



# BAY NEWS

MORRO BAY CAYUCOS LOS OSOS



YOUR COMMUNITY IN YOUR HANDS



Shock and Awe filled the faces of youngsters Saturday at Sea Pines Resorts' Snow Day. More photos Page 12. Photo by Christopher Gardner

## Diving into a Pool

By Neil Farrell

Though it seems to have been treading water for years, efforts to bring a public pool/aquatic center to the North Coast have never been completely sunk. Indeed, there has been recent movement on the issue that could lead to a major break-through toward realizing the dream of having a place for athletes to compete, the injured to rehab and everyone to go for a dip.

Karen Robert, a director with the Morro Bay Community Pool Foundation, told The Bay News that the City of Morro Bay, the County of San Luis Obispo, the San Luis Coastal Unified School District, and the Community Pool Foundation are working together to build an aquatic center in Morro Bay. And the preferred site is now the former Morro Elementary

School's playing field adjacent to the Community Center.

Robert was excited for two reasons — it's the first time the many players in the effort have come together to work out a deal on how to make it happen; and the new site means it can be open to the public for more than just when school is in session.

"The Community Pool Foundation has always thought that was the best location," Robert said of the old elementary school, which was closed in the late 1990s due to falling enrollment. Today, the district rents out space for a couple of churches and other uses and soccer players, both adults and youths, use the large grassy play area mostly on weekends. "We thought that was the best location for the high school, Cayucos, Morro Bay and Los Osos residents," added Robert.

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## Bird Festival This Weekend

The 15th Annual Morro Bay Winter Bird Festival is expected to bring some 450-500 people to town to explore the Estero Bay area and parts of the greater Central Coast this weekend for 4 days of bird watching in one of the most spectacular winter birding areas in the world. More than 200 bird species have been identified during past festivals.

Official registration closed Jan. 5 but the Festival has numerous events that are open to the public including the vendors fair and a presentation by Pacific Wildlife Care of live birds of prey the group has rescued and uses for educational programs year round.

A vendors fair is slated for the Morro Bay Community Center, 1001 Kennedy Way and is open

from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Saturday and Sunday, Jan. 15-16. Shop among dozens of birding specialty vendors and artisans who display their optical tools, reference guides, paintings and photos and much more. Admission is free and it's a chance to check out the festival's official schedule.

PWC will present its event from 1-2 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 15 at the Morro Bay Vet's Hall, 209 Surf St. and again from 2:30-3:30 p.m. Saturday. Free for Festival attendees and a \$2 per person donation to PWC is suggested for the general public.

You'll meet several birds of prey, including a great horned owl, American kestrel, red-tailed hawk, Merlin falcon, peregrine falcon, and possibly PWC's turkey vulture, Mr. Handsome. These birds are

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## Supes Out to Tag Taggers' Parents

By Jack Beardwood

Derived from the Italian word graffiti (meaning scratch), graffiti has a long history. It has been found in ancient Roman ruins, in the remains of the Mayan city of Tikal in Central America, on rocks in Spain dating to the 16th Century, and in Medieval English churches.

In recent years, graffiti in the U.S. and Europe has been associated with gangs.

Widely considered a form of antisocial behavior performed in order to gain attention or simply for thrills, for some it is seen as an expressive art form.

On Dec. 11, the County Board of Supervisors introduced an anti-graffiti ordinance that seeks to reduce crime and blight. It includes civil liability for

parents of juvenile offenders, restitution and community service for taggers, rewards for informers and fines for property owners who do not clean it up or report it to authorities within 72 hours.

It also allows the county to clean up graffiti without a property owner's knowledge — in the event that they cannot be contacted.

There is currently no ordinance specifically addressing graffiti in the county. Offenders are charged with misdemeanor or felony vandalism depending on the extent of the damage done.

Adam Hill, chairman of the Board of Supervisors, said he has heard from concerned property owners who believe that it would be removed at their

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