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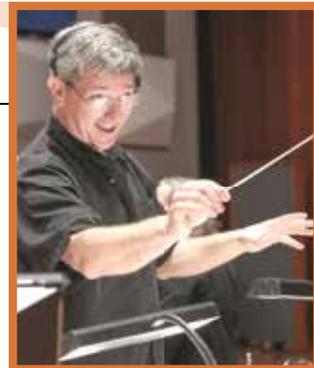
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JUNE 25 - JULY 2, 2020 VOL. 21 NO. 17

What do *Looney Tunes*, *Skyfall*, and *WALL-E* have in common? His name is Carl Johnson, an Emmy-Award winning composer who lives in the Santa Ynez Valley. Although he previously commuted to UCLA to teach orchestration courses, he's now turned his sights on something a little closer to home. Johnson is Allan Hancock College's new music business instructor, and Arts Editor Caleb Wiseblood can give you the scoop [18].

This week, you can also read about how local city councils are dealing with the "defund the police" budget discussion [6], why Lompoc declined to receive affordable housing funds from the county [10], the political divide's trickle-down effect on local businesses [11], Youth ARTS Alive's new program leader [19], and the programs that are here to help local restaurants and bars get back on their feet [22].



COMPOSER AND CONDUCTOR: Along with composing for several television and film projects over the last three decades, Carl Johnson has orchestrated for *Skyfall*, *Monsters Inc.*, *WALL-E*, *The Perfect Storm*, and other blockbusters.

Camillia Lanham
editor

Cover photo courtesy of Sabrina Manhas Hutchinson > Cover design by Alex Zuniga

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Political Watch

• **U.S. Rep. Salud Carbajal** (D-Santa Barbara) issued a statement June 18 after the Supreme Court ruled against **President Donald Trump's** attempt to end the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program. **President Barack Obama** created the program in 2012 that prevented undocumented immigrants who entered the country as children from being deported. "DACA gave nearly 800,000 young immigrants a shot at the American dream," Carbajal said in his statement. "Dreamers represent the best of our American values, and their contributions make our country stronger. Today, the dream is alive once again." While Carbajal applauded the court's decision, he said it's up to Congress to pass legislation that codifies the program. He said the House has passed such legislation, but the Republican-controlled Senate has yet to move the act forward.

• On June 18, the **California Department of Public Health** announced that all Californians must wear face coverings in "high-risk" settings to prevent the spread of COVID-19. The department states that a growing body of research shows that people with no or few symptoms of the virus can still spread the disease. "Science shows that face coverings and masks work,"

Gov. Gavin Newsom said in a news release from the department. "They are critical to keeping those who are around you safe, keeping businesses open, and restarting our economy." In the news release, Newsom said he decided to issue this order because too many people aren't wearing face coverings in public. The department states that some of the high-risk settings where coverings should be worn include inside any indoor public space, while waiting for or riding public transit, and while outdoors when it's not feasible to maintain 6 feet of distance from other people.

• Amid an increase in cases and the number of people hospitalized due to complications of COVID-19, **Santa Barbara County** is pausing its reopening plan. On June 18, county officials announced that while the state is allowing personal care service industries to reopen, these businesses in the county will remain closed for now. These businesses include nail salons, tattoo shops, massage therapy spas, and others. "Out of an abundance of caution and for the safety of all community members, particularly our most vulnerable, public health leadership has decided to hold on further reopening," county Health Officer Henning Ansorg said in the release. "We urge all residents to take this time to evaluate how they can limit their exposure to people outside their homes."

• **Santa Barbara County** is looking for applicants to serve on its **Citizens' Independent Redistricting Commission**. This commission was established after county residents voted in favor of Measure G in the November election that created an 11-person committee that adjusts the boundaries of county supervisorial districts. The commission will redraw the lines for these five districts next spring after the Census Bureau releases the data it obtains during this year's census. People interested in serving on the commission must apply by Aug. 21, after which they will go through an election process that's intended to create a commission independent from political and financial interests, according to the county. Find more information about the application process at countyofsb.org/redistricting.



RECALL: Solvang residents recently announced that they'd filed a notice to recall City Councilmember Chris Djernaes.

Citizens begin effort to recall Solvang council member

Less than two years after being elected, Solvang Councilmember Chris Djernaes is facing a citizen-led recall attempt.

Lammy Johnstone, who is leading the effort, recently filed a recall notice with the city that states, among other claims, that Djernaes isn't respectful to residents and disregards the wishes of the voters.

During the Solvang City Council meeting on June 22, Johnstone said it'd be in the city's best interest if Djernaes was no longer on the council.

"Chris, if you care about Solvang, if you really care about Solvang, for goodness sake, resign," Johnstone said. "That would do more to help our city come together than anything else."

According to state law, in cities with 1,000 to 10,000 registered voters, such as Solvang, at least 25 percent of those registered must sign a petition to place the recall proposition on the November ballot.

In the event that this effort is successful, at least one resident has already announced plans to take Djernaes' place on dais. On the SYV Strong Facebook page, former Santa Barbara County Sheriff Jim Thomas said he is beginning to campaign for the potentially vacant seat.

"I guess this is the trendy way to make an announcement, but I intend to run for Solvang City Councilman Chris Djernaes' seat should he be recalled," Thomas said in the post. "As a good friend recently said, 'We need to maintain the special essence of Solvang.' I agree and together, we can do that."

Over the last year and a half, the council has focused on reshaping the city's economy that relies heavily on tourists. The council has made decisions to try to cater less to the day-trippers who visit Solvang and to attract more of a higher-spending demographic that stays multiple nights in the city's hotels.

The council has faced backlash on some of the decisions it's made or has considered making to begin this transition. During a public meeting in May, many residents voiced opposition to a proposed mixed-use development that would

replace the city's Veterans Memorial Building with hotels, apartments, and businesses. Following outcry from the community at a meeting in May on this topic, the city scheduled a series of public workshops for June 27 where residents can weigh in on these plans.

Djernaes responded to this recall effort at the end of the June 22 meeting by stating that the residents behind this effort have been against him since he announced his candidacy. He said he's being targeted for campaigning to "clean up corruption and scandal" within the city.

"I made enemies because I campaigned on this, and I led the movement to get rid of four married couples that straddled the council, the Planning Commission, and the Board of Architectural review," Djernaes said.

He added that the recall notice amounts to residents perceiving him to be rude.

"Really, that's all they got?" Djernaes said.

—Zac Ezzone

Guadalupe City Council votes on unprecedented tobacco ordinance

Guadalupe wants an A rating from the American Lung Association, and voted on a comprehensive tobacco ordinance June 23 that would be the most stringent in the county.

"The American Lung Association gave us an F rating, and then I discovered that the city doesn't even have a tobacco ordinance," Guadalupe City Manager Todd Bodem said of the impetus for the new ordinance. "I brought it to the attention of the council, and the majority of the council said they would like to see an A grade."

Shantal Hover-Jones, program coordinator for the county's Tobacco Prevention Program & Cannabis Education Program, explained that the American Lung Association's rating system is largely based on how strong a city's tobacco rules and regulations are, particularly by considering what secondhand smoke

protections and retail regulations are in place.

"We work as a tobacco program to assist our cities in raising that grade by passing comprehensive tobacco ordinances that protect the public from the harmful effects of tobacco," she said.

If passed, Guadalupe's new ordinance doesn't just match the efforts of surrounding cities, but actually surpasses them, Hover-Jones said.

"[Guadalupe] hadn't tackled this yet, but now they've tackled it in a really big way: They've put forth this ordinance that actually addresses every single part of that report card, which we've never seen done in our county before," she said. "It's one large ordinance that basically covers secondhand smoke protections in the public and in multi-unit housing. Then it also does all kinds of wonderful

NEWS continued page 4

Weekend Weather

KSBY NEWS
Microclimate Weather Forecast
Dave Hovde
KSBY Chief Meteorologist

Thursday	Friday
COASTAL > High 74 Low 56 INLAND > High 83 Low 54	COASTAL > High 75 Low 54 INLAND > High 84 Low 53
Saturday	Sunday
COASTAL > High 75 Low 56 INLAND > High 84 Low 54	COASTAL > High 73 Low 57 INLAND > High 84 Low 54

Varying amounts of night and morning clouds near the coast but clear inland. Seasonal temps into the weekend.

NEWS from page 3

things in the retail environment: Getting rid of flavored tobacco licensing retailers so that they're held accountable to not sell to underage people, banning the sale in pharmacies, and the list goes on."

Among those advocating to pass the ordinance is the Youth Action Coalition of Fighting Back Santa Maria, a group of "local junior high and high school students who are motivated about taking a stand against violence, drugs, and alcohol in their schools and community," its website states.

The coalition brought a YouTube video to the June 9 City Council meeting when the city first read the ordinance. The video features segments compiled by local youth advocating for the city to pass the ordinance.

"Secondhand smoke causes numerous irreversible health problems to infants and children, such as frequent and severe asthma attacks, respiratory infections, ear infections, sudden infant death syndrome, damage to the arteries, increasing risk of heart attack, and may cause a stroke as an adult" one student said in the video.

"Because 30 percent of our population is 18 and under, I think it's important that it catches the youth," Bodem said. "That's the goal of it: You're keeping the minimum prices of these cigarettes so that it's cost ineffective for them to really want to buy them, and then getting rid of all these flavored and vaping products."

When a comprehensive tobacco ordinance like this one passes, Hover-Jones said her team works with the city to implement it through public education, talking to landlords and apartment complex owners about how it will change their policies with tenants, and reaching out to retailers.

The City Council planned to vote on the ordinance on June 23 after the *Sun* went to press. Check out santamariasun.com for an update.

—Malea Martin

Solvang passes budget amid COVID uncertainty

As a city that relies heavily on people visiting its businesses for tax revenue, the city of Solvang has been rocked by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

While businesses that were closed due to the public health crisis are beginning to open back up, uncertainty regarding the future of the virus and how it affects people's desire to travel presents challenges for the city.

"Even if everything goes well, there's uncertainty for economic recovery and how quickly the economy will reboot not just in Solvang, but also at the state and national and international levels that impact our tourism," City Manager Xenia Bradford said during the June 22 City Council meeting.

According to a staff report for the meeting, the city is estimated to lose a combined \$4 million between this fiscal year and the upcoming year that begins in July. To try to compensate for this lost revenue, the city has significantly reduced its expenses, partly through cutting staff.

During the current fiscal year that ends in June, the city allocated 3.5 staff positions in its planning department. The city has zero staff allocated to this department for the next year in the budget that the council approved during the June 22 meeting.

Additionally, the city reduced the staffing allocated to its Parks and Recreation Department from 4.8 positions to two; its Public Works Department from eight positions to 5.25; and its Administration Department from seven positions to 5.5. In total, the city cut the number of staff positions its general fund supports by about 10. Mayor Ryan Toussaint said he's pleased that



SUCCESSFUL PETITION: Former Rancho Laguna employee José Luis Ramírez Carrera carries pages filled with the thousands of signatures in support of his and his fellow workers' petition. The petition was handed off to Driscoll's on June 10.

structural changes the council has made to the city's expenses over the last year have prepared the city to pass a balanced budget that's focused on essential services. Without these changes, he said the city would quickly drain its reserves while dealing with and recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic

In a written public comment, resident Joan Jamieson criticized the council for not funding youth-oriented programs in this budget.

"Maybe [the council] forgot that we no longer have a Parks and Recreation Department, which provided many youth activities especially during the summer to families with children who need the activity," Jamieson said. "Please do not use COVID-19 and social distancing as an excuse not to have some programs."

—Zac Ezzone

Rancho Laguna farmworkers get raise after multi-week organizing effort

After more than a month of organizing efforts, including worker walkouts and attempts to submit a petition to Driscoll's, farmworkers at Rancho Laguna Farms successfully received a raise.

Rancho Laguna Farms is a Santa Maria-based direct supplier to the berry company Driscoll's. Rancho Laguna farmworkers first took action on May 4 with a strike, demanding a raise and safer working conditions amid COVID-19.

But after engaging in the strike, a protected action, some workers say they experienced retaliation from their employer. In response, workers organized a petition demanding that Driscoll's address their grievances.

Central Coast Alliance United for a Sustainable Economy (CAUSE) also stepped in to help workers file a complaint with the Agricultural Labor Relations Board, which is still investigating the claims.

After the workers' online petition went viral, garnering more than 60,000 signatures, Driscoll's accepted the petition, and Rancho Laguna owner Larry Ferini agreed to sit down with workers and negotiate.

CAUSE announced on June 22 that workers received a raise to \$2.10 per box of strawberries

after meeting with Ferini.

"Rancho Laguna Farms also pledged to train foremen and supervisors in better communication skills and triple the amount of shade so workers can properly social distance during breaks," a CAUSE press release stated.

The details of the raise are outlined in a June 15 memo Ferini sent to all Rancho Laguna employees.

"As the end of the 2020 picking season comes to an end, we must look to the future," Ferini wrote in the memo. "As I plan for the 2021 season, barring any unforeseen economic downturns, I expect that all strawberry pickers working for Rancho Laguna Farms will start the 2021 picking season at \$2.10 per box."

This statement addresses worker concerns that the raise they won might not continue in future seasons, something that workers said they've experienced in the past.

Hazel Davalos, CAUSE's community organizing director, told the *Sun* that Ferini's stated plan for future seasons is a win, though not necessarily a guarantee.

"In the letter they do put in writing that they expect to pay \$2.10 next season, but barring the economy falling apart," Davalos said. "We didn't feel like that was the assurance we wanted. With no contract, there's no promise. But, we are glad that it was put in writing."

The memo also promises recall eligibility, meaning that Ferini plans to hire current employees back next season. Davalos said this was initially a big concern for workers, so the workers are happy to see it in writing.

"Every employee that ends the 2020 season with Rancho Laguna Farms will be eligible for recall for the 2021 season," Ferini's memo states. "I will welcome all of you back."

—Malea Martin

Lompoc, Vandenberg Air Force Base enter into grant partnership

With Vandenberg Air Force Base likely to experience an increase in staff and resources as the federal government establishes a U.S. Space Force, the city of Lompoc is looking into a grant program that could benefit both the city and the base.

Steven Greenberg with Bridge View Resources, a consultant working with the city on this effort, said the increase of satellite launches planned for the base will lead to the installation growing in other ways, including the development of a commercial area with manufacturing and warehouses. This will in turn have an impact on the city of Lompoc and its infrastructure, such as roads, utilities, and housing, he said.

Greenberg said the Department of Defense's Office of Economic Adjustment (OEA) offers grant opportunities to cities located near military bases that helped fund improvements to city resources.

During a Lompoc City Council meeting on June 16, Louis Littleton, a representative from OEA, said the department offers these grants so that cities can focus on infrastructure, while military bases focus on their purpose.

"We do this in pursuit of enhancing the readiness and preserving the mission of our military installations," Littleton said.

Littleton said after the city applies for the Military Installation Sustainability Program, the OEA will award the city with a \$1 million to \$1.5 million grant to study what sort of improvements could benefit both the city and the base. The city needs to coordinate this effort with the base, Littleton said.

During the meeting, Col. Michael Hunsberger said the base is looking forward to this partnership.

As an example of how this program can work, Littleton cited a community in Colorado that through this study identified safety concerns along a stretch of state highway that links the military base to the city. Data from this study was then used to help the state secure a \$18.4 million grant to improve the roadway.

Greenberg said this study is the first step in a lengthy process that should benefit both the city and the base for years to come.

"Clearly you can't eat the elephant in one bite; there's a lot to do there," Greenberg said. "But this is an ongoing process. ... This is going to set in motion a process that hopefully should last for decades to come and help make the city and the base an amazing space base of the future," Greenberg said. ○

—Zac Ezzone

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PHOTO BY MALEA MARTIN

MARCHING ON: Community members participated in a rally and march on June 4 (pictured) that began at Santa Maria City Hall. Nearly two weeks later, another rally in the same location protested the city's proposed budget.

Defend or defund?

Between the COVID-19 economic crisis and calls to reallocate funds away from the police, city budgets are capturing public attention

BY MALEA MARTIN

The protests that erupted in early and mid June across the country in response to systemic racism and police brutality came at a pivotal moment for local governments, as many cities raced to finalize their budgets before the new fiscal year hits on July 1.

Amid a pandemic-induced recession, many cities are faced with financially reassessing their priorities. And given many protesters' and organizations' demands to change how money is allocated to public safety, police departments whose budgets eat up one of the largest slices of the local government pie have become the proverbial elephant in the room as city council members cast their votes.

At least, those were the words of community member Gale McNeely at Santa Maria's June 16 City Council meeting, where a proposed two year budget passed 4-1. The budget allocates 63 percent of the general fund to public safety for 2020-21, 42 percent of which goes to the police.

"Tonight I am proposing that Santa Maria lay off all new police and firefighters to provide more money for services for youth and families," McNeely said during public comment. "The elephant in the room is the fact that all the money is going to [public] safety, and not enough to youth services."

About three hours before McNeely and others took the virtual microphone to voice their thoughts on the budget, chants from a protest outside filtered through the meeting's livestream. Organized by the Santa Maria Youth Abolitionists, the rally called for defunding the Santa Maria Police Department and a community review of the budget before it's voted on, according to a Lompoc Valley Democratic Club Instagram post.

Santa Maria Councilmember Gloria Soto told the *Sun* that she was surprised by how fast the budget process was, and how little time the community had to review it. Soto was the only dissenting vote against the budget.

A grievance brought up by protesters and public commenters alike is the discrepancy between cuts made to the police department's budget versus cuts to public services like the city library and the Paul Nelson Aquatic Center.

Police saw a 1.9 percent budget decrease from the year before, while the library saw a 12.6 percent decrease, and the pool saw a 52 percent decrease.

Because of these cuts, the library was slated to remain closed through September, and the pool through January. After hours of discussion, the council decided to use capital funds from non-urgent projects to open the library and pool as soon as possible.

Although protesters and community members saw some of their demands met—more funds allocated toward public services—the means to those ends weren't quite what they rallied for. The police department's proposed funding remained untouched, and the request for a community review of the budget didn't come to fruition.

Councilmember Etta Waterfield, the executive director of the Santa Maria Police Council, advocated strongly for finding a way to reopen the pool. However, she told the *Sun* after the budget passed that she had "no intention of defunding our police department."

"The community cannot raise itself with feel-good programs," she said.

Councilmember Mike Cordero, a former police officer, told the *Sun* that while he believes defunding the police is a "poor choice of words," he's not generally opposed to reallocating money as long as responsibilities are reallocated too.

"I think that anything we can do to curb crime is a better thing. If we can do that with dialogue, then that's great," he said. "And if that means we have 10 less officers in the police department, I don't have any problems with that either, as long as there's an appropriate amount of work that is distributed to people that are going to be handling these calls."

Councilmember Michael Moats didn't respond to the *Sun*'s request for comment. However, he did bring up another hot topic at the June 16 meeting: funding for body cameras for police officers.

Moats asked Santa Maria Police Chief Phil Hansen about the fact that his department asked for funds to buy body cameras, but the request didn't make the budget. Given the pandemic-related loss of revenues for the city, city staff determined that there wasn't enough money to

fund body cameras this time around. But City Manager Jason Stilwell said he hopes to see a line in the budget for body cameras in 2022-23. Hansen added that, until then, the department will be looking to grants to potentially fund the technology.

Sgt. Alfredo Ruiz of the Santa Maria Police Department told the *Sun* that the city currently doesn't have or use body cameras, "but we do have car video cameras in all of our patrolling [cars]," he said.

Lompoc is in a similar situation, according to Mayor Jenelle Osborne.

"The issue is that, once again, limited budget," Osborne told the *Sun*. "A couple years ago, [former Police] Chief Walsh was asked to present body cam estimates, and the cost exceeded a million, and we didn't have that at the time."

As community members chanted outside Santa Maria City Hall on June 16, so too did rally organizers in Lompoc. While Lompoc's biennial 2019-21 budget was approved last year, the budget was put on the agenda for the City Council's June 16 meeting, prompting community members to come speak their minds.

Lompoc's rally was organized by Building BLOCK (Black & Latinx Offering Community & Knowledge), a recently formed group committed to "serving the underserved community of Lompoc," the group's social media states.

The protest was the organization's first call to action. Building BLOCK organizers and others then took the podium during public comment to question the way that funding is distributed in the Lompoc budget.

"Personally, police chief, I don't think you guys need a [Ford] F-150 truck ... If you go and talk to the youth, they're starving for something to do," said Keith Joseph, vice president of Building BLOCK. "You wonder about gang violence and why all these 15-year-olds are on probation doing drugs? Because there's nothing to do."

Another community member said that if Lompoc wants to stop violence, "that means providing resources for the youth and the marginalized communities."

Councilmember Jim Mosby questioned where they were going to find the money for that.

"That same year, there was a 9 percent raise for police officers," the commenter continued. "The money for these resources for the youth can come out of the act of defunding the police."

Mosby told the *Sun* that he believes advocates with organizations like Building BLOCK need a better understanding of where the money comes from for certain programs.

"They're concerned about mental health and homelessness," Mosby said. "The county collects the money for that. The city is limited with where we get our money from."

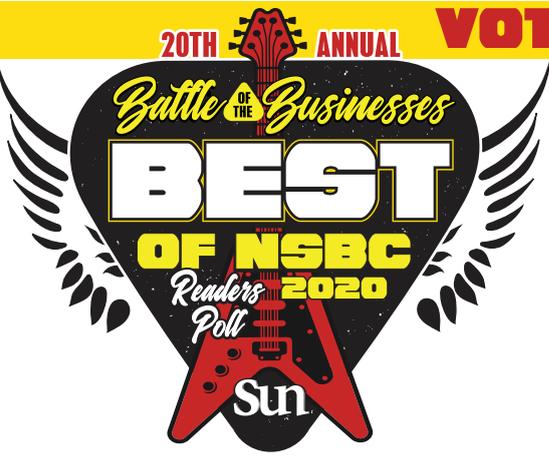
Mosby said that he supports implementing body cameras. He also said he believes the police department has been overfunded before, citing the department not utilizing its full budget allocation in the past.

When the current biennial budget passed last year, the Lompoc Police Department's general fund allocation rose by about \$1.3 million, a 13 percent increase from the year before.

Building BLOCK organizer KyungSoon Richardson told the *Sun* that she believes there's an overall "lack of understanding of what defunding the police actually means."

"There were comments from other city members saying that we can't defund the police because we need the police, but that's not the message that we were trying to put out," Richardson said. "It's that they request however much money, and yet, we still don't have resources or money for the schools or for youth programs. There was a misconception of our message of what we were trying to present to the council." ○

Reach Staff Writer Malea Martin at mmartin@santamariasun.com.



You're up!

It's been a tough year so far, but our annual Best Of issue is here and looking for your cheers—not jeers! We're asking you, the community, to take the gig and give us your judgements. Specifically, we need you to help us celebrate the things in this world that are still rockin'! Riff on the eateries, drinkeries, businesses, and people that make Northern Santa Barbara County so special.

So now isn't the time to be shy. It's time for your guitar solo. Step up and fill out this ballot. Then talk to your family, friends, and neighbors, so you're not the only one at the concert. We all dance to our own beats, so they need to fill out ballots of their own! You can even go online to vote at santamariasun.com. Just remember, you need to complete at least 25 categories to make the cut.

Return this ballot to the Sun office or go online by 5 p.m. on June 29. Then stay tuned to read all about the winners that rocked the hardest on Aug. 20.

Tell everyone!

DINE AND DEVOUR

- 1 Best Santa Maria Restaurant
- 2 Best Nipomo Restaurant
- 3 Best Orcutt Restaurant
- 4 Best Lompoc Restaurant
- 5 Best Guadalupe Restaurant
- 6 Best Los Alamos Restaurant
- 7 Best Los Olivos Restaurant
- 8 Best Buellton Restaurant
- 9 Best Solvang Restaurant
- 10 Best Santa Ynez Restaurant
- 11 Best Restaurant. Period.
- 12 Best Food Truck
- 13 Best Breakfast

14 Best Bakery

15 Best Seafood

16 Best Burger Joint

17 Best Pizza

18 Best Steak

19 Best Tri-Tip

20 Best Salsa

21 Best Taco

22 Best Burrito

23 Best Deli

24 Best Ice Cream/Frozen Yogurt

25 Best Vegetarian Restaurant

26 Best Cheap Eats

27 Best Restaurant to Impress

28 Best Kid-Friendly Restaurant

29 Best Farm/Produce Stand

30 Best Grocery Store

31 Best Hispanic Market

32 Best Chinese Food

33 Best Japanese Food

34 Best Italian Food

35 Best Authentic Mexican Food

36 Best Outdoor Dining

37 Best Breakfast Burrito

38 Best Weekend Brunch

39 Best Sushi

40 Best Poke

41 Best Mediterranean Food

42 Best Juice Place

43 Best Dessert

BEST OF BALLOT continued on next page

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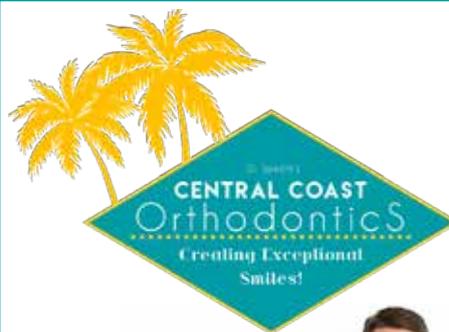


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Lack of trust

Lompoc opts out of county-led consortium aimed at addressing housing issues

BY ZAC EZZONE

He may have said it four years ago, but Santa Barbara-based U.S. Rep. Salud Carbajal's reference to Lompoc as the armpit of the county still reverberates in the minds of some residents, such as George Bedford, who referenced the remark while urging the Lompoc City Council not to join a county-led consortium during a recent public meeting.

"Santa Barbara will not help Lompoc, they hate Lompoc," Bedford said. "That's why they call us the armpit."

The majority of council echoed Bedford's sentiment—albeit in less hostile language—and ultimately voted not to join a countywide partnership that would have directed about \$200,000 annually to the city to use on affordable housing projects. While council members expressed other concerns about the program, the fact that the county would be leading the charge was a major sticking point.

"I don't want Santa Barbara County helping Lompoc," Councilmember Dirk Starbuck said.

This funding is available to the city as a result of state legislation passed in 2017. Senate Bill 2, which was part of a 15-bill package aimed at addressing the state's housing shortage and high housing costs, created the Building Homes and Jobs Trust Fund and the Permanent Local

Housing Allocation program. This program is funded through fees on certain real estate transactions that the state collects and then directs to local governments.

Dinah Lockhart, who is the deputy director for the county's Housing and Community Development Division, attended the council's June 16 meeting to ask the board to join a consortium the county will lead. She said most other local cities, aside from Santa Barbara, which is pursuing this program on its own, have joined or plan to join the partnership.

Lockhart said as the lead agency, the county would handle all administrative responsibilities, including applying for the funding, submitting program-required reports to the state, and creating committees to review the grant applications the consortium receives from nonprofits and developers. This partnership approach, Lockhart said, saves cities from having to devote their own staff resources toward administering this grant program.

"We went into this carefully because your city, like other cities, has been hit by this pandemic," Lockhart said. "Because we're the county and because we have that infrastructure, we can take on the administrative burden of administering a program like this."

Although the county would handle the program's logistics, the city would have sole control over the projects it decides to pursue with its share of the funding, Lockhart said. These projects could include boosting the city's first-time homebuyer assistance program or the development of affordable housing, among other options. The program also allows cities to save their allotted funding for up to three years to spend on a larger project.

But some of the language in the county's

partnership agreement brought some hard feelings to the surface between the two jurisdictions. Councilmember Jim Mosby pointed to a passage in the contract that provides the county with some flexibility in directing funds without the city's consent.

"People down in Santa Barbara can decide how they are going to spend and do things in the city of Lompoc," Mosby said. "And the county has done that enough already. We're buried in what the county is doing to benefit us."

Lompoc officials recently chafed at another county-run program in the city. At a meeting earlier in June, some City Council members expressed frustration over a countywide syringe exchange program that operates within the city under the county's authority. Legally the city can't prohibit the program, so Lompoc was looking at potential ways of regulating it. Starbuck suggested asking the county if the city could simply opt out.

During the June 16 meeting, Lockhart acknowledged that there is language in the housing consortium contract that allows the county to redirect a city's allocated funding. But she said this would only happen if a city is not using its funding or not saving it for a specific purpose.

"The intent of the funding is to get spent," Lockhart said. "The state understands that you may want to bank funds and wait for that great project that's in the wings, so they're not forcing the cities to spend that money year after year. But at some point, there may be a need to want to spend the money."

In addition to this issue, Mosby and other council members also raised concerns about any administrative work from this program that would fall within the responsibility of the city's already bare-bones Community Development Department.

Although the county will cover all administrative responsibilities, Community Development Director Christie Alarcon said that she's concerned about any management of this program that could fall within her department, which consists of only two people.

While acknowledging these concerns, Lockhart said in addition to the county administering the project, the state reimburses cities for costs associated with delivering the program.

Nonetheless, without adequate staffing to handle any aspect of the program and concerns over the county having a hand in city funds, the majority of the council opted to deny joining the program in a 3-2 vote. Instead, the city will apply for the program directly on its own whenever it has the staff to do so.

Mayor Jenelle Osborne, who voted against the council's rejection of the program, said she believed the city was making a mistake. She said the city could have at least opted in to the program and banked funds over the next three years while trying to find additional staff.

Councilmember Gilda Cordova, who cast the dissenting vote with Osborne, said that while she understands the anti-county sentiment, the city shouldn't turn down funding that could help Lompoc residents because of these feelings.

"To me, turning away money that could potentially serve somebody in our community because we perhaps are looking at it on a personal, I don't want to say vendetta," Cordova said. "But we're sore about the fact that Santa Barbara County doesn't like us as a community or as a part of their whole county. I get that."

"But it's not smart in my mind." ○

Reach Staff Writer Zac Ezzone at zezzone@santamariasun.com.



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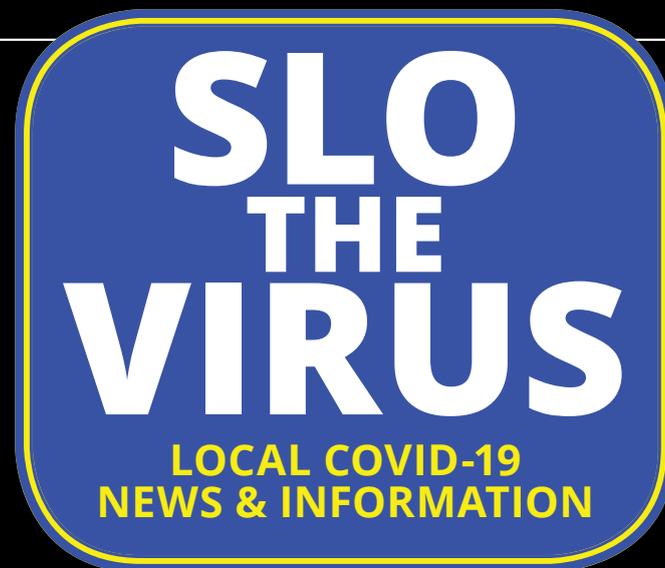
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- It's stupid. Masks don't help limit the spread of the virus.

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'Your vote is your dollar'

The political beliefs of local business owners are becoming harder to ignore, and it can make or break relationships with customers

BY KASEY BUBNASH

As a few hundred Central Coast residents prepared to march through Grover Beach and Arroyo Grande in support of the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement in early June, a few business owners were getting ready for what they feared could become violent riots.

Some boarded up the windows of their businesses or closed up shop, and others, including John Hackleman, owner of the The Pit Martial Arts and Fitness, took more drastic measures. Armed with guns and walkie-talkies, at least two of Hackleman's friends stood on the roof of his downtown Arroyo Grande gym, while other unarmed individuals stood outside the business on ground level.

Although Hackleman claims the guns weren't loaded and that protesters didn't even walk past his businesses that day, photos of the gunmen on his rooftop spread quickly on social media, along with emotive and seemingly anti-BLM videos Hackleman posted before and after the June 5 protest.

That led many to call for a boycott of The Pit. The owner of Sally Loo's Wholesome Café in SLO, Jennifer Fullarton, faced a similar reckoning after she posted anti-BLM content to her once public personal Instagram account.

Screenshots of those posts went viral on June 12, leading hundreds of community members to declare online that they'd never set foot in Sally Loo's again. An apology Fullarton posted to the Sally Loo's account days later—in which she clarified that while she's not racist or opposed to the LGBTQ-plus community, she can't support what she said is BLM's "goal to nullify the two-parent family"—only seemed to make things worse.

Now lists of other local businesses that supposedly don't support the BLM movement or that believe the COVID-19 pandemic is a hoax are circulating online. On the other hand, businesses that too aggressively enforce face covering rules are being marked as places conservatives should avoid.

Such word-of-mouth campaigns are a local trend that San Luis Obispo Chamber of Commerce President Jim Dantona said has been playing out for years but is now being exacerbated by social media and our increasingly polarized politics.

Technology and social media have made it easier than ever for everyone to make their opinions—and the opinions of others—known, and since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and the death of Minneapolis resident George Floyd, it feels like everyone has something they want to say online. Business owners aren't immune to having thoughts and feelings, but publicly taking a political stance as the face of a business comes with the risk of losing customers.

"Capitalism is still a democracy in that your vote is your dollar," Dantona told the *Sun*. "Everybody has the freedom of speech, but that doesn't come with the freedom of repercussions."

The idea of putting your money where your values are is one that's caught on more in recent years, Dantona said, at least partly because social media makes it easy for businesses to share their views and for customers to react.

According to a 2017 survey conducted by Sprout Social, a software company dedicated to social media analytics, roughly 66 percent of the 1,000 U.S. consumers surveyed said it's important for

brands to take a public stand on political issues. About 61 percent said it's important for that stance to be pushed out on social media.

That's good for consumers who Dantona said should be supporting businesses that champion beliefs and ideals that align with their own. It's also a good way to hold business owners accountable, he said. Had there been gunmen at The Pit during a protest in the '80s, Dantona said protesters might have witnessed it but would have had to have a real camera on hand to take a photo, and even then the photo would have been difficult to disseminate.

But there are, of course, downsides to the efficiency and permanency of social media.

Dantona said he wonders how accurate these lists of local businesses that support this and oppose that really are. Content on the internet is often untrue or taken out of context, and he hopes community members will do their own research before vowing to shun any local businesses for good, especially at a time like this, when small businesses are just trying to recover from coronavirus-related closures and hits.

And sometimes, he said, businesses face backlash for things they have no control over.

Though there's now a state mandate requiring Californians to wear face coverings in public, some SLO County residents online say they'll attempt to go to a number of local businesses without masks, and only support those that allow it. A lot of local businesses in SLO were also criticized for boarding up their windows during peaceful BLM protests, even though Dantona said that in some cases it was the owner of the building—not the business owner—who decided to board up.

Dantona said it's important that consumers have their facts straight before taking to the internet.

"Our business owners don't need anything else thrown at them," Dantona said.

That's Hackleman's biggest issue with the community response to his way of protecting The Pit: He doesn't feel people interpreted his actions and words correctly.

He wasn't sure what the June 5 protest would be like, and had heard about protests turning violent or destructive in other cities throughout the nation. After COVID-19, which Hackleman said resulted in about \$50,000 in losses over the course of three months, he couldn't afford any damage to his building.

Hackleman said he's not racist—some of the people protecting his business on June 5 were people of color, he said—but that's why many people say they're boycotting his business.

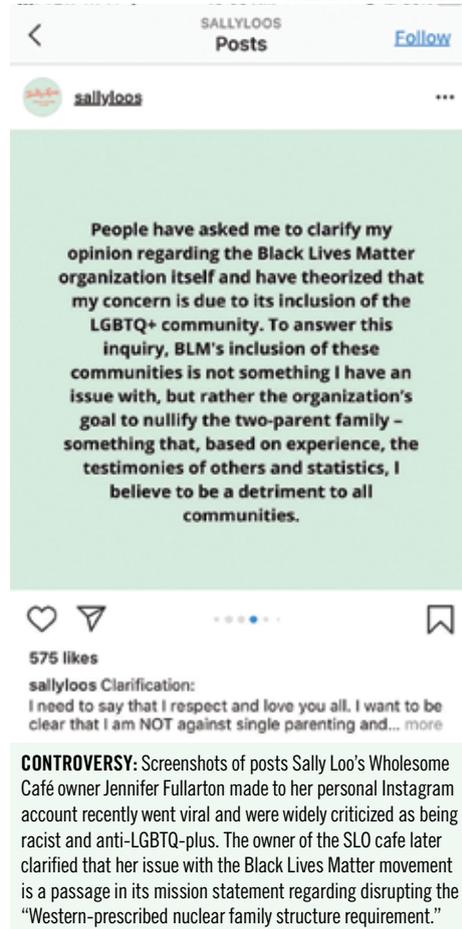
"If you say it's racist because John had two Asians and two Mexicans protecting his gym," Hackleman told the *Sun*, "you have a screw loose."

Though Hackleman said he did lose a few customers over the whole saga, including Grover Beach City Councilmember Mariam Shah, who said in a now deleted Facebook post that she would no longer take her son to The Pit, Hackleman said he's actually seen a net gain in customers overall.

"I think the people who are boycotting are the worst kinds of bullies in the world," Hackleman told the *Sun*. "Because they're trying to make someone lose their business."

But Cheryl Storton, president of the South County Democrats Club, said that's all just part of free speech.

SCREENSHOTS FROM INSTAGRAM



CONTROVERSY: Screenshots of posts Sally Loo's Wholesome Café owner Jennifer Fullarton made to her personal Instagram account recently went viral and were widely criticized as being racist and anti-LGBTQ-plus. The owner of the SLO cafe later clarified that her issue with the Black Lives Matter movement is a passage in its mission statement regarding disrupting the "Western-prescribed nuclear family structure requirement."



CONSEQUENCES: Hundreds of community members reacted to an apology from Sally Loo's Wholesome Café owner Jennifer Fullarton by criticizing what she said was her misinterpretation of the Black Lives Matter mission statement. The comments section on the post are now disabled.

As a former small-business owner herself, Storton said she gets it. If she still had her business today, she'd be posting signs in support of the BLM movement all over, and she'd expect to lose business over it. No matter what side you're on, she said, there's no way everyone will agree with you. And while some businesses can afford to lose customers, others certainly can't.

"People with a small business are their small business," Storton said. "They are. They're just entwined. And I support them if they want to peacefully and nonthreateningly take a stand. But beware: There are consequences."

Her advice? "A friend once told me, 'Never pass up an opportunity to shut your mouth.'" ○

Staff Writer Kasey Bubnash from *New Times*, the *Sun's* sister paper, can be reached at kbubnash@newtimeslo.com.

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Taking the cake

Weddings by the Sea isn't letting a global pandemic stop couples from saying 'I do'

BY MALEA MARTIN

Prior to COVID-19, Santa Barbara County-based company Weddings by the Sea already specialized in planning small, intimate ceremonies for couples looking to get married. But after the pandemic hit, things got even smaller. "There was a point where we weren't doing anything," Weddings by the Sea owner Catherine Forester told the *Sun* of the early days of stay-at-home orders. "We weren't even sure if a ceremony on the beach was the right thing to do. So I created this as something that could be done in private, with just a couple. It was in one place, and we could practice social distancing so that everybody felt comfortable and safe."

Love in the Time of COVID-19 is a full-service wedding ceremony package that maintains all the facets of the special day but also abides by the current COVID-19 regulations and restrictions. She calls it a "minimony."

The package includes every step of the wedding-planning process: preparing the marriage license, officiating the marriage, the bridal bouquet and groom's boutonniere, the wedding arbor, professional photography, the cake, and more. The company also arranges for a Zoom livestream to accommodate the guests who won't be there in person due to the pandemic.

One of the biggest advantages to the package deal, Forester said, is her ability to issue marriage licenses in Santa Barbara County.

"There are only three or four notaries in Santa Barbara County who can do so outside of the courthouse, and I'm one of them," she said. "There's a great need for that right now because the county is really backed up in that department. ... This is an option for people who want to get married right now and don't want to have to wait for one of the county courthouses to issue their license."

So far, Forester said, Love in the Time of COVID-19 has been a hit. She said couples who were initially disappointed with having to replan their wedding ended up finding a silver lining in the money, time, and chaos they were saving themselves.

"Some people are like, 'We just want to be married,'" Forester said of her clients. "What it's really all about is marrying somebody and making that lifetime commitment, not about the party necessarily. I think people are really taking stock of what they're doing and what their priorities are. Having to go through rescheduling your wedding definitely makes



VIRTUAL VOWS: Wedding by the Sea is offering a special COVID-19 wedding package, complete with setting up virtual guest attendance on Zoom.

you reassess your priorities."

Forester plans to offer the COVID-19 package deal through July 15. And as restrictions begin to loosen, she expects some clients will opt for a slightly larger wedding party. She encouraged those interested to contact Weddings by the Sea through santabarbaraweddingsite.com to find a way to make it happen while staying within health guidelines.

Highlights

- The Santa Maria Public Library announced its virtual summer reading program, Imagine Your Story, on June 15. The pandemic-friendly program will allow participants to track their reading online through a new website operated by Beanstack software. After a participant registers at cityofsantamaria.beanstack.org, they can begin reading to complete challenges and earn badges through the software. Community members can also opt for downloadable reading logs and activity sheets available at the library's website. The library created specialized, age-specific programs for everyone from young children to adults, and at the end of the program there will be a grand prize drawing for each age group. While the library is closed until further notice from the county Public Health Department, patrons can keep finding motivation to read all summer long.

- CenCal Health announced June 18 the appointment of its new medical director, Dr. Keith Emmons. CenCal Health is a publicly sponsored, community-accountable health plan for Medi-Cal in Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo counties, and delivers care to about 1 in 4 residents in Santa Barbara County. According to a press release, "Emmons will initially lead the department of Health Services' efforts in outpatient and inpatient medical support, and case management. ... With his extensive background in managed-care systems, Emmons will support the health plan's endeavors to uphold quality initiatives that promote efficient access to medical care for more than 180,000 CenCal Health members." ○

Staff Writer Malea Martin wrote this week's Spotlight. Send story ideas to spotlight@santamariasun.com.

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- 6% Of course! I'm sick of eating at home.

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Seek context

Ethnic studies increase understanding, perspective on race in our country

BY MARC GARCÍA-MARTÍNEZ

There is obviously a stubborn, if not malignant, perspective about race and ethnicity in our nation today. This perspective is intensified by the perverse arithmetic of the Trump administration's rhetoric, and by the signs and narratives that we've seen in the media these past weeks.

As the administration has proven it is uninterested in healing race relations in our country, and while our ability to vote it out this November is not certain, what we can do to keep some control is to process those media signs and narratives in a smart way.

Most of the media narratives of racist acts that we have witnessed are severe and beyond dispute, while some are slightly portrayed out of context. Many visual signs of racism and bigotry are compelling, though some are manipulated for effect.

As righteous protests and level-headed demands for change are called for, more radical reactions like rioting and looting, or pushing for unilateral defunding of our police, are not. The small, pixelated screens of our smartphones just can't frame the entirety of what's going on.

What can frame it? What can develop our perspective, help us understand and contextualize the intensity of recent weeks,

and fortify our ability to process narratives and signs? One of the best ways is to educate ourselves in the history, culture, and reality of oppressed people through ethnic studies courses and programs that our local schools offer.

Ethnic studies programs and courses don't just provide enlightenment, they create empathy while permeating our all too often stubborn racial or ethnic perspectives, and they slow (if outright cure) its malignancy.

Ethnic studies programs and courses do not make people "hate America," as is often said by hard-right conservatives. Nor do they point blame or set one group against another.

What they give us is a more cultivated racial-ethnic consciousness and an ability to sensibly confront issues of race, history, and culture. They disseminate an understanding and a respect for heritage, and it's through this developed consciousness and respectful understanding that we readily define our shared place in society, as well as our reactions to people of diverse ethnicities.

With regards to the current social unrest and its media portrayals, knowing a race's or culture's history and experience gives us

With regards to the current social unrest and its media portrayals, knowing a race's or culture's history and experience gives us a needed contextual sensibility.

a needed contextual sensibility. As while it's not always clear who are the innocent victims, the heroic leaders, the agitators, and oppressors, as well as

who are the exemplars, martyrs, the radicals, or racists, and where true role models and the neighborhoods in need are, we gain an ability to ascertain them through explorations that such programs and courses offer.

In short, ethnic studies works some pretty powerful medicine.

I therefore believe that looking at our country today through the scope of race, ethnicity, class,



WRITE NOW! We want to know what you think about everything. Send your 250-word letter to Sun Letters, 2450 Skyway Drive, suite A, Santa Maria, CA 93455. You can also fax it (347-9889) or e-mail it (letters@santamariasun.com). All letters must include a name, address, and phone number for verification purposes; may be edited for space or clarity; and will be posted to santamariasun.com.

and gender is the best way to see the bigger picture. It's the best way of getting the fuller story of how we have become this nation—helping us to get through the genuine challenges that we obviously and heartbreakingly still face. ○

Dr. Marc García-Martínez is the originator of Allan Hancock College's new degree program in Latina/o studies. Send comments to the editor at clanhm@santamariasun.com, or submit a letter for publication to letters@santamariasun.com.

LETTERS

It's time for bold action in the face of dysfunctional leadership

Sheriff Brown's commentary ("When the badge gets tarnished," June 11) is right to point out the fallacy of generalizing one's personal experience. It is not appropriate to brand all police based upon the actions of a few, just as it is not right to blame peaceful protesters for the destructive actions of a few.

The present occupant of the White House may just be the exorcist that this nation needs to finally confront the racism that has plagued it for far too long. As a nation we abolished the institution of slavery, but we never fully addressed its foundational racism. Perhaps at long last we can have a national reckoning.

If the president had a better understanding of history he would not reach for a military solution to combat domestic protests. Apparently the model for our present police force evolved from the British military occupation of Northern Ireland. In the American experience, our policing model has the unfortunate additional history of hunting down fugitive slaves. No wonder people of color, particularly African Americans, have experienced the police as an occupying force.

At the very least we do seem to have a police culture that seeks to protect the haves from the have-nots. This has become problematic as our nation faces ever greater levels of inequality.

Previous efforts at police reform have been blocked by powerful union interests more concerned with protecting a culture than with having its members be held accountable for their actions within the communities they serve. In light of these failures at police reform, we now hear calls for defunding the police departments. I prefer to think of this in terms of reinvesting money in community programs that free the police to do the jobs that they are better trained for.

For far too long we as a nation have failed to properly invest in our communities. This means problems that should have been dealt with at the family or community level are allowed to go unresolved. Then we expect public school teachers and the police to pick up the slack. School teachers should not have to deal with serious disciplinary problems, nor should the police be required to do social work.

The pandemic has exposed dysfunctional

LETTERS continued page 14

How rude!

Oh Solvang, you continue to delight this little twittering titterer with your antics. And I love you for it! Who knew the little city full of tourist delights could have such an angry soul?

After years of quietly puttering along without many quips and quibbles, you seem to have exploded into a tumultuous sea of accusations and misgivings. I'm sure it was all just simmering under the surface until a big push for change came from City Hall. And then the pushback followed.

First came the City Council majority, then came the organizations in charge of tourism and marketing, then the Architectural Review Board.

And the latest city sweater thread to start unraveling is the one that belongs to **City Councilmember Chris Djernaes**, who's the object of a recall petition being circulated among city residents who can't stand the disdain he has for anyone and everyone who he disagrees with. Hurtful words and huffy puffing were once again flying across the Danish-themed city's dais.



Recall effort leader **Lammy Johnstone** put Djernaes on notice, telling him to resign during the June 22 meeting.

"That would do more to help our city come together than anything else," she said. Damn, J! You didn't hold back.

The recall petition accuses Djernaes of disregarding the Brown Act, California's open meetings law; bullying city employees; and defaming organizations and individuals, among other things.

Djernaes scoffed at the petition, calling it a targeted effort because he's been trying to clean up all of the "corruption and scandal" in the city. Yep, folks, he's just doing his job. And if he's kind of a jerk about it in the process, then screw you. Grow a thicker skin!

He made enemies, he said, because he led "the movement to get rid of four married couples that straddled the council, the Planning Commission, and the Board of Architectural review."

He's cleaning up the town. Getting rid of old people on advisory commissions. Bringing in ferris wheels, drone shows, and new development. He's helping get rid of city staff and hiring consultants to run things! Solvang isn't a city, apparently, it's a business—so deal with it, people!

Who cares if he accused the **Solvang Theaterfest** of not wanting to support **Julfest**, when the organization actually offered to help. So what if he was involved in a little **Fair Political Practices Commission** investigation. So what if he insinuated that there were many reasons

to remove **Joan Jamieson** from the city's **Architectural Review Board** during a public meeting before being strangely shushed by **Councilmember Karen Waite**. So what if there's weird things afoot on the City Council, and he seems to be in the center of it as **Mayor Ryan Touissant's** outspoken and sometimes wrong sidekick.

Who cares if he's rude to constituents who speak during public comment or argues with them from the dais?

"Really, that's all they got?" he said.

That and apparently someone who's already champing at the bit to take his place before the signatures have even been signed on the petition recall effort! **Jim Thomas**, who served as Santa Barbara County's sheriff until 2002 and unsuccessfully ran for county supervisor, announced on the **SYV Strong** Facebook page that he was throwing his hat in the proverbial ring—should Djernaes, you know, actually get recalled. Just in case!

Thomas for one isn't happy about the direction Solvang is moving. He thinks Solvang needs to maintain its "special essence": "Its heritage and efforts to retain that special ambiance I used to ride a motorcycle for over a hundred miles to visit when I was a young man," he wrote on Facebook. Wow, that's oddly nonspecific.

It looks like Solvang's in for more of a rough ride. And I'm here to watch. I wouldn't miss it. Not for the world. ☹

The canary is buckled in and ready. Send thoughts to canary@santamariasun.com.

LETTERS from page 13

leadership and institutions, as well as vulnerabilities in our various supply chains. During such crises, we have the opportunity both as individuals and as a nation to take bold action to address these concerns.

Guy McCullough
Lompoc

that always look at things with a sour puss. They declare everyone is a victim and if you elect us we'll lift the yoke of oppression from your back. "You'll need for nothing because Big Brother government has got your back." I hope the lessons of these past months aren't forgotten soon.

Jan Lipski
Vandenberg Village

Victims or heroes?

I was tuned into a weekly technology podcast where everything new from Zoom-bombing to what technology Walmart was buying, and the conversation turned to face masks and how we were grateful that there were people out there still stocking shelves and running the checkouts. These people were real heroes. One of the participants, someone who obviously could have worn a graying ponytail, objected and quite emphatically and with a scowl on his face declared that they were not heroes. They were victims.

I don't know how you'd react, but I was stunned. He went on to say these poor people have no choice but to risk their lives every day. They have to come into work or starve. The government has made slaves of them to satisfy our needs. He went on to a screed of political hate only matched by—well you know the people I'm talking about.

I don't see the gal at the checkout who has had to quarantine herself from her grandchildren as a victim. Now true, some need to work due to their financial situation, but everyone still on the job that I have encountered has been very cordial. They don't seem to resent being there, and I would venture that they feel they are going the extra mile to keep the many customers that come in supplied with the necessities to keep their lives going during the restrictions. They always greet me with, "How are you." I reply, "I'm doing great and I hope the same is with you," and I add, "I'm glad you're here, and I'm thankful the truckers are still on the job."

But you know there are "Debbie Downers"

Loss of local oil projects has a far-reaching impact

Well, it appears that Aera Energy has thrown in the towel. The reasons given were the global drop in the price of oil coupled with the ever-increasing regulatory demands from the county. There is little that we can do to control the influence on crude prices, none that compare to the foreign petroleum producing giants. While it is easy to ponder the negative impact that the almost predictable "drop in prices" creates, it seems that their frequency is timed to destroy any projects stuck in the quagmire of our domestic, politically charged, regulatory permitting process.

Some see yet another failed petroleum project as a great victory for our community. Those at the front of that parade are the individuals who profit from obstructing yet another good-paying petroleum project. These zealots sitting up in their ivory towers would have you believe that this community should rejoice over the corpse of yet another oil permit application.

I do believe that this kind of thinking does in fact create casualties in our community, the first of which is good-paying jobs. The second is the loss of massive tax revenues that support important community services like mental health and our local school districts. Those funds also support hospitals, fire, and other emergency response services as well! I am shocked at the level of ignorance of some of our leaders, those who believe that an electric car is devoid of the need for petroleum products. Are you kidding? Approximately 50 percent of all cars—yes, electric cars as well—are

constructed from plastics, hence oil! I do not see that changing anytime soon.

We have an opportunity here in Santa Barbara to prove to the world that oil can be produced in a highly regulated environment. We must strictly adhere to regulations that protect our water, our people, our jobs, and our economy. But in all endeavors lie risk; this is a fact of life. We must balance all these variables. But when the process comes with a movable goal post, it has become almost impossible to successfully bring these projects to fruition. While another local project goes down in flames, rest assured that our foreign providers will fill in the gap. Those with zero regard for their environment. And you call this a victory for the people of Santa Barbara? Hardly.

Michael G. Lopez
business manager
U.A. Plumbers and Pipefitters Local Union 114,
Buellton

Housing density isn't the problem

I'm amazed, and sometimes amused, at the many creative reasons people give for wanting to stop housing development.

Now they've latched onto COVID-19. Because New York City has high density housing and high rates of COVID-19, they argue that building more housing will lead to the proliferation of diseases, higher infection rates, and more deaths.

They argue that we must stop building housing to protect the health of our community members. Their argument fails miserably in the light of reality.

High density housing doesn't cause COVID-19 and other diseases to spread. If density was the cause, the Navajo Nation, which has one of the lowest population densities in the nation, wouldn't have one of the worst outbreaks of COVID-19, would it?

Jerry Rioux
Santa Maria



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55 Fiction

A brief story, fifty-five
words or less, with
a headline no longer
than seven words.

Thank you to
everyone who
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The winners
will be published
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NewTimes Sun



PHOTO COURTESY OF AYA OKAWA

TO THE STARS

Starry Nights: Visions of the Night Sky, a multimedia exhibition at the Wildling Museum of Art and Nature in Solvang, was originally set to run through June 15 but has been extended to remain on display through Jan. 31, 2021, for guests to enjoy once the museum reopens. The exhibit features a variety of photography and paintings from several different artists. View the show's digital gallery at wildlingmuseum.org. Call (805) 688-1082 for additional info.
 —Caleb Wiseblood

HOT STUFF
 JUNE 25 – JULY 2
 2020

ARTS

SANTA YNEZ VALLEY

20/20: A RETROSPECTIVE This spring, the Wildling Museum of Art and Nature will mark its 20th anniversary with a special exhibition celebrating the Museum's 20-year history in the Santa Ynez Valley. View the exhibit online. Mondays, Wednesdays-Sundays, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. through Sept. 7 805-688-1082. wildlingmuseum.org/news/2020-retrospective. Wildling Museum of Art and Nature, 1511-B Mission Dr., Solvang.

THE ART OF FACE MASKS: VIRTUAL EXHIBIT This group show reunites several artists from the museum's 2019 exhibit, The Art of Dress, including Georganne Alex, Carole Coduti, Gwen Samuels, and others. ongoing Free. artoffacemasks.com. Elverhoj Museum of History and Art, 1624 Elverhoj Way, Solvang, 805-686-1211.

A MIGHTY OAK: PERMANENT EXHIBIT ONLINE Depicts the habitat around a Valley oak—one of the largest and old trees found in our area. View the artwork online. ongoing Free. Wildling Museum of Art and Nature, 1511-B Mission Dr., Solvang, 805-688-1082, wildlingmuseum.org.

NATURE PHOTOGRAPHY COMPETITION The theme of this competition's latest recurrence is Critters of the Tri-County Region, as applicants are encouraged to submit photos of all forms of wildlife—land and sea mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, insects—so long as they are found within the counties of San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, or Ventura. Through July 6 Wildling Museum of Art and Nature, 1511-B Mission Dr., Solvang, 805-688-1082, wildlingmuseum.org.

REMEMBERING BUD BOTTOMS: A LEGACY OF ART AND ACTIVISM This online exhibit features sea life sculpture works by the Santa Barbara artist locally-renowned for his iconic Dolphin Family sculpture installed at the base of Stearns Wharf. Through Sept. 22 Free. Wildling Museum of Art and Nature, 1511-B Mission Dr., Solvang, 805-688-1082, wildlingmuseum.org.

SB COUNTY AND BEYOND Photographic landscapes by George Rose. View online. ongoing Free. Wildling Museum of Art and Nature, 1511-B Mission Dr., Solvang, 805-688-1082, wildlingmuseum.org.

SOLVANG SCHOOL: INSPIRED BY NATURE View the exhibit online. Features photography by 29 Solvang School Yearbook and Media students. The students, grades 7–8, were inspired by philosopher Henry David Thoreau's quote: "All good things are wild and free." ongoing Free. Wildling Museum of Art and Nature, 1511-B

Mission Dr., Solvang, 805-688-1082, wildlingmuseum.org.

SUSAN OWENS: INSTAGRAM LIVE Q-AND-A Owens will illustrate the indigo dye process and answer questions about her work. **July 1, 4 p.m.** Elverhoj Museum of History and Art, 1624 Elverhoj Way, Solvang, 805-686-1211, elverhoj.org.

SANTA MARIA VALLEY/LOS ALAMOS

CALL FOR ARTISTS (GRADES 4-12): NEW CHILDREN'S BOOK This art contest will give students an opportunity create illustrations for a bilingual children's book that will depict local landmarks. Students are to create their illustration on a paper template entry form. All illustrations shall be created using colored pencils only. Through Sept. 25 Abel Maldonado Community Youth Center, 600 S. McClelland St., Santa Maria.

PCPA: ACTORS TALKBACK Streams live on PCPA's Instagram every Thursday and spotlights a different thespian guest each week. Hosted by Erik Stein. Thursdays, 3:30 p.m. Free. pcpa.org. PCPA: The Pacific Conservatory Theatre, 800 S. College, Santa Maria, 805-922-8313.

PCPA READS AT HOME A literacy project that uses our students' learning to serve children and parents who are learning at home. Co-hosted by Allan Hancock College and the Santa Maria-Bonita School District to bring a love of stories and language to people right in their homes. ongoing PCPA: The Pacific Conservatory Theatre, 800 S. College, Santa Maria, 805-922-8313, pcpa.org.

SMPL VALLEY READS BOOK CLUB The Valley Reads Book club meets very month on the fourth Tuesday (now over the phone). Interested community members should email jgaytan@cityofsantamaria.org to join. ongoing 805-925-0994. Santa Maria Public Library, 421 S. McClelland St., Santa Maria.

TECH TALKS: LIVE ON INSTAGRAM Every Tuesday sit down with one of our technical staff and learn about the ins and outs of their craft. Get the exclusive with

our host Erik Stein. Tuesdays, 3:30 p.m. PCPA: The Pacific Conservatory Theatre, 800 S. College, Santa Maria, 805-922-8313, pcpa.org.

WINE AND DESIGN VIRTUAL CLASSES Check Wine and Design's Orcutt website for the complete list of virtual classes online, for various ages. ongoing Varies. wineanddesign.com/orcutt. Wine and Design, 3420 Orcutt Road, suite 105, Orcutt.

WORKSHOPS VIA ZOOM Sara Curran Ice, PCPA's Technical Theatre Program Coordinator/Designer, is conducting Workshops via Zoom for local high school drama students. Check site or call for more info. ongoing PCPA: The Pacific Conservatory Theatre, 800 S. College, Santa Maria, 805-922-8313, pcpa.org.

SOUTH COAST SLO COUNTY

TEACHER AND STUDENT GRANTS Since the program's start in 2004, the Clark Center has provided more than \$150,000 in scholarships and grants to students and teachers. Grant applications are due June 30. Through June 30 Clark Center for the Performing Arts, 487 Fair Oaks Ave., Arroyo Grande, 805-489-9444, clarkcenter.org.

SAN LUIS OBISPO

CALL FOR ARTISTS: A DIGITAL ART SALON The San Luis Obispo Museum of Art (SLOMA) will be hosting A Digital Art Salon from Sept. 4 through Nov. 1 in partnership with the Digital Art Group. This juried exhibition will feature the diverse artwork being created by contemporary California digital artists. Through July 3 805-543-8562. artist.callforentry.org. San Luis Obispo Museum of Art, 1010 Broad St., San Luis Obispo.

CALL FOR ARTISTS: WHILE WE SHELTERED Seeking more artists to participate in the show "While We Sheltered". Requirement is that the artwork must have been created during the shelter-in-place orders (since March). Limited to 1 piece per artist and must be no larger than 16" x 20". Through July 31 Free. 805-747-

4200. artcentralartsupply.com/while-we-sheltered.php. Art Central, 1329 Monterey St., San Luis Obispo.

CALL FOR ENTRIES: DIGITAL SHORTS FILM FESTIVAL The San Luis Obispo Museum of Art (SLOMA) will be hosting the first Digital Shorts Film Festival on Sept. 26 in partnership with the Digital Art Group. This one-night-only event will feature digital shorts by artists from across California. Through July 3 805-543-8562. sloma.org/call_for_artists/digital-shorts/. San Luis Obispo Museum of Art, 1010 Broad St., San Luis Obispo.

GALA PRIDE AND DIVERSITY CENTER: VIRTUAL PRIDE FILM FESTIVAL A screening of *Three of Hearts*. This 2004 documentary follows a trinogamous relationship in New York City. Visit site for Zoom link and more info. **June 25, 6-8 p.m.** Free. 805-541-4252. galacc.org. GALA Center Gallery, 1060 Palm St., San Luis Obispo.

THE INTERMISSION SHOW This brisk 8- to 10-minute show is set up like a socially distanced talk show with SLO Rep's Managing Artistic Director Kevin Harris at the helm, clad in a tacky suit and tie with a faux alcoholic drink nearby. Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays, 3 p.m. San Luis Obispo Repertory Theatre, 888 Morro St., San Luis Obispo, 805-786-2440, slorep.org/.

SLOMA: WEEKLY ART PROJECTS Kids can enjoy new activities from home (posted online every Monday). Mondays sloma.org. San Luis Obispo Museum of Art, 1010 Broad St., San Luis Obispo, 543-8562.

VIRTUAL ART GALLERY Every Friday, we publish our Virtual Art Gallery to our blog and newsletter. Featuring artworks from customers and the community. Fridays, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Free. 805-747-4200. artcentralslo.wordpress.com/category/gallery-exhibits/virtual-gallery/. Art Central, 1329 Monterey St., San Luis Obispo.

NORTH SLO COUNTY

FREE VISUAL AND PERFORMING ART CLASSES (ONLINE) Check the foundation's site for various classes offered, for ages 5 to 18. Through Oct. 31 Paso Robles Youth Arts Foundation, 3201 Spring St., Paso Robles, 805-238-5825, pryaf.org.

INTRODUCING ENCAUSTICS Encaustic workshop that provides an intro to basic techniques. Taught by Vicky Hoffman. All supplies included. To register and prepay, contact vicky@vickyhoffman.com **June 27, 1-4 p.m.** \$75. 310-993-1732. Marie A Ramey, 7460 Pinal Ave, Atascadero.

MOSAIC MIRROR WORKSHOP Create a mosaic mirror by gluing pieces of glass on to a pre-cut wooden base on the first day; return to the studio to grout your piece the following day. Limited to 6 participants. Masks required. **June 27, 10 a.m.-noon and June 28, 12-1 p.m.**



New Times and the Sun now share their community listings for a complete Central Coast calendar running from SLO County through northern Santa Barbara County. Submit events online by logging in with your Google, Facebook, or Twitter account at newtimeslo.com. You may also email calendar@newtimeslo.com. Deadline is one week before the issue date on Thursdays. Submissions are subject to editing and approval. Contact Calendar Editor Caleb Wiseblood directly at cwisblood@newtimeslo.com.

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Starting at \$65. 805-464-2633. glassheadstudio.com. Glasshead Studio, 8793 Plata Lane, Suite H, Atascadero.

STUDIOS ON THE PARK: ONLINE CLASSES AND WORKSHOPS Check site for a variety of virtual classes and workshops online. ongoing studiosonthepark.org. Studios on the Park, 1130 Pine St., Paso Robles, 805-238-9800.

CULTURE & LIFESTYLE

LOMPOC/VANDENBERG

GOOD MORNING LOMPOC The show is hosted by Lompoc locals Michelle and Jeremy Ball, who aim to keep the community connected while staying home at the same time. Episodes are also available to watch on YouTube after they're streamed live. Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays, 8:30 a.m. Facebook, Online, Inquire for Facebook address.

SANTA MARIA VALLEY/LOS ALAMOS

BIZ MASTERS TOASTMASTERS TUESDAYS: ZOOM Learn more about Toastmasters, prepare for 'Your Competitive Future', and improve your communication and leadership skills. Zoom Meeting ID: 317 198 472 (Password: 630). Tuesdays, 6:30-8 p.m. through Dec. 15 Free. 805-570-0620. Santa Maria Airport, 3249 Terminal Dr., Santa Maria.

GUIDED MEDITATION WORKSHOP: YOGA 4 MANKIND This session, hosted by Tina Ventrella, is part of a beginner meditation series that guides participants on utilizing the benefits of meditation through various techniques. **June 27**, 8:30-9:30 a.m. Yoga for Mankind, 130 N Broadway, suite B, Orcutt, yogaformankind.com.

HOPE MERCHANDISE PICK-UP: SANTA MARIA PRIDE Pride Packages include limited edition HOPE face masks, buttons, stickers, and more. **June 27**, 4-8 p.m. \$10 each. HOPE, House of Pride and Equality, Santa Maria, 805-316-1356, houseofprideandequality.org.

HUMAN BEING SUPPORT AND INSPIRATION ONLINE GROUP An online group to listen and get support from others from the comfort of your own home. Tuesdays, 6:30-8 p.m. \$40 monthly subscription. 805-598-1509. divining.weebly.com. Divine Inspiration, 947 E Orange St., Santa Maria.

SANTA MARIA PRIDE: POETRY NIGHT Part of HOPE's virtual Santa Maria Pride series. Check HOPE's Facebook, Instagram, or website for more info. **June 26**, 6:30 p.m. HOPE, House of Pride and Equality, Santa Maria, 805-316-1356, houseofprideandequality.org.

YOGA FOR MANKIND: ZOOM CLASSES Offering a variety of virtual yoga and pilates classes over the summer. Check site for class schedule. ongoing Starts at \$10. yoga4mankind.org. Yoga for Mankind, 130 N Broadway, suite B, Orcutt.

I2 and 3I YOUTH PRIDE LOUNGE: ONLINE Part of HOPE's virtual Santa Maria Pride series. Check HOPE's Facebook, Instagram, or website for more info. **June 25**, 6 p.m. HOPE, House of Pride and Equality, Santa Maria, 805-316-1356, houseofprideandequality.org.

SOUTH COAST SLO COUNTY

CENTRAL COAST PROGRESSIVES: MARCH FOR CHANGE Starts at the Nipomo Park Gazebo. Hosted by the Central Coast Progressives. Those with violent intentions to break this peaceful protest are not welcomed. **June 25**, 4:30-7 p.m. Free. Nipomo Regional Park, 255 Pomeroy Road, Nipomo.

SAN LUIS OBISPO

HELP AND HOPE WEBINAR: EARLY STAGE DEMENTIA AND CARE PARTNERS An educational program for people in the early stages of Alzheimer's disease or other dementia and their primary care-partners. Six 1-hour webinars over 2 weeks covering issues that couples and families face as they travel the Alzheimer's journey together. Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays, 10:30-11:30 a.m. through June 26 Free. 805-547-3830. alz.org/cacentralcoast. Downtown SLO, Higuera Street, San Luis Obispo.

MEDITATION, BREATHWORK, AND GRATITUDE PRACTICE: LIVE ON ZOOM This class will support you and help you stay vital during these uncertain times. Practices include breathing techniques to calm the nervous system, guided meditation for balanced relaxation, mantra practice to calm the mind, and tips to help you cultivate and maintain a home practice. Wednesdays, 12-12:45 p.m. through Sept. 16 \$10 for SLO Botanical Garden members/\$15 for non-members. 805-540-1762. eventbrite.com. San Luis Obispo Botanical Garden, 3450 Dairy Creek Rd., San Luis Obispo.

METABOLIC CONDITIONING We use primarily our own body weight in this interval training class to run through exercises and drills to raise the heart rate, condition our muscles, and stay flexible. This advanced

PHOTO COURTESY OF GLASSHEAD STUDIO



CIRCLE OF TRUST

Glasshead Studio in Atascadero hosts its two-day mosaic mirror workshop on Saturday, June 27, from 10 a.m. to noon, and Sunday, June 28, from noon to 1 p.m. The class will be limited to six participants, who will be able to create their own mosaic mirrors to take home. Face masks are required. Admission to the workshop is \$65. Call (805) 464-2633 or visit glassheadstudio.com for more details. The studio is located at 8793 Plata Lane, suite H, Atascadero.

—C.W.

class also incorporates hand weights and sand bags, if you have them. Mondays-Thursdays, 8:15-9:15 a.m. \$72. 415-516-5214. ae.slcsud.org. Online, 1500 Lizzie Street, San Luis Obispo.

THE MONDAY CLUB YOGA ON ZOOM A 60-minute Restorative Flow Yoga Class on ZOOM. Zoom meeting info will be included in your registration confirmation email. All proceeds benefit The Monday Clubhouse Conservancy, devoted to the preservation of this historical clubhouse. Mondays, 4-5:15 p.m. through June 29 \$15. themondayclubslo.org/events. The Monday Club, 1815 Monterey St., San Luis Obispo, 805-541-0594.

QID: QUEER IDENTITIES ARE INTERSECTIONAL AND DIVERSE

A live Instagram stream on @thegalacenter. **June 27**, 10:30-11:30 a.m. Free. 805-541-4252. galacc.org. GALA Center Gallery, 1060 Palm St., San Luis Obispo.

VIRTUAL TOUR OF THE DALLIDET ADOBE The Dallidet family lived in San Luis Obispo from the 1850s through the 1950s. Hear their stories while visiting the family home. Please register by noon on Thursdays. Thursdays, 1 p.m. through Aug. 27 \$5 suggested. 805-543-0638. historycenterslo.org/virtual-tour.html. Dallidet Adobe, 1185 Pacific Street, San Luis Obispo.

NORTH COAST SLO COUNTY

MORRO BAY MARTIAL ARTS: WORLD CHAMPION INSTRUCTION A variety of adult and youth classes. Instructor has more than 35 years of experience. Mondays-Saturdays, 7 a.m.-8 p.m. through Dec. 31 Call for details. 805-701-7397. charvetmartialarts.com. Morro Bay Martial Arts, 850 Shasta, Morro Bay.

SUMMER CELEBRATION: OUTDOOR SUCCULENT PLANTS AND POTTERY SALE Rare chance to shop from three succulent plant vendors and a skilled potter. Take advantage of expert advice on selections, placement, and care of your new plants. Cal Poly's Mike Bush will be on hand for your questions. Great prices on healthy, interesting

plant specimens; plus gorgeous pots. **June 26**, 12-6 p.m. and **June 27**, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Free. 805-602-7817. Steve Super Gardens, 2016 9th St., Los Osos.

TAI CHI AND QI GONG: ZEN IN MOTION Taught by 2019 Tai Chi Instructor of the Year. A deep breathing moving meditation. Focus on breathing and intention of the mind. Mondays, 8 a.m.-3:30 p.m. Call for price details. 805-701-7397. charvetmartialarts.com. Morro Bay Martial Arts, 850 Shasta, Morro Bay.

HOT STUFF continued page 17



Last chance!

20th Annual
Best of Northern
Santa Barbara County
Readers Poll

Visit our website for materials to help promote your votes!

VOTE BY 5PM MONDAY
JUNE 29, 2020

Vote online today @ SantaMariaSun.com

FOOD & DRINK

SANTA YNEZ VALLEY

KALYRA: PURCHASES AND PICK-UPS Offering varietals from all over the world. Tuesdays-Sundays, 12-5 p.m. 805-693-8864. kalyrawinery.com. Kalyra Winery, 343 N. Refugio Rd., Santa Ynez.

STANDING SUN: PURCHASES AND DELIVERIES Visit site for Cellar Club details and more info. Mondays-Thursdays, 11 a.m.-5 p.m. 805-691-9413. standingsunwines.com. Standing Sun Wines, 92 2nd St., Unit D, Buellton, 805-691-9413.



BARREL ROOM BASH

Cass Winery hosts its inaugural Fourth of July Party in its Barrel Room Event Center on Saturday, July 4. To encourage social distancing, the event will be broken up into three sessions of limited capacity: 2 to 4 p.m., 4 to 6 p.m., and 6 to 8 p.m. Admission is \$5, and attendees are encouraged to reserve their time slots as soon as possible. Guests can look forward to enjoying backyard games, live music, wine, and barbecue. Tickets are available online in advance at my805tix.com.

—C.W.

LOMPOC/VANDENBERG

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SANTA MARIA PHILHARMONIC: SOUNDCLLOUD Features recordings of the Mozart Sinfonia from the Philharmonic's last live concert and other recordings. ongoing Free. smphilharmonic.org. Soundcloud (Santa Maria Philharmonic), Online, Santa Maria.

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HOT SWINGIN' JAZZ: LIVE STREAM The Creole Syncopators will be featured in a live stream performance. The Basin Street Regulars is hosting live stream events at its regularly scheduled concert dates and times until the restrictions on the Pismo Beach Veteran's Hall are lifted. First Sunday of every month, 2-4 p.m. through July 5. Donation suggested. 805-937-8402. pismojazz.com. Pismo Beach Veterans Memorial Hall, 780 Bello St., Pismo Beach.

HOT SWINGIN' JAZZ: BELMONT KINGS MarciJean and the Belmont Kings will be featured in a live stream performance in view of current event restrictions. **June 27**, 2-4 p.m. Donation suggested. 805-937-8402. pismojazz.com. Pismo Beach Veterans Memorial Hall, 780 Bello St., Pismo Beach.

SAN LUIS OBISPO

ENCORE LIVE PRESENTS GARTH BROOKS **June 27**, 8:30 & 11:15 p.m. bigbigso.com. Sunset Drive In Theatre, 255 Elks Lane, San Luis Obispo. ○

FILE IMAGE COURTESY OF CORINNE LIGHTWEAVER



DREAM WEAVERS

Reweaving Our Social Fabric, a new group show at Studios on the Park in Paso Robles, opened on June 15 and will remain on display through July. This collaborative exhibition showcases four female artists: Corinne Lightweaver, Judy Johnson-Williams, Peg Grady, and Marsha Shaw. Call (805) 238-9800 or visit studiosonthepark.org for more info. The gallery is located at 1130 Pine St., Paso Robles.

—C.W.

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Wednesdays Around the World Dinner: Germany
WEDNESDAY, JULY 8
CASS Winery



Bang Muay Thai Curriculum Review
SATURDAY, JULY 11
Sleeping Tiger Fitness



Tiny Porch Summer Concert Series: AJ Lee & Blue Summit with Miner
SUNDAY, JULY 12
King Gillette Ranch



Tribute to James Taylor
TUESDAY, JULY 14
The Savory Palette, Morro Bay



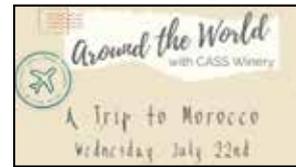
2020 Estate Beef Dinner Series: Short Ribs
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Bingo Bonanza 2020 Benefiting Hospice of SLO
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Barrel Room Concert: Unfinished Business
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Wednesdays Around the World Dinner: Morocco
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Rising Moon Sunset Series
SATURDAY, AUGUST 1
Doce Robles Winery & Vineyard



Tiny Porch Summer Concert Series: Sunny War with Laura Jean
SUNDAY, AUGUST 2
King Gillette Ranch



Zongo All Stars
SATURDAY, AUGUST 8
Point San Luis Lighthouse



Barrel Room Concert: The Mother Corn Shuckers
SUNDAY, AUGUST 9
CASS Winery



2020 Estate Beef Dinner Series: Ribeye
FRIDAY, AUGUST 14
CASS Winery



Yoga at the Lighthouse
SATURDAY, AUGUST 15
Point San Luis Lighthouse



Evening Under the Estrella Sky Winemakers Dinner
SATURDAY, AUGUST 15
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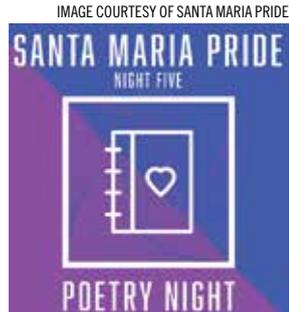
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Arts Briefs

HOPE takes Poetry Night and other Santa Maria Pride events online this year

The House of Pride and Equality (HOPE) kicked off its virtual series of Santa Maria Pride events with a live music stream on June 22, which continued with an LGBTQ+ panel on June 23, and its annual Drag Show on June 24.



The series continues with Youth Pride Lounge on Thursday, June 25, starting at 6 p.m., and Poetry Night on Friday, June 26, starting at 6:30 p.m. Guests can find out more about each nightly livestream and join in by following HOPE on Facebook (facebook.com/houseofprideandequality) or Instagram (@santamariapride).

Also in celebration of Santa Maria Pride, HOPE is currently offering a variety of Pride Packages, which feature limited edition HOPE face masks, commemorative buttons, stickers, and more. Packages are available for pre-order, at \$10 each, and a merchandise pickup day takes place on Saturday, June 27, from 4 to 8 p.m.

Visit santamariapride.com or houseofprideandequality.org for more details. As a nonprofit, HOPE also accepts donations at any time, and all contributions are tax-deductible.

Allan Hancock College Library initiates COVID-19 archive project

PHOTO COURTESY OF ALLAN HANCOCK COLLEGE



The staff of the Allan Hancock College (AHC) Library is currently collecting materials related to the COVID-19 outbreak for a historic archiving project. Area residents are welcome to submit any of their recorded experiences—in the form of photos, videos, essays, journal entries, poems, audio recordings, or other archival materials—of the ongoing coronavirus pandemic and the subsequent shelter-in-place order.

“Over the last few months, the AHC Library staff have heard stories of the resiliency, struggles, Herculean efforts, ingenuity, and heartache our students and community have experienced over the last three months,” librarian Susanna Kopecky said in a press release from Hancock. “We knew this was one of those times that needed to be documented, remembered, and preserved for the future.”

Those who wish to participate in the archival project can fill in an online form (available at bit.ly/achcovidarchiving). Users must have a Google-associated email account to access the document.

The concept of documenting daily life during the COVID-19 crisis ties into the AHC Library’s role in teaching information literacy, Kopecky explained, and the ability to recognize credible sources.

“Everyone is reacting and reflecting in their own way, and we would like to hear from anyone who is interested in sharing their reflections,” Kopecky said in the release. “Years from now, people will wonder what life was like during the pandemic, and we would like to be able to provide that glimpse of life for the historic record.”

Visit hancockcollege.edu/library for more details. ○

Arts Briefs is compiled by Arts Editor Caleb Wiseblood. Send information to cwiseblood@santamariasun.com.



COMPOSER AND CONDUCTOR: Along with composing for several television and film projects over the last three decades, Carl Johnson has orchestrated for *Skyfall*, *Monsters Inc.*, *WALL-E*, *The Perfect Storm*, and other blockbusters.

Stay tuned

Emmy Award-winning composer and Santa Ynez local Carl Johnson reflects on a rewarding career in film and television

BY CALEB WISEBLOOD

Like many origin stories, the tale of Carl Johnson’s foray into professional composing (*Looney Tunes*, *Care Bears*, *Batman: The Animated Series*) and orchestrating (*Monsters Inc.*, *WALL-E*, *Skyfall*) isn’t without happenstance.

“Suddenly there was the piano,” said Johnson, revealing the first instrument he played, at age 7. “My grandparents bought my family a piano, and my parents had no idea until this piano showed up one day.”

Johnson’s parents then decided to sign him up for piano lessons, although he had no prior interest in music at that point. Could they have guessed their son might be orchestrating for a James Bond film someday?

“I took piano lessons all the way until I graduated high school,” Johnson told the *Sun*. “I ended up initially just kind of going along with it and then enjoying it more and more as I got older.”

Along the way, Johnson picked up some trombone skills as well, which resulted in a college scholarship, he explained.

“I ended up going to University of Kansas on a trombone scholarship, even though I wasn’t a music major,” Johnson said. “Just because they needed a certain number of trombones for marching band.”

During college one summer, Johnson’s marching band experience helped him nab his first paid gig as a musician, at the “happiest place on Earth,” no less, Disneyland.

The opportunity to perform in Disney’s All-American College Band brought the Leavenworth, Kansas, native to California—but it was a film scoring program at USC that kept him there. Johnson stayed in Los Angeles after graduating and within a few years was hired to compose for Disney’s *Goof Troop*, based on a recommendation from one of his USC professors. This was Johnson’s first venture into the world of animated television. Johnson began work on the show in 1992,

Master class

Visit hancockcollege.edu to find out more about Allan Hancock College’s new online music business course, taught by Carl Johnson. Check out carljohnsonmusic.com for more info on the composer.

composing for more than 50 episodes, and was able to maintain a chain of steady gigs with other productions from then on, he said. *Animaniacs*, *Mighty Ducks*, *Pinky and the Brain*, *Gargoyles*, and *Invasion America* (which scored him an Emmy Award) were just a few of the other ’90s titles he worked on.

“It’s kind of a small community of people—composers, musicians who work in the animation—and so I was able to sort of work for several different people,” Johnson explained, “and over the course of the years, build relationships and sort of bounce around from one project to the next.”

The first post-*Goof Troop* show Johnson hopped aboard however was *Batman: The Animated Series*, where he met another celebrated composer in the animation industry, Shirley Walker (also well-known as a frequent conductor for both Danny Elfman and Hans Zimmer).

After moving to Los Olivos in 1996, Johnson had Walker and her husband, Don, over for a few visits. It wasn’t long before the couple, like Johnson and his wife, quickly fell in love with the Central Coast.

“Within a year, they had sold their house in Chatsworth and bought a house in Ballard,” Johnson recalled. “It was really neat, they lived in the area for a while, and I got to spend more time with them.”

Shirley and Don started their own vineyard on Alamo Pintado Road in Los Olivos (Palmina Wines still carries the Walker Vineyard label) before they both passed away in 2006.

“She made a real point to try to help up-and-coming composers,” Johnson said of Shirley, who he considered an important mentor. “She was just very open. Her observations wouldn’t hold back on criticism sometimes, but she was also very honest in her appreciations.”

Johnson is taking on a mentorship role of his own this summer as Allan Hancock College’s new music business instructor. The composer described his new course as “kind of a bird’s eye



SCHOOL OF ROCK: Carl Johnson said his new online music business course at Hancock will give an overview of how the music industry works, from copyright and licensing issues to different career paths.

view of what makes the music business tick.”

“It will give an overview of sort of the nuts and bolts of how the music industry works,” he said, “from copyright and licensing issues to different kinds of career paths for people who aspire to be performing artists or recording artists.”

“The thing about the entertainment industry is it’s so vast, and there’s so many different niches and job titles that it’s impossible to know everything,” he added. “But I’m looking forward to visiting about the parts I know about and learning what the students that go there are interested in.”

Johnson previously taught orchestration courses at UCLA before committing to his latest scoring project, *Looney Toons Cartoons* (2020), which recently premiered on HBO Max. After commuting to LA from the Santa Ynez Valley for so long, Johnson said he’s excited to join the Hancock family and teach closer to home—or directly from home, as his music business course is online.

“I really enjoyed teaching there [UCLA], but it was a long drive, and I was pretty exhausted by the time I got home,” Johnson said. “But when this opportunity came up at Allan Hancock, especially being able to do it remotely, I figured I’d love to get back in front of some students again—even if only virtually.” ○

Arts Editor Caleb Wiseblood is rewatching *Gargoyles* on Disney Plus. Send comments to cwiseblood@santamariasun.com.



GRAND ADVENTURES: Santa Ynez-based composer Carl Johnson has worked on several of Disney’s Winnie the Pooh properties over the years, including *Piglet’s Big Movie*, *Pooh’s Grand Adventure: The Search for Christopher Robin*, and *Winnie the Pooh: Seasons of Giving*.

PHOTO COURTESY OF SARAH RAINES



WARM WELCOME: Longtime theater and music teacher Sarah Raines (pictured) will use her new role with Youth ARTS Alive to not only organize the program's classes but also lobby city government, local businesses, and schools to provide more funds for public art and arts education.

Taking the reins

PCPA alumna Sarah Raines enters new role as program coordinator for Youth ARTS Alive

BY CALEB WISEBLOOD

Contrary to the timeless Alice Cooper adage, school's *in* for summer—at least for Youth ARTS Alive, a nonprofit dedicated to providing free courses in arts education in Santa Maria since 2017. Tentatively starting July 13, local students ages 12 through 17 can take advantage of free classes in theater, music, dance, and visual arts at the Abel Maldonado Community Youth Center.

Complying with public safety guidelines, face masks will be required, and each class will be designed to keep participants at least 6 feet apart at all times, Sarah Raines explained.

It's alive!

Visit youthartsalive.org to find out more about the program's tentative summer schedule of free classes at the Abel Maldonado Community Youth Center, located at 600 S. McClelland St., Santa Maria.

Raines' appointment as the school's new youth arts education and arts advocacy program coordinator was announced at the end of May by Founder and Director Gale McNeeley.

"I want to assure the public that we will only have these classes if we can do it in a safe way," Raines told the *Sun*. "We definitely want to make the program happen, but not at the cost of the safety of our students and teachers."

Raines will use her new role with Youth ARTS Alive to not only organize the program's classes but also lobby city government, local businesses, and schools to provide more funds for public art and arts education.

FILE PHOTO COURTESY OF YOUTH ARTS ALIVE



JUST DANCE: Since its inception in 2017, Youth ARTS Alive has provided free arts programming to Santa Maria students ages 12 through 17. Here's a snapshot taken during one of the program's past dance courses, taught by instructor Marilyn Mercado.

"I really enjoy being able to see the plans I've made come to fruition. So, if July classes happen, that will be very fulfilling for me to watch," Raines said.

An alumna of the Pacific Conservatory Theatre (PCPA), Raines found out about Youth ARTS Alive's new program coordinator position through her alma mater, she explained.

"A contact of mine at PCPA heard about the opening and suggested I might be interested, and I was," said Raines, who studied classical voice at New York University (NYU) before beginning her PCPA adventures in California.

"After [NYU], my career involved a lot of teaching and some performing. When I decided that I wanted to infuse more performing in my career, I auditioned for PCPA," she said. "My experience there has been very fulfilling. I felt connected to my fellow students almost immediately. The teachers there have pushed me to grow but also to stand by my side when I need guidance."

Other local organizations Raines has worked for include Lompoc Youth Theater, where she directed several shows for the company, including *Schoolhouse Rock: Live Jr.*, *The Nutcracker: A Mini Musical*, *Jungle Book Kids*, and *High School Musical Jr.* She also produced a variety of performing arts workshops for children—in improv, puppetry, and other theater-related subjects.

While theater, dance, and visual arts classes encompass a huge part of Youth ARTS Alive's programming, this July's tentative schedule is slated to include a plethora of music courses, with concentrations in guitar, ukulele, and drumming. Registration is free and available on youthartsalive.org.

"I think it's a beautiful thing to provide free arts education to youth from professional artists. If we are able to have in-person classes, then I am most excited to see Youth ARTS Alive instructors in action," Raines said. "And I think we will see the long-term effects of arts education are good for the individual and for society at large." ○

Arts Editor Caleb Wiseblood is a big fan of arts education. Send comments to cwiseblood@santamariasun.com.

PHOTO COURTESY OF CHELSEA GARCIA



TO THE BEAT OF YOUR OWN DRUM: Gale McNeeley (pictured, left) founded Youth ARTS Alive in 2017. The local nonprofit is dedicated to providing free arts education courses, including in drumming and other musical concentrations.

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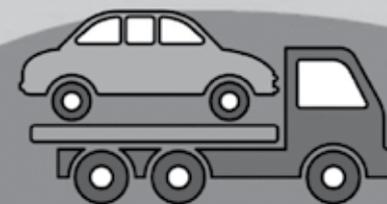


PHOTO COURTESY OF A24

American Muslim

Ramy Youssef stars as the titular lead of the Muslim-centric dramedy *Ramy*, now in its second season on Hulu. *Ramy* lives at home with his father, Farouk (Amr Waked); mother, Maysa (Hiam Abbass); and antagonistic sister, Dena (May Calamawy), and the series explores *Ramy's* travails as he attempts to navigate the fine line between his faith and America's anything-goes culture. (20 30-min. episodes)

Glen: Muslims only make up a little more than 1 percent of the U.S. population, or about 3.45 million people, and in general, the media seems to portray followers of Islam as zealots or extremists, but this show seems determined to dispel that stereotype. *Ramy* is a 20-something whose job at a failed startup has ended, and he's grown tired of sleeping with non-Muslim women he meets at clubs. He doesn't drink, and he follows prayer traditions, but he's a bit of a slacker when it comes to embracing all of Islam. When he goes to the mosque for prayer, instead of properly washing, as is tradition, he just sort of socks his feet without taking his socks off—the equivalent of the little kid who wets his toothbrush to prove to his mom that he brushed his teeth. When he asks his parents to arrange a date with a Muslim woman, he's shocked to find she's sexually aggressive. He's confused and searching for his sense of place. Desperate for a job, he goes to work for his racist uncle, Naseem (Laith Nakli), in the diamond district.

RAMY

What's it rated? **TV-MA**
 What's it worth, Anna? **Full price**
 What's it worth, Glen? **Full price**
 Where's it showing? **Hulu TV**

The series is mostly a comedy, but it also explores racism against the Muslim community. The most potent episode is the fourth, "Strawberries," a flashback to 9/11, where *Ramy* learns some hard lessons about bigotry, but he also meets one of his lifelong friends, Stevie (Steve Way), confined to a wheelchair due to muscular dystrophy. Way is, in fact, confined to a wheelchair. The writing is thought-provoking and often raw, and the series offers insight into one of the U.S.'s most misunderstood and marginalized communities. **Anna:** While *Ramy* is the lead here, the writers are smart to shift focus onto the supporting characters as well. For instance, one episode focuses on his mom, Maysa, who feels stuck in the slump of both aging and loneliness. When *Ramy* blows off being her ride to the store, Maysa has a pleasant experience with a Lyft driver, which inspires her to join up as a driver. She soon learns that not everyone needing a ride also needs a new friend, and almost gives up the app until a charming French man makes her feel a spark. It's tender and also really sad, with a wonderful performance by Abbass. Another episode in the first season focuses on Dena, a 25-year-old student and virgin struggling with her culture's expectations of purity and being a young, modern woman ready to jump into her life. It's great to see this largely misunderstood religion and immigrant experience played out on screen. *Ramy* is a wonderful focus for the series to center on, but it certainly isn't just his story; there is a lot to dive into here. **Glen:** Too true. Showing the unfair expectations for male and female behavior in the Muslim

culture makes clear that the series isn't here to whitewash Islam. No one bats an eye at *Ramy's* promiscuity, but if his sister did the same, she'd be disowned. Uncle Naseem's anti-Semitism is another example of examining Islam with an unblinking eye. When *Ramy* falls for a Jewish girl who tries to get him to take ecstasy, and he won't, she hooks up with another guy, and his two Muslim friends berate him for being too uptight. He's really adrift! Toward the end of the first season, he takes a trip to his family's homeland, Egypt, hoping to connect with his deeper traditions, but instead of helping him better embrace his faith, his Egyptian cousin just wants to take him to parties where people are smoking and taking drugs. We haven't started season 2 yet, but I'm looking forward to it because Mahershala Ali is joining the cast as Sheikh Malik. At its core, the series is interested in how difficult it is to be a good Muslim in America. This one's a must-see for anyone interested in expanding their knowledge of Islam in America. **Anna:** *Ramy's* spirituality and devotion to Islam is certainly not unshakeable. He wants to be a good Muslim, but he also has a pull to blur the lines on what is right or wrong. Sex is fun, he fakes drinking with his non-Muslim friends, but at some point he realizes his life is feeling empty.



FINDING HIS PLACE: Hulu TV series *Ramy*, starring Ramy Youssef (center), explores what it means to be Muslim in America.

Maybe being more devout in his faith and practice of it will help him feel more grounded and fulfilled? It's not easy, and while he jumps in with both feet, the same temptations and tendencies are still ever-present. The family core adds interesting dynamics, from Dena continually frustrated by her parents' constant attention and rule over her life to *Ramy* reluctantly taking a job with his awful uncle doing something he really has no interest in. I'll definitely be checking out season 2 of this one. It started and stayed strong through season 1, and I have high hopes it will continue to be funny, thought-provoking, and real. ○

New Times Senior Staff Writer Glen Starkey and freelancer Anna Starkey write Sun Screen. Glen compiles streaming listings. Comment at gstarkey@newtimeslo.com.

TV Reviews

PHOTO COURTESY OF DINO DE LAURENTIS COMPANY



THE 'GOOD' DOCTOR: Mads Mikkelsen stars as psychiatrist Dr. Hannibal Lecter, in the TV series *Hannibal*, on Hulu, about Lecter's patient, an FBI profiler who doesn't realize his therapist is a cannibal.

HANNIBAL

What's it rated? **TV-14**
 When? **2013-2015**
 Where's it showing? **Amazon Prime**

This overlooked crime drama follows FBI criminal profiler Will Graham (Hugh Dancy), whose ability to empathize with serial killers makes him a useful tool for his FBI handler Jack Crawford (Laurence Fishburne) but something of a freak to everyone else. Luckily, Graham is being treated by psychiatrist Dr. Hannibal Lecter (Mads Mikkelsen), a detached cannibal. Yes, the series is based on Thomas Harris' novels *Red Dragon*, *Hannibal*, and *Hannibal Rising*—the original-story predecessors of Harris' best-known story and best film in the series, *The Silence of the Lambs*. Visually arresting and with terrific performances, the series is very engrossing, originally appearing on NBC, which canceled the series after the third season due to low ratings. Maybe it met its demise because it was competing against *The Walking Dead* and *American Horror Story*, and the audience for a horror TV series was stretched thin, but it's grisly fun. There's also talk of series creator Bryan Fuller mounting a fourth season. If he does, I'm all in. (39 44-min. episodes)
 —Glen Starkey

I'LL BE GONE IN THE DARK

What's it rated? **Unknown**
 When? **Begins June 28**
 Where's it showing? **HBO**

Based on the bestselling book by the late Michelle McNamara, *I'll Be Gone in the Dark* is an upcoming six-part HBO series chronicling the decades-long crime spree, investigation, and eventual capture of the Golden State Killer. McNamara tragically passed before Joseph DeAngelo was identified as the man who terrorized Californians for more than 10 years, committing more than 50 rapes and 13 murders. Weaving interviews with McNamara's husband, Patton Oswalt; detective Paul Holes; and crime writer Billy Jensen, this is as much a story of Michelle's all-encompassing obsession as it is the hunt for the killer. McNamara's book was unfinished at the time of her death, and this series also chronicles figuring out how to finish her work in a way that honored both the woman behind it and the incredible amount of work she put into searching for answers. (six episodes) ○
 —Anna Starkey
Sun film reviews are compiled by New Times Senior Staff Writer Glen Starkey. Contact him at gstarkey@newtimeslo.com.

PHOTO COURTESY OF HBO



EXPOSING THE GOLDEN STATE KILLER: HBO's forthcoming six-part documentary series shows how Michelle McNamara's posthumously published book about her obsessive search for the Golden State Killer heightened awareness and led to the arrest of Joseph James DeAngelo, finally caught at age 72 in 2018, who was responsible for at least 13 murders and more than 50 rapes between 1974 and 1986.

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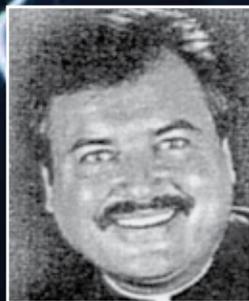
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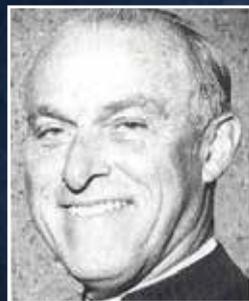
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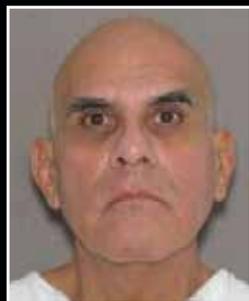
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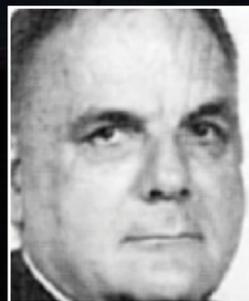
Fidencio
Flores Silva
(Silva-Flores)



Michael M.
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LUNA RAD: The new Marketplace at Luna Red in SLO provides picnic food, libations, farmers' market fresh produce, and a butcher fridge.



IMMUNE SYSTEM SHOTS: Due to some guidance from the Cal Poly Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship and the Central California Small Business Development Center, local food companies like BlissRiver Organics could increase its supply of elderberry syrup and keep SLO County residents healthy.

Find a lifeline

Here's how local food and drink businesses are reaching out for help as the economy starts to open back up

BY BETH GIUFFRE

If you haven't been out to eat yet, and you can, I suggest you do so right now. Because the only variable that experts can't predict is when customers will be patronizing food and drink businesses again, but it needs to happen for any of the Central Coast's fantastic programs to work.

Judy Mahan—who has a dual role as the director of the Small Business Development Center (SBDC) and the incubator director for Cal Poly Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship (CIE) at the HotHouse—has been helping local businesses get back on their feet. The SBDC CIE is part of a newly developed emergency task force that helps businesses apply for disaster loans.

Mahan said that while we've been in quarantine, her staff secured disaster loan funding for about 500 businesses.

The nonprofit has concentrated on three different markets that have been the hardest hit: brick-and-mortar retail (especially those without an e-commerce presence), restaurants, and health and wellness, which include gyms and yoga studios. Tech and innovation is their biggest focus in helping these businesses succeed.

"Last year we had banner year," Mahan said about 2019. "We worked with 350 companies. We helped raise, give or take, \$18 [million] to \$20 million. We were super stoked. Most of the funding came from angel or venture funders."

This year was a little different.

"When COVID hit, in that 12-week period, we worked with 450-plus companies, so we exceeded the number of companies we worked with in 12 weeks as compared to a whole year's worth."

The good news, she said, is that a lot of disaster loan capital has come into SLO County.

Mahan said they've been working with the restaurant business on everything from developing to-go menus to just being there to talk. The one-to-one business coaching that the nonprofit offers has been much of the latter, she said. Even business owners and CEOs who are used to taking on the responsibility themselves need a sounding board for these strange times, she said—a sort of business therapy, so to speak.

"Business owners are hustlers," Mahan said. "They're always

Resources for opening up

Become a client of the Central California Small Business Development Center (SBDC) and Cal Poly Center for Innovation & Entrepreneurship (CIE) by visiting ciesbdc.com or 872 Higuera St. in SLO, calling (805) 756-5171, or emailing sbdc@calpoly.edu.

going to figure it out. They work so hard. To be an entrepreneur you need that mindset. But you know what? Sometimes it feels really good to get support. Mentally, emotionally, sometimes we're here just to listen."

Now Mahan's staff is helping the local restaurant business navigate the new and changing financial landscape and streamline their processes.

"The summer season is starting," she said. "Tourism is coming back, but there is limited use of space within the restaurants, etc., so what we decided to focus on is how to help these businesses reinvent the business model."

She mentioned some great examples of innovation, such as the marketplaces that have popped up in lieu of dining in.

"They have become our Blue Aprons, if you will, where consumers can walk in, get a meal kit ready-to-go prep dinner, or just to-go meal," Mahan said. "There's been a lot of creativity that is starting to bubble up ... but what we want to see is even more innovation at that level."

To make it easier on clients, SBDC CIE sends regular email blasts and webinars for business coaching. The webinars are open to anyone who needs help.

Currently Mahan and Program Manager Liz Fisher are preparing for a webinar about relaunching your business. To help those who need a nudge into thinking outside the box, Fisher is organizing a conversation with a renowned futurist economist for ideas about a brighter future after the pandemic.

Fisher said restaurants are used to the hustle and happen to be quite efficient as a group. Of all the markets the nonprofit works with, she said the restaurant industry has an attitude for action.

"A lot of the restaurants were definitely open-minded to switching to whatever they could to stay afloat," Fisher said. "They were our most proactive."

Among the challenges the food and beverage business is facing, Mahan said, is getting the workforce to come back to work. In a year, she said, they will have a better sense of how the challenges and changes will play out.

"It's not a crisis situation anymore, but it's definitely an unknown," she said. "Right now, with these disaster loan programs, a large amount of these loans will be forgiven or there are definitely deferral terms that are beneficial to the business owners."

It may be too soon to know how many businesses will make it and how many we will lose after the lockdown.

SLOW Money SLO founder and Executive Director Jeff Wade is one of the two dozen or so consultants working with SBDC CIE. He explained how he's been helping farms and the food and drink businesses find nontraditional ways to stay afloat. Wade said he'd like to think people are going out and patronizing more restaurants and buying more food from food purveyors and farmers, but that's just not the case.

"In fact, if you took a poll, I'm sure there'd be a lot of pessimism about what's happening," he said. "I do know that people have been very creative. They've put a lot of energy in doing things in a unique way, that is in the restrictions, especially a month ago, when everybody was doing to-go food at restaurants."

To keep working toward a brighter future, the SLO County chapter of SCORE (a national nonprofit focused on entrepreneurship) has also been offering free mentoring for COVID-19 business assistance, Small Business Association loans, and the CARES Act, he said.

Here's just a little taste of the good news in the works:

Luna Red in SLO adapted by creating a marketplace equipped with butchery items.

The Buttercup Bakery & Cafe in Morro Bay took the SBA loan and remodeled its outdoor space.

Erin Primer, director of food services at San Luis Coastal Unified School District, expanded her already impressive farm-to-school food operation by morphing the program into a complete week's worth of food for students, which makes sense, being that transportation can be an issue.

With some cash flow assistance, BlissRiver Organics purchased a large quantity of elderberries to keep up with the increasing demand for immune-boosting elderberry syrup in the time of coronavirus.

Talk about coming full circle: I had just taken a shot of the elderberry syrup when Wade told me about AnnaLillian's success in growing her local homemade elderberry syrup business. That small loan AnnaLillian received had made its way into my fridge.

"In her case," Wade said, "It wasn't a comeback. She was getting a huge spike in need and desire for a product that can really be healthy and good for you. So that was a very positive story in all of the negativity." ○

Flavor writer Beth Giuffre wrote Eats this week and she will take a shot of elderberry syrup with you anytime. Send positive vibes to clanham@santamariasun.com.



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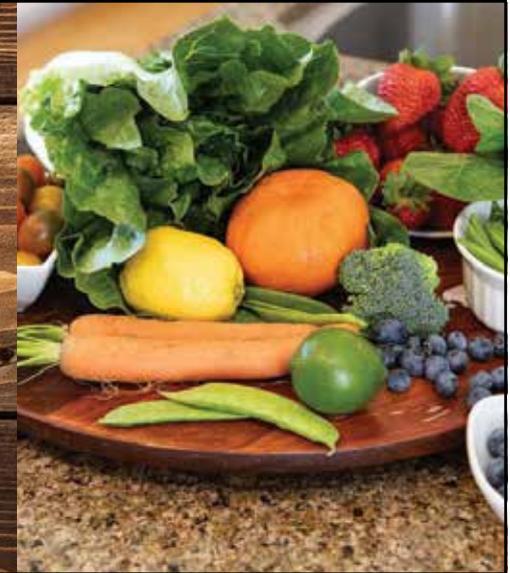
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