



Salinas Valley
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

BUSINESS

JOURNAL



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Detection
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Part III - How Local Governments Spend Your Tax Dollars. In August we brought to you Part I, Measure X; last month we covered Part II, Measure G. Information on how local governments spend your tax dollars with a focus on Measure E this month.

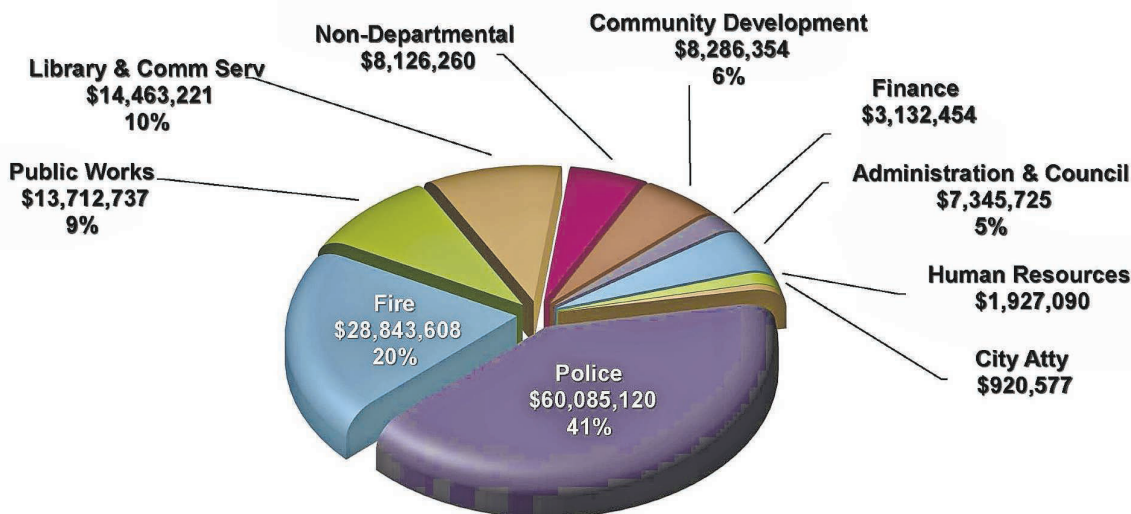
Salinas Spends Measure E Sales Tax Revenue

by Kevin Dayton, Government Affairs Liaison

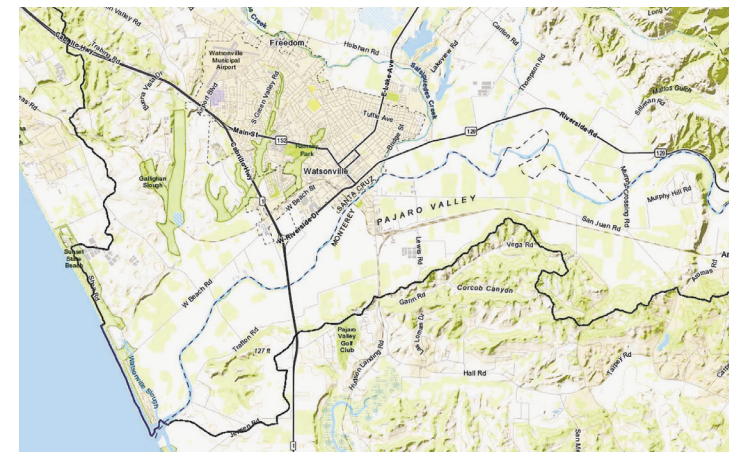
The Measure E sales tax in the City of Salinas originates in 2005 as a way to supplement inadequate revenue sources to pay for city services. On November 8, 2005, 61.9% of City of Salinas voters approved Measure V, a half-cent per dollar (.5%) sales tax that extended to 2016. Voters

decided YES or NO to this question on the ballot: *To address an existing emergency related to Salinas' ability to fund all general public services, including basic services such* ➔

MEASURE E - Continued on page 12



FY 24 Expenditures – General Funds
Gastos del Año Fiscal 24 – Fondos Generales
\$146,843,146



\$8M to Reduce Encampment Living

by Kevin Dayton, Government Affairs Liaison

On September 12, 2023, the California Business, Consumer Services and Housing Agency's Interagency Council on Homelessness (Cal ICH) announced a third round of Encampment Resolution Funding (ERF) program grants to local governments. Among the recipients is a partnership of Monterey County, Santa Cruz County, the City of Watsonville, and the Pajaro Regional Flood Management Agency.

They will receive \$8,081,101.25 to serve some of the approximately 70 people living in the riverbed of the Pajaro River, which is the boundary of Monterey County and Santa Cruz County. Besides changing lives of people, the project funded by the grant is seen as an opportunity to eliminate encampments that pollute the Pajaro River and Monterey Bay. It should be noted that the funds are specifically ear-marked for this purpose. This is not \$8 million dollars for the City of Salinas to spend where they think there might be challenges for the unsheltered. ➔

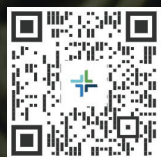
GRANT - Continued on page 30

A photograph of a woman with a shaved head, wearing a maroon top and a gold hoop earring, being embraced from behind by a young boy in a green shirt and a young girl in a yellow floral shirt. They are in a brightly lit room with a window in the background.

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Celebrations and Fall

by Bill Hastie, Board Chair

There is one sure way to know that Fall is upon us. It's not that it is getting a little cooler in the evenings, although it is cooling off. And it's not that the days are beginning to seem a bit shorter, although they are. College football is here! The avid college football fan can begin watching on Saturdays at 9 or 10am with the games that are in the eastern part of the country, and end at about 10pm with games on the west coast. College rivalries are also fun to watch, perhaps with the possible exception of Alabama and Auburn... that gets pretty serious.

October is an important time in Salinas with two very special non-profit events. First is the third annual Key for a Cure golf tournament on October 2. Held at Corral de Tierra Country Club, there are 120 players in the tournament which is followed up by a silent and live auction, live music, and a great spread of food. What is so special about this event is not so much that it's a fun tournament at a beautiful venue, but the reason everyone is there.

The Key for a Cure Foundation is affiliated with St. Jude's Children's Hospital, and the money raised at the tournament goes to funding pediatric cancer research. This year, the event will feature a "fund the need" fund raiser that will provide attendees the opportunity to donate to a specific need – a child's chemotherapy, an

MRI, etc. This event truly demonstrates the heart and soul of our community.

The second non-profit event in October is the California International Airshow, rated by the Monterey Herald as one of the top two events on the Central Coast. This year, the 42nd annual airshow, is held on October 7 – 8 at the Salinas Airport and hosts the United States Air Force Thunderbirds and the Canadian Forces Snowbirds. This is the first time in 16 years that the Salinas Airshow has been selected to host military jet teams. In addition to the two military jet teams, this airshow will host again the Red Bull Air Force Team, World Aerobatic Champion Michael Goulian, and Vicky Benzing in her Boeing Stearman.

"The success and legacy of the California International Airshow is because of our dedicated Volunteers and the Salinas Valley Business Community that has been so supportive for over 40 years. Our Board of Directors works hard and is committed to continuing to produce a "world class air show" for the benefit of charities on the Central Coast," said Harry Wardwell, Executive Director of the California International Airshow. Since its inception in 1981, the airshow has raised more than \$8.5 million for local charities, as well as about \$4.4 million in economic impact to the Salinas Airport.

The California International Airshow is hosting the Airshow Salinas Kickoff & Chamber Mixer with the Salinas Valley and Monterey Peninsula Chambers of Commerce on Thursday, October 5 at the Flying Artichoke.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bill Hastie". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

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Mee Memorial Highlights Life-Saving Mammograms During Breast Cancer Awareness Month

by *Rena Salamacha, CEO, Mee Memorial Healthcare System*



In observance of Breast Cancer Awareness Month in October, Mee Memorial Healthcare System is educating South Monterey County residents about the disease and the potentially life-saving screening available locally.

Breast cancer can take years to develop, yet women rarely have symptoms in the early stages. Mammograms are vital for early detection and successful treatment. A baseline mammogram is recommended for women at age 35, with annual mammograms beginning at age 40.

The team at Mee Memorial's Mammogram Center stand ready to screen South County patients.

Mee offers special programs and lower fees during National Breast Cancer Awareness Month in October. For low-income women, mammograms are covered through the National Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program. To learn more about programs to help pay for breast cancer treatment for women in need, contact the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention at 888-842-6355.

If you live in California, you may qualify for a free breast exam and mammogram if you:

- are at least 40 years old;
- have low income;
- have medical insurance that does not cover these services;
- have a high insurance deductible or co-payment;
- are not getting these services through Medi-Cal or another government-sponsored program.

What is a mammogram?

A mammogram (X-ray examination of the breast) can detect and diagnose breast disease in women who either have breast problems such as a lump or pain as well as for women who have no breast complaints.

Today's high-quality screening mammography is the most effective tool available to physicians in detecting breast cancer before lumps can be felt or symptoms of cancer appear.

Risk factors for breast cancer

Any woman may develop breast cancer. However, the following risk factors may increase the likelihood of developing the disease.

Constant risk factors

- Gender (breast cancer occurs nearly 100 times more often in women than in men)
- Race (Asian, Hispanic and American Indian women have a lower risk of getting breast cancer)
- Personal history of breast cancer
- Previous breast irradiation
- Family history and genetic factors
- Benign breast disease
- Previous breast biopsy in which the tissue showed atypical hyperplasia
- Menstrual periods that began early in life
- Menopause that began later in life

Lifestyle-related risk factors

- Smoking
- Not having children, or first child after age 30
- Oral contraceptives
- Obesity and a high-fat diet
- Physical inactivity
- Alcohol consumption
- Long-term, post-menopausal use of combined estrogen and progesterin (HRT)
- Weight gain and obesity after menopause

Environmental risk factors

- Exposure to pesticides or other chemicals is currently being examined as a possible risk factor

Breast cancer mainly occurs in middle-aged and older women. The median age at the time of breast cancer diagnosis is 62. This means half of the women who developed breast cancer are 62 years of age or younger when they are diagnosed. A very small number of women diagnosed with breast cancer are younger than 45.

Overall, the average risk of a woman in the United States developing breast cancer sometime in her life is about 13 percent.

Early detection is the key to successfully treating breast cancer. As part of the three-step breast health approach, Susan G. Komen for the Cure recommends that beginning by age 20, women become familiar with the look and feel of their breasts through monthly breast self-examination (BSE).

Be sure to see your doctor if you notice any of these breast changes:

- Lump, hard knot or thickening inside the breast or underarm area
- Swelling, warmth, redness or darkening of the breast
- Change in the size or shape of the breast
- Dimpling or puckering of the skin
- Itchy, scaly sore or rash on the nipple
- Pulling in of your nipple or other parts of the breast
- Nipple discharge that starts suddenly
- New pain in one spot that doesn't go away

Komen for the Cure offers a variety of BSE cards in English and Spanish you can download here. You can also order a free BSE card. There is also a helpline available at 1-877 GO KOMEN or through email at helpline@komen.org. It offers free, bilingual support from trained oncology social workers, as well as guidance to local resources (weekdays, noon to midnight).

At Mee Memorial, our highest priority is to serve the healthcare needs of our community. Educating women about breast cancer and early detection, while empowering them to take charge of their breast health is of utmost importance — in October and all year long. For more information or to make an appointment, call the MMHS Mammogram Department at (831) 385-7130. ■



The Many Options of Retirement Plans

by Ryan Hastie, CPFA® Financial Advisor, Hastie Financial Group



When thinking about their financial future, most people typically consider the benefits of establishing a retirement plan. There are many factors that influence which type of plan is best for each person, including goals, financial and employment situation, and the possibility of current deductions against income. As there are many options, it is always advised that one speak with their financial professional to discuss the various retirement plan options and which one may be best suited for them.

Most people have the option of participating in a retirement plan through their employer. The type of plan an employee may participate in is dependent on their type of employer – 401(k) plans are sponsored by private employers, 401(b) plans are sponsored by public schools, churches, and certain charities, and 457 plans are sponsored by certain state and local governments and non-governmental agencies. Other retirement plan options include Savings Incentive Match Plan for Employees (SIMPLE) Individual Retirement Accounts (IRA) and Simplified Employee Pension (SEP) IRA.

The Internal Revenue Code (IRC) places limits on how much money may be contributed to each type of retirement plan each year. For example, in 2023 an employee may contribute up to \$22,500 to a 401(k) and an additional “catch-up” contribution of \$7,500 if they are 50 years old or older. The IRS adjusts retirement plan contribution limits annually for inflation.

Aside from retirement plans via one’s employer, people can establish retirement plans on an individual

basis. The traditional IRA and Roth IRA are among the most common. There are two main differences between the two – First, contributions to traditional IRAs are made with pre-tax money and earnings grow tax-deferred, with taxes paid when the money is withdrawn in retirement. Conversely, Roth IRA contributions are made with after-tax money and earnings grow tax-free, with all withdrawals tax-free in retirement. Although anyone with earned income may make contributions to traditional IRAs, there are income phaseout limits that affect the ability to contribute to Roth IRAs. Once above the limit, you may no longer contribute to a Roth IRA. Additionally, only traditional IRA contributions can be deductible, up to certain income limits. Another major difference between the two is that traditional IRAs have Required Minimum Distributions (RMD), which is the minimum amount you must withdraw from your account each year, while Roth IRAs do not. All RMDs are included in your taxable income in the year received, except for any part that was taxed before (your basis, or what you put into the account).

These are only a few of the many types of retirement plans. There are other options available, either through an employer or on an individual basis. As mentioned, your financial professional will be able to recommend the most appropriate plan based on many factors, including your goals, employment situation, financial position, and preferred tax planning technique. It is best to begin saving for retirement as early as possible, however it is never too late. There are ways to speed up the process of saving, depending on your employment situation, which can also be discussed with your financial professional. ■

Ryan Hastie, CPFA® is a Financial Advisor at locally-owned Hastie Financial Group. If you would like to discuss your personal or company’s investment needs, please contact Ryan at Ryan.Hastie@hastiefg.com.



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Hartnell College Aims To Improve Student Outcomes With The Addition Of Five Student Success Specialists

by Richard Morales

Amidst the ever-changing community college landscape, Hartnell College has prioritized building positive relationships with students. Intending to improve student success rates from the beginning of their college journey, Hartnell has welcomed five student success specialists who offer various support services to guide students toward obtaining a college certificate, degree, or continuing their education at a four-year college or university. Through active engagement, connection, and collaboration with counseling, the admissions office, and all programs and resources on campus, these specialists support students from day one. Noteworthy to share, a positive impact on students is already noticeable in just a few short months.



Leticia



Jose



Guadalupe



Dulce



Fatima

The student success specialists offer meta-major-specific guidance to help students stay on track. Meta-majors consist of related academic majors

and degrees within a specific career area, assisting students in making informed decisions based on their interests, knowledge, skills, and abilities. Students identify with a meta-major and are paired with a student success specialist who will assist them in registering for appropriate classes aligned with the education plan of their desired degree, set forth by their counselor. Ultimately, Hartnell College aims to reduce the time it takes for students to graduate or transfer, and move into a meaningful career. ■

The efforts of these specialists are part of a broader plan at Hartnell College, driven by the idea of guided pathways, and aimed to synthesize various initiatives on campus. For years, a dedicated team of Hartnell staff and faculty members have worked towards enhancing the student experience and finding ways to encourage connections with the campus, one another, and the community. The goal was to create a clear pathway to success that is easy for students to navigate while understanding that student priorities will often change.



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Leadership Monterey County Develops Local Leaders

by Mitchell Friedman, LMC Facilitator

Infrastructure refers to basic facilities and systems serving a country, city, or area, such as garbage collection, water, transportation and communication systems, among others. Far too often, we fail to see the vital role this infrastructure plays in a healthy, vibrant local economy—especially in the County of Monterey.

A recent Leadership Monterey County (LMC) program focused on this very infrastructure, with the 30 participants spending a day visiting and engaging with key personnel at organizations charged with overseeing structures and facilities vital for County of Monterey residents. The day began with a visit to ReGen Monterey, whose mission is to turn waste into resources in the most cost effective and environmentally sound manner to benefit local communities.

LMC participants toured its recycling operations under the insightful guidance of key communications and operations staff. Next up was a visit to Monterey One Water to visit the sewer treatment facility that serves residents of North Monterey County. LMC participants then toured the Monterey Regional Airport, where they were briefed on its operations and ongoing renovation and modification efforts. The day ended at Joby Aviation, with a demonstration of a prototype all-electric, vertical take-off and landing air taxi.

In short, it was a full and fun day that offered LMC participants unique insight into critical issues and vital organizations. To learn more about their experiences, and the LMC program in general, visit <https://www.leadershipmc.org>. ■



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Vacation Leave: Be Aware of the Law There is No “Use It Or Lose It”

by Bradley J. Levang, Attorney, Fenton & Keller



There is no requirement that an employer provide vacation leave to employees. However, should an employer institute a vacation policy, then it is important

to remember that those accrued vacation hours are treated as vested wages under California law.

Since an employer can decide many aspects of a vacation policy it is important to let employees know about the scope and restrictions of that vacation policy, which also ensures fair administration of the policy. The employee handbook is a good place to include the vacation policy.

An employer can decide the accrual rate of vacation. However, once an employee accrues vacation, an employer cannot take that vacation time away. In other words, “use it or lose it” policies are prohibited under California law. One exception to this, however, is if the employee is subject to a valid collective bargaining agreement that addresses this specific issue. Employers should avoid setting accrual rates that decelerate over time.

An employer can decide when employees will begin accruing vacation; for example, 60, 90, or 120 days after the start of employment. The vacation policy can also establish whether vacation time must be taken in full or partial day increments. For business planning purposes, an employer can require employees to request vacation time in advance in writing; perhaps at least 30 days in advance.

It is important to remember that vacation accrues as it is earned and cannot be forfeited. Employers must keep accurate records of an employee’s accrual and use of vacation time. When an employee’s

employment ends, the employee must be timely paid for all accrued, but unused vacation hours at the employee’s final rate of pay. This applies regardless of the reason for the termination.

An employer may place restrictions on when vacation may be used, such as having a prohibition on its use during the “busy season.” The employer should provide sufficient notice of such restrictions and apply the policy fairly and consistently. Employers should keep in mind that an employee may nevertheless be entitled to use their vacation time during these restricted times if the vacation is being used during a protected leave.

Depending on the situation, vacation time may be used during certain protected leaves of absence. An employee may decide to use their vacation time during pregnancy disability leave; or an employer may require an employee to use vacation time during eligible leave under the Family and Medical Leave Act and/or California Family Rights Act.

Employers can implement a reasonable cap on vacation accrual, such as capping accrued vacation at one-and-a-half or two times the annual accrual. An employee ceases accruing vacation upon reaching the established cap. Once the employee drops below the accrual cap, they again begin accruing vacation at the usual rate of accrual. A vacation accrual cap can encourage employees to take time off for rest and relaxation. Choosing to omit an accrual cap from a vacation policy could lead to the unintended consequence of paying a significant amount to departing employees who accrued a large amount of vacation over the course of their employment. ■

Bradley J. Levang is a lawyer with the Fenton & Keller law firm in Monterey. This article is intended to address topics of general interest and should not be construed as legal advice. For more information, please visit www.fentonkeller.com.

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Winter Holiday Air Travel Less Stressful: If You Take the 'Road Less Traveled'

by Monterey Regional Airport Staff

It's no secret that air travel in the first several months of 2023 has been challenging to say the least: more people are traveling post-pandemic, airlines and airports are experiencing a myriad of problems, from pilot and flight attendant shortages to computer and other technical glitches, and we haven't even reached the zenith of holiday air travel, the period from just before Thanksgiving through New Year's Day.

And yet people still pack their bags, book their reservations, and make the trek to their nearest metro airport to visit family and friends in far flung destinations during the holidays. We're just hard-wired to join our families and close friends and celebrate the holidays together, long lines and interminable waits be damned!

Obviously, flying doesn't have to be a teeth-grinding, headache-inducing ordeal just to see Mom and Pop on Christmas or your college friends for New Year's Eve. All you have to do is keep a few tried-and-true travel strategies in mind: Book your flights early; try to travel a couple of days before or after a holiday, if possible; pack light (in other words, don't bring everything and the kitchen sink); arrive on time (not too early, however, it just jams up the airport!); be prepared, especially when going through the Transportation Security Administration gauntlet (don't give TSA a reason to pull you aside); be patient, keep a sense of humor and positiveness, nobody likes a crabby passenger; and remember, everyone's in the same boat, so to speak. You're not being singled out for punishment.

Also, if you have the opportunity, select a smaller, regional airport, such as the Monterey Regional Airport, to pick a local example, to fly in and out of instead of a huge bustling metropolitan airport. You'll find it's easier to get to



(not to mention easier to get in and out of if someone is dropping you off or picking you up); parking is easier, more convenient and closer to the terminal than big airports; and most regional airports these days offer enough flights to either get you where you're going or get you to the right connections. And you won't get lost in a cavernous food court or shopping mall looking for your gate or baggage.

Smaller regional airports are all about convenience, and isn't that something that seems to be in short supply when you're traveling to and from mammoth hub airports? Ease and convenience are two things you definitely need when you're traveling during the winter holidays.

For example, Monterey Regional Airport has recently increased its non-stop destinations from six to 11, with more than 40 flights in and out of the airport daily, including such popular

destinations as San Francisco, Seattle, Los Angeles, San Diego, Las Vegas, Denver, Dallas, Phoenix, Orange County, and connections to destinations such as Yuma, Arizona and Portland, Oregon. In fact, with just one connection, MRY connects you to destinations worldwide, including Paris, France and Chicago, Illinois.

So, if you do plan on travelling during the winter holidays between Thanksgiving and New Year's Day, here's a heads-up, no matter what airport you select. During most of the year, Fridays are the busiest days to fly, and Tuesdays are the least busy. But during the holidays, that really doesn't hold true, for a variety of reasons.

According to TSA, the Sunday after Thanksgiving is the busiest travel day for U.S. airports and the day before Christmas Eve is the next busiest travel days of the year with the day before Thanksgiving also drawing big airport

crowds.

Christmas airport crowds are a little trickier to predict since, unlike Thanksgiving, Christmas falls on a different day each year and air travel patterns are often dictated by the workweek. This year, Dec. 23, the day before Christmas Eve happens to fall on a Saturday, making things even more challenging. And, since Christmas falls on a Monday, the day after Christmas, also a very popular travel day, falls on Tuesday, normally the least busy travel day. So, it goes without saying, more thought and planning may have to go into your travel plans for Christmas. Ditto for New Year's Eve, which falls on a Sunday, making New Year's Day a Monday, and you guessed it, a very busy travel day on Tuesday again!

But, if you're able and up for it, few people travel on Thanksgiving Day itself, as well as Christmas Day and New Year's Day. Who wants to travel on the actual holiday? If you're smart, hate crowds and long lines and don't mind . . . you!

The winter holidays are all about joy and celebration, but flying to and from your holiday gatherings can put a serious crimp in all the warm and fuzzy feelings you've engendered sipping hot toddies with grandma and grandpa. So, resolve to make your air travel easier and less stressful by taking advantage of your friendly neighborhood regional airport. Or, to borrow a line from Robert Frost about travelling down two roads that diverged: "I took the one less traveled by, and that has made all the difference."

For more information about Monterey Regional Airport, visit the official website at montereyairport.com, call (831) 648-7000 or follow @montereyairport on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. The airport is located at 200 Fred Kane Drive, in Monterey. ■

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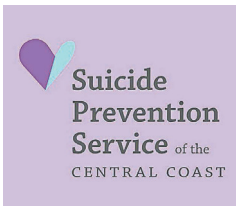
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Suicide Prevention Services of the Central Coast

For 50 years Suicide Prevention Services of the Central Coast (SPSCC) has collaborated with countless agencies and community partners to prevent suicide through compassionate care, public awareness, suicide prevention, and awareness training and education and support for suicide survivors. Based on the foundation and belief that suicide is preventable and everyone has a role to play in preventing suicide. SPSCC provides suicide and crisis intervention, community education, outreach, support, and referrals to persons at risk of suicide and suicidal behavior and offers Suicide Loss Survivors Grief Support Services throughout Monterey, San Benito, and Santa Cruz Counties.

Suicidepreventionservicecc.org, 831-423-9444



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Generosity is Contagious

by Pastor Todd Anderson



Monterey County is better because of you. Many of the business owners I meet are generous and compassionate. It is more blessed to give

than to receive and as an owner of a business or a manager of people you know this to be true. If you are not generous with the resources you have I would like you to kindly consider one of the great partners of compassion in our community. It's the Monterey County Food Bank and it's our responsibility to help them.

MCFB is making a massive difference and Compass Church is happy to partner with them because the work they do is so consequential. It's why we recently partnered with Convoy of Hope to deliver 10's of thousands of pounds of food to MCFB. When you think of a food bank you think of a place where a family in need can get a few extra groceries to help them get by until the next paycheck. But MCFB is so much more than that. They are helping to break the long-term cycle of poverty and are leading the country with the initiatives they offer.

Here are just a few:

- Mobile Grocery Delivery Program delivers weekly healthy groceries to farmworker families, including those with breast cancer and pediatric patients.

- Kids NOW (Nutrition On Weekends) provides bags of nutritious food every Friday to kids in six school districts where 90% of children live in

poverty and 33% are homeless.

- Pediatric and Adult Diabetes Programs provide nutrition education, vitals monitoring, and diet friendly groceries.

- Five Acre Farm that provides year-round fresh produce and nutrition education for first gen BIPOC and women farmers from disadvantaged communities.

- Nutrition Outreach Prevention & Education Programs that cover cooking, diet, exercise, medically required diets, and Type 2 diabetes prevention.

- Work Opportunities and Life Skills Modeled volunteer programs, which provide opportunities to acquire skills, industry-recognized certifications, and experiences which can be utilized in future career pursuits.

- Autism Program that serves farmworkers with autism.

- MCFB is Monterey County's sole emergency food source and increasingly leverages resources to address non-food needs as well, such as diapers, hygiene products, pet food, formula, cleaning supplies, and other critical items.

Jesus was the most generous of all and He is our example. If you aren't attending church, I'd like to meet you and have you be my guest. Compass

Church needs you as we continue to impact this community with God's love. My prayer for you is that God would bless you, your family, and your business. And that you would grasp the truths that generosity is contagious, kindness is underrated, and compassion is necessary. ■



The paid article is intended to offer information by Chamber member, Compass Church.

➡ **MEASURE E** – Continued from page 1

as police, fire safety, paramedics, libraries, recreation, crossing guards, graffiti removal, anti-gang programs, and street and park maintenance, shall an ordinance be adopted to levy a transactions and use tax of a half cent, which would sunset in 10 years and include an independent citizens oversight committee?

On November 6, 2012, 77.6% of City of Salinas voters approved Measure E, which eliminated the provision that the sales tax expire (or sunset) after a certain period of time (ten years). Voters decided YES or NO to this question on the ballot:

Crime Prevention, Safety, Library and Essential Services. To preserve essential services and facilities in Salinas, including: crime and gang prevention; keeping libraries open; emergency response, police, fire, paramedics; fixing streets and sidewalks; parks and recreation for youth and seniors; and other city services; shall the City of Salinas renew its existing sales tax (Measure V) to provide ongoing local funds to be used only in Salinas, protected from State takeaways, with independent citizens' oversight and annual audits?

At the time of the public vote in November 2012, the City of Salinas reported it was collecting about \$10 million per year through the Measure V sales tax. For the 2022-2023 Fiscal Year, the City of Salinas is expected to collect about \$20 million.

CITY OF SALINAS ACCOUNTABLE FOR FULFILLING INTENTIONS OF VOTERS

The original Measure V ballot measure authorized citizens' oversight as a check and balance to the decisions of the city council. As approved by voters in 2005, "the mayor and city council shall each annually appoint one member of the public to serve as an oversight committee for the revenue that the city receives from the tax enacted by this article. The committee shall prepare an annual report on the

revenue received and recommend the use thereof. The city manager shall provide staff for the committee, and the finance director shall provide all relevant data regarding revenue from the tax and expenditure thereof."

Measure E Oversight Committee members and who they were appointed by as of July 20, 2023:

1. Mayor Kimbley Craig: Jose Barajas (Committee Chair)

2. Councilmember Carla Viviana González (District 1): Eric Mora (Committee Vice Chair)

3. Councilmember Tony Barrera (District 2): Guadalupe Gilpas

4. Councilmember Steve McShane (District 3): David J. R. Mack

5. Councilmember Orlando Osornio (District 4): Cesar Lara

6. Councilmember Andrew Sandoval (District 5): Mitchell Huerta (the immediate Committee Past Chair)

7. Councilmember Anthony Rocha (District 6): Stephen Kennedy

While Measure E Oversight Committee meetings seem to be less feisty than Measure G Oversight Committee meetings, current Measure E oversight committee members discuss the same concerns about city spending priorities that current Measure G sales tax oversight committee members discuss. In April 2023, oversight committee members asked the city to dedicate more Measure E revenue to sidewalk and street improvements.

It was also pointed out at the April 20, 2023, meeting that reducing crime and ensuring public safety is a strategy that involves more than just funding police officers: it involves city maintenance of lighting, sidewalks, roads, and other infrastructure to avoid creating an environment that suggests civic neglect and apathy. However, committee members stated it was also important to use Measure E sales tax revenue pursue a goal of filling existing vacancies in the Salinas Police Department. This would reduce the amount of money the City of Salinas now spends ➡

MEASURE E – Continued on page 21

Your Health Matters: You CAN Access Medical Testing

by Spenser Smith, Lab Manager, ARCpoint Labs of Monterey Bay & Salinas



In healthcare, knowledge is power. We all have the general knowledge that eating healthier can lower our bad cholesterol, or getting more exercise can improve our heart

health. But what if you could keep track of your personal medical indicators, not just annually or every few years, but on demand, whenever is most convenient for you? What if you could follow along as you made changes to your diet and lifestyle, checking to see how your cholesterol is coming down, or your vitamin levels are moving up? What if you could get feedback on your healthy choices in real time, making wellness something that you have the power to control, rather than something that you must wait to address until something goes wrong?

These tests are the cornerstone of preventive medicine. According to the CDC, 70% of doctor decisions are guided by diagnostic test results. Yet for individuals, the people actually making these health decisions for themselves every day, getting access to this vital information can be difficult – and time consuming.

Fortunately, there is a way. Self-directed medical testing empowers individuals to get this information when it most matters, directly from the laboratory. It is a growing niche within the medical industry, offering maximum flexibility and lowest costs combined with the freedom to choose your own tests, when you want them. So, which tests should you be looking at for your self-directed annual checkup?

One of the most essential tests in any



According to the CDC, 70% of doctor decisions are guided by diagnostic test results. Yet for individuals, the people actually making these health decisions for themselves every day, getting access to this vital information can be difficult – and time consuming.”

wellness panel is the cholesterol panel, also known as the lipid panel. This examination assesses cholesterol levels, measuring LDL (low-density lipoprotein or ‘bad’ cholesterol), HDL (high-density lipoprotein or ‘good’ cholesterol), and total cholesterol, as well as a few other markers. Monitoring cholesterol is crucial for heart health, as high LDL levels can lead to arterial plaque buildup, increasing the risk of heart disease and stroke. Higher HDL levels are linked to a reduced risk of these conditions. Given that approximately 27% of U.S. deaths result from heart disease, cholesterol monitoring is a pivotal preventive measure, especially when coupled with dietary and exercise changes.

Vitamin D is another important test. Vitamin D is produced in the skin upon sun exposure, but it can also be obtained through diet and supplements. Deficiencies in this vital nutrient can result in fatigue, hair loss, weight fluctuations, weakened bones, and compromised immune function. Astonishingly, vitamin D insufficiency is widespread, affecting up

to 75% of American adults and teenagers. Deficiency rates often peak during the winter months when people spend more time indoors.

The Complete Metabolic Panel (CMP) evaluates the performance of major organs such as the liver and kidneys. It also offers insights into your metabolic health. Individuals with chronic conditions like diabetes can benefit greatly from regular CMP testing. Early detection of liver or kidney dysfunction is also a critical use of this test. Timely intervention based on CMP results can significantly enhance health outcomes, making it a valuable “early warning system” for metabolic diseases and organ health.

The Hemoglobin A1C test measures average blood sugar levels over the past two to three months. This historical gauge of glucose control differs from standard blood sugar tests, which fluctuate throughout the day as the body processes sugars. Given that an estimated one in three Americans has prediabetes, many of whom are unaware of it, regular A1C testing plays a vital role in early detection of prediabetes as well as a pivotal role in managing diabetes.

High-Sensitivity C-Reactive Protein (HsCRP) is a marker of inflammation in the body. Elevated HsCRP levels can signal underlying inflammation linked to conditions like heart disease, arthritis, and autoimmune disorders. Regular HsCRP testing is invaluable for assessing the risk of inflammatory diseases and tailoring preventive measures. By addressing inflammation early on, individuals can potentially reduce the risk of chronic health problems.

Vitamin B12 is indispensable for various bodily functions, including nerve function and red blood cell formation. A deficiency in this vitamin can lead to anemia,

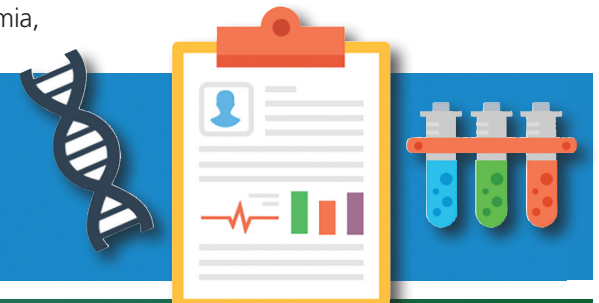
fatigue, and neurological issues. Regular testing for vitamin B12 levels is vital, especially for vegetarians and older adults, who are at higher risk of deficiency. Maintaining sufficient vitamin B12 levels through diet or supplementation can help prevent anemia and related neurological complications.

There are many other tests included in a wellness checkup panel, including urine testing to monitor kidney health, a Complete Blood Count (CBC) to serve as an early warning for certain blood disorders and potential cancers, and iron. There are other tests that are also commonly added based on patient need, such as thyroid testing, early disease or cancer screenings, and hormone testing. Another benefit of self-directed testing is that you can include whichever of these additional tests you desire when you make your appointment.

In conclusion, self-directed medical testing presents an empowering, cost-effective, and flexible approach to healthcare. These annual wellness panels encompass a range of critical tests that provide comprehensive insights into your health, enabling early detection of potential issues and informed decision-making. By prioritizing proactive health management rather than reactive responses to illnesses, self-directed testing lets you follow along and tweak your decisions to ensure that you are making the decisions that best fit your needs. ■

The article is intended to offer information by Chamber member, ARCpoint Labs and is intended to address topics of general interest and should not be construed as medical, business or legal advice. ARCpoint Labs of Monterey and Salinas are available to serve many facets of Salinas business industries.

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29	30	31				

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02

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When It Comes to Dressing the Part for Halloween, Goodwill is Spook-Tacularly Easy On Your Wallet AND the Planet

by Goodwill of the Central Coast Staff

As sure as the sight of leaves falling from trees, the fall season officially arrives when we witness the scurrying of people trying to find the perfect Halloween costume.

This time-honored tradition occurs every autumn, with Americans spending around \$10.6 billion on the ghoulish holiday last year alone! That's roughly \$100 per person on average, with 1 in 5 admitting to extending the costume search to their pets!

The answer for those on a budget as well as those looking for a creative edge lies on the aisles of one of 16 Goodwill Central Coast stores.

GCC gears up for the big day all year long, making it easy for customers to find the costume that won't scare their budget while satisfying all whimsical desires. But there's another layer of satisfaction: Each purchase helps support GCC's ongoing mission to remove obstacles to employment and help empower communities through life-changing jobs.

SKIP THE COSTUME SHOP

Here are a few things to consider before you run out and pay full price at a that costume shop:

- Thrifting your costume is easy and fun, and GCC stores provide spook-tacular savings, estimated to be 50-90 percent off retail prices
- All year long, GCC stores have been collecting Halloween costumes and apparel — and to unveil what's become a Halloween BOO-tique!
- Purchases made at your local Goodwill stores support a network of programs that create jobs and opportunities for those in the community who face obstacles to employment.

As you prepare for the big day by trying to scare up the best costume, GCC offers the following tips to help you get started:

- Go in with an idea but keep an open mind. Brainstorm a couple of costume ideas before heading in to shop but let the inventory lead the way. Being flexible often leads to a more creative and unique costume in the end! Find a piece that inspires you, then build your costume around it. Thrift Halloween inventory is completely unique and random, and put out multiple times daily, so there is no running out of "the good stuff," even on the last day!
- Take advantage of Goodwill associates. During the Halloween season, our costume experts are on hand to help you bring your ideas to life. Most of our associates have done Halloween DIY for years.
- Don't just stay in the Halloween section. After all, "Dr. Strange's" coat could be in the men's or women's coat section at the thrift store. The entire store is a treasure trove of options.
- Consider varying the colors or style from a specific attire. This is your time to shine, so make your costume your own unique interpretation on a classic or current character or create something new of your own.
- Remember, the best costumes don't necessarily have to have the most pieces. A few items can lead to the costume of the year!

FROM HALLOWEEN TO HALLOW-GREEN

The night of Oct. 31 is always great fun, but it's not always great for the environment. Here are some ways that Goodwill can help you celebrate in a more sustainable way:

- When it comes to costumes, check what you already have in your closet. The majority of costumes are purchased new and only worn once before being discarded. Most of this type of clothing is typically made from non-recyclable, synthetic materials. Before buying new costumes, try to upcycle old clothes with your sewing skills, or attach other accessories. Let your creativity flow!
- Buying your costume second-hand ensures that pieces aren't just wasted in landfills, because textiles can take up to 200 years to decompose. And always remember to donate your costume back to GCC for someone else to use. Or exchange costumes with friends or family members. It reduces waste, and it's a win-win for everyone.
- If you're after a new costume, consider pieces that would fit more than one character. For example, a long black dress can be used to portray a witch, a vampire, Morticia Addams, or an evil fairytale villain. That creates a whole new character for years!
- Make your own trick-or-treat bag by upcycling a pillowcase or bag (easily found at GCC) by redecorating or painting it to suit the Halloween mood! The bag can be stored away after the occasion and used again next year.
- Upcycle DIY decorations from old textiles to be stored and used again in the coming years. Use old black socks to create spiders or bats, torn stockings to hang as cobwebs, or old white bed sheets as ghosts. If you don't have what you need on hand, ask a GCC associate for assistance.

Regardless if you are purchasing items for that perfect costume or donating old costumes, you are making a difference in your community. By purchasing or donating items you're helping improve the lives of people with barriers to employment. People served by Goodwill are provided the skill-building programs and services needed to find and maintain employment.

To find out more about mission services offered throughout Monterey, Santa Cruz and San Luis Obispo counties, visit GCC's Mission Services page. ■



GETTY IMAGES



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13th Annual Legacy of Leadership Gala

by Chamber Staff

The Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce recently celebrated its 13th annual Legacy of Leadership Gala. The annual event treated 200 people to a spectacular evening of food and wine while honoring outstanding people and businesses in our community.

Board Chairman Bill Hastie greeted the crowd and drove home the importance of community engagement. "At tonight's Gala, we celebrated not only the achievements of today's leaders but also saw the promise of a brighter tomorrow. It was a great evening and reminded us that the torch of leadership must be carried forward with dedication, wisdom, and purpose," remarked Hastie.

The Legacy of Leadership was designed to recognize those who have made tremendous positive impacts on our community. Distinguished guests, including local elected officials, business leaders, and community advocates, gathered to honor those who have left a lasting legacy of positive change in the Salinas Valley. We were thrilled to have such an array and depth of honorees. Awards were presented to the following:

Jose Luis Barajas (Monterey County Business Council): Young Professional of the Year

Soria Contracting & Solutions: Outstanding Minority-Owned Business

California Water Service: Business Philanthropy Award

Vistra: Distinguished Business Innovation

Scott Rates, KION News Director, served as Master of Ceremony for the evening and added an extra layer of charm. His warm presence kept the audience engaged and ensured a seamless flow to the program. The entertainment for the evening was handled by Monterey DJ's David Hernandez, whose music selections kept the atmosphere energized! Guests were treated to a delicious dinner provided by Gordon's Catering and enjoyed a tremendous selection of wines from Scheid Family Wines and other local Monterey County wineries.

The Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce extends its gratitude to all the sponsors, volunteers, and attendees who made this event possible. Their unwavering support and commitment to our community continue to be instrumental in driving positive change.

Our wonderful Legacy of Leadership Gala Sponsors were: **Platinum Level:** Aera Energy and Pinnacle Bank; **Gold Level:** Bay Federal Credit Union, California Water Service, Central Coast Federal Credit Union, Chevron, Comcast, Granite Construction, Kaiser Permanente and Vistra; **Silver Sponsors:** Green Rubber – Kennedy Ag, Hastie Financial Group, Monterey Regional Airport, Natividad Foundation, and Noland, Hamerly, Etienne & Hoss; **Bronze Sponsors:** Fenton & Keller, Goodwill Central Coast, JRG Attorneys at Law; **Sparkling Wine Welcome:** JRG Attorneys at Law; **Awards Sponsor:** The Outdoor Market; **Media Sponsor:** KION; **In-Kind Sponsors:** Mission Linen, MP Express, Salinas PAL Center, Scheid Family Wines. ■

➡ **LEGACY** – Continued on page 18



Terri and Bill Hastie, Tom Moran and Jennifer Williams



Young Professional Honoree and the MCBC team: Paul Farmer, Kimbley Craig, Jenny McAdams, Jose Luis Barajas, Betsua Perlett Barajas, Jose Luis Barajas



Granite Construction Table - Ashley & Brent Fogg, Chelsea & Daniel Alameda, Rhanda & Don Roland and Starla Warren



Outstanding Minority Owned Business Honoree Armondo Soria and his family



Business Philanthropy Award Honoree Cal Water Team - Michael Mares, Brenda Granillo, Albert Sanchez



Superintendent Dan Burns SUSD and Marlene Garcia of Brew and Crew and guests



Barbara Holland, Pinnacle Bank; Ted Lorono Pinnacle Bank; Salinas Mayor Kimbley Craig; Sheri Cline, Pinnacle Bank



Jose Ariola and Brenda Granillo, Michael and Sarah Mares



Councilman Orlando Orsonio, Rosemary Soto, Kimberly Hilly, Judge John Phillips, Monica Lal and Distinguished Business Innovation Honoree Vistra guests



Legacy of Leadership Chair Amy Gibson greets guests.



Comcast team guest joins Jason Cooper and Alfredo Cervantes



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Legacy of Leadership 2023

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*Typically, up to 30-minutes in length for questions of a general nature; some restrictions may apply.

- Upcoming - CHAMBER EVENTS

RSVP at salinaschamber.com

- **Annual EV Ride, Drive & Display Show**

Sunday, October 1, 11:00 AM - 4:00 PM,

11 Station Place, Salinas

The Salinas Ride and Drive Event is hosted by Ecology Action which highlights electric vehicles (EVs) at all affordability levels and is an opportunity for people to explore, learn about, and test drive electric cars. Local EV owners will be present to answer questions about their experience driving electric. A wide selection of electric cars, trucks, and SUVs will be on display, and new models will be available to test drive! For more information, visit: EVsForEveryone.org/Salinas-NDEW.

- **Salinas Airshow Chamber Kickoff Mixer**

Thursday, October 5, 5:30 PM - 7:00 PM, 30 Mortensen Avenue, Salinas

California International Airshow Salinas is excited to invite you to the Airshow Kickoff & Chamber Mixer with the Salinas Valley and Monterey Peninsula Chambers of Commerce, an evening filled with excitement, meet and greets, stunning displays, fine wine, and delectable cuisine. Purchase tickets for \$10 member and \$15 prospective/non-member rates at SalinasChamber.com. Day-of-ticket sales will be \$15 for members and \$20 for prospective/non-members. Don't miss out on this exclusive opportunity to mingle with pilots/performers, appreciate awe-inspiring aircraft, and snag cool giveaways.

- **Lunch and Learn with Salinas Valley Health**

Tuesday, October 10, 12:00 PM - 1:00 PM, Zoom and Chamber Offices, 119 East Alisal Street, Salinas

Attention! Are you or do you know of someone interested in a career in health care? If you answered yes, please join us for lunch on Tuesday, October 10 and learn about Salinas Valley Health's new COPE Health Scholars Program. Health Scholars gain first-hand experience at Salinas Valley Health Medical Center, learn patient care skills, and network with medical staff in a variety of departments. To learn more about this program, join us at our next Lunch & Learn where COPE Health Scholars Program manager Michelle McCarty. RSVP at SalinasChamber.com.

- **Ribbon Cutting Ceremony with Jay Nolan Community Services**

Thursday, October 12, 5:00 PM - 6:30 PM, 3 Quail Run Circle, Suite 102, Salinas

The mission of Jay Nolan Community Services is to enable individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder and other Developmental Disabilities to live fulfilling lives as members of the community. Come meet the team and learn more about our services over food, drinks and prizes. Register at SalinasChamber.com today!

- **Central Coast Mobile Fab Lab Community Celebration**

Saturday, October 14, 12:00 PM - 3:00 PM,

1440 Constitution Blvd, Salinas

Free community event to celebrate the official launch of the Central Coast Mobile Fab Lab. Enjoy hands-on learning and play activities, food trucks, jump houses and a live broadcast from KDON radio. The whole family will be inspired by the Chevron STEM Zone, an interactive space for kids and parents to learn how science, technology, engineering and math are connected to everyday life. Advanced registration is free via our Eventbrite page [dreamitdesignitcreateit2023.eventbrite.com](https://www.eventbrite.com/e/dreamitdesignitcreateit2023-eventbrite-com). Learn more about the Fab Lab by visiting centralcoast-mobilefablab.org.

- **New and Prospective Member Orientation**

Tuesday, October 17, 12:00 PM - 1:00 PM, Zoom AND at Chamber Offices, 119 East Alisal Street, Salinas

Join us for an informational orientation where we welcome new and prospective members to get a broad overview of the different member benefits with the Chamber, and how to take full advantage of your membership. Lunch will be provided. For more information, please contact Gabriel Lopez at Gabe@salinaschamber.com or call 831-751-7725.

- **Ambassador Appreciation Mixer**

Thursday, October 26, 5:30 PM - 7:00 PM, Chamber Offices, 119 East Alisal Street, Salinas

The Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce would like to take an evening to recognize its current active Ambassadors, as well as welcome new ones! Ambassadors are a special group of business professionals with the mission to support businesses and the community by assisting the Chamber with events, outreach, and promotion. Come meet and greet our Ambassadors over food and drinks. It's a great opportunity for members showing interest in becoming Ambassadors of the Chamber to learn firsthand from Ambassadors what it's all about!

- **Lunch and Learn with Hospice Giving Foundation**

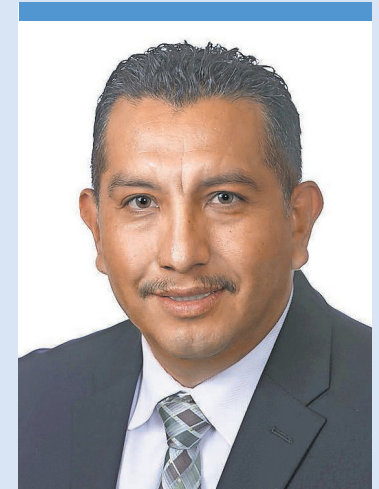
Tuesday, November 7, 12:00 PM - 1:00 PM,

Chamber Offices, 119 East Alisal Street, Salinas

Join us for a Lunch & Learn presentation with Hospice Giving Foundation. Hospice Giving Foundation offers guidance on the importance of conversations with loved ones about wishes for end-of-life care and the gift of being prepared for serious illness. Learn about the tools Hospice Giving Foundation offers and how you can begin your Advance Healthcare Directive. The event will take place in-person at the Chamber office and via Zoom. RSVP at Salinaschamber.com today!

Ambassador Profile

Oscar Mora
Blue Adobe Mortgage



Oscar has lived in Monterey County for over 40 years & has been in the mortgage business for over 20 in the Salinas Valley. Oscar's bilingual and bi-literate and has used his skills to help hundreds of families in the Hispanic community obtain homeownership. He was recently ranked on Scottman's Guide & Mortgage Executive as one of the top 1% mortgage loan officers in America.

A family man, he and his wife Sheila have been married for over 28 years. They have 3 children and their granddaughter Myla.

Oscar was part of the 1st graduating class at CSUMB & earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Business. He has had great leadership training in programs such as Rapport Leadership, The CORE Training, and Certified Mortgage Advisors.

Be sure to check out SalinasChamber.com for added events and updated information

➡ **MEASURE E** – Continued from page 12

on overtime compensation to existing police.

Measure E Oversight Committee members have also expressed complaints heard from Measure G Oversight Committee members that city staff is not providing sufficiently detailed reports of expenditures that the committee requests at its meetings. At the July 20, 2023, meeting, the committee chair reminded staff that the committee has asked at each meeting since its October 14, 2021 meeting for staff to provide a list of city expenditures using the \$50.5 million received from the federal government through the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA). Committee members also requested a list of street and sidewalk improvement expenditures paid for by Measure E.

MEASURE E SPENDING FOR THE PAST FISCAL YEAR

As of April 30, 2023, the one category of spending for Measure E sales tax revenue that was exceeding its budgeted

amount was the Fire Department. At the July 20, 2023 Measure E Oversight Committee meeting, staff explained to committee members that spending for fire services was high because of overtime compensation for firefighters. It was noted that expenditures for the libraries were under budget because of staff vacancies in the library system.

A committee member asked about “Community Programs” funded by Measure E, and staff explained that these expenditures were to pay for police services and public works services provided by city staff for various special events, including the Rodeo, Carnival, Parade of Lights, Veterans Day Parade, and others.

The city is spending about \$1.5 million of Measure E funds from this past fiscal year on capital improvement projects. These projects include resurfacing tennis courts at various locations including Central, Claremont and Laurel Parks; replacing restrooms at various parks, including Natividad Creek Park, computer

upgrades at the library, improvements to the Cesar Chavez Library parking lot, and upgrades to the Steinbeck Library.

About \$1.2 million of Measure E revenue was used to make principal and interest payments to investors who in 2018 bought \$19.8 million in revenue bonds that the city used to fund construction of the new El Gabilan library. On March 6, 2018, the Salinas City Council voted 7-0 to borrow money to pay for this library project. The city will pay \$34.7 million in principal and interest through the year 2048 to pay off these bonds.

A question to staff from a committee member concerning \$350,000 that was transferred from the Measure G sales tax revenue account to the Measure E sales tax revenue account received a vague answer related to past employment and furloughs.

AN ATTEMPT TO ANALYZE MEASURE E EXPENDITURES

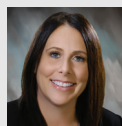
Unlike the Measure G Oversight

Committee, the Measure E Oversight Committee has not recently received any reports from the city listing annual and overall expenditures of sales tax revenue for specific projects and programs. See the front page article in the September 2023, *Salinas Valley Business Journal*. A substantial chunk of Measure G expenditures in the lists given to the Measure G oversight committee is classified as “Transfers Out” and isn’t broken down. Lists of specific Measure E expenditures provided to oversight committee members have been limited to capital improvement projects for recreation and libraries.

The Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce through the Government Relations Committee, continues to discuss constructive ways to urge the City of Salinas to improve openness and transparency for budget expenditures. Businesses, residents, and elected and appointed city officials are interested and should have more information. They want to see the good things the City of Salinas is doing and plans to do. ■

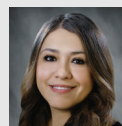
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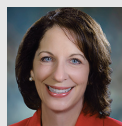
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Let's Talk Business.

Member News

WeatherTech Raceway Laguna Seca 23 year-old Track Record Broken

WeatherTech Raceway Laguna Seca has been a fixture in the race world, as well as Monterey County, since it was built in 1957. Built on U.S. Army Fort Ord land, the recent investments in the track has put Christian Lundgaard's name into the record books. The freshly repaved surface delivered on the fast-track speculation when the NTT INDYCAR SERIES Season Finale qualifying round, saw the Rahal Letterman Lanigan Race Team's driver eclipsing the 23-year-old track record with a blistering 1:06.461 lap. Lundgaard had an average speed of 121.226 miles per hour around the 2.238-mile 11-turn Monterey circuit. "It is pretty cool, I must say," says Lundgaard, upon hearing the news he set the track record. "Coming to such a historical track, we expected it to be a lot quicker, but I don't think we expected to do this. It's pretty cool to have the track record here. The track is just awesome."



Merrill Lynch Client Associate Named Miss California Rodeo Salinas

A Rodeo Queen is really a best-in-class combination of horsemanship and athletic abilities paired with personal skills of public speaking and knowledge of the heritage of agriculture. It is also something that Merrill Lynch Wealth Management Associate, Rose Escobar, has dreamed of becoming since she was a young child. That dream came true this year as she earned the crown of Miss California Rodeo Salinas 2023! Merrill Monterey region offices manage \$4.7 billion in local client assets and it's no coincidence that Rodeo Queen Escobar gravitated to Merrill. "Rose's passion for the sport of rodeo as well as helping her community has merged perfectly with her Rodeo Queen and Merrill Careers," said Morgane McNally, Resident Director, Merrill Monterey. Escobar has worked at Merrill Monterey for two years and aspires to earn her credentials to become a registered advisor.



Hartnell College Cross Country's Andrea Villegas Achieves Milestone Victory

The Hartnell College Cross Country team has long been a source of pride for the college and last month, Hartnell College sophomore Andrea Villegas broke a season and Hartnell College record for women's cross country. Her milestone triumph is significant as she becomes the first Hartnell woman to win the State Preview. Villegas' 18:36 run is an impressive achievement, and makes her the second-fastest community college woman this season. With their unwavering dedication and talent, the Hartnell College Cross Country team continues to prove that hard work pays off. Chris Zepeda, the Cross Country and Track and Field Athletic Coach at Hartnell College couldn't be more excited for his student athletes. "With an unwavering dedication to their sport, these athletes repeatedly work tirelessly to push themselves to new heights



Coastal Roots Hospitality's Pick It Up-Pay It Forward Focus on Rape Crisis Center

The Pick It Up - Pay It Forward program (PIU-PIF) continues to strengthen and support charity partners, with \$40,000 in donations so far in 2023. The charity partner for September and October is Monterey County Rape Crisis Center. The Rape Crisis Center's mission is to provide ongoing advocacy, support and healing for all victims and survivors of sexual assault, human trafficking and child abuse. It also helps prevent sexual violence in its community through education. Through the initiative, CRH donates 10 percent of all proceeds from takeout orders (that do not use delivery services) from its three restaurants — Rio Grill in Carmel, and Tarpys and Montrio in Monterey.



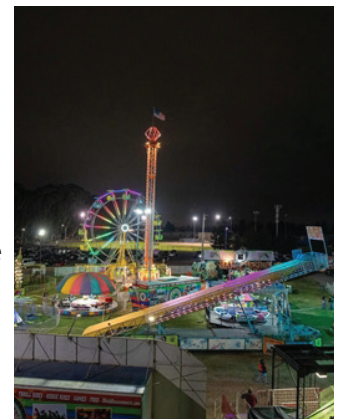
Where Your Heart Has a Home Campaign: The Monterey County Fair & Event Center Announces Capital Campaign

The Monterey County Fair & Event Center, popularly known as The Fairgrounds, is home to community events large and small, from the Monterey County Fair and the Monterey Jazz Festival to weddings and anniversaries, seasonal tradeshow, nonprofit fundraisers, flea markets, community gatherings, and event as an emergency center in times of need. With all that in mind, they are launching a major capital drive — Where Your Heart Has a Home Campaign, to raise funds and re-imagine how they can better serve a changing community and address the urgent needs of the local residents. "Our goal is \$1 million to convert our aging barns into a multi-use community center for local events, from barbecues and weddings to a central crisis center in times of emergency and need," said Kelly Violini, CEO, of Monterey County Fair. For more information and information how you can contribute and help, contact marce@thebuzzpr.net or visit the campaign website at www.mcfcapitalcampaign.com.



California Rodeo Fall Round-UP Festival

The California Rodeo Salinas is hosting the second annual Fall Round Up Festival October 12 – 15 at the Salinas Sports Complex. The event is presented by Brent Eastman Insurance Services, Inc., and will feature a carnival, food trucks, live music, a pumpkin patch, children's activities, and more. Admission tickets are \$12 for adults and \$7 for children ages 2-12. Tickets are on sale online only at <https://www.carodeo.com/events/2023/fall-round-up>. The Ticket Office will open at 4 p.m. on Thursday, October 12 for walk-up sales. Unlimited ride wristbands are available for \$35 + fees until October 11. The price increases to \$40 + fees on October 12. Parking is free. A clear bag policy will be in effect for this event with full details at carodeo.com.



Member News

Hospice Giving Foundation Announces New Board Members and Staff

As the Hospice Giving Foundation continues to invest in the community, we are pleased to welcome four new directors to our Board: Sun Shine Hohman, Maria Lopez, Sheriff Tina Nieto and Yvonne Thomas; as well as three new members of our staff: Mary Gunn, Erik Lua and Viviana Vargas. Our staff has also grown and changed with the addition of Mary Gunn, Erik Lua and Viviana Vargas. Mary Gunn, Vice President, has extensive knowledge about the role nonprofits play in community change and has a passion for the transformative relationships that define effective philanthropy. Erik Lua grew up in Watsonville, and has assumed the position of director of philanthropy. Viviana is the newest member of the HG Foundation staff and is the administration and communications coordinator for the HG Foundation. For more information on The Hospice Giving Foundation visit <https://hospicegiving.org>.



MCBC welcomes Megan Hunter to Board of Directors

Monterey County Business Council is thrilled to welcome Megan Hunter as the newest member of the Board of Directors. Before being hired as City Manager of the City of Soledad, Ms. Hunter worked for the City of Salinas as the Community Development Director, facilitating economic development, advancing housing production, addressing homelessness, eliminating blight, and ensuring equitable growth in all Salinas neighborhoods. Assuming the helm of the Community Development Department in 2015, Megan guided the development and adoption of three specific plans, economic development and housing elements of the General Plan, and two community plans. In recognition of this work, the California Chapter of the American Planning Association awarded the department "best public planning agency" in 2020. Welcome Megan, and thank you for your service!



Alliance on Aging Free Resource Answers Concerns Regarding Medicare

Medicare can often be a confusing and difficult plan to navigate, but thankfully the Alliance on Aging's Health Insurance Counseling and Advocacy Program (HICAP) provides no-cost counseling, information, and assistance to local residents



regarding the important program. Program areas at Alliance on Aging's HICAP program provides counseling and information to Monterey County residents on topics such as Medicare, health insurance benefits, and long-term care insurance. HICAP provides essential services to Medicare beneficiaries, including the elderly and those on Medicare due to a disability. HICAP counselors must complete an intensive training and are registered with the California Department of Aging. They receive continuing education to remain aware of changes in the Medicare regulations. HICAP can assist you with the following areas: Medicare benefit, Supplemental (Medigap) insurance, Medicare Advantage (MA) options, Evaluate and identify the right Part D Drug plan, Billing and claims procedures, Assist on your behalf with providers, Research Patient Assistant Programs (help with medication costs), Provide public speakers on Medicare-related issues. If you are a low-income senior, you may also be eligible for Medicare's Extra Help program. For more information visit <https://allianceonaging.org/>.

The California International Airshow: World-Class Aviation and Millions for Charity

by Harry Wardwell, Executive Director, California International Airshow

Since 1981, The California International Airshow (CIA) has been producing and staging a "world class aviation event" at the Salinas Municipal Airport. The all-volunteer nonprofit organization has given over \$8.5 to local charities during the past 42 years.

Truly an international aviation event, the CIA has hosted the Canadian Forces Snowbirds, the British Red Arrows, The Soviet MIG Tour, as well as the US Navy Blue Angels and the USAF Thunderbirds. The Airshow generates over \$4.8 million in direct and non-direct economic impact each year to the Salinas Municipal Airport, the City of Salinas, and the County of Monterey.

The CIA in Salinas has become one of the premier aviation events on the West Coast. Contributing to this success is the unique concept, which brings together three principal ingredients. 1) A primary goal of raising money for charity. 2) Stage a spectacular family oriented, and educational entertainment event. 3) Involve widespread volunteer community involvement.

The social benefits that the airshow brings to the Community are immeasurable. First there is the strong sense of community spirit that is generated each year. Traditions of volunteering are instilled in the youth of our community and the goodwill created over generations is a very positive force. Groups like the Boys and Girls Club, United Way, Boy Scouts, Girls, Inc, School Booster Clubs, and Rotary Clubs all use funds earned at the airshow to fund their community projects. All contributing to making our community a better place for our residents.

Within the Air Show industry, Salinas has a reputation of producing one of the best community based civilian airshows in the Country. It is widely recognized throughout North America, and there is a very positive

image in the industry but also within the Military of our Country. The positive image the Salinas Airshow has received over the past 42 years is significant.

Pride and patriotism is a big part of air shows. The opportunity to see our Country's top military jets perform their maneuvers at the airshow can be inspiring for all ages and many kids decide to pursue military and aviation careers from attending the Salinas airshow. Over the years, the airshow has seen several military pilots bring their planes to the Salinas Airshow and tell us that they came to the Salinas Airshow as youngsters and that is why they joined the Navy or Air Force to serve our Country.

The 42nd annual show features two "world class" military jet teams on October 7-8, 2023. The USAF Thunderbirds and the Canadian Forces Snowbirds, along with the US Navy's latest "top Gun" fighter jet, the F35C. In addition, some of the best civilian aerobatic performers from all over the United States and Canada. Jet Trucks, Monster Trucks, Military Statics like the Air Force C5 and C17 make the California International Airshow an educational and entertaining day for the entire family. There is also a huge STEM exhibit with displays by Chevron, NASA, Hartnell College, and the Navy Post Graduate School.

The California International Airshow will continue its mission to produce a "world class" aviation event at Salinas Airport, for family entertainment and education while raising money for local charities.

For updated information go to the Airshow's website at www.salinasairshow.com

Mark your Calendar for our 43rd annual California International Airshow on September 28-29, 2024 ■



The Importance of Our Rural Ag Economy



Most visitors to Monterey County recognize us for our extensive natural beauty ... the Monterey Bay with expansive views of the ocean and coastal forests for hiking and camping ... and of course, golf. Yet, many are unaware that the largest portion of our County is dedicated to food production, here in the Salad Bowl of the World.

In July, Monterey County Agricultural Commissioner Juan Hidalgo announced a 13.1% increase in production value of our crops in 2022, bringing our gross value of agricultural products to \$4.6 Billion. This places agriculture at the very top of our economic sectors and one of our key drivers to annual success as a rural county in California.

Agriculture employs over 58,000 of our hardworking residents, fully one-fifth of our local workforce. Many local families depend on the success of our agricultural operations for their personal income, and many more work in

businesses allied with agricultural operations that provide supplies and services.

But these production numbers and increase in crop value don't necessarily translate into wildly high profits for agricultural operations. As we all know, inflation took a big bite out of everyone's wallet this past year, with large increases for energy, supplies, and hard goods. Production inputs into food products such as fertilizer increased dramatically this past year, along with other costs associated with producing a saleable crop. With farmers being price-takers, increased costs are never

fully passed along in the prices of crops sold to market.

Adding into this mix of costs are the losses sustained due to the flood events of January and March this past winter. Over 20,000 acres went underwater, drowning crops, damaging irrigation equipment, and taking farm infrastructure out of production. While we have achieved some recovery of these acres, the costs of doing so became a burden to the farmers, ranchers, and vineyards that were not included in meaningful disaster relief programs. Many are still struggling to get back into production

as damages were extensive.

All this places pressure on the bottom line; agricultural operations need to make a profit each year to continue operating into the next year, just like any other business. Margins on the sale of products were already tight due to market effects of the pandemic, and inflationary costs and then flooding eats up whatever margin was remaining.

As with all economic sectors, agriculture struggles to gain its footing once again ... continuing to produce food products that reach all or our dinner tables each night. We are fortunate to have a bounty of fresh food products produced locally that not only feeds us

but supports many of those who depend on this production for their jobs and homelife here in Monterey County.

We must all rally to support our food production systems for future food security, both locally and nationally. The Salad Bowl of the World sends and astonishingly large amount of food products to stores across our country and more than two dozen countries around the world.

Vegetable crops alone account for \$3.1 Billion of our local farming production, all part of a healthy diet, produced under strict food safety requirements and agronomically advanced practices. It is often stated

that our local farms, ranches, and vineyards are 'progressive' meaning they are early adopters of new technologies that help to increase yields while reducing the reliance on natural resources such as water.

Monterey County holds the position as the fourth highest agricultural producer in the State, all on 220,000 acres of irrigated lands and extensive rangeland. This creates a strong economic driver resulting from high value crops produced in an intense working environment setting and our wide diversity of products ensures that market influences cannot impact our economic well-being.

This is why our local agricultural economy is so important, indeed dependent, on the success of our farms, ranches, vineyards, and those who support these operations each year. We are a rural economy in a state that is increasingly becoming urbanized and focused on creating wealth for our residents. Agriculture plays a big role in the success of Monterey County. ■



Monterey County's Top Crops

Strawberries.....	\$958 Million
Leaf Lettuce.....	\$842 Million
Head Lettuce.....	\$546 Million
Broccoli.....	\$519 Million
Cauliflower.....	\$216 Million
Celery.....	\$180 Million
Wine Grapes.....	\$173 Million
Spinach.....	\$166 Million
Plants & Flowers.....	\$124 Million
Brussels Sprouts.....	\$114 Million

Other major crops produced in 2022: Livestock (cattle), mushrooms, garlic, cabbage, spring mix lettuce, raspberries, carrots, lemons, artichokes, and onions.

It is this diversity of products that makes Monterey County agriculture successful; by producing a multitude of crops each year, influences of market fluctuations and supply challenges are managed to ensure no single crop can impact our economy.

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Children's Shopping Tour



2023



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OCT. 7 & 8, 2023



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Support our Chamber Members

Thank you, to our October renewing Members. Please help keep the Salinas Valley strong by doing business with companies that support the Chamber.

Member Name	Member Since	Member Name	Member Since
Piini Realty	1970	Republic Services	2000
Sambrailo Packaging	1970	Gateway Center of Monterey County	2003
Leavitt Central Coast Insurance	1971	Royal Packing	2004
American Red Cross of the Central Coast	1972	Alco Water Service	2006
Northridge Mall—Steer Point	1972	The Salvation Army	2007
The Steinbeck House	1974	SlingShot Connections	2013
California Rodeo Inc	1975	Braga Fresh Family Farms Inc	2014
Ingraham & Associates CPA's	1975	Historic Harvey House	2014
American AgCredit	1976	CSUMB City Center	2015
Monterey County Herald	1978	Diana Ausonio	2015
The Nunes Company Inc/Foxy	1978	Stifel, Nicolaus & Company, Inc	2015
United Way Monterey County	1979	ARIEL Theatrical	2016
Armanasco Public Relations Inc	1985	American Supply Company	2016
Dawn Transportation, Inc.	1987	Precision Nails	2016
Firestone Business Park	1987	TPO Human Resource Management	2017
Tanimura & Antle	1989	Guild Mortgage	2019
Bay Property Management Inc	1991	Asian Cultural Experience	2021
Dole Fresh Vegetables	1993	Latitude 36 Foods	2021
Valley Farm Management Inc	1993	Mee Memorial Hospital	2021
Bobcat Bicycles	1994	Complexions Skin Care	2022
Monterey Regional Airport	1994	Monterey Business Builders	2022
Robert Kasavan Marketing	1994	Unity Care	2022
Carol Kurtz	1999	Viable Green Building Solutions	2022

A Special Thanks to Our Visionary and Stakeholder Members



- Upcoming - NON-PROFIT EVENTS

For an updated list of Non-profit events and more visit salinaschamber.com

- Alzheimer's Association Salinas, Dementia Family Caregiver Support Group**
October 4, 12:30-2:00PM – 1130 San Vicente Avenue, Salinas
 Support groups create a safe, confidential, supportive environment or community and a chance for participants to develop informal mutual support and social relationships. They also educate and inform participants about dementia and help participants develop methods and skills to solve problems.
- Rancho Cielo, Jazz at the Ranch, Salinas Youth Orchestra**
October 6, 7:30PM – 710 Old Stage Road, Salinas
 Giving Never Sounded So Good: Jazz Fundraiser Strikes a Harmonious Chord to Support Youth Mental Health and Empower Arts Programs. Concert Series Pass & General Admission Tickets ON SALE NOW. Proceeds from the Jazz at the Ranch Fundraiser will go towards Rancho Cielo's Mental Health Program and Arts Program. Your ticket includes heavy hors d'oeuvres by Monterey Chefs, local wines and beers.
- Salinas City Center, First Fridays!**
October 6, 5:00PM – Downtown, Salinas
 On the First Friday of every month many of the downtown businesses stay open later than usual and many host live music and wine tastings as well as have special promotions going on.
- California International Airshow, 42nd Annual California Airshow**
October 7-8, TBA, 30 Mortenson Avenue, Salinas
 The 42nd annual California International Airshow will feature two "world class" military jet teams, the United States Air Force Thunderbirds and the Canadian Forces Snowbirds, plus the Navy's latest "Top Gun" Jet fighter demonstration, the F35C Lightning II.
- Active Seniors, Inc, Monthly Luncheon**
October 12, 11:45AM-1:30PM – 100

Harvest Street, Salinas
 \$12 for members and nonmembers. Lunch is served at noon but come early and have a social time with friends, and stay for program. Please call 831-424-5066, email asi@activeseniors.org, or come in to make a reservation. Our website, activeseniors.org, will have a link to the newsletter where the menu and program are listed.

- California Rodeo, Fall Festival Round Up**
October 12-15, 4:00 - 6:00 PM – Salinas Sports Complex 1034 North Main Street, Salinas
 The California Rodeo Salinas will host the second annual Fall Round Up Festival. Join us for a carnival, pumpkin patch, food, drinks, live music, games and more fall fun. The event is presented by Brent Eastman Insurance Services, Inc.
- Hope, Horses, and Kids, The Hootenanny**
October 14, 6:00 – 10:00PM – 1010 River Road, Salinas
 The night will be filled with amazing company, silent & live auctions, music, food and beverages. Sponsorship level tickets are available. Need a little more information? Please contact us at lori@hopehorseskids.org.
- El Pajaro Community Development Center, Tacos and Tapas**
October 19, 6:00-9:00PM – 421 E Riverside Drive, Watsonville
 Commemorating 10 years of supporting local food entrepreneurs in achieving their small business dreams at our Commercial Kitchen Incubator! You won't want to miss this fantastic food-and-drink event featuring over 15 food purveyors, all of whom are talented Kitchen Incubator entrepreneurs. We will also introduce many food trucks for an even greater variety of culinary delights and will be serving a selection of handcrafted local beverages.
- The Western Stage, The Thanksgiving Play by Larissa Fasthorse**
October 20, 7:30 AM – 9:30 PM – 411 Central Avenue, Salinas

Good intentions collide with absurd assumptions in Larissa FastHorse's wickedly funny satire, as a troupe of terminally "woke" teaching artists scrambles to create a pageant that somehow manages to celebrate both Turkey Day and Native American Heritage Month.

- Boys and Girls Club of America, Youth of the Year Celebration**
October 25, 5:45 - 7:15 PM – 1441 Canyon Del Rey Boulevard, Seaside
 Youth of the Year celebrates some of our most remarkable Boys & Girls Clubs of Monterey County members. In fact, it is the highest honor that a Club member can receive. During the evening, you will enjoy a fast-paced emotionally charged evening, with the final four candidates presenting their compelling and successful journeys with BGCMC and their future plans. The Joe Gunter Youth of the Year Scholarships will be awarded for the "Youth of the

Year" and other finalists.

- Max's Helping Paws, 4th Annual Howl-o-ween Pet Costume Contest**
October 28, 10:00 AM – 1:00 PM – The Forrest Theater, Carmel-by-The Sea
 Max's Helping Paws Foundation 4th Annual Howl-o-Ween is back! If you love to show how "fashion-forward" your pup can be while supporting a wonderful local animal welfare nonprofit, Max's Helping Paws, this is the event to attend! Red carpet runway for pet/owner costume contest participants Panel of Dog-Loving Judges Large Stage with nonslip ramp for pets of all ages Spacious setting with seating for everyone, including grass area for pets. FREE event to attend. Enter the contest for one of several WONDERFUL prizes, or just enjoy observing all the incredible costumes!



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Ribbon Cuttings & Chamber Events



Paint the Town Purple Kickoff Mixer

Many came together at Portobellos on Main's to show unwavering support for cancer survivors, families, and in honor of those we've lost. Guests learned more about Relay for Life, ways to get involved, and how to support.



Ribbon Cutting Ceremony with Aquablue Skin and Body Spa

Chamber members were thrilled to celebrate with Aquablue Skin & Body Spa for a special 20th anniversary ribbon cutting ceremony that marks their incredible milestone of 20 years of providing relaxation, rejuvenation, and results.



Lunch and Learn with Building Business Back

Attendees tuned into an educational presentation with Building Business Back regarding the Employee Retention Tax Credit (ERC) that can earn businesses up to \$26,000 per eligible employee retained during the pandemic.



Mission Foods Street Fest Salinas (NTT INDYCAR SERIES)

The community celebrated the kick-off to the Firestone Grand Prix of Monterey and met the world-renowned drivers at the Mission Foods Street Fest organized by WeatherTech Raceway Laguna Seca.



Ribbon Cutting Ceremony for the Center of Hope

Boys & Girls Club of Monterey County hosted a special ribbon cutting at the Salinas Clubhouse in partnership with the Panda Cares Foundation to celebrate the completion of the Club's renovations and renaming of their Learning Center.



Ribbon Cutting Ceremony with the Arts Council for Monterey County

Arts4MC and the community celebrated the opening of a new ArtWorks location in Downtown Salinas. This collaborative space will allow local Artists to display their art on a rotating basis.



Alliance on Aging Mixer

Alliance on Aging hosted Chamber members, community partners, and elected officials. The highlight of the night was the announcement of the \$200,000 grant AOA was awarded to develop a local age-friendly plan with a focus on the Salinas Valley.

➡ **GRANT** – Continued from page 1

California's Encampment Resolution Funding (ERF) Program was authorized by the Governor and state legislature in 2021 and received additional funding in 2022. It is meant to "fund actionable, person-centered local proposals that resolve the experience of unsheltered homelessness for people residing in encampments" with a transition of individuals from encampments into "interim shelter with clear pathways to permanent housing or directly into permanent housing."

The funding is not meant for coercive or punitive government actions. Eligible programs are supposed to "prioritize the dignity, health and safety of people experiencing homelessness in the encampment."

Working in partnership with an organization called HomeFirst, an organization called Dignity Moves will use much of the \$8 million grant to build "interim supportive housing" consisting of 34 small pre-fabricated "Cubez" modular units, a navigation center, and other facilities in a "micro-village" on a parking lot rented from Westview Presbyterian Church in Watsonville. These units conform to emergency building codes for homeless facilities that are less onerous than typical building codes.

Dignity Moves argues that individual interim housing units are an important part of the effort to reduce homelessness. The organization points out that permanent housing for people without a home is expensive and takes years to win approval and build. In addition, many people living without a home - especially those who have experienced trauma - decline offers for placement in group "congregate" shelters because of fears about their personal safety and theft of their belongings.

The plan is controversial, as is typical with most proposals to establish housing options for people who live outside. Some Watsonville residents and elected officials worry that the presence of the micro-village and its residents could negatively impact City of Watsonville public services and bring crime and social disorder to neighborhoods near the church. ■

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