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› Get in the holiday spirit with a sing-along at the Marina Library, 190 Seaside Circle on December 14th from 1-3 p.m. There will also be a big book sale and buffet prepared by local students.

Flooding Highlights Value of County Alerts

Flooding shutdown Highway 101 stranding commuters, including county employees, for hours.

This week’s flash flooding situation in south Monterey County is a reminder of how having the latest information can help us avoid, or at least know our options, when an emergency strikes.

Many county employees were impacted when flash flooding closed Highway 1 near Chualar along with some detour options before the evening commute on Wednesday, December 4th.
"I left about 5:40 p.m. and got home around 9:30 p.m.," says Karen Smith who works at the Health Department building on Natividad Road and took Highway 101. "It was mostly waiting and moving slowly. By the time I got to where the road had been closed, the CHP had opened it again. I went through three audio book disks."

Veronica Fernandez from Administration took the lone alternate route, River Road, and says she was fortunate to have decided to leave earlier than usual.

"Traffic was backed up to before the Spreckels exit on Highway 68. Once on River Road, it was slow but not too congested. There were flooded areas and parts where the road was covered with mud. It was still daylight so I could see what was happening up ahead and had a lot of space between me and the car ahead of me. Got on the 101 in Gonzales and made it home to Soledad in less than an hour."

If this is direction you travel, you may have heard about the flooding on social media or by countywide email, but you could’ve gotten information more quickly and with more detail if you were signed up for the County’s alert notifications systems: Alert Monterey County and Nixle.

As soon as the National Weather Service issued flood notifications, the Office of Emergency Services sent out flood warnings and watches for this area via Nixle which sends alerts to your phone by text or email and Alert Monterey County which reaches people based on their address. This speedy notice gave people options for how to manage their drive home.

Nixle has a feature that maybe very useful for commuters. Since your zip code is used when you sign up for information, you can input zip codes for other areas, such as your most used routes. To sign up for Nixle, text MoCoOES to 888777.

Sign up for Alert Monterey County at http://alertmontereycounty.org/.
Natividad Celebrates Expansion

The Natividad Medical Group, the hospital’s in-house family medical practice, has moved to an expanded, updated space in the hospital’s main building.

The expansion increased the number of exam rooms from five to 12 and plans are underway to add practitioners to the team. That was a reason to celebrate with a recent ribbon cutting and open house.

“The expansion of Natividad Medical Group helps Natividad better serve Monterey County,” said Dr. Perez-Lopez. “The practice complements the care the hospital provides by increasing primary care access to our patients and addressing the health care needs of our community.”

NMG treats patients of all ages and offers a range of services including physicals and well-child exams, vaccinations, obstetrics and women’s health services, minor outpatient surgical procedures, care for chronic medical conditions and more.

Celebrating the expansion are staff from the Natividad Medical Group, Natividad Board of Trustee members and hospital executives.

Ferreria Earns Captain Position in DA Investigations Bureau

After six years with the District Attorney’s Office as an investigator, John Ferreria has been promoted to the management team of the Investigations Bureau.
Ferreria has been named as one of two captains of this bureau which provides critical support and investigations to prosecutors among other important duties. He will lead the Major Crimes Investigative Bureau in the District Attorney’s Salinas Office.

Ferreria has had an extensive law enforcement career including with the Los Angeles Police Department in specialized units. He was deputized as a U.S. Marshal as part of the United States Marshals Task Force and as a Federal Agent with the FBI. He has traveled throughout the United States to conduct murder investigations and has been featured in documentaries such as: South Bureau Homicide (2016); Gangsters: America’s Most Evil (Season 4, Episode 2) and America’s Most Wanted.

When he retired from the LAPD in 2013, Ferreria joined the District Attorney’s Office and has worked his way to the captain position while earning a Juris Doctorate from Monterey College of Law with a dual major of Masters in Legal Studies.

Find out how he plans to incorporate that knowledge into this new role.

Q. What brought you to Monterey County?

A. The beautiful area and friendly people. Monterey County is growing in diversity and I wanted to be a part of it.

For the past 6 years, I have seen growth in Monterey County and the political changes that have revitalized the communities from King City to the northern part of the county. For example, I was part of the King City Corruption Investigation and when justice prevailed, the community changed, and people seemed less tense. I drive around the area and I notice more people are out in the streets. The Police Department became more professionally proactive.

Q. You had been serving as interim of the Investigations Bureau before being named Captain. How did you get selected as interim and did it give you a new perspective?

A. Because of my new role, I have experienced the difference between “managing” tangible things and “leading” people. Managing projects requires leading people and its challenging at times but the reward is great.

I was selected as interim because we had a promotional process, and I believe I did well in the process. In addition, I believe it was

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John Ferreria.

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my education and experience, but especially the Juris Doctorate is what probably got me promoted over the rest of my competitors.

Q. While here in Monterey County you earned both a Juris Doctorate and master's degree. Will we see you prosecuting cases someday?

A. Yes, someday I will be practicing law. For the time being, I want to use my legal education to assist me in making decisions to further professionalize my organization and others.