



Moments of Life

Camping in our Back Yard



PHOTO COURTESY OF CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION

A family enjoys camping at Pfeiffer Big Sur State Park, which boasts 218 campsites. April can be one of the best times to view the waterfalls in the area, including the 60-foot Pfeiffer Falls.

ABOUT MOMENTS OF LIFE

Each month, The Salinas Californian offers one-page guides to the important events, celebrations and milestones in our lives.

Coming next: Getting ready for summer on April 29.

“Where’s your favorite place to camp in the Salinas area?”



“I really like Pfeiffer Big Sur. It’s pretty, and I like its proximity to other things.”

— Julie Juhl, surgery technologist, Salinas



“Pinnacles. The area around there is beautiful.”

Josh Roberts, student, Salinas



“Lake San Antonio. We used to go there quite a bit; I used to belong to the Salinas Valley Boat Club.”

Ed Pacheco, retired, Salinas



“I really like going to Pfeiffer (Big Sur). The camping area is just beautiful and they’ve got the hot springs you can hike to.”

Leslie Krautkraemer, theater technician, Salinas

Pitch a tent without driving for hours

Monterey County offers many options for camping, outdoor activities

By LESLIE ESCOBAR
The Salinas Californian

Any mention of camping in the Monterey Bay area is incomplete without Big Sur.

And Big Sur in April, despite the lingering rain, can be one of the best times to escape your house for a night or two.

“Winter camping is one of our best kept secrets because our weather is tame compared to the rest of the country,” said Big Sur Chamber of Commerce spokesman Stan Russell. “Even at night it only gets into the 30s or 40s.”

April also can be one of the best times to view the waterfalls in the area, including the 60-foot Pfeiffer Falls.

“All the falls are running really well right now,” Russell said.

“That’s probably the most popular one because it’s easily accessible in Pfeiffer Big Sur State Park. Even kids can hike to that one easily.”

Pfeiffer Big Sur also is known for its scenic hiking trails and its two swimming holes. The park has 218 rustic campsites, which vary in price depending on location and the time of the season.

But Pfeiffer Big Sur’s highlights are just the beginning. Nearby Andrew Molera State Park is relatively undeveloped and has only 24 campsites, offering more of an escape for campers.

There are plenty of hikes in the area, along with biking trails. Plus, Andrew Molera offers horseback riding trips on the beach.

Heading further south, Julia Pfeiffer Burns State Park offers some of the most isolated, scenic camping.



THE SALINAS CALIFORNIAN FILE PHOTO

Many Salinas residents pack up their tent or camper and head to San Antonio Lake in south Monterey County for a close-by weekend or week-long getaway. The area has trails for horseback riders, bikers and hikers.

The only two sites at the park are located on a hilltop overlooking the ocean.

Not surprisingly, these sites must be booked weeks, or even months, in advance. If you can’t get a site booked at the time you want, consider camping elsewhere and entering Julia Pfeiffer Burns to hike the Ewoldsen Trail. The 4.5-mile looped trail offers views of the ocean and the famous McWay Falls.

“Some people say it’s the best view of the whole coast,” Russell said. “You get to see the waterfall that’s dropping 80 feet onto the sand.”

If you head further south and inland, Lake San Antonio lies on the edge of Monterey County. The

south shore of the lake has three campgrounds, while visitors to the north shore have the opportunity to camp next to the water.

Since the area is notoriously warm during the spring and summer months, water sports such as water skiing and jet skiing are popular at Lake San Antonio. There also are trails for horseback riders, bikers and hikers.

While most camping spots in Big Sur and beyond can be reached in two hours or less, there are closer locations for those who don’t feel like making the drive. For example, on a clear day in Salinas, you might be able to see Fremont Peak from your back yard.

See **CAMPING**, Page 2

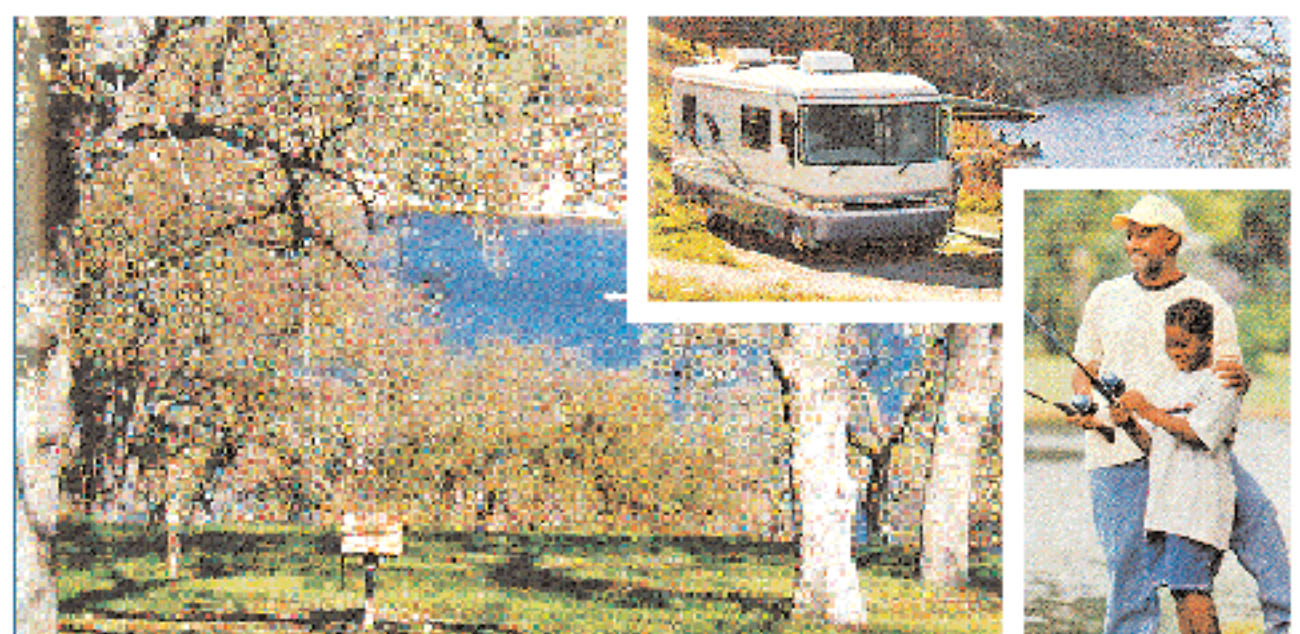
Where to go Camping in Monterey County!

Monterey County Parks
“Quality Recreation with a Personal Touch”
P.O. Box 5279 Salinas, CA 93915-5279

County Web Site
www.co.monterey.ca.us/parks



For More Information/
Camping Reservations:
(888) 588-CAMP (toll free)
or (831) 755-4899



Lake San Antonio • Laguna Seca • San Lorenzo