

Voter Initiative Filed On Battery Plant

By Neil Farrell

The growing opposition to a proposed giant lithium-ion battery plant in Morro Bay took a decidedly serious turn recently, when a group of citizens turned in a proposed voter initiative that would lock in the current zoning of the property and ostensibly prevent the City Council from approving the project without a vote of the people.

Power plant owner, Vistra Energy of Texas, proposes to build a 600-megawatt so-called, "Battery Energy Storage System" or BESS plant on about 22 acres of the power plant property.

The project involves three enormous 45-foot high buildings filled with tens of thousands of battery assemblies designed to store solar and wind energy when supply is high and demand low, and then sell it back into the power grid when supply drops off but demand is still high.

When completed it would be the largest such facility in the world and at 600 MW, it'd be twice the size of the current world's largest BESS, a 300MW Vistra-owned BESS plant in Moss Landing.

Vistra's initial cost estimate was \$490 million, of which the City of Morro Bay would receive about \$490,000 a year in property taxes alone. The property taxes would also be shared with the local school district, SLO County and the State.

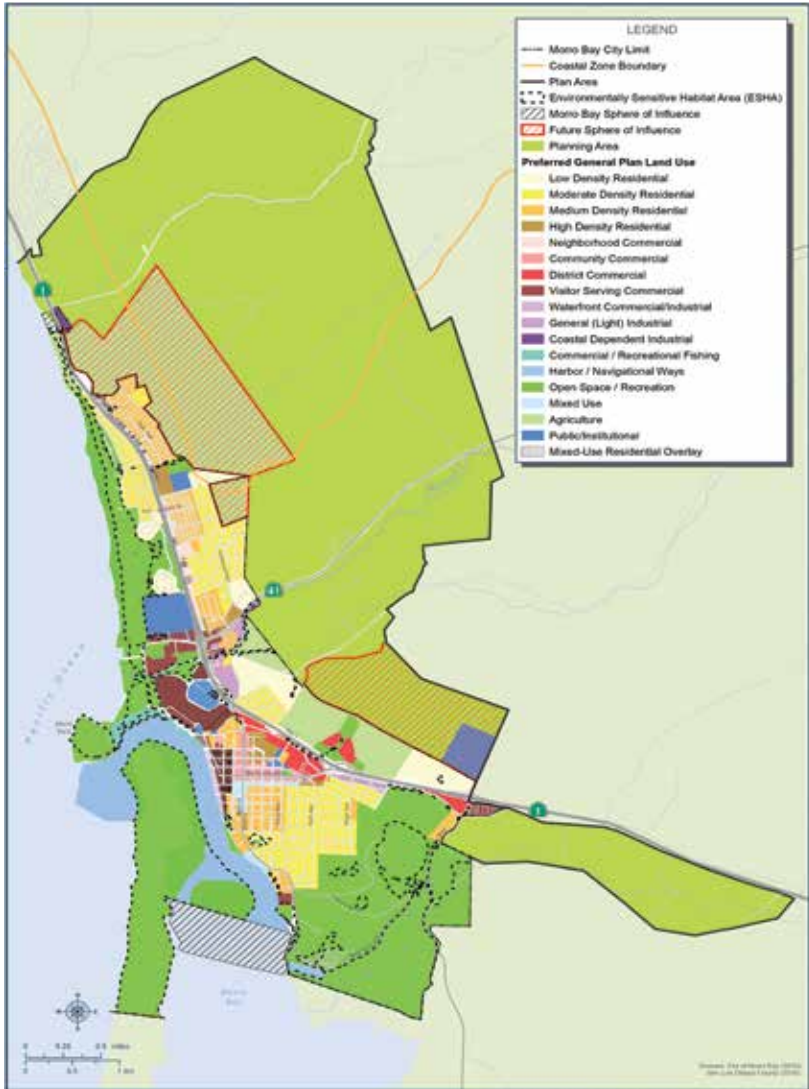
Project Review Well Underway

Vistra submitted an application for a Coastal Development Permit (and an accompanying zoning change) with the City Planning Department in 2021.

The City hired a consulting firm, Rincon Consultants, to conduct an Environmental Impact Report or EIR, work that is well underway at this time with an expected release of a draft public copy sometime later this year.

The proponents of the initiative, which has yet to be given an official name or analysis by the City Attorney or begin to gather the over 800 signatures needed to qualify for the ballot, have been meeting for months to get updates on Vistra's project and to discuss strategy.

One of the organizers, Barry Branin, said they've been



Morro Bay's current zoning map shows the power plant as zoned 'visitor-commercial serving.'

meeting Tuesdays at 10 a.m. at the Buttercup Bakery on Morro Bay Boulevard to discuss the BESS project and strategize their fight against it.

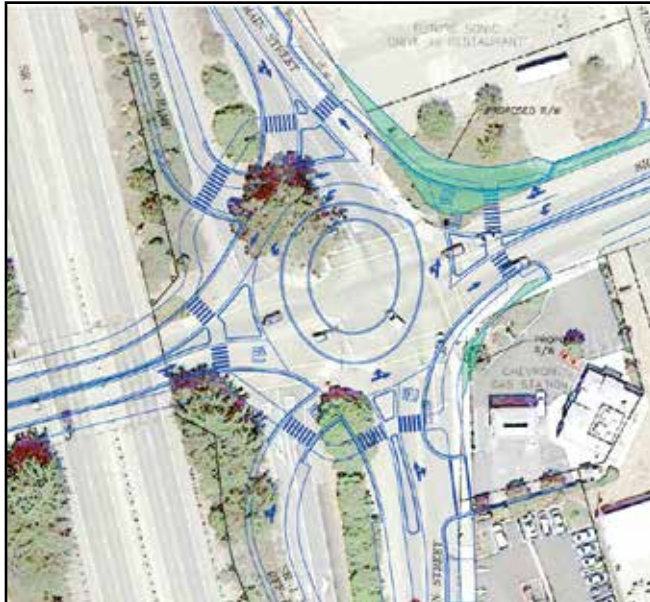
Opposition Got Organized

What's emerged from all this organizing is a citizen's opposition group, called "Citizens for Estero Bay Preservation." That group has now drafted a voter initiative and delivered it to the City Council.

City Clerk, Dana Swanson, said, "A notice of intent to circulate a petition, the proposed ordinance and a request for the City Attorney to prepare a ballot title and summary

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Going Round and Round on Roundabout



The rendering is an early depiction of how a roundabout might be situated at the intersection of Hwy 41 and Main Street in Morro Bay. It should be noted that the actual project has not yet been designed (or a final option yet chosen), so the final design might not be situated like this early version.

By Neil Farrell

It's been looming over the heads of people in Morro Bay for decades and after another round of information gathering, the City Council is expected to finally decide whether to put a second roundabout in a busy local intersection.

City Public Works officials, and reps from Caltrans and the Council of Governments were on hand May 10 for a public forum on the Main Street/Hwy 41 intersection, currently a 4-way stop but envisioned as a roundabout or possibly a signalized intersection.

About 75 concerned citizens turned out for the meeting that was led by Public Works Director Greg Kwolek and included City Engineer Eric Riddiough, Paul Valadeo of Caltrans; John DiNunzio of SLOCOG, and Morro Bay native son, John Rogers, who heads up the project staff for GHD, a worldwide engineering and environmental consulting firm the City brought in for the project. Riddiough is the City's project leader.

Sticker for Your Thoughts

The forum started out with a "Sticker for Your Thoughts" exercise, as the various officials manned computer renderings of the three options under consider-

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Went to a Garden Party

Story and Photos By
Theresa-Marie Wilson

The Los Osos Valley Garden Club recently celebrated their 90th birthday with a luncheon in appreciation of donors, vendors, members and volunteers.

In 1933, LOVGC was the first group in the county to be recognized by California Garden Club, Inc., the largest nonprofit, volunteer gardening organization in the state.

"We all have something to learn about gardening and plants, and we're here to help foster the joy of gardening," said LOVGC President, Wendy McKeown, "Another thing is getting to know other people who are into gardening. They're fun to be around because we're all excited about the same thing."

LOVGC offers programs, gatherings, outings, workshops, and activities, where members can learn how to take care of their own yards.

Whether members are into shrubs,



Los Osos Valley Garden Club President, Wendy McKeown, and Vice President, Haydee Pampel, at the club's 90th birthday celebration at First Baptist Church.

flowers or vegetables, LOVGC's mission remains the same to promote local gardening and landscaping projects through educational talks, tours, hands-on projects and charitable contributions.

"My favorite things we do are the field trips," said Linda Tanner, a club member for about eight years. "We have gone to nurseries and wholesale growers — things I would never get to see on my own."

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Lease Extension for Waterfront Brew Pub

By Neil Farrell



One of Morro Bay's last waterfront lease sites to be redeveloped has been given more time to get a project moving through what can be an onerous permitting process.

The Libertine Pub, which is located at 801 Embarcadero, had been given a three-year lease in October 2020, after the former master lease holder, Burt Caldwell, gave the property back to the City.

Caldwell tried three times to get a redevelopment project approved on that site including the site next door in one attempt, and finally gave up and reverted the lease site back

Brew Pub Continued on page 19

New Fangled Cafeteria A Yummy Addition to MBHS

Photos and story by Neil Farrell



The latest improvement to open at Morro Bay High School will give students, faculty and staff a yummy treat at bargain basement prices.

The San Luis Coastal Unified School District turned out May 1 to christen a new café-style cafeteria and Common Room, the latest projects to be completed under 2014's Measure D bond that's been used to modernize and literally transform both Morro Bay and San Luis Obispo

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News

Bike Path Reopens After Long WRF Closure



The Power Plant Bike Path, shown at right of this photo, is dwarfed by the collection pipes of the City’s Water Reclamation Facility Project (at left)

By Neil Farrell

With the City of Morro Bay’s new sewer system winding down construction, there’s further evidence of the town returning to normal after over two years of being under construction.

The City recently announced the reopening of the Power Plant Bike and Pedestrian Path that had been closed while the Water Reclamation Facility Project’s conveyance pipes were installed.

That portion of the 3.5 miles of new collection system pipes, and recycled-water return piping meant the removal of numerous mature cypress trees that used to line the bike path and screen the highway that runs parallel and above the bike path. The bike path is a major route for people walking and riding bikes from North Morro Bay into the Downtown and Quintana Road areas, and for kids walking/riding to and from Morro Bay High School.

The City said the vegetation is being replaced and



Underground sewer pipes for the City’s WRF Project daylight at Morro Creek and cross in a steel bridge.

public input will be taken as to where replacement trees should be planted.

“Following ongoing construction of the WRF injection wells near the bike path,” a news release from the City said, “native hydro-seed mix will be applied to all areas disturbed during construction. The seed mix will include grasses, wildflowers, and shrubs that are native to the area.”

The bike path, which hadn’t had much work done to it since being installed in the 1990s, was reconstructed and repaved as part of the WRF Project.

“Locations for future tree and shrub plantings,” the notice said, “are also being identified by the City’s Public Works Department to replace trees removed from this area and to have trees planted in suitable locations [i.e., not under power lines].”

“The Department will also work with the Public Works Advisory Board on a replanting plan to allow for public input. The goal is to create a safe bike path and healthy urban forest for generations to come.”

The WRF Project, which started in May 2020 and just finished up late last year, involved building a new treatment plant, dubbed the “Water Resources Center,” on former ranchlands located above the terminus of South Bay Boulevard, just outside the City Limits.



The Power Plant bike path was scrapped of trees and vegetation to make way for construction of the WRF conveyance pipes. The City has hydro-seeded the bald patches with grasses and wildflowers.

It also included some 3.5 miles of conveyance piping running underground from the old treatment plant on Atascadero Road to the new plant.

That multiple-pipe installation included two new lift stations being built — one on Atascadero Road and the other on Main Street — plus a bypass sewer main from the Front Street parking lot on the Embarcadero (at Lift Station 2) through the power plant property to Main Street and the new lift station located next to Lemos Ranch Pet Supply Store.

From there, the piping ran down Quintana Road and underneath the Roundabout at Quintana and Morro Bay Boulevard.

Though most everyone would agree the project was a major pain while it was going on, now that it’s pretty much over, the end products in terms of repaved streets and repaired sidewalks among others, seem to somewhat justify the inconveniences.

“Thank you to the community,” the City news release said, “for the patience and cooperation demonstrated during the bike path closure.”

Ironman Triathlon, May 20 in Morro Bay

By Neil Farrell

Morro Bay residents may have noticed crews of people out in advance of the Ironman 70.3 Morro Bay Triathlon, set for Saturday, May 20 in Morro Bay Harbor, on Hwy 1 and on the streets of Downtown and Morro Bay State Park.

Though City Officials didn’t send information on road closures and the like before deadline, according to the Ironman, Inc., website, this first-ever Morro Bay triathlon has a 1.2-mile swim course starting at Coleman beach and stroking down the harbor channel to about Morro Bay Boulevard (Rose’s Landing) before turning around and swimming back all the way to Target Rock.

That’s where the estimated 2,500 competitors, men and women, in dozens of age divisions will exit the water on a temporary ramp and switch over to the cycling portion in the change-over area in the Morro Rock parking lot.

The riders will head back up Coleman Drive turning left towards Morro Creek. The riders will cross over the Morro Creek Pedestrian Bridge then down and around to Atascadero Road. They will enter Northbound Hwy 1 at the Atascadero Road on ramp and ride all the way to San Simeon, rolling through Cayucos and Cambria along the way. They turn around at San Simeon and head back, using the same route in reverse.

That’s where they’ll change over to running shoes and head out on a 13.1 mile run through the Embarcadero and up the hill to Main Street, and then turn north on Main and run down and around Lower State Park Road, turning around where it meets Upper State Park Road by South Bay Boulevard. They turn around and retrace their route back to Downtown where they will turn around again and do a second lap, finishing the race down on the Embarcadero. The finish line is at 713 Embarcadero, a parking lot where Ironman, Inc., will set up vendors and have its Ironman Store.

Athletes will start to check in on Thursday-Friday, May 18-19 with the race starting at 8 a.m. Saturday at Coleman Beach. The awards ceremony is slated for 2:30 p.m. at the race HQ.

The triathlon will draw people from all over the world to compete and to watch, as Ironman, Inc. puts on races including world championships all over the world. Morro Bay’s race is a World’s Finals qualifier and some of the best triathletes in the world are expected to compete.

The City of Morro Bay, Visit Morro Bay and Ironman, Inc. signed an agreement in 2022 to have the City host three annual Ironman Triathlons. Visit Morro Bay the non-profit business assessment agency that promotes tourism in Morro Bay will be paying the sponsors fees, \$30,000 for the first two years and \$25,000 for the third year.

When the contract came up for City Council action last July, it was predicted to cost the City some \$55,000 a year with \$40,000 in “staff” costs for police, fire, maintenance, etc., and \$15,000 for “logistics” to include parking, shuttling, waste management and no doubt numerous other things that will pop up as the event draws nearer.

However, former City Manager Scott Collins said at the time that the City expects to be reimbursed for much of that cost — \$20,000 for the staffing and \$5,000 in shuttle costs.

The City was expecting a mini economic boon. “In all the expected tax revenue return to the City during the week of the event is anywhere from \$200,000 to \$300,000. Staff anticipates the greater return will come to the City post-event over time through the worldwide exposure of Morro Bay as a recreation tourist destination,” Collins said at the time in a report to the City Council.

As this is the first Ironman Triathlon in Morro Bay, what residents can expect in the way of inconvenience can’t be predicted. Suffice it to say that if you don’t want to deal with road closures, delays or detours that day you might avoid the waterfront and Downtown areas at least while the foot race is going on, as it looks to need the most street closures for the safety of the runners.

And parking will be hard to find, so you might consider taking the City bus into Downtown or the Trolley. See: www.morrobayca.gov/293/Transit to check the bus and trolley schedules.

If readers want more information on Ironman, Inc., and the hundreds of events they put on annually, see: www.ironman.com/im703-morro-bay

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Moonstone Beach Boardwalk Project Moves Ahead



The old and the new side by side. Photo courtesy of California State Parks

By Theresa-Marie Wilson

The first section of long awaited improvements to the Moonstone Beach Boardwalk at Hearst San Simeon State Park is complete. The state funded Moonstone Boardwalk Accessibility Improvements project includes several ADA-related upgrades, such as flatter re-routes, ADA parking spaces, and more compliant boardwalk surfaces and ramps. It involves demolishing part of the 2,243-foot long boardwalk and installing new sections, including three bridges. The new pathway will be relocated away from retreating bluffs and provide emergent wetland and native plant protection and re-routes. “The boardwalk needed replacement due to deteriorated condition and proximity to the retreating coastal bluff,” California State Parks San Luis Obispo Coast District Superintendent Dan Falat told EBN. “The project will move the boardwalk away from the coastal bluff and include ADA improvements including parking and flatter routes of travel.” The \$1.6 million project is funded by State Parks’ Accessibility Program. The original Boardwalk that traverses between the beach bluff-tops and Moonstone Beach Dr. in Cambria is about 20 years old.



A segment of the Moonstone Beach Boardwalk dismantled to make way for improvements. Photo courtesy of California State Parks

“It is one of our most popular and most used trails in the District,” Falat said. “The boardwalk allows State Park visitors of all abilities the opportunity to enjoy the coastal environment and view local wildlife.” Rather than closing the Boardwalk for the expected five to six month project, work will be completed in a series of sections to minimize impacts to public use. There will be some temporary road closures in areas of construction during that time. Grover Beach based Quincon Inc. will complete the repairs and upgrades. Weather conditions as well as material and supply availability could create delays. In addition to amazing views of crashing waves and fantastic sunsets, boardwalk walkers can spot dolphins, surfers, seals, seabirds and whales. CaliforniaBeaches.com calls the beach and boardwalk “Instagram worthy” and declares it one of the most searched beaches in the state. Folks visiting the area should note that the small white stones found in the beach area are, a form of quartz not moonstone.

City Offers WRC Tours



Morro Bay residents curious about their new sewer treatment plant can take a free tour of the so-called “Water Resources Center.”

The Public Works Department is scheduling a series of public tours of the new facility, located above the terminus of South Bay Boulevard at Hwy 1. It’s the largest part of the City’s largest-ever infrastructure project and truly a state-of-the-art facility that is capable of delivering treated wastewater that can be reused to bolster the city’s drinking water supply. The treatment plant is a “membrane bio-reactor” type plant, with tertiary level treatment, plus reverse osmosis filtering and disinfection. According to a City-issued flyer, “Enjoy an opportunity for a behind-the-scenes tour of the Water Resources Center! Meet the Utilities Staff who operate your water, sewer collections and wastewater infrastructure. Also check out Public Works equipment and vehicles.” Tour dates are: Saturday, May 20; Friday, June 23; Saturday, Aug. 5; and Thursday, Sept. 21. Times for the 1-hour tours are from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Sign up on Event Brite at: www.eventbrite.com/e/morro-bay-water-resources-center-community-tour-tickets-623706762717. Or you can call 805-772-6272, or email to: amills@morrobayca.gov to set up a tour. The City recommends you wear flat, sturdy shoes. They should have a hardhat and safety gear for visitors to wear. The tours will go on, rain or shine.

Sheriffs Raid Santa Maria Home, Find Drugs



San Luis Obispo Sheriff’s Special Operations Unit detectives arrested a Santa Maria man on alleged narcotics violations and weapons and theft charges who was suspected of selling drugs in SLO County. According to Sheriff’s spokesman, Tony Cipolla, Sheriff’s detectives served a search warrant at 7:15 a.m. Tuesday, May 2 at a home in the 600 block of Agnes Ave., in Santa Maria’

Raid Continued on page 4

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Estuary Program Partners with Poly with Support From Miossi Trust



The Morro Bay National Estuary Program working on Bioassessment. Photo courtesy of the Estuary Program

The Morro Bay National Estuary Program (Estuary Program) announced its second year of partnership with Cal Poly San Luis Obispo and the City of San Luis Obispo for spring bioassessment surveys in the San Luis Obispo watershed.

Bioassessment is a statewide monitoring tool used to evaluate the health of rivers and streams. Surveys involve collecting macroinvertebrates (bottom-dwelling insects) from local creeks and assessing the stream habitat. The Estuary Program has collected bioassessment data in the Morro Bay watershed since the early 2000s. This data has furthered the program’s understanding of changing conditions and helped to prioritize conservation efforts.

The Miossi Trust has provided more than \$120,000 of support for the Estuary Program’s bioassessment monitoring effort since 2013. Two years ago, the Miossi Trust trustee Howard Carroll approached the Estuary Program about a partnership to expand bioassessment monitoring into the neighboring San Luis Obispo watershed. Excited about the results of the Morro Bay effort, Carroll wanted to see the monitoring utilized in other areas.

Although the Estuary Program normally limits its work to the Morro Bay estuary and the lands that surround it, sharing of expertise and skills to build capacity is a program goal.

The Estuary Program worked with Dr. Christopher Surfleet, professor of watershed management and hydrology at Cal Poly, and Freddy Otte, biologist for the City of San Luis Obispo, to develop a San Luis Obispo bioassessment monitoring effort.

Each year, a Cal Poly graduate student candidate coordinates the project under the supervision of Professor Surfleet to lead a class of undergraduate students through the bioassessment protocol at various locations in the San Luis Obispo watershed. The City of San Luis Obispo coordinates site access, surveying equipment, and provides lab support. The Estuary Program will provide training and technical expertise for the project through 2024.

“This is a great opportunity to bring Cal Poly students out into the field to get hands on experience,” said Otte. “We are really interested in getting baseline information on the ecology of the creeks and what we can do to protect them and the plants and animals that rely on them for survival. This data will feed back into a larger watershed planning document to inform future restorationists about how to care for our resources and creeks.”

The program has been a success with Poly students. “The field data collection training for the Cal Poly students has been tremendous,” said Professor Surfleet. “The class is always at full capacity, giving students experience in environmental monitoring and assessment.”

In 2022, the San Luis Obispo bioassessment team conducted five surveys, including three sites on Stenner Creek and two sites on San Luis Obispo Creek. The data from the surveys was compiled to generate a single score for each site. The scores ranged from “Good,” indicating healthy stream conditions, to “Very Poor,” indicating impaired stream conditions. In 2023, the team will continue data collection and expand to a sixth monitoring site.

This work is made possible by the generous support of the Harold J. Miossi Charitable Trust, which is interested in seeing this work continue to expand in other areas of San Luis Obispo

County. For more information about the Harold J. Miossi Charitable Trust, go to www.miossicharitabletrust.org.

County Hires On-Call EIR Firms

By Neil Farrell

Given California’s extensive environmental laws, it might make sense to have a few planning firms at the ready.

County Supervisors recently did just that when they approved 5-year contracts with three environmental planning firms paying millions each year, to have them on call and ready to step in quickly to work on big projects.

The contracts are with Aspen Environmental Group, Inc., MRS Environmental, Inc., and SWCA Environmental Consultants, Inc., for \$1.5 million the first year and \$500,000 maximum a year after that for a total contract amount of \$3.5 million.

In a staff report from the Environmental Office of Planning and Building Department, it was explained that the department has “on call” special service providers “to help expedite preparation of environmental and planning documents such as environmental impact reports (EIR), negative declarations, technical studies, mitigation monitoring plans, general plan amendments, and land use and subdivision reports. The consultants also provide special expertise and mitigation monitoring services.”

The three companies were chosen from 15 responses the County recieved to a request for proposals to become an on call firm after an old contract expired in September 2022 before the County could get around to issuing a new RFP.

The County cited limited resources and “several pressing priority projects,” as why it didn’t get the RFP done before the contracts expired.

“The major benefit of doing this RFP,” the report said, “and contracting for on-call services, is that it shortens the time for the consultant to start work on a given project. This is because the RFP and contract negotiation process, which can take 8-10 weeks, is done once instead of for each separate project.”

The County is anticipating a big EIR project will soon come its way — the decommissioning of the Phillips 66 refinery. That Nipomo facility is expected to cease operations soon and it will be a monumental job shuttering it, cleaning up and restoring the land.

But it won’t just be the big EIR jobs that these firms will help with, as the County Planning & Building Department has seen an exodus of employees in recent years and

is short handed to handle even simple environmental work, including “negative declarations, technical studies, mitigation monitoring plans, general plan amendments, and land use and subdivision reports. The consultants also provide special expertise and mitigation monitoring services.”

The whole idea with the on-call contracts is to “help expedite the land use and environmental review process, and provide special expertise, as needed. This is consistent with the County goal of a prosperous and well governed community.”

It should be noted that the County’s Environmental Division doesn’t itself do full blown EIRs, but can do negative declarations and so-called “mitigated neg-decs,” which are mainly just a checkmark list of potential impacts that come with ready-made mitigation measures.

When a mitigated neg-dec is insufficient is when full-blown EIRs are required and applicants normally pay those costs, including County expenses. A full EIR on something like the refinery decommissioning, could cost applicants several million dollars.

Supervisors Amend Bus Contracts

By Neil Farrell

County Supervisors have revised a contract with a private bus company to have it transport people for medical appointments and things like court hearings.

Supervisors recently approved a new contract with United Cerebral Palsy of SLO County, which operates Ride On Transportation, increasing the contract by some \$827,000 for a new total contract amount of \$1.31 million a year.

The contract would have Ride On “provide transportation for clients to various facilities for medically necessary treatment and other activities that may include Court hearings and treatment sessions,” reads the report from County Behavioral Health, and County Administration. The new contract would run through the end of the 2024/25 fiscal year.

The change is driven by an increase in demand experienced by Behavioral Health, especially as the Coronavirus Pandemic was raging.

“Throughout Fiscal Year 2021-22,” the report said, “Behavioral Health saw an increased need for transportation of clients for a variety of reasons. Several of these factors remain true for FY 2022-23 and continue to increase the volume of client transports.” These include:

- An increase in requests for transportation for inpatient services outside of the County, primarily for adults who have Medicare or private insurance, or for minors. The need for return trips home to San Luis Obispo County have also continued to increase, and receiving hospitals require an assurance that the patient will be transported at discharge to an appropriate location.
- The PHF staff is no longer providing transportation

Bus Contracts Continued on page 6

Raid From page 5

“Detectives had information a resident of the home was suspected of selling narcotics in San Luis Obispo County,” Cipolla said. “During the search of the home and an associated vehicle, Detectives discovered a 9mm handgun as well as a .22-caliber rifle that had been reported stolen out of Nipomo. Additionally, a large quantity of heroin was found.

Cipolla said more than 166 grams or some 5.92 ounces of suspected heroin were discovered in the search. “The estimated street value of the heroin if sold by the gram,” Cipolla said, “would total approximately \$10,000 to \$13,000.”

The suspect, identified as Michael Frenklin Santiago, 26 of Santa Maria, was arrested and charged with suspicion of “possession for sale of a controlled substance,” Cipolla said, “and possession of a controlled substance while armed with a loaded firearm.” He added that the charges would be filed with the District Attorney’s Office.

The photo shows the baggie of heroin and a handgun and rifle seized in a raid in Santa Maria.





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News Briefs

By Theresa-Marie Wilson

SLO Food Bank Hunger Awareness Day



The SLO Food Bank will hold its largest annual community event and fundraiser, Hunger Awareness Day, on June 2. Established in 2007, this countywide event educates and activates SLO County residents about the life-changing impact of community engagement to alleviate hunger.

The event raises critical funds to support the SLO Food Bank's hunger relief efforts. "By coming together as a community to support hunger relief, we can truly make a significant impact. The SLO Food Bank can quadruple the purchasing power of every dollar donated to provide nutritious meals to individuals and families who are struggling to put food on the table," said SLO Food Bank CEO, Garret Olson.

Folks looking to help can:

- **Donate** - People can donate to support the SLO Food Bank's one-day goal of raising \$112,000 for hunger relief. Supporters can donate online or find a full list of in-person donation sites that will be hosted across SLO County on Friday, June 2, on the HAD website.

- **Fundraise** - Individuals, businesses, families, and friends can create a fundraising page to create a movement to support hunger relief. Each fundraising page can be customized and easily shared with others across various platforms.

- **Good Fruit Benefit Concert**- Megan's Organic Market presents Good Fruit Benefit Concert, a night of music on June 2 from 7 - 11 p.m. at SLO Brew Rock. Join Shawn Truax from the Beach radio and rock out to live performances by The Mother Hips, Wolf Jett, and The Silent Comedy. All ticket sales support the SLO Food Bank's mission and Hunger Awareness Day goal.

- **CALFresh Assistance** - On Friday, June 2, the SLO Food Bank offers CalFresh application assistance at locations throughout the county including 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. at the Atascadero, SLO, Morro Bay and Nipomo public libraries, and 1 - 5 p.m. at the Arroyo Grande Public Library.

Poly is the Big Cheese



Third-year Teddy Lopez, left, and fourth-year Ryan Nunes, both agricultural science majors, pose after Cal Poly's student-produced Triple Peak brie was awarded the first-place title.

The Cal Poly Creamery's Triple Peak brie, a student-produced cheese that was added to the lineup in 2020, took the first-place title in the North American Intercollegiate Dairy Challenge's (NAIDC) "Best of Dairy Challenge" competition.

Two Cal Poly agricultural science students, third-year Teddy Lopez of Wilton, California, and fourth-year Ryan Nunes, of Grover Beach, California, presented the soft cow's milk triple cream cheese at the national competition, which was held March 30 to April 1 in Saratoga Springs, New York.

The Best of Dairy Challenge, which took place during the NAIDC's annual national contest, was a new addition to the competition. More than 100 competitors were present to exhibit a variety of dairy products, including milk, ice cream, cheeses and butter.

Each competitor was allowed one submission into the Best of Dairy Challenge. Cal Poly's Triple Peak Brie cheese was submitted under the "soft cheese" category, with 30 other competing products, and garnered 200 voters — more than any of the other submissions.

Cal Poly Creamery dairy products, including the Triple Peak Brie, are sold throughout San Luis Obispo County, including at California Fresh Market, Avila Valley Barn, and Spencer's Fresh Market, among other locations. Products are also available at the weekly Ice Cream Drive-Thru at the Dairy Unit on Mt. Bishop Road (No. 18A) on Fridays from noon to 4 p.m.

For more information about the Cal Poly Creamery and to view student-made products, visit calpolycreamery.com.

Free COVID-19 Tests

County residents who need COVID-19 tests may pick some up at no cost outside Public Health clinics in

Grover Beach, Paso Robles, and San Luis Obispo.

Tests are also available at pop-up events countywide in collaboration with food bank distributions. Residents may take two tests per person in their household at these sites. There are no requirements related to residency, income, insurance, or immigration status. The tests are available during business hours. Tests may occasionally run low but will be restocked while supplies last.

People who have symptoms of COVID-19 should not go into clinics but may pick up tests outside.

"One of the most important reasons to test for COVID-19 is to ensure you can get treatment promptly if you need it," said Dr. Rick Rosen, deputy county health officer. "Effective treatment is widely available, and data continues to show it helps prevent both severe disease and long COVID, but it needs to be started within five days of your first symptoms. Having tests on hand means you are ready to find out if you have COVID-19 and get treatment if you do."

For those who test positive with a home test and do not have health insurance or can't reach their regular healthcare provider within 24 hours, free COVID-19 telehealth appointments are available online or by phone, with treatment prescribed at no cost if indicated. Health officials strongly encourage residents to take advantage of this convenient free resource. Check out <https://bit.ly/317i5bh>.

SLO City Awards Grant Funding to Prevent Homelessness

The City of San Luis Obispo awarded \$150,000 in grant funding to 19 area programs to promote economic and social wellbeing of community members, including programs that focus on homelessness prevention and transitional housing.

The City's Human Services Grants, formerly titled Grants-in-Aid, provides financial support to non-profit organizations in San Luis Obispo or based in neighboring communities whose services primarily serve City community members. The Human Relations Commission (HRC) advises the City Council on funding priorities and grant recommendations.

The primary funding priority for the 2022-2023 Human Services Grant program was homelessness prevention, including affordable housing, alternative housing, transitional housing and support services such as hunger and malnutrition prevention, mental health services, and more.

The City received grant funding requests from 29 organizations requesting a total of \$379,245. The HRC recommended funding 19 of those programs for a total

News Briefs Continued on page 8

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‘The Cemetery Club’
Comedy at By the Sea
Productions



Don’t miss By the Sea Production’s latest play, “The Cemetery Club.” Three Jewish widows meet once a month to visit their husband’s graves in ‘The Cemetery Club,’ a heartwarming comedy by Ivan Menchell. The tradition works well until one of the women becomes interested in the local butcher, and her friends attempt to sabotage the budding relationship. Directed by Anita Schwaber, the cast includes Jean Miller, Debora Schwartz, Laurelle Barnett Kelty, Russell Snow and Janice Peters.

‘The Cemetery Club’ plays through 28, at 545 Shasta Ave. in Morro Bay. Show times are 7 p.m. Friday and Saturday, and 3 p.m. Sunday. Tickets are \$25 and are available online at bytheseaproductions.org, or call 805-776-3287. Reservations are recommended.
Photo courtesy of By the Sea Productions



By Theresa-Marie Wilson

Poly Professor ‘Major
Recession’ is Possibility

The U.S. could default on its debt as early as June 1 if the federal government doesn’t raise the debt ceiling. Republican lawmakers have insisted they won’t raise the debt limit without significant spending cuts that Democrats have resisted, leading to a showdown. Dan Seiver, an economics professor at the Orfalea College of Business at Cal Poly, said the mere threat of the U.S. defaulting on its debt can rattle the stock market and trading in the U.S. dollar. “If we do not raise the debt ceiling, the U.S. will be forced to default on some or all of its obligations — Treasury securities, and payments for social security, etc.,” Seiver said. “The economy could easily tailspin into a major recession with rising unemployment. At the same time lenders will be less willing to lend to the U.S., meaning interest rates could go even higher.” Seiver has appeared regularly on the PBS TV program “Nightly Business Report” and is frequently quoted as an economics expert, While some have argued it’s irresponsible to carry a lot of debt, Seiver said the U.S. economy could not function without it. “Many Americans have mortgage debt, which is the only way they could afford to own a home,” he said. “Many students have student debt for the same reason. And most corporations have debt, including highly profitable ones, like Google (\$14 billion in debt). “Modern capitalist economies would be much poorer if we all decided to ‘neither a borrower nor lender be.” Significant spending cuts, he added, could force

Americans to cut back their spending. “And these cuts in spending will then lead to further cuts as businesses see a drop in demand for their goods and services – leading to layoffs spreading through the economy.” Reducing the debt, he added, would require a surplus in the government budget, entailing a combination of over a trillion dollars of cuts in spending and tax increases. The current debt — which Seiver said is sustainable and serviceable — was incurred by laws approved by both Republican and Democratic presidents. “It would be irresponsible not to pay what we owe,” Seiver said. “When Americans agree on taxing ourselves more heavily and cutting back future spending, we will have a more ‘responsible’ budget.”

Spokes Meeting

Spokes for Nonprofits’ next “mission-alike” roundtable is on May 31 with a focus on housing programs. Spokes welcomes representatives from nonprofit organizations who aim to provide supportive housing and/or access to affordable housing to those in need. Mission-alike roundtables are an opportunity for nonprofit organizations in the same sector to network and discuss common challenges, share resources and collaborate for the common good, through a facilitated discussion. A hallmark feature of the roundtables is a commitment to confidentiality to encourage mutual support and a candid exchange of ideas. Roundtables are 75 minutes long and free to all participants. Limit of two representatives from each organization. To register, visit the Spokes Event Calendar: <https://bit.ly/housingrt>

Cuesta Foundation
Raises Impressive
Funds

The Cuesta College Foundation raised an impressive \$109,789 to support the Foundation’s endowment for

Bus Contracts From page 4
for Public Guardian clients who need to return to the County for court hearings or back to the clients’ out-of-county residential placements. These trips are now provided by vendors.
• CenCal still has not developed additional resources for medically necessary transport to out-of-county facilities; vendors or the County continue to provide transportation, when necessary, which is not always reimbursed by CenCal, to ensure timely placement of Medi-Cal beneficiaries in appropriate levels of care.
• Payment for transportation of private insurance or Medicare clients by third party carriers continues to be inconsistent.
• Minors may not be admitted to the Psychiatric Health Facility (PHF) and are directly transferred to other

facilities that can provide care more appropriate to their needs. The change to exclude minors from PHF admission began due an increase in numbers of inmates from the jail to the PHF several years ago.
• Local emergency departments are not equipped or staffed to care for individuals in acute psychiatric need for long periods of time. Due to the lack of inpatient beds in the County, individuals must be transported as expeditiously as possible to out-of-county facilities once a bed is procured by contract staff.
• During COVID-19 outbreaks, the PHF is forced to temporarily limit admissions, which results in an increase in transports needed as patients are diverted to out of county hospitals. There were approximately 57 days through the second quarter when the PHF was closed to admissions, or patients were diverted to out-of-county

psychiatric hospitals.
This latest contract amendment is the last of four the County had to change with its four transportation vendors that provide these transportation services. The other three were amended back in February.
The contracts have clauses that allow for two, 1-year extensions past the original terms and the County Health Director can amend the contracts with regards to services, service levels or rates, because Supervisors in approving the amendments gave that authority to the Health Agency director.
The contracts are an example of the lengths and expenses SLO County must go to with regards to its mental health programs because there are no in-patient mental health facilities located within SLO County.

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SLO Public Library
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6



the Cuesta Assistance for Student Emergencies (CASE) Fund during their 50th Anniversary Celebration.

“We are thrilled with the overwhelming support we received from the community,” said Cuesta College Foundation Executive Director Shannon Hill. “The funds raised will significantly impact the lives of Cuesta College students and help us continue our mission of providing accessible, affordable, and high-quality education to our community.”

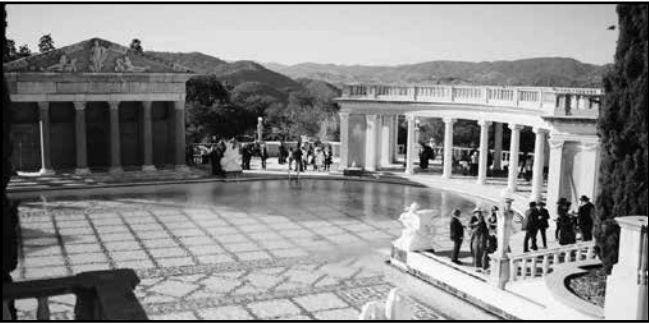
The CASE Fund is a vital resource to the campus community providing emergency grants for Cuesta College students facing urgent and unforeseeable expenses that could cause them to drop out of college. The funds raised at the anniversary celebration will allow the Foundation to create an endowment for the fund and provide critical financial support to students in perpetuity.

“I am proud to say that the Cuesta College Foundation is one of the largest and most active in the whole California Community College system,” said Cuesta College Superintendent / President Dr. Jill Stearns. “As I attend meetings with other college leaders across the state, they are always impressed at the level of support our community offers Cuesta and the numerous gifts that the Foundation stewards. Our donors should be proud of that recognition and the Foundation’s accomplishments.”

Recognized at the event were alumni Evan Norton, Adam Watkins, Caren Ray Russom, and Karl Wittstrom who all received the prestigious Honored Alumni Awards.

The Cuesta College Foundation is a non-profit organization that supports the educational mission of Cuesta College by raising funds and promoting community involvement. Since its founding in 1973, the Foundation has raised millions of dollars for student scholarships, programs, and capital projects. It has become one of California’s top ten community college foundations. For more information about the Cuesta College Foundation or to donate, please visit cuesta.edu/give/.

French Hospital Event Raised Funds for Cancer Patients



The French Hospital Medical Center Foundation’s annual “Share the Hope” event held last month resulted in more than \$450,000 to benefit the Hearst Cancer Resource Center (HCRC) Endowment.

The endowment provides vital long term support for French Hospital’s HCRC, allowing its programs and services to continue providing comfort, support, and information to cancer patients and their families, regardless of their ability to pay for services, for many years to come.

During the event, more than 180 guests were treated to a champagne reception held by the famous Neptune Pool at Hearst Castle, followed by a gourmet dinner at the historic Hearst Ranch Dairy Barn, featuring as live auction and live music.

Over the past 14 years, “Share the Hope” has raised more than \$4.4 million to benefit HCRC programs and services

The HCRC collaborates with community and physician partners to provide supportive and educational services necessary for cancer patients to understand their disease, manage treatment, and maintain dignity and quality of life throughout all aspects of their cancer experience.

To learn more or donate to the Hearst Cancer Resource Center, go to www.supportfrenchhospital.org/hcrc.

Save Money on PG&E Bill

After months of seeing increases in nearly every bill owed there is an opportunity to decrease some utility payments.

The 2023 season of PG&E’s Power Saver Rewards Program is open and residential electric customers are encouraged to register now. The program rewards participants for temporarily reducing energy use when demand for electricity is high. Last year, PG&E customers received over \$55 million in bill credits.

Power Saver Rewards Program event days are triggered by the state’s grid operator, the California Independent System Operator, calling a Flex Alert and/or an Energy Emergency Alert Watch between May 1 and October 31. Notifications to customers to reduce energy use as part of the program are sent out the day before an event. Over the ten event days in 2022, the average customer bill credit for program participants was \$35.

“Customers who reduce energy use between 4 p.m. and 9 p.m. on event days will receive an automatic credit on their energy statement after the program season ends,” said PG&E in a news release. “Customers receive \$2 per kilowatt hour for decreasing electricity use during events. There is no penalty for not reducing energy.

“The program, initiated by the California Public Utilities Commission, encourages energy conservation during extreme heat waves to lessen the overall strain on the grid and prevent the need for rotating outages. During peak hours, customers temporarily reduced usage by taking actions such as turning their thermostat to 78 degrees or higher (health permitting), turning off lights not in use, unplugging electric vehicles, and waiting until after peak hours to use large appliances such as washers, dryers and electric ovens.”

PG&E electric customers with a SmartMeter not enrolled in a conflicting peak hour program are eligible to participate. Customers can disenroll from the program at any time through the program website.

Visit powersaver.pge.com to learn more and sign up.

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.

4th of July Carnival Volunteers Needed

Folks are putting together a carnival for the 4th of July in Cayucos and they need help to make it a success for local kids and teenagers. They are looking for volunteers of all ages and genders, so whether you’re young or old, male or female, or a teenager, they would love to have you on board.

Even if you have plans that day, they could use help beforehand. Anyone interested in volunteering, should call or text Dianne at 805-602-0193.

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Police Blotter



• **April 30:** Police contacted a local yokel, 45, by the beach in the 100 block of Azure St. He had two bench warrants and that warranted that a future warrant be issued.

• **April 30:** Police contacted another citizen of the year at 10:35 a.m. in the 500 block of Monterey. That apparent swagman, 38, had six bench warrants and was also found in alleged possession of illegal drugs, which he apparently didn't have time to send up in smoke.

• **April 30:** At 3:26 a.m. police came across a no doubt most curious sight — a running vehicle stopped at the Main and Quintana stoplight with a driver slumped over and passed out behind the wheel. Logs indicated the 24-year-old fellow “displayed signs of being under the influence” of illegal drugs. The guy also allegedly had suspected meth-amphetamine packaged up for alleged sales, and he had a bench warrant. He was tossed into the gaol for suspicion of DUI drugs, possession of drugs for sale, transportation of illegal drugs for sale, the warrant and of course no driver's license, in this week's example of why they call it dope.

• **April 29:** Police took a report at 4:16 p.m. in the 700 block of Monterey after a City street tree dropped a big limb onto a parked car below and damaged it.

• **April 29:** Police responded to the 300 block of Morro Bay Blvd., at 12:33 p.m. and arrested a 38-year-old woman for suspicion of trespassing. The apparent public enemy No. 1,000 was hauled to jail.

• **April 29:** Someone in the 1500 block of Main reported vandalism.

• **April 29:** Police espied yet another humanicus dooficus shillyshallying along at 10 a.m. in the 900 block of Main. Logs indicated the 31-year-old annoying flesh monkey had allegedly been enjoying the breakfast of champions — liquor — and was nicked.

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• **April 29:** Police responded at 10:07 a.m. to City Park on Harbor Street for a kerfuffle caused by some fluffed fellow who'd apparently had curfuffed the straights in the park. The fellow had eight bench warrants and was of course issued another ticket and allowed to continue with his curfuffling ways.

• **April 29:** Police contacted another suspicious fellow at 8:16 a.m. in the Morro Rock parking lot. He had four bench warrants and police checked him into the Parkinson Plaza for three hots and a cot.

• **April 28:** Police responded to a disturbance at 10:50 a.m. at Morro Bay Market & Spirits in the 300 block of the boulevard. Logs indicated they found a 46-year-old apparently cranky pants fellow whom they arrested because he was too drunk to take care of his own safety, as they are apparently safer in jail.

• **April 27:** Police were called at 12:41 p.m. about a missing woman who was released April 25 from a mental hospital and who is also a reported drug addict with no means of supporting herself.

• **April 27:** Police responded to the 1100 block of Front St., where they arrested a 44-year-old hombre for suspicion of grand theft.

• **April 27:** Police at Morro Bay High cited a 17-year-old hooligan for suspicion of truancy, in this week's example of why we need SWAT.

• **April 26:** Police responded to the 2800 block of Hemlock where a citizen said some unknown thief stole two gold rings and two watches worth about \$2,600, which sounds like an inside job.

• **April 26:** Police forged a theft by forgery report in the 500 block of Morro Bay Blvd. and will forge ahead with an investigation.

• **April 26:** A citizen in the 300 block of Piney Way reportedly said she was being stalked. No word on a suspected scamboogah.

• **April 25:** Police responded at 2:40 p.m. to a disturbance in the 800 block of Monterey. Logs indicated they encountered a 43-year-old apparent hellion who was the cause of the big ado. She was nicked for alleged disorderly conduct, two bench warrants and being spanked in public, which explains a lot.

• **April 25:** Police at the high school arrested a 16-year-old apparent student for allegedly making criminal terrorist threats, possessing a knife on school grounds and resisting arrest.

• **April 24:** Police stopped a suspicious vehicle at 9:24 p.m. somewhere on Main Street. Logs indicated the woman driver, 45, was arrested for allegedly driving waxed.

• **April 23:** Police responded at 3:17 a.m. to the 2800 block of Main after some graffidiot tagged the side of the Del Mar Market and then slithered off into the night.

• **April 22:** Police contacted a swizzle stick sashaying down the 300 block of Main at 5:07 p.m. The neat Happy Hour refugee was nicked for suspicion of being sloppy in public.

• **April 22:** Police responded at 9 a.m. to the 2400 block of Main where someone reported a sneaky sneak sneaking around the property. He'd sneaked off before officers snuck up on him.

• **April 22:** Police contacted a familiar fellow, 44, at 12:13 p.m. in the 700 block of Quintana and arrested him on 10, count 'em 10! bench warrants. The judge will no doubt be happy to see the desperado. Earlier, at 11:41 a.m. they came across another lost boy, 30, and cite-released him, no doubt 'cause he only had five bench warrants.

• **April 22:** Police started a missing person case in the 500 block of Kings. A 27-year-old man was last seen by his mom on April 11.

• **April 22:** Police contacted a 28-year-old wanted man with three bench warrants at 8:39 a.m. on Beach Street.

News Briefs From page 7

of \$150,000, which includes:

- \$8,400 for affordable housing production at the Waterman Village provided by Smart Share Housing Solutions.
- \$10,000 for Rapid Re-Housing and Homeless Prevention Assistance SLO provided by 5-Cities Homeless Coalition.
- \$10,000 for Homeless Prevention work provided by Community Action Partnership of SLO County (CAPS-LO).
- \$10,000 for Meals that Connect provided by the

The model citizen was also allegedly in possession of suspected illegal drugs and drug paraphernalia. He got injected into the hoosegow.

• **April 21:** Police responded to a disturbance at 9:17 p.m. in the 1700 block of the Embarcadero. Logs indicated a 27-year-old fellow was having a bit of a meltdown and was taken for a 72-hour timeout.

• **April 21:** Police responded at 9:59 p.m. to the 2600 block of Main where a distraught woman was in the lobby of the Holland Inn. Logs indicated she was the victim of domestic violence. Officers arrested her apparent louse of a husband, 28, for suspicion of corporal injury to a spouse and aggravated assault.

• **April 21:** At 1:16 p.m. police responded to a home in the 300 block of Arbutus where someone had passed away.

• **April 21:** Police stopped a suspicious vehicle at 11:29 a.m. on Monterey Avenue. Los indicated the car's registration was expired over six months, so the 84-year-old woman driver was cited. Officers gave her a lift home but arrested her completely innocent car.

• **April 21:** Someone turned in a firearm for destruction that someone was no doubt shootin' to be rid of.

• **April 21:** Police contacted yet another Wiz, 30, at 8:30 a.m. in the 700 block of Quintana who only had three bench warrants. He was given a fourth disappearance ticket and released to ease on down, ease on down the road...

• **April 21:** At 7:41 a.m. police responded to the 600 block of Quintana where an offensive parked vehicle was blocking a private driveway. Logs indicated they had to tow it off because “it is impractical to move the vehicle from in front of the driveway to another point on the highway,” which is about as clear as Yoo-Hoo Soda.

• **April 21:** Police stopped a suspicious vehicle at the highly suspect time of 1:44 a.m. on Hwy 1 at Atascadero Road. The 22-year-old driver was given a field sobriety test, which he apparently failed miserably. He was arrested for suspicion of driving stupid.

• **April 20:** Police responded to a disturbance at 10 p.m. in the 700 block of Quintana. Logs indicated they arrested a 43-year-old sizzled gent for suspicion of being schmam-mered in public.

• **April 20:** Police contacted a suspicious fellow at 3:34 p.m. at Monterey and Beach. The 41-year old had a bench warrant and was booked into County Jail.

• **April 20:** At 2:44 p.m. somewhere on Quintana they encountered another apparent outdoorsman, 38, with five bench warrant cards. He was dealt another hole in his punch card and released.

• **April 20:** Police contacted a wanted woman, 37, at 9:41 p.m. on Quintana. She had a felony arrest warrant and was quick to get nicked.

• **April 19:** Police stopped a suspicious vehicle at 9:15 p.m. in the 200 block of Atascadero Rd. The 47-year-old woman driver was cited for a suspended license and a little matter of two bench warrants.

• **April 19:** Someone found a laptop computer in the 200 block of Beach and turned it over to police.

• **April 18:** Police responded at 1 p.m. to the Morro Rock parking lot where they cited a 17-year-old apparent speed demon for suspicion of reckless driving and spinning bro-dies in the dirt.

• **April 18:** Someone turned in a cell phone they found somewhere in town, no doubt calling on police to re-connect with the disconnected owner.

• **April 17:** Police stopped a suspicious vehicle at 10:42 p.m. at San Jacinto and Hwy 1. Logs indicated the driver, 29, was cited and released for suspicion of driving on a toot.

• **April 17:** Police responded at 10 a.m. to the 1400 block of Quintana for a reported sticky-fingered fellow plying his tradecraft. The 36-year-old was arrested for suspicion of burglary and of course a probation violation.

Senior Nutrition Program.

- \$15,000 for 2024 Youth Empowerment Program provided by City Farm.
- \$20,000 for hot showers to those experiencing homelessness provided by Shower the People.

For more details on the City's grant programs, visit www.slocity.org/Grants.

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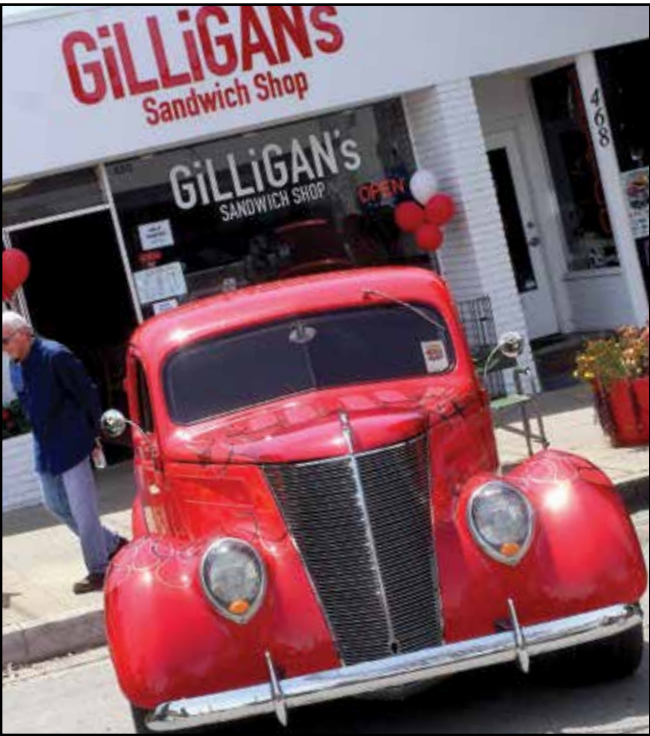
Kevin says,
"Look
for the
ANT
on the
Door"

KEVIN O'CONNOR, President

Community

Photos by Neil Farrell

The 27th Annual Cruisin' Morro Bay Car Show took over the Downtown streets May 6 with some 500 classic and custom cars, roadsters and muscle cars lining Morro Bay Boulevard, and Main Street and beyond. Thousands of folks came out on what turned out to be a really nice, sunny day, though not too warm. Among the cars were a number of Corvettes spanning the iconic American sports car's 70 years of production (1953-2023). The display showed how far the 'Vette has come in its designs, with the newest models looking more and more like European sports cars, with gull wing doors and a wicked looking face resembling McClarens. There was also a number of Thunderbirds spanning that cars' various models through the years. There were several vintage law enforcement cars on display, too including a couple of the Highway Patrol's iconic 5.9 Mustangs of 1970s and early '80s. And one gentleman from the Central Valley brought out his-and-hers Lamborghinis — his was orange and hers a fluorescent green.



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2023 Cruisin' Morro bay Car Show

Cruisin' Morro Bay

Photos by Neil Farrell

Morro Bay streets were filled with chrome and horsepower as the Annual Cruise Night car parade took over the Downtown on Friday, May

5. A few hundred people lined Morro Bay Boulevard and Harbor Street to watch the 4-wheeled spectacle that included over 400 classic cars, custom hot rods and lots of muscle cars old and new.

Edward Jones

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Sandy Cha Mumper
Financial Advisor

1073 Main Street
Cambria, CA 93428
(805) 927-1343

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Community

Foundation, the event is free to attend. Vendors will have marine-related items for sale — from wetsuits to boat and fishing gear, artworks, canoes and kayaks, surfboards and more. Bring cash if you plan on buying something.

If readers have nautical items they'd like to sell, they can sign up to be a vendor at: friendsofthembhd.org/marine-swap-meet.

Cruise Control Cambria presents “The Rolling Hills of Jenny West by artist Anna Fusco at 1075 Main Street. There is an opening reception on May 20 from 5 to 8 p.m.

Fusco’s work for this show is born from a love and appreciation for pulp western comics and their place in framing the idea of manifest destiny in the American west, and that natural friction with the current sentimental and fleeting possibility of modern home ownership. If nowhere is home then why can’t everywhere feel a bit like it? If everywhere is home then why is there still that incomplete feeling?

Her unearthing of the internal emotional landscapes at stake are heightened by the external evidence presented back to us. The concepts of safety and security through a place of ones own, in contrast to the revelations of life on the road are the compelling forces of her storytelling. Vignettes, asides, and anecdotes become the proof of life we can recall, and eventually become the truth we remember over time.

Anna currently lives, writes and creates in the hills of San Luis Obispo County.



Join the League of Women Voters for “The Promise and Challenges of Offshore Wind Power Generation” presentation on May 25 at noon via Zoom. It features moderator: Neil Havlik, Chair, LWV SLOCO Natural Resources Committee and panelists Alla Weinstein, CEO, Trident Winds and Crow White, Ph.D., associate professor, Cal Poly.

A large area off the coast is proposed for offshore wind power development at Morro Bay. The process is underway but is in the early stages. County residents will want to know more about the wind power structures, how they will be constructed and put in place, and the potential impact on the marine environment.

The presentation is free, but registration is needed at <https://bit.ly/41xPdZG>



Take part in the annual Memorial Day Remembrance Ceremony taking place in San Luis Obispo on Monday, May 29, at 11 a.m. Co-hosted by American Legion Post 66 and Central Coast Veterans Memorial Museum. San Luis Obispo County residents and visitors of all ages will come together on this special day, to honor and remember all who lost their lives making the ultimate sacrifice during

their service to our country at the Veterans Memorial Building in SLO at 801 Grand Avenue, near the Cal Poly entrance.

Guest speaker William Bowes, Navy vice admiral (ret) will reflect on the meaning of Memorial Day. The ceremony includes a flag presentation by the Sea Cadets Color Guard, The History of the American Flag by Boy Scouts Troop #322, the Gettysburg Address, singing of the National Anthem, and the laying of a memorial wreath. The Cal Poly Brass Quintet, led by Christopher Woodruff, director of Cal Poly Bands, and member of Taps Across America will play the Armed Forces Medley and Taps.

From 12 p.m. to 2 p.m., a \$12 tri-tip sandwich lunch will be served onsite at Post 66, with the sandwich, coleslaw, chips and drink; free to veterans with valid ID. Pre-sale lunch tickets are available at Post 66 on Mondays or call the ticket coordinator at (805) 459-4015. All lunch proceeds benefit the American Legion, Post 66.

The Veterans Museum will be open from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m, for free tours with a new, temporary exhibit, “Lost at Sea: Loss and Remembrance.” The exhibit provides a historical review of perilous military conflicts and natural disasters above and below the sea. Three scheduled exhibit talks take place at 10 a.m., 1 p.m. and 2 p.m., including a Q & A with local Navy surface ship and submarine Veterans about their own at sea experiences.

Congregation Beth David SLO will honor two long-time members on Saturday May 20 from 2 to 4 p.m. at 10180 Los Osos Valley Road. Paul Wolff and Marvin Sosna, each well into their nineties, are being honored for their contributions to the wider community and to Beth David.

Paul Wolff is a long-time SLO county resident and retired Architectural Design instructor from Cal Poly. At 93 years of age, Paul is still an active advocate for accessibility for all and the fight against anti-Semitism.

Marvin Sosna, a gifted writer with a keen eye for detail was the editor of the Ventura Star-Free Press for 10 years before shifting to become the editor of the Thousand Oaks News Chronicle for 26 years. At 95 Sosna notes “They say old age isn’t for sissies, and it’s true. You have to work at it.”

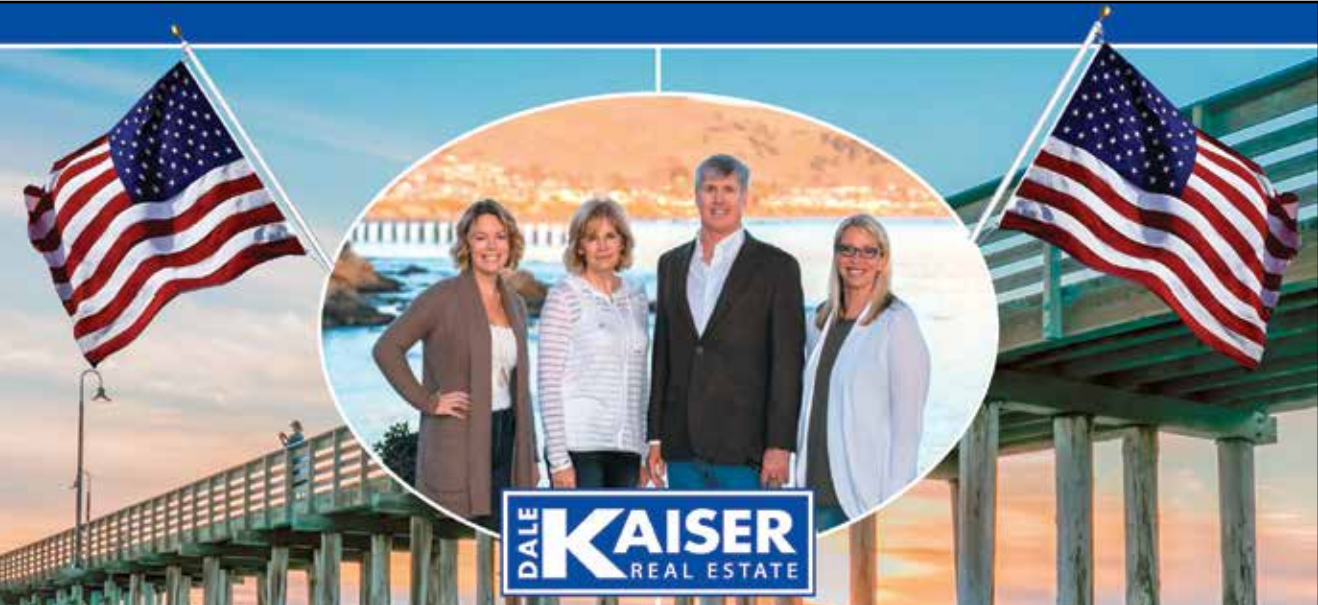
Tickets for this tribute can be purchased through the Beth David website: www.bethdavidslo.org For more information, contact Robyn Friedman O’Leary at Beth David SLO office@cbdslo.org or (805) 544-0760.

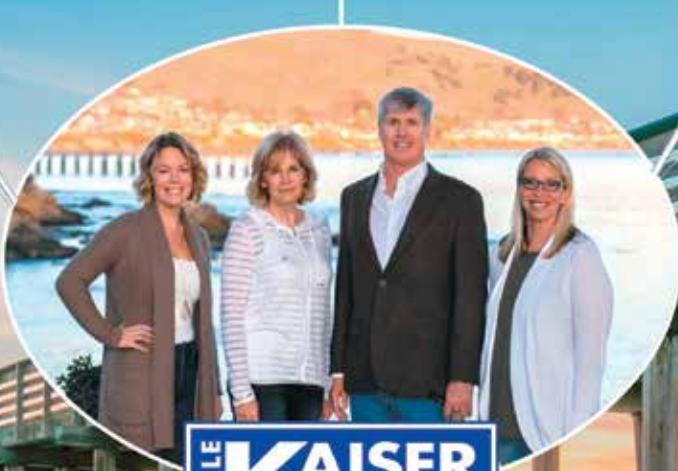
Cambria Center for the Arts is looking for original 2 and 3-D art of all types, large and small to exhibit concurrently with thier next featured artist, Tom Gould: Connections.

Submit up to 4 pieces online June 28-July2. For more information, visit <http://www.cambriaarts.org>

Exhibit runs July7-Aug27 Gallery hours Fri-Sun 12 p.m. – 4 p.m. Enjoy discounts and benefits by becoming a member at Cambria Center for the Arts; a non-profit local artists’ co-operative with fine art and crafts for sale.

Takin’ Care of Business Continued on page 12












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The following are free events brought to you by the Los Osos Library 2075 Palisades Ave, 805-528-1862. All library programs will be following 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.

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.

Beginner Coding - Friday, June 2, 2:30 - 4:30 p.m. Hands on coding fun for kids! Come tinker with Cubetto robots, a Let's Go Code set and a Robot Mouse. For ages 3+.

...



The Cal Poly Arab Music Ensemble will showcase music from multiple regions for its Spring Concert at 7:30 p.m. Saturday, May 27, in Spanos Theatre at Cal Poly. Several classic Iraqi songs, as well as celebrated

Patricia J. Kovacs



Patricia J. Kovacs, 78, of Henniker, New Hampshire passed away peacefully at Hillsboro House in Hillsborough, NH on April 1, 2023. Patricia was born in Trenton, New Jersey. She was the only child of Elizabeth and Joseph Kovacs.

Patricia earned her Bachelors of Science at New Hampshire College and a Masters of Science in community economic development at SNHU. She worked 20 years for

selections of Lebanese, Palestinian, Romanian and Syrian music, will be featured. Composers, poets and artists represented on the program include the Anton Pann Ensemble, Elias Rahbani, Fairuz, Marcel Khalife and Nazem al-Ghazali. "Al-Madrassa Al-Arabiyya," a composition by Arab Music Ensemble Director Ken Habib, will have its world premiere.

Critically acclaimed guest artists to be featured include Ishmael on qanun (zither), Fathi Aljarrah on kamanja (violin), and Faisal Zedan on riqq (tambourine), daff (frame drum) and darabukka (goblet drum).

San Luis Obispo dance director Jenna Mitchell will lead the dance troupe in the performance of original choreography that dialogues with the music.

The Arab Music Ensemble is an orchestra and choir with vocal and instrumental soloists. Its membership

the State of New Hampshire as a social worker, first in the Department of Health and Human Services and later for the Department of Corrections, eventually retiring in 1995.

Patricia was always willing to help others throughout her life. She assisted her parents, her children and her grandchildren when they needed help along the way. She aided the elderly in her community with rides, shopping, housekeeping and companionship. Patricia loved her dogs Herkimer, Markus, and Scruffy. She enjoyed gardening, cooking, and traveling with her husband Lee. She especially relished the time spent with her grandchildren.

She will be deeply missed by all who knew her. Patricia is survived by her current husband Lee Martin, her former husband William F. Griggs, her sons Michael Griggs, Francis Griggs, her grandchildren Cody Griggs, Mason and Sadie Griggs, Tristan and Leah Green, her son Thomas Griggs and his wife Laurie Cass-Griggs and their children Noah Cass, Chloe Griggs, her step-son, Lee J. Martin, his wife Heather R. Rosenbleeth and their children Ronnie and Carmella.

For those who wish to make a memorial contribution in Patricia's honor, please consider donating to the American Heart Association.

represents a range of majors on campus and professions off campus. The dance troupe has a similar composition and has collaborated with the Arab Music Ensemble since its formation in 2006.

Tickets are \$20 for the public, and \$10 for students. Event parking is sponsored by the PAC. Tickets are available at the Cal Poly Ticket Office between noon and 6 p.m. Monday through Saturday. To order by phone, call 805-SLO-4TIX (805-756-4849).

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

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OUT & ABOUT

WITH THE BOOKSHELF WRITERS



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

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

By Judy Salamacha

Sometime during 2020 an online newspaper appeared in my inbox. Beside Estero Bay News for my latest local news, the California Sun has become my weekday read for statewide information. Publisher Mike McPhate, who lives with his family in Los Osos, features twelve current California stories sourcing headline news, arts and entertainment, travel, and even sports from national periodicals. McPhate introduces each story with a brief paragraph and image then links to the original article for readers to discover more.

On March 23, McPhate featured an article about recent atmospheric river rainfall causing the reappearance of “phantom” Tulare Lake near Corcoran, CA in the San Joaquin Valley. The original article was by Lewis Griswold, Fresno Bee, who reported, “All that incoming water is giving farmers on the lake bottom a headache, but environmentalists see it as an opportunity to restore the lake – perhaps permanently – which last emerged in 1983 in another big wet year.”

Griswold had interviewed prolific Fresno author Mark Arax, who co-authored “The King of California: J.G. Boswell & the Making of a Secret American Empire” with Mark Wartzman. Their book researched how the Boswell farming company and others converted Tulare Lake to farmland. “I’m getting calls from around the country from people who are following the drama of the lake coming back,” said Arax. “Some of them are even rooting for nature to outflank man and see the old Tulare Lake alive again.”

Griswold also mentions the plight of residents in nearby Tulare County’s small towns of Allensworth and Alpaugh. Anticipating snowmelt, they are facing more devastation, evacuation and loss of homes and community. Meanwhile, I had just talked to a Morro Bay resident with a

brother who farms in the Tulare Lake area. He feared the family’s financial ruin from the loss of their flooded crops. Wikipedia defines, “Tulare Lake is a freshwater dry lake with residual wetlands and marshes in the southern San Joaquin Valley, California, United States. Tulare Lake was once the largest freshwater lake west of the Mississippi River, and the second-largest freshwater lake entirely in the United States based upon surface area.”

McPhate’s and Griswold’s articles prompted me to think about today’s societal divisiveness. It seems controversy emerges on just about any topic of conversation. Are there people – even neighbors – sincerely hopeful that valley agriculture lands will never produce as plentifully again?

Then I thought, “Isn’t it really a matter of perspective?” What spells devastation for some holds opportunity for others. Indeed, we each look at situations from our own point of view. And without empathy, aka human kindness, or at least some “skin in the game,” there is little respect for trauma endured by another.

For example, when I first heard water was refilling Tulare Lake my reaction had little to do with the plight of the farmers or hopefulness from the environmental community. My reaction was reflective of the joy I experienced when I first became a published author. I immediately emailed McPhate’s featured story to my co-author, Bakersfield resident Sandra Mittelsteadt, and my daughter, Jody Hollier. Mittelsteadt and I co-wrote an interpretive biography of Colonel Thomas Baker, the namesake of Bakersfield, titled “Colonel Baker’s Field, An American Pioneer Story.” Jody, now the Morro Bay Chamber of Commerce’s Marketing Coordinator, illustrated and formatted our book.

We spent hours interviewing California historian Chris Brewer, the great-great grandson of Colonel Baker. He had collected copious historical books, documents, and original photography from Colonel Baker’s era, 1820s-1870s. Brewer generously shared his memories, his notes and photography collection and even his own personal story with us. He and his wife Sally had relocated to Exeter from Bakersfield to live on heartland agricultural acreage belonging to his in-laws. Their land was once covered by the Tulare Lake.

Colonel Baker had been recruited by Serranus Hastings, the namesake of Cal Berkley’s Hastings Law School, to migrate by wagon train to California. Baker and Hastings had served in the Iowa State Legislature together. After a brief stay in Benecia, CA, Baker’s Iowa contingent settled in Visalia, formerly called Four Creeks. Baker represented Four Creeks in the California State Legislature. He was on the guest list for Governor Leland Stanford’s special events, thus, had firsthand knowledge when the Governor’s mansion flooded during his inauguration. “Biblical” rainfall, over 40 days and 40 nights, swelled waterways making the entire valley navigable by boat in 1867-68 from Sacramento

to Kern Island, Bakersfield’s name before 1869. Noteworthy, it was Colonel Baker that recommended to his fellow legislators to create a new legislative area below Tulare County and suggested it be named Kern County. However, he was not the one who suggested the name Bakersfield. That story and so much more about the valley’s beginnings, you’ll have to discover by reading our book. Published back in 2013, it is still available locally at Coalesce Book Store and Volumes of Pleasure Book Shoppe.

The book includes several references to the Tulare Lake particularly in Chapter 17. We interpreted Colonel Baker and his son, James, rowing from Four Corners to Kern Island by boat with Kern Island’s first settler, Tommy Fitzgerald. Young James witnesses the native Yokuts on shore practicing their unique fishing techniques.

So, my reaction to the news the Tulare Lake was filling with water again became purely reflective memories of the four wonderful years I spent researching the life and times of my original hometown of Bakersfield and the amazing Colonel Thomas Baker. A man of many career achievements, he creatively harnessed an entirely flooded valley with what residents called the Town Ditch. Mother Nature also intervened with sustained sunshine, making the land habitable and amazingly fertile to grow our nation’s favorite fruits, nuts, vegetables, and alfalfa for a hungry, working stock.

It is only natural we each see our world through our own lens. Our individual talents and shared ideas put into motion can become a community’s dreams and innovation realized. However, in today’s contentious world, I hope we might pause our instant opinions to empathize - or at least try to understand - another’s perspective before we take a diehard stand.

I believe Erica Crawford, CEO/President of the Morro Bay Chamber of Commerce, has insightful advice for us all to consider as our community moves forward. She is often heard to say, “We must stay in the conversation to become the best we can be.”

Lost at Sea Memorial May 29

With Memorial Day coming up soon, a group of local volunteers is getting ready to once again honor those lost at sea, and once again their ceremony will be in a construction zone.

The Lost at Sea Memorial is slated for 3 p.m. Monday, May 29 at the Cayucos Pier Plaza. The ceremony honors anyone lost at sea but in particular military service members — Navy, Marines, Coast Guard, Merchant Marines and

Lost at Sea Memorial Continued on page 14

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Lost at Sea Memorial From page 13

others — as well as commercial fishermen, divers, surfers, and pleasure boaters. The idea is that these peoples’ bodies were never found thus there is no grave or marker where families can go to mourn them.

The ceremony also pays homage to the Missing in Action from the Vietnam War and normally takes up the entire pier plaza with readings, prayers and song. A Coast Guard Color Guard and members of the Sea Cadets man the various service flags used in the ceremony. A Choir from Cuesta College performs, veteran musicians play Taps and service anthems, and a bagpiper and drummer perform Amazing Grace.

The ceremony is followed by a procession down the 950-foot pier where a wreath is cast into the sea and a rifle salute. It’s all a very touching ceremony and unique in the area amongst the many ceremonies held to mark Memorial Day.

As during the two years when the Cayucos Pier was being rebuilt, the Cayucos Vet’s Hall is currently undergoing a rebuild as well and much of the Pier Plaza is behind the temporary construction fencing blocking a key part of the ceremony. The Lost at Sea Memorial Committee, which works with the Rotary Club to put the event on, has erected a granite obelisk next to the plaza where a ship’s bell is mounted and rung during the ceremony.

The procession down the pier is highlighted by a flyover of military aircraft by the Estrella Warbirds Museum in Paso Robles with the Missing Man Formation. The flyover should happen about 4 p.m. but is dependent on weather conditions, mainly due to strong winds.

The Lost at Sea Memorial is free to attend. Seating is limited. See: rotarydistrict5240.org/stories/lost-at-sea-memorial-in-cayucos for more information.

South Bay Women’s Network Scholarship Benefit

South Bay Women’s Network will host their Annual Garden Party Evening Scholarship Benefit on Wednesday, May 24 in the beautiful display garden at Sage Ecological Landscapes. The event begins at 5:30 p.m. and is catered by The Savory Palette, who are members of SBWN. Denise Lowe, Goddess of Wine, will pour wine, Les Beck will perform music and the evening activities include a raffle, plant sale along with garden games. Beer and non-alcoholic beverages will be available.

Tickets prices are \$25 for members and \$30 for guests. Ticket includes entry fee, one glass of wine, food and one raffle ticket. Purchase tickets at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/garden-party-evening-scholarship-benefit-tickets-633677074187>

All proceeds from tickets, raffle and plant sale benefit the SBWN Cuesta College Adult Women Re-Entry Student Scholarship program started by SBWN in 2000. Over the years, SBWN has presented 128 scholarships totaling approximately \$48,500. Contribution to the program helps provide even more scholarships for women who need our support in transforming their lives and the lives of their families.

Sage Ecological Landscapes is located at 1301 Los

Osos Valley Road, Los Osos. Bring your chairs or blanket to spread out on the meadow. Visit www.sbwn.org to learn more about South Bay Women’s Network, the event and scholarship program.

Milk Carton Dogs

By Lisa Ellman

Why are there so many lost pets out there? It’s a rhetorical question, but still. Everyday I see at least six posts about a pet (usually a dog) that “got out” or “ran away.” Now, granted, sometimes people who post that their dog is “missing” might very well, sadly, be dealing with a theft. But I want to focus on the dogs that get out or run away. The opinions and text of this article are not meant to judge, but perhaps to help people gain some understanding of the causes and resolutions for them.

What are some reasons that a dog might run away? The first reason that comes to my mind is a lack of connection to the pack. That is, connection to your home and family. If your dog spends a lot of time alone or outside when the family is home, there isn’t really an opportunity for them to bond. The family unit should include the dog. Training, whether obedience, agility, tricks, etc., is also a great opportunity to create leadership and a strong attachment to the human(s). Ensuring your dog has a fairly reliable recall, “come,” will help get your dog back if they start to take off, thus avoiding the situation altogether. Neutering a male dog helps prevent the urge for the dog to roam and stay closer to home. If you have a new dog, a rescue, perhaps they haven’t had enough time with you to bond and trust; especially if they’ve been passed around to several previous homes. It’s kind of like a foster child; they need time to create a trusting, dependable, respectful relationship.

Maybe your dog gets frightened by something and takes off. For me, that implies two things. One, the dog isn’t in a secured yard, and or, your dog has not been desensitized or reconditioned to the things that scare it (which goes back to the training aspect). Fireworks, thunderstorms, UPS trucks, etc. All and any things that your dog is fearful of should be addressed ASAP to prevent the stress and fear reaction (running away) that follows. For most dogs, staying close to the home (den) is always preferable. It means safety and survival.

What about when your dog “gets out.” I’m not really clear on what that means. Bolts out the door? Digs under the fence? Climbs over the gate? Whatever the reason your dog gets out, it’s almost always going to be preventable. First and foremost, make sure your yard is secured. Whether you live on a ranch or in a cottage, work on preventive maintenance. Check fences (height and structure), gates and locks, screen doors. But more important, again, is the training and connection factor. Teach your dog to wait at any threshold, be it the gate, front or back door, car door, etc. Teach your dog to stop moving forward by training “wait” or “halt.” It’s the responsibility of the dog owner to ensure that the dog is kept safe. Just as you childproof your home, think about dog proofing as well.

If your dog has bonded and connected to the family, gets enough physical exercise and mental stimulation, respects you as a leader and is somewhat responsive to basic commands, they are much less likely to run away or want to get out. Please, talk to a trainer about how you can take steps to prevent these terrifying issues. I look forward to seeing fewer of these notices posted!

Good Dogma has been training humans and their dogs since 1996. Readers are invited to submit questions to gooddogma@hotmail.com. Contact information for all offered services can be found on our website www.GoodDogma.net





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Yummy Addition From page 1



MBHS Principal Scott Schalde; District Board of Trustees Member, Chris Ungar; Board Chairwoman, Ellen Sheffer; Trustee, Eve Dobler-Drew; and Trustee Mark Buchman and Superintendent, Eric Prater.

high schools.

District Trustees, administration and school staff gathered at the dining facility, which is located in what used to be the school library and Band Room. Just like the new theater that used to be the old cafeteria and multi-purpose room, the District's massive work program has made new use of an old building.

The Common Room is impressive with large round tables and chairs and TVs on the walls. It's got the feel of a lounge space, but with food ready to eat.

Coupled with the remodeled and greatly improved and



Superintendent, Eric Prater, left, listens as Assistant Superintendent, Ryan Pinkerton, thanks everyone at the grand opening, notably the voters and taxpayers who approved Measure D in 2014, for making the improvements to both high schools possible.

spacious open quad just outside the cafeteria doors, plus the new theater, admin/student services building, athletic fields and track, and STEAM labs, the Pirates of today and future Pirates practically have a brand new school.

Assistant Superintendent, Ryan Pinkerton, addressing the assembled elected officials and City staffers, thanked everyone there and made special note of thanking the voters and taxpayers who voted to tax themselves and modernize the high schools calling it a big investment in education. "Measure D," he said, "produced something as incredible as you stand in now."

Board of Trustees Chairwoman, Ellen Sheffer did the honors cutting the ribbon and officially opened the new cafeteria and Common Room, which looks like something one might find at a college, not a small, high school with

only about 840 students.

Assistant Director of Food Services, Kris Vander Weele gave a reporter a tour and rundown on how the kitchen works.

There's a fruit and vegetable bar, presented like a salad bar, with locally sourced fruits and veggies, she explained. The kids can also pick an entrée from a short menu.

On opening day they offered three entrees — peperoni and jalapeño pizza slices, chow mien with dumplings, or locally sourced fish tacos with a homemade sauce and spring mix greens. It all looked very yummy.

The entree menu changes daily, and there are hot or cold breakfast foods in the mornings, Vander Weele said. There's all state-of-the art kitchen equipment, she said, including a pizza oven, grill and chicken rotisserie oven. They also hired people on par with that equipment; people who know their way around a kitchen.

The Kitchen Supervisor at MBHS is Executive Chef Cory Bidwell, Vander Weele said, who was a chef at local restaurants for many years; and the supervisor at SLO High studied at the famous Le Cordon Bleu cooking school. The new cafeteria at SLO High will be comparable to this one, she explained but it isn't finished yet.

The kitchen at SLO High will have to top Morro Bay's output, as there are about 840 students here plus staffers, and some 1,600 students at SLOHS, which also has a larger staff.

This new concept of institutional cooking, and feeding school kids is nothing like what the current generation's grandparents had, or even their parents.

And there's another huge difference, all the food is free



A colorful fresh fruit and vegetables bar looks nice and has healthy foods too.

of charge for the students.

The school has "universal free meals," Vander Weele said. It's all included in the State budget allocations for schools. "They don't have to pay for breakfast or lunch," she added. The staff too can eat at the new cafeteria, but Vander Weele said they have to pay \$3 per meal; still a bargain by any measure.

All a student has to do is show their MBHS student body card or punch in their ID number on the computer, Vander Weele said, and they can eat, choosing whatever strikes their fancy that day.

She noted that the prices they pay for all these food-stuffs are set by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). And they expect the costs will go up next year, she said. "All the food costs have gone up."

Youth Coalition Works for the Kids

The day before Earth Day the kids at Kid's Club in Morro Bay gathered around the Earth Flag hanging on the wall, flashing the peace sign along with Ruth Ann Angus, director of Yes We Can Peacebuilders, a peace and nonviolence education organization affiliated with Los Osos Cares and the Estero Bay Youth Coalition.

"Peacebuilders acknowledges that our youth are looking for upbeat and positive ideas and activities to help them understand their world," Angus said, "and we thought what better way than to bring them the concept of taking care of our planet to foster peace in the world. As a member of the Youth Coalition, we are pleased to be part of this effort."

The Estero Bay Youth Coalition came about through the work of Los Osos Cares and was the brainchild of Director Linda Quesenberry. "This coalition brings together people and groups who do a variety of activities with children and families," Quesenberry explained. "We want to be sure that young people obtain the best educational opportunities possible as well as to help them with good social activities."

Quesenberry isn't the only person who saw a need for a gathering of groups to be dedicated to guiding youth groups. The Coalition is made up of groups like Peacebuilders as well as Los Osos Rotary that offers children and families activities under their community service umbrella, Cambria Family Advocates that works with Hispanic families, Boys and Girls Club offering after school activities and leadership training, the Oral Health Coalition offering dental care for kids. Along with area schools, these are just a few of the members of the Estero Bay Youth Coalition.

Last month at Kid's Club, thirty young people from transitional kindergarten to fifth grade created colorful drawings of flowers, vegetables, bees, butterflies, and the peace sign around the printed words "Spring for Peace." They learned how Earth Day came about and why it is important to keep our planet healthy so all people will have the resources they need for a good life. Photographs of their drawings along with a letter, authored by Angus but in the voice of the kids, were sent to Congressman Salud Carbajal at his San Luis Obispo office asking him to please work hard to keep their environment clean and to encourage the passage of laws to fight climate change.

The Estero Bay Youth Coalition supports all groups working to assure a good future for the young people of the Central Coast. They welcome your interest, and readers can reach them at wecareinlososos@gmail.com. Yes We Can Peacebuilders can be reached at yeswecanpeacebuilders1@gmail.com.

Kid's Club of Morro Bay is offered through the Morro Bay Parks and Recreation Department of the City of Morro Bay. Yes We Can Peacebuilders is a Division of The Central Coast Center for an Ecological Civilization.

Visit Morro Bay has **THREE** seats open for a two-year term. Starting on July 2023 and finishing in June 2025.

Requirements.

Attendance of six board meetings per year, currently via Zoom.

Two Hotel, Inn, B&B and Motel board member seats. Must be owner or manager with at least one property within Morro Bay City limits.

One Vacation Rental member seat must be owner or manager of a licensed Vacation Rental or Vacation Rental Company within Morro Bay City limits.

Timing for board interviews to be determined.

For more information at: www.morrobay.org/board-of-directors/

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Community

Battery Plant From page 1

were filed on May 1, 2023. The City has 15 calendar days to prepare and return the title and summary to the proponents of the measure.”

That’s when the public will get its first chance to see what’s being proposed with a legal ad in the newspaper. “The proponents will then publish the ‘Notice, Title & Summary’ in a newspaper of general circulation,” Swanson said, “and begin circulating petitions for signature. They will have 180 days from the date they received the ballot title and summary to collect signatures and file the petitions with the City Clerk’s office.”

She added that they would need to get signatures from 10% of the registered voters in Morro Bay. “Based on the most recent County Elections Report to the Secretary of State there are 8,141 registered voters so 815 valid signatures are needed” to qualify for the ballot.

From there the ball returns to the City’s court. “If they collect 815 or more valid signatures,” Swanson said, “the results are certified to the City Council and the Council can either call an election or adopt the ordinance as presented by the proponents. At the time the election is called, dates are established for filing of arguments for and against the initiative as well as the City Attorney’s impartial analysis.”

Initiatives Have Mixed Results

A local voter initiative is nothing new to Morro Bay, as voters have on several occasions in the past taken it upon themselves to either increase taxes or set land use policies through the ballot box.

The last local ballot measure, B-22, qualified for the November 2022 General Election. And while B-22 failed to pass, others in the past have, including Measures B and H that concerned a proposed shopping center on ranchlands east of Morro Bay Boulevard. Measure D from the early 1980s establishing a commercial/sport fishing zone along Embarcadero from Beach Street to Morro Rock and out to Morro Creek. Measure B-22 was a \$10 per month (\$120 a year) parcel tax that would have gone to support maintaining the City’s harbor facilities, raising about \$680,000 a year. Measure B-22 failed to win support, mainly because it was asking property owners to tax themselves.

This One’s Different

With the No BESS initiative, there’s a major difference in both approach and effect.

B-22 was a straight-up tax increase, which is always a tough sell, and this newest voter initiative is trying to work within the bureaucracy to prevent the BESS from being approved. It’s using the government’s own actions — in this case the 2021 approval of the General Plan update — against the project.

Indeed, the initiative doesn’t even mention Vistra or the BESS project, though its intent at stopping it is thinly

veiled.

Branin said their focus is on the battery project but they didn’t want to go about this in a negative way.

“If you say ‘No we don’t want something,’ it’s not pleasing.” So they decided to try the route taken with the Williams Bros., shopping center and go after it via the zoning ordinance.

When the City re-zoned the power plant to Visitor-Commercial Serving, the path became clear. “We saw that as an obvious way to solve the problem,” Branin said.

What Does It Do?

Under the heading, “Purposes, Effect, and Findings” the initiative says: “The purposes of this Initiative are to: (1) protect the natural beauty, sensitivity, and intrinsic value of Morro Bay’s waterfront and Embarcadero; (2) prevent the visual and physical degradation of Morro Bay’s natural environment; (3) promote the health and safety of Morro Bay’s residents, tourists, boaters, and wildlife habitat; (4) maintain present levels of coastal access to our California Historic Landmark, Morro Rock, as well as to the Harbor, and surrounding beaches; and (5) preserve Morro Bay as a world-renowned tourist destination.”

How it purports to work is to “amend Plan Morro Bay, the City of Morro Bay’s General Plan, adopted in May, 2021 to readopt and reaffirm the existing ‘Visitor-Serving Commercial’ [V-CS] and “Commercial/Recreational Fishing” [CRF] land use designations for certain parcels situated on both sides of Embarcadero Road from Beach Street to Atascadero Road, and Coleman Drive including Morro Rock parking lots, such that these parcels, even if subdivided, may only be amended or re-designated by a majority of Morro Bay voters at a regular or special election.”

So in plain English, that means the City’s current General Plan/Local Coastal Program that were finalized in 2021, would not be able to be changed as part of the BESS Project, but would have to go to a vote of the people, wherein a simple majority of voters could stop it dead in its tracks or approve it to move forward.

The initiative goes on to point out that the plant property was zoned V-CS in the 2021 update of the General Plan/LCP that was done under various State Laws and the California Coastal Act, which governs land uses within the “Coastal Zone,” of which a sizable chunk of Morro Bay sits, including the power plant property’s roughly 100 acres.

Branin pointed out that the initiative mostly covers the power plant, the Morro Dunes RV Park and Lila Keiser Park on that side of the Embarcadero (from Beach Street north) and all of the City lease sites on the bay side.

“We didn’t even mention the BESS,” Branin explained. “We want to preserve the Visitor-Commercial Serving zoning that was already approved by the Coastal Commission.”

Existing Laws Being Used

The initiative would appear to not create any new laws, but simply amend what’s already on the books — using the

law against to fight the project.

“The Coastal Act,” the initiative reads, “requires the City to prioritize uses that serve important needs for the community and visitors, such as recreation, coastal access, open space, and visitor-serving and coastal-dependent uses. Nearly all of Morro Bay is in the coastal zone. Coastal priority uses range from visitor-serving recreation and services to coastal dependent businesses such as aquaculture and commercial fishing.”

The General Plan has a pretty specific definition of V-CS zoning: “‘Visitor serving facility’ means those stores, shops, businesses, recreational facilities [both public and private], parks and natural preserves which are regularly utilized by the traveling public.”

The City’s V-CS zoning allows for a variety of businesses to be established including, “restaurants, coffee shops, specialty retail boutiques, travel agents, retail establishments selling boat and marine supplies, souvenirs, antiques, art galleries and studios, museums, hotels and motels, bars and taverns, boat rentals, fishing supplies, service stations, parking lots, and parks and open space,” according to the Initiative. A giant battery plant doesn’t fit that list.

Measure D In Play

The Initiative ropes in Measure D, a local voter initiative from the early 1980s that designated the waterfront area from Beach Street to Target Rock as reserved for commercial fishing and “noncommercial recreational fishing activities, or if clearly incidental thereto.”

The initiative goes on to say that the V-CS and Measure D zoning areas “are critical to maintaining Morro Bay’s economic vitality, quality of life, status as a tourist destination, recreational resources, and natural environment.”

It also claims that any time the V-CS and commercial fishing zoning is changed, “to allow industrial or other non-commercial uses [it] will have a deleterious impact on Morro Bay’s citizens, its economy, environment, reputation, and overall quality life.”

Given those arguments, the initiative is necessary “to ensure that future land uses that are incompatible with, or that would adversely impact, existing and future Visitor-Serving Commercial and Commercial/Recreational Fishing uses are not permitted to operate on those parcels situated on both sides of Embarcadero Road from Beach Street to Atascadero Road, and Coleman Drive including Morro Rock parking lots, unless a majority of Morro Bay voters approve of such other uses.”

City Will Need Permission

The Initiative essentially adds language to the General Plan/LCP that would require the City to ask voters whether any V-CS zoned property, of which there is just 145 acres within Morro Bay, can be changed. This would apply even if the land was subdivided.

It essentially locks in whatever V-CS and fishing zoning is in place when the measure is approved.



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Donut breakfast to be provided.

SUNDAY
MAY 28th 2023
8pm

Starting at 7pm, luminaries will be lit and placed down the center of the road. Guests are invited to walk the cemetery at sunset and visit the park in the evening hours.

MONDAY
MAY 29th 2023
11am

Our Memorial Day program will include a guest speaker, select musical guests, and other events.
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Community

But that’s not to say it denies off hand any potential zoning changes; it does rather, require voters decide the issue.

It does the same for the commercial and sport fishing zone (delineated by Measure D).

The proponents will have a tough road ahead convincing the voters that they don’t need this battery project and the inherent fire safety concerns that come with these big battery plants. Branin points to Moss Landing, where Vistra has a 300MW BESS and PG&E has a 100MW battery plant.

Both have had issues with PG&E’s plant actually catching fire in a blaze that sent a toxic cloud of hot gases towards nearby Watsonville, and Castroville and closed a school in Moss Landing.

“Can you imagine if you were at Morro Rock when this thing caught fire,” Branin said, “There would be no escape route. You’d have to drive right through the smoke to get away. And what would happen with the high school?”

Morro Bay High is just a few hundred yards from where the BESS is being sited. Its student and staff population is about 1,000.

Where Does The BESS Stand Now?

According to Morro Bay’s Community Development Director, Scot Graham, the City brought in Rincon Consultants last year to do the EIR for the project and that work is ongoing.

When can we expect to see something? “I believe we have completed all of the background environmental reports,” Graham said, “and Rincon is in the process of preparing administrative draft sections of the EIR for our review.”

So far the EIR work has cost about \$180,000, which Vistra is paying through a reimbursement agreement that was signed before the City took on the project review.

Graham said the “Reimbursement agreement covers the cost of Rincon, our City Attorney’s and staff cost on the project; also covers the cost of the master plan. City is contracted directly with Rincon for the environmental work and for the master plan.”

How close is the City watching the EIR work? Graham said, “We will conduct an internal review of the admin draft. Once Rincon addresses all staff comments, the Draft EIR will be ready for release for public review. We are required to respond to all comments received on the draft EIR in the Final EIR.”

City Works on Master Plan

The power plant master plan would cover the rest of the power plant property, essentially the powerhouse, office and stacks, but not the BESS project area, and seeks to guide what will happen in the future.

Vistra and the City have an agreement that the company will remove the trio of 450-foot tall smokestacks and the

165-foot tall powerhouse building by 2028 or pay the City \$3 million. And therein lies the biggest rub of all.

Branin explained that the City is in kind of a tough spot as it signed a memorandum of understanding with Vistra over the power plant’s future.

The City is supposed to help Vistra get its BESS Project through, but will apparently have to do so through lagging support amongst the citizenry.

And at the last City Council Election the three winning candidates all said they were leery about the BESS Project, though none came right flat out in opposition to it.

Branin, who worked on Mayor Carla Wixom’s winning campaign, is confident the City Council will support the will of the people.

If readers want to learn more about the anti-BESS group, Citizens for Estero Bay Coastal Preservation, you can check out their website site, at: www.preserveesterobay.com.

Roundabout From page 1



Jorge Vanegas-Moran of consultants GHD explains the Hwy 41/Main Street roundabout concept to MB resident Glenn Siloway. Photo by Neil Farrell

ation — a roundabout, a traffic signal, and status quo or no changes — and answered questions from attendees.

Different colored sticker dots were used — red for having serious concerns (i.e. they don’t support the concept); yellow for those who have questions about it (but don’t outright oppose it); and green signifying, “I feel this will work well.”

The roundabout had a mix of colored dots with about 60% of them red.

The traffic signal, which would actually be two sets of lights — one each on either side of the Hwy 1 overpasses — had a good mix of colored dots as well, but with a slight majority of them green.

And the “no changes” option too had a mix but mostly red.

So it would seem that most residents at the meeting agree the intersection, which Rogers said was the second worst intersection in town in terms of accidents, needs to be improved.

It’s also a convergence of two State highways — 1 and 41, which brings Caltrans into the project as both funder and design critic.

Main/41 an Old Issue

The 41/Main intersection was one of three troublesome intersections the City looked at many years ago — the others being Hwy 1/Main/San Jacinto, and Morro Bay Boulevard/Quintana Road.

All three were recommended for roundabouts but so far, only the MBB/Quintana one has been built. It seems to be working fine if not exactly as planned. It has a pretty light accident record.

Rogers said in their research, the roundabout has had just nine accidents reported over the past 5 years, “plus a lot of near-misses.” The 41/Main intersection has had 23 crashes over that same time period. Rogers said, “Forty-one and Main is the [collision] hot spot for Morro Bay.”

Roundabout Always Preferred

The San Jacinto intersection was rejected for a roundabout but the 41/Main Street roundabout has always been the preferred option.

But while time has dragged on, costs have risen dramatically. Current estimates from GHD show the roundabout at \$8 million to \$12 million and a traffic signal at \$4M to \$6M.



GHD’s John Rogers, who grew up in Morro Bay, discusses the roundabout concept for the Main Street Hwy 41 intersection to a local resident. Photo by Neil Farrell

SLOCOG, which is the funding agency for local transportation projects, has been putting away money for the intersection for many years and now has about \$6 million

Roundabout Continued on page 18

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News

Roundabout From page 17

saved for a roundabout project. But there has been pressure from other cities in SLO County to release that money because Morro Bay’s project is far from ready to go.

SLOCOG has about half that amount available for a traffic signal.

Where’s the City’s Beef?

It’s presumed the City would be on the hook for at least some of this funding shortfall, a prospect that had many in the audience concerned.

Some wanted to know where the City planned on getting that money? To which Kwolek said they would seek more grant funding through other programs, like the State’s “Safe Routes to School Act.”

The City has tapped that program a couple of other times with regards to Del Mar Elementary School.

According to Caltrans, “Safe Routes to School is an approach that promotes walking and bicycling to school through infrastructure improvements, enforcement, tools, safety education, and incentives to encourage walking and bicycling to school.”

Morro Bay High School is just a short block away from the 41/Main intersection and most everyone in attendance at the meeting decried the danger that inattentive teenagers pose walking to Taco Bell or the Wee Shack at lunchtime.

Studies Support Roundabout

Over the years, various studies of the intersection have produced cost-benefit analyses and the roundabout, though it’ll cost twice as much, in the long run pencils out cheaper.

A stoplight has ongoing maintenance and electricity costs; increases traffic conflicts and delays waiting for the light to change; among other drawbacks.

And that time spent idling with the engine running as others to the left and right cycle through, increases air pollution, which comes into play with the funding.

Currently, projects that receive funding tend to be those that cut emissions, and a roundabout supposedly does that.

But how much concern pollution makes to residents was dwarfed by the concerns about the pedestrians walking through the intersection, especially the teen-aged high school students.

And with construction on an 83-room Hampton Inn on the west side of Hwy 1 and a 35-unit apartment complex a block away up Hwy 41 (Atascadero Road) traffic will increase, though not by a whole lot.

GHD’s Rogers said they had used the traffic studies from both of those projects in their latest analysis of the intersection, so that increased traffic has already been accounted for.

Caltrans’ Valadeo explained that his agency does a so-called “Intersection Control Exercise” or ICE that looks at features like the potential for broad-side collisions and sideswipes, and “being able to get to Point B in an adequate amount of time.” The costs vs. benefits analysis, last updated in 2021, includes maintenance needs and costs over 20 years. “We did that Ice analysis here and the roundabout won out,” Valadeo said.

Still, concern about the school kids was strong.

Kids Playing Frogger

Kwolek, who said he’d just met with student leaders at the high school about this project, said, “We see the high



Jorge Vanegas-Moran of consultants GHD talks to residents about a at the Hwy 41/Main Street intersection. Photo by Neil Farrell

school as one of the biggest stakeholders in this.”

He joked that the high school kids said the drivers were the problem, and walking through the intersection was like playing the classic video game, “Frogger.”

He added that they are using a school newsletter to help poll what the students feel would be the best fix at that intersection.

Other stakeholders include the police and fire departments. Kwolek said he spoke to both the fire and police chiefs about the intersection and each said they didn’t think a roundabout would slow them down.

The fire chief, he explained, was only concerned about the center island having bump curbing and not the traditional blocked curbs. They like the roundabout because it cuts out cross traffic and cuts down on potential head-on traffic.

The police chief was “pretty neutral,” Kwolek said. Chief Amy Watkins didn’t think a roundabout would cause them any problems.

Intersection Gets an ‘E’

GHD’s Rogers said the intersection has long been under performing and they see it getting worse with time. Currently, using standard measurements of traffic load and how well the intersection handles it, the intersection scores an “E,” when the goal is a “C.” In as few as 10 years, it could be at an “F.”

The intersection does get congested in the mornings before school and after school (starting about 3:15 p.m.), but also is very busy all summer long, as the main entrance to the city coming from the east.

It also backs up whenever the Hwy 101/Cuesta Grade has an accident or is undergoing maintenance. When that happens, traffic at the Hwy 41 off ramp on Hwy 1 can back up onto the freeway.

Council Has Final Say

Residents will have a chance coming up in June to speak to the City Council directly about this. Kwolek said their goal is to bring the question of roundabout vs. traffic signal to the City Council at their June 13 meeting seeking definitive direction on which option to pursue.

They were also planning to bring the matter to the Public Works Advisory Board on May 17, which is past Estero Bay News’ deadline. Reruns of that meeting can be found on Morro Bay’s page at: www.slo-span.org and will be rerun on Charter Cable Ch. 20, the local government access cable TV channel.

Garden Club From page 11



Elaine Parker, a member of the UCCE Master Gardeners of SLO County, and Los Osos resident Mark Virgh discuss plants during the event.

Readers might be more familiar with LOVGC efforts than they think. Community service is an active goal and the clubs work is popping up all over.

Over the past few years, the LOVGC has planted a new garden at the South Bay Community Center, performed maintenance and upgrades to the club-created Los Osos Library Pollinator Garden, put in trees and understory plantings at St. Benedict’s Church, made donations to schools to for garden improvements, plant and tree giveaways.

“A lot of people feel very good about making a contribution to the community,” said LOVGC Vice President Haydee Pampel.

Working in the garden with dirt under your nails and the sun warming your back is a reward in itself, but the LOVGC has also earned several awards for their work. Last year California Garden Clubs Inc., an umbrella organization that includes 350 gardening-related clubs with more than 15,000 members, recognized the group in many categories:


- First Place for Civic Development (for the South Bay Community Center Project)
- First Place for Pollinator Education (for the South Bay Community Center Project)
- Second Place for Club Programs
- Third Place for Social Media facebook.com/LOVGardenClub
- First Place for a Class II Garden Club (20 to 29 members) for being recognized with the most awards for 2021

On the charitable contributions side of their mission, LOVGC has donated funds to SLO County Library for gardening books, the Monarch Grove Elementary School Garden, the Baywood Elementary School Teaching Garden, the Los Osos Middle School California Native Plant Program, Morro Coast Audubon Society for native plant restoration, Sequoia National Forest for forest restoration, Friends of the San Luis Obispo Botanical Garden, Dallidet Adobe & Gardens, UC Master Gardeners-SLO, and California Rare Fruit Growers-Central Coast Chapter.


LOVGC has experienced a growth spurt of its own. In 2019, there were 10 members today they have 70 members.

“There are a lot of new people moving to the area, and when they get here they want to fix up their yard,” said McKeown. “They want to learn what kind of plants

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live here, grow here and do well. This [club] is the perfect opportunity to get to know other people who have already had that experience”

All ages and abilities are welcome and those outside of Los Osos are encouraged to become members. Their youngest member is 9-years-old, and the oldest is in her 80s.

“What we always say is we welcome green thumbs and brown thumbs alike,” said Pampel.

Like many organizations that converted to ZOOM for virtual get-togethers during the pandemic, LOVGC is excited to resume in person meetings and programs during their season September through May. During the summer months board members plan upcoming programs and projects, which this year includes reinstating private garden visits. There is a survey on their website at <https://bit.ly/44SJac6> to give feedback about what gardening topics and activities folks find interesting.

For more information, to make a donation or to become a member of the Los Osos Valley Garden Club, go to lovgardencub.org. Questions should be sent to info@lovgardencub.org

Brew Pub From page 11
to the Harbor Department.

That move by Caldwell left his tenant, Libertine Brewing Co., and owner Eric Newton, to take over the lease site. Due to the City being in the throes of the COVID-19 pandemic response, the City Council at the time, settled on the short-term lease to give Newton time to work on a project of his own.

Caldwell had one of the last of the old, so-called Pipkin Leases, which predated the City’s takeover of the Embarcadero tidelands leases, and had favorable terms for the tenants.

The terms for this new lease are equal to \$32,000 per year with standard percent rent, according to Harbor Director Ted Schiafone’s report. He also charged \$1,680 to cover the City’s costs for the lease extension, which is being done under a “Consent of Landowner” or COL agreement.

Newton now has until Oct. 31, 2023 to “obtain Concept Plan approval from the Planning Commission and City Council,” otherwise he will be fined \$100 per day that he goes over that deadline, according to the new COL agreement.

And before any long-term lease will be approved by the City Council, he must “obtain evidence of available

financing for completion of the project, acceptable to the Finance Director and City Attorney.”

That evidence could be letters of interest or commitment by “accredited financiers” or proof he has enough cash reserves to pay for the project. He has until Dec. 31, 2023 at 4 p.m. to provide that proof or the City Council can deem the COL expired with 10 days written notice.

He also has to give the City a “professionally-prepared business plan for the proposed redevelopment that includes industry-standard elements expected of such a plan,” on or before Dec. 31. The same written notice or \$100/day fines apply to this provision too.

The COL also calls for him to produce a “professionally-prepared” marketing plan for the redevelopment, also by Dec. 31.

He will also have to take his City-approved concept plan to the Coastal Commission by Dec. 1. The Commission has “original jurisdiction” over all of the lease sites on the waterfront and no matter what, the Commission will have the final say on all redevelopment plans in accordance with the Coastal Act.

- Other milestones include:
- Applicant must obtain a CDP and other permits on or before June 30, 2024 at 4 p.m.;
 - He must file a completed application for a “Precise Plan” by the planning commission and City Council by Sept. 30, 2024;
 - He must file for a Building Plan approval from the planning commission before April 30, 2025 at 4 p.m.;
 - Must obtain Building Plan approval on or before July 21, 2025 at 4 p.m.;
 - Must “commence construction” on or before Oct. 20, 2025 at 4 p.m. “Commence construction,” means spending a minimum of \$100,000 on hard construction.
 - The project must be completed before Oct. 30, 2026 with a “certificate of occupancy” issued by the City.

There is of course an out: “If, due to any reason within or outside the control of Applicant, as reasonably determined by the City Manager, then one or more extensions to any or all of these compliance dates may be granted by the City Council in its sole discretion.”

The company has already taken one bite at the apple when the Planning Commission reviewed a conceptual redevelopment plan in February 2022.

“The conceptual plans,” reads the report from that Feb. 1, 2022 agenda item, “show conversion of the second floor to a new 9-room hotel with room sizes ranging from 264 square feet to 825 s.f. Renovation of the existing first floor to include a 302 s.f. coffee shop; 1337 s.f. waterside restaurant/bar area; 328 s.f. banquet/meeting space; 661 s.f. of covered dining; 893 s.f. of private outdoor patio area; along with new lateral access where none currently exists by providing a 15-foot wide Harborwalk including 272 s.f. of west-facing outdoor patio seating.

“An existing basement would be used for brewing area and storage. The project would include an addition of 101 s.f. to the first floor and 900 s.f. to the second floor for a net increase of 1,001 s.f. of building square footage. In addition,



A rendering shows the current Libertine Pub in Morro Bay and what was initially proposed for a redevelopment of the lease site. Courtesy City of Morro Bay

tion, the Libertine is proposing to assist with public plaza improvements in the adjacent street end.”

The project sounds a lot like what Caldwell had proposed in a previous attempt to redevelop the site.

The street end improvements are also part of a City concept in its plan for rebuilding the Centennial Staircase and Centennial Parkway (Giant Chessboard Park), that includes the complete redevelopment of the Market Avenue Plaza properties, which the City has been trying to sell to a developer for about a decade.

Community Development Director, Scot Graham cautioned that the planning commission sent Libertine’s conceptual design back for extensive changes.

“The Planning Commission,” Graham said, “provided direction at that meeting resulting in a significant redesign of the project. So plans associated with the staff report are no longer reflective of what the project looks like.”

The Planning Commission’s comments will mean the building will almost entirely be torn down and rebuilt.

Such waterfront projects often suffer delays, especially with trying to get through the Coastal Commission’s review and approval process.

Among the issues that has arisen with other projects is the continuation of the Harborwalk, and the Libertine is one of the few remaining gaps in the pedestrian walking path that runs from Morro Rock to Tidelands Park.

For example, in the past, the City has approved an 8-foot walkway only to have the Coastal Commission change it to a 10-foot walkway. But Libertine is talking about a 15-foot walkway, which is half-again bigger than what’s currently required.

A 10-foot walkway “is still the requirement,” Graham said. “They are doing 5-extra feet as extra public benefit and will match the 15-foot width on adjacent Harborwalk Plaza project, which is currently under construction.”



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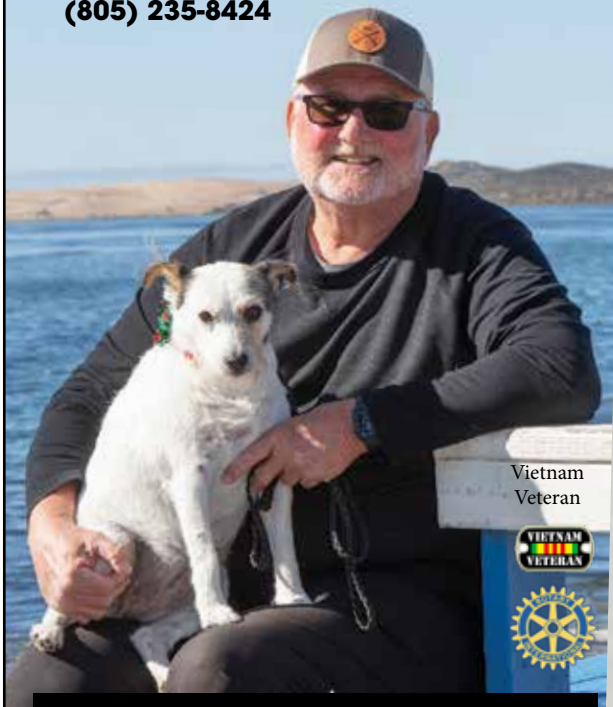
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