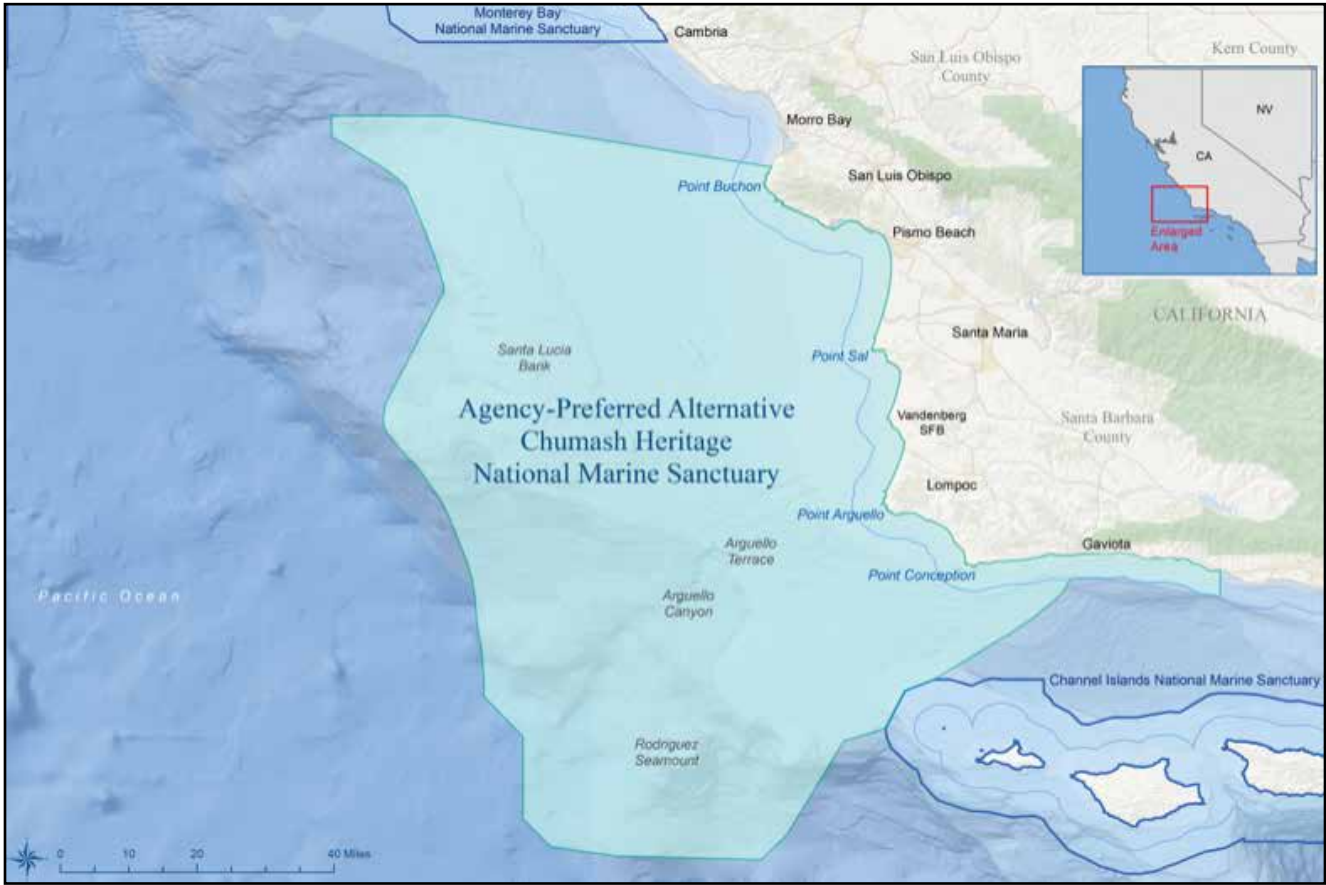


Big Step in Marine Sanctuary Process



This map from NOAA shows the new preferred boundary of the proposed Chumash Heritage National Marine Sanctuary, which cuts out Morro Bay, Cayucos and the Harmony Coast from the sanctuary.

By Neil Farrell

The Federal Government has taken a big step in the quest to establish a National Marine Sanctuary in local waters, but the proposed boundaries have taken a dramatic turn away from Morro Bay and Cayucos.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration or NOAA formally proposed the “Chumash Heritage National Marine Sanctuary” covering hundreds of square miles of the Central Coast from SLO to Santa Barbara Counties.

The Sanctuary was first proposed in 2015 by the Northern Chumash Tribal Council to honor the Native American group’s connection with the ocean in their traditional homelands.

NOAA said the designation is “to manage, interpret, and protect the area’s nationally-significant history and underwater cultural and natural resources. Through research,

education, and community involvement, NOAA would work to foster long-term conservation and public awareness about this unique area,” reads a fact sheet put out by the agency.

The original idea was to establish a new sanctuary that would start where the Monterey Bay NMS ends at Cambria and stretch down to Point Conception close to the start of the Channel Islands NMS.

But NOAA changed the boundaries mainly because of proposed offshore floating wind farms being studied now for an area off the coast of San Simeon.

Now the northern edge of the proposed sanctuary would start at Montaña de Oro, specifically Hazard’s Reef (offshore from Hazard’s Canyon), and extends down nearly to Goleta in Santa Barbara County.

That cuts Morro Bay, Cayucos and the Harmony Coast, about 60 miles of coastline, out of the sanctuary’s promised protections. But that is a “preferred” boundary

Marine Sanctuary Continued on page 18

New Owners of Celia's Getting to Know Los Osos



The new owners of Celia’s Garden Café, Todd Newman and business partner Mathew “Matty” Laurino. Photo by Theresa-Marie Wilson

By Theresa-Marie Wilson

On August 31, amid serving plates of comfort food, delectable desserts and a side of warm, welcoming service, a local restaurant changed hands.

Todd Newman, his wife Korie, and business partner Mathew “Matty” Laurino opened Celia’s Garden Café as the new owners of the popular eatery and surrounding property. It has been business as usual with the same employees, menu, and atmosphere, and will stay that way for the immediate future.

“We’re definitely looking to educate ourselves on the heritage of Celia’s and what it means to the community,” Todd told Estero Bay News. “We thought the best way to do that was to not fix something that’s not broken. We just wanted to continue on the Celia’s path, where we feel like we can get more creative and expand our ideas. We don’t feel a lot of pressure, we feel like there’s an opportunity to kind of learn and understand.”

Todd and Matty have been friends for years, but this is the first business adventure the partners have embarked on under the LLC Estero Gardens. Todd brings years of experience to the table as a former owner of SLO Brew and Downtown Brew as well as a couple of restaurants in Paso Robles and Santa Barbara. He is also known as a music pro-

New Owners Continued on page 18

Supervisors Award Storm Damage Contracts

By Neil Farrell

A local contractor has won the job of re-pairing storm damage on a rural North Coast road, one of two sizable storm repair contracts that County Supervisors recently awarded.

At its Aug. 22 meeting, Supervisors were asked to award a \$354,000 contract to David Crye General Engineering Contractor, Inc., of Morro Bay to make storm repairs to a segment of San Simeon Creek Road. The road meets Hwy 1 just at the entrance to the San Simeon State Park Campground just north of Cambria and heads back into and over the Coast Range Mountains. The jobsite is a couple of miles off Hwy 1, according to a vicinity map included with the County’s report.

The County added in some \$30,200 in contingencies for an overall project cost of \$354,000, according to a report on the award. The engineer’s estimate for the job was over \$503,000. Crye Engineering was the lower of two bidders. The losing bid was for \$625,000 from Semair Construction, Inc.

“The low bid,” reads the report, “came in 29.6% below the Engineer’s Estimate.



The County of San Luis Obispo (County) staff has reviewed the submittal from David Crye General Engineering, and verified that they are the lowest responsive, responsible bidder.”

The road got damaged during the string of atmospheric river storms that started rolling through the area last December and continued well into the spring. “The County Emergency Operations Center (EOC),” reads the report written by Garret McElveny, the County’s Storm Recovery Team Engineer, “was activated on four separate occasions in early 2023 to support storm response activities.”

Storm Damage Continued on page 16

TOT Audit Finds Few Problems

By Neil Farrell

An audit of lodging businesses in SLO County territory came up with some pretty accurate results. And while some of those lucky enough to be audited owed taxes, overall it was on the mark.

According to a report by Keri Lekvold of County Auditor-Controller-Treasurer-Tax Collector James Hamilton’s Office, the County’s “transient occupancy tax” rate or TOT is 9-percent of the cost of a room night at all motels, hotels, vacation rentals, RV parks/campgrounds, and B&Bs. The exceptions are State Park Campgrounds, which refuse to collect local TOT.

The County also has a 2% tax on a room night that

TOT Audit Continued on page 17

Cabrillo’s San Salvador: Fifteen Days of Historic Enchantment in Morro Bay

By Judy Salamacha

It’s official! More than 10,000 visitors walked the decks of Maritime Museum San Diego’s full-scale replica of Juan Rodriguez Cabrillo’s San Salvador, the first European to explore the Pacific coastline in 1542.

Docked at Morro Bay’s South T Pier from August 8 through August 22, my duty station for ten of those days was standing at the ticket entry gate greeting, asking where folks were from, and offering nuggets of history I had gleaned during the San Salvador’s 10-day visit in 2016. Vis-

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**Police
Blotter
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**SLO
POPS
Concert**



News

City to Study Rancho Colina Water, Sewer Connection

By Neil Farrell

The City of Morro Bay will seek a grant to study potentially extending the town’s water and sewer systems out to a mobile home and RV park that sits just outside the City Limits.

The City Council recently gave the OK to apply for State monies to look into hooking up the Rancho Colina MHP and RV park to the City’s infrastructure, helping the park owners with an issue they’re having with the Regional Water Quality Control Board.

Public Works Director Greg Kwolek presented the issue to Council asking permission to apply for State Revolving Fund Financial Assistance out of the State’s Clean Water and Drinking Water State Revolving Fund Grant program. The City is planning to have Rancho Colina initially pay for the study and be reimbursed by the grants. They’ve already negotiated a cost sharing agreement.

“Under the terms of the Cost Share Agreement with Rancho Colina Mutual Water Company,” Kwolek said, “the City will be reimbursed for up to a maximum of \$25,000 in costs to prepare the Clean Water State Revolving Fund [CWSRF] and Drinking Water State Revolving Fund [DWSRF] Planning Grant applications. It is anticipated the costs to prepare and submit these grant applications will not exceed \$25,000 and there will be no fiscal impact to the sewer or water fund or other City funds.”

The study will evaluate the water and wastewater utility feasibility, design of the Rancho Colina water and wastewater connections and “necessary upgrades to City water/wastewater infrastructure (via OneWater projects) and applications for the CWSRF/DWSRF Construction Grants.

“If consolidation is determined feasible and beneficial to the City by City Council, then the City would apply for CWSRF/DWSRF Construction Grants to fund the necessary expansions and upgrades to the City’s water and wastewater systems to connect Rancho Colina and accommodate the additional water demand and wastewater flows.”

Ironically, Rancho Colina, which sits about a half-mile outside the City Limits on Hwy 41, was once considered as a site for the City’s new wastewater treatment plant and water recycling facility. Ultimately, the two sides could not reach agreement and the City moved its new plant across town to a property above South Bay Boulevard.

According to the report, the Rancho Colina Mutual Water Co., “provides water, wastewater and other services for approximately 69 Mobile Homes and 57 Recreational Vehicle camping sites. The Rancho Colina Wastewater Treatment Facility is in need of significant upgrades and repairs to meet the requirements of the new General Permit for wastewater treatment facilities discharging [less than] 100,000 gallons per day. Additionally, the Rancho Colina groundwater wells have elevated concentrations of nitrates and have nearly run dry during recent droughts, forcing Rancho Colina to occasionally truck in water from other wells in the Morro Basin.”

The water board reportedly approached the City about taking on Rancho Colina to help with these problems. “Due to the fact the Rancho Colina Mobile Home Community is classified as a Disadvantaged Community, there is significant grant funding available in the CWSRF and DWSRF programs to pay for infrastructure upgrades to the City’s water and wastewater systems to accommodate the consolidation and connections to Rancho Colina’s systems.

“Based on information provided by the RWQCB and Division of Drinking Water (DDW) funding representatives, RVs are potentially not eligible for consolidation funding.”

It was the water board back in 2003 that asked the City and its partner Cayucos Sanitary District to upgrade

their jointly-owned sewer treatment plant to full secondary treatment that started the ball rolling and led to the eventual divorce between the two agencies, and ultimately to new treatment plants being built in Morro Bay and Cayucos.

According to a chart in the report, Rancho Colina has a total of 126 units (69 mobile homes and 57 RV spaces). The CWSRF funding limit just for mobile homes, has a maximum of \$100,000 per unit or \$6.9 million total.

Under the DWSRF program for water, it has a \$70,000 maximum limit per mobile home, totaling \$4.8 million that could be available. In total, there could be \$11.7 million available for servicing the mobile homes. But there could be more.

“Additional outside funding, up to \$10M total from CWSRF and up to \$6M total for DWSRF, could potentially be available for the RV units depending on how they are categorized by the CWSRF/DWSRF funding agencies or if they were converted to Mobile Homes by the operators of the Rancho Colina RV Park.”

The City Council back in September 2022 authorized hiring a consultant to work on these grant applications, according to the report. The City hired Confluence Solutions, Inc. to get that work going.

But Morro Bay has another potential speed bump in this road — a voter passed law that requires a vote of the people to approve annexations and a law that does not allow extending water or sewer service outside the City Limits, though the location of the new treatment plant is outside the City Limits now.

Kwolek told Estero Bay News, “No study has been performed. We need the grant first. The grant will pay for us to study the feasibility of the consolidation project. If we studied everything beforehand, it would be on the City’s dime.”

That feasibility should include the answers to these questions as well as a couple of more existing issues that could come into play. Namely, the City has to complete two key projects from its OneWater Plan, a work program that lays out projects needed to upgrade the City’s water system and in turn its sewer system too. Those projects are: the Main/Atascadero Street Sewer Replacement (estimated cost of \$7.9M) and the Nutmeg Tank Replacement (at \$17.9M).

So while these things could be tied together by necessity, it isn’t likely the City will get someone else to pay for everything that needs to be done.

“At this time,” Kwolek said, “we don’t know enough about the project feasibility to answer that. But it is unlikely the State would pay for the City’s already planned improvements in full.”

However, “The feasibility study will not address the Nutmeg Pressure Zone project or the sewer improvement projects on Atascadero/Main in a way that develops those projects.”

New Maintenance Manager Hired



Carlos Mendoza is the City of Morro Bay’s new Maintenance Division Manager.

By Neil Farrell

The City of Morro Bay has reached up into Cambria for its new maintenance manager. Public Works Director, Greg Kwolek, announced Sept.

1 that he had hired Carlos Mendoza to be Morro Bay’s new Maintenance Division Manager replacing Travis “Dale” Simpson, who came to the City in June 2022.

Mendoza was picked out of four candidates that interviewed for the job. He started work Aug. 28 and brings over two decades of maintenance experience to Morro Bay.

“Carlos brings strong leadership and maintenance management experience to a fantastic maintenance team,” Kwolek said. “With this, I expect he will lead the Division to prioritize a variety of open projects, including beautification of the City with a focus on the upkeep and beautification of the Embarcadero and Downtown Morro Bay. “Carlos’ understanding of local government dynamics, as well as his listening skills and calm, friendly style will allow him to jump right in to understand our community’s needs and the best, most efficient ways to respond to them.

“I can’t wait to see the outcomes he and the maintenance team will produce in the coming years under his tenure.”

Mendoza has over 18 years of experience in maintenance, Kwolek said, including 22 years working for Cambria Community Services District. At Cambria CSD he was responsible for the supervision and management of facilities, grounds, open space, and recreational facilities.

“I am thrilled to bring my experience, leadership, and knowledge to the City of Morro Bay,” Mendoza said. “The City has a robust commitment to enhancing community facilities, parks, streets, sidewalks, buildings, and providing good stewardship to our valuable open spaces and city trees. I am eager to kick-start the numerous projects that the City has set aside funds for.”

One unexpected issue has been cleanup and repairs from last winter’s storms that caused millions in damage to City equipment and infrastructure.

“Since I arrived,” Mendoza said, “the Division has continued addressing the damage and cleanup caused by the winter storms, hazardous trees in various locations, and pressing maintenance needs at our parks.”

Morro Bay’s Maintenance crew has 10 full time workers and 2-4 part time workers. Kwolek said he will manage all day-to-day maintenance of the City’s parks, open space areas, streets, sidewalks, street trees, City facilities, and most aspects of the City’s fleet of vehicles.

“I believe that I can make a meaningful contribution to the maintenance team based on my skills and knowledge,” Mendoza said. “I greatly appreciate the dedication and professionalism exhibited by the team members, and I am impressed by the fact that many of them have been serving the City for over a decade.



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Enjoy working out, tinkering in the workshop, or playing horseshoes on the designated pit. Enjoy lounging on your private deck while soaking in the incredible views!

News

“Their extensive experience is a testament to their commitment to providing high-quality services. I look forward to working alongside such a talented group of individuals.”

According to the City’s 2022-23 adopted salary schedule, the maintenance supervisor makes from \$87,400 at the Step 1 level, to \$106,200 at the top, Step 5, level, plus a benefits and retirement package.

Community Grants Available Now

The City of Morro Bay wants to break out its checkbook and donate to local worthy causes.

With some \$60,000 available in “Community Grant Funding,” the City is asking for applications from non-profits that fit certain categories.

Part of this money “is to help eligible non-profits who suffered impacts from COVID-19 and programs that positively impact youth services specifically,” reads a City news release.

The deadline to apply is 5 p.m. Friday, Sept. 15. There are two main categories for the grants — “community and social services” and “cultural arts.”

Under Community and Social Services the types of organizations includes

- Crisis intervention and/or centers;
- Youth services and athletics;
- Active Adult service agencies;
- Health and safety;
- Youth-serving agencies;
- Social service agencies and programs;
- Bilingual service agencies;
- Low-income service agencies;
- Homelessness; and,
- Economic Development.

Under “Cultural Arts” eligible applicants include:

- Museums, including artistic, historical or scientific display or education;

- Performing Arts, including music and theater arts;
- Fine arts and visual arts; and,
- Projects, i.e. funding for 1-time projects designed

to address a significant community need or problem. City funding shall be limited to a specific timeframe, usually not more than one year.

Applications are available on the City website, see: www.morrobayca.gov/DocumentCenter/View/18000/Community-Grant-Agreement-and-Policy-FY-23-24.

Completed applications should be emailed to the City Clerk at: cityclerk@morrobayca.gov, mailed or hand delivered to City Hall, 595 Harbor St., Morro Bay, CA 93442.

The City plans to award grants sometime in October. The City normally has around \$20,000 to give away in the usual City budget.

With the COVID-19 pandemic, the Federal Government borrowed trillions of dollars to assist the nation in getting through the tremendous economic hit from the economy being all but shuttered for many months starting in the spring of 2020.

Apparently with so much money available, the local municipalities are playing catch-up and still have money to give out, over a year since the official end of the pandemic.

D.A. Warns of Real Estate Fraud



By Neil Farrell

The County District Attorney is warning property owners about a scam that’s reportedly on the rise here — crooks illegally selling vacant property out from under the true owners.

D.A. Dan Dow said in a news release that SLO County, “is still experiencing an increase of incidents where persons suspected of being part of an organized crime group are impersonating the owners of undeveloped land and attempting to sell them.”

The imposters contact local real estate agents and agents outside SLO County and pull them unwittingly into the scam. There are a number of red flags that should be raised in the course of this scam. How the scheme works is:

- Criminals search public records to identify real estate that is free of mortgage or other liens and to identify the property owner. Properties often include vacant lots or rentals.
- Criminals posing as the property owner, contact a real estate agent to list the targeted property for sale and requests it being listed below the market value to generate immediate interest.
- The criminal, posing as the proper owner, requests preference for a cash buyer, and quickly accepts an offer.
- The criminal, posing as the property owner, refuses to sign closing documents in person, and requests a remote notary signing.
- The criminal or a co-conspirator impersonates the notary and provides falsified documents to the title company or closing attorney.

ny or closing attorney.

- The title company or closing attorney unwittingly transfers closing proceeds to the criminal.
- All communication is electronic, not in person.

The D.A. said his office is working hard to thwart these schemers.

“The District Attorney’s Office is aggressively working with all local real estate associations, title companies and the Office of the County Recorder.”

The targets for the scam seem pretty narrow and should be easy to avoid. “If you own an undeveloped lot within San Luis Obispo County,” D.A. Dow said, “you are encouraged to routinely conduct an internet search to determine if your property is being listed for sale. Simply type in your property address, which will reveal several real estate marketing websites. Click on the on link and it will state whether or not the property is currently being marketed for sale.”

If you discover that your property has been fraudulently listed for sale or even sold, contact District Attorney Investigator Eric Vitale at (805) 781-5868.

The D.A. is also asking all real estate sales professionals to stay current with the alerts that are sent to your local associations and to ensure all absent sellers of vacant lots are being properly vetted.

How does someone usually discover the scam? “Often,” the news release said, “it’s when recording the transfer of documents with the relevant county. This scheme has particularly affected the elderly and foreign real estate property owners, as there are no means to automatically notify the legitimate owners.”

Who’s to blame if this happens to you? The D.A. said the real estate people who let it happen. “The burden of verification is on the real estate and title companies,” he said.

To protect yourself, and not become of victim of this white-collar crime, D.A. Dow said, “Conduct open-source research for the identity and a recent photo of the purported seller.

“Request an in-person or virtual meeting and to see government issued identification.

“Be on alert when a seller accepts an offer below market value in exchange for receiving the payment in cash and/or closing quickly.

“And, use trusted title companies and attorneys for the exchange of closing documents and funds.”

A similar scam has been run for years wherein crooks list homes or apartments for rent on websites like Craig’s List and people seeking to rent them send payments for cleaning deposits, and first-and-last months rent, only to discover the house isn’t for rent at all or is being managed by a local property management company that isn’t the one who listed it.

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Santa Supes Hand Out Grant Gifts

Christmas has come in August for a handful of non-profits in San Luis Obispo County, as County Supervisors handed out over \$100,000 in tax monies for community assistance grants.

Olena Nagorna of the County Administrative Office, said in a report that the “Contributions to Other Agencies for Other Agency Requests Grants” totaled over \$102,600 for the current fiscal year.

The awards are approved as part of the County’s regular fiscal year budgeting, but the amounts available each year vary somewhat, with less money available in tough economic times and more when the County’s wallet is fat.

This year, Supervisors thought they had \$134,000 to give away and approved that amount in the budget. But Nagorna said they had to reduce that by some \$5,100 with “required budget reductions.”

“To be considered for this grant opportunity,” Nagorna said, “organizations were required to have non-profit status and apply for programs/projects that are not health and human services related. This grant allocates funds to non-profit agencies in financial support of ongoing projects and services.”

Naturally, there were more requests than money and Nagorna said they received requests totaling over \$152,600 from eight agencies, requiring a staff committee to whittle them down. Some agencies got zero, others less than what they asked for and some got their full requests filled.

- The criteria they used was:
- Identified funding sources showing the ability to leverage the other funds;
 - Organizational ability to leverage the grant funds (if applicable);
 - Requirement to obtain a funding public match (if applicable);
 - Projected program/project goals, results, and outputs/outcomes;
 - Projected program results, outputs/outcomes from prior year’s grant (if applicable);
 - Program cost compared with number of people served;
 - Geographic distribution of services;
 - Percentage of requested funding being used for direct services;
 - Program/project sustainability with funds granted; and,
 - Collaboration with other community-based agencies and County departments (if applicable).

The final \$102,000 recommended by the staff committee for awards was split six ways.

The Boys & Girls Clubs of Mid Central Coast was awarded \$20,000 for “evidence-based programing focusing on homework help and STEAM programming,” according to the report.

The Coastal San Luis Resource Conservation District got \$30,000 for “multiple conservation programs allows CSLRCD to continue promoting and implementing activ-

ities that protect water resources, enhance soil resources, restore natural habitats, and maintain healthy ecosystems.”

The SLO Children’s Museum got \$4,700 to help pay for increasing the number of CalFresh/SNAP recipient families with young children who can visit the museum.

The Community Foundation San Luis Obispo County got \$5,000 to help pay for a webpage that “centralizes data reports and community needs assessment by linking local, regional, and statewide reports from nonprofit, private, and public sectors. Funding is requested to support maintenance, outreach, and marketing so that the community is aware of the resource.”

The Upper Salinas Las-Tablas RCD was given \$35,000 for working “with a diverse array of community members to address critical natural resource issues through education, planning, and on-the-ground project implementation.”

And Greenspace was given \$7,850 for the second phase of the “10,000 Trees Project” that will be “using seeds collected from disease resistant Monterey pine trees within our local forests, distribute the seeds for propagation, and plant the seedlings on public and privately owned lands.”

A couple of agencies that requested funding got stiffed. The Council on Adolescent Mental Health, Inc., asked for \$30,000 and was effectively denied funding.

And the County apparently doesn’t much value community journalism, as SLO Review had requested \$20,000 to “expand capacity and local coverage by offering stipends to the professional writers and editors,” according to the County report. Supervisors allocated zero, zilch, nada for that effort.

County Donates Surplus COVID Trailers



The County is giving away some trailers it got in the early days of the coronavirus pandemic but no longer need.

County Supervisors were recently asked to approve giving away the emergency trailers, which the County got in April 2020 from the State Office of Emergency Services “to be used in response to the emergency and thereafter to respond to the homeless needs in the community,” reads the staff report from County OES. “The county has been lending the trailers to Good Samaritan for use as homeless shelters and has no current use for the trailers.”

Good Samaritan Shelter is based locally in Santa Maria and has facilities and programs throughout Santa Barbara County (see: <https://goodsamaritanshelter.org>).

According to the agency’s website, “For approximately 27 years, Good Samaritan Shelter has focused on its commitment to provide emergency, transitional and affordable housing with support services to the homeless and those in recovery throughout the Central Coast.

“The passion of its managers, screeners, overnight hosts, food handlers, community, and the Board of Directors have given Good Samaritan an invaluable reputation for service and concern to the needy. By providing an array of programs tailored to match the needs of the local communities in which it serves, Good Samaritan shelter is transforming the lives of the world’s most vulnerable populations.”

In essence, the County declared the COVID-19 trailers “unused property,” which allows them to be donated to charitable organizations that fit certain criteria, as in this case, working for and with the homeless, a stipulation in the State’s giving them to the County in the first place.

Ironically, the giveaway comes as the County is closing a homeless safe parking facility on Oklahoma Avenue and the City of San Luis Obispo is closing down a safe parking program it had started during the pandemic located at the railway station.

Man Arrested After Slow-Speed Chase

The Highway Patrol arrested a wrong-way driver who led them on an hours-long, slow-speed chase up and down Hwy 101 from Cuesta Grade to Shell Beach.

According to a CHP news release, at 10:35 p.m. Saturday, Aug. 26 an officer was driving Hwy 101 southbound near the top of Cuesta Grade, when he saw a 3-axel flatbed truck traveling the wrong way on the freeway. The truck was southbound in the northbound lanes and passed the officer on the road.

The officer sped ahead and turned around at Monterey Street ahead of the wrong-way truck, “in order to bring in a traffic break in an attempt to stop the wrong way driver,” reads the news release.

That didn’t work and the truck continued on, driving on the wrong side of the freeway. The truck reached the bottom of the Cuesta Grade and used a turn-around gap in the median barrier to get himself back on the correct side of the freeway. The officer tried to stop the truck again but the driver kept on going; an OJ-like pursuit ensued.

“The suspect fled from CHP units at approximately 10 mph or less,” the report said. “During the pursuit, multiple spike strips were successfully deployed.”

The truck driver turned the rig around at the Laetitia Vineyard in South County and kept going northbound on Hwy 101 (on the right side of the road this time).

With flattened front tires, the truck finally stopped on the highway near Spyglass Drive in Shell Beach but the driver reportedly still refused to give himself up.

“Officers approached the vehicle and deployed OC [pepper] spray,” the release said, “into the cab of the vehicle in hopes the suspect would exit.”

A dose of the choking pepper spray took most of the fight out of the fellow, who reportedly still exited his truck armed with a pair of pruning shears and “was not complying with officer’s commands.”

An officer then deployed a taser and the man was taken into custody without further incident.

The slow-speed chase lasted about two hours, according to the report. The driver was taken to the hospital for treatment of pepper spray and then booked into County Jail. The driver, who was identified as Antonio Vega Torres Jr., 43 of Lompoc, is suspected of driving under the influence of a drug, the report said, and the truck “was confirmed to have been stolen.”

RV Fire Victim Identified

The unfortunate man who died in a recent RV fire has been identified by the County Coroner’s Office.

According to a Sheriff’s Department news release, “The man is identified as 44-year-old Christopher Wayne Surratt of Los Osos.”

Surratt’s body was discovered in the aftermath of a devastating fire that destroyed an RV he was apparently staying in and parked in the 1900 block of Turri Road in rural Los Osos.

The Coroner’s Office said Surratt is believed to have died of smoke inhalation from the fire, the cause of which has yet to be released by Cal Fire/County Fire, which is handling the fire investigation.

An autopsy was conducted on Surratt but the official cause of death is pending the results of toxicology testing, the Sheriff’s Office said.

At 10:30 a.m. Monday, Aug. 21, the Sheriff’s Department and Cal Fire/County Fire responded to a report of a vehicle on fire in the 1900 block of Turri Rd., which is just about in the middle of the stretch of road that connects Los Osos Valley Road and South Bay Boulevard.

By the time deputies and the fire department arrived, it was likely too late to save Surratt. “When first responders arrived on scene,” the Sheriff’s news release said, “the RV was fully engulfed. Once the flames were extinguished, the body of an adult male was located inside the RV.”

Preliminary reports indicate the fire was accidental, the release said.

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September 7 - September 20, 2023 • The Estero Bay News • Your Community, Your News

News

SLO Man Hit, Killed Crossing Hwy 101

A San Luis Obispo man died and a Carpinteria woman suffered major injuries Aug. 24 when she hit a man crossing Hwy 101 on foot in Pismo Beach.

According to the Highway Patrol, at 10:12 p.m. Thursday, Aug. 24 they received a report of a vehicle vs. pedestrian on the southbound side of Hwy 101 just north of Five Cities Drive.

According to an accident report, Mikeala Torres, 23 of Carpinteria was driving a 2011 Nissan Murano sport utility vehicle, southbound on Hwy 101 north of Five Cities Drive. Meanwhile, the San Luis Obispo man, 61, was walking east on Hwy 101 when he reportedly tried “to run across the southbound lanes of traffic into the center median.”

The man, whose identity hadn’t been released pending notification of next of kin, ran right into the path of Torres’ car and she could not avoid hitting and killing him.

The impact caused major damage to Torres’ car and she suffered major injuries and was taken to the hospital. The pedestrian died at the scene. Weather conditions at the time, which was after nightfall, were “cool and calm.”

The CHP said the investigation was ongoing but the accident report.

Supes Support THS Football

County Supervisors have again donated money to help with Templeton High School’s football program.

Supervisors voted to allocate \$10,000 in “community projects funding,” to the Templeton “Football Coaches Club,” according to a report.

The money is coming out of Dist. 1’s and 5’s annual community projects budgets, a pool of money allocated to each supervisor to hand out to programs — usually in their own districts — that apply for grant funding. Dist. 1 Supervisor John Peschong gave \$7,000 and Dist. 5 Supervisor Debbie Arnold gave \$3,000.

Templeton lies within Peschong’s Dist. 1 boundaries, but Arnold, who represents Atascadero, has many supporters in that community too.

According to the report, “The funds will be used to offset expenses associated with the operation of the Templeton High School Football Program in 2023, including but not limited to new equipment, coaches’ continued education, and online streaming.”

The Coach’s Club apparently works similar to how the Athletic Boosters Club work at Morro Bay High.

“This organization provides physical fitness, mental fitness, and support for all the players, as well as leadership and community camaraderie,” the report said. “The Templeton High School Football Program interacts with many other high schools in and beyond the county. The football team uses the lessons learned with the Club to grow into young adults that interact with our community.”

Supervisors made a similar donation last year as well, though no other area schools’ football programs have received such Supervisory support.

News Briefs

By Theresa-Marie Wilson

Parking Lot Temporarily Closed in SLO

The City of San Luis Obispo officially closed the parking lot at Palm and Nipomo streets on Sept. 5 to begin preparing the site for construction of the Cultural Arts District Parking Structure.

Alternative parking options during construction include curbside and metered parking, three other parking structures (842 Palm Street, 919 Palm Street, and 871 Marsh Street), and spaces available by parking permit only. Visit www.slocity.org/Parking to find current parking rates, accessible parking locations, links to easy payment mobile apps, and details about street parking pay stations.

The project is located on the corner of Palm and Nipomo Streets and involves construction of a five-level parking garage, 397 parking spaces, 41 Electric Vehicle chargers, 32 bike racks, solar panels, and other improvements that will enhance accessibility along the block. Momentum on the project will accelerate in early November with a groundbreaking ceremony (date to be determined) and the mobilization of the construction project’s larger general contractor.

The construction work area will be fenced to limit access onto the site, Pedestrian and vehicular travel will be afforded around the site on Palm, Nipomo, and Monterey Streets. .

September Hunger Action Month

The SLO Food Bank is set to participate in Feeding America’s Hunger Action Month this September. Hunger Action Month is a national campaign organized to rally local communities to participate in hunger relief fundraising events and actions while spreading awareness about the life changing mission to alleviate hunger for all our neighbors.

“Hunger Action Month is a call for all who are able to step up and enhance the health of our community by eliminating the hunger and poor nutrition that burdens over 31,500 of our SLO County neighbors,” said Garret Olson, CEO of the SLO Food Bank. “By uniting our voices, taking purposeful action, and coming together under this vital cause, we can ensure that all our neighbors have access to the nourishment they need to thrive.”

Throughout September, individuals are encouraged to seize daily opportunities to support hunger relief efforts in SLO County. Events include fundraising collaborations with local restaurants across the county, such as House of Bread, Woodstock’s Pizza, Urbane Cafe, and Blaze Pizza in San Luis Obispo; Chipotle or Blaze Pizza in Paso Robles; and Blaze Pizza or Panera in Arroyo Grande. By dining at these establishments during specific dates and times detailed on the Hunger Awareness Month

website, community members can enjoy a delicious meal while contributing to the effort to alleviate hunger in SLO County. To get involved and see the full calendar of events and actions, visit slofoodbank.org/HAM.

Additionally, the Hunger Action Month Matching Gift Challenge runs through September 30. The local International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers No. 639 returns alongside other generous donors to match gifts, dollar-for-dollar, up to \$40,000. Every contribution made to the SLO Food Bank during this campaign will have double the impact, providing even more resources to support those in need.

Phone Scam Dialing Up

The Sheriff’s Office is warning residents of a phone scam in San Luis Obispo County.

There have been several reports recently that someone claiming to be from the Sheriff’s Office has contacted individuals to inform them there is a warrant out for their arrest. The phone number used by the scammers directs callers to a fake Sheriff’s Office phone tree. The caller indicates the resident can clear the warrant by making a cash transfer or through a debit card or gift card.

“We want to caution residents this is a scam,” a Sheriff’s Office news release said. “The Sheriff’s Office reminds you that it is not our practice to contact residents by phone regarding these matters. Deputy Sheriff’s will never request money or gift cards in lieu of bail.”

Anyone who receives a call like this should report it to their local law enforcement agency.

Poly Grads Prove Employable

Ninety-one percent of Cal Poly graduates are positively engaged, with the vast majority working or attending graduate schools in California, according to the university’s latest Career Services Graduate Status Report. Eight in 10 Cal Poly graduates accepted jobs in the Golden State, including 18% in San Luis Obispo County.

“Employers tell us time and again that they seek to hire Cal Poly graduates because our grads are ‘ready day one,’” Executive Director of Cal Poly Career Services Amie Hammond said.

Cal Poly’s Career Services annually surveys Cal Poly graduates to determine their post-commencement plans, top employers and locations, employment regions, and starting median salaries. This most recent survey includes information on 2,232 graduates in the nine months following graduation.

Of the graduates who are positively engaged, 71% are working full time, 4% are working part time and 14% are attending graduate schools. Another 9% were still seeking employment, and 2% were engaged in other pursuits,

News Briefs Continued on page 6

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News

Bomb Threat Clears Nipomo School

County Sheriff’s Deputies are investigating the sources of an apparent fake bomb threat against a Nipomo area high school.

According to a news release from Sheriff’s spokesman, Tony Cipolla, at about 10:15 a.m. Wednesday, Aug. 24, deputies responded to a reported bomb threat at Central Coast New Tech High School, located at 523 N Thompson Ave., in Nipomo adjacent to Nipomo High School.

“A student at the school,” Cipolla said, “received a text message containing the threat and reported it to school staff. Out of an abundance of caution, students were evacuated to nearby Nipomo High School.”

Deputies brought bomb-sniffing police dogs to the scene and the K-9s and their handlers began searching the tech school.

“An exhaustive search was conducted,” Cipolla said. “No device was located.”

Central Coast New Tech High is a free, public, college prep high school, within the Lucia Mar Unified School District, according to the school’s website. Admission is open to all students in SLO and Santa Barbara counties. The school employs a so-called “Project Based Learning” or PBL learning method.

According to pblworks.org, PBL is where “students learn by actively engaging in real-world and personally meaningful projects.”

Or put another way, “Project Based Learning is a teaching method in which students gain knowledge and skills by working for an extended period of time to investigate and respond to an authentic, engaging, and complex question, problem, or challenge.”

The incident is still under investigation as it is a crime to phone in a bomb threat — fake or real — to a facility like a school.

News Briefs From page 5

including travel, a planned gap year and personal commitments.

Overall, the median starting salary among 2021-22 graduates increased to \$72,000 from \$68,800 the prior year. The starting salary has increased 22% since the 2014-15 survey, when graduates’ starting median salary was \$56,000. The median starting salary of graduates from the College of Engineering increased to \$83,500 from \$68,000 during that time — an 18% increase.

To view Cal Poly’s latest and past Graduate Status Reports, go to <https://careerservices.calpoly.edu/gsr>.

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

Community

CHP Launches Online E-bike Training



By Neil Farrell

For the past several years, more and more Morro Bay businesses have begun renting electric bikes or e-bikes to the public, as cruising around the waterfront grows in popularity.

The proliferation of these rental bikes would seem to be a perfect recipe for disaster, but according to City officials there haven’t been very many bad crashes reported involving e-bikes, though they have happened.

Anyone who’s driven a car or ridden a bike down the Embarcadero can attest that e-bike rentals are growing in popularity.

Nevertheless California has a new law this year calling on the Highway Patrol to come up with a training regimen for e-bike riders to make sure they are safe in what is becoming a major factor in bike crashes, including several fatalities.

“Electric bicycles are heavier and faster than standard bicycles,” reads a news release from the CHP announcing its online training program, “and, without the proper safety education and training, e-bike riders have a higher risk of becoming severely injured or killed in a crash.

“As e-bikes become more commonplace, it’s also important for drivers to familiarize themselves with sharing the road with e-bike riders.”

One issue is that while minors are required to wear a safety helmet when riding any bicycle, adults in California are not required to wear a helmet when riding a bicycle nor an e-bike, though most people do.

That’s because e-bikes, even those with a throttle and not just pedal-assist electric motors, are not considered motorized vehicles, like a Harley-Davidson motorcycle, or a Vespa scooter would be.

“Assembly Bill 1946,” the CHP said, “which was signed into law by Gov. Gavin Newsom and took effect on Jan. 1, required the CHP to work with relevant stakeholders to develop an online training program that offers information on e-bike safety, emergency maneuver skills, rules of the road, and laws related to e-bikes.

“The e-bike safety and training program,” the CHP continued, “features tutorials, videos, a quiz, and other interactive elements with an easy-to-follow, intuitive presentation to help make the material engaging, practical and informative.”

According to CHP Commissioner Sean Duryee, “With the rise in popularity of e-bikes across the state, the CHP worked with Gov. Newsom’s Administration, the Legislature, and key stakeholders to develop California’s first e-bike safety and training program. The CHP’s program can be accessed on our website and is designed to promote safety for those who choose to ride this alternative mode of transportation.”

In Morro Bay, the City has taken some notice of e-bikes on some of the pedestrian paths in town, particularly on the Cloisters Park bike and pedestrian path. The City posted “5 mph speed limit” signs as one comes to blind curves on the north end of the path.

Cloisters bike path is a popular place for citizens to walk their dogs, making riding fast on the path even more dangerous due to the dog leashes.

According to preliminary data from the California Statewide Integrated Traffic Records System, the CHP said, there were more than 9,600 bicycle-involved crashes in 2022. At least 225 of those crashes involved an e-bike, including four that resulted in fatal injuries. This reflects a significant increase from the previous year when there were 80 e-bike crashes reported in California.”

So if readers have an e-bike, or are thinking about getting one, take the CHP’s safety course at: www.chp.ca.gov/Programs-Services/Services-Information/Bike-and-Ped-Safety to give yourself a better chance to avoid a bad crash.

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‘Thanks’ to Interim C.M.



The City of Morro Bay bid adieu to its interim city manager awarding Greg Carpenter a certificate of thanks suitable for framing at their Aug. 8 meeting. Carpenter was thanked for “his leadership, dedication and professional service to the City of Morro Bay and other cities he has served over his career in local government. The City of Morro Bay wishes Greg Carpenter all the best as he moves onto his next venture and into the future.” Carpenter was brought in back in February to take over for former C.M. Scott Collins. Carpenter was replaced by Yvonne Kimball as permanent city manager. She started work at the City shortly after Carpenter’s final council meeting. In the photo, Carpenter is front and center flanked from left to right by Councilwomen Cyndee Edwards, Zara Landrum, Mayor Carla Wixom, and Councilwomen Laurel Barton and Jen Ford. Submitted photo

Takin’ Care of BUSINESS

By Theresa-Marie Wilson

Quick Pickle Looking to Support Schools, Non-Profits

The Los Osos based business QuickPickle-Kit.com is looking to help community organizations in need of funding. “For over 27 years, QuickPickleKit.com has supported nonprofits and schools as well as provided jobs for adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities,” said President Andrea Wasko. “We’re on a mission to utilize our business and our products as tools to create a healthier and more caring world.” Pickling Kit is a Safe, Quick, simple, and natural way to pickle any vegetable in a fraction of the time and with minimal effort. For more information, send an email to AndreaCWasko@gmail.com.



Los Osos Student Wins PG&E Scholarship

A Los Osos girl was one of three local school students awarded scholarships from Pacific Gas & Electric, the company announced. “The PG&E Corporation Foundation,” reads a news release, “announced 60 students — 20 more than last year — from hometowns across PG&E’s service area will receive scholarships from the 2023 ‘Better Together STEM Scholarship Program.’” The three local kids who won scholarships were: Joel Lozano, of Santa Maria, who won \$10,000; Nicholas Quang of Arroyo Grande with \$10,000; and Kaimana Kiaha of Los Osos with \$5,000. Kiaha was happy to get the award. “As the fifth child of 12 in my family and the first of them to be attending a 4-year university,” she said, “I am honored and grateful to have received the PG&E Better Together STEM Scholarship.”



Kaimana Kiaha of Los Osos received a \$5,000 from the PG&E 2023 Better Together STEM Scholarship Program.

“The funds will help me tremendously with the burden placed upon me to finance my college education. I will be attending Cal Poly in the fall majoring in environmental earth and soil science.” She sees the field of study as a means to fulfill her childhood dreams. “Helping save the earth has been a passion of mine ever since I was a child and I’m happy to be pursuing it as a career,” she said. “This scholarship has made my college dreams attainable and eliminated financial stressors. I am incredibly thankful to PG&E.”

The PG&E Foundation scholarships totaled \$350,000 this year, according to the news release, an increase of \$100,000 from 2022. The PG&E Foundation gave out 20 scholarships of \$10,000; 20 of \$5,000, and 20 of \$2,500 each. The \$5,000 scholarships are new this year.

So who is eligible for this free money? “Scholarships,” the Foundation said, “are given to students pursuing a degree in the Science, Technology, Engineering and Math [STEM] disciplines.”

“STEM education fosters ingenuity, creativity, and experimentation, leading to new ideas, innovations, and technological advancements that can have global impact.” Over the past several years, Morro Bay High School has gradually moved towards a STEAM style of learning, which is STEM with the added discipline of the arts (STEAM is Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics).

Scholarships, the Foundation said, are awarded based on “academic achievement, demonstrated participation and leadership in school and community activities, and financial need.”

The company’s local vice-president, Teresa Alvarado, said, “As someone who pursued an engineering degree with the support of a scholarship, I am especially proud to help alleviate some of the financial burden of college tuition for these three exceptional students pursuing their STEM-based higher education goals. I am also excited that we are able to provide a larger number of scholarships this year and send our heartfelt congratulations to all of this year’s scholars.”

Now the scholarship winners will have to follow through with their plans to go to college, specifically, an accredited 4-year university or historically black university anywhere in the U.S., seeking their first bachelor’s degree. The scholarship is good for the first year at school.

Since 2012, the Better Together STEM Scholarship Program has awarded more than \$7 million to accomplished students, the Foundation said. Charitable donations come from PG&E shareholders, not PG&E customers.

The various union groups within the company also contribute to scholarship funds and since 1989 nearly \$6 million in “Engineering Networking Group” or ERG scholarships have been given out.

The PG&E Corporation Foundation is an independent nonprofit community benefit organization, separate from PG&E (the utility company) and sponsored by PG&E Corporation (the parent company).

Poly Cat Program Seek Volunteer Coordinator

The Cal Poly Cat Program is looking to add another volunteer coordinator to the team. This position entails different responsibilities than those of our other volunteer coordinators. An individual in this role will need

Takin’ Care of Business Continued on page 9

Hey Locals!

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Police Blotter



• **Aug. 27:** Police responded to a disturbance at 9:35 p.m. on State Park Road, where a 71-year-old apparent Scar-amouch was allegedly threatening the staff at the Inn at Morro Bay, no doubt just another satisfied customer. The hotheaded fellow was hauled off to the cooler to chill out.

• **Aug. 27:** Police responded to a disturbance at 7 p.m. in the 1000 block of Main. Logs indicated a 23-year-old rookie was nicked for suspicion of being drunk and disorderly in public and they came to take him away, ha-ha, he-he, ho-ho...

• **Aug. 27:** Police responded at 2:45 p.m. to a store in the 700 block of Quintana to deal with an apparently unwell-comed fellow. The 31-year-old interloper was cited for alleged trespassing and released with a promise to make like a tree...

• **Aug. 27:** Police responded to the 100 block of Atascadero Rd., where someone hopped the fence at the City Corp Yard and vandalized one of the government’s vehicles, a hanging offense in some countries.

• **Aug. 26:** Someone at the Inn at Morro Bay said his or her car was vandalized. A posse was no doubt rounded up to hunt down the varmint.

• **Aug. 26:** At 10:50 p.m. police contacted an old friend in the 1000 block of Main St. The 52-year-old scofflaw was cited and released on a bench warrant, apparently not worth the gas to haul to County Jail.

• **Aug. 25:** Police responded to a reported burglary at 12:45 p.m. in the 2300 block of Hemlock. According to logs, a resident made a citizen’s arrest on his or her 34-year-old roommate “for the theft of \$10,” because ten dollars is ten dollars.

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• **Aug. 25:** Police stopped a sitting duck driving at 1 a.m. in the 500 block of Embarcadero. Logs indicated the driver, 43, had a suspended license and was cited, his party pipped at the post.

• **Aug. 24:** Police responded to a disturbance at 11:15 p.m. in the 900 block of Pecho. Logs indicated a 23-year-old belle of the ball got kicked to the curb and the tomato landed in jail for suspicion of being stewed.

• **Aug. 24:** Police in the 3300 block of Beachcomber towed off a vehicle; they’d decided the POS was abandoned.

• **Aug. 24:** An elderly care facility on Teresa Drive reported the possible financial abuse of one of their clients.

• **Aug. 23:** Police responded to the 2300 block of Hemlock at 7 p.m. Logs indicated officers arrested a 75-year-old apparent ruffian for suspicion of aggravated assault on a peace officer or firefighter.

• **Aug. 23:** Police stopped a suspicious vehicle at 2:44 p.m. in the 500 block of Atascadero Rd. Logs indicated the 49-year-old driver was nicked for alleged possession of illegal drugs, transportation of illegal drugs, possession of a controlled substance, possession of the evil weed for sale, and being stoned, which explains a lot.

• **Aug. 23:** Police responded at 1:35 p.m. to the 2800 block of Alder at the old Pacific Cottage Motel where they arrested a 27-year-old apparent bail jumper for a bench warrant.

• **Aug. 23:** Police responded to the 900 block of Piney Way at 1:30 p.m. where they arrested a 59-year-old woman for a bench warrant, as the crackdown continues.

• **Aug. 23:** Someone came to the police station and reported that he or she had their identity stolen and were the victims of a con game but they didn’t want to press charges, as if the thieves could ever be found.

• **Aug. 23:** Some honest Abe turned in a wallet they found in the 1100 block of Embarcadero.

• **Aug. 22:** Police responded at 4:38 p.m. to the 900 block of Embarcadero where they arrested a 22-year-old sticky-fingered fellow for suspicion of shoplifting and a pair of bench warrants.

• **Aug. 22:** A store in the 300 block of Morro Bay Blvd., reported a shoplifting and the scoundrels apparently got away too, adding insult to the injury of jacked up rents.

• **Aug. 22:** Someone stole a solar panel in the 1100 block of Embarcadero, proving once again that people will steal anything.

• **Aug. 22:** Police responded at 9:40 a.m. to the 400 block of Atascadero Rd., for a report of suspected child abuse. Logs indicated a 31-year-old man was arrested for suspicion of child endangerment and hauled to the gaol.

• **Aug. 22:** Police responded at 8:55 a.m. to the Inn at Morro Bay where they arrested a 28-year-old tool for suspicion of assault and domestic violence.

• **Aug. 21:** At 7 p.m. police contacted a suspicious human-icus dooficus in the 200 block of Pacific who was arrested in connection with an alleged vehicle burglary in the 700 block of Market.

• **Aug. 21:** Police found a stolen vehicle parked in the 400 block of Quintana. No word on suspects but that’s near the Creek Bed Estates, so maybe look there.

• **Aug. 21:** At 2:55 a.m. police stumbled upon a stum-blebum stumbling down Kennedy Way at Quintana Road.

Logs indicated the future mayor, 23, was nicked for suspi-cion of being sozzled in public, a case of never take a joint from a guy.

• **Aug. 19:** Police responded at 7 p.m. to Front and Beach where a woman said she left her purse in her car and some rat fink stole it, who then of course immediately used her credit card, in this week’s example of why we need SWAT.

• **Aug. 19:** Police responded at 9:12 p.m. to the 400 block of LaJolla for a disturbance report. Logs indicated a 38-year-old louse was arrested for alleged battery to his spouse.

• **Aug. 19:** Police responded at 6 p.m. to a suspicious sub-ject hanging around Dolly’s Donut shop in the 1000 block of Kennedy Way. Logs indicated police arrested a 38-year-old fruit loop dingus for alleged possession of illegal drugs, as no doubt a sugar high is no longer sufficient.

• **Aug. 19:** Police responded at 4 p.m. to an unruly fellow raising Caine in the 200 block of Morro Bay Blvd. Logs indicated a 27-year-old annoying flesh monkey got nicked for going woolly-booger in public.

• **Aug. 19:** At 3:39 p.m. police towed off a parked vehicle at Main and Atascadero Road because the DMV was over-due its pound of flesh.

• **Aug. 18:** Someone on Sequoia Street said he or she had gotten a terrorist death threat and wanted to have police make a note of it just in case.

• **Aug. 17:** Police responded at 12:39 p.m. to the 1700 block of Embarcadero where someone’s car was broken into. While there a second vehicle burglary report was given by someone else who was also a victim of the tourist tax.

• **Aug. 17:** Someone stole a bike in the 600 block of Em-barcadero and police are hunting the thief.

• **Aug. 17:** Police took a lost property report at the police station, logs didn’t say what, nor where the thing was lost, and a task force will no doubt be formed to comb the town for whatever it was. Did you find it?

• **Aug. 17:** Police responded to the 300 block of Quin-tana where some thief made off with the license plate and fenders off a car, proving definitively that people will steal anything.

• **Aug. 17:** Police in the 700 block of Quintana espied a suspicious 48-year-old woman actin’ a fool at 9:18 a.m., which seems a little early to be having a bag lady moment. She was nicked for suspicion of being high on dope.

• **Aug. 16:** Somebody turned in something they found somewhere in town.

• **Aug. 16:** Police responded at 11:34 a.m. to a disturbance in the 800 block of Monterey. Logs indicated a 48-year-old woman was arrested for suspicion of resisting arrest and being stoned on drugs, earning this week’s prize for why they call it dope.

• **Aug. 15:** Police spotted a suspicious subject at 6:48 p.m. sitting in a vehicle parked outside Cork & Bottle Liquor in the 300 block of Atascadero Rd. The 46-year-old apparent lazybones was arrested for suspicion of being drunk in pub-lic, no doubt the minute he stepped outside the vehicle.

• **Aug. 15:** Police responded at 4:17 p.m. to a disturbance in the 500 block of Kings. Some ruffian knave, 41, was tossed into the dungeon for suspicion of spousal battery.

Aug. 14: Police contacted a return customer at 9:11 p.m. in City Park on Harbor Street. The scofflaw had a bench warrant and was issued another disappearance ticket and freed until next time.

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COLLEGETOWN

By Michael Walker

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Community

Takin' Care of Business From page 7

to be organized, efficient, and in good communication with volunteers and the other staff members. The primary tasks consist of:

- Logging volunteer hours and providing a thorough monthly report to the staff
- Maintaining a volunteer attendance Excel spreadsheet
- Providing a weekly MIA report to alert the other volunteer coordinators as to who is failing to show up to

their shifts

- Monitoring the volunteer sign-up schedule to identify gaps in shifts and posting requests for extra shift help on the GroupMe chat
- Organizing interviews with local radio and TV stations and creating/distributing press releases

Readers who are methodical, good with interpersonal communication and community outreach, and love cats,

Ribbon Cutting at Red Tail Bikes



are asked to apply to this position. Email cat-program@calpoly.edu with your resume and any other inquiries.

Red Tail Bikes in Morro Bay is officially open. The Morro Bay Chamber of Commerce recently marked their inaugural day with a ribbon cutting at 890 Main St.

“Pedal into excitement as Red Tail Bikes kicks off its

journey in style,” said Chamber officials.”Explore this fresh addition to Downtown Morro Bay’s landscape and experience the thrill of their offerings firsthand.”

Pictured: Jon Elliot, Jon Peterson, Erica Crawford, Scot Graham, Jack Smith, Eric Meyer (in the front kneeling), Marlene Peter, Heather Richert, Leila Richert, Kealani

Locals Invited to Concerts, Strolls, and Long Evenings in Morro Bay



Morro Bay’s “secret season” has arrived! There are myriad opportunities to savor the gorgeous weather and long evenings of our early Fall weather.

The Morro Bay Chamber of Commerce presents its Shop, Sip & Stroll event series on Thursday, September 14, and Thursday, September 28. Indulge your senses, support local businesses, and create lasting memories. Discover what our local businesses have to offer while sipping on both alcoholic and refreshing non-alcoholic beverages as well as sampling some delicious treats at businesses nestled along the picturesque Embarcadero and our unique and welcoming Downtown in Morro Bay.

Register and receive a wine glass to savor every sip and a tote bag to carry your purchases throughout the event. For more information, go to morrochamber.org/shop-sip-and-stroll.

Morro Bay Active Adults again presents Tunes at Tidelands, a free concert series at Tidelands Park every Thursday from 5 -7 p. m.in the Waterfront district. For more information, go to morrobayseniors.org.

Buttercup Bakery presents its Summer Concert Series in partnership with Big, Big SLO every Thursday from 5 – 8 p.m. in the Downtown district. For more information, go to bigbigblo.com/buttercup-concerts.

Live music abounds on Thursdays in Morro Bay brick-and-mortar venues like The Siren downtown and The Savory Palette on the waterfront.

Are you or a neighbor Taking Care of Business. Is your business, including non-profits, supporting our community? Maybe you’re launching a new business, or you’re making updates to your current business model, or re-opening. 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. Submit your awesome local efforts for publication to Editor@EsteroBayNews.com.

NHC GROVER BEACH

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Our team is composed of longtime experts in the curation & sourcing of quality cannabis, and our partnerships with brands & growers runs deep. These relationships and experiences allow us to provide premium cannabis products at the best possible value to customers. No matter what kind of experience you're looking for, you can find it at any one of our NHC locations — from Lemoore to Morro Bay and Grover Beach. Have questions? Our expert budtenders are some of the most informed and passionate in the state. They're always ready and waiting to answer all of your questions and guide you in the right direction.

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From young adults who are passionate about recreational cannabis to seniors who are discovering its powerful benefits for wellness and health, NHC is built to serve everyone 21+ and their unique goals. We want to remove barriers to responsible cannabis consumption and help you fulfill your vision.

After all, we know there's no one type of cannabis customer. Everyone who enters one of our stores comes with a unique set of goals, interests, and their own experience level. Our mission is to help each and every one find what they're looking for. You'll always feel welcome, comfortable, and heard when you speak to one of our bud tenders about what you need.

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7:10 - 8:10 PM

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Silina Taff

1947- 2023



Silina Taff passed away as gracefully as she lived, surrounded by friends.

Born in Shanghai, her family escaped to Hong Kong during the Chinese Revolution. She excelled at school, winning scholarships to attend UC Berkeley. This was followed by marriage to Bruce and a move to Northern California where the two welcomed their children Alisha, Aysha and Anthony.

The fortuitous move to the Central Coast in 1979 allowed Silina to pursue a banking career, making lifelong friends and helping many achieve their dreams. Along the way, she brought up her family with an unbelievable work ethic, amazing home-cooked meals, “secret” Chinese medicine, and many rescue pets. Retirement in 2010 brought a move to Florida, building her dream home and raising orchids and butterflies.

The stunning diagnosis of rapidly progressive ALS led to Silina’s return to California, enduring its effects with incredible grace and dignity. Her family is so grateful to have been able to spend those last few months in her daily company, and will miss her wise words, laughter, and unbelievable strength.

Silina is survived by her devoted husband of 52 years, their children, grandchildren Kyanne, Naia, Tim, Xochi, and Betty; and her dogs Sadie and Xiao Bao (Little Bun). We thank the Jacksonville Mayo Clinic and Central Coast Hospice for their loving kindness and care during this devastating time. No services will be held per Silina’s request. In lieu of remembrances, please consider donating to the ALS Association, Mayo Clinic, or your favorite botanical garden in her memory.

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Events and Activities

By Theresa-Marie Wilson

The Rotary Club of Los Osos invites everyone to its annual Family Fun Fair on Grandparents Day, September 10at the South Bay Community Center and Los Osos Community Park. from 12- 4 p.m.

The kids play games to win tickets that they can exchange for bounce houses, face painting, prizes or a hot dog meal. Live music by Route 66 from 2-4 p.m. Hot dog, hamburger or vegetarian chili available for purchase. Raffle tickets available at the event to win prizes including a Central Coast Staycation package, two tickets to Eric Clapton’s Crossroads Guitar Festival and a Nintendo Switch special Zelda edition gaming console and many more. Need not be present to win. Entry is free, but there is a charge for some activities.



The Pride of Morro Bay, The White Caps Community Band is gearing up for their final concert of their summer series on the T-Pier. On Saturday, September 9 from 11 a.m. to 1p.m., the band will perform classical, jazz, and popular music.

The band is also very excited to be performing a brand new piece composed by their director Brenda Hascall entitled, “Giraffes in Space.”

“I’ve always been a big fan of sci-fi and thought it would be fun to compose a whimsical story about giraffes heading to the moon,” Hascall said. “The band has enjoyed the silliness of it all and has really made the experience a lot of fun.”

The concert is a free concert with donations graciously accepted.

Fans of all manner of 2-wheeled, motorized fun, and the exhilaration of riding waves, will have a chance to partake of an inaugural vehicle show coming to Cayucos in September.

The first ever “Moving Parts Vintage & Custom Motorcycle Show” is set for 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 23 on Ocean Front Avenue in Cayucos.

“The event will celebrate and merge the skate, surf and motorcycle cultures of the past and present,” according to a press notice sent out by the organizers.

The event will have a variety of vintage and custom motorcycles on display plus a swap meet and market. Moving Parts is free admission and will take over Ocean Front Avenue, which is the short narrow street that fronts Cayucos Beach.

Join author, activist, and host of the “Socialist Program” podcast, Brian Becker for the talk “McCarthyism Is Back, Together We Can Stop It Pro Peace and Equality.” Join the event on Saturday, Sept 16 at 7 p.m. at the Unitarian Universal Church, 2201 Lawton Ave, San Luis Obispo. Brian is the National Coordinator of the Answer Coalition and a leader of the Party for Socialism and Liberation. Becker has been a central organizer of



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the mass anti-war demonstrations that have taken place in Washington, D.C. over the past two decades. This event is sponsored by SLO Speaks who can be reached at slo-speaks@gmail.com (805) 317-6661.

The People Helping People annual rummage sale is Sept. 8 and 9. Friday is from 12 p.m. to 4 p.m. and Saturday, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the South Bay Community Center in Los Osos, 2180 Palisades Ave. The sale features tools, electronics, sporting goods, household goods, small furniture, and collectables.

People Helping People is a non-profit organization, distributing food to the needy every Wednesday morning, and loaning medical equipment at the office. They also raise money for The Noor Medical Center and 40 Prado Homeless Center.

One-third of proceeds will be donated to the Community Center, 1/3 will go to support People Helping People, and 1/3 will be donated at the 18th Annual Needs 'N Wishes Holiday Fundraiser in December.

For more information call The People Helping People office at 805 528 2626

The Harold J. Miossi Art Gallery at Cuesta College presents Scab Picker, a solo art exhibition of paintings by Molly Segal through Oct. 13.

According to Segal, her artwork delves into the conflict between dystopian entropy and optimistic desire, portrayed subtly yet intensely across landscapes and within the human soul. Nature and civilization intersect in both symbiosis and conflict, precariously sharing the atmosphere amidst existential risks. Surreal compositions depict clashes between decomposing marine, insect, or avian life and industrial landscapes such as oilfields and waste sites. Romantic embraces are juxtaposed with elements that evoke anxious recoiling, creating tension within the artworks.

For more information, call the gallery at 1.805.546.3202. Image by Molly Segal.



Join a team of State Park Interpreters a presentation about the wonders of the State Parks in San Luis Obispo County. Are you new to San Luis Obispo County and want to know what parks to visit? Lived here a while but looking for a refresher on what this county has to offer? Join this 1-hour webinar on Sept. 15 starting at 1 p.m. Hear a brief overview of each park, as well as insider tips on the best ways to responsibly recreate in these incredible public spaces. We'll highlight the amazing natural wonders of Pismo State Beach, explore the land and sea at Morro Bay State Park, discover the rich history of Hearst San Simeon State Park, and everywhere in between. Pre-register at https://bit.ly/3L7GDCr



The Morro Coast Audubon Society's September Virtual Community Zoom Program is "Exploring Biodiversity and Conservation in Ecuador: An Ecologist's Perspective" presented by Torrey Gage-Tomlinson, biologist and MCAS Board Member. It all takes place Monday, September 18, 2023 at 7 p.m.

Ecuador is one of Earth's most biodiverse countries—home to about 15% of the world's bird species—yet conservation remains a steep uphill battle. In this talk, Torrey will explore the issues of conservation, ecotourism, and scientific research in Ecuador, which he personally experienced while living, studying, and working as an ecologist there for nearly half a year. He will speak specifically about his research regarding the conservation and biology of IUCN-listed species in remote NW Ecuador, and display some of his best photos. Lastly, he'll briefly talk about his trip after Ecuador to the Pantanal and Atlantic Cloud Forest in Brazil. His hope is that he can illustrate how ecotourism and scientific research can go hand-in-hand to support conservation of biodiversity.

Torrey recently graduated from Cal Poly with a degree in biology and spent nearly half a year studying and researching as an ecologist in Ecuador. He has been an avid birder from a young age and has a world life list of over 2400 species.

Join Zoom Meeting at https://zoom.us/j/91552334991?pwd=akdDMTl2RytXUW4zWk5zeWhoTlNDdz09. Send questions to Wendy McKeown, programs chair: wendy@morrocoastaudubon.org. Photo by Torrey Gage-Tomlinson

Join the Cayucos Library, 310 B St. in for the following free events.

• Dilly Bean Canning: Thursday, September 14 at 10:30 a.m. Call (805) 995-3312 or visit slolibrary.org to register. Learn how to can a pint of pickled green beans with UCCE Master Food Preservers. All supplies will be provided.

• Booked for Lunch: September 8 at noon. Tell us about your favorite book you've read recently.

• Chair Yoga: Every Tuesday at 11am. A gentle mindful mobility practice for all skill levels.

• Toddler Storytime: Thursday, September 14 and 28 at 10:30 a.m. Join us for stories, songs, rhymes and finger-plays!

• Sensory Playtime: Thursday, September 21 at 10:30 a.m. Let your little one lead the way in this open-ended playtime! Babies and toddlers will use their five senses to explore our play stations.



The Morro Bay Art Association presents Inspiration and Brush Strokes Exhibits at Art Center Morro Bay on September 21 through November 6, 2023 at Art Center Morro Bay, 835 Main St, Morro Bay. The opening reception is Sunday, September 24 from 2- 4 p.m.

How does a work of art begin? What germinates the seed and how do we grow it? What motivates us to pick up a paintbrush or visualize a complex idea in a piece of glass? What drives us to bring something intangible – like the feelings of fear or sorrow - to that tangible place where other can experience it, too, and maybe even participate in the artist's own creative catharsis?

In the exhibit "Inspiration," artists were asked to take us on a personal journey in what we hope to be an eclectic exhibit that is open to all platforms, mediums and ideas. Additionally, Morro Bay Art Association hosts The Painter's Group from San Luis Obispo, and their compelling, juried exhibit Brushstrokes 2023. A variety of accepted mediums include acrylic, oil, mixed media, watercolor, pastel and digital, encompassing a wide range of subject matter, figurative, landscape and abstract.

September programs at the Morro Bay Library - 625 Harbor St, (805) 772-6394.

• Tenango Art – Wednesday, September 13, 3:30-5:30

Come to the Morro Bay Library to learn about tenango embroidery from presenter Luna before creating your own tenango inspired drawing! This program will be presented in Spanish and English.

• Teen Crafts & Snacks - Saturday, September 16, 2 – 4 p.m.

Come on down for snacks and art. This Saturday's craft will be felt poppy flower pins. For ages 11-18.

In honor of Hispanic Heritage Month and the return of the western monarch butterfly, Central Coast State Parks Association along with the Western Monarch Trail and in collaboration with the Latino Outreach Council will be



Events Continued on page 12

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Events From page 11

celebrating the Mariposa Festival on Broad Street between Higuera and Monterey on September 14 at the San Luis Farmers Market. The evening will host a colorful array of exciting and educational booths and artisans who will represent the best of the Central Coast, highlighting Hispanic Heritage and the magnificent western monarch butterfly! Bring the entire family and immerse yourselves into the magic of nature and culture on the Central Coast! The monarch butterfly is deeply connected to Hispanic folklore culture and is a symbol of dignity and resilience who is said to carry the souls of ancestors visiting from the afterlife.

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

• Keva Blocks & GeoMags - Friday, September 15, 2:30 - 4:30 p.m.

Come to the Los Osos Library and play with Keva Blocks! Build your own creations and have lots of fun.

• Jewelry Design & Wire Wrapping - Saturday, September 16, 10:30 a.m. - 12 p.m.

Join Li Li Clever as she teaches jewelry design and wire wrapping! This class is for adults. Only six can attend, so get your reservation in.

• Book Discussion - Thursday, September 21, 5:30 - 6:45 p.m.

We will be discussing "American Dirt" by Jeanine Cummins. No need to sign up ahead of time. Just show up! Call the library for details.

• Teen Crafternoon - Saturday, September 23, 2 - 4 p.m.

Come on down for snacks and art! This Saturday's craft will be felt poppy flower pins. All materials provided! For ages 11-18.


• Nintendo Switch - Friday, September 29, 2:30 - 4:30 p.m.

Master your gaming and fine motor skills with our Nintendo Switch! We will provide one Switch for up to 4 players at a time - feel free to bring your own too. Games include Mario Kart and Mario Party.

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.

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

Remembering Navy Veterans Lost During USN Hondo Point Trag-

By Judy Salamacha

On the heels of the widely popular tour of Maritime Museum San Diego's full-scale replica of Cabrillo's San Salvador, Morro Bay's Maritime Museum (MBMM) has a significantly more somber event scheduled for Sunday, September 10 at 11am. Past President Scott Mather collaborated with the San Luis Obispo's Veterans Museum to commemorate the 100th year anniversary of the USN Honda Point tragedy. "This centennial event is Morro Bay Maritime Museum's way of recognizing the important, transformative role the U.S. Navy played in Morro Bay's Maritime history."

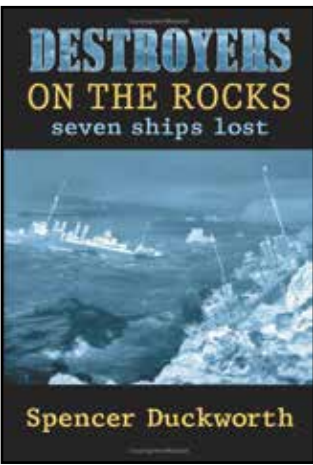
The United States Coast Guard (USCG) Morro Bay

Color Guard will open the ceremony, followed by a designated representative of the SLO Veterans Museum who will speak to details of the catastrophe that occurred September 8, 1923 and the importance of a memorial service to remember those twenty-three naval seamen lost at sea. MBMM representatives will actively participate in the program by reading the names and toll the bell of the USS Young for each of the twenty-three sailors who perished.

MBMM museum store carries a variety of maritime books for adults and children. Many of them are by local authors. One of the books available is by Spencer Duckworth titled "Destroyers On the Rocks: Seven Ships Lost." It is his 2005 illustrated version published by Cypress House. The backside book jacket states, "On the morning of 8 September 1923, the United States Navy's Destroyer Squadron 11 departed San Francisco and headed for San Diego. It was a typical summer day, and thirteen destroyers followed the squadron flagship, USS Delphy, southward. Though experienced officers commanded and navigated every ship, by the end of the day, the greatest peacetime disaster in U.S. Navy history would take place. Seven destroyers would strand on the rocky coast just north of the Pt. Arguello lighthouse. Despite the heroic rescue efforts of naval personnel and civilians, precious lives and millions of dollars would be lost. In the aftermath, a court of inquiry and a court martial would add shattered careers to the tally of ruin. This is the true story of tragic events that could have been prevented, and of the ambition, overweening pride, and inattention that made them inevitable."

However, not all will be somber. Also on the program is Dave Thomas, owner of the Morro Bay Shell Shop and the artifact bell off the downed USS Young. He has been invited to share stories remembered from the tales told by his father about the three families who received the salvage rights off the destroyed destroyers - the Thomas, Tyler, and Porter families of Morro Bay. I have heard many of Dave Thomas' stories and he has enough to fill several books and is one amazing storyteller.

The public is encouraged to attend the ceremony to be held on the back patio presentation area at the Morro Bay Maritime Museum, 1210 Embarcadero, Morro Bay, CA. Free parking is available behind the newly refurbished DSRV Avalon, the MBMM museum building, and the tugboat Alma that rescued the crew off the oil freighter Montebello in WWII. For more information contact Scott Mather at MBMM's (805) 225-5044 or www.morro-baymaritime.org



Local author Spencer Duckworth's book "Destroyers On the Rocks: Seven Ships Lost."



College Readiness 101

By, Robin Haas, M.A., Ed.

High School Junior Year Game Plan

Whether or not you have begun your college search, I am sorry to break the news but summer break is officially over. While you might be tempted to hit the beach after school, and who isn't considering where we live, now is the time to get organized and kick start your college search. The bottom line is that junior year of high school can be stressful between staying on top of homework, extracurricular activities, part time jobs, and keeping up with your friends. Your best bet to reduce that stress is to be proactive because, most likely, your life isn't going to slow down. It helps to have a plan when navigating unfamiliar territory such as figuring out where to go to college. So here we go.


First and foremost, school must be your priority. Your academic performance junior year will have a huge impact on where you get accepted. With over 80 percent of institutions being "test optional" or "test blind", succeeding in your coursework holds matters now more than ever. Take advantage of the most rigorous courses you can handle. Choose carefully when enrolling in honors or AP courses. Consider whether that class supports your future academic goals. If you're not sure what path you want to follow, take an aptitude, or career assessment such as YouScience to learn more about your interests and strengths. It is important that your course load reflects the potential major or program you plan to pursue. If you plan to study anything STEM related, honors or AP math and science are a must. Likewise, for a Liberal Arts course of study, succeeding in honors or AP English makes you a more attractive candidate.

Ask for help when you need it. Now is the time to begin thinking about which teachers you will want to ask for the letters of recommendation that you will need when filling out college applications. Get to know your teachers. Make sure to build your relationship with your school counselor. By revealing your positive attributes to your counselor, you will make it much easier for that person to write a stellar recommendation. Counselor and teacher recommendations are an important element of your future applications.

Decide whether or not you will take the ACT and/or the SAT. They are very different beasts, and you will probably discover that you score better on one of them. Once you've made that decision, make a test plan, study regularly, and register for exams on time. There are many free resources available online. Of course, there are also

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study guides available for purchase. If you choose to use a tutor, make sure that person or company has a good track record. Scoring well on standardized tests can provide colleges with one more piece of evidence to admit you. Be sure to take the PSAT in October as strong test scores may qualify you for the National Merit Scholarship as well as programs and recruitment for Black, Latinx, Indigenous, rural, first-generation and low-income students.

College applications can be stressful, which is why you do not want to leave all the work for senior year! Your job senior year should be to do really, really well in your classes. Ideally, college bound seniors have dedicated part of their summer to their applications. One way to begin your college search is by attending a local college fair and signing up for admission rep presentations at your high school. Take advantage of college guidebooks in your counseling office, then do more research on your own by exploring college websites. Next, create a preliminary list of colleges to visit, either in person or virtually using the results of your research. If possible, make a plan with your family to reserve some time to visit colleges throughout your junior year. Many colleges offer virtual tours through their websites.

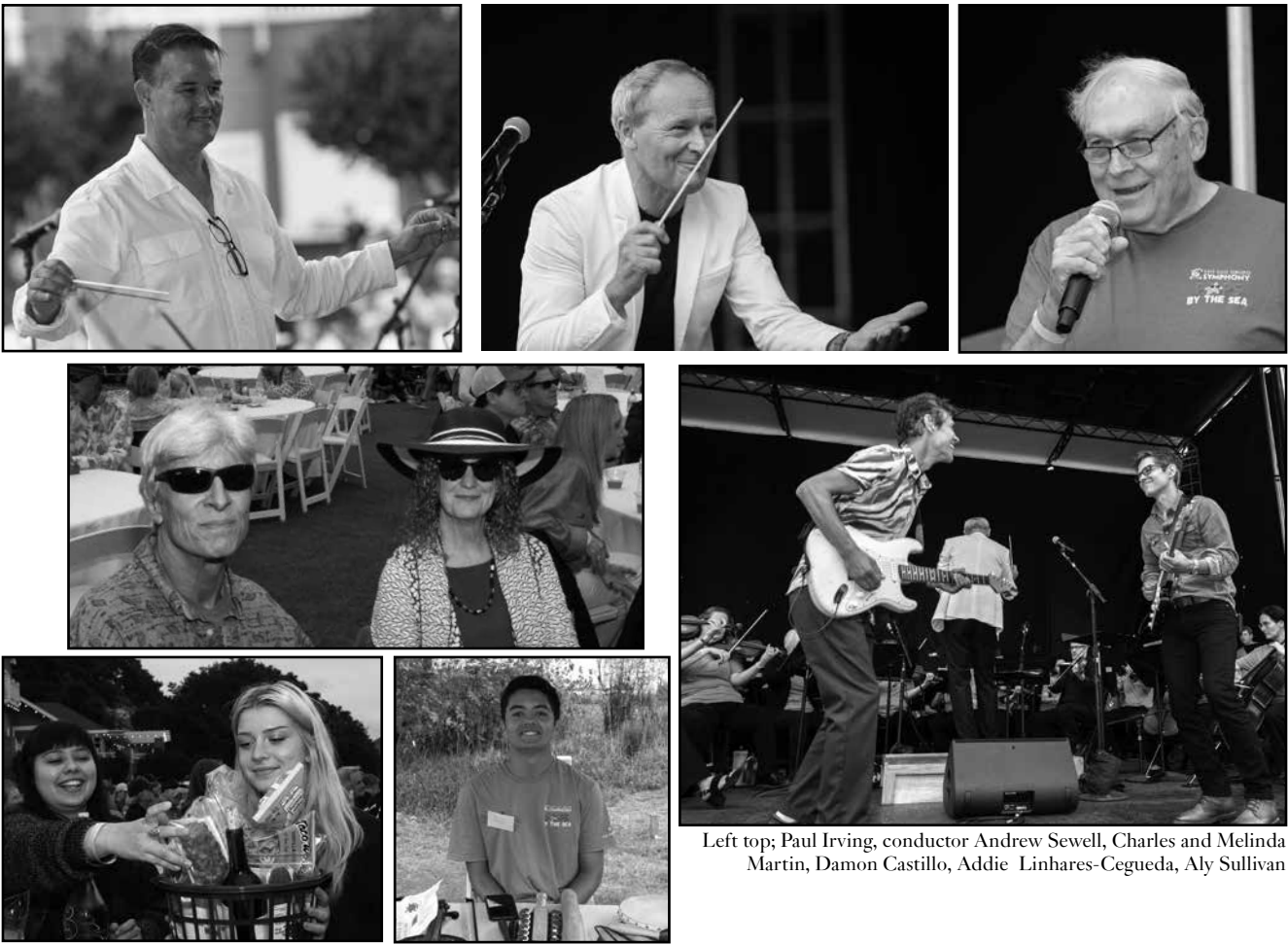
Are you a wrestler, water polo player, the star quarterback? If so, double check that your classes meet the NCAA Clearinghouse requirements. Take the time to complete online athletic recruitment forms for each college you are considering. You will typically find these forms by clicking on the “athletics” link on a college’s website. You will also want to create an athletic profile and recruitment videos when applicable.

Perhaps you are a musician, thespian, or visual artist. If that’s you, sign up for Performing and Visual Arts College Fairs. Most likely, you will need to create a portfolio and audition materials, so spend junior year creating pieces you are proud to showcase.

Extracurricular activities are an integral part of your application. Rather than joining ten new clubs, participate in activities that truly interest you and utilize your natural talents. Don’t be afraid to try something new. Take advantage of lists of volunteer opportunities provided by your school’s counseling office. Perhaps there is an adult in the community who would allow you to job shadow. Your activities provide college admissions officers with another opportunity to get to know you. That said, it’s never too early to start brainstorming ideas for college essays. The experiences you have in your extracurricular activities often provide the perfect subject matter for a great story that reveals your personality and best qualities.

Robin Haas is an independent educational consultant and the founder of Haas College Connections. She is a member of the Independent Educational Consultants Association (IECA) and earned a certificate in college admissions counseling, with distinction, from UCLA.

40th Annual Pops-By-The-Sea Concert



Left top; Paul Irving, conductor Andrew Sewell, Charles and Melinda Martin, Damon Castillo, Addie Linhares-Cegueda, Aly Sullivan

The San Luis Obispo Symphony hosted their 40th annual Pops-By-The-Sea fundraiser and concert over Labor Day weekend at Avila Beach Golf Resort. This year’s theme was celebrating the Central Coast, and the Symphony highlighted all things SLO! The guest artists for the event were the Damon Castillo Band and the entire KSBY Daybreak Team emceed the event.

One of the most anticipated features of POPS has been the baton auction. This year the Symphony gave the community a chance to nominate someone they believed deserves the chance to direct the orchestra calling the winner a “Central Coast Pops Star.” And the community did not disappoint! So many nominations came in because of course, the Central Coast is full of Pops Stars!

Nominated for his tireless work promoting the cultural vitality of the Central Coast, Paul Irving of My 805 Tix and BigBigSLO was ultimately selected. He volunteers with local nonprofit organizations including Hospice of SLO

County, Creek Lands Conservation, and Point San Luis Lighthouse organization. As his nominator said, “If the Central Coast needed an ambassador, it should be Paul. He is well known and beloved by thousands of lovers of local music, and his appreciation and care for environmental health is authentic and down-to-earth.”

The San Luis Obispo Symphony hopes to continue to host Pops concerts over Labor Day weekend for another 40 years - so catch them next Labor Day weekend at Avila Beach! If you would like to see the Symphony play before then you can catch their opening night concert at the Performing Arts Center San Luis Obispo on Saturday, October 7, 2023 beginning at 7:30 PM. If you are unable to attend the concert that evening come to the free No Ties Allowed Dress rehearsals that same day at the PAC starting at 11 a.m. No Ties Allowed rehearsals are meant for music lovers of all ages! To learn more about the Symphony and their upcoming season visit slosymphony.org today!

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Sports

Big Cross Country Meet Saturday



Morro Bay High's Otis Kelly competes in the 2022 Morro Bay Invitational Cross Country meet. The 2023 meet will be run this Saturday. Photo submitted

A new era begins Saturday for Morro Bay High's vaunted cross-country program.

New head coach, Jennifer Frere, who won a cross-country State Championship when she was a Pirate, will lead the teams into the new season at the Morro Bay Invitational, set for 9:30 a.m. Saturday, Sept. 9 at MBHS's football stadium.

The Varsity Girls' race starts at 9:30 a.m. with the Varsity Boys starting at 10.

Junior Varsity Girls will hear the starter pistol fire at 10:30 and JV Boys go at 11.

The Girls' Frosh race (for true freshmen and novice sophomores) goes at 11:30 and the boys' frosh race starts at noon.

The varsity and jayvee races are on the school's 3-mile course and the frosh run a 2-miler. After the high school kids are done, races for middle school runners are scheduled.

Over 30 schools from across California are expected to attend this traditional kick off to the cross-country season and take on one of the more challenging courses anywhere.

Both MBHS courses include lengthy runs through the sand of Morro Strand State Beach and circle the campus' sports fields, finishing with a sprint around the all-weather track before the cheering crowd.

Morro Bay's Cross-Country Program began in 1967 and is the most decorated of the school's many sports programs, which include at least three individual State Champions. Coach Frere, nee: Lacovara, is one of them along with 2-time State Champ Isaiah Festa.

Over the years, the Pirates and Lady Pirates have won numerous League Championships, had numerous League Champions, CIF winners and State medalists and the teams have also placed at State and CIF, though a State Team Championship remains a future goal. Morro Bay could be considered a regular CIF and State qualifier.



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Pickleball Tournament Sept. 9-10



Serious pickleballers can compete in a big tournament in Templeton this weekend and help raise money for senior nutrition.

Meals that Connect, the Senior Nutrition Program in San Luis Obispo County is holding “Pickles for a Purpose,” a pickleball tournament set for 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday-Sunday, Sept. 9-10 at the Templeton Tennis Ranch. The event will feature pickleball clinics sponsored by Kennedy Club Fitness and, while not a sport per se, a pickle tasting contest, too.

The tournament will have some celebrities, as Morro Bay State Assemblywoman Dawn Addis, Dist. 3 County Supervisor Dawn Ortiz-Legg and Atascadero Mayor Pro Tem Susan Funk have all entered the fray.

“I’m delighted to be part of the Pickleball Tournament supporting Meals That Connect,” Assemblywoman Addis said. “Each point scored in the competition contributes to a nutritious meal for a senior in need. The vital work of this Senior Nutrition Program not only provides sustenance but also nurtures a sense of community.”

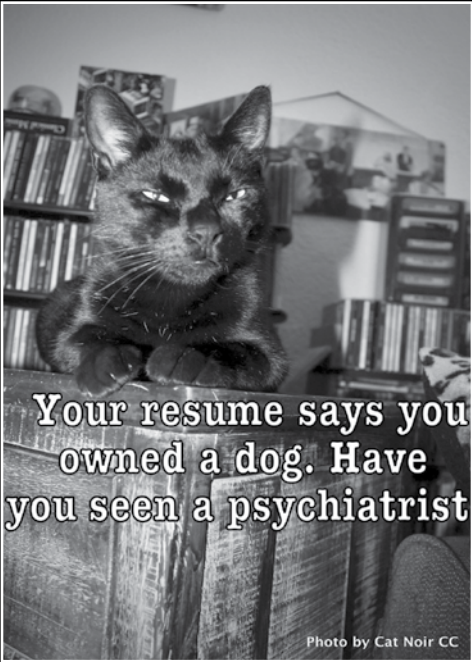
To volunteer, to enter the tasting contest or play in the tournament, see the website at: www.mealsthatconnect.org. Registration fee includes participation, a commemorative T-shirt, and helping care for senior citizens in SLO County.

Other sponsors include QuickPickleKit.com — a do it yourself pickling kit, Winby2 Pickleball, and Mechanics Bank.

Meals that Connect provides over 200,000 nutritious meals for seniors and education on nutrition to over 1,600 seniors annually. There are eight sites scattered throughout SLO County, the Morro Bay and South Bay Community Centers included, where seniors gather to dine together, make friends and socialize.

Volunteer drivers also deliver meals to homebound seniors, the new version of the old Meals on Wheels program, which also serve as a welfare check and more, for these folks.

The Templeton Tennis Ranch is located at 345 Championship Ln.



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Letters To The Editor

Speed Limit Suggestions



I will say I am very happy about the fact that they have change the speed limit from Palisades all the way to MDO to 35 miles an hour, but I am somewhat frustrated that they did not take care of the problem at the other end of town where there are three senior, mobile home parks with seniors, trying to get out onto LOVR with people doing in excess of 55 miles an hour what should be a 35 mile an hour zone.

Hopefully they can consider this area and change the speed limit to 35 miles an hour as you are entering town and continue to MDO with that speed limit. I would also like them to consider S. Bay Blvd. to either be 35 to 40 miles an hour except for where the school is located to go from 25 to 55 miles an hour on the road with many tourist bicycles attractions. It's not a good idea if it says 55 people will be doing 65. I know that for a fact we need to lower the speed limits all around town in and out of town and then enforce it.

I don't know who else to tell this to so I'm telling it to you from a concerned citizen who lives in the senior citizen park Sea Oaks. Thank you for listening.

*Paula Harrill
Los Osos*

A Visitor to Morro Bay

My wife and I just returned from Morro Bay on Friday, having stayed Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday at the Best Western - San Marcos. Good value. Three years ago, Mgr. Stacey gave me an aeonium plant cutting to take home, which was, of course, promptly stolen. However, she had earlier told me about the Garden Gallery down the street, and the purple one I bought two years ago is still alive and has given us 10 new flower heads in this 100°+ Bakersfield heat. I bought four more this past week, to replace the stolen green one.

My wife spent \$40 at the Shell Shop for some wind chimes for the bedroom. She loves propping her herself up on the hotel bed and surf new TV channels with the remote, while I go to the “T” piers with my 40” crab net (the South pier is the best). I use rubber bands and chicken legs for bait. Finally, there are baby crabs! In three days, I probably caught and released 80-90 tiny 2” ones and 5-6 that were 3-4”. I hope they live to grow and avoid being eaten, along with any new Pismo clam recruits.

When we go to Morro Bay and I'm away from the house, I can get some important things taken care of. ASAP Reprographics helped me get some valuable pictures out of my Android cellphone and onto some 4x6, 5x7, and 8x10” copies. To say thanks, I bought a lot of extra stuff that I will eventually use, someday.

I can find Albertson's walking backwards, with my hands tied behind my back, in the dark. Pam-I-Am in their Starbucks is amazing. I wouldn't be surprised if she was a member of Mensa.

Since Radio Shack moved out of Bakersfield, I always hit Coast Electronics in PR and MB. I get my digital AM/FM stereo headphones that are outstanding for \$60. In three years I have always brought some RS headphones back home, and now have eight new-in-box ones now that probably will last the rest of my 68 year-old life, but one never knows, so I always buy extras. Two years ago, I finally got an extension cord for my car's video camera, after having it on my to-do list for a long time. Coast Electronics saved the day, again. Sweet.



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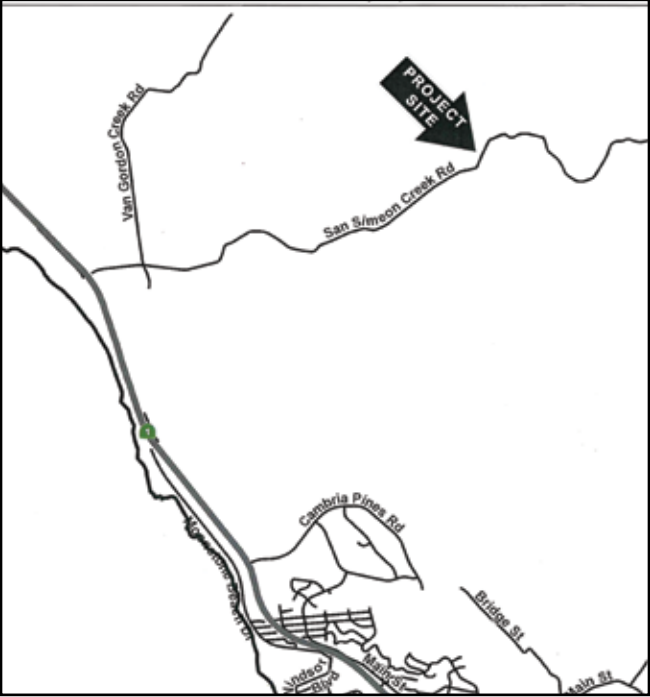
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Kevin says,
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KEVIN O'CONNOR, President



San Simeon Creek Road will get much needed repairs following recent contracts awarded by the County Board of Supervisors.

The storms led to the area being declared a disaster area for more than one storm event, and with a recent declaration by Supervisors that said the emergency was now over, work has begun on damage repairs under the Federal Emergency management Agency (FEMA's) so-called "Category C" road repairs. "Construction of Category C repair projects," McElveny said, "require bid advertisement and procurement in accordance with the County's Purchasing Policy. Today's action authorizes this Project to be completed and that the contract documents include provisions for the contractors to meet the FEMA reporting requirements, which will provide the County with the best opportunity for reimbursement of storm damage repair costs by FEMA."

San Simeon Creek Road saw the collapse of some 175 feet of roadway, located at Mile Post 2.542, McElveny's report said. "This Project will reconstruct the shoulder and creek embankment through the installation of rock slope protection and reconstruction of the road."

The amount for the San Simeon Creek Road repairs is low enough that the County can pay for them through its existing roads budget, but doing it through FEMA means it will be reimbursed, for most of the costs.

"Public Works," McElveny said, "anticipates reimbursement of project costs at a maximum of 75% from FEMA and 18.75% from Cal OES [Office of Emergency Services], for a total potential reimbursement of 93.75%

of eligible expenditures. Reimbursement revenue will be realized as Public Works works through project obligation and disaster claims processing."

The other contract Supervisors let involves repairing levees on a major South County Creek.

The Arroyo Grande Creek emergency Capacity restoration Project contract was awarded to Raminha Construcion Inc., of Atascadero in the amount of \$1.71 million. The County added \$98,000 in contingencies and the total job budget comes to \$1.81 million, according to a report from Angela Ford, the County's Water Resources Engineer.

A few budget adjustments had to be made to the project, including appropriating some \$1.23 million in "unanticipated revenue" that came to SLO County via the State Budget and the Department of Water Resources. And approve a \$1.81 million "cash flow loan" from an emergency repair account for the flood district where the levee break happened.

The County didn't get much interest in the job as Raminha was the only bid the County got. The company's base bid was \$1.66 million and the County asked for two additional bids on added scopes of work, which added \$92,600 and \$69,800 respectively. A third addition, which Raminha bid at \$69,800 was not included by the County.

The two included additions were in the area downstream of the Union Pacific Railroad and near the intersection of Los Berros Road and Century Lane respectively. The third addition was located within the railroad's right-of-way and the report said the County was still negotiating access with the railroad. Once that is secured, the additional work will likely be added to the contract.

The creek channel that was damaged runs in an arc at the edge of the community of Oceano between Willow Street and Hwy 1 according to a County map. It's an area that's been prone to flooding for many years.

Angela Ford 's report said, "based on the progress of the discussions with Union Pacific, District staff feels that authorization to work within the railroad right-of-way is likely; therefore, today's action would award a contract for the Base Bid and all three Additive Bid Items. If authorization is not received, Additive Bid Item #3 of the contract would not be authorized."

The levee broke because it kept on raining last January. "On Jan. 9, 2023," the report said, "during severe winter storms that hit California and San Luis Obispo County, and requiring an advance emergency evacuation order, the AG Creek channel filled beyond capacity and the levee breached, causing extensive flooding, and stranding many local residents."

Like other areas in the county, heavy rains in March mean a near rep[re]at of January's disaster.

"On March 9, 2023," Ford's report said, "the AG Creek channel again experienced high storm flows and another evacuation order was issued. The levee held, but additional damages occurred to the already weakened levee."

The County got some of the levee repaired in between

storms.

"While temporary measures and some permanent repairs were completed during and between storms, accumulated sediment and storm debris has reduced the capacity of the channel and the levee is structurally compromised due to piping and erosion damage."

The County came up with a 2-phased project. Phase-1 involves removing 11,000 cubic yards of accumulated sediment and storm deposited debris "to increase the flow capacity of the channel, particularly downstream of the Union Pacific Railroad Bridge." A cubic yard is the equivalent to a normal-sized garbage dumpster.

Phase-2, the report said, "will consist of levee repairs from damages caused by overtopping and seepage, including installation of turf reinforcement mat on the landside slopes of the south levee to restore as-built conditions and installation of hydraulic barriers in various portions of the compromised levee to protect against seepage and prevent further erosion. We will return to the Board to award the Phase 2 contract after bids are received."

So Raminha's contract is apparently just the Phase-1 work. These repairs are under FEMA's Category A and D, the report said, which means the costs are reimbursable. But they're looking someplace else for the money this time.

"Staff submitted a 'Letter of Interest' to the Natural Resource Conservation Service [NRCS] requesting funding via the Emergency Watershed Protection program. Voluntary purchase and removal of a vulnerable home from the floodplain appears to be an eligible project if use of the property provides a flood protection benefit to other areas.

"NRCS staff is currently completing a damage survey report as a first step in the program process. The goal would be to partner with a voluntary landowner to complete the project as soon as possible."

Also, the County "submitted a Notice of Interest for the Hazard Mitigation Assistance Program [HMGP] for advance assistance grant funding to evaluate alternatives for flood easements and/or other off-creek flood protection measures. California Office of Emergency Services [Cal OES] staff determined that the project was eligible under the HMGP and District staff submitted a full application prior to the HMGP's Aug. 4, 2023 deadline."

But, the County said, this program is very impacted and competitive "due to the extent of storm impacts throughout California and specific program priorities, and a different grant funding program may need to be pursued in the future for this effort."

Like San Simeon Creek Road, the County expects to be reimbursed 75% from FEMA and 18.75% from Cal-OES. And the DWR grant of \$1.23 million that was included in the State Budget, "is anticipated to cover local share of expenditures not covered by FEMA and Cal OES."

The County is in a hurry to get this project done and the creek levee system made whole again before this winter, which could be another wet year if the predicted El Niño weather pattern returns.

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News

TOT Audit From page 1

goes to its Business Improvement District or CBID. The CBID taxes are split 50:50 with the local town where they were collected. Each town has an advisory board appointed by County Supervisors that oversee the spending of its share of the money, mostly supporting special events, beautification projects and other uses that benefit the community overall and the lodging industry in particular.

The other half goes to the County CBID board and is used to promote only the unincorporated towns — Cayucos, Cambria, Templeton, Santa Margarita, San Miguel, Oceano, Nipomo and the areas in between.

A look at the County GIS Map, which tracks numerous demographic information sets, shows the location of every lodging business in the County areas. Zooming in on Cambria and Cayucos shows just how many vacation rentals are located in each and the distribution throughout the communities. (See: https://gis.slocounty.ca.gov/Html5Viewer/Index.html?configBase=https://gis.slocounty.ca.gov/Geocortex/Essentials/REST/sites/PL_LandUseView/viewers/PL_LandUseView/virtualdirectory/Resources/Config/Default and click on the “Layers” button at the bottom left corner to view the individual maps.)

There is also a 1.5% tax on a room night that goes to the Tourism Marketing District or TMD. That County-wide agency uses it to promote the County as a whole (city lodging businesses also pay into this).

According to Lekvold’s report, County TOT in 2022 was \$17.6 million. TMD taxes came to \$2.93 million and the CBID’s take was \$3.16 million.

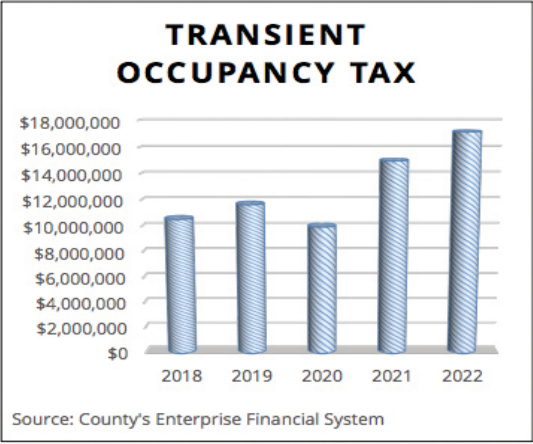
So overall, the County is looking for lodging businesses to collect and remit 12.5% of a room rate (\$12.50 for a room that cost \$100). As one might expect, the taxes each would owe can vary widely by the type of lodging — i.e. major resort vs. little B&B; as well as by the actual costs for a room or campsite.

Still the audit, which covered from Jan. 1, 2019 through Dec. 31, 2022, according to Lekvold’s report, didn’t catch a lot of bad mistakes.

She told Estero Bay News that they regularly audit TOT receipts but had ramped it down during the COVID-19 pandemic.

“Of the six establishments audited,” Lekvold said, “three establishments were determined to owe a total of \$5,931 in TOT, TMD, CBID, penalties, and interest to the County. One establishment overpaid \$1,108 in TOT and TMD and was issued a refund.”

The rate of audited properties with problems or “discrepancies” — three of six — seems high at 50%, but Lekvold said it isn’t. “It should be noted that the high rate



This chart from the County’s 2021-22 Comprehensive Financial Report shows the transient occupancy revenues for SLO County, with the vertical axis in millions of dollars and the corresponding calendar years running horizontally. The numbers reflect an overall upward trend for County TOT since 2018 with the exception of a significant dip in revenues in 2020, during the height of the Coronavirus Pandemic.

of audits with technical findings [50%] are not believed to correlate to revenues collected across the TOT program. Based on ACTTC’s audit experience, higher rates of technical (but small dollar) audit findings can be common with smaller operators, while larger operators generating most of the County’s TOT revenue are found to have a very low incidence of findings (the 20 largest establishments produce over 80% of TOT revenue).”

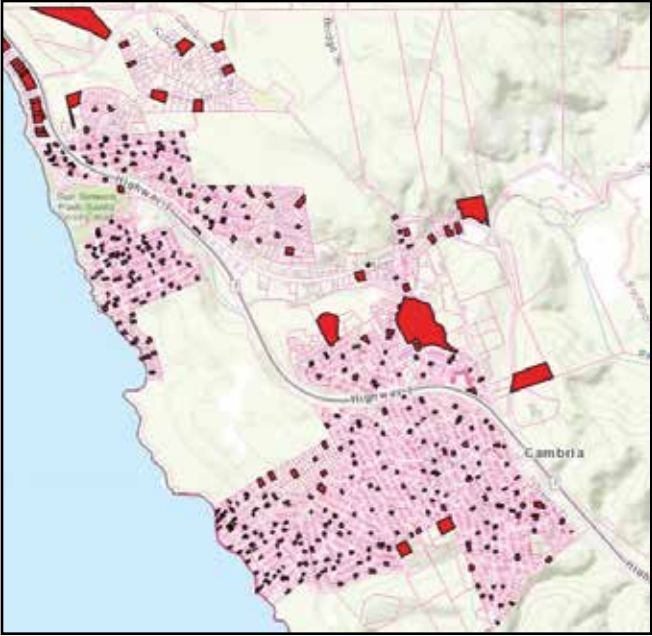
The six properties that were audited for this report were not named, which Lekvold said was the law.

“For reasons of business confidentiality,” she told EBN, “we’re careful not to provide evidence in public reports that could lead to particular businesses being identified.”

Knowing how much taxes a particular property collects, could be extrapolated out to reach an educated guess on the annual gross revenues from that place, which business people would tend to want kept on the QT.

According to a summary with Lekvold’s report the biggest of the audited properties had gross revenues of over \$7.8 million and the audit shoed zero discrepancies, so they accounted for every penny of revenues.

The next largest reported \$4.34 million in revenues but the County counted \$4.75 million, a difference of \$26,400 in gross receipts, about 0.6% off. That equated to \$4,900 short in overall TOT paid. Another property was off by \$775 in its revenue reports (gross of over \$495,000) and owed \$117 in TOT.



This map, taken from the County Planning Department’s GIS map, shows the various lodging businesses — mostly vacation rentals — scattered around Cambria that are registered with SLO County.

Another property that only reported \$6,600 in revenues actually had over \$13,600 and owed the County over \$870.

And the property that paid too much, had reported gross revenues of \$164,000 but the audit pegged it at \$154,300 a difference of \$10,500. That property is the one that got a \$1,100 rebate.

Can properties that have a large discrepancy be subject to extra scrutiny in the future? “Correct,” Lekvold said, “the ordinance indicates that the County has the right to inspect the records at all reasonable times.”

The County’s ordinance mostly treats these matters as a civil issue and not necessarily a criminal one. However, Lekvold said the County law gives them that option.

“Yes,” she said, “there are potential criminal penalties. [Please see Ch. 3.08.140 Violations- Misdemeanor at http://slocounty-ca.elaws.us/code/cc_title3_ch3.08_sec3.08.140.] Historically, though, we’re unaware of any instances in our County of criminal charges due to under-reporting TOT.

“Thankfully, we have always been able to resolve any issues directly with the business through our normal processes.”

San Salvador From page 1

itors would marvel at the riggings of the masts so far above us and ponder at a crews’ control to climb such heights in all kinds of weather. Cabrillo was recognized by most who visited - hungry for more details the docents would supply after crossing the plank to venture back into the year 1542. MMSD had prepared the vessel for visitors to experience a glimpse of life at sea in times when the only people they might have encountered were the Native Americans – in Estero Bay that would have been the Salinan Tribe.

Morro Bay Maritime Museum was the host to welcome back the San Salvador. I’m proud to say our marshalled crew of over 75 community volunteers was well prepped by MMSD to answer visitor questions and then allow them their space and time to experience the wonders of Cabrillo’s Spanish galleon. From 10 a.m. till 5:30 p.m. every day, we strived to please our guests accommodating everyone who had a ticket, many of them sold last minute at our gate or at the museum, so all might have their time with the magical San Salvador. We labored to be flexible and understanding. Most visitors seemed to understand our challenges, especially when the four school tours would arrive and get us behind. Our guests – 99% of them - were patient and lovely to serve. We rewarded them with more stories and our sincere appreciation. Once off the Spanish galleon, they would wave goodbye thanking us for their chance to journey back in time. Many walked across the street to explore MBMM. Some had visited before but not since 2020. They were amazed that so much had been

added to the exhibits. Donations demonstrated their thanks for the family friendly pricing of their San Salvador tickets. They bought memorial bricks and maritime treasures. Twice we had to reorder tour t-shirts. Our maritime books and children’s merchandise flew out the door - all to help MBMM continue to grow into the future.

MBMM’s Bonnie Jones, Morro Bay’s current Citizen of the Year, provided three quotes she heard from guests:

“The tour was so much more wonderful than I imagined. I felt like I was back in the 1500’s.”

“I felt so emotional going through the tour. Had tears in my eyes. I want to know more about those years.”

And our favorite that prompted an on-air giggle from KVEC’s early morning news commentator Andy Morris came from an 8-year-old boy, “This was the best day at my Nanas. I want to do it again.”

Many from the business community thanked us for their late summer boost in business. Troy Leage, Harbor Hut Restaurant owner, personally walked to the museum and to the ticketing area and thanked us and encouraged more maritime activities in the future. Some are due soon. MBMM’s Memorial Salute to the Hondo Disaster is September 10, Rock the Waterfront at MBYC is October 11 and Morro Bay Maritime Free Family Fun Day is October 14 beginning at 10am right after Rotary’s Ducky Derby Challenge and kicked off by John Lindsey’s launch of a weather balloon. www.morrobaymaritime.org.

Larry Newland, MBMM’s founding board president,

was twice responsible for attracting the San Salvador to Morro Bay. Back in 2015 he was visiting MMSD and met Susan Sirota, VP of MMSD and “first mate” to Captain Dr. Ray Ashley. Larry had a dream to site a maritime museum on the Central Coast. Dr. Ashley, also president of MMSD, had a dream to build Cabrillo’s replica, sail the 1542 mission to discover a route to the Far East, and mostly provide a living history artifact representing Californians’ origin

San Salvador Continued on page 19



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Marine Sanctuary From page 1

that the agency put out and not set in stone yet, as the agency starts taking public comments.

They picked the new boundaries, according to NOAA because it would be, “most manageable while simultaneously maximizing the principal resource protection purposes for the sanctuary. The preferred boundary achieves several objectives:

- Allows NOAA to focus its management on significant areas and natural resources, including offshore features like the Santa Lucia Bank and Rodriguez Seamount, in to shore to include kelp forests, sandy and rocky reefs and other areas;
- Allows a focus on areas historically important to the Chumash Tribe and natural resources important to their heritage;
- Removes an area where a large number of subsea electrical transmission cables from offshore wind leases to the Morro Bay area that would likely be unprecedented in a national marine sanctuary; and,
- It ameliorates concerns raised by several bands of the Salinan Tribe regarding naming the sanctuary “Chumash” in that area which they identify as being part of their ancestral homeland.

The Salinans and Chumash have long been in dispute over the Morro Bay and Cayucos Coasts, with each claiming it as an ancestral home. The Chumash down in Santa Ynez are the officially recognized Chumash Tribe by the federal government.

One issue not addressed by NOAA’s fact sheet is that the name “Chumash” is trademarked by the Chumash Tribe down in Santa Ynez that owns a casino/resort.

The Sanctuary’s name has apparently been controversial from the start.

“The sanctuary nomination from July 2015 that ONMS [Office of National Marine Sanctuaries] accepted into the inventory proposed calling the new sanctuary “Chumash Heritage.” When NOAA initiated the designation process in November 2021, it asked for public input on many considerations, including what the new sanctuary should be named.

“Public comments received at that time were overwhelming in favor of maintaining the proposed name, although other Indigenous communities in the broader region have objected to the name.”

NOAA has apparently taken a stand. “With the publication of the draft designation documents,” the agency said, “NOAA is proposing to designate the area identified in the Agency-Preferred Alternative as a national marine sanctuary named ‘Chumash Heritage.’ Members of the public are welcome to comment on the name and all other elements of the proposed sanctuary designation.”

Cutting Morro Bay and Cayucos out of the designation is apparently because of the proposed wind farms, which are planning to be sited on about 376 square miles of ocean, up to 30-miles offshore, some 57 miles northwest of Morro Bay.

In addition to the massive turbines, each will have to have a buried power cable to bring the power in, combining at floating substations that will be located somewhere between the wind area and Morro Bay, where the power is

expect to come ashore and connect to the state power grid at the closed Morro Bay Power Plant.

There are three companies that won lease sales last December and they are now studying the environmental impacts under the National Environmental Protection Act or NEPA.

NOAA has apparently decided that such structures and activities like trenching for the wires, don’t fit with the conservation mission of Marine Sanctuaries.

Also, the sanctuary program has traditionally avoided areas with sewage discharges, as was done with the boundaries of the Monterey Bay NMS that cut out a bid patch off San Francisco and its ocean outfall.

Both Morro Bay and Cayucos recently completed new treatment plants and treat their wastewater to a tertiary level before it’s discharged.

Morro Bay is working on recycling that discharged, highly treated wastewater and Cayucos hopes someday to return its treated wastewater directly into Whale Rock Reservoir, where all of Cayucos’ drinking water is stored.

But the wind farms are a special problem. “The Agency-Preferred Alternative for potential designation as a national marine sanctuary excludes the geographical overlap of the Morro Bay Wind Energy Area,” NOAA said. “This proposed boundary excludes a wide area [area between the proposed sanctuary and Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary] in which subsea electrical transmission cables and floating offshore substation(s) could be installed to connect the Morro Bay Wind Energy Area to the electrical power grid at Morro Bay.”

Another federal agency, Bureau of Ocean Energy Management or BOEM “estimates there could be up to 30 cables, and NOAA is concerned this may present a level of impact that would likely be unprecedented in a national marine sanctuary.”

NOAA pledged to continue to participate in BOEM’s wind farm planning but the State is on the move too. “Separate from the Morro Bay Wind Energy Area,” NOAA said, “the State of California is reviewing separate potential offshore wind proposals within the state waters of the proposed boundaries for Chumash Heritage NMS.” State waters are from shore out 3 miles, with federal waters going form 3 miles out to 200 miles offshore.

Locally, Estero Bay News sent inquiries to several local people including all of the city council members asking their reaction to having Morro Bay excluded from the sanctuary.

Dist. 2 County Supervisor Bruce Gibson, who has been a supporter of the CHNMS since the start said, “I’m excited to see the proposed designation published. This is a huge win for our coast and the protection of so many important resources.”

He too is concerned about the boundary change. “The gap in the sanctuary along the SLO County North Coast is significant and should be addressed, as these waters are equally worthy of this protection. I understand the issues surrounding offshore wind that were part of the published proposal and look forward to working with agencies, elected officials and other stakeholders to find solutions to closing the gap and protecting the entire SLO County coastline.”

Former City Councilwoman and environmental advocate, Betty Winholtz, was disappointed at the change. “I am surprised that the Harmony to Hazard Coast is carved out of the proposed Sanctuary. Residents of the North Coast have consistently supported a Sanctuary for the protection of our fishing grounds and prevention of offshore oil development. I think the carve out demonstrates the long arm of the Governor in influencing policy at the federal level.”

Local commercial fishermen have never supported the sanctuary designation. “We MBCFO [Commercial Fishermen’s Organization] are not happy at all as we see the powers that be cut up the ocean area around us for use by the government or the foreign governments that have leased our waters,” Morro Bay fisherman Jeremiah O’Brien told EBN. “The cables are not compatible with sanctuaries, so they just move over, no problem, it is sure they will achieve their agenda no matter what stands in their way.

“The move was to accommodate offshore wind, not fishing efforts. The Sanctuary was a problem that we have been addressing for many years now and still consider it a problem but not near the destructiveness of offshore wind

to the fishing industry.”

NOAA has begun a public comment period on the proposed “rulemaking” the draft environmental impact statement, and the draft management plan. The agency wants comments directed at:

- Whether NOAA should move forward with the Agency-Preferred Alternative, the No Action Alternative, or one of the other boundary alternatives described in the draft environmental impact statement?;
- The proposed terms of designation and proposed regulations for the sanctuary; and,
- The proposed goals, strategies, and activities in the draft management plan.”

“NOAA will consider these comments when preparing the final environmental impact statement, final management plan, and final rule to designate the sanctuary.”

As of now, the Chumash Heritage NMS has already been accepted into NOAA’s “inventory,” which means the various requirements as part of the nomination process have been completed.

Once a spot is in the inventory, it’s up to the Director of the Office of National Marine Sanctuaries to decide whether to officially “designate” the sanctuary, a decision that will invariably be made by or at least get the blessing of the President. But that too requires a process.

“Designation,” reads the NOAA website, “occurs as a separate process that by law, is highly public and participatory and often takes several years to complete.”

However, according to NOAA, “A final action on designation is expected in the middle of 2024.”

NOAA is taking public comments on the sanctuary until Oct. 15. See: <https://www.regulations.gov> and type — NOAA-NOS-2021-0080 — into the search window to get to the right page.

Information on upcoming meetings is available online at: <https://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/chumash-heritage>.

New Owners From page 1

moter with shows at various county venues under the name Good Medicine Presents. Todd and Korie live in Cayucos and their kids attend the Wishing Well School in Los Osos. Matty is a SLO resident who transplanted from New Jersey to attend Cal Poly years ago.

“Having been in San Luis County since 1995,” Todd said, “my wife and I have witnessed a lot of evolution, a lot of growth within the entire county. Los Osos has a genuine, authentic feel to it. We’ve definitely been drawn to this area. While it’s been very interesting having time with our kids in the community, we also kind of dreamed about having a business that we could explore within Los Osos. It was out in the ethos for us.”

Although the 1.5-acre property, the sale of which also included a beer and wine liquor license and an established restaurant, seems like an ideal place to unite years of experience and interests, but, for now, the vision for the space is flexible.


“It’s uncertain, we don’t know,” Todd said. “There are certain things in logistics that we have to work out. Out of the gates, our primary goal is to make sure that we’re competent in the thing that we have in front of us, which is the restaurant,” Todd said. “We would also like to explore some new food programming into lunch and dinner, and then tackle the mid property so that it can kind of integrate and flow together. Celia had a nice music program back a couple of years ago where she had singer-songwriters out on her patio. I feel confident that we’ll explore those types of things.”

Right now, plans are at an enviable stage for any business owner, an open space to build community with or into. Another idea on the table is to keep the outdoor area somewhat of a kid friendly picnic spot.


“You can have a drink, you can have your coffee, you can have food, but then you can also bring your kids in after the soccer game or after the baseball game,” Todd said. “We’re going to re-vegetate with plants and, to a certain degree, have a picnic atmosphere, something where the community knows that there’s space for the kids to move in, for everybody to stretch out.

“We will certainly bring along new ideas down the road and try new things. We just don’t have anything set in stone at this stage. It’s a large location we intend to take ad-

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News

vantage of the beautiful outdoor setting. We would love it to be a community resource for maybe wedding receptions, birthday parties and things of that niche.”

Many readers will remember the side property as the former Sage Ecological Nursery and that it is home to a very large, old oak tree right in middle of ideal seating or parking spaces. Have no fear dendrophiles, the beautiful tree will remain a stalwart standout.

“It’s fairly pivotal,” Todd said. “It’s interesting because it’s certainly not ideal in its location in the middle of the parking lot, but it’s beautiful. We wouldn’t replace it in our lifetime; we will definitely orchestrate our plans around the big oak tree.”

Former restaurant owner, Celia Alfievic, operated the popular eatery for the past 18 years after purchasing what was then the Garden Café in 2005. She sold the restaurant and plans to remain in the food industry making and selling her popular apricot jam at area farmers markets and enjoying her retirement years with extended family.

“I want to thank the community for their support,” Celia said in a previous interview with Estero Bay News. “I want to thank them for constantly allowing us in their lives and letting us try to be a part of their day. I want to say thank you for that, and for allowing me to have a job for 18 years, right down the street from my house.”

Celia’s is located at 1188 Los Osos Valley Road. They are open seven days a week Monday through Thursday 8 a.m. to 2 p.m., Friday from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. and again from 5 to 8 p.m., Saturday 7:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. and again from 5 to 8 p.m. and Sunday from 7:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. They can be reached at 805-528-5711

San Salvador From page 17

story. It took Larry more than 20-years to fulfill his dream. It took Dr. Ashley over 10 years to research, fund, and build the San Salvador.

Cabrillo’s San Salvador Pacific Heritage Tour 2016 was set to launch with ports in place when Larry met Susan. “Where is Morro Bay?” he asked. She admitted when hosted at August’s Chamber of Commerce breakfast meeting that she had literally forgotten about Morro Bay. Once Larry told her of Morro Bay’s strong Central Valley visitor attraction, our harbor was added to the tour. Larry shared with me when Dr. Ashley and Susan met with former City Manager David Buckingham, he negotiated two weekends and thus, a 10-day tour agreement was established.

Please, understand, Morro Bay supporters that MMSD does not need to tour the San Salvador out of San Diego Bay, but Larry convinced them to return in 2023. As he offered his commentary about the ship to our 2023 guests, Larry would tell everyone that in 2016 MMSD shared revenue from tour ticket sales and with an additional small capital campaign, the donations from museum supporters, including community school children over the years - people who came out to visit the DSRV Avalon and tugboat Almain an adjacent parking lot – plus a significant donation by John and Joan Solu, allocated to MBMM through their efforts leading the Morro Bay Harbor Festival, we had a museum grand opening by 2017. And since the board of directors had incurred no debt, it voted to provide the community museum visits free to our generous community.

Flash forward to 2023! MMSD returns for 10 days offering tours of the San Salvador. Again, MBMM shared ticket sales revenue knowing MBMM had the green light from City of Morro Bay to expand its footprint at 1210 Embarcadero. And truth be told Larry made the connection, but it took the leadership of Bonnie Jones to rally the board to be ready even when they sailed into Morro Bay Harbor two days earlier.

Why did they return to Morro Bay in 2023? Susan Sirota, VP-Maritime Museum San Diego, said to me, “Because you (MBMM) asked.” I’m paraphrasing her comments during the two weeks we spent together. “Morro Bay was originally our sole destination on the San Salvador Pacific Heritage Tour 2023 until we added Spanish Days in Santa Barbara. Your community is so welcoming to us, and we wanted to continue supporting the expansion of your maritime museum. We love Morro Bay because you get it. Your community and visitors appreciate why we built



Susan Sirota, VP-Maritime Museum San Diego, and Captain/Dr. Ray Ashley, president of MMSD stand watch over MMSD’s San Salvador crew when they arrived and tied-up to Morro Bay’s South T Pier dock on August 8. More than 10,000 visitors toured for 10-days plus a respite from possible weather conditions due to Hurricane Hilary extended their stay from August 8-15, 2023. Photo by Judy Salamacha

the San Salvador - to share our California origin story with whoever would listen. In San Diego we are just another entertainment tour to visit.”

She said that she and Dr. Ashley are sincerely pleased with the partnership established with MBMM and the City of Morro Bay.



Watercolorist David J. Rogers collaborated with Morro Bay Maritime Museum to create the composite painting based on the 2016 greeting of the Salinan Tribe in native dress and tule boats crafted specifically for the occasion. The original painting can be viewed at their gallery at Morro Bay Blvd. and Monterey in Morro Bay. Photo by Judy Salamacha

And with that endorsement allow me to thank our community and visitors for showing up. A few well-earned extra thanks go to all MBMM Board of Directors for acting as gracious hosts with a shout-out to Rich Pescatore and his mega-community of volunteers; Chris Vaile and Cathy Ryan for running the museum store on the pier and at the museum, James Costanza endurance at dockside ticket sales and Kendall Welsh for coordinating an amazing thank you Paella Party for the contributors who have kept the lights on and to David & Peggy Rogers for their collaborative beneficial painting of San Salvadors’s arrival in 2016. Mega appreciation for the Salinan Tribal members joining us on the dock to tell their native story. Thanks to our waterfront restaurants for welcoming our guests and crew

from the San Salvador, including Top Dog Coffee, daily on the T-Pier, and French Café providing early morning coffee and pastries. Hats off to our local school personnel, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Newcomers, Soroptimists, MB Seniors and Visalia Seniors for bringing out groups to experience history first-hand. Thanks to Mayor Wixom and MB Council members, our Harbor Department and Harbor Advisory Board. Many thanks to Visit Morro Bay for approving a grant for MBMM to purchase media and complement our media buys with their out-of-area contacts. Media support was critical from Estero Bay News, American General Media SLO & Santa Maria, including KVEC’s Dave Congalton and Andy Morris, KSBY-TV, New Times SLO & Santa Maria, and Dimes Media Corporation provided excellent promotional support. Thanks also to MBMM’s Jennifer Manduffie and Morro Bay Chamber Commerce’s Jody Hollier for their Social Media expertise. The San Salvador buzz was definitely out there.

My apologies in advance to anyone I might have left out. And, yes, MBMM and MMSD are talking about a 10-day visit in our future!



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I am thrilled to congratulate Deborah on finding her perfect home sweet home! 🌈 With joy, I extend my warmest wishes as she embarks on this exciting journey in her new abode. Congratulations once again, Deborah! I'm delighted to have been a part of this journey with you.



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