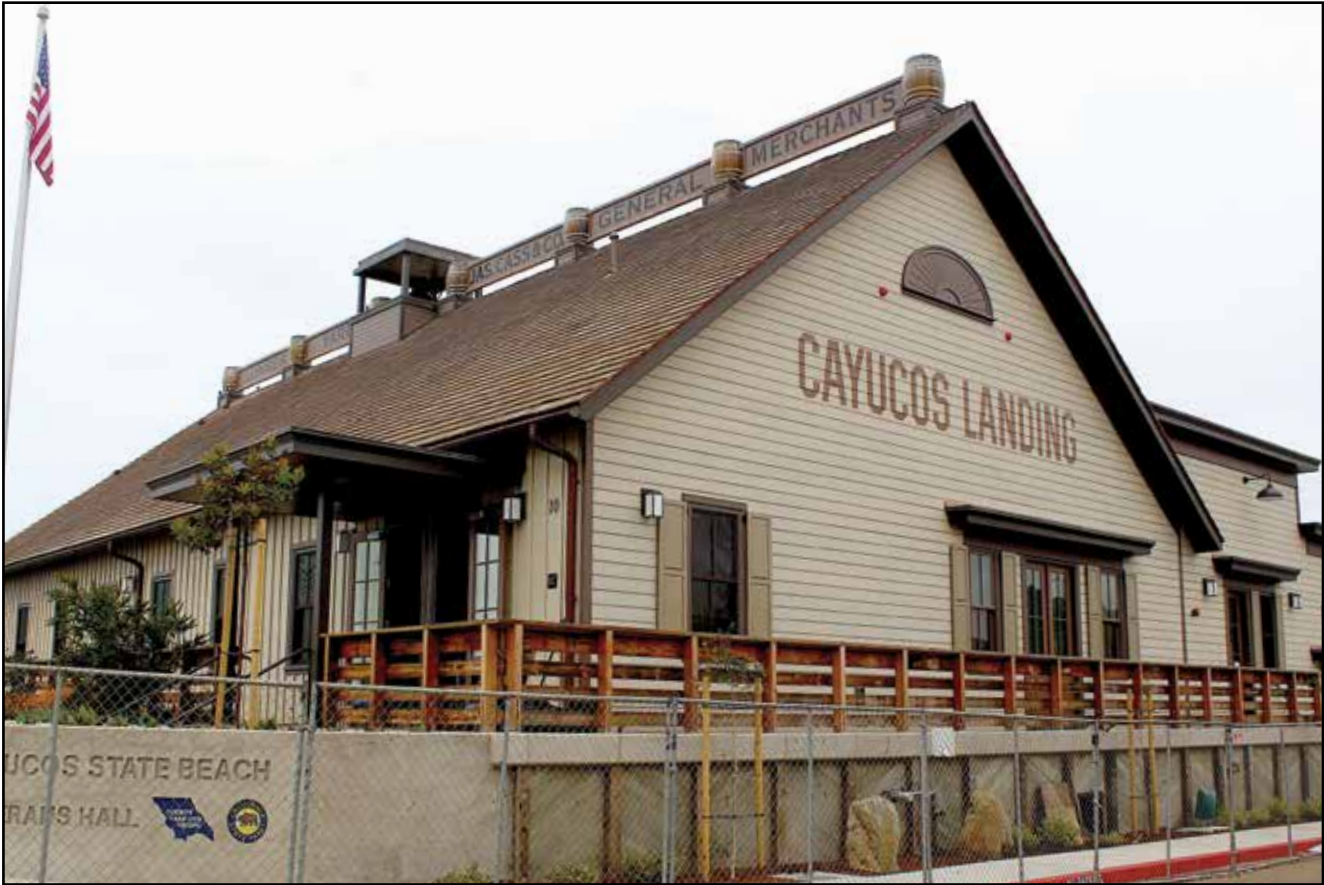


Cayucos Vet's Hall Nearly Completed



Photos show the Main Hall and some of the interior and exterior features of the newly rebuilt Cayucos Vet's Hall. Photos by Neil Farrell

By Neil Farrell

It's been closed for nearly a decade, but the public will soon get a chance to see the newly reconstructed Cayucos Vet's Hall, as the County winds down the massive construction project.

The County recently arranged media tours of the Vet's Hall, which has been re-christened, "Cayucos Landing" in homage to its original purpose as a warehouse for Capt. James Cass' import-export business that started in the 1870s.

One tour was for volunteers with the "Friends of the Cayucos Vets Hall" a group of local residents who are partnering with the County Parks & Recreation Department to run the facility.

County Parks & Rec Director Tanya Richardson said, "The Friends of the Cayucos Vet's Hall are partnering as stewards for the facility. They will be assisting with 'day-of' on-site supervision."

That means when people rent the hall, the Friends will be there to help with the set up and break down of the tables, chairs, etc., to help the County.

In exchange, the Friends represent community organizations that would get credit for their volunteer work, and receive discounts on using the facility.

She said the rebuilding of the Vet's Hall was a "Collaborative

effort between the community, State Parks and the County."

The County made sure to build two smaller spaces on the east side, away from the beach, that will house the Cayucos Art Association Gallery and a new spot for the Cayucos Historical Society to open a small museum.

The rental rates that have been established and approved by the Board of Supervisors, Richardson said, are comparable with similar high-end event facilities in the county.

They are also set to help County Parks repay a loan the project got from a bond sale the County did to fund this and a couple of other high-dollar projects — a new emergency dispatch center nearing completion in Templeton, and a new headquarters for the County Probation Department now being built in San Luis Obispo on Johnson Avenue.

Putting together the funding for the \$9.5 million Vet's Hall Project took a bit of doing.

Jen Caffee, the County's Capital Projects Manager, said they pieced together grants from several sources, plus a healthy donation from the community, and still had to borrow money through the bond sale to pay for it.

The County got a total of \$4.4 million in grants from the California Natural Resources Agency; some \$345,000 from the State Coastal Conservancy; \$705,000 from State Parks' Local

Vet's Hall Continued on page 18

The First Waldorf School on Central Coast is Official



A student prepares for the Central Coast Waldorf School's Rose Ceremony, a tradition that marks the beginning of the school year. On the first day of school, each first grader is welcomed by an eighth grader with the gift of a rose beginning a year-long buddy relationship, where the older child offers mentorship, guidance, and friendship. Photo submitted

By Theresa-Marie Wilson

After years of teacher training and curriculum development, a Los Osos school recently announced a new distinction and a new name.

The former Wishing Well School was accredited by the Association of Waldorf Schools of North America and is now called the Central Coast Waldorf School (CCWS).

The Waldorf education model focuses on a holistic educational approach emphasizing the development of the whole child — intellectually, artistically, and practically. It is referred to as "head, heart and hands" by the Waldorf community of schools.

By the end of their time at the school, the students "know who they are, and that's such a gift because you can take that anywhere with you in your life," Kim Wishon, the founder of CCWS and the school's administrator told Estero Bay News.

The school was founded in 2008 by Wishon in her backyard as a homeschool program for her twins. Thirteen years ago, the school moved to the Sunnyside School site, located at 880 Manzanita Drive, where it now has eight classrooms, 20 faculty and staff members, and 110 students. They offer an Early Childhood Program as well as teach first through eighth grades.

"It's an education of academic excellence, and then there's a real connection formed with the teacher and the students, the students and each other, the parents, and the families that come here," Wishon said. "It's very community oriented. So that's the heart part, and then the hands. We do a lot of hands-on learning. We do lots of field trips. We do project-based learning in the class-

Waldorf School Continued on page 18

New Eateries Add to Morro Bay's Variety of Choices

Photos and story
by Neil Farrell

Food lovers in Morro Bay have a trio of new eateries to try out, expanding what has to be one of the best mixes of restaurants and food styles of any small town.

Two new places opened recently and a third re-opened adding to the menu of food offerings in three different business districts.

Top Dog Reopens

One of the long-time coffee shops in the Downtown that closed suddenly last fall has reopened, as a family-owned business next door expanded into a new venture that brings back an old favorite.

Jesus Reyes, owner of the Bay Deli located at 859 Main St., said he opened Bay Deli, a sandwich shop with a Mexican flare, in March 2024.

The family-run business, which includes his brother, has built up a clientele with offerings of traditional sandwiches mixed with Mexican recipes.

He said he'd been considering expanding



The dining room at Infused Thai Fusion Kitchen, 420 Quintana Rd., is big enough for meetings and family gatherings.

into another business in the future but wasn't sure what he wanted to do.

Then Top Dog Coffee Bar located right next door, closed suddenly last fall highlighted by a pay-up or quit notice taped to the front door by the property owner that stayed up for weeks. It was the talk of the town while it was still taped to the front door.

The owner of the property and the former owner of Top Dog had a falling out over the garbage bill not being paid, as spelled out in the

New Eateries Continued on page 17

CSD Votes to go out for Bids on Pipeline Design

By Neil Farrell

Directors of the Los Osos Community Services District approved going out for bids on the design of a pipeline that would bring a new water source to town.

Based on a September 2021 County report that pointed out Los Osos' drinking water supply was vulnerable, the Board started a process to seek more treated water from the State Water Project and tap the thousands of acre feet of unallocated supply held by the County.

In October 2022, according to a report, the LOCSD staff narrowed down potential sources to the State Water Project and

Pipeline Design Continued on page 16

New Lease Approved for MB Marina

By Neil Farrell

One of the private businesses holding a lease for an offshore mooring field has been granted an extension by the City Council, even as the Harbor Department begins to take a look at the configuration of boats moored offshore throughout the harbor.

Morro Bay Marina, the moorings off Marina Square (699 Embarcadero) was slated to have its 10-year lease expire at the end of June and the Harbor Director brought a short-term renewal to the council before that happened.

The MB Marinas' lease started June 30, 2015, according to a report from Harbor Director Chris Munson, and was to expire

Leased Approved Continued on page 19

**Woods
Honoree
Page 2**



**Police
Blotter
Page 8**



**Rock to
Pier Run
Page 13**



News

Vistra Asks for Meeting with City

By Neil Farrell

There could soon be some news about a proposed Battery Energy Storage System in Morro Bay, as Vistra Energy has indicated a desire to meet with City Officials.

Recently, opponents of Vistra’s BESS project were made aware of the company’s request for a meeting and passed the tip on to Estero Bay News.

EBN asked the mayor for confirmation and got it right away. “Yes,” said Mayor Carla Wixom, “Vistra reached out to schedule a meeting next month with Brad Watson and David Yager. They did not give any specifics to the meeting.”

EBN also queried Vistra about the meeting but did not hear back before deadline.

Vistra had applied to the City for a permit to build a 600-megawatt BESS on a portion of the Morro Bay Power Plant property, essentially on a 22-acre site that used to have a fuel oil tank farm.

Fuel oil, diesel, and kerosene were the fuels initially burned at the fossil fuel plant, which was built by Pacific Gas & Electric in two stages.

Units 1 and 2 were completed in the late 1950s and units 3 and 4 were completed in the early ‘60s. The plant burned the fossil fuels until the mid-1990s when it switched full time to burning natural gas to make steam.

Natural gas greatly cleaned up the plant’s emissions, which prior to that was notorious for occasionally spewing massive amounts of black soot out of the 450-foot-tall smokestacks, blanketing the north end of the Embarcadero. PG&E had a regular program where they would detail cars that got covered in the substance.

When Duke Energy North America bought the plant, part of the State’s dabble in deregulation, Duke proposed replacing the old, inefficient plant with a modern “combined cycle” plant. That type of facility was said to be much cleaner and more efficient.

But a problem arose during Duke’s permitting process with the California Energy Commission when the question of continued use of “once through cooling” with seawater drawn from the bay was determined to be too hard on the marine environment.

Duke fought for its project for some seven years and eventually did receive an Energy Commission permit. But that permit was conditioned on receiving a permit to continue with once through cooling from the State Water Resources Control Board.

But the water board too wanted once-through cooling to end, so Duke spent an estimated \$35 million and never went ahead with the project.

Duke sold its four California power plants, and after the Morro Bay plant changed hands a couple of times, it ended up in Vistra’s ownership when that Texas-based energy company merged with Dynegy. The power plant was closed down for good in 2014.

A few years later, and with the State changing direction with its energy policies towards no-emission generating systems (solar and wind), Vistra proposed building the battery storage plant.

Such BESS plants are needed to store excess energy created by wind and solar, which operate best when the sun shines and the wind blows. The anticipation is that excess solar and wind power would be stored in batteries and fed back into the power grid overnight, thus evening out the supply vs. demand equation.

But big battery plants have sometimes caught fire, as was the case with a Vistra owned 300 MW BESS at its Moss Landing power plant last January.

Opposition to the Morro Bay BESS arose before the company formally applied for a permit in 2022. A citizen’s group called, “Citizens for Estero Bay Preservation,” formed to fight against putting a BESS in a site in the middle of town.

Meanwhile, the State Legislature passed a law, Assembly Bill 205 in June 2022, that established a work-around process for projects like Vistra’s BESS to apply directly to the Energy Commission for permitting.

AB 205 process was designed to take precedence over any local laws and with the exception of the Coastal Commission and State Lands Commission, State regulations too.

The Citizens for Estero Bay Preservation conducted a petition drive to get Measure A-24 on last November’s ballot. A-24 rewrote the City’s zoning ordinance to require a vote of the public in order to change any existing zoning on the Embarcadero from Beach Street north to Morro Rock and over to Atascadero Road.

Though it was an industrial site for about 60 years, after the power plant closed for good the City re-zoned the over 100-acre property to commercial visitor-serving, a zoning that encourages tourism development.

That change was made during the City’s update of the General Plan that resulted in the “Plan Morro Bay” document.

A-24 became part of that plan when it was approved by voters.

However, last October, before the November Election, Vistra asked the City to “pause” review of its project, which was well into the environmental review.

Nevertheless, voters easily approve of A-24 and this past January, the company formally withdrew its project from City review.

And since then, the City Council passed an ordinance that prohibits any “grid-sized” battery storage facilities from being built within the City Limits. So now there are two legal obstructions standing in Vistra’s way.

Vistra has not definitively said it was going to the Energy Commission; opponents have believed that was the strategy. It’s possible that is why Vistra wants to meet with City officials.

And in the midst of all this, the Moss Landing fire erupted and rained down criticism on Vistra and battery storage plants in general from local and State officials, too. Even our local State Sen. John Laird and Assemblywoman Dawn Addis have now criticized battery projects being located in populated areas.

Vistra has no doubt been busy dealing with the massive fire that destroyed one of its two BESS facilities in Moss Landing, Morro Bay hasn’t heard a peep from them for months.

Now, the company has asked for a meeting sometime in August. If that meeting happens it will likely be behind closed doors.

If the meeting is with just the Council subcommittee on the Morro Bay Power Plant, it would include Jeff Eckles and Cyndee Edwards, the two members listed by the City as currently serving on the power plant subcommittee.

If the whole Council wants to attend, the City would be required to be publish an agenda in advance under the State’s Public Meetings Law (The Brown Act).

It could still be held in private closed session, but the agenda topic must be published three days prior, and a report must be made in public afterwards if any decisions were made.

Also, closed session meetings allow for public comments to be made either in advance via email or snail mail, with a required in-person public comment period prior to the closed session meeting. Once the public comment period expires, the normal procedure is to clear the room of non-participants and meet behind closed doors.

Vistra has been pretty open in its dealings with Morro Bay, holding several public outreach events early on in the BESS’ permitting process.

It could be expected that when they have a decision on whatever they plan to do, they will make a public announcement.

When Vistra paused and then withdrew its project from the City’s purview, it was non-committal about whether it would seek a permit under AB 205. Nevertheless, under that law, all local laws must be taken into consideration, but the Energy Commission can simply override them.

Getting it through the Coastal Commission could be more problematic, as the Commission staff has been very critical of the BESS project and its ability to be approved under the Coastal Act.

Los Osos Woman Honored by Woods



Arianne Olarig was recently honored by Woods Humane Society for her dedication to fostering dogs. She is shown here with her dog, Gator, in Morro Bay. Photo by Marcel Steiber

By Theresa-Marie Wilson

A Los Osos woman was recently honored by Woods Humane Society with an award at their 70th Anniversary Pet Gala. Arianne Olarig received the annual Woods Humane Society Volunteer Achievement Award recognizing her “passion and commitment” to the dogs she fosters.

“I was immensely honored, and it was extra special to share it with my family and friends, all of whom support me through the highs and lows of fostering,” Olarig told Estero Bay News. “There is no feeling quite like bringing a foster dog home, seeing them decompress, realize they’re safe, and then become an entirely different, happy dog. To make that kind of difference in a dog’s life just by giving them space in my home is priceless.”

Olarig has fostered an astounding 65 dogs since April of 2023. She also shares the fosters’ transformation process on Instagram under @fostered-byarianneon Instagram, and on Facebook with the handle Fostered by Arianne, so others can see the power of fostering and, hopefully, get involved.

“Arianne has meant the difference between life and death, happiness and despair, comfort and anguish for so many animals on their journey to loving homes,” said Jamie Relth, director of development at Woods. She has gone above and beyond to support our animals through her tireless foster care, and we were thrilled to be able to call attention to her work at the event this year. She is a super-star.”

Fostering animals comes with its share of emotions — many happy and some difficult. Olarig is currently fostering newborn puppies that were abandoned in a box in the Village of Arroyo Grande. Their umbilical cords still attached, and no mother was around — a potentially deadly situation for the puppies and traumatic experience for their mother as well.

“I started fostering them: bottle feeding them every two hours and around-the-clock care,” Olarig said. “Within one week of fostering, I lost one puppy due to injuries she sustained before they were rescued. I’m currently fighting to keep the remaining three alive. Most of the time, doing my best for my fosters is more than enough. In this recent instance, I did my best and it still wasn’t enough to save this six-day old puppy because of the irresponsible actions someone else made.”



Arianne Olarig at the Woods 70th Anniversary Pet Gala where she received the annual Volunteer Achievement Award. Photo by Marcel Steiber



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Vacant Land for Sale in Los Osos

	Listing ID	S	PType	St& St.Name	City	Area	L/C Price
1	SC25154901	A	Land	346 Mitchell DR	OSOS	OSOS	\$395,000
2	SC25153823	A	Land	0 3rd ST	OSOS	OSOS	\$125,000
3	SC25090716	A	Land	1231 10th ST	OSOS	OSOS	\$169,000↓
4	SC25082851	A	Land	1412 5th ST	OSOS	OSOS	\$449,000
5	SC25067125	A	Land	1420 5th ST	OSOS	OSOS	\$185,000↓
6	SC25058660	A	Land	1924 Nevada CT	OSOS	OSOS	\$489,000
7	SC25052754	A	Land	1039 Bayview Heights DR	OSOS	OSOS	\$870,000↓
8	SC25025958	A	Land	1455 13th ST	OSOS	OSOS	\$179,000
9	SC24254510	A	Land	1107 Pasadena DR	OSOS	OSOS	\$699,000
10	SC24216739	A	Land	2021 9th ST	OSOS	OSOS	\$159,000
11	SC21111184	A	Land	0 Vista Del Osos	OSOS	OSOS	\$435,000↓

Recently Sold

	Listing ID	S	PType	St& St.Name	City	Area	L/C Price
1	SC25058185	S	Land	212 Butte DR	OSOS	OSOS	\$515,000↓
2	SC25012577	S	Land	1184 1st ST	OSOS	OSOS	\$222,050↓

900 Los Osos Valley Road Suite A Los Osos, CA 93402

News

Fortunately for Olarig and other active fosters, the volunteer work they do has rewards that outweigh the bad. The lives saved far outnumber those that are lost, and knowing the joy that adopters get to experience for years to come, makes the hard work and hours of devotion worth it.

"I love seeing my former fosters with their forever families," Olarig said. "I love getting updates, pictures, and randomly running into them. Seeing my former fosters living their best lives is the greatest reward I could ever receive. With fostering, I want to set them up for success in their forever home, so goodbye is the goal."

For Olarig, it all began with Gator, who was found in bad shape as a stray in North County. "Gator was emaciated and had barely any fur," she said. "His skin was so bad, they named him Gator, after alligator skin. The incredible Shannon Sinclair at SLO County Animal Services spent months nursing him back to health. Shannon and Gator are the ones who inspired me to start fostering dogs."

Today Gator lives in his forever home with Olarig and her husband, Marcel Steiber, in Los Osos where he teaches new foster dogs trust with his gentle and patient personality.

To Become a volunteer at Woods, to foster, or to adopt a new family member, check out woodshumanesociety.org.

New Containers Blend Art and Function



Cayucos Sanitary District Board Members, staff and volunteers unveiled new trash and recycling containers that will be distributed in the Downtown area, blending art and function, as they help keep the community litter free

By Neil Farrell

Board members and staff of the Cayucos Sanitary District, and community volunteers celebrated the unveiling last week of new trash and recycling containers that will be distributed throughout the Downtown area, blending art with function.

CSD President Bob Enns said they partnered with the Integrated Waste Management Authority (IWMA) to buy 10 sets (20 total) of the new fangled receptacles that are made of a hard plastic and decorated with some amazing artwork of the Cayucos Pier and beach.

Enns said the CSD "Would like to thank the IWMA for the

\$10,000 grant to help promote public awareness for recycling in public places."

The CSD pitched in some \$30,000 to go with the IWMA grant and cover the \$40,000 cost of replacing the old "aging and deteriorating containers," Enns said.

Cayucos resident Michael Shopshear, owner of Nelson's Garage proposed replacing the old containers, bringing the matter to the CSD Board's attention while he was briefly serving on the Board.

CSD Administrative Manager, Gayle Good, said that Genoa Design & Creation, a graphic arts shop in San Luis Obispo, designed the artwork and did the wraps on the new containers.

Good added that Mission Country Disposal, the garbage company that serves Cayucos, agreed to empty the new cans. It's in keeping with the company's emphasis on recycling, she said.

And Enns said when they discussed the new containers they had one major concern, keeping birds out of them.

"The new containers," Enns said, "are of an enclosed design that will prevent our ever present seagull population from spreading trash and food on the sidewalks and streets."

Keeping the "winged rats," as seagulls are jokingly referred, out of trashcans are a problem in every beach town everywhere.

When the birds get into the cans, they pull out food wrappers and containers searching for anything they can find to gobble down but leaving the trash to be scattered in the wind.

Oftentimes the birds eat things that are not good for them, such as plastics and paper products used to hold takeout food. (This reporter once saw a seagull trying to swallow whole a Styro-foam coffee cup, getting it caught in its craw and nearly choking. Eventually, after much effort, the bird coughed it out and flew off.)

Keeping the birds out of trashcans has at times been a hard-to-resolve issue as cities have tried to come up with different containers that are "bird proof."

In Morro Bay, the City took away all of the trash cans in the Morro Rock parking lot and directed the public to use special dumpsters sitting next to the public restrooms to dispose of their garbage.

Cayucos' new cans with their recycling component goes along with other efforts by Cayucos residents to keep their beach community clean. Among them are special cigarette butt receptacles and Mutt Mitt dispensers, which the Cayucos Lioness Club distributes and maintains at every beach access point in town.

The Club goes through some 175,000 of the plastic doggie waste bags a year, paying for them entirely through fundraising efforts and donations from the community. A company specializing in dog waste removal picks up the bags presumably for composting.

Without these efforts, Cayucos would not be as clean and tidy as it is for residents and the million or more visitors a year who enjoy one of the few remaining funky little beach towns in California.



Close up view of the new recycling and trash containers being distributed in Downtown Cayucos. Photos by Neil Farrell

Investigation Into Los Osos Shooting Not Done Yet



Screen grab from a dash-cam video mounted in a Sheriff's deputy cruiser shows Andrew Biscay of Chowchilla appearing to point a weapon at deputies shortly before they opened fire and killed him on July 2 in Los Osos. A Sheriff's spokeswoman said they will soon release more video from the incident, which is still under internal investigation.

By Neil Farrell

The investigation into the Sheriff's deputy involved shooting of a man in Los Osos has not been concluded yet, according to a Sheriff's spokeswoman, but additional information including more video of the incident will be released soon.

Estero Bay News asked Sheriff's spokeswoman Grace Norris last Thursday if their internal investigation into the July 2 shooting of a Chowchilla man had concluded yet?

"The investigation," Norris said, "is still ongoing at this time. However, we are working on a critical incident video that we plan to release in the near future, which will provide additional context and details."

The incident unfolded at 12:08 a.m. Wednesday, July 2 when Sheriff's deputies were dispatched to a report of "suspicious circumstances," in the 2300 block of Fresno St., in Los Osos.

According to a news release by Norris following the incident, "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."

The man was described as "having a history of violent behavior and being known to possess weapons," Norris said.

The first deputy on scene contacted the woman and made sure she was safe. Subsequently, two more deputies arrived for back up and began a search of the surrounding streets for the suspicious man.

They located him sitting in a pick-up truck with a camper shell parked a short distance away. Things quickly went downhill from there.

"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."

Deputies called for an ambulance and backup, announcing

Los Osos ShootingContinued on page 8

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Estero Bay News Briefs

By Theresa-Marie Wilson

Two Announces Intent to Run for District 2 Supervisor

Michael Erin Woody and Jim Dantona have each announced their intent to run for the District 2 seat on the San Luis Obispo County Board of Supervisors, a position long held by Bruce Gibson, who said he will not run again.

District 2 encompasses SLO County's northern coastal communities including Los Osos, Morro Bay, Cayucos, Harmony, Cambria, San Simeon, parts of San Luis Obispo and Ragged Point extending to the Monterey County line.

Jim Dantona, president and CEO of the San Luis Obispo Chamber of Commerce, says he has spent his professional life serving his community, protecting our environment, promoting economic development and creating head-of-household jobs.

"I'm running for Supervisor because I believe San Luis Obispo County can be a model for what's possible," Dantona said in a news release. "We have the tools, the talent, and the values to protect our environment and coastline while building something even better. With smart planning and bold leadership, we can grow an economy that creates good-paying jobs and affordable housing, supports working families, and ensures the next generation has every reason to stay."

"The future isn't something we wait for - it's something we



Jim Dantona

mold. With renewed leadership, we can protect our coastline, our values and our people while building a stronger, more inclusive future."

Jim and his wife, Jennifer, live in Cayucos, where they volunteer with Lumina Alliance, Rotary, EcoSLO and Surfrider.

Michael Erin Woody, a licensed civil engineer and Salinan Indian tribal council member, is running on a platform of environmental stewardship, government transparency, and giving voice to coastal communities that he said have been "ignored by local politicians," he said in a news release.

"For too long, District 2's coastal communities from Los Osos to the Monterey County line have not been heard by local politicians," said Woody. "This election will decide the future of this region, and we cannot afford to destroy our central coast values and lifestyle."

Currently, Woody serves as Vice Chair of the Citizens Finance Committee for the City of Morro Bay and as a member of the Tribal Council for the Salinan Tribe of San Luis Obispo and Monterey Counties. His tribal leadership role includes serving as an appointed liaison to numerous federal and state agencies from his tribe, including to the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary, the U.S. National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration, the U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs, the California Native American Heritage Commission, and the California Division of State Parks. The nomination period for candidates to file their official paperwork is between February 9 and March 6, 2026.

The California primary election for District 2 supervisor will be held on June 2, 2026.



Michael Erin Woody

Former Los Osos Resident up for an Emmy

Paul Lacovara, a native of Los Osos and graduate of Cal Poly San Luis Obispo, has been nominated for an Emmy Award for Outstanding Stunt Performance on ABC's hit show "The Rookie."

The nomination recognizes Lacovara's work in a high-intensity action sequence performed alongside fellow nominee Sonja Wajih, under the direction of stunt coordinator David Rowden, who is also nominated for his work on the same episode.

Lacovara's career spans more than two decades with credits on some of Hollywood's biggest productions as a stunt performer, stunt coordinator, and 2nd unit director. A proud alumnus of Cal Poly, Lacovara credits the Central Coast for instilling in him the grit, discipline, and creative foundation that continue to drive his work today.

"To be recognized by the Television Academy and to share this moment with such a talented team is surreal," Lacovara said in a press release. "I may work in L.A., but my roots are right here in SLO County. I'll always be that kid from Los Osos who loved movies and wanted to be part of the action."

The Creative Arts Emmy Awards take place this September in Los Angeles.



Paul Lacovara

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

9-1-1 Emergency Outage Resolved

The County Sheriff's Office announced the loss of 9-1-1 service in parts of San Luis Obispo and Santa Barbara Counties on July 22, but service was restored the next morning.

According to Sheriff's spokeswoman Grace Norris, customers of Frontier Communications, Verizon, and AT&T were unable to get through to emergency dispatchers on cell and landlines starting Tuesday, July 22.

The areas hit with the outage here were in San Miguel, Arroyo Grande and Nipomo, as well as some parts of Santa Barbara County.

People trying to dial 9-1-1 in those areas got a busy signal or had the calls dropped. Those who experienced the outage were being advised to try and call again using a different phone or to call the Sheriff's Office on the non-emergency line (805-781-4550, Option 3).

No explanation for the outage was given, but Norris said officials were working on the problem.

"We are closely monitoring the situation and actively work-

ing with local and state partners, as well as the effected service providers," she said, "to identify the source of the disruption and determine an estimated time of restoration."

The Sheriff's Department asked the public to share the news with neighbors, "especially those who may rely on landlines or have limited access to alternative communication options."

By the next morning, service had been restored. "According to Frontier Communications, service was restored at approximately 8:09 a.m.," Norris said, "and 9-1-1 calls should now be fully operational."

She said the Sheriff's Office had tested the system multiple times and all seemed to be "functioning as expected."

She added that if anyone continues to not have service, they should call the non-emergency line to report it.

"We appreciate the public's patience and cooperation as this issue was addressed."

Though the outage apparently did not affect the Estero Bay area communities, readers might take note of this hiccup and keep the non-emergency number handy or pre-programmed into their cell phones, should it happen here in the future.

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Big changes are happening at the Chamber, and they're all about you.

Our Government Affairs Committee has officially grown into the Business Advocacy Committee, and that new name says it all. We're doubling down on empowering businesses through networking, advocacy, and resources that make a real difference.

This dedicated team includes 15 local leaders representing a wide spectrum of industries making sure your needs guide our work. To focus our efforts, we've launched four dynamic sub-committees, each tackling challenges and opportunities that matter most:

- Housing – We're working with developers and city leaders to champion income-based workforce housing. Because building a, community starts with making it livable.
- Business Development & Visitor Engagement – More than tourism, this is about creating experiences that help turn visitors into lifelong customers through targeted events and marketing.
- Civic Beautification – From iconic gateways to cleaner public spaces, we're working to make Morro Bay shine in a way that truly reflects who we are.
- Permitting Partnership – No one should feel stuck in red tape. Our committee members are here to make the permitting process clearer, faster, and more business friendly.

Want to learn more and share your voice? Join us at Breakfast on the Bay on Wednesday, August 20 from 7:30 – 9 a.m.. We're putting the Business Advocacy Committee front and center — what it is, what it stands for, and most importantly, how we can better serve you. Bring a friend from the community for half price because the more voices, the better.

Keep an eye out for a quick survey heading your way soon! Let us know what you'd like us to focus on. This is advocacy in action. And it starts with listening, responding, and growing together.

Morro Coast Audubon Society – Conservation and Education

Last month Morro Coast Audubon Society (MCAS) held its inaugural “Our MCAS Community: Today and Tomorrow” fundraising event at the San Luis Obispo Botanical Gardens, bringing together local conservationists, supporters, and community members for an afternoon celebrating bird conservation and habitat protection.

Founded in 1966, MCAS is dedicated to protecting birds and the habitats they depend on throughout the Central Coast region. The organization works through education in local classrooms, direct habitat protection including stewardship of Sweet Springs Nature Preserve, and advocacy for environmentally safer policies. MCAS offers a variety of free programs to make conservation education accessible to all community members.

The event featured remarks from Torrey Gage-Tomlinson, MCAS Program Director, who provided updates on the organization's recent growth and outlined the group's vision for inclusive, community-driven conservation efforts. Gage-Tomlinson emphasized education as a cornerstone of MCAS's approach to environmental stewardship.

“Seeing our community come together like this for our first fundraising event was incredible,” said Gage-Tomlinson in a news release. “The energy and enthusiasm from everyone there — from longtime members to young students sharing their research — really showed what we can accomplish when we work together for conservation.”

A standout moment came when Angela Logan, an AVID teacher from Paso Robles High School, presented alongside four of her students who participated in MCAS's FEATHER program (Fostering Environmental Awareness Through High School Education and Research). The students shared personal stories about how the program expanded their understanding of the natural world and sparked their interest in potential careers in science and environmental advocacy.

One student moved the audience with her account of watching young crows take their first flights, describing how the

Audubon Continued on page 8



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NATURAL HISTORY NUGGETS

The Summer Show



Humpback Whale lunge feeding. Photo by Brad Lewis on Unsplash

By Dean Thompson

Many summers ago, some friends and I were out on the Cayucos pier watching the annual summer spectacle of anchovy schools attracting predators. We were not alone as we gazed off the end of the pier, waiting to see the next encounter. In addition to the crowd of humans lining the pier railing, scores of gulls, pelicans, shearwaters, and other birds were circling and chattering about the coming feast. Sea lions porpoised in and out of the water, also waiting for their massive marine cousins to bring the fish to the surface. In the waters below, 2 humpback whales were emitting air from their blowhole, creating a curtain of bubbles corraling the anchovies into a swirling, shimmering ball trapped in a “bubble net” that drove them to the surface.

Our first indication that the fish were nearing the surface was the sound. The fish

jumped out of the water, their wriggling bodies slapping the water like firecrackers. This was followed quickly by the sounds of pelicans hitting the water as they dove in to grab fish with their pouches. The sea lions darted in and out, as terns and shearwaters joined in the feeding frenzy as well. For the anchovies, it was death from above and below.

The smaller predators had to be quick because soon the vast maws of the humpbacks emerged from below. Every time it happened, the crowd on the pier let out a collective “Ohh-hh” as the whales lunged up into the swirling mass of fish. The whales’ throat pleats expanded as they collected the anchovies; they closed their mouths to force out the excess water through their dark baleen like a strainer, and then they sank back down beneath the surface.

According to the Marine Mammal Center, there are approximately 50,000 – 80,000 humpback whales left in the world, and there are 3

distinct populations of humpbacks that live in the Northern Pacific. The whales that frequent our coasts in the summer belong to a population of approximately 2,900 whales that overwinter and calve in the warmer waters off Mexico and Central America, then migrate north to feed off our coasts and further north to British Columbia.

Though they live in separate populations, some scientists think they will interact and can even communicate with each other, sometimes over great distances. Humpbacks are famous for their songs, but all baleen whales will emit similar sounds. Many of them are below our ability to hear, called infrasound. These sounds can travel great distances through the water, which could conceivably allow whales to communicate with others of their kind hundreds or thousands of miles away.

Scientists aren’t sure if they are indeed communicating at these ranges, but there could be other uses as well. Some of the notes the whales emit can last for several seconds with

wavelengths as long as a football field. Some speculate that the whales could be using their songs to map distant underwater landscapes by processing the returning echoes from the far-reaching infrasounds. Clearly, there is more to learn from these great beasts.

These summer months are great for witnessing these creatures. If you’re by the coast, keep your eyes peeled for the tell-tale flocks of birds swirling over the ocean surface. Upon further examination, if you see sea lions or dolphins porpoising out of the water, it’s a good bet there’s a school of bait fish like anchovies or mackerel there. Then just keep looking for the puff of “steam” indicating the whales are there too. Finally, if there’s a pier nearby, get out on it and enjoy the show!

Dean Thompson is a naturalist and storyteller who has worked as an educator and field biologist for the past 42 years, primarily in the Estero Bay area. His writings, titled “BrainFodder - Ruminations of a Naturalist,” can also be found on Substack.

SLO to Celebrate National Farmers’ Market Week

Join the Downtown SLO Farmers’ Market on Thursday, August 7, from 6 to 9 p.m. for a block party celebration of the nationally recognized market and the farmers and growers who make it all possible. At the intersection of Chorro and Higuera Streets.

Local organizations have booths at the event, including the SLO Food Bank, the San Luis Obispo County Department of Social Services, and more. Music is by local DJ “Just Ge.rge”.

An interactive letter-writing activity, “Letters to Vendors,” will be available for all to participate in. Community members can write notes of appreciation to the Market’s participating farm stands and vendors, then drop them in their respective envelopes. The Farmers’ Market team will distribute the letters to the vendors the following week.

Shoppers can also be the first to purchase brand-new Farmers’ Market merchandise, including tote bags, hats, T-shirts, magnets, postcards, and more. Community members are



additionally invited to enter a giveaway of tasty Farmers’ Market goodies and merchandise. The giveaway kicks off on Monday, August 4, on the @downtownslofarmersmarket Instagram account, and a winner will be announced the following Monday.

August is Amnesty Month!

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HISTORICAL SOCIETY of MORRO BAY

Major Construction in a Small Town



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

The huge generators that produced up to 1000 megawatts of electricity when the power plant was completed signaled the great disruption about to confront Morro Bay. Built from 1954 to 1963, the plant was of a monumental scale that more closely matched Morro Rock than it did the little seaside village where it was planted.

The plant design consisted of turbine generators, main transformers, boilers, boiler feed pumps, fuel tanks, condensers, cranes, a switchyard, high purity station evaporators, and innovative sea water evaporators. Large pipes were installed to draw in seawater for cooling, while warm water was discharged through a long tunnel north of the Rock.

The main power plant structure was built to contain the powerhouse and a 121-ton boiler. The massive boiler drum took three days in transit from the railroad at Camp San Luis Obispo to the construction location. A five-foot-thick concrete floor supported the heavy concrete housing walls.

Workers excavated the foundation for the 90-foot wide by 10-foot-deep concrete pad to support the equipment. The digging and subsequent destruction of Native American artifacts instigated future regulation on excavations.

A total of 289 piles were driven 68 feet into the ground and filled with concrete to provide a foundation for the first 450-foot smokestack. The stack itself was built with concrete and lined with acid-proof brick.

Eight thousand barrels of oil per hour would be burned to turn the generators. A temporary cofferdam (later removed) was built to lay 4,500 feet of oil pipes on a dry, bay floor to a fueling station where tankers could supply oil. Oil storage tanks surrounded by protective sand dikes were built near the power



plant.

Construction of the first stage of the plant with the single stack used 40,500 cubic yards of concrete; 3,500 tons of reinforcing steel; 3,450 tons of structural steel; 230,000 feet of conduit; 2,500,000 feet of wire and cable; and 30,000 electrical connections.

Bechtel Corporation, which later constructed the Diablo Canyon nuclear plant, built the Morro Bay Power Plant, at one time employing 438 workers. It was the biggest private construction project in San Luis Obispo County at the time and became the fourth largest steam plant in the nation. It changed the definition of “Morro Bay.”

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.

1954 – Residents saw a 220-ton generator section on its eight-day trip from the railroad siding at Camp San Luis to the Morro Bay Power Plant construction site. It is being pulled on an 82-tire, 12-axle trailer, with workmen picking up and laying down 20-foot-long wood planks to keep the street intact.

OUT & ABOUT

WITH THE BOOKSHELF WRITERS



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

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

Bingo Wings



By Catherine “Kiki” Kornreich

Bingo seems to be gaining popularity across many demographics. Gen Z’ers seem to find it a fun and inexpensive way to entertain themselves, more men are playing, and there are also electronic Bingo units! There’s even a Bingo app, as well as numerous themes.

Bingo has been around forever ... originating in Italy in the 16th century, arriving in America in the 20th century.

When I was young, it seemed like Bingo was just for church social events, and we laughed at all the fat old ladies waving their “Bingo wings” when they’d Bingo.

When my great aunties were in a retirement home, the activity director liked to keep the residents busy with lots of fun things to do. She organized excursions, crafts, baking, book group, and Bingo. And boooooo did my girls love their Bingo! It was almost as important as Sunday church services. Come rain or shine, they had to get to Bingo and arrive early enough to get some of the limited chips.

Lena and Louise had a little coin purse that was filled with quarters (Bingo cost a quarter a card) and would belly up next to their buddies for a very vocal game. Vocal, I say, because someone was always yelling “b-WHAT?”

I loved to visit them during the Bingo time slot, as no one

Out & About Continued on page 9



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Community

Out & About From page 7

really seemed to know what was going on and it was great entertainment. When I'd get a Bingo, I wouldn't call it, as I didn't think it was fair to steal anyone's thunder or the coveted chocolate kiss prize.

I usually got away with this, but once in a while I'd sit next to Clara, a busybody who watched everyone else's card. If I got a Bingo, she'd yell, "SHE'S GOT BINGO! RIGHT HERE! BINGO!" So I stopped putting the chips over called spots. She'd bust me on those, too! "YOU HAVE G-64! RIGHT THERE! SHE CALLED G-64!"

So, I soon became a mere spectator. Then I became the busybody saying, "look! You've got N-52!!"

I honestly don't know how any of them ever won, as so many were either hard of hearing and/or hard of seeing. Everyone was squinting, leaning back and forth to peer at each other's cards, yelling at the caller, asking each other what was called, squinting again, looking for (stealing) and dropping chips.

There was one man, Merle, who consistently hollered, "is this blackout?" The caller would gently say, each time, "No Merle, we're still on horizontal (or vertical, diagonal, X)."

When blackout did finally arrive, chaos ensued. If it was a big crowd, say twelve people, there weren't enough chips for everyone. Thievery ensued.

Fragile little hands would sneak discretely to the neighboring pile and slowly slide a few chips their way. This mostly went unnoticed, but boy-oh-boy, if the thief was busted, these 95-year-olds could come up with some nasty little accusations. The caller often had to stop and redistribute chips into equal piles, taking most of them from Howard's enormous stockpile.

Blackout was by far the most competitive, as the prize was the kitty, which at most was three dollars.

Louise was famous for falling asleep while playing, and the astonishing thing is that she would still win! Slumped over in her chair, asleep, she'd suddenly sit up and yell "BINGO!" As she'd call out her numbers, they were, indeed, all valid.

I have recently discovered this newfangled Beer & Bingo, and it's a hoot! Prizes can be anything from a pint of your favorite beer to a gift certificate for dinner. And now that I've grown my own set of impressive Bingo wings, I can celebrate with the best of 'em.



By Theresa- Marie Wilson

Los Osos Chamber to Open New Office Space

The Los Osos Chamber of Commerce is moving into new undisclosed digs in August, and they need some help. "We're working on making it cozy and welcoming for visitors and members alike," said Chamber officials.

They need an office desk, comfortable chairs for the lobby, and bookcases. Other wanted items: coffee pot, electric tea kettle, small side table, coffee cabinet stand, large whiteboard, long narrow desk, small round table for meetings (seats 4-6), pots for plants, wall hanging display for brochures and business cards, cleaning supplies, TV with wall mount, office supplies.

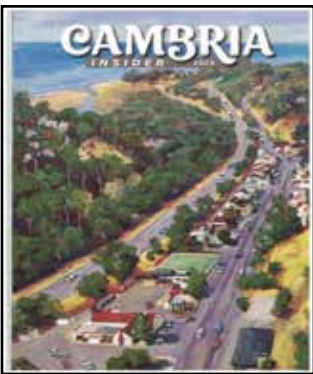
If readers have any items they want to give to the Chamber, email them at info@lobpchamber.org.

Cambria Chamber in Search of Photos

The Cambria Chamber of Commerce is looking for submissions for the cover of their 2026 Cambria Insider magazine.

Submissions must be a vertical format and represent the essence of Cambria. It may be a photo or original art. Deadline for submissions is August 31, 2025

Recognition will be given to the artist inside the magazine.



For more information or to send in artwork, contact Nancy at cambriachamberinfo@gmail.com.

County Libraries to Host Back-to-School Extravaganza

Central Coast families are invited to enjoy the end of summer with a day full of curiosity, learning, and fun at the County of San Luis Obispo Public Libraries Extravaganza event on the Cuesta College campus in San Luis Obispo Saturday, August 9, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Touch-a-Truck, a popular interactive attraction featuring squad cars, big trucks, and engines from various County of San Luis Obispo departments, will be on exhibit all day. "Kids and grownups love our touch-a-truck events. We see all ages climbing into the vehicles, and honking horns, flipping sirens, and giggling," said Erica Thatcher, communications and marketing coordinator for the libraries.

Visitors will also experience exciting scheduled performances in the Harold J. Miossi Cultural and Performing Arts Center: Local Taiko drumming group Ichimi Daiko kicks off the event at 10:30 a.m.; a dance performance from local dance group SLO Movement Arts begins at 11:45 a.m.; and Mad Science LA closes the day with a show from 1-2 p.m.

Storybook characters Pete the Cat and Clifford the Big Red Dog will be roaming the event to meet fans and offer opportunities for photos.

Other all-day activities include a curiosities sideshow, carnival games, food trucks from Big Wave Sushi and Wandering Eats, and a treasure hunt.

The Extravaganza is free and open to the public and is sponsored by the SLO County Library Foundation and the Friends of Library groups.

For the complete schedule of Extravaganza activities or more information about the library, visit SLOLibrary.org. Visit SLOLibraryFoundation.org to learn more about the Foundation.

In other library news, Saturday hours at the Morro Bay and Los Osos libraries have changed.

Takin' Care of Business Continued on page 10



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Community

Takin' Care of Business From page 9

New Los Osos Library Hours

Tuesdays and Wednesdays –10 a.m. - 6 p.m.
Thursdays – 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Fridays – 1 - 5 p.m.
Saturdays – 1 - 5 p.m.

New Morro Bay Library Hours

Tuesdays and Wednesdays – 10 a.m. – 6 p.m.
Thursdays – 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Fridays – 1 - 5 p.m.
Saturdays – 9 a.m. -1p.m.

Holds pickup dates will be extended to reflect these changes.

Poly’s Financial Management Concentration Receives Prestigious Certification



The financial management concentration at Cal Poly’s Orfalea College of Business has been named a Certified Financial Planner-registered program by the CFP Board of Standards Inc. With this designation, Cal Poly financial management graduates are put on a fast track toward earning the CFP certification, a respected certification in the financial services industry. “Achieving registration with the CFP board opens new career paths in financial services for our students,” said Cyrus Ramezani, professor of finance and program director, in a news release. “The financial planning courses we offer provide the technical foundation and customer-focused skills to become outstanding advisers. Demand for qualified financial planners is projected to grow over the next decades. This registration enables us to train qualified graduates, providing them with an edge to succeed in the competitive financial services industry.” According to the organization, nearly eight in 10 CFP professionals, who earn on average \$192,000 annually, say the certification gives them have a competitive edge over other financial advisors. Moreover, 90 percent of consumers report feeling more confident working with a financial advisor with the CFP designation. The CFP board currently oversees more than 300 programs at more than 200 institutions. It sets standards for financial planning and administers the CFP certification so that the public has access to and benefits from competent and ethical financial planning. Upon graduation from the program, finance students can take the CFP exam to earn the credential, ultimately distinguishing themselves among their peers by meeting specific education, examination, experience and ethics requirements. As of July 1, the CFP board reports, there are nearly 105,000 CFP professionals working in the U.S. Cal Poly’s Financial Management and Real Estate Finance concentrations enroll more than 400 students.

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Petco Love and Woods Humane Society Offer Free Pet Vaccine Clinics

Woods Humane Society will offer local pet parents access to four, free pet vaccination clinics at both its San Luis Obispo and Atascadero locations on August 2 and 16, and September 6 and 20 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. The free vaccines are made possible through Petco Love’s national vaccination initiative, Vaccinated and Loved, that provides an additional one million free pet vaccines to existing animal welfare partners, including Woods Humane Society, for family pets in need. Parvovirus and distemper in dogs and panleukopenia in cats — the most prevalent deadly diseases affecting pets — are preventable with a simple vaccine. An estimated 30% of pet parents do not take their pet to a veterinarian annually for preventative care. To ensure the health and wellness of beloved pets and to address this critical need, Woods Humane Society and Petco Love have partnered to make pet vaccines free and accessible. Through this effort, Woods Humane Society aims to vaccinate more than 200 pets. Woods Humane Society’s appointment-based Pet Vaccine Clinics will be held at Woods Humane Society’s North County campus at 2300 Ramona Road in Atascadero on Saturday, August 2 and Saturday, September 6 from 9 a.m. until 1 p.m., and at the San Luis Obispo location at 875 Oklahoma Avenue on Saturday, August 16 and September 20 from 9 a.m. until 1 p.m. Attendees must make an appointment in advance at SpayS-LOCounty.com. To qualify for free vaccines, pets must be six weeks or older, healthy, and owned (community outdoor cats do not qualify). Dogs must be on a leash; puppies under the age of four months must be carried; and cats must be in a secure cat carrier. More information is available at SpaySLOCounty.com. The free vaccines distributed at events through the Petco Love initiative will be the DAPPv Canine and HCP Feline vaccines. Rabies vaccines, flea treatments, and microchips are also available during appointments at low-cost. In November 2024, the Vaccinated and Loved initiative reached its goal of distributing three million free pet vaccines for family pets, and the organization is determined to reach even more pets in need by providing an additional one million free

vaccines. The campaign was launched in August 2021. For more information about vaccine distribution, contact Woods Humane Society by calling (805) 543-9316. Woods is open to the public daily from 12-5 p.m., with adoption hours from 12-4 p.m. Learn more about Petco Love’s lifesaving impact at PetcoLove.org.

Pismo Beach Welcomes a Fresh Wave of Restaurants

For all you foodies out there, summer brought a wave of new restaurants to Pismo Beach. Each new eatery brings a loyal following from its hometown roots.

Beachin’ Biscuits - 800 Price St.
The favorite biscuit brunch spot is on the move! Beachin’ Biscuits will soon relocate to a larger, upgraded space just up the road, giving guests more room to enjoy their towering biscuit sandwiches and signature comfort dishes.
Chōwa Bowl - 690 Dolliver St.
A Morro Bay favorite opened its doors in Pismo Beach offering a menu packed with Asian-inspired ramen and poke bowls. Known for its bright colors, bold flavors, and market-fresh

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Community

ingredients, Chōwa Bowl is already drawing crowds who love to customize their bowls with fresh seafood, seasonal veggies, and savory toppings.

Mariscos El Picosito - 187 Pomeroy Ave.
The Santa Maria staple landed in downtown Pismo in March. Mariscos El Picosito specializes in authentic Mexican seafood dishes served in a casual, family-friendly setting. From shrimp cocktails to fish tacos, the menu offers satisfying and filling meals that are perfect after a day at the beach.

Honey, I'm Home - 620 Cypress St.
Honey, I'm Home opened last weekend with a full menu of hearty breakfast favorites and classic burgers. With a nostalgic design and down-to-earth menu, it feels like home. They also have ice cream specials.

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

Calvary Lutheran Church is hosting a public picnic for National Neighborhood Night Out on Tuesday, August 5th, 4 to 7 p.m. at the big parking lot on 480 Monterey Ave. in Morro Bay.

There will be live music throughout, headlined by Bobby Santa Cruz and whoever else he might bring along! Free delicious Hamburgers and hot dogs and cold drinks will be served, as well as savory and sweet foods. If you'd like to bring along a side dish to share, you would be extra welcome! There will also be a children's craft and game table, and a chance to visit with neighbors and new friends. Any questions, call Brian at 925-285-7256.

These are the programs at the Los Osos Library, 2075 Palisades Ave., for August 2025. All programs are free.

Current Featured Wall Artists: Kim Winberry paintings.
• **Paws to Read** – Wednesdays, 3:15 – 4:15 p.m.
Come and read your favorite book to Berkeley! She's at the Los Osos Library on Wednesday afternoons. School age.
• **Storytime** - Thursdays, 10:30 – 11a.m.
Stories, dance, and music for toddlers and preschoolers.
• **TMHA Van** – Fridays, 1 – 2:30 p.m.
Transitions Mental Health Association provide services, referrals, supplies to unhoused individuals.
• **Coding and Circuits for Kids** – Friday, August 1, 2:30 – 4:30 p.m.
Hands on coding and circuitry fun for kids! Come tinker with Snap Circuits, Cubetto robots, a Robot Mouse and more. Options for ages 3+.

• **Fiber Arts Club** - Thursday, August 7, 2:30-3:30 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.
• **Pokemon Party** – Friday, August 8, 2:30 – 4:30 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!
• **Back-to-School Extravaganza** – Saturday, August 9, 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.
Enjoy the last days of summer with a day full of curiosity, learning, and fun at the beautiful Cuesta College campus in San Luis Obispo. Experience exciting performances in the Harold J. Miossi Cultural and Performing Arts Center. This free all-ages event is family friendly.
• **Bears Book Club** – Tuesday, August 12, 6 – 7:30 p.m.
"The Alchemist" by Paulo Coelho. Drop in. Adults.
• **Plant Swap** – August 14 - 16, 1 – 5 p.m.
Bring a plant and take a plant, or don't bring a plant but take a plant! Three days of plant swapping. Join us for one of our most popular events.

Celebrate legendary singers David Crosby and Graham Nash on Sunday, August 17 from 2 to 4 p.m. at Cambria Center for the Arts Theatre, 1350 Main St, with a tribute concert. One man flew "Eight Miles High" with the Byrds. The other founded the British pop band, The Hollies. David Crosby and Graham Nash went on to record many solo and duo albums, and of course, found fame with Crosby, Stills, Nash (and later Young).

Songwriters at Play celebrates Crosby and Nash with a tribute to their music.
The performers include Jonathan Firey and Shawn Thies, who recently played a David Crosby tribute concert at the Granada Theatre in Santa Barbara. L.A.-based artists Adrian Bourgeois, Emily Lalotis, and Mary Scholz join local musicians Kielo Smith, Donna Phillips, and The Wine Country Troubadours Duo.
The concert is produced by Songwriters at Play, husband-wife team Steve Key and Bonnie Nelson Key. <https://www.songwritersatplay.com>.
Reserved seating is \$25 and \$20 for CCA members. More info and tickets: cambriaarts.org/shows-and-performances or my805tix.com/e/crosbyandnash. Sun, 17



Join us for a free and fun adventure of textures and colors in acrylic mixed media with artist Debra Piazza at Art Center Morro Bay located at 835 Main St. on Saturday, August 2 from 3 to 5 p.m. Piazza demonstrates how we all have the ability to create. Rarely beginning her creations with a subject or color palette in mind, Piazza shows us how to let go of our expectations and let the piece develop its own identity through layers of acrylic paint and happy accidents. This organic development of depth and unexpected discoveries lead to unique and exciting results.
For more information, go to artcentermorrobay.org or call (805) 772-2504. Art Center Morro Bay is located at 835 Main St, Morro Bay.

Events Continued on page 12

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Community

Events From page 11



Canzona Women's Ensemble is holding auditions for their fall concert, "Heart Strings: Ties That Bind," on August 14 in San Luis Obispo and August 16 in Shell Beach. The ensemble seeks enthusiastic singers with previous choral experience who share a deep passion for music and community.

Auditions are open to women with previous choral experience who are eager to showcase their vocal abilities. Canzona Women's Ensemble is specifically looking for individuals who possess a strong sense of musicality, dedication, and a desire to contribute to the ensemble's success. Auditions will consist of a prepared solo piece of the singer's choice, some sight-reading exercises, and vocal range exploration.

To schedule an audition or for more information, interested singers can visit the Canzona Women's Ensemble website at canzonawomen.org/audition.



Concerts in the Plaza presents Josh Rosenblum Band on Aug. 1 with the opening act at 5 p.m. and Josh from 6–8 p.m. at Mission Plaza in SLO.

Josh Rosenblum is an award-winning rock guitarist creating soulful songs with popular appeal. Living on the Central California Coast, Josh writes all his music, plays multiple instruments, and produces all his records. With musical roots in jazz, Josh's sound today combines genres of rock, soul, and pop to create original music with mass appeal. Writing songs and playing live shows since he was 16, Josh captures what we love about music—stories that move us with the shared pain and joy that life deals with. He writes, sings, plays all instruments, and produces his own music. Josh has released seven studio albums and one live album; his next album is coming in Spring 2025.

Affordable Employee Benefits: Big Impact on a Small Budget is the next Spokes Resources for Nonprofits on Aug. 7 from 11 a.m. to 12 p.m. Admission is free. It is held on Zoom and a link will be sent upon registration Spokesfornonprofits.org. Nonprofits may not always have deep pockets, but that doesn't mean they can't offer meaningful benefits to attract and retain great staff. In this session, two vendors will showcase options for legal services,

identity protection, and supplemental insurance—designed with small organizations in mind. Whether you're an executive director or handle HR for your team, you'll come away with practical ideas to boost your benefits package without breaking the bank.

SLO Skiers, a local, non-profit sports and social club for adults, holds its next monthly meeting at Milestone Tavern at 972 Foothill Blvd. in San Luis Obispo at 5:30 pm on Tuesday, August 5. Meetings are free and yearly membership is only \$65. Social hour with food and drink from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. Meeting follows. Social and sports activities occur year around.



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

- Sensory Playtime - Saturday, August 2 and August 30, 10 – 11 a.m.

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

- Decorate a Seashell Butterfly - Wednesday, August 6, 3 – 5 p.m.

Decorate clam shells with sequins, baubles, and even more shells to transform them into beautiful butterflies. All materials provided.

- Build with Legos – Wednesday, August 13, 3 – 5 p.m.

Kids ages 5-11 are invited to engineer, build, and create amazing structures with Legos. All bricks provided by the library.

Park Palooza returns to Dairy Creek Golf Course for a vibrant, family-friendly celebration of community, music, movement, and giving back on Aug. 2 at Dairy Creek Golf Course, 2990 Daisy Creek Rd in SLO. This year's event, from 1 p.m. to 8:30 p.m., will benefit two Central Coast nonprofits: the SLO Noor Foundation, which provides free medical care for uninsured adults, and the Surfing for Hope Foundation, which supports cancer wellness through the healing power of surfing.

The day begins at 1p.m. with a festive 5K Color Run, where participants of all ages will jog, walk, or dance through clouds of colorful, non-toxic powder. Registration is \$25 and includes event admission, and attendees can purchase a limited-edition Park Palooza t-shirt for \$20.

From 1. P.m. through sunset, Park Palooza becomes a playground for all ages. Families can enjoy bounce houses, crafts, and games in the Kids Corner, while adults relax with cold drinks, explore artisan vendor booths, and take in a diverse lineup of performances. Local food trucks, cultural showcases, interactive dance & talent shows will round out the experience.

This year's musical headliner is The Main Squeeze, a Los

Angeles-based band known for their powerful blend of soul, funk, and rock. Their sixth album Panorama has drawn praise from outlets like NPR and Rolling Stone, and their electrifying live show has earned them a devoted following across the country.

Additional acts include: Vince Cimo's Hot Fire, a six-piece disco-funk collective from the Central Coast; Dante Marsh & The Vibe Setters, bringing infectious soul-pop energy inspired by SLO; B & The Hive, a local indie-rock band with powerful vocals and moody, melodic anthems; and Birthday Girl, a garage rock outfit made up mostly of medical professionals in SLO County.

General Admission: \$25 and \$30, kids 12 and under are free. Parking is \$10. Tickets are available at My805Tix.com.

Meredith Wilson's "The Music Man" plays at the Clark Center for the Performing in Arroyo Grande August 7- August 10. Meredith Willson's "The Music Man" is a heartwarming and humorous musical about a traveling con man, Harold Hill, who poses as a music instructor in the small town of River City, Iowa. He aims to con the townspeople into purchasing band instruments and uniforms, but his plans are complicated when he falls for the local librarian and piano teacher, Marian Paroo. Despite his fraudulent intentions, Harold's charm and genuine connection with the town's young people, particularly Marian's younger brother Winthrop, lead Marian to reconsider her initial skepticism and begin to fall for him.

General admission tickets are \$28.50, and student are \$17 and are available at the Clark Center box office or by calling 805-489-9444. Shows are Thursday, August 7 – 7 p.m., Friday, August 8 - 7 p.m., Saturday, August 9 – 2 p.m. and 7 p.m. And Sunday, August 10 – 2 p.m.

National Night Out takes place Tuesday, August 5, 5 – 8 p.m. at Cloisters Park. Meet local police officers and firefighters/emergency medical technicians while enjoying family-friendly activities. National Night Out enhances the relationship between neighbors and law enforcement while bringing back a true sense of community. Furthermore, it provides a great opportunity to bring police and neighbors together under positive circumstances. Morro Bay in Bloom volunteers will staff the activity table, will give away sixteen long-sleeved Morro Bay in Bloom tee shirts (Youth Large size only) to the first sixteen children who attend the table, and will give a two-inch potted succulent to each child who wants one.

Help Save Cuesta Inlet and Get 20% Off All Purchases at Volumes of Pleasure Bookshop. On Saturday, August 2 from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m., Save Cuesta

Inlet volunteers will be at Volumes of Pleasure Bookstore, in Los Osos to take donations, provide information, and sell merchandise. Additionally, anyone who donates \$100 or more will receive a thank-you gift from Volumes of Pleasure staff — a 20%-off storewide shopping spree. This is a one-day-only event to help save Cuesta Inlet and ensure it stays a community asset forever.

For more information about Save Cuesta Inlet, go to <https://www.savecuestainlet.org>. Volumes of Pleasure is located at 1016 Los Osos Valley Road. 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

Over 900 Take Part in 55th Rock to Pier



By Neil Farrell

The results of the 55th Annual Brian Waterbury Memorial Rock to Pier Run are in and a couple of local fellows led the pack.

The event is actually two races — a 6-mile (10K) one-way race on the beach and a half marathon loop that returns to the Rock with a trip through Cloisters Park in the middle.

10K Men’s Results

Hiroki Fujinaga, 40 of San Luis Obispo, was first overall in the 10k race, clocking 32-minutes 39-seconds, also taking first in the Men’s 40-49 age division and was the first one to reach the Cayucos Pier in the annual race that starts at Morro Rock.

Second place went to Morro Bay High graduate and collegiate cross country standout, Otis Kelly, 19 of Cayucos, in 32:53. Kelly also took first place in the 15-19 age group in his hometown race.

Third place went to Azel Reich, 23 of SLO in 35:10. He was also first in the 20-29 age group. Fourth overall was Ansh Vinchhi, 16 of Santa Maria in 37:02. He was second behind Kelly in the 15-19 group.

Fifth overall went to Oliver Zaitz, 15 of Los Osos in 39:44. Zaitz finished third in the 15-19 group.

Mitchell Bush, 36 was sixth overall in 39:48 and was the top runner in the 30-39 age group. He was followed in seventh place by William Vedrin, 30 of Los Osos in 39:51. Vedrin was second in his age group as well.

In eighth place was Caleb Walker, 16 of Delhi in 40:04. Walker was fourth in the 15-19 age group.

Eric Link, 34 of Los Osos was 11th overall and ninth in the men’s race, in 41:09 and third in the 30-39 age group.

Michael Barahona, 32 of Grand Terrace was 14th overall and 10th among the men in 42:24.

Other notable men were Michael Kelly, 47 of Cayucos 24th overall and 20th in men’s in 44:37; Martin Budinger, 50 of SLO, 35th overall and 27th men’s, in 45:57; and Charles Diliberti, 66 of Arroyo Grande who was 49th overall and 36th among the men (48:04).

10k Women’s Results

The first female runner, and ninth overall was Megan Cota, 28 of SLO in 40:11. She was first in the 20-29 age group as well. And the second female and 10th overall went to Phoebe Draznszak, 18 of Arroyo Grande in 40:56. Draznszak was first in the 15-19 age group among the girls.

The third female and 12th overall went to Madison Siebert, 15 of Fresno in 41:35. Siebert was also the second fastest female in the 15-19 age group.

Fourth female and 13th overall went to Hanna Muegge, 36 of SLO in 42:11. She was the top finisher in the 30-39 age group.

The fifth female went to Rebekah Waterbury, 18 of SLO in 44:49. She was the third fastest in the 15-19 group.

Lina Fuentes, 37 of Bakersfield was sixth fastest female in 45:09 and second in the 30-39 age group.

Heidi Proctor, 34 of Visalia was seventh among the females and 30th overall in 45:24. She was third fastest in the 30-39 group.

Noleena Fahy, 18 of Atascadero was eighth among females and 31st overall in 45:26. She was fourth among the teenaged women runners.

Ninth among the women was Chelsey Te Velde, 35 of Visalia in 46:07. Te Velde was fourth in the 30-39 group.

And the 10th place female was Cass Craker, 27 of Templeton in 47:14. Craker was second in the 20-29 group.

And the 10th female was Kristin Zaitz, 44 of Los Osos in 47:26. Zaitz was also the first finisher in the 40-49 age group.

Other notable female runners included: Mary Cooper, 67 of SLO in 49:03 and 60th overall. Cooper was the 20th female to reach the pier.

Sonja Johnson, 53 of SLO was 68th overall and the 23rd female. She clocked 49:57 and was the first one in thee 50-59 age group.

Other older runners who also did well included Kim Haar, 53 of Fresno (51:36, 88th overall, 27th female) and Kelly Lopez 59 of Taft (52:52, 97th overall, 32nd).

The 10k race had 745 total runners.

Half Marathon

The half Marathon (approximately 13 miles) was won by Morro Bay’s Andrew Walgren, 27, who ran a very respectable 1-hour 17:45 minutes, a 5:56 per mile pace.

Second went to Nicholas Sciole, 23 of Valencia who clocked 1:26:42. Clay Manning 43 of Clovis was third in 1:24:51 and Joseph Flora, 39 of Atascadero was fourth in 1:24:54.

Fifth went to Verdo Gregory, 46 of Tucson (Ariz.) in 1:25:08 and sixth went to Anthony Rubio, 16 of Sanger in 1:26:07. Seventh went to Sam Jones, 36 of Los Osos in 1:26:21.

In eighth was Triston Loppini, 29 of Atascadero in 1:26:25, and ninth went to Antonio Napoli, 19 of Nipomo in 1:26:51. Tenth place went to Brian Kirkpatrick, 30 of Atascadero in 1:27:16.

The first edition of Cat Times hits stands

Walter Catkito

Daisy Brokaw

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Screen grab images are from a Race Roster video of the 55th Annual Brian Waterbury Memorial Rock to Pier 10k and Half Marathon, held July 12 on Morro Strand Beach. Photos courtesy Morro Bay Rec. Dept.

Women’s Half Marathon

Among the ladies, Hannah Clough, 29 of Huntsville, Ala., was the first to finish. She was 29th overall and clocked 1:45:03. Second was Stacy Mills, 44 of Grover Beach in 1:47:47. Mills was 31st overall.

Third best female was Naomi Julian, 15 (no town given) in 1:48:08 and fourth was Stacy Ferris, 54 of Huntington Beach in 1:49:18.

Fifth female was Melrose Araujo, 24 of Nipomo in 1:49:53 and sixth was Jennifer Schutte, 45 of Valencia in 1:51:17.

Seventh went to Jennifer Fox, 44 of Tucson in 1:51:32, and eighth was Tess Brookes, 27 of Ventura in 1:53:09.

Rachel Lemos, 33 of Livermore was ninth among the ladies in 1:56:17 and 10th went to Gina King, 63 of Tulare in 1:57:02.

The half marathon saw 227 men and women start the race and all but one finished the grueling test.

The event was hosted by the Morro Bay Recreation Department and produced by Race Roster.

All race results are posted online at: <http://bit.ly/45IICxx>.

August 8-24

Proof

Written by David Auburn

Directed by Samvel Gottlieb

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Presents ‘Proof’



David Auburn’s “Proof” is the August show at By the Sea Productions. Samvel Gottlieb directs this emotional drama exploring the fine line between genius and instability, and the fierce bonds of love, trust, and family.

Catherine (Wren Hall) has spent years caring for her brilliant but mentally ill father, Robert (Tom Ammon), a renowned mathematician. After his death, the arrival of her estranged sister (Kira Dobson) and one of Robert’s former students (Charles Charm) forces long-buried questions to surface. Can genius be inherited? Can madness? And who can we trust with our deepest truths?

“Proof” plays weekends August 8-24 at 545 Shasta Ave. in Morro Bay. Reservations and tickets are available at bytheseaproductions.org or call 805-776-3287.



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Letter
to
the Editor
Thank You Cayucos



My family first moved to Cayucos in 1988. For you young’uns, that was way back in the 20th century. I went to Cayucos Elementary and made lifelong friends that I’m still close with today. Like most kids here back then, I moved on to Coast Union and graduated in 2001. I spent a few years figuring things out. I attended Cuesta College, worked as a local radio DJ, played in a handful of bands, fell in love with filmmaking, and eventually decided to make the big leap to the city ... Pasadena, to be exact.

I’d visited Pasadena years before, and it reminded me a lot of SLO, a small city feel with a strong sense of community, just nestled inside the sprawl of Los Angeles. In 2009, I packed up and headed south to chase the dream of working in the entertainment industry. In 2013, I met an amazing woman who quickly became my best friend. That friendship turned into something more, and in 2014, we made it official. We were both chasing our dreams and somehow making them work. In 2015, we took the next step and moved in together. I said goodbye to my condo in Old Town Pasadena and hello to the quiet, suburban-like streets of Altadena.

At first, Altadena wasn’t quite my scene, but it grew on me fast. As much as Pasadena reminded me of SLO, Altadena reminded me of Los Osos- funky, artsy, full of community, and everyone was just... cool. The vibe was unreal. In 2019, I asked my best friend to be my wife. And in early 2020, we found out we were going to be parents. Of course, 2020 had other plans. The pandemic hit. Our pregnancy journey happened under the shadow of COVID-19, with FaceTime doctor visits, most of which I couldn’t attend, protests and riots in the streets, and a level of uncertainty that was hard to put into words. But in November 2020, our daughter was born. Nine pounds of absolute magic (my poor wife!). Life had changed for the better, and things seemed to be getting back to some sort of ‘normalcy’.

Then came the writers’ strike. Then more fires. Fires were always part of Southern California life, especially where we were, but we never really thought one would reach us. We lived far enough south on the mountain that it almost seemed silly to worry. But the smoke? That was a different story. It would get trapped against the San Gabriel foothills and just sit there. During our pregnancy, we endured what we thought was one of the worst fires. We sealed up the house, covered the windows, and stayed indoors for days. I couldn’t see across our own yard. The smoke was thick, suffocating. That’s when Cayucos started to become our escape, our “fresh air” vacation. Clean, fresh ocean breeze, familiar faces, and clear skies.

On January 7, 2025, the Eaton Fire started. The winds were fierce. We felt it immediately- this one was different. We packed a few things and headed for Cayucos, just to get away from the smoke. Like we’d done a handful of times before. By the time we got to our Airbnb on January 8, our house, along with the rest of our town, had burned to the ground.

There’s no way to prepare for that kind of loss. Losing your home is one thing. Losing your entire town, your friends, your neighbors, your daughter’s school, your coffee shop, anything that had a sense of familiarity, is another entirely. The despair filled every crevice of our being. But we were in Cayucos. The air was clean. The sun was shining. There was no smoke. There was no fire.

The day we got the news, the three of us took a walk down to the beach. My wife and I didn’t say much, just exchanged quiet, sad glances while our daughter played in the sand. On our walk back to our Airbnb, we were stopped by two locals asking how our day was going. My jaded Southern California instincts made me just nod and keep walking. But my wife stopped and started talking. Eventually, the topic came up, and she told them everything. Later that evening, when we got back from dinner in Morro Bay, two large bags were waiting on our doorstep. They were filled with clothes, toys, books, art supplies, and crafts for our daughter. From strangers. We were floored. Even as I write this, I’m floored.

Over the last few months, it’s been a whirlwind of emotion, punctuated by moments like that, moments of kindness from people we didn’t know, who expected nothing in return. Yes, we’ve heard plenty of “You’re in our thoughts and prayers” (blah), but more importantly, we’ve felt people’s actions. People putting

those thoughts and prayers into action.

And that’s Cayucos in a nutshell, people helping people. People looking you in the eye and genuinely caring about your answer.

We never planned to start over here. But I have to say, if you’re going to rebuild your life from the ground up, Cayucos is a pretty damn incredible place to do it. We miss Altadena deeply. That was our home. A home that was stuffed full of memories, both old and new. But the love and support from this town, my hometown, has been immeasurable. Watching my daughter play on the same beach I grew up on? Those are feelings that can’t exactly be expressed.

Sure, Cayucos has changed. Some of the houses are bigger, Skippers is now Hidden Kitchen (and it’s amazing), but the heart of this town is still the same. It’s still home. Whether it’s our forever home or just for now, it’s the place we needed, and the place that welcomed us with open arms. So, thank you, Cayucos. Thank you for the early morning beach walks, the bonfires, the new friends, and the familiar faces. Thank you for giving my family the chance to begin again. I’d be remiss if I didn’t thank some of the people who make this town tick- The Fraziers, The Hamiltons, The Johnsons, The Joneses, Darci, Gale Force, the guy who helped me load packages in the rain, and the countless people who made us dinners and who continue to check in on us. Thank You.

David McAbee
A Family Starting Over

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

Poly Campus Dining
Honored with Two
Grand Prize Awards

Cal Poly Campus Dining joined college and university dining teams from across the country this month as they were recognized for excellence in student-centered food service, by the National Association of College & University Food Services (NACUFS).

Cal Poly was received two Grand Prizes during NACUFS’ 2025 Loyal E. Horton Dining Awards National Conference in Salt Lake City on July 11.

“This recognition is a testament to the commitment this team has to providing our students with best-in-class dining experiences and our constant evolution as a dining program,” said Andrea Burns, Cal Poly Partners’ associate executive director of Commercial Services. “It inspires us to continue to learn, grow and adapt with the changing dining trends and work to keep exceeding expectations.”

The grand prizes were for Innovative Dining Program of the Year and Outreach and Education Program of the year.

The Innovative Dining Program of the Year award encompassed Cal Poly Campus Dining as a whole. This included its more than 40 unique dining platforms, mobile food trucks, concessions and catering operations, as well as the 800 employees who help it run.

The program provides a blend of local favorites such as Jewel of India, Sequel Tea, Plant Ivy and Scout Coffee with national brands like Chick-fil-A, Starbucks, Panda Express and Einstein Bros. Bagels. Additional features — such as a dedicated on-site registered dietitian, an award-winning sustainability program and consistent community outreach endeavors — set the program apart.

The second grand prize, Outreach and Education Program of the Year, centered around the on-campus Self-Care Fair that Campus Dining hosted last December and created a space for students to relax and de-stress during final-exams week. Participants were invited to unwind with massage therapists, enjoy food and beverages and engage in interactive activities such as candle painting, a tea-making station and more.

Cal Poly was recognized alongside dining programs from Boston College, Duke University, University of Florida, University of Pittsburgh and the University of Texas.

Earlier in June Cal Poly earned four NACUFS awards,



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including gold for Innovative Dining Program of the Year and Outreach and Education Program of the year, silver for Renovation of the Year and an honorable mention for Residential Special Event of the Year.

The two gold awards led to this month's grand prizes. These results showcase the strides taken in modernizing the brand in recent years, as well as behind-the-scenes innovation and dedication to make Cal Poly Campus Dining one of the premier dining programs in the country.

Cal Poly Campus Dining is a program of Cal Poly Partners, the university's non-profit auxiliary and partner in campus services and enhancing the student experience.

To learn more about the NACUFS awards programs and view the full list of winners, visit www.NACUFS.org/Membership/Awards/Awards-Gallery-2025.

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Baywood Waterfront Comes Back to Life

This summer saw a return of community activity at our local waterfront gathering spot - the Baywood Pier.

On Monday, July 21, Festival Mozaic and the Baywood Navy collaborated on the beloved, annual traditional Boatzart Concert. The Monday afternoon concert featured the Festival Mozaic Brass Quintet, with top brass players from all corners of the country.

Approximately 350 music lovers came out with their lawn chairs and surrounded the pier as the ensemble played a variety of pieces, from classics to contemporary selections from "West Side Story." Many came by sea and watched the concert from their kayaks, canoes, and rowboats.

The concert had been a collaboration between the Baywood Navy and the Mozart Festival (now Festival Mozaic) since the mid



1990s. When the Festival parted ways with the Navy back in the early 2000s, Baywood Navy Admiral Stanley Stern took charge and kept the concert going. Unfortunately, Stanley passed away and so did the Boatzart concert, until Paul Irving approached Festival Mozaic Executive Director Lloyd Tanner about reviving it. Lloyd enthusiastically embraced the idea and for the second year of the collaboration, it looks like it's here to stay.

Keep an eye out for next year's show in July 2026.



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Pipeline Design Continued on page 1

Whale Rock Reservoir water. But, “Due to the raw water nature of Whale Rock, which would require new treatment facilities, the focus shifted to connecting with the Chorro Valley State Water pipeline — part of the State Water Project — which runs from San Luis Obispo to Morro Bay.”

The Chorro Valley Pipeline was built by SLO County’s Flood Control and Water Conservation District and is being paid for by water customers in Morro Bay. It delivers 1,300-acre feet a year of treated drinking water to Morro Bay’s Kings Street water storage tanks and distributed throughout the community to water customers.

Los Osos’ idea was to be able to bring in 200 AFY of water to offset groundwater pumping during wet winters.

“The conceptual strategy,” reads a report from LOCSD General Manager Ron Munds, “involves using supplemental water from the State Water Project during wet years for groundwater re-charge, allowing for long-term recovery of the Los Osos Groundwater Basin. During dry years, the District would rely more on groundwater.”

It would also be presumed that wet years means state water would be readily available and not have the State Department of Water Resources cut back deliveries, as it does in dry years.

“This approach enhances long-term resiliency, while avoiding overreliance on outside sources.”

The idea is to use state water when there’s ample rainfall and cut down on groundwater pumping, allowing that rain to soak into the ground and build up the underground aquifer.

The LOCSD’s contract engineering firm, The Wallace Group, studied the matter and produced a “technical memorandum” that included a preliminary design and cost estimates.

That design has a pipeline connecting to the Chorro Valley Pipeline somewhere near the end of South Bay Boulevard and Hwy 1 and snaking its way along South Bay to Los Osos where it would be added to the CSD’s water supply. The plan intends to use the treated drinking water to offset pumping.

With that document in hand the Board voted to move forward and notify SLO County that it wants a share of the SWP; and pursue negotiations for getting state water through the Central Coast Water Authority the coalition of agencies that oversees operations and maintenance of the Coastal Branch of the State Water Project.

That pipeline runs from a treatment plant at Polonio Pass (off Hwy 46 near the Kern County Line) and delivers it to agencies

down the coast all the way to Lake Cachuma in Santa Barbara County.

The Board also voted to move some \$80,000 around within the LOCSD’s coffers to pay for the next step — an environmental review.

In March 2023, the Board hired an environmental consultant, SWCA, to do an analysis and in September 2023, they issued findings that included just a checklist on impacts and mitigation. The so-called Negative-Declaration or Neg-Dec didn’t identify any environmental impacts that couldn’t be overcome through mitigation measures; and it was adopted by the board in December 2023.

The CSD isn’t alone in tapping the groundwater as there are two other private water purveyors Golden State Water, Co., and S&T Mutual Water and Munds said they’ve kept them both, as well as SLO County, in the loop on this effort.

“Staff have also engaged regularly with Golden State Water Company and S&T Mutual Water Company,” Minds said, “on cost sharing on design and construction of the project, and the County regarding state water transfer possibilities.”

Normally, water lines like this are only sized to deliver a certain amount of water, and in the CSD’s case 200 AFY, and if either of these entities wants to participate, they would have to say so upfront so the pipeline can be sized properly and to share costs.

All four agencies participate in the Basin Management Committee (BMC), a court-ordered effort to better manage the underground water basin.

Munds said the BMC received a grant from the State Water Resources Control Board under its “Recycled Water Facilities Planning Study” program in order to, “evaluate recycled water and supplemental supply alternatives to improve the sustainability of the Los Osos Groundwater Basin.”

As part of this grant, the BMC conducted a “transient groundwater model,” a study that looked at current water usage and factored in future needs brought on by several factors.

This transient model study considered things like extended droughts vs. high rainfall years, population growth, and further defined the underground rock layers.

Essentially, it gave the BMC new more comprehensive information on where the basin stands and how it might perform in the future. The new study was scrutinized by several pairs of eyes.

“The BMC,” Munds reported, “selected Cleath-Harris Geologists to prepare the Transient Model and GSI Water Solutions as a peer-review hydrogeologic consultants to oversee the construction and calibration of the Transient Model.

“In addition to GSI, the County of San Luis Obispo Groundwater Sustainability Department retained another hydrogeologic consultant team, Lynker and One-Water Hydrologic, to complete an additional peer review of the model.

“The peer review teams,” Munds continued, “determined that the Transient Model was constructed and calibrated within industry standards and suitable for application in evaluating anticipated effects on groundwater systems from various groundwater management strategies.”

The community sewer system built by the County was designed to recycle treated effluent by discharging it into a giant leach field on the hillside above Broderson Avenue, intending for the water to trickle down into the aquifer for recharging.

Most all new construction in Los Osos has been almost completely non-existent since 1988 when the Regional Water Quality Control Board issued its prohibition on new septic systems.

A cease and desist order was issued by the RWQCB in 1983 but the County ignored it and issued many building permits over the ensuing 5 years.

In 1988, the water board issued an outright prohibition on any new septic systems, effectively halting new construction in

town.

The water board’s prohibition was supposed to be lifted after the community sewer system went online in 2016, but then the issue of an adequate water supply rose up, though it had always been lurking in the shadows since the early 1990s when the County declared the groundwater basin to be in overdraft and in danger of seawater intrusion, a prophecy that has turned out to be pretty accurate.

The BMC’s work has focused on drilling new water wells located further away from the ocean and the area where seawater has been intruding.

The transient model used a baseline pumping rate of 1,839 AFY and looked at distribution of the wells that would be in use, using pumping data over five years (2019-23). It assumes pumping would continue for another 45 years.

Munds added, “The results of the Baseline Scenario indicate that pumping at current average rates and spatial distribution would cause seawater to intrude further into the Basin, which is an indication that current average pumping and distribution is not sustainable.”

The 1,830 AFY is substantially lower than the 2,380 AFY that had been predicted by a different study that was used by the County to justify loosening up of the hold on new construction building permits. Munds said they need to rectify the two.

“CHG,” he said, “will be using the Transient Model to develop an updated sustainable yield estimate for the Basin.”

Also, this new, new study will include “evaluating different recycled water and supplemental water supply alternatives to help improve the Basin’s sustainability. This work should be completed in the August/September timeframe.

“This portion of the study will provide broad cost estimates, which can inform future decisions for water supply development.”

Meanwhile, the LOCSD Board is pushing forward with its State Water Intertie Pipeline Project and issued the RFP for design work to “make the project shovel ready.”

Still in question is where the estimated \$8 million for the new pipeline will come from. Congressman Salud Carbajal had managed to get the allocation included in a giant funding bill at the tail end of the Biden Administration last year, but that was killed when the new Trump Administration came into office.

Munds told Estero Bay News that the Board voted 4-0, with Director Matthew Fourcroy absent, “to approve the RFP. The general consensus of the Board was that the CSD needed to take the lead in securing a long-term supplemental supply of water to ensure the future of the community.”

The engineer’s estimate for this design work is some \$630,000 and the vote gave Munds wiggle room to award a contract that is within 20% of that amount.

He said they already have a line on possible funding sources. “Staff have engaged with the Army Corp of Engineers regarding federal funding through Water Resource Development Act appropriations,” he said. “There may be an opportunity in 2027 Army Corp work plan for significant funding through their grant program. Additionally, Proposition 4, California’s climate bond, is going to be released later this year, and if the District is successful in obtaining funds, it will accelerate the project’s progress.”

Also, the other two water purveyors — Golden State Water and S&T Mutual — are interested in participating as well, and Munds said they are working on a framework to develop a partnership in the project.

Ironically, Los Osos was given the chance long ago to participate in both the State Water Project, as well as the Nacimiento Lake Water Project and bring in water from the outside. Neither option gained enough support for the Dist. 2 County Supervisor, Los Osos’ sole representative in government, to push for its inclusion.

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The huge outdoor patio at El Guero Taqueria and Distillery is perfect for large parties and family gatherings.



Long time coffee shop, Top Dog, has re-opened under new owner, Jesus Reyes, who also owns the Bay Deli sandwich shop, next door to Top Dog. Reyes said he’s changed little from the old coffee shop that had become a local favorite before closing last fall.

lease dating back to 2022, according to the legal notice. The papers claimed the bill had reached several thousand dollars and in Morro Bay, the garbage company is allowed by ordinance to tack unpaid garbage bills onto property taxes ensure payment. So, when a tenant doesn’t pay the garbage bill, it falls onto the property owners, as it does with the City’s water service bills.

That led to closure of the business that left the property sitting vacant for months.

‘When it closed,’ Reyes said, ‘I asked the owner what she was going to do with it — sell it or lease it again?’

At the time the owner was working on fixing up some things with the property, he explained, and ‘three weeks later, she called and offered me the place.’

On May 26, he said, after doing more work to the interior, they reopened Top Dog Café, changing the name slightly to give it a fresh start.

‘We’ve got the same menu as before,’ he said, ‘the same products.’

His goal was to bring back all the loyal customers that made Top Dog a success over the years. He said they are working on increasing the offerings adding some new things to try, like giving customers a choice of hot or cold/iced beverages.

‘We’ll be trying something new,’ Reyes said. Something else is coming back too, Top Dog’s beer garden. Reyes said he’s waiting on a beer and wine license to be finalized and is also planning to work on the backyard Zen Garden and its small stage for live music.

He’s also working on developing a weekend brunch menu to change things up even more.

Top Dog Café is open daily from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Taqueria El Guero

Part of a small local chain of Mexican Restaurants, Taqueria-Distillery El Guero recently opened on Morro Bay’s waterfront, 560 Embarcadero, in a spot that’s been vacant for a long time.

El Guero has four locations now in San Luis Obispo County — SLO, Grover Beach and Pismo Beach are the others. The chain specializes in authentic Mexican food — tacos, burritos, tortas, nachos and more. They also have several varieties of homemade non-alcoholic brews — watermelon, cucumber, pineapple.

The location boasts a huge outdoor patio with long family-style tables and plenty of room for a sizable party or large family gathering.

There’s a small indoor dining room as well for a more intimate setting, on those cold-foggy summer days.

Estero Bay News attempted to interview the owner, but he was unavailable before deadline. This reporter can attest to the food, as my wife Lorraine and I had lunch there the first

week they were open.

Both of us had the carnitas burritos, which were made a little differently than at other Mexican restaurants in town (of which there are many).

El Guero’s burritos are put together and then toasted, giving the tortillas a crispier texture that keeps them from getting soggy and falling apart, making for a messy meal. So, El Guero’s burritos were both delicious and tidy.

But beware the hot sauce, it is pretty spicy and creeps up on you. That could be why they served just a small container of it with the meal, which also came with some delicious, handmade nachos as a side.

El Guero is open Sundays-Thursdays, 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. and Fridays-Saturdays, 10-10.

With the opening, a very visible restaurant space on the Embarcadero is filled again after nearly two years of being empty. A rare space with its own parking lot, too.

Infused Thai Kitchen

If you’re in the mood for Thai food, there’s a new place in Morro Bay that offers Asian delicacies with a twist.

Infused — Thai Fusion Kitchen, located at 420 Quintana Rd., is a storefront restaurant that took over the former home of Nibble Nook Pizza, and most recently, The Flavor Factory.

‘We are a limited-service restaurant,’ reads a notice on the Visit Morro Bay website. ‘Serving up Thai-based dishes with influences from other Asian countries, as well as American.’

To order, you go up to the counter and the food is then brought to your table, of which there are plenty. Infused boasts a huge dining room that would be great for club meetings or family gatherings.

EBN tried to interview the owner, but he too was unavailable before deadline.

However, here too my wife and I have had lunch, and it was also very good. Though we’re not Thai food experts, we did enjoy the generous portions of chicken with our rice bowls, flavored with a nice mix of spicy and sweet. It was a healthy portion of food and made for a great lunch. The menu offers chicken, beef and pork as well as tofu dishes.

According to a Yelp review: ‘Everything we tried was flavorful and unique: Basil Burger, Curry Fried, Spicy Udon Stir-Fry, Beef Noodles, and Orange Chicken. The Milk Tea was the best I’ve had in my entire life. Restroom was very clean too. Highly recommend!’

Infused is closed on Mondays; open Tuesdays-Fridays, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., closed from 3-4 and reopening from 4-8 p.m. Saturdays-Sundays open noon-3 p.m., closed from 3-4:30 p.m. and reopening from 4:30-8 p.m.

Dine in or call (805) 225-1082 for takeout.

Student Holds Book Drive to Help Library

This summer, the Morro Bay Friends of the Library received an email from Holly Fuller (left), a student at Los Osos Middle School and a member of the Kiwanis Builders Club. Holly had organized a book drive to collect books to donate to the Morro Bay Friends Book Store.

After learning about the project, the Kiwanis Club collected donations from all of their members and raised \$165 to give to Holly in continued support of the library.

Holly met with the Friends President, Vickie Seymour (right), and Treasurer, Alaine Steuk, to present the check to Morro Bay Friends.



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More Than Meets the Eye

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Vet's Hall From page 1



ly-Operated, Prop. 68 Grant Program; \$1 million from the California State Budget Veterans Affairs; \$435,000 in donations from the Cayucos community; \$50,000 from the Dist. 2 Community Project Funds; and \$60,000 grant from the Community Business Improvement District.

And \$3.5 million from the County bond sale finished off the funding.

JG Contracting of Nipomo won the construction bid at \$8.5 million. Caffee said they still have some change orders to work out with the contractor but otherwise, the project remains on budget. But it's not on time; not by a mile.

Caffee said the target date for completion was February 2024, so the October 2025 official opening would put it a year-and-a-half behind schedule.

There were "a lot of components," with the job, she explained. Some of them are still being worked out. They also got set back a ways by the weather, especially the big storm of January 2023, when tons of debris — tree trunks and branches — washed up the beach and under the foundation, littering the job site.

"That was part of the reason why we raised the foundation," Caffee said.

The foundation work was about the biggest thing that had to be done for the whole project, as the building's historic status forced the County to follow State guidelines for restoring historic properties.

In order to rebuild the Vets Hall, the building was first gutted, down to the studs and rafters, then shored up and moved off the foundation, much as house movers do when moving historic homes.

New piles were driven into the sand and the building was eventually moved back on the new foundation in one piece.

The interior of the main hall, which is exactly the same square footage as before, seems cavernous, as the old hall had fabric draped along the rafters to bring the ceiling down and for soundproofing. That fabric is gone now and the interior is open through the rafters to the peaked roof.

Caffee said, "You can see the original rafters now. We added structural beams for added structural stability." It changed the acoustics of the building, as well.

Also, the new hall doesn't have a stage. Richardson said they took out the stage and put in massive sliding, glass, "barn" doors on the west side overlooking the beach, ocean and Cayucos Pier.

In the original building used by Capt. Cass, railroad tracks can be seen in historic photos exiting that side of the building and running out onto the pier. it used for off loading and loading goods from coastal steamships that used to call at the landing.

Caffee said they discovered parts of that old rail system when they moved the building off the old foundation.

There's also a wide porch that wraps almost all the way



around the building that is open to the public, a condition of approval put in place by the Coastal Commission.

The County awaits a final occupancy certificate that must come from the State Fire Marshal's Office. Once they get that, the building can begin to be leased out.

As for those rates, the County now has them posted online through County Parks' reservation system. They are not cheap, especially compared to what it used to cost to rent the hall.

Price (for 12-hours use) to rent the full facility, including the main hall, outdoor picnic and barbecue area, kitchen and Galley on a Saturday is \$9,744; \$7,692 for Fridays and Sundays; and \$5,183 for weekdays.

The County has partial day (8 hours) rental rates too: \$5,999 for Saturdays; \$4,765 Fridays and Sundays; and \$3,267 weekdays.

To rent the whole facility for just 1 hour is \$882 on Saturdays; \$701 on Fridays and Sundays; and \$480 weekdays. This rate holds for up to 8 hours before jumping up to the other rates.

Renting just the main hall for a full day (12 hours) runs \$5,600 for a Saturday; \$4,200 for Fridays and Sundays; and \$2,350 for weekdays.

And renting the new industrial kitchen runs \$1,494 for a full Saturday; \$1,295 for Fridays and Sundays; and \$1,195 for weekdays.

Here too there are rates for shorter intervals. One hour on a Saturday runs \$150 per hour; \$130 Fridays and Sundays; and \$120 weekdays.

These rates have some groups that used to use the hall regularly wondering if they can return.

John McGee the Cayucos Lions Club's Independence Day Parade Chairman said the club, which used to run the Vet's Hall for the County and met regularly there, has been using the Catholic Church since the Vet's Hall close in 2016. "It's been a healthy challenge," he said, "like any non-profit we're swimming hard for survival."

The Lions and Lioness Clubs both used the Vet's Hall for events that support the 4th of July Celebration, including holding Bingo games inside the main hall and throwing a barbecue in the picnic area on the 4th of July, both are big fundraisers for them. They've been unable to use them since it closed in 2016.

Many regular events moved down the street a couple of blocks to Cayucos School, which has a beautiful multi-purpose room and kitchen the school district makes available to the community.

"It would be a shame if we don't use it next year," McGee commented. They are cooperating with other non-profit groups in town to see if there's a way to bring down the costs for all of them. The Friends of the Vets Hall is what the County has set up so far and McGee said they are seeking other ways they lower the costs for using it.

And the Lions Club also contributed by taking away the

picnic benches that were out back, has refurbished them and will return them to the facility.

The County is confident, given the beauty of the facility and its location on the beach, they won't have problems renting it out.

They need \$275,000 a year just to cover the loan payments they must make to the County General Fund to cover the cost of the bonds.

The first event that will be held — a 150th Birthday Celebration of the founding of Cayucos — is being sponsored by the Chamber of Commerce.

That event is being finalized now but Alicia Van Fleet of the Chamber said it's going to be Sept. 19-21 and will have a dinner/dance, a street fair and on that Sunday a Champagne Social. Check the Chamber of Commerce's website for more details.

The County plans to hold a ribbon cutting and public unveiling on Aug. 25, Richardson said. That will give the public a chance to celebrate the finished project, and tour the facility, and will also mark the official start of the County taking reservations for the Vet's Hall. She said they anticipate starting rentals on Oct. 1.

Waldorf School From page 1



The Central Coast Waldorf School is the first one of its kind on the Central Coast. Pictured are Cassey Farrell, development coordinator; Kim Wishon, administrative director; Liza O'Sullivan, business manager; Teresa Beekman, 4/5 grade teacher; and Pratih Patel, board member. Photo by Theresa-Marie Wilson

rooms, we have art classes, so we have a handwork classes such as woodworking, sculpting, gardening, all kinds of things with our hands. It's a really interdisciplinary approach to education, not just focused on academics, but really the whole child."

Another distinction that might seem almost foreign these days is that the school is committed to screen-free learning during the school day, instead emphasizing human connection, nature immersion, and the development of imagination and curiosity. There are also no textbooks.

"It's all very live teaching and live learning," Wishon said. "The teacher really takes the concept or the idea that he or she is trying to bring and enlivens it. It's that love of the subject that transpires into the students, and then the students have a thirst for knowledge and a thirst for understanding the idea, and that gets lost sometimes on a screen."

Students are taught cursive writing and use pencil and paper for their individual essays, subject notes, or other writing projects. After assignments are graded, each child puts them in a creative Main Lesson Book that they make throughout the year.

"It's more of an artistic representation of their learning, rather than, 'Here, I finished this worksheet here, I'm done.' They really take time with processing the learning."

As far as more involved research projects go, students go to the library or use the internet at home, if they choose to. The Waldorf education is not anti-technology, just not as a mainstay of a classroom.

"It's everywhere else in the world," Wishon said. "So, we're

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Central Coast Waldorf School handwork teacher, Kyra Smith, starts a new lesson. Photo Submitted

trying to really focus on the human aspect of being in a group, socially together, and what that learning looks like.”

In that regard, eighth graders take part in a mentorship project where they each choose what they want to learn, which is often service related, and then find a community member to show them the ropes. An example is volunteering at a soup kitchen. The student works on the project throughout the school year and then presents it to classmates and parents.

Parental involvement is also part of the education. They are asked to volunteer 40 hours a year. That means showing up to performances when they can or helping in a classroom or attending back to school night.

“We just want people to come and be a part of the school and feel a part of the community,” Wishon said. “There’s also opportunities to chaperone on field trips and be a weekly volunteer, like a reading helper in the second grade.”

The school also offers physical education, a strings program for music, sports team that compete within the Coastal Valley Prep League, theater, as well as the standards like math, language arts, earth science, history and more.

Teachers traditionally earn a credential through the Waldorf program, although some are state certified. They also do professional development over the summer months and during February of the school year. Class size maxes out at 18 students with two teachers.

Wishon says the classroom size allows for more time with the teacher but also impacts a child’s social learning.

“The classrooms are so small, the children have to work things out,” she said. “There’s no, ‘I’m just going to avoid you.’ That’s not an option. “They really have to work things out with each other, which is pretty special.”

CCWS is a tuition-based school, and they do offer tuition assistance for those who need it. “Our board of directors works with families that really want this education for them [their children], and we’ve never turned anybody away,” Wishon said.

CCWS will host an Open House and Community Gathering on Saturday, August 2 from 10 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. The event is free and open to the public and will feature guided campus tours, student activities, local partner booths, food for purchase, and open play spaces for children and families to enjoy. Attendees are encouraged to bring a blanket and enjoy the relaxed picnic-style setting.

For more information about the Central Coast Waldorf School or to apply for your child to attend, go to centralcoastwaldorf.org.

Leased Approved From page 1

June 30, 2025. The so-called Mooring Area 1-4 has 26 mooring sites and is one of a handful of privately held mooring fields in the bay. The offshore moorings run from about Channel Marker 4 down to Marker 20 opposite the Inn at Morro Bay.

Though a private entity controls the sites and decides who gets to tie up on their balls, the annual payments to the City are based on the City’s fee schedule, according to Munson’s report. As such the rental rates are adjusted every five years according to the latest fee schedule, which the City raises most years. The City doesn’t have much invested in the offshore mooring areas.

“The leaseholder,” Munson said, “is responsible for the maintenance, billing and occupancy of the moorings. They also provide the amenity of dock space for mooring skiffs associated with their nearby land lease.

“The current agreement is beneficial to the City because there is only one leaseholder to conduct business with, rather than 26 separate mooring patrons.”

The MB Marina pays \$40,244 a year for the 26 sites and the Marina folks asked for a 16-year extension to match up with other leases they hold (the docks at Marina Square). But after meeting with the City the Harbor Department said “No.”

The term of the lease extension is just five years. That’s because the City plans to look at the configuration of all the moorings in the harbor.

“Since the City plans to evaluate its mooring designs in the bay soon,” Munson said, “the City preferred to have a shorter-term lease in case the new design changed the mooring field. Five years were determined to be sufficient to evaluate the design’s impacts while providing the leaseholder with enough time to enter into longer-term agreements with their mooring renters.”

Also, the rent will now go up more frequently. “The City has been considering evaluating fee increases beyond CPI (Consumer Price Index or the annual inflation rate),” Munson said, “the lease amendment was updated to ensure rent remains tied to the City’s fee schedule and is reestablished annually rather than every five years, allowing any increases beyond CPI increase to be captured.”

Resetting the rates every year is expected to help the Harbor Department find additional revenues, though it isn’t likely to be much. The department has for about a decade been trying to figure out ways to increase revenues into what is essentially an “enterprise fund,” meaning it is run more like a business than traditional government.

The Harbor Department is essentially a landlord for the State Lands Commission, which actually owns nearly all of the west side of the Embarcadero and the water areas in the Harbor from the entrance back to the State Fish & Wildlife’s wildlife area beginning off Windy Cove in Morro Bay State Park. That’s the area open to licensed hunters, who mainly hunt Brandt geese during a short and heavily regulated season in December.

The SLC leases the harbor area to the City, which established the Harbor Department and Harbor Fund to manage the various land and water leases.

Revenues are intended to be used to fund a harbor patrol; to administer the lease sites; and maintain public facilities.

The land on the east side of Embarcadero, with the exception of the Centennial Parkway (Giant Chessboard Park), is private property.

That’s because when the Army Corps of Engineers first dredge out the Harbor and established a Naval Training Base (where the power plant is now), it created the Embarcadero as it now exists.

Before the Naval Base was built, the Embarcadero was mostly a tidal mudflat, flooded twice a day with the high tides



Mooring A1-4 located off Marina Square on the Embarcadero is now under a five-year lease. Photo by Neil Farrell

and drained down to mud with the lows. That all changed in the 1930s when the ACOE built the causeway out to Morro Rock closing off the north entrance into the bay. That was part of the quarrying operations at the Rock.

Over several decades, some 1 million tons of rock was blasted away and hauled off to build jetties and other structures up and down the State, as well as redefine the Morro Bay Harbor.

Quarrying stopped after the City incorporated in 1964, the result of public outcry. All told an estimated one-third of the Rock’s mass was blasted away.

Some parts of the old mudflats were above the tideline and stayed high and dry, most notably the property that has Giovanni’s Fish Market & Galley and Stacks Wine Bar. And that is one of just two pieces of privately owned land on the entire west side of the Embarcadero; the power plant’s intake building being the other.

When the City was established in 1964, resolving the ownership of the west side of Embarcadero was a major undertaking, finally being settled around 1968.

The main bone of contention was that the private property owners on the east side who previously had access to the bay were now land locked. They laid claim to the new land created by the Army Corps of Engineers and brought a lawsuit against SLO County.

The City inherited the lawsuit when it incorporated and took control of the harbor and the tidelands leases.

The settlement established the “Pipkin Leases,” 50-year leases with very favorable terms granted to the parties in the lawsuit.

Over the years those Pipkin Leases have been phased out through re-development deals, with the final Pipkin Leases dying with the closure of the Morro Bay Aquarium and the Libertine Pub.

Now the Harbor Department is faced with some difficult funding issues as its modest budget is funded entirely through lease payments, slip rentals at City owned docks and moorings, all-day parking fees down at the public launch ramp, plus a few other minor sources.

It has been a City Council priority for over two decades to increase revenues to the harbor department, which is facing some serious costs to repair its aging and crumbling infrastructure — from seawalls and rip rap, to the T-piers, launch ramp and public restrooms.

Changing the CPI adjustments on things like Mooring Area A1-4 should help a little.

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