

From: Terrie Banish
Sent: Thursday, December 3, 2020 1:03 PM
To: Press
Subject: City of Atascadero News Release - Monolith Update
Attachments: City of Atascadero News Release - Monolith Update!.doc; Monolith removed 1.jpg; Monolith removed 2.jpg



News Release:

City of Atascadero
6500 Palma Ave.
Atascadero, CA 93422
(805) 461-5000

For Immediate Release: December 3, 2020
Contact: Deputy City Manager, Terrie Banish, 805-470-3490

Monolith Update

On the afternoon of Wednesday, December 2, 2020, the City of Atascadero received reports from hikers of a steel Monolith or Obelisk structure at the top of Pine Mountain in Stadium Park.

As of early this morning, the Monolith had disappeared. The City has received the actual video that has surfaced on social media showing a group of men from out of the area removing the Monolith and replacing it with a plywood cross. The video shows them replacing the structure and talking amongst themselves.

“We are upset that these young men felt the need to drive 5 hours to come into our community and vandalize the Monolith. The Monolith was something unique and fun in an otherwise stressful time,” said Mayor Heather Moreno.

The Atascadero Police Department has not received any reports to date that the Monolith had been removed and/ or stolen. Currently, the Atascadero Police Department is reviewing the video and looking into this incident further. We will provide updated information as soon as it’s available.

The steel 3-sided structure stood about 10 ft. tall and appeared to weigh an estimated 200 pounds. The area of Stadium Park offers a 2 mile looping trail up to the top or you can take a more challenging trail with a higher level of difficulty to the top that would be about a 30-minute hike. The altitude of Pine Mountain sits at 1300 ft.

and there is no vehicle access to bring something that large to the top. The City owns and maintains 75 acres of the Stadium Park area and the five-acre entrance is owned and maintained by the Atascadero Land Preservation Society (ALPS). At this time, neither the City nor the ALPS have any information on how the structure found its way to the top of the mountain or who placed it there.

If you have any information about the Monolith, please contact the Atascadero Police Department at (805) 461-5051.

For further information, please contact Terrie Banish at (805) 470-3490, tbanish@atascadero.org. The area of Pine Mountain where the Monolith was located, can be found at www.visitatascadero.com/things-to-do/hiking-and-biking/ and click on Stadium Park.

Terrie Banish

Deputy City Manager | Outreach, Promotions, Events
City of Atascadero | City Manager's Office
6500 Palma Ave | Atascadero, CA 93422
Direct: 805.470.3490 | Mobile: 805.235.2539



Lara Christensen

From: Susan Funk
Sent: Friday, December 4, 2020 2:00 PM
To: Rachelle Rickard
Subject: Fw: Atascadero Monument Replacement (lower priority)

Rachelle,

Would it be appropriate for me to bring this matter up at personal considerations Tuesday and offer to be on a task force with the Mayor or other member as appropriate to vet this offer and work with city staff on it? Our unexpected moment of fame was more like 15 seconds than 15 minutes, so I'm not sure it is enough to attract the funding that a stable monolith sculpture would require, but it seems a low-risk opportunity to add a tourist attraction to our community, even if its just a novelty item.

I actually rather like the Pine Mountain location for that reason despite inaccessibility that will exclude a lot of people -- having to hike up to it adds to the mystique, and hikers could celebrate their treks at many nearby locations, including Wild Fields, Sylvester's, or Dead Oak Brewing, or Malibu Brew for the health-conscious ones. Terrie could make good use of a steady flow of Instagram posts tagged to the Atascadero Monolith from randomly sourced visitors. Also, that's not land that can be used for other recreational purposes, and putting a sculpture up there won't interfere with current uses. Funding would need to include camera installation so that APD could check activity there without having to hike up, obviously.

I do still wonder who was the original installer. It would have to be someone already familiar with that location.

Thoughts?

Susan

From: David Naisuler
Sent: Friday, December 4, 2020 1:33 PM
To: Susan Funk
Cc: Rachelle Rickard
Subject: Re: Atascadero Monument Replacement

Glad to hear back from you Susan.

No, we are not the originator's of the monolith, but we do appreciate what we feel it represents. We do believe that the monoliths are from disparate auteurs, and as such even with few numbers they imply a movement to simple beauty, which many perceive as an ode to new future that integrates disparate elements (technology and nature) than an inscrutable enigma. I'd thought the monuments were a cute phenomenon until the Atascadero one was taken down, which changes the light in which they are cast.

Certainly all property rights and equal access issues would have to be settled as part of the site choice farther

down the line should general sentiment be open to creating space. I'd enjoy any conversation you and the City might wish to have, and will wait for you to gather input "outside of committee." I do have a connection to Cal Poly that I would likely enlist as a local liaison, I'm sure it would be an invigorating experience to "make it right" with the co-operation of the Atascadero City Council.

Best regards,
-- David

David Naisuler
Director, Stoller Studio Inc.
394-A Umbarger Rd San Jose, CA 95111
408 206 7424
dave@stollerstudio.com
www.stollerstudio.com

On 12/3/2020 9:26 PM, Susan Funk wrote:

IHi David,

Thank you for reaching out with creative and generous offer. I deeply appreciate the power of art to express communal values and aspirations. Additionally, as a person of faith, it grieves me to see people do such unholy, destructive acts in Christ's name. Art and faith are not mutually exclusive!

You don't mention whether or not you were the source of the original monolith. However, I like the idea of a replacement that could be dedicated by local leaders of all faiths and no faith to serve as a symbol of tolerance and welcome — especially if you are willing to raise the donations to fund it. (Our City government is very thinly funded and could not afford to buy it.)

I assume you checked Google Earth or a topological map before making this offer, so you already know that if we want to be welcoming of those who are not able-bodied and physically fit, the site from which the original monolith was stolen is going to be a problem in that regard. (I did not see it in situ, but I have hiked up there often enough to have a pretty good idea of the trek involved. If you need photos, let me know.)

I have copied the city manager so that she knows I would be interested in our exploring your generous offer further. Since you are familiar with public processes in California, this request should not surprise you, but please respect the Brown Act by being careful not to forward or share this message to or discuss my views with any other member of our Council, or reveal their views to me.

I hope we will have the opportunity to meet, at least over Zoom. Meanwhile I thank you for your generous spirit that takes a moment of fun and mystery that others perversely tarred with a very un-Christian and in-American act, and envisions it becoming an opportunity for coming together as a welcoming community.

Regards,

Susan

Susan Funk
Atascadero City Council Member
805-461-1440 office
805-206-5705 texts
Sfunk@atascadero.org

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From: David Naisuler
Sent: Thursday, December 3, 2020 7:48:20 PM
To: hmoreno@atascadero.org ; cbourbeau@atascadero.org ; rfonzi@atascadero.org ;
sfunk@atascadero.org ; hnewsom@atascadero.org
Subject: Atascadero Monument Replacement

Dear Mayor, Vice Mayor and City Council Members,

This letter is in regards to the recent events regarding a monument in Atascadero that was illegally erected and subsequently torn down by militant white supremacists and religious bigots.

Stoller Studio has been making sculpture for 25+ years in public settings. Though illegally placed, we here at the Studio are pained to see the abuse of an innocent yet playful and thought provoking icon in our fair state, which prides itself on welcoming all creeds and colors in the best of the American spirit.

We would like the opportunity to erect a new monolith as a statement of freedom and tolerance for all. It would be set in a location of your choosing (if not the location of the original), and financed by donors from around the state. We have deep experience installing in civic environments: With our familiarity with heavy and durable materials as well as engineered and permitted construction methods and techniques, the new monolith would be impossible to harm while maintaining a lightness of aesthetic and a surety of communication.

Please allow us to help Atascadero make a statement to California, the country and the world that it will continue on as a bastion for freedom and tolerance, and that we will both as citizens and a nation persevere in the remaking this country's ideals while enduring these divisive times.

As both a former Arts and Culture Commissioner For the Town of Los Gatos and as a sculptor, I would be privileged to discuss this over Zoom with you in any capacity, and at your convenience.

Respectfully,
-- David Naisuler

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https://www.vice.com/en/article/qjpk7/mysterious-monolith-update-racists-destroy-california-monolith-proclaim-christs-superiority-to-space-aliens?utm_source=iterable&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=curated_vice_daily_102320
2

<https://atascaderonews.com/news/vandals-remove-object-from-pine-mountain/>

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Lara Christensen

From: Syed, Mohammed (NBCUniversal) <Mohammed.Syed@NBCUNI.COM>
Sent: Thursday, December 3, 2020 7:23 AM
To: Rachelle Rickard; Lara Christensen; Terrie Banish; Rachel Hunter; Luke Knight
Cc: Social Newsgathering (NBCUniversal)
Subject: NBC News Network request -- monolith at Atascadero

Hi there,

Mo Syed here, I'm an NBC News reporter. I'm inquiring about the monolith that appeared on Pine Mountain, I'm sure you haven't heard the end of it today...

Does the City of Atascadero have a statement to share with us about the monolith on Pine Mountain? Do you know who planted it there? Does the city have a plan to deal with it by any measure? Can you confirm to me that you are aware of the monoliths presence?

We located this video of it on Instagram, can you confirm that this is the same monolith on the Mountain?

<https://www.instagram.com/p/CIUcCYFnbWZ/>

This is the local story: <https://keyt.com/news/offbeat/2020/12/02/mysterious-monolith-appears-in-san-luis-obispo-county/>

I am also reaching out to the Atascadero Land Preservation Society...

Best,
Mo

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Lara Christensen

From: Heather Moreno
Sent: Wednesday, December 2, 2020 4:58 PM
To: Rachelle Rickard; Lara Christensen
Subject: Fw: Query from Mashable re Pine Mountain monolith

I'm not sure what she's referring to. Do either of you?

Warm regards,

Heather Moreno
Mayor, City of Atascadero

"Your representative owes you, not his industry only, but his judgment; and he betrays instead of serving you if he sacrifices it to your opinion." ~ Edmund Burke

From: Amanda Yeo
Sent: Wednesday, December 2, 2020 4:56 PM
To: City Council
Subject: Query from Mashable re Pine Mountain monolith

Hi Atascadero City Council

My name is Amanda, I'm a reporter at Mashable. I'm writing an article on the monolith that appeared on Pine Mountain on Wednesday. Do you have any statement or comment on the matter? Are there any plans for it, and do you have any indication of where it might have come from?

Further, do you have any photographs of the monolith that we may embed on our website?

Cheers
Amanda

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Lara Christensen

From: Heather Moreno
Sent: Friday, December 4, 2020 7:14 AM
To: Rachelle Rickard
Cc: Lara Christensen; Terrie Banish
Subject: Fwd: Mysterious Monolith video

In case anyone wants to see it. And to note, the guy was wearing a mask. 😊

Heather Moreno, MA, CPA
Mayor, City of Atascadero

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Mark Frazier
Date: December 3, 2020 at 18:31:58 PST
To: Heather Moreno
Subject: **Mysterious Monolith video**

Or is it an obelisk?

Hi Heather,

Here is a link to the video I made of our visit to the monolith on Wednesday. I can't make the video public/searchable as it would get flagged for a music copyright violation by YouTube, but feel free to pass the link around to the city council, etc.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hvAZiokRrh4>

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Lara Christensen

From: Terrie Banish
Sent: Thursday, December 3, 2020 5:58 PM
To: Robert Molle; Jason Carr
Cc: Casey Bryson; Rachelle Rickard; Luke Knight
Subject: Monolith being removed - Video Stream

Hi Bob & Jason!

Here is the link of the video we have: <https://streamable.com/1sngc0>. Unfortunately, they (people who traveled here) removed the other video that we viewed earlier. Luke is going to download the video on this link so we do have it. The media that sent the link to me is asking me for the video, so obviously they did not pull it either.

If I am able to get that video back, I will let you know. To date, I do not believe we have located or found either the monolith or the cross.

Thanks,
Terrie

Terrie Banish
Deputy City Manager | Outreach, Promotions, Events City of Atascadero | City Manager's Office
6500 Palma Ave | Atascadero, CA 93422
Direct: 805.470.3490 | Mobile: 805.235.2539

Lara Christensen

From: Susan Funk
Sent: Thursday, December 3, 2020 9:27 PM
To: David Naisuler
Cc: Rachelle Rickard
Subject: Re: Atascadero Monument Replacement

IHi David,

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Respectfully,

- - David Naisuler

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Lara Christensen

From: Lisa Cava
Sent: Thursday, December 3, 2020 2:16 PM
To: Terrie Banish; Press
Subject: Re: City of Atascadero News Release - Monolith Update

stupid buttinsky's

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Sent: Thursday, December 3, 2020 1:03 PM
To: Press
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News Release:

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6500 Palma Ave.
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(805) 461-5000

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Contact: Deputy City Manager, Terrie Banish, 805-470-3490

Monolith Update

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“We are upset that these young men felt the need to drive 5 hours to come into our community and vandalize the Monolith. The Monolith was something unique and fun in an otherwise stressful time,” said Mayor Heather Moreno.

The Atascadero Police Department has not received any reports to date that the Monolith had been removed and/ or stolen. Currently, the Atascadero Police Department is reviewing the video and looking into this incident further. We will provide updated information as soon as it's available.

The steel 3-sided structure stood about 10 ft. tall and appeared to weigh an estimated 200 pounds. The area of Stadium Park offers a 2 mile looping trail up to the top or you can take a more challenging trail with a higher level of difficulty to the top that would be about a 30-minute hike. The altitude of Pine Mountain sits at 1300 ft. and there is no vehicle access to bring something that large to the top. The City owns and maintains 75 acres of the Stadium Park area and the five-acre entrance is owned and maintained by the Atascadero Land Preservation Society (ALPS). At this time, neither the City nor the ALPS have any information on how the structure found its way to the top of the mountain or who placed it there.

If you have any information about the Monolith, please contact the Atascadero Police Department at (805) 461-5051.

For further information, please contact Terrie Banish at (805) 470-3490, tbanish@atascadero.org. The area of Pine Mountain where the Monolith was located, can be found at www.visitatascadero.com/things-to-do/hiking-and-biking/ and click on Stadium Park.

Terrie Banish

Deputy City Manager | Outreach, Promotions, Events
City of Atascadero | City Manager's Office
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Direct: 805.470.3490 | Mobile: 805.235.2539



Lara Christensen

From: Terrie Banish
Sent: Thursday, December 3, 2020 9:48 AM
To: Syed, Mohammed (NBCUniversal)
Cc: Social Newsgathering (NBCUniversal); Rachele Rickard; Lara Christensen; Luke Knight; Rachel Hunter
Subject: RE: NBC News Network request -- monolith at Atascadero

Hello Mo!

Thank you for reaching out to our City! We do not have any information at this time on how the Monolith was placed at Pine Mountain. We were notified yesterday afternoon of its presence. As of early this morning, it has already disappeared. The location of the Monolith was at Stadium Park on the top of Pine Mountain, about a 30 minute hike and you cannot access that location by driving up to it. If you would like to see Stadium Park where the Monolith was located, please go to: <https://www.visitatascadero.com/things-to-do/hiking-and-biking/> and click on Stadium Park.

We do not have any current plans to look into this further. I am happy to answer any further questions and am available at the numbers provided below.

Warm regards,
Terrie

Terrie Banish

Deputy City Manager | Outreach, Promotions, Events
City of Atascadero | City Manager's Office
6500 Palma Ave | Atascadero, CA 93422
Direct: 805.470.3490 | Mobile: 805.235.2539



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Thank you for the prompt reply Terrie!

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To: Syed, Mohammed (NBCUniversal)
Cc: Social Newsgathering (NBCUniversal) ; Rachele Rickard ; Lara Christensen ; Luke Knight ; Rachel Hunter
Subject: [EXTERNAL] RE: NBC News Network request -- monolith at Atascadero

Hello Mo!

Thank you for reaching out to our City! We do not have any information at this time on how the Monolith was placed at Pine Mountain. We were notified yesterday afternoon of its presence. As of early this morning, it has already disappeared. The location of the Monolith was at Stadium Park on the top of Pine Mountain, about a 30 minute hike and you cannot access that location by driving up to it. If you would like to see Stadium Park where the Monolith was located, please go to: <https://www.visitatascadero.com/things-to-do/hiking-and-biking/> and click on Stadium Park.

We do not have any current plans to look into this further. I am happy to answer any further questions and am available at the numbers provided below.

Warm regards,
Terrie

Terrie Banish

Deputy City Manager | Outreach, Promotions, Events
City of Atascadero | City Manager's Office
6500 Palma Ave | Atascadero, CA 93422
Direct: 805.470.3490 | Mobile: 805.235.2539



From: Syed, Mohammed (NBCUniversal) [<mailto:Mohammed.Syed@NBCUNI.COM>]

Sent: Thursday, December 3, 2020 7:23 AM

To: Rachele Rickard <rrickard@atascadero.org>; Lara Christensen <lchristensen@atascadero.org>; Terrie Banish <tbanish@atascadero.org>; Rachel Hunter <rhunter@atascadero.org>; Luke Knight <LKnight@atascadero.org>

Cc: Social Newsgathering (NBCUniversal) <SocialNewsGathering@nbcuni.com>

Subject: NBC News Network request -- monolith at Atascadero

Hi there,

Mo Syed here, I'm an NBC News reporter. I'm inquiring about the monolith that appeared on Pine Mountain, I'm sure you haven't heard the end of it today...

Does the City of Atascadero have a statement to share with us about the monolith on Pine Mountain? Do you know who planted it there? Does the city have a plan to deal with it by any measure? Can you confirm to me that you are aware of the monoliths presence?

We located this video of it on Instagram, can you confirm that this is the same monolith on the Mountain?

<https://www.instagram.com/p/CIUcCYFnbWZ/>

This is the local story: <https://keyt.com/news/offbeat/2020/12/02/mysterious-monolith-appears-in-san-luis-obispo-county/>

I am also reaching out to the Atascadero Land Preservation Society...

Best,

Mo

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Lara Christensen

From: Rachelle Rickard
Sent: Wednesday, December 2, 2020 5:38 PM
To: Heather Moreno
Subject: RE: Query from Mashable re Pine Mountain monolith

We vaguely heard something this afternoon about something on Pine Mountain that Nick Mattson reported late this afternoon. I'm googling it now.

From: Heather Moreno
Sent: Wednesday, December 2, 2020 4:59 PM
To: Rachelle Rickard ; Lara Christensen
Subject: Re: Query from Mashable re Pine Mountain monolith

I just got on the Chamber talk Zoom and seeing a picture of it...

Warm regards,

Heather Moreno
Mayor, City of Atascadero

"Your representative owes you, not his industry only, but his judgment; and he betrays instead of serving you if he sacrifices it to your opinion." ~ Edmund Burke

From: Heather Moreno
Sent: Wednesday, December 2, 2020 4:57 PM
To: Rachelle Rickard; Lara Christensen
Subject: Fw: Query from Mashable re Pine Mountain monolith

I'm not sure what she's referring to. Do either of you?

Warm regards,

Heather Moreno
Mayor, City of Atascadero

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From: Amanda Yeo <ayeo@mashable.com>
Sent: Wednesday, December 2, 2020 4:56 PM
To: City Council
Subject: Query from Mashable re Pine Mountain monolith

Hi Atascadero City Council

My name is Amanda, I'm a reporter at Mashable. I'm writing an article on the monolith that appeared on Pine Mountain on Wednesday. Do you have any statement or comment on the matter? Are there any plans for it, and do you have any indication of where it might have come from?

Further, do you have any photographs of the monolith that we may embed on our website?

Cheers
Amanda

This email, its contents and attachments contain information from J2 Global, Inc. and/or its affiliates which may be privileged, confidential or otherwise protected from disclosure. The information is intended to be for the addressee(s) only. If you are not an addressee, any disclosure, copy, distribution or use of the contents of this message is prohibited. If you have received this email in error, please notify the sender by reply email and delete the original message and any copies.

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From: Amanda Yeo
Sent: Wednesday, December 2, 2020 4:56 PM
To: City Council
Subject: Query from Mashable re Pine Mountain monolith

Hi Atascadero City Council

My name is Amanda, I'm a reporter at Mashable. I'm writing an article on the monolith that appeared on Pine Mountain on Wednesday. Do you have any statement or comment on the matter? Are there any plans for it, and do you have any indication of where it might have come from?

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Lara Christensen

From: Lara Christensen
Sent: Thursday, December 3, 2020 8:34 AM
To: Heather Moreno; Rachelle Rickard
Subject: RE: Query from Mashable re Pine Mountain monolith

We went national. It's crazy!

From: Heather Moreno
Sent: Wednesday, December 2, 2020 4:59 PM
To: Rachelle Rickard ; Lara Christensen
Subject: Re: Query from Mashable re Pine Mountain monolith

I just got on the Chamber talk Zoom and seeing a picture of it...

Warm regards,

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Mayor, City of Atascadero

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Lara Christensen

From: Heather Moreno
Sent: Friday, December 4, 2020 6:41 AM
To: Rachelle Rickard; Terrie Banish
Subject: Fwd: Atascadero Monument Replacement

Very interesting...

Heather Moreno, MA, CPA
Mayor, City of Atascadero

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: David Naisuler
Date: December 3, 2020 at 19:48:29 PST
To: Heather Moreno , Charles Bourbeau , Roberta Fonzi , Susan Funk , Heather Newsom
Subject: Atascadero Monument Replacement

Dear Mayor, Vice Mayor and City Council Members,

This letter is in regards to the recent events regarding a monument in Atascadero that was illegally erected and subsequently torn down by militant white supremacists and religious bigots.

Stoller Studio has been making sculpture for 25+ years in public settings. Though illegally placed, we here at the Studio are pained to see the abuse of an innocent yet playful and thought provoking icon in our fair state, which prides itself on welcoming all creeds and colors in the best of the American spirit.

We would like the opportunity to erect a new monolith as a statement of freedom and tolerance for all. It would be set in a location of your choosing (if not the location of the original), and financed by donors from around the state. We have deep experience installing in civic environments: With our familiarity with heavy and durable materials as well as engineered and permitted construction methods and techniques, the new monolith would be impossible to harm while maintaining a lightness of aesthetic and a surety of communication.

Please allow us to help Atascadero make a statement to California, the country and the world that it will continue on as a bastion for freedom and tolerance, and that we will both as citizens and a nation persevere in the remaking this country's ideals while enduring these divisive times.

As both a former Arts and Culture Commissioner For the Town of Los Gatos and as a sculptor, I would be privileged to discuss this over Zoom with you in any capacity, and at your convenience.

Respectfully,
-- David Naisuler

--

David Naisuler
Director, Stoller Studio Inc.
394-A Umbarger Rd San Jose, CA 95111
408 206 7424
dave@stollerstudio.com
www.stollerstudio.com

https://www.vice.com/en/article/qjpk7/mysterious-monolith-update-racists-destroy-california-monolith-proclaim-christs-superiority-to-space-aliens?utm_source=Iterable&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=curated_vice_daily_1023202

<https://atascaderonews.com/news/vandals-remove-object-from-pine-mountain/>

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Lara Christensen

From: Rachelle Rickard
Sent: Monday, December 7, 2020 10:14 AM
To: Terrie Banish; Lisa Cava
Cc: Amanda Muther; Lara Christensen
Subject: RE: Voicemail Message (BROWN,DAVID > CMMain) [REDACTED]

I already called and am taking care of it

-----Original Message-----

From: Terrie Banish <tbanish@atascadero.org>
Sent: Monday, December 7, 2020 10:12 AM
To: Lisa Cava <lcava@atascadero.org>; Rachelle Rickard <rrickard@atascadero.org>
Cc: Amanda Muther <amuther@atascadero.org>; Lara Christensen <lchristensen@atascadero.org>
Subject: RE: Voicemail Message (BROWN,DAVID > CMMain) [REDACTED]

Thank you! I can reach out and talk with her.

-----Original Message-----

From: Lisa Cava
Sent: Monday, December 7, 2020 9:54 AM
To: Terrie Banish <tbanish@atascadero.org>; Rachelle Rickard <rrickard@atascadero.org>
Cc: Amanda Muther <amuther@atascadero.org>; Lara Christensen <lchristensen@atascadero.org>
Subject: FW: Voicemail Message (BROWN,DAVID > CMMain) [REDACTED]

This is from Val Houdyshell (sp?), re the Pine Mountain trail issues (related to the monolith I'm assuming), parking, safety, liability, etc. She lives at the corner of Escarpa and Pinal and has concerns she wishes to discuss.

-----Original Message-----

From: BROWN,DAVID <syservice@atascadero.org>
Sent: Monday, December 7, 2020 9:48 AM
To: CM Main <CMMain@atascadero.org>
Subject: Voicemail Message (BROWN,DAVID > CMMain) [REDACTED]

IP Office Voicemail redirected message

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