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Let Him Go:  
Suspenseful [17]

# SUN



*The Wildling  
Museum exhibits  
art installations  
you can see  
through its  
windows [16]*  
BY CALEB WISEBLOOD

## Through the glass

**NEWS** What it takes for schools to open [4]

**NEWS** Settlement aims to close part of Main Jail [7]

**EATS** Get your shrub on [18]

# OUTDOORS

Explore the great outdoors!

PUBLICATION DATE:  
FEBRUARY 18

Check in to the beauty that surrounds you and explore the creeks and valleys of the Central Coast with us in our first ever **OUTDOORS** special publication!

Sun

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FEBRUARY 11 - FEBRUARY 18, 2021 VOL. 21 NO. 50

The Wildling Museum of Art and Nature might be closed to the public due to the COVID-19 pandemic, but that doesn't mean you can't head over to the museum and check out some art. Arts Editor Caleb Wiseblood has the details about two new art installations that are up and viewable from the sidewalk through The Wildling's windows [16].

This week, there's a new path forward for schools to reopen [4]; a lawsuit settlement means partial closure at Santa Barbara County's Main Jail [7]; and get to know the shrub—herbaceous, fruity vinegars that are perfect for cocktails [18].

Camillia Lanham  
editor



**CLOUDY NATURE:** Items suspended from the ceiling on invisible thread illustrate the water cycle in Holli Harmon's The Nature of Clouds, viewable through The Wildling Museum's Tower Gallery windows.

Cover photo courtesy of The Wildling Museum of Art and Nature > Cover design by Alex Zuniga

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## Political Watch

On Feb. 2, **U.S. Rep. Salud Carbajal (D-Santa Barbara)** introduced a resolution in the House of Representatives in support of front-line workers during COVID-19. "Since the outbreak of this deadly virus, countless medical workers, emergency management personnel, public safety officers, grocery and food service workers, postal and delivery workers, farmworkers, and other front-line workers have continued to work every day to meet the essential needs of the American public, often at great personal risk," a statement from Carbajal's office said. The resolution states that "the House of Representatives honors and recognizes the contributions of all front-line workers and essential critical infrastructure personnel and reaffirms the responsibility of Congress to find ways to meet the needs of front-line workers, in addition to our elderly, for the most effective personal protective equipment and other necessary tools to safely carry out their jobs." Resolutions do not have the force of law, according to Carbajal's office, but rather "serve as a tool used to express the sentiment of the House on a particular subject in order to spur congressional action." Carbajal's resolution was cosponsored by fellow House members from California, Texas, Maryland, Arizona, and Connecticut.

**Gov. Gavin Newsom** issued a statement on Feb. 5 to thank the Biden-Harris administration and Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for fully reimbursing California for its emergency relief programs during the COVID-19 pandemic. "It is now the policy of the Biden-Harris administration to provide state and local governments reimbursement for emergency costs for FEMA-eligible services—including the cost of National Guard personnel mobilization, the purchase of personal protective equipment, emergency feeding programs, and sheltering at-risk populations—at a 100 percent rate dating back to January 2020," according to Newsom's office. The governor emphasized the importance of state programs that protect the homeless population in California, which will now be eligible for full reimbursement under the new policy. "On behalf of the 23,000 people experiencing homelessness who have benefited from Project Roomkey in California since April of last year, I say thank you President Biden," Newsom said. "Your administration's decision to fund this pandemic response—meant to protect the most vulnerable homeless Californians from COVID-19—has saved countless lives."

**U.S. Reps. Salud Carbajal (D-Santa Barbara) and Jimmy Panetta (D-Monterey) and U.S. Sen. Jeff Merkley (D-Oregon)**, sent a Feb. 4 letter to the Principal Deputy Director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service expressing "concern with the recent decision to forego listing the monarch butterfly under the Endangered Species Act and urging substantial investments in monarch conservation efforts so this crucial pollinator does not go extinct before protections are in place," a statement said. According to Carbajal's office, the monarch butterfly is threatened by the loss of its habitat and climate change, with recent population counts showing a 99.9 percent decline in the monarch populations that migrate to California in the winter. "Just two decades ago, roughly 1.2 million monarchs overwintered in California," the statement said. "This year, that number is down to 1,914." While the Fish and Wildlife Service recognized the severity of the monarch's endangerment in December, it opted not to list it under the Endangered Species Act because other species took higher priority. "This decision effectively puts the monarch butterfly on a waiting list but denies the species immediate protection," the statement said. Carbajal, Panetta, and Merkley wrote in the letter that, "to ensure the monarch does not become the 48th species to go extinct while on the candidate list, we urge the service to make substantial investments in bold conservation actions that not only prevent the butterfly from further decline but also ensure long-term population stability." ○

## Santa Barbara County needs to be in red tier for schools to reopen

As Santa Barbara County recovers from its third and highest-peak in COVID-19 cases, health officials say the region still has a long journey ahead to reach the next tier in the state's reopening system. "Our COVID metrics, indeed, have significantly decreased since peaking mid-January. We're seeing about a 60.5 [percent] reduction in our case rate, and we're seeing about a 38 percent reduction in our testing positivity," Public Health Director Dr. Van Do-Reynoso said at a Feb. 5 press conference.

But, she continued, "in order for us to reach the red tier, our case rate needs to decrease by an additional 80 percent, and our testing positivity needs to decrease by an additional 20 percent."

Getting the community into the red tier is an essential step toward reopening schools. According to the Blueprint for a Safer Economy webpage, public kindergarten through 12th grade schools can reopen for in-person instruction once their county is in the red tier for at least five days, and once a school posts its COVID-19 Safety Plan on its website homepage.

"Simply put, we need to have fewer than 32 new cases a day to reach to the red tier, and right now we're averaging 157 new cases per day," Do-Reynoso said. "We still have a lot of work to do."

In the meantime, the county is helping schools prepare their COVID-19 Safety Plans so they can reopen as soon as it's allowed under state guidelines.

"We are reviewing the safety plans and offering suggestions for improvement, and awaiting corrections. Some of these schools are very, very close to having a top notch school safety plan ready to go," Do-Reynoso said.

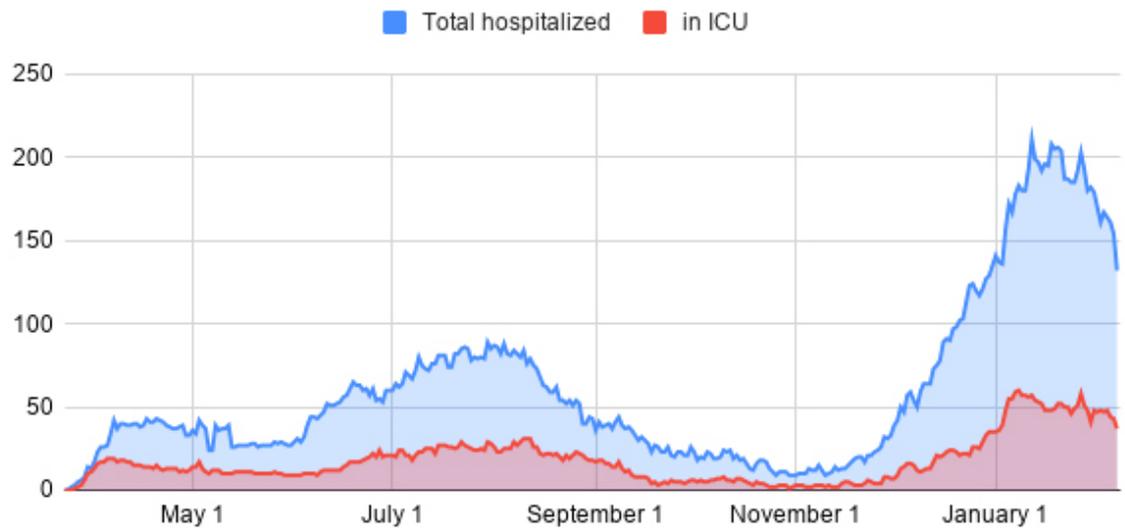
She announced later that the Santa Barbara Unified School District and the Buellton Unified School District had their safety plans approved by the public health team.

Another looming question is when educators will be able to receive the COVID-19 vaccine in Santa Barbara County. The county plans to prioritize education and child care workers, as well as food and agriculture employees and emergency services personnel, in the next phase of vaccine rollout. Community members who are 65 or older will also be eligible for the vaccine in this next phase. But Public Health Officer Dr. Henning Ansgor said that the county is still struggling to vaccinate residents in the first phase—health care workers and people 75 or older who want to be vaccinated.

At the press conference, Ansgor said Santa Barbara County has about 36,000 residents over the age of 75 and about 26,000 health care workers. He added that while 75 percent of the elderly want to accept the vaccine at this point, only about 50 percent of the health care workers countywide do. At Cottage Hospital, about 80 percent of workers accepted the vaccine, Ansgor said, whereas that number sits around 30 percent at skilled nursing facilities.

"That brings the number of vaccines needed to cover this initial phase to roughly 80,000, because remember, two shots are needed for every person,"

## Santa Barbara County COVID-19 hospitalization



**COMING BACK DOWN:** COVID-19 case rates and testing positivity finally peaked in mid-January, and hospitalizations and ICU rates followed suit in late January, but public health officials say Santa Barbara County still has a ways to go to make moves through the state's tiered reopening system.

Ansgor said. "Given the fact that the Public Health Department has been receiving about 6,000 vaccine doses per week for the whole county, it is obvious that it could easily take 12 weeks or longer to complete this task."

Although, Ansgor said, "the vaccine supply to the Public Health Department is slowly increasing." The next phase—individuals 65 and older and some essential workers, like teachers—will likely require even more doses than the first phase, Ansgor said.

"We are estimating that we require anywhere from 70,000 to 100,000 vaccine doses just to cover these groups, depending on how many of these actually want to be vaccinated," he said. "I'm sure you can imagine that it is very challenging to plan and schedule for vaccinations if the amount of available vaccine is determined only week by week. It's also difficult when we're not in a position to schedule vaccinations ahead of time, because we do not know how much vaccine we will actually receive next week."

When enough doses do become available, Ansgor confirmed that the county plans to open up eligibility to the 65-and-up age group, teachers, farmworkers, and emergency services personnel concurrently.

"We are thinking even if there is only a 60 percent acceptance of the vaccine that we would need about 100,000 doses," Ansgor said. "So we anticipate a lot of people in this particular group. We are hoping that we are getting more vaccines and that it doesn't take even longer than this first phase that we're just about to finish."

—Malea Martin

## Orcutt school district has no stance on proposed cannabis dispensaries

Several cannabis companies are vying for retail space in Orcutt, and although some community members had hoped the local school district would weigh in on proposed dispensary locations, that's not going to happen. For now, anyway.

"At this time, the district is not looking at taking up this issue," Orcutt Union School District Superintendent Holly Edds wrote in a statement to the *Sun*.

According to Santa Barbara County's existing cannabis ordinance, one cannabis dispensary is allowed within each of the county's six unincorporated community plan areas, including Orcutt and Los Alamos. The county's process

to determine which companies are awarded these lucrative permits includes three phases and is supposed to heavily weigh the company's background and its potential fit within a community.

Six applicants are fighting for a single permit in the Orcutt area, and most of the proposed dispensaries would be within a half mile from Orcutt Union schools.

Both dispensaries proposed by SLO Cultivation and Beyond/Hello would be located at 3550 and 3596 Orcutt Road respectively, situated about two blocks away from both Joe Nightingale Elementary and Lakeview Junior High. The Natural Healing Center's proposed location at 405 E. Clark Avenue is four blocks away from Orcutt Junior High and Orcutt Academy High School, and two others would be just a block farther from Orcutt Junior High than that. The last applicant's dispensary would be about a mile away from the nearest school, Ralph Dunlap Elementary.

Although Edds said in January that she was discussing "what action we are able to take, if any," with the school district's attorney, the district decided to hold off.

"I really don't have anything to add," Edds wrote in a Feb. 9 email to the *Sun*. "At this time we are respecting the process the county Board of Supervisors has established and our board of trustees may choose to weigh in at a later time."

Lanny Ebenstein is a former member of the Santa Barbara Unified School District board of education and recently served as the education chair for the Santa Barbara County Taxpayers Association. In a January letter to the Orcutt Union School District, Ebenstein argues that the district can and should take a stance against the two dispensaries proposed for Orcutt Road, both of which would be located between Joe Nightingale and Lakeview Junior High.

"Though the addresses of the two proposed cannabis dispensaries may be a few dozen feet more than the mandatory 600-foot buffer required between cannabis dispensaries and schools and child-serving services, location of a dispensary at either site would violate the spirit of the ordinance," Ebenstein's letter reads. "Moreover, that not just one, but two schools would be negatively impacted would make either of the proposed dispensaries even more detrimental to the community."

Although school districts typically shy away from any involvement in politics, Ebenstein said this is really more of a zoning issue.

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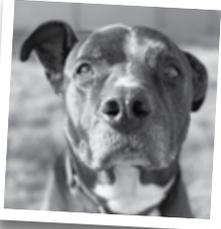
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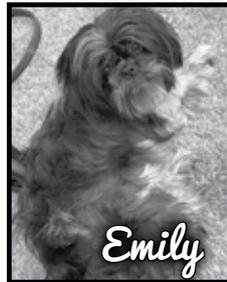
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NEWS from page 4

"This isn't a political issue in terms of taking a position on a candidate for office or something like that," he told the *Sun*. "Zoning, planning, or development projects often impact schools. Those are all appropriate issues for boards of education and school districts to weigh in on."

The potential for a pot shop in Orcutt has been controversial. It's a small area, and all of the proposed dispensaries are within walking distance from schools or grocery stores and restaurants that kids frequent.

It's a tough situation, according to Edwin Weaver, executive director of Fighting Back Santa Maria Valley, a nonprofit aimed at promoting resilience against substance abuse and violence among youth. Marijuana is legal, he said, but no one seems to want it growing or selling in their neighborhoods.

One thing that would help though, Weaver said, is to have leaders in the cannabis industry who are serious about keeping marijuana out of the hands of young people. That means more stringent advertising limits, strategic dispensary locations, and aggressive ID checks. Until then, Weaver said community members still have a say.

"I think the big thing is that it's very important that people are a part of the process," he said. "And if the community doesn't want this to happen they need to let the county Board of Supervisors know that they really don't want this there."

—Kasey Bubnash

## Solvang discusses regional housing needs

During the Feb. 8 Solvang City Council meeting, the council questioned whether the city has enough development space to meet the state's next set of recommended housing need allocations.

In this cycle, Solvang is tentatively projected to need 225 more housing units, 63 of which must be allocated to "very low-income housing," 45 for "low-income housing," 25 for "moderate-income housing," and 92 for "above-moderate-income housing."

After a staff presentation, Councilmember Mark Infanti said he was confused about what the city could do in order to meet these requirements.

"We're pretty built-out in this town. That is where I get really confused. When I ask what we're supposed to do, I'm a little bit lost as to what we can accomplish," Infanti said.

Solvang isn't on the hook to ensure the units are actually built, however it is responsible for ensuring there are adequate development sites and that regulatory obstacles are minimized.

The state Department of Housing and Community Development works with the Santa

Barbara County Association of Governments to assign Santa Barbara County with the number of housing units that it must plan for during a specified planning period. This cycle, which is the sixth for the Regional Housing Needs Assessment, estimates that the county should plan for 24,856 more housing units between February 2023 to February 2031.

It's a significant increase over the fifth cycle allocation of 11,030 housing units. According to a staff report, the increase is not unique to Santa Barbara County. Instead, it's a result of new factors such as overcrowding and cost burdens, which weren't considered in past cycles.

During Solvang's meeting, county Association of Governments Director of Planning Michael Becker said that many local governments question whether their city can meet the housing allocation requirements.

For instance, Becker said the city of Santa Barbara's allocation is increasing to about 8,000 housing units, which the city is struggling to accommodate.

"I will say, with the state's new accessory dwelling unit law, a good portion of your

housing units could be accommodated through assumptions related to accessory dwelling units," he said.

The new accessory dwelling unit law that went into effect on Jan. 1, 2021, states that landlords and homeowners can now add two more units, an accessory dwelling unit and a junior accessory dwelling unit, to any residential lot.

This cycle of the Regional Housing Needs Assessment is in a draft stage, and the allocations are being reviewed by the Department of Housing and Community Development. The numbers are expected to be finalized by the end of 2021.

—Karen Garcia

## Racial justice groups collaborate to host community dialogue

How does the justice system work? Who does it work for? Does the justice system treat all Americans equally?

These are among the questions posed at the start of a Feb. 4 virtual community dialogue on the justice system, hosted by Showing up

FILE PHOTO BY JAYSON MELLOM



**ENOUGH SPACE:** Solvang recently discussed whether it can meet regional housing needs allocations in relation to its available development space.

for Racial Justice (SURJ) Santa Maria in partnership with the Racial Justice Committee of the Santa Barbara County Public Defender's Office.

The meeting brought together a panel of Santa Barbara County public defenders to talk about "the racial bias that we as members of the public don't see" in the criminal justice system, SURJ member Pam Gates said at the start of the event. It marked the first community dialogue sponsored by SURJ Santa Maria.

Attorney Juan Higuera, a founding member of the Racial Justice Committee and a public defender, started the panel discussion by breaking down one of the most common ways people come into contact with the police: traffic stops.

"In 2020 Stanford University put out a study called the Open Policing Project, and among other things, they reached several conclusions about

arrests, specifically about traffic stops," Higuera said. "After reviewing over 100 million police reports from across the country, Black drivers were 20 percent more likely to be stopped by police than their white counterparts."

But what's more, Higuera continued, is the study "pretty explicitly established that there might be some sort of racial bias in these stops, because they found that once the sun went down and it was nighttime, when a person's ethnicity behind the wheel is a little harder to discern, ... that the stop rates for Black individuals dropped."

This is just one reason for the disproportionate number of people of color within the criminal justice system, Higuera said. Those disparities are evident in Santa Barbara County, too, but the data can be challenging to root out, he added.

In response to a community member's question about whether enhancements are charged against people of color disproportionately to white people for comparable offenses in the county, Higuera said the county's data is "not quite there yet."

"What I can say is that our clientele is about 75 percent people of color," Higuera continued. "So prosecution and enhancements are going to affect people of color more often than white people just by sheer numbers, that they represent more defendants."

According to Data USA, white people make up nearly 44 percent of Santa Barbara County's population.

One way the local criminal justice system is lowering incarceration is through mental health diversion, according to public defender and panelist Rebecca Seldin.

"Currently I am the treatment court attorney in South County," Seldin said at the meeting. "Once [cases have] been diverted into mental health diversion, I follow them along, I help the client along as they progress through treatment and hopefully, ideally, graduate from the program successfully, terminate their case."

Seldin said, in her experience, local judges are "very receptive to mental health diversion."

"I've had a number of folks that have graduated from the program earning a dismissal of their case and expungement of the charge," Seldin said. "So that's going really well. I hope to see it expand more."

Adrian Galvan, current co-chair of the Racial Justice Committee and a local public defender, emphasized that the committee "seeks to work with the community," but does not seek to "substitute its agenda for anyone else's."

"There are amazing organizations who are on the ground combating systemic racism and racial inequity," Galvan said. "They are the specialists. The Racial Justice Committee is another tool that we as an ally, and as advocates, can provide." ○

—Malea Martin

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FILE PHOTO BY STEVE E. MILLER

# Settled in court

County Jail battles COVID-19 outbreak that started in an area a recent lawsuit settlement will shut down for good

BY MALEA MARTIN

A settlement reached six months ago in *Murray v. County of Santa Barbara*—a class action lawsuit addressing conditions for inmates at the county jail—is official after the court issued an order granting final approval on Feb. 1. But lawyers on the case say the work to implement the settlement is only just beginning.

Meanwhile, the Santa Barbara County Jail continues to face challenges in keeping COVID-19 outbreaks at bay, despite major reductions in the jail's population. As of Feb. 5, the Main Jail had 35 infected inmates stemming from an outbreak in the basement dormitory, Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Office Public Information Officer Raquel Zick told the *Sun* via email.

The now-approved settlement lays out a remedial plan that the county must implement to improve conditions at the jail, particularly for inmates with disabilities.

"The remedial plan will significantly reduce the use of solitary confinement for anybody inside the jail," said Disability Rights California lawyer Aaron Fischer, who worked extensively on the case. "It will increase out-of-cell time and programming, particularly for people with mental health treatment needs. ... For the first time, people with disabilities should expect to have safe and accessible facilities inside the jail. That includes where they sleep, where they shower, where they use the facilities."

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, according to the settlement, the jail operated above its intended capacity. This led to "dozens of people sleeping on the floor, people being housed in makeshift housing units, like in the basement rooms that were never meant to house human beings," Fischer said.

When the pandemic hit, the county made significant efforts to reduce its jail population. If the county remains committed to a reduced population in the long run, it would "significantly reduce the cost of compliance and the timeline for the county to achieve compliance with the remedial plan," according to Fischer, especially with the new, 376-bed jail facility near Santa Maria that he said is slated to open in June.

Santa Barbara County Public Defender Adrian Galvan said at a Feb. 4 community dialogue, hosted by Showing Up for Racial Justice Santa Maria, that pandemic-implemented policies like zero bail and reduced jail population are leading to larger conversations about what incarceration could look like after the pandemic.

"There is a lot of talk amongst county stakeholders as to whether or not the Santa Barbara County Jail in Santa Barbara should remain open as a jail, or whether the North County jail should be the only jail in the



**IMPROVING CONDITIONS:** The settlement reached in *Murray v. County of Santa Barbara* in July 2020 is now finalized thanks to a recent court order. Litigators say it may take years to implement the settlement's remedial plan to improve conditions at the jail, particularly for inmates with disabilities.

county," Galvan said. "So when it comes to litigation that is aimed at health and safety of the folks in the county jail, which *Murray* is that, we're hopeful."

The Feb. 1 court order establishes a team of individuals who will serve as remedial plan experts to advise the court on whether the county is in compliance with the settlement. Their areas of expertise range from mental health and suicide prevention, to disability compliance, to custody operations. The court will have jurisdiction for at least four years to ensure the county complies with the plan, but Fischer said this could be extended if needed.

"How long it's going to take and how much it costs, that is very much contingent on what the jail population looks like moving forward," Fischer said.

Zick from the Sheriff's Office said that "since the settlement agreement, the Santa Barbara Sheriff's Office has already staffed the Continuous Quality Assurance unit, who will monitor progress of the action items in the settlement. Additionally, we are working towards approval of one additional custody deputy and an administrative office professional, which would then cover both the Main Jail as well as the Northern Branch Jail."

But whether the Sheriff's Office will commit to keeping the jail population low after the pandemic passes is not yet clear. As the *Sun* reported on Jan. 6, the Sheriff has pointed to lower jail populations as a reason for an increase in reported crimes in Santa Barbara County, which were trending higher at the end of 2020 as compared with previous years.

At the time of the *Sun*'s Jan. 6 reporting, Zick said a "significant number" of those arrested for crimes and released on pandemic-implemented zero-bail policies had been caught reoffending, though she didn't say how many.

Fischer believes it's too early to understand the impacts of a reduced jail population or zero-bail policies on public safety. But what is known, Fischer argued, is that overcrowded jails impact not just those incarcerated, but also those who staff the jails and the surrounding community.

"When you have these congregate setting facilities and a pandemic hits, it puts enormous pressure on the public health system, on ICU capacity," he said.

The facility is currently dealing with a COVID-19 outbreak that started in the jail's basement dormitory. According to the Sheriff's Office, several inmates reported symptoms on Feb. 2, which prompted the jail to test inmates in two separate housing units. Twenty-six turned up positive in the first round of testing, and as of Feb. 5, Zick said 35 total are infected.

"We are working closely with Public Health and our Wellpath team to determine the source of this outbreak," she said.

Zick said infected inmates are "housed in either negative airflow (negative pressure) cells or are housed in cohorts with other COVID-positive inmates in a separate area of the facility from the rest of the jail population."

Fischer said the basement dorms where

**'... we have told them for a long time, those units are tinderboxes for harm and for infectious disease spread.'**

—Aaron Fischer, Disability Rights California lawyer

the outbreak started, under the settlement agreement, were "supposed to be shut down Jan. 1, 2021." Zick said the Sheriff's Office would close this housing unit "when it is safe to do so."

"The basement housing area was closed prior to the COVID-19 pandemic and reopened shortly after the pandemic began, to allow for greater social distancing," she said.

"We aren't running to court because we're trying to give them some flexibility because of the pandemic," Fischer said of the basement dorms remaining in use. "But we have told them for a long time those units are tinderboxes for harm and for infectious disease spread. So I was very saddened, but not shocked, to see that that is where the outbreak happened." ○

Reach Staff Writer Malea Martin at [mmartin@santamariasun.com](mailto:mmartin@santamariasun.com).



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IMAGE COURTESY OF THE CITY OF LOMPOC

## Making a market

*Lompoc wants to bring back a new and improved version of the weekly swap meet that ended in 2014*

BY MALEA MARTIN

Local vendors will soon have a new opportunity to sell their wares in Lompoc, and the city wants to hear from the business community about the best way to bring the vision to life.

The Lompoc Outdoor Community Market would revamp the city's weekly swap meet tradition (which ended in 2014) to create a community gathering space and a place for local commerce. The city hasn't yet announced a specific start date for the market, but it's slated for early April, and the plan is to hold it on Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. once it gets off the ground.

Longtime Northern Santa Barbara County local and City Councilmember Jeremy Ball remembers swinging by the swap meet during his teenage years.

"It was always abuzz," Ball said. "I have fond memories of it."

But in 2014, the swap meet faced some challenges when the city received complaints from surrounding resident and commercial neighbors about noise, trash, and parking issues, Recreation Manager Mario Guerrero said at a Dec. 15 City Council meeting.

"Due to the inability to reach consensus to address all the concerns, the council discontinued the service agreement with the concessionaire" at the time, Guerrero said.

But in recent years, Mayor Jenelle Osborne told the *Sun*, some community members have called wanting to reinstate the once-popular event.

"We began a discussion about it prior to COVID, because there were community members saying, 'We miss this opportunity, and we think it could be done better,'" Osborne said. "So we made a council request."

This time, Lompoc is committed to striking the right balance between the improved market and the community's needs. The now city-operated event will come to fruition following upcoming February and March workshops, during which individuals and businesses are invited to be a part of the planning process.

"I think to create such a diverse, local celebration is amazing, but as we're explaining the process and trying to make it easy for our entire community to participate, it's really up to us to make sure that there's equitable access," Councilmember Ball said.

The proposal is to hold the market in the downtown parking lot located at I Street and Ocean Avenue. Vendors will have a couple of different booth options: a 13-by-13-foot spot, a 20-by-13-foot spot (large enough to accommodate one vehicle), or a spot in a designated area for food trucks and booths.

"This is all conceptual," Guerrero said at the council meeting. "We're totally open to any layout that's going to bring people to the market."

Another key aspect of the new market is the way it incentivizes surrounding businesses to participate. Osborne said the current proposal allows businesses within one block of the market to have their booth fee waived, and any brick-and-mortar business in Lompoc will have the



**NEW MARKET IN TOWN:** The city of Lompoc will soon be offering the Lompoc Outdoor Community Market as a new opportunity for local vendors to sell their goods.

opportunity to get a reduced booth fee.

"The idea was to address the concerns that some of the surrounding businesses had about taking away business from them," Osborne said. "Say someone like Sissy's [Uptown Cafe] feels impacted. Well, hey, let's give you a booth to sell your pies, or South Side [Coffee Co.] could come over and serve coffee."

While the exact details of the booth fee structure will be guided by feedback gathered during the upcoming workshops, Osborne is confident the market will help bring economic vitality and a sense of community back to Lompoc after the rough pandemic year.

"In the time of COVID, it's really an opportunity to potentially help some brick-and-mortars reconnect with their community by being able to, at least once a week, have an outdoor market where people want to come and socialize but can still honor all of the parameters we have regarding COVID," Osborne said.

With the proposed market being located in Councilmember Ball's district, he said it holds "a soft spot" in his heart.

"Open Streets, our downtown market—those have been the best things that I think Lompoc has done in many ways, in terms of celebrating community over the past few years," he said. "So I think this is an extension of that opportunity. ... This is right with what I'm hoping for the future of not just this district, but for Lompoc."

Those interested in learning more about the market or participating in the city workshops can contact the Lompoc Recreation Division at (805) 875-8100 or recreation@ci.lompoc.ca.us to receive updates and information.

### Highlight

• The city of Santa Maria Utilities Department wants to make recycling more accessible to local businesses by offering complimentary bins. "The bins can be used around the workplace, break rooms, and are ideal for under desks," according to the city. "Businesses can select from two options of bins: a tall, wall-hugger with a lid for cans and bottles (or a lid for paper) or a smaller option for paper recyclables." Businesses can get up to four bins while supplies last. The offer is only valid for businesses with city trash and recycling collection services. Those interested can contact the Utilities Department at (805) 925-0951, Ext. 7270, to schedule their recycling bin pickup. ○

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

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# DEATH NOTICES

**ERIC KEITH GLIDDEN**, 54, of Santa Margarita passed away 1/9/2021 arrangements with Kuehl-Nicolay Funeral Home

**JANIS Y. WALLACE**, 92, of Grover Beach passed away 1/10/2021 arrangements with The Neptune Society

**MARK SHANE JENSEN**, 49, of Santa Maria passed away 1/21/2021 arrangements with Lori Family Mortuary

**RICHARD NEWMAN**, 63, of Atascadero passed away 1/22/2021 arrangements with Blue Sky Cremation Service

**HENRY GOMEZ**, 71, of Nipomo passed away 1/25/2021 arrangements with Marshall-Spoo Sunset Funeral Chapel

**MARJORIE GAIL MILLER**, 93, of San Miguel passed away 1/26/2021 arrangements with Kuehl-Nicolay Funeral Home

**JOAN MARGARET COY**, 75, of Paso Robles passed away 1/26/2021 arrangements with Kuehl-Nicolay Funeral Home

**RAULEVERETT CUELLAR, JR.**, 42, of Arroyo Grande passed away 1/26/2021 arrangements with Marshall-Spoo Sunset Funeral Chapel

**HENRY "HL" LOPEZ, SR.**, 67, of Santa Maria passed away 1/27/2021 arrangements with Magner-Maloney Funeral Home & Crematory

**JOHN ANTONIO LUJANO**, 52, of Nipomo passed away 1/28/2021 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

**JUANITA GARCIA**, 86, of Nipomo passed away 1/28/2021 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

**ADEL FREY**, 89, of Atascadero passed away 1/29/2021 arrangements with Blue Sky Cremation Service

**HELEN DUKE**, 91, of Los Osos passed away 1/30/2021 arrangements with Blue Sky Cremation Service

**GEORGE WILLIAM OLMSTEAD**, 92, of Arroyo Grande passed away 1/30/2021 arrangements with Marshall-Spoo Sunset Funeral Chapel

**RACHEL R. MALDONADO**, 85, of Oceano passed away 1/30/2021 arrangements with Marshall-Spoo Sunset Funeral Chapel

**LINDA JACKSON**, 77, of Paso Robles passed away 1/31/2021 arrangements with Blue Sky Cremation Service

**ROLF ERIKSON**, 58, of Morro Bay passed away 1/31/2021 arrangements with Blue Sky Cremation Service

**JOYCE AMADOR**, 82, of Santa Maria passed away 1/31/2021 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

**JOSE "JOE" S. ACOSTA**, 69, of Santa Maria passed away 2/1/2021 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

**ROBERT "BOB" PADILLA**, 73, of Santa Maria passed away 2/1/2021 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

**CLIFTON "CHUCK" STANLEY III**, 56, of Santa Maria passed away 2/1/2021 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

**WILLIAM BERNARD**, 66, of Pismo Beach passed away 2/1/2021 arrangements with Blue Sky Cremation Service

**RICHARD E. HARDEN**, 89, of Atascadero passed away 2/2/2021 arrangements with Kuehl-Nicolay Funeral Home

**ROY JOSEPH PAPILLON**, 90, of Oceano passed away 2/2/2021 arrangements with Marshall-Spoo Sunset Funeral Chapel

**BARBARA ANN BROWN**, 80, of Paso Robles passed away 2/2/2021 arrangements with Kuehl-Nicolay Funeral Home

**MICHAEL FOSTER**, 74, of Santa Maria passed away 2/4/2021 arrangements with Magner-Maloney Funeral Home & Crematory

**GERALD "GERRY" KIKUCHI**, 77, of Arroyo Grande passed away 2/3/2021 arrangements with Marshall-Spoo Sunset Funeral Chapel

**ISRAEL TREJO**, 38, of Santa Maria passed away 2/3/2021 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

**ERIC WAYNE BATRUM**, 60, of Paso Robles passed away 2/3/2021 arrangements with Kuehl-Nicolay Funeral Home

**JAMES RAY WEAVER**, 76, of Santa Maria passed away 2/4/2021 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

**WILLIAM A. "BILL" HARES**, 86, of Santa Maria passed away 2/4/2021 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

**MICHAEL JOE TOZZI**, 74, of San Miguel passed away 2/4/2021 arrangements with Kuehl-Nicolay Funeral Home

**LARRY LEE BACHMAN**, 81, of Santa Maria passed away 2/4/2021 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

**LORENZO "JUAN RIVAS" JIMENEZ-RIVAS**, 47, of Grover Beach passed away 2/5/2021 arrangements with Marshall-Spoo Sunset Funeral Chapel

**EDWARD A. SMITH**, 79, of Santa Maria passed away 2/6/2021 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

**AMOS L. DAMPIER JR.**, 65, of Santa Maria passed away 2/7/2021 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

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- 55% No, and it's hard to say when it will be available to my demographic.
- 22% I haven't, but I have close friends or family who did.
- 18% I got my first dose, but now I'm waiting on my second.
- 5% Yes, I'm fully vaccinated.

22 Votes

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STAFF WRITERS | Malea Martin, Karen Garcia, Kasey Bubnash  
ARTS EDITOR | Caleb Wiseblood  
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## Progress report

### What marks should we give to Lompoc Unified School District for its performance?

BY RON FINK

So, after nearly a year of COVID-19 related closures, let's give the Lompoc Unified School District (LUSD) a "progress report"; how is it doing and what grade would it get if this were a classroom project? I am not an educator, but I think we can figure this out based on the progress made so far.

Does the LUSD have any incentive to reopen the schools for in-person learning? It doesn't look like it because the school district's learning facilities are still closed to students. In the meantime, we property owners are still paying school taxes as if the kids were still using all those empty classrooms. In fact, the teachers don't even have to show up on school property or even be in the district boundaries to teach their classes.

When businesses were initially ordered shut, the owners promptly figured out how to reopen following the guidelines established by the county Health Department. Unlike local business owners who have lost their income due to closures, LUSD employees and administrators continue to get paid.

When classrooms closed, the state allowed what was termed "distance learning" in lieu of physical attendance in the schools so they could qualify for federal education funding. This meant that teachers had to learn how to effectively instruct students and get them to participate using electronic media, and it meant that students had to have the capability to access classes via the internet.

The plan failed to consider that many LUSD students and their families had no access to the internet and/or the fact that many parents either didn't speak English or didn't have the capabilities that credentialed instructors have to help their children with their lessons.

According to a recent superintendent's letter to parents on Jan. 22, distance learning is summarized this way: "Due to the increased struggles of many of our students that have resulted in an increase in failing grades this school year, LUSD has developed a revised grading policy for this school year."

So, instead of returning kids to the classroom where they may have a better chance of understanding the materials being presented, the LUSD is simply lowering the bar. To put this in perspective, the LUSD already has an incredibly low level of achievement according to a 2020-21 evaluation by niche.com. "According to state test scores (for Lompoc), 26 percent of students are at least proficient in math and 46 percent in reading."

To most that would be a failing grade, and if a private business had a track record like that no one would use their services. This means that students, parents, and taxpayers are being disenfranchised by the poorly run public school system.

The superintendent's letter also discusses progress toward reopening schools this way: "Principals continue to meet weekly to discuss reopening. The current focus is on class creation and parent notification." So instead of physically reopening the schools, they have sat around for more than 40 weeks talking about it and sending memos to parents trying to justify continued closures.

Even though the Centers for Disease Control has been publishing reopening guidelines for several months, the LUSD is just now getting

around to submitting plans to the county. The superintendent's letter explains it this way: "COVID Safety Plans (CSPs) and Illness & Injury Prevention Plans (IIPPs) are due to county health departments and the CDE by Feb. 1."

How long it will take the county and CDE (California Department of Education) to return comments and/or approve the plans isn't clear, and there is no mention if any of the steps in these plans have been implemented or how long it will take to complete required employee training, classroom modifications, or acquire needed materials.

The LUSD school board met in January, and one of the items discussed was just when the district planned to reopen. Only one member of the board was an advocate for establishing a date to start the process in early March.

But other board members, some who were former employees of the district, were hesitant to set a date. The county has established an unrealistic reopening threshold at 25 cases per 100,000 residents, a number that hasn't been realized for several months—and considering the current case rate, in all likelihood it won't be achieved any time soon.

Even though students are not present, there have been reports of infections at every school facility in the district. It appears that school children aren't the problem but district employees who aren't taking preventive measures seriously.

It makes you wonder if the district IIPP and CSP will be complied with or even enforced by management once the district reopens. Seems to me that there is a significant management issue that needs to be resolved.

Considering all the things I have discussed in this commentary, what sort of grade would you give to the LUSD? Using the new grading schedule published in the superintendent's letter, I would give a "no credit," and using the grading schedule used when I went to school, I would give a failing grade.

It's important to note that Manzanita charter school located on Vandenberg Air Force Base is open for in-person learning; many other school districts and charter/private schools in

the county are also open for business. If they figured it out, why can't the LUSD; could it be that the employee unions, and not the school administration, are in charge?

The sad part of all of this is that the most vulnerable children of our community are being tossed under the bus by a public school system that has no incentive to reopen the schools. ○

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

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## LETTERS

### Planners must pay attention to neighborhoods' reality

Los Alamos is in the midst of a development blunder aided by our own county Planning Department. This can happen to any small town, or any neighborhood within a city.

A builder seeks to develop an acre-and-a-half lot that is bordered by three roads. He may build as many as 11 dwellings. One of the potential access roads has long provided a safe and quiet place for walking and jogging, pushing infants in strollers, young children riding tricycles and bikes, and folks walking with a cane or in a wheelchair. This road is also, however, the easiest and most profitable choice for the developer.

How has our Planning and Development Department handled the permitting process? County transportation experts first downplayed or sought to ignore the one-lane bottleneck

LETTERS continued page 11

## THIS MODERN WORLD

by TOM TOMORROW

**WELCOME BACK TO THE SUNDAY TALKING ABOUT STUFF SHOW! OUR TOPIC TODAY--ARE CONSERVATIVES BEING SILENCED BY BIG TECH AND THE MEDIA?**

**FIRST UP, SPECIAL GUEST JOSH HAWLEY! SENATOR, TELL US YOUR STORY!**

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**AND I WRITE OP-EDS! OTHER-WISE, YES.**

**NEXT UP, IT'S THE MYPILLOW GUY, WHO WAS KICKED OFF TWITTER FOR SPREADING ELECTION FRAUD CONSPIRACIES! NOW, WE ONLY WANT TO DISCUSS YOUR TWITTER BAN--**

**DOMINION VOTING MACHINES WERE RIGGED BY COMMUNISTS! THEY SWITCHED VOTES FROM TRUMP TO BIDEN! YARGLE BARGLE BARGLE!**

**HOLD ON, MY PRODUCER IS SAYING SOMETHING.**

**AH, SINCE DOMINION IS FILING A LOT OF LAWSUITS LATELY, I'VE BEEN ASKED TO CLARIFY THAT EVERY WORD YOU ARE SAYING IS NONSENSE, INCLUDING YARGLE, BARGLE, AND BARGH.**

**LET'S MOVE QUICKLY ALONG TO MARGORIE TAYLOR GREENE, WHO WAS STRIPPED OF COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS DUE TO ALLEGED EXTREMISM! CONGRESSWOMAN, YOUR THOUGHTS?**

**Q IS REAL! SCHOOL SHOOTINGS ARE STAGED! FOREST FIRES ARE CAUSED BY ROTHSCHILD SPACE LASERS!**

**THESE ARE THINGS I USED TO BELIEVE, LAST WEEK! I'M A DIFFERENT PERSON NOW!**

**WELL, REPUBLICANS HAVE YOU--AND DEMOCRATS HAVE A.O.C. AND THE GREEN NEW DEAL! TWO SIDES OF THE SAME COIN, IF YOU ASK ME!**

**NEXT: AS REPUBLICANS FIGHT TO DEFEAT BIDEN'S ENTIRE AGENDA, WILL DEMOCRATS MEET THEM IN THE MIDDLE--OR RESORT TO UNSEEMLY PARTISANSHIP?**

**ALSO, DO I REMEMBER ANYTHING THAT HAPPENED FOR THE PAST FOUR YEARS? LET ALONE LAST MONTH? DO I EVEN KNOW WHERE I AM OR WHY I'M SAYING THESE WORDS?**

**WE'LL ASK OUR EXPERTS AFTER THESE MESSAGES.**

**SUITALABSTH**

LETTERS from page 10

on this road. It would experience greatly increased traffic and corresponding risk for accident and injury. The transportation planning supervisor then stated that he was not concerned, as "liability is covered by design immunity as long as we follow adopted county/federal standards and guidelines."

Rather than try to understand the community, or call for a traffic study, the planner simply opened the Traffic Engineering Handbook, turned to a general formula, and plugged in some numbers to generate an answer.

The planner further assumed only one new home on each of the parcels within the lot. Zoning here, however, allows for as many as three dwellings on each parcel. So again, his conclusions grossly underestimate the number of vehicles and resulting traffic problems.

County planners ought to pay more attention to realities on the ground and to the interests of existing residents. They need to respect the unique characteristics of a street or a neighborhood and avoid damaging the fabric of communities.

There may well be pressure from Sacramento for our county to expand the housing stock. There are, though, several other lots in our town that are more suitable for multiple-home development.

Seth Steiner  
Los Alamos

### Keep rallying for Trump

We must continue to support President Trump now as we have for the past four years. He has every right to encourage his supporters to rally peacefully before Congress to support and promote important Republican issues now. When the president was at Walter Reed Army hospital to treat his case of COVID-19, his supporters rallied peacefully for three days while he was being treated.

In the past four years, millions of we American patriots all over the U.S. have rallied for President Trump on local street corners, on boats, on cars, on trucks, on motorcycles, and at the airports where the president arrived in Air Force One. None of these rallies were anything but peaceful and well run, as were the Tea Party rallies before them. At times, we were challenged by rogue agitators, but we always maintained our calm. In the past year we have seen local peaceful rallies and demonstrations for various causes turned into riots by imported and paid agitators to impose chaos on all aspects of the scenes and cause millions of dollars of damage to property and loss of lives.

Now this is just what happened in Washington on Jan. 6. We citizens are peaceful and respectful. But our rally was usurped by these paid rogue infiltrators who formed a chaotic scene, and the media and Democrats tried to blame it all on Trump. This is not his doing.

Trump is a true American patriot and has done more in four years to improve the lives of the average American citizens and to stabilize the foreign world than any president before him. He is the political Einstein of the business and financial world.

He deserves our support and praise and not mean actions by the Congress for something he did not inspire or had any control over. Even the Capitol Police were surprised.

But to all of our detriments, the seldom seen and uninformed American voters have elected a political "Humpty Dumpty" and animal of the deep swamp in Washington, the very senior 78-year-old Joe Biden with growing dementia.

Who will save us now?

Justin M. Ruhge  
Concerned Taxpayers  
Lompoc



## Too many kids are having to wait To help us grow, will you please donate?

It's hard to imagine anyone intentionally hurting an innocent child. But it happens every day in our community - a tragic reality for approximately 537 children right now. They have suffered physical or emotional abuse, neglect, or abandonment by those they trust the most - their parents or caregivers.

At CASA, our volunteers are resilient, tenacious, and committed to supporting the lives of these vulnerable children. As we approach one year of isolation, shut downs, changes, and fear, CASA remains poised - with your help - to meet the growing need. Your generous, tax-deductible donation will help us recruit, train, and support more CASA Volunteers to help children heal and thrive.

Donate or apply to volunteer at [SBCASA.ORG](https://SBCASA.ORG)



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## Coastal Community Builders Announces the Summit Club at Rice Ranch

Coastal Community Builders (CCB), the local home builder that has been shaping communities of the Central Coast for more than the past 30 years, is thrilled to announce the completion of the Summit Club at Rice Ranch in Orcutt, California.



Rice Ranch is the only Master Planned Community in Santa Barbara County with large, executive homes nestled in 580 acres of open space. CCB is currently building the final phases of 180 new homes at The Meadows and Groves at Rice Ranch which is centrally located between San Luis Obispo and Santa Barbara. Included in the purchase of a CCB



home at Rice Ranch is private access to the exclusive Summit Club.

The Summit Club is the pinnacle of Rice Ranch, where location luxury, and lifestyle become one. The private club was designed for the casual and cultured Central Coast way of life. It is the place to bring your friends and impress them with all that makes this club extraordinary. Members and their guests can spend the day savoring the exquisite pool, cabanas, and hot tub area that overlooks the majestic oak studded valley below or challenging friends to endless games of pickleball or bocce ball. In addition to the vast list of outdoor amenities that embrace the picturesque natural surrounding landscape, the impressive clubhouse and prep kitchen's impeccable design, will surpass all expectations.

"The response to our homes at Rice Ranch has been heartening. In a time when many industries have been faced with endless challenging obstacles, we are ever grateful to be considered an essential employer as we have been able to continue to create job opportunities for our local communities while building beautiful neighborhoods. We are thrilled to share our newly completed Summit Club with you," stated Jennifer Daniels, CCB's Sales and Operations Manager.

Since 1988, COASTAL COMMUNITY BUILDERS has helped to shape the Central Coast, building on a tradition of value, quality, and homeowner satisfaction. Headquartered in Pismo Beach, CA, the company has grown from its humble beginnings to become a leader in new home construction. Coastal

Community Builders prides itself in building more than 3,000 new homes since the company's inception spanning two counties from as far south as Solvang, all the way north to Templeton.

From creating floor plans to finalizing color palettes, every design detail is performed in-house, with an enthusiastic team of experienced professionals who have a great love of design and superior construction experience. Crafted with homeowner satisfaction in mind, resident preferences are carefully curated and inspected to ensure the most ideal amenities and lifestyle choices are built into each home.

Coastal Community Builders is committed to exceeding expectations through high quality homes enveloped in welcoming communities that better the lives of each resident every day.



For a limited time, CCB, Inc. is inviting the public to tour the brand-new Summit Club by appointment only. To make your tour reservation, you can call (805) 623-5607 or email sales@ccb1.net.

To view additional photos of the Summit Club, please visit [www.riceranchhomes.com](http://www.riceranchhomes.com).

## Inmates in waiting

How long does it take to build something? In the case of the the **Santa Barbara County Jail** under construction in Santa Maria, at least eight years, maybe longer. **Santa Barbara County Sheriff Bill Brown** has touted the facility as the future savior of the county's justice system woes since at least 2013.

Every malady afflicting the county's decrepit **Main Jail** in South County will be nourished back to health when its famed North County partner opens its shiny, shipshape cell doors.

Food quality issues? New jail.

Unaccessible to inmates with disabilities? New jail.

Tight quarters? New jail.

Poor visibility for guards? New jail.

Increasing recidivism rates? New jail.

Need a new jail? New jail.

Looking for government funding? New jail.

Just wait! We'll fix it all once our new jail is open. Promise!

And yet, here we are again. Pining away for the now \$121 million facility to be spacious, open, and COVID-19 germ free. The Main Jail has 35 and counting COVID-19 cases stemming from an outbreak in its basement dorm, which the jail isn't even supposed to be using right now because the conditions are so subpar—but due to social-distancing requirements, the **Sheriff's Office** was left with no other options but to use it for inmate housing.

Even the attorneys who just settled a lawsuit with the county over the Main Jail's conditions are placing their bets on the elusive facility's grand opening. **Disability Rights California lawyer Aaron Fischer** said the new jail's opening would reduce the cost of complying with the settlement reached in *Murray v. County of Santa Barbara*. And one of those conditions is, yes, closing those basement dormitories!

Those dorms were supposed to be shut down on Jan. 1, but **Sheriff's Office Public Information Officer Raquel Zick** said the basement wouldn't be closed until "it is safe to do so." Which I totally get! We don't need anymore jail inmates or the people who work with those inmates to get COVID-19. So the Sheriff's Office is caught between a crappy basement and COVID-19.

Don't worry, though, Fischer said he wasn't going to run back to court and force the basement's closure: "We're trying to give them some flexibility because of the pandemic."

"But we have told them for a long time, those units are tinderboxes for harm and for infectious disease spread," he said.

Our favorite fantasy behind bars was slated to open in spring of 2019. Then, the fall of 2020. Now, maybe sometime in 2021. If we're lucky. See, all you pro-government advocates out there, this is why we can't have nice things!

And although the county's **Northern Branch Jail Project** website states that construction was completed on Nov. 5, 2018, the facility is apparently still under construction, but is estimated to open in spring 2019. So could we maybe use our precious resources to update that website for the public please?

Fischer said he'd heard that the facility would be completed in April 2021 and possibly open by June 2021. We haven't received either an affirmative or a negative from the Sheriff's Office about when the fateful day will come. But it's coming! Just be patient. ○

The Canary is also waiting on a new cage. Send comments to [canary@santamariasun.com](mailto:canary@santamariasun.com).



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## What's Your Take?

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

**This week's online poll 2/11-2/18**

**When do you think schools should reopen?**

When teachers and school staff get vaccinated.

Now. It's been way too long already.

Not until the county's COVID-19 metrics return to pre-holiday surge levels.

In the fall. COVID-19 isn't going away anytime soon.

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

# HOT STUFF

FEB. 11 – FEB. 18  
2021

**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!



## PLANT AHEAD

The San Luis Obispo Botanical Garden presents a virtual event, *Capturing California's Flowers: Natural History in the Digital Age*, on Saturday, Feb. 20, from 1 to 2 p.m. via Zoom. Local botanist Jen Yost, a Cal Poly biology professor and director of the Hoover Herbarium, will discuss natural history topics and guide viewers in exploring digital plant collections. A donation of \$5 to \$10 is suggested. Call (805) 541-1400 or visit [slobg.org](http://slobg.org) to find out more.

—Caleb Wiseblood

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE SLO BOTANICAL GARDEN

## 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 Elverhoj Way, Solvang, 805-686-1211.

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

**NEW PERSPECTIVES** A collection of paintings by the gallery's newest artists. Through March 1 Gallery Los Olivos, 2920 Grand Ave., Los Olivos, 805-688-7517, [gallerylosolivos.com](http://gallerylosolivos.com).

**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).

### SANTA MARIA VALLEY/LOS ALAMOS

**FEBRUARY 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. **Feb. 11, Feb. 12** and **Feb. 13** Free. [engagedpatrons.org](http://engagedpatrons.org). SM Public Library, 421 S. McClelland St., Santa Maria, 805-925-0994.

**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).

**RAINBOW MACRAME FOR TEENS: SANTA MARIA PUBLIC LIBRARY** Brighten up your space with a neon macramé rainbow wall decoration. Packs include everything they need to make their own macramé project. This program is open to teens in junior high and high school only. Registration is required. **Feb. 20** Free. 805-925-0994. [engagedpatrons.org](http://engagedpatrons.org). SM Public Library, 421 S. McClelland St., Santa Maria.

**TECH TALKS: LIVE ON INSTAGRAM** Every Tuesday sit down with one of our technical staff and learn about the ins and outs of their craft. Get the exclusive with our host Erik Stein. Tuesdays, 3:30 p.m. PCPA: The Pacific Conservatory Theatre, Santa Maria, 805-922-8313, [pcpa.org](http://pcpa.org).

**TEEN ANIME CLUB PACK: SANTA MARIA PUBLIC LIBRARY** Pick up an Anime Club Pack from the Santa Maria Public Library which will include something bookish, crafty, and of course, something yummy. When you register for our Anime Program Pack, you will also be invited to an Anime Club Zoom meeting. **Feb. 13, Feb. 15, Feb. 16, Feb. 17, Feb. 18, Feb. 19** and **Feb. 20** Free. 805-925-0994. [engagedpatrons.org](http://engagedpatrons.org). SM Public Library, 421 S. McClelland St., Santa Maria.

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

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

**SUBMIT YOUR EVENTS**

**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).**

**WRITING CLUB TO GO: SANTA MARIA PUBLIC LIBRARY** The writing club is designed for students up through grade 12. The writing packs include a journal, and a variety of activities to inspire amateur authors. Each month the kits will feature new and exciting projects that will help strengthen writing skills. Registration required. **Feb. 20** Free. 805-925-0994. [engagedpatrons.org](http://engagedpatrons.org). SM Public Library, 421 S. McClelland St., Santa Maria.

### SAN LUIS OBISPO

**ART CENTRAL'S 10TH ANNIVERSARY** Enjoy three weeks of special sales, live demos, giveaways, and more. Follow Art Central on social media for updates. Mondays-Saturdays, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. through Feb. 27 Free. 805-747-4200. [artcentralso.wordpress.com](http://artcentralso.wordpress.com). Art Central, 1329 Monterey St., San Luis Obispo.

**CALL FOR ARTISTS: ART CENTRAL'S VIRTUAL GALLERY** Most Fridays, Art Central publishes a "Virtual Gallery" and is looking for more artwork to include. Please email us your artwork so we can continue to encourage, support, and inspire the local art community. Attach your image, name, title, medium, size and any inspiring words you would like to share. Fridays, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. through May 28 Free. 805-747-4200. [artcentralso.wordpress.com/blog/](http://artcentralso.wordpress.com/blog/). Online, San Luis Obispo.

**CAMBRIA CENTER FOR THE ARTS: VIRTUAL EXHIBIT WITH PLEIN AIR PAINTERS** A call for artists. Contact the Gallery Director for questions. Through Feb. 28 Free; entry fees vary. 805-434-7060. [cambriacenterforthearts.org](http://cambriacenterforthearts.org). Online, See website.

**LOVE IN SWEATPANTS** A virtual Valentine's sketch comedy show that you can enjoy from your couch. The perfect date night for these unprecedented times. All performances will be live and include sketch, stand-up, improv, storytelling, and more. **Feb. 13**, 7-9 p.m. \$10. [centralcoastcomedytheater.com](http://centralcoastcomedytheater.com). Online, See website, San Luis Obispo.

**PANEL DISCUSSION: GREASE, WATER, AND STONE** Join SLOMA for a lively panel discussion with printmakers Steve Andrews, Conrad Schwable, and Jeff Sipple to discuss his Gray Wing exhibition, "Grease,

Water, and Stone: An Ocean Works Retrospective." The exhibition features lithographs created by Ocean Works Press between 1979 and 1983. Through Feb. 28, noon Free. 805-543-8562. [slo.ma.org/panel-discussion-ocean-works/](http://slo.ma.org/panel-discussion-ocean-works/). Online, See website, San Luis Obispo.

**ROSEY 'N' BARB: STILL AT IT AFTER ALL THESE YEARS** Barbara and Robert "Rosey" Rosenthal, award-winning printmakers, have been art partners since 1980. For this unique show, Barbara is showing her rich, landscape paintings and Rosey his colorful, gouache paintings. Mondays-Saturdays, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. through March 29 Free. 805-747-4200. [artcentralartsupply.com](http://artcentralartsupply.com). Art Central, 1329 Monterey St., San Luis Obispo.

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

**SLOPE PAINTS THE SERENE MAGIC OF SANTA RITA RANCH: A VIRTUAL ART EXHIBIT** SLOPE painters celebrate with The Land Conservancy of SLO their acquisition of the incredible Santa Rita Ranch, a 1715-acre jewel at the top of Highway 46 West between the Pacific Ocean and Templeton. The Land Conservancy will receive a portion of art sale proceeds. Through Feb. 28, 6-midnight Free. 805-544-9096. [slope-painters.com](http://slope-painters.com). Online, See website, San Luis Obispo.

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

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

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

**FUSED GLASS SUSHI SET** Perfect serving set to impress your guests or give as a gift. All materials

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AGES 50+

# REC & PARKS

## DRIVE-IN BINGO

FEBRUARY 12, 2021

### FEELING LUCKY

The Santa Maria Recreation and Parks Department and the Santa Maria Valley Senior Club are co-hosting a Valentine's Drive-in Bingo event at the Elwin Mussell Center parking lot on Friday, Feb. 12, from 10 to 11:30 a.m. The event is open to adults ages 50 and older, who can participate from the safety of their own vehicle. Bingo games will be announced via radio. Admission is free. Call (805) 925-0951, Ext. 2260, or visit [smucc.org](http://smucc.org) for more info.

—C.W.

### ARTS

**FEATURES SMALL PAINTINGS AND DRAWINGS**, no bigger than 8 inches square, in all media (showcased in the Upper Gallery). Featured Artists: Tyler Priest, Carole McDonald, Stevie Chun, Suzanne Leon, and Lisa Kanofsky. Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays-Sundays, 11 a.m.-5 p.m. through Feb. 27 Free. 805-772-1068. [galleryatmarinasquare.com](http://galleryatmarinasquare.com). Gallery at Marina Square, 601 Embarcadero suite 10, Morro Bay.

**JANE MORGAN: MOKUME GANE** Create beautiful designs using a modified Mokume Gane technique. **Feb. 20**, 1-4 p.m. Art Center Morro Bay, 835 Main St., Morro Bay, 805-772-2504, [artcentermorrobay.org](http://artcentermorrobay.org).

**MAKE A SUCCULENT WREATH** Learn how easy it is to create with succulents with this at home kit and video.

Choose from two sizes of round wreaths, a heart wreath or a square wreath. Care instructions are provided so your succulent projects thrive for a very long time. **Feb. 14**, 10-11 a.m. Various. 805-286-5993. [creativemetime.com](http://creativemetime.com). Art Center Morro Bay, 835 Main St., Morro Bay.

**MOSAICS FOR BEGINNERS** Create in the comfort of your home with a complete Creative Me Time kit, guided by a how-to video. Looking for something different and fun to do Valentine's weekend? Work on the project as a couple or create a mosaic masterpiece as a gift. **Feb. 13**, 10-11 a.m. Various. 805-286-5993. [creativemetime.com](http://creativemetime.com). Art Center Morro Bay, 835 Main St., Morro Bay.

**PAPER AND FIBER** This show bursts with color and texture in all media and sizes. Artworks of felted wool, fiber, and paper collages, to quilted cloth, and more. Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays-Sundays, 11 a.m.-5 p.m. through Feb. 27 Free. 805-772-1068. [galleryatmarinasquare.com](http://galleryatmarinasquare.com). Gallery at Marina Square, 601 Embarcadero suite 10, Morro Bay.

**RESIN ART TAKE-HOME WORKSHOP** Create your very own resin scene in the comfort of your home with a Creative Me Time kit, guided by a how-to video. Kit includes a white frame and all of the necessary components to create your scene. Preregistration required. **Feb. 13**, 11 a.m.-noon \$65. 805-286-5993. [creativemetime.com](http://creativemetime.com). Art Center Morro Bay, 835 Main St., Morro Bay.

## CULTURE & LIFESTYLE

### LOMPOC/VANDENBERG

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

### SANTA MARIA VALLEY/LOS ALAMOS

**30 VOLUNTEERS NEEDED IN SANTA MARIA/ORCUTT** Community Partners in Caring is seeking volunteers to help support dependent older adults and seniors. [partnersincaring.org](http://partnersincaring.org). Citywide, Santa Maria.

**CELEBRATE BLACK HISTORY MONTH WITH YOUTH STEAM PACKS: SANTA MARIA PUBLIC LIBRARY** Celebrate Black History Month with STEAM packs to learn about important figures in STEAM. Activities will help kids learn about George Washington Carver, Jean-Michel Basquiat, and Dr. Mae Jemison and their contributions to STEAM. Packs will include supplies, information, and a book list. Registration required. **Feb. 13, Feb. 14, Feb. 15, Feb. 16, Feb. 17, Feb. 18, Feb. 19 and Feb. 20** Free. 805-925-0994. [engagedpatrons.org](http://engagedpatrons.org). SM 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](http://divining.weebly.com). Divine Inspiration, 947 E Orange St., Santa Maria.

**SANTA MARIA PUBLIC LIBRARY: MOVIE TALK DISCUSSION GROUP** A video conference movie discussion group; meets on the second Thursday of each month. For more information email [ssarnaud@cityofsantamaria.org](mailto:ssarnaud@cityofsantamaria.org) or call 805-925-0994. Second Thursday of every month, 3:30-4:30 p.m. Free. [cityofsantamaria.org/city-government/departments/library](http://cityofsantamaria.org/city-government/departments/library).

SM Public Library, 421 S. McClelland St., Santa Maria, 805-925-0994.

**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 required for a Zoom link. Wednesdays, 4-4:30 p.m. through Feb. 24 Free. 805-925-0994. [engagedpatrons.org](http://engagedpatrons.org). SM 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](http://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](http://yoga4mankind.org). Yoga for Mankind, 130 N Broadway, suite B, Orcutt.

**YOUTH ART PACKS: SANTA MARIA PUBLIC LIBRARY** Register to pick up an art pack to create your own masterpiece at home. Art packs include projects that help students learn basic principles of art. These packs are geared towards ages 6 to 12. Registration begins Feb. 6. **Feb. 11 and Feb. 12** Free. 805-925-0994. [engagedpatrons.org](http://engagedpatrons.org). SM Public Library, 421 S. McClelland St., Santa Maria.

**YOUTH LUNAR NEW YEAR CELEBRATION PACK: SANTA MARIA PUBLIC LIBRARY** Register to pick up a Lunar New Year craft pack. Packs will include information, a book list, and most supplies needed to create two Lunar New Year crafts at home. This program is for children ages 4 through 12. Registration required. **Feb. 11, Feb. 12 and Feb. 13** Free. 805-925-0994. [engagedpatrons.org](http://engagedpatrons.org). SM Public Library, 421 S. McClelland St., Santa Maria.

### SOUTH COAST SLO COUNTY

**LEARN TO SURF: BEGINNER SURF LESSONS** Beginner surf lessons for you, your zoomers, and your homeschooled. All equipment provided with the \$70 charge. Every other Monday-Sunday, 8:45-11 a.m. through April 30 \$70. 805-489-8823. [surfpismo.com](http://surfpismo.com). Pismo Beach Pier, West end of Pomeroy, Pismo Beach.

**PECHO COAST TRAIL PLANT LIFE** Learn about the native plants that thrive along the Pecho Coast Trail and discover their medicinal uses. General admission ticket includes hike, tour and lunch. **Feb. 21**, 9:30 a.m. [my805tix.com](http://my805tix.com). Point San Luis Lighthouse, 1 Lighthouse Rd., Avila Beach.

CULTURE & LIFESTYLE continued page 15

ARTS from page 13  
included. Limited to 6 people. **Feb. 19**, 6-8 p.m. \$150. 805-464-2633. [glassheadstudio.com](http://glassheadstudio.com). Glasshead Studio, 8793 Plata Lane, Suite H, Atascadero.

**SLOPE PAINTS TO PRESERVE** Please stop by to see this exhibit of stunning originals and prints by San Luis Outdoor Painters for the Environment (SLOPE), featuring some of our region's top landscape artists, who use their art to raise awareness, funding, and education for the Central Coast's treasured open spaces. Wednesdays-Sundays, 12-8:45 p.m. through Feb. 28 Free. 805-238-9800. [slopepainters.com/](http://slopepainters.com/). Studios on the Park, 1130 Pine St., Paso Robles.

**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.

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**WEEKLY DROWNING RESCUE COURSES** Facility advertised as open and safe. Give the office a call to register over the phone. Mondays-Saturdays, 10 a.m.-6:30 p.m. Members \$130; Non-members \$160. 805-481-6399. 5 Cities Swim School, 425 Traffic Way, Arroyo Grande, 5citieswimschool.com.

**SAN LUIS OBISPO**

**THE ECONOMIC VITALITY CORPORATION: SLO COUNTY BROADBAND SUMMIT** Featured speakers, include Karen Ross, Secretary of the California Department of Food and Agriculture, and Sunne McPeak, President and CEO of the California Emerging Technology Fund. **Feb. 18**, 10 a.m. [sloevc.org](http://sloevc.org). Online, See website, San Luis Obispo.

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

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**SLO COUNTY MEDICAL RESERVE CORPS: VOLUNTEERS NEEDED** The SLO County Medical Reserve Corps is looking for volunteers to help with vaccine distribution and contact tracing. Apply online. [ongoingemergencyslo.org](http://ongoingemergencyslo.org). Countywide, SLO County.

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**VIRTUAL DOCUMENTARY SCREENING AND DISCUSSION WITH GEORGE TAKEI** Join George Takei and CA libraries for a live discussion of the documentary, *And Then They Came for Us*, detailing the forced removal and incarceration of 120,000 Japanese Americans during World War II. Register and receive a link to view the documentary. **Feb. 19**, 4-5 p.m. Free. [gooddocs.net](http://gooddocs.net). Online, See website, San Luis Obispo.

**FOOD & DRINK**

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

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**SANTA MARIA VALLEY/LOS ALAMOS**

**PRESQU'ILE WINERY: RESERVATIONS ONLY** Call or go online to make a reservation (reservations open to the public starting June 6). Presqu'ile Winery, 5391 Presqu'ile Dr., Santa Maria, 805-937-8110, [presquilewine.com](http://presquilewine.com).

**SOUTH COAST SLO COUNTY**

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**SAN LUIS OBISPO**

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**NORTH SLO COUNTY**

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**A SPECIAL VALENTINE DINNER EXPERIENCE** This beloved Valentine tradition is unlike any other dinner you've shared with your special someone. We will sit around a beautiful (socially distant) King's Table where we will wine and dine you and your special someone with a five-course menu paired alongside our award-winning wines. **Feb. 13**, 6:30-9:30 p.m. \$120-\$150. 805-239-1730. [my805tix.com](http://my805tix.com). Cass Winery And Vineyard, 7350 Linne Rd., Paso Robles.

**MUSIC**

**SAN LUIS OBISPO**

**BOB MARLEY DAY (VIRTUAL)** San Luis Obispo's local reggae favorites True Zion and Ras Danny & The Reggae Allstars are leading a celebration of the life and legacy of Bob Marley in a live stream benefit concert to benefit SLO Food Bank. **Feb. 12** Proceeds benefit SLO Food Bank. [slobrew.com](http://slobrew.com). SLO Brew Rock, 855 Aerovista Pl., San Luis Obispo, (805) 543-1843.

**CAL POLY JAZZ CD RELEASE CONCERT: VIRTUAL** This virtual concert will celebrate the recently produced double-album titled *another time, another place*. The album is the result of at-home rehearsals by members of the Cal Poly Jazz Ensemble and Cal Poly Vocal Jazz Ensemble that began in March due to the pandemic. **Feb. 19**, 7:30 p.m. \$5. 805-756-4849. [music.calpoly.edu](http://music.calpoly.edu). Online, See website, San Luis Obispo.



**MAKE SWEET ART YOUR SWEETHEART**

*Studios on the Park in Paso Robles hosts a stay-at-home iteration of its annual Sweet Art Fundraiser through Saturday, Feb. 13. Patrons can purchase a hand-painted bag, which includes an original coloring book designed by local artists, watercolor paints, chocolates, two bottles of wine, and more. Call (805) 238-9800 or visit [studiosonthepark.org](http://studiosonthepark.org) for more details.*

—C.W.

**CAL POLY WEBINAR: ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN MUSIC** David Cutler, professor and director of music entrepreneurship at the University of South Carolina (UofSC), and Mark Tonelli, assistant professor of guitar and entrepreneurship at Millikin University in Decatur, Illinois, will share methods for beginning and sustaining a career in music. **Feb. 11**, 11:10 a.m.-noon Free admission. 805-756-2406. [music.calpoly.edu](http://music.calpoly.edu). Online, See website, San Luis Obispo.

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### Arts Briefs

#### Santa Barbara, SLO county libraries co-host virtual Day of Remembrance event, featuring George Takei

PHOTO COURTESY OF GOOD DOCS



Starting on Feb. 12, the Santa Barbara Public Library and San Luis Obispo Public Library will join other California library systems in streaming the documentary, *And Then They Came For Us*, for the public to access online for free. This award-winning documentary details the forced removal and incarceration of 120,000 Japanese Americans in the U.S. during World War II as a result of Executive Order 9066.

The film features rediscovered photographs by Dorothea Lange and in-depth interviews with several individuals who were incarcerated, including actor, activist, and author George Takei. On Feb. 19, from 4 to 5 p.m., participating libraries will co-host a live Q-and-A discussion of the film, via Zoom, featuring Takei, who also detailed his firsthand account of years spent behind the barbed wires of internment camps in his award-winning memoir, *They Called Us Enemy*. Widely known for his portrayal of Sulu in *Star Trek*, Takei's acting career spans five decades with roles in more than 40 feature films.

Visit [gooddocs.net](http://gooddocs.net) for info on how to pre-register for the free Zoom panel, which will also feature filmmaker Abby Ginzberg (co-director of *And Then They Came For Us* with Ken Schneider) and activist Satsuki Ina. The documentary will be available to stream between Feb. 12 and 19, and a link to the Zoom meeting will be emailed to registrants on Feb. 12.

#### Wine and Design in Orcutt hosts special Valentine's Day workshop, Fifty Shades of Color

PHOTO COURTESY OF WINE AND DESIGN



On Feb. 14, Wine and Design in Orcutt is hosting a commemorative Valentine's Day painting workshop, *Fifty Shades of Color*, starting at 6:30 p.m. Each participating couple gets their own private table, and a capacity limit will be enforced to accommodate social-distancing policies. Couples are asked to mask up when leaving their table to move around the studio and maintain 6-foot distancing from other parties.

Online reservations at [wineanddesign.com/orcutt](http://wineanddesign.com/orcutt) are required to join the workshop. Admission is \$75. Participants must be 21 or older to attend. Wine and beer will be available for purchase during the event (no outside alcohol is permitted). Guests are also free to bring their own personal snacks and non-alcoholic drinks to enjoy during the workshop.

Call Wine and Design directly at (805) 868-1746 for more details. The studio is located at 3420 Orcutt Road, suite 105, Orcutt. ☉

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

COURTESY PHOTO BY MARY INCE



**SHAPES OF WATER:** Chandelier crystals, spider plants, and various succulents are among the items suspended by invisible threads, all under a ceiling designed to resemble a cumulus-cloud-filled sky, in artist Holli Harmon's new installation, *The Nature of Clouds*, a multimedia exhibit inspired by the water cycle.

## What does the fox say?

Passersby can view two new art installations from outside the Wildling Museum's windows

BY CALEB WISEBLOOD

Santa Barbara-based artist Nicole Strasburg based the subject of her new paper-cut silhouette series, *Wintering: A Fox Tale*, on the mascot of its venue, the Wildling Museum of Art and Nature. While the Solvang staple remains closed due to state and local mandates, this new window installation can be viewed from the sidewalk outside the museum.

"The opportunity to work with the museum for something light and fun like a window design really perked me up. I love their mission of highlighting the environment through art," said Strasburg, who spent the last few months completing the installation.

"It was a wonderful way to get through the holidays, since gathering with family was not an option," she added. "I think anything that focuses on joy right now keeps me engaged. And don't we all need more joy and magic during this surreal time?"

The best time to view the display is during the evening, Strasburg said, when the silhouettes are illuminated for the public to enjoy. Similar to her

exhibit's titular fox, Strasburg finds ample solace in wintering, specifically when it means hunkering down in her art studio.

"As an artist and sworn introvert, I love endless hours alone in my studio," Strasburg said. "The winter, especially when it rains, is particularly wonderful for shutting yourself inside and working."

Strasburg is thankful the ongoing pandemic couldn't put a halt to that side of things, while it did disrupt other joys in her life—traveling, visiting galleries and museums, meeting up with other artists in person, for example, activities she described as creativity feeders.

"Inspiration has been elusive, and I think most artists would agree that the creative energy has been in great fluctuation for the past year," said Strasburg, who welcomed her latest project at the Wildling as a fresh and exciting outlet, one she hopes viewers will read as a metaphor for the museum's temporary closure being a hibernation.

*Wintering: A Fox Tale* is one of two new window installations at the Wildling, where passersby can also enjoy viewing *The Nature of Clouds*, an



**FOXES IN BOXES:** Local artist Nicole Strasburg's illuminated paper-cut silhouette series, *Wintering: A Fox Tale*, is one of two new window installations, easily viewable from outside the Wildling Museum of Art and Nature in Solvang.

#### Window shopping

Visit [wildlingmuseum.org](http://wildlingmuseum.org) for more info on the Wildling Museum's new window installations. The museum is located at 1511 Mission Drive, unit B, Solvang.

immersive, multimedia exhibit by fellow Santa Barbara resident and artist Holli Harmon.

Large chandelier crystals, spider plants, and various succulents are among the items suspended by invisible threads, all under a ceiling designed to resemble a cumulus-cloud-filled sky, in this installation. Harmon aimed to illustrate the water cycle, from evaporation to precipitation, both literally and symbolically.

"I think the floating plants and crystalized water are a good representation that our natural existence is always in perpetual motion. Nothing is always solid or liquid or gas, it's circular," Harmon told the *Sun*.

Harmon's installation, which can be viewed outside the Wildling's Tower Gallery windows, was inspired by a plethora of literary sources, including author Richard Hamblyn's book, *The Invention of Clouds: How an Amateur Meteorologist Forged the Language of the Skies*, which chronicles the life of 19th century British meteorologist Luke Howard. Inspiration also came from poetry by Johann Goethe.

"Goethe's poems really capture that feeling of truly understanding what the clouds are communicating through pattern and form," said Harmon, who also took inspiration from contemporary poet Mark Strand. "Both are masters, just a few centuries apart."

During a spate of quarantine in December last year, Harmon became fascinated with kokedama, a Japanese floral art form, which she described as a "growing obsession"—pun intended.

Kokedama consists of growing plants in a moss-covered ball of soil, wrapped with string, fishing line, or a similar material. Harmon's floating plants featured in the Wildling installation were created using this process.

Harmon came across kokedama while surfing the internet for inspiration, she said.

"I found pictures, I think on Instagram. There is this Dutch artist, Fedor Van der Valk, who really is a master of kokedama," said Harmon, who immediately set out to try the method for herself.

"I started experimenting with them and made several for friends," Harmon said. "I even made some with tiny pine seedlings for Christmas gifts. They were little 'Charlie Brown' Christmas trees, perfect for our COVID Christmas." ☉

Arts Editor Caleb Wiseblood is taking comments from the "Peanuts" gallery at [cwiseblood@santamariasun.com](mailto:cwiseblood@santamariasun.com).

PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE WILDLING MUSEUM OF ART AND NATURE



**BEHIND THE SCENES:** "The opportunity to work with the museum for something light and fun like a window design really perked me up," said Nicole Strasburg (pictured), who chose the museum's fox mascot as the subject for her installation.

## The searchers

**W**riter-director Thomas Bezucha (*The Family Stone*, *Monte Carlo*) brings Larry Watson's 2013 novel to the screen. A couple—Margaret (Diane Lane) and George Blackledge (Kevin Costner)—grieving the untimely death of their only son, James (Ryan Bruce), go in search of their grandson, Jimmy (co-played by Otto and Bram Hornburg), who's spirited out of town by their daughter-in-law, Lorna (Kayli Carter), and abusive new husband Donnie Weboy (William Brittain). Worried about Jimmy's safety, they leave their Montana ranch and strike out for North Dakota, where the Weboy clan lives. (113 min.)

**Glen:** Set in 1963, this neo-Western feels a lot like a Cormac McCarthy story (*All the Pretty Horses*, *No Country for Old Men*). It's quiet and bleak, elegiac and mournful, with unromanticized violence and stoic characters navigating difficult circumstances. This is Margaret's story. She's the one who witnesses Donnie's cruelty. She's already loaded up her station wagon for the trip to find Jimmy when George—a retired sheriff—returns. He isn't sure it's their place to go after Jimmy, but strong-willed Margaret is going with or without George, determined to see Jimmy safe. They have no idea what they're in for. If they think Donnie's their biggest obstacle, just wait until they meet the Weboy family and its matriarch, Blanche (Lesley Manville). This is a soulful crime drama anchored by an amazing veteran cast. Costner and Lane are dependable as always, and Jeffrey Donovan as Donnie's uncle, Bill Weboy, is pure grinning menace. As for Manville's Blanche, she's raised a clan of misogynists, and her iron grip on her three sons—including Donnie's brothers

Elton (Connor Mackay) and Marvin (Adam Stafford)—is complete. Even the local sheriff dares not cross the Weboys. Suspenseful and engrossing, this film released in pandemic-crippled theaters last November will hopefully get the audience it deserves now that it's at Redbox.

**Anna:** I hadn't even heard of this film when you mentioned it, which is definitely a sign of the COVID-19 times since it's got a cast of such heavy hitters. Costner is so great as the stoic and measured George, and Lane is equally as phenomenal as the maternal and steadfast Margaret. The Weboys' reputation precedes them and with good reason. Blanche is straight-up evil, and she's groomed all the men in her life to follow suit. Donovan is especially chilling as Bill; it gives me shivers just thinking about that cruel grin! It's got the feel of a Western with the soul of a drama, and with that you can't expect a wholly happy ending, but it satisfies nonetheless. While George and Margaret are on their way to find Lorna and Jimmy, they run into a young Indigenous man who ran away from the Indian school where he was given the name Peter (Booboo Stewart). He's wary of everyone and afraid of being dragged back into the world he escaped, but over a fireside chat, he comes to trust the two travelers, albeit with reservations. The human connection here is really tender, and I was riveted by this film both in wondering what those dastardly Weboys would do and emotionally as the tale plays out with dark and dreadful lows.

**Glen:** I think that side plot with Peter is one of the reasons it reminded me of a McCarthy story. Peter is the embodiment of America before it was colonized. He wants to live off the land and be at peace. The tearing asunder between past and present seems to be a reoccurring theme in McCarthy's tales, which don't offer feel-good Hollywood endings. If

### LET HIM GO

What's it rated? **R**  
 What's it worth, Anna?  
**Full price**  
 What's it worth, Glen?  
**Full price**  
 Where's it showing?  
**Redbox and on demand**

the Blackledges don't extricate Jimmy from the Weboys' clutches, he's destined to be groomed into their cruel worldview. It's a fight for his future, and we see how Blanche, Bill, and Donnie are trying to twist his mind. Lorna is shellshocked by fear, but like a lot of battered women, she doesn't know how to escape. I liked that this was Margaret's story more than George's, and that she was a foil to Blanche. The build-up to the conclusion is slow and steady, but when we reach the end, it comes with a furious release. It's got a potency you'll not soon forget.

**Anna:** I would definitely say the turns taken were unexpected, and the Weboys were villains I didn't see coming. An abusive husband to take down, sure, but a whole clan of angry jerks who are convinced everyone and everything in the world is against them and they'd rather burn it all down than concede one tiny inch? Didn't expect that. George and Margaret's relationship is a really interesting piece to this puzzle. They love each other in the way you only can if you've been with someone for what amounts to nearly your entire life—your



**FAMILY FIRST:** Margaret (Diane Lane) and George Blackledge (Kevin Costner) go in search of their young grandson in the neo-Western *Let Him Go*, currently available at Redbox.

shared past, present, and future are intertwined. Yet Margaret is her own woman, going on her quest with or without her husband and come hell or high water. She's dealing with the tragic and immense loss from her son's death, and the closest thing in the world to him has now been ripped from her. The same strength that allows mothers to lift up cars when their child is trapped lies in Margaret, and as soon as Jimmy is gone, a flame is lit inside her. The storyline here is aces, and as you said very McCarthy-esque, but the icing on the cake comes from some jaw-dropping performances from these veteran actors. This one is definitely worth a watch. ○

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

## TV Reviews

PHOTO COURTESY OF FX STUDIOS AND AMAZON STUDIOS

**DRY WIT:** Comedian Tig Notaro stars in the semi-autobiographical TV show *One Mississippi*, screening on Amazon, where she plays a radio personality known for mixing personal anecdotes and music.



### ONE MISSISSIPPI

What's it rated? **TV-MA**  
 When? **2015-2017**

Where's it showing? **Amazon Prime**

Running two seasons, comedian Tig Notaro's *One Mississippi* offers a semi-autobiographical account of her return to her hometown after the sudden death of her mother. She's recovering from breast cancer and a double

mastectomy, stuck in a relationship with someone who's nice but clearly not for her, and she has to deal with her mother's world—a beyond quirky stepfather and a brother stuck in a state of perpetual adolescence.

Using her dry comedic wit and expert timing, Tig's dark comedy shines through and helps us get through the rough stuff. After all, life doesn't always dole out a fair hand. Her brother, Remy (Noah Harpster), is a high school history teacher who does Civil War reenactments. He's sweet and a little unaware of the problematic behavior of his good-old-boy friends. He doesn't think much of himself, but throughout the show we get to see him realize at least a little more what a wonderful partner he can be.

Tig's stepdad, Bill (John Rothman), has some seriously obsessive behavior and a very strict idea on how things should be done. He's not the easiest man to live with, but he's so endearing in his own odd way. Tig has a radio show, uses the local station to record, and quickly falls for the adorable but straight engineer, Kate (Stephanie Alllynne). I wish we would have gotten a few more seasons of this one, but do yourself a favor and check out the 12 episodes. If you're a Notaro fan, you'll love it. (12 26-min. episodes)

—Anna

### PAINTING WITH JOHN

What's it rated? **TV-MA**  
 When? **2021**

Where's it showing? **HBO Max**

Think of HBO Max's quirky new series *Painting with John* as the anti-Bob Ross and his *The Joy of Painting* PBS series. In fact, in the opening episode, star John Lurie says, "Bob Ross was wrong. Everyone can't paint." The antithesis of Ross and his "happy little trees," Lurie declares his trees are angry. Deadpan funny, philosophical, and deeply odd, *Painting with John* is a trip into the mind of an iconoclastic artist.

Lurie, if you don't recognize the name, is co-founder of The Lounge Lizards, an acid jazz ensemble with which he played saxophone. He's also scored 20 films, and started acting in Jim Jarmusch films such as *Stranger Than Paradise* and *Down by Law*. Other notable films include *Paris, Texas* and *The Last Temptation of Christ*. Towering at 6-foot-4, with a deep rumbling voice, he's an imposing figure.

A self-taught artist working in watercolor and oil, he calls his paintings "a logical development from the ones that were taped to the refrigerator 50 years ago." In 1994, Lurie was struck by a baffling series of neurological symptoms, which turned out to be chronic Lyme disease, which made

PHOTO COURTESY OF HYPEROBJECT INDUSTRIES



**DOWN BY LYME:** Musician and *Down by Law* actor John Lurie, who's suffered from chronic Lyme disease for more than two decades, has a new painting show on HBO Max, *Painting with John*, in which he paints and talks and rolls tires down hills.

him unable to act or play music. His TV show is a mix of his philosophy, life lessons he's learned, and him accidentally crashing drones into his jungle-like backyard. Highly recommended! (six 20-min. episodes) ○

—Glen

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**DYNAMIC DUO:** Charles and Jody Williams originated Broken Clock Vinegar Works under a cottage food license in their own home kitchen in 2016. A year later, they moved the business to its current location on Mission Drive in Solvang, lovingly nicknamed The Shrubbery.

## Shrub hub

*Broken Clock Vinegar Works in Solvang offers wide selection of shrubs for cocktails, cakes, and more*

BY CALEB WISEBLOOD

Husband and wife Charles and Jody Williams, co-founders of Broken Clock Vinegar Works, were out enjoying drinks one night at The Landsby Hotel in Solvang when they got bit by the “shrub bug.” Jody Williams recalled, after trying a shrub cocktail for the first time.

“It featured a peach shrub, and we were both hooked after one sip,” she told the *Sun*. “After that evening at The Landsby, we started making shrubs at home, and before we knew it, we had Mason jars lining our kitchen with various sugar trials and fruit components.”

Williams said that Charles was already an avid gardener at the time, frequently canning fruits, roots, and veggies from their own backyard and turning them into marinades and sauces, so “it wasn’t too far of a stretch to start making one more garden-inspired substance.”

Unlike many other shrub producers, Broken Clock Vinegar Works—which the couple began in their own home kitchen in 2016 as a cottage food business—operates under a winery license to produce fruit wines, which are acetified into vinegar. These vinegars are then used as the base for Broken Clock’s shrubs—or drinking vinegars, as they’re also called. This practice makes Broken Clock one of the only shrub producers handling their process completely in-house, from farm to product.

During its first year, Broken Clock transitioned from the Williams’ home to its own industrial space on Mission Drive in Solvang, where it’s been operating since 2017. Lovingly nicknamed The Shrubbery, the facility is currently open for private tastings and appointments.

“Here [at The Shrubbery] we get to share

those life-changing moments with our customers, as most people have never heard of shrubs, much less tried anything like them,” said Williams, who hopes visiting first-timers will experience the same exuberance she felt after trying her first shrub cocktail.

Although she personally adores a good-quality “shrubtail,” Williams admitted it’s not something for everyone.

“The simplicity of the shrub cocktail, while offering such a unique and refreshing flavor, is really the magical thing about the whole shrub culture—that is, if you like vinegar,” Williams said. “If you don’t like vinegar, then stick to the plethora of cocktail mixers on the market that don’t fall in the shrub category.”

Near the end of last year, the Economic Alliance Foundation named Broken Clock Vinegar Works the recipient of its 2020 Innovation Award. The award is given annually to recognize a Northern Santa Barbara County business for strengthening the area’s economic vitality through new products or practices.

While the couple initially only started making shrubs for their own consumption at home, they quickly became attracted to the idea of sharing their concoctions with the public, especially given their mutual backgrounds in the beverage industry. The two first met at Carina Cellars in Los Olivos, where they worked together for a few years and began dating.

After getting married, the couple went on to own the Wandering Dog Wine Bar in Solvang for more than a decade. A short time after Broken Clock got up and running in the Williams’ home kitchen, its base of operations “graduated” to the Wandering Dog Wine Bar’s backroom kitchen area, Williams said.

One year after that, Broken Clock moved to its current location.

Overall, transitioning from the wine industry to Broken Clock eased a wide range of stressors for the couple, Williams explained.

“I love wine and always will, but you’ve got one shot per year to harvest the fruit and then wait anywhere from six to 18-plus months to bottle it and share it with the world,” she said. “And talk about stress from factors completely out of your control—weather being the main one.

“With shrubs, we don’t really have those problems,” Williams said. “We are in a position now where we have new batches of vinegar

PHOTO COURTESY OF DAN QINAJON



**CHOOSE YOUR POISON:** Unlike many other shrub producers, Broken Clock Vinegar Works operates under a winery license to produce fruit wines, which are then acetified into vinegar. These vinegars are then used as the base for Broken Clock’s shrubs.

PHOTO COURTESY OF JODY WILLIAMS

### If it ain’t broke ...

Find out more about Broken Clock VinegarWorks at [brokenclockvinegarworks.com](http://brokenclockvinegarworks.com). The production facility, aka The Shrubbery, is currently open for private tastings and appointments and is located at 1210 Mission Drive, suite 103, Solvang.

going all the time to use as the base for our shrubs, and then we work with the seasons for our various flavors.”

As for Broken Clock’s wide range of shrub flavors, Williams was on the verge of pleading the Fifth when questioned about her personal favorite.

“I love all our flavors—and I know that sounds like a well-rehearsed, vague answer, but it’s true,” she said. “I tend to drink a lot of whatever is our newest release because I’m busy testing it out in various cocktails and dishes. Like right now, we just released our winter citrus shrubs, and I am obsessed.

“I do love me a spicy margarita, so our peach jalapeño with a nice tequila and a splash of lime is a regular for me,” Williams continued. “My husband is a mule guy, so he drinks a lot of the blueberry vanilla with ginger beer and vodka or gin.”

Broken Clock also offers straight vinegars for cooking and other culinary purposes. And aside from cocktails, shrubs are great for sodas (sparkling water with a dash of shrub) and even baked goods as well, Williams said. She recently baked a cake using one of Broken Clock’s newest shrub flavors, tangerine rosemary.

“I’ve found that baking with the shrubs makes cakes, brownies, and such super moist and adds a really unique depth to the recipe,” she said.

Cocktails, sodas, cakes, and brownies? Take my money now! ☺

*Arts Editor Caleb Wiseblood could use some grub and a good shrub. Send comments to [cwiseblood@santamariasun.com](mailto:cwiseblood@santamariasun.com).*



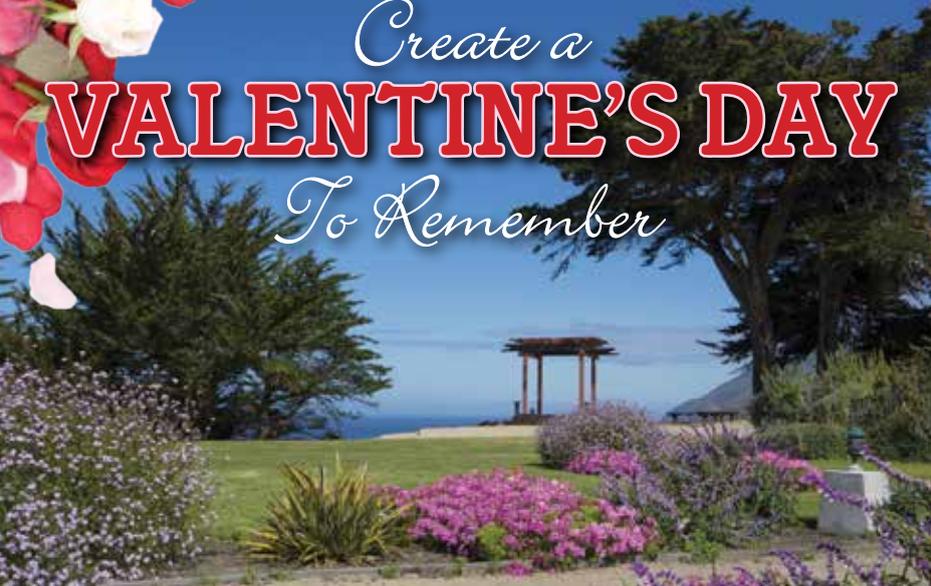
**TELL-TAIL HEART:** Jody Williams said said that if you like vinegar, you’ll like the unique and refreshing flavors that shrubs, aka drinking vinegars, bring to cocktails. If vinegar’s not your thing, she advised that you stick to other mixers.

PHOTO COURTESY OF JODY WILLIAMS



**LET THEM EAT CAKE:** “I’ve found that baking with the shrubs makes cakes, brownies, and such super moist and adds a really unique depth to the recipe,” Jody Williams, co-founder of Broken Clock Vinegar Works, told the *Sun*. She recently baked a cake using one of their newest shrub flavors, tangerine rosemary.

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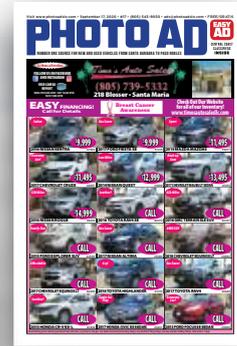
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