

Wind Farm Critics to Hold Fundraiser, Protest



The Federal Government is working on a project to install some 3 gigawatts of wind energy turbines, similar to these here, floating on the ocean offshore from San Simeon. A local group is hosting an informational event and demonstration against the plans. File photo

By Neil Farrell

Critics of proposed offshore floating wind farms off the Central Coast, are getting ready for a big coming-out party and demonstration, as the proposal to install three gigawatts of wind turbine energy continues to blow a gale across the area.

The REACT Alliance (Responsible Energy Adaptation for California's Transition; see: www.reactalliance.org) will host a "Save Our Seas Stop Offshore Wind/2024" gathering and flotilla demonstration from noon to 5 p.m. Saturday, March 9 at the Morro Bay Vet's Hall, 209 Surf St.

From noon-1 p.m. attendees will march from the Vet's Hall down to the Embarcadero and the South T-Pier, where they will meet up with a flotilla of watercraft — fishing boats, sailboats and kayaks — to demonstrate against the offshore, floating wind projects, and then march back to the Vet's Hall.

Local favorite, Jill Knight will perform live from 1-2 p.m.; Mini Nova plays from 2:30-3:30 p.m.; and the Susan Ritchie Band is from 4-5.

There will be guest speakers discussing impacts to the environment in between the bands; food trucks and a silent auction; and there'll be a kids' zone area, too. Cost is \$10 at the door.

Proceeds will support the REACT Alliance's fight against the proposed wind farm projects, which are planned for a nearly 400-square mile patch of open ocean, some 20-30-miles off the San Simeon Coast (about 57 miles from Morro Bay, where the energy is expected to come ashore).

The non-profit group is newly born and formed some 4 months ago, according to the group's Secretary, Andrea Lueker, a former City of Morro Bay city manager and har-

bor director at Port San Luis, now retired.

"This is not a political group," Lueker said. "This is an environmental issue. We oppose the offshore wind projects, and we want to educate the public" about the potential impacts to sea life.

Their focus so far has been to bring their arguments to decision makers at the Board of Supervisors, and before State agencies that have a hand in the review of the proposals, which have grown up out of the Federal Government's, "Bureau of Ocean Energy Management" or BOEM.

She noted they have a presentation scheduled for Feb. 27 before County Supervisors, where they will raise their multitude of concerns with the wind farms (The meeting came after EBN's deadline, but readers can watch it on slo-span.org, where the Supervisor meetings are archived.).

The issue has brought people from different points of view with regards to the environment, united in their wariness of industrializing the ocean.

She said REACT members have already met with several officials — from the State Lands Commission, Coastal Commission and State Fish & Wildlife, with more to come. "Anyone who touches the permits or the process," Lueker explained.

In December 2022, BOEM solicited bids for the lease sites and concluded the sale in 2023. BOEM sold the roughly 80,000-acre lease areas here to Equinor; Ocean Wind/Golden State Wind; and Invenergy/Even Keel.

The process from here includes site surveying, something Lueker said the Alliance would focus on.

"The No. 1 issue now," she said, "are the site surveys, we believe they will start in March."

Surveys include biological studies to determine the

Wind Farm Continued on page 16

Family Traditions Continue at Morro Bay Appliance



Mike and Annette Mlnarik have sold the Morro Bay Appliance Store and retired. Photo by Neil Farrell

By Neil Farrell

As far as family-owned and run businesses go, not many match the endurance of Morro Bay's lone appliance store.

And now, the Main Street store is under new ownership — its fourth and third family.

Former owners, Annette and Mike Mlnarik, relinquished ownership of the store on Feb. 4 to Julia and Chris Nichols, a young couple from Nipomo.

The store sale takes a huge burden off of the Mlnariks, as Mike continues a battle against lung cancer, the No. 1 reason he was willing to step away from a profitable business and a job that he loved.

"I feel like I'm doing good," Mike said, "but I want to enjoy the rest of my life."

Mike's lung cancer, first detected about 7-years ago, led to removal of one of the lobes on his lungs, and rounds of chemotherapy.

It looked like he'd beaten the disease, but it came back. "For about eight months, everything looked good,"

Mike explained. "I had a scan done and it turned up two tumors in the lower lobe. The tumors found a way around the [chemo] block."

That scan also turned up a cracked rib that he was unaware of. "That happened while I was deep sea fishing," Mike said of one of his beloved past times. "That was right after the hurricane happened."

Now the tumors are near to his heart making them

Family Traditions Continued on page 17

Moving Forward: YSLASH Artistic Freedom Awaits You!

By Judy Salamacha

Have you noticed an energy vibe sparking among the businesses in downtown Morro Bay? There's something fun going on — sometimes regularly, sometimes randomly, and usually scheduled enough in advance to be able to get involved. In my humble opinion, the energy was ignited during 2020-21 when newer businesses brainstormed with longer standing businesses to create new activities to attract more visitors — especially after-hours.

One of the newer businesses to contribute to Morro Bay's nightlife is YSLASH Carocha's Gallery & Art Studios that opened May 20, 2023. Artist/owner Carocha hosts her unique concept of artistic get-togethers at her studio mid-block on Monterey just south of Morro Bay Blvd. or at various satellite locations as scheduled. For example, classes are held at Legends located on the corner of Main and Harbor every other Thursday and the last Wednesday of each month. www.YSLASH.NET.



Carocha receives Morro Bay Chamber of Commerce Spotlight Award. Photo submitted

"I truly believe we're all artists at heart," Carocha said. "I want to help find that artist inside of each of us."

At either location, Carocha offers

YSLASH Continued on page 16

Engineering Contracts Amended, Awarded

By Neil Farrell

County Supervisors approved changes to one sizable engineering contract for an old project and awarded another contract for a brand-new project — both to the same firm.

Fixing a Key Road

Supervisors in January approved an engineering contract to make significant repairs to the only access road to a

Contracts Amended Continued on page 18



Morro Bay Girls Top Reedley in CIF Tourney

Story and photos by Neil Farrell

The Morro Bay High Girls' Basketball Team capitalized on a distinct size advantage against Reedley, to dominate the Central Valley school in a second round CIF Central Section Div. 3 playoff game on Feb. 15.

The hometown Lady Pirates defeated the visiting Pirates (Reedley's mascot is a pirate, too), 64-41 and improved to 22-6 on the season.

And what a season it's been for the Lady Pirates, who won the Championship in the inaugural season of the

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New Regulators Slated at Los Osos Treatment Plant



Aerial photo shows the Los Osos Wastewater Treatment Plant shortly after being completed in 2016. File photo

By Neil Farrell

San Luis Obispo County Supervisors approved a contract to install some new equipment at the Los Osos Wastewater Treatment Plant; gizmos designed to better control the pressure inside the plant's discharge lines and extend their useful lives.

Supervisors approved a \$187,000 contract with electrical contractors, Electricraft, Inc., of San Luis Obispo to install so-called "variable frequency drives" at the plant.

Electricraft was the lowest of four bidders for the job of wiring in the devices which allow the plant's four main, 100-horsepower pumps to run at a speed somewhat below 100% all the time.

EBN asked Blythe's report, the County has \$600,000 set aside for the project out of the \$1.5 trillion American Rescue Plan Act funding that was passed in 2021 to address the COVID-19 Pandemic impacts to the nation.

As a side note, a Google search for the cost of 100 hp pumps lists them as running between \$7,000 and \$120,000.

The plant delivers treated, re-usable waste water to "urban, agricultural, and leach field sites," the report said. "These recycled water customers experience very high water pressure that must be regulated at the point of discharge to prevent damage to equipment and property."

Electricraft will be charged with wiring the new regulators into electrical panels located in the plant's control room.

Electricraft's bid was 6.1% below the engineer's estimate from the County and lower than three other companies bid. The others were: Alpha Electrical Services, Inc., at \$190,000; Smith Mechanical-Electrical-Plumbing at \$226,000; and Taft Electric Company at \$313,000.

The contract includes an \$18,000 contingency bringing the total contract amount to potentially, \$206,000. The County anticipates another \$49,000 in "project support costs" bringing the overall project's expected cost up to \$255,000.

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Library System to Use Funds for Public Benefit



McAdam; Corvus Wealth Advisors CEO Rob Garcia; Foundation Board Members Elizabeth Manak, Charlotte Alexander, Kristy Lundstrom, Marie Schmidt, and Kristin Bridgeford; Library Director Chris Barnickel. Photo submitted

By Theresa-Marie Wilson

Further collection development and enhanced programs are coming to San Luis Obispo County Public Libraries.

Thanks to two local benefactors, the SLO County Library Foundation announced a donation of \$119,525 to benefit children and adults who visit any of the 14 locations or make use of the county's Library by Mail program.

Most of the donation, \$65,525, will support the collections budget of the library this year, helping to purchase books and other materials patrons can borrow. The donation is made possible by a bequest received by the Foundation from Sarah Day, a resident of Morro Bay who died in 1999.

"Sarah has supplemented our collections," said Erica Thatcher, engagement and marketing coordinator for the libraries. "Over the years, she was a real big supporter of the LGBTQ community. It's been really helpful for us to make sure we have representation in our collections."

The remainder, \$54,000, will support the 2024 Summer Reading Program via the Barbara Baltimore Memorial Fund, created when Baltimore, a volunteer at the SLO library since 2005, passed away in 2011.

The cost of the summer reading program, slated to run June 8 through August 10, includes books for participants, usually a book bag, and a materials program. There are separate programs for kids and adults. Participation numbers for both have risen.

"Kids are generally the primary audience," said Thatcher. "Thousands of kids participate every summer, and they tripled or quadrupled last summer. Our adult participants have also increased, so we're expecting more participants. We want to make sure that libraries across the county, not just libraries that have active friends' groups,

get a chance to have like quality programs.

"We plan to bring summer reading fun to Summer Meals for Kids pickup sites, to homebound adults and incarcerated teens, as well as to learners enrolled in our adult literacy program."

Reaching more patrons has been a creative adventure that happens outside the stacks and cozy chairs often associated with a library. The County uses the Branch Out Vans to bring mini libraries to sites where the nearest location is a distance away or is difficult to reach for some patrons. More community event pop-ups are expected in 2024 as well. Partnerships with juvenile hall and county jail are expected to result in more programs and material at the facilities.

"We also have a library by mail program, where we ship books to homebound adults and older adults who can't make it to the library," Thatcher said. "We want to invite them to participate. And again, we want to reach kids who might not have a chance to come to the library over the summer. They're out there, and we want to find where they are."

The Foundation is a tax-exempt non-profit organization that has served the San Luis Obispo County Library since 1996.

"The Foundation Board of Directors sincerely appreciates the support we receive from county residents who love our libraries," said Foundation President Juliane McAdam in a news release. "We gratefully accept bequests and other donations large and small that benefit library programs supporting our community. We work with Library Director Chris Barnickel and his staff to determine the greatest needs."

SLO County Public Libraries operates 14 branches providing service to residents of 6 of the 7 incorporated cities and the unincorporated areas of San Luis Obispo County, a service area that extends over 3,000 square miles.

For more information about the Foundation, visit SLOLibraryFoundation.org. For more information about the programs and services of the library, visit SLOLibrary.org.

Correction

In the story *Discussing the Economy of the Estuary* (Volume 6, Issue 3) Melody Grubbs, executive director of the Morro Bay National Estuary Program said the Estuary Program's goal "is to conserve and protect natural open spaces around Morro Bay."

Estero Bay News Staff



Dean Sullivan

Owner - Publisher

dean@esterobaynews.com

Theresa-Marie Wilson

Editor

editor@esterobaynews.com

Neil Farrell

Reporter

neil@esterobaynews.com

Shari Sullivan

Marketing Director

shari@esterobaynews.com

Joan Sullivan

Judy Salamacha

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News

Expungement Clinic, March 8

Do you have a criminal record you'd love to see wiped clean giving you a fresh start on your good name? The District Attorney's Office may have just the ticket you're looking for.

The D.A. is hosting a free, legal, "Clean Slate Clinic" to show people how to expunge a criminal record, felony reduction and sealing arrest records from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Friday, March 8 at the SLO County Law Library, located in the County Courthouse basement (Ste. 125), 1050 Monterey St., in Downtown SLO.

This free clinic "is for local residents whose convictions were processed through San Luis Obispo County Superior Court," reads a public notice on the event. "The purpose of the Clean Slate Clinic is to help eliminate a barrier to employment and housing for individuals who have criminal records."

No matter when it happened or how serious it actually was, in today's wired world, a prospective employer is likely to find it on the Internet.

"A criminal record — no matter how old or how minor," the release said, "can be a significant barrier to re-entry for people when most employers, property managers and universities use background checks to screen applicants."

The event is co-sponsored by the County Probation Department, San Luis Obispo Defenders, Restorative Partners, People's Justice Project, California Rural Legal Assistance, and San Luis Obispo College of Law.

"We are proud to work with our community partners," D.A. Dan Dow said, "to help with the time-consuming and paperwork-intensive process of expunging criminal records and helping folks get on track to leading productive and engaged lives."

"The added stability that comes from obtaining employment and housing helps reduce rates of recidivism which improves the overall quality of life in our community."

The poor criminal's lawyer, the public defender's office, is glad to help. "A criminal record can be a barrier to success and stability in life," Steve Rice, the Primary Public Defender for SLO County, said. "We believe that everyone deserves a second chance, and this clinic will give individuals the opportunity to start fresh."

If readers are interested in clearing their criminal record, make an appointment to the SLO Clean Slate Clinic on Friday, March 8 by calling (805) 902-2752. Walk-ins are welcome "but appointments are strongly preferred."

Quick Work Made of Hwy 1 Slide

Caltrans crews made quick work of a small landslide on Hwy 1 temporarily closing even more of the scenic highway than was already shutdown by a previous massive landslide.

Caltrans Dist. 5 spokesman, Kevin Drabinski, said on Feb. 20 that their crews had cleared away a rockslide that happened Feb. 19 just north of Salmon Creek.

That slide pushed down the south end of the closure from the initial bigger slide at Paul's Slide that had closed Hwy 1 down earlier in the year.

"Highway 1," Drabinski said, "has returned to closure limits which were in place before last weekend's storms."

The highway has been closed for weeks starting on the south end at Post Mile 20, south of Limekiln State Park. On the north end, the road was closed at Dolan Point — PM 29.7.

For now the roadway is open from the SLO County side nearly to Limekiln State Park. Caltrans has not said when they expect the highway to be fully cleared and reopened through the Big Sur Area and re-connect Carmel and Monterey to SLO County. Some 5 million people a year are estimated to travel the famous Big Sur Highway, which is a huge draw to California's, SLO County's, and especially the North Coast communities' tourism industries.

Readers can get current road conditions on Caltrans Dist. 5 social media platforms, see: @CaltransD5 on X; Caltrans Central Coast (District 5) on Facebook; and on Instagram at: Caltrans_D5.

County to Expand Drug Addiction Program

By Neil Farrell

The County has received an over \$1 million grant from the Federal Department of Justice to help them combat methamphetamine addiction and possibly prevent overdose deaths.

According to a report from Behavioral Health Director, Star Graber, the BHD received the \$1.3 million grant "from the Bureau of Justice Assistance for the Comprehensive Opioid Stimulant and Substance Use Program," and covering from Oct. 1, 2023 to Sept. 30, 2026, "to provide recovery support services to individuals suffering from opiate and stimulant use disorders."

The money allows BHD to hire two, limited-term, Behavioral Health Specialist I/II/III to work on the program, calling them "case workers."

The money is coming in annual installments of

\$324,000, while it lasts.

"The funds," Graber's report said, "will support the BHD's capacity to provide peer recovery support services to an estimated 200 individuals suffering from opiate use and stimulant use disorders. The target population is adults who have both opiate use disorder and stimulant use disorder, primarily methamphetamine, who are at high-risk for overdose."

The BHD will also provide stays at drug recovery centers to all the participants in SLO County, which Graber points out is "one of the least affordable housing markets in the nation, who need this level of care. All Recovery Residences provided funding with this grant will be Medication Assisted Treatment [MAT] compliant to serve those with opiate use disorders."

"The Case Managers," Graber said, "will provide transportation and an initial supply of hygiene items to provide a warm welcome from custody to outpatient treatment in conjunction with the Recovery Residence."

While this addiction-fighting program already exists, the grant money will allow it to grow. "There is currently only one Case Manager that covers the entirety of the County, which is not sufficient to meet current needs."

It's a way to expand the compassion being shown people addicted to drugs. "This grant will address both mental health and substance use disorders in coordinated integrated care to provide the bridge from County Jail to community-based treatment and builds upon the results of BHD's previous efforts to bend the curve of opioid overdose fatality rate in San Luis Obispo County."

According to the report, the grant would accommodate 25 people a year to check into a recovery center "for an average stay of 90 days."

According to a proposed budget included with the report, they will allocate \$160,000 for the two new employees, \$34,000 to help pay for the existing caseworker, and \$119,000 for "services and supplies" for an annual total of \$324,000 for this year (2023-24 and covering 9 months).

In the future, the annual grant awards will be \$443,000 (FY 2024-25 and 2025-26); and \$109,000 for FY 2026-27.

The two new employees would make \$45,000 for 9 months of work this year plus \$33,000 in benefits for a total salary/benefits package of \$80,000 each.

That pay jumps to \$64,000 in salary and \$46,000 in benefits the following year; and \$70,000 and \$45,000 the year after (total compensation of \$115,000 each).

Graber puts a lot of faith in the program. "Participants in the COSSUP," the report said, "will have achieved and sustained a lifestyle of sobriety and recovery, including learning skills to better manage their lives. There will be decreased criminal recidivism, decreased impact on criminal justice and behavioral health care systems, and re-stabilized lives which will contribute to the County vision of a safe and healthy community."



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SLO Man Pleads Guilty in Fatal Crash

A San Luis Obispo man has pled guilty to manslaughter after he ran over and killed two people and their pet dog out walking in SLO. The District Attorney's Office announced Feb. 20 that Daniel Angel Saligan Patricio, 25 of SLO, faces a maximum of seven years in State Prison for the Nov. 21, 2022 deaths of pedestrians Matthew Ernest Chachere, 39, and Jennifer Ann Besser, 36, and their dog, Buddy.



Daniel Angel Saligan Patricio of San Luis Obispo pled guilty to two counts of gross vehicular manslaughter in the 2022 deaths of a young, SLO couple and their dog, Buddy.

It was shortly after 5:30 p.m. that day when Saligan Patricio reportedly was driving his vehicle fast, over 90 mph, on Sacramento Drive in SLO. He failed to make a "nearly 90-degree turn," the D.A.'s announcement said, and struck the couple and their dog, killing them. The two came to rest in thick bushes at Sacramento Drive and Basil Lane, and it was a day later before they were discovered, after someone reported a dead dog lying in a creek.

According to a news report, the couple had been together 11 years and worked for E&J Gallo Wineries, having only recently moved to SLO County from the Modesto

Area. It was family members in Modesto who notified police when they failed to arrive there for a family gathering.

According to a news report, the SLOPD officer who investigated the matter said that Saligan Patricio had admitted to drinking alcohol that day and was texting while driving when he hit the two. The vehicle's GPS indicated his speed at 61 mph when the accident occurred, having slowed down for the curve. Sacramento Drive is an industrial area running parallel to and a block over from Broad Street.

Saligan Patricio initially fled the scene of the accident but was tracked down and arrested by SLOPD.

He pled guilty to two counts of "gross vehicular manslaughter," the D.A. said, "both are felonies."

The plea came with no deal on sentencing and the D.A. said the judge, Michael S. Frye, has a lot of discretion when he sentences Saligan Patricio on April 9. "Because there was no agreement on a sentence, the judge has wide discretion in imposing a sentence, which can range from a period of probation to the maximum term of 7 years and 4 months in prison."

The prosecution alleged numerous factors involved in the crimes that could come into play during sentencing, including that he was a previously convicted felon who served some prison time; was on active probation at the time; and acted with gross negligence, among several others.

It will up to the judge on whether any of the enhancements alleged apply, when handing down a sentence. According to the news report, Judge Frye indicated he would wait for the Probation Department's report on sentencing before making a decision on the enhancements.

The two manslaughter charges count as two strikes under California's Three Strikes Law.

The case was investigated by SLOPD and prosecuted by Dep. D.A. Danielle Baker.

County Employee Arrested for Fraud

The District Attorney's Office has arrested a long-time SLO County employee and charged him with allegedly embezzling over \$100,000 of public funds over a period of about seven years.

According to the D.A.'s news release, on Feb. 21, they arrested Norman Hibble, 54, and charged him with "stealing public money while employed with County of San Luis Obispo. The suspected theft was discovered by staff of the Office of the Auditor-Controller, who identified purchasing irregularities and worked closely with the District Attorney's Public Integrity Unit to investigate the alleged crimes."

Hibble had worked for SLO County for some 16

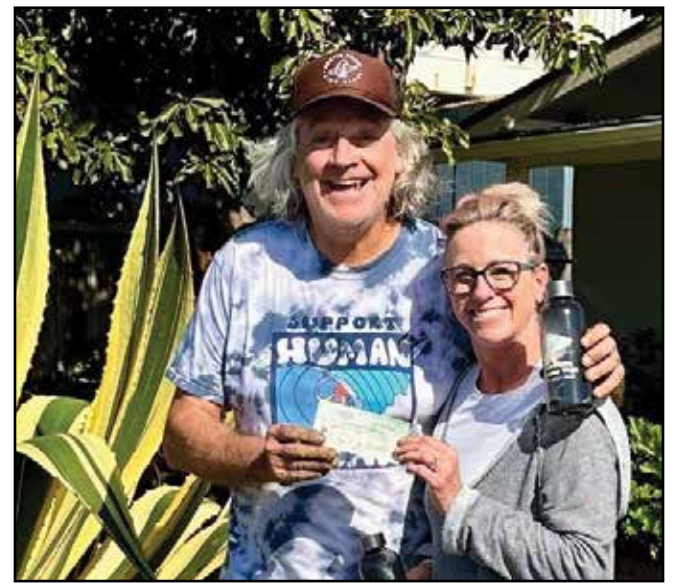
years in the IT Department until last November, when the Auditor's Office discovered the discrepancies and search warrants were executed at Hibble's home and office. He was placed on administrative leave immediately and was fired from the County on Jan. 5, 2024.

Hibble is charged with 12 felony counts alleging that between April 2017 and October 2023, he allegedly used a County credit card "to purchase personal items estimated at well over \$100,000," the announcement said. The charging documents break the charges out into 6-month time periods alleging a felony count being committed over each of the periods. There are also a host of "enhancements" listed in the court filing, though many appear to be unrelated to the act of misusing a credit card and appear to be charges routinely piled onto an indictment that the judge must sort out before sentencing, in the event of a conviction.

He was booked into the County Jail and bail was set at \$350,000. He was scheduled to be arraigned on Friday, Feb. 23 when he is held to answer to the charges.

The long list of allegations could add up to a lengthy prison sentence, if he is convicted. The case is being prosecuted by Dep. D.A. Ben Blumenthal of the Major Fraud/Public Integrity Unit.

Give Back to The Community



On February 18, 2024 Cayucos Yoga and Estero Bay Kindness Coalition teamed up together at Cayucos Yoga 625 S. Ocean Ave, Cayucos; for a food and clothing drive and three donation based yoga classes throughout the day.

Give Back Continued on page 15

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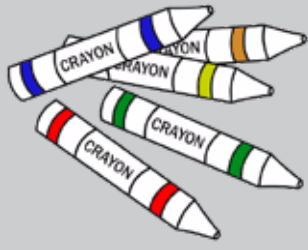
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Estero Bay News Briefs

By Theresa-Marie Wilson

Register for T-K and Kindergarten

San Luis Coastal Unified School District registration and open enrollment for the 2024 - 2025 Transitional Kindergarten or Kindergarten school year begins March 4, 2024 and ends April 5, 2024.



Families with students new to the district or wishing to transfer from one school to another should register during the open enrollment period. For school year 2024 - 2025, the dates to qualify for Transitional Kindergarten have expanded to students turning 5 between September 2, 2024 and June 2, 2025.

Depending on space availability, students who have their 4th birthday by September 1 are allowed to be put on a waitlist; contact isla@slcusd.org for details. The district webpage for Enrollment/Registration goes live on Monday, March 4. Visit www.slcusd.org/academics/enrollmentregistration for details.

Cheng Park in SLO Renovations

A distinct park in San Luis Obispo will get a new look while maintaining the original intent for the space.

Renovation of LC YC Cheng Park in Downtown SLO on the corner of Marsh and Santa Rosa streets is underway.

Original elements of the Chinese Garden currently being restored include the water pond, pagoda, and updated landscape and irrigation systems. Solar lighting and ADA-accessible elements will be added.

The park was the vision of retired Cal Poly professor Alice Loh and her husband Larry, who transformed the 11,000 square foot area into a meditative Chinese Garden with a pavilion, pond, lions, and the original Tankhead Fish public art. It was built in 2005 and donated to the city in 2006.

The park commemorates the contributions of the Chinese laborers who settled along the creek starting in the mid-1870s.

Free Pet Vaccinations at Woods in Atascadero

Woods Humane Society offers chances for free pet vaccination on March 9 and 23 as part of Petco Love's National Pet Vaccination Month called Vaccinated and Loved. The program provides one million free pet vaccines to existing animal welfare partners, including Woods Humane Society, which has so far distributed 5,014 vaccines to SLO County pets in need.



Spring, commonly known as "puppy and kitten season," threatens young and vulnerable pets with an especially high risk of exposure to deadly and contagious diseases and viruses. To combat this risk, Petco Love and Woods Humane Society urge pet owners to protect their pets from deadly pet diseases like parvovirus and distemper in dogs, and panleukopenia in cats. These are the most prevalent deadly diseases affecting pets and are preventable with a simple vaccine — either the DAPPv Canine or the HCP Feline vaccine — which Petco Love's initiative has made free and accessible. Woods will also offer other vaccines and services at low cost during the clinics.

Woods' appointment-based Pet Vaccine Clinics for publicly owned pets takes place at the North County campus at 2300 Ramona Road in Atascadero, California on Saturday, March 9 and Saturday, March 23 from 9 a.m. – 1 p.m.

Pet parents must make an appointment in advance at SpaySLOCounty.com. In order to qualify for free vaccines, pets must be six weeks or older, healthy, and owned (community outdoor cats do not qualify). Dogs must be on a leash, puppies under the age of four months must be carried, and cats must be in a secure cat carrier. More information is available at SpaySLOCounty.com.

In November 2023, Petco Love's Vaccinated and Loved initiative reached its goal of distributing 2 million free pet vaccines.

For more information about vaccine distribution, contact Woods Humane Society by calling (805) 543-9316, or visiting 875 Oklahoma Ave., San Luis Obispo or 2300 Ramona Rd., Atascadero. Woods is open to the public daily from 12-5 p.m., with adoption hours from 12-4 p.m. Learn more about Petco Love's impact at PetcoLove.org.

NPR Journalists to Speak in SLO



KCBX Central Coast Public Radio is presenting a candid in-person discussion with two prominent NPR Journalists: Nathan Rott, NPR's Environment & Climate Correspondent and Kelly McEvers, host of NPR's Embedded podcast and previous host of NPR's news program, "All Things Considered." The event takes place on March 9, at 7 p.m., at SLO Brew Rock. Both Rott and McEvers have worked for NPR in varying roles and will share their experiences reporting on the global climate and from war zones.

As a correspondent on NPR's National Desk, Rott primarily focuses on environmental issues and the American West. He has also spent time in Ukraine, reporting on the current war. In addition to serving as the host of NPR's All Things Considered, McEvers has spent most of her career as an international correspondent, reporting from Asia, the former Soviet Union, and the Middle East.

Tickets can be purchased at kcbx.org or by calling 805-549-8855. Funds raised from this event benefit KCBX Central Coast Public Radio.

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



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Community

M.B.H.S Mock Trial Team for the Win



The Morro Bay High School Mock Trial Team took home the big win in county competition. State, here they come. Photo submitted

By Orion Rea

For the second consecutive year, Morro Bay High School (MBHS) has won the San Luis Obispo County Mock Trial championship.

The Pirates were announced as the winners at the awards ceremony February 15 by the chairman of SLO County's Mock Trial Committee, attorney John Fricks. Since 1998, Fricks has organized San Luis Obispo County's mock trial program, an engaging civic education program with tournament-style competition in which students simulate a real trial.

Last year, for the first time in the school's history, the Pirates won the county championship and qualified to compete in the State of California Mock Trial Competition. Out of 32 qualifying teams in Los Angeles, MBHS placed 15th overall, an impressive first-time showing. At county competition this year, the Morro Bay defense team beat Templeton High School in the semifinal round, and San Luis Obispo High School in the final round.

After the win, Fricks recognized several MBHS students at the awards ceremony. Team captain and club president Karen Lun received a certificate for Best Pre-Trial Attorney, while Astrid Barnett-Davis and Tyler Patel received certificates for Best Pre-Trial Brief. Every student attorney on



A courtroom drawing by MBHS student Mazzlyn Paulson shows the school's attorney Orion Elfant Rea with witness Noah Moreno at the SLO County Courthouse. Image by Mazzlyn Paulson

the Morro Bay team received certificates as well, including Maggie Appel for the defense, Eli Waldman for the defense, Lilah Green for the prosecution, and Orion Rea for both the prosecution and the defense. Additionally, Elsey Ruane received a certificate for best defense witness, and Mazzlyn Paulson won the county medal for best courtroom artist.

In attendance at the February 15 Mock Trial awards were San Luis Coastal Unified School District Superintendent, Eric Prater; Morro Bay High School Principal, Scott Schalde; and San Luis Obispo High School Principal, Rollin Dickinson.

The Pirates depart on March 21 for

state competition, and do not show any signs of slowing down as they prepare. Donations to assist MBHS with the funding needed to attend state competition can be

made at <https://bit.ly/mbmocktrial>.

Editor's Note

Orion Rae is a junior at Morro Bay High School.

Tide Pooling Hike Rescheduled

Bad weather canceled a planned hill-top nature walk by the Cayucos Land Conservancy as the CLC rescheduled it for later in March, but they are planning to go tide pooling on Estero Bluffs Park next week.

The CLC will follow retired PG&E biologist and tide pool expert, Sally Krenn, who now leads nature walks as a State Parks Volunteer; along with retired Morro Bay High teacher and marine biologist, Faylla Chapman, to explore the untouched tide pools of Estero Bluffs State Park (located on Hwy 1 just north of Cayucos).

The excursion is set for 2-4 p.m. Saturday, March 8. Meet on Hwy 1 at the old windmill at San Geronimo Creek and hike down the trail to the shore.

The Estero Bluffs ride pools are home to a wide variety of invertebrate marine species, as well as the limitless possibilities of what has washed ashore with the tide.

Hiking poles are useful for walking through the bluff. Be ready to get your shoes wet and no dogs allowed. Rain cancels. Attendance is limited and RSVP is required. Email to: hello@cayucoslandconservancy.org to sign up.

Also, Dr. Joel Germond will lead a walk to the top of Hollywood Hill in Southern Cayucos set for 10 a.m. Friday, March 22.

Meet at end of Hacienda Drive by the County's new water tanks.

A.k.a. "Hang Glider Hill" the ridge high above Cayucos is host to an amazing biodiversity, invisible to motorists rushing by on Hwy 1 far below.

Badgers, mountain lions and over 75 species of birds have reportedly been seen in these environs. The hike will go through coastal chaparral, grassy hillsides and along a thicket of willow and honeysuckle.

Dr. Germond — neither a biologist nor an expert — has "been an avid lover and observer of nature since childhood. Since moving to the area in 2007, he has focused

on learning to identify and photograph all the interesting biodiversity of the California Central Coast. Now semi-retired, Dr. Germond is a ceramicist and licensed clinical psychologist who hikes daily with his wife, Paolina Aligero, a retired social worker and avid nature lover as well.

The hike starts with a brief program explaining the CLC's attempts to purchase and retire numerous so-called "paper lots" that were drawn up decades ago but have been deemed too steep and the hillside too subject to slippage, to be buildable. Over the years, the County has bought up the lots as they go into tax default for non-payment, and CLC has been an active participant in this endeavor.

This walk is not flat; the pace is slow and the trail is fairly steep. Good hiking shoes are required and hiking poles are recommended. Plan on two hours (it's OK to return early on your own). No RSVP required.

The CLC is an accredited non-profit conservation organization responsible for working to preserve the greenbelt around the town of Cayucos. Among its accomplishments is the preservation of Estero Bluffs Park (which had been slated for a huge housing development); and working with others to preserve the Chevron Dog Beach (the only dog-friendly, off-leash beach in the county). Dog Beach is now under the overview of the City of Morro Bay.

See: www.cayucoslandconservancy.org for more information about the conservancy and its upcoming events.



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A Singular Opportunity Awaits just above the favored Numbers Streets area of Cayucos. This end space unit in Whale Rock Mobile Home Park has only one neighbor and serves up sweeping ocean views over the houses below from large windows that grace three sides of the plan. There's also a large ocean view deck off of the living room. The interior is paneled and features an open plan with a large kitchen, dining, living area that offers many furnishing options. The spacious kitchen/breakfast area has brightly colored counters, lots of cabinet space, a full complement of appliances and a pantry. There's more built-in storage in the bright dining area. A short hallway leads from the living area to a guest bedroom and 3/4 bath. Beyond is the large primary suite with expansive vanity and shower over tub. Closet space is impressive and the suite has its own impressive ocean views. Outside there's EZ care landscaping, a generous paved parking area and guest parking spaces adjacent. Seniors seeking impressive ocean views, coastal access stairs a block away and a tranquil atmosphere should not delay in checking out this rare opportunity. Call us today! \$765,000.00

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Community

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, Catharine "Kiki" Kornreich, Judy Salamacha and Susan Vasquez

Walking with Vultures



Vulture flies above Morro Strand State Beach

By Susan Vasquez

When I was teaching elementary school, I would often ask students to classify nouns and verbs. Thumbs up for a word that had a positive feel, thumbs down for the negative. Every once in a while, one might pop up with a neutral reaction, but most words we use have a good or bad reputation. Think about it. Bedtime? For my students, always a negative. Cake? Thumbs up. Vulture? Ask most adults, the reaction will be negative.

I want to form my own opinion about vultures. Wherever I walk, there they are. I may be hoping for an eagle-sighting, but the truly reliable are the vultures. You can count on them everywhere in nature. They glide by me, sometimes far up in the sky, sometimes quite close. Nature gives me more than enough information to show the importance of these creatures. If I valued living things for being dependable, these vultures, even though they are present at the end of other creatures' lives, would be given high scores. If skill is what impresses me, I can watch them command an entire section of the sky on my walk, claiming the air before they claim whatever brings them to the ground.

That, of course is the issue. The service they perform in nature is yucky. We don't like to be reminded of this necessary job as we walk in the beauty of a calm beach day. But their service is important, and we shouldn't blame them for being given the job of refuse collectors. They scavenge. So do I. I pick up shells, then discard them. I collect a smooth

rock, use it for a mile or two as a worry bead, then place it at the trail's end. Maybe vultures pursue habits that many think of as grizzly, but can't we just as easily thank them for keeping our trails and walkways clean? There's a good side to picking at the bones of life, a sort of nature's way to keep house.

I look forward to jaunts with local vultures. Perhaps because I walk where many creatures live - and die - vultures capture my attention each day. I love to see the long spread of their wings as they hover over the sage. I had never known the effortless grace of their flight before my walks on the beach. They make me take notice with a persistent presence and a command of the salt-sprayed fog.

Beach weather can change fast. Even when winds come up and blow the sand, I walk and vultures glide. The flying sand doesn't seem to change their daily romp along the coastline. Nor mine. Over many years of walking, we have become trailhead friends.

As I walk, they seem to play in the sky and frolic on the land. Maybe they don't see things that way, but as I have come to know these friends with feathers, I see their antics. They share with me their freedom by dipping and swaying with air currents I will never explore. Once, one came so close, I heard the push of a wing as the vulture coasted inches over a dune, just one more trick to make me wish I could be as playful in the air.

Walking with nature can be surprising, but my walks with vultures have taught me lessons about what we must see and accept. I am grateful for their company, even when vultures are doing what comes naturally. My beachside walks have treated me with a new respect for the word "vulture." Thumbs all the way up.

Susan Vasquez has taken walks in many of the world's most interesting spots, but especially enjoys her strolls around Estero Bay. She is the author of four books, blogs at One Small Walk and is a member of the Bookshelf Writers, four Estero Bay women whose writing can be found at <http://www.thebookshelfwriters.com>

Area Congregations Work Together

The program "Hope for Life" takes place Saturday, March 8 - 9 from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. at the Morro Bay Community Center.

The purpose of the program is to share the good news about Jesus in such a way that we don't focus on a church, but the Person of Jesus," said David Ryal, coordinator of the event. "That is why we will hold the event in a neutral site."

"Can I Tell You a Story?" features Steve Ridgell of Abilene Texas and Domestic Director of Herald of Truth Ministries. He presented the program at the Community Center in October of 2021.

"We all have a story. God has a story too," said Ridgell. "It is one of love, hope, peace, forgiveness, purpose and joy."

Ridgell will speak on Friday and Saturday evening. Randy Ponder, former Chaplain of the Morro Bay Police Department, will address the topic of "Unity in Christ." He stated that he is looking forward to returning to the Morro Bay community and "helping the local congregations work together for the cause of Jesus. It is too easy to get distracted to focus on division."

Ponder's session will run Saturday morning, May 9, from 9 to 11 am. Ridgell and Ponder will serve as lead in for each other during the three sessions.

All are welcome, and the program is free. The Morro Bay Community Center is located at 1001 Kennedy Way.

Events and Activities

By Theresa-Marie Wilson

Reprise Foundation for the Arts invites the San Luis Obispo community to a free concert featuring soprano Katherine Arthur and pianist Susan Azaret Davies performing music by Brahms on Sunday, March 3 at 3 p.m. at Trinity United Methodist Church in Los Osos. This free community event includes a silent auction and light reception. All proceeds benefit the Reprise Foundation for the Arts scholarship fund. Through the scholarship program, Reprise offers local students support to ease the financial burden of arts education and experiences. For an application for scholarships, or to donate, visit reprisefoundation.org.

•••

Morro Bay Friends of the Library celebrates National Library Week with a book giveaway. All children ages 3 to 12 years old are invited to sign up for their free book. Books are selected by library staff, are age-appropriate and feature stories about oceans and marine life. Stop by the Morro Bay Library at 625 Harbor St. to sign up anytime between March 12 to March 23.


Each child who signs up can pick up their book at the Library on Saturday April 13 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Library card applications for children and adults of all ages are also available at the main desk.

•••

Take a trip down memory lane with "Beehive: The 60's Musical," a celebration featuring iconic female voices of the 1960s, at SLO Repertory Theater. Told from the perspective of six young women who came of age in this

Events Continued on page 9

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JOIN THE DIABLO CANYON DECOMMISSIONING ENGAGEMENT PANEL.




While PG&E is pursuing the steps to continue operating Diablo Canyon Power Plant until 2030 as directed by the state, PG&E will continue to provide opportunities for community input regarding future decommissioning plans and potential future uses of the Diablo Canyon site.

PG&E is currently in regulatory proceedings for both extended operations and decommissioning.

The Diablo Canyon Decommissioning Engagement Panel (Panel) was created to foster open and frequent dialogue between members of the local community and PG&E on topics regarding the site's eventual decommissioning, originally planned to begin in 2025 but now slated to begin in 2030 or later. The panel will focus on decommissioning related issues not ongoing continued operations. The Panel will focus on decommissioning related issues and not ongoing continued operations.

There are currently open positions on the Engagement Panel subject for appointment or reappointment consistent with the Panel's Charter. The application period runs until March 5, 2024.

Visit pge.com/diablocanyon and scroll down to the Engagement Panel section or diablocanyonpanel.org to apply.

Police Blotter



- **Feb. 18:** Police towed away an apparently offensive vehicle from the 300 block of Surf for the unforgivable offense of an expired registration, and who says the death penalty is dead in California?
- **Feb. 17:** Police contacted a suspicious man at 11:25 p.m. in the 300 block of Morro Bay Blvd. Officers re-cited the 43-year-old fugitive for an out-of-county warrant and released him.
- **Feb. 17:** Yet another anarchistic vehicle was towed away to feed the DMV beast, this time from the 900 block of Quintana.
- **Feb. 17:** Police responded at 2 p.m. to a business in the 700 block of Quintana for a reported case of ATM machine fraud, as the Nigerian prince strikes again.
- **Feb. 17:** Police responded at 9 a.m. to the 700 block of Quintana where two cars went badda-bing, badda bam. No injuries reported.
- **Feb. 16:** Police responded to the 400 block of Yerba Buena for a disturbance. Logs indicated a 17-year-old juvenile was pitching a fit inside his home and “being uncontrollable from guardians.” The apparent miscreant was arrested and charged with suspicion of disturbing the peace and being an out of control little yob.
- **Feb. 15:** Police responded to the 1700 block of Main to deal with three encampments in or thereabouts at Morro Creek deemed within 200-feet of “critical infrastructure,” according to logs, in one of the early crackdowns with the town’s new muni code ban on outdoor living. No word on where they’re supposed to pitch their yurts now.
- **Feb. 15:** Police contacted a suspicious fellow at 12:23

- a.m. in the 300 block of Morro Bay Blvd. The 39-year-old artful dodger had five bench warrants but just when you thought he’d be off to the gaol, officers cited and released him.
- **Feb. 14:** Police espied a suspicious woman traipsing about at 7:45 p.m. at Main and Quintana. Logs indicated the 66-year-old reveler was allegedly schwasted on hooch and unable to care for herself, so — for her own good — she was taken to the County B&B to sleep it off, a fine Happy Valentine’s Day to you too.
- **Feb. 14:** Someone turned in a surfboard they found washed up on Toro Lane.
- **Feb. 13:** Police responded at 11:17 p.m. to the 200 block of Atascadero Rd., for a disturbance. Logs indicated a 29-year-old woman got pipped at the post for suspicion of being juiced.
- **Feb. 13:** Police arrested a 42-year-old apparent millionaire at 7:37 p.m. in the 700 block of Quintana for suspicion of battery. No word on whom got zoomed.
- **Feb. 13:** Police responded at 11:39 a.m. to Main and Rennel where someone found a threatening note affixed to a vandalized car, no doubt left by some vengeful scamboogah.
- **Feb. 13:** Police responded to the 200 block of Surf for a report of a vandalized gate. Logs indicated it might be connected to a prowler who’d been seen there.
- **Feb. 13:** Police responded at 11 a.m. to a disturbance in the 1700 block of Main. Logs indicated they apparently contacted a 35-year-old ruffian who they charged with suspicion of resisting arrest; battery on a police officer; assault on a police officer with a deadly weapon; possession of fake ID; and possession of a crack pipe, which explains a lot.
- **Feb. 12:** Police stopped a suspicious vehicle in the 1500 block of Main, a.k.a. Citation Alley, at 11:40 p.m. The 41-year-old man driving had a bench warrant and a suspended license, which warranted a ride to the iron bar hotel.
- **Feb. 12:** Police responded at 4:15 p.m. to a disturbance in the 800 block of Embarcadero. Logs indicated a 31-year-old woman was arrested for allegedly resisting arrest, vandalism, and battery against a police officer, who apparently were having a tough week. The apparent hellcat was tossed into the dungeon.
- **Feb. 12:** Police responded to the 500 block of Quintana where someone had passed away.
- **Feb. 12:** Police stopped a suspicious vehicle at 2 p.m. in the 800 block of Main, pulling them over outside Legend’s Tavern. The 38-year-old woman driver was nicked for suspicion of driving thick and not to be left out, her 35-year-old apparent passenger was hooked up for suspicion of being drunk in public, as the inside of a car is apparently now public space.
- **Feb. 12:** Police contacted a suspicious fellow at 8:48 a.m. in the 1000 block of Kennedy Way and arrested him for three bench warrants. In a possibly unrelated matter, at 11:39 a.m. they returned to the area where some sinner’s sinful burglary of St. Timothy’s Catholic Church had been uncovered. Police didn’t list an arrest and are presumably investigating, though you-know-who already knows who done it.
- **Feb. 11:** Police contacted some twisted sister at 1:40

- p.m. at an undisclosed location in town. Logs indicated the 52-year-old apparently stultified lady was arrested for suspicion of having an open container of alcohol and drunk and disorderly conduct, for, as Confucius never said, “Nail that sticks out, gets hammered.”
- **Feb. 11:** Police contacted a suspicious woman, 34, lurking about at 12:15 a.m. at the Community Center. Logs indicated she had five bench warrants and was at last made to answer for this bit of nincompoopery.
- **Feb. 10:** Police were called at noon to investigate a man reportedly camping underneath a highway bridge in violation of the City’s sleeping where we can’t collect a tax law. The apparent troll was no doubt given a stern talking to.
- **Feb. 10:** Police contacted a 37-year-old familiar foe at 11:13 a.m. somewhere in town. The scofflaw was nicked for “several outstanding warrants,” and apparently taken to the Kansas Avenue Inn.
- **Feb. 10:** Police responded at 12:48 a.m. to a report of an out-of-control person at an undisclosed location in town. A 51-50 report was written for County Mental Health.
- **Feb. 9:** Police responded to a domestic disturbance at 6:37 p.m. at yet another undisclosed location in town. Logs indicated the call involved inflicting corporal punishment on a spouse or cohabitant.
- **Feb. 9:** Police responded at 2:13 p.m. to a business in town where a female employee accused the business owner of battery.
- **Feb. 9:** At 11 a.m. police pulled over a suspicious vehicle at an undisclosed location presumably in town. The driver, 25, had a suspended license — the result of a DUI — plus a handful of bench warrants and he got a free ride to the lockup.
- **Feb. 8:** Police stopped a suspicious vehicle at 11:13 p.m. somewhere in town. Logs indicated the woman driver, 29, was arrested for suspicion of driving smashed while on probation for driving spanked, a possible disruption in the space-time continuum.
- **Feb. 8:** Police were called at 5:30 p.m. to a local business after some apparent critic stole two art pieces. No word on what the masterpieces were valued at.
- **Feb. 8:** Police stopped another regular customer driving at 2 p.m. in town. Logs indicated he had a bench warrant, plus his car registration was expired and so he got a room without a view at the County Jail.
- **Feb. 8:** Police responded to a disturbance at 10:43 a.m. somewhere in town and started a report on a fellow deemed a potential danger to himself and more importantly, to others.
- **Feb. 7:** Police contacted a suspicious dude at 1:23 p.m. The 42-year-old squat had three bench warrants and was taken to jail.
- **Feb. 6:** At 10:12 a.m. police towed away a 2003 Chevy Silverado truck that was illegally parked in a City right of way and had an expired registration, a hanging offense in this State.
- **Feb. 5:** At 8:07 a.m. police came across a suspicious apparent bad girl, 37, who turned out to be in violation of her parole terms, and also had a misdemeanor warrant. She got checked into the plush, zero-star, Parkinson Plaza, for three-hots and a cot.

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News

County Jail From page 7

enigmatic decade and unforgettable time, this new show will have you “dancing in the aisles.”

Wednesdays-Saturdays, 7-9 p.m. and Saturdays, Sundays, 2-4 p.m. Continues through March 10. Tickets range from \$40 - \$60 and are available at SLOrep.org.



Join virtuoso and Arroyo Grande resident, Gilles Apap, return to perform Beethoven's Violin Concerto, and Bartok's Violin Rhapsody No.1. The concert takes place March 2 at Harold Miossi Hall on Cuesta's SLO camp us at 7:30 p.m.

The Hungarian spirit continues with Leo Weiner's Hungarian Folk Dance Suite – a symphony in four movements based on Hungarian folk melodies and in a late romantic style.

Ensure ample time for parking. Parking is FREE but may take time! Be aware that the PAC Plaza is under construction. but we do not expect any impact on your experience.

Join Maestro Sewell, and guest solisit Gilles Apap, for a Symphonic Foray Discussion beginning at 6:30 p.m. Tickets range from \$12 to \$82 and are available at Pacslo.org under events. Photo is soloist Gilles Apap

Jump-Start Your Creativity is a workshop to spark new ways to see, think, create, and live taking place Sunday March 10, from 1-3 p.m. at Coalesce Bookstore 845 Main St, Morro Bay.

Join writer, artist, and coach Ruth Davis and play with ways to spark how you see, think, create, and live. You can apply these practices to all aspects of your life!. Creativity is more than making art. Creativity is seeing things in new ways and sharing what you experience from your unique point of view.

No artistic experience needed. The cost is \$45/person and pre-registration required. Contact Ruth for details and sign up at ruth@sparktheheart.com or 602-531-3736.



The Cal Poly Arab Music Ensemble gives its winter concert at 7:30 p.m. Saturday, March 16, in Spanos Theatre.

A suite of instrumental and vocal pieces celebrated across Arab society are a highlight of the program. It features a wide range of rhythmic modalities with pieces ranging from four to 17 beats per measure, as well as examples of muwashshah, a genre of poetry and music that stems from 10th-century Andalusia in the southern Iberian Peninsula.

A Romanian folksong and Ottoman Turkish dance piece will also be performed, along with a song made famous by the Lebanese singer Fairuz that is an arrangement

of the second movement of Joaquín Rodrigo's “Concierto de Aranjuez.” Ensemble member Samuel Shalhoub will conduct the ensemble in his own arrangement of the work. Shalhoub teaches in the Liberal Studies Department and Music Department at Cal Poly.

Other composers, poets and artists that will be represented in the works performed include Anton Pann, Badi Khayri, Farid al-Atrash, Ibrahim Touqan, Mohammed Flayfel, Sayyid Darwish and Ziad Rahbani.

Tickets are \$15 and \$20 for the public, and \$10 for students. Event parking is sponsored by the PAC. Tickets are available at the Cal Poly Ticket Office between noon and 6 p.m. Monday through Saturday. To order by phone, call 805-SLO-4TIX (805-756-4849).

For more information, visit the Music Department's calendar website, email music@calpoly.edu, or call 805-756-2406.



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

• Sensory Playtime - Saturday, March 2, 10 – 11 a.m.

Let your little ones lead the way in this open-ended playtime! Babies and toddlers can use their five senses to explore our play stations. Parents and caregivers: we also have early literacy tips for you! For ages 0-5.

• Create a Thaumatrope - Saturday, March 2, 1 – 2 p.m.

A Thaumatrope or “wonder turner” is an optical illusion based on combining two images with movement. Come learn how to make one with presenter Luna! For all ages. This program is presented in Spanish and English.

• Art Party - Wednesday, March 6, 3 – 5 p.m.

Unleash your creativity at our monthly art party! Use your imagination to make unique art pieces using paper, pens, pencils, scissors, glue and more. All materials provided - you bring the inspiration! Creative options available for ages 3-12.

• Mini Weaving - Wednesday, March 13, 3:00-5:00

Learn how to weave with Librarian Emily! We'll make miniature tapestry weavings together and learn more about how cloth was made in the past and how it's made today.

Readers interested in California history are invited to become a docent at Mission San Luis Obispo. Attend training on March 16 at the Mission

Call John for details - (805) 550-7713.

Events Continued on page 10

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Community

Events From page 9

The First-Ever Central Coast Jazz Guitar Fest Is California's Only Celebration of Archtop Guitars and great jazz players, creating the ultimate guitar player hangout. It all takes place at the Cambria Pines Lodge, March 1-3.

Get ready to immerse yourself in a harmonious celebration of jazz music and guitar education, as the Central Coast Jazz Guitar Fest kicks off. The event features three days of electrifying performances, captivating workshops, engaging artists, Q&A sessions, a guitar and gear exhibition room, and unforgettable musical experiences.

The Central Coast Jazz Guitar Fest brings together world-class jazz guitarists and educators with jazz guitar enthusiasts for a weekend filled with listening, learning, and hanging out.

Renowned jazz guitar players from around the U.S. will grace the stage, showcasing their virtuosity, and pushing the boundaries of jazz guitar.

Attendees will have the opportunity to witness breathtaking performances and workshop-style classes by jazz luminaries such as: Rich Severson, Bruce Forman Thom Rotella, David Becker and more.

All-access weekend passes, single-day all-access passes, and nightly concert tickets are available at www.jazzguitarfest.com.



• Messy Art Playtime - Saturday, March 9, 10 - 11 a.m. Encourage your child to get creative through painting and other messy art processes! Leave the clean-up to us. All materials will be provided. Wear clothes that can get messy. For ages 6 months and up.

• Seed Starting & Seed Collecting - Saturday, March 9, 10 - 11 a.m. Hope Merkle from Los Osos Valley Nursery will come and show how to do some simple seed starting and collecting, and teach everyone how to make seed bombs.

• Dungeons & Dragons for Teens - Saturday, March 9, 2 - 4 p.m. Teens and tweens: Local Dungeon Master John will take us on a voyage to The Enchanted Woods! You and your friends are attending a school for wizards, but on a field trip to the Enchanted Woods you get separated from your group! Work together with your friends, watch out for dangers, and get help from the forest's residents to get safely back to your class before night falls. For ages 11-18. Space is limited so please register.

Brain Education Series for Adults: Week 2 - Tuesday, March 12, 5:30 - 7 p.m.

The Basics: Understanding Alzheimer's and Dementia Alzheimer's is not normal aging. It's a disease of the brain causing problems with memory, thinking and behavior. You'll learn the difference between Alzheimer's and dementia, disease stages, risk factors, current research and treatments available.

Registration preferred. Walk-ins welcome. RSVP: Los Osos Library: 805-528-1862 or the Alzheimer's Association: 800-272-3900.

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

• Featured Wall Artist: Ron Baers
• Display Case: Nature Journaling by Mary Sturm
• Paws to Read - Wednesdays, 3:15 - 4:15 p.m.

Come and read your favorite book to Berkeley! She's at the Los Osos Library on Wednesday afternoons. School Age.

• E-Device Class - Wednesdays, 9:15 - 10 a.m. Bring your device in and Diana will do her best to answer any questions you have.

• Storytime - Thursdays, 10:30 - 11 a.m. Stories, dance, and music for toddlers and preschoolers.

• Nintendo Switch - Friday, March 1, 2:30 - 4:30 p.m. Master your gaming skills and make new friends 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 Just Dance. School Age

• Art Party - Friday, March 8, 2:30 - 4:30 p.m. Unleash your creativity at our monthly art party! Use your imagination to make unique art pieces using paper, pens, pencils, scissors, glue and more. All materials provided - you bring the inspiration! Creative options available for ages 3-12.

the Monterey Peninsula. He is a former startup co-founder "dedicated to the onset of the circular economy."

He "loves wine, hockey, surfing, philosophy, art, and of course, reading and writing," according to Amazon.

Coalesce's book signings are traditionally held in the Garden Chapel behind the bookstore.

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. We do not guarantee publication but try to include as many as we can.

Puzzle Exchange March 2

If you like jigsaw puzzles, the Morro Bay Odd Fellows has solutions for you. The Bay-Rock Lodge, I.O.O.F. is holding a "Jigsaw Puzzle Exchange" fundraiser set for 2-4:30 p.m. Saturday, March 2 at the Odd Fellows Hall, 710 Harbor St., Morro Bay.

Cost is a \$10 entry fee and they will have more than 100 puzzles of varying sizes and by various manufacturers to peruse. Bring your old puzzles and take home new puzzles to assemble, and help the non-profit organization raise money for its many community programs.

Manufacturers include: Springbok, Ravensburger, Willow Creek and many more. Sizes range from 300 pieces to over 1,000.

Themes include holidays, animals, shaped puzzles, Americana, nostalgia and more.



College Readiness 101

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

The Unpredictable Landscape of College Admissions

At this time of year, as admissions decisions continue to be released, you may start to hear rumblings about why Student A was granted admission to a particular school while Student B was flat out rejected, waitlisted, or deferred. "She had a lower Grade Point Average (GPA) than he did." "Her test scores were so much higher." "But she hardly has any extra-curricular activities, and my son or daughter is the student body president, had the lead in the school play and is the captain of the soccer team!" What gives?

The bottom line is that college admissions is often more of an art than a science. While there are schools that

Ukrainian-born novelist, Nick Oliveri, will sign his

new book, "The Last Conjuror," from 11:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday, March 9 at Coalesce Bookstore, 845 Main St., Morro Bay.

A No. 1 Bestselling author of eight novels and an e-book of poetry, Oliveri's "The Last Conjuror" is the third book in the Conjuror Story trilogy and was preceded by "Becoming the Conjuror (Stories of the Shadow and Flame Book 1)" published in February 2023; and its prequel, "The Conjuror (Stories of Shadow and Flame Book 2)" in 2021. The Last Conjuror was published this past December.

According to Amazon's plot summary, "In today's society, people today scroll through a digital world that alienates them. Coyote suffers the same struggle as he journeys to the greedy depths of vicious crime and sin. The unproven son leaves his cushy life to battle through tattered robes through deserts and cities. As he does so, a shocking power struggle between the kingdom's leaders unleashes terror in an unforgettable battle of the wits. Blood spills."

According to Amazon's bio, Oliveri was born in Ukraine but grew up in Massachusetts, and now lives on





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Community

adhere to what is called “admissions by the numbers,” the institutions you are hearing about in these rumbblings are typically schools that practice “holistic admissions.” You may even hear an admissions officer boast in a college information session about the holistic review they employ when creating an incoming freshman class.

When applying to schools that practice “admissions by the numbers” it’s pretty cut and dry as well as predictable. After completing a set of required high school courses, you either meet the minimum threshold GPA, and possibly, a minimum SAT or ACT score or you don’t. Institutions that practice holistic admissions, on the other hand, use GPA and test scores as screeners to determine who most likely possesses the skills to succeed academically at the school.

A plethora of additional criteria are utilized to make an admissions decision. This is the reason you may hear admissions officers from the selective universities admit that many of the students who get denied are clearly prepared to succeed at their schools, at least in terms of academic qualifications.

Keep in mind that you don’t have whole story about Student A. Even if you think you know the other student’s GPA and test scores, you haven’t read their application, and you may not realize that what that student has to offer is precisely what that institution was hoping to find to build next year’s freshman class. There is no point comparing yourself, or your child, to any other applicant. Perhaps something in an essay hit close to home to an admissions reader. Perhaps your student applied as a computer science or business major and those majors were impacted, or more competitive due to the limited number of spots. Perhaps Student A is both a gifted soprano and has a killer jump shot. There is also the chance that Student A’s letters of recommendation revealed something particularly fascinating, making them a uniquely valuable asset to the campus community.

Here’s what we do know to be true: college admissions is becoming less and less predictable. There are a number of factors that contribute to what sometimes appears to be the random nature of the college admissions game.

For instance, the growth of the common application and a significant increase in the amount of funds dedicated to marketing by colleges and universities since the onset of the pandemic. These two factors alone have greatly influenced the application volume at many institutions, consequently making it that much more competitive to secure a seat in the freshmen class of your dream school.

Another factor contributing to the mystery of college admissions has been the rise in test-optional policies, which force schools to place more emphasis on extracurriculars, essays, recommendations, as well as the specific institutional goals that vary from year to year. Take the recent decision by Dartmouth College to reinstate its standardized testing requirement for the next application cycle. Dartmouth, along with approximately 80% of colleges and universities in the United States, chose the test optional route in 2020 in response to unusual challenges presented by a global pandemic. Dartmouth’s recent decision makes it the first Ivy League institution to reverse course by abandoning its temporary test-optional policy. According to Dartmouth’s announcement: “Nearly four years later, having studied the role of testing in our admissions process . . . we believe a standardized testing requirement will improve — not detract from — our ability to bring the most promising and diverse students to our campus.”

Thus far, decisions regarding a standardized testing requirement from other selective institutions have been a mixed bag. While Dartmouth, Georgetown University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology have returned to the policy of requiring standardized testing policy, other schools such as Columbia University, the College of William & Mary have extended their test-optional policy indefinitely.

My goal here is not to stress you out, but rather to help you and your student to realize that a rejection letter from a college is not personal. Each year admissions officers must meet enrollment goals and priorities that have been dictated by the leadership of the institution. Unfortunately, the college admissions game is not a “fair” process. In a perfect world, college admissions would be more predictable and

transparent regarding these decisions. Students must remember that these decisions do not define who you are or determine what you will accomplish. Regardless of whether you get accepted to your “dream school,” as Frank Bruni says, “Where you go is not who you’ll be.”

Robin Haas, M.A.Ed. is the founder of Haas College Connections and can be reached at Robin@HaasCollegeConnections.com. She is a member of the Independent Educational Consultants Association (IECA) and earned a Certificate in College Counseling with Distinction from UCLA.

Takin’ Care of BUSINESS

By Theresa-Marie Wilson

Cannabis Educational Fair



Glass House Brands’ Senior Cannabis Educational Fair made its way to NHC Morro Bay on February 20. This popular senior event, previously offered at Farmacy Santa Ana, hosted more than 15 seniors, families, and caregivers eager to explore the world of cannabis.

The event helped educate seniors on cannabis basics and included a special presentation by guest speaker Sue Taylor, founder of Mama Sue Wellness and a trusted face of cannabis among seniors. The event also offered exclusive deals and provided demos from participating brands such as Glass House Farms, PLUS, Mama Sue Wellness, Care By Design, and Jetty Extracts.

Spokes Offers Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Basics

Spokes, an organization providing resources to support and empower the nonprofit community, will offer the online class Diversity, Equity & Inclusion: Basics for Board Members at 11 a.m. on March 5.

Closing out Spokes’ 2024 Board Academy — a multi-session program that educates attendees on all aspects of nonprofit board service — the new class will be the first offering in 2024 Spokes programming developed in partnership with Diversity Coalition San Luis Obispo County.

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion: Basics for Board Members will encourage attendees to engage in deep self-reflection in an effort to build awareness of implicit bias,



Cal Poly Dean of Students Joy Pedersen, Ph.D.

Takin’ Care of Business Continued on page 12

Embarcadero Master Leaseholders, LLC

The Embarcadero Master Leaseholders (the EML) are waterfront business people who lease the waterfront Tidelands Trust land they occupy from the City. They partner with the City of Morro Bay through the rent they pay to the City for their ground leases, plus paying the City a percentage of their sales and revenue. Those revenues fund more than 90% of the City’s Harbor Enterprise Fund, which in turn funds the City’s Harbor Department, including Harbor public safety and City waterfront facilities.

The EML’s purpose is to advocate for and partner with the City of Morro Bay in developing and increasing revenue from the City’s Tidelands Trust lands - for the benefit of all citizens of Morro Bay.

Did You Know.... that Embarcadero waterfront businesses are not “getting rich” off the backs of the City and the community?

Did You Know..... Did You Know that Embarcadero waterfront businesses are a leading contributor to the tourism that supports the City of Morro Bay economically, including the services the City provides to the community?

Did You Know that the typical term for Embarcadero waterfront leases negotiated with the City are 30-40 years long.

Brought to you by the Embarcadero Master Leaseholders, LLC

Community

Takin' Care of Business From page 11

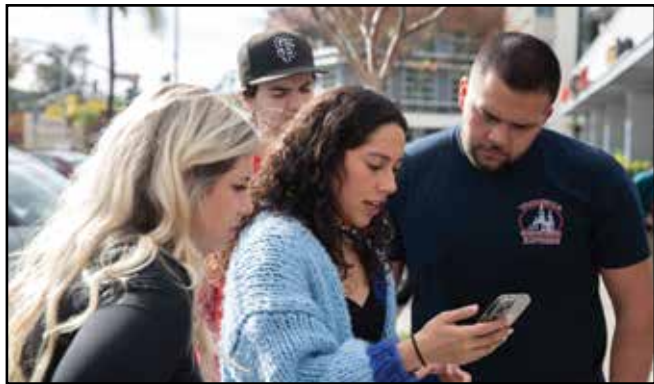
acknowledge privilege, examine social responsibility, and understand how socialization and culture impact the work of nonprofits.

Led by Cal Poly Dean of Students Joy Pedersen, Ph.D. the class will help introduce participants to racism as an institutional structure and explore their social responsibility to engage in bystander intervention, advocacy, and social change.

"In order for a nonprofit board to best serve the needs of all the communities it serves, it must understand and be sensitive to cultural differences — and, ideally, be diverse in and of itself," said Michael Simkins, chief executive officer of Spokes. "We're excited to partner with Diversity Coalition to bring this class, and other critical programming, to our nonprofit members and others who will benefit."

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion: Basics for Board Members is on Zoom from 11 a.m. to 12 p.m. on March 5. Cost is \$25 for non-Spokes members; \$10 for Spokes members; and free to Spokes Board Academy 2024 attendees. For more information and to register, visit <https://bit.ly/DEI-BoardBasics>.

Marketing Athletes at Poly



Cruz Rubio, a long snapper with the Cal Poly football team, far right, reviews video of himself promoting Taqueria Santa Cruz with his marketing team. Pictured are Laurel Yocum, Keiry De Leon, Aiden Velasquez. Photos by Jahan Ramezani, courtesy of Cal Poly

Now that college athletes can profit from their name, image and likeness, a Cal Poly class is acting as a mini-marketing agency, helping numerous athletes with promotional opportunities.

Randy Rovegno, a professor in the Orfalea College of Business, launched the Athlete Lab, which operates out of his marketing projects class, last fall.

"It's a senior-level marketing class that serves as an internal sports agency to support their student-athlete peers and also get the local community to help facilitate opportu-

nities," he said.

Rovegno brings 30 years of sports and entertainment marketing experience to the class, having worked at Fox Sports and CBS, where he was vice president of marketing. With his own agency, Longboard Marketing, he also performed work for ESPN, Disney, ABC and NBC. Some of the sports campaigns he worked on included famous athletes such as National Baseball Hall of Famer Rollie Fingers and former NFL players Ronnie Lott and Drew Brees.

Eager to share his knowledge, Rovegno had guest lectured for 15 years, including a stint at his alma mater, Arizona State University, before coming to Cal Poly last fall. "I always knew eventually I'd wind up teaching full time," he said.

At Cal Poly, he immediately launched his Athlete Lab, <https://athletelab.org/>, an idea he carried over from Arizona State.

For well over a century, college athletes were considered strictly amateurs and not allowed to profit from their participation in sports. But in 2021, the NCAA overturned its rule forbidding the athletes from making name, image and likeness (NIL) money.

Since then, star athletes like Ohio State receiver Marvin Harrison Jr. and University of Miami basketball twins Haley and Hanna Cavinder have profited greatly. But while Harrison is valued at \$1.4 million and the Cavinder twins have reportedly made over \$2 million off NIL deals, most college athletes aren't going to get rich off their image.

"The new NIL rules have definitely changed the landscape of college athletics, favoring those schools that have wealthy donors and alumni," said Kate Slack, a member of the Cal Poly volleyball team, who also took Rovegno's class as a marketing student. "For Cal Poly, specifically, there are a lot of local opportunities, but we don't have as many large-scale opportunities as nationally known (sports) schools might have."

The class connected Aidan McCarthy, a record-breaking Mustangs track star in the 800 meters, with Quickie, a food delivery business that launched at Cal Poly, for promo spots, emphasizing the speed of Quickie deliveries. And members of the volleyball team recently appeared at Athleta women's apparel store in San Luis Obispo, to sign autographs.

"It's all scale," Rovegno said. "Here we're working for product, trade or cash. And it allows them to get their profile up, it gives them some swag, and they're out there in the community — so if someone sees them doing a promotion, they might think, 'I want to hire that person.'"

Because the rule change is new, college athletes don't know what opportunities exist — or how to pursue them.

"Many student athletes are trying to navigate this new landscape on their own, which can be very tricky," said Cruz Rubio, a long snapper on the Cal Poly football team, who recently filmed promotional videos with the class for

the Taqueria Santa Cruz Mexican restaurant in San Luis Obispo. "But with the guidance and knowledge of Randy, it makes the whole process smooth and stress free."

For each athlete the lab works with, students perform a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) analysis, complete with graphics. The marketing students serve as account executives, project managers, and content creators.

As both an athlete and a student in the class, Slack has learned how to brand herself, which includes keeping consistent — and non-controversial — on all social media platforms.

"Another thing that we've learned in our class is to always have an elevator pitch ready, which is very important for branding," said the Roseville, California, resident.

Rubio said he knows several other athletes who are working with the lab, and it has been a positive experience. "The students get to learn and experiment within their class, and student-athletes get to benefit from the whole situation by essentially being guinea pigs for them," said Rubio, a political science major from Anaheim, California.

Rovegno hopes to expand the class and garner Cal Poly a reputation for its NIL work beyond San Luis Obispo.

Already, word of mouth has spread about what the class can do locally.

"I'm fielding probably three or four calls a week from athletes," Rovegno said, "which is exactly what we want."

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.



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LOOKING BACK

A look at our local history, from way back when to now!

The building on the corner of Ninth Street and Los Osos Valley Road was built in the late 1920s by Charles and Emma Ferrell. It was the first gas station and grocery store in Los Osos Valley, and with an addition, it became the Ferrell's living quarters.

They served sandwiches, chili for a dime, and coffee for a nickel. Gas was pumped from a 200 gallon tank.

They sold the building after prohibition ended in 1933, as they did not want to sell liquor. The building was later called Paul's Corner, run by Paul Moribito (1905-1977). It was later named Frogs. It was once a bus stop for kids going to school in San Luis Obispo. It has been the Sweet Springs Saloon for 40 years. It closed for a remodel in 2017 and reopened March 13, 2018.

Then



Now

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SCAN ME

Sports

CIF Tourney From page 1

Sunset League, and posting an 8-2 league record. Earning the No. 2 Seed for the playoffs, the team beat West High School 48-30 in the opening round, and Reedley fell in the second round.

The local girls were slated to host the Div. 3 Semi-finals game against third seed, Roosevelt High of Fresno (21-7) on Feb. 21, for a chance to play for the Sectional Championship on Feb. 23 against either Bakersfield Christian (No. 1 seed) or Shafter (4th seed). The Central Section's Championship Games for all divisions are played at Fresno's Selland Arena.

But no matter how deep the girls end up going, their 20-plus wins is the first 20-win season for the Lady Pirates' program since 2013.

Yes, it's been a highly successful season for the Lady Pirates and coach Alex Engel; and the Reedley game was a good example of how efficient this team is on offense and defense.

"The girls did a great job executing our game plan against Reedley," Coach Engel said. "We knew we had a size advantage inside and wanted to dominate the rebounding battle and make them take contested shots all night long."

On offense, the girls dished the rock quite a lot. "We also did a great job of sharing the ball," he said, "and working inside out by getting looks in the post and kick outs for open three-pointers."

Leading the way for Morro Bay was senior power forward, Georgie Wheeler, who put up Stephen Curry numbers from beyond the arc. Wheeler hit seven of 10, 3-point shots and scored 23 points to lead the team.

Overall shooting had Wheeler hitting a total of eight shots (seven treys) out of just 12 shot attempts for an excellent 67% shooting on the night. It's gotten to be almost routine for Wheeler to light up the scoreboard.

"She's hit seven, threes in a game multiple times this year," Coach Engel said. "She broke the school record for 3-pointers made in a season, which had stood for almost 20 years."

Shooting guard Violet Pace hit three of six, 2-point shots plus 4-for-4 from the free throw line to score 10 for the Lady Pirates.

Forward, Fiona Durham scored 10 points on four of 10 from the floor, plus two-of-three from the charity stripe.

Senior center, Tailer Morrison scored nine for Morro Bay; point guard, Zoe Fitzwater scored four; Taylen Robson scored four; and Maiya Massie and Naiyah Zales each score a bucket to round out Morro Bay's scoring against Reedley.

The Lady Pirates have been able to do something that every team strives for but few achieve.

"This season," Coach Engel said, "our team has had incredible team chemistry, which has allowed us to be successful on the court. The girls spend a lot of extra time in the weight room, watching film, and practicing to prepare themselves for games. Their dedication has paid off and I'm incredibly proud of all of them."



Morro Bay point guard, Zoe Fitzwater splits the defenders on a drive to the hoop against Reedley.



Morro Bay senior forward, Georgie Wheeler drives through defenders against Reedley.



Senior, Fiona Durham, posts up against Reedley.



MBHS senior, Fiona Durham, drives to the basket.



Fiona Durham drives against a double team against Reedley.



Fiona Durham drives leads the break against Reedley.



Morro Bay senior center, Tailer Morrison muscled her way inside against Reedley.



Morro Bay's Violet Pace fights the triple team defense.



Georgie Wheeler goes for the scoop shot against Reedley.



Violet Pace drives to the hoop with the left hand against Reedley.



Senior Georgie Wheeler gets double-teamed during a fast break against Reedley. The ball was stripped by the defense but it was Morro Bay's under the basket.



After a steal, Georgie Wheeler, leads the fast break for Morro Bay against Reedley.



NATURAL HISTORY NUGGETS

Spring is in the Air



A young peregrine falcon surveys her domain above the Pacific. Photo by Staci Thompson.

By Dean Thompson

In 1985, before they closed the end of Colman Drive, I lived in my van in the parking lot on the south side of Morro Rock for 100 days. No, I was not a "homeless dude" as some wondered, I was a field biologist (there can be a fine line between the two). It was my job to be there. I was a nest site attendant monitoring the endangered peregrine falcons that lived there. Due to that time spent there, it has always been a special place for me, plus I met my wife there (which is a whole different story).

This is one of my favorite seasons to venture out to Morro Rock, it reminds me of my time back in the 80s and it's so noticeable that spring is in the air ... literally. The gulls are chattering to each other about reestablishing their pair bonds. Cormorants are traveling in from the bay with mouthfuls of eel grass to line their nests, sparrows, wrens, and other birds are all singing and nest building, but my eyes are always drawn up, to the peregrine falcons.

They say that peregrines mate for life, but I often wonder are they wedded to each other or to the territory? To that massive volcanic monolith dominating the mouth of the bay. It is the Park Place and Boardwalk of peregrine habitat; it can't get any better for a falcon. A big cliff near water where there are lots of birds to eat.

If you go out to The Rock, keep your eyes to the skies for a chance to watch those birds go through their rousing courtship. On windy days you may be lucky to see the male rise high over the rock into the gale riding the updrafts. Once he knows his mate is watching, he'll pitch over, tuck his wings and with his shape like a bullet, dive down, faster and faster gaining speeds up to 100 to 200 mph, racing in front of the cliff where the nest ledge is, then he'll pull out of the dive and rocket back up into the wind to do it over again, several times. At some point he'll fly straight to the nest ledge he thinks she'll like, land, and begin bowing and chugging to her.

The female watching from above or on a nearby ledge will fly to the nest site. When she lands and starts chugging to him, he'll quickly hop onto her back and tuck his tail around hers for the cloacal kiss. It takes all of three to ten seconds and then they're done, for now. They both rouse (ruffle their feathers to set them straight) and then off he'll go again. Perhaps this time to kill a bird on the wing, demonstrating to his mate he's still got what it takes to raise a family.

The details that make these spring rituals happen are fascinating. Most of the time birds' gonads are virtually non-existent, small insignificant structures in their body cavities. But come springtime, the lengthening days and increased light spurs all sorts of physiological changes. Their gonads begin to swell 50 to 800 times their normal size and with this enlargement, hormones flood their bodies putting their breeding plumage on

full display and their singing fills the morning like a dawn chorus.

Imagine if that gonad swelling happened to you. You too would probably turn color, become more territorial and start vocalizing at the top of your lungs as well.

So now you know why our feathered friends are acting that way. We are all animals and hormones are powerful drivers. Just ask any middle school teacher! But let's not fight it, let it flow. Enjoy the extended daylight, the profusion of flowers and colors, the songs, the mating dances of the birds and the bees, and of course of the humans as well.

Yes, indeed spring is in the air. Breathe it in.

Dean Thompson is a naturalist and storyteller who has worked as an educator, and field biologist for the last 42 years, mostly in the Estero Bay area.

Subtle reminder, I'm napping!



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Every Color Deserves a Forever Home

Sports

MBHS February 2024 Athletes of the Month

By Neil Farrell

The Morro Bay High School Sports Boosters Club has named its Athletes of the Month for February 2024, honoring a pair of hoopsters, a swimmer and a golfer, plus the entire wrestling program from a very grateful coach.

The Boosters Club "aims to showcase some of the many exemplary student/athletes representing Morro Bay High School," the club said in a news release. "February is a month that transitions away from the winter sports season and begins the spring sports season."

Girls Basketball

Girls' Basketball Coach Alex Engel named two of his league champions — Fiona Durham and Georgie Wheeler — for honors.

"Fiona Durham," he said, "she averaged 11.5 points and 11 rebounds a game during league and helped lead us to a 20-6 overall record and the Sunset League Championship." It was the inaugural season for the Sunset League, too.

Durham, he said, "is also a 2-year team captain and has been a great leader for our program over the past 2 years. Fiona is one of the hardest workers I have ever had the pleasure of coaching and does so many different things on the court that help us win."

Wheeler also averaged 11 points a game during league and made 88, 3-point field goals during the season, which broke the single season school record that had been held for 20 years." The previous record was 66.

"She is one of the best shooters in the [CIF] Central Section and was also a major factor in our successful season this year."



Girls' basketball player, Fiona Durham, was named Athlete of the Month for February 2024.

Boys and Girls Wrestling

Boys and Girls Wrestling Coach, Albert Garza said he is so impressed with all of his wrestlers that he decided to nominate them all for Athlete of the Month Honors.

"I'd like to recognize both the entire boys and girls team," Coach Garza said. "I know I can single out individual wrestlers for their accomplishments, but what a lot don't understand is what it takes to host the tournaments we host at Morro Bay and the amount of work all the wrestlers put in to not only have a successful season for themselves but to make our tournaments some of the best events in California."

Girls Swimming

Girls Swimming Coach Laurel Carpenter selected Kirra Doherty to be Athlete of the Month in February.

"Not only is Kirra a committed student-athlete," Coach Carpenter said, "she is committed to becoming the best version of herself. I have been consistently impressed so far this season by the hard work she put in pre-season [which has earned her a position on the varsity squad and is well-deserved], her positive attitude, and the way she deeply cares for her teammates."

"She is an excellent communicator with her coaches, and is serious about bettering herself alongside the experiences of her teammates. When things get tough, she has shown that she is able to carry herself through with the utmost integrity. I am so proud to be Kirra's coach."

Boys Golf

Boys Golf Team Coach Sean Allstot chose Braden Burnett for early-season honors.

"While we have not had any official competitions yet," he said, "Braeden's hard work in the offseason has been obvious during practice. He is coming to practice every day with the goal of improving a little bit each day. In his practice rounds so far he is shooting the best rounds of his young career."

Estero Bay News congratulates all of the honored athletes this month and wishes them continued success in the future.

A Dose of Good Dogma



Animals: Gods, Spirits and Stars

Forum, "The cow symbolizes all other creatures. The cow is a symbol of the earth; the nourisher, the ever-giving undemanding provider." The cow represents life, the sustenance and "the virtual sustainer of life for many humans." It is seen as a symbol of grace and abundance. Reverence of this bovine "instills in Hindus the virtues of gentleness, receptivity and connectedness with nature."

Totems: For Native Americans, there are Totems. From Native American Legends, "Native American tradition provides that each person is connected with nine different animals that will accompany him or her through life, acting as guides." Also called "spirit guides or power animals", these creatures come in and out of our lives depending on the direction that we're headed and the tasks that need to be completed along our life's journey. A Totem animal is one that is with you for life, in both the physical and spiritual world. Though people may identify with different animal guides during their lifetime, it is only one totem animal that acts as the main guardian spirit.

The Zodiac: Although the ancient Chinese and Egyptians are known to have applied symbolic sky maps, the origins of the patterns is not clear. Most of the constellation names we know came from the ancient Middle Eastern, Greek, and Roman cultures. They identified clusters of stars as gods, goddesses, animals, and objects of their stories. There are 42 animal constellations. Chinahighlights.com says, "The Chinese legend goes that the Emperor of the Heavens ordered all the animals that inhabited the earth to congratulate him on his birthday. He...selected twelve animals that arrived first to be guardians of the Heavenly Gate, so they could take turns on duty in order to prevent deities from secretly descending to the earth. The people created the twelve Chinese zodiac signs according to the arrival order of the twelve animals. Each zodiac sign is designated to a specific year, so, the same zodiac sign returns every twelve years."

Heavens ordered all the animals that inhabited the earth to congratulate him on his birthday. He selected twelve animals that arrived first to be guardians of the

Heavenly Gate, so they could take turns on duty in order to prevent deities from secretly descending to the earth." The people created the twelve Chinese zodiac signs according to the arrival order of the twelve animals. Each zodiac sign is designated to a specific year, so, the same zodiac sign returns every twelve years.

Constellations: Animals have always been credited with crafting elements of the dark sky. There are Native American tales in which the coyote created the constellations and, in some, he's to blame for the fact that they don't really resemble what they should. The impatient canine carelessly tossed the stars up into the sky instead of placing them carefully in the right pattern.

I think my favorite is a Cherokee story which tells the tale of a dog that was caught stealing from a mill. When he ran away, the trail of grain spilling from his mouth created the Milky Way.

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

Give Back From page 4

All of the proceeds went to EBKC. There was a lot of support for the community during the day. Many people donated shelf stable foods and new or gently worn clothing for students K-12, as well as attending donation based yoga classes. The donation based yoga classes raised \$500 for EBKC and the Guides of each class donated their time and pay to the cause.

Cayucos Yoga has a heart for the community and is teaming up with local nonprofits throughout the year with their "Give Back to The Community" business platform called "Kindness Matters". We will also collaborate with EBKC several more times throughout the year.

Estero Bay Kindness Coalition has a variety of outreach programs to help under-resourced families and students.

You can also go to EBKC "wishlist" on Amazon and have foods sent to their facility where volunteers meet every Tuesday to pack groceries and fresh produce and deliver to over 90 families.

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Community

Wind Farm From page 1

animals that inhabit the “Morro Bay Call Area” as the wind farm site is called. That should include the grey whale, which has a long bi-annual migration route that runs from Baja Mexico to the summer feeding grounds off Alaska. When traveling north, the female whales swim with young calves born in the Sea of Cortez.

The surveys also include mapping the seafloor with high-energy “Sound Navigation and Ranging” or SONAR devices.

The SONAR, Lueker said, “uses decibel levels that are harmful and deadly to marine mammals, and animals all through the water column.”

She noted that when Pacific Gas & Electric wanted to do SONAR mapping for a seismic study of earthquake faults offshore from Diablo Canyon Power Plant, as part of the company’s re-licensing application, there was widespread opposition.

Lueker said she was with the City of Morro Bay back then and the City Council was strongly against it. “People of all walks of life,” she said, “came together against PG&E.”

The Navy also proposed a plan to test high-power SONAR for an anti-submarine defense system, which also raised a furor of opposition, but the Navy eventually won out. “They said ‘No’ to PG&E and ‘No’ to the Navy,” Lueker said, and yet one of the wind companies plans to soon start SONAR surveying.

BOEM has already gotten the Coastal Commission to sign off on the mapping, with decibel levels up to 228.

According to a decibel chart from the National Hearing Conservation Association, the noise level standing 100-feet from a jet engine is about 140 decibels (dB); a rock concert is 115 dB. Potential hearing loss for humans with sustained exposure starts at 90 dB; and pain begins at 125 dB. Some 180 dB starts to kill off hearing tissue and the loudest sound possible is 194 dB, according to the Hearing Conservation Association’s chart.

She said the SONAR surveys would certainly damage the hearing of whales, as it is alleged to have done already off the East Coast, where she said there has been 90 dead whales wash ashore.

Though the deaths happened while site surveys for near shore wind farms were being conducted, the government has denied the surveys are the cause.

“We’re saying,” Lueker said, “that there’s a direct correlation between the site surveys and whale deaths.”

The REACT Alliance is also concerned about impacts to birds, and Lueker said their president, Mandy Davis, “speaks eloquently that the call area is sited within the Pacific Flyway,” that’s the wide path going north-south used by countless migrating bird species. The Morro Bay Estuary is a major stopover on that route.

One of the biggest impacts wind turbines have to wildlife is the ability to knock birds out of the sky with 200-foot long fan blades that Lueker said are spinning at some 170 mph at the outer tip.

On land, she said, “they are killing a significant number of eagles.”

It should be noted that BOEM has enlisted marine sci-

entists to do biological surveys of the call area to see what bird species and marine mammals and other sea life either migrate through the call area or live there year-round.

The issue has brought together some folks that normally don’t see eye-to-eye, such as commercial fishermen and environmentalists, in opposition to the industrialization of the oceans.

“And then there’s commercial fishing,” Lueker said. She said the call area is designated essential fish habitat for albacore, swordfish, salmon and rockfish, as well as crab, squid and prawns that get fished all along the proposed power cable routes.

“Fish are also damaged from the sound surveys,” Lueker said. Other possible issues include the electro-magnetic fields associated with high-voltage power lines. “The damage is just unknown.”

And the kicker of all is that Lueker said BOEM itself years ago issued a paper that said “wind farms have no collective impacts on climate change.”

The REACT Alliance is inviting everyone to come to the March 9 event at the Vet’s Hall and see for themselves the arguments being made against this brand new industry.

“We are opposed,” to the projects, Lueker said. “But the big push is to make sure people understand what’s involved.”

YSLASH From page 1

themed art classes. “I don’t have models or do demonstrations. I provide all they will need to paint for the two-hour session.”

When participants sign up, they are asked to ponder the theme provided. When the class starts, the group – maximum 12 – discusses the theme for five minutes.

“Their art will need to come from their heart, their feelings,” said Carocha. “It will be their artistic interpretation of the theme.”

However, once the class starts Carocha throws in her “curve ball secret theme” to challenge them and probe further creativity. Students then have two hours to express what they are feeling abstractly or by image they have visualized. Carocha guides, cajoles, and documents each participant’s creative journey with photographs. Time at the end is reserved for all to share how their painting has expressed the theme and congratulate each other for creating their custom originals.

Carocha added, “Classes can be an emotional roller coaster. I try to help them discover what’s deep inside and capture it on the canvas.” It made me wonder if that was why adult beverages were included!

Another activity she produces is the “Artist Day to Shine.” She features someone in the area, typically outside of Morro Bay, that produces an art form other than acrylics – Carocha’s medium. It might be dance, oils, Henna, etc. The guest artist will share their artistic story, demonstrate their art form, and be available for questions. Carocha’s goal is to build community and share common creative experiences.

It wasn’t until 2015 that Carocha discovered Morro Bay. After working 24/7 for a privately owned pharmaceutical company in Hollywood for 14 years, she had achieved



Carocha’s students share their final art after a YSLASH lesson at Carocha’s Gallery & Studio. Photo submitted

senior health advisor status and exceeded her client sales goals, so she celebrated her 40th birthday in Morro Bay with friends. “We took a walk about midnight, and I know you have heard this from others, but Morro Rock called me. I knew I’d be back.”

As she continued to recruit and stabilize her core client repeat-business, she kept her eyes open for lease space. She thought she wanted just enough space for her personal working gallery.

“I’ve always been an artist,” she said. When the Monterey site came up, “I jumped on it.” But then she needed a place to live. She commuted from Atascadero for five months until housing became available near her gallery. It was during this time the concept of sharing her studio space came to her. She decided to offer classes, but with her unique concept and a goal to have fun while probing creativity. Her marketing flyer promises, “Artistic Freedom Awaits You!! Come Paint with Us and Release the Artist Hidden Inside of You!”

Through networking at chamber of commerce events and meetings with South Bay Women’s Network members, she quickly adapted her themed art classes to produce at other venues and special events.

It is notable that in less than a year YSLASH Carocha’s Gallery & Art Studios has attracted enough business to warrant a fulltime employee. Some folks will recognize Lizzy Palm as the former manager of the Libertine. Currently closed for reconstruction, Lizzy had some time and had taken some classes. She is in the gallery from 11 a.m.- 4 p.m. fulfilling the role as Scheduling Ninja while Carocha is out growing new business.

Frankly, Carocha has impressed many how she has grown so quickly. It is textbook business marketing 101. First and foremost, she believes in networking with fellow businessowners, so she immediately joined and more importantly started attending Morro Bay Chamber of Commerce Members Mixers, monthly breakfasts, and became an active member of the Ambassador Committee. She also joined the South Bay Women’s Network, a constant source of referrals.

“I give out business cards and flyers to everyone,” Carocha said. “My friend Lisa Law suggested I could attend the Morro Bay City Council meeting. It is televised. At the

YSLASH Continued on page 19

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Community

Family Traditions From page 1



From left, Julia and Chris Nichols receive the keys to the Morro Bay Appliance Store from former owners Annette and Mike Mlnarik. The Nichols took over the business on Feb. 4. Photo by Neil Farrell

hard to reach for a biopsy to further diagnose the illness. Last year, he and Annette decided to put the business up for sale and retire, and then spend time traveling and enjoying their remaining time together.

"We worked six days a week," Annette said. "It's become too much."

"The doctor," Mike adds, "can't tell me how much longer I have" to live.

The business was on the market for nearly a year and last December, they'd made the decision that the store would have to close for good.

With just a few days left on their deadline to sell or close, the Nichols' contacted their broker and a possible sale gave them hope, so the store stayed open.

It was the reprieve the Mlnariks were praying for and one of the longest continuously open businesses in Morro Bay has gotten a fresh lease on life.

Mike bought the store from his parents, Jim and Sherry Mlnarik, in May 2012, with Annette joining him as store manager after they got married.

Mike's parents had owned the business for 19 years before they retired. They bought it from the founders, Rhoda and Bob DeSommer, who had it for more than 20 years before they retired. Morro Bay Appliance has been one of the foundation stones in Morro Bay's Downtown business district for over five decades.

And now, the Nichols are eager to continue the family tradition.

Chris Nichols said he spent years working in natural resources management first for the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and most recently for the City of San Luis Obispo. He said this has long been his dream.

"My dream and my goal," Chris said, "has been to own my own business."

He said they had been looking for something to buy into and found an online sale ad for the appliance store. Julia said she did some research on the business and turned up a story Estero Bay News had done in 2022, when Annette retired from doing hair, closed her salon down and joined Mike at the store to run the office.

"I liked the history of the business," Chris said. "It's been here a long time."

As a specialty store that only sells appliances — new and reconditioned used ones too — one has to be able to fix the machines, and that means learning the technical aspects of the appliances. The image of a bored Maytag repairman from TV commercials, has no basis in reality for small business owners like the Mlnariks.

The 2,200 square foot appliance store comes with a basement storage room and a full workshop and parts repository in the back room. There's even some office space at the back of the store.

Mike, when he came to work for his parents, learned the trade from a long-time employee and through hard work has made service calls and reselling used appliance part of his gig. The used models, he completely goes through fixing whatever's wrong and cleaning them up, and then puts them back on the floor. Such used appliances are popular with folks who have rental properties, and he's got numerous apartment-sized refrigerators, too.

Mike said he will miss doing the service calls, because of all the interesting people he meets, and all the good work he's able to do for them. He's also a bit of a "picker" who loves to go to auctions and to buy unusual things that catch

his eye — from a nickel slot machine to wooden Indians, a bearskin rug, and a stuffed armadillo.

He's also found several antique appliances and after fixing them too, has them on display in the front of the store, facing the street, in a small shrine to the past.

The sale came with a pledge to help the new owners learn the business, so the Mlnariks stayed around for several weeks teaching them the ropes.

Chris said they planned to hire a full-time repair technician and may have already found a guy to bring aboard. "We wanted to keep everything going," Chris explains of what was a pretty seamless transition.

Julia said, "We're learning the business and rolling along."

"We're like two sponges," Chris laughed, "absorbing all their knowledge."

Julia grew up in Novato in the Bay Area and moved here after high school to go to Cal Poly. First, she went to Cuesta College for a year but when she wanted to transfer to Poly, she couldn't. That was during a time when the school wasn't taking new students, she explained, so she ended up at Fresno State studying animal sciences. But that year at Cuesta was enough to make her want to return to the Coast after school.

Chris grew up here and attended Hancock College in Santa Maria before going to Chico State, he said. They have a 2-year-old son and 10-month-old daughter.

The Nichols' are stepping into quite a challenge, as anyone who has their own business could probably attest. But the sale comes as a relief for the Mlnariks, who had a lot of stress fall away in an instant.

Indeed, Estero Bay News had planned on doing a big story last December about the impending store closure and the big sale they had planned. But when the Nichols' offer came in, they asked to hold the story for what in the end is a much happier ending and continuation of a successful family-owned business that's over 50 years in the telling.

Morro Bay Appliance is open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Mondays-Saturdays. It's located at 935 Main St. Call 805-772-2755.

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Grateful From page 17

main drinking water pipeline hub damaged in last winter's heavy storms.

The Chorro Valley Access Road, "contains the Chorro Valley Pipeline and is the only access to the south portal of the Cuesta Tunnel," reads a report from the Public Works Department.

The Chorro Valley Pipeline delivers State Water to Morro Bay and the entities in Chorro Valley that subscribe to the SWP.

Also, "The Cuesta Tunnel," the report said, "is a drinking water conveyance conduit for the Nacimiento Water Project, Salinas Dam, and State Water Project to the City of San Luis Obispo, City of Morro Bay, County Operations Center, Cuesta College, California Men's Colony, and all State Water Contractors south of the portal."

(The Los Osos Community Services District is currently studying a possible project that would tap the Chorro Valley Pipeline as it approaches Morro Bay and bring some 200-acre feet a year of treated drinking water to the South Bay to prop up the town's water supply.)

Some Repairs Were Made

The County said they made some repairs to the road after it was damaged in the storms, but, "the roadway slope remains unstable and vulnerable to additional erosion that could cause damage to the Chorro Valley Pipeline and restrict access to the other drinking water conveyance infrastructure."

The County Flood Control and Water Conservation District is responsible for maintaining the various pipelines and subscribers pay for it. The Supervisors are the governing board of the Flood Control District but every city in the County has a representative on the District's advisory board. County Public Works acts as the District staff.

Design Contract Let

Supervisors awarded a contract with Cannon Corporation for \$274,000 to design and prepare construction documents to repair the roadway's eroding slope.

They also officially created a new capital "project" and seeded it with some \$450,000 taken out of the current State Water Project Operating Reserves.

Cannon Corp.'s contract includes an additional 10-percent — \$27,400 — in contingencies. If the contract needs to go past that total amount, Supervisors will have to OK it.

Red Tape Gets Started

Such projects have a lot of red tape, but Canon will now be able to get started on wading through it all.

Canon will prepare an "Alternatives Analysis," of the project; prepare 30% Design Documents; 60% Design Documents and final designs; plus hang around for the construction bidding and actual construction phase.

Costs Just Starting

The County isn't done dipping into the SWP reserves, as the \$450,000 budgeted by Supervisors is the first installment for what's anticipated to be a multiple-year project at an unknown cost.

"Construction of a repair project," the report said, "is expected to occur in Fiscal Year 2024/25, but costs are unknown because an alternative has not been selected yet."

Costs to be Shared

Given the importance of the Cuesta Tunnel and the water supplies it delivers, everyone will help pay for the road repairs.

"This project will repair a critical road used for accessing the Nacimiento Water Project, Salinas Dam, and State Water Project," the report said. "Therefore, the costs, less potential FEMA reimbursement, will be divided equally between State Water Project Fund, Nacimiento Water Project Fund, and Salinas Dam Fund upon completion of the project."

Another Contract Amended

Repairing the Cuesta Valley Access Road wasn't the only big contract Cannon has with the County. On the same agenda, Supervisors approved a sixth contract amendment for Cannon with regards to the Morro Bay-Cayucos Connector Pathway Project, a proposed dedicated bike lane running from the south end of Studio Drive in Cayucos to the north end of Toro Lane and the North Point Natural Area in Morro Bay.

This latest amendment was for \$423,000 with a \$40,000 added contingency for, "additional engineering services under the existing Engineering Consultant Services Contract that was authorized by [Supervisors] on Aug. 26, 2014."

The change came along with another allocation of tax monies from the San Luis Obispo Council of Governments, which allocated an additional \$650,000 towards the connector project.

Connector a Safety Project

The Connector Project is intended to make pedaling the area safer. It would take cyclists off the highway and onto a new, separated path, though Caltrans' recent completion of a new, wider, northbound Toro Creek Bridge, and removed one significant safety concern.

That old bridge, which dated back to the 1930s, wasn't originally built with the intent of making room for cyclists, causing a short bottleneck with speeding traffic crossing the bridge.

The new bridge, built to modern standards, has plenty of room for two lanes of vehicle travel and a Class-B bike lane.

Project Nearly ready

The 1.25-mile Connector Project has already been approved by government agencies, including the Coastal Commission, and has been held up due to a lack of funding. But that obstacle was recently lifted too.

According to the County report, the California Transportation Commission approved \$7.4 million from the Active Transportation Grant Program to fund construction of the Connector Project.

Once Canon is finished with the design and all of its other duties they should be ready to go out for construction bids.

The amendment for Canon is to finish the design work. "Contract Amendment No. 6 to the Cannon Corporation contract," the report said, "will allow the Cannon Corporation, under the direction of County staff, to complete the Plans, Specification, and Estimate [PS&E] package from the current 60% completion milestones to the final 100% completion milestone.

"Once completed, the Department of Public Works will be positioned to request authorization to enter the Construction phase from Caltrans."

Connecting The Coastal Trail

Overall, the MB-Cayucos Connector will link up existing bike paths in Cayucos — from Norma Rose Park by the cemetery and through to Morro Bay ending at the Cloisters.

It's all planned to become part of the California Coastal Trail.

Project Goes Back Years

It's been a long and winding road for the Connector Project.

"In 2003," reads the County report, "County Parks obtained a transportation grant [through SLOCOG] for a feasibility study, which was completed in 2006, showing this trail segment is feasible.

"In 2008, Parks received another transportation grant for preliminary design and completion of an Environmental

Impact Report (EIR)."

Supervisors certified the Final EIR in 2019, the report said, and in 2013 and 2014, "County Parks received additional transportation grants to complete the design, engineering, National Environmental Policy Act [NEPA] process, right-of-way acquisition, permits, and construction documents."

NEPA is the Federal Government's version of the California Environmental Quality Act or CEQA and is required because the transportation monies funding it originate at the federal level (paid by consumers who purchase gasoline and diesel fuel).

The majority of the right-of-way needed was owned by Chevron, which owned and operated the Estero Marine Terminal from 1929 to 1999, shipping oil out of Estero Bay from the Central Valley and San Ardo oilfields.

The Cayucos Sanitary District actually negotiated the purchase of Dog Beach (Chevron's beach is an off-leash, dog friendly stretch of Morro Strand), purchasing one of the old undersea loading lines for use as a discharge pipe for its new sewer treatment plant located about a mile up Toro Creek Road.

The Sanitary District, County Parks, Cayucos Land Conservancy, City of Morro Bay, and Morro Bay Open Space Alliance worked together to acquire the beach from Chevron. Morro Bay agreed to take what's now called "Dog Beach" and the groups are now working on the rest of Chevron's property, including a large valley stretching behind Del Mar Park.

Time's a Wastin'

As usual, transportation monies come with deadlines, and the Connector Project is no exception. The clock is literally ticking.

"Funding requirements associated with this grant," the County report said, "require the Project to be in the active construction phase by early 2025."

YSLASH From page 16

beginning of the meeting, I had three minutes to talk about my business. The councilmembers were excited I was offering activities in the evening."

She enjoys saying she's a frequent client at ASAP-Reprographics in Morro Bay. "Jim is very helpful with all my flyer ideas and offered a locals' discount." She originally took flyers to all the businesses in Morro Bay to introduce herself. The next step was to hit the hotels to offer their guests activities downtown in the evening.

Originally from Connecticut, Carocha has been an account executive in sales her entire adult career. In 2010 she bought a one-way ticket to Hollywood, CA and created financial sustainability, which allowed her to settle in Morro Bay in 2023 and follow her passion. Building business, however, is what Carocha does. It's in her DNA to create business relationships, but this time she is creating personal balance, creating her own art for sale or commission, and building new friendships in the art and business world of Morro Bay.

She strongly believes that businesses bring in more clients when involved with their business community. She also believes business owners need to be present, get involved, give to get back and be aware of the benefits these organizations can offer.

"I enjoy introducing art to those who don't always believe they can create."

Check out Facebook/Instagram under YSLASH Carocha's Gallery and Art Studio to see what some of her growing creative community members are saying.



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Chamber News

New Hotel Opens in Morro Bay



Twilight time during the mixer. Photo by Dean Sullivan
Story and photos by Neil Farrell

The Morro Bay Chamber of Commerce recently held a mixer at the new, Rhapsody in View boutique hotel, located at 2790 Main St., Morro Bay.

Rhapsody in View is a themed family-built project by Tim and Allie Cleath along with their son Robert and his wife Kezia Cleath.



The 'I Got Rhythm' room is highlighted by a purple accent wall with matching bed covers.

The hotel features just seven rooms — five regular rooms and two suites — though each is tastefully decorated with a theme taken from the music of composer Ira Gershwin. Hence there's "An American in Paris" (a second-floor suite); "Summertime;" "I Got Rhythm;" "Moonrise on the Sea;" "Rhapsody in Blue;" "Shall We Dance;" and, "Love is Here to Stay," rooms.



Jon Elliot, Carocha, Timothy Cleath and his wife, Kezia Cleath, Bobby Cleath, Just Salamacha, Ryan Blevins.

Each has a huge flatscreen TV mounted on the walls with the suites having two, including one in the sizable bedrooms.

The new hotel is bathed in luxury down to the walk-in showers and sculpted bathtubs.

The Chamber held their monthly mixer at the same location following the ribbon cutting.

"We had an amazing turnout and got to tour the beautiful hotel," said Jody Hollier, Chamber marketing Coordinator "We ate some amazing food that was all prepared on-site, listened to smooth jazz from three students from the Cuesta Jazz program, sipped some delicious wine from Rhonedonnée Wines, and of course, had wonderful conversations with the business community!"

The owners of Rhapsody in View are shooting for a mid-March official opening.

Morro Bay Chamber Annual Summit

On February 21, 2024, the Inaugural Annual Summit convened 100 local business and community leaders for a sold out networking lunch at the Inn at Morro Bay.

Kicking off the Summit, Morro Bay Chamber of Commerce Interim CEO, Jocelyn Brennen, delivered opening remarks, setting the tone for an engaging and collaborative experience. Supervisor Bruce Gibson provided an overview of the current state of District Two in his State of the County address. In addition, there was a State of the City presentation by Morro Bay Mayor Carla Wixom. She gave a deeper understanding of Morro Bay's current affairs and future initiatives.

The event closed with a special segment from Visit Morro Bay's Executive Director Michael Wambolt, who offered an analysis of the tourism sector's current status, highlighting recent achievements and upcoming



From Left: Bob Fowler, MBCoC board member; Gloria Zion, MBCoC interim board vice-chamber; Michael Wambolt, executive director for Visit Morro Bay; District 2 Supervisor Bruce Gibson; Judy Salamacha, MBCoC board member; Cherise Hansson, MBCoC board chairperson; Morro Bay Mayor Carla Wixom; Andrea Chmelik, district director, Assemblymember Dawn Addis, AD30; Ryan Blevins, MBCoC board member; Clint Weirick, John Laird's district representative for SLO County and Grover Beach City Council Member; Ray Riordan, MBCoC board secretary; Cyndee Edwards, Morro Bay City Council member; Paul Bosclair, MBCoC board member; Zara Landrum, Morro Bay City Council member; Jen Ford, Morro Bay City Council member; Laurel Barton, Morro Bay City Council member.
Photo by Jocelyn Brennen

opportunities. The Morro Bay Chamber of Commerce was honored to be presented with proclamations for the Inaugural event by Andrea Chmelik, the District Director for Assemblymember Dawn Addis and Clint Weirick, the District Representative for Senator John Laird.

Cambria Chamber of Commerce February Mixer

On February 15, the Cambria Chamber of Commerce held the first 2024 Mixer. The event was hosted by the Unitarian Universality Community of Cambria in their lovely worship and meeting space. Other Chamber members co-hosting included Luigi's Pizza with a generous donation of food, the Discovery Center, and the Cambria Community Health District.

Chamber Mixers are held monthly for the benefit of Chamber members and guests are welcome. Contact the Chamber to find the next location. 805.927.3624 or info@cambriachamber.org.

After a time of actual "mixing" people got to know one another better, there were brief presentations from the co-hosts. The Unitarians explained their mission and involvement in the community and invited those present to get to know them better. The Coastal Discovery Center's, Michelle Roest shared part



Featured in the photo is EMT-Paul Butterfield and EMT-Katie Bramlette.
Photo by Dean Sullivan

of our greater "neighborhood." She reminded us that we live in a national park, formally called a National Marine Sanctuary. She showed some of the features that make the area so special, so full of life, and so important. The CCHD folks spoke about their Minutes Matter guide, which can be found on the Chamber website in English and Spanish.

Clean Up Week

Mission County Disposal will offer Clean-Up in Los Osos the week of March 4th - March 8th.

Clean-Up Week is a community service provided free to single family residential garbage customers. Place your Clean-Up Week garbage on the curb no later than 6 a.m. on your regular garbage collection day. Don't block your containers because they still run automated trucks. You may set out up to 6 bags, 32 gallon capacity size, each not to exceed 75 pounds and 4 feet in length.

Should you have metal, electrical or bulky items, Call our office at 805-543-0875 to schedule pick up. Special pricing for these items are \$25.34 each, limit of 2 like items and is valid only during Clean-Up Week. You must call no later than Friday, March 1st to schedule the pickup of these items. These items will not be picked up unless you call.

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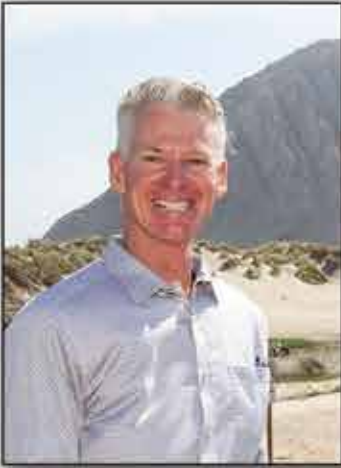


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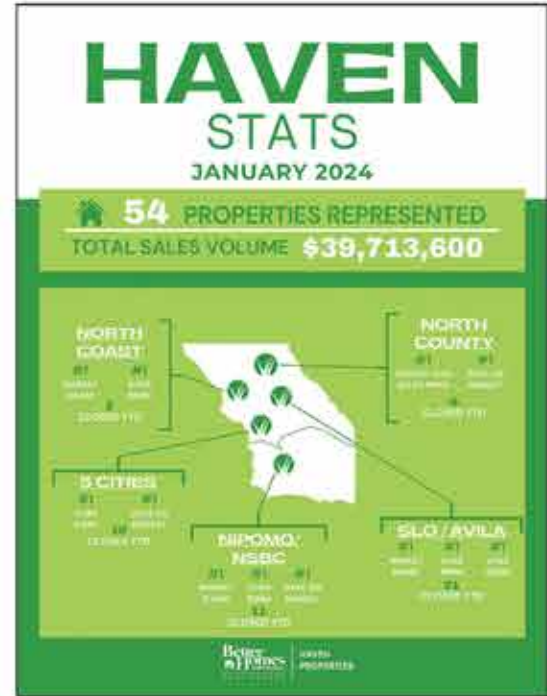
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