

Work Continues on MB Estuary Sea Level Rise Plan



Elevated view of the Morro Bay National Estuary with South Bay Boulevard traversing the photo along the bottom. The SLO Council of Governments is working on a plan to address troublesome areas of the only road directly connecting Morro Bay and Los Osos with predicted sea level rise in the future. Photo by SLOCOG

By Neil Farrell

A countywide transportation planning agency continues to work on a plan to address sea level rise due to climate change, and how it might affect the only road directly linking Morro Bay to Los Osos.

The San Luis Obispo Council of Governments (SLOCOG) is currently writing a so-called, “Morro Bay Estuary Climate Resilience Transportation Plan,” a Caltrans-funded effort led by ESA Science Associates to address sea level rise impacts, enhance transportation connections, and protect critical habitat between Morro Bay and Los Osos,” reads an article in SLOCOG’s monthly newsletter for August.

The effort recently produced a Vulnerability Analysis, a document that looked at at-risk transportation, recreational and natural assets “under high sea level rise projections,” the item said.

The standard being used for this study is 6.3 feet of sea level rise by the year 2100, according to the article, a figure produced by the California Ocean Protection Council, a State agency that’s been issuing reports on climate change and sea level rise since 2010.

Their 2024 report is “for state and local decision-makers to incorporate best available science on sea level rise into planning, design, permitting, investments, and other decisions. To support science based decision-making, this report consists of syntheses of the best available science on sea level rise and other coastal hazards [e.g., flooding and erosion] with pragmatic and practical approaches for using this new scientific information,” reads the OPC’s 2024 report’s introduction, “primarily led and authored by the Task Force, as well as specific policy recommendations for incorporating this information into decision-making led and authored by OPC.”

But while the OPC report pegs maximum sea level rise at 6.3 feet by 2100, NASA currently has it at just 0.14 inches a year or 3.6 millimeters, which by 2100 (75 years) would be some 10.5 inches, not 6.3 feet. So, the OPC figure is apparently a worst-case scenario.

Nevertheless, SLOCOG is pushing ahead with its climate change study and has focused on a couple of areas that would affect the Estero Bay communities, if the worries about sea level rise come true.

“The most vulnerable areas,” SLOCOG’s article said, “include sections of [Lower] State Park Road near Windy

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Assemblymember Addis Talks Fire Insurance and Redistricting



Assemblymember Dawn Addis with Adam Kay of the US Forrest Service at the fire base camp in Santa Margarita. Photo submitted.

By Theresa-Marie Wilson

Facing an almost yearlong wildfire season in California, some insurance companies are pulling the reins on safeguards leaving people underinsured or denying coverage entirely.

Estero Bay News sat down with State Assemblymember Dawn Addis to discuss homeowners’ insurance in the face of wildfires.

On August 12, during the Gifford Fire, Addis (D-Morro Bay) headed to the base camp at Santa Margarita Ranch to get up to the minute information from the numerous agencies involved in fighting the blaze, which as of press time was 95% contained and had burned 131, 000 acres in San Luis Obispo and Santa Barbara counties.

The following day, Addis held a virtual townhall meeting with California Insurance Commissioner Ricardo Lara, California Fire Marshal Daniel Berlant, and United Policyholders Executive Director Amy Bach. The discussion focused on the growing challenges in securing and maintaining homeowners’ insurance coverage amidst regulatory shifts that continue to reshape the insurance market across the state.

Addis is the sole California appointee to the National Conference of State Legislatures, advocating for disaster mitigation and response funds. The organization advocates for state rights against federal overreach.

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Baywood Lighted Boat Parade Returns



Photo by Danna Dykstra-Coy

The 4th Annual Baywood Lighted Boat Parade is back. On August 31, the community will gather for an evening of creativity, connection, and fun out on the bay. Come float, see friends, and enjoy some great live music by the Cimo Brothers, starting at 5 p.m. at the pier in

Baywood Park. Awards and prizes will be given as well the honoring of local luminaries, Joan Sullivan and Volumes of Pleasure Bookshop, for the lasting impacts they’ve had on our community.

“The Baywood Lighted Boat Parade is one of my all-time favorite events,” said Jes-

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Fee Hikes on Horizon

By Neil Farrell

Have you ever thought about building a house in Morro Bay? Ever wondered what the fees would be like?

The Community Development Director, Airlin Singewald responding to a question from a Council member, broke it down.

The response was part of the record for an item on the City Council’s Aug. 12 agenda that asked for approval of a new fee schedule for the City.

The Master Fee Schedule is the list of all the fees and

Fee Hikes Continued on page 20



Council Votes to Buy Morro Elementary; Famous Grad to Perform Benefit

By Neil Farrell

The Morro Bay City Council is interested in the old Morro Elementary School property after all, as the City Council unanimously voted to make an offer to the school district for the long-closed facility.

The San Luis Coastal Unified School District earlier this year declared Morro Elementary and Sunnyside School in Los Osos as surplus property and began the lengthy process of selling them. The District did so in response to a budget shortfall due to reduced property taxes from the Di-

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News

Levee Project Could Ease Flooding on Chorro Creek

By Neil Farrell

A new project to reroute an old levee in Chorro Valley could help ease flooding of Ag lands and help the City satisfy a lingering requirement of its Water Reclamation Facility (WRF) project.

The Coastal San Luis Resource Conservation District (RCD) is proposing the “Chorro Creek Floodplain Resilience Project,” using a piece of City-owned property on Chorro Creek Road, outside the City Limits in Chorro Valley.

“This project, reads a report from Public Works Director Greg Kwolek, “involves the City granting an easement on City property to CSLRCD in the Chorro Valley to protect the area around the property from flooding.”

Essentially, the RCD is asking for an easement over a nearly 5-acre ag-zoned parcel owned by the City and located near the confluence of San Bernardo and Chorro Creeks.

Kwolek told Estero Bay News that this involves one of several parcels the City owns in that area.

In the big storm of January 2023, the creeks overflowed an old levee that was built by the Army Corps of Engineers and flooded several properties in the area, including the Chorro Creek Ranch (formerly called Roandoak of God Commune).

The project is being designed and engineered by Stillwater Sciences of Morro Bay for the RCD.

In essence, the plan is to move the old levee and open up some three acres of the City’s property to help with stream flow when the creeks are running high. This would decrease the flooding for several properties in the area.

Stillwater’s Scott Smith, in a Technical Memorandum, said they conducted a simple desktop calculation and found that the effects of the improvements reduced floodwater elevations by 0.3 feet or more across approximately 45 acres of lands adjacent to the site, with some areas seeing up to 1.5 feet in floodwater elevation reductions.

Kwolek’s report pegged the damages from the January 2023 storm at an average of \$17,500 per acre in crop losses. The project “could reduce flooding on prime agricultural land by [about] 17.7 acres during a 10-year flood event, which could result in a potential savings of [about] \$300,000 for nearby agricultural users, assuming [about] \$17,000/Acre of crop losses.”

The property involved is zoned agriculture, but Kwolek said it’s currently vacant and no farming is being done on it.

The Technical Memo shows a couple of City-owned wells in the area, but those wells are no longer in use by the City. Though it once provided the majority of the City’s drinking water, the Chorro Valley wells are now largely retired, with the only well still in production located on Canet Road near Hwy 1.

As a bonus the City’s participation in this project could be used to satisfy a condition of approval left over from the Coastal Development Permit issued by the Coastal Commission for the City’s big WRF project.

The City was under a deadline of May 1 to notify the Commission on how it intended to satisfy the condition — officially, a Pilot Denitrifying Treatment System Project and the Rangeland Enhancement Activities.

The Coastal Commission said they could replace those two things with the RCD’s project and satisfy the conditions.

The WRF was built on rangeland above the terminus of South Bay Boulevard at Hwy 1. The location, outside the City Limits was chosen to satisfy a Coastal Commission requirement to move the City’s new treatment plant away from the Coast to avoid coastal hazards. But it seems, the agriculture-zoned location gave rise to concerns.

In a letter to the City dated May 4, Coastal Planner Sarah MacGregor wrote, “This appears to be a beneficial project that will provide valuable flood protection to

nearby agricultural land. The City can submit a revised Agricultural Mitigation Program, which replaces the denitrifying system and rangeland enhancement projects with the flood protection easement project, and we will provide approval of the updated mitigation program.”

And perhaps best of all for the City, RCD is paying for this. “The proposed project,” Kwolek said, “has far greater benefits than the two requested to be replaced, and it leverages up to \$6 million in outside funding.”

Kwolek said the City would still have some costs associated with the project. “We’d have some costs related to property value analysis for the City Council,” he said, “as well as some costs related to developing an agreement with the CSLRCD. That’s all that’s anticipated at this point. There may be other unanticipated items that will come up.”

In his report, he said the two projects that would be replaced would cost about \$200,000 and noted that the Coastal Commission still must sign off on the change.

And though it doesn’t directly address flooding that happened at South Bay Boulevard and Quintana Road, during that same 2023 storm, it should help.

“It is expected to lower floodwaters by half a foot in that area,” he said.

It’s the latest tinkering of the Chorro Valley’s creeks and farmlands that goes back many decades, as various berms have been built and creeks redirected to open up the rich soils to farming.

About 30 years ago, the RCD built the Chorro Flats Project removing an old berm that redirected Chorro Creek and drained the flats at South Bay and Quintana for farming.

That project included a new berm closer to Quintana and dug a new channel lined in willows that wound through the flats and created in essence a silt trap designed to spread out floodwaters and slow down high flows. This would settle out silt that was rapidly filling in the estuary and had built up under the old Twin Bridges on South Bay, causing them to flood and close off South Bay with most heavy rains.

The new Chorro Creek Bridge was completed at about the same time as the Chorro Flats Project.

The 2023 storm event is believed to be the first time South Bay had flooded since the bridge was replaced. And the flooding at South Bay and Quintana was something new as well.

County Staffing Up for Special Election



By Neil Farrell

As Gov. Gavin Newsom wages his war against Texas’ efforts to re-draw its Congressional Districts and add more Republican seats to its House Delegation, and prepares to ask California voters to change the Constitution here so they can counter Texas, the County Elections Office is gearing up to staff up with election poll workers, in case there’s a special election in November.

The San Luis Obispo County Elections Office recently celebrated “National Poll Workers Recruitment Day” on Aug. 12.

“Launched in 2020,” reads a news release from the County, “this initiative seeks to address poll worker needs across the country, promote civic participation and volunteerism, and ensure safe, secure, accurate, and accessible

elections.”

This year’s celebration took on special importance as the Elections Office prepares for a potential special election, which would happen on Tuesday, Nov. 4.

But of course, with a politically charged issue like redrawing boundaries in an off year, there’s a fight brewing in Sacramento, as at least one lawsuit has been filed against Newsom’s redistricting scheme, and Republicans in the Legislature have asked the U.S. Attorney General’s Office to investigate the matter, calling it Unconstitutional.

California voters in 2008, established a Citizens Redistricting Commission that is supposed to redraw Congressional, State Assembly and Senate Legislative and State Board of Equalization Districts after the U.S. Census is published, which was last taken in 2020. This was intended to remove the specter of gerrymandering from the process and produce fair district maps.

“The Commission must draw the district lines in conformity with strict, nonpartisan rules,” according to the Commission’s website, “designed to create districts of relatively equal population that will provide fair representation for all Californians.”

For the Governor and Democrats in the Legislature to install new Congressional maps, which they themselves drew, they must get a majority of voters to rewrite the State Constitution and in essence overturn that vote from 2008 (see: wedrawthelines.ca.gov for more information on the Commission).

And since 2025 is a non-election year, that means calling a special election, which reports have pegged as costing some \$200 million.

And if the redistricting effort succeeds, it would take effect for the 2026 June Primary and November General Elections. However, initial maps that have been released online show no changes to SLO County’s District lines.

In any event the Clerk-Recorder is getting her poll workers ready, just in case.

“Election workers play a vital role in helping run our local elections every time,” SLO County Clerk-Recorder Elaina Cano said. “While we are already hard at work preparing for the June 2, 2026, Primary Election, we’re now



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looking at the prospect of a Nov. 4 Special Election. That means we must move extremely quickly to recruit and train community members willing to be on call and staff the polls if the governor does indeed call the special election.”

Cano said that they should know by Aug. 22 if there will be a special election in November (after Estero Bay News’ deadline).

Poll workers are vital cogs in the election machinery. They are in charge of everything from setting up polling places and greeting voters to verifying voter registrations and issuing ballots.

“They are also able to help explain how the voting process works by demonstrating the use of voting equipment and detailing voting procedures,” the County said.

“Poll workers further play a vital role in maintaining election accessibility, whether this means translating for a voter who speaks another language or helping those with disabilities. Local election authorities oversee election staff and poll workers, including providing training before Election Day,” the County said.

If readers are interested in applying to become a poll worker in SLO County, go to: SloVote.com/pollworkers.

And even if you don’t want to become a poll worker, be sure to vote.

Vistra Responds to EPA Agreement

By Neil Farrell

Vistra, the company that owns the Morro Bay and Moss Landing Power Plants, has issued a statement regarding their efforts to clean up the ruins of its Moss Landing battery storage plant that caught fire and was destroyed last January.

Last issue, Estero Bay News reported on Vistra and the EPA reaching agreement on the clean up of the destroyed Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) facility at Moss Landing and had sought comment from Vistra. But the company did not get back to us before deadline.

Since then, we did receive an email from Vistra regarding the EPA agreement and are reporting on it now.

Jenny Lyon, the senior manager for Communications & Media Relations said, “We’re pleased to have an agreement with [EPA] finalized, as it facilitates battery removal and other important cleanup operations at the Moss Landing site.

“The agreement formalizes the careful preparation and planning that have been underway for the past several months and prioritizes worker safety, community needs, and environmental protection. This will also advance the ongoing incident investigation as access to damaged parts of the building is secured.”

Lyon added that Vistra is happy with how things have gone, so far. “We appreciate the hard work, expertise, and professional collaboration of the U.S. EPA, the County of Monterey, and many other state and local partners. “

They planned to get started on the clean up right away. “In the coming days,” Lyon said, “we will move from the planning and preparation phase to the work execution phase. Initial activities will focus on stabilizing the Moss 300 building and removing batteries.”

The agreement with EPA lays out all the procedures they must follow, including extensive monitoring and proper disposal of the burned up batteries at a certified toxic waste disposal site.

Vistra’s 300 megawatt BESS at Moss Landing caught fire last Jan. 16 and destroyed the majority of a large building that housed the batteries. A second BESS plant adjacent to the one that caught fire was not damaged.

The surrounding communities of Moss Landing harbor and parts of Castroville were evacuated as a toxic plume of smoke rose thousands of feet into the air.

All the local fire departments responded to the scene but ultimately allowed the fire to burn itself out, which took a couple of days, and the fire smoldered for days afterwards. Fighting lithium-ion battery fires such as this one requires special equipment and using foam vs. water. Pouring water on a battery fire actually makes it worse.

The fire’s aftermath has raised alarm bells across the State and shifted attitudes towards these large battery facilities, which are a key element in the State’s push towards zero emissions power generation and so-called green energy sources, namely solar and wind power, being located close to populated areas.

Battery plants are needed to even out the supply-demand quotient of these renewable energy sources, as the timing of generating capacity and demand for power do not always line up. So battery plants are needed to store excess energy when the solar and wind plants produce it and then feed it back into the power grid when supply drops off, like after sunset in the case of solar power.

Vistra had proposed building a 600 MW BESS at its Morro Bay Power Plant but withdrew its project from City review last Fall just before Morro Bay voters were to decide on an initiative, Measure A-24, that affected the zoning of the Morro Bay Power Plant property.

Drafted by an anti-BESS citizen’s group, Meas. A-24, which easily passed in November, requires voter approval before the City can change the zoning on the waterfront from Beach Street north to Morro Rock, including the power plant property.

In it’s letter asking the City to “pause” review of the BESS, Vistra had indicated it planned to apply for a permit through the California Energy Commission under a 2022 law, AB 205 that allows projects like the BESS to bypass local jurisdictions and have the CEC do the permitting. Two

other State agencies — the Coastal Commission and State Lands Commission — would also play a part in permitting under AB 205.

However, Vistra has yet to apply to the CEC and so its project sits in limbo, officially withdrawn from City consideration but not moving forward with the CEC.

Lyon also commented on an EBN request regarding a meeting with the City Council’s Power Plant Subcommittee that was scheduled for Aug. 20. “Regarding the meetings you referenced in Morro Bay: there is nothing new to report — these are just normal course of business for Vistra.

“We value regular touch points with local leaders and stakeholders and make it a point to stay in close communication in the communities where we operate or may operate in the future. When there’s a meaningful update on the Morro Bay project, we’ll be sure to keep the community and local media informed.”

The company is also posting updates on the Moss Landing cleanup as well. “Vistra will continue to update the public at: www.mosslandingresponse.com and, together with our partners at U.S. EPA and Monterey County, in other forums as work progresses.”

Working ‘Round the Clock on Regent’s Slide



Overhead photo shows the massive Regents Slide scar on Hwy 1. The hillside above the roadway slipped out in January 2024 and obliterated the highway. Caltrans has been working since then to stabilize the slide and eventually rebuild the roadway. Photo courtesy Caltrans

By Neil Farrell

Work continues ‘round the clock on a massive landslide on Hwy 1 north of San Luis Obispo County that has cut off the scenic highway for over a year-and-a-half now.

“Repairs at Regent’s Slide,” reads a news release from Caltrans Dist. 5 in SLO, “which closed Highway 1 on Feb.

Regent’s Slide Continued on page 4

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9, 2024, continue to advance with slope stabilization efforts contributing to sustained excavation activity.”

Caltrans has been working around the clock doing excavation work at Regent’s Slide since mid-July, now that key stabilization devices have been installed to help stabilize the slide that has continued to move since the first big slip.

The work has continued, “in part due to the effectiveness of the installation of thousands of shear dowels. Averaging 60-feet in length, these steel bars are being drilled and grouted into the cut slope above the active work area.”

Called “shear dowels,” or tiebacks, the rods are drilled into bedrock below the loose soils of the slide and installed under stress to hold the mountain together. Caltrans has already installed some 3,500 of the dowels with 1,500 installed since mid-July.

“As the top-down excavation advances,” the news release said, “crews will continue to install shear dowels in the cut slope behind them, providing immediate and long-term reinforcement of the slope.”

The work is now being done with both manned and unmanned, remote-controlled pieces of heavy equipment.

“The remote-controlled equipment, including two large bulldozers and one excavator, remain an integral component to the advancement of excavation and removal of slide material. Even as seasonal patchy coastal fog has intermittently cut into full production, crews continue to work seven days a week and extended hours on these repair efforts.”

Having mild winters the past two years has no doubt also helped keep the job going.

The agency said it plans to announce a reopening date for the slide area sometime in mid-September. Until then much of the Big Sur highway is open to travelers from both the north and Monterey County, and the south in SLO County. However, one cannot drive all the way through as Regents Slide is closed to all traffic.

“Visitors can access more than 100 miles of Highway 1 between Cambria and Carmel, except for the 6.8-mile segment, 1-mile south of the Esalen Institute to 2-miles north of Lucia.”

If readers want to go to Carmel or Monterey, they must use Hwy 101 North and cross over to the coast through Salinas (using Spreckles Road).

And, Caltrans has also been doing emergency repairs to a key seawall that protects a major bridge on Hwy 1, including a full overnight closure on Aug. 24, with more to come.

The repairs were made to the sea wall at Rocky Creek, some 12 miles south of Carmel, to protect the repairs from a March 2024 slip out that were just completed in June. A significant chunk of the roadway just south of Rocky Creek Bridge broke loose and slipped some 1500 feet down to the sea. A large chunk of wall went with it and Caltrans constructed a viaduct repair and got the road reopened in just over a year.

“This work is part of an ongoing emergency project aimed at reinforcing the seawall that protects the south end of the Rocky Creek Bridge and the slope beneath the recently constructed viaduct. The repairs will enhance the

seawall’s resilience against wave action and prevent further erosion, ensuring the long-term stability of this vital coastal route,” Caltrans said in another news release.

The repair involved using a giant crane that spanned both lanes of the highway and thus required all traffic to be halted. It won’t be the only time they close the roadway at this location.

“As Caltrans continues the emergency project in the coming months, additional lane and road closures will also be expected along Highway 1 in the Rocky Creek area.

“These closures are necessary to ensure that the work is completed safely and effectively. Advance notice will be provided to the public prior to each closure.”

Road information and updates can be found on Caltrans District 5’s Social Media platforms: X/Twitter at: @CaltransD5; on Facebook at: Caltrans Central Coast (District 5); and Instagram at: Caltrans_D5.

Though Not Yet Hired, City Manager Got a Raise

By Neil Farrell

Though the search for a new, permanent city manager in Morro Bay continues, whoever eventually gets the job has already gotten a potential raise.

The City Council on Aug. 12 approved re-setting the salary range for the next city manager, adding a significant amount to the top end of the salary scale under which the new person will be hired.

The Council had previously in closed session told the administration to rewrite the salary schedule for its top official adding \$20,000 a year to the top level of the scale.

“This adjustment,” said Human Resources/Risk Manager, Rachael Hendricks, “was intended to bring Morro Bay’s compensation for this position more in line with comparable local agencies.”

She noted that the previous top end of \$245,000 a year was 12% “below the County average and 8% below comparable cities such as Arroyo Grande, Grover Beach, and Pismo Beach. Council expressed a desire to remain competitive as the City moves forward with the recruitment of the next city manager, ensuring the ability to attract and retain high-caliber candidates.”

The Council also amended the 2025-26 salary schedule for its employees. The new scale for the city manager runs from a low of \$212,000 on Step 1, to a high of \$265,000. This number does not include the City’s compliment of benefits — insurance, retirement, car allowance, etc.

The city manager’s duties include, “implementing Council policy, overseeing all City operations, managing the City’s budget, and leading the executive management team.”

Hendricks said salary is a key factor in recruitment of top officials. “Given the competitive nature of executive recruitment,” she said, “particularly for City Manager positions, compensation is a critical factor in attracting a broad and qualified pool of applicants. By increasing the top step by \$20,000, Morro Bay will be better positioned to

compete with nearby cities and the wider market.”

The City Council hired Executive Recruiter, Roberta Greathouse of Peckham and McKenney to lead the search for a new full-time manager.

Currently, the City has an interim city manager, Andrea Lueker, a former long-time City employee and city manager now retired as its interim CM.

Under the retirement system rules, Lueker is on a limited contract that must end after she puts in some 960 hours, or around the end of the year. Hendricks pointed out that the Council did not have to make any adjustments to the budget because Lueker’s \$118 an hour salary (max of \$113,000), does not pay any benefits, so the City is saving some money in that regard.

Lueker was brought in after the City Council fired the former city manager, Yvonne Kimball, on June 24, for reasons that have not been revealed by the Council members. The vote was 3-2.

Though the top end of the salary range was increased significantly, how much it actually costs the City will depend on the salary level that a new hired is brought in at. Normally that’s Step 3, to leave room for raises given good performance.

The Council got at least one criticism from the public on the salary increase. Former Councilwoman and council critic, Betty Winholtz, sent her objections to the Council, and said, “I object to the City of Morro Bay being compared to Paso Robles, Atascadero, SLO and SLO County. These government agencies have larger populations and greater incorporated land. The comparison is flawed.”

She added, “Morro Bay should be compared to Grover Beach and Pismo Beach because we are more closely aligned with population, coastal geography, geographical size, and tourism emphasis. If a third city is required, then the choice should be Oceano. It is these smaller populations that must bear these increasing costs.”

It should be noted that while Paso Robles, SLO and Atascadero were not mentioned by name, they were likely included when the City calculated the county average salary for top executives.

And Oceano is not an incorporated city but rather is under a Community Services District, which has limited authority.

Police Warn of New Scam

Morro Bay Police are warning the public about a scam that’s been going around involving impersonation, fear, and cash.

In this scam, police said in a Facebook post, “Scammers pose as trusted entities — banks, government agencies [like the IRS or Social Security,] tech support, or even law enforcement.

“They create a sense of urgency, claiming your money is at risk or you’re under investigation.”

The first red flag comes with instructions. “You’re instructed to go to your bank or ATM and withdraw large sums of cash,” MBPD said. “They tell you not to tell the bank why you’re withdrawing the money — a major red

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Estero Bay News Briefs

By Theresa-Marie Wilson

CCSPA’s 6th Annual Butterfly Ball

The Central Coast State Parks Association (CCSPA) will host its 6th Annual Butterfly Ball “Moonlight, Wings, and Wild Things” on September 27, from 4 – 8 p.m. at the Octagon Barn, 4400 Octagon Way, San Luis Obispo.

The event celebrates San Luis Obispo County’s conservation community by recognizing seven inspiring young leaders and two longtime champions of environmental stewardship. The Young Leader in Conservation Award, now in its second year, honors individuals under 30 who have made significant contributions to environmental education, advocacy, and conservation in SLO County. This year’s honorees represent organizations ranging from State Parks to local nonprofits, each bringing creativity, passion, and innovation to their work.

In addition to uplifting emerging voices, CCSPA will also present the John Laird Lifetime Achievement Award and the Metamorphosis Award to two local conservation legends, both of whom will be revealed during the event. These awards recognize individuals whose decades-long dedication to protecting California’s natural and cultural resources has paved the way for the next generation of environmental leaders.

The 2025 Young Leader in Conservation Awardees are: Liam McInerney, Park Interpretive Specialist, State Parks (Oceano Dunes District); Brooklynn Ramos, Senior Park Aide, State Parks SLO Coast District; Marly Miller, Garden Educator, One Cool Earth; Ava Curtis, College Corps Fellow, SLO Climate Coalition; Shayla Zink, Operations Coordinator, The Marine Mammal Center; Kate Ditrani, Regenerative Farming Intern, SLO City Farm; and Lexi Mitchell, Volunteer Coordinator, Central Coast Aquarium.

Tickets and more information are at [\[parks.org/butterfly-ball\]\(http://parks.org/butterfly-ball\). Tickets are \\$125 per ticket through August 31 or \\$150 per ticket after that. Proceeds from the Butterfly Ball support CCSPA’s mission to inspire stewardship, support, and connection for State Parks in San Luis Obispo County. Funds raised will benefit projects including western monarch conservation, youth and community education, cultural and natural resource restoration, and advocacy for the protection of the Central Coast’s wild and scenic places](http://centralcoast-</p></div><div data-bbox=)

Pacific Wildlife Care Begins Construction on New Facility



Pacific Wildlife Care Executive Director, Kristin Howland, jumps for joy as construction begins at the new site in San Luis Obispo.

Construction has officially begun on the Kim and Derrel Ridenour Wildlife Rehabilitation Center in San Luis Obispo.

After more than five years of planning, the nonprofit is one step closer to their permanent home.

Phase I includes:

- A main building with treatment areas and staff/volunteer spaces
 - Specialized animal enclosures, pools, and flight aviaries
 - Necessary site improvements and solar power infrastructure
- Construction is expected to take about 15 months. Until then, the organization will continue caring for patients at the Morro Bay facility.
- “This is a historic moment for Pacific Wildlife Care, and we couldn’t have done it without you! Your support remains vital — every gift helps us meet rising costs and move into our new home ready to care for wildlife for generations to come,” said Pacific Wildlife Care Executive Director, Kristin Howland.
- Readers wanting to donate, should go to bit.ly/4msc-qP6.

Cayucos Elementary New Play Structure Ready for New School Year

Cayucos Elementary School has completed the construction of a new, state-of-the-art play structure on the school’s campus, almost entirely funded through generous community donations. The Cayucos community — highlighted by gifts from the Rotary Club of Cayucos, Cayucos Education Foundation (CEF), Cayucos PTA, the Held Family, the Cayucos Turkey Trot, and contributions from the Hartzell and O’Shea families — has made this long-awaited project possible. The Cayucos Elementary School Board of Education unanimously approved the project earlier this year.

“The generosity of the Cayucos community is simply inspiring,” Superintendent Jen Gaviola said. “This

News Briefs Continued on page 8

DOM'S DAY

MEMORIAL SKATE JAM

In Memory of Dominic Lencioni

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 7th
10am-3pm @ Nipomo Skatepark

BEST TRICK CONTEST & POOL JAM
(11:00am-12:00pm)

BBQ LUNCH
Bottled Water Provided
(12:00pm-1:30pm)

LIVE MUSIC BY GYPSI
(2:00pm-3:00pm)

RAFFLE PRIZES

\$20 DONATION
Includes BBQ Lunch

BE MORE LIKE DOM

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Can't make the event? You can donate directly at www.SkateCambria.com
Please mention Dominic Lencioni in the notes

JORDANO'S 110th ANNIVERSARY
1915-2025

gumbies

Solvang

POWELL PERALTA

NEWLINE SKATEPARKS

CONVERSE

flag.”

The crooks then step in to relieve you of your money. “They arrange for someone to come to your home or a public location to pick up the cash,” Police said, “claiming it’s for safekeeping, verification, or evidence.”

This scam has a lot of things wrong with it that Police want people to recognize and understand.

“Important Facts to Remember:

- No legitimate organization will ever send someone to your home to collect cash.
- Banks and government agencies will never ask you to lie or keep secrets about your transactions.
- Tech support will never ask for payment in cash, gift cards, or crypto currency.”

They recommend several things to avoid these scams.

What You Should Do:

- Hang up or delete the message if something feels off.
- Call your bank or the agency directly using official contact numbers — never the number they give you.
- Report the scam to the FTC at: reportfraud.ftc.gov or your local law enforcement.

Police ask that you talk to elderly family, friends and neighbors, as they are often the target for these types of crimes.

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Community

On Assignment — Morro Bay Octogenarian Brings Home Gold



Caption James Zuur showing his medals he won at the U.S. Master's Nationals. Photo submitted
By Judy Salamacha

Happy Birthday to Morro Bay resident James Zuur. On August 18 he turned 85. How did he celebrate? Sporting a blue, silver and bronze medals, he was still celebrating his swimming performance after competing in the U.S. Master's Nationals in Federal Way, WA near Seattle.

"I brought home four gold medals, one silver and two bronze," he said. "Two of the golds were in individual events and two were for our team's 320 Relays. My silver and bronze medals were in Individual events."

At the National meet, there were 1100 swimmers in competition and 216 teams from all over the U.S. with a couple of teams from other countries. James believes he is lucky to be on a great team. "In the Men's division, we had four men swimming in competition and placed third out of 130 clubs. As a combined team (men and women), we placed seventh overall in the local section of clubs out of 182."

Age has not stopped James from keeping active and engaged. As I write to share his story, I am confident he's doing his laps at one of SLO County's swimming pools practicing for his next competition! He said, "As a senior, I feel that the most important thing for us to do is to keep moving! I think this is what has kept me from getting old, stiff, and cranky."

To keeping enjoying our later years, he highly recommends some kind of exercise every day. Swimming became his preferred daily routine. "I started swimming again 40 years after competing for the U.S. Air Force team serving in the Philippines." James recalled, "My last meet was the Pacific Air Force Championships in Tokyo."

Is James onto to something the rest of us should know? According to an article published in National Geographic by Daryl Austin in 2024, "Americans make more than 300 million recreational swimming visits a year, resulting in swimming being the fourth most popular recreational activity in the country...Swimming provides an array of specific benefits such as improved cardiovascular and respiratory fitness, improved muscle strength and endurance, improved lean body mass, lower risk of traumatic injuries such as occurs during high-impact activities, and improved mental health and well-being," says Mitch Lomax, a pulmonologist and exercise physiologist at the University of Portsmouth in the United Kingdom. The sport has the added advantage of being available to people of all ages and among those with physical limitations."

Today swimming competitively is Jame's passion. He purposefully swims to stay mobile and healthy. "It was forty years later I started swimming again competitively. In the National Senior Games anyone over 50 could compete. After a couple of fun years, I've been able to move up to the next level – the U.S. Master's competition."

He regularly trains at the Morro Bay High School pool or Kennedy pool in Atascadero. However, while getting ready for the Nationals he needed to train to swim for Long Course Meters, "I trained at SLO's Sinsheimer pool. It is the only one in our area that uses their 50-meter course."

James was inspired to start racing again once he took a breaststroke workshop with a former coach, Cokie Lipinski. "She changed my life. She had been a 911 operator and hostage negotiator for Marin County, also a U.S. Master's National breaststroke champion and coach." While still living in Marin County, he "joined her team, the Marin Pirates, and remained there until she moved to Arizona and disbanded the team. Then one of my teammates – one who formerly swam for Yale that I had introduced to the Pirates, was recruited to swim on another team, the Tamalpais Aquatic Masters. I feel extremely lucky to now swim for this team. We are coached by Marie McSweeney. A couple of my teammates are already in the International Swimming Hall of Fame in Florida as champion U.S. Master swimmers with multiple World Records."

Swimming has also allowed for James and his wife, Mary Ellen, to travel. "I have been to three FINA World Swimming competitions – one in Italy, one in Montreal and one in Budapest. Because of my age, I was able to swim as a member of our Relays there. In Montreal, we had two golds and one silver metal in our relays. In Budapest, we brought home two bronze metals."

Mary Ellen has been swimming with James three days a week. "Not competitively. It is our thing to keep us moving and healthy." He would love to see a few more Morro Bay senior residents joining him at the pool for a few beneficial laps.

Skate Cambria Reaches Final Fundraising Goal



Team Skate Cambria members, plus Cayucos skate business owner Jeff Smith, hold an iconic check representing contingency funds raised for the Cambria Skateboard Park. (L to R) Robby Hargreaves, Juli Amodei, Chelsea Foster, Jeff Smith, Shara Tatham, Reb Botelho, David Amodei.

By Keith & Connie Pendleton

Skate Cambria Project Manager Juli Amodei made a huge announcement their Camp Ocean Pines fundraiser held August 10. The organization has successfully completed the final leg, securing \$329,000 for the contingency fund required by the Cambria Community Services District (CCSD), to build a skate park.

More than 40 fundraising events have taken place Since March 2020 to provide financing for the skate park to be built next to the Cambria Branch, San Luis Obispo County Library, on Main Street in West Village.

The Ocean Pines fundraiser was coordinated with the Cambria Film Festival and included a hamburger/hot dog BBQ, a silent auction, screening of two skate films and prize giveaways.

After Cyrus Latham, a 14-year-old boy in the spring of 2020, knocked on the door of the CCSD office to find out why the skatepark was torn down, an energized group banded together and formed the fundraising program, Skate Cambria. They organized with a youth-run board of directors and a core group of adults anchored by a strong mission to rebuild the park. With plans to build a long-lasting concrete structure, they obtained 3,000 signatures and proceeded to raise thousands of dollars in donations from Cambrians and visitors.

The skateboard park project will go out to bid when the CCSD substantiates the money currently held in trust by the Cambria Community Council.

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8 AM - 1 PM

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Amodei said separate contingency funds have been set aside for park maintenance and legal issues. Other funds have already been spent on pre-construction, permitting, archaeological studies and design. Skate Cambria hopes there can be a meeting, before their next scheduled September 11 CCSD meeting, to discuss only the skateboard park as the clock is running out on the \$600,000 California Parks matching Grant. That funding grant was identified by Skate Cambria and diligently processed and procured by CCSD staff.

The CCSD has overseen water supply, fire department, facilities and resources including parks and recreation since 1976. They have worked with Skate Cambria from the beginning on the project.

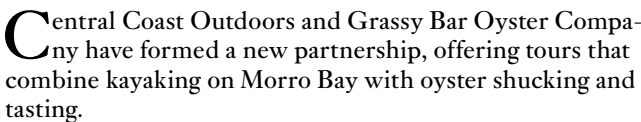
The Cambria Community Council (CCC), a non-profit 501-C3 organization, has been a resource for community transportation and support of non-profit organizations in the Cambria and San Simeon communities since 1947. Their assistance in the skateboard project includes investment of the funds raised to the tune of over \$30,000 return on investment, according to Amodei. The community responded with hearty applause when their material and morale contributions were highlighted at the Ocean Pines fundraiser.

Many California skateboard parks officials and related businesses have made profound contributions to the effort including and especially families of skateboarders and area businesses. The website Skate4concrete highlights some of the vision and energy that comes out of skateboarding culture.

By Theresa- Marie Wilson

Join families from across the county for the annual Family Fun Fair! The Los Osos Rotary event takes place on Grandparents Day, Sunday, September 7 from 12 - 4 p.m. at the South Bay Community Center at Park (2180 Palisades Ave, Los Osos).

New Oyster Experience



tional Estuary by kayak. Once there, trained Central Coast Outdoors guide(s) explain in detail how the oyster farm works and answer questions about the operation. Back at the kayak docks, a Grassy Bar Oyster Company staff member gives an oyster shucking lesson and answers further questions about oystering on Morro Bay. Each participant gets six oysters to shuck themselves. Fun dipping sauces are also included.

According to John Flaherty, co-owner of Central Coast Outdoors, people have been asking for years to do kayak tours of oyster farm area on Morro Bay. “We used to organize these tours on an ad hoc basis, but now we are fortunate enough to collaborate much more closely with Grassy Bar Oyster Company and run specific tours that offer actual oyster tasting as part of the Experience,” he said.

Central Coast Outdoors has been running guided kayak tours on Morro Bay since 2003 and is the top-rated Outdoor Activity in Morro Bay, according to Tripadvisor. Grassy Bar has been raising premium oysters in Morro Bay since 2009.

Upcoming 2025 dates for the tour are September 12 and October 11. The price is

\$95 per person and includes all kayak gear and six oysters. Plans are in the works to offer a version the tours on demand as a private tour as well.

Reservations and a more detailed explanation of the tour can be found on Central Coast Outdoors website at <http://bit.ly/45uh2OX>. Grassy Bar Oyster Company's website is grassybaroyster.com/

For more information, contact John Flaherty at john@centralcoastoutdoors.com.

Did you know that there are more than 1,500 charitable nonprofit organizations there are in San Luis Obispo County. And each of them must, by law, be governed by a board of directors.

Serving as a director on a nonprofit board offers valuable benefits to both you and your community. You'll develop leadership skills, expand your network, and make a meaningful impact on a cause you care about. Your volunteer service ensures the organization stays mission-focused and effective, supporting positive change and enhancing the quality of life in your community.

Learn more at Board Service 101 | September 9 from 11 to 11:45 a.m. via zoom. Free.

Registration information is at spokesfor nonprofits.org.

Takin' Care of Business Continued on page 10

Cambria's



Diamond Jubilee
Aug. 30 - Sept. 1

Pinedorado Days

Please visit us this Labor Day Weekend and join the Cambria Lions Club in celebrating the 75th Pinedorado Days.

This will be an exciting weekend for the entire family. The **Pinedorado Parade starts on Saturday at 9:30 A.M.** with our Grand Marshall, **Joyce Williams**. Join us on **Sunday for the 16th Annual Nate's Car Show starting at 8 A.M.** Live entertainment all 3 days begins at 1 P.M.

Pinedorado Days	Parade	The Follies	Nate's Car Show
• Aug. 30, Aug. 31 and Sept. 1 (Labor Day weekend) • 11 A.M. to 5 P.M. (All 3 days) • Chicken/Beef BBQ • Food Court • Game Booths • Bounce House • Kiddie Rides • Electric Train • Live Entertainment at 1 P.M. all 3 days Sat 8/30: Ballet Folklórico at 2 P.M. Sun 8/31: Rough House Band at 1 P.M. Mon 9/1: Jill Knight Band at 1 P.M.	• Saturday, Aug. 30 (Labor Day weekend) • Parade steps off at 9:30 A.M. from Bridge and Main St. • Local Groups: Schools, Nonprofits, High School Bands, Grizzly Academy, Classic Car Clubs and several dignitaries • Grand Marshall, Joyce Williams • Warbird Airplane Flyover near start of Parade • Saturday, Aug. 30 5k Fun Run Registration at 7 A.M. Race starts at 7:45 A.M. Starting Line: Coast Union High School	• Cambria Night Live! A two-hour musical parody of and love letter to Cambria • Aug. 22, 23, 29, 30 and 31 at 7 P.M. • Aug. 24 at 3 P.M. • Location: Vet's Hall in West Village, Cambria • Tickets: \$25 (General) \$80 (Angel Seat) Can be purchased at the door or in advance at the Cambria Chamber of Commerce or Lions Club	• Sunday, Aug. 31 • Show starts at 8 A.M. (Vet's Hall Parking Lot) • Car Viewing starts at 8:00 A.M. (All cars parked/ready) • Open Show: All Years and Makes • American Legion Pancake Breakfast starts at 7:00 A.M. (All are welcome) • Raffle Prizes and Giveaways at 2:30 P.M. • Awards at 3 P.M. *All Proceeds go to Cambria Lions Charities



For more info about Pinedorado 2025, please visit:

www.CambriaLions.org or Scan QR Code for direct link

Location of Event:

950 Main St, Cambria, CA 93428



*Check the website for updates to include calendar of events and live entertainment

Police Blotter



- **Aug. 17:** Police responded at 9:25 p.m. to a store in the 700 block of Quintana Rd., where they’d apparently nabbed a sticky-fingered customer helping himself or herself to the merchandise.
- **Aug. 17:** At 9:25 p.m. police contacted a suspicious subject in City Park and cited the mope for possession of dope.
- **Aug. 17:** Police responded at 9:20 a.m. to the 400 block of Bonita where a citizen said he or she got their car boosted.
- **Aug. 16:** Police contacted a suspicious fellow at 4:17 p.m. at Harbor and Napa. The slapdash apparent idler had a warrant and was once again issued a Charmin citation.
- **Aug. 16:** Police stopped a suspicious vehicle at 12:02 a.m. in the 900 block of Allesandro. Logs indicated the driver got nicked for alleged driving thick as a tick and also allegedly had a loaded firearm in the car. He was shot into a jail cell.
- **Aug. 15:** Police responded at 1:45 p.m. to the 800 block of Monterey where some graffidiots had apparently left their mark.
- **Aug. 15:** Police responded at 1:09 p.m. to a disturbance in the 2200 block of Panorama Dr. Logs indicated the incident involved domestic violence and a report was taken.
- **Aug. 15:** At 10 a.m. police responded to a business in the 700 block of Embarcadero for a reported grand theft and will no doubt have a jolly good time catching the bugger.
- **Aug. 14:** Police responded at 7:50 p.m. to a disturbance in the 2600 block of Main. Logs indicated the incident involved the exhibiting of a firearm in a threatening manner, as if there is any other manner of brandishing a gun.
- **Aug. 14:** Police stopped a suspicious vehicle at 4 p.m. in the 400 block of Piney Way. Logs indicated the cue ball driver was racked up for suspicion of driving snookered.
- **Aug. 13:** Police responded at 1 p.m. to an undisclosed location for a petty theft case, so call up the National Guard!
- **Aug. 13:** Police responded at 10:34 a.m. to a car crash at Dunes and Main St., where the City just painted the road and restriped the lines.
- **Aug. 12:** Police responded at 4:11 p.m. to a disturbance in the 2000 block of Seaview. Logs indicated the incident was a case of spousal or cohabitant abuse, aka some louse abusing his spouse.
- **Aug. 12:** Police responded at 6:13 p.m. to the 900 block of Morro Bay Boulevard for another fender-bender crack-up, as the Roundabout claims another victim.
- **Aug. 12:** Another car crash was reported at 1:11 p.m. in the 500 block of Atascadero Rd.
- **Aug. 12:** At 8:49 a.m. police contacted a regular customer at Beach and Main with bench warrants.
- **Aug. 11:** Police responded at 5:13 p.m. to the 400 block of Napa for a reported rape of an unconscious person.
- **Aug. 11:** Police responded at 10:11 a.m. to the 500 block

of Main for a missing person report.
Note: The Police Department didn’t post media logs for the week of Aug. 4-11.

- **Aug. 3:** Police contacted a suspicious subject at 10:06 p.m. in the 1000 block of Main Street. Logs indicated the suspected fiend was nicked for allegedly possessing unlawful drug paraphernalia, as his stash was apparently already gone in a puff of smoke.
- **Aug. 3:** Police responded at 1:54 a.m. to a disturbance at an apartment house in the 2300 block of Main. They apparently traced the source of the dust up to a scourge of a fellow who was deep in his cups and got hauled off to the hoosegow.
- **Aug. 2:** Police stopped a suspicious vehicle at 11:37 p.m. on Main at State Park Road. Logs indicated they arrested the driver for suspicion of driving on a toot another apparent case of arrive on vacation and leave on probation.
- **Aug. 2:** Police stopped a suspicious vehicle at 10:15 p.m. speeding along Main Street towards the Hwy 1 on ramp. The driver was cited for speeding and also got smacked for driving whacked.
- **Aug. 2:** At 1:45 p.m. police were notified by someone at Morro Rock of a missing person from the area of Coleman Drive and Embarcadero.
- **Aug. 1:** Police responded at 1 p.m. to a car crash on Hwy 1 at San Jacinto, as the highway stoplight claims another. And at 9:30 p.m. there was another hairy crackup at Morro Bay Boulevard and Quintana, as the Roundabout strikes again.
- **Aug. 1:** Police responded at 8:24 a.m. to the 900 block of Pecho St., after someone apparently went to bed in Paradise and woke up in Heaven.
- **Aug. 1:** Police stopped a suspicious vehicle at 7:12 a.m. at Zanzibar Street and Zanzibar Terrace. Logs indicated the driver hit a grand slam — suspicion of drunk driving, possessing illegal drugs, a suspended license and giving police a

fake name, which naturally follows given the previous sins.

- **July 31:** Police responded at 6:44 p.m. to the 400 block of Atascadero Rd., where some moocher was allegedly trespassing. Officers advised him to take his shoes for a walk.
- **July 31:** Police contacted a suspicious fellow at 1:07 p.m. in the 400 block of Monterey. The scofflaw had a warrant and was issued another disappearance ticket and released.
- **July 31:** Police stopped a suspicious vehicle at 9:52 a.m. in the 2800 block of Main. Logs indicated the driver got cited for not having a license to drive, which ought to be more than a misdemeanor.
- **July 31:** Police contacted an apparently homeless fellow at 7 a.m. in City Park in the 700 block of Harbor who naturally had a bench warrant. Earlier, they’d contacted another apparent urban camper at 4:33 a.m. in the 1100 block of Main who had the same sword hanging over his head.
- **July 29:** At 6:45 p.m. police responded to a disturbance in the 500 block of Morro Bay Blvd. Logs indicated the ruckus was caused by some fallstaffian gaggle head who was no doubt shown the error of his or her ways.
- **July 28:** Police responded at 2 p.m. to a home on Nutmeg, where someone said they’d been swindled out of more than \$400.
- **July 28:** Starting at 3:14 p.m. police began a sneetches roundup hauling off at least four slugabeds with bench warrants and one with a pocket full of dope out of City Park, and once again making the world safe for Democracy.
- **July 28:** At 9:41 a.m. at Lila Keiser Park officers contacted yet another scruffy Philistine, who had a felony warrant.
- **July 28:** At 8:35 a.m. police contacted a model citizen at Morro Bay Boulevard and Piney Way who had two bench warrants, one from SLO County and the other from parts unknown. When they got to the Parkinson Plaza, the fooliot apparently had suspected dope on his person that of course was discovered at the jail, so add those charges to his list of woes.

News Briefs From page 5

project is a shining example of what makes Cayucos the Best Little Beach School. We are deeply grateful to our partners—from the Rotary Club to the Education Foundation, PTA, local families, and community events like the Cayucos Turkey Trot. The in-kind labor and professional expertise from the Hartzell and O’Shea families brought this vision to life. Together, we are better, and this project shows the power of coming together for our children.”

The Rotary Club of Cayucos contributed \$50,000, underscoring its mission of local and global service. David Nygren, Rotary Club of Cayucos president and a 30-year educator, added, “As an educator and a Rotarian, I am so pleased that we can support this important project for the children in Cayucos, including those students with special needs. Rotary is love, and we love our Cayucos Elementary School.”

The Cayucos Education Foundation (CEF) contributed \$40,000, continuing its tradition of strong support for local education. “We are incredibly grateful to the Cayucos Education Foundation for their unwavering support of our students,” said Superintendent Gaviola. “This generous donation will create a lasting legacy of play and learning at Cayucos Elementary.”

The Cayucos PTA raised \$32,000 toward lower field renovations, and an additional \$7,000 was donated by the annual Cayucos Turkey Trot, organized by the McGee and Gaeta families. The Held Family, longtime Cayucos Elementary School supporters, also contributed \$8,000 to the effort.

In addition to financial support, in-kind work was provided by the Hartzell and O’Shea families, who donated their time, labor, and expertise to prepare the site and ensure a successful installation.

The new play structure includes ADA-accessible elements and will replace a structure that has served the school for over 30 years. The Cayucos Elementary School Board of Education approved the more comprehensive \$124,000 design, featuring additional accessible options. Installation was completed in June 2025. A ribbon-cutting ceremony to celebrate the new ADA-accessible play structure and swings scheduled is scheduled for September 10 at 5 p.m. on the lower field at Cayucos School, 301 Cayucos Dr. The entire community is invited to attend.

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.

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Successful Siren Test

On August 23, 2025, the Annual Early Warning System Siren test took place with all sirens operating successfully. The system, which was sounded twice to test both the primary and backup activation points, operated seamlessly.

During an emergency, the sounding of the sirens is an indication that the Emergency Alert System has been activated, and the public should tune to a local radio or television station to receive emergency information and instructions.

The siren system is only one of the alert and notification systems that may be used to alert the public during an emergency.

For more information on public alert and notification systems or how to prepare your family for an emergency, visit PrepareSLO.org/sirens or call the County Office of Emergency Services at (805) 781-5678

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8

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SEPT 4



5-7pm



SEPT 11



SEPT 18



SEPT 25



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Larry & Carole
Truesdale



Thomas Laycock Trust



MBAA...55+

John R.
Saurwein III

Bill Luffee



Takin' Care of Business From page 7

California Legislative
Caucus Foundation
Scholarship Awardees

The California Legislative Central Coast Caucus Foundation (CLCCCF) announced the 2025 Central Coast Impact Scholarship recipients. This scholarship supports the educational aspirations of eighteen students from the five counties of the California Central Coast: Santa Cruz, Monterey, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, and Ventura.

"I am incredibly proud to announce our second round of Central Coast Impact Scholarship awardees," said Assemblymember Dawn Addis (D-Morro Bay), chair of the CLCCCF. "As a former teacher, I can see how amazing these students are, and I cannot wait to see the impact they make. Supporting their academic journeys is an investment in their futures and the future of our entire Central Coast."

Local 2025 Impact Scholarship awardees:

- San Luis Obispo County:
- 1. Delia "Ozzy" Pidd - nominated by Assemblymember Dawn Addis
 - 2. Nigel Dowlan - nominated by State Senator Monique Limón
 - 3. Yahairi Nunez Ruiz - nominated by State Senator John Laird

As a charitable, non-profit organization, the CLCCCF is committed to fostering education on issues significant to Central Coast communities. In line with this mission, the newly introduced Central Coast Impact Scholarship program offers financial assistance to students.

Find out more details regarding scholarship criteria and the application process, at CLCCCF.org.

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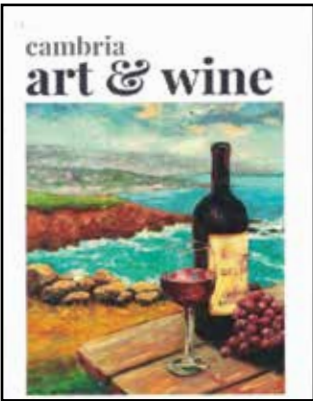
Cayucos California

Calling All Artists

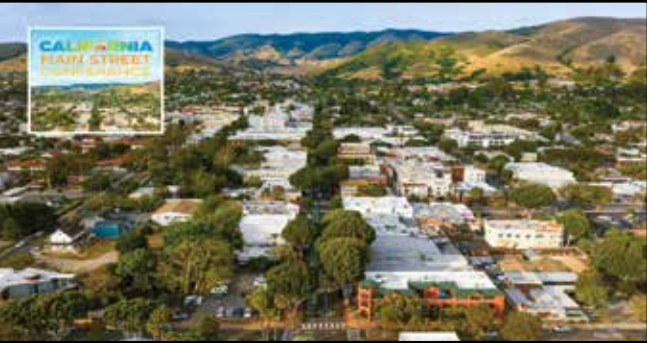
The Cambria Chamber of Commerce is looking for submissions for the 2026 Art & Wine Festival's Passport Booklet and Posters. It must be a vertical format and represent the essence of Cambria, Art and Wine. It may be a photo or original art.

Recognition will be given to the artist inside the Passport, and he or she will receive \$300.

The deadline for submissions is September 15, 2025. For more information, contact Nancy at cambriachamberinfo@gmail.com



SLO Chosen to Host 2025
California Main Street
Annual Conference



San Luis Obispo has been chosen as the location for the 2025 California Main Street Conference October 15

through Saturday, October 17. This event will help increase awareness of amenities in downtown San Luis Obispo and aligns with the City's plan to continue enhancing the economic vitality of the entire community. City officials say this is an opportunity to showcase how San Luis Obispo can host a multivenue conference, as well as attract more business travel and more midweek travel. California's top-tier professionals focused on revitalizing downtowns and commercial districts will get to see how downtown San Luis Obispo is thriving and creating culturally vibrant spaces where everyone belongs. The conference will take place over several days at venues across downtown San Luis Obispo, showcasing the area's walkability, public art, events, and vibrant shops and restaurants.

The conference sessions and panels will cover themes such as commercial district revitalization, housing, and promotional strategies, with an emphasis on Downtown SLO's partnerships with the City of SLO, Cal Poly, and other local organizations. Statewide and national experts will share best practices, tourism and economic development strategies, and legislative updates.

Conference venues include Hotel Cerro (the official hotel partner), the Palm Theatre, the Penny, the SLO Museum of Art, and more. The first evening will kick off with a Welcome Mixer & Networking Event in Mission Plaza, co-hosted with the SLO Chamber of Commerce in tandem with their monthly membership mixers.

All are invited to register for the conference at my805tix.com. California Main Street (CAMS) is the state coordinating program of Main Street America, a subsidiary of the National Trust for Historic Preservation. Since its inception in 1986, CAMS has worked with 60+ communities across the state to revitalize downtowns and commercial districts through place-based economic development. CAMS communities have collectively secured over \$8.5 billion in public and private reinvestment.



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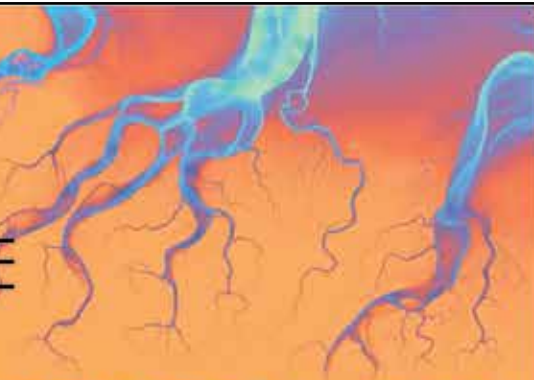
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10 August 28, 2025 - September 11, 2025 • The Estero Bay News • Your Community, Your News

Community
Earthquake Brace and
Bold Grants Available

The California Residential Mitigation Program (CRMP) has opened its second Earthquake Brace + Bolt (EBB) grant registration period for 2025, running from through October 1. For the first time, this open registration expands eligibility to include non-primary residential properties, giving landlords and other property owners the opportunity to apply for seismic retrofit grants to strengthen wood-framed, homes built before 1980 with raised foundations against earthquake damage.
Following the successful registration of nearly 19,000 homeowners during the January registration period, CRMP is initiating a second registration phase. With more than 1,100 eligible ZIP Codes across the state - including 303 added earlier this year - qualified homeowners can apply for grants of up to \$3,000 to help cover the cost of bolting houses to their foundations and bracing crawl space walls. These seismic retrofit upgrades help to reduce earthquake damage and provide more resilient housing in high-risk areas.
More than \$20 million in grant funding will be available to help offset the cost of seismic retrofits.
Since the 2013 EBB program launch, more than 32,500 California homeowners have received grant assistance for strengthening their homes against earthquake damage. The EBB grant program is administered by CRMP, a Joint Powers Authority between the California Earthquake Authority and the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services.
"Offering a second registration period this year is a valuable opportunity in helping us meet the strong demand we've seen for earthquake retrofit assistance," said Janiele Maffei, chief mitigation officer, California Earthquake Authority. "By opening eligibility to include non-owner-occupied residential properties, we are helping ensure more of California's older homes, including rentals, can be strengthened against earthquake damage. Retrofitting is one of the most effective ways to reduce the risk of severe damage in a major quake, protecting both residents and the communities they call home."
Income-eligible homeowners may also qualify for supplemental grants. Up to \$7,000 in additional grant funds are available for households with an annual income at or below \$89,040, which may provide up to 100% of the funds needed to cover a seismic retrofit. Grants are contingent upon meeting eligibility requirements and available funds.
"Earthquake retrofits create a safer and more resilient California. Expanding retrofit grants to rental properties means CRMP will provide even greater protection for California's housing stock and the families who call these properties 'home,'" said Tom Welsh, Chief Executive Officer of the California Earthquake Authority. "Each retrofit brings

us one step closer to a better-prepared California."
Eligible homeowners can apply for a retrofit grant at EarthquakeBraceBolt.com, where they can also find detailed program information, select a trained California-licensed general contractor and view the full list of ZIP Codes and program areas.
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.

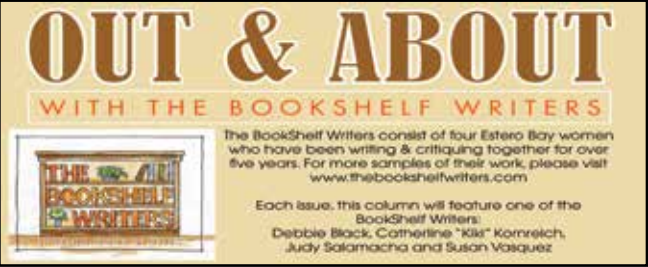
Writers' Conference
Announces Scholarships,
Teen Program, and Vendor
Opportunities

The 41st Annual Cuesta College Central Coast Writers' Conference (CCWC) returns in a big way on Sept. 26-27 with hands-on workshops, keynote speakers, immersive breakout sessions, and a new teen program. The 2025 theme of "It's Time" signifies the event staff's goal to inspire writers from all experience levels, from those just starting out to published authors.
Thanks to generous sponsors, the conference is offering numerous new scholarship opportunities and writing contests to cover registration fees. One contest is in partnership with the County of San Luis Obispo Public Libraries, and another is for individuals experiencing or recovering from a serious illness.
"Offering these scholarships helps to open doors for talented individuals who might not otherwise have the opportunity to attend," said CCWC Director Meagan Friberg. "Our goal is to nurture fresh perspectives, foster inclusivity, and ensure the brightest ideas are heard, no matter someone's financial background. This year, we are especially honored to extend support to those who are battling or recovering from illness while recognizing the strength, resilience, and insight they bring to our community."
Scholarship Opportunities and Writing Contests
The Anna Unkovich, Paul Alan Fahey, and Linna Thomas Memorial Scholarships are intended to support those battling or recovering from an illness who embody the spirit of resilience and have a love for the written word. Created to honor the strength and legacy of Anna Unkovich, Paul Alan Fahey, and Linna Thomas — all of whom gave generously to the literary world. Unkovich was the CCWC volunteer coordinator for more than 10 years and a dedicated teacher and trainer. Fahey was CCWC's first LGBTQ+ instructor and a prolific, accomplished author

and generous mentor. Thomas was the co-founder and driving spirit behind Coalesce Book Store in Morro Bay, and an avid supporter of authors and readers.
To apply, write and submit a story or poem of 800 words or less using the prompt: "It's Time!" Six scholarships will be awarded based on need and the writer's authentic voice. The application deadline is Sept. 10. Details are available at centralcoastwritersconference.com.
County of San Luis Obispo Public Libraries hosts 2025 CCWC Writing Contest
"SLO County Libraries is excited to partner with CCWC to offer this opportunity to win free registration for the 2025 conference," said Monique Matta, adult services coordinating librarian of the County of San Luis Obispo Public Libraries. "It's our library mission to promote literacy and that includes encouraging our talented local authors. We will judge the entries on writing skills and compelling storytelling. There are 13 scholarships available, so it's definitely worth your while to enter!"
To enter, write and submit an essay or poem of 800 words or less inspired by this year's conference theme, "It's Time" by Sept. 5. This contest is open to adults 18 and over, with one entry per person. Entries may be submitted in person to your local branch librarian or via webform: https://forms.office.com/r/JXZumHqaju. See your library branch for full details.
Teen Writing Program
"Dream It, Draw It, Draft It": This exclusive program takes place on Friday, Sept. 26 from 3 - 6 p.m. Teens will learn the first steps every writer needs to launch a great idea through a blend of storytelling, illustration, outdoor inspiration, and serious writing time. They will be mentored by Laurie Woodward, an award-winning author, screenwriter, former bilingual teacher, and peace consultant, with special guest illustrator Stephanie Roth Sisson. Students may return Saturday for the full slate of more than 30 workshops. The cost is \$75 and includes pizza and snacks. Register your teen http://bit.ly/47Je5vc. Limited scholarships are available.
All of the above scholarships and programs are made possible through the generosity of Cuesta Community College and CCWC 2025 sponsors: Kindle Direct Publishing, Rotary Passport Club of the Central Coast, Visit Morro Bay, SoCreate, SLO NightWriters, Chevron, Launch My Book, and the Salamacha Family Trust.
Vendor booths for book or writing clubs and writer-centric products and services are still available as space allows; cost is \$200. Apply for a spot http://bit.ly/45SQy-Wf by Sept. 5.
For more information on the conference, scholarship opportunities, teen program, or vendor opportunities, contact CCWC Director Meagan Friberg at centralcoast-writersconference@gmail.com or visit centralcoastwritersconference.com.

Advertisement for Dorn's Morro Bay Breakers Cafe. Includes text: 'ESTABLISHED 1942 FRESH & LOCAL DORN'S MORRO BAY BREAKERS CAFE', 'A MORRO BAY FAVORITE SINCE 1942.', 'HARD TO IMAGINE SOME PEOPLE JUST COME FOR THE VIEW.', 'Open Monday-Sunday from 7AM - 9PM', '(805) 772-4415', '801 Market Ave. • Morro Bay', and social media icons for Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter.

Real estate advertisement for Sherry Sim. Includes property listings: '2278 Emerald Circle, Morro Bay, \$1,899,000 3 Beds, 3 1/2 Baths, 2-Car Garage', '2770 Orville Ave, Cayucos, \$999,998 2 Beds, 1 1/2 Baths, 1-Car Garage + Bonus Room', and '735 Cabrillo Pl, Morro Bay, \$1,988,000 4 Beds 2 1/2 Bath, 2 1/2-Car Garage on 12,440 sq ft lot'. Includes a photo of Sherry Sim and her contact information: 'Sherry Sim, 805-234-4315 Lic# 01385503 @cayucos.realestate', along with the SIM Real Estate logo and website.



Author Kalyn Josephson
— Her Books and Her
Online Bookstore

Parents and teen readers, did you know the Central Coast Writers Conference at Cuesta College on September 26-27 offers a 2-day unique program at a deep discount for Teen Writers?

CCWC Director Meagan Friberg explained the 2025 Teen Writers Program includes “a fast-paced, art-fueled writing adventure” that will encourage participants to “invent wild characters and sketch out stories.” The lead facilitators are Laurie Woodward, author of “The Artania Chronicles,” which has been optioned for film, and illustrator Stephanie Roth Sisson, author and illustrator of more than 60 children’s and nature-focused books.

The teens will also be able to select additional workshops featuring middle grade and YA authors Wendelin Van Draanen, well known for “Flipped” and multiple popular books; Debbie Noble Black, a 2025 award winning author of Deetjen’s Closet: Sarah and the Ghost Clothes series; and Kalyn Josephson, an award-winning NYT bestselling fantasy author. Note the program also includes hobnobbing with at least 40 other published authors, editors, and agents during the weekend event, plus Pizza! Check details at www.centralcoastwritersconference.com.

I met Kalyn Josephson, a resident of Cayucos, when



Meet NYT Bestselling Fantasy Author Kalyn Josephson will be at the Central Coast Writers Conference at Cuesta College, September 26-27.

she attended a Morro Bay Chamber of Commerce community breakfast and announced she had recently launched her online bookstore, which includes middle grade, YA, and adult fantasy fiction. Find her at www.kalynjosephson.com.

If you haven’t discovered her books, Kalyn suggested starting with the Ravenfall series. I recently finished and sent my copy to my middle-grade niece so she can enjoy how twelve-year-old Anna and fourteen-year-old Colin meet after he is mystically drawn to Ravenfall Inn following his parents being sent to the afterlife. Anna has been helping her family run the Inn and becomes smitten with Colin. Offering her psychic powers, she accompanies him through twists and turns trying to find his brother.

Kalyn revealed, “The draw for me as a fantasy writer has always been in the magic. It’s where all my story ideas start. Often, the magic centers around the animals or nature in my stories. For example, the elemental abilities featured in ‘The Storm Crow’ or the magical beasts that influence the ecosystem in ‘The Library of Amorlin.’ It’s my favorite part to develop.” Her readers will recognize fantasy equivalents of the local places she loves. “I believe there’s a magic to the Central Coast.”

Years ago, worldbuilding was a concept this writer learned while chairing CCWC. Kalyn explained her process developing this element in her fantasy genre. “I usually start with the magic, treating each other element of the world like a building block that develops from there. For example, in ‘This Dark Decent,’ the magic system is based in chemical reactions that require certain ingredients. Those ingredients became the foundation for the economy and religion of that world.

“Worldbuilding is my favorite part of writing. And yet, because it takes so much work to develop a world, I usually like to use it for more than one book.”

Kalyn believes she is like so many of the registrants she will teach at CCWC. “I grew up writing. I can’t remember a time when I didn’t do it. But it wasn’t until I got to college, where I was double majoring in English and biology, that I truly considered pursuing publishing.” She was inspired by

a book “Daughter of Smoke and Bone” by Laini Taylor. “I wanted to do that ... create magical worlds that would sweep readers away. So, I started working on a book.”

It wasn’t until after the fourth manuscript that Kalyn’s query letters attracted a literary agent and an offer for a publishing deal. “Agents are heavily overworked. Their response time might be longer than anticipated or not at all. It is very important writers ensure their manuscript is polished and ready to go. And be sure to follow the agency’s querying guidelines.”

And for new writers, adult or teen attending CCWC, Kalyn recommends, “A place to begin as a new writer is read, read, read. The more you understand the genre you want to write, the easier it’ll be to put your own mark on it.” She admits even after publishing eight books she is still learning to become a better writer.

Kalyn enjoys sharing her journey and learning from others. She developed an online bookstore, The Cove, and regularly hosts events to bring emerging and seasoned published authors together.

“Establishing The Cove is one of the ways I’ve addressed some of the changes in the publishing landscape over the years. It gives me the flexibility to schedule and execute my own events and sell my books directly to readers,” Kalyn said.

The Cove is hosting a Spooky Book Fair on October 24 at Two Broads Ciderworks in SLO at 5 p.m. The first 13 attendees at the author talk with local author Nicholas Belardes at the Atascadero library on October 25th at 10 a.m. will receive a free book. After participating as a presenter at CCWC, Kalyn is participating in a Spooky Reads panel at the SLO library on September 25 at 4 p.m. Check out <https://thecovebooks.myshopify.com/pages/upcoming-events>.

Even with a full-time day job Kalyn says, “I haven’t looked back since. Writing books has always been what I am most passionate about.” Her newest series, Ravenguard, is available while two more books in the series will be out in 2026. Meanwhile, she hopes to meet you in the real world at Cuesta College September 26 and 27.



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Thursday - Monday 10 am - 3 pm**

**Tickets: \$115/person (\$100 for museum members)
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*Morro Bay Maritime Museum is a 501c3 non-profit
corporation. Admission price includes a donation
of \$80 towards museum projects.*



 @mbmaritimemuseum  @MBMaritimeMuseum  @morrobaymaritime.org

Community

Events and Activities

By Theresa-Marie Wilson



It's that time of year again when Morro Bay Rotary gets all their ducks in a row – rubber duckies, that is. The 5th Annual Rubber Ducky Derby takes place Saturday, October 4, at 7:30 a.m.in Morro Bay.

The event is an opportunity to win big and help Morro Bay Rotary fund Morro Bay High School and Trade School Scholarships as well as many community projects.

It's only \$10 a ducky! Cash prizes are: First Place \$1000, Second Place \$750, and Third Place \$500. Winners need not be present to win.

Go to www.morrobayrotary.org and scroll down the home page to donate.

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

- Watercolor Art Party - Wednesday, September 3, 3 – 5 p.m.

Use your imagination to make unique art pieces using brushes, watercolors, paper, pens, pencils, scissors, glue and more. All materials provided. Creative options available for ages 3-12.

- Engineer a Fairytale – Wednesday, September 10, 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.

- Sensory Playtime - Saturday, September 13, 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.



Local artist Joan Brown presents twelve new works of art as the featured artist for September in the Gallery at Marina Square, 601 Embarcadero, Suite 10, Morro Bay.

Joan has been painting scenes from her life for more than twenty-five years in both watercolors and oil. Her paintings cover a wide range of subjects as she admits to not being able to say “no” to a beautiful place or moment.

“Creating something beautiful that someone will enjoy gives me great pleasure and keeps me at the easel,” she says. “There is so much beauty in the world, and we need beauty, especially now.”

Her new works include scenes of the Central Coast including the bay and estuary, landscapes, farmlands, and florals. Joan’s work has been developed over decades of training with nationally known artists and has won awards in state, regional and international exhibitions. Painting in her unique representational style, her paintings have been described as filled with light, color and emotion. In addition to original paintings, Joan will offer giclee prints and cards.

Readers are invited to stop by and meet Joan at an informal reception held on Sat., Sept. 13 from 3-5 at the Gallery at Marina Square. For more information, go to JoanLBrown.com. Image oil painting by Joan Brown “Across the Bay.”

Morro Bay 4-H is getting ready for the new program year. Youth from 5 years of age to19 are invited to join the Morro Bay 4-H Club. 4-H is one of the largest youth organizations in the United States, reaching close to 6 million kids in the U.S. alone.

The Morro Bay 4H Club will kick off the new program year at the club’s first general meeting on September 2, at Moro Grange Hall 1340 Atascadero Rd., Morro Bay starting at 6:30 p.m. Information about Morro Bay 4-H and the projects being offered this year will be provided at this meeting. The current list of projects offered is leadership, poultry, beef, swine, sheep, scrapbooking, cooking, gardening, floral, small pets, and sewing.

For more information, contact the community club leader, Tammy Haas (805) 459-7988 or morrobay4hclub@

yahoo.com. Information is also available at the countyweb-site: ucanr.edu/sites/slo4-h.



It's time for the most paw-some weekend of the year. From September 12–14, more than 200 corgis and their humans will gather in Pismo Beach for a three-day celebration packed with seaside fun and VIP pup parties. It's time for the second annual Pismo Beach Corgi National Vacation.

Weekend Events

- September 12, 5 - 7 p.m.– Welcome Tiki Luau Pawty (VIP)
- September 13, 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.– Pismo Beach Corgi Beach Fest (FREE for All)
- September 13, 5 - 7 p.m.– Wine Tastings & Sunset Pawty (VIP)
- September 14, 9 -11 a.m.– Brunch (VIP)

The purchase of a VIP ticket gives access to all three exclusive events (Friday Luau, Saturday Wine Tasting, and Sunday Brunch), plus an exclusive Corgi Nation Vacation tote bag filled with goodies. Corgis always attend for free.

Saturday's free Corgi Beach Festival takes place on September 13, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., the heart of Corgi Nation Vacation comes alive with the Pismo Beach Corgi Beach Fest, an event open to all. Just south of the Pismo Beach Pier, hundreds of corgis and honorary corgis will gather. Pups compete in corgi races and costume contests, visitors can pose for photo ops, and there is a lively vendor village featuring dog-friendly products and local treats. Guests will also be welcomed by a giant corgi-themed sand art installation, creating a one-of-a-kind backdrop. Everyone is welcome to join to watch the fun.

Tunes at Tidelands is a free concert series being hosted by the Morro Bay Active Adults 55+ and the City of Morro Bay. The 4-week concert package TBD runs every Thursday night through the month of September. The music plays from 5 p.m. - 7 p.m.

Events Continued on page 14

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Community

Events From page 13



Join the South Bay Women’s Network on Sunday, September 7, from 3 to 5 p.m. for a South Bay Tea Party gathering of friends, high tea, and refreshments. Put on your fanciest hats and Sunday best to enjoy tea and savory treats at The Savory Palette, located at 601 Embarcadero in Morro Bay.

Indulge in the high tea menu, featuring finger sandwiches, salad, tea party desserts, and an assortment of teas. Additionally, wine and beer will be available for purchase. The event also includes tea party-themed games and a competition for the most stylish hat!

This event serves as the South Bay Women’s Network’s last fundraiser for 2025, aiming to collect funds for their Cuesta College Female Reentry Student Scholarship Program. Show your support by “filling our teapot” at our Harvest Tea Party on the Bay Fundraiser. Donate and take a guess at the total amount in our teapot by the event’s conclusion for a chance to win a gift basket.

Tickets are priced at \$60 per person with a portion of the proceeds allocated to the SBWN Scholarship Program. Purchase tickets on their website at www.sbwn.org or at my805tix.com.

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

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 – 11 a.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.

• **Fiber Arts Club** - Thursday, September 4, 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.

• **Watercolor Art Party** – Friday, September 5, 2:30 – 4:30 p.m.

Unleash your creativity at our monthly art party! Use your imagination to make unique art pieces using brushes, watercolors, paper, pens, pencils, scissors, glue and more. All materials provided - you bring the inspiration! Pre-school, School Age, Tween

• **Messy Art** – Saturday, September 6, 1 – 2: p.m. Encourage your child to get creative through painting and other messy art processes! Leave the clean-up to us. :) All materials will be provided. Wear clothes that can get messy! For ages 6 months and up.

• **Bears Book Club** – Tuesday, September 9, 6 – 7:30 p.m Treasure Island, by Robert Louis Stevenson. Drop in. Adults.

• **Fairytale Engineering** – Friday, September 12, 2:30 – 4:30 p.m.

Engineer a happy ending to your favorite fairy tales! Build a chair even Goldilocks can’t break - Or a bridge for the three Billy goats gruff, or a house strong enough no wolf can blow it down. STEM fun for ages 3+.

SLO Skiers, a local, non-profit sports and social club for adults, holds its next monthly meeting at Milestone Tavern in San Luis Obispo at 5:30 pm on Tuesday, September 2. Meetings are free and yearly membership is only

\$65. Social hour with food and drink from 5:30 to 6:30 pm. Meeting follows. Social and sports activities occur year around.



Maharlika Christian Fellowship, located at 1805 11th Street in Los Osos, will celebrate its 15-year anniversary on September 14. There will be a special service, followed by dance and musical performances, and a BBQ lunch — all open to the community. The event runs from 9 a.m.to 5 p.m. at the church. The theme is “Heart of a Servant.” There is no cost to this event. Individual’s may donate money if they like to help fund the church.

San Luis Obispo Repertory Theatre (SLO REP) 79th Season offers something for every theatergoer — from high-energy musicals to riveting dramas and cutting-edge staged readings. Season subscriptions for both the Mainstage and Ubu’s Other Shoe Reading

Series are now available. The Mainstage Subscription Season, priced at \$200, includes five fully produced theatrical events:

- **“I love You, You’re Perfect, Now Change”** – A charming and witty musical about love, dating, marriage, and everything in between.
- **“Unnecessary Farce”** – A door-slamming come-

SATURDAY NIGHT

ALIVE!

Christian Music Concert

with Chris Keith

Sept. 6, 2025 -- 6:00 p.m.

Free

CHRIS KEITH

Walkin' In Heaven

CHRIS KEITH

HE TOOK MY NAME TO THE CROSS

CHRIS KEITH

KNOCKIN'

CHRIS KEITH

Churchman

First Saturday of every month

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Baywood Park Community Church

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Community

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 - **“A grand Night for Singing”** – A joyful musical revue celebrating the timeless songs of Rodgers & Hammerstein.

In addition to the mainstage productions, SLO REP will present two special engagements:

- **“Million Dollar Quartet”** – The rock ‘n’ roll musical inspired by the famed 1956 recording session that brought together Elvis, Johnny Cash, Jerry Lee Lewis, and Carl Perkins.
- **“A Christmas Story”** – The beloved holiday classic returns for another year of festive family fun.

SLO REP also has a new of its acclaimed Ubu’s Other Shoe Staged Reading Series, showcasing bold and provocative contemporary plays. Ubu season tickets are available for just \$90, and include the following five readings:

- “Luna Gale” by Rebecca Gilman
- “Fortinbras” by Lee Blessing
- “Anthropology” by Lauren Gunderson
- “Wife of a Salaman” by Eleanor Burgess
- “Love Alone” by Deborah Salem Smith

Season subscriptions are available now at www.slorep.org, or by phone at (805) 786-2440.



Morro Coast Audubon Society’s September Zoom Community Program, “Coexisting with Rattlesnakes on the Central Coast,” is set for Monday, September 15 at 7 p.m.

Have you ever encountered a snake on your property? Have you wondered what kind of snake it was and how to deal with it? Cal Poly Professor Emily Taylor (pictures), founder of Central Coast Snake Services, will explain how you can get your questions about local snakes answered. The CCSS promotes a peaceful coexistence with rattlesnakes on the Central Coast, providing free snake identification, rescuing injured snakes, and relocating rattlesnakes from residences in San Luis Obispo and Santa Barbara Counties. Learn more about the challenges and solutions this organization has faced and developed over the years.

For the Zoom link, see the Morro Coast Audubon Society Event Calendar (LINK in the header of the website at morrocoastaudubon.org. All MCAS Zoom Community Programs are free and open to the public. All ages are welcome. No signup/registration required to attend. If you have questions, email Wendy McKeown, community programs chair at wendy.mckeown@morrocoastaudubon.org.

Nashville recording artist Johnny Young makes a tour stop on the Central Coast on September 13 and 14. This award-winning guitarist turned solo artist has been hard at it the last few years, and is set to bring his classic country dance show to both The Merrimaker in Los Osos on Saturday, September 13 at 8 p.m. and Sunday, September 14 at the new outside venue at The Eagles Aerie #3693 in Morro Bay at 2 p.m. Both events are open to the public 21 and over.



Visit www.johnnyyoungcountry.com, for more information.

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.

Fall Classes and Camps Now Enrolling at SLO REP

Registration is open for theatre classes designed for students of all ages and levels of experience

Registration is now open for Fall After-School Classes with the Academy of Creative Theatre (ACT) through San Luis Obispo Repertory Theatre (SLO REP). Designed for students of all ages and skill levels, ACT classes and camps offer a fun and supportive environment for young performers to explore theatre, build confidence, and develop lifelong skills.

Since 1997, SLO REP’s Academy of Creative Theatre has offered after-school programs, school-break and summer camps, and theatrical production classes for children aged 3-18. Offered in a group setting, ACT classes and camps are small in size, by design, and provide professional-level training, based on California Department of Education Visual and Performing Arts Standards (VAPA), and a creative and positive outlet for all students. Classes are arranged according to age or grade level and are held one to two times per week for 6-12 weeks (depending on the class) with a final “sharing” performance for family and friends on the last day of class. Tuition scholarships are available so that all children can participate regardless of their family’s financial circumstances.

“ACT is more than just theatre classes — it’s a place where young people discover their voices, gain confidence, and build friendships that last a lifetime,” said Kerry DiMaggio, SLO REP’s education director. “We are deeply grateful for the incredible support from our sponsors, foundations, and individual donors who make this work possible. Their generosity ensures that every student, regardless of financial circumstance, can experience the magic of live theatre.”

Since moving ACT’s camps and classes to SLO REP’s Empleo Street Headquarters in 2022, enrollment has grown significantly, and the program has expanded in scope and impact. The dedicated space has provided ACT with the resources to welcome more students, offer additional classes, and deepen the program’s role in serving local families. This thriving education program is an essential part of SLO REP’s Capital Campaign for A New Stage, which will create a new state-of-the-art theatre complex in downtown San Luis Obispo.

Class details and registration listed below and available online at: slorep.org/education/act-after-school-classes.

Local 4-H Club Shines at Mid-State Fair



MB 4-H Club member, Bailey Dunn, took First in her class and earned the Reserve 4-H Duroc Championship at this year’s California Mid-State Fair. Submitted photo

The Morro Bay 4-H Club is on cloud nine after a fantastic showing at the Mid-State Fair in Paso Robles, as the kids took home numerous prizes, ribbons and money.

“Thanks to the unwavering support of our community,” said Club Reporter, Aiden Foerst, “our talented youth showcased their skills, creativity, and dedication, bringing home numerous prizes, money, ribbons, and unforgettable

4-H Club Shines Continued on page 16

Edward Jones

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4-H Club Shines From page 15



Morro Bay 4-H Club member Aiden Foerst is all smiles sitting among the numerous ribbons and awards he and his fellow club members took home from the California Mid-State Fair in Paso Robles. Submitted photo

memories.”

All 12 club members had brilliant performances in their respective classes and every one of them placed high in the tough competition.

Leading the way was MB 4-H'er Bailey Dunn, who took First in her class and earned the Reserve 4-H Duroc Championship.

It was, “a fantastic achievement that highlights the hard work and talent of our young members,” Foerst said.

Sean Bodily shined in the Ladies and Lads Lead Costume Contest, taking First Place in his class “and demonstrating impressive leadership and creativity.”

The Club was also well-represented in the arts competitions, “excelling in art exhibits, stepping-stones, bird houses, projects, and the egg contest, among many other categories.”

Foerst earned Best of Show, showcasing exceptional craftsmanship, for his fair-themed stepping-stone.

“Our 4-H club truly brought home the ribbons,” he said, “but even more importantly, we created cherished memories and shared great times together as a community.

“We are truly grateful for the continued support from families, friends, and neighbors and businesses that make these successes possible.”

The whole club is thankful to the community of supporters. “A heartfelt ‘thank you’ to everyone who cheered us on and contributed to this inspiring and successful fair. We look forward to many more achievements and community gatherings in the future!”



NATURAL HISTORY NUGGETS

Tent Spiders

By Dean Thompson

I’ve always been a fan of efficient resource use. That’s one of the reasons I appreciated the home of the late Art Beal up in Cambria, which is popularly known as Nit Wit Ridge. Art spent close to 50 years carving out his hillside lot with hand tools and building his “castle on a hill” with materials that he could readily obtain. Castoffs from Hearst Castle, beer cans, abalone shells, concrete, washer drums, tile, car rims, car parts, and old stoves were all used in creating his eclectic domicile.

That idea of building one’s home with materials on hand makes me admire a little arachnid commonly found in our chaparral areas of California. This spider belongs to the genus *Metepeira*. I am not positive of the species because, as Tony Iwane of the California Center for Natural History says, “...identifying spiders to the species level is very difficult. It usually involves peeking at the poor arachnid’s genitalia through a microscope and following descriptions like “The embolus curls almost 180° clockwise around a reduced or fleshy terminal apophysis.” I, like many others, just call them tent spiders.

These spiders specialize in being efficient users of the resources available when building their homes.

Scientists say spiders have been around for almost 400 million years and have had a long time to perfect their ability to spin silk. It truly is an amazing substance. It is flexible and light but can be as strong as Kevlar or steel. It can be used to trap prey, wrap up meals, create egg sacks, fly through the air, and construct shelters.

These *Metepeira* spiders, (you know what, I’m just going to call them tent spiders). These tent spiders will use several different types of silk for their creations, but it’s their homes that are unique. Using dried leaves and the remains of their victims’ exoskeletons, like wings or carapaces, the female spiders use their silk to create a little tube-shaped retreat, or tent, if you will, to hang out in. This provides protection from the elements and from the eyes of potential predators. Many times, she will sit just inside the tent with one leg out, her tarsal claw gripped to a strand of silk extending down to her orb web, waiting for just the right vibration.

These spiders belong to the larger group of what is referred to as orb weaver spiders. The orb web is just as it



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News

sounds, a classic round spider web built out of sticky silk designed for entrapping insects. But instead of being suspended alone between branches, the orb is surrounded by a roof and wall-like maze of non-sticky silk, which arachnologists call a barrier web. When a flying insect blunders into this tangle, it will bounce around and eventually be channeled into the sticky orb. Once there, the spider will use her highly developed sense organs located in her legs to detect the vibrations made by the struggling insect. She'll then quickly descend to dispatch her next meal, deftly wrapping the creature up in silk to feed on later.

One more interesting thing about these spiders is their affinity for living next to each other. Sometimes one can see colonies of these spiders, their barrier webs sometimes cojoined. Scientists think that this cooperation helps in reducing maintenance burdens for individual spiders, and they might gain additional "knock-down" structures, which could help increase the prey taken. The colonial web may also transmit vibrations, which may help communication during predator attacks or prey availability.

So, if you are ever out on a late summer or fall morning, marveling at the glistening dew on the spider webs in the bushes, take a closer look. Maybe you'll see a community of these ingenious little builders hanging out in their tents patiently waiting for their next meal.

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 "Brain-Fodder - Ruminations of a Naturalist", can also be found on Substack.





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HISTORICAL SOCIETY of MORRO BAY

The Power Plant Helped Morro Bay Become a City

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

The year 1964 was a big one in Morro Bay history. The new PG&E power plant was fully built and operating providing substantial revenue to the city, the local school district, and the county. The city finally incorporated to take control of public safety, streets and the rules for development. The two milestones were closely linked.

The lure of both local control and the desire for low taxes are always strong, creating dramatic tensions in the would-be electorate when it is asked whether it supports incorporation. Morro Bay experienced this drama three times since World War II.

In October 1951, the Morro Bay Chamber of Commerce initiated an effort to incorporate. Members mapped out what a campaign to convince the electorate would require and put a timeline on it. The SLO County Telegram-Tribune said that "Morro Bay is growing so rapidly that eventual incorporation has become almost a certainty" (Oct 10, 1951). Residents disagreed: only 7.3% of qualified property owners signed a petition for incorporation, far short of the 25% required by state law (Tribune, Dec 3, 1951).

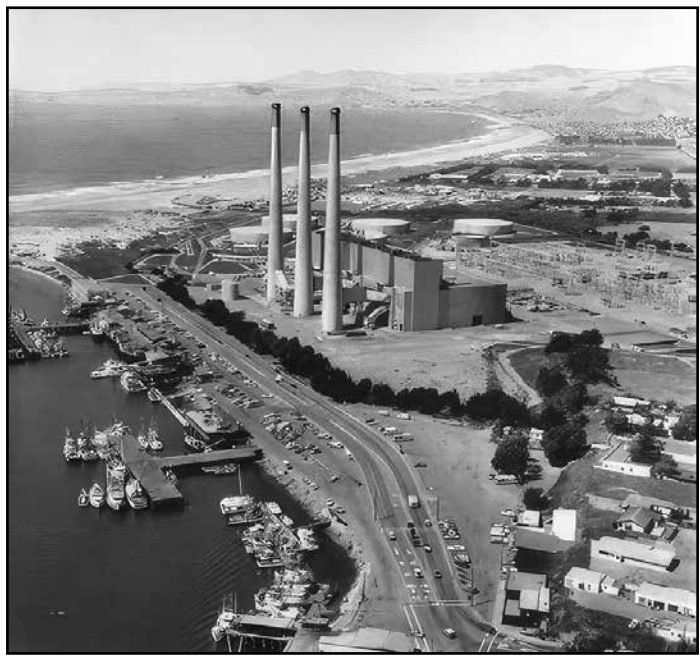
A public meeting was held the evening of August 23, 1955, to discuss a new effort to incorporate. This effort was also doomed to failure due to the expected high cost of incorporation.

The third time was the charm. Morro Bay residents enthusiastically approved incorporation by a 2 to 1 majority with about 1,500 for it and 750 against. The eagerness was shown in the fact that 23 people ran for one of five spots on the first City Council, according to the Tribune, July 8, 1964. Why the big change?

Money talks. The completion of the power plant meant that the city had a large, stable source of revenue that was from outside the voter base — this windfall meant voters didn't have quite so hard a choice between local control and cost. They could have it both ways. Writing for the Tribune on July 4, 1964, Charles Judson put it this way, "Aside from Morro Rock...the PG&E generating plant is the biggest thing in Morro Bay...While it clutters up the landscape, it represents a cherished island of high tax assessment and is the main reason why Morro Bay can entertain the idea of incorporation.

There were other issues, the tidelands legal dispute with the County being a major one, but solving the public revenue problem cleared the way. If there was ever one moment when Morro Bay got its unofficial brand of Three Stacks and a Rock, this was it.

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.



Source: Historical Society of Morro Bay. The 3 stacks appear to be tipped in a darker color like the red used in 1964-1965 when the plant was first completed.

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Boat Parade From page 1

sica Irving, one of the organizers. “There is an unpolished beauty and magic in the way it comes together. It’s simply about fresh air and community, wonder and awe, and celebrating the spirit of making cool things, just for fun.”

The assignment is simple: make or find something you can float in, add some kind of illumination, and then come out to float and play together on the bay.

Your floating “boat” could be a kayak you turned into a light-up sea creature, a crew of your friends in theme costumes, or a lighted rowboat, a dinghy towing a glowing sculpture, a craftily decorated light-filled canoe, or even you illuminated and gliding across the water on your stand-up paddleboard. If you can imagine it and assemble it, and it lights up and floats, it’s in.

“The parade itself tends to be pretty relaxed in form,” Irving said. “Though there may be a circle-ish route around the Baywood cove at times, it will likely become a lovely, loosely shifting constellation of boats stretching out over the bay, with everyone just cruising around, taking it all in, and enjoying the evening.”

During the day, folks begin assembling near the shore by the pier in Baywood in the late afternoon, readying their watercraft and preparing for the evening. As the first signs of sunset approach, people begin to coax and slide their boats from the beach onto the water. As the sun sets, the floating lights begin to shine, reflected in countless little twinkles across the water.

“For the next hour or two folks float around the water together – ‘oohing’ and ‘ahhing’ and marveling at the magical beauty of it all,” Irving said.

The Baywood Lighted Boat Parade is free and open to boaters/floaters and folks who’d like to come watch and enjoy. Since it’s a community gathering/meet-up, everyone is responsible for making safe choices and participating at their own risk.

There are a few simple rules:

- Embrace the spirit of kindness and community
- Take care of yourself and each other - on the beach and on the water
- Whatever you bring with you (large or small), please bring it back home with you

For more information, visit: <https://www.bigbigslo.com/baywoodboatparade>.

Cat Noir



By Theresa-Marie Wilson

Imagine the human’s glee when I walked in and saw Boris appearing to clean. He had a wad of paper towels in his paw and seemed ready to go Cinderella on something.

“OH MY GOD, I have the best cat in the world,” I said to myself because Daisy was napping, and Virgil was doing catnip under the bleachers somewhere. Then it hit me that I had confused the word cat with “thoughtful and team player.” Sure, they are fastidious about keeping their coat shiny, cleaning their butts on carpets, removing every last drop of food from your plate, rolling in dirt to keep the yard tidy and inspecting countertops for crumbs, but they never have any intention of picking up hairballs (why is hairball one word, but fur ball is two), throwing out the poo that clings to their derriere like it’s on the top of a double decker bus on sightseeing tour of the house, or vacuum the delightful furs that somehow manage to get in everything from the freezer to the lightbulb on the desk lamp.

Anymew, Boris had found the paper towels that I had sloppily left right in plain sight, fully away that three cats rule the roost. Thus, as it was explained to me with flow charts and reenactments of the incident, I was at fault.

Excuse me, I have tiny shreds of paper towel to painstakingly remove from my bed. As much as I love sleeping on trash, the thought of rolling over and inhaling a half a paper towel has me concerned.

Follow Cat Noir CC on Facebook and Instagram for daily photos. Every Color Deserves a Forever Home



Sea Level From page 1

Cove and South Bay Boulevard, which could face daily tidal flooding by 2060.”

As anyone who regularly drives along South Bay Boulevard has no doubt seen, during extreme high tides, so-called king tides, the water in the estuary laps at the base of the elevated roadway and can flood Windy Cove, which sits at sea level.

The solution is as multi-faceted as the potential issues. “The project blends transportation adaptation,” SLOCOG said, “with nature-based solutions to improve safety, mobility, and flood resilience, while protecting the Morro Bay Estuary ecosystem.”

One potential fix is to elevate South Bay Boulevard at the low spots along the winding roadway, raising them up out of the expected tidal flood zones.

SLOCOG’s website on the project has a map that designates the portion of South Bay from Quintana Road to the intersection with State Park Road as an opportunity to link up with a planned water pipeline connecting Los Osos to the Chorro Valley Pipeline, and to include a class 1 bike lane along all of South Bay, along with the pipeline project.

It also shows conversion of Lower and Upper State Park Roads to one-way streets going in opposite directions and adding another class 1 bike lane to the lower roadway. (This change was first proposed many years ago and was rejected by residents and Morro Bay officials. But that was before sea level rise became a thing.)

In any event, we should soon see what SLOCOG has in mind. “Upcoming tasks include developing adaptation alternatives, conducting a benefit–cost analysis [with the Center for the Blue Economy], and creating forward-looking design concepts [by RRM Design Group].”

The article lists August 2025 as when a “Summary of Alternatives & Adaptation Pathways” would be released. SLOCOG plans to give an update to the Morro Bay Public Works Advisory Board (PWAB) at its Wednesday, Oct. 15 meeting; and will hold another public workshop on Oct. 22, with the location and time not yet announced.

From there, a draft plan is slated to be released for

public review in November, and a final study incorporating all the expected comments is due in December 2025.

The SLOCOG Board is slated to vote on accepting the plan in February 2026.

If readers would like more information on the Morro Bay Estuary Climate Resilience Transportation Plan, see the website at: www.slocog.org/programs/special-studies-services-projects.

Addis From page 1

“There are different pieces of legislation around insurance cancelations that are moving through the legislature,” Addis told EBN. “One of my focuses has been the issue of under insurance, where companies are using third parties to assess how much insurance you really need, and then tell you too little so they save money. Your home might take half a million dollars to rebuild, well, they’re offering you a policy that only goes up to 300,000.”

Underinsured, which Lara said people might not even be aware that they are, means there is coverage, but not enough to replace their home as it was.

“That could be that either they haven’t informed their agent or their broker about any renovations they have made, or that the insurance company has denied then the ability to get more insurance to properly cover it,” Lara said during the townhall meeting. “That is something that we have been seeing around the entire western part of the United States around wildfire.”

Addis is also a member of the Assembly Insurance Committee responsible for reviewing and analyzing bills related to the business of insurance, insurer solvency, and trade practices.

“We’re starting to uncover this issue,” Addis said. “We’ve had at least five hearings with the insurance commissioner coming to present to us. I’ve asked him about this issue at every single one of them, because there’s been fires in Northern California where it was shown that people were under injured by design and didn’t know it.”

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Addis touched on legislative efforts to improve insurance policies and the role of the insurance commissioner in protecting consumers.

“Now, after me bringing it up so many times at the hearings, the insurance commissioner is working with other states to start investigating the issue, because it’s starting to happen across the nation,” she said.

Lara is working to ensure that insurers stay in California and that consumers are adequately insured.

Since 2022 alone, seven of the top 12 insurance companies have paused or restricted new business despite rate increases approved or pending with Department of Insurance, according to the California Department of Insurance.

One way to stabilize the insurance market is through the State’s Sustainable Insurance Strategy, which aims to provide discounts for home improvements that make properties fire safe.

“The way the Sustainable Insurance Strategy is meant to work is that as people make improvements on their property, they will get discounts on their insurance,” Addis told EBN. “Some insurers are starting to do that now. If you go through and meet this level of criteria of improvements that you’ve made for a fire safe home, then you’ll get a discount.”

California Fire Marshal Daniel Berlant emphasized that homeowners are their first defense to protecting their home.

“Homes that ignite by wildfires have a 90% chance of being completely destroyed,” Berlant said. “That staggering stat tells us that we have to make sure that homes are hardened, that there’s nothing flammable right around them to prevent them from igniting in the first place.

“I want to really focus on what is related to zone zero. This is the first five feet around the home. There are new requirements that are being worked on right now that essentially look at reducing anything flammable in that first five feet.”

Home Hardening Tips

- Install 1/16 to a 1/8-inch mesh screening on all vents. This is the most important, easiest and least expensive thing readers can do that could have a huge impact.
 - Install weather stripping around the garage door to close the gap and prevent embers from getting inside.
 - Replace your roof and gutters with noncombustible material. Use gutter guards to prevent leaves getting in.
 - Replace parts of wood fences that touch your home as well as the gate with noncombustible material.
 - Maintain five feet of hardscaping around your home. Trashcans are often overlooked in this strategy.
- “We don’t think about the trashcans, but I’ve seen so many homes that ignite because the trashcans catch on fire first, and then it spreads to the home itself,” Berlant said. “To the best of your abilities try not to store those trash cans right up against the home.
- “These defensible space requirements, the home hardening elements, these are all field tested. This is science based.”
- For more information, go to readyforwildfire.org.
United Policyholders Executive Director Amy Bach,



A screen shot from the townhall insurance meeting showing examples of how to protect your dwelling before a fire hits. These measures could lower individual fire insurance rates.

an insurance consumer advocate, offered what she called a “reality check” during the townhall. Her suggestions included taking an inventory of your home via a video on your cell phone

“We are in a very strange time, this is unprecedented,” Bach said. “It’s a seller’s market meaning us, as buyers, are not in the driver’s seat. Options are few, prices are high ... It is so important to avoid underinsuring your home. You want to try to have your dwelling coverage be reasonably accurate for the local conditions.” She added to buy more than the minimum building code coverage and go for extended replacement.

Should an insurance company refuse a policy to folks, Bach says to request your risk score from the insurer, and they are supposed to give you an appeal process.

“Be prepared to make risk reduction home improvements,” Bach said. “That is what insurance companies really want to see.”

Lara, in July, announced formal legal action against the California FAIR Plan Association, the state’s insurer of last resort operated by the insurance industry, for systematically denying and limiting smoke damage claims from wildfire survivors – particularly in the wake of the Palisades and Eaton Fires earlier this year.

The California FAIR Plan is operated by the insurance industry, not the state. State law requires all property insurance companies doing business in California to participate in the Fair Access to Insurance Requirements Plan, which provides basic fire insurance coverage when homeowners and businessowners cannot find it in the traditional market. It was first created after the Watts Riots of 1965 and resulting major wildfires. It is designed as a temporary safety net – not a long-term solution.

To view the video recording of the Insurance Town Hall, go to <http://bit.ly/479p29h>

State Redistricting

Last week California Governor Newsom signed leg-

islation designed to change the State’s congressional map, helping Democrats in the House in the 2026 midterm elections.

Addis said she supports Newsom’s campaign for a ballot measure following the redistricting battle that started when Gov. Greg Abbott of Texas created a new congressional map that increased Republican representation in the state by as many as five congressional seats. That map is close to becoming law in the Lone Star State.

Newsome’s goal is to create five additional Democrat congressional seats in California. Legislation ACA 8 and SB 280 just passed allowing for the special election on November 4, 2025, to decide whether to suspend the state constitution and approve the new maps. (View proposed map: <https://selc.senate.ca.gov/proposed-congressional-map>.)

“Texas is silencing voters, California is giving them a voice,” said Addis. “That’s why I co-authored ACA 8 and SB 280 – to create the most transparent redistricting process in the nation. We won’t let underrepresented communities be attacked. It’s time to let all Californians, not just a few, decide our future together.

“The proposal is right in line with the Voting Rights Act, so there will not be communities of interest that are disenfranchised in California. In fact, we’ll be strengthening the voice of communities of interest. So Black and brown communities and underrepresented communities that need a voice, we will be strengthening the voice of those people. And then it’s a transparent process in that it’ll go from the legislature to the voters to vote on and with a trigger that if Texas decides not to redistrict, we will pull this. We will not redistrict.”

Although millions of dollars from each party have gone into this fight, the measure that will go before California voters requires the state to return to nonpartisan map-drawing every 10 years. In this case, after the 2030 Census.

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News

Fee Hikes From page 1

charges the City puts on residents and businesses for anything they might ask for — from costs for taking recreation classes, to sign permits and in this case fees on new construction projects.

Singewald’s response concerned the fee increase for someone who wanted to build a typical single-family home — 1,800 square feet with a 400 s.f. garage, a total of 2,200 s.f. project.

“The proposed fee updates would increase the cost to permit a typical single-family residence,” he said, “by \$7,092 or 13% compared to the current fee levels. Assuming a construction cost of \$500 s.f. this would increase the project cost for a typical single-family residence by approximately 0.64 percent.”

He noted that these costs do not include so-called “impact fees,” which are charges put onto building projects to cover costs for City services. “The majority of the fees to build,” Singewald said, “are impact fees for new development to pay its fair share cost of new public facilities - e.g., fire, water, sewer, police, storm drains, traffic, etc.”

Those impact fees have not yet increased, as the City is looking at them under a contract with a different consultant. Singewald said “Staff is working with a separate consultant [DTA] to complete a development impact fee nexus study [required by AB 1600] that will establish the maximum impact fees the City may impose on new development.

“Staff will review the nexus study and preliminary recommendations with building industry stakeholders prior to presenting recommended development impact fees to Council in the Fall of 2025.”

So, what kind of costs would you be looking at to build the 1,800 s.f. house plus a garage?

At \$500 per square foot for the 2,200 s.f. project, Singewald said it would cost \$1.1 million to build.

Before the fees were increased, he pegs the Impact Fees at over \$39,280 with an increase anticipated in the fall.

Building Permit fees were \$15,549 before the increase and now stand at \$20,560, an increase of just over \$5,000 or 32%.

Planning Permit Fees were at \$1,644 and increased to = \$3,725, a \$2,091 increase, or 127%.

Before the latest increases, you would have paid \$56,521 in fees. After the hike, that number is going to be \$63,613, an increase of \$7,091 or 13% overall.

In response to the agenda item and fee increases in general, former Councilwoman and Council critic, Betty Winholtz was shocked.

“An overall comment regarding all fee changes,” she wrote, “is that nothing should increase by such large percentages, i.e. 50-100%. Even 33% is a lot. It is shocking and unreasonable to institute that kind of jump. 100% recovery need not happen all in one year; it can be paced or stair-stepped. Examples arte business licenses, after hour inspections, administrative CDP, and some appeal fees.”

Overall, the new fee schedule raises about \$390,000 in added “cost recovery,” for the City’s various funds — the General Fund, Harbor Fund, Water and Sewer Funds.

The report says the new fees represent full cost

recovery but that’s it. “In most cases represent the full cost to deliver services, but no more than the full cost, and thereby decrease the City’s subsidy of private discretionary activity.”

The fees are to pay for anything “extra” a citizen or business might, need from the City, above what they are entitled to through the taxes they pay.

The City’s ordinances require the City Council to hire an outside firm to conduct the fee study and a cost allocation study needed to justify raising fees. Back in August 2022, they hired Clear Source Financial Consulting and they finished the Coast Allocation Study in August 2023. The Cost Allocation Study calculates the services provided by the administration to so-called Enterprise Funds — water, sewer, transportation and harbor. The charges pay for things like legal costs, administration, payroll, human resources, etc.

Clear Source finished the fee study in July and the new fees will take effect next January.

Among the higher raises in fees, percentage wise anyway, is the filing fee for a new business license. It was \$37 but the fee study said it costs \$65, so the new fees was raised to \$65, a \$28 increase, or nearly double.

Same goes for renewing a business license, which used to be just \$18 but cost \$32 according to the fee study. So it too was raised to \$32, a \$15 hike.

Also from the Buildings Department is the per-hour, after hours inspection fees, which carried a 4-hour minimum. It was \$91 an hour, but cost \$216 and was hiked to that level, or \$125. The City will now also charge \$90 if you missed an inspection appointment.

The City’s Master Fee Schedule will be posted on the City’s website.

Benefit From page 1

ablo Canyon Nuclear Power Plant and plant owner Pacific Gas & Electric.

Because of a previous plan to shut down Diablo Canyon for good, and a subsequent State Law that was designed to soften the blow to the District as well as the County and other agencies who share in the tens of millions in property taxes paid every year, PG&E was allowed to depreciate the plant down to zero in just a few years.

But since then the State has asked PG&E to keep Diablo Canyon open for at least 5 more years, and the federal regulators are allowing a 20-year license renewal for the plant’s two reactors to continue to produce electricity. Exactly how long Diablo Canyon will stay open is anyone’s guess but unless the State Law gets changed again, they won’t be paying property taxes on it.

That’s left the School District without its largest single source of tax dollars and facing a multi-million-dollar deficit.

That coupled with a report that said Morro Elementary needs millions in repairs and upgrades, led to the decision to sell.

But selling a school property isn’t so easy in this state, as local governments must first be given a chance to purchase the sites.

And faced with a looming deadline to respond to the district’s inquiry, the Morro Bay City Council stepped up and voted to go forward and try to buy the site.



World renowned conductor and Morro Bay Native Son, Kent Nagano, will lead a benefit concert Sunday Aug. 31 at Cuesta College. The event is a fund raiser for the effort to purchase Morro Elementary School by local citizens and the City Council.

A similar effort is being made in Los Osos as the Community Services District is looking at asking voters next June if they would raise property taxes to purchase Sunnyside.

The Morro Bay Council is looking at a couple of options — buying just the extensive playing fields at the school and buying the whole property, which first opened in 1932.

According to the official report by the City Attorney made after the the Aug. 12 closed session meeting, “The Council unanimously gave direction to make an offer for purchase of 30% of the property under the Naylor Act and to continue negotiations with the School District for purchase of the entire property.

“It is important for the public to understand that any purchase of the property, whether partially or in its entirety, would have to be approved by Council at a public hearing in open session.”

Community Development Director Airlin Singewald, who has led the City’s efforts on Morro Elementary, said, “The next step is we send a letter to the SLCUSD with the Council’s offer under the Naylor Act and request a meeting to discuss the City’s offer and a potential purchase of the entire property. The City has until Aug. 24, 2025 to submit a Naylor Act offer to purchase 30 percent of the property for open space and recreational purposes.”

The Naylor Act is part of the California Education Code and specifically deals with school district owned lands and their disposal.

Simply put it “mandates that school districts, when proposing to sell or lease such land, must first offer a portion of it (often at a discounted rate) to the city or county where the land is located. This offer is intended to facilitate the land being used for outdoor recreation and open-space purposes.”

Under the Naylor Act up to 30% of a school site can be sold to a local government agency — city, county, recreation district, and regional park, among others — at a “discounted

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rate.”

The school district is seeking \$10 million for whole of Morro Elementary and it remains to be seen what price they are willing to let the playing fields go for. However the District has indicated it’s willing to listen to an offer for just the playing fields and playground.

Should the City and District fail to reach agreement, the District would likely conduct a request for proposals from private developers, who would be bound to only build affordable housing, under that same State Law.

The Naylor Act’s goal is to keep valuable open space in a town available for all to use and failing that to build what the State sees as a pressing need — affordable housing.

The driving force among Morro Bay residents (and in Los Osos too), is they wish to continue to use the expansive grassy fields and playgrounds at both sites. In Morro Bay they also want to save a historic structure, and a beloved school that was the only one in town for over 80 years and where generations of local children were first educated.

And the school’s most famous student is planning to return home and give a special benefit concert to get the ball rolling on fundraising.

World renowned musician and conductor, Kent Nagano, who is a Morro Bay Native Son and first studied music under the late-Botso Korishelli at Morro Elementary, has agreed to come home and play a special concert to help save his alma mater.

“When Mr. Nagano learned that his alma mater was up for sale,” reads a news release from Friends of Morro Elementary, “he let his family know this was unacceptable. He would do a benefit concert Labor Day weekend to raise money for the school’s purchase by the Community and City.”

The concert is set for 3 p.m. Sunday, Aug. 31 at the Harold J. Miossi Performing Arts Center at Cuesta College. General Admission tickets are \$85 a person and available through the Cuesta online ticket box office, see: cuesta.universitytickets.com.

There’s a special deal too. For a \$500 or more donation to the Friends of Morro Elementary (see: www.friendsofmorroelementary.org) you’ll get tickets for your entire family (not just two). Any business that donates \$500 or more covers the owner, family and all of your employees for free. And, a \$500 donation is considered a sponsorship and gets a mention in the event program.

This a rare chance to see a world-renowned conductor come home for a good cause. It promises to be a memorable event.

Letters To The Editor

Thanks to Neil Farrell

I just wanted to say thanks for the recent articles covering the many issues affecting the community and the CSD’s



roll in all of it. Between the Sunnyside School acquisition, State water intertie, possible fire tax increase and the new transient groundwater model’s affect upon building permits, there’s a lot for the community to digest.

I appreciate the way you have been able to include enough of the history for the newcomers to understand how we got here as we try and find our way forward. That can’t be easy, and I see a lot of thought going into the articles. I’m also really thankful that we have Mr. Munds guiding us now.

Please keep up the good work! Thanks again.

*Chuck Cesena
Los Osos*

No on Election Rigging

I oppose the Election Rigging Response Act to be put before CA voters this November, because I oppose election rigging.

What is occurring in the Texas legislature is the rigging of an election process in our democracy. Voters should select representatives, not the other way around.

Still, Gov. Newsom is not a federal agent. We need him to attend to CA. Politics is a contest. To win the contest is not all. The contest must be worth winning. Thus, rules, judges, and non-partisan commissions.

No Tax on Social Security Benefits?

The Budget Reconciliation Act, signed into law on July 4, 2025, provides for an additional tax deduction for seniors. The provision expires in 2028.

A blatantly misleading interpretation of this tax relief appears on the White House website, not just once, but twice, implying that Social Security would not be taxed. This falsehood was repeated in the official proclamation on the 90th anniversary of the Social Security Act: “Following the passage of the historic One Big Beautiful Bill last month, the vast majority of seniors who receive Social Security will pay zero tax on their Social Security benefits — the largest tax break for seniors in the history of our country.”

Shame on newly appointed Social Security commissioner Frank Bisignano for perpetuating this misrepresentation on their website and reiterating it in his Open Letter to the American People, celebrating Social Security’s anniversary: “Last month, the President delivered historic tax relief for America’s seniors when he signed the “One Big Beautiful Bill” into law. A provision in the Bill eliminated federal income taxes on Social Security for most beneficiaries, ensuring that retirees can keep more of the benefits they earned.”

Contrary to this deceitful mischaracterization, Social Security benefits will continue to be taxed up to 85%, depending on income levels.

Consider for comparison the Social Security Fairness Act, that was signed on January 5, 2025. This act remedied an inequity for wage earners who during their working lives had contributed to both Social Security and other retire-

ment systems, such as those established for teachers, firefighters, police officers and public employees. Due to these pensions their Social Security benefits had been reduced or eliminated. The new law did away with this offset, thus increasing their Social Security benefits or establishing entitlement for the first time.

*Petra Clayton
Los Osos*

Eliminating Vote-by-Mail is an Attack on Freedom to Vote

Free, fair, and accessible elections are the cornerstone of a healthy democracy. President Trump’s call to eliminate vote-by-mail is a direct attack on Americans’ freedom to vote.

Vote-by-mail is secure, accurate, and trusted by millions of voters — including older adults, military members, rural communities, tribal communities, voters of color, and voters with disabilities. Vote-by-mail has proven to expand voter participation in recent elections.

President Trump has no constitutional authority to take this action. Under our US Constitution, the states have the power to run elections, and only Congress can step in to regulate those elections when needed. This move is yet another overreach by an unpopular president who seeks to silence the public to hold onto power.

President Trump’s attacks on voting machines are similarly misleading and dangerous. Voting systems in the US already meet strict standards for security, accuracy, transparency, and accessibility, with paper ballots or audit trails to verify results. Scrapping machines in favor of hand counting would undermine election integrity and efficiency, not strengthen it. The League of Women Voters stands firmly for secure, modern systems that protect every vote and uphold public trust in our democracy.

The President should get his facts straight: he does not have the authority to regulate elections, states have strong measures to ensure voting equipment is secure, and many countries successfully utilize vote-by-mail.

The League of Women Voters will not stand by while politicians spread lies to limit democratic participation. We will be looking at the forthcoming Executive Order very closely and will use every tool in our toolbox to push back on these threats to our free, fair, and accessible elections.

We will fight to protect vote-by-mail and every method that makes casting a ballot accessible. Our democracy is strong when every eligible voter can make their voice heard, whether at a polling place or through a mail-in ballot.

*Celina Stewart, Esq
League of Women Voters*

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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

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Morro Bay Tops Foothill 23-20, Improves to 1-1

Story and Photos
by Neil Farrell

Morro Bay High took a hard-earned 23-20 win over the Foothill Trojans of Bakersfield in the Pirates' football home opener Aug. 22.

The win improved the Pirates to 1-1 on the season after they lost a wild shootout, 41-68 on Aug. 16 to King Kekaulike H.S. of Hawaii.

The Pirates flew to Hawaii to play the farthest away game in school history but dropped the game despite five touchdown passes by senior quarterback, Sands Dougherty.

Morro Bay will host Lindsay H.S. Friday, Aug. 29 with the JV game starting at 4 p.m. and Varsity at 7:30.



Morro Bay running back Luca Macari breaks through the line for a big gain against Foothill H.S.



MBHS QB Sands Dougherty gives the ol' stiffarm to avoid a Foothill tackler in one of many scrambles the senior QB made.



Wide receiver, Anthony Campanario, runs free after catching a pass from Sands Dougherty.



Luca Macari powers into the end zone for Morro Bay's first score, late in the first half.



RB Luca Macari vaults through a pair of would-be Trojan tacklers.



Cornerback Efrain Hernandez puts a hit on Foothill RB, Branden Valenzuela, as linebacker Luca Macari closes in to finish him off despite an apparent hold by Foothill lineman.

Alumni Basketball Game Planned

The Morro Bay High School Girls' Basketball Program is bringing back its Alumni Game and the call is going out to all the former Pirates on the girls' team to come down and join in the fun — whether you still play or not.

Head Coach Alex Engle is calling on all alumni of the program, which has a storied history going back decades, to join him and the current players, as well as former coach Cary Nerelli, at 11 a.m. Saturday, Nov. 15 at the High School gym. There will be a luncheon after the game.

A sign-up form has been developed, email Coach Engel at: AEEngel@slcUSD.org to get a link sent (it's too long to print in the newspaper, sorry).



Morro Bay safety, Ellis Best, wraps up Foothill's Branden Valenzuela, with help from Efrain Hernandez, with an obvious hold in the photo as well.



Quarterback Sands Dougherty scrambles away from Foothill's Nathan Arevalo in the Pirates' 23-20 win.

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