

## Locals Make USA Dragon Boat Team

By Theresa-Marie Wilson

On July 8, two San Luis Obispo County athletes flew to Brandenburg, Germany where they will represent the United States in a sport dating back 2000 years in China.

Rose Marie Battaglia, of Morro Bay, and Belin Tanner, of San Luis Obispo, will compete on Team USA at the 17th World Dragon Boat Racing Championships July 14-20 in Brandenburg an der Havel, Germany.

Both breast cancer survivors, Battaglia, selected for the inaugural USA Breast Cancer Paddler team, and Tanner, selected for the USA Senior C team, paddle for the Central Coast SurviveOars that works the waters of Morro Bay as the main team of the nonprofit Central Coast Dragon Boat Association.

"Making Team USA is incredibly gratifying and rewarding," Battaglia told Estero Bay News. "After focusing on fitness and technique throughout the tryout period, receiving the call that I'd been selected was emotional and breathtaking. You feel like you're walking on clouds, knowing that your hard work, attitude, and knowledge earned you a seat on the team that only 22 others nationwide will experience."

The selection process for Team USA is rigorous, involving multiple training camps with several days of intense paddling and fitness testing. Candidates train year-round on dragon boats and outrigger canoes, in addition to "off water" workouts with specific requirements.

"It's a huge honor to wear 'USA' on your jersey, knowing how much work it took to get there," said Tanner, who is on Team USA for the fourth time. "Over the past 18 months, we've dedicated countless hours to training both on and off the water, attending tryout camps, meeting rigorous fitness standards, and making personal sacrifices. All of that effort becomes worth it when you receive the call inviting you to be part of this elite team. It's a moment of pride and validation for every challenge you've pushed through to get here."

The 17th World Dragon Boat Racing Champion-

## Plant, Herb Store Re-brands After Lawsuit Threat

Photos and story  
by Neil Farrell

For several years, daughter-mother team, Sierra Mace and Summer Burchell, have run a little plant and crystal shop in Morro Bay.

Gaia's Garden started in April 2021 on Shasta Avenue selling houseplants and crystals to the more spiritually-minded folks.

But then their landlord and friend, Penny Harrington, who had the crystal shop, Ruby Dragon, died that December. They had to find a new home.

"We reopened in February 2022," Sierra explained, in their current location in the Historic Circle Inn Building on Main Street in Downtown Morro Bay. "We were closed for a month."

Since reopening, the two have refined and expanded their offerings, incorporating Sierra's new skills as a certified herbalist, into lotions, tinctures and herbal tea blends.

Like many entrepreneurs, they've searched for winning combinations to make the business really go. It's been a struggle but



Rose Marie Battaglia and Belin Tanner, Team USA paddlers, will compete in the 17th World Dragon Boat Racing Championships in Brandenburg an der Havel, Germany. Photos courtesy of the Central Coast Dragon Boat Association

ships are sponsored by the International Dragon Boat Federation. It will gather more than 4,000 athletes from more than 30 nations for a week of high-level competition, cultural exchange, and shared celebration of the sport of dragon boat racing. Team USA paddlers will compete in races of 200 meters, 500 meters, 1,000 meters and 2,000 meters in length.

Battaglia and Tanner have trained hard to make it to the highest level of competition in the sport, but it is more than that.

"Being a breast cancer survivor is what first led me to dragon boating through my local team, the Central Coast Survivors," Tanner said. "At first, I was completely happy just paddling and training with them — it was a fantastic outlet and a wonderful community. But over time, I realized there was so much more to the sport and opportunities to train and compete at a higher level."

"My local team has always been incredibly supportive of my goals, and they've been a constant source of encouragement throughout the tryout process. Dragon boating has become not only a sport for me but also a huge part of my healing and my ongoing journey as a survivor and high-level athlete."

The sport combines athleticism, art and tradition dating back more than 2000 years ago in China. Now 82

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## Coastal Commission OKs Hwy 1 Bridge Replacement



Chunks of concrete have fallen off the southbound Hwy1 bridge over Toro Creek, causing corrosion of the rebar inside. Caltrans plans to replace the bridge starting sometime next spring. Photos courtesy Caltrans

By Neil Farrell

The Coastal Commission has approved a permit to allow Caltrans to replace the southbound side of the Hwy 1 bridge over Toro Creek in north Morro Bay, a project that could bring several side benefits to the folks who frequent Dog Beach.

Caltrans already replaced the northbound side bridge a few years ago bringing that 1930s-era structure to modern size and standards. It meant the removal of one of the few remaining original highway bridges dating to the 1930s, when Model Ts roamed the largely unpaved roads, but greatly improved safety for the heavily pedaled bicycle route.

Then the southbound side was discovered to have corroded badly, with cracked and offset supports in the creek bed and so the State decided that newer bridge, built in 1962, had to be replaced as well.

"The existing southbound Toro Creek Bridge," reads a project description on the Dist. 5 website, "has poor bridge health due to non-recoverable corrosion on the columns, abutments, and superstructure, and replacement of the structure is needed to resolve the issue."

"The existing bridge has bridge railings that need to be replaced with bridge railings that meet current Manual for Assessing Safety Hardware standards. The existing outside shoulders need to be widened to standard width to decrease off-tracking vehicle collisions and facilitate the passage of bicycle traffic."

Cost for just the bridge construction are listed at \$15.26 million, and Caltrans' Project Manager, Nicholas Heisdorf, said that was still a good number.

Heisdorf said while they were at the Coastal Commission review, they got the final design work done and have

Bridge Replacement Continued on page 19

## Gettin' the Band Back Together Again

By Neil Farrell

Like a Blues Brothers remake, the Morro Bay City Council is gettin' the band back together again.

Former long time City Manager, Andrea Lueker, has been hired as the interim city manager stepping in to the spot vacated when the former CM Yvonne Kimball was let go by the City Council in June.

Lueker joins another former longtime employee, Interim City Attorney Rob Schultz, who was also hired on an interim basis

City Manager Continued on page 21

## New Radio Gear for Dispatch Center

County Supervisors have upped the ante on outfitting the new Sheriff-Fire Dispatch Center being built now in Templeton.

County Sheriff Ian Parkinson asked Supervisors on July 8 to increase the contract with Motorola Solutions, Inc., nearly \$1 million to buy a dozen additional dispatch consoles to add to the list of new communications equipment for the new dispatch center.

That new center — now officially renamed the Public Safety Communications Center — is nearing completion on a parcel adjacent to Hwy 101 in Templeton.

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**Red, White & Blue**  
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News

Sheriff's Deputies Shoot, Kill Armed Suspect in Los Osos



Screen shot from a Sheriff's Department in-car camera appears to show Andrew Biscay, 40 of Chowchilla, taking a shooting stance as he advances towards deputies. Photo courtesy SLO County Sheriff's Department

By Neil Farrell

County Sheriff's deputies in Los Osos shot and killed a Chowchilla man involved in a domestic disturbance incident. The call started about 12:08 a.m. Wednesday, July 2 when deputies were dispatched to a "suspicious circumstances" report in the 2300 block of Fresno St., Los Osos. Such a designation could literally be anything from a harmless misunderstanding to a prowler, or in this case a reportedly violent, and armed man alarming a woman. According to a news release from Sheriff's spokeswoman, Grace Norris, "The reporting party expressed concern for her safety due to the presence of a male suspect, known to her, who was reportedly in the area of her residence."

Norris said the suspect "was



Photo shows the actual Baretta PX4 Storm semi-automatic pellet gun the Sheriff's Department said was being pointed at deputies by Andrew Biscay of Chowchilla when they shot and killed him after a suspicious subject report from a frightened woman.



Photo is of a Baretta PX4 Storm .40-caliber semi-automatic handgun, which is almost identical to the pellet gun version of the weapon that Andrew Biscay reportedly pointed at Sheriff's deputies, when they shot and killed him. Photos courtesy SLO County Sheriff's Department

described as having a history of violent behavior and being known to possess weapons." Deputies responded to the scene and made contact with the woman, ensuring she was safe. "While one deputy was speaking with the reporting party," Norris said, "additional deputies arrived on scene to search the area for the subject." A short time later, the suspect was seen nearby sitting in a small pickup with a camper shell. "As deputies made contact," Norris said, "the man, a 40-year-old from Chowchilla (Calif.) presented a handgun. Both deputies on scene fired their service weapons. The subject was struck and went to the ground." She added that deputies immediately radioed that shots had been fired and called for an ambulance and backup. An ambulance arrived on scene about 12:15 a.m. and deputies reportedly continued to administer aid to the fallen man. He was pronounced dead at the scene. The Sheriff's Department launched an immediate investigation into the deputy-involved shooting of the man, who was later identified as Andrew Biscay, 40 of Chowchilla, a small Central Valley town in Merced County. Detectives and "members of the Sheriff's Executive Team" responded to the scene. Later the same day, the Sheriff's Department released results of their investigation and further detailed what happened to cost a man his life.

"The Sheriff's Detective Division," Norris said, "has downloaded the in-car camera footage from the patrol unit driven by the involved deputies. Upon arriving on scene, assisting deputies located Biscay inside of his vehicle, which was within close proximity of the reporting party's address. "Biscay immediately exited his vehicle," Norris continued, "took a shooting stance while pointing a handgun at the arriving deputies." She said Biscay "advanced toward their position. Deputies

gave multiple commands to Biscay, and he continued to advance toward deputies resulting in the deputies discharging their service weapons toward Biscay."

After he went down, she added that deputies immediately started rendering medical aid. They found a handgun beside him. The car dash camera showed what happened and why deputies shot him.

"A still image from the in-car camera," Norris said, "captured immediately prior to the shooting, shows Biscay pointing the weapon at deputies." She added that they were releasing that screen shot "as part of our commitment to transparency."

The gun turned out to not be so deadly after all. The weapon was a Baretta PX4 Storm semi-automatic pellet gun.

The Sheriff's department released a photo of that pellet gun next to a real Beretta PX4 Storm .40-caliber handgun and the similarity is remarkable.

Norris added that the detectives continue to investigate the shooting, which is a rare occurrence in the County Sheriff's Department, and for all SLO County law enforcement agencies.

She said both deputies involved in the shooting were put on administrative leave while they continue to investigate and the department would release more information as it becomes available.

Broken Down Boat Catches Fire, Sinks



Thick black smoke billows from a 24-foot Bayliner cabin cruiser that caught fire off the Coast of Cayucos while under tow by the Coast Guard. Photo courtesy USCG

By Neil Farrell

A small motorboat that was under tow by the Coast Guard on Saturday, July 5 caught fire and sank off Cayucos forcing the rescue of four people on board.

According to a USCG news release, Coast Guard "watch standers" got a report of a disabled boat about 200-300 yards off-shore of Cambria. Sta. Morro Bay sent a 47-foot surf rescue boat to the scene and the 24-foot, Bayliner, cabin cruiser, was taken under tow by the 47's crew preventing the boat from going on the rocks.

At about noon, with the Bayliner being towed back to Morro Bay, where they'd originally launched from, fire broke out in the Bayliner's engine compartment.

The Coast Guard released the towrope and ordered the four people on board to don lifejackets and abandon ship.

Meanwhile, a Harbor Patrol boat with a water cannon mounted on the bow responded to the scene and was able to douse the fire. However, the Bayliner sank about 4 miles off Cayucos, inside the Estero Bay waters.

Smoke from the fire could be seen for miles and social media lit up with photos taken from shore. A photo of the boat before the Harbor Patrol arrived, was released by the Coast Guard and shows a thick column of black smoke billowing across the water.

The four people on board were rescued from the water by the crew of the 47, and taken to Morro Bay Harbor where they were treated and released. One of them suffered second-degree burns and was taken to the hospital for further treatment.

None of the Coast Guard or Harbor Patrol personnel were injured.

As for the cause, according to a report in the SLO Tribune, Coast Guard spokesman, Richard Uranga said while they were towing the disabled boat, the owner tried to restart the engine, but the anchor rope was reportedly tangled in the prop. The fire began shortly after that failed attempt.

The Coast Guard did not say exactly where the boat sank, but depending on the location it could be in 15-35 meters of water.

MB City Hall Annex Catches Fire

By Neil Farrell

A small office building on Harbor Street belonging to the City of Morro Bay caught fire last week, but the fire department was able to quickly contain and put the fire out.

According to a news release from Fire Chief Daniel McCrain, at about 7:35 a.m. Wednesday, July 9 a structure fire was reported in the City Hall Annex Building, a small standalone space at 535 Harbor St., across from the Post Office and about a block away from the Harbor Street Fire Station.

The Annex used to be the City's transportation office under MV Transportation but has been used for many years by City officials as a conference/meeting room.

Chief McCrain said the building was unoccupied when the fire broke out.

"The fire was contained in the room of origin by Morro Bay Fire Department personnel," the Chief said. "There were no public, or first responder injuries reported."

The cause of the fire is under investigation by the Fire Department. The fire harkens back to the early 2000s when the old Public Works Office at 695 Harbor St., caught fire and ruined decades worth of City records with smoke damage.

That fire was caused by the short-circuiting of an extension cord. The Fire Department responded from across the street and was able to prevent further damage.

But the department was temporarily moved into a vacant, former bank building on Morro Bay Boulevard that's now Distasio's Italian Restaurant.

The Annex at one time housed the Planning Department, which moved along with Public Works into a prefab structure that was brought in adjacent to City Hall on Shasta Avenue. That marked the combining of the Planning & Building, Engineering and Public Works Departments under one roof.

As for the old Public Works site, the City brought in another prefab building to house the fire department after its old station was damaged in an earthquake and deemed uninhabitable. The fire department eventually burned it down in a training exercise.

After a few years, years, the City built the Harbor Street Fire Station, a modern building expected to house the fire department for many decades to come.

Online Transit Survey

Morro Bay residents have until the end of July to take part in an online survey concerning public transportation in the City and region.

The City of Morro Bay and the Regional Transit Authority are teaming up on the survey to gather information to be used in the update of the Short Range Transit Plan.

"If you don't use transit," reads a news release from RTA, "they'd like to know why not and if there are changes that can



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# Estero Bay News Briefs

By Theresa-Marie Wilson

## Poly Ranks in Money Mag’s Top List

Cal Poly has again received Money magazine’s top five-star ranking in its 2025-26 Best Colleges in America list, a ranking designed to help students and their parents choose a school in terms of value.

Money’s analysis, in its 11th annual list, showcased the top 732 colleges and universities in the U.S. on graduation rates, cost of attendance, financial aid, alumni salaries and more. Although there isn’t one “best” college for every student, the magazine says its ratings can help families build a list of stand-out schools that fit their budgets.

While Cal Poly is a highly selective school, with an acceptance rate of 30 percent for students with an average 4.03 grade point average, it enjoys a graduation rate of 86 percent.

Cal Poly also scored well postgraduation. About 90% of Cal Poly graduates are working full time or in graduate schools within a year, and students go on to earn median salaries of just over \$90,700 in their early careers.

Since classes were first offered in October 1903 as the state’s first polytechnic school, Cal Poly has evolved into a skills-focused university with more than 21,500 high-achieving students in six colleges pursuing over 60 majors, including one in wine and viticulture and several within its renowned engineering school, the magazine said.

The 40 institutions that earned Money’s five-star rating — down from 54 schools on the 2024-25 list — include liberal arts colleges, public universities and Ivy League schools, such as Harvard and Princeton. Alongside some of the most prestigious universities in the world, Money says, are schools where a wider variety of students can get in and afford to attend.

Cal Poly was joined as a top-ranked institution — the highest on the magazine’s scale — with eight other California State University campuses. All CSUs made the list, earning four stars or better.

Cal Poly was among 18 public and private California schools — including Stanford University and Harvey Mudd and Pomona colleges and University of California campuses — to receive five-star recognition.

Read more about Money’s Best Colleges 2025 rankings at [money.com/best-colleges](https://money.com/best-colleges).

## The League of Women Voters Announces Officers and Directors

The League of Women Voters of San Luis Obispo County recently announced officers and directors for 2025-2027.

Officers are Janice Langley, 1st vice president (San Luis Obispo), Kim Gravell, 2nd vice president (Nipomo), Joanne Schultz, secretary (Pismo Beach), and Wendy Brown, treasurer (San Luis Obispo). Members of the board of directors are Jacquie Canfield (Cayucos), Ed Cabrera (San Luis Obispo) Nancy Clark (Pismo Beach), Anne Quinn (Atascadero), Glenn Silloway (Morro Bay), Straith Smith-Zanartu (Atascadero), and Karen Venditti (Los Osos).

The League of Women Voters of San Luis Obispo County is a nonpartisan, grassroots civic organization that encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy. Membership in the League is open to people 16 years and older of all gender identities. With more than 100 years’ experience, the League is one of America’s oldest and most trusted civic nonprofit organizations.

During the 2025 – 2027 biennium the League will provide voter education and election services leading up to the primary and general elections in 2026. League educational programs and advocacy will focus on civic education, information literacy, housing and homelessness, environmental stewardship, climate resiliency, immigration, and civil rights.

To join the League, go to [www.lwvslo.org](https://www.lwvslo.org). For more information, contact the League at (805) 242-6990 or by email at [info@lwvslo.org](mailto:info@lwvslo.org). The League of Women Voters of San Luis Obispo County is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization.



## New Law Prohibits Parking Near Crosswalks

To improve pedestrian visibility and reduce traffic accidents, a relatively new state law prohibits parking near crosswalks, even if there are no red curbs or signage posted.

What to know:

- The “daylighting” law prohibits parking within 20 feet before a crosswalk or intersection (on the side you’re approaching) and 15 feet if there is a curb extension.
- 20 feet is about the length of a large car.
- The law applies even if there are no red curbs, signs or marked crosswalks.
- “Daylighting” improves visibility, and federal studies show it can reduce pedestrian collisions by up to 30%.
- Drivers parked in violation of the daylighting law can expect to receive written warnings between now and the end of 2025.
- The new state law is under California Vehicle Code 22500(n).

The “daylighting” law went into effect on January 1, 2024. The term “daylighting” refers to a safety measure that increases visibility at intersections by prohibiting parking near crosswalks. It’s called daylighting because it creates clearer sightlines, essentially “daylighting” the intersection for both drivers and pedestrians, improving safety and reducing accidents. It is especially critical for child safety and has been enacted in other states across the nation.

The City of SLO is starting to enforce the law and will focus its efforts on public education and outreach to gain compliance and improve public safety. Over the next six months – through the end of 2025 – City staff will work to educate the public prioritizing areas around schools, commercial zones and other locations with high concentrations of pedestrians. Infrastructure changes will be made around the City, including strategic installation of curb markings and signage where appropriate, even though this is not required by law. Warnings will be issued through the end of this year to help ensure that drivers understand the new law.

## Supervisors Approve Bridge Replacement Review

County Supervisors have approved moving forward with replacing an old wooden bridge over Toro Creek in the forested area between Cayucos and Atascadero.

The County wants to replace the single-lane, 75-foot bridge over Toro Creek located on Toro Creek Road about 2.7 miles west of the Toro Creek Road-Hwy 41 intersection, near the Halfway Station between Morro Bay and Atascadero.

That old wooden structure would be replaced with a 2-lane concrete bridge with guardrails and immensely improve safety for the residents in that rural wooded area, and allow emergency vehicles like fire engines to safely cross it.

“The new bridge,” reads the County’s report on the propos-

al, “will also provide improved, reliable access to private properties and National Forest land with capacity for emergency egress and firefighting access.”

The new bridge would be a single-span precast, pre-stressed concrete slab bridge. It will be some 60-feet long, and 24-feet wide, “to accommodate two 10-foot lanes and safety barriers,” the report said.


The County Environmental Division conducted an environmental impact study and declared that no impacts would



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News

result that couldn't be mitigated. "The proposed Project will not significantly affect the environment because suitable mitigation measures designed to avoid and/or reduce project-related impacts to less-than-significant levels will be included in the design."

During the public comment period the County got responses from two residents in the area. "The comments received," the report said, "were related to construction equipment, roadway concerns, emergency response times, and construction noise."

The County met with folks that live in the area, including the two who raised concerns, and as a result, "Public Works Roads staff will continue to maintain Toro Creek Road during construction and respond to maintenance requests, and emergency access beyond the bridge will be maintained throughout the project."

The County must still get the OK from the California Fish & Wildlife; the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers; and the Regional Water Quality Control Board, as it is expected to have to do work within the creek.

The County is piecing together the funding for the project, which is estimated to cost some \$6.02 million. It has already budgeted \$2.5M — \$1.5M from the Highway Bridge Program, and \$800,000 in Road Funds. It has spent some \$950,000 to date on the project. Public Works anticipates having to come back to County Supervisors for more money, likely to come out of the Highway Bridge Program monies.

The costs break down as: \$510,000 for "professional consultant costs for surveying, geotech and design; \$1.59M in County staff time for design, project management, environmental support, right of way work and administration; \$3.04M for construction and mitigation; and \$880,000 for construction engineering.

With the Supervisors approving the environmental review, the County can now move forward with bidding to build the project.

Suspected Arson Fire Destroys Templeton Landmark

By Neil Farrell

The County Sheriff's Department is searching for four men suspected of starting a spectacular fire on July 4 that destroyed a Templeton landmark.

At about 11:30 p.m. July 4, the Sheriff's Department said, fire broke out at the Templeton Feed & Grain, a historic multi-story structure that has dominated the Templeton skyline for over half a century. Despite the efforts of the Templeton Fire Department and help from surrounding fire agencies that responded, the granary could not be saved.

"On the evening of July 4th," reads a Facebook post from the TFD, "the Templeton Feed & Grain building was engulfed in flames and could not be saved despite the tireless efforts of our crews and neighboring agencies.

"This structure was more than just a building, it stood as a symbol of our town's roots, resilience, and rural heritage for over a century. Its loss is deeply felt by our entire community."

The fire burned through the metal sided buildings, with wooden framework, and burst through the roof. It burned most of that night and was still smoldering for a couple of days after.

Rumors began circulating almost immediately online that



Photo shows three of the four to six men being sought in connection with the Templeton Feed & Grain arson fire on July 4. Photos courtesy SLO County Sheriff's Department

the fire was caused by careless use of illegal fireworks, and those rumors have been confirmed by the TFD Fire Chief, as evidenced by surveillance camera footage from a business across Main Street from the Feed & Grain.

"Detectives are working to identify four to six individuals who were all seen in the area, wearing dark clothing, with at least one person carrying a backpack," reads a July 7 news release from the Sheriff's Department, which has taken an active role in what is now a major arson investigation.

"It's also believed that individuals associated with a nearby vehicle may have spoken with these subjects just prior to the incident. Sheriff's detectives are hoping to speak with the occupants of this vehicle."

In still photos released by the department, the vehicle appears to be a white, newer-model SUV, though the Sheriff's Department did not list a make or model for the car.

The four men, though the photos are grainy and in soft focus, appear to be young, possibly teenagers. Unfortunately, as is common with such surveillance camera images, the photos were taken in low light, at night and are grainy, with details hard to make out.

One fellow appears to be wearing dark or black tennis shoes with white soles. He appears to be thin with short dark hair.

Another one appears to be wearing white shoes and the one with a backpack has dark shoes. None of the photos that were released, has a clear image of their faces.

Fighting the fire used up so much of the Templeton CSD's water supply, that it sent notices to residents asking them to cut back on their water usage until the supply could be replenished.

Detectives have asked for the public's help. "If you were in the area between South Main Street and Templeton Park between 10:30 p.m. and 11:30 p.m. on July 4, or have surveillance footage from that time frame, please contact the Sheriff's Office," call (805) 781-4500. Tips can also be shared anonymously through Crime Stoppers at (805) 549-7867 or online at www.slotips.org.

Templeton hosts a big 4th of July Parade during the day, so it's possible these men, if they were watching the parade, may have been captured on video or in photographs then as well.

Templeton's Parade is sponsored by the Rotary Club and the Chamber of Commerce hosts a family picnic at the nearby Community Park followed by a public fireworks show. The day was apparently fun-filled and uneventful until the fire ruined it.

The granary, owned by the Jermin Family, has been a key business in what is still a rural, agricultural community. The



Photo from surveillance camera footage, shows one of the suspects sought by the Sheriff's Department, and a white SUV that was in the area at the time. Detectives believe the driver may have spoken to their suspect(s) shortly before the Templeton Feed & Grain facility granary buildings caught fire on July 4.

Tribune reported that the business had lost its insurance coverage a couple of years before the fire, a statewide trend in recent years.

Granaries in general are prone to big fires, as dust from the handling of dried grains is highly flammable. And like many other businesses and homeowners in California, in the face of recent wildfires that have burned down whole communities, fire insurance is difficult to get, and increasingly expensive.

The granary owners sought help online to find somewhere that they could reopen temporarily. The business' retail store survived the fire along with much of its already bagged inventory.



A still photo from surveillance footage shows three of the four to six men being sought for questioning in the July 4 arson fire that destroyed the Templeton Feed & Grain facility.

They were able to move their operations to Nature's Touch Nursery & Harvest, which is located at 225 S. Main St., Templeton.

After the fire was finally extinguished, and TFD firefighters got a break after being on scene for four straight days, the two big towers of the granary were brought down by ABI Engineering Grading and Paving, leaving a huge pile of rubble.

The remains of the buildings were hauled away to the Chicago Grade Landfill and a temporary fence was erected around the site.

In their Facebook post, the fire department summed up the sentiments of Templeton residents:

"We want to thank every firefighter, law enforcement officer, and emergency responder who answered the call without hesitation. Your dedication, bravery, and teamwork reflect the very best of who we are.

"To the Templeton community: we see your heartbreak, and we share it with you. Together, we will honor what was lost — and continue to stand strong for what remains."

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# Community

## Cayucos Sand Sculpture Contest

Photos by Neil Farrell

The Annual Cayucos Sand Sculpture Contest on Fourth of July drew thousands of folks to the beach north of the pier to see the wildly creative sculptures that included a massive, apocalyptic scene of Morro Bay and Cayucos featuring the pier and stacks, with a mountainous backdrop filled with monsters like Godzilla, King Kong, dinosaurs and all manner of totally cool little mini sculptures.



### OUT & ABOUT

WITH THE BOOKSHELF WRITERS

The BookShelf Writers consist of four Estero Bay women who have been writing & critiquing together for over five years. For more samples of their work, please visit [www.thebookshelfwriters.com](http://www.thebookshelfwriters.com)

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

## RV Camping in Your Own Backyard: Saying Goodbye to the Little Camper



Jack Black the Cemetery Cat clowns around in front of a fisheye lens and ends up in a fishbowl.

**Jack Black the Cemetery Cat**  
Photos and Story By Debbie Black

I know. It's summertime. You want to go camping. Fear not, I have just the place for you to try. But first, I need to tell you about the passing of our beloved little camping buddy, Jack Black the Cemetery Cat. He made it to fifteen — calm, good-natured, even-tempered, sweet — all the way to the finish line. When we adopted him from the Cayucos Cemetery, the gray and white kitty was already known to quite a number of you who he greeted as you walked by or whose spirits he lifted during a graveside ceremony. You'll be happy to know that he spent his last eleven years with us in utter cat bliss, and every day we counted our blessings that he had become a part of our pack.

Our camping trips with Jack will forever remain at the top of our good-memories list and were only discontinued when Jack figured out how to open the screen door to the motorhome and threatened to explain it to the dog. We reverently retired his camp chair as if it were Jerry Rice's jersey.

If you've owned an animal dear to your heart, you know what this feels like — torn between the responsibility of helping them leave and the selfish longing to keep them here. Sometime in the future, when we return to Jack's favorite campground, some of his ashes will be solemnly and joyously left there to become part of Mother Earth again.

Now that we're back on the subject of campgrounds, I'll keep you in suspense no longer, well, maybe a little bit longer. Have



Anchor Bay Campground tucks into its private, oceanside cove.

you ever experienced surprise and delight when your leery, first impression of something is proven completely wrong? My first impression of Anchor Bay Campground was "What the heck?" But after our stay, my parting comment as we maneuvered through the redwoods back onto Highway 1 was "Well, that's on my 'favorite campgrounds' list now!"

Anchor Bay, on the coast north of Jenner, was recommended to us by a rustic woman camper at Samuel P. Taylor Park in Marin. "I've been camping all over the country in my van," she said. "That place ... the best. You gotta go there. I mean it, man." She was a bit odd (I can say that because I'm from Marin). But darned if, in the end, she wasn't right. Nearly a year later, on our loop of Northern California, we decided to give Anchor Bay a try.

As we drove into the narrow ravine sandwiched between meandering Highway 1 and the ocean, all we saw were permanent, fenced, eclectically landscaped trailers and Class A motorhomes that hadn't been moved in decades. And yet, there was an obvious pride of ownership. But this didn't look like a place for us—a little 24-footer staying a few days. We navigated over the speed bumps, through the orange cones with hand-drawn directional signs to the little office where we were greeted like relatives showing up for Thanksgiving. After a relaxed but lengthy welcome chat, we were guided to our freshly-raked site, tucked between four redwoods. The next few days were divine.

This campground is over 100 years old. It's co-owned by those folks with the permanent set-ups, their coastal get-aways. In addition, there are 28 reservable hook-up sites for visitors like us. Do they resent us? On the contrary, they appreciate that nightly rentals help support the campground. They don't mind sharing their stretch of beach where kids play, dogs romp, and surfers, fishers and sun-bathers, spend the day. You'll find six campsites tucked in the trees (get 5, 58 or 57), and 22 more sites at the beach (get 35-38). All have water/electricity and there's a dump station. A little path leads up to an amazingly well-stocked organic grocery store, a Thai restaurant, coffee shop, and laundromat. Check out [www.abcamp.com](http://www.abcamp.com), call for reservations (707-884-4222; rates \$45-\$75/night), then add it to your Northern California plans. Maybe bring your cat too. Just beware of your cat and dog whispering in the corner!

And speaking of cats, the next time you pass the Cayucos Cemetery, think of Jack Black the Cemetery Cat and smile. Then hug your animals when you get home.

More articles: [www.debbienobleblack.com/rv-camping-in-your-own-backyard](http://www.debbienobleblack.com/rv-camping-in-your-own-backyard).

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This lovely turnkey 3-bedroom, 2-bath home with a bonus room is located in the highly sought-after Harbor Tract neighborhood. The property offers beautiful ocean and hill views and a spacious open floor plan perfect for comfortable living and entertaining.

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This ocean front custom home was completely remodeled in 2017. There are 3 bedrooms and 3 bathrooms, including two primary suites, with one upstairs and one downstairs. Both primary bathrooms have a separate tub, open shower, heated floors and double sinks. In addition to a primary bedroom, downstairs has a guest bedroom, guest bathroom, living room, kitchen and dining area for those who want single level living. The kitchen offers Alder cabinets, granite countertops, Jenn Air appliances and a beautiful custom made glass dry bar.

There is also a deck facing the ocean, two single car garages and private steps to the beach.  
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Police Blotter



• **June 29:** Police responded at 11:48 p.m. to a suspicious subject report and caught some lost soul with a warrant outside the Salvation Army store.

• **June 28:** Police stopped a suspicious vehicle at 7 p.m. somewhere presumably in town. Logs indicated the Snallygaster was nicked for suspicion of driving whacked.

• **June 28:** Police contacted another model citizen at 4:47 p.m. who had a warrant. No word on what they did with the scofflaw.

• **June 28:** At 4 p.m. someone came to the police station on Morro Bay Boulevard to turn over some undisclosed apparent treasure they’d discovered someplace in town, so if you lost it, good luck.

• **June 28:** At 12:38 a.m. police tried to stop a suspicious vehicle at an undisclosed location, but logs indicated the driver hit the gas instead and foolishly tried to get away, but they didn’t. When the chase was over, and the prey subdued he or she was nicked for suspicion of resisting arrest, evading police, driving on a suspended license and drunk driving, which explains a lot.

• **June 27:** Police responded at 8:44 p.m. to Rite Aid on Quintana Road where they encountered an unwelcomed fellow wanted by the law.

• **June 27:** Yet another treasure was discovered in town by an undisclosed someone and turned over to police to unlock the mystery.

• **June 27:** Police stopped another suspicious vehicle at 8:06 a.m. and cited the driver for a suspended license, a hanging offense in this State.

• **June 27:** Police responded at 7:20 a.m. to Morro Rock parking lot for a disturbance. Logs indicated they started two cases — one for simple assault and the other for strong arm robbery.

• **June 28:** Police responded at 12:41 p.m. to a disturbance in City Park. Logs indicated some apparent fallstaffian ruffian was nicked for being stupid in public.

• **June 25:** Police stopped a suspicious vehicle for some a code violation at 10:17 p.m. at Marina Street and Morro Avenue. Officers said the driver was suspected of being impaired due to his apparent poor driving skills. Officers reportedly spotted a handgun in the vehicle on the floorboard at the driver’s feet. An ID check revealed the man was a convicted felon from Bakersfield who wasn’t supposed to have any firearms. A search of the car allegedly found live ammunition for a pistol and a rifle; “large capacity” rifle magazines and ammunition, a large amount of suspected fentanyl and items indicating sales of drugs, according to a news release. They also allegedly found suspected burglary tools in the car. He was booked on all these charges plus alleged possession of a switchblade knife, as the fellow apparently thought he was in a war zone.

• **June 25:** At 8:53 p.m. at an undisclosed location, police contacted yet another hero with a bench warrant. The Mamaluke was issued another disappearance ticket and released.

• **June 25:** Police responded to Morro Dunes RV Park on Embarcadero to pick up something some apparent vacationer left behind.

• **June 24:** Police responded at 3 p.m. to a reported petty theft at Lila Keiser Park. No word on whose booty got pinched.

• **June 24:** At 8:24 a.m. police responded to an apparently secret location for a felony burglary report.

• **June 23:** At 8:21 p.m. police responded to a real-life disturbance report. Some Bohemian scaramouche was doing the fandango but was hit by a very, very frightening thunderbolt and lightning, and got arrested. Charges included trying to destroy evidence, possession of paraphernalia, possession of illegal drugs with more than two prior convictions, and being fitshaced in public, but nothing really

matters, nothing really matters to he.

• **June 23:** Police responded at 3:19 p.m. to a reported theft form a motor vehicle, as the crime wave continues unabated.

• **June 22:** The long arm of the law caught up to some no good varmint at 10:33 p.m. somewhere in town. He or she was cited for an out-of-county warrant and was advised to take his shoes for a walk.

• **June 22:** Police contacted a suspicious subject at 8 a.m. at Coleman Park. The scalawag had a felony warrant and wound up in the hoosegow.

• **June 22:** Police stopped a suspicious vehicle at the suspect time of 1:13 a.m. Logs indicated the driver was allegedly jacked up on tarantula juice and arrested.

• **June 21:** At 10:06 p.m. police contacted another citizen of the year who was cited and released for suspicion of possessing paraphernalia and being stoned on drugs, proving once again that you don’t take a joint from a guy named Don.

• **June 21:** Someone found something somewhere in town and for some reason turned it over to some police officer.

• **June 21:** At 2:16 p.m. at an undisclosed location police pulled over a suspicious vehicle. Logs indicated they could only cite the fool for expired registration.

• **June 21:** Police contacted some lazy bones shilly-shallying around Couch Potato in the 300 block of Quintana Rd. The slacker was cited and released on a bench warrant to catch another day.

• **June 21:** Someone brought some unknown treasure to the police station and handed it over to police to worry about.

• **June 20:** A citizen came to the police station at 9:23 a.m. to report the violation of a stay-the-hell-away court order.

• **June 20:** Some graffidiot left his mark at Del Mar Park.

• **June 19:** At 9:16 p.m. police responded to an undisclosed location for a reported trespasser. The interloper apparently skeddadled before they arrived.

• **June 19:** At 1:21 p.m. police responded to a car crash at an unknown location; nor did logs say who was involved or how badly or not-so badly they were injured.

• **June 19:** Police responded to a disturbance at 12:15 p.m. at the Morro Bay Laundry on Quintana Road. Logs indicated it involved a mentally off person unable to care for himself let alone others, which normally results in a 72-hour timeout at County Mental Health.

• **June 19:** Police stopped another suspicious vehicle at 12:18 p.m. someplace in town. This driver too hadn’t handed over to the DMV its annual pound of flesh.

• **June 19:** Police were at the North Pit parking lot at 2:14 a.m. when they encountered a suspicious subject, who naturally had a bench warrant.

• **June 18:** At 10:38 a.m. police responded to yet another car crash but again didn’t indicate a location nor the severity of the carnage.

• **June 18:** Police stopped another suspicious vehicle at 7:57 a.m. somewhere in town. Logs indicated the car had fake tags and the nincompoop was cited.

• **June 18:** Police responded at 7:55 a.m. to Del Mar Park for yet another vandalism or graffiti case, which seems to be a Quotidian occurrence there.

• **June 17:** Police stopped another suspicious vehicle at 9:42 p.m. at yet another undisclosed location. Logs indicated the driver was nicked for suspicion of driving buttered.

• **June 17:** Police contacted a pair of urban campers at 11:40 a.m. at Coleman Park and cited one for a felony warrant and both of them for violation of the anti-sleeping where they can’t collect a tax ordinance, a case of dudes, you need to find a better hiding place.

• **June 17:** At 3:29 a.m. police contacted another night owl someplace in town who had a bench warrant, and was found to allegedly possess drug paraphernalia, a case of there being more to the elephant than the tusks.

• **June 16:** Police responded somewhere at 10:54 a.m. for a felony vandalism report. They logged another felony vandalism an hour later, though it’s unknown if it was the same spot or if the same humanicus dooficus was responsible.

• **June 16:** At 9:09 a.m. police contacted another lipspittle fellow who was trespassing. He too of course was in possession of suspected drug paraphernalia, his stash apparently already gone up in smoke.



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# Community

## CCSPA and Hidden Kitchen Team Up for One Day

The Central Coast State Parks Association (CCSPA) is teaming up with Hidden Kitchen in Cayucos to raise money for State Parks.

Support Central Coast State Parks this Friday, July 18 from 9 a.m.- 3 p.m. with 2 percent of the proceeds for the day going to CCSPA's general operations, helping preserve and protect our beloved parks.

Known for their iconic blue corn waffles, colorful smoothies, and fresh ingredients, Hidden Kitchen, 113 N Ocean Ave, Cayucos, has been a San Luis Obispo County favorite for years. Situated on Cayucos State Beach, one of the 10 State Parks CCSPA is proud to support, Hidden Kitchen and CCSPA are a perfect match. Enjoy beautiful views and good vibes all around. You can sit in or order takeout, making supporting State Parks this Friday more convenient – and delicious – than ever.

The Central Coast State Parks Association, in partnership with California State Parks in San Luis Obispo County, supports interpretation, education and volunteer efforts while promoting public awareness and stewardship of our natural resources and cultural heritage. The organization is an independent 501(c)(3) non-profit. They are one of 85 similar cooperating associations across the state who work in partnership with the state parks.



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## Tee Off for a Great Cause - Join the Morro Bay Foundation Golf Tournament

The Morro Bay Chamber Foundation has announced they will host the “Putting for the Kids” Golf Tournament—a heartwarming community event on Friday, October 10, 2025, at 9 a.m. at the Morro Bay Golf Course (201 State Park Rd).

Proceeds support scholarships designed for anyone in the Estero Bay community pursuing education — whether you’re just starting out or returning to school later in life. Every swing helps open doors and empower dreams.

What’s included:

- 18-hole scramble with cart
- Lunch, prizes, side games, and camaraderie
- \$195 per player or \$750 per team (tax deductible!)

Whether you’re a weekend golfer or just in it for the fun, this is your chance to give back and play for a purpose.

Sign up today and support local learners at every life stage.

To register or sponsor, contact the Morro Bay Chamber Foundation at [foundation@morrochamber.org](mailto:foundation@morrochamber.org) or go to [www.morrochamber.org/mbcf](http://www.morrochamber.org/mbcf).







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By Theresa- Marie Wilson

KCBX Celebrates 50th Anniversary

A couple of guys named Steve had a big idea 50 years ago - they wanted to create a non-profit radio station to broadcast news, information, and music on the Central Coast of California. On July 25, 1975, Steve Burrell and Steve Urbani realized their dream when they flipped the switch to turn on the transmitter for local public radio station KCBX.

Over the years, a lot has changed. Personnel have rotated out, though many of the station’s original staff and founders remain. Technology has been updated over the years. One thing has remained the same - the station’s commitment to providing quality information and music programming to its listeners.

On July 26, KCBX will host a 50th Anniversary Celebration at the Octagon Barn in San Luis Obispo. The community is invited to a free afternoon event (11 a.m. - 4 p.m.) with live music featuring Graybill and SLO County Stumblers, food trucks, a fun 50-year trivia game, and celebration honoring KCBX founders, supporters, volunteers and staff. At the celebration, community members can record their KCBX memories for an audio history the station is compiling as well as enjoy and purchase 50-year memorabilia. In the evening, Damon Castillo with Friends will perform in the Octagon Barn at 7 pm (\$40/per person).

KCBX is encouraging people to RSVP for afternoon activities. More information and tickets for Damon Castillo are available at [kcbx.org](http://kcbx.org).

PG&E Scams Hit Locally

Utility scams have continued at an alarming rate during 2025, with Pacific Gas and Electric Company customers reporting over \$190,000 in losses to scammers.

A typical sign of a scam targeting a utility customer includes a caller claiming to be from PG&E and threatening disconnection if immediate payment is not made via a pre-paid debit card, digital payment mobile application, or other methods of money transfer. As a reminder, PG&E will never send a single notification to a customer within one hour of a service interruption and will never ask customers to make payments with a pre-paid debit card, gift card, any form of cryptocurrency, or instant mobile payment applications, like Zelle® or Venmo.

“Scammers seek to create a sense of panic, threatening

disconnection of utility services if immediate payment is not made. If a phone call, visit to your home, or email doesn’t feel right, don’t fall for it. Hang up, shut the door, and do not respond to the email,” said PG&E Cybersecurity Risk Manager Amy Lucido.

So far this year, PG&E has received more than 10,000 reports of scams targeting residential and business customers – nearly 200 of those reports came from the Central Coast.

Monterey County: 110 reported scams  
Santa Cruz County: 60 reported scams  
San Benito County: 11 reported scams  
San Luis Obispo County: 13 reported scams  
Arroyo Grande: six reports; Cambria: four reports; and Morro Bay: three reports

The average scam victim lost over \$900, and over 200 customers companywide have reported falling victim. This number is likely just the tip of the iceberg as many scams go unreported.

Business customers are also not immune from scam attempts. In fact, PG&E has received 250 reports of scams targeting small and medium-sized businesses this year, and these attempts frequently occur during busy business hours when scammers hope to catch unsuspecting victims while they are distracted or stressed.

Scammers can be convincing and often target those who are most vulnerable, including senior citizens and low-income communities. They also aim their scams at small business owners during busy customer service hours. However, with the right information, customers can learn to detect and report these predatory scams by visiting [www.pge.com/scams](http://www.pge.com/scams) or by calling 1-833-500-SCAM.

**Signs of a Potential Scam**

- Threat to disconnect: Scammers may aggressively demand immediate payment for an alleged past due bill.
- Request for immediate payment: Scammers may instruct the customer to purchase a prepaid card, then call them back supposedly to make a bill payment.
- Request for prepaid card: When the customer calls back, the caller asks the customer for the prepaid card’s number, which grants the scammer instant access to the card’s funds.
- Refund or rebate offers: Scammers may say that your utility company overbilled you and owes you a refund, or that you are entitled to a rebate, and ask you for your personal financial information.
- Scammers Impersonating Trusted Phone Numbers: Scammers are now able to create authentic-looking 800 numbers which appear on your phone display. The numbers don’t lead back to PG&E if called back, however, so if you have doubts, hangup and either log into your account at [pge.com](http://pge.com) to confirm your bill details or call PG&E at 1-833-500-SCAM. If customers ever feel that they are in physical danger, they should call 911.

**How customers can protect themselves**

- Customers should never purchase a prepaid card to avoid service disconnection or shutoff. PG&E does not specify how customers should make a bill payment and

offers a variety of ways to pay a bill, including accepting payments online, by phone, automatic bank draft, mail or in person.

- If a scammer threatens immediate disconnection or shutoff of service without prior notification, customers should hang up the phone, delete the email, or shut the door.

Customers with delinquent accounts receive an advance disconnection notification, typically by mail and included with their regular monthly bill.

- Signing up for an online account at [pge.com](http://pge.com) is another safeguard. Not only can customers log in to check their balance and payment history, they can also sign up for recurring payments, paperless billing and helpful alerts. Customers can also call PG&E Customer Service at 800-743-5000 to confirm their bill details and current amount due.
- Customers who suspect that they have been victims of fraud, or who feel threatened during contact with one of these scammers, should contact local law enforcement. The Federal Trade Commission’s website is also a good source of information about how to protect personal information.

For more information about scams, visit [pge.com/scams](http://pge.com/scams) or <https://consumer.ftc.gov/scams>.

Development Directors Roundtable

Join a facilitated peer networking and problem-solving opportunity for Development Directors or those serving in a fundraising role on July 24 from 12 – 1p.m. It is held online in Zoom with URL sent upon registering at [spokesfornonprofits.com](http://spokesfornonprofits.com). Space is limited to 12 participants.

The Development Directors Roundtable is a collaboration between Spokes and the Association of Fundraising Professionals of San Luis Obispo County. Spokes roundtables are facilitated, peer networking and problem-solving opportunities held monthly. At the start of the roundtable, participants introduce themselves and share some good news or something that’s “keeping them up at night.” They may also offer a “spotlight topic” for consideration during the meeting. A hallmark of the roundtables is confidentiality. The explicit norm is “what’s said in the roundtable stays in the roundtable.” This encourages mutual support and a candid exchange of ideas.

Registration fee waived for Spokes members and AFP members with discount code. For others the price is \$10 per person. Participants are required to have their video on.

The facilitator for the roundtable is Loren Leidingner, CFRE. Loren is currently the Outreach and Develop-



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Community

ment Director at the Community Action Partnership of San Luis Obispo (CAPSLO) and is the past President of the Board of the Association of Fundraising Professionals of SLO County. Prior to joining CAPSLO she was the Regional Chief Development Officer for the American Red Cross Central California Region covering 10 counties for four years. Prior to taking on the lead fundraising role for the region, she was the Executive Director for the Pacific Coast Chapter of the Red Cross covering Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo Counties for three years. Prior to that she served as Vice President of Development for AIDS Foundation in Chicago. In all of her roles, she has worked closely with board members in the areas of Fund Development, Board Governance, and Planning. She is also a board member for two nonprofit organizations.

Student Continues Years-Long Support of Marian’s Pediatric Closet



Janeth Ruiz poses with her mother Teresa after making a donation to Marian Regional Medical Center’s Pediatric Closet.

While summer break is a time for relaxation and fun one an Orcutt student is continuing her mission to help those in need and perhaps inspire some local youths as well. Janeth Ruiz, a soon-to-be 12-year-old who just finished up sixth grade at Joe Nightingale Elementary in Orcutt, has been a dedicated supporter of Marian Regional Medical Center Pediatric Closet since kindergarten, transforming discarded clothing into a lifeline for families in need. This week, Janeth continued her tradition, donating around 150 items, mostly sweaters and jackets, collected from her school’s lost and found to the hospital’s Pediatric Closet. This contribution is the latest in a series of generous donations Janeth has made throughout her childhood. “The best part is knowing that these clothes are going to people in need – to people who can’t afford them or get them easily,” Janeth says. Janeth’s commitment began when she noticed the

abundance of unclaimed clothing at her school. Instead of letting these items sit there, she partnered with her mother, Teresa, to collect, launder, and donate the gently used garments. Her efforts have turned the school’s lost and found into a valuable resource for local families. “We’re so proud that Janeth continues to think of others and find ways to help her community,” Teresa says. Beyond her philanthropic endeavors, Janeth dances with Ballet Folklórico Corazón de la Costa, participates in Girl Scouts, and has taken up acting. Janeth’s actions embody the spirit of the Pediatric Closet, established in 2016 through a partnership between Marian Regional Medical Center and the Children’s Resource Network of the Central Coast. The closet, dedicated to the memory of registered nurse Janet Davila, provides essential clothing and supplies to local families in need. “It’s not just the donations themselves, but Janeth’s thoughtfulness and dedication that truly impress me,” says Patty Herrera, director of Community Health for Dignity Health’s hospitals on the Central Coast. “She saw a problem – usable items going unused – and found a creative solution that directly benefits families in need. Her heart for service is an inspiration to all.”

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.

Events and Activities

By Theresa-Marie Wilson

Join Volumes of Pleasure bookstore on Saturday, July 26 at 1p.m., in welcoming B. Misty Wycoff for a selected reading, discussion, and signing of her eighth published collection of poetry, “Dwelling.” Misty, a native Californian, has been a resident of Los Osos for the past 23 years. Her work as a poet has been honored, including being nominated twice for the position of Poet Laureate of SLO County. The power of words has always resonated with Misty whether as a clinical therapist, public speaker, teacher, or in helping others to find their own creative threads.



Light refreshments will be served and copies of “Dwelling” will be available for purchase. For more information, call Volumes of Pleasure, 805-528-5565.

The Braver Angels SLO event: Reuniting America, film and discussion takes place Sunday, July 27 from 4 to 6 p.m. at Unitarian Universalists San Luis Obispo, 2201 Lawson Avenue. Can civility be contagious? Is it possible that we could feel less polarized just by watching a movie with other community members wherein we see people with opposing viewpoints try to understand, rather than demonize, each other? Let’s try it and see! Braver Angels SLO presents a free filming of “Braver Angels: Reuniting America,” a 50-minute documentary about polarization in America. Watch seven Republican-leaning and eight Democrat-leaning voters experience a Braver Angels Red/Blue workshop in Waynesville, Ohio. It’s interesting to see “regular people” move from initial skepticism to more profound understanding and empathy. Get an inside look at how a Democratic voter went from threatening to cut off relationships with Trump voters to becoming dear friends with one; and how a Republican voter moved from distaining progressives to taking a co-leadership role with one in a movement that now spans the country. The documentary was directed by four-time Emmy award-winner Jim Brown and produced by musician Peter Yarrow. Watch the trailer https://youtu.be/rJTgwKBftH4. This event is free. Donations are appreciated. For free registration type in the code BRAVER At http://bit.ly/4ILtNJZ.

Join the Los Osos Valley Garden Club on Sunday July 27 from 12 p.m.- 4 p.m. for an informative tour of four Los Osos homes showcasing fire-scaping, home hardening, and creating defensible spaces. Discover how to incorporate beautiful fire-resistant plants into your garden while ensuring safety and sustainability in California’s changing climate. Tickets are \$25 each or 2 for \$40. LOVGC Member Rate is \$10.

Note: There are no restrooms on this tour. Public Restrooms are located at Los Osos Community Park and South Bay Community Center. Tour routes will be assigned to each ticket holder. A route map will be sent to ticket holders by 7/26. To pay by cash or check, email info@lovgardenclub.org.



Events Continued on page 12

Edward Jones

College? Retirement? Find out how to prepare for both. Let's plan your future together.

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Community

Events From page 11



Step Back in Time at the 39th Annual Central Coast Renaissance Festival July 19 & 20, 2025 in San Luis Obispo's Laguna Lake Park. Immerse yourself in the magic of the Central Coast Renaissance Festival. History comes alive with thrilling battles, lively performances, and vibrant marketplaces. Don your finest attire and join us for two days of revelry, adventure, and enchantment at San Luis Obispo's most beloved summer tradition! Tickets and pricing are at ccrenfaire.com/get-tickets.

...

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

**Cartooning with Kane Lynch** – Friday, July 18, 3 – 4:30 p.m.

Join cartoonist Kane Lynch (and P-nut the Cartoon Cat) for a comic-making adventure! For ages 10 to 18.

**Fiber Arts Club Saturday**, July 19, 11 a.m. – 12 p.m.

Join us for our monthly Fiber Arts Club. Bring your project and enjoy camaraderie with like-minded sewers, stitchers, knitters, and anything fiber arts. Adults.

**Nintendo** – Friday, July 25, 2:30 – 4:30 p.m.

Master your gaming skills and make new friends with our Nintendo Switch! We will provide one Switch for up to 4 players at a time - feel free to bring your own too. Games include Mario Kart, Just Dance and Super Smash Bros. School age, Tween, Teen.

**Teen Murder Mystery** followed by the Teen Advisory Board meeting – Saturday, July 26, 2 – 4 p.m.

Calling all teens! Murderous mayhem is afoot at the library and only a group of meddling teens could possibly help solve the case! After, looking for volunteer or community service hours? Help Librarian Emily run the Teen Advisory Board! Participation can be listed on job, scholarship and college applications. There will be snacks. Ages 13-18.

...

Highlighting a diverse array of snake species — over 3,500 globally — and the critical roles they play in controlling pest populations and maintaining biodiversity, the first-ever World Snake Week takes place this month, and you can participate in San Luis Obispo County and learn more about these fascinating reptiles.



Emily Taylor, a Cal Poly biological sciences professor and renowned international snake expert, is part of the team organizing the inaugural World Snake Week, set for July 13-19. More than 50 in-person and online events will be coordinated internationally by conservation groups, scientists, zoos, museums and herpetological societies. These special events will celebrate the world of snakes.

“Snakes are among the most maligned wildlife across the globe, and we want to change the way people see them,” Taylor said. “These animals benefit us by consuming plant-eating, disease-carrying rodents, and they are important parts of food webs. Snake venoms continue to give rise to new life-saving medicines. Promoting the peaceful coexistence of people and snakes is good for both people and snakes.”

As part of the celebration, a local event open to the public will be held July 18 from 4 to 6:30 p.m. at the Pismo Preserve, 80 Mattie Road in Pismo Beach, including live snakes, crafts, displays and more. Taylor and Cal Poly herpetology students will be on hand with many live snakes for people to hold safely.

Taylor will present a short talk on rattlesnakes and demonstrate tubing an 8-year-old male named Buzz Jr., which is a rare chance for most people to see a rattlesnake up close and even touch its tail. Tubing involves gently

guiding a snake into a clear, appropriately sized polycarbonate tube. Once the snake is inside, the handler can safely secure it without needing to grab it by the head.

Worldwide, snake enthusiasts in other countries are participating in the awareness week, which aims to promote snake education, awareness and conservation and help shift negative attitudes toward the limbless reptiles. Participating nations include Ecuador, India, Australia, Philippines, United Kingdom, France, Peru and others.

For more information about World Snake Week, go to: [snakeweek.org](http://snakeweek.org). For more information about the July 18 Pismo Beach event, visit: <http://bit.ly/4m9NgEH>.

...



“The Drowsy Chaperone” musical takes place July 25 - August 3 at Cambria Center for the Arts – Theatre, 1350 Main St.

Step into a world of laughter, romance, and musical mayhem with “The Drowsy Chaperone” — the five-time Tony Award-winning musical comedy that’s equal parts love letter and hilarious send-up of classic Broadway. This dazzling “show-within-a-show” begins when a die-hard musical theatre fan drops the needle on his favorite cast album—and suddenly, the stage comes to life with glamorous showgirls, tap-dancing gangsters, mistaken identities, and a bride who just can’t stop cold feet from creeping in. Packed with witty one-liners, catchy tunes, and over-the-top characters, “The Drowsy Chaperone” is a delightful romp that will have you grinning from ear to ear. Whether you’re a seasoned musical lover or new to the genre, this production is guaranteed to charm and entertain. Grab your tickets now: [my805tix.com/e/drowsy](http://my805tix.com/e/drowsy).

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Community

Join the 30 voices of Resonance for “Magnificat”, a sumptuous feast of a cappella choral repertoire celebrating Mary, mother of Christ, and a special set of music featuring women composers of the 20th and 21st centuries on Sat, Aug 2 at 7:30 p.m. at Mission San Luis Obispo de Tolosa, 751 Palm Street.

With music by Praetorius, Josquin, Bach, Pärt, Biebl, Alice Parker, Phyllis Zimmerman, and Górecki, it is sure to be a gorgeous program of both choral chestnuts and lesser-known masterpieces. Don't miss it!

Choose from two summer concert dates: Saturday, August 2, at 7:30 p.m. at Mission San Luis Obispo de Tolosa or Sunday, August 3 at 3 p.m. at

Trinity Lutheran Church in Paso Robles. Tickets are \$30 for general admission and \$20 for students at my805tix.com.



The Morro Bay White Caps Community Band, under the direction of conductor Brenda Hascall, presents their third “Music by the Sea” performance on Saturday,

July 26 at 11 a.m., live from the scenic South T-Pier in Morro Bay. This free, family-friendly event invites residents and visitors alike to soak in the coastal sunshine while enjoying a lively mix of classic and contemporary tunes.

As a non-profit organization, the White Caps are dedicated to bringing joyful, high-quality music to the community. Their summer setlist includes nostalgic favorites like “The Bare Necessities,” “Blue Moon,” “Harlem Nocturne,” and a toe-tapping Beach Boys on Stage Medley, alongside big band hits like “In the Mood” and “Pennsylvania 6-5000.” In addition, A special highlight of the concert will be two original compositions by conductor Brenda Hascall herself: the tender and evocative “Moonlight in Morro Bay,” capturing the town’s tranquil beauty, and “Alexander’s Waltz,” a playful and heartfelt homage that Brenda composed after the birth of her son.

The Morro Bay White Caps is made up of local musicians in and around Morro Bay. They are always looking for new members. To find out more about the band, visit their website at www.morrobaywhitecaps.com.

The Lion’s Club of Cambria sponsors the 75th Pinedorado Days, on Labor Day Weekend. This year, they call it the Diamond Jubilee! Our local Lions have been running this event since 1949. We had to take a couple years off for COVID. We put this on every year to celebrate Cambria, and to raise funds for many local groups.

The groups and people we assist include college scholarships for students from Coast Union, the Cambria Chorale, Cambria Youth Athletic Association, the Lion’s Eye Foundation, and several other local groups who need financial support.

Information about this year’s Pinedorado can be accessed by going to www.CambriaLions.org.

Many local volunteer and school groups help us to run Pinedorado. For example, volunteers assist us with serving food at our BBQ, our Food Court, and in managing our Game Booths. We also need people to sell tickets and be involved in cleaning and picking up trash. If readers would like to assist, send a note to: Pinedorado@gmail.com.

If you are part of a group wanting to be in the Parade on Saturday August 30, go to the website, to get the Entry Form. (The deadline isn’t until late August.) If you have a car you’d like to enter in the Car Show at the Vet’s Fall on Sunday, September 1, see the info on the website. If you’d like to purchase tickets for a performance at our Follies six shows, check out the website.



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

• How to Draw Comics with Kane - Wednesday, July 18, 3 - 4:30 p.m.

Join cartoonist Kane Lynch (and P-nut the Cartoon Cat) for a comic-making adventure! For ages 10 to 18.

• Pokémon Party – Wednesday, July 23, 3 - 5 p.m.

Do you wanna be the very best like no one ever was? Then drop in for Pokémon-themed crafts and games.

Design your own Pokémon card, bring your cards to trade, play trivia to win prizes, and more. Costumes encouraged!

• Nintendo Switch - Wednesday, July 30, 3 - 5 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.

Send your event listing at least three weeks in advance to EditorEBN@gmail.com. Make sure to include the who, what, why, where and when of the event and contact information. Please, type out in paragraph form rather than attaching flyers. We do not guarantee publication but try to include as many as we can.

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Community

A Dose of Good Dogma One Size Fits All?



By Lisa Ellman

“On size fits all.” I see this tag in department stores, boutiques and clothing tents. Yes, one size fits all, unless your hips are too big, or if they would just put a teensy more elastic in the waistband. But what does this have to do with dogs? What is my point? My point is that if you read one book or watch one YouTube video on dog training or behavior solutions. it’s probably not going to resolve your issues, and you shouldn’t assume you will be successful when the suggested methods are applied to your dog. In other words, one size does not fit all.

There are a lot of well written training books out there to help you with your puppy or adult dog, but sometimes these books can result in confusion and more questions. The reason is that although many books provide methods of solutions for typical problem behaviors, those many books may provide different solutions. How do you determine which one is right for you? Or for your own unique dog?

Although all dogs learn through conditioning (classic, operant, counter, etc.) and consistent training, like humans, they’re apt to react differently to any given situation at any given time. For example, some dogs may be shy or submissive and have issues with loud sounds, like a slamming door. Some dogs might have issues with men, this happens quite frequently with adopted or rescue dogs. So, although all dogs are wired to learn the same way, you may need to modify training techniques in a way that is compatible with the temperament and learning style of your own dog. The authors of training books, or people on YouTube, can’t know if your particular dog will respond successfully to what they suggest, model or their methods, because every dog is different in terms of history, trauma, breeding and temperament. Training techniques used for a German Shepard are not necessarily the same ones you should use to train a small mixed breed or a Great Dane. They are two completely different beings.

I often suggest to my human students that they read and learn as much as they possibly can about dogs in general. I emphasize that while dog training books or videos might be helpful for ideas on what to train for, reading books about dog psychology (the way they think, what makes them tick), and their co-evolution with humans, will



HISTORICAL SOCIETY of MORRO BAY

The Origins of the Morro Bay Power Plant

This is the first in a five-part series on the history of the Morro Bay Power Plant.

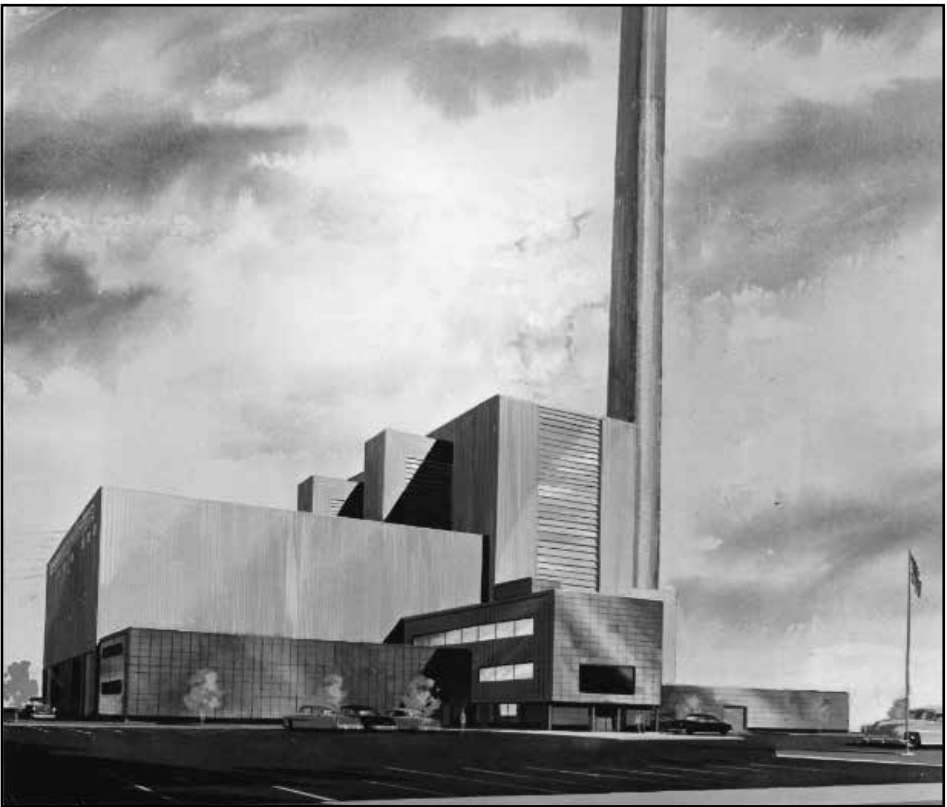
The Morro Bay Power Plant, built before Morro Bay became a city, operated for 60 years. It closed in early 2014, a victim of its antiquated technology, governmental regulations, a saturated electricity market, and corporate instability. Many townspeople would like to see it demolished and a more ecologically friendly use found for the 107-acre waterfront property.

Yet others see the three 450-foot stacks, nearly as tall as Morro Rock, as an iconic symbol of Morro Bay, perhaps as significant as the Rock itself. In the context of history, the Morro Bay Power Plant represented cutting-edge technology, relying on the first industrial-scale seawater evaporators for its steam turbines.

It was designed by William Gladstone Merchant, an architect who helped design the Palace of Fine Arts in San Francisco. The 2005 Historic American Record claimed that “The Morro Bay Power Plant is the single most architecturally defined power plant in California ... an impressive example of international modernism ... in the forefront of power production technology for its time.” Its design was fashioned after an ancient monumental temple and the exterior was clad with an aluminum skin as an aesthetic upgrade.

San Luis Obispo County bought the land where the power plant was built from the federal government in 1949. The property was part of the former Navy base in Morro Bay. Pacific Gas and Electric (PG&E) purchased the property from the County for just under \$80,000 in 1951 and began construction of the power plant in 1953.

The plant played a significant role in Morro Bay becoming a city in 1964. Townspeople had wanted to be incorporated as a city for many years. But each time it was considered, revenue sources were insufficient to support a full-service city. The taxes and lease fees paid by the pow-



Architect’s rendering of the former Morro Bay power plant.

er plant provided that revenue, and people living in Morro Bay at the time supported the project enthusiastically.

Why was it built here? California’s mountain water made hydroelectric dominant in the early days of electricity generation. But droughts cast doubt on hydro’s reliability during the 1940’s, and utilities turned to steam plants powered by oil and gas. These plants required water to cool the turbines. Morro Bay provided the ideal location for oil-fired steam turbines that were cooled by seawater.

Ironically, Morro Bay never used the electricity that was generated at the plant. It was built to supply electricity for irrigation pumping in the San Joaquin Valley. Eventually, the outfall discharge of 75 degree-water violated environmental regulations and attempts to modernize the plant failed. But Morro Bay benefited directly from the revenue and the jobs the plant generated. Its closure represented a significant economic loss to the City, which has yet to be fully restored.

*Do you have an amazing photo-story to share? We’d love to hear from you about that or anything else about our shared history: [info@historicalmorrobay.org](mailto:info@historicalmorrobay.org).*

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offer much more insight on how to avoid problem behaviors before they begin and will help more than most “how to” training books.

There is a plethora of resources (books, magazines, journals, websites) to help you understand “dog brain” and why your dog behaves like a dog, i.e. eating poop, jumping the fence, digging, etc. Dog owners should be familiar and comfortable with what makes a dog, a dog. Don’t take everything you read in the training books as gospel, use your common sense as well. If you happen upon a method to solve a barking issue and you’re just not quite comfortable with it, don’t be afraid to tweak it a little or combine it with other information you’ve read regarding the same issue.

Don’t think that you’re doing something wrong if you don’t follow one trainer’s methods to a “T.” You know your dog better than anyone else. Here’s a sample of informative, interesting books to peruse:

“Inside of a Dog” by Alexandra Horowitz  
“Culture Clash” by Jean Donaldson

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“The Dog’s Mind” by Bruce Fogle, DVM  
“The Toolbox for Remodeling Your Problem Dog” by Terry Ryan  
*Good Dogma has been training humans and their dogs since 1996. Readers are invited to submit questions to [gooddogma@hotmail.com](mailto:gooddogma@hotmail.com). Contact information for all offered services can be found on our website [www.GoodDogma.net](http://www.GoodDogma.net)*

The real reason waterbeds are extinct

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Obituary
Leona "Joy" Lisk
1934 - 2024



Leona "Joy" Lisk, 89, of Morro Bay, passed away peacefully on Wednesday, June 5, 2024. Beloved wife (widow), mother, stepmother, grandmother, sister, aunt, cousin, and friend, Joy was born in New York and moved to Orange County, California in 1956 when she was 21. She worked at the Federal Reserve in New York and after moving to California, she worked in the banking industry for many years and at McDonnell Douglas. She later met and married Paul Lisk in Fullerton, California. She was very proud to be the wife of Paul, a World War II Veteran. She was so proud that she is listed with distinction on the Honor Roll of The National World War II Museum. Joy and Paul had a wonderful life together having had many adventures together. Joy enjoyed education and attended Cal Poly and Fullerton College receiving two degrees and the "Woman of Distinction" Award. She loved literature, poetry, history, learning about nature and the world, and she loved to read, read, read (in addition to reading an array of books, two of her favorite authors were Eric Larson and John Grisham). After retiring, Joy and Paul traveled in their 5th Wheel across many different

states volunteering as Campground Hosts, making lots of friends along the way. After settling in Coarsegold, CA, they helped build and live in Park of the Sierras, a new SKP Park near Yosemite National Park in the Sierra Mountains. After becoming a widow, Joy moved to Morro Bay, making lots of new friends in the Morro Bay community and spending time with those friends and her daughter, Nancy, and stepdaughter, Denise. She enjoyed her travels to Japan to visit Nancy and many historical and state park vacations with her daughters and friends, traveling to New York, Washington DC, Virginia, Hawaii, Florida, Grand Canyon, Sedona, Redwoods, San Francisco, Monterey, Sacramento and the California State Capital, New Mexico, and more! Joy loved Morro Bay and was so happy to live near Morro Rock for the last eleven years. She enjoyed time at the Morro Bay Community Center, taking a variety of classes over the years, including Emeritus Classes through Cuesta College. She had a delightful sense of humor and she loved to go shopping, always making sure to match her new outfits with matching purses and shoes. She loved yummy chocolate desserts and treats and Pepsi-Cola! Joy was preceded in death by her husband, Paul, her daughter Margie, grandson Justin, her sister, Gail and her best friends, Allie and BJ. She is deeply missed by her family and friends. Burial will take place at 2 p.m. on July 23 at the Cayucos/Morro Bay Cemetery.

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Community
Come by Land or Sea!



Festival Mozaic & Danna Joy Images.

This summer, Baywood comes alive with two events celebrating community, music, and boating. Boatart comes to the Baywood Pier this coming Monday, July 21 at 4 p.m. This free, outdoor concert is co-presented by Festival Mozaic and the Baywood Navy. This unlikely collaboration has roots going back to the 1990s, with world class musicians and an opportunity to watch the concert from your lawn chair on the beach or from your kayak, canoe, or other small boat. By popular demand, this year's event features the return of the Festival Mozaic Brass Quintet, who delighted and amazed the community at last year's festival. The show starts at 4 p.m. and concludes at 5 p.m., so come early to get a good spot. For those with small boats, the tides will provide ample water all day and into the evening. For more information, visit festivalmozaic.org. Then on Sunday, August 31, the beloved Baywood Lighted Boat Parade returns for the first time since the pandemic. This is an opportunity to light up your kay-

Land or Sea Continued on page 17

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2025 Cayucos Independence Day Parade

Photos by Neil Farrell

The Annual Cayucos Lions Club's Independence Day Parade filled Downtown Cayucos on July 4 with the happy, cheering faces of 49 entries who danced, pranced and motored down Ocean Avenue to the cheers of some 25,000 people celebrating the Greatest Parade in SLO County. Entrants were bedecked in red, white & blue, stars, stripes and costumes with this year's theme, 'Beach Cowboy.' The Grand Marshal was Liz Villalobos and award winners were: grand prize Poster Contest Winner, Shyne Barclay of Cayucos Middle School; first grade winner, Isabella Garca Jumenez; second grade Tanner Avellar; and fifth grade winner Emely Garcia. Lion of the Year was Ray Bruno. Among the entrants were unicorn horses from Mystic Rose Realm, the Roquet Family of Seaside Motel celebrating granddaughter Reese's 12th birthday [her 12th straight year in the parade]; David Crye Engineering with the whole family; the Ukelele Ladies and Morro Bay Presbyterian Church; Central Coast Roller Derby girls; Mike's Barbershop; the Robinson Family; and the Sea Shanty, plus numerous others.



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Saturday, July 19, from 11-2

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The County's new 'Public Safety Communications Center' in Templeton is nearing completion, with a target date of mid-August. It is expected to be fully up and running before the end of the year. Photo courtesy SLO County

The Sheriff's report said, "On Sept. 26, 2023, the Board of Supervisors approved a contract that the department requested with Motorola Solutions, Inc. for mobile radios, dispatch consoles, and system integration to enhance dispatch operations."

The new gear would allow the Sheriff's Department to better handle the increased emergency communications load, which includes radio communications and dispatching for several local police agencies — Morro Bay Police included — and medical emergencies.

When the new dispatch center is finished, it will also handle communications for the Cal Fire/County Fire Department, plus numerous local fire agencies like Morro Bay, Cayucos and Los Osos' fire departments (Cayucos and Los Osos are both part of Cal Fire/County Fire).

"The Sheriff's Office," Sheriff Parkinson said, "also



Photo show the progress being made on the County's \$23 million-plus new co-located emergency dispatch center, being built now in Templeton. Photos courtesy SLO County Public Works

dispatches Law Enforcement resources for the Arroyo Grande Police Department, Grover Beach Police Department, Morro Bay Police Department, and the County Sheriff's Office. On average, the Sheriff's Office dispatches over 150 field personnel dispersed throughout San Luis Obispo County on any given day."

Adequately adding the fire department's dispatch needs meant they needed a dozen more radio dispatch consoles. Though they will be housed in the same building, the police and fire dispatchers will still be separate, operating in adjacent rooms under the same roof.

Supervisors also approved using Federal Community Oriented Policing or COPS grant funding to pay for the additional equipment.

Back in March, Supervisors approved using \$2 million of COPS monies to buy the radios and computer consoles, and \$877,000 of that allocation will be used to buy the 12 additional consoles, the Sheriff said. He simply had to have Supervisor's approval to amend Motorola's contract.

He added that maintenance of the new radio gear has already been included in the 2025-26 Fiscal Year budget,

so technically they are not using any additional monies to pay for all this new equipment.

As for the new dispatch center, it is currently scheduled to be completed in mid-August and expected to be staffed and online before the end of the year.

Initially the County was planning to build it on Kansas Avenue, next to the old County Animal Shelter on a site that houses a County Office of Emergency Services public/media communications facility. The location got changed after the County studied alternative locations, eventually choosing the site in Templeton, and using communications equipment on top of the Cuesta Grade to reach into the South County and the North Coast.

The Templeton site also has the existing North County Sheriff's Substation, where deputies patrolling North County are headquartered.

Cal Fire/County Fire's current dispatch center is housed in the main headquarters facility off Hwy 1 near Highland Drive (back entrance to Cal Poly).

The idea of combining all the emergency dispatch functions under one roof came from a 2009-10 Grand Jury report and has been supported by both agencies since its inception. The Grand Jury didn't much like the idea of having to switch from CHP to Cal Fire or Sheriff's dispatch, believing it increased response times and recommended the County build a single facility to house both.

That should speed up communications in emergencies, but it won't do much to speed up 9-1-1 calls made on cell phones.

Those are handled through the California Highway Patrol, which gets all the cell phone calls for help at its dispatch center in SLO, and transfers them either to the Sheriff's Department or Cal Fire, depending on the nature of the emergency being reported.

# Letters To The Editor

## A Little Civility, Please



If Mandy Davis's vulgar, profane letter to the editor was intended to persuade us that windmills are an evil threat to our way of life, the author failed spectacularly. How dismayingly cringe-worthy was her declaration that "we don't want outside influencers here and we sure as shit [sic] don't need an industry here that will decimate our oceans and coastal communities for decades to come!"

Ms. Davis did not try to make reasoned arguments for her position but rather simply resorted to vilifying her political opponents with bile-laden personal attacks. Her vitriol was as embarrassing as it was uncalled for, especially given that President Trump already has put a hold on offshore wind development. Just because an individual in our community has a different political perspective doesn't mean he is subhuman and unworthy of respect. Is it too much to ask for a modicum of civility in the increasingly unseemly battle over wind turbines?

Bob Kittle  
Cayucos

## Off-Shore NIMBY

I disagree with Mandy Davis's "Redlight Greenlight" (EBN, 7/3-16) opinion.

Ms Davis touts, "...sanity and conservation win the day" with the defeat of the A-24 ballot measure. I attribute the result to inertia and NIMBY.

This project is a globally-significant effort with contributions by nations, corporations, universities, states, think

tanks, and immediate locales all with, as Ms Davis acknowledges, "...a stake in the success of offshore wind nationally and here in California."

John Verdi  
Los Osos

## Poem for Housing

A poem written by me about trying to find a long term, unfurnished rental in Cayucos.

Dare I say...  
Not from L.A. or the bay, not even from California,  
dare I say.  
Leaving home headed West, knowing there was a better way, 2 Texans land in  
Cayucos hoping to stay, not wanting to change her or "better" the local's ways.  
After 10 months of joy, I can NOT say "Cayucos is home!"  
SHORT-TERM, FURNISHED, MONTHLY, NO PETS... are the signs that steadily greet us today.  
All this to say, I hope vacation rentals don't leave long-time locals with regrets, down the road when you have no community or pets.

Sara Hernandez  
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

Land or Sea From page 15

ak, canoe, SUP, small sailboat, or anything else that floats and celebrate the best of community, music, art, and our sweet little village of Baywood. The event will run from 5 p.m. - 9 p.m., and is a free community gathering. Start getting your ideas together and maybe you'll end up with a gorgeous Emrick Studios trophy for your mantle. More information coming soon.



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News

**Dragon Boat** From page 1  
nations and territories are members of the International Dragon Boat Federation, and dragon boat racing was a demonstration sport at the 2024 Summer Olympics.

The 40-foot long, canoe-like vessels with brightly painted, ornately carved dragon’s heads and tails weigh about 500 pounds and are powered by a team of up to 20 paddlers working in synchronicity along with one steer person and one drummer.

“The competition on the water is intense and fierce, but off the water, there’s an incredible sense of camaraderie and respect among competitors from around the world,” Tanner said. “I’m looking forward to connecting with other paddlers, sharing experiences, and soaking up the energy and spirit of such a high-level event.”

Being a part of the team and the sport perhaps goes deeper than other athletic feats.

“We all have our story, and there’s incredible diversity in each one,” Battaglia said. “I’m humbled and honored to be among women who are thriving in their survivorship — women who’ve overcome unimaginable obstacles and emerged stronger, choosing life at every opportunity.

“We often say, ‘Make lemonade from lemons.’ Without a doubt, SurviveOars is my lemonade, cancer my lemons. I couldn’t imagine life without the support of this incredible organization.”

Dragon boat races are held throughout California from March through October. There are one-day and two-day festivals, with competitions in several divisions: Men’s, Women’s, Mixed, Masters (seniors), Youth, College, and Cancer Survivors. Most races are either 250 or 500 meters. The latter is about 5 and a half football fields and takes about 2 minutes, 40 seconds to cover.

“Dragon boating is a unique water sport because of the teamwork involved. There are no star players,” Sandy Mitchell, CCDBA community outreach chair said in a previous interview. “Twenty people work together, doing the same thing at the same time, to move the boat. The stroke works the core and the legs. The rhythm and concentration on the stroke make the stresses of the day melt away. When everyone is paddling together in time, the boat glides along the water seemingly without effort. It’s a tremendous feeling of power and unity. One beat, one boat.”

In 2023, four local dragon boat paddlers were selected to compete on Team USA at the World Championships that were held in Pattaya, Thailand. Battaglia paddled for the Senior C Women’s team and Tanner for both the Senior B Women’s and Senior B Mixed teams. World Dragon Boat Racing Championships take place in odd numbered years — 2021 was canceled due to the pandemic.

Locally, the non-profit CCDBA officially formed in 2014. The founding team, the Central Coast SurviveOars, began as a group of cancer survivors and supporters in 2007. Now, CCDBA welcomes everyone to participate. To paddle as a guest, go to CCDBA.org, click Paddle With Us. Practice times are listed on the website. Pick a practice time, sign two forms online, and contact registration@ccdbsa.org to sign up for a practice. The first ‘guest’ practice is free.

Anyone can take part in according to his or her own

individual level, goals, and physical fitness. The paddling technique involves the entire body in the stroke, emphasizing the larger muscle groups, so it is a great full-body workout.

**Re-Brand** From page 1



The re-branded Flora Alchemy Herbs, at left, replaces the formerly named Gaia’s Apothecary; same products, different name.

with Sierra’s graduation from herbalism school, they had yet another path they could follow.

“I work with medicinal plants,” Sierra explained. “I make herbal remedies, teas, tinctures, body oils, salves. It’s healing through plant medicines.

“I address the root of the problem through plant medicines.”

They added bulk sales of herbs and began to build a line of special blend teas. They added “apothecary” to the store name, rebranding as “Gaia’s Garden & Apothecary.”

She uses roots, berries, leaves and herbs, practicing medicine the way civilizations have done for thousands of years, before “modern medicine” and its reliance on chemicals took over.

Sierra said they also started a tearoom offering brewed teas and “mocktails,” for folks who like the taste of a cocktail, minus the alcohol.

The business was going OK and last January they decided to pre-package her mixtures and sell them online through a website.

Seeing some success there, they moved onto Yelp, where they saw an immediate success with orders picking up greatly to about 100 a day.

She built up her products to 30 different blends of teas and 16 tinctures, Sierra explained. They expanded the apothecary part and rebuilt their website, marketing it as Gaia’s Apothecary.

Things were looking up and a light started shining at the end of their self-employment tunnel. Then...

“We were getting a lot of online traction, on Yelp,” Sierra said, “and then ‘Ta-da!’ We got hit with a cease and desist order.”

It seems a huge multi-million dollar a year company called Gaia’s Herbs, Inc., out of North Carolina had taken notice.

What arrived like a punch in the gut was an 80-page CDO from a big law firm representing Gaia’s Herbs demanding they stop using the name “Gaia,” all together.

That might seem odd to readers, since Gaia is an ancient name from Greek Mythology for “Mother Nature,” or Earth Goddess, and trademarking it would be like owning the name “God.”

Faced with two choices — either fight it like David vs. Goliath, or change the name and re-brand everything again.

They sought counsel of a lawyer and he wanted a \$5,700 retainer up front, which they didn’t really have. And how does one little plant, crystal and apothecary shop fight a \$128 million a year conglomerate that has products in health food stores across the nation, including right here in Morro Bay?

The CDO was thorough. Sierra flips through the stack of papers and explains that they took screen shots of every product they were offering with “Gaia” in the name and claimed that each and every one was a trademark infringement and “we were doing them harm.”

Summer exclaimed with a laugh, “Doing them harm;

we don’t even have employees!”  
They stewed on it for a bit, and looked into the other Gaia’s. “I’d heard of them,” Sierra said. “They’re herbalists and farmers with a \$128 million a year business. They’ve been around for a long time.”

She laughs at the claim that she, who hand blends her products and hand cuts all the labels, is “major competition” to them. “It’s not the products, it’s the name. I formulate everything myself.”

So after some soul searching, they decided to change the name. “We’re changing the name,” she said. “Rather than put money into attorney bills, we’ll put money into the re-branding.

“It’s the next step in the evolution of the business.”

So Gaia’s Apothecary is now “Flora Alchemy Herbs,” Sierra said. And the product website is being renamed “LuminEarthApothecary.com.”

“We dropped Gaia entirely from the business,” Sierra said. They still offer houseplants, crystals, readings, teas and the herbal medicine products. And this time, they checked to be sure there isn’t some other monstrous corporation out there whose toes might get stepped on because of a name. They both laugh and say this time they intend to file their own trademark, just to be on the safe side.

Lumin Earth Apothecary is located at 875 Main St., Suite C. They are open Mondays 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.; close Tuesdays; Wednesdays-Fridays 10-5; Saturdays 10-6; and Sundays 11-4.

They’re on Facebook at Lumin Earth Apothecary and on Instagram too.

Both mother and daughter are keeping a positive attitude about all this, and are grateful for all the local folks that have dropped by to offer support.

**City Manager** From page 1



Andrea Lueker, shown here in a 2014 portrait, has been hired as Interim City Manager in Morro Bay, stepping in for former GM Yvonne Kimball, who was let go in June. Photo by Neil Farrell

a few months ago to replace the City’s contract law firm. Both had served together for seven years as the Top-2 City employees until both were let go by a previous City Council in 2013 on a split 3-2 vote.

Schultz, who was let go in October 2013 immediately became the city attorney in Los Gatos, a position he held until he retired.

Lueker got her walking papers in December 2013, and left Morro Bay Jan. 3, 2014. She later became first the interim and then full-time harbor manager for the Port San Luis Harbor District, where she served until her retirement in 2021.

As public employee retirees, both can work for a limited time under the rules of the California Public Employee Retirement System (CalPERS).

Their return to the City marks a complete reversal, albeit a temporary one, from the controversial actions taken by the City Council at the time, when their firing caused a great to-do among the residents, hundreds of whom decried the move at the time in an ugly council meeting at a packed Vet’s Hall and played out on live TV.

Lueker earned a Bachelor of Science Degree in 1986 from Colorado State University. In 1986 she came to Morro Bay to work first as a lifeguard in the Recreation and Parks Department, eventually becoming the R&P director.

After about a decade, she was promoted to assistant

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News

city manager under former CM Bob Hendrix, serving as the interim CM for some nine months after Hendrix was let go by the City Council. She eventually got the city manager job full-time in July 2008.

Soon after leaving Morro Bay and before she hired on at PSL, Lueker served as the executive director of the Morro Bay Quota Fund, a newly-formed non-profit organization tasked with overseeing a groundfish fishery Quota System set up by the Federal Government to regulate the deep water trawl fishery.

That quota system was formed to “obtain, administer, and manage dedicated fishing privileges, including permits and \$2M in groundfish quota, to the Central Coast of California,” her resume reads.

According to a staff report, prepared by Schultz, her hiring was slated to be the only agenda item at a special meeting on Thursday, July 10 but dependent on her passing a background check, which should be a mere formality.

A Los Osos resident, Lueker, in recent times has been active in a couple of community efforts. She’s been involved in the acquisition of the Cuesta Inlet, a small tidal flat in Cuesta-by-the-Sea (Los Osos) trying to purchase the Inlet and preserve public access to the popular kayak launching spot (see: [www.savecuestainlet.org](http://www.savecuestainlet.org)).

She’s also been a founding board member on the REACT Alliance, a non-profit activist group based on the Central Coast that has been fighting the floating offshore wind energy projects being proposed for a patch of ocean 20-30 miles off the Coast of San Simeon (see: [www.reactalliance.org](http://www.reactalliance.org)).

She reportedly resigned from REACT Alliance when offered the interim CM job to avoid a conflict of interest, as the Morro Bay Harbor is being eyed as a key port for the maintenance operations of the OSW project.

Under her proposed employment contract, Lueker’s pay “cannot be less than the minimum nor exceed the maximum monthly base salary paid to other employees performing comparable duties, divided by 173.333 to equal the hourly rate,” according to Schultz’ report. That equates to \$118.16 per hour.

In the employment contract, she was hired for no more than six months, while the City goes through a recruitment process for a permanent GM. The contract lists the duration as July 15, 2025, to Jan. 15, 2026, but no more than 960 hours (total of some \$113,000).

Her schedule is for 40 hours a week and if she goes into overtime, she would be paid the normal OT compensation.

She will not receive any of the normal benefits that come with City employment outside worker’s compensation; and should she be fired again, she’s entitled to zero severance pay.

Though she’ll be working full time hours, she is still considered a CalPERS retiree. She is also an “at will” employee, meaning she works directly for the City Council and can be terminated at any time and, just as the case with former CM Kimball, with or without a reason given.

Bridge Replacement From page 1

also finished up the environmental review, which was done with a Mitigated Negative Declaration or Neg-Dec. That means that whatever environmental impacts anticipated from the project are mitigated through conditions in the permit.

He said the plan now is to send the project up to Sacramento for funding from the California Transportation Commission (CTC), the governing body of Caltrans and most of the transportation-related projects in California. If it goes as planned, they should be able to get the funding approved in October and be out for bids by January. Normal contract requirements give the contractor two months to get up and running, so Heisdorf said they should start construction some time early next spring.

The Coastal Commission’s report estimated a 1-year construction but Caltrans’ posted schedule on the website gives it an expected completion date of June 2028.

Just as with the north side bridge project, traffic will be moved across the median and merged so that both directions go over the new northbound bridge during construction.

That will set up a short bottleneck for traffic in both directions as they merge onto the single bridge.

The entire bridge will be demolished and a new 130-foot bridge built. It would be the same length as the old bridge, but a bit wider on the shoulders to better accommodate bicycles.

Ironically, another project, being pursued by the County, will build a dedicated bicycle path to the west of the highway overlooking the beach. That too will require a long bridge over Toro Creek, albeit one made for bicycles and pedestrians, not hundreds of cars and trucks a day.

And the project calls for the continuation of the small parking area on the west side of the highway where folks park to bring their dogs to Dog Beach, the only off-leash dog-friendly public beach in SLO County. The City of Morro Bay owns Dog Beach.

There is room for up to 50 cars to park along the roadway, between Hwy 1 travel lanes and the highway safety fence. It’s a very popular spot.

“The parking areas along the highway, both north and south of the bridge,” the Coastal Commission report said, “currently allow parking for approximately 50 vehicles, and are quite popular, especially with dog owners. About one-half of the parking spaces would be blocked during the project’s estimated one-year construction period.”

The Commission’s permit also anticipates the County building a regional park on the old Chevron Estero Marine Terminal Shore Plant, the flat lands adjacent to the highway where first Standard Oil and later Chevron controlled the uploading of crude oil onto tanker ships moored in Estero Bay.

The marine terminal was in operation from 1929 to 1999 when it was closed in favor of a direct pipeline from Central Valley oilfields and the San Ardo oilfield in Monterey County to Southern California refineries.

Over the ensuing years several of the parcels have been purchased and put into public ownership through collaborative efforts of state and local conservation groups and governments and eventually the County plans to put in the regional park on the flatlands of the shore plant.

“There have been a variety of land conservation efforts over many years in the project area,” the Commission report said, “including public and private land conservancy acquisitions, with the long-term intent of creating a public park inland of the Highway [which some have called ‘Toro Creek Park’] that would be part of a larger and contiguous protected open space area extending between Cayucos and Morro Bay.

“As such efforts come to fruition, there is also a desire to connect such future park areas inland of the highway to the beach and the ocean.”

But having to cross a busy 4-lane highway could be a problem, so the Commission and Caltrans agreed to remedy the matter.

“The Highway 1 bridge underpasses provide a potential opportunity to make such a connection without requiring users to cross over the highway. Accordingly, Caltrans has agreed [and this CDP requires them] to allow public access under the bridges and to work with the County to develop a public coastal access connection for pedestrian access between the inland parklands and the beach via the bridge underpasses or through some other longer-term identified measure.”

Until all this happens, the permit requires Caltrans to allow people to walk under the bridges and access the beach, though the pathway will not be improved.

Caltrans’ permit also requires them to work with the County to make improvements near Dog Beach, to include a second opening in the safety fence for access to the beach. Right now, there is just one gate on the north end of the



The southbound Hwy 1 Bridge over Toro Creek is slated to be replaced starting sometime next spring.

parking areas.

They will also work up plans to improve that dirt parking area “into a more formal beach parking/access area, with the goal of making it more accessible, functional, and safe for users of the County’s popular Morro Bay Dog Beach.” That work would be done after the bridge project is finished.

“As is, this area is unpaved and rudimentary, and there are public safety concerns as users enter and exit the parking area from a fast-moving highway or walk along the highway and parking area.

“There is the potential to create safer parking and to provide a modicum of public amenities in this area in a way that would increase its public utility.”

The Commission added one more item to its lengthy list of conditions — the new bridge must anticipate sea level rise caused by climate change.

Heisdorf said they are required to build the new bridge in anticipation of what he called “The perfect storm,” i.e. anticipating a combination of king tide, heavy rain runoff from the huge Toro Creek watershed, and a rise in sea level. They agreed to raise the level of the new bridge 2 feet, he said, and to do another study on sea level rise.

It was a condition for their northbound bridge, he said, to do a study and they partnered with Cal Poly. He said they conservatively chose 2 feet as the additional height to raise the new bridge to compensate for what is essentially a worst-case scenario, a perfect storm of catastrophes.

It’s similar to a situation from Hwy 1 at the old Piedras Blancas Motel, which sits overlooking the ocean north of the Piedras Blancas Light Station.

Occasionally, waves crashing against the shore below the road, which basically sat at sea level, would wash onto the roadway.

So, Caltrans agreed to swing the road inland, in what amounts to a detour to avoid the short stretch of wet road.

So, while motorists will have the renewed hassle of merging four lanes of traffic onto one, 2-lane bridge for a while, on the other side they should come out with a safer bridge and improvements to the access for Dog Beach and further clearing the way for a future County Regional Park as well.

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