

Our Stories: Morro Bay Yacht Club Turns 70



Optimist sailboats used for Morro Bay Yacht Club Junior sailors and for the Summer Sailing program. Photo courtesy of by Dana McClish
By Judy Salamacha

The Morro Bay Yacht Club celebrated its 70th anniversary on May 30, with a record number of members attending — charter, longstanding, former and some who had recently joined. The goal of the day was to reminisce, break-bread with new and old friends, and celebrate its 70 active years in Morro Bay. The fare was Luau MBYC-style. A bounty of BBQ chicken from the grill was augmented by abundant choices of potluck fixings and desserts to satisfy anyone's sweet tooth.

MBYC Commodore John Wimer opened the memory-filled program with stories and photographs compiled by historian Andrea Surfleet with his greeting and an exciting announcement. "All members have made this club a success — those that built it, continue to maintain it and our boatyard, and participate in the races and programs. I have good news! We just received notice our grant to shore up the docks has been approved. We will need everyone's support again to get this job done."

And based on the club's history volunteering and celebrating together has been MBYC's strategy for survival and growth for 70 years. The following is a brief synopsis of that history sourced from the club website at www.mbyc.net.

MBYC was formed in 1964 by sailing and power boating enthusiasts. They spent their early years helping to improve Morro Bay's harbor and boating conditions, including doing safety inspections for the Harbor Department. They helped organize the Morro Bay Harbor District and the Coast Guard Auxiliary Flotilla. Work, however, was always rewarded with time to play. Racing events and socials were common. Youth activities were always a priority for these young families. Summer sailing lessons were first sponsored through the city's recreation department. MBYC is well known for its open-door hosting of worldwide

visitors from other yacht clubs.

In 1960 the first clubhouse was a houseboat. It would tie-up to various business docks until it found a location near the south Embarcadero boat ramp. This made competition starts and finishes easier for sailboat and power boat racing. The "clubhouse" would sink in 1964, a casualty of the tsunami generated from the Great Alaskan Earthquake.

Activities resumed in 1966 when they secured a lease at 541 Embarcadero from SLO businessman Charles Berkemeyer. By 1971 the membership was able to purchase it and, after many improvements to the small dockside house, they had a permanent clubhouse. Dedicated on May 18, 1980, the new clubhouse filled all the needs of a thriving yacht club. Leadership retired any debt in 1981. Continuing to pay their way utilizing the volunteer talents within the membership, the boatyard across the street was acquired, docks repaired, bathrooms and the galley were remodeled between 1986 and 2018.

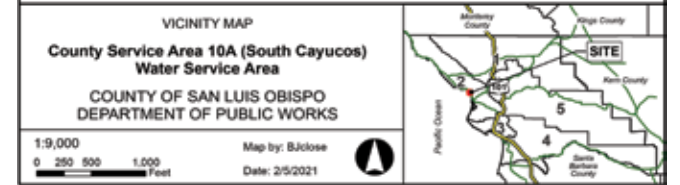
Membership and racing fleets continued to grow. Summer sailing programs for adults and youth continues to be popular. The Morro Bay Youth Sailing Foundation was formed in 2011. The Junior Yacht Club maintains independent meetings and programs. Active Cal Poly sailing students have increased their participation and responsibilities advising and teaching the youth programs.

Surfleet shared stories and photos from the past 70 years and recognized many of the attendees for their contributions. "It was our members who agreed we would serve by volunteering our time and skills to keep our club affordable, fun and friendly." The original fees were \$5 for initiation plus \$1 monthly dues."

She recognized the first charter member, Rosemary Jorgens, who joined in 1962 with her husband Buck. Even at age 101,

Yacht Club Continued on page 17

County Sets Water Rate Hike Process Dates



Map shows the outline of the area in South Cayucos served water by County Services Area-10A, which is facing a significant rate hike. Map courtesy SLO County

By Neil Farrell

Tempers could come to boil in South Cayucos, as the County nears a big rate hike for their drinking water.

For months, the County has been working on a rate hike for the 950 water customers in its County Services Area-10A system.

That's the name for the County-run water treatment and distribution system that serves residents roughly from the base of Whale Rock Dam south to the end of Ocean Boulevard, and on both sides of the highway.

CSA-10A also provides drinking water under contract to the two privately owned water companies — Cayucos Beach Mutual and Morro Rock Mutual.

While the County's proposed rate hike is aimed at its own customers, the treatment plant is one of the facilities that's due for increasing costs, so a rate hike for that service is a potential.

Cayucos residents and the Cayucos Citizens Advisory Council (CCAC) have been anticipating the rate hike for many months, and the County informed them of the proposal in May when it released a slide show spelling out why they need to raise the rates.

Under the heading of "Current Situation," the County listed three bullet points:

Rate Hike Continued on page 17

Mitigating Climate Change One Meal at a Time



Robin's Restaurant owner Shanny Covey in the atrium of the restored adobe home and garden setting in Cambria. Photo by Isabella Curtioni

By Theresa-Marie Wilson

A North Coast restaurant is tackling climate change one meal at a time and diners can participate simply by eating.

Robin's Restaurant in Cambria, long celebrated for its seasonal, fresh food and innovative

menu, is the first eatery in SLO County to join Zero Foodprint's efforts to fund farmers implementing climate smart/regenerative practices. This decreases harmful emissions by reducing fossil fuel inputs like fertilizer made from methane, thereby reducing the damage being done to the planet. Regenerative practices draw

Mitigating Climate Change Continued on page 18

Drone Light Show Set for Friday, July 3



By Neil Farrell

The City of Morro Bay is planning something special for the upcoming 4th of July Holiday; after all you only turn 250 once, right?

Recreation Services Manager, Kirk Carmichael, and Youth Services Manager, Angelica Jepsen, ran down the 2-day event the City is planning to celebrate the USA's Semiquincentennial Anniversary of the founding of the nation, and they're planning a new-fangled high tech show stopper.

The celebration is set for Friday-Saturday, July 3-4, they explained.

Friday, July 3 Continued on page 18

Two Picked for Pilgrimage Trip



By Neil Farrell

In the special 250th Anniversary year of the nation's founding, a pair of Morro Bay High students will go on a special trip to visit historic monuments and places, thanks to the local Odd Fellows.

The Bay Rock Lodge of the International Order of Odd Fellows and Rebekahs (I.O.O.F.) selected Morro Bay High students, Ely Franco and Benny Easton-Carr as the recipients of scholarships to attend the Odd Fellows' Annual Pilgrimage of Youth.

The Pilgrimage brings more than 90 student delegates to the East Coast for a two-week trip, visiting the nation's monuments and historic

Pilgrimage Trip Continued on page 19

Whale
Count
Page 3



Police
Blotter
Page 8



Graduation
2026
Page 10-11



Dantona Races Past Woody



Dist. 2 Supervisor candidate, Jim Dantona (left) of Cayucos has taken the lead over his opponent Michael Erin Woody of Morro Bay in the race to replace the retiring Bruce Gibson. Photo by Neil Farrell

By Neil Farrell

Though ballots are still being counted, it appears that the Dist. 2 County Supervisor race will be won by Jim Dantona who overcame an Election Night deficit to overtake Michael Erin Woody as late votes continue to be counted.

As of June 9, the unofficial tally had Dantona ahead with 6,512 total votes, and 53.59 percent of the 13,861 votes counted at that point.

Dist. 2 has 32,361 registered voters so at 24,862 the turnout is listed as just 42.83%.

Woody had a slim, early lead of over 200 votes when the County Election Office released the first unofficial results on June 4, two days after the June 2 Primary Election.

If Dantona's lead holds and his vote total stays above 50%, he would win the seat held by Bruce Gibson for nearly two decades and avoid a runoff in November.

Once again mail-in balloting made up the majority of votes cast, with 13,262 compared to 599 cast at polling places.

Of note, there were 1,515 "undervotes" (ballots that didn't cast a vote in this race), and eight overvotes (ballots with more than one candidate marked).

In the Dist. 4 race, Incumbent Jimmy Paulding had 54.61% of the votes (15,170) to 45.39% for challenger Adam Verdin (6,638).

Dist. 4's turnout so far is less than Dist. 2, as 15,170 votes had been counted out of 39,137 registered voters, or 38.76%.

In this race there were 545 undervotes and just two overvotes.

And mail-in ballots dominated the totals with 14,516 mailed in versus 654 cast in person at the polls.

In the other contested County Office incumbent Clerk-Recorder, Elaina Cano appears to be running away with her race securing 38,414 (64.78%), with challengers Vanessa Rozo (15,199, 25.63%) and Gaea Powell (5,687, 9.59%).

In the other race of local interest, Los Osos voters approved Measure B-26, a property tax increase to fund the purchase of the Sunnyside School site for future use for the town.

"Yes" votes totaled 2,260 (52.76%) to 2,032 "No" votes (47.24%).

The total shows the wisdom of the measure's supporters in holding a petition drive to have the Community Services District place it on the ballot.

As a citizen's initiative, B-26 needed only a simple majority to be approved, instead of the two-thirds needed when a governmental agency seeks a tax hike for a specific purpose.

Had the CSD asked for the measure, these totals would have been the agony of defeat.

B-26 establishes a parcel tax of \$185 a year per parcel attached to property tax bills and lasting at that rate for 15 years. This amount is to pay for buying the old school from the San Luis Coastal Unified School District.

After the initial 15 years, it would drop down to \$100 a year, adjusted annually for inflation, to pay for the upkeep of the property.

The CSD would take possession of the land and be responsible for the maintenance and upkeep, as well as acting as landlord for any organizations that lease space in the old school's buildings.

B-26 raises over \$1.11 million a year the first 15 years and then \$602,200 annually after that. Only voters can end the assessments in the future through another initiative.

The new law also has a provision that revenue and expendi-

tures be public information and an oversight board be established to watchdog the money.

Also on the ballot were several uncontested races. The Auditor-Controller-Treasurer-Tax Collector-Public Administrator's race had incumbent Jim Hamilton getting all of the 46,020 votes cast countywide.

Long time County Assessor Tom Bordonaro also ran unopposed and got all 50,558 votes cast in that race.

In the County Superintendent of Schools race, Joe Koski was also unopposed in the bid to replace the retiring Jim Brescia. Koski got all 43,021 votes.

Incumbent Dist. 30 Assemblywoman Dawn Addis of Morro Bay got the majority of votes in SLO County, securing 29,456 (48.75%). Her district also includes significant parts of Monterey and Santa Cruz Counties.

Addis also leads in those counties with 20,112 votes out of Monterey County and another 15,843 votes out of Santa Cruz County, giving her over 65,400 total votes out of the three counties in her district.

In the Dist. 24 Congressional race, incumbent Salud Carbajal led the vote getters in SLO County with 23,378 (54.59%) and in second place is Bob Smith with 16,451 (38.41%). If Carbajal had similar totals in the other counties he represents (Santa Barbara and part of Ventura) he would avoid a run-off with over 50% of the votes.

Also of note, in the Governor's race, Republican Steve Hilton got the most votes with 19,844 and Xavier Becerra second with 16,796 in an over-crowded field of office seekers. Hilton campaigned several times in SLO County including once in Morro Bay where in an online campaign video he criticized Gov. Gavin Newsome's push for an offshore, floating wind energy project that is opposed by a majority of local residents as well.

Billionaire Tom Steyer was third with 14,429 and Riverside County Sheriff, Chad Blanco was fourth with 9,090 SLO County votes. Hilton and Blanco were the top two Republicans in the field of 61 candidates. There were a total of nine admitted Republicans in the race. Candidates that listed "No Party Preference" or NPP numbered 23.

It appears that Hilton and Bacerra will have a runoff in November in the bid to replace the termed-out Gov. Newsom.

Final election results are expected to be announced and certified by the Board of Supervisors sometime before the end of June.

Next Steps in Sunnyside Purchase



By Neil Farrell

With an apparent positive election result in, the folks in Los Osos will now turn to the work at hand — finalizing the purchase of Sunnyside School.

Los Osos voters appear headed to approving the Measure B-26 tax increase at the June Primary Election.

The property tax increase will fund the purchase of the Sunnyside School site for future use for the town.

As of the June 11 accounting, "Yes" votes totaled 3,258 (53.90%) to 2,787 "No" votes (46.10%).

As a citizen's initiative, the measure only needed a simple majority to pass. Had a government agency, like the Community Services District proposed it, the threshold would have been two-thirds and wouldn't have even come close to passing, assuming the same vote ratio.

The measure increases property taxes \$185 a year for private property parcels. That rate continues for 15 years to cover the expected purchase price and then drops to \$100 a year in perpetuity until the law is changed by another vote of the people.

B-26 will raise over \$1.1 million a year for that initial period and then about \$602,000 a year after that. The continuing charges are meant to cover operations and maintenance for the property.

The CSD will own and be responsible for the future uses, which is one of several questions that will be addressed as the purchase moves forward. Community sentiment leans towards parklands

and office space.

Estero Bay News asked new CSD General Manager, Greg Kwolek, what the next steps are now that the money has seemingly been approved?

It should be noted that at this point the election results have not been finalized, as the County Elections Office is still counting late arriving ballots. The results won't be official until the Board of Supervisors certifies the results, probably by the end of June.

"If B-26 passes," Kwolek said, "our first job is to finalize a deal with the school district and bring it to the CSD Board of Directors for their consideration."

The San Luis Coastal Unified School District put the old school site, which has been closed for about 25 years, up for sale last year after declaring it, and Morro Elementary in Morro Bay, surplus property.

The City of Morro Bay has agreed to purchase Morro Elementary and negotiated a purchase price of \$5.3 million, far below the \$10 million it was appraised for. That deal is scheduled to close escrow at the end of October.

The CSD will do the same as Morro Bay did — negotiate.

Kwolek said they would be entering into negotiations on "Price and structure of the deal. Very likely we will enter into a lease-to-own agreement. Stay tuned!"

As for Morro Bay's successful negotiation, Kwolek said, "We would work to get the best possible deal for the taxpayer. It's important to note that the Sunnyside and El Morro are very different sites, with different potential uses and different constraints."

Like Morro Bay, once a purchase agreement is reached, they will conduct a "due diligence" study, looking at everything from the school's title to environmental conditions, potential hazardous materials and site plans.

But all this is hypothetical at this point. "We're still waiting for final word from the County to work out specific timelines," Kwolek said. "There are still a lot of ballots not counted."

That may be true, but if history is any indication, at this point in the ballot counting, whoever or whatever measure is ahead is more than likely to remain there, though the percentages may change a little up or down.

At the latest count on June 11 before EBN's deadline, the lead for the Yes vote was 471, with about 300 votes remaining to be counted out of Los Osos.

Overall voter turnout at this point is 61.77%, according to the Elections Office.

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Enjoy views of the ocean and Morro Rock in this beautifully updated and thoughtfully reimaged, this move-in ready Los Osos home combines modern efficiency with comfortable coastal living. The spacious living room is filled with natural light from two solar tubes and features a striking floor-to-ceiling stone fireplace wall, now complemented by a freestanding electric stove for added ambiance and convenience. The remodeled kitchen offers updated finishes and newer appliances, while both bathrooms have been tastefully renovated. Designed with energy efficiency in mind, the home has been converted to an all-electric lifestyle (except for the gas water heater) and features a Tesla solar system, an energy-efficient heat pump with four mini-split zones for customized heating and cooling, Milgard dual-pane windows throughout, and LED lighting.

Tiny Ocean Life Helps Scientists Estimate Whale Prevalence



Humpback whales launch out of the water to feed on large schools of anchovies off the California coast near the Oceano Dunes. The whales worked together to herd the fish into concentrated balls before lunge feeding up through the schools. Photo by Joe Johnston, Cal Poly

A new approach to better assessing whale population data has emerged, led by a research team of marine biologists from Scripps Institution of Oceanography at UC San Diego and statisticians from Cal Poly.

Scientists typically monitor whale presence through a variety of traditional methods such as visual surveys, photo identification, acoustic monitoring, satellite imagery and, increasingly, genomic methods. But monitoring can be challenging due to a wide-ranging migration area and intermittent surface pop-ups, among other difficulties.

Using an innovative alternative method, the Cal Poly-Scripps team examined microbial “ecological habitats” as highly accurate predictors of how many filter-feeding whales were occupying the California coast between 2014 and 2020 from San Diego to Morro Bay.

Baleen whales, including blue, fin and humpbacks, commonly migrate along the California coastline and feed on dense collections of food sources. Baleen mouth filters function as a sieve after the whale takes a massive mouthful of water. The massive creatures use their tongues to expel the water and trap prey such as krill, zooplankton and other small fish inside the

mouth for the whale to eat.

In their analysis examining the ecological habitat, or community of small organisms associated with baleen whales, researchers from the two institutions collaborated to develop data models to predict whale presence from microbial and plankton information. Their study appeared in a May 6, 2026, article published in the journal PLOS One.

The research used data from the world’s oldest marine ecosystem monitoring program, the California Cooperative Oceanic Fisheries Investigations, or CalCOFI, now in its 77th year, to examine the relationship between baleen whales and their ecological habitat.

“The concept of this project was to try and find an indirect signal that’s based on ecological relationships in the microbial communities that are in the water and how they respond to macro-organisms, such as whales,” said Trevor Ruiz, a Cal Poly assistant professor of statistics and one of the study’s lead authors. “We developed a tailored approach, and while our methods are not off the shelf, they remain transferrable to prediction from microbial data more broadly, and along with our scientific findings we have provided a portable software implementation

of the methods to lower barriers to adoption for other researchers who might be interested in applying our approach to other problems.”

Working in coordination with Scripps marine ecologists, who informed the biological aspects of the research, the Cal Poly team developed the statistical modeling using computational data science tools.

“This project gave me valuable experience in data analysis and modeling,” said Nick Patrick, a 2025 Cal Poly statistics alumnus and study coauthor. “It had many collaborators across different fields, from statistics to marine ecology to genomics, and seeing everyone from these disciplines coming together to form the final product was one of the most interesting aspects.”

Erin Satterthwaite, a marine ecologist affiliated with Scripps Oceanography, said the scientists compared the whale survey data taken from visual observations with seawater samples analyzed for microbial and small plankton communities using environmental DNA, or eDNA. In this approach, seawater is filtered and DNA from organisms in the water is extracted. Specific genetic markers are then amplified and sequenced, allowing researchers to identify the suite of organisms present by matching sequences to reference databases.

“Many approaches rely on indirect environmental proxies that are several steps removed from the actual biology of the whales,” Satter-

thwaite said. “Our work uses eDNA to characterize the structure of the microbial and small plankton community which adds to existing oceanographic information by incorporating ecological habitat information of whales, which improves our ability to predict whale densities.”

Findings based on the study suggest that on average, predictions of whale densities based on microbial communities were found to be 53% more accurate than traditional forecasts.

The work adds to a growing body of research using eDNA that gives scientists a window into the biology and ecology of the ocean. With whales, scientists are interested in monitoring their populations as a general indicator of ocean health, to better understand and manage human impacts such as vessel strikes, entanglement, and noise disturbance, and because they are culturally and ecologically important. Satterthwaite said that this work can help scientists to better understand how whales are connected to tiny ocean life, like bacteria, phytoplankton, and zooplankton.

As the cost decreases and the ease of using eDNA techniques improves, eDNA is becoming increasingly accessible for a wide range of applied purposes. More broadly, this approach could also be used to study other large marine animals, like sharks or large open-ocean fish, which could help create more detailed range maps of marine species.

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News

County Fire Welcomes Firefighting Helicopter

By Neil Farrell

If the nightmare of wildfire returns to San Luis Obispo County this summer, the local firefighters will have a special tool to fight the blaze from the air.

SLO County Fire Department Public Information Officer, Capt. Ryan Grebe, announced that a CH-47D Chinook Helitanker recently flew into the Paso Robles Airport and will be under an exclusive contract for the 2026 fire season.

Named, "Helitanker 7PJ," it's the same one that was here last fire season, Capt. Grebe said in a news release.

"The helicopter's unique nighttime firefighting capabilities," he said, "allow it to operate during hours when many other aircraft are unavailable, providing critical aerial support during periods of increased fire activity." The chopper will work the night shift.

Helitanker 7PJ will be staffed and available from 3 p.m. until 3 a.m. each day, "allowing crews to take advantage of both afternoon fire suppression operations and nighttime firefighting missions.

"Its speed, capacity," Capt. Grebe said, "and night-flying capabilities provide firefighters with another powerful resource to help protect lives, property, and natural resources."

Battalion Chief Cody Dunn, who heads up the Paso Robles Air Attack Base, welcomed the big bird. "7PJ is a welcome addition to the aerial response we have in the San Luis Obispo Unit and will also be utilized statewide as large incidents emerge," said Chief Dunn.

The CH-47D Chinook can cruise at speeds of up to 120 knots (138 mph) and carry up to 2,300 gallons of water per drop.

The combination of speed and payload "enables the aircraft to respond rapidly to emerging incidents and deliver substantial



County Fire announced that a CH-47D Chinook Helitanker, a helicopter specially equipped to fight fires at night, will be stationed at the Cal Fire/County Fire Air Attack Base in Paso Robles this fire season. Submitted photo

water drops to support firefighters on the ground," Capt. Grebe said.

Readers may see the aircraft responding to wild fires throughout SLO County and it will respond to other areas in the state when needed for larger fires.

Still a relatively new concept, firefighting aircraft that can fly at night are becoming more and more important.

"Night-flying aircraft," Capt. Grebe said, "have become an increasingly important component of California's wildfire suppression strategy, allowing firefighting operations to continue after sunset, when cooler temperatures, higher humidity, and reduced fire behavior can create favorable conditions for containment."

The announcement comes a couple of weeks after Cal Fire/County Fire announced a burn ban due to what they said could be a bad fire season. Early rains last fall followed by extended periods of dry, clear weather made grasses and vegetation grow early. The dry late winter and spring have meant a quick drying out of that vegetation and an increase in potential fire fuel.

SLO County hasn't had a major wildfire in several years but has repeatedly been struck by numerous catastrophic blazes in the past.

And with a huge amount of the county sitting as open range, grasslands and oak forests, the potential for a huge blaze is ever present.

The Chinook Helicopter has many uses. As a heavy lift helicopter, it has seen extensive duty as a military troop transport and evacuation chopper since at least the Vietnam War.

It has been used for many heavy lifting operations in various industries as well as a fire suppression aircraft on wildfires. Locally, readers may occasionally see Chinooks flying over the North Coast out of Camp Roberts or Camp San Luis Obispo.

City-Fishermen Ink Deal for Dock Repairs

By Neil Farrell

The City of Morro Bay has finalized an agreement with local fishing organizations for the use of generous donations made to repair the Commercial Fishermen's Dock.

The City Council approved a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Morro Bay Commercial Fishermen's Organization and the Joint Cable-Fisheries Liaison Committee, on how to spend some \$800,000 in donations made by the organizations to repair one of the main offloading facilities for the commercial catch.

"The MOU," reads a report from Harbor Vitality Director Chris Munson, "will establish the requirement by MBCFO for the use of \$800,000 toward the Harbor Commercial Fishing Dock Repair Project and by the City to dedicate the lease site solely to commercial fishing industry use for a period of 30 years."

Locking down the dock for the commercial fishing industry was the main selling point and the Harbor Department will benefit as well.

"The City will not directly receive the grant funding," Munson said, "but will indirectly benefit from a lease site in good repair, an improved asset, and sustained commercial fishing."

The old dock, which has offloaded fish seemingly forever, is a vital resource. This agreement for the extensive repairs it needs comes on the heels of the City inking a long-term lease with a local company.

The Harbor Commercial Fishing Dock is the main offloading area for wholesale fish in Morro Bay," the report said. "In March 2026, the City entered a 20-year lease agreement with Morro Bay Seafood Company to operate the facility. The prior tenant, Morro

COMMUNITY MEETING #2

HELP SHAPE THE FUTURE OF THE MORRO ELEMENTARY PROPERTY

The City of Morro Bay invites the community to learn about the proposed purchase of the former Morro Elementary School property and participate in the due diligence process.

Residents are encouraged to attend, ask questions, and share ideas about the future use of the site.

For More Information :

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Bay Fish Company (Santa Monica Seafood) had partially completed repairs to the pier structure below the lease site.”

In the lead-up to the MOU, the Harbor Department asked the Liaison Committee, another commercial fishing organization that gets its money through an agreement with undersea cable companies, to do an assessment of the damage that still needs to be repaired and any new damage, “in the hope that JCFLC would help fund the repairs. The damage was much more extensive than originally discovered, estimated at \$817,700 to repair.”

Last year, the MBCFO and the Liaison Committee had made big donations to the City to help with the dock repairs. The CFP donated \$400,000 and the Liaison Committee \$150,000. Those donations came with a catch — the City had to designate the lease site for commercial fishing uses only. And since the two big donations fall short of what’s estimated to be needed, the Liaison Committee is stepping up once again with another \$250,000 donation, Munson said.

“The Harbor commercial fishing dock is in dire need of repair,” Munson said. “It’s continued existence and operation are vital to continued commercial fishing in Morro Bay. The cost of the project makes the repairs infeasible for the leaseholder to complete without assistance.”

Those costs would be tough for the Harbor Department to cover as well, considering it has identified tens of millions of dollars in repairs to harbor facilities — including the rock riprap that holds back the bay waters — up and down the Embarcadero.

It also has a big project to rebuild the public boat launch ramp on its plate, among numerous others.

The Liaison Committee has helped out the City before. “JCFLC has been a key ally to both the City of Morro Bay and MBCFO,” Munson explained. “They have donated over \$175,000 directly to the City, which includes \$40,000 for the Harbor Patrol Vessel Replacement and sending a delegation to Washington D.C. for over 20 years. They have also donated over \$840,000 towards the Morro Bay Ice Facility. They continue to support MBCFO and Central Coast Women for Fisheries. Morro Bay Community Quota Fund is graciously using some of their revenue to support the effort as well.”

That Washington D.C. trip is for the Annual California Marine Affairs and Navigation Conference or C-MANC, the annual lobbying trip City officials — usually the mayor and harbor director — make to lobby the Army Corps of Engineers to include Morro Bay Harbor Mouth dredging in its annual schedule of work for the dredge ship Yaquina. It’s also a chance to meet with local House members and Senators, and bureaucrats from different agencies to bring to their attention Morro Bay’s infrastructure needs.

The Fishermen’s Dock sits in the middle of the Measure D planning zone, the area north of Beach Street that is reserved primarily for commercial and sport fishing needs.

That voter-approved initiative means any new development or redevelopment that increases the footprint of an existing use has to be connected to commercial fishing or sport fishing.

Though the lines have been smudged a bit over time — for example the new docks at Morro Bay Landing are not exclusively used by commercial fishers — for the most part it has been adhered to.

Allowed uses include fish markets, such as the one at Dockside Too and the sport landing operation at Morro Bay Landing.

But for example is someone wanted to build a new restaurant on a lease site in that area, they would have trouble winning approval.

These restrictions are permanent unless or until another voter initiative is approved that changes them.

Locking down the Fishermen’s Dock for 30 years is in keeping with Measure D and in keeping with the City’s notion of being a working waterfront.

Lompoc Man Arrested in Waterfront Burglary

Morro Bay police, with help from the County Sheriff’s Department, quickly arrested a Lompoc man after he allegedly burglarized a waterfront art gallery and made off with a significant amount of jewelry.

MBPD Cmdr. Tony Mosqueda said that they were dispatched to a burglar alarm at the By the Bay Gallery in the 800 block of the Embarcadero at 3:45 a.m. Sunday, May 31.

They arrived within minutes and officers discovered a broken front window at the business, Cmdr. Mosqueda said in a news release.

“The property owner was contacted,” he said, “and confirmed a significant loss, primarily consisting of jewelry.”

Then shortly after 4 a.m., Cmdr. Mosqueda said, SLO County Sheriff’s Deputies stopped a suspicious vehicle for “a vehicle code violation” somewhere within the Morro Bay City Limits.

“During the stop,” Cmdr. Mosqueda said, “deputies contacted the driver, identified as 27-year-old Ryan Michael Coats, and observed narcotics and drug paraphernalia inside the vehicle.”

Deputies searched the vehicle and reportedly discovered “a large quantity of jewelry.”

MBPD officers responded to the traffic stop and were reportedly able to identify the majority of the recovered jewelry suspected to be property “stolen from the Embarcadero Road business.”

Coats was arrested on suspicion of burglary, receiving or possessing stolen property, and theft with two or more prior convictions, Cmdr. Mosqueda said.

The suspected stolen jewelry wasn’t the only suspicious items Sheriff’s deputies found in their search.

Cmdr. Mosqueda said the Sheriff’s Office “is investigating additional incidents potentially connected to other property recovered from Coats’ vehicle.”

If readers have additional information related to the Embarcadero burglary, contact the Morro Bay Police Department at: 805-772-6225 (non emergency).

If anyone has information related to the other potential crimes Coats may have been involved in that were in the Sheriff’s jurisdiction, call: 805-781-4500 (non emergency).

The quick arrest of the suspect was most fortunate for law enforcement and the victim, as Sheriff’s deputies who work out of the Coast Station in Los Osos have a large response area — spanning from Los Osos to SLO and north to the SLO-Monterey County Line. So their being in Morro Bay at that particular time and place was most unlucky for the alleged burglar.

A check of the County Jail website’s “Who’s in Custody” link on June 3 showed that Coats was no longer in custody.

Bombs Found After Home Standoff

A San Luis Obispo man wanted on several charges, barricaded himself in his home and refused to come out for two hours before the County and Regional SWAT Teams forced his surrender and then reportedly discovered homemade bombs inside the home.

According to a news release from Sheriff’s spokesman, Tony Cipolla, at 5 a.m. Friday, June 5, the Sheriff’s Special Enforcement Detail (SED) served a felony arrest warrant at a home in the 4700 block of Los Osos Valley Road, that’s a rural area a short distance west of Foothill Boulevard-LOVR intersection.

The wanted man was identified as Benjamin Reynoso, 43 who was wanted for suspicion of felony vandalism, violating a domestic violence restraining order and obstruction of justice, Cipolla said. These charges stemmed from a prior incident the week before, Cipolla added. He’d also reportedly threatened law enforcement.

“Reynoso,” Cipolla said, “also made prior statements threatening law enforcement as well as residents in the area.”

When officers arrived, Reynoso refused to come out of the house, “despite numerous announcements,” Cipolla said. He added that no one else was inside the home at the time.

The Sheriff’s Negotiation Team tried to contact him and talk him out but Reynoso refused to come out and allegedly made new threats to Sheriff’s officers on scene. They tried several persuasive methods to get him to surrender.

“Several methods including chemical agents were used to get Reynoso out of the home,” Cipolla said. The stalemate lasted about two hours and Reynoso finally surrendered without further incident. When they searched the home, they discovered items that will add further charges to his future woes.

“During a search of his home,” Cipolla said, “Detectives discovered several homemade incendiary devices.”

The SED got an assist from the Regional SWAT Team when they brought in their specialized vehicle “to help in the apprehension of Reynoso,” Cipolla said.

The Regional SWAT Team is manned by officers from the various incorporated city police departments in the County and is separate from the Sheriff’s SWAT Team (the SED).

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News

Cambria Man Dies in Hwy 46 Head On Crash

By Neil Farrell

A Cambria man was killed in a head-on collision on Hwy 46 east of Hwy 1, the Highway Patrol said in a news release.

According to CHP Lt. Darren Gennuso of the Templeton Office, at about 9:39 a.m. Sunday, June 7 officers responded to a report of a head-on crash on Hwy 46 east of Green Valley Road and east of the Hwy 1 and 46 intersection.

According to Lt. Gennuso, "Upon CHP arrival it was determined a 21-year-old male and Cambria resident, Oscar Pena Estrada, was driving a gray 2014 Ford Mustang westbound on Hwy 46 at an unknown rate of speed."

At the same time, Dean Carl Voigt, 62 of Ellisville, Mo., was eastbound on the highway in a white, 2016 Dodge Ram 2500 truck and hauling a camping trailer.

"For unknown reasons," Lt. Gennuso said, "Mr. Estrada allowed the Mustang to travel into the opposing traffic lane directly into the path of the Ram, subsequently colliding head on."

A passenger in the Mustang, identified as Cesar Pena Estrada, 29, was fatally injured and died at the scene.

The driver of the Mustang suffered major injuries and was taken to Sierra Vista Hospital in SLO.

Mr. Voigt and a passenger, identified as Kelly Voigt, suffered minor injuries. The CHP's Templeton Office is investigating the crash.

Head on crashes on Hwy 46 between Hwy 1 and Paso Robles are not all that common, but certainly have happened in the past, as the highway is mostly a two-lane roadway with intermittent passing lanes, and divided only by a double yellow line painted down the center.

Some areas on that road are also prone to landslides, falling rocks and slip outs during wet winters, though Caltrans has worked hard to fix the most problematic areas.

Water Line Job Set to Start

By Neil Farrell

Residents of South Cayucos will soon see increased water pressure after the County completes a job to upgrade a major water line.

Hartzell General Engineering, Inc., as the winning bidder for the Chaney Waterline Upgrade Project with an \$189,000 bid.

The project will slide a new, larger water pipe through an existing casing that runs underneath Hwy 1 from the east side over to the Studio Drive neighborhood.

The old 4-inch line will be replaced with a 6-inch line, and the project will involve some excavation work on Ocean Boulevard, according to a report from County Water Utilities Division Manager, Nola Engelskirger, to the Cayucos Citizens Advisory Council.

"This project," she said, "will improve water system's resili-

ency and increase fire flow to Studio Drive, west of Highway 1."

The work is scheduled to start at the end of June or start of July.

The overall budget for the job is listed as \$563,000. After Hartzell's bid, the County has also counted in \$18,000 in contingencies in case there are change orders needed (\$208,000 total for construction).

The rest is engineering and plan work, plus administrative duties, as the project required working with Caltrans on an encroachment permit. Also, the job is being done for County Services Area-10A (CSA-10A), the water system run by the County that serves the southern end of Cayucos and also operates the water treatment plant that serves the entire community.

That plant also provides drinking water to the two private water companies that also provide drinking water on the north end and Downtown and charge the fire hydrants in what is the main portion of town.

The CSA-10A budget specifically for this job had some \$289,000 set aside and left \$93,000 in the fund balance. With the costs now nearly doubled at \$563,000 that left the County to do a little dance to cover the shortfall of \$273,000.

That money is coming from the CSA-10A's Water Fund Reserves, \$70,000; and \$203,000 out of the CSA-10 "Parent Fund Designated Reserves."

Hartzell's winning bid at \$189,000 easily beat out the other two bidders: R. Burke Corp., at \$263,000, and Spless (SIC) Const., Co., at \$318,000.

County Engineering's estimate was \$211,000 so the winning bid came in 11% lower than anticipated.

The project start comes as the County is gearing up to raise water rates significantly for the CSA-10A's 950 water customers (see related story).

The rate hike is expected to hit customers of the two private purveyors, as well, as the County's costs to treat the water coming from Whale Rock Reservoir to drinking water standards and provide it to the other water companies, are partly to blame for the rate hike.

LOCSD Celebrates Turnaround

By Neil Farrell

My how things have changed. An agency whose board meetings once bordered on civil unrest, the Los Osos Community Services District has now been honored with a prestigious award for how civilly it conducts business.

The LOCSD was recently awarded the "District Transparency Certificate of Excellence" by the Special District Leadership Foundation (SDLF).

The award is "in recognition of its outstanding efforts to promote transparency and good governance," reads an announcement from the District.

"On behalf of the SDLF Board of Directors," reads a letter from SDLF Board President, Sandy Raffelson, "I would like to congratulate your district on achieving this important certificate. By completing the District Transparency Certificate of Excellence Program, Los Osos Community Services District has proven its

dedication to being fully transparent as well as open and accessible to the public and other stakeholders."

The honor is a far cry from the chaos that erupted at every board meeting during the height of the town's "sewer wars," when the newly-formed CSD found itself under constant attack for an ill-conceived plan to build a community sewer and place the treatment plant — initially a ponding system — in the center of town.

A revamped plan was pursued to the point of actually breaking ground before a recall election flipped the board majority and upended the project, and gave rise to the battle cry, "Move the Sewer!"

That led to bankruptcy, default on a State loan and the State eventually stepping in and giving the project back to the County, which tried unsuccessfully for nearly 30 years to build it.

The project was completed in 2016, after about two years of the whole town being turned into a construction zone.

New General Manager, Greg Kwolek, who was not here when all this ugliness happened, was a little philosophical.

"During the sewer wars," he said, "I'm told meetings were a mess and the district was disorganized."

"The District has come a long way and Ron [Munds the retiring G.M.] was a big part of that."

Munds is wrapping up a long career in public service and has led the LOCSD since August 2019, serving as the longest tenured G.M. in the District's history. The CSD was voted into existence in 1999 and its top spot had been a revolving door until Munds came in.

"The district is now a stable organization," Kwolek added, "with lots of big projects coming in the next few years — the State Water intertie project, fire station renovation, Sunnyside School, and the storm water basin up in Cabrillo Estates. Pretty amazing."

To receive the award LOCSD "demonstrated the completion of essential governance transparency requirements, including conducting ethics training for all board members, properly conducting open and public meetings, and filing financial transactions and compensation reports to the State Controller in a timely manner," the news release said.



"This award," Kwolek stated, "is a testament to Los Osos Community Services District's commitment to open government. Our staff is to be commended for their contributions that empower the public with information and facilitate engagement and oversight."

The SDLF is an independent, non-profit organization promoting good governance and best practices among California's special districts. It has certification, accreditation, and other recognition programs.

Special districts are independent public agencies that deliver core local services to communities. Potential services include utilities, wastewater treatment, fire protection, parks and recreation, healthcare, sanitation, and mosquito abatement. They can also oversee ports, libraries, public cemeteries and more.


In Los Osos the CSD provides fire protection, water service to about half the town and maintains storm drainage and numerous other functions. It does not own or operate the community sewer that caused so much turmoil for so long. The County still handles that function.

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Estero Bay New Briefs

By Theresa-Maria Wilson

Big Brother Big Sisters Open House

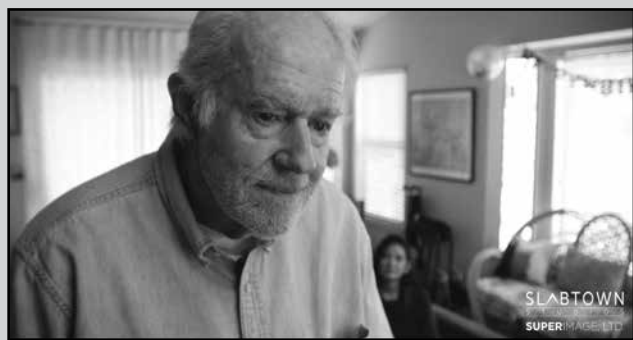
Big Brothers Big Sisters will hold an open house for community members on Friday June 26, at the SLO Bigs office, 142 Cross Street ste.140, San Luis Obispo. This special event offers guests an opportunity to explore the space, meet the team, and learn more about the programs and services available.

Attendees can participate in a welcoming and interactive experience, including tours, live demonstrations, refreshments, networking opportunities, and special presentations. The event is designed to provide insight into Big Brothers Big Sisters of SLO County's mission and highlight its commitment to serving the community.

"We're excited to open our doors and connect with our neighbors and community," said Stacy Salame, executive director. "This open house is a great opportunity for people to see firsthand what we do, how we're making a difference and how they can get involved."

The event is free and open to the public. Whether you're a longtime supporter or new to the organization, all are welcome to attend. For more information, contact Lynsey Hansen at 805.732.5824 or lynsey@slobigs.org.

Mike Farrell Comes to MB



The independent feature film "The Strawberry" (starring Mike Farrell of MASH fame) is bringing its exclusive Central Coast Red Carpet Premiere for one night only to the Bay

Theatre in Morro Bay, on Monday, July 6, at 5:30 p.m. Tickets are on sale now at 805tix.com.

Audience members can expect a full evening of celebration, including a red-carpet arrival, filmmaker meet-and-greets, a Q&A session, special guests, merchandise, photo opportunities, and an exclusive behind-the-scenes short film. The event aims to spark meaningful conversations around the themes at the heart of the film.

The Strawberry is based on a true story. After receiving a terminal diagnosis, Herb Kaplan (Mike Farrell) sets out to make peace with his broken family and rediscover the joy he long overlooked. As old wounds begin to heal and new bonds form, Herb learns to cherish the sweetness right in front of him and to say goodbye on his own terms.

General Admission is \$25, VIP is \$45.

Poly Names Tod Colegrove as Dean of Library Services



Patrick "Tod" Colegrove has been named dean of Library Services at Cal Poly, effective July 13.

Colegrove currently serves as dean of Albertsons Library at

Boise State University, where he has led efforts to strengthen library services, expand student and faculty support, advance major facilities improvements and integrate AI literacy into undergraduate education.

"Tod brings a compelling combination of academic library leadership, technology expertise and entrepreneurial experience," said Al Liddicoat, Cal Poly's provost and executive vice president for Academic Affairs. "His work reflects the essential role libraries play in advancing learning, discovery, access and innovation."

At Boise State, Colegrove has led strategic transformation of a comprehensive university library serving more than 28,500 students and 1,500 faculty. His work has included expanding digital infrastructure, strengthening library collections and services, and supporting emerging technology initiatives that help students use AI and other tools responsibly and effectively.

Previously, Colegrove served as Nevada State Librarian and as director of the DeLaMare Science and Engineering Library at the University of Nevada, Reno. At DeLaMare, he helped transform an underutilized science and engineering library into a nationally recognized hub for hands-on discovery, makerspace innovation, emerging technologies and interdisciplinary collaboration.

"I am honored to join Cal Poly and work with the talented faculty and staff of the libraries at both the San Luis Obispo and Solano campuses," Colegrove said. "I look forward to helping Cal Poly's libraries continue to evolve as places where students, faculty and staff connect with ideas, technologies, resources and one another."

Colegrove is a first-generation college graduate whose early connection to Cal Poly began as an FFA member competing on campus in dairy cattle judging. He holds doctoral, master's and bachelor's degrees in physics from the University of Nevada, Reno, as well as a master's in library and information science from Drexel University.

As dean of Library Services, Colegrove will lead Cal Poly libraries in supporting student learning, faculty scholarship, digital scholarship, archival stewardship, emerging technologies and collaborative academic engagement across the university.

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

Public Choice Best State Parks



California is home to more than 280 incredible state parks, and thanks to thousands of park lovers, the 2026 Best of California's State Parks poll celebrated some of the very best of them. From iconic coastlines and redwood forests to hidden gems and family-friendly escapes, your nominations and votes helped spotlight the parks that inspire adventure, protect natural beauty, and create lasting memories.

2026 Best of California's State Parks Winners

• Best California State Park for Camping

Winner: Pfeiffer Big Sur State Park

Honorable Mentions: Anza-Borrego Desert State Park and

Calaveras Big Trees State Park

• Best California State Park for Spectacular Views

Winner: Mount Tamalpais State Park

Honorable Mentions: Point Lobos State Natural Reserve and Crystal Cove State Park

• Best California State Park for Hiking

Winner: Big Basin Redwoods State Park

Honorable Mentions: Jack London State Historic Park and Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park

• Best California State Park for Birdwatching

Winner: Morro Bay State Park

Honorable Mentions: Humboldt Lagoons State Park and Año Nuevo State Park

• Best California State Park for Wildflowers

Winner: Antelope Valley California Poppy Reserve State Natural Reserve

Honorable Mentions: Anza-Borrego Desert State Park and Sugarloaf Ridge State Park

• Best California State Park for Family-Friendly Experiences

Winner: Angel Island State Park

Honorable Mentions: Railtown 1897 State Historic Park and Indian Grinding Rock State Historic Park

• Best California State Park for Day Trips

Winner: Point Lobos State Natural Reserve

Honorable Mentions: Jack London State Historic Park and Angel Island State Park

• Best California State Beach

Winner: Half Moon Bay State Beach

Honorable Mentions: Asilomar State Beach and Crystal Cove State Park

• Best California State Park for Learning About History

Winner: Bodie State Historic Park

Honorable Mentions: Jack London State Historic Park and Indian Grinding Rock State Historic Park

• Best California State Park for Dog-Friendly Adventures

Winner: Folsom Lake State Recreation Area

Honorable Mentions:

Leo Carrillo State Park

Candlestick Point State Recreation Area

• Best California State Park for Water Activities

Winner: Emerald Bay State Park

Honorable Mentions: Folsom Lake State Recreation Area and Clear Lake State Park

• Best California State Park for a Hidden Gem Experience

Winner: Sugarloaf Ridge State Park

Honorable Mentions: Bodie State Historic Park and China Camp State Park.



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Police Blotter



- **June 7:** Police contacted an apparent citizen of the year at 8:36 p.m. hanging around the Subway on Quintana. He had a warrant and was cited and chased off as he apparently was serving up a baloney sandwich.
- **June 7:** Police contacted someone dozing where he shouldn't at 8:38 a.m. and cited the apparent slugabed for illegally camping in public, in this week's example of the consequences of sleeping late.
- **June 6:** Police responded to a disturbance at 11:17 p.m. Logs indicated some apparently ill-tempered Nodcock got into a fight with emergency medical personnel and was then allegedly found to be in possession of drug paraphernalia and drugs, which explains a lot but excuses nothing.
- **June 6:** At 9:22 p.m. police stopped a suspicious vehicle at an undisclosed location in town. Logs indicated the driver was nicked for allegedly driving thick as a tick.
- **June 6:** Police responded at 6:41 p.m. to an undisclosed location where someone's body was discovered deceased.
- **June 6:** Police stopped a suspicious vehicle at 6:20 p.m. somewhere presumably in town. Logs indicated the driver was busted for suspicion of driving with a snoot full of tarantula juice.
- **June 6:** Police responded to a disturbance at 10:20 a.m. Logs indicated the call involved spousal battery and domestic violence, but not whether the louse actually got arrested.
- **June 6:** Police responded at 9:54 a.m. to the Community Center on Kennedy Way after someone reported finding something worth turning over to police.
- **June 5:** At 3:56 p.m. police responded to a reported case of larceny after some petty thief committed petty theft.
- **June 4:** At 10 p.m. someone called police about someone having a bit of a breakdown on Marina and logs indicated it was a case for County Mental Health.
- **June 4:** Police responded at 5:45 p.m. to a reported petty theft

- no doubt upsetting the buoyancy of the Buoy Bar on Quintana.
- **June 3:** Police responded to a domestic disturbance at 11:34 a.m. Logs indicated it involved alleged felony infliction of corporal injury on a spouse, aggravated assault and mayhem, and assault with a deadly weapon, and let's hope they took the tool to the wood shed.
 - **June 3:** Police responded to another reported dustup at 8:26 a.m. Logs indicated this was a case of simple assault, though the victim might disagree.
 - **June 3:** Police contacted some apparent night owl at 1:30 a.m. at Morro Rock and discovered the sneetch had a bench warrant.
 - **June 2:** Police responded to a disturbance at 5:24 p.m. at an undisclosed location. Logs indicated the matter involved some unrestrained Mamaluke violating a domestic violence restraining order.
 - **June 2:** At 3:08 p.m. someone reported being scammed for more than \$400, which is a felony rip off.
 - **June 2:** At 11:06 a.m. police responded to a citizen's report of yet another petty larceny. No word on what national treasure was stolen this time.
 - **June 2:** At 10:08 a.m. police responded to another mentally disturbed person causing a hoo-ha-ha somewhere in town.
 - **May 31:** Police responded to a disturbance at 7:03 p.m. at an undisclosed location. Logs didn't say what was happening but some ruffian was arrested for suspicion of felony battery on a police officer, and went to jail no doubt after a detour for medical attention.
 - **May 31:** At 12:35 p.m. police responded to a hairy crack up crash someplace in town. No word on the extent of the carnage.
 - **May 31:** Police roused some urban camper at noon and cited the apparent slacker for allegedly sleeping where they can't collect a bed tax.
 - **May 31:** Police responded at 3:45 a.m. to a burglar alarm at an art gallery in the 800 block of the Embarcadero. Upon arrival they discovered some thief had made a new entrance to By the Bay Gallery by busting out the front window and then proceeded to steal an undisclosed amount of valuable jewelry. A short time later Sheriff's Deputies stopped a suspicious vehicle across town somewhere and discovered the driver was in possession of a bunch of jewelry that was possibly stolen. Chief Inspector Clouseau put two and two together and came up with three — felonies that is including suspicion of burglary, possession of suspected stolen property and burglary with two or more prior convictions. The apparent career criminal from Lompoc was tossed into the hoosegow but had apparently taken the revolving door and been released on bond the next day. The stolen jewelry was returned, the broken window replaced, and the caze is sol-ved!

- **May 30:** Police stopped a suspicious vehicle at 11:04 p.m. somewhere in town. Logs indicated the driver forgot one little detail — a valid driver's license, which he or she did not possess.
- **May 30:** At 8:04 p.m. police contacted a suspicious character in the 400 block of Quintana hanging around at McDonald's. The Hamburglar had a bench warrant and was issued a new notice to appear in court, proving once again that fast food isn't good for you.
- **May 29:** Police stopped a suspicious vehicle at 3:33 p.m. at an undisclosed location. Logs indicated the driver was cited and released for suspicion of driving tanked.
- **May 28:** At 5:58 p.m. police contacted another suspicious fellow at an undisclosed location. The model citizen had a bench warrant and was issued another disappearance ticket to ignore.
- **May 27:** Someone found some no doubt valuable treasure — or maybe just a cell phone — at Morro Rock and turned it over to police.
- **May 27:** At 3 p.m. police contacted another apparent lazy bones with a bench warrant and he or she too was ticketed again, with a follow up no doubt due in about 30 days.
- **May 27:** Police responded at 9:02 a.m. to a report of someone being stalked by some mulish creep at the Blue Sail Inn on Market in violation of a stay-the-hell-away court order.
- **May 27:** Police responded at 8:58 a.m. to a report of fraudulent use of a stolen credit card at the Mobile Station by the Round-about.
- **May 26:** Police responded to a disturbance at 4:18 p.m. at Albertsons Market on Quintana. According to logs someone got arrested for suspicion of battery and simple assault and also had a felony and a misdemeanor warrant. The Triple Crown winner went off to the gaol.
- **May 26:** Police responded at 3:25 p.m. to an unknown location where an unknown citizen reported having his or her identity stolen, and we now have no idea who they are.
- **May 26:** Police responded to a disturbance at 1 a.m. at an apartment complex on Atascadero Road. Logs indicated the case involved spousal battery at the Rockview at Sunset apartment complex.
- **May 25:** Police stopped another suspicious vehicle at 3:53 p.m. at an undisclosed location. Logs indicated the driver was cited for suspicion of driving deep in his cups.
- **May 25:** Police responded at 12:23 p.m. to another car crash at yet another undisclosed location. No word on how badly anyone was hurt but the cars will no doubt ever be sound again.
- **May 25:** Police responded at 8:57 p.m. to a reported commercial burglary but logs didn't divulge the apparently super secret location where this happened.

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Boris and Virgil in the Great Escape

By Theresa-Marie Wilson

Hi everyone, Virgil here. Thank you all for the birthday greetings. You missed a great tuna dinner and presents. Boris tried to take my toys, and the human made me share --ON MY BIRTHDAY, the gall.

At four in the morning, when Furless was asleep, I crawled all over her doing my loudest purr, think jet engine, and convinced her that we should make my birthday a full weekend affair. You see, cat purrs, if done right, are full of subliminal messages. Tonight I might try recording myself and playing it backwards. Little known fact, cats are behind most conspiracy theories. We laugh and laugh. It should be noted that we did not start the one that claims dogs are man's best friends. After all, who in their right mind would believe that? Purrs and love, Virgil.

So, the human let BVD watch "Shawshank Redemption" last night, and Virgil and Boris have been pretending they are prisoners. Boris even went so far as to clank his food bowl against the bars, as in the front door. I think it will be a while before they break out, but until then, I am working the chow line and will open the commissary later this

Cat Noir CC



Photo by CatNoirCC.com

afternoon.

Daisy said the movie was good, but she prefers action movies like "The Cat in the Hat." She is also into films about food and has watched "Saving Nemo" so many times.

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Community

OUT & ABOUT
WITH THE BOOKSHELF WRITERS

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

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

RV Camping in Your Own Backyard The 3-3-3 Rule of Camping

**Whoa!
3-3-3 Rule
ahead**



What is this mysterious rule?

By Debbie Black

Have you ever heard of the "3-3-3 Rule of Camping?" Wait. Garth and I thought camping was supposed to be about getting away from everything and relaxing in Nature not fretting about some ominous rule? Reference to this mysterious 3-3-3 Rule kept popping up in blogs and forums, so I figured I'd better investigate. I would have bet you a bundle of firewood and a marsh-

mallow stick that we had already unwittingly broken this rule, whatever it is. Well, you guessed it. I would have won that bet! It turns out that the 3-3-3 Rule is actually simple and wise. Hopefully, you're already abiding by it. During our first years of camping, we had no choice but to disobey the 3-3-3 Rule. But boy, not anymore! Have I piqued your curiosity? Let's see where you stand on the 3-3-3 Rule of Camping.

Here's how it goes. It simply states that you should drive no farther than 300 miles, arrive by 3 p.m., and stay for a minimum of 3 days. What a lovely concept. But not always feasible.

When Garth and I worked fulltime in our architectural and landscape-architectural practices, we had no choice but to break this rule. We could only slip away for a few days at a time. We'd drive hard, get into camp late, set up in the dark, stay for a couple nights, then break camp, drive home, unpack, clean the RV, do laundry, and go back to work. Effortful, but worth it. Now that we've retired, we're grateful to be able to stretch out our camping trips for as long as we choose. We alternate between sticking close to home, savoring a super relaxing stay-vacation at one of our favorite local campgrounds or heading out at a leisurely pace for a month-long exploration of the western states.

As I write this, we're enjoying the .012-3-7-1 Rule. Yesterday, we drove 12 miles to El Chorro Park, checked in at 3 p.m., and set up for a 7-night stay, all in less than 1 hour. This is RV Camping in Your Own Backyard at its finest! We do similar short hops for easy stays at San Simeon, Morro Bay, and El Capitan State Parks, as well as Santa Margarita Lake — El Chorro's sister campground. When we go farther afield on month-long trips, we've learned the hard way to pace ourselves to avoid burn out. We know now that we can't see and do everything in one trip. We pare down our itinerary and are cautious not to overschedule. We drive a daily maximum of 250 miles between stays of at least two days, preferably four. I guess you could say we've evolved into our own variation of the 3-3-3 Rule.

For the past four years, I've written "RV Camping in Your Own Backyard" in the Estero Bay News to highlight and bring to your attention our fabulous, beautiful local campgrounds. People drive for hours or days to enjoy what we have in our own backyard. Merriam-Webster defines vacation as: "A period spent away from home...in recreation." Nowhere does it say you have to go far!

Certainly, we who live on the Central Coast are fortunate. We don't have to drive through LA or across the Central Valley or the length of the I-5 corridor to get to scenic campgrounds that check all the boxes. The 3-3-3 Rule doesn't apply when you can

be in your favorite campsite in less than an hour, making the most of your precious free time. Camping locally has a host of advantages. You may get raised eyebrows from folks asking where you're going camping, expecting you to say "Yellowstone," but instead you answer, "Morro Bay State Park." You can see the wheels turning as their disbelief turns to understanding, then often to envy. Likely, they'll join the swelling ranks of locals who are enjoying our local campgrounds. How about you?

Wishing you a summer filled with good camping memories, whether you're traveling 12 miles or 1200. May you slow down and savor the moment. It's not a rule, it's a blessing.

For my campground reviews and campsite ratings, please visit *RV Camping in Your Own Backyard* at www.debbienobleblack.com/rv-camping-in-your-own-backyard.

Events and Activities

By Theresa-Marie Wilson



Morro Coast Audubon Society's Annual June Picnic and Birding Walk takes place Monday, June 29 at 5 p.m. at

El Chorro Regional Park, Mariposa Group Area. An informal birding walk runs from 5 to 6 p.m. and the picnic is from 6 - 7:15 p.m. at 2961 Dairy Creek Rd., San Luis Obispo

The Mariposa Group Area is on your left as you drive into the park, just across from the SLO Botanical Gardens main entrance and Oak Glen Pavilion. NOTE: This is different from the one typically reserved. The closest restrooms are located near the entrance to the park. This is an ADA accessible group area.

Bring a dish to share (w/serving utensils), and your own reusable table setting (plate, cup, flatware, etc.), in addition to a picnic tablecloth if you have one. If you'd rather not share, bring your own meal. Assorted beverages and cookies will be provided by MCAS hospitality.

Join Eric and Mark for a late afternoon birding walk through the varied habitats and surrounding environs of El Chorro Regional Park. This short birding walk will be over gentle terrain and begins and ends in the Mariposa Group Area. People of all birding skills are welcome. Some of the species that might be seen include White-tailed Kite, Red-shouldered Hawk, California Quail, Western Scrub-jay, Western Bluebird, Black-headed Grosbeak, and Bullock's Oriole. Bring your own binoculars and take a casual stroll with fellow birders. No signups are required for walk.

The event is open to all at no charge. Donations towards our programs are always welcome. Questions? Email Wendy McKenown at commprograms@morrocoastaudubon.org. Photo by Marlin Harms

Events Continued on page 12

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Coast Union Graduation - 2026



Morro Bay Graduation - 2026



Congratulations to the Class of 2026. We wish you all success and happiness in the future. Be proud of what you have accomplished. Remember the bonds you formed with the community, friends, teachers and staff because they all helped shape who you are and will become. Keep kindness close to your hearts.

Visit Morro Bay has Three Board of Directors seats opening for two year terms. Starting in July 2026 and finishing in June 2028.



Requirements:

- (2) Hotel, Inn, and Motel board members must be owners or managers with at least one property within Morro Bay city limits.
 - (1) Business Board member must be owner or manager of a licensed tourism business within Morro Bay City limits.
- Commitment to attendance of six in person board meetings per year.

Incumbents have expressed intent to stand for re-election for these seats. Find out more information at: www.morrobay.org/who-we-are/board-of-directors/ Deadline for applying - July 10, 2026. Any questions email info@morrobay.org

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Cal Poly Graduation - 2026



A special shoutout to Connor Sullivan, Estero Bay's Cal Poly graduate. We love you and are so proud. Love Mom, Dad and Aunt T.





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Community

Events From page 9

•••

Beautify Cambria's annual Bee, Butterfly & Bat Faire has grown. In its 10th year, it's now the Pollinator Palooza, a lively street faire celebrating the essential role of pollinators. Taking place SATURDAY, JUNE 27 from 11 a.m. – 3 p.m. Attendance is free or by donation with all proceeds going towards creating murals on the backs of the buildings facing Highway 1.

Celebrate summer by learning about gorgeous, fuzzy native bees, honeybees, butterflies, and their extraordinary caterpillars, the stunning diversity and colorful beauty of moths, bats pollinating tropical fruits and flowers (and adorable baby bats!), and gardens that support them.

This dynamic community event brings together families, gardeners, environmental organizations, artisans, and local businesses for a day of pollinator-friendly fun. Through presentations, exhibits, demonstrations, plant sales, and hands-on activities for kids, Pollinator Palooza highlights the importance of protecting the species that sustain our food systems and ecosystems.

Get Tickets and more information at my805Tix.com and choose your price.

•••



Art Center Morro Bay presents POP! Art in Action, a three-day workshop for ages 6 and up, on June 23-25 (T/W/Th) from 10 a.m.-12:30 p.m. for \$115. Bright. Bold. Bursting with creativity. Step into the colorful world of Pop Art, inspired by artists who made everyday things extraordinary. Learn printmaking and create a series of relief prints in the style of Andy Warhol. Build larger-than-life, playful sculptures like Claes Oldenburg, and jump into a high-energy project inspired by Keith Haring's figures in motion.

•••

Cambria is hosting its 45th Annual Picnic in the Park celebration on Saturday, July 4th at Shamel Park. The opening ceremony begins at 11 a.m. at the flagpole for this family-friendly

event and continues until 5 p.m. Featured activities are music, children's games, pie eating contest, waiter/waitress races, raffle, and face painting. A bounce house will be available, compliments of the Cambria Lions Club.

Attendees are encouraged to purchase food on-site to support this event and will be provided by American Legion Post 432, Cambria Rotary, and Linn's Restaurant. Grills and fireworks are not allowed at the park, located at 5455 Windsor Blvd., due to fire safety for the community. All pets must be kept leashed. To volunteer, provide donations or for more information, visit 432cambria-legion.com.

•••

Celebrate the timeless music of Rodgers and Hammerstein in "A Grand Night for Singing," a charming and elegant revue that reimagines the legendary duo's most beloved songs at SLO Repertory Theater, 888 Morro Street, SLO, through June 28. Featuring fresh, contemporary arrangements of classics from "Oklahoma," "The Sound of Music," "South Pacific," "Carousel," "Cinderella," and more, this delightful musical showcase offers a fresh take on golden-age favorites, perfect for lifelong fans and new audiences alike. This astonishing musical has left audiences spellbound since its 1993 premiere and features more than 20 of the world's most famous songs, seamlessly woven together to create a dazzling evening of theatre. Tickets are available at sloreop.org.

•••



Join Sycamore Mineral Springs for a 1-hour outdoor yoga class on the Secret Garden Lawn in celebration of International Day of Yoga Sunday, June 21, from 10:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. surrounded by fresh air and lush greenery. This special morning session is for all experience levels and led by favorite Sycamore

instructors. After class, enjoy refreshing infused water and protein bars with our garden vibes. Tickets are \$12.56 at my805tix.com and exclusive to 30 guests.

- Arrive early and allow time to park in our main parking lot and cross the Green Bridge to the Secret Garden Lawn
- Bring your own yoga mat
- Class will be outdoors on the Secret Garden lawn (unshaded area), so please dress and sunscreen up accordingly

•••

Members of the Estero Amateur Radio Club will participate in the national Amateur Radio Field Day exercise June 27 and 28, at The Cloisters City Park in Morro Bay. Since 1933, ham radio operators across North America have established temporary ham radio stations in public locations during Field Day to showcase the science and skill of Amateur Radio. This event is open to the public and all are encouraged to attend.

For more than 100 years, Amateur Radio—also called Ham Radio—has allowed people from all walks of life to experiment with electronics and communications techniques, as well as provide a free public service to their communities during a disaster or emergency, all without needing a cell phone or the Internet. Field Day demonstrates ham radio's ability to work reliably under any conditions from almost any location and create an independent communications network. More than 40,000 people from thousands of locations participate in Field Day each June. A ham radio license testing session will also be available at 1 p.m. Saturday for all three license levels. A reservation is not required.

Field Day operations begin at 10 a.m. on Saturday 27 June, and run through 11 a.m. on Sunday. A person does not have to be a ham radio licensee to attend or talk on the radio at this event. This is a great chance to see what ham radio about and learn how to get involved. More information can be found at www.arrl.org and www.slradio.net.

•••

"Call of the Wild" and "Off the Wall" Exhibits is June 25-Aug 3 from 12-4 p.m. Art Center Morro Bay, 835 Main St, Morro Bay. There is and artists reception on Sunday June 28, from 2-4 p.m.

Discover the spirit of adventure in "Call of the Wild," an inspiring exhibit that explores the beauty, energy, and freedom found in nature and the human experience. This exhibit features a variety of artistic interpretations, including wildlife, landscapes, emotional expression, and imaginative works that reflect the untamed world around us and within us. From quiet moments in nature to bold expressions of movement and spirit, each piece offers its own unique perspective. Join us for "Call of the Wild" and enjoy a thoughtful collection of art





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Community

that celebrates creativity, curiosity, and the many ways we connect with the natural world.

The "Off the Wall" juried exhibition, hosted by the Central Coast Artists Collective brings a contrast in media to the gallery. This statewide showcase features 3D artwork from California sculptors, complete with an awards reception.

...

Open Farm Days Weekend takes place June 19-21.

Open Farm Days is a self-guided tour of the SLO CO Farm Trail.

Many local family farms will be swinging open their gates to welcome ticket holders to tour, taste and learn about local agriculture.

Demos, tastings and farm tours will be happening along the trail for ticket holding guests to learn how food is grown and how products are made here in SLO CAL. This family-friendly experience is an up-close chance to learn about agriculture through demonstrations, tastings and farm tours. Ticket holders will visit local farms, ranches, producers and purveyors setting their own pace for a self-guided adventure along the trail. Local farms will feature everything from beekeeping to olive oil production. Local ranchers will introduce you to goats, alpaca, sheep, pigs, and more, while local purveyors will showcase their locally made products using our locally grown. Relax at picnic spots, shop at pop-up markets, and enjoy tastings of food and wine. Places for picnics will be abundant, featuring local provisions and libations for sale. See the farm map at <https://www.farmstead.com/ofd-trail-map>. Note that not all farms are open Saturdays and Sundays.

...



A collective of graduating Cal Poly art and design students will share their creations with the community they've called home for the past four years by hosting a weeklong display in the heart of downtown running through June 21.

The exhibit, "This is Not a Couch," runs from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. at 750 Higuera St. in SLO featuring the works of nine artists — including three from the Central Coast — with about 50 original artworks, varying in size and medium, ranging from hyperrealism to abstraction, highlighting their individual creative methodologies. Artwork will be for sale, as well as artist prints and merchandise made from repurposed clothing embellished with hand-carved, block-printed designs.

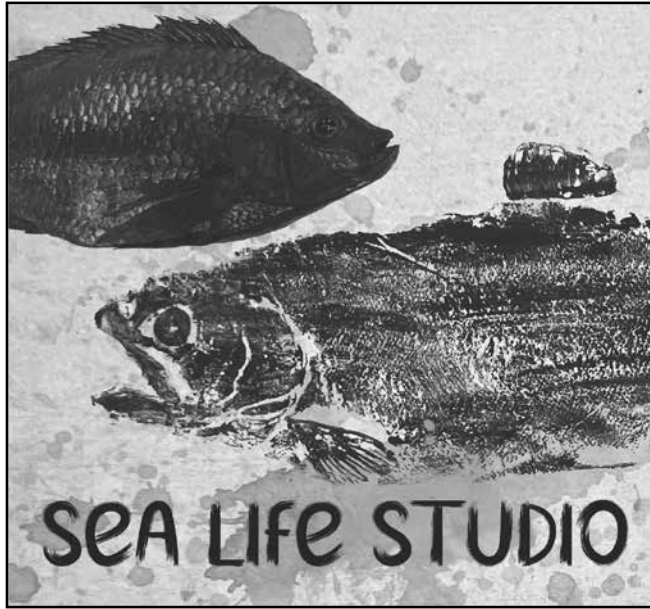
The collective, which calls itself Big Artist Corp., had their own symbol: A well-worn, light-blue, two-cushion couch in the shared studio in Room 127 of the Dexter Building that was a comfy place to rest over their time at Cal Poly. For the show's poster, each student contributed a rendition of the settee. More Information at [instagram.com/bigartist.corp/](https://www.instagram.com/bigartist.corp/).

...

Gallery at Marina Square, 601 Embarcadero suite 10, Morro Bay, presents Crystalline Glaze Ceramics by Thomas Brown through June 29, 11 a.m.- 5 p.m.

View handmade porcelain ceramics with rich surfaces and flowing forms, created through years of glaze exploration— a chance to see something both technical and visually compelling. (805) 772-1068. Free and open to the public. For more information, go to www.galleryatmarinasquare.com.

...



Sea Life Studio, a three-day workshop for ages 6 and up, is offered at Art Center Morro Bay on June 30- July 2 (T/W/Th) from 10 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

for \$115. Print, paint, and sculpt an underwater world. This workshop invites young artists to explore the textures, patterns, and forms of the Central Coast. Learn how to make Gyotaku, a traditional Japanese printmaking technique, using real fish! Build imaginative mixed-media sea creature sculptures inspired by local marine life and create vibrant tidal pool seascapes.

...

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.

A Dose of Good Dogma



What to Expect

(from your dog)

When You're Expecting

By Lisa Ellman

What happens to your dog when you decide to bring a new human into the world? From my own experience I've seen two things happen — the family either doesn't take time to prepare the dog and the dog ends up rehomed (or surrendered to a shelter), or, the family uses the time to prepare the dog for the impending arrival because they don't want to have to give the canine family member up. The family has nine months, give or take, to work on acclimating the dog to what will be a new routine, smell, sound and sight. If not handled thoroughly and correctly, bringing a baby home may be overwhelming for the dog, causing extreme anxiety, which may lead to unusual, inappropriate, or dangerous, behavior(s).

When preparing your dog for the new arrival, several critical steps that should be taken. Remember that being a dog, there are never any guarantees that subsequent issues will not arise, but if you follow some simple routines the odds significantly decrease.

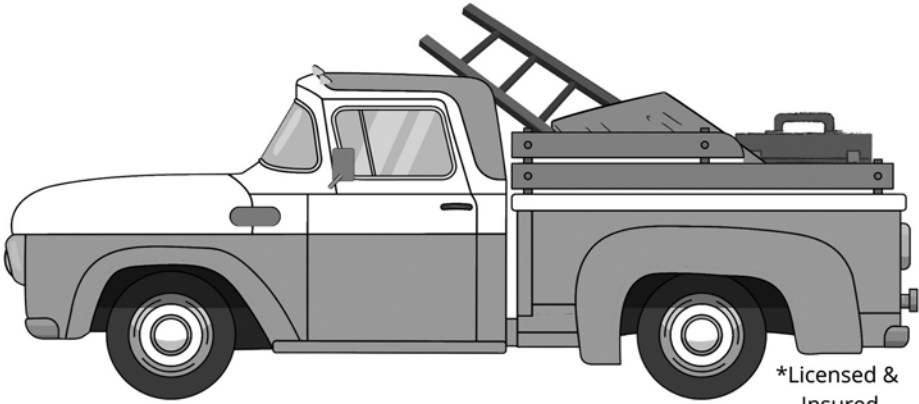
To begin, ensure that your dog has basic obedience/manners training and is responsive to you. This includes things like not jumping on people and verbal cues such as down, stay, drop it and leave it. Not only will you need these to protect your child, but there may be a lot of activity throughout the house with family coming and going.

Continue to provide consistent and fair leadership, rules and boundaries. For example, don't allow your dog to jump into your lap without permission, your lap will soon contain a baby. If the dog's routine will change dramatically, in terms of feeding, walk or park times, begin establishing the new times asap. If your dog has been used to hanging out in the room that will be a nursery, establish a new, safe, quiet place for it to be. If possible, arrange toys, beds, crate in the same, or a similar, position. Perhaps add a piece of clothing with a familiar scent on it. Use this area for a calm, time out space for your dog if things become too hectic.

Begin introducing the new sounds, sights and smells that will

Dogma Continued on page 14

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HISTORICAL SOCIETY of MORRO BAY

The Quonset Hut – Early Manufactured Housing



At the outset of World War 2, Quonset huts were introduced as a solution for the United States Navy, which needed an all-purpose, lightweight building that could be shipped anywhere and assembled without skilled labor. Named after Quonset Point in Davisville, Rhode Island, Quonset huts are semi-circular buildings leveraging the structural strength of the arch, made from corrugated or galvanized steel enclosing plywood walls with doors and windows on the ends.

The Quonset was based on the earlier design called the Nissen hut created by British Major Peter Norman Nissen in 1916. The Nissen was a different design than the Quonset but served similar purposes in World War I and into the second world war alongside the Quonset.

The standard measurements of the original Quonset hut included a base of sixteen feet by thirty-six feet that could be extended, with semicircular walls with an eight-foot radius. Their simplistic structures meant that assembly required little or no technical skill and made them extremely adaptable for many purposes. Quonset huts were easy to disassemble and transport to wherever they were needed.

Quonset huts appeared all over Morro Bay soon after World War II began, especially at the U.S. Navy's Morro Bay amphibious training base. About 65 to 100 huts were built, located primarily along the waterfront where the Morro Bay power plant stands today. They were used primarily as sleeping quarters and training facilities.

After the war ended, the War Assets Administration sold the huts to veterans, and later, to civilians. The Quonset huts often became solutions to the post war housing problem for veterans and the need for community public

buildings. More uniquely, the members of the 4-H Club of Morro Bay in the fall of 1947 raised enough money to buy a surplus Quonset hut from the Morro Bay school district and convert it into clubroom for their meeting and events.

The 4-H hut survives today in a renovated and repurposed building at 1141 Main Street in Morro Bay. After its duty as a 4H facility, the hut became an antique mall. Most recently, the 4,000 square foot building was meticulously restored by owners John and Joan Solu and reopened as The Q Inn, a modernized, spacious 10-room boutique hotel still preserving the interior views of the original steel trusses and arches. The owners intend to save this gem of Morro Bay history for future generations while at the same time fostering the hotel's ability to "tell a story inside."

Although most Morro Bay Quonset huts have disappeared, a few remain. In addition to the Q Inn there is a large hut on the southern end of the Embarcadero across a parking lot from The Shell Shop. This hut has had a varied postwar history as a storage facility for bags of dog food and as a school bus barn when Morro Bay didn't yet have a high school. Today the hut is used by The Shell Shop for merchandise storage.

Another familiar sight in Morro Bay is the Quonset hut on North Main a little south of Highway 41 that has an art deco façade. This hut has been used recently as an antique or previously used retail space.

In this era of the housing affordability crisis, one wonders of something like the Quonset hut could help provide workable solutions. The usefulness has been proved under tougher conditions.

Takin' Care of BUSINESS

By Theresa-Marie Wilson

Poly Grads Face AI Job Market



As graduating college students seek to launch their careers, artificial intelligence is increasingly changing the way job searches are conducted, with both recruiters and applicants using the technology.

"AI and generative AI are increasingly embedded in applicant tracking systems," said Ben Alexander, associate professor of management at the Cal Poly's Orfalea College of Business. "Major systems can conversationally guide applicants and help organizations screen applicants."

According to TopRésumé, a company that offers professional résumé writing services and other job search assistance, more than 60 percent of companies embrace AI tools as some part of their recruitment or hiring process. That includes writing job ads, drafting interview questions and automatically contacting candidates for interviews. Meanwhile, according to recruiter Career Group Companies, two-thirds of job candidates in a 2025 study used AI for functions such as résumé and cover letter writing, interview practice, career guidance and headshot photos.

A recent Forbes piece described a wide expansion of AI, where machine learning algorithms instantly analyze skills and behavioral patterns, assess verbal and non-verbal cues during interviews and even offer negotiations.

"The landscape is changing rapidly," Alexander said.

While human resources faculty must keep abreast of the latest research, college career advisors have to assist students applying for internships or career jobs in a fast-evolving AI world.

"I have had students share with me that during a virtual interview, the student received an AI summary as well as AI-appointment scores in their answers," said Matt Parks, a Cal Poly career counseling specialist and liaison for the Orfalea College of Business. "Within some platforms, such as LinkedIn, there are embedded AI chatbots that a recruiter can ask to find candidates meeting certain qualifications and have specific qualities."

Kristin Beal, a graduating finance student, said she had virtual job interviews where she spoke to a screen as her answers were recorded.

"It was not as natural, as conversational, and there are no verbal cues, so it's just different," said Beal, who is also an Orfalea College career peer advisor.

More commonly, companies use AI to scan résumés for keywords, hoping to solicit candidates that match job descriptions.

"This matters because the terms signal that an applicant both speaks the same language as someone in the role and has read the job post carefully," Alexander said.

Newer systems using large language models, he added, better understand context, synonyms and the broader meaning behind what applicants write.

Cal Poly's Career Services recently adopted BigRésumé, which allows candidates to submit both their résumé and the job description of an opening, offering AI-powered advice on how to optimize the résumé for compatibility with applicant tracking systems.

While the hiring process is evolving, Parks cautions against too much AI strategy and guessing.

"Do not obsess over this," he advised.

Mainstays, like consistent and clean résumé formatting, are still important, Parks said, and he advises job hunters avoid using profile photos and icons, which might throw off AI reviews.

When candidates all use AI, cover letters

Dogma From page 13

soon fill your home. A CD of baby sounds (cries, coos, etc.), starting quietly and gradually increasing in volume, maybe when your dog has meals or is playing with you. Perhaps give random treats as the CD plays. If you know someone with a baby, borrow some clothing or a diaper, lotion or powder, then add anything that may be used on a regular basis on your own baby. While your dog investigates these new scents, be sure to stay relaxed. Maybe a slow, gentle belly rub or a calming toy. After a few weeks, begin to incorporate the sounds and smells and new routines. Introduce bassinets, strollers or any other different features that will be used. Take your dog for a walk with the stroller to acclimate them to the sound and movement. If you have a friend that has a baby, invite them to come over after you've worked with your dog for a few months on all the previous practices. Keep your dog leashed but allow them to be curious and to investigate under supervision.

The County is required to issue the ballots at least 45 days before the Board of Supervisors vote for passage.

It appears that the County is waiting until the last day to send the notice and ballots, will not take public input, will avoid any protest

Opposition to Wind Energy is Selfish

It's not that complicated. Is climate change real? Obviously, yes. Can sustainable energy reduce its impacts? Obviously, yes. Shouldn't citizens of this rich country and prosperous coast do their part for sustainable energy? Certainly, yes. Would a wind farm out of sight over the ocean horizon begin to satisfy our collective responsibility? Certainly, yes.

vote, and this rate increase will be in effect by this fall. Public service does not seem to be an attribute of County Service Area 10A.

Charles Bergson
Cayucos

Is there an explanation for local opposition to wind energy (which spouts meaningless slogans like 'ocean industrialization') other than empty-headed, NIMBY, selfishness? No.

Jeff Wheelwright
Morro Bay

Letters To The Editor



Cayucos Water Rate Increase

County Service Area 10A (CSA 10A) provides water service primarily to the south end of Cayucos. This Service Area, operated by San Luis Obispo County, is planning to implement a major rate increase for Cayucos water bills. This increase includes a rate hike and a reduction in the water allocation. The cost of this increase includes, reportedly, a raise in charges for water anywhere from 40% to 74% and a surcharge for going over the lowered water allocation. These charges are estimated to raise the average water bill in Cayucos about \$160 per billing cycle. The County plans to put this increase into effect this fall. All of this information is second hand because the County has yet to notify the public.

The County is using the Proposition 218 "Right to Vote on Taxes Act" to establish this levy and collect higher water rates from each property in CSA 10A. This Act requires the County to provide notice of the proposed rate increase to each property owner, to produce an engineer's report explaining the rate increase, to provide an opportunity to discuss the proposed increase, and to provide a voting ballot. To date none of this - notification of the public, an engineer's report, County public discussion, a ballot - has been provided.

This Act also requires each property owner to vote for or against the increase. Only a protest vote of 50% plus one vote will stop the rate increase. A "no" vote is a protest vote, a "yes" vote is for the increase.

However, a "Prop 218 vote" is not a simple yes or no vote, and here is the proverbial government "red tape." Property owners that do not vote will count as a "yes" vote for the rate increase, by default. This includes property owners that toss out ballots with 'other' mail will be a "yes" vote, owners who live out of town and don't send in a ballot will be a "yes" vote, and owners who fail to receive ballots, hence no vote, will be a "yes" vote. Given this method of voting, the County is already halfway to the vote threshold to pass the rate increase. And they have yet to inform the public about this water rate hike!

I contacted the CSA 10A office asking when do they plan to announce the increase to the customers, when will they issue the engineers report, and when do they plan on taking public input? They said the increase of water rates will be announced when the ballots are sent to the property owners, the report will be available when the ballots are sent, and public input will be "your vote" in the returned ballot.

Letters to the Editor Policy

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

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Email letters to editor@esterobaynews.com.

Community

and résumés all begin to look similar. So, Yasna Mukundan, a graduating finance student, suggests using AI to workshop the human writing.

“Obviously, don’t have AI write it for you because then it’s not that good,” said Mukundan, who is a career peer advisor at Orfalea College. “But as long as you’re using it as a tool, I think that’s fine.”

While AI also threatens recruiter jobs, at conferences and career fairs, Parks said, he has heard that employers are still frequently using human review for applicants.

But the future is unclear.

“Many shared that they use AI as an aid but not the only means for review,” he said. “With that being said, I have had students who apply to larger companies and organizations report back that they received nearly immediate rejection emails, which can be an indicator that their application was reviewed by AI only.”

Woods Partners with UC Davis to Support County Animals



Woods Humane Society is building stronger foundations for animal care by partnering with the UC Davis Koret Shelter Medicine Program (KSMP).

KSMP provides expert consultation to shelters across the state, made possible by California for All Animals. The partnership with Woods Humane Society will work to address challenges faced by shelters across California, such as veterinary staffing shortages, longer wait times for essential care like spay/neuter, and increased demand for services as pet owners face barriers to care.

“This collaboration will help us strengthen our systems — from medical protocols to daily planning — so we can provide timely, compassionate care to animals who need it most,” says Woods Humane Society CEO Emily L’Heureux.

Through this partnership, Woods Humane Society will work with KSMP veterinarians to:

- Direct medical and surgical resources, including spay/neuter, where they will have the greatest impact on animal health and community well-being
- Create shelter environments that lower stress and disease risk
- Diagnose bottlenecks that keep animals waiting in the

shelter, helping Woods Humane Society to serve more pets and families over time

- Maintain Woods’ capacity for care — the ability to provide high-quality care and individual attention to every animal — by continuously monitoring animal needs, staffing, and resources, keeping animals on track toward the best possible outcomes
- Identify opportunities for partnerships that can expand SLO County’s collective capacity to support animals before they’re in crisis

“Shelters across California are facing veterinary staffing shortages that affect how quickly animals, especially large dogs, can get care and go home,” said Dr. Chumkee Aziz, a UC Davis outreach veterinarian and board-certified shelter medicine specialist. “Partnerships like this show what sheltering does best — adapting and problem-solving to protect animal health.”

Woods Humane Society Director of Veterinary Services Dr. Amanda Hefner referred to Hippo, a young kitten who arrived suffering from Panleukopenia, a highly contagious, potentially fatal viral disease. With the right protocols in place, Woods Humane Society was able to swiftly identify and diagnose Hippo’s condition, isolate her to protect other animals in the shelter, and place her in a loving foster home to provide her with a safe, low-stress environment in which to recover from the illness. This also freed up space at Woods for healthy, adoptable animals.

“Thanks to our prepared and equipped medical team, foster coordinator, and our dedicated fosters, Hippo has since recovered from this life-threatening illness, received her spay surgery yesterday, and is available for adoption today,” Dr. Hefner says. “The UC Davis KSMP partnership will help us build the conditions to make survival stories like Hippo’s possible for more animals.”

Woods Humane Society is located at 875 Oklahoma Ave., San Luis Obispo and at 2300 Ramona Rd., Atascadero, and is open to the public daily from 12-5 p.m., with adoption hours from 12 - 4 p.m. For more information about Woods, go to WoodsHumane.org or call (805) 543-9316.

Share the Hope Raises More Than Half a Million



Steve Hearst with his son Jack Hearst. Photo submitted

The French Hospital Medical Center (FHMC) Foundation 17th annual Share the Hope event, held on recently at Hearst Ranch in San Simeon, raised more than \$592,000 to support advanced imaging technology in a new San Luis Obispo comprehensive cancer center.

“The support shown at Share the Hope every year powerfully illustrates what our generous community

can accomplish together,” said Steve Hearst in a press release. “It is a deep honor to host this event at Hearst Ranch knowing that it directly funds both the indispensable, no-cost services of the Hearst Cancer Resource Center and the progress toward a state-of-the-art new cancer center. This collaboration will deliver an unmatched patient experience, keeping exceptional cancer care close to home.”

More than 200 guests attended Share the Hope, which began with a reception by the famous Neptune Pool at Hearst Castle, followed by a gourmet dinner, live auction, and live music at the historic Hearst Ranch Dairy Barn.

Since 2008, Share the Hope has raised more than \$6.6 million to benefit French Hospital’s Hearst Cancer Resource Center, which offers no-cost programs, services, and resources for local cancer patients. The annual event is hosted by Steve and Barbara Hearst, whose family have been instrumental supporters of the HCRC since its inception in 2008.

The new cancer center will unite the oncology services of Dignity Health’s French Hospital Medical Center, Marian Regional Medical Center, and Pacific Central Coast Health Centers, as well as a number of physician groups. For the first time in San Luis Obispo County, all oncology services will be available under one roof, streamlining the team-based care approach, improving patient convenience, and elevating cancer care in our community. The cancer center will be easily accessible, conveniently located near the corner of Tank Farm Road and Broad Street in San Luis Obispo.

Construction on the two-story, 58,650-square-foot building is actively underway and completion is expected in late 2026.

The new cancer center will provide a seamless experience for patients, offering a wide range of comprehensive services and programs such as medical oncology, hematology, infusion, diagnostic imaging, radiation oncology, general and oncology surgery, and urology. Located at the heart of the new center will be Hearst Cancer Resource Center (HCRC), a unique support resource dedicated to helping cancer patients and their families from diagnosis through recovery.

All HCRC services are offered at no charge to patients, thanks to donor support. To learn more, or to support the Hearst Cancer Resource Center or advanced technology for cancer care, go to supportfrenchhospital.org/hcrc.

New Executive Chef at The Ava Hotel Paso Robles

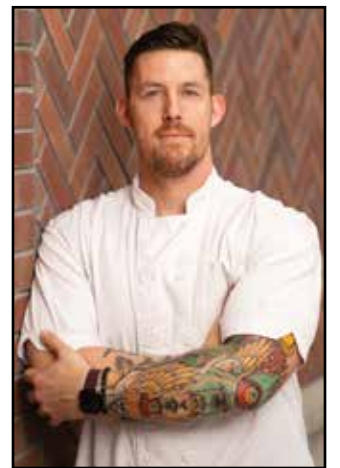
The Ava Hotel Paso Robles, Curio Collection announced the promotion of Casey McMinn to executive chef, overseeing culinary operations for the property’s dining outlets including EMRE, Esperanza on the Rooftop, and Pine Street Bistro, along with banquets and catering.

EMRE is conceived by local chef Julien Asseo, owner Les Petites Canailles and S’Aranella in Paso, and previous executive chef of the two-Michelin-starred Restaurant Guy Savoy in Las Vegas. The new restaurant EMRE

brings a “bold and contemporary offering to the Central Coast, featuring a fire-forward menu inspired by Asseo’s French roots and the coastal borders of the Mediterranean,” said a representative in a news release. McMinn runs the kitchen alongside the continued support from Asseo.

McMinn joined The Ava Hotel as chef de cuisine ahead of its August 2025 debut and has helped define its culinary identity, establishing the property as a coveted downtown dining destination. A former paramedic turned chef, McMinn brings more than a decade of culinary experience and a “strong commitment to operational excellence and elevating guest experiences, with prior chef de cuisine roles at Bay Area restaurants including State Bird Provisions in San Francisco and The Hatch Rotisserie & Bar in Paso Robles.”

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.





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Kyle Amundsen

After attending Art Center College of Design Kyle pursued a career in design and advertising that lead him to work at John Moran Auctioneers for 15 years. It was here he became fascinated with American & California Impressionist art, fine jewelry and diamonds. For the last 15 years Kyle has owned a company in Pasadena brokering estate jewelry, fine art, buying and selling diamonds & cutting diamonds.

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Hana Goble

Hana attended Gemological Institute of America after graduating from UC Riverside and has been passionate about antique jewelry for over a decade. Her deep interest in the history and craftsmanship of fine jewelry led her to work as a traveling buyer for a prominent estate jeweler, specializing in old-cut diamonds and signed pieces. She especially enjoys researching hallmarks and uncovering the history behind jewelry she encounters.

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Alan Bedwell

Alan grew up working in the family jewelry business in London. That store is still located in the prestigious Gray Antique Market today. It was here that Alan learned the trade of fine English and American silver, signed European vintage jewelry and Swiss watches. For the last 18 years Alan has been living in New York City and owns a business curating special pieces for stores all across the country.

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Michael Merritt

Mike is the owner of this company and host of the event. He has 38 years of experience in buying and selling new and vintage jewelry, wrist watches, pocket watches, currency and silver. Mike personally takes almost every call for the appointments and will be happy to answer all of your questions about the process and about what items are purchased.

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Yacht Club From page 1



A sunset view overlooking the Yacht Club and Boat Yard in 2026
Photo by Judy Salamacha

Rosemary made it up the staircase at the event with the help of family members in attendance.

Andrea explained it was two men, Ken Jenkins and Barney Pikes, that pushed the original idea of a yacht club. “Ken owned the houseboat that had to be refloated each gathering and held in place with a flashlight. They created the “Power of the Potluck” concept to earn funds for a clubhouse on land.”

Picnics were held on the sandspit. Derby races were for fun and bragging rights. The introduction of the fast-racing Lidos expanded interest in bay sailing. Ed Carnegie and Dev Devlin earned most of the trophies. It was also Carnegie and Devlin who teamed up to lead the design and construction crew that rebuilt the current club house. Don Lockwood engineered the team’s successful risk to raise the frame of the new 5,000-sq.ft. clubhouse on site without a crane. Sighs of relief and cheers followed the feat.

Surfleet recognized Duncan (1937-2023) and Marlene McQueen, who launched their seven-year sail around the world in a 39-foot sailboat from Morro Bay Yacht Club on May 17, 1992. Duncan had won the first MBYC Founders’ Cup in the Laser division that year. After their world tour Marlene would publish, “Thistle/s Seven Year Odyssey,” from her diaries written

during their adventure.

Bay sailing regattas began early in the club’s history. Ocean racing was added in 1971. Today the Zongo Cup organized by Paul Irving is a popular ocean race from Morro Bay to Avila Beach.

Surfleet assured, “Although the members took the time to play, yacht club traditions included some formal activities as well.” Opening Day in the Spring requires formal attire for members, particularly the new officers inducted during the celebratory event.

Kendall Welch, galley chief and social director, was honored for planning many new events, unique dinners, holiday activities and for her community involvement since her partner John Burgener was commodore in 2023. As founding members of the Morro Bay Maritime Museum, Commodore John and MBYC members sponsored and restored the Spindrift, an historic 1933 Monterey-style fishing boat, currently an onsite display at the museum. Kendall is the current MBMM President of the Board of Directors.

Dana and Theresa McClish’s family spent years developing and working with the Youth Sailing Programs. In 1980 there were 90 members in the Jr. Yacht Club. They created their own leadership team, bylaws, and events led by Chris Lockwood. Recently the fall Big Rock Regatta, which is open to any youth sailor member or non-member, was renamed the Chris Lockwood Regatta.

I asked a couple members how they found the MBYC. Nine-year member, John Edell said, “I would fly in from Santa Monica for visits in Morro Bay.” After he took the adult sailing classes, he would trade his airplane in for more time on the water with the boat he bought. “I realized it was better to live here.”

Rachelle Phillips said, “Jim and I had a trailer. We would drive over weekends from Visalia and visit the club as guests. Once we moved here, we joined. Jim would become the bar steward, then vice-commodore and commodore.” For years Rachelle was membership director and started the Ships Store so the club would make a little money on its personalized logo merch.

Since 1956 awarding winning wood carver Pat Rygh and his wife Dot, now in their 90s, are still attending weekly Happy Hour Friday evenings. Pat endearing humor said with a smile, “It gets us out of the house at least once a week.”

Full disclosure: This group welcomed and introduced Bob and I, landlubbers from Bakersfield, with open arms to the benefits of our new waterfront paradise soon after we moved here 25-years ago. Are you a sailor or interested in learning to sail? Maybe the MBYC is the group for you! Friday Happy Hour is the best time to visit. Simply, contact a member and he or she would be happy to host and introduce you to the membership.

Rate Hike From page 1

• Revenues below Operations and Maintenance (O&M) budget;

- Parent Loan Payment; and,
- Reserves below target after major capital projects.

In response, and after public input, the County listed two proposed responses under “Community Feedback:”

- Keep 14 units included in the base rate; and,
- Accept lower reserves.

The County has two proposed solutions:

- Cover costs without cutting usage;
- A 15-percent increase for the first year; and,
- 5% increases for each of the following four years (years two through five).

The County’s proposal is to eventually increase rates 35% over five years, locking in the annual rate hike under a single vote by ratepayers.

According to a graph in the County’s slide show in the current 2025-26 fiscal year revenues are projected at \$1.18 million but they need \$1.32M to cover all their costs, a \$134,000 shortfall.

By FY 2030-31 they project revenue at \$1.2M and expenses at \$1.53M, a shortfall of \$331,000.

Assuming the numbers are correct, something’s got to give.

In a slide headlined “Why are rates being increased?” the County said costs are increasing \$50,000 for “Parent Loan Payment;” \$55,000 for labor costs; \$45,000 for water treatment costs; and \$10,000 for increased vendor costs due to inflation, for a total \$160,000 shortfall.

Parent Loan Payment is an amount that the water system (CSA-10A) borrowed from the larger CSA-10, the services district that encompasses the entire community and pays for things like street and sidewalk repairs, oversees garbage service, and storm drains.

The town’s sewer system is owned and operated by the Cayucos Sanitary District, which is an entirely separate agency from the County.

The County calculated the rate increase by looking first at the base rate, which everyone pays, and then the actual usage, which is different for every customer.

The base rate — paying for the loan, labor costs, water treatment and vendor costs — needs an additional \$153,000 translating to a bi-monthly rate increase of \$32.66 (water bills go out every other month), or \$16.33 per month.

Under “Peak Use O&M” the County said it needs an additional \$7,000 a year and wants to increase the per-unit rate by \$1.81, with the first 14 units falling under the base rate umbrella. One unit of water is 745 gallons.

In dollars and cents, the proposed rate hike would bump up the base rate from \$217.79 (for two months) to \$250.45 in the first year (15% hike).

It would then go up to \$262.97 in year two; \$276.12 in year three; \$289.93 in year four; and \$304.43 in year 5, according to the County’s slide show.

Some folks affected by the rate hike have been very vocal in opposing it.

CCAC board member, Rachel Wilson, put together a flyer for residents back in May that laid out the size of the increase compared to what the customers of the two mutual water companies are paying.

The County is proposing to increase your water rates, if you use more than eight units (now 14) of water by at least 74%, the flyer said.

She pointed out that the current bills for eight units run \$217 and at the highest rate under the increase will rise to \$379 (for two months usage).

As a comparison, the rate for nine units at Cayucos Beach Mutual are \$169 and \$157 at Morro Rock Mutual, both are non-profit companies, as is CSA-10A.

Other residents have pointed out that the list of projects needing to be done under the last big water rate hike that CSA-10A enacted was never completed.

And at a recent Dist. 2 Supervisor’s candidate forum focused on Cayucos issues, both Jim Dantona and Michael Erin Woody were asked if they would support privatizing CSA-10A, in essence turning it into a privately held, non-profit like the other two water companies?

Woody was generally in favor of the idea and Dantona was not.

Dantona appears to have won the election and will be replacing long-time Supervisor Bruce Gibson in January.

The rate hike is simply a proposal and must survive a protest vote by the ratepayers, under the State’s Proposition 218 — The Right to Vote on Taxes Act.

Under Prop 218 County staff must present its proposal to County Supervisors in a public meeting and then open a waiting period before the final hearing and tally the votes.

The County’s Water Utilities Project Manager, Laura Holder, informed the CCAC that they’ve now got a date for introducing the Prop. 218 process.

“We have secured Board of Supervisors dates to introduce the Proposition 218 rate adjustment for CSA 10A on July 7, instead of the previously planned date of June 16,” Holder said.

The Supervisors would conduct the second public hearing Sept. 1. At that time the vote tally — in the form of written protests — needs to be over 50% “No” to stop the rate hike. If the “No” votes fall short, the rate hike will go into effect.

Just the 950 lots served by CSA-10A will have a chance to vote, and it’s one vote per customer/household. So, 476 “No” votes are needed.

Of note, if readers are renters and don’t pay their water bills, the notice of the vote will be sent to the property owner or management company, whoever actually pays the water bill.

If you do pay the water bill, whether a renter or not, it should come to you at your home address, and you should be able to cast it.

Also, if a customer doesn’t respond, it’s counted as a “Yes.” Protest votes must be in writing, an email will not suffice.

You must give the address or assessor’s parcel number and indicate clearly that you are protesting the rate hike, for it to count.

Such Prop. 218 challenges are rarely successful but it’s not unheard of.

Holder told the CCAC that the County would make another presentation to the board before the deadline in September.

If readers want more information, the County has a website set up, see: <https://bit.ly/4xq570g>.

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News

Mitigating Climate Change From page 1

carbon out of the air and store it underground, safely and naturally undoing damage that has already been done.

“Zero Foodprint wants to transform agriculture by funding farmers directly to make the change, provide food and beverage businesses with a way to help their customers take climate action, and build social acceptance of the need to pay a tiny bit more for food to be responsibly grown,” Dr. Erin Pearse, a Cal Poly mathematics professor and the Director of the Initiative for Climate Leadership and Resilience, told *estero Bay News*.

Zero Foodprint provides grants of up to \$25k for farmers and ranchers to implement regenerative practices that sequester carbon, meaning capturing atmospheric CO₂ and storing it in plant material and soil organic matter.

“Being able to give back to the community, and the climate in general, makes sense for me as restaurants generate a significant amount of carbon in their operations from food waste to packaging,” said Robin’s owner Shanny Covey. “I love that Robin’s can be a vehicle to a large cause that will benefit future generations through reducing the carbon climate while contributing to better tasting food that’s healthier for all of us.”

Covey said about 45% of the restaurants produce is from local farmer’s markets.

As part of the Zero Foodprint program, Robin’s will add a 1% surcharge to all checks. This optional charge can be removed, if requested by the customer. The next time readers sit down to a meal such as Robin’s Chow, a wok-flashed pasta dish with farmer’s market vegetables, garlic, ginger, soy with choice of tofu or chicken, or prawns, they can be assured that they are making a small difference that contributes to a larger goal, even if they decline the surcharge. Robin’s will donate an additional 3% of the total collected funds. This money will go into a larger collective and be disbursed as grants by Zero Foodprint.

Pearse was a catalyst in implementing the program at Robin’s via his membership in the SLO Climate Coalition.

“SLOCC is really excited to have our first fully enrolled restaurant” Pearse said. “Robin’s is really focused on sustainability, they implement a lot of thoughtful measures, and on supporting local farmers, and this program lets them do both at once! It is a great fit. Also, it provides a way for community members to make impactful contributions to the climate crisis, just by going out to eat at Robin’s.”

“The SLO Climate Coalition has the goal of getting as many businesses and farmers involved in the program as possible,” Pearse said. “We’re hoping for at least 20 businesses this year. One of SLOCC’s programs (we call it our Table-to-Farm program) is to encourage participation with Zero Foodprint. On the one hand, we are working with food and beverage businesses to participate in the collection of funds. On the other hand, we work with the local Resource Conservation Districts and other parts of the local food system [such as] Harvestly, City Farm SLO, Farm Bureau to encourage local farmers to take advantage of this excellent opportunity for going regenerative.”

The SLOCC, a local nonprofit that champions high-impact regional solutions by bringing together community expertise, creativity, and resources introduced Robin’s to Zero Foodprint, and assisted them with implementing the program.

“Any farmer in California is eligible to apply for these grants. However, farmers that supply participating restaurants get increased priority,” Pearse continued. “If we can increase local participation in the program, by farmers and by restaurants, SLO County farmers will have even better chances.”

“Shanny Covey and Robin’s Restaurant have been leaders in Central Coast hospitality for decades. They understand better than anyone that a commitment to caring for their diners includes a commitment to caring for their farmers and their community, said Zero Foodprint Program Director, Tiffany Nurrenbern.



Robin’s Chow, dish that has been around since Robin’s inception in the mid 1980s, offers a wok-flashed pasta dish with farmer’s market vegetables, garlic, ginger, soy with choice of tofu or chicken, or prawns. Photo by Isabella Curtoni

“We’re honored that Robin’s has continued to demonstrate its leadership in the region by becoming Zero Foodprint’s first member in San Luis Obispo County.”

Since launching the grant program in 2020, Zero Foodprint has funded projects with a modeled carbon benefit of 240,000 CO₂e. That’s the same as not burning over 27 million gallons of gasoline or keeping 52,000 cars off the road for a year.

Find out more about Zero Foodprint at zerofoodprint.org. More information and a menu for Robin’s Restaurant, 4095 Burton Drive, is at robinsrestaurant.com. They are open for lunch Monday Through Saturday from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. and for dinner Sunday through Thursday from 4:40 to 8 p.m. and Friday and Saturday from 4:30 p.m. to 9 p.m. There is a Sunday brunch from 10 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

SLOCC is, currently looking for other food and beverage businesses that they can assist with joining Zero Foodprint. Interested businesses can reach them at sloclimatecoalition.org.

Friday, July 3 From page 1



Carmichael said they received a \$25,000 donation from Visit Morro Bay, the town’s tourism agency, and have booked an elaborate “drone” lightshow, that will be performed up to 400-feet in the air over the harbor, opposite Tidelands Park.

The company doing the show is Sky Elements, Jepsen explained. They were on the TV show *America’s Got Talent* and took third place.

According to the company’s website, “Sky Elements is the largest drone light show provider in the United States. Our experienced team has brought the art of drone light shows all across the country for community events, sports teams, businesses, artists, and major brands.”

Never seen a drone light show, you’re probably not alone (this reporter hasn’t either), but it basically consists of hundreds, even thousands of drones, synchronized by computer, flying in formation and using a sequence of lights, different colors and movement, to bring the sky to life.

“Drone light shows,” the company said, “are redefining the future of entertainment on an immense scale. If you have seen a drone show, there’s a good chance it is the Sky Elements team behind the successful activation. Whether you’re hosting an event, promoting a launch, or building brand awareness, our US-based team is here to take your moment to the sky and beyond (see: skyelementsdrone.com for examples).”

Jepsen said the company has performed at ballparks, arenas and even Disneyland and Disney World. Now they’ll animate the sky over Morro Bay, too.

The drone show would seem a natural evolution. The Chamber of Commerce originally put on a fireworks show at Morro Bay High School, until around the mid-1990s, when development at the Cloisters (adjacent to the high school) meant the fireworks no longer had a safe landing zone.

So after a year’s hiatus, the show was moved to the harbor and was put on there for about 17 years and turned into an outdoor, live music and dance party that saw great success.

But the nemesis of fireworks in Morro Bay is fog, and after three-straight years of not being able to see the fireworks due to dense marine layers, the Chamber tried a laser light show instead.

But that night too fizzled when darkness fell under clear skies — perfect for fireworks but terrible for lasers. Fourth of July in Morro Bay was canceled again.

That disappointment gave rise to a citizen’s committee forming to bring back the fireworks and music festival.

That worked for several years, and added a new fun event to the day’s festivities — a Bike Parade from Morro Rock to Tidelands Park kicking off the day’s celebration. People of all ages turned out with their decorated bicycles bedazzled in red, white & blue.

Eventually that too fizzled out and was replaced by an afternoon “Family Fun Day,” held at Tidelands Park, with live bands, games, food, but no fireworks.

Fireworks shows are frowned upon by many folks who don’t like the loud noise particularly in how it affects their animals — especially dogs — that cower from the overhead explosions that echo down the waterfront.

They are also frowned upon by the Coastal Commission, which has sought to end them when they are held over coastal waters.

But the City didn’t want to let this particular 4th of July pass by without a celebration, which is happening all across the nation to commemorate the 250th Anniversary of the Declaration of Independence and the birth of what would become the United States of America.

Friday, July 3 will start at 6 p.m. at Tidelands Park with ‘80s tribute band, The Molly Ringwald Project, taking the stage.

The drone show will begin at about 9 p.m., shortly after nightfall. (See: www.youtube.com/watch?v=bxlc969qtYo)

Carmichael advised that there would not be parking available at Tidelands Park and the launch ramp. So if you have to drive down there, try and find someplace to park close enough to walk.

As for the drone show, Jepsen said their team has picked out elements — different displays, different phrases, that will be programmed into the control computer for the unique show.

They kept the elements under wraps, not wanting to spoil the surprise, but did say it will have a patriotic theme and properly celebrate Morro Bay. At \$25,000 that’s about what a professional 20-minute fireworks show costs, too.

Of note, this drone show is entirely done with lights, there are no fireworks involved and they do not make any noise, either. The company also has drones that let off fireworks as they fly.

There will be food trucks and a beer garden, and the harbor cruising boat, Chablis, will be at the side-tie dock with its bar open. The drone show is set for about 9 p.m.

How’d they come up with a drone show? Carmichael said when they attended the California Parks and Recreation Conference they were treated to a drone show, which gave them the idea to have one here for this special 4th of July.

And if the old nemesis fog rears its ugly head once again?

If it’s foggy they said, the company will cancel the show and it won’t be rescheduled.

Assuming the skies are clear, Carmichael said you should be able to see the display from a good distance away, so long as you are facing the drones and not behind them.

On July 4, the City’s normal Family Fun Day will return with the Annual Bike Parade at 10:40 a.m. If you’d like to participate, meet at Morro Rock parking lot starting about 10 a.m. The parade starts at 10:30 and peddles slowly up the Embarcadero to Tidelands Park with a police escort.

Carmichael said they will not have a skateboard push this year, but skateboards, scooters and even electric carts are welcome to join the Bike Parade. Entry is free, just like all the festivities later in the day.

The band Rosewood & Honey will perform at 11 a.m. and they will have their flag ceremony at noon with the Coast Guard Station Morro Bay Color Guard doing the honors.

At 12:15 p.m. another 4th of July tradition — albeit a new one to Morro Bay — will be held. That’s when the Hot Dog Eating Contest happens, Carmichael said.

Gilligan’s Sandwich Shop is sponsoring the Hot Dog Eating Contest. That’s the big change this year, he added.

Odes to gluttony, hot dog eating contests started at Coney Island, NY and sponsored by Nathan’s Hot Dogs. Though the legendary story is that the contest started in 1916, the first recorded Nathan’s Contest was in 1972. Last year, 17-time “Mustard Belt” Champion Joey Chestnut scarfed down 70.5 hotdogs — with buns — in 10 minutes. He also holds the official record at 76 set in 2021.

The music starts up again at 1 p.m. with Sound Investment, which will play until the Family Fun Day ends at 4 p.m.

That will give everyone time to grab some dinner, Carmichael said, before they head off to see fireworks shows. On the Coast, fireworks will be set off in Cayucos and Pismo Beach, both of which draw tens of thousands of people to sit on the sand and watch the displays.

They will also have some fun kids’ activities, Jepsen said, like face painting, games and a bounce house. The Bay-Osos Kiwanis Club will also have a fundraiser barbecue that day.

Once again there will be no parking at Tidelands Park, except for folks that paddle in on kayaks and paddle boards, and liveaboards will also be able to park down there. The City Trolley will be running that day, making it possible to park at The Rock and catch the trolley to Tidelands.

Also new for Morro Bay is a business decorating contest. Carmichael said they partnered with the Chamber of Commerce to have local businesses decorate the fronts of their stores for the holiday. The winners will be announced at the Family Fun Day on the Fourth of July.

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Pilgrimage Trip From page 1



Morro Bay High senior Ely Franco is one of two students selected to attend the I.O.O.F.'s Pilgrimage for Youth Tour. Submitted photo



Benny Easton-Carr, who will be a junior at MBHS next year, was selected to attend the Annual Pilgrimage for Youth by members of the Bay Rock Lodge of the Odd Fellows. Photo by Neil Farrell

sites.

Last year the 91-student contingent (plus chaperones) represented some 23, I.O.O.F. jurisdictions across the U.S. and several foreign countries. The mix of nationalities among the delegates is truly amazing, including the mix of boys and girls.

This year's pilgrimage, which was pushed back from June to July due to scheduling conflicts with the World Cup Tournament, begins July 16 and ends on the 29th, according to information from the event website (see: IOOF/pilgrimageforyouth.com).

Los Osos resident, Easton-Carr, 16, seems to be a young man with a direction already picked out for himself despite his age.

He's interested in medicine, he explained, adding that his father is a doctor. He's helped teach fellow students about emergency treatments and has spent time as an explorer with the ambulance company. He wants to be a trauma surgeon.

He went to a cadaver lab, he said, where paramedics and resident doctors perform medical procedures on people who donated their bodies to science, after they've died of course.

He said that he likes the action and excitement of helping people who've suffered some kind of physical trauma.

He said he's leaning towards attending Oregon State University for both pre-med and medical school. "They have a really

Obituary

Joyce Draper Cameron 1938 - 2026



Joyce was born on June 6, 1938, in Kanab, Utah. She married the love of her life, James S. Cameron in 1960. Together they built a loving home and shared more than 42 years of marriage until James's passing in 2003.

A devoted homemaker, Joyce dedicated herself to her family and community. During her children's school years, she spent many years actively serving in the local PTA. She later worked as a secretary in the Alumni Office at Occidental College before re-

good pre-med program and a medical school," he explained. His dad, he adds, went to U.C. Berkeley.

Easton-Carr said he participates in the school's very successful, Mock Trial Program.

The Odd Fellows' Pilgrimage for Youth requires the students to write an essay on a topic revolving around the United Nations, so it's a global issue.

Easton-Carr said his topic was Artificial Intelligence and the U.N.'s involvement with it. So is AI going to be a good thing or a bad thing?

"I think it's a good thing," he explained. He added that AI

tiring. In 2000, Joyce and Jim relocated to Morro Bay, California, where she embraced the beauty and community of the Central Coast.

Following the loss of her husband, Joyce continued her lifelong commitment to service by volunteering for many years at French Hospital, where her kindness, compassion, and generous spirit touched countless lives.

Joyce is survived by her three children: her son, Jeffrey S. Cameron and wife, Colleen Cameron, of Aubrey, Texas; her daughter, Jennifer Cameron of Morro Bay, California; and her daughter, Jill C. Segura and her husband, Dave Segura, of Los Osos, California.

She was a proud and loving grandmother to seven grandchildren: Matthew Cameron and wife Christina Leininger, of Mission Viejo, California; Christine Owens and husband, Ben of Laguna Hills, California; Corey Cameron and wife, Cailin of Aubrey, Texas; Ceilon Anderson and husband, Zack of Aubrey, Texas; Kevin Segura of Pasadena, California; Ryan Segura of Los Osos, California; and Amy Segura of Morro Bay, California.

Joyce was also blessed with five great-grandchildren: Kaelynn Cameron, Zephyr Espitia-Segura, Autumn Owens, River Cameron, and Declan Owens.

Joyce will be remembered for her unwavering devotion to her family, her generous volunteer service, and her warm and caring nature. Her legacy of love, kindness, and dedication to others will continue to live on in the lives of those who knew and loved her.

She was deeply cherished and will be greatly missed by her family, friends, and all whose lives she touched.

The family encourages acts of kindness and service in Joyce's memory, reflecting the generous spirit by which she lived her life.

will be a good tool in the future and will help address a lot of issues and since it's already here and growing, "there's no point in avoiding it."

Franco, 17, is a swimmer at the high school and ran cross country in the past but didn't really like it. What he does like is science.

He said he plans to major in biochemistry in college and wants to do research, in particular developing vaccines.

He hasn't picked out a college yet, though he's applying to several. He anticipates going to a university, "In-state for sure."

His U.N. essay topic was the U.N.'s involvement with the food crisis around the world. "The U.N. is trying to stop food shortages," he said.

Both boys were grateful to the Odd Fellows. Franco said, "They're all great people. It's awesome they sponsored us to do this."

Easton-Carr also thanked the Odd Fellows. "I'm really excited to do it. It seems like it's an awesome experience."

The itinerary for this year's Pilgrimage includes flying into Philadelphia and taking a tour of the Corning Glass Factory and Museum; staying overnight in Buffalo, N.Y.

They'll travel to Niagara Falls the next day and then tour Salem and Boston, Mass.

They'll spend five days in New York City and then head to Washington, D.C. to tour the museums and monuments in the Capital while staying in College Park, Md. They will also visit Arlington National Cemetery before heading back to Philadelphia and then flying home.

It's a program with a long history. According to the Pilgrimage website, "The Independent Order of Odd Fellows and Rebekahs have sponsored and supported the Pilgrimage For Youth annually since 1949. This unique educational program brings high school students from around the world to study and participate in discussions concerning world affairs, as well as making new and lifelong friends."



NATURAL HISTORY NUGGETS

Spittle

By Dean Thompson

When I was a kid, during family vacations, one of the entertaining actions I liked to watch was my father loading his pipe with tobacco as he drove. Using his knees to steer, he would deftly scoop the pipe into his tobacco pouch, load it up, and tamp it down. Then, with the window cracked, he'd light it up and start puffing away. I never minded, as the pipe tobacco was not nearly as harsh as cigarette tobacco, and the aroma reminded me of him and my grandfather, who also smoked a pipe. My mother simply tolerated it.

Invariably, though, after he was done and the pipe tucked away, he'd need to spit. He'd snarf up a loogie, roll down the window a little way, and "patooie!" That loogie would sail out the narrow space of the window neat as you please. One time, I figured I could spit just like that, so I rolled down my window the same distance and attempted the same feat. However, due to my novice technique and low mucus viscosity, my attempt to clear the gap to the outdoors did not go well. Then I compounded the problem by immediately trying to clean my failure off with my hands. Decades later, my sister often resurrects this story as one of the funniest and grossest things she has ever witnessed. Loogies can be that way.

That must be why, in the late spring and early summer, many people are fascinated with the blobs of what look like white loogies all over bushes and plants in the chaparral or gardens. Despite their appearances, they are not produced by mucous humans but by the nymphal stage of a little insect called a frog-hopper.

Froghoppers, not to be confused with leaf hoppers, are cryptically colored with a compact winged body shaped like a miniature wedge. What's impressive about them is the ability of their legs to launch them over 100 times their body length; they are truly champion jumpers, better than fleas. For comparison, most athletic humans can jump roughly their own height. Froghoppers' legs are not muscular but instead more like elastic catapults. During the initial part of their jump, just after the trigger snaps them into action, they will generate a force of over 400 Gs. Astronauts experience a G force of about 5 Gs when blasting off into space.

Adult froghoppers, or spittle bugs as many call them, are long-lived for an insect and can survive for six months or so. Before they perish, however, they look to mate. When done, the females will use their knifelike ovipositor to lay one to several dozen eggs inside small stems, spines, shoots, or plant crevices. After overwintering, the eggs will hatch, and the nymphs will emerge to feed on the xylem juices in the plant stems.

This is different than most other sap-feeding insects, which use the "sap" from the nutrient-rich phloem flowing back down from the photosynthetic leaves. The xylem is a much more dilute sap that flows upward from the roots. Normally, insects can't survive on a diet so low in nutrients, but the froghoppers'



Meadow Froghopper (*Philaenus spumarius*). Photo by Charles J. Sharp, Wikimedia commons

digestive system contains symbiotic bacteria that provides them with the essential amino acids. But they still need to deal with all the excess water they are consuming, and this is where the "spit" comes in. Plant pathologist Joan Allen describes the formation of the spittle, "The excess [fluid] is expelled through the anus as a watery waste product. It mixes with a mucilaginous fluid produced by glands on the abdomen, and air bubbles are introduced from a special canal by abdominal contractions."

This creates a white foamy mass that benefits the nymphs by keeping their soft bodies moist and hiding them from potential parasites and predators. A single mass of this mucilaginous spittle can sometimes harbor multiple nymphs. Sometimes they will move to other parts of the plant as they grow through four increasingly larger instars. Eventually, the nymphs will metamorphose into the spectacular leaping adult forms.

So, if you're out walking and it looks like some kids have been hocking loogies on the bushes, do a little closer observation, maybe even delve into the spittle and move the bubbles around, and you may be able to find one of those cute little spittlebugs hanging out in their home of foam.

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.

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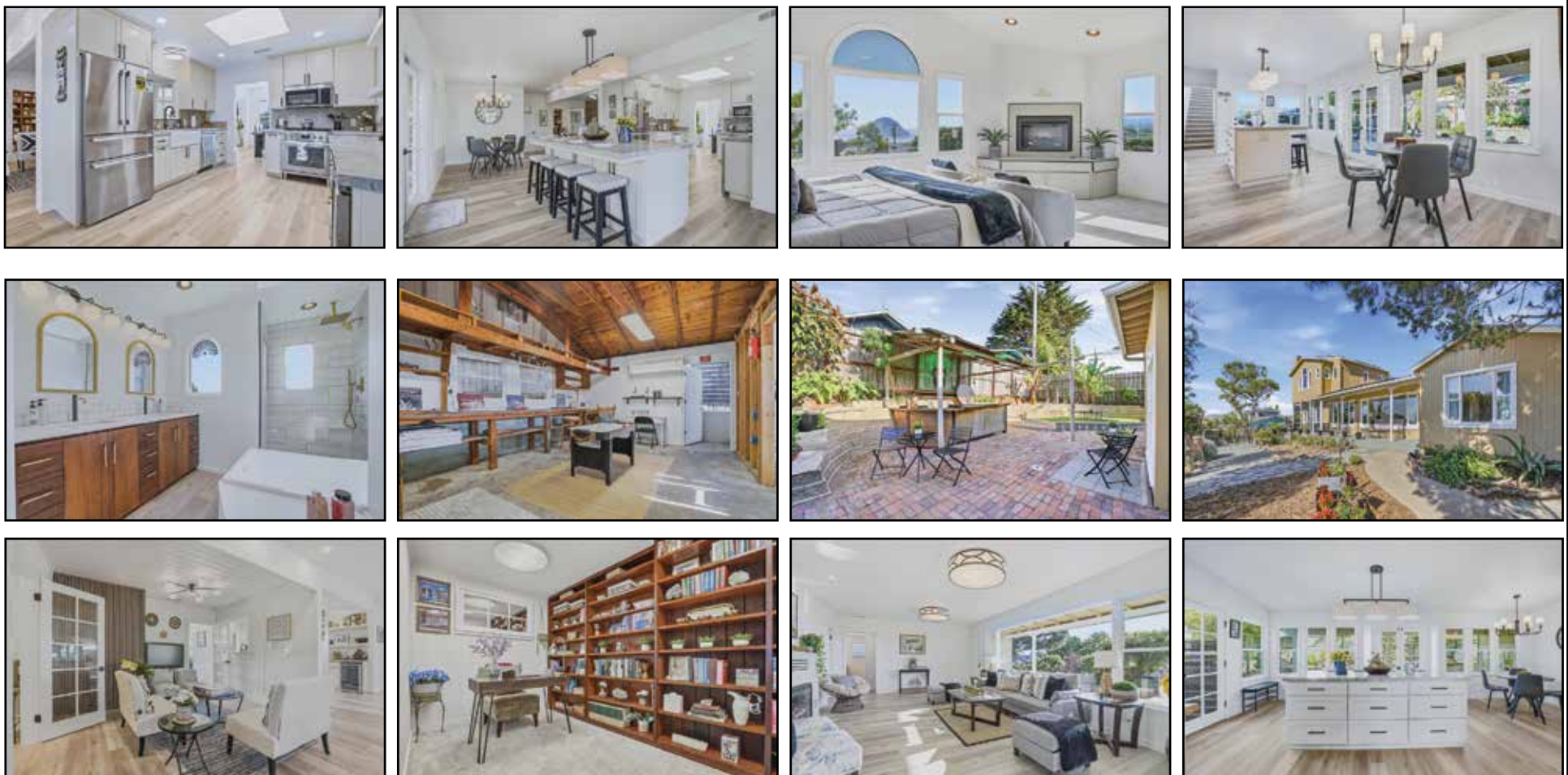
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