

## City Says Storm Was a 500-Year Event



A look down South Bay Boulevard from State Park Road shows the depth of the flooding. Photo courtesy Cal Fire

By Neil Farrell

For over 40 years South Bay Boulevard, the sole direct pathway linking Morro Bay and Los Osos, flooded just about every winter at the infamous “Twin Bridges.”

In the mid-1990s, and after many years of trying by various government agencies, the City of Morro Bay finally built the Chorro Creek Bridge.

It's been smooth sailing ever since, until Jan. 8-9. That's when a major storm system blew into the Central Coast, indeed the entirety of California, and dumped nearly 5 inches of rain here in a little over 24 hours.

The storm wreaked havoc from San Miguel, where a 5-year old boy was swept away and lost, down into Santa Barbara County, which sustained extensive storm damage ranging from washed out roads, mud slides in Montecito to huge sinkholes that threatened to swallow entire homes.

The storm, which the City of Morro Bay said was equal to a once in 300-year event, left a swath of devastation and sorrow.

It was if the March 10, 1995 mega storm had recurred, as many of the flooded areas in Moorro Bay were also underwater in that monster storm that saw 13 inches of rainfall overnight.

### South Bay Boulevard Floods

And for the first time since Twin Bridges was replaced, Chorro Creek overflowed its banks and inundated South Bay

Boulevard at State Park road, completely closing South Bay.

That closure was coupled by a cascade of floodwaters from a swollen San Bernardo Creek that flooded Hwy 1 so high that water was flowing over the top of the concrete center divider, and washing across the westbound lanes and down onto farmland alongside Quintana Road.

Quintana was also closed, and after rock slides closed Hwy 41 out towards Atascadero, Morro Bay almost became an island, with no getting in or out, unless one wanted to brave the storm, drive over the Cuesta Grade all the way to Paso Robles and then over the hill on Hwy 46 West, then south on Hwy 1.

### Morro Creek Flooding

Morro Creek, normally a trickle of water that doesn't make it all the way to the ocean, became a torrent, that overflowed at the Main Street bridge.

That caused a major flooding event along the 1500-1700 blocks of Main St. The floodwaters overwhelmed several businesses along that stretch of Main Street including Wee Shack, Estero Bay Glass, Morro Bay Antiques, and Central Coast Cart & Scooter. Plus several people who live in that area were also evacuated — some by kayak piloted by volunteers — and had their homes damaged by flooding.

Public Works Director, Greg Kwolek told ESNB, “The flood was caused by a high volume of water in a short amount of time going to the creek.” He added that the water washed additional debris into the creek channel, “which certainly did not help. But

Flooding Continued on page 14

## The Battle for Pine Ave.



Los Osos resident, Kenyan Moothart, stands outside his Pine Avenue home and the wall of sandbags and railroad ties that were put out to save his and his neighbor's homes in the Jan. 8-9 storm. Photo by Neil Farrell

By Neil Farrell

The Jan. 8-9 storm that hit Los Osos caused much destruction and despair, as flooding overwhelmed homes, and a mudflow devastated homes in the Vista Court neighborhood.

But not far away a battle royal was also being waged against the rain runoff, bringing a slew of neighbors together in a pitched battle on Pine Avenue.

Kenyan Moothart, who lives in the 1800 block of Pine Ave., contacted Estero Bay News just a day after the storm to bring attention and give thanks to the small army of volunteers that came out to help save his home, and those of his neighbors.

The worst of the storm started around 11:30 a.m. Monday, Jan. 9, he explained. The street was already flooded and the water started entering his home and that of his neighbor's.

“There was about a 30-minute downpour,” Moothart said. “It turned Pine into a river.”

Pine Avenue — which is a straight, downhill shot from Los Osos Valley Road to Ramona Avenue and like most of Los Osos has no gutters or storm drains — has long been controversial; first in the 1990s when the local advisory council persuaded the County to do something about speeding traffic on what had come to be called, “The Pine Avenue Raceway.”

The County put in a series of speed bumps on Pine to slow the traffic. But that led to rain runoff being directed off the roadway and into some of the homes along Pine.

This recent storm was more of the same. Moothart said that day water entered his garage and was a few inches deep at his front door. Inside, the water started coming in under their kitchen door into the house, which they were mostly able to stop with a wet/dry shop vac. “Luckily,” he said, “we still had power.”

Moothart said within just a few minutes, people started coming out to help shore up the bump curbs along Pine, against the onslaught of water.

“It was awesome,” Moothart said. “People just showed up; neighbors from up the street, from all over the neighborhood,

Fight For Pine Continued on page 12

## PG&E Powers Through the Storm

By Theresa-Marie Wilson

The recent string of storms that roared through San Luis Obispo County and much of the state left many without electricity. Locally, PG&E was on the scene and behind the scenes working to restore power, although some in Los Osos had a longer wait.

SLO County is in the utility company's Los Padres region. During the height of the storm, Communications Representative, Carina Corral said PG&E had more than 7,500 personnel dedicated to restoring power throughout the service territory where more than 22,000 customers were without power.

“Approximately 80% of all customers have been restored within 12 hours, and more than 90% have had power restored within 24 hours,” Corral told EBN.

As of Jan. 17, crews had restored power to more than 2.7 million customers since the initial storm on New Year's Eve weekend.

Power outages were to be expected with the unprecedented winds and rain raging for hours on end. However, people living in the Cuesta by the Sea area of Los Osos were in the dark longer than most.



PG&E crewmembers on Highway 1 in Morro Bay use a piece of equipment called the Spider to set a utility pole in place. Photo courtesy of PG&E

“Our crews worked vigorously and safely to restore power as quickly as it was safe to do so,” Corral said. “During times of the storm, high winds, flooding, and soil instability issues made it unsafe for crews to work, which led to extended outages for some of our customers. There were also repeat outages, such as in Los Osos, caused by storm conditions.”

On Wednesday, January 4, some residents were without power for 19 hours. Then on Jan. 9, PG&E had to “cut power to Morro Bay and portions of Los Osos due to flooding of their lo-

PG&E Power Continued on page 12

## Moving Forward: Don Maruska, Making a Difference

By Judy Salamacha

In his latest book “Solve Climate Change Now, Do What You Love for a Healthy Planet,” internationally recognized master coach and our Estero Bay neighbor Don Maruska invites us to have joy in what we do, even have some fun and save some money, as activated “climate solvers.” He defines a ‘climate solver’ as an individual

or group that recognizes climate change is happening and ongoing; chooses to incorporate simple everyday modifications to their lifestyle; and challenges elected leadership to do more than talk about a healthier world for future generations.

“Collectively, we can make a difference,” Maruska said. He's on a mission to spread opportunities to anyone who will listen. Currently,

Moving Forward Continued on page 12

## City Damages Estimated at \$20 Million

By Neil Farrell

The big storm of Jan. 8-9 could turn out to be the costliest disaster in town history, after preliminary estimates of the damage to just City facilities runs into the tens of millions.

City Manager Scott Collins told Estero Bay News

the damage included “Harbor infrastructure, the Corp Yard [equipment, buildings, vehicles], old waste water treatment plant, storm drains, parks, trees, and roads.”

He explained that the City had been engaged in the extensive cleanup of the area on Main Street that was flooded, as well as “Atascadero Road

City Damages Continued on page 17

Chamber  
Addresses Storm  
Page 3



Police  
Blotter  
Page 8



Helping  
Hands  
Page 16





Injection Well Tests Out

By Neil Farrell

There’s some good news with the City of Morro Bay’s project to recycle its wastewater. Public Works Director Greg Kwolek said in a news release that the City’s first tests on injecting recycled wastewater into the ground to produce a reliable, drought proof groundwater source, protected against seawater intrusion were successful.

“The results of the Injection test,” Kwolek said, “which involved injection of potable water into the Morro Groundwater Basin via Injection Well No. 1 and monitoring of nearby groundwater conditions, will inform the design of the Indirect Potable Reuse (IPR) Recycled Water injection system.”

The test proved to the City that its scheme to pump tripe-treated and disinfected wastewater into the groundwater basin of Morro Creek will work. “The test,” Kwolek said, “successfully demonstrated the ability to inject water into the basin to protect against seawater intrusion and improve groundwater quality.”

How does one go about conducting such a test? Kwolek said, “The injection test was initiated on Dec. 6, 2022, with a controlled flow rate of 95-gallons per minute [gpm] being conveyed into the well. The testing was conducted until Jan. 4, 2023.

“During the test, water levels in both the injection well and the nearby monitoring well were recorded on an hourly basis. Water quality data were also tracked to [a] document the quality of the injected water and [b] determine the migration rate of the injected water from the injection well to the nearby monitoring well. Water quality data collected from the monitoring well on Dec. 20, confirmed the arrival of the injection water at that location, which allows the calculation of the migration rate through the aquifer sediments.”

The test results will determine the path forward. “These data,” Kwolek said, “will be useful in both future project planning and for permit acquisition through the Regional Water Quality Control Board. Finally, a series of water quality samples are being collected following cessation of the test to evaluate if geochemical changes occurred within the aquifer following the introduction of the potable water source [State Water Project water].

This means the City can now move on to designing more injection wells and installing the feed water pipes to hook them up to the Water Reclamation Facility treatment plant, officially known as the “Water Resources Center.”

“Next steps for IPR project,” Kwolek said, “will include the design, permitting and construction of the remaining injection wells and advanced purified recycled water pipelines.”

The injection wells would go in the northeast corner of the over 100-acre power plant property, close to Morro Creek.

“The IPR component of the WRF Program,” Kwolek said, “provides the City with a new water supply that will be available regardless of future hydrologic conditions, including climate change, and enables the City to improve the resiliency of its water supply portfolio to mitigate against future droughts and State Water Project infrastructure failures.

It will be the first new water source brought to the City since State Water arrived in the mid-1990s.

State water contracted deliveries have at times been reduced due mainly to drought conditions in Northern California. But the City is protected with an “insurance” allocation, meaning the City pays for double it’s 1,313 acre feet of water under contract, so that the deliveries have to be cut by 50% before the City loses a drop of its annual allocation. The WRF will enhance the City’s water supply.

“Having this local, resilient supply,” Kwolek said, “will provide water security for the City, reduce its reliance on Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta imports, and improve local groundwater quality.”

That recycled water will be pumped out of the ground again via the Morro Basin water wells at Lila Keiser Park. The City uses its former desalination reverse osmosis plant to filter the “fresh water” pumped from the Morro basin wells, then pipes it across

town to the Kings Street Water Tanks, where state water also arrives in town.

The filtered Morro basin water is blended with the City’s other water sources — including one well in Chorro Valley near Dana Road — to deliver a consistent quality of water to all of its customers.

But this won’t be a full-time water source, as the plan is to inject the recycled water only a few days a month to keep up the seawater block and supplement the supply.

So long as the State Water Project is being delivered, it will remain the No. 1 source of the City’s drinking water.

There could soon be a wild card thrown into this mix, as the Los Osos Community Services District is now investigating whether it can run a pipeline along South Boulevard and hook up with the Chorro Valley Pipeline (CVP) near Hwy 1.

Morro Bay owns the CVP and the County Flood Control District maintains it. The CVP delivers state water to Morro Bay and Los Osos is seeking to connect to it and get deliveries of state water to the South Bay.

Search for Little Boy Swept Away Storm Takes Two Lives



Kyle Doan, 5, who has not been found since swept away in floodwaters on Jan. 9.

By Neil Farrell

The Jan. 8-9 storm that caused widespread destruction from flooding, also claimed the lives of two and possibly a third person.

Search and rescue crews have worked daily since the storm to find a little boy who was swept away in floodwaters in San Miguel.

According to a Jan. 12 news release from Sheriff’s spokesman Tony Cipolla, “Sheriff’s search operations continued for missing 5-year-old Kyle Doan who was swept away by raging floodwaters on Jan. 9, 2023 near San Miguel.”

Little Kyle Doan and his mother were trapped by floodwaters from San Marcos Creek, which flows into the Salinas River. She was rescued but he was lost in the swiftly flowing waters. As of Jan. 20, he had yet to be found.

Doan was described as having, “short, dirty-blond hair, hazel eyes, is 4-feet tall, and weighs 52-pounds.” He was last seen “wearing black puffer jacket with a red liner, blue jeans, blue and gray Nike tennis shoes.”

Within days of the storm, an army of people had joined in the search, including Search and Rescue and Dive Teams from SLO County, Santa Barbara County, Ventura County, Sacramento County, Santa Clara County, and Kern County Sheriff’s Offices.

Members of the California Conservation Corps and community volunteers joined in the desperate search.

There have even been six, K-9 teams, members of the California Rescue Dog Association, three Cal Fire hand crews, CHP air operations, Drone Teams from San Luis Obispo County Sheriff’s Office and Grover Beach Police Department and members of the California Office of Emergency Services. And 120 members of the California National Guard also helped to find the boy.

“In total,” Cipolla said, “approximately 200 personnel are involved in the search.” As of Jan. 20, searching was still ongoing daily.

Photos of the scene from the Sheriff’s Department show searchers wading chest deep in muddy water strewn with debris, feeling along the waterway and looking under every log and rock in a huge swath of devastation.



Photo shows search and rescue crews wading through mud and debris in the search for Kyle Doan, 5, who was swept away in floodwaters up in San Miguel.

“The search,” Cipolla said, “is being conducted in extremely challenging conditions with mud and debris hampering the efforts. But this is a comprehensive effort to search every brush pile and area of debris.”

Meanwhile, in another storm-caused death, the Highway Patrol reported that at 12:30 p.m. Monday, Jan. 9, CHP got multiple reports of a vehicle with a female driver being overtaken by floodwaters on Avila Beach Drive, east of San Luis Bay Drive, according to a news release from the CHP in SLO.

“Roadway closures were previously placed throughout the area,” the CHP said. CHP and emergency responders tried to get to the car but couldn’t. Cal Fire deployed a swift water rescue boat to reach the vehicle,” a Ford Escape.

Rescuers found the woman driver still inside the car but she had already died. In a Jan. 20 news story in The Tribune, she was identified as Karen Buccat, 60 of Avila Beach.

Buccat worked in the family business, Buccat Fish, in Port San Luis and was very involved in the commercial fishing industry in PSL, according to the Tribune story.

And in Morro Bay, a 78-year-old man who had lived on a boat in dry dock on Main Street for many years, was found dead, his boat knocked off its stands presumably by floodwaters.

The man’s name has yet to be released pending notification of his next of kin and no cause of death has been announced.

Sewage Spills in Jan. 8 - 9 Floods

By Neil Farrell

The big storm of Jan. 8-9 caused flooding and wreaked havoc across San Luis Obispo County, including causing sewers to spill thousands of gallons and prompting the County Health



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Department to issue warnings.

Morro Bay Spill

The intersection of Atascadero Road and Embarcadero in Morro Bay got caught up in major flooding that occurred on Morro creek at Main Street when the roadway bridge over the creek became plugged with debris, backed up and flooded an area of about a square mile, several feet deep.

The intersection in photos shows several pieces of heavy equipment being used to build Morro Bay Water reclamation Facility Project conveyance system, covered in water.

The deluge overwhelmed the sewer system and sewage spilled out of a manhole.

“Due to heavy rains,” County Public Health Department said in a statement, “9,900 gallons of sewage was reported to be released into Morro Creek. The spill started at approximately 11 a.m. and stopped at approximately 11 p.m., Monday, Jan. 9.”

The City explained in a statement on the spill that this manhole was in an area subject to flooding.

“The area,” the City said in a news release, “is located in a flood zone with one of the lowest elevation points within the city. Flooding waters infiltrated into the sewer collection system causing approximately 9,900 gallons of highly diluted sewer water to overflow out of the top of a manhole into Morro Creek.”

The sewage mixed with all that runoff could be a health risk. “Rainstorm runoff,” the County said, “is known to transport high levels of disease-causing organisms such as bacteria, viruses and protozoa from the watershed and urban areas to the ocean. Such organisms carried into the ocean can cause skin, respiratory, and intestinal problems. Young children, older adults, and people with compromised immune systems are especially vulnerable to these waterborne pathogens.”

The County advised surfers, swimmers and others to avoid the ocean waters right now, especially surf breaks near the mouths of creeks, rivers, storm drains and “other runoff outlets that empty into the ocean. Anyone who inadvertently has contact with ocean water during this time should monitor for symptoms and contact their doctor if symptoms persist or are moderate to severe.”

Rising River Floods Templeton Pond

Templeton had a scary event of its own, caused when the usually dry Salinas River overflowed its banks and poured into one of the percolation ponds of the Templeton Community Services District’s sewer treatment system.

According to County Public Health on Monday, Jan. 9, “heavy rains caused the Salinas River to overflow into the percolation ponds operated by the Templeton Community Service District Wastewater Treatment Plant resulting in the release 300,000 gallons of treated sewage into the Salinas River, which flows northward through Templeton, Paso Robles, San Miguel and into Monterey County.

“The release occurred approximately 2,000 feet south of Vineyard Drive-Main Street intersection. The spill started at approximately 2:45 p.m. and stopped at approximately 5:45 p.m., Monday, Jan. 9.”

TCSD General Manager Jeff Briltz told Estero Bay News that the main treatment plant on the west side of Hwy 1 is where the primary and secondary sewer treatment process is done. The treated effluent — which has not been disinfected — is then piped to a series of seven percolation ponds on the east side of town near the high school and the juncture of Paso Robles Creek and the

Salinas River. The ponds feed into the river system underground, a process that avoids the strict guidelines for direct discharge of effluent into any body of water.

“The river rose really rapidly,” Briltz said. “We haven’t seen it rise this much since the facility was developed.”

The river water was spread out over a wide area, greatly slowing the current down. The river flowed into the most eastern of the CSD’s ponds. “The pond essentially went away,” Briltz said. He added that in about 3 hours the water levels dropped considerably and the pond was again unveiled. And by some small miracle it survived.

“We were very fortunate,” Briltz said. “We had little levee damage.” He added that the pond’s levee remained intact though it did have some erosion.

He said their issue wasn’t a “sewage spill” in the normal usage of the term. What they had was secondary-treated effluent, not raw sewage, which they believe was greatly diluted by the river water.

When the river dropped, the pond was still standing and full of water. How much of the effluent escaped when the river rose, he couldn’t say, but the pond was still full.

“It was not a traditional sewage spill,” Briltz said. “It wasn’t raw sewage.”

Given the extent of what was happening with the swollen river, he was amazed when he went back the next day. “I expected it to be a lot worse.”

San Luis Obispo Spill

The biggest sewer system in the county had the smallest spill, according to the County and this one wasn’t because of the rainstorm.

A blockage in a sewer main on New Year’s Eve (Saturday, Dec. 31) rang in a stinky New Year for SLO.

“Approximately 4,250 gallons of sewage,” the County Public Health reported on Dec. 31, “was released due to a sewage line blockage. The sewage release impacted a storm drain leading to the San Luis Obispo Creek. The spill started at about 5 p.m., on Saturday and was stopped at 6:25 p.m., the same day.”

The spill occurred in the 1000 block of Higuera St., which is near the intersection of Osos and Higuera Streets, near the heart of Downtown. San Luis Obispo Creek runs mostly underground through SLO’s Downtown, day-lighting near Marsh and Santa Rosa Streets and at Mission Plaza. From there, the creek runs free all the way to the ocean in Avila Beach.

The County was slated to start testing the ocean waters in Avila Beach after the New Year’s Day holiday and no further warnings have been issued.

Dirty Water Dangerous

Anytime sewage spills — whether from a manhole, an overflowing creek or river or a line blockage — the water is dangerous to human health.

“The County of San Luis Obispo Public Health Department advises the public to avoid ocean water contact during, and at least three days following, significant rainstorms — such as the recent storm.

“Contact with storm water while swimming or surfing may increase the risk for certain types of illnesses such as rashes, fever, chills, ear infections, vomiting, and diarrhea.”



Chamber Corner

Reflections on the Storms

By Erica Crawford, president/CEO, Morro Bay Chamber of Commerce

To be fair, the start of this new year is not as any of us expected. Buckets of rainfall, ferocious winds, and flooded creeks wreaked havoc on this community’s activities of daily living. Business owners all over town experienced an added layer of stress over top of recent baseline concerns about the rising cost of goods, a scarce labor pool, and the post-holiday winter “shoulder season.”



On Monday, January 9, business owners were also coordinating accommodation for stranded employees when flooded highways, county roads and local surface streets made central Morro Bay an island, cut off even from parts of itself with the flooding at Morro Creek. Restaurants and markets gave away inventories of perishable food items when the power cut off and restoration time was unclear given the partial flooding of the PG&E substation that was, thankfully, quickly addressed and resolved. Employees in the professional services industry were answering panicked client calls about insurance, SBA loans, and Red Cross vouchers. The business community was on overdrive.

The businesses along Main Street between Radcliff and Highway 41, carrying the baseline and extra stress detailed above, were pushed into fight or flight. Water, mud and debris flowed into and against their properties, fast. They did all they could to keep the flooding out, but water finds a way. Over two feet of water permeated some structures including storefronts, business inventory storage units, and homes. For some, damage and inventory loss estimates are in the hundreds of thousands of dollars.

A city Emergency Operations Center, or EOC, was activated to coordinate emergency resources and response right away, and the city issued an emergency declaration that was certified by the City Council at a public meeting the next day, Tuesday, January

Reflections Continued on page 4

# Bayside Cafe

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10. Morro Bay’s EOC coordinates with SLO County and State of California emergency centers, and various agencies including Caltrans, State Parks, and California Coastal Commission. The Morro Bay Chamber closely coordinated with the EOC to share on the ground information from businesses and to broaden the reach of EOC communications using our social media channels and direct email database.

City, County, State and Federal elected officials also rapidly spurred into action by communicating with community members directly to understand immediate needs, then translating those needs into actions. Elected representatives at every level continued to fight on our behalf and achieved a FEMA disaster declaration that unlocks funding for Individual Assistance (IA) recovery that includes support for businesses.

The City of Morro Bay provides essential public services and infrastructure to maintain a safe, clean and healthy community. City staff and elected leaders spurred into action to deliver on their mission. The Morro Bay Chamber catalyzes business growth and convenes community leaders and we, too, put on our raincoats and our rubber boots. Communication on January 9 was limited by power and internet outages. We leveraged our social media to share road closure and emergency information in as real-time as possible. We coordinated with the city’s EOC and we contacted insurance professionals, bankers, and local, state and federal elected officials for recovery resources. At a time of crisis, the Chamber does not look to see who is a member or who isn’t. We serve the community first and sent direct emails to every contact in our database, member or not. We walked our economic centers to find out what businesses needed.

The mirror is up in front of our community. We could use this opportunity to see only the good. There is, to be sure, so much good to see. Neighbors and strangers coming together to clean mud and debris, to open their homes to people unable to get back home, and dropping lunches off to cleanup crews. Numerous Go Fund Me and spontaneous fundraisers to help flood victims. Elected and city staff leaders engaged with victims and fought hard to unlock federal disaster funds for individuals and businesses. These parts of our community’s reflection in a mirror shine brightly.

However, focusing solely on these bright spots is sure to discount our chance to see that we want to change, and then take steps to actually change it. It’s been said, “Never waste a good crisis.” As superficially callous as this sounds, it could not ring truer. These atmospheric river and bomb cyclone storm events have exposed the vulnerability of our infrastructure. Decades-old storm drains, narrow culverts, a highway overpass that sits feet lower than the height of a flooded creek, and roads with new or larger potholes plus degraded docks on the harbor and crumbling revetments are among the reflections of our community in the storms’ rear-view mirror.

It’s critical for decision and policy makers to invest in resiliency moving forward. From the business perspective, these investments ought to be made from dividends of increased property, sales, employee and bed tax earned by finding a way to say “yes” to new and renewed investments by the private sector. There is a direct link between cash registers ringing and the pothole in front of your house getting filled; it’s called Measure Q. There is a direct link between cash registers ringing and a public safety officer coming to your home in an emergency; it’s called Measure E (and Q). And, there is a direct link between cash registers ringing and more people living in our community year-round; it’s called housing.

One of the Chamber’s core tenants is to fix problems and not assign blame. This approach removes emotion from reaction and shifts effort from finger pointing to rolling up your sleeves and getting into issues to find solutions. With a newly seated city council comes an opportunity to revisit community goals and objectives for the next two years. The Chamber has created a three-month limited series called “Roadmap to Impact” that gives attendees an inside look at three city departments: Public Works, Community Development, and City Administration. The series features moderated panel discussions with staff leadership and advisory and elected officials in these departments. Our intention is to provide facts and information about how these departments work to encourage fact-based civic engagement during the goal setting process. We are taking a good look at our community’s reflection in the storm’s mirror, and we invite the community to join us. Go to morrochamber.org/events to register for the series.

## Some COVID Testing Sites Closed



Testing for COVID-19 could be a little more difficult in the coming months. Community testing sites in Grover Beach, Paso Robles, and San Luis Obispo closed on January 20 along with many others across California following the loss of State funding. These no-cost community-testing sites were funded by the California Department of Public Health with operational support provided by local agencies.

“Testing remains an important part of preventing the spread of COVID-19,” said County Health Officer Dr. Penny Borenstein, in a news release. “While it is disappointing that our community sites are closing, I encourage residents to use rapid home tests or visit one of the other testing providers in our community. For those who have relied on these sites and need support lining up another option, I encourage you to contact our team — we are here to help you through this transition.”

Free rapid home tests are available from the U.S. government. Health insurance plans (including employer plans, Medi-Cal and plans through Covered California) are required to cover or reimburse the cost of eight rapid tests per month for each person on your plan. Many health care providers in SLO County now also offer COVID-19 testing.

County residents who need support accessing rapid tests or PCR testing should contact the Public Health Department online or at 805-781-5500. For those who test positive with a home test and do not have health insurance or can’t reach their regular healthcare provider within 24 hours, free COVID-19 telehealth appointments are available online or by phone, with treatment prescribed at no cost if indicated.

Treatment is important to lessen the impacts of infections for not only the infected person but also for their contacts.

Community testing sites have conducted more than 250,000 tests in SLO County since opening in early 2020, with some sites conducting more than 750 tests per day during surges. As home testing has become more widely available, usage has decreased to an average of about 30 tests per day.

“I am grateful to the California Department of Public Health for providing this service for more than two years, and especially grateful to the testing staff who have put themselves on the front lines to help our community stay safe through COVID-19 surges,” said Dr. Borenstein. “Your work has been heroic, and you have our community’s sincere thanks.”

For updates on COVID-19 in SLO County, go to slopublichealth.org/COVID19. Public health phone support is available at (805) 781-5500 Monday - Friday, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

## Hwy 1 Closed at Piedras Blancas

If you were thinking of driving up to Monterey on Hwy 1 through Big Sur, plan on changing your travel plans for the foreseeable future.

Caltrans announced that the Hwy 1 closure in San Luis Obispo County will continue to be at the Piedras Blancas Elephant Seal Rookery about 4-miles north of San Simeon, and even access to Ragged Point at this time is limited.

“A significant slide,” Caltrans spokesman Kevin Drabinski said in a news update, “one mile south of Ragged Point, at a location known as Polar Star, extends over both lanes of travel. The highway is impassable at this location and is expected to restrict access to Ragged Point from the south for several weeks to months.”

He had a warning to anyone who might think about getting past the slide area on foot. “It is not permissible or safe to go across the slide area at Polar Star on foot,” he said. “The public is asked to refrain from approaching the area surrounding this slide.”

With this past week or so of drier weather, Caltrans is assessing the Hwy 1 road conditions daily and will change or move closures as they warrant. Meanwhile, Hwy 1 is a mess again this winter and folks in Big Sur are once again cut off from the north and south.

The northern limit (from Carmel heading south) of the closure was slated to be moved to Lime Creek on Tuesday, Jan. 17, barring any more slides. It had been set at Deetjen’s Inn, which is just under 4-miles from Pfeiffer Big Sur State Park.

Caltrans was organizing convoys bringing supplies to Big Sur

but those are conditioned on the weather, road conditions and Caltrans’ ability to clear a path through the slide areas.

Road information and updates can be found on Caltrans Dist. 5 Social Media platforms: Twitter at: @CaltransD5; Facebook at: Caltrans Central Coast (District 5); and Instagram at: Caltrans\_D5.

The slide at Polar Star was slated to start being cleared with heavy equipment on Jan. 17 and would continue as weather permits.

To be safe, anyone who needs to head to Monterey or Carmel should probably just take Hwy 101 North.

Road information and updates can be found on Caltrans Dist. 5 Social Media platforms: on Twitter at: @CaltransD5; Facebook at: Caltrans Central Coast (District 5); and Instagram at: Caltrans\_D5.

To check on current road conditions, see the CHP Traffic Incident Information Page at: <http://cad.chp.ca.gov>. Get traveler information at: <https://quickmap.dot.ca.gov>.

## County Secures Money for M.B.-Cay. Bike Path

By Neil Farrell

Things are looking up early in 2023 for a long-sought-after, safe, bike lane connecting Morro Bay and Cayucos, as the State recently awarded a big grant to pay for it.

The so-called, “Cayucos-Morro Bay Connector,” would build a multi-use pathway on the west side of Hwy 1 from North Point Natural Area in Morro Bay to Studio Drive at the southern end of Cayucos.

On Dec. 15, the California Transportation Commission “approved a \$7.4 million grant that will fund construction of a multi-use trail segment connecting Morro Bay and Cayucos along the west side of Highway 1,” reads a news release from the County Public Works Department.

### Final Portion of Longer Trail

The overall “project” includes bike paths that already exist and that will connect with the new connector.

“The new 1.25-mile pathway will result in a more than 10-mile bike route, 4-miles already existing in Cayucos and more than 5-miles in Morro Bay.”

The new pathway will be incorporated into the California Coast Trail, and “create a safe pedestrian and bicycle connection between these communities where today, the path requires walking and riding on Highway 1 next to high-speed traffic.”

The project will include added parking, signs and striping on existing bike routes, the news release said. The new path itself is slated to follow along the existing bluff top overlooking Dog Beach, and will need several “bridges” to span drainage swales, and runoff channels, with the largest being a 150-foot long bridge over Toro Creek.

### Overall Route Laid Out

Looking at a map of the overall project’s route, the County starts the pathway at Morro Bay’s Cloisters Park, and follows the park’s existing bike and pedestrian trail to the Azure Dunes Beach Access.

From there the route turns onto Sandalwood Drive, and follows around to Beachcomber Drive.

At Yerba Buena Street the route turns right towards Hwy 1 and then left onto Toro Lane and up to North Point Natural Area, and onto the old Toro Lane.

That’s where the existing path meets up with the new one and head north on Studio Drive.

The route follows Studio up to Old Creek Road, where it splits with one segment heading over to the east side of Hwy 1 (Ocean Boulevard) and the other running up Studio Drive to the 24th Street Beach.

The Ocean Boulevard route connects with another bike path by the cemetery eventually leading into Downtown Cayucos.

Parking has been a sticking point with the project. The County’s project map denotes parking at Cloisters Park, North Point and at the southern end of Studio Drive. It also notes the parking at 24th Street Beach in the map.

The Studio Drive parking area referred to on the maps is the existing parking area, which would be restriped “to better organize that area and create a couple more parking spaces” according to County Parks and Recreation Planner, Elizabeth Kavanaugh, who has been working on this project for some 10 years.

### Giving Credit

County planner Kavanaugh was happy about the grant funding and credited the work of others. Kavanaugh said, “We owe thanks to San Luis Obispo Council of Governments (SLOCOG), the City of Morro Bay, and Caltrans for their continued support and guidance.”

One other agency, the Cayucos Sanitary District, should also get some credit. As part of its new wastewater treatment



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News

plant project on Toro Creek Road, the CSD purchased the Chevron Dog Beach property from Chevron so as to use one of the decommissioned, yet still existing, undersea oil loading lines for an ocean discharge pipe.

Once the necessary easements the CSD needed to finish its project were recorded, the rest of the property was deeded over to SLO County and the City of Morro Bay, which took jurisdiction over Chevron's Dog Beach.

The City has vowed to have it remain the only SLO County beach where dogs are allowed off leash. The big difference is that now it's in public ownership.

The CSD also deeded over a ranch property at Hwy 1 and Toro Creek Road to County

Parks, as well as a portion of the former Marine Terminal, where the CSD has a lift station.

Currently, Caltrans is in the midst of replacing the northbound bridge over Toro Creek, one of two major bridge projects going on at the same time on the stretch of Hwy 1 through Cayucos. Caltrans is also replacing the northbound Hwy 1 bridge over Old Creek.

**Politicos All Support It**

Local politicians and bureaucrats are in full support of the connector project.

For Dist. 2 County Supervisor Bruce Gibson, who just won a fifth term in office, it was a relief to finally have the project ready to move forward. "I'm beyond excited to see funding

Bike Path Continued on page 6



A bike lane will connect Morro Bay and Cayucos

News Briefs

By Theresa-Marie Wilson

Poly Students Help at Vista Court

In one of the best examples of Learn by Doing, students in Cal Poly's #CaliforniansForAll College Corps program assisted with cleanup efforts following storms throughout San Luis Obispo County.

More than a dozen students helped residents in the Vista Court community in Los Osos clean up their homes after they were damaged in mudslides from a storm that dumped up to six inches of rain in some areas of the county. In addition, students in the program are also pitching in with general cleanup and restoration efforts at First Fruits Farm and the San Luis Obispo Botanical Garden.

Cal Poly is one of nearly 50 state institutions participating in the statewide #CaliforniansForAll College Corps program, which provides 6,500 college students with service-learning fellowships over the span of two academic years to tackle statewide challenges in climate action, K-12 education and food insecurity. As part of their service, fellows will receive up to \$10,000 (including monthly stipends and an educational award at the conclusion of service), which can be applied toward their college education.

County Eligible for FEMA Assistance

In the wake of recent storms, San Luis Obispo County is eligible for FEMA assistance.

On January 17, the Major Disaster Declaration for the State of California (FEMA-4683-DR) for severe winter storms was amended to include SLO County for individual assistance, debris removal, and emergency protective measures. Residents will now be eligible to apply for Federal financial assistance and public agencies will be eligible to seek reimbursement for the removal of debris. Public agencies had previously been eligible for reimbursement for costs associated with emergency protective measures.

"We appreciate the support for our county and the assis-

tance this will provide our residents," said Emergency Services Manager Scott Jalbert in a news release, "this is a step towards recovery for those who have lost so much."

Residents who incurred financial losses due to storm damage are encouraged to apply for assistance as soon as possible online at [www.disasterassistance.gov](http://www.disasterassistance.gov) or by calling 1-800-621-3362. You can also apply for assistance by downloading the FEMA app in the Apple and Google store. This allows you to upload documents to FEMA directly and track the status of your application.

For individuals unable to apply by internet or phone, more options will become available in the coming days including a Disaster Recovery Center where you can apply for and get help from a FEMA representative.

Those who can't live in their homes currently due to issues with water, mold, mud, or inaccessibility, make sure you include this in your application.

Readers with questions should contact the County Office of Emergency Services at (805) 781-5678.

Register for Cuesta Spring Semester

The Cuesta College spring 2023 semester has begun, but students can add a full-term course through Jan. 29. A complete list of available courses is at <https://bit.ly/3CZV6TQ> and students can register at [bit.ly/cuestaregistration](http://bit.ly/cuestaregistration).

Launching this semester is the new Aviation Maintenance Technician (AMT) program in partnership with ACI Jet. The 18-month certificate program prepares students with the skills and technical knowledge they need to perform maintenance on aircraft in the aviation maintenance industry and to earn certification in airframe and power plant mechanics. Cuesta College's program is among the 20 AMT schools in California approved by the Federal Aviation Administration.

Cuesta students can now ride free on the San Luis Obispo Regional Transit Authority (RTA) bus with a valid student ID card. Check out [www.slorta.org](http://www.slorta.org) for bus routes and up-to-date schedules.

Cuesta is implementing virtual parking permits through license plate recognition this spring semester. No more stickers

or hanging tags required, simply enter your license information online. Parking permits are required on the San Luis Obispo and North County campuses when classes are in session. Semester parking permits can be directly purchased and managed online in the new portal on my Cuesta. Daily permits for guests and visitors can be purchased in the portal or from self-serve machines in all campus parking lots.

Cuesta College courses are available at three locations: the San Luis Obispo Campus, the North County Campus in Paso Robles, and the South County Center at Arroyo Grande High School. Classes may also be taken online and via dual enrollment through local high schools.

The spring semester runs through May 17 and Cuesta College also offers a variety of less-than-full-term courses that run between three and 17 weeks, as well as short courses that can be completed in two weeks or less. Course fees are \$46 per unit for credit classes and non-credit courses are free.

For questions regarding classes and registration, call (805) 546-3952 or email [register@cuesta.edu](mailto:register@cuesta.edu),

City of SLO Helps Homeless

The San Luis Obispo City Council approved \$425K in grant funding for programs and projects that will help house the homeless in SLO and create more affordable housing units.

The City's Human Relations Commission reviewed applications for Community Development Block Grant funding and recommended five of the seven applications received. Through the CDBG program, the City has approved \$64K for the 40 Prado Homeless Services Center; \$9,145 for the Rapid Rehousing and Homeless Prevention program through 5Cities Homeless Coalition; \$318K in funding for Orcutt Road Apartments, located at the former Maxine Lewis site (Housing Authority of SLO); and \$34K for CDBG Administration and Capacity Building at the City's Community Development Department.

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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# City Gets \$1.5 Million Grant for North T-pier Repairs

By Neil Farrell

The City of Morro Bay acknowledged being awarded a sizable grant to repair its North T-pier, after the president signed into law a huge spending package.

The City said it had been awarded a \$1.5 million grant as part of the \$1.7 trillion 2023 Omnibus spending bill that President Joe Biden signed into law while vacationing in the Virgin Islands.

Indeed, eyebrows were raised when it was revealed the 4,155-page bill had been specially flown out to where the president and family were vacationing in St. Croix, so he could immediately sign it into law.

But no matter how the bill came to be signed, Morro Bay will get a chunk of it after local Congressman Salud Carbajal put the request into the spending package.

Congressman Carbajal touted the money as needed to help the City prepare for the needs of the companies that won leases to an offshore area for a major wind energy facility.

The Federal Government wants to erect floating wind turbines totaling some 3 gigawatts of generating capacity, and then bring the power ashore — potentially to the Morro Bay Power Plant to connect with the state power grid.

The new Mayor was hopeful about the money. “The [North] T-Pier project will ensure safety in and around Morro Bay Harbor for our fishing industry, our citizens, and our visitors,” Mayor Carla Wixom said. “The project will also enhance the local and regional economic benefits provided by the T-Pier and harbor.”

But the money will cover only part of what the City has said it needs to fix the World War II-era T-pier. The City estimated the project at \$3.8 million and would replace old and broken pilings, electrical outlets and the pier’s fire suppression system.

What’s next? “Next steps in the funding process,” the City said, “include working with the Federal Government on a funding agreement and developing plans for the project.”

The City also expects to meet sometime soon with the three companies that won leases for the proposed wind farms to find out what facilities they’ll need to support their operations.

## Bike Path From page 5

coming for their long-awaited project,” Gibson said in a news release. “The connector will provide a unique opportunity for residents and visitors alike to enjoy our incomparable coastline. This project has it all — a chance to enjoy nature with healthy outdoor exercise, an alternative to driving a busy highway and a world class coastal access that will boost our visitor-serving economy.

Dist. 3 Supervisor, Dawn Ortiz-Legg, who now represents Morro Bay (after redistricting), said, “The ability to increase trail connectivity in SLO County increases healthy lifestyle options as well as boosts tourism. We appreciate the California Transportation Commission working with SLO County on all transportation grants.”

County Director of Parks and Recreation, Nick Franco, said, “Morro Bay and Cayucos are both popular destinations for many outdoor activities and this project will provide a safe and scenic non-motorized way to travel on the expanded California Coastal Trail between these two wonderful coastal communities.” County Parks will oversee the new connector trail.

Pete Rodgers, the Executive Director at the Council of Governments, said, “This project closes a gap in the pedestrian and bicycling network by connecting the communities of Cayucos and Morro Bay,” said Pete Rodgers, Executive Director of SLOCOG. “We couldn’t be happier to see this longstanding regional priority move forward.”

SLOCOG is a countywide agency that accepts and distributes both state and federal transportation monies to the local cities, services districts and the County.

**What’s Next?**

Kavanaugh told Estero Bay News that they hope the project would kick off some time in 2024 or early 2025, as there is still quite a bit of preliminary work to be done.

“The next step for this project,” she said, “is permitting and finishing the construction plans. We are working with a local engi-

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# Wet, Wild and Wonderful Weekend – Morro Bay Bird Festival Returns

Last weekend’s rain, wind, flooding, road closures and emergency alerts did not deter 692 avid bird enthusiasts (“birders”) from coming to town for the annual Morro Bay Bird Festival. After two years of COVID closures, attendees from as far away as Brazil braved the conditions to go on field trips, attend seminars and special events to celebrate the vast diversity of birds that winter along the Central Coast.

Field trips went as far north as the elephant seal rookery, south to Oso Flacco and east to Carrizo Plains. Ocean voyages were unfortunately canceled by the US Coast Guard due to 15-foot ocean swells, however all bay cruises continued throughout the four days of the weekend. Birders kayaked, bicycled, and hiked in the rain and wind, took photography classes, and attended seminars in Falconry and other programs offered by experts.

David Allen Sibley, preeminent bird book author and artist delivered a keynote address based on his most recent book, “What it’s Like to be a bird.” Two other famous bird book authors and ornithologists, Jon Dunn and Richard Crossley, completed a tri-lecta of experts that drew the large crowds, form more than 25 US states, to this year’s Festival. A banquet at Madonna Inn on Sunday



A group of Morro Bay Bird Festival attendees took kayaks to view birds in nature. Photo submitted

night celebrated the 25th Anniversary of the festival and honored five leaders who have participated in all 25 years of the event. A number of Morro Bay restaurants and retail stores also welcomed birders with discount offers for meals and services.

Committee planning for next year’s festival begins in March, anyone in the area that would like to be a part of this community event is welcome.

The Morro Bay Bird Festival said they thank the Visit Morro Bay Tourist organization and the Morro Bay Chamber of Commerce for their help and support.

## New Signs Installed

Work is now complete on a City of Morro Bay’s efforts to put out directional signage, leading tourists to places of interest.

The new, large, colorful signs are scattered about Downtown, the Embarcadero and other streets and point travelers in the direction of things like museums and of course Morro Rock.

Statewide Safety Systems of Nipomo got the \$200,000 contract to install up to 50 new signs, each with its own decorative sign pole. Some are full sized, while others are shorter but all

are big and easy to read.

Back in September the City said, “The project comes on the heels of engagement with the business community, Morro Bay Chamber of Commerce, Morro Bay Tourism, Public Works Advisory Board and the Planning Commission.”

In the photo is one of the short signs, installed on Morro Bay Boulevard in front of Distassio’s Italian Restaurant, corner of MBB and Shasta Avenue.

— Photo by Neil Farrell



neering firm to complete the construction plans. We hope both these steps will be completed early next year.” Cannon Corp., in SLO is doing the design work, she said.

The big grant should cover the costs. “As it stands today,” Kavanaugh said, “the \$7.4 million was the estimate to build this trail. I won’t know the exact figure it will cost to build until permitting and construction drawings are completed. Often times the permitting process changes a project and/or adds costs to a project. In addition, we are hopeful inflation will smooth out in the next year or so, which will help keep the cost of construction down.”

As for the bridge over Toro Creek, she said, “An approximately 150-foot long, free span bridge is proposed across Toro

Creek on the ocean side of Highway 1. And there are four to six smaller bridges or culverts over the site’s drainage paths that receive Highway 1’s storm water runoff. We are still working on these details.”

**Support Has Been High**

In polls on the project, the County reported that some 85% of respondents supported the project, which along with the new highway bridge over Toro Creek will make biking from Morro Bay to Cayucos much safer.

Serious cyclists who will likely continue to ride on the highway, will have more room on the new highway bridge and for more casual riders, riding above the beach is likely to be very popular.

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6

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Takin' Care of BUSINESS

By Theresa-Marie Wilson

Los Osos/Baywood Names New Board



The Los Osos/Baywood Park Chamber of Commerce kicked off 2023 with the installation of the newly elected board of directors and the election of their officers. Those elected and those chosen as officers were: Tom Cross, individual member; President Curtis Armstrong, Baywood Bed and Breakfast; President-Elect Annie Wahler, Kiwanis, secretary; and Josh Tucker, Tucker Law Firm, treasurer. Other Board members are Colleen Vecchetti, Movement for Life Physical Therapy; Gary Dove, Rotary; Marshall Ochylski, CSD; and Jim Stanfill, individual member. In February, the board will plan for the year's activities including a retreat to set dates and select chairpersons for the upcoming events with the first one being the annual awards dinner. Tentative plans for this event are for late March. The next ribbon-cutting and mixer takes place at Brightside Restaurant (formerly Nichols) at 1236 on LOVR near Fairchild at 5 p.m. on Thursday, January the 26.

Cambria Chamber Honors Citizen and Business of the Year

About 60 people gathered to celebrate the 2023 Cambria Chamber of Commerce Citizen and Business of the Year during their annual dinner and awards celebration on Jan. 17. Chamber President Mel McCulloch's presented a picture of the Chamber going strong after the pandemic stating that there are more than 250 members, and visitor numbers are starting to increase again. Vice President Oz Barron reviewed the year's activities by

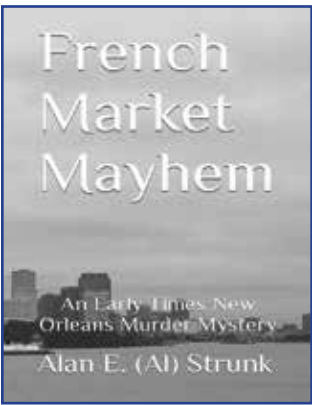


Steve Kniffen received the Cambria Chamber of Commerce Citizen of the Year Award. Photo by Lorianne Schwenk.

the Chamber, including a successful car show, participation in community events, the strong return of Hospitality Night, and the upcoming Art & Wine Festival. Sunshine Johnson received the Business of the Year Award on behalf of Robin's Restaurant. Lorianne Schwenk, chamber executive director, introduced her by speaking to the work owner Shanny Covey does through Robin's for the community and the world at large while also continuing to run an outstanding restaurant. Johnson continued that theme of collaboration and outreach in her thank you speech. "Community member Suzanne Kennedy gave a very moving introduction to Citizen of the Year, Steve Kniffen," Schwenk said "She addressed his strong generations of family, his leadership at the Sea Chest, and his deep commitment to the Cambria community's health and well-being. Steve Kniffen gave a rousing speech honoring those who have inspired him and sharing his award with those who lifted him up. "In all, the event spoke to how we are all stronger together when we collaborate and help one another," said Schwenk. "San Simeon Beach Bar & Grill provided a terrific dinner with their usual wonderful staff." For more information, contact the Cambria Chamber of Commerce at 805-927-3624.

Local Author Releases Murder Mystery

Los Osos resident Alan E. (Al) Strunk released "French Market Mayhem - an Early Times New Orleans Murder Mystery" taking readers on a trip through the dark side of New Orleans. Early Times, escapes his past in San Francisco with its romantic complications by fleeing to New Orleans. Now he finds tarot cards in his mailbox, on his kitchen bulletin board, and under his windshield wiper. He never meant to become a private investigator, but with the help of his



landlady Angélique Rolé, Early must unravel the mysteries of the Caribbean occult, serving up gore and ritual with hush puppies. Strunk experienced life in the French Quarter in the 1980s after receiving an MFA in theater from Tulane University. After graduation, he served as production manager at the Saenger Performing Arts Center and the La Petit Theater du Vieux Carre. He is the author of the historical novel "Pacific Sail" and the non-fiction journal "Quarantine Quickies - Pandemic in Paradise." "French Market Mayhem - an Early Times New Orleans Murder Mystery" is now available at Amazon.com. Strunk can be reached at pacificsaga@yahoo.com.

Free Tax Help for Seniors and More

AARP Foundation Tax-Aide of San Luis Obispo County will provide free tax services to seniors and low to moderate taxpayers for the 2023 tax season. Services are free, and while funded through the AARP Foundation, are available to all seniors and low to moderate income residents, not just AARP Members. Tax return preparation services are offered from February 1 through early April 2023. There are nine locations across SLO County including the Church of Christ, 1001 Las Tunas Street at Kings, Morro Bay. All sites are returning to in-person tax preparation except for the City of San Luis Obispo, which will again use the two-visit drop-off model. Social distancing protocols for the safety of volunteers, location sponsors, and taxpayers will be in place at all locations. Details about specific operations at each of our locations can be found at CCFREETAX.ORG. AARP Tax-Aide is offering an online self-booking appointment system, also at CCFREETAX.ORG. Taxpayers without a computer, tablet or smartphone can call the appointment line at 805-931-6308. Taxpayers are strongly encouraged to use the online appointment system.

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see her.

- **Jan. 2:** Police responded at 5:09 p.m. to a disturbance in the 800 block of Marina. Logs indicated they contacted an apparently upset fellow who was ultimately placed under a 72-hour timeout for being a danger to others. No word on what happens after his time is up.
- **Jan. 1:** At 7:07 p.m. the first scofflaw of the New Year, 27, was pinched in the 400 block of Quintana and housed on four bench warrants.
- **Dec. 29:** Police stopped a suspicious vehicle at 9:30 p.m. at Main and Quintana. Logs indicated the toasted driver, 27, was nicked for suspicion of being buttered.
- **Dec. 29:** Police responded at 12:37 p.m. to a motel in the 700 block of Embarcadero. Logs indicated three juvenile hooligans trespassed into a motel room “and damaged two robes,” a hangin’ offense in these parts.
- **Dec. 29:** Police contacted a suspicious fellow at 2:49 a.m. outside the police station. Logs indicated the fellow, 40, hit the trifecta — suspicion of being stoned on drugs, possessing drugs and drug paraphernalia. He went to the hoosegow to sleep it off.
- **Dec. 29:** Police contacted a suspicious fellow, 32, hanging around Mobile Gas Station in the 900 block of MBB at 1:41 a.m. The scofflaw had a bench warrant and was issued another disappearance ticket and released.
- **Dec. 28:** At 10:15 p.m. police contacted a suspicious fellow in the area of Quintana and Kennedy Way. The 30-year-old apparent skint had three bench warrants and was allegedly stoned on drugs, too, so he was off to the dungeon.
- **Dec. 28:** Police arrested yet another nefarious model citizen this time at 8:37 p.m. in the 500 block of Quintana. Logs indicated the 43-year-old schmoe had three bench warrants and drug paraphernalia, his stash apparent already shot.
- **Dec. 28:** Someone turned in a cell phone he or she found in the street at 625 Harbor, a possible case of time to upgrade anyway.
- **Dec. 28:** Police responded at 2:52 a.m. to a disturbance in the 900 block of Piney Way. Logs indicated they contacted a 43-year-old apparently stultified fellow and tossed him into the drunk tank to sleep it off.
- **Dec. 27:** Police responded at 9:12 p.m. to a disturbance in the 400 block of Quintana. A 38-year-old familiar fellow was nicked for suspicion of being schwasted on drugs.
- **Dec. 27:** Police stopped a suspicious vehicle at 3:50 a.m. in the 800 block of Atascadero Rd., reportedly for expired tags. When officers searched the car to take “inventory,” they allegedly found drugs and drug paraphernalia. The woman driver, 58, was also allegedly driving hammered and of course got nailed.
- **Dec. 26:** Police responded to a disturbance at 9:56 p.m. in the 400 block of Radcliff and arrested a 45-year-old raucous fellow and took the poor slob to County Jail.
- **Dec. 26:** Police responded to the 300 block of Quintana for a reported vandalism. Logs indicated they arrested a 43-year-old dude for an out-of-county warrant and don’t forget the vandalism that started all this nincompoopery.



Community

Events and Activities

By Theresa-Marie Wilson

Super Bowl Sunday is right around that corner, and it's a special one this year because the Martin Luther King Jr. Chicken Barbecue is back offering a great meal to help raise money for the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial High School Scholarship Fund. This year's barbecue is from noon to 3 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 12, at the Elks Lodge, 222 Elks Lane, San Luis Obispo. Each \$15 ticket buys a meal of barbecued chicken, baked beans, potato salad and garlic bread. Eat at the lodge or get your food to go and take it home to eat while watching the Super Bowl. Since 1968, this local organization has awarded 600 scholarships to college-bound teens graduating from area high schools. The annual community barbecue is the group's primary fundraiser. To purchase tickets in advance, or to buy a block of tickets, contact Matakovich at (805) 595-2526. Tickets will also be available at the door. In addition, desserts and other baked goods will be for sale at the event. The organization also accepts donations throughout the year. Checks made out to the Martin Luther King Jr. Scholarship Fund can be mailed to P.O. Box 1693, San Luis Obispo, CA 93406. Or, go to www.mlkfund.org and click on "Donate" to make a tax-deductible contribution.

SLOFunny kicks off 2023 with another lineup packed with hilarity at the Morro Bay Veterans Hall on Jan. 28. Hosted by Tom Clark, with Steph Clark, corporate comedian James Uloth, Featuring Robert Omotto and Headliner Mary Gallagher. Radio station 97.3-107.9FM The Rock returns as the non-profit sponsor. All proceeds from beer, wine and concessions go to support the station. The show is rated R



for strong language, adult content and Freudian slips. Showtime's are 6:30 p.m. or 9 p.m. Tickets are \$30 at the door and \$25 in advanced online. They can be purchased at My805Tix https://my805tix.com/e/slofunny-comedy-show-8 and at Eventbrite.com https://www.eventbrite.com/e/slofunny-comedy-show-tickets-501063021987?aff=eand



Several of Cal Poly's finest student music ensembles will perform traditional and contemporary chamber music at 7:30 p.m. Friday, Feb. 10, in Spanos Theatre on campus. "A Night of Chamber Music" is a free performance featuring students from a variety of majors. All are involved in at least one of the department's large, premier ensembles, which include Cal Poly's Arab Music Ensemble, Choirs, Symphony, University Jazz Bands, Wind Orchestra and Wind Ensemble. For more information, call the Music Department at 805-756-2406. The Alzheimer's Association California Central Coast Chapter is offering an educational class called Promoting Your Brain Health. Growing evidence suggests that you can keep your brain healthy by adopting key lifestyle habits. Learn how you can take care of your brain through diet, exercise, social engagement and cognitive activities. Join us for this no cost event at the Morro Bay Library (625 Harbor St. Morro Bay, CA) on Friday January 27, 2023 from 10:30 a.m. - 12 p.m. Contact Laura DeLoye for questions at ladeloye@alz.org or 805-342-0956.



Join California State Park Volunteer Norma Wightman on Saturday, January 28 at 10 a.m. to explore the beach and rocky shoreline of Estero Bluffs through the lens of geology. Learn about various land formations and see rocks that have been tortured by tectonic forces giving unique shape to this coastline. Attendees will observe the "bulldozer effect" of the subduction zone underneath the North American plate that creates a melange of rock types. Bring water and binoculars (optional); wear sturdy beach shoes and layered clothing. Heavy rain cancels. Meet in a dirt parking lot north of the Fig Tree and across the highway from a billboard. Look for the car with the Cayucos Land Conservancy banner. The parking area is 1.5 miles from the beginning of the two-lane start of Hwy 1 going north from Cayucos. Use these coordinates in your navigation system: Photo by Elliott Johnson.

Artist Cooper McDonnell's HAND MADE opening reception takes place at Cruise Control Cambria, 1075 Main Street, on Saturday, January 28 from 4 p.m.- 7 p.m. There will be a wine tasting by Darren Delmore of Delmore Wines as well as a communal wet clay experiment. Currently Cooper's body of work resides within that space between form and function, how each modality can compliment each other to an extent. And how they can be their own distinctive stand alone representations. HAND MADE is his most recent exploration in clay of that playful, joyful, and purposeful space between.



The San Luis Obispo Symphony's third concert of the 2022-2023 season, "Cello on Fire," takes place on Saturday, February 4 at 7:30 p.m. Tickets are available through the Performing Arts Center San Luis Obispo Box office at pacslo.org or by calling 805-756-4849. A free "No Ties Allowed" open dress rehearsal suitable for all ages takes place at the Performing Arts Center at 11 a.m. the day of the concert. Immediately following, featured soloist Amit Peled will read his book "A Cello Named Pablo." Children of all ages are invited to attend this fun and interactive presentation. "Cello on Fire" features the artistry of Amit Peled, performing Shostakovich's Cello Concerto No.1. NZ composer Douglas Lilburn studied under Ralph Vaughan Williams in the late 1930s, at the Royal College in London. Works by both composers, Fantasia on Greensleeves and Lilburn's Symphony No.2. Brahms' Haydn Variations opens the program and will be familiar to many. Ticket holders are invited to attend a pre-concert Symphonic Foray talk, which begins at 6:30 p.m.. This is sponsored in loving memory of Michael Fitzgerald.



Over 40 talks and workshops centered around social justice and equity is offered during Cal Poly's seventh annual Social

Events Continued on page 10

Advertisement for NHC (Natural Healing Center) featuring cannabis products and the Friends of the Farm app. The ad includes a QR code to download the app and a list of locations: Grover Beach, Morro Bay, Lemoore, and Turlock. It also mentions a promotion for first-time customers: (1) Promo 3.5g flower for \$1 or 15% off on their first purchase.

Advertisement for Flooring Discount Center, featuring waterproof, hardwood, carpet, and vinyl flooring. The ad includes contact information: 787 Harbor St. Morro Bay, CA 93442, Phone 772-2211, Fax 772-7747, and website www.fdcmb.com.



Obituaries

Barbara Musso  
1951 - 2022



Barbara Lynne Musso was born in 1951 to romantics Mary and Al Musso. She embodied the classic Italian spirit in her approach to cuisine, fashion, art, and affection. She always surrounded herself with beauty and love.

Inspired by her father, Barbara was ever-curious and undertook all of her interests with zeal. One of her first professional creative pursuit took her to Long Beach State University to study metalsmithing. After, she avidly pursued freelance jewelry work, and was involved in many shows and craft fairs. In 1992, she moved from Southern California to the Central Coast, which would become her home for the rest of her life.

Barb opened her boutique Poppy in Morro Bay in 1998. Her success there, as well as her passion for shoes, led her to open Sole Mia years later. Both businesses were greatly admired and rewarding contributions to her local community.

Barb was mother to two sons, Ian and Dylan, and was devoted to them. She was always encouraging and supportive, and was proud of the kind, thoughtful young men she raised.

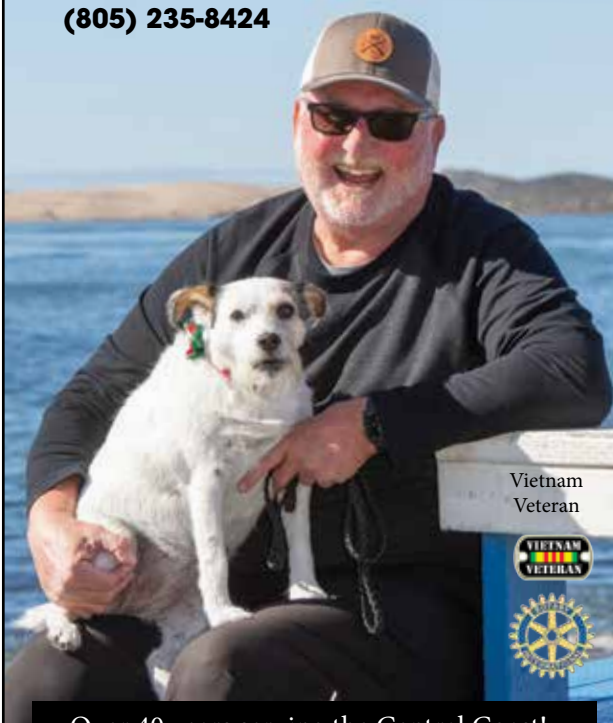
After many years of health issues, Barbara passed away peacefully in November of 2022, surrounded by family in her Los Osos home. She left a lasting, loving impression on many people. She will be dearly missed and remembered. A Remembrance Gathering will be held on Saturday, February 4 from 2-4 p.m. in the Clubhouse at Morro Shores Park, Los Osos.

On Stands and Online



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Patricia Boyles  
1941-2022



Patricia Boyles was born October 15, 1941 in Minneapolis, Minnesota to parents Frankie and Paul Skahen. She passed away at the age of 81 on December 18, 2022 at 10:30 p.m. in San Luis Obispo with family by her side. She is survived by her son Kenneth Boyles, daughter Amber Wigart, nieces Linda Childers, Shannon Keating and Debra Kraft, grandchildren Tristan and Isabel Wigart.

Patricia moved to Glendale, CA in the 1950s where she graduated high school and attended beauty school. She married Kenneth Boyles and moved to North Hollywood where she was a hairstylist for many artists and up and coming stars. She was an artist through and through, whether by hair or by the brush she loved to paint and create touching works. She loved art, anything artistic and loved art events like "Art in the Park." It is there that she raised her two children, worked and lived a full life with family, friends, coworkers and clients. Patricia was a loving aunt, taking in and encouraging her nieces and nephews to strive for a better life, showing them unconditional love then and for the rest of her life. She loved animals and took in several strays till their owners were found.

After visiting a friend in Morro Bay, Patricia fell in love with the sound of the foghorns, seals and constant waves and soon relocated with her daughter. Los Osos to Cayucos would be her constant playground and places she loved most. Patricia styled hair at Main Street Hair Company and then Catch a Wave from the early 90s until about 2010 when she retired. You could catch her at any of her favorite haunts including Dorn's, Pizza Port or feeding the homeless cats on the Embarcadero.

Patricia's piercing smile and joyous laughter was contagious to all that knew her. Through life's ups and downs, she was a fighter, a survivor and a pillar of strength. Always there for her family, their friends and anyone she knew in need. She was a constant beacon, a lighthouse of sorts for all those she loved going through rocky times. The memories of the many phone calls, letters and cards that she selflessly gave to many will be missed. "Aunt Pat," Mom, Grandma, Momsie Pooh, Patricia, we all miss you so much already and love you so dearly. We will miss the sweet ways you always reminded us that we were in your thoughts and in your heart. For that Pat, you will always be in ours and for generations to come a little piece of you will always shine though. She never liked goodbyes, so till we meet again "we love you more!"

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



KEVIN O'CONNOR, President

Community

**Events** From page 9

Justice Teach In on Thursday, Feb. 9. Hosted by the College of Liberal Arts and the Office of University Diversity and Inclusion, the Teach In features presentations by students, staff, faculty and community leaders, whose diverse voices will share their expertise in a multitude of fields, working to create a just society for all.

All events are open to the public, and attendees can register for sessions on a wide range of topics, including "Muted Voices in Virtual Meeting: How to Address DEI (diversity, equity and inclusion) in Virtual Meetings," "Artistic Activism to Disrupt the Single Story of Incarcerated Populations," and "ANDOR: Writing Resistance in the Star Wars Universe." Five presentation tracks are focused on specific topics to help attendees identify sessions that best match their interests, including pathways to Hispanic-serving institutions; diversity, equity and inclusion in engineering; reproductive justice; pop culture and media; and restorative justice: beyond incarceration.

Jennifer Teramoto Pedrotti, College of Liberal Arts associate dean for diversity and curriculum, noted how the event has grown to support audiences beyond Cal Poly's campus.

The Teach In culminates in a keynote session from Claude M. Steele titled "Stereotype Threat and Identity Threat: The Science of a Diverse Community" from 4 to 5:30 p.m. Steele is a social psychologist and a professor of psychology at Stanford University. He is best known for his work on stereotype threat and its application to racial and ethnic minority student academic performance, including his popular book, "Whistling Vivaldi: How Stereotypes Affect Us and What We Can Do." His earlier work dealt with research on the self as well as the role of self-regulation in addictive behaviors.

Learn more about the sessions and register at: <https://cla.calpoly.edu/teach-in>.

San Luis Obispo Repertory Theatre (SLO REP) brings the story and music of Johnny Cash to the Central Coast with "Ring of Fire - The Music of Johnny Cash." This unique, original musical includes more than two dozen classic hits – from "I Walk The Line," "A Boy Named Sue," "Folsom Prison Blues" to the title tune -- all performed by a multi-talented five member cast. From start to end, the story paints a musical portrait of Johnny Cash that promises to be a foot-stompin', crowd-pleasin' salute to a unique musical legend.

"Ring of Fire - The Music of Johnny Cash." opens Friday, February 10 and runs through March 12 with performances Wednesdays through Saturdays at 7 p.m. and Saturdays and Sundays at 2 p.m.. SLO REP is located at 888 Morro Street in downtown San Luis Obispo. Ticket prices range from \$40-\$60 and are available at [www.slorep.org](http://www.slorep.org) or by calling (805) 786-2440.

Join the Cayucos Library at 10:30 a.m. on Thursday, February 2 for "The Ten Warning Signs of Dementia," an interactive education session focused on lifelong brain health. Attendees will learn about the differences between normal brain changes due to aging and abnormal brain changes that could point to Alzheimer's or another dementia. Presented in partnership with the Alzheimer's Association California Central Coast Chapter. This program is free to attend, and no registration is required. Contact the Cayucos Library at (805) 995-3312 for more information.

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.



# Community

## Lady Pirate Athlete of the Month

Morro Bay High's Athlete of the Month for December (2022) is a standout for the girls' basketball team and one with a locally famous surname.

Girls' Basketball Coach Alex Engel said, "My athlete for December is Bella Musolff. She's our starting point guard and one of the leaders of our team. Bella is hard working, leads by example, and a great teammate."

"In December she averaged 8.3 points, 5.6 rebounds, 4.1 steals, and 3.6 assists. She does a little bit of everything and really makes our team successful on both ends of the court. We are also 5-1 so far this month."

Musolff is a famous surname around these parts, with the retired-Ed Musolff a teacher at MBHS for many years who was also the long-time women's basketball coach at Cuesta College. Bella is Ed Musolff's granddaughter.

The MBHS Athlete of the Month is sponsored by the Athletic Booster's Club and seeks to honor a student athlete from some of the less popular sports at Morro Bay High.



## Kiwanis Club of Bay-Osos Fundraiser for Vista de Oro

A fundraiser to help those affected by the Los Osos Vista de Oro disaster takes place Saturday, February 4 at the Grocery Outlet Parking Lot, 1130 Los Osos Valley Road. The Kiwanis Club of Bay-Osos will offer its signature tri-tip sandwich, chips, and soda for sale. All profits will be donated to the GoFundMe campaign started by life long Los Osos resident Diana Hammerlund. Drive thru meals will be served from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Annette Sheely, Kiwanian and a leading volunteer of Los Osos Cares, applauds the help those in need are getting from their neighbors. "The loss to our friends and neighbors is heart-breaking. Some have lost nearly everything and we're not yet sure when financial resources will be available for recovery," she said. "The people in this community are compassionate. They supported each other immediately. Within hours of putting out a plea for help on Support Los

Osos, around one hundred people were shoveling mud out of homes. Restaurants and loving people brought food for Vista de Oro residents and volunteers. There's a lot of work ahead but I'm grateful for the various fundraisers being planned. Those will definitely help."

Kiwanis Club member Annie Wahler takes the lead on this event. "This is what we do as Kiwanians, as human beings; we step up to help our neighbors in their time of need. We can only imagine their struggle, and the pain they are feeling as they pick up the pieces after the Vista de Oro disaster. It is our duty as neighbors to let them know they are not alone, and that we are here to help."

Kiwanis International is a community service organization. They meet at noon on Wednesdays at the Sea Pines Golf Resort, 1945 Solano Street in Los Osos. Guests are always welcome.

## Two Great Games - One Great BBQ

The Cambria Sons of the American Legion (SALs) invite you to a special BBQ on Sunday, January 29 at the Cambria Vets' Hall, 1000 Main St.

In addition to the fabulous BBQ, your ticket will provide an opportunity to win your choice of a cruise or \$1,000 cash, plus great door prizes.

At the same time, enjoy the camaraderie of watching the AFL and/or NFL Championship games. The AFC game starts at noon, and the NFC game starts at 3:30 p.m.

The cost is \$30 per person. This is the sole

SALs fundraiser for the year, and provides many services to our community, such as hot dogs at Hospitality Night, popsicles at the Pinedorado Parade, hamburgers and hot dogs at Memorial Day and Veterans Day celebrations, participation in the July 4th Picnic in the Park, as well as maintenance of the flags they post along Main Street and around the Vets Hall parking lot for every patriotic holiday.

The SALs are a group of service-oriented guys, that often organize additional dinners through the year as they become aware of community members in need.

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# Storm Recovery Guide



For Countywide Recovery information, visit [www.recoveryslo.org](http://www.recoveryslo.org)

**Residents Impacted by the Storm**  
San Luis Obispo County was added to the FEMA major disaster declaration (**FEMA-4683-DR**) and individuals are now eligible to apply directly to FEMA for assistance.

Residents who incurred financial losses due to storm damage are encouraged to apply for assistance as soon as possible online at [www.disasterassistance.gov](http://www.disasterassistance.gov) or by calling **1-800-621-3362**.

You can also apply for assistance by downloading the FEMA app in the Apple and Google store. This allows you to upload documents to FEMA directly and track the status of your application.

More ways to apply are coming soon, including in person assistance from FEMA representatives.

**FEMA Frequently Asked Questions**  
[www.fema.gov/press-release/20210318/fact-sheet-frequently-asked-questions-about-fema-individual-assistance](http://www.fema.gov/press-release/20210318/fact-sheet-frequently-asked-questions-about-fema-individual-assistance)

**How To Apply For FEMA Assistance**  
<https://www.emergencyslo.org/en/resourcesGeneral/DR-4683-CA-FLR003-Apply-for-FEMA-Disaster-Assistance-ENG-ESP-01.18.2023.pdf>

The County of San Luis Obispo Office of Emergency Services has posted recovery information for the public on their **RecoverSLO.org** website for those in need of assistance following the recent storm. This includes how to re-enter your home if you experienced damage, cleanup and recovery resources, and information regarding financial assistance.

If you have questions, call the County Office of Emergency Services at **(805) 781-5678**.

**Additional Support**  
**Los Osos Cares Resource Center** and **Womenade Estero Bay** are here to help those in need who have suffered loss due to flooding of homes or businesses (including funding immediate needs, utilities, food, clothing, gas vouchers, laundry needs, community dinners, etc.).

**For One on One Help**  
PHONE: **805-592-2701**  
EMAIL: [wecareinlososos@gmail.com](mailto:wecareinlososos@gmail.com) Or [locwomenade@gmail.com](mailto:locwomenade@gmail.com)

**Volunteer Opportunities**  
log on to [www.VolunteerSLO.org](http://www.VolunteerSLO.org) or [www.emergencyslo.org](http://www.emergencyslo.org).

**Businesses Impacted by the Storm**  
Business owners who incurred financial losses due to storm damage can apply for assistance through the Small Business Administration online at [www.disasterloanassistance.sba.gov](http://www.disasterloanassistance.sba.gov) or by calling **1-800-659-2955** or (TTY) **7-1-1** to request an application.

**SBA DISASTER ASSISTANCE INFORMATION**  
[www.disasterloanassistance.sba.gov](http://www.disasterloanassistance.sba.gov)





Community

PG&E Power From page 1

cal infrastructure,” the City of Morro Bay’s website stated. Power was restored about six hours later. Much of Cuesta By the Sea was without power for the third time on Jan. 10 for about five hours.

“During this recent storm, accessibility issues were the main factor for extended outages,” Corral said. “While some customers may have had their power restored sooner than others, it’s likely because flooding, debris, road closures, soil instability or other weather-related conditions prevented our crews from safely accessing power lines to re-energize the lines for those customers.”

While having no electricity was easily evident, behind the scenes work going on that required “out of the box” thinking and action was not as easily noticed.

“In one case in Los Osos [on Jan. 5 on South Bay Blvd and State Park Rd.], a crane hoisted our linemen to power lines made inaccessible by floodwaters,” Corral said. “This was an extensive process that took time to safely get the crane in place and allow our linemen to cut branches off power lines before they could be re-energized.”

Crews got creative again on Jan 11 on Highway 1 in Morro Bay.

“They utilized a piece of equipment nicknamed the ‘Spider’ that crawls saturated mountainsides – that our typical trucks can’t drive - carrying power poles,” Corral said. “It has the capability to dig a hole and set the replacement pole.”

Although the goal under these types of outages is to restore power as rapidly as possible, safety comes first and things have to be prioritized, such as making repairs to power plants and substations followed by critical areas like hospitals, life support centers, fire stations, and police stations.

“The process of the outage restoration [is] that we assess the damage and restore power when it’s safe to do so,” Corral said.

“The number of people affected by the outage is a factor in prioritizing the work, and safety will always be our top responsibility.”

Ultimately, downed trees were the cause of many of the outages locally during the two weeks of storms

“With the ground saturated, it won’t take much more rain or wind to topple trees, damage our infrastructure and cause more outages,” Corral said. “PG&E prepares by pre-staging crews and equipment ahead of storms to ensure we are ready to respond and restore power as quickly as it is safe to do so.”

While many turned to their cell phones to get view real-time outage information an PG&E’s alerts, another source is available. PG&E began publishing county-specific outage information throughout the day and is posting regular updates on its storm response at [www.pgecurrents.com](http://www.pgecurrents.com). To directly get to outages by county, go to <https://bit.ly/3IQ4nuG>.

Residential customers who go without power for 48 hours or even longer due to severe events like storms may qualify for the PG&E Safety Net program, which pays \$25 to \$100 automatically 60 to 120 days after the outage. The amount may depend on the outage length.

Residential customers living in an area where access to PG&E’s electric facilities are blocked due to mudslides, road closures or other issues are ineligible for a Storm Inconvenience Payment.

Since a State of Emergency in California was declared following the storms, PG&E’s consumer protections are in effect for impacted customers. PG&E will:

- Stop estimated billing for impacted customers while they are evacuated from their homes or businesses.
- Stop billing customers whose homes or businesses were destroyed by the winter storms.
- Allow customers who apply for low-income programs like CARE/FERA to automatically participate. (Specifically, PG&E

will not require the proof of income documents that are normally needed.)

• For homes or businesses destroyed by the storms, PG&E will not require customers to pay a deposit when electric or gas power restarts after the property is rebuilt.

As a reminder for future storms:

- Never touch downed wires: If you see a downed power line, assume it is energized and extremely dangerous. Do not touch or try to move it — and keep children and animals away. Report downed power lines immediately by calling 9-1-1 and then PG&E at 1-800-743-5002.
- Use generators safely: Customers with standby electric generators should ensure they are properly installed by a licensed electrician in a well-ventilated area. Improperly installed generators pose a significant danger to customers, as well as crews working on powerlines. If using portable generators, be sure they are in a well-ventilated area.
- Use flashlights, not candles: During a power outage, use battery-operated flashlights and not candles, due to the risk of fire.
- Have a backup phone: If you have a telephone system that requires electricity to work, plan to have a standard telephone or cellular phone ready as a backup. Having a portable charging device helps to keep your cell phone running.
- Have fresh drinking water and ice: Freeze plastic containers filled with water to make blocks of ice that can be placed in your refrigerator/freezer to prevent food spoilage.
- Turn off appliances: If you experience an outage, unplug or turn off all electrical appliances to avoid overloading circuits and to prevent fire hazards when power is restored. Simply leave a single lamp on to alert you when power returns.
- Safely clean up: After the storm has passed, be sure to safely clean up. Never touch downed wires and always call 8-1-1 or visit [811express.com](http://811express.com) at least two full business days before digging to have all underground utilities safely marked.

Moving Forward From page 1



A group planting trees at St. Benedict’s with St. Benedict’s Earthcare Team and ECOSLO, Los Osos Valley Garden Club, and Deadwood Revival. Photo submitted.

he’s reaching out to local community groups like Kiwanis, Quota, Lions, Soroptimist, Eagles, Boys & Girls Club, Scouts, all faith-based believers, sports enthusiasts, and even more casual meet-up groups who might enjoy accepting a friendly challenge. Later this month he’ll address groups in Sacramento.

Maruska is a fellow Rotarian with the SLO Rotary de Tolosa Club. He was scheduled to present his passion project to Morro Bay Rotarians Tuesday January 9 at a regularly scheduled meeting held dockside on the Chablis. The meeting was rescheduled due to the destructive atmospheric river’s thunderous waves crashing the Chablis into the docks while torrents of pounding rain and bomb-cyclone high winds devastated the West Coast. We became participants and witnesses to consequences of nature’s fury. In Morro Bay trees fell, dry ditches became overflowing rapid-running streams, and streets and businesses were flooded and closed. Every artery into and out of Morro Bay was clogged or closed necessitating City Manager Scott Collins, to call an official state of emergency. Surely the universe is sending one more reminder that if we think ahead and implement a focused plan of action, we can be better prepared for tomorrows.

Maruska’s aha moment came in the early 2000s during his facilitation of workshops contracted by the Marine Interest Group of SLO. He learned and accepted the science that climate change should no longer be ignored. As further testament that climate change had accelerated worldwide, he and his daughter toured Iceland’s ice caves and witnessed first-hand dramatic proof. The ice caves were melting at 85-ft per year.

“What kind of a world am I going to leave for my daughter,” he asked himself, “and how can I make a difference?”

When the worldwide pandemic pushed the pause button on normal activities, Maruska found he had time to ponder his question and facilitate an action plan using the tools he normally



Building a bioreactor for enhanced soil health at SLO Botanical Garden with Rotary San Luis Obispo, SLO Rotary, and SLO Botanical Garden volunteers. Photo submitted.

shared with others. He recognized his plan needed to start locally — even start at home. Leadership had failed, including outcomes from a recent United Nations Climate Conference in Egypt. Knowledgeable worldwide representatives were tasked to focus on action items meant to adapt to climate change. They produced more talk, but no plan of action.

Fear-based strategies currently ingrained in climate change discussions were the wrong approach, Maruska decided. “Humans don’t like to be told what they have to do.” He also said carbon emissions are not something we can see or touch and yet, “We need to understand what is happening and develop strategies for the long term.”

In chapter one of his book, Maruska quickly gets to the point, “In my work helping people solve tough issues together, I’ve seen the power of engaging people around their hopes and what gives them joy. ...” His climate solver plan suggests a focused approach in what he calls the triple A of climate health — Awareness, Action, Advocacy. Maruska suggests Awareness is educating ourselves until we are convinced we are not only part of the problem, but we can also become part of the solution. He recommends the free interactive website [www.resilientslo.org](http://www.resilientslo.org) to research our personal carbon footprint. This website increases awareness, suggests a variety of action choices and encourages involvement with other climate solvers.

Action, typically done with others is more fun either because we enjoy the competition or cherish positive feedback. Advocacy ultimately suggests a giant leap sharing our knowledge, action and passionate resolve with local, state and federal leadership.

Maruska is not advocating anything he isn’t currently doing himself. He assessed and made personal changes to reduce the impact of his own carbon footprint. Then, when he learned the United States is losing 36 million urban trees per year, he suggested his Rotary club plant trees. Their goal became 100 tree plantings per year. By collaborating with other local partners like the City of SLO, SLO Botanical Garden, ECOSLO, Land Conservancy, ResilientSLO, and SLO County Parks, 167 trees were planted since May, 2022, plus bioreactors were built.

A graduate of Harvard, Maruska was founder and CEO of three Silicon Valley companies. At twenty-two, he was a legislative assistant in the US Senate where he developed management procedures. While employed with McKinsey & Company, Maruska led strategy and organization projects for corporations, government agencies, and nonprofits. He has worked with organizations such as Accenture, Blue Shield, Duke Energy, Intel, Microsoft, and Wells Fargo and founded and directed the CSMFO and ICMA Coaching Programs, which provided professional development for over 10,000 leaders in local government throughout the United States. He has a talent for translating innovative ideas into practical applications. His career path includes becoming a life coach, author, and speaker offering hands-on workshops worldwide.

Don Maruska believes residents in the Estero Bay and the rest of San Luis Obispo County can be a catalyst to reducing our carbon footprint worldwide. Action starts with us. If we begin to push leadership to further positive action, our elected officials will claim and promote their personal leadership on climate change action. Who knows, and why not! Just maybe, action plans will go from Estero Bay to recommended action items by leadership attending the 2023 United Nations Climate Conference!

Fight For Pine From page 1

bringing sandbags.”

Across the street is a vacant lot that had a big pile of railroad ties stacked on it. Moothart said they commandeered the wood to line the street and stacked sandbags on top of that. “We put up a layer of sandbags down the entire block,” Moothart said.

Within about 10 minutes of the sandbag wall going up, Moothart said the rain started to let up, and just in the nick of time too. “We were watching the water go back down, and thank God, because we were out of options.”

When the rain stopped, the runoff dropped over the next two hours, Moothart said. He credits the volunteers that put

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Community

out the wood and sandbags and prevented a bad situation from becoming much worse.

How did everyone know they needed help? Moothart wasn't sure but he was listening to a radio scanner when the fire department was called out, and some social media posts too said they needed help; plus some folks just driving by noticed the problem developing.

One guy he said, went home, put on rain gear and came back to help. And just when they thought all was lost, was when the cavalry showed up.

He feels the small curbing along Pine isn't enough to handle a big runoff like this. "It's not so much the amount of water," Moothart said, "as how fast it comes down."

When the rain hits hard for a good amount of time, the curbs are not high enough. "There are definitely water diversion issues" on Pine, he said.

For him though it's the fact that neighbors, indeed many complete strangers, answered the call and came out to help.

"I feel like the community came together and helped out," he said. "Without these people's help, I have no doubt we would have had 2-3-feet of water in our house."

It should be noted that on that very same day, a storm water retention pond situated above Vista Court broke and sent a flood of mud and debris flowing downhill and into homes.

There too, neighbors came to the rescue to help those folks, who lost most everything, dig out from the mud in an effort that has continued for days afterwards.

As for the railroad ties, Moothart promised he'd put them all back where they got them.

City Damages From page 1

and other parts of the community. The infrastructure damages and our cleanup costs are estimated to be around \$20 million. But that is an early estimate and subject to change."

He was thankful that the City's new wastewater treatment plant was online when the storm hit. "Our old wastewater plant was heavily flooded on Jan. 9," Collins said, "and would have failed had it been operating at that time. That would likely have released up to half a million gallons of sewage into the community and we'd potentially still be without sewer service in our community today." His comments came 10 days after the storm.

Public Works Director Greg Kwolek confirmed that several pieces of heavy equipment that can be seen in a photo of the flood, belonged to Anvil Builders, the company that has been installing the Water Reclamation Facility conveyance system but "We have not heard that they lost any equipment."

The company also for the past couple of years has used an area alongside Atascadero Road as an equipment storage and lay-down yard, and Kwolek said, "To my knowledge, no supplies or equipment down stored on Atascadero Road sustained damage."

The City did have a sewage spill on Atascadero Road of some 9,900 gallons that came up out of a manhole in the street. "We did encounter a small sewage issue [around 10,000 gallons released] on Jan. 9," Collins said, "with remnant sludge in the old treatment plant and sewer lines overwhelmed by the sheer amount of water. We are coordinating with the state on that."

The full extent of the damage wrought by the storm includes more than the City's losses. "The \$20 million estimate," Collins said, "does not include private residents and business impacts. We are grateful that the cities, county, state and Congressional partners were successful in raising awareness of impacts to our region and that the president extended the major disaster declaration to our county."

"We don't fully understand what it all means, but that declaration opens the door for some relief."

OUT & ABOUT WITH THE BOOKSHELF WRITERS

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

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

Local Author Spotlight: Kathy Mastako 'The Lighthouse at Point San Luis'

By Judy Salamacha

Congratulations, Kathy Mastako, author of "The Lighthouse at Point San Luis." Your book reads like fiction!



A view of the Point San Luis Lighthouse. Photo submitted

As an author of this genre, I believe this to be the supreme compliment a reader can offer a writer who publishes biography, memoir, or historically based narrative. Mastako is a storyteller bringing to life the early days of the Avila lighthouse, now restored for public tours. Her diligent documentation and relevant commentary details its development and the keepers that managed and served to protect ships navigating our rocky Pacific shores.

"Indeed, it is my gift to the lighthouse and to lighthouse preservation in general — keeping 'the light' alive so to speak," said Mastako. She admits this became her passion project although her background is entirely unrelated. "I'm originally from Washington, DC, and of course, there are many lighthouses along the eastern seaboard. Some I visited, but I was never a lighthouse fanatic. I just thought they were romantic and somewhat magical."

Her husband's career moved them to Palo Alto where she continued to work in Human Resources with Varian Associates, VLSI and Philips Semiconductors. She retired moving to the Central Coast, but meaningful work called her back. For twelve years, she spent every day on Cal Poly's campus while working for the Landscape Architecture department.

"During all this time I had never put pen to paper," she admitted. "I'd always written, but it was purely business writing. I had never really done research either — just editing and fact-checking for various publications issued with jobs I held."

Mastako leads tours on Wednesdays and Saturdays for the Point San Luis Lighthouse. She also serves as the volunteer historian, continuing to gather any information she can about its 132-year history. In her book, available at Estero Bay bookstores and the Morro Bay Maritime Museum, she weaves researched materials into her storytelling style. It's as if she were walking you through one of her tours, but was able to verify details she has sourced through numerous research outlets.

It was not easy to build a lighthouse in 1889. The contract was awarded to George Kinney, but the federal government inspector became his biggest challenge. The work began in July with scheduled completion due in December. However, the job was not accepted until May 1890. A contractual overrun charge of \$25 per day depleted much of the \$18,893 Kinney should have been awarded. Indeed, history repeats itself in 2022 with weather and supply challenges!

Antonio Souza's story pops up in the book with years of service and life on an island visible by the lighthouse. For most of the fifteen years he served under his boss, Keeper Young, he was a nuisance. He was a proficient fisherman with a mystery mentioned surrounding the name of his boat he dubbed Edna.

Mastako also describes family life and leisure time activities in text and photographs. Many readers of maritime history know about the sinking of the Montebello during World War II, but she introduces us to the literal disappearance of the Roanoke, a true maritime mystery. Ultimately, the Coast Guard was tasked with management of the Point San Luis Lighthouse. While researching the men that served, a first reunion of sorts was held by Zoom. Plans are hopeful for an onsite reunion someday.

Besides her docent duties, Mastako serves on the board, which maintains and operates Point San Luis Lighthouse. "We are basically an all-volunteer organization, with one paid employee — Deb Foughty, our executive director." During COVID, historian Jack San Filippo retired and Matsuka volunteered to continue his duties producing the non-profit's quarterly newsletter and writing monthly columns for Avila Beach Life newspaper.

"I enjoy leading tours most," Mastako said. "I meet so many interesting people and, on occasion, someone with a close connection to the light station will share their stories of visiting or living there."

Is there a next book for Mastako? "I think one more could be written about the years spent negotiating for the transfer of its ownership to the Harbor District, its restoration, culminating in its grand re-opening. It will be fun to do the research — especially since many of those involved are still around to tell their stories."

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Community

Flooding From page 1



Morro Creek pushed its way through the beach sands to the ocean. Photo by Becka Kelly

this did not cause the flood nor was there any plug” at the Main Street bridge.”

South Bay Rescue



A Cal Fire swift water rescue crew stands at a flooded Chorro Creek Bridge as a Coast Guard Helicopter flies in to pick up an 86-year-old woman rescued from the flood. Photo courtesy Cal Fire

According to Cal Fire EMS Battalion Chief Rob Jenkins, rising floodwaters on the Chorro Creek Bridge trapped two vehicles that were bound for Morro Bay.

Another motorist in a pick-up truck rescued a man who was trapped in a car, Battalion Chief Jenkins said. The other vehicle, with an 86-year-old woman inside, wasn’t as lucky.

B.C. Jenkins said the floodwaters rose so quickly, the truck was unable to go back in to get her.

So Cal Fire brought in a swift water rescue team in a boat and they were able to reach her. A Coast Guard helicopter came in to airlift her out of danger and she was ultimately taken to a local hospital.

Quintana Road Submerged

Numerous vehicle parked on Quintana Road at the Bay Pines RV Park, were inundated with water, as the Chorro Flats flood-plain overflowed its berm and the entire area around South Bay and Quintana was flooded.

Kwolek said, “The City’s observation was that the flood on Quintana and South Bay resulted from high water levels from Chorro Creek coinciding with the high tide.”

Residents along Chorro Creek Road were hit especially hard as the various creeks that converge along Chorro Valley into Chorro Creek for the final run into the National Estuary overwhelmed

the area.

Homes, outbuildings, farmlands were all flooded by the immense amount of runoff and days later, and, with another storm expected over the Jan. 13-15 Holiday Weekend, there wasn’t much relief in sight for those folks.

And their only road in or out was still over-flowing with runoff a week after the big storm hit.

Vista Court Washout



Photo shows the path a mud flow took into Vista Court from a broken retention pond levee.

Perhaps the hardest hit area of the Estero Bay was the Vista Ct., neighborhood in Los Osos, where a storm water retention pond failed and sent a torrent of mud and debris down into a residential neighborhood.

No one was killed in the devastation that saw mud and water 3-feet deep enter numerous homes

The pond, which is connected to the Cabrillo Estates neighborhood on the hills above Vista Ct., was reportedly inspected by the Community Services District early Jan. 10 and was fine, according to the CSD quoted in news reports.

But by about 4:15 p.m. all heck broke loose. According to B.C. Jenkins, the eastern wall of the pond gave way and opened up a breach in the levee.

“That let all the water out all at once,” B.C Jenkins said. The slurry of mud, water and debris swiftly flowed downhill towards Vista Court and B.C. Jenkins said the mudflow affected some 15 homes on Vista Court and flowed down further damaging another five homes.

In the immediate aftermath, B.C. Jenkins said the County “tagged” five homes due to the damage, three with red tags, meaning they were uninhabitable and two yellow, which he said allows the residents to enter and salvage whatever they can.

Such floodwaters are not very clean and when they inundate a home, it triggers extensive drywall and flooring removal and replacement. B.C Jenkins said one problem that has arisen already is that insurance companies are calling this a flood and unless someone has “flood insurance” they could get stiffed by their insurance companies.

Community to the rescue

After the flood, neighbors of the Vista Court folks turned out in droves, bringing shovels and brooms and rolling up their sleeves to help their neighbors dig out of the muck.

B.C. Jenkins said, “There was a big turnout of people who came to help. They turned out in droves.” He noted that a social media group, “Support Los Osos” put the word out that folks needed help and the community responded. A California Conservation Corps group also came to help and the CSD brought in several port-a-potties, he said.

CSD Maintained the Pond

The Community Services District was responsible for maintaining the retention pond, B.C. Jenkins said. But it was built many years before and was reviewed and permitted through San Luis Obispo County, as part of the original Cabrillo Estates subdivision.

That has the LOCSD board meeting to discuss their potential liability with this catastrophe.

Sewage Spilled

In Morro Bay, the big storm caused sewage to flow out of a manhole on Atascadero Road outside the City’s old sewer treatment plant.

“The area,” the City said in a news release, “is located in a flood zone with one of the lowest elevation points within the city. Flooding waters infiltrated into the sewer collection system causing approximately 9,900 gallons of highly diluted sewer water to overflow out of the top of a manhole into Morro Creek.”

Photos of the area during the storm show the intersection about 4-feet deep in floodwaters, with several pieces of heavy equipment, owned by Anvil Builders, the company installing the



Photo shows the flooded intersection of Atascadero Road and the Embarcadero, outside the Waste Water Treatment Plant, where 9,900 gallons of sewage spilled out a manhole. Photo by Becka Kelly

new conveyance system for the City’s Water Reclamation Facility Project.

Thankfully, the new treatment plant up above South Bay Boulevard was working at the time and there was a minimal amount of flow going to the old plant, which also got flooded. The old Waste Water Treatment Plant hasn’t been treating sewage since last November when the new plant started up.

“The recent storm event,” the City said, “resulted in the WWTP and the Corporation Yard being inundated with 3-4-feet of storm water from the flooding of Morro Creek.”

The City is working with County Environmental Health and the Regional Water Quality Control Board on the spill, which was one of several that occurred in SLO County due to the storm.

The flooding on Atascadero Road closed the street for several days while clean up was underway. The City put out an advisory warning people to stay clear of the area.

WRF Saved the Day

According to the City, it’s a good thing the new WRF treatment plant was up and running or the flooding on Atascadero Road would have been so much worse.

“Based on observed water levels,” the City said, “preliminary analysis of the flood event that occurred in Morro Creek indicates that flooding exceeded the threshold for a 100-Year and may have approached a 500-Year Flood Event.

“Had the new Water Resource Center not been operational, all of the City’s wastewater at the old WWTP would have been exposed to catastrophic inundation.”

That new treatment plant, which has been under construction since May 2020, came through its first big test.

“The WRF,” the City said, “readily handled the storm and sewer flows that are normally only 600,000 gallons per day, but increased to approximately 10-times higher, peaking at over 6 million gallons per day.

That huge jump in the flow was caused by sewer collection pipes that have for many years, been greatly infiltrated during big storms, flowing into the pipes under pressure from high ground-water levels.

The old collection system, most of which remains in use, is gravity-flow and the new conveyance system, which moves raw sewage from the old plant on Atascadero Road to the new one, some 3.5 miles away, is a force-fed system and under pressure from the inside.

The WRF plant included extensive storm drainage work too, making use of interior retention ponds that recycle the rain into the treatment plant, and a large drainage ditch running along the east side of the plant.

Dumpsters, Sand Available

The City said it has placed dumpsters and sand at multiple locations in the city for residents to dispose of ruined belongings and to fill sandbags, because the winter isn’t over yet and with the ground now saturated, should another big storm hit, there’s nowhere for the water to go.

Sand can be found at the City Library parking lot off of Shasta Avenue and at Cloister Park parking lot.

Sandbags can be purchased at Miner’s Hardware or any other hardware store. The City posted a map of the locations for the dumpsters and the sand, see: [www.morrobayca.gov/Document-Center/View/17380/Morro-Bay-Dumpster-and-Sand-location-Map](http://www.morrobayca.gov/Document-Center/View/17380/Morro-Bay-Dumpster-and-Sand-location-Map).

Help Promised

California Gov. Gavin Newsom declared SLO County a disaster area, one of several counties that were so designated; and President Biden declared a federal disaster, which presumably opens the area up to federal disaster relief, normally processed through the Federal Emergency Management Agency or FEMA.

The Morro Bay Chamber of Commerce is working to assist hard-hit businesses with filing claims for relief. “We are advocating on behalf of our business community,” the Chamber said, “with local, state and federal representatives. Follow the SBA’s social media channels — we have been told that program availability would be announced there first.

SLO County wants people to report any damage they sus-



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tained to their property from the big storm.

“For access to the most up-to-date information throughout this storm and any other emergency in our county,” the County said in a news release, “visit [readyslo.org](http://readyslo.org), or you can call our Phone Assistance Center from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Mondays through Fridays. The phone number is: (805) 781-5678.”

**Damage Info Sought**



Photo from Radcliff Street shows some of the flooding on Main Street. Photo by Becka Kelly

SLO County is trying to help those affected by the storm and has forms and other assistance posted on a special website.

“If your home or other private property was damaged in the major storm that hit Morro Bay on 1/9/2023,” the City of Morro Bay announced, “please report that to SLO County at: [www.recoveryslo.org](http://www.recoveryslo.org) (through the form provided on the website).

“The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has declared an emergency in SLO County for that storm and may provide assistance for storm damage. The form requests contact information, as well as information about the specific damage to private property and estimated cost.”

**Pols Visit the Area**



Congressman Salud Carbajal, (right) Dist. 30 State Assemblywoman Dawn Addis (center) and Dist. 2 County Supervisor Bruce Gibson (left) toured Vista Court in Los Osos. Photo by Dean Sullivan

Morro Bay and Los Osos were two of the stops made by Congressman Salud Carbajal, and Dist. 30 State Assemblywoman Dawn Addis, who along with Dist. 2 County Supervisor Bruce Gibson, were among the officials who toured flood damages areas of Estero Bay on Jan. 16.

The pols visited with residents and business owners who lost so much in the storm, lending a sympathetic ear and promising as much help as possible.

County to Offer Collection Locations for Storm Debris

The County of San Luis Obispo is offering free collection sites for storm related debris. Non-storm related debris will not be accepted.

Debris collection bins are available at the following locations and times:

- Oceano: Oceano County Airport parking lot. Monday-Friday 8 a.m.-12 p.m.
- Santa Margarita: Santa Margarita Community Hall parking lot, 22501 I St. Monday–Saturday 8 a.m.-12 p.m.
- Creston: Creston Rodeo Grounds, 6180 Webster Rd. Monday-Saturday 8 a.m.-12 p.m. Due to state and federal regulations, storm debris should be sorted into the following:

- Recyclables
- Organic/yard debris (no dirt)
- Furniture/mattresses
- Appliances (except those categorized as E-waste)

Household Hazardous Waste, E-waste, and soil will not be

Meanwhile, cleanup on Main Street continued through the end of last week, a full 10 days after the floodwaters drained off and left hundreds of tons of mud and debris that had to be scooped out with skip loaders and hauled away in dump trucks.

And surveys of the damage done to harbor facilities was being conducted. Early indications are that several City-owned docks and other facilities sustained damage and one sign at the launch ramp was blown over and reduced to splinters.

**A Little Comic Relief**

While the misery was compounding daily from this storm-of-the-century, someone provided a little comic relief, installing several duck decoys and one large Canada goose in a small pond that formed in a low spot on Main Street at Radcliff.

The decoys amused a town that celebrates the Martin Luther King Holiday with the Annual Winter Bird Festival. More than one interested birder was seen snapping photos of the decoys.

And the City’s BMX bike park along Main Street, which has its hills and dales fashioned of compacted dirt and clay, seemed to sustain little damage from the torrential rains. Indeed, except for some fencing that was dug up and strewn across the bike park, it appeared to have survived the flooding intact.

A Dose of Good Dogma

**Dominance**

By Lisa Ellman

What’s your first reaction when you hear that word, dominance? For me, it implicates something forceful and against my will. Maybe even violent. In my life as a trainer, I never use that word when discussing canine behavior between human and dog. However, when relating dog on dog behavior it can be quite valid. I bring this word up because I sometimes hear dog owners mention having to, or wanting to, be dominant with their dog. I prefer to use the word “leader.” I don’t even bother with the word “alpha.” Leadership says to me, and the dog, I am in charge and I will provide for you and teach you and guide you to do the right thing, without fear of negative repercussions. In living with and training your dog(s), it’s critical that the dog sees you as a leader. Someone to count on, a leader that has its back. This contributes to the dog’s sense of confidence and how they perceive you, in terms of respect. If your dog constantly challenges you, or ignores your training cues, this would indicate a lack of respect. The human has not developed, or succeeded, in promoting leadership qualities, thereby not earning any respect from the dog.

Once you’ve earned your dog’s respect, life with your dog be-

accepted. Visit [RecoverSLO.org](http://RecoverSLO.org) for more information on hazardous and E-waste.

Additional locations will be added as resources become available in the coming days.

Readers with questions, should call the County Office of Emergency Services at (805) 781-5678.

PG&E Awards Fire Safety Grants

Near the end of 2022, Pacific Gas & Electric awarded several grants to “Fire Safe Councils” to bolster their efforts to cut down the danger of wildfires, the company said in a news release. And one grant came to the FSC in SLO County.

According to a news release, FSCs are, “critical to strengthening the safety and preparedness of local communities in areas of extreme fire risk.”

PG&E awarded a total of \$250,000 to eight FSCs in the company’s service area of Central and Northern California, supporting a total of 10 projects.

Among the grantees is the San Luis Obispo County Fire Safety Council, which got \$25,000 for something called the

comes less chaotic. The more structure and routine you provide, the less anxious and reactive they become. Their self confidence can thrive.

I find people also mention the word “discipline” when telling me about their dog and its behavior. Another word that really needs to be defined. So I ask them, what kind of discipline are you referring to? Common answers are “a swat on the behind” or putting them in their crate. For me, that’s not the kind of discipline that will enhance your dog’s response to you later on. I would replace that word, in relation to training a dog, with “structure” or “boundaries,” again something concrete that teaches the dog a desired behavior. Removing a dog from a situation to discipline it, removes any learning on the dog’s part. But...I find I digress from my original intent of this article about “dominance” vs. “leadership”.

I think I’ve made the point, ad nauseum, that words can be meaningful, when focusing on a goal while working with your dog. Whether training for commands or remodeling behavior, our goal is to teach the dog with calm, non threatening methods. We are the role models for our dogs; our energy is their energy, any violent behavior we model will be reflected in theirs. Don’t dominate your dog, guide it with consistent, gentle leadership, structure and boundaries.

*Good Dogma has been training humans and their dogs since 1996. Readers are invited to submit questions to [gooddogma@botmail.com](mailto:gooddogma@botmail.com). Contact information for all offered services can be found on our website [www.GoodDogma.net](http://www.GoodDogma.net)*

“Marsh Road Project.”

Peter Kenny, PG&E’s Senior Vice President of Vegetation Management and System Inspections, said, “We are working every day with our customers and communities to manage trees and other vegetation located near power lines and equipment that could cause a wildfire or power outage. But we can’t do it alone.

“That’s why our long-standing partnership with local Fire Safe Councils, and our shared goal of keeping our communities safe, is essential.”

Since 2014 PG&E has paid out a total of \$17 million in fire safety grants.

A typical FSC project would include reducing fuel, creating fuel breaks, and removing dead and dying trees to improve fire evacuation routes and emergency access roads in High Fire Threat District areas. such as the Marsh Road project in rural Cayucos.

Dan Turner, the executive director of the SLO County FSC, said, “This PG&E grant was combined with other funds to expand the scope of the Marsh Road Project. Marsh Road is a rural, residential, single access/dead end road serving several residences.

“Lightning-caused fires occurred on both sides of the Marsh Road neighborhood raising significant safety concerns of residents since there is only one way out, which is a major evacuation problem.”

Turner said the grant is helping ease concerns of the neighborhood. “Neighbors were worried about escape routes,” Turner said, “and PG&E stepped up to allow us to expand this project to include Falling Star Lane.”

Photos PG&E sent out with its news release show before and after looks at Marsh Road, which is a narrow country lane overgrown with trees and brush that used to grow right up next to the road.

The Marsh Road Project cleared out that brush and debris well back from the road.

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**In Their Own Words**

Julie Steincamp Quillin: “While I don’t technically speak for everyone, on behalf of all of us here on Vista Court who have been affected by this event, I just want to say we can’t begin to thank you enough. While we have all cried some tears for what we have lost or may loose, I personally have cries the most because of how truly grateful and awestruck I have been by the kindness, generosity and hard work by all of you who have shown up this week. It has been so amazing and remarkable and I feel lucky to live here.”

...

Lynne Oliverius: “I was a volunteer at Vista however I’d like you to honor the food businesses that stepped up to help. Lewis, the new manager at Ralphs deserves a gold medal. He not only provided so many meals but did it all with such a loving kind heart.

Jeremiah and Ashley, the owners of the new Brightside Pizza. Wow, they showed up with wings and amazing pizzas and so much kindness. The pizza was delicious and hot, and boy did we love that.

Nautical Bean brought in pastries and hot coffee. Perfect on the cold, cold mornings. Caliwala Bakery offered food to the volunteers at their business. They had extra empanadas ready. Ascendo sent in pastries and goodies.

Kai Ueyda, a sophomore at Occidental College, baked two big pans of brownies, and boy did those go fast. So good. Cal Poly sent in muffins all packaged to send with volunteers.

I know there were many more. These are the ones I can remember.”

...

Henry Fong: I am still amazed, shocked and filled with gratitude for the help that complete strangers provided in the initial stages of the recovery. They stepped up and sincerely asked the residents if they needed help.

In particular, Annette ‘Lifesaver’ acted to provide resources like people, services and equipment for us. Always warm interactions with us stressed out homeowners. Cal Fire also stepped up and provided guidance on how to correctly clean up the area.

The California Conservation Corps (CCC), with great supervision (I don’t remember her name), were just absolutely the hardest workers. For me, I was really flagging on Saturday. Thanks to Shelley for gently kicking my ass to take care of myself. Thanks to the “Django Lady” - a really skilled driver when moving the dirt.”

...

Dawn Sanders, Vista Court: “Annette Sheely, the Fairy Godmother of our street during the crisis. Emily Miggins, Mrs. Information, kept us up to date. Becky McFarland has the tools and the knowledge. And, all the many volunteers who came out to help. SLO City Church has awesome volunteers.”

...

Anna Yeackle, Vista Court: I just want to share that as someone who works with kiddos I have been so inspired by the children who came to help; it was beyond worlds. This entire community has come out and shown the beauty of what we can do when we do it together. I am beyond grateful for all the food that was donated, all the kind words that have been offered, and the most precious gift of people’s time. Thank you to everyone who has come out to support us and have literally dug us out of the mud. The sun shines a bit brighter in our little complex because of all of you!”

...

Mark Ruffing: On behalf of my band, Next Life, we want to thank everyone who came out to our Merrimaker mudslide benefit show on January 16th and who donated so generously to help the impacted families. We also want to thank new Merrimaker owner, Jennifer (“Niffy”) Dorn, and her crew for being flexible and turning a normal gig into a full-scale benefit, including donating proceeds from the bar. All told, over \$4200 was received in behalf of the affected neighbors from everyone!

We’re just a small, local Los Osos band and we were floored by the response, love, and generosity that everyone expressed. This wasn’t just a fundraiser though, but a

chance for everyone to connect and be there for each other. Of course, there is so much more work to be done. It isn’t just any one person/band/business, but all of us, together, that make a difference. And that’s why our area is so special.

I also want to thank my band-mates for donating their time and efforts to the benefit, every one of them doing it without pause: Antwon Byrd (bass), Christian Kennedy (drums), and Len Oesterling (guitar and keyboards).

...

Diana Bowlby: “Many thanks to all who showed up to help with the flood. Many were strangers but all worked hard to save my home from more damage. You all were wonderful. Thank you, thank you from Diana on Pine St. in Los Osos.”

...

Brandi Glenn, a 30 year resident of Los Osos: “I just want to say that my community has time and time again impressed me, but this time has been above and beyond. All of the time, energy and love these folks have given is just amazing. And Annette Sheely and her family were definitely a big part of the glue that brought us all together. I myself could not help with the heavy stuff, but on the second day I got a wagon and got coffee very generously donated by SLO Roast coffee and bottled water from Grocery Outlet and went around over and over to all who were working hard in the houses. There smiles were endless. One mans hands were getting very raw and a bit bloody but he still had a smile to offer me. We did find him some gloves!

I just don’t think we could ever properly repay what all these folks have given our community.”

...

Elinor Dempsey: “Thank you to Lewis the Los Osos Ralphs’ store manager. He coordinated the donation of sandwiches for several days. In fact, he paid for some of it himself. The volunteers were very grateful for the food as everyone was working very hard.”

...

Jennifer Cordon: “I helped our neighbors out on Pine Avenue during the Monday storm and witnessed so many people from all over Cuesta by the Sea lending a hand. These are a few I met and remembered. It was very rainy...

Rick and Linda Fenske, Brook Feldman, Dylan and Catalina Foster, Pete Somers, The Allstots.Noah Howard  
A man with wagons from Binscarth Road.

...

Anonymous: “Rain poured on Pine Avenue from the sky and from up the hill above. The built up gutter protection is perhaps two inches — no match for the flood that buried yards and flooded several houses. Residents used cushions, rocks, and lumber in frenzied and vain attempts to stop the torrent. I was so busy trying to stop the flood; I didn’t notice some guardian angels lining the entire inundated block wit sandbags! I don’t know who filled the hundreds of sandbags and placed them in front of our flooding property, but we were saved from further destruction. Thank you forever.”

...

Victoria Conant-Weir: “I would like to thank all the volunteers who came to our rescue at Vista De Oro Estates. Also the local businesses who donated supplies and food. Words alone cannot express my gratitude.”

...

Gary Orback: “I was amazed at the number of people who turned out since the date for this community disaster to help the residents of Vista Court. It was very heartwarming to see and experience such an outpouring of community care and concern. Thanks to all.”

...

Anonymous: “Thanks to the politicians — County, State, Federal. They were present with information and connections of support to meander through the bureaucracy. Many of them also shoveled [debris].”

...

Kay: “When I left my neighborhood on Monday night it was swirling in brown mud, sending gardens, garage tools, furniture and momentos on to Pecho Road. On Tuesday, when I returned, there were hundreds, literally hundreds, of people wielding shovels and attacking the mud. Thanks to all, young and old, who dug out my driveway and garage

with shovels, equipment, food, a shoulder to lean on and many words of support.

Estero Bay News gave our neighbors impacted by storm related events the opportunity to say what can’t be emphasized enough, “thank you.”

and forged a path to my front door. Thanks to the CCC for clearing paths and mud from my backyard. Thanks to Ralphs and High Street Deli for soup and sandwiches. Thanks to all the others for pizza, coffee, donuts, cookies and energy bars.

Thanks to the young mom who came with her 4 or 5-year-old and a baby strapped to her back. Mom and son shoveled; the baby slept. I didn’t get a picture but image is ingrained in my mind. I will never forget it. A thank you also to Bruce and his son, Logan, and Shelly and her boys.”

...

Emily Miggins: “I am thankful to the hundreds of DIY, get’er done community based volunteers from our community, also all of the California Conservation Corps members deployed by Cal Fire Battalion 15, our Chief Provence and all firefighters! You have been amazing.”

...

Anonymous: “Thank you to Raul, Jackson, and Spencer Salgado for spending your time between work and school to help your community. Your muscles are big and your hearts are bigger.

...

Thank you to the Ruiz Family. Ruben, Allison, Lexi, and Mateo who were some of the first people to show up to shovel and returned day after day to pitch in wherever they were needed. They embody the community spirit of Los Osos.

...

Thank you to Mariah Eaves. Mariah made herself available in every way possible. She spent every day cold, wet, and dirty and then spent her nights assisting with paperwork, storage agreements, meal arrangements, and temporary housing assistance. She provided transportation, advice, and a shoulder to lean on. Her willingness to help strangers is so admirable and this community is lucky to have her.”

...

Virginia Flaherty: “I live on Vista Ct. in Los Osos. I wanted to share a couple stories of amazing people who’ve helped out this week in addition to the dozens and dozens of people who’ve been here helping clean up.

...

Wendy Wendt lives in the Redfield Woods neighborhood. She has welcomed one person who is now homeless on Vista Ct. into her home and a second person on Vista Ct. who works out of a home office and now has no place to go to work, so to speak. Both of them are using Wendy’s home until more longterm arrangements can be made. She ‘d never met either of these people before.

...

Ellen Nelson is another person who doesn’t live in the neighborhood, but has literally taken over all of the paperwork for one elderly neighbor and that neighbor’s disabled son, including filing of claims, driving paperwork to the county office, insurance company correspondence and all other arranging of logistics in regard to hiring people to demo the house and do the environmental clean up and arranging different contractors to come and give bids on repair costs.

...

A big shout out to the College Corps also and their amazing day to day dedication in helping with so much heavy and hard work here in the neighborhood. Great people!”

**Donation Help**

The following is a list of some of the GoFundMe accounts set up for local people severely impacted by the storm:

- A GoFundMe page, [gofundme.com/f/help-the-los-osos-mudslide-victims](https://gofundme.com/f/help-the-los-osos-mudslide-victims). The goal is to raise \$50,000 to help the people who lost so much on Vista Court.
- Another GoFundMe account, has been set up at [gofundme.com/f/emergency-fund-for-flooded-survivors-kelseycarlos](https://gofundme.com/f/emergency-fund-for-flooded-survivors-kelseycarlos). That goal is to raise \$12,000 to help a couple that lost their home in Morro Bay.
- A GoFundMe account, [gofundme.com/f/my-brothers-family-get-their-happy-spot-back](https://gofundme.com/f/my-brothers-family-get-their-happy-spot-back), was also created for a family of four in Morro Bay whose home and belongings were severely damaged due to flooding. The goal is \$5,000.