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AT THE MOVIES

Spider-Man:
Nostalgic fun [20]

SUN

2021



A wild ride

2021 starts and ends with uncertainty [6] BY SUN STAFF

NEWS Omicron, COVID-19 testing [4]

ARTS The evolution of events [18]

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DECEMBER 30, 2021 - JANUARY 6, 2022 VOL. 22 NO. 44

Here we are at the end of yet another year. It's hard to believe that COVID-19 followed us all the way from the beginning of the year to the end, but the pandemic is still thriving—even through vaccine and vaccine booster roll-outs. As the Omicron variant spreads, the *Sun* looks back at more than just COVID-19. But similar to 2021, it seems like everything was touched by the pandemic [6].

You can also read about the difference between last year's COVID-19 surge and this year's [4]; how art galleries and artists adjusted to the pandemic's peaks and valleys [18]; and Arts Editor Caleb Wiseblood's favorite meals of the year [22].

Camillia Lanham
editor



ROLLERCOASTER: 2021 came with ups and downs caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Cover photo from Adobe Stock > Cover design by Alex Zuniga

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Political Watch

• **U.S. Sen. Alex Padilla** (D-California) joined **U.S. Sen. Amy Klobuchar** (D-Minnesota) and 11 of their colleagues in a letter to **Meta**—previously referred to as Facebook—**CEO Mark Zuckerberg** expressing concern regarding Meta's response to the rise of online election-related misinformation on its platforms, including Facebook, according to a Dec. 23 statement. The letter comes in advance of the anniversary of the Jan. 6 insurrection and follows reports and Senate testimony indicating that the company ended its misinformation safeguards too soon after the 2020 election. Senators argued that it enabled misinformation and violent rhetoric to return to Facebook immediately following Election Day and lead to the Jan. 6 insurrection. "While efforts to delegitimize election results and undermine our democracy continued and even intensified following Election Day, reports indicate that Facebook turned off election-related safeguards because the company was concerned that they could be limiting the growth of the platform," the letter stated. "The controls demonstrate that Facebook clearly knew that its platform could be used to sow and promote discord, division, and incendiary content." The senators asked Meta to justify its decision to dial back controls post-election and to explain its current work to guard against misinformation and violence on its platforms.

• Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC) added Santa Barbara County to its membership, bringing the total number of RCRC member counties to 38, according to a Dec. 14 statement. "The voice of rural California is strengthened in its collective impact when we unite to advance the important and unique interests of our communities," **RCRC Board Chair and Mono County Supervisor Stacy Corless** said in the statement. "We are excited to welcome Santa Barbara County as the newest member of RCRC and look forward to working together to promote the health and wellbeing of rural counties." The addition was approved at the RCRC's Dec. 9 meeting, and **4th District Santa Barbara County Supervisor Bob Nelson** will serve as the county representative on the board of directors. "I'm honored to serve as the representative for Santa Barbara County, and I've long been aware of the great work that RCRC does on both the local and state levels. The values in our county, especially the North County, align with the principles of the organization. Our residents and businesses will benefit greatly from this relationship," Nelson said in a statement. Founded in 1972, RCRC works with its membership to advocate on behalf of rural issues at the state and federal levels.

• **Gov. Gavin Newsom** announced new actions to protect Californians from COVID-19, which were supported by health, education, and state leaders across California, according to a Dec. 23 statement. The state is requiring health care workers to get boosters by Feb. 1, 2022, distributing at-home test kits statewide for students returning to public school, and extending hours at testing sites with increased demand. These actions intend to give everyone in California access to testing throughout the holiday season and ensure safety as public school students return to school. "I'm grateful to see the governor's continued leadership as he takes proactive steps to ensure that California kids can continue to learn safely in person and keep our schools open," **Lt. Gov. Eleni Kounalakis** said in a statement. Since the beginning of the pandemic, California has taken actions designed to stem the spread of the virus, including requiring that workers in health care settings be fully vaccinated, announcing that the COVID-19 vaccine will be added to the list of required vaccinations to attend in-person school when fully authorized for applicable grade spans, requiring masking in schools, and implementing a standard that all school staff and state workers either show proof of full vaccination or be tested. ○

FILE PHOTO COURTESY OF RYAN HOPKINS



SURGING UNCERTAINTY: COVID-19 cases didn't increase after Thanksgiving this year as badly as they did last year, but that doesn't mean the Central Coast is in the clear from a winter surge, public health officials say.

Public health officials warn of potential winter COVID-19 surge

Last year's holiday season ushered in one of the worst COVID-19 surges we've seen to date, with cases peaking on the Central Coast in mid-January 2021. But this year, with the advent of vaccines and the uncertainty of the Omicron variant, it's unclear what the next big surge will look like.

Comparing this year's COVID-19 data to last year's, it's clear that cases aren't surging in the same way—at least, not yet.

In the month after Thanksgiving 2020, the case rate more than doubled in Santa Barbara County. This year, the case rate remained relatively stable, with just a slight uptick in the weeks after the holiday.

But that doesn't mean the Central Coast is spared from a winter surge—Santa Barbara County's cases are ticking back up, with the case rate almost doubling from Dec. 15 to 22.

"At this time, cases are lower than this time last year," the Santa Barbara County Public Health Department told the *Sun* in a written statement. "However, it will be several weeks until we know the impact of the winter holidays. Given the holiday travel and gatherings, we anticipate an increase in cases, but we're still reviewing the data and it is too early to say [if] this year will be as severe as last year."

Another wild card is Omicron, which only recently made an appearance in SLO County. As of Dec. 28, the variant hadn't yet been detected in Santa Barbara County.

"It is estimated from the experiences in South Africa that Omicron has a doubling rate of only two days," SLO County Public Health Department spokesperson Michelle Shoresman told the *Sun*.

While vaccines greatly reduce the severity of the disease, breakthrough cases are still prevalent.

"To stay as safe as possible during this confusing time, consider testing before gathering and three to five days after a gathering, stay home if you feel sick, practice social distancing, and gather outside as weather permits, and get

vaccinated or boosted if you are able and haven't already," Shoresman said.

Despite the increase in cases, two of Santa Barbara County's public health-run testing locations closed. The Goleta Valley Community Center is closing Dec. 30, and a county-run testing site at Buellton closed before Christmas.

"We haven't really seen an increase in traffic in our community testing sites over the last month or so," Santa Barbara County EMS Systems Coordinator Matt Higgs told KEYT about why the sites closed.

Northern Santa Barbara County residents can still get tested at county-run sites at the Santa Maria Fairpark and the Lompoc Health Care Center. People can schedule a testing appointment at publichealthsb.org/testing.

—*Malea Martin*

Santa Maria approves housing development at Hi-Way Drive-In

A recent Santa Maria City Council decision will prevent any potential buyers of a local drive-in from maintaining the location as a movie theater.

Thanks to an approved zoning change for the site, from commercial to residential, People's Self-Help Housing has the final go-ahead to purchase the Hi-Way Drive-In, where it plans to develop 49 single-family homes.

One of the reasons Mayor Alice Patino said she supported the change, which was approved during the City Council's Dec. 21 meeting, was to prevent alternate buyers from building a multi-story apartment complex at the site instead. The original commercial designation allows for mixed-use residential development, including studio apartments.

"My concern is that if we leave it commercial ... anything can be built there that doesn't even have to be approved by City Council or the Planning Commission," Patino said during the meeting.

Before voting on the item, Councilmember Mike Cordero raised some concerns about past complaints he's heard about other low-income housing developments from People's Self-Help

Housing.

"I am aware of other projects they've been involved with, and I've been pretty supportive, in the past, of People's Self-Help Housing; it's a great organization in many respects," Cordero said. "But there seems to be a breakdown in caring for some of the properties."

Cordero said some of the complaints have been about "a lot of people hanging around outside the projects" who were "generally disrupting the people that were already established in the neighborhood," he said, describing the loiterers as "criminal in nature."

Sheryl Flores, vice president of home ownership at People's Self-Help Housing, inquired about Cordero passing along these complaints to her directly, so she could then forward them to property management. Cordero said he would contact her, but did not dive into the complaints' specifics during the meeting.

Councilmember Etta Waterfield said she believes the proposed housing development will attract dedicated homebuyers, partly because they will help build the houses themselves. People's Self-Help Housing assigns 60 to 70 percent of physical construction duties to those who buy.

"People are buying these homes for themselves; they're gonna take care of these homes. They're not gonna go in and build a home, especially in today's time, and then trash it out," Waterfield said. "I believe these people who will be buying these homes will take care of these homes and do a great job."

The Santa Maria Planning Commission recommended approval of the zoning change, which the City Council did unanimously on a 5-0 vote.

—*Caleb Wiseblood*

Endangered Guadalupe-Nipomo dunes plants receive recovery plans

The La Graciosa thistle—a plant in the sunflower family—and the Nipomo Mesa lupine—an herb in the legume family—are endangered plants only found in the coastal dune ecosystem of the Guadalupe-Nipomo Dunes Complex. And both now have blueprints for recovery, said Kristie Scarazzo, a botanist with the Ventura office of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

"As broad brush as I can be, each of these species is a regional endemic, meaning they only occur in California. They are limited to the Guadalupe-Nipomo Dunes Complex, one of the largest dune ecosystems left in the United States. Their habitats are extremely rare and endangered," Scarazzo said.

The La Graciosa thistle grows in the wetland features of the dunes, and the Nipomo Mesa lupine grows in a 2-square-mile area in the Nipomo Mesa. Their survival relies on wind and rainflow to move the sediments and sands in the dunes and the relationship that they have to the soil, she said.

Real estate and agricultural development, invasive species, groundwater loss, and climate change have negatively impacted the plants' ecosystems, causing them to be added to the endangered species list at the state and federal levels. Recovery plans work to get the plants off the endangered species list—under the U.S. Endangered Species Act—by laying out a step-by-step, detailed process, similar to following recipes in a cookbook, Scarazzo said.

"When you have an endangered plant, the first step is to downlist it; meaning, if we met the criteria, they would go from endangered to threatened," she said. "Once we downlist, we want to meet the delisting criteria."

NEWS from page 4
 There need to be nine new thistle colonies and three new lupine colonies—which both need to be stable or increasing for 10 consecutive years—in order for the plants to be downlisted from endangered to threatened. To be removed from the list entirely, the thistle needs an additional 13 colonies and the lupine needs five more colonies.



NIPOMO MESA LUPINE: This lupine, which only grows in a 2-square-mile area of the Nipomo Mesa, is an annual plant that produces vibrant purple flowers, and grows no taller than eight inches.

“We need more of them out there. The smaller the population size, the more at risk it is for loss and extinction; these are extremely at-risk species. If you had a catastrophic loss, or something really bad happened, it could easily wipe out remaining populations. We are focusing on finding the places that meet the requirements of the species, and a lot of habitat restoration,” she said.

The total estimated cost for the thistle’s plan implementation is about \$3 million, and the lupine’s plan is about \$7 million, which come from Fish and Wildlife funds and potential grant funding, Scarazzo said. By having the recovery plans completed

after a three-year process of research and collaboration, Scarazzo hopes to receive funding and gain potential partnerships to further the plants’ improvement.

“One of the reasons that having a recovery plan is so good is because it enables us to leverage grant funding. It allows us to refer to actions in the recovery plan, and go out to try and get grant funding,” she added. “California is a plant biodiversity hotspot; it’s our legacy. I want people to be proud of the diversity here. These dunes are one in a million, there’s not many left . . . We want to conserve the remaining areas that are left, and not have any areas be lost.”

—Taylor O’Connor

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In flux

A year that started with uncertainty also ended with it

BY SUN STAFF

At the end of 2021, it's hard to believe that the COVID-19 pandemic is still here, ever-changing and continuing to test communities, their governing bodies, businesses, schools, and residents. But while it was an ever-present part of the past year, instead of simply struggling to keep up with the pandemic, we were challenged to adjust for the changes that a year-plus of uncertainty brought with it: business closures, widening gaps in the social services safety net, an increase in homelessness, more turbulent politics, and shortages in both goods and the people who provide services. Northern Santa Barbara County is now on the other side of a second year with COVID-19, and the Sun looks back at some of the bigger news events of 2021.

—Camillia Lanham



FILE PHOTO COURTESY OF DIGNITY HEALTH



HEALTH CARE HEROES: As COVID-19 surges came and went this year, health care workers kept our community afloat.

Independent redistricting

Santa Barbara County turned to an Independent Redistricting Commission to hash out the every-10-year redistricting process for the county's five Board of Supervisors districts. But that didn't prevent politics from clouding the process, with complaints from both liberals and conservatives marring the commissioner appointment process, a slew of commissioner resignations, and a lawsuit filed against the county for the commission's choice of consultant. The year-long redistricting process included several public meetings, enabled community members to draw their own draft maps, and the commission ultimately selected a map that satisfied legal requirements—like equal population—and considered populations of interest—like Latino and indigenous populations. The final adopted map, which was selected on Dec. 15, puts the Cuyama Valley and its overdrafted water basin in the 1st District; splits Goleta between the 2nd and 3rd districts; keeps the Santa Ynez Valley, Lompoc, and part of the coastline in the 3rd District; puts Vandenberg Space Force Base in the 4th District; and groups Guadalupe with Santa Maria in the 5th District.

—Malea Martin

—Taylor O'Connor

COVID-19's still here

After the dumpster fire of a year that was 2020, everyone hoped that 2021 would be better—particularly, that COVID-19 would get better. In some ways, it did: Vaccines made it safer to live life again, and California's economy officially reopened in June 2021. But the year started out on a low when both SLO and Santa Barbara counties saw the most new cases in one month, ever, in January. The first month of the year also saw the highest hospitalizations and deaths of the pandemic on the Central Coast and across the state. Amid the surge, health care workers

had a glimmer of hope: They began to receive the COVID-19 vaccine in late December 2020 and throughout January 2021. As the winter surge came and went, and vaccines became more widely available, average citizens soon had the option to get inoculated in the spring—but not everyone wanted to. April saw the most vaccines put into arms to date across the Central Coast, but by early May, demand for vaccinations began to wane. Then, as cases began to surge again in July, Delta became the dominant variant. Health care workers found themselves reliving the trauma of the previous winter surge, now treating patients

who were sicker than ever before due to Delta—an outcome they said was largely preventable with vaccines. As children 5 years and older became eligible in early November, a new vaccine debate ensued, with parents split over whether or not to give their kids the jab. With the Omicron variant now on the rise, at-home COVID-19 tests were selling out in minutes as people scrambled to test negative before holiday gatherings. As of Dec. 21, SLO County had lost 370 community members, and Santa Barbara County had lost 557, to the virus.

—Malea Martin

—Taylor O'Connor

Turbulent times

Between hybrid learning and navigating how to safely return to the classroom, 2021 was a hard year for teachers. For Santa Maria elementary and middle school teachers, those challenges were compounded by tension with Santa Maria-Bonita School District leadership. It started when the district abruptly canceled negotiations with the Santa Maria Elementary Educators Association over how to return to in-person learning. District administrators said they needed more time to understand state policies, but the union felt like teachers' voices were being excluded. In March, the district presented its plan for returning to in-person instruction at a board meeting, much to the surprise of teachers. "That was the first time teachers across the district have heard of any of this," union President Jose Segura said at the time. That tension continued to manifest when the two parties began contract negotiations in May, soon finding themselves at an impasse. Hundreds of teachers took to the streets in mid-May, protesting having to work on expired contracts. Some teachers that day were also opposing a new district policy that barred them from teaching full novels in class. With the 2020-21 school year now underway and students back in the classroom full time, the union continues to keep a close eye on the district, most recently on the district's search for a new superintendent, following Luke Ontiveros's announcement that he will be retiring at the end of December.

FILE PHOTO BY MALEA MARTIN



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

—Malea

The county's got a brand new jail

In early 2021, the Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Office announced that crimes in 2020 trended 10 percent higher than the preceding three-year county average, attributing the problem to an emergency order aimed at decreasing jail and prison populations during the COVID-19 pandemic. But even through the state's efforts to prevent the spread of COVID-19, the county's Main Jail still felt the pandemic's effects with outbreaks in February, September, and December—numbers reached as high as 87 active cases during the December surge. Inmates will soon be dispersed across two jail facilities, alleviating some of the limitations of the Main Jail, as the North County Jail finally opened its doors after a five-year delay. The new facility will house up to 376 inmates and cost about \$120 million; the original project was supposed to cost \$80 million, and the county is responsible for the remaining \$40 million. Project delays included weather, regulatory compliance issues, management losses, and overall supply chain issues.

FILE PHOTO COURTESY OF THE SANTA BARBARA COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE



POMP FOR CIRCUMSTANCE: In November, Santa Barbara County Sheriff Bill Brown spoke at the ribbon cutting celebrating the near-future opening of the North County Jail.

—Taylor



AT YOUR SERVICE: Santa Barbara County Fire wants to add another station in Orcutt, where resources are stretched thin for a growing community.

What's your emergency?

A years-long conversation about dispatch services in Santa Barbara County had a breakthrough this year when design plans for a new regional fire dispatch center were approved in July. All dispatch services are currently handled by the Sheriff's Office. The center "would alleviate this issue of calls that arrive on the borders, because it's what we call borderless dispatching," county fire Public Information Officer Capt. Daniel Bertucelli told the *Sun*. "The closest, most appropriate piece of equipment would respond to any given call that comes in." But the Sheriff's Office isn't thrilled about the change. County Sheriff Dispatch Manager Susan Farley believes it's a more expensive solution than necessary to fix dispatch issues. For some former local firefighters, the regional dispatch center would provide a much-needed step in the right direction to improve response times, but they'd also like to see another fire station in places like Orcutt, where existing stations are stretched thin to cover a growing population. The final piece to get the dispatch center moving forward was getting all the local cities on board, which happened in November. If all goes to plan, the center is expected to go live in January 2024.

—Malea

Homelessness solutions

Santa Barbara County experienced a 34 percent increase in unsheltered homelessness between 2020 and 2021. To help resolve this issue, the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors approved the second phase of its Community Plan to Address Homelessness in February, with the goals of increasing access to affordable housing and strengthening systems aimed to help people get and stay in housing. Good Samaritan Shelter worked with Lompoc city and county officials to replicate a housing program it piloted in Isla Vista at its Lompoc shelter. The Pallet sheltering program provides temporary housing and wrap-around services for individuals who may be overwhelmed in group housing. In September, supervisors approved a Homeless Encampment Response Protocol, which provided increased clarity and coordination around clearing out encampments and requested \$1.9 million from the one-time American Rescue Plan Act COVID-19 relief funds to implement the three-year strategy. The goal is to ensure that individuals cleared out of homeless encampments have access to housing and the services they need to stay in housing.

—Taylor

Mental health gap

Since before the COVID-19 pandemic began, Santa Barbara County has had a lack of mental health resources. In order to fill some of these gaps in 2021, the county's Department of Behavioral Wellness requested more beds for non-crisis mental health services, the Marian Regional Medical Center worked to open a new mental health crisis unit on the Central Coast, and the Sheriff's Office responded to a record number of calls with its Crisis Intervention Team. Currently, the county only has 16 psychiatric health facility beds (with a population of 440,000 people, it works out to three or four beds per 100,000 people) and Marian has yet to be able to open the crisis unit's doors due to red tape. Doctors and mental health providers told the *Sun* that oftentimes, people get discharged from emergency rooms without a safety plan or mental health support, leaving it up to patients to seek help on their own. They added that mental health follow-up is extremely difficult for emergency room physicians, which makes it more likely that patients end up returning to emergency rooms.

—Taylor



REZONED: The Hi-Way Drive-In could become the future site of a affordable housing development with the recent zoning changes approved by the Santa Maria City Council.

Changing community institutions

The Santa Maria Raceway—home of Stadium805—ceased its operations in August due to financial burdens and the 15-plus acre property was put on the market for \$2.75 million, according to a its Facebook page. The raceway hosted stock car races for more than 40 years. Nick Duggan purchased the raceway in 2018 to expand the venue's reach to concerts and other events. What followed was a challenging permitting process and a potential lawsuit from neighbors. The final straw came from county fines Duggan was required to pay for hosting concerts without a permit. Another Santa Maria staple community members may have to say goodbye to is the Hi-Way Drive-In—which could be sold to nonprofit housing developer People's Self-Help Housing. The Santa Maria Planning Commission approved a zoning change in November to rezone the drive-in from a commercial to a residential property. Drive-in owner Bob Gran said the business "is not profitable anymore." The City Council reviewed and approved the zoning change on Dec. 21.

—Taylor

Loss of child care

Mother Amanda Pierce had been on child care waiting lists for eight months in 2021. She called 12 different day cares near her home in Lompoc and reached out to facilities in neighboring Vandenberg Village, but none had space. Pierce and her family were not alone. In four out of five households, at least one adult took on additional child care duties during the pandemic, according to the Santa Barbara County COVID-19 Impact Report, due to the cost of child care, lack of child care services, and distance learning. About 75 percent of the parents taking on additional child care responsibilities were women, the report said. It's something felt across all sectors, including the military. Military families in places such as Vandenberg Space Force Base work long hours and on-base facilities have limited hours, leaving gaps in child care service. In response, U.S. Rep. Salud Carbajal (D-Santa Barbara) and Tony Gonzales (R-San Antonio) proposed the Childcare Expansion for Military Families Act: a bipartisan bill to improve and increase child care services for military families as well as ensure that children of military families have access to mental health resources.

—Taylor

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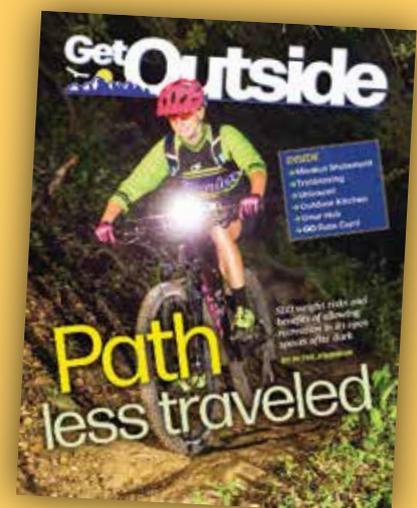


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BELL, LUCILLE, 75, of Atascadero passed away 12/21/2021 arrangements with Blue Sky Cremation Service

BENFIELD, MARY C., 82, of Atascadero passed away 12/14/2021 arrangements with Los Osos Valley Mortuary

BITTNER, BERNICE, 96, of Paso Robles passed away 12/18/2021 arrangements with Blue Sky Cremation Service

BORELLO, LAURIE LYN, 64, of Los Osos passed away 12/14/2021 arrangements with Los Osos Valley Mortuary

BOYD, LINDA CAROLE, 74, of Atascadero passed away 12/12/2021 arrangements with Chapel of the Roses

BROWN, ARLETA LOUISE, 75, of Arroyo Grande passed away 12/21/2021 arrangements with Marshall Spoo Sunset Funeral Chapel

CARLONE, VINCENT, 86, of Oceano passed away 12/18/2021 arrangements with Marshall Spoo Sunset Funeral Chapel

COOKE, MARIE "NICOLE," 85, of Santa Maria passed away 12/24/2021 arrangements with Magner Maloney Funeral Home

DANIEL, MALTILDA "TILLIE," 95, of Lompoc passed away 12/22/2021 arrangements with Starbuck-Lind Mortuary

DELEON, MARTIN, 83, of Arroyo Grande passed away 12/14/2021 arrangements with Marshall Spoo Sunset Funeral Chapel

FITCH, LORALEE, 81, of Arroyo Grande passed away 12/2/2021 arrangements with Marshall Spoo Sunset Funeral Chapel

FRASER, STEVEN, 67, of Pismo Beach passed away 12/3/2021 arrangements with Marshall Spoo Sunset Funeral Chapel

FREITAS, RICHARD JOSEPH SR., 83, of Santa Maria passed away 12/20/2021 arrangements with Magner Maloney Funeral Home

GAULT, ROSIE LEE, 87, of Atascadero passed away 12/11/2021 arrangements with Chapel of the Roses

GUZMAN, ARTHUR CELSO, 68, of Santa Maria passed away 12/22/2021 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

HARDTKE, GRETCHEN, 61, of Santa Margarita passed away 12/17/2021 arrangements with Chapel of the Roses

HIPSON, GEORGE L., 100, of Santa Maria passed away 12/19/2021 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

HUGHES, MARIE T., 77, of Santa Maria passed away 12/21/2021 arrangements with Magner Maloney Funeral Home

MARQUEZ, CHI YON KIM, 76, of Santa Maria passed away 12/22/2021 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

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MILLER, KEITH E., 86, of Los Osos passed away 12/20/2021 arrangements with Los Osos Valley Mortuary

OLSON, GARY LEROY, 82, of Pismo Beach passed away 12/17/2021 arrangements with Marshall Spoo Sunset Funeral Chapel

PARKER, MARY SONIA, 68, of Paso Robles passed away 12/16/2021 arrangements with Chapel of the Roses

PHAKLIDES, CORINNE JOAN, 91, of Templeton passed away 12/14/2021 arrangements with Chapel of the Roses

SLOT, BURNICE, 94, of Santa Maria passed away 12/23/2021 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

SMITH, DENNIS G., 72, of Santa Maria passed away 12/20/2021 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

SMITH, ARTHUR "ART," 97, of Lompoc passed away 12/18/2021 arrangements with Starbuck-Lind Mortuary

THIESSEN, MARIE ESTER, 77, of Orcutt passed away 12/16/2021 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

THOMPSON, JEAN L., 95, of Atascadero passed away 12/22/2021 arrangements with Chapel of the Roses

TRETT, GLORIA MAYBERRY, 98, of Pismo Beach passed away 12/14/2021 arrangements with Marshall Spoo Sunset Funeral Chapel

TRIGUEIRO, FRANCES ANGELICA, 99, of Santa Maria passed away 12/18/2021 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

Dream on wheels

A Nipomo couple wants to build a safe space for community skaters through a local skate shop

BY BULBUL RAJAGOPAL

Former Santa Cruz locals Laura and Jameson Lucero want to build a local skate shop for their Nipomo community, but the last thing they want to do is be like a dancing Kevin Bacon.

"Brick-and-mortar skate shops serve as more than places to grab products. They're organic cultural epicenters for youth and artists," Laura said. "It's not like Kevin Bacon in *Footloose* ... coming in from Santa Cruz to bring skateboarding to the people. It's already here."

Nipomo residents since 2016, the couple wants the skating community to flourish in its own safe space. Between an act of arson burning down the town's recreation center in 2008 and the demolition of a makeshift skate park at the old rec center site, Nipomo's skaters lost their community hubs.

The Luceros came up with a solution over the summer. They're working with the San Luis Obispo chapter of SCORE's mentors to set up the **Nipomo Skate Shop**. It would include boards and wheels suited for Nipomo's roads, skate tours and movie screenings, and most importantly, room for skaters to be themselves.

Hoping to open by summer 2022, Laura wants the store to provide local kids with different recreational avenues for physical activities as opposed to sitting indoors all day with no place to go.

The Luceros also plan to elevate skating in Nipomo using a screen-printing press. It's something they're already familiar with because Jameson runs a screen-printing business where he presses designs on shirts. The couple wants to extend the art to skateboards too.

"People become more conscious consumers when they understand how something is made," Laura said. "We want to have art contests where community members can get their design on a board."

Nipomo Skate Shop would also tailor skateboards to people's skating goals. Laura said that neighborhood streets determine the kind of wheels people from different areas purchase. This is where the one-size-fits-all policy of chain stores falls flat.

"They don't cut it for skateboarding. A lot of major skate suppliers will provide you with products that you sell online," Laura said.

Jameson hopes to bring custom supplies to the dream store. He tapped into his local connections at Santa Cruz, like the staff at Consolidated Skateboards and NHS, Inc.

The 35-year-old has been skateboarding since he was 8 and was taken under the wing of Santa Cruz skating legend Bill Ackerman of Bill's Wheels Skateshop.

"Bill was always there to sell my shirts or give me a job when I didn't have money, making or designing stuff for him. It's been the glue that's kept everything in my life together. I have two skills—skateboarding and screen-printing," Jameson said.

He added that Nipomo residents would dictate what his store would look like,



SKATE CREW: While Laura Lucero handles the business set up for their skate shop, her husband Jameson is behind the art and design.

depending on what speaks to them. He also has a few artistic ideas up his sleeve.

"I [want to] build ... a giant, 8-foot skateboard wheel. So kids can come in and take pictures with it and put it on their Instagram," he said with a laugh.

But the road to the skate shop isn't completely smooth. In her monthly meetings with SCORE, Laura found out that it's slim pickings for available properties in Nipomo.

Further, their original plan was to donate some of the proceeds from the store to a build a proper skate park for the community. But SLO County Parks and Recreation Director Nick Franco told them that would have to wait a while. Franco informed her about the county's plans to submit grant applications for a new skate park.

"He was all, 'We have a plan to stay on the original timeline. We're submitting it on Jan. 24. If that falls through, I'll reach back out to you,'" Laura said.

Having their finger on the pulse is important for the Luceros' shop to thrive. Laura said that she frequently chats with local skateboarders about their wants and needs when she bumps into them in the neighborhood. Jameson has been engaging with this sort of networking since he was a teenager.

"I would stop at a skate park, I would meet kids and ask, 'Where do you guys party?' They would take us to other cool skate spots and we'd go to skate shops," he said. "You all speak the same language: skateboarding. So there's instant unity no matter where you go."

Highlights

- On Dec. 21, Santa Barbara County Probation officers conducted countywide wellness checks during home visits to youth under community supervision. Officers delivered 50 care packages to families of youth on probation to spread some holiday cheer while they checked in. Donations included fresh veggies and canned goods from La Casa de la Raza, arts and crafts supplies, grocery gift cards, and toys from CommUnify.

For more info about the Probation Department, visit sbprobation.org.

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Online Poll

Does Santa Maria have enough Starbucks drive-throughs?

- 81% Yes, there are plenty to choose from.
- 13% Depends on which part of Santa Maria you're talking about.
- 6% Of course not! The more, the merrier!
- 0% Probably, but I wouldn't be opposed to just one more.

16 Votes

Vote online at www.santamariasun.com.



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Losing ground

It's the end of the year; how was it?

BY RON FINK

The past year saw a continuance of teeter-totter COVID-19 rules. It's hard to keep up with the off-again, on-again restrictions, mandates, closures, and misinformation concerning this disease. All this confusion has led the government to use cash and political pronouncement's once again as a cure-all for something they can't fix.

In the process of infusing trillions of dollars into the economy they have created a fiscal mess for the people they serve. For example, when the Social Security benefit was increased by 5.9 percent, the current administration in Washington, D.C., opined that it was the "largest increase in history," but the joy was short lived.

Why? Because shortly after it was announced that the inflation rate for the average family in 2021 increased by 6.8 percent, the highest since 1982, and Medicare Part B premiums had the largest rate increase in history. So, you see, the average Joe and Jane didn't get a dime more in purchasing power—in fact they lost ground.

Let's look at the cost to get people to work: In our county, the ruling class has implemented policies to satisfy the environmental lobby that essentially ban more oil production. The first impact was a major loss of revenue to the county general fund—that's what pays for road repairs, parks, sheriff's deputies, and firefighters. The second was a dramatic increase in the cost

of gasoline, which places another drain on your pocketbook.

Another impact of all the cash raining down from Washington is that more people are choosing not to work. Many service industry businesses have either reduced hours or simply closed up shop because they can't get people to work. In addition, the mandatory minimum wage increases and so-called "supply chain" shortages have caused these same businesses to raise their prices to compensate for additional expenses.

I have lived long enough to remember when I was overjoyed when the minimum hourly wage was increased to a smidge over a dollar. That was when you could still get a hamburger for 15 cents and a soda for a nickel. Shortly after that raise suddenly hamburgers were a quarter.

Today, with the minimum hourly wage approaching \$15, a hamburger will cost you 9 bucks and sodas are more than \$2. So, you see raising the minimum wage really doesn't get you anywhere—you just have more dollars that buy less stuff when all is said and done.

Now, as we are about to enter 2022, do you think things are going to get much better for either the middle class or low income families in our county? If history is any indicator, and it's been very reliable in the past, the political class will continue to adopt policies that don't really help anyone.

For example, there is a huge push toward "green energy" and the banning of hydrocarbon fuel-powered vehicles. Did the people proposing and implementing these policies ever look over the horizon to see what impact this will have on you and me?

In the process of banning hydrocarbon fuels, they also wrapped up clean burning natural gas fired appliances. In nearby Santa Barbara, new homes must install all-electric appliances including water heaters, stoves, and home heating.

Environmental groups claim that natural gas appliances contribute to global warming; they have no real facts, just theories to back up their claims.

Speak up!

Send us your views and opinion to letters@santamariasun.com.



THIS MODERN WORLD

by TOM TOMORROW

The industry on the other hand claims that their product is cleaner than electricity; this claim assumes that coal, oil, natural gas, and other materials that must be burned are used to produce the electricity.

The current thinking among those environmentalists is that solar and wind power will produce all the electricity needed to power homes, businesses, and vehicles. Recently, I saw a public service announcement that informed families to "reduce the use of power between 4 and 9 p.m.," because there was a reduced power supply as the wind slowed down and it got dark.

Another factor is that the world's supply of lithium, used to make batteries that store power for later use, may be inadequate. Science Direct claims that "Energy Agency's Blue Map Scenarios are fulfilled regarding electrification of the car fleet. We find that the availability of lithium could in fact be a problem for fulfilling this scenario if lithium-ion batteries are to be used."

Once again, I ask the question "Did the people proposing and implementing these policies ever look over the horizon?" In this case, are there battery technologies available to support their goals?

Another factor is that if you have enough money to buy one of those electric vehicles, what happens when the battery eventually won't take a charge? Currently a mechanic would have to take the car apart to install a new one and the cost of a new battery is nearly as much as a new car. After that you must pay extra to dispose of the old one.

My friends, the coming year and years to come will be a challenge for ordinary people who either work for a living or are on fixed incomes. The political class in charge of making policies that impact your daily lives seems to be incapable of making rational decisions that include a "what happens next" test of the proposed new policy.

Will we be able to elect national, state, or local leaders who possess this quality? So far, we have come up short for decades. ○

Ron Fink writes to the Sun from Lompoc. Send a response via the editor at clanham@santamariasun.com.

LETTERS

Sanctuaries aren't working

One of the things I am not seeing in the discussion over a new marine sanctuary off our coast is how well are the ones we have working? As written by Lori French ("Unnecessary," Dec. 23) there are four national marine sanctuaries designated in California since 1980. Also, there are 124 state marine protected areas, reserves and preserves, plus another five rock fish conservation areas.

From the point of view of fishermen, all of this coverage is not producing more fish. The promised "spillover affect" hasn't worked. So what is the answer from government and environmentalists? Just make more. Right. When something is not working, just make more of it. Meanwhile, the price of seafood continues to increase.

When Congress began designating marine sanctuaries, San Luis Obispo County still had commercial and recreational abalone fishing. Pismo Beach still had a clam fishery. The red sea urchin fishery had begun at Port San Luis and soon after became California's biggest fishery. There were also set-net and trawl fisheries for halibut and rock fish. Now, our local fisheries are a shadow of their former economic powerhouse.

We haven't gained anything in 50 years, but we have lost 90 percent of our fisheries. Why do we need more of this when it is not working?

Steve Rebutk
San Luis Obispo

There's always next year

This year is over, man. And it almost feels like the only thing left to do is shake my little bird head.

My takeaway from 2021 is that everything would be much easier if we all just learned how to communicate with others and genuinely sought out reality rather than ideas that strengthen our existing belief systems. This whole COVID-19 thing would have gone a lot smoother without all of the misinformation and open hostility that surrounded it.

Students' return to the classroom in the **Santa Maria-Bonita School District** wouldn't have been so hard for the district and its teachers to figure out if administrators and the teachers union didn't talk past each other. In the stories we wrote about strife in the district, it seemed like the district wasn't done negotiating with teachers but didn't want to give them what they asked for and teachers were done negotiating with the district and didn't want what they were offered.

So, that's a no for compromise?
Administering vaccines would have gone a lot smoother if people didn't believe fake news about conspiracy theories and instead believed in science. Maybe **California** wouldn't have mandated vaccines for teachers and medical professionals and the **Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors** wouldn't have voted to give its employees two options—get vaccinated or get tested often—if the majority of folks would have just done what Americans did in the past. Get vaccinated and thank their lucky stars that they live in a country where medicine is advanced and

vaccines are plentiful.
Maybe we would have dodged all the COVID-19 variants that continue to multiply in the unvaccinated population and gently nudge their way into the vaccinated population if, as a whole, we could have voluntarily reached for some semblance of herd immunity.

Instead, we got to hear the **Santa Barbara County Public Health Department** beg residents to get vaccinated. Even though there are areas of the world that are begging for vaccine access.

Maybe local medical professionals wouldn't have experienced the trauma of dealing with surge after surge of extremely sick and dying patients if a greater number of people opened their eyes to reality—that

COVID-19 meant business. Instead, they watched helplessly as some area residents lost their lives to a virus that science told us would kill people.

Maybe next year we can be smarter, more intuitive, more friendly, more apt to apologize for our wrongs.

Maybe perennial conservative talk show radio host **Andy Caldwell** will stop trying to stir up his listeners just to stir them up. Maybe the cannabis and wine industries will kiss and make up. Maybe we will begin to see the fruits of independent redistricting efforts from Santa Barbara County and the state to be a little bit more fair in a process that has historically thrown the word "fair" out the window. Maybe we will stop blaming the other for the woes that we see in the world and instead try to reach out to them as a way to bridge the divide and find amenable solutions.

Maybe. But I'm not holding my breath. ○

The canary is disappointed. Send thoughts to canary@santamariasun.com.



VOLUNTEERS

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PUBLICATION DATE: January 13

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BOOK ADS BY: January 21

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The Central Coast guide to everything outside

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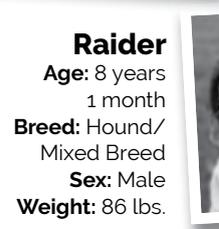
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SANTA YNEZ VALLEY

SHARING THE LIGHT: ANSEL ADAMS AND ALAN ROSS This duo exhibition showcases the photography careers of both Ansel Adams (1902-1984) and Alan Ross (whose work is pictured), a longtime friend and former assistant of Adams. Through March 20, 2022 wildlingmuseum.org. Wildling Museum of Art and Nature, 1511-B Mission Dr., Solvang, 805-688-1082.

THIRD ANNUAL WINTER SALON Gallery Los Olivos presents its third annual Winter Salon group show. Gallery artists display their creative work hung "salon style" floor to ceiling. All fine art mediums represented. Mondays, Thursdays-Sundays, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. through Jan. 31 805-688-7517. GalleryLosOlivos.com. Gallery Los Olivos, 2920 Grand Ave., Los Olivos.

WIDENING CIRCLES: LANDSCAPE PORTRAITS OF SOLVANG Both of the show's featured artists, husband and wife John Iwerks and Chris Chapman, will also be hosting periodic art demonstrations at the museum (Oct. 9, Oct. 30, and Nov. 13). Through Feb. 1, 2022 elverhoj.org. Elverhoj Museum of History and Art, 1624 Elverhoy Way, Solvang, 805-686-1211.

SANTA MARIA VALLEY/LOS ALAMOS

GRAPHITE ART OF MINNIE ANDERSON Now through the month of January 2022, Minnie Anderson's exhibit is on display in Shepard Hall and features selected graphite works using a number 2 pencil on paper. The works feature portraits, pets, and family relationships. Through Jan. 28, 2022 Free. 805-925-0994 x 2832. Santa Maria Public Library, 421 S. McClelland St., Santa Maria.

LOCAL AND FEATURED ARTIST EXHIBITS Valley Art Gallery, located in the SM Airport, exhibits local and featured artist work. New exhibits are mounted the first Tuesday of even-numbered months. Wide variety of art available for purchase. ongoing, 8 a.m.-10 p.m. Free. 805-922-0663. Santa Maria Airport, 3249 Terminal Dr., Santa Maria.

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

OUTDOOR UKULELE LESSONS For individuals 50 years and up, at no charge. Participants will learn to play chords, melodies, and familiar songs. Five baritone ukuleles are available to borrow, or class members may bring one of their own. Tuesdays, Thursdays, 12:30-1:30 p.m. cityofsantamaria.org/register. Elwin Mussell Senior Center, 510 Park Ave., Santa Maria.

SANTA MARIA PUBLIC LIBRARY: BOOK CLUB OVER THE PHONE A teleconference book discussion group, meets on the first Tuesday of each month. For more information email jgaytan@cityofsantamaria.org First Tuesday of every month, 2-3 p.m. 805-925-0994. cityofsantamaria.org/city-government/departments/library. Santa Maria Public Library, 421 S. McClelland St., Santa Maria.

SOCIAL DIS-DANCE Classes available for all skill levels. Class sizes limited. ongoing Everybody Can Dance, 628 S. McClelland St., Santa Maria, 805-937-6753.

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

SOUTH COAST SLO COUNTY

MIXED MEDIA FOR AGES 5-6 AND 7-12 For ages 5-6 (Mondays) and 7-12 (Tuesdays). Mondays, Tuesdays, 3:15-4:15 p.m. 805-668-2125. lila.community. LiLA Creative Community, 1147 East Grand Ave. suite 101, Arroyo Grande.

OCCULT AND METAPHYSICAL ART SHOW An exhibition of the occult and metaphysical paintings by Bay Area artist Leona Lee. Reception: Nov. 28, from 3 to 5 p.m. Through Jan. 15, 2022 Puffers of Pismo, 781 Price St., Pismo Beach, puffersofpismo.com.

OPEN STUDIO FOR ADULTS Call to reserve. All materials included. Tuesdays, 6-9 p.m. and Wednesdays, 12:30-3:30 p.m. \$35. 805-668-2125. lila.community. LiLA Creative Community, 1147 East Grand Ave. suite 101, Arroyo Grande.

RANCHO NIPOMO: MOVING WITH THE TIMES EXHIBIT This exhibit also includes the restoration efforts of the Dana Adobe which had their start in the 1930s and remain ongoing to this day. Through Jan. 15, 2022, 11 a.m.-3 p.m. \$5, free for DANA members and children under 12 years of age. 805-929-5679. danaadobe.org. DANA Adobe Cultural Center, 671 S. Oakglen Ave., Nipomo.

NOTE: Local COVID-19 case numbers and changing health precautions may cause some event cancellations and venue closures. Please check with the venues directly, and most of all, stay safe!



SLICE OF STILL LIFE

Widening Circles, a duo exhibition showcasing artworks by husband and wife John Iwerks and Chris Chapman, will remain on display at the Elverhoj Museum of History and Art in Solvang through Sunday, Jan. 9, 2022. This exhibit features a collection of panoramic landscapes and intimate still life pieces. Call (805) 686-1211 or visit elverhoj.org for more info. The museum is located at 1624 Elverhoy Way, Solvang.

—Caleb Wiseblood

FILE COURTESY IMAGE BY CHRIS CHAPMAN

SAN LUIS OBISPO

A CHRISTMAS CAROL: A RADIO PLAY BY CUESTA DRAMA (VIRTUAL) This radio play is only virtual; there is no in-person event. Enjoy a radio play based on the Charles Dickens classic short story. Make Cuesta's first ever radio play part of your holiday tradition. Through Dec. 31 \$10-\$20. tickets.cuesta.edu. Online, See website, San Luis Obispo.

ACTOR'S EDGE: ACTING CLASSES Actor's Edge offers film and television acting training in San Luis Obispo, plus exposure to Los Angeles talent agents. All ages and skill levels welcome. Classes available in SLO, LA, and on zoom. ongoing \$210 per month. actorsedge.com. Online, See website, San Luis Obispo.

ART AND ABOUT SLO Join us for Art and About SLO, a self-guided art walk that gives the community an opportunity to experience visual, literary, and performing art in galleries and other venues. Visit site for

an updated map of locations. Events will not occur on major holidays. First Friday of every month, 5-8 p.m. Free. 805-544-9251. artsobispo.org/art-and-about. San Luis Obispo, Citywide, SLO.

CALIFORNIA CENTRAL COAST PASTEL SOCIETY: 3CPS MEMBER ONLINE SHOW Discover California Central Coast Pastel Society's new online exhibit, with vibrant contemporary and classical paintings in varied styles and themes. Find exhibit, workshop, membership, paint-out dates, and event info on website. Through March 31, 2022 Free. 3cps.org/3cps-online-show/. Online, See website, San Luis Obispo.

CERAMIC LESSONS AND MORE Now offering private one-on-one and group lessons in the ceramic arts. Both hand building and wheel throwing options. Beginners welcomed. ongoing 805-835-5893. hmcruceceramics.com/. Online, See website, San Luis Obispo.

EXPOSURE COMPOSURE While photography has historically been valued for its ability to depict our world objectively, some photographers seek to reveal it to us by abstracting objects and moments they observe. This exhibition explores examples of abstract photography created by members of The Photo Society. Through Jan. 30, 2022, 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Free. 805-543-8562. sloma.org/exhibition/exposure-composure/. San Luis Obispo Museum of Art, 1010 Broad St., San Luis Obispo.

FREE DOCENT TOURS AT SLOMA Gain a deeper understanding of the artwork on view with SLOMA's new docent tours. Saturdays, 11 a.m. Free. 805-543-8562. sloma.org. San Luis Obispo Museum of Art, 1010 Broad St., San Luis Obispo.

FREE MEMBERSHIP IN CENTRAL COAST SCULPTORS Central Coast Sculptors welcomes CA artists, teachers, and students working in 3D art media, and sculpture enthusiasts. Join for free until Dec. 31. No geographic requirements. Enjoy distinctive exhibits such as 'The Phantom Project,' pop-ups, juried member showcases, and more. Through Dec. 31 Free membership. 505-690-4283. centralcoastsculptors.org/membership.html. Online, See website, San Luis Obispo.

I'D TELL YOU IF I COULD Paintings and works on paper by London-based artist William Brickel. Through Feb. 6, 2022, 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Free. 805-543-8562. sloma.org/visit/. San Luis Obispo Museum of Art, 1010 Broad St., San Luis Obispo.

LITTLE TREASURE: HOLIDAY ART EXHIBIT Features artwork of all mediums by local artists, and all priced at \$100 or less. Great for holiday shopping,

ARTS continued page 14

SUBMIT YOUR EVENTS

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

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Get Outside

The Central Coast Guide to Everything Outside

Coming Spring 2022!

MISSION STATEMENT

Focused on outdoor adventures that range from recreational activities to extreme sports, where to find those adventures on California's Central Coast, the people who seek them out, and the gear that makes it all possible.

Trailblazing

A quick gander highlighting the best of the Central Coast outdoors from the waters of the Pacific to the coastal peaks. This section will feature short stories, lists, and handy tips about where to go, what to do, and how to get there. It will include staff favorites and expert picks for trails, campgrounds, trips, shops, events, and more.

Unbound

Get Outside main features will focus on the local explorers making strides in the outdoor universe – from professional athletes to outdoor photographers

to gear creators, backpacking enthusiasts, guides, and more – events that highlight the Central Coast's landscape and the people who come to enjoy it – i.e. Big Sur Foragers festival – the land itself and what it has to offer explorers; the agencies, nonprofits, and volunteers who come together to maintain and elevate those spaces; and the best ways to enjoy them.

Outdoor Kitchen

Whether it's crafting cuisine over an open flame or boiling water to hydrate your meal, we want to make sure the food you cook under an open sky is tasty and satisfying. This section will include recipes and tricks for making firepit cuisine – car camping, beach bonfires, or that backyard barbecue – ways to prepare hunted and gathered food, snacks to keep you going while you're on the go, dehydrated delicacies that make you go

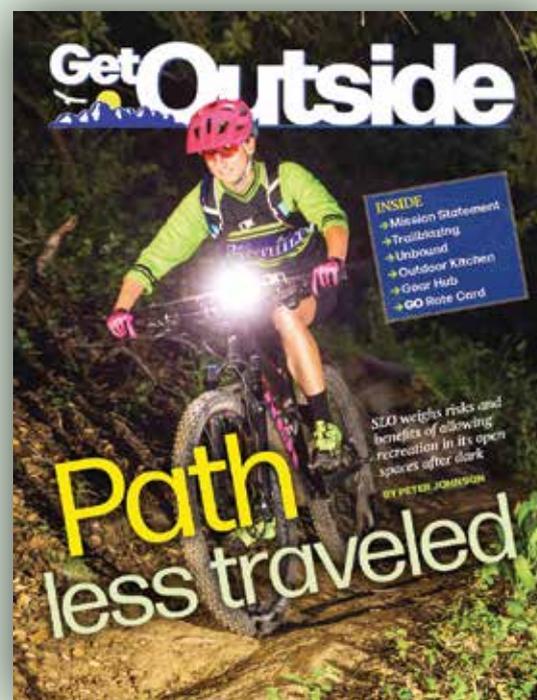
yum, and local purveyors you can salivate over.

Gear Hub

The gear you need to get the job done. Featuring local Central Coast shops, prices, and the equipment that's necessary to hike, bike, camp, backpack, hunt, fish, hit the water, and explore more. Descriptions and top gear picks will come from local shops, outdoor activity experts, and magazine staff.

The magazine

Get Outside is a full-color glossy magazine with a circulation of 25k. It will be distributed throughout



San Luis Obispo and Northern Santa Barbara counties. Pickup points for Get Outside include chambers of commerce, hotels, college campuses, corporations, shopping centers, and other high-traffic areas, including many New Times and Sun newspaper racks.



GET MORE INFO!

San Luis Obispo County: 805-546-8208 · advertising@newtimeslo.com

Northern Santa Barbara County: 805-347-1968 · advertising@santamariasun.com

A New Times Media Group Special Publication

New Times Sun

A TIME OF REMEMBRANCE

For Survivors of Violence

Grief touches us all. *It is a fundamental human experience. The grief that results from a violent action or crime, resulting in a loss of trust and security, trauma and possibly death, can be a particularly difficult path to negotiate, even more so when we feel we are traveling that path alone.*

A Time of Remembrance is a ceremony created to bring together survivors of violence, offer a time to mourn as a community, to honor the many ways the experience of violence changes our lives, and provide a space for healing. Through story, poetry, music and ceremony, A Time of Remembrance is a time for us to gather, remember our loved ones, our life before the loss, and be compassionate with ourselves and our complex emotions.

Even as we must find ways to grieve and experience our loss in our own individual ways, coming together in a community with others on similar paths can be a healing experience. We offer A Time of Remembrance in that spirit. If extra support is needed, Wilshire Hospice Bereavement Counselors are available for follow up.



Please join us:

A TIME OF REMEMBRANCE
JANUARY 26, 2022 • 6:30-7:30 p.m.

Zoom Info: https://calpoly.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_ZCOPSTNzRjmMU5ZEE8uWLw

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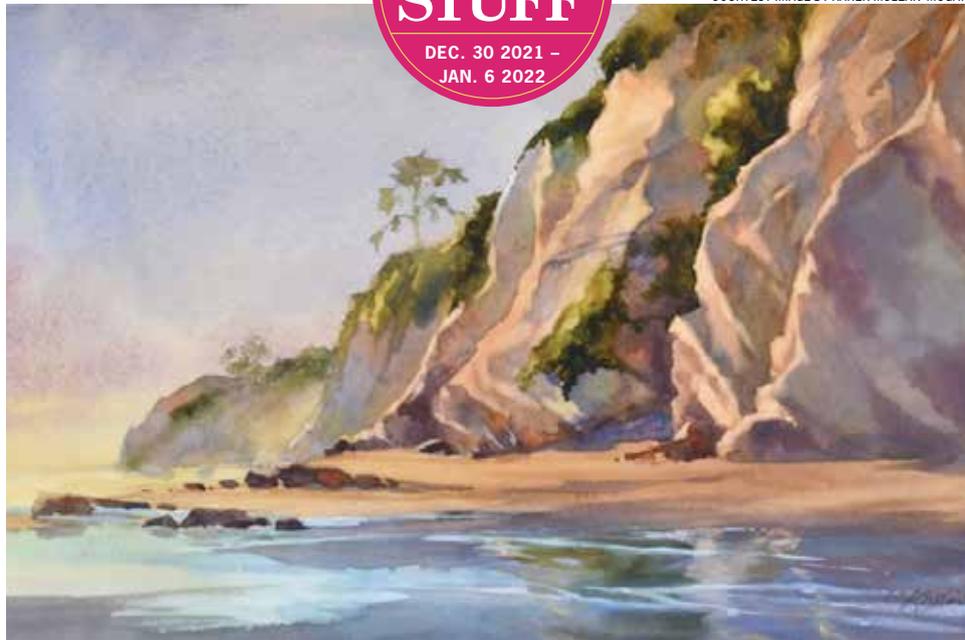
collecting sweet and creative gifts that are one of a kind. Exhibit runs Dec. 3 through Jan. 31. Mondays-Saturdays, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. through Jan. 31 Free. 805-747-4200. artcentralslo.com/gallery/. Art Central, 1329 Monterey St., San Luis Obispo.

MASK MAKING AND HAT MAKING Geared for children and adults. Spirits of Africa Gallery, 570 Higuera St., San Luis Obispo, spiritsofafricagallery.com/.

PAINTING CLASSES Easels, brushes, and canvases provided. Limited to 20 students. ongoing Spirits of Africa Gallery, 570 Higuera St., San Luis Obispo, spiritsofafricagallery.com/.

PICKET PAINTING PARTY Decorative picket purchasing opportunities are available to show your support and help fund maintenance and educational programs in the Children's Garden. Second Saturday of every month, 1-4 p.m. \$75 per picket or 2 for \$100. 805-541-1400. slobg.org. San Luis Obispo Botanical Garden, 3450 Dairy Creek Rd., San Luis Obispo.

SECOND SATURDAYS FREE ART EVENT SLOMA's Second Saturdays program features art-making activities that complement the Museum's current exhibitions. It's completely free and open to the public, on the lawn outside SLOMA's Mission Plaza double doors. Second Saturday of every month, 11 a.m.-1 p.m. through Dec. 10 Free. 805-543-8562. slo.ma.org/events/second-saturdays/. San Luis Obispo Museum of Art, 1010 Broad St., San Luis Obispo.



WINTER WAVES

Gallery Los Olivos presents its third annual Winter Salon exhibition, which is scheduled to run through Monday, Jan. 31, 2022. This seasonal group exhibit features works of various media, including painting, jewelry, ceramics, sculpture, wood turning, and assemblage.

Framed artworks will be displayed salon-style, from floor to ceiling. Call (805) 688-7517 or visit gallerylosolivos.com for more info. The gallery is located at 2920 Grand Ave., Los Olivos. —C.W.

SLO JEWISH FILM FESTIVAL Twenty films, twenty days, to stream the SLO Jewish Film Festival. Includes feature films, documentaries, and shorts from around the planet celebrating the Jewish experience. Streaming starts Jan. 9. Through Jan. 30, 2022 \$50 All-Access Festival Pass; \$25 Three-Movies Pass; \$10 One-Movie Pass. 410-693-2949. slojff.com. Online, See website, San Luis Obispo.

TOUCHY TOUCHY BY ARTIST MARRIN LEE MARTINEZ Soft kinetic sculpture exploring motherhood. The objects on display in this exhibition are a collection of kinetic creatures that explore a mother's physical sensitivity to their child's constant touch. Visitors are invited to interact with the forms, as suggested by adjacent action words. Through Feb. 28, 2022, 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Free. 805-543-8562. slo.ma.org/exhibition/touchy-touchy/. San Luis Obispo Museum of Art, 1010 Broad St., San Luis Obispo.

VIEWPOINTS: A SPECIAL EXHIBITION Viewpoints is an exhibition by four artists who observe the world from different directions. Kim Snyder, Rod Baker, Barry Lundgren, and Janice Pluma each offer a unique perspective on nature's many faces. Through Dec. 31 805-926-5050. SLO Gallery, 1019 Broad Street, San Luis Obispo, SLOgallery.com.

NORTH SLO COUNTY

ART AND ABOUT PASO Join us for Art and About Paso, a self-guided art walk that gives the community an opportunity to experience visual, literary, and

performing art in galleries and other venues. Visit site for an updated map of locations. Events will not occur on major holidays. First Saturday of every month, 5-9 p.m. Free. 805-544-9251. artsobispo.org/art-and-about. Participating locations, Paso Robles, City-wide.

BRUCE MUNRO: LIGHT AT SENSORIO Acclaimed artist Bruce Munro's Light at Sensorio features two walkthrough installations: "Field of Light" featuring almost 60,000 color-changing blooms covering 15 acres of rolling hills; and "Light Towers," celebrating Paso Robles wine country with 69 towers composed of more than 17,000 illuminated wine bottles. Thursdays-Sundays. through Jan. 2 \$9.50-\$110. 805-226-4287. sensoriopaso.com/. Sensorio, 4380 Highway 46 East, Paso Robles.

DEPRISE BRESCIA ART GALLERY: OPEN DAILY Features a large selection of encaustic art, sculpted paintings, art installations, acrylic palette knife paintings, digital art, glass, jewelry, stones, fossils, and a butterfly sculpture garden. ongoing DepriseBrescia.com. Deprise Brescia Art Gallery, 829 10th St., Paso Robles, 310-621-7543.

HANDCRAFTED FOR THE HOLIDAYS 2021 Premier craftspeople from San Luis Obispo County and beyond are featured in this unique exhibition and retail sale devoted to bringing wide public attention to the field of fine craft. A portion of every sale supports Studios on the Park. Through Jan. 3, 2022 Free. 805-238-9800. studiosonthepark.org. Studios on the Park, 1130 Pine St., Paso Robles.

COURTESY IMAGE BY KAREN MCLEAN-MCGAW

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.

NORTH COAST SLO COUNTY

ALLISON REIMUS: FEELINGS IN A FAMILIAR FRAMEWORK New paintings by New Jersey-based artist Allison Reimus. Opening reception is from 5 to 7 p.m. ongoing 805-305-9292. leftfieldslo.com. Left Field Gallery, 1036 Los Osos Valley Road, Los Osos.

ART AND ABOUT LOS OSOS Join us for Art and About Los Osos, a self-guided art walk that gives the community an opportunity to experience visual, literary, and performing art in galleries and other venues throughout Los Osos. Events will not occur on major holidays. Second Saturday of every month, 1-4 p.m. Free. 805-544-9251. artsobispo.org/art-and-about. Los Osos, Townwide, Los Osos.

COSTA GALLERY: ART AND ABOUT LOS OSOS Costa Gallery is now featuring a private collection of encaustic artwork by Los Osos artists Margaret Bertrand and Bob Dodge. Second Saturday of every month costagallery.com. Costa Gallery, 2087 10th Street, Los Osos, 559-799-9632.

DESTINATION UNKNOWN: WATERCOLOR WORKSHOP In this series of classes, we will use

ARTS continued page 15

watercolors as a medium for exploration. We will explore what we can do with color, texture, line, and light. We will also explore the effects of watercolors when mixed with other media. Tuesdays, 10 a.m.-noon through Jan. 25 \$120-\$135. 805-772-2504. artcentermorrobay.org/index.php/shop/. Art Center Morro Bay, 835 Main St., Morro Bay.

FOR THE BIRDS Art Center Morro Bay presents its annual For the Birds art exhibition in partnership with the Morro Bay Winter Bird Festival and Pacific Wildlife Care. **Jan. 6-Feb. 21**, 12-4 p.m. Free. 805-772-2504. artcentermorrobay.org. Art Center Morro Bay, 835 Main St., Morro Bay.

FOR THE BIRDS EXHIBIT During this exhibit, you'll find bird related fine art paintings, photography and three dimensional art to include pottery, sculpture, jewelry, glass, and more. Don't miss this exciting exhibit and artist reception featuring live birds. This event is free and open to the public. **Jan. 6-Feb. 21**, 12-4 p.m. Free. 805-772-2504. artcentermorrobay.org. Art Center Morro Bay, 835 Main St., Morro Bay.

FOR THE BIRDS: CALL TO ARTISTS This exhibition celebrates the Morro Bay Winter Bird Festival and everything about the birds and habitats that are indigenous to the Central Coast. **Jan. 4**, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Free. 805-772-2504. Art Center Morro Bay, 835 Main St., Morro Bay, artcentermorrobay.org.

FOREVER STOKED PAINT PARTY Join us at the gallery, for a few hours to travel on a creative paint journey guided by a member of the fun loving FS crew. You will receive as much or as little instruction as you prefer. No artistic experience is necessary. Saturdays, 7-9 p.m. \$45. 805-772-9095. Forever Stoked, 1164 Quintana Rd., Morro Bay.

FREE CREATIVITY DAY This ongoing group is free, informal, and open to the public. Meet in the Studio at Art Center Morro Bay. Bring your art work, in any medium and join others working in various mediums. Bring your lunch and join the fun. Choose your attendance time. Wednesdays, 10 a.m.-3 p.m. through Jan. 26 Free. 805-772-2504. artcentermorrobay.org/index.php/comingevents/classes/. Art Center Morro Bay, 835 Main St., Morro Bay.

JERILYNNE NIBBE: A RETROSPECTIVE Featuring monprints, watercolors, and woodcuts. Through Jan. 2, 2022, 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Free. 805-772-6394. Morro Bay Library, 625 Harbor St., Morro Bay.

LEARN BEGINNING FUSED GLASS WITH LARRY LE BRANE Call or email host, or check website for more precise info on workshop dates (dates vary). Make fused-glass home/garden décor, gifts, dishware, or use in your own artwork. No previous art skills are needed. All materials for 3-5 projects are included in \$135 fee. For 4-6 students. No drop-ins. Registration at larron4@charter.net Through Jan. 29, 2022 \$135. 805-528-8791. facebook.com/larry.lebrane. Central Coast Glass Blowing and Fusing, 1279 2nd Street, Los Osos.

LIVE FIGURE DRAWING CLASS Open to vaccinated adults. All levels and art techniques are welcome. 18 ages and over. No photos allowed. Bring your own art materials. First come, first served. Wednesdays, 6-9 p.m. through Jan. 26 \$10 members; \$12 non-members. 805-772-2504. artcentermorrobay.org/index.php/comingevents/classes/. Art Center Morro Bay, 835 Main St., Morro Bay.

LOOKING FOR VOLUNTEERS AND ARTISTS Cambria Center for the Arts is always looking for volunteers to help us with projects. No artistic skills required. Artists are also sought on a continual basis. Please check our website for details. Through Dec. 31 805-927-8190. cambriaarts.org/home. Cambria Center for the Arts, 1350 Main St., Cambria.

MEMBERS ONLY SHOW: CALL FOR ARTISTS Register/submit art online to the Cambria Center for the Arts' next show that will open on Jan. 8, and will run through February. No exhibit fee, as membership is required. For membership and exhibit details, please visit CCA's website. **Dec. 30, Dec. 31, Jan. 1, Jan. 2, & Jan. 3** 805-927-8190. cambriaarts.org/home. Cambria Center for the Arts, 1350 Main St., Cambria.

MOOSAIC TRIVET WORKSHOP During this workshop, you will learn how to design and create a mosaic trivet. You will learn how to select materials, lay out a pleasing pattern, and adhere the tiles to the trivet base. You will learn how to properly grout and seal your project. ongoing, 1-4 p.m. \$60. 805-772-2504. artcentermorrobay.org/index.php/workshops/. Art Center Morro Bay, 835 Main St., Morro Bay.

OPENING RECEPTION: FOR THE BIRDS EXHIBIT This opening celebration will feature an awareness lecture with live birds from Pacific Wildlife Care. **Jan. 9**, 2-4 p.m. Free. 805-772-2504. artcentermorrobay.org. Art Center Morro Bay, 835 Main St., Morro Bay.

SECOND SATURDAY: FEATURED ARTISTS OPENING RECEPTION Come by and see the Featured Artists Shows, find gifts for your loved ones, surprises for yourself, and meet the artists featured in the incredible gallery. Second Saturday of every month, 5-7 p.m. Free. 805-772-1068. galleryatmarinasquare.com. Gallery at Marina Square, 601 Embarcadero suite 10, Morro Bay.

STETCHING AND CRAFTS SHOW This very special holiday event offers a collection of exceptional paintings, photography and fine crafts, spanning a variety of artistic mediums from traditional to contemporary. Crafts include fiber, wood, glass, sculpture, pottery, jewelry, and more. Through Jan. 3, 2022, 12-4 p.m. Free. 805-772-2504. artcentermorrobay.org. Art Center Morro Bay, 835 Main St., Morro Bay.

CULTURE & LIFESTYLE

SANTA YNEZ VALLEY

NEW YEAR'S EVE PARTY A fundraiser party for Animals Asia. Price includes a glass of Prosecco to toast the new year in East Coast time. Come and enjoy the best wine, beer and cheese plates in the Santa Ynez Valley. Cocktail attire encouraged. **Dec. 31**, 7-10 p.m. \$25. 805-686-9126. arrowsmithwine.com. Arrowsmith's, 1539 Mission Drive, Solvang.

SOLVANG JULEFEST Julefest returns with a modified, pandemic-safer set of events and happenings throughout the 2021 holiday season. Through Jan. 1, 2022 solvangjulefest.org/. Downtown Solvang.

LOMPOC/VANDENBERG

LOMPOC RESOLUTION RUN Open to all ages 5 and above, and ability levels. Participants ages 5 to 7 will run a 1K, and participants ages 8 and older will run a 3K. First- and second-place awards will be given in each age of the two categories. **Jan. 1**, 9 a.m. cityoflompop.com/government/departments/recreation. River Bend Park, McLaughlin Rd. and A St., Lompoc, 805-875-8100.

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.

ANDROID PHONE CLASS First Thursday of every month Oasis Center, 420 Soares Ave., Orcutt, 805-937-9750.

CENTRAL COAST CORVETTE CLUB Open to Corvette owners and enthusiasts. First Thursday of every month, 7 p.m. Free. 805-934-3948. Home Motors, 1313 E. Main 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.

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, unwindstamaria.com.

SOUTH COAST SLO COUNTY

NEW LOCATION CELEBRATION: HALCYON STORE Celebrating new location at 1275 W. Grand Ave Grover Beach. Scheduling Readers and Classes now store hours 10 a.m.-6 p.m. daily. Mondays-Sundays, 10 a.m.-6 p.m. through Jan. 9 Varied. 805-674-4277. Halcyon Store, 1275 W. Grand Ave, Grover 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.

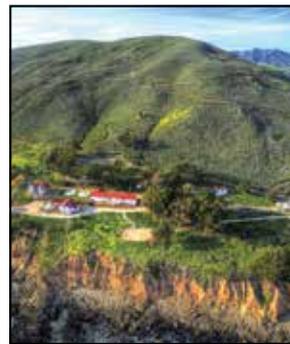
VETSURF FRIDAY Veterans encouraged to join us for these weekly VetSurf programs to share the camaraderie. Surfers and non-surfers are welcome; enjoy coffee and snacks on the beach or paddle out to share some waves with fellow Veterans. Fridays, 8:30 a.m.-1 p.m. Free admission. 805-441-5271. ampsurf.org. Addie Street Surfer Parking Lot, Addie Street, Pismo Beach.

CULTURE & LIFESTYLE continued page 16

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Point San Luis Lighthouse



New Year's Eve CASSino Party!
FRIDAY, DECEMBER 31
Cass Winery, Paso Robles



Wednesdays Around the World: Argentina
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 12
Cass Winery, Paso Robles



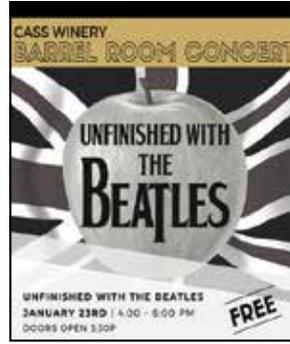
Symphony of the Vines: Mighty Beethoven
FRIDAY, JANUARY 14
Mission San Miguel



The Full Monty: The Musical
FRI/SAT/SUN: JAN 14-16,
JAN 21-23, JAN 28-30
SMCT, Santa Maria



The Tramp and Roughrider - Fundraiser Event
SAT & SUN, JANUARY 22 & 23
KDA Studios, Santa Maria



Barrel Room Concert: Unfinished with the Beatles
SUNDAY, JANUARY 23
Cass Winery, Paso Robles



Ted's Estate Beef Winemaker Dinner: Short Ribs
FRIDAY, JANUARY 28
Cass Winery, Paso Robles



Symphony of the Vines: Gallant Guitar
SUNDAY, MARCH 20
Cass Winery, Paso Robles



Three Speckled Hens: Antiques & Old Stuff Show
SAT & SUN, APRIL 30 & MAY 1
Paso Robles Event Center



Symphony of the Vines: Joyful Beethoven
FRIDAY, MAY 27
Mission San Miguel



Evening Under the Estrella Sky Winemakers' Dinner
SATURDAY, AUGUST 20
Hartley Farms, San Miguel

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CANOE ATTITUDE

The Pale Kai Outrigger Club hosts its next introductory demonstration on outrigger canoe paddling on Saturday, Jan. 8, at 8 a.m., at Coleman Park in Morro Bay. Admission to the class is free, and all necessary equipment is provided. Sign-ups are required in advance online at palekai.org. Email join@palekai.org for more info. Coleman Park is located at 101 Coleman Drive, Morro Bay.

—C.W.

CULTURE & LIFESTYLE from page 15

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, 5cityesswimschool.com.

SAN LUIS OBISPO

CAL HOPE SLO GROUPS AT TMHA Visit website for full list of weekly Zoom groups available. Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, Fridays calhopeconnect.org. Transitions Mental Health Warehouse, 784 High Street, San Luis Obispo, 805-270-3346.

CAL POLY BASKETBALL VS. CAL STATE FULLERTON Celebrate the New Year with Cal Poly Basketball. Get 2 tickets for \$22 to bring in 2022. Jan. 1, 7-9 p.m. gopoly.com/. Mott Athletics Center, 1 Grand Ave., San Luis Obispo, 805-756-7297.

CAL POLY BASKETBALL VS. LONG BEACH STATE It's Youth Night, so all kids ages 13 and under get in for free, and the first 100 kids get a color changing cup. Dec. 30, 7-9 p.m. gopoly.com/. Mott Athletics Center, 1 Grand Ave., San Luis Obispo, 805-756-7297.

CAL POLY WOMEN'S BASKETBALL VS. UCSB Don't miss the Blue-Green Rivalry game as the Mustangs take on UC Santa Barbara. Jan. 6, 7-9 p.m. gopoly.com. Mott Athletics Center, 1 Grand Ave., San Luis Obispo, 805-756-7297.

CITY FARM SLO'S YOUTH EMPOWERMENT PROGRAM Check site for more info on programming and summer camps. cityfarmslo.org. San Luis Obispo.

GARDEN FOUNDER WALK AND TALK Walk and talk with Eve Vigil in the Botanical Garden each month on the first Tuesday. Free garden tour with paid admission to the Garden. Free for members. No need to RSVP, just show up and enjoy. First Tuesday of every month, 11 a.m.-noon Free with \$5 Garden Entry. 805-541-1400. slobg.org/calendar. Walk and talk with Eve Vigil in the Botanical Garden each month on the first Wednesday. Free garden tour with paid admission to the Garden. Free for members. No need to RSVP, just show up and enjoy. First Wednesday of every month, 11 a.m.-noon Free with \$5 Garden Entry. 805-541-1400. slobg.org. San Luis Obispo Botanical Garden, 3450 Dairy Creek Rd., San Luis Obispo.

LGBTQ+ FED THERAPIST LEAD SUPPORT GROUP (VIRTUALLY VIA ZOOM) A pro-recovery group offering space to those seeking peer support, all stages of ED recovery. We understand recovery isn't linear and judgment-free support is crucial. Share, listen, and be part of a community building up each other. First Wednesday of every month, 7-8 p.m. Free. galacc.org/events/. Online, See website, San Luis Obispo.

MINDFULNESS AND MEDITATION (ONLINE MEETING) Zoom series hosted by TMHA. Thursdays, 10:30 a.m.-noon Transitions Mental Health Warehouse, 784 High Street, San Luis Obispo, 805-270-3346.

OUTDOOR YOGA CLASSES Hotel San Luis Obispo, Piazza Hospitality's first property on California's scenic

Central Coast, offers outdoor yoga classes on its rooftop terrace. Thursdays, Saturdays, Sundays \$10-\$15; complimentary for hotel guests. 805-235-0700. hotel-slo.com. Hotel San Luis Obispo, 877 Palm Street, San Luis Obispo.

PET LOSS CLASS: 6 WEEKS ONLINE (INCLUDES BOOK) Do you still miss a pet that died one, five, or over ten years ago? You are not alone. The Pet Loss Grief Group is a step-by-step process (with two class options to choose from: Tuesdays or Wednesdays). Tuesdays, 6-8 p.m. and Wednesdays, 9:30-11:30 a.m. through Feb. 9 \$59.99. 1-714-273-9014. griefrecoverymethod.com/grms/rev-diann-davison. Online, See website, San Luis Obispo.

PLANET FUNK NEW YEAR'S EVE BASH Enjoy champagne toasts, a midnight balloon drop, delicious comfort food dishes, craft cocktails and live music. Features a headlining performance by funk/jazz/soul fusion band Diggin' Dirt in our Event Center. Dec. 31, 8:30 p.m. slobrew.com/events/. SLO Brew Rock, 855 Aerovista Pl., San Luis Obispo, 805-543-1843.

Q YOUTH GROUP (VIRTUALLY VIA ZOOM) This is a social support group for LGBTQ+ and questioning youth between the ages of 11-18. Each week the group explores personal, cultural, and social identity. Thursdays, 6-8 p.m. Free. galacc.org/events/. Online, See website, San Luis Obispo.

QI GONG FOR MIND, BODY, AND SPIRIT Learn and practice qi gong, a Chinese system for physical, mental and spiritual development. This class is conducted outdoors in a beautiful setting, which is the best place to do qi gong, as its inspiration is drawn from nature. Certified instructor: Devin Wallace. Tuesdays, 10-11 a.m. \$10. 805-709-2227. Crows End Retreat Center, 6340 Squire Ct., San Luis Obispo.

SLO ASTROLOGERS We are a small group of Central Coast folks who love talking about astrology. We enjoy learning from each other and hearing personal experiences so that we can understand the meaning of astrological symbols. Don't be shy, give us a try. First Wednesday of every month, 6-7 p.m. Free. galacc.org/events/. GALA Pride and Diversity Center, 1060 Palm Street, San Luis Obispo, 805-541-4252.

SLO NOONTIME TOASTMASTERS CLUB MEETINGS Want to improve speaking and leadership skills in a supportive and positive environment? During COVID, we are meeting virtually. Contact us to get a meeting link for info. Tuesdays, 12-1 p.m. Free. slonoontime.toastmastersclubs.org. Zoom, Online, Inquire for Zoom ID.

SOLOROLL: A COMMUNITY INITIATIVE A free pop-up roller skating event. Locations posted the day of at 4 p.m. Follow [@thesoloroll](https://www.instagram.com/thesoloroll). First Saturday of every month Online, See website, San Luis Obispo.

SUNDAY EVENING RAP LGBTQ+ AA GROUP (VIRTUALLY VIA ZOOM) Alcoholics Anonymous is a voluntary, worldwide fellowship of folks from all walks of life who together, attain and maintain sobriety. Requirement for membership is a desire to stop drinking. Email aaarapgroup@gmail.com for password access. Sundays, 7-8 p.m. No fee. galacc.org/events/. Online, See website, San Luis Obispo.

HOT
STUFF

DEC. 30 2021 -
JAN. 6 2022

TRANS* TUESDAY A safe space providing peer-to-peer support for trans, gender non-conforming, non-binary, and questioning people. In-person and Zoom meetings held. Contact tranzcentralcoast@gmail.com for more details. Tuesdays, 7-9 p.m. Free. GALA Pride and Diversity Center, 1060 Palm Street, San Luis Obispo, 805-541-4252.

NORTH SLO COUNTY

NAR-ANON: FRIDAY MEETINGS A meeting for those who know or have known a feeling of desperation concerning the addiction of a loved one. Fridays, 12-1 p.m. Free. 805-221-5523. North County Connection, 8600 Atascadero Ave., Atascadero.

NAR-ANON: TUESDAY MEETINGS A support group for those who are affected by someone else's addiction. Tuesdays, 6-7 p.m. naranoncentralca.org/meetings/meeting-list/. The Redeemer Lutheran Church, 4500 El Camino Real, Atascadero, 805-221-5523.

NEW YEAR'S EVE CASSINO PARTY A swanky CASSino Night in the vineyard as we ring in the New Year. Features jazz music by Casey Biggs and the Paso Wine Man Band. Dec. 31, 7-10 p.m. my805tix.com. Cass Winery And Vineyard, 7350 Linne Rd., Paso Robles, 805-239-1730.

OPEN AIR VINEYARD YOGA Intentionally carve out time for quiet, movement, and a little self pampering in the open air of the vineyard with Yogi Chelcy Westphal Johnson, of Mindful Movement Collective. Fridays, 9:30-10:30 a.m. \$28-\$150. Cass Winery And Vineyard, 7350 Linne Rd., Paso Robles, 805-239-1730.

TOPS SUPPORT GROUP: WEIGHT LOSS AND MAINTENANCE A self-help support group focusing on weight loss and maintenance. Thursdays, 1:30 p.m. 805-242-2421. tops.org. Santa Margarita Senior Center, 2210 H St., Santa Margarita.

NORTH COAST SLO COUNTY

AXE THROWING Enjoy the art of axe throwing in a safe and fun environment. Kids ages 10 and older are welcome with an adult. No personal axes please. Fridays, 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m. and Saturdays, 12-6 p.m. \$20. 805-528-4880. baysidemartialarts.com. Bayside Martial Arts, 1200 2nd St., Los Osos.

CENTRAL COAST SLIM DOWN Take control of food without suffering. Learn a step-by-step process to take control of overeating, cravings, and feel peace with food. Build the habits, mindset, and your unique path with results that stick. Hosted by Tami Cruz and Dana Charvet. Call for pricing info. 805 235 7978. gratefulbodyhealthcoaching.com. Grateful Body, 850 Shasta, Morro Bay.

INTRODUCTION TO OUTRIGGER CANOE PADDLING WITH PALE KAI OUTRIGGER CLUB Pale Kai will be offering a free canoe demo and recruitment sessions in Morro Bay to get you out on the water. Join us for a fun intro to outrigger canoe paddling. All equipment and instruction provided. Limited sign-ups. Jan. 8, 8 a.m. Free. palekai.org/recruitment-program/. Coleman Park, Morro Bay, 101 Coleman Drive, Morro Bay, 805-772-6278.

CULTURE & LIFESTYLE continued page 17

TAI CHI AND QI GONG: ZEN IN MOTION Small group classes with 2019 Tai Chi Instructor of the Year. Call for time and days. Learn the Shaolin Water Style and 5 Animals Qi Gong. Beginners welcomed. Mondays, 8 a.m.-3:30 p.m. Call for price details. 805-701-7397. charvetmartialarts.com. Morro Bay Martial Arts, 850 Shasta, Morro Bay.

TAI CHI CHUN CERTIFICATION With the 2019 Tai Chi Instructor of the year. Ongoing courses. ongoing Call for price. 805-701-7397. charvetmartialarts.com. Grateful Body, 850 Shasta, Morro Bay.

TAI CHI CHUN/ QI GONG BASICS Learn the foundation of Qi Gong, the rooting of breathing, and Shaolin Tai Chi. Tuesdays-Thursdays Call for details. 805-701-7397. charvetmartialarts.com. Grateful Body, 850 Shasta, Morro Bay.

WEEKLY QIGONG PRACTICE AT FITNESSWORKS MORRO BAY Calm your mind and nourish your joints with a weekly Qigong practice led by Mike Raynor of Tai Chi Rejuvenation. The practice is rooted in Qigong fundamentals, and standing/moving meditations. Forms include: Eight Brocades, Five Elements, Shibashi 18, and Tai chi 24. Saturdays, 10:45-11:45 a.m. Members free; non-members \$8-\$10. 805-225-1728. facebook.com/TaiChiRejuvenation/. FitnessWorks, 500 Quintana Rd., Morro Bay.

ZEN IN MOTION Learn the Shaolin Water Style and other deep breathing and moving meditation techniques with the 2019 Taijiquan Instructor of the Year. Beginners Welcome. Instructor Certification Courses available. Mondays, Wednesdays Call for details. 805-701-7397. charvetmartialarts.com. Grateful Body, 850 Shasta, Morro Bay.



CASINO ROYALE

CASS Winery in Paso Robles hosts its New Year's Eve CASSino Party on Friday, Dec. 31, starting at 7 p.m. Attendees can look forward to enjoying casino games, wine, beer, hors d'oeuvres, live music, and celebrating the East Coast ball drop at 9 p.m. Admission is \$150. Visit my805tix.com for tickets. CASS Winery is located at 7350 Linne Road, Paso Robles.

—C.W.

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.

LIBRARY MONTH AT ZACA MESA WINERY This holiday season, taste the treasures of our cellar. In our limited-time Library Flight, you will sip wine that has been artfully aged to delicious perfection. Available Thursday through Monday. Mondays, Thursdays-Sundays, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. through Dec. 31 805-688-9339. zacamesa.com/upcoming-events/. Zaca Mesa Winery, 6905 Foxen Canyon Rd, Los Olivos.

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

SANTA MARIA VALLEY/LOS ALAMOS

PRESQU'ILE WINERY: WINE CLUB Call or go online to make a reservation to taste at the winery or find more info on the winery's Wine Club offerings. ongoing presquilewine.com/club/. Presqu'ile Winery, 5391 Presqu'ile Dr., Santa Maria, 805-937-8110.

SIMPLY SOURDOUGH First Thursday of every month Oasis Center, 420 Soares Ave., Orcutt, 805-937-9750.

SOUTH COAST SLO COUNTY

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

NEW YEAR'S EVE CELEBRATORY DINNER This special Executive Chef Barajas' dinner at delightful Somerset Grill is a wonderful way to usher in 2022.

Dec. 31, 5-10 p.m. \$49-\$129. Vespera Resort, 147 Stimson Ave., Pismo Beach, 805-773-1011, vesperapismoeach.com.

PISMO BEACH FARMERS MARKET Features various vendors selling their goods. Wednesdays, 4-7 p.m. Pismo Beach Farmers Market, Pismo Pier..

SAN LUIS OBISPO

SLO FARMERS MARKET Hosts more than 60 vendors. Saturdays, 8-10:45 a.m. World Market Parking Lot, 325 Madonna Rd., San Luis Obispo.

NORTH SLO COUNTY

BRUNCH IS BACK Celebrate the second Sunday of the month with brunch. Enjoy a two-hour cruise on the waterfront. Features fresh coffee, pastries, and more. Second Sunday of every month, 11 a.m.-1 p.m. \$50. 805-772-2128. chablisrcruises.com. Chablis Cruises, 1205 Embarcadero, Morro Bay.

TACO TUESDAYS La Parilla Taqueria will be in courtyard serving up their delicious tacos and tostadas every Tuesday. Tuesdays, 5-8 p.m. Ancient Owl Beer Garden, 6090 El Camino Real, suite C, Atascadero, 805-460-6042, ancientowlbeergarden.com.

VIRTUAL WINE TASTING PACKAGES AT CASS WINERY Wine by the glass and bottles are also available for purchase. Check site for specific virtual tasting packages. ongoing Free. 805-239-1730. casswines.com/. Cass Winery And Vineyard, 7350 Linne Rd., Paso Robles.

NORTH COAST SLO COUNTY

MORRO BAY FARMERS MARKET A delightful mix of local farm fresh products, baked goods, crafts, and more. Saturdays, 2:30-5:30 p.m. 805-824-7383. Morro Bay Main Street Farmers Market, Main Street and Morro Bay Boulevard, Morro Bay, facebook.com/MorroBayMainStreetFarmersMarket/.

MUSIC

SANTA YNEZ VALLEY

LIVE MUSIC SUNDAYS Sundays, 2-5 p.m. Brick Barn Wine Estate, 795 W. Hwy 246, Buellton, 805-686-1208, brickbarnwineestate.com.

WINE DOWN WEDNESDAYS Wednesdays, 5-7 p.m. Brick Barn Wine Estate, 795 W. Hwy 246, Buellton, 805-686-1208, brickbarnwineestate.com.

SANTA MARIA VALLEY/LOS ALAMOS

CENTRAL COAST BEAT SOCIAL: COURTYARD CULTURE An ongoing series of outdoor music events at different venues in Santa Maria, Guadalupe, and other cities along the Central Coast. Hosted by Central Coast Beat Social. ongoing centralcoastbeatsocial.com/. Santa Maria, Citywide, Santa Maria.

NOON YEAR'S EVE Featuring Riptide Big band with vocalists Bob Nations, Mitch Latting, and Liz Douglas. Funded by the Community Foundation of San Luis Obispo County. Presented by Santa Maria Valley Senior Club. **Dec. 31, 11 a.m.-1 p.m.** Free. 775-813-5186. RiptideBB.com. Elwin Mussell Senior Center, 510 Park Ave., Santa Maria.

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

SAN LUIS OBISPO

DRUM CIRCLE SING-A-LONG Limited to 20 drummers. Learn African music through drumming and song. ongoing Spirits of

Africa Gallery, 570 Higuera St., San Luis Obispo, spiritsofamericagallery.com/.

LIVE MUSIC WITH GRAMMY AWARD-WINNER LOUIE ORTEGA Enjoy live music with Louie Ortega every Wednesday, while sipping your favorites in the Wine Bar and Craft Beer Garden. No cover. Wednesdays, 4-7 p.m. Free. 805-544-9463. slowineandbeerco.com/events. SLO Wine and Beer Company, 3536 S. Higuera Street, Suite 250, San Luis Obispo.

W. TERENCE SPILLER PIANO RECITAL The first half will feature works by Clara and Robert Schumann, two of the most important musicians from 19th-century Germany, and one of the most important married couples in music history. The second half will be entirely of French repertoire. **Jan. 7, 7:30 p.m.** \$20 general, \$10 students. 805-756-4849. music.calpoly.edu/calendar/. Spanos Theatre, Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo.

NORTH SLO COUNTY

FRIDAY DJ SERIES Features different DJ each Friday. Presented by Traffic Records. Fridays, 6-9 p.m. Ancient Owl Beer Garden, 6090 El Camino Real, suite C, Atascadero, 805-460-6042, ancientowlbeergarden.com.

NEW SONGS FOR THE NEW YEAR Songwriters at Play host Steve Key will be joined by eight other writers who have accepted the challenge of performing newly-created compositions to welcome 2022. Lineup includes Lauren Hatcher, John Sandoval, Dan Daniel, Douglas Romayne, Craig Louis Dingman, Rob Kimball, Dennis Mikel, and Jeff Seals. **Jan. 1, 12:30-3:30 p.m.** Free. 805-204-6821. stevekey.com/events. Sculpterra Winery, 5015 Linne Rd., Paso Robles.

SONGWRITERS AT PLAY FEATURES STEVE KEY BAND Songwriters at Play host Steve Key is also the headliner, accompanied by drummer Paul Griffith and Bob Liepman on cello and electric mandocello. Paul and Bob both played on Steve's latest album, "How I Learned to Drink". Special guests are Karl Tallman and Paul Welch. **Jan. 8, 12:30-3:30 p.m.** Free. 805-204-6821. stevekey.com/events. Sculpterra Winery, 5015 Linne Rd., Paso Robles.

WINE DOWN WEDNESDAYS: VIRTUAL MUSIC SERIES Follow the venue's Facebook page for a virtual series of music, wine tasting, and education. Wednesdays, 5-6 p.m. Free. facebook.com/vinaroblesamphitheatre/. Vina Robles Amphitheatre, 3800 Mill Rd., Paso Robles, 805-286-3680.

NORTH COAST SLO COUNTY

OPEN MIC NIGHT Come join us each Wednesday for Open Mic Night in the downstairs dining area. Grab some friends and show off your talents. Food and drink service will be available. Wednesdays, 7-9 p.m. Free. 805-995-3883. schoonerscayucos.com. Schooners, 171 North Ocean Ave, Cayucos. ○

Spread the word!

Send event information to calendar@santamariasun.com.



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Seasons change

Take a trip down memory lane and reflect on this year's local art scene

BY CALEB WISEBLOOD

Looking back on some of the local arts happenings that occurred over 2021, it's hard to believe just how quickly some artists and galleries were able to return to hosting in-person events. While virtual programming defined the majority of 2020, 2021 had more of a mix between the two formats, with some local outlets adopting hybrid models (the opportunity to visit an exhibit in person, or view it online, for example).



Before looking ahead to new opportunities we should expect from 2022, here's a handful of highlights from this year that I believe either helped shape Northern Santa Barbara County's current art scene or brought national attention to local artists and causes. ○

Send artsy story recommendations for Arts Editor Caleb Wiseblood to consider in 2022 at cwiseblood@santamariasun.com.

FILE COURTESY IMAGE BY KRIS BUCK



TEMPLE OF BLOOM: Local pastel painters and frequent collaborators Kris Buck and Deborah Breedon displayed their colorful landscapes at Gallery Los Olivos during its June exhibition, Summer Bloom. Buck and Breedon enjoy painting outdoors together, and one of their favorite spots to paint is the Santa Ynez Valley Botanical Garden, especially "when the poppies were in their full glory and begging to be painted," Buck said. Visit gallerylosolivos.com for more details.

FILE COURTESY PHOTO BY JEREMY BALL



THEATRICAL TELETHON: In March, the Lompoc Theatre Project (a nonprofit dedicated to restoring and reopening the historic Lompoc Theatre) hosted a virtual fundraiser and telethon, titled *The Show Must Go On*. Central Coast-based artists and performers participated in the event, including local musician Kaitlyn Chui (pictured), and several celebrity guests joined the live-streamed program as well. Julia Louis-Dreyfus (*Seinfeld*, *Veep*), Tom Bergeron (*America's Funniest Home Videos*), and Richard Karn (*Home Improvement*) were just a handful of guests who appeared during the telethon to express their support for the Lompoc Theatre. For more info on the Lompoc Theatre Project's ongoing efforts, visit lompoctheatre.org.

FILE PHOTO COURTESY OF EVANS VESTAL WARD/NBC



CREATIVE AND CRAFTY: Orcutt local Kara Walker (pictured) competed on season 3 of NBC's popular crafting show, *Making It*, which premiered in June. Walker said that one of the funnest aspects of joining the production was getting to bond with her fellow contestants and the show's quirky co-hosts, Amy Poehler and Nick Offerman. "Amy is definitely like the mom type you just want to tell all your secrets and where you bury the bodies. And then, Nick, he's more, you know, the strong, silent type," she revealed. Walker is best known locally for her lavish, handcrafted Halloween decorations, which she proudly displays outside her home every year. Check out some of Walker's crafty creations on Instagram, @kara_walker_designs.

FILE COURTESY PHOTO BY GLENN FUSS



PASSION PROJECT: *FireStorm '77*, a locally produced, award-winning documentary that examines the Honda Canyon Fire of 1977, was screened at various film festivals throughout the country during 2021, including the Cambria Film Festival's SummerFest program at the end of August. The film was directed by Christopher Hite (pictured), a longtime film instructor at Allan Hancock College in Santa Maria, and was co-produced by Lompoc locals Dennis R. Ford and Joseph N. Valencia (who both served as firefighters during the historic tragedy which resulted in four fatalities, 65 injuries, and nearly 10,000 acres burned).

FILE COURTESY PHOTO BY LUIS ESCOBAR REFLECTIONS PHOTOGRAPHY STUDIO



A REGAL RETURN: Although the Pacific Conservatory Theatre (PCPA) was able to host two outdoor productions in Solvang over the summer of 2021, the company hadn't performed a new show inside Santa Maria's Marian Theatre since before the pandemic—until November. Performances of PCPA's *The Secret Garden*, a musical adaptation of Frances Hodgson Burnett's popular 1911 book, were held through Dec. 23. Visit pcpa.org for info on its 2022 season.



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With great power

Editor's note: Arts Editor Caleb Wiseblood and New Times Staff Writer Bulbul Rajagopal are filling in while the Starkeys are on vacation.

With *Spider-Man's* secret identity now revealed to the world, the teenage web-slinger is no longer able to separate his regular day-to-day life as high school student Peter Parker from his role as a superhero. (148 min.)

Caleb: There's just *no way* around it; *No Way Home* is hard to talk about without diving into its juiciest spoilers, but I'm gonna try my best not to. Even before walking into the theater, I was convinced that the trailers had already given away too many of the film's surprises—including the return of Willem Dafoe and Alfred Molina, as the Green Goblin and Doctor Octopus, respectively. There's always plenty of hype surrounding anything Marvel puts out, but the promise of getting to see these guys bring back their characters from, arguably, the most nostalgic and beloved era in Spidey history (the Tobey Maguire years) really raised the anticipation bar, at least for me. Fans of the franchise already got a taste of the "multiverse" concept in *Spider-Man: Into the Spider-Verse*, where multiple iterations of Spider-Man from alternate realities collide with each other. *No Way Home's* Peter Parker (Tom Holland) finds himself in a similar predicament after he seeks help from a powerful sorcerer and former collaborator, Doctor Strange (Benedict Cumberbatch). After the events of his

last live-action outing, *Far From Home*, Spider-Man's identity is no longer a secret, which not only complicates

Parker's life, but the lives of his aunt May (Marisa Tomei), girlfriend MJ (Zendaya), and best friend Ned (Jacob Batalon) as well. Parker asks Strange if there's a way he can make the world forget he's Spider-Man, so the caped wizard agrees to cast a spell to do just that, but there are some unexpected side effects—namely in the form of new, yet old, Spidey villains suddenly appearing out of thin air.

Bulbul: *No Way Home* is definitely a Spidey smorgasbord for every generation of Spider-Man fans (spoiler-free hint), and it's a feel-good tear-jerker thanks to its central message: Second chances are cool. Every single movie iteration of the web slinger is grounded in an almost formulaic pattern of making the best out of the cards you're dealt. Parker—with his lively teen spirit—messes up, pays the price with an unspeakable loss, lashes out at the world to fill the gaping hole, and ultimately realizes that revenge isn't the healthy way out. With the identity leak, *No Way Home* teaches him a lesson through a wholly original dilemma that speaks to the human and the superhuman in Parker. The thrilling plot got theater patrons to gasp and yelp, no holds barred. That's exactly what an action-packed superhero movie should incite. *No Way Home* does leave some unanswered questions though. Marvel movies always claimed that fiddling with time travel causes ruptures in the timeline of those alternate universes. So, what happens when old Spider-Man villains leave their original realities to come to a New York City protected by Holland's hero? Do their universes, storylines, and previous Spider-Man

SPIDER-MAN: NO WAY HOME

What's it rated? **PG-13**
 What's it worth, Bulbul? **Full price**
 What's it worth, Caleb? **Full price**
 Where's it showing? **Regal Edwards Santa Maria & RPX, Regal Arroyo Grande, Hi-Way Drive-In**



SUIT UP: Tom Holland plays Peter Parker, aka Spider-Man, in his third solo outing (if we're not counting additional appearances in team-up Marvel flicks), in *Spider-Man: No Way Home*.

flicks crumble because of their surprising fates at the end of this movie? We never find out.

Caleb: I think there's a dangerously time-consuming Reddit thread full of potential answers to that, but it is unfortunate how contrived the universe-crossing stuff can feel at times. I appreciate the film's straightforward, humorous attitude about that stuff for the most part, though, and the way it leans more into fantasy rather than sci-fi. Having Doctor Strange involved, and the film's plot resulting from a magic spell gone haywire, somehow don't sound as convoluted to me as your usual science-driven time travel fare. Suspension of disbelief aside, this movie really tugged at my heartstrings, and it's honestly hard to separate how much of my enjoyment came from nostalgic appeasement or unbiased admiration for, you know, other stuff I should take into consideration. I'm almost afraid to watch it again, because of how euphoric I still feel toward it after one viewing. There are some genuinely touching and beautifully executed story-driven moments in this film. They're just too spoiler-centric to gush over any further.

Bulbul: I'd happily watch *No Way Home* again

if I stumble across it on some streaming service soon. It's layered with nostalgia (watch out for J.K. Simmons reprising everyone's favorite crabby news reporter, J. Jonah Jameson), and made me feel right at home. What I love the most about Spider-Man is that he's a nuanced hero who gives equal importance to all the relationships in his life, be it his family, his best friend, or his girlfriend. Mutant opponents may underestimate him for being young, but it's Parker's "never-say-die" humor even in the darkest hour that makes him endure the test of time, what with eight movies and three actors donning the Spidey suit. *No Way Home* is proof that the franchise can breathe new life into what could be a predictable plot blueprint. Run to catch it on the big screen, and relive the fantasy when you get home with the Reddit thread. ○

Sun Screen was written by Arts Editor Caleb Wiseblood and New Times Staff Writer Bulbul Rajagopal this week. Send comments to gstarkey@newtimeslo.com.

Anime TV Reviews

COWBOY BEBOP

What's it rated? **TV-MA**
 When? **1998**
 Where's it showing? **Netflix**



If you were ever planning on giving Netflix's new live-action iteration of *Cowboy Bebop* a whirl, why not rewatch or, if it's your first time, dip your toes into the original anime beforehand? Conveniently, both shows are currently available through the streaming service, which reportedly canceled the live-action series only a month after its first season's release, due to disappointing reviews.

I cannot vouch for nor denounce the ill-fated series, as I haven't finished it myself yet. But its release got me in the mood to jump back into the atmospheric world of its source material, the neo-noir anime I loved watching as a teenager on Cartoon Network's Toonami (almost as near to my heart as the less heavy, far cheesier, but beautifully operatic classic that is *Dragon Ball Z*).

Set in the year 2071, *Cowboy Bebop* follows a crew of bounty hunters aboard a spaceship led by Spike Spiegel, a former hitman exiled from a mysterious crime syndicate. We slowly learn more and more about Spike's somber past as the show progresses between the crew's various escapades, which range from apprehending



PHOTO COURTESY OF SUNRISE

3. 2. 1. LET'S JAM! Set in the year 2071, *Cowboy Bebop* (1998) follows a crew of bounty hunters aboard a spaceship, led by Spike Spiegel, a former hitman exiled from a mysterious crime syndicate.

a fugitive inside of a space casino to ingesting hallucinogenic mushrooms while stranded on one of Jupiter's moons.

Don't feel the need to reciprocate the latter, though, *Cowboy Bebop's* visual prowess and catchy soundtrack will leave you high on life. (one season, 26 episodes, 25-min. each).

—Caleb

CASTLEVANIA

What's it rated? **TV-MA**
 When? **2017-2021**
 Where's it showing? **Netflix**

BINGEABLE

Castlevania is a poignant work of art, considering its source material is an 8-bit Japanese video game from the 1980s. Set in a Middle Ages-esque eastern Europe ravaged by vampires at the command of none other than Dracula himself, this animated Netflix series is bingeable right down to the bloody bone.

Dracula Tepes is the vampire king whose human wife is burned alive by the town's corrupt clergy after they branded her scientific knowledge as witchcraft. Driven mad with rage, Dracula starts a war to terminate the human race, and its fate lies in the hands of three warriors. *Castlevania* follows the gory journey of vampire killer Trevor Belmont, the sorceress Sypha, and Dracula's son Alucard ('Dracula' backwards, get it?) as they race to stop the vengeful vampire and his army.

The series is grounded in a straightforward premise but its narrative technique breaks the rules of storytelling with elements like major deaths quite early on. While this can pull the plug for many TV shows, *Castlevania* prevails. It keeps the plot exciting and complex by trying to answer a deceptively



PHOTO COURTESY OF NETFLIX

BLOODY BRILLIANT: *Castlevania* follows the gory journey of vampire killer Trevor Belmont (left), the sorceress Sypha (right), and Dracula's son Alucard, as they team up to defeat Dracula and his army of night creatures.

simple question through battle-hardened characters, snarky dialogues, and rich philosophy: What now? Take a weekend and sink your teeth into *Castlevania* to find out (four seasons, with approximately 10 25-min. episodes each). ○

—Bulbul

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Food for thought

My favorite foodie flashbacks to sum up 2021

BY CALEB WISEBLOOD

This past year was full of memorable meals, at least according to my phone's camera roll. About 60 percent of said photos are admittedly of chicken strips, nuggets, and wings, but I assure you, the other 40 percent showcase the profound moments when I had the courage to step out of my bubble and branch out to new and exciting non-poultry-based adventures. Please enjoy the following compilation, full of vignettes that summarize some of my favorite Eats features I had the pleasure of writing over the past 12 months. ○

Send your favorite 2021 foodie memories to Arts Editor Caleb Wiseblood at cwiseblood@santamariasun.com.

FILE PHOTO COURTESY OF THREE DREAMERS FARMSTAND



JAM TRAM: Three Dreamers Farmstand in Buellton celebrated its grand opening by hosting its first monthly market event in November. This ongoing series of outdoor events showcases fresh produce and food items from the property and neighboring farms, including a variety of organic fruit jams from Cosecha Farming. Visit threedreamersfarm.com to find out more.

FILE PHOTO COURTESY OF DREAMERS VEGAN TAKEOUT



VEGAN VENDORS: Bringing high quality vegan comfort food to Lompoc was a longtime dream for David Velazquez, who co-founded Dreamers Vegan Takeout with his wife, Lauren, in January. The company's name refers to the dream shared by "those who have come to the U.S. to make a life for themselves and their loved ones," said Velazquez, a proud DACA recipient. February 2021 marked the business's first official pop-up event, held at the Royal Healing Emporium in Lompoc. For more info on the mobile vendor, visit dreamersvegan.com.



NAUGHTY AND NICE: April marked the debut of the Naughty Oak Brewing Company's line of to-go cans, featuring unique label artwork from local graphic designer Andrea Rockwell. "We wanted the cans to look fresh and colorful so they would stand out on the shelves," said the Orcutt venue's co-owner Steve Kitts. Naughty Oak's lineup of canned libations include Mexican lagers and Central Coast IPAs. Visit naughtyoak.com for more.

FILE PHOTO COURTESY OF RACHEL BOSTON



ROSES ARE FED: In May, Orcutt local Rachel Boston founded Brie Happy Charcuterie, which offers its patrons a wide range of charcuterie boxes and boards to choose from. One of Boston's personal favorites is the salami rose. "You can't help but smile when looking at a gorgeous rose that you can also eat," Boston said. Follow [@briehappycharcuterie](https://www.instagram.com/briehappycharcuterie) on Instagram for more info.

FILE COURTESY PHOTO BY BONJUNG LEE



WISH UPON A STAR: Bell's in Los Alamos was awarded a Michelin star in late September. Part of why the win felt so dreamy for the French bistro's co-owners, husband and wife Greg and Daisy Ryan, is thanks to the amount of times the couple has depended on Michelin to discover acclaimed eateries to try out for themselves. One of the many compliments featured in Michelin's write-up for Bell's is "this is cooking that tastes as good as it looks." Visit bellsrestaurant.com to check out a menu.

FILE PHOTO BY CALEB WISEBLOOD



HOP ON CHOP: The Salty Brigade, founded by chef Michael McDonald, first opened its doors in July. This casual Santa Maria eatery's menu evolves and rotates on a frequent basis. The menu often features a variety of burgers, hot dogs, tacos, and "chef master plates" (which might include the grilled maple Texas pork chop, depending on when you visit). For more info on the Salty Brigade, visit thesaltybrigade.com.

FILE PHOTO BY CALEB WISEBLOOD



PRIZED POULTRY: In August, Roblar Winery in Santa Ynez launched a special weekly promo to celebrate the appointment of its new executive chef, Peter Cham. The exclusive Thursday offering showcases one of Cham's favorite things to make, buttermilk fried chicken, served with sides of watermelon and cornbread and a glass of blanc de blanc, one of Roblar's signature sparkling wines (hence the promo's appropriate title, Birds and Bubbles). Check out Cham's latest menu offerings at roblarwinery.com.



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