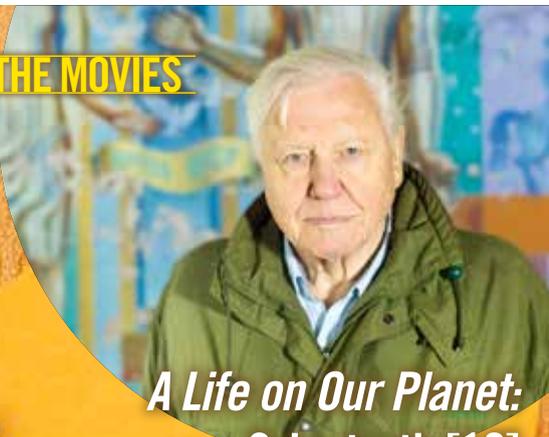


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*A Life on Our Planet:
Grim truth [19]*

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| MATH | C- |
| ENGLISH | D |
| SCIENCE | F |
| ART | D |
| MUSIC | C |
| P.E. | C |

Santa Maria high schools attempt to address a much higher than usual number of failing grades caused by distance learning [6]

BY MALEA MARTIN

Struggle to educate

NEWS A local lawsuit about political signs [4]

ARTS Pricey Diggs' new Americana album [17]

EATS Alisos Canyon becomes an AVA [20]

Next Week!

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2020 • 12TH ANNUAL



November 12, 2020

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With nearly four times as many failing grades on recent student progress reports as the same time last year, the Santa Maria Joint Union High School District is looking at how to turn those grades around. Teachers told the *Sun* that while some students aren't showing up to class or turning in work, others are just falling behind due to the change in teaching style and homework loads associated with distance learning during the COVID-19 pandemic. Staff Writer Malea Martin talks to teachers, parents, and students about what the issues are and what the future should look like [6].

This week, you can also read about how Pricey Diggs turned a tour cancellation into a new album [17]; Youth ARTS Alive's after-school program [18]; and what's so special about Alisos Canyon [20].

Camillia Lanham
editor



PROGRESS? Santa Maria Joint Union High School District's recent student progress reports indicate that distance learning isn't going very well for many kids.

Cover design by Alex Zuniga

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Political Watch

• **U.S. Rep. Salud Carbajal** (D-Santa Barbara) announced Oct. 28 that the Santa Barbara County Flood Control District had been awarded a \$13.5 million grant from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). The grant will allow the county to purchase property along Randall Road in Montecito in order to construct a new debris basin near San Ysidro Creek. The basin could help prevent another disaster like the Montecito mudslides in 2018. "It has taken years for our community to rebuild and recover from the Montecito Debris Flow. We can, and should, honor the memories of those we lost that horrible day by doing everything possible to prevent future disasters," Carbajal said in a statement. "Wildfires and floods, fueled by climate change, are only getting worse over time and we must adapt our infrastructure to reflect our reality. The new debris basin will go a long way toward that goal, and I'm proud of the collaborative work we've done across local, state, and federal governments to secure the funding necessary to turn this project into a reality." The new basin would not only retain large boulders and debris to protect the community, but would also protect fish habitat, something that had been a concern of environmental groups in past basin discussions. "This debris basin will have more than four times the capacity of the current basin upstream, and will feature design elements to detain more trees and rocks. Because of this and because it is at the best gradient in the watershed, this is the ideal project for increasing the protection of the community," **1st District Santa Barbara County Supervisor Das Williams** said in the statement. "I want to thank the families who are selling the land to us and the community supporters who have been advocating every step of the way." The new basin is estimated to cost \$18 million, so the FEMA grant will cover 75 percent of the cost.

• **Gov. Gavin Newsom** issued an executive order on Oct. 28 responding to issues created by the pandemic. "The order directs the California Department of Transportation to create a process for issuing temporary encroachment permits enabling commercial activities in the state highway right of way, allowing businesses located along state highways to expand their outdoor dining options onto sidewalks and parking areas, where safety permits," according to Newsom's office. The order also allows people who are 70 and older to renew their driver's licenses by mail to limit in-person DMV visits and allow the vulnerable population to remain isolated.

• **Assemblymember Monique Limón** (D-Santa Barbara) wrote in an Oct. 30 Facebook post that Herencia Indígena—an organization that provides medical interpreting, cultural awareness training, and training for Mixteco interpreters—has launched a Mixteco COVID-19 hotline in partnership with Dignity Health to help serve the Indigenous community. Limón wrote that people can call Monday through Friday from 2 to 8 p.m., as well as Saturday and Sunday from 3 to 8 p.m. "They will be answering questions regarding symptoms, quarantine requirements, and resources," Limón wrote. The hotline number is (805) 363-0888. ○

Political sign dispute in Santa Maria neighborhood continues past Election Day

In June, Santa Maria resident Stephen Siemsen decided to protest the White House by hanging an American flag upside down in his window, a choice that drew criticism from some residents of Quail Meadows East, the manufactured home park where Stephen and his wife, Lisa Casillas-Siemsen, reside.

But the dispute didn't end there. Now, the Siemens are plaintiffs in a case against Quail Meadows East after the park management ordered the couple to take down one of the two political signs they displayed in their front yard.

The couple says that they were unfairly targeted for their political views. While their signage included anti-Trump and pro-Democrat sentiment, other park residents allegedly displayed pro-Republican signs without pushback, according to court documents.

According to a complaint for damages document that Sanger Swysen & Dunkle, the law firm representing the Siemens, shared with the *Sun*, the current dispute started on Aug. 3 when the Siemens displayed two political signs in their front yard.

"One sign included the text 'Vets Against Trump,'" the court document stated. "The other sign was in support of the reelection of United States Representative Salud Carbajal."

Stephen told the *Sun* that within six hours of putting the signs up, he and Lisa received a notice from the park management asking them to only display one sign within their space.

The email cited the Quail Meadows East Guidelines, which state, "Resident is permitted to display a political campaign sign related to a candidate for election to public office or to the initiative, referendum, or recall process in the window or on the side of the home, or on the space. Such signs may not exceed 6 square feet, and the sign may not be displayed in excess of a period of time from 90 days prior to an election to 15 days following the election."

"I was told to take the sign down," Stephen said. "Then we appealed this because ... when I read the guidelines that I signed when I moved into the park, it says that a resident may display a sign. Well, I'm a resident, my wife's a resident. That's two signs."

Neither of the Siemens' signs exceeded 6 square feet, and both were displayed starting exactly 90 days before the election.

Then in an Aug. 21 email to all Quail Meadows residents, according to court documents, the management wrote, "There are a few issues in regards to the Quail Meadow East Guidelines that are written in a rather vague way. ... In order to eliminate the confusion for residents and myself as the manager, please take the time complete [sic] this form and return to the office. The majority of votes rule."

Julie Johnson is the manager of Quail Meadows East.

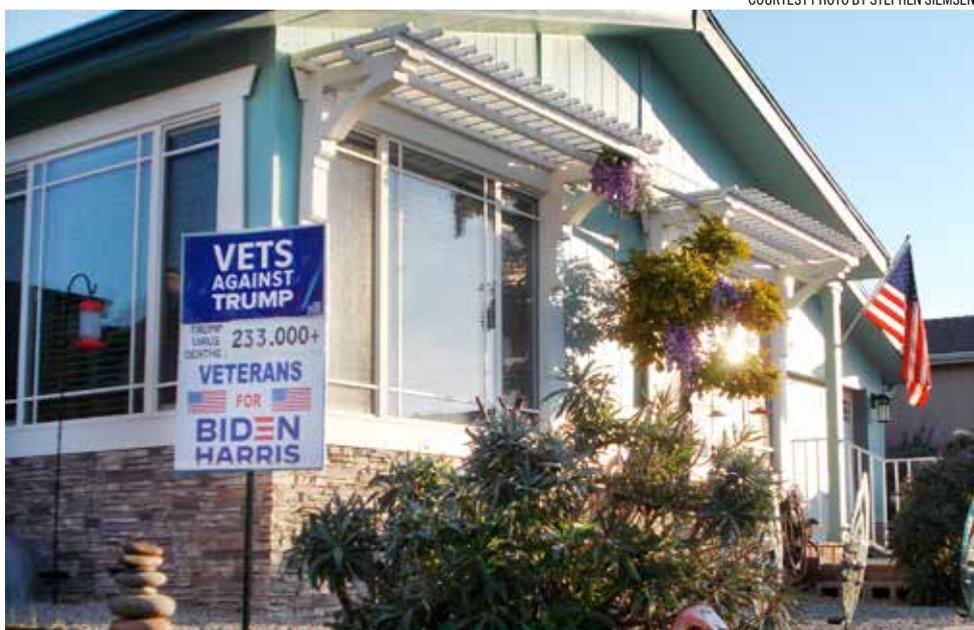
The form included questions such as, "How many political signs are allowed on residents lots?"

Two days later, Stephen forwarded the email to Quail Meadows East owner Devon Weber.

Weber replied on Aug. 24, writing, "If you are within the size limits then please disregard request to remove signs. Any violations going forward will be addressed by myself along with Julie Johnson. Please disregard the email asking you to complete a form."

"So my wife put her Carbajal sign back out in the yard, after we got the email from the owner," Stephen said. "The next thing we got on Sept. 18 was a seven-day notice to take the sign down."

On Sept. 24, the Siemens removed their Carbajal sign, opting to keep their "Vets Against Trump" sign. But according to both Stephen and



SIGNS DENIED: Stephen Siemsen and Lisa Casillas-Siemsen were asked to take down one of their two political signs by the management of the manufactured home park where the couple resides. Stephen decided to cut down his signs and fit them onto one piece of size-compliant plywood.

the court documents, since Sept. 18, multiple other properties in the Quail Meadows East park have displayed more than one political sign.

"Many of the spaces had signs for candidates for the Republican Party," the complaint states. The Siemens' signs, in contrast, expressed anti-Trump and pro-Democrat sentiments.

"Some of these neighbors are my friends. If they put a Trump sign in their yard, after the election, we're still friends," Stephen said. "But what's with telling me I can't have a sign?"

With the election days away, the Siemens applied for a temporary restraining order on Oct. 27. If granted, it would have ordered Quail Meadows East "to permit plaintiffs to display multiple political campaign signs relating to candidates for election to public office," the proposed temporary restraining order document stated.

But on Oct. 30, the judge denied the Siemens' application for a temporary restraining order. Stephen said their next hearing isn't until February 2021, months after the 2020 election.

"Justice delayed is justice denied," Lisa said. "I was just crushed. [The judge] does not have a machine to turn back time to give me those vital days to have my say and political sign up."

Though the Siemens will not be able to display multiple signs for this election cycle, Stephen said he and Lisa will still fight to win their case.

"If we win the case, that means in four years we can put two signs in our yard," Stephen said.

In the meantime, Stephen decided to cut a 6-square-foot piece of plywood, trim down his signs, and attach them to fit within the singular piece of wood.

"They seem to be OK with that, especially since it's only two days until the election," Stephen said before Election Day.

The *Sun* reached out to Quail Meadows East for comment, but was told that the manager was out of the office until Friday, Nov. 6, and could not be reached.

—Malea Martin

Solvang business owners push back on branding guidelines

Several Solvang business owners took issue with the newly established Branding and Design Committee's first recommendations to the city, which called on all businesses operating outdoors to have specific barriers, furniture, and umbrellas.

During public comment of the Oct. 26 City

Council meeting, Ingeborg's Danish Chocolates' owner Kim Jensen said the guidelines don't fit with each individual business's unique flair. She added that it would be an additional expense for strapped businesses that already purchased outdoor equipment to serve their customers during the COVID-19 pandemic.

"So purchasing this furniture would be basically buying for one month, December, to look nice. And then come Jan. 2, our investment drops to zero because the season is over with," Jensen said.

"Some of our employees are still unemployed going to either [Bethania Lutheran Church] or the mission for food. Some shops are on their knees trying to get by right now. So why would you all want to burden us at this time financially without at least a choice in the matter?"

The Branding and Design Committee's recommendations were geared toward businesses operating outdoors in the tourism-related commercial district (TRC) within the public right of way and with a temporary encroachment permit.

According to the proposed guidelines, businesses operating within this area must use a K-rail barrier and only purchase white blocks—the staff report states the cost of one block is approximately \$150. Businesses that expand into a sidewalk shall use the same barricades as businesses within the Copenhagen Drive Closure area.

Umbrellas of one to two colors per business should be used for shade coverage; the guidelines state that tents or other shade structures are not allowed. The color of umbrellas should contrast and complement the business's color scheme but not blend in—white umbrellas are discouraged. The guidelines would require businesses to use black metal or wooden furniture.

The staff report states five businesses would be impacted by the committee's guidelines so staff recommended that the city expand the interest free city loan program, with a repayment term of 12 months and limited to \$3,000 per business to implement the guidelines.

City Manager Xenia Bradford is also dealing with an empty seat on the Branding and Design Committee, since one of the five committee members already resigned—the resignation was announced at the Oct. 12 meeting.

At the Oct. 12 meeting, the council agreed to reach out to the committee member candidate runner-up to fill the vacant position. Since the last City Council meeting, Bradford said she's been going through the list of candidates because many

NEWS from page 4

have declined to take the seat.

Solvang Mayor Ryan Toussaint said he endorsed local business owner Jennifer Arant to fill the vacant position. Councilmember Chris Dejernaes proposed that they appoint someone to the committee at the Oct. 12 meeting, but the council rejected his proposal.

Toussaint said the guidelines should be taken back to the Branding and Design Committee for review, and he encouraged the business community to attend the public meetings and provide input.

—Karen Garcia

Los Alamos subdivision proposal leads to concerns about Shaw Street traffic

A proposed subdivision on an empty lot in Los Alamos is leading to concerns among some locals about the potential for traffic congestion on a narrow, private road.

The Santa Barbara County Planning and Development Department is currently reviewing an application for a tentative parcel map that would split a 1.53-acre lot at 774 Main St. in Los Alamos into four separate and smaller parcels. While no structural development is currently proposed for the project, Los Alamos community members worry that several houses will eventually be built on each of the parcels, and that currently proposed entrances and exits to the parcels could lead to future traffic congestion issues.

Seth Steiner is a Los Alamos resident and the vice president of the Shaw Street Maintenance Association, an organization of homeowners who

help fund and preserve a section of Shaw Street that's privately owned and, thus, not maintained by the county. Shaw Street is a narrow road that roughly 18 homeowners, including Steiner, use to access their homes, he said. It's currently a quiet road with a low volume of traffic, he said, making it popular among walkers, bikers, and other pedestrians.

But as outlined in the project's tentative parcel map, three of the four proposed parcels would be accessed from Shaw Street via a 24-foot shared driveway. If homes are built on those parcels—Steiner said he's heard that as many as 11 could be built in total—that could significantly impact Shaw Street traffic.

"Access from Shaw Street would disturb, and possibly end, the peaceful enjoyment of the eastern end of this quiet and private section of road by pedestrians, children on bicycles, residents from other parts of town who walk their dogs here and come with young children and with infants in strollers," Steiner wrote in a letter to the *Sun*. "If the development were to proceed without a change of the access road, this charming portion of Los Alamos would suffer immeasurably. And, notably, all pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicular traffic would be faced with negotiating a 100-foot-long one-lane bottleneck with the likelihood of an increased chance of accidents."

Although a portion of Shaw Street between the east and west property lines of the first proposed parcel would be widened to 24 feet as part of the project, Steiner said that isn't enough, considering not only the potential tenants but all the maintenance and emergency vehicles that would need access to the parcels.

There are other roads—Main Street and Foxen Lane—that Steiner said could be used to access the proposed lots.

"So this is why many people would like to see one of the other alternatives considered seriously," he told the *Sun* in a phone interview.

A public hearing regarding this project will be scheduled as soon as Planning and Development officials finish the review, according to Supervision Planner Holly Owen. Owen reiterated that the current proposal does not include development.

"With this application, [the applicant] is not allowed to build on these smaller properties until his parcel map is approved," Owen wrote in an email to the *Sun*. "When he is ready to build houses, he will have to apply for a separate approval."

—Kasey Bubnash

Dayspring can remain head of Natural Healing Center while lawsuit moves forward

A San Luis Obispo County Superior Court judge ruled on Oct. 21 that local cannabis businessman Helios Dayspring may stay at the helm of his Natural Healing Center brand while a fraud and misconduct lawsuit filed by his top investor plays out.

Judge Tana Coates denied investor William Szymczak's preliminary motion to install a neutral third party to run the company, which has a dispensary in Grover Beach and entitlements for dispensaries and farms throughout the Central Coast, including Orcutt.

"Plaintiffs allege a receiver must be appointed to prevent further mismanagement and maintain transparency while this litigation moves forward," Coates wrote in the ruling. "The main problem ... is that plaintiffs haven't demonstrated that other less onerous remedies are inadequate."

Szymczak, a former U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development official, is suing the cannabis business partner who he invested at least \$15 million into in 2018. Among his allegations are that Dayspring siphoned millions of dollars in company funds for himself, including to fend off IRS and FBI investigations.

Dayspring, a Morro Bay High School grad who founded the company, is denying the allegations. His attorneys told the *Sun* that the lawsuit is chock-full of "misrepresentations and distortions of facts and "procedural defects."

In the Oct. 21 decision, Coates ruled that Szymczak failed to show that "irreparable harm" would result if Dayspring stayed on as manager while the litigation continued. The company's operating agreements gave "Mr. Dayspring wide latitude in managing the companies," she noted.

Coates also wrote that the defendants raised legitimate questions about the veracity of Szymczak's allegations, citing testimony from the company's chief financial officer defending Dayspring and recent emails between the partners-turned-foes discussing their future plans.

"Receivership is a last resort," Coates wrote. "Plaintiffs request a drastic remedy without demonstrating why such a drastic remedy is the only viable option."

In a statement to the *Sun*, Szymczak attorney Miles Feldman said that the lawsuit, which seeks a full company accounting, damages, and Dayspring's permanent removal as manager, will move forward.

"The court did not exonerate Helios Dayspring in any way," Feldman said in a statement. "The court stated that Mr. Szymczak's allegations should be pursued through this lawsuit. Mr. Szymczak will do so." ○

—Peter Johnson

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'Historically low'

Recent progress reports for Santa Maria Joint Union High School students reveal unusually low grades during distance learning

BY MALEA MARTIN

Joseph Graack, a parent and social science teacher at Righetti High School, estimates that over the past four years of teaching economics he's given out maybe two failing grades. But so far this semester, he has "well over 30" students who are failing, despite this being "the most work I've ever put into a school year," Graack said. He's been a teacher for 25 years.

The unprecedented academic struggle that Graack's students are facing during distance learning is happening district-wide. According to a bar graph presented at an Oct. 13 Santa Maria Joint Union High School District (SMJUHSD) school board meeting, Sept. 25 progress reports revealed that there are nearly four times as many failing grades as there were the same time last year. Meanwhile, the number of A's and B's have dropped significantly.

In a student survey conducted by the district, also presented at the Oct. 13 board meeting, 82 percent of students said they wished school was being held on campus and 48 percent rated their stress levels as a 4 or 5 on a scale of 1 to 5.

In an effort to address both the failing grades and student survey results, the district released a Distance Learning Response Plan on Oct. 22. One element of the plan was a Wellness Week from Oct. 26 to 30, during which teachers were asked to give no new content or assignments.

Teachers were also instructed to accept late work and were encouraged to allow students to retake tests.

"Basically, we need to throw everything we can against the wall and see what's going to stick," Graack said. "I think it does provide hope to some of those students who maybe have suffered emotionally or just don't feel connected."

Righetti English and AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination) teacher Kim Karamitos told the *Sun* that the Wellness Week was a step in the right direction for her students.

"It was something that we definitely needed," Karamitos said. "Some of the kids have gotten far behind already, and it just kept piling on, so some of them had just sort of given up."

But Graack said there's still a large number of his students who are unaccounted for.

"Out of those [with] F's, probably two-thirds of those students are who we classify as unengaged," Graack said. "Basically, they're not showing up to class, and they're not turning in work."

Graack believes part of the problem is rooted in poor communication. He thinks the district should mail out physical copies of students' progress reports to their homes. Right now, progress reports are only sent out electronically, Graack said.

"You would get a lot better response," Graack said.

At the Oct. 13 school board meeting, district Assistant Superintendent John Davis said that SMJUHSD is working to connect with disengaged or absent students.

"Our site administrative teams, our site counseling teams, our outreach people, our teachers are working with students and parents," Davis said. "They're using the phones, they're using home visits, they're using one-on-one tutoring and assistance, they're using counseling—it's been an 'all hands on deck' effort to improve student outcomes since those grades came out."

Graack said he has personally made more than 6,300 communications, including emails and phone calls, to students and their parents this semester. But there are still many students he is unable to connect with.

"Out of my 30-plus F's that I have so far, I still can't account for 65 percent of those kids," Graack said. "Have they moved out of the district? Have they gone to another school? That's where the system at Righetti has broken down."

The *Sun* reached out to SMJUHSD Superintendent Antonio Garcia for further comment, but did not receive a response before press time.

Katrina MacKinnon, a senior at Righetti, said the online learning schedule has proven difficult to balance at times. Students have just one 80-minute instructional period for each class every week.

MacKinnon has Zoom instruction on Wednesdays and Fridays, but on the other days it's up to her to structure her day.

"It can be kind of hard to juggle everything," she said. "Usually when I'm at school, the homework that the teacher assigned to us would be due the next day. But now that we're only meeting the teachers once a week, you have to remember when everything is due for each class."

MacKinnon said that at the start of the semester, she had more schoolwork than previous



STRUGGLING TO PASS: Students enrolled in the Santa Maria Joint Union High School District—which includes Righetti High School, Pioneer Valley High School, Delta High School, and Santa Maria High School (pictured)—are earning record low grades so far this semester.

years when she was enrolled in more classes.

"In the beginning of the semester, I had way more homework as a senior taking five classes than a sophomore taking seven," MacKinnon said. "However, as the year's been going by I've seen teachers give out less and less homework. ... Right now I have a reasonable amount."

The Distance Learning Response Plan seeks to address some of these challenges by encouraging teachers to factor in how long an assignment might take as part of the instructional day.

"Students must receive a minimum of four hours of daily instruction Monday through Friday. The four hours can be met by any combination of teacher instruction (Zoom or non-Zoom) and 'time value' of work assigned," the district stated in the response plan. "Teachers have been asked to recalibrate their assignments so that they are spread out across the week, with time values that are limited and reasonable."

County Supervisor-elect Bob Nelson, who currently has three children in high school, has seen both sides of the pandemic learning equation. Two of his kids go to St. Joseph High School, a private high school that Nelson said has brought most of its students back to in-person learning. Nelson's other child goes to Righetti. He would have liked to have seen Righetti adopt a hybrid model after the state's reopening system allowed for it.

"If I was in a perfect world, I'd be having kids back maybe one day a week on alternating schedules, really spreading out so that you have some kind of relationship that can be built between instructors and their students," Nelson said. "I think what you're seeing is a lack of accountability, and that's why we're seeing the F's

that we are."

At the Oct. 13 board meeting, Superintendent Garcia said that the spread of COVID-19 in Santa Maria was too substantial to warrant a safe return to physical classrooms in 2020. Santa Maria and other parts of North County have consistently seen more cases than South County throughout the pandemic.

"In order to assess how safe it is to return to in-person instruction in our district, we must look more closely to our local metrics, meaning here in Santa Maria," Garcia said.

School board member Dominick Palera agrees that the district did the right thing to keep students at a distance for this semester, though he hopes a transition back to campus occurs soon.

"I think we have to start looking at transitioning to that hybrid," Palera said. "I'm anticipating and I'm hoping that we can open at least as a hybrid when we come back in January [to] get the kids face-to-face time with their teachers."

As challenging as distance learning has been at times, senior MacKinnon is making the most of it.

"I work at a coffee shop and play volleyball, so this is more flexible," she said. "It allows me to spend a little bit more time outside of school."

MacKinnon added that she's grateful to her teachers for being supportive during a challenging time.

"I applaud the school staff for trying to make it work," she said. "Teachers understand that students are going through a hard time. ... I think that teachers don't get enough credit." ○

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

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Finger on the pulse

CenCal Health distributes 2,000 pulse oximeters for health care providers to give to Central Coast patients



SIMPLE AND EFFECTIVE: Pulse oximeters are easy to use and measure both pulse rate and oxygen saturation. Since some COVID-19 patients experience rapid oxygen desaturation before feeling short of breath, doctors say these simple devices can save lives.

BY MALEA MARTIN

While many unknowns still remain about COVID-19, what's well documented is that serious cases of the disease can impact a person's oxygenation levels—sometimes rapidly and with little warning.

Dr. Keith Emmons, medical director at CenCal Health, the local Medi-Cal health plan, called this "one of the cruelties of this disease."

"The normal oxygenation would be, for a healthy person, somewhere from 99 percent to 100," Emmons said. "But with this disease, your oxygenation level can fall quite low before you actually feel short of breath."

But thanks to a simple and accurate tool called a pulse oximeter, COVID-19 positive patients can monitor their blood oxygenation levels from home—and CenCal Health recently procured and distributed 2,000 of the devices to health providers in Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo counties.

The pulse oximeter is placed at the top of the finger and measures both pulse and oxygen saturation.

"These are best used for people who may be positive and can use this device as an assistant to help them monitor their health," Emmons explained. "Not all patients who are COVID positive need to be hospitalized immediately, so it helps in the management of these COVID-19 patients."

Pulse oximeters are a critical tool because they can reveal what doctors are calling "silent hypoxia."

According to a *New York Times* article written by Dr. Richard Levitan, in typical cases of pneumonia, patients will feel chest pain and difficulty breathing, an obvious signal that something is wrong. But patients with COVID-19 caused pneumonia, Levitan said, often experience oxygen deprivation that is difficult to detect because they don't initially have breathing difficulties.

"Many people do not feel this air hunger until they're below 75 percent," Emmons said.

Maria Jauregui-Garcia, director of nursing at Community Health Centers of the Central Coast, said that public health and CDC guidelines recommend that patients go to the emergency room when their oxygenation goes below 94 percent. At 75 percent oxygen saturation, a patient's condition would be considered a serious health emergency, even in the absence of difficulty breathing.

Community Health Centers is one of the local health care providers that received pulse oximeters from CenCal Health. Jauregui-Garcia said the donation could save lives.

"When we have patients arrive at our clinic, we have screeners at the very front of our clinics," Jauregui-Garcia said. "We've had a number of

patients with pulse oximeter [readings] of 70, so that required a 911 call right away. Especially with our older population, they tend to desaturate very quickly."

Thanks to CenCal Health's donation, Community Health Centers will include a pulse oximeter in its COVID-19 Care Kits for patients who test positive. This will not only allow patients to know when their oxygenation is in trouble, but will also put some patients' minds at ease if they are experiencing symptoms but are still maintaining solid oxygenation levels.

"If someone feels a little short of breath, but their oxygenation is still quite high in the 95 percent or above, they may realize that they are oxygenating fine, but perhaps it's the anxiety," CenCal Medical Director Emmons said. "That helps the provider to understand that they're not in quite dire shape. ... It enables us to utilize limited resources in a more efficient manner."

Earlier in the pandemic, CenCal Health procured \$250,000 worth of personal protective equipment (PPE) for local hospitals at a time when PPE was difficult to obtain. CenCal Health Chief Operating Officer Paul Jaconette said the pulse oximeter distribution is "in line with those efforts."

"This originally came as a request from some physicians in the community," Jaconette said. "That's what we're about: improving the health of the members in our community and responding to the needs of our providers."

Highlights

- On Oct. 28, Cottage Health announced that nearly 400 people received free flu vaccines at a drive-thru clinic hosted at Santa Ynez Valley Cottage Hospital. About 390 people ages 18 and older received a flu vaccination from their vehicles at no cost, thanks to a grant from The Wood-Claeyssens Foundation, a local donor, and the support of the Santa Ynez Valley Cottage Hospital Foundation, according to Cottage Health.

- The city of Lompoc announced on Oct. 27 that applications are now being accepted to nominate someone to be honored in Lompoc's River Park Recognition Grove. The Recognition Grove program is run by the Lompoc Beautification and Appearance Commission and recognizes "residents who have made significant contributions to improving quality of life in the Lompoc Valley as a result of their service" by establishing a plaque in their honor, according to a city statement. Applications can be found on the city's Beautification and Appearance Commission webpage. For more information, contact Kathleen Forbes at (805) 875-8034. ○

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

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BEATRIZ CASTILLO, 80, of Santa Maria passed away 10/23/2020 arrangements with Moreno Mortuary

DENNIS J. FRIZZELL, 78, of Santa Maria passed away 10/23/2020 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory and Memory Gardens

IGANCIO ENRIQUEZ, 86, of Santa Maria passed away 10/23/2020 arrangements with Moreno Mortuary

WILLIAM GARFINKEL, 82, passed away 10/24/2020, arrangements with Los Osos Valley Mortuary & Memorial Park

GRACE CHIYEKO KADOTA, 91, of Santa Maria passed away 10/24/2020, arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory and Memory Gardens

NICOLE KALAR, 41, of Santa Maria passed away 10/24/2020, arrangements with Magner-Maloney Funeral Home & Crematory

PAUL E. NOSKE, 92, of Santa Maria passed away 10/25/2020, arrangements with Magner-Maloney Funeral Home & Crematory

CHARLES KEITH HOLLOWAY, 81, passed away 10/25/2020, arrangements with Kuehl-Nicolay Funeral Home

DOLORES WAGNER, 91, passed away 10/25/2020, arrangements with Los Osos Valley Mortuary & Memorial Park

NEVA JEAN MORRILL, 94, passed away 10/25/2020, arrangements with Los Osos Valley Mortuary & Memorial Park

CRISTINEPEREA, 96, of Santa Maria passed away 10/25/2020, arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory and Memory Gardens

PEGGY LANINI FORD, 67, of Santa Maria passed away 10/25/2020, arrangements with Magner-Maloney Funeral Home & Crematory

ROBERT WOOD, 71, of Arroyo Grande passed away 10/25/2020, arrangements with Marshall-Spoo Sunset Funeral Chapel

JAMES BLAIR, 78, of Paso Robles passed away 10/26/2020, arrangements with Blue Sky Cremation Service

AURORA HERNANDEZ LOPEZ, 93, of Santa Maria passed away 10/26/2020, arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory and Memory Gardens

CHARLES "CHUCK" MILLER JR., 52, of Santa Maria passed away 10/26/2020, arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory and Memory Gardens

JOHN GARLAND PACE, 95, of Arroyo Grande passed away 10/27/2020, arrangements with Marshall-Spoo Sunset Funeral Chapel

MILDRED LA RUE RICHETTI, 80, of Arroyo Grande passed away 10/27/2020, arrangements with Marshall-Spoo Sunset Funeral Chapel

MANUEL F. GARCIA, 84, of Santa Maria passed away 10/27/2020, arrangements with Magner-Maloney Funeral Home & Crematory

HATTIE BELLE MCKINLEY, 89, passed away 10/27/2020, arrangements with Chapel of the Roses

JOHN STUART, 97, passed away 10/27/2020, arrangements with Los Osos Valley Mortuary & Memorial Park

WILLIAM "BILL" ADAM JR., 87, of Santa Maria passed away 10/27/2020, arrangements with Magner-Maloney Funeral Home & Crematory

MARY ANNE WILLIAMS, 90, passed away 10/28/2020, arrangements with Chapel of the Roses

NORMA TAGGART, 83, of Morro Bay passed away 10/29/2020, arrangements with Blue Sky Cremation Service

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What's your favorite conspiracy theory?

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- 31% Tupac and Biggie Smalls are alive and thriving.
- 31% The moon landing was filmed in Hollywood.
- 7% Democrats are part of a human trafficking sex ring of children.

16 Votes

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We welcome submissions. Please accompany them with a self-addressed, stamped envelope. All letters to the editor become the property of the Sun.

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Tone deaf

Lompoc officials float ordinances that are out of touch

BY RON FINK

By time this reaches newsstands, the election should be decided; some will celebrate, and others may complain that the process wasn't fair. No matter the outcome, we are stuck with those elected for another couple of years.

Press deadlines prevented any commentary on local elections until my next submission, but I thought you'd like to know what the Lompoc City Council talked about during its last meeting before Election Day. Sometimes the selection of subjects leaves you scratching your head.

Mylar is a technical name for a product that is widely used in industry as packaging because of its strength, stability, transparency, reflectivity, effectiveness as a gas/aroma/humidity barrier, and electrical insulating qualities. You have probably seen it as packaging for electrical components, specifically computer components, because it resists static electricity and keeps them clean.

Mylar is also used for decorative balloons that announce births, anniversaries, birthdays, engagements, and many other festive events. The reason is simple: It is because balloons of this material can contain gases and can have the fun messages printed on their surfaces.

The gas used in these balloons is inert, just like that used in lighter-than-air aircraft, aka blimps. Because they float so easily, they are an entertainment for young children, but not so entertaining to the maintainers of our electric distribution system or their customers.

The voluntary release of these balloons is prohibited, but sometimes they slip out of the hands of the person holding them or come loose from required moorings. That's when trouble can soon follow.

The Lompoc electrical utility explains it this way: "Every year electrical outages are caused

when metalized Mylar or foil balloons filled with helium gas get caught up in electrical lines." The staff report presented to the council on Oct. 20 indicated that there were three outages that impacted 265 customers in 2020.

In 2019 one outage, caused by an errant balloon, impacted 4,100 customers. In these cases, we don't know how many people or businesses were impacted, just the number of electric meters (customers) that were shut off.

Not only are customers left in the dark, but someone must remove the balloon and restore power; that's the job of the city electrical department. We are fortunate in Lompoc that the city and its citizens own the electric utility. So the wait for repair crews to arrive, even after business hours, is minimal and power gets turned back on quickly.

But they still have to de-energize the system, go up in their bucket trucks, untangle the balloon, inspect and repair any damaged equipment and then turn the power back on. Anytime these folks are working on our overhead wiring it's dangerous work.

The council discussed for several minutes a staff proposal to ban the sale of balloons in the city, and local merchants were concerned that such a ban would "affect my business and fellow businesses that offer such service." Each suggested an educational program at the point of sale as an alternative to an outright ban.

What was sort of a surprise to many council watchers was that Councilman Jim Mosby, who is no friend of government regulations and/or complying with them, was an advocate for a restrictive ordinance and a crackdown on balloons that provide pleasure to so many people.

Councilwoman Gilda Cordova said she understood the problem, but "I just have an issue with the fact that we would be creating another ordinance that we cannot enforce because we don't have a body to enforce it."

You see, it was Mosby who led the effort to eliminate the code enforcement officer from the last budget.

In the end, the council concluded that the education program was one way to reduce the number of balloon mishaps.

The city and state already have some programs

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in place. The state requires all retail shops that sell these balloons to provide weights attached to the balloons to keep them down to earth, to not sell balloons that are tied together in groups, and not use metallic ribbons on the balloons.

The city advises that users should not walk under or near power lines with the balloons, not detach the balloons from their weights, and to not try and retrieve them from power lines—leave it to the trained crews with the proper safety equipment.

So, what did we learn from the way this issue was discussed? First, we learned that the council apparently didn't know that there was already an education program in place and that the city had provided an informational poster several years ago.

We also learned that the state had laws in place that prohibited people "from releasing outdoors balloons made of electrically conductive material and filled with a gas lighter than air as part of a public or civic event, promotional activity, or product advertisement."

Keep in mind that once you purchase one of these balloons, it's your responsibility to pay attention to where it goes; up is the direction it travels if it comes loose from its tether, and up is where the electrical wires are. Make sure your balloon stays near ground level, so your neighbors won't be upset when their power goes out.

Lastly, we learned that some politicians have a knack for discussing a "hot button" topic like interfering with people who want to celebrate with a festive decoration and merchants who sell them just before an election. Talk about tone deaf. ☹

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



LETTERS

Our current dystopia

Dystopian. You've read the books and have seen the movies. Classics like *Dark City* or *Road Warrior*, *The Matrix*. Authors like Aldous Huxley, George Orwell.

The themes are similar. Paranoia of our government and even our neighbor. "Newspeak" where the language becomes controlled by the enforcer. "Thought Police" where any expression can be a criminal offense.

We've seen it in Nazi Germany, and it is alive in China, North Korea, and the United States. Didn't recognize it, did you? It's subtle. Each generation has no deep reference to the past.

Saturday Night Live comedian Pete Davidson plays a character whose response to anything is "OK." Today we lock down everyone and make them wear a mask. Tomorrow we give them an ID to allow free travel. "OK."

Buffalo Springfield had a popular song "For What It's Worth." The lyrics:

"Paranoia strikes deep/ Into your life it will creep/ It starts when you're always afraid/ You step out of line, the man come and take you away."

We should start playing the song again, and stop, think what's going down and not superficially.

Jan Lipski
Vandenberg Village

Right to complain

It's Election Day 2020. I'm swinging in my cage, pecking away at the keyboard as I anxiously await the results that you can't read in this week's paper. Why? Well, it's our press schedule, you see. We hit the printer before the results get announced.

I'm no prognosticator, but I think it's going to be a couple/few weeks before we know-know, you know? And in the meantime, I hope that I don't have to deal with any more political hullabaloo from you complainers out there.

People angry about **Trump** trains and **BLM** protests (not the riots), which are basically the same exercise of First Amendment rights—yes, even when it messes up your trip down Highway 101 and it's the opposing party's show. People up in arms about some candidate they heard was dirty—some rumor fueled by the private, one-sided Facebook group they belong to. News flash: Most politicians aren't clean. People stealing yard signs. Or suing over them.

Suing over yard signs. Yep. You read that right. And are you surprised?

Remember that story the **Sun** wrote earlier this year about the guy with the upside down **American flag** in his window and disapproving, complaining neighbors who tried to get **Quail Meadows East**—the manufactured home park they live in—to force him to take it down?

Well apparently that was only the first chapter in the story. His neighbors don't like his choice of yard signs, either. Or it could be that this particular sign bearer wasn't following park rules.

Either way, here we are, talking about political signs on Election Day.

Stephen Siemsen and his wife feel persecuted



over their choice of yard signs supporting **Democrats** in a manufactured home park full of **Republicans**. After hearing about the flag dilemma and whiny neighbors, who were offended by the Siemens' flag display, I honestly don't blame them. The Siemens put up two yard signs 90 days before the election, somebody complained about the number of signs, and management requested a sign take-down.

I honestly don't understand. It's not like the signs were 18 feet tall or that the Siemens' lawn was covered in signs. It was just two signs: One for supporting **Joe Biden** for president and one for **U.S. Rep. Salud Carbajal**.

But no! Their neighbors said: This atrocity cannot stand!

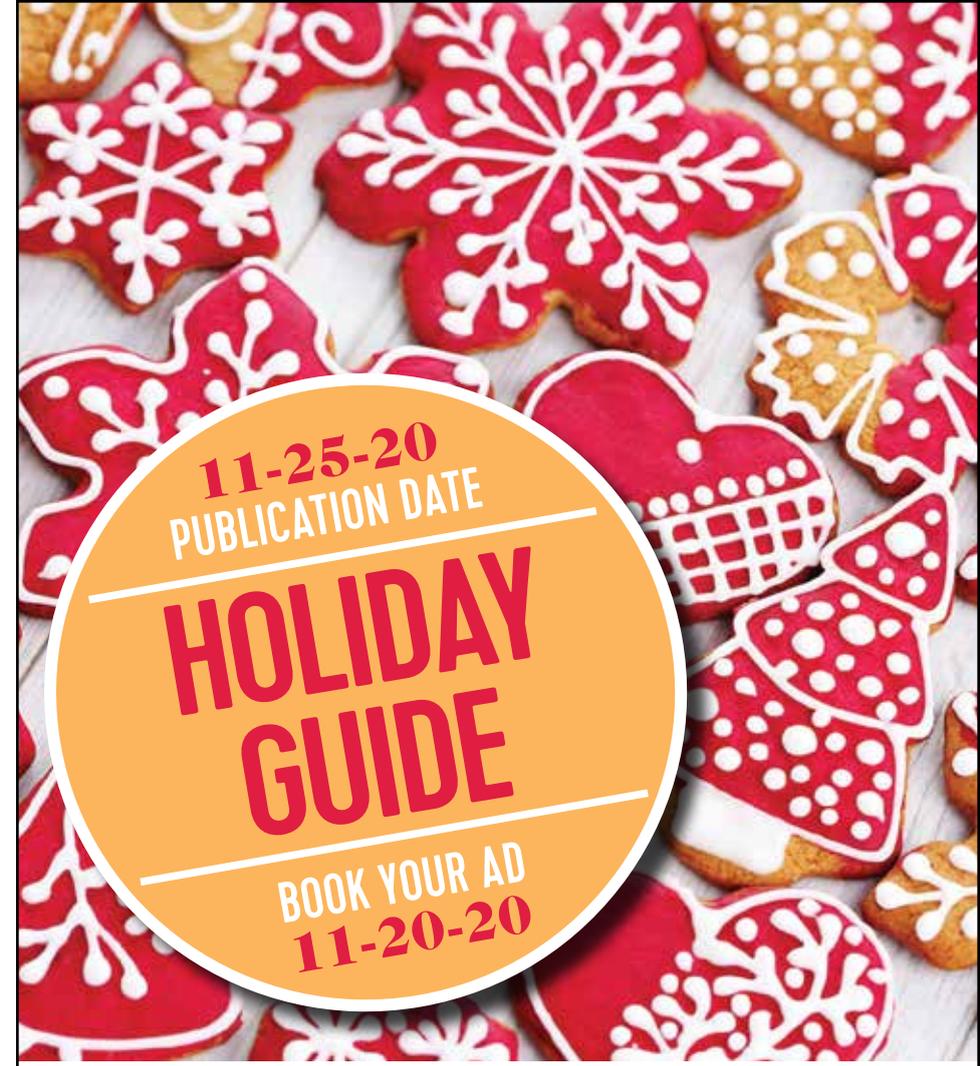
There seems to be some confusion as to what exactly the park's sign rules are, whether it's one per household or one per resident. In fact, management even sent out a survey asking residents what they thought the rules were because the wording was too vague!

The Siemens allege that other park residents have more than one sign up, but those ones support conservative causes, so they haven't been targeted with take-down notices. The couple sued the park over it, and asked for a restraining order that would allow them to keep the two signs up before the 2020 election. That restraining order was denied, so the Siemens got creative, bundling multiple signs into one.

But Siemsen is taking the long view about the case—"If we win the case, that means in four years we can put two signs in our yard," he said.

Oh goodie! ☹️

The canary is sick of the election. Send comments to canary@santamariasun.com.



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HOT STUFF

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BAND ON THE RUN

This year's annual Cal Poly Bandfest goes virtual and will stream on Sunday, Nov. 15, from 3 to 4 p.m. Nearly 300 students—from Cal Poly's Wind Ensemble, Wind Orchestra, and Mustang Marching Band—will participate in the concert, which will be conducted by Christopher J. Woodruff and Nicholas P. Waldron. Call (805) 756-4849 or visit music.calpoly.edu for more info.
—Caleb Wiseblood



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE CAL POLY MUSIC DEPARTMENT

ARTS

SANTA YNEZ VALLEY

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. artofacemasks.com. Elverhoj Museum of History and Art, 1624 Elverhoy 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.

PORTRAITS OF SANTA BARBARA BIRDS: EMIL MORHARDT Morhardt exhibits 28 acrylic paintings of shore and inland birds of Santa Barbara. Features 12 species of birds in portrait detail to highlight their characteristics and behavior. The paintings range from small size to larger format for impact and drama. Mondays, Thursdays-Sundays, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. through Nov. 30 805-688-7517. <http://GalleryLosOlivos.com>. Gallery Los Olivos, 2920 Grand Ave., Los Olivos.

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.

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MUSIC LESSONS AT COELHO Call or go online for the Academy's current offerings. The Academy offers private lessons by the hour or half hour for all age groups and ability. ongoing 805-925-0464.

coelhomusic.com. Coelho Academy of Music, 325 E. Betteravia Rd., Santa Maria.

NOVEMBER ART PICK UP PACKS: SANTA MARIA PUBLIC LIBRARY Register to pick up an art pack to create your own masterpiece at home. Art packs include projects that help students learn basic principles of art. These packs are geared towards ages 6 to 12. **Nov. 10, Nov. 11, Nov. 12, Nov. 13 and Nov. 14** Free. 805-925-0994. engagedpatrons.org. Santa Maria Public Library, 421 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, 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, Santa Maria, 805-922-8313, pcpa.org.

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, Santa Maria, 805-922-8313, pcpa.org.

VALLEY ART GALLERY OF SANTA MARIA: FALL ART SHOW Parking is free. Admission is free. There is plenty of space to view art and stay six feet apart. Great for family outings and dates. Through Dec. 7 Free. 805-922-0663. Santa Maria Airport, 3249 Terminal Dr., Santa Maria.

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

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

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, Santa Maria, 805-922-8313, pcpa.org.

SOUTH COAST SLO COUNTY

DANA'S ALL ABOUT TREES: A MULTIARTIST EXHIBITION DANA Adobe and Cultural Center showcasing the best in local and regional art. Artwork is available for purchase. Through Dec. 4, 11 a.m.-3 p.m. \$5, free for DANA members and children under 12 years of age. 805-929-5679. danaadobe.org. DANA Adobe Cultural Center, 671 S. Oakglen Ave., Nipomo.

MIXED MEDIA WORKSHOP FOR AGES 5-6, FOR AGES 7-12, AND FOR ADULTS Each week we will combine two or more mediums in several pieces. We will work with watercolor, acrylic, ink, pastels, charcoal, as well as various printmaking techniques in the course of a month. Maximum of 5 guests. Pre-registration and masks required. Mondays, Wednesdays, 1:30-3 p.m. \$25. 805-668-2125. lila.community. Lila Creative Community, 1147 East Grand Ave. suite 101, Arroyo Grande.

SAN LUIS OBISPO

CALL FOR ARTISTS: ART CENTRAL'S VIRTUAL GALLERY Central Coast artists to submit artwork to Virtual Gallery Exhibit every Friday. Free to join, all you have to do is email image(s) of artwork created since COVID-19 with name, title, medium, and a positive message. Fridays, 5-11 p.m. through Dec. 18 Varies. 805-747-4200. artcentralslo.wordpress.com/blog/. Art Central, 1329 Monterey St., San Luis Obispo.

CALL FOR ENTRIES: GROUNDED (EXHIBITION AT SLOMA) Artists of all media are eligible for this digital exhibition. Deadline for submissions is Nov. 29. Exhibit runs January 8 through Feb. 28, 2021, with a digital reception on Jan. 1, 2021, with awards and cash prizes. Assistant Curator Courtney Davis will make selections

from submitted entries. Through Nov. 29 805-543-8562. sloma.org/call_for_artists/grounded/. San Luis Obispo Museum of Art, 1010 Broad St., San Luis Obispo.

EVERETT: PAINTING IN PROGRESS Private tours of Everett's studio. Masks and appointments required. Email cfineart@pacbell.net for more info. Second Saturday of every month Private home, Private address, TBA.

I'LL TAKE YOU THERE: ART EXHIBIT Art Central will host well-known painter Rosanne Seitz with her latest watercolor works. Over 15 works created from her solo travels on out of the way roads to places showing the grandeur, and quiet beauty of California scenery, that revitalizes mind and body. Mondays-Fridays, 10 a.m.-3 p.m. through Nov. 24 Free. 805-747-4200. artcentralartsupply.com/. Art Central, 1329 Monterey St., San Luis Obispo.

MOSAICS FOR BEGINNERS Learn mosaic basics at home with a how-to video and kit of supplies. This class is great for beginners. Choice of snowman, wonky holiday tree, heart, or wine bottle. Register, purchase kit, then instructor will provide video link and kit pickup times. Mondays-Sundays. through Nov. 30 Various. 805-286-5993. creativemetime.com. Cuesta College, San Luis Obispo.

PICKETS FOR PROGRAMS AT SLO BOTANICAL GARDEN Buy and paint a picket to be displayed on the SLO Botanical Children's Garden fence from 2021 to 2023. Pickets, paint, and brushes supplied on site at SLO Botanical Garden. Your contribution to public art supports the garden and programs. Saturdays, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. and Tuesdays, 2-4:30 p.m. through Dec. 22 \$150 per picket or \$600 for 5. 805-541-1400. slobg.org/calendar-of-events/pickets. San Luis Obispo Botanical Garden, 3450 Dairy Creek Rd., San Luis Obispo.

SEA GLASS WIRE WRAP JEWELRY Learn how to wire wrap sea glass to create beautiful earrings and a necklace with step-by-step video instruction. Register, select kit, and instructor will provide video link and kit options. Mondays-Sundays. through Nov. 29 Various. 805-286-5993. creativemetime.com. Cuesta College, Highway 1, San Luis Obispo.

SLO CAMERA CLUB Online Zoom meetings and competitions. Everyone is welcome. Visit site for meeting links. Second Thursday of every month Free to guest. slocameraclub.org/home.shtml. SLO Guild Hall, 2880 Broad St., San Luis Obispo, 805-543-0639.

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 ALUMNI SERIES: CRISTAL TAPPAN AND JOSHUA SOLIS In collaboration with the Cuesta

SUBMIT YOUR EVENTS

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HIPCAMP

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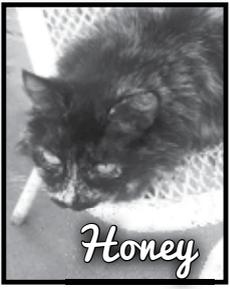
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Central Coast Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals
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ADOPT!

Adoptable Pets of the Week



Libby
Age: 1 year
7 months
Breed: DSH
Sex: Female
Weight: 10 lbs.



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Age: 9 years
Breed: Pit Bull mix
Sex: Female
Weight: 58 lbs.

All animals are health checked, spayed/neutered, vaccinated and microchipped.

Santa Maria Valley
Humane Society
1687 West Stowell Rd • Santa Maria
(805) 349-3435 • www.smvhs.org

Adoption Center Hours
Wed-Sun 11am-6pm

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student Art Circle, the Harold J. Miossi Art Gallery is launching a new bi-monthly series featuring graduates of Cuesta College and Hancock College's art programs. This event features Cristal Tappan and Joshua Solis. **Nov. 12**, 12-1 p.m. cccconfer.zoom.us. Harold J. Miossi Gallery, San Luis Obispo, 805-546-3202.

VIRTUAL ART AFTER DARK Tune into Facebook to see what local artists are up to. First Friday of every month Free. facebook.com/artsobispo. Downtown SLO, Higuera Street, San Luis Obispo.

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.

VIRTUAL OPEN STUDIOS ART TOUR Visit ARTS Obispo's Facebook page to view works from several local artists and artisans. Free. facebook.com/artsobispo. Downtown SLO, Higuera Street, San Luis Obispo.

VIRTUAL WORKSHOP: ARTFUL QUILTING Inspired by Picasso's etchings and Matisse's cutouts, create a series of drawings with fabric and thread. Instructor Gina Gilbert will teach you how to transfer drawings to quilted projects using appliqué, traditional quilting, trapunto, and hand and machine stitching. Tuesdays, Saturdays, 10-11:30 a.m. through Nov. 21 \$160 members, \$175 general. 805-543-8562. sloma.org/product/quilting-zoom/. San Luis Obispo Museum of Art, 1010 Broad St., San Luis Obispo.

NORTH SLO COUNTY

ATELIER 708 FACEBOOK DISCUSSION SERIES Hosts and artists Kim Snyder, Janice Pluma, and David Butz have been colleagues for the last 8 years. View the show on the gallery's Facebook page. Second Saturday of every month, 10-11 a.m. through Feb. 13 Atelier 708, 708 Paso Robles St., Paso Robles.

DAVID SETTINO SCOTT: FEATURED ARTIST Offering personal appointments and tours of Scott's studio in San Miguel. Through March 1, 2021 805-286-4430. Park Street Gallery, 1320 Park Street, Paso Robles, parkstreetgallery.com.

FUSED GLASS SUSHI SET Perfect serving set to impress your guests or give as a gift. Create an 8" x 8" square sushi plate with two matching 3.5" dipping bowls. All materials included. Limit 6 people. Masks required. **Nov. 13**, 6-8 p.m. \$150. 805-464-2633. glassheadstudio.com. Glasshead Studio, 8793 Plata Lane, Suite H, Atascadero.

HOLIDAY ORNAMENT WORKSHOP Create a whimsical fused glass hanging ornament using various pieces of pre-cut glass. We are limiting the class size of this popular workshop to 6 people per time slot. All materials included. Must pre-register via email and masks are required. **Nov. 7**, 10 a.m.-4:30 p.m. and **Nov. 15**, 10 a.m.-4:30 p.m. \$50 for 3 ornaments. 408-464-2633. glassheadstudio.com. Glasshead Studio, 8793 Plata Lane, Suite H, Atascadero.

SLOPE PAINTERS AT STUDIOS ON THE PARK Please stop by to see paintings by San Luis Outdoor Painters for the Environment (SLOPE), at Studios on the Park. SLOPE painters have been sheltering at home and are now ready to break out to show paintings and prints at open galleries. Fridays, Saturdays, 12-9 p.m. and Wednesdays, Thursdays, 12-4 p.m. through Dec. 31 Free. 805-238-9800. Studios on the Park, 1130 Pine St., Paso Robles, studiosonthepark.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

ANNUAL WINTER FAIRE AND JURIED CRAFT SHOW A collective of exceptional paintings, photography and fine crafts, spanning a variety of artistic mediums from traditional to contemporary. Crafts include fiber, wood, glass, sculpture, pottery, jewelry and more. **Nov. 5-Jan. 3** Art Center Morro Bay, 835 Main St., Morro Bay, 805-772-2504, artcentermorrobay.org.

CALLING ALL ARTISTS: CAMBRIA CENTER FOR THE ARTS VIRTUAL JURIED SHOW Fall juried exhibit will be held virtually and will feature paintings only. Cash prizes given by Juror. Mondays-Sundays through Jan. 3 \$15-\$25 per piece. 805-927-8190. Gallery@CambriaCenterfortheArts.org. Cambria Center for the Arts, 1350 Main St., Cambria.

GALLERY AT MARINA SQUARE: FEATURED ARTISTS Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays-Sundays, 11 a.m.-7 p.m. through Nov. 29 Free. 805-772-1068.



HOT STUFF
NOV. 5 - NOV. 12
2020

ECLECTIC EXHIBIT
Allan Hancock College's Ann Foxworthy Gallery in Santa Maria presents its first virtual exhibition, a showcase of photography and drawings by Marcos Dorado, through Friday, Dec. 4. The exhibit is available to view for free online at hancockcollege.edu/gallery. The show includes selections from Dorado's ongoing project, *Immigrant Me*, the first entry of which he debuted at the Fresno Art Museum in 2018. —C.W.

galleryatmarinasquare.com. Gallery at Marina Square, 601 Embarcadero suite 10, Morro Bay.

MAKING A MOSAIC TRIVET Anne Hodges and Paula Hulet teach this workshop. **Nov. 6** and **Nov. 7** Art Center Morro Bay, 835 Main St., Morro Bay, 805-772-2504, artcentermorrobay.org.

RESIN WORKSHOP An at-home class that includes a kit and how-to video so you can create in the safety and comfort of your home. **Nov. 14**, 10-11 a.m. Various. 805-286-5993. creativemetime.com. Art Center Morro Bay, 835 Main St., Morro Bay.

SEA GLASS HAMMERED WIRE JEWELRY An out-home class complete with supplies and how-to video. Video shows how to drill holes in sea glass, texturize and strengthen metal, and basic jewelry making techniques. **Nov. 14**, 10-11 a.m. Various. 805-286-5993. creativemetime.com. Art Center Morro Bay, 835 Main St., Morro Bay.

SEA GLASS JEWELRY CLASS Craft at your own pace from the comfort and safety of your home using supplies and a how-to video provided by Creative Me Time. Choose either a hammered metal or new bail design. **Nov. 14**, 10-11 a.m. Various. 805-286-5993. creativemetime.com. Art Center Morro Bay, 835 Main St., Morro Bay.

CULTURE & LIFESTYLE

LOMPOC/VANDBERG

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

30 VOLUNTEERS NEEDED IN SANTA MARIA/ ORCUTT Community Partners in Caring is seeking volunteers to help support dependent older adults and seniors. ongoing partnersincaring.org. Santa Maria, Citywide, Santa Maria.

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.

SANTA MARIA PUBLIC LIBRARY: MOVIE TALK

video conference movie discussion group; meets on the second Thursday of each month. For more information email sstarnaud@cityofsantamaria.org or call 805-925-0994. Second Thursday of every month, 3:30-4:30 p.m. Free. cityofsantamaria.org/city-government/departments/library. Santa Maria Public Library, 421 S. McClelland St., Santa Maria, 805-925-0994.

VETERANS DAY CELEBRATION WITH GRAND RE-OPENING SPECIALS Enjoy a free barbecue, an American flag exchange, giveaways, kids activities, store discounts, vendor demos, raffles, and more. All proceeds go to the ECHO Group and Band of Brothers to support local veterans. **Nov. 7**, 11:30 a.m.-3 p.m. Free. 805-937-3536. Oak Knolls Hardware, 1155 E. Clark Ave., Orcutt, oakknollshardware.com.

VIRTUAL WORKSHOPS OVER ZOOM Visit site or call to learn about various virtual workshop offerings. ongoing Varies. Unwind Studio, 130 N. Broadway, suite B, Santa Maria, 805-748-2539, unwindstamaria.com.

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.

SOUTH COAST SLO COUNTY

DANA'S PUNKIN CHUNKIN Don't know what to do with your Halloween Pumpkins after the holiday is over? Get rid of your Halloween pumpkins the fun way at DANA Adobe and Cultural Center. Come see your pumpkin fly at DANA. **Nov. 7**, 11 a.m.-2 p.m. \$8 or 3 for \$20. 805-929-5679. danaadobe.org. DANA Adobe Cultural Center, 671 S. Oakglen Ave., Nipomo.

HALCYON PSYCHIC WEEKEND Offering a variety of techniques to provide guidance of love, travel, relationships, finance, and more. By appointment only. First Saturday, Sunday of every month, 9 p.m. through Jan. 3 805-489-2424. Halcyon Store Post Office, 936 S. Halcyon Rd., Arroyo Grande.

INFANT DROWNING RESCUE COURSES Join twice a week classes on Tuesday/Thursday or the once a week class on Friday and receive \$10 off. Drowning Rescue Courses are a great way to learn water safety in a fun, loving way. Fridays, 2-6 p.m. and Tuesdays, Thursdays, 2-6 p.m. Members \$130; Non-members \$160. 5 Cities Swim School, 425 Traffic Way, Arroyo Grande, 805-481-6399, 5cityesswimschool.com.

POINT SAN LUIS LIGHTHOUSE VIRTUAL TOUR Zoom with a docent on a virtual tour of the Point San Luis Light Station. Travel back in time to 1890, delve into the history of the light station, and see all the places you'd see on an in-person tour, plus more. Wednesdays, 2-3 p.m. \$10. 805-540-5771. pointsanluislighthouse.org/. Point San Luis Lighthouse, 1 Lighthouse Rd., Avila Beach.

SAN LUIS OBISPO

HOMESHARESLO CALL-IN COFFEE CHAT Connect with the folks at HomeShareSLO to talk about homesharing and other housing solutions twice a month during our Call-In Coffee Chat events. Second Wednesday of every month, 12-1 p.m. through Dec. 9 Free. 805-215-5474. smartsharehousingolutions.org/events/. Zoom, Online, Inquire for Zoom ID.

LITERACY FOR LIFE TUTOR TRAINING Literacy For Life has a San Luis Obispo countywide need for tutors. Work one-on-one with non-literate adults learning to read, write, and speak English. If you are interested in attending the training but need help with using Zoom, please email assistant@literacyforlifeso.org. **Nov. 7**, 10 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Free. 805-541-4219. literacyforlifeso.org/become-a-tutor.php. Zoom, Online, Inquire for Zoom ID.

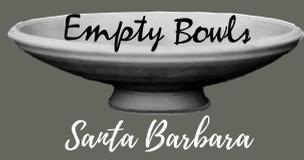
METABOLIC CONDITIONING We use primarily our own body weight in this interval training class to run through exercises and drills to raise the heart rate, condition our muscles, and stay flexible. This advanced class also incorporates hand weights and sand bags, if you have them. Mondays-Thursdays, 8:15-9:15 a.m. \$72. 415-516-5214. ae.slucsd.org. Online, See website, San Luis Obispo.

NATIONAL PHILANTHROPY DAY 2020: VIRTUAL EVENT Hosted by the Association of Fundraising Professionals San Luis Obispo County Chapter; the sixth annual celebration of National Philanthropy Day (NPD). **Nov. 12**, 12-1 p.m. Free. 805-534-3811. community.afpglobal.org. Zoom, Online, Inquire for Zoom ID.

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY CLASSES FOR SENIORS Have you heard the phrase, "Sitting is the new smoking"? Cuesta College's Emeritus exercise program, taught by Doris Lance, is offering a 45-minute class of stretching, balance, and cardiovascular fitness three days a week available to seniors. Tuesdays-Thursdays, 9-9:45 a.m. through Dec. 18 Free. 805-546-3942. cuesta.edu. Zoom, Online, Inquire for Zoom ID.

CULTURE & LIFESTYLE continued page 16

EMPTY BOWLS 2020



Celebrate the Foodbank's beloved annual soup luncheon fundraiser, virtually!

NOVEMBER 14 - 23

DONATE All gifts will be doubled!

SUPPORT RESTAURANTS Show your love to chefs who usually donate soup!

CHOOSE Handmade artist bowls

POST FAVORITE MEMORIES
#EmptyBowls2020

JOIN US!

FOODBANKSBC.ORG/EMPTYBOWLS2020



CENTRAL COAST AGRICULTURE

Mary and Don Thompson
Philip and Carolyn Wyatt

THANK YOU VETERANS

VETERANS DAY - NOVEMBER 11

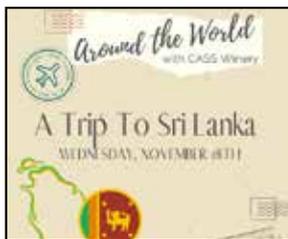


Tickets on sale now at My805Tix.com and at our official Box Office at **Boo Boo Records in SLO**

Supporting local journalism, one ticket at a time.



Point San Luis Lighthouse Virtual Tours
WEDNESDAYS THRU DEC 30
Point San Luis Lighthouse



Wednesdays Around the World Dinner: Sri Lanka
WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 18
Cass Winery, Paso Robles



2020 Friendsgiving at Cass
FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 20
Cass Winery, Paso Robles



2020 November Wine Seminar: Bubbles
SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 29
Cass Winery, Paso Robles



2020 Holiday Market at Cass
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 6
Cass Winery, Paso Robles



Pecho Coast Trail Plant Life
SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 21
Point San Luis Lighthouse, Avila Beach

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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FOODBANKSBC.ORG



GIVE A HOOT

Gallery Los Olivos presents *Portraits of Santa Barbara Birds*, a solo exhibit of works by Santa Barbara-based artist Emil Morhardt, through the end of November. The exhibit features a variety of Morhardt's acrylic paintings of 12 different bird species. Call (805) 688-7517 or visit gallerylosolivos.com to find out more. The gallery is located at 2920 Grand Ave., Los Olivos.

—C. W.

CULTURE & LIFESTYLE from page 14

PUBLIC TALK: A NEW VIEW OF GOD Phil Hockley will share his life-transforming experience after finding a new view of God as Love itself. This new perspective of God and reality that Christian Science opens up is one that offers freedom from whatever in our lives seems painful, debilitating. **Nov. 7**, 2-3 p.m. Free. 805-543-5853. cstalks.org/slo-hockley/. Zoom, Inquire for Zoom ID.

SLOBG: ONLINE FALL PLANT SALE FUNDRAISER A semi-annual plant sale. Find the perfect plant for your garden. Greenhouse open to the public for a two-week plant blow-out. Enjoy a wide selection of drought-tolerant and volunteer-grown plants. Members save 10%. **Nov. 9-21**, 9 a.m.-3 p.m. Varies. 805-541-1400. slobg.org/calendar-of-events/plantsale. San Luis Obispo Botanical Garden, 3450 Dairy Creek Rd., San Luis Obispo.

SPOKES BOARD ACADEMY Whether you are an experienced board member or just considering becoming one, the Spokes Board Academy will equip you with the knowledge you need to be an informed and effective member of a nonprofit board of directors. There will be 7 sessions on different topics. **Nov. 10**, 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. spokesfor nonprofits.org/upcoming-events/academy/. Zoom, Inquire for Zoom ID.

YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID Youth Mental Health First Aid is a comprehensive training designed to equip educators, family members, and caregivers (18 years or older) with the skills to identify, understand, and respond to the signs or risk factors of mental illness and substance use disorders in youth. **Nov. 10**, 8 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Free. 978-697-0629. bethedifferencesb.org/. Zoom, Inquire for Zoom ID.

NORTH SLO COUNTY

LEARN TO FLY INTRODUCTORY SEMINAR The Paso Robles Experimental Aircraft Association (EAA) Chapter 465 is organizing a "Flying Start Seminar" with the goal of providing interested adults 18 and older a pathway to flight training and possible involvement with our local EAA chapter. **Nov. 7**, 9-11:45 a.m. Free. 805-586-0550. chapters.eaa.org/ee465/eagle-flights. Paso Robles Airport, 4912 Wing Way, Paso Robles.

RIISING TO THE CHALLENGE: HOW TO EMBRACE CHANGE AND INNOVATE Get ready to be inspired, to laugh, and ultimately to relate to what it takes to lead and inspire people. **Nov. 6**, 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. \$10-15. 800-556-2926. Templeton Park, 550 Crocker St., Templeton.

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.

NORTH SLO COUNTY

CRESTON DRIVE-THROUGH SPAGHETTI FEAST

Pick up your Friday night dinner while supporting local scholarships and the Creston community. Creston Women's Club will provide the feast. Dinners include: pasta, spaghetti sauce, garlic bread, salad, and a sweet treat. **Nov. 13**, 5-7:30 p.m. \$15 per plate; \$50 for 4. 805-610-1517. CrestonWomensClub.com. Creston Community Center, 5110 Swayze St., Creston.

MUSIC

SANTA MARIA VALLEY/LOS ALAMOS

SANTA MARIA PHILHARMONIC: SOUNDCLOUD

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

SOLDIERS, SWEETHEARTS, AND SONGS FROM THE LAST PANDEMIC AND WWI

Bring history to life. Local singer/actor Diana Diaz Boadella reads love letters between soldiers and sweethearts, and serenades with pop songs of the era. For all ages. **Nov. 7**, 6-7 p.m. Free. clarkcenter.org/event/diana-diaz-pop-songs-of-ww1/. Clark Center for the Performing Arts, 487 Fair Oaks Ave., Arroyo Grande, 805-489-9444.

SAN LUIS OBISPO

ADDRESSING RACISM AND DIVERSITY IN MUSIC INSTITUTIONS

The Cal Poly Music Department will present this virtual panel discussion. Email music@calpoly.edu for more info. **Nov. 5**, 11 a.m.-noon 805-756-2406. music.calpoly.edu. Zoom, Inquire for Zoom ID.

THE MUSE HOUR: LILA DOWNS (VIRTUAL)

A virtual concert and conversation with Lila Downs. **Nov. 8**, 7:30 p.m. Performing Arts Center, 1 Grand Ave., San Luis Obispo, 756-4849, pacslo.org.

PHOTO COURTESY OF GLASSHEAD STUDIO



FISH DISH

Glasshead Studio in Atascadero holds its fused-glass sushi set workshop on Friday, Nov. 13, from 6 to 8 p.m. Participants will create their own square sushi plate and two matching dipping bowls during this class. Admission is \$150 and is limited to six attendees. Masks are required. Call (805) 464-2633 or visit glassheadstudio.com for more info. The studio is located at 8793 Plata Lane, suite H, Atascadero.

—C.W.

Arts Briefs

NatureTrack Film Festival announces award winners of 2020 competition

The NatureTrack Film Festival announced the award-winning entries of this year's juried competition. The award for Best in Festival (Feature) was awarded to two feature-length films that tied for first place, *Last Kings of Bioko* (Oliver Goetzel) and *Realm of the Robber* (Moritz Katz and Braydon Moloney). Best in Festival (Short) was awarded to *Kokoly* (Blue Ventures, Garth Cripps, and Paul Antion).

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE NATURETRACK FILM FESTIVAL



The Dan Conaway Award (or Kids Connecting with Nature) was awarded to *Traces* (Sebastien Pins), while the Igniting Passion for (and with) Nature Award was awarded to *By Hand* (Kellen Keene). Two films tied for the Audience Award, which was awarded to *The Beaver Believers* (Sarah Koenigsberg) (pictured) and *Saliega's Lineage: The Return of the Iberian Lynx* (Javier Ortega Martinez).

Five feature-length films were honored in the following genre categories: *Queen Without Land* (Asgeir Helgestad) for Adventure; *83 Degrees: Ski the North* (Matthias Mayr) for Outdoors (or Out of Bounds); *Last Kings of Bioko* (Oliver Goetzel) for Conservation; *The Earthling Movie: The Remarkable Science of Grounding* (Josh and Rebecca Tickell) for Biography; and *Realm of the Robber* (Moritz Katz and Braydon Moloney) for Scenic.

Eight short films were awarded in the following genre categories: *ICEolation* (Sophie Ballagh and Ewan Blyth) for Adventure; *One Breath Around the World* (Guillaume Nery) for Outdoors (or Out of Bounds); *Ferret Town* (Virginia Moore) for Conservation; *Kokoly* (Blue Ventures, Garth Cripps, and Paul Antion) for Biography; *Carrizo Plain: A Sense of Place* (Jeff McLoughlin) for Scenic; *Six Mile Stretch* (Carol Chambers) for Animation; *Yikasdabi: Awaits the Dawn* (Gabriela Clar) for Student Film; and *Traces* (Sebastien Pins) for Kids Connecting with Nature.

Visit naturetrackfilmfestival.org for more details and updates on next year's NatureTrack Film Festival.

Cypress Gallery holds November duo show, Uniquely Yours

The Lompoc Valley Art Association presents Uniquely Yours, a new duo exhibition showcasing works from featured artists Toni Zybelle and Joellen Chrones, at the Cypress Gallery. This multimedia exhibit features earrings, rings, bracelets, necklaces, and other handcrafted jewelry items and is scheduled to remain on display at the gallery through Sunday, Nov. 29.

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE LOMPOC VALLEY ART ASSOCIATION



Zybelle uses enamels, copper, and silver to create her jewelry, while Chrones has created a variety of beaded jewelry, decorative fused glass items, and felted hats and purses for this showcase. Call (805) 588-2261 or visit lompocart.org to find out more about Uniquely Yours. Cypress Gallery is located at 119 E. Cypress Ave., Lompoc. ☪

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

PHOTO COURTESY OF PRICEY DIGGS

No place like home

Traveling duo Pricey Diggs releases new Americana album, *Home Free*, in lieu of a canceled countrywide tour



DYNAMIC DUO: From performing at wineries in Los Olivos and bars in Pismo Beach and Cayucos, eclectic, traveling musical duo Pricey Diggs has become well acquainted with the local music scene over the past few years.

BY CALEB WISEBLOOD

"We had 33 gigs booked when the pandemic hit. That was a low point," musician Annie Boreson told the *Sun*. A singer and cajonist, Boreson is one half of a California-based traveling duo, Pricey Diggs. Her husband, Mark McMillen, is the duo's keyboardist, and both partners provide vocals and compose their original songs together.

The COVID-19 crisis forced the duo to cancel an extensive road trip tour, which would have stretched from Los Angeles to the Canadian border—including stops in Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo counties—and across to Wyoming and back.

"Some of our all-time favorite places to play are on the Central Coast," Boreson said.

From wineries in Los Olivos to bars in Pismo and Cayucos, Pricey Diggs had become well acquainted with the local music scene over the past few years. Among their favorite venues to perform is *Vino et Amicus* in Old Town Orcutt. Pricey Diggs' connection with the wine bar began with its owner Kurt Hixenbaugh, McMillen's stepbrother, who also helped introduce the Los Angeles-based duo to the town of Orcutt and the Santa Maria Valley in general.

"He's [Hixenbaugh] been great at introducing us to the area and a lot of nice people," Boreson said. "We can hardly wait to play there again when

Sound on

Pricey Diggs' new album, *Home Free*, is available for purchase at pricediggs.com. The album can also be found on Spotify and other major streaming outlets.

everything gets back on track."

In place of the canceled tour, Pricey Diggs has spent the past seven months completing a new studio album, *Home Free*.

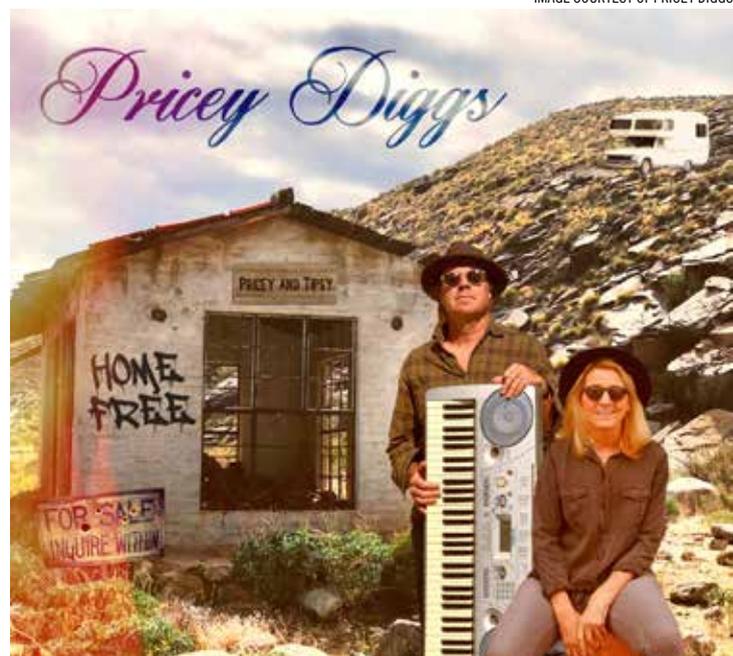
"COVID-19 changed our course and threw us a lemon. But as we've come to learn in life, some of our greatest blessings appear at the darkest times. For us, being homebound and quarantined led to productive days dedicated to writing, recording, and making this CD," an excerpt from the album's inside cover reads. "So I guess you could say that we took that lemon and mulched it into sonic lemonade."

While the duo is known for playing a variety of genres—including country, funk, jazz, Latin, R&B, reggae, and rock—*Home Free* is difficult to categorize, Boreson explained.

"It's always tough to put a label on our own music because it covers a lot of different styles, but our PR guy, Robert, calls us 'an eclectic, contemporary, blue-eyed soul slice of Americana,'" Boreson said.

McMillen lovingly described *Home Free* as "the newest chapter of my wandering minstrel life that I've been so fortunate to lead with Annie."

So which of the new album's 10



SLICE OF LIFE: In lieu of their canceled tour, Pricey Diggs has spent the past seven months completing a new studio album, *Home Free*, described as an eclectic, contemporary, blue-eyed soul slice of Americana.

FILE PHOTO BY REBECCA ROSE



RAISE THE BAR: *Vino et Amicus* in Old Town Orcutt is among the duo's favorite venues. Pricey Diggs' connection with the wine bar began with its owner Kurt Hixenbaugh, Mark McMillen's stepbrother, who also helped introduce Pricey Diggs to the town of Orcutt and the Santa Maria Valley in general.

songs is each musician's personal favorite?

"That's a tough one because I'm proud of all the songs and feel each one has its own personality," McMillen said. "Distance" kind of kicked things off and seems to resonate with a lot of people."

The second track of the album, "Distance" covers themes of pandemic-induced isolation and is also Boreson's favorite song the duo composed and recorded specifically for *Home Free*.

"We wrote it at the start of quarantine, when we were missing the life we knew and family. Isolation is hard for everyone, and we channeled our feelings through that song," Boreson said. "It nearly wrote itself."

Boreson and McMillen's musical adventures and countrywide travels as Pricey Diggs began a few years ago, shortly after Boreson was diagnosed with cancer, her husband said.

"Here she was hooked up to chemo telling me she wanted to buy an old camper, learn to play an instrument, and start playing gigs up and down the coast," McMillen said. "When she

was well, I held her to it."

About a year before purchasing their 1982 Toyota Sunrader, Boreson spent her free time learning how to play the cajon. McMillen was already an experienced musician, having toured with R&B legend Bobby Caldwell for more than two decades before embarking on Pricey Diggs with his wife.

"I built her a cajon and we practiced night and day. When she wasn't rehearsing with me, she was watching cajon players on YouTube. A year or so later, we bought the camper and hit the road, playing gigs wherever we went," McMillen said.

"I couldn't be more blessed to have him as my partner-in-crime," Boreson said of her husband. "We love traveling in the camper as every day is different, never knowing who you will meet and what adventures you'll stumble across." ☪

Arts Editor Caleb Wiseblood wants to know what adventures you've stumbled upon lately. Send postcards to cwiseblood@santamariasun.com.

FILE PHOTO COURTESY OF CHELSEA GARCIA



SCHOOL OF ROCK: “Drumming is especially popular; it is so fun to watch the kids having a blast making loud rhythms. I am thrilled about all the classes we have offered,” Youth ARTS Alive Program Coordinator Sarah Raines told the *Sun*. Pictured here, Youth ARTS Alive performers share their skills during the 2019 Arts Fiesta.

COURTESY FILE PHOTO BY LUIS ESCOBAR REFLECTIONS PHOTOGRAPHY



LOCAL THESPIAN: Jana Price (pictured here as Laurie Morton in PCPA's 2019 production of *Brighton Beach Memoirs*, right) is teaching dance courses as part of the Youth ARTS Alive fall program, which runs through Nov. 20.

In-person and outdoors

Registration is open for new Youth ARTS Alive after-school classes in Santa Maria

BY CALEB WISEBLOOD

A diverse selection of after-school performing and visual arts classes awaits participants of the Youth ARTS Alive fall program. While classes officially began on Nov. 2, registration is still open for those who wish to join. The program is open to ages 8 through 18 and runs through Nov. 20 at the Abel Maldonado Community Youth Center in Santa Maria. Admission to each class is free, but availability is limited.

Since its inception in 2017, Youth ARTS Alive has aimed to provide free arts education for local youth, under the direction of founder Gale McNeeley. While a virtual iteration of the program was considered for its fall term, organizers ultimately decided to retain the in-person aspect, with all classes held outdoors and other protocols implemented to comply with public safety guidelines.

“We think a major benefit is that it’s an opportunity for kids to be outside when so many of their activities are online right now,” Sarah Raines, program coordinator of Youth ARTS Alive, told the *Sun*. “We have considered online classes, but many of the students our program is designed to serve do not have reliable internet access.”

The summer program marked Raines’ first

outing as program coordinator for Youth ARTS Alive, a role she uses to not only organize the department’s classes but also to lobby city government, local businesses, and schools to provide more funds for public art and arts education. And similar to the program’s summer term, social distancing will be accommodated, and face masks will be required at all times, Raines explained.

“Just like this summer, we are holding classes outdoors for maximum ventilation,” Raines said. “All involved—students, teachers, parents, staff, volunteers, and interns—will be required to wear a mask. Youth ARTS Alive will provide masks for any who forget to bring them.”

Hand sanitizer will also be available on site to students during each class, Raines added. Other safety protocols include limiting restroom access to one person at a time.

Instructors of the November program



MURAL MASTER: Plans are already underway for the Youth ARTS Alive program’s spring term, which will include a class on the creation of public art and murals, hosted by local artist and mentor Ruben Espinoza (pictured).

include former *Sun* Managing Editor Joe Payne, who teaches guitar and ukulele classes, and local thespians Ksa Curry and Jana Price, who teach theater and dance, respectively. Other Youth ARTS Alive faculty members include dance instructor Anita Tubbs and drumming instructor Sean Sullivan.

“Drumming is especially popular; it is so fun to watch the kids having a blast making loud rhythms. I am thrilled about all the classes we have offered,” Raines said. “They [the instructors] make their classes fun and incorporate performance skills with the kids.”

Plans are already underway for the Youth ARTS Alive program’s spring term, and more

FILE PHOTO COURTESY OF YOUTH ARTS ALIVE



CLASS IN SESSION: Since its inception in 2017, Youth ARTS Alive has aimed to provide free performing and visual arts education for local youth through a variety of after-school classes held in Santa Maria—including dance classes (pictured).

Fountain of youth

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

details on spring classes will be announced once funding is secured, Raines said. One offering already on the spring lineup is a class on the creation of public art and murals, hosted by local artist and mentor Ruben Espinoza.

“Ruben is very creative, but also very professional and engaging with the students,” Raines said. “His class during our summer program was an abstract take on the self-portrait. The students had a lot of fun exploring that project.” ○

Send your abstract takes and hot takes to Arts Editor Caleb Wiseblood at cwiseblood@santamariasun.com.



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Spaceship Earth

Calling it his “witness statement,” natural historian David Attenborough lays out his case against humanity’s impact on the natural world, demonstrating through three evolving statistics—world population, parts per million (ppm) of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, and percent of worldwide wilderness—the increasing damage humans have done. In 1937, when Attenborough was a boy, the stats were 2.3 billion people, 280 ppm, and 66 percent wilderness left. Today, just 83 years later, we’re at 7.8 billion people, 415 ppm, and just 35 percent wilderness. He makes the case that the Holocene period is being eclipsed by the Anthropocene, a sixth mass extinction on Earth and the first to be caused by a species—humans. (83 min.)

Glen: In case you’re not depressed enough, tune in to Attenborough’s new Netflix documentary *A Life on Our Planet*, which opens with the famed British broadcaster walking through the ruins of Pripjat, the Ukrainian town that was abandoned after the Chernobyl meltdown—one of the many “mistakes” humans have made during their stewardship of Earth. As he looks through the deserted town, he narrates key moments of his life and work with the BBC exploring untamed places, from Africa’s Serengeti to the Arctic, from the rainforest to Antarctica. Over his long career, he explains that he’s seen firsthand the effects we’ve had on the planet we call home—the loss of biodiversity, the dying ocean coral reefs,

the greedy harvesting of natural resources. It’s a remarkable condemnation of human activity, a stunning rebuke of our behavior. But he notes something important—now devoid of human presence, Pripjat is returning to the wild, with flora and fauna flourishing. Despite what we’ve done, Attenborough sees a path out of our mess by re-wilding the world.

Anna: A path perhaps, but an increasingly narrower one to be sure. At 94 years old, Attenborough has certainly seen a lot of change over his lifetime, but he recognizes that even in his early days, humanity was already on a path to destruction. While our usual association with his work and voice is centered on the natural beauty of land and sea, this scathing look at our disregard for the destruction and ruin we’re responsible for weighs heavy. Attenborough supposes what will happen in 10, 20, 50 years down the road if we stubbornly refuse to take our stewardship of the Earth seriously. Eating a plant-based diet, turning toward renewable energy, and ending our exploitation of the natural world to gain

DAVID ATTENBOROUGH: A LIFE ON OUR PLANET

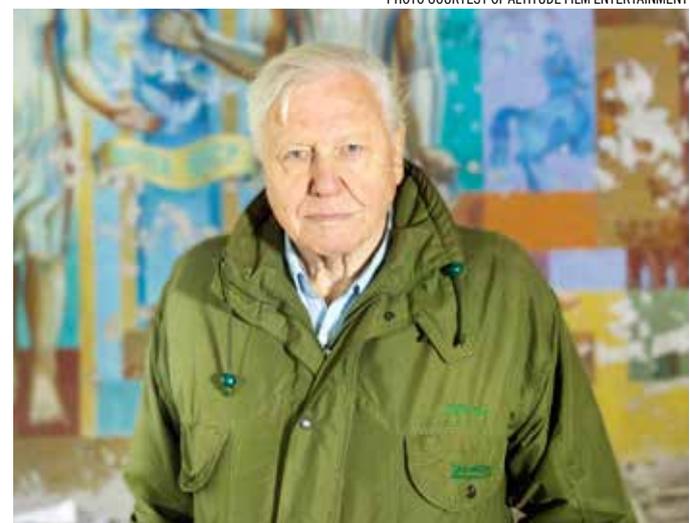
What’s it rated? **PG**
 What’s it worth, Anna? **Full price**
 What’s it worth, Glen? **Full price**
 Where’s it showing? **Netflix**

unsustainable resources are all key to healing what we have blatantly destroyed. I don’t have much faith that most people are interested in giving up their comfort or habits to heal the world, but luckily for our planet, we will destroy ourselves long before we destroy nature’s ability to overcome. It’s a grim truth, but one we would do

much better to learn now rather than later.
Glen: I agree. I think he’s more hopeful than I am at the prospect of humankind righting its wrongs. The bottom line is there are just too many of us,

and the poorer and less educated are most likely to produce the most children, continuing the cycle. Raising living standards and education access for all is the key, and Attenborough does point to a handful of examples of regions making the right choices, such as Costa Rica’s reversal of its deforestation, Palau’s rebuilding of its fisheries, and the Netherlands’ innovative land use and agricultural practices. Mixing gorgeous shots of nature with horrifying examples of human destruction, it depicts a civilization at a crossroads. Will we continue down this selfish path, turning our whole planet into Pripjat, or will we have the political will and wisdom to make the sacrifices and hard choices to save ourselves and our home? Attenborough is hoping for the latter rather than the former.

Anna: It’s a hard look at a difficult subject, and not one that’s easy to confront. The beauty of nature contrasted with the ugly truth of destruction is an effective method for getting his point across, and Attenborough is adept at presenting both truths. He’s a treasure as a filmmaker and advocate for nature, and the fact that he’s still at it at 94 years old is a gift. Is this film a big bummer? For sure. Does it still offer hope? Yep. I have no doubt that



BEARING WITNESS: Legendary British natural historian Sir David Attenborough offers his account of human impact on our planet, offering a path forward to end our destructive ways and remake our world, in *A Life on Our Planet*, available on Netflix.

Attenborough has to keep hope alive to continue his work. Perhaps it will serve to educate and inspire, surely what it is meant to do as opposed to depress and dishearten. I encourage all to watch, just know *A Life on Our Planet* may not leave you feeling a whole lot of faith in things actually turning around. It’s an important look at the harsh reality we live with today. ○

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

Film Reviews

BEST WISHES, WARMEST REGARDS: A SCHITT’S CREEK FAREWELL

What’s it rated? **Not rated** When? **2020**
 Where’s it showing? **Netflix**

Unless you’ve been living under a rock, there is no doubt that the Canadian series *Schitt’s Creek* has made it onto your radar one way or another. The brainchild of Daniel Levy, this series is a testament to comedy without cruelty and the ability to make a world where the realities of homophobia and hate do not exist.

This 44-minute Netflix special looks at the last season of the show, from table reads to final filming, and interviews those closest to the project. From huge gets like Eugene Levy and Catherine O’Hara to auditioning hundreds of actresses for the part of Alexis and finally finding the perfect fit with Annie Murphy, the attention put into every aspect shines through.

Detailing not just the casting process but the decision to end the show even while it was on a meteoric rise, the intense importance of costuming and character development, this love story to *Schitt’s Creek* is just the medicine those of us still mourning the series’ end needed. The cast and creators were humble and incredibly invested in making great characters



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE CANADIAN BROADCASTING CORPORATION

A TEARFUL GOODBYE: Join show makers Eugene and Dan Levy along with cast and crew of *Schitt’s Creek* as they reminisce about the phenomenon that their six-season show has become and the messages of love and acceptance that it encompasses, available on Netflix.

and stories, and everyone feels overwhelmingly lucky for their involvement in the show. I will hand out a warning here: Be prepared to bawl your eyes out—this one hits fans right in the feels. (44 min.)

—Anna

BORAT SUBSEQUENT MOVIEFILM

What’s it rated? **R**
 When? **2020**
 Where’s it showing? **Amazon Prime**

Sacha Baron Cohen is back as Borat Sagdiyev, a television journalist from a fictional version of Kazakhstan, who—mockumentary-style—interacts with unsuspecting people, essentially pranking them. It’s a follow-up to the 2006 original, *Borat: Cultural Learnings of America to Make Benefit Glorious Nation of Kazakhstan*, and I’m happy to report, this sequel is just as hilarious, outrageous, and politically astute as its predecessor.

We learn Borat’s first film humiliated Kazakhstan, leading to Borat’s imprisonment in a gulag, but 14 years later, he’s freed for a special mission—to deliver Kazakh Minister of Culture Johnny the Monkey, an actual chimpanzee, to President Trump. Once he arrives in the U.S., he discovers his daughter, Tutar (Maria Bakalova), has stowed away in Johnny’s crate. Long story short, the chimp is dead and the new plan is to gift his daughter to Vice President Mike Pence.

What makes the film so timely is its astute takedown of the worst of America, from QAnon rednecks to right wing rallies to disrupting Pence during his speech at the Conservative



PHOTO COURTESY OF AMAZON STUDIOS

TRUMPING TRUMP: Kazakh TV journalist Borat Sagdiyev (Sacha Baron Cohen) disguises himself as President Trump to crash the 2020 CPAC and deliver his daughter Tutar as a gift to Veep Mike Pence, in the hilarious sequel *Borat Subsequent Moviefilm*, available on Amazon Prime.

Political Action Conference. It’s wickedly funny and a blistering attack on contemporary conservatism. (95 min.) ○

—Glen

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On the map

The county's newest AVA, Alisos Canyon, owes its existence largely to two local winemakers



PRIME LOCATION: Alisos Canyon's proximity to the Pacific Ocean makes it unique, and the area's cooling marine winds and fog along the San Antonio Creek Valley are the distinct factors that inspired local winemakers to secure its AVA designation.



GROUND-TO-GLASS: Dovecote Estate Winery in Los Alamos is now located in the Alisos Canyon AVA, the newest designated American Viticulture Area in Santa Barbara County.



THE RHONE FACTOR: The Alisos Canyon AVA lends itself to Rhone-style wines, such as the ones produced by Dovecote. Area vineyards grow grape varieties that are indigenous to that region of France.

A MAIN DRIVER: Noah Rowles, owner and winemaker at Dovecote Estate Ranch and Winery in Los Alamos, and renowned area winemaker Wes Hagen pushed to get Alisos Canyon designated as the latest Santa Barbara County American Viticultural Area.

Drink up

To find out more information about the Alisos Canyon AVA, visit sbcountywines.com. To read up on Dovecote Estate Vineyard, visit dovecotewine.com, where you can request a private tasting of the Rhone-style wines the Alisos Canyon winery is producing.

BY KENNY CRESS

Wes Hagen and Noah Rowles, two longtime area winemakers, figured Alisos Canyon had the wherewithal to be the newest designated American Viticultural Area (AVA) in Santa Barbara County.

The two men liked the area's location. They liked the soil. They believed in the workers who tilled the soil and harvested the grapes.

So they labored to make Alisos Canyon become an AVA reality. Hagen authored the petition. Rowles helped drive the process. After six years of work, according to *Wine Enthusiast*, the U.S. Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau (TTB) approved Alisos Canyon as an AVA in late August.

"It was a great adventure, and something I'm very proud to have led to fruition," Rowles said.

Rowles is owner and winemaker at Dovecote Estate Ranch and Winery in Los Alamos, and Hagen is the winemaker and brand ambassador for J. Wilkes Wines in the Santa Maria Valley.

Hagen also helped create three other AVAs in the county, Ballard Canyon being the most recent in 2012. Before that, he helped successfully craft the petitions for the Sta. Rita Hills and Happy Canyon areas. In 2013, Michael Cervin of *The Wall Street Journal* and *Decanter* ranked Hagen No. 68 among the 100 most influential winemakers in the United States.

Rowles and Hagen worked together to make Alisos Canyon the seventh Santa Barbara County AVA, now on the veritable viticultural map with the Santa Maria Valley, Santa Ynez Valley, Sta. Rita

Hills, Ballard Canyon, Happy Canyon, and Los Olivos District AVAs.

California has the lion's share of AVAs, with 140 of the 251 in the U.S. as of Oct. 8, according to the TTB.

AVAs help distinguish a wine's character and makeup, based on terroir, "the idea that wine has unique qualities depending on where the grapes are grown—the soil, climate, altitude, and so on," according to *Food and Wine* magazine. "In America, we're now becoming more and more knowledgeable about our own terroir, as evidenced by the push to establish more AVAs. ... The smaller the AVA, the more idiosyncratic the terroir."

Advocating for Alisos Canyon to be designated as an AVA, Hagen wrote, "Alisos Canyon falls perfectly within the Goldilocks Rhone Zone, a phenomenon that has proven itself over three decades of wine growing history in Santa Barbara."

Grape growers in Alisos Canyon cultivate grape varieties that are indigenous to the Rhone Valley in southern France. These grapes grew roots along the banks of the Rhone River and include syrah, grenache, mourvedre, viognier, and roussanne.

Santa Barbara County has three "Goldilocks Rhone Zones"—where the climate is "perfectly suited for Rhone grapes," according to the Santa Barbara County Vintners Association. Each of those zones is situated along a river or creek channel about 25 miles from the Pacific Ocean. These channels run from the Pacific to the interior coastal ranges: the Santa Ynez River, Santa Maria River channel, and San

Antonio Creek channel.

The Alisos Canyon AVA covers nearly 5,800 acres along San Antonio Creek Valley, taking in cool marine winds and fog from the Pacific Ocean, giving it a similar climate to the French wine region. The Vintners Association describes the mean temperature as one of the lowest of all the county's AVAs, resulting in a degree-day average above the Santa Rita Hills and below Ballard Canyon.

Rowles spearheaded the effort to get Alisos Canyon designated as its own AVA soon after he bought the Thompson Vineyard property along Alisos Canyon Road near Los Alamos in 2014. The vineyard, first planted in 1990, yields 42 acres of cool-climate Rhone grapes, with vines that produce low yields and intense flavors.

But every year is different.

In some ways, Rowles said, this October was good for area winemaking. In other ways, it wasn't.

"This year's crop isn't the prettiest, but any veteran winemaker will tell you that great wine isn't made based on the cosmetics of the grapes or vineyard," Rowles said.

In other words, looks aren't everything.

"Very often the fruit that looks like it went through a war can yield the most elegant and unique wines," Rowles said. "We saw some sudden and rapid late-season dehydration in berries, and then some vines were partially aborting their fruit load presumably as a survival strategy."

The unseasonable heat in early October could have been at least partially to blame, but it didn't

bother Rowles. In fact, he was encouraged by it. "Normally, we do well with the later heat spikes that often occur in October. Alisos Canyon—and my vineyard in particular, Thompson Vineyards—is one of the last to be harvested in the entire Santa Barbara County every year," he said. "A little late-season warmth is generally a good thing, as in October the angle of the sun is less harsh and the amount of daytime hours have dropped, so the vines aren't as stressed as they would be if the heat came mid-year when they were getting 12 hours of sunlight every day."

Rowles was less happy with the summer of smoky skies over region, however.

"2020 had another issue that I believe exacerbated the multiple heat spikes we all endured this summer: sustained poor air quality," Rowles said.

He emphasized, though, that he was not concerned about smoke taint or any direct phenolic or flavor impacts.

"For me at Dovecote, I am choosing to base my harvest decisions on flavors versus looks this year," the veteran winemaker said. "We will invest a lot of time meticulously hand-sorting fruit in the winery and likely end up with a smaller overall 2020 vintage, but I am confident the extra attention and effort will result in some unique and expressive wines." ○

Contributor Kenny Cress knows a good wine when he hears about it. Reach him through the editor at clanham@santamariasun.com.

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What's Your Take?

We know you've got an opinion. Everybody's got one!

This week's online poll 11/5 - 11/12

When should kids go back to in-person school?

- When North County cities get their COVID-19 numbers on par with the rest of the county.
- They should have already gone back this semester.
- Play it safe and keep distance learning for the rest of the 2020-21 school year.
- ASAP—implement a hybrid model first and see how it goes.

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PREFERRED PROPERTIES



758 Stansbury, Santa Maria

Cute and cozy home within walking distance to Old Town Orcutt. This 3 bedroom 2 bath is warm and inviting featuring tile and hardwood flooring throughout. Dual pane windows, and new sod for the front lawn. The back yard is south facing, with raised planter beds and a chicken coop. This is a great home, with a country feel. Perfect for animals or gardening. **\$431,990**



1650 E Clark #231, Santa Maria

Sunny Hills Delight! This 2 bedroom 1 and 3/4 bathroom mobile home has been tastefully updated throughout. The remodeled kitchen is very spacious with a breakfast bar, pantry, and utility closet. The living room and dining area have an open feel. Both bathrooms have been beautifully updated. The cozy master bedroom with large master bathroom provides great storage for all of your linens and more! Freshly painted inside & out within the last year. There are two entrances to this home. One up the front steps on to a lovely front porch, the other from the carport with a handicap wheelchair lift. The yard is very peaceful & beautifully landscaped. A true pride of ownership in this well maintained mobile home! Also the bonus of all the parks amenities for you to enjoy! It is a must see! **\$79,990.00 (CL165)**



4978 Harmony Ln, Santa Maria

Great family home on spacious corner lot near Orcutt schools. House features 3 bedrooms and 2 bathrooms as well as large family and living rooms. Both bathrooms and kitchen were updated in 2013. Dual pane windows and gas oven with broiler drawer. There is also ample space on the right side of the house for a buyer to create RV or boat parking. Huge backyard for creating a great entertaining area! Loads of potential! **\$474,990 (HA479)**

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