

## Election Races Almost Set



By Neil Farrell

With the nomination period winding down, candidates for the June Primary Election are being set, with several positions having no one to challenge the incumbent.

Information for this story is based on the “unofficial” candidates list issued March 19 by the SLO County Clerk-Recorder, who is the top elections official.

It should be noted that a candidate must be certified as “qualified” to run by the Secretary of State’s Office before being placed on the local the ballot. There can be lag time between the Secretary’s review and the release of these candidate lists, and conflict with EBN’s deadlines for publication. If there is a significant change to any of these races before our next edition, we will do a follow up story.

### Dist. 2 Supervisor

In the Dist. 2 Supervisor race, Michael Erin Woody of Morro Bay will square off with James Angelo Dantona.

Woody is from Morro Bay and Dantona listed his mailing address as Cayucos. If readers would like to contact the candidates, Woody’s website is listed as: [www.woodyforsupervisor.com](http://www.woodyforsupervisor.com) and Dantona is at: [jimdantona.com](http://jimdantona.com).

With just two candidates, one will win the seat outright and avoid a November runoff. It would also mark the first time Morro Bay and Los Osos voters have had the chance to vote for their county supervisor since the 2018 election, when Bruce Gibson won in a re-drawn Second District.

In 2024, a new Board majority threw out the map approved in 2021 and returned the district boundaries to

what they had been before redistricting.

Gibson has held the post since 2007 but last year announced that he would not seek a sixth term.

### Michael Woody

Woody is a licensed civil engineer and a Salinan Indian whose family has roots in the area going back over a century. He is part of the Pierce Family, who were among the pioneers in the local abalone industry of the early 1930s.

### Jim Dantona

Dantona was born and raised in the San Fernando Valley attending Simi Valley High School, and Sacramento State University where he earned a bachelor’s degree in “government systems” according to a biography on his website.

For over a decade he worked as a chief of staff for four Los Angeles City Councilmen and was a city planning commissioner in Simi Valley for nearly a decade.



Michael Woody is running for Dist. 2 SLO County Supervisor.



Jim Dantona is running for Dist. 2 SLO County Supervisor.

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## Coleman Park Project Contract Awarded



Work has begun on Phase 1 of the Coleman Park Project. Photo by Neil Farrell

By Neil Farrell

Work has already begun in the rebuilding of Morro Bay’s Coleman Park, with a construction fence up and excavators and backhoes already moving dirt around.

Morro Bay City Council in February awarded the construction contract for Phase 1 of the rebuilding of Coleman Park.

The Council approved hiring J Bruce Kies, who was the low bidder at \$724,000. There’s a contingency of \$72,000 bringing the total contract budget up to over \$796,000.

The project includes purchase and installation of a pre-fabricated restroom for some \$333,000, add in extras like \$192,000 for design and \$40,000 for construction management and others. And the overall project budget tops \$1.4 million.

But that total falls short of the available funding by some \$194,000.

The City’s funding is coming from several sources. There’s a \$600,000 grant from a State Parks program; \$40,000 donated by Castle Winds a company that tried to get an offshore wind energy lease but failed; \$69,500 in Quimby Act monies; \$177,000 of Prop. 68 funds; and \$292,000 in development impact fees. The total available funding was at over \$1.21 million.

To make up the difference the City shuffled around some other monies from three other projects — two that were completed under budget and one that is being put off.

The City took \$42,300 from the Sequoia Street Emergency Storm Drain Project; and \$84,700 from the Citywide Capital and Facilities Planning. It also deferred its Active

Coleman Park Continued on page 22

## Our Stories: Walter Heath: An ‘I Love MB’ Origin Story



Morro Bay in Bloom volunteers are prepared for a spring community project and an Easter egg hunt. Photo submitted

By Judy Salamacha

Who’s ready for an early-bird Easter Egg hunt? On Saturday April 4, the entire community is invited to this year’s I Love MB activities based at Tidelands Park. Although participation in the beautification projects is not required to enjoy the children’s egg hunt fun, Morro Bay In Bloom (MBIB) volunteers are hoping families and friends will come out and give a little “love” to our waterfront. Projects are strategically

planned for all ages, talents and abilities beginning at 8:30 a.m. followed by a celebration egg hunt.

Longtime locals might remember there used to be an annual Morro Bay Easter egg hunt, and now, in 2026, our children will discover the revived tradition with hunting for fun-filled egg surprises beginning at 11:30 a.m.

Walter Heath, founder of MBIB and project manager for I Love MB said, “This is our third year for I Love MB. The Tide-

I Love MB Continued on page 22

## Local Sport Fisher Settles Civil Case

By Neil Farrell



A Morro Bay sport fishing boat operator has settled a dispute over relatively minor violations of fishing regulations, agreeing to pay thousands to get past the troubles.

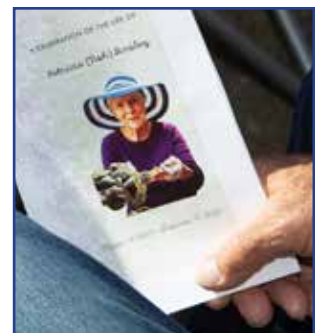
District Attorney Dan Dow on Feb. 23, said his office had reached a settlement with Black Pearl Sportfishing LLC., the owner of the “Black Pearl” fishing vessel, and its operator, Brian Walker, for \$12,600 to settle violations he said dated back to last summer.

“The Black Pearl charter boat service,” Dow said in a news release, “regularly takes dozens of paying passengers

Civil Case Continued on page 23

## Forever in Our Community’s Heart

Photos by Dean Sullivan



Family, community members, and customers came from near and far to celebrate the life of Tish Linsley, a beloved local and business owner.

Tish and her husband, the late Lee Linsley, started the Los Osos Valley Nursery in 1977 and built more than a business together. Tish and her daughter, Hope Merkle, carried on the welcoming atmosphere, wealth of information, and beautiful plants when Lee died.

“I want to thank people for the outpouring of love we have received for my mom who passed away on February

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# News

## D.A. Urging 'Yes' on AB 46

By Neil Farrell

The County District Attorney has come out in support of a bill before the State Legislature designed to get tougher on criminals with mental health disorders.

"District Attorneys and law enforcement professionals," reads a news release from D.A. Dan Dow, "are urging people across the State of California to immediately contact their elected state assembly member and state senator to fix mental health diversion by passing Assembly Bill 46."

D.A. Dow, who serves as president of the California District Attorneys Association, said AB 46 is needed to "fix California's broken mental health diversion law."

He added that AB 46 closes "dangerous loopholes" in the law "by restoring judges' discretion to deny diversion to violent and high-risk offenders while still ensuring meaningful treatment for those who truly suffer from mental illness."

According to the website, calmatters.org (see: <https://bit.ly/4uP3hoD>) "Existing law authorizes a court to grant pretrial diversion to a defendant suffering from a mental disorder, on an accusatory pleading alleging the commission of a misdemeanor or felony offense in order for the defendant to undergo mental health treatment."

Current law says a defendant "is eligible for diversion if they have been diagnosed with certain mental disorders and the court finds that the mental disorder was a significant factor in the commission of the charged offense, unless there is clear and convincing evidence that the disorder was not a motivating, causal or contributing factor to the defendant's involvement in the alleged offense."

In other words, to get mental health diversion one must show that whatever crime they committed was because they are mentally ill. If a judge finds that mental illness wasn't the reason that they did whatever they are accused of, the judge can deny diversion. But a person could still plead insanity. And, current law makes diversion unavailable for certain crimes, like murder.

AB 46 gives judges discretion in deciding whether a defendant can get diversion.

This bill, Cal Matters said, would, if the defendant has been diagnosed with a mental disorder within five years of the current offense, as specified, require the court to find that the defendant's mental disorder was a significant factor in the commission of the offense.

As it is now, a defendant is suitable for diversion if a qualified mental health expert says that the defendant would respond to treatment "and the defendant will not pose an unreasonable risk of danger to public safety if treated in the community."

AB 46 gives a judge the discretion to deny diversion, "even if a defendant is otherwise suitable for diversion."

The law requires a finding that "it is more likely than not that the defendant will pose an unreasonable risk to the physical safety of another person."

AB 46 "would require the mental health experts' opinion to include that the proposed mental health diversion plan is clinically appropriate to address the symptoms of the defendant's mental disorder."

It would also require a judge to put in writing why a defendant is not allowed diversion.

D.A. Dow said, "Victims of violent crime in California deserve to be protected by our laws, not placed in greater danger because those laws are written in a way that forces judges to release dangerous offenders back into our neighborhoods."

He said current law ties the hands of judges and "strips them of common-sense discretion and allows individuals who commit serious and violent crimes — including domestic violence, home invasions and assaults — to avoid accountability and reoffend. We must fix this law before another victim pays the ultimate price."

According to Dow, when an offender successfully goes through the diversion program, "the crime is removed from their record. Erasing accountability and endangering victims, law enforcement, and the public if the person

reoffends."

Dow added, "Diversion should be a carefully monitored path to treatment, not a loophole that gives dangerous offenders a free pass and leaves victims feeling abandoned by the system that promised to protect them."

Dow listed several examples of diversion gone wrong including one out of Santa Clara County wherein "a woman carjacked an elderly man, dragging him alongside the car; then rammed that same vehicle into her boyfriend when they argued; and then 10 minutes later rammed the vehicle twice into one victim as he was eating at a restaurant outside, killing him. She was on mental health diversion for carjacking at the time."

And in Butte County, he said, "a defendant was on active mental health diversion for felony assault on a police officer when he shot his neighbor to death. His neighbor's body was found riddled with bullets in the middle of the street in front of the defendant's residence."

"The defendant fled and later was found with a ghost gun in his possession. Behavioral Health had reported the defendant was compliant with medication and had been doing 'excellent' on his program." His roommate had a different story to tell.

"Defendant's roommate when interviewed indicated that in fact the defendant had been acting oddly for weeks and had been off his medications for an extended time. He has since been committed to the state hospital as a 'Not Guilty by Reason of Insanity' disposition."

Dow asked everyone to contact their State Senator and State Assembly person and urge them to vote "Yes" on AB 46.

Readers can contact the local representatives, Dawn Addis in the Assembly (see: <https://addis.asmdc.org>) and Sen. John Laird in the State Senate (see: <https://sd17.senate.ca.gov>).

The bill has had a long and circuitous route through the Legislature having first been introduced in December 2024, according to the bill's history posted on the Legislature's website.

It's been in and out of committee several times, amended several times and as of March 3, 2026, it was being re-referred to the Senate Committee on Public Safety.

Assemblywoman Stephanie Nguyen (D — Elk Grove) is the bill's author. On her website, Assemblywoman Nguyen said, "Public safety must be the foundation of every diversion decision. AB 46 gives judges clearer authority to deny diversion when a defendant poses a serious risk. Diversion remains available where appropriate, but protecting victims and our communities must come first."

Local Assemblywoman Addis voted for the bill back in May 2025 on its third reading on the Assembly floor.

Esteros Bay News sent inquiries to both Addis and Laird asking their positions on AB 46 but did not receive a response before deadline.

Addis' team responded with, "Yes, Asm. Addis voted for the bill previously. If the bill passes the Senate and comes back to the Assembly for a final vote, she will consider the newest amendments at that time."

Sen. Laird had not responded before deadline.

## Law Day Essay Contest

In celebration of Law Day on May 1, 2026, the San Luis Obispo County Bar Association, in partnership with the San Luis Obispo Superior Court will hold the inaugural "Young American Voices" Law Day Essay Contest for middle and high school students across San Luis Obispo County.

This year's theme, inspired by the American Bar Association, is "The Rule of Law and the American Dream." The contest invites students to reflect on how the legal system shapes their aspirations and the future of their generation.

Middle school students are asked to explore their personal American Dream and how the rule of law supports it, while high school students will tackle a broader question: what the American Dream looks like for their generation — and how the rule of law makes it possible.

The "Young American Voices" initiative is designed to do more than recognize strong

writing: It aims to engage young people in civic life at

a critical moment. By encouraging students to think deeply about fairness, equality, and opportunity, the program seeks to foster a new generation that understands and values the institutions that uphold democracy.

"As we approach the 250th anniversary of our nation's founding, it is more important than ever to engage young people in understanding and preserving the rule of law," said Judge Michael C. Kelley. "This contest gives students a meaningful opportunity to reflect on their own aspirations while recognizing that the freedoms they enjoy, and the dreams they pursue, depend on a system of laws that applies equally to all."

Submissions are due by April 3, and winners will be honored at a public ceremony at the San Luis Obispo Courthouse on May 1. First-place winners will receive cash prizes of \$1,000 (high school) and \$500 (middle school), along with publication opportunities and community recognition.

To make this initiative possible and to expand its impact, the SLO County Bar Association is seeking donations from local businesses, organizations, and community members.

### Community contributions will directly support:

- Student cash prizes and awards
- Event programming and outreach
- Continued civic education initiatives in local schools

"Investing in these students is an investment in the future of our community and our justice system," said Lisa Sperow, president of the San Luis Obispo Bar Association and president/CEO of the Monterey College of Law. "By supporting this program, donors help ensure that young

## Correction

Last issue's story about work on demolishing the old Morro Bay-Cayucos Sewer Treatment Plant identified the consultant as AQEA. We should have first listed the full name of the company, Anchor QEA, before using the acronym.

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**See you at the Bay-Osos Kiwanis Easter Egg Hunt!**

**WHEN:** Saturday, April 4th 2026

**WHERE:** Grassy area next to South Bay Community Center

**TIMES:** 10:00 am: FUN ACTIVITIES BEGIN  
10:30 am: Contest Entries Due & Story Time with the Los Osos Library  
11:00 am: EGG HUNT BEGINS

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# News

people not only understand the rule of law—but feel empowered to protect and strengthen it.”

## How to Get Involved

- Students: Contact the San Luis Obispo County Bar Association for more information
- Educators: Encourage student participation and incorporate the contest into classroom learning
- Community Members & Businesses: Donate to support prizes and program growth
- Public: Attend the Law Day awards ceremony on May 1 to celebrate student achievement

The SLO County legal community hopes to amplify young voices, strengthen civic understanding, and inspire the next generation of leaders.

For more information about the contest or to donate, contact the San Luis Obispo County Bar Association at [slobar@slobar.org](mailto:slobar@slobar.org).

## Cal Fire Warns of High Fire Danger



A Cal Fire firefighter uses a drip torch to ignite a controlled burn, one of the ways Cal Fire manages fuel loads to lessen the impact of wildfires.

When temperatures are on the rise the potential for a wildfire rises as well, and Cal Fire and the County Air Pollution Control District have issued a warning to be extra cautious not to spark a blaze.

“Forecasted warm temperatures are expected to push conditions above seasonal averages through June,” Cal Fire said in a March 12 news release, “and with below normal rainfall anticipated through April, grass and brush across the county are drying out earlier than usual.”

In response to the warm weather and lack of spring showers, Cal Fire declared a temporary burn suspension for all of SLO County from March 13-15.

But just because that temporary ban has now elapsed, the danger hasn’t eased.

“Early season rains produced robust grass growth across the county,” Battalion Chief Luke Bourgault said. “Those grasses will begin curing quickly in May and June, and once they do, we could see fast moving fires in the right conditions.”

This winter started out with some strong rainfalls last November and into December, which is early for this area. Normally, the end of the year is pretty dry and rains start to come in January with the heaviest normally falling in March and into April.

Big storms can sometimes happen even later than April.

For example, on May 20, 2017, a rainstorm caused the Mud Creek Landslide on Hwy 1 north of here — the biggest landslide in California history.

Statewide, Cal Fire said, fire potential is forecast to remain near normal through May, but [fire] activity is expected to increase in June as fine fuels continue to dry.

“These conditions also bring an increased risk of heat related injuries,” Chief Bourgault said. “While live vegetation currently holds enough moisture to reduce the likelihood of catastrophic wildfires in most areas right now, we still need the community’s help. Use equipment safely, avoid parking in dry grass, and take steps to protect your home and your neighbors.”

APCD will monitor the weather and issue periodic updates, which could include additional burn bans.

Everyone can pitch in to the lower the risks by doing some basic prevention, like clearing away dried grasses around your home to create defensible space, and being extra careful when using equipment like mowers or acetylene torches in or near dry grass.

For more information on wildfire preparedness, see: [www.ReadyForWildfire.org](http://www.ReadyForWildfire.org).

## Goleta Couple Died of CO Poisoning

By Neil Farrell

The County Coroner’s Office has ruled the deaths of a Goleta couple staying in a home in Cambria as “accidental” due to inhaling poison gas.

According to Sheriff’s spokesman, Tony Cipolla, on Feb. 8 deputies were dispatched to a home in the 8100 block of Lone Palm Dr., Cambria for a “call for service,” that ended up being a coroner’s case.

When they arrived they found a man and woman dead inside the home. They were identified as John Ruskey, 53 of Goleta, and his wife, Kristen Ruskey, 49.

“An autopsy and toxicology test were performed,” Cipolla said in a March 12 news release. “The Coroner has determined John Ruskey died of toxic effects of carbon monoxide [CO] and Kristen Ruskey died of toxic effects of carbon monoxide and ethanol.”

He added that both of their deaths have been ruled accidental. The home had a CO monitor but it had been been disabled.

“A combination carbon monoxide/smoke detector was found in their room, but it was found to be disconnected,” Cipolla said.

Lone Palm Drive is a frontage road on the ocean side of Hwy 1 just north of Cambria. It turns off the highway and runs north for a short distance and is mostly undeveloped save for a few homes.

According to the CDC, “carbon monoxide is an odorless, colorless gas that can cause sudden illness and death if inhaled.”

Symptoms include “headache, dizziness, weakness, upset stomach, vomiting, chest pain, and confusion. CO symptoms are often described as ‘flu-like.’”

CO is produced by the burning of gasoline in a car or truck, but indoors more commonly by natural gas in an appliance that isn’t efficiently burning the gas.

When natural gas is properly burned with the correct mix of fuel and air, it produces carbon dioxide, water vapor and heat and burns in a blue flame.

When improperly burned natural gas can produce carbon monoxide (CO) and burns with a yellow flame. Fuel oil, kerosene, charcoal and wood also produce CO gas when burned.

This is why gas appliances especially floor furnaces, must be regularly cleaned and inspected. It’s also a good reason to make sure chimneys are periodically cleaned of soot.

If CO builds up in an enclosed space like a home, it is deadly. Breathing CO reduces the blood’s ability to carry oxygen. It can reach dangerous levels indoors or outdoors.

“If you breathe in a lot of CO,” the CDC said, “it can make you pass out or kill you. People who are sleeping, drunk, or under the influence of other substances can die from CO poisoning before they have symptoms.”

For more information on CO poisoning, see: [www.cdc.gov/carbon-monoxide/about/index.html](http://www.cdc.gov/carbon-monoxide/about/index.html).

CO monitors are required by law. The California “Carbon Monoxide Poisoning Prevention Act” requires all residences with an attached garage or a fossil fuel source (gas stove, fireplace, gas furnace, for example) to have functioning carbon monoxide alarms.

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## League District 2 Forum

The League of Women Voters is urging SLO County voters to get ready to vote in the upcoming Primary Election on June 2 by learning about the candidates for county supervisor and their positions on the issues important to our community.

The League is partnering with area Rotary Clubs to moderate a forum for candidates for supervisor. A forum for District 2 candidates will be held on Wednesday, April 22, from 5:30 to 7 p.m. at the Morro Bay Vets Hall, 209 Surf Street in Morro Bay.

Candidate forums are free and open to the public. They provide an opportunity to learn about the candidates, find out their views on the issues, and ask them questions.

To make sure your voter registration is up to date, to change your registration information, or if you are new to San Luis Obispo County, to register to vote go to [register-tovote.ca.gov](http://register-tovote.ca.gov).

"As with every election, your vote is your voice and your power," the League said in a new release. "Make your voice heard. Use your power. Register to vote and cast your ballot."

Community members are encouraged to attend the forum and to submit questions for the candidates, Jim Dantona and Michael Erin Woody, to answer at the forum. Questions should be on the issues and applicable to both candidates.

## Goodwill Donation Drive in Cambria

Is your closet or garage full of things you no longer use or need? Would you like to declutter your home and contribute to a worthy cause? Here's your chance to bring new life and fresh energy into your home by donating to the Goodwill Drive on behalf of a local non-profit organization. Remember when you give to Goodwill, you keep trash out of landfills and contribute to the local economy through workers that are employed with them. The Beautify Cambria Association will hold a Good-

## Estero Bay New Briefs

By Theresa-Maria Wilson

will Donation Drive on Saturday, March 28, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. in the empty lot next to Cambria Library, (future Skatepark site) located at 900 Main St. Cambria.

Beautify Cambria will use the money earned by this Donation Drive towards a Bee, Butterfly & Bat Street Faire planned for Saturday, June 27, on Burton Drive in the West Village, to help raise awareness about the importance of bees, butterflies, bats and other pollinators. Enjoy food, music, bee-related products, interesting speakers, a photo exhibit of pollinators, plus plenty of kid-friendly activities. For more info, visit our website <https://beautifycambria.org/about/>.

Anyone who cannot come to this event but has items to contribute, is asked to contact Claudia Harmon Worthen at 805-927-1934 to arrange for drop off in Cambria ahead of time.

## Estuary Climate Resiliency Transportation Plan Comments and Questions



The San Luis Obispo Council of Governments is looking to develop the Morro Bay Estuary Climate Resiliency Transportation Plan, which will be the first step toward improving mobility options between Morro Bay and Los Osos under a multi-objective framework that considers

the natural environment, the estuary, and the state park.

As San Luis Obispo County experiences unusual weather events this March, it highlights the importance of planning for how future climate conditions may affect coastal transportation infrastructure and mobility in the Morro Bay-Los Osos corridor. Board presentation, and the draft plan and supporting materials can be accessed at [sbbclimateplan.org/](http://sbbclimateplan.org/). Send any comments or questions to [jdinunzio@slocog.org](mailto:jdinunzio@slocog.org) by noon, April 9.

## Addis Release statement on California's Farmworkers Day

Following allegations of rape, including two women who were minors at the time, Cesar Chavez, the California Legislature will move to change the name of the state holiday named for the labor leader.

Assembly Speaker Robert Rivas, (D-Hollister), on March 8 announced that he will work with Senate President pro Tem Monique Limón (D-Santa Barbara) to change the holiday's name to Farmworkers Day.

Assemblymember Dawn Addis (D-Morro Bay) issued the following statement, "I am grateful for the strength of the Chavez survivors, and to survivors everywhere, for their strength and courage, and I am proud to support the Legislature's efforts to help California begin to heal with a state holiday for farmworkers."

"Farmworkers' rights, giving people a voice, and ensuring fair treatment takes collective effort and that's what the movement has always been — thousands rising up for fairness. It is vital that now California doubles-down on preserving existing pathways to justice for child sex abuse survivors and continues to strengthen our protection so that time is never a barrier for those seeking justice."

Assemblymember Addis will support the legislation following its introduction.

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

## Foul Play Not Suspected in Jail Inmate's Death

Foul play is not suspected in the death of a San Luis Obispo man with a long criminal history who was locked up at the County Jail at the time.

According to Sheriff's spokesman, Tony Cipolla, on Saturday, March 14 sometime before 9 p.m., County Jail

medical staff was making the rounds handing out medications to inmates when they came upon one man who was in "medical distress."

"Custody and nursing staff immediately attempted to render medical aid and CPR," Cipolla said, "until paramedics arrived."

The man never regained consciousness, Cipolla said, and paramedics pronounced him dead at 8:59 p.m.

The inmate was identified as Trinidad Castilleja, 48 of SLO.

SLO Police arrested Castilleja on Dec. 18, 2024, Cipolla said, and he was in custody on three separate cases.

"Two cases," Cipolla said, "had been resolved, and he was pending sentencing on the third at the time of his death."

He had a long history of getting into trouble.

"Castilleja had a long history of being booked into the jail," Cipolla said, "with more than 24 such occurrences since 1998."

The official cause of death was awaiting the results of an autopsy, Cipolla said.

Castilleja's death is the first one at the County Jail in 2026.




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## Sheriff Warns of Paving Scams



Has someone contacted you regarding your driveway, offering a great deal to pave it over? Don't believe them. The County Sheriff's Department is warning residents about "asphalt scams" people have been reporting of late. "Deputies have responded to calls for service related to these scams in Huasna Township, in January and again last week in Nipomo," reads an alert from Sheriff's spokesman, Tony Cipolla. The scams involve people pretending to be legitimate contractors. "These incidents involve individuals posing as contractors who approach homeowners offering discounted driveway paving services," Cipolla said. "Each time, after the work was done, the scammers demanded much more money than what was verbally agreed upon with the homeowner."

It's the old bait & switch scheme. "Sometimes the price was inflated two, three, and even 10 times more than the agreed upon cost," Cipolla said, "with the hopes the homeowner would 'settle' for a higher price."

Asphalt paving scams, Cipolla said, "typically involve traveling sales crews who claim they have 'leftover' materials from a nearby job and can complete work quickly at a reduced price. In reality these materials are rarely left over, and the work performed is often substandard."

He added that victims say the asphalt is too thin, improperly installed, or "of inferior quality, resulting in driveways that begin to crack and deteriorate shortly after completion."

The scammers often go door-to-door, Cipolla said, and use high-pressure tactics to rush people into quick decisions and insist on a cash only deal.

"Once the work is completed, or sometimes before, it becomes difficult to locate the individuals, leaving homeowners with costly repairs and little recourse."

Cipolla gave several tips on how to protect yourself:

- Do not accept unsolicited, door-to-door offers for paving services;

- Verify the contractor's license and insurance through the California Contractor's State Licensing Bureau or Better Business Bureau;

- Get at least three written estimates from reputable, local companies;
  - Require a written contract that includes the company's name, address, phone number, license number, and a detailed scope of work; and,
  - Avoid paying cash. Use a check or credit card to ensure a record of the transaction.
- And if someone tries to run this scam on you, report it to the Sheriff's Department or local police.

## Masons Honor Firefighters



In the photo from left are: Fire Capt./Paramedic Ryan Gobler; Fire Apparatus Engineer/Paramedic Zach Doener; Firefighter Jack Hoy; Reserve Firefighter Parker Burt; and Engineer/Paramedic Casey Robertshaw (MBFD). Submitted photo

The King David's Masonic Lodge, No. 209 F & AM in San Luis Obispo honored several local firefighters at the lodge's 2026 Fire Fighters Recognition Dinner, held March 17 at the Masonic Lodge in Downtown SLO.

The fire fighters were from Morro Bay, SLO City and CAL FIRE/County Fire Departments and were honored "for exemplary community service," according to a news release from the Masons.

Honorees included Engineer/Paramedic Casey Robertshaw of Morro Bay Fire Department; Fire Capt./Paramedic Ryan Gobler, Fire Apparatus Engineer/Paramedic Sach Doener, Fire Apparatus Engineer Andrew Gertz, Firefighter Jack Hoy, and Reserve Firefighter Parker Burt of CAL FIRE/County Fire; and Capt. Eric Lökkart of SLO City Fire.

"These individuals, by their zeal and endeavor, have been of significant and outstanding service to their communities," the Masons said.

Each honoree received a framed certificate at the awards banquet and a \$2,500 donation in honor of the firefighters was made to the Alisa Ann Ruch Burn Foundation.

## SLO Wedding Expo Keeps Budgets in Mind

As wedding costs continue to rise, the Central Coast Bride San Luis Obispo Wedding Expo is putting the spotlight on something couples are asking for more than ever: budget transparency and smart, strategic planning.



Designed to help engaged couples plan with clarity and confidence, the expo offers a streamlined opportunity to meet trusted local professionals face-to-face, compare options in real time, and gain a realistic understanding of pricing before signing contracts. Rather than spending months researching vendors individually, couples can explore services, ask detailed questions, and discover practical ways to maximize their investment—all in one day.

"Couples want beautiful weddings, but they also want financial confidence," said Karla Langner, event organizer of Central Coast Bride. "When vendors are in the same room, couples can compare packages, understand what's included, and make informed decisions that align with their priorities."

This year's participating professionals represent a wide range of services essential to building a well-balanced wedding budget. Rental and event design support will be showcased by Taylor Rental Party Plus and Kramer Events, Inc., while culinary experiences come to life with Popolo Catering and Classic Cocktails. Capturing the day's most meaningful moments are Loose Tie Photography and Videography, Burlap & Oak Wedding Photography, and Painted Love by Kristiana. Couples can also explore specialized services from Tiffany's Bridal Boutique, Boozy Burros, Bare Heart Boudoir, and Central Coast Party Helpers, along with venue options including Pavilion on the Lake, The Cliffs Hotel & Spa, Madonna Inn, Zaca Mesa Winery, and Bianchi Winery and Tasting Room.

VIP ticket holders will enjoy additional perks, including a signature beverage, floral arrangement with Flowers on Alexander, and a curated swag bag.

It all takes place Sunday, April 12, from 12–4 p.m. the Madonna Expo Center in San Luis Obispo. Tickets are \$12 for general admission and \$55 VIP admission. They can be purchased at <https://bit.ly/4d77g9x>. For more information and social media giveaways, follow @centralcoastbride on Instagram.

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• CAL FIRE	• Fire Safe Focus Group	• San Luis Obispo County Sheriff's Office
• California Department of Fish and Wildlife	• Greenspace	• SoCalGas
• California Highway Patrol (CHP)	• Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E)	• United Way of San Luis Obispo County
• California State Parks	• San Luis Obispo County Animal Services	
• Cambria Community Healthcare District		

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# Community

## The Morro Bay High School Drama Club presents 'Mamma Mia!'



Photo by Erin Davis

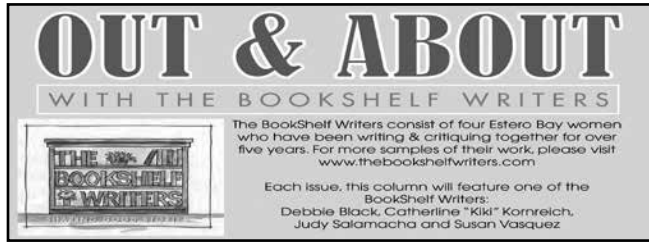
Get ready for a musical that will have you tapping your toes in your seats while cheering for love, friendship and the embrace of unconventional families.

Morro Bay High School Drama Club presents "Mamma Mia." Set on a colorful Greek island, the plot serves as a background for a wealth of ABBA songs including "Dancing Queen," "Honey, Honey" and "Take a Chance on Me" among many others.

Sophie, a young woman about to be married in paradise, discovers that any one of three men could be her father. She wants her father to walk her down the aisle. They need to figure this out. Sophie invites all

three potential fathers to the wedding without telling her mother, Donna Sheridan, who was once the lead singer of Donna and the Dynamos.

The public is invited to performances Friday April 10 at 7 p.m., Saturday April 11 at 2 p.m. and 7 p.m., Sunday April 12 at 2 p.m., Friday April 17 at 7 p.m., and Saturday April 18 at 2 and 7 p.m. Adult tickets are \$15, and tickets for students or child are \$12. Morro Bay High School Theater is located on the high school campus at 235 Atascadero Road, Morro Bay. Tickets can be purchased at [mbhsdrama.ludus.com](http://mbhsdrama.ludus.com). For more information, contact Erin Davis at [mbhsdrama@slcUSD.org](mailto:mbhsdrama@slcUSD.org).



## Searching for the Ruby Crown

By Susan Vasquez

Sounds invade my yard every morning. One is the rapid tap-tap-tap of an old-fashioned typewriter, but with the speed of a bubble machine. I hear the sound, see nothing, check with the birding app, Merlin, and see it thinks a Ruby-Crowned Kinglet is vocalizing. I have to trust Merlin, since it knows so much and I so little.

Maybe I have seen the featureless outline of the bird, safe behind several layers of branches or a row of hearty bushes. But this bird is shy around me and so small that I might convince myself that it is a resting hummingbird if it weren't also stout in a tiny way. I know it is not one of the Bushtits, ruffling the leaves and the twigs on the trees that frame my yard. They are also adept at hiding, but pass by in a quiet procession. If I didn't see movement in my surroundings, I might not know the Bushtits scavenged nearby. These Kinglets announce themselves with voices that command attention, but they are not so willing to reveal anything more than their birdsong. I might know the bird is nearby. I can identify their call. But I have never seen the ruby crown.

A flit flashes at the edge of my sight. It emerges from the top of my neighbor's coastal redwood and slides through the air in a fraction of a second to the next tree. My mind registers the idea of red, almost impossibly from the front of the bird. I believe I must have seen it wrong, but the impression of something red on this flash of a bird remains.

I want to think it is a Ruby-Crowned Kinglet. I want to think I have seen and identified this illusive bird. But the red

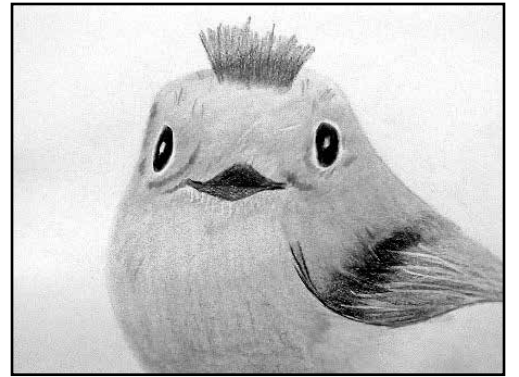


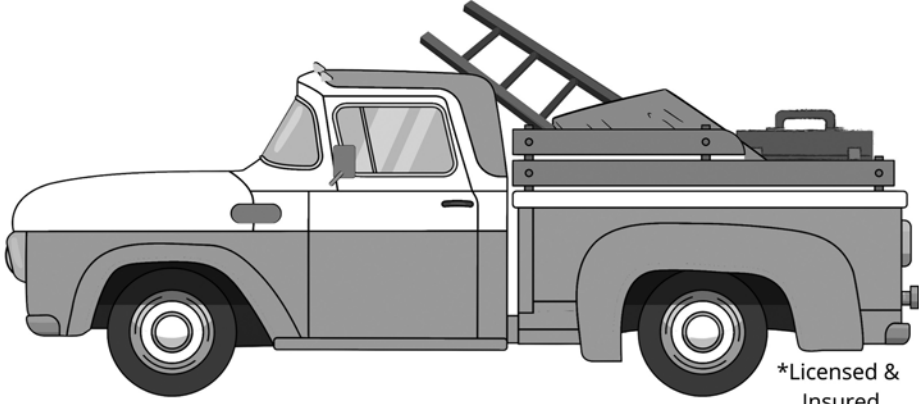
image isn't from the top of the bird, and I shouldn't argue with my memory just because I want to see what I want to see. It could more rightly be a House Finch, a show-stealing presence in my yard, like the student in elementary school who always raises his hand to answer questions.

I should be satisfied with the House Finch, that normal, accommodating, serenading bird. It fulfills all my birding requirements: I hear it, see it, watch its behaviors. The Finch likes my backyard and agrees with my presence there. But playing hard-to-get, the Kinglet entices me, and I fall prey to the hide and seek call of nature. I don't think I'll be satisfied with House Finches while Ruby-crowned Kinglets are nearby. My search goes on.

Peterson Field Guide tells me the bird is tiny - 4 1/4 inches. Just 1/4 inch larger than the Anna's Hummingbirds that live nearby. I also learn that my quest to see the ruby crown may never be realized. Only males have the ruby crown. And the crowns remain hidden unless the Kinglet is excited.

To find a tiny Kinglet among the giant of the natural world and to recognize that bird as a male and then to see it in an excited state is asking too much. Only their call

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## Cat Noir CC

Hot Tub for Boris

By Theresa-Marie Wilson

Spa Attendant: Can I help you sir?

Boris: I would like to rent a hot tub for an hour.

SA: Okay salt or natural spring water?

Boris: Dry.

SA: Excuse me?

Boris: No water at all, just a tub and one of those fancy sponges.

SA: Water comes with the package.

Boris: NOPE!

SA: What kind of sponge - looffa, mesh, foam?

Boris: Touch my tongue?

SA: What the hell?

Boris: (\* tongue hanging out, words mumbled) Tutch my tomgue.

SA: Ooooo, scratchy.

Boris: I also want a bowl of your best tuna water and a fish flake salad.

SA: Umm, is this your first time at a spa?

Boris: I have never been so offended in my nine lives.

Looks at my claws, are they the razor sharp, pearly white claws of a tree scratcher?

SA: Sir, we simply don't have any of the stuff you want. There is a place next door that does excellent nail work and wellness checks. Maybe you came in here by mistake. It's called The Vet.

Boris: I am so sorry. I only napped for 14 hours yesterday, so I am a tad out of it. The Vet Spa, you said?

SA: I think it is just The Vet.

Boris: Can I have my slippers back, please. I want to look ready for relaxation and pampering when I walk in there.

Dun dun duuuun. Will Boris write a scathing Yelp review of The Vet; will he steal a car and drive back home to Furless, Virgil and Daisy; will he settle for the sink at home with a bowl of tap water and a basic kibble salad?

Follow Cat Noir CC on Facebook and Instagram



©CatNoirCC

# Community

is a friend to my backyard. The vocals are an easy find; the rest is near impossible. But those are my marching orders. Find that elusive, hummingbird-sized, male Kinglet and make sure it shows me its ruby crown.

If your search ever brings you close to a sighting, please let me know.

Visit Susan Vasquez and her stories at <https://susanvasquez.com/>

## Events and Activities

By Theresa-Marie Wilson



Check out "Out of Bounds," an open juried international exhibition offered by the Pastel Society of the West Coast. The exhibit features work in pastel (and other mediums) going beyond the traditional use of the pastel medium. Breaking the 80% rule for traditional pastel exhibits, this competition is one that requires the entries to be approximately 30-50% pastel combined with one or more other mediums creating two-dimensional works of art. If you relish experimental art and love art that moves outside of the usual boundaries of traditional pastel competitions, this show is for you!

The featured 3D artist is Christine Silbaugh of Back Bay Pottery in Los Osos. She is inspired by nature, birds, leaves, flowers, and the ocean and enjoys making a variety of things from miniature teapots and jewelry to functional pieces for the home and kitchen, like garlic graters, utensil holders, butter dishes and house numbers.

PSWC'S Out Of Bounds! takes place April 2-May 11, from 12 - 4 p.m. daily. There is an artist's reception on Sunday, April 12, from 12 - 4 p.m. at

Art Center Morro Bay, 835 Main St, Morro Bay. Image by Christine Silbaugh

...

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, April 7. 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.

...



If you like jigsaw puzzles, the Morro Bay Odd Fellows has solutions for you. The Bay-Rock Lodge, I.O.O.F. is holding a "Jigsaw Puzzle Exchange" fundraiser set for 2-4 p.m. Saturday, March 28 at the Odd Fellows Hall, 710 Harbor St., Morro Bay.

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

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

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

...

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

Current Featured Wall Artist: Randy Ayala paintings on wood and canvas.

Current Featured Display Case: Faylla Chapman - All kinds of eggs!

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

• **Fiber Arts Club** - Thursday, April 2, 2:30 - 4 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.

• **Art Party** - Friday, April 3, 2:30 - 4:30 p.m. Unleash your creativity at our monthly art party! Use your imagination to make unique art pieces using beads, paper, pens, pencils, scissors, glue and more. All materials provided - you bring the inspiration! Preschool, School

Age, Tween.

• **Pokemon Card Trading** - Saturday, April 4, 1 - 2:30 p.m. Do you "wanna" be the very best like no one ever was? Then bring your Pokémon cards to meet, compete, and trade with other collectors your age! School age, tween, and teen.

• **Paws to Read** - Wednesday, April 8 and 22, 3 - 4 p.m. Come and read your favorite book to Lucy and Pauli! School age.

• **Hexbugs** - Friday, April 10, 2:30 - 4:30 p.m. Create mazes for these motorized bugs, race them and more! Preschool, school age, and tween.

...



Take part in Pastel Innovations Plus with Dawn Emerson via Zoom on April 10-11 from 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. The cost is \$250. The registration link is [pswc.ws/new-workshops/](https://pswc.ws/new-workshops/)

This session is designed for those who have taken a "Pastel Innovations" session at some time and want to explore applying these techniques to "mine" and edit a subject for more powerful meaning and expression. Each day techniques will be introduced to help you apply the design elements of line, texture, value, edges, space, color, and shape with mixed media and pastel (PanPastel and stick) in order to discover new ways to explore your subject.

Participants will be encouraged to push the boundaries of what is "expected" of the pastel medium by embracing the question "what if?"

Dawn Emerson is an inspiring teacher who is passionate about helping each person in their own unique way of using the pastel medium to express themselves. She creates a culture of sharing and exploration in each workshop that encourages each person to take risks, to constructively critique their work, and to identify meaningful themes to pursue in their art. Dawn is a signature member of the Pastel Society of America, a respected art judge and juror, author of the book "Pastel Innovations," and has seven instructional videos. Her work is known for its powerful energy and expressive way of combining realism with abstraction.

This workshop is available for anyone to take via Zoom from home, but artists in the Central Coast area are invited to register for the class via the PSWC website, [pswc.ws](https://pswc.ws), and then gather at Art Center Morro Bay, 835 Main St, Morro Bay, to participate in the workshop together. RSVP <https://pswc.ws/new-workshops>. Image by Dawn Emerson

...

St. Benedict's Episcopal Church will offer viewings of local artist Chloe White's highly acclaimed Stations of the Cross. For centuries, people have used Stations of the Cross to contemplate the final days in the life of Jesus. More than simple points of reference, however, Chloe White's relief sculptures encourage us to go deeper. As she explained, "I concerned myself with the physical and emotional expression of these moments in Christ's life, conveying his and his loved ones' experiences for the viewer to find what resonates within their own experience."

Inviting the public to this special Lenten observance, Reverend Linzi Stahlecker commented, "Art helps connect us with the deep emotions of our faith." The fourteen stations and interpretive materials are available for free public

Events Continued on page 9

San Luis Obispo Blues Society Presents

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# Police Blotter



- **March 15:** Police responded at 12:13 p.m. to Albertson's Market on Quintana for a reported aggravated assault. Logs indicated the case was deemed a misdemeanor, and apparently no-blood no foul?
- **March 15:** At 8:50 a.m. police responded to Albertson's Market after a sticky-fingered shopper had tried to use the help-yourself aisle. Logs indicated the alleged pilferer also had a bench warrant.
- **March 14:** At 1:55 p.m. police responded to a reported car crash, but logs didn't indicate where or how bad the carnage was.
- **March 13:** Police responded to a disturbance at 3:30 p.m. at an undisclosed location. Logs indicated the matter concerned some louse abusing his spouse.
- **March 13:** Police responded at 9:27 a.m. to a reported theft of personal property. No word on what or whose booty got pinched.
- **March 12:** Police responded at 8:25 p.m. to a watering hole in the 800 block of Quintana, where they contacted a regular customer at The Buoy Bar who missed an appointment with Judge Judy.
- **March 12:** Police were notified of a suspected case of felony elder financial abuse, with the loss topping \$900.
- **March 12:** Police responded to Coast Electronics in the 500 block of Quintana where some zhlub had shoplifted. I guess they don't know about cameras at an electronic store.
- **March 11:** Police responded at 10:21 p.m. to an undisclosed location to break up a domestic disturbance. Logs indicated misdemeanor spousal battery and child abuse charges, and one felony child abuse, plus felony vandalism

charges resulted. Let's hope the tornado riding the back of a hurricane went to the hoosegow.

- **March 11:** Police stopped a suspicious vehicle at 1:43 p.m. and cited the driver for letting the registration elapse, no doubt a case of cranial-inversion disease.
- **March 11:** Police responded at 6 a.m. to City Park on Harbor Street where someone reported a grand theft, and the Bobbies will no doubt have a jolly good time pursuing the master criminal.
- **March 10:** Police stopped a suspicious vehicle at 10:24 p.m. at the Sinclair Gas Station in the 900 block of Morro Bay Blvd. Logs indicated the driver got nicked on a trove of illegal activity. Logs indicated charges included: suspicion of possessing drug paraphernalia; possessing controlled substances; possession with more than two priors; possession of narcotics; being a drug addict driving a car; and a felony warrant, a classic example that you can't shovel water with a pitchfork.
- **March 10:** Police contacted a suspicious subject at 7:54 p.m. at an undisclosed location. Logs indicated the naughty boy was popped for suspicion of possession of drug paraphernalia and drugs, having two or more prior arrests for the same nincompoopery, and violating probation.
- **March 10:** Police responded at 4:25 p.m. to an ugly disturbance at Foxy's Thrift Shop in the 600 block of Morro Bay Blvd. Logs indicated some feculent potty mouth had used offensive words in public, quick, somebody grab the soap on a rope.
- **March 9:** At 8:48 p.m. police contacted a familiar foe that had a bench warrant. Logs indicated one thing leading to another, and the squit was also charged with suspicion of possession of illegal drugs and paraphernalia, all misdemeanors.
- **March 9:** Police responded at 4:16 p.m. to Tidelands Park where they cited an innocent vehicle because the owner let the registration expire.
- **March 9:** Police responded at 10 a.m. to the 500 block of Quintana for a reported burglary at the Estero Glass shop.
- **March 8:** Police caught up to a suspicious subject at 3:13 p.m. an undisclosed location. The fiend had a felonious bench warrant and got benched in the County penalty box.
- **March 8:** A citizen called police at 4:18 a.m. to complain about some harasstartd who'd been bothering them with harassing quotidian calls.

- **March 7:** Police responded at 6:35 p.m. to Taco Temple in the 2600 block of North Main, where some drunken fool was causing a ruckus. Logs didn't say if the Scaramouch got arrested, but that's the way to bet.
- **March 6:** Police and firefighters responded at 12:19 p.m. to Morro Rock after a report of a surfer being discovered unresponsive in the water. The fire chief said other surfers noticed him in the water and tried to bring him to shore but couldn't, so the Harbor Patrol got a rescue sled (jet ski) and picked him up in the water. Rescuers were unable to save him.
- **March 6:** Police stopped a suspicious vehicle at noon to a reported disturbance at McDonalds on Quintana Road. Logs indicated two men got arrested on a long menu of charges — suspicion of criminal conspiracy; possession of illegal drugs with more than two priors; possessing a concealed dirk or dagger; transporting narcotics; possession with intent to sell; a bench warrant; drug possession; being a drug addict driving a car; possession of paraphernalia (two counts); possession of drugs; and failure to wear a seat-belt, the ultimate undoing of a humanicus dooficus.
- **March 5:** Police contacted a suspicious subject in the 1700 block of Main and rang up the meat puppet for alleged possession of drugs and paraphernalia at Taco Bell.
- **March 4:** Police stopped a suspicious vehicle at 8:23 a.m. at an undisclosed location in town because no one had offered up the State's pound of flesh in over sixth months. They were cited and relegated to purgatory at the DMV.
- **March 3:** At 7 p.m. police responded to Albertson's Market on Quintana for a reported shoplifter. Logs indicated the alleged thief tried to drive away and was pulled over, and then cited for suspicion of drunk driving, because sometimes there's more to the elephant than the tusks.
- **March 3:** At 8:44 a.m. police rousted some apparently de-housed individual at an undisclosed location and cited the urban camper under the City's anti-sleeping-where-they-can't-collect-a-tax law.
- **March 2:** Police responded at 10:44 p.m. to an undisclosed location after felony vandalism was reported. No word on what treasured items were damaged or whether the scoundrel escaped.
- **March 2:** Someone called police at 8:27 a.m. to report a missing person. Information on who was lost or where from they were missed was missing from logs.

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## Help Needed with Platform Lift Funds

A GoFundMe account has been set up to raise money for a local in need of a platform lift to help her in her home.

Jane Hash, of Los Osos, is a "healthcare advocate/content creator/mermaid, who has connective tissue disorder called Osteogenesis Imperfecta (OI). She is in need of Bruno Residential Platform Lift in her home.

"After being on a waiting list to get a lift for more than three years, I am still waiting and still can't safely get in/out of our house and it's taking a toll on my mental health," Hash wrote on the GoFundMe page. "There are many types of OI and I have one of the more severe types that is characterized by my short stature, extremely fragile bones and loose joints that pop frequently.

"I'm sharing these details of how fragile I am to help you understand why it is dangerous and terrifying for me to be carried down and up these stairs every time I leave my house. Chances of me surviving a fall down these stairs are slim."

Hash, 51, said she had broken her bones hundreds of times from doing things that most people would not consider dangerous, like:

- bumping my head getting in/out of a car fractured



my skull

- coughing too hard broke my ribs

• picking up a cup that was heavier than I thought, so I dropped it on my foot and broke it (the cup survived just fine)

- using a ramp that was too steep which caused my seatbelt to break my ribs

The fund hopes to raise \$11.5 thousand to purchase the lift. To make a donation go to GoFundMe.com and search Jane Hash.

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# Community

Events From page 7

viewing, personal prayer, and meditation from 2-5 p.m., Tuesday, March 31, at St. Benedict's Episcopal Church, Los Osos Valley Road and Clark Valley Road in Los Osos. The work will be part of the Good Friday services at noon and at 7:30 p.m., Friday, April 3. For more information see <https://www.stbenslososos.org/lent/>. All are welcome.



Cal Poly's annual Tomato Spectacular plant sale place Saturday, April 4 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Horticulture Unit near the Poly Plant Shop. More than 90 different types of tomato plants will be available, including never before offered varieties. New this year is the addition of a dozen varieties of heirloom sweet peppers and fiery chilis. The four-inch tomato, pepper and basil plants are \$7. A catalogue of available varieties is available at [polyplant-shop.com](http://polyplant-shop.com).



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

- **Art Party** - Wednesday, April 1, 3 -5 p.m. Use your imagination to make unique art pieces using paper, pens, pencils, scissors, glue and more. Creative options available for ages 3-12.
- **Hexbugs** - Wednesday, April 8, 3 -5 p.m. Create mazes for these motorized bugs, race them and more! All ages welcome.
- **Sensory Playtime** - Saturday, April 11, 10 -11 a.m. Let your little ones lead the way in this open-ended playtime! Parents & caregivers: we also have early literacy tips for you! For ages 0-5.
- **Play Nintendo Switch** - Wednesday, April 15, 3 -5 p.m. Master your gaming skills and make new friends with our Nintendo Switch! We will provide one Switch for up to 4 players at a time - feel free to bring your own too. Games include Mario Kart, Super Smash Bros, and Just Dance.

- **Earth Day Crafts** - Wednesday, April 22, 3 -5 p.m. Join us as we craft beautiful handmade things from recycled materials. We'll have a button maker, DIY notebook binder, collage supplies and more!
- **Pacific Wildlife Care Show** - Wednesday, April 29, 3:30-4:30 p.m. Meet and learn about rescue animals. All ages.

The Basin Street Regulars present Yosemite Jazz Band | Jazz Dance Concert on Sunday, March 29 at Pismo Beach Veteran's Memorial Building from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. The Basin Street Regulars entered 2026 with a clear mandate: celebrate five decades of "Keeping Jazz Alive" on the Central Coast while bridging the gap to a new generation of listeners. This milestone year, established in 1976, is a testament to the staying power of traditional jazz in Pismo Beach.

The Yosemite Jazz Band brings a 32-year legacy from the mountain communities bordering Yosemite National Park. Founded in October 1993 by trumpet and flugelhorn player Berl Howell, the band has become a cornerstone of the California jazz circuit. The band established its roots in Oakhurst, California, and began an annual tradition in May 1994 as the house band at the Oakhurst Pizza Factory. Originally known as the Yosemite Dixieland Jazz Band, they shortened their name as they branched into broader jazz styles.

Known for a high-energy, enthusiastic style of traditional and Dixieland jazz, their music is designed to get audiences "stomping their feet, clapping their hands, and singing along".

The band features a blend of veteran masters and talented newcomers, including Berl Howell (cornet), Ted Strauss (reeds), Jeff Gurule (banjo/guitar), Jim Kirin (drums), Les Nunes (trombone), and Bonnie Otto (piano). They also feature young standout Elva Gurule on trumpet, who grew up singing with the band before taking up the instrument in 2018.

Events Continued on page 10

# SHOW MORRO BAY SOME LOVE FOLLOWED BY AN EASTER EGG HUNT



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# Community

Events From page 9



Don't miss Vince Cimo's Hot Fire w/ special guests The Loving Mosh & Sweet Spots on Friday, March 27 at SLO Brew Rock, SLO. Tickets are \$17.91 at my805tix.com.

The Loving Mosh is an eclectic, high-energy original band from the Central Coast of California, blending funk, rock, ska, and R&B into a vibrant and dance-forward sound that defies traditional genre boundaries.

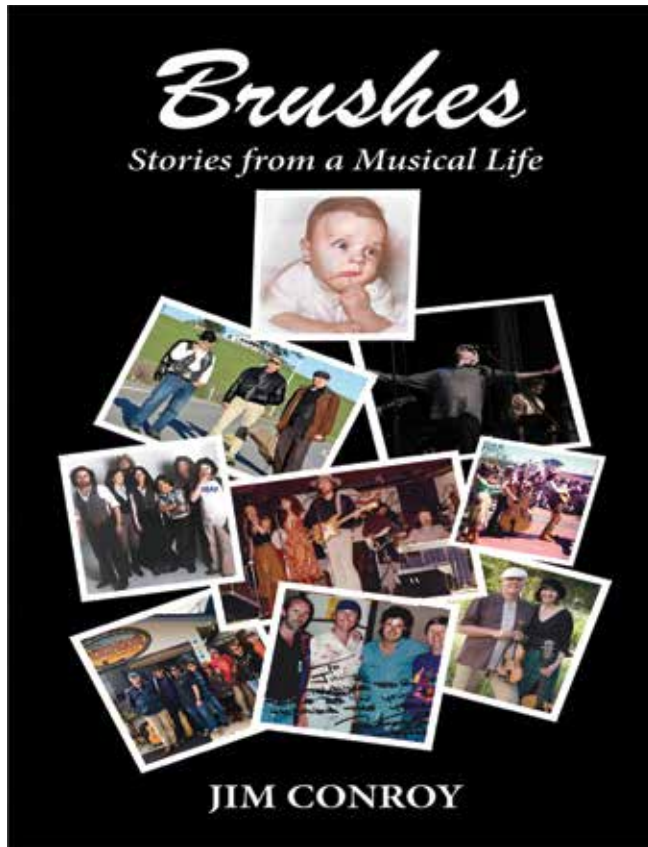
Formed in the wake of the pandemic and amid a fracturing world, The Loving Mosh emerged with a mission to create a unifying and healing force through music. Their sound channels youthful angst and real-world emotion into spirited grooves and celebratory rhythms that invite connection, joy, and collective movement.

Fronted by powerful vocals from Ashley Brown, the ensemble also includes Roberto Monge (vocals & rhythm guitar), Anthony Donatelli (saxophone), Luis Monge (drums), Jeremy Lemen (bass), and Albert Sanudo (lead guitar), crafting soundscapes that make every performance an eclectic engaging experience.

Dedicated to transforming life's challenges into communal celebration, The Loving Mosh encourages audiences to "lovingly mosh" — letting go, dancing together, and sharing in soulful expression and uplift.

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.

## Book Signing 'Brushes: Stories from a Musical Life'



"Brushes: Stories from a Musical Life," a novel by long-time Central Coast resident Jim Conroy, chronicles his life in the world of music starting when he was a teen-ager in the South Bay of Los Angeles. At that time, he was part of the garage band culture that started in the mid-sixties out of the rise of surf music and the British invasion.

From humble garage beginnings, his band rose to the top of the heap and nearly sprang into the world of fame but fell short while having a grand adventure rubbing elbows with the major names of the day. Throughout his life in music, Conroy, who is the host of Celtic Crossroads radio show on KCBX every Saturday at 5 p.m., continued to have encounters with the famous while gigging and running a nightclub. *Brushes* is about those encounters.

One Amazon reviewer said, "An engaging read that documents both some heady times in the world of music and a personal journey that brushes up against the more widely known."

The book is available on Amazon and at Volumes of Pleasures Bookstore in Los Osos. There will be a book signing/reading and concert at Don's String Shop, 1030 Los Osos Valley Rd., in conjunction with Volumes of Pleasure on Sunday, April 12 at 3 p.m. Tickets are \$10, which can be used towards the purchase of a book. For reservations and info send an email to jconroy@kcbx.org.

## Takin' Care of BUSINESS

By Theresa-Marie Wilson

### Baywood-Los Osos Yoga Studio Celebrates One-Year March 28



The Yoga Lab, a boutique yoga and movement studio located in Baywood-Los Osos, will celebrate its one-year anniversary on Saturday, March 28, with a community event open to members and the public. The celebration also serves as the official unveiling of a significant studio expansion that nearly doubles the facility's footprint.

The expansion adds two new dedicated spaces. The Recovery Lab offers four-person infrared sauna and red-light therapy sessions, providing members with dedicated recovery and restoration services. The second addition is a non-heated room that will house the studio's non-heated yoga classes as well as two new class formats: Barre Lab, a blend of Pilates, yoga, and functional fitness that incorporates small isolated movements, large range of motion, and full-body sequencing; and Strength Lab, a resistance-training class using heavier weights, full range of motion, and lower reps to target the lower body, upper body, core, and cardiovascular endurance.

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# Community

“This studio exists because of a shared vision with people I trust,” said Corlese Todd, owner and founder of The Yoga Lab. “The owners of this building are close family friends who came to me with the idea of creating a space that would give the community their best day every day. They opened their third pottery studio, and I took a chance on a yoga studio. It has been the best decision of my life. The community here has been so enthusiastic, appreciative, and welcoming — this expansion is a direct response to them wanting more.”

The Yoga Lab opened in March 2025 with the tagline “Experiment. Discover. Grow.” Since opening, the studio has built a dedicated team of instructors and a loyal membership base, establishing itself as a community wellness hub on the Central Coast.

The anniversary celebration on March 28, at 1204 2nd Street, features three free classes: an 8 a.m. Birthday Burn Sculpt and Flow Lab, a 9:30 a.m. One Year Strong Flow Lab, and an 11 a.m. Gratitude Restore Lab. All classes require pre-registration at [centralcoastyogalab.com](http://centralcoastyogalab.com). Several classes are already at capacity, but community members who are unable to secure a spot are still encouraged to stop by. From 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., the studio will offer mimosas, light snacks, tours of the new space, and previews of upcoming offerings.

Founding Member enrollment for the Recovery Lab opens March 28, with availability limited to 20 spots. More information is available at [centralcoastyogalab.com](http://centralcoastyogalab.com).

## PG&E Discounts are Available

Thousands of Central Coast residents who qualify for PG&E’s low-income assistance programs are not enrolled. Programs like CARE and FERA offer critical assistance for families struggling with today’s cost of living.

• CARE (California Alternate Rates for Energy) provides eligible customers with a monthly discount of 20% or more on gas and electricity bills.

• FERA (Family Electric Rate Assistance) provides a monthly discount of 18% on electric bills for households with three or more people.

“Right now, we’re seeing really low enrollment rates in every Central Coast County,” said PG&E representative Stephanie Magallon in a news release. “For example, more than 33,200 customers in the Central Coast qualify for FERA’s 18% discount on their electric bill, but only about 3,700 customers are enrolled.” In SLO County 8778 people are eligible and only 8% or 686 are enrolled.

Qualification details:

CARE- You’re eligible if someone in your household participates in a qualified public assistance program, or if

total gross household income meets the income guidelines.

FERA- You’re eligible if your total gross household income meets the income guidelines.

Number of persons in household	Total gross annual household income*
1-2	\$42,301-\$52,875
3	\$53,301-\$66,625
4	\$64,301-\$80,375
5	\$75,301-\$94,125
6	\$86,301-\$107,875
7	\$97,301-\$121,625
8	\$108,301-\$135,375
9	\$119,301-\$149,125
10	\$130,301-\$162,875
Each additional person, add	\$11,000-\$13,750

Income guidelines for FERA

Number of persons in household	Total gross annual household income*
1-2	\$42,300 or less
3	\$53,300 or less
4	\$64,300 or less
5	\$75,300 or less
6	\$86,300 or less
7	\$97,300 or less
8	\$108,300 or less
9	\$119,300 or less
10	\$130,300 or less
Each additional person, add	\$11,000

Income guidelines for CARE

Readers can apply for both assistance programs at [energyinsight.pge.com/carefera](http://energyinsight.pge.com/carefera).

Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) lowered electric rates on March 1, 2026 — the fifth time since January 2024. The decrease marks the third consecutive electric price cut since last September for residential customers who receive both electricity supply and delivery from PG&E.

Combined with previous decreases, residential bundled electric rates are 13% lower than in January 2024, reinforcing the company’s commitment to manage energy costs for customers. Since that time, typical residential

electric customer bills are about \$25 less per month, assuming a consistent monthly usage of 500 kilowatt-hours.

Based on current information, the company expects typical residential electric rates to be lower overall in 2026 than in 2025.

“We are delivering on our promise to lower prices for our customers again, even as national prices are expected to rise,” said PG&E Corporation CEO Patti Poppe. “Our actions match our promises: we’ve reduced electric rates five times since January 2024 and remain committed to finding new ways to save and pass those savings on to our customers.”

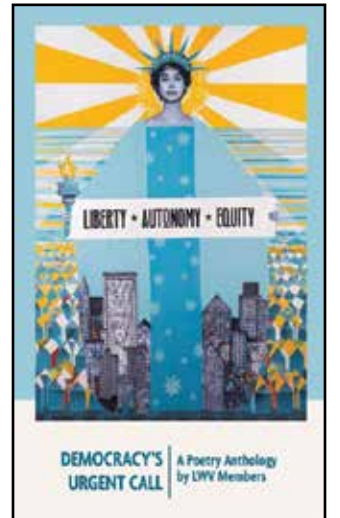
## Democracy’s Urgent Call

Fresh off the presses “Democracy’s Urgent Call,” a poetry anthology by members of the League of Women Voters from throughout the United States, is available to purchase.

League members and poets Christy Schwan and Eloisa Gomez from LWV Wisconsin have curated this collection of 58 poems by League poets representing 25 states. Local Juliane McAdam has a poem in the collection.

Poetry is indeed a great way to cope with life’s stresses. As Schwan wrote to the poets who contributed to this anthology, “It takes courage to put yourself out there, just as it does to be a member of LWV. Your words are an inspiration to us all. We know first-hand that poetry can be centering, yet clarifying, during chaotic times.”

The anthology is 66-pages with glossy paperback cover. It is available for purchase from Amazon, Barnes & Noble, and other booksellers.



Takin’ Care of Business Continued on page 12

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# Community

Takin' Care of Business From page 11

## Kayak and Oyster Farm Tours Return



Central Coast Outdoors and Grassy Bar Oyster Company have brought back the popular kayak and oyster tasting tour program.

Central Coast Outdoors and Grassy Bar Oyster Company started partnering on these tours in late 2025, and they were an immediate hit. The tours visit Grassy Bar Oyster Company's farm location in the middle of beautiful Morro Bay National 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. If oyster farming staff are at the farm, they will also explain what their role is. Back at the kayak docks, a Grassy Bar Oyster Company staff person gives an oyster shucking lesson and answers further questions about oystering on Morro Bay.

Each participant gets six oysters to shuck and eat themselves. Fun dipping sauces are also included.

Tour dates are April 18, May 2, June 14, July 11, August 20, September 18, October 22, November 15. The cost is \$95 per person and includes all kayak gear. Due to popular demand, for 2026 private tour options are also available.

Reservations and a more detailed explanation of the tour can be found at

<https://bit.ly/4bPHWnn>. The Grassy Bar Oyster Company website is [grassybaroyster.com](https://grassybaroyster.com).

For more information, contact John Flaherty at [john@centralcoastoutdoors.com](mailto:john@centralcoastoutdoors.com).

## Spokes Funding Research Support Waitlist

Spokes Resources for Nonprofits is piloting a volunteer-supported grant research service to help member nonprofits identify potential grant and foundation opportunities. This service provides research only. Join the waitlist to be considered as volunteer capacity becomes available. Register at <https://bit.ly/3Pqd9ET>.

Spokes is also holding a Zoom ED-CEO Coalition Meeting on April 2 from Noon to 1p.m. Admission is free. Register at [spokesfor nonprofits.org](https://spokesfor nonprofits.org) under classes/workshops.

This is a meeting of SLO County nonprofit leaders to address challenges and support one another, including a brief spotlight on California Senate Bill 1240. This session is primarily intended for full-time, paid CEOs and Executive Directors of San Luis Obispo County nonprofits.



The Bill, introduced in February 2026, proposes creating an Office of Nonprofit Empowerment within state government to serve as a centralized point of contact for nonprofits and help coordinate state policies affecting the sector. The office would support nonprofits in navigating state grants and contracting, reduce administrative barriers, and strengthen collaboration between nonprofits and state agencies.

"Our nonprofits provide invaluable services to our community, but today they are under unusual stress," a representative from Spokes said in a press release. "Funding uncertainties, new requirements, prohibitions, and other factors present new hurdles in providing much needed services to our community. This meeting is part of an ongoing effort to collaborate, share information and provide mutual support."

## Spring Plant Fundraiser

The Los Osos Valley Garden Club will hold a Spring Plant Sale Fundraiser on Saturday, April 11 from 9 a.m.- 2 p.m. at the Red Barn, 2180 Palisades Ave, Los Osos. For more information, go to [LOVGardenClub.org](https://LOVGardenClub.org). During the event, the Los Osos/Baywood Park Chamber of Commerce will celebrate the club with a special ribbon cutting to officially kick things off at 9 a.m. surrounded by beautiful blooms, friendly faces, and plenty of garden inspiration.



*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](mailto:EditorEBN@gmail.com).*

## New Owners Shaping Up at FitnessWorks



Joe and Adrian Blandford are the new owners of FitnessWorks in Morro Bay. Photo by Neil Farrell

By Neil Farrell

For over three decades, it's been the premier full service fitness center on the North Coast, and FitnessWorks in Morro Bay is shaping up to open a new chapter.

FitnessWorks, located at 500 Quintana Rd., is undergoing a change in owners, as the long-time owners, Debbie and Joe Pettit completed the sale of the gym to Joe and Adrian Blandford of Los Osos, who own their own little workout studio, Sweat Therapy.

"We've been contemplating the sale of FitnessWorks for a while," the Pettits said in a Facebook post to their over 600 members, "but the challenge was to find a buyer with a rare combination of community, fitness knowledge and business acumen."

"Joe and Adrian Blandford check all the boxes and we're confident they will continue to provide over the top

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# Community

customer service in a professional, but fun gym environment, always with the best interest of our members and staff in mind."

Estero Bay News sat down with the Blandfords last week, interrupting for a short time what is an extremely busy period for them as they learn the ropes of running such a large and diverse operation.

The building, formerly a Thrifty's Drug Store houses more than one independent business. There's TherapyWorks, a physical therapy office that treats injured folks and is owned by Ross Dover. There's also MassageWorks, a massage therapy business owned by Elizabeth Uhrig.

"We bought FitnessWorks," explained Adrian. That part of the business, some 19,000 square feet, includes the weight room as well as exercise classrooms offering yoga, spin, zumba and more. They have over 600 members who hail from mostly the North Coast — from Cambria to Los Osos, and over 30 employees.

It's a lot to absorb for two people with physical therapy and training backgrounds who operate a small boutique training studio. "Debbie and Joe have been so kind to take us under their wing," Adrian said.

But they aren't new to running a business. In addition to the Sweat Therapy gym Joe also is a painting contractor and owner of California Joe's Painting, something he plans to continue with.

Joe is originally from Atascadero, he explained and Adrian hails from a small town in Southern Illinois. She moved to the Central Coast from Los Angeles. They met in 2009 while both were working as personal trainers at Kennedy Club Fitness in Atascadero, she said.

Like many people here, they've lived a somewhat nomadic life moving several times over the ensuing years. They've called Cayucos and Morro Bay home, migrated back to Illinois for a while before coming back to California so Adrian could go back to school to earn a degree in exercise science.

"I've been working in this business since 2003, in high school," she recalled. "We've always been in the fitness industry."

Joe said after Kennedy Club they both had ideas of owning their own gym. "We thought about opening in Cayucos," he said. When Los Osos Fitness closed several years ago, after the owner retired, they thought about moving into that space, but it didn't pan out, and now Miner's Hardware has expanded into the old Los Osos Fitness spot.

Sweat Therapy opened about 3-years ago and features personal training, a sauna and cold plunge. "It's sort of our passion," Joe said. "That's what got the ball rolling."

The painting started in 2014 back in Illinois, after his trainer work slowed down, he recalled. He paints commercial properties and houses — interiors and exteriors. People

kept asking him if he was that "California Joe" painter guy? When they returned to California, he admits he liked it and the name stuck.

Both say they saw there was a need for a fitness center in Los Osos and they looked for a location, but couldn't find anywhere that might work.

"It just wasn't feasible," Adrian said. "The rents were astronomical."

Then one of the Sweat Therapy clients mentioned the Pettits were talking about retiring. And last August, they met with them for the first time. And as of April 1 their dream will be realized.

They take over a beloved and well-equipped facility that has hundreds of loyal members and offers something for just about everyone. What's the demographic like?

Joe said, "We do have a large senior community here." They have a special program, Silver Sneakers, an insurance-based membership wherein a person's insurance — including Medicare and Medi-Cal — pays the monthly dues.

"It's a really cool program," Joe said, "We intend to keep that going."

He added that they also have a large number of younger members. "It's a real home town gym," he said. Adrian added that some of their members have been with FitnessWorks for more than 30 years. "And they're happy. That says a lot about the owners," she said. "This has been around over 34 years."

Joe said, "That's a rarity these days."

It could be the variety of classes they offer — over 45. "A wide variety of things happen here," Adrian, who is 41, said.

Joe said there is such a need for physical fitness today, for the young and the old. "It's really medicine," Joe, 39, said. "It's important to provide that, and get people to get their bodies moving."

"Fitness brings joy," Adrian said. "It brings out the best in us."

Told that they look young for their ages, Adrian replied, "It's all the exercise. It keeps us young. That's a big reason why we do it."

Joe joked, "Of course our kids [ages 5 and 6] think we're old."

FitnessWorks is open from 5 a.m. to 9 p.m. Mondays-Fridays; Saturdays 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.; and Sundays 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. They will be closed April 5 for Easter.

See the website at: [fitnessworksmb.com](http://fitnessworksmb.com) for information on classes and other offerings (TherapyWorks and MassageWorks also have links off this website).

They are planning to celebrate the new owners and throw a retirement party for the former owners from 10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Wednesday, April 15 for club members. They will have cake and punch available.

## Bookbinding Class at Estero Bay Arts and Crafts



Want to create your own journal, scrapbook, or photo album? Learn the art of bookbinding in this hands-on class, where participants will make a traditional Japanese stab-bound book. Perfect for beginners and those looking to build skills, this class introduces foundational techniques while guiding you in creating a functional book to take home.

The art of Japanese stab binding, developed during the Edo period in Japan (Qing Dynasty in China), around 1603-1867, uses flat sheets that are stitched together in decorative patterns. This traditional technique offers a gratifying and visually compelling introduction to the art and craft of book construction.

Attendees will learn one classic style and explore variations. Covers can be simple or highly decorative — once learned, the technique offers endless possibilities for customization. Handmade books make beautiful gifts.

The class also covers how to choose and evaluate papers for text blocks and covers, accurately cut thick boards, and use essential bookbinding tools. If time allows, additional binding techniques will be introduced.

The class takes place Saturday, April 4, from 2 to 5 p.m. at Estero Bay Arts and Crafts, 523 Harbor St., Morro Bay. The fee is \$80 with all supplies included. Instruction is by Shari Sullivan, who studied bookbinding with Shereen LaPlantz, a leading figure in the modern revival of book arts.

Pre-registration is required at <https://bit.ly/4lGe3JE>.

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# Community

## Community Gathers to Remember Patricia "Tish" Linsley



Forever From page 1

14," said Hope on social media. "My mom was an amazing person, and we miss her dearly.

"For those of you who know of Tish and Lee's love story, the symbolism of her departing so close to Valentine's Day and the anniversary of his death is so mystical (much like her). We know that Tish wouldn't have wanted it any other way. Tish was surrounded by her whole family with the utmost love, comfort, and with her lipstick on ready to reunite with the love of her life, Lee.

"Tish's eternal light will live on in the many people she touched so deeply. We know that for many, this light made meaningful and long-lasting impressions on you. It

was her superpower, her mission, and it is what we hope you remember her for. Her kindness and sweetness knew no bounds, and she would be so happy and slightly embarrassed, to have seen the community outpouring that the family has experienced. Thank you all for your kind words and support."

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# Community

## A GALA Event for Oscars Night

Movie fans gathered in San Luis Obispo on Hollywood's most glamorous night to celebrate the movies, meet a genuine scream queen and raise money for a local gay support organization.

Sunday, March 15, the United Christ of Christ in SLO hosted an Oscar Viewing Party, organized by Los Osos businessman Sabin Gray, who owned and operated the Hooray for Hollywood store on Morro Bay's Embarcadero and is a big movie fan and collector of Hollywood memorabilia.

Scream Queen actress Brinke Stevens attended the event bringing a little Hollywood glamour to the festivities benefiting the GALA Pride & Diversity Center in SLO.

Over 50 church and GALA members got all dressed up to walk the red carpet, flash bulbs lighting up the procession, just like at the real Oscars.

Guests were treated to a fancy dinner prepared by chef Bryan Gerber with desserts provided by local businesses. But the main event was the Oscars telecast.

Stevens, the star of 1982's "Slumber Party Massacre," 1988's "Nightmare Sisters," and over 300 B horror movies posed for photos with attendees and was presented with a special award for "Fan Favorite."

The event featured a silent auction with great prizes like hotel stays, dinners for two, gift certificates and other exciting experiences.

An impressive variety of sponsors contributed to the event: A French Touch, Ambiance Luxury Boutique, Apple Farm, Bay Cruisers, the Bay Theater, Beads by the Bay, Beauty Poet, Bizarre Antiques, Boo Boo Records, Buttercup Bakery, Cal Poly PAC, Calico Trading, Carla's Country Kitchen & Gifts, Carousel Taffy, Club Amnesia, Competitive Arcade, Cool Cat Café, Dorn's Restaurant, The Embarcadero Inn, Finder's Keepers Consignment, Fitness Works, Frankie & Lola's Restaurant, Galaxy Groovin' Designs, Hofbrau Restaurant, Hooray for Hollywood, Humankind Fair Trade, La Katrina Restaurant, Lost Aisle



From left: silent auction model Willow, guest star Brinke Stevens and emcee Mr. Sparkles pose on the red carpet at the March 15 Oscars Party. Submitted photo

Adventures, Lindquist Family Winery, Mike's Barbershop, moon River Salon, Neighbor's General Store, Opera SLO, Organic Nail Salon, Paula Radke Art Glass, Phoenix Books, Picking Daisies, Ree's Resale Shop, Rowe Clayworks, Savory Palette, Seven Sisters Gallery, SLO Rep, SLO Symphony, Smoobage, Subsea Tours, Sun N' Buns Bakery, The Garden Gallery, Timbre Winery, Tom's Toys, Trader Joe's (SLO), Whalebird Combucha and Windows on the Water Restaurant.

The event raised \$4,200 for the Pride & Diversity Center. Gray said the money will "help the SLO GALA Pride & Diversity Center in their mission to promote social justice and equality for all."



Event organizer Sabin Gray poses with guest star Brinke Stevens on the red carpet. Submitted photo



The United Christ of Christ in SLO was the setting for the March 15 Oscars Party. Submitted photo



Oscar ballot winner, Lupe Acosta (left) celebrates her prizes with organizer Sabin Gray. Submitted photo



# Kiwanis

For more info: 805-801-4444

## 37TH BAY-OSOS KIWANIS ANNUAL EASTER EGG HUNT

**WHEN:** Saturday, April 4th 2026

**WHERE:** Grassy area next to South Bay Community Center

**TIMES:** 10:00 am: FUN ACTIVITIES BEGIN  
10:30 am: Contest Entries Due & Story Time with the Los Osos Library  
11:00 am: EGG HUNT BEGINS



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## 25th Annual Morro Bay Garage Sale Weekend

Photos by Neil Farrell



The streets of Morro Bay were chaotic last weekend as thousands of bargain hunters descended on the town for the 25th Annual Garage Sale Weekend.

With over 100 yard and garage sales scattered across the city, buyers were traipsing all over the place, intermingling with traffic filled with gawkers behind the wheel.

Though the potential was there for disaster, everything appeared to go over smoothly. Bargain hunters had an impressive variety of items to buy including everything from new and used clothing and shoes, to baby clothes, toys, tools, several motorcycles including at least two Harleys, tools of every stripe and function, some toilets, and even a few kitchen sinks as well.



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**50 3rd. St. - Cayucos \$1,685,000**  
 Prime Cayucos location with Ocean view. Residence is located across from the 3rd Street Park which provides expansive green views and plenty of parking. This stylish single level Craftsman style single home was completely rebuilt in 2000. The exterior features white pillars with shake siding and an inviting portico and courtyard. The courtyard fencing and garden are lovely and creates an extension of the house. Inside the house has a spacious great room with vaulted ceilings, open beams and skylights with a big window area that provides ocean views. The kitchen is well equipped, nice appliances, custom cabinets, with abundant granite counter space. The primary and guest bedrooms have vaulted and beam ceilings in both, as well as skylights, and open to the spacious backyard by sliders. The primary bath has a corner shower with a large jetted soaking tub with backyard views. The bedrooms enjoy an abundance of light with



generous size, skylights, and sliders to the backyard. The lovely and spacious backyard is south, facing, and boasts an easy care landscaping, mature trees, hard scape, and wood decking. It gives a very private sanctuary atmosphere. A very desirable location for this single level residence, with easy access to town and just steps to the sand. Enjoy the sounds of the waves and the sea life.



**Ash Avenue, Cayucos \$795,000**  
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Singular opportunity on a downslope lot of nearly 6,000 sq. ft. with a gentle slope and ocean views. This single-level home offers both hill views and sweeping ocean vistas stretching to Pt. Estero along the north coast. The entry provides access to the two-car garage, a private patio with morning sun, and a spacious great room with ocean views and access to a deck. A dining area and efficient kitchen are nearby, offering ample storage and functionality. The primary suite is situated on the street side and features generous storage, a full bath, and its own ocean-view deck. The guest bedroom has an adjacent bath



that also serves the great room. Below the structure, a gravel area provides additional parking, including space for RV parking. The southerly portion of the lot is landscaped and offers exceptional potential with approximately 70 feet of depth, ocean views, and access to the decks above. This home presents outstanding possibilities as a primary residence or a coastal vacation retreat—come explore the potential!

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# Community



## NATURAL HISTORY NUGGETS

### Eight-Legged Nemeses

By Dean Thompson

We hate them. Except for a few birds that eat the plump juicy ones, most mammals, reptiles, and birds probably wish they didn't exist. They do not run, hop, jump, or fly and they are blind. All they do is sit on the ends of grasses and other plants, legs extended, patiently waiting for a warm body to pass by. Once one comes within an arm's length they'll grab the animal's fur, feathers, clothing, or scales and climb up, always up, to a spot where they can dine on the host's blood. Ticks. Patient as a tick I always say.



Ten Black-Legged Ticks on a grass stalk. Photo by John Roser

In Coastal California we can find ticks all year round, but I always associate the beginning of the rainy season with tick season. During the dry seasons, we will find an occasional dog or deer tick out on the trails but once the rains start the black legged ticks come out in force.

One of my good friends, John, is a fantastic naturalist and perceives the world through a lens shaded by that perspective. I'd like to share an email I recently received from him describing the walk he regularly does in Montana de Oro State Park.

Subject: A fine morning or 9736 legs

"I hike the 3-mile Coon/Rattlesnake loop on a regular basis. I noticed tick abundance picked up around mid-November, and I've given friends doing that trail a heads-up that I've been seeing at least 40 to 50 every time I do the loop lately. Did the loop today and it was fine tick weather—upper 50s, overcast, misty—so they stayed out on the ends of the grasses and vegetation. I got a wild hair to count them. Had never done a tick survey before and it sounded fun to me today. Usually that loop takes me about 60 minutes going at a brisk enough pace to get my heart rate up and get sweaty. Today my slow tick survey took over four hours. Every time I noticed ticks I'd break off the vegetation they clung to count them, then toss them at least five feet off the trail. I'd love to do a mark recapture study to see how many end up back on the edge of the trail after that treatment. Their non-random distribution interests me and I'd bet it's more sophisticated than they are just dropping

off hosts along the trail.

"Anyway, my grand total of ticks tossed ended up at 1,217. I bet I missed a few hundred. For example, they're very hard to see on deerweed at the trail's edge. A few times I'd grab some deerweed just to see if any were on it, and I often found ticks. I passed a lot of deerweed.

"Probably 90 percent of them were within one foot of the trail and virtually all were within two feet (but of course that's where I focused). I'd periodically survey farther than two feet and rarely saw any. If a large grass clump with last year's seed stalks radiating out in all directions had ticks, they'd almost all be on the trail side.

"Elevation distribution: On the low end, almost all were higher than a brush rabbit's torso (but many would catch a rabbit's ears) and on the high end they'd hit a deer's belly with most just right to latch on to a coyote or bobcat or deer legs. I'm no tick expert and I didn't try to ID them, but my gut feeling was by far the most abundant species was the western black-legged tick but there also seemed to be a lot of Pacific Coast ticks.

"I did feel a bit of guilt. I took 1,217 ticks from prime host encounter locations and tossed them into the hinterlands. Bad tick karma.

"John"

So be aware out there everyone, it is indeed tick season. Pay attention to where you walk, tuck your shirt in and wear light colored clothing which makes it easier to find the ticks when you stop for your periodic tick checks. Some like to tuck their pantlegs into their socks to prevent ticks from getting inside the pant legs and crawling up to... well you get the picture, it's a bad place to get a tick.

If you are really concerned about ticks and possibly contracting Lyme disease, consider using a repellent, like DEET for your skin and Permethrin for your clothes. Lemon eucalyptus oil has been shown to be an effective deterrent and there are several natural sprays containing it available, but you will need to reapply it more often. Just don't let those little arachnids (they're not insects) prevent you from getting out and enjoying our wonderful parks and trails, it's beautiful out there this time of year.

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

## Former Teacher Pens New Local Mystery

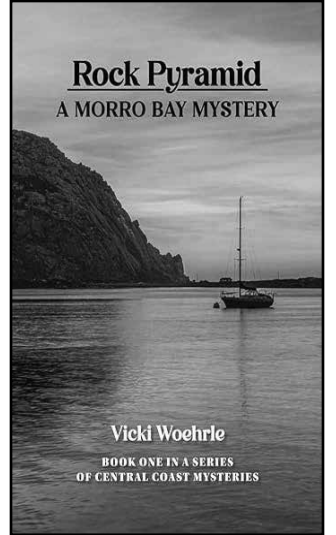
"Rock Pyramid, A Morro Bay Mystery" is Vicki Woehrle's debut novel.

When a family in the Federal Witness Protection program is relocated to Morro Bay, a kind teacher helps their young son adjust to his new school. Not completely aware of his parents' plight, the boy immerses himself in school and his fascinating new teacher.

With encouragement from their assigned U.S. Marshals Service officer, the parents slowly adjust to living a fearless life as they become part of the school community that is expected of them. They discover San Luis Obispo and Morro Bay as the calming force in their lives, until someone unexpectedly shows up.

Woehrle taught throughout the San Luis Coastal Unified School District for the past 25 years, with a focus on writing and theatre arts. She plans to feature various communities in San Luis Obispo county through a series of mysteries solved by local citizens, as well as is working on two children's books for publication under the pseudonym Dortha Vickers.

"Rock Pyramid, A Morro Bay Mystery," is available at Coalesce, Volumes of Pleasure, and Amazon.



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# Community

## Baywood Park Chamber Mixer and Ribbon Cutting

Photos by Dean Sullivan

The Los Osos/Baywood Park Chamber of Commerce held its first mixer of the year, featuring a ribbon cutting celebration at The Pottery Baywood.

The event brought together community members and local supporters to welcome this new Baywood business and connect for the year ahead. Guests had the opportunity to explore the unique space, meet the passionate team behind the business, and enjoy the warm, welcoming spirit that defines the Baywood community. Fellow Chamber members, Brightside Pizza, provided pizza slices and salad for the event. The Chamber extends sincere thanks to everyone who came out to show their support and help make the evening a success.

For more information about upcoming events and membership opportunities, contact the Los Osos/Baywood Park Chamber of Commerce or visit [www.lobpchamber.org/events/](http://www.lobpchamber.org/events/).



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### FUN FACT:



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Feathers and Fedoras Speakeasy Gala

Photos By Dean Sullivan

The Morro Bay theater was turned into a speakeasy for the Los Osos Cares Fundraiser featuring a costume gala, appetisers and silent and live auctions followed by a screening of the movie "Chicago."

Los Osos Cares is dedicated to, "creating a culture of care by building community, identifying needs, and providing immediate assistance and referrals to address the needs of the underserved in Los Osos, Morro Bay, and Cayucos."

Linda Queensberry, who co-started the nonprofit in 2016 and retired in 2024, was honored at the fundraiser with the very first "Linda Queensberry Award" honoring the organization's Volunteer of the Year.



HISTORICAL SOCIETY of MORRO BAY

The Expansion of the Dairy Industry

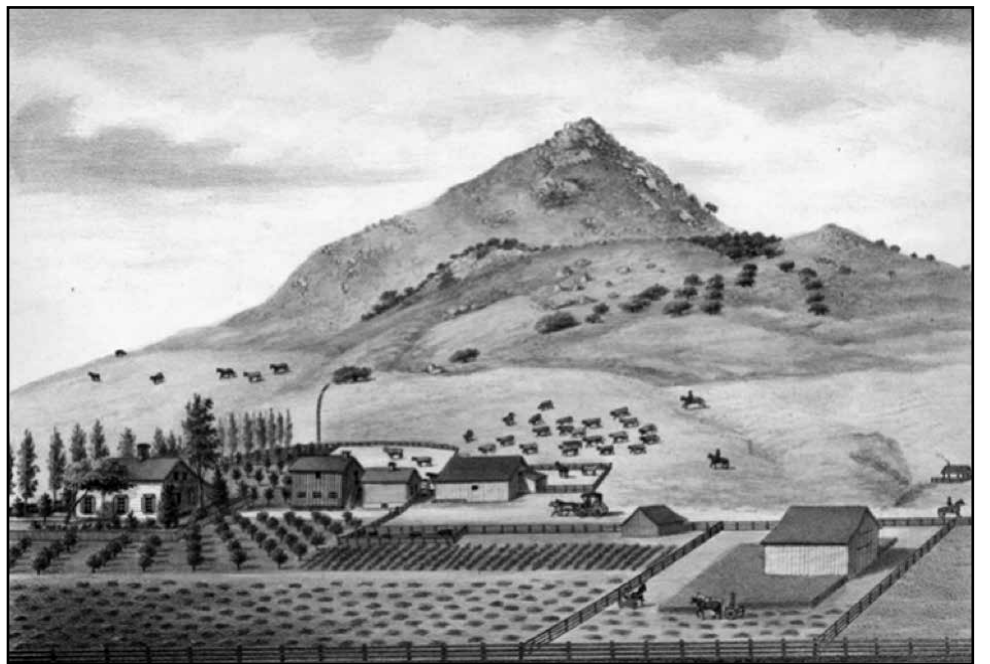
Part 2 of 2

Following the major drought in the 1860s, dairy farming boomed in SLO County. Franklin Riley founded the town of Morro Bay in 1870 in part as a trading port for these dairy and ranch products. He constructed a wharf where schooners exported butter and cheese to population centers. By the 1880s, SLO County could claim the moniker "Cow Country," providing San Luis Obispo County with a reliable tax base.

Dairy products from this region were plentiful and of high quality. A major disadvantage, however, was the region's remoteness from main centers of population. Shipping dairy products to faraway places made them susceptible to deterioration, making milk "a dangerous food."

Dairying was the startup that put the Central Coast on the map, but transportation improvement was necessary for moving perishable dairy products to markets in San Francisco and Los Angeles. The demand for safely transporting dairy products spurred the building of wharves, lighthouses, and railroads. The railroad promoted the dairy industry's economic expansion throughout the state and beyond.

While schooners initially handled exports, the 1876 construction of the Pacific Coast Railway, a local narrow-gauge line, improved the speed of transporting the perishable dairy products and thus their marketability. The industry was further revolutionized on May 5, 1894, when the Southern Pacific Railroad arrived in San Luis Obispo to an "uproarious three-day celebration," (as reported in "A Track Through Cow Heaven" by Solange Kiehlbauch). These steel rails transformed fresh milk into a long-distance industry, allowing products to be shipped far and wide.



Soon centralized creameries further increased production by introducing specialized processing practices. When California Polytechnic University opened for classes in 1903, the Cal Poly Creamery was established, one of the first operations of the university. True to the university's learn-by-doing philosophy, it partnered with dairy-making operations such as the Harmony Valley Creamery Association. Prospective dairy farmers and producers were trained here in modern manufacturing equipment and practices.

The dairy industry continues to thrive on the Central Coast, but it is no longer a top producer. The agricultural sector remains robust, with the overall county agricultural value topping \$1 billion, but it is now driven by crops such as vineyards and berries as well as ranching. Even though not the economic powerhouse that it once was, local dairy products continue to be in high demand due to their exceptional high quality.

Photo source: San Luis Obispo Railroad Museum. Do you have an interesting photo with a story to tell? We'd love to hear about it—contact HSMB via email: info@historicalmorrobay.org.

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# News

**Election Races** From page 1

He came to San Luis Obispo County 20 years ago and was CEO of the SLO Chamber starting in 2019.

## Dist. 3 Supervisor

Though Estero Bay Communities can't vote in the Dist. 3 race, who sits on the Board of Supervisors is important to our communities.

In the race for Dist. 3 Supervisor incumbent Jimmy Paulding will face challenger Adam Verdin both of Arroyo Grande. Paulding is running for a second term.

Verdin grew up on Oceano, according to his website (see: verdinforsupervisor.com) where his family has owned and operated Old Juan's Cantina Restaurant for some 50 years.

He is an attorney and the chief pilot for a corporate aviation company, having learned how to fly at 17 at the Oceano Airport. He is a community volunteer involved with several local organizations, among them Jack's Helping Hand and the 5Cities Homeless Coalition.

His wife, Mary Verdin, owns a local marketing firm.

Paulding was born and raised in Arroyo Grande and attended Cal Poly studying city and regional planning. He's worked on public works projects building roads, wastewater plants and criminal justice facilities, according to his website (see: jimmyPaulding.org).

He earned a law degree from Santa Barbara and Venture College of Law and owns a small business consulting firm.

Both Paulding and Verdin will appear on the June 2 Ballot.

## State Assembly

Also appearing on the ballot in the race for Dist. 30 State Assembly seat will be incumbent Dawn Addis of Morro Bay, running for her third, 2-year term. She is being challenged by Shannon Kessler of Arroyo Grande and Susannah Brown of SLO. Kessler is a Republican and Addis and Brown are Democrats.

## Shannon Kessler

Kessler is a "mother, business owner and long-time Central Coast community volunteer" according to her website (see: www.kesslerforca.com).

"She has served as an Arroyo Grande Parks and Recreation Commissioner, PTA president, and coordinator of a local Moms Walking Club, working directly with families, schools, and neighbors to solve real community and children's needs.

She is a co-owner of a local family construction company and real estate business. She has a long history in the agriculture community, as well.

## Susannah Brown

According to Brown's bio on her website (see: www.brownfor30.com) she is "a data strategy consultant and longtime Central Coast resident."

She is founder and CEO of a data and strategy consultancy supporting regional housing, economic development, and infrastructure decision-making. She had experience in retail pharmacy operations leadership across 19 stores from Salinas to Santa Barbara.

She's active with the South County Chambers of Commerce as chairperson (2025); board member (2024-2026); and government affairs chairperson (2023-2026).

She is also a volunteer finance director for a regional health and family services nonprofit and has held several leadership roles with local schools.

Her husband is a nuclear operator at Diablo Canyon, and she is well versed in energy issues.

"I bring direct, firsthand understanding of how energy policy decisions affect grid reliability, workers, ratepayers, and local school funding. That perspective shapes my focus on reliability, workforce safety, and responsible transitions — not rushed decisions that leave communities paying the price."

She stated, "I'm running to represent the Central Coast with a practical, disciplined approach grounded in listening, learning, and showing up in every community, from San Luis Obispo County to Santa Cruz and Monterey Counties."

## Dawn Addis

Addis was elected to the Assembly's Dist. 30 seat in 2022 and represents portions of San Luis Obispo, Monterey and Santa Cruz Counties.

She previously served one term as a Morro Bay City Councilwoman from 2018-2022 before being elected to the State Assembly.

Addis was a teacher for 20 years in the San Luis Coastal Unified School District and is the founding chair of the California Legislative Central Coast Caucus, the president of the California Legislative Central Coast Caucus Foundation, and the Assembly appointee to the Ocean Protection Council, according to her website (see: dawnaddis.org).

Addis is the first Democrat from San Luis Obispo County to serve in the State Assembly since 1922, and the first Democratic woman to ever hold the seat. She is also the first Democrat to represent the majority of San Luis Obispo County in the State Assembly since 1947.

Addis, Brown and Kessler will appear on the June Ballot. If no one gets over 50% of the vote, the top two will run off in November.

## County Clerk-Recorder

The race for County Clerk-Recorder will have three women vying for the office, with incumbent Elaina Cano being challenged by Gaea Powell and Vanessa Rozo.

## Vanessa Rozo

Rozo's website (see: vanessarozosloclerkrecorder.com) says she is "a proven leader with 30+ years in management, compliance, and public service, bringing integrity, accuracy, and accessibility to our vital county office."

She said, "My journey in San Luis Obispo County began in 1992 when my husband Mike and I chose Grover Beach as our home. For over 35 years, our life together has been a journey of love and support raising our two sons Troy and Bryan, and now delighting in our cherished grandchildren, Milo and Oliver. Our family deepened its roots on the Central Coast when we became franchise owners of N-Hance Wood Refinishing, Inc., in 2006, later opening our local shop in Oceano.

"This entrepreneurial journey has given me invaluable experience in managing operations, prioritizing customer service, and ensuring fiscal responsibility required to run an efficient trusted organization."

As for the Clerk's job, she said, "My commitments for a stronger SLO County — fair, legal, and ethical elections. I am dedicated to ensuring fair, legal, and ethical elections for all residents."

Rozo added, "I will vigilantly protect the nonpartisan nature of this essential role. This includes working to eliminate the disenfranchising of voter precincts, lobbying

against gerrymandering, and holding candidates accountable for campaign fraud by utilizing the Public Integrity Unit."

## Gaea Powell

Powell said on her website (see: gaea4clerk.com): "As a business consultant with over 30 years of experience, I bring the diverse skills, organizational insight, and leadership needed to manage the complex responsibilities and sworn duties of the County Clerk-Recorder's Office."

Her mission statement reads, "My mission is to restore common sense, transparency, and trust to San Luis Obispo County's election process.

"I will speak out whenever state directives threaten the Constitutional Rights of the people of our county or attempt to silence or discredit citizens who raise legitimate election concerns."

She lists several core election principles: voter ID required; U.S. citizens only; clean and accurate voter rolls; in-person voting with paper ballots; absentee ballots only for legitimate needs; same-day voting; same-say results; full transparency; more North County office access; and civics and election process education.

Powell made headlines last year when the District Attorney's Office charged her with alleged election fraud in a previous race she entered for Arroyo Grande Mayor. Her website has an extended interview Powell did with New Times and she addresses the court case, which is ongoing, in depth. She claims she is innocent and being targeted for political reasons.

"From my perspective," Powell said, "the DA's investigation into me — the digital seizures, nine-month fishing



Arroyo Grande businesswoman, Gaea Powell, is challenging for County Clerk-Recorder.



Incumbent State Assemblywoman Dawn Addis is running for a third 2-year term.



Shannon Kessler is running for the Dist. 30 State Assembly seat.



Susannah Brown is challenging for the Dist. 30 Assembly seat.



Oceano businesswoman Vanessa Rozo is challenging for County Clerk-Recorder.

Election Races Continued on page 22

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WRITTEN BY: **Jon Robin Baitz**  
DIRECTED BY: **Lisa Woske**

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# News

**Election Races** From page 21

expeditions, the attempt to paint me as some sort of criminal — was nothing more than political intimidation.

“I believe I was targeted because I have been outspoken in challenging the political machine, and because I filed complaints with the DA’s Public Integrity Unit regarding very real issues that harm the ‘people’ including federal law violations: child abuse and sexualization, anti-American policy implementation, and irregularities within the Clerk-Recorder’s Office.”

Powell’s case is scheduled for a preliminary hearing on April 1.

## Elaina Cano

Incumbent Cano is running for re-election to another 4-year term.

“Over the past four years serving as your County Clerk-Recorder, she said on her website (see: team-elainacano.com), I’ve focused on making our office more responsive, accessible, and transparent — because public service isn’t just a promise, it’s a responsibility.

“This role carries serious legal and democratic duties, from administering elections and safeguarding property records to issuing vital records and ensuring compliance with hundreds of state laws. There is no on-the-job training for this work. It requires experience, sound judgment, and the ability to lead accurately and confidently from day one.”

Cano took over the Clerk-Recorder position after former Clerk-Recorder Tommy Gong left for a position as Chief Deputy County Clerk-Recorder in Contra Costa County. Last August, Gong was hired as Clerk-Recorder for Lane County, Ore.

Cano won a full term in 2022. “I’ve overseen multiple elections, managed tens of thousands of public records, guided residents through essential services during both routine and challenging times, modernized critical systems, and fostered a team culture rooted in integrity, accountability, and public trust. In 2024 alone, our office issued and recorded thousands of vital records and official documents, expanded Express Marriage ceremonies, and brought pop-up services directly to communities across the county. We’ve also maintained transparent, accurate election administration while prioritizing clear communication, outreach, and voter education.

Cano added, “Looking ahead, I remain committed to protecting election integrity, expanding access to services countywide, supporting high civic participation, and continuing to modernize responsibly — always with care, accuracy, and respect for the public trust.”

According to her website bio, Cano is originally from Riverside. She came to the Central Coast in 1992 when her husband Marty earned a full-ride scholarship to play football at Cal Poly. They soon put down roots and started their



Incumbent County Clerk-Recorder Elaina Cano is running for re-election.

family. Cano began her public service career in 1994 with the City of San Luis Obispo Parks and Recreation Department, and a few years later, in 1998, Marty joined the San Luis Obispo County Probation Department.

## Other races

Several candidates will not be on the ballot as they were unchallenged. Judge Rita Federman and Judge Matthew Guerero were both unchallenged and will win in a walk over.

As of March 19, according to the latest list of candidates released by the Election’s Office, County Tax Assessor Tom Bordonaro, Jr., is also unopposed and unless there’s a last-minute addition, the race will not appear on the ballot.

County Auditor-Controller-Treasurer-Tax Collector (ACTTC) James Hamilton was also not challenged for another term and won’t be on the ballot.

County Superintendent of Schools, Dr. James Brescia, recently announced that he would be retiring and not seek another term.

Joe Koski, the assistant superintendent of educational support services for the County Office of Education has qualified for the ballot to replace Sr. Brescia.

At this time, he may not have a challenger, as another long-time education figure in the County Office of Education, Michael Spechierla, in January announced his candidacy but has since pulled out of the race, according to a news report.

So, it appears that even though the County Election’s Office’s candidates list shows that Koski would appear on the Ballot, unless someone else filed to run at the 11th hour, he will win without a fight.

Also, Stacy Korsgaden of Grover Beach, who has twice run for Dist. 3 County Supervisor, has qualified for the ballot to run for Insurance Commissioner, a statewide office. She is listed as a Republican.

The incumbent Insurance Commissioner Ricardo Lara, Democrat, is running for re-election as the first openly gay person to be elected to statewide office (in 2018) in State history.

## What’s Ahead

According to the Clerk-Recorder’s website, ballots will be mailed to all registered voters beginning no later than May 4.

The last day to register to vote in this election is May 18. Conditional or “same day” registration is available within 14 days of the election and must be done in person only at either County Elections Office (SLO or Atascadero) or at a polling location or elections office on Election Day.

Preliminary results will be posted online as they come in but don’t expect a final count for at least a few weeks, as provisional ballots come in.

## Coleman Park From page 1

Transportation Plan project for another \$67,000.

“The Active Transportation Plan/Corridor Studies project was originally included in the Fiscal Year (FY) 2023-24 budget to create the City’s first active transportation plan for the purpose of pursuing active transportation grant funding.

“However, due to the high number of active and wait-listed capital projects as well as reduced staff capacity to implement these projects, as well as the low priority status of this project, no work has been done on this on the Active Transportation Plan.”

There’s a potential issue with that big State Parks grant.

“The \$600,000 of grant funding awarded by California State Parks,” reads the item report, “was for a broader Coleman Park Improvements project and included additional scope to what is now planned for the Phase 1 project.

“At the recommendation of State Parks, the City has formally submitted a de-scoping request for several items originally proposed in the grant. As of the writing of this staff report, State Parks has not made a final decision on the City’s de-scoping request. In the event State Parks reject the City’s de-scoping request, staff would come back to identify potential solutions to fill any funding gaps as an alternative to project cancellation.”

The Phase 1 Coleman Park Project has been in the

works for a long time. The public restrooms were condemned after an inspection found problems with the single-story concrete block structure. They sat closed for some time before the City decided to tear it down.

Coleman Park is among the most scenic in the City rivaling Tidelands Park in its setting next to the bay, with a sweeping view of the harbor mouth to the west and looking down the harbor channel and the Embarcadero to the south.

It sits in the shadow of the smokestacks of the closed power plant and has some amenities — a swing set, picnic tables, a trio of bayside dirt parking lots and a full size basketball court.

In 2021, the City held several public meetings with the Parks & Recreation Commission and other advisory boards, polling what amenities the public would like there. What emerged was a concept plan that included numerous new features, like cultural areas for Native Americans and Filipinos to commemorate their history with the bay, an exercise area, new playground, outdoor stage, ADA parking and interior trails among others.

But budget realities have pared down the project considerably and Phase 1 will focus on the new restroom facility; ADA-compliant parking; accessible playground replacement; and ADA pathways connecting these features.

J Bruce Kies Const. started last week, and the project is expected to take some 55 working days to complete.

Last Thursday, the work had already included moving picnic tables around and grading of the sandy surface. A trio of men were doing underground work on what will be the restroom pad while a backhoe and a track excavator stood sentinel over the effort.

When the pad for the new restroom is finished, the company CXT will deliver the pre-fab restroom and install it.

If all goes as planned visitors to the park will have a new restroom and other amenities before the summer tourist season starts.

## I Love MB From page 1

lands Park landscaping was originally planted in the eighties. Now after 45 or 50 years it needs replanting and color.”

The projects are set and MBIB hopes everyone will show up for a couple hours to plant or paint artful watering pails. Walter explained, “MBIB’s goals are always two-fold — a bunch of people pitch in and finish several pre-prepped projects that could normally take our Morro Bay city staff endless hours and cost a boatload of money.” Franklin Riley Park and the nearby pocket park are also included. “We always end up creating a community of new friends having fun together and building something beautiful and lasting in one of our civic neighborhoods.”

In 2024, the first I Love MB gathering planted 82 trees with 47 of them creating the Peace Garden next to Dorn’s Restaurant. Volunteers also rejuvenated the Main Street Bike Park originally built by Friends of the MB Police Department and volunteers.

In 2025, 10,000 pounds of dirt was needed to recreate the landscaping around the offices housing Morro Bay’s Rock Radio station, Visit Morro Bay and the Chamber of Commerce. Walter said, “The public sees the pretty flowers, but don’t realize the prep time it takes to do projects. With more people we can get more done. This one took four leaders and girls from twelve Girl Scout troops. They finished planting in 45-minutes.”

When and how did Walter develop his passion for gardening? He spends his weekdays prepping and fundraising for each Saturday morning’s civic gardening project so his all-volunteer MBIB gardening group can complete it



# BAY

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**OPEN FRIDAY - WEDNESDAY**  
**CLOSED THURSDAYS**  
 \*SHOWTIMES SUBJECT TO CHANGE\*

**3/20 - 4/1**  
**PROJECT HAIL MARY**  
 (PG-13) 2 hr 36 min  
 Fri-Sat & Tues-Wed 3:30 pm & 7 pm  
 Sun 12:30 pm & 4 pm

**4/3 - 4/22**  
**THE SUPER MARIO GALAXY MOVIE**  
 (PG) 1 hr. 38 min.  
 Fri.-Sat. & Tues.-Wed. 4:15 p.m. & 7 p.m.  
 Sun. April 5 & April 12 at 1:15 p.m. & 4 p.m.  
 Sun. April 19 at 6 p.m. ONLY

**MONDAY SPECIALS \* ONE SHOWING ONLY AT 5:30 PM**

**4/6**  
**BE KIND REWIND**  
 (PG-13) (2008)  
 1 hr. 42 min.

**4/14**  
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# News

within two hours. Their motto: "One hour to chat and one to complete the project together."

"I come from a family of hobbyist gardeners," Walter shared. "My grandfather was the most serious. He raised Tuber Begonias to show at the San Francisco County Fair. He had a backyard green house. I lived close by so got to use it. Gardening was my only way to have a relationship with him since he preferred flowers, birds and Lucky Lager beer over people." Note: He worked at the Lucky Lager Beer plant.

After a career as a chemist Walter's family – Jane Heath and their kids – moved to Morro Bay where he had plenty of room to create his own backyard garden, now regularly used as a staging and seedling start-up area for new MBIB projects. Jane, now recently retired, opened her law firm in SLO then eventually Morro Bay while the kids finished school and established their own families. Jane began to get involved in local civic groups while Walter stumbled into developing the concept of Morro Bay In Bloom.

In 2012, Walter heard about a civic gardening program from then Mayor Jaime Irons who'd been talking to Arroyo Grande's then Mayor Tony Ferrara. AG had affiliated with the national group America In Bloom (AIB). "Their public gardens made their city shine," marveled Walter.

He researched AIB's guidelines and in October 2013 he assembled a small group to create their first project. "As long as the site and program of work are fully set up for the volunteers, it is amazing what we can accomplish in our Saturday morning two-hour meet-up time. We all come away with such a good feeling we've accomplished something."

MBIB has never had chapter dues and encourages all ages and abilities to show up on any given Saturday. "About 25 came out for that first planting – Mayor Tony Ferrara and Supervisor Bruce Gibson plus Morro Bay residents. Fourteen years later several are still with MBIB most Saturdays including Susie and Tim Crowley, Joe Birney, Jan Goldman and Cindy Heimel.

After a couple annual visits from AIB with assessments that Morro Bay had accomplished "a lot of improvement," Walter was compelled to learn what more they might do. He served two years on the board of directors and volunteered for the national evaluation team. He was able to see what other communities were doing to fulfill AIB's criteria for community beautification. Eventually Morro Bay received top evaluations three years in a row.

"We will always be noted in America In Bloom's 'Circle of Champions,' Walter said. "Jane and I got to travel to some of the most beautiful cities in the USA. It was amazing to see cities all over doing the same thing as Morro Bay."

One of the hurdles MBIB had to overcome was developing a stronger relationship with the Morro Bay Public Works staff. "They now trust that MBIB's only purpose is to fill gaps in landscaping needs. We understand how our eight-person staff is stretched caring for our city parks, street cleaning, and public bathrooms. Carlos Mendoza [with public works] has been an amazing partner. They do the heavy lifting – bring in excavators to prep the grounds so we can finish the planting and add more color to our city."

But as MBIB continues to create larger projects and community-wide events, grants and fundraising have become essential. The group raises funds to purchase the plants, install them, and regularly maintain the sites.

"When our members are out maintaining the community planter box they have adopted, they will often hear, 'When I'm feeling blue, I come out and see the colorful flowers and feel happier.'"

Since I Love MB is a major civic project, current Morro Bay In Bloom volunteers hope lots of folks will join them in 2026. "It's all about getting families involved," Walter said. "Service is healthy for us in our senior years."

And why not start teaching our young now how they might continue to contribute to their future community?

Check out [www.morrobayinbloom.org](http://www.morrobayinbloom.org) for more details on Saturday events or how to donate to the cause. Also check out a MB online walking garden tour of projects that includes 325 "This is Us" decorated garden pails and 20 civic wall murals all created by volunteers during I Love MB events.

## Civil Case From page 1



The sport fishing boat, Black Pearl, recently settled a civil case with the District Attorney's Office over violations of State fishing regulations on deep-sea fishing trips along the coastal waters of San Luis Obispo County."

The incident happened in the waters off San Simeon. "On July 12, 2025," the release said, "California Department of Fish & Wildlife officers were on patrol in the Bluefin [patrol] vessel in foggy conditions near Piedras Blancas in San Luis Obispo County when they identified on radar a suspected boat drifting inside a restricted fishing area. The captain of the Bluefin lowered a small patrol boat and dispatched two officers to investigate."

Getting help from the Bluefin to navigate the fog, the launch was able to find and identify the Black Pearl as the vessel inside the no fishing area.

The game wardens, "observed 20 customers fishing in waters seasonally prohibited to fishing," the D.A. said. That original violation led to the discovery of others.

"Later, an audit by the CDFW of the electronic fish logs submitted to the State by the crew of the Black Pearl revealed it was not accurately recording the species of rock fish being caught by its passengers."

The game wardens took their allegations to the D.A., and he contacted the Black Pearl's owner.

"Black Pearl Sportfishing LLC, immediately took steps to come into compliance with reporting requirements by replacing the vessel's computer hardware system and training the crew members in its usage."

The D.A.'s Special Prosecutions Unit pressed the case using a civil litigation process, rather than a criminal case. Such fishing violations can be charged as either. The case was resolved in late January.

"On Thursday, Jan. 22, 2026, San Luis Obispo County Superior Court Judge Craig Van Rooyen approved the settlement stipulation and issued an order that requires Black Pearl Sportfishing LLC, and Mr. Walker to pay \$10,600 in civil penalties.

"They also agreed to pay \$2,000 to the San Luis Obispo County Fish and Game Fund."

That fund, fed by fines for Fish & Wildlife violations, is "exclusively used for programs and projects that benefit the fish and wildlife of San Luis Obispo County," the D.A. said. The County's Fish & Games Fines Advisory Committee advises the County Board of Supervisors on how to grant that money out to different projects.

Also, the settlement prohibits the boat from exceeding daily catch limits and "requires the boat's crew to report the specific species of rockfish that its customers catch."

Some fish species are difficult to tell one from another and sport boats have long lumped them together under the catchall category, "unspecified rockfish."

D.A. Dow said, "Civil enforcement actions like this are essential to protect our precious marine resources and to make sure that everyone who does business on our coast plays by the same rules.

"By holding violators accountable, we safeguard the longterm sustainability of our coastal waters and ensure a fair marketplace for the many lawabiding commercial fishermen who depend on them."

The Black Pearl responded in a Facebook post shortly after the D.A.'s announcement hit the news.

"The incident in question occurred during a drift in which the vessel was attempting to hold near the 300-foot mark, but with current and wind conditions drifted into about 320 feet of water which was beyond the regulatory

limit in effect at that time. Though the captain had already called our anglers up and signaled a boat move, we take full responsibility for our obligation to maintain constant awareness of our vessel's position relative to current fishing regulations, including in-season adjustments that may alter allowable fishing areas, and acknowledge our responsibility in insuring that at all times, regardless of conditions we maintain a position unquestionably within the proper boundary lines."

The company added that this is the only violation the captain has had in over 40 years of professional fishing.

When they checked their equipment, they found a problem.

"During our internal review, we identified that certain onboard navigation and regulatory reference technology was outdated. That equipment has since been fully replaced and upgraded to ensure real-time accuracy and full compliance with all applicable state and federal regulations moving forward."

Addressing the identification issues, "questions were raised regarding fish reporting classifications. Specifically, certain species of rockfish were recorded under the broader category of 'unspecified rockfish' rather than being itemized individually.

"While this has been a common reporting practice within the broader California sportfishing fleet, we acknowledge that regulatory expectations require precise species-by-species identification."

They put the captain and crewmembers through some training to better identify the different species of fish.

That issue illustrates the complexity of fishing regulations, as the rules have been detailed down to when you can fish, where you can fish and what depth of water, how many fish you can catch, and even what fish species you can take. The regulations also differ in many aspects from one area of the state to another.

And the regulations can be changed at any time by either the State Fish & Game Commission, or the Pacific Fisheries Management Council (PFMC). That's the federal agency that regulates fishing on the West Coast. That aspect makes it a challenge to keep up to date with the current regulations for sport and commercial fishers, as well as the game wardens that do the enforcement.

The Pearl's statement added that for them the ocean is more than just a place to earn a living.

"The ocean and its rich ecosystems are not just our workplace," the post said, "they are our life and our passion. We deeply value the privilege of sharing these waters with our guests and community. Sustainable fishing practices, regulatory compliance, and responsible stewardship are foundational to who we are and how we operate."

The issue with the Black Pearl marks at least the second time a local sport fishing boat has been dinged for much the same issues with tracking the fish passengers landed. Some time ago the Endeavor had similar issues with the catches by their passengers, and they too reached a civil settlement with the D.A.

The Black Pearl operates out of Morro Bay Landing. See the website at: [www.blackpearlsportfishing.net](http://www.blackpearlsportfishing.net) to book a fishing trip online.

The rockfish season is slated to officially open April 1.

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