



Salinas Valley  
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

# BUSINESS

JOURNAL



12th Annual Legacy of Leadership Gala **P.12**



Clutter Busting **P.15**

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## November Election: Chamber Endorsements

*by Chamber Staff*

Your Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce continues to take the time to provide rigorous review and thoughtful consideration of ballot measures and candidates running for local public offices. The September Business Journal lists endorsement decisions for Monterey County Sheriff (Joe Moses), Monterey County Board of Supervisors District 2, and the new California Assembly District 30.



Last month, the Chamber's Candidate Review

Committee considered a local Monterey County ballot measure, and interviewed candidates for Mayor of Salinas, Salinas City Council, Hartnell College Board of Trustees, Salinas Valley Memorial Healthcare System Board of Directors, and U.S. House of Representatives. Candidates answered questionnaires about why they were running for office and what they would intend to do as elected representatives of The People.

The Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors reviewed and discussed the Candidate Review Committee recommendations and voted to make the following endorsements.

### Chamber Endorses Measure Q, County Child Care Ballot Measure

Measure Q will be on the November ballot and is the Monterey County Safe, Affordable, Quality Child Care Act. Many Chamber members report they're having difficulty recruiting and retaining employees, and one major reason is the lack of affordable childcare within a reasonable distance of work or home. Measure Q will provide supplemental funding for operator expenses related to new or expanding child care facilities (such as liability insurance and regulatory compliance), training and certification for child care professions, and reuse of vacant or underused government buildings for child care facilities. There are several provisions in the ballot measure that ensure public accountability and transparency for expenditures, which will be managed by First 5 Monterey County.

### Mayor of Salinas - Kimbley Craig

Kimbley Craig has been a strong supporter of business issues since her election to City Council in 2010 and does not hide her positions. Under her leadership as Mayor, the city has accomplished much in helping businesses recover from COVID-19 public health restrictions.

Her challenger, Amit Pandya, did not respond to two invitations to fill out a questionnaire and participate in an interview. ➡

**ENDORSEMENTS** - Continued on page 9

## Castroville Pushed to Limit Despite Irrigation Innovation

*by Chamber Staff*

What does wastewater have to do with the Artichoke Center of the World? We will give you a hint. Crops grow where water flows.

Castroville declares itself to be the "Artichoke Center of the World." In fact, Castroville today supplies about two-thirds of artichokes to North America. In addition to the artichokes, this unincorporated area of Monterey County also grows other crops such as brussel sprouts, lettuce, cauliflower, broccoli, and celery.

Much of the Castroville irrigation water does not come from wells in the local aquifers, but from recycled municipal wastewater, river water released from dams (in normal and wet years), and even industrial wastewater from the City of Salinas. In fact, Castroville has been on the cutting edge of the technology in industrial-level use of recycled water for field crops.

All of this water for crops goes through the Castroville Seawater Intrusion Project (CSIP - pronounced Sea-Sip), a partnership between the Monterey County Water Resources Agency (MCWRA) and the Monterey One Water (M1W) regional wastewater agency.

Never heard of CSIP? Here's a brief summary.

### Why Use Recycled Wastewater for Irrigation?

Farmers in the Castroville area were forced into innovative water supply options for irrigation because of "seawater intrusion." Wells in the area have long penetrated underground aquifers at approximately 180 feet and 400 feet below the surface. As fresh water gets pumped out from the aquifers, the groundwater level near the wells drops below sea level and allows seawater to move inland into the aquifers. Chlorine ions in that seawater (note: salt is sodium chloride) damage crops. Wells experiencing seawater intrusion are unsuitable for irrigation use.

This has been a long-known problem. A 1946 bulletin published by the State of California Department of Water Resources reported "...abandonment of wells in the Salinas Basin near the bay shore due to excessive salinity as early as 1938. Accelerated encroachment of the contamination occurred in 1943 and the matter was brought to public attention in 1944." ➡



**CASTROVILLE** - Continued on page 16

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# The Importance of Strong Leadership

- Rodney Meeks -

by Rodney Meeks, Board Chair



One of the four core goals of the Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce is to strengthen our advocacy and policy influence to advance the interests of our membership. This helps support our vision of a thriving, welcoming Salinas Valley where people, families, and businesses succeed via economic opportunity and growth. It's important to have people in leadership positions that understand the value that profitable businesses bring to the community. This includes a strong educational system for workforce development, a financially strong healthcare system that can afford to support the needs of our community with the latest advancements in healthcare technology, strong public safety and most importantly, people who understand the importance of laws that will support the needs of business and not overregulate.

In order to support the Chamber's mission where people, families, and businesses succeed via economic opportunity and growth, the Chamber formed a candidate review committee and reviewed candidates running for various positions that included school and hospital boards, city council, mayor, sheriff, county supervisor, etc. The candidate review committee consists of a committee chair and several committee members. This committee reaches out to all candidates and invites them for an interview

to find out how knowledgeable they are about current issues and their position on these issues. Not all candidates respond to this invitation and not all candidates

are knowledgeable or even have a plan on how they would make a difference if they were elected. This is a major commitment by the volunteers of the committee that requires many hours of volunteer service. After the interview process the committee makes its recommendations and reports them to the Chamber's board of directors where the board votes on each one of the candidate recommendations.

In addition to the recommendations of the candidate review committee, the Chamber also recently honored several members at our annual Legacy of Leadership event for their leadership and advancements in technology. One of our honorees, Danny Little, who was recruited to the area from Austin, Texas, by the law firm of Noland, Hamerly, Ettiene, and Hoss, spoke about how special our community is because of the strong network in the Salinas Valley and the ability to make a positive impact in the community. Carla Rocha of Artistic Hangups spoke about how she migrated from Peru as a child, became a citizen, learned to speak English, and became a business owner. Marlene Garcia of Brew N Krew spoke about how she was the first person to go to college in her family, became a teacher, and started her own business. Dr. Rolando Cabrera spoke becoming a doctor and his brother telling him how important it was to build his legacy by giving back to the community.

All of these stories are about opportunity and the American dream. Raymond Costa of RHC Management Company shared his story at the CEO Advisory Luncheon: he was a UPS driver when he had a dream of becoming a McDonald's franchisee. He was rejected twice while competing against 24,000 other applicants, but his persistence and tenacity finally paid off and now he owns nine McDonald's franchises, and never forgets about his humble beginnings and has a passion for giving back to those less fortunate. And that's what makes our community so special. When local businesses succeed, the community succeeds. ■



## 2022 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

- Chair - **Rodney Meeks** (Credit Consulting Services)
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- Vice Chair, Finance - **Tom Moran** (Goodwill Central Coast)
- Vice Chair, Events - **Amy Gibson** (Central Coast Federal Credit Union)
- Vice Chair, Membership - **Andrea Bailey** (Chevron)

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- **Sara Boyns** (Fenton & Keller)
- **Raymond Costa** (RHC Management, dba McDonald's)
- **Brenda Granillo** (California Water Service)
- **Mark Kennedy** (Green Rubber-Kennedy Ag)
- **Albert Maldonado** (MP Express Printing)
- **Krishna Patel** (Duda Farm Fresh Foods)
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- **Colby Pereira** (Braga Fresh Family Farms)
- **Patty Rodriguez** (Rodeo Marketplace)
- **Amy Salmina** (Coast & Valley Properties)
- **Starla Warren** (Housing Consultant)

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- **Kevin Dayton** (Salinas City Center Improvement Assn.)

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- **Gabriel Lopez** (Membership Development Director)
- **Willa Doroy** (Operations & Finance Director)
- **Jasmine Bardwaj** (Marketing & Member Services)
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- **Toula Hubbard** (Business Journal Editor)
- **Steve McShane** (President & CEO)

## CHAMBER PRIORITIES

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

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# The Yield Curve and Recessions

by Bill Hastie, Hastie Financial Group

Over the past several months, news outlets have inundated us with the “R” word – recession. Have we gone into a recession? If not, will we and when? News pundits and economic experts continue the debate whether the U.S. economy has slid into a recession or not. There are valid arguments for and against a recession; however we must look at the current situation through a purely economic lens to truly evaluate the state of the U.S. economy.

Although there has been some recent debate, the traditional definition of recession (used for decades in economic textbooks and business schools) is two consecutive quarters with negative gross domestic product (GDP). Real GDP decreased at an annual rate of -1.6 percent in the first quar-



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ter of 2022, while the second quarter saw a -0.6 percent decline. Thus, putting the U.S. economy into a technical recession.

Conversely, opponents of this school of thought stated that the U.S. economy could not be in a recession due to a string of strong jobs reports released over the past few months. The Employment Situation, the monthly jobs report released by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, has consistently shown a strong labor market with numbers continually outperforming estimates. So, are we in a recession or not? The debate continues to wage on.

One concept that is gaining more attention is the yield curve and its relationship with recessions. The yield curve is a graphical representation of the interest rates for various U.S. government treasuries,

including the 2-year and 10-year Treasury notes. A normal yield curve (sloping upward from left to right) shows short-term bonds carry lower interest rates to reflect that an investor's money is at less risk, while higher interest rates are typically associated with longer-term bonds due to increased risk of having one's money tied up for extended periods of time. On April 1, 2022, the yield curve inverted – meaning short-term Treasury yields were higher than long-term Treasury yields. While this might not seem significant, experts warn that this could be a sign of looming recession. The yield curve is often viewed as a leading indicator of recessions in the U.S. economy. Over the past half century, yield curve inversion has preceded every U.S recession. During that time, the yield curve has inverted, on average, 12 months prior to a recession. On a brighter note, research from Morningstar indicates that periods between yield curve inversion and subsequent recession have proven to be relatively strong periods for the S&P 500 Index.

Despite the arguments for and against a recession, some analysts are more concerned with other more pressing issues – decades high inflation and the resulting aggressive interest rate hikes by the Federal Reserve (Fed). Regardless of whether the U.S. is in a recession or not, the reality is that most people have been directly affected by the rising costs of most goods and services. The markets and investors alike continue to hope for positive economic news with each CPI report and a shift to more dovish actions from the Fed. ■

**Bill Hastie, MBA is the Founder of locally-owned Hastie Financial Group. If you would like to discuss your personal or company's investment needs, please contact Bill at [william.hastie@hastiefg.com](mailto:william.hastie@hastiefg.com).**



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# Employer Compliance with Requests for Employee Records

by Gladys Rodriguez-Morales, Fenton & Keller

Employers regularly receive requests from former and current employees for a copy of their personnel file and/or payroll records. Employers often put these requests to the side and forget about them, or they may find it confusing as to which documents need to be produced. Employers who receive such requests, must not ignore the request, and ensure they comply in a timely manner to avoid statutorily imposed penalties for non-compliance.

Under Labor Code sections 226(a), 432, and 1198.5, former and current employees have the right to inspect and receive a copy of their personnel file, payroll records, and any document they signed related to their employment. Labor Code section 1198.5(a) provides that current and former employees have the right to inspect and receive a copy of their personnel file relating to the employee's job performance and any grievance concerning the employee, which do not include letters of reference; documents relating to the investigation of a possible criminal offense; and ratings, reports, or records that were (1) obtained prior to the employee's employment; (2) prepared by identifiable examination committee members; and (3) obtained in connection with a promotional examination. Moreover, the right to inspect personnel files does not apply to an employee covered by a valid collective bargaining agreement if certain provisions are contained in the agreement.

The California Department of Industrial Relations provides guidance concerning the categories of records that employees are entitled to see as part of a personnel file request, including:

- Employment application
- Payroll authorization forms
- Commendations, warnings, disciplinary and/or termination notices
- Notices concerning layoffs, leaves of absences, and vacations
- Wage attachment and garnishment notices
- Training and education records
- Performance reviews
- Attendance records

Employers have 30 days from the date the employer received a written request to allow inspection of the employee's personnel file and/or to provide a copy if requested. If a copy is requested, employers can charge the actual cost

of reproduction. Former employees who prefer to receive a copy by mail can be charged for the actual postage expense in addition to the reproduction costs. Also, employers have the option to mail a copy of the file or make

it available for inspection at a non-work site that is within a reasonable driving distance from the former employee's residence when an employee was terminated because the employee violated the law or the employer's harassment or workplace violence policies. For current employees, employers can require the employee to inspect the file or receive a copy of the file when the employee is not working unless the employer requires the employee to receive a copy or inspect the file at a location other than where the employee reports to work.

Additionally, under Labor Code section 226(a), former and current employees have the right to inspect or receive a copy of their payroll records. If a copy is provided, the employer needs to provide a duplicate of the itemized wage statement that is provided to the employee on payday or a computer-generated record that accurately shows the information required pursuant to section 226(a). When a copy is provided, the employer can charge the actual cost of reproduction. Employers who receive a written or oral request to inspect or receive a copy of payroll records are required to comply with the request by no later than 21 days from the date the request was made.

Employers who use the services of a payroll service company should ensure they are able to access and print all current and former employee itemized wage statements for at least the last three years of an employee's employment, or in the alternative, ensure that they have access to computer-generated reports that accurately show all the information required by Labor Code section 226(a). ■

*Gladys Rodriguez-Morales is a lawyer with the Fenton & Keller law firm in Monterey. This article is intended to address topics of general interest and should not be construed as legal advice. For more information, please visit [www.fentonkeller.com](http://www.fentonkeller.com).*



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## Business Basics: Cash Flow Management

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# Sale of Business and Real Property

by Patrick Casey, JRG Attorneys

Selling an on-going business involves many steps and must be thoroughly evaluated before signing a sale agreement. One key issue that must be addressed is distinguishing the sale of the business itself versus any real estate associated with the business. If the seller is selling both the business and the real estate, then these are separate transactions that must be addressed in separate sale agreements.

The sale of a business typically involves the sale of inventory, furniture, fixtures and equipment, a client list, customer contracts, the business name and any goodwill, all licenses, permits and leases of the business, and other such assets. The sale may involve the buyer assuming certain business liabilities and possibly hiring certain employees. The seller may agree to a covenant not to compete and may also provide consulting services to the buyer post-closing. The parties may want to conduct a bulk sale transfer (which will require establishing a business escrow) to insure that the buyer gets clear title to all the business assets. In addition, if a liquor license is being transferred, then the California Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control ("ABC") requires a separate business escrow to transfer the liquor license.

buyer will conduct a due diligence investigation into the real estate, which may involve a survey and/or environmental site assessment. The seller and buyer will open a real estate escrow with a title company, which will issue a preliminary report about the condition of legal title to the property and all encumbrances against the property. The buyer will have a due diligence period to evaluate the property and decide whether to proceed with the purchase. The title company will issue a title insurance policy to the buyer at the closing.

In this situation, the parties will need to enter into separate purchase agreements, one for the business and another for the real estate. They will need to allocate the purchase price between the business versus the real estate. Each party will have distinct duties and obligations in each purchase agreement relating to each sale. The parties can make closing the business sale contingent on closing the real estate sale, or vice versa. Sometimes, that may not be possible as the closing date may be subject to various factors. For example, the sale of a business with a liquor license is deemed to close on the ABC transfer date of the liquor license. As such, the parties may need to negotiate for some interim arrangement if they are unable to close both sales on the same date. Each party will need to retain its own legal counsel to advise them on these issues. ■

*This article is written by Patrick Casey, who is a business attorney with the JRG Attorneys at Law firm in Monterey. You may reach the author at (831) 269-7114 or at [patrick@jrgattorneys.com](mailto:patrick@jrgattorneys.com).*



The sale of real estate involves not only the sale of the real estate itself, but also any leases and other rights associated with the real estate. The

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# Lyme Disease: How and What

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



One of the best parts of Monterey County is the natural beauty that surrounds us all year round. Whether you prefer the beach, the golf course, or a nice walk on a sunny hillside trail, there are plenty of ways to enjoy our extended summers outdoors. Unfortunately, a nice tan isn't the only thing we bring back home with us. Ticks breed in oak litter and grass throughout the county, and their bite can carry many illnesses, including Lyme disease. Lyme disease cases have risen 357 percent in rural areas across the country in the last 15 years, making awareness and education more important than ever. ARCpoint Labs is joining with healthcare facilities around the country in bringing a new generation of rapid Lyme disease tests directly to our local community, to help in the diagnosis and rapid treatment of this disease.

Lyme disease is spread by the bite of specific species of tick, leading to a bacterial infection by a spirochete (a corkscrew-shaped bacterium) called *Borrelia burgdorferi*. It is named after the city of Lyme, Connecticut, where the first case was discovered in the 1970s. It occurs worldwide where blacklegged ticks are found, including in California, and is most common in the warm months of the year from April to October.

Ticks can be found in wooded areas, areas with tall grass or low hanging foliage, and even in areas with low coastal scrub and bushes like can be found around beaches up and down the Central coast. According to a 2021 study by the University of Colorado in 2021, up to 10 percent of ticks in these habitats in California have been detected to host *Borrelia burgdorferi*, the bacterium that causes Lyme disease.

Not every tick bite will or can cause Lyme disease. Lyme disease is only transmitted by ticks from a family called "Ixodes" or black-legged ticks. Additionally, the tick must bite and remain attached for at least 24 hours. Any tick that is properly removed within 24 hours doesn't have the chance to burrow in and transmit the bacteria that cause Lyme disease. It's also important to realize that dogs not only carry ticks back into the house, but they can get Lyme disease, too! Tick-checks for your furry friends is just as important as keeping them off yourself.

Lyme disease often starts with mild symptoms. Initial flu-like symptoms like fever, chills, headache, fatigue, muscle and joint aches, and swollen lymph nodes are common. The most characteristic symptom of early Lyme disease is the so-called "bullseye" rash. This rash appears at the bite location within 3-30 days and slowly expands, gradually forming a red ring around the bite that resembles a bullseye. In individuals with darker skin tones, this rash may be less pronounced or present differently. The bullseye rash appears in 70-80 percent of individuals who contract Lyme disease.

When diagnosed early, the infection is easily treated with a simple antibiotic regimen. Unfortunately, when left untreated Lyme disease can cause a host of chronic issues including fatigue, joint pains and even short-term memory problems. Symptoms of chronic Lyme disease can persist for years and resist easy treatment. While research into a cure

for chronic Lyme disease is ongoing, rapid diagnosis and early, aggressive treatment remains the best way to treat Lyme disease.

**Lyme disease cases have risen 357 percent in rural areas across the country in the last 15 years.**

While Monterey County is not historically a high-risk habitat for Lyme disease, that may be changing. In recent years, climate change and species encroachment has led to an expansion of the areas where disease-bearing Ixodes ticks are found, and an accompanying increase in Lyme disease and other tick-borne illnesses. There have been just 17 confirmed cases of Lyme disease in Monterey County since 2000, however this likely underestimates the true number. Historically, testing

for Lyme disease has been uneven or unreliable, and cases tend to be severely underreported. Fortunately, a new generation of testing technologies offers faster results and more rapid diagnosis of Lyme disease.

These rapid testing platforms can return results within a few hours from a small sample of blood, making it easier, faster, and more convenient ever for both doctors and patients to get access to Lyme disease results. Like rapid COVID tests that have become so familiar in recent years, rapid Lyme disease testing lowers patient costs while improving access and providing faster information to inform patient care. Faster results means faster treatment, which improves recovery rates and helps prevent chronic Lyme disease.

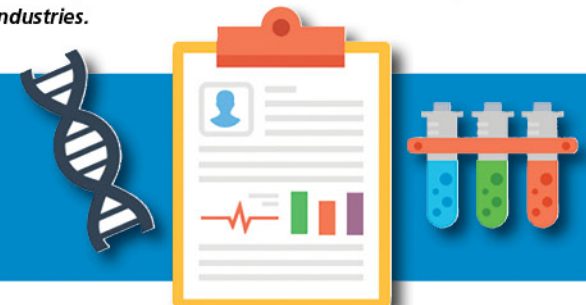
If you have been bitten by a tick, or if you have symptoms after being in an area where ticks are known to be, consult your healthcare provider. Ticks in California carry diseases other than Lyme disease such as anaplasmosis, Rocky Mountain spotted fever, Pacific Coast tick fever, babesiosis, Colorado tick fever, tularemia, and relapsing fever. The California Department of Public Health and Monterey County health department track and disseminate public health information about many of these diseases.

If you have been bitten by a tick and want instructions on how to safely remove it, visit [labtestsalinas.com/tickinfo](http://labtestsalinas.com/tickinfo). You can also bring a tick in to ARCpoint Labs of Salinas or Monterey to have the tick identified, for free, by one of our biologists. Public health offices such as the Monterey County Public Health Office may also perform this service. Ticks that are brought in can also be tested for Lyme disease and other tick-borne illnesses directly. If you or your physician would like more information on Lyme disease, rapid Lyme disease testing, or any other tick-borne or infectious disease, please contact us at [salinas@arcpointlabs.com](mailto:salinas@arcpointlabs.com) or at (831) 975-4313. ■



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

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**Salinas City Council, District 5 - Christie Cromeenes**

Councilmember Christie Cromeenes is emphasizing her leadership as mayor or pro tempore after the death of Mayor Joe Gunter. She led the city through economic relief during the early stages of COVID-19 public health restrictions with an understanding of business needs. She is pleased with the accomplishment of bringing a community center to her district and has a goal for her second term of bringing a fire station to her district.

**Hartnell College Board, Area 5 - Ulises Gonzalez Reyes**

Ulises Gonzalez is emphasizing reversal of enrollment decline and low completion rates. He is interested in promoting more extensive outreach to local businesses to find out what decent-paying jobs in the Salinas Valley are in high demand.

**Salinas Valley Memorial Healthcare System Board, Zone 1 - Rolando Cabrera**

Dr. Rolando Cabrera would be a helpful addition of a doctor to the hospital board. He appreciates the financial stability and clinic purchases of the district but wants to see improved hiring and retention, better quality technology, and more community involvement to deal with diabetes and fentanyl. He is the winner of this year's Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce Legacy of Leadership Business Philanthropy Award.

**Salinas Valley Memorial Healthcare System Board, Zone 4 - Richard Turner**

Richard Turner is running for his second term. He brings an important business and financial management perspective to the board. He played a key role in board procedural changes concerning contractor bidding and pro forma income statements. He thinks the current top administrators are doing an excellent job guiding the hospital over recent challenges and toward future challenges. He expressed an interest in increasing the number of local companies bidding for hospital contracts - something that the Chamber can work with him on through the Local First Coalition.



**Salinas Valley Memorial Healthcare System Board, Zone 5 - Joel Hernandez Laguna**

Joel Hernandez was the only candidate who contacted us directly asking for an interview, which we appreciate. He works for Community Foundation for Monterey County. He has some specific goals, including bringing specialty care to a Gonzales clinic and getting an in-house 24-hour pharmacy for the public in the hospital.

**New 18th Congressional District - Peter Hernandez**

Peter Hernandez is a member of the San Benito County Board of Supervisors. He's a small business owner who has been a leader in redevelopment of Downtown Hollister. He's especially strong on knowing how federal mandates impose costs and burdens on local governments and businesses. He would be a dependable vote in Congress in support of traditional business positions.

Zoe Lofgren has served a San Jose-based district in Congress since 1995 and now finds herself in a redrawn district that includes San Benito County and the Salinas Valley. She has a highly capable staff and has been working to master the new issues of the Salinas Valley and build relationships, especially with agricultural interests. While her voting record is often opposed to traditional business positions, the Chamber hopes to maintain a positive relationship with her if she wins in November. ■



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# Protecting The Most Precious Gift We Humans Hold In Life - Our Health

by Rena Salamacha, CEO, Mee Memorial Healthcare System



In 1948, the World Health Organization defined health as “a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.”

WHO published further clarifications in 1986, citing health as “a resource for everyday life, not the objective of living. Health is a positive concept emphasizing social and personal resources, as well as physical capacities.”

This means that health helps support an individual’s function in wider society, rather than an end in itself. A healthful lifestyle provides the means to lead a full life with meaning

and purpose.

Going back 60 years to humble beginnings, Mee Memorial Healthcare System has long been a trusted foundation of our rural community in South Monterey County. We have always held a vision to promote health and well-being — but in the context of helping our neighbors to thrive, not just survive.

MMHS’s highest priority is to serve the healthcare needs of our valued community. This includes offering an extensive array of services with a commitment to the highest possible standards, the best available technology and a highly skilled healthcare team.

Health is the most precious gift we humans hold in life because it ...

- helps us live longer
- helps us have more “good years” as we age
- makes us feel better
- makes us less stressed
- enables us to spend quality time with loved ones
- makes us better at our jobs
- helps us serve our community
- reduces the time and money we need to spend on healthcare

The last benefit is especially important. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), healthcare costs in the United States total \$4.1 trillion (or \$12,530 per person) each year.

In many rural communities across the country, health disparities are deeply rooted in economic, social, racial, ethnic, geographic, and health workforce factors. That tends to limit access to care, and makes finding solutions more difficult. At MMHS, we are committed to providing culturally sensitive and patient-centered healthcare, delivered with the highest quality of service, to ALL our residents. There is no other way forward.

When Mee Memorial Hospital first opened its doors in 1962 — with rancher Tom Mee putting a fundraising drive over the top by donating \$150,000 from a cattle sale — medical professionals faced many challenges in providing quality healthcare in a rural community.

A strong foundation was built, through loyal support, dedicated volunteerism and the sheer determination of healthcare professionals.

In the past 15 years, a new Mee has emerged. In 2007, the second floor of the hospital was finished to increase the number of beds to 119. In addition to our hospital services, we have a network of five clinics, four in King City and one in Greenfield.

MMHS continues to improve and expand to meet both inpatient and outpatient needs in an area of several thousands square miles.

As the community and this hospital move forward, there is no greater defense of good health than personal responsibility. Visit your doctor for wellness checks, eat well, exercise, learn what it takes to stay healthy, find that delicate balance between work and home life, and find ways to thrive.

It’s a critical time of year when it comes to both health and safety in our community. We are entering the fall season, the days are getting shorter, kids are back in school and the winter holidays are on the horizon. It’s time to be vigilant — while still enjoying all that makes rural living rewarding.

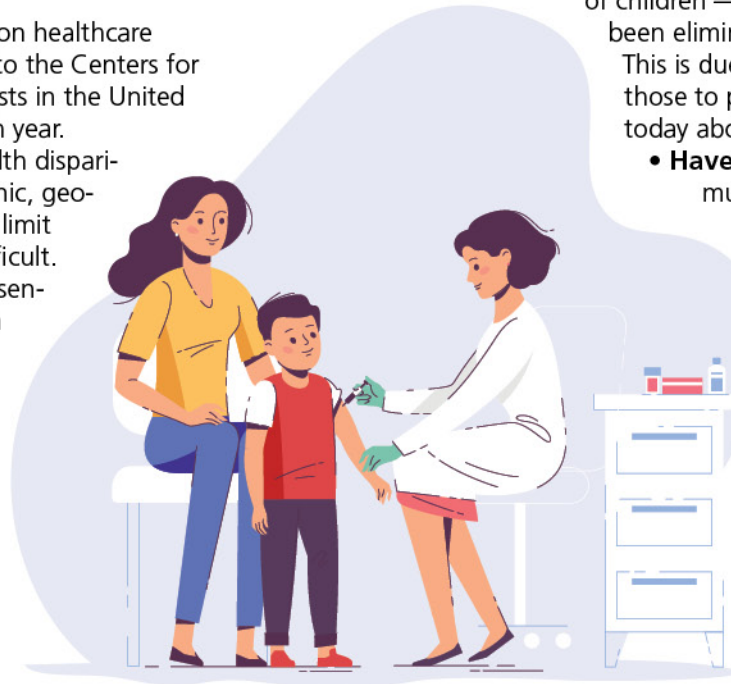
Here are some health-first tips for the rest of 2022:

• **Get your flu shot:** Experts say it’s likely that the flu and COVID-19 will both spread this fall and winter as people begin to move indoors. While a flu vaccine will not protect against COVID-19, there are many important benefits, such as reducing the risk of flu illness and hospitalization, while saving resources for patients suffering from more serious healthcare needs. Flu also affects employers and businesses, costing an estimated \$11.2 billion in direct and indirect costs in the U.S. annually. MMHS will host a number of free flu clinics throughout South County, with dates and times to be announced soon!

• **Immunize your children:** Kids should get most of their shots during their first 2 years after birth. This is because many of these diseases are the most severe in the very young. Some diseases that once injured or killed thousands of children — such as polio, tetanus, and diphtheria — have been eliminated completely, and others are close to extinction. This is due to safe and effective vaccines — and that includes those to protect against COVID-19. Talk to your family doctor today about immunizing your child today!

• **Have a safe Halloween:** For our children, Oct. 31 is a much-anticipated day of fun and frolic. We remind parents to make safety a priority. Remember to decorate costumes and bags with reflective tape or stickers and, if possible, choose light colors. Choose face paint and makeup whenever possible instead of full masks, which can obstruct a child’s vision. And remain in trusted neighborhoods and send older children out with a phone (for emergencies only).

For 60 years, helping our community stay healthy and safe has remained in MMHS’s best interest. It’s what we do, and what we stand for. But it’s vital that each of us become our own advocate in safeguarding and maintaining our health. Let’s pull together on all these fronts and finish 2022 as the best versions of ourselves. ■



# Do Employers Need to Provide a Seat?

by Bradley J. Levang, Fenton & Keller



Recently, the California Court of Appeal, in *Meda v. AutoZone, Inc.*, (2022) 81 Cal. App. 5th 366, considered what it means to “provide” suitable seating for an

employee. The case concerned language in Wage Order 7, which states that, “All working employees shall be provided with suitable seats when the nature of the work reasonably permits the use of seats.” However, it is worth remembering that most of California’s Industrial Welfare Commission Wage Orders contain a similar provision to the one stated above from Wage Order 7.

In this case, Monica Meda, worked as a sales associate for about six months at an AutoZone auto parts store, operated by AutoZoners, and she thereafter asserted a claim that AutoZoners failed to provide suitable seating to employees at the cashier and parts counter workstations. AutoZoners had a policy of making two raised chairs available to any employee that needed or wanted one. In this instance, the California Court of Appeal found that when an employer has not expressly advised employees that they may use a seat during work and has not provided a seat at the employee’s workstation, then the determination of whether an employer provided suitable seating may be a fact-intensive inquiry and may also involve several job and workplace-specific factors.

In reaching its decision, the Court of Appeal looked to the California Supreme Court Case of *Kilby v. CVS Pharmacy, Inc.*, (2016) 63 Cal.4th 1 for guidance. In that case, the California Supreme Court applied a fact-based analysis to determine the definition of “suitable seating” and stated that, “Courts should look to the actual tasks performed, or reasonably expected to

be performed, not to abstract characterizations, job titles, or descriptions that may or may not reflect the actual work performed. Tasks performed with more frequency or for a longer duration would be more germane to the seating inquiry than tasks performed briefly or infrequently.”

Even though the California Supreme Court in *Kilby* evaluated a term other than “provide,” the Court of Appeal in *Meda* adopted a similar analysis to decide whether an employer has provided suitable seating. The determination of whether seating is provided is a fact-intensive inquiry related to the actual tasks performed or reasonably expected to be performed by the employee rather than simply reviewing rules and job descriptions. *Meda* cited several examples of potential fact-based inquiries for evaluating whether an employer provided suitable seating at a particular workstation such as, consideration of the many differences in every workplace, the nature of an employee’s job responsibilities, the frequency in which an employee changes tasks, the physical layout of the workspace, the number of employees sharing a workstation, and the extent to which the location of a seat at or near a workstation may obstruct employees’ tasks or cause congestion.

Even though it may become a fact-specific inquiry, employers should consider developing a written seating policy and informing employees of that policy. Employers should also consider informing employees about seats located at a particular workstation, or located elsewhere, that an employee may use while working at their workstation if the nature of their work reasonably permits the use of a seat. ■

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

## DOLLARS AND SENSE: INVESTING IN EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT

Nobel Laureate Economist James Heckman  
Returns to Monterey County

Invest + Develop + Sustain = Gain



October 7, 2022  
8:30am - 10:30am  
Monterey Conference Center  
Breakfast \$30

Register here: <https://bit.ly/3Q9BVnw>

Join us to reflect and learn more about ensuring a strong economic future for our community.



[www.heckmanequation.org](http://www.heckmanequation.org)

## Health Literacy Month



*“To anticipate and provide services to meet the health care needs of the people we serve.”*

SCAN ME



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# 12th Annual Legacy of Leadership Gala

Last month, the Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce celebrated its 12th annual Legacy of Leadership Gala. The sold-out event treated 220 people to a spectacular evening of food, wine, silent and live auctions, all while honoring outstanding individuals and businesses in our community.

The Legacy of Leadership was designed to recognize those who have made tremendous positive impacts on our community.

Awards were presented to:  
Marlene Garcia, Brew-N-Krew:

Young Professional of the Year

Daniel Little, Noland, Hamerly, Etienne & Hoss:

Young Professional of the Year

Carla Rocha, Artistic HangUps:

Outstanding Minority Owned Business

Rolando Cabrera, M.D.:

Business Philanthropy Award

D'Arrigo California:

Distinguished Business Innovation

Salinas Valley Memorial Healthcare System:

Distinguished Business Innovation

Board Chair Rodney Meeks greeted the crowd and emphasized the importance of advocacy and community engagement.

"Your Chamber of Commerce is hard at work as a strong voice for business in the community," remarked Meeks.

Guests were treated to delicious food provided by the talented team at the Steinbeck House, the impeccable Portobello's, and Chef Shahram Farahmand and the wonderful team at Sun Street Center. Kathy Kulper, A Sweet Affair, provided an array of delectable desserts that extinguished the last of any willpower guests might have had.

Not to be outdone by the food, the wine selection featured Scheid Family Wines, Smith Family Wines and Poppy Wines. Kevin Harris and Kool Inc. provided the musical selections and the program concluded with a special guest appearance by "Elvis" brought to us by Artistic Hangup! OK, it was an impersonator, but that guy could move like the real one! Two additional highlights were a fun photo booth and the incredibly talented caricature artist, Nito Gomez. Special thanks to the staff of Portobello's On Main and to Taylor Farms who graciously hosted the evening's celebration. While plans are already starting for the 13th Annual Legacy of Leadership Gala in 2023, the date has not been determined. ■



SVCC Vice Chair of Governmental Relations, Jennifer Williams, is joined by Innovation Award recipient, John D'Arrigo and Chamber CEO Steve McShane.



Award recipient Carla Rocha (Artistic HangUps) with husband, Jorge Gonzalez and son, Gino Gonzalez.



Ted Lorono (Pinnacle Bank), Sheri Cline (Pinnacle Bank) and Don Cline.



Salinas Valley Memorial Healthcare System board members and staff celebrate their award for Distinguished Business Innovation Award.



Andrea Manzo, Honoree Marlene Garcia and Gabriela Manzo.



Ben Oakley, Christina Coulson, and Brooke Caraccioli.



Chamber CEO Steve McShane with honoree Marlene Garcia (Brew-N-Krew).



Honoree Danny Little with his daughter!



Kathy Kulper, A Sweet Affair, provided desserts!



Shahram Farahmand, Sun Street Center, with teammate, Richard Mulvey.



Award recipient, Danny Little (Noland, Hamerly, Etienne & Hoss), with Monterey County Supervisors Luis Alejo (District 1) and Chris Lopez (District 3).



The sold-out crowd enjoyed networking at Taylor Farms Courtyard.



SVMHS Board Members Regina Gage, Victor Rey, Juan Cabrera and Richard Turner.



Ag industry icon John D'Arrigo, D'Arrigo California, along with family, staff and elected officials celebrate receiving the Distinguished Business Innovation Award.



Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce  
Presents



# Legacy of Leadership Gala

Thank You to Our Fantastic Sponsors!

## Gold Level



## Silver Level



## Bronze Level

- . Bay Federal Credit Union
- . Braga Fresh Family Farms
- . Central Coast Community Energy
- . Coast & Valley Properties
- . Credit Consulting Services

- . Fenton & Keller
- . Gourley Construction
- . Granite Construction
- . Green Rubber-Kennedy Ag
- . Hastie Financial Group

- . Kasavan Architects
- . Noland, Hamerly, Etienne & Hoss
- . Quintes
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## Award Sponsors



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# Overwhelmed by Clutter? Donate to Goodwill to Help Others Feel the Power of Employment

by Az Koussa, Regional Transportation Manager, Goodwill Central Coast



Americans function within a capitalistic, growth-centered economy. Logic tells us that the more we spend the better it is for everyone. And that's true — to a point.

We all want things, of course. But do we really NEED everything we buy? We've all fallen into the trap of spending money we don't have, and buying things we think we need but never use.

The result usually leads to debt and dissatisfaction, excess clutter, and ultimately the dumping of items into landfills.

If you feel like your "stuff" is weighing you down and controlling your life, there is a time-honored, local option available. Goodwill Central Coast stands ready to accept donations and transform them into meaningful jobs in our communities.

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

With multiple, convenient drop-off sites, GCC makes it easy for anyone to have an impact on their local economy and the environment. And it saves you money so that you don't have to pay to throw something away.

It's a win-win proposition — for the people and the planet.

## It Begins With A Purge

We've all collected a few impulse buys or things we don't need over the years. Whatever reason someone has for holding on to these items, it is time to start letting those things go once and for all.

Do any of these excuses sound familiar? "I paid good money for it." "I might need it someday." "Someone gave that to me as a gift." "A family member left me that item in their will."

If you're wondering if you really need to purge, there are probably clues all around you:

Your "containers" are no longer containing the things you own in that category.

You are spending more time organizing a space than it's worth.

Something doesn't have a home in your home.

You can no longer park your car (or even walk through) your garage.

The bottom line is, if you don't use an item, if you don't need or love an item, then it doesn't belong in your home.

Wellness experts say that a home should be a sanctuary, not a place that is cluttered and overwhelming.

Here are some purging tips to help create a more Zen atmosphere around your home:

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

Get rid of duplicate items: This could include things like spare spatulas, having too many cups that are similar, etc. Check

out your junk drawer, your shoe rack and old toy chests. There is surprising power in owning just one!

Fill a "maybe" box: For things that you're still not sure about, get a box and write "donate by X date" on it. If you find that you're missing those items, go in the box and get them. But when the date comes, anything still in the box gets automatically donated!

## Donating to Goodwill is Easy

With the summer season waning and autumn right around the corner, GCC encourages all residents in Monterey, Santa Cruz and San Luis Obispo counties to begin the purge process. It's fast, easy and convenient. GCC is especially interested in donated clothing, shoes, housewares, small electrical items, and small electronics, with donation centers listed <https://www.ccgoodwill.org/donate/find-a-donation-center>.

What's more, all monetary donations and donations of clothing and household goods that are in "good" condition or better are entitled to a tax deduction, according to Federal law. The Internal Revenue Service requires that all charitable donations be itemized and valued, and GCC provides an estimated value list at <https://www.ccgoodwill.org/donate/tax-deductions>.

In addition, Goodwill Central Coast provides the following services:

Free home pickups are available for large amounts of items (some restrictions apply). Those interested should send their address, telephone number and pictures of the items they would like picked up to [donorservices@ccgoodwill.org](mailto:donorservices@ccgoodwill.org).

Free weekly or monthly pickup service from Businesses/schools/organizations (please contact donor services at 800-894-8440)

Donation drives which can net an organization, school, club or nonprofit thousands of dollars are available this fall and the spring of next year in Santa Cruz, Monterey and San Luis Obispo counties

For donating high value items please call donor services at 800-894-8440 and someone will be happy to assist.

For donating cars or other vehicles, please contact our affiliate at 866-701-2277 and let them know that it's for Goodwill Central Coast.

## Creating Job Opportunities

Goodwill Central Coast is committed to removing obstacles for individuals looking to build the necessary skills to succeed in their desired career. So each time

you're making a donation you aren't just getting rid of unused clothes in your closet, you're providing an opportunity for someone in your area to gain work experience to help advance their career.

When it comes to purging, once you start letting go, you'll feel more peaceful, content and fulfilled in the open space you intentionally created. Instead of stress and panic that you can't find anything you need in clutter and chaos, you'll know where things are and make effective use of everything you own.

And you can rest assured that GCC will transform something unwanted and unneeded into community goodwill! ■



### Seeking Solutions

In the following decades, farmers considered various ways to deal with the threat of continuing seawater intrusion. In 1974, the State of California Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board recommended "consolidation of Monterey Peninsula, Salinas, and Castroville area municipal wastewater flows with construction of a regional treatment plant and outfall for discharge to Central Monterey Bay with reuse of reclaimed wastewater for crop irrigation..." Studies were planned and carried out in the 1980s to see if recycled wastewater could be used for irrigation without risking public health and safety.

After a proposal was abandoned in 1983 to build a dam on the Arroyo Seco River to provide water to the Castroville area, the Monterey County Board of Supervisors commissioned studies and plans for construction of an alternative water supply project.

In 1987, the "Monterey Wastewater Reclamation for Agriculture Study" was provided to the Monterey County Water Resources Agency. It declared the use of recycled municipal wastewater to be a safe and effective way to irrigate crops in the Castroville area as an alternative to pumping water from the aquifers and encouraging further seawater intrusion. Studies were also conducted to ensure farmworker health would not be compromised by use of the recycled water and that consumers would be willing to buy produce irrigated with recycled wastewater.

In 1989, the Regional Treatment Facility at the Monterey County Water Pollution Control Agency (renamed in 2017 as Monterey One Water) began operating a large primary and secondary wastewater treatment plant near Marina. A piece was in place for future use of recycled wastewater for crops, however, that irrigation water would need additional tertiary treatment as well as primary and secondary treatment.

### CSIP Becomes Operational

In 1992, the Board of Supervisors approved the project now known as the Castroville Seawater Intrusion Project. It consists of the following infrastructure:

- a tertiary water treatment plant adjacent to the Regional Treatment Plant to recycle municipal wastewater (the Salinas Valley Reclamation Project)
- an 80 acre-foot storage pond
- a 46-mile system of pipes for irrigation water distribution from the treatment plant (the Castroville Irrigation System) to 114 grower turnouts in the fields (where water is diverted from system to user)
- 22 new supplemental wells drilled into the aquifers to supply the system when recycled water supply does not meet demand

Construction started in 1995 and the Castroville Seawater Intrusion Project was operational in 1998. Farmers were prohibited from using their existing private irrigation wells once they were obtaining water from the system. Farmers are charged an assessment to pay for construction, maintenance, and operations of the project.

In 2010, CSIP obtained a second water source when the Salinas River Diversion Facility was completed near Marina as part of the Salinas Valley Water Project. This is a rubber dam that collects water released at intervals from dams at the Nacimiento and San Antonio reservoirs in far southern Monterey County. That water flows down the river to the rubber dam during the summer months. However, in drought periods with low reservoir levels, the Monterey County Water Resources Agency is not allowed to release water for the Salinas Valley Water Project.

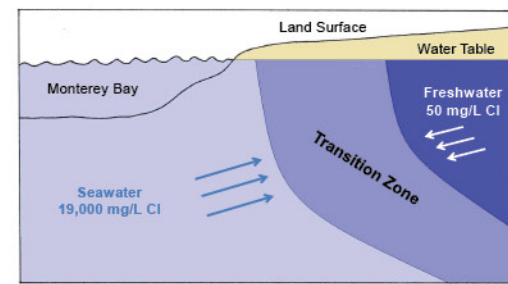
In 2014, CSIP began obtaining water from the City of Salinas Industrial Wastewater Treatment Facility and Conveyance System, a project featured in the September 2022 *Business Journal*. This arrangement has been made on occasion, including in 2022, when drought has prevented release of water from the Nacimiento and San Antonio reservoirs.

Eventually, CSIP is supposed to obtain water from additional sources through the Pure Water Monterey/Groundwater Replenishment Program, a project featured in the March 2022 *Business Journal*. These new water sources include stormwater from South Salinas, and runoff from the Blanco Drain and Reclamation Ditch. Even water from Lake El Estero in the City of Monterey may eventually end up going through the recycling process for CSIP.

### New Challenges for CSIP

According to the Monterey County Water Resources Agency, "the 2022 irrigation season has had some of the highest demands ever seen within CSIP." With the region is experiencing multi-year drought, there are limits to water supply for irrigation.

### Seawater Intrusion – Transition Zone



Source: Basin Management Advisory Committee of the Monterey County Water Resources Agency, March 4, 2022

The Castroville Seawater Intrusion Project has now been operating for almost 25 years, and infrastructure is deteriorating. Supplemental groundwater wells are no longer operating or are producing much less water. Originally 22 CSIP wells were constructed, but now only ten are operational. A new replacement well was constructed this year, at a high cost.

Seawater intrusion is continuing in the 180 foot and 400 foot aquifers. In fact, the Castroville Community Services District has recently lost one of its most productive wells to seawater intrusion. Wells are now drilled into the "deep aquifer", which is below the 180 foot and 400 foot aquifers, and this practice has provoked controversy and temporary moratoriums on new wells.

Meanwhile, the Monterey County Water Resources Agency is implementing a "Protection of Domestic Drinking Water Supplies for the Lower Salinas Valley" Project, to destroy approximately 105 wells in the area. This is an effort to prevent flow of seawater, as well as the nitrate-contaminated groundwater, to drinking water supply wells.

### How Your Chamber Will Help

Keeping CSIP operational will require a lot of money and the cooperation of private industry and several government agencies, including Monterey One Water, the Monterey County Water Resources Agency, and the City of Salinas.

If special interest groups or elected officials interfere with this cooperation, or try to use legislation or litigation to block projects, our dominant agriculture industry and the regional economy will suffer negative consequences. Not everyone is pleased with Castroville's status as the Artichoke Center of the World.

Water issues in Monterey County are complicated, and the *Business Journal* will continue to keep you informed while doing our best to explain projects and issues in a simple, concise way. Your Chamber will remain vigilant to threats to CSIP that also threaten the vision of a thriving, welcoming Salinas Valley where people, families, and businesses succeed via economic opportunity and growth.

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TUESDAY - SATURDAY  
11:30AM - 2:00PM

**GIFT SHOP**  
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**The Steinbeck House Presents: MURDER MYSTERY EVENT**

**"1929 Oscars"**

**Lights! Camera! Murder!**

*Come dressed in your 1929 Oscar Finery—and we'll all try to figure out "Who-Dunnit?!"*

When: Saturday, October 22, 2022 @ 5-7:30 PM or  
Sunday, October 23, 2022 @ 1-3:30 PM

Cost: \$129.00 per person\* (tax/tip included)

MENU: Brushetta Appetizer  
Salinas Valley Salad  
Choice of: Poulet de Broccoli & Rice OR  
Eggplant Parmesan & Rice  
Served with freshly made rolls & butter  
Dessert: Crème Brulee  
Non-alcoholic beverages are included

Call now: 831-595-0782 to make your PAID reservations. Space is limited to 40 guests each seating.

\*Payment must be made at time of reservation—by CASH, CHECK OR CREDIT CARD. No Refunds after October 10, 2022

Please note: Unless tables of 4 or more guests are in one reservation, there will be 'table-sharing' occurring at this event. Just think, you'll get to meet new friends and work as a team to figure out 'who-dunnit' together!  
Bring extra \$ with you for the "Chance-Drawing" tickets as well as beer & wine tickets!



# Member News

## Alvarado Street Brewery to Donate Proceeds to Local Nonprofit

A portion of the proceeds from the sale of Alvarado Street Brewery's Rae Day beer, named in honor of the late host at the brewery's Monterey location, will benefit locally based Partnership for Children. Selected by Rae's Family, the nonprofit provides transportation and financial assistance to children with life-threatening conditions and their families. The beer, a sour ale, will be available at Alvarado Street Brewery's Carmel Plaza location for as long as supplies last, estimated to be over the next 4-6 weeks, according to Kathleen Johnsen, Human Resources Director for the brewery. "Rae Day is a special brew in honor of Rae, an amazing host in Monterey who passed away last month. Her sunny personality and positive vibes are missed daily," said Johnsen about the 24-year-old. "It is a sour ale with mango and cherry — full of flavor, but easygoing — a sour ale that is sure to bring a smile to your face! Just like Rae!" For more information on Rae Day beer, call Alvarado Street Brewery



## Carmen Torres-Alfaro New Deputy Director at Interim, Inc.

Interim, Inc. has appointed Carmen Torres-Alfaro for the agency Deputy Director position. An experienced mental healthcare professional, Torres-Alfaro will succeed Jane Odegard and transition into the Deputy Director position during August 2022. With over 21 years of experience in the mental health field, Torres-Alfaro joined Interim Inc in 2001 after graduating from the University of California at Berkeley with a dual bachelor's degree in Social Welfare and Psychology. Over the years, Ms. Torres-Alfaro has held positions as counselor; assistant program director; was instrumental in opening Interim's Lupine Gardens; Program Director of Wellness and Employment Services where she helped in developing and implementing the Choices Day Treatment Intensive Program and the Assertive Community Treatment Program; and most recently, Division Director for Quality Assurance. Barbara Mitchell, Interim's Executive Director, noted that "Carmen is a real asset to the agency. Her combination of skills and education, plus her extensive knowledge of the agency programs and the local Behavioral Health system make her the perfect candidate for this position." Torres-Alfaro holds a master's degree Counseling Psychology and a clinical license as a Marriage and Family Therapist.



Carmen Torres-Alfaro

## Angela Harden, Bay Federal Credit Union Named CUES Emerge Finalist

Angela Harden, Facilities Assistant Manager with Bay Federal Credit Union in Capitola, has been named one of the five Finalists in the 2022 CUES Emerge program. CUES Emerge applicants are young leaders employed by a credit union and will learn from some of North America's top educators and participate in Mastermind sessions.



Angela Harden

## Bay Federal Credit Union Names Marissa Ledesma Branch Manager

Bay Federal Credit Union has introduced Marissa Ledesma as the new Branch Manager/Assistant Vice President of its Aptos Branch. Mrs. Ledesma will draw from nearly a decade of experience at Bay Federal to connect members with the best financial solutions. "This branch is really special to me. Over the years, I've built relationships with many of the members here," said Mrs. Ledesma. "I look forward to being able to lift up our community in a way I haven't before."



Marissa Ledesma

## Workforce Development Board Partners with Hartnell College to Open New Career Center Locations

Local job seekers in north Monterey County now have another resource at their disposal when looking for work. The Monterey County Workforce Development Board is pleased to announce that it is co-locating at Hartnell College's new Castroville Education Center at 10241 Tembladera Street in Castroville. The career center will be open on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Wednesdays from 10am-3pm. Job seekers may call (831) 708-6511 or email: [MontereyEmploymentHELP@EquusWorks.com](mailto:MontereyEmploymentHELP@EquusWorks.com) for resume, interview, networking and training assistance.



## California International Airshow: 40 Years of Achievement

The California International Airship was created in Salinas, California in 1981 and has been showcasing aviation excellence for over 40 years, while at the same time raising over \$8 million for local charities. Join the festivities October 8-9, 2022. For more information visit [www.salinasairshow.com](http://www.salinasairshow.com).



# Upcoming CHAMBER EVENTS

- 7th Annual Electric Vehicle (EV) Ride & Drive Event**  
*Sunday, October 2, 11:00 AM – 4:00 PM, Amtrak Train Station, 11 Station Place, Salinas*

We are proud to sponsor the 7th Annual Electric Vehicle Ride and Drive Event which is a celebration of community, climate change solutions, and clean transportation. Attendees will be able to test drive the latest electric vehicles, peruse a variety of EV cars on display, talk to EV owners, test ride electric bicycles, and engage with local organizations working to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in our community. Please join us for a fun-filled day of activities!

- 201 Main/James Dean Bar and Grill Ribbon Cutting**

*Thursday October 6, 5:00 – 6:30 PM, 201 Main Street, Salinas*  
Join the Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce for 201 Main/James Dean Bar and Grill's official ribbon cutting! Mark your calendars, save the date, and see you there!

- Salinas Regional Sports Authority Lunch & Learn**

*Tuesday, October 11, 12:00 – 1:00 PM, 119 E Alisal St., Salinas*  
Salinas Regional Sports Authority will be hosting a lunch and learn in partnership with the Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce! Enjoy a meal while pertinent information is shared to Chamber members and members of the community.

- Ribbon Cutting - United Way**

*Thursday, October 13, 2022 (Time and Location TBD)*  
Join the Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce and the Monterey Chamber for the United Way ribbon cutting to celebrate their new offices in Downtown Salinas. More details to come.

- Lunch and Learn with PG&E**

*Tuesday, October 18, 12:00 – 1:00 PM, 119 E Alisal St., Salinas*  
PG&E will be hosting a lunch and learn in partnership with the Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce! Enjoy a meal while pertinent information is shared to Chamber members and members of the community. Mark your calendars, save the date, and see you there!

- Lunch and Learn with Aspire Health Plan**

*Tuesday, October 25, 12:00 – 1:00 PM, 119 E Alisal St., Salinas*  
Aspire Health Plan will be hosting a lunch and learn in partnership with the Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce! Enjoy a meal while pertinent information is shared to Chamber members and members of the community. Mark your calendars, save the date, and see you there!

- Ribbon Cutting - Disaster Kleenup Specialists**

*Thursday, November 10, 5:00 – 6:30 PM, 567 Ortiz Ave. Sand City*  
Join the Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce and the Monterey Chamber for a ribbon cutting with Disaster Kleenup Specialists as we all celebrate their 40+ years of being in business.

- Connect at Lunch - 201 Main/James Dean Bar & Grill**

*Tuesday November 15, 12:00 – 1:00 PM, 201 Main Street, Salinas*  
Join us at 201 Main/James Dean Bar and Grill for an opportunity to network over a meal with Chamber members, local business owners and community leaders at this wonderful lunch event!  
*\*This is not a sponsored event. Attendees must pay for their own meals.\** ■

## Ribbon Cuttings • Chamber Events

## CEO Power Lunch Join Us Next Year

by Chamber Staff

Last month, more than 60 people attended the Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce annual CEO Power Lunch. The CEO Power Lunch is a benefit for the members who have invested \$1250 and more. The event offered exclusive networking, a presentation by Chamber of Commerce CEO Steve McShane and owner/operator of nine local McDonalds restaurants, Raymond Costa. Costa shared his inspiring story, and how humility and community giving, were key components in his "rags to riches" journey. Don't miss out! The next CEO Power Lunch is scheduled for 2023. If your business would like to be included, contact Membership Director, Gabriel Lopez, at 831.751.7725.



Ribbon cutting ceremony celebrating the The Epicenter's relocation, and commemorate eight years of youth advocacy and support since The Epicenter's founding in 2014.



Republic Services hosted the Lunch and Learn and shared new legislation and programs in the city such as the California State Organics Law SB 1383.



The Chamber, Salinas Valley Tourism & Visitors Bureau, and community celebrated the ribbon cutting commemorating the 150th anniversary of the groundbreaking of the Southern Pacific Freight Depot on September 3, 1872.



The Last Call Bar and Grill was happy to host an opportunity for Chamber members and members of the community to make valuable connections over a meal.



The Chamber was excited to host the annual gathering of the Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce Past Chairs at Portobello's to update them on Chamber activities and activities while offering a special opportunity to network.

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Or visit: www.yosal.org/magic



**GALA COMMITTEE**

Joanne Taylor, Steve Ish, Drew McDonald, Tanya  
Reinhardt, Aameena Maria Khawaja, Berniz House

# Dollars and Sense: Investing in Early Childhood Development

Ten years ago,  
First 5 Monterey  
County and the  
Salinas Rotarians  
hosted Nobel  
Laureate Professor  
James Heckman  
to discuss the  
economic benefits of investing in early  
childhood development.



Professor Heckman and his colleagues at  
University of Chicago conducted seminal  
research that found a 13 percent return  
on investment (ROI) for comprehensive,  
high-quality, birth-to-five early education.  
Professor Heckman's research followed  
participants throughout childhood and into  
adulthood. The ROI includes the life out-  
comes of health, crime, income, schooling,

and an increase in a new mother's income  
after returning to the workplace.

Since his visit, Monterey County has  
made great strides for children and fami-  
lies. Professor Heckman is now returning  
to share the evolutions of his research.  
Join First 5 Monterey County and partners  
for breakfast:

Friday, Oct. 7, 2022  
8:30-10:30 a.m.

Monterey County Conference Center  
1 Portola Plaza, Monterey

Register at this link:  
<https://bit.ly/3Q9BVnw>

Improving our economy is about invest-  
ing in our workforce of today and tomor-  
row. As Professor Heckman often says,  
"All you have to do is develop America's  
greatest natural resource: its people." ■

The secret for  
attracting  
talent:

**RETIREMENT PLANS.** Your employees are the heart of your organization. Quality benefits are the key to recruiting and retaining the best of the best. A competitive retirement plan will keep you in good standing in a tight labor market. Contact us today, to review your best options for upcoming State-mandated plans.

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*Attorneys at Law*

# - Upcoming - NON-PROFIT EVENTS

For an updated list of Non-profit events and more visit [salinaschamber.com](http://salinaschamber.com)

- Community Human Services, Benefit Concert For Shuman Heart House Shelter**  
*October 2, 1:00 - 5:00 PM, 2004 Fairgrounds Road, Monterey*  
Benefit Concert for the Shuman HeartHouse - a shelter for homeless women and families in Monterey County. The Concert is at the Garden Stage /Monterey Fairgrounds. Headlining the show is Lauren Monroe featuring legendary drummer Rick Allen, Tammi Brown, and Katherine Lavin with special guests: John Wineglass, Jayson Fann, Steve Robertson, and more. tickets are available at [www.chsmonterey-bloom.kindful.com/e/shuman-hearthouse-benefit-concert](http://www.chsmonterey-bloom.kindful.com/e/shuman-hearthouse-benefit-concert)
- Alzheimer's Association, Salinas & Pacific Grove Caregiver Support Group**  
*October 5, 12:30 PM, 1130 San Vicente Street, Salinas*  
If you have a family member who has been diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease or a related dementia disorder, a caregiver support group can offer you an opportunity to find out more about available community resources, learn from others who are going through similar experiences and obtain additional educational materials. Our Pacific Grove caregiver support group meets monthly, on the 2nd Wednesday of the month, without a fee.
- Active Seniors, Inc, Monthly Luncheon**  
*October 13, 11:45 AM - 1:30 PM, 100 Harvest Street, Salinas*  
\$12 for members and nonmembers. The lunch is prepared by our professional chef, Michael Gaines, and his crew of volunteers. There is always a program following lunch. Lunch is served at noon but come early and have a social time with friends. Please call 831-424-5066, email [asi@activeseniors.org](mailto:asi@activeseniors.org), or come in to make a reservation. Our website, [activeseniorsinc.org](http://activeseniorsinc.org) will have a link to the newsletter where the menu and program are listed.
- Meals On Wheels, SOCOS Social**  
*October 20, 11:00 AM - 1:00 PM, 116 South Belden Street, Gonzalez*  
Launched in 2021, MOWSV created a congregate meal program for those seniors who are able to leave their homes and meet others for a monthly luncheon/social. The socials combine a fresh lunch (provided by local restaurants/organizations), live music and/or an activity, a produce box from the Food Bank for Monterey County and senior resources presented by local agencies.
- Center for Community Advocacy 29th Annual Día De Los Muertos Banquet**  
*November 4, 8:00 - 11:00 PM, Location TBA*  
CCA Annual Banquet & Awards ceremony. This year to Honor Ben Heller Award Recipient State Sen. Bill Monning and Dana Kent M.D. CCA will honor Monning's efforts to create a safe and equitable work environment.
- California Women for Ag, Annual CWA Bus Trip**  
*November 5, 8:30 AM, Santana Row, San Jose*  
The Bus Trip is the primary fundraiser for CWA's areas of focus that include legislation, education and public relations in support of agriculture. CWA provides members and guests with networking opportunities, while promoting women in agriculture. The Salinas Valley Chapter of CWA volunteers at many local educational and public events, including the Salinas, King City, Monterey and San Benito County Farm Days. The Salinas Valley Chapter also awards generous scholarships to deserving women in the TriCounty area. With funds raised from past shopping trips, we awarded \$15,000 in scholarships to 21 deserving young women this year.

# New Member Profiles

by Chamber Staff

## Premier Valley Bank

At Premier Valley Bank, decision making is kept to a local level and bankers are unwaveringly committed to deeply understanding every intricacy of every customer's financial relationship. Because when that happens, a bank, even one with over \$19 billion in assets and the backing of a company with national outreach, doesn't just feel like a partner, it feels like an extension of your family. Our parent company, HTLF, is loyal to the principles of community banking and has been named a Forbes Best Bank 2022, 2021, 2020, 2019, 2018, 2017, and 2013. At Premier Valley Bank, our team of experts is invested in your financial well-being and overall satisfaction as a client. You can expect a comprehensive range of products and services coupled with specialists who will help you achieve your goal through personalized financial solutions.

[premiervalleybank.com](http://premiervalleybank.com) [nlerma@premiervalleybank.com](mailto:nlerma@premiervalleybank.com) • 559-256-6429



## The Last Call Bar & Grill

The Last Call Bar and Grill's owner and general manager is Max Gibbons, the fourth generation of his family to operate eateries in the area. The Last Call is an indoor dining, child-friendly, hip atmosphere that prides itself on its large portions and tasty menu in Oldtown Salinas.

Looking for some comfort food and a great ambiance? Come to the Last Call to enjoy delicious French fries, chicken wings, strips, burgers, tri-tip, and more.

**The Last Call Bar & Grill | Facebook**

[maxgibbons78@gmail.com](mailto:maxgibbons78@gmail.com) • 831-596-7478



## Fresh Harvest

Fresh Harvest is the premier labor provider, staffing and harvesting company to agriculture industry in the western United States. Our goal is not to just provide labor to our customers, but also to recruit and manage our employees to obtain the highest level of efficiency from the work we do. We take great pride in specializing as an H-2A labor provider to our customers. By specializing in this area, we are able to fully meet the needs of our customers and their staffing needs. Fresh Harvest is a huge proponent of automation through different harvest aids.

[sfcos.com](http://sfcos.com) • 831-758-5300



## AIM for Mental Health

AIM is bridging the gap between research and access to care for youth struggling with their mental health by finding, funding, and implementing evidence-based treatments, empowering youth to discover their own mental health solutions, and training caring adults to create a safe holding place for youth in crisis. AIM's world-class Scientific Advisory Board guides our investments by evaluating strategies for implementing evidence-based treatments with the greatest promise for healing the mental illness of children, teens and young adults. Our vision is simple: We AIM for a world of mentally healthy youth.

[Aimymh.org](http://Aimymh.org) • [info@aimymh.org](mailto:info@aimymh.org) • 831-372-1600



## Hope Services

Hope Services is Silicon Valley's leading provider of services to people with developmental disabilities and mental health needs. "Developmental disability" means a severe and chronic disability attributable to a mental or physical impairment that begins before adulthood, such as intellectual disability, cerebral palsy, epilepsy, autism, and Down syndrome. In addition, we serve those who have mental health conditions. We serve approximately 3,500 people and their families in six counties and provide a broad spectrum of services.

Hope also operates a number of businesses to raise funds and provide employment for people with developmental disabilities, including a recycle/reuse business for clothing and household goods, auto donations, HopeTHRIFT stores, and staffing solutions for businesses.

[Hopeservices.org](http://Hopeservices.org) • 831-758-0973



# Spend the Holiday Season in Downtown Salinas

by SCCIA



Trick-or-Treating, Festive décor, the Tree For Peace, and not just one but two special appearances made by Santa Claus—It's all happening in Downtown Salinas this holiday season. Just like in past years, the Salinas City Center Improvement Association (SCCIA) is bringing joyful holiday décor, celebratory banners, and ambient lighting to the downtown creating a festive and welcoming environment for all to enjoy this holiday season.

In addition to enjoying the ambiance of Downtown Salinas, while supporting local businesses, a few

fun events are scheduled to take place this holiday season. Mark your calendars now for the following:



On **Saturday, October 29**, bring the kids downtown for the 18th annual Downtown Trick-Or-Treat. The family friendly event will take place from 11am – 2pm. Kids can enjoy trick-or-treating at the local businesses as well as costume contests, pumpkin decorating, and a scavenger hunt.

On **Tuesday, November 22**, the Salinas City Center Improvement Association, in partnership with CSUMB Salinas City Center and the Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce, is inviting the community to the annual family-friendly tree lighting event that kicks off the holiday season for Downtown Salinas. The event will start at 5:00pm and wrap with the lighting of the Tree For Peace around 6:00pm. Come enjoy live musical performances and a special appearance by The Salinas Fire Department and Santa Claus.

On **Saturday, November 26**, the SCCIA recommends you plan your dining and shopping plans around being in Downtown Salinas between 11am and Noon to ensure you do not miss a special appearance from Santa Claus. He will be cruising Main Street with the Salinas Fire Department waving to all who come out to see him and support Shop Small Saturday. Rumor has it that he gets off the fire truck to visit with Downtown shoppers and diners so be sure to bring your wish list to share with him. In addition to meeting Santa Claus there will be live music and other exciting promotions happening around supporting local and shopping small.

Community events and festive décor make this time of year special in Downtown Salinas but the several locally owned and operated shops, bars, and eateries are what make the downtown distinctive year-round. The Salinas City Center Improvement Association is encouraging the community to not only come downtown for the events this holiday season but to come downtown and support local. Shop Small, Dine Small, Support Small.

We look forward to seeing you in Downtown Salinas this holiday season. ■



## “Business banking is sweeter with Pinnacle Bank.”

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- **Scott Lund**  
**Lula's Chocolates**

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# Attract & Retain a More Satisfied Workforce

How can you, as a business, attract and retain a more satisfied workforce? Certify as a Family Friendly Business through the countywide Bright Beginnings Early Childhood Development Initiative.

We'd like to welcome the newly certified Natividad Medical Center as a family friendly business! You too can join the dozens of businesses in Monterey County that have already certified, like the Central Coast Federal Credit Union and Post Ranch Inn.

In response to the pandemic, workplaces have to be more flexible than ever so parents can earn a living, contribute to a recovering economy, and take care of their families, all while ensuring a business thrives. This might mean an employer offers options to work remotely, flexible schedules to accommodate classroom closures or COVID exposure, or helping parents find child care for their young children.

What's good for families is good for business. Visit [www.brightbeginningsmc.org](http://www.brightbeginningsmc.org) to learn more and to certify. It's quick and easy, you'll see! ■



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# Support our Chamber Members

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

## Stakeholder

Braga Fresh Family Farms Inc.

## Leaders

Dole Fresh Vegetables

Latitude 36 Foods

## Partner Members

American Supply Company-Salinas

Leavitt Central Coast Insurance

Mee Memorial Hospital

MidPen Housing Corporation

Northridge Mall/Starwood Retail Partners

## Marketer

American AgCredit

Associated Services Heating Solar & Air

Panera Bread

Sambrailo Packaging

## Business

Armanasco Public Relations Inc

Asian Cultural Experience

## Member Since

2014

## Member Since

1993

2021

## Member Since

2016

1971

2021

2019

1972

## Member Since

1976

2015

2021

1970

## Member Since

1985

2021

## Business Cont.

Bay Property Management Inc

Bobcat Bicycles

California Rodeo Inc.

Dawn Transportation, Inc.

Firestone Business Park

First Team Media

Gateway Center of Monterey County

Historic Harvey House

Monterey County Herald

Monterey Regional Airport

Piini Realty

Precision Nails

Republic Services Inc.

Robert Kasavan Marketing

Ruggiero Law Office –RLO Attorney

SlingShot Connections

Stifel, Nicolaus & Company, Inc

The Salvation Army

Todo Verde by Marie and Bruce

TPO Human Resource Management

United Way Monterey County

## Member Since

1991

1994

1975

1987

1987

2021

2003

2014

1978

1994

1970

2016

2000

1994

2019

2013

2015

2007

2021

2017

1979

A Special Thanks to Our Visionary and Stakeholder Members



# MEET FELISA

## 37 years of dedicated service at Goodwill Central Coast



Back in 1985, Ronald Reagan was the president of the United States, Microsoft released Windows 1.0, and the price of a gallon of gas was \$1.20.

It was also the year that Felisa Vinluan started working at Goodwill Central Coast's Seaside store.

During her 37 years of dedicated service, Felisa worked as a Lead Sales Associate and an Assistant Manager. On Saturday, Sept. 3 she called it a career, retiring to spend more time with her four beloved grandchildren.

Felisa's retirement followed the same decision from her husband Mariano, who recently retired from GCC as a donation attendant.

Known by every member of the community, it seems, Felisa made quite an impact in her nearly four decades at GCC.

"Felisa has always been a hard worker and, more importantly, kind to everyone who walked into the store," said Leah, a longtime Seaside Goodwill customer.

Regional Retail Manager Juan Ramirez called Felisa "a pillar for the Seaside staff and the community. She is irreplaceable and will be missed," he said.

Known for her work ethic and customer service, Felisa valued teamwork on the job. As a thank-you for dedicating her career to benefiting the community, the Seaside store held a potluck complete with her favorite dessert.

In a statement commending Felisa's long tenure, Goodwill Central Coast said:  
**"Ms. Vinluan has dedicated her life to our mission of building lives, families and communities by helping people with employment needs become successful."**