the generous members of our community. They didn't let the cancellation of our annual Super Bowl Sunday Chicken Barbecue stop them from continuing to support The Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. High School Memorial Scholarship Fund. Every year since 1968, we have presented scholarships to local high school seniors, and because of your contributions, we are able to continue. Now, donations are more important than ever because the pandemic has caused additional financial hardship for deserving students headed for college. Soon we will be selecting worthy recipients for this year's awards. We have assisted 575 students over the years, but there are many more outstanding young men and women who could really use a boost. So remember, it's never too late to help. We gratefully accept donations year-round. Go to www.mlkfund.org and click on "Donate" to make a tax-deductible contribution to the MLK Memorial Scholarship Fund. Or send checks to: P.O.Box 1693, San Luis Obispo, CA 93406. Mary Matakovich Board President MLK Memorial Scholarship Fund

Board of Supervisor's Gerrymandering Will Eliminate Votes

One has to ask if a group of people have to "cheat" to win an election, what's wrong with their party's platform or core values? If they have to gerrymander to an extreme, that says a lot about them and the direction of ultra-conservative views. If their constituents agreed, they would not have to succumb to the extremes our Board of Supervisors' majority has adopted and perpetrated upon the very people they took an oath to represent. What our Board of Supervisors' majority has accomplished is to manipulate the boundaries of (an electoral constituency) to favor one party—theirs. In representative democracies, gerrymandering refers to political manipulation of electoral district boundaries with the intent of creating undue advantage for a party. Is it legal? Yes, or in the case of San Luis Obispo County — questionable, the courts will decide. Is it moral? No! Their primary goals are to maximize the effect of their supporters' votes and to minimize or eliminate entirely the effect of opponents' views and votes. If their views do not align with the majority of voters; if they cannot win on their own virtues, values, ideas and track record, then maybe it is time for them to re-evaluate them. Pandora Nash-Karner Los Osos

Morro Bay Drug, What's the Deal?

Morro Bay Drug & Gift, my personal pharmacy for decades, has abruptly closed, and I'd like to know why. Tried to call in a prescription this morning, phone was disconnected. Went to the store, only to be greeted by a sign that said, "Store closed. All MB Drug & Gift customers go to 740 Quintana," which just happens to be Rite Aid. And, RITE AID now has an outside banner that reads "Welcome Morro Bay Drug customers." Lines there now out of sight. There was no prior warning, or e-mail, or call about this change from anyone at MB Drug. What an inconvenience, to say nothing about a terrible way to do business! John Winthrop Cayucos Please include your full name and town you live in on all letters sent. Although we do welcome longer opinion pieces, publishing is as space permits. Estero Bay News reserves the right to edit for length and clarity. Email letters to editor@esterobaynews.com



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In Print and Online

News

MB Drug & Gift From page 1

Morro Bay store who confirmed that MB Drug & Gift had been bought out by the corporation, but had little information beyond that. Apparently, no press release was sent out and, as this reporter is a customer of MB Drug, no notices were sent to customers.

EBN attempted to contact Rite Aid’s corporate media folks but did not get a response back before deadline.

What should patients do now about their prescriptions? The manager said the prescriptions would not automatically transfer over to Rite Aid and people must talk with their doctors about having prescriptions transferred to whatever pharmacy they now wish to go patronize.

Los Osos, Cambria and Cayucos each still have small independent pharmacies, otherwise, a pharmacy in Ralph’s Market in Los Osos and Morro Bay Rite Aid are the other ones on the North Coast.

Morro Bay Drug & Gift has been a leader locally in the battle with the coronavirus pandemic, offering vaccine shots last year soon after they became available and staying open all through the pandemic, even though it was tough to find employees and keep them on.

Dr. Paul, who came to Morro Bay from Bakersfield, told Estero Bay News in August 2020 that this was the first pharmacy that he’s owned.

He was just getting into a groove running the business when the COVID-19 hit in March 2020.

Contacted for comment, Mayor Headding said he had no idea this was about to happen, no warnings at all. “I was absolutely shocked,” he said, adding that a local resident had alerted him to the closure on March 31.

He said he didn’t know why it happened but has seen this sort of thing happen before. “When Med Stop closed in Los Osos,” he said, “the same thing happened.”

Typically, when a corporation like Rite Aid buys a little family pharmacy, they buy the “files” or the “active” prescription orders that have additional doses authorized by a doctor.

If a prescription has run out, they don’t buy those, he said, and a patient will have to contact their doctor to have the “dead” prescription renewed and switched to the new pharmacy, wherever they want it to go.

When he sold to Dr. Paul in 2019, Headding explained, he sold the business and the property, so Headding said he’s completely out of the loop and could speak only in generalities.

He wasn’t too surprised that Rite Aid was interested, as he was often contacted by them when he owned the pharmacy.

Asked if this was common, to close without any warning, he said unfortunately, yes.

“If physicians want to close their practice, like they plan to retire, they are required to give patients a 30-day notice that they will no longer be practicing,” Headding said. “There is no such requirement for a pharmacy.” They also tend to remain open until the last day to avoid an early exodus.

“Unfortunately,” he said, “as a patient you find out on

that day [when they close], that they’re no longer going to be open.”

He too recommended former patients of Morro Bay Drug & Gift contact their doctors to have their prescriptions switched over to whomever they want to go to now. And though the choice is theirs, it can cause tensions between patients and pharmacies, Headding said.

He said Dr. Paul didn’t have it as easy as he did. When he opened the Morro Bay store, he had family working with him — a daughter who is a pharmacist, son-in-law and his wife, who is a registered nurse. Plus they’d already been running a pharmacy in Cambria for years.

“It’s not easy,” he said of being a lone pharmacist even in a little store like Morro Bay Drug & Gifts, “especially with COVID — giving shots and he was doing testing too.”

While people like nurses and even paramedics give people shots all the time, with vaccinations like the COVID-19 ones that Dr. Paul has been administering since shortly after they became available in 2021, only licensed

Boatyard From page 1

feasibility study.

“The market analysis was half the picture,” he said. They sought basically a business plan looking at revenues versus costs. “That hasn’t been done.”

About 20-years ago, former HAB chairman, the late-Jim Wood and some others looked at a boatyard with an ancillary business connected to it, and “even that study said it would not be profitable. We had a design firm look at that project and concluded that [it wasn’t profitable] because of the assumed acquisition costs. Then the whole area was deemed environmentally sensitive habitat [ESHA] and that killed it,” Endersby recalled.

“The financial picture has not changed, and it wouldn’t be a profit maker.”

He added that his gut feeling is that even if the City got property free and got grants to build the infrastructure, including a travel lift, it still would not be profitable. “There’s just not that much demand for it,” he said.

It should be noted that the harbor does have a small boatyard down in the 200 block of Main Street but it’s capacity is limited and it can’t lift the larger, heavier, boats in the harbor.

Most recently, in 2016 the City asked RRM Design of SLO to pencil out a boatyard project at the City’s Beach Street docks, somewhere between Stax Wine Bar and GAFCo., for the ways (travel lift ramps) and using the Triangle lot as a repair yard.

It would have required cradling the boats and driving them across Embarcadero and through the Front Street parking lot.

That exercise, Endersby said, was to see if it could all fit in that area, and yes it could, if you rebuilt the parking lots and reconfigured parking along Embarcadero, among other necessary improvements.

That penciled-in project showed a net gain of nearly 40 parking spaces but carried a rough estimate of \$4 million to \$5 million to build.

“They do that in Santa Barbara,” Endersby said of a travel lift carrying boats around, “and people love seeing it.”

But usage of the Triangle lot has changed in recent years, with the Maritime Museum expanding with new exhibits, and hoping to expand further with a new building, and the Harbor Department using nearly half the area for a boat storage yard.

Seven camping sites that the Harbor Department put into the Triangle lot as part of its RV camping program will have to be removed, after the City Council agreed to ban overnight camping on The Embarcadero and at Morro Rock rather than having the issue go to a vote.

Another possibility has recently emerged, after power plant owner Vistra agreed to remove the 16-story, main power station building and three 450-foot tall smokestacks.

The plant takes up roughly 14 acres and is zoned industrial, and thanks to a deed restriction must remain so zoned or be cleaned up at considerable expense for other uses.

The extent of any needed clean up can’t really be known until the building and stacks are removed and soil testing is done.

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News

Garden Tour From page 1

committee find the Los Osos homes to tour, but adjacent to Sweet Springs during our 2022 Estero Bay Springtime.

I was able to tour one of the gardens this week in between our welcomed rainstorms. Readers: Surprise! Surprise! One of the gardens you will tour belongs to Kiki Kornreich. Indeed, once every other month you’ve read Kiki’s musings in Estero Bay News under the banner “Out & About with Bookshelf Writers.” Now you can get to know her a little bit better by touring her home garden.

Kiki moved from Cayucos to her North Morro Bay home eight years ago. She was attracted by the home’s bountiful garden and the amazing view off her back deck of the lush green hillsides of Morro Valley. She agreed to host the AAUW Garden Tour before the pandemic shuttered our daily happenings. One might say Kiki was given two more years to imagine, then create garden spaces she would enjoy sharing with friends and neighbors, and supporters of AAUW’s Garden Tour.

For the first time in months our Bookshelf Writers’ group, Debbie Black, Susan Vasquez and I, were able to meet at Kiki’s home — all together. It had been a surprise to us why she was spending so much time in her garden instead of writing! Well, we learned why as she walked us through her transformed garden spaces all blooming with not only what we’d seen before but new or repositioned whimsical “yard art” and bird feeders. I felt I was walking through the many moods of my friend, Kiki.



Each nook has its own theme. Naturally her Ponderosa home had to have a “wild western” garden, but Kiki’s style balances historical with a Zen mood. Morro Bay is a neighborly community. Reflecting that mood, her front porch



area has space to sit, wave to her neighbors or shelter within a patio-like area bordered by a variety of roses, a magnificent Meyer lemon, and lush greenery. Stroll around to the back yard and see her puppy Pearl’s special garden space. There’s a Kiki-vacation memory display with colorful anchor-weight souvenirs from Newport, OR, and a tribute wall to the former owner thanking her for planting a strong foundation for Kiki to expand the many more garden spaces surrounding her home.

From her expansive deck, Kiki can watch numerous bird species flock to several fun-feeders she keeps well supplied. She said the doves would intimidate the finches at first, until they realized they had no reason to horde. There was plenty for all to get their fill. Now, they share side-by-side and sing their songs to Kiki’s delight and peace of mind. It gave me hope that maybe humans might someday realize our abundance and learn to live and share the resources we have, especially here in our Central Coast paradise.

I also had a chance to talk to former Morro Bay City Councilwoman Nancy Johnson, who is publicity chair for the event. She credited Kathleen Lenski for her leadership of the committee, Janelle Richardson for her social media expertise and her fellow members for working together to find the homes and organize the 2022 tour. Just last month President Jan Dean called the entire membership together. Visitors interested in possible membership are welcome to attend their regular meetings at St. Peter’s Episcopal in Morro Bay second Saturdays between September and May from 10-Noon. Check out their AAUW Morro Bay Facebook page.

Nancy continued to describe the other gardens on the tour. Gabriel Frank, owner of Gabriel’s Gardens, is opening one of his home gardens for the benefit of AAUW’s scholarships and science camperships. Committee members discovered Gabriel had combined his horticulture education with his skills as an artist, welder, and craftsman to create

an interesting landscape with drought tolerant plants.

In Los Osos, John Dilworth and Carole Maurer’s beautifully landscaped garden was designed by Lisa Denker of Los Osos. In the front yard are tiered rock-faced beds with yellow Phlomis rusellias, agaves, red yarrow, kangaroo paws, grevillea, purple and hummingbird sages, birch trees, and an olive tree. The committee was told it took three years to build the beautiful front yard deck. Nancy was awed by their patio’s uniquely designed barbecue. She also hopes the aloe blooms will still be as vivid April 24.

Walk across the street and view the home garden of Margarete Schmidt and Mike Lozito. Their landscape design intends to match the open space feel of Sweet Springs adjacent to their property. Are you familiar with Estero Bay native plant life? Their garden demonstrates how to gently blend drought tolerant cultivars and native plants with the natural habitat. Once you’ve viewed their garden, take the time and short walk on the Sweet Springs path to the bay and study local birds in full view – and yet sheltered behind a blind.

Be sure to thank the Cal Poly student hostesses for taking time to help at the event and take note of the gifted floral arrangements crafted for the homeowners by students studying floral design careers.

Tickets for the tour are easily available online at My 805 Tix, or at Morro Bay’s Coalesce Book Store, Los Osos’ Volumes of Pleasure Book Shoppe and Farm Supply in SLO.

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