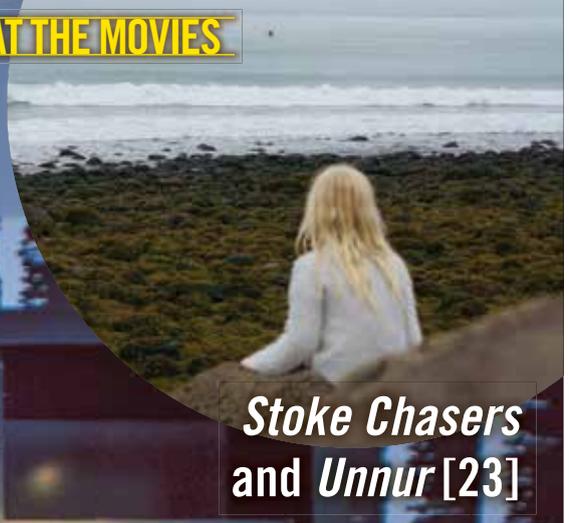


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AT THE MOVIES



Stoke Chasers and Unnur [23]

Sun



Discipline and trust

2020 Winemaker of the Year Greg Brewer is dedicated to the Sta. Rita Hills and always will be [24]

BY CAMILLIA LANHAM

NEWS New COVID-19 stay-at-home order looms [4]

ARTS Setting campaign contribution limits, or not [8]

EATS The New Cuyama issue of *RURAL* [20]

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Contents

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The Sta. Rita Hills have a hold on Brewer-Clifton winemaker Greg Brewer, similar to the hold he has on the Sta. Rita Hills. They've been working together for 30 years, so it's only natural. The longtime winemaker recently received the honor of being named *Wine Enthusiast's* Winemaker of the Year. Learn about Brewer's passion, process, and product [24].

This week, you can also read about campaign contribution limits and how some North County cities aren't planning to limit them at all [8]; the Cuyama Buckhorn's first artist-in-residence [20]; and a local filmmaker's take on local issues [22].

Camillia Lanham
editor



AWARD-WINNER: Brewer-Clifton winemaker Greg Brewer won *Wine Enthusiast* magazine's 2020 Winemaker of the Year.

Cover image courtesy of Brewer-Clifton > Cover design by Alex Zuniga

NEWS

News Briefs	4
Political Watch	4
Spotlight	9

ARTS

Arts Briefs	20
-------------------	----

OPINION

Web Poll	10
Modern World	10
Canary	12

MOVIES

Reviews	23
---------------	----

CLASSIFIEDS, HOME, AND REAL ESTATE

.....	26
-------	----

EVENTS CALENDAR

Hot Stuff	17
-----------------	----

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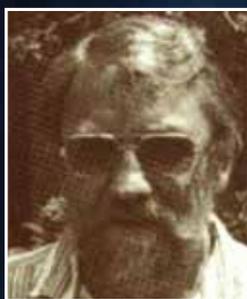
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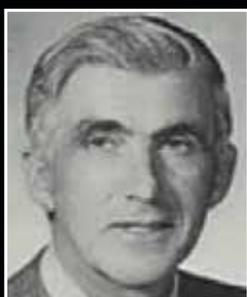
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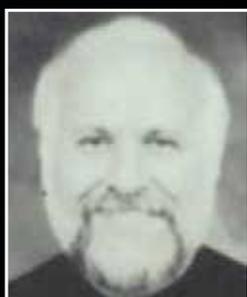
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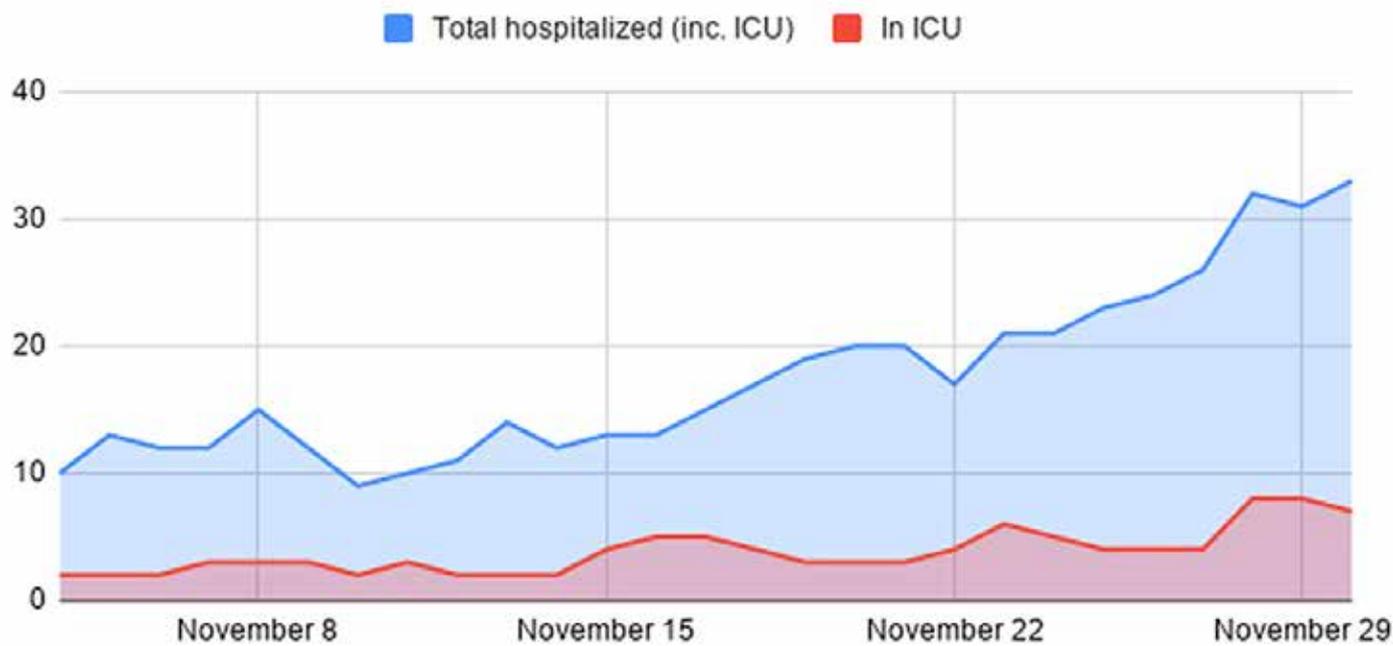
• On Nov. 21, **U.S. Rep. Salud Carbajal** (D-Santa Barbara) hosted his fourth annual Citizenship Recognition Ceremony where he virtually presented Special Congressional Recognitions to 102 new Central Coast citizens who took their oaths between July 2019 and November 2020. “These new U.S. citizens have rights, responsibilities, and opportunities that will strengthen and shape the future of our great nation, just as generations of immigrants have done before them,” a statement from Carbajal’s office said. “By choosing to naturalize, they are confirming their commitment to our country and furthering our legacy as a nation of immigrants.” In a Nov. 28 Facebook post following the event, Carbajal congratulated the new citizens and wrote, “The day I became an American citizen was one of the proudest moments of my life.”

• **Gov. Gavin Newsom** issued a Thanksgiving Day proclamation that recognized the holiday but also addressed the inaccuracies in the Thanksgiving narrative as well as the challenges of celebrating during a pandemic. “Our understanding of the first Thanksgiving, of course, failed to tell the full story of European contact with Indigenous peoples living in what is now the United States,” Newsom wrote. “In the years that followed, Indigenous peoples have rightfully called attention to the inaccuracies and elisions in our national narrative.” The celebration of “friendship, generosity, and resilience” over Thanksgiving, Newsom continued, is the celebration of things that Americans have practiced all year long thanks to COVID-19. “We draw strength and resilience from the heroism of our health care workers, emergency response personnel, and essential workers from all lines of work, as well as volunteers who are safely checking in on their vulnerable neighbors,” he said. “Let us strengthen these lasting ties and resolve to protect and support one another during these unprecedented times.”

• The **Santa Barbara County Public Health Department** announced on Nov. 24 that the county remains in the purple (widespread) tier in the governor’s reopening system. The county has now been in the most restrictive tier for more than two weeks and continues to see increases in the positivity rate. In the Nov. 24 state report card, the county’s positivity rate increased by 0.5 percent, and the adjusted case rate by 0.2 percent. “These small, but consistent increases indicate that widespread transmission of the virus that causes COVID-19 is happening in Santa Barbara County,” a county Public Health Department statement said. “We are continuing to face significant upticks in our local cases, and beginning to see increases in our hospitalizations,” **Public Health Director Dr. Van Do-Reynoso** said in the statement. “Very quickly, we have seen our metrics approach the orange tier metrics and then suddenly revert back to purple tier levels.” The Public Health Department has consistently urged people to change their holiday plans, avoid travel, and limit interactions to those inside one’s immediate household. “It is not too late to change your holiday plans,” Do-Reynoso said. “Although it isn’t the easy choice, it is in fact the right choice this year.”

• **Assemblymember Monique Limón** (D-Santa Barbara), who recently won election to the state Senate, wrote in a Nov. 24 Facebook post about her recently passed Assembly Bill 209, which establishes the Outdoor Equity Grants Program. The program, Limón wrote, “creates opportunities each year for outdoor environmental education programs that primarily serve low-income students.” According to the bill, the California Director of Parks and Recreation will now be required “to increase the ability of underserved and at-risk populations to participate in outdoor environmental educational experiences at state parks and other public lands.” Limón added in her post, “I look forward to students having the opportunity to experience the outdoors after the COVID-19 pandemic.”

Santa Barbara County: November COVID-19 hospitalization



ON THE RISE: Hospitalizations in Santa Barbara County are on the rise again, though the county is likely far from reaching its peak because Thanksgiving-related infections aren’t yet reflected in the number hospitalized.

Newsom hints at stay-at-home order for purple tier counties

Californians who live in purple tier counties may soon be under a stay-at-home order similar to those imposed at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Gov. Gavin Newsom floated the possibility at a Nov. 30 virtual press conference, though he didn’t specify exactly what would necessitate a new order. He said that alarming increases in COVID-19 hospitalizations across the state are playing a key role in public health decisions and that “deep purple tier moves” will be made in the coming days.

According to data presented at the press conference, hospitalizations in California increased by 89 percent over the last two weeks. Current projections show that hospitalization could increase two or three fold over the next month, “in the absence of making better decisions,” Newsom said.

Without “additional interventions” or “fundamental shifts in our conduct,” Newsom said, statewide intensive care unit capacity is projected to be reached by mid-December.

“If we see these trends continue, [there’s] potential for a stay-at-home order for those regions in purple, because of hospitalizations and ICUs,” Newsom said.

When the state shifted to the Blueprint for a Safer Economy reopening system, hospitalization rates were no longer considered for tier assignments. While hospitalization is one of the most accurate measures for COVID-19 spread in a community, it’s also considered a “lagging metric,” a California Department of Public Health (CDPH) representative told the *Sun* in an October email.

But despite it not being considered for a county’s tier assignment, “CDPH still monitors hospitalization rates and capacity as part of our response to COVID-19, particularly to ensure appropriate surge capacity at the local level,” the CDPH email stated.

“We’re not just now looking at positivity rates. We’re not now just looking at case

rates. We are now looking in real time at hospitalization numbers and ICU capacity in those regions,” Newsom said on Nov. 30.

What’s perhaps most concerning about the rising hospitalization numbers is that Thanksgiving Day gatherings aren’t yet reflected, meaning the surge is likely far from reaching its peak.

“We expect to see continued increases of hospitalizations if cases continue to increase,” Santa Barbara County Public Health Department Public Information Officer Jackie Ruiz told the *Sun* in an email. “In the previous peak of reported cases in July, we saw hospitalizations peak about three weeks after. Cases related to Thanksgiving likely won’t be seen in our data for a couple of weeks.”

Dr. Lynn Fitzgibbons, Cottage Health’s infectious disease specialist, told the *Sun* that a person infected on Thanksgiving Day would “likely to develop symptoms early this week, then hopefully quickly get tested and receive their results by the middle of this week.”

“The new daily cases we see through this week will tell us a lot about the impact the holiday has had on the already worsening surge,” Fitzgibbons added.

On Nov. 10, Santa Barbara County had nine COVID-19 patients hospitalized, the lowest it had seen since March. On Nov. 30, Santa Barbara County had 33 COVID-19 patients hospitalized, including seven in the ICU. The last time that many people were hospitalized was in mid-September, when the county was coming down from its late July to early August peak.

Public Health Director Dr. Van Do-Reynoso said in a Nov. 18 email that people still have the power to slow the spread with simple actions.

“We have the ability to contain the widespread disease transmission if we wear our mask, maintain at least 6 feet distance, wash our hands frequently, and stop gathering with people who are not in our household,” she wrote. “If everyone can be diligent in doing these tools, we will see the decrease in cases.”

—Malea Martin

Solvang accepts recall of former councilman Chris Djernaes

Solvang City Council held a special meeting on Nov. 30 to accept the recall of former Councilmember Chris Djernaes and swear in the candidate elected to fill the vacancy.

All members of the council were present except for Djernaes, leaving his seat already empty for the next council member.

The certified election results show 2,878 votes, nearly 90 percent of Solvang voters, in favor of the recall with only 434 voters opposed. Djernaes’ recall began with a citizen-led petition claiming that he wasn’t respectful to residents and disregarded the wishes of voters.

When it came time for public comment on the matter on Nov. 30, the few attendees in the meeting room, on the phone lines, and on Zoom were silent—a stark contrast to past comments calling for Djernaes to resign or threatening to remove other members of the council.

Lammy Johnstone, who spearheaded the Djernaes recall effort, threatened other City Council members at a July 27 council meeting.

“Let this be a lesson to any council member or mayor. If you do not listen to we the people of Solvang, we will remove you,” she said.

Mayor Ryan Toussaint followed the lack of public comments at the special meeting with two questions, asking City Manager Xenia Bradford whether anyone had ever been recalled by 90 percent before.

Bradford, who started working for Solvang in 2019, replied that it hadn’t in her tenure with the city.

Toussaint’s second question was directed at City Attorney Chip Wullbrandt to clarify the process of a council member “being served and usually they shape up before being shipped out.”

Wullbrandt referred to the Secretary of State’s handbook on local agency recall process, which includes the recall being served.

According to the handbook, Wullbrandt said, a

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NEWS from page 4

local agency is required to give the recallee an opportunity to provide a responsive statement to the community.

"In the Secretary of State's handbook, it mentions the fact that very few recalls go past that point because typically the recallee, on hearing the concerns of the citizens who elected them, will at least make an effort to correct their ways or explain their ways," Wullbrandt said. "In this instance, I would note: You had a circumstance where the recallee sort of doubled down on the activity that the citizens had complained about."

Toussaint said those were his comments on the recall and gestured toward Djernaes' vacant seat.

"Chris Djernaes if you have anything ... that's OK, he's not here," Toussaint said.

The council approved the resolution accepting the recall and moved to swear in Jim Thomas to fill the newly vacated seat. Thomas received 2,282 votes, approximately 72 percent, over the other candidate Jaime Baker, who had 876 votes, about 27 percent.

Thomas' term ends in December 2022.

—Karen Garcia

Santa Barbara County sees record turnout in 2020 election

It's official—Santa Barbara County certified its 2020 general election results on Nov. 25, marking the completion of an election that was extraordinary in more than one way, including the sheer volume of voter turnout nationwide.

In Santa Barbara County, more registered voters cast ballots in this election than in any of the last five presidential elections, dating all the way back to the 2000 race between Al Gore and George Bush. There were 220,274 Santa Barbara County residents registered to vote in that election, according to data available on the Santa Barbara County Registrar of Voters website, and around 155,000 actually voted.

This year, 235,198 residents registered to vote, and 86 percent of those registered—203,506—cast a ballot. That amounts to about a 30 percent increase in votes in Santa Barbara County since 2000, and an 11 percent jump from 2016, when President Donald Trump faced off against Hillary Clinton.

Santa Barbara County's upward trend aligns with a national increase in voter turnout. While only about 54 percent of eligible voters cast ballots in the 2000 presidential election nationwide, a little more than 66 percent of eligible voters did so in this year's election, according to data collected by the United States Elections Project.

While election officials have largely

pointed to America's passionate feelings over the COVID-19 pandemic and the Trump administration as reasons for the turnout, some say this year's record-breaking numbers are suspect. That includes Andy Caldwell, a local conservative radio talk show host who lost his bid to represent the 24th Congressional District to incumbent Salud Carbajal (D-Santa Barbara) by about 17 points and 62,783 votes in SLO, Santa Barbara, and northern Ventura counties.

"I can accept the fact that I lost," Caldwell told the *Sun*, "and I can even take a beating."

But, he said, considering the money his team raised and effort they put into campaigning, he said such a massive loss isn't adding up. In a Nov. 22 Facebook post, Caldwell suggested that the landslide could have been related to voter fraud.

In the post, Caldwell mentioned a theory that Dominion Voting Systems, which maintains voting machines in several states, may have added up to 35,000 votes to Democratic candidate totals throughout the nation. Although many Democratic and some Republican officials have dismissed the accusation, it was made popular among right-wing Americans by attorney and Trump ally Sidney Powell.

"What would that mean for my race against Salud?" Caldwell wrote in the post. "I would have beat him!"

Carbajal received between around 95,000 and 99,000 Santa Barbara County votes in both the 2016 and 2018 general elections. That support shot up to about 124,584 in this election, and at a time when Caldwell said Carbajal's "base"—UC Santa Barbara students—aren't even living on campus. Caldwell said he's not convinced that UCSB students who are attending school from homes outside of Santa Barbara County during the pandemic should be allowed to vote in the region's elections.

He also said he's not convinced that more people nationwide would vote in this election than in a race for the first woman president or first president of color.

Still, Caldwell said he can't say yet whether voter fraud really did happen in this year's election. He's waiting to see what happens nationally before he comes to any conclusions. And if fraud did happen, he doesn't think election officials in Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo counties are to blame.

"So if anything like this happened," Caldwell told the *Sun*, "it happened beyond our immediate control or influence. That's what I believe."

Santa Barbara County Elections Official Joseph Holland couldn't be reached for comment before press time.

—Kasey Bubnash



VITAL SUPPLIES: Children's Resource & Referral is teaming up with First 5 to provide essential supplies to local child care providers.

Child care providers struggle to meet increased need caused by COVID-19

Santa Barbara County is struggling to meet new child care needs created by the pandemic, but local organizations are finding ways to support providers.

Children's Resource & Referral of Santa Barbara County, a nonprofit that provides services to both families and child care providers, is teaming up with First 5 Santa Barbara County for the organizations' fifth supplies distribution event since the onset of the pandemic.

The Dec. 5 event is open to all child care facilities in Santa Barbara County who register, and there will be distribution spots in both Santa Maria and Santa Barbara.

Children's Resource & Referral Chief Operating Officer Jacqui Banta told the *Sun* that it's their largest distribution yet, and they're expecting to supply 350 licensed child care facilities with face masks, hand sanitizer, disinfectant, and other essential supplies.

Prior to the pandemic, Santa Barbara County already had a significant child care need for infants and toddlers, Banta said.

"But now, we have this huge need for school-aged children: those first, second, third graders who are not old enough to be left alone but are needing to do distance learning and have supervision," Banta said.

The county currently has the capacity to

serve 18,000 children, Banta said, but more than 9,000 infants and toddlers, 10,000 preschool-aged children, and 25,000 school-aged children need care. This leaves the county with a child care deficit of more than 25,000.

"The weight on the shoulders of these child care providers is unimaginable," she said.

"The majority of child care providers have either expanded their licenses to support more children, or they've expanded their hours of operation. Many of them are working 24-hour shifts, they're working over the weekends."

The supply distribution event will ensure that teachers and children stay healthy and safe as they continue to provide unprecedented levels of care.

"Doctors need to work, paramedics need to work, grocery store clerks need to work, and the only way they can work is to have safe and healthy child care options," Banta said.

In retrospect, Banta said, the child care crisis that many communities are experiencing would have been less severe if these services had been better prioritized before the pandemic.

"With the pandemic, it seems like there's a lot of catch-up work from the state," she said. "We wish that the value would have been placed on early care and education prior to the pandemic."

Children's Resource and Referral offers free child care for qualified families, parent training classes, individualized referrals, and professional development to providers. Visit crsbc.org to learn more about the organization's services. ○

—Malea Martin

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Setting new local limits

North County city councils mull campaign contribution limits with decision deadline fast approaching

BY MALEA MARTIN

As the dust continues to settle after Election Day, local city councils are grappling with how much individual donors should be allowed to influence future elections.

With the passing of Assembly Bill 571, an update to the state's election code, cities that don't already have local campaign contribution limits must decide before the end of the year whether they want to set their own cap or default to the state's.

Prior to the bill's passing, most jurisdictions in California—including Santa Maria—had not imposed limits on how much money candidates for local office can take from their donors. Santa Maria Chief Deputy City Clerk Rhonda White said during a Nov. 17 presentation to the council.

But once AB 571 goes into effect on Jan. 1, 2021, cities that don't establish their own limits will be automatically defaulted to the state limit of \$4,700, which is expected to be adjusted to \$4,900 in the new year. The Fair Political Practices Commission will enforce the limit in cities that go with this option. On the Central Coast, Grover Beach, Arroyo Grande, and Carpinteria already decided to default to the state's limit, White said.

If a city opts to establish its own limit—whether it's less than, equal to, or more than the state's cap—it must also take on the regulatory responsibilities of enforcing that limit. Or, a city council can vote to establish no limit, in which case no regulation would be necessary.

Santa Maria city staff recommended that

'If the concern is really around staff capacity, going with the state limit isn't a bad idea. The average campaign contributions for city councils between 2016 and 2020 have been about \$1,500 That is way below the state [limit].'

—Santa Maria City Councilmember Gloria Soto

the council maintain the city's status quo by establishing no contribution limits for local office candidates.

Councilmember Etta Waterfield made a motion for city staff to move forward with writing a no-limit resolution, and the vote was split 3-2 over the issue, with Councilmembers Gloria Soto and Michael Moats dissenting.

While Mayor Alice Patino sided with Waterfield and Councilmember Mike Cordero in the vote, she expressed some initial hesitation.

"I can remember . . . when an amount of \$5,000 was given to someone running for City Council, and I remember thinking that was, really, quite an exorbitant amount," Patino said.

But, she continued, the fact that the city would have to take on enforcement if it established its own limit is "where I find trouble." In a no-limit situation, which Patino ultimately supported, there wouldn't be a limit for the city to regulate, and the state would stay out of it.

Soto also recognized the benefit of not burdening the city with regulatory responsibilities. But rather than achieving this with a no-limit resolution, Soto suggested that the city default to the state's cap and let the Fair Political Practices Commission do the enforcing.

"If the concern is really around staff capacity, going with the state limit isn't a bad idea," Soto said. "The average campaign contributions for city councils between 2016 and 2020 have been about \$1,500 That is way below the state [limit]."

This way, Soto continued, "our staff won't be burdened with that task and candidates that run will still be able to run a competitive campaign."

Cordero maintained his support for establishing no cap, arguing that it hasn't been a problem historically. In the most recent election, Patino received the largest single contribution given to a candidate: \$3,000, nearly \$2,000 under the state limit.

Moats argued that though it hasn't been a problem historically,



SPLIT VOTE: Santa Maria City Councilmember Gloria Soto speaks in favor of campaign contribution limits in Santa Maria at the Nov. 17 council meeting. She and Councilmember Michael Moats voted against a no-limit resolution, while Councilmembers Etta Waterfield and Mike Cordero, and Mayor Alice Patino voted in favor.

"there's certainly the potential for it to occur in the future."

"I think [\$4,900] is really a good upper limit, and I support just following what the state has to say," Moats said.

"Campaigns are incredibly expensive, but that doesn't necessarily mean that one donor should have the influence of changing the outcome of a campaign," Soto added. "Having campaign limits will ensure that each campaign is run at the grassroots level."

The vote at the Nov. 17 meeting gave staff the go-ahead to write a resolution to establish no campaign contribution limits, which the City Council planned to vote on at its Dec. 1 meeting, after the *Sun* went to press.

In Lompoc, City Council members have not yet heard any staff presentations or recommendations on the issue. Lompoc Mayor Jenelle Osborne told the *Sun* that the city attorney was in the process of reviewing the state's legislation and will provide guidance to Lompoc City Council before the end of the year.

At the Nov. 17 Santa Maria City Council meeting, Chief Deputy City Clerk White said that Buellton and Guadalupe are similarly working with their attorneys to present

information to their city councils before the year ends.

Guadalupe Mayor Ariston Julian told the *Sun* that he personally did not see a need for Guadalupe to establish its own campaign contribution limit.

'I can remember . . . when an amount of \$5,000 was given to someone running for City Council, and I remember thinking that was, really, quite an exorbitant amount.'

—Mayor Alice Patino

"In the past, when there were several people running for office, I don't believe more than \$300 was spent on campaigns," Julian said.

For this reason, Julian said he would be open to either establishing no limit or defaulting to the state's limit. He said the item will be agendized for the city's Dec. 8 meeting. ○

Staff Writer Malea Martin can be reached at mmartin@santamariasun.com.

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Equity, climate, jobs

The Tri-County Regional Energy Network reduces local energy use, trains the building industry workforce of tomorrow

BY MALEA MARTIN

Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo counties have some of the most ambitious climate goals in the state: Santa Barbara County's new 2030 Climate Action Plan will seek to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 50 percent over the next 10 years, and the city of San Luis Obispo aims to reach carbon neutrality by 2035.

Reducing energy use in the built environment is integral to achieving these ambitions, according to Santa Barbara County Sustainability Division Chief Ashley Watkins, as buildings are responsible for 25 to 40 percent of greenhouse gas emissions.

"But we can't really achieve that goal if we're not able to educate people about the benefits of energy efficiency technologies, provide incentives or financing to encourage people to adopt those technologies, and then provide a workforce that's properly training to be able to install those types of equipment," Watkins said.

The Tri-County Regional Energy Network, which Watkins helps direct, aims to achieve just that by reducing energy use in the region's buildings.

In 2019, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, and Ventura counties launched this regional entity, also known as 3C-REN. The partnership provides services for households, such as free energy saving kits and virtual home assessments, and services for building industry professionals, such as workforce training and energy code forums—and it's all funded through local utility ratepayer dollars.

Before the days of regional energy networks like 3C-REN, these programs were all run through the California Public Utilities Commission. But many of the state-run resources are based out of urban centers like Los Angeles, making it difficult for a Central Coast resident to access them.

"We found our residents weren't really hearing about available programs and that it was difficult for the workforce to be able to take a day off work and drive down for training," Watkins said.

3C-REN takes those same dollars—a line item that utility payers can find in their monthly bill—and keeps them local.

"The idea is returning these ratepayer dollars to the community to reinvest in energy efficiency," 3C-REN Portfolio Manager Erica Helson said.

For people who want to save energy (and money) in their homes, 3C-REN's Home Energy Savings Program offers a no-cost home assessment, which is currently done virtually due to the pandemic. Following the assessment, 3C-REN will send you a free Energy Efficiency Starter Pack with LED light bulbs, a smart power strip, and more, so you can start saving on your energy bills with no out-of-pocket costs. Since

PHOTO COURTESY OF 3C-REN



NEW SKILLS: Building industry professionals attend a pre-pandemic 3C-REN training session, held in partnership with In Balance Green Consulting. For now, 3C-REN has pivoted to offer its training events virtually.

launching the program earlier this year, 3C-REN has served nearly 250 households.

If you're a building industry professional, 3C-REN offers free training events, with more than 70 held since 2019.

The cross-county partnership also brings together industry experts a few times a year for regional forums, such as the one on Nov. 13. The virtual conference, called "Taking the High Road: Preparing our Region's Workforce for Quality Jobs in Energy Efficiency," focused on what the California Workforce Development Board dubs the "High Road Framework."

"It's a new framing for a lot of energy and resources from the state and increasingly within the region," 3C-REN Co-Director Jon Griesser said.

It focuses on equity, climate, and jobs, and can serve as a guide for regional workforce development efforts, like those 3C-REN is undertaking. Griesser said it's about "meeting the needs of employers and employees to create high quality, family-supporting jobs, and making sure that you're creating the kind of workforce that our employers need."

"At the same time," he continued, it's about "making sure that we're doing these things with equity front and center, and working to achieve increasingly aggressive climate goals."

One way 3C-REN achieves this is by making a concerted effort to reach underserved parts of the community with its free and discounted energy upgrades, Watkins said.

"The Home Energy Savings Program can serve all of our residents, but we are really trying to target what we consider hard-to-reach residents," Watkins said, such as low-income individuals or people who don't speak English as their first language. "We're trying to make sure that ratepayer dollars are being distributed equally amongst everyone in our community."

If you're interested in learning more, visit 3C-REN.org.

Highlight

• Pacific Gas & Electric Company recently shared some tips with customers on how to stay safe and keep energy bills low over the holidays. PG&E advises customers to cook with a clean oven, which reduces the risk of a grease fire and results in better tasting food. Keeping the oven door closed once the food's in cuts down on energy consumption. PG&E suggests using the oven light to check on food instead. Finally, use the stovetop instead of the oven when possible, as it uses less energy. Or, plan ahead so that your oven and stovetop dishes are cooking simultaneously. Happy eating! ○

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

VICTOR JOSEPH LAMON, 75, of Santa Maria passed away 11/12/2020 arrangements with Marshall-Spoo Sunset Funeral Chapel

DONNA KAY SIKOLA, 63, of Pismo Beach passed away 11/16/2020 arrangements with Marshall-Spoo Sunset Funeral Chapel

ANGELA VALDEZ, 84, of Santa Maria passed away 11/17/2020 arrangements with Moreno Mortuary

DAVID "DAVE" MELVIN IMWOLD, 73, of Arroyo Grande passed away 11/17/2020 arrangements with Marshall-Spoo Sunset Funeral Chapel

LEILA ROBINSON, 96, of Morro Bay passed away 11/18/2020 arrangements with Blue Sky Cremation Service

JOHN TERKLA, 69, of Atascadero passed away 11/18/2020 arrangements with Blue Sky Cremation Service

VIRGINIA BRADSHAW, 94, passed away 11/19/2020 arrangements with Los Osos Valley Mortuary & Memorial Park

JO ANNE BERR, 89, of Santa Maria passed away 11/19/2020 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

MARIA DE JESUS MARISCAL, 93, of Paso Robles passed away 11/19/2020 arrangements with Kuehl-Nicolay Funeral Home

MICHAEL REMPEL, 64, of Paso Robles passed away 11/19/2020 arrangements with Blue Sky Cremation Service

AMY J. ESTRADA, 52, of Santa Maria passed away 11/20/2020 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

BENTON STEWART, 75, of Cambria passed away 11/20/2020 arrangements with Blue Sky Cremation Service

FORTINO SIERRA MENDEZ, 46, of Santa Maria passed away 11/20/2020 arrangements with Moreno Mortuary

DARRYL MELVILLE WHALEY, 80, passed away 11/20/2020 arrangements with Los Osos Valley Mortuary & Memorial Park

IDELLA NEVAREZ, 90, passed away 11/20/2020 arrangements with Reis Family Mortuary & Crematory

EDDIE PEREZ, 76, of Paso Robles passed away 11/21/2020 arrangements with Blue Sky Cremation Service

STEPHEN GRILEY, 67, of Cambria passed away 11/21/2020 arrangements with Blue Sky Cremation Service

JACINTO GARCIA, 59, of Santa Maria passed away 11/21/2020 arrangements with Moreno Mortuary

RENATE SWANSON, 78, passed away 11/21/2020 arrangements with Reis Family Mortuary & Crematory

SUSAN NOBLE, 73, of Santa Maria passed away 11/21/2020 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

LUVERNE LLOYD ANDERSON, 90, of Creston, passed away 11/22/2020 arrangements with Kuehl-Nicolay Funeral Home

MARK DAVID UJANO, 54, of Santa Maria passed away 11/22/2020 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

EDWARD JOSEPH MURRAY III, 76, of Santa Maria passed away 11/23/2020 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

MARY ELIZABETH ROBINSON, 89, of Santa Maria passed away 11/23/2020 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

MARY "SISSY" SOUZA, 101, of Guadalupe passed away 11/23/2020 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

ROBERT SCHUH, 99, passed away 11/23/2020 arrangements with Los Osos Valley Mortuary & Memorial Park

AMELIA GABRIELA RAMIREZ, 43, of Santa Maria passed away 11/23/2020 arrangements with Moreno Mortuary

JUAN NEVAREZ, 59, of Paso Robles passed away 11/23/2020 arrangements with Kuehl-Nicolay Funeral Home

LARRY DEAN DENNY, 68, of Bradley passed away 11/23/2020 arrangements with Kuehl-Nicolay Funeral Home

TATTOO TERRY KEATH, 61, of Santa Maria passed away 11/24/2020 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

AMPARO JIMENEZ CATELLANOS, 97, of Santa Maria passed away 11/24/2020 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

EDWARD SAPIEN, 81, of Nipomo passed away 11/25/2020 arrangements with Marshall-Spoo Sunset Funeral Chapel

DOROTHY DELIA HILL, 89, of Santa Maria passed away 11/25/2020 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

LUZ REYES, 63, of Santa Maria passed away 11/25/2020 arrangements with Moreno Mortuary

EARLENE WASHBURN, 96, of Atascadero passed away 11/25/2020 arrangements with Blue Sky Cremation Service

HILARIO RAMIREZ, 45, of Paso Robles passed away 11/25/2020 arrangements with Blue Sky Cremation Service

JOSEPH JAMES ELLIS, 88, of Paso Robles passed away 11/25/2020 arrangements with Kuehl-Nicolay Funeral Home

MARIA ANGELA OCHOA, 95, of Santa Maria passed away 11/25/2020 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

LLOYD REX DEERING, 85, of Santa Maria passed away 11/25/2020 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

DAVID H ELLIOTT, 76, of Orcutt passed away 11/25/2020 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

FRANCISCO JAVIER GONZALEZ CAMPOS, 32, of Paso Robles passed away 11/25/2020 arrangements with Kuehl-Nicolay Funeral Home

JOHN R. RANSOME, 82, of Santa Maria passed away 11/26/2020 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

MICHAEL HARRIS, 79, of Cambria passed away 11/26/2020 arrangements with Blue Sky Cremation Service

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Online Poll

How should Santa Barbara County enforce the state-imposed COVID-19 restrictions?

- 56% Ticket people who break the mask order and increase business enforcement.
- 28% Do nothing—this is a free country!
- 11% Make sure businesses are compliant, but let individuals make the choice for themselves.
- 5% Take an educational approach.

18 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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On the wrong path

In a misguided cleanup effort, the city of Lompoc evicted the rabbits and quail from a popular trail

BY RON FINK

Everyone follows a path through life; some paths are littered with traps and dead ends, others with an easy ride/walk/run and nothing but positive outcomes.

In Lompoc, the city used a transportation grant to build a paved path with all of those things wrapped up into one project. Dubbed the Riverbend Bike Path it was built for a little less than \$1 million. It doesn't just serve bike riders, there are scores of walkers, joggers, and the ever-present homeless who use it every day of the week.

The city does very little to maintain this walkway. They mow part of the wild grass growth a couple of times in the late spring to reduce the fire hazard as the grasses dry, but other than that and emptying the trash cans, it is a "low maintenance area."

In the past year or so, one woman who walks the trail has taken it upon herself to sweep portions of the trail as plant litter, doggy residue, and gravel accumulates. Many of the walkers are senior citizens, and they don't need the added hazard associated with this type of litter under their feet.

Every day I see several people, young and old, walking or biking along the trail. It's always "good morning" or "what a beautiful day." As we see the same folks, you get to develop a casual acquaintance and inquire about their health or pet their dogs.

For some reason there is a traffic circle at an intersection in the trail; why it's there is anyone's guess—I suppose it's to keep people from running

into one another. In the middle of this large circle is what's known as a fried egg plant; its correct name is the matilija poppy. A beautiful plant, it has large white flowers with what looks like an egg yolk in the middle. I have seen a few near homes in the area, but this plant is easily 20 feet around and 10 feet high and is full of flowers in the spring.

The walk I take, about a mile and three-quarters, is peaceful in the early morning chill. At one point, my wife and I counted more than 30 quail roosting in a large clump of bushes and more

Every day I see several people, young and old, walking or biking along the trail. It's always 'good morning' or 'what a beautiful day.' As we see the same folks, you get to develop a casual acquaintance and inquire about their health or pet their dogs.

than two dozen rabbits munching on the goodies left by regular walkers on the trail. We discovered the rabbits by accident as we stopped one day to chat with other regular walkers and turned around to notice them at the edge of the path.

But a couple of years ago, the city spent a half-million dollars to "clean up the homeless problem" in and near the river. You see, the homeless have found the "traps and dead ends" of life and live largely off the goodwill of others and whatever they can shoplift from local merchants.

The project included picking up several tons of trash, drug paraphernalia, shopping

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carts, construction materials, old clothing, and garbage left by the homeless when they were "evicted" from the area. They were told to go to River Park where they could stay until "temporary" housing could be located, mostly in the older motels in town.

Another part of this project was to remove vegetation in various areas of the trail so that the homeless wouldn't camp there any longer. The contractors clear-cut the area and eliminated the bunnies' and quails' homes; it's been a couple of years since the project was completed and very few—well, almost none—of the critters have returned.

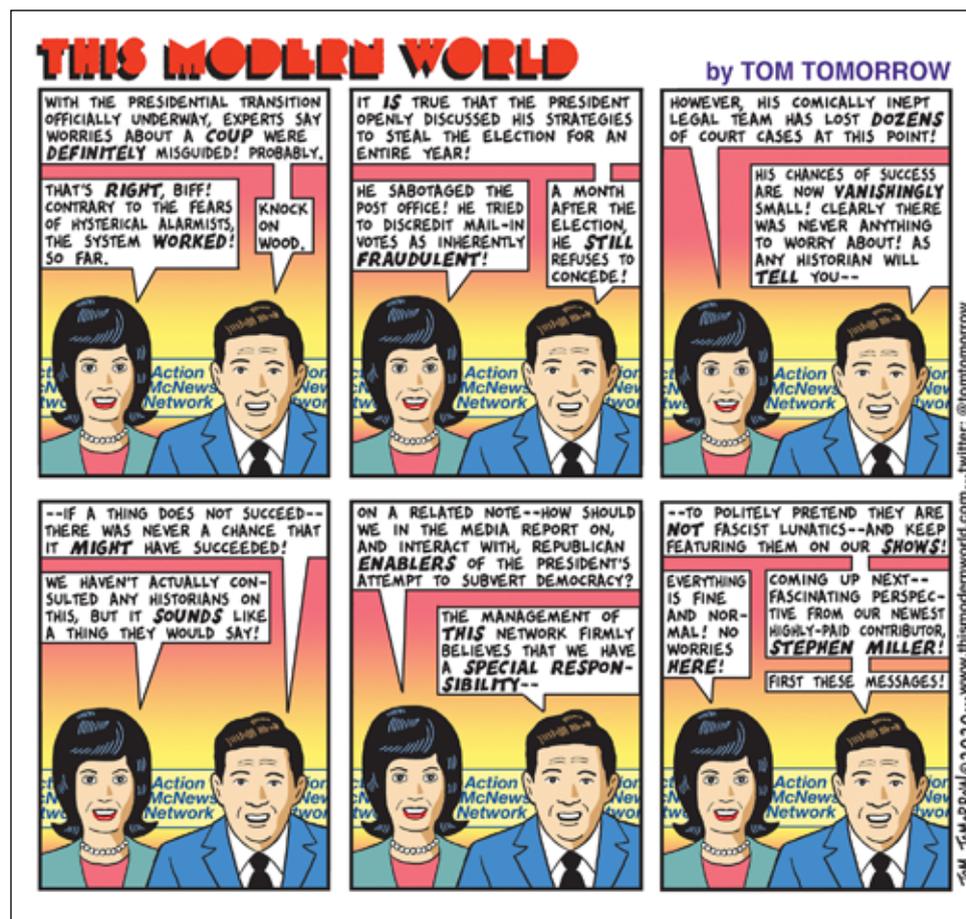
The little bunnies and birds were a soothing beginning to the day, especially for one lady who we have seen walking for the last few years. She just celebrated her 90th birthday and still walks almost 3 miles every day with a bag of carrots for the few bunnies that are left.

Another gentleman, easily in his mid-70s carries a bag of mixed bird seed; he leaves little piles, and if I see him ahead of me, by the time I get to the pile he left, most of it is gone as the small birds quickly devour it. Another couple brings a bag full of carrots, dog treats, and other goodies for the wildlife and dogs they see along the trail. They seem to know every owner and dog's name as they walk along.

As for the homeless, they moved right back in the week after the "cleanup" and haven't left yet. One was so bold as to erect his camp in clear view at the side of the trail. Others can be seen as they "commute" to their panhandling stations along H Street.

We still walk the trail several times a week—the doctor says it's good for our health. I guess it is, but it's good for both our physical and mental health to walk this quiet path and look for the birds and bunnies that used to be rustling through the brush. But the city in its misguided effort to clean up the riverbed took that away from all of us. ○

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



LETTERS

Make President Trump the man of the past four years

President Donald Trump is this year's—in fact for the past four years—Man of the Year.

Not since the likes of Washington, Lincoln, Jefferson, and Theodore Roosevelt has any president taken to heart the words in the oath of office. Dismantling the runaway bureaucracy created by past administrations as they abdicated their responsibilities to unelected special interest cronies. Rooting out deep state cabals and unleashing the economic

LETTERS continued page 11

LETTERS from page 10

power of this mighty country and preserving our sovereignty, to name just a few of his accomplishments, while facing a storm of plots to delegitimize his election and a coup to remove him from office, make Donald J. Trump a president for the centuries.

As much as he has done, another term would complete the righting of this country to the founding principles in our Constitution.

If there is a shred of courage among those who recognize that our election system and a "free press" have been corrupted, with the grace of God, we will expose that corruption and rightfully inaugurate President Donald J. Trump to a second term as president.

Jan Lipski
Vandenberg Village

Renew your efforts to stay masked

This week kicks of the fall and winter holiday season, amid a doubling of COVID-19 case numbers across Santa Barbara County. This alarming trend is also reflected nationally and globally. As health care workers on the front lines and as educators eager to see students back in the classroom, we are making a sincere plea to all residents to follow public health recommendations and help keep our community safe.

Like many of you, we are sad about the impact this pandemic will have on our traditional holiday gatherings with family and friends. We understand how difficult it is, after an already tough nine months, to request that everyone forgo travel and avoid celebrations with people who do not live in their immediate household.

We do know that asking all out-of-town visitors and any residents who traveled out of state to quarantine for two weeks upon their return is inconvenient, but essential to our community health. We also know that it might be tempting to use a negative test result to rationalize travel or attend a gathering, but this approach is not recommended since the incubation period for COVID-19 lasts for up to 14 days. It is very possible to test negative for COVID-19, experience no symptoms, still harbor the virus, and be able to transmit it to a loved one.

A serious, renewed commitment to mask wearing and social distancing needs to occur immediately in order to stop the current surge and bend the curve again. Something has to change or our schools may not be able to open, businesses will continue to suffer, and we risk the health of our most vulnerable community members. While our hospital systems prepared well for large outbreaks earlier this year, we do not want to see a tidal wave of sick patients overwhelm our health systems due to a surge that we could have prevented. These exact scenarios are playing out across the country, but it doesn't have to be that way here.

Through the fires and mudflows, we saw the great capacity of our community to pull together, help one another, and remain resilient in the face of challenges that at times seemed unsurmountable. Unlike those events, which happened without warning, this pandemic is not a riddle still unsolved. We now know how to decrease the spread of this virus, and a determined effort by all of us will make a difference.

We are asking you personally to join us in making these hard choices, and hopefully preserving the good health of our friends, family, and loved ones to enjoy many more holiday seasons together.

Masked and Mighty Coalition members
Santa Barbara County

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convenient for your holiday shopping. Local businesses provide good jobs, build community pride and invest right back into the community.

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Janet Silveria,
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Kick, kick!

Nothing like kicking a man when he's down. Solvang Mayor Ryan Toussaint revealed in it on Nov. 30, verbally chastising recalled City Councilmember Chris Djernaes at a special meeting meant to accept the vote to kick the dude out of office.

Nearly 90 percent of Solvang residents who voted in the November election, opted to leave Djernaes' unrepentant butt on the curb outside of City Hall. A point that Toussaint didn't hesitate to rub in. He asked City Manager Xenia Bradford whether anyone had ever been recalled by 90 percent before.

Bradford, who's been with Solvang for a whopping almost two years, said not since she's been with the city. If he means ever in the history of elections, I'm sure the answer is probably. But in the city of Solvang? How many elected officials have really been recalled?

Of course, Djernaes was really unpopular and stuck to his obstinate opinion about himself and his own contributions to the city throughout the recall effort. He told the *Sun* that the recall effort was full of lies and false accusations about him, designed to remove him from office. Duh!

Plus, he's so dramatic!

"There's a battle going on for the soul of Solvang right now," he said a couple of weeks ago.

What's Solvang's soul made up of anyway? Hans Christian Andersen fairytales, cookie-cutter Danish architecture, and aebleskiver pastries? What's the alternative?

What happened since 2018, when Djernaes and Toussaint seemed to be thick as thieves in their fight against the old traditions of Solvang's stodgy leaders?

Toussaint hammed it up at the meeting where Djernaes was noticeably absent, gesturing toward the empty seat and asking Djernaes if he had anything to add before the City Council voted to accept the recall.

"That's OK, he's not here," Toussaint said.

I guess Toussaint no longer has skin in the game anyway, since he decided not to run for another term as mayor. He's heading out to the curb voluntarily, which should tell you a thing or two about the volatility of Solvang politics. Who knew such a quaint little town could be so mean?

You know what else is quaint? Loser Andy Caldwell's attempts to over-explain his accusations of voter fraud. What don't you understand about "if," he asked the *San Luis Obispo Tribune* in response to their questions about his renegade Facebook post claiming that if Sidney Powell's accusations about Dominion Voting Systems were correct, he would have beat U.S. Rep. Salud Carbajal (D-Santa Barbara) in his bid for the 24th Congressional District.

"I can accept the fact that I lost, and I can even take a beating," he told the *Sun* this week.

Well, that's good because both of those things literally happened to you.

But he just had to throw that "if" out there to stir the pot, because that's what local conservative shock-jock Caldwell does best: Screams into the ether. He does it at local government meetings every week. Sometimes his weirdly high-pitched soliloquies have a point, most of the time they don't make sense, and every time he just wants a reaction. Well, I guess he got what he wanted. Support from the crazies and some stories in the local press.

I personally don't have a problem kicking someone when they're down. Especially when they're begging for it. ☹

The Canary is worried Solvang's drama will go away. Send thoughts to canary@santamariasun.com.



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FOUNDATION MISSION

The mission of the Marine Toys for Tots Foundation is to assist the U. S. Marine Corps in providing a tangible sign of hope to economically disadvantaged children at Christmas. This assistance includes providing day-to-day leadership and oversight of the Program, raising funds to provide toys to supplement the collections of local Toys for Tots Campaigns, to provide promotional and support material and defray the costs of conducting annual Toys for Tots Campaigns.

Other Foundation support includes providing administrative, advisory, financial, logistic and promotional support to local Toys for Tots Coordinators; managing funds raised and monies donated based on the use of Toys for Tots name or logo; providing other support the Marine Corps, as a federal agency, cannot provide; and conducting public education and information programs about Toys for Tots that call the general public to action in support of this patriotic community action program.

FOUNDATION OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the Foundation are to help less fortunate children throughout the United States experience the joy of Christmas; to play an active role in the development of one of our nation's most valuable resources - our children; to unite all members of local communities in a common cause for three months each year during the annual toy collection and distribution campaign; and to contribute to improving communities in the future.



FOUNDATION ACTIVITIES

The Foundation engages in two categories of activities: **Program Services** and **Support Services**.

PROGRAM SERVICES

Collection and Toy Distribution

This is the process of obtaining and delivering toys to local Toys for Tots Coordinators and providing the support and assistance those Coordinators need to conduct effective toy collection and distribution campaigns in their communities. Toy collection includes a combination of locally donated toys, those purchased by the Foundation, and those donated by corporations.

Support of Local Coordinators

This involves arranging the creation, publication, manufacture and delivery of an array of promotion and support materials to local Coordinators. It includes managing all financial matters for local Coordinators as well as updating and publishing a manual for the conduct of local programs. Concisely stated, this activity encompasses providing a wide range of support to nearly 800 local Toys for Tots Coordinators and their support groups. Today, there are nearly 40,000 Marines, Marine Corps League members, veteran Marines and volunteers involved in annual campaigns.

Education

The Foundation conducts an annual public information and education campaign. This activity is designed to give the general public a clear understanding of the benefits that accrue to individuals, communities and the nation from Toys for Tots. It increases visibility and name recognition, and calls the general public support in Toys for Tots. The campaign includes distributing a series of news releases, distributing TV and radio public service announcements, publishing newsletters arranging media events and appearances, arranging for national corporations to incorporate information about Toys for Tots into their paid advertisements, conducting special events, maintaining a website and distributing educational material about Toys for Tots to the general public.



SUPPORT SERVICES

Management and General Activities

This involves accomplishing the spectrum of business management activities necessary to make an organization efficient and effective and to ensure the program and the Foundation operate in compliance with IRS regulations, federal and state laws and charitable standards.

GOAL

The primary goal of Marine Toys for Tots is, through the gift of a new toy, help bring the joy of Christmas and send a message of hope to America's less fortunate children.

OVERVIEW

In order to better execute the Program, in 1991 the Marine Toys for Tots Foundation was created at the behest of the Marine Corps.

FOUNDATION OVERVIEW

The Marine Toys for Tots Foundation, is an IRS recognized 501(c)(3) not-for-profit public charity which was created at the behest of the U. S. Marine Corps in 1991.

FOUNDATION GOVERNANCE

The Marine Toys for Tots Foundation is governed by a board of directors, all of whom are veteran Marines and successful business leaders from throughout the nation. The Foundation's professional staff is headquartered in the Cooper Center, which is located just outside the Main Gate of Marine Corps Base, Quantico, about 35 miles south of Washington, DC.

PERFORMANCE AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Since 2001 ranked as one of the top rated charities by "Philanthropy 400"
- Unmodified opinions on Audited Financial Statements (1994-Present)
- Average Program to Support Service expense ratio: (2000-Present) 96:4
- Continues to meet all 20 standards established by the Better Business Bureau WiseGiving Alliance

EVERY CHILD DESERVES A LITTLE CHRISTMAS



The basic mission of the Marine Toys for Tots Program is to collect new unwrapped toys and distribute those toys to less fortunate children at Christmas.

The primary goal of Marine Toys for Tots is, through the gift of a new toy, help bring the joy of Christmas and send a message of hope to America's less fortunate children.

Toy applications are accepted and managed by the Local Marine Toys for Tots Campaign and family agencies in your area.

FUNDRAISING

The Foundation pursues a range of fundraising projects each year. Projects include national corporate sponsors, a direct mail campaign, the Combined Federal Campaign, special events such as golf tournaments; and special projects such as "in memory of/in honor of" donations and internet donations. All events and activities for Toys for Tots in the Santa Barbara county stays with the local communities.

TOY DROP OFF

Boxes are located in the following cities.

LOMPOC Oct 1 to Dec 13: Fire Station, Veteran's Memorial Bldg., Dollar General, Marine Recruiter's Office, Coast Hill and Mechanical banks, Elks, Perry's Auto

SANTA MARIA Oct 1 to Dec 14: Fire Stations, Salvation Army, Marion Hospital, YMCA, Jr Drive In Dinner, Marine Corps Recruiter's Office,

SANTA BARBARA Oct 1 to Dec 15: Fire Stations, Unity Shoppe, Recruiter's Office.

AFTER DEC 25: All toys and donations will be to the Veteran's Memorial Building, Box #110, 100 E. Locust Ave, Lompoc CA 93436



Soledad Kennedy
Toys for Tots Coordinator
Santa Barbara County
805-733-2175

HOT STUFF

DEC. 3 – DEC. 10
2020



YOU HAD ME AT CELLO

The Clark Center for the Performing Arts in Arroyo Grande presents *Holiday Blues and Bluegrass*, featuring Dirty Cello (pictured) on Saturday, Dec. 12, from 6 to 7 p.m., as part of the venue's virtual concert series. Led by cellist Rebecca Roudman, this San Francisco-based ensemble is known for blending blues and bluegrass with elements of world music. Call (805) 489-9444 or visit clarkcenter.org to find out more about the virtual program.

—Caleb Wiseblood

FILE PHOTO COURTESY OF DIRTY CELLO

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. artoffacemasks.com. Elverhoj Museum of History and Art, 1624 Elverhoy Way, Solvang, 805-688-1211.

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.

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.

WINTER SALON: ANNUAL GROUP SHOW Over 50 artists display all fine art mediums hung floor to ceiling, "salon style". Features all sizes, all subjects, framed, unframed, etc. **Dec. 3-Jan. 31** GalleryLosOlivos.com. Gallery Los Olivos, 2920 Grand Ave., 805-688-7517.

LOMPOC/VANDENBERG

KATHY BADRAK: LVAA FEATURED GOURD ARTIST Kathy Badrak will be showcasing her gourd art in many different ways; from gourd bowls and vases to wall hangings and lamps. Giftable items from Badrak will be on display at the show. Saturdays, Sundays, 10 a.m. through Dec. 27 Free. 805-737-1129. lompocart.org. Lompoc Valley Art Association, 119 E. Cypress, Lompoc.

SANTA MARIA VALLEY/LOS ALAMOS

HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS: A VIRTUAL CABARET A streaming holiday cabaret production. Features music, dance, and surprise acts. Registration required. Hosted and directed by Erik Stein. Performers include Kitty Balay, Yusef Seevers, Emily Trask, and others. **Dec. 12**, 6 p.m. Free admission; donations accepted. pcpa.org. PCPA: The Pacific Conservatory Theatre, 800 S. College, Santa Maria, 805-922-8313.

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.

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.

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

SOUTH COAST SLO COUNTY

DANA'S ALL ABOUT TREES: A MULTIARTIST EXHIBITION DANA Adobe and Cultural Center showcasing the best in local and regional art. Artwork is

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.

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

2021 SLO FILM FEST FUNDRAISER: SNEAK PEEK OF VINYL NATION This fundraiser includes a very special sneak preview of the festival's 2021 official selection, plus a panel hosted by Palm Theatre owner Jim Dee with filmmakers and local vinyl experts. **Dec. 4-6**, 7 p.m. \$12-\$25. slofilmfest.org/2021-fall-fundraiser-vinyl-nation/. Online, See website, San Luis Obispo.

ART IN THE GARDEN: GALLERY AND FUNDRAISER AT SLOBG Local artists will display and sell handmade items to benefit the SLO Botanical Garden. Get your holiday shopping done in one spot. Thursdays-Sundays, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. through Dec. 27 805-541-1400. slobg.org/calendar-of-events/gallery. San Luis Obispo Botanical Garden, 3450 Dairy Creek Rd., San Luis Obispo.

FUN DIY HOLIDAY PLUSHIE KITS Make your own Holiday Plushies. Comes with all materials needed and instructions. Mondays-Sundays. through Dec. 18 slomakerspace.com/making-home. SLOMakerSpace, 81 Higuera, suite 160, San Luis Obispo, 805-225-4783.

HOLIDAY MOVIE SCREENING HOSTED BY PISMO BEACH/5 CITIES ROTARY A benefit screening of *Yes Virginia, There is a Santa Claus*, starring Charles Bronson. Ed Asner, and Richard Thomas. Food donations benefit St. Patrick's Outreach Program. **Dec. 12**, 4:30 p.m.

INDEX

Arts	[17]
Culture & Lifestyle.....	[18]
Food & Drink.....	[19]
Music	[19]

Admission: non-perishable food item. 805-234-7796. Sunset Drive In Theatre, 255 Elks Lane, San Luis Obispo.

ROD BAKER'S SIXTH HOLIDAY GIFT STUDIO GLASS SALE Explore Rod Baker's unique affordable gifts in a fun safe studio and sculpture garden, with guest glassblowers. Woods Humane Society benefits from art sales of blown and fused glass home-garden décor, jewelry, and dishware. Masks and social distancing required. **Dec. 6**, 11 a.m.-4 p.m. Free admission. 805-551-6836. Central Coast Glass Cottage, 1279 2nd St., Los Osos.

SLO-MADE HOLIDAY FAIRE A three-day virtual event presenting handmade wares from local artisans. **Dec. 4**, 10 a.m.-9 p.m., **Dec. 5**, 9 a.m.-9 p.m. and **Dec. 6**, 9 a.m.-5 p.m. slomakerspace.com/slo-made-faire. Online, See website, San Luis Obispo.

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

WINTER SNOWFLAKE CERAMIC CLASS A socially distanced hand-building ceramic, snowflake class. Ceramic artist Heather Cruce guides this workshop. Through Jan. 31, 2021 slomakerspace.com/. SLOMakerSpace, 81 Higuera, suite 160, San Luis Obispo, 805-225-4783.

NORTH SLO COUNTY

STUDIOS ON THE PARK: ONLINE CLASSES AND WORKSHOPS Check site for a variety of virtual classes and workshops online. 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. Through Jan. 3, 2021 Art Center Morro Bay, 835 Main St., Morro Bay, 805-772-2504, artcentermorrobay.org.

EVENING SKIES: A GROUP PHOTOGRAPHY SHOW Photographers Beth Sargent, Karen Peterson, Terry Garvin, Jack McNeal, and Greg Siragusa bring their talents together in depicting the evening skies of our seaside beaches and sanctuaries on the Central Coast. Through Dec. 29, 11 a.m.-7 p.m. Free. 805-772-1068. galleryatmarinasquare.com. Gallery at Marina Square, 601 Embarcadero suite 10, Morro Bay.

RESIN WORKSHOP An at-home class that includes a kit and how-to video so you can create in the safety and

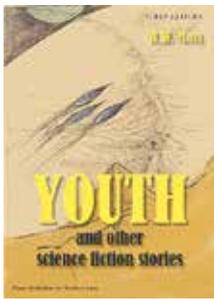
ARTS continued page 18

Shop Local & Win Big!

2 WAYS TO WIN WHEN YOU SHOP LOCAL:

- Snap a selfie while doing your holiday shopping and win weekly prizes!
- Text, email or mail in your local holiday shopping receipts for a chance to be reimbursed up to \$200!

LEARN MORE AND ENTER AT
santamaria.com/shop-local-win



An anthology of 14 science fiction short stories written by H.W. Moss

Cover illustration by Steve Moss

Published by
NetNovels.com



HOT STUFF
DEC. 3 - DEC. 10
2020

GUITAR HERO

The Pacific Conservatory Theatre (PCPA) presents *Home for the Holidays*, a virtual cabaret production, which will stream live on Saturday, Dec. 12, starting at 6 p.m. Featured performers include George Walker (pictured), Yusef Seevers, Kitty Balay, and other PCPA resident artists. The show is free to view, but pre-registration is required. Visit pepa.org to find out more.

—C.W.

ARTS from page 17

comfort of your home. **Dec. 5**, 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. **Dec. 5**, 10-11 a.m. Various. 805-286-5993. creativemetime.com. Art Center Morro Bay, 835 Main St., Morro Bay.

SUCCULENT WORKSHOP Choose from succulent pumpkin, round wreath, square wreath, heart wreath, or grapevine wreath kits. Preregistration required. This is an at-home project. Instructor will provide all supplies (except pumpkin) and a how-to video. **Dec. 6**, 10-11 a.m. Various. 805-286-5993. creativemetime.com. Art Center Morro Bay, 835 Main St., Morro Bay.

CULTURE & LIFESTYLE

SANTA YNEZ VALLEY

SOLVANG JULEFEST 2020 The 2020 holiday season event, which has been modified as per Santa Barbara County COVID guidelines, will entail multiple holiday happenings all located within the town. Through Jan. 1, 2021 SolvangJulefest.org. Downtown Solvang, Mission Dr., Solvang.

SOLVANG NISSE ADVENTURE Participants join in a city-wide hunt for the mysterious Solvang Nisse (Christmas elves) which will have hidden themselves throughout downtown Solvang. Elf-trackers can visit site where clues will be provided to the various hiding spots which the Nisse frequents. Prizes awarded. Through Jan. 1, 2021 NisseAdventure.com. Downtown Solvang, Mission Dr., Solvang.

SOLVANG TREE DECORATING CONTEST More than 100 Christmas trees will line Solvang's lanes as the town's businesses hold a tree decorating contest, similar to Solvang's fall season Scarecrow Fest. Solvang's shops, Danish bakeries, restaurants, wine tasting rooms, wine and beer bars, and hotels will join the friendly competition. Through Jan. 1, 2021 SolvangJulefest.org. Downtown Solvang, Mission Dr., Solvang.

LOMPOC/VANDENBERG

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

FILE PHOTO COURTESY OF ERIK STEIN

Airport, 3249 Terminal Dr., Santa Maria.

CHRISTMAS IN THE COUNTRY: DRIVE-THRU EVENT A holiday light display to bring you all the warmth of the holidays. Drive through the gleaming light displays created by local organizations and families. Through Jan. 3, 2021, 7-10 a.m. \$40. 805-925-4125. elksrec.com. Elks Unocal Event Center, 4040 Highway 101, Santa Maria.

DRIVE-IN HOLIDAY BINGO AND FAMILY BINGO Features a variety of festive holiday prizes and a few yuletide surprises. Both bingo events are designed to encourage community members to safely celebrate the holiday season from the comfort and convenience of their cars. **Dec. 11**, 10-11:30 a.m. 805-925-0951, Ext. 2260. Elwin Mussell Senior Center, 510 Park Ave., Santa Maria.

FOURTH ANNUAL WAGS AND PURRS ONLINE AUCTION All proceeds

benefit the animals in need at the Santa Barbara County Animal Shelters. Visit site for more info and auction items. Through Dec. 7 32auctions.com/SBCACF2020. Santa Maria Animal Shelter, 548 W. Foster Rd., 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 FAIRPARK'S INAUGURAL FESTIVAL OF LIGHTS A drive-thru holiday event along the paths and roadways of the Santa Maria fairgrounds. Each ticket holder will receive an activity book with food menus from featured food trucks (located at the end of fest in parking lot). **Dec. 4-6** \$25 per carload. 805-925-8824. santamariafairpark.com. Santa Maria Fairpark, 937 S. Thornburg St., Santa Maria.

SANTA MARIA PUBLIC LIBRARY: MOVIE TALK DISCUSSION GROUP A video conference movie discussion group; meets on the second Thursday of each month. For more information email ssstarnaud@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.

SECOND ANNUAL JINGLE MINGLE HOLIDAY MARKET A craft fair showcasing local artists and crafters, paired with the fairpark's Festival of Lights this year. Shop local and discover unique gifts. **Dec. 4**, 3-8 p.m. and **Dec. 5**, 9 a.m.-2 p.m. santamariafairpark.com. Santa Maria Fairpark, 937 S. Thornburg St., Santa Maria.

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, unwindsantamaria.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 ADOBE ORNAMENT FUNDRAISER A great gift idea and a way to support the DANA Adobe and Cultural Center. Each ornament is custom made by staff members. Visit site for more info. ongoing danaadobe.org. DANA Adobe Cultural Center, 671 S. Oakglen Ave., Nipomo, 805-929-5679.

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, 5citiesswimschool.com.

JINGLE EXPRESS DRIVE-THRU A drive-thru holiday event. Meet and greet with Santa throughout the evening. Features special treats while supplies last. Presented by Pismo Beach Recreation. **Dec. 4**, 5:30-8 p.m. Free

admission. pismo-beach.org/recreation. Pismo Beach City Hall, 760 Mattie Road, Pismo Beach, 805-773-7063.

PECK THE HALLS Wear your ugliest Christmas sweater and enjoy a free self-guided tour. Meet the animals up close and hear their stories of triumph. Masks and distancing required. **Dec. 6**, 12-3 p.m. Free. 805-704-73267. Greener Pastures Farm Sanctuary, 2148 S. Halcyon Rd., Arroyo Grande, GreenerPasturesSanctuary.org.

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

CARNEGIE LECTURE: ETO PARK AND BROOK STREET Originally known as "Portuguese Flats," the "Nippon Tract" was developed by the Eto family and thrived in the 1930s as a "Nihonmachi" (Japantown). This small neighborhood is reached near the west end of South Street, with the church at the south end of the street. **Dec. 4**, 5:30 p.m. Free. 805-543-0638. historycenterslo.org/lecture.html. Online, See website, San Luis Obispo.

GIVE JOY HOLIDAY CAMPAIGN Family Care Network's Give Joy Campaign matches families' needs with our community's heart to give. Help raise awareness, funds, and resources to make sure our families have everything they need for this holiday season and beyond. Participate and donate today. Through Dec. 31 fcni.org/givejoy. Online, See website, 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.

LIGHT UP DOWNTOWN SLO 2020 Visit Mission Plaza, which will include Santa's House and the traditional Holiday Tree, which will be surrounded by creative and colorful light installations, a 20-foot rainbow light tunnel, a glammed-up Dine Out Downtown outdoor dining area, a lighted tree forest, and five interactive themed Memory Moment Pods. Through Jan. 1, 2021 sloholiday.com. Mission Plaza, 751 Palm St., San Luis Obispo.

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.

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. **Dec. 8**, 11:30 a.m.-

CULTURE & LIFESTYLE continued page 19

ART BY DON DOUBLEDDEE/IMAGE COURTESY OF GALLERY AT MARINA SQUARE



CRITICAL INKING

Gallery at Marina Square in Morro Bay will be showcasing works by local artist Don Doubledee through Tuesday, Dec. 29. Doubledee's pen and ink drawings often depict scenes inspired by Morro Bay's waterfront and other coastal areas. To find out more about the exhibit, visit galleryatmarinasquare.com. The gallery is located at 601 Embarcadero, suite 10, Morro Bay.

—C.W.

**VOLUNTEER AT SLO BOTANICAL GARDEN**

Are you feeling bored, stressed, or restless? Chase away those feelings by volunteering at SLO Botanical Garden. Gardening has proven benefits to well-being, and volunteering here is a great way to connect with your community and with nature. Mondays-Saturdays, 9 a.m.-noon through **Dec. 5** Free. 805-541-1400. slogb.org/volunteer2. San Luis Obispo Botanical Garden, 3450 Dairy Creek Rd., San Luis Obispo.

NORTH SLO COUNTY**ATASCADERO'S LIGHT UP THE DOWNTOWN DRIVE-IN**

Park and enjoy live music from AUSD school choirs and bands, the traditional countdown to light up Historic City Hall, Santa and Mrs. Claus making their way around Sunken Gardens on the Model-A Firetruck, and more. **Dec. 4**, 5:30 p.m. visitatascadero.com. Sunken Gardens, 6505 El Camino Real, Atascadero.

SANTA'S REINDEER POP-UP FARM Thanks to Santa's generosity, these reindeer from the North Pole will be featured along with Santa's Sleigh at a Pop-Up Reindeer Farm at City Hall. A great picture opportunity for the kids, and they can feed the reindeer too. Presented by T-Mobile. **Dec. 4**, 12-6 p.m., **Dec. 5**, 12-6 p.m. and **Dec. 6**, 12-6 p.m. Free. visitatascadero.com/events/. Historic City Hall, 6500 Palma Ave., Atascadero, 805-461-5000.

NORTH COAST SLO COUNTY

HARMONY CHRISTMAS MARKET Shop and support local businesses selling a variety of goods and food to make shopping for the holidays a breeze. **Dec. 5-6**, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Free. 805-927-1028. Harmony Christmas Market, 2177 Old Creamery Rd, Harmony.

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.

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). ongoing Presqu'ile Winery, 5391 Presqu'ile Dr., Santa Maria, 805-937-8110, presquilewine.com.

SOUTH COAST SLO COUNTY

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

DANA'S HOLIDAY TAMALES MAKE AND TAKE CLASS

Participants are asked to bring a mask, gloves, an apron, pen, and pan and will take home one dozen tamales. Sign-ups open. RSVP by Nov. 30. Payments due Dec. 2. **Dec. 5**, 10 a.m.-1 p.m. \$50 per person. danaadobe.org. DANA Adobe Cultural Center, 671 S. Oakglen Ave., Nipomo, 805-929-5679.

SAN LUIS OBISPO

HISTORY CENTER DRIVE-THRU BARBECUE Fill your mind with the diverse history of the Brooks Street/Eto Park neighborhood, and fill your belly with a delicious tri-tip meal for four with all the fixings. **Dec. 6**, 1-5 p.m. \$50. 805-543-0638. historycenterslo.org/bbq.html. Villa Automotive, 34 South Street, San Luis Obispo.

JEWISH DELI DAY #2 AT SLO PROVISIONS

Enjoy warm delicious food this holiday season. Orders are due by Tuesday, Dec. 1. **Dec. 9**, 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Varies. 805-426-5465. jccslo.com/jewish-deli-day-2.html. SLO Provisions, 1255 Monterey St., San Luis Obispo.

MUSIC**SANTA YNEZ VALLEY****SYV CONCERT SERIES PRESENTS JOHNNY GANDELSMAN (ZOOM)**

The Grammy-winning violinist presents this exploration of suites by Bach. Includes a pre-recorded interview with the artist. **Dec. 3**, 5:30 p.m. smitv.org. St. Mark's in the Valley Episcopal Church, 2901 Nojiqui Ave., Los Olivos.

THE MONOTONES TRIO: DRIVE-IN HOLIDAY CONCERT

This local group is under the direction of founder Clive Grey. Familiar holiday tunes and a traditional sing along with the audience will be featured. **Dec. 3**, 12-1 p.m. 805-925-0951 Ext. 2260. Elwin Mussell Senior Center, 510 Park Ave., Santa Maria.

SANTA MARIA PHILHARMONIC: FIRST FRIDAYS AT FOUR

Featuring musicians from the Santa Maria Philharmonic, this monthly series of musical adventures are recorded in local settings and offered free to the public. First Friday of every month Free. smphilharmonic.org. Soundcloud (Santa Maria Philharmonic), Online.

SOUTH COAST SLO COUNTY**THE BRONX WANDERERS CHRISTMAS (VIRTUAL)**

The Bronx Wanderers take you on a musical, comedic and heartfelt journey through music's biggest and most recognizable hits, including holiday music. Features non-stop hit after hit from artists such as Frankie Valli to Bruno Mars. **Dec. 5**, 6-7 p.m. Free. 805-489-9444. clarkcenter.org/event/the-bronx-wanderers-christmas/. Clark Center for the Performing Arts, 487 Fair Oaks Ave., Arroyo Grande.

DIRTY CELLO: HOLIDAY BLUES AND BLUEGRASS (VIRTUAL)

Dirty Cello brings the world a high energy and unique spin on blues and bluegrass. Led by vivacious cross-over cellist, Rebecca Roudman, Dirty Cello is cello like you've never heard before. **Dec. 12**, 6-7 p.m. Free; donation requested. 805-489-9444. clarkcenter.org/event/dirty-cello-holiday-blues-bluegrass-concert/. Clark Center for the Performing Arts, 487 Fair Oaks Ave., Arroyo Grande.

SAN LUIS OBISPO**CAL POLY VIRTUAL SYMPHONY PRESENTATION**

The Cal Poly Symphony will present music of Gordon Jacob, George Walker and Ludwig van Beethoven. In addition to the 20-minute concert portion, student musicians will be interviewed about their experiences with the challenging process of preparing for and presenting a concert during a pandemic. **Dec. 4**, 7:30 p.m. music. calpoly.edu. Zoom, Online, Inquire for Zoom ID.

FOURTH ANNUAL HOLIDAY KALEIDOSCOPE: CAL POLY CHOIRS

This virtual concert will feature a variety of performances and special guest appearances from the Valencia High School Choirs and Canzona Women's Ensemble. Sponsored by the Cal Poly's Music Department and College of Liberal Arts. **Dec. 6**, 3 p.m. \$10-\$15. music.calpoly.edu. Zoom, Online, Inquire for Zoom ID. ○

A STAR IS BORN

Creative Me Time hosts a pickup date for its take-home Resin Workshop on Saturday, Dec. 5, from 10 to 11 a.m. Each participant will receive a kit with materials to complete the project in the safety and comfort of their own home. Call (805) 286-5993 or visit creativemetime.com to find out more about the workshop. Art Center Morro Bay is located at 835 Main St., Morro Bay.

—C.W

CULTURE & LIFESTYLE from page 18

12:30 p.m. spokesfor nonprofits.org/upcoming-events/academy/. Zoom, Online, Inquire for Zoom ID.

THINK DIFFERENTLY: REIMAGINING YOUR EVENTS

An afternoon of inspiration, education, and direction on how to think differently about events for your organization. This event is brought to you by a partnership between the SLO Chamber and the City of SLO's Promotional Coordinating Committee. **Dec. 7**, 12-1:30 p.m. Free. 805-781-2777. slochamber.org. Online,

Presented by Santa Maria Fairpark

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Visit our website to buy tickets or to sign-up to get involved



PHOTOS COURTESY OF KIANA TOOSSI/ CUYAMA BUCKHORN

Arts Briefs

Santa Ynez Valley Concert Series hosts virtual Bach tribute, featuring Grammy-winning violinist Johnny Gandelsman

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE SANTA YNEZ VALLEY CONCERT SERIES



The Santa Ynez Valley Concert Series presents a virtual program, A Violinist Explores Bach's Cello Suites, featuring violinist Johnny Gandelsman on Thursday, Dec. 3, at 5:30 p.m. Gandelsman was originally slated to perform live at St. Mark's-in-the-Valley Church in Santa Ynez in March, before the pandemic closures put a halt on in-person concerts. The virtual programming will begin with a pre-concert live interview with Gandelsman, conducted by the concert series' artistic director, Robert Cassidy, at 5 p.m. via Zoom.

Gandelsman is currently scheduled to return to Santa Ynez for a live in-person concert sometime in 2022. Throughout his seasoned career, Gandelsman has collaborated with Bono, David Byrne, Yo-Yo Ma, and several other artists. Gandelsman is also a member of the Silkroad Ensemble and a founding member of Brooklyn Rider. His upcoming virtual concert will highlight three of Bach's cello suites on violin.

To find out more about the program, visit smitv.org/syv-concert-series. Donations will be accepted during the livestream, and proceeds will benefit the Santa Ynez Valley Concert Series.

Cypress Gallery presents Into the Light, a new exhibit showcasing local artist Kathy Badrak

PHOTO COURTESY OF KATHY BADRAK

The Lompoc Valley Art Association presents Into the Light, a new multimedia art exhibition at Cypress Gallery, which will open on Friday, Dec. 4, and is scheduled to remain on display through Sunday, Dec. 27. This solo exhibit showcases works by local artist Kathy Badrak.



"For over 40 years, I've spent as much time as possible learning and experimenting with various forms of art," Badrak said in a press release from the gallery. "I love being a student, stretching myself to try new techniques and approaches."

For this exhibit, Badrak used new techniques and materials to create a variety of multimedia art that reflects themes of change, loss, and self-expression. One featured piece is a mask Badrak constructed from cereal boxes and recycled paper.

"Its facial expression mirrored the way I was feeling," Badrak said.

The exhibit also features a variety of Badrak's decorative and functional gourd art (pictured). For more updates from the Lompoc Valley Art Association and more info on its new exhibition, Into the Light, visit lompocart.org.

The Cypress Gallery is located at 119 E. Cypress Ave., Lompoc, and is open on Fridays (11 a.m. to 3 p.m.), Saturdays (10 a.m. to 4 p.m.), and Sundays (1 to 4 p.m.) with COVID-19 safety protocols followed. ○

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

People who need people

Cuyama Buckhorn's first artist-in-residence, Kimberly Sutherland, releases latest issue of *RURAL* series

BY CALEB WISEBLOOD

If there's one thing Kimberly Sutherland is no stranger to, it's talking to strangers.

While creating the second installment of her ongoing art project and publication series, *RURAL*, Sutherland's three-week artist residency at the Cuyama Buckhorn in New Cuyama was full of cold calls and warm conversations.

"It's the most enjoyable and inspiring project I've ever done and truly feels like it's the work I'm supposed to do in my life. I love dedicating time and space to talk with strangers," Sutherland told the *Sun*.

While aiming to explore the interconnections between humans and nature by examining individuals' relationships to their surroundings, Sutherland bases each issue of *RURAL* on one specific rural area. The project began in Sutherland's home state, when she interviewed residents of Joseph, Oregon, for her debut issue.

"It's not meant to define a place based on the few people that I talk to. It's a glimpse into some people's experiences living in different rural communities," Sutherland said of the series. "Every issue takes place in a different rural community where I place myself as an artist-in-residence at a place of lodging in that town."

"It's really a project that's exploring questions around how *place* impacts the way we engage with our communities, the land, our values, how we think about politics, how we're creative, etc.," Sutherland added. "It's a way for me to try and understand our collective consciousness and gain perspective on other people's realities through listening, conversation, and, sometimes, random experiences in nature."

During her stay in New Cuyama, Sutherland conducted interviews with a variety of community members—from local farmers and business owners, like Robbie Jaffe and Steve Gliessman of Condor's Hope Vineyard, to artists in the area, like Dick Gibford, aka "Cuyama Valley's cowboy poet."

The New Cuyama issue of *RURAL* was released in November, after more than a year in the making, as Sutherland's artist residency took place during the summer of 2019. In a world prior to social distancing, Sutherland was able to visit most of her interviewees in their homes after they had agreed to meet with her.

"Sometimes we meet in public and have a coffee or go for a walk, but a lot of the time they invite me over to their house," Sutherland said. "I've done so many different things with people. Definitely a lot of conversations over kitchen tables."

Aside from house calls, Sutherland also joined her subjects on their daily activities, helping out with chores and errands, as well as recreational adventures, from casual hikes to spontaneous road trips.

"There's something about being out in the elements with them, in their environment that adds to the feeling of shared humanness," Sutherland said. "Even though I'm a stranger from a city, we are



Reading rooms

The latest issue of *RURAL* is now available for sale through both the Cuyama Buckhorn's on-site market and online shop (cuyamabuckhorn.com/shop). Guests of the Cuyama Buckhorn can also look forward to finding a copy in each guest room as well as the lobby. The issue is also available at the Cuyama Valley Library.

BETWEEN THE LINES: Author and designer Kimberly Sutherland (pictured) created the latest installment of her ongoing art project and publication series, *RURAL*, during her three-week artist residency at the Cuyama Buckhorn in New Cuyama.

both sweating together running up this hill, or marveling at a herd of elk run over the prairie, or sharing tears about a relatable story.

"One thing I've learned is nuance is an incredibly important thing to remember when making judgements about people," Sutherland added. "Nothing and nobody is simple. We all have a spectrum of interests and experiences that inform how we navigate the world and what we understand as truth."

Thanks to translation support from freelance cultural worker Blanca S. Villalobos, Sutherland's latest issue of *RURAL* is bilingual. Guests of the Cuyama Buckhorn can look forward to finding a copy of the New Cuyama edition in each guest room as well as the lobby. The issue is also now available for sale through the resort's on-site market and online shop.

While looking back at her first *RURAL* adventure in Joseph, Oregon, and comparing it to her New Cuyama experience, Sutherland noticed "a common thread" between both sets of subjects.

"I actually think almost all of the people I've talked to in both places also really love what they do and they love where they live," Sutherland said. "There's a common thread of appreciation for the quiet, the beauty, the hard work, and the small community culture." ○

Start a thread with Arts Editor Caleb Wiseblood at cwiseblood@santamariasun.com.



FARM AND FOWL: During her stay in New Cuyama, *RURAL* creator Kimberly Sutherland conducted interviews with a variety of community members, including local farmers and business owners, and often joined them during day-in-the-life activities.



PASSION PROJECT: The New Cuyama issue of *RURAL* was released in November, after more than a year in the making, as Kimberly Sutherland's artist residency at the Cuyama Buckhorn took place during the summer of 2019.

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VIRTUAL INFORMATION SESSIONS HELD WEEKLY

Keeping it reel

Lompoc-based filmmaker and Mad Sin Cinema founder Shane Ryan discusses upcoming projects

BY CALEB WISEBLOOD

From the suburbs of Buellton and Santa Maria to the sprawling fields of the Santa Ynez Valley, local filmmaker Shane Ryan never gets tired of shooting on location at destinations throughout the Central Coast—especially when they're not too far from his hometown of Lompoc.

"Shooting in LA can be just the worst, and costly beyond belief," said the 40-year-old director, writer, editor, and actor, who has lived in Lompoc since age 7.

"It's crazy how you can live in a small town most of your life and still discover new places every time you scout for locations," Ryan told the *Sun*. "You can never cover every single corner of anywhere, it seems. There are always wonderful surprises."

One of Ryan's upcoming films, currently in pre-production, is *Trash Kids*, the filmmaker revealed, which he plans to shoot in Lompoc. While using a handful of locations where real-life shootings, stabbings, and other violent incidents have occurred, Ryan seemingly aims to comment on the city's crime problem. The film's plot also deals with universal themes, while acknowledging the COVID-19 crisis and analyzing its effects on society.

"It centers around some kids in a small town who start turning towards the idea of crime to cope with their boredom due to the lockdown," Ryan said. "It begins with them visiting all of the areas where murders, stabbings, and shootings have occurred—since

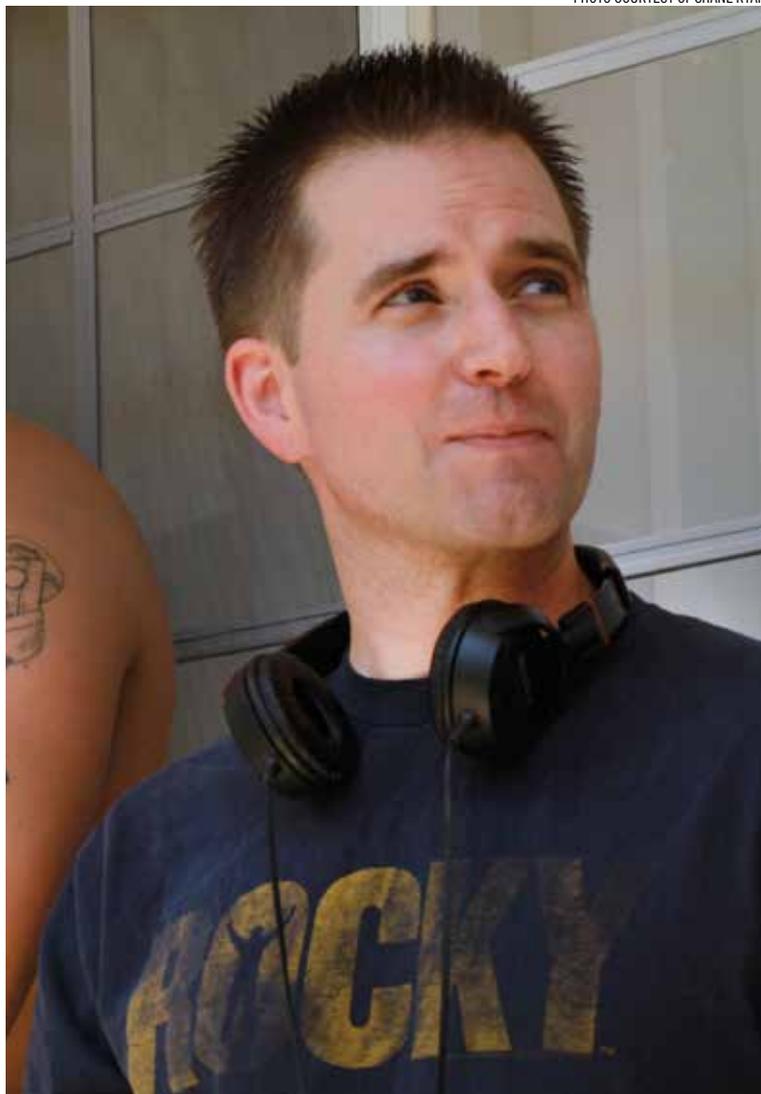


PHOTO COURTESY OF SHANE RYAN

LOMPOC LOCAL: Independent filmmaker Shane Ryan (pictured) never gets tired of shooting on location at destinations throughout the Central Coast, especially when they're not too far from his hometown of Lompoc.

Lompoc is flooded with them—and then the conversations lead them to discuss how *they* would have committed the crimes."

Among other projects keeping Ryan busy during the ongoing pandemic is a film much closer to completion, *The Owl in Echo Park*, which is currently in post-production. Ryan has been editing the film from his home in Lompoc. He also produced the film, under the label of his production company, Mad Sin Cinema.

Described as both a tragic character study and crime drama,

The Owl in Echo Park explores the downward spiral of a corrupt cop, drug addict, and alcoholic, played by Kevin Gage—best known for his roles in *Heat*, *G.I. Jane*, and *Con Air*. For Ryan, who was admittedly starstruck upon meeting the actor, working with Gage was a surreal experience.

"I've gotten to be involved with lots of people that I grew up admiring, so that's been very cool," said Ryan, who listed 1995's *Heat* in his top 10 favorite films of all time.

In *Heat*, Gage played Waingro, the memorably terrifying thief-turned-



IMAGES COURTESY OF SHANE RYAN

CHARACTER STUDY: Shane Ryan is currently editing *The Owl in Echo Park*, which he also co-wrote and directed. The film explores the downward spiral of a corrupt cop, drug addict, and alcoholic, played by Kevin Gage—best known for his roles in *Heat*, *G.I. Jane*, and *Con Air*.

Love the sin, love the sinner

Find out more about filmmaker Shane Ryan and his production company, Mad Sin Cinema, at madsincinema.com.

serial killer who manages to get under both Robert De Niro's and Al Pacino's skin. Ryan described Gage's character in *The Owl in Echo Park* as an eclectic combination of *Heat*'s Waingro and Charles Bukowski, while the tone of the film was inspired by *Bad Lieutenant*, *Training Day*, *Street Kings*, and *Deep Cover*, the director said.

"I remember when I saw that film [*Heat*] in the theater as a teenager thinking, 'Damn, this guy [Gage] is scary.' But in real life, he's the best person I've probably ever worked with," Ryan said. "So easygoing, so nice, so professional."

"Actually he was too nice, and sometimes it started to show through his performance," Ryan joked.

While the official release date for *The Owl in Echo Park* has yet to be announced, Ryan hopes that the majority of audiences will be closer to returning to movie theaters, rather than having to rely on streaming, by then.

"The filmgoing experience has meant everything to me since I was old enough to remember," said Ryan, who preferred trips to the video store over modern streaming apps.



DARDEST THINGS: "It centers around some kids in a small town who start turning towards the idea of crime to cope with their boredom due to the lockdown," Shane Ryan said, discussing one of his upcoming films, *Trash Kids*, which is currently in pre-production. Ryan plans to shoot the film in Lompoc.

"The 'going' in filmgoing has been completely wiped out. Going to the theater, to the video store, is an incredible journey. The film is the destination.

"And a destination without a journey isn't that great. It's lacking something very special." ○

Arts Editor Caleb Wiseblood also ranks *Heat* high among his favorite films. Send comments to cwiseblood@santamariasun.com.

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Double feature!

Two local filmmakers—Jo Anna Edmison and Chris Burkard—will screen their short films at a SLO Motion Film event on Saturday, Dec. 5, from 5 to 8 p.m. Edmison's 16mm eight-minute film explores a group of young women who break into the male-dominated skate and surf scene, with lots of recognizable local scenery. Burkard's *Unnur* is a 17-minute documentary about Icelandic surfer and photographer Elli Thor, his near-death kayaking experience, how fatherhood changed him, and his deep desire to pass on his love of the outdoors to his young daughter, *Unnur*.

Glen: I'm often blown away but how much power can be packed into a short film, and these two shorts by local filmmakers are both worth seeing. Jo Anna Edmison's *Stoke Chasers* was shot on 16mm, lending it an air of nostalgia, and with a filter that gives the footage a quintessential California feel. You see young women skateboarding and surfing, with narration that explains how women are all too often discounted and discouraged from trying "dangerous" sports. Burkard's *Unnur* brings viewers to the wilds of Iceland and depicts the life-changing experience of parenthood. Elli Thor wants to pass to his daughter, Unnur, his love of a simpler, wilder, more natural life, one that's



PHOTO COURTESY OF JO ANNA EDMISON

THEY PERSISTED: *Stoke Chasers*, a locally made short film about young women breaking into the male-dominated skate and surf scenes, will be screened with *Unnur*, followed by a filmmakers Q-and-A on Dec. 5.

not about chasing money but instead chasing experiences that nurture the soul. Unlike the decidedly lo-fi no-budget feeling of *Stoke Chasers*, *Unnur* is gorgeously shot and captures Iceland's inhospitable beauty. They're very different films but share a love for adventure and taking the path less traveled. The filmmakers will talk about their craft as well as entering their films in film festivals amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

Anna: Both films deal with the feeling of being an "other." *Stoke Chasers* confronts the idea of being a girl in what has always been seen as "boy sports," and *Unnur* explores the conscious choice of wilder living and focusing on connection with nature over having the conventions of a "normal" life where a big home and steady job are your focus. Any woman who has gotten into skating or surfing knows the reality of showing up and being the only



PHOTO COURTESY OF CHRIS BURKARD

PASS THE TORCH: *Unnur*, a short film about Icelandic surfer Elli Thor and his determination to pass on his love of nature to his daughter, Unnur, screens Dec. 5, with *Stoke Chasers*, either virtually or in-person at Whalebird Kombucha.

STOKE CHASERS AND UNNUR

What's it rated? **Not rated**
 What's it worth, Anna? **Full price**
 What's it worth, Glen? **Full price**
 Where's it showing? **Virtual or in-person screening on Dec. 5, from 5 to 8 p.m., through SLO Motion Film, either at Whalebird Kombucha or slomotionfilm.com/events/stoke-chasers**

looking forward to hearing from the filmmakers themselves on their journeys. ○

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

Film & TV Reviews

HAPPIEST SEASON

What's it rated? **PG-13** When? **2020**
 Where's it showing? **Hulu**

It's the time of year to get your holiday rom-com on, and *Happiest Season* delivers with gusto. Driving out the usual Hallmark plotlines, this flick co-written and directed by Clea DuVall (*The Intervention*) delivers on the laughs and touching moments throughout. Abby (Kristen Stewart) and Harper (Mackenzie Davis) are merrily in love and ready to take the next step, but when Harper feels a little too much holiday spirit and invites Abby to join her at home for the holiday, trouble soon arises. A story about coming out to her parents last summer proves untrue, and Abby is forced to pretend to be just the poor orphaned roommate.

Harper's family has a reputation to uphold with her father, Ted (Victor Garber), running for mayor and her mother, Tipper (Mary Steenburgen), demanding perfection in every way. Soon Harper's two sisters join the crew and things just get more complicated as Tipper tries to reunite Harper with her ex-boyfriend, Connor (Jake McDorman).

Personally, the most joy of the film is any scene with



PHOTO COURTESY OF TRISTAR PICTURES

HOMECOMING OUT: When Abby (Kristen Stewart, left) agrees to join her girlfriend, Harper (Mackenzie Davis), at her family's home for the holidays, she soon discovers Harper has been harboring a secret that threatens their otherwise solid relationship, in *Happiest Season*, screening on Hulu.

Abby's best friend John (played by Canadian gem Daniel Levy), who can't seem to understand how Abby can be OK with being a secret but who also reminds her that just because Harper can't yet come out to her family doesn't mean that the love they have isn't real. Life is complicated, and family at Christmastime doubly so. Also, shout out to gay and queer

characters in the holiday movie game! More of this, please! If you want a good feel this holiday season, give this one a go—it's got all you need to get the good feelings going. (102 min.)
 —Anna

EVIL

What's it rated? **TV-14** When? **2019**
 Where's it showing? **Amazon Prime**

Go ahead and file this show under guilty pleasures. Created by Michelle and Robert King (*The Good Wife*, *BrainDead*), the supernatural crime procedural mixes genres into fun and occasionally thrilling spectacle that traverses the razor's edge between the occult and psychology.

Kristen Bouchard (Katja Herbers) is a clinical psychologist who teams up with priest-in-training David Acosta (Mike Colter) and Catholic Church-contracted skeptic Ben Shakir (Aasif Mandvi) to investigate demonic possessions, miracles, and other odd phenomenon to determine if something is supernatural or scientifically explainable.

Over the first season's 13 episodes, we encounter puzzling events and people—especially recurring character and competing forensic psychologist Leland Townsend (Michael Emerson)—who might just be evil incarnate. Sometimes



PHOTO COURTESY OF KING SIZE PRODUCTIONS

ALL IN YOUR HEAD? *Evil*, streaming on Amazon Prime, mixes the supernatural thriller and police procedural genres into a tantalizing mash-up that can be both funny and unsettling, currently screening on Amazon Prime.

legitimately unsettling, other times downright funny, this is a series that has set up a tantalizing second season, though thanks to the pandemic, no release date has been announced. (13 40- to 42-min. episodes) ○

—Glen

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- Yes, we need it, otherwise our hospitals will be in rough shape.
- Local governments should get a say—not all purple tier counties are the same.
- It would be bad news for the economy.

Enter your choice online at: SantaMariaSun.com

Sun

Wines with character

Greg Brewer, Wine Enthusiast's 2020 Winemaker of the Year, is disciplined about doing things the same way year after year



30-YEAR RELATIONSHIP: Greg Brewer has dedicated his life to the Sta. Rita Hills AVA, breathing its essence into the wines he makes and talking up the region's strengths to anyone who will listen.

BY CAMILLIA LANHAM

In 30 years, the Sta. Rita Hills hasn't let Greg Brewer down.

"I've been reflecting a lot on my relationship with this place," the Brewer-Clifton winemaker said. "I'm very loyal to this place. I'm very provincial in that way. I'll always work here. I've only worked here."

He describes his relationship with the region as akin to working with someone for three decades. It's an intimate relationship, and as a result, Brewer said, he's been able to be kind of naked and exposed in how Brewer-Clifton grows and makes wine, doing as little as possible during the process so the wines can reflect the Sta. Rita Hills.

"It's really about not inserting oneself," he said. "It's being as gentle as we can, and ultimately, I guess, allowing things to be what they're going to be."

The process at Brewer-Clifton is disciplined, trusting of the systems that are in place. Brewer doesn't modify or tweak the wine as it's developing; his crew doesn't disturb the wine or add anything to it. The end result is going to be the result, Brewer said.

Recently picked as *Wine Enthusiast's* 2020 Winemaker of the Year, Brewer and his efforts to showcase the region haven't gone unnoticed.

"Greg is one of the most talented and dynamic winemakers in California today with his

distinctive style of coastal-influenced pinot noirs and chardonnays that rank among some of our magazine's most highly rated bottlings. More importantly, he's been a champion of Santa Barbara wines and helped build the prestige and excitement for the Sta. Rita Hills wine-growing region," *Wine Enthusiast* Publisher Adam Strum said, according to Wine Industry Network Advisor.

The 8-mile stretch of land that runs between Buellton and Lompoc was the second designated American Viticultural Area (AVA) in Santa Barbara County. The area is mostly dedicated to chardonnays and pinot noirs, and its proximity to the Pacific Ocean influences its vines with fog-filled mornings and evenings.

Brewer describes it as a land of juxtaposition, a rugged coastline that gives way to hills and dales. It's all about the ocean—both contemplative and savage in the same instant.

"We're in this kind of gentle climate that's predictable, and at the same time, it's cold and desolate and stark," he said. "There's tension in [the wines]. There's that oceanic kind of drive and force within them."

When Brewer was 21 years old, he started working at the Santa Barbara Winery tasting room as a way to make extra money while he was in grad school for French literature and also teaching French at UC Santa Barbara. That was in 1991. By the end of 1992, he was the assistant winemaker,



SINCE 1996: Brewer started Brewer-Clifton in the mid-1990s, with a love for the chardonnay and pinot noirs that the Sta. Rita Hills has since become known for.



SHOWCASE: Brewer-Clifton's Diatom chardonnays are motivated by the "pursuit of subtraction and refinement," Brewer explains on the winery's website. They embody the essence of his winemaking: grapes that are disturbed as little as possible from the vine to the bottle.

Drink some

Find Greg Brewer's wines at Brewer-Clifton, where Brewer-Clifton, Diatom chardonnays, and Ex Post Facto syrahs are made. The winery is located at 329 North F St. in Lompoc—where visits are by appointment only (info@brewerclifton.com)—and the tasting room is in Los Olivos at 2367 Alamo Pintado Avenue. Contact the winery for current hours at (805) 866-6080 or info@brewerclifton.com. Visit brewerclifton.com for more info.

leaving grad school and his desire to teach French behind. Bruce McGuire, who's been the winemaker at Santa Barbara Winery for four decades, showed Brewer the ways of wine in a budding industry.

Back then, Brewer said, there were only four or five wineries in the region. Now there are thousands of acres of vines planted and hundreds of wineries with corporate, mom-and-pop, and foreign investors. Then, of course, *Sideways* came out and really put Santa Barbara County on the wine map.

"It's been really beautiful to see it play out," he said.

Brewer started Brewer-Clifton in 1996, meeting up with Ron Melville in 1997 to help build Melville Winery, where Brewer made wine for 18 years. Around that same time, Sta. Rita Hills winemakers came together to push for AVA recognition. In discussing what the appellation could be, Brewer said, several folks pushed for specialization: chardonnays and pinot noirs.

California's growing regions are diverse, and Santa Barbara County has so many micro-climates, producing so many different wine varieties, Brewer said they wanted to be sure they stood out.

"Specialty is valued and should be," he said. "In 20 years, we've done a lot. Plantings have probably gone up 1,000 percent."

Wine lists all around the world include a section on the Sta. Rita Hills. About 2,700 acres of chardonnay, pinot noir, and 18 other varieties now grow in the appellation, which boasts 51 wineries, according to the Santa Barbara Vintners.

Seven days a week, Brewer does the same thing

PHOTOS COURTESY OF BREWER-CLIFTON

in that AVA. Describing himself as similar to an old stereotyped sushi chef in Tokyo, he repeats the same process day in and day out, producing wines that can be themselves.

Jackson Family Wines purchased Brewer-Clifton in 2017, and Brewer stayed on as the winemaker. He said the Jackson family has been rooted in Santa Barbara County for many years and encouraged him to continue doing what he was doing—allowing him the space and financial leeway to go further than he could comfortably go in the past.

"The past 3 1/2 years have really been the best of my entire career," he said. "I've never been more here, and there's a long, cool future ahead."

Receiving the Winemaker of the Year award, he said, is similar to what the Jackson family alignment means to him. With both he can continue to spread the word about the Sta. Rita Hills and its unique family of grape growers and winemakers—his neighbors who he both learns from and teaches.

While Brewer-Clifton aims to be as hands-off as possible, Brewer said, he of course makes decisions that impact the outcome. For instance: Brewer-Clifton trims its leaf canopy so there's a lot of airflow around the fruit. They choose the right time to harvest and pick their grapes at night. He uses a commercial yeast strain and ages the wine in 15- to 25-year-old barrels. But, Brewer said, it's all very elementary. Brewer-Clifton isn't about flexibility; it's

efficient, rhythmic, and ritualistic.

The process is preventative, said his wife, Sonja Magdaveski, who makes wines for Casa Dumetz in Los Alamos. Nothing is arbitrary and everything is preparation. She said that Brewer knows what his goals are and he knows that he wants to be as light and quiet as possible in order to allow the grapes to do the talking.

He trusts the Sta. Rita Hills to deliver. He's inspired by what they can do, and he knows what he needs to do to enable the grapes to do the right thing.

"It's really about being so prepared and so aware and so in tune that you can be quiet and disciplined and not rush into making arbitrary decisions," Magdaveski said. "You walk into that winery any day of the year and it looks exactly as it did yesterday and last year and many years from now. ... And to fight the need to not go with every twist of the market, which is so volatile."

Magdaveski said Brewer's process yields wines that have a similar character, an energy to them that's consistent and connected—the energy of the Sta. Rita Hills, the energy of Brewer himself. It's not so much the flavor profiles that are distinct as it is the intention and texture of the wines.

"There's a density of character in the wines that Greg makes that are like no other," she said. "It's totally impossible to express, and once you've had it, and you've had many, it's a very specific characteristic." ○

Editor Camillia Lanham is ready for some pinot noir. Send tasting notes to clanham@santamariasun.com.

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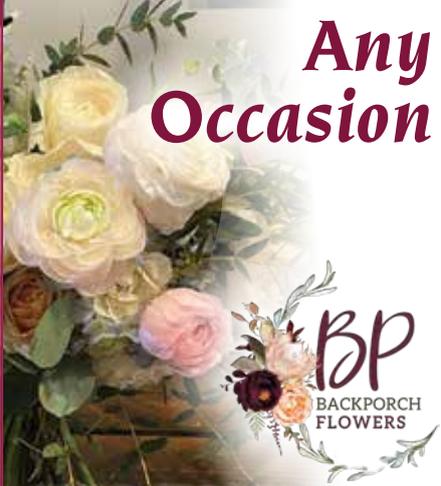
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