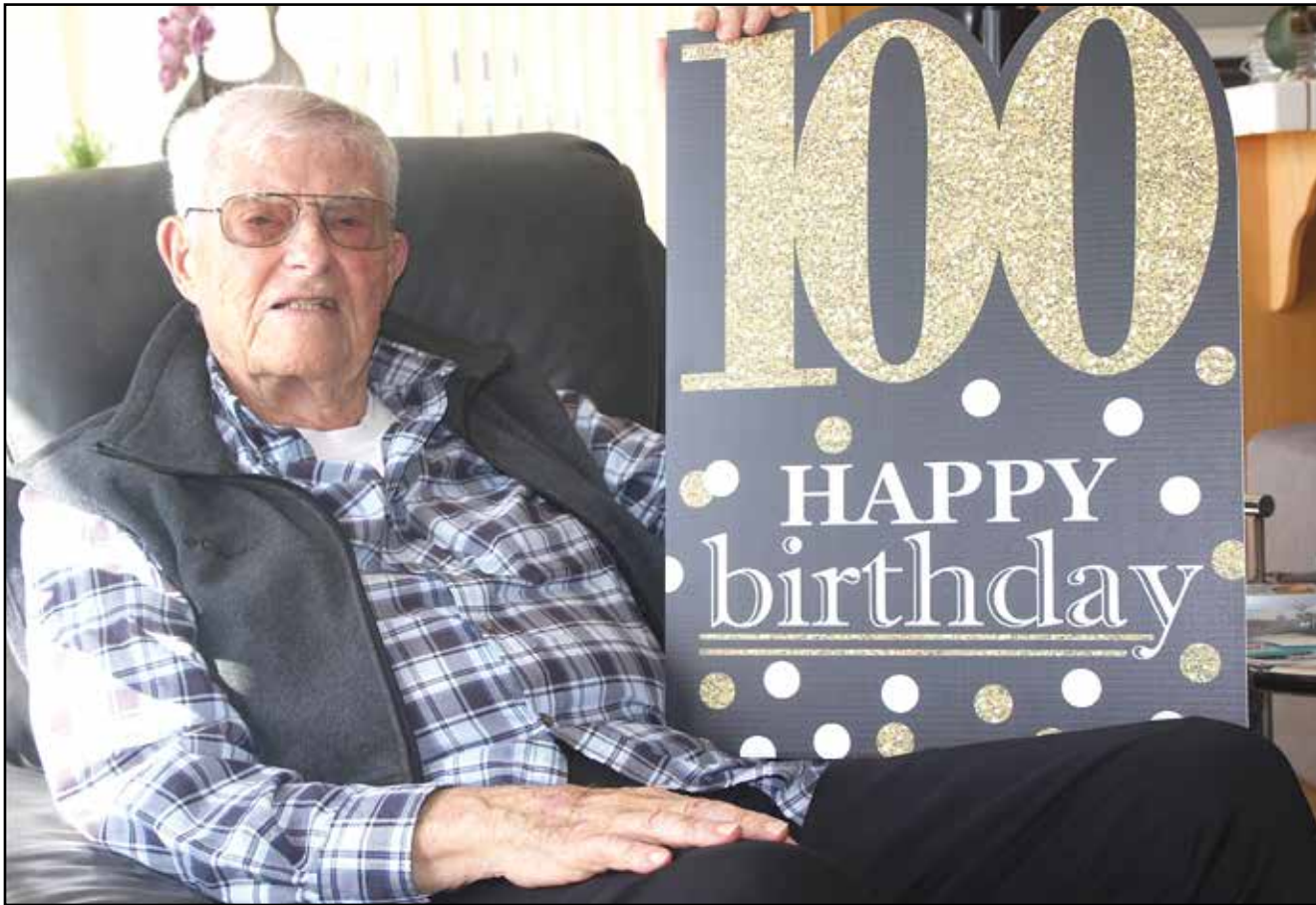


Morro Bay Navy Flyboy Turns 100



Morro Bay resident Herb Berry, who was a Navy fighter pilot in two wars, recently celebrated his 100th birthday.

By Neil Farrell

Anyone who lives to 100 has undoubtedly had an eventful life seeing the world change over a lifespan that few will reach, and experiencing first hand things one reads about in history books.

For Morro Bay resident, Herb Berry, who turned 100 in January, that journey took him all over the world, into two major wars, through the growth of air travel, and the birth of the journey off the planet and into space.

Herb says he was born in Turlock, Calif., but didn't spend a lot of time in that Central Valley farming community.

"We moved from Turlock when I was 10-months old," Herb says while sitting in a comfy recliner in his living room with a sweeping view of Estero Bay through sliding glass doors. "I mostly lived in Chico."

That was because of Chico State University, where he began his university studies as a history and English major. He had a brother and three sisters, he explains.

He joined the Navy in the 1940s with war raging in Europe and the Pacific leaving Chico State behind. "My first active duty was at Cal Poly," he says. He spent 12 weeks here with the 4th Battalion 1st Platoon. "I'm a Cal Poly alumnus." He attended Naval Aviation Prep School and his eyes were set on the skies, destined to become a Navy flyboy.

He attended war service training to become a pilot and got his primary training in Kansas, where he learned to fly in freezing temps in a plane with an open cockpit. He finally graduated flight training while in Pensacola, Fla., in September 1944.

He was sent to the Pacific to fly Corsair fighter planes and ended up on the aircraft carrier, Intrepid, after it had

Flyboy Continued on page 20

Help for Disaster Recovery



Los Osos resident Alice Stone surveys damage to her home in Los Osos. Photo by Dean Sullivan

By Theresa-Marie Wilson

Help for residents seeking recovery assistance following the January storms is available in-person in San Luis Obispo.

Heavy rains, flooding, road closures, and a mudslide resulted in San Luis Obispo County's inclusion in the major disaster declaration issued by President Joe Biden. That declaration opened the doors to apply for help from FEMA, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, while local organizations also came to the rescue.

"If you are a homeowner or renter located in a federally declared county and have received damage as a result of the recent storms and flooding, and your damages are not covered by insurance, you should register for FEMA assistance," said FEMA Media Relations Specialist, Renee Bafalis. "Every survivor's situation is different and therefore the amount of assistance varies. The maximum grant from FEMA is \$40,000, but that is strictly based on the need."

The temporary Disaster Recovery Center (DRC) and Local Assistance Center (LAC) opened at the Veterans Memorial Building on January 24 to provide resources to residents impacted with storm-related damages. It is set to close Feb. 14.

The DRC/LAC is a partnership between FEMA, Governor's Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES), and the County of San Luis Obispo.

"The DRC is a one stop shop for residents to get services if they were affected by the storms," said County Emergency Services Coordinator Rachel Monte Dion.

"They can apply for FEMA financial assistance, SBA loans,

Help Continued on page 21

Moving Forward: Debbie Black's Magic Carpet Ride

By Judy Salamacha

When Debbie Noble Black officially closed her successful Cayucos-based Landscape Architecture practice, her fulltime focus was to become a published author. It has taken years of dedicated writing, research, networking and practicing all the steps recommended by the publishing industry, but then that's how Debbie has found success at everything she tackles.

As of February 2, 2023, her debut middle grade novel 'Deetjen's Closet' can be purchased at Morro Bay's Coalesce Book Store and Volumes of Pleasure Book Shoppe in Los Osos. A Kindle copy will be available on Amazon, but I believe you'll want your children and grandchildren to have the original printed copy of the first of several books in



The Morro Bay Maritime Museum's landscape plan and work was created by Debbie Black as she was transitioning from a career owning her own landscape architect business based in Cayucos to her new career as published author.

Magic Carpet Continued on page 22

City Manager to Leave in March

By Neil Farrell



Turnover of Morro Bay's leadership team continues with the City Manager announcing he was leaving in March for a job in the private, non-profit sector.

City Manager Scott Collins became the latest city leader to leave Morro Bay in the past two years. He plans to go sometime in early March. Collins is leaving to become executive director for the Housing Authority of San Luis Obispo (HASLO).

His departure is the latest in a string of departures mainly due to retirements. Over the past couple of years, Morro Bay has gotten a new fire chief, public works director, city engineer, maintenance supervisor, utilities director,

Manager to Leave Continued on page 22

Cunningham Honored by District Attorney

By Neil Farrell



Former State Assemblyman Jordan Cunningham was recently honored for his work to combat the scourge of human trafficking by the District Attorney, himself a warrior against what amounts to modern day slavery.

District Attorney Dan Dow presented Cunningham with the "District Attorney Special Commendation Award" during a Jan. 26, Anti-Human Trafficking Task Force meet-

Cunningham Honored Continued on page 23

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Donation
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Blotter
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**Support
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Business
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SBA Has Disaster Relief Help



By Neil Farrell

Anyone who sustained losses from this winter’s storms can apply for federal disaster financial assistance and moral support through various federal agencies and programs.

The Small Business Administration (SBA) has a Small Business Development Center (SBDC) office at 872 Higuera St., at the Cal Poly Center for Innovation & Entrepreneurship.

“SBDCs,” reads an information sheet from the SBA, “are providing the following services to help small businesses impacted by the disaster” (no charge for any services):

- Counseling for financial, accounting, marketing and other post-disaster challenges;
- Management and technical assistance;
- Business planning to help business owners re-establish their operations and plan for their future;
- Help in reconstructing damaged or destroyed business records;
- Assistance with updating or rewriting business plans; and,
- Assistance with accessing government contracts and procurement related to the disaster.

The SBA also has Veterans Business Outreach Centers (VBOC) “designed to provide entrepreneurial development, business training, counseling, and mentoring for eligible veterans who own or are starting a small business,” according to SBA.

SBA has but two VBOCs in California — one in Sacramento serving Northern California and one in Carlsbad serving Southern California.

SLO County is considered Southern California and the Carlsbad VBOC contact information is: Phone — (760) 795-8739; email to: socialvboc@miracosta.edu; or see the website at: www.socialvboc.org.

SBA is also affiliated with Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE), a mentorship program which offers expert assistance to anyone trying to start a new business. Mentors are available to help small businesses with their disaster recovery at no charge for individual and team counseling. Services include:

- Free online disaster preparedness/recovery resources for small business at: www.score.org/disaster-preparedness-recovery;
- Matching volunteer business-management mentors with clients in need of expert advice;
- In-depth counseling and training with small business owners and managers;
- Help to identify business problems, determine the causes and find solutions; and,
- Maintaining a confidential and personal relationship.

See the SCORE website at: www.score.org. And finally, SBA also has Women’s Business Centers to help women with their business needs. “WBCs,” SBA said, “provide technical training and counseling to women and others who are currently in business or thinking about starting a business. Assistance is targeted to meet specific needs whether a beginner or seasoned entrepreneur.”

The WBC in SLO County is at the Mission Community Services Corp., 71 Zaca Ln., Ste 130; phone (805) 595-1357; email: info@mcsCorp.org; or see: www.mcsCorp.org to set up an appointment or for more information. WBC also has a website, see: www.awbc.org.

SBA said people should not wait too long to file applications with SBA for disaster assistance.

“It is very important for applicants to initiate an SBA application to ensure recovery options by the March 16, 2023, deadline,” SBA said. “The Economic Injury deadline is Oct. 16, 2023. There is no cost or obligation, and eligibility is based on a case-by-case review for each applicant.”

It should also be noted that SBA is in the business of giving out low interest loans and not grants.

Highway 1 A Big Mess



This photo from Caltrans taken shortly after a Jan. 15 landslide at Mill Creek shows the magnitude of the problem in just this one area. As one can see, the roadway’s western edge was obliterated in the landslide. Photo courtesy Caltrans

By Neil Farrell

Hwy 1 through Big Sur remains a big mess with Caltrans crews and contractors tackling multiple areas where landslides block the iconic, scenic highway or the roadway has become unstable and in need of shoring up.

Here’s a breakdown on Hwy 1 conditions from Caltrans’ Dist. 5 in San Luis Obispo:

- A landslide Jan. 4 at “Polar Star” — located about a mile south of Ragged Point — remains closed while crews repair the landslide and drainage system. As of Estero Bay News’ deadline on Feb. 2, the Polar Star slide was slated to open for a local “resupply convoy” on Friday, Feb. 10, but will remain closed to through traffic.

Caltrans was on schedule to reopen the highway at Polar Star by evening on Sunday, Feb. 12 — weather permitting. But the road is closed once again at Mill Creek (Post Mile 18), where another landslide blocked the highway.

“As work progresses there in the coming weeks,” Caltrans said in its highway update, “Caltrans will be looking for opportunities to allow convoys through at Mill Creek.”

- The Mill Creek slide (PM 18) has two, “spider” excavators working to remove slide materials from a Jan. 15 slip. “The steep slope of the slide and the saturated soil,” Caltrans said, “have slowed progress significantly. A third spider excavator is being deployed to assist in slide removal due to the challenging conditions that exist on site. As slope conditions permit, other heavy equipment will be deployed to accelerate debris removal.”

Caltrans said they hope the slide at Mill Creek can be cleared and the road stabilized in about 6 weeks.

- Another slide, at PM 0.8 in Monterey County is also being cleared by crews, who also have to deal with slope instability, therefore once traffic is let past the Mill Creek Slide area, Caltrans plans to put in a traffic light to regulate one way, reversing traffic flow through the area. Crews are working behind K-rails to stabilize the western edges of the roadway. The road here is down to one lane but it is open.

- Caltrans engineers are designing a fix to repair a retaining wall that failed at PM 20.8 in Monterey County, but the road is open here, for now. “It is anticipated,” Caltrans said, “that both lanes of Highway 1 will remain open during construction efforts.” They did not give a date for when that work might happen.

- A huge slide, located at PM 22 in Monterey County and dubbed “Paul’s Slide” — that area also came down in 2017’s big winter — could prove to be a massive problem.

“New assessments,” Caltrans said, “are providing a picture of the scale of the movement of the slope at PM 22. Drone imagery suggests that this winter’s storms created a large landslide within an even larger magnitude slide.”

Caltrans can’t say when the highway at Paul’s Slide will reopen.

- Crews are clearing another small slide at PM 32.6 near Lime Creek. One-way traffic controls are in place.

- Caltrans said it would have the roadway north of Paul’s Slide reopened by last Friday, Feb. 3. So travel between Paul’s Slide (PM 22) and the closure at Lime Creek (PM 32) should be open as of this report.

However, “Signs at southbound Highway 1 at Lime Creek will alert travelers that the road is closed except for travel by locals,” Caltrans said.

Caltrans explained why it closed Hwy 1 at the Piedras Blancas elephant seal rookery.

“That location was selected as it provides an opportunity for large vehicles to turn around, an opportunity that is largely unavailable north of that location.”

Readers can get updates on road conditions on social media platforms — @CaltransD5 on Twitter; on Facebook at Caltrans Central Coast (District 5); and on Instagram at Caltrans_D5.

Motorists are reminded to drive slowly and cautiously through all construction zones and obey any traffic signals and flagmen they come across. Also, any fines you might get in a construction zone are doubled if you don’t.

Correction

In the last issue of the Estero Bay News many thanks were handed out to all who helped with the storm damage.

Several people wanted to thank Matt Gellerman from Gellerman Constuction for his help in their time of need. He donated his time, crew and services to help flood victims.

There were others who also helped out. Thank you to all who did.

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HAPPY Valentine's DAY

Survey on Power Plant Master Plan



By Neil Farrell

Morro Bay’s past is a key to its future and the City wants residents’ opinions on what should be done with the Morro Bay Power Plant property.

The Morro Bay Power Plant was built in the late 1950s and early 1960s and was a key part of California’s energy grid for over 50 years. For most of that time it was owned by Pacific Gas & Electric, which built the plant, and has changed hands several times sine Duke Energy North America bought it in 1999, along with three other PG&E gas-fired plants — Moss Landing, Pittsburgh, and Oakland.

The Morro Bay plant property is about 117 acres, but the City Master Plan is looking at roughly 95-acres — minus a 22-acre former tank farm site, where Vistra proposes to build a Battery Energy Storage System or BESS — and the City’s survey divvies it up into four main areas.

The first is called the “Embarcadero corridor” the area along Embarcadero that includes a strip of cypress tree-lined land

between the roadway and the plant’s sound wall, as well as the former intake building and parking lot. There are also two small lots that are underwater in the bay.

Second is the site of the 165-foot tall powerhouse with its three, 450-foot tall smokestacks.

Third is an undeveloped area of hillside below Surf Street; and the fourth area is the heavily forested Morro Creek corridor and Lila Keiser Park, which Vistra owns but leases to the City.

“The Master Plan,” the City said in a news release, “will establish a vision and plan for growth and development of the Power Plant site and surrounding area. The survey focuses on land use preferences, circulation improvements, and design amenities.”

Deadline to take the survey is Friday, Feb. 17. It can be found on the City website: www.morrobayca.gov under ‘Hot Topics’ for a direct link.

What can be done with arguably the most desirable portion of the plant — roughly 14 acres where the powerhouse

and stacks sit — is hampered by a deed restriction that PG&E placed on the site when they first sold it to Duke.

In investigations by the State Department of Toxic Substance Control, as part of the plant’s closure, the plant property was given a generally clean bill of health, with the exception of the powerhouse site.

DTSC has said there may or may not be pollutants underneath that area, but it can’t be determined definitely until the building and stacks are removed.

Vistra has pledged to remove the powerhouse and stacks by 2028 or pay the City \$3 million cash.

PG&E’s deed restriction on the site limits future uses to “industrial.” So if a new owner wanted to do something more

with the property they would become responsible for any clean up that is called for by the DTSC.

But there may not be pollutants under the powerhouse building. Indeed DTSC found little pollutants at the other areas it surveyed and tested, including the former fuel oil tank farm, which is where Vistra wants to build its battery storage facility.

The other place they found traces of pollutants was at a former chemical retention and cooling pond, used to temporarily hold caustic chemicals that were used to clean the plant’s boilers.

For more information on the Master Plan and the BESS Project, see: www.morrobayca.gov/bess.

Streets Being Repaired and Repaved

Morro Bay’s Water Reclamation Facility Project is nearing its end and the company that’s been installing pipe down Quintana Road and through town, is now repaving the streets.

Anvil Builders of San Francisco has been laying the multiple pipe conveyance system from the old wastewater treatment plant on Atascadero Road to the new WRF plant on the hill above the terminus of South Bay Boulevard for over two years now.

With the pipes now in the ground and the WRF up and running, it’s time to repair the mess that was made of the streets during the 3.5-mile trenching job.

Work began Feb. 1 with grinding down of the pavement to make room for a new coating of asphalt.

Most of the paving should be completed by now with just one last segment left to complete. If all has gone well, and the weather has cooperated, the repaving work should wind up on Quintana Road from the Roundabout to Main Street sometime Friday, Feb. 10, according to a news release from the City.

ro Road, but the City hadn’t released a schedule for that work before EBN’s deadline.

Construction notices are posted online at: morrobaywrf.com. Email to: wrfinfo@morrobayca.gov or call 877-MORROBAY-H2O with questions about the WRF, and they promise that a team member will get back to you within one business day.

Also, the City is in the midst of its annual street paving program with whole streets being shut closed to traffic while the pavement is ground down and the streets repaved.

Motorists are advised to watch for flagmen, adhere to detour and road closed signs, and drive carefully through active construction zones.



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Tax Deduction
Related to Storms



Californians impacted by winter storms are now eligible to claim a deduction for a disaster loss and will have more time to file their taxes.

“Whether it’s more time to file your taxes or getting a deduction, this tax relief will support Californians who have been impacted by the ongoing storms battering the state,” said Governor Newsom in a news release. “California is working swiftly to get people back on their feet and help communities recover.”

Taxpayers affected by a presidentially declared disaster may claim a deduction for a disaster loss when filing either an original or amended tax year 2022 tax return.

When filing their return, taxpayers should write the name of the disaster in blue or black ink at the top of their tax return to alert FTB. If filing electronically, taxpayers should follow the software instructions to enter disaster information. If a taxpayer receives a late filing or payment penalty notice related to the postponement period, they should call the number on the notice to have the penalty abated.

Additional information and instructions are available by searching FTB Publication 1034, 2022 Disaster Loss: How to Claim a State Tax Deduction.

Disaster victims can receive free copies of their state returns to replace those lost or damaged. To do so, they should use form FTB 3516 and write the name of the disaster in blue or black ink at the top of the request.

Tax Extension

The FTB has extended the filing and payment deadlines for individuals and businesses in California until May 15, 2023.

This relief applies to deadlines falling on or after January 8, 2023, and before May 15, 2023, including the 2022 individual income tax returns due on April 18 and the quarterly estimated tax payments, typically due on January 17, 2023 and April 18, 2023.

Taxpayers affected by the storms qualify for an extension to May 15, 2023 to file individual and business tax returns and make certain tax payments. This includes:

- Individuals whose tax returns and payments are due on April 18, 2023.
- Quarterly estimated tax payments due January 17, 2023 and April 18, 2023.
- Business entities whose tax returns and payments are due on March 15, 2023

County Awards
New Probation
Office Contract



A rendering of the new County Probation Office.

County Supervisors have awarded a construction contract to build a new County Probation Office for more than \$33 million to an out-of-county firm.

Supervisors award the contract to F & H Const., of Lodi, Calif., the lowest of three bidders, for \$33.28 million. Add in a \$1.6 million contingency for any changes that might arise, and the total construction budget tops \$34.8 million.

The County had to adjust the project’s available budget by over \$2.7 million using proceeds from a bond sale to cover the difference.

The project would replace an old office building the Probation Department uses on Bishop Street, at the old General Hospital complex.

Called Casa Lorna, the department’s building dates back to 1940 and “has exceeded its useful life,” reads the staff report from the Jan. 24 meeting.

The County conducted a feasibility study in 2017 to look at the Probation Department’s future needs and concluded the old Casa Lorna wouldn’t cut it. “It was concluded that a new Department building should be developed,” the report said.

Supervisors created the project with the 2018-19 fiscal year budget and plans are to build a 31,500-square foot “two-story Probation Department office building with staff offices, support spaces, secure staff parking and public/visitor parking. The project will be developed in such a way to ensure that the neighboring Child Development Resource Center remains on site and functional per previous Board direction.”

The project had initially required the childcare facility to vacate the premises, which caused an uproar in the community. Supervisors accommodated the facility and changed the project accordingly.

Since then the Supervisors voted to use the “design-build” method of development, which means F & H will both design and construct the new building.

They also voted to first seek qualifications from potential contractors and to give stipends of \$25,000 to the firms that place second and third, in the rankings.

The County got three bids: F & H’s successful bid and losing bidders Harris Const., of Paso Robles and Specialty Const., of SLO.

But F & H’s contract plus the contingency isn’t even the totality of the project, as the County also budgeted \$2.2 million for “other building and site costs;” and \$2.2 million in “soft costs” for a grand total project estimated cost of \$40 million. The County has already spent over \$928,000 on the project.

When it’s done, the new building will “include features that meet or exceed the intent of the County’s Energywise Plan,” which the Supervisors adopted in November 2011. “The features will assist in reducing ongoing operation and maintenance costs and include, but not be limited to:

- Meeting or exceeding the requirement of the U.S. Green Building Council’s Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Silver rating (without formal certification);
- Site and building commissioning of all installed systems for maximum efficiency and performance;
- Installation of electric vehicle charging stations;
- A rooftop photovoltaic electrical power generation system; and,
- Installation of infrastructure for future electric battery storage system.”

F & H is offering to include some additional amenities — an outdoor exercise patio; site plan with increased landscape area; and “enhanced exterior elevations incorporating durable materials beyond what was specified.”

The project doesn’t include money to demolish the old Casa Lorna building. Public Works is planning to return to the board on that aspect at a later date.

With the County using bonds to pay for this project (as well as the new dispatch center in Templeton and rebuilding the Cayucos Vet’s Hall), the new Probation Department office payoff will be more than \$70.8 million paid in annual installments of \$2.8 million for 25 years.

Students Donate AED



Erin Brown, Julie Marshall, Caine Marshall (Portola Built Construction), Meghan Calmere, Osie Reyes, Ali Marshall, Mimi Rodriguez (ECHO), Wyatt Marshall (Cuesta EMT), Logan Knuckles (Cuesta EMT), David Kline (Cuesta EMT), Lauren Lepe (Cuesta EMT), Michael Smiley (Public Safety Development Group), Joan Reilly (AEDs for Hearts). Fifteen other donors were unable to make it.

Students in the Cuesta College EMT program presented the El Camino Homeless Organization (ECHO) with two Automatic External Defibrillators (AEDs). The life-saving equipment went to ECHO locations in Paso Robles and Atascadero. The students created this project and raised the funds through their class, friends, and family.

ECHO (www.echoshelter.org) was established in 2001 and provides comprehensive services to residents facing homelessness. The Public Safety Development Group (www.publicsafetydg.org), a new local non-profit organization, was excited to provide consultation to the students and facilitate the donation to a great organization like ECHO. AEDs for Hearts (www.aedsforhearts.com), another locally owned business, was also supported the Cuesta EMT students by providing one AED at a reduced cost then generously offered to match the students by donating a second AED to their project.



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News Briefs

By Theresa-Marie Wilson

Redistricting Law Suit Could Reach Settlement

A lawsuit opposing the redistricting map adopted by the San Luis Obispo County Board of Supervisors in December 2022 could reach a conclusion.

The League of Women Voters and SLO County Citizens for Good Government say that the “Patten map was adopted in an illegal manner and should be replaced with a fair and representative map.”

At a closed session of the Board on Tuesday, January 24, 3 of the 5 supervisors voted to direct county counsel to enter into settlement talks on the redistricting case.

The next Case Management Conference is scheduled for February 9 (post press time) at 1:30 p.m. If the case does not result in a settlement, then the trial of SLOCCGG’s claim under the Public Records Act is scheduled for March 30 at 1:30 p.m. The trial of the claims by SLOCCGG and the League that the current map violates the Fair Maps Act will be held on June 20 at 8:30 a.m.

All hearings take place Dept. 5 of SLO Superior Court and will be available for viewing on Zoom at <http://bit.ly/3jpMc4z>. Changes to these scheduled events may occur, and if the case results in a settlement, these hearings will not take place.

SLO Broadband Survey

Do you own or work at a business in SLO or even hang out in one that uses the internet? The City of San Luis Obispo is conducting a study of internet availability as part of a citywide Broadband Strategic Plan to ensure every household and business has access to high-speed and affordable internet service.

As part of this project, the City is gathering first-hand information from community members through an online survey running through February 15, 2023. Take the survey at www.slocity.org/broadband.

The City is working with a national consulting and engineering firm, Magellan, to explore improvements to fiber broadband coverage for people who live in, work in, and regularly visit the City of San Luis Obispo. Magellan is designing an expanded broadband network to meet the City’s growing needs and support broadband service to business and residential communities. The strategic plan is focused on expansion of broadband access and adoption

within the community to bridge the digital divide.

The online survey is only the first step in the process of building the strategic plan; there are community workshops and focus groups planned in the coming weeks, in which Magellan will be meeting with local residents, businesses, stakeholders, and community groups to understand the how to chart a path forward that achieves high-speed, affordable broadband service across the City.

Information from the survey will only be used for broadband planning purposes and will not be shared with any other entity.

This project is funded through a \$100,300 grant from the California Public Utilities Commission.

Cal Poly Tax Help

With tax season underway, trained and certified Cal Poly accounting students will once again offer free tax help through the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program. Three CPAs have also volunteered their services.

The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) administers VITA to provide free basic tax return preparation for low- and moderate-income taxpayers; there are VITA clinics nationwide. Cal Poly students are volunteering at clinics at Cal Poly and two off-campus sites: Oceano and Santa Maria. Another non-student VITA clinic is in Atascadero.

While the tax filing deadline for most is April 18, the IRS extended the deadline to May 15 to California counties impacted by the storms. That includes San Luis Obispo County.

VITA appointments can be made at MyFreeTaxes.org.

Lopez Drive Bridge Work



Planning a trip out to Lopez Lake to check out the increased water the storms left us? Plan ahead for roadwork.

The County of San Luis Obispo Public Works Department began work preparing for seismically retrofitting the Lopez Drive Bridge in Arroyo Grande over Lopez Lake. This first phase of work consists of installing environmental equipment to allow for retrofitting work to start later this spring.

Work is expected to run from Monday, Jan. 30 through Wednesday, March 1, from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. and 6 p.m. to 7 a.m. Monday through Friday, weather permitting.

Construction signs and lane closures with flagging will be placed in advance of the work to notify the traveling public. Motorists may experience intermittent delays.

“The retrofit is a public-safety project expected to begin later this year,” County officials said in a news release. “Strengthening the seismically vulnerable bridge now will prevent a sudden bridge collapse during an earthquake event. Retrofitting will consist of constructing new support columns and seismic cable restraints beneath the bridge.”

Shimmick Construction Company, Inc. was awarded the contract for \$9,268,771 to perform the work. The project is funded by the Federal Highway Administration via grant funding administered by the Caltrans Highway Bridge Program.

Boys and Girls Club Lands Big Grant

The San Luis Obispo County’s Department of Public Health awarded the Boys & Girls Clubs of Mid Central Coast \$300,000 from funds from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA).

Funds will enable the BGCMCC to decrease the number of youth in the county on waiting lists who need out of school childcare at County club sites. This will also help to ensure that all enrolled members are provided the evidence-based programming they desire in order to confirm that out- of- school attendance is worthwhile for them.

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



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Los Osos Woman Gets Prison for Halloween Crash

A Los Osos woman who killed a bicyclist while driving drunk in 2018, has been sentenced to State Prison, after she did it again last October, though without any fatalities this second time.

District Attorney Dan Dow announced that Gianna Catherine Brencola, 23 of Los Osos, was sentenced to 6-years in State Prison for a Halloween night crash in the 700 block of The Embarcadero in Morro Bay.

Last Oct. 31, Brencola crashed her car into four parked cars and reportedly tried to flee the scene but was detained by two witnesses to the crashes.

The D.A. said, "One of the people physically removed Brencola from her vehicle while the other put her car in park and removed the keys from the ignition." She apparently tried to buy her way out of her mess.

"During the intervention," the release said, "Brencola offered one of them money to let her go from the scene before police responded."

Judge Patrick Duffy sentenced Brencola to six years, "based on her plea," the release said. "The driving while under the influence charge carries a maximum sentence of three years, which is doubled due to her prior conviction for vehicular manslaughter while intoxicated, a 'strike' under California's Three Strikes sentencing law."

Back in 2018, Brencola was driving on Foothill Boulevard in SLO late at night when she struck and killed Cal Poly student Kennedy Love, who was riding a bicycle at the time.

She successfully fled the scene of that crime, but was soon arrested and eventually convicted of vehicular manslaughter and hit-and-run resulting in death, and sentenced to seven years in State Prison.

However, thanks to her participating in a "community re-entry program" while in prison, the State Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation released her in December 2019, after serving just over a year in prison.

And now, "Less than two years after her early release," the news release said, "she committed this dangerous crime."



Gianna Brencola

D.A. Dow was none too happy about this sad case. "Driving drunk again," he said, "after already serving a prison term for killing someone while driving under the influence of alcohol or other drugs, is without excuse. Our criminal and victim justice system cannot force rehabilitation because each person must make their own decision to take advantage of the resources that have been provided. "We plead with Ms. Brencola to stop her dangerous behavior and to take responsibility for her future by making the necessary choices to change."

The most recent case was investigated by the Morro Bay Police Department and prosecuted by Deputy D.A. Lindsey Bittner. The previous manslaughter case was handled by the San Luis Obispo Police Department.

Four Arrests in South County Thefts



Catalytic converters, power tools and burglary tools were among the suspected stolen items deputies found in a car in Nipomo.

Sheriff's deputies busted up an apparent gaggle of suspected thieves following a suspicious vehicle report out of Nipomo.

According to Sheriff's spokesman, Tony Cipolla, at about 7:50 a.m. on Jan. 24 deputies received a suspicious vehicle report in the 500 block of Sunnydale Dr., Nipomo. But the suspicious car was gone before they arrived.

"The vehicle," Cipolla said, "was later located being driven southbound on Highway 101 and a traffic stop was conducted near the Tefft Street off ramp in Nipomo."

Deputies discovered three people inside the car. "All three occupants of the vehicle," Cipolla said, "Pedro Enriquez Bautista, Alexis Antonio Gomez, and Maritza Serena Hernandez had outstanding arrest warrants."

Bautista, 32, is from Santa Maria; Gomez, 25, is from

Arroyo Grande; and Hernandez, 28, hails from Santa Maria, according to the news release. Deputies searched the vehicle and discovered a trove of ill-gotten spoils.

"In the vehicle," Cipolla said, "deputies located stolen mail and packages, along with three catalytic converters, power tools and burglary tools." The three were arrested on suspicion of grand theft, conspiracy to commit a crime, and possession of stolen property.

The investigation reportedly led deputies to a motel in Arroyo Grande where they located additional suspected stolen mail and packages, Cipolla said, as well as burglary tools.

The occupant of that room, Duane Patrick James, Jr., 29 of Santa Barbara also had an outstanding felony arrest warrant, Cipolla said. He was also arrested for suspicion of mail theft. All four suspects were booked into County Jail for their warrants and for these additional new transgressions.

It should be noted that deputies had not received reports of catalytic converter thefts in that area, and it was an observant citizen who spotted the suspicious car and called 9-1-1.

Grover Man Gets Life for Morro Woman's Murder

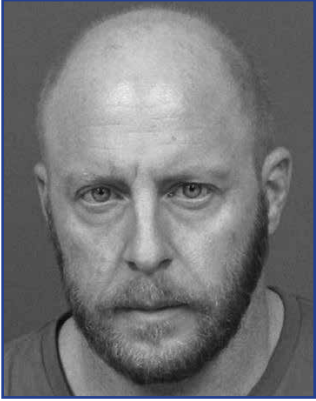
A Grover Beach man convicted of killing a former Morro Bay resident in 2018 has been given a long prison sentence for his crime.

District Attorney Dan Dow's office said Robert W. Koehler, IV, 40 of Grover Beach was sentenced to 56-years to life in State Prison for the murder of Kristen Marti.

Marti, a former resident of Morro Bay who was reportedly homeless at the time of her murder, went missing on Jan. 9, 2018, according to the news release.

It was a month before she was reported missing by a family member and two more months before San Luis Obispo Police, who led the investigation into Marti's disappearance, discovered her decomposed body March 25 hidden in Prefumo Creek in a remote area off Prefumo Canyon Road.

"Computer forensics and other investigative tools," the



Robert Koehler

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Community

Knights Donate to Kindness Coalition

By Neil Farrell

The local Knights of Columbus again showed some kindness for the Estero Bay Kindness Coalition who help make sure that local needy families can feed their children.

Ron Vasconcellos, the grand knight of the Knights of Columbus, Council No. 5175, was on hand recently to give a donation of \$500 to Bobby DeLancellotti, the founder of the Kindness Coalition at the organization's food pantry on North Main Street at the Avocado Shack.

The Knights, who are affiliated with St. Timothy's in Morro Bay, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton in Los Osos and St. Joseph's Catholic Church in Cayucos, normally use coffee and goodies sales at the Annual Lighted Boat Parade to fund this donation. But as Estero Bay readers know, the parade was cancelled due to bad weather last December.

Vasconcellos said, "We donated last year and want to do it annually." So the Knights dipped into their coffers to support the coalition this year. It's hoped the weather doesn't rain on next December's boat parade.



The local Knights of Columbus donated \$500 to the Estero Bay Kindness Coalition and its food program for local schools kids. Pictured from left are: Grand Knight Ron Vasconcellos; Pamela Harris with the Kindness Coalition; John Lalley of the Knights of Columbus; Coalition founder Bobby DeLancellotti; and Avocado Shack owner, Michael Wolfe. Photo by Neil Farrell

The Kindness Coalition, started by DeLancellotti, his wife and a handful of volunteers, began when DeLancellotti, a pastor by trade, sought a way to help local school kids at Del Mar Elementary, which has a lot of children on the free lunch program.

news release said, "led law enforcement to identify Koehler as the suspected murderer." Investigators went hi-tech to solve the case.

"Evidence introduced at trial revealed that Koehler contacted Kristen using secretive social media apps in order to entice her to his location through his persistent offer of providing her with cocaine," the news release said. "Although Kristen's body was found in a stream buried under rocks, the forensic medical examination revealed cocaine and Tiletamine, a drug that causes a human body to become immobilized, in her bloodstream. In addition, she was found to have suffered numerous knife wounds to her throat and wounds indicating that she had fought back to protect herself from the violent attack."

Last July, after an eight-week trial, Koehler was convicted of first-degree murder using a knife. Koehler had a previous conviction for carjacking, which is a strike under the Three Strikes Law.

Superior Court Judge Jesse Marino gave Koehler the maximum sentence allowed — 56-years to life — based on Koehler's conviction.

"Today," D.A. Dow said, "we finally have justice for Kristen Marti five years after she was brutally murdered. This defendant should spend the rest of his life in state prison and today's sentence should make that possible."

"We are grateful to each of our law enforcement partners and search and rescue volunteers who never gave up searching for Kristen. Finally, we must thank the members of the jury for their service and their verdict that made today's just sentence possible."

At the sentencing hearing several of Marti's family members, including Kristen's mother and father, described to the Court "the devastation and sadness resulting from the loss of Kristen."

This case was investigated by the SLOPD with assistance from the County Sheriff's Office and the District Attorney's Bureau of Investigation and D.A.'s Central Coast Cyber-Forensic Laboratory.

The prosecution team was led by Chief Deputy D.A. Lisa B. Muscari, who supervises sexual assault, child abuse, intimate partner violence, juvenile, and mentally disordered offender prosecutions.

What emerged was the "We got your back" a program wherein the coalition fills a backpack with enough food for two days that the kids take home every Friday, returning the empty packs on Mondays to be refilled.

The immediate popularity of the program showed what tremendous need there was in the community.

Pamela Harris, one of the coalition's original volunteers who now manages the food pantry, said the backpacks contain two breakfasts, two lunches and two dinners. And from what started as just a handful of Del Mar kids, has blossomed into a regional food program, serving hundreds of kids from several local schools.

Harris explained that they got lists of needy students from the schools and drop off the packs at the various school campuses.

"We started with 10 backpacks," said Harris, who added that she "does the shopping" for the organization.

That shopping includes to an Amazon Wish List, wherein they can order food stuffs and have it shipped directly to the pantry on North Main Street.

They also partner with the County Food Bank where they receive some 1,200 pounds of non-perishable food and fresh vegetables. So each backpack now has non-perishables and a bag of veggies, Harris said.

During COVID, when local schools were closed for remote learning, Harris said they were delivering directly to the families' doors. They were delivering to 79 families in Los Osos, and 87 in Morro Bay via some 19 volunteers drivers.

Now, they have a total of about 90 kids from Cambria, Cayucos, and Morro Bay, but not Los Osos, which she said has a whole different setup. "We're looking for a place in Los Osos so we can expand," Harris said.

She said the program has spread through word of mouth and "If someone is 'under resourced' we'd be glad to help you." They added five more families after the recent storms.

Harris said using donated funds, they "shop" at Costco, Grocery Outlet, the Dollar Stores, and online they buy from Target, Amazon and Walmart.

If readers would like to donate to the cause, they can get information from the coalition's website, see: esterobay-kindnesscoalition.org.

Monday Dinner Served During Big Storm



The Morro Bay Lion's Club fed folks at the Vet's Hall during the storm, even during a power outage.

The big storm of Jan. 8-9 wreaked havoc across the Estero Bay area, but determined volunteers made sure a free community dinner was held — even if by candlelight.

According to a post on the Morro Bay Lion's Club's Facebook Page, Monday, Jan. 9 at the Morro Bay Vet's Hall was, "a cold, dark, building with no electricity and under flood conditions."

For 9 years, local churches, volunteers and the Lion's Club have collaborated to provide free hot meals to hungry people every Monday Night at the Vet's Hall. Different churches and organizations trade off providing the meals, which are open to anyone. It's been a big success.

"469 [sic] is now the magic number of consecutive Monday Night Dinners that have been provided by our caring volunteers and contributing organizations," reads the Lions' Facebook post.

But Jan. 9 was unusual after the power went out at the Vet's Hall. "North Morro Church," the post explained, "prepped and served the dinner. Not all of the volunteers that work the event were able to come in and help."

"In spite of the heavy rains, flooding, road closures, and lack of manpower, the program was able to serve 25 meals. An additional 25 meals were delivered to the Community Center, one of a couple of locations housing displaced residents of Morro Bay." The dinner was served by candlelight, but the Vet's Hall has gas ovens and stoves.

The dinner in the midst of one of the area's worst storms ever, is another example of how local residents stepped up to the plate to help out during that terrible storm.

Estero Bay News, salutes the Lion's Club and North Morro Church — indeed all the folks involved with the Monday Night Dinners — who didn't let that terrible storm stop their inspirational work.

The post summed up the club's sentiments by saying, "Thank You! Thank You! Thank You!"

— Photo courtesy Morro Bay Lion's Club

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Police Blotter



- **Jan. 28:** Police responded to a home in the 800 block of Pacific Street where some swamp donkey had vandalized the place.
- **Jan. 28:** Police stopped a suspicious vehicle somewhere on Main Street. The 64-year-old lady driver was nicked for suspicion of driving schnuckered and was cited and released presumably to someone who wasn't inebriated.
- **Jan. 27:** Police contacted a suspicious woman somewhere on Quintana Road. The 42-year-old probationer was determined to be unable to take care of herself — despite her age inferring otherwise — and hauled away for drunk and disorderly conduct and her probation violated.
- **Jan. 26:** Police responded to Main Street Antiques where some slime ball had broken in sometime between 5 p.m. Jan. 25 and 9:45 a.m. on the 26th.
- **Jan. 26:** Police responded to a disturbance on Napa Avenue. Logs indicated police arrested a 31-year-old woman for suspicion of aggravated assault against a man whose relationship to the battleaxe was not disclosed.
- **Jan. 26:** Police stopped a suspicious vehicle somewhere on Main Street. The 36-year-old driver, of course, had a suspended license and no insurance, so he was given the ol' one-two punch.
- **Jan. 23:** Police contacted a suspicious woman who was reportedly trespassing on private property somewhere on Quintana Road. When police ran her name she, of course, had three out-of-county bench warrants and got took to jail.
- **Jan. 24:** Police contacted yet another suspicious chap in the 800 block of Olive. The 46-year-old model citizen had one arrest warrant, which landed him in the Parkinson Plaza, and becomes the latest example of why we need SWAT.
- **Jan. 23:** Police contacted a suspicious woman reportedly trying to break into McDonalds on Quintana Road. Officers discovered she had an arrest warrant and she was fitted for a pair of steel bracelets for the ride to face the music.
- **Jan. 23:** Police contacted another suspicious dingus,

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30, hanging around on Main Street. This scofflaw had five bench warrants and was cited and released to no doubt go laugh his head off.

• **Jan. 21:** Police stopped a suspicious vehicle in the 1700 block of Main for some apparent code violation. Logs indicated the 23-year-old hombre driving was sent to the hoosegow for suspicion of driving on a toot.

• **Jan. 21:** Police contacted a woman suspiciously laid out on the sidewalk in the 300 block of Surf. Logs indicated the 41-year-old lass was drunk off her a**. She got arrested for suspicion of being smashed but apparently not for obstructing the sidewalk, as some things can no doubt be forgiven.

• **Jan. 20:** Police stopped a suspicious vehicle (sorry, logs didn't give a time) in the 1200 block of Main. The 42-year-old woman driver got dinged for a suspended license, a hanging offense in Califreakornia.

• **Jan. 19:** Police were sent at 7:30 p.m. to a reported fight between three men in the 2400 block of Reno Ct. Logs indicated one of the apparent pugilists was poo-pooed and got arrested for suspicion of being tanked in public and possession of paraphernalia. No word on whether his missing stash started the fight.

• **Jan. 19:** Police stopped a suspicious vehicle somewhere on Atascadero Road with expired registration tags. Police investigated the woman driver, and then wrote her up for not having current tags and expired registration. She was cited and released but her car was arrested, which hardly seems fair.

• **Jan. 18:** Police were called to Albertson's Market for a reported disturbance. Logs indicated they contacted some annoying flesh monkey who was allegedly clearly intoxicated and tossed him into the dungeon to sleep it off.

• **Jan. 18:** Police responded to Albertson's Market where some apparent scamboogah had used the help-yourself line.

• **Jan. 18:** Police responded to an undisclosed address on Kern where some apparent Nodcock rode off with a bicycle. On the other hand, on Jan. 16 someone turned in a bicycle they'd found abandoned on Morro Cove Road, returning balance to the force.

• **Jan. 18:** Police stopped a suspicious vehicle at an undisclosed location in town for some no doubt trumped up

Statute of Limitations Reform for Child Sexual Abuse

Assemblymember Dawn Addis (D-Morro Bay) and Senator Nancy Skinner (D-Berkeley), the Chair of the Legislative Women's Caucus, introduced AB 452, the Justice for Survivors Act. The legislation ends California's civil statute of limitations for minors who have experienced sexual abuse and removes barriers that prevent survivors from seeking justice against their abusers and the institutions that concealed or ignored their claims.

"I am immensely proud to author the Justice for Survivors Act with my colleague, Senator Skinner," Addis said. "By eliminating the civil statute of limitations for child sexual abuse, we are helping survivors come forward to seek the critical closure they need. It's time to end this arbitrary and cruel time limit on justice."

Under current law, survivors who experience sexual assault as minors only have until their 40th birthday to seek justice in civil court.

"There are good reasons why survivors of sexual assault and abuse may take years or decades to confront their experience," Skinner said. "This delay can be due to the complex ways in which we process trauma, and for self-protection, suppress painful memories. These incidents of abuse are often accompanied by threats of harm, feelings of shame, or the very legitimate fear of not being believed. It's unacceptable and cruel that many California

code violation. The 22-year-old driver got cited for a real neck-stretcher — a suspended license.

• **Jan. 17:** Police contacted a suspicious woman in the 300 block of Surf. The 79-year old had two bench warrants and was given a future third and released.

• **Jan. 17:** Police contacted a suspicious woman at 2:43 p.m. on Surf Street who had a bench warrant. While being arrested, police allegedly found illegal drugs and added it to her rap sheet.

• **Jan. 16:** Police were called to a disturbance at 10:47 p.m. in the 1000 block of Main. Logs indicated they contacted a 20-year-old fellow during what turned out to be a "family disturbance." The scofflaw had three bench warrants and was cited and released with a new promise to appear and no doubt an order to shaddup already!

• **Jan. 16:** Police contacted a 45-year-old woman at 4 p.m. in the 500 block of Kings. Logs indicated she too was a naughty girl with a bench warrant and was issued another disappearance ticket and released to catch another day.

• **Jan. 16:** Police responded at 4:11 p.m. to a bit of nastiness in the 600 block of Quintana. Logs indicated police contacted a 30-year-old apparent jackanape regarding a report of a little indecent exposure. The officer reported observing that the fellow had "objective signs and symptoms of being under the influence of a controlled substance" and was nicked for being fit-shaded in public, possession of drugs and more.

• **Jan. 16:** Some citizen turned in a knife that he or she found sometime earlier someplace in town.

• **Jan. 16:** At 10:43 a.m. police contacted a suspicious fellow in the 400 block of Quintana apparently at the creek bed estates. The 30-year-old delinquent had four bench warrants and got hauled to the gaol to await an audience with the judge.

• **Jan. 16:** Police contacted a 30-year-old man at 9:41 a.m. in the 500 block of Quintana. Logs indicated the apparent anarchist had eight bench warrants and was arrested. A search of his "property," no doubt packed neatly in a shopping cart, allegedly uncovered both drug paraphernalia and suspected fentanyl. Police added suspicion of possession of paraphernalia and illegal drugs to his long list of woes.


victims of childhood sex abuse are unable to hold their abusers accountable because our law now says their time has run out. AB 452 will right this wrong by eliminating the deadline for taking civil action against child abusers and those who aided or allowed the abuse to happen or covered it up."

Last year, President Joe Biden signed the Eliminating Limits to Justice for Child Sex Abuse Victims Act, which removed statute of limitations for people who were sexually abused as minors to file civil claims in federal courts. Subsequently, numerous states have eliminated the statutes at the state level.

"There is an epidemic of child sexual abuse, with 13.5 percent of children at risk of being sexually assaulted before their 18th birthday, many repeatedly. Society must protect children through statutes of limitations reform," said Kathryn Robb, executive director of Child USA advocacy. "There is a national movement sweeping across the country to reform our laws, with many jurisdictions passing elimination, extension and revival legislation for child sexual abuse claims. These are not typical torts, and they demand an atypical response. Bravo to California for acting once again to protect children and honor justice."

AB 452 now awaits referral to its first policy committee.

This is my cute, I didn't do it face. Is is working yet?



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Every Color Deserves a Forever Home

Los Osos Cares Receives Dignity Health Grant

By Ruth Ann Angus

Dignity Health Central Coast awarded nearly \$400,000 in grant funding to seven non-profit community organizations. Los Osos Cares received a \$75,000 grant for their humanitarian efforts.

The \$393,172 in grant monies were awarded through the Community Improvement Grants Program created by Dignity's parent company, CommonSpirit Health. At the close of January, Linda Quesenberry, acting as fiscal agent for the Estero Bay Resource and Outreach Project, joined with six other organization leaders at an awards ceremony at Marian Regional Medical Center to accept the award.

The intent of the program is to help non-profit organizations with an interest in building healthier communities by improving health and living conditions. Criteria for this funding cycle was based on the priority areas identified in the hospital's Community Benefits Report and Plan and Community Health Needs Assessment: Educational Attainment, Access to Primary Care including Behavioral Health and Oral Health, and Health Promotion and Prevention.

An additional requirement was that funding help underserved populations such as seniors, needy families,



An awards ceremony was held at Marion Regional Center to honor grant recipients. Picture are: Patty Herrera of Dignity Health; Linda Quesenberry, executive director of Los Osos Cares; Maureen Titus of Saint Benedicts Church; and Patrick Caster of Dignity Health.

Photo courtesy of Dignity Health

and the homeless. The grant requires that there be collaboration indicated with three or more other organizations that share distinct, complementary, and substantive project roles.

The Estero Bay Resource and Outreach Project is made up of member organizations in the Accountable Care Community that provides assistance to the underserved including access to the resource center, clean laundry programs, nutritious meals and food delivery, assistance accessing healthcare and healthcare education, continuing

education/scholarships, information such as community resource guides and computer access, referrals, community meetings, emergency basic needs and transportation assistance, and a senior program that includes computer classes and the Estero Bay RUOK outreach program.

Funds from the \$75,000 grant will be shared with: Los Osos Cares Inc, Wilshire Community Services, Morro Bay Lions Club, St. Benedict's Episcopal Church, Transitions Mental Health Association, City of Morro Bay Resource Connection, Monarch Dream Center at Cuesta College and French Hospital Medical Center.

Other organizations awarded grant monies from Dignity Health are MARBLE, Multi-tiered Youth Mental Wellness Project; Oral Health to Care: Service Expansion for Uninsured and Underinsured; 5 Cities Wellness Connection for People experiencing Homelessness; Senior and Caregiver Support; Youth Leadership and Education Project, Santa Maria Stabilization Center.

For more information about Los Osos Cares, go to losososcares.com.

Takin' Care of BUSINESS

By Theresa-Marie Wilson

Brightside Pizza Ribbon Cutting



The Los Osos-Baywood Park Chamber of Commerce held its first ribbon cutting and mixer of the year at Brightside Pizza last week. Owners Ashley and Jeremiah Bright served up pizza and drinks during prize drawings in their family-friendly location at 1236 Los Osos Valley Rd Ste A.

Prizewinners included Dave Feldman, who won wine donated by Grocery Outlet. Colleen Vecchetti, Annette Sheely, and Tom Cross won Coffee donated by SLO Roast Coffee.

Chamber Board members Tom Cross, president; Cur-

Takin' Care of Business Continued on page 10



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Community

Takin' Care of Business From page 9

tis Armstrong, president-elect; and Colleen Vecchetti. Gary Dove, Jonathan Means. Marshall Ochylski, and Jim Stanfill were among the attendees.

Ribbon Cutting at Coast Electronics



The Morro Bay Chamber of Commerce held a ribbon cutting for one of the city’s longtime business members, Coast Electronics located at 510 Quintana Rd. Coast Electronics was founded by father and son team Dick and John Weiss in 1978. The Chamber and members of the community turned out to celebrate 44 years of service. The store carries merchandise for your electronics, computer, home theater, and car stereo installation needs. They also sell some of the top brands in the industry such as SONY, LG, Yamaha, and more. They are also an authorized retail location for Spectrum internet and phone services. Coast Electronics also has locations in San Luis Obispo and Paso Robles. For more information, go to coastelectronics.com or give them a call at 805-772-1265.

Love is in the Air at Woods

In celebration of Valentine’s Day, Woods Humane Society has a special that could help readers find true love. The “Love is in the Air” adoption event runs through February 14. The promotion reduces standard adoption fees to \$14 for adult pets (5 months or older), down from the typical range of \$65 for senior cats to \$150 for adult dogs. “At a time when our kennels and those of our shelter partners are absolutely brimming with adoptable animals eager to give their hearts to a family, Valentine’s Day seems like a great reason to remind our community of the incredible love and companionship they can find by adopting a shelter pet,” said Woods CEO Neil Trent.

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In creating the artwork for the adoption special, Woods asked the community for submissions of photos demonstrating their love for their pets and received more than 200 submissions on Facebook in one weekend. The selected photo (above) shows recently adopted Woods dog Indi with owner Robyn Friedman O’Leary, a three-time adopter, long-time foster volunteer, and supporter of Woods. “In the short time Indi has joined our family, she has become a happy, confident dog who loves to meet new people and other dogs,” said O’Leary. “She has learned so many manners and, most of all, brings us love and joy every day. She is simply fabulous and does something every day that makes us all laugh.” All animals available for adoption have been spayed/neutered, vaccinated, microchipped, licensed, and treated for parasites. Adoptions also include a voluntary 30 days of pet insurance and a free wellness exam at a local vet clinic. Woods Humane Society is located at 875 Oklahoma Ave., San Luis Obispo, and at 2300 Ramona Rd., Atascadero, CA 93422, and is open to the public daily from 12-5 p.m., with adoption hours from 12-4 p.m. For more information about Woods, visit www.WoodsHumane.org or call (805) 543-9316.

New Director Named to RBOC

Recreational Boaters of California (RBOC) has a new director. Judi Sheesley took the helm of the non-profit government advocacy organization that works with lawmakers to inform them of California boaters’ needs and to advocate boater positions on legislation and regulations.

Directors work with the professional lobbyists to testify in hearings, and to communicate support, opposition or requests for amendments. This is a three-year term. Judi is one of nine directors for Southern California and will be representing the Central Coast from Ventura to Monterey. Judi is also a delegate for Southern California Yachting Association for Morro Bay Yacht Club. SCYA holds regular membership meetings featuring guest speakers on a variety of boating topics; the meetings are a networking opportunity for members and leadership teams to connect with other yacht club officers and board members. Judi can be contacted at Sheesley@rboc.org.



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

You’re Invited: Family-Friendly Community Open House at the New Water Resources Center!

The City of Morro Bay cordially invites you to celebrate the completion of the Water Reclamation Facility Program and visit the Morro Bay Water Resources Center!

DATE
Thursday, Feb. 23, 2023

TIME
1–4 p.m.

Please note:
Visitors must RSVP and reserve their tour by Tuesday, Feb. 21, 2023

LOCATION
Morro Bay Water Resources Center
555 South Bay Boulevard
Morro Bay, CA 93442

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Community

Events and Activities

By Theresa-Marie Wilson

Cambria Center for the Arts continues its presentation of New Beginnings, a local artist's cooperative featuring fine arts and crafts. Original oil paintings, watercolors, pottery, jewelry and other unique gifts are on display and available for purchase now, all created by the many local Cambrian artists. The exhibit is open to the public through February 26. Admission is free. Visitors are welcomed Friday, Saturday and Sunday from 12-4 p.m. They are located at 1350 Main Street, Cambria. For membership and exhibit details visit CCA's website: <https://cambriaarts.org/home>.

...



Place your orders now. Members of the Rotary Club of Morro Bay, headed up by Dan Costley, will fire up their BBQs again on March 15 in support of the community. Take home a full-size Spencer's premium tri-tip roast along with ranch-style beans, garden salad with ranch dressing, hot sourdough garlic bread loaf and salsa. This is a complete meal that serves six. Tickets are \$55 and are available at morrobayrotary.org. All proceeds go to the club's "Help Us Help Others" Campaign, which provides services to our community.

Pick-up is from 5 – 6 p.m. on Wednesday, March 15 at Carla's Country Kitchen at 213 Beach St. Morro Bay.

...

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

Paws to Read - Wednesdays, 3:15-4:15 p.m.

Come and read your favorite book to Berkeley! She's



at the Los Osos Library on Wednesday afternoons. School Age. Featured Artists - Wall artist TBD Display Case is Stanley Stern with his Blue Glass

Storytime - Thursdays, 10:30-11 a.m.

Stories, dance, and music for toddlers and preschoolers.

Stay Young with Qi Gong! - Fridays, 9 – 10 a.m. (rain cancels)

Qi Gong is a system for physical, mental and spiritual development that has roots dating back thousands of years in China. It consists of flowing movements and meditations that cultivate life force energy (called qi by the Chinese). The basics of qi gong are not difficult to learn and practice, and are particularly beneficial for older adults. Instructor Devin Wallace was certified to teach by qi gong master Lee Holden. Devin has taught at hospitals, fitness and yoga centers and also does private classes.

E-Device Class - Wednesdays, 9:15-10 a.m.

Bring your electronic device in and Diana will do her best to answer any questions you have.

Gardening Event - Saturday, February 11, 10 -11 a.m.

Hope Merkle from Los Osos Valley Nursery will talk about: What to plant, When to plant, How to plant, and more. Librarian Antoinette will talk about the library's Seed Library. All adults are invited to attend.

Family Movie - Saturday, February 11, 2 p.m.

Featuring "Encanto." It's rated PG. The library provides popcorn Everyone is invited to attend this wonderful movie!

Book Discussion - Thursday, February 16, 5:30-6:45 p.m.

Discuss the Cuesta Book of the Year, "All My Rage." No need to sign up ahead of time. Just show up. Call the library for details.

...

Experience Nature Nights, an eight-acre experience in light and art, Friday through Sunday evenings through March 19 plus February 14, Valentine's Day at the SLO Botanical Garden.

This immersive experience features digital imagery by Bryn Forbes, Michael Reddell's wire sculptures and artistic lighting of the garden by lighting designer, Kody Cava.

Wine, beer, beverages and snacks available for purchase.



chase. Tickets are \$24.75 plus fees for adults, children 12 and under are \$14.75 plus fees, and toddlers, 2 and under are free. Times, dates and tickets are available at My805Tix.com.

...

The Man in Black is back. The San Luis Obispo Repertory Theater (SLOREP) will produce "Rick of Fire — The Music of Johnny Cash" — a tribute to one of the few people who have been inducted into both the Country Music and Rock-n-Roll Hall of Fames.

"This unique, original musical," SLOREP said in a news release, "includes more than two dozen classic hits, from "I Walk The Line," "A Boy Named Sue" "Folsom Prison Blues" to the title tune — performed by a multi-talented 5-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 musical legend.

The show opens Friday, Feb. 10 and runs Wednesdays-Saturdays, through March 12. Wednesday-Saturday shows are at 7 p.m. with Sunday matinees at 2 p.m.

Shows are at the SLOREP Theater, 888 Morro Ave., in Downtown SLO. Tickets range from \$40-\$60 and are available online at: www.slorep.org or by calling 805-786-2440.

...

Art Center Morro Bay, 835 Main Street, Morro Bay, presents a free pastel demonstration with award-winning artist, Greg Trombly on March 13, from 3- 5 p.m.

This demonstration will explore basic composition, drawing techniques, color and value with a variety of soft pastels. Interaction with the artist is welcome and encouraged.

Trombly holds undergraduate and graduate degrees in education from State University of New York at Oswego and State University of New York at Albany. In addition, he holds a PhD in the cultural foundations of education from Union Institute and University, Cincinnati, Ohio.

This art demonstration is a precursor to Trombly's 3-day upcoming workshop that is open to the public March, 24, 25 and 26 from 1-4 p.m. For more information about the workshop and pre-registration, go to www.art-centermorrobay.org or call 805-772-2504.

Image is copyrighted and courtesy of Greg Trombly



Events Continued on page 12

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The Morro Coast Audubon Society presents “Observing and Conserving the Seabirds that Rely on California’s Central Coast” as its latest Zoom program on Feb. 20 at 7 p.m. The event features Dan Robinette of Point Blue Conservation Science.

Seabirds are a highly visible and charismatic feature of central California’s coast. They have adapted to ocean life by living long and providing increased parental care to offspring compared to other birds. This Community Program will introduce the many seabird species that are dependent on central California’s coastal habitats, discuss the threats they face, and highlight some of the conservation victories giving these birds hope. It will also demonstrate some of the ways that seabirds can be used as indicators of change in our oceans and thereby guide the management of our ocean resources.

Dan Robinette is the Coastal Program Leader for Point Blue Conservation Science. He earned his B.S. in Marine Biology and M.S. in Biology from California State University, Long Beach. He has studied marine bird response to environmental change for over 20 years. He currently leads research and monitoring programs along the California coast with much of his work focused on developing marine birds as indicators of ecosystem processes and condition.

All MCAS Zoom Community Programs are free and open to the public. All ages are welcomed. No signup/registration required to attend. For more information, email Wendy McKeown, programs chair at wendy@morrocoast-audubon.org.

Join Zoom Meeting at <https://bit.ly/3CRGzUi>. The meeting ID: 227 248 5901 and the passcode is morrocoast
Photo courtesy of Dan Robinette.

Check out “Vertebrate and Insect Pests of the Home Garden” on Thursday, February 16 from 6:45-7:45 p.m. when the Los Osos Valley Garden Club hosts guest speaker, Kim Wilson, master gardener. Kim will explain the

basics of identifying vertebrate pests and how to control them safely, as well as the most common insect pests and how to prevent and control them in the garden.

The presentation will be held on zoom. To join the meeting, go to:
<https://bit.ly/40rP1me>. Meeting ID is 753 644 4586 and passcode is

LOVGC. If you don’t have a camera or microphone on your device, you can use your phone to dial in at 1-669-900-6833 US (San Jose); meeting ID: 753 644 4586; Passcode: 678130.

For more information, send and email to info@lovgardenclub.org.



The Central Coast Watercolor Society announces the Aquarius 2023 California Open Watermedia Exhibition held February 23 - April 3 at Art Center Morro Bay, 835 Main Street, Morro Bay. Aquarius 2023 presents the best in watermedia painting, representing a wide range of subject material and techniques, from experimental to traditional, and encourages support for watermedia painting as a vital, enduring and expressive artistic medium.

Submissions came from artists throughout California State as well as local CCWS members. The juror for selection and awards is the internationally recognized, award-winning watercolorist Fealing Lin. More than \$3000 in cash and merchandise will be awarded.

A list of the selected artists can be found <https://ccwsart.com>.

There will be an opening reception on Feb. 26 from 2 to 4 p.m. including presentation of awards, certificates and a gallery tour with Fealing Lin

Contact Exhibition Chair Diann Johnston at diannj@gmail.com with any questions. Image is 2022 Aquarius First Place Winner: “Luca” by Pat Cairns.

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.

35th Annual Live Oak Tickets On Sale

Tickets for the Live Oak Music Festival’s 35th annual event — the third at its new home at El Chorro Regional Park in San Luis Obispo — are on sale with adult tickets discounted for early bird pricing through March 31.

“We’re happy to be back,” said KCBX General Manager Frank Lanzone. “I hope those who missed attending in 2022 due to tickets selling out can get their tickets early this year.”

The festival is held every June to benefit KCBX Public Radio, and features musicians performing a variety of genres, including funk, bluegrass, soul, folk, alternative rock, Americana and world music.

The three-day, family-friendly festival takes place Friday through Sunday, June 23 – 25, 2023. The Live Oak Music Festival will draw music aficionados of all ages to experience live concerts in a beautiful setting, with the county’s iconic volcanic peaks, the Morros, as the backdrop.

Thirteen acts have been confirmed for 2023 so far, with more to be announced. Performers include Neko Case (indie singer-songwriter), Galactic featuring Anjelika Jelly Joseph (New Orleans funk jam band), Wild Child (indie folk pop), Cracker (alt-rock/Americana), Brothers Comatose (rowdy California string band), Próxima Parada (groovy California soul and R&B), Parker Millsap (Americana), Las Cafeteras (Afro-Mexican Americana futurism), Diggin’ Dirt (West Coast funk and soul), Carolyn Sills Combo (western swing/Americana), Shawn Clark and Ryan Delmore (folk and country gospel), Miss Leo & the Handsome Fellers (California soulgrass), and Hot 45 (R&B).

In addition to music, the festival offers a way to kick off summer with local food, wine and beer for adults, and plenty of games, activities and talent shows for children and teens.

“We’re excited to present such a diverse array of talented performers across so many genres of music,” said KCBX Program Director and Live Oak Artistic Director Marisa Waddell. “We can’t wait to announce even more artists soon.”

A Full Festival ticket allows access to the festival on Friday, Saturday and Sunday with overnight camping throughout the park. Single-day tickets are also available for adults, teens (ages 13-17), and children (ages 4-12). Those who would like to enter and camp on Thursday, one day before the festivities begin, may do so for a minimal additional fee, with a Full Festival ticket. Tickets are available at the festival’s website (www.liveoakfest.org), along with a map of the campground, photos and videos, and a schedule of performances and family activities.

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Community

Refugee Family Gets Lion's 39th Car



Members of the Morro Bay Lions Club pose with their 39th car giveaway, this time going to a family of Afghan refugees. Photo courtesy Morro Bay Lions Club

By Neil Farrell

A number of local community service organizations got together recently to help out a family of refugees from Afghanistan, providing them with reliable transportation.

According to Morro Bay Lion's Club member, Bill Todd of Todd's Garage in Morro Bay, this car giveaway was special because of all who were involved.

"The Morro Bay Lions, Morro Bay Eagles, and SLO4Homes organizations," Todd said, "pooled their resources, and gave away their 39th car!"

Morro Bay Eagle's Past President Josh Howell, Todd said, donated the 2004 Toyota

Camry to the program.

The Lions and SLO4Homes, "provided the funding to repair the car to give to a political refugee family that was extracted from their war torn country to the states," Todd said.

That family, Todd added, wished to remain anonymous in fear of the Taliban, which re-took Afghanistan upon the withdrawal of U.S. troops in August 2021, after two decades of war.

The Lion's Club car giveaway program seeks to provide people with reliable transportation, with the motto: "Helping change lives one car at a time."

Recipients are chosen from applications submitted, which is done in coordination with the Community Resource

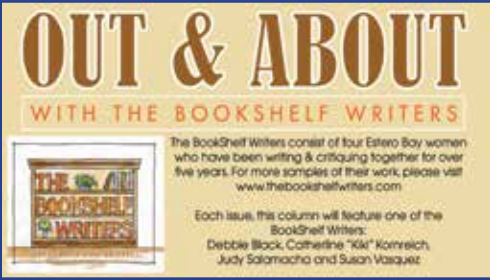
Connections. Cars are given away on a quarterly basis. If readers are in need of reliable transportation, they can apply for the giveaway program online at: www.communityresourceconnections.net or call Sharon O'Leary of the Community Resource Connections, 805-225-1991.

The program is also in need of donated cars. Anyone who has an extra vehicle and would like to donate it should call Bill Todd at 805-772-1985. Recipients have mostly been active community volunteers, who get rewarded for their service to the community.

For his part, Bill and his son Mike Todd, go through donated cars, fixing things that need fixing to make sure they run good, and smog checking the vehicles, too.

If a car can't be used, they can sell it for money that is then used to buy parts for another donor vehicle. Donors get a tax-deductible donation receipt.

Bill Todd said this latest giveaway was touching because the family "was extremely grateful and excited to receive the car."



RV Camping in Your Own 'Backyard' Family Reunions

By Debbie Black

Twenty-six people staying in our house for four days. Showers, towels, sleeping bags, extra tables and chairs, chairs, and more chairs. Eight people per bathroom.

Coffee maker and hot water heater working overtime. Trips to the store for more bread, beer, and toilet paper. Loud group laughter. Quiet one-on-one conversations à la the movie "The Big Chill." Teasing. Reminiscing. Family.

It was Thanksgiving weekend, a few years back. Several times before, we'd hosted husband Garth's large, wonderful family for Thanksgiving, but this time ... well, this time we decided the group had outgrown our house. Twenty-six was a lot of bodies living under one roof.

Someone suggested an alternative, which has subsequently become the new family tradition—annual family campfests. We meet for four days at different campgrounds, avoiding holidays. Everyone has their own campsite to retreat to or to host happy hour. Everyone makes his or her own meals, except for a few that are shared. It's relaxing, easy on everyone and there's plenty of time for quality visiting. With lingering COVID concerns, a campfest offers plenty of fresh air and separate living

Out & About Continued on page 14



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Community

Out & About From page 13



El Chorro Campground was the perfect spot for the Noble Kornreich Campfest 2018.

spaces. If you're in charge of a reunion (family or otherwise), I heartily suggest a campfest. Don't stop reading, just because some members of your group are not happy campers. Hear me out. You (and they) may be surprised by a couple luxurious options for accommodations, listed later, that will soon have them roasting marshmallows and singing Kumbaya.

Right in your own backyard are several campgrounds that are perfect venues for large gatherings. Garth and I have organized campfests at El Chorro Regional Park (across from Cuesta College) and El Capitan State Beach (north of Goleta). Morro Bay State Park is another good one.

Here's our campground criteria:

- Within 5 hours drive for most
- Nice adjacent campsites
- Hookups if possible (elect./water)
- Clean bathrooms/showers
- Affordable
- Something for everyone to do
- Dogs allowed
- Hotels and activities nearby

El Chorro checked all the boxes for our first family campfest. We included both our families for the Noble Kornreich Campfest 2018 — complete with t-shirts, games, contests, crafts and a bonfire. I booked ten campsites around the little meadow in the Chumash Loop (C5,7,8,9,10,11,12,13,14,16). All had full hookups, picnic table and grill. There were clean bathrooms and showers.

We rented the Mariposa Day Use Pavilion for crafts, group meals and a family bonfire. We also rented a baseball field for a cutthroat (but injury-free!) game of kickball.

Some of us had RVs. Some had tents. One family rented a fully appointed trailer from a local company who had it all set up in their campsite when they arrived. They also could have rented a hotel room in Morro Bay, just ten minutes west. See? Two easy glamping options!

We camped for four days which gave everyone the opportunity to do whatever suited them: golf next door at Dairy Creek; paintball at Gladiator across the highway; hike up to the Eagle; visit the Botanical Garden, or the dog park, or the kids' playground; drive ten minutes east or west to San Luis Obispo or Morro Bay for movies, shopping, and wine tasting. There's also surfing, sailing and kayaking in Morro Bay, or simply reading and napping in camp. Something for everyone. El Chorro also has the perfect place for a group photo. Just a short walk down the road past the dog park, you'll see an old, sprawling oak on your right. You can't miss it.

El Capitan State Beach was the location of our second campfest. We traded having hookups for being by the ocean, a major plus for our Colorado relatives. I'll cover everything El Cap has to offer in my next article.

No matter where you decide to camp, it's crucial that you book well in advance. Reserving multiple adjoining campsites can be difficult. Try to avoid Friday and Saturday nights as well as summer months. Each campground has its own booking window, and it's best to get on their website the first day/first hour the window opens. Review ahead of time which campsites you're going for and enlist the help



"Family Tree" at El Chorro is another beautiful place for a group photo.

of other internet-savvy members of your group to go after campsites from their computers as well.

A little effort up front is about all that's required when planning a family reunion at a local campground. And the memories will last long after the final hugs goodbye, and the gravel crunches under the tires of the last car, and the squirrels invade the fire pits looking for burnt marshmallows.

For extended articles on local campgrounds, go to www.debbienobleblack.com/rv-camping-in-your-own-backyard.

And now, a shameless plug for the release of my debut novel, "Deetjen's Closet" —

a historical fantasy for readers age eight and up. Available at Coalesce Books (Morro Bay), Volumes of Pleasure (Los Osos), and Amazon. Thank you, readers.

Debbie Black is a member of the Bookshelf Writers, four Estero Bay women whose writing can be found at <http://www.thebookshelfwriters.com>.

Sports

Lots of Athletes of the Month for January

By Neil Farrell

The Morro Bay High Athletic Boosters will honor a slew of athletes with the January 2023 Athletes of the Month recognition.

This time the boosters acknowledged girls' soccer team standout, Jan Hotaling; varsity girls' basketball's Fiona Durham; and the entire boys' and girls' wrestling teams for outstanding efforts, performances and leadership.

MBHS Varsity Girls' Soccer coach, Kim Wishon said of Hotaling as, "a force to be reckoned with on the field! Jane was nominated by her team to be team captain and definitely imbues that winning spirit."

Hotaling is leading the team with 11 goals and six assists, Coach Wishon said. "As a junior, she is being pursued by different college and university soccer programs and is on the path to play collegiate soccer after she graduates."

Hotaling, "plays attacking midfielder and has the tenacity to win the ball," Coach Wishon said. "She sends beautiful balls up the field and dribbles through defenders to get the shot. She pushes herself to be better and is a positive voice on and off the field, always seeing the effort put forth by her team-



Jane Hotaling

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mates. Jane is a key component of our team and our success!"



The Morro Bay High School Wrestling Team.

Varsity Wrestling coach, Alberto Garza, is so impressed with his entire boys' and girls' wrestling team he nominated them all for the Athlete of the Month honors.

Coach Garza said, "We couldn't just decide on one or two wrestlers from each team. This month, the team came together to pull off two tournaments, a tri-meet and a dual."

He was impressed with the girls' efforts recently hosting a big meet. "What people don't understand about wrestling," he said, "is the amount of work it takes to set up one mat. At our girl's tournament on Jan. 7, the team not only set up four mats, tables and barriers, but also cleaned everything up that same night after competing or working hours during the day."

"We saw over 200 wrestlers walk through the doors to compete on Jan. 7. Two weeks later we hosted a tri-meet on a Wednesday and immediately started setting up for the largest boys' tournament in California [the California Invitational Tournament], which saw over 700 wrestlers compete on 10 mats in both gyms."

MBHS was wrestling central in January. "Between the two tournaments and two home meets," Coach Garza said, "we saw close to 1,000 wrestlers walk through our gym doors to compete and over 1,500 spectators came to support."

That monumental effort meant singling out one athlete impossible. "To give one girl and one boy the Athlete of The Month title for January," he said, "just didn't seem right, without the help of everyone on our team, we wouldn't have been able to pull off a very successful month of wrestling."

Estero Bay News congratulates not just those who are singled out for honors, but all student athletes, for the hard work they put in, the sacrifices they make, and for going above and beyond what's expected and doing what is necessary for all the teams to compete.

MBHS Varsity Girls' Basketball coach, Alex Engel said of Durham, "One of our team captains, and our starting power forward. Fiona is a high-energy player who leads our team in scoring at 10 points per game, and is second in rebounding at 9.2 rebounds per game. She's the vocal leader of the team, and is a great example for our younger players."



Fiona Durham

Greenspace Plans for Future



Pictured are: Greenspace Board of Directors: (left rear) Scott Anderson (vice president), John Seed (president), Bob Reid (left front) Wayne Attoe, Mary Webb (Co-Treasurer), Ellen Leigh, Jeff Wilson (Co-Treasurer), Karin Argano (Executive Director), Donni Morgan (Secretary), Andy Allison. Photo credit: Diane Anderson

By Wayne Attoe

Greenspace-The Cambria Land Trust non-profit embraced the future recently when its continuing directors and a group of eager, highly experienced new ones met in retreat to establish goals for the next three years.

These goals include reforestation with

10,000 more Monterey pine seedlings, completing improvements at the Greenspace Creekside Reserve in the East Village, and enhancing its expanded Strawberry Canyon Preserve on Lodge Hill. A multi-faceted "Earth Day" celebration at the Creekside Reserve on Saturday, April 22, will highlight activities this spring.

Cambria Dance and Social Club Plans Valentine Event

The Cambria Dance and Social Club celebrates Valentine's month on Wednesday, February 22, with a social get together, potluck dinner, and live dance band. Both singles and couples are invited to join in a fun-filled evening from 5:30 to 8 p.m. at the Joslyn Recreation Center (950 Main Street). After a brief Club meeting, members and guests will enjoy a potluck dinner and dancing to live music provided by Mike Schimberg and the Cambria Dance Band.

Early reservations and potluck sign-ups are greatly appreciated and may be emailed to Brian Griffin (chippysgt@sbcglobal.net). For more information, email Pat Burbank (pat@patburbank.com). Reservations are requested, so the Club can set



up sufficient tables and chairs for everyone attending.

For first-or second-time attendees, there is no fee. For those who wish to join the Club, membership typically is arranged on the third visit.

Edward Jones

edwardjones.com | Member SIPC

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coast-electronics.com

Obituary

Wayne Dayton Peoples

1928 - 2023



Wayne was known as many things – nature lover, Mr. Positive, most organized man on earth and much more.

He was born in Wilmington, Delaware on February 28, 1928 (a leap year) to Irma and Dayton Peoples — he would often joke that had he been born one day later, on February 29, he would be much younger!

He had a very strong work ethic and earned money as an animal trapper selling furs in his teens and the assistant pro at the Dupont Country Club in his twenties. He

was president of his high school senior class and a natural born leader. He served in the Army and went on to earn a degree in mechanical engineering from the University of Delaware. After graduation, he designed water heaters. He then realized that it would be more fun to sell than design, so he switched careers and went into selling commercial water heaters and air conditioners to distributors.

He raised his family and lived in Fresno for over 30 years. In 1978 he started his own business, Wescon Sales, Inc., which sold water heaters in Canada and Hawaii. Over the years many of his customers became friends for life.

Wayne was a devoted husband. He was married to his wife Jayne Gilhams for 40 years and, after her death, to Sue Burke for 10 years until her death in 2007. Wayne and Jayne are survived by their three children, Craig and his wife Mary of Denver, Colorado, Wendy of San Rafael, California and Scott and his wife Caroline of Livermore, California as well as their granddaughters, Rachel, Heather and Jennifer and great-grandson, Dante.

Wayne will be remembered for his love of family and friends as well as his reputation for integrity, organization and humor. He enjoyed the outdoors and nature and his family has fond memories of backpacking in the Sierras and fishing with him at his Huntington Lake cabin.

He moved from Fresno to Los Osos in 1997 where he enjoyed the beautiful views, wonderful restaurants and opportunities for birdwatching. He spent the last year and a half in Livermore, California near Wendy and Scott. He was a wonderful man and will be missed.

A celebration of his life will be held in Morro Bay at a later date. Donations in his memory can be made to Friends of the Elephant Seal. www.elephantseal.org

Letters

to

The Editor

Kudos to All



This is to thank you and praise you for your coverage in the Jan.26-Feb. 8 edition of Estero Bay News.

I'm an ex-newspaperman, ex-adjunct journalism prof at Cal Poly and CSUN, was the editor of The News-Chronicle (Thousand Oaks) that won more CNPA awards than any other newspaper, so I know quality coverage. Your reporting on the flood was complete, concise, correct and compelling. It told what happened to whom, and where.

More, it gave perspective, relating 2023 to events like this in years past. That kind of journalism comes only with long acquaintance in the field.

Congratulations, all around.

Marvin Sosna
Morro Bay

How Blessed are We

After seeing all the damage and distuction these storms did to houses and businesses, I was amazed and blown away by all who came out to help. Kids, businesses, the old and young did not blink an eye to help out their neighbors.

I know the Estero Bay News did a great job covering the storm but then to cover the human interest part of it was awesome. They say "if it bleeds, it leads," but that is not the case with our local paper. Covering both side was refreshing to say the least. It made me get up and do something for my neighbors who I never knew until now. That is what I call inspiring.

Keep up the great work Theresa-Marie, Neil and Dean, it is always a pleasure picking up your paper and I look forward to the next one.

J. Fillmore III
Los Osos

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

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Community

Super Bowl Ads Contribute to U.S. Obesity Problem

While television audiences eagerly await the funny, creative and memorable commercials set to air during Sunday's Super Bowl, those ads are also likely to exacerbate the worsening obesity epidemic, said a Cal Poly business professor.

"There are plenty of experimental studies showing these ads are affecting people and actually causing people to consume more unhealthy food," said Brennan Davis, a marketing professor at Cal Poly's Orfalea College of Business who has researched the impact of marketing on obesity. "And we know that eating unhealthy food leads to higher rates of overweight and obesity."

For TV commercials, the Super Bowl represents a golden opportunity to reach massive audiences, which is why NBC can charge over \$6.5 million for a 30-second spot for this year's game, set for Feb. 12. According to Kantar, a data analytic and brand consulting company, those ads work, offering advertisers increased brand awareness and a strong return on investment.

Many of those ads push unhealthy foods. A study published in the journal Pediatrics revealed that 76 percent of food products shown during sporting events were unhealthy.

And according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 42 percent of U.S. adults are already obese — significantly higher than the 31 percent figure from the early 2000s. Obesity is associated with other serious health issues, such as cancer, heart disease and diabetes. The CDC defines obesity as a BMI, or Body Mass Index — a person's weight in kilograms divided by the square of height in meters — of 30.0 or higher. A BMI of 18.5 to 24.9 is considered a healthy weight range.

Despite the known correlation between unhealthy food and obesity, those who create ads for food products know how to draw consumers to them.

"Most marketing people have come through marketing programs that are steeped in what we call consumer behavior courses that essentially are consumer psychology," Davis said.



According to basic marketing principles Davis teaches, traditional marketing mixes what he calls "the four P's" — product, promotion, place and price — to influence consumer attitude and behavior toward food. Promotion includes strategies such as packaging graphics, print ads and commercials.

While consumers might normally view ads with skepticism or boredom, Super Bowl commercials are an exception, when viewers look forward to clever, star-studded spots.

"We're also looking for pleasure and entertainment," Davis said, and food ads equate products with pleasure. Meanwhile, he added, advertisers control what consumers focus on with clever verbal descriptions.

So even if we know too many chips are bad for us, Davis said, humorous spots with celebrities — especially if they are attractive — are likely to influence us subconsciously. Famous people, he said, lend credibility to products and make consumers think the food is going to lead to an exciting experience.

"During a Super Bowl event, people are going to dial down that part of their brain that's processing things more rationally in terms of the costs of eating unhealthy food," he said.

Past policy solutions have tried to raise awareness of unhealthy foods, such as requiring restaurants and packaging to display calorie counts. While initially shocking, people eventually were either confused by those or just ignored them, said Davis, who wonders if there are more effective ways to promote awareness.

"What if every seventh chip in a can were bright red, reminding you that you've reached your one-serving size?" he said. "That might help you make your decisions and trigger that part of your brain that is more logically accessing the healthy food matters."

But sometimes policy can backfire, such as New York City's so-called soda ban in 2013, which sought to curb sales of sweetened drinks larger than 16 ounces in food-service establishments.

While some lauded the proposal, others mocked it — and courts eventually rejected it.

Ads for unhealthy food are unlikely to be regulated like tobacco products, Davis said, but the mere threat of policy could encourage change. A better approach, Davis said, might be to make healthy food more appealing.

"There have been studies showing that if you put a cartoon character on a bag of oranges, it will appeal to kids," he said.

Just as there is a lack of clever commercials for healthy food, there's a dearth of research on how to promote them.

"There are fewer papers studying how to get people to eat carrots more and more papers studying how to get people to eat cookies less," he said.

While an aging Marlon Brando once said the only thing that provided him happiness was eating, Davis said messaging can help prevent others from having that perception.

"Aren't there other things that make you happy?" he said, "like being healthy enough to spend a day with your grandkids without having to lay on the couch?"

Observing Birds of Prey



Join the Central Coast State Parks Association, CA State Parks, and local field biologist Steve Schubert for the latest Mind Walk, Observing Birds of Prey on Feb. 15 at SLO Public Market at 4:30 p.m.

Learn about the biology, classification, migration, predatory behaviors and prey preferences of locally occurring birds-of-prey, both year-round resident and seasonally overwintering raptors. Study flight and predatory adaptations. Learn to identify and recognize the diagnostic visual field marks useful in identification of species of Hawks, Eagles, Falcons, Ospreys, Kites, Harriers, Accipiters, Vultures, and Owls. Take a virtual guided field trip to birding locations on the Central Coast, including Morro Rock — home of the famous nesting Peregrine falcons — and associated coastal estuary and marshlands, then inland to grasslands and grazing pastures, shrublands, oak and streamside woodlands, forests, and freshwater lakes where raptors frequent overwintering and nesting habitats.

The event takes place upstairs in the main building at SLO Public Market at 3845 S Higuera St, San Luis Obispo. The event space is open from 4 p.m. — 6 p.m. The presentation begins at 4:30 p.m.

The cost is \$5 admission for ages 18 and over. Cash, card, and Venmo accepted. It is free for ages 17 and under and for Friends of CCSPA and one guest. Attendees must bring their Friend of CCSPA card to ensure free attendance. There are 70 seats available indoors, 80 seats available on the attached patio. First come, first served on seating.

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Community

Chinese New Year at Volumes of Pleasure

Tour the Water Resource Center in M.B.

The 20th annual Chinese New Year celebration took place at Volumes of Pleasure in Los Osos.

The Cal Poly Lion Dance Team performed a blessing ritual dating back centuries that is believed to bring good fortune to the store and the Los Osos community.

According to the Chinese calendar, 2023 in the Year of the Rabbit. In Chinese culture, water represents longevity, peace, and prosperity while the rabbit reflects elegance, beauty, cleverness, quietude and good energy. Together they predict a year of quiet contemplation, an excellent time to strengthen bonds with loved ones.

The performance also included taiko drummers and two traditional lion dance dragons.

Photos by Dean Sullivan



The City of Morro Bay invites the public to celebrate the completion of the Water Reclamation Facility Program and visit the Morro Bay Water Resources Center. It all takes place at 555 South Bay Boulevard Morro Bay on Thursday, Feb. 23 from 1 to 4 p.m.

The event marks the completion of the first phase of the largest infrastructure program in City history. Meet City staff and visit informative booths and check out Public Works equipment and vehicles. Join City staff as they guide visitors around the facility. Attendees may sign up for a tour or choose a self-guided tour and arrive at any time. Tour slots may fill up.

Visitors must RSVP by Feb. 21 at [Morro-Bay-Water-Resources-Center.Eventbrite.com](https://www.eventbrite.com). Park on Teresa Drive and walk through the main gate up the driveway to the facility site. Carpooling is encouraged.

For your comfort and safety, the City recommends flat, sturdy shoes. The event will occur rain or shine.



DIRTY CELLO

A black and white photograph of a woman with dark hair, wearing a dark top, sitting and playing a cello. She is smiling and looking towards the camera.

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2023 SCHEDULE

A logo for "Cruisin' Morro Bay" featuring the word "Cruisin'" in a script font above "Morro Bay" in a large, stylized, outlined font.

27th Annual Cruisin' Morro Bay Car Show

May 4th-6th, 2023

Thursday, May 4th

Evening Pre-Registration 5 PM - 8 PM

Friday, May 5th

Daytime Registration 11 AM - 5 PM

Friday, May 5th

Cruise Night for Registrants Only

Staging 5PM • 6 PM - 7:00 PM

Saturday, May 6th

Show & Shine 9 AM - 5 PM

Music

Cheeseballs Brings the Dance Party

Dust off your dancing shoes and get ready for more fun than you've had since the last time theses guys were in town! The Cheeseballs are a San Francisco based, high energy dance band with thousands of successful shows under their belt. Soulful, funky and at the top of the list of go-to bands for special events of any nature. TCB has delighted tens of thousands of fans across the country. This band comes from an angle of funk, soul and R&B, and are constantly adding new top hits to their list. From 60 s Motown classics to 80 s new wave, and all the rock n' roll Favorites. From ABBA "Dancing Queen" to Camila Cabello "Havana", Bruno Mars "Uptown Funk", and of course Etta James



"At Last". The show starts at 7:30PM, is 21+, and tickets are an easy \$15 at thesiren.com. See you there!

Stephen Marley at the Fremont

Well, almost... After kicking off his solo acoustic Old Soul Tour in Monterey the night before, Stephen Marley makes a stop at the Fremont Theater in San Luis Obispo on Saturday, February 18. Stephen Marley is an award-winning singer, songwriter and producer. From his solo works to family collaborations and production credits, Stephen Marley's music has earned him eight Grammy Awards. He is the second eldest son of reggae legend Bob Marley and Rita Marley, raised in Kingston, Jamaica. Stephen started singing professionally at 7 years old with his elder siblings Ziggy, Sharon and Cedella in The Melody Makers. Stephen has garnered recognition as a solo artist for his Grammy-winning albums Mind Control (dubbed "the best Marley album in a generation" by Entertainment Weekly), Mind Control Acoustic and Revelation Part I: The Root of Life,



while also receiving multiple Grammys as as a producer - most notably for Damian "Jr. Gong" Marley's massive cross-over hit Welcome To Jamrock. This tour features special guest Mike Love and will be a night to remember for all reggae fans. Tickets are \$49.99 after fees and are available available at fremontslo.com <<http://fremontslo.com>>. This all-ages show starts at 8:00PM. Photo courtesy of Stephen Marley:

Los Osos Disaster Relief Concert slated for Sunday, February 26

Many Los Osos families suffered major damage to their homes from the January bomb cyclone of rain. As a local relief effort, Gary Freiberg and Paul Irving have teamed up to produce a benefit concert. Many Los Osos organizations and individuals have joined together to bring relief to families affected by the rains that broken all-time daily rain records since 1893.

The concert happens on Sunday, February 26th from 12:00 to 6:00 at the South Bay Community Center in Los Osos. Five top local bands and sound engineer Rich Rolson have all donated their time and talents to make this happen, including Zongo All-Stars, Strange Cake, Carbon City Lights, B & The Hive, and Mini Nova - featuring Scott Martin of WAR and Kenny Lee Lewis of the Steve Miller Band.

People Helping People, a local 501(c)3 nonprofit organization has jumped in to help in a variety of ways: They will be collecting all the donations and distributing them as needed to help the victims repair their homes. They are also organizing a large silent auction, and tending bar. All proceeds from donations, sponsors and Silent Auction will go to People Helping People and distributed as needed.

DIGGIN' DEEP

LOS OSOS

DISASTER RELIEF CONCERT

Benefitting victims of the January 2023 rain events

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Please help the victim families by attending what is likely the biggest singular free benefit concert ever held in Los Osos. You can also help by donating and contributing to the silent auction. Your support is greatly appreciated. For full details on the event and how to get involved, please visit: supportlososos.com.

Sat., Feb. 11 • 7:30pm
Boot Juice
The Siren
900 Main St, Morro Bay

Sat., Feb. 11 • 9:00pm
The English Beat
The Fremont Theater
1035 Monterey St,
San Luis Obispo

Sat., Feb. 11 • 1:00pm
JAZZ at the MINT
Mint + Craft
848 Monterey Street,
San Luis Obispo

Sat., Feb. 11 • 7:00pm
Life on Planets / TROPO
/ Nozu
SLO Brew Rock
855 Aerovista Place,
San Luis Obispo

Sat., Feb. 11 • 5:00pm
Will Breman
Sea Pines Golf Resort
1945 Solano St, Los Osos

Sun., Feb. 12 • 2:00pm
Brynn Albanese's
One-Woman Show
Unitarian Universalists of
San Luis Obispo

2201 Lawton Avenue,
San Luis Obispo
Sun., Feb. 12 • 7:30pm
The Everly Brothers Experience
Clark Center for the
Performing Arts
487 Fair Oaks Ave,
Arroyo Grande

Sun., Feb. 12 • 5:30pm
Whimsical Woodwinds
Cass Winery
7350 Linne Road,
Paso Robles
Tue., Feb. 14 • 7:00pm
Ballyhoo with Mike Pinto
and Joint Operation
The Siren
900 Main St, Morro Bay

Tue., Feb. 14 • 7:00pm
Thee Sacred Souls
SLO Brew Rock
855 Aerovista Place,
San Luis Obispo

Wed., Feb. 15 • 5:30pm
Bi Variety Night
Linnaea's Cafe
1110 Garden St,
San Luis Obispo

Wed., Feb. 15 • 7:00pm

Blues Agenda Merrimaker 1301 2nd Street, Baywood Park Wed., Feb. 15 • 7:00pm The Elovaters, Surfer Girl, Claire Wright The Siren 900 Main St, Morro Bay Wed., Feb. 15 • 7:30pm The Lone Bellow Performing Arts Center 1 Grand Ave, San Luis Obispo Wed., Feb. 15 • 7:00pm Schooners Open Mic Night! Schooners 171 N Ocean Ave., Cayucos Thu., Feb. 16 • 7:00pm Emily Franklin Saints Barrel 1021 Higuera St, San Luis Obispo Thu., Feb. 16 • 7:00pm The Frights SLO Brew Rock 855 Aerovista Place, San Luis Obispo
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Thu., Feb. 16 • 9:30pm Sherita Perez Music Frog & Peach Pub 728 Higuera St, San Luis Obispo Fri., Feb. 17 • 9:00pm Dead Magic BarrelHouse Brewing Co. 1033 Chorro St, San Luis Obispo Fri., Feb. 17 • 7:30pm Fan Halen - "Van Halen Tribute" The Siren 900 Main St, Morro Bay Fri., Feb. 17 • 8:00pm Pepper The Fremont Theater 1035 Monterey St, San Luis Obispo Fri., Feb. 17 • 7:00pm The Stone Foxes SLO Brew Rock 855 Aerovista Place, San Luis Obispo Sat., Feb. 18 • 7:00pm Cass McCombs SLO Brew Rock 855 Aerovista Place, San Luis Obispo

Sat., Feb. 18 • 7:30pm Ernie Watts - Bill Cunliffe Duo Mt. Carmel Lutheran Church 1701 Fredericks Street, San Luis Obispo Sat., Feb. 18 • 2:00pm Lulu & the Cowtippers California Coast Beer Co. 346 Railroad St., Paso Robles Sat., Feb. 18 • 7:30pm Mark Adams Band The Siren 900 Main St, Morro Bay Sat., Feb. 18 • 8:00pm Stephen Marley & Mike Love The Fremont Theater 1035 Monterey St, San Luis Obispo Sun., Feb. 19 • 7:00pm Bruce Molsky & Allison de Groot & Reed Stutz Octagon Barn-Octagon Way, San Luis Obispo Sun., Feb. 19 • 3:00pm Michael Nowak and Friends: Schubert's "Trout" Quintet Trinity United Methodist Church 490 Los Osos Valley Road, Los Osos Sun., Feb. 19 • 11:00am Robi Duganne Sea Pines Golf Resort 1945 Solano St, Los Osos Tue., Feb. 21 • 7:00pm FIDLAR The Fremont Theater 1035 Monterey St, San Luis Obispo	Tue., Feb. 21 • 7:00pm Fat Tuesday (New Orleans Funk Band) The Siren 900 Main St, Morro Bay Wed., Feb. 22 • 7:00pm Alborosie The Siren 900 Main St, Morro Bay Wed., Feb. 22 • 7:00pm Schooners Open Mic Night! Schooners 171 N Ocean Ave., Cayucos Wed., Feb. 22 • 6:00pm Songwriters At Play Showcase SLO Wine and Beer Co 3536 S Higuera St. Suite 250, San Luis Obispo Wed., Feb. 22 • 7:00pm Twiddle The Fremont Theater 1035 Monterey St, San Luis Obispo Thu., Feb. 23 • 7:00pm Emily Franklin Saints Barrel 1021 Higuera St, San Luis Obispo Thu., Feb. 23 • 7:00pm Marvelous Mayhem - SLO Comedy Festival Firestone Walker Brewing Company Taproom 1400 Ramada Drive, Paso Robles Fri., Feb. 24 • 9:00pm SOUNDHOUSE Harry's Night Club & Beach Bar 690 Cypress Street, Pismo Beach
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Community

Flyboy From page 1

been repaired and returned to duty from a Japanese kamikaze attack.

Herb says his was a replacement unit that spelled pilots on Intrepid when needed. “I made exactly one landing on Intrepid,” he says.

They were sent to Saipan to fly cover for B-29 bombers that were the main bomber aircraft used in the Pacific Theater. He was in the air when the Enola Gay, the bomber that dropped the A-bomb on Hiroshima, made its fateful mission.

“They told us not to fly near it,” he explains giving the bird at least seven miles clearance. “We didn’t know when the bomb was going to be dropped.”

After the world’s first atomic bomb exploded, they were placed on high alert, anticipating a Japanese counter attack. “A very feeble attempt was made,” he recalls. “Then we dropped the second bomb and the rest is history.”

During WWII Herb says he was stationed on various islands and fought in the battle for Guam. U.S. forces island hopped and built an airstrip on the Isle of Tinian where the Enola Gay launched from. He was at Saipan, an island away from the Japanese island of Iwo Jima. And once Iwo was taken, the B-29s moved there, he says. That was the most traumatic point of his service, which extended past WWII.

“I stayed in the Navy,” he says, “it was too late to enroll in college again.”

He spent some time with the Naval Air Transport Command and flew POWs home from Guadalcanal.

Herb smiles and says he “was one of the few who got paid for riding a burro.”

After the war he and a friend became test pilots and were on a routine flight from Alameda to Jacksonville, when tragedy nearly struck.

In an article written by his fellow pilot, Donald M. Day, the details of that Dec. 9, 1945 flight were recounted. Day writes that the first leg of their journey from San Francisco to Los Angeles went smoothly.

Weather delayed their departure from San Pedro but they took off around 2 p.m. when the skies cleared. This leg from California to Tucson, Ariz., was familiar to the flyers, so again they didn’t consult a map.

Two hours out of San Pedro, though, Herb’s plane developed problems and “began to shake with a rough-running engine.”

Day’s article recounts that Herb, “couldn’t use more than 1600 rpms.” Bad weather over Phoenix forced a course change, in hopes they could fly around it.

Then Herb’s radio went out in the Grumman Hellcat airplane and he couldn’t transmit or receive. Then 10 minutes out of Tucson, Day’s radio died too. The airstrip lights couldn’t be seen from their position and Day writes that he decided to fly back to Phoenix, “by dead reckoning and hope we could find a field.”

But that storm they’d avoided was waiting over Phoenix. Day’s account says they set a compass for what he

thought was San Diego and the West Coast, with no radios, and fuel becoming an issue.

When he spotted the ocean, Day estimates they were about 160 miles south of the border. They had flown over Baja California at 5,000 feet, flying through a valley with mountains that rose to over 10,000 feet.

With just 25 gallons of fuel left, the two turned north to follow the coastline back to San Diego, but ran into thick fog.

Soon, with just 15-gallons of fuel left, Day reports a “feeling of despair overwhelmed me.” He signaled Herb to prepare for a night landing on the water. They finally spotted lights, but they were not city lights but bonfires burning on the beach. But there was a problem.

“To land on the beach,” Day writes, “in a strange land would be flirting with death, and I wasn’t going to kill my wingman or myself just after completing the most terrifying flight of our careers.”

Herb and Day planned to land offshore but there was another problem that he’d just realized — neither man had a “Mae West” inflatable life preserver.

Herb landed his plane about 1,000 feet from shore, Day recounts, “and got out without a scratch. Three minutes later, I landed with the fuel gauge reading 6 gallons; hit hard and rode far up onto the nose.”

Day’s plane slowly began to sink nose first. But he clambered out and swam about 300 feet to shore and walked down the beach to one of the bonfires, which had several frightened Mexican clam diggers huddled around it.

A search party was organized to look for Herb, but he soon “staggered up, clad only in his shorts and practically freezing to death.” The two pilots embraced with relief that they’d both made it.

“It was the first time I had spoken to him in three hours,” Day’s account says. “We had gone through hell together without being able to say a word.”

That’s when Herb got paid to ride a burro, as the two pilots rode through some of North America’s most rugged country to a Mexican Air Force auxiliary airfield where they radioed their base. They hopped a Mexican Air Force plane to Ensenada and then a Coast Guard plane to Lindbergh Field in San Diego, their ordeal becoming a harrowing tale to tell.

Day reports they later discovered why they had so much trouble. First they had the wrong maps and the two planes and previously had radio and engine troubles. “Ensign Berry and I had taken off in planes that had not been okayed for the trip.”

Herb chuckles that this story “Wasn’t a war story; it was a stupidity story.”

Herb became a “weekend warrior” in the Navy Reserves after WWII until the Korean War. He was with the Oakland Air Group which he says had a 70% casualty rate in Korea, while “Flying the same planes I flew in World War Two.”

He made training films while stationed in Anacostia and flew F-8 jet fighters at the time. He made his last carrier landing in a jet plane and then, “I felt I’d had enough of that.”

He moved into the aerospace industry to help train astronauts, he says. They worked in zero-G pools to boost buoyancy and checked for leaks with the Saturn 5 rockets in a Top Secret program that President Nixon eventually nixed.

“The people we were training,” Herb recalls, “were the first to fly the Space Shuttle.” The crew on that April 1981 flight aboard the Columbia was Cmdr. John Young and Pilot and pioneering astronaut, Robert Crippen.

Bobby Crippen, Herb says, was related to a friend of his family and he thought the name was familiar when they first met.

He met the woman who would become his second wife back in Chico at a Christmas dance in 1944. But Herb says he already had orders to go over seas. “The next time I met her,” he says, “she was engaged to a friend of mine in Chico.”

He met Dorothy, the woman he would marry, by

accident. “I sat on her glasses,” he laughs. “So I decided I should marry her.” He and Dorothy had a long happy life together, staying married for 62 years, until she died. They had two daughters one of whom, Deborah, is still alive today and he has three grandkids and a great-grandchild.

After Dorothy’s death, he says he renewed his friendship with the earlier apple of his eye, Elizabeth Jean, and the two lived together for 9 years. They eventually married, but Elizabeth died just a week later.

“I was very, very fortunate,” Herb says, “both of my wives were tremendous and supportive. I don’t think I could have done better.”

He and Dorothy settled in Corona Del Mar in Orange County in 1952, and he recalls how across the street from them was a big park that hosted the Boy Scout Jamboree. His dog used to chase deer in the vacant field across the street, which eventually became a shopping center.

They were in Buffalo Ranch, he explains which became U.C. Irvine. Corona Del Mar had a population of about 600 when they first moved there and now has over 100,000.

He worked a full career for McDonald Douglas certifying its MD-11 passenger plane. And eventually retired but it didn’t last.

In 1993, he says, he became a consultant for the government of Indonesia, which was trying to design an airplane, the N-250. He was among a group of ex-pats from the U.S. working on that project. They had to hide anytime (President Bill) Clinton and (British Prime Minister Margaret) Thatcher came to visit because the Indonesian government “didn’t want to admit they weren’t designing this airplane.”

He said they had a wonderful experience living in Guangdong and his wife Dorothy was involved in a clinic that repaired cleft pallets. “They had a DC-10 retrofitted to perform surgeries,” he says. “People would line up for blocks” to await the surgeries. “I still contribute to the program.”

He says he learned humility realizing how people in Third World and Second World countries live.

As for the Indonesian airplane, “I realized that the plane was never going to be operational.” He adds that the World Bank invested billions on an airplane that “flew 70 meters all together and never flew again.”

He had seven people working for him who were terrified of flying. He used to sit them in the cockpit and rev the engines.

He retired for a second time and he and second wife Jean, moved up to Morro Bay in 1998.

They did a lot of traveling all over the world. Meeting Jean’s grandson while on a trip to Chile. “We went through the Panama Canal five times in one year,” he recalls. Most of their trips started in Florida.

“I’ve had a full and wonderful life,” he says, as his current companion, a cute little dog named Eugene, which he adopted from Woods Humane Society, comes to say “Hello” to a reporter.

He enjoys his friends and neighbors including a group calling itself “Berwick Babes,” who check in on him and who on Jan. 22 threw him a block party for his 100th birthday. He also got a letter from President Joe Biden congratulating him on the milestone and thanking him for his service in the Navy. “It was a wonderful gesture,” he says of getting the letter on White House stationery.


So what’s been the best thing about his long life? “I’ve been asked that question and one thing I have to say is I have good health — my eyesight is still good but I’m just not as mobile as I used to be.”

He gets help from Monarch Home Care, who he says have been wonderful. Why’d they pick Morro Bay to live?

“One reason we came to Morro Bay,” he says, is there were 10,200 people and now in 2023, there’s about 10,400. It’ll never be a big city, which I think is wonderful.

“The people here are unique in that there are no strangers. They’re outgoing.”

He praises his neighbors. “The support group I have that live here,” he says, “are all unbelievable.”



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Community

Help From page 1

and get connected to wraparound services through the County and non-profits. Even if you apply for FEMA assistance online, we encourage you to come in person to the DRC to receive other services. The recovery process can be confusing and the DRC also allows you to talk to a real person and work through the process.”

The center also has information and services from agencies such as: County Behavioral Health, Environmental Health, and Planning and Building; DMV, IRS, insurance services, Small Business Administration, legal assistance, and non-profits. Information from the Ag Commissioner, County Assessor and Clerk Recorder is also available.

The center is expected to close Feb. 14. Residents can get help seven days a week, from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. Center staff are available to help with applying for federal assistance and disaster loans, update applications, and learn about other resources that are available. Spanish and ASL interpreter services are present. Readers needing transportation to the DRC/LAC, should call the County Office of Emergency Services at (805) 781-5678.

Appointments are not needed, and folks should bring their identification card, social security number, address of damaged primary residence, description of damage, information about insurance coverage, bank account and routing numbers for direct deposit of funds, address where you receive mail and telephone number.

“As of Friday [Feb. 3], 1,128 county residents have applied for FEMA financial assistance,” said Dion. “There has been \$1.5 million in federal grant money awarded to County residents who sustained damage from the storms.”

Additionally, FEMA Disaster Survivor Assistance (DSA) teams “are visiting neighborhoods impacted by the storms to help residents apply for FEMA assistance and answer questions about federal assistance,” the County said. But readers should beware of potential fraudsters. “DSA teams,” the County cautioned, “wear FEMA attire and have federal photo identification badges.”

Readers should note that the deadline to apply for FEMA financial assistance is March 16, 2023. To apply online for assistance, go to www.DisasterAssistance.gov, download the FEMA mobile app or call the FEMA Helpline at 800-621-3362. If you use video relay service (VRS), captioned telephone service or others, give FEMA the number for that service. Helpline operators are available from 7 a.m. to 11 p.m. daily; press 2 for Spanish and 3 for an interpreter who speaks your language.

Questions for the County Office of Emergency Services should be directed to at (805) 781-5678.

Upon hearing of families whose homes flooded and others who were stranded or evacuated for safety reasons, the staff at the non-profit Los Osos Cares sent inquiries to community funders for assistance.

“We were pleased to receive \$7000 from the SLO Community Foundation for flood relief and another \$3000 from SLO County UndocuSupport [see below] to help individuals who were impacted by the flooding,” Executive

Director Linda Quesenberry said “The Los Osos Cares Board of Directors voted that \$10,000 be used for this aid.”

Funds were made available to people impacted by the flood especially if they were forced to evacuate their homes and had to rent another space for shelter.

Just obtaining a motel room on the hardest hit night of the storm proved to be difficult for many due to power outages that left motel managers unable to process a credit card.

“Unless a person had enough cash to pay for the room,” Quesenberry said, “they couldn’t get a place. For some obtaining some of the emergency funds that Los Osos Cares offered saved the day or night.”

Los Osos Cares has volunteers on hand to assist with the federal paperwork and any other source of funding they may need.

Because it is difficult to understand what losing one’s home to a disaster of this sort is like without experiencing it, referrals to agencies that can help with the trauma are available. Los Osos Cares also has two psychologists for those in need of counseling.

“In an area where finding decent housing is next to impossible due to lack of inventory and high rents, these impacted people face a difficult next few months,” said Los Osos Cares. “Temporary housing is almost unknown here and consider the fact that one must still pay a mortgage no matter that living in the premises is impossible. Adding the cost of a high rent for however long it would take to repair the home could force some into extreme financial difficulty. Renters may have lost their furniture and other belongings and face trying to find other shelter. Whether many have flood insurance is unknown. What is known is that there is help available.”

Readers in need of assistance are encouraged to call Los Osos Cares at 805-592-2701.

Local organizations that serve undocumented and mixed-status immigrant residents in the areas most affected by the recent flooding disaster received \$21,000 in grant funding from San Luis Obispo County UndocuSupport .

It is estimated that 9,000 undocumented residents live and work in San Luis Obispo County.

Bafalis said undocumented families may apply for FEMA assistance if there is a child living in the home that was damaged who was born in the United States and has a social security number or there is an adult living in the home that was damaged that has legal status in the United States.

That won’t help everyone. UndocuSupport awarded grants to Los Osos Cares, the Center for Family Strengthening, the Paso Robles Housing Authority, Community Action Partnership of San Luis Obispo County, Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Monterey, 5 Cities Homeless Coalition, and the Central Coast Coalition for Undocumented Student Success. The organizations will distribute the funds to local residents and families in need through their existing programs.

“Many undocumented immigrants mitigate the effects of our county’s high cost of living and affordable housing

shortage by doubling and tripling up in housing,” said a UndocuSupport new release. “The ability to be self-sufficient in times of disaster and emergency preparedness are directly impacted by their vulnerable situation, because storing food, water, and emergency supplies in a doubled-up environment is a challenge due to a lack of physical space. Economic insecurity is another barrier to emergency preparedness as it impacts the ability to purchase emergency preparedness items.”

Since UndocuSupport’s inception in April 2020 they have raised over \$326,000 to provide essential support to more than 771 local immigrant families across SLO County. Support went to families for medical care, childcare, transportation, food, utilities and funeral expenses.

For more information, go to sloundocusupport.org. The Small Business Administration is providing services to help small businesses impacted by the disaster. See story on page 2.



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Community

Cunningham Honored From page 1

ing.

“This special award was presented in recognition of Assemblyman Cunningham’s outstanding work in the California State Legislature from 2016 to 2022 to combat human trafficking through important new legislation,” Dow said in a news release. “This month has been designated [annually] as Human Trafficking Awareness Month by the San Luis Obispo County Board of Supervisors.”

Dow commented, “It is my distinct pleasure to present Assemblyman Jordan Cunningham with the distinguished District Attorney Special Commendation Award for his distinguished work to combat human trafficking and support survivors of trafficking. Jordan’s tireless effort and significant success, in spite of the challenging political environment, bring great credit upon Jordan and upon the residents in San Luis Obispo County who he has valiantly served. He is very deserving of this recognition.”

Dist. 1 County Supervisor and board Chairman, John Peschong, was also on hand to award Cunningham a “Certificate of Appreciation” from the County Board of Supervisors

Cunningham had the distinction of being the only former Deputy District Attorney serving in the State Assembly during his tenure, and was able to provide “an important and practical perspective about the real impact of their proposals to his peers serving in the legislative body,” Dow said.

created together.” HASLO is in the midst of building a 35-unit, low- income apartment complex on Atascadero Road.

Collins believes the new, all-women city council can handle the job. “I am supremely confident,” he said, “that under the leadership of the mayor, city councilmembers, executive team, and staff that the City and community will thrive into the future.”

The new mayor is happy for Collins. “I am happy for Mr. Collins in taking on this important regional opportunity to address affordable housing needs,” Mayor Carla Wixom said. “However, I will miss his leadership and compassion, which for me was evident in how he and the City staff and volunteers responded to the recent storm emergency and supported those in our community most impacted by flooding.”

She wished Collins happy trails. “On behalf of the city council and staff,” Mayor Wixom said, “we wish him the best of good luck and thank him for his service to our community.”

The city council was expected to meet in closed session last week to devise a transition plan, and possibly name an interim manager. In the past, searches for a new city manager have been opened up nationwide, with on at least one occasion, council members serving on an ad hoc committee flying across the U.S. to interview candidates.

Special committees of citizens have also been named to sort through applicants and conduct some interviews. The 2017 recruitment for city manager that resulted in Collins being hired had 46 applicants for the job, making the selection process somewhat difficult to navigate.

The City has also in the past hired consultants to do the recruitment and narrow the field of candidates, with a subcommittee of councilmembers making a final recommendation to the full council to vote on.

Under the City’s current salary schedule the city manager is paid from \$194,179 in the first step on the pay scale, to \$214,338 on the fifth and top step of the pay scale. Added on top of that are a generous benefits package including medical insurance, retirement and more.

The city manager hires and fires the department heads and indirectly oversees all City departments except city attorney, which in Morro Bay is a law firm hired by and answerable to the city council. The council also directly oversees the city manager.

The city manager has the authority to settle relatively minor legal disputes like trip-falls on upturned sidewalks, though there is a limit on the amount he can authorize.



District Attorney Dan Dow (left) presents former State Assemblyman Jordan Cunningham with the 'District Attorney Special Commendation Award,' for his work combating human trafficking. Submitted photo

During his relatively short tenure, Cunningham was recognized as “Legislator of the Year” during his tenure in Sacramento by several organizations including the Federation of California Builders Exchange, the California District Attorneys Association, and the California Police Chief’s Association.

Cunningham, who had not yet term-limited out, chose to step away from the Assembly after his district was severely redrawn to exclude a large chunk of SLO County in favor of adding Monterey and Santa Cruz, both with heavy Democrat party majorities. Former Morro Bay City Councilwoman, Dawn Addis ran for and won what is now the 30th Assembly District and becoming the first Morro Bay elected to the State Assembly.

Among the bills that Assemblyman Cunningham authored are:

- AB 1735: Protective orders: human trafficking: pimping: pandering. Requires Judges to consider issuing a protective order in all cases in which a defendant has been convicted of human trafficking, pimping or pandering.
- AB 1868: Authorizes school districts to provide instruction, on the potential risks and consequences of creating and sharing sexually suggestive or explicit materials through cell phones, social networking sites, computer networks, or other digital media.
- AB 662: Crimes against minors. Changed the elements of the crime of enticing a female under the age of 18 into a house of prostitution to make the crime gender neutral and thereby recognize the crime is committed against boys and girls.
- AB 2009: Postsecondary education: training for drivers of commercial trucks: human trafficking awareness training. Require that human trafficking awareness training developed under the bill be incorporated into the curriculum of all community college programs that offer training for persons preparing for licensing and employment as commercial truck drivers.
- AB 1788: Sex trafficking: hotels: actual knowledge or reckless disregard: civil penalty. Creates civil penalties for hotels, for instances of human trafficking that specified employees knew or recklessly disregarded activity on hotel grounds constituting sex trafficking.
- AB 2408: Social media platform: child users: ad-diction. Makes social media platforms, such as Meta and

Snapchat, civilly liable for negligently addicting child users by establishing a duty for a social media platform to not negligently addict child users by a) The use or sale of a child user’s personal data or; b) the development, design, implementation, or maintenance of a design, feature, or affordance. (This bill passed the Assembly; passed Senate Judiciary Committee, then died with no referral to the full Senate from Appropriations Committee.)

- AB 2130: Emergency medical services: training: human trafficking. Requires every emergency medical technician-paramedic (EMT-P), upon initial licensure and upon licensure renewal, to complete at least 20 minutes of training on issues relating to human trafficking.

Getting the D.A.’s Award is rare. “The District Attorney Special Commendation,” the news release said, “has only been awarded to two recipients since its inception. The award “is reserved to recognize distinguished service that demonstrates exceptional commitment to the safety of our community through advocacy and action that yields significant results.”

But Cunningham’s work against human trafficking could be for naught, after a new law went into effect that critics say will empower sex traffickers.

Senate Bill 357, which was authored by Democratic State Senator Scott Wiener, and signed into law last July by Gov. Gavin Newsom, decriminalized laws against loitering with the intent to commit prostitution, which critics say will lead to more human trafficking.

Critics claim that sex trafficking victims often find their way out from under their enslavers when they get arrested by police for loitering for prostitution. And while the law doesn’t exactly legalize prostitution, critics say it is the first step. Critics also claim the law will expose children to prostitution.



Also, business interests said repealing the law would allow prostitutes to loiter outside businesses and drive away customers.

S.S. Wiener claimed his bill was aimed at protecting sex workers and trans people from being harassed by police. Loitering for prostitution was a misdemeanor. S.S. Wiener is a Democrat from San Francisco.

California is one of the worst states in the U.S. for human trafficking.

The first District Attorney Special Commendation Award was presented by D.A. Dow to San Luis Obispo Police Department Patrol Officer, Quenten Rouse, for “swift action during a routine traffic stop in October 2018 that freed a 14-year-old victim of sexual slavery, in keeping with the finest tradition of our local law enforcement. The trafficker Lucion Banks is now convicted and serving 15 years-to-life in prison.”

The second recipient was Jennifer Adams in June of 2019 on her retirement from RISE (now known as Lumina Alliance). “Jennifer had served as an outstanding partner in assisting survivors of intimate partner and gender-based violence in San Luis Obispo County for over 20 years. She has since returned to the same work when she was asked to become the chief executive officer for Lumina Alliance in 2021.”



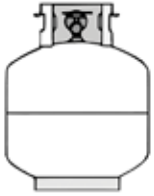
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