

## Meet the Morro Bay Candidates

### Morro Bay Chamber of Commerce Question and Answer with the Canidates



Dr. John Headding



Carla Wixom



Casey Cordes



David Duringer



Cyndee Edwards



Robin "Zara" Landrum



Sarah Robinson

The Morro Bay Chamber of Commerce recently held a community roundtable Meet the Candidates event at the Inn at Morro Bay allowing those running for the office of mayor or city council opening and closing statements and an opportunity to respond to questions. Estero Bay News was a sponsor of the event. These profiles were submitted to the Chamber.

The office of mayor is a 2-year term and city council members serve for four years. There are two open seats on the council replacing Dawn Addis, who is running for state assembly, and John Heller, who is not running for re-election. Candidates for mayor are incumbent Dr. John Headding and Carla Lynn Wixom. Council candidates are Casey Cordes, David Duringer, Cyndee Edwards, Robin "Zara" Landrum, and Sarah Robinson. All introductions and why they are running for office are presented below in alphabetical order.

Incumbent  
Dr. John Headding

#### Candidate Introduction

My career involves the management of complex organizations. I have been a department director in hospitals and was a CEO/COO of multiple hospitals for almost 20 years. My background includes a master's degree in healthcare administration, a doctor of pharmacy degree, and a Bachelor of Science degree in pharmacy. I operated a successful family-owned pharmacy in Morro Bay for over 10 years before retiring. I was



Meet the Canidates Continued on page 22

## Welcome Home Mary Leizear



Mary Leizear

By Judy Salamacha

Thank you and blessings to all who rescued Mary Leizear from Oxnard, CA. It was your prayers, positivity, donations, get-well cards, professional expertise, and visits to St. John's Regional Hospital and/or Maywood Acres Acute Care that brought her back to SLO. Mary still has challenges before she returns to her own apartment, but she is now with her family of community friends.

Gratitude also for Estero Bay News for printing the original "shout-out" for help created by Morro Bay Rotary and her vast network of friends. Two new friends stepped up. Nicole Pazdan, founder of Elder Placement Professionals, and Dustin Blom, the new owner of Top Dog Coffee Bar/Rescue Me Coffee.

Unfortunately, Mary's story is not unusual in today's health-care climate. Nicole has been in healthcare since she was 19 years old. She reminds us not to hesitate another day to get our medical plans to loved ones. She also marveled at how fortunate Mary was to have numerous healthcare advocates help her daughter, Laura, navigate her mother's wishes.

I don't think I truly understood the concept of "it takes a village" until September 22, 2022. Few of us are probably as prepared for what life throws at us than Mary Leizear. She had fought her way back to health after pacemaker surgery strengthened her heart and breathing issues. Life was good again. She enjoyed volunteering for her Morro Bay Rotary Club projects, especially delivering fresh fish to the Food Bank and ECHO of Paso Robles and supporting the Adopt-A-Teacher project at Del Mar Elementary School. She was honored as Rotarian of the Year for 2021-22.

Her will and advance directive were with Laura. Years before she planned for retirement on a fixed income with only Medicare insurance. She secured affordable housing at Judson Terrace in San Luis Obispo. Her talents working with dogs generated income dog sitting. Her popularity earned funds to give to others and support organizations like the Morro Bay Natural History

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## Pecho Energy Project Getting Cool Reception



A rendering of the proposed Pecho Energy Storage Center

By Neil Farrell

A proposed project to put a 400 megawatt underground energy storage facility in Chorro Valley is proving to not be very popular with just about everybody.

The Pecho Energy Storage Center or Pecho for short is an "Advanced Compressed Air Energy Storage" or A-CAES plant that would be built on farmland at 2284 Adobe Rd., off Hwy 1 below Hollister Peak.

The Pecho LD Energy Storage LLC, the project's corporate name, is a joint project between Canadian energy company Hydrostor and Meridian Infrastructure Partners.

Pecho would build large underground storage tanks that would be energized with compressed air and water during the times when solar and wind energy is plentiful.

That 400 megawatts of stored energy (air pressure) would essentially convert the potential energy back into electricity via four 100MW

Pecho Energy Continued on page 21

## New Animals Shelter Opens

By Theresa-Marie Wilson  
Photos By Dean Sullivan



A husky available for adoption at the time of the ribbon cutting.

Animals looking for homes in the county have a new place to receive care while they await adoption.

Government officials and members of the community, including some furry ones, gathered for a ribbon-cutting last month to celebrate the completion of the new Animal Services Facility in San Luis Obispo.

After nearly two years of construction, the \$20.4 million project is complete and is now housing its new inhabitants. The 20,000-square-foot facility, located at 865 Oklahoma Ave. in San Luis Obispo, will serve the people of SLO County through the care of lost and displaced animals.

Shelter Opens Continued on page 21

## County Awards Vet's Hall Repair Contract

By Neil Farrell



This historic photo circa 1900s shows the old Cayucos Landing warehouse, not the Vets Hall

County Supervisors were expected to make the final appropriations this week and award a contract to repair the Cayucos Vets Hall, in a project that has ballooned to over \$11 million.

The decisions, which were on this past Tuesday's Supervisor's agenda for approval, mark the turning point for the historic Vets Hall, which dates back to 1873.

The hall was originally a warehouse built by Capt. James Cass, starting in the 1870s, when Capt. Cass built the pier and landing, as well as the Cass House, which was his personal residence.

The Vet's Hall in recent decades has been used as a communi-

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Happy  
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# Vandal Attacks Memorial Benches



This is one of several memorial benches strung along the bay and Harborwalk that had their bronze memorial plaques pried off but didn't steal them. Photo by Neil Farrell

By Neil Farrell

Morro Bay officials are breathing a sigh of relief after someone pried off more than two dozen bronze plaques from memorial benches along the waterfront, but didn't take them.

It was Monday, Sept. 12 when a citizen contacted the Harbor Patrol to report the vandalism.

The memorial bench program is run by City Public Works and people donate money to pay for the bench, which includes a bronze plaque commemorating a person or family and the City picks where to install it and then puts them in.

It's one of the few ways that people can publicly honor a loved one, and the benches are utilitarian too, providing places to rest and enjoy the beauty of the harbor.

Harbor Patrol Officer Dana Stein said they investigated the report and indeed found that numerous benches had the plaques torn off, essentially vandalized. But the bronze wasn't stolen.

"Someone took the plaques off the benches — 27 of them," Stein told Estero Bay News, "and then left them on the benches. He was unsure how many benches in total were vandalized, because some of them have just one plaque while others have two or three.

They were both wooden benches and the newer cement benches that the City put in several years ago as part of a project that also saw several fire pits put in along the Rock parking lot edge.

How easy was it to pry them off? "The cement ones," Stein said, "were glued on. The wooden ones had screws, so they were better secured. But we got them all back."

He said they called the police to report the incident and turned the plaques over to the maintenance department.

Dale Simpson, the City's new maintenance supervisor, told Estero Bay News, "We did recover all the plaques that were removed and are in the process of reinstalling them. We are using a strong adhesive to install, which we believe is the best method for this application. However, if someone is determined enough to destroy something, they will find a way."

He added that they have records of which plaque goes where and "We are hoping to have all the plaques reinstalled in the next couple of weeks as our work schedule permits.

"We are confident we will have them back in the right place very soon."

As for why someone would take the trouble of prying them off but then not steal them, Stein speculated that maybe something spooked them. Scrap price for bronze is \$2.15 a pound, and Stein said collectively, the 27 plaques were "pretty heavy."

# County Moves on Homeless Action Plan

By Neil Farrell

County Supervisors recently created a "Homeless Services" division within the County Department of Social Services, and what does every new bureaucracy need — a manager, new employees, and a citizens' oversight panel.

**New Division Manager Hired**

Supervisors voted Sept. 13 to officially create a management position for the new homeless division that arose out of the "San Luis Obispo Countywide Plan to Address Homelessness 2022-2027," a new road map into the services, facilities and assistance that needs to be carried out to get people off the streets and out of creek beds, and into safe, secure housing.

Tami Douglas Schatz, the County Director of Human Resources said in a staff report, "A key component of the plan was the creation of a Homeless Services Division in the Department of Social Services (DSS). This new Division is comprised of current positions from the Departments of Social Services and Planning & Building, as well as new positions that were approved by the Board." Supervisors approved nine new positions with that homelessness plan, including one called the "Division Manager — Social Services." There was apparently a problem with the original name.

"This classification," Douglas Schatz said, "was used in the planning and development of the new Division but was deemed to be insufficient in describing the duties of the new position. Upon the Board's approval of the new Division, the Human Resources Department and DSS developed a new job classification entitled Division Manager — Homeless Services. This new job classification will replace the more generic job description used in new Division's planning."

Mark McKibben with County HR told Estero Bay News that they had just hired a guy for the new manager's position, picking Joe Dzvonik from among 15 applicants, in what was an expedited job search.

He said they narrowed the field down to three candidates and Social Services Director, Devin Drake, who interviewed the candidates and picked Drake, who he was already familiar with.

McKibben said Drake had been working with DSS at the Parking Village on Kansas Avenue and later transferred to the DSS Office doing similar work.

Most division managers in the Social Services Department handle specific programs like Cal Fresh, or Child Welfare Services, among others, but this job is apparently going to be different.

"In contrast," Douglas Schatz said, "this position is focused on directing the County's efforts to address homelessness. This new area of focus will coordinate program efforts with internal and external partners while directing the three work units of Housing, Continuum of Care and Grants, and Communication and Data Analysis."

The job will fall under the Civil Service Commission and the salary is pretty good. The position's salary range goes from \$56.37 an hour in Step 1 of the salary range, to \$71.95 at Step 6, which translates to \$9,770 to \$12,471 per month.

At the median salary levels the new manager would make \$132,500 a year in salary plus \$79,386 in benefits for an annual salary package of \$211,892 a year, according to Douglas Schatz' staff report.

Drake's position will fall under the County's "confidential employees" bargaining unit because, "the new position will have access to information relating to the County's administration of employer-employee relations. As such, they meet the definition of a Confidential Employee as defined in the Employee Relations Policy," Douglas Schatz said.

So why go through this paperwork exercise? "The addition of the proposed Division Manager — Homeless Services position and establishment of the salary range and bargaining union classification," Douglas Schatz said, "will aid in attracting and retaining qualified candidates by accurately portraying the duties and requirements of the position and paying a market competitive salary. It will also provide a basis for training, performance management, and succession planning."

**New Division Getting Staffed**

McKibben said the new Homeless Services Division would get staffed right away, taking eight employees from DSS and six from the Planning Department, as well as hiring nine new employees to fill in the 23-person staff.

Once they had a team leader set, McKibben said Drake was under orders to his positions staffed and comfortable, because some grant programs reward success with more grant funds, so the more people they help the better it looks with funding agencies.

Those jobs would soon be posted on the County's website, as well as governmentjobs.com website and other places.

AS for digs, he said the new division would be moving into a building that the County leases on Empleo Road, right behind the main DSS building, which is at the corner of Higuera Street and Prado Road in San Luis Obispo.

It will take some time to get the new offices up and running with office furniture, computers and more. But once it's going, McKibben said it's intended to be a one-stop shop for the homeless community and the public.

**Grants Handed Out**

Getting straight the name and classifications of the person who will head up the County's homelessness efforts, is one of sev-

eral issues that have been dealt with by Supervisors with regards to homelessness.

Back in July, Supervisors approved doling out some \$3.6 million in Federal COVID relief monies to numerous agencies and organizations providing a wide variety of things — from homeless services to free museum tours for kids.

The County took \$3 million out of the "American Rescue Plan Act of 2021" (ARPA) funds for non-profit grants; and \$654,000 in ARPA Housing and Homeless funding, according to the staff report. The ARPA was President Biden's \$1.9 trillion COVID relief spending package passed in March 2021.

The July vote came after a previous attempt by staff to award ARPA monies and get that money working in the community. But at a meeting last May, Supervisors were swayed by the public to better spread out the federal relief monies, because just a handful of applicants initially got awards. So Supervisors gave new priorities — homelessness and services to low-income families — for using the ARPA monies and the staff went back and reallocated the money.

The grant awards were topped by the County's Homeless Efforts, which got \$654,000; 5 Cities Homeless Coalition got \$275,000; Community Action Partnership of SLO County \$350,000; and El Camino Homeless Organization (ECHO) got \$430,000.

Other awardees were: People's Self-Help Housing, \$200,000; Smart Share Housing Solutions, \$50,000; Transitions Mental Health, \$150,000; Boys and Girls Club of Mid Central Coast, \$150,000; Boys & Girls Club of South SLO County, \$150,000; Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA), \$115,000; Jack's Helping Hand, \$25,000; CAP-SLO SAFE School Program, \$100,000; South County Youth Coalition, \$150,000; Food Bank, \$200,000; Lumina Alliance (for sexual assault victims), \$40,000;

## Correction

Last issue's story about all the local races in the coming Election left out one of the seats for San Luis Coastal School District. In Trustee Area-1, incumbent, Marilyn Rodgers, is being challenged by Loren Leidinger, an outreach development manager.

Also, In the district's TA-2 race between retired educator, Rob Banfield and retired teacher and coach Jim Quesenberry, we mistakenly said Quesenberry was the "incumbent." He is a former district trustee seeking to return to the board. Evelyn Frame is the incumbent, but is not running.

And it turns out, neither is Quesenberry, who in a letter to the editor, said he was endorsing Banfield and Rodgers and not actively seeking the TA-2 seat, though he will appear on the ballot.

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News

SLO Noor Foundation (to start a free health clinic at a PSHH apartment complex) \$100,000; Los Osos Cares, \$25,000; and, San Luis Obispo Symphony (rebuilding youth music programs ended by COVID), \$25,000, among numerous others.

Under the federal guidelines for the ARPA monies, they must be obligated by the end of 2024, and spent before the end of 2026.

The County thinks these grant awards meet all the Supervisor’s priorities. “Approval of the ARPA grant funds for these organizations,” Douglas Schatz said, “are aligned with the Board’s priority for housing and homelessness and services to low-income families by maintaining and expanding very low-income housing options and shelter for those that are homeless.

“In addition, funds are recommended to assist low-income families, whether it be for food, or assistance in offsetting the cost of participating in afterschool or arts/ cultural activities that they not otherwise be able to participate in.”

New Citizens’ Committee

And no bureaucratic effort at solving a social issue would be complete without a citizen’s oversight committee.

Supervisors also green-lit the formation of the “Citizens’ Homelessness Accountability Commission” [CHAC] with the sole purpose of monitoring operations and performance of the San Luis Obispo Countywide Plan to Address Homelessness 2022-2027,” reads a report from County Administrative Officer Wade Horton.

The new citizen’s commission is part of the County’s Plan to Address Homelessness, approved in August. “To make this plan more robust regarding operational transparency and performance accountability,” Horton said, “an organization known as the Citizens’ Homelessness Accountability Commission [CHAC] has advocated for the formal establishment of a Brown Act body authorized to interact with the County government at multiple levels to perform these functions.”

Under the Countywide plan, the issue of homelessness is broken down into six elemental parts, called “Lines of Effort,” or LOEs, and this committee falls under LOE-5, “Strengthen Regional Collaboration,” according to the report.

The regional approach, Horton said, “facilitates our ability to minimize gaps and duplication of efforts while improving system effectiveness in addressing homelessness. The core of this effort

within government structures is the ‘Regional Homelessness Action Committee’ [RHAC], consisting of the County CAO, City Managers, and the Homeless Services Division Manager. The specific purpose of the Regional Homelessness Action Committee is to serve as the mechanism that implements operational planning and tactical execution of the Countywide Plan.”

So under the hierarchy being set up by the County’s new homelessness plan, there will be three oversight/advisory bodies

— Homeless Services Oversight Council (HSOC); the Regional Homeless Action Committee (RHAC); and the Citizens’ Homelessness Accountability Commission (CHAC).

The RHAC and HSOC are bodies with members affiliated with government agencies and the CHAC along with an informal group of service providers, housing developers and hospitals and volunteers are outside government.

“In contrast,” Horton said, “the CHAC is a proposed group of citizen volunteers who will be appointed by the Board of Supervisors to represent our countywide region in closely monitoring the progress of The San Luis Obispo Countywide Plan to Address Homelessness 2022-2027 over the next five years.

“Subcommittees from this panel will interact directly with the Homeless Services Division on quarterly basis and the full committee will interact with Board of Supervisors annually.

“The intent,” Horton continued, “is to establish a panel of citizens, operating with independence from government perspectives and processes, to be authorized access, input, and evaluation of the Countywide Plan as it unfolds, while also reporting out to the public regarding their evaluation in an independent manner. Because the Board of Supervisors is formally establishing the CHAC, it is subject to the requirements of the Ralph M. Brown Act, among other things.”

The Brown Act is California’s open meetings law and requires government bodies, such as the Supervisors or a city council, to conduct their business open to the public. So the committee’s meetings will have to be publicly noticed, open to the public and potentially broadcast on Government Access TV (Charter Cable Ch. 21, online at slo-span.org).

County’s Plan for ARPA Monies

The Federal Government’s American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA) appropriated \$1.9 trillion in funding, “intended to speed up the United States’ recovery from the economic and health effects of the COVID-19 pandemic,” according to a County report.

County Supervisors have been doling out its share of the pie, some \$55 million, a little at a time, with the most recent allocations for non-profit organizations and programs that serve the homeless and low-income families (see related story).

In June Supervisors voted to divide up the ARPA money into three main categories: public health and negative economic impacts; restoration of government services; and water, sewer and broadband projects.

Under the Public Health section, \$14 million is to go for the public health emergency costs; \$9M for business, non-profit, childcare grants; \$6M for housing and homelessness; and \$1M in administrative costs for a total of \$30M.

Under the restoration of government category, \$10M is allocated; and under the water, sewer, broadband, \$15M for a grand total of \$55M the County has gotten from the ARPA program.

Beyond the initial divvying up of the COVID relief monies, Supervisors last January split the water, sewer and broadband money up evenly in thirds, with \$5M going towards each category.

And last March 15, Supervisors allocated \$3M for childcare and \$500,000 for small business grants.

Under the ARPA the County has until Dec. 31, 2026 to fully spend the money but it must be awarded out before the end of 2024.

— Neil Farrell

Los Osos Man Dies in Hwy 41 Crash

A Los Osos man was killed last week in a solo vehicle, rollover crash on Hwy 41, east of Morro Bay.

According to a Highway Patrol news release, at about 6:40 a.m. on Monday, Sept. 26, the CHP in San Luis Obispo got a 9-1-1 call regarding a traffic collision on Hwy 41 south of Bear Ridge Road, which is east of Morro Bay near the highway’s “S” curves.

An officer found a vehicle, described as a 2001 Chevrolet, off the roadway. The driver, identified as Justin William West, 20 of Los Osos, was located outside the vehicle where he’d been ejected in the rollover. He died at the scene.

The CHP said the vehicle left the southbound lane, traveled across the northbound lane and drove off the edge of the roadway. It rolled and came to rest down a short dirt embankment ear the edge of private property, the CHP said.

The driver was not wearing a seatbelt and was ejected completely out of the vehicle, the release said.

They are not sure about when the accident happened. “The time of the collision is undetermined,” reads the news release, “and it is believed the collision occurred early on the morning of Sept. 26.”

Road conditions at the time were foggy, cool and dry. The CHP is asking anyone with information about the case to call the SLO Office at 805-594-8700.

Congressional App Contest

Budding app writers are being invited to enter a nationwide Congressional contest, according to local Congressman Salud Carbajal.

“Central Coast students with an impressive ‘app’ design for a desktop or PC, web, tablet, mobile, or other devices can enter for a chance to have their entry selected for display in the U.S. Capitol!” reads a news release from Carbajal’s office.

The winner will be part of a much larger display at the Capitol and on the contest website.

“The 2022 Congressional App Challenge” is open to all middle school and high school students within Carbajal’s district, which includes all of SLO County. Deadline to enter is Nov. 1.

To enter go online to: <https://carbajal.house.gov/constituent-services/congressional-app-challenge>.

For assistance from Carbajal’s staff, email Jesse Ebadi at the Congressman’s Santa Barbara Office at: [Jesse.Ebadi@mail.house.gov](mailto:Jesse.Ebadi@mail.house.gov) or Caitlin Cox in the SLO Office at: [Caitlin.Cox@mail.house.gov](mailto:Caitlin.Cox@mail.house.gov).



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News Briefs

By Theresa-Marie Wilson

Police Bring Back Pink



Morro Bay Police Commander Amy Watkins and Chief Jody Cox show off the pink patch and badge for Breast Cancer Awareness Month.

The Morro Bay Police Department is once again a participant in supporting the Pink Patch Project. MBPD joins more than 300 Law Enforcement and public safety agencies across the country that support this program and those who fight against breast cancer.

MBPD officers are authorized to wear a custom designed patch (and a custom designed pink badge) on their uniforms during the month of October, Breast Cancer Awareness Month. The pink patches are intended to encourage public awareness about early detection and treatment in the fight against this disease.

The MBPD Pink Patch design is available for public purchase for \$10 with proceeds going to support local breast cancer awareness groups. The patches are available for purchased through the department at 850 Morro Bay Blvd. Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. or by contacting a patrol officers through the Neighborhood Cop program.

For more information on the Pink Patch Project, go to [www.pinkpatchproject.com](http://www.pinkpatchproject.com).

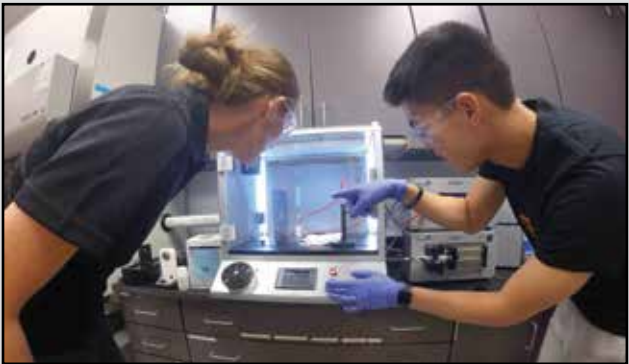
Road Delays on LOVR in SLO

Readers that take Los Osos Valley Road to SLO could run into road work this month.

On Laguna Lane near Laguna Middle School, the City of SLO will remove the new bike lane, restore street parking, and return the striping back to the way it was before this project started.

After hearing concerns from residents and representatives of Laguna Middle School that the new bike lane is not necessary, City staff brought the issue to the City's Active Transportation Committee, which ultimately directed staff to return the striping to the pre-project condition without a westbound bike lane. The ATC also directed staff to add green-backed shared lane markings to further indicate to roadway users to share the road with bicyclists.

Poly Receives Nearly \$3 Million Grant



Professor Kristen Cardinal, left, and biomedical engineering student Squeaky Buentipo, operate a new Spinbox machine that produces electro-spun sheets that serve as scaffolding for growing blood vessels. Photo by Dennis Steers / Cal Poly College of Engineering.

Cal Poly will receive \$2.89 million from the California Institute for Regenerative Medicine (CIRM) to fund an undergraduate program focused on regenerative medicine.

Regenerative medicine seeks to develop any sort of medical treatment — drugs, engineered stem cells and devices — to help people regenerate parts of their bodies. Cell and biologic therapies represent the future of medicine, and after years of promise, the field is starting to realize its potential, as evidenced by the growth in the biotech sector and the large number of clinical trials currently ongoing for cell and tissue-engineered therapies in the nation.

The initiative is part of CIRM's statewide Creating Opportunities through Mentorship and Partnership Across Stem Cell Science, or COMPASS program.

Cal Poly's COMPASS team will implement a two-year undergraduate training program to prepare a diverse group of students for a career in regenerative medicine. The team plans to recruit high school and community college students from underrepresented backgrounds as part of the initiative, which aligns with the program's goal to "guide the growth of a diverse regenerative medicine workforce that represents California and benefits the world."

The \$2.89 million grant will be awarded to Cal Poly over the next five years.

Morro Bay Makes Most Charming List

Morro Bay is one of the eight Most Charming Small Towns in California, according to Strategistico, an independent research organization that develops strategic insights on living and in-depth guides for travel.

"These towns are not just charming in their beautiful aesthet-

ics, but also offer a well-rounded way of life that both travelers and people looking to relocate can enjoy all year round," Strategistico said in their article.

The criteria used was based on the blend of living, leisure, and overall atmosphere that each provide. A total of 1,180 small towns across California with a population of 35,000 people or under were scored based on key factors including cost of living, access to entertainment, cultural events, safety, and walkability.

When it came to Morro Bay, the online site said, "Morro Bay is another seaside gem located on California's Central Coast. Don't miss the excellent locally-owned restaurants and boutiques that line Morro Bay Boulevard and the Embarcadero right in the heart of the town.

"You can also take time to enjoy the serene stretches of the Morro Strand State Beach that is located just a 20 minute walk from the town's center.

"Morro Bay is also noted as one of the nation's best spots for bird watching. It even hosts the annual Morro Bay Bird Festival that is a delight for all ages."

Other towns include Monterey, Paso Robles, Solvang, Tahoe City, Windsor, Winters and Yountville. To read the full article, go to [strategistico.com/charming-small-towns-in-california](http://strategistico.com/charming-small-towns-in-california).

Bear Valley Quilters Holiday Boutique



The Bear Valley Quilters' annual boutique with unique, handmade items is Sunday, October 9 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the South Bay Community Center in Los Osos.



Members donate a variety of hand-crafted items for sale and profits go toward education and support of their Bear Hugs community quilt program donating quilts to people in need. For more information, go to [bearvalleyquilters.org](http://bearvalleyquilters.org).

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

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Visit one of our CalFresh Application assistance sites to get one-on-one help applying from November 2nd to November 10th! No appointment necessary.

November 2, 2022  
12:00 PM- 4:00 PM

**SLO Public Library**  
995 Palm St, San Luis Obispo, CA 93401  
**Coast Unified School District Office**  
1350 Main St, Cambria, CA 93428

November 4, 2022  
12:00 PM- 4:00 PM

**Morro Bay Public Library**  
625 Harbor St, Morro Bay, CA 93442  
**Nipomo Public Library**  
918 W Tefft St, Nipomo, CA 93444

November 3, 2022  
12:00 PM- 4:00 PM

**Atascadero Public Library**  
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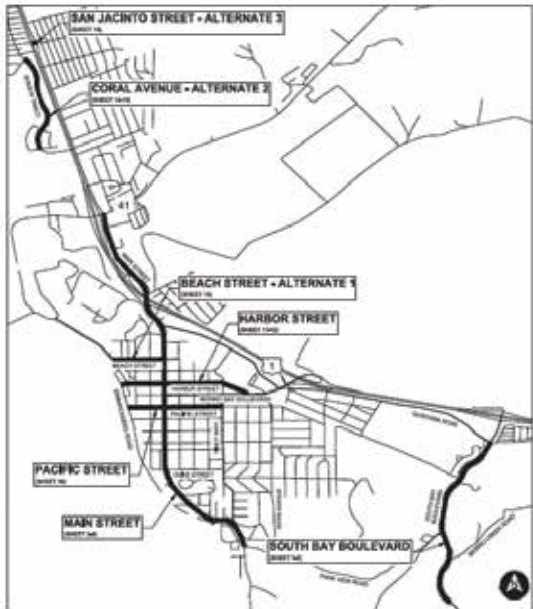
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# News

## City Awards Big Street Paving Job



This map shows the streets being paved by the City in bold. Map courtesy City of Morro Bay  
By Neil Farrell

A victim of the coronavirus pandemic, the City of Morro Bay’s street maintenance program is getting up and at ‘em once again, with the City set to spend nearly \$1.5 million on several main thoroughfares this time around.

The City Council recently awarded a contract to Papich Const., of Arroyo Grande, for \$1.33 million. Papich was one of three bids the City received on the project and the original bid was a little over \$1 million. But City Engineer, Eric Riddiough’s estimate for the work was \$1.24M. So the bid was some 19% under estimates. This contract marks the first time Riddiough has put together the annual paving project, as he was just hired earlier this year to replace the retired Rob Livick.

That led to the City adding in a couple of more segments to the overall project and upping the award to \$1.33M. Add in extra costs like testing and inspections (\$74,800) plus a contingency fund (\$63,700) and the overall budget for the project is a tad over \$1.41M.

With such a low bid, the City added three extra streets to the plan — alternatives 1, 2 and 3 — that the estimate put at \$1.423M. So even with the added work, the contract still comes in under what was anticipated.

The last time the City did a major paving project was pre-pandemic, 2019, and the streets are showing it.

“Since then,” Riddiough said, “the City’s pavement condition index (PCI) has dropped from 66 to 63 and is at risk of continued decline without substantial investment into pavement preservation.”

This contract is apparently just the beginning. “This arterial and collector dig-out project,” Riddiough said, “is Phase 1 of a necessary ‘stop gap’ to save some of the City’s highest volume streets from full structural failure.

“Later in the fiscal year, Phase 2 of this project [FY 22/23 Pavement Management Project] will apply a surface seal on the same streets to protect the surface and give added life to the

repaired pavement.”

The work will include the usual — tools, materials, labor and equipment — but also “incidentals necessary for the removal or ‘dig-out’ of failed, localized pavement areas and replacement with asphalt materials in roadways denoted on the plans and as described in the specifications.”

Funding the work has been a bit of a juggling act.

“Funds for this project,” Riddiough said, “were budgeted in a capital project account in FY 21/22 totaling \$1,064,600 from the Road Maintenance & Rehabilitation Allocation SB-1 account and Measure Q & E.”

But the City didn’t do a paving project the last two years, and so Riddiough said they carried over the money to the current fiscal year but they’ll also have to dip into the Measure Q and E monies for next year. Measures Q and E are local sales taxes — a half percent for M-Q and a full 1% for M-E22 — the city charges on top of the 7.25% Statewide sales tax — of which the City gets 10%.

Measures Q and E were approved by voters with the City promising to use the money for police and fire department needs, repairing streets and storm drains and in the case of M-E22, for public safety needs. The money has also been used to pay the debt on the City Harbor Street Firehouse.

Riddiough said they needed to pull \$350,000 out of the next fiscal year’s Measures Q and E budget to cover all the work.

“With the transfer of the \$350,000 to the FY21/22 project,” Riddiough said, “the remaining project budget for the FY 2022-23 Pavement Management would be \$1,387,846, which would be bid and awarded under a separate contract and scope of work as Phase 2.”

So adding the two phases together the City plans to spend a total of \$2.81M on the streets this year.

Papich’s bid was the lowest of three the City got with the highest bid at \$1.65M. The City report did not name the other companies that bid. The report lists Chrisp Company from Bloomington, Calif., as a subcontractor.

Among the streets slated for work is South Bay Boulevard, essentially from Quintana Road to the City Limits past the Chorro Creek Bridge.

Several main arterial streets leading from Downtown to the Embarcadero will get paved including Pacific Street from the Embarcadero up the hill to Piney Way; and Harbor Street from the Embarcadero up to Morro Bay Boulevard; and Beach Street from the Embarcadero up to Main Street.

And Main Street from Hwy 41 (Atascadero Road) to the intersection with Piney Way will also be paved.

The project includes a long segment of Coral Avenue in the Cloisters and the intersection of Hwy 101 and San Jacinto.

Several of these segments are among the heaviest travelled roads in town and will no doubt cause traffic headaches. Readers are reminded to drive cautiously through construction areas, and heed the flagmen controlling the traffic flow.

With the contract awarded, Papich has 60 days to get started and complete the work.

## Supervisors to OK Bond Sales

By Neil Farrell

County Supervisors this week were expected to finalize the sales of bonds to finance three big construction jobs.

Supervisors were set to approve selling some \$78.5 million in “Lease Revenue Bonds” to pay for the rebuilding of the Cayucos Vet’s Hall, a new co-located emergency dispatch center in Templeton, and a new Probation Department Office on Broad Street

in San Luis Obispo.

The breakdown on the bonds is \$30 million for the dispatch center, \$36 million for the probation office and \$3.5 million for the Vet’s Hall, with bond issuance costs of \$745,000. The project costs and issuance fees comes to \$70.24 million and the extra bonds will go to refinance two large projects from 2012 — the new County Government Center and Dairy Creek Golf Course, according to the report.

Refinancing the old debt will have “estimated savings of \$399,000,” according to the report, and “would benefit the General Fund by \$292,000, and the Golf Course Enterprise Fund by \$107,000.” The expected bond interest rate is 4.48% with maximum annual debt service of \$4.64 million.

The bonds are expected to go on sale in late October and continue into December.

Normally bond sales for projects include a new tax to pay for them, which requires voter approval. But since the County is not proposing any new taxes, it can issue the bonds and finance the projects with a four-fifths vote of the Board of Supervisors.

## Sheriff Investigating Bomb Threat

The County Sheriff’s Department is investigating an apparent bomb threat hoax last week at a local high school.

According to a news release from Sheriff’s spokesman Tony Cipolla, Templeton High School received a bomb threat at about noon Wednesday, Sept. 28.

“Out of an abundance of caution,” Cipolla said, “the school evacuated students to the football field. Deputies and K9’s arrived on scene and began searching the school.”

The school had already planned for a short day that day, so Cipolla said they let the kids go home.

“Following an exhaustive search of the school,” he said, “it was cleared at approximately 2:30 p.m. No device was located. The incident is still being investigated by the Sheriff’s Office.”

## County to Get Hi-Frequency Radios



By Neil Farrell

County Supervisors have agreed to accept a grant to pay for hi-frequency radios that can communicate with state and federal agencies during a major emergency.

The County Office of Emergency Services (OES) applied for the grant from the “High Frequency Communications Equipment Program” run by the Federal Emergency Management Agency or

Hi-Frequency Continued on page 6



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Hi-Frequency From page 5

FEMA, for equipment that will allow local governments “to be included in an integrated high frequency radio network service that utilizes frequencies authorized by the Federal Communications Commission and intended to be capable of communications with state, local, and federal agencies,” reads a staff report from Scott Milner of the County Office of Emergency Services.

The radios have since been ordered but are coming from Australia, Milner told Estero Bay News.

The FEMA grant is part of the agency’s “Integrated Public Alert and Warning System” program and can only be awarded to County OES agencies, and sheriff’s departments. Funds were limited and the State OES could only give out 100.

“There is \$6 million of State General Funds available for the program,” Milner said. “Individual applicants may request up to \$60,000.”

The County was awarded \$59,989 and will get three radios — one will be installed at the County OES building on Kansas Avenue, where County law enforcement is dispatched; one in a command trailer to be used on site of emergencies and natural disasters; and one will be a portable “suitcase” unit.

The new radios will improve communications during emergencies — from wildfires to tsunamis and earthquakes.

And with the County now moving towards building a co-located central dispatch center in Templeton, that would house both law enforcement and fire radio traffic, the stationary radio at the OES building will presumably be moved when that new facility is completed.



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Old is Made New Again

Story and photos  
by Neil Farrell

One of Cayucos’ oldest motels has undergone a top-to-bottom — and maybe a little deeper than that — remodel, emerging dazzlingly white and decorated with beautiful cactus and succulent gardens.

The Pacific Motel, as it has been rechristened, started as the Dolphin Motel probably sometime in the 1950s. New owner, Ryan Fortini said they were told the small cabins on site were brought over from Camp San Luis Obispo sometime in the ‘50s. But the history has been a little tough to figure out.

Over the decades the little motel has changed business models several times and at some point probably was flexible in length of stays. A lady from Cayucos recently visited the motel, Ryan Fortini said, and told them some stories about the place. “She cleaned rooms here,” Fortini said. That was two or three owners prior to Fortini, he said, in the late 1970s or 80s. He and wife Marisa Fortini, bought the motel from the Patel Family, he explained and they’d owned it for about 15 years.

“They lived here,” he said, “raised a family here.” Mr. Patel is a Caltrans engineer and Fortini said that’s why you’ll see older photos of the motel with a Caltrans truck parked in the lot.

For the Fortinis, it’s been a long road to a happy place. Ryan said he met his future wife at Cal Poly in the early 1990s, where they were both ornamental horticulture majors. They became lab partners in a tissue culture class, “And we fell in love,” he said.

His father grew up in Templeton, Ryan said, and went to Mission Prep High School. His grandparents have had a home in Cayucos since the 1940s.

They bought a home in Cayucos back when one could afford to buy a house here, he said, and have lived here off and on ever since the mid 1990s.



They have for many years had a landscaping business, designing and installing beautiful gardens mainly at wineries and hospitality projects. They specialized in exterior design and programming, he said.

“We decided that if we can do it for other people,” Ryan said, “let’s try and do it for ourselves.” When the Dolphin Inn came on the market they decided to go for it, and since they still own a house in Cayucos, they could live there and not be connected at the hip to the motel.

When they saw it they thought it would be a piece of cake to freshen up. “We saw it more as a lipstick on a pig situation,” he said. “Our intent was to not have a lot of money into it.”

But plans tend to change, and boy did they on this project. Right as they were seeking permits from the County, the pandemic hit and, well the County went a little haywire, with staff working from home and not very much getting done at all.

“The County basically wanted us to do it all over. It needed a lot more than what we could just do; we needed a permit.”

And as anyone who’s tried to navigate the permit process knows, it can be long, frustrating and expensive, and that’s without a pandemic throwing a monkey wrench into the works.

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They decided if they were going to have to redo the whole place, “We wanted to do it to the nines,” Ryan said. “Everything was redone, except the locations” of the small cabins and the main row of normal rooms.

Nothing was left untouched, except for the existing framing, Ryan said, “And we had to tear a lot of that out too.”

One of the cabins was about a foot out of level. “You could roll a marble at speed across the floor,” he said. They lifted that cabin up and fixed the foundation, lowering it back into place.

There were also several “unpermitted” outbuildings on site, essentially sheds being used for a laundry, and they had to demolish those. They also had to replace rusted gas lines and everything else that was not up to code.

He chuckled when asked how much they spent on the remodel. Could he ballpark it?

It cost between \$1 million and \$5 million, he said. Part of it was “COVID inflation,” as he saw prices for building materials especially lumber, just skyrocket. And it was for everything — structural materials, electrical, plumbing. Prices for nice materials got so exorbitant, he said.

It took 2½ years to complete, but Ryan said 9 months of that were due to COVID. “It was difficult to get the process moving with the County,” he said. “Everybody was working remotely. It was hard to get materials, subcontractors, we were in uncharted waters.”

They saved some money by Ryan acting as the general contractor, using his license, and hiring subcontractors, which

posed it’s own set of challenges. “It slowed the process,” he said, “because they’re not full time jobs.”

While he handled the construction, Marisa was the interior designer, selecting the furnishings, fixtures and paint schemes.



Photos show the inside of various rooms of the newly remodeled Pacific Motel in Cayucos.

“We’re a project team,” Ryan said. “We flip houses too.” The remodel included removing kitchenettes that were in some of the cabins, laying brick pavers throughout the parking lot and driveway, and new landscaping that highlights lots of cacti and succulents, and a slew of palm trees. It all comes together nicely, like a brand new development, not like something over 70-years old.

The newly transformed and re-Christened, Pacific Motel, has a total of 20 rooms made up of five private bungalows, with the rest split between regular rooms with king sized beds and rooms with vaulted ceilings and queen or king beds.

Room rates run from \$299 a night for a standard room, to \$499 a night for the bungalows. Located at 399 S. Ocean Ave., Cayucos. Call 805-900-8224 to inquire about a room.

Maritime Family Fun Day Schedule



Celebrate everything local in the amazing Morro Bay on Saturday October 8.

The day begins with the 2nd Annual Morro Bay Rotary Ducky Derby. Buy your duckies now at morrobayrotary.org. The race starts at 8:30 a.m. at the Galley/Hof Brau inlet and ends at Tidelands Park.

Maritime Family Fun Day starts at 10 a.m. in the triangle lot behind the Morro Bay Maritime Museum. Admission is free.

Visit exhibits, take part in demonstrations, play games, build sandcastles, make fish prints, get in a dive suit, try our treasure hunt, make otter masks, and so much more all provided by local nonprofits and businesses.

Music on the Patio provided by Savory Palette and Foghorn Brewery.

**10:30 a.m.** – Winners of the Ducky Derby will be announced. Claim your prize.

**11:15 a.m.** – Muffin Contest \$1 Blueberry Muffin tastes served up by Erica Crawford, Chamber of Commerce, Scott Collins, City Manager, Michael Wambolt, Tourism and Jeff Heller, City Council. Sample muffins made by local bakeries and vote for your

Maritime Continued on page 9

Vote Yes on Measure B-22 on November 8th



Our Waterfront and our Harbor are Morro Bay’s crown jewels, and it is critical their infrastructure be well maintained for the use and enjoyment of both residents and tourists. It has been years since any serious money has been spent on its piers, docks, seawalls, revetments, restrooms, and the Harbor Walk.

Measure B-22 is a \$120 per year (\$60 per half year) parcel tax that would appear on the 2023/2024 tax statements of Morro Bay property owners, and will be dedicated to repairing and maintaining the City’s Waterfront and Harbor infrastructure. Without needed repairs and maintenance there is a very real risk of unsafe conditions, catastrophic failures, and restricted access. Measure B22 provides the needed funding.

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Police Blotter



• **Sept. 25:** Police responded at 7:14 p.m. to a disturbance in the 400 block of South Bay Blvd. Logs indicated they arrested a 31-year-old woman for allegedly assaulting her boyfriend and child endangerment. At the same call, they took a report for suspected child abuse.

• **Sept. 25:** Police contacted a regular customer at 10 a.m. in the 1200 block of Embarcadero. The 32-year-old apparent bail jumper had two misdemeanor warrants and officers scooped him up and took him to the clink.

• **Sept. 25:** Police contacted a suspicious fellow at 8 a.m. in the 400 block of Quintana. The citizen of the year, 41, was arrested for suspicion of possessing illegal drugs and paraphernalia, it apparently being too early in the morning to be loaded.

• **Sept. 24:** Police responded at 11:30 p.m. to a suspicious subject trespassing in the 800 block of Monterey. Logs indicated a 41-year-old sneak with a snoot full was arrested for suspicion of being soused in public, which explains a lot.

• **Sept. 24:** Police responded to Mobil gas station in the 900 block of Morro Bay Blvd., at 9:34 p.m. and took a report of possible shoplifting, which is not part of the rewards program.

• **Sept. 24:** At 6 p.m. police contacted a 39-year-old woman at the stationhouse who had a pair of bench warrants. She was issued a third disappearance ticket and released.

• **Sept. 24:** At 2:45 p.m. in the 1600 block of Main, police contacted a wanted woman, 48, with bench warrants and — shock surprise — allegedly possessing drug paraphernalia for which she'll have some explainin' to do in court.

• **Sept. 24:** Police towed away a vehicle parked in the 500 block of Quintana for expired tags over 6 months, as the DMV simply must be paid.

• Sept. 24: Police contacted a suspicious subject at 1 a.m. in the 1000 block of Main. Logs indicated the popular fellow, 39, was cited and released on a \$75,000 out-of-county warrant, as he'd probably never make bail anyway.

• **Sept. 23:** Yet another scofflaw was contacted at 11:08 p.m. in the 1100 block of Allesandro. The 68-year-old woman was cited and released to catch another day.

• **Sept. 23:** Police responded to the 2800 block of Main for a report of a lost wedding ring, no doubt a test of for better or worse.

• **Sept. 23:** At 1:21 p.m. police contacted a suspicious subject in the 300 block of Quintana. One 29-year-old apparent swag-man had a warrant, got issued another summons and was let go. Another Einstein, 27, didn't fare so well. He had one local bench warrant and two more from out of the county and allegedly had drug paraphernalia in his pocket. You guessed it, he went to County Jail.

• **Sept. 23:** Yet another miscreant with a warrant, 28, was contacted at 1 p.m. in the 600 block of Quintana. He too had an invite to tea from the judge, was cited and released.

• **Sept. 23:** At 10:43 a.m. a woman, 46, came to the stationhouse to deal with a warrant. They gave her another ticket to ignore.

• **Sept. 23:** Police contacted a suspicious subject at 10 a.m. in the 300 block of MBB. The 37-year-old fellow was nicked for alleged possession of drug paraphernalia and being high as Hollister Peak.

• **Sept. 22:** Police responded at 7:53 a.m. to a disturbance in the 2600 block of Main. Logs indicated a 20-year-old hothead was arrested for suspicion of making criminal threats to his immediate family and brandishing a weapon. The apparent black sheep was taken to the lockup.

• **Sept. 22:** Police contacted a suspicious man, 36, at 1:33 a.m. in the 700 block of Embarcadero. He had a warrant and was taken to jail.

• **Sept. 21:** Police spied a suspicious subject waltzing down Coleman Drive at 8:30 p.m. Logs indicated the 73-year-old annoying flesh monkey was arrested for suspicion of being stultified in public.

• **Sept. 21:** Police contacted a suspicious fellow at 2:48 p.m. in the 1000 block of Front St. Logs indicated the tipster, 66, was arrested for allegedly flexing his beer muscles.

• **Sept. 20:** Police responded to the Inn at Morro Bay on State Park Road after some dingus left a firearm in a motel room.

• **Sept. 20:** Police responded to the 100 block of Island where some fiend stole a Chevy Silverado 3500.

• Sept. 20: Police took a report charging battery in the 200 block of Atascadero Rd.

• **Sept. 20:** A citizen came to the police station and reported being defrauded out of \$20,000. Logs indicated they have no investigative leads, and so another scumbag gets away with it.

• **Sept. 20:** Police towed away a vehicle from the 700 block of Bernardo for expired tags over 6 months, no doubt awaiting another stimulus check.

• **Sept. 19:** Police contacted a suspicious subject hanging around Rite Aid on Quintana at 10:30 p.m. The apparently forgetful fellow had four bench warrants and was issued a fifth and released.

• **Sept. 19:** At 10 p.m. police contacted a 37-year-old man in the 700 block of Quintana who had two bench warrants. He was taken to the Parkinson Plaza to meet Lady Justice.

• **Sept. 19:** At 4:30 p.m. in the 300 block of Quintana, police contacted another apparent resident of the creek bed estates, 48, who had bench warrants. She was cited and released.

• **Sept. 19:** Police responded at 4 p.m. to the Community Center in the 1000 block of Kennedy Way for yet another squat hanging around. The 30-year-old fellow was arrested for a felony warrant and a misdemeanor warrant, issue an infraction ticket and he'd hit the trifecta.

• **Sept. 19:** Police went to the 400 block of Rennel at 12:40 p.m. and contacted a woman, 58, who had three warrants and took her for a photo shoot with the County.

• **Sept. 19:** Police responded at 11:39 p.m. to the 400 block of MBB where some Plod ran into a car and then split the scene. The case was being forwarded to the D.A. for prosecution, and hopefully a hangin' judge will preside.

• **Sept. 18:** Police espied two suspicious swizzle sticks traipsing along at Harbor and Piney Way at 9:47 p.m. Logs indicated a woman, 22 and a fellow 23, were arrested for suspicion of being tanked in public and resisting arrest. According to logs, the apparent battleaxe allegedly assaulted two police officers as she was apparent suffering from Jailatosis, an aversion to getting locked up, and will be facing unspecified additional charges.

• **Sept. 18:** At 8:30 p.m. police got a report of a missing woman at the beach. Logs indicated the wayward ninny was found apparently safe if not entirely sound.

• **Sept. 18:** At 12:08 p.m. in the 400 block of Morro Bay Blvd., someone reported being assaulted. Police took a battery report to send to the D.A.

• **Sept. 17:** Police were called at 10:15 p.m. to a disturbance in the 100 block of Main. Logs indicated a 43-year-old louse was nicked for alleged abuse of his spouse, and wound up in the big house.

• **Sept. 17:** Police were called at 8 p.m. to the 900 block of Monterey where some dingus parked blocking a private driveway, so naturally police towed away the threat to the American way of life.

• **Sept. 17:** Police stopped a suspicious vehicle at 5:44 p.m. in the 900 block of MBB. Logs indicated the driver, 41, was arrested for suspicion of driving looped and scooped in the County B&B.

• **Sept. 17:** Police stopped a suspicious vehicle at 4:38 p.m. in the 300 block of Quintana for a code violation. Logs indicated the traffic stop resulted in the car being impounded, a case of gettin' DMV'd.

• **Sept. 17:** Police were called at 12:23 p.m. to the 300 block of Tahiti where some mulish humanicus dooficus violated a stay-the-hell-away order.

• **Sept. 17:** Police contacted an old friend in City Park on Harbor Street. The scofflaw, 37, had two bench warrants and was issued a third disappearance ticket and released to catch another day.

• **Sept. 17:** Police towed off another offensive parked car, this time from the 900 block of Front St., for not giving the DMV its pound of flesh.

• **Sept. 16:** Police responded at 9 p.m. to the 400 block of Quintana where they arrested a 35-year-old fellow for suspicion of arson, criminal threats, and possession of drug paraphernalia, his stash apparently already snorted away.

• **Sept. 16:** Police responded at 7:37 p.m. to the 2900 block of Ironwood where they arrested a 50-year-old Nodcock for alleged violation of a restraining order. He chilled in the cooler.

• **Sept. 16:** Police stopped a suspicious vehicle at 4:30 p.m. in the 1300 block of Main when they apparently saw the driver yacking on a cell phone. Police ran the 26-year-old woman driver's ID and low and behold, she had a bench warrant. The inattentive driver was issued a citation and released, no doubt itching to call her BFF ASAP.

• **Sept. 16:** Someone found something somewhere in some State Park and gave it to some police officer who did something with it.

• **Sept. 14:** someone found a necklace and gave it to police to try on.

• **Sept. 16:** Police stopped a suspicious vehicle at 1:30 p.m. in the 600 block of Harbor. Logs indicated the woman driver, 58, was arrested for allegedly "knowingly driving on a suspended license," also called not giving a hoot, and cited and released, presumably on foot.

• **Sept. 16:** Police stopped a suspicious fellow at 1:31 a.m. on Coleman Drive at Embarcadero. The sneaky Pete, 36, had a warrant and police actually took him to the hoosegow.

• **Sept. 15:** Police responded to the 2900 block of ironwood where a citizen said someone stole his wallet out of his car and the scamboogah has already used his credit cards.

• **Sept. 15:** Police responded at noon to the 2000 block of Sunset where a citizen said some scalawag vandalized his or her car. In the 2700 block of Cedar, a citizen said someone got into his or her vehicle and stole some undisclosed treasure. And, in the 200 block of Surf, another lucky citizen said someone got into their vehicle too, a case of hooligans running amok.

• **Sept. 15:** Police responded at 3:30 a.m. to the 400 block of Oahu where some 54-year-old tilted tool was engaging in nin-compoopery and causing a kerfuffle. He was taken to the gaol to sleep it off.

• **Sept. 14:** Police contacted a suspicious subject at 10:40 p.m. in the 600 block of Quintana. Logs indicated the model citizen, 39, was arrested for suspicion of being schwacked on drugs, possession of drugs and drug paraphernalia, which of course led to a resisting arrest charge when he apparently decided not to come along quietly.

• **Sept. 14:** A man came to the stationhouse and told police that some heartless fiend stole \$1,183.50 from his EDD unemployment benefits account, a case of reverse Robin Hood.

• **Sept. 14:** Police responded to the 1600 block of Main at 12:48 p.m. where they contacted a woman and arrested the bully for suspicion of making criminal threats and trying to dissuade a witness.

• **Sept. 14:** Police contacted a suspicious subject, 33, at 11:37 a.m. in the 300 block of Quintana at the Couch Potato furniture store. The apparent slacker had a bench warrant was issued a second one and released.

• **Sept. 14:** A woman came to police and said someone stole her purse the day before, while she was on the beach in Malibu, reason No. 237 for not going to L.A.

• **Sept. 14:** Police contacted a suspicious fellow, 35, at 7:45 a.m. in City Park on Harbor Street. Logs indicated the master criminal was nicked for suspicion of burglary, arson and "several lesser charges," and tossed into the dungeon.

• **Sept. 14:** Police contacted a suspicious fellow, 30, at 4:51 a.m. in the 1100 block of Embarcadero and, hallelujah!, they arrested him for a bench warrant.



• **Sept. 13:** Police responded at 7:35 p.m. to the 1000 block of Quintana at a former pet groomers, and took a report for assault with a deadly weapon, robbery and criminal threats. They will send the report to the district attorney to file charges, as apparently the victim and police know the suspect.

• **Sept. 13:** Police contacted a suspicious woman at 5 p.m. in the 1600 block of Main. Logs indicated the belle of the ball, 36, was nicked for suspicion of possessing stolen property and drug paraphernalia, her stash no doubt hidden where the sun don't shine and the cops won't search.

• **Sept. 13:** Police contacted a suspicious fellow, 37, in the 700 block of Quintana who had a bench warrant. He was hauled to the nick, and the judge will surely be happy to see him.

• **Sept. 13:** A citizen in the 1900 block of Sunset reported water being stolen, in this week's example of why we need SWAT.

• **Sept. 12:** A citizen in the 700 block of Pacific said someone broke into his garage and paddled off with two paddleboards and accessories.



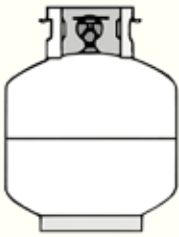
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# Community

## Cambria Scarecrow Festival is Back



On October 1, more than 400 imaginative and lively scarecrows will descend upon the seaside villages of Cambria and San Simeon for the 14th annual Cambria Scarecrow Festival. Scarecrows will line the streets and fill empty lots through October 31 allowing locals and visitors to enjoy scarecrow displays at their leisure throughout the month.

The displays are recycled and redesigned each year to keep it fresh and new and are created by community members.

“Plans for this year include the return of the very popular Art Sherwyn workshop that focused on art styles throughout the years and will be displayed in an outdoor art museum space,” said Paulla Ufferheide, Cambria Scarecrow Festival president. “Another addition this year is the Great Cambria Recycled Scarecrow Challenge where “junk” will be turned into scarecrow creations.”

The festival debuted in 2009 with 30 scarecrows and expanded from a one weekend event at the Cambria Historical Museum to a month-long extravaganza.

“The festival came about because October was a very slow month for businesses in Cambria,” Ufferheide said. “Now the businesses tell us that October is one of the busiest months of the year for them. We have heard from hoteliers that say they are



already booked up in October.”

Patti Rixman, in charge of the redesigned Friends of the Cambria Scarecrow Festival, added. “This year, we folded the previous scarecrow rental program into the Friends program. Now donations of \$100 or more will get you a free scarecrow in front of your business. That’s a lot of possible foot traffic in your door during this popular event.”

Salute to Scarecrows

The Festival culminates in a culinary feast at Cambria Nursery and Florist on Oct. 29. The Salute to Scarecrows! A Starlit Celebration of Cambria features fare and wine from an exclusive sampling of Cambria’s 30-plus restaurants and wineries.

“Not only does it benefit the Cambria Scarecrow Festival, a registered charitable organization, it is also the best party in town and sells out quickly,” Ufferheide said.

The Festival has been featured in publications as varied as the New York Times, Los Angeles Times, Chicago Tribune, ABC News.com and Huffington Post. The Travel Channel included it in the top 10 scarecrow festivals in the U.S. and Canada.

“We here in scarecrow-land are very excited about this year’s festival,” Ufferheide said. “It truly is a manifestation of this very artistic community.”

For more information, go to [CambriaScarecrows.com](http://CambriaScarecrows.com) or send an email to [info@cambriascarecrows.com](mailto:info@cambriascarecrows.com).

Photos by Kim Miller

## Takin' Care of BUSINESS

By Theresa-Marie Wilson

### Bank of America Donates to State Parks

The Central Coast State Parks Association has and additional \$20,000 in funding to work with thanks to a grant from Bank of America.

“San Luis Obispo County and the Central Coast have pristine natural environments that are becoming rare nowadays,” said Greg Bland, president of Bank of America San Luis Obispo, in a press release. “These State Parks not only preserve the land and sea but are also economic draws as more people from all over the region, state and nation recognize the importance of experiencing its stunning beauty firsthand.”

“Bank of America shares CCSPA’s vision to preserve these sites and support efforts for sustainable growth, access and educational outreach by supporting the Central Coast State Parks Association. Our \$20,000 grant will support CCSPA’s growth from a volunteer-based organization to having more paid employees in order to support our parks: keeping them clean, running their nature centers, and offering insightful tours to foster existing and future environmental stewards.”

Readers that would like to help the efforts of CCSPA can donate on their website at [centralcoastparks.org](http://centralcoastparks.org). When you donate \$35 or more, you can become a “Friend of CCSPA” and receive perks. Donations over \$35 will go to a State Park program of your choosing.

To learn more about Bank of America’s environmental efforts, including the bank’s goal to achieve net zero greenhouse gas

**Takin' Care of Business** Continued on page 10

#### Maritime From page 7

favorite.

**12:15 p.m.**— Astrolabe Demonstration by Gregory Anderson

**1 p.m.**— Wonderful maritime stories told by the amazing storyteller, Theo Moreno.

**2 p.m.**— Chowder Contest \$1 Served up our fabulous First Responders. Taste all 4 and pick a winner.

**3 p.m.**— Sea Shanties

**Food**

All food available for purchase is provided by local restaurants and nonprofits at family friendly prices. Oysters by Tognazzini’s Dockside, chowder and shrimp ceviche by Chablis Cruises, avocados stuffed with grilled albacore by Central Coast Women’s Fishing and hotdogs by Morro Bay Lion’s Club.

Thanks for participating in the event goes to the US Coast Guard, Morro Bay Harbor Department, Morro Bay in Bloom, Central Coast Dragon Boat Association, Sea Otter Savvy, Good Flea, Morro Bay Youth Sailing, Central Coast Fishermen’s Association.

And thank you to Ugly Mug and Paula Radke Art Glass for making the Very Special Trophy’s.

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Estero Bay New, American General Media and Moro Bay Tourism sponsor our First Annual Maritime Family Fun Day.

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Community

Takin' Care of Business From page 9

(GHG) emissions in its financing activities, operations and supply chain before 2050, go to [www.BankofAmerica.com/Environment](http://www.BankofAmerica.com/Environment).

PG&E Awards Scholarship to Poly Student

Pacific Gas and Electric Company awarded scholarships to 40 students from across its service area totaling \$250,000 from the 2022 Better Together STEM Scholarship Program. The PG&E Corporation Foundation funds the scholarships. This year, The Foundation is sponsoring 20 scholarships of \$10,000 each and 20 scholarships of \$2,500 each. The scholarships are given to students pursuing a degree in the Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) disciplines. STEM education fosters ingenuity, creativity, and experimentation, leading to new ideas, innovations, and technological advancements that can have global impact. This year's \$2,500 scholarship recipient from the Central Coast region is Victor Petrov of Union City, CA who is attending Cal Poly San Luis Obispo and majoring in Computer engineering. Scholarships are awarded based on academic achievement, demonstrated participation and leadership in school and community activities, and financial need. Scholarship recipients must plan to enroll in full-time undergraduate study for the entire 2022-2023 academic year and be seeking their first undergraduate degree at an accredited four-year institution in California, or at a Historically Black College and University (HBCU) anywhere in the United States. HBCU eligibility was added in response to a trend in applications from high-achieving students admitted to HBCUs, none of which are in California. Since 2012, the Better Together STEM Scholarship Program has awarded more than \$6.7 million to accomplished students. Charitable donations come from PG&E shareholders, not PG&E customers.

SLO County AARP Tax-Aide Locations

AARP Tax-aide's free tax preparation and e-filing services for seniors and low to moderate-income taxpayers is opened for the 2023 tax season at Church of Christ, 1001 Las Tunas Street at Kings in Morro Bay on Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Other county locations, addresses, directions, and operating hours can be found at [www.ccfreetax.org](http://www.ccfreetax.org). While you are there, the SLO County Tax-Aide program is also seeking volunteers for the 2023 season. Volunteers are needed for both tax return preparer positions, as well as client facilitators, and call-center positions. All volunteers will receive training and IRS certification. If you

- Are reasonably skilled using a computer
- Have previously used tax preparation or other software
- Like working in a collaborative team environment
- And want to "Pay It Forward"

Then you may find AARP Tax-Aide a rewarding volunteer experience. AARP Tax-Aide has been providing tax preparation service to Central Coast residents for more than 30 years. The approximately 75 local AARP tax counselors and other volunteers are trained annually, are IRS certified, and provide services across the county at nine preparation sites. In prior years the local Tax-Aide program in San Luis Obispo County prepared approximately 3,600 tax returns resulting in over \$ 3,000,000 in refunds being returned to the local economy.

Medicare Open Enrollment Choices

Health Insurance Counseling and Advocacy Program (HICAP) will sponsor free presentations for anyone interested in better understanding Medicare benefits. Information on the 2023 Medicare Annual Open Enrollment (October 15 through December 7) will be presented:

- Friday, October 21, 2022 at 10 a.m., Morro Bay Senior Center
- Saturday, November 5, 2022 at 9 a.m., Los Osos Library

HICAP offers free, unbiased Medicare information and counseling. HICAP does not sell, endorse or recommend any specific insurance products. HICAP services are provided through the local Area Agency on Aging. For more information on HICAP presentations, contact HICAP at 1-805-928-5663 or 1-800-434-0222, [hicap@centralcoastseniors.org](mailto:hicap@centralcoastseniors.org) or [www.CentralCoastSeniors.org](http://www.CentralCoastSeniors.org).

*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](http://EsteroBayNews.com).*

Events and Activities

By Theresa-Marie Wilson



Join the Cayucos Land Conservancy on October 10 for a Hillside Walk called "Stalking the Wildlife of Hollywood Hill" Hollywood Hill in Cayucos supports more than 67 species of birds, 18 of mammals and 12 of reptiles and amphibians. These range from the tiny Allen's hummingbird to massive mountain lions. This hike will take participants through coastal scrub, willow thickets and grassy hillsides as they observe the wildlife in these habitats.



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**[www.Carlaformayor2022.com](http://www.Carlaformayor2022.com)**

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Committee to Elect Carla Wixom for Mayor2022

FPPC #1452627



Community

As an avid birder and photographer, walk leader Joel Germond PsyD hikes the Cayucos hills and Estero Bluffs with his wife, Paolina, and their two dogs. He is also a ceramic sculptor and has dedicated his work life to helping people improve their mental health.

Bring water and binoculars (cameras optional) and wear a hat and sturdy shoes. Meet at the dirt parking lot, 100 meters from the end of Hacienda Drive (south of Old Creek Rd.). There is room for approximately ten cars. Carpools encouraged. This 3-mile, moderate-to-rigorous walk will proceed up the back side of Hollywood hill to the top and loop back. Two hours or longer. No RSVP required.

...

Morro Bay Active Seniors continue their Concerts in the Park series with two upcoming shows in October. The "Tunes at Tidelands" events are from 5-7 p.m. Saturdays, Oct. 8 and 13. Admission is free and you should bring a blanket or folding chair to sit on. There will be food and drinks available and MBAA members (55-over) will get a discount on libations. Music will of course be "the greatest oldies."

...

MARCIE BEGLEITER

What Will Remain

NOVEMBER 5 - DECEMBER 31

also showing - 'SMALL GEMS'

CAMBRIA ARTS

The Cambria Center for the Arts, 1350 Main St in Cambria, has a Call for Artists for the Gallery's next show: "Small Gems" with featured artist Marcie Begleiter. Small Gems will be limited to 8X8 and 12X12 canvases. The show: Marcie Begleiter - What will Remain, opens on Saturday, November 5, with a reception from 4:30 to 6 p.m. The exhibit runs through December 31.

Small Gems was a popular format for CCA's holiday shows in past years, and the Gallery is happy to revive it this year. Any 2-D medium that can be applied to a stretched canvas (unframed, finished on the edges) is acceptable for this show. All work must be original, with no part copied from other art or publications. All paintings and photographs must be signed. An artist may enter up to three canvases. For more information, go to cambriaarts.org/call-artists.

Contact the Gallery with any questions at: gallery@cambriaarts.org

...

Discover the connection between birds and native plants and which native plants would be best for your yard to attract birds. Learn what birds need from landscapes and how to best provide those needs. Master Gardner Peggy Burnhenn will also describe the best time to plant for the greatest success and how to maintain native plants to support birds in your area.

Burnhenn, a certified California Naturalist, oversees the native

plant garden in the 7 Sisters Demonstration Garden in SLO and works on the Arroyo Grande Master Gardener Helpline. She is a member of the California Native Plant Society and the Audubon Society. Her interests in gardening are to grow food plants for people and to support nature. She volunteers regularly at the Cal Poly Herbarium and as a docent for California State Parks, focusing her time at the Pismo Monarch Butterfly Grove and leading native plant walks. She is also a regular volunteer at the Morro Bay Winter Bird Festival. As a citizen scientist she has banded birds, collected spiders, counted butterflies and birds, and regularly posts her finds on iNaturalist and eBird.

Los Osos Valley Garden Club Zoom Programs are free and open to the public. If you have any questions, send an email to info@lovgardenclub.org. The easiest way to join this Zoom Meeting is to simply go to: bit.ly/3pAKlts. Meeting ID: 753 644 4586 Passcode: LOVGC. If you don't have a camera or microphone on your device, use your phone to dial in:+1 669 900 6833 US (San Jose).



...

Library Events

The following are free events brought to you by the Los Osos Library 2075 Palisades Ave, 805-528-1862. All library programs following current California and County of San Luis Obispo health guidelines.

- Paws to Read - Wednesdays, 3:30 - 4:30 p.m. Come and read your favorite book to Berkeley! She's at the Los Osos Library on Wednesday afternoons. School Age.
- Featured Artists - Through October Pat Watson's art will be on display. Panamanian Molas (reverse embroidery) in the display case.
- Storytime - Thursdays, 10:30 - 11 a.m. Stories, dance, and music for toddlers and preschoolers.
- Stay Young with Qi Gong! - Fridays, 9 - 10 a.m. (rain cancels)

Qi Gong is a system for physical, mental and spiritual development that has roots dating back thousands of years in China. It

consists of flowing movements and meditations that cultivate life force energy (called qi by the Chinese). The basics of qi gong are not difficult to learn and practice, and are particularly beneficial for older adults. Instructor Devin Wallace was certified to teach by qi gong master Lee Holden. Devin has taught at hospitals, fitness & yoga centers and also does private classes.

- E-Device Class - Wednesdays, 9:15 - 10 a.m. Bring your electronic device in and Diana will do her best to answer any questions you have.
- Read Together - Thursday, October 6, 5:30 - 6:45 p.m. Jonniepat Mobley facilitates the group reading of a play/script. No audition necessary. Come in, take a script and we will read the play aloud together.
- Book Discussion - Thursday, October 20, 5:30 - 6:45 p.m. The discussion group will talk about "The Bluest Eye" by Toni Morrison. No need to sign up ahead of time. Just show up.

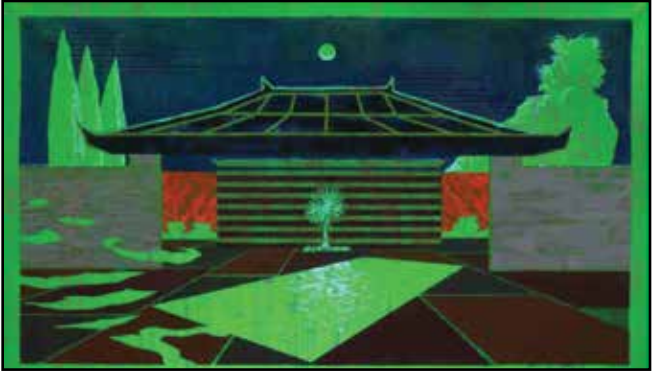
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Cambria Center for the Arts Theatre, 1350 Main St, in Cambria presents "Our Town" by Thornton Wilder October 7 - October 23 on Fridays and Saturdays at 7 p.m. and Sundays at 2 p.m.

First produced on Broadway in 1938, "Our Town" is considered one of the greatest plays in modern day theatre. Wilder takes us back to a time when life was simple, family was everything, and love got us through the difficult times. Directed by Bryce Prunty, the cast features some outstanding performances by Colin Toohey, Kate Kostecka, Hank Wethington, John Mackey, Laura Richie, Heather Babcock, Tim Gossman, Simone Lowrie, Randall Lyon, and Mary Alvaredo.

Tickets are available now, online, at the Cambria Center for the Arts website, Cambriaarts.org. Adults are \$25, CCA members \$20, and students are \$15. Seats are reserved.

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Cal Poly's University Art Gallery presents "Mixtape," an exhibition featuring 11 artists from the L.A. chapter of Tiger Strikes Asteroid, from Oct. 6-28. A gallery reception will be held from 5 to 7 p.m. Oct. 20, with an artist talk at 6 p.m. "Mixtape" is a group exhibition composed of members from the Los Angeles chapter of Tiger Strikes Asteroid, an artist-run collective of five

Takin' Care of Business Continued on page 12

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Community

Takin' Care of Business From page 11

spaces in New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, Philadelphia and Greenville, South Carolina. For the exhibition, each artist has selected a song to accompany their artwork, all of which are available as a Spotify playlist using the QR codes in the gallery.

The University Art Gallery is free and open to the public from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday. It is located in the Dexter Building (No. 34) on Cal Poly's campus. Image by Ricardo Harris-Fuentes.



The County of San Luis Obispo is inviting residents to learn more about rainwater harvesting and rain barrel installation. Residents are invited to register for a free Rain Barrel Basics clinic on Saturday, Oct. 8 at Farm Supply Company, San Luis Obispo. A panel of local experts will cover the essentials of operating a rainwater collection system, including rain barrel components, irrigation tips and techniques, and mosquito prevention. Interested community members can register for the event by contacting Farm Supply Company by phone at (805) 540-6107 or via email at askus@farmsupplycompany.com. This clinic is supported by the County of San Luis Obispo Stormwater Program stormwater@co.slo.ca.us.



The Cal Poly Music Department hosts andPlay duo — Maya Bennardo, violin, and Hannah Levinson, viola — for a talk and concert at 7:30 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 20, in Room 218 of the Davidson Music Center.

Titled "Collaborating with Technology," the presentation will feature pieces the duo commissioned by Bethany Younge, Lester St. Louis and David Bird, which showcase three different ways of incorporating technology into performance. Based in New York City, Bennardo and Levinson first played to an eager crowd on Fire Island in the summer of 2012 and have since commissioned more than 40 works.

andPlay's debut album, "playlist" (2019, New Focus Recordings), features world-premiere studio recordings of works by Ashkan Behzadi, David Bird and Clara Iannotta. "playlist" was recorded as part of the duo's artist residency at the Experimental Media and Performing Arts Center in Troy, New York, and was listed on Bandcamp's "Best Contemporary Classical: October 2019."

Recent highlights include a five-city tour in Sweden performing their Translucent Harmonies program, appearances at the Oh My Ears Festival in Phoenix, and the Re:Sound Festival in Cleveland.

The presentation is free and open to the public. For more information, call the Music Department at 805-756-2406 or visit the department's calendar website.



Join a free, fun filled, interactive art demonstration by award winning artist and poet, George Wm. Asdel at Art Center Morro Bay, 835 Main Street, Morro Bay on October 10 from 3 to 5 p.m. George will demonstrate how to draw animals and write haiku at the same time

For more information, contact Kirsti Wothe, mrswothe@yahoo.com or check out www.artcentermorrobay.org.

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



FREE ADMISSION

Morro Bay Active Adults 55+ presents

Tunes at Tidelands

a Concert Series at Tidelands Park

Morro Bay Active Adults 55+ is hosting a

FREE Concert Series September 22nd - October 13th at Tidelands Park in Morro Bay, CA.

Bring your family and friends and come join us for live music performances on the lawn.

Please bring lawn chairs and blankets! We will have drinks and food for purchase.



September 22, 2022

5pm - 7pm

Unfinished Business



September 29, 2022

5pm - 7pm

Cocktail Shorty



October 6, 2022

5pm - 7pm

Next Life



October 13, 2022

5pm - 7pm

Back Pages Band

Please contact Recreation Services Office at 805-772-6278





# Community

## Happy Birthday Jim



More than 100 people came together to celebrate longtime civic volunteer Jim Stanfill's 90th birthday at the South Bay Community Center last week. Colleagues, friends and family came from as far away as Pennsylvania, Washington, Idaho, Kansas and in California – San Jose, San Diego, Berkely, Woodland Hills and of course Los Osos, Cayucos, Morro Bay and San Luis Obispo.

Everyone shared a delicious meal prepared by friends Dave and Michelle Feldman and naturally the traditional birthday cake, which was arranged for and designed by friends Tammy and Tim Fiscus who also arranged for all the wonderful decorations.

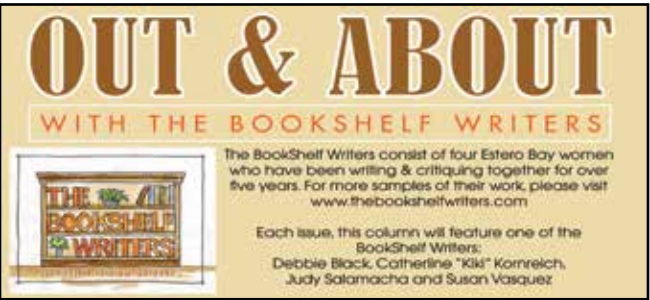
Rotarian friend, Rick Robinette emceed the evening and shared in the roasting. In addition to the gentle barbs, a lot of acknowledgment of Jim's contributions were shared including his involvement in the Los Osos Chamber of Commerce, Los Osos Cares and the Los Osos Community Advisory Council.

Jim closed the event with his three secrets for a long life.



First: "Keep Moving. When you stop you drop and that's when they shovel the dirt in - get a dog and walk it daily." Second: Keep engaged with and for people. "You have to be somewhere and doing something, you might as well do something that helps people. Church, Chamber and Service club are good places to start." Third: Keep having birthdays.

Happy birthday Jim from all of us at Estero Bay News.



## RV Camping in Your Own 'Backyard' Morro Bay State Park



Garth and 87-year-old Aunt Frances atop Black Hill  
By Debbie Black

Third in a series featuring local campgrounds, clever camping gear and gizmos, tried-and-true hacks, secret hikes, camp recipes, camping with pets and kids, things to avoid, and things you won't want to miss. Come camp with us in our own backyard.

Tourists are well aware of Morro Bay State Park. They've been camping here for years, and traveling great distances to do so. Now it's your turn to pack up your RV, drive a few minutes through familiar territory and find yourself a world away from work and home.

Getting a reservation takes patience. But it's worth it. The setting alone is enough — views of the marina, the back bay, the Morros, the forested golf course, egrets, herons, and falcons. If you just want a beautiful spot to chill, this is it. But if you want action, this can also be your base camp.

Hike Black Hill Trail, an easy/moderate climb for jaw-dropping views of the city, the bay, the ocean and hills (2.5mi roundtrip, 661' elevation, 2 hours). Or walk to the Heron Rookery. Stroll the Marina Peninsula Trail and Boardwalk, a level, accessible trail less than a mile long. Give yourself time to stop, sit, and enjoy the picturesque views of the marina, the Rock and all the bird life. Bring your leashed dog! Unlike most state parks, leashed dogs are also allowed on the trails in the Black Hill area.

At the marina across the street, rent a kayak or launch your own. Paddle out to the sand spit with your lunch. Or paddle to the Rock to see the otters. Check out the oyster farm in the middle of the Bay. Just be mindful of the tides and winds or you'll be battling your way back to the marina! Worse yet, low tide can leave you stranded, necessitating a long slog back through knee-deep muck, pushing your kayak. But at least from that day on, you'll have a great pathetic story for the campfire!

Out and About Continued on page 15

RE-ELECT MARILYN

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**Some candidates run on rhetoric. MARILYN RUNS ON HER RECORD.**

As a working mother, Marilyn Rodger put two kids through our local schools. This experience made her passionate about empowering *all* students to achieve their goals. Under her steady guidance, our coastal schools are gaining state and national recognition for academic excellence. Across our schools, you can see the results of the investments Marilyn has helped secure in order to give our students a leg up.

Marilyn has a proven track record as an experienced leader and effective champion for our coastal schools.

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- Highest performing district in the county
- Highest rates of post-covid learning recovery in the county
- 97% of students back to school full time
- California Distinguished School - *Del Mar Elementary*
- Leader in Me School - *Monarch Grove Elementary*
- State & National School to Watch - *Los Osos Middle School*
- First STEAM Middle School - *Los Osos Middle School*

**DELIVERING... Equity & Opportunity**

- 1st dual immersion school on the coast - *Baywood Elementary*
- Open enrollment schools, giving students equal access to their school of choice
- Enhanced transportation offerings help students and families access new opportunities
- New district wide elementary youth sports program
- Free Summer Experience program to meet the summer needs of students and families

**DELIVERING... Resources**

- Worked with our Foundation to build new innovation labs at all elementary sites
- Built a new community pool benefitting the residents of Morro Bay & Estero Bay
- Secured 25% pay increase for our teachers over 3 successful contract negotiation cycles
- Enhanced counseling across the district, including full time elementary counseling
- \$26 million in funding from PGE to offset impacts of eventual Diablo closure
- \$10 million from PGE to endow our district Education Foundation
- \$1 million in additional annual revenue after securing an agreement with neighboring Coast Unified School District to allow inter-district transfers
- \$77 million invested in Morro Bay High School through Measure D, delivering new state-of-the-art learning resources for our students

*"Marilyn doesn't just represent the coast. She delivers for the coast."*

-MARIA SLAVIN,  
5TH GRADE TEACHER

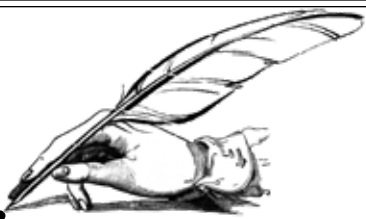
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# Letters To The Editor



## No on Measure B-22 in Morro Bay

This initiative [Measure B-22] for a proposed increase to property taxes was qualified for the ballot by three private individuals rather than City government. There is a huge advantage for private persons to put an issue to the vote as it requires only 50% plus 1 vote to pass, whereas if the City had placed it on the ballot 2/3rds yes votes would be required for passage. Another advantage of the initiative, if it passes, is that it can only be changed or rescinded by another vote of the people.

In the case of the people's initiative that was qualified for the ballot to ban RV sites on the waterfront, the City Council chose to thwart a public vote by adopting the RV ban ordinance into law rather than by a vote of the people, thereby allowing it to be changed or rescinded by the Council at any time.

The City's economic travails of 2007-8 radically contributed to a decrease in the Harbor fund when City Hall instituted a policy to charge the Harbor fund a fee, called "cost allocation" for any personnel, other than Harbor department staff, who spends any time working on harbor department land or harbor related issues, even indirectly, such as making out Harbor staff paychecks, or Parks and Rec personnel cleaning the harbor front restrooms.

The Harbor Director said "cost allocation" — charging enterprise funds administration fees — is an excepted policy, however there is no established standard rate to limit the amount that can be charged.

The cost allocation from the Harbor fund to the General fund has averaged between \$300,000 and \$350,000 annually, how is this figure calculated? As that amount seems excessive, re-assessing a lower charge could return to the Harbor fund a hundred to two hundred thousand dollars.

There are other negatives to the tax. It does not have an end date; it will be charged forever or only if the residents qualify another initiative for the ballot to rescind it.

The tax rate will be automatically adjusted annually for inflation with an increase every year as written into the ordinance. This onerous tax on property is premature at this time as other more equitable ways have not been publicly discussed that would not place the entire burden on residents, but rather on all benefactors of the harbor.

Nancy Bast  
Morro Bay

## Tribal Identity Theft

I am sending this to you (among many others) to spread awareness of the epidemic of tribal identity theft by fake Indians, race shifters, pretendians, and frauds. This is not just happening in Los Angeles County but it is happening all over the United States and Canada. It's a human rights issue that can no longer be ignored.

We need to educate our institutions, the federal government, and agencies obligated to interact with real Indians. Tribal governments, true Native American Indians, and our allies need to be involved. We need to have a verification policy and accountability in place for every institution offering services or grants to protect our people from resource theft and interference with our repatriation rights.

I am sending a link to a story I published on Medium. com. entitled, "I Know I Will Make Enemies, But They Won't Be Indians." It's just one episode of the experience I am having from ongoing abuse being heaped upon me by a pretender in Los Angeles. As long as he can do what he is doing in the dark, he gets away with more abuse. So, it's time to shine the light on the whole issue — not just him, but the epidemic this country is facing. See the story here: <https://nprotector.medium.com/ill-make-enemies-but-they-won-t-be-indians-50d4a090165> (I do not know if you have to have a Medium. com account to applaud or leave a comment, but I encourage you to do so.)

I don't have an attorney, nor can I afford one, but I am doing the best I can in this 4-year-long lawsuit. I have won several issues but he continues to use the judicial system to harass me. He won't stop. But, meanwhile, I have found that I am not alone. Many others are taking on the task of vetting the self-identification of these cultural thieves and frauds even to the risk of their careers and financial stability.

Then there are the tribes that are talking openly about this serious social issue. In the words of Ben Barnes, of Shawnee Nation, "It is time for righteous indignation." I agree. It is time to rise

up to protect our history, our stories, our identity, and our tribal communities. If you would like to see a wonderfully informative video given by staff at Michigan State University, I highly recommend watching the first episode of "Unsettling Genealogies," on youtube <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fyY0egN0cd4> It will enlighten you if not blow your mind. If you know like-minded persons who might like to be informed on this issue, please, feel free to pass this along.

Lorraine Escobar  
Tribal member and genealogist,  
Esselen Tribe of Monterey County

## Property Owners Shouldn't Foot the Bill

The November 8 election is just about here. With that said, Morro Bay has several major issues where we need to consider before voting. The one that really affects Morro Bay property owners is the \$120 added to already high property taxes [Measure B-22]. It is even indexed to inflation which means it will continue to increase. The taxes collected will go to supporting repairs on the Embarcadero created by visitors, that includes, road repairs, restrooms, beach clean ups, fire and police depts.

Question why does the Morro Bay City Council expect the property owners pay all this? Lastly, the city should start charging a parking fee at the "rock" to help pay for the use of our beaches, litter, restrooms, etc.

Garry Johnson  
Morro Bay

## Christianity is not a Religion

Regarding William Fritch's rebuttal letter in the recent Estero Bay News newspaper (Vol. 4, Issue 18): First of all my weather station office and service is a big dream that came true after high school and during community college during the last several years of my life because I have self-educated myself in a spiritual gift from Jesus Christ.

Christianity is not a religion, however, it is a relationship

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that I have had as a born-again believer since my mother’s 35th birthday in the year 1975 in Newhall, California in the Santa Clarita Valley. I have been blessed in so many ways by Jesus and am happy too.

In closing, I am witnessing to you through the love of Jesus Christ in a compassionate caring way, Mr. Fritch.

Scott Presnal  
Morro Bay

Trustee Election  
Mistake and Endorsement

Your article on local elections was very informative and essential to our democratic process. I would like to clarify, correct and endorse. I, Jim Quesenberry, a candidate for District#2 Trustee to the San Luis Coastal USD, am not campaigning for that seat. While I am on the ballot with a statement, I am endorsing Rob Banfield, and I am not the current incumbent. While I was on the SLCUSD board from 2010 to 2018, I had the good fortune to serve with Marilyn Rodger and Mark Buckman. Both have served the parents and community extremely well, therefore I am endorsing them. Each one is very knowledgeable about budget and policy. They are good listeners and very approachable. Finally, please vote for Measure C. Our elementary schools need renovation and modernization.

Jim Quesenberry  
Los Osos

Lithium-ion Batteries:  
What Don’t We Know?

As Morro Bay considers becoming home to the world’s largest lithium-ion battery energy storage plant, questions are being raised about the safety of such plants. Most of those questions center around the batteries’ ability to overheat and burst into flames, as the Moss Landing plant did again this week (9/20/22).

Unfortunately, it’s way too soon to tell what other safety concerns are yet to come from this relatively new technology.

We know that living under power lines can contribute to cancer and other illnesses. We know that living in buildings with cell towers on the roof can cause neurological disturbances.

But what does exposure to intense, concentrated levels of lithium-ion energy do to the human mind and body? We just don’t know yet.

Do the citizens of Morro Bay want to be the guinea pigs for this latest experiment on humankind?

And what about our wildlife? Do we want to wake up one day to find that the birds and monarch butterflies we hold so dear have decided to go elsewhere rather than live in the disruptive electromagnetic shadow of a battery plant?

There are still a lot of things we don’t know. Let’s give this new technology some time to prove – or disprove – itself before we jump in with both feet and don’t find out the consequences until it’s too late.

Jayne Scott  
Morro Bay

Trustee Correction

I am writing to correct an omission in your reporting about elections for SLCUSD Board of Trustees. In addition to the races

listed, in TA1, Morro Bay’s own Loren Leidinger is challenging incumbent Marilyn Rogers.

Loren is a non-profit leader, first with the Red Cross and now with CAPSLO and actually has a child in the school district, unlike any of the current Trustees. Interestingly, although this district is meant to represent Morro Bay, Rogers lives in Los Osos and recent redistricting included a sliver of this neighboring town in order to accommodate her potential re-election.

Another error in your reporting listed Jim Quesenberry as the incumbent in TA2. Evelyn Frame, the actual incumbent, is not seeking re-election. Quesenberry previously served on the board but was voted out in 2018.

Nicole Dorfman  
Morro Bay

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

Out and About From page 13



A shady pull-through campsite with hookups at Morro Bay State Park.

You can also paddle board or sail. Rent an electric boat from Estero Adventures or Bay Cruisers on the Embarcadero. Bring your own bikes for peddling to town or mountain biking on Black Hill or Cerro Cabrillo. No bikes? Want to try an electric bike? Call Cal Coast Adventures for rentals and ask about delivery to camp for multiple bikes. If, like my husband Garth, your idea of relaxation is golfing, there’s beautiful Morro Bay Golf Course right next door. Book your tee time online a week in advance, especially for Friday, Saturday or Sunday. At a minimum, hit some balls on the driving range then go back to camp for a nap.

Visit the Museum of Natural History. Even if you’re a local and think you’ve already seen it—visit again. You’ll be surprised by how much new material they have packed into this little museum. Great gift store too, where I often do my Christmas shopping.

Take a break from camp food and walk over to Bayside Café for lunch or dinner. The food is superb, the views are complimentary. Save room for their Boysenberry Crisp or super-rich Mud Pie. Dogs are welcome on the outdoor deck.

The campground has 30 hookup sites (#1-30), water and electric only. They’re all pull-throughs and can accommodate large rigs. Most have trees and a few shrubs for privacy. Dry camping sites (#31-134) are larger, have fewer trees and shared water spigots throughout. All sites have a picnic table, fire ring/grill, and asphalt pads—most require slight leveling. There’s a dump station (\$10) plus water fill-up for RVs. Maximum moto-

rhome or trailer length is 35’. When making reservations, note the length of the site pad to make sure your rig will fit. Firewood is available from camp hosts. Cell service is good. Limited Wi-Fi—best in sites near the ranger station. Five accessible restroom buildings have flush toilets and showers (tokens). Restrooms 3, 4 and 5 are newer and have hotter water.

This place is great for kids—flat, looping roads for biking, the Museum of Natural History, watersports galore, Monarch Butterflies, and a grin-tickling kids’ menu at the Bayside Café.

For family reunions, I rate this park a 5/5 for the “something for everyone” factor—more details in my extended article.

Make reservations at [www.reservecalifornia.com](http://www.reservecalifornia.com) up to six months in advance. RV camping at Morro Bay State Park is guaranteed fun, year round. Give it a try and I’ll bet you a big fat s’more that you’ll be booking your next reservation even before you get home. We’ll see you in camp!

For the extended article with more info on Morro Bay State Park Campground, go to [www.debbienobleblack.com/rv-camping-in-your-own-backyard](http://www.debbienobleblack.com/rv-camping-in-your-own-backyard). Next up: El Chorro Regional Park Campground

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October's Athletes of the Month

By Neil Farrell

Morro Bay High School's Athletic Boosters announced the MBHS Athletes of the Month for October 2022, the second installment of a new program to honor and bring attention to athletes at the school.

Ken Hotaling, Vice-President of the MBHS Athletic Booster's Board, said they picked athletes from four sports to honor in October, as nominated by their coaches. The athletes are: cross country runners Rheanna Dunton and Eli Waldman; tennis players Macy Mauch and Erica Sigmeund; girls' volleyball player, Rhea Sarrouf-Levine; and girls' water polo player Devin Downing.

Cross Country



Rheanna Dunton and Eli Waldman.

Dunton's coach, Chuck Ogle said, "Rheanna, a sophomore, has been the team's top performer in September. Rheanna was a CIF qualifier in the 3200 meter run as a freshman in track."

Coach Ogle said of Waldman, "Eli had a strong summer of base training and continues to run well. He lowered his course personal record by 55 seconds at the Arroyo Grande Big Ditch Invitational on Sept. 3, on a day when heat challenged all participants. Eli is our No. 3 Varsity runner."

Girls Tennis

Mauch and Sigmeund's coach, Taylor Bennett, said, "They are great tennis players, have positive attitudes winning OR losing, and are tremendous students!"

Girls Water Polo

Downing's water polo coach, Ryan Davis said, "Devin Downing has helped the Girls' Water Polo Team get off to a 10-4 start, including going 5-1 in the Mountain League. Devin is the centerpiece to the defense and is charged with guarding the other team's best player."

"This position can be a thankless position and Devin always handles it well," he added. "She is able to stay calm in tense and very physical conditions. She is a great teammate and a driving force behind our success."

Girl's volleyball



Rhea Sarrouf-Levine and Philline Asuncion

Girls Volleyball coach, Kate Yarbrough, nominated sophomore Rhea Sarrouf-Levine, the libero on the jayvee team for Athlete of the Month. Sarrouf-Levine is "a leader on and off the court. Rhea has a strong and dedicated work ethic and a compassionate heart. She leads by example with a cerebral approach to the sport and the team dynamic, always ready and willing to share positive and insightful ways for our team to improve and grow together."

The coach wanted to give a shout out to another key player. "I would like to recognize freshman Philline Asuncion for her leadership in practices and games. She projects modest confidence with her team and is quick to support them with positive words of encouragement and a shoulder to lean on which has made her well respected by her teammates and coaches."

"Philline puts in the hard work required of her without any hesitation or complaint. I am proud of the standards she sets for herself and the example she gives to the rest of the girls."

Morro Bay Celebrates Peace Day



Morro Bay Mayor John Headding readid the Proclamation of Peace at the Peace Day Celebration the Estero Bay United Methodist Church.

Every year when International Peace Day rolls around on September 21 special events are held to commemorate not only that day dedicated to peace in the world, but also peace in the community. This year a special reading and rededication of the Proclamation of Peace first issued by the Morro Bay City Council on September 11, 2018, occurred on September 22. People gathered around the peace pole at the Estero Bay United Methodist Church for the United Nations International Peace Day Observance.

With a welcome by Pat Mangione and opening prayer by Pastor Steve Poteete-Marshall, a history of Peace Day and the significance of having a peace pole was offered to the gathered crowd. Attendance included members of the community, M.B. Police Chief Jody Cox and Commander Amy Watkins, other pastors and faith leaders, and members of Yes We Can Peacebuilders.

Director Ruth Ann Angus spoke about the Peace Proclamation that designates the month of September as the City of Morro Bay Peace and Nonviolence Month and the Morro Bay Day of Peace came about. Angus said she worked for nearly two years planting the idea in the minds of the then members of the city council.

"Mayor Jamie Irons at the time joined me in writing out the elements of the document that begins with stating that peace is not merely the absence of war and violence," Angus said. "The document goes on to state all the points that the City of Morro Bay will endeavor to work for to foster a culture of peace. At this year's celebration Mayor John Headding read the Peace Proclamation to the audience. Then on September 27 at the city council

Peace Day Continued on page 19

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Obituaries

George L. Garrigues  
1932 - 2022



Morro Bay resident George L. Garrigues passed away on August 10 at the age of 90, after being diagnosed with brain cancer two weeks earlier.

A writer and retired journalism professor, George began his journalism career as a copyboy for the Los Angeles Times at age 15. He went on to work as a reporter in the 1950s and 60s, then held positions in public relations with the State of California in Sacramento and the International Labor Organization in Geneva, Switzerland. He taught journalism at the University of the Pacific in Stockton, Wayne State University in Detroit, Lincoln University in Missouri, and the University of Bridgeport in Connecticut. Throughout his career, George always found a local community theater where he could pursue his passion for acting.

After his retirement in the early 2000s, George focused on his own writing, publishing a biography of his journalist father, C.H. Garrigues, "He Usually Lived with a Female" (2006), "Los Angeles's The Palms Neighborhood" (2009) and a series of history books with City Desk Publishing (2014-2022).

George was an avid traveler. By the time he moved to Morro Bay in 2014 from Frazier Park, he had visited China, Tahiti, New Caledonia, Argentina, Russia and several other European countries. On the Central Coast, he was active in writers and meet up groups, swam regularly at Cuesta College, and enjoyed eating at the Hungry Fisherman. He also acted in the Pewter Plough Playhouse's production of "The Dinner Party" in 2016.

In April, George was joyous as he celebrated his 90th birthday in Morro Bay with family and friends. He will be remembered by all who met him for his acerbic wit, his love of language, exploration and adventure, and his kind heart.

He is survived by his children Lisa Gale Garrigues, Michael Garrigues and Rica Linders, sister Patti James, and grandchildren Tyler Linders and Dominique Fields. He will also be missed by his ex-wives Vivian Garrigues and Wanda Lau, both of whom remained friends with him until the end of his life.

A Memorial Celebration of Life for George Garrigues will be held on Zoom and at the Veterans Memorial Building in Morro Bay at 209 Surf Street on October 15, from 3-5 p.m. Anyone wanting to join by Zoom is asked to send an email to Lisagarrigues@gmail.com.

Robert "Coach"  
George Herron  
1953 - 2022



Robert "Coach" George Herron passed away at Sierra Vista Regional Medical Center on September 19, 2022, at the age of 69 in San Luis Obispo.

Growing up he was an exceptional athlete at El Monte High School where he played football, ran track, and wrestled.

In addition to his superb athletic ability Robert had a love for music and worked for the band Stormer in the Los Angeles area as part of their road and lighting crew.

At the age of 30 he relocated to San Luis Obispo County where he lived for the remainder of his life. He worked as a coach for Morro Bay High School for over 15 years. During his tenure he coached hundreds of students in football and track. He was incredibly proud of his athletes and would speak of them often.

Later in life, he devoted his free time to working at The Siren doing lighting for their live music.

Robert is survived by his longtime companion, Lynda Epperson Chauncey, his two daughters: Katie Bowers (Ryan) of Colorado; granddaughters Brooke and Abigail; Kelly Ortiz (Steven) of North Carolina. Robert is also survived by his Mother Beverly, two brothers, Ron Herron and Manuel Herron Jr, and two sisters, Cynthia Madrid and Christina Delgado. He was preceded in death by his father Manuel Herron Sr.

Respects can be paid during his celebration of life on Saturday, October 8, 2022, at 11 a.m. at The Siren 900 Main Street, Morro Bay.

Publisher's Note:

Coach Bob use to photograph sports for the Bay News back in the late 80' early 90's for us. He always enjoyed seeing his images of the players in the local newspaper.

Nancy Lee Burger  
1929 - 2022



Nancy Lee Burger passed away peacefully at her home in Morro Bay. She was 93.

A native of California, she was born in Ojai. She enlisted in the Navy in 1948, where she met her husband, Kurt Burger of Indiana. Later, they moved to Morro Bay. Nancy lived there on and off for over 65 years. She worked in the abalone industry, tending line for her husband and trimming abalone for the Leage family at the cannery and for Chuck Sites. She then worked for the County of San Luis Obispo where she retired.

She was very strong in her faith as a Jehovah's Witness.

She is survived by two daughters, Sharon of the Santa Margarita area, Tracey of Morro Bay and two sons, Nick of Morro Bay (recently deceased) and Kevin of the Lockwood areas. All siblings grew up in Morro Bay. She is also survived by six grandchildren and six great grandchildren. Nancy will be missed by her family and friends. In lieu of cards, please donate to the Central Coast Home Health and Hospice.

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**Madden Family Announce Plans for  
Football Center at Poly**



Cal Poly and the John Madden family announced plans for the John Madden Football Center that will be located on campus.

Players and fans of Mustang football have reason to cheer. Cal Poly and the family of alumnus and NFL Hall of Fame coach and commentator John Madden announced the John Madden Football Center, a new home for Cal Poly Football.

Cal Poly President Jeffrey D. Armstrong and Coach Beau Baldwin worked for the past few years with John Madden and his son, Mike, to envision a new headquarters for the university's football program. Thanks to the Madden family's support and engagement, in two years the center come to life beyond the south end zone at Alex G. Spanos Stadium.

The project was publicly announced by Virginia Madden, John Madden's wife and Cal Poly alumna, along with her sons, Mike and Joe, and grandson, Jack, at halftime of Cal Poly's Big Sky Conference football game Oct. 1 against Sacramento State. John Madden, who played football and baseball at Cal Poly in the late 1950s before embarking on a long coaching and broadcasting career in the NFL, passed away in December at 85.

The \$30 million project will feature 30,000 square feet of space over two stories that will include a locker room; hall of champions; strength and conditioning facilities; fueling station; team lounge; offices for coaches, equipment personnel and athletic trainers; and a team meeting room with tiered theater-style seating for 125 players.

"We are certain the John Madden Football Center will be a transformative facility that elevates every aspect of Mustang football," said Mike Madden. "It will be a centralized home for the entire football community — a state-of-the-art facility for current and future Mustangs, designed to develop their physical and mental skills and provide a place to gather with teammates to study or relax. Further, it will afford coaches regular interaction with current Mustangs, while also being an attraction to help recruit the best future players."

Designed to complement the Mission Revival architecture of Spanos Stadium, the center will welcome visitors into a spacious first-floor lobby complete with a hall of champions, including

comfortable furnishings and a collection of wall treatments and exhibits celebrating 100-plus years of great moments of Mustang Football.

"Cal Poly Athletics, and specifically the football program, is the front porch of Cal Poly. Investing in the program where alumni and the local community can be proud of their achievements will lead to a deeper engagement and nurture a pride that provides alumni more reasons to come back to Cal Poly," Armstrong said. "And as we planned the facility, Coach Madden was focused first and foremost on the health, well-being and overall experience of football players. This will be a facility for our student-athletes, designed and planned by the best coaches."

Baldwin said the new building will take the football program to new heights in its ability to develop players, both mentally and physically.

"It shows that we're not just an incredible university with a great academic history, but also that we're committed to building a championship-level football program," Baldwin said. "We had the opportunity to watch a few football games with John, and it was amazing to listen to him talk about the game — after all those years as a commentator, deep down he was still a coach first. Ultimately as a coach you're a teacher, and he wanted to do something special to really help our players develop."

The front entrance of the John Madden Football Center will face Mustang Memorial Plaza, which honors the lives of 16 players and the team manager who lost their lives in a plane crash on Oct. 29, 1960, in Toledo, Ohio. The memorial was a place very important to John, as many of his friends and teammates were on that flight.

Including the lead donation by The Madden Family, 80 percent of the funding for the new center has been secured. A total of \$6 million still needs to be raised. Those wishing to be a part of the project should contact Ashley Offermann, Senior Associate Director of Athletics for Development, at (805) 440-9792 or by email at [aofferma@calpoly.edu](mailto:aofferma@calpoly.edu).

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Peace Day From page 17



The Peace Pole made by the kids from the UMC Children’s Center.

meeting he again read the document rededicating Morro Bay to a community of peace and nonviolence.”

During the Peace Day celebration, a specially constructed peace pole made by the very young students from the Morro Bay United Methodist Children’s Center preschool classes was displayed and youngsters from the preschool joined in a circle of peace around the pole.

The Peace Day celebration concluded with the song “Let There be Peace in Earth,” and a reading by members of the Estero Bay Methodist Church and Yes We Can Peacebuilders from a book by United Nations Ambassador Jane Goodall entitled “A Prayer for World Peace.”

Prior to this celebration day, Angus visited with the children at the Morro Bay Parks and Recreation Kid’s Club to invite them to do a special art project commemorating International Peace Day. With help from her puppet friend, Moobert the Peace Cow, she told the kids how International Peace Day began and about this year’s theme which was “End Racism-Build Peace.” Moobert explained how everyone should be loved and accepted and not excluded based on the color of their skin, or their nationality, or the language they speak. Then all the children spent time coloring special line drawings that emphasized the concept of world peace.

Vet’s Hall From page 1

ty meeting place and venue hosting such things as the Annual Seaglass Festival, 4th of July events, the Portuguese Festival, weddings and parties, concerts and local advisory board meetings, as well as the home of Cayucos Art Association Gallery.

The building is owned by State Parks and leased to the County via an agreement that originally dates back to 1944 and includes the pier and beach.

It was closed in 2016 after an inspection found numerous structural problems, including a rotted out floor underneath the stage and roof beams that were not properly connected to the walls. The County closed it and except for a short time when it allowed the art gallery to reopen before being shut down again, it has been unused, however the County did set up large tents behind the Vet’s Hall by the barbecue area.

It’s taken a long time to piece together the project, which was complicated by the historic value of the building. “Since closure of the facility,” reads the County staff report, “staff has been working with California State Parks to reopen the facility for the benefit of the public. A historical resources report was conducted as part of this effort and the report determined that the facility met all four criteria required for listing in the California Register of Historic Resources.

“The California Office of Historic Preservation has since concurred with the report findings that the Cayucos Veteran’s Hall has historic significance at the local, state, and national level. In their letter of concurrence, the Preservation Officer wrote that the Cass Warehouse is a rare example of its type and that ‘it may be possible to demonstrate that the Cass Warehouse is the only surviving mid-late 19th Century maritime warehouse, still associated with its wharf, in the State of California.’”

County Supervisors, shortly after it closed, allocated some \$200,000 to get the repair project moving, a sum that is being repaid with the final funding.

The County hired Studio Design Group, Inc., in 2017 “to develop the construction documents according to the Secretary of the Interior’s standards for the rehabilitation of historic properties.”

This isn’t an easy fix. “The completed project,” the report said, “will raise the building’s foundation 2.5-feet above its current level to protect it against sea level rise, secure the structural integrity of the building, restore its historic fabric, enhance coastal access with ADA-compliant connections between the facility, the beach, and the pier, and most importantly restore this important cultural and economic resource to the community and the region.”

The County went out for construction bids last March and on May 5, they received two bids. The low bid was from JG Contracting of Nipomo for \$9.5 million, with a higher bid coming in from Edwards Construction Group, Inc., from Santa Maria at over \$9.6M.

Both bids were way higher than the County’s budget for the project, so staff was recommending changes to the work, called “Deductive Bid Alternates 1 and 2” that would drop the low bid amount by \$940,000, “bringing the contract award to \$8,560,000. Deductive Bid Alternate 1 changes the exterior wood deck boards from a high-performance engineered product to a less costly standard deck board that is easier to obtain yet still provides the durability and longevity required at the project’s exterior decks and boardwalk.”

The second deduction “changes the wood shake roofing ma-

terial from a custom oversized shake, requiring a complex sub-roof assembly to achieve required fire-rating, to a standard wood shake size that is readily available and fire-rated.”

The County added an \$856,000 contingency, which brought the total construction costs up to potentially \$9.41M.

The higher than expected bids meant finding more funding. “At time of bid,” the report said, “the project had a budgeted of \$4.5 million for the construction contract, so awarding a contract in the amount of \$8,560,000 was not feasible. Since that time, staff has worked to secure additional project funding from various sources to augment the project budget sufficiently to be able to move forward with award of the construction contract.”

Putting together all the funding must have been an enormous challenge, even with a project that everyone wants to see done.

The County had \$5.95M in hand for the project when the bids came in last May, including \$471,600 from the general fund, \$1.93M of State aid, and \$3.55M of “internal bridge loans from the Tax Reduction Reserve Fund,” according to the report. The total project cost is now estimated at more than \$11M, which meant the County needed to find another \$5 million.

The various funding sources include: \$4.43M from the California Resources Agency; \$345,000 from the State Coastal Conservancy; and \$705,000 from State Parks.

The project is also relying on \$471,000 from the County general fund; \$1M from the State Veterans Affairs budget; \$60,000 from the Cayucos tourism board funds; \$50,000 from Dist. 2 Community Donations Fund; and \$3.53M in bond financing that the County is putting together to pay for three big projects — a new co-located dispatch center in Templeton and the new Probation Department Office in SLO on Broad Street are the other two. Plans are to start selling those bonds this fall with an anticipated interest rate of 4.48%.

Of note, like with the rebuilding of the Cayucos Pier a few years ago, the community has stepped up, donating over \$435,000 to the project.

One other change is coming to the Vet’s Hall. The County is changing oversight for the building from County Real Property Services to Regional or Community Parks, “so that the pier, beach, and Cayucos Veteran’s Hall can be operated together,” said the report. “County Parks will work with the Cayucos Lions Club to operate the facility to generate sufficient income to operate and repay the debt. New fees will be established that will include higher rental rates for the much-improved facility and community rates to keep small local events affordable.”

County Parks is supposed to start repaying the debt in year three once it reopens. Of course there’s the pandemic to consider. “The pro forma assumes the end of COVID-19 restrictions prior to opening the Cayucos Veteran’s Hall and the ability to hold large events once again. The estimated shortfall in revenue to pay back the debt through FY 2025-26 is \$111,000.”

The staff believes the Vet’s Hall will need to be subsidized. “Revenues are estimated to be sufficient to make the debt payment beginning FY 2026-27, and a subsidy will be required to make debt payments through the first 2 years of operation.”

Overall debt on the bond financing is expected to be over \$1.5M a year, with the Vet’s Hall being the smallest of the three projects.

The County anticipates the repair of the Vet’s Hall to be completed sometime in FY 2023-24.

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News

welfare while mitigating to the extent feasible the negative impacts of development to agriculture.”

And the Coastal San Luis Resource Conservation District (RCD), which operates the 130-acre Chorro Flats area a ways further down the valley, had plenty to say as well. It’s concerns are in four categories — setting; flood hazard; loss of prime agricultural land; and property interest of nearby CSLRCD property.”

RCD agreed with the Coastal Commission about the value of ag lands. “The project sponsors must provide a convincing explanation for why the proposed facility is appropriate in this location and how such use is consistent with the stated goals of the voter-mandated policies of the Coastal Commission.”

RCD acknowledged the propensity for Chorro Creek to flood the flats and sometimes more. “This waterway has been known to periodically flood, sometimes in great volume, filling the entire bottomland with water for days. The proposed facility will need to be protected against such flood events, either through construction of levees or by raising the entire site above identified flood levels.”

RCD decries the loss of productive farmlands and calls for Pecho to mitigate this loss. “Such loss cannot be easily mitigated, but the project sponsors must provide some reasonable mitigation for this loss, however difficult that may be.”

As for its Chorro Flats storm basin, which RCD said was purchased using Federal monies, for the “purposes of wetland restoration and storm flow attenuation, and legal agreement enforce those purposes. The Pecho project proposes to cross the property with a new set of power lines.

“We were never consulted about this aspect of the project, and we find it inconsistent with our purposes and goals for the property. Also, as noted above, the property would be affected in unknown ways by the construction of this facility, particularly as regards flood potential.”

And no matter whether the CEC granted its NOI exemption, RCD said, “the project has many significant impacts upon a sensitive and highly valued environmental, ecological, and scenic resource of San Luis Obispo County and indeed of the entire State of California. The concerns described above must be studied and addressed satisfactorily.”

As for the neighbors of the project site, they too are none too happy about it. Charlene Bucis, who lives on nearby Canet Road, said, “My neighbors and I live at the base of Hollister Peak, adjacent to the proposed plant. I am requesting you stop the progression of even the thought of disrupting the cultural balance of nature and the Chorro Creek watershed,” Bucis wrote in a letter to County Supervisors that she forwarded to the CEC, “along with disrupting the possibility of Chumash artifacts buried in the area and contaminating the water supply for the surrounding properties.”

She continued, “The pond that Hydrostor is planning to build to cool the air, is planning to pump 351,918,950 gallons of water from the aquifer to fill their pond. Did you know that’s 1,080-acre feet!

“We all have wells out here. There will not be any water left for us after they take the water for their pond, and then ‘displace water’ in the deep caverns to hold the air they have collected. What condition will the remaining water for our wells be in after it is constantly ‘displaced’ just one acre away from where we live?”

She added that the neighbors just learned about the project and yet the company was already out there drilling holes. “Obviously,” she said, “this has been in the works for sometime, without our knowledge or input. The public was not made aware of the project until Nov. 23, 2021. The following week, there were already trucks with surveyors, surveying the area, and the following week there were drilling trucks out there from Gregg Drilling.

This has to have been in the works for a while for this much work to be started already.”

She said the plant would ruin their idyllic home. “This plant will destroy our agricultural base, along with the scenic integrity of Hollister Peak. Chorro Creek goes into the Estuary, and runs very close to the potential site. The Chorro Valley is historic on many levels.”

She added that her family has deep roots in the area. “My family and my ancestors are the original landowners of the San Bernardo Land Grant, which included Hollister Peak in the 1840s.”

While much of the original rancho has been sold off, she said, but the family remains. “Some of us still remain on the Rancho,” Bucis said, “we own a few acres, and we still maintain the Canet Family Cemetery on the hill on Canet Road at the base of Hollister Peak.

“Right now the view from the cemetery and from my home and all my neighbors homes that also live at the base of Hollister Peak is the beautiful, untouched, serene countryside that has been the same for thousands of years.”

Another member of the public, Christina Hardeman, said, “I have a vested interest in the property surrounding the new development being proposed. There is a privately owned cemetery within a mile of the proposed energy plant. There are very few of these left in the state of California. I am in the process of making this a historic preservation site. This eyesore will be a disservice to the families at rest there.”

EBN sought a comment from Hydrostor, given all the negative comments their project has received. Will Bartlett, a Hydrostor Associate, Business Development & Marketing responded via email:

“Thank you for reaching out. Hydrostor is currently in the process of assembling responses to data requests from California Energy Commission staff as well as addressing issues raised by the California Coastal Commission in connection with the project. We will provide further updates on our progress as merited.”

If readers would like more information on the Pecho Energy Storage Center, see Hydrostor’s website at: [www.hydrostor.ca/pecho-energy-storage-center](http://www.hydrostor.ca/pecho-energy-storage-center). The CEC’s webpage for the project is at: [www.energy.ca.gov/powerplant/caes/pecho-energy-storage-center](http://www.energy.ca.gov/powerplant/caes/pecho-energy-storage-center).

Shelter Opens From page 1

Living conditions are improved at the new site, in part, through updated medical care facilities, offering dog runs and outside play areas for both dogs and cats, and living areas for exotic animals.

“There is a substantial qualitative improvement to the animal housing environment and to those visiting to look for animals, Animal Services Manager Dr. Eric Anderson told Estero Bay News. “The old shelter was so cramped and depressing it was not inviting to people, which is who we need to appeal to in order to adopt out more animals. It also has capacity to implement places to take in large animals like horses, although that still needs to be built out.”

Depending on the size of the animal, up to about 50 dogs and 80 cats can be housed on site. A barn will be constructed adjacent to the new building in the near future to make it possible to bring in livestock, including horses, cattle, pigs, and small-hoof animals.

“Through the hard work of our staff, volunteers, and partner organizations, we were able to maintain a live animal outcome rate above 90% at the old shelter,” Anderson said. “However, the building itself became a physical limitation and restriction on the quality of animal care and welfare we could provide. With our new facility, we not only expect to continue our successful live animal



Government officials, shelter staff and members of the community gathered for the Animal Shelter Ribbon Cutting.

outcome rate, but to also provide a more humane and comfortable physical environment which will support both animal health and mental welfare.”

The Animal Services facility’s primary emphasis is on animal care, welfare, and adoption. Folks can stop by and meet cats, dogs, reptiles and birds in need of a new home. The facility is open Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Saturday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. It is closed on Sunday.

“We encourage people to adopt from a shelter rather than a



District 2 Supervisor Bruce Gibson and a puppy at the ribbon cutting for the County’s new Animal Services Facility in San Luis Obispo.

breeder or pet shop because there are so many great animals out there that need homes already,” Anderson said. “However, we’re not competitive — if someone finds their best match at Woods [Humane Society] or another shelter, good for them! An adoption out of a shelter is a win for all of us, and, more importantly, it’s a win for that shelter animal.”

Each of the seven incorporated cities within the county have a part in funding the project, which meets CalGreen Tier 1 standards for sustainable design with All LED lighting, a component for electric vehicles, and high efficiency air conditioning and heating.

“This facility is pretty much state-of-the-art for animal services facilities,” said Rob Staniec, county public works project manager, in a video interview. “I think it will serve the needs of the public and the department very well.”

This project is the first by the county delivered using Design-Build, a contractual method where the designer and contractor work as one entity under one contract with the county from

Shelter Opens Continued on page 23



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News

I feel an obligation to serve the community. It seems like part of the ethic of a democracy to step up to the plate to help take care of things. I am at a point in my life where I have time available as my children are all grown with families of their own. As both a good listener and a team player I feel my problem-solving skills would be a good fit for civic leadership.

For more information, send an email to [zara4morrobay@gmail.com](mailto:zara4morrobay@gmail.com).

Sarah Robinson

**Candidate Introduction**  
A third-generation Morro Bay resident, I graduated from Coast Union High and Cuesta Community College. My husband went to El Morro Elementary. His parents bought Harbor Electric in the late 70s and served the area for 23 years.



I am a professional server at Bayside Cafe. I take great pride in serving our long-time locals, newest customers, and returning tourists. I receive great joy in making customers happy and satisfied. I would like the opportunity to serve our great city. My goal is to bring balance to the city council, honesty to the residents, and support to the business community.

**Why are you running for elected office in Morro Bay?**  
As a Central Coast native, I am seeking your vote so I can bring fresh eyes to important local issues. It is important to have a well-rounded council to bring matters to light in a positive, precise, and thoughtful manner. Too many important issues such as sewer, water, land, and overgrowth are being glossed over. It's my mission to bring to light the importance of our very special environment that surrounds us.

By working together, we can make sure we are doing the right thing. I feel Morro Bay is on a fast track of expansive growth. This can take away the charming hometown feeling that so many locals and tourists expect when they come to escape the big city feel of huge infrastructure, eyesores of unthoughtful building heights and colors, and fast pace that Morro Bay is not. I believe we can continue to have planned growth with thoughtful awareness.

Let's consider the long-term effects of current and upcoming projects. Let's bring awareness to community members so we are all informed and up-to-date on decisions that affect our lives. We can do this if we work together in a thoughtful and peaceful manner.

For more information, send an email to [sarahsmithrobinson2022@gmail.com](mailto:sarahsmithrobinson2022@gmail.com).

Welcome Home From page 1

Museum, Mutt Mitt Estuary Program, take Cal Poly Lifelong Learners classes, guided bus tours around California with Dan Krieger and an occasional Rotary International Convention.

She enjoyed her neighbors at Judson Terrace, exercised four days a week with friends at Linda Gardner's swim aerobics at Sinsheimer Pool, attended Morro Bay Rotary on Tuesdays and watched her sports programs weekends.

So, on July 22 it was not the stroke that nearly broke her spirit, but the aftermath of frustrations and challenges that were totally out of Mary's control. It woke her up. She called 911 knowing it was serious. Her neighbor, Louise Justice, helped her gather her ID cards. Mary entrusted her with apartment and car keys. She requested the paramedics take her to Sierra Vista, but rules bound them to take her to the closest hospital, which was French Hospital. Emergency doctors determined the best procedure was available at St. John's, so she was transported another 2.5 hours to Oxnard.

When our friend, Jude Long, and I saw her Sunday, she was fully cognitive after the procedure with some facial droop that affected her speech and loss of movement on her left side. She had no choice when Maywood Acres in Oxnard became her care and physical therapy facility. And although her care was adequate, she was anxious and frustrated that she wasn't home. Her numerous visitors from home heard her say, "I can't live like this."

And although her daughter had daily updates with the caseworker to identify a facility in SLO/Santa Maria nothing was offered. Laura even made the trip from Texas to help after a couple minor seizures took her mother back and forth from Maywood to St. John's.

Pool friend Sue Fong suggested a GoFundMe and Linda Gardner created a 'Mary Support-Email-Tree.' John Solu, president - Rotary Club of Morro Bay said, "Mary has been a member and a champion of all things Morro Bay and SLO so her community of friends came out to be a champion for her. Through the Rotary donation portal, friends and community members donated in a big way to support Mary! Our goal was to reach \$5,000 and

we were surprised and thrilled when we hit that goal within five days and went on to raise more for our fellow Rotarian Mary!"

But as time lapsed and long-distance efforts from Oxnard were going nowhere, Mary's depression increased and her Medicare insurance for physical therapy was running out.

Then on August 31 the universe randomly introduced her friends to Nicole Pazdan at a barbecue hosted by Andrea & Kevin Klipfel. When Nicole heard Mary's story, she said, "I'll see what I can do." Nicole realized a kindred spirit, who needed help. Both are dog lovers and people dedicated to helping others.

The very next day Nicole texted she had found a place in Santa Maria. Paperwork was rapidly created and faxed by Laura and caseworker Virginia at Maywood Acres to secure what Mary's friends would discover was a healthcare vacuum of minimal SLO County beds available for Medicare patients. When that didn't pan out, Nicole found another, but without secondary insurance that option went away.

Meanwhile, Mary was adamant she needed to come home. One night Laura got the call that her mother refused therapy, food, and medication. She was faced with Maywood's recommendation of hospice care, which Mary would reject.

Nicole then presented another option. She had negotiated a workable plan for Mary to stay at Jaj Home Health Care in Los Osos plus Central Coast Home Health Care & Hospice would provide physical therapy three times a week. Mary was familiar with medical director, Dr. Steven Sainsbury, from listening regularly to the Dave Congalton Show on KVEC-Radio. She was pleased. And the fund already collected was at least enough to get her home to SLO.

She was to transfer Thursday, September 22. A pool friend, Beverly Gilbert, would borrow her daughter's van and pick Mary up. Cayucos Seniors provided a wheelchair on loan. Then two days before Laura called, despondent it might not happen. Although it was the family's responsibility to find transport for her mother, Maywood Acres would not release her unless Bev had a wheelchair accessible van they could roll her into.

Mary was a longtime subscriber of Rescue Me Coffee at Top Dog Coffee in Morro Bay. The new owner, Dustin Blom, was transitioning from a fulltime paramedic career with AMR, Santa Barbara County and clinical instructor at Allan Hancock College. He informed us it was a new California law that hospital facilities like Maywood Acres were bound to live by. He offered to call a company he had worked with in the past. He then made all the arrangements. Mary's trip home was to happen as planned. Beverly and another Morro Bay friend Ann Albright would meet her at Jaj and get her settled in.

October 2 was Mary's birthday. On transfer day, she joyously told Jaj's owner, Joe and staff, they would be amazed at the number of friends that would be visiting her. And the stream has been steady, including the Happy Birthday celebration.

Morro Bay's John and Christine McDonald Weiss, concluded, "Mary is thoughtful, kind, non-judgmental, and has great candor --- she tells it like it is! She has touched the lives of so many by being a good friend to the community. Right now, she has health challenges, which have temporarily side-tracked her service efforts. That said, with Mary's drive and determination, she will be back on track helping others."

Shelter Opens From page 21



the start of projects though completion, resulting in a collaborative approach and outcome.

"The Design-Build team we used here, the quality is good, and we are actually under budget," Staniec said "It's been a very effective method of delivery. Its been a long process, but the design and construction process, once the selection process was done, was seamless. It has been painless as far as construction goes. We have the quality that we require. This has been the best job that I have been on in my tenure at the county."

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2022

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3:30pm

Fun Run Registration & Pancake Breakfast starting @ 7am  
Costume Contest Announcements 2:45pm

Santa Maria & 2nd st. Baywood Park-Los Osos, 93402



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