



A Note on Disasters and Resources

by Toula Hubbard

We've had warnings, advisories, evacuations and events. Be prepared! As a business, there are many FREE resources available to you. I invite you to consider the value of utilizing these generous offerings. Ok, so you weren't prepared in the past. It is what it is AND you can definitely be prepared for your continued future success.



Locally This Month

The Monterey County Business Council has two upcoming presentations that you can register for at their website www.mcbc.biz: Be Ready 1: Prepare Your Business For The Next Disaster, April 13 from 11:00 am – 12:00 pm at the Prunedale Library; and, Be Ready 2: Experts Help Improve Your Disaster Ready Rating, April 27, 2023, from 11:00 am – 12:00 pm at the Soledad Community Center.

Online Resources

A great federal website with tools and resources in both Spanish and English is Ready, www.ready.gov/business. Every type of natural disaster and a simple checklist to assist the business owner, manager or staff, with identifying factors that might impact the business, customers, and employees.

The California State Office of Emergency Services, www.caloes.ca.gov, offers assessments and resource guides, including additional resources from the Small Business Administration, FEMA, and a helpful list of questions to ask your insurance agent BEFORE a disaster.

The Monterey County Office of Emergency Services www.monterey.ca.us, offers general information under their "prepare" tab that is helpful to walk through. If one can prepare themselves to the best of ones ability, the disaster will still happen, but doesn't have to be physically or mentally as difficult as it might have been. ➡➡➡



DISASTERS - Continued on page 18

Your Business May Be Subject to Human Trafficking Laws

by Gladys Rodriguez-Morales, Attorney, Fenton & Keller

Human Trafficking Notice

California requires that specified businesses and other establishments, including but not limited to, airports, bus stations, truck stops, emergency rooms, urgent care centers, farm labor contractors, hotels, motels, bed and breakfast inns, and businesses with an on-sale general public premises Alcoholic Beverage Control Act license, post a notice that contains specific information relating to human trafficking and slavery.

The notice is required to be posted in a conspicuous place near the public entrance of the business or in another location that is in clear view of the public and employees. The notice must be posted in English, Spanish and one other language that is most widely spoken in the county where the business is located. The notice must be at least 8 ½ inches by 11 inches in size, 16-point font is required to be used and the notice must contain specific language as provided by Civil Code section 52.6, subdivision (b). For more information regarding the posting requirements and to download the notice visit <https://oag.ca.gov/human-trafficking/model-notice>. In addition to English, the notice is available in 23 languages.

In 2022, Governor Newsom approved Assembly Bill 1661 which expanded the human trafficking posting requirements by requiring hair, nail electrolysis, skin care, and other related businesses to also post human trafficking and slavery notices in their establishments.

Human Trafficking Awareness Training

Hair, nail electrolysis, skin care, and other related businesses will also need to comply with existing law concerning training related to human trafficking awareness. In addition to posting a notice regarding human trafficking and slavery, covered businesses must also provide at least 20 minutes of classroom or interactive training to all employees who may interact with, or come into contact with, a victim of human trafficking, or who are likely to receive a report from an employee about suspected human trafficking.

Although the new law does not require all employees of covered businesses to receive the training, it is recommended that covered employers provide this training to all their employees because they all may at some point in time interact with or have contact with a human trafficking victim. Employers are required to provide the required training and education every two years. Additionally, each new employee must be provided with the training and education within six months of being hired or when an ➡➡➡



HUMAN TRAFFICKING LAWS - Continued on page 18

THANKS A MILLION!

CELEBRATING ONE MILLION DOLLARS AWARDED FOR LOCAL PETS IN A HEALTH CRISIS



"Sapphire is a happy dog and a child at heart, she does not act like she is almost 10 years old she is still very active, full of life, loves to play and go on walks. Despite the tumor that was found on her neck she is still a very happy dog and continues to be herself. I would greatly appreciate the help and forever be thankful because Sapphire is my child and is always by my side. I am unemployed and I will be 66 on March 13, my husband is the only one that works, he is an agriculture worker who barely makes enough to pay our bills and house and groceries. Due to all the rain he has not been able to work so his checks have been low and vary from as low as \$500 a week sometimes. I have applied for Unemployment and that is around \$200 a week."

Max's would like to take this opportunity to thank our community business partners. By supporting Max's events and fundraising activities, local businesses have helped us be able to award **\$1,000,000** in financial assistance for pets in need of unexpected, but necessary treatment. You made what was once impossible...possible. Thank you.

Sapphire is the 1176th deserving pet to have a chance to change their story. If your business would like to help us change the story of many more pets just like Sapphire, please visit www.maxshelpingpaws.org or contact us at 831-704-6473.

Rental Registry Under Consideration

by Bill Hastie, Board Chair

One local issue that is getting the attention of landlords and renters alike is the a proposal to establish a rental registry in Salinas. The idea of a rental registry seems straightforward – to provide renters with a property that has been inspected by the city and deemed to be safe, and to keep the city informed as to the inventory of rental housing on the market. In January 2023, the Salinas City Council voted to approve registry ordinance and the details are being worked out for the Council's final vote in March.

As with most any issue, there are pros and cons, and it is beyond the scope of this article to take a position on either side. But the concern expressed by some renters is the potential rent increase to offset the cost of the inspections and City overhead at a time when paychecks are already being squeezed. This could particularly affect senior citizens and others who live on a fixed income who are already falling behind due to inflation. Even if the rental property owner bears the cost of the registry program and does not pass on the additional cost, many are concerned that the registry will lead to rent control as in many other parts of California.

Having rental housing is a business much like any other business in Salinas, it runs by minimizing operating expenses and maximizing revenue. So should the registry program lead to rent control, no matter how well intended, it may increase the operating cost of maintaining a rental property and restrict future revenue. In this scenario, the rental property owner sees that the property is no longer a profitable venture and makes the prudent business decision to sell the property at an attractive price.

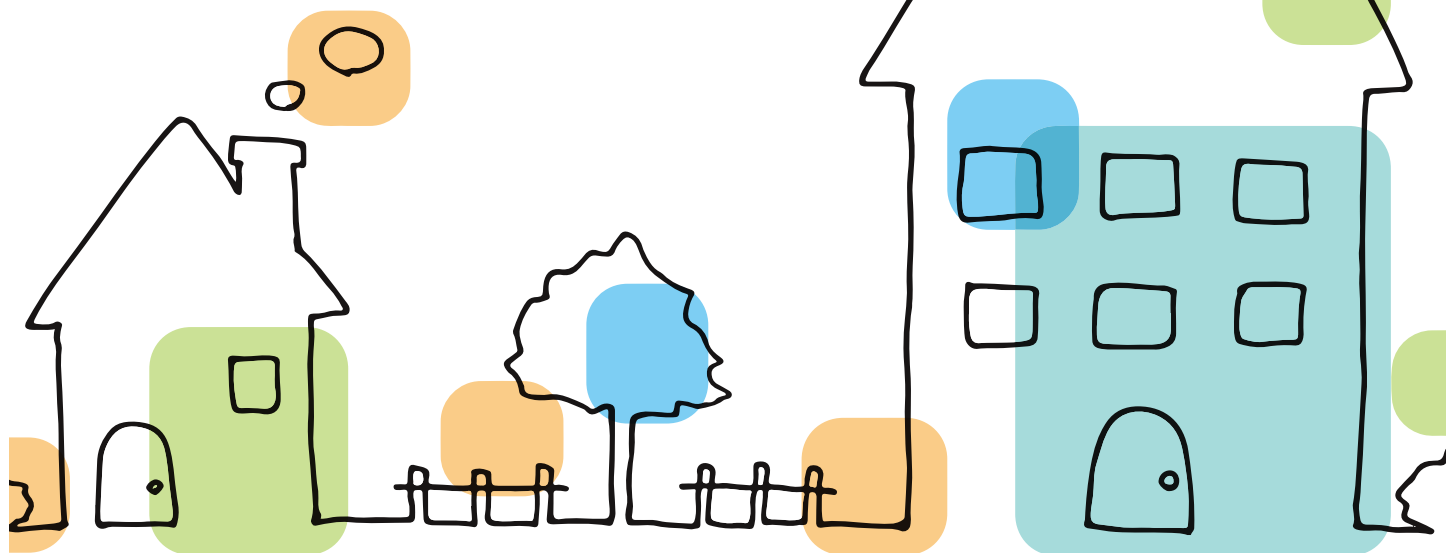
Under this scenario, the ripple effect goes forward and reduces the inventory of rental property available in the Salinas Valley and simple economics kicks in – the law of supply and

demand. If the supply of anything is reduced, its price increases. If rent control prohibits the price from increasing, there could be a major disruption in the local rental housing market. One possible solution to this situation would be to loosen restrictions and approve permits on the construction of new rental properties, thereby increasing the supply of available rental properties and reducing the pressure on pricing (housing inflation is a major contributor to the consumer price index, CPI).

Before the rental registry moves forward in the approval process, although it may be very well intended, there may be significant unintended consequences to consider. Complex issues like this, that have significant information on what may seem like opposing sides, is just one of the many things that the Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce monitors for our members and the community. ■



Bill Hastie



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at Jasmine@salinaschamber.com or call 831.751.7725

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City of Salinas Annual Strategic Planning Workshop

by Chamber Staff

Early this year, the Salinas City Council held a workshop to evaluate the first year of their 2022-2025 Strategic Plan, amend existing city council priorities for 2023, and review effective governance practices.

Before the workshop, the Chamber sent a letter to the City Council listing current priorities for the business community. Sent with the letter was a package of 2022 Business Journal articles reporting on City of Salinas public policies.

City Manager's 2022 Report and Top 2023 Goals

City Manager Steve Carrigan gave a report listing numerous accomplishments of the City of Salinas over the past year.

- Other cities are looking to Salinas as a model for promoting Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) and developing Homekey projects as permanent or interim supportive housing for people without a home.
- Surging popularity of the AMOR Salinas community cleanup program. Of note, community volunteerism and the number of public comments to the city council were up significantly in 2022.

Goals and Challenges for 2023

- Implementing and advancing the Alisal Vibrancy Plan, which brings an identity to this section of the city.
- Diversity, Equity, Inclusion (DEI) training for employees and hiring someone to oversee diversity training.
- Implementing a program that would post city council agendas translated into Spanish (and later translate budget documents), but the translations have to fulfill a high degree of technical accuracy.

Carrigan's top three issues for 2023:

1. Homelessness
2. Affordable Housing

| Strategic Goals and Goal Statements | |
|--|--|
| Economic Development | • Sustain and develop a diverse and thriving economy that benefits Salinas residents and businesses and that contributes to the community's economic health. |
| Housing/ Affordable Housing | • Pursue housing options for residents of all income levels, including the unsheltered, that is safe and secure. |
| Infrastructure and Environmental Sustainability | • Invest in and maintain infrastructure that creates a vibrant City and generates community pride and improves climate resiliency. |
| Public Safety | • Continue to improve community safety by engaging residents and using a broad range of proactive approaches that emphasize community policing and prevention programs. |
| Youth and Seniors | • Provide opportunities for healthy development and social connections through recreational facilities, programs and activities. |
| Effective and Culturally Responsive Government | • Provide effective and culturally-responsive government programs and services in a professional, customer-oriented manner that ensures equitable solutions to community challenges. |

3. Recruiting and Hiring City Personnel, employee numbers are down 30% compared to a year ago and every city department is short on personnel.

Key Issues During Discussions

1. Economic Development

The city council forcefully rejected the idea that "economic development" should be addressed as an item on a long list of responsibilities under one department. Comments included opinions variations of an economic development position dedicated to the topic; concerns with executing existing plans; highlighting the success of Soledad's plan; philosophy on what economic development should incorporate; the desire to help residents start businesses.

During the Housing/Affordable Housing discussion (see below), the council discussed the lack of hotels and motels in Salinas for visitors and how Soledad and King City were pursuing hotels and motels to benefit from Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT) revenue. The council agreed this was something that needed to be addressed but concluded it was an Economic Development issue.

2. Housing/Affordable Housing

There was praise for what the Community Development Department has done with advancing housing opportunities for the unhoused. The council created a goal to establish a Committee on the topic of unhoused to coordinate with other agencies. ➡

STRATEGIC Continued on page 22



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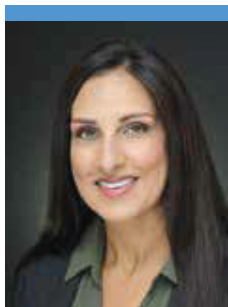
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Volunteering = Stronger Communities and The Fabric That Binds the World Together

National Volunteer Week is the Perfect Time to Strengthen Community Ties

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



Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., spoke these profound words to an audience in Montgomery, Ala. back in 1957 — and they still ring true today. We all have the power to transform lives and the world around us. It begins with raising your hand to say “I can help.”

With National Volunteer Week (April 16-22) nearly upon us, it's incumbent upon each of us to answer Dr. King's question for ourselves. The week serves to recognize the impact of volunteer service and the power of volunteers to tackle society's greatest challenges, to build stronger communities and be a force that transforms the world.

Founded in 1974, the holiday has grown each year, with countless volunteer projects and special events scheduled throughout the week. Today more than ever, it's clear that volunteering helps to create a more beautiful tomorrow.

The word volunteer comes from the Latin word *voluntarius*, meaning willing or of one's own choice. This Latin verb originated from the Latin noun *voluntas*, meaning will or desire.

And that's really what it comes down to — having the will or desire to help others, even in small ways.

We all live busy lives, and finding time to volunteer can be difficult. However, the benefits of volunteering can be enormous, both personally and to the broader community. Nobody loves a place as much as the people who live there. Volunteering offers vital help to worthwhile causes, and the community.

For example, how different would our local healthcare system be today without the strong foundation of volunteerism?

With a world war on the horizon, King City opened the area's first full-fledged hospital in 1941, with 22 beds in a single-story building on Broadway Street.

The community came together to create Southern Monterey County Memorial Hospital, laying the groundwork for what is now a modern Healthcare System.

In 1962, a community fundraising for a more modern hospital culminated when rancher Tom Mee generously donated all the proceeds from a cattle sale, more than \$150,000. Our present hospital was built adjacent to that facility and, along with five comprehensive medical clinics, and a new pediatric clinic soon to open, represents the core of MMHS in Southern Monterey County.

Community support continues today, led by our Service League. As its name suggests, these volunteers truly serve others. The League's mission is to “aid in community healthcare and support all MMHS medical

facilities,” and this group of dedicated volunteers take that mission seriously.

Independent and nonprofit, the group provides vital services for the hospital. They help strengthen employee morale by organizing employee acknowledgement events, holding scrubs sales and providing funds for needed equipment. Through the years fundraisers have provided revenue for facility improvements such as a mammography machine, dialysis equipment, fetal monitors, and furnishings for the hospital chapel.

If you have time to devote to this vibrant group of volunteers who forward an important community-focused cause, call 831-385-7233.

The Mee Memorial Foundation is another arm of volunteerism that makes a huge difference by meeting direct needs of patients and staff. The nonprofit operates independently, with its own focus and goals, but its main purpose is to ensure that our community has access to quality healthcare now and into the future.

Like the Service League, the Foundation always needs volunteers, and there are many ways to get involved; overseeing donations, managing endowments and organizing capital campaigns, helping with special events and organizing fundraising activities.

The Foundation can be reached at (831) 385-7233 or through email at foundation@meememorial.com.

Beyond our local hospital, there are countless volunteer opportunities in the community. If you're looking for ways to get involved, sometimes the best approach is to just take a look around to determine needs. Serve at a foodbank, aid your church, help out at your child's school, tutor students, mentor a child, organize a summer reading program, donate books to the local library.

The list goes on and on. Chances are, you will see personal benefits immediately.

Studies show that giving to others can help protect the volunteer's mental and physical health. It can reduce stress, combat depression, keep them mentally stimulated, and provide a sense of purpose.

Beyond that, volunteering has such a profound impact on others. It allows us to connect with the community and make it a better place. Even helping out with the smallest tasks can make a real difference to the lives of people, animals, and organizations in need.

Dedicating your time as a volunteer helps you make new friends, expand your comfort zone, and boost your social skills. It's a great way to meet new people, especially if you are new to an area. It strengthens your ties to the community and exposes you to people with common interests, neighborhood resources, and fun and fulfilling activities.

National Volunteer Week recognizes the impact of volunteer service and the power of volunteers to tackle society's greatest challenges. Only together can we hope to build stronger communities that help stitch together the fabric that binds the world. ■



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SAVING MONEY WITH GREEN BUSINESS PROGRAMS

- MONDAY, APRIL 10
- 10:30 AM - 12 PM
- SALINAS

BE READY 1: PREPARE YOUR BUSINESS FOR THE NEXT DISASTER

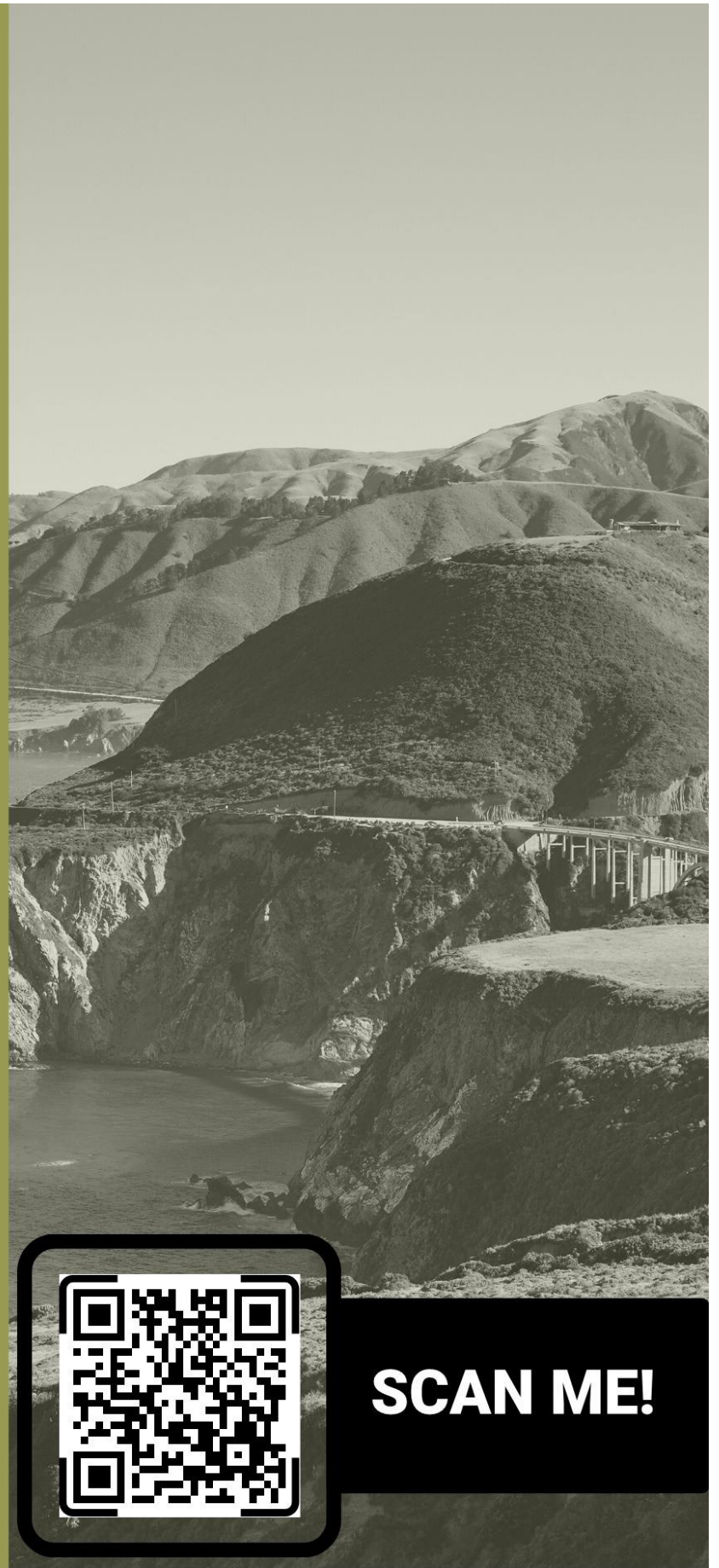
- THURSDAY, APRIL 13
- 11 AM - 12 PM
- PRUNEDALE

BE READY 2: EXPERTS HELP IMPROVE YOUR DISASTER READY RATING

- THURSDAY, APRIL 27
- 11 AM - 12 PM
- SOLEDAD



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The Streets of Salinas: Deteriorating Streets and Sidewalks Still Not Fixed

by Chamber Staff

Salinas residents, workers, and visitors have complained for years about the deterioration of city streets and sidewalks. The Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce and other local business groups recognize that such conditions compromise quality of life and discourage businesses from expanding or establishing operations locally. Your Chamber has heard many unsubstantiated conspiracy theories purportedly explaining why many local sidewalks and roads are in bad shape. But as far as the Chamber can tell, the truth is more mundane: infrastructure wears out, and fixing it costs a lot of money.

Streets and Sidewalks Don't Last Forever

Most California local governments have "fallen behind" in maintaining streets and sidewalks built in the booming decades following World War II. Besides the passage of time, variables that can affect street and sidewalk conditions include traffic volume, types of underlying soil, effectiveness of drainage, and exposure to weather elements.

And while we all enjoy our urban tree canopy, an improper choice in species and planting location can result in root damage to streets and sidewalks. That's a reason why the Downtown Salinas Main Street Streetscape Project in 2020 removed most trees and replaced them with trees with root structures appropriate for a dense urban street corridor.

Why THIS Street?

Maintenance history is a key part of pavement and sidewalk conditions. The City of Salinas Public Works Department website answers a common question asked by residents about street work: "Why are they resurfacing that street when it doesn't look so bad?"

A street can be preserved with street resurfacing, before it degrades to a bad condition. Street resurfacing is far cheaper (90%) than street reconstruction. Letting a street degrade to the point where it needs to be reconstructed is a very expensive proposition.

Overlays and reconstruction of streets in fair and poor condition are significantly more expensive than slurry seals and other pavement preservation treatments on streets in good condition. And when budgets are tight, pavement preservation for a street that "doesn't look so bad" becomes a luxury and a lower budget priority.

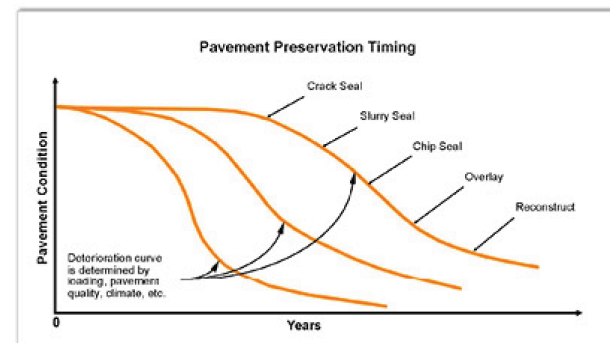
Pavement and Sidewalk Repair Is Not Cheap

Californians tend to grossly underestimate how much construction costs nowadays on public works projects. For example, workers on public works construction contracts in Monterey County must be paid a state-mandated "prevailing wage," which means laborers earn \$55-\$65 per hour (including fringe benefits) and equipment operators earn \$80-\$90 per hour (including fringe benefits).

In addition, laws meant to ensure justice come at a price. Street and sidewalk projects can trigger requirements under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), a federal law enacted in 1990 that requires governments to ensure that persons with disabilities have access to pedestrian routes in the public right of way. Whenever a government reconstructs, rehabilitates, or resurfaces a street, it must install curb ramps where pedestrian walkways intersect the street. (Filling potholes or other routine maintenance work does not trigger the requirement to install curb ramps.)

Best Management Practices

Applying the
RIGHT TREATMENT
to the
RIGHT PAVEMENT
at the
RIGHT TIME
using the
RIGHT MATERIALS



Lack of Public Knowledge

Progress is happening, mainly because of unanticipated one-time funding in 2021 of \$51.6 million from the federal American Rescue Plan Act. However, the City of Salinas Measure G Oversight Committee and the City of Salinas Traffic and Transportation Commission have expressed concerns that the public is relatively unaware of new city efforts to address street and sidewalk conditions.

Outside groups have also expressed these concerns. For example, the Salinas Taxpayers Association sent a letter dated May 7, 2021, to the Salinas City Council making observations about streets and sidewalks:

1. The typical Salinas resident has strong awareness of substandard and deteriorating pavement and sidewalk conditions. Rightly or wrongly, they are dissatisfied with their city's efforts to improve conditions.
2. Most Salinas residents have no idea what the city is doing - or can do - about street pavement or sidewalk conditions.
3. False information seems to circulate explaining deteriorating streets and sidewalks.
4. The city has not adequately kept Salinas residents informed about sources and expenditures of funds on street and sidewalk improvements.

This year, your Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce sent a letter dated February 9, 2023, to the Salinas City Council and Salinas Traffic and Transportation Commission noting the following:

Chamber leaders believe that the credibility of the city government is being undermined by unsubstantiated assertions that "nothing is being done" to improve street and sidewalk conditions, or that some areas of the city are being fixed while other areas are neglected based on favoritism and influence. The recent rains apparently resulted in new potholes and asphalt "alligator cracking," and this has made the public impression of the city's streets even worse. Our own members are complaining and asking about government accountability for fixing the deteriorating street infrastructure. This impression extends to the local news media.

The Chamber letter concluded with a recommendation to city leaders to "develop a concise, clear outline posted for the public on the city's website that explains the city's efforts to improve city street and sidewalk conditions."

The Salinas Chamber is optimistic about influencing the process and stay tuned for a future follow-up on what the City of Salinas and County of Monterey are doing to improve street pavement and sidewalk conditions. ■

- Upcoming Non-Profit Events -

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

- **Community Human Services and Prescribe Safe**

Join us for a virtual event, #RunforRecovery, with the 2023 Virtual Recovery Run. Register for either the 5k or the 3k before May 1st for an early bird discount! Each registrant receives a participant medal and commemorative T-shirt just for registering! By taking part in the 2023 Recovery Run, you are supporting programs that provide help to residents in Monterey County who need it! Thank you!!

For more information: www.chservices.org or

<https://runsignup.com/Race/CA/Monterey/RecoveryRunWalk>.



- **Alzheimer's Association, Salinas & Pacific Grove Caregiver Support Group**

April 1, 12:30PM - 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 (April 12), without a fee.

- **Alliance on Aging Senior Luncheon**

April 4, 11:00 AM - 72 E Joaquin Street, Salinas

A \$12 donation provides meatloaf, mashed potatoes, cooked veggies and a roll.

Reservations are required. Questions? Call 831-655-1334 or 831-758-4011.

- **Alzheimer's Association Salinas Dementia Family Caregiver Support Group**

April 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.

- **Active Seniors, Inc, Monthly Luncheon**

April 13, 11:45AM-1:30PM - 100 Harvest Street, Salinas

\$12 for members and nonmembers. The lunch is prepared by our professional chef, Michael Gaines, and his crew of volunteers. There is always a program following lunch. Lunch is served at noon but come early and have a social time with friends. Please call 831-424-5066, email asi@activeseniors.org, or come in to make a reservation. Our website, activeseniorsinc.org will have a link to the newsletter where the menu and program are listed.

- **American Cancer Society Annual Celebration of Life Fashion Show**

April 14, 10:30AM-2:30PM - Monterey Conference Center, 1 Portola Plaza, Monterey

Mark your calendar and spread the word! It's with great excitement that the American Cancer Society Annual Celebration of Life Fashion Show will be back live and ready to rock the runway on Friday, April 14, 2023, from 10:30 am to 2:30 pm at the Monterey Conference Center. The luncheon event includes a silent auction, raffle, and spectacular fashion show.

Are you a Non-Profit member of the Chamber? Be sure to add your events on-line at SalinasChamber.com and be considered for listing in the Salinas Valley Business Journal.

- **Blue Zones Project - Earth Day Clean-Up at Tatum's Garden**

April 15, 8:30AM - 11:30AM - Tatum's Garden, 1 Maryal Drive, Salinas

Join Blue Zones Project at Tatum's Garden on a fun clean-up day in honor of Earth Day! Clean-up activities will consist of pulling weeds, scrubbing down benches, picnic tables and side-walks, sanitizing the playground structure, and other special tasks. We recommend bringing your own water, garden tools & gloves (if you have them), comfortable clothes and sunscreen. Bring your community service hours form! Stay for fun Earth Day activities, organization booths and healthy snacks!

- **SNIP - Cioppino & Vino**

April 17, 6:00PM - 8:30PM - Paluca Trattoria, 6 Fisherman's Wharf, Monterey

Join us for an unforgettable evening to benefit SNIP Spay Neuter Imperative Project. Seating is limited to 34 people! 100% of proceeds supports SNIP and animals in need throughout the Central Coast. Visit snipbus.org for information on services funded. Tickets \$150/per person; any additional donations and contributions are appreciated.

- **Community Conversations with Ohana - Drug Prevention**

April 19, 5:00-7:00PM - Monterey Public Library, 625 Pacific Street, Monterey

Medical experts Dr. Casey Grover, Dr. Reb Close, and Dr. Susan Swick will discuss teen drug use and overdose prevention, including current trends in Fentanyl use and how parents can talk with teens. Overdoses can happen to anyone, including first-time users. Pick up a free dose of Narcan/Naloxone, the "antidote" to an opioid overdose, while supplies last. Registration is required. <http://montagehealth.org/ohana-talks>

- **Monterey Symphony - April Pre-Concert Luncheon**

April 20, 11:30AM - Inn at Spanish Bay, 2810 Spanish Bay Road, Pebble Beach

Join us for a pre-concert luncheon with Music Director Jayce Ogren. Tickets \$65, visit monterey-symphony.org for more info.

- **SVMHS Blood Drive**

April 25, 9:00AM-2:00PM - SVMHS, 450 E. Romie Lane, Salinas

Salinas Valley Memorial Healthcare System is teaming up with Vitalant to hold a blood drive on April 25, 2023, at Salinas Valley Memorial Healthcare System's MRI Parking Lot located at 450 E. Romie Lane, Salinas. Please bring your photo ID; if you are a past participant bring your donor card to your appointment. Registration is required. For more information, please contact the Health Promotion Department at healthpromotion@svmh.com or 831-759-1890.

- **Community Foundation for Monterey County Women's Fund Luncheon**

May 5, 11:00AM-1:30PM - Hyatt Regency Monterey, 1 Old Golf Course Road, Monterey

16th Annual Women's Fund Luncheon is the signature event for the Women's Fund, a field of interest fund of the Community Foundation for Monterey County. This year's keynote speaker is Judy Guzmán Krueger.

- **Monterey Symphony May Pre-Concert Luncheon**

May 18, 11:00AM - Glen Deven Ranch, Big Sur

Join us for a special season closing pre-concert luncheon with Music Director Jayce Ogren, Composer in Residence John Wineglass and violinist Edwin Huizinga. Hosted by Big Sur Land Trust. Chef Brandon Miller will be cooking up his delicious paella. Tickets are \$65.

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Clearer Financial Skies Ahead?

by Ryan Hastie, CPFA®, Hastie Financial Group



Fiscal year 2022 will undoubtedly go down in the record books as one of the worst years for the investment markets. According to Financial Times, it was the worst year for a mixed asset portfolio since 1932, in the depths of the Great Depression. Throughout 2022 and continuing into this year, we have been inundated with “bad” news – inflation, rapidly rising interest rates, supply chain disruptions, geopolitical war, tension in Washington, etc. These are very real and significant issues that Americans see and feel every day. Unfortunately, we have no way of knowing or guessing what the future holds. So, rather than guess, sometimes it can be beneficial to look back in time. Looking back throughout the history of the investment markets, we have seen record highs and record lows (i.e., 2022). One thing we do know for sure, markets always recover – it’s the time it takes to recover that can be the most painful, even unbearable at times. Looking back can also give us a historical perspective of current events. To that end, let’s look at some historical data that potentially points to 2023 being better for investors than last year.

Data from FactSet shows stocks have historically reversed course following down years. In 18 time periods from 1950 – 2018, the S&P 500 has gained an average of 15%. The S&P 500 also saw positive returns in 15 of those 18 periods. Conversely, there were only 3 instances of consecutive negative years: 1973, 2000, and 2001. On average, following a loss of 20% or more, the S&P 500 has gained 17.6% the following year.

Additional data from FactSet points to a potential comeback of sorts for 2023. Since 1950, stocks have historically

risen, on average, 14.7% in the year following a midterm election. Politics aside, the results of November’s midterm election was good for the market. Following the recent midterm elections, we now have mixed power in Washington –with Democrats holding the Oval Office and the Senate, and Republicans controlling the House. This “gridlock” has historically been good for the stock market, as it will be harder to pass any legislation without bipartisan support. Fewer bills typically translate to less surprise for the market – which it favors. Fewer surprises typically mean less volatility, which we saw plenty of last year.

The partisan makeup of the White House and Congress has also seen some differing effects on the market and stock returns. Going back to 1951, a Democratic President with a Republican or split Congress (our current composition) has seen an average total return of 17.5%, compared to an overall average of 12.5%, according to FactSet. Whatever one’s political preference, we can all cheer and hope for better performance for the investment markets.

Although past performance is not indicative of future results, these historical averages point to a potentially brighter year after the devastation experienced in 2022. January saw a strong start to the year, with all three major averages up for the month. Since then, the markets have seen persistent volatility due to fear of not only continued Federal Reserve (Fed) action, but potentially more aggressive action. Upcoming Consumer Price Index reports and Fed meetings will give us a look into the state of the economy and the effects of the Fed’s actions on decades-high inflation. ■

Ryan Hastie, CPFA can be found at locally-owned Hastie Financial Group. If you would like to discuss your personal or company’s investment needs, please contact Ryan at ryan.hastie@hastiefg.com



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Stronger Together: 102nd Annual Awards Luncheon

Presented by Chevron

The event was designed to acknowledge the contributions of various community leaders, and is the single largest gathering of businesspeople and community in our area.

The luncheon will be held Thursday, April 6th, and begins with the Salinas Valley Health Networking Power Hour from 10:00 am – 11:00 am, followed by the Awards Luncheon from 11:00 am – 1:00 pm, at Sherwood Hall, in Salinas.

Award Winners:

- **Businesswoman of the Year:**
Leinette Limtiaco (Central Coast Federal CU)
- **Citizen of the Year:**
Dr. Allen Radner (Salinas Valley Health)
- **Spirit of the Community:**
Blue Zones Project of Monterey County
- **Outstanding Small Business:**
Natividad Foundation
- **Outstanding Large Business:**
Chevron
- **Ag Leadership Award:**
Candi DePauw (Farm Day)
- **Ambassadors of the Year:**
Michael Laroco & Daniel Philpott (INOSOT)

To be honored for their contributions:

Immediate Past Board Chair – Rodney Meeks
Outgoing Board Members – James Bogart (Bogie) - Ag Industry Icon; Raymond Costa - RHC Management Co, LLC dba McDonald's; Albert Maldonado - MP Express Printing; Brandon Patterson - Windermere Valley Properties; Krishna Patel - Duda Farm Fresh Foods; Sara Boyns - Fenton & Keller

Chamber Member Anniversaries

100 Years: The Californian
50 Years: American Red Cross of the Central Coast; Monterey County Agricultural Commissioner; Matsui Nursery; Northridge Mall / Starwood Retail Partners
25 Years: Ausonio Inc; Kinship Center; Taylor Farms California, Inc; The Don Chapin Company, Inc.; Monterey Bay PTAC; Monterey County Business Council

15 Years: Residence Inn by Marriott – Salinas; Coastal Kids Home Care; Community Foundation for Monterey County; Lopez Tax Service; 1st Capital Bank; allU.S. Credit Union; Pinnacle Bank; Holiday Inn Express & Suites; Mission Trails Regional Occupational Program; The Salvation Army; Salinas Valley Fair; The Yanks Air Museum Foundation

10 Years: Chilton and House Attorneys; Baratto, Sullivan & Co. Insurance; Scudder Roofing; Hastie Financial Group; LuAnn Meador-Hutchinson; Girls Inc of the Central Coast; Kobrinsky Group; Hartnell College; Cloverfield Management LLC; Sacred Heart School

Our sponsors are a big part of making this event all that it is. (As of the publication deadline)

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Silver: Alco Water Service; Alliant Insurance Services; California Water Service; Central Coast Federal Credit Union; D'Arrigo California; Mechanics Bank; Monterey Regional Airport; Natividad Foundation; Pacific Valley Bank; Pinnacle Bank; RHC Management dba McDonald's; Snipville Pet Care
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The cost is \$55/members and \$95/non-members. For more information, call (831) 751-7725, email events@salinaschamber.com or visit www.SalinasChamber.com. ■



in the community



ARCpoint Alternative Samples Drug Testing

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



Drug testing has become common for companies, organizations, and government agencies to help in maintaining a safe and drug-free workplace. Traditionally, urine samples have been the go-to method for drug testing, but newer technologies are becoming available that make drug testing faster, easier, less invasive, and more reliable.

With California laws increasingly regulating testing, while drug abuse grows more serious every year, some of these new technologies hold great promise in the struggle to keep the workplace safe while respecting employees' privacy and dignity.

Urine testing has been the default method of drug testing for many decades, given that they are relatively cheap and well understood. Yet testing using urine samples does have disadvantages. Some employees may see them as awkward, and it can sometimes be difficult or time consuming to produce a suitable sample. Additionally, with such a long history of use by employers, there are many strategies that people have developed to cheat on urine drug tests.

Thankfully, new methods of drug testing have emerged, including hair and saliva testing. They offer many advantages for employers, athletic organizations, and other groups looking to institute drug-testing policies that actually make a difference in the workplace while complying with the strict requirements of the California regulatory environment.

Statistics on Drug Use

According to a survey conducted by the National Safety Council, 75% of employers have experienced the effects of opioid use in their workplace. The survey also revealed that 38% of employees who abuse opioids are more likely to be absent from work, and 32% are more likely to miss deadlines. These statistics indicate that drug use in the workplace can have a significant impact on productivity and costs for employers, and that this impact is growing.

Drug use in the workplace can be costly for companies in terms of lost productivity, absenteeism, and accidents. According to the National Institute on Drug Abuse, substance abuse costs the U.S. economy more than \$740 billion annually in lost productivity, healthcare costs, and criminal justice costs. Drug testing has long been a key way for employers to contain these costs and risks, but it can be difficult.

The Detection Windows

One of the primary differences between hair, saliva, and urine testing is the detection window, the period in which a drug can be detected after use. Urine testing has a relatively short detection window of 3-5 days. This is a limitation for something like a pre-employment test, where prospective employees are often aware a test might be coming, and needs to only abstain for a few days to pass a test.

Hair testing, by contrast, can detect drugs for up to 90 days or longer, depending on the length of hair and frequency of use. This makes it ideally suited to pre-employment testing, allowing an employer to get a good idea of any substance abuse history rather than a tiny snapshot of their last few days. Knowing in advance, before hiring, whether an employee has a potentially disruptive drug habit can save a company many hours, many headaches, and many thousands of dollars in future issues.

Saliva testing, on the other hand, has a slightly shorter detection window of 24-to-48 hours. Again, this can be a limitation, but for certain needs it can be an

advantage. For example, an employee who appears to be under the influence at work can be tested using saliva, allowing a specific look at their last day or two of activity, the time period most relevant for determining if they are under the influence at work. As a key point, saliva testing for THC is allowed under AB 2188, the California law which takes effect on Jan. 1, 2024, banning discrimination against workers who use marijuana on their own time.

Less Invasive to Get a Sample

Another advantage of hair and saliva testing is that they are less invasive compared to urine testing. Let's face it, collecting urine samples can be an uncomfortable and personal process. It can also be time-consuming. In contrast, saliva and hair samples are simple to collect, easier to validate, and far less invasive for many employees. Collecting a hair sample only requires about a paper clip's weight in hair from the head or body, while saliva testing involves simply placing an absorbent tab in the mouth for a few minutes.

Harder to Cheat On and More Reliable

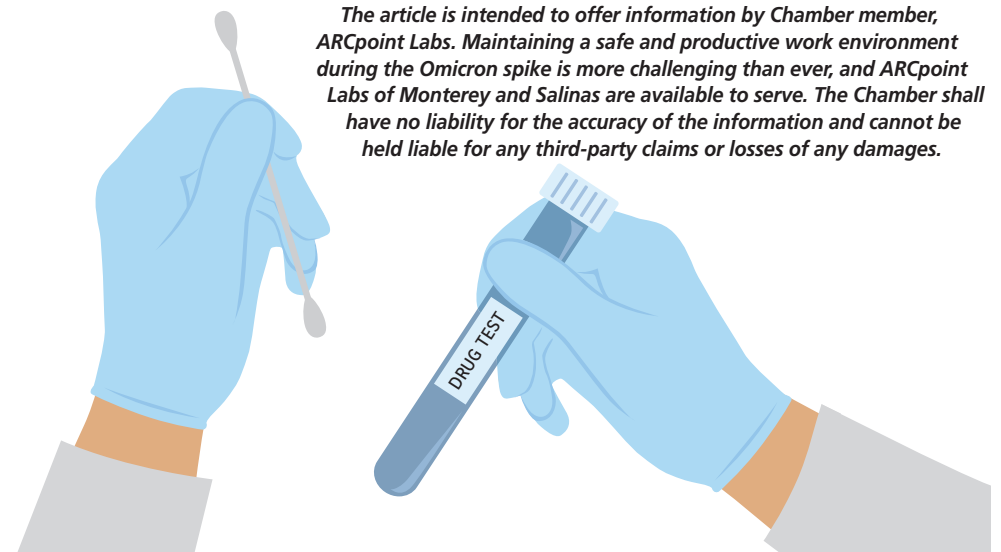
Do a Google search for "how to cheat a drug test" and you will find hundreds of pages that give instructions, or even sell concoctions and devices, that attempt to aid in defeating a urine drug test.

Hair and saliva testing are harder to cheat on. Hair and saliva samples cannot be diluted or adulterated, making it a more reliable option for employers. Since the collector is present with the donor at all times, observing and collecting samples themselves, there is no opportunity to substitute with another sample either.

Products sold to bleach or wash hair, or "emergency purge" the body of detectable drugs, have never been shown to have any success in defeating hair or saliva testing.

Hair and saliva testing offer many advantages over urine testing, including longer detection windows, less-invasive sample collection, increased reliability, and reduced risks of cheating. These advantages make hair and saliva testing an increasingly popular option for companies and athletic organizations.

With drug use in the workplace becoming an increasingly significant issue, employers face challenges in keeping their workplaces free from drugs and other substances that may affect safety, performance and productivity. ■



Ribbon Cuttings • Chamber Events



Lunch and Learn - Vistra Moss Landing Energy Storage Facility

Vistra Moss Landing Lunch and Learn provided attendees a crash course on battery storage systems and planned future growth for the Vistra Zero portfolio by 2026.



Walking Cleanup of the Alisal Corridor

The Salinas Chamber was delighted to partner with the City of Salinas, SUBA, Downtown Streets Team, Blue Zones, and other partners in the kick-off of the Alisal Ambassador Program with a walking clean-up of the Alisal.



Lunch and Learn - TPO HR Experts

Michaëlle Stanford, TPO Senior Consultant, provided an informative presentation on workforce trends, workplace characteristics, and how to reinvigorate the workplace.



Ribbon Cutting Platinum Multiservices Inc

Celebrating Platinum Multiservices Inc and the grand opening of its Seaside office. Attendees had a great time with live music, a taco bar, and heartwarming speeches.



Monterey County STEM Talent Expo

The Monterey County STEM Talent Expo was a successful event connecting industry leaders to talented students and community members looking for opportunities to further their education and career opportunities in the fields of STEM.



Special Ribbon Cutting Disaster Kleenup Specialists

Disaster Kleenup Specialists were honored with a special ribbon cutting ceremony commemorating their 40+ years in business. Guests enjoyed tours, hors d'oeuvres, wine and live music.



Goodwill Central Coast and Chamber Mixer

Goodwill Central Coast opened its doors to the community and hosted a tour of the facility, special guest speakers, raffle prizes, a special performance by Mariachi Tapatio, and hosted appetizers by the Flying Artichoke.



Lunch and Learn - Chamber Governmental Affairs

Lunch and Learn with Governmental Affairs Liaison, Kevin Dayton, covered information on Local Government 101 and how to navigate the intricacies of government.



Ribbon Cutting - Barbara Shipnuck Professional Center

The Salinas Chamber was honored to celebrate with Natividad and Natividad Foundation, the ceremonial ribbon cutting for the renaming of Building 400 in honor of Barbara Shipnuck, the first woman to serve as a County Supervisor in Monterey County.



Ribbon Cutting - Crumbl Cookies

Crumbl Cookies can now be found in Harden Ranch Plaza, and was celebrated at the Salinas Chamber ribbon cutting ceremony.



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Turn Your Closet Chaos Into Community Gold Through Value-Added Donations To GCC

by Goodwill of the Central Coast Staff

Spring has sprung — and we should all have a collective desire to purge unwanted or unworn clothes and other household items that have spent months or years merely collecting dust.

Springtime has long been the season to root through your house and put everything in tip-top shape. It's not always easy to decide what should stay and what should go. To help you declutter your home, Goodwill Central Coast offers up a list of the Top 6 things to donate to GCC this spring.

Rest assured that all your hard work will pay off for others. You know that old winter coat with a ski lift ticket from 2015 hanging from the zipper? It hasn't done much good stashed away in a closet or a bin in the attack. But as a donation to Goodwill its powers are limitless. It helps reduce fast fashion, helps keep local landfills manageable and represents community gold by fueling GCC's mission to provide jobs to those seeking the empowerment of a career.

Consider the following list of most-wanted items:

- **Winter coats:** With warm weather on its way, now is a perfect time to shed your winter coat and donate it to Goodwill Central Coast. Donating is a great way to give your gently used coat a new life and recycle responsibly.

- **Sweaters:** Spring cleaning your closet is exciting because it means you can get bulky winter sweaters out of the way to make room for fun, colorful spring clothing. Before you put things into storage, take some time to evaluate which items you want to wear next winter. If you've acquired a stockpile of sweaters (even ugly Christmas ones!), consider donating a few to GCC. You'll free up more real estate on your shelves while giving the local economy a boost.

- **Books:** Are your bookshelves overflowing? Get organized by donating your pre-loved books to Goodwill! When you donate your books, you spread the joy of reading, giving others the opportunity to discover a book they love.

- **Games and toys:** As you spring clean your home, you may come across games, toys and sports equipment that your family no longer uses. As long as you have all the parts and pieces, consider donating these items. GCC happily accepts donations of gently used dolls and action figures, blocks, board games, puzzles, balls and sporting equipment that are in good condition.

- **Electronics:** Goodwill accepts functioning electric keyboards, personal computers, tablets, video games and consoles, cellular phones, stereos and speakers. This creates an environmentally responsible way to recycle these items while receiving a tax deduction at the same time.

- **Housewares:** Do you have extra household items, such as dishes, cooking utensils, or small appliances? Don't throw them away — donate them to Goodwill.

As you spring clean your home, designate a box for the items you plan to donate. You might be surprised to see how many items end up in the box by the time you're finished spring cleaning.

Why is this so important?

Goodwill Central Coast accepts donations and turns them into funding for job skills training and employment services for people living on the Central Coast. Donated goods are collected, sorted and resold through GCC's network of retail stores in Monterey, Santa Cruz and San Luis Obispo counties — and online at www.ccgoodwill.org/shop.

Each year GCC assists more than 5,000 job seekers get back to work and reclaim financial and personal independence. It provides a positive learning environment that creates brighter futures through connecting people to meaningful work.

Plus, donating to Goodwill is good for the planet. Each year, Goodwill diverts millions of pounds of reusable materials and textiles from local landfills, promoting responsible recycling and sustainability. ■



Staff Up Without Breaking the Bank:

5 Reasons Salinas Area Businesses Should Consider Temporary Staffing Solutions

by Paul Weyant



We are known for our thriving agriculture industry, as well as a growing number of businesses in other sectors such as healthcare, manufacturing, and hospitality.

However, no

matter the industry, one thing all businesses have in common is the need for a reliable and skilled workforce. This is where temporary staffing solutions, like Express Employment of Salinas, can come in handy. In this article, we'll explore the top 5 benefits of temporary staffing for Salinas businesses.

Increased Flexibility: One of the most significant benefits of temporary staffing is the flexibility it provides. Temporary employees can be hired on a short-term basis to cover a seasonal increase in demand, fill in for an employee on leave, or assist with a special project. This means that businesses can easily adjust their staffing levels to meet their current needs without committing to long-term employment contracts.

Reduced Recruitment Costs: Recruitment can be a time-consuming and expensive process, especially if businesses need to hire multiple employees at once. Companies like Express Employment can help alleviate some of these costs by providing pre-screened candidates that meet the required skills and experience. This means businesses can save on recruitment advertising, resume screening, and interview expenses.

Access to a Larger Pool of Qualified Candidates: Our agency also likely has access to a wider pool of candidates than businesses typically have. This is because

we are constantly recruiting and building a database of qualified candidates with different skills and experience levels. This means businesses can benefit from the expertise and skills of employees who may not have otherwise been available to them.

Reduced Turnover Rates: Employee turnover can be a significant challenge for businesses, especially when it comes to seasonal work or short-term projects. However, our staffing solutions can help reduce turnover rates by providing employees with a clear understanding of the job's duration and expectations. This means that businesses can avoid the cost and disruption that comes with high turnover rates.

Cost-Effective Trial Period: Hiring a permanent employee can be a significant investment, especially when the employee is new to the business. However, temporary staffing solutions can offer a cost-effective trial period for businesses to evaluate the employee's skills, work ethic, and fit within the company culture. This means that businesses can reduce the risk associated with permanent hires while still ensuring that they have the staff they need.

Employment agencies can offer numerous benefits for Salinas area businesses. We provide increased flexibility, reduced recruitment costs, access to a larger pool of qualified candidates, reduced turnover rates, and a cost-effective trial period. These benefits can help businesses of all sizes and industries to manage their staffing needs more effectively, saving time and money while improving productivity and bottom line. ■

Paul Weyant can be found at locally owned Express Employment. If you're interested in learning more about how Express Employment of Monterey County can help your business, give us a call today, 831-920-1857.

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Disaster Distress Helpline, 1.800.985.5990, is a 365 day-a-year and 24/7 national hotline dedicated to crisis counseling for people who are experiencing emotional distress related to any natural or human-caused disaster.

Helping a child cope with disaster can be challenging for parents. The CDC has resources to consider, www.cdc.gov/childrenindisasters. Any time you feel it is necessary, reach out for professional help and support for you and your child. CALL or TEXT Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's (SAMHSA's) Disaster Distress Hotline: 1.800.985.5990; People with deafness or hearing loss can use their preferred relay service to call 1.800.985.5990.

All-In Monterey County can assist with food and clothing, www.allinmonterey.org.

The Food Bank for Monterey County, www.foodbankformontereycounty.org, 831.758.1523.

United Way can provide general support, simply dial 211.

For our four legged and winged family members, the SPCA of Monterey County can be reached at 831.373.2631.

Of course you may see something that isn't necessarily an emergency, and would be helpful to have someone to take a look. The non-emergency dispatch number for the Salinas Police Department is 831.758.1321 and the non-emergency number for the Monterey County Sheriff's Office is 831.755.5111.

This is a small snap-shot of resources, and a place to start in considering your own level of preparedness. As the editor of the Salinas Valley Business Journal, I really want to hear from you. After reading this article, did you use any of the resources? Do you have a super-secret resource you care to share? Let me know by dropping me a note at svbj@salinaschamber.com. ■

existing employee's position changes and the change results in the employee working in a new position that is likely to interact or come into contact with the public.

As a resource for training materials, covered employers can use information provided by certain federal agencies, including the Blue Campaign, which is part of an effort by the Department of Homeland Security to combat human trafficking. The Blue Campaign materials can be accessed at <http://www.dhs.gov/blue-campaign/request-materials>.

Human Trafficking Reporting

In 2022, Governor Newsom signed Assembly Bill 1788 which became effective on January 1, 2023. Hotel owners are now liable if they or their hotel supervisors knew of or "acted with reckless disregard" of sex trafficking activities at the hotel and failed to inform law enforcement, the National Human Trafficking Hotline, or a victim service organization within 24 hours of the sex trafficking activity. Hotel owners are also liable under the newly enacted law if a hotel employee was acting within the scope of employment and knowingly benefited (received anything of value) from participating in a venture that the employee knew, or acted in reckless disregard of, the sex trafficking activity at the hotel.

Penalties

Failure to post the required notice or provide the required training exposes businesses to civil penalties from \$500 for the first offense and \$1,000 for each subsequent offense, and a hotel's failure to report sex trafficking activities at the hotel exposes the hotel owner to civil penalties from up to \$1,000 to \$10,000, depending on the number of violations in a year. ■

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

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The Salinas City Elementary School District is seeking applicants and exists to ensure that the proceeds from Measures G&H—the two general obligation bonds passed in 2022—are spent in accordance with the will of the voters. This committee satisfies the accountability requirements of Prop 39.

Among the duties of this committee: Reviewing quarterly expenditure reports produced by the District to ensure that bond proceeds are expended only for the purposes set forth in the ballot measure and no proceeds are used for any teacher or administrative salaries or other operating expenses of the District.

If interested, scan the QR code for the application. You may also obtain a paper copy between 8:30AM-4:30PM M-F, at the front desk of the District Office, 849 S. Main St., Salinas.

Please email your completed application to jcardenas@salinascity.k12.ca.us or return it to the District Office. Recruitment for this committee is ongoing.

SCAN ME

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

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2011
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 2014
 2020

Business

BookKeeping Central
 Bronco Van & Storage
 California Welcome Center - Salinas
 Coast & Valley Properties Inc
 DeSerpa Investments, LP
 El Estero Car Wash
 GT Monterey, dba Main Event Transportation
 Harmony At Home
 Haupt & Associates
 Housing Authority of the County of Monterey
 Incfile
 INOSOT Financial and Health Coaching Centers
 Monterey County Film Commission
 Monterey County Weekly
 One Plant Salinas
 Planned Parenthood
 Salinas Valley Ford Lincoln
 South County Newspapers
 State of California, Department of Rehabilitation
 T. Bob Uemura, Attorney At Law
 Top 10 Produce LLC
 Towers Realty
 Tunstall Engineering Consultants, I
 United Site Services
 Victory Mission
 Wells Fargo Advisors- Brian Allen
 Western Growers Center -
 For Innovation & Technology

Member Since

2011
 1973
 2011
 2014
 1976
 2022
 2015
 2016
 2018
 2014
 2022
 2013
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 2001
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 1982
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 2016
 2016
 1989
 2017
 2014
 2011
 2016
 2022
 2009
 2021

A Special Thanks to Our Visionary and Stakeholder Members



Rancho Cielo: Judge John Phillips's Vision, Realized

by Joseph L. DeRuosi Jr.

What began as the dream of a handful of individuals has become a positive reality for hundreds of young people. In 2000, the Rancho Cielo Board was established as a 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization for the purpose of developing a comprehensive center of learning and social services for underserved youth in Monterey County. Now-retired Superior Court Judge John M. Phillips witnessed the tragic cycle of offending and incarceration that many young people found themselves in. He wanted to create an effective alternative that would help keep first-time offenders from becoming repeat offenders.

The Rancho Cielo Ag Technology & Mechatronics program is a unique experience, giving students hands-on occupational skills training, as well as academic instruction in the classroom, leading to the completion of high school diploma. The Ag Technology & Mechatronics program focuses on student learning outcomes in mechanics, food safety, electrical (salad factory line). Students can maintain and repair state-of-the-art agriculture machinery and equipment that is essential to the industry. Students will visit and learn from various agriculture companies, such as Taylor Farms, Mann Packing, D'Arrigo, Costa Family Farms, Dole, and Ocean Mist. In addition, students will have the opportunity to learn from professionals currently working in the agriculture industry.

Rancho Cielo Drummond Culinary Academy provides at-promise youth an opportunity to gain classroom training, work experience, and transferrable skills to assist them in becoming employable in the culinary and hospitality arts industry. Rancho Cielo's Drummond Culinary Academy is tailored to help transform the lives of youth through learning new skills, on-the-job training, and professional mentorship; the goal is to train at-promise and underserved youth, aged 16-24, throughout Monterey County in a work environment conducive to learning, where students are challenged and respected. This is a ten-month program, split between the kitchen and the high school classroom, results in a culinary certificate and high school diploma. Students complete a 200-hour externship, working with local restaurants to gain employment experience. The program offers job readiness training, and placement and referral services for graduates.

83% of the first graduating class (2011) are still working as of 2016.

More than 4 students have graduated from culinary school at Le Cordon Bleu and L'Escoffier Schools.

Scholarships are available for culinary schools, provided through supportive partners and sponsors.

Executive Chef Estevan Jimenez leads students through a nationally recognized culinary arts curriculum, including Safe Food Handlers Certification. The skills learned dramatically increase their employability, while students gain work experience in the Academy Dining Room, open to the public on Friday nights, as well as during the



many special events occurring on campus. All proceeds go to Rancho Cielo, supporting student success.

Rancho Cielo's Welding and Fabrication Program is headed up by our lead instructor Angel Padilla, and provides 32 student's a state-of-the-art program every year, giving students the opportunity to develop stackable occupational skills that are required in the Welding field here locally. The Welding & Fabrication program was designed by Angel Padilla, Ty Brooks (the most well-respected and talented Welding professional in Monterey County), Clint Cowden (Dean of Career Technical Education at Hartnell Community College) with an emphasis on creating a Welding and Fabrication career ladder that allows students to transition to industry or transfer to Hartnell Community College to complete a degree or certificate in Welding technology.

Rancho Cielo provides 32 students comprehensive Auto/Diesel Technology training, in conjunction with support from local industry. Graduates have successfully transitioned to post-secondary training and all 3 recent graduates were hired by local Auto/Diesel companies.

Rancho Cielo Youth Corps is an on-the-job training program serving at-promise youth ages 18-24 to be prepared for regular full-time employment. Our crews learn through their involvement in a variety of landscaping and maintenance projects and are employed by Rancho Cielo during their tenure in the Youth Corps. This program provides youth with positive opportunities to learn new skills and self-sufficiency.

Rancho Cielo invests in all youth in Monterey County ages 16-24, many of whom are facing life and academic challenges. Our academic partner, John Muir Charter School, a WASC accredited institution authorized by the California Department of Education to provide high school diploma and GED diploma. Rancho Cielo is a 100-acre facility in the foothills of Salinas, providing paths to success through secondary diploma education, career technical education training, counseling, and life skills.

The construction industry assisted in redevelopment of the site in 2003: demolition of dilapidated buildings and large-scale clearance of rubbish and debris. Re-construction of administration and educational buildings was completed in 2004 and a dormitory became a classroom complex; a kennel became administrative offices; and a crumbling maintenance building became a four hundred square-foot wood shop.

Rancho Cielo empowers participants to become accountable, competent, productive and responsible citizens, through education, job training and individualized counseling. Participants learn how to make outstanding choices, while building an amazing future. Rancho Cielo's work reaches much further than those who enroll in our programs; it also improves the lives of participants' families, their children, parents, grandparents, and relatives who witness their accomplishments and newfound dedication to leading a productive life. ■

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➡ **STRATEGIC** – Continued from page 5

3. Infrastructure and Environmental Sustainability

Opinions were expressed regarding deficiencies in public notification of ongoing and upcoming street and sidewalk repairs. Staffing issues were identified as a contributing factor for fulfillment of the infrastructure improvements desired.

4. Public Safety

A Public Safety Master Plan is underway. A continued challenge is the recruitment and retention of public safety personnel. It was identified that police need to build trust and relationships with residents through more community engagement.

5. Youth and Seniors

Concern was expressed that volunteers and agencies were doing a lot for youth and seniors in the community and the city council is not fully aware of the extent and degree of the resources being utilized. Many senior citizens seem to know what's going on, and they watch city council meetings.

6. Effective and Culturally Responsive Government

Implementation of an "equity plan" and an "equity index" could provide some objective measurement of how the city is becoming more culturally responsive. Cultural awareness should be integrated into how information is provided to the council.

Councilmembers discussed their need to do a better job of training, supporting, and recognizing people who serve as appointees on city boards and commissions. Appointed board members and commissioners should be encouraged to speak to the city council, rather than having their deliberations and decisions solely reflected through a staff report.

There was discussion about better informing the public about what the city council is doing. Ideas included a city manager's newsletter and "enhanced minutes" or a recap of city council meetings for prompt distribution to the public after the meetings. ■

A National Day of Prayer 2023



Thursday, May 4th
 12:00 PM - 1:00 PM
 Compass Church
 1044 S. Main St. Salinas CA 93901

*Please Refer questions to Ryan Hunzie at
 Ryan@compasschurchmc.org or (831) 422-7811*



Chamber Member News

Monterey County Business Council (MCBC) Announces Covid Business Survival Awards

Monterey County Business Council celebrated their 25th Anniversary and awarded Covid Business Survival Awards. Honorees were recognized for their community efforts during the unprecedented times: Small Business Innovation- Stonies Taphouse and Bistro; Agriculture- Braga Fresh; Higher Education & Research- CSUMB; Hospitality & Tourism- Portola Hotel & Spa at Monterey Bay; Health & Wellness- Clinica De Salud Del Valle De Salinas; Nonprofit- Community Foundation for Monterey County; Creative & Technology- Virus Geeks; Lifetime Achievement Award- Mary Ann Leffel.



1st Place for Monterey County Fair

The Western Fairs Association (WFA) recognized the Monterey County Fair with WFA Achievement Awards, recognize excellence within the fair industry, in: Television Advertising Single Ad; Fair Commemorative Poster; Special Event Logo: Monterey Bay Classic Livestock Show; Food & Beverage Photo; Exhibits, Competitive or Educational Photo. Join the fun at the 2023 fair themed "Buckaroos and Howdy Do's" from August 31 – September 4, 2023.



Dr. Rhiyan Quiton Named New Executive Director of Interim, Inc.

Dr. Rhiyan Quiton has been named Executive Director of Interim Inc. Most recently a Behavioral Health Services Manager for Monterey County Behavioral Health Department's Behavioral Health Bureau, Dr. Quiton, is also known as Dr.Q, and is a licensed psychologist with over 20 years' experience in the behavioral health field, and has led collaborative efforts that helped to improve the criminal justice and behavioral health systems in both Monterey and Kern counties. For more information, call Interim at (831) 649-4522 or go to: www.interiminc.org.



Monterey Regional Airport Announces New Summer Routes to Orange County on JSX

Flights will operate out of Monterey Jet Center, 200 Sky Park Drive, in Monterey, with JSX hop-on jet service from Monterey to Orange County starting April 6. Fly faster and easier from Monterey to John Wayne Airport in Santa Ana: round-trip flights on Thursday, Friday, Sunday and Monday, depart Monterey at 7:35 pm and arrive in Orange County at 8:55 pm (One hour, 20 minutes); and depart Orange County at 5:55 pm and arrive in Monterey at 7:10 p.m. Tickets start at \$279 each way and are available for booking today at jsx.com. JSX flights available through September 30, 2023.



Natividad Trauma Center Earns Highest Level of Surgical Re-Verification

Natividad Trauma Center has again been verified as a Level II Trauma Center. The achievement reaffirms the trauma center's dedication to providing optimal care for injured patients and coincides with Natividad's eighth anniversary as Monterey County's trauma center. Natividad serves the Central Coast and is the only trauma center between Santa Barbara and San Jose. Natividad's highly skilled trauma team is in-house and ready to respond with 24-hour immediate coverage by double-boarded Surgical Critical Care trauma surgeons, neurosurgeons, orthopedic surgeons, interventional radiologists, anesthesiologists, nurse practitioners, nurses, technicians, and support staff.



Community Human Services (CHS): Evangelina Ochoa named Senior Program Officer of Homeless Services

CHS has hired Evangelina Ochoa as Senior Program Manager of Homeless Services. Ochoa grew up in Seaside and graduated from CSU Monterey Bay with a B.A. in Collaborative Health and Human Services with a social work concentration. Evangelina has 11 years of experience serving the homeless population in Monterey, San Benito, and Santa Cruz County, including being a member of the Monterey Multi-Disciplinary Team. In her new role, Ochoa will provide oversight to all homeless service programs as well as manage the day-to-day operations of the Shuman HeartHouse shelter for homeless women and families, opening in Monterey this summer.



**community
human services**
hope. help. here.

Soledad Community Health Care District (SCHCD) Celebrates 75 years

SCHCD proudly celebrates 75 years of service and has launched a year of celebration. Originally named the Soledad Community Hospital District when it was established by Dr. Richard Handley in 1948, it was then decided that a hospital was not feasible and the efforts turned to establish a medical clinic and skilled nursing facility. SCHCD now has three facilities: Eden Valley Care Center, the Soledad Medical Clinic, and the Women's Health Center. For more information about the Soledad Community Health Care District, visit soledad-health.com or call Communications Coordinator Jaimee Campa at 831-677-6033. SCHCD is located at 612 Main Street in Soledad.



Central Coast Community Energy Launches Electric Bus Rebates

Central Coast Community Energy (3CE) has launched its Electric Bus Program, providing 3CE customers with rebates for the purchase or lease of all-electric school and agricultural farmworker transport buses. 3CE's Electric Bus Program will contribute up to \$200,000 per school bus and up to \$150,000 per agricultural transport bus. 3CE also offers rebates for chargers and charging infrastructure through 3CE Electrify Your Ride Commercial Program with rebates of up to \$3,000 for chargers and up to \$5,000 for charging infrastructure, including materials and labor costs. Visit <https://3cenergy.org>.



Salinas Valley Basin Groundwater Sustainably Agency (SVBGS) Launches Dry Well Mapping Program in Salinas Valley

SVBGS is partnering with the State agencies to collect information about domestic wells that have failed during California's prolonged drought. The Dry Well Reporting System (<https://mydrywell.water.ca.gov/report>) is a free, easy-to-use online tool that tracks wells that have gone dry across California. The data is used to inform state and local agencies about drought impacts on residential water supplies and helps to develop strategies that support long-term sustainability for groundwater sources. Residential wells typically go dry before wells that serve agriculture or municipal users because the residential wells are shallower. Please utilize the Dry Well Reporting System <https://mydrywell.water.ca.gov/report> and help to spread the word.



Bay Federal's Tamara Harrington Completes Financial Managers School

Tamara Harrington, AVP of Finance at Bay Federal Credit Union, has completed the Financial Managers School. The Financial Managers School is co-presented by the Financial Managers Society and the Graduate School of Banking at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. The program was designed by CFOs for financial managers and consists of an interactive learning format to prepare financial managers for today's bank finance management issues. As the AVP of Finance, Ms. Harrington's primary role is to ensure the financial integrity of the Credit Union.



GIRLS INC. Celebrates Three National Scholars

Girls Inc. of the Central Coast celebrates three of its participants being awarded Girls Inc. National Scholarships totaling \$35,000. These young ladies were selected for their outstanding academic achievements, community service work, and dedication to the Girls Inc. mission. Girls Inc. credits its leadership training model and other programs that allow girls to be strong, smart, and bold.

Kayla Salazar, a senior at Hollister High School, was awarded a \$25,000 Suzanne Patmore Gibbs Courage Scholarship, one of only three awarded throughout the United States and Canada. **Vanessa Campos** and **Chinemerem Elleleh**, students at Soledad High School, were each awarded a \$5,000 Girls Inc. Lucile Miller Wright Scholarship, two of only 35 awarded throughout the United States and Canada.





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Chamber Ambassador



Jay Gines joined Santa Cruz County Bank in April 2022, as VP Senior Relationship Manager for the Bank's new Salinas branch, serving clients throughout Monterey County. Raised in Salinas, Jay says, "Coming back

Jay has a natural inclination to be involved, thanks to the influence of his dad, who was a longtime community doctor and active chamber member. Jay shares this spirit of community by including his kids in volunteer activities. Over the holidays, Jay and his son participated in the 71st Annual Children's Shopping Tour for the Salinas Chamber Foundation, taking local children shopping for clothing and other needed items. He explains, "I want my kids to see the community through their own eyes, and to embrace the feeling of giving back."

to my roots, my family, and my home town is fantastic. My parents still live in the home where I grew up – which is walking distance to the Salinas branch!"

Jay gives back to his community, serving as Ambassador with the Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce, an organization central to local businesses, and in tune with the pulse of the region. Jay says, "The Chamber is a perfect fit for me. I'm involved in a variety of events supporting and celebrating businesses and community organizations. I'm learning where there's a need, who is helping fill that need, and where I can give my time."

As an active member of the Palma High School Alumni Association, Jay recognizes that many of his former classmates at Palma now have businesses in the Valley, "It's exciting to come back and re-connect, and contribute to a thriving Salinas."

As Santa Cruz County Bank expands its presence in the Salinas Valley, Jay is excited to expand his involvement, "I want the community to know Santa Cruz County Bank is here to stay. I'm excited to discover local causes and organizations where I can be present and contribute."

102nd ANNUAL AWARDS LUNCHEON

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DR. ALLEN RADNER (Citizen of the Year)
CANDI DEPAUW (Agricultural Leadership Award)
MICHAEL LAROCCO and **DANIEL PHILPOTT** (Ambassadors of the Year)

Natividad FOUNDATION (Small Business of the Year)
the human energy company (Large Business of the Year)
BLUE ZONES PROJECT (Spirit of the Community)

April 6th, 2023 | 10:00 AM - 1:00 PM
\$55/ Members | \$95/ Non-Members
Sherwood Hall | 940 N Main St, Salinas

REGISTER AT SALINASCHAMBER.COM

Chamber Unveils New Website

www.salinasmchamber.com

by Chamber Staff

It is with great excitement that the Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce goes live with a completely new website in late April. The chamber team has spent more than a year planning for a more modern look, improved layout, and greater functionality.

The goal of the project was to create a site that was as valuable to the public and visitors as it is for members. The site is designed to propagate subsites for each of our members. Each member has a unique login and password to create a profile that then improves and members business presence on the internet. This is especially useful for member organizations that don't have a web presence at all. We encourage members to contact the Chamber if they have any questions on how to set up their listing. The new website will make it easier than ever for members to add member news, employment opportunities and post events to our community calendar. The site also has an improved chamber events management function. We were asked to develop a site that allowed member organizations to renew membership, register for events & make payments. We are proud to say that we delivered. We would love feedback on our new website and will commit to constant improvements. Please direct feedback to website project manager, Bryan Cabello, at bryan@salinasmchamber.com or (831) 751-7725.



- Upcoming - CHAMBER EVENTS

• Premier Valley Bank / HTLF Food & Agribusiness Grand Opening Celebration

Tuesday, April 11, 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM, 1418 S. Main Street, Suite 102 & 104, Salinas

In partnership with the Salinas Chamber, Premier Valley Bank, a division of HTLF Bank, and HTLF Food & Agribusiness will host a joint Grand Opening event in celebration of their new location in Salinas! Join us for a ribbon cutting and open house with raffle prizes, live music, refreshments, networking and more! The Bank's in-depth understanding of its customers combined with the HTLF Food & Agribusiness Division's farm to fork expertise means our clients can expect an extraordinary banking experience delivered by local bankers right here in Salinas.

• Lunch and Learn – Alliant Insurance Services

Wednesday, April 12, 12:00 PM – 1:00 PM, 119 East Alisal Street, Salinas

Join Alliant Insurance Services for a lunch and learn presentation at the SVCC. Mark McAuliffe, Vice President, will provide an overview of the risk management process, including current trends in Cyber/Privacy Liability Insurance, critical coverage parts of Cyber Insurance Policies and some important considerations to help you manage these risks. The event will include lunch and take place in-person and via zoom. "In-person" space is expected to be limited so be sure to RSVP to reserve your space at www.salinasmchamber.com.

• Lunch and Learn with Monterey Regional Airport

Monday, April 17, 12:00 PM – 1:00 PM, 119 East Alisal Street, Salinas

Join us for a Lunch and Learn presentation by the Monterey Regional Airport at the Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce. An update will be provided on new service and happenings at the Airport including Vision 2035, which will provide the Airport with the ability to continue to enhance safety and maintain our priority of sustainability as they grow responsibly to meet the aviation needs of our thriving region. The event will include lunch and take place in-person and via zoom.

• Lunch Connect at Stonies

Tuesday, April 18, 12:00 PM – 1:00 PM, 1366 South Main Street, Salinas

Join us at Stonies Taphouse & Bistro off highway 68 for an opportunity to have lunch and network with members of the Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce and meet involved individuals of the community. We will also have a special guest speaker. RSVP's are required, so be sure to register on our website at salinasmchamber.com. *This is not a sponsored event. Attendees must pay for their own meals.*

• Laboratory Professionals Week Celebration by ARCpoint Labs

Tuesday, April 25, 5:00 – 7:00 PM, 24560 Silver Cloud Court, Suite 103, Monterey

You are invited to celebrate Medical Laboratory Professionals Week at ARCpoint Labs. Join us in recognizing ARCpoint Labs through a ribbon cutting ceremony presented by Salinas and Monterey Chambers of Commerce. Meet the team, tour the offices, learn about services, sip local wines, savor small bites, and enter to win a prize.

• Monterey County Mosquito Abatement District Ribbon Cutting

Thursday, April 27, 5:00 PM – 6:30 PM

You are invited to the Monterey County Mosquito Abatement District ribbon cutting ceremony. More information is coming soon on our website at salinasmchamber.com! Save the date.

• Annual Awards Luncheon

Thursday, April 6, 10:00 AM - 1:00 PM, Sherwood Hall, 940 North Main Street, Salinas

See article on page 9.

• May Events – Save the Date!

- Coast and Valley Properties Ribbon Cutting (May 4)
- Mercado Kramer LLP Ribbon Cutting (May 9)
- Madonna Gardens Mega Mixer (May 11)
- Lunch and Learn with ARCPoint Labs (May 22)
- Permit Center Open House (May 24)
- Central Coast Community Energy (May 31)

New Member Profiles

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Monterey County Historical Society

Founded in 1933, and incorporated in 1955, the Monterey County Historical Society is a non-profit organization dedicated to the ongoing preservation of our own past. The Society is responsible for a massive collection of family, city and county archival materials. These rare and valuable documents are housed in our temperature and humidity controlled archival vault. Scholars, authors, students, attorneys and the public are using these historical documents for research purposes at an ever-increasing rate.
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Chamber Travel: October 11, 2023 Amazing Tuscany Awaits

www.salinaschamber.com

The Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce is proud to present its 2023 Fall destination: Tuscany, Italy. Famed for its marvelous scenery, Tuscany's landscape combines colorful rolling hills, splendid ancient villas, massive mountains, numerous rivers and seven islands! For more than thirty years, the Salinas Valley Chamber has organized safe, affordable and memorable trips for members of our community to explore destinations together. Tuscany is going to be awesome and you are invited to join us! We chose Tuscany based on a survey of 200 respondents that were past travelers with the Chamber. Tuscany is rich in history, encompassing the ancient, modern, urban, and artistic perspectives. Thanks to careful planning, we have arranged a nine-day tour with both a "pre-trip" to Rome and a "post-trip" to Venice based on feedback.

We will also experience Viale Verdi including the ancient castles, churches, towers on the enchanting hills in the town, historic markets, a hundred or more fountains and Roman Church of Saint Peter; outings to Florence, Pisa, and San Gimignano. Travelers will be offered plenty of options to explore other attractions in the region including Cinque Terre, Siena, and a Ferrari Museum experience. The goal of our trip is to introduce one of the most incredible regions in the world in a way that can be approached by everyone.

The coast of Tuscany stretches from the protected nature reserves of the Maremma, to Versilia, further North, at the foot of the Apuan Alps. The Apuan Alps include majestic white marble peaks, ancient quarries that plunge deep into valleys and underground cavities. The Apennines mountains curve around the Tuscan border. They descend from

Liguria to the Tyrrhenian coast to meet the sea, forming a crescent of marine Islands. These mountains give birth to some of the most fertile and ideal wine grape growing regions in the world and we will experience the amazing Italian Chianti that the region is famous for.

Tuscany is also overflowing with rivers with every valley being a waterway. The Magra River flows through Lunigiana; the Serchio River flows across Garfagnana; the Sieve crisscrosses through the verdant hills of Mugello, just a few kilometers north of Florence. The more famous and larger river Arno passes through the Casentino, and the Tiber from the Tuscan Apennine mountains flows South to Rome through Val Tiberina. These rivers have produced an abundance of agricultural products for hundreds and hundreds of years.

We have designed our trip so that our time in Tuscany is spent in one town at a four star hotel located in Montecatini Terme. Montecatini Terme is a quaint community centrally located in Tuscany. It is well known for the mineral water springs that naturally rise out of the ground. These natural springs are said to have healing properties for people who suffer from various ailments.

Travel with the Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce has been successful for so long because lifelong friendships are made alongside unforgettable memories. We invite you to learn more by visiting the Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce website at www.salinaschamber.org. We welcome and questions or interest and invite you to contact our CEO Steve McShane at president@salinaschamber.com or (831) 751-7725.



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