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AT THE MOVIES

*Those Who Wish Me Dead: Elevated action [18]*

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# Ready for renewal

*Guadalupe has plans to restore the Royal Theater, recently putting out a proposal for project bids [4]*

BY KASEY BUBNASH

**NEWS** Teachers protest impasse [8]

**ARTS** Disneyland is open for visitors [17]

**EATS** Get your charcuterie fix [19]



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# Contents

MAY 20 - MAY 27, 2021 VOL. 22 NO. 12

Once again, the city of Guadalupe has plans for what to do with the Royal Theater—renovate it into a community arts center and get it designated as a historic building. The city estimates the renovation could cost an estimated \$4 million and plans to apply for grants to pay for it. Staff Writer Kasey Bubnash talks to the city administrator about the potential project and what it could bring to Guadalupe [4].

You can also read about why Santa Maria-Bonita School District's teachers union protested before a recent board meeting [8]; a daytrip to the land of happily ever after [17]; and brie-inspired charcuterie boxes [19].

Camillia Lanham  
editor



**NEW LIFE:** Guadalupe is ready to refurbish the Royal Theater, which held a grand opening for the Odd Couple II (filmed in town) in 1997.

Cover courtesy photo from Doug Jenzen > Cover design by Alex Zuniga

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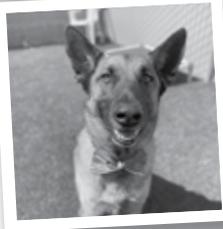
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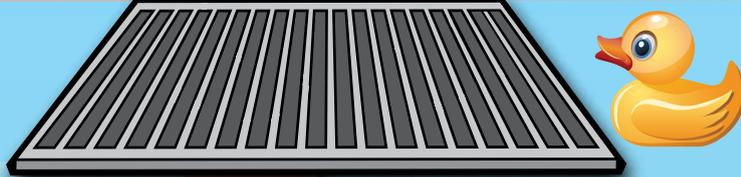
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## Political Watch

• **U.S. Rep. Salud Carbajal** (D-Santa Barbara) announced on May 10 that he and **U.S. Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick** (R-Pennsylvania) recently reintroduced the Market Choice Act, a bipartisan bill that puts a fee on carbon emissions, “which would help fund infrastructure advancement and development while combating climate change,” according to Carbajal’s office. “Climate change demands our immediate attention, and the Market Choice Act is a crucial way to move the ball forward while enhancing our crumbling infrastructure,” Carbajal said in the statement. “Not only will this bill tackle greenhouse gas emissions, it also builds funds for sustainable infrastructure and creates economic opportunities for communities—like mine on the Central Coast—that are moving toward renewable energy. This bill is a smart solution to a significant challenge, and I’m proud to join my colleagues on both sides of the aisle in reintroducing it.” Environmental Defense Fund Senior Vice President of Political Affairs Elizabeth Gore praised the act. “This bill will cut climate pollution and generate revenue to invest in urgently needed infrastructure,” she said in a statement. “Measures like the Market Choice Act are key components in the vital, comprehensive effort to curb climate change, revitalize our infrastructure, and create healthier communities.”

• **State Assemblymember Jordan Cunningham** (R-San Luis Obispo) announced May 10 that his Anti-Eavesdropping Act (AB 1262) passed the state Assembly. “The bill, if signed into law, would prohibit smart speaker manufacturers from retaining, distributing, or selling identifiable voice recordings or transcriptions without first obtaining the user’s consent,” according to a statement from Cunningham’s office. “For years, tech giants have given us a false choice: live in a smart and interconnected home, or keep your conversations private. We can and should have both,” Cunningham said in the statement. “I am grateful to my colleagues for supporting the Anti-Eavesdropping Act. We must continue to pursue common-sense protections that safeguard our privacy in the home.” According to the bill, existing law prohibits recordings collected through a voice recognition feature to be sold or used for advertising. Cunningham’s bill would add smart speaker devices to the existing law. “The bill would also prohibit the manufacturer from retaining the recordings or transcripts, as specified, unless the user opts in,” it states. The Anti-Eavesdropping Act was co-authored by **Assemblymember Buffy Wicks** (D-Oakland), and passed the Assembly with bipartisan support.

• **Gov. Gavin Newsom** announced another component of his California Comeback Plan on May 12: pouring funding into public schools. “Gov. Newsom’s plan represents the highest level of state school funding in California history, investing an additional \$20 billion to support the potential of every California student and make the structural change necessary to reduce barriers while increasing opportunities across the board, including massive investments in K-12 public schools, creating universal Pre-K and college savings accounts for 3.7 million low-income children in public schools,” according to the governor’s office. “We’re doing more than just fully reopening for the upcoming school year, we’re proposing historic investments in public schools to create new opportunities for every student, especially for our neediest students, so that every child can thrive, regardless of their race or ZIP code,” Newsom said in a statement. **State Sen. Monique Limón** (D-Santa Barbara) applauded the governor’s announcement on her Facebook page. “This investment is foundational for many families across our state and will provide the readiness that our littlest learners need to succeed,” she wrote. ○



**TO MASK OR NOT TO MASK:** Walmart announced that its stores would no longer require customers to wear masks, but local stores such as the one in Santa Maria will continue to follow California’s stricter mask requirements.

## Local businesses must follow state mask guidelines, health officials say—but not all are

Following the CDC’s May 13 announcement that fully vaccinated people no longer need to wear masks, a few major food and department store chains said inoculated customers could ditch their face coverings. But in California, the mask rule remains in place until June 15, leading to some mixed signals from local chain stores.

According to a company memo, Walmart dropped its mask requirements for fully vaccinated customers on May 14, and employees could stop masking up starting May 18. However, the company said it would continue to follow more stringent city and state guidelines.

“There may also be local conditions, regulatory changes, or laws that affect our guidance,” the memo said. “We will be communicating with your local store, club, or facility management team as regulations change so they can keep you informed.”

On May 17, the state Public Health Department announced it won’t alter the mask mandate until June 15, meaning California businesses, such as the Walmart in Santa Maria, will have to continue to abide by those rules.

“Masks will also continue to be required by some city and state ordinances, and we will follow those requirements,” the Walmart memo said.

A Santa Maria Walmart representative confirmed that the store will still require masks until June 15. As of May 17, the store still had a large sign outside instructing customers to wear a face covering.

But it appears that the grocery store Trader Joe’s, which is headquartered in Monrovia, California, is not necessarily sticking to state guidelines. The store initially announced May 14 that, like Walmart, it would no longer require

masks for vaccinated customers. Trader Joe’s spokesperson Kenya Friend-Daniel did not respond to a request for comment on current mask rules for its California stores.

On May 16, Trader Joe’s Santa Maria had a chalkboard sign outside the entrance stating that “customers who are fully vaccinated are no longer required to wear a mask while shopping.” The next evening, the sign was no longer there.

However, as of May 18, store employees from Arroyo Grande and Santa Maria Trader Joe’s locations confirmed that they are not requiring vaccinated customers to wear a mask. The Arroyo Grande store employee said the store doesn’t require proof. “We’re trusting our customers.”

Santa Barbara County Public Health Department Public Information Officer Jackie Ruiz said local businesses still need to follow state guidelines, regardless of the CDC’s announcement.

“Private businesses must also follow the state mask guidance and cannot be less restrictive at this point in time,” she said in a May 17 email. “Our local Health Officer Order currently defers the masking portion of the order to automatically align with what the state indicates. This means that Santa Barbara County will be following the state in changing guidance locally on June 15, 2021.”

—Malea Martin

## Guadalupe plans to renovate and repurpose Royal Theater

Guadalupe is taking its first steps toward renovating the long vacant Royal Theater, a project that, despite a lengthy and uncertain road ahead, could result in the theater reopening for public use within the next several years.

On April 16, Guadalupe released a request for proposals from development and design teams willing to restore the Royal Theater and

transform it into a community arts facility. Although the building needs to be retrofitted and otherwise updated, City Administrator Todd Bodem said its original art deco features and location at 848 Guadalupe Ave. in the heart of downtown make it the perfect spot for a performing arts center, a place where locals could see a movie or play before grabbing dinner and drinks.

“A city like this has to start developing and diversifying its revenue portfolio by creating some attractions,” Bodem said. “And this would be an attraction.”

The application period closed on May 17, and although the city received just a single proposal, Bodem has hope.

With a structure already in place on-site and limited funding on the city’s part, it’s a challenging project to tackle. But Bodem said the organization that filed a proposal has worked on successful projects in Guadalupe before. It has a firm grasp on the city’s goals and stakeholders, and he’s confident City Council will approve the proposal once it’s reviewed.

“It’s just fun because it’s been sitting there for a long time, and it’s just—I have this belief that we’re going to get this done.”

But there have been a lot of promises to refurbish and repurpose the Royal Theater building over the years, and Guadalupe locals tend to be skeptical of any new plans. Once it was going to be a venue for local bands; in 2006 there were stories about plans to turn it into a recording studio; and in 2015 the Guadalupe-Nipomo Dunes Center considered buying it but opted to take over the Far Western Tavern instead.

This particular effort is dependent on grant funding the city hopes to obtain. The city is applying for a community development block grant—due on June 14—that would fund the architectural design and civil planning work for



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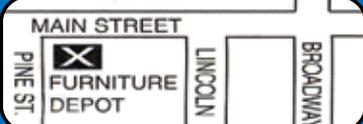
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**HISTORIC:** Residents gather outside the Royal Theater in Guadalupe in 1940, a year after it was opened. Now Guadalupe hopes to renovate the long vacant building and use it as a performing arts center.

## NEWS from page 4

the Royal Theater's renovations. Once there's a "shovel ready" building and renovation plan in place, Bodem said the city plans to apply for an even larger grant that would cover actual construction costs, which he estimates will add up to about \$4 million.

Guadalupe's demographics and financial struggles make it a shoo-in for such funding, Bodem said. The city is also working to get the building (it was built in the mid-1900s and owned by a Japanese-American family that was later forced into a Japanese internment camp during World War II) registered as a historic place, another likely feat that could make it eligible for even more funding.

"So I think incrementally we're going to get it done," Bodem said.

—Kasey Bubbash

## Solvang wants a reset on its tourism marketing and visitor center

Solvang's contract for its visitor center is up in June, but the process of receiving contract proposals left the City Council wanting a more unified vision for tourism marketing.

During the May 10 meeting, the council voted to extend the city's current contract with Central Coast Marketing for visitor center operations from June to September. In addition to the contract extension, the center's hours and days of operation were pushed from four days a week to seven from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

The City Council neither voted to definitively

stick with its current operator, Central Coast Marketing, nor did it vote to switch to the Solvang Chamber of Commerce—which both submitted contract proposals. City Manager Xenia Bradford recommended that the visitor center be operated by a marketing contractor or the chamber of commerce.

According to the city staff report, if the chamber managed the visitor center it would streamline connections between the center's operations and local businesses. However, if a marketing provider helmed the center, it would strengthen the center's marketing message.

The two contract proposals were starkly different, which many council members said was a testament to the lack of one cohesive idea for what the visitor center should be. The chamber's proposal focused on website brochures, and Central Coast Marketing emphasized social media and in-person operations.

Councilmember Robert Clarke said he was hesitant to vote on an operations provider because the city lacked a concrete vision of its brand.

"I would urge us to have a—and I hate doing this but—a reset on all of our tourism marketing and visitor center information. I want to have a better setup, and I would want to have a committee, if you will, to set concrete goals for what this council and what the city wants its brand to be ... and how we're going to appeal to our visitors," Clarke said.

Solvang's events, tourism marketing, and business support come from three different avenues—Central Coast Marketing, the Solvang Chamber of Commerce, and IDK Events. Each

has its own following and each plays a different role in attracting visitors to the city.

The council moved for each council member to send their ideas and criteria for visitor center management to the city manager for review in an effort to create a unified vision for managing tourism.

—Karen Garcia

## Local organization calls for unemployment benefits for undocumented Californians

Local immigrant worker advocates are calling on California to close the gap between unemployment benefits paid out to documented and undocumented individuals throughout the course of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Central Coast Alliance United for a Sustainable Economy (CAUSE) is part of the Safety Net for All Coalition, which seeks to include undocumented workers in state unemployment benefits. Gov. Gavin Newsom's recently announced California Comeback Plan would give undocumented families \$500 to \$1,000 in stimulus money, but the Safety Net for All Coalition says this isn't enough to remedy the existing disparities. CAUSE Policy Director Lucas Zucker said the average documented Californian who lost work over the past year got \$13,000 in federal unemployment insurance, while immigrant families only had access to small, one-time payments.

"It's really a gaping disparity," Zucker said. "New York created this excluded workers fund that was really aimed at filling the gap in federal

unemployment benefits. That provided up to \$15,000 for undocumented workers in New York who had lost their jobs to the pandemic. So that's what we're looking to the state to provide for undocumented Californians here who have been excluded from unemployment, beyond just the stimulus."

While Newsom's proposed stimulus checks for undocumented families are a step in the right direction, Zucker said it's not enough.

"Ultimately we're talking about folks who simply can't pay the rent, because a \$500 check doesn't even come close to paying one month's rent anywhere in California," he said. "For people who have lost their job for months on end without the ability to have any kind of safety net to help them keep a home over their kids' head and put food on their family's table, that's simply not enough."

The coalition is requesting that California provide up to \$13,000 on average for immigrant workers who lost their jobs, the same amount that the average unemployed Californian has received since the pandemic started.

U.S. Rep. Salud Carbajal (D-Santa Barbara) said he believes "essential workers are essential workers"—regardless of their immigration status.

"You can't take their blood, sweat, and labor to help keep our economy going, and then say, 'Oh no, we're not going to recognize them because of their immigration status,'" Carbajal said. "I think the state of California is recognizing that through the Legislature and the governor. They're recognizing that if these people are cleaning, are the ones working in the fields providing food for our tables, for all of us to enjoy, they're essential workers."

Zucker pointed to California's \$75 billion budget surplus as evidence that the state has the means to do more for undocumented, unemployed workers.

"That's been driven by massive income gains at the top of the spectrum in California," he said. "At the same time as we've seen the pandemic increase inequality at the top, it's really increased at the bottom. The people who were struggling before the pandemic are struggling even more now."

The Safety Net for All Coalition came together at the beginning of the pandemic, Zucker said. The concept of creating a safety net for undocumented workers affected by job loss started with initiatives like 805 Undocufund, and Safety Net for All aims to find a more systemic solution.

"We can try to raise money in all of our different communities ... but we know it's not going to be enough," he said. "The need is far too massive to fill the gap of this hole in our safety net, as a nation." ○

—Malea Martin

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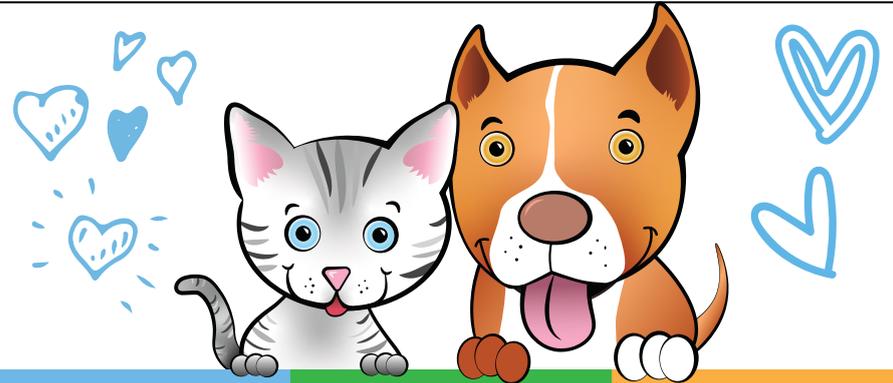


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# Rallying for respect

Teachers in Santa Maria-Bonita School District protest expired contracts, instructional shifts

BY MALEA MARTIN

**Editor's Note:** This is the second in a two-part series on the Santa Maria-Bonita School District's decision to not allow teachers to teach full novels in their classes. The first part, "For the love of reading," is in our May 13 issue.

In the late afternoon on May 12, Santa Maria-Bonita School District teachers began to line the street outside of the district office. The sidewalk became a sea of blue as more people arrived, donning Santa Maria Elementary Education Association (SMEEA) T-shirts. Within an hour, roughly 300 SMEEA teachers were present, chanting "Respect!" in unison.

SMEEA, the union that represents teachers in the Santa Maria-Bonita School District, organized the rally to occur right before the school board meeting scheduled for 6 p.m. that evening. The protest was in reaction to the union and district being at an impasse in their contract negotiations. While the parties reached tentative agreements on most of the articles in the contract, there were a few places where the union put in its final offer and the district didn't accept.

"We have been without a contract for over a year," Fesler Junior High English teacher Joan Redstone told the *Sun* as she stood among the crowd. "They want us to teach more classes, with more students."

Some at the rally also held signs protesting recent shifts in how teachers are allowed to use instructional time: specifically that English teachers can no longer teach full novels in class. Teachers and union leaders at the rally expressed that, from their perspective, being stuck at an impasse and the instructional shifts are both part of a larger picture of not feeling heard by the school district in recent years.

As an English teacher, Redstone said the instructional changes concern her.

"What we have right now are excerpts, pieces of novels. There is, right now, zero opportunity to teach a novel, and I think that's atrocious," Redstone said. "I think that needs to change and needs to be worked into the curriculum, or be a teacher's choice."

...

District Director of Teaching and Learning Jennifer Loftus said she understands the frustration around change.

"I understand why there's so much emotion around some of the shifts," Loftus said. "Ultimately, the change is not being done because we don't want kids reading those novels. ... When we look at the list of novels that were being read, we can't hit all of

the grade level standards in a novel."

She also emphasized that pacing guides—the documents that dictate how teachers should use instructional minutes—will be adjusted with teacher input as school begins to look more normal in a post-pandemic world.

"Formally, all of my department chairs at the junior high level have been brought into the loop of developing the guidance and also adjusting the pacing guidance for the upcoming school year," Loftus said. "We anticipate having a traditional school year ... They'll have typical learning time, and so then you're going to go back, and you're going to adjust your guidance."

While whole-class novel study will remain absent, the district is looking at other ways to incorporate reading.

"One of the ideas is ... they would have some time set aside in class for what might be called a lit circle, and that is usually 10 or 15 minutes where the kids are in groups and they're discussing the books that they're reading," Loftus said. "They might add an elective that would be specific to literature, to novel studies. They might add an expanded learning program before or after school that would be specific to novels."

SMEEA President Jose Segura has concerns about this approach.

"They want novels removed from the instructional part of your day and into a supplemental or outside of the school day," he said. "Just giving a kid a book to read, the chances that they're going to read it and they're going to use it to connect with their learning is pretty low."

...

From a union perspective, Segura said he has concerns with how the district treated an email it received a month ago regarding the curriculum changes.

"Right before the [April 21] board meeting, the district put out an email to all staff about novel studies. ... And one of my members responded to the email with a nice letter that he wrote," Segura said, referring to an email sent by Arellanes Junior High teacher Scott Rice, who taught English for seven years and now teaches electives.

Rice's emailed letter, which Segura shared with the *Sun*, rebutted some of the points the district made and pointed out that a couple of lines of the district's email were copied directly from an online article about novel studies. He replied—all to the district's email and added school board members' emails, Segura said.



**RALLYING TOGETHER:** Maria Miramontes, a TK and kindergarten teacher at Arellanes Elementary School in Santa Maria, and her son, Benjamin, hold signs at a May 12 rally organized by the teachers union.

The district's new instructional approach, Rice wrote in his response, "insinuates that standards cannot be addressed through novels or that our district's teachers are too inept to know how to teach standards through novels, neither insinuation is correct."

Less than an hour after sending his response, Rice said it disappeared from the district's servers.

"I do understand that I work for the district and my email is their property," Rice said. "But it did disturb me quite a bit that they deleted it."

Segura said he has concerns because deleting the letter relates to public records, "because the email was sent directly to the board members."

Superintendent Luke Ontiveros said that Rice's response violated district policies.

"The issue wasn't with content; it was unauthorized use of the technology-use policy," Ontiveros wrote in an email to the *Sun*.

As someone who taught English for seven years, Rice believes that "teaching novels is a shared experience using multiple ways to reach and teach students how to read analytically," he wrote in the retracted letter.

But there are underlying issues that go beyond differing opinions on a novel's place in the classroom. Rice and other teachers are also frustrated about changes to schedules, class sizes, and preparation time. These are some of the sticking

points that brought the union and the district to an impasse in their contract negotiations.

"The district is pushing to mandate that we teach six out of seven [periods in the school day]," Rice said, whereas right now he gets two periods of preparation time. "Which would put us up to 200 students in classes and only 47 minutes of grading time. It's been chopped away, little by little ... So there's a lot at play here, the novels is just one thing."

...

During the May 12 protest outside the district offices, Shawna Perez, a first grade teacher at Miller Elementary whose kids attend Santa Maria-Bonita schools, said she is frustrated not just as a teacher, but as a parent.

"I feel very invested in the district, because I am a product of this district. I went through Santa Maria-Bonita schools myself, and I had amazing teachers all growing up," she said at the rally, which she attended with her three kids.

"We're at a very difficult time right now where we feel like our voices aren't valued and they don't matter to the people who are making important decisions for our kids," she continued. "By our kids, I mean my own children and my students." ○

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

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## Driven to help Community Partners in Caring provides transportation for seniors to get to their COVID-19 vaccine appointments

BY MALEA MARTIN

Community Partners in Caring, an organization committed to helping seniors and those with mobility issues, is on a mission to help the roughly 10,000 seniors in Santa Barbara County who haven't gotten their COVID-19 shots yet.

The organization has already driven more than 800 miles taking seniors to and from vaccination sites as part of its Mission Vaccinate initiative, which began in March. But there are still folks who want to get a shot and don't have access, Community Partners in Caring Marketing Coordinator Kaley Wise said.

"Eighty percent [of seniors], more or less, are vaccinated in our community, but there's still those people that aren't," Wise said. "We aren't by any means saying if they don't want to get vaccinated... that they should, but those that want to, we want them to know that they have access to do so. We can make sure that they get there for free."

Community Partners in Caring already provided extensive transportation to seniors before COVID-19, and it's now using that network to aid in vaccination efforts.

"Prior to COVID, and now, we do take seniors to their medical appointments," Wise said. "We have volunteers, and also have third-party vendors that we pay for, for seniors to get to and from their appointments. So whether it is a medical appointment, a doctor's appointment, or even if they want to go to the grocery store, we will have our volunteers take them."

Wise said that anyone 62 and older, or 18 and older with mobility issues, can utilize Community Partners in Caring resources.

The number of clients the organization helps has more than doubled since the pandemic started, from about 400 to close to 900. The services go beyond transportation, too.

"Our main mission is we are helping seniors age in place while maintaining a dignity of life," Wise said. "We bring them groceries: We either bring them free food from the food bank, or we have our volunteers go to the grocery store [to bring] them whatever items they need. ... We also bring our seniors their prescription medication, so we'll take that to their homes. We do friendly phone calls or reassurance phone calls checking in on them."

While for many people the pandemic was their first time experiencing the isolation that comes with being homebound, Wise said that seniors already dealt with this reality before COVID-19. The pandemic only exposed how isolated some community members are.

"I think with COVID, it brought attention to the isolation that was already being felt for a long time by seniors, but because of COVID, people really realized how important this need is," Wise said. "Of course, during the beginning of COVID our main goal was to make sure that our seniors were staying safe, staying inside. ... Now it's more so that they're able to start getting back out again, while continuing to get those things that they need in order to survive."

The Mission Vaccinate program will run officially through May 31, though Wise said her organization will continue to offer free transportation and other services beyond the end

PHOTO COURTESY OF COMMUNITY PARTNERS IN CARING



**SENIOR SERVICES:** In addition to the organization's initiative to provide seniors with vaccination appointment transportation, Community Partners in Caring also offers services like grocery delivery and phone check-ins. Margaret (pictured) is one of the organization's clients who benefits from these services.

of the month. Those seeking help can call (805) 925-8000.

"We really want to just help as many people as we can, so seniors can sign up to get their ride," Wise said. "They don't have to officially become one of our clients, we're just trying to help anybody that qualifies to get a ride to their vaccination and making sure the most vulnerable are vaccinated."

### Highlights

- Santa Barbara Humane held a drive-through event in Santa Maria on May 16 to celebrate its recent rebranding and expansion of services for animals in need. Right before the pandemic hit, Santa Barbara Humane Society merged with the Santa Maria Valley Humane Society. "Generations of community support have made it possible to merge the organizations, transform the brand, and ultimately expand services through donor-funded safety-net programs," according to the organization. "Pet owners now benefit from affordable or free medical services, a training and behavior program with new class options and one-on-one support, an open admission policy allowing all animals a second chance, and more. Increased financial support is now available for community members who need assistance for any service, and the trap-neuter-release (TNR) program in Santa Maria has been relaunched." Pet owners who are interested in Santa Barbara Humane's many free or reduced-cost services can head to [sbhumane.org](http://sbhumane.org) to learn more.

- The Santa Maria Public Library recently announced expanded grab-and-go service. "Visits are extended to one hour per day, the lobby bookstore is again open, and the second floor is also open for browsing and computer use," according to library officials. "Safety protocols aligned with county health orders will remain in place, including required face coverings and more. Computer use and paid printing will be available with a one-hour session limit per day." For further information about using the expanded services, visit [cityofsantamaria.org/library](http://cityofsantamaria.org/library) or call (805) 925-0994. ○

Staff Writer Malea Martin wrote this week's Spotlight. Send news about your business or organization to [spotlight@santamariasun.com](mailto:spotlight@santamariasun.com).

**BANEZ, RICARDO CABANAS**, 86, of Pismo Beach passed away 5/8/2021 arrangements with Marshall-Spoo Sunset Funeral Chapel

**CANCINO, GEORGIA G.**, 83, of Santa Maria passed away 5/6/2021 arrangements with Moreno Mortuary

**CAVANILLAS, KC PAUL**, 19, of Nipomo passed away 5/2/2021 arrangements with Marshall-Spoo Sunset Funeral Chapel

**CHANDLER, MARK**, 68, of Atascadero passed away 5/13/2021 arrangements with Blue Sky Cremation Service

**CHISUM, BOBBY**, 68, of Santa Maria passed away 5/15/2021 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

**DESILVA, ROBERT**, 70, of Los Osos passed away 5/9/2021 arrangements with Blue Sky Cremation Service

**DUNTON, THERESA**, 89, of Atascadero passed away 5/17/2021 arrangements with Reis Family Mortuary

**FREY, SHARON SLATER**, 68, of Lompoc passed away 5/4/2021 arrangements with Starbuck -Lind Mortuary

**GAMMOM, MARTHA POLLOCK**, 61, passed away 5/11/2021 arrangements with Los Osos Valley Mortuary & Memorial Park

**GIBSON, ELIZABETH WILHELM**, 59, passed away 4/30/2021 arrangements with Los Osos Valley Mortuary & Memorial Park

**GINGG, CECELIA MARIE**, 74, passed away 5/15/2021 arrangements with Los Osos Valley Mortuary & Memorial Park

**GUERRERO, ANGEL**, 75, of Santa Maria passed away 5/10/2021 arrangements with Moreno Mortuary

**HARTWIG, CHRISTOPHER KARL**, 53, of Arroyo Grande passed away 5/11/2021 arrangements with Marshall-Spoo Sunset Funeral Chapel

**HEAPS, LEONARD GERALD**, 75, passed away 5/4/2021 arrangements with Los Osos Valley Mortuary & Memorial Park

**HOPPER, GARY STEWART**, 83, of Arroyo Grande passed away 5/12/2021 arrangements with Marshall-Spoo Sunset Funeral Chapel

**JENNINGS, SETSUE**, 81, of Lompoc passed away 5/4/2021 arrangements with Starbuck-Lind Mortuary

**KERCHEER, EUGENE EDWARD**, 90, passed away 4/27/2021 arrangements with Los Osos Valley Mortuary & Memorial Park

**LIZAMA, JOSE**, 86, of Lompoc passed away 5/2/2021 arrangements with Starbuck -Lind Mortuary

**MALAN, TIMOTHY**, 76, of Templeton passed away 5/11/2021 arrangements with Blue Sky Cremation Service

**NASH, CLEVE**, 79, of Santa Margarita passed away 5/13/2021 arrangements with Blue Sky Cremation Service

**PINKERTON, ANN GERTRUDE**, 87, of Oceano passed away 5/11/2021 arrangements with Marshall-Spoo Sunset Funeral Chapel

**ROBINSON, THOMAS ROBERT**, 95, of Santa Maria passed away 5/12/2021 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

**RODRIGUEZ, BLANCA ESTELA**, 70, of Santa Maria passed away 5/13/2021 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

**SCHALLER, VELMA ROSE**, 87, of Santa Maria passed away 5/12/2021 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

**SCHUERMAN, NORMA JEAN**, 87, of Santa Maria passed away 5/16/2021 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

**SHORT, LADONNA MAE**, 80, passed away 5/3/2021 arrangements with Lady Family Mortuary

**SIGNORELLI, JOE SR.**, 96, of Lompoc passed away 5/6/2021 arrangements with Starbuck-Lind Mortuary

**SMITH, MICHELLE**, 63, of Cambria passed away 5/17/2021 arrangements with Reis Family Mortuary

**SOLWICK, LINDA**, 77, passed away 5/6/2021 arrangements with Los Osos Valley Mortuary & Memorial Park

**TERRONES, GUADALUPE J.**, 74, of Lompoc passed away 5/11/2021 arrangements with Starbuck-Lind Mortuary

**TOLSON, RICHARD MILLER**, 89, of Arroyo Grande passed away 5/7/2021 arrangements with Marshall-Spoo Sunset Funeral Chapel

**TUNNELL, CECILIA**, 91, of San Luis Obispo passed away 5/18/2021 arrangements with Reis Family Mortuary

**TYBER, PETER LEWIS**, 68, passed away 4/28/2021 arrangements with Los Osos Valley Mortuary & Memorial Park

**VEGA, MARIANO "MARIO"**, 59, of Santa Maria passed away 5/14/2021 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

**WARREN, ROBERT FREDERICK**, 69, passed away 4/14/2021 arrangements with Los Osos Valley Mortuary & Memorial Park

**WILLIAMS, SABRE MARIE**, 42, of San Luis Obispo passed away 4/27/2021 arrangements with Marshall-Spoo Sunset Funeral Chapel

**WILLIAMS, COLUMBUS**, 54, of Lompoc passed away 5/12/2021 arrangements with Starbuck-Lind Mortuary

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- 48%** Yes, it will be a relief to have the whole family protected.
  - 30%** No, I am not planning to have my children vaccinated against COVID-19.
  - 18%** I don't have kids.
  - 4%** My kids are younger than 12, but I want them to get it as soon as they're eligible!
- 23 Votes

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## Pick up the pace

Homelessness is growing at warp speed, but government moves at a snail's pace to address the issue

BY RON FINK

The homeless (unsheltered population) problem has been festering in our community and virtually every other community in the United States for the last several decades. I can remember that in the 1960s there were scores of "cardboard condos" on Los Angeles' Skid Row and soup kitchens were abundant in the downtown area.

And decades before that, large caravans of families and individuals fleeing depressed areas of mid-America headed for California and set up their makeshift camps in out-of-the-way places.

In Lompoc as far back as the 1980s, there were homeless camps under the H Street bridge; however, the problem has grown worse to the point that camps exist openly on our streets, and many use ancient motorhomes or their cars as homes. Meanwhile elected leaders keep pointing their fingers elsewhere to fix the problem: "It's the county's job to provide mental health, low-income housing, and other social services" is often the response we get.

A regional approach to this problem was needed and begun several years ago; a group of well-intentioned politicians and advocates met several times, but other than talk about it no coherent plan was put together to address the issue. The history was described as part of a City Council hearing on May 4; the staff report says, "The Phase II Community Action Plan to Address Homelessness development process began in October 2019, concluded in January 2021, and included community outreach and input from over 400 community members and key stakeholder groups."

On page 4 of the plan is a clue as to what to expect: "The Phase II Community Action

Plan to Address Homelessness will guide strategic resource decisions and comply with funding resources and other state and federal regulations." "Resources" is a code word for using your tax money to solve the problem.

So the focus seems to be to obtain state and federal taxpayer-funded grants for more expensive nonprofit housing programs, such as the one just completed in Lompoc, which converted an unused office building to 14 living units at more than \$357,000 each (total cost \$5 million). Or small, 100-square-foot "pallet shelters" that cost \$8,000 each.

The Board of Supervisors adopted the plan, and now the county was seeking buy-in from all the incorporated cities in the county.

There were numerous concerns about joining this plan, uppermost in council members' minds was the fact that there has been no monetary assistance to clean up the mess left by the homeless. (Oh, I forgot we are supposed to refer to them as an "unsheltered population," which is a more politically correct way of saying the same thing. Their impact is the same no matter how we refer to them.)

Councilmember Dirk Starbuck correctly pointed out that so far Lompoc has borne the cost of cleaning up several tons of trash transported by the unsheltered masses to the riverbed; and in a related move, an unsanctioned local volunteer group has cleaned up even more solid waste transported from waste containers to the riverbed.

On Feb. 16 of this year, after working to identify and fund a program for five years, the City Council approved a "safe parking" location and a contract for a nonprofit to operate and maintain a property for vehicle-bound homeless folks to help mitigate part of the problem, but as of May 14—three months later—the site didn't appear to be operational yet.

The stated goal of the phase II plan is to "move from planning to bold action"; it would be encouraging if somehow implementing the plan would mean the end to the unsightly, unhealthy, and serious fire hazards posed by homeless camps, but as Councilmember Victor Vega pointed out, the county "has no skin in the

game to help clean up the mess."

Trash and sleeping unsheltered people in makeshift camps are the most visible signs of the homeless in our city and other areas too. Lawsuits filed by advocates for the nomadic population have resulted in laws requiring "alternative housing" for those taken off the streets and surrounding open space.

One statement in the staff report was troubling to Councilmembers Starbuck and Gilda Cordova: "The adoption of the plan will enhance the city's efforts to end homelessness and may require city resources such as additional administration by staff, implementation or creation of programs and supportive housing."

They both openly wondered where the city was going to come up with the money to fund this effort when there are so many other issues to deal with; none of the staff members had an answer.

Either a nonprofit or the city must submit a funding application, and there is no guarantee that a nonprofit would not "import clients" from other areas because they had open beds. Admittedly when the nonprofit-operated shelter out on Sweeny Road just outside of town releases clients who were sent here from other areas of the county, they simply go to the nearby riverbed and set up camps that are clearly visible from the highway.

As Councilmember Vega aptly put it, the county is "putting out the welcome mat" in Lompoc for the unsheltered by offering a service hub in the city.

After more than an hour of debate on May 4, as Councilmember Jeremy Ball reminded the Council that "no plan is perfect," they decided on a 3-2 vote—with Councilmembers Starbuck and Vega opposing—to support the 104-page Countywide Phase II Community Action Plan to Address Homelessness. Many other cities in the county have also agreed to support this plan.

The staff said that there was no penalty for not supporting the plan. But as one member of the public pointed out, "to not be a part of the plan is putting our heads in the sand." He was right.

As evidenced by the pace of planning so far, it is clear that government works at a snail's pace to solve a problem that is growing at warp speed. ○

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

## LETTERS

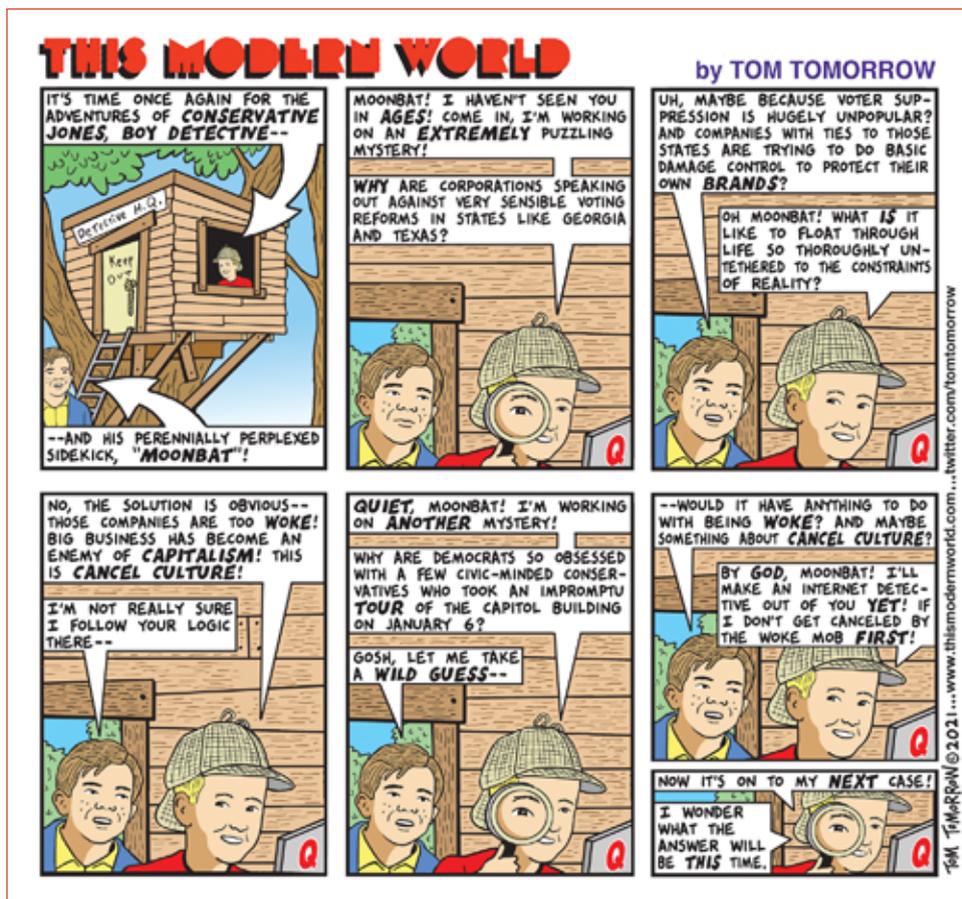
### Rangers don't keep Oceano beach safe

I am an Oceano resident. I walk Oceano beach south of Pier Avenue almost every day. Over and over again I witness vehicles speeding, driving recklessly and in non-permitted areas. I often stop the rangers to notify them, if I am lucky enough to see a ranger drive by. Never have I seen a ranger issue a citation and a ticket on those occasions. Consistently, rangers tolerate this unlawful behavior. They bluntly state that they issue tickets at their discretion. They say that the offense is not serious enough to issue a citation. What are they waiting for? That a pedestrian gets killed?

No wonder the off-roaders and beach drivers have become such an arrogant and dangerous crowd.

The Off Highway Vehicles (OHV) Division of State Parks, in charge of managing Oceano beach, is not doing its job at enforcing the law and making Oceano beach a safe place for all.

Lucia Casalino  
president, Oceano Beach Community Association



# Missing details

Don't want to wear a mask anymore? I know just the spot where you can shop. **Trader Joe's!** And because they trust their customers so much, you don't even need to show proof of a COVID-19 vaccination.

The **Centers For Disease Control** recently announced that you don't need to wear a mask if you're vaccinated. However, states with stricter rules in place, such as California, take precedence. California said it likely won't lift the mask requirement until at least June 15, and TJ's has gone rogue.



What about **Walmart**? Sticking to the state's rules.

Now if I'm pro-mask, I can't go to Trader Joe's and buy those organic raw cashews. And if I'm anti-mask, I can't go to Walmart and buy that patriotic American flag T-shirt. What are we going to do?!

The world is topsy-turvy. And so is the **Santa Maria-Bonita School District**, which apparently decided novels were too time-consuming to teach in the classroom. Consider my mind blown, again.

I've been thinking about it for at least three weeks now, and still can't wrap my head around it. As if Instagram and Snapchat weren't bad enough for the attention spans of our youth (and adults!), we are now planning on teaching our children reading comprehension by giving them a *single chapter* out of a book. But not *the whole book*.

Because learning, apparently, happens in a digital vacuum that's hooked to something called pacing guidelines.

**Anne Frank: The Diary of a Young Girl**, you're out! The kids only need one diary entry to fully comprehend what it was like to be Jewish living in hiding during World War II.

Character development and tracing a story over a couple of hundred or more paper pages be damned! They won't learn what they need to learn! Let's keep those eyes glued to the computer screen. That's where the magic happens.

I can't roll my eyes hard enough at this turn of events. It's tragic. Maybe we're trying to cram too much into a curriculum if teaching novels means teachers can't "hit all of the grade level standards." That's at least the reason district **Director of Teaching and Learning Jennifer Loftus** gives for removing novels from the curriculum.

And do the teachers get to have any say in it? You know, the ones who actually work with the students? Nope, nope, nope—at least not according to them.

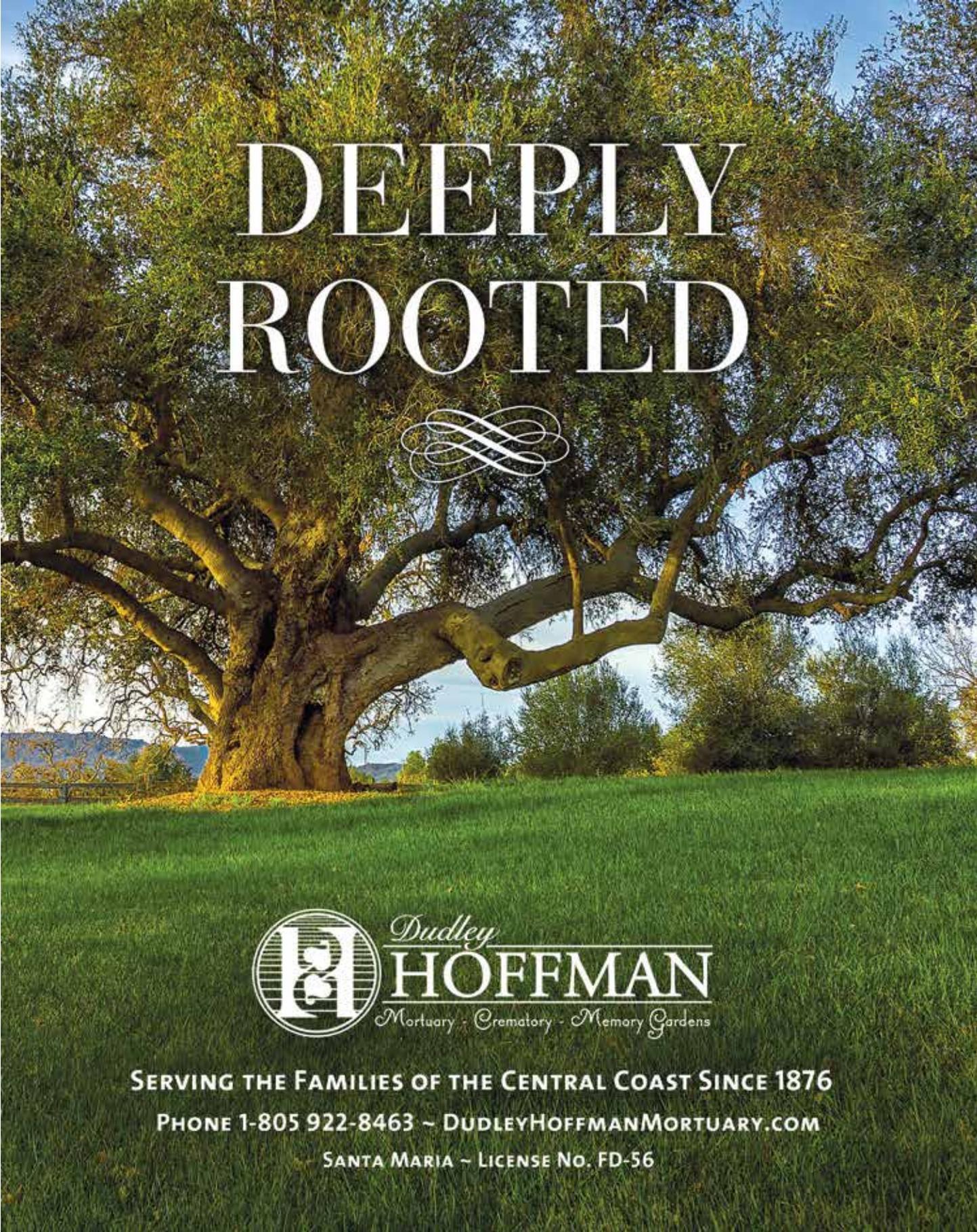
In fact, it seems like the teachers don't get to have a lot of say in anything these days. Not the curriculum they actually have to teach or the way they return to teaching in-person classes. And the teachers are pissed!

A group of 300 teachers and teachers union supporters showed up to a protest that took place before the May 12 school board meeting to show just how pissed they were. The **Santa Maria Elementary Education Association (SMEEA)**, don't you just love that acronym? is fed up.

They don't currently have a contract with the district, which apparently wants more classes, more students, and fewer novels. The union declared an impasse with the district over negotiations, although the district disagrees with that (no surprises there, amirite?).

But I won't be able to get into the details. That's all we have time for in today's lesson. ○

*The Canary* is wondering where to find banned books. Send thoughts to [canary@santamariasun.com](mailto:canary@santamariasun.com).



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# HOT STUFF

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**NOTE:** As state and local governments lift restrictions designed to prevent the spread of COVID-19, venues are reopening more broadly. However, some venues may still cancel or postpone events depending on local conditions. Please check with the venues directly, and most of all, stay safe!



## BOTTLE THROTTLE

The Valley Art Gallery is currently showcasing several pieces by 15 of its members at the Santa Maria Airport. This group show is scheduled to remain on display through Monday, June 7, and highlights a variety of media, including painting, photography, and silk art. Visit [valleygallery.org](http://valleygallery.org) to find out more about the exhibit. The airport is located at 3217 Terminal Drive, Santa Maria. Pictured: Two Dozen Bottles by featured artist John Card.

—Caleb Wiseblood

COURTESY IMAGE BY JOHN CARD

## ARTS

### SANTA YNEZ VALLEY

**ART FROM THE TRAIL: EXPLORING THE NATURAL BEAUTY OF SANTA BARBARA COUNTY** Celebrates the Central Coast with 38 artworks by 27 local artists from the Oak Group, SLOPE (San Luis Outdoor Painters for the Environment) and SCAPE (Southern California Artists Painting for the Environment). Saturdays, Sundays, 11 a.m.-4 p.m. through Oct. 3 \$5 General Admission; ages 17 and under are free. 805-688-1082. [wildlingmuseum.org/news/art-from-the-trail](http://wildlingmuseum.org/news/art-from-the-trail). Wildling Museum of Art and Nature, 1511-B Mission Dr., Solvang.

**BIO/MASS: CONTEMPORARY MEDITATIONS ON NATURE** Invites viewers to engage with art through the eyes of the artists as observers and interpreters of the world around them. The exhibition highlights eleven contemporary artists who create work in series, exploring some element of nature. Saturdays, Sundays, 11 a.m.-4 p.m. through Sept. 5 \$5 General Admission; ages 17 and under are free. 805-688-1082. [wildlingmuseum.org/news/biomass](http://wildlingmuseum.org/news/biomass). Wildling Museum of Art and Nature, 1511-B Mission Dr., Solvang.

**BROUGHT TO LIGHT** Showcasing works by Sherri Cassell, a painter, and Felice Willat, who team up to present striking images that are distinct and powerful. Mondays, Thursdays-Sundays, through May 31 805-688-7517. [GalleryLosOlivos.com](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. Free. Wildling Museum of Art and Nature, 1511-B Mission Dr., Solvang, 805-688-1082, [wildlingmuseum.org](http://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](http://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](http://wildlingmuseum.org).

**SOLVANG SCHOOL: INSPIRED BY NATURE** View the exhibit online. Features photography by 29 Solvang School Yearbook and Media students. The students,

grades 7 – 8, were inspired by philosopher Henry David Thoreau's quote: "All good things are wild and free." ongoing Free. Wildling Museum of Art and Nature, 1511-B Mission Dr., Solvang, 805-688-1082, [wildlingmuseum.org](http://wildlingmuseum.org).

**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](http://wildlingmuseum.org). Wildling Museum of Art and Nature, 1511-B Mission Dr., Solvang, 805-688-1082.

### SANTA MARIA VALLEY/LOS ALAMOS

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

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

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

**SMCT: DIRECTOR'S CUT** Lynda Mondragon, Santa Maria Civic Theatre regular, is playing the role of "Director" in this fun combination of theater games and TV game shows. **May 29**, 7-9 p.m. [my805tix.com](http://my805tix.com). Santa Maria Civic Theatre, 1660 N. McClelland St., Santa Maria.

### TECH TALKS: LIVE ON INSTAGRAM

Every Tuesday sit down with one of our technical staff and learn about the ins and outs of their craft. Get the exclusive with

our host Erik Stein. Tuesdays, 3:30 p.m. PCPA, Santa Maria, 805-922-8313, [pcpa.org](http://pcpa.org).

**TERRARIUM IN A JAR KITS (ZOOM)** The Santa Maria Public Library will have a limited number of terrarium kits available for adults. Each kit contains a recycled jar, soil, moss, and one small succulent. **May 26**, 3-4 p.m. Free. 805-925-0994. [engagedpatrons.org](http://engagedpatrons.org). Santa Maria Public Library, 421 S. McClelland St., Santa Maria.

**VALLEY ART GALLERY: SPRING ART SHOWCASE** The Valley Art Gallery of Santa Maria is now exclusively showing at the Santa Maria Airport. The airport has free parking and plenty of elbow room for guests to social distance. With the winter exhibit closing at the end of March, the spring showcase will begin in April. Through June 6 Free. 805-922-0663. [valleygallery.org](http://valleygallery.org). Santa Maria Airport, 3249 Terminal Dr., Santa Maria.

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

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

### SAN LUIS OBISPO

**ATMOSPHERES DEEP** SLOMA presents a multimedia exhibition exploring themes of ecology and environmentalism. **May 29-Aug. 1** [sloma.org/exhibition/atmospheres-deep/](http://sloma.org/exhibition/atmospheres-deep/). 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

**SUBMIT YOUR EVENTS**

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

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you would like to share. Fridays, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. through May 28 Free. 805-747-4200. [artcentralslo.wordpress.com/blog/](http://artcentralslo.wordpress.com/blog/). Online, See website, San Luis Obispo.

**FINDING SPACES** Finding Spaces is a group exhibition of artists' works, exploring a variety of paint mediums. This exhibition is hosted by SLOMA in partnership with The Painters Group and was guest curated by Laura-Susan Thomas. Through May 30, noon [sloma.org/exhibition/finding-spaces/](http://sloma.org/exhibition/finding-spaces/). 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 [theatredance.calpoly.edu](http://theatredance.calpoly.edu). Online, See website, San Luis Obispo.

**LABORATORY SERIES XI: ALISA SIKALIANOS CARTER** The 11th segment of the Laboratory Series, a conversation series with Black-identified artists in collaboration with R.A.C.E. Matters SLO. May's guest artist is Alisa Sikalianos Carter. Please subscribe to the Miossi Gallery newsletter for the most up-to-date information. **May 27**, 5-6 p.m. [cuesta.edu/student/campuslife/artgallery](http://cuesta.edu/student/campuslife/artgallery). 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.

**OBJECTIFYING** SLOMA presents a showcase of contemporary sculpture by Elisa Ortega Montilla. Through June 27 [sloma.org/exhibition/objectifying/](http://sloma.org/exhibition/objectifying/). Online, See website, San Luis Obispo.

**PRIDE'S GOT TALENT** Winning entries will be streamed live the final night of Pride Week. Visit site for more info and submission details. **May 23** [slopride.com](http://slopride.com). Online, See website, San Luis Obispo.

**SHELTER: AN AUDIO PLAY** An experimental theatrical experience available to stream through the end of Cal Poly's academic year. Through June 1 [theatredance.calpoly.edu](http://theatredance.calpoly.edu). Online, See website, San Luis Obispo.

**SLO PRIDE DRAG/BURLESQUE SHOW** Join drag and burlesque performers as we light up the stage with some amazing acts. Hosted by Juicy CW. **May 21**, 8:30 & 11:15 p.m. [slopride.com](http://slopride.com). Online, See website, San Luis Obispo.

**SLOMA CELEBRATES PRIDE** In collaboration with Central Coast Pride, SLOMA is hosting a free (and socially distant) take-home art activity for kids and kids at heart. The public is invited to visit the Museum's Mission Plaza entrance and grab an art bag with supplies and instructions. **May 22**, 11 a.m.-1 p.m. Free. Mission Plaza, 989 Chorro St, San Luis Obispo.

ARTS continued page 14

# ENTRY PERIOD IS MAY 13–JUNE 2 BY 5PM

# Winning Images

## IT'S TIME FOR OUR 26TH ANNUAL PHOTO CONTEST!

CATEGORIES: ANIMALS · FLORA · IN MOTION · LAND/SEASCAPES · PEOPLE · TRAVEL · OPEN · YOUTH

Win cash prizes, get published in our annual Winning Images issues on June 24, see your work in an online gallery, and be a part of a show at Studios on the Park!

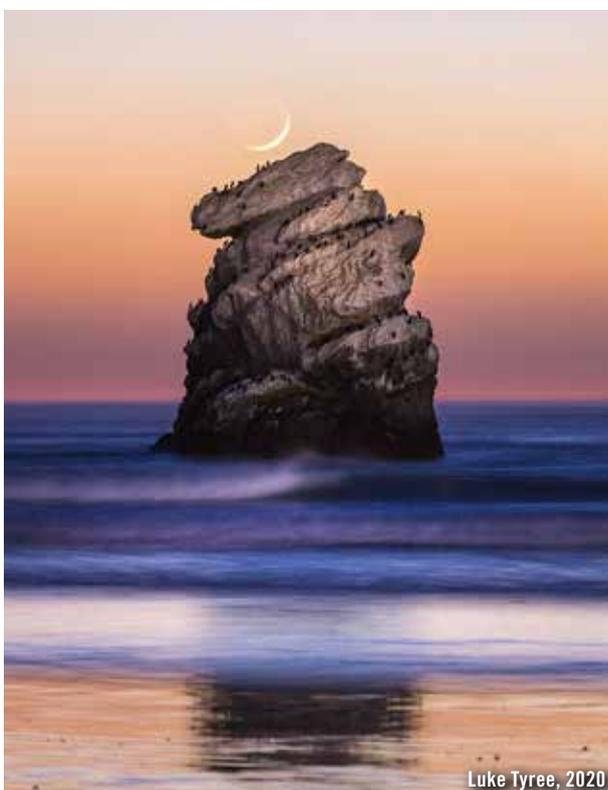
### THE RULES:

Entry divisions are either **ADULT** or **YOUTH** (under 18)

#### ADULT

- Categories are: **Animals, Flora, Land/Seascapes, People, Travel, Open** and **NEW THIS YEAR: In Motion** which can include any interpretation of action or motion.
  - All images must be submitted digitally via our online entry form, where the category can be selected.
  - A completed online entry form **MUST** be submitted for **EACH** photo entered.
  - Entrants are asked to submit a high-quality digital file of their image (jpeg format, at least 300 dpi) on the submission form.
  - Photos submitted in previous years are ineligible.
  - All photos must be the original, creative work of the submitting photographer.
  - All photographs must be taken within the boundaries of San Luis Obispo or Santa Barbara counties – except submissions to the Travel and Open categories – for which photos may be taken anywhere.
  - Entries are \$10 per photo. Entry fees go toward cash prizes for winners in each category.
  - After entering your photos, submit your payment online via PayPal. You may also mail a check (made payable to New Times) to: Winning Images, c/o New Times, 1010 Marsh St., San Luis Obispo, CA 93401. Be sure to include your name, address, email, and a brief description of the photos entered online.
  - **Photos must be received and entry fees must be paid in full by 5 p.m. on Wednesday, June 2, 2021, to be considered officially entered.**
  - Entry in the contest constitutes permission to use the photo in the paper, online, and for display.
  - Judges have the right to reassign categories for mislabeled or misfiled photos at their discretion.
- #### YOUTH (UNDER 18 YEARS OLD)
- This is an **OPEN** category. Photographs can be of any subject of the entrant's choosing, but must have been taken within the boundaries of San Luis Obispo and Santa Barbara counties.
  - Entrants must be younger than 18 years old as of June 24, 2021, and must be enrolled in any school (including a home school) that's not a college. A winner's legal guardian will be required to sign a release form.
  - All other rules from the adult categories apply.

Winning photos will be published in the Thursday, June 24, 2021, issues of *New Times* and the *Sun*.



Brought to you by: *New Times*

**Sun**

The Photo Shop



# ONLINE ENTRIES ONLY! ENTER AT NEWTIMESSLO.COM

**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 and newsletter. Featuring artworks from customers and the community. Fridays, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Free. 805-747-4200. artcentralslo.wordpress.com/category/gallery-exhibits/virtual-gallery/. Art Central, 1329 Monterey St., San Luis Obispo.

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

**VIRTUAL STUDENT EXHIBITION** This year, the Cuesta College Harold J Miossi Student Exhibition went online. View student work, including the Salon des Refuses, on the website. Mondays-Sundays hjmgallery2020studentshow.org/. Harold J. Miossi Gallery, Highway 1, San Luis Obispo, 805-546-3202.

**NORTH SLO COUNTY**

**DATE NIGHTS AT GLASSHEAD STUDIO** Share a creative evening with your special loved one. Work together on an 8"x 8" fused glass plate while enjoying a glass of wine or non-alcoholic beverage, and a small charcuterie plate. Limited to 6 participants. **May 21**, 6-8 p.m. Starting at \$150. 805-464-2633. glassheadstudio.com. Glasshead Studio, 8793 Plata Lane, Suite H, Atascadero.

**IMPRESSIONS OF THE MIDDLE KINGDOM** Go online for more info. Through June 28 Studios on the Park, 1130 Pine St., Paso Robles, 805-238-9800, studiosonthepark.org.

**MOSAIC FRAME WORKSHOP** The perfect project to repurpose your broken jewelry, ceramics, beads, and give an old frame a new look. **May 22**, 10 a.m.-noon and **May 23**, 12-1 p.m. \$55. 805-464-2633. glassheadstudio.com. Glasshead Studio, 8793 Plata Lane, Suite H, Atascadero.

**STUDIOS ON THE PARK: ONLINE CLASSES AND WORKSHOPS** Check site for a variety of virtual classes and workshops online. ongoing studiosonthepark.org. Studios on the Park, 1130 Pine St., Paso Robles, 805-238-9800.

**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**

**ARTIST SALON 2021 EXHIBIT** This special exhibit celebrating 70 years of MBAA will feature MBAA Member Artists and their choice of artwork that best represents their personal artistic journey. Artwork will be accompanied by the artist's photo and brief bio. All art media and artistic approaches will be represented. **May 27-July 12**, 12-4 p.m. Free. 805-772-2504. artcentermorroby.org. Art Center Morro Bay, 835 Main St., Morro Bay.

**ARTIST SALON VERNISSAGE** This opening reception, Vernissage, will kick off the start of the Artist Salon Exhibit and celebrate 70 years of MBAA with live music on the Patio of the Art Center Gallery. All are welcome to come, celebrate, and view the exhibit. **May 29**, 5-7 p.m. Free. 805-772-2504. artcentermorroby.org. Art Center Morro Bay, 835 Main St., Morro Bay.

**BROKEN NATURE** This exhibit celebrates artistic expression in all media, including textile, encaustic, mixed media, oil, watercolor, acrylic, and photography. In celebration of Earth Day. Mondays, Thursdays-

Free. 805-925-0994. engagedpatrons.org. Register to pick up a Teen Anime Club Pack from the Santa Maria Public Library which will include something bookish, crafty, and of course, something yummy. When you register you will also be invited to a Zoom meeting on May 24. **May 20, May 21, May 22 and May 24** Free. 805-925-0994. engagedpatrons.org. Santa Maria Public Library, 421 S. McClelland St., Santa Maria.

**FEATURED ARTIST: JEFF ODELL** Enjoy the works of a Morro Bay-based plein air artist. Friends and Family night is May 8, from 5 to 7 p.m. Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays-Sundays, 11 a.m.-5 p.m. through May 29 Free. 805-772-1068. galleryatmarinasquare.com. Gallery at Marina Square, 601 Embarcadero suite 10, Morro Bay.

**FINE ART PHOTOGRAPHY BY BRETT HARVEY** Gallery at Marina Square presents "From the Sea to the Sierras", which showcases photos by Harvey. Friends and Family night on May 8, from 5 to 7 p.m. Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays-Sundays, 11 a.m.-5 p.m. through May 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. Santa Maria, Citywide, Santa Maria.

**CAREGIVER SUPPORT GROUP (ONLINE)** Join us for this Caregiver Support Group online. Sponsored by the Santa Maria Wisdom Center and Dignity Health Family Caregiver Support Program. Open to everyone. Call to have zoom link emailed, or for questions. Fourth Tuesday of every month, 1:30-2:30 p.m. through Dec. 31 Free. 805-354-5326. smwisdomcenter.org. Santa Maria, Citywide, Santa Maria.

**FAMILY ASIAN AMERICAN AND PACIFIC ISLANDER HERITAGE MONTH CELEBRATION PACK: SANTA MARIA PUBLIC LIBRARY** Celebrate Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month with a family activity pack. Register for a pack that will have supplies for a flower garland, shell pendant, and popsicle stick boat, as well as activity sheets, a book list, and informational links. **May 20, May 21 and May 22** Free. 805-925-0994. engagedpatrons.org. Santa Maria Public Library, 421 S. McClelland St., Santa Maria.

**FEEL GOOD YOGA** Tuesdays, Thursdays, 8:30-9:30 a.m. 805-937-9750. oasisorcutt.org. Oasis Center, 420 Soares Ave., Orcutt.

**HUMAN BEING SUPPORT AND INSPIRATION ONLINE GROUP** An online group to listen and get support from others from the comfort of your own home. Tuesdays, 6:30-8 p.m. \$40 monthly subscription. 805-598-1509. divining.weebly.com. Divine Inspiration, 947 E Orange St., Santa Maria.

**LINE DANCING** Mondays, 6:30-9 p.m. 805-937-9750. oasisorcutt.org. Oasis Center, 420 Soares Ave., Orcutt.

**REFLEXOLOGY AT OASIS** Tuesdays, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. 805-937-9750. oasisorcutt.org. Oasis Center, 420 Soares Ave., Orcutt.

**STORY TIME LIVE FOR FAMILIES: SANTA MARIA PUBLIC LIBRARY (ZOOM)** Register for live story time for families; on alternating weeks this program will be bilingual. There will be songs, fingerplays, and stories. Registration is required for a Zoom link to the program. Wednesdays. through May 26 Free. 805-925-0994. engagedpatrons.org/EventsExtended.cfm?SiteID=9521&EventID=421416&PK=684076. Santa Maria Public Library, 421 S. McClelland St., Santa Maria.

**TEEN ANIME CLUB PACK: SANTA MARIA PUBLIC LIBRARY** Register to pick up a Teen Anime Club Pack from the Santa Maria Public Library which will include something bookish, crafty, and of course, something yummy. **May 20, May 21, May 22 and May 24**

Free. 805-925-0994. engagedpatrons.org. Register to pick up a Teen Anime Club Pack from the Santa Maria Public Library which will include something bookish, crafty, and of course, something yummy. When you register you will also be invited to a Zoom meeting on May 24. **May 20, May 21, May 22 and May 24** Free. 805-925-0994. engagedpatrons.org. Santa Maria Public Library, 421 S. McClelland St., Santa Maria.

**VIRTUAL WORKSHOPS OVER ZOOM**

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

**YOGA FOR MANKIND: ZOOM CLASSES**

Offering a variety of virtual yoga and pilates classes over the summer. Check site for class schedule. ongoing Starts at \$10. yoga4mankind.org. Yoga for Mankind, 130 N Broadway, suite B, Orcutt.

**SOUTH COAST SLO COUNTY**

**IN-PERSON LIGHTHOUSE TOURS** Docent led tour of the buildings and grounds of the historic Point San Luis Light Station. Saturdays, 12 & 2 p.m. through May 29 my805tix.com. Point San Luis Lighthouse, 1 Lighthouse Rd., Avila Beach.

**POINT SAN LUIS LIGHTHOUSE VIRTUAL TOUR** Join a live docent via Zoom for an interactive virtual tour of the Point San Luis Lighthouse. Wednesdays, 11 a.m. \$10. pointsanluislighthouse.org/. Point San Luis Lighthouse, 1 Lighthouse Rd., Avila Beach.

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

**SAN LUIS OBISPO**

**AMPSURF/ ISA CERTIFIED ADAPTIVE SURF INSTRUCTOR PROGRAM** Share your love of surf with those that may not usually get the chance. Become one of our Certified Adaptive Surf Instructors. **May 25-27**, 10 a.m.-1 p.m. \$75-\$250. 805-441-5271. eventbrite.com. Online. See website, San Luis Obispo.

**BEAUTY: THE INVISIBLE EMBRACE** A conversation based on John O'Donohue's book, on rediscovering the true source of compassion, serenity and hope. Tuesdays, 10:15-11:30 a.m. through May 25 Free. 805-528-0654. sbtenlososos.org. Online. See website, San Luis Obispo.

**BOOK TO ACTION: EVENING WITH BESTSELLING AUTHOR JASON REYNOLDS** Join SLO County Public Libraries and Chula Vista Public Library for a live webinar with NY Times bestselling author Jason Reynolds. **May 26**, 6-6:45 p.m. Free. chulavistaca.webex.com. Online. See website, San Luis Obispo.

**CENTRAL COAST CONJURERS (SLO COUNTY**



COURTESY PHOTO BY FELICE WILLAT

**LET THERE BE LIGHT**

Gallery Los Olivos holds its latest duo show, *Brought to Light*, through Monday, May 31. This vivid, collaborative exhibition pairs the works of photographer Felice Willat and painter Sherri Cassell. Guests can view the exhibit during the gallery's regular hours (open weekly, except Tuesday and Wednesday, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.). Call (805) 688-7517 or visit gallerylosolivos.com for more info. The gallery is located at 2920 Grand Ave., Los Olivos.

—C.W.

**MAGIC CLUB)** Monthly meeting of magicians of all levels. Please call or email for more info. Meet like-minded folks with an interest in magic, from close-up to stage performances. Last Wednesday of every month, 6:30-9 p.m. Free. 805-440-0116. IHOP, 212 Madonna Rd., San Luis Obispo.

**AN EVENING WITH GUY BALDWIN: SLO PRIDE** For ages 18 and older. Presented by Central Coast Kink. **May 21**, 6:30 p.m. slopride.com. Online. See website, San Luis Obispo.

**FUNDING OUR FUTURE: ONLINE AUCTION & DRIVE THROUGH BBQ FOR STUDENT SCHOLARSHIPS** Rotary Club of SLO is holding an online auction for Student Scholarships. Over 55 amazing auction items to bid on, including Disneyland Tickets, Pismo Beach Staycation, golf, gift cards, and more. **May 20-June 2** Various. 805-769-8779. slorotary.org. Online. See website, San Luis Obispo.

**GALA AND CAL POLY PRIDE CENTER PRIDE WEEK** Visit slopride.com for full list of Pride Week activities and events, including a Pride Art Show, the Pet Photo Competition, Pride's Got Talent, and more. Through May 23 slopride.com. GALA Center Gallery, 1060 Palm St., San Luis Obispo.

**MEDITATION FOR BEGINNERS (ZOOM)** Learn to meditate from the comfort and security of your home. For beginners as well as those desiring to deepen an existing practice. Email info@heartofsilence.net for more info. Sundays, 6-7 p.m. Donation. 559-905-9274. heartofsilence.net. Online. See website, San Luis Obispo.

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

**THE MYSTERY OF TREES EXPLORATION AT SLO BOTANICAL GARDEN** Bring the family for a morning of nature exploration. Learn about the mystery of trees, take a guided hike, and snack on food given to us by

CULTURE &amp; LIFESTYLE continued page 15

**Enjoy Country Music!****LIVE: SAMMY JOE MITCHELL****UPCOMING SHOWS:****Friday  
May 21st, 6pm****Maverick Saloon,  
Santa Ynez****Saturday  
May 29th, 1pm****Los Alamos  
Depot Bar**



**JDX PHARMACY**  
**Health Mart.**  
PHARMACY

*Your Local Pharmacy  
and Medical Equipment  
Supply Source*

## 805-922-1747

**Medical equipment:**

- Hospital beds
- Lift chairs
- Wheelchairs
- Bathroom safety products
- and more

**Medicine:**

- Prescription medicine
- Cold medicine
- Cough syrup
- Cough drops
- Flu medicine
- Pain relief medicine

OPEN: Mon-Fri 9am-6pm • Sat 9am-1pm

JDX Pharmacy is a full-service pharmacy that offers medications and other medical equipment to all of Santa Maria, CA. Our friendly and knowledgeable staff is always ready to assist you with all your medical supply needs. We offer same-day service for your convenience.

**1504 SOUTH BROADWAY EAST, SANTA MARIA • WWW.HEALTHMART.COM**

**CULTURE & LIFESTYLE** page 14  
 trees, plants, seeds, and more. **May 22**, 9 a.m.-noon  
 Admission for 1 adult and 1 child: \$35 for Garden  
 Members; \$40 for general public. 805-541-1400. slobg.  
 org. San Luis Obispo Botanical Garden, 3450 Dairy  
 Creek Rd., San Luis Obispo.

**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. slcusd.org. Online, See  
 website, San Luis Obispo.

**PARENTING THE INFANT, BABY  
 AND ME YOGA, AND PREPARING  
 FOR THE POSTPARTUM PERIOD  
 (ONLINE)** Meet other parents and form  
 connections that last a lifetime in Parent  
 Participation's infant classes (ages 0 to 12  
 months). Learn from the comfort and safety of your  
 own home. Expecting parents welcome. Tuesdays,  
 Thursdays, Fridays. through May 28 \$10-\$46. 805-549-  
 1253. slcusd.org. Online, See website, San Luis Obispo.

**SLO PRIDE: AN EVENING WITH TRANZ CENTRAL  
 COAST** The premiere of two new videos highlighting the  
 experiences of trans people on the Central Coast. **May  
 20**, 6:30-8 p.m. slopride.com. Online, See website,  
 San Luis Obispo.

**SLO QUEER HISTORY VIDEO ARCHIVE FORUM**  
 The Central Coast Queer Archive Project and its  
 members will share examples of their video archiving  
 work including clips from Lisa Dean, Kelly Quiros, and  
 Carroll Leslie, and a discussion/open Q&A. The project  
 encourages LGBTQ seniors to join, especially those who  
 wish to share their stories. **May 21**, 5-6:15 p.m. Free.  
 805-541-4252. slopride.com/event-details/slo-queer-  
 history-archive-forum. Online, See website,  
 San Luis Obispo.



## FOOD & DRINK

### SANTA YNEZ VALLEY

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

**STANDING SUN: PURCHASES AND DELIVERIES**  
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 com/2021/. Online, See website, San Luis Obispo.

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 Beach Pier, 805- 773-4382.

## MUSIC

### SANTA YNEZ VALLEY

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 mavericksaloon.org.

### SANTA MARIA VALLEY/LOS ALAMOS

**SAMMY JOE MITCHELL LIVE** Enjoy live country  
 music. **May 29**, 1 p.m. Los Alamos Depot Bar, 515 Bell  
 St., Los Alamos, 805-344-1883, thedepotmall.com/.

### SOUTH COAST SLO COUNTY

**MONOTONES LIVE** **May 21**, 5 p.m. Branch Street  
 Deli, 203 E. Branch St., Arroyo Grande, 805-489-9099,  
 branchstreetdeli.com.

**PAINTED RED LIVE** **May 21**, 5 p.m. Branch Street  
 Deli, 203 E. Branch St., Arroyo Grande, 805-489-9099,  
 branchstreetdeli.com.

### SAN LUIS OBISPO

**SCATTER SEEDS: 20TH ANNIVERSARY A**  
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 stevekey.com/events. Online, See website,  
 San Luis Obispo.

**STRONG. PROUD. UNITED. CONCERT: SLO  
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 Op. 90; and Sonata in A flat Major, Op. 110. Available to  
 stream through May 28. **May 21-28**, 7:30 p.m. \$5. 805-  
 756-4849. music.calpoly.edu/calendar/special. Online,  
 See website, San Luis Obispo.

### NORTH SLO COUNTY

**BURNING JAMES AND POHO BLUES ALL-STARS**  
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 Robles, 805-239-1000, pasobrewing.com.

**DULCIE TAYLOR BAND AT FOUR LANTERNS** Enjoy  
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 5955. fourlanternswinery.com/events. Four Lanterns  
 Winery, 2485 West Highway 46, Paso Robles.

**JOHN STATION BAND LIVE** **May 22**, 7 p.m. The  
 Pour House, 525 Pine St., Paso Robles, 805-239-1000,  
 pasobrewing.com.

**RAVA ON THE ROCKS: DV8D BAND** **May 22**, 6  
 p.m. Rava Wines + Events, 6785 Creston Rd.,  
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 805-204-6821. stevekey.com/events. Sculpterra Winery,  
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 Hartley Farms, San Miguel

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**FRIDAY, MAY 28**  
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**SMCT's  
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### Arts Briefs

#### Central Coast artists sought for Water Colors 2021 Storm Drain Mural Project

The Santa Maria Recreation and Parks Department and Utilities Department are seeking artists to apply to join the Water Colors 2021 Storm Drain Mural Project, in which selected artists will design and paint sidewalk murals at five of the city's storm drains. This public art project is part of the city's education and outreach efforts to raise awareness about the negative effects of water pollution, according to the city.

"While providing a unique canvas, the juxtaposition of education and public art will remind our community about the need of protecting the city's water systems while creating poignant masterpieces," Dennis Smitherman, recreation services manager, said in a statement.

Artists throughout the Central Coast are eligible to apply to join the project, as long as they're 18 years old or older. Submissions from applicants are due no later than Sunday, May 30. Applicants are required to submit a mural proposal, which should include their proposed artwork.

Artists are encouraged to submit an artwork that reflects support for water quality initiatives. Five applicants will be chosen by a panel of judges, and each of the chosen artists will receive a \$250 stipend to complete their proposed murals (and up to \$150 in reimbursement for supplies).

Once the five new storm drain murals are completed, photographs of the murals will be posted online at [cityofsantamaria.org/art](http://cityofsantamaria.org/art). To find out more about the Water Colors 2021 Storm Drain Mural Project and details on how to apply, call (805) 925-0951, Ext. 2260, or visit [cityofsantamaria.org/recreation](http://cityofsantamaria.org/recreation).

#### Santa Maria Airport holds new abstract exhibit in June, showcasing artist Denise Gimbel

On Tuesday, June 8, a new exhibition showcasing abstract nature paintings by contemporary artist Denise Gimbel (whose work is pictured to the right) will debut at the Santa Maria Airport. This solo exhibit is presented by the Valley Art Gallery and is scheduled to remain on display through the end of July.

COURTESY IMAGE BY DENISE GIMBEL



For more info on the show and a preview of Gimbel's artworks, visit [denisegimbelcontemporaryartist.com](http://denisegimbelcontemporaryartist.com). The Santa Maria Airport is located at 3217 Terminal Drive, Santa Maria.

#### PCPA seeks low-cost housing for incoming students, guest artists

The Pacific Conservatory Theatre (PCPA) is seeking low-cost housing opportunities in Santa Maria to offer incoming students and guest artists. Requirements include a bedroom with bed provided, a private or shared bathroom, and access to an on-site kitchen and laundry facilities. Walking distance to the PCPA headquarters at Allan Hancock College is preferred, but not required.

Community members who wish to support PCPA's programming by offering their extra space at an affordable rate can contact the company's assistant production manager, Geno Franco, at (805) 928-7731, Ext. 3153, or email [companymanager@pcpa.org](mailto:companymanager@pcpa.org).

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

# It's a small world

Limited to 25 percent capacity, Disneyland is back in business with fewer crowds than ever

BY CALEB WISEBLOOD

In this world, nothing can be said to be certain, except death, taxes, and long lines at Disneyland. Benjamin Franklin may not have lived long enough to assert the third premise, but I'm sure the folks over at the Haunted Mansion can attest to the late statesman rolling in his grave over it.

For the first time in nearly a year and a half, grim, grinning ghosts are coming out to socialize—albeit at least 6 feet apart—with mortal guests of the beloved theme park, as it celebrated its grand reopening to the public this month. Once I found out the park was operating at 25 percent capacity, I jumped at the chance to buy tickets for my girlfriend and me. Fewer people, shorter lines, same churros—take my money now!

It's a Wednesday and we arrive at the park around 10 a.m., just an hour after opening time. Our temperatures are scanned before we're even allowed to leave the parking garage area, and once we get to the front gates through the standard security check, the visible lack of crowds is quite promising for the day ahead.

In lieu of the traditional photo ops with Disney characters, Mickey Mouse and his compatriots are hanging out near the staircase to the Main Street USA train station, blocked off from meeting guests up close but waving, dancing, and posing nonetheless for passersby to take selfies from just below the stairs. Minnie, Goofy, Pluto, and even Chip and Dale are present, but Donald Duck is strangely absent. Maybe he forgot to bring his mask today? Typical Donald—gets away with showing up to work pantsless for years, but maskless ain't gonna slide.

As we stroll down Main Street, the sidewalks and main road are refreshingly spacious and decently devoid of other roaming organisms, minus a couple of trolley drivers, one of whom honks for me to get out of the way as I pause in the middle of the road to take a not-so-snappy Snapchat story.

The first gateway we venture into is Fantasyland, which we enter through the iconic Sleeping Beauty castle. Mr. Toad's Wild Ride, the Mad Tea Party, Dumbo the Flying Elephant, and Pinocchio's Daring Journey are among the rides we're able to enjoy with ease (only five- to 10-minute wait times for each) before we cross over into Tomorrowland for Space Mountain and Star Tours (both with relatively quick wait times as well, compared to a typical pre-pandemic day at the park).

Our rose-colored glasses start to lose their tint as we head to New Orleans Square however, where the crowds appear almost robust enough to make me question whether the park is actually following



**A VERY MERRY UNBIRTHDAY TO YOU:** The Mad Tea Party is one of the many rides we enjoy in Disneyland's Fantasyland area, along with Dumbo the Flying Elephant, Pinocchio's Daring Journey, and Mr. Toad's Wild Ride (my personal favorite).

its 25 percent rule. But things start to make more sense as we wait in line for Pirates of the Caribbean, which looks excruciatingly long at first. But once you're in, it moves fast; it only looks long because each party of guests is amply spaced out from one another.

Still, I must say, this line is particularly tricky for those outside the line to maneuver around; thus amplifying the uneasy, crowded feeling at this narrow part of the park. At the other side of New Orleans Square, the equally long line outside the Haunted Mansion nearly gets entangled with the Pirates one.

But both rides are just as fun as they've always been, there's no denying that. And Thunder Mountain, nearby in Frontierland, is more fun than ever, with the shortest wait time in terms of the bigger rides (about 10 minutes). We go on twice, once before lunch and once after. A late-ish lunch, I should say. It's about 4 p.m., although we ordered our food around 2 p.m. (most of the restaurants in the park only accept mobile orders in advance an hour or two prior, so be sure to order your food much earlier than the time you'll be hungry for it).

In between our chicken strip meals at the Stage Door Cafe and the park's closing time (current closing hours are a bit early at 7 p.m.), we walk off our full bellies, get them full again with churros for dessert, venture into the Star Wars Galaxy's Edge area for the first time (for both of us), and enjoy an epic finale to our day plummeting 50 feet down the famous Splash Mountain drop. I've never longed for a poncho so much in my life. ○

Arts Editor Caleb Wiseblood wants to know your favorite Disneyland ride at [cwiseblood@santamariasun.com](mailto:cwiseblood@santamariasun.com).



**STAIRWAY TO HEAVEN:** In lieu of the traditional photo ops with Disney characters, passersby can take selfies with Mickey Mouse and his compatriots in the background as they hang out near the staircase to the Main Street USA train station.

PHOTO COURTESY OF CALEB WISEBLOOD



**MICKEY AND MINNIE MASK UP:** Once I found out Disneyland was operating at 25 percent capacity, I jumped at the chance to buy tickets for my girlfriend and me. Here we are posed in front of the iconic Sleeping Beauty castle.

## The protector

**C**o-writer Taylor Sheridan (*Hell or Highwater*, *Wind River*) directs this action thriller based on Michael Koryta's novel about teenage murder witness Connor Casserly (Finn Little), who's pursued by two assassins—Jack Blackwell (Aidan Gillen) and his son, Patrick (Nicholas Hoult)—into the wilderness, where Connor meets Hannah Faber (Angelina Jolie), a veteran smokejumper and survival expert suffering from PTSD. Can she protect the boy from the assassins and the raging forest fire they started? (100 min.)

**Glen:** I'm a big fan of Taylor Sheridan. He really knows how to write macho stories. His first screenplay was *Sicario* (2015), after all, and he also created the Kevin Costner neo-Western TV series *Yellowstone*. I still think his best work is *Wind River* (2017), but this lean, mean action thriller is very compelling. The Blackwells are efficient and remorseless assassins, and they're unworried about collateral damage. The story also features Ethan Sawyer (an always dependable Jon Bernthal), local law enforcement and also Hannah's ex, who's now married to Allison (Medina Senghore), pregnant with their first child. When killers are willing to take out a pregnant woman, you know just how ruthless they are. Hannah, Ethan, and Allison, however, are all capable, and the cat-and-mouse game they play amid the growing forest fire is gripping. Pregnant Allison is especially tenacious, and Hannah's PTSD ups the emotional ante—she holds herself responsible for some earlier fire deaths when she "read the wind wrong." This is a

propulsive and violent story, and it's also Jolie's first action flick since *Salt* (2010). She's up to the ass-kicking task as long as you can get past her anorexic physique.

**Anna:** Jolie may not seem like the obvious choice for a smokejumper, but it was her collaboration that made Sheridan take on this project after another director dropped out, and he made a good call here. Her body of work shows that she can kick ass and look good doing it, and *Those Who Wish Me Dead* holds steady in that department. It's always high stakes when a kid gets involved, and Little holds his own as her bad-guy-dodging companion. I love Bernthal in all he does; he's such a reliable actor, melding into his character so naturally. This one had me gasping, holding my breath, whispering "nonononono" as the cat-and-mouse game played out. Well done, cast and crew! The father-son team is so diabolical and sinister, they make for great villains you can't wait to see the hammer of justice come down on. Quite honestly I didn't know much about this film going into it, and I was sort of expecting a run-of-the-mill action flick, which in some ways it is, but in other ways it's elevated. I felt compelled to watch and not check out halfway through and start scrolling my phone—the fate of many action flicks when I'm at home watching. This isn't my favorite work from Sheridan, but it's still solid just the same. Definitely worth checking out when you need to feel a bit of adrenaline running through your blood.

**Glen:** We have HBO Max, so we watched it at home, but I imagine it's even more powerful on the big screen. The New Mexico locations and wilderness were gorgeous, and cinematographer

### THOSE WHO WISH ME DEAD

What's it rated? **R**  
When? **2021**  
Where's it showing? **HBO Max**  
What's it worth, Anna? **Matinee**  
What's it worth, Glen? **Matinee**

Ben Richardson (*Mare of Easttown*, *Yellowstone*, *Wind River*, *Beasts of the Southern Wild*) did an incredible job capturing it. If we didn't already pay for HBO, I would have ponied up the dough to watch this in a theater. It's not going to win any awards, and it's a pretty standard-issue action story that apparently deviates considerably from the novel it's based upon, but Sheridan's direction keeps things moving fast. There's no time to get bored. With solid performances from all involved and interesting, well-crafted characters, I'd say this is worth matinee prices unless you're an action film fan or an Angelina Jolie junkie, in which case, pay full price. It will be worth it to you.

**Anna:** Yep, this would be a fun one in the theater—even easier to get absorbed in the fiery cinematography. It definitely doesn't stray far from being a standard action flick, but it isn't a bad one. Storyline-wise, it falls in pretty familiar territory, but the landscape and the tight cast add a lot to what could have been just plain ordinary. Like you



**FIRED UP:** Former smokejumper Hannah Faber (Angelina Jolie) argues with her ex, Deputy Sheriff Ethan Sawyer (Jon Bernthal), in *Those Who Wish Me Dead*, screening at most local theaters and on HBO Max.

said, this one isn't in the cards to win awards, but it does the job it sets out to do—keeps the audience engaged and rooting for the good guys to win. With a real case of quarantine boredom and lack of new content, I'll take as many decent movies as I can get. This is an easy choice if you already subscribe to HBO Max, but if you want that full experience, go buy some popcorn and check this out on the big screen. It's worth the price of a matinee to see all of these players at work. ○

Senior Staff Writer Glen Starkey and freelancer Anna Starkey write *Split Screen*. Glen compiles streaming listings. Comment at [gstarkey@newtimeslo.com](mailto:gstarkey@newtimeslo.com).

## Film Reviews

### THE MARKSMAN

What's it rated? **PG-13** When? **2021**  
Where's it showing? **Redox**

Robert Lorenz (*Trouble with the Curve*) directs this so-so action thriller about Arizona rancher, former Marine, and Vietnam vet Jim Hanson (Liam Neeson), who feels obligated to save Miguel (Jacob Perez), a little boy crossing the border after the boy's mother is killed by a dangerous drug cartel, which is committed to finding and killing the boy. The pair, wary of one another at first, begin to form a bond as they set out for Chicago, where Miguel has family. Naturally, the cartel is in hot pursuit, and a series of skirmishes follow as they try to escape.

The story is clearly going for a Clint Eastwood vibe: Think *The Mule* and *Gran Torino* in particular. Hanson's a good man about to lose his ranch to the bank because of his deceased wife's cancer medical bills. He's not without compassion, but he's the kind of guy who calls in "IAs"—illegal aliens—when he sees them crossing the border during his ranching duties. He's desperate for money to save his ranch, so when Miguel's dying mother, Rosa (Teresa Ruiz), promises him a bagful to get her boy to Chicago, he ignores his moral code and agrees.



PHOTO COURTESY OF CUTTING EDGE GROUP

**BREATHE OUT AND SQUEEZE:** Arizona rancher Jim Hanson (Liam Neeson, right) helps Miguel (Jacob Perez) escape a Mexican drug cartel trying to kill him, in *The Marksman*, now available at Redbox.

It's pretty derivative and farfetched. Why the cartel would go to such lengths to kill a little boy makes no sense, and for a film called *The Marksman*, I was expecting Hanson to be a better shot. The ending is exactly what I would expect, but as a Neeson fan, I was OK spending \$1.80 to watch his aging ex-Marine fight one final battle. If you miss it, you haven't missed much. (108 min.) —Glen

### SEASPIRACY

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

Life is so much simpler when we can ignore the untold story that sits on our plates, but documentaries like *Food, Inc.*; *King Corn*; and *Supersize Me* force the truth into their audience's reality. And now *Seaspiracy*, helmed by and starring Ali Tabrizi, is here to confront the world of and big business behind the seafood industry and the dire and imminent threat we are facing because of it.

This is one of those films that is going to leave you feeling pretty hopeless about the human race, but hopefully it will also inform your decisions when it comes to ordering dinner. From the world of illegal whaling to the realities of bycatch, this pointed and urgent film gives us glimpses of the ugly truths behind the big business of decimating our seas and the false narrative the industry spins on it.

You would think that there's some regulation or control over the use of words like "dolphin free" and "sustainably harvested," but the sad reality is that those labels we live by are flat-out meaningless, and our biggest resource on this planet is being sucked dry of its ecosystem. This is a tough watch but an important one, hopefully encouraging the



PHOTO COURTESY OF AUM FILMS

**SHARK FIN DUPE:** Documentarian Ali Tabrizi reveals the ugliness and dishonesty of the worldwide seafood industry, in *Seaspiracy*, screening on Netflix.

audience to rethink their food choices and opt for meals that don't contribute to this dire and drastic situation. (89 min.) ○ —Glen

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**BOSTON'S BOXES:** Santa Maria local Rachel Boston, creator of Brie Happy Charcuterie, described a charcuterie box as the perfect companion to bring along on outdoor adventures.



**STOP AND EAT THE ROSES:** One staple feature of boxes and boards at Brie Happy Charcuterie is founder Rachel Boston's salami roses. "You can't help but smile when looking at a gorgeous rose that you can also eat," Boston said. "Appearance is such an important factor. I truly feel like we eat with our eyes first."

## Don't worry, brie happy

Rachel Boston, founder of Brie Happy Charcuterie, offers customizable, decorative charcuterie to Central Coast residents

BY CALEB WISEBLOOD

Growing up as the daughter of two business owners, Santa Maria local and lifelong foodie Rachel Boston had always hoped to start a business of her own one day. The only question was what?

"It has been a huge dream of mine, but the question always was what should I do that I am passionate about, and what can I bring to this community," said Boston, whose father owned a local pet supply company during her childhood.

But Boston, 28, credits her experiences at Evergreen Video, which her mother owned for about three decades before the store closed in 2018, for shaping her aspirations.

"You could say I grew up in that video store, which taught me so many important skills when it comes to customer service and the impact you can have on people," Boston said. "I understand it was only a video store, but I watched the impact that my mom made on her customers and the community. I hoped I could do that one day."

For the past seven years, Boston has worked in customer service and management positions, from event and catering manager to operations manager, for a local food service company, but she didn't take the steps to launch an operation of her own until March of last year.

"I had been working long hours, with little time to focus on anything else. Then the pandemic hit and threw everyone's lives up in the air, including myself," Boston said. "This led to me being

furloughed for roughly six months."

A few months into her furlough, Boston had an epiphany while casually browsing the internet, tumbling deeper and deeper down a foodie-laden rabbit hole.

"I stumbled upon a few charcuterie businesses in the LA area, and it just hit me," Boston said. "I was immediately drawn in and knew I wanted to do this."

In her personal life, Boston had already enjoyed customizing charcuterie boards for herself, and she figured that adding gift-like, to-go charcuterie boxes to the mix would be a natural option when envisioning what her business could be.

"I thought the idea of a charcuterie box is such a perfect fit for the current state of life," Boston said. "It makes the perfect addition to any small or intimate gathering; a date night in, girls night, a picnic, a trip to a winery or the beach with loved ones or friends. Being on the Central Coast, we have so many beautiful places to go and explore, and a charcuterie box makes the perfect companion."

Designing and crafting the decorative boxes themselves fulfilled a separate passion for Boston, she explained, beyond curating the food items to be included in each box.

"In my work life, I have a huge passion for customer service and providing people with an experience. But personally, I love making things beautiful—decorating, anything of the sort," Boston said. "Let's just say when it comes to Christmastime, I go all out. I am the kind of woman that loves to make holiday gift baskets for my friends and family. I love taking the time to perfect every little

### Meat and greet

Find out more about Brie Happy Charcuterie on its Instagram page, @briehappycharcuterie. For more additional info, email [briehappycharcuterie@gmail.com](mailto:briehappycharcuterie@gmail.com).

detail," she added. "It just makes me happy to bring others joy. I love the experience and the process of creating something beautiful for others to enjoy."

It's this attention to detail that separates Brie Happy Charcuterie, which she officially launched at the beginning of May, from other charcuterie businesses, Boston believes.

"I do feel like I set myself apart by wanting each box to be an experience for those who are enjoying it, not just food for them to eat," Boston said. "Each time I am creating a box or board, I think about how it will bring people together to connect and enjoy themselves."

Brie Happy Charcuterie offers a diverse range of packages to choose from, with boxes and boards in varying sizes. Customers can also customize their orders to include whichever available meat, fruit, and cheese options they prefer. In perfectly punny fashion, Boston named the company after her favorite cheese, of course.

"Obviously, I am a huge brie fan. I love the creaminess, versatility, and spreadability," Boston said. "It has a nice mild, fruity yet earthy flavor. And you can eat the rind; it actually provides another unique flavor profile and texture when combined with the creaminess of the cheese."

As Boston is currently back to working full time at her longtime job, she usually dedicates the very early hours of the morning to her new charcuterie venture.

"I actually look forward to waking up at 6 a.m. to prepare an order before going to my full-time job, and I'm not even a morning person," said Boston, whose favorite part of finishing her boards and boxes is applying "the final floral touches, fresh rosemary, and the little details that turn it from being a meat



**WIDE SPREAD:** Brie Happy Charcuterie offers a diverse range of packages to choose from, with boxes and boards in varying sizes. Customers can also customize their orders to include whichever available meat, fruit, and cheese options they prefer.

and cheese box or board into an entire mood."

Speaking of both meat and floral touches, one staple feature in Boston's charcuterie packages is her salami roses.

"You can't help but smile when looking at a gorgeous rose that you can also eat," Boston said. "Appearance is such an important factor. I truly feel like we eat with our eyes first, and how food is presented can impact your mood before even taking a bite." ☺

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

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