



Salinas Valley
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

BUSINESS JOURNAL



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in Everyday Life

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Latest Data Reveals Violent and Property Crime in Salinas has Risen Slightly After Years of Decline

By Kevin Dayton, Government Affairs Liaison

Since 2021, the Business Journal has annually published a table showing multi-year crime data trends for the City of Salinas, along with an article explaining the statistics in context. In turn, the Chamber encourages its members and the public to use this information when exercising their right to petition the city government regarding law enforcement and crime prevention programs.

Efficiency, transparency, and accountability related to crime data are important for the Chamber, as crime (or the perception of crime) can significantly affect the local and regional economy and the quality of life for the community. In addition, police expenditures (derived from our taxes) comprise about 40 percent of the city's annual Operating Budget.

Background on Recent Salinas Police Department Upgrades to Data Collection and Analysis

Reporting crime data that's accurate and timely is also a priority for the Salinas Police

Crime Data see page 7

New Housing for "Moderate Income" Residents Remains Elusive and Unlikely

By Kevin Dayton, Government Affairs Liaison

Readers of the Business Journal may have looked at the Monterey County Regional Housing Needs Allocations (RHNA) tables in the June issue. (See "Monterey County Jurisdictions are Assigned Goals for New Housing. What's Their Progress Toward Those Goals?") It's obvious that Monterey County cities and the county issue relatively few permits for "moderate-income" housing.

This is not a new phenomenon, but it is getting increased attention from government officials. Meanwhile, the City of Soledad just experienced a housing policy setback that shows why moderate-income housing doesn't get built.

What Is Moderate Income?

Based on state and federal laws, households are classified as "moderate income" if their income is 80 percent to 120 percent of area median



income for their household size. Area median income is the amount at which half of households are above and half are below.

(Median is different than mean — often referred to as "average" — which is calculated by adding up incomes for all households and then dividing the sum by the number of households.)

In Monterey County, for

2025, the Division of Housing Policy Development of the California Department of Housing and Community Development has calculated the annual median family income at \$104,500 for a family of four and \$73,150 for an individual, for the purposes of Regional Housing Needs Allocations (RHNA).

NEW HOUSING see page 5



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Philanthropy: A Key Element That Makes the Salinas Valley a Special Place to Live

By Leonard Batti, SVCC Board Chair

This coming Oct. 10, the Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce will proudly host the Legacy of Leadership Awards, honoring individuals and organizations that exemplify excellence, demonstrate profound community impact, and have made lasting contributions to our region. The Chamber believes it is vital to shine a spotlight on an aspect of our community that sets it apart from many others: a culture of giving that transforms lives, sometimes for generations.

This year's Legacy of Leadership event will feature four key awards:

Legacy Award: Honors an extraordinary leader whose enduring contributions have left an indelible mark on the Salinas Valley.

Public Servant of the Year Award: Recognizes an individual whose dedication, integrity, and service have made a profound and lasting impact on the community.

Young Professional of the Year Award: Celebrates an outstanding business leader between the ages of 21 and 40 who demonstrates professional excellence and a strong commitment to positive community change.

Nonprofit of the Year Award: Honors a nonprofit organization whose unwavering commitment and visionary service have made a meaningful difference in the Salinas Valley.

The Salinas Valley has long been known for its generosity, extending support to individuals and institutions far beyond what might



The Salinas Valley has long been known for its generosity, extending support to individuals and institutions far beyond what might be expected from a region of its size and economic demographics.

be expected from a region of its size and economic demographics. Salinas consistently leads the nation in fundraising for the American Cancer Society's Relay for Life events, a testament to the community's deep compassion and organizational drive.

While agriculture is the foundation of the region, non-agricultural businesses also play a vital role in supporting the philanthropic ecosystem. What's especially remarkable is the targeted support given to underserved communities, particularly in healthcare and education. Look no further than the names synonymous

with supporting local nonprofits like the Hartnell College Foundation, Natividad Foundation, Salinas Valley Health Foundation and its Wellness Center in Gonzales, the Foundation for CSUMB, Rancho Cielo, drug and alcohol rehabilitation centers, and many, many more.

Beyond financial contributions, these organizations and companies are shaping futures. Many offer scholarship programs for their employees and their families, opening doors to higher education that were once closed. This commitment to generational progress is seen not only in dollars raised but in lives changed, children becoming first-generation college graduates, families gaining access to critical health services, and neighborhoods revitalized by collaborative effort.

Valley businesses and their leadership are sometimes unfairly vilified and portrayed as indifferent to the needs of everyday people. Nothing could be further from the truth. When you consider the impact that local businesses have on our communities, and the countless lives that have been improved through their generosity and engagement, it becomes clear that our community cannot thrive without them.

At its core, the Salinas Valley's philanthropic spirit reflects a deep understanding: when one of us thrives, we all do. The Chamber is proud to celebrate this legacy and invites the entire community to join us in honoring those who lead with heart, vision, and a shared commitment to a better tomorrow. 🌱

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Not Much Gets Built for the Missing Middle

Conventional wisdom holds that residential developers tend to shun the construction of housing for “moderate-income” households. The federal and state government provides subsidies for construction of low or very-low income housing but generally does not provide financial assistance for moderate income construction. At the same time, moderate-income households generally do not have enough money to pay market rates for rental units or home ownership. They are stuck in the middle. Sometimes the absence of housing for moderate income households is referred to as “the Missing Middle.”

Missing Middle housing typically consists of relatively small single-family homes, duplexes, townhouses, and apartments with small units. Throughout Monterey County, you may see houses and apartment buildings built 100 years ago that fit this profile. Today, such housing often doesn’t achieve profit margins expected by homebuilders. Neighbors often object to such housing and try to use the government to stop it from getting built. Some people even argue that there isn’t genuine consumer demand in this era for such housing.

Recently, the City of Soledad provided a prime example of the difficulty in getting new housing built for moderate-income residents.

The City of Soledad Negotiates an Agreement for Moderate-Income Housing

Over the past 25 years, various developers have planned and built housing (and commercial and public buildings) in the 238-acre Miravale Partnership Hambey Property, which was annexed by the City of Soledad from the County of Monterey. It included what became the 136-acre Phase II of the Miravale Subdivision Project.

All Monterey County Jurisdictions Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) Progress Report 2015-2023 Housing Element (5th Cycle) - Final Moderate Income Housing (80-120% of Area Median Income)				
Cites + Unincorporated County	Goal for Units	Total Units for Cycle	Shortfall of Units	% of Units Achieved
CARMEL	6	0	6	0%
DEL REY OAKS	5	0	5	0%
GONZALES	53	0	53	0%
GREENFIELD	66	24	42	36%
KING CITY	33	6	27	18%
MARINA	239	147	92	62%
MONTEREY	119	2	117	2%
PACIFIC GROVE	21	18	3	86%
SALINAS	407	4	403	1%
SAND CITY	10	0	10	0%
SEASIDE	72	76	0	106%
SOLEDAD	35	0	35	0%
UNINCORPORATED COUNTY	282	35	247	12%
TOTAL	1,348	312	1,040	23%

All Monterey County Jurisdictions Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) Progress Report 2023-2031 Housing Element (6th Cycle) Through 2024 Moderate Income Housing (80-120% of Area Median Income)				
Cites + Unincorporated County	Goal for Units	Total Units for Cycle Through 2024	Shortfall of Units	% of Units Achieved
CARMEL	44	0	44	0%
DEL REY OAKS	24	2	22	8%
GONZALES	321	0	321	0%
GREENFIELD	184	41	143	22%
KING CITY	178	0	178	0%
MARINA	173	0	173	0%
MONTEREY	462	0	462	0%
PACIFIC GROVE	142	11	131	8%
SALINAS	1,692	0	1,692	0%
SAND CITY	49	0	49	0%
SEASIDE	156	0	156	0%
SOLEDAD	183	0	183	0%
UNINCORPORATED COUNTY	420	0	420	0%
TOTAL	4,028	54	3,974	1%

Much of the Phase II property is now developed, but there remains an undeveloped 8.55-acre parcel called the Santa Clara Subdivision (Parcel E) of Miravale Phase II(b). This is a parcel that the City of

Soledad designated in 2019 for some affordable housing. When the Soledad City Council approved 28 multi-family rental units and 104 single-family ownership units on this parcel (for a total of 132 housing

units), it also required the parcel owner to negotiate and enter into an Affordable Housing Agreement with the city.

The agreement was required to designate 29 percent of total units for low and very-low income households and 25 percent of total units for moderate-income residents, unless the developer and the city council mutually agreed on alternative terms. To fulfill that condition, the City of Soledad and the parcel owner negotiated and entered into an Affordable Housing Agreement in 2020 to build 52 affordable housing units (inclusionary housing), consisting of 14 low-income and 14 very-low-income deed-restricted rental units and — notably — 24 moderate-income ownership units (without deed restrictions).

The agreement also included “an incentive to the development of affordable housing” from the city to provide the parcel owner with an impact fee credit of \$280,000 (\$10,000 per low and very-low unit) to be applied to the low and very-low income affordable units.

Finally, the parcel owner agreed to the request of the City of Soledad to “establish a lottery preference program for existing Soledad residents and employees of the Soledad Unified School District.” The lottery program would reserve sales of the affordable units exclusively to Soledad residents and/or employees for at least five weeks.

Making Arrangements for Someone to Build the Moderate-Income Housing

The land remained vacant. In 2024, the parcel owner requested a first amendment to the Affordable Housing Agreement that would increase the number of low and very-low income affordable multi-family units in the project from 28 to 40. The city council agreed to this change, recognizing that the developer had established a partnership

with Eden Housing to build these units. Eden Housing is a California non-profit housing developer based in the San Francisco Bay Area.

By increasing the number of units and making other associated changes (such as a density bonus and increase of maximum building height), Eden Housing would attain eligibility for federal funding on the affordable housing project.

A year passed.

Abandoning the Moderate-Income Housing

In May 2025, the city council began discussion of a request from the parcel owner for a second amendment: an in-lieu plan, under which it would build one moderate-income unit with a 45-year deed restriction instead of building the other 23 moderate income units.

In lieu of the other 23 moderate income units, the parcel owner would pay the city \$460,000 in in-lieu fees (\$20,000 per unit) to pay for future affordable housing and dedicate a 15,950-square-foot parcel valued at \$218,000 for it. (The original offer from the parcel owner, presented at the May 21, 2025 Soledad City Council meeting, proposed in-lieu fees of \$300,000 in addition to the parcel.)

The May 21, 2025 staff report to the Soledad City Council stated that the parcel owner “has encountered difficulties securing a homebuilder for the 24 required moderate-income ownership units.” The June 4, 2025 staff report further recommended the amendment as “a practical alternative” and reported that “construction of the moderate-income units has faced significant challenges.”

At the June 4 meeting, city staff made the following comments to the city council:

- The city’s housing programs are useless if no homes are built in the first place.
- Look at the totality of the deal,

not just the loss of the moderate-income housing.

- The proposed in-lieu amount is in range with other jurisdictions. In Soledad there a smaller differential between market rate and affordable rate than other places.
- Developer negotiations are proprietary information, so the city can’t report on what the parcel owner did in pursuit of moderate-income housing.
- The 24 moderate-income units are not deed restricted and do not have a resale restriction. Someone could sell a moderate-income unit, and then staff would have to subtract the unit from the city’s Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) progress report for moderate-income housing. At the end of the day, 24 units might end up as 18 units. Some buyers will surely flip them.

A representative of the parcel owner said it took out a bank loan on the parcel before the 2024 first amendment (to the 2019 agreement), and the bank won’t release the parcel until the loan is repaid. Therefore, the parcel owner cannot transfer ownership of the affordable housing land to Eden Housing until its loan is repaid. In the meantime, the parcel owner has identified homebuilders willing to pay off the loan and then begin utility installation and other horizontal construction. If the city council amends the agreement and substitutes the requirement to build moderate-income units with in-lieu fees and the small parcel, the parcel owner will be able to pay off the bank loan and then give the land to Eden Housing.

A representative of Eden Housing asked the city council to approve the second amendment, reporting

that Eden Housing was making progress on obtaining financing for the 40 low-income units. If Eden Housing gets the funding, it has 180 days to close on a construction loan, but it can’t proceed with that until the underlying deed is released by the parcel owner.

The Moderate-Income Housing: Gone

In the end, the Soledad City Council voted 3-2 for the amendment sought by the parcel owner, with direction to increase the in-lieu fees to \$25,000 per unit. While expressing misgivings, the majority of city councilmembers felt the amendment had to be accepted. The low-income and very-low-income housing was at risk.

While recognizing the city was compelled to accept the amendment in order to save the low-income and very-low-income housing, the mayor and one other city councilmember asked for more time to consider options. In the end, they chose to vote against the amendment. Among many arguments, the mayor pointed out that the City of Soledad has been trying to provide moderate-income housing to local residents, despite the difficulties getting it built.

The mayor noted that the city has coordinated for years with the Soledad Unified School District to build moderate-income workforce housing. (See the November 2024 Business Journal article “Partnerships in the City of Soledad Between the City and School District.”) The City of Soledad bought a house for moderate-income workforce housing. The Affordable Housing Agreement was another example of the city’s commitment to increasing the supply of

moderate-income housing.

The City of Soledad Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) progress reports over the years have been poor for moderate-income housing. Meanwhile, people from Salinas, Seaside, Marina, and even San Jose, are buying the city’s new market rate housing. Now an opportunity to build some moderate-income housing — and give Soledad residents five weeks first priority to buy them — is gone. Will the third proposed amendment be the elimination of the requirement to give Soledad residents first priority for housing purchases?

What Can Be Done to Spur Construction of Moderate-Income Housing?

This was an explicit, unambiguous example of a local government being forced to abandon a sincere, proven commitment to increasing the supply of moderate-income housing. It is a documented example of why “the system” fails to bring moderate-income housing to the market.

It may be useful for the entire state if the City of Soledad compiled an outline of the specific steps taken by the developer (in coordination with the city, where relevant) to arrange for moderate-income housing construction to fulfill its commitment, along with an analysis of why these arrangements did not happen.

The City of Soledad may have an opportunity to serve as an example for the California State Legislature and California Department of Housing and Community Development as they consider state policy changes that could result in more construction of moderate-income housing. 🌱

Number of Persons in Household:		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Monterey County Area Median Income: \$104,500	Acutely Low	11000	12550	14150	15700	16950	18200	19450	20700
	Extremely Low	30400	34750	39100	43400	46900	50350	53850	57300
	Very Low Income	50600	57850	65100	72300	78100	83850	89650	95450
	Low Income	81000	92600	104150	115700	125000	134250	143500	152750
	Median Income	73150	83600	94050	104500	112850	121200	129600	137950
	Moderate Income	87800	100300	112850	125400	135450	145450	155500	165550

Department (SPD). The SPD has proven this over the five past years with its assistance to Chamber staff in clarifying information and ensuring the annual crime tables published in the Business Journal are based on the most updated data. For a variety of reasons, crime numbers in the SPD records management system typically adjust slightly over time.

For 2025, the Salinas Police Department has initiated a project to improve their processes for data collection and validation. This will allow the public to regularly obtain the latest, most accurate reports on crime statistics.

In addition, the Salinas Police Department has overhauled its data systems in the past few years, first in 2022 with the replacement of its 30-year-old Records Management System (RMS) with a new system (Mark43) and then in 2023 with the purchase of a new data analytics system (Peregrine).

Anyone who has endured a major corporate systems change knows the frustrating experience of mastering a completely new set of systems, and SPD staff has been tested and challenged, especially as they’ve integrated the new records system with the new analytics system. To complicate matters, SPD does not have someone on staff dedicated to compiling data

and analyzing it — this responsibility is divided among six people. SPD recognizes the shortcomings of this arrangement and has plans to change it.

Checking the Crime Data Yourself

In the meantime, the public can obtain generally reliable cumulative data for each year through the website “Salinas Police Department: Statistics” at <https://salinaspd.org/statistics/>. The Salinas Police Department collects and compiles crime data through the National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS), established for the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program of the Federal Bureau of Investigation in the U.S. Department of Justice. Eight types of crimes are tracked:

- Four types of violent crimes: murder and non-negligent manslaughter, rape, robbery, and aggravated assault
- Four types of property crimes: burglary, larceny-theft, motor vehicle theft, and arson

Findings from 2024 City of Salinas Crime Data

For 2024, the numbers of crimes reported in the city remain significantly lower than in the mid-2010s. The murder rate remains historically low.

As usual, the Chamber asks you to share this crime trend information with other people — especially

people who say they avoid Salinas based on memories of news stories they saw ten years ago. Crime is not “out of control” as some people claim. In fact, compared to the record of some other California cities, Salinas is doing well. There is reason for the community to be proud of its collective efforts.

Focusing on year-to-year change, a slight increase in crime over 2023 is evident. Arson is at the highest level in 11 years. Salinas Police Department spokespeople have said that some of these fires are often the result of people without shelter trying to stay warm. Also, SPD states that it ultimately arrested one individual who was associated with several of the 2024 arson incidents.

Statistics need to be considered in context. Note that voter approval in 2014 of Proposition 47 reclassified various offenses from felonies to misdemeanors, so comparisons of crime rates before 2015 to crime rates for 2015 and years thereafter need to account for this change. Likewise, future comparisons of crime rates from 2015-2024 to crime rates for 2025 and years thereafter will need to account for voter approval in 2024 of Proposition 36, which reclassified some of those misdemeanors back to felonies.

Idea #1 for the City Council: Focus on Data Management and

Analysis

Difficulties experienced at times by Salinas Police Department staff with their new data systems have affected the ability of the Salinas City Council to evaluate programs and projects. For example, a December 2024 staff report to the city council concerning renewal of the city’s \$490,000 annual subscription for its ShotSpotter system noted that the SPD could not provide an updated data analysis related to ShotSpotter alerts and corresponding calls for service. It stated that the Police Department has been “challenged due to data system changes, including the implementation of a new Records Management System (RMS) within the last few years.”

Anecdotal evidence provided at the city council meeting seemed to confirm the value of ShotSpotter, but the city council and the public would have received additional assurance after review of a data analysis showing if the city’s implementation of ShotSpotter in 2016 has contributed to the significant decline in crime over the past ten years. (Your Chamber surmises that it has made a difference.)

Your Chamber would likely support specific proposals that ensure the Salinas Police Department has the resources necessary to maximize the potential of its

Crime Data see page 29

Annual Crimes in City of Salinas 2015-2024 with Population and Police Budget Trends

	Murders (includes Negligent Manslaughter)	Forcible Rape	Arson	Robberies	Buglaries	Aggravated Assault	Larcenies- Theft	Motor Vehicle Theft	"Part 1" Crimes	Total Including Non- Aggravated Assault	Population at Start of Year	Percentage Change for Population	Adopted Police Department Budget	Amended Police Department Budget	Percentage Change for Police Department Budget
2015	40	72	19	369	679	613	1,534	1,932	6,346	7,430	158,116	N/A	\$44,548,900	\$45,024,381	N/A
2016	36	84	11	325	695	559	2,484	1,563	5,759	6,835	160,220	1.33%	\$45,694,745	\$45,424,345	1.49%
2017	29	69	24	358	964	564	2,589	1,242	5,841	6,933	161,079	0.54%	\$50,091,227	\$49,636,278	10.27%
2018	19	99	31	321	897	541	2,180	1,227	5,316	6,547	161,295	0.13%	\$51,247,420	\$51,790,726	3.25%
2019	8	65	25	241	742	467	1,709	1,081	4,340	5,576	162,008	0.44%	\$52,247,657	\$52,997,357	0.88%
2020	8	68	33	233	790	556	1,779	912	4,380	5,470	161,776	-0.14%	\$52,694,683	\$53,248,983	-0.57%
2021	16	70	30	235	694	563	1,820	732	4,160	5,291	161,835	0.04%	\$53,028,645	\$53,028,645	-0.41%
2022	13	62	42	222	328	461	1,665	683	3,476	4,288	160,587	-0.77%	\$57,452,491	\$57,882,491	8.34%
2023	10	42	21	234	232	468	1,202	505	1,668	3,607	160,870	0.18%	\$60,085,120	\$60,085,120	3.81%
2024	10	63	44	229	240	525	1,899	594	1,945	4,678	162,037	0.73%	\$60,489,450	\$60,489,450	0.67%

Goodwill Central Coast Launches ‘Summer of Support’ to Help Fuel Job Opportunities Through Community Donations

By Goodwill Central Coast Staff

Summer is a time of renewal and adventure, but for many in our community, it can also be a time of uncertainty. Youth looking for their first job, parents needing seasonal employment, and individuals transitioning back into the workforce often face obstacles that can feel overwhelming.

As temperatures rise and families enjoy beach days and barbecues, Goodwill Central Coast reminds the community that summer is also the perfect time to give back. This July, the nonprofit is spearheading its annual “Summer of Support” campaign, encouraging Central Coast residents to donate gently used summer items to help create life-changing opportunities for individuals facing barriers to employment.

Your donations make a real difference. Just one box of summer clothing or gear can help:

- Prepare someone applying for their first job.
- Supply training materials for job seekers.
- Fund career workshops that empower individuals to take their next step.

From flip-flops and sundresses to picnic gear and sunglasses, donations to Goodwill Central Coast go far beyond secondhand shopping. The organization transforms these contributions into critical funding for local job training programs, paid work experience, and support services such as resume workshops and career counseling.

“Every donation has a ripple effect,” said VP of Retail & E-Commerce Alan Martinson. “When someone donates a box of summer clothing or camping gear, that simple act fuels a much bigger mission — helping people in our community build skills, gain

employment, and change their lives.”

Proceeds from donated goods sold in Goodwill’s retail stores directly support individuals overcoming challenges such as homelessness, disabilities, or lack of access to technology and training. As students prepare to return to school and job seekers look for new opportunities, the need for these services is especially critical.

Fueled by the community, powered by success

As a social enterprise, the heart of GCC’s funding comes from its 16 thrift stores and outlets. Through donations and shopping, GCC has seen marked growth and community impact. Among the 152 Goodwills worldwide, it ranks No. 6 in donations per household and No. 4 in sales per household — a testament to the strength and generosity of its communities.

In 2024, GCC significantly expanded the reach of its Opportunity Platform, a groundbreaking program that connects participants with a Resource Specialist to create a personal plan for success. This includes career training, education, financial guidance, and help with budgeting, credit management, housing, and more. GCC even offers one-time assistance with practical challenges such as opening a bank account, navigating public assistance, and dealing with medical bills or identity theft. Last year alone, GCC supported 4,388 people through this program — up nearly 50 percent from the year before.

Why summer donations matter

Donated items can provide real solutions. A pair of donated sandals may prepare someone to take their first step toward a new job. A set of linens or home goods might help someone transitioning into stable

housing. Proceeds from sales can fund training that leads to long-term employment.

Donations also help GCC provide:

- Job readiness training for individuals overcoming challenges such as homelessness, disabilities, or lack of job training and access to the internet.
- Paid work experience through our stores and programs, so people can build skills and confidence.
- Support services that address transportation, housing, child-care, and other barriers to steady employment.

What to donate

Goodwill Central Coast encourages donors to look through their closets, garages, and storage spaces for items they no longer use. Requested summer donations include:

- Light clothing like T-shirts, shorts, sundresses, and swimsuits
- Sun hats, sunglasses, and other beach accessories
- Flip-flops, sandals, and summer footwear
- Picnic and camping gear
- Lightweight linens and home décor
- Outdoor sports equipment

Not only do these items help reduce waste and promote eco-conscious living, but they also serve as vital resources in Goodwill’s mission to empower individuals through the power of work.



Building stronger communities

By donating during the Summer of Support, residents of the Central Coast are contributing to a brighter future — one where everyone has the opportunity to succeed, regardless of their past or circumstances.

“Whether you’re clearing out your closet or teaching your kids about giving back, now is the perfect time to make a difference,” said Martinson. “Together, we can turn sunglasses into second chances and swimsuits into success stories.”

While the Summer of Support identifies opportunities to help right now, the need for donations at Goodwill Central Coast exists year-round. Community members are always seeking jobs, skills, stability — and every donated item helps fund those pathways to success.

To find your nearest donation center and learn more about Goodwill Central Coast’s impact across Monterey, Santa Cruz and San Luis Obispo counties, visit www.ccgoodwill.org. 🌱

A Summer Invitation

By Pastor T.K. Anderson, Compass Church

What an incredible start to the summer we've experienced together! On behalf of all of us at Compass Church, I want to say thank you to the thousands of individuals and families who joined us at this year's Celebrate America event at the Salinas Rodeo Grounds. It was nothing short of amazing, patriotic, inspiring, family-filled, and a lot of fun.

From the dazzling fireworks and carnival rides to the emotional sky-diving flag ceremony and tribute to our veterans and active-duty service members, this day was unforgettable. We are deeply grateful for the generous support of our community and business sponsors, you helped make this free event possible for our entire region.

As we step into July, the pace of life begins to shift. School is out, vacations are in full swing, and the sun seems to linger just a little longer. This is the time of year when we're invited to do something incredibly important — recharge, relax, and refuel. And while rest may feel like a luxury in our fast-paced culture, it is actually part of God's design for a healthy, thriving life.

Even Jesus modeled this for us. Scripture records that Jesus withdrew to quiet places at least nine different times during His earthly ministry. In Luke 5:16, we read, "But Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed." He understood the power of stepping away from the noise to refocus and reconnect with His Father. After feeding the 5,000, He sent the crowds away



and "went up on a mountainside by himself to pray" (Matthew 14:23). These weren't just moments of pause, they were moments of purpose.

Vacationing with your family, enjoying a slow morning with coffee, taking a walk along the coast, or sitting in the quiet of your backyard, these are more than just downtime. They are sacred opportunities for your soul to catch up with your body. In those moments of stillness, you may find clarity, renewed energy, or even a deeper sense of God's direction for your life.

There's great wisdom in the words of author and theologian Dallas Willard who said, "You must ruthlessly eliminate hurry from your life. Hurry is the great enemy of spiritual life in our day." Our culture glorifies busyness, but God invites us to be still (Psalm 46:10). He calls us to rest, not as a sign of weakness, but as a rhythm of strength and dependence on Him.

This July, I encourage you not to just fill your calendar. Fill your heart. Make space for the people you love. Step away from the screens. Go outside. Seek God in the quiet. His voice is often clearest when everything else is turned down.

We love you, Salinas and Monterey County. We are here for you, cheering you on, and praying that this summer will be a time when your soul finds rest, your family finds joy, and your heart finds direction. 🌿

With gratitude and grace,
Pastor T.K. Anderson

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MEMBER NEWS



Natividad Awarded Top Quality Improvement Honor by America's Essential Hospitals

America's Essential Hospitals recognized Natividad Medical Center for its work decreasing anemia and transfusion rates in pregnant patients. America's Essential Hospitals awarded Natividad Medical Center a 2025 Gage Award for quality improvement at a June 12 luncheon at VITAL2025 in Atlanta. "We are deeply honored to receive the Gage Award for our 'Hospital-Led Outreach to Reduce Anemia at Time of Delivery' project," said Chad Harris, MD, CEO, Natividad Medical Center. "This recognition reflects our commitment to improving maternal health outcomes, particularly for our Latina and Indigenous communities. Together with our dedicated team and community partners, we are proud to bring accessible, high-quality care to our patients. We hope this program serves as a model of care for other health care systems." Natividad Medical Center noticed that transfusion rates began to increase rapidly in 2021, especially among Latino and native indigenous communities from Mexico served by the hospital. Recognizing that undergoing multiple rounds of infusions posed a barrier to treatment for patients, hospital leaders secured Medicaid coverage for single-infusion therapy courses. Natividad's obstetrics leadership team taught medical staff at eight community clinics about the negative effect of anemia, how to monitor patients' hemoglobin and iron stores, and best practices in treating iron deficiency, which often involves up to eight rounds of iron infusions. From 2021 to 2024, the anemia rate at participating clinics fell from 18.4 percent to 11.7 percent. "Our members reach outside their walls to meet patients where they are and provide superior, person-centered care," said Bruce Siegel, MD, MPH, president and CEO of America's Essential Hospitals. "These awards spotlight innovative solutions that reflect their commitment to their mission."



Natividad Hosts Sixth Annual Innovation, Patient Safety & Quality Improvement Showcase

Natividad hosted its sixth annual Innovation, Patient Safety & Quality Improvement Showcase on Thursday, June 5, bringing together clinical leaders, family medicine residents and interdisciplinary teams to present innovative quality improvement projects focused on advancing patient safety, eliminating health care disparities and elevating health equity throughout the region. Co-sponsored by the Natividad Patient Safety and Quality Improvement Committee and the Natividad Family Medicine Residency Program, the event featured narrated poster presentations judged on measurable impact, interdisciplinary collaboration and potential to improve patient care. The event took place at Natividad's Nora Dowd Community Courtyard and lobby. Dr. Julianne Dean, Chair of the Patient Safety & Quality Committee, opened the event with remarks on the critical role of quality initiatives in fostering a culture of safety. She was joined by Natividad CEO Dr. Chad Harris, who underscored the organization's mission of safety, quality and health equity. Additional speakers included Dr. Craig Walls, Chief Medical Officer, and Tammy Perez, RN, Director of Quality. "Quality improvement is not only central to excellent patient care — it is a cornerstone of the education we provide to the next generation of clinicians," said Dr. Melissa Nothnagle, Residency Director and Chief of Family Medicine at Natividad.

The showcase featured more than a dozen poster presentations, including:

- A Diabetes Needs Assessment at Laurel Family Practice – Conducted by a resident team serving Spanish-speaking farmworkers in Salinas including Vivian Garcia, MD, Maria Ruiz-Ruelas, FNP, MPH, Bao Ly, DO, Meghan Zander, MD, Marie Schilling, MD, Marissa Scott, MD, Celene Serrato Flamenco, MD, Diana Ornelas, MD, Jacob Ongaro, DO, Jasmine Morante, MD, Stephanie Morales, MD, Alexandra Arnold, MD, Ginger Tissier, MD, Mina Khodabandeh, MD, Annika Kreye, MD, Susan Park, MD,
- Natividad-Led Clinic Outreach to Reduce Anemia at Time of Delivery, Peter Chandler, MD, MPH, Alex Gonzalez, RN, Caroline Kennedy, MD, Alicia Ventura, MD, Victoria Zentner, RN, Bob Peng, MD, Brittany Lore, DO, Hillary Fish, Anthony Leal
- Every Drop Counts: Motivating & Optimizing Maternal Milk in Natividad (MOMMS), Dr. Martha Douglas-Escobar, Monica Nguyen, RN, Carolyn Fisher, RN, Donna Tremientozi, RN, Naomi Amaro, Stephanie Snell, RN, Diane Atsatt, Karen Fiala, CNM, MSN, RN, Kate Hartnett, RN, Lisa Preimesberger, RN

The afternoon concluded with an awards ceremony recognizing top poster presentations for their contributions to clinical innovation and measurable patient impact.

The annual showcase reinforces Natividad's role as a regional leader in health care quality and its dedication to training healthcare professionals in real-world improvement science that drives better outcomes for all patients.

#LiveForRoss Fund Donates Safety Gear to Several Vocational Highs

The #LiveForRoss Fund presented awards to three welding classes at Mission Trails ROP, based on students' exceptional performance and dedication. Student graduates from five Salinas Union High School District schools were presented awards. The #LiveForRoss Fund is a cause dedicated to promoting safety awareness and vocational education. Presenting awards were instructor Marc K., who has been instrumental in the success of the program, Tom Lamar, Patty Lamar, Riley Pettit, Rosemary Tarp, and Brad Tarp Sr., who have also played key roles in the program. With these 16 – \$500 awards/certificates redeemable at Barnes Welding Supply in Salinas, The Fund is investing in the future of local students, which wouldn't have been possible without the generous support of the community.



Noland, Hamerly, Etienne & Hoss Welcomes Attorney Sierra Rhodes

Attorney Sierra Rhodes joins NHEH's Trusts & Estates practice group with a focus on estate planning, probate and trust administration, and litigation. Rhodes has a J.D. from the University of Arizona James E. Rogers College of Law and a B.A. from California State University, Monterey Bay.

After law school, Rhodes practiced law in Arizona before returning to the Central Coast, where she grew up in both Half Moon Bay and Santa Cruz. During college, she worked with Legal Services for Seniors in Seaside as an intern and a legal advocate. Rhodes is based in NHEH's Salinas office.



Noland, Hamerly, Etienne & Hoss Announces Jennifer Villasin as Controller

Jennifer Villasin has been in accounting for 27 years and worked in various industries, such as healthcare, nonprofit, public accounting, agriculture, and now legal. As Controller, she oversees NHEH's accounting department, partnering daily with management and staff for all accounting needs.

Villasin is a first-generation immigrant whose family migrated from the Philippines in the 1990's. After graduating from Northeastern Illinois University in Chicago, she returned to Salinas to raise her family.



Bay Federal Credit Union Invests in the Future by Awarding \$4,500 in Local Scholarships

Bay Federal Credit Union announced the winners of its 2025 Education Scholarship: James Parker, Laura Hodges, and Spike Sorensen. Each student will receive a \$1,500 scholarship to support their educational journey. Over the years, Bay Federal has awarded more than \$94,000 in scholarships to help local students thrive in higher education. "Every year, our scholarship recipients inspire us with their drive and commitment to building a brighter future," said Carrie Birkhofer, Bay Federal's President and CEO. "We're honored to support these incredible individuals as they take the next step in their academic and professional goals." This year's applicants were asked to share their thoughts on how technology impacts financial literacy and money management among their generation. They were also asked to suggest improvements to educational resources that would make them more accessible and effective for young adults and their broader communities.

2025 Bay Federal Credit Union Education Scholarship recipients:

- James Parker, a sociology major at Cabrillo College, who plans to transfer in the fall of 2026.
- Laura Hodges, who will pursue a bachelor's-to-doctorate program in occupational science and therapy at the University of Southern California this fall.
- Spike Sorensen, who will pursue a bachelor of science in computer science degree at Simon Fraser University in British Columbia, Canada, this fall.



MONTAGE
Health

New Neurosurgical Procedures Come to Monterey County

A patient arrived at the Emergency department of Community Hospital of the Monterey Peninsula with classic stroke symptoms: paralysis on one side of their body and difficulty speaking. A CT scan pinpointed the trouble spot — a blood clot that had lodged in one of the arteries in their head, cutting off the flow of blood and oxygen to their brain. Until recently, the patient might have been transferred to a Bay Area medical center to remove the clot, with each passing minute killing 1.9 million brain cells. But on this day, a clot-removing procedure called mechanical thrombectomy was newly available at Community Hospital. A team led by neurosurgeon Dr. Tyler Cole quickly assembled in one of the hospital's hybrid operating rooms and, in 34 minutes, removed the clot. Quick action and expert response led to an ideal outcome, with the patient having minimal lasting impacts from the stroke. A thrombectomy is a minimally invasive stroke treatment used to remove a blood clot that's blocking an artery in the brain. A thin, flexible tube called a catheter is inserted in the blood vessel through a small incision and guided to the brain. This allows the doctor to retrieve the clot, restoring blood flow and significantly reducing the risk of long-term brain damage. This advanced, specialized procedure is part of Montage Health's growing neurosurgery program in collaboration with University of California, San Francisco (UCSF), made possible by a significant philanthropic gift from David and Joan O'Reilly through Montage Health Foundation. Previously, 40–50 patients per year were transferred out of Monterey County for neurosurgical procedures that are now available at Community Hospital thanks to the new UCSF partnership.



Support our Chamber Members

Thank you, to our June & July 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
KSBW 8 (NBC) · Central Coast ABC · Estrella TV Central Coast	1970 <i>*55 Years*</i>	Salinas City Elementary School District	2008
California International Airshow	1982	Windsor Skyline Care Center	2009
CLA CliftonLarsonAllen LLP Salinas	1982	Bay and Basin Insurance Agency	<i>*15 Years*</i> 2010
Noland, Hamerly, Etienne & Hoss - Salinas	1983	Monterey County Sheriff's Advisory Council	2011
Salinas Valley Health	1984	Girls Inc of the Central Coast	2012
Central Valley Seeds Inc	1986	Greenfield Village, LLC	2014
Natividad Foundation	1993	McWherter's Jewelers & Gemologist LLC	2014
Taylor Farms California, Inc	1997	Lowell Farms	<i>*10 years*</i> 2015
Monterey County Business Council	1997	California Strawberry Commission	<i>*10 years*</i> 2015
Costco Wholesale Corp	1999	Holaday Seed Company	<i>*10 Years*</i> 2015
iHeartMedia - KDON-KPRC-KOCN-KTOM-KION	1999	MommieRazzi Photography	<i>*10 Years*</i> 2015
Monterey Credit Union - Monterey	<i>*25 Years*</i> 2000	Chukchansi Gold Resort and Casino	2016
Interim Inc	2002	Door to Hope	2016
AquaBlue Skin & Body Spa Inc	2003	Earth Systems Pacific	2017
Naturipe Berry Growers	2003	Grupo Flor/East of Eden	2017
DataFlow Business Systems	2006	LC1 Productions	2017
Ag Land Trust	2008	HUB International Insurance Services	2018
		Portola Hotel & Spa	2018

A Special Thanks to Our Visionary and Stakeholder Members





Support our Chamber Members

Thank you, to our June & July 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
IMPOWER Inc	2018	Wald, Ruhnke & Dost Architects	2022
Ocean Mist Farms	2018	Agriculture and Land-Based Training Association	2023
El Pajaro Community Development Corporation	2019	Arbon Equipment Corporation	2023
Wingstop-S. Main	2019	Benitez Security Services, Inc.	2023
Aldina Real Estate	2019	CAL Property Management	2023
Balance Physical Therapy & Human Performance Centers	2019	Jay Nolan Community Services	2023
Planet Fitness	2019	GreenBay Janitorial Services	2023
Salinas Union High School District	2019	HVAC Filters, Inc.	2023
StoneBridge Home Inc	2019	MPWMD	2023
West Coast Community Bank	2019	Paper Tacos®	2023
Mag One Media	2021	Silva Injury Law, Inc.	2023
Monterey County for Energy Independence	2021	Remedy Spa	2024
Wonder Wood Ranch	2021	Youth on Course	2024
Empire Home Loans, Inc	2021	Comerica Bank	2024
Looking for Space	2021	Digital NEST	2024
Swenson Builders	2021	Elevo Learning	2024
Carmel Realty Company	2022		
Universal Staffing Inc.	2022		
201 Complex	2022		
JPMorgan Chase & Co	2022		
Monterey Touring Vehicles; Classic Car Rentals & Experiences	2022		

A Special Thanks to Our Visionary and Stakeholder Members





What's Your Chamber's Government Relations Committee Talking About This Month?

JULY 2025

By Kevin Dayton, Government Affairs Liaison

Your Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce Government Relations Committee had 20 members at its meeting on Wednesday, June 11, as it continues to pursue your Chamber's official vision of "a thriving, welcoming Salinas Valley where people, families and businesses succeed via economic growth and opportunity." Here's what they discussed:

1 There was an unusually high response from Chamber members and the community to the cover story in the June 2025 Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce Business Journal about City of Salinas industrial wastewater ("The Biggest Local Issue You Don't Know About — Salinas Industrial Wastewater"). This article includes a compilation table of annual flow data from 2013 through 2024 and a list of short-term industrial wastewater diversion agreements. This information has apparently never been compiled before for the public.

Reader responses can be classified into three categories: (1) people who didn't know the city's industrial wastewater system existed and were surprised to learn about it; (2) people who knew there was a city industrial wastewater system but had never seen an explanation of how it actually worked; and (3) local experts on the regional water system who were pleased that the Chamber explained it to the public and recommended more public review of it.

Councilmember José Luis Barajas has asked for a study session on City of Salinas water and wastewater issues. Your Chamber has been asking for a study session on this topic for a few years.

The Government Affairs Liaison noted that the City of Salinas is actually a primary water supplier for the region, but people don't know it. For example, it was noteworthy that the City

of Salinas was not a participant in the Monterey County Board of Supervisors water forums in 2022, which were meant to "provide an overview of current efforts regarding water management and sustainability" and "initiate a comprehensive discussion on regional water supplies and solutions in northern Monterey County."

Meanwhile, Chamber leaders and staff are continuing to focus attention on the final destinations and final charges to the City of Salinas for industrial wastewater that was diverted to the Monterey One Water Regional Treatment Plant under recent formal agreements and other arrangements.

2 With the final repeal by the Salinas City Council of the 2023 rental registration ordinance and the three 2024 rent stabilization/tenant protection ordinances, the Chamber is working to better inform landlords and tenants about their rights and responsibilities. Public comments on the rental ordinances suggested that some speakers were simply having difficulty resolving specific issues with their landlords. The Chamber website now has a link to a simple four-page publication entitled "Know Your Rights! Know Your Resources!"

MBEP (Monterey Bay Economic Partnership) is planning a regional Housing Summit at the National Steinbeck Center in downtown Salinas on Thursday, Aug. 14. This may be an opportunity for the Chamber, the City of Salinas, and other interested parties to discuss and consider policies that could help increase the supply of housing for ordinary households in the region, particularly in Salinas.

3 An official with the City of Salinas confirmed the claim of Amazon officials that the company paid a significant amount (reportedly over \$11 million) to the city for the purpose of traffic



impact mitigation. The payment is being handled properly, according to law.

4 The City of Salinas Measure G Oversight Committee has obtained records from the City of Salinas Finance Department for evaluation and development of a report.

No one at the Government Relations Committee meeting was aware of any efforts to develop a campaign committee or begin preparing arguments for the public about the need to renew the Measure G sales tax before it expires in 2030. Your Chamber sent a letter to the Salinas City Council in July 2024 asking the city to take several steps to ensure business and public support for renewal of the sales tax. If voters don't renew the tax, it would be a significant fiscal blow to the city.

5 As requested by the Government Relations Committee, the Government Affairs Liaison has prepared a preliminary list for Committee review entitled "Ideas for Chamber Proposal to Increase Housing Supply and Protect Renters from Abuse and Exploitation." This would be a

a pro-active, specific legislative package to serve as a more effective policy direction in the City of Salinas than the now-repealed rent stabilization and tenant protection ordinances.

The Committee directed the Government Affairs Liaison to select and add a few additional policies enacted at other local governments that address abuses in the rental market but avoid excessive regulation that reduces market availability of rental units. This expanded list will be distributed to the Government Relations Committee as a Word document for comments and changes, with possible future review by an ad hoc committee.

A Committee member stated that the Measure G renewal measure could perhaps direct a portion of that sales tax revenue to a housing trust fund. This fund would help assure non-profit housing developers of enough financial assistance for affordable housing projects to risk proceeding with planning and pre-construction. This idea will be added to the list for discussion and consideration.

6 As requested by the Government Relations Committee (and clarified by the Executive Committee), the Government Affairs Liaison has prepared a preliminary list for Committee review of water and wastewater goals that could be incorporated into a revised Economic Development Element of the City of Salinas General Plan. Because of the technical nature of this list, the Government Relations Committee referred the list back to the Executive Committee for informed review.

7 Government Relations Committee members discussed their concerns about long-term projections for balancing the budgets of the City of Salinas and the County of Monterey. There are various accounting strategies being used to achieve balanced budgets, but these strategies are not sustainable, especially when unfunded pension liability is taken into account. Committee members discussed a comprehensive independent examination of the city and county budgets to identify which budget items could be eliminated, reduced, or slowed in increases.

The Government Affairs Liaison observed that “there is nothing in a government budget that no one wants” and warned that a rigorous, objective evaluation of these budgets based on standard principles would likely identify programs and projects for elimination that the business community and Chamber members consider to be important and worthy of taxpayer funding.

The Government Relations Committee recommended to the Board of Directors that it consider adopting a formal, official “statement of values” reflecting “efficiency through structure” that the City of Salinas should follow when developing its annual budgets. If this statement of values becomes useful, the Chamber can then develop one for the County of Monterey. Staff will develop a list of proposed principles. 🌱



Get Involved!

For 73 years, the Children's Shopping Tour has been a cherished event where children in need are paired with volunteers for a day of shopping. We need dedicated volunteers and donations to support this tradition on Saturday, December 13.



Learn more!

Salinaschamber.com



A PROFILE IN LEADERSHIP

New Supervisor Kate Daniels Brings Dynamic Leadership and Boundless Energy

By Colleen Bailey, SVCC CEO

Although Supervisor Kate Daniels is new to her current position, she brings with her a wealth of leadership experience and a deep understanding of the key issues presently facing the Board of Supervisors. Known for her boundless energy and exceptional communication skills, Daniels has been a natural leader from an early age — evidenced by her election as Senior Class President at Carmel High School.

Her commitment to public service has only grown since then. Daniels has played an active role in addressing county-wide challenges through her tenure on the County Planning Commission and her work alongside Supervisor Mary Adams and, more recently, State Sen. John Laird. These experiences have provided her with a nuanced understanding of budgeting and legislative procedures and have also helped her cultivate enduring relationships with a diverse and effective coalition of public officials at the local, state, and federal levels. This coalition remains a vital resource today.

One of her longstanding personal and professional connections is with former Salinas Mayor Kimbley Craig, who has been a friend since their days at Carmel High School. Craig now serves as Daniels' Chief of Staff. Craig's insights into the Salinas community further strengthen Daniels' ability to address regional concerns effectively.

Supervisor Daniels is well-versed in the county's most pressing issues. When asked to identify her



Supervisor Kate Daniels

top three priorities, she highlighted water and housing as equally critical — though she emphasized that water must come first, as expanding housing is contingent upon securing adequate water resources. Her third priority is economic development. Daniels is advocating for a strategic approach to job creation that includes training residents for higher wage careers of the future. She envisions expanding workforce development efforts that leverage existing partnerships with institutions such as Monterey Peninsula College (MPC), Hartnell College, and California State University Monterey

Bay (CSUMB) that include sustainable hospitality and construction. In doing so, she believes “we can keep our community whole” and simultaneously reduce commuting and contribute to climate change mitigation.

Daniels is also candid about the challenges ahead. She acknowledges the significant impact of recent federal budget cuts, which are expected to affect approximately 12–13 percent of the county's budget. Her greater concern, however, lies in the potential loss of federal funding that supports non-profit organizations, public schools, and

Daniels is encouraged by the current composition of the Board of Supervisors, which she describes as a group of visionary leaders prepared to engage in challenging conversations and take bold steps for the long-term well-being of the community.

critical social services. She is particularly troubled by anticipated cuts to Medicaid, which could severely affect children, seniors, and individuals with disabilities. The human impact of these cuts is felt deeply by Daniels, who recounted a recent encounter with a retiring federal employee who accepted a buyout due to impending staff reductions — a poignant reminder of how policy decisions resonate on an individual level.

Despite these obstacles, Daniels remains optimistic. She is encouraged by the current composition of the Board of Supervisors, which she describes as a group of visionary leaders prepared to engage in challenging conversations and take bold steps for the long-term well-being of the community.

As our meeting concluded, Supervisor Daniels dashed off to another engagement at the City of Monterey, pausing only briefly to listen to constituents eager to speak with her. With characteristic energy and determination, she headed to her next commitment, embodying the proactive leadership style that defines her public service. 🌿

Have Your Employees Completed Their Sexual Harassment Prevention Training?

By Gladys Rodriguez-Morales, Fenton & Keller

California requires all employers who have five or more employees to provide its employees with sexual harassment prevention training every two years. Part-time and full-time employees, volunteers, unpaid interns, and independent contractors, even if they work in separate locations, or do not work or reside in California, should be counted by the business to determine if it meets the employee count threshold.

While everyone is counted to determine if the business has five or more employees, an employer is only required to provide the training to its California employees. However, employers should consider providing the sexual harassment prevention training to any out-of-state employee who interacts with California-based employees, including any out-of-state supervisors who supervise California employees.

Employers who are required to provide the state mandated sexual harassment prevention training should be aware of the following training requirements:

Training Requirement: (1)

Employees who are supervisors must complete two hours of training every two years and non-supervisory employees must complete one hour of training every two years; (2) employees who are promoted to a supervisory position must receive the two-hour supervisory training within six months of becoming a supervisor; (3) all new hires must be trained within six months of their hire date; (4) new hires who previously received training from a prior employer are not required to retake the training for a period of two years from the date of the new hire's last

training if their prior training was legally compliant, and the new hire reads and acknowledges receipt of their new employer's anti-harassment policy.

If an employer wants to ensure that all new hires have received legally compliant training, they should provide all new hires with the training, even if they received the training elsewhere within the last two years; (5) temporary employees employed through a temporary service agency should receive the training by the temporary service agency; (6) employees who are minors between the ages of 14 and 17 must receive the training; (7) seasonal employees who work less than six months (but not less than 30 days or 100 hours) must be trained within 30 days of hire or 100 work hours, whichever occurs first (migrant and seasonal agricultural workers have different training requirements); (8) new businesses must provide the training within six months of their establishment; and (9) employees cannot be required to take the training during their personal time, employees must be paid for the training.

Effective Interactive Training

Required: The training must be interactive and involve employee participation. The training can be conducted live in an individual or group classroom setting, individually online, or in a combination format as long as it is effective interactive training. Among other requirements, the training must cover federal and state law concerning the prevention, prohibition, and correction of sexual harassment, the available remedies, and information about preventing harassment and

abusive conduct based on gender identity, gender expression, and sexual orientation.

The training must include practical examples of improper conduct, how employees can report complaints, a review of their employer's harassment prevention policies, and supervisor training on their reporting obligations, how to respond to complaints, investigations, and the prevention of retaliatory conduct.

Qualified Trainer Required: An individual with knowledge, expertise, training, and experience in the prevention of harassment, discrimination, and retaliation must present the training. Qualified trainers include an attorney licensed in California with at least two years of experience practicing employment law and a human resources professional who is experienced in harassment training, investigation, and employer advisement for at least two years.

Record Keeping

Requirement: Employers must keep records concerning the training given to its employees for at least two years, including (1) the date the training was given; (2) the type of training given; (3) a copy of the written and/or recorded training materials used; (4) the name of the trainer(s); (5) the names of employees who received the training; and (6) a copy of the certificates of attendance or completion.

Posting Requirement:

Employers are required to display either a sexual harassment poster or fact sheet at each

worksite, in an area frequented by employees. When more than 10 percent of the workforce speaks a language other than English, the posting must also be displayed in the other language(s). The poster and fact sheet in several languages are available at <https://calcivilrights.ca.gov/posters/>.

Gladys Rodriguez-Morales 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.





CHAMBER NEW MEMBER PROFILES

Habitat for Humanity Monterey Bay

Habitat for Humanity Monterey Bay is an independent, locally operated and funded affiliate of Habitat for Humanity International. Habitat for Humanity Monterey Bay brings people together to build programs, homes, communities, and hope. Their mission is to build decent, affordable homes and provide home ownership opportunities to qualified families who live and work in Santa Cruz and Monterey Counties. Together, their volunteers and families have built 70 homes, with further plans extending through the foreseeable future, including in Seaside and Watsonville. Habitatmontereybay.com, helen@habitatmontereybay.org, (818) 448-3608.



Town 'N Country Realty, Inc.

Founded in 1977 by Dale Handley and proudly carried forward by his son Mike Handley, Town 'N Country Realty, Inc. is a locally owned and operated full-service real estate brokerage rooted in six generations of family history in the Salinas Valley. Their mission is to provide honest, responsive, and expert real estate and property management services while upholding the values of professionalism, integrity, and long-term client relationships. They serve the greater Salinas area with a focus on personalized service, local insight, and results-driven solutions. Whether helping families find their first home, managing investment properties, or representing sellers and investors, they're committed to protecting their clients' best interests every step of the way. Town 'N Country Realty, Inc. is more than a business — they're a legacy-driven team dedicated to strengthening our community through responsible real estate practices and trusted leadership. tncrealestate.com/meet-the-team/mike-handley/, mike@tncrealestate.com, (831) 262-2400.



Salinas Valley California Women for Agriculture

California Women for Agriculture (CWA) was formed in 1975, in the Coachella Valley. The Salinas Valley Chapter was formed in 1977. The name was chosen to develop a cross section of members. In fact, the nucleus of the first chapter was made up of consumers, as well as farmers and ranchers. Today their membership is as diverse as the industry they represent: bankers, lawyers, accountants, marketing professionals, consumers, and farmers and ranchers. With 20 chapters and 1,600-plus members across the state, CWA is the most active, all-volunteer agricultural organization in the state, and members are actively engaged in public relations, education, and legislative advocacy on behalf of agriculture.



Their scholarship committee is awarding 20-plus scholarships to women pursuing degrees in agriculture and children of farm workers in 2025. Wish them the best in their educational pursuits.

Their 2024 shopping trip to Santana Row, San Jose was a huge success last year, raising over \$20,000 to support the chapter. Save the date Nov. 1, 2025 for this year's trip.

Their photo contest continues to attract some great photos of Central Coast Agriculture, check out their website for all the amazing photos. Winners are featured on the cover of Coastal Grower.

Annual visit with California's state legislators and administration to communicate the importance of supporting Agriculture, California's #1 Industry. Salinascwa.org, Membership@SalinasCWA.org.

Deli-Café 3 Hermanos

After the father of the Suarez-Aguilar family passed away, the eldest son migrated to the U.S., in an effort to support his widowed-mother and six siblings. He began working in the agriculture valleys of California and with time, he began inviting his siblings in search of the "American Dream." After working three decades in the fields, the Hermanos decided to dedicate their time to the craft they learned as kids. In 2001, Panaderia 3 Hermanos was inaugurated on Alisal Street and 17 years later, the Deli-Café 3 Hermanos was led by the second generation of the three Hermanos. The Mexican-American kitchen is open from 2 a.m. to 8 p.m., offering a wide selection of drinks, home-style meals, and other delicacies. panaderiatreshermanos.com, president@panaderiatreshermanos.com, (831) 771-2720.



BNI Central Coast Connection

BNI Central Coast Connection is a dynamic networking group focused on fostering business growth and building meaningful relationships. Through weekly meetings, members share referrals, support one another's businesses, and collaborate on new opportunities. The group is composed of local professionals from various industries, all committed to helping each other succeed. By embracing the BNI philosophy of "Givers Gain®," they've created a positive environment where everyone can thrive. The connections made in BNI often lead to lasting relationships, valuable referrals, and mutual growth throughout the community. Cperez@cpagy.com, (831) 428-2632.



Borrowing Money from a Retirement Account

By Ryan Hastie, Hastie Financial Group

Over the past several years, we have witnessed a global pandemic transpire, inflation skyrocket, and prices of everyday items markedly increase. These events have forced many Americans to look to alternative sources of money to pay for necessities like shelter, groceries, and gas — among others.

With many people's paychecks already being stretched thin due to increased costs for most goods and services, some have looked to retirement funds to assist in paying for necessities. When deciding if drawing on retirement funds is appropriate, it is important to know the options available and the tax ramifications in each instance. Below are a couple of options available and the tax consequences associated with each option.

The first option is a 401(k) hardship distribution. If a 401(k) plan allows for it, participants have an option for withdrawing money from their account. However, the IRS has strict guidelines that must be followed to avoid penalties. The distribution can only be made if it is 1) due to an immediate and heavy financial need and 2) limited to the amount necessary to satisfy that financial need. The IRS defines an immediate and heavy financial need as any one of the following: medical care, costs directly related to the purchase of a principal residence, tuition (or related educational expenses), payment necessary to avoid eviction or foreclosure, funeral expenses, or certain expenses to repair damage to a principal residence.

Unfortunately, hardship distributions are subject to ordinary income tax (unless they consist of Roth contributions) and early withdrawal



penalty (if under 59½) of 10 percent federal and 2.5 percent state (California). Additionally, participants who take a hardship cannot repay it back to the plan or roll it over to another 401(k) plan or IRA.

The second option for withdrawing funds to help meet current living needs is to take a loan from a 401(k). If a 401(k) plan allows loans, the IRS limits the amount that participants may take to the lesser of 50 percent of the vested account balance or \$50,000. One exception to this limit states that if 50 percent of the vested account balance is less than \$10,000, then up to \$10,000 may be withdrawn.

Since this is a loan, participants will need to pay the borrowed money back, plus interest — the interest rate on most 401(k) loans is the prime rate plus 1-2 percent. Lastly, the loan must generally be repaid within five years, with some exceptions. There are no taxes or penalties associated with taking a loan from a 401(k).

Unlike a 401(k), investors are not able to take a loan from a traditional or Roth IRA. However, there are ways to get money out of an IRA without penalty, including if you are over 59½, you qualify for an exception, if the account is a Roth IRA (certain limitations apply), or if the money is replaced within 60 days (known as a 60-day rollover).

Please reach out to your financial professional to discuss your specific situation to see if taking money from a retirement account is the best option for you and, if not, what other options may be available. 🌱

Ryan Hastie, CFP®, AIF®, CPFA®, is a Partner and Investment Advisor with locally owned Hastie Financial Group and can be contacted at ryan.hastie@hastiefg.com.



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Your Impression Is Accurate: Homelessness Is Getting Worse in Monterey County, Reflecting Larger Trends

By Kevin Dayton, Government Affairs Liaison

The Coalition of Homeless Services Providers held its 2025 “Lead Me Home Summit” at the National Steinbeck Center in Downtown Salinas on April 17. Your Chamber’s Government Affairs Liaison has been attending these annual conferences to learn about the latest trends and policies related to people in our community who lack permanent housing.

After several years in which government and private entities seemed to make progress in reducing the number of homeless people in Monterey County, the local point-in-time surveys and anecdotal evidence now indicate an apparent increase in homelessness. This increase is also happening at the state level and national level.

A noteworthy session of the 2025 Lead Me Home Summit was “Housing First: How We Make Housing First a Success.” This session featured two officials of the California Department of Housing and Community Development. They asserted that California’s government-mandated “Housing First” approach to homelessness — prioritizing immediate, permanent housing without preconditions, while also emphasizing the supportive services necessary for long-term stability — is the right way to address chronic homelessness.

Several of the homeless service providers in the audience feistily cited shortcomings to this approach. They claimed that some homeless people are accepting the offer of Housing First while declining the complementary offer of supportive services for conditions such as substance abuse and mental illness. Thus, they occupy permanent

Monterey County Biennial Point-in-Time Homeless Census and Survey for U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) - 2013 to 2024

	Unsheltered homeless individuals and families (sleeping outdoors, on the street, in parks, or vehicles, etc.)	Homeless individuals and families in temporary shelter (emergency shelter, transitional housing, or stabilization rooms)	Total Homeless	Percentage Change in Number of Homeless Compared to Last Census	Percentage Living in Monterey County at Time of Housing Loss
January 2013	1,969	621	2,590	N/A	79%
January 2015	1,630	678	2,308	-10.9%	78%
January 2017	2,113	724	2,837	22.9%	83%
January 2019	1,830	592	2,422	-14.6%	78%
January 2022	1,357	690	2,047	-15.5%	83%
January 2024	1,883	553	2,436	19.0%	81%

supportive housing at the expense of other homeless people who claim they would accept supportive services if given housing. In response, the state agency officials insisted that studies and data prove that “Housing First” is the best approach to homelessness.

This dialogue reflects a national debate about whether permanent supportive housing — offered for free without judgement or conditions — is a wise government policy. There are many variables to consider regarding the reasons for homelessness. Homelessness is a result of decisions made by individuals and families, along with circumstances established in collective society. To complicate matters, abstract philosophical, theological, and ideological beliefs have significant influence on the tenor of debate.

Monterey County Supervisor Luis

Alejo was present at the session and noted that in 2016 he voted for the bill (Senate Bill 1380) that required state-funded homeless programs to adopt Housing First policies. He pointed out that a law should be evaluated on occasion to see if amendments would improve its effectiveness, and this would be an appropriate time to consider if amendments would help to make the Housing First policy more effective. Discussions at the Lead Me Home Summit had already inspired him to come up with three ideas for bills.

To justify the bill in 2016, Senate Bill 1380 stated in its declarative legislative findings that “California leads the nation in the number of homeless residents with 115,738 people experiencing homelessness at some point, which is 21 percent of the nation’s total. California also leads the nation in the number

and ratio of chronically homeless residents with 29,178 chronically homeless residents at any point in time, which is 31 percent of the nation’s total.”

What has happened in the nine years since then? In its 2024 Annual Homelessness Assessment Report to Congress, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) reported that California had 187,804 people experiencing homelessness, which is 24 percent of the nation’s total. And California has 66,548 chronically homeless residents, which is 44 percent of the nation’s total.

Did “Housing First” policies have any effect on that significant increase in California’s numbers and proportions of homeless people? That question may become a future heated debate in the state legislature. 🌱

Cultivating Good Health in Everyday Life

By Chris Haubert, Salinas Valley Health

Good health is the foundation of a thriving community. Going beyond delivering medical care when and where needed, Salinas Valley Health works to cultivate good health in the everyday lives of the people it serves.

Wellness isn't found in a vacuum; it is built — as individuals, as families and as a richly diverse community. For more than 70 years, Salinas Valley Health, a public district healthcare system, has contributed to the growth of a region where the health and well-being of all people are prioritized.

A Diverse Range of Opportunities

From reducing stress to discovering fun ways to stay active, finding support for managing chronic conditions, and learning about financial health and fitness, Salinas Valley Health offers a diverse range of opportunities to help the community thrive.

These events and programs empower individuals to take charge of their wellness journeys, learn practical skills, adopt healthier lifestyles and build supportive networks, which can lead to improved overall outcomes.

Investing in a Culture of Wellness

Salinas Valley Health's investment in wellness education is a proactive step toward creating a healthier population, promoting preventative care and enhancing the quality of life for everyone in the community. It fosters a culture of wellness that extends beyond the walls of our medical center.

Online guided mindfulness and meditation sessions, that a local instructor leads in a live setting, help participants lean into restfulness, allowing the body and mind to relax and recharge. Free, in-person Zumba



Joanna Oppenheim, MD, Director of Salinas Valley Health's Lifestyle and Metabolic Program (far right), leading Walk With a Doc — one of many free community events hosted by the healthcare system.

and yoga classes increase flexibility, strength and balance while bringing a smile to your face and sparking connections with others. "Walk With a Doc" is an opportunity to get fresh air and fresh insight. The regularly held monthly Saturday events include a presentation from one of our medical providers followed by a two-mile walk over flat ground. Blue Zones Project Monterey County inspires people to engage in activities that change their mindsets and habits in lasting ways, providing motivation to achieve higher levels of health and happiness. Community Health Days, held throughout the region that the public district healthcare system serves, offer free wellness screenings through the Mobile Clinic, along with information and resources shared by Salinas Valley Health staff. The Friday Farmers' Market at the medical center, held 11:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. through Nov. 7, offers fresh produce (available at

Salinas Valley Health plays an essential role in bridging the gap between medical care and proactive health management.

a discount for CalFresh recipients using a SNAP/EBT card), beautiful flowers and tasty prepared foods. A safe place to share experiences and emotions about cancer treatment, recovery following heart disease, obesity and other challenges is found through a wide variety of support groups. Valuable information unravels the complexity of financial and legal issues, including advance health directives, planning for long-term care, and wills and trusts.

The Power of Prevention

"Salinas Valley Health plays an essential role in bridging the gap between medical care and proactive

health management," says Tiffany DiTullio, Vice President of Partner and Community Relations at Salinas Valley Health and Executive Director of Blue Zones Project Monterey County. "This helps ensure everyone has access to the tools they need for a healthier life."

Salinas Valley Health believes in the power of prevention. Every step toward a healthier life is a step away from the emergency department. Improving the health and well-being of the community is a big part of the healthcare system's mission.

Nationally recognized for its outstanding cardiac, stroke and cancer care, the medical center has also received top marks for maternity services, nursing excellence and patient safety. At the heart of health, however, is a personal commitment to living well. Salinas Valley Health provides the resources to make healthy lifestyles easier for everyone. 🌱

Salinas Union High School District Moves Forward Toward Buying Downtown Building for Administrative Offices

By Kevin Dayton, Government Affairs Liaison



The Salinas Union High School District board unanimously voted to buy the building at 450 Lincoln Ave., located on the corner of Lincoln Avenue and Clay Street in downtown Salinas, for \$4.5 million.

On May 27, 2025, the Salinas Union High School District board voted 6-0 to spend \$4,550,000 to buy 450 Lincoln Ave., a land parcel on the corner of Lincoln Avenue and Clay Street in downtown Salinas. The seller is Paul L. Miller 2002 Revocable Trust, which does business as Paramount Properties.

The school district sees a need for a new district administrative office and believes a purchase of 450 Lincoln Ave. will cost less than renovating other locations or building a new district office. On this parcel is a three-story office building built in 1982, colloquially known as the “Kasavan & Pope Building.” It has 17,672 square feet of space, 25 surface parking spaces, and 20 covered parking spaces. There are three tenants now in the building. Two have an option to renew their leases.

For years, the Salinas Union High School District has reported that its administration complex at 431 West Alisal St. (across from the Hartnell College main campus) does not have enough office and meeting space. Employees have to work at several different locations.

The district leases 584 South Main St. for its Special Education Services Office at more than \$10,000 per month. Some district departments occupy space at schools; for example, the Educational Services Department is based at Everett Alvarez High School and the Special Projects Office is based at El Sausal Middle School. This school space could be used instead for classrooms.

In 2021, Salinas Union High School District officials were internally discussing the possibility of buying Sherwood Hall from the City of

Salinas to renovate into a district administration building. “The Salinas Plan” presented to the Salinas City Council in 2018 had proposed that the city sell Sherwood Hall because of ongoing operational deficits. This proposal was never discussed at a school board meeting or city council meeting and did not come to fruition.

One question that the school board considered at their May 27 meeting was the adequacy of parking at 450 Lincoln Ave. The current district office now has 3.1 spaces per 1,000 square feet of space, and the new office will have 2.5 spaces per 1,000 square feet of space. (Note that the City of Salinas owns the Salinas Street Parking Garage one block away.)

The parcel at 450 Lincoln Ave. is just outside of the jurisdiction of the Downtown Salinas Community Benefit District, administered by the Salinas City Center Improvement

Association (SCCIA). There have been controversies in the immediate neighborhood related to anti-social behavior of homeless people and transients who frequent Clay Street and the 300 and 400 blocks of Lincoln Street. Clay Street residents have organized in recent years to address safety and public health concerns.

This immediate neighborhood where the parcel is located would benefit from the physical presence of a vibrant, forward-looking school district. The Chamber hopes that the relocation of the school district administrative offices will enhance operations of the school district, bring more patrons to downtown businesses, reduce vehicular traffic by providing walkable opportunities for employees and visitors, and discourage people from anti-social activity while in the neighborhood. 🌿

Interim, Inc. Honors Mental Health Advocates and Celebrates 50 Years of Impact at Annual Service Awards

Interim, Inc. held its annual Mental Health Service Recognition Awards on May 30, bringing together more than 250 community members at the Embassy Suites in Seaside, to celebrate the individuals who are making a lasting impact in Monterey County's mental health community.

The evening featured an inspiring awards presentation, a consumer art exhibit, and music by DJ Madonna.

The event is traditionally held during May, National Mental Health Awareness Month, a time dedicated to uplifting the voices of people living with mental illness and celebrating the progress made in mental health advocacy and care.

This year's ceremony also included a special presentation commemorating Interim's 50th anniversary. In recognition of this milestone, Interim received official proclamations and certificates from several local cities, the County of Monterey, the California State Assembly, the California State Senate, and the United States Congress. These honors acknowledged Interim's five decades of dedicated service to mental health and housing in the region.

Each year, Interim presents three signature awards to honor extraordinary commitment and contributions by individuals to the mental health community. The Dr. David Soskin Compassionate Service Honorarium, Dr. David Soskin Inspiring Hope Honorarium, and the Kristin Hart Memorial Award recognize individuals who embody the spirit of these community champions.

Special thanks go to the Soskin family for their ongoing sponsorship of the awards. Soskin was a passionate advocate and former Medical Director of Monterey County Behavioral Health, remembered for



his empathy, mentorship, and tireless support for underserved individuals.

This year's honorees included:

Lorena Lopez, Patient Services Representative with the Juvenile Justice Team at Monterey County Children's Behavioral Health, was awarded the Dr. David Soskin Compassionate Service Honorarium for being the heart of the Children's Clinic — offering warmth, advocacy, and unwavering kindness that ensures every child and family feels safe, heard, and cared for from the moment they walk through the door.

Kevin Gast, Program Director for MCHOME and Housing Navigation, was honored with the Dr. David

Soskin Compassionate Service Honorarium for his unwavering compassion, steady leadership, and deep commitment to creating safe, supportive spaces where clients and staff alike feel seen, heard, and empowered. **Elizabeth Barrell**, Community Support Worker II with the MCHOME program, was awarded the Dr. David Soskin Inspiring Hope Honorarium for her courageous advocacy, lived-experience education, and unwavering commitment to breaking stigma, uplifting unhoused individuals, and inspiring others on the path to recovery. **Susan Brier**, Group Facilitator at Interim's OMNI Resource Center, was awarded the

Dr. David Soskin Inspiring Hope Honorarium for her quiet strength, deep compassion, and unwavering presence that inspires trust, healing, and hope in all those she serves.

Jacoby Aguirre, a volunteer at Interim's OMNI Resource Center in Salinas, received the Kristin Hart Memorial Award.

Interim, Inc. expresses deep gratitude to all award winners, nominees, volunteers, and mental health professionals whose work brings healing, dignity, and support to those living with mental illness.

For more information about Interim, Inc. and its programs, visit www.interiminc.org.

Rancho Cielo's Veggie Box & BBQ Fundraiser Turns 10: A Decade of Nourishing the Community

By Adam Joseph, Rancho Cielo

What started as a modest idea at a Rancho Cielo board meeting has blossomed into one of Monterey County's most impactful fundraisers. Rancho Cielo's Veggie Box & BBQ Fundraiser celebrates its 10th anniversary on Aug. 18-22, 2025, marking a decade of feeding the community and generous giving.

"I just walked into the meeting with the concept of vegetables in a bag as a fundraiser," Veggie Box founder and Rancho Cielo board member Mike Costa recalls. "I presented a bag of six items, and everybody was all in favor of it."

In its first year, 900 veggie bags were assembled on a single line of tables. Costa reached out to local agricultural companies, contacted farms and spoke with prominent local produce leaders to request produce donations. Their support was instrumental, as was the spirit of innovation and determination that carried the event forward.

Those early boxes were packed with care — and with weight, thanks to miniature watermelons donated from the San Joaquin Valley. While logistics posed a challenge, the bags couldn't handle the small but heavy melons, the success of that first year proved that the idea had legs and heart.

The annual event gained momentum when bags



were replaced with boxes a couple of years later. Then, Costa says it truly became a bonafide success when Rancho Cielo partnered with local nonprofits, including the Salvation Army of Salinas, the Boys & Girls Club of Monterey County, the Food Bank of Monterey County and Second Harvest Food Bank of Santa Cruz.

Fast forward to 2024, and the scale is astonishing. More than 14,000 veggie boxes, filled with fresh produce from 15 prominent local shippers and growers, were distributed to families

and organizations across the region. The BBQ side of the event has grown just as impressively. Over 1,300 pounds of tri-tip were barbecued and served in more than 2,000 BBQ lunches to sponsors and the public.

The fundraiser has also become a significant collaborative effort, with hundreds of volunteers, students, alumni, Rancho Cielo staff, local businesses and community members coming together each year to make it all happen. In 2024, over 115 generous sponsors supported the cause, proving that

the event earned its place as a cherished tradition.

"It's about the students," Costa says. "That's the main thing — always remembering it's about the students. Everyone's on board with why we're doing this."

Mike's wife, Kim, who has also been instrumental in leading the fundraiser since its inception, echoes that sentiment, adding, "[The Veggie Box & BBQ Fundraiser] is a wonderful gathering of volunteers, community partners, and produce companies, all of whom support Rancho

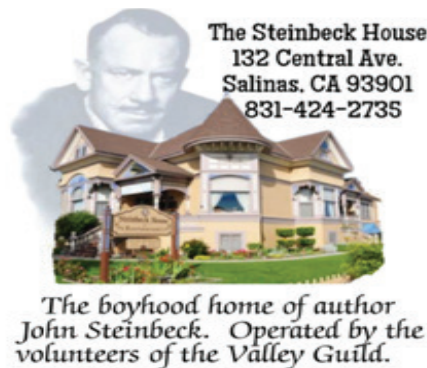
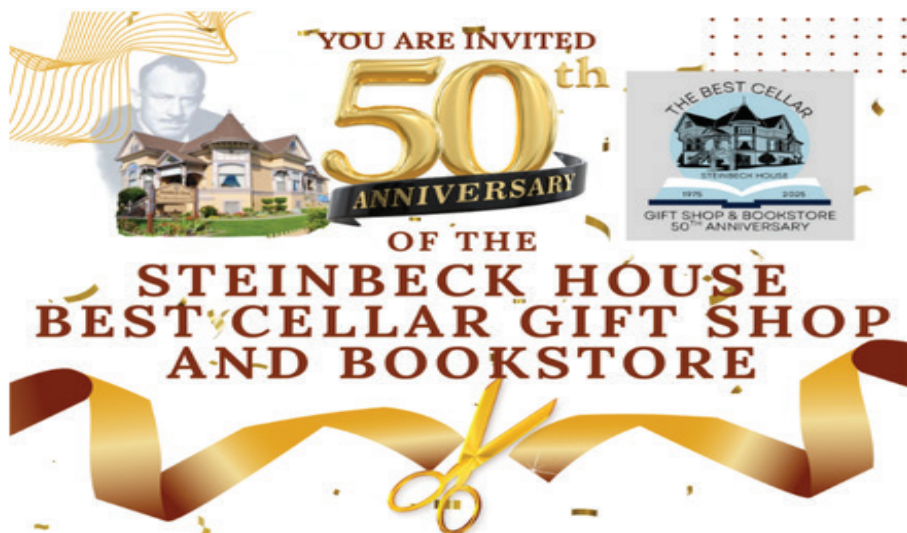
Cielo!"

Their leadership and tireless dedication have helped transform a small, annual effort into a large-scale operation that not only raises funds for Rancho Cielo's programs but also provides fresh and healthy food to many in need.

As Rancho Cielo celebrates both the 10th anniversary of the Veggie Box & BBQ Fundraiser and its 25th year as a nonprofit organization, the milestone year will be capped off with a special celebration on Oct. 25, when the community is invited to gather at Rancho Cielo for food, wine and live music, and a moment to reflect on the remarkable impact it has made over the years.

From "vegetables in a bag" to a vital source of funding, skill-building and nutrition, the Veggie Box & BBQ Fundraiser is a shining example of what happens when people rally around a shared purpose. As the saying goes, "It takes a village," and thanks to the village behind Rancho Cielo, thousands of lives have been enriched, year after year.

Veggie boxes are on sale now. Visit ranchocieloyc.org to learn more, volunteer, purchase for yourself and/or donate to families via the Boys & Girls Clubs of Monterey County, Food Bank for Monterey County, Salvation Army Salinas and Second Harvest Food Bank. 🌱



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UPCOMING HOUSE EVENTS

- July 10th- National Teddy Bear Picnic Lunch
- July 12th- Rodeo Themed Afternoon Tea
- July 15th- 19th- Rodeo Tri Tip Lunch Special
- July 26th- Merchandise Sale- 8am-2pm
1130 San Vicente Ave, Salinas,CA
- August 1st- BUNCO & BUBBLES fundraiser
6:30pm- Food, Fun and Game!

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RIBBON CUTTINGS & CHAMBER EVENTS

by Chamber Staff



Sun Street Centers Huntington Recovery Center Ribbon Cutting

Sun Street Centers celebrated the grand opening of its Huntington Recovery Center, a vital new facility offering outpatient treatment, recovery group space, and sober living for individuals and families. The center expects to serve over 300 people annually. Community partners, donors, and dignitaries joined the ribbon-cutting ceremony to mark the occasion.



Grand Opening of Integris Wealth Management's Salinas Location

Integris Wealth Management has officially opened its Salinas office, expanding its accessibility and deepening its commitment to guiding individuals toward their financial goals. Chamber members, clients, and local partners joined the celebration and toured the new space.



25th Anniversary Celebration of RVS Technology Group

Everyone had a wonderful evening honoring RVS Technology Group's 25th anniversary at Chamber member restaurant Patria on Main. Local dignitaries were in attendance to recognize this significant milestone. Congratulations to RVS on 25 years — and here's to many more!

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SE HABLA ESPAÑOL

Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce Hosts ‘Salinas Valley Speaks’ at the Iconic Braga Barn

The Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce is proud to announce Salinas Valley Speaks, an exclusive and insightful regional event taking place at the historic Braga Barn on Thursday, Aug. 7, from 3:30-5:30 p.m. This gathering brings together community leaders and business professionals for a powerful conversation about the future of the Salinas Valley.

The evening will feature a casual networking mixer followed by an impactful panel discussion with the following regional leaders:

- Mike LeBarre, Mayor of King City
- Robert White, Mayor of Greenfield
- Anna Velazquez, Mayor of Soledad
- Jose Rios, Mayor of Gonzales
- Dennis Donohue, Mayor of Salinas

The event will be emceed by District 3 Supervisor Chris Lopez, Chair of the Monterey County Board of

Supervisors. Salinas Valley Speaks aims to foster regional collaboration, highlight economic development initiatives, and address the critical issues and challenges facing our cities. Attendees will gain firsthand insights into what each city is doing to promote growth, support businesses, and build stronger communities.

“This is a rare opportunity for the public and private sectors to come together, share ideas, and inspire action for the advancement of the entire Salinas Valley,” says President & CEO Colleen Bailey.

The Salinas Valley Chamber extends sincere gratitude to the sponsors who are making this event possible: Braga Fresh, Chevron, and Wescom Financial.

Tickets can be purchased at \$25 for members, \$35 for non-members. Tickets are limited and expected to sell quickly. To reserve your spot or learn more, please visit SalinasChamber.com or contact the Chamber directly at (831) 751-7725. 🌱



For more information:
www.salinasmchamber.com



AMBASSADOR SPOTLIGHT FRANCISCO AREVALO FINANCIAL ADVISOR



I'm proud to announce that I, Francisco Arevalo, a Salinas native and Palma alumni, have earned my Certified Financial Planner™ (CFP®) certification as a financial advisor with Northwestern Mutual. This certification reflects my commitment to acting as a fiduciary, meaning I always prioritize my clients' best interests when providing financial advice and planning. My team and I specialize in working with business owners in the community. For our business owner clients, we emphasize helping them on tax optimization, strategic saving and investing both in and out of qualified plans, as well as distribution and exit planning. Congratulations to Chamber Ambassador Francisco Arevalo for his achievement!



UPCOMING EVENTS

- **Lunch Connect at The Pizza Factory**

Tuesday, July 1, 12:00 – 1:30 p.m., 926 S Main St., Salinas

Join the Chamber on Tuesday, July 1, from 12:00 – 1:30 p.m. at The Pizza Factory for our Lunch Connect Series—a great opportunity to meet fellow Chamber members, network in a relaxed setting, and enjoy Pizza Factory's delicious lunch buffet. Don't miss this fun way to connect with your business community and support member restaurants. Register today. This is not a sponsored event, attendees must pay for their own meals.

- **Lunch and Learn with Navigator Schools: Educational Choices for Now to Prepare for the Future**

Tuesday, July 8, 12:00 - 1:00 p.m., 119 East Alisal St., Salinas

Join the Chamber for a Lunch and Learn with Navigator Schools, a tuition-free public charter school network currently serving TK–8 students in the northern Central Coast region of California. With a strong focus on academic excellence and leadership development, Navigator Schools is equipping students with the skills they need to succeed in high school, college, and beyond, regardless of circumstances. Join us at lunch to learn how Navigator Schools is planning to become part of the community through opening Salinas Prep School. Tune in via Zoom or in person at the Chamber Office. Lunch will be provided. Details at www.salinasmchamber.com.

- **Ribbon Cutting with Monterey Credit Union**

Thursday, July 10, 5:00 - 6:30 p.m., 1566 N. Main St., Salinas

Join the Chamber and Monterey Credit Union for a special ribbon-cutting celebration as they unveil their exciting new brand at the Harden Ranch Plaza branch in Salinas. Monterey Credit Union will introduce a refreshed look that reflects the beauty and spirit of Central California — with new colors, a modern logo, and the same trusted name that has served the region for over 56 years. Enjoy light bites, drinks, and great company as we celebrate this new chapter together. Details at www.salinasmchamber.com.

- **50th Anniversary of The Steinbeck House's Best Cellar Gift Shop & Bookstore**

Monday, July 14, 5:30– 7:30 p.m., 132 Central Ave., Salinas

The Steinbeck House is celebrating the 50th anniversary of its Best Cellar Gift Shop & Bookstore this July. To commemorate the milestone, a ribbon-cutting ceremony will be held on Monday, July 14, from 5:30-7:30 p.m. Guests will enjoy a festive evening featuring appetizers, drinks, and access to the historic cellar, which will be open for the occasion. The gift shop will also offer special promotions throughout the week including daily giveaways through Saturday, July 19. This celebration honors five decades of literary history and community support in Salinas, the hometown of Nobel Prize-winning author John Steinbeck.



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Pictured from left to right: Mike Millett-Director of Business Development, Jessica Perez-Senior Relationship Manager, Ramon Castro-Business Development Officer, Mirna Hills-Director of Treasury Management, Robert Mina-Senior Relationship Manager, Glenna Datta-EVP Regional Executive, Scott Gillett-Senior Relationship Manager, Dana Hart-Relationship Manager, Jim Scattini-Business Development Officer, Not pictured: Sue Storm-Market President and Jefferson Suruiz-Relationship Manager.

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UPCOMING EVENTS

- **Monterey County Vintners & Growers and SV Chamber Mixer**

Thursday, July 31, 2025, 5:00 - 7:00 p.m., California Welcome Center, 1A Station Place, Salinas

Join the Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce and the Monterey County Vintners and Growers Association for a mixer hosted by the California Welcome Center – Salinas. Enjoy tasty bites from local restaurants, sip on wines from the region's finest vintners, and enjoy an evening of great company and meaningful networking. Tickets to attend are \$10 for members and \$20 for non-members. If you have any questions, please contact Jasmine@salinaschamber.com or call (831) 751-7725.

- **Lunch and Learn with TPO: 'Personality Clashes. Are They on the Rise? It's Not Your Imagination!'**

Tuesday, Aug. 5, 12:00- 1:00 p.m., 119 East Alisal St., Salinas

TPO, a well-respected HR consulting firm based in Monterey, will present a Lunch & Learn session on personality clashes in the workplace on Aug. 5, at the Chamber offices in Salinas. Today's employers are encountering an uptick of disagreements at work, sometimes escalating to quarrels or even clashes. What's triggering this and how can we get ahead of it by instilling a culture of respectful communication at work? Understanding conflict is a critical first step. Learn when conflict is beneficial (creative abrasion) and when it's not. During this one-hour program, you will: Learn Top 5 Reasons for Conflict that Influence Personality Clashes; Use a Simple Tool to Help Diagnose Conflict in Your Organization; Identify the 5 Management Conflict Styles & Assess Your Style; Recognize How Conflict Can Lead to Better Outcomes; and Be Able to Choose a Response that Results in the Best Outcomes. Q&A opportunity from 1:00-1:15 p.m. Register for in-person or via Zoom. Lunch will be provided for those in person. www.salinaschamber.com.

RSVP at salinaschamber.com

Crime Data - from page 7

data systems for crime reduction. This could include additional funding for software consultants and personnel training, as needed. In addition, your Chamber would likely support SPD funding requests for consolidation of crime data compilation and analysis under the responsibility of one specialized position.

Idea #2 for the City Council: Examine Data and Propose Policy Changes

The Salinas City Council

traditionally has not scheduled study sessions or even routine meeting agenda items to discuss changes in crime rates and inquire why rates go up or down. Some cities do this.

Your Chamber believes that crime and the public perception of high crime rates are obstacles to economic growth and quality job creation in the City of Salinas and the surrounding region. If the community can come together in a structured forum to identify and consider solutions to crime problems, the community can better work together to solve the problem. 🌱



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NON-PROFIT EVENTS

Sweetheart Soiree – California Rodeo Salinas

July 11, 11:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m., 1034 N. Main St., Salinas – Salinas Sports Complex

Giddy up, cowgirls! You're invited to the Sweetheart Soiree, brought to you by the California Rodeo Salinas and presented by Kaiser Permanente. Saddle up on July 11 for a rootin' tootin' luncheon, where you'll be tipping our hats to all the fierce and fabulous ladies of the West! This is no ordinary shindig — it's a wild and wonderful celebration of rodeo fans, rodeo friends, and all-around good-time-gals. With a grand entrance that'll have you feeling like a rodeo queen, they'll be serving up pampering and entertainment galore. So grab your boots, your hats, and your besties, and kick up some dust. Savor mimosas skillfully crafted and served by dashing cowboys, relish a delectable lunch, sip on your favorite beverages, indulge in an exciting auction, and much more. A portion of the event's proceeds will be directed toward supporting the noble cause of the Justin Cowboy Crisis Fund and the California Rodeo Salinas Scholarship Fund.

Blue Zones Project Monterey County: Hike & Wine at the Vineyards | Caminata y vino en el viñedo

July 13, 10 a.m.-12 p.m., 37500 Foothill Road, Soledad

Move naturally while hiking and connecting over a glass of wine. A movernos naturalmente mientras caminamos y conectémonos con una copa.

California Rodeo Salinas

July 17-20, times vary, 1034 N. Main St., Salinas – Salinas Sports Complex

The California Rodeo Salinas will take place July 17-20, 2025, with two night and two day performances. The California Rodeo Salinas is one of the top 15 professional rodeos in the U.S. out of over 600 and the largest rodeo in California. With over 110 years of tradition and a little bit of something for everyone, it's an event you don't want to miss. Not only are the top cowboys and cowgirls featured in the arena and on the track, but there are food and shopping vendors, saloons, and more. The whole family will enjoy this affordable community event. To learn more, visit carodeo.com/events.

Trashion Show – Alliance on Aging

Aug. 22, TBA, 2700 17 Mile Drive, Pebble Beach – Inn at Spanish Bay

Tickets on sale now for Alliance on Aging's Trashion Show. Get ready for a wild and wonderful night where art, fashion, and outrageous creativity collide — all in support of Monterey County's seniors. The Trashion Show is not your average runway event. It's fun, funky, and fuels the vital services that help older adults thrive in our community. All proceeds go directly to Alliance on Aging's critical senior services. Ticket info: Regular seats, \$200; Runway seats, \$225; tables of eight also available. To purchase tickets, call (831) 655-7564 or (831) 655-4246, or contact Nicki at npasculli@allianceonaging.org. Mark your calendar, grab your most creative outfit, and join Alliance on Aging for a night you won't forget.

Rancho Cielo Veggie Box and BBQ Fundraiser

Aug. 18-22, Rancho Cielo Youth Campus, 710 Old Stage Road, Salinas

Rancho Cielo's Veggie Box & BBQ fundraiser makes a significant impact in helping sustain the vocational training for our students while also feeding families in need. Purchase boxes for yourself or donate boxes to families in need via the Boys & Girls Clubs of Monterey County, Salvation Army Salinas, The Food Bank for Monterey County and Second Harvest Food Bank. Barbecue lunch is from 11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m. on Friday, Aug. 22. Veggie box orders must be placed by Aug. 1 and BBQ Lunch orders By Aug. 8. Questions? Contact Jadrian Clausen at (831) 444-3501 or jclausen@ranchocieloyc.org. www.ranchocieloyc.org.

Touch-A-Truck Salinas

Sept. 7, 12-4 p.m., Salinas Rodeo Grounds

Get ready to rev-up your engines and mark your calendars because Touch-A-Truck Salinas is coming this fall. Calling all children and the young at heart to join in on a day filled with excitement as you climb on, explore, and learn all about an array of fascinating trucks — from cement mixers to delivery trucks, garbage trucks, and more! All proceeds benefit Coastal Kids Home Care, California's only nonprofit pediatric home health care agency for kids with cancer and other serious-illness. Touch-A-Truck 2025 is presented by the Don Chapin Company.

#LiveforRoss Annual BBQ Fundraiser

Sept. 13, 1:00 – 5:00 p.m., 3424 Gloria Road, Gonzalez – Swiss Rifle Range

The family and friends of Ross Tarp Braasch invite the community to attend the #LiveForRoss BBQ Fundraiser on Saturday, Sept. 13, from 1 to 5 p.m. at the Monterey County Swiss Rifle Club, located at 34241 Gloria Road, Gonzales. This special event will raise funds to support the #LiveForRoss Fund, a cause dedicated to promoting safety awareness and vocational education. Attendees will enjoy a fun-filled afternoon that includes:

- A delicious steak entrée with sides
- Wine and beer tasting
- Games and live music
- A no-host bar, dessert auction, and live auction

Tickets are \$50 and available for presale on Eventbrite. All proceeds directly support the #LiveForRoss mission. The fund operates as a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization; all donations are tax-deductible. Tickets available at: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/liveforross-bbq-fundraiser-tickets-1360816592059>.

68th Monterey Jazz Festival

Sept. 26-28, Monterey County Fair and Event Center, Monterey

The Monterey Jazz Festival, the world's longest continuously running jazz festival, has announced its lineup for the 68th incarnation, which happens Sept. 26-28 at the Monterey County Fairgrounds. There are 79 shows on five stages. Ticket packages are on sale now. The 2025 lineup features such luminaries as Latin jazz legend Pete Escovedo featuring Juan and Peter Michael Escovedo; Ledisi; Delfeayo Marsalis & The Uptown Jazz Orchestra; MJF68 Jazz Legends Gala honoree Christian McBride & Ursa Major; Gregory Porter; Dianne Reeves; Trombone Shorty & Orleans Avenue; Cory Wong, and many more. Details at montereyjazz.org.

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**CITY OF KING
MAYOR
MIKE LEBARRE**

AUGUST 7TH | 3:30 PM - 5:30 PM | BRAGA BARN

FOR MORE INFORMATION AND TO PURCHASE TICKETS VISIT [SALINASCHAMBER.COM](https://salinaschamber.com)

