

# Salinas Valley CHAMBER OF COMMERCE BUSINESS JOURNAL



Alianza Tournament Makes Salinas Debut  
page 24

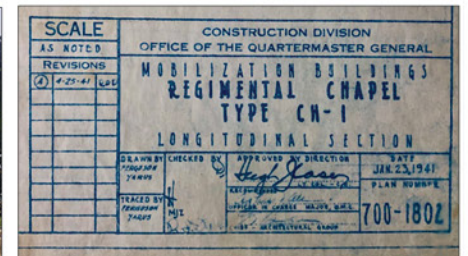


Retirement Income Planning for a Secure Retirement  
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Part I of an Exclusive Two-Part Series

## Twelve Stand-Alone Fort Ord Chapels Have Potential to Inspire Tourism

By Kevin Dayton, Government Affairs Liaison



There are five remaining World War II chapels out of the original eight on Fort Ord. Clockwise from top-left: North Chapel, Tenth Street Chapel, Eighth Street Chapel, title block for the chapel blueprints, First Street Chapel, East Garrison Chapel.

### Into the Ditch: Agricultural and Urban Drainage from the Lower Salinas Valley Contributes to Regional Water Solutions

By Kevin Dayton, Government Affairs Liaison

A cover story in the May 2025 Salinas Valley Business Journal explained how some City of Salinas industrial wastewater goes to the treatment plant of the Monterey One Water (M1W) regional wastewater agency.

Using the Pure Monterey Water Monterey/ Groundwater Replenishment Project (PWM/ GWR) facilities, M1W can recycle that industrial wastewater to produce Monterey Peninsula drinking water, Marina Coast Water District landscape irrigation water, and Castroville Seawater Intrusion Project (CSIP) agricultural irrigation water.

Chamber leaders have learned since publication of that article that many readers didn't know about the existence of the Salinas industrial wastewater conveyance and treatment system. Nor did they know that the M1W Regional Treatment Plant recycles City of Salinas industrial wastewater as well as City of Salinas municipal wastewater (sewage). A few asked if M1W recycles any other wastewater from Salinas.

In fact, Monterey One Water does recycle

DRAINAGE see page 8

Two generations have grown up since Fort Ord closed on Sept. 30, 1994. For many Monterey County residents and visitors, knowledge of the decommissioned U.S. Army base is limited to driving by dilapidated buildings and ruins.

Nevertheless, some older Monterey County residents vividly recall Fort Ord and the base closure at the end of the Cold War. Another group that remembers Fort Ord is the steady stream of older veterans who visit (often with family members) to recall their

training and service there.

There's not much to see. And there isn't an established group to guide and inform their explorations. People must create their own itineraries. Landmarks are missing,

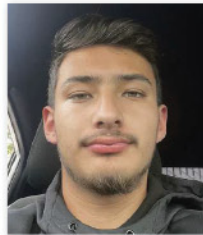
CHAPELS see page 5



# McDonald's Restaurants of the Salinas Valley would like to congratulate the recipients of the 2025 Raymond H. Costa Family Scholarship



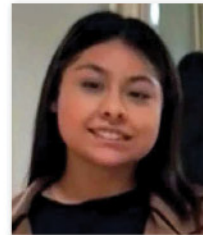
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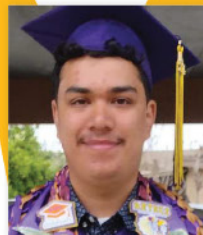
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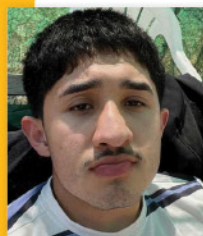
**Lissette  
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**PROMENADE**  
AT THE DUNES



# Confidence Through Engagement

By Leonard Batti, SVCC Board Chair

In July of this year, the Public Policy Institute of California (PPIC) released a report showing that most Californians don't trust their federal government. This raises an important question: Do residents of the Salinas Valley and Monterey County trust their local governments? Including our board of supervisors, mayors, city councils, and city and county staff.

Public opinion is often shaped by personal experiences with local government, whether a positive or negative interaction with the building department, permit center, or public works. Sometimes, our views are influenced by how elected leaders vote on specific issues. In today's world, where we get our news or who we choose to follow on social media also plays a significant role in shaping our perceptions.

One of the privileges of serving as your Chamber chair is hearing many passionate perspectives about local government. I don't always agree with what I hear, but I respect every opinion and often learn something valuable from a different point of view.

Another privilege is having the opportunity to work closely with our Salinas government officials and staff. What I've experienced firsthand is often quite different from some of the perspectives expressed by members of our community. I've



Backed by a strong board of directors, your Chamber remains deeply engaged in matters that impact your business and our community. I encourage you to reach out if you feel there's more that we could be doing to support you.

found our elected officials and city staff to be hard-working, intelligent, and caring individuals who genuinely want the best for our community. They are navigating incredibly complex challenges, deteriorating infrastructure, water and wastewater capacity, homelessness, quality of life issues, future growth, and much more.

In June of last year, the Chamber began the process of searching for a new CEO. Before launching the formal search, and under the leadership of then-chair Jennifer Williams, the board

agreed to first conduct a member listening tour. The goal was to better understand what members wanted from their Chamber and its future leadership.

Through a comprehensive member survey and several stakeholder focus groups, the feedback was consistent: members wanted a leader who was local, deeply connected in the community, and had strong relationships throughout the county, including with local government. They wanted someone well-versed in the issues affecting both business and the broader community, someone who would work with local government and not against it. And lastly, members sought a leader who could collaborate with other civic and business organizations to represent their interests effectively.

I was skeptical that any candidate would meet all these expectations and would have been thrilled with someone who checked even 80% of the boxes. But after interviewing Colleen Bailey, Jennifer and her search committee were ecstatic to know that they had found someone who met and exceeded all of our member's expectations. Under Colleen's leadership, our small but mighty staff has been delivering on that member "wish list."

We've seen a steady stream of networking and educational events, the revitalization of the Chamber's Foundation and the Children's Shopping Tour leadership, and continued support for our Government Relations, Membership, and Events committees. Backed by a strong board of directors, your Chamber remains deeply engaged in matters that impact your business and our community. I encourage you to reach out if you feel there's more that we could be doing to support you.

Which brings me back to the PPIC report. Through working side by side with Chamber staff, I've realized that to have confidence in local government, you need to be informed and engaged with it. If you're feeling disenfranchised with local government, I would humbly suggest that you reach out and get involved in a constructive and collaborative way, whether through the Chamber of Commerce or through one of the many local nonprofits that represent business and industry.

As my father would challenge me and my siblings when we were feeling that life was unfair; "You can't complain if you're not engaged, so do you want to be part of the problem or part of the solution?" Let's be part of the solution. 🌱

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CREATING A STRONG LOCAL ECONOMY • PROMOTING THE COMMUNITY • PROVIDING NETWORKING OPPORTUNITIES • POLITICAL ACTION • REPRESENTING THE INTERESTS OF BUSINESS WITH GOVERNMENT



## CHAPELS - from page 1

unrecognizable, or transformed. Even street orientation has changed.

As time passes, is there regional interest in creating a public-private partnership to develop cohesive tours of the former Fort Ord? With adequate funding and qualified professional leadership, this entity could prepare a guidebook (written by professional historians using credible sources) and install directional/way-farer signs and interpretive signs.

How would this entity organize tours for a general audience that's unfamiliar with Army military organization and has limited historical knowledge of World War II and the Cold War? One possibility is to revolve the tours around visits to sites of the original eight World War II chapels and the later four Cold War chapels.

This two-part series explains these 12 chapels and reveals what happened to them. For this month, Part 1 provides historical context and describes the eight World War II chapels.

Part 2 next month will describe the four Cold War chapels and clarify questions about other chapels. Part 2 will also reference sources and suggest topics for undergraduate and graduate-level papers, theses, and dissertations. Finally, Part 2 will propose an action plan for readers who believe these chapels offer a useful foundation for visiting Fort Ord to understand its role in regional, national, and world history in the 20th century.

### Historical Context of Military Chapel Construction for World War II

President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed the Selective Training and Service Act on Sept. 16, 1940, more than a year before the Dec. 7, 1941 attack on Pearl Harbor and the U.S. declaration of war on the following day. About 17 million young men were required to register for potential military service. In addition,

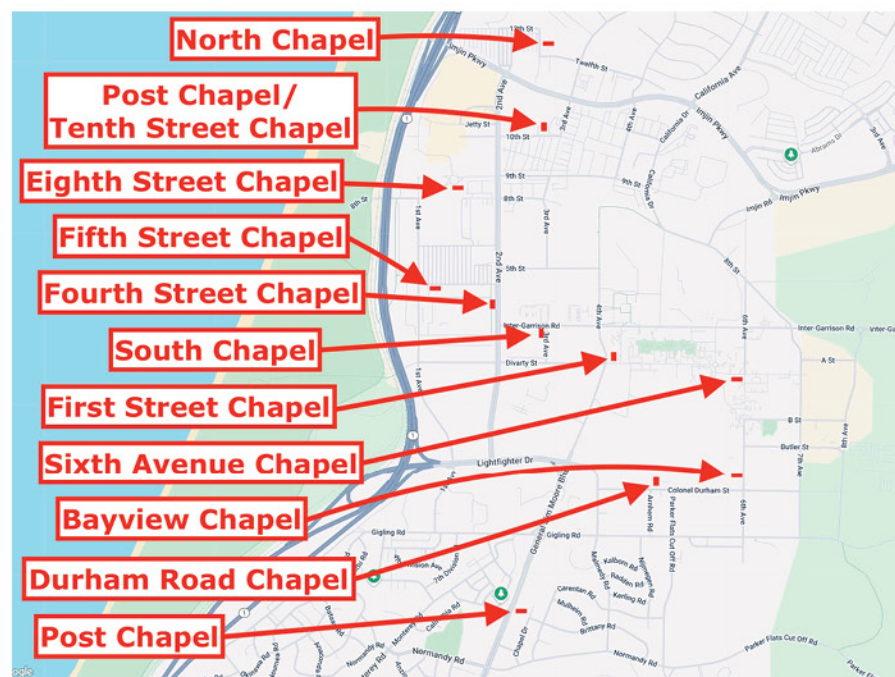
up to 900,000 young men were to be drafted at any one time for a year of compulsory military training and service. In response to this military conscription, the Army Quartermaster Corps began implementing a massive and speedy construction program.

Stand-alone chapels were not in the original Army plan for religious activities at military installations. It was assumed these would happen at recreation buildings and theaters. However, on March 17, 1941, President Roosevelt signed into law a supplemental defense appropriations bill that included the first funding intended for chapel construction. Three days later, the War Department announced a master plan to build 604 chapels in six months "where soldiers of the Protestant, Catholic and Jewish faiths may make their devotions in appropriate settings."

Army Chief of Chaplains Major Gen. William Arnold reportedly influenced the War Department decision to develop this plan and seek Congressional funding. He also reportedly oversaw design and construction to ensure chapels had a standard non-denominational appearance and stayed within budget parameters.

At the Fort Ord East Garrison Chapel today, an interpretive sign repeats a common but unsubstantiated assertion: "The Army was convinced to build a chapel with a traditional appearance by Eleanor Roosevelt, who believed it made a big difference to soldiers' morale." This claim invites more research into how the First Lady may have influenced World War II military construction.

At the opening of a chapel in Arlington, Virginia on July 27, 1941, Gen. George Marshall noted his intent to "have a clean army, morally and physically, and these chapels are very important contributions to that end." The Quartermaster General then spoke about chapel symbolism: "There is nothing in construction





## History of the Eight World War II Chapels and Their Fates

Five of the eight World War II chapels still exist: two within Marina city limits, two within Seaside city limits, and one in the East Garrison community of unincorporated Monterey County. Primary names listed below for the chapels were their “permanent designations” established after World War II began. However, they were also referenced by other names — especially in the 1960s — often in association with military units housed in proximity to them.

Each chapel was also assigned a distinct Fort Ord building number that was retained until the base closed. The “T” prefix for World War II chapels means temporary; the “P” prefix for later Cold War chapels means permanent.

### 1. Fourth Street Chapel (Building T-1817)

Known as the 53rd Infantry Chapel when built, later called the Infantry 1 Chapel.

(Former location: West side of Second Avenue, south side of Fourth Street in what is now the City of Marina.)

Dedicated on Oct. 26, 1941, this chapel was eventually used by the 4th AIT (Advanced Individual Training) Brigade, 7th DIVARTY (Division Artillery), and 127th Signal Battalion. It was decommissioned on Sept. 6, 1993. Along with 15 other buildings, it was demolished in 2003 under a Fort Ord Reuse Authority (FORA) contract to prepare a right of way for the 2nd Avenue Widening Project.

### 2. Fifth Street Chapel (Building T-1885)

Known as the 32nd Infantry Chapel or Infantry 2 Chapel when built, later known as Fifth Street CDCEC (Combat Developments Command Experimentation Command) and as DISCOM (Division Support Command) Chapel.

(Former location: South side of Fifth Street between First Avenue and Second Avenue in what is now the City of Marina.)

First morning worship at this chapel was on Oct. 12, 1941. It was decommissioned with a service on July 26, 1993. In 2005, the City of Marina entered into a development agreement that included the transfer of a land parcel, including this chapel, to a private developer, Marina Community Partners/Shea Homes. The developer removed the deteriorated chapel in late 2022 as part of wide-scale demolition in preparation to build Phase 3 of The Dunes.

### 3. Eighth Street Chapel (Building T-2229)

Known as 17th Infantry Chapel and the Engineers Chapel when built, later known as 3rd Brigade Chapel and then as the Former 3rd Brigade Chapel, now sometimes called the First Chapel.

(Current location: South side of Eighth Street roundabout in what is now the City of Marina.)

This was the first completed chapel at Fort Ord. A groundbreaking ceremony was held in early July 1941, with four battalions of the 17th Infantry standing at attention for the turning of the first shovel of dirt. It was opened and dedicated at an outdoor ceremony on Sept. 25, 1941 in front of hundreds of soldiers and members of the public who responded to a general invitation to attend.

It was decommissioned on March 2, 1993. Today the Eighth Street Chapel is owned by the City of Marina, which acquired it in 1998 from the U.S. Army through the National Park Service (NPS) Federal

Lands to Parks Program. This transfer requires public community uses for the chapel. It sat seemingly neglected among deteriorated barracks for a couple of decades and inspired grassroots community efforts to save it from ruin. Marina Community Partners/Shea Homes recently demolished the barracks that surrounded this property, and the City of Marina plans to renovate it into a community meeting room if it gets funding.

### 4. South Chapel (Building T-1599)

Known as Special Troops Chapel when built.

(Former location: South side of Third Street, west side of Third Avenue in what is now the City of Seaside.)

This chapel opened on Oct. 12, 1941. By the 1960s, published schedules of base worship services no longer mentioned this chapel. A 1986 aerial photo of Fort Ord shows the South Chapel still at its original location, but by the time Fort Ord was preparing for closure, there are no documented records of its

presence. It's likely the Army demolished the chapel in 1987, when Third Street was closed for realignment between Second Avenue and Third Avenue. New buildings were subsequently constructed at that location and then demolished. In 2007, the Monterey Peninsula College Child Development Center was built in that general area.

### 5. Post Chapel (Building T-2661)

Known as the Medics Chapel or the First Medical Chapel when built, later known as the 10th Street Chapel (rather than the Post Chapel, likely because of the opening of the

new Post Chapel Center in 1958), still later known as the Patton Park Chapel.

(Current location: North side of 10th Street between Second Avenue and Third Avenue in what is now the City of Marina.)

This chapel opened on Oct. 12, 1941. It was the chapel designated for a racially segregated service at 11:00 a.m. on Sundays. (Fort Ord was the first U.S. military facility integrated by the federal government, but that was in 1948.) On April 14, 1970, clergy from the San Francisco Bay Area protesting the treatment of Fort Ord Stockade prisoners held a service in this chapel, “liberated” it, and dedicated it to St. Maximilian of Tebessa, a patron saint of conscientious objectors.

It was decommissioned on July 5, 1993. Goodwill Industries acquired this chapel in 1997 through a public benefit conveyance, along with the neighboring Red Cross Building and a garage, for use as its Shoreline Training Center. Today Goodwill has a memorandum of understanding with the Central Coast Baptist Church for use of the chapel.

### 6. North Chapel (Building T-2878)

Known as the 19th Engineers Chapel when built, later used as an administrative building.

(Current location: East side of Second Avenue between 12th Street and 13th Street in what is now the City of Marina.)

The North Chapel opened on Oct. 12, 1941. In 1969, this chapel was still used for religious purposes, but at some later date it became an administrative building in an area known as CDEC Hill (referring to the Combat Development Experimentation Center). Its proximity to the base's administrative headquarters buildings may have inspired a change in its function. A 1994 report categorized its function as “Administration General Purpose” and a 2003 report labeled it as the Lightfighter Conference Building.

Monterey Peninsula College



(MPC) acquired the chapel in 2004 as part of a land conveyance from the Army. (The MPC Marina Education Center, established in 2011 and now known as Monterey Peninsula College, Marina Campus, is nearby.) The college currently uses the building for storage.

## 7. First Street Chapel (Building T-1136)

Known as the 76th Field Artillery or Division Artillery Chapel when built, later known as the Jewish Chapel and then the DIVARTY (Division Artillery) Chapel.

(Current location: 3040 Divarty Street in what is now the City of Seaside, on Cal State University Monterey Bay campus.)

This chapel was dedicated on Oct. 26, 1941 and decommissioned with a service on April 28, 1993. It was then transferred to California State University Monterey Bay through a land conveyance and now serves as a meeting house for the college as Building #98.

## 8. East Garrison Chapel (Building T-135)

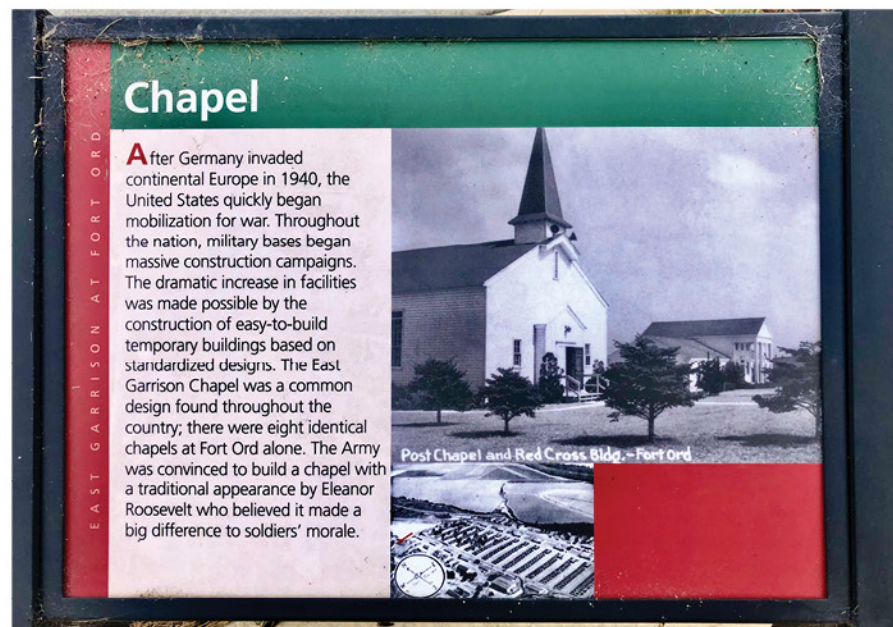
(Current location: Northeast corner of East Garrison Drive and Kit Carson Drive in the East Garrison community of unincorporated Monterey County.)

Four miles east of the Main Garrison, the Army built the East Garrison and included a chapel. Opening on Nov. 2, 1941, it was the last of the eight World War II chapels to be completed.

The now-dissolved Fort Ord Reuse Authority (FORA) acquired East Garrison from the U.S. Army and transferred it in 2005 to the County of Monterey. A 2004 staff report to the Monterey County Planning Commission stated that "The chapel will be used as a Vision Center and house a historical interpretive exhibit while the community builds out and can be used as a non-denominational facility for the community." In 2005, the County of Monterey approved the East Garrison Specific



Location of the World War II stand-alone chapel built at the Fort Ord East Garrison.



Educational interpretive sign at the East Garrison Chapel.

Plan, which identified the chapel as a structure to be "retained and enhanced."

The County of Monterey then entered into an agreement with East Garrison Partners for development of the site. After East Garrison Partners defaulted on its loan obligations in 2009, Union Community Partners acquired the site. In

2018, Union Community Partners completed a merger with Century Communities, which now owns the chapel. The East Garrison Chapel remains unused and fenced off. The historic photo included on the interpretive sign at this chapel shows the Post Chapel/10th Street Chapel and not the East Garrison chapel.

In 2012, the Monterey County

Board of Supervisors, following a recommendation from the county's Historic Resources Review Board, added the East Garrison Chapel to the Monterey County Official Register of Historic Resources. This is the only Fort Ord chapel with government-recognized historic status. This 2012 historic designation is separate from the 2006 Board of Supervisors designation of the "East Garrison Historic District at Fort Ord."

Other than these two county historical designations and the 2014 addition of the Fort Ord Station Veterinary Hospital to the National Register of Historic Places, no other Fort Ord building has official historic status.

In the next issue, Part 2: Cold War chapels, other chapels related to Fort Ord, potential student paper topics related to the chapels, and an action plan to use the chapels to promote tourism.

To submit questions, corrections, and additional information about these chapels, or to request source material, contact Kevin Dayton at (831) 869-6592 or by email at Kevin@salinaschamber.com. 🌱



## DRAINAGE - from page 1

additional water; specifically, it recycles drainage water from the City of Salinas and the growing fields surrounding the city. This runoff is diverted from three sources: the Reclamation Ditch, the Blanco Drain, and the South Salinas stormwater system. These additional source of waters for recycling are described below.

### Background on the Reclamation Ditch

The Reclamation Ditch (also known as the Rec Ditch, Reclamation Ditch No. 1665, Salinas Reclamation Ditch, Salinas Reclamation Canal, or Salinas Reclamation Channel) is a network of excavated earthen ditches built in the first decades of the 1900s to channel surface water from the Lower Salinas Valley, including what was then a much-smaller City of Salinas.

Besides collecting runoff from stormwater systems, urban uses, and agricultural irrigation drainage, the Reclamation Ditch has five natural tributaries. Four of these tributaries are creeks flowing out of the Gabilan Range. Alisal Creek transforms into an engineered channel of the Reclamation Ditch and empties into Carr Lake. Natividad Creek and Gabilan Creek also enter the city and empty into Carr Lake. That combined water then flows out of Carr Lake via another channel of the Reclamation Ditch. Santa Rita Creek (known as Little Bear Creek in unincorporated Monterey County) empties into the Reclamation Ditch on the west side of the city limits. Farther west of the city limits, Merritt Lake drains into the Reclamation Ditch.

The Reclamation Ditch is its own watershed, distinct from the Salinas River watershed to the south, and most stormwater from the City of Salinas ends up in it. (Note that South Salinas is in the separate El Toro Creek-Salinas River watershed, as explained below.) Reclamation Ditch water flows into Tembladero Slough

near Castroville, then into the Old Salinas River Channel, and ultimately through the Potrero Tide Gates into Moss Landing Harbor and into Monterey Bay.

Before construction of the Reclamation Ditch, land in and around Salinas was predominantly marshland and seasonal lakes. This chain of lakes is sometimes called the “Seven-Lake System.” Carr Lake is the best-known remnant of this system, while the other six lakes are

known as Smith Lake, Heinz Lake, Markley Swamp, Vierra Lake, Espinosa Lake, and Merritt Lake. The chain also included other lakes, such as Mud Lake, Santa Rita Slough, Boronda Lake, Fontes Lake, and Mill Lake. The City of Salinas uses some of these lakes as detention basins to store water during the rainy season.

### Reclamation Ditch Water Can Now Flow to a Treatment Plant Instead of the Ocean

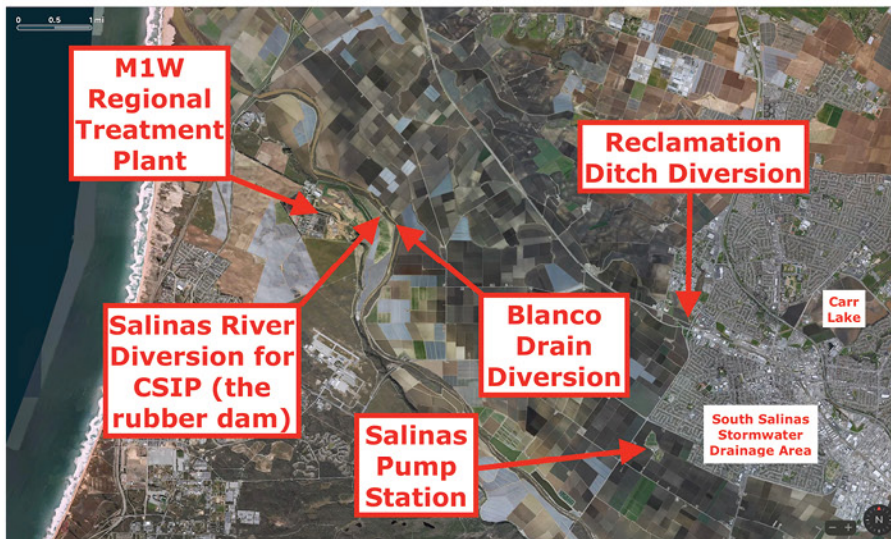
In 2019, Monterey One Water completed construction of the Reclamation Ditch Diversion Facility just to the east of Salinas city limits, in unincorporated Monterey County. Equipment for the facility is visible in the field northwest of the intersection of Davis Road and Highway 183 (Castroville Road), not far from the Harvest Moon farmworker housing complex on Davis Road.

Reclamation Ditch water goes through a screen to enter an intake



Excerpt of map from the 2019 Salinas River Long-Term Management Plan: “Water Management Facilities on the Lower Salinas River.”





structure, and a pump station at that location sends the water through a pipeline to a 54-inch sanitary sewer main parallel to Davis Road. Water in this sewer main flows to the Salinas Pump Station (at the abandoned Treatment Plant No. 1) near Hitchcock Road. There, the water combines with other city wastewater. It then flows in a 36-inch interceptor pipeline from Salinas to the M1W Regional Treatment Plant near Marina.

### Background on the Blanco Drain

The Blanco Drain (also known as the Blanco Drainage) was built in 1944 after the Monterey County Board of Supervisors established Storm Maintenance District No. 2 in 1942. At the time, the Monterey County Farm Bureau argued that the drain would clear land of excess water, and as a result "more crops could be grown to aid in the war effort."

Operated by the Monterey County Water Resources Agency (MCWRA), the Blanco Drain is a three-channel reclamation ditch totaling eight miles in length that drains approximately 6,400 acres of farmland north of the Salinas River and south of Alisal Slough, which is just south of Highway 183. Water from the Blanco Drain that does not get diverted to the treatment plant is discharged into the Salinas River from an outfall (a 60-inch pipe culvert with a flap gate) about

five miles upstream of the Salinas Lagoon, between the bridges of Highway 1 and Blanco Road.

During the rainy season, storm water runoff enters the Blanco Drain and the channels are allowed to overflow. But in the dry season, Blanco Drain water comes from surface irrigation runoff and subsurface tile drains installed in the surrounding agricultural fields.

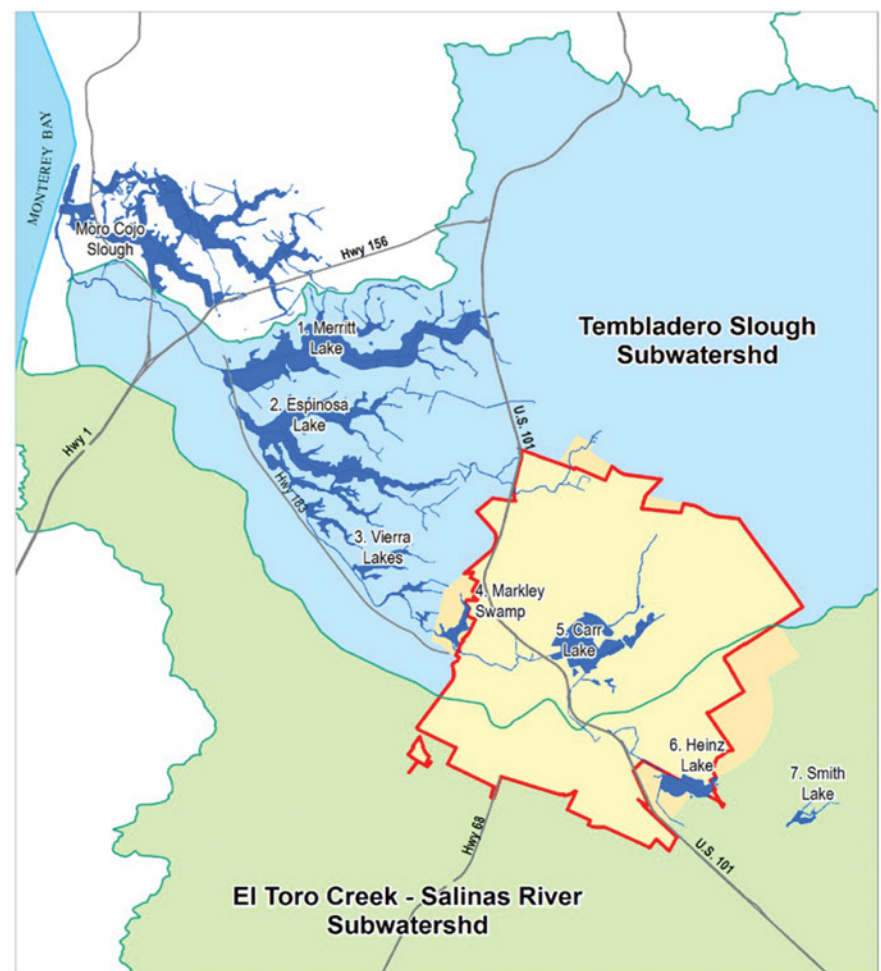
Much of this agricultural irrigation water is pumped from wells in the 180/400 Foot (Pressure) Subbasin. However, some of the Blanco Drain service area includes the service area of the Castroville Seawater Intrusion Project (CSIP). CSIP recycles water for agricultural irrigation from four sources: the Salinas Valley Reclamation Project (SVRP) located at the M1W Regional Treatment Plant, the Salinas River Diversion Facility (SRDF) with its seasonal rubber dam, CSIP supplemental wells, and on occasion, some private wells.

Through 2009, a pump station operated in the dry season where the three Blanco Drain channels meet in the middle of farmland. It lifted water from the two side ditches into the main ditch that conveys water to the Salinas River. When MCWRA built the Salinas River Diversion Facility (SRDF) in 2009, the Blanco Drain had to be reengineered to account for higher Salinas River water levels in the summer.

The SRDF includes a rubber dam that impounds Salinas River water upstream during the dry growing season to recycle as irrigation water for the Castroville Seawater Intrusion Project. To prevent that higher water level from pushing river water into the Blanco Drain, the Monterey County Water Resources Agency built a new pump station and slide gate near the end of the main ditch. New grading was done for the three channels of the Blanco Drain, and the pump station at the point of confluence for the three prongs no longer operates.

### Blanco Drain Water Can Now Flow to a Treatment Plant Instead of the Ocean

In 2019, the Blanco Drain Diversion Facility was completed. Another pump station was built just upstream from the one built in 2009. This new pump station diverts drainage water through a new 16-inch force main (a pipeline in which water moves under pressure from pumps, rather than through gravity) that goes under the Salinas River. The pipeline then connects with the 36-inch interceptor pipeline that sends wastewater from the City



Urban Watershed Management Program

Figure Q-4:

### Lower Salinas Valley Historic Wetlands and 7-Lake System

#### LEGEND

- Historic Wetlands and 7-Lake System
- Tembladero Slough Subwatershed
- El Toro Creek - Salinas River Subwatershed
- Sphere of Influence
- Salinas City Limits

Source: USFWS/NRCS, National Hydrology Dataset (NHD), 2012; City of Salinas, 2013.

Map from the 2004 City of Salinas Stormwater Management Plan: "Lower Salinas Valley Historic Wetlands and 7-Lake System."



of Salinas to the M1W Regional Treatment Plant.

### Challenges to Water Rights Lead to Abandonment of Tembladero Slough Runoff as a Third Drainage Water Source

In order to divert drainage water from the fields of the Lower Salinas Valley for the Pure Water Monterey/ Groundwater Replenishment Project (PMW/GWR), Monterey One Water needed to obtain water rights permits from the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB). In 2015, the Monterey County Water Resources Agency

(MCWRA)—a partner in the project—submitted applications (revised from an earlier application) to the SWRCB for three permits.

One permit would allow MCWRA to divert surface water from the Reclamation Ditch and a second permit would allow surface water diversion from the Blanco Drain. MCWRA also applied to the SWRCB for a third permit to divert surface water from the Tembladero Slough, at a location in agricultural fields west of Castroville. That drainage water from the Tembladero Slough would be diverted to the interceptor pipeline that conveys municipal

wastewater from Castroville/Moss Landing to the M1W Regional Treatment Plant.

In response to these applications, the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) and California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) filed protests. These two agencies contended that diversion of so much drainage water from the Lower Salinas Valley would hinder water flow in the Reclamation Ditch and Salinas River watersheds and thus reduce steelhead populations.

The steelhead is a salmonoid fish that is “anadromous.” Adult steelhead live in salt water (the ocean) but migrate to freshwater rivers and tributaries to spawn. (On the East Coast, the same kind of fish spends its entire life in freshwater and is known as a rainbow trout.) Depleted water in coastal rivers from dams and groundwater pumping has interfered with the life cycle of the steelhead, and today the government designates it as a threatened species.

In the end, a settlement agreement was reached among the interested parties that included conditions meant to ensure drainage diversion would not harm the steelhead. One condition was removal of the Tembladero Slough diversion facility from construction plans for the Pure Water Monterey/ Groundwater Replenishment Project (PMW/GWR).

With this issue resolved, the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) granted M1W water rights permits in 2017 to divert up to 3,000 acre-feet per year (AFY) from the Blanco Drain and 2,000 AFY from the Reclamation Ditch.

### Background on the South Salinas Stormwater Diversion

As mentioned above, part of the City of Salinas is within the El Toro Creek/Salinas River watershed. Surface water that accumulates in South Salinas flows to the Salinas River rather than the Reclamation Ditch. Planners of the

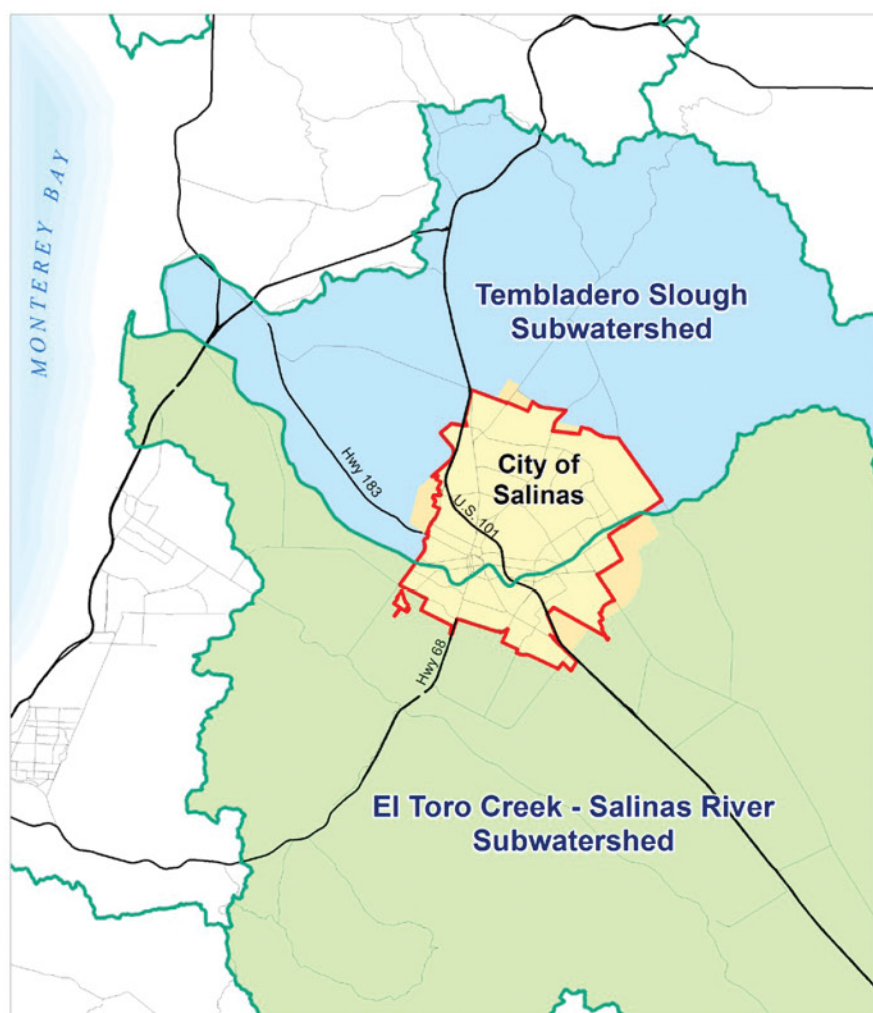
Pure Water Monterey/Groundwater Replenishment Project (PMW/GWR) saw this water as yet another opportunity to recycle wastewater while reducing pollutants entering Lower Salinas Valley waterways.

In 2020, the City of Salinas completed the “Dry Weather Flow Diversion Project” that allows the city in the summer to capture dirty urban water flow from sources such as landscape irrigation and vehicle washing. This project also cuts the amount of highly polluted “first flush” stormwater that collects and runs off impermeable surfaces when the first major precipitation occurs at the start of each rainy season.

A new pipeline was installed to connect the South Salinas stormwater system to the existing 42-inch pipeline that conveys industrial wastewater from agricultural processing facilities to the Salinas Pump Station at the defunct Salinas Treatment Plant No 1. From there, the stormwater can go to the Salinas Industrial Wastewater Treatment Facility (SIWTF) for evaporation, percolation into the ground, or recycling at the M1W Regional Treatment Plant.

### Recycling of Drainage Water Benefits the Regional Economy

Successful diversion and recycling of urban and agricultural runoff benefits businesses, residents, and visitors. These three sources of drainage water increase and diversify recycled water supply. They help ensure enough water is available for maintenance and growth of the four major sectors of the regional economy (agriculture, hospitality, military bases, and educational institutions). In addition, diversion of drainage water to a regional treatment plant means ground pollutants accumulated in the runoff do not wash into waterways that ultimately flow to Monterey Bay. Clean water in the Bay allows fish and wildlife to flourish and boosts recreation, tourism, and the fishing industry. 🌿



Urban Watershed Management Program

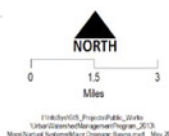
Figure Q-2:

### Salinas Subwatersheds

#### LEGEND

- Tembladero Slough Subwatershed
- El Toro Creek - Salinas River Subwatershed
- Salinas City Limits
- Sphere of Influence

Source: USDA/NRCS, National Hydrology Dataset (NHD), 2012; City of Salinas, 2013.



Map from the 2004 City of Salinas Stormwater Management Plan: “Salinas Subwatersheds.”





## Cal State University Monterey Bay Scores 4.5 Stars on Money's Annual Best Colleges in America Ratings for 2025

CSUMB earned a 4.5-star rating (out of 5) on Money's annual Best Colleges in America list, released June 25. The website reads, "Oceanfront views are plentiful at California State University Monterey Bay, located a mile from the beach and just two hours south of San Francisco," adding, "Like much of the Cal State system, CSU Monterey Bay scores high marks for being both accessible and affordable." Money's website praised CSUMB's scholarships for first-year students, and ability to set students up for success. CSUMB President Vanya Quiñones commented on the university's amazing achievement, saying that "We are proud to receive 4.5 stars from Money magazine in its survey. This recognition reflects our commitment to providing affordable, accessible education and promoting both social and upward mobility for students from all backgrounds. At Cal State University Monterey Bay, students find their place, realize their potential and prepare to make a lasting impact in their communities."



## Hartnell College Students to Perform Original Play at Prestigious BorderLight Theatre Festival in Cleveland

A group of nine Hartnell College students and two faculty members is heading to Cleveland, Ohio, to present their original production, "Get with the Times, Jane!" at the acclaimed BorderLight Theatre Festival, an international showcase known for celebrating boundary-pushing, socially engaged, and independent theater. The opportunity marks a major milestone for the Hartnell College Theatre program and the student creators. Written and performed by an all-female cast of students, "Get with the Times, Jane!" is a bilingual, time-traveling comedy that brings history and modern-day struggles into a sharp, humorous focus. The story follows a Mexican-American suffragette from 1916 who awakens in 2016 and finds herself clashing and connecting with three present-day college women confronting challenges around politics, identity, and equality. "Get with the Times, Jane!" will also be performed at local venues following the group's return from Cleveland.



Digital  
NEST

## Digital NEST Board Leadership Transition: Jackie Cruz Passes the Torch to Tony Nethercutt

Dr. Jackie Cruz, Ed.D., whose visionary leadership as board president helped Digital NEST soar to new heights, has concluded her impactful term and has passed the torch to Tony Nethercutt. "Serving as board president for Digital NEST has been an honor and a privilege," said Cruz. "Together, we have built a community where young people are empowered to dream big, develop their talents, and take flight in their careers. I am confident that Tony Nethercutt's leadership will continue to inspire growth and opportunity for our members and communities."



## Rachel Lancaster Wins Miss California Rodeo Salinas 2025 Title

Rachel Lancaster has been crowned Miss California Rodeo Salinas 2025 following two days of competition at the Salinas Sports Complex. As the newly crowned Miss California Rodeo Salinas, Lancaster received a \$3,000 educational scholarship, a custom gold and silver belt buckle, a tiara sponsored by the Harden Foundation, the use of a two-horse trailer for one year, and an assortment of additional gifts and awards. Over the next year, she will serve as an ambassador for the California Rodeo Salinas and the Western way of life, representing the organization at rodeos, parades, and community events throughout California. The 2025 Miss California Rodeo Salinas contest was sponsored by Holiday Inn Express & Suites.





# MEMBER NEWS



HARMONY AT HOME

*Healing Trauma. Ending Abuse. Building Families.*

## Harmony At Home Receives \$100,000 Grant for Social & Emotional Support Programs

Harmony At Home has been awarded a generous two-year grant totaling \$100,000 in support of their Social & Emotional Support programs. This grant, distributed as \$50,000 per year, will be provided through the Cyrus F. Fitton Fund and Rapa Trust Fund of the Community Foundation for Monterey County, with the grant period running from July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2027. This vital funding will help ensure that children, youth, and families across Monterey County continue to have access to the tools and support they need to build resilience, heal from trauma, and develop essential social and emotional skills.



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## Bay Federal's Record-Breaking Campaign Raises Over \$25,000 for Children's Miracle Network Hospitals

Bay Federal Credit Union employees and members came together to raise a record-breaking \$25,805 during the Credit Union's annual fundraiser in support of Children's Miracle Network (CMN) Hospitals. The annual campaign is a spirited tradition among Bay Federal's branches, which participate in friendly fundraising competitions through donation drives, branch decorations, and community engagement efforts. In-branch digital signage celebrated donors of all sizes and inspired community members to "out-give" one another in support of local kids and families. The funds raised will benefit the Salinas Valley Memorial Hospital Foundation, a Children's Miracle Network Hospitals partner. Donations directly support local families by funding charitable care, upgrading life-saving equipment, enhancing patient services, and providing vital education and support.

# SALINAS VALLEY SPEAKS SAVE THE DATE

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DENNIS DONOHUE**



**CITY OF GONZALES  
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**CITY OF SOLEDAD  
MAYOR  
ANNA VELAZQUEZ**



**CITY OF GREENFIELD  
MAYOR  
ROBERT WHITE**



**CITY OF KING  
MAYOR  
MIKE LEBARRE**





## Support our Chamber Members

Thank you, to our August 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
Monterey County Agricultural Commissioner	1972	Cloverfield Management LLC	2012
Sammut Brothers	*45 Years* 1980	Hartnell College	2012
Shaw Development	*45 Years* 1980	Kobrinisky Group	2012
Central Coast College	1983	Aspire Health	2013
Natividad Medical Center	1987	Hospice Giving Foundation	2013
National Steinbeck Center	1993	Housing Resource Center of Monterey County	2015
Bay Federal Credit Union	1994		*10 Years*
JRG Attorneys at Law	1994	Johnson Electronics	*10 Years* 2015
Granberg Law Office	*30 Years* 1995	Laurel Inn	2016
Ruggeri - Jensen - Azar	1998	Salinas Valley Basin Groundwater Sustainability Agency	2018
Salinas Firefighters Association	1998	Greet Hwy 68 Loop and Monterey County	2019
Boys & Girls Clubs of Monterey County	1999	Real Producers Magazines	
American Cancer Society	*20 Years* 2005	Joby Aviation	*5 Years* 2020
Bayonet and Black Horse Golf Course	*20 Years* 2005	Pebble Beach Company	2021
Monterey County Works (MCW)	*20 Years* 2005	Premier Valley Bank	2022
Holiday Inn Express & Suites	2007	Privatus Consulting	2023
Mission Trails Regional Occupational Program	2007	Suicide Prevention Services Central Coast	2023
Pinnacle Bank	2007	The Cheese Fairy Charcuterie	2023
Christopher M Mule DDS	2008	Altais Medical Group	2024
Central California Alliance for Health	2009	Brewjee Coffee Co	2024
Mexican American Opportunity Foundation	2009	FlexIT	2024
Entravision - Univision 67 / UniMas / La Tricolor / La Suavecita	2010	Full Circle Consulting	2024
	*15 Years*		

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### Church Brothers Farms

Church Brothers Farms is a vertically integrated family-owned and operated company that produces a full line of fresh vegetables year-round. Church Brothers has an in-house farming/harvest program and state of the art processing plants in the U.S. and Mexico. The Church family has a legacy of service and innovation in the Salinas Valley that spans multiple generations. [Churchbrothers.com](http://Churchbrothers.com), [Sales@churchbrothers.com](mailto:Sales@churchbrothers.com), (831) 796-1000



### Monterey Motorsports Festival

The Monterey Motorsports Festival, Aug. 16, is the premier Saturday evening event during August's Car Week in Monterey County. It offers an elevated and curated experience, which is affordable for attendees, families, and automotive enthusiasts. This is the only event open to the general public on Saturday night, showcasing automotive unveilings, classic cars, supercars, hypercars, off-road vehicles, motorcycles, live music entertainment, curated food and more. [Montereymotorsportsfestival.com](http://Montereymotorsportsfestival.com), [adam@montereymotorsportsfestival.com](mailto:adam@montereymotorsportsfestival.com), (310) 989-7723



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### Safety Fund Established in Name of Ross Tarp-Braasch: #liveforross

The family of Ross Tarp-Braasch created #liveforross: A Fund for Safety Awareness and Vocational Education to celebrate Ross's bold spirit and love of life. The fund supports program messaging that promotes safety, good decision-making, and vocational education. In the three years since the start of #liveforross, due to the generous donations from our community, the organization has presented Monterey graduating seniors in welding and agricultural technology with 31 \$500 awards/certificates redeemable at Barnes Welding in Salinas. This is for safety gear needed to enter the workforce in these fields. The fund has also provided safety helmets to families in our community. The ultimate goal is to make a tangible difference in the lives of families, helping them avoid the tragic loss that the beloved Ross experienced. [Liveforross.org](http://Liveforross.org), [rtarp@comcast.net](mailto:rtarp@comcast.net), 831-320-8647



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# Goodwill Central Coast launches ‘School Starts Here’ Campaign to Support Students and Strengthen Communities

By Goodwill Central Coast Staff

**A**s the new school year approaches, Goodwill Central Coast is making it easier — and more impactful — than ever for families to prepare with the launch of its “School Starts Here” campaign.

Running July 15 through Aug. 15, the late-summer campaign aims to help local students gear up for success while supporting Goodwill’s broader mission of job training, youth development, and career readiness throughout the Central Coast.

From gently used backpacks and classroom-ready basics to stylish sneakers and even brand-new items with tags, Goodwill Central Coast’s 16 stores across Santa Cruz, Monterey, and San Luis Obispo counties offer a wide selection of affordable back-to-school essentials for students of all ages. And every purchase has a purpose.

“As families prepare for the school year, many are looking for cost-effective ways to outfit their students,” said Toni DeMello, GCC’s Director of Community Engagement. “Goodwill is proud to provide high-quality, affordable options while reinvesting those dollars into programs that help individuals gain the skills they need to succeed.”

## Donate school essentials, empower a student

In addition to shopping, the “School Starts Here” campaign encourages the community to donate new or gently used school supplies, backpacks, youth clothing, and dorm essentials. These items help stock store shelves with affordable goods and fund programs that provide career pathways and wraparound support to local residents.

“A donated backpack might help a student walk into class feeling confident. A clean pair of jeans might make the difference in a job interview. These items go far beyond their shelf value,” DeMello said.

Whether it’s a kindergartener attending their first day or a college student settling into a dorm room, donations provide dignity, preparedness and the tools for academic success.

## Supporting students of all ages

Back-to-school season isn’t just for kids. College students across the Central Coast are also preparing to head off to new schools and fresh independence. Your donation of gently used comforters, towels, dishes, or small kitchen appliances can help furnish a dorm room or apartment — and keep costs down for students trying to balance school and living expenses.

When you donate these items, you’re not just decluttering your home. You’re helping another student start fresh, with the tools they need to succeed.

It’s good for the planet, too. When you donate, you’re also choosing sustainability. Reusing and repurposing goods keeps usable items out of landfills and reduces the need for new production. It’s a small act that adds up to a big difference for the environment — and our future.

## Donations that make a difference

Community members are encouraged to look around their homes for items that could make a difference in a student’s life — new or gently used school clothing, notebooks and folders, backpacks, and even dorm supplies for college students.



Getty Images



Goodwill is proud to provide high-quality, affordable options while reinvesting those dollars into programs that help individuals gain the skills they need to succeed.

— Toni DeMello, GCC Director of Community Engagement

A clean pair of jeans can help a student feel more confident. A working desk lamp can make studying late into the night possible. A donated backpack can carry not just supplies — but a sense of belonging.

In addition to providing access to affordable goods, every item sold at a Goodwill store directly supports workforce development and education programs. That means each donation contributes to a cycle of opportunity: helping students today, while funding programs that will prepare them for tomorrow.

Donate items to any one of GCC’s 16 stores or donation centers. Your donations stay local and support programs that strengthen our communities — creating brighter futures through job training, education and employment services.

## Education is the first step

For local youth, education is often the bridge to opportunity. But that journey often comes with barriers — from limited access to technology and resources to a lack of career guidance or mentorship.

Goodwill Central Coast steps in to fill those gaps by offering:

- Access to job-readiness workshops
- Digital skills training
- Career coaching and resume support
- Valuable on-the-job experience

In addition, Career Centers in Salinas, Capitola and Watsonville offer a variety of free programs to assist community members throughout every stage of their employment journey. Patrons find assistance with job placement and resume development, participate in mock interviews, get assistance with online applications, receive typing certifications, and inquire about completing community services by meeting with a Career Center Coordinator.

The goal for GCC is to meet young people where they are — whether



they're in high school, entering community college or exploring career options after graduation.

#### First jobs, real experience

A first job is more than just a paycheck — it's about confidence, discipline and opportunity. Through its Employment Programs, Goodwill Central Coast connects young adults with paid work experience in a supportive environment.

These programs teach valuable soft skills such as:

- Professional communication
- Time management
- Customer service
- Problem-solving

Participants also receive mentorship and job coaching to help them transition into long-term employment or continued education.

**Join the movement: Shop, donate, empower**

By shopping secondhand, families around the Central Coast can save money and reduce environmental waste. By donating gently used items, they can directly support students and job seekers while keeping thousands upon thousands of pounds of items out of local landfills. And by supporting Goodwill Central Coast, they help create a future where everyone — regardless of background — has the chance to thrive.

Goodwill Central Coast operates stores and donation centers across Santa Cruz, Monterey and San Luis Obispo counties. All proceeds remain local, supporting services such as job placement, resume support, and skills training for individuals facing barriers to employment.

To find a donation center or store near you, visit <http://www.ccgoodwill.org/>. 🌱

## AMBASSADOR SPOTLIGHT DAVID BIELSKER



David Bielsker moved from Long Beach to Northern California in 2012 to accept a job offer with Monterey-Salinas Transit, where he began planning and scheduling bus service for the Monterey County region. David has spent his entire career in the public transportation industry.

Upon arriving here, David discovered a strong need for volunteers and joined the Coast Guard Auxiliary, where he worked on boating safety and marine inspections, and assisted with search and rescue efforts when needed. Additionally, he served on the Marina Planning Commission for six years.

In 2019, David became more familiar with Salinas when he was asked to volunteer on several political campaigns in the area. Although living on the Peninsula, he now spends most of his free time in Salinas and has enjoyed watching the area grow.

He sees great things happening in the region and is proud to serve the community as a Chamber Ambassador.

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# RIBBON CUTTINGS & CHAMBER EVENTS

by Chamber Staff



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

Community members attended an exciting night of celebration to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Steinbeck House's Best Gift Cellar Gift Shop & Bookstore, enjoying drinks, snacks, and access to the historic cellar that was open for the occasion. It was a night of significance for The Steinbeck House, the legacy of John Steinbeck, and the Salinas Valley community.



## Lunch and Learn with Salinas Valley Health

Chamber Members and Community Partners gathered to enjoy lunch and observe Salinas Valley Health Vascular and Endovascular Surgeon Dr. Jamil Matthews give an informative presentation on the complex topics of Peripheral Artery Disease and Venous Disease with inspiring expertise.



## Lunch Connect at The Pizza Factory

Chamber Members gathered at The Pizza Factory, a local member restaurant, and enjoyed the delicious lunch buffet while using the relaxed atmosphere as an opportunity to meet, mingle, and network with fellow Members.



## Ribbon Cutting with Monterey Credit Union

Monterey Credit Union unveiled their exciting new brand at the Harden Ranch Plaza in Salinas, showcasing a refreshed look that reflects the beauty and spirit of the Central Coast. The same trusted name, now with a modern logo and new colors. Community attendees celebrated this new chapter for the Monterey Credit Union, enjoying light bites and drinks.



## Lunch and Learn with Navigator Schools

Navigator Schools, a tuition-free TK-8 charter network, delivered an excellent presentation to the local business community — sharing their history, providing an overview, and showcasing their mission to prepare students for success in elementary school, middle school, and beyond. Navigator Schools also shared their exciting plans and next steps to open a location in Salinas in the near future.

## Past Chairs Luncheon

The Chamber hosted its Past Chairs Luncheon at Valley Restaurant and Catering. CEO Colleen Bailey and Board Chair Leonard Batti provided an update on current Chamber initiatives and upcoming efforts. A special moment from the luncheon included Batti presenting Past Chair Jennifer Williams the Board Chair Emeritus Pin and expressing heartfelt thanks for her dedicated service.







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

## AUGUST 2025

By Kevin Dayton, Government Affairs Liaison

Your Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce Government Relations Committee had 23 members at its meeting on Wednesday, July 9, 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** The committee discussed local budget issues and the need to consider how to maintain a balanced budget over the coming years. The committee reviewed a list prepared by the Government Affairs Liaison of 13 strategies that could bring "efficiency through structure" to the City of Salinas in its process of developing and approving the city budget.

Some committee members had attended an event on July 8, 2025, featuring the City of Salinas Fire Chief as a speaker. The Fire Chief commented on budgetary constraints that prevent the Fire Department from hiring personnel and catching up on deferred fire station maintenance and repairs.

Committee members acknowledged that identifying and implementing cuts to government expenditures is a difficult task. For example, public employee health care and retirement benefits are a major cost for local governments. These benefits are determined through collective bargaining and it's difficult to change them. Voters in

San Diego and San Jose approved ballot measures in 2012 to try to control pension expenses, but public employee unions filed lawsuits and courts then invalidated them.

The arena for proposing meaningful policies and practices to reduce the cost of health care and pension obligations would be the collective bargaining process. There are 11 memorandums of understanding (MOUs) between the City of Salinas and employee organizations. It's unlikely that union negotiators would agree to any changes that erode the benefits of the workers they represent. In addition, it may not be in the long-term best interest of residents and businesses to become more parsimonious with public employee benefits.

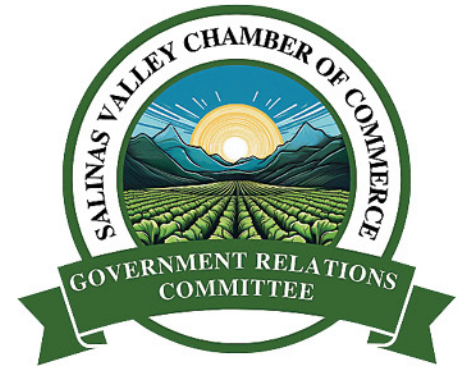
**2** To examine possible ways for the City of Salinas to save money, the committee asked the Government Affairs Liaison to prepare an analytical summary of proposals in the 2010 Avery report, the 2018 Salinas Plan, and the 2023 Salinas Plan Refresh. Some committee members asked if city parks and other facilities were being efficiently managed, with consideration of opportunities to generate revenue from special use.

**3** A volunteer group called Protect Salinas Renters claims to have collected and submitted petitions with about 10,000 signatures to trigger a voter referendum on the Salinas City

Council repeal of four ordinances concerning landlord-tenant relations. Ordinances repealed on June 3, 2025, by the city council were registration of rental properties, rent stabilization (strict limits on rent increases), and two ordinances that regulate how landlords can evict their tenants (defining the legally justified reasons for evicting tenants and prohibiting landlords from harassing or coercing tenants).

Signatures are being checked for validity to see if the number reaches the reported 6,888 needed to qualify the referendum for the ballot. If there are enough signatures, the Salinas City Council may vote on Aug. 12 to either reverse its earlier repeal of the four ordinances or let the voters decide with a ballot referendum at a future election. If the petitions do not have enough valid signatures, the repeal takes effect. For now, the repeal is on hold.

**4** Some committee members expressed dismay about the divisiveness of the rent control issue for the community. It's obvious rent is high and many ordinary people struggle to pay it. Interest groups that advocate for the poor blame landlord motivation for profit rather than regional politics and policies that prevent new construction to meet demand. Can the Chamber play a role as a "convener" to bring parties together, discuss facts, and come up with collaborative solutions to the housing supply issue?



The Government Affairs Liaison noted that rent stabilization is a political issue. If supporters have the votes to enact it, they have the power and there's no strategic advantage for them to collaborate with the Chamber and weaken their objectives through compromise. In fact, in 2024, they ignored critics and simply imposed the policies they wanted, to the extent allowed by state law.

**5** As directed by the committee at its June 2025 meeting, the Government Affairs Liaison presented a revised, expanded version of a "Chamber of Commerce Proposed Package to Increase Housing Supply and Protect Renters from Abuse and Exploitation." He pointed out that this list could be used as a starting point from the Chamber perspective if there was ever a meeting of all interested parties to collaborate on housing policy solutions.

**6** There are tentative plans for Monterey Bay Economic Partnership (MBEP) to hold a regional housing summit on Aug. 14 in Seaside or Marina. The City of Salinas is planning a housing





summit on Nov. 5 focused specifically on Salinas. The City of Salinas may invite housing experts to speak at the Nov. 5 summit.

**7** Committee members discussed new state reforms to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and debated on whether those changes in law would encourage developers to build more housing in the region. Some parties in California routinely object to the adequacy of environmental review for proposed construction projects. They use CEQA as a tool to stop new housing, extract lump-sum payments from developers as a condition of withdrawing their objections, or pressure developers to require union-only contracts or make concessions to labor unions

in collective bargaining. The committee asked the Government Affairs Liaison to prepare an explanation of the latest CEQA reforms for the committee to review and discuss at its next meeting.

**8** The committee asked the Government Affairs Liaison to obtain and provide an analysis of the distribution of city expenditures on the basis of city council districts. The city's Finance Department has produced this information in the past.

**9** The President & CEO described the Chamber's "Salinas Valley Speaks" event on Aug. 7, 2025, and encouraged committee members to register promptly. Committee members asked whether various topics would be discussed, such as

the positive and negative implications of ag tech and the potential of applying for federal grants to attract manufacturing. The Government Affairs Liaison encouraged everyone to attend, listen to remarks from panelists, and ask questions as appropriate.

**10** A representative of the Monterey County Association of Realtors (MCAR) reported that a coalition that also includes the American Institute of Architects (AIA) Monterey Bay is working with county officials to develop a streamlined process for compliance with regulations concerning defensible space to reduce fire risk.

**11** A representative of the Bright Beginnings Monterey County

Early Childhood Development Initiative reported that the Marina City Council held a public hearing on June 3, 2025, to revise zoning ordinances related to day care centers and home-based child care businesses. In 2019, Gov. Newsom signed Senate Bill (SB) 234 that prohibited municipalities from restricting the use of home childcare facilities in residential zones. The City of Marina has been a leader in Monterey County in implementing these changes to help increase supply of safe, affordable, quality childcare facilities. Bright Beginnings is preparing a report on the status of child care facility regulations in the 12 Monterey County cities and unincorporated Monterey County, funded by an "Uplift Central Coast" grant.



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# ‘What the People Want’

## A stroll through our Economic Development Element of the Salinas General Plan

By **Peter Kasavan**, Kasavan Architects

**T**he Rotunda was full that afternoon. Turnout by the community was large and represented a broad and diverse cross-section of interests. The energy and expectations were high because of the main topic on the Salinas City Council’s agenda: The final draft of the Economic Development Element (EDE).

This was the moment of truth for the EDE, which was the product of the most ambitious, inclusive and authentic community outreach for a public policy document in memory and probably in the history of the Central Coast.

After the financial investment of over \$600,000 by the City of Salinas and the contribution of thousands of hours by hundreds of residents, the EDE was ready for Council consideration. In a potentially unprecedented show of support, 26 individuals rose during the public comment period and spoke in favor of adoption of the EDE. No individual spoke in opposition.

This was the first Economic Development Element in the history of Salinas. It was spearheaded by City Manager Ray Corpuz, who exhibited faith and great trust in the residents of Salinas by delegating much of the creation of the EDE to its residents through the engagement of stakeholder groups, including SPARC, Building Healthy Communities and COPA, to organize the community engagement effort. This included working with the Chamber along with scores of other organizations and hundreds of residents in interviews, public events, workshops and even house meetings with Spanish monolingual workers organized by COPA.

The EDE provides a robust and comprehensive guide to making policy decisions reaching from that day to decades into the future. So unique and extraordinary was the community engagement that

is embodied in this document that the resulting EDE was recognized with three awards from professional planning organizations: Award of Excellence for Economic Planning and Development from the American Planning Association of Northern California; Award of Merit from the California American Planning Association; and an Outstanding Award for a Planning Document from the California Association of Environmental Professionals.

The EDE is currently undergoing an update along with the rest of the Salinas General Plan elements. Again, the Chamber and many of the original shareholders have come together to prepare the community’s recommendations for this Update to the Economic Development Element of the Salinas General Plan.

This effort is in full alignment and consistent with the City’s award-winning EDE, which specifically calls for the same level of community engagement to prepare the EDE Update as was used in its original creation of Action LU-1.1.5: Continue to actively engage the type of community outreach utilized in the Economic Development Element process ... to update the General Plan, develop City policies, prepare applicable Municipal Code and Zoning Code updates, and develop reforms in procedures and practices in the delivery of city services, including permit streamlining.

In future articles, we will give more examples featuring particularly exciting examples of policies, goals, and actions that represent many of the powerful initiatives provided in the EDE that can deliver meaningful economic development. Featured examples will include strategies from land use, circulation, infrastructure, retail, entertainment, tourism, job opportunities, neighborhoods, commercial areas, and quality of life. 🌱

.....

The unprecedented community engagement successfully identified the community’s values and what the people want — a vision of an economy that is prosperous, healthy, and environmentally sustainable based on the pursuit of eight key strategies:

- **1** Develop and promote Salinas as the ag tech capital of the United States.
  - **2** Make Salinas the recreation, entertainment, and sports destination of the central coast.
  - **3** Grow the pie,” by growing from within and at its borders in all directions and responsible but deliberate manner.
  - **4** Tell the “real story” of Salinas as a safe, vibrant community.
  - **5** Develop an efficient and effective circulation system to move goods, services and people.
  - **6** Look beyond traditional economic development strategies to add an emphasis on improving the health of residents and the health of neighborhoods and commercial areas.
  - **7** Develop key infrastructure, including innovative supplies and distribution of energy, water/wastewater, rail access and communications.
  - **8** Train the workforce today for tomorrow’s jobs, including those in green construction, information technology, healthcare, agricultural technology, communications, water and conservation technology and vehicle maintenance.
- .....



# Papillon 831 to Unveil First 'Wind Phone' Installation in Salinas on National Grief Awareness Day

**P**apillon 831, Monterey County's leading grief support center, will unveil its first Wind Phone installation on Friday, Aug. 30, 2025, in Salinas. The event marks National Grief Awareness Day and is presented in partnership with the Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce.

The Wind Phone is a symbolic, vintage rotary phone housed in a handcrafted weatherproof case. Not connected to any system, the phone provides a quiet and reflective space for individuals to speak words left unsaid to loved ones who have died. The project is inspired by the original "Phone of the Wind" in Japan and

"The Wind Phone is a physical space where grief has permission to exist, where memory and voice can meet," said the Papillon 831 team. "We believe that healing happens when people are given meaningful ways to connect, even in loss."

The Salinas Wind Phone, located at the shared headquarters of Papillon 831 and Coastal Kids Home Care, is the first in a series of six installations planned throughout Monterey County by the end of 2025.

Each location will feature a unique artist-designed structure, a vintage rotary phone, and a plaque inviting visitors to "say hello or goodbye to someone you love."

The unveiling event will begin at 11:00 a.m. and include a brief program, artist recognition, and space for community reflection.

It is free and open to the public.

The Wind Phone Project is not a fundraiser. Papillon 831 is seeking artist collaborators and site partners to help bring additional Wind Phones to life across the region. Organizations interested in hosting a Wind Phone or contributing artistically can reach out to [papillon@coastalkidshomecare.org](mailto:papillon@coastalkidshomecare.org).

To learn more about the Wind Phone Project or Papillon's free grief support services, visit: [www.coastalkidshomecare.org/papillon-center](http://www.coastalkidshomecare.org/papillon-center).

has since become a global movement offering community-based spaces for grief and healing.



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# Attorney Sara Boyns Burnishes Distinguished 30-plus Year Career by Winning Prestigious Gibson Award from Local Bar Association

By Mac McDonald, Salinas Valley Business Journal

**A**fter being named the recipient of the Monterey County Bar Association's prestigious Gibson Award for 2025, Monterey attorney Sara Boyns said she was "humbled" by the award. And who could blame her? The list of 40 previous recipients reads like a Who's Who of Monterey County's law community over the last four decades.

Names like John Andrew Church, Glenn Nolte, Myron "Doc" Etienne, Elizabeth Helfrich, Charles Page, Peter Coniglio, Paul Hamerly, Anna Caballero, Michelle Welsh, the Hon. John Phillips, and many more. In fact, the first winner of the award was none other than the co-founder of the law firm that Boyns has worked at for the last 25 years, Fenton & Keller, Lewis Fenton. Boyns is now the 40th recipient of the award.

"It's an incredible honor, I was very surprised (to receive it)," she says. "That's a very accomplished group of people in the community."

The Gibson Award was named in honor of the late California Supreme Court Chief Justice Phil Sheridan Gibson and is awarded at a dinner in June. The award honors a Bar Association's member who exemplifies the spirit of distinguished community service as demonstrated by Justice Gibson, whose lengthy career was notable "as he exhibited the finest traits of human understanding, personality and character."

The award presentation noted that "As a partner, Sara has been a valued mentor and leader at Fenton & Keller, where she has played a central role in shaping the firm's culture of inclusiveness and professional development. Whether serving in executive roles or offering quiet guidance behind the scenes, Ms. Boyns has remained committed to helping others build meaningful,

sustainable careers in the law."

Boyns became "semi-retired" in June 2024, working part-time for Fenton & Keller as Of Counsel, which allows her to continue her work in workplace law.

"I help a lot of local business and nonprofits in the community — it's all community service," she says. "I get a lot of satisfaction doing that."

When asked if she'd contemplate retirement, she was quick to reply:

"At some point, yeah, but I really enjoy my work, my co-workers and my clients, so I feel very fortunate I could work something out with Fenton & Keller (to continue working)," she says. "I enjoy mentoring your attorneys. It's a very rewarding job and a great place to work."

She moved to the Monterey area when she was 10 (her father was in the U.S. Navy stationed at the Naval Postgraduate School), attended Colton Middle School and Monterey High School, received her bachelor's degree from the University of Utah in 1980 and her J.D. from the Monterey College of Law in 1987. She was admitted to the California Bar a year later, in 1988.

She has 30-plus years in law, ranging from civil litigation to estate planning, but her wheelhouse is in representing employers in a wide variety of workplace issues, including discrimination and harassment, wage and hour claims, employee misclassification issues, employment policies, leave issues, workplace investigations, defense of post-employment claims, and in-home caregiver agreements.

Over the years she's been involved

in a number of outside endeavors, including speaking to local community groups on employment law topics, teaching legal writing at her alma mater, Monterey College of Law, becoming an Association of Workplace Investigators Certificate holder, and wrote a bi-weekly column for the Monterey County Herald addressing workplace law issues.

She's also been recognized by local organization, including your own Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce, which named her Businesswoman of the Year in 2019. In 2023, she received the Tanya

Antle Visionary Award from Girls Inc. of the Central Coast, as well as the Lady Justice Lifetime Achievement Award from the Monterey County Women Lawyers Association.

The Gibson Award is given to a local attorney who exemplifies the spirit of distinguished community service and

Boyns has a list of accomplishments as long as her arm.

She's a graduate of Leadership Monterey Peninsula (Class of 1985), has served on the boards of Girls Inc. of the Central Coast, Shoreline Church, Monterey County Women Lawyers Association, Barristers, Monterey County Bar Association, Central Coast Human Resources Association, the Lyceum of Monterey County, Fellowship of Christian Athletes, and the Hospice Giving Foundation Golf Scramble Committee.

But the one closest to her heart is Girls Inc. of the Central Coast, which she has been "very involved" in for 10-12 years — on the board of directors,



Monterey law firm Fenton & Keller attorney Sara Boyns recently won the prestigious Gibson Award for 2025 from the Monterey County Bar Association.

on the development and scholarship committees and as a donor.

It's the local chapter of a national 501(c)(3) organization that serves 1,700 girls a year in 41 schools sites in 10 cities, including at eight high schools, 11 middle schools, and 22 elementary schools in Salinas, Seaside, Marina, Castroville, Gonzales, Soledad, Greenfield, King City, Hollister, and Watsonville. It's an after-school, peer-to-peer leadership program for middle and high schoolers that stresses the importance of creating a supportive space where girls can learn, grow, and build lasting connections with other girls and develop their strengths, build confidence, and grow up healthy, educated, and independent.

Many of the girls come from the Salinas Valley and farmworker and laborer communities to build their leadership skills and realize their potential by working with other girls, adult mentors (many who also went through the program), schools and local community organizations. Many become the first generation in their families to attend college.

"It's a great nonprofit and a very rewarding program that has grown through the years," says Boyns.

Boyns and her husband, Casey, are the proud parents of two children, Marisa and Christopher, and grandparents to Cassadee Lee. 🌱





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Fútbol players participate in pick-up games in preparation for the Alianza de Fútbol Tournament coming to Salinas on Aug. 9-10, at the Salinas Regional Soccer Complex.

## Alianza Tournament Makes Salinas Debut: A Milestone for Local Soccer and Community Connection

**F**or the first time, the nationally recognized Alianza de Fútbol Tournament is coming to Salinas — bringing with it thousands of players, families, and fans for a weekend that celebrates sport, culture, and community pride. The event will take place Aug. 9–10 at the Salinas Regional Soccer Complex, 1440 Constitution Blvd, and will be one of the largest soccer events ever hosted at the facility.

This debut appearance marks a significant moment for Salinas, placing it alongside major cities like Dallas, Los Angeles, and Phoenix on Alianza’s prestigious eight-city national tour. It’s more than just another tournament — it’s a milestone for a region where soccer is woven into the cultural fabric of everyday life.

### A National Platform for Local Talent

Alianza de Fútbol is the leading organization in the United States



dedicated to developing and showcasing Hispanic soccer talent. Its tour provides thousands of youth and adult players with opportunities to compete at a high level, gain exposure to professional scouts, and dream big.

Through the Sueño Alianza program, more than 80 players have gone on to join professional clubs, university teams, or national programs — often changing the trajectory of their lives and their families.

“This is a dream come true for a lot of local players,” said Kurt Gollnick, President of the Board of Directors of the Salinas Regional Sports Authority, the non-profit organization responsible for the Salinas Regional Soccer Complex. “To have an organization like Alianza come here means the rest of the country is beginning to recognize what we’ve always known — there’s incredible talent and passion in Salinas.”

For many players in the Salinas Valley, this will be the first time they’ve had access to this level of scouting and visibility without having to travel out of town.

### A Boost for Salinas — On and Off the Field

While the community impact is front and center, the tournament also brings tangible benefits to the local economy. Thousands of visitors over the weekend will mean full



hotel rooms, busy restaurants, and increased activity for gas stations, shops, and vendors. Events of this scale support local jobs and generate momentum for Salinas as a sports tourism destination.

The tournament's arrival also underscores the success of the Salinas Regional Soccer Complex in positioning itself as a premier

venue for major athletic events. With 15 fields and a track record of hosting regional events, the Complex is proving that investment in sports infrastructure pays dividends — not only in economic development, but in community well-being.

#### A Weekend of Unity and Celebration

The tournament will include competitive brackets for youth, adult men, and women, as well as small-sided 5v5 games and family-friendly activities throughout the weekend. But what sets Alianza apart is the atmosphere — a high-energy blend of competition

and community celebration that reflects the culture of the families who attend.

From early morning check-ins to late afternoon finals, the Salinas Regional Soccer Complex will be alive with music, color, and connection. Families from across the region — and beyond — will gather to cheer on their teams,

reconnect with old friends, and share in the joy of the game.

#### A Turning Point

Bringing the Alianza Tournament to Salinas is more than a booking win — it's a recognition of the region's vibrant culture, strong community ties, and commitment to creating opportunity through sport.

"It's not just about soccer," Gollnick said. "It's about opening doors, lifting up our kids, and showing the world what Salinas can do when we come together."

As the first Alianza weekend approaches, Salinas is ready — ready to host, ready to shine, and ready to take its place on the national stage.

*It's more than just another tournament — it's a milestone for a region where soccer is woven into the cultural fabric of everyday life.*

# One Backpack, Big Impact

By Pastor T.K. Anderson, Compass Church

**D**ear Salinas Community and Our Friends Across Monterey County,

As August rolls in and the summer winds down, there's an unmistakable buzz in the air, it's back-to-school season! For many families, this time of year brings both excitement and challenges as children prepare for new classrooms, teachers, and opportunities to learn and grow.

At Compass Church, we believe every child deserves to start the school year with confidence. That's why we're excited to host our Annual Backpack Drive, where we're providing over 3,500 fully stocked backpacks to kids in need across our local school districts.

These backpacks are more than just supplies; they're symbols of hope, dignity, and a fresh start. If you'd like to be a part of this amazing initiative, just text "Backpack" to 33777 to join us in blessing children right here in our community.

This season reminds us of something powerful: God cares deeply about the next generation. In fact, Jesus made it clear just how valuable children are to Him. In Mark 10:14, Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these." He didn't just tolerate kids, He welcomed them, blessed them, and made time for them. That's the kind of love we want to show the children of Salinas and Monterey County.

We know that behind every child is a family doing their best,



*Every backpack we give, every smile we share, and every family we support is part of a much bigger story, one of transformation, love, and lasting impact.*

sometimes with limited resources, often with great love. At Compass, we believe that strong families build strong communities. By partnering with parents, teachers, and leaders throughout our region, we can help every child feel seen, supported, and equipped to succeed. That's not just a church value, it's a community calling.

Proverbs 22:6 reminds us, "Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old, he will not depart from it." Back-to-school isn't just about academics, it's a reminder of the sacred responsibility and joy we all share in investing in the future of our children. When we lift up kids, we lift up the whole community.

It was Frederick Douglass who once said, "It is easier to build strong children than to repair broken men." We believe that wholeheartedly. Every backpack we give, every smile we share, and every family we support is part of a much bigger story, one of transformation, love, and lasting impact.

So, thank you, Salinas. Thank you, Monterey County. Thank you to every teacher, parent, coach, volunteer, and neighbor who steps in to make a difference. We see you, we honor you, and we're honored to serve alongside you.

Let's continue to make this a place where every child knows they matter, every family feels supported, and every person sees that love really does make a difference.

With gratitude and purpose,  
Pastor T.K. Anderson

## MARK YOUR CALENDARS: HARVEST CUP COMING THIS OCTOBER

**What:** Corporate Soccer Tournament & Fundraiser

**When:** Oct. 12, 2025

**Where:** Salinas Regional Soccer Complex, 1440 Constitution Blvd., Salinas

The Harvest Cup invites local businesses and organizations to form teams and compete in a spirited 11-on-11 tournament — while raising funds to support the expansion of the Salinas Regional Soccer Complex. It's a day of competition, camaraderie, and community impact. Whether you're on the field or cheering from the sidelines, the Harvest Cup is your chance to power something extraordinary for the Salinas Valley.

<https://salinassoccer.org/harvest-cup/>





## Monterey Regional Airport Breaks Ground on a Transformational Travel Experience

*Long-awaited Construction of Replacement Passenger Terminal is Underway; Expected Opening in 2027*

Summer kicked off in a big way in Monterey as the Monterey Regional Airport (MRY) team gathered with our board, contracting partners, and community to break ground on a replacement passenger terminal. The ceremonial launch event on June 6 for our long-awaited terminal was filled with excitement and anticipation as we celebrated the next phase in the MRY Metamorphosis—an FAA-required Safety Enhancement Program—and what locals and visitors will soon experience while traveling through MRY.

### Modern, Accessible, and Transformational

The new five-gate terminal, with over 62,000 square feet of public space, will deliver a modern and accessible experience for all airport users. While similar in size to MRY's existing terminal, the LEED Platinum Certified-designed passenger facility departs from the current travel experience with boarding bridges; spacious, light-filled hold rooms and departure and arrival areas; and an improved roadway design to reduce congestion and enhance safety at passenger drop off and pick up areas. Ample parking, with 440 public spaces, will be footsteps from the terminal. From curb to cabin, MRY passengers will delight in a transformational travel experience when the new terminal opens in 2027.

### Terminal Groundbreaking Who's Who

With much excitement and anticipation for what's in store for MRY's future, it was no surprise the greater Monterey community was represented to witness and celebrate the launch of the airport's bright and transformative future.



*Ribbon cutting for Monterey Regional Airport's state-of-the-art travel experience, coming 2027.*

Monterey Peninsula Airport District (MPAD) Board of Directors Chair Carl M. Miller kicked off the groundbreaking festivities by welcoming more than 100 guests to the event. "On behalf of my fellow board members, I wish to thank our community

**The new five-gate terminal, with over 62,000 square feet of public space, will deliver a modern and accessible experience for all airport users.**

for the input they provided in helping envision our new terminal, as well as our airport team and partners for designing an experience that will elevate how our residents and visitors travel for decades to come," he said.

Other presenters included representatives from the offices of Congressman Jimmy Panetta, and State Senator John Laird, Assembly Speaker Robert Rivas and Assemblymember Dawn Addis; the Federal Aviation Administration; and tourism and contracting partners.

Event highlights also included remarks and a ceremonial dirt drop from a bucket loader by retiring MRY Executive Director Michael La Pier, A.A.E., and a ribbon cutting joined by MPAD board members and MRY's incoming Interim Executive Director Chris Morello, who also served as the event emcee.

Local chamber representatives were also in attendance, including Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce CEO Colleen Bailey.

### Stay Informed During Construction

The new terminal and support facilities are being built southeast of the current passenger terminal. While impacts to travelers are not expected for the foreseeable future, the MRY team is communicating and coordinating with contracting partners on a daily basis to prepare for eventual operational changes and what they mean for customers.

As the MRY Metamorphosis continues, the airport team is committed to providing customers with superior services and a convenient, hassle-free travel experience. Passengers are asked to visit [montereyairport.com](http://montereyairport.com) or follow @montereyairport on Facebook, Instagram, and X for traveler advisories.

**Learn more about MRY and the MRY Metamorphosis Safety Enhancement Program at [montereyairport.com/transform](http://montereyairport.com/transform).**







## A PROFILE IN LEADERSHIP

# MEET LISA MURPHY

## The City of Salinas' New Assistant City Manager

By Colleen Bailey, SVCC CEO

**T**he City of Salinas is taking a significant step forward in building its leadership team with the appointment of Lisa Murphy as its new Assistant City Manager. Under the direction of City Manager Rene Mendez, who has been thoughtfully assembling a strong team to serve the community, Lisa brings a wealth of experience and a passion for community service that will benefit Salinas for years to come.

### A Seasoned Public Servant with Central Coast Roots

Murphy's career in city government spans more than two decades, with a focus on serving communities throughout California's Central Coast. She has held pivotal roles, including 13 years as Assistant to the City Manager and Administrative Services Director for the City of Capitola. From there, she dedicated eight years to the City of Santa Cruz as Director of Human Resources before rising to the position of Deputy City Manager for two years.

Throughout her career, Lisa has tackled complex and critical issues that align with many of the challenges facing Salinas today — labor negotiations, water resource management, and homelessness. Her leadership in Santa Cruz was instrumental in developing and implementing a comprehensive three-year Homeless Action Plan that offers valuable insights for Salinas' own efforts. That plan delivered practical solutions such as:

Providing shelter, hygiene, and storage services. Expanding partnerships and staff capacity to better coordinate city services. Creating designated RV parking and bolstering law enforcement efforts. Promoting affordable and



Lisa Murphy

supportive housing to break the cycle of homelessness.

This experience has equipped Lisa with the tools to address Salinas' challenges head-on while developing sustainable solutions for the future.

### Embracing Salinas' Unique Potential

While Lisa is ready to solve problems, her vision extends beyond tackling tough issues. She is determined to shine a light on all that is great about Salinas — from its vibrant dining scene to its unique local businesses. In her short time in the city, Lisa has already discovered an abundance of hidden gems, including distinctive boutiques perfect for her busy summer of weddings.

But it is the people of Salinas who have made the biggest impression on Lisa. She's inspired by their deep commitment to the city's growth and vitality. As we dined together in a local restaurant, we crossed paths with Kurt Gollnick and Jonathan De Anda Hernandez,



While Lisa is ready to solve problems, her vision extends beyond tackling tough issues. She is determined to shine a light on all that is great about Salinas.

who serve as two great examples — champions of turning Salinas into the "Sports Capital of the Central Coast" through their leadership of the Soccer Complex. As a passionate soccer player herself, Lisa and Jonathan immediately connected about a new tournament that will be coming to Salinas this year. He even offered to connect her with a local vendor to replace her well-worn cleats — a small example of the spirit of

collaboration that she hopes to cultivate across the city.

### Building a Collaborative Path Forward

Lisa believes that Salinas' future success depends on working together across all sectors, with city government, community members, and the business community unified around a shared vision. She is eager to partner with the Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce and local businesses to harness the city's many strengths, attract economic development, and create greater opportunities and resources for everyone who calls Salinas home.

With her extensive background, practical experience, and genuine enthusiasm for the community, Lisa Murphy is poised to be a driving force for progress in Salinas. Your chamber looks forward to partnering with such a dedicated and dynamic leader in this key role. 🌱







# NON-PROFIT EVENTS

## Explore, Design, and Launch – MCSC Women's Center

*Aug. 13, 9:00 a.m. – 11:30 p.m., Online Through Zoom*

Launch your business in 2025! This seven-week comprehensive program is built to help you turn your business idea into a thoroughly researched and tested business plan. The course begins with an Overview Session on Aug. 13, 2025. With eight learning sessions and four mentoring sessions interspersed throughout, you will have access to content, templates, and tools to help you progress through the entrepreneurial journey. IDEATE — Get started making your idea a reality and exploring the journey of becoming an entrepreneur. POSITION — Position your idea in the market, understand your customers, and solidify your business model. COMMIT — Commit to reaching your market, making a sale, and protecting your business. REFINE — Perfect your strategy before launch and make sure your finances are in order. LAUNCH — Plan for launching, leading, and growing your business. This course is being offered at no cost to you. Complete course assignments and graduate with a completed business plan. We also offer services after graduation to support you for the life of your business. Classes will be led by Brant Myers and Andrea LaRosa, experienced business professionals who will teach you the key steps for creating a successful start-up. Certificate awarded upon completion. Register here: <https://mcscorp.ecenterdirect.com/events/2883>.

## Trashion Show – Alliance on Aging

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

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 available. To purchase tickets, call (831) 655-7564 or (831) 655-4246. Contact Nicki at: [npasculli@allianceonaging.org](mailto:npasculli@allianceonaging.org). Mark your calendar, grab your most creative outfit, and join in for a night you won't forget.

## Veggie Box and BBQ Rancho Cielo

*Aug. 18-22, 11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m., 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. <https://www.ranchocieloyc.org/fundraisers/veggiebox2025/>.

## Touch-A-Truck Salinas

*Sept. 7, 12:00-4:00 p.m., Salinas Rodeo Grounds, Salinas*

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 for 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 Don Chapin Company.

## Jacob's Heart Golf Tournament

*Sept. 12, 11:00 a.m. – 9:00 p.m., Seascape Golf Course, Aptos*

Registration is now open for the 2025 Jacob's Heart Golf Tournament. The Jacob's Heart Golf Tournament is approaching quickly. It will be a beautiful day spent on the green with the community, all in support of local kiddos and their families battling pediatric cancer. Join in for some great golf, delicious food, games, and so much more. See you on the green! Buy tickets at: <https://www.jacobsheart.org/golf>

## #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 Fair & Event Center. 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](http://montereyjazz.org).

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# Retirement Income Planning for a Secure Retirement

By **Bill Hastie**, Hastie Financial Group

**S**aving for retirement can take the entire duration of a person's working years. Whether through an employer-sponsored retirement plan, such as a 401(k), or personal saving and investing, or both, assets accumulated over many years can get one in a great position for retirement. This is referred to as the "accumulation phase" and is the first step in securing a successful retirement.

The second step is referred to as the "distribution phase," or the planning for how to take retirement income from the various assets that have been accumulated. There is generally an accepted hierarchy of assets from which to distribute retirement income. Let's review that hierarchy.

The first two are the easy ones — Social Security and required minimum distributions (RMDs) from retirement accounts, namely IRAs. How and when to take one's Social Security is a lengthy conversation for another day, but the vast majority of Americans have paid into and will eventually receive Social Security benefits. Under current tax law, anyone born between Jan. 1, 1951, and Dec. 31, 1959, must begin taking their RMD by April 1 of the year following the year during which they turn 73. For those born on or after Jan. 1, 1960, their RMDs must begin the April 1 of the year following the year they turn 75.

The third source of retirement income can be rental income if rental property is owned, especially property that is free of mortgage debt. Since most rental agreements include a cost-of-living adjustment, the investor, in effect, gets a raise

every year.

The fourth source of retirement income would be from non-qualified assets. There are often referred to as personal savings assets and are specifically not retirement accounts. The primary reason is these assets are taxed upon distribution only to the extent of accumulated capital gains. Basis, or the amount invested in the account from after-tax assets, is received tax-free since these assets have already been taxed. You can even control the amount of taxable distributions by carefully selecting the assets that are sold to generate the cash to distribute.

The fifth source is from qualified retirement assets above and beyond what is their RMD. These distributions are fully taxable as ordinary income which is typically taxed at the individual's highest marginal tax rate. Here, too, these taxable distributions can be combined with income from other sources to control the amount of taxable income.

Lastly, distributions from Roth IRAs. Why last to distribute, especially when these distributions are received tax-free assuming certain qualifications are met? Primarily because Roth assets accumulate tax-free and do not have RMDs for

the original account owner.

In many cases, the retiree can plan to take their retirement income from several sources noted above simultaneously to create a retirement income plan that meets their current needs, controls the amount subject to current taxation, and that can preserve assets for the next generation. Note that there are always special circumstances in every case and should be considered before creating a retirement income plan. 🌱

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# UPCOMING EVENTS

- **Lunch and Learn with TPO 'The HR Experts': 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*

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 the top five reasons for conflict that influence personality clashes; use a simple tool to help diagnose conflict in your organization; identify the five management conflict styles and 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.

- **Salinas Valley Speaks at Historic Braga Barn**

*Thursday, Aug. 7, 3:30 - 5:30 p.m., 33750 Moranda Road, Soledad*

The Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce announces Salinas Valley Speaks, presented by Braga Fresh, 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; and Dennis Donohue, Mayor of Salinas. Tickets can be purchased at [SalinasChamber.com](http://SalinasChamber.com).

- **Lunch and Learn with RVS Technology Group: 'Mastering Microsoft Teams for Business Success'**

*Tuesday, Aug. 26, 12:00 - 1:00 p.m., 119 East Alisal St., Salinas*

The Chamber will host a dynamic Lunch & Learn led by RVS Technology Group. Titled "Mastering Microsoft Teams for Business Success," the workshop will be led by RVS's accomplished women in tech — Maria and Miria. Designed for small and mid-size businesses, this free session provides a practical, big-picture introduction to using Microsoft Teams to enhance how businesses organize, modernize, and automate their operations. Attendees will learn how to structure Teams and channels for clarity and efficiency, use built-in tools like shared calendars, documents, and task managers to improve team communication, and explore simple automations that reduce repetitive tasks and streamline operations. The event includes a live demonstration, Q&A session, swag bags, and light refreshments.

- **Lunch and Learn with Granite Construction: Salinas Hot Plant Tour**

*Tuesday, Sept. 9, 12:00 - 1:00 p.m., 721 Work St., Salinas*

Join Granite Construction to learn about how asphalt is made and becomes the impressive material that we all drive on every day. Attendees will see an overview of the operations of Granite's Salinas Hot Plant, followed by a guided walking tour of the facility, showcasing the fascinating world of road and asphalt production. Lunch will be provided. Wearing closed-toe walking shoes is required for this event (no sandals/open-toe shoes permitted). PPE will be provided for attendees who do not have their own set. Granite is one of the largest diversified construction and construction materials companies in the United States, as well as a full-suite provider in the transportation, water infrastructure, and mineral exploration markets. Granite is also an industry leader in safety and an award-winning firm in quality and sustainability.

- **The Club at Crazy Horse Ranch Celebrates 100 Years**

*Friday, Sept. 12, 5:00-6:30 p.m., 475 San Juan Grade Road, Salinas*

For over a century, The Club at Crazy Horse Ranch has brought together families, farmers, business leaders, and friends from across the Salinas Valley. Now, it's time to celebrate the history they've built — and the future they're creating. Join in for an unforgettable evening as we honor 100 years and counting at one of Salinas' most-beloved institutions. The evening schedule includes a welcome reception with local wine and beer tastings, performance of the National Anthem, remarks, and a ribbon cutting with the Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce.

- **ARCpoint Labs of Salinas Joint Chamber Mixer**

*Tuesday, Sept. 16, 5:00 - 7:00 p.m., 635 Sanborn Place Suite 24, Salinas*

ARCpoint Labs of Salinas invites you to an exciting joint mixer in partnership with the Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce and the Monterey Peninsula Chamber of Commerce. Come connect with fellow professionals and community leaders while you: sip local wines; savor delicious small bites; and learn more about our wellness and employer-testing services. Plus, don't miss the live trivia showdown: "The Lab Report: Test Your Wits!" Win prizes throughout the evening in this fun and fast-paced contest hosted by the ARCpoint team! Whether you're here to network, explore health services, or just enjoy a great evening — this event is one you won't want to miss!

**RSVP at [salinaschamber.com](http://salinaschamber.com)**





## A Vision Realized: Ensen Community Park Celebrates Grand Opening in Salinas

*After years of planning and collaboration, a long-awaited public green space will open in the heart of the city.*

On Sunday, August 17, Salinas residents will celebrate more than the grand opening of a new park—they'll be celebrating the power of community-guided vision, equity-focused planning, and deep-rooted community partnerships. From 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., Ensen Community Park will host its official ribbon-cutting and celebration, marking the first step in turning 73 acres at Carr Lake into a thriving green space for people and nature.

The event, hosted by Big Sur Land Trust, the City of Salinas, and the Center for Community Advocacy, will feature family-friendly activities, performances, local food, and a formal ribbon-cutting at 12:30 p.m.

### A Park Built from the Ground Up—With the Community

For decades, Salinas residents have dreamed of converting Carr Lake, a seasonally dry lakebed, into a green space for families. Carr Lake spans over 480 acres, while open spaces for nearby neighborhoods to enjoy have historically been limited. In 2017, Big Sur Land Trust took a decisive step by purchasing a 73-acre portion of Carr Lake to begin addressing this gap. The acquisition and opening of the 6-acre portion of the new park, made possible by generous support from a CA State Parks Proposition 68 grant and grants from organizations like California State Coastal Conservancy, California Natural Resources Agency, the David and Lucile Packard Foundation, and Monterey Peninsula Foundation, marks the beginning of a community-centered transformation.

Over 7,000 residents helped shape the design of the park—signing petitions, attending workshops, and voting on its name. Ultimately, "Ensen Community Park" was selected. "Ensen," the Esselen word for blackberry, honors the area's Indigenous heritage and the fruit that once nourished this land and its people.

"This project is going to be transformative for the city but has also been transformative for Big Sur Land Trust in learning how to work shoulder to shoulder with the community," said Jeannette Tuitele-Lewis, President and CEO of Big Sur Land Trust.



### The First Phase of an Impactful Project

This 6-acre neighborhood park is only the beginning. It includes family-friendly amenities: sports courts, a skate area, playground, dog park, picnic areas, and walking paths. The full 73-acre plan includes a 67-acre habitat restoration area, already under construction. When complete, this space will feature seasonal wetlands, wildlife habitat, and walking trails with interpretive signage—welcoming nature into the area and offering new educational and wellness opportunities.

"The restoration area will reconnect residents with the natural world right in their backyard," said Rachel Saunders, Vice President of Conservation at Big Sur Land Trust. "It's a space that's designed to grow healthier communities from the soil up."



### Supporting Well-Being, Connection, and Local Growth

For the business community, projects like Ensen Community Park can offer benefits beyond recreation. Well-designed public spaces contribute to a city's overall livability, support a healthier and more connected community, and may create opportunities for future neighborhood activity and investment.

As the 6-acre neighborhood park officially opens, Big Sur Land Trust will transfer its ownership to the City of Salinas, which will oversee its ongoing care. When the Land Trust finishes construction and transfers the 67-acre restoration area to the city late next spring, the organization will continue to steward the restoration zone and is raising funds for a long-term endowment to support its ecological health. Donations to help sustain this community space can be made at [bit.ly/enscommpparkdonation](https://bit.ly/enscommpparkdonation).

### Join the Celebration

The grand opening celebration is open to all and promises to be a festive tribute to what the Salinas community can achieve together. Whether you're a resident, business leader, or long-time supporter of open space, this is a milestone worth marking.

**What:** Ensen Community Park Grand Opening

**When:** Sunday, August 17 | 11:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

**Ribbon-Cutting Ceremony:** 12:30 p.m.

**Where:** 600 Sherwood Dr, Salinas, CA 93906

For more information, visit [bit.ly/ensgrandopening](https://bit.ly/ensgrandopening)







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