

Honor Flights – a Cherished Memory



John Weiss and his father Richard of Morro Bay in front of the Marine Corp Memorial



Rocky and Gary Setting of Los Osos pose at the Vietnam War Memorial in Washington D.C. during a recent Honor Flight.



Peter and Nicole Starlings pose for a photo during their recent Honor Flight trip to Washington D.C.

By Neil Farrell

For over a decade now, Honor Flights of the Central Coast has arranged for trips by military veterans to visit the monuments dedicated to their service in Washington D.C., and recently a trio of local businessmen and their “chaperones” made the trek.

Rocky Setting and his son Gary, who have the Sea Pines Golf Resort in Los Osos, John Weiss and his father Richard “Dick” Weiss of Coast Electronics; and Peter Starlings and daughter Nicole, were aboard the flight with a total of 84 other veterans and companions.

According to the organization’s website: “Honor Flight Central Coast has a single mission: to take our veterans to Washington D.C. to visit the memorials that pay tribute to their military service. We are an all-volunteer, 501(C)(3) non-profit organization that provides veterans from Southern Monterey County through Ventura County with no-cost “Tour of Honor Trips” (see: honorflightccc.org).”

Some 750 veterans have so far taken the honor trips through the Central Coast organization and there’s a 200-strong waiting list of veterans signed up to go.

“We encourage all veterans to apply, from any service and any assignment [at home or abroad]. Every veteran deserves a Tour of Honor.”

For the local fellows, it was a trip to remember. “My wife Judy signed me up for the trip and encouraged me to go,” explained Rocky Setting. “She then gave up her seat as my guardian

so that my son Gary could go with me.”

John Weiss said, “This trip was an opportunity to take my dad to the monuments and museums in Washington D.C. It was reported as an experience that would be memorable, and it was.”

John explained that his dad, now age 90, served in the Navy at the tail end of the Korean War. And despite his age, he’s still sharp. “He can tell you the date when he entered and the date when he was honorably discharged.”

Estero Bay News contacted all three men and received responses from Weiss and Setting, but unfortunately, not from Starlings before deadline.

Setting said the trip was special for him because he and the Starlings used to be neighbors and he got to spend time with them. “It made the trip extra special to share it with them,” he said.

The flight out of Santa Maria was uneventful, he said, though the return flight had to divert around some nasty weather over the Appalachian Mountains, making the long flight about an hour longer, but otherwise it was smooth going.

The trip included tours of Arlington National Cemetery where the nation’s war dead are buried dating back to the Civil War.

Setting remembered one of the stories they were told at Arlington. “It was said that some time before his assassination, President John Kennedy remarked that Arlington was so beautiful and peaceful that he wouldn’t mind spending eternity there!”

President Kennedy is of course interred at Arlington below

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Food Bank Prepares for Cuts in Funding



Proposed federal funding cuts would have a big impact on area agencies that help the food insecure. Pictured are volunteers handing out fresh produce at the SLO Food Bank’s Morro Bay Neighborhood Food Distribution. Photo submitted

By Theresa-Marie Wilson

The federal “One Big, Beautiful Bill” tax and spending plan is currently in the hands of the Senate after being approved by the House of Representatives on May 22. San Luis Obispo County agencies that help the food insecure could face dramatic impacts.

“We are now serving an average of 45,000 neighbors every month, which is the highest number we’ve ever reached — even more than at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic,” SLO Food Bank Senior Manager for Communications, Savannah Colevans told Estero Bay News. “This reflects a significant and ongoing increase in need throughout San Luis Obispo County. The rising cost of living, economic uncertainty, and recent reductions in other support programs have all contributed to this record demand for food assistance in our community.”

The bill, which also includes tax cuts, aims to reduce the nations’ deficit by shifting food assistance costs to individual states and reducing federal funding for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).

CalFresh, California’s nutrition assistance program federally known as SNAP, provides eligible individuals and families with monthly financial assistance to purchase food at grocery stores and some farmers’ markets. It serves more than 31,000 SLO County residents.

As proposed, the bill would cut \$300 billion in SNAP funding. Locally, that would mean a reduction of 10% potentially increasing demands on the SLO Food Bank. Both programs serve families with children, seniors on fixed incomes, people with disabilities, college students, and working adults who simply can’t make ends meet due to high housing and living costs.

CalFresh is administered throughout the county by the Department of Social Services. The program financially supports farmers’ markets and agriculture producers, as well as grocery stores, to the tune of \$75 million annually.

“With CalFresh providing 10 meals for every one meal provided by food banks to people experiencing hunger, our partner-

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City out for Bids to Rebuild Coleman Park

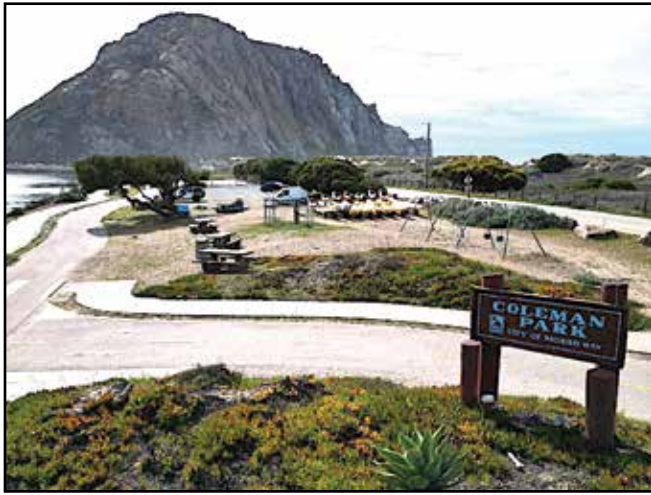
By Neil Farrell

It’s arguably the saddest public park in Morro Bay, but the City is working on fixing it back up and is out for bids now to rebuild Coleman Park.

Located near the intersection of The Embarcadero and Coleman Drive, nestled between the waterfront business district and Morro Rock, Coleman Park has one of the finest views of Morro Bay Harbor. It’s also adjacent to the heavily used Harborwalk bike and pedestrian paths, with loads of potential.

Coleman Park and the adjacent, calm water, Coleman Beach is a popular spot for launching kayaks and paddle boards, as well as the launch point for scuba divers exploring the kelp forest that lines the revetment out to Morro Rock.

It’s got an outdoor basketball court, several picnic tables and an old-fashioned swing set. It also used to have a public restroom, something that’s sorely missed.



Coleman Park, located adjacent to Morro Bay Harbor on the road to Morro Rock and the beach is due for a makeover.

Photo courtesy City of Morro Bay

The City last week issued a Request for Technical and Cost Proposals (RFP) to rebuild Coleman Park, implementing a conceptual plan that was drawn up several years ago.

In its notice, the City said it needed someone to draw up the technical plans and manage the construction portion as well.

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Hearing on Garbage Rate Hike Set for June 17

By Neil Farrell



Some residents of the North Coast could be seeing significant garbage rate hikes, but will have a chance to protest the increases before the County Supervisors.

Mission Country Disposal, the garbage company that collects trash in the rural areas of Los Osos, Morro Bay, Cayucos, San Simeon, Cambria, and Harmony, is seeking the rate hikes, according to a County notice of the upcoming protest hearing.

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City to Receive FEMA Disaster Funding

By Neil Farrell



Like Manna from Heaven, the Morro Bay Harbor Department’s prayers may have been answered, at least partially.

A recent study, called the Brady Report, on the condition of the various revetments and seawalls that line the Morro Bay waterfront and the Morro Rock parking lot assessed the condition and recommended needed repairs — just for the City’s areas and not the lease sites — for three seawalls and a dozen stretches of revetment. In a nutshell, the Brady Report concluded every one of these areas is either failed, or failing and in danger of degrading more with future storms and heavy wave activity.

The Harbor Department, armed with the study has been

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County Forms Nonprofit for Tourism District

By Neil Farrell

County Supervisors have approved a major change in a county assessment district that charges lodging businesses 2% of the cost of a room night and uses the money to promote tourism in the unincorporated areas of SLO County.

Back in late April, County Administration asked Supervisors to approve the formation of a non-profit organization — Highway 1 Tourism Alliance or H1TA — to take over the running of the County Business Improvement District or CBID.

That's the marketing scheme put together in 2009 to collect money that would promote tourism in county towns, in particular Cayucos, Cambria, San Simeon, Templeton and Los Osos, among others.

Half of the money collected goes into the overall CBID, which is governed by an appointed Advisory Board to promote just the areas within the district.

The other half goes to a local, appointed advisory board for each community that hires its own marketing firm and promotes itself. These monies can also be used to support special events that bring tourists to town.

The set up for the CBID, and its success, has meant more and more so-called soft costs incurred by the County, which is facing a huge budget shortfall and looking to save money wherever possible.

The new agreements “replace the existing agreement with MarketCher as the main county independent contractor for the County Tourism Business Improvement District with H1TA effective May 1,” reads a staff report by County Administrative Services Manager Tessa Cornejo, who runs the CBID program for the County Administration Office. “Since 2009, the CBID and Local Area Advisory boards have grown in assessments collected [between \$500,000 to just under \$2 million each], number of independent contractors, advisory board appointments, branding, complex issues, tasks, and County staff time. The growth has caused the County and the CBID to take an in-depth review of overall operations and efficiencies.”

With the former set-up the County had to wrangle 31 independent contractors that work for the CBID and are contracted with the County, the report explained. The effect was to make the County CBID “a marketing agency.” Plus, each of the seven local advisory boards contracts its own promotions on behalf of the County and CBID, “as well as administration staff.”

By chance, 29 of these contracts are coming due for renewal July 1, so the County and CBID decided to form the non-profit and take another route. A non-profit “can provide most services that the County currently provides,” the report said.

The change is really in name only as Cornejo told Estero Bay News that the current members of the CBID Advisory Board will become the new non-profit's board too, and contract with the same firm that provides staffing for them.

The big change is that County staff will no longer have so much responsibility. But they aren't completely off the hook.

“County staff,” Cornejo said, “will continue to attend monthly CBID Advisory Meetings, track advisory board and local area board appointments and agendas as terms come due, collect and transfer assessments monthly, provide financial information broken up by local area and CBID overall, renew contract with H1TA annually, prepare and conduct annual hearing to renew the district, and track local ethics training and conflict of interest filings for CBID Advisory members.”

This change will also affect the local advisory boards as well, as those with contracts about to expire will need to be paid through the end of June. They'll have to be re-approved for the new fiscal year that starts July 1.

Those whose contracts extend further “will receive 30-day notice of termination prior to the end of the fiscal year. H1TA will then subcontract with their chosen team to provide the marketing and tourism promotional services that they currently do for the areas within the CBID boundaries.”

There's a good amount of money in the kitty, too.

Taking out County expenses for April-June, the report said, there is still some \$787,000 in the CBID's account that will transfer over to H1TA. And, “The CBID and the Local Areas carry balances year over year, and have contingencies and reserves that will be the main part of the initial transfer on May 1,” the report said.

H1TA will still have the regular administrative duties the County used to do. With the new agreement, H1TA will be required to conduct annual audits, have a county advisory seat on the H1TA Board, continue conducting meetings with the CBID advisory and Local advisory boards, provide the annual report for the annual hearing, and provide the County with 2% revenue for the collection of the assessments as provided in the current ordinance.

Additionally, the H1TA Board and CBID Advisory Board members are required to consist of the same people.”

Next up, the County wants to make changes to its CBID Ordinance that would allow the annual assessment vote to happen every 5-10 years instead of annually. It would also dissolve the CBID Advisory Board and no longer have to go to Supervisors to approve the appointment of new board members. Cornejo said this would put them in a similar set up as another countywide tourism marketing outfit — Visit SLOCAL.

That Tourism Marketing District charges 1.5% of a room night cost for all lodging businesses (motels, hotels, B&Bs and vacation rentals) in SLO County including those within an incorporated city like Morro Bay.

On another note, H1TA submitted a draft budget for FY 2025/26 that proposes \$1.45 million in expenses against \$1.4M in assessment revenues. The budget proposed using \$48,000 from the carryover funds to balance out the revenues and expenditures.

Planning Begins for Fiscalini Ranch Health Restoration



A view of the Fiscalini Ranch shows a variety of growth and density in the forest. Photo by Connie Pendleton.

By Connie Pendleton

The Thursday, May 15, meeting of the Parks, Recreation, and Open Space (PROS) Committee of Cambria included a presentation on improving forest health and reducing fire fuels at the Fiscalini Ranch Preserve. Currently in the planning stage, it is part of the larger San Luis Obispo County Monterey Pine Restoration Coalition/CAL FIRE Forest Health Grant project.

The San Luis Obispo County Fire Safety Council applied for and was awarded \$6.7M to pay for all costs associated with this project, according to the Cambria Community Services District. Three other properties are a part of this grant: Hearst Ranch at Pico Creek, Covell Ranch, and the adjacent Cambria Pines Ecological Reserve. The program includes removing diseased and dying trees, reducing competition, and encouraging natural pine regeneration. It is also designed to increase climate resiliency and biological diversity, and reduce the severity of wildfires around Cambria and San Simeon.

The meeting objectives included discussing the regional land-use, progression, and existing conditions at the Fiscalini Ranch; and providing examples of the treatment approach on two other Monterey Pine restoration projects, and strategies for improvement.

Speaking were Riley McFarland and David Van Lennep, foresters from Auten Resource Consulting (ARC). The company has been working in conjunction with multiple agencies on the restoration project, such as CAL Fire, San Luis Obispo County Fire Safety Council, California Fish & Wildlife, and the Upper Salinas-Las Tablas Resources Conservation District. Local organizations are Hearst Ranch, Covell Ranch, Cambria Community Services District, and Friends of the Fiscalini Ranch Preserve.

McFarland presented six aerial photos of the Fiscalini Ranch from 1937 to 2024 to show the effects of Cambria's development. He said, “The most effective tools we have as foresters to understand [historical] land-use progression ...are these aerial photos.” Former effects of cattle ranching, cultural burns, and lack of natural fire were discussed. Evaluating and understanding the area's land-use provides the team with additional knowledge to better determine the ideal individual approach to each area of work.

Photographs of Covell Ranch were also shown, offering an example of improved forest health after a project was completed in 2022. Insect-infested and diseased trees, as well as trees of eight inches or less in diameter, were removed. Chain saws and track chippers were used to eliminate debris by spreading wood chips

across the forest floor instead of taking the cleared brush off-site. A shaded fuel break was created along the west side of Bridge Street adjacent to Covell Ranch to increase fire protection for Cambria.

McFarland also shared photos of Rancho Marino Reserve, where chain saws were used and burn piles were created. Many factors, such as weather and air quality, have limited when piles could be burned at the Reserve. Cutting was done in 2024, with “240 out of the 500 piles” burned in March 2025, almost a year later.

A draft timeline was provided for the project at Fiscalini Ranch, showing planning and outreach starting between spring of 2025 and spring 2026. Contracting and operational planning is expected to occur in the summer of 2026, and clearing operations

Clarification

Some information we reported in the story, “Citizen Coalition Formed to buy Sunnyside School,” (May 5) should be further clarified.

We reported: “The CSD tried this once before [passing a tax measure], as the CSD charter has a “Recreation” aspect. But a ballot measure to activate that taxation measure failed at the ballot box.”

That was an over simplification of events. The CSD's General Manager Ron Munds, clarified the history behind that failed attempt to get recreation programs and parks funded:

“Since the Sunnyside School acquisition issue came up earlier this year, I've been looking through old documents regarding the CSD's involvement in Parks & Recreation-related activities.

“What I found is back in 1996, the County started assessing properties for P&R related expenditures. At that time, a community pool was being considered and youth programs.

“In 1997, Prop. 218 came into effect and the County was required to have the property tax voted on by the community; the vote failed to get the 2/3rds required for passage.

“Approximately \$250,000 had been collected before the failed vote. When the CSD was formed, that money came over to the CSD as part of absorbing the CSA-9 responsibilities from the County. The CSD still has the money in a reserve account under P&R.”

Our story should have named SLO County instead of the Community Services District in this matter.



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would potentially commence between spring of 2027 and late 2030.

More information is also available in the Feb. 20, 2025, Regular Fire Protection Committee Meeting agenda packet. Briefly, it is summarized as follows: “The goal is to restore 62 acres of the Fiscalini Ranch Preserve Monterey pine stand to a healthy condition by conducting manual and mechanical thinning to replicate conditions following natural and cultural fires. No prescribed fire will be used on Fiscalini Ranch Preserve. Planting of seedlings on 15 acres will expand the geographic footprint of the stand to prior dimensions. Invasive plant removal (French broom) [is also slated].”

A YouTube video of the meeting is available on the CCSO website, <https://bit.ly/43ENwUq>.

County to Continue Mental Health Diversion

By Neil Farrell

Outing the success of a pilot program, the San Luis Obispo County Behavioral Health Department will continue its diversion program for some, eligible, accused felons needing mental health treatment instead of potentially long incarceration in a mental hospital.

Health Agency Director, Nicholas Drews, asked County Supervisors to authorize spending over \$8.3 million retroactive to July 1, 2024 and through June 30, 2028. The program is funded by the State and through the California Department of State Hospitals, and is intended to provide people with mental health problems “a streamlined path into treatment as opposed to long term jail stays for criminal offenses they may have committed,” reads a report from Drews. “In other words, this program will divert clients away from incarceration and toward community-based services.”

Drews said the intended outcome “is to provide ongoing community support and mental health treatment to prevent the circumstances that led to arrest to long term jail stays for criminal offenses they may have committed.”

The diversion program isn’t for just anyone. “Program participants must meet certain criteria for participation,” Drews said, “and include specific mental health diagnoses that can be treated in the local community. Individuals with schizophrenia, schizoaffective disorder, or bipolar disorder are eligible for diversion and treatment in our community and do not pose an unreasonable danger to public safety.”

On the other hand, “Serious criminal offenses such as murder, voluntary manslaughter, rape and sex offenses with a child are not eligible for this diversion program.”

And lest readers think a gaggle of mentally ill criminals will be let out to seek treatment, the County has agreed to provide diversion to four people at a time.

Yet the budget calls for spending some \$1.66M a year each year through 2028.

The County first started this program in 2019, when the Dept. of State Hospitals funded the pilot program. That initial

pilot ran from Fiscal Year 2019-20 to FY 2023-24. SLO County apparently did so well with its program that the State offered to continue funding. “DSH has offered funding to the BHD to permanently fund Felony IST treatment,” Drews said.

Normally, a person accused of a crime but determined to be incompetent to stand trial, would go to a state hospital like Atascadero State Hospital for treatment and once deemed by hospital staff to be well enough to stand trial, they transfer to a regular jail to await trial.

This diversion program would allow them to take part in outside treatment programs, presumably run by contractors, to basically arrive at the same place, becoming well enough to stand trial.

The Health Agency has been working with numerous other agencies on this diversion program.

“Partners included the County Superior Court, Public Defenders, County D.A., County Probation Dept., County Sheriff’s Department and County Jail.

“The BHD,” Drews’ report said, “provides a recommendation to the court to address risk and eligibility for diversion, which upon determining the Felony MH Diversion is clinically appropriate and a placement recommendation is provided to the court.”

The Health Department, D.A., Public Defenders Office, and the Court work together to pick the right treatment program but only a judge can order a defendant get diversion.

The program has a lofty goal. “Approval of this agreement will help reverse the cycle of ongoing criminal justice involvement with mentally ill clients.”

Lost Pismo Man Found by S&R Team



Sheriff’s deputies with the Search & Rescue Team help an elderly man who wandered away from his Pismo Beach home and got lost in a wooded area of a creek. Photo courtesy SLO Sheriff’s Department

The County Sheriff’s Department is celebrating a successful search and rescue of a Pismo Beach man who wandered away from home and got lost.

According to Sheriff’s spokesman, Tony Cipolla, on March 25, the Sheriff’s Office got a call from Pismo Beach Police asking for help with a missing persons case.

BPBD requested “to use the San Luis Obispo County Sheriff’s Search and Rescue (SAR) unit to help locate a missing

64-year-old man,” Cipolla said.

The fellow had wandered away from home March 23, Cipolla said, and “was considered at risk because of a cognitive disability, had a hearing impairment, and was known to wander.”

Search & Rescue was able to narrow down the man’s possible location through cell phone data, “before his phone died,” Cipolla said. Some 20 S&R personnel searched the area but didn’t find him. They tried again the next day and brought some expert help.

“On March 26,” Cipolla said, “members of S&R again searched the area with K9’s [police dogs] along with members of the Sheriff’s Unmanned Aerial Systems Team, which deployed drones to assist with the search.”

The man was found using a drone, “near a creek in an area overgrown with trees and brush,” Cipolla said. “He was alive but extremely dehydrated.”

The man, who was not identified by the Sheriff’s Department, was taken to the hospital for treatment and is expected to make a full recovery. “It is likely he would have died had he not been located,” Cipolla said.

Estero Bay News asked which creek he was found near, and Cipolla said he didn’t have that information, but from the description of the terrain, it was most likely Pismo Creek.

The Sheriff was proud of the S&R Team’s work. “I couldn’t be prouder of our Search and Rescue Team,” Sheriff Ian Parkinson said. “Their tireless dedication, skill, and refusal to give up brought this man home alive after three days in the wilderness. This is exactly what commitment to community looks like.”

Poly Pier Designated for Wave Energy Testing Site



The Cal Poly Pier, located in Avila Beach is a marine research facility operated by the university, extending 3,000 feet into the Pacific Ocean. Photo by Dylan Head, Cal Poly

In a new partnership established to enhance and support effective, innovative wave energy technologies, Cal Poly was selected as a federal agency’s first open water research pier.

Research access to the Cal Poly Pier will be available through the Testing Expertise and Access to Marine Energy Research Program, or TEAMER, which is sponsored by the U.S. Department

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of Energy. The pier offers applicants developing wave energy innovations open-water access from its 3,000-foot-long marine research station in San Luis Obispo Bay in Avila Beach.

The TEAMER program, first announced in March of 2019, is designed to set up technology developers and researchers with access to U.S.-based facilities and technical expertise to help encourage the success of wave energy commercialization and leverage a largely untapped resource, the power of the sea.

While much of the nationwide network of nearly 50 facilities provides access to key laboratory or computational resources, as well as some open ocean site access (including by vessel in Washington and a test stand stationed in tidal waters in Massachusetts), the Avila Beach site will provide users with direct access in the form of a drivable pier to the marine environment at a facility with convenient access for ocean research.

“The Cal Poly Pier is set up extremely well to test equipment from an easily accessible, shore-based facility without the expense and complications of chartering vessels,” said Ben Ruttenberg, director of Cal Poly’s Center for Coastal Marine Sciences. “Organizations will be able to design their wave energy or other devices and test them easily. The pier is the perfect launching spot for that important (research and development) work.”

Managed by the nonprofit Pacific Ocean Energy Trust, TEAMER may allocate applicants funding support with the goal of accelerating innovative marine energy technology toward commercialization to help meet society’s needs.

The Cal Poly Pier is a secured facility in the harbor with drivable access to deploy and test a range of equipment, including wave energy devices, sensors, autonomous vehicles and more.

As a TEAMER site, the Cal Poly facility is expected to attract collaborators such as companies focusing on early-stage research and development, as well as government organizations such as national labs and the U.S. Navy, with potential long-term benefits of new energy technology for remote areas.

All TEAMER deployments will be conducted in accordance with federal, state and local permitting regulations.

While testing sites and pilot projects have demonstrated capability for commercial wave energy in the U.S., the industry has yet to take off. The Cal Poly Pier site marks an opportunity to learn more about how wave energy technology performs in ocean conditions, contributing to supporting the blue economy with clean energy jobs and a new ocean-related industry.

The World Bank defines the blue economy as the “sustainable use of ocean resources for economic growth, improved livelihoods, and jobs while preserving the health of ocean ecosystem.”

“This exciting announcement marks an opportunity for growth and moving marine energy forward,” said Dean Wendt, dean of Cal Poly’s Bailey College of Science and Mathematics. “Innovative technologies that can provide important, sustainable energy solutions will help provide needed infrastructure long into the future. The university’s marine science infrastructure is proud to play a role in supporting this invaluable research and development.”

For more information, visit <https://marine.calpoly.edu/teamer>.

SLO Man Dies in County Jail

By Neil Farrell

A San Luis Obispo man has died in custody at the County Jail, the Sheriff’s Department announced May 27. According to a news release, during regular cell checks on

Sunday, May 25 at the SLO County Men’s Jail, staff recognized an inmate was in “medical distress,” said Sheriff’s spokesman Tony Cipolla. “Custody and nursing staff immediately attempted to render medical aid and CPR.”

The inmate, identified as Brent Perucca, 59 of San Luis Obispo, was unresponsive and staff could not revive him. Paramedics who responded to the Jail pronounced him dead at the scene at about 4:30 p.m.

Perucca had been booked into County Jail at 12:40 p.m. on Friday, May 23 by the SLO Police Department, Cipolla said. Before officers took him to Kansas Avenue, he was taken to a local hospital to be medically cleared, as he suffered from “chronic long term health issues,” Cipolla said. He was at the hospital for several hours, Cipolla said, and received extensive testing and examination by hospital staff.

He was booked into County Jail at about 6 p.m. on the 23rd. The Jail’s medical staff also examined Perucca who “continued receiving treatment for his health issues,” Cipolla said.

“Perucca had a long history of being booked into the jail,” Cipolla said, “with more than 20 such occurrences.”

The Coroner’s Office performed an autopsy May 27, and Cipolla said they await the results. However, “No foul play is suspected,” he said.

The death is the first in some time at the County Jail, which had a run of inmates dying in custody several years ago, including an Atascadero man, Matthew Holland, in 2017 and another Honor Farm inmate who overdosed on heroin while in custody. But it was Holland’s case that drove change.

Holland suffered from mental illness and was in the throes of a mental breakdown in jail after being arrested by Atascadero Police. He was strapped naked into a restraint chair for nearly two days before he died.

The FBI launched an investigation into Holland’s and other in-custody deaths, and the Holland Family sued the County and settled the case for \$5 million.

The case led to a 2018 Election season that saw both Sheriff Ian Parkinson and District Attorney, Dan Dow, challenged, with the Holland case and other deaths at the County Jail becoming major campaign issues.

Sheriff Parkinson and the County made numerous improvements to its medical care system, and mental health treatment at the County Jails (Men’s, Women’s and Honor Farm).

A Department of Justice investigative report on the SLO County Jail came out in August 2021 and the DOJ concluded that conditions at the County Jail violated the Constitution. It should be noted that improvements started at the County Jail very soon after Holland’s death and the ensuing controversy it caused.

The DOJ report, which didn’t take recent improvements into account, said in part that the County Jail, “violated the rights of prisoners by, among other things, failing to provide adequate medical care and subjecting some prisoners to excessive uses of force.”

But much has changed since then, with the Sheriff bringing in a contract medical care company, Wellpath — formerly called California Forensics Medical Group — to provide health care services at the County Honor Farm, Men’s and Women’s Jails.”

That contract was first enacted in 2018, in response to the incident with Holland and the public outcry it caused when a video of his ordeal was made public. The County now spends some \$9 million a year on medical care at the jail.

Cal Fire Douses Burn Season

By Neil Farrell

Citing high fire danger, Cal Fire in San Luis Obispo County has thrown cold water on the backyard-burning season.

“Effective June 2,” Cal Fire’s news release said, “due to statewide fire conditions and fire suppression forces being heavily committed to control fires, Cal Fire San Luis Obispo is declaring the end of Backyard Burn Season. All burning authorized under Backyard Burn Permits issued by the Air Pollution Control District are now suspended.”

Backyard burning is allowed with APCD and Cal Fire permits in rural areas outside population centers. Most communities have local laws against any backyard burning within the City Limits.

Backyard burning refers to yard clippings, and does not include burning of garbage or other trash. Some items give off toxic fumes when burned.

APCD has a list of items they prohibit from being burned, including: rubber (tires, fabric and sponges); plastics; hydrocarbons like oil, diesel fuel, grease, solvents and painted items; lumber and construction materials treated or not; tar and creosote soaked wood; metal wire and stakes; and any cannabis wastes like bud shake and other unusable parts of weed.

Also, “By special permit only, unpainted non-galvanized metal stakes and wire may sometimes be permitted in grape vine burn piles. Contact the APCD about a ‘grape stake exemption.’”

The suspension of burn season however, isn’t a blanket ban. “Agricultural burners may continue to burn on permissive burn days with a valid APCD Burn Permit and Cal Fire LE-62a or LE-5 Burn Permit.” Here too the reference is to ag wastes like cuttings from grape vines and orchards.

The notice came with additional information concerning activities that could lead to a controlled burn getting out of control and spreading to wild lands, and ways to make your home more defensible against a wildfire.

“Residents within State Responsibility Areas [outside cities and towns] are required to maintain 100 feet of defensible space around all habitable structures on their property,” the notice said.

The notice continued, “residents are encouraged to be vigilant and avoid activities that could spark unwanted fires, such as mowing dry vegetation during warm, dry, or windy weather.

“In addition, campfires within organized campgrounds or on private property that are otherwise permitted will be allowed if the campfire is maintained in such a manner as to prevent its spread to the wildland.”

Given the absolute destruction experienced in last January’s Southern California fires in Pacific Palisades and Altadena, everyone should make an extra effort to be fire safe and vigilant, especially when the winds are strong.

For information about the burning program, see: SLOCleanAir.org or contact Cal Fire San Luis Obispo at 805-242-6250.

California’s Water System Topic of Discussion

By Connie Pendleton

Derrick Williams of Cambria will discuss California’s water system: why it seems to be in a perpetual crisis, what drives it, and where the state’s policy is headed on Sunday, June 29, at 4 p.m. The talk, sponsored by Greenspace - The Cambria Land Trust, will be at the Unitarian Universalist of Cambria, 786 Arlington Street.

Williams, a California professional geologist and certified hydrogeologist, has been a groundwater consultant in California for over 35 years. He works with public water agencies, cities, counties, irrigation districts, industries, and special districts. His clients are located throughout California from Santa Monica to

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News

Redding, and from Sonoma to the Sierra Nevada. He is employed by Montgomery & Associates, an international groundwater consulting firm, based in Tucson.

He has been a guest lecturer at Stanford University and taught a short course on groundwater management at McGeorge School of Law in Sacramento.

He earned his Bachelor of Arts in Geology from the University of California at Davis and his Master of Arts from the University of Arizona.

A \$10 donation is requested per person. Beverages and baked goods will be served. More information is available on the web-site, greenspacecambria.org.

Paso Child Molester Faces Life in Prison

A Paso Robles man has been convicted on multiple counts of child sexual crimes, the District Attorney’s Office announced, including several where the victim was a pre-teen.

D.A. Dan Dow said the jury found, “Francisco Pablo Zaragoza Guzman, 46 of Paso Robles guilty of nine counts of committing sex crimes against multiple children under the age of 14 including three counts where the children were aged 10 or under.”

In detail, his convictions were for two counts of sexual

penetration of a child under-10; one count of oral copulation of a child under-10; and six counts of lewd and lascivious acts with a child under-14, “using force, fear or duress.”

“The jury also found enhancements true that the defendant committed his crimes against multiple victims who were under the age of 14,” the announcement said. “This enhancement provides for multiple consecutive life sentences.”

The crimes occurred over eight years, from 2006-2013, and occurred in Paso Robles and Santa Maria, the D.A. said.

Trial testimony came from victims, law enforcement, and medical personnel, with experts testifying “about the effects of sexual abuse on children.”

“I commend the two brave survivors,” D.A. Dow said, “who



Francisco Pablo Zaragoza Guzman, 46 of Paso Robles faces over a century in prison after being convicted on multiple counts of committing illegal sex acts with children.

were courageous to report the horrific abuse they were forced to endure as young children. Their resilience has enabled them to testify in court and to endure the pressure of cross examination by an experienced criminal defense lawyer.

“The guilty verdicts are a step toward justice and the ongoing process of healing. I’m so proud of our law-enforcement partners, our Victim Witness staff, and the prosecution team that was led by Deputy District Attorney Kimberly Dittrich.”

Guzman is scheduled for sentencing on Friday, June 6 and faces a maximum sentence of over 100 years in prison, according to the D.A. The judge in the case is Hon. Catherine J. Swysen.

But no matter how much time he ultimately gets, he will have to register as a convicted sex offender for the rest of his life.

This case was investigated by the Paso Robles Police Department, the D.A.’s Bureau of Investigation, and the Child Forensic Interview Team.

The San Luis Obispo County Child Advocacy Center, the District Attorney’s Victim Witness Assistance Center, and Courthouse Dog Program assisted the victims and their families through the trial.

Dep. D.A. Dittrich of the Sexual Assault and Child Abuse Prosecution Unit prosecuted the case and victim services were provided by Victim Advocates, Aracely Maldonado and Isabella Gaddini, the D.A. said.

Memorial Day Observance in Los Osos

Photos by Dean Sullivan

A Memorial Day observance was held at Los Osos Valley Memorial Park.

“It was a truly profound and beautiful day of remembrance, deeply resonating with the spirit of community and gratitude,” said Keyna Torres, the new general manager of Los Osos Valley Memorial Park. “The ceremony was graced by the eloquent words of veteran speaker Wallace McCray, whose insights offered a powerful reflection on service and sacrifice. We were also honored to hear from Ashley Côté from the Los Osos Valley Garden Club, who not only highlighted their efforts in beautifying our shared spaces but also provided a moving historical account of the poppy, a poignant symbol of remembrance.”

Torres said she envisions a continued dedication to those interred and their families, powerfully emphasizing the “everyday heroes” who consistently answer the call to help those in need within our community.

“It was a day that truly highlighted the vibrant and unwavering support from the entire community, transforming the park into a place of collective honor and shared respect,” Torres said.

Also marking the event was the California Highway Patrol (CHP), CHP Coastal Air Operations, firefighters of South Bay Los Osos, the Kiwanis Club, and the San Luis Historical Camp.

“A truly riveting flyover by the Freedom Flight of the Estrella Warbird Museum was the highlight of our service, along with the dignified raising of the flag by a veteran who bravely volunteered,” Torres said.

Bloom and Grow in Atascadero donated flowers and Girl Scouts placed flags on every veteran memorial in the cemetery, a poignant act of respect.

“This collective effort, uniting diverse community groups, exemplified our desire to continue to serve those in our community and to honor our veteran community each and every day, treating them as we would our own family members, with the profound respect that their service demands,” Torres said.

The community is invited to a Veterans Day service at Los Osos Valley Memorial Park in November.



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Community

Los Osos Group Improving Areas with Vegetation



Continuing the effort to plant trees along busy corridors in Los Osos, the Los Osos Community Advisory Council's (LOCAC's) Tree and Landscape Committee (TLC) sponsored the planting of 17 oak trees in April with the help of some 16 volunteers, including organizers Katherine Corson and Wendy McKeown of TLC.

Led by tree expert Jesse Trace of Traceland Organics, who provided the trees, the group planted Island Oaks (*Quercus tomentella*), a native of California's Channel Islands. Trace predicts this variety should do well in our climate zone, even in the face of climate change. The goal is to promote the greening and beautification of Los Osos, especially during Earth Month.

Readers can see the completed plantings on the northside of Los Osos Valley Road (LOVR) between Palisades Ave. and Pine Ave. with white protective stakes, just west of the county's Mid-town Restoration Site.

The trees are planted with a big setback to allow room for a county-planned bike and walking trail that will connect all of LOVR in the future as well as county plans to widen the road.

Trees were planted on private property with via approval and financial support from the owners, Morro Shores LLC and property

manager Ann McCarthy, vice president. The company owns LOVR frontage west to Broder-son Ave.

At the end of May, the group was at it again when the volunteers watered and spread mulch on a block long frontage area, just west of the post office that has been planted with trees and flowering Grevillea in the past year with the permission of the property owner.

The LOCAC TLC sponsored group has other tree and landscape projects in front of the Los Osos Community Park, at the SW corner of South Bay Blvd. and LOVR, and as mentioned, west of the Los Osos Post Office all along LOVR.

The group continues to seek future projects with the approval of property owners as well as the county. They hope to do some planting along LOVR near the Los Osos Valley Nursery in the future. All this is in the effort to beautify Los Osos and help replace the lost canopy of trees in the community.

The group is seeking more volunteers to help with both watering, and mulching, and future plantings to beautify the community of Los Osos. To volunteer or contact the group with ideas for new locations send an email to tlcloso@gmail.com.

New Educational Displays at the Maritime Museum

The month of May introduced a recent collaboration between Friends of the Morro Bay Library and Del Mar Elementary School that enables fifth graders to enjoy a daylong experience at the Morro Bay Harbor and the Morro Bay Maritime Museum.

Students were welcomed by museum president Kendall Welch before volunteer docents led small groups along an interactive curated course through educational exhibits.

During the tour, Del Mar School fifth grade teacher Maria Slavin took note of the museum's newest exhibit, retired local Dragon Racing Boat 1, used as a celebration of cancer survivors. She added personal meaning for her students noting her mother was a participant in a Morro Bay group in the boat.

Jan Goldman of Friends of the Morro Bay Library showed the students another new exhibit, a historic photo filled kiosk featuring a century of

both commercial fishing and sport fishing based in Morro Bay. She pointed out that many of the family names featured in the display matched names of students who have attended Del Mar School. Other exhibits provided insight and hands-on maritime STEM skills that support learning opportunities unique to our community.

School and group tours can be scheduled at morrobaymaritime.org



Summer Library Guides Available

SLO County kids, teens, and adults can visit their favorite County of San Luis Obispo Public Libraries branch to pick up a Summer at the Library Guide that includes the annual Summer Reading Challenge and a map of fun things to see and do this summer.

"Every summer, thousands of people take the challenge by tracking their reading and sharing their progress with us," said Erica Thatcher, engagement and marketing coordinator for the libraries. "Summer is our time to celebrate books and to show readers we appreciate them."

This year's Reading Challenge runs June 7-August 9.

Readers earn a spin on a prize wheel after reading five hours, and ten hours gets them a new book to keep. Anyone who completes 20 hours of reading earns a whimsical canvas book bag.

All ages are also invited to follow a map to the county libraries to see a "Cabinet of Curiosities."

"You can see something cool, curious, or just plain weird at any of our libraries this summer. Just follow the Quail Trail map in our Summer Guide," said Thatcher.

Libraries will host free all-ages events including reptile shows, magic shows, and nature presentations with a SLO County focus.



Even people who don't consider themselves readers will find something at the libraries this summer, Thatcher said. "We have books for everyone. And it's okay to just borrow cook-books or comic books or how-to books. We want people to fill up their book bags with whatever sparks their curiosity. All reading is good reading, and it's free to use the library."

Summer at the Library is free and is sponsored by the San Luis Obispo County Library Foundation and Friends of the Library groups from all 14 libraries.

For more information about Summer at the Library, library cards, and County of San Luis Obispo Public Libraries locations, visit SLOLibrary.org.

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Takin' Care of BUSINESS

By Theresa- Marie Wilson

Poly Students Startup Helps Divert 10 Tons from Landfill



Flooring is carefully pulled from Kennedy Library during its transformation — the first step in giving 10 tons of material a second life through reuse.

When Cal Poly alumnus Jason Wheeler returned to the campus Kennedy Library, it wasn't to relive his student days — it was to reimagine its transformation as a catalyst for environmental change.

A business graduate from the class of 2000, Wheeler quickly recognized the potential of the building's discarded flooring, destined for the landfill but full of new possibilities.

The upgrade of Robert E. Kennedy Library — underway since summer 2023 and slated to be complete in September — features an energy-efficient, sustainable design and will offer improved study spaces and updated programming for students.

Inspired, Wheeler founded JackRabbit Salvage Marketplace, a startup designed to connect salvaged construction materials with people ready to give them a second life.

"I saw materials going to waste as costs soared," he said. "We needed a system to repurpose valuable resources, not discard them."

JackRabbit's first transaction redirected 10 tons of reclaimed flooring from the library to a local general contractor, highlighting how technology can turn waste into opportunity. The effort was made possible through collaboration with Cal Poly's Facilities Management and Development and Kennedy Library renovation contractor Hensel Phelps.

That project also helped launch Cal Poly's new computer science capstone sequence. Over fall and winter quarters, seven students partnered with Wheeler, under the guidance of faculty lecturer BJ Klingenberg, to upgrade the site in real time — re-vamping database design and administrative dashboards and enhancing interactive maps and user-login features to make it more user-friendly and visually engaging.

"These students didn't just hand off code; they left a foundation for the next group to build on," Wheeler said. "That kind of continuity mirrors what they'll experience in the real world."

Klingenberg, who supported the project through his role with Cal Poly's Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship's Small Business Development Center, called the platform a practical tool with wide appeal.

"With platforms like this, reuse becomes easy and intuitive," Klingenberg said. "Once it gains momentum, everyone from contractors to local artists can find what they need and keep valuable materials in circulation."

For students, the project offered both technical development and personal insight.

"The materials from the library could be reused elsewhere around town," said computer science student Michelle Chi. "It's a community-based approach to conservation."

JackRabbit's next phase includes a new "storefront" feature designed to help organizations like Habitat for Humanity showcase materials for reuse. The platform's name reflects its quick-action philosophy: a jump-on-it mindset that turns demolition waste into shared resources with lasting value.

To learn more or see where salvaged materials are finding new life, visit jackrabt.com.

Everyday AI for Nonprofits

Spokes For Nonprofits presents a hands-on workshop designed specifically for nonprofit professionals, staff, and volunteers who are curious about artificial intelligence (AI) but may not know where to start on June 13 from noon to 1:30 p.m. Registration closes June 10

- Attendees will learn:
- How to use ChatGPT to draft donor emails, thank you notes, and grant proposals.
 - Tips for summarizing board reports and creating social media captions in seconds.
 - Examples of real nonprofit use cases (from organizations just like yours!).

You will need your own WIFI-enabled laptop, able to connect to the Internet.

The course is taught by Carol Chenot, a multifaceted professional from Arroyo Grande, who founded her AI consulting firm, AI ADVANTAGE. She designs workshops and offers consulting to make learning new skills like AI understandable and useful for nonprofits.

Chenot retired from a 35-year corporate career in human resources, where she held senior roles in executive development for global corporations. She volunteers with Womenade, supporting women and families in need. She also serves as secretary on the Commission on the Status of Women and Girls and is president of the 5 Cities Women's Network.

The course is \$45 for the general public and \$25 for Spokes members and includes a boxed lunch from Urbane Café. For more information or to register, go to spokesfor nonprofits.org.

Petco Love Gives to Woods

Woods Humane Society is set to receive a \$12,500 grant investment from national nonprofit Petco Love in support of their lifesaving work for pets in San Luis Obispo County.

"We are so grateful for this crucial investment from Petco Love, which will make a difference for so many local dogs and cats in need of food, shelter, medical care, and adoption services," said Woods Humane Society CEO Emily L'Heureux. "During this record-breaking season of kittens and puppies and when so many young, fragile pets require lengthy care and critical medical services, this will truly be a lifesaving investment."

Since its founding in 1999, Petco Love, a national nonprofit, has invested nearly \$410 million in adoption and other lifesaving efforts. The organization also helps find loving homes for pets in partnership with Petco and more than 4,000 other organizations — like Woods — across North America, with nearly 7 million pets adopted and counting.

Celebrating 70 years of saving dogs and cats on the Central Coast, Woods Humane Society is a full-service humane society with two adoption facilities and public spay/neuter clinics in SLO and Atascadero. In addition to its adoption program which places up to 3,000 pets for adoption in a typical year, Woods also provides the community with: accessible and affordable spay/neuter services; a Pet Pantry delivering more than 12,000 pounds of free pet food to pet parents in need; affordable dog obedience training classes; a volunteer program; a growing pet foster program; and a humane education program for our area's children.

Woods is located at 875 Oklahoma Avenue in San Luis Obispo and at 2300 Ramona Road in Atascadero, and is open to the public daily from 12-5 p.m., with adoption hours from 12-4 p.m. For more information about Woods, visit WoodsHumane.org or call (805) 543-9316. Learn more about Petco Love here: petco-love.org.

Hospital Fundraiser Brings in Big Bucks for Cancer Services

The French Hospital Medical Center (FHMC) Foundation's 16th annual "Share the Hope" event, held in April at Hearst Ranch, raised more than \$550,000 to support cancer services through advanced imaging technology in a new San Luis Obispo comprehensive cancer center, currently under construction.

The new cancer center will unite the oncology services of Dignity Health's French Hospital Medical Center, Marian Regional Medical Center, and Pacific Central Coast Health Centers, as well as a number of physician groups partnering with Dignity Health. For the first time in San Luis Obispo County, all oncol-

ogy services will be available under one roof, streamlining the team-based care approach, improving patient convenience, and elevating cancer care in our community.

"Our compassionate community supports local cancer patients, as evidenced with the outpouring of generosity at the event," said FHMC Chief Philanthropy Officer, Tessa Espinoza. "It is our privilege to provide healing, education and critical resources through the Hearst Cancer Resource Center for anyone touched by cancer."

The new cancer center will provide a seamless experience for patients, offering a wide range of comprehensive services and programs. These will include medical oncology, hematology, infusion, diagnostic imaging, radiation oncology, general and oncology surgery, and urology. Located at the heart of the new center is the French Hospital's Hearst Cancer Resource Center, a unique support resource in the county dedicated to helping cancer patients and their families from diagnosis through recovery. The Hearst Cancer Resource Center supports nearly 10,000 patients battling cancer each year with over 30 programs including support groups, wellness classes, educational workshops and lectures, nurse navigation, social work consults, bilingual navigation, registered dietician consults, and transportation services.

The cancer center will be located near the corner of Tank Farm and Broad Street in San Luis Obispo. Construction on the two-story, 58,650 square foot building is underway with a completion date expected in early 2026.

To learn more, or to support the Hearst Cancer Resource Center or advanced technology for cancer care, go to www.supportfrenchhospital.org/hcrc.

In other local medical news, the French Hospital Medical Center was awarded an "A" Hospital Safety Grade today for the 27th consecutive time by The Leapfrog Group, a national nonprofit watchdog organization. This accolade recognizes French Hospital as one of only 11 hospitals in the country, one of only two in California, and the only one on the Central Coast to earn an "A" Grade continuously for all 27 grading cycles since the program's inception in 2012.

The Leapfrog Group assigns an "A" through "F" grade to all general hospitals across

the country on over 30 measures of errors, accidents, injuries and infections as well as the systems hospitals have in place to prevent them. These largely preventable problems harm one in four

Takin' Care of Business Continued on page 8

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Police Blotter



• **May 25:** Police responded at 8:54 p.m. to a report of some weapons grade moron making a pest of himself at Rite Aid on Quintana Road. According to logs, the fool was on probation, which he violated, and that led to new charges of suspicion of possession of illegal drugs, with two prior arrests for drugs making this one a felony, plus having paraphernalia. He was apparently given a 1-way ticket to Palooka Ville.

• **May 23:** Police responded at 12:13 p.m. to a traffic collision at an undisclosed location in town.

• **May 23:** Police responded at 7:17 a.m. to the 700 block of Harbor for a reported trespasser, as some odd fellow was hanging around the Odd Fellow’s Lodge.

• **May 22:** Police responded at 10:31 a.m. to a report of assault with a deadly weapon. Logs did not disclose the location of this sinister evil deed, but it was listed as a misdemeanor, so...

• **May 22:** Someone found something at City Park on Harbor Street and gave it to a no doubt eternally grateful police officer.

• **May 21:** At 9:47 p.m. police contacted a suspicious subject at the Vet’s Hall. The apparent ne’er-do-well had an out-of-county warrant and got nicked.

• **May 21:** At 3:18 p.m. police logged a report of suspected felony rape of an unconscious person.

• **May 20:** At 11:05 p.m. police stopped a suspicious vehicle and tagged the knave for having false tags.

• **May 20:** Police stopped a suspicious vehicle at 2:13 p.m. at an undisclosed location in town. According to logs, the driver got the big trifecta — suspended license; identity theft for using a fake ID; and, of course, driving with a belly full of tarantula juice.

• **May 19:** Graffidiots apparently unleashed a weapon of mass desecration at Del Mar Park.

• **May 19:** Someone found something at Bottle Liquors in the 900 block of Main, and had police respond to get it. No word on what was found, but if it’s valuable, it’s a sure bet it ain’t yours.

• **May 19:** Police took a report of alleged lewd and lascivious conduct with a child under-14.

• **May 19:** Police stopped a suspicious vehicle on some no doubt trumped up charge, at an undisclosed location at 10:47 a.m. Logs indicated the driver’s license was suspended after he or she got a DUI, an infraction that’s usually good for about 10 days in the clink.

• **May 19:** Police responded at 7:50 a.m. to Del Mar Park for a report of vandalism, as some humanicus dooficus apparently decided to leave his mark on the world.

• **May 18:** Police fishing at 7:19 p.m. hooked a suspicious vehicle on the Embarcadero at Giovanni’s Fish Market and landed a big one. Logs indicated the unidentified driver was nicked for suspicion of driving kootered with an open container, as it must be 5 o’clock somewhere.

• **May 18:** At 3:32 p.m. police responded to a traffic crash at an undisclosed location involving an unidentified level of carnage.

• **May 18:** Police took a report of misdemeanor alleged child abuse with great bodily injury.

• **May 17:** Police responded at 7:30 p.m. to a reported felony commercial burglary, but logs left unanswered a few “W’s” — where did it happen; what was stolen; and, who’s the scoundrel responsible? They also listed the heinous crimes of possessing illegal drugs and paraphernalia at the same time, which probably explains a lot but excuses nothing.

• **May 17:** Someone turned in something they found somewhere presumably in town, with some hope police can somehow find the something’s rightful owner.

• **May 17:** At 11:57 a.m. at an undisclosed location police contacted an unnamed probationer and, whoopsy-poopsy, he or she had a warrant. Logs indicated the model citizen also was allegedly in possession of suspected drug paraphernalia, their stash apparently already gone up in smoke.

• **May 17:** Police were called at 1:25 a.m. to a disturbance at the Sea Air Inn on Morro Bay Boulevard. Logs indicated some no doubt husband of the year was tossed into the tank for suspicion of spousal battery and, of course, being drunk.

• **May 16:** The scofflaw roundup was on as police contacted three different people who had bench warrants. The first was at 9:43 p.m. at the library on May 15; the second at City Park at 12:10 a.m.; and the third was at the Salvation Army on Quintana at 8:48 p.m. Logs did not indicate whether the delinquents were actually arrested but SOP is you’d get another disappearance ticket with a new court date to ignore and be left free to pick up another time.

• **May 15:** Police started a new case of some Snallygaster ripping off an elderly person in town through some kind of scumbag scam.

• **May 14:** Police contacted yet another fellow with a bench warrant, someplace in town.

• **May 14:** Police responded at 2:09 p.m. to the Ocean View Manor Apts., where some poor soul had died.

• **May 14:** Police responded at 6 a.m. to McDonald’s on Quintana Road, after some apparent Fry Goblin found something and wanted to turn it over to Officer Big Mac.

• **May 13:** Police contacted some suspicious subject at 10:51 p.m. somewhere in town and cited him or her for suspicion of possessing illegal drugs, which will teach him not to hog the joint.

• **May 13:** At 8:12 p.m. police started a case of suspected possession of obscene material of a minor in a sex act, a.k.a. child pornography.

• **May 13:** At 9:53 a.m. police towed away a vehicle for violation of the City’s parking in one place for too long law.

• **May 12:** Police at 11:41 p.m. were at the Buoy Bar on Quintana Road where they came across a fellow with a warrant. Logs indicated the dingus was also allegedly in possession of a hookah pipe, in this week’s example of why they call it dope.

• **May 12:** Police responded at 3:37 a.m. to a traffic collision, no word on where or how bad it was.

• **May 12:** Police started another case of someone swindling an elderly citizen. No word on where it happened or how much the sinister Nodcock stole.

• **May 12:** Some apparent pawn at the Giant Chessboard Park on the Embarcadero found something of some apparent value and turned it over to police.

Takin’ Care of Business From page 7

hospital inpatients and cause as many as 250,000 deaths each year.

“Everyone who works and volunteers at French Hospital should be so proud. Sustaining an “A” over multiple years reflects a deep-rooted commitment to patient safety. French Hospital has made a clear and consistent effort to protect patients from harm. This is reflected in the outstanding and very remarkable distinction of earning an ‘A’ Safety Grade every cycle for the past 13 years” said Leah Binder, president and CEO of The Leapfrog Group. “I congratulate everyone at French Hospital for their national example and never-ending quest to put patients’ safety first.”

The Leapfrog Hospital Safety Grade is the only hospital ratings program based exclusively on preventable medical errors,

injuries and infections that can harm and even kill. The grading system is peer-reviewed, fully transparent and free to the public. Grades are updated twice annually, in the fall and spring.

Dignity Health Hospitals throughout California received the most “A” grades from the Leapfrog Group during this Spring 2025 Grading Cycle. To see French Hospital’s full grade details and to access patient tips for staying safe in the hospital, visit HospitalSafetyGrade.org.

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 EditorEBN@gmail.com.

By the Sea Productions presents ‘The Importance of Being Earnest’

What’s in a name? Oscar Wilde’s classic comedy of manners, “The Importance of Being Earnest,” is a satirical look at Victorian society’s emphasis on appearances and social standing. Confusion results when two indolent young men both claim the name of Earnest to woo two young ladies who are outside their social station. Jean Miller directs this delightful parody of status over substance.

The cast includes Topher Lyons and Wren Hall, and Jonah

Duhe and Perri Gandy as the vain, but charming and witty couples. Janice Lamont plays a governess; Laurelle Kelty, a reverend; Laura Richie, a snooty society maven; and Landen Scott plays two long-suffering butlers.

“The Importance of Being Earnest’ plays weekends June13-29 at 545 Shasta Ave. Morro Bay. Reservations and tickets at bytheseaproductitons.org or call 805-776-3287. Tickets are \$25, except for Saturday, June 14 only, which is 2-for-1 night.

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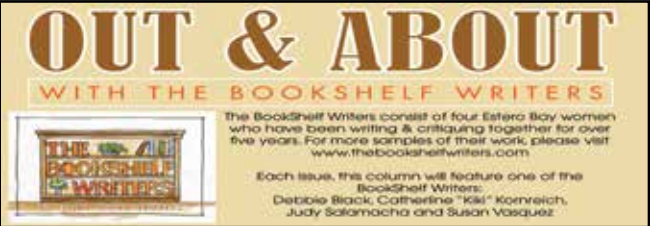
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Walking the Daily Walk



Seals enjoying June
By Susan Vasquez

June is an odd, unpredictable month when it comes to weather. Here, on California's Central Coast, we complain if the temperature varies by more than 5 degrees, and we complain a lot in June. But today, I find an agreeable hour in the afternoon when the wind calms and the sun is mild. I go for a walk.

I want to see what is happening to the seasonal ponds in the dunes. These low areas fill up with water after it rains and, perhaps, have some leftover sea water from high tides. The brackish waters still call for the local birds, and I enjoy finding them here. But we have had a month of sun and wind, and I am thinking that the ponds will be dry today.

When I reach the dunes, I find a little water, but it has turned swampy. I think that the mallard ducks I noticed last time have found a better place for their temporary home. I see several curlews sticking their long, curved beaks into the sand, and I wonder if they are testing out potential nesting places. Then I think more likely they are scrounging for the little plover eggs that I have never seen but are said to be everywhere on this protected area. Curlews, apparently, ignore the warning signs that tell us humans to stay away.

I think back to the many times I have walked through this area, the ponds coming and going with the seasons. Occasionally, I have to find an alternate route, being blocked by water or nesting ducks or mud. Many more times, the ponds simply shift, along with the dunes, finding a spot to settle that is just slightly different than the last season.

A large group of seagulls fly overhead and call for my attention. I turn south to see wave after wave of the birds all flying north past me toward the town of Cayucos, maybe even farther. I wonder what would have caused this. A cluster of seafood in the waves farther north on the beach? As more and more make the flight northward, it is apparent that the birds know something I do not, and it makes me curious. Blue herons and a vulture or two join the flight north. The sky is so filled that I get distracted with the sight and forget I have a camera in my hand. By the time I have things in focus on the vifinder, this bit of local migration has passed. Like on so many walks, I will have nothing but my memory to help me understand what I see every day. It's better that way. I can embellish my steps with what I recall and how it feels rather than be constrained with the evidence of a real-world photo.

If I could fly, I could find out where the gulls and their companions are headed, and maybe the reason for their flight. But I am feet-only today and can't imagine having wings to pull me up into the clouds, or even a small distance off the ground. The mass of flying creatures has disappeared, so I have to be satisfied with the spectacle of their race past me, and grateful for the feet that made it possible for me walk along and watch.

I begin the walk back home. It's a daily bit of good fortune, and I imagine I will see something else extraordinary tomorrow.

Visit Susan Vasquez and her walking stories at <https://susan-vasquez.com>

Events and Activities

By Theresa-Marie Wilson

Get your words ready! The theme for the 2025 SLO NightWriters Golden Quill Writing Contest is "Risk." Submissions are due June 30.

All submissions must be previously unpublished. The contest is open to writers 18 years old and over residing in the United States and Canada. First-place winners in each category

will receive a \$350 cash prize and publication in the 2025 issue of "The NightWriter Review." Second-place winners in each category will receive a \$150 cash prize and publication in the 2025 issue of "The NightWriter Review." Third-place winners in each category will receive a \$50 cash prize and publication in the 2025 issue of "The NightWriter Review." Entry fees \$20 for SLO NightWriters members and \$25 for nonmembers. Get all the rules and submit at slonightwriters.org/golden-quill.



Morro Bay Maritime Museum is launching a hands-on educational program this summer. Join them on Museum Mondays June 16 to Aug. 11, from 10 a.m.-12 noon for nautical-themed activities for the whole family. Designed for children ages 6-13, each class will feature a STEM component and an arts & craft component.

- Summer STEM Program Schedule:
- June 16: Boat Safety USCG
- June 23: Codes & Messages
- June 30: Design/Parts of a Boat
- July 14: Why Are You Happy? Whale Project
- July 21: Build a Canoe
- July 28: Sea Shanties

Events Continued on page 10

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Community

Events From page 9

- Aug 4: Knot Tying
 - Aug 11: Beyond the Horizon, Painting a Boat on the Horizon
- To register, morrobaymaritime.org.

Cayucos is celebrating its 150th year anniversary of its founding. The Cayucos Historical Society is putting on the opening event, June 7 at 6:30 at the Cayucos School. The lighthouse at Piedras Blancas is also celebrating its 150th year, so the evening will start with a presentation about the history of the Piedras Blancas Lighthouse. Followed by the movie “The Redemption of the Monster of Piedras Blancas. Free admission, but donations would be appreciated. The event is sponsored by the Cayucos Historical Society.

Free programs at the Los Osos Library 2075 Palisades Ave. 805-528-1862.

- **Bears Book Club** – Tuesday, June 10, 6 – 7:30 p.m. “The Personal Secretary” by Marie Benedict. Drop in. Adults.
- **Derek Hood Magic Show** – Wednesday, June 11, 3 – 4 p.m. All ages.
- **Reptile Ron** – Friday, June 13, 3 – 4 p.m. Join us for a fun interactive event with Reptile Ron and his exotic animal friends from around the world! All ages.
- **Summer Reading Program Kickback Party** – Saturday, June 14, 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. Kick back with a good book for summer reading. Come get a reading log, play lawn games, make chalk art, color a bookmark, and more. Bring a blanket and relax on our lawn.
- **Let’s Talk!** – Wednesday, June 18, 6 – 7 p.m. Join us for a TED Talk viewing followed by discussion. This month – Kelly McGonigal: How to make stress your friend. Adults.
- **Nintendo** – Friday, June 20, 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 four players at a time, feel free to bring your own too. Games include Mario Kart, Super Smash Bros, and Just Dance.
- **Fiber Arts Circle** – Saturday, June 21, 11 a.m. – noon Join us for our monthly Fiber Arts Club. Bring your project and enjoy camaraderie with like-minded sewers, stitchers, knitters, and anything fiber arts.
- **Build it Challenge** – Friday, June 27, 2:30 – 4:30 p.m. Build creations with Keva Blocks, GeoMags, stacked cups and more. Will yours be the tallest, widest, most colorful, or something else entirely? Build it, tear it down, build it again. For ages 5+
- **Collage for Kids** – Saturday, June 28, 2 – 3:30 p.m. Emily Emanuel will facilitate this fun and creative workshop for kids ages 8 - 12. No sign up needed.

The Cal Poly Music Department will host its 2025 Summer Music Camp for California high-school-age instrumentalists and vocalists July 16-19. Applications are being accepted through June 15. Participants can stay in residence halls while they engage in a variety of opportunities, including rehearsing with faculty and students in a choir, percussion ensemble or string chamber group; having private lessons with Cal Poly instructors; sampling music classes; and much more! For prices and registration, go to music.calpoly.edu/summer-camp.

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

- **Summer Reading Kick-Off Party** - Saturday, June 7, 11 a.m. - 2 p.m. Come get a summer reading log, dress up in a fairytale photo-booth, make a fortune teller, draw some chalk art, color a tote bag and more.
- **Star Wars Party** - Wednesday, June 18, 3 – 5 p.m. Join us for an afternoon of trivia, crafts, games and more. Star Wars costumes and t-shirts are encouraged!
- **Nintendo Switch** - Wednesday, June 25, 3 – 5 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, Super Smash Bros, and Just Dance.

People Helping People Rummage Sale at South Bay Community Center, 2180 Palisades Ave. Los Osos on Friday, June 6 from 12 - 4 p.m. and Saturday, June 7 from 9 a.m.- 2 p.m. Come find your treasures. One third of proceeds will be donated to the Community Center, 1/3 will go to support People Helping People, and 1/3 will be donated at the 20th annual Needs N Wishes Holiday Fundraiser that benefits both the SLO Noor Clinic and 40 Prado Homeless Service center.

Celebrated author, Lucy Jane Bledsoe, will be at the San Luis Obispo and Atascadero Libraries on Saturday, June 14, to celebrate Pride Month. The events are presented in partnership with AAUW and the Friends of the Atascadero Library.

- Atascadero Library: June 14, noon – 2 p.m.
- San Luis Obispo Library Community Room: June 14, 4 – 5 p.m.

Bledsoe is the author of several works of fiction for both adults and children, including “A Thin Bright Line,” which was a Lambda Literary Award and Ferro-Grumley Award finalist. She is the winner of numerous literary awards including the American Library Association Stonewall Award.

Books will be available to purchase at this event. Attendees will have a chance to win a book.

The Cal Poly Digital Transformation Hub (DxHub), powered by Amazon Web Services (AWS), has a free, weeklong Artificial Intelligence (AI) summer camp on the Cal Poly campus this summer.

The camp, running Aug. 3-7, is for 100 California Community College students, and applications are being accepted until June 7 at dxhub.calpoly.edu/ai-camp. Those selected for the CCC camp will be notified by June 14. All lodging, meals, and camp participation costs are covered for participants. Only transportation to and from San Luis Obispo and parking, if applicable, is required by selected participants.

Current CSU undergraduate and graduate students in all majors were welcome to apply — no prior AI experience required. The same is true for participants in the CCC camp — all majors are welcome, and no AI experience is required.

Join the dance party and documentary premiere of “That’s So Drag” — an electrifying night honoring the art, beauty, and power of drag. It all takes place at The Libertine, 1234 Broad St. SLO. They are We’re rolling out the pink carpet for the first public screening of our behind-the-scenes documentary, followed by a high-energy dance party featuring beats that’ll keep you moving all night. Come dressed to impress – because That’s So Drag! Tickets are \$9.34 and are available at my805tix.com.

City Farm SLO launch their Summer Farm Stand, a great opportunity to get the best produce while supporting City Farm SLO and its tenant farmers. The farm stand is open every Wednesday from 1-5:30 p.m. at 1221 Calle Joaquin Road, San Luis Obispo. It offers produce grown regeneratively on farm plots, maintained and harvested by students, community members, and City Farm staff. Additionally, they will feature produce from their tenant farmers, who operate plots across the 19-acre site. Proceeds directly support local organic farmers and help fund City Farm’s educational programs including farm field trips for K-5th graders, therapeutic horticulture for children and young adults with disabilities, and leadership development for underserved teens.

For more information, go to cityfarmslo.org/community-tours.

The Seven Sister Gallery, 601 Embarcadero Ste. 8, Morro Bay, presents Metal art by Trudi Gilliam. Trudi draws inspiration, for her one-of-a-kind, hand-crafted pieces, from the wild landscapes in which she travels and lives. As an avid fan of the ocean, and to get an even closer perspective of the sea and marine life, she received her scuba certification while living on St. Croix, where she has spent more than 25 years. Today Trudi shares time between St. Croix, the Central Coast of California, and her home in Montana. She creates her sculptures using copper, brass, nickel/silver, and found objects. This new series of whales and birds uses copper and sea glass. Call (805) 772-9955, for more information.



The League of Women Voters SLO County is participating in the NAACP SLO County’s Eighth Annual Juneteenth celebration on June 14, 11 a.m. - 4:30 p.m., in Mission Plaza San Luis Obispo. This year’s theme is “We’re Still Here – Standing Together. Activities include musical performances, speakers, a gumbo cookoff, freedom lounge and more. For more information, go to juneteenthsla.com.

Juneteenth, celebrated on June 19, commemorates the emancipation of enslaved African Americans. It marks the day in 1865 when Union soldiers announced the end of slavery in Galveston.

Today, Juneteenth has evolved into a national celebration with parades, festivals, educational events, and family gatherings, honoring African American history and progress. The holiday symbolizes the end of slavery and highlights the resilience and contributions of African Americans. Juneteenth gained federal recognition when President Joe Biden signed the Juneteenth National Independence Day Act into law. This acknowledges Juneteenth’s importance and provides an opportunity for national reflection and celebration.

Take part in the Monday Club’s Summer Sippin’ - Walk Around Tasting Event at 1815 Monterey Street, San Luis Obispo. Doors open at 4 p.m. Sunday, June 8. Enjoy wine and beer tastings, music by Terry Lawless and nibbles by Del Monte’s Debbie Collins, a sip and spin wine raffle and raffle baskets. Tickets are \$100 and can be purchased at themondayclubsla.org.

Enjoy featured Photographer Cathy Russ at Gallery at Marina Square, 601 Embarcadero suite 10, Morro Bay through June 29 from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Russ is a streetscape/landscape photographer living in Morro Bay. Her pursuit of streetscape/landscape images have taken her around the world for well over 30 years. The visual artistry of her photographs is born of a keen eye for the unusual and a life-long passion for the outdoors. This passion shines throughout Cathy’s work and has attracted a wide audience.

Russ’ style is unmistakable. Her talent for rare captures of amazing images fills her portfolio with a sense of passion, inspiration and the extraordinary. Her success derives from the patient pursuit of unique moments, the magic, and energy of the streets and outdoors. View her work at cathyrussphotography.com.


Oscar Wilde's Classic Comedy of Manners

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When Gerry wasn't in the garage, you could find him on the golf course, a passion he developed in his early years that became as much a part of him as breathing in his retirement years. Golfing upwards of three or more times a week as part of both the Morro Bay and San Luis Obispo County Golf Clubs — winning Club Champion in 2022 in the San Luis Obispo group. In fact, after

Gerry is survived by his wife, Karen Griswold, his children, Cassie Trzcinski (Vince), Keli Winchester (Bill), Leigh Madamba (Celena), Gayle Pullen (John), Barbara Boyer, 10 grandchildren, 7 great grandchildren, his brother, Galen Griswold, and family. A memorial service will be held on June 21, 2025, at the Estero Bay United Methodist Church in Morro Bay, California, at 2 p.m. A graveside service will be held at a future time at the Grangeville Cemetery in Armona, California. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Morro Bay Golf Club High School Scholarship Fund with checks payable to MBGC HS Scholarship Fund.

Anthony Raymond Martinez 1983 – 2025



Gone from our sight, but never from our hearts.



Community No Fee Adoptions at Woods June 7

To view animals available for adoption, visit www.WoodsHumaneSociety.org/adoptions. Woods Humane Society is located at 875 Oklahoma Ave., San Luis Obispo and at 2300 Ramona Rd., Atascadero. They are open to the public daily from 12-5 p.m., with adoption hours from 12-4 p.m. For more information about Woods, visit www.WoodsHumane.org or call (805) 543-9316.



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Letters To The Editor

Boo, to the Police Blotter

If I was looking for any information on local crime, I would never figure it out from reading the police blotter in the Estero Bay News. I get the old-time jokey deal but cringe at the vernacular in oh so many ways. Besides the complete lack of any useful information the use of slurs and disregard for others is hard to read. Isn't it worn out by now?

Kim Connolly
Los Osos

Police Blotter Love

My wife and I just returned from a trip to Morro Bay. While we were waiting for some food we ordered, we were looking through the Estero Bay News. When we hit upon the Police Blotter, we couldn't stop laughing at how the entries were written. While we feel for those who experienced loss, we appreciate your novel approach to communicating it.

Scott Lewis
Sunnyvale, California

To the SLO Department of Public Works

As a veteran, I was really offended to note that the new Vets Hall here in Cayucos had NO FLAG flying on Memorial Day, yesterday.

Alex at the Cayucos Chamber of Commerce has informed me that YOUR department is responsible for this sort of thing, and directed me to contact you about it.

You may not think that this is important enough to even get noticed, but I can assure you that the public, and EVERY VETERAN I KNOW, did notice.

So why wasn't this done, and what assurance going forward can you give me that it WILL get done in the future?

John Wintbrop
Cayucos

Letter Policy

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

Cambria Firefighters to Host Benefit Chili Cook-off Saturday



By Connie Pendleton

Cambria Firefighters Local 4635 is hosting a chili cook-off on Saturday, June 14, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Pinedorado Grounds, adjacent to the Cambria Veteran's Memorial Hall, 1000 Main Street. The fundraising event will benefit Skate Cambria to help build the skatepark.

Firefighters from shifts A, B, and C will make their own chili batches for the public to enjoy. For those who appreciate a good competition, a chili flight will allow tasters to savor each of the three batches and vote on their favorite. Hamburgers, hot dogs, chips, and drinks will also be served.

The firefighters also plan to bring their vintage 1933 Dodge fire truck down to the grounds for classic car enthusiasts and photo opportunities.

The Sons of the American Legion is also a sponsor of the event.

Reprise Foundation Fundraiser Success



On Saturday May 10, Reprise Foundation for the Arts hosted its annual fundraiser "Making Arts Happen" with great success.

The variety show featured pianists, violinists, vocalists, actors, West African drummers, and a demonstration of Los Osos home-based Mini Melodies classes designed for infants and toddlers.

Through sponsorships, silent auction proceeds, and general donations, the event raised a remarkable \$6,800, all of which goes directly to support student scholarship programs across all arts disciplines.

Reprise sends out a thanks to their generous donors and audience members who helped "enormously to carry out its mission of making music, art, and community in San Luis Obispo County."

For further information, visit the Reprise Foundation website at reprisefoundation.org.

Photo by Ryan C. Loyd RYLO Media and Design.



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Central Coast Legislative Caucus' Bill Package

The California Legislative Central Coast Caucus, co-chaired by Assemblymember Dawn Addis (D-Morro Bay) and Assemblymember Gregg Hart (D-Santa Barbara) and vice chaired by Senator Monique Limón (D-Santa Barbara), unveiled its bill priorities for the 2025 legislative session.

"From protecting our coasts from offshore drilling to protecting our homes from wildfires, this year's package aims to not just defend the residents of the Central Coast, but also people all over the state of California," said Addis in a news release. "This year's package takes a holistic view of the natural disaster landscape through bills that address the root cause of these disasters, climate change, while also making our environments and homes more resilient to storms, wildfires, and other natural disasters."

The legislative package is poised to address critical issues facing the region and include the following and more:

AB 1243 (Addis) requires fossil fuel polluters to pay their fair share of the damage caused by fossil fuel emissions to relieve a portion of the burden borne by current and future California taxpayers.

AB 1143 (Bennett) requires the State Fire Marshal to create a holistic home hardening certification program that incorporates home hardening techniques, materials, and defensible space to reduce wildfire losses.

AB 14 (Hart) creates the California Blue Whales and Blue Skies Program, a voluntary vessel speed reduction program to incentivize ocean-going vessels to reduce their speed.

AB 1448 (Hart) prohibits changes to oil leases that would increase the amount of oil transported through state waters, protecting our coast from additional oil infrastructure.

AB 452 (Irwin) allows local governments to identify conservation measures to protect and restore the ecosystems and natural resources surrounding surf breaks.

AB 996 (Pellerin) establishes a process for local governments to seek consultation from the California Coastal Commission on sea level rise planning and establishes the California

Estero Bay News Briefs

By Theresa-Marie Wilson

Coastal Planning Fund to help local governments adequately plan for the protection of coastal resources and public accessibility to the coastline.

Further updates on the progress of these bills are anticipated as they move through the legislative process in the State Assembly and State Senate.

Cal Poly Partners Plaza Recognized

Cal Poly Partners Plaza — the 14,200-square-foot hospitality area at the university's Alex G. Spanos Stadium — received two awards from the American Society of Civil Engineers San Luis Obispo Branch.

The three-tiered pavilion on the north end of the stadium received the ASCE branch's Outstanding Community Improvement Project award for its significant enhancements to the community and was honored as the Outstanding Urban or Land Development Project for providing value and benefit.

Cal Poly Partners — the university's nonprofit auxiliary — worked with Wallace Group on the civil engineering, Maino Construction and Ten Over Studio, all based in San Luis Obispo, to transform the formerly unused and restricted space into a vibrant, multilevel plaza featuring concessions, a turf play and picnic area, and landscaped pathways.

The walkways provide Americans with Disabilities Act-compliant access to all levels of the plaza and includes new ADA parking spaces on California Boulevard adjacent to the site.

Moreover, the plaza provides a significant upgrade to stadium concession offerings. All game attendees have access to two different culinary and beverage venues and a standalone drink concession. The large picnic area, available to game attendees, also provides space to run around, a popular feature for young Mustang athletics fans.



During the academic year, the food, seating and picnic areas are open Monday through Thursday as another place for Cal Poly community members to gather and eat on the west side of campus.

With exclusive, private hospitality spaces, customizable catering and beverage service, Cal Poly Partners Plaza offers a turnkey VIP experience for company picnics and employee or corporate events.

League of Women Voter's Blocks Part of Executive Order

A federal court judge has issued a ruling in League of Women Voters et. al. v. Trump et. al., temporarily blocking the US Election Assistance Commission (EAC) from implementing a provision in the President's executive order adding a requirement to show a passport or similar document proving citizenship when registering to vote via the federal form. While the case proceeds, this injunction preserves the status quo where would-be-voters already affirm under penalty of perjury that they are US citizens on the federal form.

"The League of Women Voters is heartened by this ruling, which is a major victory for voters across the country," said Marcia Johnson, chief counsel of the League of Women Voters of the United States. "While the fight is far from over, we're glad the court agreed that a president cannot 'short-circuit' Congress and unilaterally use an illegal executive order to obliterate the rights of millions of voters. Broadly, this executive order and the SAVE Act try to make it more difficult for American voters, particularly women voters, to participate in our elections — but the League hasn't and will not back down. The League of Women Voters will continue to fight to defend our democracy from those who seek to restrict it."

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

SOLD: Representing Buyer



410 Kings SOLD: \$1.6m- Represented Buyer on this 5 bedroom/4 bath fixer.

SOLD: Representing Seller



*511 Pinon #42 SOLD: \$398,400 Represented Seller on this 3/2 porch model manufactured home

JUST LISTED: Representing Seller



*5145 White Pine #52. Just Listed: \$435,000 - Brand new 2025 Manufactured Home. 3 Bedrooms/ 2 Baths, Fully upgraded. Patio.

PRICE IMPROVEMENT: Representing Seller



*475 South Bay Blvd, #3- \$369,000- For Sale: Price Drop/ Seller Motivated on this five years' new, custom kitchen manufactured home with fenced yard

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Community

Ceremony Honors All Lost at Sea

Photos by Neil Farrell

On Memorial Day we remember the fallen soldiers who gave their lives in defense of the nation, but in Cayucos they do things a bit differently.

Memorial Day saw the Annual Lost at Sea Memorial Ceremony held at the Cayucos Pier Plaza with prayers, speeches and somber ceremonies, commemorating people lost at sea with singing and the playing of traditional songs.

Cpl. Jerry Boots, trumpeter extraordinaire played the various theme songs of the military branches — Army, Navy, Air Force Marines, Coast Guard, Merchant Marines and the newest branch, the Space Force.

Bagpiper Paul Dunn and drummer Jeff Van Nest performed traditional Irish songs and finished the ceremony with “Amazing Grace.”

The Cuesta Concord Chorus performed, and the Coast Guard Station Morro Bay provided the Color Guard. The Naval Sea Cadets were on hand in spiffy dress blues, and about 250 people gathered for the ceremonies.


The event ended with a march down the Cayucos Pier where a flower wreath was tossed into the sea in honor of all those lost at sea — military and civilian.

It’s believed to be the only such ceremony held on the Central Coast and is intended to remember anyone lost at sea including military personnel, commercial fishermen, pleasure boaters and even folks like surfers.

The highlight of the day was a flyover by the Estrella Warbirds with the traditional, “Missing Man” formation. Photos are scenes from the 2025 Lost at Sea Memorial.



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Community

Rate Hike From page 1

Under Prop. 218, the “Right to Vote on Taxes Act,” approved by voters in 1996, rate payers can vote against a proposed rate hike — for things like water, sewer and garbage services — and if over 50% of the affected customers protests, the governing board, in this case County Supervisors, cannot approve the rate hike.

That’s not to say it would be over, instead the garbage company would have to go back and rework its new rates and try and come up with something more palatable for ratepayers and resubmit for consideration. Though it’s been known to happen, such Prop. 218 protest votes are rarely successful.

All protest votes must be made in writing prior to or during the public hearing, which Supervisors set for 9 a.m. Tuesday, June 17 at the Supervisor’s regular board meeting, held in the Supervisor’s Chambers at the County Government Center, 1055 Monterey St., in Downtown SLO. If the protest vote falls below 50%-plus one vote, the new rates go into effect on July 1.

The rate hike proposal from Mission Country Disposal, would be a 14.07% immediate increase to the base rate, according to the County notice.

This hike is being blamed on “cost increases associated with the organic waste processing fees, direct labor, landfill tipping fees, and general inflation.”

The rate hike also includes approval of a delayed rate increase of an additional 14.07% base rate hike that wouldn’t take effect until next Jan. 1 (2026). The delay would allow time for conducting a “rate review.”

And, it allows for annual rate increases based on the inflation rate for each of the next several years. So if the Trump Administration can keep inflation in check, as it’s promised to do, these rate hikes may not amount to very much.

These inflationary rate hikes would continue through 2028, and each annual increase would take effect on Jan. 1.

SLO County in 2023, rejoined the Integrated Waste Management Authority (IWMA), a countywide joint powers agency “formed to plan and implement regional solid waste and hazardous waste programs mandated by State Law.”

Rejoining IWMA is going to cost ratepayers another 5.4% fee “to account for IWMA operation and capital cost increases due largely to the implementation of SB 1383 [“Solid Waste Management Fee”]. The Solid Waste Management Fee was implemented, starting Nov. 1, 2023.”

Mission Country says it needs these rate increases to remain profitable. “The Proposed Rate Increase is due to increased costs associated with the organic waste processing fees, direct labor,

landfill tipping fees, and general inflation,” the County report said.

As for who can protest, the notice said the official owner of a property or parcel(s), whose name appear on the deed, may submit a protest. Also, if a renter’s name appears on the garbage bill, as the actual “customer” they too can protest the rate hike.

All protests must be done in writing and contain the name of the person submitting the protest, and their connection to the property — i.e. owner, or tenant. It must contain a statement of protest to the rate hike, the address and the Assessor’s Parcel Number of the parcel or parcels that get garbage service. The written protest must also be signed.

Written protests cannot be emailed in nor faxed. Verbal protests don’t count either. Written protests to this rate hike must be received by the Clerk of the Board (County Administration), before the close of the public hearing on June 17.

Mail written protests to: County of San Luis Obispo Administrative Office, Attn: Clerk of the Board, 1055 Monterey St., Suite D430, San Luis Obispo, CA 93408.

Also, if readers believe this Prop. 218 process is not being done correctly, they can file official “Objections” but they must be received more than two days before the hearing date (no later than June 15). Such objections must also be done in writing and can be mailed to the same address as the protest votes.

If readers have questions, call Public Works Department Program Manager, Jodie Snowbarger, at (805) 781-1510.

Disaster Funding From page 1



Photo is of the failed seawall by the boat launch ramp that’s been approved for funding of repairs by FEMA.

looking for monies to get started on what’s become a lengthy repair list and the first good news may have come in, thanks to, or perhaps because of the rough winter of 2023.



Photo shows where rocks have slipped out of the revetment at the Dunes Street docks, below Anchor Memorial Park.

Photos courtesy City of Morro Bay

Partial relief came last week, when the Federal Emergency Management Agency or FEMA announced that it had approved funding for repairing five of the seawalls and revetments under “the Public Assistance Grant Program.”

The City applied to FEMA, the lead federal agency in response to natural disasters, for assistance recovering from the big storms in 2023.

“Public Works,” said City Engineer Cindy Cecil, “applied for FEMA disasters funds for revetment and seawall repairs after the 2023 extreme storms.”

Morro Bay was hit with several large storm events, as an atmospheric river set up over the Pacific and funneled heavy rains our way. The worst of these storms happened Jan. 8-9, 2023.

Former City Manager Scott Collins told Estero Bay News at the time, damages included “Harbor infrastructure, the Corp Yard [equipment, buildings, vehicles], old wastewater treatment plant, storm drains, parks, trees, and roads.”

He explained that the City had been engaged in the extensive cleanup of the area on Main Street that was flooded, as well as “Atascadero Road and other parts of the community. The infrastructure damages and our cleanup costs are estimated to be around \$20 million. But that is an early estimate and subject to change.”

FEMA’s “Final Notice” released last week is another step in the process of getting disaster relief.

The FEMA funding for this particular grant did not come with a dollar amount. City Engineer Cecil said that’s normal.

“FEMA does not provide the reimbursement amount approved,” she said, “which will be a percentage of the reimbursement amount applied for at this time.”

Disaster Continued on page 16

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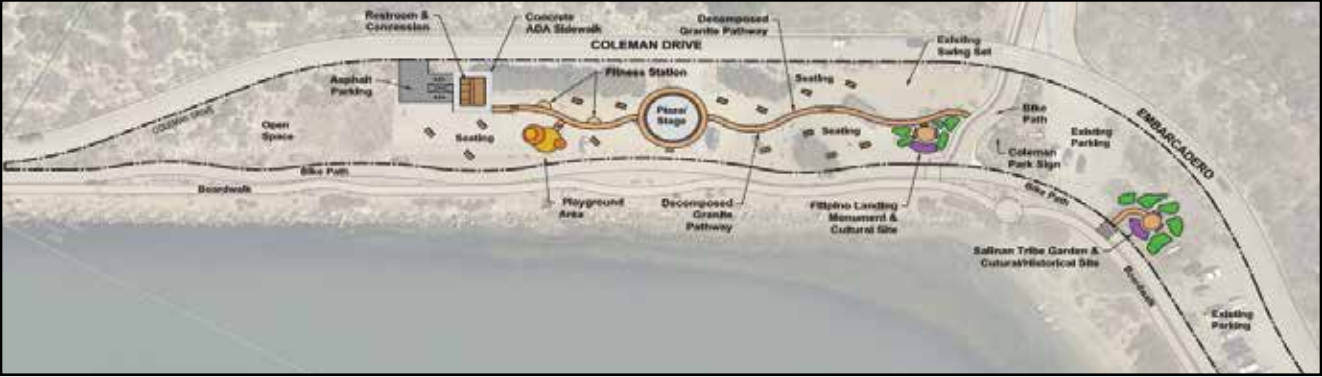
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Conceptual drawing of what the redeveloped Coleman Park would look like. Photo courtesy City of Morro Bay

“The Consultant,” reads the RFP notice, “shall be responsible for preparing an effective, clear, and concise proposal.”

The deadline for bidding is 4 p.m. Thursday, June 26. City Senior Civil Engineer, Austin Della, is handling the job for the City.

Under the RFP timeline, the City intends to award the bid July 10 and execute a contract by Aug. 5. The tentative start date is Aug. 11 and estimated completion date is March 2, 2026, or about seven months.

The City has nine public parks ranging in amenities from nothing but a stunning view at the North Point Natural Area, to the multi-use 10-acre Del Mar Park, which has an off-leash dog park, tennis court, pickleball courts, a picnic area, playground, restrooms and several acres of open grass.

On the whole, Morro Bay’s parks are well kept and diverse in their offerings, with the exception of Coleman Park, which ironically is arguably the most visible of them all.

“Coleman Park,” reads the RFP, “is strategically located in a highly visible and frequently visited area of the city, situated between the downtown Embarcadero area and the iconic Morro Rock.

“The park occupies a prime coastal location with the popular Morro Bay Boardwalk running adjacent to it. This boardwalk serves as a key pedestrian connection between the Embarcadero commercial district and Morro Rock, one of the city’s most significant natural landmarks and tourist destinations. The park’s location makes it an important public space in Morro Bay’s coastal recreational corridor.”

Coleman Park’s public restroom, a single-story concrete block structure, was deemed to be structurally unsound about five years ago and closed to the public. The City erected a fence around it until it was torn down entirely in 2021.

In a town that’s long said there were not enough public restrooms on the Embarcadero (with none Downtown), it made the loo shortage worse.

The City has now decided to make Coleman Park a priority.

“Given its prominent location and potential to enhance visitor experience along Morro Bay’s waterfront,” the RFP explains, “Coleman Park has been identified as a priority site for redevelopment.”

The City was able to get a pair of grants from the State. They’ve tapped the Rural Recreation and Tourism Prop. 68 Grant and the Proposition 68 Per Capita Program Grant to get the project moving. It also hopes to land more grant funds.

“The City plans to seek additional funding through the California Coastal Conservancy Grant program to complete the full vision for the park.”

The City estimates the overall project budget at \$918,000 with about \$814,000 available for construction.

They have a concept plan to guide what they want to do at Coleman Park, a process that included most of the area between the Power Plant Intake Building and Target Rock, where the Harborwalk turns sharply north and ends at the beach.

The conceptual plans included new restrooms; a new playground; a new exercise area; a stage/plaza; new parking lot; granite pathway; a Salinan Tribe garden and culturally historical site; and a new monument to commemorate the Filipino Landing at Morro Rock (which ended in tragedy when the Salinans attacked the Conquistadores.)

The local Filipino Community Assoc., erected a bronze plaque commemorating that long-ago voyage and had it installed on a big rock at Coleman Park, which ironically didn’t exist back then, as it was created by the Army Corps of Engineers when they put the rock causeway out to Morro Rock, sealing off the north harbor entrance and created the Embarcadero using spoils from the Morro Rock mining operations.

The RFP asks the bidders to give a full estimate on the entire scope of work and then cull off parts to fit the available monies. After this the City, with assistance from the design consultant, will ask the State to allow a “de-scoping” or delaying of some park features that were included in the original grant applications.

The consultant will then bring the remaining features to full design and ready for construction.

Full design and construction of those removed features will be subject to availability of future funding.

Of note, the RFP said one of the grant requirements is that they must coordinate with the California Conservation Corps “to assist with the placement of five educational signs, and planting/landscaping the designated areas.”

The City also pledged to handle and pay for all permitting costs, as the location sits within the Coastal Commission’s Original Jurisdiction (as former tidelands). Indeed, the entire waterfront sits within this original jurisdiction.

The project shouldn’t have any problems with City Zoning Laws, as a visitor-serving use like a park is within the limitations of Meas. A-24, which voters passed last November and blanketed the area from Beach Street north to past Morro Creek including the City’s former sewer treatment plant site on Atascadero Road, and out to Morro Rock. A-24 requires a vote of the public before zoning can be changed for future development.

Though A-24 was aimed at stopping a proposed Battery Energy Storage System project at the old power plant, its reach goes far beyond that single property or project.

The rebirth of Coleman Park doesn’t appear to include changing the use or the zoning, so A-24 shouldn’t come into play.

What’s this grand concept for Coleman Park look like?

According to the conceptual plans and going from the west end (nearest Morro Rock and working back), there’s an open space area that already exists; then a new parking lot with a new restroom next to the lot and sitting where the basketball court is now.

The new granite pathway runs past a new playground, and around a new, round, stage/plaza that becomes the centerpiece of the park.

Picnic seating is scattered about the park greatly increasing the park’s potential for family gatherings. The granite path continues south past a new, Filipino Monument adjacent to where the bike path turns north crosses Coleman Drive and heads towards Morro Creek.

The existing swing set remains where it is now, and the south parking lot will stay too.

There’s a space for the Salinan Tribe’s Garden and historical center that would be roughly across the Embarcadero from the power plant gatehouse. The paved parking lot at the south end would remain as well.

It’s a design that was arrived at several years ago when the City held public meetings before the Harbor Advisory Board and the Parks & Recreation Commission and at least the third different iteration of a redeveloped Coleman Park that the City has considered over the past couple of decades.

Disaster Funding From page 15

There appears to be more paperwork that must be done. “An initial disaster-wide Public Notice,” FEMA’s Final Notice said, “was published November 1, 2023. Funding for the proposed project will be conditional upon compliance with all applicable federal, tribal, state and local laws, regulations, floodplain standards, permit requirements and conditions.”

They must still go through the environmental reviews under the National Environmental Policy Act or NEPA. “Federal actions must be reviewed and evaluated for feasible alternatives and for social, economic, historic, environmental, legal, and safety considerations.”

FEMA had to consider alternatives to the project and decided they must be fixed. “FEMA has determined the only practicable alternative is to fund the repairs of the damaged Morro Bay seawall and costal protection revetments with mitigation.”

If the seawalls and revetments are not fixed, they could sustain more damage by the inevitable future storms. Also, these seawalls and revetments also took a pounding in March 2011, when the tsunami in Japan sent wave after wave — 11-foot walls of water — in and back out again for the better part of an entire day. It’s possible this contributed heavily to the undermining of areas of the revetment that the Brady Report discovered.

FEMA said the damage to these structures was caused by wave actions driven by the storms and acknowledged the City plans to fix them back to pre-storm condition and then go one better by using larger boulders and changing the underwater sloping of the revetments to better handle wave actions, and to improve the drainage for each segment of revetment so it doesn’t erode again. Some spots have undermined the sidewalk and paving above; while other spots showed serious damage to supports for the little street end public observation piers.

The five areas being funded were not specifically named by FEMA in its Final Notice, rather, they are referred to by GPS coordinates. The Harbor Department said the five sites were an 84-foot long, failed and partially collapsed seawall near the Launch Ramp; the revetment at the Dunes Street docks (at Anchor Memorial Park); the Tidelands Park side-tie dock revetment; and Beach Street North and South.

Until the actual repair projects are designed, cost estimates for each are unavailable. The Brady Report however, estimated the total costs to repair and/or replace the entirety of the City’s seawalls and revetments, would be from \$25.5 million to \$54.6 million.



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CONGRATULATIONS

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SENIORS CLASS OF 2025

Messages To Our 2025 Graduate Class

To the Class of 2025

I'm filled with immense pride as I reflect on the remarkable achievements of your class. It is truly incredible to realize your successes.

Just over 40% of the students have a 4.0 GPA or better. This class has collectively earned more than \$195,000 in local scholarship awards! Our local community is incredibly supportive, and we are thankful.



Over 70% of the students held a job during high school. Next year, over 90% of our graduates will be attending college, and we're proud to see them heading in so many exciting directions. Many students were accepted to multiple universities, giving them a wide range of choices — from international institutions like the University of Edinburgh and the University of British Columbia to top U.S. schools such as Northeastern University, Northwestern University, American University, Pepperdine University, Gonzaga University, Brigham Young University, University of Michigan and the Colorado School of Mines. Members of this class will be attending every highly competitive University of California campus, as well as California State Universities including Cal Poly San Luis Obispo. And notably, several students who were admitted to four-year universities have chosen to begin their journeys at Cuesta College, reflecting thoughtful and personalized decisions about their futures.

Over half of the class of 2025 have completed at least one Career Technical Education pathway program. MBHS has several pathways, and students must take two years of specific classes to complete a pathway. This is just one example of how we work to support students in being career and college ready. The pathway industry sectors include - Agriculture, Arts, Media & Entertainment, Engineering, Health & Medical Technology, as well as, Automotive Services.

This school year, MBHS was the SLO County Mock Trial Champions, for the third year in a row.

This year in sports, Girls Volleyball and Baseball were undefeated league champions, with Baseball playing for a CIF title; Girls Water Polo and Girls Cross Country won CIF championships with Water Polo also finishing as state runner-up. Football and Boys Cross Country were CIF runners-up, three wrestlers won individual CIF titles and qualified for state, and three track athletes competed at the State Meet.

The Class of 2025 worked hard, and our school is now recognized as a US News and World Report Best High School.

Class of 2025, I personally thank you. I know I speak for our entire staff when I thank you for an amazing four years. You have exceeded every expectation. Once again, my heartfelt congratulations!

Love you Morro Bay,
Scott A. Schalde

Coast Union High School Class of 2025

Your high school journey began in a time no one could have predicted. You spent much of middle school learning through screens, trying your best to learn during a global pandemic. When you started ninth grade, it was in small learning pods with social distancing.

The past four years haven't been easy. Many of you balanced school with family responsibilities, jobs, or challenges at home. But through it all, you kept going. You've learned how to be flexible, how to stay hopeful, and how to keep moving forward even when the path isn't clear.

As you head into your next chapter — college, work, the military, or whatever you choose — I want you to remember that you are stronger than you know. You've already overcome so much, and you're ready for whatever comes next.



*Congratulations, Class of 2025.
Ed Arrigoni*

Dear Class of 2025

You did it! Your hard work, determination, and perseverance has paid off, and this season, we celebrate you and the journey ahead.

As you say goodbye to your peers, your teachers, and those that helped you along the way, take a moment to reflect on how far you have come, and how far you're going to go. Your journey is just the beginning, and the future ahead is full of possibility.

As a former teacher, I know and value the strength it takes to stay the course. The late nights, the tough choices, and the moments when life got hard. But you pushed forward, and now as you step into the next chapter, remember to stay true to yourself and never lose sight of what matters the most — your FUTURE.

Education is not just a destination, it is the foundation. One that prepares you to lead, to uplift others, and to shape a world that reflects your values and vision.

From Sacramento to San Luis Obispo County, I am rooting for you. I believe in your potential, and I can't wait to see how you'll change the world.



*Congratulations, Class of 2025!
With pride,
Assemblymember Dawn Addis
California's 30th Assembly District*

To the Graduates of 2025:

To the Graduates of 2025, Congratulations! You've accomplished something great and you deserve to celebrate with your friends and family — and be celebrated by them!

Your school journey, in fact, much of your life, has been shaped by remarkably challenging times. Even before the worldwide pandemic that stressed our sense of community and upended so many lives, our view of the world seemed skewed by regular reports of natural disasters tied to a changing climate and political arguments that have increasingly turned divisive and nasty.



Yet you've pressed on to accomplish something remarkable, and you should be immensely proud. The diploma you receive is certainly an important symbol of your formal education — proof that you've taken the classes, passed the tests and gathered a lot of information about the world. But I think there's more that this piece of paper represents.

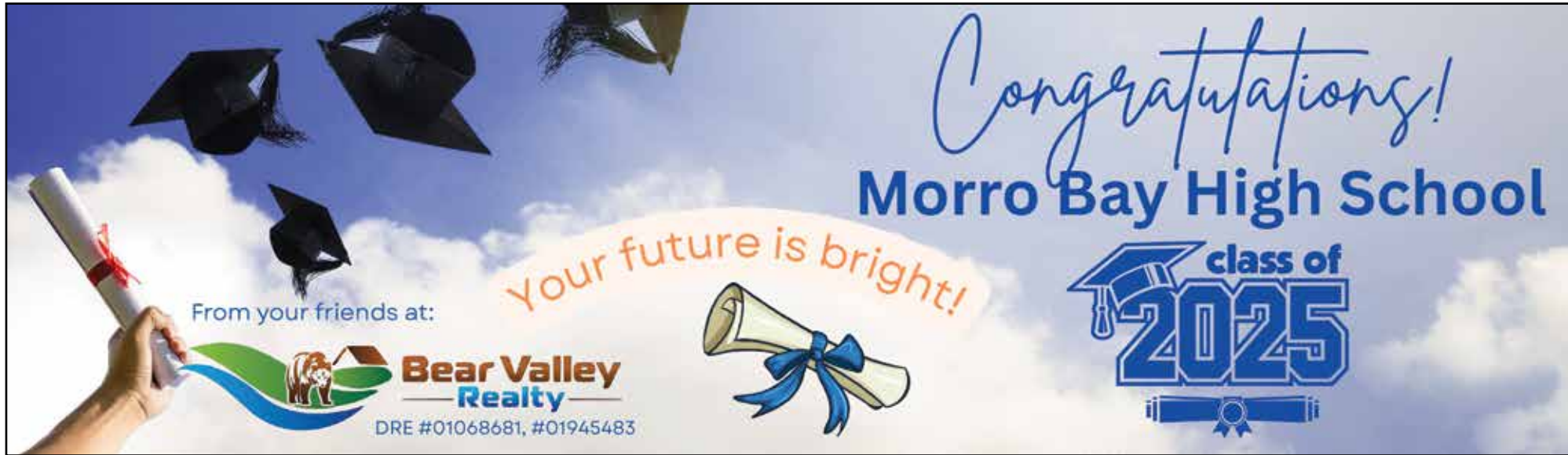
The diploma that you and your classmates each hold is also a marker of the time you spent together as a community. With those of you I've met, I get the clear sense that community is important to you, and that gives me great hope, because taking on our challenging world is something we have to do together.

I bet that being part of your school community gave you a real education about people, whether your fellow humans inspired, frustrated, amused or angered you. In these years, I expect you've also developed strong feelings about what's right and wrong in the world around you as well as opinions on what needs to change.

There's no doubt that your shared experiences have given you tools that will help shape the rest of your life. Whatever the next phase of your own journey might be, I'm hopeful that the knowledge you've gained about the world, about people, and about the power of community will serve you well. On whatever path you take, I hope you remember that being connected to others always makes us stronger.

Now, it's time to celebrate how far you've come, and, please, let me offer sincere best wishes for all your future adventures! Congratulations!

*Bruce Gibson
County Board of Supervisors*



Morro Bay High School - Class of 2025



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Ainley IV, Frank C



Alvarez, Vivienne



Andres, Jade



Anguiano, Luis



Atwood, Aubrianna



Atwood, Jane



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Bariel, Ruby



Barragan, Levi



Bath, Wyatt



Beckett, Ava



Bennett, Mia



Bettencourt, Ella



Buentiempo, Juliana



Burnett, Braeden



Burton, Liam



Busch, Ryder



Castillo Jr, Rogelio



Chappell, Dylan



Chrismen, Hayden



Colletti, Stuart



Cordero, Jeremiah



Costa, Lillie



Covert, Phineas



Cruz Martinez, Ashley



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Duncan, Joshua



Dunton, Rheanna



Elizalde, Jenna



Elms, Ellie



Erkenbrecher, Byron



Escalante, Loreyna



Escalante, Sofia



Falat, Jacob



Ferguson, Isla



Flood, Isaac



Fortini, Lucy



Gabatin, Joshua



Gade, Ray



Galaviz, Ayten



Gallardo, Ruth



Garcia, Christopher



Garcia, Rylee



Garner, Nicole



Gentry, Hayden



Giordano, Emily



Grafton, Odin



Green, Lillah



Hallmeyer, Reno



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Howell, Damien



Huss, Lucas



Hyman, Theo



Ibay, Sam



Janovec, Colton



Jimenez Salas, Samantha



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Korman, Jacob



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Landwehr, Nathaniel



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Llamas, Andrew



Looper, Danae



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Loza Zavaleta, Stephany



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Marcial, Gerardo



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McCain, Rowan

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McLaughlin, Devyn Marie



McNamara, Alanna



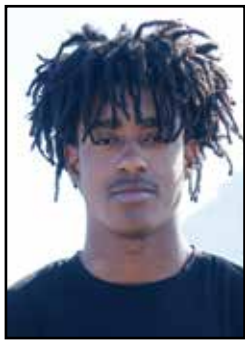
McNellie, Angus



Meehan, Logan



Milne, Nali



Mimms, Cody



Minetti, Annamarie



Mischel, Paul



Molina, Bridget



Mongin, Everett



Montoya, Annabella



Moon, Peyton



Moore, Lily.



Moreno, Noah



Muff, Caroline



Myers, John



Nelson, indie mae



Nickel, James



Osorio-Hernandez, Natalie.



Osorio, Jeremiah



Padilla, Haylie



Paulson, Mazzlyn



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Perez, Angie



Petacci, Cecilia



Petersen, Carli



Pianosi, Lucas



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Rodgers, Ozzy



Rojas, Isabella



Rollings, Maddox



Roman Martinez, Yesenia



Ronquillo, Nathaniel



Ruane, Elsie



Salemi, Antonella



Salgado, Isaac



Sarrouf-Levine, Rhea



Savannah, Goodyear



Schachter, Connor



Segler, Zahira



Selverston, Asa



Serna, Valeria



Shattuck, Reagan



Shipcott, Siena



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Smith, Kalvin



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Whitney, Dawson



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Winstead, Jamison



Yonemoto, Kaleb



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Zales, Lannaiah

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Bitler, Zinn



Castillo, Diego



Chase, Sienna



Chavez, Martin



Cuevas, Mia



De Alba, Alexander



De Alba, Tatiana



Delgadillo, Eduardo



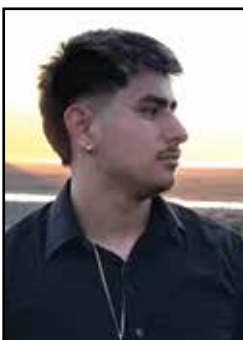
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Espinoza, Gabby



Garcia Aguilar, Giovanni



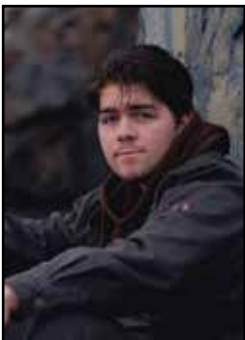
Garcia, Ramsey



Gomez, Diego



Gomez, Melissa



Gould, Seth



Haanan, Hailey



Hernandez, Carolina



Juarez, Esme



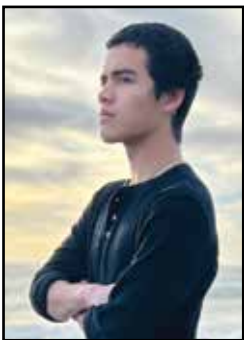
Kjems, Rosa



Lopez, Paola



Lundy, Gavin



MacKenzie, Declan



Mercado, Catherine



Mercado, Daniela



Merced, Richard



Merlos, Jovan

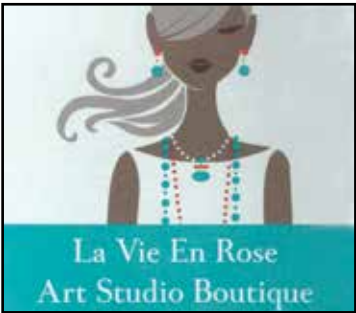


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Rios, Adrian



Rixman, Adyson



Sanchez, Jazmine



Sanchez, June



Schalk, Sean



Sepulveda, Rafael



Sook, Harmony



Urbina, Jesus



Vargas, Gabriel



Vargas, Uriel



Volz, Dane



Gearwood at Beerwood – Honoring a Local Car Buff

Photos by Eric Anderson

Hosting the show at her favorite spot of Beerwood, was the best way to honor Michele Fellows. She had this incredible way of lighting up a car show, not just because she loved the cars, but because she loved the people, the energy, the stories behind every vehicle, and the food. You could feel that same energy with over 60 vehicles. Every revving engine, every handshake, every smile, and every pint of beer, Michele could be felt celebrating the gathering.

Having folks with a Volkswagen bug drive in from as far as Newbury Park, CA just to be here shows how much she meant to this community and beyond. This show was her kind of day, through and through.



News

Cherished Memory From page 1

the “Eternal Flame.”

They also toured famed Fort McHenry, site of a key battle in the War of 1812, and “where Francis Scott Key wrote the ‘Star Spangled Banner,’” Setting said.

Their tours included the Lincoln Memorial, Air Force Memorial, the Iwo Jima Memorial, the World War II Memorial and they drove past the Pentagon en route to Washington.

The special place for Setting was the Vietnam Wall. “The trip was important to me to visit the Vietnam Wall and see some of my 11 classmates that are on the Wall and remember them for their sacrifice. Also to share some life stories with my son, Gary.”

They also visited the U.S. Naval Academy. “We went to Annapolis and got a great tour of the amazing campus,” Setting said. “While there we visited the Chapel and were treated to an amazing display of organ music.

“The organ has 5,000 pipes and is one of the largest in the world. It was very impressive.”

One of America’s first war heroes is buried there. “In the basement under the church alter,” Setting said, “lies John Paul Jones’ crypt which is very beautiful and very ornate.”

Jones was an officer in the Continental Navy during the Revolutionary War and is considered, “The Father of the American Navy” by historians.

The Army Museum was also on the itinerary. “The new Army Museum,” Setting said, “is filled with all sorts of amazing displays showcasing 250-years of Army memorabilia.”

They bunked at the Hilton Hotel, Setting said, “with very nice accommodations and we were fed extremely well the entire trip.

“The Honor Flight personnel were extremely well organized and made the trip a lifetime memory for all the Vets that went.”

They also got warm receptions at every stop on the tour. “Everywhere we went we were greeted with shouts of ‘welcome home’ and ‘thank you for your service.’”

As they were approaching home, Setting said they had a big surprise waiting for them, but EBN agreed not to divulge what this was, so as not to spoil the surprise for future veterans who take the trip. It moved Setting. “I was bawling like a baby,” he said, “and feeling so very grateful that I served my country.

“The final treat was being welcomed home by several hundred friends and family at the Santa Maria Airport. It was very

emotional and extremely gratifying.”

It’s also an indication of how far the nation’s come since the bad days in the late 1960s and early ‘70s, when G.I.’s returning from Vietnam, were met by anti-war protesters and shameful treatment by some people. That unwelcome home has left scars on the psyches of lot of Vietnam Veterans, that still hurt 50-plus years later.

But attitudes toward military veterans have changed considerably, to the point where countless non-profit organizations have been formed to aid veterans. Organizations like Tunnel 2 Towers, Wounded Warriors and Honor Flight, now welcome veterans, thank them for the sacrifices they made for the nation, and assist them or their surviving families with numerous services.

Setting praised Honor Flight for the wonderful trip and the chance to spend time with his son.

“As a result of the trip my son, Gary, and I are going to start a fundraising effort at the Sea Pines Saturday concerts to raise money to support future Honor Flights,” Setting said. “I would highly recommend any Veteran to go on this trip.”

For information about Honor Flights Central Coast, see the website at: honorflightccc.org. The organization accepts donations from individuals and businesses and takes signups for chaperone spots, as well as veterans wanting to go on the trip.

They also have a lot of business and community sponsors such as the Rotary Club of Morro Bay, for which John Weiss is the current club President.

Food Bank From page 1

ship is more vital than ever before,” said Molly Kern, SLO Food Bank CEO. “To meet the increased food insecurity caused by a 10% cut to SNAP, the SLO Food Bank would need to double in size.”

California Governor Gavin Newsom’s most recent budget proposal would reduce statewide funding by \$52 million for Cal-Food, a state-funded program that allows food banks to purchase and distribute healthy, locally grown foods such as produce, milk, and eggs. The SLO Food Bank’s grant would be cut by \$400,000 annually.”

Additionally, a phase of the Local Food Purchase Assistance Cooperative Agreement Program (LFPA) run by the USDA has been cut. It provided funding to purchase food produced in-state, supporting local farmers and enabling the SLO Food Bank to buy



Food being organized for community members in need at Morro Bay Neighborhood Food Distribution. Photo submitted

fresh produce weekly. The loss is \$600,000 annually.

Although SNAP improvements mitigated food insecurity during the COVID-19 pandemic, those adjustments have ended resulting in a loss of \$500 million per month statewide — an average monthly loss of \$180 per household.

“When there are changes to SNAP at the federal level, such as proposed cuts or new restrictions, it doesn’t directly reduce our food bank’s funding, but if SNAP benefits are reduced, thousands of people in our area will lose a substantial part of their grocery budget and access to nutritious food, and turn to the food bank and our hunger relief network to fill the gap,” Colevans said.

Statewide in 2024, the program helped 76,600 participants equaling \$186 million in food benefits while creating more than 2500 jobs. The California Association of Foodbanks says 8.4 million Californians are food insecure — more than one in five households, which is more than double pre-pandemic levels.

“The reality is that the scale of the potential cuts is so large that it would be difficult for any food bank, including ours, to meet the increased demand on our own,” Colevans said.

The “One Big, Beautiful Bill” passed the House of Representatives by one vote. In the coming months, senators are expected to rewrite portions of the bill in hopes of garnering the 51 votes it needs to pass. Legislation must be approved by both chambers before it can go to President Donald Trump for his signature. If passed, federal funding cuts to basic SNAP benefits would start in 2028.

Despite the current turbulent outlook, there are positives.



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10:00 AM - Skateboard Race

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11:00 AM - Live Music

12 PM - Opening Flag Ceremony Presented by USCG

1:00 PM - Live Music by The Michael Arriola Project (Band will Play until 4PM)

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Community

“Time and time again, people throughout SLO County have stepped up and refused to let their neighbors go hungry,” Colevans said. “We are constantly inspired by the resilience and generosity of our community, the determination of the 70+ nonprofits whose pantries and kitchens we are proud to stock, the dedication of our volunteers and staff, and the collaborative, creative ways we have found to serve more people than ever before.”

Hunger Awareness Day June 6

The SLO Food Bank is turning the spotlight on childhood hunger this summer with its annual Hunger Awareness Day event on June 6, presented by Joan G. Sargen. The nonprofit is focused on bridging the summer meal gap for children in need.

The summer months pose unique challenges for families who rely on school meal programs during the academic year. With fewer resources available, thousands of children face an increased risk of hunger. According to Feeding America, over 6,700 children in SLO County experience food insecurity, a number that local trends suggest may be even higher. The SLO Food Bank reports that 25% of the people they serve are children, who have an essential need for nutritious food for healthy growth and development.

To raise awareness and rally the community around this issue, the SLO Food Bank is hosting a special Open House from 4 to 6 p.m. at its warehouse on 1180 Kendall Road, San Luis Obispo. The event will also include guided tours of the warehouse, offering attendees a behind-the-scenes look at the scale of operations required to address food insecurity in the county.

Additionally, there will be a Breakfast Bag Build-Off to feed local children. Sponsors will participate in a challenge to assemble hundreds of Summer Breakfast Bags, each containing 21 meals for children in need. Each year, the SLO Food Bank distributes over 6,500 bags throughout the summer months to fill the gap left by reduced access to school meals.

Community members who cannot attend the event but want to make a difference are encouraged to donate to support the SLO Food Bank’s programs addressing summer hunger.

Visit slofoodbank.org/OpenHouse to learn more, donate, or get involved. For more information about CalFresh, to make an application appointment, or to apply for benefits, visit calfreshslo.org.

Let's Get Tuned sound & yoga studio

Taming the Monkey Mind: How to Quiet Your Inner Chaos

Ever feel like your brain is a hyperactive toddler on a sugar rush? One minute you’re focused, the next you’re spiraling down a rabbit hole of “Did I send that email?” and “What happened to my third-grade best friend?” That, my friend, is the monkey mind — that restless, chattering part of our brain that just won’t sit still.

The good news? You can train it. Science backs this up. Research from Harvard University found that our minds wander 47% of the time, but mindfulness can help rein it in. Practices like meditation, breathwork, and focused movement have been shown to reduce stress, improve concentration, and boost overall well-being.

Here are a few tricks to calm the chaos: Breathe Like You Mean It – Deep



breathing activates the parasympathetic nervous system, aka your brain’s chill-out mode. Try inhaling for four counts, holding for four, and exhaling for six. It’s like a reset button for your mind.



Tame the Tech – Your phone is like a monkey-mind amplifier. Try setting boundaries such as no scrolling before bed, timed breaks from social media, and maybe don’t check emails the second you wake up.



Name It to Tame It – When your thoughts are running wild, label them: “Oh look, there goes my brain overanalyzing again.” Awareness helps you take back control.

The monkey mind will never disappear completely, but with practice, you can teach it to chill out and maybe even sit quietly once in a while.

Jon and Natalie are the owners of Let’s Get Tuned Sound and Yoga studio in Morro Bay, a safe space dedicated to personal growth and health in a loving community environment.

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HISTORICAL SOCIETY of MORRO BAY

American Gothic in Baywood/Los Osos

Have you ever seen the famous Grant Wood painting called “American Gothic”? The painting celebrates a stern farm couple holding a pitchfork between them (possibly homesteaders somewhere on the Great Plains) determined to succeed in their endless work, fulfilling their version of the American dream.

Is that what the couple in this photo from 1920s Baywood/Los Osos are doing? We found this photo in a collection that features Richard Otto, a 1920s developer of Baywood, and the painting is a good clue about it.

The man seems made of sterner stuff than the woman who’s looking askance at the camera, but they are engaged somehow in a work project along the Morro Bay Estuary, with Black Hill to the left and Cabrillo Peak behind them. They are taking a break for the photo.

What they are doing is mysterious but it probably has something to do with managing the water in the tidal flows of the estuary. The foreground is a heavy stream of water being pumped from the left. At the couple’s feet are three pumpkin-shaped objects that might be plant-based or maybe are manufactured floats used to mark something in the water. The photo is not clear enough to be sure, but there are u-shaped handles on the top of two of the objects where a rope could easily be attached.

We do know that Otto used equipment like this in efforts to create channels in the estuary for boats when the tide was out. For Otto, the point was to enhance the appeal of the real estate for potential buyers. Did he use the pumped silt from the estuary to fill in elsewhere?

What do you think is going on?

If you know more about this photo (or can make up a good story about it) let us know at info@historicalmorrobay.org . Or contact us if you have a photo you’d like to share!

Free Summer Bus Rides for K–12 Students Across SLO County!

Summer Youth Ride Free allows K-12 students to ride the bus for free during the summer months. With the recent partnership between the City of Morro Bay and RTA, this program now includes Morro Bay Transit fixed route trips.

Starting Monday, June 9, and running through Friday, August 15, all RTA and SLO Transit bus rides are free for K–12 students! Fare free transit makes it easy for local youth to get around the county, whether it’s heading to parks, libraries, the pool, summer camps, shopping centers, or even summer jobs.

The Summer Youth Ride Free program is brought to you by Rideshare and funded by the San Luis Obispo Council of Governments (SLOCOG). It’s all about giving kids the freedom to explore, connect, and learn without needing a car.

Parents can easily stay in the loop with the RTA or the SLO Transit App, available on the Apple Store or Google Play to track their child’s bus in real time anywhere in the County.

RTA encourages students to ride free, explore more, and enjoy summer!

If you need help learning how to ride the bus or want help making a trip plan, RTA will make a personal plan just for you. Visit our website and push the “Learn how to ride” button on the homepage. Enter in your trip info and we will make a plan detailing everything you need to know. www.slorta.org

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6/13 - 6/26 THE LIFE OF CHUCK IMPOSSIBLE 1 HR 51 MIN (R) 4PM & 7PM SUNDAYS AT 1PM & 4PM

MONDAY SPECIALS

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6/16 STAND BY ME (1986) 1 HR 25 MIN (R) 5:30PM

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