

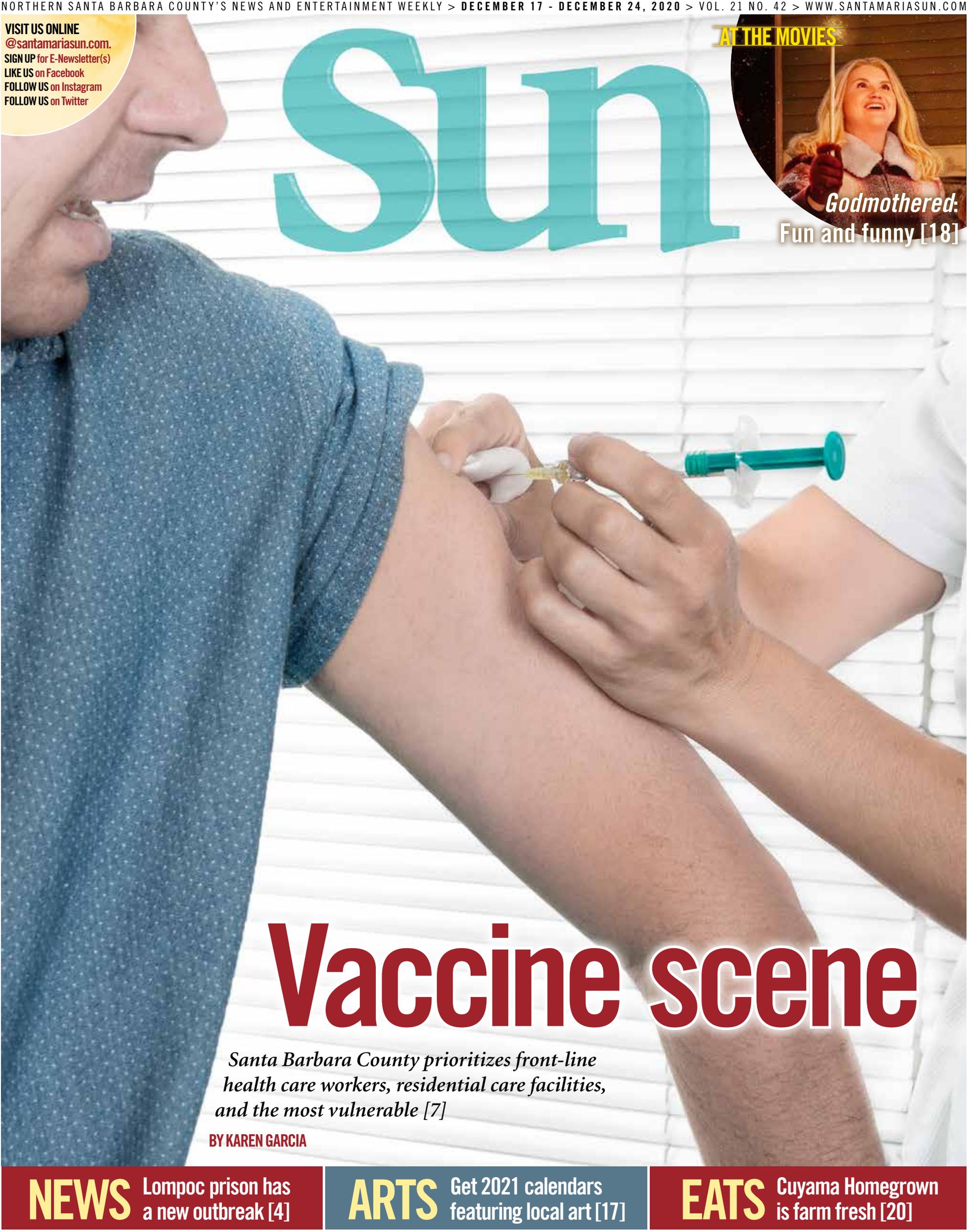
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# Sun

AT THE MOVIES



*Godmothered:*  
Fun and funny [18]



# Vaccine scene

*Santa Barbara County prioritizes front-line health care workers, residential care facilities, and the most vulnerable [7]*

BY KAREN GARCIA

**NEWS** Lompoc prison has a new outbreak [4]

**ARTS** Get 2021 calendars featuring local art [17]

**EATS** Cuyama Homegrown is farm fresh [20]

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DECEMBER 17 - DECEMBER 24, 2020 VOL. 21 NO. 42

**W**ith COVID-19 vaccines being delivered, SLO and Santa Barbara counties have laid out their plans for distribution. Local governments are waiting for more guidance from local and state officials about who will be next in line to receive the vaccine, but they are currently ready to distribute it first to health care workers on the front lines and those who are most vulnerable to the virus. Staff Writer Karen Garcia has more [7].

This week, you can also read about the new COVID-19 outbreak at the Lompoc Penitentiary [4]; the calendars that showcase Central Coast artists [17]; and what Cuyama Homegrown can bring to your table [20].

Camillia Lanham  
editor



**FIRST ROUND:** California distributes the first round of vaccines to front-line health care workers battling the COVID-19 pandemic.

Cover photo by Jayson Mellom > Cover design by Alex Zuniga

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## Political Watch

• **Gov. Gavin Newsom** issued a statement on Dec. 11 after the U.S. Food and Drug Administration granted an Emergency Use Authorization for the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine. "As California faces reduced ICU capacity, we must remain vigilant over the next few weeks. At the same time, today's FDA Emergency Use Authorization of a COVID-19 vaccine is a tremendous step toward safe and equitable vaccine distribution in California," Newsom said in the statement. "This important step advances the process of administering a vaccine at first to our critical health care workforce and those in long-term care. More vaccine doses will be arriving in the weeks and months ahead, which will be distributed and administered quickly and equitably across all of California. As always, it remains critical that we continue to take steps to protect ourselves, our families, and our communities by staying home, wearing masks, and following local health directives." Newsom's office then stated that on Dec. 13, the Western States Scientific Safety Review Workgroup "completed their concurrent and thorough review of the federal process and has confirmed the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine is safe and efficacious." The multi-state workgroup was launched by the governor in October to ensure the safety of the COVID-19 vaccine. The statement added that the Vaccine Drafting Guidelines Workgroup and the Community Advisory Vaccine Committee "have prepared California's Phase 1a prioritization guidelines focused on health workers and long-term care residents. The guidelines will expand to other groups as more vaccine becomes available."

• **U.S. Sen. Dianne Feinstein** (D-California) and **U.S. Rep. Salud Carbajal** (D-Santa Barbara) sent a letter on Dec. 9 to the secretary of the Air Force "asking for clarification on the selection process for the future location of Space Command headquarters," which recently removed Vandenberg Air Force Base from the list of finalists, a statement said. "As we highlighted in our August 2020 letter to you, we continue to believe that Vandenberg's existing space-related missions and assets, along with its proximity to the Space and Missile Systems Center at Los Angeles Air Force Base, would offer Space Command unique and unparalleled advantages," they wrote. "As the West Coast defense and commercial space launch site, Vandenberg already offers a highly qualified workforce for aerospace engineering, and the local community is eager to welcome Space Command to the area." The letter also requested "specific information about Vandenberg's scores in each of the evaluation factors and their criteria, including relative to other bases," as well as information about how the selection processes may have changed between 2019 and 2020.

• **Democrat Steve Bennett** took the oath of office to serve as the 37th District state Assembly member on Dec. 7 in a ceremony at the California Capitol, a statement from his office said. The 37th Assembly District includes parts of both Santa Barbara County and Ventura County. "I am honored and humbled to represent the people of the 37th Assembly District in Sacramento," Bennett said in the statement. Bennett is a former Ventura County supervisor. During his time on the board, "he co-authored the Save Open Space and Agricultural Resources (SOAR) initiatives to protect open spaces from encroaching Los Angeles-style urban sprawl, and passed laws to stop oil companies and other corporate polluters from contaminating our air, land, drinking water, and beaches," the statement said. Bennett succeeds **Monique Limón** for the 37th District seat. Limón ran for state Senate District 19 office in November and won. ○

## COVID-19 cases at Lompoc prison creep back up, concern rises

A new COVID-19 outbreak at the Lompoc Penitentiary—though currently much smaller than the one that peaked in May and infected hundreds—has family members and inmate advocates concerned about the current situation.

As of Dec. 15, the Bureau of Prisons reported that 25 inmates and one staff member had tested positive for the virus, nearly doubling from the 13 reported the previous day.

Chrissie Rogers, the founder of Love Your Inmate, a support group for family members of incarcerated individuals, said she started keeping a close eye on prisons when COVID-19 first hit.

"I noticed Lompoc got one, then five, 14, then 60," Rogers said of the outbreak that peaked in May. "The numbers just started climbing."

Rogers is concerned that the current situation could grow into something of a similar magnitude.

"I'm a nurse. I know what this virus is doing," she said. "The health care is not adequate in there to begin with."

Through her work with Love Your Inmate, Rogers said she has contact with more than 300 people incarcerated at Lompoc.

"Right now their biggest concern is medical," she said. "They're scared. They're scared of another outbreak, they're scared of being reinfected."

The *Sun* asked the BOP whether any of the new cases are reinfections, but the bureau did not respond. The *Sun* has made repeated attempts to contact the Bureau of Prisons' Public Affairs Department for comment since November.

U.S. Rep. Salud Carbajal sent a letter to the bureau's deputy director on Dec. 4 in which he asked for more information about medical staffing levels within Lompoc Penitentiary, what the prison's plan is for potential case surges, and what the current communication protocols are for family members of those incarcerated who contract the virus. As of Dec. 14 Carbajal's office had not yet received a response back.

Rogers said that for family members of inmates, the amount of information they receive about their loved ones' medical status is minimal.

"When you don't get a call or anything to know that your loved one is OK, I mean, as far as we know they could be hospitalized," she said. "We would never know until it's end of life. They won't tell you due to security reasons if they're in a hospital, or they're in a quarantine unit."

Lompoc prison isn't the only correctional facility battling a COVID-19 outbreak in Santa Barbara County. The Santa Barbara County Jail reported on Dec. 14 that seven staff members have tested positive for the virus in the last week. The jail did not report any inmate infections.

"All five custody deputies consistently wore PPE while interacting with inmates," according to a statement from the county.

The other two recently infected staff include a sheriff's deputy and a member of the department's professional staff.

"The deputy consistently wore a mask while at work," the statement said. "The non-sworn member of our professional staff last worked on Dec. 8, 2020, in a position that does not involve contact with the public nor inmates."

The juvenile hall also experienced a couple of cases among staff, reporting on Dec. 4 and Dec. 9 that institution staff members assigned to the Santa Maria Juvenile Hall had tested positive. In the first case, the individual had not been in contact with youth or other staff. In the second case, "although the staff consistently wore a face mask while on duty," youth and staff who had close contact with the infected person were tested as a precaution, according to juvenile hall officials.

—Malea Martin



**ASKING FOR ANSWERS:** Family members of inmates at the Lompoc prison gathered in protest in late April when the first COVID-19 outbreak was beginning to ramp up.

## New Solvang council disagrees with nonenforcement of state COVID-19 restrictions

Solvang's newest City Council members don't agree with the former council's stance on the state's increased COVID-19 restrictions, stating on Dec. 14 that they did not support the former City Council's emergency decision on Dec. 7 to defy such orders.

During the Dec. 14 Solvang City Council meeting, the former council accepted the results of the Nov. 3 election and welcomed newly elected Councilmembers Mark Infanti, Claudia Orona, and Mayor Charlie Uhrig.

The new council, save for Councilmembers Robert Clarke and Jim Thomas, came with a different take on the former council's decision to continue abiding by the state's purple tier safety guidelines and dismiss the state's increased restrictions.

"I think in general it was a poor decision," Infanti said on Dec. 14, adding that it painted the city of Solvang in a negative light in recent news coverage.

City Manager Xenia Bradford said Santa Barbara County Public Health Officials had alerted businesses about the repercussions of not following the stay-at-home orders to cease outdoor dining service—allowing customers to sit on their outdoor furniture to eat. Bradford said that public health officials were in the area two days after the Dec. 7 decision, asking that area businesses put away or remove outdoor furniture. Business that didn't comply could face a citation of up to \$5,000 or lose their license for up to one year.

The City Council's Dec. 7 decision offered businesses the option of having a public space lease agreement, where businesses could lease the outdoor dining portion of their property to the city on a month-to-month basis for \$1. Solvang also offered businesses a rental agreement for privately owned furniture located on city property for the same cost. So far, no businesses have applied to participate.

Bradford told the council on Dec. 14 that the Dec. 7 decision could affect the city's qualification for future direct state or federal aid relating to COVID-19.

City Attorney Chip Wullbrandt clarified that the city's previous emergency action doesn't

supersede Santa Barbara County, state of California, or California Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control authority. Wullbrandt said that while the city had decided not to use its resources to enforce the recent orders, the county is responsible for enforcing Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control rules regarding COVID-19.

Councilmember Clarke, who voted in support of the Dec. 7 decision, remained largely silent during the Dec. 14 discussion, however Councilmember Thomas defended his vote in favor of it.

"My intent was, I think all of our intent was, not to encourage that our businesses go out and break the law. Our intent was, after talking to the council, was to offer an opportunity within the law that they would be able to continue their businesses," Thomas said.

Uhrig said he agreed with the city's Dec. 7 decision to join the petition asking the state to removing Santa Barbara County from the Southern California categorization on the state's regional map. However, Uhrig said he didn't agree with the council's decision "to go a step further where we're saying 'disobey orders.'"

He applauded businesses and restaurants for following the rules that are in place for everyone's safety, and he urged the community to continue wearing a mask and observing social distancing, keep meetings to a minimum, and support local businesses.

"I think for a few dollars to make for three weeks is not worth anyone's life. Given the numbers that are going on right now, everything is going up, and we're breaking records every single day. Until we can get this thing beat, I really believe wholeheartedly that we need to follow the public health directors' directives," Uhrig said. "It would break my heart if we didn't have as many people next year because of what we did this time now."

—Karen Garcia

## Hospitalization, case rate, positivity continue to skyrocket in Santa Barbara County

Over the past month, the number of COVID-19 patients hospitalized from the virus in Santa Barbara County has increased sixfold, and the number of patients in the ICU is more

NEWS continued page 6

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NEWS from page 4

than 10 times what it was a month ago. As of Dec. 14, 75 people were hospitalized, including 21 in the ICU. One month prior on Nov. 14, 12 were hospitalized with two in the ICU.

This isn't the first time that the county has seen this many hospitalized with the virus. On July 13, for example, 76 people were hospitalized. A month prior to that, on June 13, 51 were hospitalized. This means the rate of increase during that month-long period was about 50 percent. What's different now is that the rate of increase is much larger over the same period of time. Going from 12 hospitalized to 75 in a month makes the rate of increase 525 percent.

The county also continues to see sharp increases in other COVID-19 metrics.

"We are experiencing a steep rise in case rate, from 14.4 to 19.2 in one rating period, which is equivalent to about a 33 percent increase," Public Health Director Dr. Van Do-Reynoso said at the Dec. 15 Board of Supervisors meeting. "Our testing positivity also is increasing, going from 4.6 to this week's 6.1, and that denotes a 36 percent increase. Our health equity metric went from 6.2 to now 8.3, denoting an increase of 34 percent."

These percent increases are over a one week period. In the past month, the adjusted case rate has increased by more than 150 percent, and the positivity rate by about the same percentage.

Do-Reynoso said that about 30 percent of hospital beds in the tri-county area remain open. However, she added that the county anticipates fewer beds available in the coming weeks as hospitalization and ICU rates catch up

to continuously skyrocketing case rates. There is typically a two- to three-week lag, she said.

With the Central Coast still maintaining significantly more hospital space than the rest of the Southern California region, Ventura, San Luis Obispo, and Santa Barbara counties sent a letter to the state asking that the area be considered as a separate region in the state's reopening system. The county hasn't received a response, officials reported at the board meeting.

At the Dec. 15 meeting, 4th District Supervisor Peter Adam questioned public health officials about the accuracy of COVID-19 testing, particularly the polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test that is mostly commonly used.

Do-Reynoso said the typical range for false positives is from 0.8 percent to 4 percent.

"False positives can be a result of different PCR tests, which have different types of sensitivities," she said. "It is also further influenced and determined by the prevalence of disease in the community, what type of swabs are used, and how quickly the test is run after collection, and by the lab processing."

Public Health Officer Dr. Henning Ansorg added that given Santa Barbara County's percent positivity rate still being under 10 percent, "the false positives are really negligible."

"With respect to the public health, we'd rather have a false positive than a false negative," he continued. "False negatives are actually a bigger problem than false positives, because we could miss patients who have minor symptoms or no symptoms, and still be contagious."

—Malea Martin

## County cannabis tax revenue doubled in the last year, but challenges still exist

Applications for cannabis grows and storefronts continued to pour into Santa Barbara County during the first quarter of fiscal year 2020-21 along with a significant increase in tax revenue—all despite this year's pandemic-induced economic downfall. Still, county leaders and staff say there are a number of issues related to the emerging industry that have yet to be fully smoothed out.

At a meeting on Dec. 15, the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors discussed a report on cannabis compliance, enforcement, and taxation for the first quarter of the 2020-21 fiscal year. From July 1 to Sept. 30 of this year, the county received about \$4.2 million in cannabis tax revenue, down slightly from the last quarter's \$5.5 million but up from other past quarters.

"This represents a 50 percent increase over the taxes collected in the same quarter of the last fiscal year," fiscal analyst Steven Yee said at the Dec. 15 meeting.

To date, according to the report, 209 applications for marijuana-related land use entitlements have been submitted to the county, 184 of which are still pending and 25 of which have been issued. In the first quarter of 2020-21, 47 operators submitted applications to obtain 80 cannabis business licenses throughout the county, and of those, 18 have been issued.

But Yee said that cannabis cultivation acreage caps adopted by the board in the Carpenteria Ag Overlay—which maxes out at 186 acres—and other unincorporated areas of the county—

capped at 1,575 acres—will make it impossible to accept all the pending cannabis land use applications as they are currently written.

"I'd like to emphasize that through the first quarter, the proposed cultivation acreage associated with permit applications in the inland area total 2,743 acres, while the Carpenteria Ag Overlay acreage came in at 234 acres," Yee said at the meeting. "This indicates that not all applicants will be able to reserve their acreage under the respective caps that your board has adopted."

There are other issues to work out, too, county staff said at the meeting. Roughly 29 operators did not report cannabis tax data to the county in the first quarter, according to the report, and the county is still working to take appropriate action against those operators. County staff say the land use permitting and business licensing processes need to be better aligned, streamlined, and standardized, and 12 cultivation operations located within existing developed rural neighborhoods are still being phased out in accordance with a recently adopted and controversial ordinance.

Odors wafting from cannabis grows into neighboring towns and the county's inability to adequately handle such complaints also continue to be a major point of contention throughout the county, particularly in the Buellton area.

"There are dozens and dozens of complaints that are never registered," Marc Chytilo, an attorney for the Santa Barbara County Coalition for Responsible Cannabis said at the Dec. 15 meeting, "and applicants come to the Planning Commission saying that they're free, which is not the case." ○

—Kasey Bubnash

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# Inoculation station

Santa Barbara and SLO counties await further state and federal guidance on COVID-19 vaccine distribution plans

BY KAREN GARCIA

While health care workers in California received the state's first doses of the recently approved COVID-19 vaccine on Dec. 14, nine pharmaceutical companies are continuing human clinical trials for their vaccines.

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved emergency use of Pfizer and BioNTech's COVID-19 vaccine on Dec. 11. The decision came just a day after its advisory panel unanimously recommended its approval. On Dec. 14, Moderna secured the recommendation of the FDA's advisory council to approve its COVID-19 vaccine; it is currently awaiting authorization by the FDA.

Santa Barbara County's Public Health Department is trying to anticipate the local needs for distributing a vaccine, but officials said that plans hinge on further guidance from the federal and state governments.

During a virtual coronavirus briefing on Nov. 30, Gov. Gavin Newsom said the state is anticipating getting about 327,000 doses of a vaccine in mid-December. On Dec. 13, 33,150 doses of Pfizer's vaccine arrived at the Los Angeles International Airport; the first dose was administered to a health care worker at Kaiser Permanente hospital in Los Angeles County the following day.

Newsom said the state is planning to receive an estimated 2.1 million doses by the end of the year.

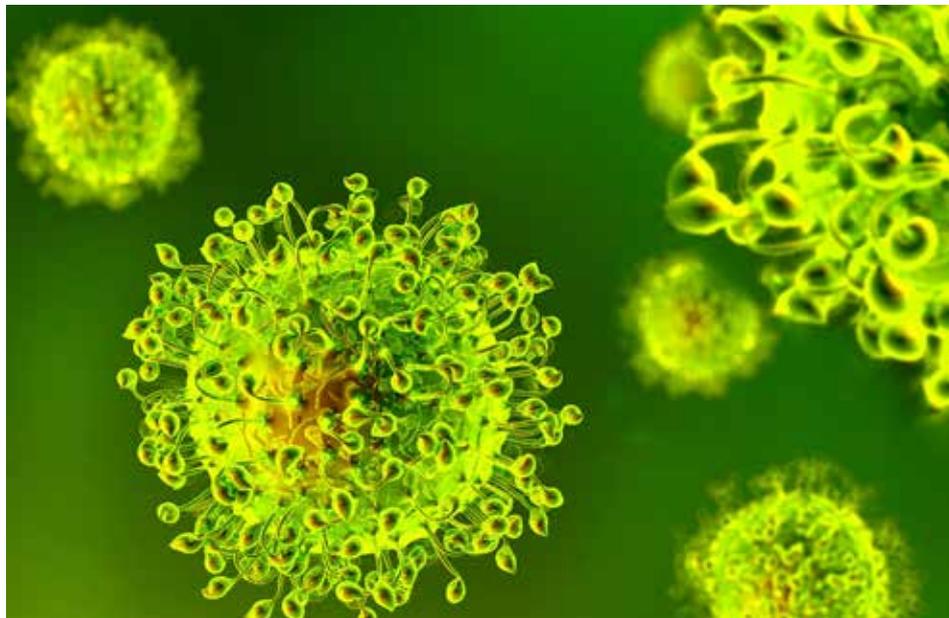
Gen. Gus Perna, the chief operating officer of Operation Warp Speed—a government-led effort to move the development, manufacturing, and distribution of COVID-19 vaccines—said in a press conference on Dec. 12 that the group expected 145 sites across the nation to receive the vaccine on Dec. 14. He said a second delivery will be made to 425 sites the following day, and the final shipments to 66 sites will be made Dec. 16.

In Santa Barbara County, Public Information Officer Jackie Ruiz said the Health Department is working closely with the California Department of Public Health and has formed a local Partner COVID Vaccination Workgroup to prepare health care partners to receive and administer a vaccine as soon as it's available.

The core group consists of individuals from Community Health Clinics of the Central Coast; Cottage Health, Lompoc, and Dignity Health hospitals and clinics; Vandenberg Air Force Base; UC Santa Barbara; first responder representatives; and the county Office of Emergency Management.

During the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors meeting on Dec. 1, Public Health Director Van Do-Reynoso said the group's purpose, aside from implementing a phased approach for distributing the vaccine, is to ensure the county's distribution is equitable. The local plan, Do-Reynoso said, will be based on the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) vaccination playbook and California Department of Public Health recommendations.

"It is anticipated that there will be a limited amount of vaccine initially, and this will be prioritized in tiers, with potentially the first for high-risk health care workers, including hospital, skilled nursing, and assisted living workers, and first responders; and the next for individuals at



**TIERED SYSTEM:** Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo counties gear up for future COVID-19 vaccination distribution plans, but local officials are waiting for federal and state guidelines.

highest risk for developing severe illness, such as residents of skilled nursing and assisted living facilities," Ruiz said.

The prioritization list is potential because Santa Barbara County, like San Luis Obispo, is awaiting guidance on finalized categories from the CDC and state Department of Public Health.

Whitney Szentesi, the lead public information officer for San Luis Obispo County's health department, said that the department has been preparing for mass vaccination events for years and managed a successful drive-through flu shot clinic in October to serve as a drill and help it prepare for an eventual COVID-19 vaccine.

In an effort to distribute the future vaccine in a fair, ethical, and transparent way, the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine gave input to the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices, which will make recommendations to the CDC director once vaccines are approved for use. The advisory committee is made up of scientists and public health experts who review and create recommendations for all vaccines.

On Dec. 1, the advisory committee approved a recommendation for Phase 1a of a vaccination program: The FDA-authorized vaccine should be given to both health care personnel and residents of long-term care facilities. The CDC website states that the recommendation was adopted by the CDC director.

"We are currently working with health care facilities and first responder agencies to get an accurate number of at-risk staff, and residents within facilities, to inform our planning process," Ruiz said. "This rollout will intentionally focus on those most at risk for being in contact with the virus first."

Do-Reynoso told Santa Barbara County supervisors that she estimated the county had more than 20,000 health care workers and roughly 1,800 first responders. Santa Barbara County hopes to distribute the vaccine in phases, which can help set community expectations about when residents will have the opportunity to be vaccinated.

Representatives from local hospitals, such as those owned by Dignity Health and Tenet Health Central Coast, said they expect that priority will be given to health care workers involved directly with patient care and those

most vulnerable to the virus.

Dignity spokesperson Sara San Juan said that it plans to provide the COVID-19 vaccine at its hospital locations as well as its Dignity Health Urgent Care centers.

"While we are encouraged by the news about the progress of vaccine development, we must remain vigilant and follow CDC guidelines—including wearing a mask and social distancing—to stop the spread of COVID-19," she said.

Before administering the vaccine, San Juan said, Dignity has assembled a team of infectious disease and immunology experts to review the new vaccine applications and evaluate their safety and efficiency.

"At this time, employees will be encouraged but not required to receive the vaccine. Local, state, and federal agencies may require the vaccination for some health care workers," she said.

California established a Scientific Safety

**'It is anticipated that there will be a limited amount of vaccine initially, and this will be prioritized in tiers, with potentially the first for high-risk health care workers ... and the next for individuals at highest risk for developing severe illness ...'**

—Jackie Ruiz, Santa Barbara County Public Health Department public information officer

Review Workgroup to closely monitor all available information about the potential COVID-19 vaccines, including the vaccine trials, the FDA review process, and any independent evaluations.

Dr. Lynn Fitzgibbons, who specializes in infectious disease for Cottage Health, told the Sun that vaccines have provided a public health solution to so many life-threatening diseases in the past, including smallpox, measles, diphtheria, and so many others.

"This year, vaccines to protect against COVID-19 are likely to be our populations' exit strategy to escape this pandemic. It's encouraging to know that vaccine progress has been extraordinary this year," Fitzgibbons said. ○

Staff writer Karen Garcia can be reached at [kgarcia@newtimeslo.com](mailto:kgarcia@newtimeslo.com).

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# Taking care

*Teddy Bear Cancer Foundation hopes to raise funds for Central Coast families facing childhood cancer and COVID-19*

BY KASEY BUBNASH

Seven-year old Isabella Ramirez has always been a high-energy, bubbly kid—the kind who never seems to get sleepy no matter how much she runs around all day. She’s tough, too, always popping right back up after a fall without so much as a peep.

So her mom, Santa Maria resident Fabiola Ramirez, knew something was wrong when Isabella started lagging behind her siblings early last year, complaining about feeling tired constantly and of pain in her legs and head. Fabiola took Isabella to a doctor for a checkup, and in March 2019, Isabella was diagnosed with leukemia.

The following year was about as challenging as you could imagine. Both Fabiola and her husband, Noe, took time away from work to care for Isabella while she went through various treatments and recovered from surgery in the hospital for three months. Her hair fell out twice throughout the year, and her 9-year-old sister and 11-year-old brother took the news hard.

“It was really, really scary,” Fabiola told *New Times*.

Isabella is fortunately doing better now. She has just six months of treatment left, Fabiola said, and the cancer appears to be in remission. But the hospital bills have since piled up, and when the COVID-19 pandemic hit this year, things that were already tough—going to the hospital, taking care of Isabella’s battered immune system, school, work—got even more complicated. Everyone in the family has had to make sacrifices this year, but they won’t be giving up having an amazing Christmas.

The Ramirez family was one of 53 in Santa Barbara, San Luis Obispo, and Ventura counties to receive decked-out Christmas trees and gifts at the beginning of this month as part of the Teddy Bear Cancer Foundation’s Season of Hope fundraising campaign. Donations to the foundation will go to helping kids with cancer like Isabella and their families, many who are currently battling cancer and other financial and health issues brought on by COVID-19.

In the two years that Teddy Bear Cancer Foundation has been working with the Ramirez family, Isabella received tutoring through the foundation’s educational program, thousands of dollars in financial assistance, and various gifts, including \$100 worth of wrapped gifts for all three Ramirez kids this Christmas.

“The foundation—it’s always there to help us with anything we need,” Fabiola said. “They’ll always find a way to help us.”

But according to Executive Director Corey Pahanish, the foundation is grappling with two



**SEASON OF HOPE:** Santa Maria resident Isabella Ramirez, 7, was diagnosed with cancer in the spring of 2019. This year, the Teddy Bear Cancer Foundation donated hundreds of dollars’ worth of Christmas gifts and decorations to her family.

conflicting trends brought on by COVID-19 this year: families caring for children with cancer need more help than ever, but many of the big fundraising events that bring in the bulk of the Teddy Bear Cancer Foundation’s funding were canceled this year.

“When you have to cancel an event that traditionally has generated a larger portion of the funding that’s been important for us to support families,” Pahanish told the *Sun*, “we’ve had to pivot to thinking outside the box.”

So the foundation is just trying to get the word out—the word being that it needs the help of generous community members—as far and as loudly as possible.

To offer more help to families struggling to pay bills amid cancer and COVID-19, the foundation opened up additional funds to families already receiving financial assistance, gave out more than 7,000 grocery gift cards, made all its support groups virtual and doubled the groups available, and earlier this month gave out thousands of dollars’ worth of holiday gifts.

Now the foundation, Pahanish said, is hoping to raise about \$98,000 to continue offering emotional and financial support to families who were already in the most desperate times of their lives prior to the pandemic.

“And now,” he said, “everything has been exacerbated.”

## Highlight

• Cottage Health is offering free flu shots at its Urgent Care Centers, located in Goleta, Camarillo, San Luis Obispo, Oxnard, Ventura, and Santa Maria. The flu vaccine can be administered to anyone over the age of 6 months, according to a statement from Cottage. Walk-ins are welcome, but online registration at [cottagehealth.org/flushot](http://cottagehealth.org/flushot) is recommended. Wearing a face mask is required to get the shot. Cottage Health has also opened its urgent care centers to allow for the treatment of minor injuries and illnesses. The centers are open every day from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. ○

Staff Writer Kasey Bubnash wrote this week’s Spotlight. Send tidbits to [spotlight@santamariasun.com](mailto:spotlight@santamariasun.com).

# BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS FUN-DRAISER

**On December 31st, a special insert will run in the Sun and New Times**

The insert will include the Boys & Girls Clubs of Mid Central Coast’s quarterly newsletter, information about the Clubs, and ads designed especially for you by the kids at the Clubs.

**Please sponsor a child’s drawing in this section!**

The Sun and New Times underwrites the cost of this publication and gives back to the organization.



ISSUE DATE: DEC. 31  
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# DEATH NOTICES

**TERRY ENFIELD**, 59, of Bradley passed away 11/29/2020 arrangements with Blue Sky Cremation

**ANDRES CANCINO**, 83, of Santa Maria passed away 12/1/2020 arrangements with Moreno Mortuary

**STELLA POWELL**, 73, of Santa Maria passed away 12/3/2020 arrangements with Moreno Mortuary

**RANDY TENHAEFF**, 61, of Templeton passed away 12/3/2020 arrangements with Blue Sky Cremation

**GILBERT E. WALTON**, 90, of Paso Robles passed away 12/3/2020 arrangements with Kuehl-Nicolay Funeral Home

**ALICHA FRANCINE ST. MARTIN**, 50, passed away 12/3/2020 arrangements with Chapel of the Roses

**NAHUM SANCHEZ**, 91, of Santa Maria passed away 12/3/2020 arrangements with Moreno Mortuary

**ALYCIA AMOS**, 45, of San Luis Obispo passed away 12/3/2020 arrangements with Blue Sky Cremation

**JUDITH ANDERSON**, 79, of Atascadero passed away 12/4/2020 arrangements with Blue Sky Cremation

**JENNIE CASTRO RAMOS**, 72, of Santa Maria passed away 12/4/2020 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

**TAMARA CORDIE DEERING**, 80, of Santa Maria passed away 12/4/2020 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

**NATHAN "NATE" MASALTA**, 45, of Santa Maria passed away 12/4/2020 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

**MARJORIE JORGENSEN**, 99, of Morro Bay passed away 12/5/2020 arrangements with Blue Sky Cremation

**MITCHELL WILSON JR**, 51, of Paso Robles passed away 12/5/2020 arrangements with Blue Sky Cremation

**CAMILLE RYLL**, 77, passed away 12/5/2020 arrangements with Kuehl-Nicolay Funeral Home

**LEONA FRANCES YOUNG**, 78, of Bradley passed away 12/5/2020 arrangements with Kuehl-Nicolay Funeral Home

**MARILYN L. NOYES**, 89, of Santa Maria passed away 12/5/2020 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

**DALE G. HOLT**, formerly of Lompoc passed away 12/5/2020 arrangements with Starbuck-Lind

**JAMES "JIMMY" WOODARD**, 61, of Santa Maria passed away 12/6/2020 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

**JUANITA KAY PEARCE**, 67, passed away 12/6/2020 arrangements with Chapel of the Roses

**WILBERT EDWIN ROJEWSKI**, 94, of Arroyo Grande passed away 12/6/2020 arrangements with Marshall-Spoo Sunset Funeral Chapel

**BRENT ALAN VOLBRECHT**, 42, passed away 12/6/2020 arrangements with Chapel of the Roses

**FAYE CHAPMAN WALTON**, 94, of Atascadero passed away 12/6/2020 arrangements with Kuehl-Nicolay Funeral Home

**AARON JAMES EZELL**, 41, passed away 12/7/2020 arrangements with Chapel of the Roses

**ANN F. WINTHROP**, 94, of Paso Robles passed away 12/7/2020 arrangements with Kuehl-Nicolay Funeral Home

**CONNIE DURGAN**, 68, of Arroyo Grande passed away 12/7/2020 arrangements with Blue Sky Cremation

**WAYNE DOUGLAS FRANKLIN**, 76, of Orcutt passed away 12/8/2020 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

**RONALD SCHMIDT**, 90, of Arroyo Grande passed away 12/8/2020 arrangements with Blue Sky Cremation

**CONCHA CHAVIRA**, 98, of Santa Maria passed away 12/9/2020 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

**WILSON LEE USELTON**, 85, passed away 12/9/2020 arrangements with Chapel of the Roses

**ALBERT "GORDO" DOMINGUEZ**, 52, of Santa Maria passed away 12/9/2020 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

**JESUS ESPINOZA**, 79, passed away 12/9/2020 arrangements with Chapel of the Roses

**STUART ALAN LARSEN**, 84, passed away 12/9/2020 arrangements with Kuehl-Nicolay Funeral Home

**WILLIAM PRESTON CONN**, 70, of Santa Maria passed away 12/9/2020 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

**JORDAN "JORDY" VASQUEZ**, 26, of Orcutt passed away 12/10/2020 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

**JACQUELINE JACKSON**, 91, of Arroyo Grande passed away 12/11/2020 arrangements with Marshall-Spoo Sunset Funeral Chapel



# SURVEY

HELP MAKE THE SUN BETTER

# SURVEY

The world we live in is a very different place than it was at the beginning of 2020. How we do everyday things has changed, including the way we get information about our community. Like most businesses, we've had to adjust and adapt to keep our companies alive.

As we look ahead, we'd like to learn more about our most valuable assets, our readers.

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## Online Poll

### Should Santa Barbara County remove itself from the Southern California region on the state's new map for COVID-19?

- 60% Yes, we shouldn't be lumped in with LA.
- 20% It's only for three weeks; everyone needs to calm down.
- 20% The county should just disregard the state's restrictions.
- 0% This too shall pass; support small business!

15 Votes

Vote online at [www.santamariasun.com](http://www.santamariasun.com).



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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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# The state grinch

## The governor stole Christmas this year—was it in the name of science or politics?

BY RON FINK

When I was a young man, I bought several Dr. Seuss books to help teach my children how to read. These were wonderful little stories, cleverly illustrated with words young children could easily learn in a few minutes each evening.

One of the characters was a cynical grump Seuss named “Grinch” who wanted to steal Christmas but was eventually persuaded to scuttle the plan by a small child. The book became the idea line for movies in the early 1960s, and its popularity grew from the fact that the Grinch repented when faced the grim reality of what he was about to do.

Let’s fast forward to 2020; we have our own real-life Grinch in Sacramento who doesn’t have the cognitive ability of the mythical Grinch. On Dec. 6 our governor issued stay-at-home and business closure orders for the lower half of California. This action put hundreds of thousands of low- and moderate-income families out of work and closed struggling mom-and-pop businesses two weeks before Christmas.

What were the criteria for this action? His public health team lumped our county in with the larger and highly populated counties stretching from Paso Robles to the Mexican border to the south, and the state line to the east. Meanwhile, in Northern California regions were much smaller and sparsely populated.

Gov. Gavin Newsom claims that all his

draconian actions related to business shutdowns, suspension of civil liberties, and restriction of free movement are “science based.”

For months, state and federal government health officials have been predicting a surge in COVID-19 cases as winter sets in and holiday gatherings started occurring. The Newsom administration has published colorful charts and graphs; warned and regulated the population with ever-changing versions of population restrictions; and implemented various shutdown plans.

None of these actions stopped the surge. All of them appear to be a feeble effort to demonstrate that he is “doing something” to solve the problem, and all of it has been superficial and ineffective.

Many thought that the state and local government would marshal the resources necessary to create an action plan to treat the increase in sick people until a preventive protocol could be developed; they were wrong.

Did Newsom and his medical experts try to address treating the anticipated increase in patient loads in our hospitals with tangible improvements? Even though he and his medical teams have had several months to make some progress on a plan to deal with the surge, all we are left with is a near total shutdown of the state and the subsequent loss of jobs, paychecks, and more. So, it appears that they did absolutely nothing!

This isn’t a science issue; it is simply a logistics issue. Health officials knew that more treatment capacity would be needed; certainly, they knew that the California Air and Army National Guard units were trained to set up and operate field hospitals that could have accepted routine cases or could have provided staff that could have augmented hospital wards. What happened to all those overload locations that were set up with much fanfare and weren’t used in the early months of this crisis; did they forget how to set them up?

Over the decades, many have said that “government efficiency” is an oxymoron; in this case, the absence of any form of contingency planning as it relates to the long-anticipated COVID-19 surge is the result of totally of

incompetent leadership.

Meanwhile the folks who aren’t sick are suffering as they try to cope with closed schools, lost income, and mounting bills for deferred rent or house payments, and are trying to provide food for their families amid the uncertainty of when all this will finally end.

In Lompoc and other communities, it has had a devastating impact on small businesses that have been struggling to stay afloat for the last nine months throughout this mismanaged medical emergency.

Since there is no logic to all those restrictions maybe it’s time for local governments to do what nearby Solvang did and simply refuse to take any action to enforce orders that have not been justified with data that indicates that the actions being ordered are a direct result of an increase in COVID-19 cases.

In the meantime, the governor and many other political “leaders” dine out, attend gatherings, and socialize while mandating that the general public can’t do it. I guess in the governor’s mind, this constitutes “science based” decision-making. ○

Ron Fink writes to the Sun from Lompoc. Send your thoughts, comments, and opinionated letters to [letters@santamariasun.com](mailto:letters@santamariasun.com).

## LETTER

### Protest for the clowns

Somehow it escapes the attention of those people who have deprived us of our liberty and freedom that 99.98 percent of positive COVID cases recover. I’m checking now—since this bloody panic (yes, I meant panic) began several months ago, 12,000 cases have been confirmed and 138 deaths reported in Santa Barbara County, which has half a million residents.

AARP reported in a recent article that of the 285,000 deaths in the United States, 40 percent have occurred in long-term care facilities (yes, that would include hospice where no lifesaving assistance is administered).

So instead of protecting the vulnerable in those facilities, New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo and other governors on March 25 ordered COVID-19 positive patients back into nursing homes providing no equipment or other assistance to prevent the spread of the virus. Tens of thousands of elderly patients died at the hands of this Emmy Award winner for his stellar news conferences.

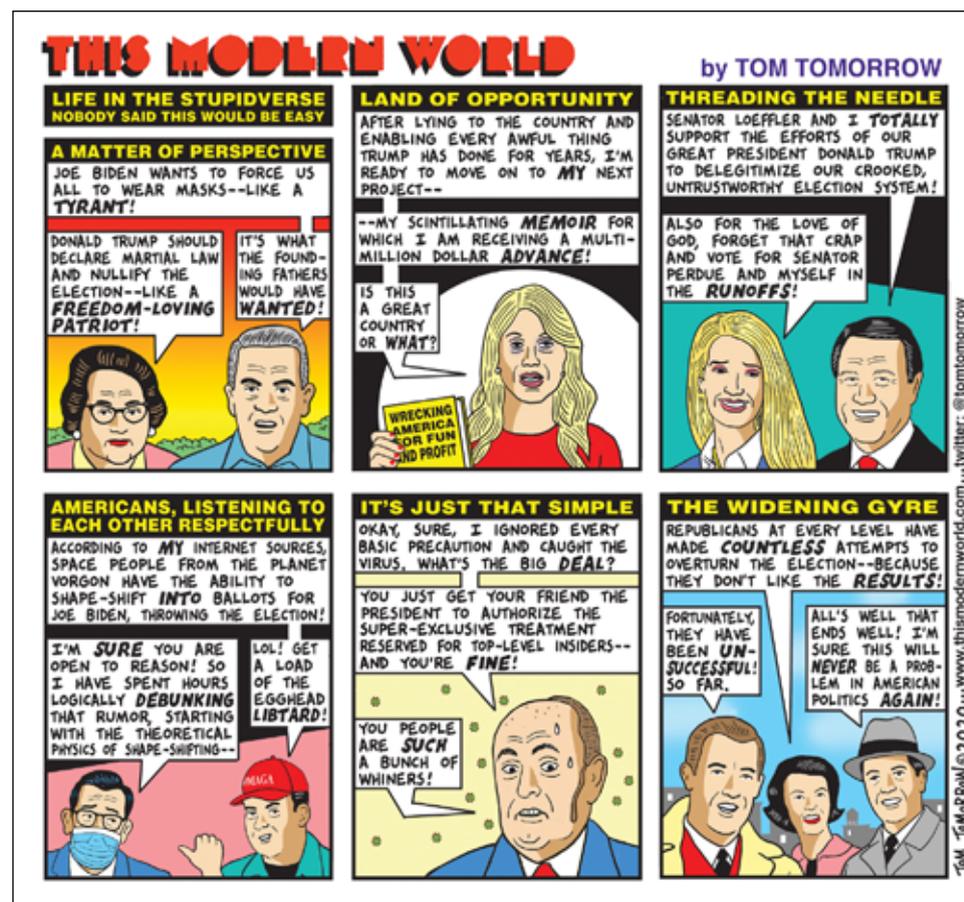
There is an escape clause to the lockdown. Protests. Of course the BLM and Antifa hooligans have run the course and don’t really pass muster. France has come up with a new one. The streets of Paris are alive with protesters for farmers in India. Who would have thought Parisians knew where India was. Wasn’t it the British that colonized them?

That’s the beauty of this lockdown. Essential services and protests are accepted exceptions to the stay-home order. No, no, no. Not so fast, masked man. Protesting the lockdown will get you locked up (that’s kinda’ funny). So all we have to do is come up with a protest that hasn’t been done to death (apologies for perceived insensitivities).

Let me reach into my top hat and, yes! Let’s protest for the circus workers. Entertainers who have been shut down and probably don’t get government checks and have been replaced by officials. Yes, they have been replaced by county officials and Sacramento politicians who’ve never missed a paycheck through this long nightmare.

So let’s organize a protest for the circus workers. Especially the clowns.

Jan Lipski  
Vandenberg Village



# Ridiculous ridicule

How would you like to be laughed at by a sitting Santa Barbara County supervisor? No, not in private, silly. In the middle of a public meeting. Sounds awesome, right?

Wrong. **Santa Barbara County Public Health Officer Dr. Henning Ansgorg** certainly didn't like it when **4th District Supervisor Peter Adam** laughed at him on Dec. 15.

As Ansgorg was describing that false positives range between zero and 4 percent for a certain type of COVID-19 test, and that with the percentage of COVID-19 positive tests in Santa Barbara County, the potential false positives are negligible, Adam basically laughed in his face.



How rude!  
 "Why are you laughing, sir? What is so funny about that?" Ansgorg said rather tersely.

"Well, it just seems to me that if you a test that works, it works, and it should work ...," Adam responded with additional chuckles.

Maybe my sense of humor is way off, but what's funny about that?

"Yes, it does work, really well, sir," Ansgorg basically yelled.

Wow! Another spicy exchange with **Peter "I Have A Point To Make" Adam**.

"I don't like to be ridiculed, sir," Ansgorg said.  
 "I am not ridiculing you," Adam said.

Actually, you weren't *just* ridiculing him, Adam, you were also being condescending about a topic you're most definitely *not* an expert on. Because reading stuff on the internet does not an expert make. No matter what the internet tells you!

But just to humor our pal **Peter "The COVID-19 Questioner" Adam**, let's do a little bit of math. Just the other day, Santa Barbara County recorded 360 positive COVID-19 cases. Wowee! That's a lot. It's actually the most daily cases ever recorded in the county!

If 4 percent of those were false positives, the county would still have at least 340 positive cases. Even if the worst case scenario outlier of 16 percent false positives were a peer-reviewed scientific fact, the county would still have recorded more than 300 positive COVID-19 cases in one day! And COVID-19 hospitalizations would still be rising.

So what's your point, Adam? That the science isn't 100 percent?

News flash: Science is never 100 percent. It's based on probabilities and likelihood. It's always been that way. And guess what? If it's 96 percent *likely* that you're going to have a heart attack unless you do something about it, you're going to believe the doctor and start doing the things that are *likely* to help you not have a heart attack.

Because preventative measures are likely to give people a longer life.

What does the **Santa Barbara County Department of Public Health** get out of shutting down the economy? Other than being hated, publicly ridiculed, threatened, blamed for economic collapse, etc. Sounds great!

What does the county get out of leaning on science and trying to prevent a public health catastrophe? Hopefully, a world in which doctors don't have to make a decision about who to treat and who to let die because they've run out of room at the hospital.

Which is an unfortunate reality in some places in the United States—and a reality the state of California is trying desperately to prevent. It sucks. And that I can tell you with 100 percent confidence. ○

*The Canary is ready for ridicule. Send laughs to canary@santamariasun.com.*

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# HOT STUFF

DEC. 17 – DEC. 24  
2020

## A DAY IN THE STILL LIFE

Gallery Los Olivos presents its latest group exhibition, *Winter Salon*, in person as well as online at [gallerylosolivisonline.faso.com](http://gallerylosolivisonline.faso.com), through Sunday, Jan. 31, 2021. This annual salon-style exhibit showcases works from more than 50 artists, including Patti Robbins, Bill Friedman, and Martha Inman Lorch. Call (805) 688-7517 for more details. The gallery is located at 2920 Grand Ave., Los Olivos.

—Caleb Wiseblood

IMAGE COURTESY OF PATTI ROBBINS

**NOTE:** Most venues are canceling or postponing events due to concerns about the spread of COVID-19. Please check with venues to make sure that scheduled events are still, in fact, happening, and most of all, stay safe!

## 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](http://artoffacemasks.com). Elverhoj Museum of History and Art, 1624 Elverhoy Way, Solvang, 805-686-1211.

**A MIGHTY OAK: PERMANENT EXHIBIT ONLINE** Depicts the habitat around a Valley oak—one of the largest and old trees found in our area. View the artwork online. ongoing Free. Wildling Museum of Art and Nature, 1511-B Mission Dr., Solvang, 805-688-1082, [wildlingmuseum.org](http://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](http://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](http://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. Through Jan. 31, 2021 [GalleryLosOlivos.com](http://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](http://lompocart.org). Lompoc Valley Art Association, 119 E. Cypress, Lompoc.

### SANTA MARIA VALLEY/LOS ALAMOS

**DECEMBER ART PICK UP PACKS: SANTA MARIA PUBLIC LIBRARY** Register through the Santa Maria Public Library to pick up an art pack to create your own masterpiece at home. Art packs include projects that help students learn basic principles of art. These packs are geared towards ages 6 through 12. Supplies are limited. Dec. 17, Dec. 18 and Dec. 19 Free. 805-925-0994. [engagedpatrons.org](http://engagedpatrons.org). Santa Maria Public Library, 421 S. McClelland St.

**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](http://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](http://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](http://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](http://pcpa.org).

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

### SOUTH COAST SLO COUNTY

**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. LiA Creative Community,

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**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](http://newtimeslo.com). You may also email [calendar@newtimeslo.com](mailto: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](mailto:cwiseblood@newtimeslo.com).**

1147 East Grand Ave. suite 101, Arroyo Grande.

### 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](http://slobg.org/calendar-of-events/gallery). San Luis Obispo Botanical Garden, 3450 Dairy Creek Rd., San Luis Obispo.

**ARTIST TALK WITH ZALIKA AZIM** Join the Harold J. Miossi art gallery for our sixth event in our Laboratory Series, a conversation series with Black-identified artists in collaboration with R.A.C.E. Matters San Luis Obispo. A Zoom webinar and artist talk with New York based artist Zalika Azim. Dec. 17, 5-7 p.m. [cccconfer.zoom.us](http://cccconfer.zoom.us). Online, See website, San Luis Obispo.

**CALL FOR ARTISTS: ART CENTRAL'S VIRTUAL GALLERY** Central Coast artists to submit artwork to Virtual Gallery Exhibit every Friday. Free to join, all you have to do is email image(s) of artwork created since COVID-19 with name, title, medium, and a positive message. Fridays, 5-11 p.m. through Dec. 18 Varies. 805-747-4200. [artcentralslo.wordpress.com/blog/](http://artcentralslo.wordpress.com/blog/). Art Central, 1329 Monterey St., 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 [slo makerspace.com/making-home](http://slo makerspace.com/making-home). SLOMakerSpace, 81 Higuera, suite 160, San Luis Obispo, 805-225-4783.

**AN IRISH CHRISTMAS** Features an award-winning cast of world champion dancers in a celebration of the great traditions of Christmas in Ireland. Enjoy spectacular dance, song, and music. An online replay of the 2015 PBS television show. Dec. 19, 6-7 p.m. Free; donation requested. 805-489-9444. [clarkcenter.org/event/an-irish-christmas-5/](http://clarkcenter.org/event/an-irish-christmas-5/).

**THE LINK BETWEEN MAN AND NATURE** An art show benefiting NatureTrack, whose mission is to instill young students with leadership skills, attitudes, and habits

for lifelong learning, and to inspire them to be respectful stewards of our natural world. Through Jan. 1. Free. 805-252-1100. [oakgroup.org/](http://oakgroup.org/). Online. San Luis Obispo.

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

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

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

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

### NORTH SLO COUNTY

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

**STUDIOS ON THE PARK: ONLINE CLASSES AND WORKSHOPS** Check site for a variety of virtual classes and workshops online. [studiosonthePark.org](http://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](http://artcentermorrobay.org).

ARTS continued page 14

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

**GALLERY AT MARINA SQUARE: FEATURED ARTIST DON DOUBLEDEE** Doubledee has been drawing all his life. As well as being a Cal Poly architecture grad, he has been a resident of Morro Bay since 1970. 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.

# 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 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. SolvangJulefest.org. Downtown Solvang, Mission Dr.

## 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

## 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.

**CHILDREN'S CHAPTER BOOK GRAB AND GO BOOK PACKS: SANTA MARIA PUBLIC LIBRARY** The library will have a limited number of children's chapter bags available for pick up at the Sidewalk Service Pick-Up window. The Grab-and-Go packs are pre-packaged paper bags containing three books. Grab-and-Go Book Bags are not checked out and have no due date. **Dec. 17, Dec. 18 and Dec. 19** Free. 805-925-0994. engagedpatrons.org. Santa Maria Public Library, 421 S. McClelland St.

**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.

**HARRY POTTER MINI ORNAMENTS PACK: SANTA MARIA PUBLIC LIBRARY** Register to create your own Harry Potter mini ornaments to decorate for the holidays. Also included are links to make more ornaments, a booklist for great reads, and trivia. **Dec. 17, Dec. 18 and Dec. 19** Free. 805-925-0994. engagedpatrons.org. Santa Maria Public Library, 421 S. McClelland St., 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.

**MERRY CHRISTMAS CAR TRAIN** A no-contact holiday event hosted by the Orcutt Lions Club. Cars can line up on the corner of Rice Ranch Road and Broadway (facing west). Spectators are welcome to view the car parade by parking along the main streets or Orcutt shopping centers. **Dec. 19**, 6 p.m. Free. Historic Old Town Orcutt, S. Broadway and Union Ave., Orcutt.

**STORY TIME LIVE FOR FAMILIES: VIRTUAL EVENT FROM SANTA MARIA PUBLIC LIBRARY** Join us for a live story time for families; bilingual on alternating weeks. Includes songs, finger plays, and a few stories. Tune in for a fun story time the whole family will enjoy. Registration is



## HAPPY CHRISTMAS, RON

The Santa Maria Public Library hosts pickup dates for its complimentary Harry Potter mini holiday ornaments kit on Thursday, Dec. 17, and through Saturday, Dec. 19. Each kit of ornaments also includes a booklist, some holiday trivia, and links to additional resources. Participants can register for the free kit at engagedpatrons.org. Call (805) 925-0994 for more info. The library is located at 421 S. McClelland St., Santa Maria.

—C.W.

required for a Zoom link. Wednesdays, 4-4:30 p.m. through Feb. 24 Free. 805-925-0994. engagedpatrons.org. Santa Maria Public Library, 421 S. McClelland St.

**STUFFED ANIMAL SLEEPOVER PACK: SANTA MARIA PUBLIC LIBRARY** Includes activities to do with your best stuffy as well as a booklist of fun bedtime reads and more. **Dec. 21, Dec. 22, Dec. 23 and Dec. 24** Free. 805-925-0994. engagedpatrons.org. Santa Maria Public Library, 421 S. McClelland St.

**TEEN ANIME CLUB PACK: SANTA MARIA PUBLIC LIBRARY** Register to pick up a Teen Anime Pack from the Santa Maria Public Library which will include something bookish, crafty, and of course, something yummy. When you register you will also be invited to a Zoom meeting on Monday, Dec. 28, from 4 to 5 p.m. **Dec. 21, Dec. 22, Dec. 23 and Dec. 24** Free. 805-925-0994. engagedpatrons.org. Santa Maria Public Library, 421 S. McClelland St.

**TEEN GRAB AND GO BOOK PACKS: SANTA**

**MARIA PUBLIC LIBRARY** The Library will have a limited number of teen book packs available for pick up at the Sidewalk Service window. The Grab-and-Go Book Bags are pre-packaged paper bags containing three books. Grab-and-Go Book Bags are not checked out and have no due date. **Dec. 17 and Dec. 18** Free. 805-925-0994. engagedpatrons.org. Santa Maria Public Library, 421 S. McClelland 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.

CULTURE & LIFESTYLE continued page 16

**MY 805 TIX**  
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**Holiday Lighthouse Virtual Tours**  
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Point San Luis Lighthouse

**The SMCT Drive Up Theatre: Christmas in Your Car**  
SAT., DEC. 19 CANCELLED  
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**Wednesdays Around The World: China**  
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 6  
Cass Winery, Paso Robles

**January Wine Seminar: Taste Like A Pro**  
SUNDAY JANUARY 24  
Cass Winery, Paso Robles

**Wednesdays Around The World: India**  
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 3  
Cass Winery, Paso Robles

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

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

*Join Us!*  
**Online Christmas Eve**  
Thursday, December 24th

7:00 p.m. Family Candlelight Service  
Type in the YouTube search bar: Santa Maria First UMC  
Look for premier

11:00 p.m. Traditional Candle Light Service  
Pipe Organ, carols, Jesu Bambino solo  
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**SATURDAY/SÁBADO 12/19 AT 9:30 AM**

**SATURDAY/SÁBADO 12/19 AT 6:00 PM**

**THURSDAY/JUEVES 12/24 AT 10:30 PM**

**MONDAY/LUNES 12/21 AT 7:30 PM**

**WEDNESDAY/MIÉRCOLES 12/23 AT 4:00 PM**

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¡Viva el Arte de Santa Bárbara! is sponsored by Kath Lavidge & Ed McKinley, Monica & Tim Babich, Anonymous, Russell Steiner, The Roddick Foundation, Audrey & Timothy O. Fisher, UCSB Office of Education Partnerships, The Stone Family Foundation, Linda Stafford Burrows, Marianne Marsi & Lewis Manring. Additional support comes from The Marjorie Luke Theatre's Dreier Family Rent Subsidy Fund, the Santa Barbara County Arts Commission, the California Arts Council, and the National Endowment for the Arts. The program is supported in part by the Santa Barbara Independent, the Santa Maria SUN, El Latino CC, Radio Bronco, Entravision/Univision Costa Central, and the Santa Barbara Unified School District. Viva is co-presented by The Marjorie Luke Theatre, the Guadalupe-Nipomo Dunes Center and UCSB Arts & Lectures, in partnership with the Isla Vista School Parent Teacher Association.

**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. [danaadobe.org](http://danaadobe.org). DANA Adobe Cultural Center, 671 S. Oakglen Ave., Nipomo, 805-929-5679.

**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, [5citysswimschool.com](http://5citysswimschool.com).

**POINT SAN LUIS LIGHTHOUSE VIRTUAL HOLIDAY TOUR** Join a live docent via Zoom for an interactive virtual tour of the Point San Luis Lighthouse. All online virtual tours are enhanced with traditional holiday decorations for the month of December. Wednesdays, Saturdays, 2 p.m. \$10. [pointsanluislighthouse.org/](http://pointsanluislighthouse.org/). Point San Luis Lighthouse, 1 Lighthouse Rd., Avila Beach.

**SAN LUIS OBISPO**

**DOWNTOWN HOLIDAY STROLL** Walk through Downtown San Luis Obispo to see businesses, windows and parklets lit up for the Holidays. Visit site to get your Merry map and itinerary to see bright and cheery decorated windows and other surprises and visual delights. Through Jan. 1, 2021 [SLOHolidays.com](http://SLOHolidays.com). Mission Plaza, 751 Palm St., 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](http://fcni.org/givejoy). Online, See website, San Luis Obispo.

**GRIEF RECOVERY AND SUPPORT PROGRAM** People say you have to let go and move on in your life, but they don't tell you how to accomplish that. This Grief Recovery Program will make that possible while providing guidance. Tuesdays, 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. through Jan. 19 Total: \$49 plus \$12 book. 714-273-9014. [cccl.org/classes/](http://cccl.org/classes/). Online, See website, San Luis Obispo.

**HANUKKAH MEMORAH LIGHTING** The socially distanced candle lighting ceremony, coordinated by the JCC-Federation, happens outside the steps of the Mission in San Luis Obispo each night of Hanukkah. Through Dec.

17, 5 p.m. Free. [jccslo.com](http://jccslo.com). Mission Plaza, 751 Palm St., San Luis Obispo.

**JCC-FEDERATION OF SLO PRESENTS HANUKKAH DOWNTOWN 2020** 10 participants maximum surrounding the menorah spaced at least 6 feet apart. Masks are required. Dec. 17, 5-6 p.m. Free. 805-426-5465. [jccslo.com/hanukkah.html](http://jccslo.com/hanukkah.html). Mission Plaza, 989 Chorro St, San Luis Obispo.

**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. [sloholidays.com](http://sloholidays.com). Mission Plaza, 751 Palm St., San Luis Obispo.

**NORTH SLO COUNTY**

**CHARLES PADDOCK ZOO'S VIRTUAL HOLIDAY MAGIC EVENT** An all-virtual family-friendly event. More details available soon. Check site or call for updates. Dec. 19 Charles Paddock Zoo, 9100 Morro Rd., Atascadero.

**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](http://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-Thursday, 11 a.m.-5 p.m. 805-691-9413. [standingsunwines.com](http://standingsunwines.com). Standing Sun Wines, 92 2nd St., Unit D, Buellton, 805-691-9413.



**READY TO ROCK**

Gallery at Marina Square in Morro Bay presents its photography exhibition, *Evening Skies*, through Tuesday, Dec. 29. This themed group show features photographic landscapes from local artists Karen Peterson, Terry Garvin, Jack McNeal, Beth Sargent, and Greg Siragusa. Call (805) 772-1068 or visit [galleryatmarinasquare.com](http://galleryatmarinasquare.com) to find out more about the show. The gallery is located at 601 Embarcadero, suite 10, Morro Bay. —C.W.

**LOMPOC/VANDENBERG**

**FLYING GOAT CELLARS: APPOINTMENT AND PICK-UPS** This winery specializes in Pinot Noir and sparkling wine. Call or check site for pick-up and appointment info. Mondays, Thursdays-Sundays, 11 a.m.-4 p.m. 805-736-9032. [flyinggoatcellars.com](http://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](http://presquilewine.com).

**SOUTH COAST SLO COUNTY**

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

**Holiday Giving**  
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We're giving away \$2,000!

Submit your receipts from shopping local this holiday season and you could be reimbursed up to \$200! Up to 20 winners will be drawn!

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**What's Your Take?** We know you've got an opinion. Everybody's got one!

This week's online poll 12/17 - 12/24

Do you trust the vaccine and the county's ability to get it distributed?

- Clinical trials show it's safe, but I'm not getting my hopes up that I'll get it anytime soon.
- It was developed way too fast for comfort—I'm going to wait to see how it plays out before getting it myself.
- I will be first in line to be vaccinated as soon as I can.
- I'm not coming within 100 feet of it, and the government can't make me!

Enter your choice online at: [SantaMariaSun.com](http://SantaMariaSun.com)

**ADOPT!**  
Adoptable Pets of the Week

**Chuy**  
Age: 2 year 6 months  
Breed: Chihuahua  
Sex: Male  
Weight: 16 lbs.

**Anderson**  
Age: 3 years 3 months  
Breed: American Pitbull  
Sex: Male  
Weight: 57 lbs.

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

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**MAKE YOUR OWN HOLIDAY CERAMIC CUP AT HOME** Offering a coco cup home kit. You will be provided with supplies needed, instructional video; we will glaze and fire your work for you. No experience needed; designed with the beginner maker in mind. Through Jan. 1, 2021 \$45. [slomakerspace.com/](http://slomakerspace.com/). SLOMakerSpace, 81 Higuera, suite 160, San Luis Obispo, 805-225-4783.

**MUSIC**

**SANTA MARIA VALLEY/LOS ALAMOS**

**A LITTLE BIT OF CHRISTMAS WITH THE CENTRAL COAST FOLLIES** Central Coast Follies presents a mix of familiar holiday songs and tap and jazz dance numbers, including a mariachi-vocalist, and fun soloists singing contemporary music and sing-a-longs. This covid-conscious drive-in theater style show benefits Elks Rodeo and the Follies. Purchase tickets online in advance. Dec. 18, 5:30-6:30 p.m. and Dec. 19, 5:30-6:30 p.m. \$20 adult; \$10 kids 6-12; free for ages under 5. 805-925-4125. [elksrec.com/events/2020/central-coast-follies-performance](http://elksrec.com/events/2020/central-coast-follies-performance). Elks Unocal Event Center, 4040 Highway 101, Santa Maria.

**THE SIMPLY SAXES QUARTET: DRIVE-IN HOLIDAY CONCERT** The quartet is led by Judy Lindquist and includes several members of the Riptide Big Band. The Quartet plans an audience sing-along for the finale. Dec. 17, 12-1 p.m. 805-925-0951 Ext. 2260. Elwin Mussell Senior Center, 510 Park Ave., Santa Maria.

**SAN LUIS OBISPO**

**CUESTA COMBOPALOOZA VIRTUAL CONCERT** Featuring six combos in all of their best pieces for the semester, these groups have been rehearsing outside since August and offer a super fun mix of styles and talent. You'll hear everything from Frank Sinatra classics to original compositions, to jazz standards. Dec. 17, 7-8:30 p.m. \$5. 805-546-3198. [tickets.cuesta.edu](http://tickets.cuesta.edu). Online, See website, San Luis Obispo.

**CUESTA FACULTY VIRTUAL HOLIDAY CONCERT** Local musicians that teach at Cuesta are teaming up — once again — to support student scholarships while bringing you a seasonal concert of holiday hits. Dec. 19, 7-9 p.m. \$5 students; \$15 general; \$25 families; \$125 for VIP. 805-546-3198. [tickets.cuesta.edu](http://tickets.cuesta.edu). Online, See website, San Luis Obispo.

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IMAGE COURTESY OF ANGELINA LAPOINTE

### Arts Briefs

#### DPAC Dancers perform to benefit Santa Maria Elks Recreation and Arroyo Grande's Clark Center

The Dellos Performing Arts Center (DPAC) Dancers will perform live onstage as part of Christmas in the Country at the Elks Unocal Event Center in Santa Maria, on Thursday, Dec. 17, from 6 to 7 p.m. The dance performance, set to a variety of seasonal music, will be streamed live through YouTube and Facebook, giving community members the chance to experience some of Christmas in the Country, a drive-through holiday light display, from the comfort of their own homes.

Admission to view the virtual show will be free, but donations will be accepted and split equally between DPAC, Santa Maria Elks Recreation, and the Clark Center for the Performing Arts. The performance will be available online through Monday, Jan. 4, 2021. Visit [elksrec.com](http://elksrec.com) or [clarkcenter.org](http://clarkcenter.org) for more info.

#### Santa Maria Civic Theatre cancels its former drive-up program, Christmas in your Car

Following the recent statewide stay-at-home orders, the Santa Maria Civic Theatre (SMCT) board members voted to cancel the group's next drive-up program, Christmas in your Car, which was originally scheduled to take place on Saturday, Dec. 19. Proceeds from this holiday-themed event were meant to help support SMCT during its longtime closure. For info on how to donate to SMCT and other ways to support the theater during this time, visit [smct.org](http://smct.org).

FILE PHOTO BY JAYSON MELLOW



#### Central Coast-based Zoom series showcases artist and guest speaker Zalika Azim

The Laboratory Series, a Black-identified artist showcase program co-hosted by R.A.C.E. Matters SLO and the Harold J. Miossi Art Gallery, holds its next episode with special guest speaker Zalika Azim, on Thursday, Dec. 17, from about 5 to 6:30 p.m. This virtual program is offered via Zoom, and admission to join the meeting is free.

A 30-year-old artist based in New York, Azim aims to conceptualize the mechanisms of personal and collective narratives, through a wide range of media, including photography, text, sound, and installation and performance art.

Through her art practice, Azim hopes to investigate the ways in which "memory, migration, movement, and the body are negotiated within the American landscape," according to press materials. Azim's work has been exhibited nationally and internationally, through group exhibitions at venues including The International Center of Photography, The Dean Collection, The Maryland Institute College of Art, Welancora Gallery, the Dorsky Gallery, Diego Rivera Gallery, the Instituto Superior de Arte, and the African American Museum in Philadelphia. Her first solo exhibit premiered in 2019 at The Camera Club of New York.

To find out more about Azim, visit [zalikaazim.com](http://zalikaazim.com). For more info on the Laboratory Series and its Zoom programming, visit [racematterslo.org](http://racematterslo.org).

Arts Briefs is compiled by Arts Editor Caleb Wiseblood. Send information to [cwiseblood@santamariasun.com](mailto:cwiseblood@santamariasun.com).



**WILD AT HEART:** Lompoc printmaker Angelina LaPointe is showcasing a variety of her block print illustrations through her 2021 Flora and Fauna calendar. Each month includes a different portrait of local wildlife.

## Save the dates

Local artists and photographers showcase their work through original 2021 calendars

BY CALEB WISEBLOOD

Imagine holding an entire art exhibition in the palm of your hand. For Orcutt-based contemporary painter Lori Mole, the concept isn't far-fetched, especially in the form of a desk calendar for 2021. Mole is one of a handful of local artists showcasing their original works in the form of next year's calendar.

"It makes a great stocking stuffer," said Mole, who usually draws inspiration from her travels around the country.

While the pandemic put a halt to most of her trips this year, Mole was able to paint new works from her past sketches, compiled in multiple sketchbooks for more than a decade.

With one painting per month, Mole's desk calendar highlights 12 of her acrylic pieces. *Rockin' Cab*, featured on the September page, was inspired by a drawing Mole sketched at a Cajun restaurant in Chicago.

"Musical instruments hung from the ceiling and all over the walls," said Mole, whose illustration of the eatery is riddled with musical notes and other stylistic details, inviting viewers to play a round of *I Spy* within the frame.

Mole's other pieces in the calendar include August's *Chardonnay Day*, a still life painted from a sketch she drew at Hudson Street Winery in Healdsburg, and November's *In the Mood*, inspired by a big band concert she attended in Santa Rosa years ago.

Meanwhile, Lompoc printmaker Angelina LaPointe is showcasing a variety of her block print illustrations through her 2021 calendar. As a linoleum block printer, LaPointe carves each of her images into the linoleum's surface, "creating what is essentially a giant stamp," she said while discussing the process.

"Each color has its own block, and they are layered to create the final image," said LaPointe, who is inspired by the traditions of Japanese woodblock printing, the bold color blocking of many comic books and children's books, and other motifs.

The theme of LaPointe's 2021 calendar is flora

#### Seize the day(s)

Find out more about each artist online: Lori Mole ([lorimole.com](http://lorimole.com)); Angelina LaPointe (on Instagram, [@sidecarpress](https://www.instagram.com/sidecarpress)); Paul Irving ([bigbigso.com/calendar](http://bigbigso.com/calendar)); and Amy Joseph ([centralcoastpictures.com](http://centralcoastpictures.com)).

and fauna, as each month includes a different portrait depicting either local or regional wildlife—both "familiar and exotic," the artist said.

"We have such a diverse climate and ecology. Go 50 miles and you're in a completely different microclimate," said LaPointe, who also attributes the style of her wildlife prints to art found in the science books she grew up loving.

"The 1970s earth tone color palettes and faded illustrations have a special place in my heart and are mirrored in my work," she said.

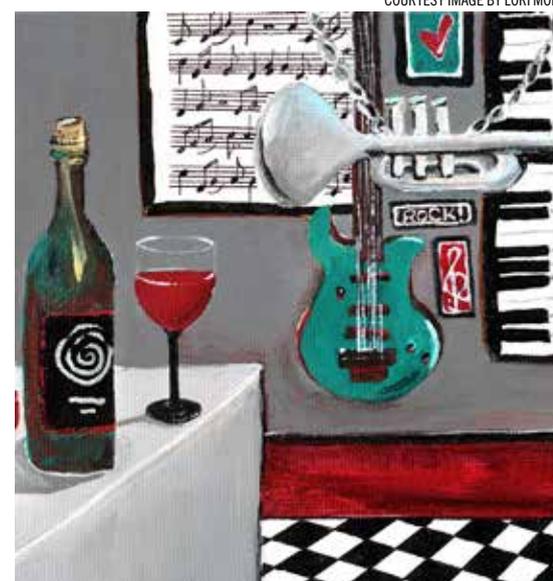
As for other locally produced calendars, a few Central Coast photographers are showcasing their portfolios through the format, including Paul Irving of Big Big SLO and Bayside Life. An avid boater as well as photographer, Irving captures most of his coastal landscapes around Baywood Park and Morro Bay. Irving's classic wall-style calendar offers patrons the chance to enjoy these scenic views "all year round," according to his website.

Arroyo Grande local Amy Joseph, owner and founder of Central Coast Pictures Fine Art Photography, also specializes in landscapes and is using her 2021 calendar to highlight several destinations throughout San Luis Obispo County.

"It's paradise for a photographer," Joseph said of her home region. "The landscapes are so diverse on the Central Coast. You can be at the beach taking amazing coastal shots one minute, and drive 5 miles inland and be at a vineyard in Edna Valley, or a few miles north and be hiking up one of the nine sister volcanic mountains with 360 degree views. I mean, what more could a photographer ask for?"

Of all the locales featured in her new photography calendar, Joseph's favorite spot to shoot at was probably the sea caves of Pismo Beach, based partly on nostalgia, she explained.

"That is where I used to spend most of my time as a kid at the beach. It was *the* place to get away



COURTESY IMAGE BY LORI MOLE

**THE MUSIC NEVER STOPPED:** Orcutt artist Lori Mole's desk calendar highlights 12 of her acrylic paintings, including *Rockin' Cab*, featured on the September page, which was inspired by a Cajun restaurant she once visited in Chicago.

COURTESY PHOTO BY AMY JOSEPH



**CAVE OF WONDERS:** Arroyo Grande photographer Amy Joseph, owner and founder of Central Coast Pictures Fine Art Photography, is using her 2021 calendar to highlight several destinations throughout SLO County, including the sea caves of Pismo Beach.

from the crowds at Pismo or Avila," Joseph said. "They were always fun to explore, even if you knew every inch of them. It was like having your own private paradise." ○

Send stocking stuffers to Arts Editor Caleb Wiseblood at [cwiseblood@santamariasun.com](mailto:cwiseblood@santamariasun.com).

## Modern magic

**Editor's note:** Staff Writer Karen Garcia and Arts Editor Caleb Wiseblood took over Sun Screen while the Starkeys enjoy their holidays off.

**D**irector Sharon Maguire (*Bridget Jones's Diary*) takes the audience on a lighthearted and comedic journey with Eleanor Fay Bloomingbottom (Jillian Bell, *Workaholics*, *Brittany Runs a Marathon*), an untrained fairy godmother who ventures into the human world to prove she's got what it takes to answer the call of a girl whose request for help was left unanswered. (113 min.)

### GODMOTHERED

What's it rated? **PG**  
 What's it worth, Karen? **Matinee**  
 What's it worth, Caleb? **Matinee**  
 Where's it showing? **Disney Plus**

**Caleb:** In a magical realm known as Motherland, fairy-godmothers-in-training hone their craft in an academic setting reminiscent of Hogwarts, minus the teen angst and, well, all things youthful really. The school's students and faculty are solely composed of elderly women, with one exception, Eleanor Fay Bloomingbottom (Bell), who appears to be in her mid-30s (at least from a human perspective—who knows how old she is in fairy years). As the youngest of the fairies, Bloomingbottom (whose surname I will not tire of) is an outlier who embodies becoming a fish out of water during her first visit to Earth, where she sets out to find a 10-year-old girl named Mackenzie Walsh. After reading a wishful letter from Walsh, Bloomingbottom is determined to make all of her dreams come true by granting her a “happily ever after.” But she's a few decades late,

as Walsh is a middle-aged, single mother by the time Bloomingbottom arrives. Recently widowed, Walsh (Isla Fisher, *Confessions of a Shopaholic*) and her two daughters live in Boston, Massachusetts, where she works as a reporter for a local television station. Bloomingbottom shows up at the station to convince Walsh that she's her fairy godmother in front of her co-workers during an awkward scene that echoes Buddy the Elf meeting his father for the first time (“I love you, I love you, I love you!”).

**Karen:** It's a hodgepodge modern-day fairy tale until Bloomingbottom realizes that happily ever after isn't so black and white. She quickly realizes Walsh might not need a knight in shining armor but a touch of positivity and to be intertwined back into her girls' lives. But nevertheless, as the dried-out saying goes, she persisted—and I mean that in a positive way. Bloomingbottom doesn't let go of her positive spirit and will not give up on her assignment. This fairy godmother has a dual mission: help Walsh and save The Motherland. Sadly, Bloomingbottom is in a dying industry slated to become a Tooth Fairy enterprise because humans don't believe in happily ever after (Gee, I wonder what would make us so cynical?). Seeing her interact with humans and deliver fish-out-of-water jokes is top notch and had me belly laughing. In almost every scene, you know that Bloomingbottom is going to get into some kind of mischief while trying to help the Walsh family. That being said, the story doesn't do anything new. In fact, it's following the footsteps of many Disney films, where several storylines somehow mesh together in one.

**Caleb:** It's in the same vein of films like *Enchanted*

and *A Simple Wish* (I wish Martin Short was my fairy godfather). And while I agree *Godmothered* doesn't bring much new to the table, it's still fun to see these actors take on the genre. Bell is never not funny as Bloomingbottom. Her childlike, but often hazardous, optimism in the face of one disaster after another reminded me of her role as wide-eyed Jillian Belk in *Workaholics*. In one scene, Bloomingbottom attempts to transform a pumpkin into a carriage, a la *Cinderella*, but ends up destroying the entire patch. You can easily imagine Bell's Belk coming to the same conclusion as her Bloomingbottom does: Well, let's try watermelons instead! And it's that level of perseverance that makes her occasional angry outbursts all the more effective (“Mother of fudge!”). My favorite character by far though is one of her Motherland mentors, Agnes, played by the always wonderful June Squibb (*Nebraska*, *About Schmidt*). Agnes is basically Bloomingbottom's guide throughout the film as she pops in from time to time to offer some godmotherly advice. Their convos are usually via “FaceTime,” but not our version of FaceTime, as Agnes's head magically appears inside of an old, wooden clock (Droid users can relate).

**Karen:** What I appreciated most from writers Melissa Stack and Kari Granlund is that they



**BE CAREFUL WHAT YOU WISH FOR:** Fairy-godmother-in-training Eleanor Fay Bloomingbottom (Jillian Bell, left) takes on her first assignment, Mackenzie Walsh (Isla Fisher, right), in Disney's *Godmothered* (2020).

rewrote the fairy tale formula of needing a prince to have a “happy ending.” Of course Walsh has a love interest, her colleague at the news station, but it's not a primary goal for her or Bloomingbottom. Time and time again, these modern-day fairy tales end with a couple coming together in love. It's a lovely thought, but finding happiness in family, friends, and work is more of a life lesson. So take the time to enjoy the loved ones in your home by curling up on the couch, sharing a large bowl of popcorn, and laughing together at Bloomingbottom's magical journey. ○

Staff Writer Karen Garcia and Arts Editor Caleb Wiseblood wrote Sun Screen this week. Comment at [gstarkey@newtimesslo.com](mailto:gstarkey@newtimesslo.com).

## Film Reviews

PHOTO COURTESY OF NETFLIX



**GLAMOROUSLY INCLUSIVE:** Three Broadway stars get off their high horse to help Emma (Jo Ellen Pellman), who wishes to be accepted for who she is and take her girlfriend to the prom.

### THE PROM

What's it rated? **PG-13**  
 When? 2020  
 Where's it showing? **Netflix**  
 Ryan Murphy (*Glee* and *Eat Pray Love*) takes a stab at adapting the book-turned-broadway musical *The Prom* to a television screen near you. In a high school gym in a small, conservative Indiana town, angry parent-teacher-association moms argue against allowing lesbian student Emma Nolan (Jo Ellen Pellman) to bring her girlfriend to prom, ultimately canceling the event altogether.  
 An 11-hour drive away in flashy New York, three Broadway stars lament their plummeting careers. Dee Dee Allen (Meryl Streep), Barry Glickman (James Corden), and Angie Dickinson (Nicole Kidman) are three narcissists who are losing relevance and need to come up with something to put them back in the spotlight, something that will make them more likable. What's more likable than using their stardom platform to help a cause? A quick search of

trending topics on Twitter leads them to Emma, their charity case. With the magic of theater glamour and liberal values, the three believe they can shake up small-town bigotry. Several musical numbers later, you'll realize this isn't a theatrical masterpiece by any means, but it's fun, shiny, and earnest. (132 min.)  
 —Karen Garcia

### MANK

What's it rated? **R**  
 When? 2020  
 Where's it streaming? **Netflix**  
 David Fincher (*Seven*, *Fight Club*, *Gone Girl*) directs this black-and-white period drama that chronicles the life of screenwriter Herman J. Mankiewicz (Gary Oldman, *Darkest Hour*) during the development of the script he's most famous for, *Citizen Kane*. The film starts in 1940, when a bedridden Mankiewicz, or Mank as his colleagues lovingly call him, is recovering from a broken leg and

dictating the first draft of his *Kane* script to his secretary (Lily Collins), who quickly begins to detect its main character is scathingly based on newspaper tycoon William Randolph Hearst. She's not wrong. The film goes back and forth between this setting and flashbacks of Mank's various encounters with Hearst (Charles Dance) throughout the 1930s, including various dinner parties at Hearst Castle, where he starts to develop an offbeat friendship with Hearst's mistress, Marion Davies (Amanda Seyfried). As a Fincher fan, I enjoyed *Mank* not only as a stylistic love letter to the Old Hollywood era but also as a much-needed reprieve from the gritty thrillers he's become most known for. And call me biased, but the San Simeon setting and Hearst history stuff immediately drew me in. It's fun to hear Oldman say lines like, “I took a cab from Morro Bay,” or Seyfried rave about some gaudy picture house in Santa Barbara. Woo! (132 min.) ○  
 —Caleb Wiseblood

PHOTO COURTESY OF NETFLIX



**FROM HOLLYWOOD TO HEARST CASTLE:** Screenwriter Herman J. Mankiewicz (Gary Oldman) develops a friendship with William Randolph Hearst's mistress, Marion Davies (Amanda Seyfried), in director David Fincher's *Mank*, now streaming on Netflix.

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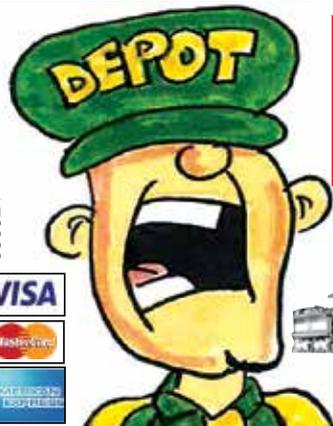
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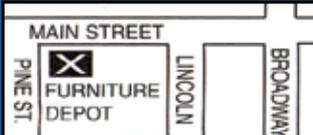
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**DYNAMIC DUO:** Husband and wife Jean Gaillard (right) and Meg Brown (left), owners of Cuyama Homegrown, purchased their ranch in New Cuyama in 2001, where they grow fresh fruits and vegetables throughout each season of the year.



**JAM FAM:** “March through December, I’m doing jams,” said Cuyama Homegrown co-owner Meg Brown, whose personal favorite is the pear lime jam. Additional jams are made from apricots, peaches, plums, and other fruits grown at the farm.



**TAKE YOUR PICK:** “The day people order their produce, we’re picking it from the ground that same day,” Cuyama Homegrown co-owner Jean Gaillard told the *Sun*. “It hasn’t been stored for two weeks. It’s totally fresh. I believe that’s a real big plus.”

## There’s no place like home

*Cuyama Homegrown produces high-quality, farm-fresh fruits and vegetables year round*

BY CALEB WISEBLOOD

The tried-and-true—and still apropos—idiom “the bee’s knees” is a bit of an understatement when describing the husband-and-wife duo behind Cuyama Homegrown.

“It’s the most pure honey you could ever dream about,” said Jean Gaillard, co-owner of the farm with his wife, Meg Brown, while discussing the two bee hives on their property.

One of the secrets to maintaining this so-called purity within the hives’ product is a lack of human interference, Gaillard explained.

“We don’t add sugar water, so the bees totally rely on their honey,” he said. “What they collect will help them to survive in wintertime. So whatever you extract is a top quality honey.”

But honey isn’t the only thing to buzz about at Cuyama Homegrown, where Gaillard and Brown produce a wide assortment of vegetables and fruits throughout the year. The latter usually end up in Brown’s famous farm-fresh jams.

“March through December, I’m doing jams,” said Brown, who was surprised she and her husband could actually agree on which jam is Cuyama Homegrown’s best: the pear lime jam.

Additional jams are made from apricots, peaches, plums, and other fruits grown at the farm. Brown also specializes in pickled fruits and vegetables, including pickled beets and pickled artichoke hearts.

“I have this ancient pickle book that I got from my mother. I don’t know where she got it because it’s older than she was,” said Brown, who believes both she and Gaillard have their mothers to thank for their career paths.

“Both of us grew up with mothers who were serious gardeners. That’s where it all came from,” she said. “When I was growing up, I did not particularly enjoy being dragged out to the garden to pick peas and beans. But you can pick up a lot by osmosis.”

While Brown grew up in upstate New York, Gaillard was born and raised in Belgium, but he left the country shortly after college to pursue owning his own farm someday.

“I found out that it was almost impossible to start a farm like this in Belgium, where farmland is very expensive. It’s a little overpopulated country, so that means every year it’s losing a lot of farmland to urbanization,” said Gaillard, who worked as a rural engineer after earning his bachelor’s degree in agriculture.

Gaillard met Brown after separate work opportunities brought them both to West Africa.

“He was there doing his engineering work. I was there working in agriculture development. But we met through horses,” Brown recalled.

As members of the same horse club in Niamey, Gaillard and Brown bonded during various trail rides and other club outings. Shortly after the group embarked on one particularly majestic moonlit ride to a small, seemingly hidden oasis, Gaillard was inspired to ask Brown if she wanted to join him in attempting to re-create the adventure.

“He said, ‘Why don’t we go out there again?’ I said, ‘I don’t know how to get there.’ ‘Oh, I think I can figure it out,’ he said,” Brown laughed. “So off we go with no water, no money, no nothing, just us and the horses. We could not find it, and we were totally lost. We eventually found our way back to his house.”

“That was the first and last time I trusted him to take me anywhere,” she added.

Except California, where the couple eventually relocated after getting married. The pair purchased their land in New Cuyama in 2001.

Nineteen years later, the circumstances of the ongoing pandemic and shelter-in-place orders haven’t drastically altered the couple’s work schedule, farming from home on their 80-acre ranch.

“Even before COVID, we really didn’t leave the ranch that much. There’s too much to do, really. We go into town maybe once a week or once every two weeks for shopping,” Brown said, citing monthly treks to either Santa Maria or Taft for supplies.

One thing both Cuyama farmers pride themselves on is their use of environmentally friendly practices and technologies, Brown explained.

“Cuyama Valley is designated as a severely water-deficit basin. We try to be as conservative as possible with water management,” Brown said. “We have to be very careful with our water; our well drops every year. It doesn’t seem to recharge.”

“It takes a couple of years after a good rainfall for it to even kind of have a slight increase,” she added. “But overall, it’s dropping.”

In their orchard, the couple uses special tubing to send irrigation directly to their crops’ roots, “instead of sitting on top and not being absorbed,” Brown said. The hoop tunnels on the farm also help conserve water.

Over the years, Cuyama Homegrown has come to provide products for local businesses, including Cuyama Buckhorn and Condor’s Hope Vineyard, but it also takes custom orders from the public while supplies last. Anyone can join the farm’s client list by contacting Gaillard and Brown through their Facebook page.

Depending on the season, the farm produces lettuce, radish, kale, spinach, cabbage, broccoli, onions, garlic, beets, squashes, melons, eggplants, pumpkins, and cucumbers, while its neighboring orchard grows peaches, apricots, plums, apples, figs,

### Down-home

Find out more about Cuyama Homegrown on Facebook, or follow the farm on Instagram (@cuyamahomegrown).



**WE CAN PICKLE THAT:** Aside from jams at Cuyama Homegrown, co-owner Meg Brown also specializes in pickled fruits and vegetables, including pickled beets (left) and artichoke hearts (right).

pears, persimmons, and much more. The couple also raises poultry, and their eggs are offered for sale through Cuyama Homegrown as well.

When it comes to Cuyama Homegrown’s produce though, one of the biggest benefits for consumers, in Gaillard’s opinion, is the freshness aspect.

“The day people order their produce, we’re picking it from the ground that same day,” he said. “It hasn’t been stored for two weeks. It’s totally fresh. I believe that’s a real big plus.”

Arts Editor Caleb Wiseblood is jammin’ at [cwiseblood@santamariasun.com](mailto:cwiseblood@santamariasun.com).

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