



Salinas Valley
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

BUSINESS

JOURNAL



2024 New Laws
Impacting Your
Business

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Ditching the Compromise: Salinas City Council Plans to Enact Rent Control

by Kevin Dayton, Government Affairs Liaison

Despite voting to establish a residential rental program earlier this year, and developing a rent stabilization and tenant protection ordinance through unelected, community stakeholders, the City Council's Housing and Land Use Committee will create the ordinance without the benefit of collection and analysis of the data collected through the rental registry.

Throughout California, elected officials of local governments are discussing and enacting local laws (ordinances) to limit how much residential property owners can increase their rent each year. They are also enacting ordinances to restrict the ability of property owners to evict tenants.

Earlier this year, it appeared the City of Salinas would collect data about the local rental market before the City Council held any votes on such ordinances. However, rents are high and rising. Democratic pressure is fierce to curb rent increases. The timeline for government intervention in the rental market is now accelerating.

Rental Registry Was Just Implemented

On April 4, 2023, the Salinas City Council voted to establish a residential rental registration program. As stated in that ordinance, the program will allow the City of Salinas to collect, monitor and analyze the characteristics of residential rental units. The City will get an idea of how much people pay in rent. The City Council will receive an annual report from staff with the findings.

An estimated \$400,000 in annual fees paid by owners of rental properties is supposed to fund the rental registration program. That revenue is meant to maintain the registration program and fund services for landlords and tenants, such as education, resources, and referrals to mediation and legal services.

The registration period was July 1, 2023 to September 30, 2023. Late fees will apply to any rental property for which fees are not paid by November 15, 2023. ➡

RENT CONTROL - Continued on page 14

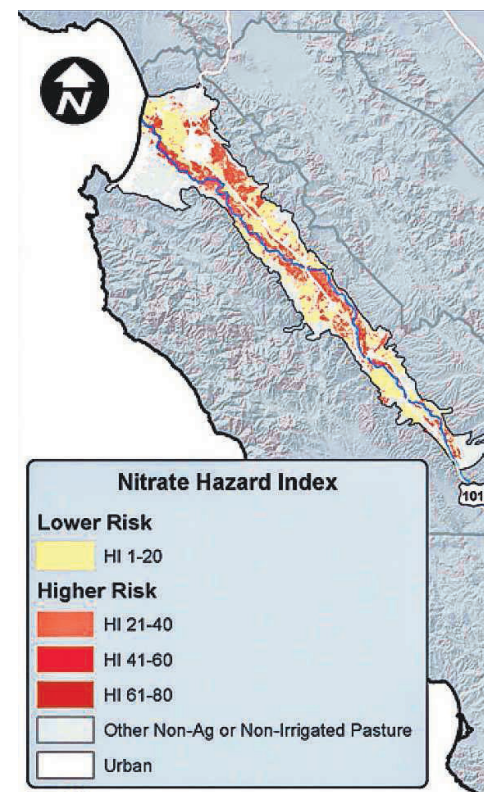
Regulation of Nitrate-Based Fertilizers Controversy in the Salinas Valley

by Chamber Staff

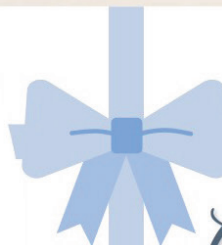
Commercial farmers seek consistent production of a healthy, sufficient crop yield at a reasonable cost. Most Americans are not involved in agriculture and are unaware of the challenges in this business.

Because nitrogen promotes plant growth, commercial farmers seek ways to maximize the efficiency of supplying nitrogen to crops. One way is by using nitrate-based fertilizers, applied to crops through various methods. Inorganic nitrates are molecules with a nitrogen atom and three oxygen atoms, often bound in fertilizers to ammonium, sodium, potassium, and calcium.

Major crops in the Salinas Valley that benefit from nitrate-based fertilizers include lettuce, strawberries, broccoli, cauliflower, spinach, cabbage and celery. Nitrate-based fertilizers are an important part of Salinas Valley agriculture, not only because of the types of crops ➡



NITRATE - Continued on page 12



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Grateful to Have Served

by Bill Hastie, Board Chair

It's hard to believe that 2023 is rapidly coming to an end. Looking back at the year there were some challenges, but from those challenges comes incredible opportunities. We will begin 2024 with a new CEO/President, Karin Moss, who has a wealth of Chamber of Commerce experience. Karin will lead our young team in raising awareness of the Chamber services and promoting membership throughout the Salinas Valley.

The Chamber's Board completed several internal "house-keeping" tasks that are required of every non-profit organization. First, a committee was formed to review and update the Chamber's bylaws. These are the guidelines under which the Chamber operates. Not having been reviewed since 2019, the committee first sent the bylaws to the Chamber's attorney, Matt Attone, for review and recommended updates. The committee then reviewed and recommended a number of significant changes to that helped bring the bylaws current. A separate committee was formed to review and update the employee handbook. This process began by sending the current employee handbook to human resources specialists, TPO, for an update from a regulatory standpoint, then the committee also recommended a number of changes that also brought the handbook current.

The Chamber's internal bookkeeping process received major overhaul under the direction of the Chamber's Vice Chair of Finance, Tom Moran. Working with Chamber staff, Tom has guided them through devising a meaningful bookkeeping process, and with the assistance of our bookkeepers, Bookkeeping Central, provides a finished product to the Board each month.

The Governmental Relations Committee (GRC), led by Vice Chair Colby Pereira, and with the assistance the Chamber's Government Affairs Liaison, Kevin Dayton, were extremely active in 2023 providing input to the City of Salinas on a variety of issues. These issues include rent control, Ag-Tech and Special Sales Tax Expenditure Oversight. The Chamber, through the GRC, has also been involved with the Hartnell STEM job fair, and has become involved with workforce

development. The GRC will also be holding another Government Relations Breakfast in 2024, date to be announced, that provides a great opportunity to hear from many local, state and national elected officials.

The Business Development Committee, led by Chair-elect Jennifer Williams, was re-engaged with the same mission to facilitate proactive and honest feedback from the building, business and development community as it relates to the planning and development departments for the City of Salinas. The Committee is fortunate to now have the expertise of Lisa Brinton, Director, Community Development Department, who ensured that Committee members were involved in the interviews conducted as part of the City's assessment of the Permit Center. The Committee has also been invited to assist City staff with Economic Development Element policy coordination.

Lastly, I would like to thank the Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce for the privilege of having served this year as Board Chair, and the last six years on the Executive Board. The bylaws provide that I may serve a seventh year on the Executive Board as Past Chair. I am excited to have the opportunity to serve next year under Jennifer Williams as the incoming Chair. ■



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New Employment Laws Affecting Employers in 2024

by Geraldine Villa-Hernandez
Noland, Hamerly, Etienne & Hoss



It is everyone's favorite time of the year...new laws! Whether you are a large or small employer, every year, new laws and significant changes to existing regu-

lations may affect your business. This year, employers should be aware of the following changes:

Minimum Wage Increase

California's minimum wage will increase to \$16 per hour on January 1, 2024. Since the threshold salary for exempt employees is two times the minimum wage for full-time work, as of January 1, 2024 exempt employees must be paid an annual salary of at least \$66,560. Employers must also determine if the city where their employees are working requires an even higher minimum wage.

California has also passed laws requiring different minimum wages for certain economic sectors. For example, the Governor signed Assembly Bill (AB) 1228 that sets a \$20 minimum wage rate for fast food workers starting on April 1, 2024 with the rate increasing annually until 2029 based on the Consumer Price Index. Senate Bill (SB) 525 establishes five different minimum wage schedules for covered health care employees depending on how a facility is classified. These minimum wage rates go into effect on June 1, 2024 and range from \$18 per hour to \$23 per hour.

Increased Paid Sick Leave (SB 616)

Effective January 1, 2024, the amount of paid sick leave ("PSL") that California employers must provide employees has expanded from three days to five days per year.

Under the new law, employers must ensure that employees who have worked in California for the same employer for 30 or more days have no less than five days (40 hours) of accrued PSL by the 200th calendar day of employment or each calendar year. Additionally, the new law increases the accrual and carryover cap from six days (48 hours) to ten days (80 hours). Furthermore, employers using a different accrual method than providing one hour of PSL per every 30 hours worked must ensure that employees accrue not only the pre-existing requirement of twenty-four hours of PSL by the 120th calendar day of employment but also forty hours of PSL by the 200th calendar day of employment. Those employers that provide employees with a lump sum of PSL at the beginning of the year (the frontload method) rather than using the accrual method must provide employees with five days (40 hours) of PSL at the beginning of the year. Employers can still choose how they define the "year" for purposes of the frontload method.

Although the amended paid sick leave law continues to exempt employees covered by collective bargaining agreements that meet certain criteria, it does extend some of its protections to those employees. ➡

NEW LAWS - Continued on page 28



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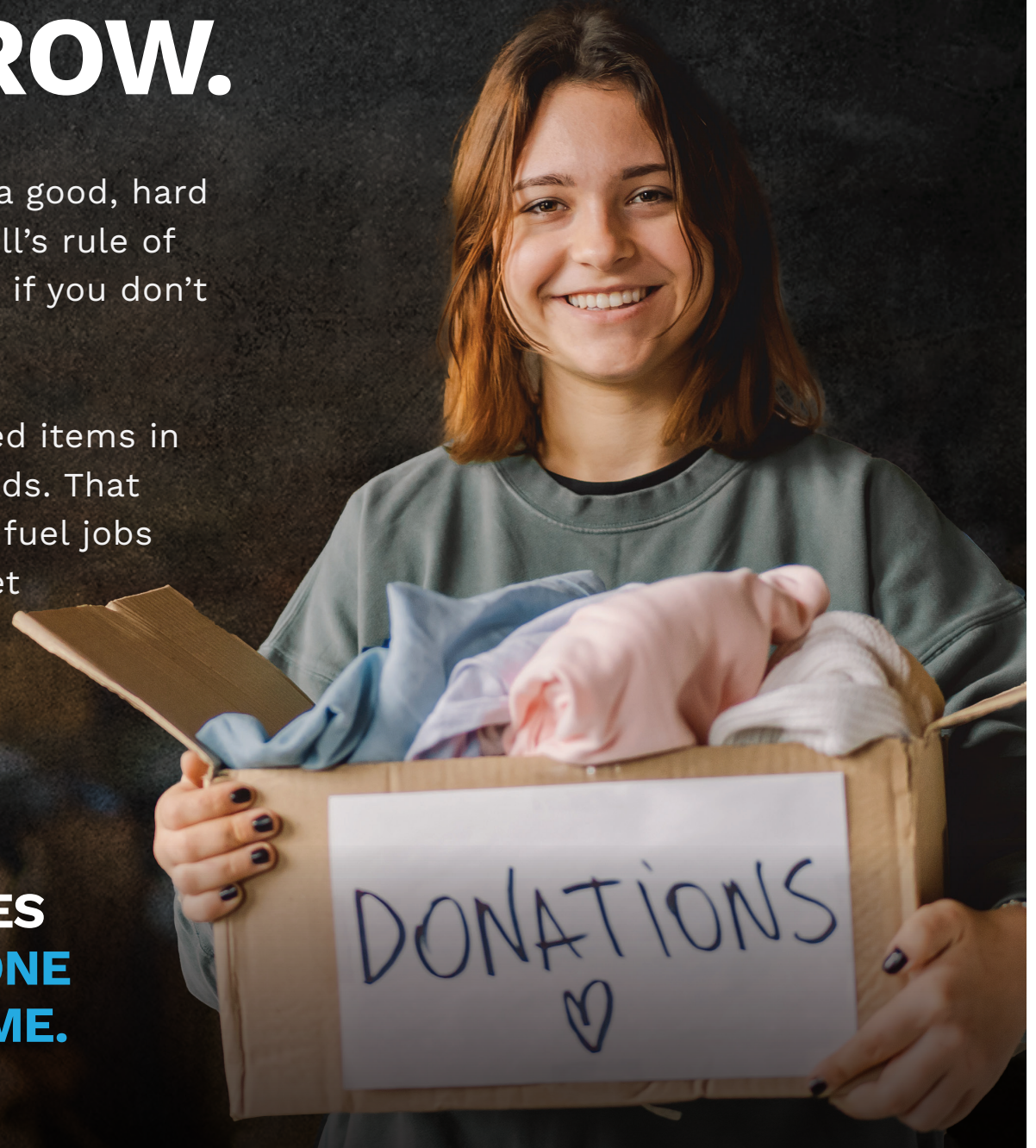
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Prepare Now for Sexual Harassment Prevention Training in 2024

by Gladys Rodriguez-Morales, Attorney, Fenton & Keller



When budgeting and preparing for employee training for 2024, be sure to remember California's sexual harassment prevention training requirement. Employers who have five or more employees are required to provide sexual harassment prevention training every two years. Part-

time and full-time employees, volunteers, unpaid interns, and independent contractors are counted in calculating the five-employee threshold, and everyone is counted even if they work in separate locations, or do not work or reside in California. While everyone is counted, employers are only required to provide training to California employees. However, the best practice is to provide the training to everyone.

Some of the training requirements include:

1. Timing of Training Requirement

- Supervisory employees must complete two hours of training every two years and non-supervisory employees must complete one hour every two years.
- New supervisors must be trained within six months of becoming a supervisor.
- New employees must be trained within six months of their hire date. Employees who previously received training are not required to retake the training for a period of two years from the date of the employee's last training if (1) the prior training was legally compliant; and (2) the employee reads and acknowledges receipt of the employer's anti-harassment policy.
- Minors between fourteen and seventeen years old must be trained.
- Temporary and 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.
- New businesses must provide training within six months of their establishment.

2. Record Keeping Requirement

Employers must keep documentation concerning the training for at least two years, including the (1) date of training; (2) type of training given; (3) copy of written/recorded training materials; (4)

name of the trainer; (5) names of employees who received the training; and (6) a copy of the certificates of training completion or attendance.

3. Effective Interactive Training Required

The training must be interactive and involve employee participation. The training can be conducted in an in-person 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 California Civil Rights Department offers online training courses in English, Spanish, Korean, Chinese, Vietnamese, and Tagalog. See <https://calcivilrights.ca.gov/shpt/>

4. 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.

5. 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/>.

Additional information is available from the California Civil Rights Department:

https://calcivilrights.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/sites/32/2022/11/Sexual-Harassment-Prevention-Training-For-Employers-FAQ_ENG.pdf



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.



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IRS Announces New Contribution Limits for 2024

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



On November 1, 2023, the Internal Revenue Service announced new limits for qualified and tax-advantaged retirement plans. Section 415 of the Internal Revenue Code provides for dollar limitations on benefits and contributions for retirement plans. Section 415(d) requires that the Secretary of the Treasury adjust these limits annually for cost-of-living increases. On January 1, 2024, the following changes will take effect.

The annual additions limits (also known as the 415 limit) for defined contribution plans (i.e., 401(k) plans) has increased from \$66,000 to \$69,000. This is the most amount of money that may be added to a participant's account each year, including both employee and employer contributions. Elective deferrals (the most amount of money an employee may contribute per year) have increased from \$22,500 to \$23,000. Catch-up contributions, for those individuals aged 50 and over, remains \$7,500. Therefore, the maximum amount of money an employee over age 50 may contribute is \$30,500. This catch-up amount is not included in the 415 limits previously discussed.

The contribution limit (elective deferrals) for Savings Incentive Match Plan for Employees (SIMPLE) retirement accounts (including both SIMPLE 401(k) and SIMPLE IRA) has increased from \$15,500 to \$16,000.

Individual Retirement Accounts (IRAs) also saw slight increases regarding contribution limits. For 2024, the IRA/Roth contribution limit has increased from \$6,500 to \$7,000. A catch-up contribution of \$1,000 is available to those individuals who are aged 50 and over, for a total of \$8,000. As has always

been the case, this contribution limit applies to all IRAs and Roth IRAs in the aggregate – you can contribute up to this amount for all accounts combined, not for each one.

One major change in 2024 applies to the deductibility of contributions to a traditional IRA (these rules do not apply to Roth IRAs). If neither married filing jointly (MFJ) spouse is an active participant in an employer-sponsored retirement plan (excluding 457 plans) or if a single person is not an active participant, then contributions to a traditional IRA are deductible without regard to the participant's modified adjusted gross income (MAGI). Deductibility of IRA contributions depends on filing status and, if married, which person is contributing.

For single taxpayers who are covered by a workplace retirement plan, the phaseout range is increased to \$77,000 and \$87,000, up from \$73,000 to \$83,000 in 2023. For married couples filing jointly, if both spouses are active participants in a workplace retirement plan, the phaseout range is \$123,000 to \$143,000 in 2024, up from \$116,000 to \$136,000 in 2023. For married couples filing jointly, when one spouse is an active participant in a workplace retirement plan and one spouse is not an active participant, there are two phaseout ranges depending on which spouse is contributing. The phaseout range for the active participant is \$123,000 to \$143,000 in 2024, up from \$116,000 to \$136,000 in 2023. The phaseout range for the nonactive participant is \$230,000 to \$240,000 in 2024, up from \$218,000 to \$228,000 in 2023. For married couples who file separate returns, the phaseout range is not subject to an annual cost-of-living adjustment and remains \$0 to \$10,000. ■

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

Understanding Your Food Sensitivity Results for the Holidays

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



The holiday season is synonymous with indulgence, and for many, it's a time when festive feasts take center stage. It's also a time when our belt buckles explore a few new notches, and when cholesterol levels tick up and wellness indicators tick down in preparation for a whirlwind of corrective New

Year's resolutions.

This is where most holiday eating advice stresses the importance of eating less. Less food, less fat, less sugar, less salt, and less often. And to be fair, for many Americans, this is important advice. I know that I could certainly do with choosing between ice cream or pie or cobbler at Thanksgiving this year, instead of my traditional "all of the above". But talking only about portions and calories in dieting advice often risks obsessing about quantity rather than trying to improve the quality in our diets (the same mistake I make at the family all-you-can-eat brunch on Christmas Eve). WHAT you eat and HOW those foods affect your personal biochemistry is at least as important as how MUCH you eat, but it can be harder to measure and to take action over.

This is where food sensitivity testing comes in. Food sensitivity testing is a diagnostic method that measures an individual's immune system response to specific foods. It identifies heightened immune reactions, such as IgG antibodies, to particular food components. Those heightened immune reactions can lead to all sorts of issues, especially when you are regularly eating foods that your body is sensitive to without even realizing it. The goal is to identify potential problem foods before they have a chance to play havoc in your body this holiday season.

First off, some helpful definitions. (You can skip this part if you've read some of my articles on food sensitivity testing before.) Food sensitivities and food allergies are often confused, but they are distinct physiological responses. Food allergies involve an immediate, often severe immune system reaction to a specific protein in a particular food. Common allergens include peanuts, shellfish, and tree nuts. In contrast, food sensitivities elicit a more delayed and subtle response, typically delayed over the following hours or days, and being

harder to pinpoint because of that. Common symptoms reported include bloating, digestive distress, mind fog, skin irritation, and difficulty maintaining a steady weight or energy level. Any of those sound familiar from a holiday binge?

Some people worry that knowing their food sensitivities is going to make eating difficult. You don't want to be "that relative" at a family gathering, with dietary restrictions that make it impossible to cook for you. Fortunately, food sensitivity results at ARCpoint Labs and many other laboratories tell you not only which foods you are sensitive to, but how severe the reaction is. Your food sensitivity results are not a list of foods to avoid, it's a list of flags, from green to yellow to orange to red, telling you how much stress each food is likely to put on you.

A severe food sensitivity reaction should be generally avoided. Mild and moderate sensitivities might be individually minor or even lead to no symptoms when eaten, but can lead to significant issues when they are eaten together with other mild to moderately sensitive foods consistently. Portion size is obviously going to be relevant as well; if you know you are moderately sensitive to green beans, maybe enjoy a first portion but decline seconds on that side dish, especially after you've already had paprika on your potatoes and duck breast on an appetizer, two foods that you are also mildly sensitive to. Elimination isn't the point, making informed choices so that your body isn't put under excessive stress is!

The bottom line is, almost everyone who tests will discover that they have food sensitivities. Planning a diet around that discovery, and being empowered



to include ingredients that you enjoy in moderation while decreasing or eliminating foods that are causing potential symptoms, is how your food sensitivity results go from a list of flagged foods to a strategy to keep you feeling your best.

The holiday season need not be a culinary minefield for those with food sensitivities. By understanding your food sensitivity results, and the difference between mild 'yellow flag' sensitivities and more severe 'red flags', and adopting practical strategies, you can approach festive feasts with confidence. Make informed choices, listen to your body's signals, and enjoy the holidays in a way that prioritizes both celebration and well-being. With a mindful approach to your unique dietary needs, you can savor the flavors of the season without the post-holiday regret.

ARCpoint Labs can be reached in Salinas at (831) 324-0772, in Monterey at (831) 324-0772. ■

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

The Gift Of Service

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



As 2023 comes to a close and I reflect on what seems to have been a whirlwind of a year, it is clear that our community has much to be grateful for. We have faced many challenges together over the years. Yet, I continue to see resilience, strength, and generosity demonstrated by the people of Monterey County at every turn.

As we begin to focus on seasonal generosity with holiday celebrations and gift-giving, it is good to remember that one of the most meaningful gifts we can give at this time of year, and indeed throughout the year, is an act of service to others. Whether volunteering at a local community nonprofit, helping a neighbor in need, or giving to a charitable organization, serving others is powerful.

Not only does helping others make the world a brighter and happier place; it also provides numerous health benefits so it is good for you, too.

Studies show that those who volunteer live longer than those who don't. Service to others can lower the stress hormone cortisol and boost serotonin, dopamine, and oxytocin--regulating mood and increasing feelings of connection. This results in what is known

as "helpers high." When we offer a helping hand, our blood pressure is lowered, happiness increases, and feelings of depression decrease.

You can offer help to others in your community in many ways this year. Some can be as simple as:

- Helping a technically challenged family member set up a computer or device.
- Doing light yardwork for a neighbor.
- Providing a wholesome meal for someone who is sick.
- Doing a few chores or some shopping for a friend or relative.
- Letting the car in front of you onto the highway.
- Checking in on elderly neighbors to ensure they stay warm and have what they need.
- Taking a moment to breathe and respond with kindness and compassion during challenging interactions with others.
- Offering a cup of coffee and a sympathetic ear to someone going through a difficult time.

Why not consider volunteer opportunities with a local nonprofit group or community organization:

- Join a school reading or tutoring program.
- Help clean up or beautify a local park or outdoor area.
- Sign up to help at your local food bank, shelter, or church.

- Join a charitable fundraising group.
- Consider helping local seniors by volunteering with Meals on Wheels or Alliance on Aging.

Research shows that volunteering raises self-confidence, provides a sense of purpose and belonging, and offers opportunities to form new friendships. It also provides:

- A sense of perspective.
- A healthy dose of fun.
- A feeling of renewed optimism and life satisfaction.
- A positive impact on good health and quality of life.

With all these valuable health and wellness benefits available to us, including a few small acts of kindness for friends and neighbors when planning your gift-giving this year makes a lot of sense.

From everyone at Mee Memorial Healthcare System, we wish you a healthy, happy, and helpful holiday season. ■



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➡ **NITRATE** – Continued from page 1

grown, but because crops can be grown almost all year. Farmers can rotate vegetable and berry crops or continually harvest the same crop from the same field. This requires fertilizer.

This farming practice may change after the full implementation of a state policy called Ag Order 4.0, which imposes substantial monitoring and reporting requirements for application of nitrate-based fertilizers and imposes limits that increase over time. The cost of adopting new fertilizer application technologies and changing growing patterns will likely compel some farmers (particularly smaller farmers) to transfer crop production to other regions or cease production altogether.

Meanwhile, some environmental groups are demanding expansive restrictions on land where nitrate-based fertilizers can be applied. They have filed a lawsuit to make it happen.

Nitrates as a Health Hazard

While nitrate-based fertilizers may be good for certain crops, nitrates that percolate down from the surface into groundwater are regarded by the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the State of California as a contaminant. There are cases documented in medical journals in which nitrate-contaminated drinking water used to prepare infant formula likely triggered infant methemoglobinemia, also known as “Blue Baby Syndrome” due to the obvious symptom of a blue-gray skin color and the condition can be fatal if unaddressed. There also may be health risks for adults who ingest drinking water that contain a level of nitrates that exceeds regulatory limits. It should be noted that there has been no documented “blue baby” instances in Monterey County in over two decades.

A perusal of web sources reveals that inorganic nitrates appear to be a ripe target for politicized “junk science.” Descriptions range from “beneficial,” to harmless, to harmful under some circumstances, to “toxic” and a cause of severe health problems. Arguments in support of strong regulations on nitrate-based fertilizer applications tend to portray the health effects as much more definitive and widespread than evidence suggests. In addition, news stories tend to report personal anecdotes about harmful health effects of nitrates without confirmation from medical professionals that the claims are valid.

It is uncertain if there have been any medically documented cases of infant methemoglobinemia in Monterey County in the 2000s. No examples are cited in documents submitted to government agencies. Certainly this data about actual cases (or absence of actual cases) would be a useful addition to the debate. Nevertheless, the potential effects on infants consuming baby formula make the presence of inorganic nitrates in drinking water a legitimate concern.

Well Contamination

Nitrate concentrations in groundwater aquifers exceed the maximum contaminant level in many rural areas of the Salinas Valley. This is a problem because residents in these areas obtain their drinking water from wells drilled into the aquifers.

A prominent example of nitrate contamination in Salinas Valley wells has been at the San Jerardo Cooperative, a farmworker housing complex in unincorporated Monterey County, southeast of Salinas city limits. This co-op had to abandon three previous wells because of nitrate contamination. It may eventually need to abandon

NITRATE - Continued on page 21

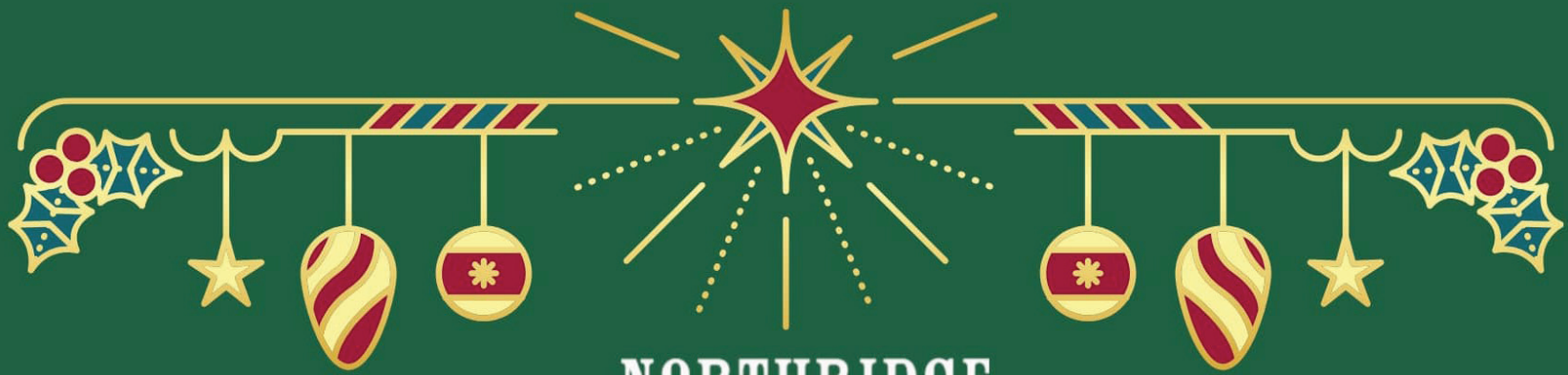


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NORTHRIDGE MALL HOLIDAY HOURS

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					November 17 10AM-9PM	November 18 10AM-9PM Santa Arrives
November 19 11AM-8PM	November 20 11AM-8PM	November 21 11AM-8PM	November 22 11AM-8PM	November 23 CLOSED	November 24 8AM-9PM	November 25 10AM-9PM
November 26 10AM-9PM	November 27 11AM-8PM	November 28 11AM-8PM	November 29 11AM-8PM	November 30 11AM-8PM	December 1 10AM-9PM	December 2 10AM-9PM
December 3 11AM-8PM	December 4 11AM-8PM	December 5 11AM-8PM	December 6 11AM-8PM	December 7 11AM-8PM	December 8 10AM-9PM	December 9 10AM-9PM
December 10 11AM-8PM	December 11 11AM-8PM	December 12 11AM-8PM	December 13 11AM-8PM	December 14 11AM-8PM	December 15 10AM-9PM	December 16 10AM-10PM
December 17 10AM-9PM	December 18 10AM-9PM	December 19 10AM-9PM	December 20 10AM-9PM	December 21 10AM-9PM	December 22 10AM-10PM	December 23 10AM-10PM
December 24 10AM-6PM	December 25 CLOSED	December 26 10AM-8PM	December 27 11AM-8PM	December 28 11AM-8PM	December 29 10AM-9PM	December 30 10AM-9PM
December 31 11AM -6PM	PLEASE NOTE DEPARTMENT STORE AND FITNESS CENTER MAY VARY.					

A close-up photograph of an older woman with short, wavy grey hair, smiling warmly at the camera. She is wearing a grey and blue plaid shirt and a small blue earring. She is holding a small, fluffy white dog with a red and white checkered collar. The background is slightly blurred, showing a window with a patterned curtain and a view of greenery outside.



- Residences with patio & fenced lawn area for your dog to play
- Supportive assisted living services
- Six acres of outdoor gardens, courtyards and walking paths
- Cats & other pets welcome too!

 **(831) 585-1790**



A **Carefield Living** Community

RCFE #275202569



Leadership at the City of Salinas has changed, and Community Development Department Director Megan Hunter and City Manager Steve Carrigan are no longer employed by the City of Salinas. This has created a policy vacuum in city leadership. It opens an opportunity for some members of the City Council to push for more aggressive government

Your Chamber asserts that failure to increase housing supply in the region for many years remains the true, fundamental problem. ■

RESIDENTIAL RENTAL REGISTRATION FORM
MANDATORY PER ORDINANCE NO. 2663
 REGISTRATION YEAR: 2023-2024

Mail Form to:
 CDD – Housing Division
 65 W. Alisal St., Salinas, CA 93901
 OR Email to:
 RentalRegistration@CS.salinas.ca.us

PART 1 – CONTACT INFORMATION

Provide the property owner's contact information. If the property owner has a Residential Rental Business License, they should provide the business name (if applicable), and business license number.

PROPERTY OWNER INFORMATION

LAST NAME*		FIRST NAME*		M.I.
BUSINESS NAME (IF APPLICABLE)			BUSINESS LICENSE (IF APPLICABLE)	
ADDRESS*		EMAIL*		
CITY*	STATE*	ZIP CODE*	PHONE*	

Property Manager section to be completed if the property is managed by someone other than the property owner.

PROPERTY MANAGER (IF APPLICABLE)

LAST NAME*		FIRST NAME*		M.I.
MANAGEMENT COMPANY (IF ANY)		EMAIL*	PHONE*	
ADDRESS*		CITY*	STATE*	ZIP CODE*

PART 2 – LIST OF RENTAL PROPERTIES AND COST CALCULATION

List all Rental Properties. Use a Separate Line for Each Address (APHN) on call 833-758-7734.

APHN can be found on the property's tax bill.

Note: If requires more than 6 APNs, just enter address/online call and call 833-758-7734.

# of units on a Parcel	Registration Fee Table 2023					# OF UNITS ON APN	REGISTRATION FEE
	\$10	\$15	\$20	\$25	\$30		
1	\$20	\$30	\$40	\$50	\$60	25-49	\$125
2						50-99	\$150
3						100+	\$175
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RESIDENTAL RENTAL REGISTRATION FORM
MANDATORY PER ORDINANCE NO. 2663
REGISTRATION YEAR: 2023-2024

OPTIONAL INFORMATION

Provided the information in this section is voluntary.

Units utilizing rent subsidy <i>e.g. Section 8</i>		Are any utilities included with rent?					Occupancy Status	
Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>					# of vacant units <input style="width: 50px;" type="text"/>		
# of Units		If yes, which utilities?					# of units occupied <input style="width: 50px;" type="text"/>	
<input style="width: 30px;" type="text"/>		Gas <input style="width: 30px;" type="text"/>	Sewer <input style="width: 30px;" type="text"/>	Water <input style="width: 30px;" type="text"/>	Garbage <input style="width: 30px;" type="text"/>	Electricity <input style="width: 30px;" type="text"/>	Other <input style="width: 30px;" type="text"/>	

REQUIRED INFORMATION

Completing the information in this section is mandatory per Ordinance No. 2663

	Address	Unit Number <i>e.g. BA</i>	# of Bedrooms	# of Bathrooms	Square Footage <i>e.g. 1,130 sq. ft.</i>
Unit 1	<i>E.g. 65 W Alisal</i>				
Unit 2	Address	Unit Number	# of Bedrooms	# of Bathrooms	Square Footage
Unit 3	Address	Unit Number	# of Bedrooms	# of Bathrooms	Square Footage
Unit 4	Address	Unit Number	# of Bedrooms	# of Bathrooms	Square Footage
Unit 5	Address	Unit Number	# of Bedrooms	# of Bathrooms	Square Footage
Unit 6	Address	Unit Number	# of Bedrooms	# of Bathrooms	Square Footage
Unit 7	Address	Unit Number	# of Bedrooms	# of Bathrooms	Square Footage
Unit 8	Address	Unit Number	# of Bedrooms	# of Bathrooms	Square Footage

Questions? Email RentalRegistration@clsalinas.co.us or call 831-758-7334

PAGE _____ OF _____

Finish Strong, It's Not How You Start

by Pastor Todd Anderson



At the beginning of each year, many of us are filled with enthusiasm and a long list of goals. However, as the year progresses, setbacks and disappointments can lead to feelings of disillusionment by December. To make a successful transition into the new year, it's crucial to end the current year positively, shifting focus from what we didn't achieve to the successes and pleasant surprises that did occur.

Reflecting on how we positively impact others and recognizing unplanned achievements can be uplifting. This helps us celebrate our progress in different areas of life, regardless of the size of these accomplishments. As the end of the year draws closer, it's a good time to reevaluate our goals. Some might have yet to be achieved, but it's vital to see them not as failures but as targets yet to be reached. Life changes, and so do our goals. It's okay to let go of goals that no longer fit, but for those that still resonate, we should continue to pursue them, even in small steps.

A positive mindset is vital now. Don't view the end of the year as a cutoff for abandoning goals but as an opportunity to plan and strategize for the future. This involves assessing ongoing and new goals, documenting them, and preparing a plan for the year ahead. This approach means resisting the urge

to give up on goals that still need to be met, recognizing that some unachieved objectives within the year may still be important and worth pursuing. The transition from one year to the next is an opportunity to recalibrate, letting go of what's no longer beneficial and focusing on what still matters.

So, end the year strong, with positivity that changes your perspective. Instead of focusing on failures or what didn't happen, we should concentrate on our achievements,



lessons learned, and the good that emerged. This optimistic viewpoint prepares us for a productive and fulfilling new year with new lessons and a refreshed sense of purpose.

Also, let me invite you to our special Christmas Eve services at Compass Church. Sunday, December 24, join us at 9 am or 10:30 am at 1044 S. Main in Salinas. I'd love to meet a new friend.

My prayer for you as we end 2023 is that you will celebrate the Christ of Christmas and put Him first in your plans as we begin the new year of 2024. God bless You. ■

This article is a paid insertion by Chamber member, Compass Church.

Register Now!



Littler

Wednesday
January 24, 2024
8:45 am - 3:15 pm

VirtuaLivesm
Online Training

20th Annual Employment Law & Leadership Conference

TPO and Littler will guide you through an informative VirtuaLive event, balancing both Legal and Leadership Best Practices to prepare you for 2024 and beyond!

A Premier Conference for Business Owners, Managers, HR, Risk Management and Legal Counsel in Public, Private and Non-Profit Organizations

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Time	Topic/Presenter(s)
8:45am – 9:00am	General Session <i>Welcome and Conference Overview!</i> <i>Melissa Irwin, SPHR, PHRca, SHRM-SCP, TPO Senior Consultant/Training Specialist</i>
9:00am – 10:30am	Littler Employment Update <i>Keeping on the Path to Legal Compliance!</i> <i>Marlene Muraco, Esq., Littler Shareholder & Richard Leasia, Esq., Littler Shareholder</i>
10:45am – 11:45am	HR/Legal Q&A <i>Balancing Both Legal & Leadership!</i> <i>Marlene Muraco, Esq., Littler Shareholder & Melissa Irwin, SPHR, PHRca, SHRM-SCP, TPO Senior Consultant/Training Specialist</i>
1:00pm – 2:00pm	Today's Talent Shortage... <i>Let's Plan to Win!</i> <i>Michaëlle Stanford, PHRca, M.A., Senior Consultant/HR Strategy & Training Specialist</i>
2:15pm – 3:15pm	Are Personality Clashes on the Rise... <i>Or Is It Your Imagination?</i> <i>Michaëlle Stanford, PHRca, M.A., Senior Consultant/HR Strategy & Training Specialist</i>

REGISTRATION QUESTIONS?

Call Amber Allerton, Operations Manager/Conference General Manager at 831.647.7292 or ambera@tpohr.com

Go to: www.tpohr.com to Learn More & Register!

Children's Shopping Tour



Every year, in December, our community comes together to make the holiday season brighter for hundreds of children. This is a cherished event where children in need are paired with volunteers for a day of shopping.

Volunteer or Donate Here!



SalinasChamber.com




Events@salinaschamber.com



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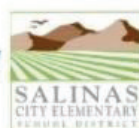


Support our Chamber Members

Thank you, to our November 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
Granite Rock	1959	Trio Petroleum	2018
Rain for Rent, Inc.	1974	Alvarado Street Brewery & Tasting Room	2016
The Post Box	1983	Engie Services	2016
KION TV	1985	McDonald's Monterey/Salinas	2016
Food Bank for Monterey County	1991	McSherry & Hudson	2017
Kasavan Architects	1993	Trio Petroleum	2018
ACE Hardware	2001	BBSI—Monterey	2019
Scheid Family Wines	2002	Manpower	2019
Moncrief & Hart, PC	2004	Primerica Financial Services	2019
Rotary Club of Salinas	2004	Valley Health Associates	2019
Security Public Storage	2004	Inns of California	2020
Fenton & Keller	2009	ZenBusiness	2020
Rancho Cielo Youth Campus	2010	Cardinale Automotive Group	2021
Mahoney & Associates	2013	Center For Community Advocacy	2021
Aera Energy LLC	2014	Community Homeless Solutions	2021
Loaves, Fishes & Computers	2014	Health Project Center	2021
U-Haul Incorporated	2014	Mangia—Eat on Main	2021
Alvarado Street Brewery & Tasting Room	2016	American Water	2022
Engie Services	2016	Cal Pacific Roofing	2022
McDonald's Monterey/Salinas	2016	Rock Boxing	2022
McSherry & Hudson	2017	Team Beesley—Keller Williams—Coastal Estates	2022

A Special Thanks to Our Visionary and Stakeholder Members



Unlock Your New Year's Travel Resolutions: A Gateway from Monterey Regional Airport

As we step into a new year, now is the perfect time to embrace new adventures and check off the travel destinations beckoning you from your bucket list.

For Monterey County travelers, flying out of Monterey Regional Airport (MRY) offers the perfect gateway to a range of captivating destinations. Make 2024 the year to finally embark on that family escape to warm and welcoming San Diego. Or experience the thrill of Major League Baseball Spring Training in Phoenix, Arizona, where 15 teams compete in 10 stadiums! Perhaps you'd prefer to savor the serene beauty of an Alaskan cruise from Seattle. The options run the gamut, depending on what you are looking for in a getaway.

Monterey Regional Airport prides itself on offering convenient connections to diverse destinations, so let's explore how Monterey Regional Airport can simplify and enhance your travel dreams.

Exploring the Beauty of San Diego: A Family Adventure

For families seeking an enjoyable retreat, a quick flight to San Diego International Airport (SAN) presents a wide array of family-friendly activities. From the renowned San Diego Zoo to the stunning beaches and vibrant culture, San Diego caters to every member of the family.

A trip to San Diego doesn't just mean relaxation and sandy beaches; it's a perfect blend of history, culture, and fun. The remarkable Balboa Park, the USS Midway Museum, the Maritime Museum, The New Children's Museum on the Embarcadero, the picturesque Coronado Peninsula, Belmont Park amusement center, SeaWorld San Diego, the historic Gaslamp Quarter in downtown, the stunning La Jolla Cove, and LEGOLAND California in nearby Carlsbad are just a short list of the many attractions waiting to be explored.

Spring Training in Phoenix: A Sports Enthusiast's Haven

For sports aficionados, Major League Baseball Spring Training in Phoenix, Arizona is an unmissable delight. With Monterey Regional Airport's easy nonstop service to Phoenix Sky Harbor Airport (PHX), experiencing the pre-season fervor of baseball is just a short flight away.

The Phoenix area, which encompasses neighboring communities such as Scottsdale, Peoria, Mesa and Glendale, hosts teams ranging from local favorites - San Francisco Giants and Oakland A's - to teams beyond - San Diego Padres, Los Angeles Dodgers,



Chicago Cubs and the most recent World Series teams, Arizona Diamondbacks and Texas Rangers, the Series champions. There are 15 teams playing in 10 different stadiums, all within a short drive of each other. The laid-back ambiance coupled with thrilling baseball action makes Phoenix a must-visit for every enthusiast of America's favorite pastime.

Alaskan Cruise through Seattle: A Journey to Remember

Embarking on an Alaskan cruise from Seattle is an experience that promises memories to last a lifetime. Departing from MRY, travelers have direct access into Seattle-Tacoma International Airport (SEA), the gateway to an enchanting Alaskan adventure. The captivating beauty of the Pacific Northwest combined with the grandeur of the Alaskan wilderness offers an unparalleled voyage of exploration and discovery.

Some of the major cruise lines that offer cruises from Seattle to Alaska include Princess Cruises, Holland America Line, Celebrity Cruises, and Norwegian Cruise Line, among others. Ports of call vary depending on the cruise line, but often include stops in Skagway, Juneau, and Ketchikan and visiting such breath-taking areas such as the Endicott Arm, Tracy Arm, or Glacier Bay National Park. These cruises usually wrap up with a final port call in the British Columbian capital of Victoria before returning to Seattle and then directly home via MRY.

Skiing the Slopes of Colorado through Denver: A Winter Wonderland

For those winter adventure enthusiasts, Denver provides seamless access to the magnificent ski slopes of Colorado. When leaving from MRY on a direct flight to Denver International Airport (DEN) you will be moments away from your winter wonderland Zen. With Colorado being home to the Rocky Mountains, it's no big surprise that it boasts an array of the world's best ski resorts. What may surprise you, however, is how close Denver is to the world-class skiing that Colorado is known for.

Imagine strapping on your skies and hitting the slopes within an hour of arrival, the small but reasonably priced Echo Mountain Resort is only 50 minutes

away from Denver! Loveland Ski Area, Arapahoe Ski Area, Eldora Mountain Resort and Winter Park Resort are all only about an hour away from Denver as well. Other resorts within a two-hour drive include such world-renowned slopes as Vail, Breckenridge and the luxurious Beaver Creek.

Locals all have their favorite runs and resorts, but you can't go wrong with any of the fantastic slopes surrounding Denver.

Monterey Regional Airport: Your Travel Hub

Flying from MRY is a breeze. With easy parking, efficient security lines, which includes a TSA precheck option, and a convenient terminal layout, it's hassle-free from check-in to takeoff. Whether you're jetting off on a family adventure, a sports excursion, a relaxing cruise, or a breathtaking ski trip, the "park, fly, and go" approach of MRY simplifies the travel experience, allowing you to focus on the excitement of your getaway.

Plan Your Journey Today

Visit montereyairport.com for detailed information, airline booking facilities, and resources to streamline your travel planning. Don't let those travel dreams linger unfulfilled and make 2024 the year to explore, experience, and create cherished memories. Begin your adventure from Monterey Regional Airport, where your travel resolutions are just a flight away.

Looking for more? Be sure to follow @montereyairport on Facebook, Instagram and X (formerly Twitter).

Monterey Regional Airport

200 Fred Kane Drive, Monterey, CA 93940

(831) 648-7000

Airport code: MRY





Happy Holidays

FROM THE BBB TEAM

The Building Business Back team wishes you happy holidays. We especially thank our business community, who have trusted us to help strengthen businesses in Monterey County.

We look forward to continuing to serve you next year. Until then, we wish you a holiday season filled with joy and prosperity.

Warmest Regards,

The BBB Team



Local Business Resources

Our Building Business Back team has highlighted these resources to help entrepreneurs and business owners in our community. From forgivable loan programs to business facade improvement grants, these resources empower local businesses to thrive..



Get in the holiday spirit with **FREE** resources to help your business grow and thrive!



01

City of Salinas Marketing & Technology Grant (City-Wide)

Receive up to \$2,500 for your brick-and-mortar or home-based business.



02

City of Salinas Marketing & Technology Grant (Alisal Area)

Receive up to \$2,500 for your brick-and-mortar or home-based business.



03

City of Salinas Outdoor Dining Forgivable Loan

Eateries in Downtown Salinas are eligible for a one-time forgivable loan of up to \$10,000 for eligible expenses.



04

City of Soledad Business Facade Improvement Grant

Businesses in Soledad are eligible to receive up to \$25,000 for qualified facade improvements.



05

City of Soledad Hotel Incentives

Provides incentives and individual assistance to develop quality hotels and rehabilitate existing hotels.



06

City of Soledad Business Recruitment

Assistance with establishing or relocating a business to Soledad such as providing metrics of interest, permitting support, and individual assistance.



07

City of King Covid-19 Business Relief Grant

Businesses in King City that were in operation prior to March 2020 are eligible to receive up to \$10,000 in grants.



08

City of Seaside FLIP Storefront Grant

Businesses in Seaside are eligible to receive up to \$7,5000 for qualified facade improvements. Note: This is a cost-sharing grant.

Scan the QR code for more information or visit:

MontereyCountyBusiness.com/Local-Business-Resources



123 Capitol St, Suite B
Salinas, CA 93901



(831) 216-3000



MontereyCountyBusiness.com



info@mcbs.biz



➡ **NITRATE** – Continued from page 12

its current well. Another example is at the unincorporated community of San Lucas, where wells have exceeded nitrate limits.

Disputes Over Government Regulation of Nitrates

In the past couple of decades, the State of California and its water boards have responded to reports and studies about nitrate contamination by implementing policies meant to reduce nitrate levels in groundwater. The first three Agricultural Orders related to application of nitrate-based fertilizers were approved in 2004 (Ag Order 1.0), 2012 (Ag Order 2.0), and 2017 (Ag Order 3.0). These orders became embroiled in disputes between agricultural interests and environmental groups.

On April 15, 2021, the Central Coast Water Quality Control Board approved Ag Order 4.0, “General Waste Discharge Requirements for Discharges from Irrigated Lands, Order No. R3-2021-0040.” This sets up a system for management and reporting of nitrates and a reduction of nitrate use over time.

However, on September 8, 2023, the State Water Resources Control Board issued its own Order WQ 2023-008, related to review of Ag Order 4.0. The order acknowledged challenges with compliance under Ag Order 4.0 and announced the intention of the Board to “further develop the Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program (ILRP) by convening a second expert panel.”

Before issuing this order, the Board had received two petitions regarding Ag



Order 4.0. One petition was from groups related to agriculture: Grower-Shipper Association of Central California, Grower-Shipper Association of Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo Counties, Western Growers Association, Western Plant Health Association, California Farm Bureau Federation, Monterey County Farm Bureau and California Strawberry Commission. The other petition was from environmental groups and the farmworker co-op: California Coastkeeper Alliance, Santa Barbara Channelkeeper, Monterey Coastkeeper, San Jerardo Cooperative, California Sportfishing Protection Alliance, Pacific Coast Federation of Fishermen’s Associations, and

Institute for Fisheries Resources.

On October 27, 2023, the coalition of environmental groups filed a lawsuit in Sacramento County Superior Court to suspend the new order of the State Water Resources Control Board. They want the original Ag Order 4.0 fully implemented without further review by an expert panel. (They regard further review as unnecessary and an attempt to delay necessary regulations.) In addition, they want the Board to implement policies beyond groundwater that protect riparian areas (banks of rivers), wetlands, and other surface waters from nitrates.

Your Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce will be watching this case. Contact the Chamber if you want to obtain a copy of Ag Order 4.0, the subsequent State Water Resources Control Board order from September 2023, and the lawsuit challenging it. ■



Matthew Ferry



Emmanuel Perea Jimenez



Molly Steele



Cyndi Claxton

Recent Additions to the Fenton & Keller Team

We are proud to introduce the associate attorneys who recently joined Fenton & Keller. Join us in extending a warm welcome to our new colleagues who bring unique expertise to serving our clients.

ATTORNEYS

Christopher Panetta
Sara Boyns
Brian Call
Troy Kingshaven
John Kesecker

Elizabeth Leitzinger
Andrew Kreeft
Kenneth Kleinkopf
Alex Lorca
Derric Oliver

Carol Hilburn
Marco Lucido
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Christopher Nannini
Tara Clemens
Matthew Ferry
Emmanuel Perea Jimenez

Molly Steele
Cyndi Claxton

Of Counsel:
Charles Keller

(831) 373-1241 • 2801 Monterey-Salinas Highway, Monterey • www.FentonKeller.com



- Upcoming - CHAMBER EVENTS

For complete list visit salinaschamber.com

• Children's Shopping Tour

Saturday, Dec. 9, 7:00 AM – 2:00 PM, Northridge Mall (In the Community Room located between JCPenney and Hobby Lobby), Salinas

Every year, in December, our community comes together to make the holiday season brighter for hundreds of children. The Children's Shopping Tour is a cherished event where children in need are paired with volunteers for a day of shopping. It's an event filled with laughter and excitement for everyone involved! We need dedicated volunteers to join us on Saturday, December 9th. There are opportunities available to support the event for everyone! You can volunteer at one of the many stations, such as set-up, check-in, distributing gift cards, cutting merchandise tags, take-down, or sign up to be a chaperone and spend a fun-filled day shopping with the children. Witness the smiles and joy of children as they pick out their own clothing, create a lasting impact, and make memories! If you have any questions, contact Jennifer Russell at Events@SalinasChamber.com or call the Chamber office.

• Ribbon Cutting Ceremony with T-Mobile

Friday, Dec. 15, 3:00 PM, 2197 H Dela Rosa Sr Street Suite H, Soledad

Join us for a grand opening and ribbon cutting ceremony with T-Mobile for their new location in Soledad. Connect with the team, explore the new location, and enjoy delightful refreshments. Visit SalinasChamber.com for more information.

2024 PREVIEW - MARK THE DATE!

• Ribbon Cutting Ceremony with North American Mental Health Services

Thursday, Jan. 18, 5:00 – 6:30 PM, 450 Lincoln Avenue, Suite 101, Salinas

• Lunch and Learn with Salinas Valley Health

Tuesday, Jan. 23, 12:00 – 1:00 PM, 119 East Alisal Street, Salinas

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The Heart of Goodwill Central Coast Beats Through the Generosity of Donors

by Goodwill of the Central Coast Staff

It's no secret that we live in a consumerism culture. We all want things, of course, but do we really need everything we buy? Savvy marketers think so, and pound us with ads for the next brand new thing, whether that be clothes, appliances or electronics.

Overconsumption gives us short-term satisfaction, but in the end it often leads to debt and disappointment, excess clutter, overburdened landfills and ultimately guilt at our own indulgences.

Goodwill Central Coast offers solutions to all this overconsumption that takes a toll on both pocketbooks and the environment. It gives clothing and products an opportunity to be utilized to their highest potential — which is a critical principle of a circular economy (reduce, reuse, recycle). What's more, every purchase supports GCC's mission of offering valuable services to individuals facing barriers to employment.

The key to making Goodwill's circular economy work? Donations. By donating, we reduce the need for someone else to buy it new — saving our natural resources. With a network of donation centers and retail stores, GCC isn't just about giving items a second chance; it's about extending opportunities to individuals seeking a fresh start.

The art of decluttering

How do we even begin to let go of our "stuff?" It's difficult because we naturally fall back on rationalizations: "I paid good money for it." "I might need it someday." "Someone gave that to me as a gift." "It was trending on Tik Tok."

The first step is to take a good hard look in the closet (and maybe the mirror!). Fast fashion is one of the worst polluters of the planet. It's estimated that one garbage truck of textiles is sent to the landfill every second. This is an estimated \$500 billion value lost every year due to clothing being barely worn and rarely recycled. Buying secondhand goods means that the energy and natural resources that went into creating those goods have already been used.

The community can help by gathering up unwanted or unused items, especially clothing. Here are five suggestions about what to remove from your closet first:

- **Pieces that are dated:** Whatever was in style a year or two ago, it's probably not in style anymore. Anything that you've held on to, that you used to wear years ago may not work today. In general, get rid of anything that's been in your closet for a long time and isn't classic.
- **New items you have never worn:** Do some of your clothes still have tags attached? That's your first sign! If it's a new item and you haven't worn it in the first two to three months, just let it go.
- **Gifts you'll never wear:** You don't like them and can't exchange them, so donate these items to Goodwill. Don't feel guilty. It was the thought that mattered most, right? If you don't love it and you're not going to wear it, it's just cluttering up your closet.
- **Items on wish list:** Get rid of any clothing that is more suited for somebody else's life. This includes things that you purchased wishing one day you would wear them — especially if you need to be a different size. If you bought them but they don't fit your lifestyle then they're not realistic.

Outside of your wardrobe, it's important to tackle areas of the home that are really cluttered, including attics and garages. If you're wondering if you really need to purge, there are probably clues all around you:



1. Your "containers" are no longer containing the things you own in that category.
2. You are spending more time organizing a space than it's worth.
3. Something doesn't have a home in your home.
4. You can no longer park your car (or even walk through) your garage.

The bottom line is, if you don't use an item, if you don't need or love an item, then it doesn't belong in your home. Wellness experts say that a home should be a sanctuary, not a place that is cluttered and overwhelming.

If something has collected dust for six months or more, there is no valid reason to keep it. If it helps, imagine the item in someone else's loving hands, following their Goodwill purchase, and a third party removing obstacles to employment.

Donating to Goodwill is easy

GCC encourages all residents in Monterey, Santa Cruz and San Luis Obispo counties to begin the purge process. It's fast, easy and convenient. GCC is especially interested in donated clothing, shoes, housewares, small electrical items, and small electronics, with donation centers listed here.

What's more, all monetary donations and donations of clothing and household goods that are in "good" condition or better are entitled to a tax deduction, according to Federal law. The IRS requires that all charitable donations be itemized and valued, and GCC provides an estimated value list here.

In addition, Goodwill Central Coast provides the following services:

- Free home pickups are available for large amounts of items (some restrictions apply). Those interested should send their address, telephone number and pictures of the items they would like picked up to donorservicesc@ccgoodwill.org.
- Free weekly or monthly pickup service from Businesses/schools/organizations (please contact donor services at 800-894-8440)
- Donation drives which can net an organization, school, club or nonprofit thousands of dollars are available this fall and the spring of next year in Santa Cruz, Monterey and San Luis Obispo counties
- For donating high value items please call donor services at 800-894-8440 and someone will be happy to assist.

In a typical year, GCC receives more than 630,000 donations, totaling more than 25 million pounds of clothing and household items. From those generous donations, GCC diverts more than 17 million pounds from landfills, helping preserve and protect the Central Coast landscape. And the money raised helps fund programs that put more than 13,000 people back to work, while helping rehabilitate others who are trying to be productive members of society. ■

- Upcoming - NON-PROFIT EVENTS

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

- **WeatherTech Raceway Laguna Seca, Coffee and Cars**
December 2, 7:30 AM – 1:30PM
WeatherTech Raceway
1021 Monterey-Salinas Highway, Salinas
The picturesque Laguna Seca Recreation Area is home to one of the most dynamic Cars & Coffee locations in America. Early risers will enjoy a relaxed and quiet environment as entrance begins at 7:30 am to enjoy a wide variety of automobiles and a delicious cup of coffee. A \$5 donation is required which will go to help a local non-profit. From classic and muscle cars to all types of exotics, it's all at Cars & Coffee.
- **Alzheimer's Association Salinas, Dementia Family Caregiver Support Group**
December 6, 12:30-2:00PM
1130 San Vicente Avenue, Salinas
Support groups create a safe, confidential, supportive environment or community and a chance for participants to develop informal mutual support and social relationships. They also educate and inform participants about dementia and help participants develop methods and skills to solve problems.
- **YOSAL, Winter Concert**
December 6, 7:00PM
Sherwood Hall, 940 N. Main Street, Salinas
Join us for the Youth Orchestra Salinas (YOSAL) Winter Concert at Sherwood Hall on Wednesday, December 6th, at 7:00 PM! We warmly invite the community to join us in supporting the kids through the power of music! Admission is free for everyone, but make sure to reserve your tickets by December 6th to secure your spot. You won't want to miss this fantastic performance featuring talented students from Salinas and County schools. Young musicians will be showcasing a diverse program of classical, cultural, and holiday music.
- **Salinas City Center, First Fridays!**
December 8, 5:00PM –Downtown, Salinas
On the First Friday of every month many of the downtown businesses stay open later than usual and many host live music and wine tastings as well as have special promotions going on.
- **Monterey County Food Bank, Feed the Soul Event**
December 8, 6:00 PM
The Pocket 6th Avenue, Carmel
Please join us for a fun, festive evening at The Pocket Carmel's beautiful restaurant complex, which will feature live music, wine, incredible food stations, libations, and a silent auction. This will be a night to mingle and enjoy. Please join us for an incredible evening and know that you are a force for good in helping to end hunger in Monterey County. 100 percent of all ticket sales and silent auction items will benefit the Food Bank for Monterey County.
- **SNIP, Annual Santa Paws Christmas Shopping Event**
December 9, 10:00 AM – 2:00 PM
Pasadera County Club,
100 Pasadera Drive, Monterey
Bring Your Friends and Explore the Treasures offered by unique vendors from across the country! 20% of all proceeds will go to benefit animals and communities in need through SNIP!
- **Monterey Peninsula Voices Holiday Concert**
December 9, 7:00pm
December 10, 3:00 pm
First United Methodist Church, 915 Sunset
Immerse yourself in the joyous atmosphere at the "Winter With You" concert. Led by Dr. Sean Boulware, the 100-person choir will be performing renditions of classics such as "The Hallelujah Chorus," "Silent Night" and others accompanied by a brass quintet, along with beautiful melodies of "Winter With You," "The Light of Christmas" and more. The eclectic lineup also includes jazz, spirituals, sacred music and more. Audience members are even invited to lend their voices in an array of festive carols.
- **Hospice Giving Foundation, Tree of Life Celebration**
December 10, 5:30 – 7:30PM –
Portola Hotel and Spa, 2 Portola Plaza, Monterey
Our Tree of Life celebration, a 38-year tradition in our community, also presents the opportunity for you to pay tribute to those loved ones that you remember by providing a Tree of Life Tribute gift in their honor. Your loved one's names will be listed in the 2022 Tribute Book (viewable further down on this page). Thank you for your support!
- **Blue Zones Project Monterey County, Discover your purpose**
December 11, 5:00 – 7:00 PM
450 E Romie Lane, Salinas
Blue Zones Project Monterey County and Salinas Valley Health bring you a Purpose Workshop available for the entire community. This is an opportunity for each individual to discover their set of strengths and talents that can be used to lead a truly meaningful life. People who have "purpose," or a sense of their gifts and strengths -and use them daily- have increased well-being and tend to live about seven years longer than those who do not. One of the goals of the Blue Zones Project® is to help people discover a clear definition of their gifts or deepen their sense of purpose. It's fun. Enlightening. Life lengthening. Life changing! This workshop will be in English. The workshop is available for staff, students and the community. Appropriate for all individuals age 15 years and older.
- **Active Seniors, Inc, Monthly Luncheon**
December 14, 11:45AM-1:30PM
100 Harvest Street, Salinas
\$12 for members and nonmembers. The lunch is prepared by our professional chef, Michael Gaines, and his crew of volunteers. There is always a program following lunch. Lunch is served at noon but come early and have a social time with friends. Please call 831-424-5066, email asi@activeseniors.org, or come in to make a reservation. Our website, activeseniors.org, will have a link to the newsletter where the menu and program are listed.



**Ambassador
Spotlight**
Brent Calvin,
**Disaster Kleanup
Specialists**



Brent Calvin is a marketing executive with over 35 years of experience on the Central Coast of California. He has worked with major media corporations, property management companies, national non-profit organizations and is an expert in new media marketing as well as all traditional advertising methods. He brings all that experience to making sure Disaster Kleanup Specialists are the first thing you think of when a disaster happens.

Wishing you a safe and lovely holiday season.
From your Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce
Parade of Lights, Salinas



Member News

Hartnell Community College District Expresses Gratitude To District 6 Trustee Erica Padilla-Chavez Following Resignation

The Hartnell Community College District would like to express its most profound appreciation for the remarkable contributions and unwavering leadership of District 6 Trustee Erica Padilla-Chavez after 14 years of dedicated and tireless service to the District's students and community. During the October 17 board meeting, Padilla-Chavez announced her resignation, with an effective date of November 2, 2023. "I would like to commend Erica Padilla-Chavez's relentless commitment to our students," stated Aurelio Salazar, Jr. President of the Hartnell College Governing Board. "Erica Padilla-Chavez was instrumental in the passage of the Measure T bond and construction of our new facility in Soledad." Throughout her tenure, Padilla-Chavez achieved numerous milestones and spearheaded initiatives that have had a lasting impact on the college and its surrounding communities. Under her leadership, the District experienced notable advancements, including increased support for dreamers, the expansion of ag tech programs, the establishment of healthcare pathways, and a commitment to broadening access within the District.



Kaiser Permanente Has Announced Eric Henry As SVP And Area Manager Of Greater San Jose Area

Eric joins Kaiser Permanente after holding senior leadership positions with nonprofit health systems in North Carolina, Michigan, and Virginia. Before joining KP, Eric served as Senior Vice President, System Professional & Support Services, at Novant Health in Charlotte, North Carolina, where he led clinical and ancillary services, including respiratory care, laboratory, radiology, rehabilitation medicine, clinical engineering, patient transport, dietary, and environment of care, at the health system's 15 medical centers. Whilst in northern Michigan, Eric served as the vice president of operations and ambulatory services at Munson Healthcare. In addition to leading daily operations at the flagship tertiary facility, his scope included both the oncology service line and outpatient services. Eric also served in various capacities in consulting, the medical group setting, practice operations, inpatient operations, and green-field construction of a new acute care campus.



Hartnell College to Offer New Bachelor's Degree in Respiratory Care

Beginning in spring 2025, students can pursue a Bachelor of Science in Respiratory Care, a significant milestone in Hartnell College's 103-year history and a first in Monterey County. This program aims to expand on the college's successful two-year associate degree program, providing students with advanced knowledge, skills, and aptitude needed for the evolving field of respiratory care. The 15-month Bachelor of Science in Respiratory Care degree advancement program will encompass a comprehensive curriculum to foster excellence in leadership, education, and advanced bedside professional practice. The online program will be offered over three semesters of full-time study, ensuring flexibility and accessibility for students. Hartnell's respiratory care program graduates have consistently achieved remarkable success, with high licensure exam pass rates and praiseworthy employability. The enactment of Senate Bill 850 in 2014 allowed community colleges to offer baccalaureate degrees, providing students with a cost-effective pathway to lucrative and in-demand careers. Pursuing a bachelor's degree at Hartnell College will enable students to continue their education within a familiar environment while significantly reducing their financial burden. The growing demand for respiratory therapists is evident in current workforce data, making Hartnell's respiratory care program an ideal choice for desiring professionals seeking to expand on an already meaningful and rewarding career. The application window will open in the fall of 2024. Applicants must have completed an accredited respiratory care program and hold an associate degree from an accredited institution. Additionally, application requirements include a registered respiratory therapist (RRT) credential and an active license or eligibility for licensure.



Rancho Cielo Wins 2023 Orange County Sustainability Decathlon

The Orange County Sustainability Decathlon is thrilled to announce the winner of its inaugural competition: Rancho Cielo Youth Campus of Salinas, Calif. This remarkable institution, dedicated to serving underserved youth, not only left a strong impression on the judges but also excelled in performance-based verifications. Rancho Cielo's winning house, aptly named Nexus, is defined by a commitment to sustainable design and a dynamic spirit of collaboration. Their team wholeheartedly embraces the possibilities inherent in sustainable, resilient, and forward-thinking construction design. "This is an incredible Cinderella story. This is the smallest school. It is also the one with the least resources. What they had was will. The students, trustees, administrators, and teachers were determined to build the best house they could. Their win also demonstrates the need for vocational training," said Fred Smoller, OCSO president and CEO. "The Orange County Sustainability Decathlon brought focus to our construction academy. Many said it couldn't be done. Rancho Cielo's accomplishment was earned by the board, donors, staff, students, and community partners," added Chris Devers, Rancho Cielo president and CEO.



Popular, Philanthropic Monterey Motorsports Festival Announces Aug. 17, 2024 Return To The Fairgrounds

Offering distinct counterpoints to the standard Monterey Car Week experience, the inaugural Monterey Motorsports Festival drew more than 4,000 attendees on Saturday, Aug. 19, at the Monterey Fair & Event Center. The event proved to be such a success that founder Paolo Manca has already announced a return to the Fairgrounds on Saturday, Aug. 17, 2024, from 2-10 p.m. Showcasing all types of moving technologies — ranging from exotic cars to off-road and hyper-cool, tech-focused equipment and heavy steel — the first-of-its-kind event provided automotive fans with opportunities to roam the grounds, connect with the business world, and enjoy food and entertainment well into the night. Sponsored by Mecum Auctions, the all-moving, technology-focused event also distributed more than \$50,000 to 13 nonprofit partners. MMF's nonprofit partners for 2024 include: Heritage Foundation; Boys and Girls Club of Monterey County; Monterey County Family Justice Center; Seneca Center; Alliance on Aging; Gil Basketball Academy; Monterey Rape Crisis Center; Monterey Symphony; Animal Friends Rescue Project; Sun Street Center; YMCA Central Coast; Alzheimer's Association; Legal Services for Seniors.



Paper Tacos® Partners with Vallarta Supermarkets to Bring Cultural Greeting Cards to Their Customers

Paper Tacos®, the greeting card business that celebrates Mexican culture through art, is thrilled to announce its partnership with Vallarta Supermarkets. Customers of Vallarta Supermarkets will have the opportunity to purchase Paper Tacos® greeting cards in all of their stores, expanding the reach and impact of these culturally rich cards. Founded by artist Jesus Ruvalcaba, Paper Tacos® was born out of a desire to connect with the Mexican-American community and fill a void in the market for greeting cards that truly resonate with the Mexican heritage. Ruvalcaba's upbringing in Castroville, California, along with his artistic journey and career in graphic design, inspired him to create a collection of cards that authentically represent the Mexican-American experience. "Vallarta Supermarkets is known for having fresh flowers with beautiful arrangements. We're excited to partner with Paper Tacos to bring our customers unique, cultural greeting cards that will accompany a beautiful bouquet for any occasion", said Paige Venable, Floral Director of Vallarta Supermarkets. What sets Paper Tacos® apart is its incorporation of traditional Mexican sayings and cultural references. Phrases like "sana sana colita de rana" (heal, heal little frog) as a "get well" card and other beloved expressions evoke a sense of nostalgia and pride. Each card is a work of art that captures the essence of Mexican traditions, appealing to people from all backgrounds who appreciate the richness of diverse cultures. While Paper Tacos' initial focus is on Mexican traditions, the brand is already expanding its product offerings to include other Latin American cultures.



Chamber Member Profiles

Davila-Prado Athletic Scholarship

At The Davila-Prado Athletic Scholarship, we are dedicated to empowering students on and off the field. Through our program, we aim to provide opportunities for student-athletes to pursue their academic and athletic goals, while fostering leadership, teamwork, and personal growth. Our mission is to transform lives by creating a pathway for student-athletes to succeed in college and beyond by offering financial assistance, academic support, athletic training, and leadership development opportunities.

Thedavila-pradoathleticscholar.godaddysites.com, Angelicadavpra@gmail.com, 831-258-0864



Love's Travel Stops

Love's Travel Stops & Country Stores is headquartered in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. Founded in 1964, Love's has more than 600 locations in 42 states. Love's provides professional truck drivers and motorists with 24-hour access to clean and safe places to purchase gasoline, diesel fuel, travel items, electronics, snacks and more, as well as a selection of restaurant offerings. On-site Love's Truck Tire Care centers offer roadside assistance, tire care and light mechanical services for professional truck drivers. Showers, CAT scales and other services for professional truck drivers are also available. Love's, which remains family-owned and operated, employs more than 38,000 people.

Loves.com, Hannah.weiss@loves.com, 831-500-6979



Youth Music Monterey

Youth Music Monterey's mission is "to inspire excellence in individual students and enrich our community by providing young people with opportunities to participate in, and gain greater understanding of, music and its performance." Youth Music Monterey County supports two orchestras, a chamber music program, a brass ensemble, a woodwind ensemble, and in-school teaching and performance opportunities throughout Monterey County. Their Junior Youth and Honors Orchestras are led by professional conductor Maestro Danko Druško and feature approximately 100 student musicians.

Youthmusicmonterey.org, Office@youthmusicmonterey.org, 831-375-1992



Pacific Homecare Services

Pacific Homecare was founded in 2005 by current president, Leticia Robles in Stockton, CA. Pacific Homecare strives to provide care to elderly and developmentally disabled individuals with the same attentiveness as their own family; all while upholding the values of honesty, respect and kindness. "We make it our mission to understand, respect, and honor the unique needs of our clients and their loved ones while creating and sustaining compassionate, friendly companionship and home care. Our mission is to be more than a generic in-home care provider. Pacific Homecare Services is made up of extraordinary service providers striving to provide exceptional, yet flexible and affordable home care service to the highest standard."

Pacifichomecare.com, Kderr@pacifichomecare.com, 925-719-1497



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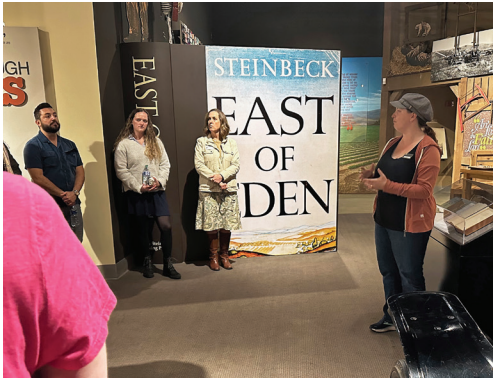
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Leadership and Culture

by Mitchell Friedman, LMC Facilitator



The County of Monterey is home to a broad range of museums, galleries, and performing arts venues. In previous sessions in 2023, Leadership Monterey County (LMC) visited some of them. At its most recent session, participants explored more fully the intersecting worlds of arts and culture. The day began with a behind the scenes tour of the Sunset Center. It's a performing arts center in Carmel-by-the-Sea which features concerts, comedy, theatre, and dance. Participants next visited the Carmel Art Association Gallery, where they were able to view paintings and other expressions of art created by local residents.

Perhaps more importantly, the County of Monterey has a rich,

vibrant history which continues to inform current day developments. To gain deeper insight into that history, the LMC cohort visited the National Steinbeck Center in Salinas. There they learned how John Steinbeck's gift in crafting a picture of life in the Salinas Valley in the 1930s and 1940s earned him a Nobel Prize in literature and has made him the subject of ongoing interest. The day concluded with a visit to the Monterey County Historical Society. LMC participants viewed there a range of artifacts from throughout the area's recent history; heard from subject matter experts; and learned about the organization's ongoing efforts to catalog and communicate the expanse of its holdings to residents throughout Monterey County. ■

➡ NEW LAWS – Continued from page 5

Workplace Violence Prevention Plan (SB 553)

Effective July 1, 2024, employers, which include both private and public entities, must develop and implement a workplace violence prevention plan ("WVPP") as part of their Injury and Illness Prevention Plan.

The WVPP should be in writing and available and easily accessible to employees. The plan must include, among other things: (1) person(s) responsible for implementing the plan;

(2) procedures to obtain the active involvement among employees and authorized employee representatives in developing and implementing the plan; (3) methods the employer will use to coordinate implementation of the WVPP with other employers, when applicable, to ensure that those employers and employees understand their respective roles; (4) effective procedures for the employer to accept and respond to reports of workplace violence and to prohibit retaliation against an employee who makes such a report; (5) procedures to ensure compliance by supervisory and nonsupervisory employees; (6) procedures to communicate with employees regarding workplace violence matters including how an employee can report a violent incident, threat, or other workplace violence concern to the employer or law enforcement without fear of reprisal, and how employee concerns will be investigated and how employees will be informed of the results of the investigation and any corrective actions to be taken;; (7) effective procedures to respond to actual or potential workplace violence emergencies; (8) procedures to develop and provide required training; (9) procedures to identify and evaluate workplace violence hazards; (10) procedures to correct workplace violence hazards that are identified and evaluated; (11) procedures for post incident response and investigation; and (12) procedures to review the effectiveness of the plan and revise it as needed.

For every workplace violence incident, covered employers must record information in a "violent incident log." The log must include, among others things, (1) date, time, and location of the incident; (2) workplace violence type; (3) detailed description of the incident; (4) classification of who committed the violence, the circumstances at the time of the incident, the location of the incident; (5) the type of incident, including whether it involved physical violence with or without a weapon or object, threats, sexual assault, animal attacks, or a threat of physical force or of the use of a weapon; (6) consequences of the incident, such as whether security or law enforcement was contacted and actions taken to protect employees from continuing threat; and (7) contact information for the individual completing the violent incident log.

Employers must retain the violent incident log, violence hazard identification,

evaluation, and correction records for 5-years for every workplace violence incident.

Reproductive Loss Leave (SB 848)

Effective January 1, 2024, covered employers (those with five or more employees) must provide employees who are employed for at least 30 days with up to five days of unpaid leave following a "reproductive loss event." A "reproductive loss event" is defined as "the day or, for a multiple-day event, the final day of a failed adoption, failed surrogacy, miscarriage, stillbirth, or an unsuccessful assisted reproduction."

The leave must be taken within three months of the event and is capped at a maximum of twenty days within a 12-month period, and employees must be permitted to take such leave nonconsecutively. Employees may use vacation, personal leave, accrued sick leave or other paid time off otherwise available. Employers must maintain the confidentiality of employees requesting this leave and may not retaliate against them for exercising these rights.

Cannabis Use Discrimination (AB 2188)

AB 2188, which Governor Newsom signed in 2022, takes effect January 1, 2024. This legislation makes it unlawful for an employer to discriminate against individuals in hiring, termination, or any term or condition of employment, or to otherwise penalize an individual for off-duty cannabis use away from the workplace. Furthermore, employers may not discriminate based on drug screening results that find an employee to have non-psychoactive cannabis metabolites (that show consumption of cannabis but not impairment) in hair, blood, urine, or other bodily fluids.

However, an employer does not lose the right to maintain a drug-free and alcohol-free workplace. It may still refuse to hire an applicant based on scientifically valid pre-employment drug screening conducted through methods that do not screen for non-psychoactive cannabis metabolites.

Recommendations for Employers

This article summarizes only some of the new laws affecting California employers. To ensure compliance, employers should familiarize themselves with the details of the laws, update policies where appropriate, train supervisors and non-supervisors where necessary, and consult with legal counsel. ■

Geraldine Villa-Hernandez' practice is focused on employment law and litigation. Her J.D. is from Santa Clara University School of Law, and she interned at Noland Hamerly for two years prior to attending law school. This article is intended to address topics of general interest and should not be construed as legal advice. © 2023 Noland, Hamerly, Etienne & Hoss

Ribbon Cuttings and Events



Ribbon Cutting Ceremony with Mmm Churros LLC

Mmm Churros LLC welcomed the community to the grand opening of their new location at the Northridge Mall Food Court. Guests enjoyed the expanded menu and treated themselves to delicious churros.



Lunch and Learn with Ecology Action

Sebastien Garbe, an Ecology Action EV Program Specialist, discussed the Multifamily Housing and Small Business EV Charger pilot program offerings and how to apply for no-cost EV charging at eligible sites within the PG&E service area.



Lunch and Learn with Hospice Giving Foundation

Attendees learned about the tools Hospice Giving Foundation offers and how you can begin Advance Healthcare Directive, the importance of conversations with loved ones about wishes for end-of-life care, and the gift of being prepared for serious illness.



Cash Flow Masters Conference

Cash Flow Masters 2023, an all-Spanish speaking conference organized by Platinum Multiservices Inc., provided business owners with the latest information from federal and state agencies, government contracts, and cost-saving strategies, among other issues related to the construction sector.



Ribbon Cutting Ceremony with Balance Physical Therapy

Guests celebrated Balance Physical Therapy's grand opening of their new location in Salinas. The space offers private treatment rooms and open floor gym equipment to meet all physical therapy and rehabilitation needs.



Grand Opening & Open House of Family Service Agency

Family Service Agency held its grand opening of its new office in Salinas. Guests, dignitaries, and Chamber members were on hand to celebrate and learn more about these invaluable services.



2024

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