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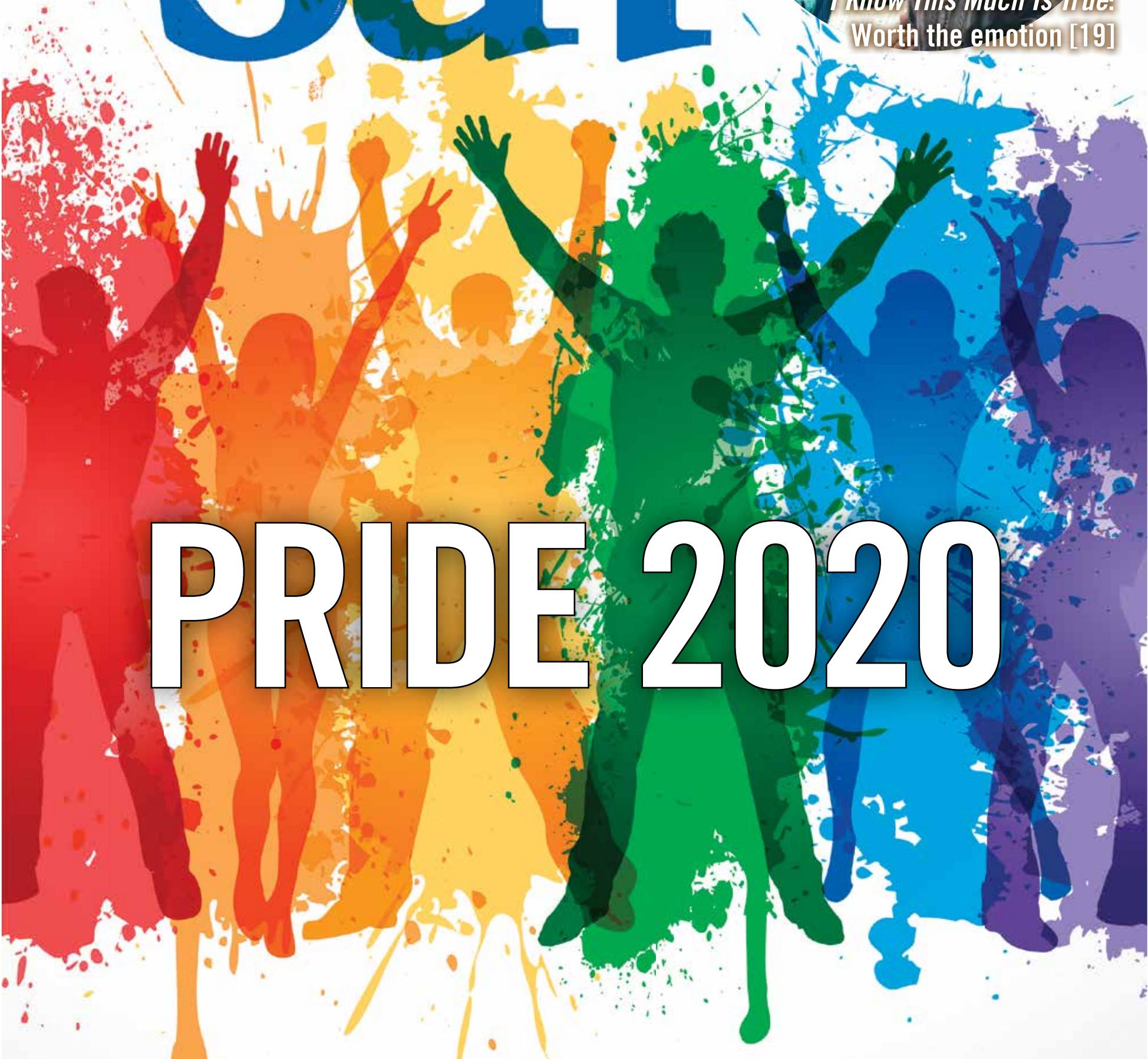
Sun

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CELEBRATE! For the Sun's annual Pride issue, we talk about Supreme Court, Health and Human Services, and drive-through festivities.

In our annual Pride issue, find stories about a rally in Lompoc bringing awareness to transgender individuals who are killed violently and a Trump administration ruling that reverses Obama-era LGBTQ-plus health care coverage protections [8]; how Planned Parenthood of the Central Coast continues to provide gender affirming care and what the Supreme Court of the United States' recent discrimination ruling means [9]; and how the Gala Pride and Diversity Center celebrated Pride Month during the pandemic [10].

This week, you can also read about the Golden State Killer's recent hearing where he pleaded guilty to four Santa Barbara County murders [4], a mobile observatory that's coming soon to a street near you [17], the livestreamed poetry event to celebrate Pride Month [18], and a new restaurant in Solvang that's focused on farmers and feasting [20].

*Camillia Lanham
editor*

Cover design by Alex Zuniga

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Political Watch

• On June 22, state Sen. Hannah-Beth Jackson's (D-Santa Barbara) Senate Bill 1207 passed off the Senate floor on a 36-0 vote. The bill would require California nursing homes to have backup power for at least 96 hours during an emergency. The Nursing Home Resident Safety Act was written with the current wildfire season and potential public safety power shutoffs amid the COVID-19 pandemic in mind. According to a press release from Jackson's office, current state regulations only require nursing home facilities to provide very limited backup power for six hours in the event of an emergency. "However, during the 2019 public safety power outages, many Californians were without power for more than 48 hours," the release states. "Nursing home residents are especially vulnerable during natural disasters and power outages. Evacuations can be challenging due to mobility limitations and dangerous amid the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, some residents rely on electrical-powered life-support systems to stay alive, unsafe temperatures can be dangerous, and unrefrigerated medications put many residents at risk." The bill, Jackson said in the press release, "will help keep our most vulnerable residents safe."

• On June 18, U.S. Rep. Salud Carbajal (D-Santa Barbara) advocated for and secured several measures in the INVEST in America Act that will directly benefit the Central Coast, including wildfire prevention and financing Central Coast infrastructure projects. The act is "a key component of the Moving Forward Framework that House Democrats released earlier this year," a press release from Carbajal's office states. "Every dollar we put toward repairing our infrastructure is a sound investment. This bill makes sure the Central Coast can repair our existing infrastructure and ensures new infrastructure is built to withstand the effects of extreme weather due to climate change," said Carbajal, according to the press release. "This massive investment to bolster our economy is especially critical right now, as many of our local governments are struggling under the weight of budget shortfalls as a result of COVID-19. I'm glad to serve as an advocate for Central Coast infrastructure projects in Congress and look forward to seeing this bill to the finish line."

• State Sen. Hannah-Beth Jackson's (D-Santa Barbara) Senate Bill 956 passed off the Senate floor on June 22 with a 25-13 vote. According to a press release, the bill would "bring oversight and accountability to billions of dollars in certain corporate and other tax breaks" amid the COVID-19 pandemic. "Senate Bill 956 would require evaluation of certain California tax credits and exemptions for their effectiveness as well as economic, social, or any other benefits to the state," the release states. "SB 956 applies to eight corporate and other tax incentive programs that have no metrics of efficacy associated with them, no sunsetting provision, and result in revenue losses of greater than \$1 billion each over 10 years." The bill would have the University of California analyze these expenditures, present its findings to a nonpartisan board, and then make a recommendation to the Legislature "as to whether the tax expenditure is meeting its intended purposes," and whether it "should be altered, continued, or repealed." Jackson said, according to the release. "As our state contends with the economic impacts of the coronavirus pandemic, we should have full knowledge of all of our revenue-generating options. Now more than ever, we need to bring transparency and accountability to tax breaks that have been on the books for decades, result in billions of dollars in lost revenue, and may no longer deliver on their promise." ◉

Golden State Killer pleads guilty to four murders in Santa Barbara County

On June 29, Joseph James DeAngelo pleaded guilty to 13 counts of first-degree murder, with special circumstances in a number of them—such as murder committed in the commission of a burglary or rape—and 13 counts of kidnapping. Four of those murders occurred in Santa Barbara County in 1979 and 1981.

All the county's murders happened in Goleta, though Santa Barbara County District Attorney Joyce Dudley confirmed in an email to the *Sun* that 1979 victim Debra Alexandra Manning was a Santa Maria-based psychologist.

Known widely as the Golden State Killer, DeAngelo also admitted his responsibility for 161 crimes involving 48 individual victims and 32 crime scenes. Ventura County District Attorney Gregory Totten said during a livestreamed press conference after the hearing. Those additional crimes, Totten said, "could not have been charged because of California's statute of limitations."

The hearing took place in Sacramento and involved prosecutors from multiple counties where DeAngelo's crimes took place. During the hearing, Santa Barbara Chief Deputy District Attorney Kelly Duncan described DeAngelo's local murders in gruesome detail. DeAngelo pleaded guilty to all of the local murders—Robert Offerman and Manning in 1979, and Cheri Domingo and Gregory Sanchez in 1981—and admitted to the special circumstances of the murders, including rape and burglary.

Dudley also spoke at the press conference after the hearing, and acknowledged the daughter of one of the murder victims.

"I saw so much in the eyes of the crime victims," Dudley said as she looked at Domingo's daughter in the audience. "I know many of them rightfully believed that this day would never come. But today did come, and even though their pain is still raw, and their wait was painfully long, most of them are appreciative because they saw justice today. I know that's true for Debbie Domingo, Santa Barbara County victim, and for all of the other crime victims."

As a part of his plea deal, DeAngelo will face life in prison rather than the death penalty. Ventura County District Attorney Totten explained why prosecutors went this route.

"In the end, I and my colleagues concluded that seeking death did not serve the best interest of the victims in this unique and decades-old serial rape-killing case," Totten said at the press conference.

A death penalty sentence, Totten said, would lead to inevitable delays, lengthy litigation, and a high probability, given the defendant's age, that he would die before his trial and "certainly before any execution could be carried out."

"For those victims whose crimes fell outside the statute of limitations, they would never have been given an opportunity to see and hear the defendant, as he did today, admit what he did to them," Totten said. "Simply put, they deserve to see the defendant die in prison as a convict, and not simply the accused, and that is the reason we chose this result, which I think is a just and a fair result in this horrific case."

—Malea Martin

County grand jury examines increase in gang violence

Recent changes in state laws aimed at reducing California's prison population and preventing kids from being incarcerated has local agencies at odds with how to best address an increase of gang activity in parts of Santa Barbara County.



JUSTICE FOR ALL: District Attorney Joyce Dudley (right) stands with Debbie Domingo, daughter of 1981 Santa Barbara County murder victim Cheri Domingo, at the June 29 hearing for Golden State Killer Joseph James DeAngelo.

Weekend Weather

KSBY NEWS



Microclimate Weather Forecast

Dave Hovde

KSBY Chief Meteorologist

Thursday



COASTAL ▶ High 72 Low 53
INLAND ▶ High 79 Low 51

Friday



COASTAL ▶ High 73 Low 52
INLAND ▶ High 82 Low 49

Saturday



COASTAL ▶ High 79 Low 52
INLAND ▶ High 90 Low 52

Sunday



COASTAL ▶ High 82 Low 57
INLAND ▶ High 94 Low 55

Night and morning clouds near the coast but inland is clear and getting hot over the weekend.

NEWS continued page 6

Your health is essential.

Continue taking precautions to stay well

Dear Valued Community Members,

With COVID-19 cases on the rise across the nation and locally, it's important to continue to take the proper steps to protect yourself and your loved ones. While we may be growing tired of the disruption the coronavirus has caused, the pandemic is not behind us. Make your health a priority by:

Wearing a face covering when outside your home. COVID-19 spreads through respiratory droplets produced when someone coughs, sneezes, or talks. A face covering helps prevent those droplets from traveling through the air and onto other people.

Practicing social distancing when outside your home. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) indicates that COVID-19 is spread mainly between people who are within six feet of one another for a prolonged period of time. Limit close contact with others outside of your household and reduce your risk of exposure.

Washing your hands often. Use soap and water to wash your hands for 20 seconds or longer. If soap and water are unavailable, use hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.

Avoiding touching your eyes, nose, or mouth. Germs are easily spread when you touch your eyes, nose, or mouth with your hands. Keeping your hands clean in addition to being mindful of keeping your hands away from your face will reduce your risk.

Staying home when you are sick. When you are sick and go to work or even out to the grocery store, you are putting others at risk. If you aren't feeling well, please stay home.

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Stay safe and be well.



Sue Andersen
President and CEO
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NEWS from page 4

have experienced increases in gang violence in recent years—particularly in Lompoc, which has a police department with numerous vacant positions and no dedicated gang unit.

"In Lompoc, deaths and injuries from shootings have escalated to the point of being almost monthly," the report states. "Gang affiliation is most often tied to the incidents."

The jury found that a countywide gang task force could help local jurisdictions work together to address this increase in activity. But in North County, agencies have been unsuccessful in applying for grants that would fund the creation of this task force.

The jury also noted that the current services that are available in North County aren't well-coordinated and would be better managed by nonprofits rather than civic leaders who have too many other responsibilities to juggle.

"The 2017 Mayor's Task Force on Youth Safety in Santa Maria has not gained traction in the parts of the community where it is needed," the report states. "However, the need for these services in North County is immediate."

Ultimately, the jury states that helping transform the lives of at-risk youth is and should be the priority, but that better coordination between law enforcement departments is still necessary.

The jury is requesting responses from various county agencies to the findings and recommendations outlined in the report, including boosting programs for at-risk youth and creating a gang unit within the Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Office. The departments identified in the report have between 60 and 90 days to issue a response.

—Zac Ezzone

Santa Maria investigates tree deaths related to apparent poisoning

On June 22, the city of Santa Maria's park and urban forest supervisor discovered two trees on West Main Street that appeared to have suspiciously died, prompting the city to investigate further. The city arborist discovered that the trees had multiple drill holes near the base, indicating that they were likely injected with chemicals. A few days later, a third tree on West Taft Street was discovered with the same apparent injections.

Brett Fulgoni, assistant director of Recreation and Parks, told the *Sun* that these types of procedures are not uncommon; however, they should only be conducted by the city.

"Usually we'll inject trees to try and help them. But for a tree to die that quickly is very suspicious, especially to see injection locations," Fulgoni said. "People shouldn't be tampering with trees at all. If they were trying to help it, they did it wrong. That's why the city needs to be

PHOTO COURTESY OF CITY OF SANTA MARIA



SEEKING ANSWERS: Santa Maria is asking the public for help after three trees died from what appears to be chemical poisoning. Anyone with information is encouraged to contact the Recreation and Parks Department at (805) 925-0951, Ext. 2260.

responsible for it."

The city plans to work with a tree pathologist in the near future to uncover how the trees were killed and to confirm whether chemicals were involved. While nothing is certain yet, City Arborist Roy Teniente has his theories.

"I would have to believe that it was intentional to get rid of the trees," he said. "There's different reasons why people want to get rid of trees. One of the main reasons is the leaf litter that they produce. They might not like the tree for whatever reason. They don't like the species; they don't like the location."

Teniente said that it will be difficult for the city to find a culprit, as the alleged method used to kill the trees takes a couple of weeks to kick in. By the time the tree dies, it's hard to pinpoint a suspect.

"Code Compliance is going to try to talk to some people, talk to the adjacent property owners, to see if they've seen something or if they have any information," he said. "But you'd be hard-pressed to find any guilty party."

Fulgoni said there are proper avenues people can go through to get a tree removed if it's bothering them.

"Sometimes people will call and try to get trees removed through the correct channels, but every once in a while somebody will take it upon themselves to try to remove the tree," he said.

Fulgoni said that, under the city's tree ordinance, a person charged with killing the trees would be required as punishment to pay for the damages and the costs associated with planting a new tree. The estimated damages alone amount to \$7,900.

"If people do have issues with their trees, before taking it upon yourself, just contact the city first to determine whether they're city-maintained trees or not," Teniente said. "If they are, then we can address it going through the proper channels."

—Malea Martin

County eyes two parcels in Orcutt for open space

Residents in the Santa Maria Valley may have more local places to hike if Santa Barbara County moves forward with purchasing two pieces of property in Orcutt.

During a county Planning Commission meeting on June 24, the commissioners unanimously determined that acquiring the two parcels—one directly south of Orcutt Hills Open Space and the other along Highway 101—for recreational use is consistent with the county's land use code.

The commission's action doesn't mean the parcels have been acquired, county planner Delaney Roney said. The Board of Supervisors will ultimately make that decision at a future meeting.

According to a staff report for the commission meeting, acquiring the parcels would be funded through \$3 million the county received from Shell Exploration & Production Inc. as part of the Guadalupe Dunes Restoration Project. This project is aimed at mitigating damage to natural resources caused by oil operations in the dunes.

"The agreement specified that the funds were to be used for the enhancement of public recreation in the north coastal region of Santa Barbara County," the staff report states. "The proposed acquisition(s) would serve the purpose of providing open space and recreational uses (hiking trails) for public use in the county of Santa Barbara."

News of this potential acquisition was a welcome surprise to Dan Ardin, who serves as the director of trail maintenance for Santa Maria Valley Open Space, which is the nonprofit that maintains the trails at Orcutt Hills.

"This is good news," Ardin said. "Anytime they buy open space for the community is awesome."

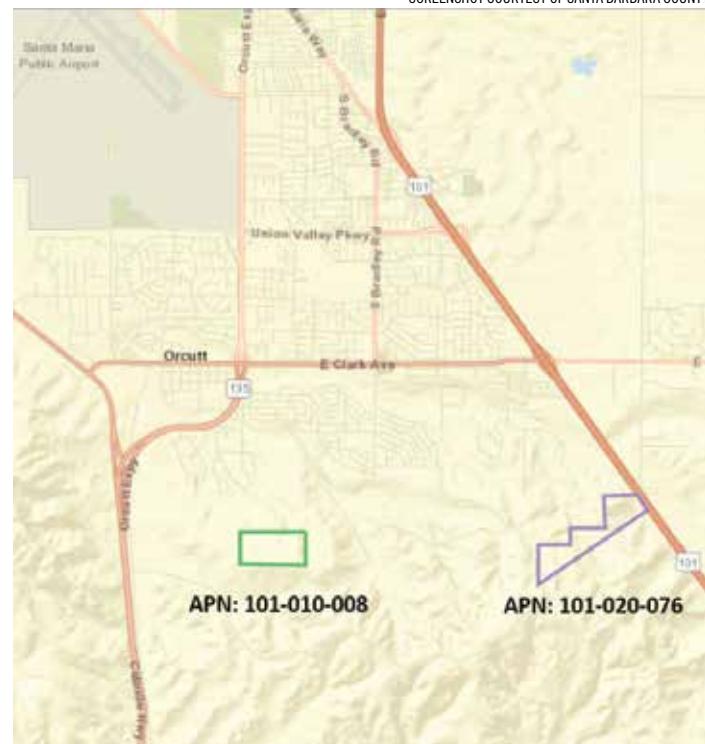
Acquiring the two parcels would open up a

combined 176 acres of open space for the county. Ardin said this space is needed as there are only a few trails in Orcutt and they are over used. The Orcutt Community Plan states that the unincorporated community should have 40 miles of designated trails open to the public, but currently there's only about 8 miles.

The amount of open space that exists will eventually be reduced as the developer behind the Rice Ranch master-planned community builds homes on Orcutt Hills that have been planned for years. This development won't affect the open space's designated trails, but it'll remove about 20 miles worth of makeshift "social trails" that people have created on their own, Ardin said.

"We have a few trails that are way over used, and it's obvious we need more open space," Ardin said. "So this [potential acquisition] is good. This is the solution we needed all along."

—Zac Ezzone



TAKE A HIKE: Santa Barbara County is considering acquiring two parcels in Orcutt that would be used for outdoor recreation.

With some community members calling to take resources and funding away from the county jail system, Fischer clarified what he believes the proposed settlement would really mean for the future of the local jail system.

"Nothing in the settlement prevents the county from meaningfully reducing its jail system," Fischer said. "It will take resources to make sure that people with disabilities and people with health care needs are able to get the care and treatment they're entitled to and that they need, but there's nothing that says the jail needs to be a certain size. We fully support a smaller jail system in the county that is able to meet the needs of our class members who continue to be in that system."

While the class action lawsuit represents all current and future inmates of the jail, the county Public Defender's Office also has a stake in jail conditions since they represent some inmates as well—especially during a global pandemic.

"The Public Defender's Office represents a large number of people who are still in custody right now, so our priority has been to try to see that they're either released or held in conditions that preserve their rights and safety," Deputy Public Defender Mark Saatjian told the *Sun*.

One way to reduce the jail population is through zero-bail policy measures, something that counties across the state have implemented in reaction to COVID-19. A statewide zero-bail policy ended on June 20, but the Santa Barbara Superior Court elected to extend it until further notice.

"I think it's very important that it be extended," Saatjian said. "It's been helpful to show the community that too many people were being held in custody pre-trial."

As of June 9, the jail population had 591 inmates in custody, down from an average of 900 before the pandemic, according to Lt. Erik Raney from the Sheriff's Office.

The Sheriff's Office is still discussing whether the population reduction will be possible to maintain long-term, he said.

"While all of these efforts have been successful in reducing the current jail population, what we do not know, is how will this ultimately affect public safety," Raney said in an email to the *Sun*. ○

—Malea Martin

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Standing in solidarity

Lompoc group holds rally, vigil for LGBTQ-plus community

On May 27, two days after George Floyd died in police custody in Minnesota, triggering weeks of nationwide protests, a black transgender man named Tony McDade died after being shot by police officers in Florida.

According to the Human Rights Campaign, McDade is just one of at least 16 transgender or gender nonconforming people who have been violently killed so far this year. Many of these deaths are of black transgender women, the group states.

"Black people, LGBTQ people, and especially all LGBTQ people of color are at greater risk for violence every day in this country," Tori Cooper, the campaign's director of community engagement for its Transgender Justice initiative said in a statement about McDade's death. "This must end."

In recognition of these deaths, and in celebration of Pride Month, Building BLOCK (Black & Latinx Offering Community & Knowledge) held a rally in Lompoc at Ryon Park on June 27 where members of the LGBTQ-plus community spoke of their experiences.

Anthony Bryson told the crowd of about 100 people that it's hard to be black and gay in this country, but that the people gathered at the event can stand together and push for changes.

"We can come together, and we can redefine ourselves as a community and as a culture and as a people," Bryson said. "My life is a black, gay life, and my life matters like yours matters."

Other people spoke about the violence inflicted upon the LGBTQ-plus community, especially those who are transgender or gender nonconforming. Those personally affected include Lompoc Mayor Jenelle Osborne, who told the crowd about her family members who happen to be transgender.

"I have trans nieces," Osborne said. "They transitioned at a time when the bathroom bill was being argued in Texas and my 16-year-old niece appeared before the Legislature and said, 'You are creating a negative and destructive environment for me.' I've never been so proud of her."

In addition to these speeches, the group asked the crowd to recognize five minutes of silence to reflect upon the number of trans lives that have



Pushing for equality

A Supreme Court ruling grants Civil Rights Act protections to the LGBTQ-plus community, while a new Trump administration rule reverts the federal definition of 'sex' back to traditional gender roles

June was Pride Month, but the usual parades and events that commemorate the occasion were waylaid by the COVID-19 pandemic. The month also coincided with the Trump administration and the Supreme Court of the United States respectively taking steps backward and forward for the LGBTQ-plus movement. There's still a long way to go, and despite the pandemic's hold on in-person group gatherings, the LGBTQ-plus community did find a way to celebrate Pride Month on the Central Coast. A group in Lompoc shone a light on the deaths of transgender or gender nonconforming people while the Gala Pride and Diversity Center in SLO opted for a drive-by photo op. You can read about it all in this year's annual Pride issue.

—Camillia Lanham

been lost to hatred and bigotry. But aside from these solemn moments, the afternoon was full of music, dancing, and celebration.

Building BLOCK has held multiple events since forming a few weeks after Floyd's death focused on speaking to the struggles and systemic racism the black community faces. Building BLOCK President Raelyn Person said the group held this Pride event to bring awareness to another community that has to deal with its own biases and other issues.

Along with these events, Building BLOCK's members have attended Lompoc City Council and other community meetings to push for changes

in policing, education, and opportunities for the city's youth. Building BLOCK's Vice President Keith Joseph said he was born and raised in Lompoc, and not much has improved during that time.

The group intends to meet with and apply pressure to city leaders to push for changes, but change also needs to take place on an individual level, Joseph said.

"At the end of the day, it's about being a good person," Joseph said. "As far as skin color, preferences, it's just, if you have a good heart, we wouldn't have these types of issues."

—Zac Ezzone
PHOTO BY ZAC EZZONE



CELEBRATING PRIDE: About 100 people gathered at Ryon Park in Lompoc to celebrate Pride Month and remember LGBTQ-plus community members who have been killed violently.

Uncovered

Local LGBTQ-plus community says the fight for equal transgender rights in health care is far from over

It's been a tough few years for transgender and nonbinary Americans. In 2017, President Donald Trump announced that transgender individuals would no longer be allowed to serve in the U.S. military. In 2018, the U.S. Department of Education announced it would refuse to allow transgender students to use bathrooms and locker rooms that align with their gender identity.

Then on June 12 of this year, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) took another step, finalizing a rule reversing portions of the Affordable Care Act that protect transgender and nonbinary individuals from discrimination while seeking out health care and insurance coverage.

"Under the final rule, HHS eliminates certain provisions of the 2016 rule that exceeded the scope of the authority delegated by Congress in Section 1557," a June 12 press release from HHS reads. "HHS will enforce Section 1557 by returning to the government's interpretation of sex discrimination according to the plain meaning of the word 'sex' as male or female and as determined by biology."

The provision in question, under Section 1557 of the Affordable Care Act, prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, disability, age, and sex. But in 2016, the Obama administration extended the definition of "sex discrimination" to include gender identity, which it said "may be male, female, neither, or a combination of male and female."

Critics of the Obama rule say it infringes on religious freedoms and a doctor's right to refuse to provide care contradictory to their religious beliefs, and in December 2016, a federal court agreed. The court issued a preliminary injunction against the Obama administration's redefining of sex, concluding that the provisions were likely in violation of the Religious Freedom Restoration Act and the Administrative Procedure Act. In its June 12 release, HHS said it hasn't been able to enforce the Obama-era provisions since then.

The new rule from the Trump administration, which is scheduled to take effect in August, will officially remove discrimination protections for transgender and nonbinary people.

Denise Taylor, a doctor at the Community Health Centers of the Central Coast, has long provided the local trans community with gender affirming care—procedures transgender people sometimes need to make their physical appearances match their gender identities. Taylor worries that, despite California's protections for LGBTQ-plus people, the new HHS policy will negatively impact trans care locally—and all because of an argument that she said doesn't hold up.

Conservative Christians, she said, often argue that because abortion is legal, all doctors will be forced to perform abortions regardless of their religious beliefs. But that kind of procedure requires specialized training, and Taylor said only doctors who have that expertise are able to terminate pregnancies. If you're against abortions, she said, you likely wouldn't go into that field.

The same goes for gender affirming care, she said. It's a specialized field that requires specific knowledge, especially when it comes to sex reassignment surgery.

"So we're not forcing surgeons to suddenly have to do those surgeries," Taylor said.

What should be required of doctors, Taylor said, is that they provide care within their scope to patients seeking it, regardless of religious beliefs. Under this rule, Taylor said doctors could essentially refuse to treat a transgender patient for a cold simply

UNCOVERED continued page 9

because the patient identifies as trans. Doctors who do that, she said, should lose their licenses.

"Don't be a jerk," she said. "That's basically what the previous directive was."

Jamie Woolf, a trans woman and chair of Tranz Central Coast, said the new policy makes it clear that the Trump administration doesn't believe trans and nonbinary individuals should have the right to access even basic health care.

"We don't have a right to be," Woolf said. "And that's wrong and it is an attack on me and all the other transgender and nonbinary people out there."

However, Woolf said California law offers comprehensive nondiscrimination protections for the LGBTQ-plus community. While a doctor in California does have the right to refuse to treat a person they aren't comfortable with, a doctor cannot reject potential patients strictly because of their sexual orientation or gender identities. State law also requires health insurance companies to cover gender affirming care procedures.

While Woolf said there's still much debate over what counts as gender affirming care, she's grateful to live in a state that likely won't be dramatically impacted by the recent HHS reversal.

"I'm just hopeful that it will not seriously harm trans people in other areas where they don't already benefit from state protections," she said.

But local attorney Doug Heumann, who also serves as board president of the Gala Pride and Diversity Center, said laws don't lead to



REVERSAL: A group of demonstrators show their pride on Higuera Street in downtown SLO during a rally in 2017. On June 12 of this year, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services removed nondiscrimination protections for transgender and nonbinary individuals seeking out health care and insurance coverage.

actual progress unless they're enforced. Getting insurance providers to cover gender affirming care has been a challenge, Heumann said, locally and recently.

Gala, Tranz Central Coast, and several other local and state organizations are currently working to push one California joint powers authority to

fully eliminate its still existing trans exclusionary practices. The Municipalities, Colleges, Schools Insurance Group (MCSIG) offers health benefits to employees at school districts across the state, including Cuesta College, and it recently came under fire after a Salinas High School teacher's transgender son couldn't get a gender affirming

hysterectomy covered by MCSIG.

Although trans care exclusions are illegal in California, self-funded plans like MCSIG's are subject only to federal regulations, according to reporting from the *Monterey County Weekly*.

"I was shocked to find, in this day and age, that MCSIG could have trans exclusions," Heumann said.

Heumann said he's been working with Cuesta and MCSIG for months now. Although MCSIG voted to do away with its trans exclusions at a board meeting in May, Heumann said there's still work to be done to ensure that MCSIG's new rules offer comprehensive coverage to trans and nonbinary people.

"So just because it's a law," Heumann said, "you still have to fight."

The same goes for the June 15 Supreme Court ruling, which gives the LGBTQ-plus community protections against sex discrimination in the workplace.

Since the Supreme Court ruling essentially redefined "sex" to include gender identity and sexual orientation, many say that can be applied to situations outside the workplace, which would undermine the Trump administration's recent reversal of protections for transgender people.

Heumann agrees, but he said it will likely have to play out in court, a long and arduous process.

"We believe that no longer will that HHS policy be able to stand," he said, "but that remains to be seen."

—Kasey Bubnash

Continued care

In the face of Trump's rollback of LGBTQ-plus health care protections, Planned Parenthood isn't going anywhere

Between a landmark Supreme Court ruling for the LGBTQ-plus community and a Trump administration rule that goes in the opposite direction, this year's Pride Month has been one of both victory and distress for members of the queer community.

But no matter what the federal government decrees, Planned Parenthood Central Coast wants residents to know that they will continue to get the services they need.

"Regardless of your sexual orientation or gender identity, where you're from, the language you speak, or whether you've had an abortion, every person deserves access to health care, free from judgement and discrimination," Planned Parenthood Central Coast CEO and President Jenna Tosh said. "I think especially during a public health crisis, any rule that makes it harder for marginalized people to access health care is unconscionable."

U.S. Rep. Salud Carbajal (D-Santa Barbara) echoed this sentiment, saying that the Trump administration "is looking at every way to continue to undermine [protections], in this case health benefits, to members of the LGBTQ community."

Tosh explained that the Trump administration's June 12 ruling, which rolls back nondiscrimination protections for sex and gender identity put in place by the Affordable Care Act, will allow "health care providers, hospitals, and insurance companies that receive federal funding to refuse to provide or cover services such as LGBTQ health care."

But, she said, this will not have any immediate impact on Planned Parenthood patients' ability to get access to care.

"At Planned Parenthood we provide care to everyone," Tosh emphasized. "The main concern here is that, in reading about these types of rules, this could have a chilling effect: It could make trans folks more reluctant to seek care with trusted health care providers."

In addition to welcoming folks regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity, Planned Parenthood Central Coast started providing gender affirming care about a year ago, Tosh said.

Planned Parenthood's Vice President of Community Engagement Julie Mickelberry wrote via email about the gender affirming services the organization provides.

"Gender affirming hormone therapy, sometimes referred to as Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT), consists of either estrogen based or testosterone based treatments," she said. "While not all transgender people medically transition, gender affirming hormone therapy is an essential part of transition for many transgender people."

Mickelberry said that the Planned Parenthood team "will work with patients to determine how to pay for gender affirming care services, whether they have insurance or not. We provide care to everyone, regardless of their ability to pay."

—Malea Martin

IMAGE COURTESY OF PLANNED PARENTHOOD CENTRAL COAST

All are welcome here.



'NO IMMEDIATE IMPACT': Planned Parenthood Central Coast President Jenna Tosh said that the organization's services for LGBTQ-plus community members will not change after the Trump administration's recent order.

Work to do

In wake of Title VII Supreme Court ruling, LGBTQ-plus activists say the equal rights movement still has a long way to go

Hunter Tidd, a north San Luis Obispo County resident, isn't afraid to express himself in the world.

He's been called flamboyant for his clothing style, which he "changes up pretty dynamically," from suspenders and a bow tie, to jeans shorts, to cashmere sweaters and scarves. He often sports a rainbow-colored Pride bandana in his back pocket, too.

"I wear my colors," Tidd said.

But on the Central Coast, simply being himself comes at a cost. Tidd has experienced workplace discrimination from all angles, from customers, co-workers, and managers. He's been fired from three jobs in North County after his sexual orientation became a subject of attention and discomfort.

During one stint at a local coffee shop, he said the shop owner told him he was "too gay, too flamboyant, and too charismatic" for his own good.

"The next day I ended up getting fired," he said. "That one hit more personally because he directly expressed that I was too gay. ... I ended up living out of my car and I was homeless for a bit."

Stories like Tidd's are all too common, even in a state like California where anti-discrimination laws apply to LGBTQ-plus people. After he lost the cafe job, Tidd talked to an attorney about filing a lawsuit, but ultimately he lacked hard evidence of the misconduct, and his co-workers declined to testify.

"No one was comfortable speaking out," he said. These accounts are why equal rights advocates remain clear-eyed after a landmark U.S. Supreme Court decision in June granted Civil Rights Act employment protections to LGBTQ-plus workers. For the nearly half of U.S. states that didn't have these protections in place, the ruling fundamentally changes the legal landscape of their workplaces. But there's still much work to be

WORK TO DO continued page 10

Drive-by Pride

Gala finds a safe way for the community to commemorate Pride Month

Palm Street is home to the newly named Gala Pride and Diversity Center, formerly known as the Gay and Lesbian Alliance of the Central Coast. The organization's been around since 1989, but in 2018 community members said they wanted a name with more inclusivity.

Some members of the LGBTQ-plus community didn't feel represented by the organization's name, so in July 2018 Gala held a town hall meeting to start the process of changing its name while taking community input.

Along with the name transformation, Gala reworked its mission statement to say that the organization supports and empowers people of all sexual orientations, gender identities, and expressions in order to strengthen and unite the Central Coast community.

"We're really trying to expand our offerings and make sure that not only are all LGBTQ folks accounted for but that we're also thinking about intersectional identities, and we're advocating for our most marginalized constituents," Gala Executive Director Michelle Call said. "So it really is a whole shift away from that Gay and Lesbian Alliance, which was great and has served us well for all these years, to this new want to include everyone in the name."

In order to officially change the organization's name, Call said the nonprofit's board had to

amend its bylaws for the state of California. The amendment was voted on in January of this year and sent off for the state's recognition. Call said hearing back from the state took longer than anticipated due to the coronavirus and its impacts on office closures.

"So it finally came through yesterday, in the nick of time. It's just perfect timing," she said on June 27.

The state's recognition was one factor that made this year's Pride celebrations in San Luis Obispo special. On June 27, individuals and couples wearing rainbow pins, shirts, or face masks stopped by Gala to take a photo, say hello, and "Happy Pride!" The attendees didn't stay for more than 20 minutes at a time—by design, Call said. It was a safe alternative to having a large gathering.

"We wanted to just have one thing where people could come by in person, because we recognize the importance of seeing other people in the flesh. It's really important for our mental health," Call said.

She said the organization felt it was vital to create a safe event where people could come together, especially for those who live in non-affirming households.

Attendees in masks followed the signage to socially distance their way to Gala's steps, which were recently painted in rainbow colors, and snap a photo. As people left, others would arrive, which Call said she was happy about.

"Now they can really see other people in their community, come see the rainbow steps and be proud, and be among people that care about them," Call said.

WORK TO DO from page 9
done to achieve true equality and inclusion.

"With the current state of the courts, it caught me off guard that anything proactive would come out in Washington right now for LGBTQ rights. It was definitely a great moment," said Sam Byrd, a board member for the Gala Pride and Diversity Center of the Central Coast. "[But] we have to go well above the law. You have to create inclusive environments where people feel comfortable enough bringing their full selves to work."

For Tidd, finding inclusive work in SLO County has been "a constant battle." The news of the court ruling felt like a victory but also a reminder that discrimination still "happens pretty



SHOWING PRIDE:
Community members celebrated Pride in San Luis Obispo by momentarily stopping by the Gala Pride and Diversity Center.

lot," Marin said.

O'Leary was especially appreciative of the safety precautions Gala took in order to make the event possible.

"Not only are we being kept safe, but we're also given the message of, 'Be proud of who you are,' and show your pride," O'Leary said.

—Karen Garcia



CELEBRATE: Nala Diamond (left) and Juicy CW (right) celebrate Pride Month on June 27. With the June 15 Supreme Court decision on Title VII, LGBTQ-plus activists had another reason to celebrate in 2020. But they say there's still much more progress to be made.

frequently and pretty often."

Byrd, who moved to California from North Carolina a few years ago, said he has also endured discriminatory work environments in his past. He hears about them now from the college students he works with at Cal Poly, as the coordinator of LGBTQ-plus initiatives.

"A lot of the students come from even more rural areas and they talk about not feeling comfortable enough to work as their authentic self," he said. "If you do a campus climate or workplace climate poll, you can see what the people really experience. And that's, to me, just a big part of creating environments that are non-discriminating."

The Supreme Court ruling, in Byrd's opinion, marks an opportune time for employers and their regulators to check in on compliance with anti-discrimination laws and policies.

"Are we truly compliant?" he asked. "Until someone really sues or brings these gaps that are still in a lot of workplaces to the forefront, we usually don't hear about it. We need to be critically examining all of our workplaces proactively."

Advocates also hope that the recent ruling will empower more employees to fight back against violations when they occur.

"Maybe they'll feel like they have even more

of a way to speak up now," said Michelle Call, executive director of the Gala Pride and Diversity Center.

Call, Byrd, and others are now looking to the future to see if the decision puts pressure on Congress to codify more protections for LGBTQ-plus people in still-unaddressed institutions, like health care.

"We have to close the critical gaps," Byrd said. "There's been an onslaught of attacks on the trans community. There's a huge push to deny gender affirming care. ... It's still legal to discriminate in federally funded programs, like hospitals, colleges, adoption agencies, and public accommodations such as hotels and restaurants."

Byrd asked for the community's support in the fight and pointed to national advocacy groups, like the Human Rights Campaign and the National LGBTQ Task Force, as good sources of current information.

"We need our allies to be aware of what's happening," Byrd said. "If you have the privilege of never having to think about these issues, you're usually blinded to the issues that affect underrepresented communities. We ask that folks educate themselves." —Peter Johnson

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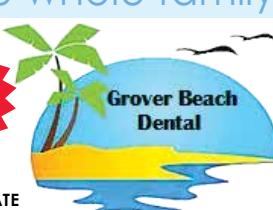
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NEW OWNERSHIP: Alyssa and Ben Honeycutt took over ownership of Oak Knolls Hardware on June 15.

Keeping it local

Orcutt couple takes over Oak Knolls Hardware

BY ZAC EZZONE

For more than 40 years, in a building that used to hold a movie theater, Oak Knolls Hardware has served as Orcutt's local hardware shop, and the new owners of the establishment intend to keep it that way.

Alyssa Honeycutt, who was born and raised in Orcutt, and her husband, Ben, officially took over as owners of the store on June 15. Alyssa said that although they plan on making some minor changes, the store will largely remain the same.

"The main thing I want people to know is we're keeping the store the same," Alyssa said. "I want them to still feel comfortable coming in."

A few years ago, the store's previous owners—who are Alyssa and Ben's neighbors—told the couple about their plans to retire and move to another state. Alyssa said Ben was interested in the idea of taking over the store, as he's always enjoyed working with his hands and fixing things around the house.

Previously Ben, who served in the Marine Corps, worked at Vandenberg Air Force Base and was part of the team that assembled the rockets launched there. Alyssa said she's been a stay-at-home mom over the past few years, while also running a wedding and events rental company.

Alyssa said for both her and Ben, the idea of running a locally owned store that helps people was too good of an opportunity to pass up.

"I believe the common ground that piqued both our interest is keeping the store in Orcutt and serving the community," Alyssa said. "This was the perfect opportunity to be close to home and work with customers to help them solve their problems."

Despite this transition happening during the COVID-19 pandemic, Alyssa said taking over ownership of the store has been a relatively smooth process. As an essential business, the store has remained open throughout the public health crisis, albeit with some plexiglass partitions and other modifications in place.

Not only has the store remained open, it's been busy, Alyssa said. People continue to come into the store to buy appliances and materials to complete home improvement projects while abiding by the stay-at-home order.

"We're able to help people get through a lot of these projects to keep them busy while they're staying inside," Alyssa said.

As for some of the changes they're planning on making, Alyssa said she wants to increase the visibility of some of the services they offer, like screen repairs, as well as bringing in more and different varieties of paints. Also, given the mild weather year-round on the Central Coast, she said they plan to increase their stock of outdoor cooking products.

Additionally, Alyssa said she wants the store to get involved with the community and host workshops where kids can learn how to build things. And, depending on the state of the COVID-19 pandemic at the time, Alyssa said she's thinking about hosting an open house in the fall where Orcutt residents can meet the shop's new owners.

"We saw a lot of potential in the store," Alyssa said. "We know we can bring more to Orcutt."

Highlights

- On June 29, staff and board members of the Lompoc Valley Medical Center sealed a time capsule full of documents related to the COVID-19 pandemic, letters to future employees, and photos to celebrate the hospital's 10-year anniversary. The capsule is to remain unopened for 50 years.

- The city of Santa Maria is renovating Russell Park this summer and fall through the use of nearly \$900,000 in state and federal grant funds. The city plans to install a new playground, restrooms, and a walking path in the park. ☀

Staff Writer Zac Ezzone wrote this week's Spotlight. Send tips to spotlight@santamariasun.com.

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Opinion

COMMENTARY

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 37% It won't affect me. I do it anyway.
 13% It's stupid. Masks don't help limit the spread of the virus.
 8% I don't listen to anything he says.

24 Votes

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We aren't Minneapolis

Is there a problem with the Lompoc Police Department's use of force? No!

BY RON FINK

There has been a lot of conversation, many demonstrations, and some riots across the nation in the past few weeks because of the use of deadly force by police. On June 16, Lompoc Police Chief Joseph Mariani provided the Lompoc City Council with a briefing concerning use of force policies in our city.

He began by saying that before an officer can begin a probationary period at the police department he/she must receive 664 hours (16 weeks) of intense police academy training, then another lengthy period under the direct supervision of a qualified training officer in the field before they are qualified to patrol on their own.

Although it only takes a high school diploma or GED to qualify, most officers have advanced degrees in municipal management, police sciences, and other related courses of study. Most have two-year associate degrees prior to attending the police academy.

Chief Mariani explained that the California Penal Code requires "reasonable cause to believe a person has committed a public offense" for an officer to "use objectively reasonable force to make the arrest, prevent escape, or overcome resistance." This begins with asking questions and rarely ends in a physical confrontation. Of the 15,000 calls for service, between January and June of this year, only 28 required a use of force, and no suspects or officers were injured during these arrests, including SWAT operations.

The chief went on to say that the penal code section dealing with homicide by peace officers is very subjective. Local policies are far more restrictive than those of the penal code. In Lompoc, the section of the 730-page police policy manual dealing with use of force is more than 40 pages in length while the

penal code section is only one page.

Training doesn't end at the academy. The California Commission on Peace Officers Standards and Training requires 12 hours of "perishable skills training" each year. Subjects include arrest and control techniques, tactical or interpersonal communication techniques, and tactical firearms or force option simulators. Firearm qualification, including department policy discussions concerning the use of force is required quarterly.

The controversial "upper body control [choke] hold" was last used in Lompoc 18 years ago. This technique is not a preferred tactic and is equal to the use of a firearm. It appears that in Lompoc the choke hold is rare to the point of extinction since almost all officers weren't in the police ranks 18 years ago.

Chief Mariani stated emphatically that Lompoc officers "have a duty to intercede if someone is using excessive force," meaning that if they see an inappropriate use of force they must take direct action to stop it even if it's their first day on the job.

All use of force incidents are carefully investigated by Lompoc Police Department supervision, internal review boards are conducted when deemed necessary as a result of these reviews, and none have been required in the last two years.

In 2017, a consulting firm reviewed the Lompoc Police Department's use of force policies and any internal investigations associated with the use of force. This was a proactive investigation and not the result of any citizen complaints or specific incidents.

At the conclusion of the review, the consultants provided 22 recommendations, and 21 have been implemented to date. Only one hasn't been implemented—providing lieutenant level positions; however these positions require additional funding.

The police department only has "in car video" and does not currently have the funding (about \$1 million for hardware and data storage capability) available for body cameras. The officers have no control over how material from their car is transferred to data storage. Officer/citizen confrontations have been reduced since cameras were installed.

There were several speakers during the meeting's public comment period, and they were almost evenly divided concerning the issue. Some were demanding that police funding be diverted to social services. Others said that defunding the police would be a serious mistake and feared for the safety of their families if the police department's budget was cut.

One speaker claimed that "police misconduct has been a staple of this town" without offering any examples of such conduct. While everyone's point of view is welcome and we should honor their right to freedom of speech, much of what had been said about the Lompoc Police Department does not fit what's happening on the ground!

Another speaker said that there was an organized movement to replace City Council members during the next election. Mayor Jenelle Osborne and other council members encouraged people to get involved in city government either as an appointed commissioner or to run for office.

The council didn't discuss or take any action on this matter because it wasn't on the official agenda.

Even though there were a number of unsubstantiated complaints, I think an objective look at Lompoc as a community would establish that there are none of the problems in our city that are experienced in other communities, with the exception of what is in the minds of a few internet agitators.

One person who called in to the council meeting during oral communication read a script that can be found on the internet and really had no connection to the issues we face in Lompoc. As Chief Mariani correctly noted, "We are not Minneapolis." ☐

Ron Fink writes to the Sun from Lompoc. Send your thoughts, comments, and opinionated letters to letters@santamariasun.com.

LETTER

Not for Solvang City Council

I grew up around policemen who were friends and colleagues of my dad. He was "on the job" for 33 years, a superior officer, in every sense, with the NYPD. I think I know something about good cops, effective policing, and fine character.

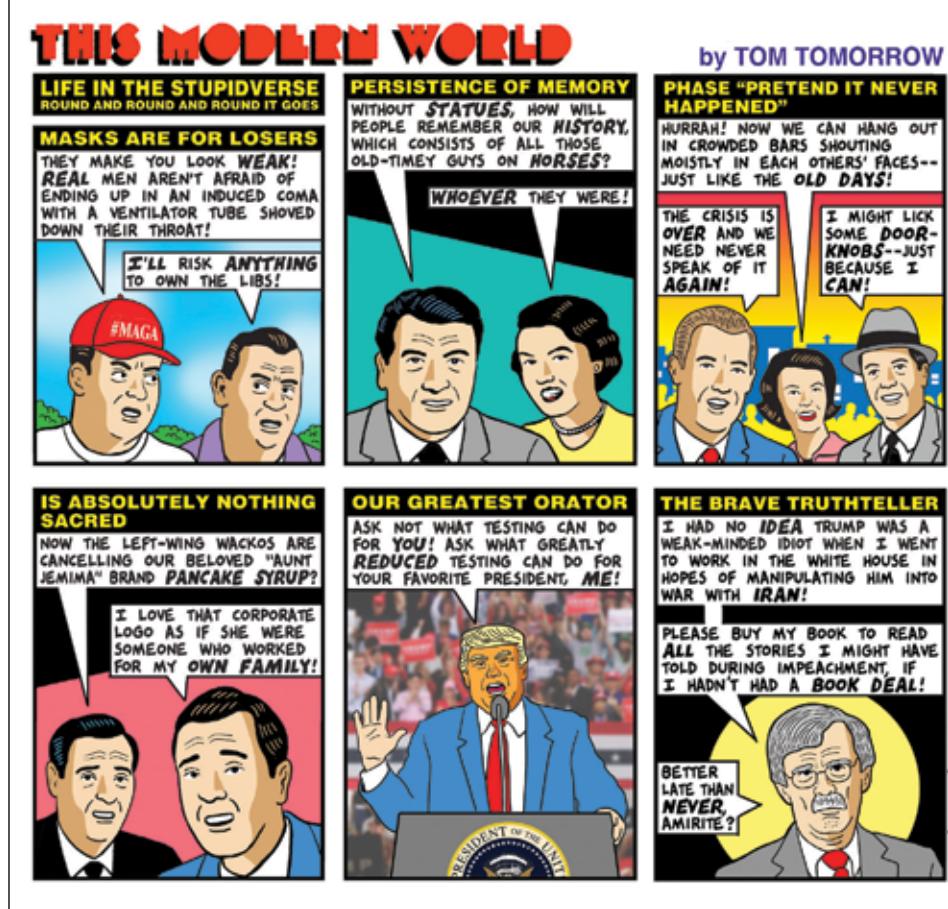
I have met and spoken with Jim Thomas, a former sheriff now seeking a seat on Solvang's City Council. He has been doing PR for a big oil company trying to ramp up operations here in our midst. This is an effort that, if successful, would jeopardize our attraction as a tourist destination.

And Jim has expressed deeply insensitive views about a tragic police incident in New York. This does not speak well for his judgment in these socially fraught but hopeful times.

Further, he has been quick to cry "socialism" when criticizing folks who seek to grow a safe and renewable energy economy here in our county while preserving our health and environment.

Does Solvang really want him on the City Council?

Seth Steiner
Los Alamos



Freedom to breathe

Good job, guys! Way to keep the pandemic at bay!

Oh wait, actually, we haven't done that.

Santa Barbara County, which blamed its high numbers on the Lompoc federal prison a month ago, is currently on a state watch list because its COVID-19 numbers are increasing at an uncomfortable rate. And, as an added bonus, we can no longer blame inmates for our problems.

Guess what, everyone? The pandemic is definitely not over.

So, that freedom to booze with the public that you thought was coming this **Fourth of July** isn't coming. Instead, your favorite neighborhood bar got shut down again on July 1 at 8 a.m. thanks to a new order from the county **Public Health Department**. And the only people you have to blame are those non-mask wearing, non-social-distancing barflies!

You know who you are.

The statement the county issued about the order on June 28 said that bars are environments where many people mix and that alcohol can impair judgement, reducing people's compliance with safety measures. Uh duh? I could have told you that before you let people start drinking together in small spaces again.

What a mess we're in! It's basically the economy versus health, which is not a good spot to be.

But hey, **Goldman Sachs** research finds that a national mask mandate could save 5 percent of the nation's GDP for the year, according to **Marketplace**. And all that lender cares about is money, not people's health, so you've got to believe them, right?

"A face mask mandate could potentially substitute for lockdowns that would otherwise subtract nearly 5 percent from GDP," the financial giant said in a report it sent to clients.

So wear a mask, people! Social distance! And we won't have to shut down more of your favorite places to spend money and the economy because people are dying due to your incompetence.

Even **Dignity Health Centers of the Central Coast**, which puts out the most positive-sounding press releases in the world about all of the good it does for the community, felt the need to warn the community about coronavirus.

"While we may be growing tired of the disruption coronavirus has on our daily lives, the COVID-19 pandemic is not behind us, and we urge community members to continue to make their health and safety a priority," an email Dignity sent out on June 30 stated.

Santa Barbara County now has almost 3,000 cases, 29 people have died, and we've doubled the number of people in the hospital in one month. So let's go ahead and put the brakes on that forward momentum, shall we?

And just for clarity. The pandemic isn't a hoax. Mask mandates are only being imposed because people have refused to voluntarily do what's best for their fellow citizens. People are idiots. And the alleged greatest country in the world—that's us—is indeed Great Again. Great at being loud, proud, and catching COVID-19.

Woo-hoo! Congratulations!

Americans now make up a quarter of the coronavirus cases around the world. At 4 percent of the world's population, that's quite a feat. Hell yeah! And guess who helped make it happen? Yep. Your president. ☺

The canary is busy writing President Donald Trump a thank you card. Send help to canary@santamariasun.com.



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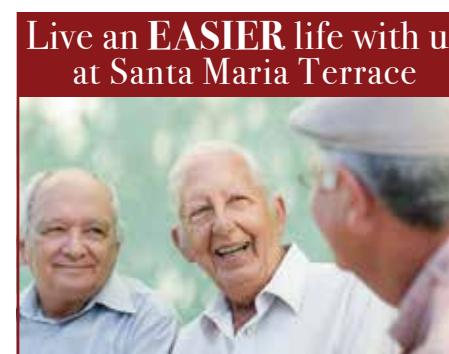
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HOT STUFF

JULY 2 – JULY 9
2020



IMAGE COURTESY OF WINE AND DESIGN

GO GNOME OR GO HOME

Wine and Design in Orcutt hosts its timely Patriotic Gnome painting session on Sunday, July 5, from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Admission to this celebratory workshop, intended for ages 21 and over only, is \$38. Online reservations are required, and attendees are asked to wear face masks. Wine and beer will be available for purchase. The studio is located at 3420 Orcutt Road, suite 105, Orcutt. Call (805) 868-1746 or visit wineanddesign.com/orcutt-ca for more info.

—Caleb Wiseblood

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.

SANTA MARIA VALLEY/LOS ALAMOS

CALL FOR ARTISTS (GRADES 4-12): NEW CHILDREN'S BOOK

This art contest will give students an opportunity to 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 jgatyat@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.

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.calforentry.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.

DRAWING WACKY ANIMAL 'TOONS: ONLINE CLASS In this class, students will learn to draw all sorts of different creatures from throughout the animal kingdom in a humorous "Sunday funnies" type of style.

They will also learn warm-up and imagination exercises that cartoonists use in making their drawings. **July 6-9, 8:30-9:30 a.m. \$75. 805-546-3132. cuesta.edu/communityprograms/youth-programs/. Cuesta College, Highway 1, San Luis Obispo.**

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.

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.

NORTH COAST SLO COUNTY

BEYOND BOUNDARIES This show hopes to push beyond unbeaten riddled viewpoints to allow viewers an opportunity to identify with artists and discover more about themselves. Un-restrained by limitations of personal, cultural, gender, man-made biases, artists exhibit their sensitivities to today's viewpoints and paradigm shifts. Through Aug. 2, 12-4 p.m. Free. 805-772-2504. Art Center Morro Bay, 835 Main St., Morro Bay, artcentermorrobay.org.

FEATURED ARTISTS: NORA RIGGS AND ROCHELE GOMEZ A duo show running through the month of July. Through Aug. 1 Left Field Gallery, 1036 Los Osos Valley Road, Los Osos, 805-305-9292, leftfieldgallery.com.

GALLERY AT MARINA SQUARE PRESENTS FEATURED ARTIST HEMA SUKUMAR Artist's statement: "As a resident artist of California, I gravitate towards painting nearby coastal scenes and landscapes from National Parks. While most of my paintings are studio based, I also paint plein air whenever possible." Through July 29, 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Free. 805-772-1068. galleryatmarinasquare.com. Gallery at Marina Square, 601 Embarcadero suite 10, Morro Bay.

SUBMIT YOUR EVENTS

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ARTS continued page 15

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 newtimesslo.com. You may also email calendar@newtimesslo.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 cwiseblood@newtimesslo.com.

**GALLERY AT MARINA SQUARE PRESENTS
FEATURED ARTIST SARAH DELONG** Artists' statement: Watercolor has been Sarah's medium of choice for over 24 years. She is in her element painting by a mountain stream or painting a boat in a harbor. Through July 29, 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Free. 805-772-1068. galleryatmarinasquare.com. Gallery at Marina Square, 601 Embarcadero suite 10, Morro Bay.

CULTURE & LIFESTYLE

SANTA YNEZ VALLEY

SOLVANG PARKS AND REC: SAND VOLLEYBALL A kids sand volleyball camp (ages 8 through 12). Through July 9 cityofsolvang.com. Downtown Solvang, Mission Dr., Solvang.

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.

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.

LAURUS COLLEGE: 2020 COMMENCEMENT CEREMONY ONLINE Celebrating the Class of 2020. All graduates are encouraged to participate (applications due June 8). **July 11** Laurus College, 325 E. Betteravia

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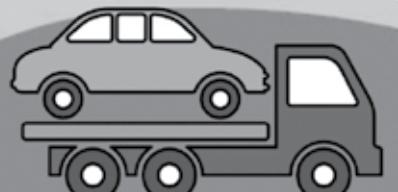


PHOTO COURTESY OF GLASSHEAD STUDIO

SAN LUIS OBISPO

BANG MUAY THAI CURRICULUM REVIEW

Drill and rep out the yellow and orange belt curriculum. **July 11**, 12-2 p.m. \$25-\$40. my805tix.com. Sleeping Tiger Fitness, 3595 Suelo St., San Luis Obispo.

CUESTA COLLEGE COMMUNITY PROGRAMS: COLLEGE FOR KIDS SESSION

II Registration is open. Classes online. Mondays-Tuesdays, 8 a.m.-5 p.m.

through July 22 \$75-\$150 (plus materials). 805-546-3132. cuesta.edu. Cuesta College, Highway 1, 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.

HOT STUFF
JULY 2 - JULY 9
2020

HEART OF GLASS

Glasshead Studio in Atascadero hosts its Stained Glass Terrarium workshop on Saturday, July 11, from 10 a.m. to noon. In accordance with Centers for Disease Control recommendations, face masks are required during the class, which will be limited to four to six participants. Students will use patterns to cut glass and complete their own terrariums. Admission is \$45. Call (805) 464-2633 or visit glassheadstudio.com for more info. The studio is located at 8793 Plata Lane, suite H, Atascadero.

—C.W.

Road, suite B, Santa Maria, 805-267-1690.

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.

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 SLO COUNTY

FOURTH OF JULY BARREL ROOM BASH

To encourage social distancing, the event will be broken up into three sessions of limited capacity. Guests can look forward to enjoying backyard games, live music, wine, and barbecue. **July 4**, 2-4, 4-6 & 6-8 p.m. \$5 in advance. my805tix.com. Cass Winery And Vineyard, 7350 Linne Rd., Paso Robles, 805.239.1730.

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.

LOMPOC/VANDENBERG

FLYING GOAT CELLARS: APPOINTMENT AND PICK-UPS

This winery specializes in Pinot Noir and sparkling wine. Call or check site for pick-up and appointment info. Mondays, Thursdays-Sundays, 11 a.m.-4 p.m. 805-736-9032. flyinggoatcellars.com. Flying Goat Cellars, 1520 Chestnut Court, Lompoc.

SANTA MARIA VALLEY/LOS ALAMOS

PRESQU'ILE WINERY: RESERVATIONS ONLY

Call or go online to make a reservation (reservations open to the public starting June 6). ongoing Presqu'ile Winery, 5391 Presqu'ile Dr., Santa Maria, 805-937-8110. presquilewine.com.

VINO ET AMICIS: NEW HOURS AND FOOD TRUCK CONJUNCTIONS

Working in conjunction with local food trucks and Pizzeria Bello Forno; charcuterie plates will be available to meet County expectations (meals to be served with wine and beer). Saturdays, Sundays, noon and Tuesdays-Fridays, 2-8 p.m. Vino et Amicis, 156 S. Broadway, Orcutt, 805-631-0496. vinoetamicis.com.

FOOD & DRINK continued page 16

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- 7/11 Jill Knight
- 7/12 Sweet Leaf
- 7/18 Spanky Paul
- 7/19 Rockin Bs
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Cass Winery



Avila Beach
4th of July
Doggie
Parade
**SATURDAY,
JULY 4**
Avila Beach
Promenade



4th of July
at Cass Winery
SATURDAY, JULY 4
Cass Winery



Fourth of July
Drive-Thru BBQ
SATURDAY, JULY 4
Atascadero Printery



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



2020 Estate Beef Dinner
Series: Short Ribs
FRIDAY, JULY 17
Cass Winery



Barrel Room Concert:
Unfinished Business
SUNDAY, JULY 19
Cass Winery



Wednesdays Around the World
Dinner: Morocco
WEDNESDAY, JULY 22
Cass Winery



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
The Pleasant Valley Wine Trail



Pecho Coast Trail
Plant Life
SUNDAY, AUGUST 23
Point San Luis Lighthouse



Season 3 Song Contest
Final Round
FRIDAY, AUGUST 28
Painted Sky



2020 Sunset
Seafood Boil
FRIDAY, AUGUST 28
Cass Winery

MY805TIX BOX OFFICE IS OPEN Get your tickets online or at Boo Boo Records, the official Box Office for My805Tix events! Boo Boo's is located at 978 Monterey Street in SLO. Call 805-541-0657.

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TOON TOWN

Drawing Wacky Animal Toons, a virtual children's workshop series hosted by Raytoons Comics and Games, begins on Monday, July 6, and will run through Thursday, July 9, with classes held from 8:30 to 9:30 a.m. each morning. Participants can learn how to draw various animals in a comic strip style during this online program. Admission to the full series is \$75. Call (805) 546-3132 or email ray@raytoons.net for more info.

—C.W.

FOOD & DRINK from page 15

SOUTH COAST SLO COUNTY

ARROYO GRANDE FARMERS MARKET Saturdays, 12-2:25 p.m. Arroyo Grande Farmers Market, Olohan Alley, Arroyo Grande.

SAN LUIS OBISPO

SLO FARMERS MARKET Hosts more than 60 vendors. Saturdays, 8-10:45 a.m. World Market Parking Lot, 325 Madonna Rd., San Luis Obispo.

NORTH SLO COUNTY

FOURTH OF JULY CHOWDER CRUISE AND WINE TASTING Enjoy award winning chowder, Ceasar salad, and a turkey croissant sandwich while you view the famous Shadow of Morro Bay's Rock and Fairbanks Point. Our guests often see sea lions, harbor seals, egrets, white pelicans, and much more! **JULY 4, 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m., 1:20-3:40 p.m. \$35. 805-772-2128. chabliscruses.com. Chablis Cruises, 1205 Embarcadero, Morro Bay.**

VIRTUAL WINE TASTING PACKAGES AT CASS WINERY Wine by the glass and bottles are also available for purchase. Check site for specific virtual tasting packages. ongoing Free. 805-239-1730. casswines.com/. Cass Winery And Vineyard, 7350 Linne Rd., Paso Robles.

NORTH COAST SLO COUNTY

BRUNCH IN THE GARDEN Enjoy the sun with a delicious meal accompanied by live music in the garden gazebo every Sunday this summer. Adult flat rate includes one entree, the choice of a homemade muffin or biscuit with jam, and a non-alcoholic beverage. Sundays, 10:30 a.m.-2 p.m. through Aug. 30. \$9-\$19. 805-927-4200. cambriapineslodge.com/onsite. Cambria Pines Lodge, 2905 Burton Dr., Cambria.



Fired Up

The Templeton Firefighters Association hosts its annual Fourth of July Pancake Breakfast Fundraiser at the Templeton Fire Department on Saturday, July 4, from 7 a.m. to noon. To support social distancing, this traditional benefit will be a drive-through event rather than a dine-in service this year. Each meal includes two pancakes, two sausage links, syrup, butter, and utensils. Visit the fundraiser's Eventbrite page for more info. The fire station is located at 206 5th St., Templeton.

—C.W.

MUSIC

SANTA MARIA VALLEY/LOS ALAMOS

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.

SOUTH COAST SLO COUNTY

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.

THE MOTHER CORN SHUCKERS LIVE A 9-piece acoustic Bluegrass/Americana band based out of the Central Coast. **JULY 11, 3:30-6:30 p.m. \$20-\$35. my805tix.com. Point San Luis Lighthouse, 1 Lighthouse Rd., Avila Beach.**

SONG CONTEST SEASON 3: FINAL ROUND The award winners from Season Three of Songwriters at Play's monthly contests compete for the Grand Prize of \$500. **JULY 7, 7:30-10 p.m. \$15. my805tix.com. Painted Sky Studios, 715 Main St, Cambria, (805) 927-8330.**

SAN LUIS OBISPO

THE BOGEYS Dogs on leash are welcomed. **JULY 5, 1-4 p.m. Kelsey See Canyon Vineyards, 1947 See Canyon Rd., San Luis Obispo, (805) 595-9700.**

TYLER RICH WITH TEDDY ROBB **JULY 3, 6 p.m.**

bigbigsls.com. Barrelhouse Brewing Co. Speakeasy, 1033 Chorro St., San Luis Obispo, 805-296-1128.

VIRTUAL FACULTY CONCERT: A FUNDRAISER A virtual benefit concert. **JULY 2, 7:30 p.m. bigbigsls.com. Cuesta College Community Programs (Zoom event), Inquire for Zoom code, 805-242-1649.**

NORTH SLO COUNTY

PASO CONCERTS IN THE PARK: MONTE MILLS Part of the series' 2020 lineup, which continues through Aug. 13. **JULY 2, 5:30 p.m. bigbigsls.com. Paso Robles City Park Gazebo, Spring and 12th St., Paso Robles, 805-237-3991.**

RAVA ON THE ROCKS: THE COUNTERFEIT

KINGS All ages are welcome, but only those 21 and over can enjoy Rava's wines. No outside alcohol is permitted. **JULY 5, 12-4 p.m. Rava Wines + Events, 6785 Creston Rd., Paso Robles, 805-238-7282.**

THE STEVIE NICKS ILLUSION

A tribute band to Stevie Nicks and Fleetwood Mac. Check site for updates. **JULY 11, 7:30 p.m. \$20. my805tix.com. Rava Wines + Events, 6785 Creston Rd., Paso Robles, 805-238-7282. ○**

PHOTO COURTESY OF RAYTOONS COMICS AND GAMES

Arts

ART SCENE

Arts Briefs

PCPA seeks applicants for stage technician training program

SCREENSHOT FROM PCPA'S INSTAGRAM



The Pacific Conservatory Theatre (PCPA) is now accepting applications for its two-year Technical Theatre Training Program. The deadline to apply is Sept. 15, and classes will begin on Oct. 5.

Students in the program will train and work alongside PCPA's professional designers, technicians, directors, and actors in an intensive, vocational setting. Stage lighting, sound, props, paints, set construction, costumes, and stage management are only a few areas of study within the program's curriculum.

Sara Curran, coordinator of the training program, described enrollment as "an investment in an aspiring student's future," in a press release from PCPA.

"We help prepare students for a career as a theater technician by providing a hands-on professional approach to learning where after only two years our students successfully find meaningful employment," Curran said in the release.

Applicants to the program are required to either be at least 18 years old or have a high school diploma. As a certified vocational program, several colleges and universities accept PCPA's graduates to enter as juniors and complete their path to a bachelor's degree. According to the release, many graduates are often sought out by Cirque du Soleil, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, ZFX, and other companies.

The training program includes classes, workshops, labs, and performances that encompass six days per week, designating its description as a full-time commitment. After applications are reviewed, potential candidates for the program are contacted to set up a follow-up interview. To find out more about the Technical Theatre Training Program and its admission process, call (805) 928-7731 or visit pcpa.org.

Dana Adobe and Cultural Center updates health-related procedures for 2020 Summer Day Camp

Registration to join the Dana Adobe and Cultural Center's (DACC) 2020 Summer Day Camp closes on Monday, July 13, or earlier if the camp reaches its capped limit of 30 children before then.

The camp is open to ages 8 through 13 and will take place on Monday, July 27, through Friday, July 31, from 9 a.m. to noon each day. Activities at the camp include gardening, hiking, birdhouse building, and nature education workshops. The first 10 families to register for the camp will receive a \$50 scholarship toward their registration fees, thanks to sponsorship from the Rotary Club of Nipomo.

According to press materials, the DACC will be following Centers for Disease Control guidelines and recommendations provided in the American Camp Association field guide to keep campers, staff, and volunteers safe during the events. Some of the new safety procedures include a mandatory temperature check for both children and adults each day from a contactless, digital thermometer. Anyone who displays a temperature higher than 100.4 degrees will be directed to seek appropriate medical care and will not be allowed to enter the camp.

The DACC will also be utilizing several cleaning protocols. Call (805) 929-5679 or visit danaadobe.org for the full list of health-related procedures and more info. The center is located at 671 S. Oaklawn Ave., Nipomo. ☐

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

PHOTO COURTESY OF EMILY KITTS



SWEET TEAMS ARE MADE OF THIS: "We have worked through a lot of the main planning concepts for the observatory and are now beginning construction," said Emily Kitts, co-chair of Leadership SMV's observatory committee. "Due to the COVID-19 shutdowns, we've pushed our finish date to Nov. 7."

Down telescope

Santa Maria Recreation and Parks Department partners with Leadership SMV on new mobile observatory

BY CALEB WISEBLOOD

It was as if the stars aligned when Leadership Santa Maria Valley (SMV) first pitched its community observatory concept to the Santa Maria Recreation and Parks Department, which is currently in the process of modifying its mobile nature trailer to include said observatory. Emily Kitts, co-chair of the program's Observatory Committee, described the project's early stages as refreshingly providential.

"The Recreation and Parks Department just so happened to obtain a trailer for their mobile Nature Center around the same time we pitched the idea to them, so it was all just very fortuitous," Kitts said. "The idea for the observatory just seemed to line up pretty well."

Before being brought to the Parks Department though, the project was one of several proposals competing for approval within Leadership SMV. Steve Williams, Kitts' partner as fellow co-chair of

Observe and report

Visit santamaria.com/leadership-2020-legacy-project to find out more about the mobile observatory. Currently in construction, the trailer is expected to be completed by early November.

the committee, first proposed the observatory as a potential Legacy 2020 project—Leadership SMV's annual effort to provide a creative new service or resource to benefit the community.

While more than 20 different proposals were discussed this year, the program decided to move forward with two projects: an illustration contest geared toward a new bilingual children's book ("Leadership SMV holds illustration contest for its 2020 Legacy Project, an upcoming bilingual children's book," June 18) and Williams' community-accessible observatory.

"I believe the idea stuck because it filled both a community need and a community interest," Williams said.

A local astronomy enthusiast, Williams has participated in bimonthly stargazing events at Los Flores Ranch Park in Santa Maria regularly since 2016, which partly inspired his proposal. Volunteers from various astronomy clubs, including the Astronomical Society of Lompoc and the Santa Barbara Astronomical Unit,



LEARNING THE SCOPES: "I hope young people will be motivated by the 'wow' factor of looking through the eyepiece of a telescope and begin the quest for an education in STEAM," said Steve Williams, who originally pitched the observatory as Leadership SMV's Legacy 2020 project.



WHERE THERE'S A WILL, THERE'S A MILKY WAY: A timeline designed by Leadership SMV's observatory committee estimates completion dates for key aspects of the observatory's construction.

contribute telescopes and other tools to each event.

Williams hopes the observatory's offering of similar resources will encourage visitors, especially youth, to gain an appreciation for astronomy and other sciences.

"I hope the observatory will inspire people, both young and old, to look up more often and begin to understand that we are connected through a common curiosity that dates back to the beginning of civilization," Williams said. "I hope young people will be motivated by the 'wow' factor of looking through the eyepiece of a telescope and begin the quest for an education in STEAM [Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math]."

Williams first envisioned the observatory as one with a permanent home, most likely, Los Flores Ranch Park. But Kitts proposed the mobility aspect.

"One of the potential roadblocks to building the observatory would probably be the planning and permitting process, so we thought making the observatory mobile could eliminate some of those hurdles," Kitts said.

Construction of the mobile observatory was originally delayed due to COVID-19 shutdowns earlier this year but is currently underway with an estimated completion date of Nov. 7. Kitts, Williams, and their peers in the Leadership SMV program will be working on installing the observatory's dome to its trailer over the next few weeks.

"We have worked through a lot of the main planning concepts for the observatory and are now beginning construction," said Kitts, who also serves in the group's bilingual book committee.

Through word of mouth, she decided to join the nearly year-long Leadership SMV program, which is hosted by the Santa Maria Valley Chamber of Commerce and designed to foster community leadership and networking.

"I decided to apply for the Leadership class after hearing about it through a few friends who had completed the program. Everyone spoke so highly of it. It sounded like a great opportunity," Kitts said. "First and foremost, I'm a student, here to learn about our community and all it has to offer."

Members of the 2020 program celebrated their class graduation on Friday, June 26, with a special moon observation session. It was one of the first times members were able to use the observatory's newly acquired telescope. One reason Kitts believes Leadership SMV decided in favor of the observatory is that it's expected to have a lasting impact, she explained.

"I think our class decided to proceed with this project because it was a tangible experience that we can gift to the community, which can be used for years and years," Kitts said. "Its legacy can live on and be enjoyed by many, long after our class graduates." ☐

Arts Editor Caleb Wiseblood is reaching for the stars. Send comments to cwiseblood@santamariasun.com.

IMAGE COURTESY OF STEVE WILLIAMS

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ARTS



POET AND ACTIVIST:
Yosimar Reyes, named by *The Advocate* in its list of 13 LGBT Latinos Changing the World, was the featured guest speaker of HOPE's virtual Poetry Night on Friday, June 26.

SCREENSHOT FROM FACEBOOK LIVE

Loud and proud

Yosimar Reyes headlined HOPE's virtual Poetry Night, one of several Santa Maria Pride events online this year

BY CALEB WISEBLOOD

C OVID-19 couldn't keep the House of Pride and Equality (HOPE) from hosting its annual Santa Maria Pride festivities—albeit online through Facebook Live and Twitch in place of traditional gatherings this year.

"It's the government, they're after me!" California-based poet and activist Yosimar Reyes said for levity's sake after some moments of technical difficulty during HOPE's virtual Poetry Night, which streamed live on Friday, June 26.

Reyes, named by *The Advocate* in its list of 13 LGBT Latinos Changing the World, was the event's featured guest speaker. The livestream also showcased multiple readings, in both English and Spanish, from Central Coast-based poets. Translator Jennie Morales joined in on each segment to interpret the readings in ASL.

After reading a variety of his own nationally acclaimed poetry, Reyes took part in a very insightful Q-and-A session (viewers were encouraged to comment with their own questions for Reyes during the stream). Born in Guerrero, Mexico, and raised in San Jose, Reyes once received an Undocupoets Fellowship—an annual grant given out to poets who are currently or were formerly undocumented in the U.S.—for his works, which usually explore themes of migration and sexuality.

Reyes' poems have been published in various collections over the years, including *Mariposas: An Anthology of Queer Modern Latino Poetry* and *Aztlan: Chicano Male Recollections of Consciousness and Coming Out*. New works by Reyes will appear in the upcoming publication *Joto: An Anthology of Queer Xicano and Chicano Poetry*.

One question that arose during Reyes' Q-and-A was what pieces of advice would he give to aspiring poets, specifically to those in the Santa Maria Valley that might feel they could easily become "lost in the mix," compared to poets from larger cities.

"Own the place," Reyes said, encouraging poets to embrace the places they've grown up in, rather than create separate realities in their work. Reyes is also well known for exploring his upbringing in San Jose in his poetry.

"Tap into the special nuances and cultural references in your area," he said. "Own your

experience." HOPE's Poetry Night was one of several other Santa Maria Pride events live and online for free this year, including its annual Drag Show, virtual for the first time this year. Central Coast-based performers Santanico

and Juicy CW co-hosted the event (through Facebook and Twitch), on Wednesday, June 24.

The duo glamorously performed a fun, eclectic blend (from Broadway staples to modern pop hits) of dance and lip sync numbers along with guests C.C. Candypepper, Foxy Moron, and Nala Diamond. Tips were accepted but not required during the livestream.



THE SHOW MUST GO ON: Juicy CW (pictured) and Santanico co-hosted Santa Maria Pride's virtual Drag Show (through Facebook and Twitch) on Wednesday, June 24.



STARSTRUCK: C.C. Candypepper, Foxy Moron, and Nala Diamond were among the performing guests during this year's Drag Show, presented virtually for the first time.

Tip compliments and/or suggestions to Arts Editor Caleb Wiseblood at cwiseblood@santamariasun.com.

Film Reviews

PHOTO COURTESY OF SLOMOTION FILM



LAST MAN STANDING: After a petrochemical plant contaminates his community and tries to drive him out, Stacey Ryan refuses to give up, in the documentary *Mossville: Where Great Trees Fall*, streaming through slomotionfilm.com, on July 2.

SLOMOTION@HOME

What's it rated? Not rated

What's it cost? \$5

Where's it showing? slomotionfilm.com

SLOMotion Film has organized a mini virtual festival you can stream at home on July 2 and 9 via its website, slomotionfilm.com. The first two screenings are part of the "Living in America" series, which, according to SLOMotion, "will highlight issues of racial injustice, environmental inequality, systems of oppression, and mass incarceration."

On **Thursday, July 2**, at 6:30 p.m., see director Fraser Jones' *Uniontown*, about Uniontown, Alabama, which has endured years of pollution and whose citizens are fighting to take back the town from a dirty cheese factory, landfill, coal ash operation, and catfish plant. (2019, 15 min.). Next, see Alexander Glustrom's documentary *Mossville: Where Great Trees Fall*, about a centuries-old black community that's become contaminated by a petrochemical plant that wants to uproot the community and expand, but one man—Stacey Ryan—stands in the way and refuses to give up. (2019, 76 min.).

On **Thursday, July 9**, at 7 p.m., see *America* (2020, 5 min.), directed by Jo Anna Edmison, featuring Super 8 footage of the SLO protests. Next is *Asches to Ashes* (2019, 26 min.), directed by Taylor Rees, which introduces viewers to Winfred Rembert, who lived on a plantation, was put to work on chain gang, and who survived a lynching attempt. Finally, see Sami Khan and Smriti Mundhra's *St. Louis Superman* (2019, 28 min.), about 33-year-old Bruce Frank Jr., a battle rapper who's also a state representative from St. Louis, Missouri.

Each mini-fest costs \$5, which benefits R.A.C.E. Matters SLO. —Glen

Sun film reviews are compiled by New Times Senior Staff Writer Glen Starkey. Contact him at gstarkey@newtimeslso.com.

PHOTO COURTESY OF SLOMOTION FILM



RAPPER AND REPRESENTATIVE: Meet Bruce Frank Jr., a battle rapper who's also a state representative from St. Louis, Missouri, in the documentary *St. Louis Superman*, streaming through slomotionfilm.com, on July 9.

Guilt trip

Writer-director Derek Cianfrance (*Blue Valentine*, *The Place Beyond the Pines*, *The Light Between Oceans*) helms this miniseries based on Wally Lamb's book of the same name, about Dominick Birdsey's attempt to get his paranoid schizophrenic twin brother out of a mental asylum. Both roles are played by Mark Ruffalo. (six 60-min. episodes)

Glen: The miniseries format is perfect for a sprawling novel like Lamb's *I Know This Much Is True*, which spans not only the Birdsey boys' childhood, college years, and middle age, but also their maternal grandfather, Domenico Tempesta (Marcello Fonte), and his brother's early years settling in America, as well as their mother's childhood under their grandfather, told through a personal history written by the grandfather before his death. There are a bunch of other threads, too, such as the Drinkwater clan, which is also intertwined with the Birdseys back to his grandfather. Part of the story also examines the twins' relationship with their stepfather, Ray Birdsey (John Procaccino); their mother, Ma (Melissa Leo); Dominic's relationship with his divorced wife, Dessa (Kathryn Hahn); his current girlfriend, Joy (Imogen Poots); and the people he encounters as he tries to get his brother released: social worker Lisa Sheffer (Rosie O'Donnell), psychiatrist Dr. Patel (Archie Panjabi), and the head of the asylum, Dr. Hume (Bruce Greenwood). As you can see, there are a lot of characters and a lot of intertwined plot threads, but with about a six-hour runtime, these various elements are given the time they need to develop. Ultimately, this is Dominic's story, a story about guilt. Can we ever feel that we've done enough for our loved ones? It's depressing but worth the emotional turmoil.

Anna: It's definitely a grim tale, sprawling, tragic, and unforgiving in its moments of grief. Ruffalo is absolutely fantastic playing the two brothers, vastly different characters chained together by blood. Through flashbacks we find that Dominic has always held resentment for Thomas, whether it is when they are young kids and their classmates found his brother to be high maintenance, or college when the idea of rooming with anyone but Dominic would

throw Thomas into a huge panic. Now in middle age, the care of his spiraling brother falls heavy on Dominic and he himself is barely holding on. As always, everything else in life takes a back seat to Thomas' mental health and the inherent drama that surrounds him. Like a caged animal, Thomas becomes irrational and violent. He's at one moment tender and achingly sad, at another spouting his paranoid delusions and becoming out of control. It's a pretty heartbreak watch, but Ruffalo kills it here. Just make sure you're in the right frame of mind for this sad tale.

Glen: Because Thomas always sucked the emotional air out of every situation, Dominic never really learned how to manage his own emotional needs, and when he begins meeting with Dr. Patel, ostensibly to help her in her treatment of Thomas, she discovers that Dominic is also broken, but in a different way. Thomas is straight-up delusional, hearing voices, and in the first installment he's committing a truly crazy act that lands him in the asylum. Dominic's issues are more complex—resentment of his needy brother, the challenge of twinhood, a potentially violent stepfather, a lie he told as a child that prefaced a tragedy that he didn't have anything to do with but that still haunts him, a personal tragedy that led to the end of his marriage, and anger issues. He's a complicated and deeply unhappy person who feels like he and his family are cursed, and there's certainly a case to be made that his grandfather Domenico, Dominic's namesake, set in motion a multi-generational string of misfortune that has followed the family through the years. He believes that the sins of the father (or in this case grandfather) are visited on the son. What really seems to be at work is a repetition of the same family character flaws, genetic mental illness, and poor decision-making and coping skills. The story is less about saving Thomas and more about Dominic learning to break



BROTHERLY LOVE: Mark Ruffalo stars in the twin roles of paranoid schizophrenic Thomas Birdsey (left) and his brother, Dominic, who's trying to get his brother released from a mental asylum, in HBO's miniseries *I Know This Much Is True*.

old cycles, forgive himself, and move forward. I read the book's plot synopsis after watching the miniseries, and the endings share the same tone but are somewhat different, I think because the book's ending would have seemed too farfetched and neat for the miniseries. I will say this: As dark and depressing as the mini-series is, it offers a glimmer of hope that Dominic can move forward. Steel yourself, and then dive in. It's an emotional roller coaster worth riding.

Anna: It's beautifully shot as well. The cinematography of the fictional town Three Rivers is breathtaking, and the work they did putting Ruffalo in scenes as both brothers was pretty flawless. Same with Phillip Ettinger, who plays the teenaged twins. Both he and the twin boys (Donnie and Rocco Masihi) who played the elementary school age Thomas and Dominic did a wonderful job. Dominic's world would not be perfect without Thomas in it. He still holds a candle for his ex-wife, Dessa, and a seething grudge against his stepfather, Ray. Tragedy has changed every aspect of his life, and he feels a bit like a broken shell. What more can this world ask of him? This one is meant to be watched closely, and though its six-hour runtime doesn't work for the big screen, it deserves the kind of attention you give to films in the theater. Clear away your distractions and settle in for this haunting drama. ○

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



Kathleen Gerber, 2019



David Lawrence, 2019



Dylan Kyle, 2019



Barry Goyette, 2019



Michael Castaneda, 2019

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PHOTO BY RODOLFO NAVARRO, COURTESY OF ANNA FERGUSON-SPARKS



THOM'S VEGGIE STACK: Chef Michael Cherney's vegetarian sandwich is a whopper with cucumber, red onion, sunflower sprouts, mozzarella, avocado, and roasted garlic aioli on Bob's Well Bread pain de mie.



PHOTO COURTESY OF ANNA FERGUSON-SPARKS

SIDE OF MAC: The to-go food that chef Michael Cherney offers at his restaurant in Solvang, peasants FEAST, consists of soups, salads, and sandwiches due to the pandemic, but he still serves up a heaping helping of mac and cheese as a side dish.

PHOTO BY LINDA CHAJA PHOTOGRAPHY, COURTESY OF ANNA FERGUSON-SPARKS



NEW DIGS: Chef Michael Cherney and his wife, restaurant veteran Sarah Cherney, opened peasants FEAST in Solvang this spring.

PHOTO COURTESY OF ANNA FERGUSON-SPARKS



SOLVANG HOT CHICKEN: Buttermilk fried chicken, pickled red onion, fresh herbs, shredded cabbage, and Nannie's ranch on a sesame brioche bun. Yum!

waiting for the first phase of reopenings to see what happens.

"As bad as it is, for some reason the timing has worked out for us," Cherney said. "It's slow and steady for us. We have enough to pay our employees and pay the rent." ○

Editor Camillia Lanham suddenly has a hankering for some carrot soup. Send food tips to clanham@santamariasun.com.

Carrots and comfort

Solvang's newest restaurant opened during the pandemic and is serving up locally sourced deliciousness to-go or for the patio

BY CAMILLIA LANHAM

The first time in three years that chef Michael Cherney saw someone eat the food he prepared was on the patio of his new restaurant in the middle of the COVID-19 pandemic.

"They were eating a grilled cheese sandwich, and they were pulling it apart and the cheese was all gooey," Cherney said. "I'll never forget that. That image is burned into my head."

Although he and his wife, Sarah Cherney, are restaurant veterans, their most recent jobs were for more corporate-style restaurants, so Cherney said they didn't really get to interact with customers. The experience wasn't personal enough for them, so they decided it was time to venture out on their own with their new spot in Solvang, peasants FEAST.

"We didn't have that connection with customers. We were just soldiers," he said.

Serving customers and seeing the smile on their faces as they dig into the food he makes is what puts a smile on Cherney's face. Seeing other people happy makes the Cherneys happy, he said. It's a personal, communal interaction, something to be celebrated.

"And that's what we want this restaurant to be. A celebration," he said.

With the COVID-19 pandemic coinciding with the opening of the new restaurant, things have gone a little differently than they originally thought. But, Cherney said, everything seems to work out for them in the end, and he's confident that this won't be any different.

It gives them a chance to ease into things slowly and test the waters a little bit, he said. The response has been keeping both him and his wife busy. He said they've been putting in 14-hour days, six days a week, since they opened in April, and they almost have more to-go orders than they can keep.

up with. It's a good problem to have, he said.

Right now, peasants FEAST is serving a core menu of soups, salads, sandwiches, and some sides, because that's the kind of food that works best in to-go containers. In the future, Cherney said, he's hoping to offer up a seasonal menu of what he calls "new American comfort food." And the specials will be where it's at.

For instance, the restaurant recently purchased a whole lamb and turned it into specials. Cherney said he made lamb barbacoa tacos with the leg meat; rubbed the spareribs, smoked them, and paired it with Texas toast, cole slaw, and potato salad; served the racks with gnocchi and spring onions; and cooked up a lamb bolognese with fresh fettuccini.

He worked up a mushroom burger in June made from Brandon's Gourmet Mushrooms in Orcutt and cheese from the Stepladder Creamery in Cambria. It was over the top, he said. And

several customers asked him to put it on the more permanent menu.

Getting the chance to work with local farmers such as those who run Stepladder and Brandon's Mushrooms give Cherney the opportunity to have an intimate understanding of the produce and meat he purchases. It's important to him, Cherney said, because that leads to connection with the food we eat and an appreciation for those who used their time and energy to grow it.

He requires the chefs who work for him to put time in on local farms. Recently, he said, a couple of his employees went and harvested some rabbits and duck eggs.

"There's a story for almost every single dish, and that goes back into where that product came from and how it got to your plate," he said. "We're not just here to feed people."

The flavors coming out of local, small farms

are bright, vegetal, and intense. Plus there's less waste and less of a carbon footprint. With the restaurant, he said, they can take surplus produce from local farmers—such as the oddly shaped carrots that farmers can't always sell at markets and produce stands—and puree it into a vegetable puree with some garlic, butter, and possibly cream for soup.

"If I could source all of these ingredients locally, and they're all great, it makes my job easier," Cherney said. "If you're getting carrots that are mass-produced, there's no flavor, there's no story."

His desire for a connection with the food that he cooks with stems from some time Cherney spent as a WWOOFer (World Wide Opportunities on Organic Farms) after working at L'Atelier de Joël Robuchon (a Michelin star chef) in the Las Vegas MGM Grand for three years.

After spending some time abroad, Cherney moved to North Fork, California, where he worked at the Kern Family Farm in the Sierra Nevada foothills.

"An that's where it all kind of clicked for me," he said. "They weren't rich in money, but they were rich in family and culture."

One day, they were thinning carrots, pulling little carrots out of the ground so the ones around it could grow into the space it left behind. The Kern Family Farm thought of those little carrots as thinners that they wouldn't be able to sell. But when Cherney looked at it, he thought of the little carrots they used to purchase at the L'Atelier in Vegas. He told them that fine dining chefs would pay good money for little carrots like that.

Eventually, Cherney made his way into Sides Hardware and Shoes in Los Olivos, where he worked for several years and met his wife. He said it was exactly where he wanted to be. A restaurant in wine country where he could work with local farms.

Now, the Cherneys have their own spot and are excited to make things work. The building is a greenhouse that was built in the 1970s before it was converted into a restaurant with a kitchen. With panel glass almost all the way down to the floor and a patio that wraps almost all the way around the restaurant, you can see anyone and everyone from anywhere in the restaurant.

Although, peasants FEAST isn't open for dine-in services yet, the patio is open for diners who would like to make an online food order and eat it out in the open air. Cherney said they are just



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7/2 - 7/9

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- This is just the beginning. More closures are coming.
 - Good. We need to get a handle on the surge of cases.
 - It wouldn't have happened if people actually wore face masks.
 - It's stupid. More people are out of work again.

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Bathroom was remodeled in 2016 with new vanity, new tiled floor & tile tub enclosure. Home has dual pane windows making it energy-

efficient. There is an indoor laundry room, large fenced rear yard w/patio & lemon Tree. Lot is 6098 SQ FT. Great for commuters with easy

access to the freeway. Close to Allen Hancock College and just minutes from shopping & Medical Facilities. **\$330,000 (LA729)**



**729 Laguna Avenue
Santa Maria**

Vandenburg Village Cutie!!! This 3 bedroom 2 bathroom home has much to offer. The Kitchen features granite counter tops and tile flooring

. The Kitchen opens to the dining area that flows to the living room with lots of natural light from the 2 solar tubs. Remodeled bathrooms and laminate flooring throughout. This home also features a two car garage and a sunroom that is separated into two spaces for endless

possibilities. Drought tolerant landscaping in the front yard and the backyard is spacious with a nice brick area perfect for a patio table, and

some fruit trees. **\$384,990 (RI396)**



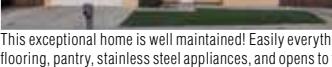
**3965 Rigel,
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Vandenburg Village Cutie!!! This 3 bedroom 2 bathroom home has much to offer. The Kitchen features granite counter tops and tile flooring

. The Kitchen opens to the dining area that flows to the living room with lots of natural light from the 2 solar tubs. Remodeled bathrooms and laminate flooring throughout. This home also features a two car garage and a sunroom that is separated into two spaces for endless

possibilities. Drought tolerant landscaping in the front yard and the backyard is spacious with a nice brick area perfect for a patio table, and

some fruit trees. **\$384,990 (RI396)**



**4751 Titan,
Santa Maria**

This exceptional home is well maintained! Easily everything you need and more! The Kitchen features oak cabinets, Corian counter tops, tile

flooring, pantry, stainless steel appliances, and opens to the great room with built-ins. 2 masters – 1 with built-in cabinets and 1 with private

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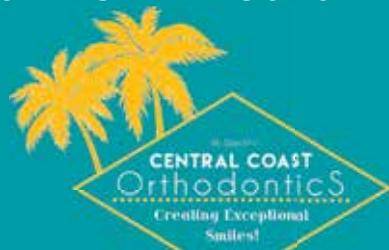
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