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AT THE MOVIES



*Servant:
Disturbing* [20]

SUN

Retrofit benefit

*A telethon featuring celebrity guests, artists, and community members
will raise funds for the Lompoc Theatre Project [18]*

BY CALEB WISEBLOOD

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SLO THE VIRUS

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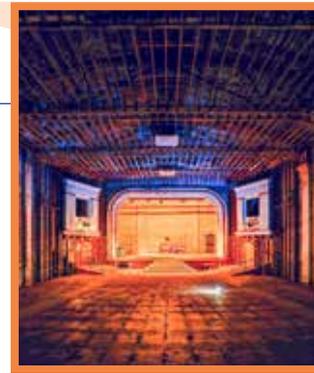
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MARCH 25 - APRIL 1, 2021 VOL. 22 NO. 4

What do Julia Louis-Dreyfus, Richard Kern, and Jeffrey Combs all have in common? At least one thing for sure: Each is appearing as part of an upcoming telethon to raise money for The Lompoc Theatre Project in *The Show Must Go On*. Arts Editor Caleb Wiseblood has all the details [18].

You can also read about the aftermath of the California Coastal Commission's decision to stop off-roading at the Oceano Dunes [4]; Bikers Against Child Abuse and how they help victims [7]; and Women in Wine winemaker Gretchen Voelcker [22].

Camillia Lanham
editor



CURTAINS UP: The Lompoc Theatre Project put together a telethon to raise funds to restore the historic landmark.

Courtesy cover photo by Jeremy Ball > Cover design by Alex Zuniga

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- I'm thrilled that someone finally decided to put health and the environment ahead of fun.
- Local businesses and family traditions will be destroyed by this decision.
- I'm glad there will still be some vehicle access and beach camping allowed.
- I'm just glad this is over and done with. I'm tired of hearing about this crap!

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Political Watch

• **U.S. Rep. Salud Carbajal** (D-Santa Barbara) and **U.S. Rep. Doug LaMalfa** (R-Chico) introduced the Funding Our Roads and Ecosystems Sustainably Together (FOREST) Act on March 16. The bill aims to fund forest road infrastructure. According to Carbajal's office, while the National Park Service receives nearly \$300 million to maintain 13,000 miles of roads, the United States Forest Service receives just \$18 million to maintain 370,000 miles of roads. The FOREST Act aims to close this gap. "In California, we know the importance of our national forests to our recreational and tourism economy—we also know that, in the event of a fire emergency, well maintained and resilient roads make all the difference," Carbajal said in the statement. "Our FOREST Act ensures that first responders and all those tasked with keeping our communities safe are able to effectively do their jobs, especially during a fire. I'm glad to partner with Rep. LaMalfa on this bipartisan bill that will make the Central Coast and communities across the nation more secure and prepared."

• On March 17, **U.S. Reps. Salud Carbajal** (D-Santa Barbara) and **Jimmy Panetta** (D-Carmel Valley) and **Sen. Jeff Merkley** (D-Oregon) introduced two bills aimed at helping the monarch butterfly called the Monarch Action, Recovery, and Conservation of Habitat (MONARCH) Act and the Monarch and Pollinator Highway Act. The MONARCH Act, according to Carbajal's office, provides protections for the Western monarch butterfly, whose population has dropped by 99 percent since the 1980s. The bill would fund butterfly conservation projects as well as the implementation of the Western Monarch Butterfly Conservation Plan developed by the Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies in 2019. The second piece of butterfly legislation, the Monarch and Pollinator Highway Act, would "establish a federal grant program available to state departments of transportation and Native American tribes to carry out pollinator-friendly practices on roadsides and highway rights of way," according to Carbajal's office. "The Pismo Beach Monarch Butterfly Grove in my district traditionally hosts the largest Western monarch overwintering population in California, but when I went to visit recently, there weren't any monarchs to be found," Carbajal said in a statement. "The MONARCH Act and Monarch Pollinator Highway Act make critical investments in conservation projects so we can restore their habitats and preserve this beloved pollinator for future generations to experience and enjoy."

• On March 19, **Gov. Gavin Newsom** signed Senate Bill 95, which ensures access to up to 80 hours of COVID-19 supplemental paid sick leave for eligible employees, according to Newsom's office. "Paid sick leave gives workers the time they need to care for themselves and loved ones while keeping their coworkers, families, and communities safe," Newsom said in a statement. "Even as case rates and hospitalizations decline and vaccinations ramp up, we can't let our guard down and must do all we can to stop this virus from spreading." The bill extends these protections through Sept. 30, 2021. The statement added that businesses employing 25 or fewer workers are exempt from the requirements of the legislation but could receive a federal tax credit for offering supplemental paid sick leave. ○

Coastal Commission decision to eliminate off-roading ends 40 years of uncertainty

For South County Chambers of Commerce President and CEO Jocelyn Brennan, the California Coastal Commission's March 18 decision to end off-roading and most other vehicle access in the Oceano Dunes felt bittersweet.

While Brennan said she's concerned and sad for the South County business owners who depend on off-roading tourists to stay afloat, she's simultaneously relieved to see the 40-year battle over vehicle access in the dunes laid to rest. It's an opportunity, finally, for everyone to move on. Rebuild. Heal.

"I feel like it's been hard for the businesses to have this hanging over their heads for so long," Brennan told the *Sun*. "Now we know what we're dealing with, and we just have to figure it out."

The historic Coastal Commission decision over the Oceano Dunes State Vehicular Recreation Area (SVRA) still allows for street-legal vehicles and some night driving on the beach between West Grand and Pier avenues, where up to 500 drive-up campsites can continue to operate indefinitely. The Coastal Commission also voted to close the park's Pier Avenue entrance, but extended the closure deadline from July 1 of this year to July 1, 2022.

Though commissioners said they were moved by the many comments they heard from off-highway vehicle (OHV) enthusiasts vehemently opposed to the ban, all agreed that OHV use in the Oceano Dunes is not consistent with the Coastal Act or the park's designation as an Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Area.

"It's clear how impacts occurring at the park are having a disproportionate impact on adjacent and downwind underserved communities," Commissioner Linda Escalante said at the meeting. "It is clear that Oceano, Nipomo, Guadalupe, and Santa Maria qualify as [environmental justice] communities that are experiencing these adverse effects of pollution. And it is clear that prohibiting those activities would reduce or eliminate the environmental burden on these communities."

It's not the conclusion that some business owners and residents in South County had hoped for, but it at least offers some semblance of closure and certainty to a community that Grover Beach Mayor Jeff Lee said has been living in limbo for decades.

"Whether you agree or disagree with the decision, there's a direction," Lee told the *Sun*. "There's a scope that as a city we can work with. We were going to be able to work with either choice, but certainty is really going to help."

With the fate of the SVRA always in question, Lee said corporations and entrepreneurs are often wary of setting up shop in South County.

"It's like when you start to have conversations with developers and those interested in making an investment in Grover, invariably the question either to the city or to the chamber of commerce or to other business organizations is, 'Hey, what's the status of the dunes?'" Lee said.

Bruce Van Vort is the owner of Fin's Bar & Grill, a beachside seafood restaurant situated next to the SVRA entrance on West Grand Avenue. Due in part to its location, many of Van Vort's customers are off-roaders and campers.

"I've talked to OHV riders today," Van Vort said the day after the Coastal Commission's vote, "and, I mean, they're in tears."

Though the Coastal Commission's decision is about the strongest stance any agency has taken on the matter in years, Van Vort said there's still a lot pending, making it difficult for him to prepare for the looming closure. The details of the phase-out plan and Pier Avenue closure remain



THE END OF AN ERA: The California Coastal Commission unanimously voted to ban off-roading in the Oceano Dunes SVRA, a mandate that will require State Parks to eliminate most vehicle access in the dunes on its own accord within the next three years.

to be seen, and the Friends of the Oceano Dunes, an organization that supports OHV access in the dunes, is gathering support and donations online to fight the ban in court.

If that lawsuit isn't successful and off-roading is banned, Van Vort said one thing is for certain.

"It'll have a tremendous impact on a lot of businesses," he said. "There will be businesses that'll have to shut down. Businesses that'll have to find different ways of operating," he said.

—Kasey Bubnash

Charges filed against tanker truck driver after crash caused oil spill

Nearly a year after a tanker truck overturned on Highway 166, causing thousands of gallons of crude oil to spill into the Cuyama River, the Santa Barbara County District Attorney's Office announced on March 19 that it's filing charges against the truck's driver. But environmentalists say the root of the problem runs deeper than one allegedly unsafe driver.

The charges, filed by the Consumer and Environmental Protection Unit within the District Attorney's Office, allege that driver Jesse Villasana drove at an unsafe speed and made an unlawful turning movement, thereby causing the oil spill into the river and the death of at least two birds.

"There were 4,500 gallons of crude oil that were spilled into the Cuyama River, so a fairly large quantity," Deputy District Attorney Morgan Lucas told the *Sun*.

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), the Environmental Protection Agency, and the California Highway Patrol (CHP) were involved in the investigation of the case, Lucas said.

Eric Laughlin, public information officer for CDFW's oil spill prevention and response office, told the *Sun* in an email that the response to the incident was a coordinated effort, and the oil was contained before it reached the reservoir downstream.

"After that our investigators worked diligently for several months to provide a comprehensive report to the DA's Office," Laughlin added. "We are confident their staff will secure justice in this case."

According to a statement from the District Attorney's Office, the driver's actions allegedly caused the oil tank on his truck to roll into the

Cuyama River, in violation of Fish and Game Code.

"We've also alleged two violations of vehicle code: one for excessive speed and one for an unlawful turning movement," Lucas said. "We're also alleging two violations of the Fish and Game Code for what's called an illegal take of wildlife, which in this case is causing the death of two specific animals."

The two animals that perished were both birds: a belted kingfisher and a mallard.

At the time of the crash, Center for Biological Diversity Oceans Program Litigation Director Kristen Monsell called the incident a "disturbing reminder of oil trucking's risks" in a statement. Stephanie Prufer, oceans campaigner with the center, told the *Sun* that these risks loom larger than "just one driver."

"Trucking oil is the most dangerous way to transport oil, and also Highway 166 is incredibly dangerous," Prufer said. "It's a two-lane highway, which is right next to the river which leads to the Twitchell Reservoir that provides water for Santa Maria."

Filing charges against the truck's driver, from Prufer's perspective, doesn't get to the root of the problem.

"It's not the specific one driver who necessarily needs to be held accountable," Prufer said. "But rather, one, this highway shouldn't be considered as a route for oil trucking, and two, trucking oil is extremely dangerous. It's time to phase out oil drilling, and not have oils and tanker trucks going through these dangerous highways throughout California."

At the time of the crash, ExxonMobil was seeking approval to add dozens of oil transportation trucks per day on coastal highways, a project that Prufer said the gas company is still pursuing.

"Last year, we analyzed CHP data on Exxon's route, which includes Highway 101 and 166," Prufer said. "It showed that there were 216 large truck collisions requiring a police response between 2015 and 2020 along this proposed trucking route."

Collisions that involve oil trucks can prove disastrous, Prufer said, as exhibited by the March 21, 2020, spill into the Cuyama River.

"We're not going to remedy the situation by holding one driver accountable," Prufer said. "We're going to remedy it by stopping trucking oil."

—Malea Martin

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NEWS from page 4

Tri-counties nominate locals for vacant Coastal Commission seat

Gov. Gavin Newsom is looking for a new Central Coast representative to serve on the California Coastal Commission, and Santa Barbara, San Luis Obispo, and Ventura counties nominated a few familiar faces for the position on March 16. Santa Barbara City Councilmember Meagan Harmon stands out as the only nominee to receive support from groups in all three counties.

"As a real estate and land use lawyer, I do understand how challenging it can be to work at the intersection of the Coastal Act and private property rights, and I understand how important it is that we're sensitive to both," Harmon said at the SLO County Board of Supervisors meeting on March 16, where supervisors nominated Harmon for the Central Coast seat. "I love our coast. I'm committed to protecting it, but it's also vital that we move beyond entrenchment to all the problems of our time. I wrote about this in my letter, but issues like affordable housing, like job creation, these are connected to the Coastal Commission."

Harmon was raised in Lompoc and has served on the Santa Barbara City Council as a progressive Democrat since February 2019. Throughout her time in Santa Barbara, Harmon said she's witnessed first-hand how issues like climate change, coastal erosion, private property rights, and affordable housing are all intertwined.

"We have to work toward the solutions to real problems that are facing real Californians," Harmon told the *Sun*, "and I see the Coastal Commission as part of that equation."

The Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors also nominated Harmon for the South Central Coast seat, along with 1st District Supervisor Das Williams. Williams has years of experience in both local and state politics, serving first on the Santa Barbara City Council for seven years before a six-year stint in the California State Assembly. He was elected to his position on the Board of Supervisors in 2016.

Williams said at a March 16 Board of Supervisors meeting that as an Isla Vista native and surfer, he's deeply passionate about coastal preservation.

"And yet I find that so much of the potential that could be reached in the deliberations of the commission is lost in a fundamental disconnect with local government," he said.

This disconnect, Williams said, often leads to overly stringent decisions on the commission's part and lesser outcomes for both the coast and local communities. It's not just that the Coastal Commission goes up against developers hoping to build within coastal zones, he said.

"It's that it butts its head with local government

about how to approach environmental community," Williams said, "when often local communities know the body politic, know the stakeholders, and know the science well enough that they should be supported."

The California Coastal Commission is made up of 12 voting members and three non-voting members charged with regulating land and water use on the coast. All voting members are appointed to the Coastal Commission by the governor, the Senate Rules Committee, or the speaker of the Assembly, and half of the voting members are local elected officials in specific coastal districts. In 2014, former Gov. Jerry Brown appointed former Pismo Beach City Council member Erik Howell to the commission to represent the South Central Coast, which consists of SLO, Santa Barbara, and Ventura counties.

Howell served on the Coastal Commission until he lost his bid for reelection to the Pismo Beach City Council in November 2020, leaving the South Central Coast seat up for grabs. Once supervisors and city selection committees—groups made up of representatives from each city in a county—in the Tri-Counties have all nominated elected officials for the position, the governor may vet and appoint one of the officials nominated, or ask for new nominations.

In Ventura County, the Board of Supervisors nominated Ventura County Supervisor Linda Parks, and the city selection committee nominated Harmon, along with Oxnard City Councilmembers Vianey Lopez and Gabriela Basua, and Port Hueneme City Councilmember Laura Hernandez. The Santa Barbara County city selection committee nominated Harmon and Williams on March 18, and on March 19, the SLO County city selection committee nominated Harmon and Morro Bay Mayor John Heading.

"I've known John for a long time, I've served on boards and commissions and met with him at mayors' meetings and I have the deepest respect," Pismo Beach Mayor Ed Waage said at the city selection committee meeting on March 19. "He's very thorough, he's very knowledgeable, he digs into issues. ... At the same time, Meagan Harmon has got experience on the City Council in Santa Barbara. With her background in law and property issues, I think she would also be a good person to represent this region on the Coastal Commission. And I'm prepared to support both of them."

—Kasey Bubnash

Vaccination disparities by race and ethnicity, region persist

Despite the Public Health Department's ongoing outreach efforts, vaccination disparities in Santa Barbara County remain stark, public officials say.

While about 48 percent of Santa Barbara

County's residents are Hispanic or Latino, this group makes up just 22 percent of those vaccinated as of March 19. White people make up 43 percent of the county's population, and 31 percent of those vaccinated so far.

However, about 20 percent of the county's inoculations so far are missing racial and ethnic data. Even so, Public Health Director Dr. Van Do-Reynoso noted at a March 19 press conference that "there are other similar, concerning trends among communities of color."

One such trend is hospitalization, for which the county has racial and ethnic data for 97 percent of cases. Hispanic and Latino residents in the county make up 67 percent of those hospitalized from COVID-19, despite being only 48 percent of the population, according to the community data dashboard. White people make up 23 percent of those hospitalized, but 43 percent of the population.

"Santa Barbara County Public Health Department is committed to working to ensure all residents have access to COVID-19 vaccine," Do-Reynoso said. "We have recently partnered with various community groups to offer vaccine to farmworkers and other vulnerable groups."

The state identified 400 ZIP codes that are in the lowest quartile of the Healthy Places Index, a tool used to see how community conditions shape health outcomes in neighborhoods across the state, according to the index's website. Communities in the lowest quartile are those that score lowest on the Healthy Places Index, and four of those communities are in northern and central Santa Barbara County: Santa Maria, Guadalupe, Cuyama, and Vandenberg Air Force Base.

Part of the state's vaccine equity efforts include allocating 40 percent of doses toward these 400 ZIP codes. Though all of Santa Barbara County's lowest quartile ZIP codes are in north and mid county, a significantly higher number of South County residents have been vaccinated.

According to the community data dashboard, North County residents have received nearly 15,000 doses, mid county just more than 8,000, and South County more than 29,000.

"It is a county's obligation, through the allocation of vaccines, to allocate 40 percent to those healthy places index, first quartile, as deemed by the state," Do-Reynoso said. "We used our existing, approved-by-the-state vaccine providers, and increasing allocations to them as we receive from the state."

In addition to allocating more doses toward these regions, Do-Reynoso said the county's outreach and education efforts around the vaccine have been primarily focused on northern and mid county.

"I think that a lot of it, some of the barriers, has to do with not being aware of where they can get a vaccine, not being aware that it is available and they are eligible, and not knowing enough

about the vaccine," Do-Reynoso said. "So for that reason, we are partnering with various community partners, trusted leaders, to amp up our messaging around the accessibility, around more information, about the vaccine, just to address those barriers."

Do-Reynoso also suggested that the disparity might be partially driven by vaccine hesitancy.

"I think that a lot of that has to do with the willingness of community members," she said. "Perhaps they are not ready to take the vaccine. ... We have ramped up our 211 [helpline] efforts to ensure that we can offer assistance in registering community members."

—Malea Martin

Santa Ynez Valley Youth sports gets a free pass on banner fees

On March 22, the Solvang City Council unanimously approved waiving a \$350 banner fee for Santa Ynez Valley Youth Football League and Cheer as the youth program picks up again after its 2020 athletic year was canceled due to COVID-19.

The council moved the request further up the agenda that evening as Brenda Messer, vice president of Santa Ynez Valley Youth Football League and Cheer, said some of the school-aged speakers who wanted to speak on the item needed to go home and get homework done before the next school day.

Three football players attended the council meeting, and one player, Levi Snow, asked the council to consider lifting the fee to help him and his fellow players.

"This is going to be my last year of [the youth football league], but they still have a few more years left," Snow said, gesturing to the players behind him. "But we're really excited to find out that we're having a season this year, and we're wondering if the money can get waived because we don't have any money for our league."

The \$350 city fee would allow the league to place their banner along Highway 246 to advertise the upcoming season.

Normally the league is able to pay the fee, Messer said, but due to the pandemic, "we essentially made zero dollars last season" because there wasn't one.

"We don't have the money to put up the banner, which is one of the ways we let the community know that our registrations are open. And we really need as much recognition and exposure as possible," she said.

Last year was very difficult for everyone, Messer said, but especially for the youth.

Without discussion, the board unanimously agreed to waive the fee and wished them well on their upcoming season. Santa Ynez Valley Youth Football League and Cheer is hoping to kick off its season in late July. ○

—Karen Garcia

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Wall of protection

Bikers Against Child Abuse continues supporting victims amid the pandemic

BY MALEA MARTIN

When Santa Maria mother Nancy's daughter, Sarah, was 9 years old, she told her mother something that would immediately turn their worlds upside down: Sarah's paternal grandfather was sexually abusing her. (Nancy and Sarah's names have been changed to protect their anonymity.)

"I was obviously not prepared for that," Nancy said.

Nancy believed her daughter's accusations without hesitation, and called law enforcement. Sarah, in fourth grade at the time, made the police report with her mom. The perpetrator was arrested and placed in jail, but the horror wasn't over.

"The court process takes a long time," Nancy said. "I think it was actually 17 months ... before we actually went to court."

As the family awaited their date at the Santa Barbara County Courthouse, Nancy said there was one organization in particular that helped Sarah get through the hardest time in her life: Bikers Against Child Abuse (BACA), an international nonprofit organization of motorcyclists with a mission to create a safer environment for abused children. BACA has chapters in nearly every U.S. state—plus a number of other countries—and its Ventura and Atascadero chapters serve victims in Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo counties.

With the COVID-19 pandemic cutting many children off from the teachers, school nurses, and counselors who would typically report suspicions of child abuse, organizations like BACA are more vital than ever, said Ann McCarty, the executive director of the North County Rape Crisis & Child Protection Center. While the number of child abuse cases locally hasn't seen a large statistical increase, McCarty said that numbers only paint part of the picture.

"We said from the very beginning [of the pandemic], not having our mandated reporters out in the community, not having our children in schools, there was this overwhelming fear of what was going to be happening," McCarty said. "We knew the abuse was going to continue. Nobody could predict one year ago ... that we'd still be where we are right now."

In 2020, despite reporting channels being adversely impacted by the pandemic, McCarty's organization still saw a 16.5 percent increase in the number of people it had first contact with and a 32.8 percent increase in the number of services provided when compared with 2019.

And the abuse, McCarty said, was worse than in the past.

"The level of violence against the children had risen—cases were horrific," she said.

As an agency that serves child abuse victims, the Lompoc-based North County Rape Crisis & Child Protection Center can refer children to BACA who need their services.

"The work that they do is critical," McCarty said.

BACA member Titus, a Santa Barbara County resident who rides with the Ventura chapter and serves as public relations officer, explained that all BACA members only use their "road names"—in his case, Titus—when



FOR THE KIDS: Bikers Against Child Abuse member Crash, who rides with the organization's Atascadero chapter, gives a presentation at the Lompoc Boys and Girls Club.

helping the children.

"Once we as individuals make this commitment to BACA and our kids, we don't take any recognition," Titus said. "Our sole purpose and mission is to support abused children."

BACA International's services start when an authorized agency with which the abuse victim is already in contact, such as the North County Rape Crisis & Child Protection Center, determines that the child is frightened by their environment. With a client's permission, the agency can refer them to BACA, which contacts the child's family and arranges to meet them in a safe location. After the initial meeting, the child is given the name and phone number of two BACA members who become their primary contacts.

These primaries are there for the child for a variety of possible needs: offering reassurance that they are safe and protected, providing escorts for them if they feel scared, and supporting children at court and parole hearings.

"The BACA members never go to the child's house alone and never without the knowledge or permission of the parents," the organization's website explains. "Our mission is not to be permanently engaged as the child's power. Our mission is to help the children and their families learn how powerful they can be."

Nancy heard about BACA as a potential resource for her daughter somewhat serendipitously.

"I had a coworker that had a BACA brochure stuck on a pinboard in her office," Nancy said. "When I told her what had happened she said, 'You need this.'"

Nancy got in contact with BACA, and they agreed that Sarah was a good fit for their services. At Sarah's request, she was assigned two female primaries.

"Her abuser was a male, and she didn't want a male, and they were very respectful about that," Nancy said.

BACA members played an integral role in making her daughter feel safe, Nancy said, as she dealt with the repercussions of her abuse.

"[Her primaries] would respond if she wanted to call any time, day or night," Nancy said. "They came for her birthday, and they all rolled up and brought cupcakes. They came outside, nothing in the house. It was very good boundaries in terms of, 'We're not coming in, we're not hanging out, we're not going to sit around ... We're here to support this kid.'"

Members also brought Sarah her own special BACA vest, and "patched her in," making her an official member of the BACA family.

"They told her that she was part of their family now, and she didn't need to be afraid," Nancy said as she held back tears. "It was really amazing to watch these people come ... to take some time to support this little girl that they didn't even know."

When it finally came to the fateful day that Sarah had to read her victim impact statement in court, BACA was there.

"I communicated with them, I let them know we were going to court," Nancy said. "They all rolled up and parked right next to us, and when it was time to go into the courtroom, they surrounded her, and they helped us get into the courtroom."

One of Sarah's BACA primaries stood with her as she gave her victim impact statement.

"She was so tiny, she couldn't see over the top of the podium," Nancy recalled.

Sarah, now 14 and a freshman in high school, said that BACA's presence in court was vital for her.

"That was something I was really afraid of: I was really afraid of going to face him in court," she said. "[BACA] is a fierce looking group of people. It really made it easier to go in and speak my truth. ... It was an extra sense of protection that I feel like was so great, and that I would love for anybody else in my position to be able to have and experience."

McCarty from the North County Rape Crisis & Child Protection Center said that's exactly what BACA aims to be: a wall of protection.

"They also want these kids to know that their voice matters, and that they believe them," she said.

In 2020, Santa Barbara County's Child Welfare Services received 3,578 calls for suspected child abuse in North County alone, McCarty said. With April being National Child Abuse Prevention Month, McCarty's organization will be planting "pinwheels for awareness" on April 1 and 5 in Lompoc, Solvang, Santa Maria, and Guadalupe: one for every five reports made to Child Welfare Services last year.

For local child abuse victims who need it, BACA is there.

"There is nothing in the world that compares to the moment when you see a child, a child that has been through the worst experience in their life, smile and realize that this group of bikers, BACA, is there for them 24/7/365, unconditionally, until they no longer need them," BACA member Titus said. "That's why I do it." ○

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

PHOTO COURTESY OF BIKERS AGAINST CHILD ABUSE



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Rally to reopen

A coalition of local business owners is demanding change to COVID-19 restrictions

BY MALEA MARTIN

As the end of the workday nears on March 16, people holding protest signs began to gather outside of Santa Maria City Hall. One man carried a camping chair with an American flag printed on the canvas and set it up among the growing crowd. A woman held a white sign with “We are essential” written across it in thick lettering.

The Reopen our Cities rally was organized by the Reopen the Central Coast business coalition. Ongoing COVID-19 pandemic regulations have caused many businesses to remain closed or be open with a limited capacity. Advertised on Facebook, the event drew about 50 people to the lawn at the corner of Broadway and Cook Street. Virtual flyers encouraged attendees to bring their children, employees, customers, and signs to peacefully protest “the one year anniversary of two weeks to flatten the curve.”

Ashlee Carranza, owner of Rancho Bowl in Santa Maria, is one of the business owners who initially organized the Reopen the Central Coast Facebook group, which she said has nearly 200 local, business owning members.

“In our community of families and friends, we know a lot of different business owners, specifically long-standing restaurants here in the area. We talk amongst ourselves, the problems that we’re facing over the years,” Carranza said. “This has been going on for so long now that we ended up

forming this coalition. . . . We just have an array of different businesses that have been affected by the shutdowns.”

Eddie and Joanne Plemmons, who own The Swiss Restaurant in Santa Maria, attended the March 16 rally. The couple told the *Sun* that they’ve been part of the coalition “since day one.”

“Sales are down dramatically; it’s horrible,” Eddie said. “Food costs are up, we couldn’t raise menu prices because it just wasn’t the right time. Just a big impact.”

Joanne said it’s been challenging to keep up with changing restrictions and the extra costs associated with them.

“Trying to do a combination, all the restrictions and new codes, and the tent, and all the things we’ve had to do to be able to stay open,” she said. “It’s been really hard.”

With Santa Barbara County back in the red tier of the state’s Blueprint for a Safer Economy reopening system as of March 16, Eddie said he’s looking forward to seating a limited number of customers indoors. Under the red tier, restaurants, museums, and movie theaters can reopen indoors at 25 percent capacity.

“The Santa Maria wind and the weather is very unpredictable here,” he said. “People don’t realize it, but the tents, most people are paying a daily fee for those on top of their rent. And then the propane is another, too The paper products and everything else. Your profit margin really just goes away. It’s a survival, not a profit-making, industry right now.”

Carranza lamented how the state’s reopening system has been confusing at times.

“We just have so many questions, and we’re not getting the answers we need,” she said. “And the statistics are changing all the time, the criteria for tier and opening is changing all the time, so we can’t even keep up with it.”

After meeting a vaccination benchmark, state officials recently shifted the tier thresholds to make it

easier for counties to move up in the reopening system. Santa Barbara County wouldn’t have moved to the red tier assignment under the previous metric requirements, but with the change it was able to shift into the less-restrictive tier.

Teri Stricklin, general manager of The Hitching Post restaurant in Casmalia and a member of Reopen the Central Coast, spoke at the rally.

“We know COVID’s real. We’ve had employees, close family friends who’ve been very sick,” Stricklin said to the crowd. “But shutdowns are not the answer anymore, and they have to end. And even though the governor has kindly given us the move to the red tier, to open 25 percent inside our restaurants, it’s not enough.”

When Santa Barbara County Public Health Director Dr. Van Do-Reynoso announced the county’s move to the red tier at a March 16 Board of Supervisors meeting, she said metrics in the county have improved considerably. However, Do-Reynoso added, it’s important that the community continues to follow public health guidelines if it wants to keep progressing through the tiers and see additional economic reopening.

“Yes, the winter surge in cases is now over. We’re seeing that our active cases, our daily new cases, our testing positivity, our case rate, hospitalizations, ICUs, and deaths all have decreased substantially,” she said. “But I really want to stress that we have to stay vigilant,



PROTEST: Members of the Reopen the Central Coast business coalition gathered for a rally on March 16 to protest ongoing COVID-19 restrictions.

collectively, as a county, so that we can continue to see a decline in case rates and other metrics.”

Highlight

• With Easter just around the corner, the Santa Maria Recreation and Parks Department is hosting a free “Eggsploration” Our Parks Spring Egg Hunt at parks around the city from April 2 to 4. Participants who find hidden eggs signs at the parks, or the special “golden egg,” can enter to win a prize. Participants who manage to visit all 12 of the city’s parks and submit pictures from each will be put into a special drawing. Entries can be posted to Facebook, Instagram, or Twitter with the hashtag #smreandparks. For more information, visit cityofsantamaria.org/recreation. ○

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

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DEATH NOTICES

JEFFREY DELEON, 36, of Santa Maria passed away 2/28/2021 arrangements with Moreno Mortuary

MARIA DEL SOCORRO PINEDA, 77, of Santa Maria passed away 3/2/2021 arrangements with Moreno Mortuary

WANDA W. WHITE, 83, passed away 3/7/2021 arrangements with Lady Family Mortuary

PEDRO CASTRO, 68, of Santa Maria passed away 3/8/2021 arrangements with Moreno Mortuary

ROBERT LEE HIX, 64, of San Luis Obispo passed away 3/10/2021 arrangements with Marshall-Spoo Sunset Funeral Chapel

MAURO O. ROMAN, 55, of Santa Maria passed away 3/10/2021 arrangements with Moreno Mortuary

ERICKBERTO MONTESINOS, 16, of Santa Maria passed away 3/10/2021 arrangements with Moreno Mortuary

JAN BOWERS, 70, of Templeton passed away 3/10/2021 arrangements with Blue Sky Cremation Service

GLORIA ASHLEY DE NOVA MORALES, 21, of Santa Maria passed away 3/10/2021 arrangements with Moreno Mortuary

ERIK BERTO SANCHEZ, of Santa Maria passed away 3/10/2021 arrangements with Blue Sky Cremation Service

ELISE MARY CECCHETTI, 98, of Arroyo Grande passed away 3/11/2021 arrangements with Moreno Mortuary

MARY PABINQUIT, 62, of Morro Bay passed away 3/11/2021 arrangements with Blue Sky Cremation Service

BILL CROWLEY, 91, of Lompoc passed away 3/12/2021 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

DAVID FRANK FISHER, 76, of Nipomo passed away 3/12/2021 arrangements with Marshall-Spoo Sunset Funeral Chapel

ANTHONY VAN WAGNER, 75, of Atascadero passed away 3/12/2021 arrangements with Blue Sky Cremation Service

REGINA DAVIS, 51, of Santa Maria passed away 3/13/2021 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

RAYMOND DYAKON, 83, of Atascadero passed away 3/13/2021 arrangements with Blue Sky Cremation Service

KENNETH GREEN, 65, of Atascadero passed away 3/13/2021 arrangements with Blue Sky Cremation Service

JUDITH ANN SULLIVAN, 72, of Grover Beach passed away 3/13/2021 arrangements with Marshall-Spoo Sunset Funeral Chapel

JUDY JAMES, 72, of Cayucos passed away 3/13/2021 arrangements with Blue Sky Cremation Service

CYNTHIA RANJEL, 70, of Templeton passed away 3/13/2021 arrangements with Blue Sky Cremation Service

PATRICIA ELLEEN SLATER-MINER, 85, of Grover Beach passed away 3/14/2021 arrangements with Marshall-Spoo Sunset Funeral Chapel

ELVIRA NAJERA LOPEZ, passed away 3/14/2021 arrangements with Lady Family Mortuary

ERIK CHRISTIAN VAN DEN ANDEL, 41, of Arroyo Grande passed away 3/15/2021 arrangements with Marshall-Spoo Sunset Funeral Chapel

ANDREW JOHN HALBIG, 44, of Santa Maria passed away 3/15/2021 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

VIOLET JUANITA RAUCH, 96, of Arroyo Grande passed away 3/15/2021 arrangements with Marshall-Spoo Sunset Funeral Chapel

GABRIEL MARIO MANRIQUEZ, 55, of Santa Maria passed away 3/16/2021 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

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JAVIER ARIZAGAS VARGAS, 71, of Santa Maria passed away 3/17/2021 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

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JOHN FERENZ, 103, of Santa Maria passed away 3/17/2021 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

DAVID MARTIN ARIAS, 47, of Santa Maria passed away 3/18/2021 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

CONSTANCE E. SMITH, 99, passed away 3/18/2021 arrangements with Lady Family Mortuary

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MARCO A. LANDEY JR., 39, of Santa Maria passed away 3/19/2021 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

BOBBY E. THOMAS, 56, of Santa Maria passed away 3/20/2021 arrangements with Magner-Maloney Funeral Home & Crematory

MICHAEL MAZON CARDENAS, 42, of Santa Maria passed away 3/20/2021 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

ROBERT LEE STITT, 93, of Santa Maria passed away 3/21/2021 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

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Online Poll

How do you feel about Santa Barbara County being back in the red tier?

- 48% Great! More businesses can reopen and kids can get back in the classroom.
- 38% I'm glad it will help some people, but I'm worried about cases going back up.
- 10% The state made it easier for counties to enter the red tier, so this doesn't feel all that monumental.
- 4% It's way too soon to be reopening more, we still have substantial spread in the community.

28 Votes

Vote online at www.santamariasun.com.



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Ag vs. annex

Should more ag land be sacrificed for the proposed Bailey Avenue annexation?

BY RON FINK

Extending the boundaries of the city of Lompoc west to Bailey Avenue has been the dream of politicians, some property owners, and developers for several decades. But there are two opposing arguments, one supporting and another objecting to westward expansion of the city.

Supporters of an annexation point out that going back over 50 years, we can see evidence on the extreme west side of town that all the intersections are four-way and dead end in farm fields; there are alleyways normally used for utility easements and access between residences on different streets that separate houses from farm fields; and there is a sewer line that the city built along Bailey Avenue—a county farm road—to support any future development.

Clearly, they say, this indicates that developers, city planners, and politicians of the time believed that the city would expand west.

In October of 2008, the city received two reports: one titled Bailey Avenue Specific Plan and the other titled Bailey Avenue Specific Plan Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for a project that included 2,700 homes and 200,000 square feet of commercial space. The City Council did not approve the Bailey Avenue Specific Plan, nor did they certify the EIR.

Chief among the report's concerns was the fact that the area proposed for development is on Class I prime soils; the Local Area Formation Commission (LAFCO), an agency that is the approval authority for annexations, has consistently voted against any effort to annex this type of land and specifically against annexation of this land.

LAFCO policies state, “the loss of any primary agricultural soils should be balanced against

other LAFCO policies and a LAFCO goal of conserving such lands,” and “annexation and development of existing vacant non-open space lands, and nonprime agricultural land within an agency’s sphere of influence is encouraged to occur prior to development outside of an existing sphere of influence.”

I checked LAFCO policies in other counties, and the language was the same. So, it’s not uncommon for LAFCO in most jurisdictions to object to expansion into primary agricultural soils.

The report also cited concerns that unless additional police officers were hired and a fire station were relocated, the city couldn’t meet emergency service call response times to the proposed annexation.

The opposing argument from farmers, ranchers, and others is that this is prime agricultural land that has been in active tillage for several generations. In 2010 the Environmental Defense Center settled a lawsuit requiring the city to reconsider approval of a General Plan update that would have set the stage for potential annexation of approximately 300 acres of prime farmland (Bailey Avenue) for development.

Later, the City Council approved the 2030 General Plan Land Use Element which states that “the city shall encourage development of under-developed and vacant land within its boundaries and shall oppose urbanization of agricultural lands east of the city and west of Bailey Avenue.” Perhaps this was in response to this settlement.

During a council meeting in November 2019 concerning a developer’s 2016 annexation request—proposing to build 624 dwellings and 125,000 square feet of commercial space on two

WRITE NOW! We want to know what you think about everything. Send your 250-word letter to Sun Letters, 2450 Skyway Drive, suite A, Santa Maria, CA 93455. You can also fax it (1-805-347-9889) or e-mail it (letters@santamariasun.com). All letters must include a name, address, and phone number for verification purposes; may be edited for space or clarity; and will be posted to santamariasun.com.

widely separated parcels at separate locations in the Bailey Avenue corridor—the council discussed transferring the annexation effort from the Planning Department to the city attorney.

The staff report chronicled the process so far stating that during a recent meeting, Paul Hood, former LAFCO executive officer, “made a statement indicating he did not think LAFCO

The area proposed for development is on Class I prime soils; the Local Area Formation Commission (LAFCO), an agency that is the approval authority for annexations, has consistently voted against any effort to annex this type of land and specifically against annexation of this land.

would approve the annexation.” The staff also estimated a cost of between \$92,500 to \$160,000 for the city attorney to continue the negotiations. So that left an important question: Who is going to pay for this? The city or the developer?

The project developer agreed to pay the costs, so that cleared up that matter. When asked if there was a limit to what his client was willing to spend, he said this project has been in planning for more than a decade and “we are already in it for about \$500,000 over the last 18 months and hopefully we are nearing the end.” He also said his client didn’t intend to stop until a final decision is reached.

After a lengthy hearing, despite the annexation concerns expressed in 2007, a legal settlement by the Environmental Defense Center in 2010, and at least two previous denials by LAFCO, the council voted 5-0 to transfer the task to the city attorney, which also included a requirement for the developer to pay all costs.

Why the city attorney didn’t point out the 2010 Environmental Defense Center settlement at that meeting is an unanswered question.

There has been little progress since, and the Planning Division reported “draft MOA (memorandum of agreement) routed to county Dec. 6, 2019. Response received on Dec. 19, 2019, not supporting proposal.”

On March 3, 2021, the Environmental Defense Center sent the following objection of the annexation to LAFCO: “Proceeding with this annexation is contrary to LAFCO policies encouraging the conservation of prime agricultural lands and is not in the interest of the city community or the residents of the county of Santa Barbara.”

Now we’ll see if LAFCO will agree to allow the annexation after objecting to it vigorously in the past. If they do, I will be surprised since they have repeatedly stated that the city should grow north, and it appears to be contrary to their policies. ☹

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

Easy target

Santa Barbara County District Attorney Joyce Dudley is sure keeping environmental polluters in check! She's saving the world, one working man at a time by throwing the book at people who drive too fast on Highway 166.

Everyone, be wary!

Actually, Dudley's only got her eagle eyes on *one guy*—the driver of a tanker truck that took a curve at the wrong speed, spilling thousands of gallons of oil into the Cuyama River in 2020.

A press release from the District Attorney's Office said the driver "drove at an unsafe speed and made an unlawful turning movement." It could have been *any* truck. It could have been *any* driver. But I think the key to this case is one big, scary word: *oil*.

Ooh. I shudder!

A quick check of accident records along that infamously dangerous stretch of road yields "216 large truck collisions requiring a police response between 2015 and 2020," according to California Highway Patrol stats analyzed by the Center for Biological Diversity.

It could have been 1,000 gallons of molasses or a dump truck load of dust and gravel. Both spilled on the same stretch of Highway 101 in Santa Rosa last year, hours apart from one another, according to Burns & Wilcox, an insurance company.

It could have been thousands of rolls of toilet paper, a pre-pandemic accident that happened in Canada on Highway 401. Imagine all the toilet paper hoarders fighting over that one? Would have been cleaned up in seconds, amirite?!

It could have been 42,000 pounds of pig parts, which flipped over on Highway 59 in Texas. That's actually really disgusting.

It, literally, could have been any truck that carries any load of any product that started to sway as it headed into that fateful curve along Highway 166 that day, eventually dumping its load into the river.

Would Dudley have prosecuted? What if that molasses spill killed a mallard and a belted kingfisher? Or toilet paper got stuck inside their bellies? Would the Fish and Game Code violations have been prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law? I doubt it! Not sexy enough.

Oil, bad. Molasses, kind of sweet. Toilet paper, so fresh and so clean.

The District Attorney's Office is charging the oil tanker driver with the deaths of those birds, which aren't even endangered species.

I have yet to see one *single* charge against the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation for killing hundreds of endangered steelhead in the Santa Ynez River during the drought because the massive federal department couldn't keep its water pumps working in Cachuma Lake.

So what's up, Dudley? Is this a political tactic, targeting a truck driver simply because the contents of his tanker were full of crude oil? Or are you setting a precedent for what we should expect in the future after accidents on Highway 166?

Even the Center for Biological Diversity, a staunchly anti-oil environmental advocacy organization, believes that this case isn't going to fix the issue. While the center is very concerned about oil—and is definitely going to use the crash as fuel (pun intended) for its fight against ExxonMobil oil trucks driving coastal highways—the sheer number of accidents on that stretch of highway is a reminder that something needs to be fixed.

And it's not the driver.

It's the road. ○

The Canary is very happy to fly. Send comments to canary@santamariasun.com.



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Luke Tyree, 2020

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Jonathan Shapiro, 2020

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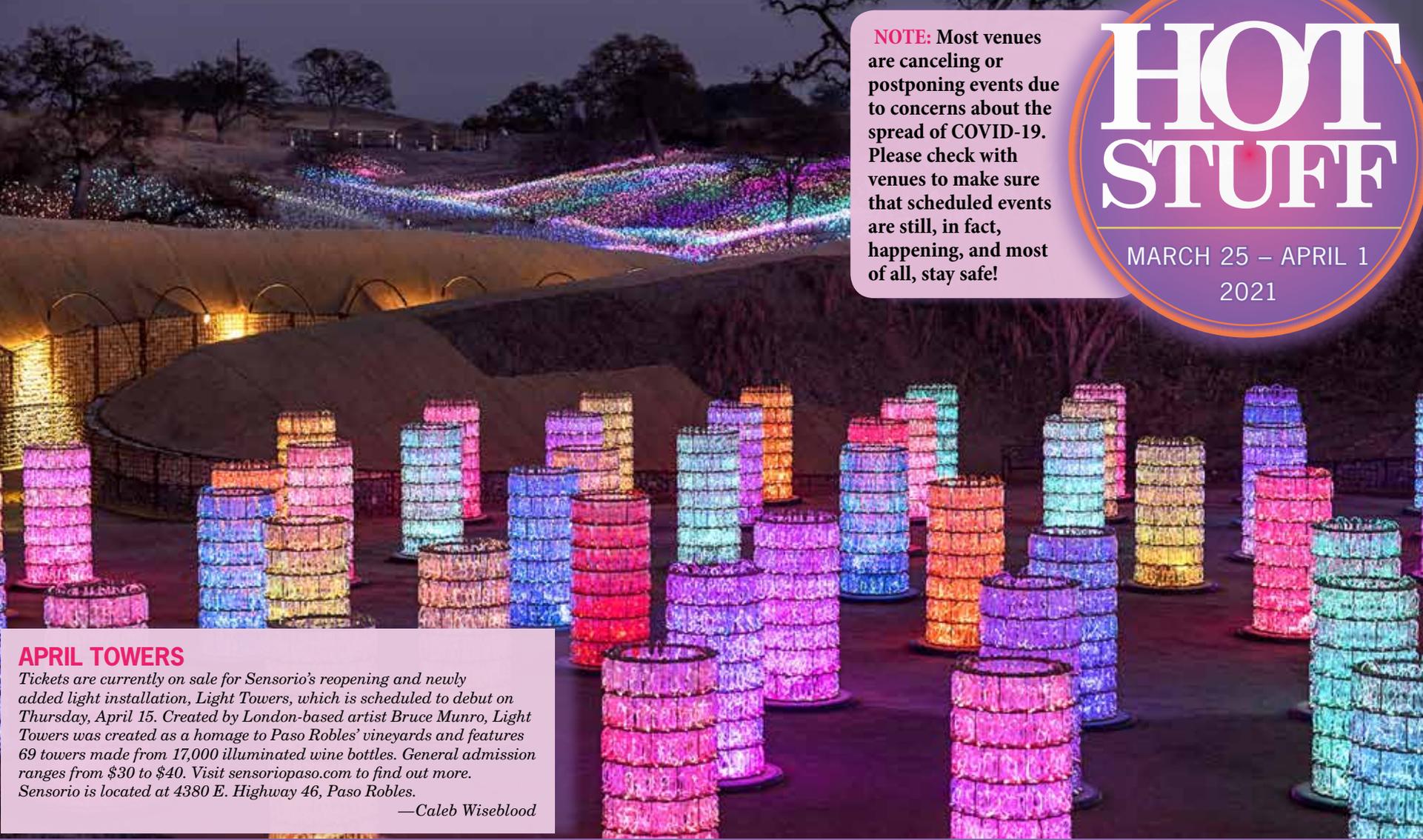
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HOT STUFF

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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!



COURTESY PHOTO BY CHRIS HARD

APRIL TOWERS

Tickets are currently on sale for Sensorio's reopening and newly added light installation, *Light Towers*, which is scheduled to debut on Thursday, April 15. Created by London-based artist Bruce Munro, *Light Towers* was created as a homage to Paso Robles' vineyards and features 69 towers made from 17,000 illuminated wine bottles. General admission ranges from \$30 to \$40. Visit sensoriopaso.com to find out more. Sensorio is located at 4380 E. Highway 46, Paso Robles.

—Caleb Wiseblood

ARTS

SANTA YNEZ VALLEY

THE ART OF FACE MASKS: VIRTUAL EXHIBIT This group show reunites several artists from the museum's 2019 exhibit, *The Art of Dress*, including Georganne Alex, Carole Coduti, Gwen Samuels, and others. ongoing Free. artoffacemasks.com. Elverhoj Museum of History and Art, 1624 Elverhoj Way, Solvang, 805-686-1211.

COLOR AND LIGHT Artists Neil Andersson and Vicki Andersen display their oil and acrylic paintings in this exhibit at Gallery Los Olivos. Open Mondays and Thursdays, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Mondays, Thursdays-Sundays, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. through March 29 805-688-7517. <http://GalleryLosOlivos.com>. Gallery Los Olivos, 2920 Grand Ave., Los Olivos.

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.

THE NATURE OF CLOUDS: HOLLI HARMON 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 window installation inspired by the water cycle. Through Sept. 22 wildlingmuseum.org. Wildling Museum of Art and Nature, 1511-B Mission Dr., Solvang, 805-688-1082.

SB COUNTY AND BEYOND Photographic landscapes by George Rose. View online. ongoing Free. Wildling Museum of Art and Nature, 1511-B Mission Dr., Solvang, 805-688-1082, wildlingmuseum.org.

SOLVANG SCHOOL: INSPIRED BY NATURE

View the exhibit online. Features photography by 29 Solvang School Yearbook and Media students. The students, grades 7 – 8, were inspired by philosopher Henry David Thoreau's quote: "All good things are wild and free." ongoing Free. Wildling Museum of Art and Nature, 1511-B Mission Dr., Solvang, 805-688-1082, wildlingmuseum.org.

SUNFLOWERS + HYDRANGEAS = HAPPINESS: OIL PAINTINGS BY PATTI

ROBBINS Gallery Los Olivos presents a solo exhibit of oil paintings by Patti Robbins. This collection of paintings includes pieces that focus on sunflowers and/or Hydrangeas as the primary subjects. Mondays, Thursdays-Sundays, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. through April 30 Free. <http://GalleryLosOlivos.com>. Gallery Los Olivos, 2920 Grand Ave., Los Olivos, 805-688-7517.

WINTERING: A FOX TALE 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. Through June 20 wildlingmuseum.org. Wildling Museum of Art and Nature, 1511-B Mission Dr., Solvang, 805-688-1082.

SANTA MARIA VALLEY/LOS ALAMOS

MAKING MARKS IN CREATIVE SPACES: AHC FINE ARTS STUDENT SHOW (VIRTUAL) A virtual exhibit celebrating the work of the Allan Hancock Fine Arts students created during the pandemic, over the past year of online studio learning. This virtual exhibit will be able to view on the Ann Foxworthy Gallery website. **March 29-April 5**, 7 a.m.-7 p.m. Free. 805-694-8894. hancockcollege.edu/gallery. Ann Foxworthy Gallery, 800 S. College Dr., Santa Maria.

MUSIC LESSONS AT COELHO Call or go online for the Academy's current offerings. The Academy offers private lessons by the hour or half hour for all age groups and ability. ongoing 805-925-0464. coelhomusic.com. Coelho Academy of Music, 325 E. Betteravia Rd., Santa Maria.

PCPA: ACTORS TALKBACK Streams live on PCPA's Instagram every Thursday and spotlights a different thespian guest each week. Hosted by Erik Stein. Thursdays, 3:30 p.m. Free. pcpa.org. PCPA: The Pacific Conservatory Theatre, Santa Maria, 805-922-8313.

PCPA READS AT HOME A literacy project that uses our students' learning to serve children and parents who are learning at home. Co-hosted by Allan Hancock College and the Santa Maria-Bonita School District to bring a love of stories and language to people right in their homes. ongoing PCPA: The Pacific Conservatory Theatre, Santa Maria, 805-922-8313, pcpa.org.

TECH TALKS: LIVE ON INSTAGRAM

Every Tuesday sit down with one of our technical staff and learn about the ins

and outs of their craft. Get the exclusive with our host Erik Stein. Tuesdays, 3:30 p.m. PCPA: The Pacific Conservatory Theatre, Santa Maria, 805-922-8313, pcpa.org.

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

WORKSHOPS VIA ZOOM Sara Curran Ice, PCPA's Technical Theatre Program Coordinator/Designer, is conducting Workshops via Zoom for local high school drama students. Please stop by Art Central's gallery during store hours to view this exhibit. Mondays-Sundays, through May 3 Free. 805-747-4200. artcentralslo.com/portfolio/nowhere-to-land/. Art Central, 1329 Monterey St., San Luis Obispo.

SAN LUIS OBISPO

ART EXHIBIT: NOWHERE TO LAND An exhibit featuring local artist and Cal Poly Professor Antonio F. Garcia. Enjoy his unique exploration of mediums and concepts. Please stop by Art Central's gallery during store hours to view this exhibit. Mondays-Sundays, through May 3 Free. 805-747-4200. artcentralslo.com/portfolio/nowhere-to-land/. Art Central, 1329 Monterey St., San Luis Obispo.

CAL POLY ARTS PRESENTS NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC LIVE: MYSTERIOUS SEAS Get a glimpse into the ocean's greatest depths—and the fascinating creatures that live there—with two leading marine biologists and National Geographic Emerging Explorers. This 60-minute virtual event will include stories and visuals; live, moderated conversation; and an audience Q-and-A. **March 31**, 7-8 p.m. \$16.50; \$10 students. calpolyarts.org/nat-geo-live/mysterious-seas. Online. See website, 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. artcentralslo.wordpress.com/blog/. Online. See website, San Luis Obispo.

FLOOR PLAN: A VIRTUAL DANCE CONCERT

Presented by the Orchesis Dance Company. Available to stream through the end of Cal Poly's academic year. Through June 1 theatreanddance.calpoly.edu. Online. See website, San Luis Obispo.

LABORATORY SERIES VIV: DEMETRIUS OLIVER

IN CONVERSATION WITH THOMAS FOWLER This event is a part of the Laboratory Series, a conversation series with Black-identified artists in collaboration with R.A.C.E. Matters SLO. **March 25**, 5-6:30 p.m. cccconfer.zoom.us. Online. See website, San Luis Obispo.

LINDA WEINBERG-HAMMER: PASTEL EXHIBIT

Pastel artist Linda Weinberg-Hammer will have her works on display. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, please contact the artist directly. ongoing 913-522-9457. Jamaica You, 1998 Santa Barbara Ave., San Luis Obispo.

NEVER STOP CREATING: STUDENT FILM AND DIGITAL MEDIA ARTS COMPETITION

An opportunity to celebrate Central Coast students who found safe ways to continue creating throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. The challenge covers film, digital media arts, screenplay writing, and podcasting. Through April 15 Free. 805-668-4828. centralcoastfilmsociety.org/never-stop-creating-challenge.html. Online. See website, San Luis Obispo.

THE REBOOT PRESENTS COVID STORIES: THE PLEASE SCREAM INSIDE YOUR HEART EDITION

Diverse storytellers around the country share slivers of the bittersweet good blooming in the pandemic's long shadow. This quirky, interactive showcase of collaboration and resilience breathes big stories out loud about being masked up, boxed in, distanced, adapting, and cultivating hope. Story on with us. **March 26**, 7-8:30 p.m. youtube.com/watch?v=3jvSPXDFcJY. 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. Art Central, 1329 Monterey St., San Luis Obispo.

SHIFTING TIDES: A NIGHT OF SURF INSPIRED FILM

The Central Coast State Parks Association is excited to bring an evening of in-person and virtual film screenings to our community. A showing of feature and short films examining surfing as cultural and environmental activism. Partners at There Does Not Exist Brewery will provide food and beverages for purchase for in-person

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. You may also email calendar@newtimeslo.com. Deadline is one week before the issue date on Thursdays. Submissions are subject to editing and approval. Contact Calendar Editor Caleb Wiseblood directly at cwiseblood@newtimeslo.com.

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Last State Restricted Silver Walking Liberty Bank Rolls go to state residents

California residents get first dibs on last remaining Bank Rolls loaded with U.S. Gov't issued Silver Walking Liberties dating back to the early 1900's some worth up to 100 times their face value for just the \$39 minimum set for state residents - non state residents must pay \$118 per coin if any remain after 2-day deadline

▶ STATE DISTRIBUTION: A strict limit of 4 State Restricted Bank Rolls per CA resident has been imposed

CALIFORNIA - "It's a miracle these State Restricted Bank Rolls even exist. That's why Hotline Operators are bracing for the flood of calls," said Laura Lynne, U.S. Coin and Currency Treasurer for the National Mint and Treasury.

For the next 2 days the last remaining State of California Restricted Bank Rolls loaded with rarely seen U.S. Gov't issued Silver Walking Liberties are actually being handed over to California residents who call the National Toll-Free Hotlines listed in today's newspaper publication.

"I recently spoke with a retired Treasurer of the United States of America who said 'In all my years as Treasurer I've only ever seen a handful of these rarely seen Silver Walking Liberties issued by the U.S. Gov't back in the early 1900's. But to actually find them sealed away in State Restricted Bank Rolls still in pristine condition is like finding buried treasure. So anyone lucky enough to get their hands on these Bank Rolls had better hold on to them,'" Lynne said.

"Now that the State of California Restricted Bank Rolls are being offered up we won't be surprised if thousands of California state residents claim the maximum limit allowed of 4 Bank Rolls per resident before they're all gone," said Lynne.

"That's because the dates and mint marks of the U.S. Gov't issued Silver Walking Liberty Half Dollars sealed away inside the State of California Restricted Bank Rolls have never been searched. But, we do know that some of these coins date clear back to the early 1900's and are worth up to 100 times their face value, so there is no telling what California residents will find until they sort through all the coins," Lynne went on to say.

And here's the best part. If you are a resident of the state of California you cover only the \$39 per coin state minimum set by the National Mint and Treasury, that's fifteen rarely seen U.S. Gov't issued Silver Walking Liberties worth up to 100 times their face value for just \$585 which is a real steal because all other residents must pay \$118 per coin which totals \$1,770 if any coins remain after the 2-day deadline.

The only thing California resi-

dents need to do is call the National Toll-Free Hotlines printed in today's newspaper publication before the 2-day order deadline ends.

"Rarely seen U.S. Gov't issued silver coins like these are highly sought after, but we've never seen anything like this before. According to The Official Red Book, a Guide Book of United States Coins many Silver Walking Liberty Half Dollars are now worth \$115 - \$825 each in collector value," Lynne said.

"So just imagine how much these last remaining, unsearched State of California Restricted Bank Rolls could be worth someday. Remember, these are not ordinary coins - these rarely seen coins date clear back to the early 1900's. In fact, these coins have been forever retired by the U.S. Gov't, and you can't get them rolled this way anywhere because these are the only State Restricted Bank Rolls known to exist," said Lynne.

"We're guessing thousands of California residents will be taking the maximum limit of 4 Bank Rolls because they make such amazing gifts for any occasion for children, parents, grandparents, friends and loved ones," Lynne continued.

"We know the phones will be ringing off the hook. That's why hundreds of Hotline Operators are standing by to answer the phones beginning at 8:30am this morning. We're going to do our best, but with just 2 days to answer all the calls it won't be easy. So make sure to tell everyone to keep calling if all lines are busy. We'll do our best to answer them all," Lynne said.

"That's why the National Mint and Treasury set up the National Toll-Free Hotlines in order to make sure California residents get the State Restricted Bank Rolls before they're all gone," she said.

The only thing readers of today's newspaper publication need to do is make sure they are a resident of California and call the National Toll-Free Hotlines before the 2-day deadline ends midnight tomorrow. ■



JACKPOT: Imagine finding the 1919-D Silver Walking Liberty shown above worth thousands of dollars in collector value in one of these unsearched Bank Rolls. There are never any guarantees, but State residents who get their hands on these State Restricted Bank Rolls will be the really lucky ones because even more common coins are still worth up to \$115 - \$825 in collector value.

VALUABLE: It's like a treasure hunt - there's no telling what you'll find. That's because the dates and mint marks of the fifteen U.S. Gov't issued coins sealed away inside these State Restricted Bank Rolls have never been searched. All we know is some of the coins are worth up to 100 times their face value.

IMPORTANT: The dates and mint marks of the U.S. Gov't issued Silver Walking Liberties sealed away inside the State Restricted Bank Rolls have never been searched. Coin values always fluctuate and they are never any guarantees, but any of the scarce coins shown below, regardless of their value that residents may find inside the sealed Bank Rolls are theirs to keep.



1916-P
Mint: Philadelphia
Mintage: 608,000
Collector Value: \$55
\$265

1919-P
Mint: Philadelphia
Mintage: 962,000
Collector Value: \$32
\$515

1921-S
Mint: San Francisco
Mintage: 548,000
Collector Value: \$80
\$800

1938-D
Mint: Denver
Mintage: 491,600
Collector Value: \$60
\$160

CALIFORNIA RESIDENTS: COVER JUST \$39 MINIMUM PER COIN

BEGIN CALLING AT 8:30 AM: 1-800-929-4439 EXT. RWL1550



IF YOU ARE A RESIDENT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA CALL NOW TO CLAIM THE STATE LIMIT OF 4 STATE OF CALIFORNIA RESTRICTED BANK ROLLS. ALL CALIFORNIA RESIDENTS WHO BEAT THE 2-DAY DEADLINE ARE GETTING THE ONLY FULL FIFTEEN COIN BANK ROLLS LOADED WITH RARELY SEEN U.S. GOV'T ISSUED SILVER WALKING LIBERTY HALF DOLLARS DATING BACK TO THE EARLY 1900'S SOME WORTH UP TO 100 TIMES THEIR FACE VALUE KNOWN TO EXIST. THE ONLY THING CALIFORNIA RESIDENTS COVER IS JUST THE \$39 PER COIN STATE MINIMUM SET BY THE NATIONAL MINT AND TREASURY, THAT'S FIFTEEN RARELY SEEN U.S. GOV'T ISSUED SILVER WALKING LIBERTY HALF DOLLARS WORTH UP TO 100 TIMES THEIR FACE VALUE FOR JUST \$585 AND THAT'S A REAL STEAL BECAUSE NON-CALIFORNIA RESIDENTS MUST PAY \$1,770 FOR EACH STATE OF CALIFORNIA RESTRICTED BANK ROLL. JUST BE SURE TO CALL THE NATIONAL TOLL FREE HOTLINES BEFORE THE DEADLINE ENDS TWO DAYS FROM TODAY'S PUBLICATION DATE.

NON STATE RESIDENTS: MUST PAY \$118 PER COIN - IF ANY REMAIN



DO NOT CALL BEFORE 5:00 PM TOMORROW: 1-800-929-8898 RWL1550

IF YOU ARE A RESIDENT LIVING OUTSIDE OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA YOU ARE REQUIRED TO PAY \$118 FOR EACH SILVER WALKING LIBERTY FOR A TOTAL OF \$1,770 PLUS SHIPPING AND HANDLING FOR EACH STATE OF CALIFORNIA RESTRICTED BANK ROLL LOADED WITH FIFTEEN U.S. GOV'T ISSUED SILVER WALKING LIBERTY HALF DOLLARS.

NATIONAL MINT AND TREASURY, LLC IS NOT AFFILIATED WITH THE U.S. MINT, THE U.S. GOVERNMENT, A BANK OR ANY GOVERNMENT AGENCY. IF FOR ANY REASON WITHIN 30 DAYS FROM SHIPMENT YOU ARE DISSATISFIED, RETURN THE PRODUCT FOR A REFUND LESS SHIPPING AND RETURN POSTAGE. THIS SAME OFFER MAY BE MADE AVAILABLE AT A LATER DATE OR IN A DIFFERENT GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION. OH RESIDENTS ADD 6.5% SALES TAX. NATIONAL MINT AND TREASURY, PO BOX 35609, CANTON, OH 44735 ©2020 NATIONAL MINT AND TREASURY. R1018



SOURCE OF FIBER

The Ann Foxworthy Gallery at Allan Hancock College in Santa Maria presents *Woven Narratives*, a virtual exhibition showcasing artist Michael F. Rohde, which is scheduled to remain online through Saturday, May 1. This abstract exhibit highlights a collection of Rohde's unique tapestry artworks. Admission to view the show online is free. Call (805) 694-8894 or visit hancockcollege.edu/gallery for more info. —C.W.

Free. 805-747-4200. artcentral.slo.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. [ongoing facebook.com/artsobispo](https://www.facebook.com/artsobispo). Downtown SLO, Higuera Street, San Luis Obispo.

WE ALL BLEED: PHOTOGRAPHY OF PROTEST BY RICHARD FUSILLO An exhibition of photography and media surrounding the Black Lives Matter protests in SLO. Hosted in collaboration with R.A.C.E. Matters SLO. Through May 2, 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Free. 805-543-8562. slo.ma.org/exhibition/we-all-bleed/. Online, See website, San Luis Obispo.

NORTH SLO COUNTY

CALIFORNIA-AESTHETIC-3D A celebration of the California spirit through sculpture. CA3D features work created with elements of wood, stone, metal and glass. Sculptors include Carl Berney, Peter Charles, Mecki Heussen, George Jercich, Larry Le Brane, Ron Roundy, and Ken Wilbanks. Mondays, Wednesdays-Sundays, noon through May 3 Free. 805-238-9800. studiosonthepark.org/events/californiaaesthetic3d/. Studios on the Park, 1130 Pine St., Paso Robles.

FEATURED ARTIST SHEILA UNDERWOOD: SILK PAINTING AND WATERCOLOR Enjoy the bold and beautiful luscious color of these exquisite floral and landscape paintings by Sheila Underwood, during Paso Art After Dark first Saturdays, in March and April. April 3, 6-9 p.m. 805-236-4430. Park Street Gallery, 1320 Park Street, Paso Robles, parkstreetgallery.com.

GEOMETRIC GLASS TERRARIUM Create a small glass terrarium using clear glass, copper foil, and solder. Complete your look with small rocks and air plants. All materials included. Bring a bag lunch. Limited to 4 people. March 27, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. \$125. 805-464-2633. glassheadstudio.com. Glasshead Studio, 8793 Plata Lane, Suite H, Atascadero.

PORTRAITS IN NATURE View the unique and inspiring work of local Central Coast artists in oil, pastel, watercolor, photography, sculpture and glass in the Paso Robles Art Association Gallery. Through April 28 Studios on the Park, 1130 Pine St., Paso Robles, 805-238-9800, studiosonthepark.org.

STUDIOS ON THE PARK: ONLINE CLASSES AND WORKSHOPS

Check site for a variety of virtual classes and workshops online. [ongoing studiosonthepark.org](http://ongoing.studiosonthepark.org). Studios on the Park, 1130 Pine St., Paso Robles, 805-238-9800.

WINGS OF CHANGE: VETERANS' VOICES 4 ART EXHIBITION An outdoor butterfly sculpture garden. Through June 30 310-621-7543. Deprise Brescia Art Gallery, 829 10th St., Paso Robles.

NORTH COAST SLO COUNTY

CALL FOR ARTISTS: BROKEN NATURE (MIXED MEDIA EXHIBIT) Artists are called upon to courageously expose greed, brutality, neglect-of nature and each other. Exhibit challenges artists to find ways of addressing the consequences of our choices and the urgent need to live sustainably within Earth's finite resources, healing ourselves and the planet. Through April 6 Entry fees vary; see entry forms. 805-772-2504. artcentermorrobay.org. Art Center Morro Bay, 835 Main St., Morro Bay.

FLOWER POWER This exhibit will demonstrate the flexibility of floral images to convey both timely and timeless themes. The flowers offer decorative appeal, symbolic and healing values, as well as ways of thinking about a wide range of topics. Through April 5 Art Center Morro Bay, 835 Main St., Morro Bay, 805-772-2504, artcentermorrobay.org.

GALLERY AT MARINA SQUARE: CHINESE BRUSH PAINTINGS BY JARIEN DE HAM Jarien de Ham began

Chinese brush painting in 2002. Includes landscapes and figure paintings. Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays-Sundays, 11 a.m.-5 p.m. through March 29 Free. 805-772-1068. galleryatmarinasquare.com. Gallery at Marina Square, 601 Embarcadero suite 10, Morro Bay.

GALLERY AT MARINA SQUARE PRESENTS WATERCOLOR PAINTINGS BY SHERIL VIAU

Sheril Viau's vibrant, detailed, uplifting watercolors are inspired by her many travels. She paints a wide variety of subjects, including flowers, boats, harbors, landscapes and architecture. She grew up in Morro Bay and currently resides with her family in Nipomo. Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays-Sundays, 11 a.m.-5 p.m. through April 29 Free. 805-772-1068. galleryatmarinasquare.com. Gallery at Marina Square, 601 Embarcadero suite 10, Morro Bay.

SKYE WRIGHT: GALLERY AT MARINA SQUARE

Digital artist Skye Wright has had a love affair with art since early childhood. As an adult, she began a 3-year intensive education in Adobe Illustrator ("love at first click"). Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays-Sundays, 11 a.m.-5 p.m. through March 29 Free. 805-772-1068. galleryatmarinasquare.com. Gallery at Marina Square, 601 Embarcadero suite 10, Morro Bay.

TANGLED LINES: PEN AND INK DRAWINGS BY DEBBIE GEDAYLOO AND STEVIE CHUN

Artists Debbie Gedayloo and Stevie Chun have come together to showcase their pen and ink drawings. Both artists work with different techniques and line intensity, patterns, and ink strokes. Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays-Sundays. through April 29 Free. 805-772-1068. galleryatmarinasquare.com. Gallery at Marina Square, 601 Embarcadero suite 10, Morro Bay.

CULTURE & LIFESTYLE

SANTA MARIA VALLEY/LOS ALAMOS

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



ARTS from page 12

attendees. All proceeds from screenings support local beaches within our State Parks. March 27, 6 p.m. \$10-\$20. 805-548-0384. centralcoastparks.org/film-festival/. There Does Not Exist Brewery, 4070 Earthwood Lane, Suite 110, San Luis Obispo.

SLO REP: THE INTERMISSION SHOW Even though SLO REP's stage is dark, enjoy a dose of SLO REP behind-the-scenes fun every Friday until the theater opens its doors to the public again. Fridays, 3-3:30 p.m. through April 30 Free. 805-781-3889. slore.org/shows/the-intermission-show/. Online, See website, San Luis Obispo.

SLOMA: A DIGITAL ART SALON (VIRTUAL) This digital exhibition features diverse artworks created by contemporary California digital artists. Juror selections were made by artist Michelle Robinson. Through May 2, 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Free. 805-543-8562. slo.ma.org/exhibition/a-digital-art-salon/. Online, See website, San Luis Obispo.

SPIRITUAL MOVIE DISCUSSION (VIRTUAL) Supported by Unity 5 Cities, this weekly virtual group discusses popular movies with spiritual themes (please watch movies in advance). Contact Melissa at meliss.crist@gmail.com to be added to the email list and receive the link. Tuesdays, 6-7:30 p.m. Free. 805-440-9461. unity5cities.org. Online, See website, San Luis Obispo.

VIRTUAL ART GALLERY Every Friday, we publish our Virtual Art Gallery to our blog/newsletter. Featuring artworks from customers and the community. Fridays, 9 a.m.-1 p.m.



UP IN THE AIR

The Valley Art Gallery of Santa Maria presents its Spring Art Showcase at the Santa Maria Airport, starting on Monday, April 5. Several local artists will be showcased during this group exhibit, which is set to remain on display through Sunday, June 6. Admission to view the artworks inside the airport will be free. Call (805) 922-0663 or visit valleygallery.org for more info. The airport is located at 3217 Terminal Drive, Santa Maria. —C.W.

CULTURE & LIFESTYLE continued page 16
FILE PHOTO BY JAYSON MELLOM

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HICAP Counselors are available to answer your Medicare questions including understanding Medicare benefits, Supplemental Insurance and Medicare Advantage plan options, identifying cost effective prescription drug plans, preparing Medicare claims and appeals and understanding long term care insurance options.

HICAP offers free virtual presentations to Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo County residents

Virtual presentation topics include New to Medicare, Understanding Medicare, Medicare Open Enrollment Changes, and a variety of 30-minute Medicare related topics.

To register for a virtual presentation, please visit our website at www.centralcoastseniors.org/blog/hicap-presentation-calendar/ or call 805 928-5663



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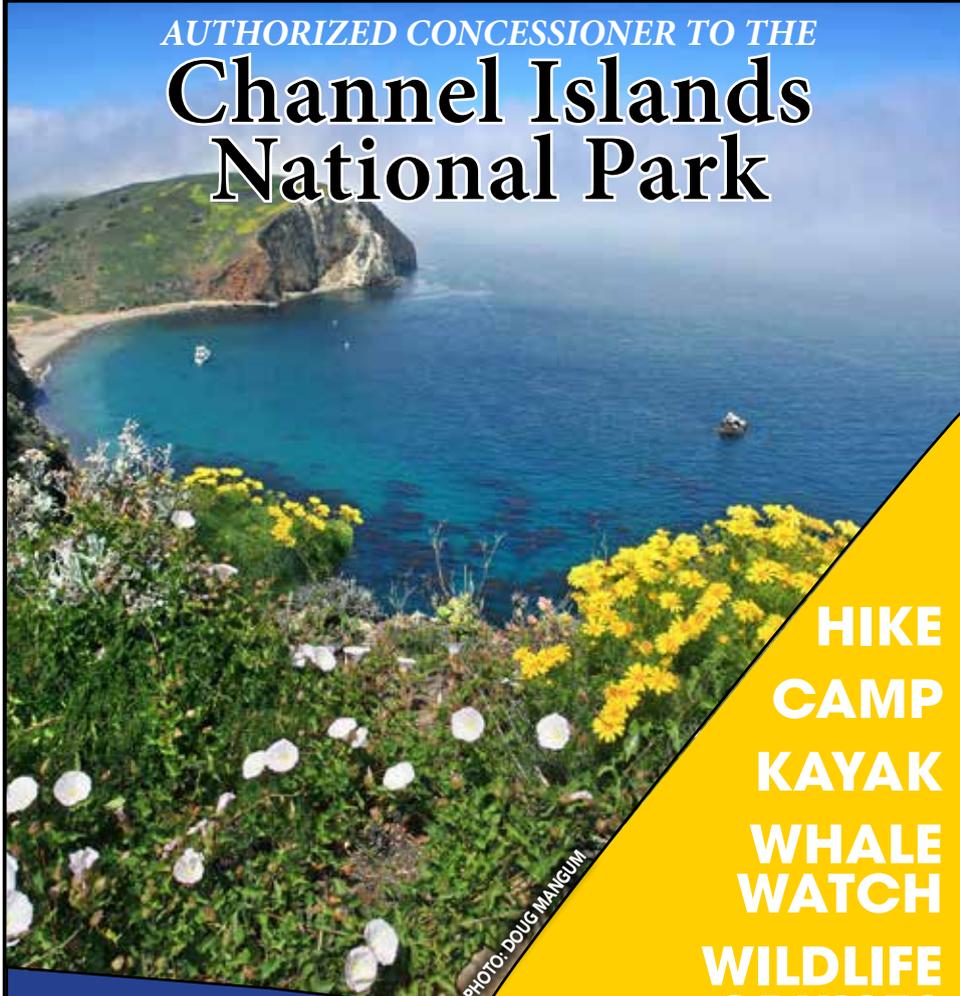


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CULTURE & LIFESTYLE from page 14

EASTER SERVICES AT FCC Join FCC for its Easter Services this year. **April 4**, 8:45-9:45, 10-11 & 11:15 a.m.-12:15 p.m. 805-922-8479. fccsantamaria.org. Online, See website, San Luis Obispo.

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HIKE AND MEDITATION FOR VITALITY Hike the hills at the SLO Botanical Garden before an outdoor meditation practice. Every other Wednesday, 11 a.m.-1 p.m. through May 19 \$25 for Garden Members; \$30 for non-members. 805-541-1400. slobg.org. San Luis Obispo Botanical Garden, 3450 Dairy Creek Rd., 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.slcsud.org. See website, San Luis Obispo.

THE NONVIOLENT LIFE: A CONVERSATION ABOUT NON-VIOLENT LIVING Join us for a conversation about non-violent living based on "The Nonviolent Life", which explores the powerful journey of nonviolence rooted in the Christian vision of love. The conversation will be led by Rev. Caroline Hall on Zoom. Tuesdays, 10:15 a.m.-noon through April 6 Free. 805-528-0654. stbenslosos.org. Zoom, Online, Inquire for Zoom ID.

PARENT PARTICIPATION AND PARENT EDUCATION CLASSES ONLINE (THROUGH SAN LUIS COASTAL ADULT SCHOOL) Find support and connect with others in weekly online parenting classes. Learn about the developmental stage of your child, participate in teacher-facilitated discussions on parenting topics, explore local resources, and safely enjoy the company of other parents. Mondays-Thursdays, through May 28 \$10-\$30. 805-549-1253. slcsud.org. Online, See website, San Luis Obispo.

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SOLOROLL: A COMMUNITY INITIATIVE A free pop-up roller skating event. Locations posted the day of at 4 p.m. Follow @thesoloroll. First Friday of every month Online, See website, San Luis Obispo.

VIRTUAL TOUR OF THE JACK HOUSE Public virtual tours via Zoom of the famous Jack House of San Luis Obispo. Access to the house is extremely limited and this is your best opportunity to get the inside view. Thursdays, 2 p.m. \$5 suggested. 805-543-0638. historycenterslo.org/jack-tour.html. Zoom, Online, Inquire for Zoom ID.

FOOD & DRINK

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KALYRA: PURCHASES AND PICK-UPS Offering varietals from all over the world. Tuesdays-Sundays, 12-5 p.m. 805-693-8864. kalyrawinery.com. Kalyra Winery, 343 N. Refugio Rd., Santa Ynez.

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

LOMPOC/VANDENBERG

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

SANTA MARIA VALLEY/LOS ALAMOS

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

SOUTH COAST SLO COUNTY

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

SAN LUIS OBISPO

PANDA EXPRESS FUNDRAISER FOR CPCP The Cal Poly Cat Program invites everyone to this fundraiser at Panda Express in San Luis Obispo. 20 percent of the proceeds will be donated back to this non-profit cat rescue. **April 1**, 10:30 a.m.-8 p.m. catprogram.calpoly.edu/. Panda Express, 789 E. Foothill Blvd., San Luis Obispo, 805-784-0355.

NORTH SLO COUNTY

SPRING RELEASE PIG ROAST Enjoy new releases, dive into some good food, and enjoy the tunes of the Joy Bonner Band. Spring is a time to celebrate newness. **April 2**, 6-8 p.m. my805tix.com. Cass Winery And Vineyard, 7350 Linne Rd., Paso Robles, 805.239.1730.

WINE TASTING AND LOCAL BITES FUNDRAISER FOR PASO FOOD CO-OP Support and meet with reps from Bon Niche Cellars, Paso Food Co-op, and Foss Farm during this event. **March 26**, 6-8 p.m. Varies. 805-286-7798. bonniche.com/visit/#events. Bon Niche Cellars, 2627 Golden Eagle Way, San Miguel.

COURTESY FILE PHOTO BY JENNY ASHLEY



LADY AND THE LAMP
Studios on the Park in Paso Robles presents its latest exhibition, Abstract Thoughts, through Monday, March 29. This group show highlights a variety of media from artists Jenny Ashley (whose work is pictured), Burl Vreeland, Jordan Hockett, and Allen Cox. Guests can see the exhibit in person or virtually at studiosonthepark.org. The gallery is located at 1130 Pine St., Paso Robles.

—C.W.

MUSIC

SANTA MARIA VALLEY/LOS ALAMOS

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

SAN LUIS OBISPO

CUESTA COLLEGE: UNMASKED AT HOME (VIRTUAL FACULTY CONCERT) A special virtual concert starring the Cuesta College Music Faculty. **March 31** bigbigslo.com. Online, See website, San Luis Obispo.

ELFIN: SPRING ALBUM RELEASE Local artist Dr. C. Hite releases *Elfin* to celebrate spring and St. Patrick's Day. ongoing Free streaming; select at \$1 per song or \$10-\$20 per album download. carolbethhite.bandcamp.com. Online, See website, San Luis Obispo.

NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM: BENEFIT MUSIC ALBUM Night at the Museum, original harp music created for sale at the San Luis Obispo Museum of Art (SLOMA), is now available for streaming and download at carolbethhite.bandcamp.com, as a donation to the Museum. Listen free and select per song or complete arrangement. Through March 31 \$1, \$10-\$20. carolbethhite.bandcamp.com. Online, See website, San Luis Obispo.

NORTH SLO COUNTY

3 SONGWRITERS PLAY IN PASO Songwriters at Play host Steve Key is joined by Charlie Baker and Warren Sellers, swapping songs on the outdoor stage at Sculpterra. Rob Kimball will play a guest set. Food for sale. All ages welcome. No cover charge. **April 3**, 12:30-3:30 p.m. Free. 805-204-6821. stevekey.com/events. Sculpterra Winery, 5015 Linne Rd., Paso Robles. ○

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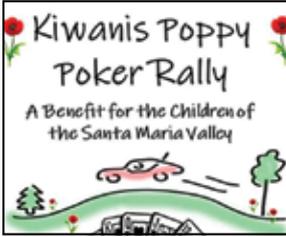
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Dinner Series: South Africa
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 7
Cass Winery, Paso Robles



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Arts Briefs

Central Coast Film Society holds multimedia competition for high school students

FILE PHOTO COURTESY OF THE SOLVANG CONFERENCE AND VISITORS BUREAU



The Central Coast Film Society is now accepting submissions from high school students across four counties (Santa Barbara, San Luis Obispo, Ventura, and Monterey) into its new multimedia competition, The “Never Stop Creating” Student Challenge. Submissions are due no later than April 15, and the contest’s categories include filmmaking, screenwriting, photography, podcasting, and the “highlight reel challenge” (editing and/or acting in short/long-form digital content).

All students who submit entries will receive constructive feedback from the Central Coast Film Society board members and will be eligible to be included in the “Never Stop Creating” Student Showcase, which will be available online on May 1 and 2. A panel of judges will review the showcase and select a winner from each category, who will each receive a scholarship of \$100. The public will also have the chance to vote for their favorite works during the virtual showcase, which will determine who wins the People’s Choice Award and an additional \$100 scholarship.

The panel of judges in this competition are Skye McLennan, the festival director for the SLO Film Festival; Chris Lambert, the creator and producer of *Your Own Backyard* podcast; Sheryl Franciskovich, the publisher and creative director for *SLO Life Magazine*; Randi Barros, an instructor at Cal Poly; Ken Napzok, an author and podcaster; Chris Burkard, a photographer and filmmaker; and Josh Ernstrom, a digital media producer for PG&E.

One of the contest’s rules is that each submission must have been completed no earlier than March of last year, as the theme of “Never Stop Creating” is to celebrate Central Coast students who found safe ways to continue creating throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. There is no entry fee to enter the contest nor an admission fee to view the showcase later in May, according to Daniel Lahr (pictured), executive director of the Central Coast Film Society.

“Everything is free for the students and the audience. We want to make sure their outstanding work is recognized and rewarded, and we want that opportunity to be given to everyone regardless of where on the Central Coast they are from,” Lahr said in press materials.

For more info on the competition, visit centralcoastfilmsociety.org.

PCPA announces in-person, outdoor theater camps for ages 8 to 17

The Pacific Conservatory Theatre (PCPA) will host Young People’s Project on the Green, an in-person, outdoor theater camp opportunity for kids and teens. The camps’ workshops are described as COVID-19 compliant and will run from April 12 through 17 (for ages 8 to 12) and April 19 through 24 (for ages 13 to 17).

Early registration is recommended as enrollment is limited to 15 students per camp. For more info on the program, visit pcpa.org.

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

Teamwork makes the stream work

Artists, community members, celebrity guests collaborate on virtual variety show to benefit Lompoc Theatre Project

BY CALEB WISEBLOOD

“From that moment on, I knew I wanted to be an actor,” PCPA alumnus Mark Herrier said, recalling his reaction to a production of *The Music Man* he saw when he was 10 years old, at the historic Lompoc Theatre.

Herrier’s fond nostalgia for the long-dormant venue wasn’t the only thing that inspired him to join the Lompoc Theatre Project (LTP)—a nonprofit that aims to restore the theater—about seven years ago. More than anything, Herrier wants to see the theater open again to nurture new generations of aspiring actors and other artists.

“I want the kids in Lompoc right now to have the same opportunity to be as inspired and elevated as I was,” said Herrier, who currently serves as the LTP’s executive director.

On Friday, March 26, Herrier will co-host a virtual fundraiser and telethon—*The Show Must Go On*—to benefit the LTP in its mission to reopen and revitalize the Lompoc Theatre as a much-needed community hub for arts, culture, and entertainment in the city. The event will stream live from the LTP’s Facebook page starting at 6 p.m. and will include a variety of content from local artists and special guests.

“I am particularly looking forward to Tom Bergeron coming on live to help me with the emcee duties,” said Herrier, referring to the former *America’s Funniest Home Videos* (2001-2015) and *Dancing with the Stars* (2005-2019) host.

Bergeron is one of several celebrity guests set to appear during the livestream—alongside television notables Julia Louis-Dreyfus (*Seinfeld*, *Veep*), Richard Karn (*Home Improvement*, *Family Feud*), Jeffrey Combs (*Star Trek*, *Batman: The Animated Series*), Jeff McCarthy (*The Good Wife*, *Madam*

Telethon-tale heart

The Lompoc Theatre Project (LTP) presents *The Show Must Go On*, a virtual fundraiser and telethon, on Friday, March 26, starting at 6 p.m., via Facebook. The event is free to view but the LTP encourages viewers to donate \$20 for a VIP pass, which includes access to exclusive behind-the-scenes footage, an opportunity to bid in a virtual auction, and more. Visit lompoctheatre.org for more info.



CAN'T STOP THE BEAT: Several local musicians, including Kaitlyn Chui (pictured), are contributing their talents to a live telethon, *The Show Must Go On*, to help benefit the Lompoc Theatre Project in its efforts to restore and reopen the historic Lompoc Theatre.

Secretary), and world-renowned burlesque and cabaret performer Alotta Boutté.

“I am humbled by their participation, and I think the audience will enjoy their contributions immensely,” Herrier said of the group. “All of them have had their own hometown theaters that inspired them in their lives, and jumped at the chance to help us raise money for the Lompoc Theatre.”

Many local musical acts also jumped at said chance to contribute their talents, including the Simmons Sisters, Jacob Cole and Friends, Angie and the Nightmares, and solo artist Kaitlyn Chui.

“I figured it would be a perfect way to highlight so many of the local musicians who haven’t really been able to perform for the past year,” co-organizer Michelle Ball said, discussing the event’s formation as a virtual showcase.

Ball and her husband, Jeremy, are probably best known locally for creating, producing, and co-hosting *Good Morning Lompoc*. For *The Show Must Go On*, the duo is working behind the scenes with other LTP board members, filming individual segments of the show’s participating artists performing inside the Lompoc Theatre and editing them together the night of the livestream.

“It’s been complicated with lots of moving parts, but I think it’s going to be fantastic,” Ball said.



SPIRITED AWAY: *The Show Must Go On* will feature segments that highlight local artists in a variety of concentrations, including Lompoc dancer Alena Velasco (pictured), who won the highly coveted Spirit of Fiesta 2020 during Old Spanish Days in Santa Barbara last year.

of dollars have been given in grants and donations for the arts here. But when you do the math, you find that the North County, and Lompoc specifically, has received very little of it,” Herrier said.

Other parts of the region have well-known venues—including the Santa Maria and Santa Ynez valleys with the Marian Theatre and Solvang Festival Theater, respectively—yet Lompoc lacks an operating performing arts center to call its own.

“We are working to change that,” Herrier said. ○

Arts Editor Caleb Wiseblood’s world is a stage. Send comments to cwiseblood@santamariasun.com.



THE MUSIC NEVER STOPPED: “I figured it would be a perfect way to highlight so many of the local musicians who haven’t really been able to perform for the past year,” co-organizer Michelle Ball said, discussing the event’s formation as a virtual showcase for its contributing artists. Pictured: Jacob Cole and Friends.

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Changeling

Promoted under executive producer M. Night Shyamalan, who also directs three episodes, the real star behind *Servant* is creator and writer Tony Basgallop, who has invented a plausible but surreal world where normal people are driven to do bizarre things. A Philadelphia couple—TV newscaster Dorothy Turner (Lauren Ambrose) and celebrity chef Sean Turner (Toby Kebbell)—have tragically lost their infant son, Jericho, in a terrible accident. Dorothy is so despondent she becomes near catatonic, and in a last-ditch effort to bring her back, under the care of family friend and therapist Natalie Gorman (Jerrika Hinton), they replace Jericho with a lifelike but fake baby, and her husband; brother, Julian Pearce (Rupert Grint); and father, Frank Pearce (Todd Waring) all pretend that the fake baby is Jericho, alive and well. It's a twisted premise that gets weirder when Dorothy, now ready to return to work, hires Leanne Grayson (Nell Tiger Free) as Jericho's nanny. (20 30-min. episodes)

Glen: This is a deliciously weird and unsettling series that reminds me of the recent trend in horror epitomized by films such as *Midsommar* (2019), *Hereditary* (2018), and *Mother* (2017). It doesn't need something paranormal to create scares. People are weird enough as is. Dorothy is one of those plastic "journalists" who gets before the camera to cover sensationalized stories or shallow feel-good plugs. She's vapid and

obviously mentally disturbed enough to believe a plastic baby is real. Sean is self-involved and cold, but somewhere in him he loves Dorothy enough to put up with her insanity. There are a lot of graphic scenes of whole animal food prep that add to the grisly and off-kilter atmosphere. Dorothy's brother, Julian, is an anxious drug and alcohol addict with a lot of underlying issues. Leanne, on the other hand, is a mystery. She's quiet and withdrawn, apparently religious but in a creepy make-crosses-out-of-bound-reeds sort of way. She's the closest thing to what might be described as occult in the series. This show is just plain creepy, and once I got sucked in, I was hooked. The last episode of Season 2 was released last week, and a third season is reportedly in the works. Fans of subtle horror, take note!

Anna: I heard about this series from an interview with Grint and the whole scenario—fake baby, occult weirdness, dark and twisty happenings—had me amped up to check it out, and I was not disappointed in the least. This unsettles from the beginning with an eerily real-looking doll. (Side note: The show mentions the name of these dolls as Reborn dolls, which is a real company and a real thing and a really deep dark internet hole I personally suggest you avoid.) Plus we get two odd and seemingly secretive characters living in a big, old Philadelphia home that is dark and rich and beautiful while also starting to fall apart at the seams. When Leanne joins the family, it becomes clear she herself is an odd duck when she keeps up the illusion of a living Jericho even when Dorothy is out of the house. What opens up as the series progresses

are cords of mystery and intrigue, each character damaged, some beyond repair, it seems. Where Dorothy's mania stems from slowly comes to light, and the strain between her and Sean starts unfolding as well. Throw in some cult weirdness and a frenetic and haunted Julian, and you've got a whole world of weird going on. This is a dark dive, but for fans of the slow burn, it has total payoff. I can't wait for Season 3!

Glen: It will be interesting to see where Basgallop takes the story, which is confined almost entirely to the claustrophobic interiors of the house, which has a creepy sub-basement with a crumbling foundation right up to a sloped ceiling attic. When the story does leave the house, it's always briefly and in service to propelling the narrative forward. The acting is fantastic, especially Grint. His Julian doesn't handle stress well, masking his anxiety with cocaine and booze and caustic remarks. The problem with the series, and why I fear for the quality of Season 3, is it's long on atmosphere but short on story. It's basically all these characters simmering in their own emotional stew, all at the mercy of Dorothy, for whom the entire fake baby charade was conceived.

Anna: It will be interesting to see how things develop and what storylines the writers decide to run with. Sean's nitty-gritty work of breaking down whole fish or poultry is visceral, revealing the ugly truth behind making something beautiful. Dorothy herself is much the same—elegant and regal from afar, but once you start to



UNREAL: A Philadelphia power couple mourning the loss of their infant with a realistic substitute baby opens their home to a new nanny, who brings with her an unsettling atmosphere, in *Servant*, screening on Apple TV.

pull at the strings, we see she's flawed, desperate, and vain. Is there a good guy here or just a host of broken people? I got into this series because of Grint, and my loyalty lies with him and his deeply flawed but super sympathetic Julian. He does a great job at toeing the line between outsider and insider in this insane household. If you have a spot in your heart for feeling unsettled, this series is sure to satisfy. ○

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

SERVANT

What's it rated? **TV-MA**
 What's it worth, Anna? **Full price**
 What's it worth, Glen? **Full price**
 Where's it showing? **Apple TV Plus**

TV Reviews

THE LADY AND THE DALE

What's it rated? **TV-14**
 When? **2021**
 Where's it showing? **HBO Max**

Complicated doesn't even scratch the surface of Liz Carmichael's story. From auto executive to serial fraudster, she ran the gamut of life and ultimately paid the price for her shyster ways. This HBO four-part miniseries explores Liz's life before transitioning from Jerry to Geraldine Elizabeth, formerly a fraudster family man who hoodwinked his way through life, continually packing up his young family and once again living life on the run.

The family finally found some stability after Liz's transition and when she boldly entered the automobile industry, promising a three-wheeled vehicle that could withstand anything and everything you threw at it. The problem wasn't Liz's vision, it was the sad fact that she was selling wishes and prayers, and the magic vehicle she dreamed up was a disaster in reality.

The filmmakers attempt to liven up old photos, resulting in a cut-and-paste Monty Python-style animation, and, in general, it's distracting from the story—a story interesting enough to keep you hooked without any tricks. Who was Liz Carmichael



COMPLICATED: Was Elizabeth Carmichael a larger-than-life entrepreneur who aimed to upend the automobile business with a unique three-wheeled car called The Dale, or was she a con artist, and was she really a he? Watch *The Lady and The Dale* on HBO Max and decide for yourself.

at her core—a con artist or a visionary? Those closest to her argue that it could just be a mix of both, and this series asks its audience to give a little room to the possibility she wasn't just a fraudster but someone who genuinely thought she could change the world with her idea. This is an entertaining tale of a complicated character. (four episodes totaling 212 min.)

—Anna

ALLEN V. FARROW

What's it rated? **TV-MA**
 When? **2021**
 Where's it showing? **HBO Max**

I've loved a lot of Woody Allen films. As a 15-year-old, I saw *Annie Hall* (1977) in the theater and was hooked on his quirky, neurotic humor. *Zelig* (1983) is a masterpiece, and over the years I've watched his new films as well as his back catalog of zany comedies such as *Bananas* (1971) and *Sleeper* (1973). I loved some of his heavier stuff, like *Match Point* (2005), but the more I learn about his behavior, the more he disgusts me. I know we should be able to separate art from an artist's personal life, but after watching this documentary, I'll never support Allen by watching one of his films again.

Not only does it explore his infidelity to Mia Farrow by pursuing a sexual relationship with her adopted daughter Soon-Yi Previn, 35 years his junior, it lays out the case that he molested his daughter Dylan Farrow, and when Mia called him out on his behavior, he sued her for custody of their children.

It's the story of a powerful man getting away with horrible behavior, and in the #MeToo era, it's another sad reminder



AFFECTION OR OBSESSION: In HBO Max's *Allen v. Farrow*, the sad and disturbing story of Woody Allen and Mia Farrow unfolds, exploring their daughter Dylan's claims of sexual abuse against her father.

that culturally we have far to go. Watching these interviews with Mia and Dylan, it's impossible to think they're making up these terrible allegations, and it's wholly unjust that Allen has escaped accountability. (four episodes totaling 256 min.)

—Glen



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Lightning in a bottle

Gretchen Voelcker, owner of Luna Hart Wines and winemaker at Piazza Family Wines, discusses a fulfilling career in the wine industry



WOMAN'S BEST FRIEND: Local winemaker Gretchen Voelcker is participating in an upcoming virtual winemakers' panel on Friday, March 26, via Facebook Live. Here she is pictured at Piazza Family Wines in Solvang with her best friend, Koru.



TERRIFIC TRIO: While still owning and operating Luna Hart Wines in Buellton, Gretchen Voelcker (left) also works as the winemaker for Piazza Family Wines, which she helped owners Ron and Nancy Piazza (center and right, respectively) bring to fruition in 2019.

PHOTO COURTESY OF LUNA HART WINES



SOLO ROUND: As for her day-to-day routine over the course of the pandemic, COVID-19 mitigation measures didn't disrupt Gretchen Voelcker's regular workflow too much, as she tends to work by herself for the most part, she said.

BY CALEB WISEBLOOD

Specializing in small-batch, handcrafted varietals, winemaker Gretchen Voelcker believes the best way to produce wine is with minimal human interference. This Central Coast local plans to discuss her winemaking style and other topics during an upcoming virtual panel. As part of Buttonwood Farm Winery and Vineyard's Women in Wine series, the event will be hosted by the Solvang winery on Friday, March 26, at 5:30 p.m., via YouTube.

Prior to starting her own boutique wine company, Luna Hart Wines in Buellton, Voelcker's minimalist philosophy blossomed while working in various capacities for both Rideau Vineyard in Solvang and Faith Vineyard in Los Olivos.

"My first two harvests were full of trials with yeast versus non-inoculated fermentations, and I always preferred the non-inoculated," Voelcker said, recalling her time at Rideau, where she started as an intern and left as an assistant winemaker.

During one summer at Rideau, Voelcker simultaneously worked as a vineyard and production assistant for Ryan Roark at Faith Vineyard.

"He [Roark] showed me the world of garagiste, minimal interference winemaking, and taught me a lot about organic and holistic farming approaches," she said.

Voelcker described these experiences as catalysts to her beginnings as a small-batch winemaker. While still owning and operating

Luna Hart Wines in Buellton, she also works as the winemaker for Piazza Family Wines in Solvang, which she helped owners Ron and Nancy Piazza bring to fruition (pun intended) back in 2019.

Looking back at 2020 though, Voelcker is surprised to say it was technically her winery's [Luna Hart Wines] most successful year to date. "I certainly ran a lot of aggressive discounts to help get through the pandemic, but it worked out quite well," she said. "I would say that more of my sales went directly to consumers, which yields better profits but much less volume, so it has certainly been a give and take."

As for her day-to-day routine over the course of the pandemic, COVID-19 mitigation measures didn't disrupt her regular work flow too much, as Voelcker works by herself for the most part, she said. Outside of winemaking though, circumstances of the pandemic inspired Voelcker to revisit one of her older passions.

"I did end up delving more into horse sports last year because of the pandemic and now have two beautiful horses at our vineyard property," said Voelcker, who loved growing up surrounded by horses at her family's lavender farm. She's originally from Coatesville, Pennsylvania.

While Voelcker didn't relocate to California until her college years, to study at UC Santa Cruz, she became interested in wine and winemaking during high school.

"My most memorable early wine experience was a private tasting experience that my mother had organized for my family in Bordeaux,"

said Voelcker, who was able to visit many wine regions throughout France during her youth.

Voelcker said she was immediately drawn to "the balance of science and creativity" in winemaking and wine culture. During the Bordeaux visit, Voelcker took part in a wine class that really opened her eyes—and nose—to "what wine could become and the poetry behind it," she explained.

"The host introduced us to a game to smell different scents detected in wine. This showed me that I really could not identify even the simplest and most common scents, like roses, which prompted me into years of smelling and tasting anything I could get my hands on," Voelcker said.

After graduating with a degree in plant science from UC Santa Cruz, Voelcker applied to several wine industry positions throughout California.

"I had a few opportunities in Napa and Sonoma and a few down here. I ultimately chose Santa Barbara County because of the town and beaches of Santa Barbara," Voelcker said. "Little did I know how amazing the wine industry itself would be down here."

"We have an extremely supportive community of winemakers, a lot of whom are women," added Voelcker, who will be joining three other guest speakers during the upcoming Women in Wine panel.

Local winemaker Anna Clifford, co-founder of Final Girl Wines in Los Alamos, was also invited to speak during the virtual event, presented by Buttonwood Winery in celebration of Women's History Month. As aficionados of both wine and film, Clifford and her husband,

On cloud wine

Visit lunahartwines.com or piazzafamilywines.com to find out more about Luna Hart Wines and Piazza Family Wines, respectively.

For info on Buttonwood Winery and Vineyard's Women in Wine series visit buttonwoodwinery.com.

Peter, based their brand's theme on the "final girl" trope popularized by the horror genre.

Winemaking team Mireia Taribó and Tara Gomez, of Camins 2 Dreams in Lompoc, will also discuss their production style and unique varietals during the event. Like Voelcker, Taribó and Gomez strive for minimal intervention when it comes to their handcrafted wines, fermented with natural yeast and made from grapes sourced exclusively from Santa Barbara County vineyards.

In summing up the appeal of the area, Voelcker cited a handful of reasons Santa Barbara County attracts so many winemakers, whether they're up-and-coming or already established elsewhere.

"Santa Barbara County is unique in its opportunities for entrepreneurial winemakers, due to more affordable fruit, more reasonable winemaking facilities, and a great supporting community," Voelcker said. "We are also blessed with microclimates throughout the valley that allow us to grow the best of a wide variety of varietals." ○

Arts Editor Caleb Wiseblood is feeling blessed. Send comments to cwiseblood@santamariasun.com.

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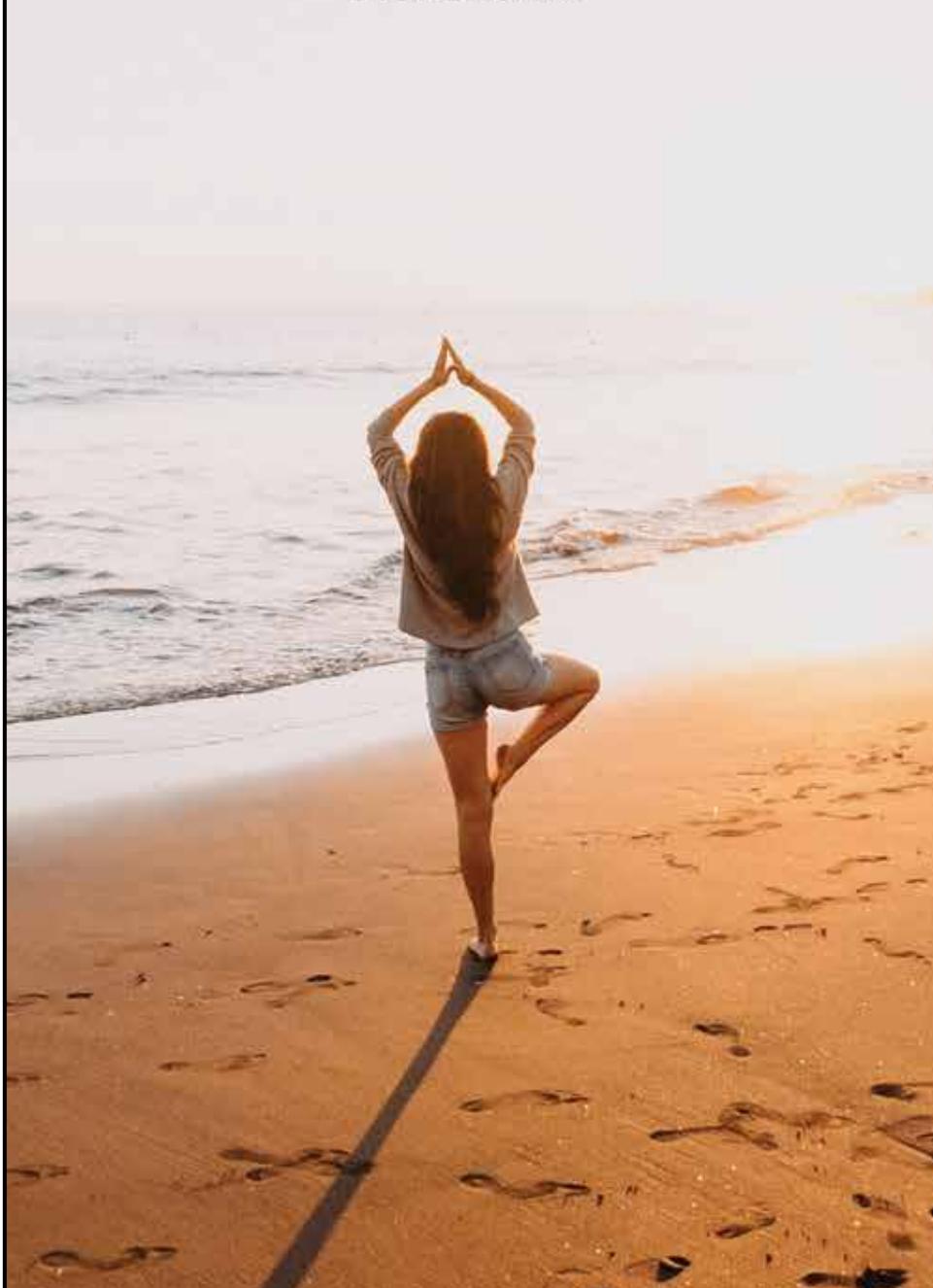


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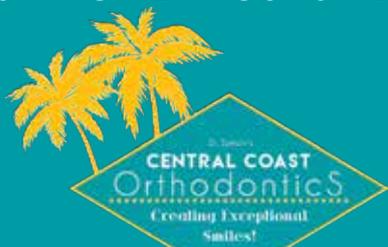
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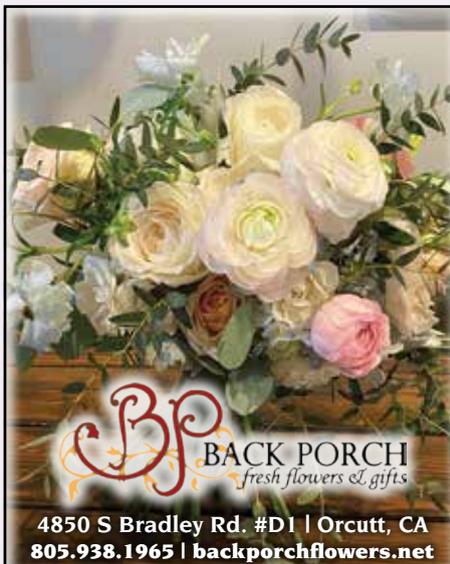


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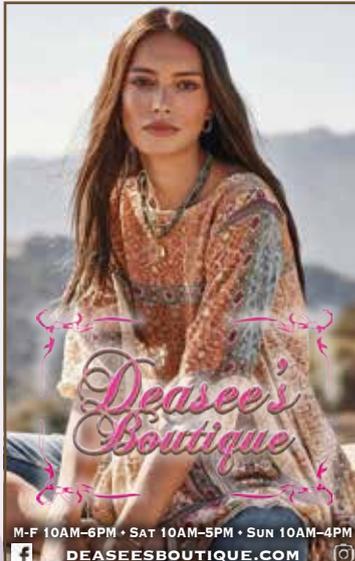


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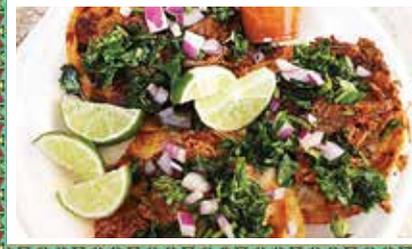
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