

November 2008

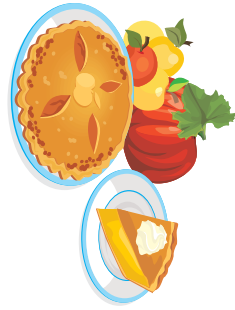


# Scoop!



In this issue . . .

- Family Restaurant Winners
  - Pinecone Turkeys
  - Learning Styles
- And more!*

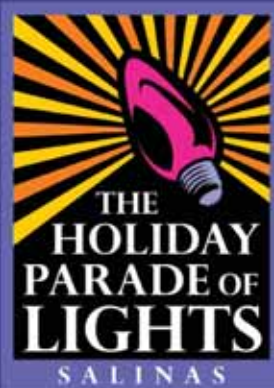


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# “One City, Many Cultures”

## November 30th

### SUNDAY

### 6:00 - 8:00PM

## A FREE Community Event!

**Spectacular Floats, Dancers, Huge Helium Balloons,  
Costume Characters and Entertainment Galore!**

Bring the family and kick off the holiday season  
in Oldtown Salinas.

The Parade will run from Acacia Street to the National Steinbeck Center.  
Bring blankets and lawn chairs and find “your spot”  
along the parade route on Main Street.

**Pre-Parade Holiday Children’s Festivities** start at 4:00pm at  
the Steinbeck Library, 350 Lincoln. Activities will be outside and  
include storytelling, costume characters, music, and treats.

### Hey Kids, It’s the Parade of Lights Coloring Contest!

Log onto [www.salinasparade.com](http://www.salinasparade.com) for contest details.  
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For more Parade  
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## Secrets for Success

A record number of nominations were generated in MBayKids’ 3rd annual **Family Friendly Dining** survey. The top vote-getter, for the second year in a row, was **Black Bear Diner**.

Black Bear Diner’s three local restaurants (Monterey, Salinas & Gilroy) were each applauded by parents for having a friendly staff, excellent food, great value and a welcoming atmosphere. In an economy that is forcing families to carefully watch how they spend every penny, Black Bear Diner is as busy as ever.

How do they do it? I asked **George Sammut**, managing partner of *Black Bear Diner West Inc.*, to share his thoughts. “The biggest secret to our success is the people we surround ourselves with and their understanding of our philosophies,” says George. “We treat each customer with equal importance.... They are *all* the most important customers we have – especially our youngest ones, the kids!”

Many of the parents who nominated Black Bear Diner told us that their children “feel important and grown up” when they dine there. In addition to being able to make their own ice cream sundaes for dessert, kids can pick from a children’s menu that very much resembles the adult menu -- including a selection of “daily specials.” When asked about Black Bear’s “daily specials for kids” concept and how it came to be, George replied, “As the father of my own 11 year old son, it dawned on me one day that we offered a daily special to adults but not to the other important customers that are loyal to us. We want to let the kids know that they are equally important to us so there are specials each day for them, also!”

It’s clear when talking to the folks at Black Bear Diner that they are having fun serving families in our community. What’s the most fun part? “This one’s easy,” says George. “We call it our ‘WOW’ effect. It’s the effect we look for each time we set a huge portion of food on the table...when we make our kids’ sundaes with them...when we hand them a balloon to take home...when we see our families laughing, talking and enjoying their meals as if sitting in their own homes.”

“It’s the part,” says George, “that makes us different from other concepts, which makes *us* feel special, too.” Hmm...feeling good while making others feel special. Now, *that’s* a secret for success worth sharing!

Lori McDonnal  
Editor



Lori McDonnal, left, celebrates Black Bear Diner’s victory with managers Richard Werner, Marlene Ayala and managing partner George Sammut.



**Cover photo by Kathy Pimentel, Katalina Photography**

**On our cover:** Pile it on! Seven year-old **Jacob Gomez** and five year-old **Jessica Mason** test the theory that a pie can never have too much whipped cream.

Published 9 times per year, **Scoop!** is a supplement to our website, **MBayKids.com**. **Scoop!** is mailed to Central Coast parents FREE of charge and is available at select family-friendly locations throughout the Central Coast. To receive future free copies of **Scoop!** magazine, register at [www.MBayKids.com/sign\\_up.asp](http://www.MBayKids.com/sign_up.asp). For information on how your organization or school can distribute issues of **Scoop!** each month, contact us at (831) 751-1678.

**For information on advertising opportunities, contact Kim Georgalos (831) 595-6943.**



MBayKids would like to thank each of the following contributors for sharing their **Scoop!** with us this month:

**Laurie Bend - Sweet Stuff**

Laurie is a mom, community volunteer, Girl Scout leader and small business owner. As a mother of three, she loves to test out recipes on her kids so she can pass them on to **Scoop!** readers.



**Pamela Breslin, CPNP - House Calls**

Pamela Breslin is a Certified Pediatric Nurse Practitioner at Monterey Peninsula Pediatric Medical Group. Pamela has lived all over the world and currently resides on the Central Coast. She and her husband of 32 years have raised four children.



**Michelle Chisum - MamaPreneur**

MamaPreneur Michelle is the owner/operator of Red Rooster Company LLC under which she manages The Stork Ladies, A Perfect Present and Celebrate Mama!™ Monterey. Her most important role in life, however, is being mama for two young sons.



**Susan Oros, M.A. - Special Needs**

Susan is cofounder and vice president of Special Kids Crusade and mother of three, with a 12 yr. old son with Down Syndrome, a 9 yr. old daughter with autism and a 7 yr. old son who is typically developing.



**Sherry Pasquariello - Homeschooling**

Sherry is a former apparel buyer for The Pebble Beach Company who left her job in 2000 to be a full-time mom. She has been homeschooling her daughter since 2005.



**Kathy Pimentel - Photographer**

Kathy is a 'locally grown' photographer, having lived in Salinas nearly all her life! She has been taking photographs for over 20+ years, turning her hobby into a business. Kathy and her husband Rick live in Salinas with their 2 children, dogs, cats, fish and turtle!



**Carol Richmond - Happenings**

Carol is owner of the Carmel Academy of Performing Arts and founder of Dance Kids of Monterey County, a not-for-profit youth dance and theatre performing arts organization.



**Julie Sutliff - Arts & Crafts**

Julie has a "craft room" in her home that is dedicated solely to the creation of all things "arts & crafty." Julie enjoys sharing her love of crafts with her husband and 12 year old daughter - and with MBayKids **Scoop!**



## Pinecone Turkey

by Julie Sutliff

Here's fun way to keep a turkey on your table all season long!

**You'll need:**

- Pinecone**
- Feathers (4" to 6")**
- Google eyes**
- Brown, yellow & red foam sheets**
- Hot glue gun**

**DIRECTIONS:**

**Step 1:** Lay your pinecone on its side so it doesn't roll. The turkey's head will be the wider part of the pinecone.

**Step 2:** Working from the back, tapered end, deposit spots of hot glue into the spaces of the pinecone and insert feathers in a fanned design. For a full-feathered look, place increasingly shorter feathers in front of longer ones.

**Step 3:** Drawing them "freehand" or tracing from our pattern available at [www.MBayKids.com/crafts.asp](http://www.MBayKids.com/crafts.asp), cut out the head (brown), two feet (brown), a beak (yellow) and the gobble (red) from the foam sheets.

**Step 4:** To make the face, glue the yellow beak to the brown head and then glue the red gobble to the side of the yellow beak. Place google eyes above beak on the brown head. Glue the completed face to the front of the pinecone.

**Step 5:** Hot glue the brown feet to the bottom of the pinecone so the turkey will sit and not roll. You may need to use extra hot glue to get the feet to stick.

We found our turkey decorations at Beverly's: Touch of Nature 4" – 6" feathers (14g), for \$1.99, Darcie® 5mm google eyes (30 count) for \$.49; Darcie Foamies® 9" x 12" foam sheets for \$.59 each. Scented pinecones are available at Michael's for \$4.99 or you can do like we did and find pinecones outside. Just be sure to clean them well!




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## The New Governance Structure of Monterey County's SELPA

Part 3 in our series: *The Changing Landscape of Special Education in Monterey County*

by Susan Oros, M.A.

Approximately 120 Special Education Local Planning Areas (SELPA) operate throughout California. Last month, I encouraged parents, teachers, and concerned community members to participate in the planning of special education within their SELPA by attending Community Advisory Committee (CAC) meetings. This month, I am focusing on Monterey County SELPA's new governance structure which has been a result of the Fiscal Crisis Management Assistance Team (FCMAT) report published earlier this year.

Created in 1992 as an independent and external state agency, FCMAT's mission is "to provide proactive and preventive fiscal, business and management services that help local educational agencies comply with fiscal accountability standards and incorporate best practices." In October 2007, FCMAT entered into an agreement with the Monterey County Office of Education (MCOE) to provide a review of the county office and SELPA's special education programs and services.

In a report published in February 2008, FCMAT recommended, among other things, a revision of the governance structure within the Monterey County SELPA. The governance process for special education is outlined in a Local

*Continued on page 15*

## MONTEREY BAY AQUARIUM



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## Celebrate this MamaPreneur!

by Michelle Chisum

**Anna Masteller  
Master Raw Food Chef**

[www.foodinthenude.wordpress.com](http://www.foodinthenude.wordpress.com)



If the kids won't stay still in a restaurant and you're getting tired of pizza delivery, call on MamaPreneur Anna Masteller, Master Raw Food Chef, to deliver fresh, nourishing meals right to your doorstep. Her personal chef service, **Food in the Nude**, offers creative new ways for families to incorporate fresh foods into their diets. Anna's menus are vegan, organic, uncooked, sugar-free and grain-free. They include items like tacos with sunflower seed "refried beans," stuffed marinated portabella mushrooms with sun-dried tomato sauce and chocolate truffles.

As a foodie first and a raw food chef second, Anna believes people should eat what they love, although she is thrilled when people "transform themselves by eating clean, fresh, mouthwatering food." "Consuming food in its natural state provides full nutrition," says Anna. "When we heat food, we kill enzymes, minerals and vitamins and often create indigestible toxins which our bodies then have to detoxify. Incorporating more raw foods in one's diet is a way of staying healthy and youthful and maintaining high energy." In addition to "Le Box," a weekly raw food meal delivery service, *Food in the Nude* offers catering services for fundraisers, showers, blessingways, and more.

When Anna isn't in the kitchen she is busy raising her four year old twins, Cassius and Kaia. When asked how she juggles family life and a business she says, "The most challenging part of being a mama and working from home is that I rarely have more than one hour of uninterrupted time to focus on menu planning, but it's a small price to pay when the objects of my distraction happen to be my two favorite faces on the planet."

Her advice to other mamas interested in running their own business is to search for grants that are available for women and make sure that they can truly commit themselves to their business. "Be willing to ride the waves," she says. "Just as in any relationship, there are ups and downs...always come from a place of service and love and have fun doing it because this is your life!"

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# 2008 Family Restaurant Favorites

The votes are in! MBayKids' annual family friendly dining survey generated more responses than ever before! Great food, attentive service, reasonable prices and an atmosphere that lets families have fun were all critical factors for respondents in this year's poll.

For a complete list of restaurants nominated, visit [www.MBayKids.com/restaurants.asp](http://www.MBayKids.com/restaurants.asp).

## Best Family Friendly Black Bear Diner

Monterey • Salinas • Gilroy

Good portions, daily specials for kids and jukebox fun.



## Best Breakfast First Awakenings

Pacific Grove • Salinas

Mickey Mouse pancakes, great food and service.



## Best Chicken Taco

### Turtle Bay Taqueria

Monterey • Seaside

Fresh ingredients, lively decor and festive music.



## Best Mac & Cheese California Pizza Kitchen

Monterey

Curly macaroni and lots of variety on the adult menu.

## Best Burger Chili's Grill & Bar

Seaside • Salinas • Gilroy

Healthy side offerings, attentive staff and comfortable atmosphere.



## Best Pizza

### Pizza My Heart

Monterey • Capitola • Santa Cruz

Fresh-baked pizza, delicious salads and tall tables with twirling chairs.



## Best Dessert

### Marie Callender's

Salinas

The best pies in town!



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[www.FirstAwakenings.net](http://www.FirstAwakenings.net)

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Second year in a row!



**Black Bear Diner**

**Locations:**

**Monterey**  
2450 North Fremont  
(831) 645-9700

**Salinas**  
805 W. Laurel St.  
(831) 449-1545

**Gilroy**  
395 Leavesley Rd.  
(408) 842-9901

Beary Good Kid



**Black Bear Diner**



Congratulations to:

Adam Duarte

Our Beary Good Kid of the month

Visit [MBayKids.com/BearyGoodKid.asp](http://MBayKids.com/BearyGoodKid.asp) to  
nominate the "Beary Good Kid" in your life.

# Safe for the Ride!

by Pamela Breslin, CPNP

California law requires children to ride in a “properly” secured child restraint system (safety seat, booster, car bed, etc.) until they are at least six years old or weigh 60 lbs. Last month, we covered infant car safety. This month, we’ll take a look at restraint systems for children after they’ve outgrown their rear-facing infant seats.



The law requires that a child ride rear-facing in a car until he or she is 12 months old and at least 20 pounds. Due to the weight requirement, many children actually do not outgrow their infant seats until about age 2, at which time forward-facing **toddler seats** are recommended. These seats typically use a 5-point harness to safely secure a toddler. Straps come over the child’s shoulders from slots either at or above the shoulders. As with the rear-facing seat, the top of the harness retainer clip is slid up to the level of the child’s armpits and there should be no slack in the straps. The safety seat is held to the seat of the car either using the vehicle safety belts or the car and seat’s built-in LATCH system. A tether strap is required for most of these seats to keep the back of the seat from moving forward in a crash. This tether attaches to the top back of the safety seat, as well as being anchored to the car.

Forward-facing seats can be *toddler-only* seats, *convertible* or *combination* seats. The term *convertible* typically refers to seats that are used rear-facing for infants and then forward-facing for toddlers. *Combination* typically refers to seats that take a child from the forward-facing toddler stage through to the booster stage, as discussed below. Some “3-in-1” seats on the market are equipped to cover all of a growing child’s restraint needs.

Do not hurry a child out of the forward-facing seat with its 5-point harness and don’t be fooled by a seat’s declared “weight capacity.” There are many 5-point harness car seats that claim a weight capacity of up to 80 pounds but in the fine print, you may find that the harness, itself, is certified to only 40 pounds.

**Booster seats** are designed for children who have outgrown their toddler seats (usually around age 4 and 40 lbs.) but are not yet tall enough to be adequately

protected with a car’s lap and shoulder belt system, alone. A booster seat is a firm cushion with or without a backrest that safely positions the car’s own lap and shoulder belt on a child. Depending on the model, booster seats can usually protect children up to a maximum weight of 80 to 120 lbs. Children transitioning from toddler to booster seats must be well enough behaved to stay seated in an upright position so the lap and shoulder belt will always be

correctly positioned. For children that nap in the car, boosters with backrests give support for the upper body while sleeping. When the booster is part of a combination seat, it is necessary to remove the harness straps used to restrain a toddler. The lap and shoulder belt of the car holds the child and the seat in place. Keep the booster seat strapped in place even when not in use to prevent it from flying around the car in the event of a crash.

Lap and shoulder belts usually are not appropriate until a child is 8 to 10 years old. Until then, most children are not tall enough (about 4’ 9”) for a vehicle belt to fit properly without a booster. If you can answer YES to every question below, your child is ready for the vehicle safety belt alone.

1. Does the child sit all the way back against the auto seat?
2. Do the child’s knees bend comfortably at the edge of the auto seat?
3. Does the belt cross the shoulder between the neck and arm?
4. Is the lap belt as low as possible, touching the thighs?
5. Can the child stay seated like this for the whole trip?

For more information about car seat safety, visit [www.nhtsa.gov](http://www.nhtsa.gov) or [www.carseat.org](http://www.carseat.org). For information on car seat defects and recalls, call the Auto Safety Hotline at 888-DASH-2-DOT (888-327-4236) or visit [www.odnhtsa.dot.gov/cars/problems/recalls/childseat.cfm](http://www.odnhtsa.dot.gov/cars/problems/recalls/childseat.cfm).

According to the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration, children ages 4 through 7 who use booster seats are 59 percent less likely to be injured in a car crash than those who are restrained only by seat belts.

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## Learning Styles

by Sherry Pasquariello

The word “teacher” means “one who brings out the best in their student.” As parents, we are our children’s first and best teachers. The more we know our children, the better we can determine how they learn best and, in turn, help them to use their strengths to achieve success both academically and in life.

A person’s learning style is as individual as their fingerprint. There is no right or wrong way to learn; it’s just another way that people are different. Most people use three primary ways of learning - auditory, visual and kinesthetic - but one sense will be more finely tuned and effective for learning than the others. Even children who have been labeled “learning disabled” can compensate for their weaknesses and achieve more when they take advantage of their strongest learning style.

My own daughter’s strongest method of learning is kinesthetic. When I would read to her as a young child, she would want to hold the book, turn the pages, and even act out the story. She had a strong desire to be “involved” in our book. These days, she learns better when she’s allowed to move freely rather than having to sit at a desk or table. She also loves to draw. Our curriculum this year is Charlotte Mason-based so there is notebooking for science and history where she draws out the maps of what we’re studying or diagrams the steps in a science experiment. She also records the people and dates that we’ve studied on a time line once a week. Playing games are also helpful. For instance, instead of using flash cards, she rolls big foam dice to work on basic math facts.

Visual learners may use picture clues to give meaning when reading a book, notice details such as a new picture or object in the room, and remember chores better when given a written list rather than verbal instructions. A strong auditory learner, on the other hand, will be able to follow directions after hearing them once and doesn’t need things repeated. They will repeat a name or phone number to themselves to help them retain it.

A number of books have been great resources for me in determining my daughter’s learning style and in choosing an effective curriculum that best suits her. Two great books are *In Their Own Way: Discovering and Encouraging Your Child’s Multiple Intelligences*, by Thomas Armstrong and *Top 100 Picks for Homeschool Curriculum*, by Cathy Duffy.



## Nutcracker

by Carol Richmond  
Photo by Gregg Wutke

**Nutcracker**...the name conjures images of childhood memories of holiday gatherings, party dresses, gifts under a tree and, most of all, family. **Nutcracker**...the story of a little girl with a jealous brother, a magical doll maker for an uncle and a sleep invoking the “Kingdom of Sweets” in all of its dancing splendor. **Nutcracker**...an annual gift of artistic beauty presented by the *Dance Kids of Monterey County* on December 5, 6 and 7.

**Nutcracker** director Tia Brown has the task of taking 100 child dancers – half of them under the age of eleven – and telling the story through ballet mime. Drawing from her years of directing experience and her own professional dance career, Tia enjoys the challenges of working with a large, young cast. “The pre-professional ballerinas will take your breath away,” she exclaims. She is quick to add that, in addition to being a beautiful ballet, there is something for everyone in Dance Kids’ **Nutcracker**.

First of all, there is *action*. “The best is the fight scene,” says Tia. “Ten boys under the age of eleven are on stage with pretend guns and a cannon that shoots a flag that reads ‘BOOM!’ They are in heaven!”

Second, there is *comedy*. Everyone has a good laugh when KION’s Hunter Finnell dons his stage wig and heavy make-up to lead the Mother Ginger scene. “He is funny and he is wonderful with the children,” says Tia. “To see this very tall man leaning over to talk to the four and five year old dancers sharing that scene can just melt your heart.”

Finally, there is a sense of *family*. Dance Kids’ **Nutcracker** is truly a family affair. Tia Brown works with stage manager, Carol Heiland-Rosa, a host of dance captains, and a cast of parent volunteers for four months prior to opening night.

**Nutcracker**...an opportunity for local families to come together to honor tradition and have fun...just in time for the holidays!

*Dance Kids of Monterey County* will perform the **Nutcracker** on Friday, Dec. 5 through Sunday, Dec. 7 at the historic Sunset Center in Carmel. A special *Sugarplum Fairy Tea Party* will take place in the lobby of the Sunset Center on Sunday, Dec. 7 at 12:30 pm. For tickets, visit [www.sunsetcenter.org](http://www.sunsetcenter.org) or call the box office (831) 620-2048.



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## Ginger-Pumpkin Mini Cheesecakes

by Laurie Bend

This is an easy way to serve individual portions of a quick cheesecake for your holiday feast. No crust is needed because you drop a gingersnap cookie at the bottom of each cupcake liner for an instant crust.

Prep time: 15 minutes  
Makes: 24 cheesecakes

### INGREDIENTS:

24 cupcake liners	$\frac{3}{4}$ cup sugar
1 box gingersnap cookies	1 (15 oz.) can pure pumpkin
2 eggs	2 teaspoons vanilla
16 oz. cream cheese ( <i>brought to room temperature</i> )	2 teaspoons pumpkin pie spice
	$\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon ground ginger
	Whipped cream

### DIRECTIONS:

1. Preheat oven to 350°F.
2. Place one gingersnap cookie at the bottom of each cupcake liner in your cupcake tin.
3. With mixer, beat together eggs, cream cheese, sugar, pumpkin, vanilla, pumpkin pie spice and ground ginger.
4. Pour mixture over cookie, filling each liner  $\frac{3}{4}$  full.
5. Bake 20-23 minutes or until toothpick inserted in center comes out clean.
6. Cool. Top with a scoop of whipped cream right before serving. Enjoy!



### Special Needs - continued from page 6

Plan which is submitted to the state. Monterey County's Local Plan has not seen revisions of this magnitude in 27 years. Monterey County SELPA Executive Director Carol Lankford has completed a draft of a revised Local Plan with input from a Local Plan Committee comprised of teachers, special education directors, parents, and district superintendents. The plan's revisions include:

- Creation of a **Governance Council** (which had been started earlier this year) whose primary responsibility is to "review and approve amendments to the Local Plan, the SELPA annual service and budget plans, program transfers, and any changes in the allocation model." The Governance Council is comprised of the superintendents of the 24 districts and the MCOE superintendent, Dr. Nancy Kotowski. The Governance Council plans to meet at least twice a year. *These meetings are open to the public.*
- The formation of an **Executive Committee** with powers for "recommending action on proposed revisions to the allocation plan for the distribution of federal, state and local funds allocated for special education programs to the Governance Council, adopting SELPA policies, administrative regulations, procedures, and guidelines for the management and implementation of special education programs and services within the SELPA, directing that data be gathered, interpreted, and reported regarding the implementation, administration and operation of the Local Plan, and receiving and reviewing an annual report of all due process and compliance complaints filed within the Monterey County SELPA." The Executive Committee is comprised of 6 district superintendents plus the MCOE superintendent. It will meet a minimum of 4 times per year. *These meetings are open to the public.*

MCOE has been the primary service provider for the moderately to severely disabled students. It had also become a service provider for some students who fell in the mild to moderate ranges. All special education students served by MCOE are referred by districts. SELPA, MCOE, and the districts are reviewing which students MCOE should continue to serve and which students should be served within their own districts. These changes can be good for our children, but I encourage parents to stay abreast of their district's implementation plan for any changes to its special education services. It is important to remember that many districts have not been serving these children for many years and a planned well thought-out transition is critical for many of our children to continue in their progress.

It is imperative that parents stay informed of these changes by attending CAC meetings, by contacting their special education directors and/or by contacting the Monterey County SELPA. Radical changes could be made as a result of the FCMAT report. For dates of CAC, Governance Council, and Executive Committee meetings, call SELPA at (831) 755-0342.

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