



Rancho Cielo
Pioneers Innovative
Model



AG & Bio-Tech
Innovation
in Salinas

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Salinas City Council Unanimously Approves Annual Budget

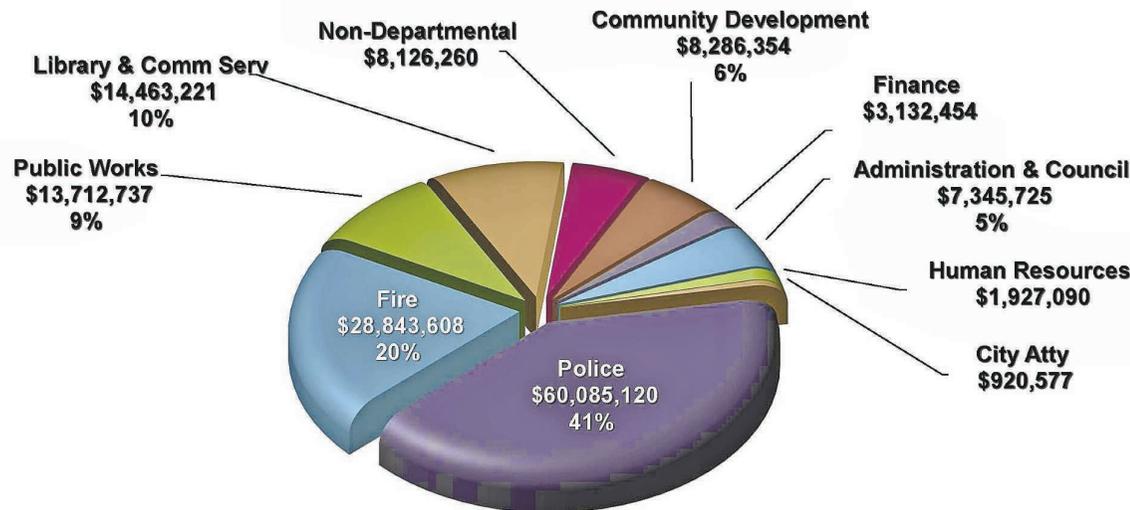
by Chamber Staff

Developing and approving an annual budget has been a contentious exercise this year at some California local governments. In some places, political factions have even disrupted public meetings in an apparent attempt to undermine the budget process and intimidate elected officials.

However, this year's budget process in the City of Salinas was calm, thoughtful, and ended in consensus with a 7-0 city council vote on June 13 to approve the proposed Fiscal Year 2023-2024 city budget.

As city council members had observed and emphasized at their January 2023 strategic planning meeting, the city council is fairly close in their motivations and views about how to govern the city. They are actually exceptional in their cooperation and unity when compared to the dysfunctional governing bodies of so many other California local governments. ➡

BUDGET - Continued on page 24



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

Community Priorities Match Chamber Priorities

by Chamber Staff

In preparation for development of the Fiscal Year 2023-2024 budget, the City of Salinas collected information from residents on where the city council should spend taxpayer money. City staff released a community budget survey in December 2022 and conducted forty “pop-ups” at various locations throughout the city. City staff also conducted four community budget meetings in January and February 2023.

Survey participants were asked to rank seven categories of budget expenditures that generally correlate with the goals in the 2022-2025 City of Salinas Strategic Plan. By a wide margin, the top two categories selected by residents were “Housing Opportunities for All” and “Connectivity, Access, & Mobility.”

“Housing Opportunities for All” encompasses tenant and landlord education and support, homeless outreach and support, homeownership promotion and support, and incentives and facilitation for new housing production. Increasing the amount of housing in the City of Salinas (and Salinas Valley) that’s affordable for ordinary households has been a Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce public policy priority for several years. Chamber members regard the lack of housing that’s affordable as a major obstacle to employee hiring and retention.

For a variety of reasons, getting new housing built in the region has been a challenge. However, the Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce hosted a ribbon cutting ceremony on May 4 for the 110-unit Alameda new density housing development on Abbott Street in Salinas. It replaces three lots formerly used for motor vehicle sales and is described as “the first ➡

PRIORITIES - Continued on page 24



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Collaboration with the City of Salinas

by Bill Hastie, Board Chair

Companies of all sizes spend thousands of dollars each year on team building exercises with one primary goal – to help the team learn how to cooperatively work together to produce more than each could have produced individually. This collaboration of efforts seeking to yield increased production is commonplace in the corporate America. The same concept applies in the non-profit world.

A great example of collaboration in the non-profit world is the board of the Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce (SVCC). Each board member comes from a different profession and either owns their business or are a key employee at their company. The executive board at the SVCC is a smaller group of experienced board members who are responsible for making the high-level decisions that are then voted on by the full board.

The SVCC also very productively collaborates with the City of Salinas. Each month, Jennifer Williams (our Chair-elect) and I meet with the city manager, Steve Carrigan, to discuss a variety of issues focused on those that would most affect the Salinas business community. Through this regular and ongoing collaboration, the SVCC maintains a close relationship with the city and its leaders – all for the benefit of the Chamber members we serve.

The SVCC also created the Community Development Committee many years ago, made up of Chamber members and key business leaders, to provide a forum through which the public can provide input to the city's permit center. This committee, headed up by Jennifer Williams, meets on a regular basis to discuss those issues most relevant to the general public as they work with the city's permit center in the development of various projects in the Salinas Valley.

It is very beneficial when two entities - the SVCC and the city of

Salinas – work together with the purpose of achieving their respective missions, to benefit the business community we serve. This is a mix of dedicated business leaders serving on the SVCC board and key employees of the city working together with the common goal to empower the business community and therefore foster a healthy and safe city of Salinas.

The SVCC is very proud of our efforts and will continue to maintain a strong bond of open communication and collaboration with the city of Salinas. We remain focused on maintaining a business-friendly environment in the Salinas Valley and engaging in the activities that most benefit the diverse small and large businesses who represent the backbone of the Salinas business community. ■



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Rancho Cielo Pioneers Innovative Model to Support Student Success

by Tiffany Harbrecht

Since 2003, Rancho Cielo Youth Campus has addressed a need within Monterey County to provide relevant workforce development training for underserved youth — so they can earn a living wage, end the cycle of poverty and become productive members of society and an inclusive economy. Such an endeavor is not easy, particularly for young people in need of additional support to change counter-productive lifestyles and face other substantial challenges at home and in their communities.

That's why Rancho Cielo built a case management model focused on supporting high-quality education, removing barriers to success and rewarding student outcomes — transitions into post-secondary training programs, college or careers. It's a framework that considers the whole student and what they specifically require to thrive. It's extraordinarily unique for a career and technical education institution, particularly a nonprofit, to employ case management. That's the magic of Rancho Cielo — in addition to diploma education and vocational training, the organization invests in support services, enrichment programs, counseling and life-skills development that transform lives.

Rancho Cielo's case management team consists of five case managers, one dedicated to each program, and a lead case manager to help facilitate and coordinate their work. Case managers conduct formal meetings with their students weekly to meet each one's needs. They also connect regularly with teachers and instructors and communicate often with parents and guardians. This keeps a pulse on the issues students face — inside and outside of the classroom — that may interfere with their ability to pursue and focus on their education and future.

"We ensure their needs are being covered for them to be their full selves, otherwise they may not be prepared for the opportunities we're ready to give them," said Gabriela Manzo, Rancho Cielo's lead case manager.

Manzo explained that case managers' focus on relationship building with students has made a difference in how they show up in school, for themselves and each other. "Because we are there for them and have those relationships, do those checkins, talk about goals, they share important things that help us facilitate their day," said Manzo. "They know there's someone who cares whether they are at school or not."

Wendy Guardado, case manager for Rancho Cielo's construction academy, frequently sits in on students' academic classes to observe how they are doing. When she notices them being good team players and leaders, she provides positive feedback. That bolsters her relationship building and students' trust. "They know I'm there to see their progress, not only for behavioral issues," she said.

Promoting Healing for Transformation

Rancho Cielo's case managers also have specialized training in trauma-informed healing practices and culturally relevant programming, which they draw upon every day. It's compassionate support that helps the youth process their trauma, envision possibilities and opportunities in life, and recognize the importance of the choices they make today.

This includes proactively employing non-punitive practices to de-escalate situations and resolve issues, and avoiding certain words that trigger trauma (often unintentionally). For example, a conversation between a case manager and an instructor can help with understanding students' specific situation, and how to positively reframe their interactions with them. In turn, the case manager may explain to a student a teacher's perspective, helping them understand where the instructor is coming from.



DCA Case Manager and Student

When issues students face are beyond the case managers' expertise, they can refer them to the full-time, on-site mental health professional (thanks to RC's partnership with Harmony at Home). "Sometimes it's scary [for students] to reach out to a therapist," said Manzo. "There is a [cultural] stigma associated with asking for help. Some feel like they "shouldn't complain."

Having the therapist on campus has allowed them to get to know her. "She eats lunch with us. She takes walks and talks with students, eliminating that fear of opening up to [a stranger]," Manzo added.

Additionally, case managers help students facing legal issues, providing a ride or attending court proceedings for moral support. If students are on probation, case managers meet with their probation officers and share their progress at Rancho Cielo; they even write character reference letters for students.

Setting Up Future Success

Many Rancho Cielo students will be the first in their families to attend college. Maria Alvarado, case manager for RC's welding program, explained that case managers help with this entire process, from talking with parents about the benefits of higher education to navigating applications, scholarships and financial aid, and introducing students directly to college academic counselors.

Case managers also partner with career and technical education instructors to connect students with local industry partners for apprenticeships, internships and full-time jobs leading up to and post-graduation. They help with resumes, applications and interview preparation — things students may be doing for the first time.

Providing this holistic support has not only positively influenced students' self esteem and self efficacy but also their well-being. "I've seen huge differences during my sessions with them [over time] and how that influences their career goals," said Alvarado. "To me, it's the small things that make a big impact."

Learn more about Rancho Cielo at ranchocieloyc.org. ■

Healthy Habits Can Help Us Build, Preserve And Protect Our Brain's Function Over Time

by Rena Salamacha, CEO, Mee Memorial Healthcare System



Brain health is a critical piece of our overall health. Our amazing (and still mysterious) brain underlies our ability to communicate, make decisions, problem-solve and live a productive and useful life.

At Mee Memorial Healthcare System, we will observe the 10th annual World Brain Day on Saturday, July 22. Started a decade ago by The World Federation of Neurology

(WFN), the annual observance is designed to close the gaps in disability awareness and reduce health care barriers that exist for individuals with neurological disabilities.

Maintaining a Healthy Brain

Taking care of our brains is as straightforward as taking care of our bodies. Here are some simple tips to get you started:

- **Exercise:** Among everything at our disposal, regular exercise has been shown to slow age-related brain deterioration and maintain cognitive abilities that typically decrease with age. Exercise also helps lower blood pressure, avoid vascular disease leading to stroke and helps maintain a healthy supply of blood pumping to the brain. Exercising is as easy as walking to get your groceries, gardening, cycling or attending an exercise class, among many others. Remember, though, that mental exercise is just as important. Our brain is similar to a muscle — you need to use it or lose it! There are many things that we can do to keep our brain in shape, such as doing crossword puzzles or Sudoku, reading, playing cards or putting together a jigsaw puzzle. Consider it cross-training your brain. Incorporate different types of activities to increase the effectiveness.
- **Sleep:** A good night's rest plays an important role in our brain health. Yes, you can actually sleep your way to better cognition! Sleep keeps you sharp, focused and able to make thoughtful decisions. While different age groups require different amounts of sleep, the general recommendation is around six to seven hours a night. Those with sleep disturbances should ask their doctor about medical intervention. In particular, sleep apnea is a disorder that involves repeated stopping and starting of breathing during sleep, which can lead to low oxygen levels. Studies show that sleep apnea may increase the risk of cognitive decline and dementia. The bottom line is that sleep keeps us sharp, focused and able to make thoughtful decisions. While different age groups require different amounts of sleep, the general recommendation is around six to seven hours a night.
- **Environment:** Our surroundings can also influence brain health. Environmental toxins in water, food and the air can all lead to neurological issues such as stroke, neurodevelopmental and neurodegenerative disorders. Another environmental risk involves repetitive or major head trauma caused by accidents or while participating in extreme sports.
- **Diet:** A balanced, nutritional diet is not only good for our body but our brains as well. Research shows that the best brain foods are the same ones that protect your heart



and blood vessels, including green, leafy vegetables, fatty fish, berries, tea and coffee and nuts such as walnuts. Just as there is no magic pill to prevent cognitive decline, no single brain food can ensure a sharp brain as we age. The most important strategy is to follow a healthy dietary pattern that includes a lot of fruits, vegetables, legumes, and whole grains. And try to stay away from over-processed foods and saturated fat.

World Brain Day was established by WFN in 2014 as a way to bring public awareness to a different topic in neurological health each year. The official theme for the 10th annual World Brain Day is Brain Health and Disability, chosen to help inspire global initiatives to close the gaps in disability awareness and reduce health care barriers that exist for individuals with neurological disabilities. Visit wfneurology.org/world-brain-day-2023 for more information on how to get involved in this year's World Brain Day.

World Brain Day is framed by five key aims:

- **Prevention:** Brain disabilities can be prevented, treated and rehabilitated.
- **Awareness:** Brain health awareness can reduce the disability associated with brain disorders.
- **Access:** Universal access to care, treatment, rehabilitation and assistive technology is essential.
- **Education:** Increasing equity for those living with brain disabilities.
- **Advocacy:** Brain health is a human right that applies to everyone, everywhere.

Brain Health is Complex

The brain is an incredibly vascular organ. A rich supply of arteries and veins help with the delivery of nutrients, as well as the removal of toxins and by-products of metabolism, in order to keep it healthy.

When that blood flow is interrupted, it affects brain function and that results in changes in the way information travels along the brain's pathways. This can impact how we move, how we sense things like hearing or touch, the way we think about the world and people around us, how we perceive a situation, and how we behave.

All of the things that the brain is responsible for — physical and mental — are part of brain health. While often spoken about separately, mental health is a central part of brain health and they are not separate or distinct.

Understanding this can help to reduce the stigma that is often associated with mental illness, which, like any physical disorder or disease, is a health problem and requires appropriate treatment.

Consider this: The three major brain conditions of our lifetime — stroke, dementia and depression — are all interrelated and all happening in the same organ. If a person has been diagnosed with one of those three conditions, their risk of the other two increases.

Because access to care is so important, medical systems such as MMHS play a significant role in overall brain health. Identifying issues early and referring patients to neurologists and other appropriate brain specialists is key. Raising awareness about brain health and disability will help ensure that people with neurological disabilities receive the care and rehabilitation they need to reach their full potential. ■



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Leadership Monterey County Develops Local Leaders

by Mitchell Friedman, LMC Facilitator

Local government and law enforcement serve as the bedrock of the County of Monterey's economy. Yet they've been subject to heightened pressure and scrutiny over the last few years. In a recent session, Leadership Monterey County (LMC) participants gained further insight into these challenges through meetings with local officials.

The 30 program participants spent the day in Salinas, meeting with Monterey County Supervisors Glenn Church (District 2), Wendy Root Askew (District 4), and Mary Adams (District 5), as well as the Honorable Sam Farr (retired Congressman) to discuss their work and in particular their perspectives on the key challenges faced by local residents. The remainder of the day focused on law enforcement, with a visit to the Salinas Police Department where participants heard from Chief Roberto Filice (see photo) as well as officers involved with the daily challenges of policing and in particular the application of modern technologies in doing so. What followed was a tour of the Monterey County jail and presentations by members of the Sheriff's Office who work with inmates there. The day concluded with a presentation by a local criminal defense attorney, whose perspectives rounded out the day's discussion of the local legal system.

In short, LMC participants gained unique insight into local government and law enforcement. To learn more about their experiences, and the LMC program in general, visit <https://www.leadershipmc.org>.



Salinas Police Chief Roberto Filice addresses Leadership Monterey County participants



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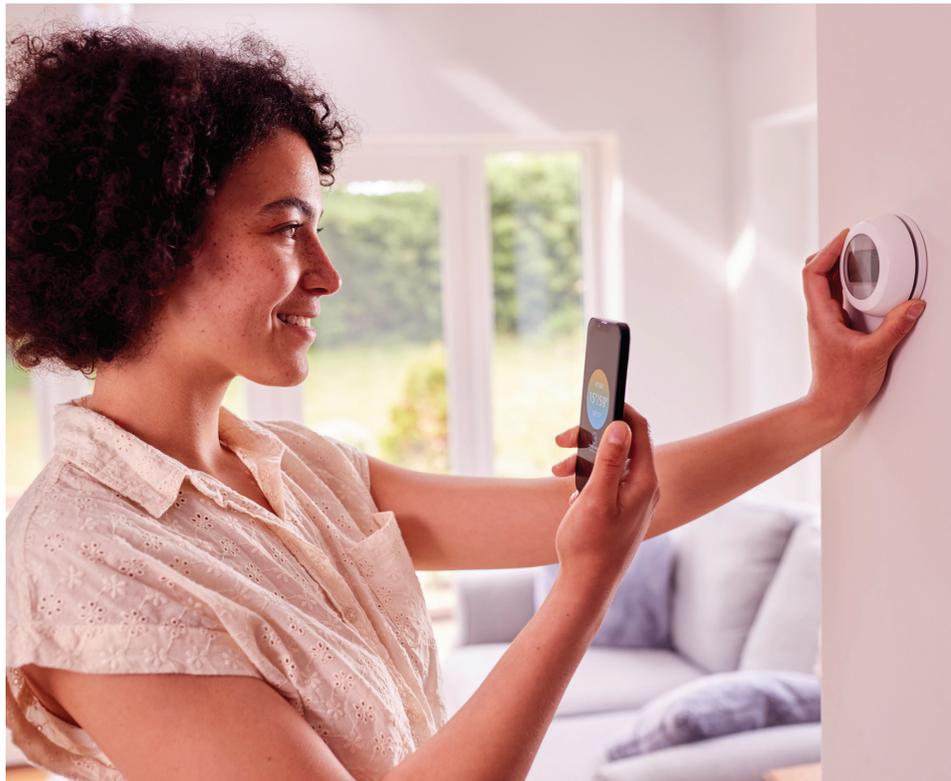
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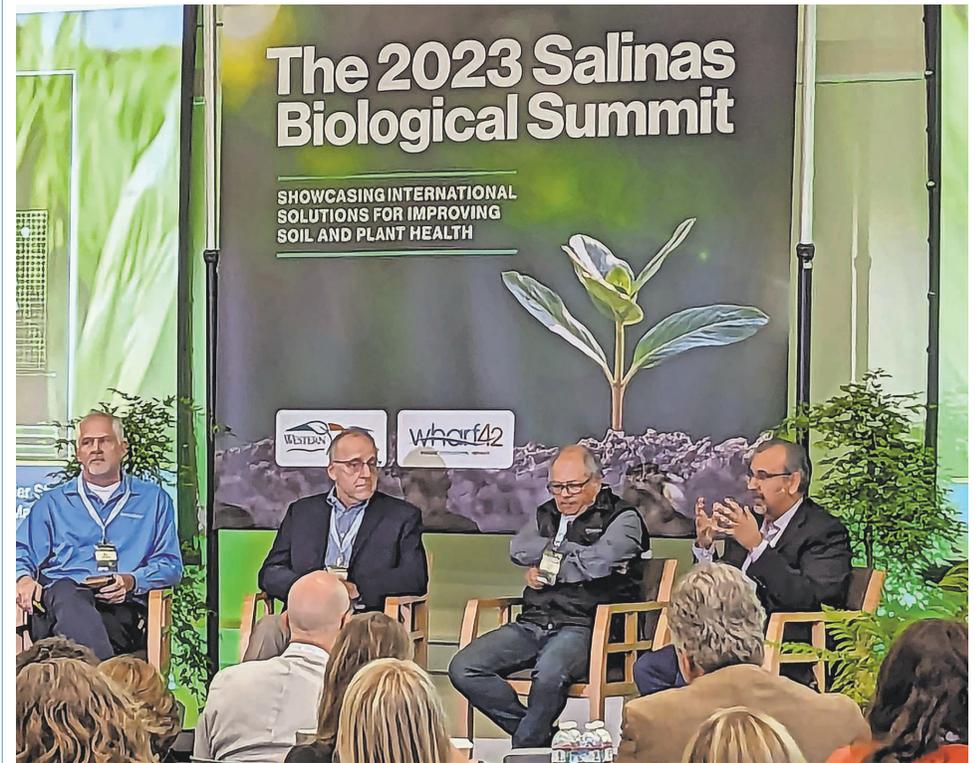


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Innovation In Salinas

by Chamber Staff



Western Growers and New Zealand-based, Wharf 42, hosted the 2023 Salinas Biological Summit in downtown Salinas June 20-21. The goal of the event was to deepen knowledge of globally applied biological solutions in farming. More than 350 scientists, farmers & agricultural professionals attended. " We are here to engage the

broad framework of biologicals from the standpoint of science, industry and regulation in the field," shared event organizer, Dennis Donohue. The two-day Summit featured keynote speakers, plenary sessions and targeted panel discussions. The Summit also hosted an exhibition of biological solutions and included field tours. ■



The Value of Teaching Financial Literacy in Schools

by Haley Hitchman, AIF®, CPA®



With the costs of goods and services on the rise, many Americans are struggling financially. According to a poll conducted by CNBC in April of 2023, more than half of respondents were living paycheck-to-paycheck and did not have emergency savings set aside. With so many struggling to make ends meet, an effort to implement personal finance courses within schools is gaining more attention across the country. Financial literacy programs would educate our youth on personal finance subjects such as creating and managing a budget, using debt responsibly, how to improve one's credit score and saving for retirement.

In some states, efforts have been made with bipartisan support to implement educational programs within schools in financial literacy. However, according to NexGen Personal Finance, a nonprofit organization that provides personal finance curriculum and professional development for teachers across the US, there are only 24.6% of high schoolers that attend schools requiring at least one semester of personal finance courses and 23% attending schools where personal finance is embedded into another course. As of June 7th, Connecticut became the 21st state to require a standalone personal finance course for high schools.

In California there is no state requirement for financial literacy among schools, however, Bill AB2051 was signed into law to require the Superintendent of Public Instruction to allocate funding for the purchase of instructional materials in financial literacy for kindergarten through grade 12 and Assembly member Kevin McCarty introduced Assembly Bill 984,

which would make personal finance and financial literacy a high school graduation requirement. In a news release for the California Department of Education, State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tony Thurmond said, "Young Californians are entering the workforce and higher education with very little understanding of financial literacy. This is deeply concerning, since students with higher financial literacy are more likely to invest in savings accounts, prepare for retirement and manage their debt." He went on to say "Only 27% of California high school students attend schools that offer personal finance classes. Ensuring that all young Californians have exposure to financial literacy is a vital step in closing inequality gaps and providing the skills and resources to improve their lives overall."

The benefits of providing financial literacy education are abundant. Data from Georgia, Idaho and Texas saw credit scores rise and delinquent payment rates fall just three years after implementing financial literacy requirements. According to a national study by FINRA Foundation, those with higher financial literacy were more likely to make ends meet than those with lower financial literacy. The study went on to find that those with higher financial literacy were more likely to spend less than their income, have emergency savings and plan for retirement.

Learning responsible financial principles at a young age will benefit students in the real world and help establish good money habits for the future. These skills would undoubtedly benefit our youth by providing a strong foundation to make better financial decisions during their adult life. ■

Haley Hitchman partner at locally-owned Hastie Financial Group. If you would like to discuss your personal or company's investment needs, please contact Haley at Haley.Hitchman@HastieFG.com.



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SCAN ME

We Are For The Family

by Pastor Todd Anderson



Last month I wrote about why I love living in Monterey County. This month I wanted to share my thoughts on one of our values. We are “for the family.” It’s one of the reasons I love being the pastor of Compass Church Monterey County. We have enough division and misunderstanding in our world. Too often people and organizations are known more for what they are against and not what they stand for. Compass serves as a healing community, embracing individuals and families alike. It’s a place where we foster a sense of belonging, providing spiritual meaning, and offer unwavering support to every family and individual. With

programs and groups for all ages, we foster spiritual growth and nurture a sense of meaning. The church helps individuals find direction and guides families toward a life of significance. Compass Church is truly “for the family.”

It’s easy to see the fractures that exist within our community and we are actively working to bridge the gaps. The church treats individuals and families like cherished members of a larger family, offering solace and support during difficult times. When the world breaks us apart, Compass serves as a healing force that brings us back together. With a culture that often asks, “What’s the point?” Compass Church provides an answer. It helps families discover and

embrace a deeper sense of purpose, rooted in eternal values that transcend the chaos of our times. We provide help for parents to be their best as they lead their families.

Compass Church recognizes that families thrive when they are part of a broader community. The church serves as a haven, providing positive role models and shared experiences that foster strong bonds within families. With life being unpredictable, Compass Church stands ready to assist families. By creating a nurturing environment, the church becomes a pillar of support for families, ensuring they never have to face their battles alone. The church community becomes an extended family, ready to lend a helping hand when it is needed the most.

Our daily lives are often consumed by the transient and materialistic nature of our culture. In contrast, the church helps families embrace eternal values that endure beyond temporary circumstances. By focusing on spiritual growth and biblical values, Compass Church encourages families to cultivate compassion, love, and integrity in their interactions with others. It provides a moral compass, guiding families to live with purpose and values that transcend the changing culture of the times we live in. We are not perfect, but it is my desire to see Compass Church truly embody the value of being “for the family.” My prayer for you is that God would bless your family and if you are looking for that family connection, you are always welcome at Compass Church Monterey County. ■



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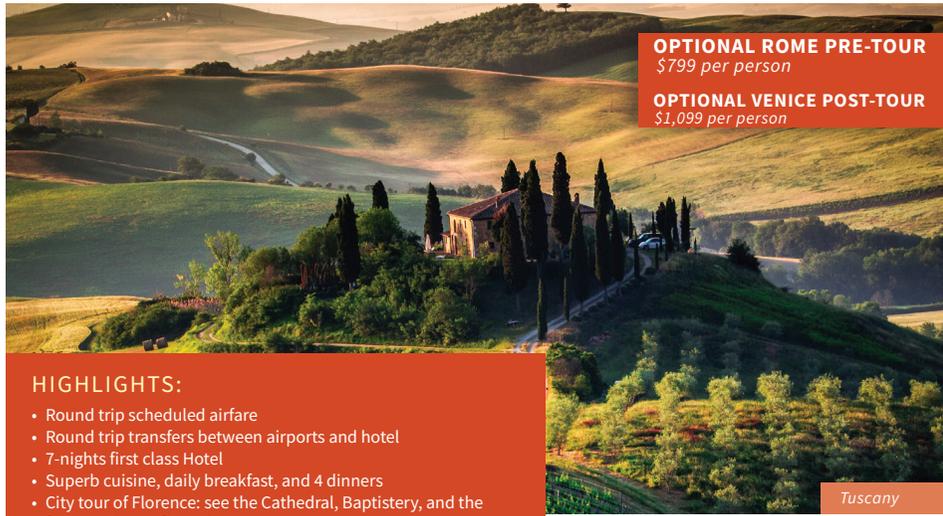


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- DAY 3**
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- DAY 4**
- Breakfast at your hotel
 - Tour of Pisa
 - Dinner at your hotel
- DAY 5**
- Breakfast at your hotel
 - Full day at leisure in Montecatini
 - Optional trip to Cinque Terre
- DAY 6**
- Breakfast at your hotel
 - Tour into the Heart of Tuscany & San Gimignano
 - Chamber Experience (wine industry)
 - Dinner at your hotel
- DAY 7**
- Breakfast at your hotel
 - Full day at leisure in Montecatini
 - Optional trip to Ferrari Museum
- DAY 8**
- Breakfast at your hotel
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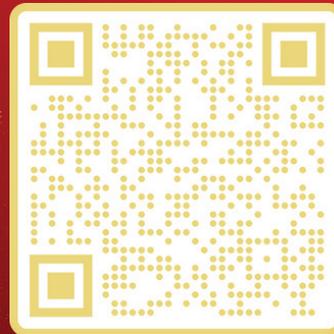
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VIP EXPERIENCE

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GENERAL ADMISSION

\$100

RICKY CABRERA PRODUCTIONS WILL HOST OUR VIP GUESTS FOR A BEAUTIFUL TIME WITH TOP-SHELF WINES AND BITES TO IGNITE COMRADERY AMONG FRIENDS.

Great things happening at Salinas PAL, stay tuned!

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Upcoming CHAMBER EVENTS *RSVP at salinaschamber.com*

- **4th of July Celebration**

Tuesday, July 4, 4:00 PM – 9:00 PM,

Central Park, 420 Central Avenue, Salinas

Join us in Salinas for a sizzling 4th of July, five-hour extravaganza! Sparkling (“safe and sane”) fireworks, live music, mouthwatering food, and a festive atmosphere await as we celebrate Independence Day like never before right here in Central Park. Bring your lawn chairs, family, friends, and loved ones to enjoy an evening of fun. Don’t miss out on the spark-tacular party of the year! If you have any questions, please contact Jennifer Russell at Events@salinaschamber.com or call 831-751-7725.

- **MotoAmerica Bike Night**

Thursday, July 6, 5:00 PM – 7:00 PM,

100 Block of Main Street, Salinas

The Central Coast is excited to welcome back world-class motorcycle racing with a Bike Night to kick off MotoAmerica Superbike Speedfest at Monterey. Motorcycle riders, owners and enthusiasts are encouraged to bring their bikes and engage in this lively community event – igniting the community’s passion for our bike races and regular race season. This event will showcase our destination and allow riders to feature their high performance sportbikes. There will be autograph sessions with World Champions, and a radio live remote.

- **Ribbon Cutting Ceremony – Central Coast Federal Credit Union**

Thursday, July 13, 5:00 PM – 6:30 PM,

1141 South Main Street, Salinas

Central Coast Federal Credit Union opened a new Salinas branch with its official ribbon cutting ceremony on July 13. Come enjoy the event with delicious catering by The Salad Shoppe Salinas as well as desserts by Cheesecake Dreamations, Marina. There will be music, mingling, a tour of the facility, and an opportunity to meet the team. We welcome you to the grand opening and hope you can join us! Register at Salinaschamber.com and save the date! For any questions, contact Jasmine Bhardwaj at Jasmine@salinaschamber.com or call (831) 751-7725.

- **Lunch and Learn: California American Water**

Monday, July 17, 12:00 PM – 1:00 PM,

119 East Alisal Street, Salinas

Join us for a Lunch & Learn presentation with California American Water at the Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce. California American Water provides water to over 40,000 customers and approximately 100,000 residents on the Monterey Peninsula and also operates water and wastewater systems in Salinas. Representatives from California American Water will provide a general overview of the Cal Am water system, current and future source waters and discuss the region’s water dynamics. The event will take place in-person at the Chamber office and via zoom. RSVP at Salinaschamber.com today!

- **Salinas Valley Food and Wine Festival Kickoff Mixer**

Thursday, July 27, 5:00 PM – 7:00 PM,

CSUMB @ Salinas City Center, 1 Main Street, Salinas

Are you a lover of food and wine? Join us at our 12th annual Salinas Valley Food and Wine Festival Kickoff Mixer. It is a warm-up to the main event set for Saturday, August 5... an event that is embedded deep into the Salinas Valley culture. Enjoy unlimited food, beer, and wine tasting, and have a great time. Tickets can be purchased at \$20 for members and \$25 for non-members at Salinaschamber.com. Day-of-ticket pricing is \$25 for members and \$30 for non-members. We have a limited number of outreach tables sold on a first-come, first-serve basis at \$100 for members and \$150 for non-members. If you have any questions related to the event, contact Jasmine Bhardwaj at Jasmine@salinaschamber.com or call 831-751-7725.

- **Lunch and Learn: Salinas Valley Solid Waste Authority**

Monday, August 7, 12:00 PM – 1:00 PM,

119 East Alisal Street, Salinas

Join us for a Lunch and Learn with Salinas Valley Solid Waste Authority where Resource Recovery Technician, Julia Brooker, will discuss their services and how to recycle right and save money for businesses. Other topics include SB 1383. The event will take place in-person at the Chamber office and via zoom. In-person space is limited, so be sure to RSVP at Salinaschamber.com to reserve your spot.

- **Signs By Van Mega Mixer**

Thursday, August 10, 5:00 PM – 7:00 PM,

16130 Highway 156, Salinas

Join us for an unforgettable evening of connections at a mega mixer hosted by Signs by Van in partnership with the Salinas Valley, Pacific Grove, Marina, and San Benancio Chambers of Commerce. Get ready to indulge in mouthwatering Kleinfeldt Barbecue as well as delightful brews from Alvarado Street Brewery and exquisite wines from Joyce Winery. The ambiance will be alive with a fantastic DJ, and the excitement will be captured in the lively photobooth. Explore the world of custom signs with tours of Signs by Van, renowned for their exceptional dimensional signs that grace the landscapes of Monterey County. We also have a special treat for sports enthusiasts! Meet and mingle with Monterey Bay FC Players. Don’t miss this opportunity to expand your network while enjoying an evening of fantastic food, beverages, entertainment, and inspiration.

- **SUBA & Chamber Mixer at Leal’s Bakery**

Thursday, August 17, 5:30 PM – 7:00 PM,

805 East Alisal Street, Salinas

Join us for a mixer with Salinas United Business Association (SUBA) and the Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce hosted by yours truly, Leal’s Bakery. Come network with business professionals, indulge in delicious Mexican delicacies and support the Salinas Hometown Heroes banner program. This program is dedicated to paying tribute to the veterans and active-duty service members and serves as a living tribute for our servicemen and women. Every lamp post on both sides of Main Street from E. San Luis Street down Oldtown Salinas to Central Avenue is decorated with a two-sided, colored banner.

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



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THE BOARD IS COMPRISED OF UP TO 20 CHAMBER MEMBERS WHO MEET MONTHLY. WE AIM FOR OUR BOARD TO REFLECT OUR MEMBERSHIP BY INDUSTRY.

WE HAVE TWO TERMS OPENING NEXT YEAR, AND WE ARE TAKING NOMINATIONS! ALL MEMBERS ARE WELCOME TO APPLY!



STAY INFORMED WITH CHANGES IN OUR AREA AND BE PART OF THE SOLUTION

Applications are available at Salinaschamber.com
Refer any questions to President@salinaschamber.com

Ambassador Profile Matt Salyer



Matt Salyer moved to Seaside in 2010 from Modesto to pursue a BA in Global Studies at CSUMB and later completed a dual MBA/MA in Global Business & Policy at the Middlebury Institute of International Studies. The local wildlife and outdoor opportunities were a major factor in Salyer's decision to stay in Monterey since he enjoys hiking, paddleboarding and the fresh ocean air. Salyer developed a love of business while working on program development at CSUMB, and working as a free-lance Consultant for start-ups, governments and non-profits locally and abroad. Salyer's focus on financial strategies for businesses, asset acquisition and wealth management eventually inspired him to become a Financial Advisor so he could better serve his clients and their

needs. Salyer works at Salinas Valley Financial Services, a financial advisory practice of Ameriprise Financial Services, where he specializes in investment strategies, wealth preservation, and estate planning for small businesses and individuals.

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LEGACY OF LEADERSHIP

Legacy of Leadership to Honor Community Champions

The Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce is thrilled to announce its upcoming Legacy of Leadership Gala, scheduled to take place on Saturday, September 16th, 2023, from 5:30 PM to 9:30 PM, at the Salinas PAL Center. This highly anticipated event aims to recognize and celebrate exceptional individuals and businesses who have made significant positive contributions to our community.

The Legacy of Leadership awards will be bestowed on a select few who have demonstrated exemplary leadership and dedication to improving the lives of others in Salinas. Nominations are currently being accepted for the following categories:

YOUNG PROFESSIONAL OF THE YEAR: Awarded to a businessperson under 40 years old that has demonstrated success in business and the community. (Must be a Chamber member.)

OUTSTANDING MINORITY-OWNED BUSINESS: Presented to a successful business with origins from a traditionally disadvantaged community. The recipient would have demonstrated overcoming unique challenges to grow and build a successful business operation. (Must be a Chamber member.)

DISTINGUISHED BUSINESS INNOVATION AWARD: Award is given to a local business or start-up that has shown breakthrough leadership in their given field. This may include new technologies, research, and incredible

business success. (Does not need to be a Chamber member.)

BUSINESS PHILANTHROPY AWARD: Presented to a business non-profit that demonstrates the highest level of giving back to the community as demonstrated by volunteer hours, financial contributions, and community organizing. (Must be a Chamber member.)

Nominations are due by Friday, July 14th. Forms can be found on the Chamber website: www.salinasmember.com.

The Legacy of Leadership Gala promises an unforgettable experience for all attendees. The event will feature a delectable array of food and wine, carefully curated to delight the palate of every guest. There will also be both a silent and live auction, showcasing an array of unique items and experiences up for bid.

The Legacy of Leadership Gala promises to be a night of celebration, appreciation, and recognition, as we honor those who have dedicated their time, energy, and talents to the betterment of our community.

Tickets for the Gala are available now for purchase. Chamber members can secure their tickets at the special rate of \$95, while non-members may purchase tickets for \$145. To reserve your spot at this extraordinary event, visit www.SalinasChamber.com.

For further assistance contact us at (831) 751-7725 or via email at events@SalinasChamber.com. ■



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The Salinas Valley Food and Wine Festival
is a production of Ye Old Main Street Foundation
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Dorothy's Place

MISSION

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Salinas Valley Food & Wine Festival A Celebration of the Region

The Salinas Valley Food & Wine Festival will take place on Saturday, August 5, 2023. The Annual event highlights local wine, beer and bites and will feature more than 20 wineries and numerous breweries from the region. In addition to food and wine, many local restaurants and artists will be featured as well.

Last year's event was a huge success with a sold-out crowd enjoying beautiful blue skies in downtown Salinas. The Salinas Valley Food & Wine Festival is coordinated by a hands-on, action-oriented Board of Directors who volunteer their time and energy to do what they love—immersing themselves in food and wine culture for the community they love—the Salinas Valley.

For nearly 12 years, the Salinas Valley Food & Wine Festival has been dedicated to increasing the popularity of locally grown and crafted food, wine and beer. The Festival brings our community together as well as invites visitors from outside the area to experience and celebrate the tastes and sounds of the Salinas Valley while raising funds to support local worthwhile and important community nonprofit organizations. Past beneficiaries have been Grower Shipper Association & Downtown Streets Team. The 2023 event will be passing along a portion of the net proceeds to Dorothy's Place in Salinas, who strives to help people living on the streets find shelter and a safe place to sleep.

More information can be found at www.salinasvalley-foodandwine.com. ■



New Member Profiles

by Chamber Staff

DeVeera

DeVeera is a company that was founded more than twenty years ago out of the desire to fill a void in the business IT market. Though many IT support firms focused on repairing IT assets, there was no one devoting their focus to the necessary line of business applications. To meet this growing need, was formed. Today, DeVeera advises on, develops, integrates, and maintains business solutions to help Monterey Bay businesses achieve IT networks which are secured and performing optimally. Our team of professional software developers have the experience needed to craft the ideal solution for each of our valued clients' industries. DeVeera is more than just a Managed IT Services provider. We take our role as a Business Technology Solutions Company very seriously. Our valued clients are located in California and Arizona and across the USA. They come to us because they need more than comprehensive IT care; they need solutions that will help them drive positive business outcomes.

Deveera.com, Info@deveera.com, 831-240-4703



The Equine Healing Collaborative

The Equine Healing Collaborative was created to provide a path to recovery, self-discovery, personal growth, a re-connection with the natural world, and/or emotional insight and health. The Equine Healing Collaborative offers more than just traditional talk therapy and utilizes interventions such as equine assisted therapy, mindfulness, and mindful equine massage to promote health and quality of life for individuals seeking change. All of our clinicians are driven to help others tap into the healing power of horses and donkeys, and help change the way people experience mental health care. Call us today to let our horses and donkeys help you heal. We believe your mental health matters.

Equinehealing.org, Admin@equinehealing.org, 831-293-4492



VARNEL Consulting and Training Services

VARNEL is a family-women owned business with a commitment to serve others by working as a team and empowering each other. We are dedicated to creating a learning environment in where our clients can develop professional and personal growth. Whenever you work with VARNEL, you can trust that you're in great hands. Our journey began with a passion of bringing our skill set together to address community/individual needs. Also, to raise knowledge and awareness on how people can respond to an emergency while being at a worksite and, at the same time, help businesses achieve success. We provide three types of services: business consulting by assisting worksites to set structures to accomplish their objectives; safety trainings to stay in compliance with the required trainings for their worksite; and we provide wellness sessions to promote Health and Wellness in worksites to improve employee's health and wellbeing.

Varnelservices.com, Info@varnelservices.com, 831-253-4059



MM Jumpers and Party Rentals

When it comes to all things related to FUN or equipment for your guests and events, then you have come to the right place for a party rental in Salinas. Over the years we have acquired some quality but affordable options for a party rental in Salinas, CA. Here you will surely find all the popular options available for inflatables like Jumpers, Jump Houses, Bounce Houses, Moonwalks, Combo Bouncers, Dry Slides, Water Slides, Obstacle Courses, Interactive Games, and so much more. But wait, the fun doesn't stop there, because we have some event rentals Salinas CA customers love like Concessions, Tents, Tables & Chairs. If there is something we don't offer, just give us a call because most likely we can get it for you. That's how we do it at MM Jumpers!

Mmjumperz.com, Mmjumperz2rent@gmail.com, 831-262-6939



Young Life Salinas

Young Life Salinas desires to secure the future promise of every student. Given the challenges affecting our teens, we must meet them with resources designed to do more than fill empty time. Relational connection forms the root of our mentorship endeavors. In this way, we can dismantle the sense of isolation and disconnection that pervades so much of adolescence. We want Monterey County teens to know they are valued, accepted, and supported. Only then will their achievements carry the weight of character and conviction.

Salinasvalley.younglife.org, YL.Salinas.2020@gmail.com, 831-422-6441



Legacy of Leadership Gala

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 16
AWARD NOMINATIONS,
SPONSORS & VOLUNTEERS
NEEDED!



Salinas PAL Armory
100 Howard St, Salinas, CA
5:30 p.m. - 9:30 p.m.



Call the Salinas Chamber office (831)751-7725 to learn more!

12th Annual Salinas Valley Food & Wine Festival Kickoff Mixer

You are invited!

July 27, 2023

5:00 PM - 7:00 PM

ENJOY UNLIMITED FOOD, WINE AND BEER TASTING AS A
WARM-UP TO THE MAIN EVENT SET FOR SATURDAY,
AUGUST 5TH. PURCHASE PRE-SALE TICKETS AT
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1 MAIN ST, SALINAS CA 93901

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TO RESERVE AN OUTREACH TABLE OR GET MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT JASMINE BHARDWAJ AT
JASMINE@SALINASCHAMBER.COM OR CALL (831) 751-7725.

FARM FOCUS[®]

KEEPING FARMERS GROWING

What is Farm Bureau?

Founded in 1917, Farm Bureau is a membership organization that supports Agriculture in Monterey County and serves as a collective voice for farmers and ranchers and provides information, advocacy, benefits, and services. Farm Bureau collaborates with other agricultural organizations to fulfill its purpose of working for the solutions to the problems of the farm and ranch, the farm home, water resources, the environment, and the rural community.

Our membership includes farms, ranches, vineyards, processing facilities, harvest packers and shippers throughout our County. There is a Farm Bureau in nearly every county of California, with a headquarters office in Sacramento, and in turn, a national organization headquartered in Washington, D.C. that serves all 50 state Farm Bureau organizations.

More importantly, Farm Bureau helps consumers understand how their food is produced through public outreach and education. We support three local Farm Day events that exposes all third-graders to their local food environment. And we provide insight to those who like to eat locally produced fresh vegetables, berries and over 150 other crops of Monterey County.

If this appeals to your sense of food awareness, consider joining Farm Bureau as a Friend of Farming. It is easy to do with the QR code and you will be rewarded with insights into our local rural lifestyles of farming and ranching! All for just \$25 a year! ■



Flooding Impacts to Local Farms & Ranches

by Monterey County Farm Bureau

The destruction to agricultural properties and crops from January and March flooding in Monterey County is considerable. There is frustration locally over a failure to address known dangers that caused or worsened the flood toll in this critical farming region.

For decades, the Salinas River channel has been clogged with excessive vegetation, much of it non-native *Arundo donax*, a bamboo-like reed that grows to over 30 feet at maturity and creates vegetative dams. Significant sediment buildup also decreased the flow capacity of the river during heavy storms, such as the atmospheric rivers this winter.

Fortunately, in January, our reservoirs were nearly empty and could capture much of the flood capacity before it contributed to river drainage flows. That was not the case in March when reservoirs were forced to release water to increase storage space for incoming water. Due to additional flows, the Salinas River watershed endured significantly more flooding, which inundated the already saturated landscape around the river.

What was most frustrating for our landowners, farmers, ranchers and vineyards was the diminished capacity of the river channel due to permit restrictions on channel maintenance work. For decades, they have been telling multiple agencies the permitting process was inadequate for enabling meaningful flood protection measures and much too costly to navigate.

Now, farmers are saying “we told you so” because the environmental damage is immense. Topsoil has been washed away, levees damaged and farm equipment destroyed due to inactivity in the river channel.

In the wake of the storm damage, farmers along the Salinas River came together to draft a unified “Flood Mitigation Pathway Forward” document, which was presented to state and federal agencies and our elected officials. The document calls for consensus solutions to allow holistic work in the river channel and its tributaries to enhance flood-flow capacity, improve the 

FLOODING - Continued on page 21

environment and minimize economic damage from natural disasters.

Years ago, permitting for river channel work was restricted to secondary channels of the Salinas River, not the main low-flow channel that is critical to managing flow capacity. Work permits limited the amount of sediment that could be managed and how much vegetation could be removed incidental to the amount of Arundo removed. More and more farmers, facing both high expenses for the work and limits on the channel maintenance they could do, abandoned efforts to make improvements they hoped for in the privately-owned channel.

As a result, minimal work has been accomplished in the past decade to enhance the Salinas River channel to control even an 8-year flood level, which is what occurred here in 2023. In 1995, the last disastrous flood in the Salinas Valley, the water flow was recorded at 90,000 cubic-feet-per-second. The flow in 2023 was one-third that of level at 30,000 cfs. Yet similar flooding occurred, clear evidence that the river channel is not able to control the capacity flow as it once did.

Part of the frustration is also the inability to improve our levee systems along the river. Realizing the river was originally meandering throughout the Salinas Valley, the Army Corps of Engineers channelized the river in the 1940s to mitigate disastrous flood events. Levees built decades ago now need significant reinforcement to build upon what the Army Corps started. Many of the recent levee failures would have been avoidable if proper maintenance had been performed over the decades.

Our county's food producers along the Salinas River know what needs to be done to enhance flood control and protect valuable farmland. They are committed to improving the environment of the river channel by controlling vegetative growth and sediment for adequate fish passage, as multiple agencies desire. But frustration builds when farmers are willing to make improvements at their own expense yet are not allowed to protect their own land without a burdensome permit process from multiple agencies.

We also have exasperation in the Pajaro Valley due to the levee failure along that river. Improvements approved in the 1960s were finally funded and scheduled to begin work in 2026. That was too late for an entire town and vast acres of farmland that went underwater for two weeks in March. The blame falls on the arduous flood-protection process, which is prolonged, expensive, and ultimately injurious to residents and farm operations.

It is time we find a solution to protect our valuable farmland assets from excessive regulatory hurdles. Our food production depends on it. ■



The High Cost of Regulatory Compliance

by Monterey County Farm Bureau

Perhaps the most misunderstood part of California's regulatory environment is the high costs of compliance for farms and ranches ... for water quality, labor and workplace rules, air quality and equipment replacement, electrification of fleets and on-farm equipment, workers compensation insurance and health care, recycling and composting of waste ... the list continues to grow each year.

In 2018, Monterey County Farm Bureau commissioned a study on the costs of regulatory compliance in California's farming sector. What we found was alarming: regulatory compliance costs increased at a rate of 795% over the past decade, while costs of inputs changed only 25% over the same period.

Since that study, farmers and ranchers have seen costs of inputs rise dramatically, but more importantly, new regulatory requirements for water quality, pandemic response, and fleet equipment replacements have placed an increased burden on farming and ranching in California.

Monterey County Farm Bureau continues to insist

that the economic costs of all new regulations must be considered prior to adoption or approval. As our County develops and proposes a new plan to mitigate for climate change, with substantial reductions in greenhouse gas emissions in our rural areas, the costs of these progressive mandates must be first studied and known prior to adoption and implementation of any climate action plan strategies. Determining the best strategies for an already progressive agricultural element will be critical to ensuring success in achieving climate action targets.

We are fortunate to live in a region where farmers and ranchers are early adopters of new technologies and agronomic practices. Many have incorporated sustainable practices and are now looking towards regenerative practices as the next phase of farming and ranching. The free market should determine how these practices are utilized and implemented; mandating farming and ranching operations into compliance is costly and invokes unintended consequences, such as higher prices for our food products. ■

Member News

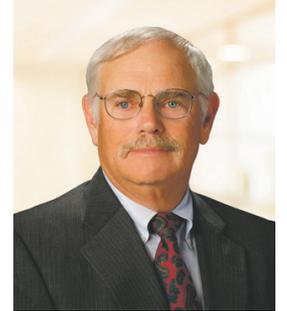
California Rodeo, Big Week Bull Riding, Big Week Kick Off Concert & More

Tickets for the California Rodeo Salinas July 20-23, 2023, and the Big Week Bull Riding July 19, 2023 are on sale now! The Big Week Bull Riding presented by Salinas Valley Ford is part of the Xtreme Bulls Tour and will feature the Professional Rodeo Cowboy Association's top bull riders. Competitors include riders from the PRCA I Ram World Standings as well as contestants who advance through Xtreme Bulls qualifying events. Tickets start at \$15 for select children's grandstand seats, \$35 for adult upper grandstand tickets, \$46 for adult lower grandstand seats and \$64-\$69 for box seats (all ages) depending on location. Additional events will include: women's breakaway roping, women's barrel racing, bull riding, bareback riding, saddle bronc riding, team roping, steer wrestling and tie-down roping. Chuckwagons will race in the arena and events like mutton busting, trick riding, horse show classes and more take place on the track that surrounds the arena during each performance. Tickets are \$12 for children ages 2-12, \$20 for adult general admission, and \$25 for adult grandstand seats. Box seats start at \$33 per seat; contact the Ticket Office at tickets@carodeo.com to inquire about availability.



Santa Cruz County Bank Announces New Board Chairman Stephen D. Pahl

Stephen D. Pahl announced as new Chairman of Santa Cruz County Bank. Stephen Pahl is Senior Partner and Chairman of Pahl & McCay, a professional law corporation, based in San Jose. During his tenure on the Board of Santa Cruz County Bank, he has chaired the Director's Loan Committee, providing him broad credit experience in this aspect of banking operations. He also has served the Bank as its Corporate Secretary since January 2021. The Board of Directors also reappointed John Burroughs as Vice Chairman. Mr. Burroughs will assume the additional responsibilities of serving as Corporate Secretary following the Annual Meeting.



Bay Federal Credit Union Announces Stephanie Como as Vice President of Digital Services

Bay Federal Credit Union is pleased to welcome Stephanie Como to the organization as their Vice President, Digital Services. In this position, Ms. Como will oversee member interactions with Bay Federal Credit Union through digital channels including online and mobile banking platforms, the member service center, and the digital lending team. Ms. Como joins Bay Federal with over 15 years of financial industry experience and nine years of credit union experience. Ms. Como earned a bachelor's degree in political science from Ave Maria University and has continued her education with multiple professional certificates including Project Management Professional, Lean Six Sigma, Design Thinking, Journey Mapping, and UX. Apart from empowering her team to achieve amazing goals, she loves spending time at the beach with her husband, daughter, and two dogs.



Central Coast Community Energy and Silicon Valley Clean Energy Celebrate 30 Megawatt Casa Diablo-IV Geothermal Power Plant

Central Coast Community Energy and Silicon Valley Clean Energy (SVCE) today celebrated the first geothermal power plant built in the last 30 years within the California Independent System Operator (CAISO) balancing authority. The power plant achieved commercial operation in July 2022 and produces clean and renewable electricity for 22,000 homes, offsetting 160,000 tons of carbon emissions.

Casa Diablo-IV (CD4) is a 30 megawatt (MW) geothermal power plant that provides stable and reliable renewable benefits 24 hours a day, with zero carbon emissions. SVCE and 3CE each receive 7 MW of geothermal power under a 10-year power purchase agreement (PPA). "SVCE and 3CE recognized the need for this clean baseload resource and signed the contract for this project even before the state passed new procurement orders for geothermal energy," said Girish Balachandran, SVCE CEO.



Applications Available for Fall Child Development Center

Hartnell College is accepting applications for the fall preschool at the Hartnell College Child Development Center. With morning and afternoon sessions available, income-eligible families may have access to free preschool. The fall session begins August 21 and enrollment packets for the 2023-2024 school year are available by calling 831.755.6945 or by email to cdc@hartnell.edu.



Member News

Bay Federal Credit Union Announces Launch of Additional Business Services

Bay Federal now offers a full line of business services to their business members including loans, credit and debit cards, savings accounts, online banking, investment services, and merchant services. The Credit Union specializes in serving the needs of small business owners and provides a full line of products to support their operations. With these services, Bay Federal can help increase cashflow, add capital via cash management tools and lending facilities, and provide more efficient merchant card processing avenues. All of these services have been developed and implemented to aid in the efficiency of local businesses' growth and operations, always having the best interest of the businesses in our community at heart. The business services program is under the leadership of Business Relationship Manager, Jeff Heitmann. Those interested are encouraged to visit www.bayfed.com, stop by a local branch, or reach out directly to Jeff Heitmann at jheitmann@bayfed.com, or call 831-479-6000 for more information.



Central Coast Community Energy Announces New Executive Leadership Team

Central Coast Community Energy (3CE), proud to announce a series of leadership appointments that position the agency to meet its renewable energy goals while continuing to deliver value to customers and investment in communities through programs and rate savings. Seasoned administrative executive Dewayne Woods has been appointed Chief Financial Officer at 3CE. Woods worked as the Assistant County Administrative Officer for the County of Monterey for more than 22 years, where he oversaw the County's \$1.9 billion budget and finance operations. He brings deep experience in public utilities and enterprise operations. Catherine Stedman, who joined 3CE in 2022 to lead communications and outreach efforts, has been appointed Chief Communications Officer. In this role, Stedman will oversee communications, account services, and energy programs. Stedman brings extensive utility experience in community relations and government affairs, having led external affairs for California American Water's district operations on the Monterey Peninsula for sixteen years. Dennis Dyc-O'Neal has moved from Director of Power Supply Resources to Interim Chief Operating Officer for 3CE. With more than 25 years of experience in the electric and natural gas markets, Dyc-O'Neal brings specialized capability in renewable energy, business development, and contract administration. Prior to joining 3CE, he was the Director of Power Resources for Silicon Valley Clean Energy (SVCE) and spent thirteen years at PG&E in energy procurement and contract management.



WeatherTech Raceway Laguna Seca

WeatherTech Raceway Laguna Seca has undergone more than \$20 million in much needed track improvements this year. This last month, a complete repaving of the entire track was completed just in time for the MotoAmerica Superbike SpeedFest at Monterey July 7-9. For a complete schedule of Track race events and tickets, please visit: www.co.monterey.ca.us/government/government-links/weathertech-raceway



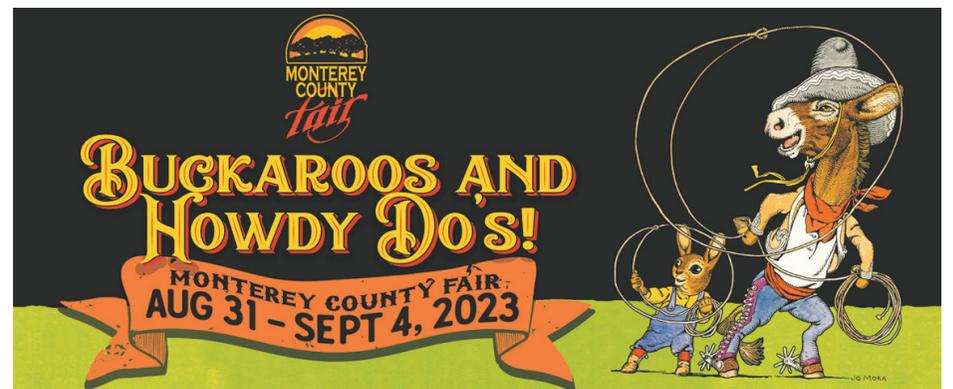
www.co.monterey.ca.us/government/government-links/weathertech-raceway

The Monterey County Board of Supervisors today unanimously approved a five-year extension for WeatherTech® to continue as naming rights partner of WeatherTech Raceway Laguna Seca, which is owned by the County of Monterey. The new agreement will extend through June 30, 2028. The annual sponsorship is \$1 million per year. WeatherTech's re-signing is another spark in the energetic resurgence at WeatherTech Raceway as the new Start/Finish bridge, site and drainage work, and repaving of the historical track are nearing completion. The grand reopening will be held July 7 with the MotoAmerica Superbike SpeedFest. For information on the WeatherTech Raceway Laguna Seca season, visit WeatherTechRaceway.com.

Monterey County Fair

READ & WIN for Monterey County Kids Grades 1 to 6!

The Monterey County Fair is offering a special reward to Monterey County readers! Kids will receive a FREE child (12 and under) fair admission ticket to be used at the Monterey County Fair any day August 31 - September 4, 2023. You may pick up your ribbon in the Home Arts Building! Students in 1st and 2nd grades can read picture books, and all other grades will read chapter books. For more information on how to enter, log onto www.montereycountyfair.com



➡ **BUDGET** – Continued from page 1

Community Input

As requested by the city council, staff worked to increase community input and involvement in the annual budget process as compared to past years. There were a series of community meetings and a survey to determine priorities of residents and other interested parties. Then staff prepared a proposed budget and presented it to the city council at public meetings for analysis and input.

However, as noted by Councilmember Carla Viviana González at the June 13 meeting, the percentage of Salinas residents providing input for the budget process remains relatively small. Admittedly, municipal budgets do not inspire most Americans, so the task is daunting. Nevertheless, the city will continue working to increase resident knowledge and involvement in the budget process.

Economic Development

The Government Relations Committee and Board of Directors of your Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce did not authorize submission of any correspondence to the Salinas City Council regarding the budget proposal. However, the Chamber's Government Affairs Liaison monitored the development of the budget to ensure nothing was included that would inappropriately or unwisely interfere with economic growth and quality job creation. At the June 13 city council meeting to approve the budget, Mayor Kimbley Craig suggested that the budget process should include more consideration of how to promote economic development - a potential source of

additional budget revenue for the city.

The Salinas City Council continues through its annual budget to focus on its six goals: Economic Development, Housing/Affordable Housing, Infrastructure and Environmental Sustainability, Public Safety, Youth and Seniors, and Effective and Culturally Responsive Government. If it sticks to these goals, the city council is unlikely to advance any political agendas that add impediments or burdens to commerce. Your Chamber will continue to remain vigilant.

Police Funding

There were no prominent efforts this year to cut the budget of the police department. In fact, four speakers at the June 13 meeting asked the city council for more money for police in the budget. The police department is receiving 41% of the total operating expenditures in the Fiscal Year 2023-2024 city budget.

As reported in the May 2023 Business Journal, crime rates in the City of Salinas have dropped significantly in the past several years (except for arson). Presumably, most Salinas residents are pleased with this improvement in the quality of life and do not want to squander it with experiments in counterintuitive social theories.

Neighborhood/District Equity in Pavement and Sidewalk Improvements

Some members of the Salinas City Council continue to be perplexed and displeased with the disbursement of city funds for sidewalk and pavement repairs. At the June 13 meeting, the city's Public Works Director reported that a new Pavement Management Index

(PMI) assessment would be presented to the city council in July 2023. Staff is considering a standard for prioritizing pavement repairs based on the "most traveled" roads and streets.

Recognizing that this standard could end up disproportionately sending funding to certain neighborhoods at the expense of other neighborhoods with the worst street conditions, Councilmember Anthony Rocha asked for an amendment to the budget to divide \$6 million of the \$8 million appropriated for citywide pavement rehabilitation into \$1 million to each district, for "equity." This was accepted.

Earlier this year, your Chamber of Commerce sent a letter to the Salinas City Council and the city's Traffic Commission asking questions and making recommendations about the disbursement of funding for pavement and sidewalk rehabilitation. Our members frequently complain about road and sidewalk conditions.

Targeted Line-Item Expenditures ("Earmarks")

Two councilmembers in particular - Anthony Rocha and Andrew Sandoval - brought attention to a list of line-item expenditures in the proposed budget earmarked for specific events and organizations. They pointed out that such expenditures need to be presented to the city council with more information. In addition, it was noted that not everyone in Salinas knows that a person or organization can submit a request for a line-item budget expenditure. The process is vulnerable to favoritism and cronyism.

With these expenditures as a city council concern, City Manager Steve Carrigan and staff devised a standard

for determining which specific line-item expenditures should remain in the final budget and which should be eliminated. They took the original proposed list and analyzed the items based on value as a "general public benefit." Some proposed expenditures were kept because they were obviously geared toward "general public benefit." Some proposed expenditures were retained because they were required under existing funding agreements involving the city. And some proposed expenditures were eliminated because they did not achieve a perceived standard of "general public benefit."

It is likely that the Salinas City Council will revise this procedure for line-item expenditures for the Fiscal Year 2024-2025 budget process, or eliminate the earmarking concept altogether. Your Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce supports government fiscal responsibility and fairness. The city must be transparent and open in considering line-item expenditures, if the city chooses to continue with them. This topic will be discussed at a future Government Relations Committee meeting of your Chamber of Commerce.

The Government Relations Committee will also reiterate that any Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce support for local government budget expenditures must be reviewed and approved by the Government Relations Committee and the Board of Directors, through the established process that includes objective analysis from the Government Affairs Liaison. Any approved requests for line-item budget expenditures need to be transmitted to the full Salinas City Council and include a complete explanation of the request and justification for it from a perspective of "general public benefit." ■

➡ **PRIORITIES** – Continued from page 1

major housing development on a primary commercial corridor the City has envisioned transforming since the 2002 General Plan." Many of the units are going to be reserved for housing of teachers in the Salinas Union High School District. Nevertheless, such projects remain few and far between.

"Connectivity, Access, & Mobility" was presented as city investments in repairing and maintaining streets, sidewalks, lighting, and bikeways. Along with housing, this is another arena in which Chamber members complain about the quality of life for employees and customers. Deteriorated streets and sidewalks diminish community morale and create a sense of disorder. Your Chamber has urged the

city council to invest in streets and sidewalks and explain to the public in a clear, systematic manner what the city is doing to fix street and sidewalk conditions.

"Economic Prosperity, Equity, & Diversity" was a category that did not rank as highly as the categories related to housing and to street and sidewalk conditions. However, many survey participations did recognize the importance of

business attraction and job creation, image development, beautification, tourism promotion, small business support, and agricultural technology and innovation. The Chamber of Commerce will work to remind residents that economic prosperity generates tax revenue, which is essential to advance programs and projects that make the City of Salinas a better community to live, work, and visit. ■



Support our Chamber Members

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

Stakeholder

Salinas City Elementary School District	2008
Salinas Union High School District	2019

Leader

Brad Slama Development	2022
Ocean Mist Farms	2018
Santa Cruz County Bank	2019

Partner

Balance Physical Therapy- And Human performance Center	2019
Booth Machinery Inc	2018
Empire Home Loans, Inc.	2021
Clifton Larsen Allen(CLA)LLP	1982
Oldtown Salinas Foundation	2022
StoneBridge Homes Inc	2019

Marketer

201 Complex	2022
Aldina Real Estate	2019
Central Valley Seeds Inc	1986
Door to Hope	2016
MommieRazzi Photography	2015
Monterey Credit Union—Monterey	2000
NAACP Monterey County Branch#1049	2021
Naturipe Berry Growers	2003

Marketer Cont.

Pediatric & Adolescent Medical Asso of PG	1987
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Business

Ag Land Trust	2008
Amapola kitchen & Wine Merchant	2021
California International Airshow	1982
California Strawberry Commission	2015
DataFlow Business Systems	2006
Divorce with Dignity, Monterey County	2021
Farmers Union Pour House	2016
Girls Inc of the Central Coast	2012
Holaday Seed Company	2015
IMPOWER Inc	2018
Interim Inc	2002
JPMorgan Chase & CO	2022
La Gloria Medical Clinic	2022
Looking for Space	2021
Maya Cinemas	2022
McWherter's Jewelers & Gemologist LLC	2014
Monterey Touring Vehicles	
Classic Car Rentals & Experiences	2022
Salinger Properties, Inc	2021
Swenson Builders	2021
Tacos Don Beto	2021
The Great British Bake Shop	2022
TJ Carpet and Tile Cleaning	2022
Wald, Ruhnke & Dost Architects	2022

A Special Thanks to Our Visionary and Stakeholder Members





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**Are you interested in learning more?
Fill out the interest form today!**

Ribbon Cuttings • Chamber Events



Lunch and Learn with ARCpoint Labs

Spencer Smith, owner of ARCpoint Labs, presented at the Chamber office and provided a walkthrough of technologies, compliance with the new 2023 California laws, and an overview of the new developments in the industry.



Ray Day

Cheers to a remarkable celebration for local legend Reynaldo (Ray) Retez, co-founder of the iconic Whole Enchilada restaurant and other businesses in Moss Landing. His contributions were honored by Salinas and Pajaro Valley chamber officials, Watsonville, Santa Cruz, and Monterey County dignitaries.



Permit Center Open House and Community Mixer

The City of Salinas hosted a mixer in partnership with SUBA and the Salinas Chamber. The event included a meet and greet with several departments and an opportunity for networking with business professionals.



Ribbon Cutting Ceremony for Fenton & Keller

Monterey law firm Fenton & Keller celebrated the opening of a new law office in King City with a ribbon-cutting ceremony joined by King City and Salinas Valley Chambers of Commerce, guests, and dignitaries.



Lunch and Learn with Central Coast Community Energy

Staff from Central Coast Community Energy provided an overview of the agency's work and took a deep dive into the Electrify Your Ride Program over lunch.



New and Prospective Member Orientation

New & Prospective Member Orientation was a success with our SVCC Membership Director at the Salinas Chamber office as the team and ambassadors welcomed new and potential members and informed them regarding Chamber resources.

California Rodeo Salinas & Monterey Regional Airport Chamber Mixer

Guests from the Monterey Peninsula and Salinas Valley Chambers geared up for a fun evening and warm up to the California Rodeo Salinas in July with their boots and cowboy hats at the Monterey Regional Airport.



One Year Collaboration!



Have you wondered how long the Chamber has been collaborating with the Martins? It has been a year! Brad and Laurie Martin are the publishers of Greet Hwy 68 Loop, a social publication for residents of the Hwy 68 and River Road corridors. In print for nine years, the partnership provides pertinent information with Greet Hwy 68 Loop readers on Chamber happenings.

Laurie also publishes, and has for the past five years, Monterey County Real Producers, a social/professional magazine for the top Realtors in Monterey County.

Look for the Chamber's blurb in Greet Hwy 68 Loop. ■

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- Upcoming NON-PROFIT EVENTS -

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

- **The Marine Mammal Center, Behind-the-Scenes Experience**
July 1, 12:30- 1:00PM - 2000 Bunker Road, Sausalito
During this 45-minute walking tour behind the scenes of the hospital, you'll hear inspiring stories about how animal care experts provide life-saving care to sick and injured marine mammals, learn about the innovative technology sustaining the state-of-the-art hospital and find out how you can make a difference for these vulnerable patients.
- **Celebrate 4th of July with Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce Foundation**
July 4, 4:00-9:00PM - Central Park, 420 Central Avenue, Salinas
See ad on Page 30 for more details
- **Alzheimer's Association Salinas, Dementia Family Caregiver Support Group**
July 5, 12:30-2:00PM - 1130 San Vicente Avenue, Salinas
Support groups create a safe, confidential, supportive environment or community and a chance for participants to develop informal mutual support and social relationships. They also educate and inform participants about dementia and help participants develop methods and skills to solve problems.
- **Blue Zones Project, Community Volunteer Day July Beach Clean-Up**
July 5, 4:00-6:00PM - 588 Del Monte Boulevard, Monterey
In collaboration with Communities for Sustainable Monterey County, Del Monte Beach will have a clean-up day. For more information, contact Tanja at tanja.roos@sharecare.com.
- **WeatherTech Raceway, MotoAmerica Superbike Speedfest Festival**
July 7-9, 8:00AM-6:00PM - 1021 Monterey-Salinas Highway, Salinas
A motorcycle festival, bring the family and enjoy food, free carnival festivities, a Wall of Death, MX Big Air Freestyle, racing, the V-Twin Visionary Bike Show, demo rides by Yamaha, Indian, and Harley Davidson, and of course practice and qualifying events on Friday. Saturday and Sunday featuring five classes of road racing. Visit <https://www.co.monterey.ca.us/government/government-links/weathertech-raceway> for more information.
- **Active Seniors, Inc, Monthly Luncheon**
July 13, 11:45AM-1:30PM - 100 Harvest Street, Salinas
\$12 for members and nonmembers. Lunch is prepared by professional chef, Michael Gaines, and his crew of volunteers. Served at noon; come early and have social time with friends; stay after for the monthly program. For reservations: 831-424-5066, asi@activeseniors.org, or come in. activeseniors.org, will have a link to newsletter where the menu and program are listed.
- **WeatherTech Raceway, AHRMA Classic MotoFest of Monterey**
July 14-16, 7AM - 1021 Monterey-Salinas Highway, Salinas
Celebrate vintage motorcycles in Monterey with the American Historic Racing Motorcycle Association! This event includes a swap meet, bike show, road racing, sidecar racing, flat track, vintage/post-motocross, observed trials, other family friendly activities.
- **Blue Zones Project, Family Beach Clean Up**
July 15, 9:00 - 11:00AM - Sand Dunes Drive, Seaside
In collaboration with Cypress Healthcare Partners a Seaside State Beach clean-up. There will be hands-on tasks for all abilities and ages and Blue Zones Project will provide water and healthy snacks to celebrate a job well done. For more information, contact Cindy at cindy.ruizplascencia@sharecare.com
- **Housing Matters, Community Tour**
July 20, 11:00AM - 12:00PM - 115B Coral Street, Santa Cruz
Join experts from Housing Matters for an in-person tour of our campus here in Santa Cruz County. Learn more about Housing Matters programs and services. The comfort and safety of guests is our #1 priority and no photos please of any participants on the campus. Coffee and pastries will be provided! Questions? Contact Marlena De Castro, Community Engagement Manager, at mdecastro@housingmatterssc.org.
- **California Rodeo, Larry Balentine Memorial Cowboy Shoot Out Golf Tournament**
July 19, 7:00AM-3:00PM - The Club at Crazy Horse Ranch, 475 San Juan Grade Road, Salinas
Format will be cowboy breakfast at 7:00AM, shot gun start at 8:00AM and some new fun and exciting contests on a few of the holes. The Cowboy Shoot Out is a fun filled golf tournament where participants get a chance to mingle with rodeo contestants, bull fighters and Rodeo Directors. The cost per entry is \$225 and includes breakfast, ½ cart, tee prizes, and a steak barbecue to end the day which is held on the Mike Storm Directors Patio at the California Rodeo Grounds at 1034 N. Main Street in Salinas.
- **Active Seniors and Silver King & Queens Present: HEARST CASTLE - GRAND ROOMS**
July 27, 8:45AM-7:00PM - 750 Hearst Castle Road, San Simeon
This guided tour of Hearst Castle highlights the Assembly Room, Refectory, Billiard Room, Theater, Gardens, Neptune Pool, and Roman Pool. Tickets cost \$135.00 per person and include transportation, fees, and meals. Pickup location: Salinas - Park Row at 8:45AM and King City Fairgrounds at 9:45AM. Reservations required by July 12, 2023. The 70-minute walking tour includes 140 steps, both up and down, and a 2/3-mile walk. Contact Active Seniors Inc. by at (831) 424-5066, or asi@activeseniorsinc.org for more information, or to advise if you need the "Accessibly Designed Tour".
- **Center for Non-Profit Excellence, Executive Director Breakfast Roundtable**
July 28, 9:00-10:30AM - 2354 Garden Road, Monterey
The Center for Nonprofit Excellence hosts a monthly breakfast to invest in the resilience of nonprofit leaders of diverse backgrounds. Nonprofit executives invited to recharge and reconnect and share wisdom, strategies, and resources for leadership growth. New and veteran nonprofit executives are encouraged to attend this event. Please visit www.cfmco.org/cne for tickets.

Sneak Peak in August

- **Association, Salinas Caregiver Support Group**
August 2, 12:30-2:00PM - 1130 San Vicente Avenue, Salinas
Support groups create a safe, confidential, supportive environment or community and a chance for participants to develop informal mutual support and social relationships. They also educate and inform participants about dementia and help participants develop methods and skills to solve problems.
- **Rancho Cielo, Inaugural Jazz at the Ranch**
August 25, 7:30PM - 710 Old Stage Road, Salinas
Fall for Jazz at the Ranch: listen to 11-time Grammy Winning artist and former lead singer for Santana, Tony Lindsay, and the Soul Riders. Donation includes heavy hors d'oeuvres by Monterey Chefs, fine local wines and beers, and pre-concert entertainment by members of the Youth Orchestra Salinas.



Celebrate 4th of July



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PLEASE VISIT [BIT.LY/3BQDEOR](https://bit.ly/3BQDEOR) TO REGISTER. YOU CAN ALSO REACH OUT TO JENNIFER RUSSELL AT EVENTS@SALINASCHAMBER.COM OR (831) 751-7725 FOR MORE INFO.



- City-Wide Marketing & Technology Grant Program
- Alisal Plan Area Marketing & Technology Grant Program
- Downtown Outdoor Dining Forgivable Loan Program



- Business Facade Improvement Grant Program
- Hotel Incentive Program
- Business Recruitment



- Covid-19 Business Relief Grant Program



SCAN ME

Contract Awards for
1/1/2023 - 3/31/2023

\$4,847,102

15 Contract Awards
won by Monterey County
businesses

Contract Awards for
1/1/2023 - 3/31/2023

- 2 - Women Owned Businesses - \$1,956,658
- 1 - Veteran Owned Business - \$270,000
- 1 - Service-Disabled Owned Business - \$270,000
- 3 - 8(a) Owned Business - \$1,591,396
- 1 - HUB Zone Certified Business - \$160,000

Monterey County Jobs

373

jobs created or retained



We Mean (& Bring) Business to Monterey County

At the Monterey County Business Council, we host a variety of programs that support local businesses. Our Monterey Bay APEX Accelerator program assists small businesses in obtaining and performing under Federal, State, and Local government contracts at no cost. Contact our APEX team to see if government contracting is suitable for your business!



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