



Morro Bay Open Space Alliance

Spring 2019 Newsletter

Dedicated to the Memory of Chriss Austin

CHRISS JUST KEEPS ON GIVING — SHE'D LIKE THAT...

~ Dianne Bianco, Membership Chair

Morro Bay Open Space Alliance lost a wonderful friend and dedicated supporter with the passing of Christine Austin. Chriss had a smile that would light up the night sky and wasn't afraid to use it. For fifteen years she dealt with a debilitating autoimmune disease which eventually led to diminished lung capacity, with strength and grace. She learned all she could about her foe and then went about the task of living life to its fullest.

When Chriss retired she approached the MBOSA board to ask what she could do to help. As the Membership Committee Chair, I was the lucky recipient of her volunteer hours. She helped me set up the MBOSA membership list with her extensive knowledge of technology and sent out many of the thank you letters that you have received for donations to our organization. In addition, whenever there was an event, Chriss was always there to help. She came when she didn't have to, even when she was physically compromised.

Even after her death, Chriss continues to give. Her husband, Rick, has asked that any memorial gifts be given in her name to the preservation of Eagle Rock (Cerrito Peak). You can donate at our website, mbopenspace.org/donate/ and in the PayPal checkout, notify us that it is in Chriss' memory. Thank you, Chriss! We dedicate this newsletter to you.



MBOSA ANNUAL MEETING

**Thursday, April 25,
5:30 to 7:30 pm**

**MB Community Center
General Purpose Room**

~ Glenn Silloway, Chair

MBOSA's Annual Meeting this year is going to have actual financial reports, and a review of what we've been doing. But don't worry, it will still have music from local artists, finger food (provided by members), wine (first glass free, then \$5 as suggested donation), an update on Chevron's Toro Creek property by Rachael Lem of the Trust for Public Lands, and other fun things to do!

Also new this year, the Annual Meeting is for current members and donors only. If you didn't receive your invitation and you know you deserve one, it's because we don't have either an email or surface address for you. Please get in touch at info@mbopenspace.org to set the record straight.

If you would like to be invited to this special event, you can join or donate on our website: www.mbopenspace.org.

We very much look forward to this gathering of good friends who share a passion for open space, and to hearing the wonderful music of our very own local singer/songwriter talent Amalia Fleming!

DOUBLE YOUR IMPACT WITH CASTLE WIND LLC'S MATCHING CHALLENGE GRANT

MBOSA has received a generous matching challenge grant from Castle Wind worth up to \$20,000 toward our goal of preserving Eagle Rock (aka Cerrito Peak) as a permanent open space conservancy. We must earn this \$20,000 by getting matching contributions by the end of June. So now is the perfect time to donate in Chriss Austin's name.

Board Chair Glenn Silloway says "Castle Wind shares the values of conservation and environmental stewardship with us. They have been generous with our town in many ways, and we are certainly grateful for this challenge. Now we need to earn it—every donation no matter the size will help us towards our goal."

Castle Wind LLC is a joint venture of San Francisco's Trident Wind and the German utility EnBW. The proposed wind farm could generate up to 1 gigawatts of electrical power per year, about the same as one of the nuclear units at Diablo Canyon, but without the radioactive waste. Not only will help with this one-for-one match be a huge help, it also gets you an invitation to the upcoming Annual Meeting!



CERRITO PEAK OR EAGLE ROCK?

~ Nicole Dorfman

Eagle Rock, also known as Cerrito Peak, although a volcanic dome rather than a volcanic plug, is part of the system of nine ancient volcanic peaks extending east from Morro Rock and ending with Islay Hill in San Luis Obispo. The land is sacred to the local

Salinan and Chumash tribes, and is on record as a sacred site with the California Native American Heritage Commission under the name of "Eagle Rock". About 15 years ago, the City of Morro Bay formally changed the name of the peak to "Cerrito Peak" to conform with proposed development in the area. While MBOSA originally used this more recent designation in our "Saving Cerrito Peak" campaign, our board has since decided to adopt the traditional title of Eagle Rock in our on-going communications and preservation work to honor the site's spiritual and historical significance. We apologize for any confusion regarding the name change, but want you to know that the name is the only thing that did change: Our ongoing efforts to preserve the land remain steadfast. Thank you to everyone who has donated to these efforts. We couldn't do it without you!



Eagle Rock, a 24 million-year-old volcanic dome that has been part of human habitat for at least 8,000 years, is still vulnerable to development. MBOSA has a tentative agreement with the City of Morro Bay to place the parcel into permanent open space if the organization can raise sufficient funds to reimburse the City for the initial purchase price.

PEAK CLEANUP by MB FIRE DEPT.

~ Marty Lomelli

MBOSA would like to recognize the Morro Bay Fire Department for their 2-day cleanup of Eagle Rock this past fall. Chief Knuckles canvassed the site with Fire Marshal Vierra and developed a plan to clean up the Peak and lessen the fire load in the area. This past fall, the team removed dumpsters of debris and dead vegetation accumulated throughout the years. The MBOSA membership, as well as the neighborhood, is very grateful of their efforts. It is reassuring to know that the residents of Morro Bay are well-served by outstanding leadership and dedication to protecting the Community.





THREE STACKS and a ROCK ST. PATRICK'S DAY EVENT

~ Nicole Dorfman

A big thanks to 3 Stacks and a Rock Brewery in Morro Bay, which hosted a sham-rocking party on St. Patrick's Day for the benefit of MBOSA and our Saving Eagle Rock campaign. Brewery owners

Ananda and Chuck generously

donated \$2 for every pint sold of their special Eagle Rock Pale Ale, which was so tasty that the kegs were dry before the day was done! Thanks also to Over Tow, Samba Loca, and Lyle Fuller Band for the amazing tunes. We are grateful to all the musicians who donated their time and talents, with a special shout out to John Bates who arranged it all. Raffle prizes donated by 3 Stacks, SLO Rep, Bay Theater, Nicki Turner Realty, Sub Tours and Kayaks, and Ariana's Mexican Deli were a big hit. Many green-clad revelers visited the MBOSA table to learn more about our overall mission and our Eagle Rock campaign, giving our Spring Membership Drive a huge boost as lots of them signed on as new members. We owe thanks to our Morro Bay neighbors for their enthusiastic support for both MBOSA and 3 Stacks and a Rock. What a great community we live in!



HILLBLOM FOUNDATION DONATES TO PRESERVE EAGLE ROCK

~ Ken Green

MBOSA received two generous donations from the Larry L. Hillblom Foundation totaling \$50,000, in support of purchasing Eagle Rock. The first donation, of \$25,000, came in September 2017 from the Foundation, and another \$25,000 was gifted recently. The combined total makes the Larry L. Hillblom Foundation the single largest donor to MBOSA's Eagle Rock Fund.

The Foundation is based in Kingsburg, CA, where Mr. Hillblom grew up. He was one of the founders of DHL Worldwide Express, one of the largest private delivery firms in the world. He died in a plane crash in 1995, leaving the funds for his foundation, which primarily supports medical research through grants to institutions and individual scientists, mostly in California.



We might leave the empty bench in memory of Larry Hillblom

TRI-W POLICY FORUM WELL ATTENDED



Wednesday, March 27, MBOSA sponsored a policy forum about the proposed land use plans of the City and County for the "Tri-W" parcels, where the planned new Water Reclamation Facility (WRF) will be located on county land. There is also a Tri-W parcel just east of the Morro Bay Blvd. interchange, within city limits, with a small commercial zone.

At the forum, the Executive Officer of the Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO), David Church, and the Morro Bay Community Development Director, Scot Graham, explained what Study Areas, Sphere of Influence (SOI), and Annexation are, especially with regard to bringing the proposed WRF site into the City of Morro Bay's jurisdiction.

- The MOU between Tri-W and the city requires the city to seek to add the whole parcel of over 300 acres to its Sphere of Influence (SOI), not just the 30 acres intended for the WRF. However, LAFCO will only approve the SOI changes if the city shows it can provide needed services.
- The city, according to Mr. Graham, has no intention to change the land use of the remainder of the parcel, outside the WRF. The remainder is currently zoned agriculture.
- LAFCO may approve or deny SOI requests in detail, including approving the WRF parcel, but not the remainder. Its legal mandate favors open space.
- There are 13 acres zoned commercial in the second Tri-W parcel east of MB Blvd as required by citizen initiative Measure H. The General Plan update must continue this, but chance of this kind of development is nil.

MBOSA sponsors these lively occasional forums in the spirit of helping to create a more knowledgeable and informed public. Link to video here: https://drive.google.com/file/d/17z-QMAOM2cnZdsD2Ae-ONE2yQ_Okbn7/view



Laura Lopez and Noah Smukler prepared the fresh veggie kabobs



Chuck Stoll & friends tool-up at the BBQ.

LOCAL BUSINESSES DONATE COUPONS

Have you heard of MBOSA's local merchant coupon book? Thanks to the efforts of Nicole Dorfman, Fundraising Committee Chair, local businesses are getting involved with the Eagle Rock fundraising efforts. These businesses are offering a discount, via a coupon book, to everyone who donates \$100 or more during our matching grant window, ending in late June. If you have already donated \$100 or more since January, a coupon book will be coming your way shortly. Let's double Castle Wind's \$20,000!

- Buttercup Bakery
- Fitness Works
- Harbor Floral Studio
- Morro Bay Drug and Gift
- Pizza Port
- Radio Shack
- The Siren
- Smoobage
- Sunshine Health Food
- Taco Temple
- The Rock Espresso Bar
- Wavelengths

Please show your support to these generous and community-minded local businesses!

FALL 2018 COMMUNITY PARTY

The food was wonderful, delicious, fresh, and nutritious! A huge thank you to the team of Laura Lopez and Noah Smukler for organizing real growing things from the community garden, and also to Chuck Stoll for arranging the Lions Club BBQ to cook up the kabobs.



Dianne Bianco (Membership Committee Chair) again worked her baking magic with cupcakes designed like the peak itself! Did anyone catch the rock candy inside the cupcakes? She is a bubbling caldera of creativity!

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Fall 2018 Community Party (cont.)

A special shout-out to the owner of the Grape Leaf Deli, who when he heard we were having a community party, loaded up Board Secretary Tina Metzger with falafels and kabobs to contribute. They were absolutely amazing, so go to his restaurant on Main Street and try them yourself.



MBOSA girls take a break from organizing to enjoy the party

Another special thank you to Brian and Nicole Dorfman (Board Member and Fundraising Committee Chair) for opening up their backyard organic garden to host the beer garden. It really was a community affair, when their neighbor John Bates came over the fence and arranged live and lively music with his group, The Lyle Fuller Band.



Words can't express our gratitude for knowing you and working with you, so we'll just say goodbye.



Dennis with bug fans Suze Crowley & Susan Heinemann

And would any outside party be complete without Dennis Sheridan sharing his love of bugs, spiders, and snakes? Pacific Wildlife Care again showed off their human-tolerant owl. State Parks Docent Jan Ojerholm brought interesting information on the Monarch butterflies which winter here.

XENOLITHS, LAVA DOMES, & RHYOLITES, OH MY!

"Take a hike", they said. So we did. Members got to see Eagle Rock from a new (or old, very old) perspective in early March, in a Members Hike with a geology twist. (Where oh where is John McCabe when you need him?) Would you like more of these types of events? Let us know, and maybe we'll bring out the real expertise, complete with field notebooks and maybe even compasses. Black Hill geology? The Quarry Trail? Eagle Rock redux? Send your comments and suggestions to info@mbopenspace.org.



UPCOMING EVENTS

Apr 25 Annual Members Meeting
5:30-7:30,
Morro Bay Community Center
Multi-purpose Room



Newsletter production by Janet Gibson, with articles from Nicole Dorfman, Glenn Silloway, Dianne Bianco, and Janet Gibson.

MEMBERSHIP FORM

www.mbopenspace.org

- ____ \$25 Individual
- ____ \$50 Family/Household
- ____ \$100 Contributor or Business
- ____ \$250 Advocate
- ____ \$500 Patron
- ____ \$1000 Steward (lifetime member after 3 years)
- ____ \$2500 Guardian of the Land (lifetime member)

MBOSA is a 501(c) (3) non-profit organization questions? Contact us at info@mbopenspace.org

Tax ID: 81-2375834

Visit the website to join, or cut and return the following:

NAME _____
STREET _____
CITY, STATE, ZIP _____
PHONE _____
EMAIL _____

Make checks payable to: MBOSA, and

Mail to: Morro Bay Open Space Alliance
PO Box 1029, Morro Bay, CA 93443

☐

New Member

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Renewing Member