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Sun



AT THE MOVIES

The Tender Bar:
Poignant [22]

VOLUNTEERS

2022



This year's annual Volunteers issue highlights those who give their time at Marian Regional Medical Center [6] and those who help keep Los Padres accessible [10] BY SUN STAFF

NEWS COVID-19 restricts hospital visitation again [4]

ARTS Quilting in the TREES [20]

EATS Pizza, beer, coffee, and breakfast [24]



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JANUARY 13 - JANUARY 20, 2022 VOL. 22 NO. 46

Each January, we put out a volunteers issue, but with another year of COVID-19 in the rearview mirror, it seems especially important this time around to pay homage to those who continued to give their time to help others. This week, Staff Writer Taylor O'Connor speaks with a woman who's volunteered at Marian Regional Medical Center for more than two decades, highlighting the gaps that volunteers fill at the hospital [6]; and Peter Johnson from the Sun's sister paper, *New Times*, speaks with the Los Padres Forest Association about the ways in which its volunteers help maintain recreational access in the national forest [10].

You can also read about the COVID-19 surge and its impact on visitation for hospital patients and seniors [4]; the quilters who took over the Wildling Museum [20]; and Fire and Vice in Santa Maria [24].



OFFERING TIME: Volunteers offer their time, heart, and soul to fill the gaps left by under-resourced government agencies and low staffing levels in hospitals.

Camillia Lanham
 editor

Cover photo from Adobe Stock > Cover design by Alex Zuniga

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Political Watch

• Assemblyman **Jordan Cunningham** (R-San Luis Obispo) released a statement in response to the Assembly Rules Committee's vote to move a single-payer health care bill forward without an independent cost analysis. "This reckless move puts our state's entire budget at stake, including education funding, and puts millions of seniors' Medicare at risk," Cunningham said in a Jan. 6 statement. "For years, the Assembly has stood in a righteous fight against wholesale dismantling of our state's health care system. It's a shame that somebody's bad political calculus could force 40 million Californians into a health care system run by the same bureaucrats who can't figure out how to schedule appointments at the DMV or get unemployment checks issued." The proposed single-payer system would cost about \$400 billion annually, with up to half of that money coming from a new payroll tax on workers and employers, according to state analysis from 2017, when lawmakers last floated a single-payer plan. "Make no mistake, this bill would create the most expensive state bureaucracy in history, funded by the largest set of tax increases in history, and take away our constituents' Medicare or private insurance. And the majority party won't even ask for an independent cost analysis before considering it," Cunningham said in the statement.

• Gov. **Gavin Newsom** announced that he activated the California National Guard to support local communities with additional testing facilities and capacity amid the COVID-19 surge by deploying more than 200 guard members. "California has led the country's fight against COVID-19, implementing first-in-the-nation public health measures that have helped save tens of thousands of lives," Newsom said in a Jan. 7 statement. "We continue to support communities in their response to COVID by bolstering testing capacity." To support this, Newsom signed an executive order the next day to establish consumer protections against price gouging on at-home test kits. The order prohibits sellers from increasing prices on COVID-19 at-home test kits by more than 10 percent and gives the California Department of Justice and Attorney General's Office additional tools to take action against price gougers, according to a Jan. 8 statement. The administration also unveiled the governor's proposed \$2.7 billion COVID-19 Emergency Response Package, including \$1.2 billion to bolster testing efforts through expanded hours and capacity at testing sites; distributing millions of antigen tests to local health departments, county offices of education, and schools; and a \$1.4-billion emergency appropriation request for California's immediate needs. This effort invests in vaccinations and boosters, supports front-line workers, and strengthens the health care system, according to the statement.

• U.S. Sens. **Alex Padilla** and **Dianne Feinstein** announced that California is receiving more than \$382 million in federal funding for the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), a federally funded program aimed to assist low-income households that pay a high portion of their income to meet their energy needs. "As we face the highly transmissible COVID-19 omicron variant, it is especially critical for families to be able to keep the lights on and have reliable heat to stay safe at home," Padilla said in a statement. "Thanks to the American Rescue Plan, California is receiving hundreds of millions of dollars to help hardworking families with the cost of heating and other utilities this winter." The American Rescue Plan more than doubled LIHEAP funding, and these funds represent the program's largest appropriation since it was established in 1981. "Thanks to this additional funding, more families will be able to stay warm by avoiding devastating power shutoffs and receiving assistance in weatherizing their homes," Feinstein said in a statement. ○

COVID-19 surge limits visitation at county hospitals

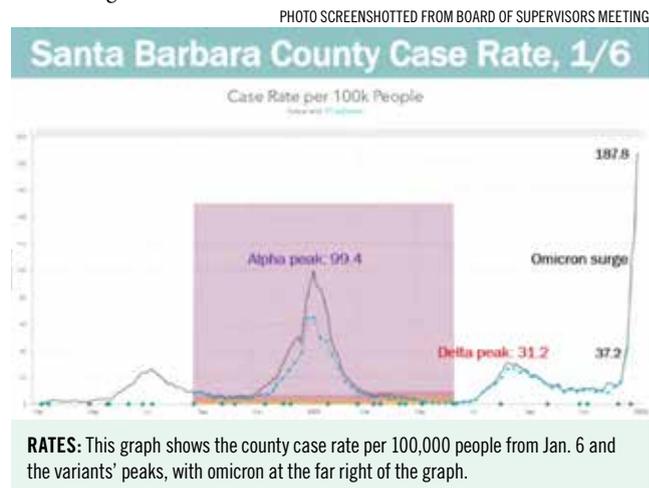
Santa Barbara County Public Health Director Dr. Van Do-Reyonoso reported a record-breaking 1,325 COVID-19 cases on a single day (Jan. 8) in her pandemic update to the Board of Supervisors on Jan. 11.

She told supervisors that the county had 6,513 active COVID-19 cases, 87 patients were hospitalized with COVID-19, and 10 were in the ICU as of Jan. 10.

Santa Barbara County Department of Public Health officials told the *Sun* via email that the county's experiencing the highest case counts they've seen in the entire pandemic, with 58,847 total cases to date. The current surge stems from omicron, a more contagious variant of COVID-19.

"The projections for this current surge are highly concerning. Hospital capacity will continue to be significantly impacted as we continue through January. We have not seen the peak of this surge yet, and so it is critical that every person take action to stop the spread of this virus," public health officials said in the email.

After a recently revised California Department of Public Health mandate that requires hospitals to check visitors' vaccination status or require them to have a negative COVID-19 test, Dignity Health hospitals—both in Arroyo Grande and Santa Maria—went a step further by limiting visitors due to the fast spread of the virus and staffing shortages, Marian Regional Medical Center Chief Nurse



RATES: This graph shows the county case rate per 100,000 people from Jan. 6 and the variants' peaks, with omicron at the far right of the graph.

Executive Candice Monge said.

"As you know, the omicron variant is highly contagious [and] at this time this is an extra precaution to keep them [patients, visitors, and staff] safe and healthy. We believe this limitation will limit the spread of disease. This is a fluid situation that keeps changing our visitation policy," Monge said.

Right now, patients at Marian are allowed one visitor per day with the exception of the pediatric unit, neonatal intensive care unit, and any end-of-life care planning, Monge continued.

"The number of cases remains high. As they decline we will adjust our visitation as necessary," she added.

Monge said she didn't know how many COVID-19 patients Marian was treating, but that she could say Marian's cases had been increasing while ICU admissions remained "relatively flat."

Cottage Health Hospitals also enforced a visitor restriction policy because of increasing cases.

"With the new surge of new COVID cases now rapidly spreading throughout our community, it is necessary to pause visitation at Cottage Health to best protect patients and staff. As of Jan. 5, no visitors will be allowed for most patients in the hospitals, with limited exceptions based on what clinical area and urgent need," Cottage Health officials released in a statement.

Visitors who are allowed entry need to show vaccine records or a negative COVID-19 test.

All visitors must wear a mask at all times within the facility. Cottage was treating 31 patients with COVID-19 as of Jan. 6, with one person in critical care, according to hospital data.

"This is a difficult decision, but it is critical that our hospitals maintain capacity for ongoing care. We appreciate the community's efforts to maintain safe practices, and look forward to when we can again invite visitors back into the hospitals as safely as possible," Cottage officials said.

—Taylor O'Connor

Solvang ponders closing Copenhagen Drive to vehicles permanently

On Jan. 10, Solvang reversed its directive to reopen Copenhagen Drive in downtown Solvang to cars, trucks, and motorcycles.

In mid-December, the Solvang City Council directed staff to plan for a full reopening of the road by Feb. 1. But during its Jan. 10 meeting, City Council members voted unanimously to extend the closure and continue allowing businesses to use the street for outdoor dining.

"I know I was one of the ones that said I wanted this by the first of February, but that was before omicron," Councilmember Jim Thomas said. "I just think it might be good to step back a couple of weeks before we make the final decision on what we're going to do.

"Plus, I want to hear from these folks," Thomas added, referring to the long line of community members scheduled to speak during public comment.

René Kaerskov, owner of the Danish Mill bakery in Solvang, said that keeping Copenhagen Drive closed to vehicular traffic would mirror the way many popular towns in Denmark "have converted major downtown shopping streets into pedestrian streets."

ElseMarie Petersen, manager of the Copenhagen House, said she has noticed visitors staying downtown later in the evening, thanks to pedestrians' ability to roam Copenhagen Drive freely.

"Solvang has—in all the years that I've lived here, almost 35 years now—struggled with an empty downtown after 5 to 5:30 p.m.," Petersen said. "Again and again, we've had to hear, 'This town is dead after 5,' and, 'What is there to do?' Now you see people walking the streets into the evening, and the town is full of life."

Eric Hutchins, a 10-year resident of Solvang, argued that reopening Copenhagen Drive to vehicles would force restaurants and tasting rooms with on-street seating to either lose revenue or unsafely raise their capacity limits on indoor dining.

"Now is not the time to risk the health and safety of visitors, workers like myself, and business owners by taking away outdoor dining," Hutchins said. "On the other hand, if the City Council forces businesses to serve inside, in order to keep from going out of business, and someone becomes seriously ill or dies, it is arguable that the council's actions are the enabling cause of this tragedy?"

"I think we have to ask which of the following headlines we would like to see on the front page of the *Los Angeles Times*: 'City of Solvang remains open for outdoor dining and wine tasting' or 'City of Solvang forces visitors to eat and taste wine indoors while COVID cases continue to rise?'" Hutchins continued.

Before voting to extend the road's traffic closure indefinitely, City Council members directed staff to work with Copenhagen Drive business owners and research the potential permanent closure.

Mayor Pro Tem Claudia Orona said it will be

easier to make a more concrete decision "based on actual data and not just anecdotes."

—Caleb Wiseblood

High school district denies liability in abuse lawsuit

Former Pioneer Valley High School math teacher Michael Cardoza was sentenced to 16 years in prison after being convicted in 2008 of child molestation and oral copulation with a minor. Thirteen years later, survivor James McDaniel is asking for damages in a recently filed lawsuit accusing the school district of failing to protect its students.

The Santa Maria Joint Union High School District responded to McDaniel's September 2021 lawsuit by denying all its claims and asserting that McDaniel shares blame in the abuse, one of McDaniel's attorneys, Brian Williams, said.

"He can't share fault with this; he was a minor. It can't be his fault, and it's just a horrible thing to say. It revictimizes him," Williams said. "Every parent at the school district should be concerned because it promotes a culture of silence. If another student gets the understanding they will be blamed, how will they come forward?" Williams said.

This lawsuit comes after a state law change allowing childhood sexual abuse victims the opportunity to file a civil lawsuit until Dec. 31, 2022, Williams said. And the district filed its response in late December.

In those court documents, the school district denies that McDaniel suffered emotional distress, injuries, or damage from the abuse he received as a 16-year-old.

"This answering defendant denies plaintiff suffered any injury or damage whatsoever, and further denies this answering defendant is liable to plaintiff for any injury or damage claimed, or for any injury or damage whatsoever," the district's response stated.

This is a defense Williams said he's never seen before.

"How can you say that he suffered no injury or damage after reading the graphic abuse in the complaint? We know the abuse happened and occurred, to say he didn't suffer any damage is not OK. It's a public school district that's supposed to be staffed to serve the benefit of those students; I just can't believe a public school district would say something like this," he said.

Cardoza had a history of sexual abuse prior to his arrival at Pioneer Valley High School, according to the lawsuit filed in September 2021. In the early 1990s, he worked as an altar boy coordinator at St. Mary's Church in Visalia, California, where, the lawsuit states, he engaged in inappropriate behavior with other minors. He later applied to the Mount Angel Seminary to become a priest, but the lawsuit alleges Cardoza was dismissed in 1995 after church officials discovered his abusive actions.

The Santa Maria Joint Union High School District hired Cardoza to work at Santa Maria High School in 1997, where he sexually abused students, the suit states. After transferring to Pioneer Valley High School in 2004, Cardoza assaulted McDaniel in 2006.

"This is a lawsuit designed to address the clear negligence of hiring a teacher with a clear background in abuse, and the school district didn't monitor him enough to allow this to happen. James [McDaniel] was the one brave enough to come forward and go to the cops, and yet he's the one being blamed for it," Williams said. "I have to tell my client the defenses being raised; it's a terrible conversation to have, and now they are saying it's [his] fault. It's hard enough for survivors to come forward, but to be blamed makes it worse."

District Public Information Officer Kenny Klein sent a statement about the lawsuit to the *Sun* via email.

"We are aware of the lawsuit, though we have no comment at this time," Klein said. ○

—Taylor O'Connor

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Photo: Chuck Graham

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A 'huge impact'

Marian Regional Medical Center volunteers work with visitors, staff, and patients to alleviate stress and give back to their community

BY TAYLOR O'CONNOR

When Caroline Woods found out her father was diagnosed with cancer, she discovered she wanted to help people in similar situations. "I was with my mother, out of town, in a hospital where my father was diagnosed with lung cancer. We were terrified and we were kind of lost; it was a big city hospital. ... I wanted to help people find all sorts of things they needed to know, but don't ask a nurse or a doctor those questions," Woods said.



Once a Santa Maria school teacher and Orcutt substitute teacher, Woods found a home at Marian Regional Medical Center's Volunteer Office where she's been volunteering for the past 30 years, Woods said.

"People all over the hospital would call us to discharge patients, run down to the basement and deliver supplies to nurses' stations, and we would run paperwork to nurses before a good computer system was put in. This was in the mid '90s," she said. "Since COVID we are in limited areas, but doing the same things."

Volunteers at Marian do everything that doesn't require a nursing degree, like being there to support visitors and patients, cleaning and restocking nurses' stations, discharging patients, and conducting temperature checks, Woods said. Her main job is at the

outpatient desk, where she and a hospital employee help check in people and help them navigate the hospital.

"People that come in [to the hospital] are nervous or afraid; they are sick coming in for infusions or surgery. They are not doing their best, and if I can get a twinkle in their eye, I feel like I've done something," Woods said. "It boils down to service and giving back."

Marian offers a wide variety of volunteer opportunities like helping out in the lobby, escorting people to different parts of the hospital, and setting up the baby bassinets, said volunteer coordinator Colleen Twomey.

"Not only do we have adult volunteers during the day, we have volun-teens working in the afternoons and evenings for extended hours in the afternoon and on weekends when the adults don't normally work," Twomey said.

Four-legged friends can also volunteer through pet therapy opportunities, she added.

"I cannot tell you how much the staff needs this, just the comfort of a dog. Our handlers take the dogs up and down the hallways, go into our offices, and meet and greet as many people as possible," Twomey said. "These are people bringing in their own dogs that are trained as pet



VOLUNTEERS: Marian volunteers typically work four hours each day and receive a free lunch after their shift.

therapy animals to receive love from the employees and give love back to them.

"Staff will bury their faces in the dog's hair; that's what they need. It's just a little bit of comfort."

Volunteers are required to be vaccinated against COVID-19, and also required to eventually receive the booster shot once the six-month waiting period is up. Medical exemptions are available, but Twomey said it's best for everyone to be fully vaccinated to be as safe as possible. Volunteers are also required to wear a mask during their volunteer shift.

For those who want to help but don't want to take the risk of coming into a hospital, there are volunteer groups that work off-site making crocheted blankets and hats for babies and cancer patients.

VOLUNTEERS continued page 8

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VOLUNTEERS from page 6

“I feel that working in a hospital is maybe one of the safer places to be because everybody is wearing a mask, everybody’s using hand sanitizer, everybody’s wiping down their stations, and employees are highly encouraged to stay home if they are sick,” Twomey said. “We want the volunteers to feel comfortable; we don’t pay them enough to do anything they don’t want to do. We want them in a job that they like doing.”

Right now, Twomey estimates there are about 115 volunteers at the Santa Maria facility and 35 at the Arroyo Grande location, making a total of 150 volunteers. Prior to COVID-19, there were about 350 total. Hospital employees felt a heavier shift in their workload when the pandemic first cut out the volunteer program entirely, she noted.

“I can’t tell you how much the staff relied on the volunteers, from discharging patients, to the baby bundles, and the waiting rooms. There was such an impact when we went from 300 volunteers to none. People were like, ‘What do we do now?’ It [had] a huge impact on the hospital,” Twomey said.



‘There was such an impact when we went from 300 volunteers to none. People were like, “What do we do now?”’

Colleen Twomey, Marian Regional Medical Center volunteer coordinator

couldn’t be there. It was frustrating,” she said. “Colleen made sure we knew the minute that vaccines would be available so we could come down for the vaccination days because she wanted us as much as we wanted to come back.”

Woods hears from retired volunteers who say they miss being a part of Marian, and she said hospitals are a great place to volunteer. “It’s a little community out here,” she said. “I’ve enjoyed these days when I’m sitting at a desk helping a hospital employee. Employees are wonderful, and people are so grateful when you smile and show them where to go. It just takes away a lot of their anxiety. ... I’ll keep doing it until they throw me out.”

Reach Staff Writer Taylor O’Connor at toconnor@santamariasun.com.

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Natural stewards

Los Padres Forest Association volunteers with a passion for the outdoors help maintain local backcountry trails and more

BY PETER JOHNSON

In the tranquility of the Los Padres National Forest at sunrise, the camp cook wakes up, rolls out of a tent, and starts prepping coffee, breakfast, and bagged lunches.

After fuel and caffeine, a small army of about 20 volunteers is ready to start their day in the vast and wild Los Padres backcountry—a forest that encompasses 1.75 million acres of the Central Coast.

Their mission for the next seven to 10 days is to help restore whatever trail or trails they've targeted for that expedition, whether it's in the Sespe Wilderness of Ventura County or Figueroa Mountain in Santa Barbara County.

"We get tons and tons of work done," said Bryan Conant, executive director of the Los Padres Forest Association (LPFA), a 33-year-old nonprofit that oversees various volunteer projects in the forest. "It's usually just trail work, mostly cutting back brush, clearing trees, and redefining the tread on trails."

These "work vacations," as they're called, take place two to four times per year, generate up to 1,000 cumulative hours of volunteer labor, and are the most popular offering for volunteers with the LPFA.

What's the payoff? A vastly improved Los Padres trail system, a chance to connect with the forest and its stewards, and a huge sense of satisfaction.

"At the end of the day, you get to see what you accomplished as a group, as an individual, as a team. And it's there," Conant said. "It's like wow, earlier today we had to crawl through this, and now we can just walk through it like a normal trail."

Conant has led his fair share of work



ENJOY THE VIEWS: Two volunteers with the Los Padres Forest Association take a break to enjoy views of the rugged mountains.

vacations—having started with the LPFA in 2005 as a volunteer, before convincing the nonprofit's board in 2013 to hire its first-ever executive director ("I'm living the dream," he said).

A man infected with "Los Padres-itis," as he calls it, Conant just can't get enough of the forest. The second largest in the state, spanning five counties, Los Padres is so vast and diverse that there's always something new to discover and fall in love with, he said.

"There are a lot of different flavors," said Conant, a Santa Barbara County resident. "The Sespe [Wilderness] has its own flavor. It's got more dramatic mountains but it's drier. And San Luis has nice rolling grassy hills with oaks and—I love the San Luis backcountry. I've just started learning about it in the last five years and I've kind fallen in love with it."

It's that passion for the forest—and the outdoors in general—that draws volunteers from up and down the Central Coast to contribute to LPFA-led projects. Those volunteers run the spectrum of age, but the most dedicated workers tend to be in their 50s, 60s, and 70s, since they often have more time available, Conant said.

"I think most people in their 30s are having families and are busy with that sort of thing. And then you see them start popping back again in their 40s," he said.

According to an LPFA 2021 year-end blog post,

volunteers donated 23,000 hours of combined time to the forest last year—quite a feat given the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. And their contributions weren't just on trails. LPFA workers removed graffiti, repaired campgrounds, helped create and distribute educational material to those visiting the Los Padres, and more.

"It's not just going on a trail and swinging a tool, though that's what most volunteers do," Conant said. "We also have volunteers who go out and interact with the public, work with the visitors centers, do cleanups or graffiti removals, install signs, or work with scout groups."

Conant said that over the years, the LPFA has become more of a partner agency to the U.S. Forest Service, the federal agency that's in charge of the Los Padres National Forest. The two groups work hand in hand these days.

"We're in constant contact with them," he said. "We've actually developed a really close relationship with them and have garnered their trust, especially in the last couple years. They are trusting us with a lot more than what we've been able to do in the past."

LPFA's growing list of responsibilities in the forest range from doing campground renovations, to taking on more advanced projects, like a recent fencing project in SLO County to block motorcyclists from accessing wilderness areas around High Mountain Road, near Lopez Lake.

Given LPFA's increasing role, Conant said the nonprofit is always looking for new volunteers with niche skills and expertise to help bolster the organization.

"Constantly getting new people with new skills [allows us] to provide more for the Forest Service," he explained.

One of Conant's goals for 2022 and beyond is to pursue more forest projects in the SLO County region of the Los Padres—whether in the Santa Lucia mountain range or on the Big Sur coast.

"Most of our volunteer projects are based in Santa Barbara and Ventura, but we are starting to branch out into San Luis," Conant said. "We have couple of volunteers who are interested in starting lead more regular volunteer projects out there."

Conant noted that there are fewer Los Padres-centered volunteer groups in SLO County.

"San Luis has CCCMB [Central Coast Concerned Mountain Bikers], which is a very good organization for mountain bikes, but there's not a whole lot of people caring for the wilderness areas Conant said. "Fortunately for San Luis, there has been a whole lot of fires in the backcountry, and fires are what really cause trail damage. It sparks this mad regrowth in the trail and all of a sudden those trails get completely overgrown again. In San Luis, the trails are in generally pretty good shape compared to a lot of the other parts of the forest, but we're really looking forward to developing more frequent volunteer work there."

Whatever projects LPFA takes on in the future—from 10-day work vacations in the backcountry, to short, weekend day trips—its success will depend on maintaining a base of dedicated, passionate volunteers.

"Volunteers are the lifeblood," Conant said. "They are the heart; they are the soul; they are everything." ○

Assistant Editor Peter Johnson can be reached at pjohnson@newtimesslo.com.

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FILE PHOTO BY KASEY BUBNASH

AGUILLION, JOHN TALLGRASS, 41, of Santa Maria passed away 1/5/2022 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

ALCALA, MARCOS, 27, of Santa Maria passed away 1/6/2022 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

ATTIG, JOHN WESLEY, 80, of Santa Maria passed away 1/8/2022 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

BARBOSA, CONSTANTINO JR., 66, of Santa Maria passed away 1/10/2022 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

BATTLE, WILLIE J., 67, of Lompoc passed away 12/28/2021 arrangements with Starbuck-Lind Mortuary

BORGES, MARGARIDA R., 81, of Santa Maria passed away 1/4/2022 arrangements with Magner Maloney Funeral Home

DAVIS, CLARK THOMAS, 89, of Morro Bay passed away 12/29/2021 arrangements with Los Osos Valley Mortuary

DAVIS, WILT, of Santa Maria passed away 12/29/2021 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

DE ARMOND, ROBERT, 80, of Santa Maria passed away 1/8/2022 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

DUCAV, CAROLINA C., 87, of Santa Maria passed away 1/2/2022 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

FOX, JOHN HENRY JR., 92, of Santa Mariapassed away 1/9/2022 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

GOLLABA, CARMELITA GALANG, 87, of Santa Maria passed away 12/31/2021 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

JAMES, PARALEE, 95, of Santa Maria passed away 1/10/2022 arrangements with Magner Maloney Funeral Home

JIMENEZ, ARMANDO DAVID, 54, of Oceano passed away 12/27/2021 arrangements with Marshall Spoo Sunset Funeral Chapel

JOSEPH, JACK LEE, 77, of Arroyo Grande passed away 12/24/2021 arrangements with Marshall Spoo Sunset Funeral Chapel

KERSCHREITER, JANET Y., 80, of Santa Maria passed away 1/3/2022 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

LARSEN, JENNIFER LEA, 74, of Santa Maria passed away 1/6/2022 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

LONGEST, NANCY LOU, 73, of Nipomo passed away 1/5/2022 arrangements with Magner Maloney Funeral Home

MANGAPIT, CONRADO L., 99, of Guadalupe passed away 1/8/2022 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

MAYFIELD, BARBARA GENE, 82, of Nipomo passed away 12/23/2021 arrangements with Marshall Spoo Sunset Funeral Chapel

MILLER, RICHARD ANTHONY, 69, of Los Osos passed away 12/24/2021 arrangements with Los Osos Valley Mortuary

PAPPAS, RODNEY JAMES, 61, of Arroyo Grande passed away 1/1/2022 arrangements with Marshall Spoo Sunset Funeral Chapel

PAULS, NELSON, 85, of Paso Robles passed away 1/4/2022 arrangements with Chapel of the Roses

PEARCE, RICHARD "BARRY", 89, of Los Osos passed away 12/18/2021 Scattered at Sea by The Neptune Society

PETERSON, LEE WHITEMORE, 81, of Paso Robles passed away 1/5/2022 arrangements with Chapel of the Roses

PHILLIPS, CHARLES "CHUCK" E., 91, of Santa Maria passed away 1/5/2022 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

ROBLES, JOSE DE JESUS, 86, of Santa Maria passed away 1/3/2022 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

ROMERO, DARLENE ORTIZ TEAFORD, 71, of Lompoc passed away 1/9/2022 arrangements with Starbuck-Lind Mortuary

SCOLARI, LEROY, 89, of Lompoc passed away 1/1/2022 arrangements with Starbuck-Lind Mortuary

SHANER, MARGARET A., 92, of Burbank passed away 12/29/2021 arrangements with Los Osos Valley Mortuary

SINGH, LILI FE YANORIA "BING", 53, of San Luis Obispo, passed away 1/4/2022 arrangements with Lady Family Mortuary

SOTO, MELISSA R., 43, of Santa Maria passed away 1/2/2022 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

SWEET, BETTY JEAN, 90, of Santa Maria passed away 1/9/2022 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

THORNTON, HARRY, 94, of Morro Bay passed away 12/31/2021 arrangements with Blue Sky Cremation Service

TUMBAGA, PERLITA, 77, of Santa Maria passed away 1/2/2022 arrangements with Los Osos Valley Mortuary

VAN DYKE, MARTIN ANDRES, 69, of Lompoc passed away 1/3/2022 arrangements with Starbuck-Lind Mortuary

VOIGT, PAULA JEAN, 80, of Paso Robles passed away 1/3/2022 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

YORK, SAMMY MILTON, 72, of Sparks, Nevada passed away 12/21/2021 arrangements with Marshall Spoo Sunset Funeral Chapel



FREQUENT SPOTS: During the 2019 Homeless Point-In-Time Count, volunteers were directed to stop at places like 7-Eleven (West Stowell Road location pictured) because people experiencing homelessness tend to spend time at those establishments.

Numbers matter

The annual Santa Barbara County homeless Point-In-Time Count needs volunteers

BY TAYLOR O'CONNOR

After a pause in 2021, the annual Santa Barbara County homeless Point-In-Time Count is returning with the goal of getting 300 to 400 volunteers to participate in the data-gathering process, Housing Program Specialist Jett Black-Maertz said.

During the last 10 days in January, counties across the nation participate in the Point-In-Time Count, when the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) is required to count individual people experiencing homelessness. This will be the first year the count's been conducted since the pandemic began, Black-Maertz said.

"We want to find out how COVID has impacted our unstably housed or unhoused populations. HUD provided a waiver in 2021, but not this year," Black-Maertz said.

Volunteers throughout the county on Jan. 26 will ask individuals experiencing homelessness questions about their last known permanent address, where they first experienced homelessness, if they haven't been able to work because of a disability, and if COVID-19 caused job or shelter loss, she said.

"We got a lot of questions in the past because there was this myth that people were coming from outside the county for our services. Any community you speak to says that. It's not that Santa Barbara has any weaker or stronger services, but it's this idea of 'othering.' It's this idea [that] they aren't coming from here; it's a sociological phenomenon," Black-Maertz said.

The 2020 count showed that of the 1,897 homeless individuals residing in the county, more than 75 percent of the homeless population had their last known permanent address in Santa Barbara County, she continued.

"It's the people that are living here that are becoming homeless. It's due to the cost of living and the availability of housing," Black-Maertz said. "We are not able to build affordable housing fast enough to house all of the people that need it. Our housing authorities work very closely with nonprofits and for-profit, but the cost of building is so high it's difficult to move projects forward as quickly as we need to."

Collecting this data will help demonstrate the county's need, inform projects—like the Homelessness Encampment Protocol—and get project funding, she said.

"Funding stems from the data collecting we do; it's one

of the things considered when allocating funds locally. It's important we get it right and [resolve] so many misconceptions," Black-Maertz said. "The Point-In-Time Count is so important to our area."

This is a chance for volunteers to make connections and give back to their community, she said.

"It gives people the opportunities to understand why people are homeless, and to see that they are people. They didn't just spring out of nowhere, they have a past. The volunteer is able to witness the other side of humanity that I think we [often] shelter ourselves from," Black-Maertz added.

The Point-In-Time Count is one of the safer volunteer opportunities because it's outdoors and people can choose a group option when signing up to work with those who they're already in close contact with, she said.

"We are pushing for groups. ... It doesn't mean we are excluding individuals, but they are going to be in contact with people they don't know. By asking people to form their own teams, we are hoping to decrease the chances of transmission," Black-Maertz said.

As of Jan. 5, about 200 people had signed up to volunteer, Black-Maertz estimated.

"We do need a massive amount of volunteers. Everyone counts, and we can't do that without a large number of volunteers," Black-Maertz said. "It's so important [to know] where and how we allocate services. If we don't have enough volunteers, we won't be able to see where the need is. They help us understand our community so much more than without them. We couldn't do this without them."

The count begins at 5:30 a.m. on Jan. 26. Volunteers will arrive at group centers across cities in the county to check in and receive hygiene bags to hand out. All volunteers will get a mask and hand sanitizer upon arrival.

Volunteers can learn more and sign up at countyofsb.pointintime.info.

Highlight

• On Jan. 15 from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m., the Santa Maria Public Library will host a do-it-yourself workshop on making salt and sugar scrubs. Guests will learn how to mix natural ingredients to make two different homemade body scrubs. Salt and sugar scrubs work to remove dead skin cells from the body, cleaning and smoothing the skin. All materials will be provided. Seating is limited, and registration is required. To register, visit the library's online events calendar at

cityofsantamaria.org/library, or by calling (805) 925-0994, Ext. 8562. The library is located at 421 South McClelland St. ○

Taylor O'Connor wrote this week's Spotlight. You can reach her at tconnor@santamariasun.com.

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Online Poll

What new law are you excited to see take effect in 2022?

- 43% Keeping to-go cocktails from restaurants!
- 26% Decertification for bad cops—finally more accountability.
- 19% Universal vote-by-mail—elections need to stay accessible.
- 12% The \$15 minimum wage.

16 Votes

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Taxpayers' headache

High pension risk in Lompoc affects the future of public projects citywide

BY RON FINK

Lompoc taxpayers and those in many other cities of the county have a problem: The Public Employee Retirement System (CalPERS) is underfunded. This should concern everyone, and I'll explain why.

CalPERS was created to provide public (government) employees with a retirement fund paid by employee and taxpayer contributions. It replaces the federal Social Security program, which is funded by employee and employer contributions from money earned working for a private sector employer.

But, while a nongovernment employee pays 6.2 percent, some Lompoc employees pay as much as 14 percent, and the majority pay at least 9 percent from wages paid for by taxpayers. However, if you add what many private sector employees add to their 401K to subsidize Social Security each pay period, it averages out about the same.

The Santa Barbara County grand jury investigated the health of the CalPERS system; its conclusion wasn't very optimistic for us taxpayers. The grand jury observed that "each year, employers within the CalPERS pension fund are required to make contributions to the fund. These contributions are made up of two components, the employer normal cost and a payment that represents amortization of the unfunded accrued liability (UAL)."

These payments are composed of two components: the negotiated employee contribution and the employer (taxpayer) contribution.

The grand jury also reported that "counties and cities have the option to administer their pension plans, but the costs and risks associated with doing so make using an outside

administrator more attractive. In California, most counties and cities that have decided not to administer their own pension plans use CalPERS."

But reliable sources say that once in the system, the only way out is to pay off the current balance owed.

There are eight incorporated cities in the county; all are using the CalPERS administered system. The 2017-18 jury found "the highest risks are in the plans of Lompoc, the city of Santa Barbara, and Santa Maria, which are the largest in the county." The county manages its own system, and in the 2017-18 report the grand jury found that the financial risk was "moderate and well managed."

The amount of risk is very important since it impacts the interest rate Lompoc must pay if the City Council decides to fund any improvements using municipal bonds.

Unfunded accrued liabilities (UAL) are an important measure of how much trouble a government is in concerning their pension obligations. The grand jury found that "Lompoc, the city of Santa Barbara, Santa Maria, and the county have higher per capita UALs than the remaining cities, suggesting there could be a higher strain on those communities than on those with lesser per capita UALs. Also, the cities of Lompoc, Santa Barbara, and Santa Maria have significantly higher estimated total employer (taxpayer) contributions than the other cities."

That's not good. Basically, it means that an increasing amount of the taxes we pay

to provide needed services and maintain city infrastructure is being used to subsidize the retirement system. A table in the 2021 report clearly demonstrates that with 51.4 percent of the projected Lompoc payroll going to CalPERS contributions, it is the highest in the county.

So, the grand jury found that in the four years since it last looked at retirement system risk, not much has improved. The jury found that "the cities of Lompoc, Santa Barbara, and Santa Maria are at higher potential pension plan solvency risk."

In all fairness, the CalPERS system was only 70.8 percent funded in fiscal year 2019-20, while Lompoc is lower at 68 percent in 2020.

I guess because it's neither improved nor gotten worse either, it's relatively stable.

They also recommended that each City Council "develop and publish a comprehensive plan by June 30, 2022, addressing their pension plans and how they intend to properly assure future obligations are paid when due, without impacting the timely delivery of essential and promised services to residents."

The amount of risk is very important since it impacts the interest rate Lompoc must pay if the City Council decides to fund any improvements using municipal bonds.

However, an incredibly reliable source says, "For instance, their (CalPERS) refusal to allow local jurisdictions to place new hires under a 401K plan, as opposed to requiring local jurisdictions to add new hires to the CalPERS pool, has prevented member agencies from radically reducing retirement contribution costs. That act alone—allowing new hires to be placed in a 401K plan rather than CalPERS—would free up significant funds that would accelerate UAL paydowns."

The city of Lompoc has taken some steps to lower future risk. Like many other cities, Lompoc has a tiered retirement system, which was agreed to by employee union groups. What that means is that new employees will receive a lesser benefit than heritage employees and will contribute more toward their retirement.

A couple of years ago, Lompoc voters approved a 1 percent sales tax increase; the council majority then used a large portion of it to initiate a CalPERS contribution "fresh start" by locking in increased payments for 15 years. The CalPERS rate of return, like those in your own 401K retirement fund, is doing well, but a person knowledgeable of the subject says, "The earliest those returns would benefit the city's contributions would be 2029."

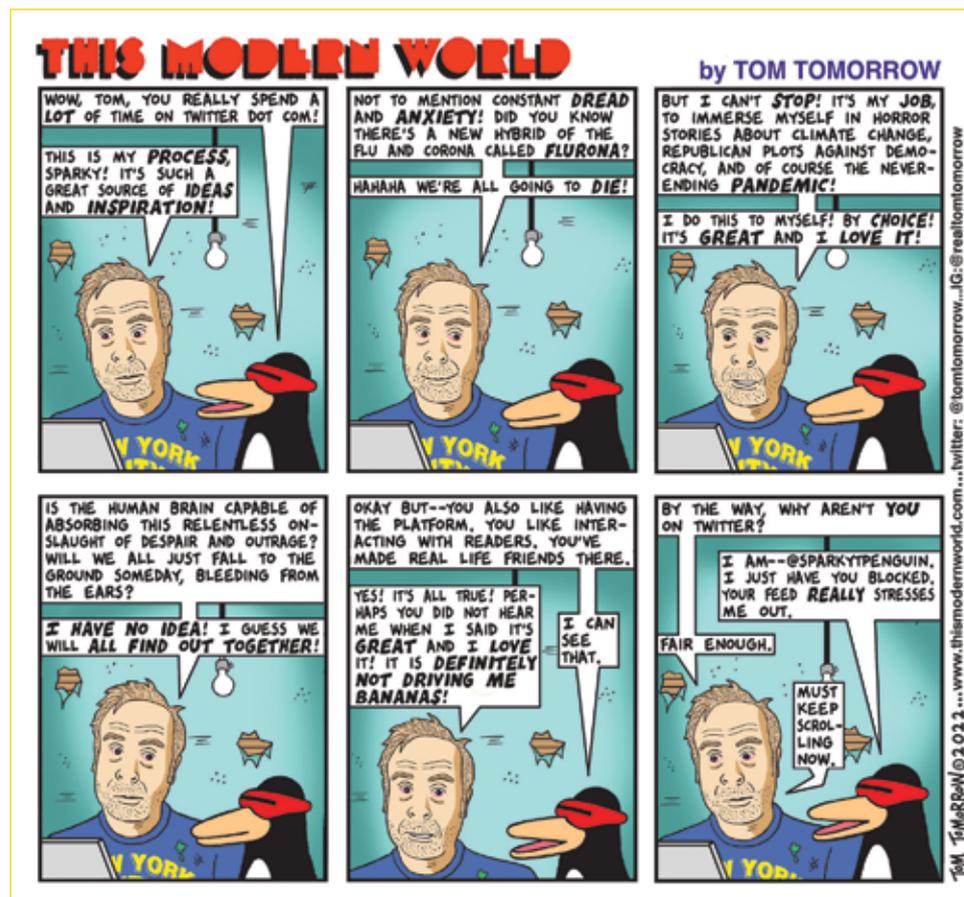
Another recently passed cannabis manufacturing tax will add more revenue to our cash-strapped city coffers.

So, will the city provide the plan recommended by the grand jury? The short answer is yes. However, I am guessing they will simply reiterate what they already are planning to do as a solution. Should employees worry about receiving their retirement benefits? The short answer is no, since taxpayers subsidize their retirement fund from taxes collected to provide services, and more funds would be diverted from tangible improvements to CalPERS.

In a few years, the grand jury will once again examine this issue; my hunch is it will once again find "the highest risks are in the plans of Lompoc, the city of Santa Barbara, and Santa Maria, which are the largest in the county." ○

Ron Fink writes to the Sun from Lompoc. Send a response for publication to letters@santamariasun.com.

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Media matters

Copenhagen Drive in Solvang is reopening to vehicle traffic on Feb. 2, according to the *Santa Barbara News Press*.

According to the *Sun's* reporting, it most certainly is not. In fact, the **Solvang City Council** is now considering potentially keeping the city's main downtown drag closed to trucks, trailers, cars, and buses in perpetuity.

Ooh. So who's right?

Considering the *Sun* story attributes its information to the City Council meeting where the decision was made as well as public commenters and council members who attended the meeting, and the only attribution in the *News-Press* story was "as reported by news channels ABC3, CBS12, and Fox11," I'd say this little newspaper has it in the bag!

So what have we learned? Copying "news" reporting from television stations is not a replacement for watching a good, old fashioned City Council meeting. I get it though; times are hard. Not enough staffers, too much news to report, too much of a rush to get information out—first.

I'm not trying to be the pot that called the kettle black—I'm just trying to be the canary who sings and stings. Listen up, people!

I'm betting that story, which is very short and lacking details, came out before the City Council meeting even took place on Jan. 10, before a good number of city residents asked council members—who were considering reopening the street—to keep it closed and walkable.

Business owners were all about keeping that street for pedestrians only. It's relaxing, jovial, and

full of people after 5 p.m.

"The town is full of life," Copenhagen House owner **ElseMarie Petersen** told council members. I'm into it! Keep Solvang walkable!

And while some business owners kept things reasonably polite during public comment, one resident relied on fear to make his point.

"We have to ask which of the following headlines we would like to see on the front page of the *Los Angeles Times*: 'City of Solvang remains open for dining and wine tasting' or 'City of Solvang forces visitors to eat and taste wine indoors while COVID cases continue to rise'?" **Eric Hutchins** asked.

Well, aren't you dramatic! Wait, there's no such thing as bad publicity, right?

First of all: A more appropriate threat would have included the *Santa Barbara News-Press*, duh! I'm pretty sure Solvang wouldn't make the *LA Times* front page with "news" like that. The city isn't that important to Los Angelenos, although I dare say Los Angelenos are that important to Solvang.

Second of all: Either way, Solvang would "remain open" for "dining and wine tasting," as the city hasn't ever really shut down, even when the pandemic first swept through the Central Coast.

And lastly: Any newspaper worth its salt would only use the phrase "forces visitors" if a city was kidnapping residents from other areas and busing them into the city, demanding money and shoving food and wine down their throats. Oh boy, what a story that would be.

I can see it now: "Solvang runs low on transient occupancy tax, forces 'visitors' to come by bus." ☺

The canary is into food, wine, and visitors. Send comments to canary@santamariasun.com.



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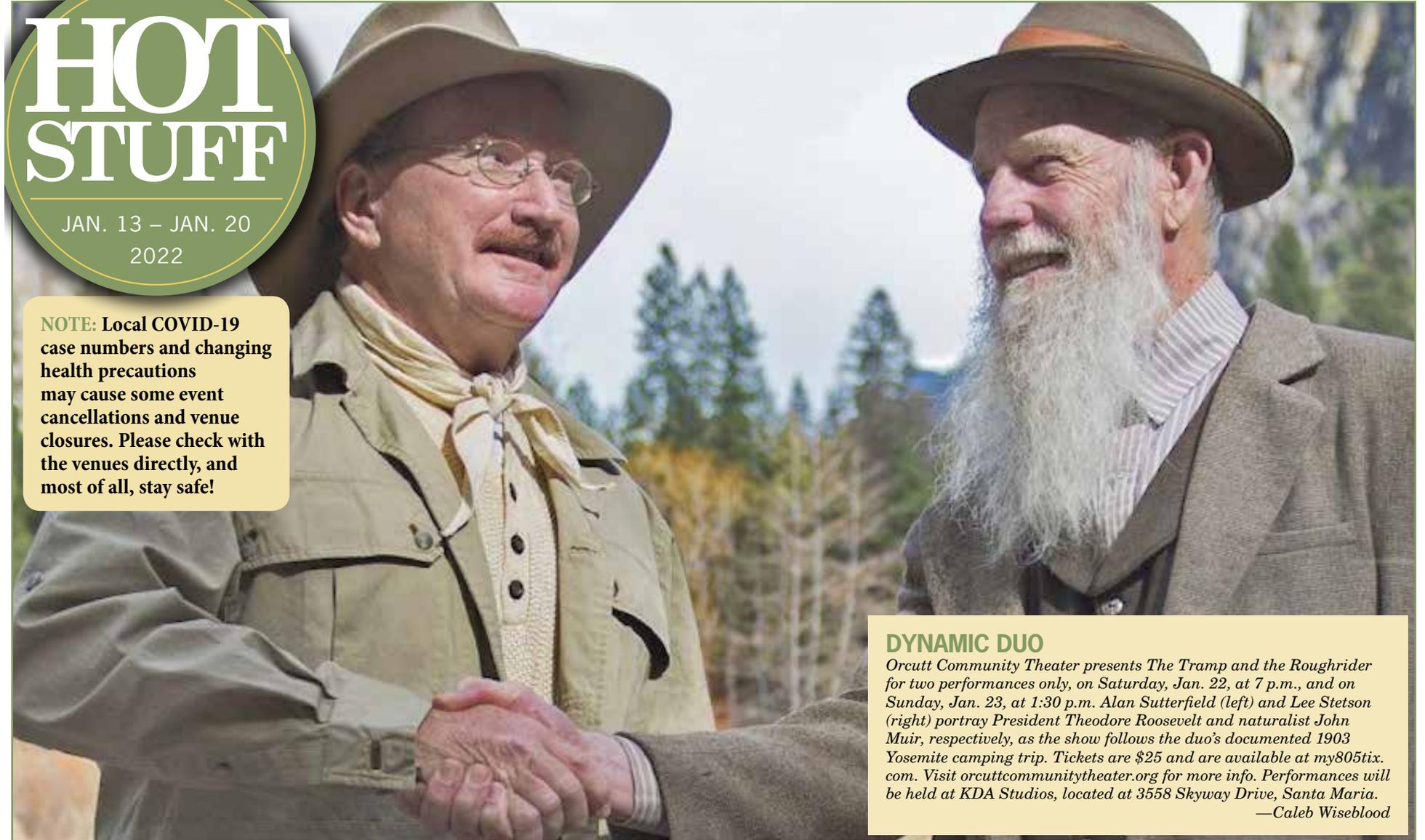
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DYNAMIC DUO

Orcutt Community Theater presents *The Tramp and the Roughrider* for two performances only, on Saturday, Jan. 22, at 7 p.m., and on Sunday, Jan. 23, at 1:30 p.m. Alan Sutterfield (left) and Lee Stetson (right) portray President Theodore Roosevelt and naturalist John Muir, respectively, as the show follows the duo's documented 1903 Yosemite camping trip. Tickets are \$25 and are available at my805tix.com. Visit orcuttcommunitytheater.org for more info. Performances will be held at KDA Studios, located at 3558 Skyway Drive, Santa Maria.

—Caleb Wiseblood

PHOTO COURTESY OF LEE TERKELSEN

ARTS

SANTA YNEZ VALLEY

FABLES, FOIBLES, AND FAIRYTALES BY ARTIST SUSAN READ CRONIN Bronze sculptures with humorous and allegorical themes by local artist Susan Read Cronin. Mondays, Thursdays-Sundays, 11 a.m.-5 p.m. through April 17 Free. 805-686-1211. elverhoj.org. Elverhoj Museum of History and Art, 1624 Elverhoj Way, Solvang.

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 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 elverhoj.org. Elverhoj Museum of History and Art, 1624 Elverhoj Way, Solvang, 805-686-1211.

SANTA MARIA VALLEY/LOS ALAMOS

THE FULL MONTY: THE MUSICAL This theatrical adaptation of the popular 1997 film follows a group of unemployed men that decide to become male strippers to make some quick cash. The show is described as an upbeat comedy full of honest affection and engaging melodies. Jan. 14-30 805-922-4442. my805tix.com. Santa Maria Civic Theatre, 1660 N. McClelland St., Santa Maria.

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 Free. 805 925-0994 x 2832. Santa Maria Public Library, 421 S. McClelland St., Santa Maria.

SUBMIT YOUR EVENTS

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. 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.

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.

THE TRAMP AND THE ROUGHRIDER Join Teddy Roosevelt and John Muir on this fact-based camping trip to Yosemite Park. These characters had sharp disagreements on hunting, animal rights, and forest management while enjoying each others company. This production has toured for over 20 years, and is a fundraiser for OCT. Jan. 22, 7-8:30 p.m. and Jan. 23, 1:30-3 p.m. \$25. 805-268-5969. orcuttcommunitytheater.org. Orcutt Community Theater (Klein Dance Arts), 3546 Skyway Dr, Bldg. 1, Suite A, Orcutt.

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.

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.

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 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.

PERCUSSIVE DANCE CLASSES Come and dance with us. Clogging is a similar to tap dancing and it's fun and easy to learn. Have fun dancing to all sorts of music, meet people, and get great exercise! No partners required. Adults and kids ages 8 and over. Thursdays, 10-midnight through May 26 \$20/month. 805-975-6601. Heritage Square Park, 201 Nelson St., 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, 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.

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.

ALLOY: IDEAS AND INFLUENCE Group exhibition of contemporary cast metal featuring works by Margaret Korisheli, nicolalee, Paula Zima, Randall Johnson, Elizabeth Dorbad, Ariane Leiter, Marcia Harvey, and Barry Frantz. Tuesdays-Fridays, 11 a.m.-4 p.m. through Jan. 28 Free. 805-546-3202. cuesta.edu/student/campuslife/artgallery/index.html. Harold J. Miozzi Gallery, Highway 1, San Luis Obispo.

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 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, 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.

I'D TELL YOU IF I COULD Paintings and works on paper by London-based artist William Brickel. Through Feb. 6, 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, 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. artcentralso.com/gallery/. Art Central, 1329 Monterey St., San Luis Obispo.

MARIAH SCHWARTZ: ART SHOW Showcasing the electrifying, vibrant, imaginative, and colorful art of Mariah Schwartz. Come meet the artist on Jan. 14, from

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BOB'S BEATS

The Lompoc Senior's Club presents its Senior Dance at the Dick DeWees Community Center on Sunday, Jan. 16, from 2:30 to 4:30 p.m. The event will feature live music from the Riptide Big Band and accompanying vocalist Bob Nations (pictured). Admission is free, but a donation of \$3 is suggested. Funding for the event was provided by the Community Foundation of SLO County. Email lompocseniorclub@yahoo.com for more info. The Dick DeWees Community Center is located at 1120 W. Ocean Ave., Lompoc.

—C.W.

REPRESENTATION IN FILM FRIDAYS: FREAKS SLO Library presents this topical film series highlighting issues of representation in film. Professor Paul Marchbanks of the Cal Poly English Department will introduce the featured film and facilitate discussion afterwards. **Jan. 14, 6-8 p.m.** Free. 805-781-5184. slolibrary.evanced.info/signup/calendar. San Luis Obispo Library Community Room, 995 Palm Street, San Luis Obispo.

SLO CAMERA CLUB Online Zoom meetings and competitions. Everyone is welcome. Visit site for meeting links. Second Thursday of every month Free to guest. slocameraclub.org. Online, See website, San Luis Obispo.

SLO JEWISH 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 \$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, 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.

NORTH SLO COUNTY

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.

LADIES ENCHANTED EVENING Enjoy a special evening creating a fused glass plate while drinking a bubbly beverage awaiting your turn for a personal intuitive card reading by Tiffany, owner of Oracle Atascadero. Readings will be conducted in the cozy and private loft area upstairs. **Jan. 15, 5-7 p.m.** \$150. 805-464-2633. glassheadstudio.com. Glasshead Studio, 8793 Plata Lane, Suite H, Atascadero.

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

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 MORRO BAY Join us for Art and About Morro Bay, 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 a map of locations. (Events will not occur on major holidays). Fourth Saturday of every month, 1-4 p.m. Free. 805-544-9251. artsobispo.org/art-and-about. Morro Bay (participating artists), Townwide, Morro Bay.

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

FACES OF MORRO BAY This fun workshop will feature interesting key people from the beautiful town of Morro Bay. Each session is 3 hours long with the model in one pose for two 3-hour sessions. Workshop designed for beginning to professional artists. Thursdays, 5-8 p.m. through Jan. 27 Members \$60; Non-Members \$80, for this index workshop. 805-772-2504. artcentermorrobay.org/index.php/shop/. Art Center Morro Bay, 835 Main St., Morro Bay.

FIBER ART BY GAY MCNEAL Gay's love of textiles and the fiber arts started when her mother taught her to sew when she was ten years old. Gay received a BA in Art with an emphasis in Interior and Textile Design from CSU Long Beach. Mondays, Wednesdays-Sundays, 11 a.m.-5 p.m. through Jan. 29 Free. 805-772-1068. galleryatmarinasquare.com. Gallery at Marina Square, 601 Embarcadero suite 10, Morro Bay.

FINE ART PAINTING BY MARY SUMMERS Oil painter Mary Summers, PhD, RN, has a lifelong love of the outdoors. She values capturing scenes in beautiful light, including early morning and late in the day. Her philosophy is to "follow the brush" to record the rich colors, designs, and textures of the world. Mondays, Wednesdays-Sundays, 11 a.m.-5 p.m. through Jan. 29 Free. 805-772-1068. galleryatmarinasquare.com. Gallery at Marina Square, 601 Embarcadero suite 10, Morro Bay.

FOR THE BIRDS EXHIBIT During this exhibit, you'll find bird related fine art paintings, 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. Through Feb. 21, 12-4 p.m. Free. 805-772-2504. artcentermorrobay.org. Art Center Morro Bay, 835 Main St., Morro Bay.

FOREVER STOKED PAINT PARTY Join us at the gallery, for a few hours to travel on a painting 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

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6 to 9 p.m. Artwork will be displayed through March. **Jan. 14, 6-9 p.m.** Free to public. 805-541-9911. Tigerlily Salon, 629 Higuera Street, San Luis Obispo.

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

STAGED READING: THE QUALITY OF LIFE SLO REP is thrilled to welcome audiences back to cutting-edge live theatre with an Ubu's Other Shoe staged reading of "The Quality of Life" by Jane Anderson. **Jan. 21, 7-8:30 p.m.** and **Jan. 22, 2-3:30 & 7-8:30 p.m.** \$15-\$18. 805-786-2440. slore.org/. San Luis Obispo Repertory Theatre, 888 Morro St., San Luis Obispo.

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Mon-Sat: 10-5 • Sun: 11-4 | PASO ROBLES
1236 Park Street
805.226.5088
Mon-Sat: 10-5 • Sun: 11-5 |



from 16
lunch and join the fun. Choose your attendance time.
Wednesdays, 10 a.m.-3 p.m. through Jan. 26 Free.
805-772-2504. artcentermorroby.org/index.php/
comingevents/classes/. Art Center Morro Bay,
835 Main St., Morro Bay.

GALLERY AT MARINA SQUARE: FEATURED CRAFT ARTIST CAROLE MCDONALD As a native Californian, Carole McDonald started her art career working in the film industry. Her oil paintings reflect the vibrant colors tranquil feelings of the Central Coast where painting is a daily joy. Mondays, Wednesdays-Sundays, 11 a.m.-5 p.m. through Jan. 29 Free. 805-772-1068. galleryatmarinasquare.com. Gallery at Marina Square, 601 Embarcadero suite 10, 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 \$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. artcentermorroby.org/index.php/comingevents/classes/. Art Center Morro Bay, 835 Main St., Morro Bay.

MOSAIC HEARTS Learn mosaic basics to create a one-of-a-kind heart project. Choose a project to make your heart sing from rocks to wall art. You have many colors, baubles, and beads to choose from. Everything is provided. Preregistration required. **Jan. 16**, 10 a.m.-1 p.m. \$50. 805-286-5993. CreativeMeTime.com. Art Center Morro Bay, 835 Main St., Morro Bay.

MOSAIC 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. artcentermorroby.org/index.php/workshops/. Art Center Morro Bay, 835 Main St., Morro Bay.

SEA GLASS HAMMERED METAL JEWELRY Create a gorgeous sea glass necklace and two pierced earrings. Everything is provided to complete the projects from local sea glass (choose brown, white, or green in class), to metal, jewelry findings and use of tools. Preregistration required. **Jan. 15**, 1-3 p.m. \$50. 805-286-5993. CreativeMeTime.com. Art Center Morro Bay, 835 Main St., Morro Bay.

SEA GLASS HEART JEWELRY Create a gorgeous sea glass necklace and two pierced earrings in this relaxing and fun class. Everything is provided to complete the projects including local sea glass. Learn how to drill holes in sea glass and basic jewelry making skills. Preregistration required. **Jan. 15**, 10 a.m.-noon \$50. 805-286-5993. CreativeMeTime.com. Art Center Morro Bay, 835 Main St., Morro Bay.

CULTURE & LIFESTYLE

SANTA MARIA VALLEY/LOS ALAMOS

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

DIY BATH AND BODY SCRUB Treat yourself in the New Year. Join us and learn how to make your very own body scrubs. All materials will be provided at the workshop. Registration is required. **Jan. 15**, 10:30-11:30 a.m. Free. 805-925-0994. cityofsantamaria.org/city-government/departments/library. Santa Maria Public Library, 421 S. McClelland St., Santa Maria.

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

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

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

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, unwindsantamaria.com.

SOUTH COAST SLO COUNTY

POINT SAN LUIS LIGHTHOUSE TOURS Tours will give you a glimpse into the lives of Lighthouse Keepers and their families, while helping keep our jewel of the Central Coast preserved and protected. In-person and virtual tours offered. Check website for more details. Wednesdays, Saturdays 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.

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, 5citysswimschool.com.

PHOTO COURTESY OF FESTIVAL MOZAIC



TEMPLETON TUNES

Festival Mozaic presents a violin recital with musician Abigel Kralik (pictured) at the Templeton Performing Arts Center on Sunday, Jan. 23, from 2 to 4 p.m. Pianist Maxim Lando will accompany Kralik during the program. Admission ranges from \$35 to \$65. Call (805) 781-3009 or visit festivalmozaic.org for tickets and more info. The Templeton Performing Arts Center is located at 1200 S. Main St., Templeton.
—C.W.

SAN LUIS OBISPO

BEYOND MINDFULNESS Realize your potential through individualized meditation instruction with an experienced teacher via Zoom. This class is for those who wish to begin a practice or seek to deepen an existing one. Flexible days and times. Certified with IMTA. Email or text for information. **Jan. 19**, 5:30-6:30 p.m. and Mondays-Sundays, 5:30-6:30 p.m. Sliding scale. 559-905-9274. theartofsilence.net. Online, See website, San Luis Obispo.

BIRD (AND BOTANY!) WALK The Garden is excited to present a monthly bird walk series which explores the intersection of birds and botany. Allow for a two-hour exploration on mostly flat terrain. Third Thursday of every month, 8-10 a.m. through Feb. 24 \$10/members, \$20/public. 805-541-1400. slobg.org/calendar. San Luis Obispo Botanical Garden, 3450 Dairy Creek Rd., 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. UC DAVIS It's National Hat Day, so the first 500 fans will get a Cal Poly hat. **Jan. 15**, 7-9 p.m. gopoly.com/. Mott Athletics Center, 1 Grand Ave., San Luis Obispo, 805-756-7297.

CAL POLY BASKETBALL VS. UC RIVERSIDE The Mustangs take on UC Riverside in a Big West Conference game at 7 p.m. **Jan. 13**, 7-9 p.m. gopoly.com/. Mott Athletics Center, 1 Grand Ave., San Luis Obispo.

CULTURE & LIFESTYLE continued page 18



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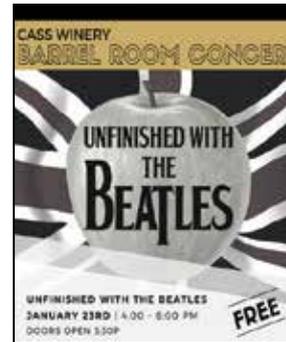
Tickets on sale now at My805Tix.com



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



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



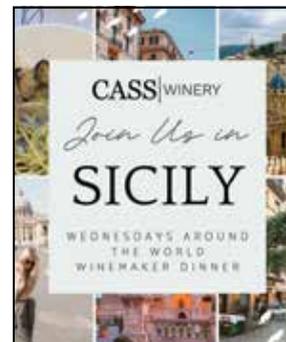
Barrel Room Concert: Unfinished with the Beatles
SUNDAY, JANUARY 23
Cass Winery, Paso Robles



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



Taste the WKND: Brand Launch Party
SATURDAY, JANUARY 29
Madonna Expo Center, SLO



Wednesdays Around the World: Sicily
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 7
Cass Winery, Paso Robles



Madrid Night Valentine's Event
SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 12
Cass Winery, Paso Robles



Rock 'n' Roll Sweetheart Valentine Dance
SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 12
SLO Guild Hall



A Special Valentine Winemaker Dinner
SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 13
Cass Winery, Paso Robles



Ted's Estate Beef Winemaker Dinner: Osso Buco
FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 18
Cass Winery, Paso Robles



The Full Monty: The Musical
FEBRUARY 18-MARCH 5
Santa Maria Civic Theatre, Santa Maria



Barrel Room Concert: Carbon City Lights
SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 20
Cass Winery, Paso Robles

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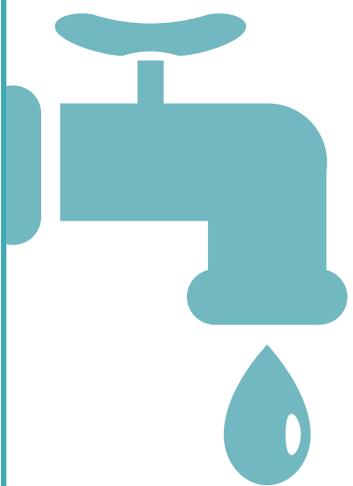
Send cover letter and resume to Cindy Rucker at: crucker@newtimeslo.com

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Do your part!

- take shorter showers
- turn taps off tightly so they don't drip
- repair leaks promptly
- only run full loads in the dishwasher, washing machine
- install low-flow shower heads and toilets
- save flushes where you can
- turn off water when washing dishes, brushing teeth, shaving
- reuse greywater to water plants
- water landscaping when it's cool outside (morning or evening) to avoid evaporation
- use a timer when watering
- plant drought-tolerant landscaping that doesn't need much water

CULTURE & LIFESTYLE from page 17

CAL POLY WOMEN'S BASKETBALL VS. CSU BAKERSFIELD Come watch the Mustangs take on CSU Bakersfield in a Big West Conference showdown at Mott. **Jan. 18**, 5-7 p.m. gopoly.com. Mott Athletics Center, 1 Grand Ave., San Luis Obispo, 805-756-7297.

CEC CLIMATE ACTION WEBINAR SERIES: UC CLIMATE STEWARDS Join us for a powerful showcase of community-led action. Recent alumni of CEC's new UC Climate Stewards course share their experience, the community action projects they designed, and how they are putting new-found climate knowledge to work within Central Coast communities. Register today. **Jan. 13**, 12-1 p.m. Free. cecsb.org/events/cec-climate-action-webinar-series-uc-climate-stewards-building-local-climate-leadership. Online, See website, San Luis Obispo.

CENTRAL COAST POLYAMORY (VIRTUALLY VIA ZOOM) Hosting a discussion group featuring different topics relating to ethical non-monogamy every month. Virtually meet via Zoom. Third Wednesday of every month, 6:30-8:30 p.m. Free. galacc.org/events/. Online, See website, San Luis Obispo.

FREE DAY AT THE GARDEN There will be a guided sketch walk with a garden docent at 11 a.m. Paper and

FILE PHOTO COURTESY OF THE SLO BOTANICAL GARDEN



PAPER TRAIL

The San Luis Obispo Botanical Garden hosts its next Free Day at the Garden event on Monday, Jan. 17, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Guests of all ages are welcome to take part in the garden's sketch walk during the event, which starts at 11 a.m. Paper and basic drawing supplies will be provided, but attendees are encouraged to bring their own materials. Call (805) 541-1400 or visit slobg.org. The garden is located at 3450 Dairy Creek Road, San Luis Obispo.

—C.W.

basic drawing supplies will be provided, but participants are encouraged to bring their own. **Jan. 17**, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Free. 805-541-1400. slobg.org. San Luis Obispo Botanical Garden, 3450 Dairy Creek Rd., San Luis Obispo.

GALA PRIDE AND DIVERSITY CENTER BOARD MEETING (VIA ZOOM) Monthly meeting of the Gala Pride and Diversity Center Board of Directors. Meets virtually via Zoom and is open to members of the public. Visit galacc.org/events/ to fill out the form to request meeting access. Third Tuesday of every month, 6-8 p.m. No admission fee. galacc.org. Online, See website, 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. Third 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.

MLK RALLY AND MARCH Join NAACP SLO County as we rally and march in remembrance of MLK. Our theme: Is Bigotry a Mental Illness? For more info, go to naacpslocty.org or call 805-619-5354. Social distancing and mask are required. **Jan. 17**, 11 a.m.-1 p.m. Free admission. 805-619-5354. naacpslocty.org. San Luis Obispo County Courthouse, 1050 Monterey St., 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-davissan. Online, See website, San Luis Obispo.

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. 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 LEZ B FRIENDS (VIRTUALLY VIA ZOOM) A good core

group of friends who gather to discuss topics we love/care about from movies, outings, music, or being new to the area. We come from all walks of life and most importantly support each other. Transgender and Nonbinary folks welcome. Third Friday of every month, 6:30-9 p.m. Free. sloqueer.groups.io/g/lezbfriends. 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 aarapgroup@gmail.com for password access. Sundays, 7-8 p.m. No fee. galacc.org/events/. Online, See website, San Luis Obispo.

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.

FOOD & DRINK

SANTA YNEZ VALLEY

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

STANDING SUN: 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.

SOUTH COAST SLO COUNTY

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

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

HOT STUFF continued page 19

MUSIC

SANTA YNEZ VALLEY

ABOUT TIME LIVE Jan. 15, 1 p.m. Maverick Saloon, 3687 Sagunto St., Santa Ynez, 805-686-4785, mavericksaloon.org.

FLANNEL 101 LIVE Jan. 14, 9 p.m. Maverick Saloon, 3687 Sagunto St., Santa Ynez, 805-686-4785, mavericksaloon.org.

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

PULL THE TRIGGER LIVE Jan. 15, 8:30 p.m. Maverick Saloon, 3687 Sagunto St., Santa Ynez, 805-686-4785, mavericksaloon.org.

THE ROBERT HEFT BAND LIVE Jan. 21, 8:30 p.m. Maverick Saloon, 3687 Sagunto St., Santa Ynez, 805-686-4785, mavericksaloon.org.

SAM MITCHELL LIVE Jan. 16, noon Maverick Saloon, 3687 Sagunto St., Santa Ynez, 805-686-4785, mavericksaloon.org.

TEX PISTOLS LIVE Jan. 22, 8:30 p.m. Maverick Saloon, 3687 Sagunto St., Santa Ynez, 805-686-4785, mavericksaloon.org.

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

LOMPOC/VANDENBERG

SENIOR DANCE The Lompoc Senior's Club presents a "Senior Dance" featuring Riptide Big Band with vocalist Bob Nations. Funded by the Community Foundation of San Luis Obispo County. RSVP by email or phone. **Jan. 16, 2:30-4:30 p.m.** Donation \$3. 661-333-7746. RiptideBB.com. Dick DeWees Community & Senior Center, 1120 W. Ocean Ave., Lompoc.

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 centralcoastbeat-social.com/. Santa Maria, Citywide.

THE SANTA MARIA PHILHARMONIC'S ANNUAL YOUTH SHOWCASE The Santa Maria Philharmonic's annual Youth Showcase is a recital by audition for classical musicians ages 8 to 18. This event is free to the public. **Jan. 16, 4-6 p.m.** Free. 805-925-0412. smphilharmonic.org/youth-showcase/. Shepard Hall Art Gallery - Santa Maria Public Library, 421 South McClelland St., Santa Maria.

SOUTH COAST SLO COUNTY

DIRTY CELLO AT THE CLARK CENTER From Iceland to Italy, and all over the U.S., Dirty Cello brings the world a high energy and unique spin on blues and bluegrass. Led by vivacious cross-over cellist, Rebecca Roudman, Dirty Cello is cello like you've never heard before. **Jan. 22, 7:30-9:30 p.m.** \$30-\$42. 805-489-9444. clarkcenter.org/shows/dirty-cello/. Clark Center for the Performing Arts, 487 Fair Oaks Ave., Arroyo Grande.

SAN LUIS OBISPO

CAL POLY BACH WEEK AKADEMIE LECTURE AND ORGAN SHOWCASE At 6 p.m., Bach Week co-director David Arrivé will explore of J.S. Bach's multifaceted relationship with the organ, with musical examples played by university organist Paul Woodring. At 7:30 p.m. Woodring will present a concert of Bach's organ music. **Jan. 18, 7:30 p.m.** \$10. 805-756-4849. music.calpoly.edu/calendar. Performing Arts Center, 1 Grand Ave., San Luis Obispo.

CAL POLY BACH WEEK INSTRUMENTAL MASTER CLASS Guest artist Leif Woodward, cello, will coach Cal Poly students in instrumental repertoire from the Baroque era, with a focus on historically informed performance. He will also coach students in effective continuo playing. **Jan. 20, 11:10 a.m.-1 p.m.** Free. 805-756-2406. music.calpoly.edu/calendar/. Cal Poly Davidson Music Center, Room 218, Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo.

CAL POLY BACH WEEK VOCAL MASTER CLASS Guest artists Kerry Ginger and John Buffett will coach several Cal Poly voice students in repertoire from the Baroque era. **Jan. 20, 3:10 p.m.** Free. 805-756-2406. music.calpoly.edu/calendar/. Cal Poly Davidson Music Center, Room 218, Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo.

SUNFISH LIVE Jan. 14, 7 p.m. The Siren at El Chorro, 2990 Dairy Creek Rd., San Luis Obispo, 805-541-1149.

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Arts Briefs

Laura Crawford headlines comedy event, Laugh Therapy, in Santa Ynez

The Maverick Saloon in Santa Ynez presents Laugh Therapy, a stand-up comedy event hosted by Paco Zamora, on Wednesday, Jan. 26, from 8 to 10 p.m. Comedian Laura Crawford (pictured) is headlining the program's lineup, which also includes Anthony Deyo, Nick Malitzia, and Sal Espana.

PHOTO COURTESY OF SAL ESPANA



Admission to the show is \$15. Call (805) 686-4785 or visit mavericksaloon.com for more info on Laugh Therapy and other upcoming events held at the Maverick Saloon. The venue is located at 3687 Sagunto St., Santa Ynez.

Lompoc Concert Association presents flutist Jeannine Goeckeritz

The First United Methodist Church in Lompoc hosts prolific flutist Jeannine Goeckeritz live in concert on Friday, Jan. 21, at 7:30 p.m. This program is presented by the Lompoc Concert Association, a local nonprofit dedicated to promoting live music and music education in the community. Tickets to the show will be available at the door, starting at 6:45 p.m.

As a performing artist, Goeckeritz has toured throughout the U.S. and Europe, according to her website. Her distinctive flute playing can be heard in an extensive variety of film soundtracks, Broadway scores, collaborating artists' studio albums, and her solo album, *Come Dream With Me*. Headliners of productions Goeckeritz has performed for include Sarah Brightman, Josh Groban, and Andrea Bocelli.

For more info on the upcoming concert, call (805) 588-5971 or visit lompocconcert.org. Goeckeritz's performance marks the first concert in the Lompoc Concert Association's Winter 2022 season. The First United Methodist Church is located at 925 N. F St., Lompoc.

Santa Maria High School band director marched in 2022 Rose Parade

On New Year's Day, local musician Samantha Quart participated in the Saluting America's Band Directors project, as part of the 2022 Rose Parade in Pasadena. Quart is the band director at Santa Maria High School, where she's worked since 2016. She joined nearly 300 other band directors from schools throughout the U.S. and Mexico in marching along the parade's route.

PHOTO COURTESY OF KENNY KLEIN



The Saluting America's Band Directors project was originally planned for the 2021 Rose Parade but was postponed due to the pandemic. Quart played tuba in the parade and said she was excited to perform in front of an international audience, according to the Santa Maria Joint Union High School District. ○

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

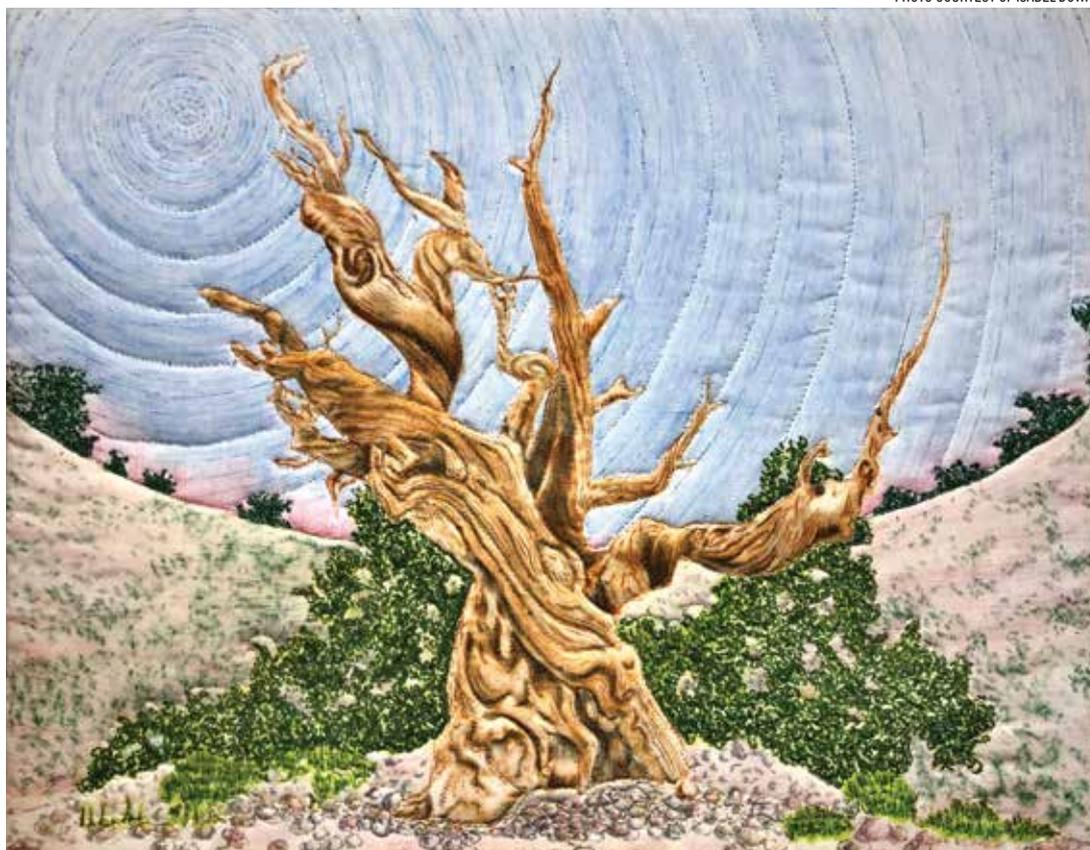


PHOTO COURTESY OF ISABEL DOWNS

FEELING PINE: Fiber artist Isabel Downs, one of the featured quilters currently showcased at the Wildling Museum of Art and Nature in Solvang, chose to illustrate a bristlecone pine in this pictured piece, which is part of her Oh, Most Ancient One series.

Wool for the trees

Nine fiber artists showcase themed quilts in Wildling Museum's group show, TREES

BY CALEB WISEBLOOD

It took Michelangelo four years to complete the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel, a relatable ETA for Isabel Downs when it came to finishing her first quilt.

"I dragged the incomplete quilt around with me all over the place, first to San Diego where I was a graduate student. ... Then to Panama for two years, where my husband and I lived and worked," said Downs, who finished the five-year project after moving to Santa Barbara during the 1970s.

"I still have and love the quilt, but it is in a fragile condition," added the fiber artist, who has an array of more recently created, less fragile quilts featured in one of the Wildling Museum's current group shows, TREES, which showcases work by a total of nine local quilters.

Each quilter featured in the show is a longtime member of the Sewjourners, a satellite group of the Coastal Quilters Guild of Santa Barbara and Goleta. As the Solvang exhibit's title suggests, participating artists were asked to quilt their creations with a shared theme in mind: trees.

"We wondered how many different ways we could represent the theme of trees. Having a theme unifies our work while still allowing each member's personal style to shine through," featured quilter Ranell Hansen said. "Our styles mesh so comfortably and yet

our individuality remains."

Hansen described the Sewjourners—whose collective quilts can be viewed on the Wildling Museum's website through Jan. 16—as a close-knit group of creative women. Members can openly share their quilts with one another, whether the quilts are complete or still in progress, and open up about their daily lives as well, Hansen said.

"There is a great amount of trust between us. We are able to share our feelings, our successes and failures, and our love of textiles and the art of quilting," she said. "We are bound together by needle and thread."

For one of her tree-themed quilts in the show,

Showtime!

Send gallery, stage, and cultural festivities to cwiseblood@santamariasun.com.

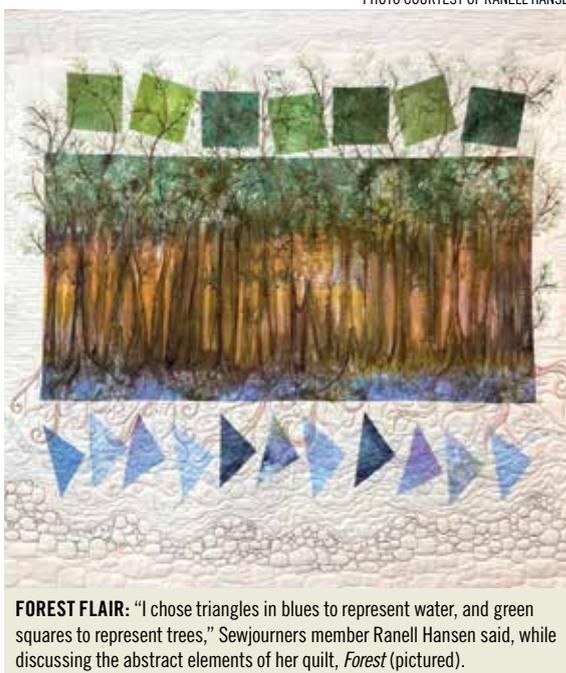


PHOTO COURTESY OF RANELL HANSEN

FOREST FLAIR: "I chose triangles in blues to represent water, and green squares to represent trees," Sewjourners member Ranell Hansen said, while discussing the abstract elements of her quilt, *Forest* (pictured).

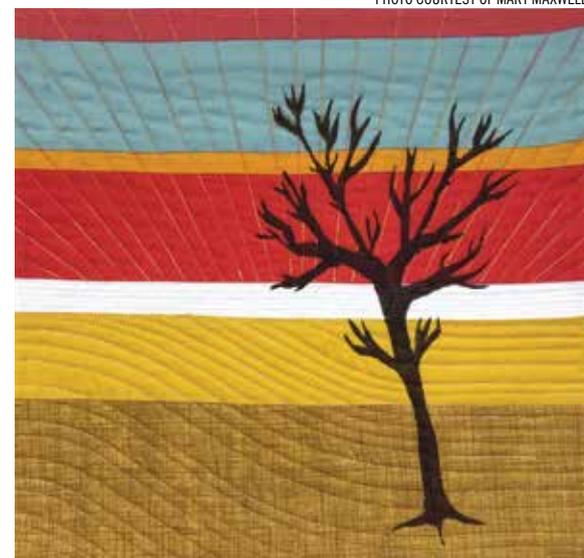


PHOTO COURTESY OF MARY MAXWELL

SUNRISE TO SUNSET: "My inspiration for my quilts is generally based on a graphic representation of the subject—not necessarily realistic," said quilter Mary Maxwell, whose quilt, *Sticks at Sunset* (pictured), is one of 45 quilts currently on display in a group show at the Wildling Museum of Art and Nature.

Last call

Although the Wildling Museum is temporarily closed to the public, TREES is available to view online at wildlingmuseum.org, through Jan. 16. Call (805) 686-8315 for more info.

For more info on the Sewjourners, a satellite group of the Coastal Quilters Guild of Santa Barbara and Goleta, visit coastalquilters.org.

Hansen set out to illustrate a wide view of a forest within a single panel, with some flourishes outside the panel as well.

"I wanted the panel to be the focal point but wanted to add some abstract geometric elements that would create a more modern feel," Hansen said. "I chose triangles in blues to represent water and green squares to represent trees."

Fellow Sewjourners member Mary Maxwell also enjoyed experimenting with shapes and colors within her featured quilts in the exhibition.

"I have fun with color and shape and the way the fabrics play with each other," Maxwell said. "My inspiration for my quilts is generally based on a graphic representation of the subject—not necessarily realistic."

The quilts of Maxwell, Hansen, and Downs are showcased alongside those of six of their peers: Patti Hunter, Linda Estrada, Carol Fay, Pamela Holst, Susan Bullington Katz, and Patty Six.

Hunter, one of the founding members of the Sewjourners, first learned how to quilt through

workshops offered by the Coastal Quilters Guild. The origin of Sewjourners as a separate satellite group came about during a regular guild meeting during the early 2000s, Hunter said.

"Some members have left the group, and new members have joined. But the nine Sewjourners whose work is displayed at the Wildling have been together for several years," Hunter said. "We aim to be supportive of each other, as we each explore the art that we make with fibers." ○

Arts Editor Caleb Wiseblood could use a cozy quilt during these chilly times. Send comments to cwiseblood@santamariasun.com.

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'Man science'

Gorge Clooney directs this adaptation of J. R. Moehringer's 2005 memoir—a coming-of-age story about a young boy (played by Daniel Ranieri) growing up in Long Beach who seeks out father figures among the regulars at his Uncle Charlie's (Ben Affleck) bar. As a young man (Tye Sheridan), he struggles to find his place in the world. (106 min.)

Glen: I loved the book upon which this film is based, and though much of the memoir's richness and depth have been lost in this film adaptation, Clooney and screenwriter William Monahan (*The Departed*) manage to retain and express its most important themes: growing up fatherless, the fierce love of a single mother, learning what it means to be a man from dubious "authorities" on the subject, surviving a first love and the insidiousness of societal class systems, finding a life's purpose, and becoming an authentically good man. The story is essentially split between child J.R. spending time with Uncle Charlie, his bar's regulars, and his Grandpa (Christopher Lloyd), who he and his mom (Lily Rabe) go to live with after she can no longer support them; and college-age J.R., as he navigates the early stages of adulthood and battles personal demons while striving to become a writer. We meet J.R.'s absent and deadbeat father, dubbed The Voice (Max Martini), a New York radio disc jockey sliding into alcoholism and professional obscurity. What's missing in the film is the development of the bar's patrons—Chief (Max Casella), Bobo (Michael Braun), and Joey D. (Matthew Delamater)—who are more fully fleshed

out in the book. What Monahan wisely left out of the screenplay was the memoir's ending connected to 9/11, which would have been a distraction. **Anna:** So much of the memoir was J.R. developing as a person built from the characters around him, and while the film holds true to his closeness with his Uncle Charlie, it doesn't quite have the time or mechanism to develop the bar regulars. We do get a glimpse when, using his grandfather's cigarette change, J.R. "backs up" Bobo at the bar—aka buys his next round. He's a sweet and thoughtful kid, well portrayed by the impossibly adorable Ranieri who doesn't mistake J.R.'s tender, sweet nature for weakness. He's a voracious reader who wants to be a writer despite his mother's determination for him to go into law. Her discontent with being back at home isn't shared by her young son, who loves having so many people around. He never has to be lonely again. The book made me cry plenty and so did the film—I know inevitably I will read critics complain about the treacle of it all and about Clooney wielding emotion as a weapon against his audience, but personally I'm here for it! Sometimes we all need a feel-good win, and the fact that it's based on a real person grounds it in reality. If you've got Amazon Prime or a theater screening this, it's certainly worth escaping into. **Glen:** This is Ranieri's first acting role, and he's terrific. In fact, I liked the first half of the film focused on child J.R. more than the second half, though Sheridan also turns in a good performance. I was totally blown away by Affleck, however. His Uncle Charlie is such a likable character while also being vaguely tragic. An autodidact and voracious reader, Charlie wastes his potential slinging drinks, bowling with his lowbrow buddies, and drifting

THE TENDER BAR

What's it rated? **R**
 What's it worth, Anna? **Full price**
 What's it worth, Glen? **Full price**
 Where's it showing? **Palm Theatre in San Luis Obispo, Amazon Prime**



LOOKING FOR GUIDANCE: Young and fatherless J.R. (Daniel Ranieri, left) learns to be a man from his bartender uncle, Charlie (Ben Affleck), in *The Tender Bar*, based on J.R. Moehringer's 2005 memoir.

through life. Affleck digs deep into the role and plays Charlie with uncommon subtlety. It would be easy for J.R. to follow in Charlie's footsteps, but Charlie doesn't want that for his nephew and encourages J.R. to aim high, which is why he takes a trainee job at *The New York Times*, which J.R. also hopes will impress his ex-girlfriend, Sidney (Briana Middleton)—another important lesson J.R. must learn about the futility of doing things to impress others. Moehringer won a Pulitzer Prize for Feature Writing in 2000, wrote the novel *Sutton* in 2012 about bank robber Willie Sutton, ghostwrote Phil Knight's 2016 memoir *Shoe Dog*, and co-wrote Prince Harry's upcoming memoir due later this year, but *The Tender Bar* is his magnum opus. Watch the film, read the book—they're both worth your time. **Anna:** Affleck hasn't been getting the greatest press as of late, but I couldn't help but like him here. His Charlie is so loving and yet subtly sad. He takes it upon himself to fill J.R. in on all the things a young man usually learns from his father, what he called "man science," about bar etiquette, women, books,

and ambition. While his role in *The Way Back* was powerful, this felt raw and personal and like a peek behind the Affleck curtain. He gets to get lost a little bit here in Charlie, and it's a great reminder that Affleck is indeed a gifted actor. Like you said, book or movie, you can't go wrong—this coming-of-age tale is lovely every way it comes to us. With the continued pandemic and variants popping up left and right, who needs an excuse to curl up and watch a new flick? Go ahead and turn the lights down, grab a couple of tissues and a snack, and settle in for this feel-good treat. ○

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

Film & TV Reviews

DON'T LOOK UP

What's it rated? **R**
 When? **2021**
 Where's it showing? **The Palm Theater in SLQ, Netflix**
 Writer-director Adam McKay (*Anchorman: The Legend of Burgundy*) helms this biting satire about the nonchalant global response to an impending planet-killing meteor strike. Mild-mannered astronomy professor Dr. Randall Mindy (Leonardo DiCaprio) and his doctoral candidate student Kate Dibiasky (Jennifer Lawrence) discover the coming disaster and set about warning the world in the hopes that something will be done to avert catastrophe. Their first approach U.S. President Janie Orleans (Meryl Streep), a "leader" who has appointed her incompetent son, Jason (Jonah Hill), as her chief of staff. She blithely believes a "wait and see" response is best. If you're thinking Donald Trump and global warming, you're picking up what McKay is laying down. Then the pair of scientists decide to take the news to the people and go on a morning talk show with vacuous hosts Jack Bremmer (Tyler Perry) and Bree Evantee (Cate Blanchett), who treat the topic frivolously.

New Flicks

PHOTO COURTESY OF HYPEROBJECTS INDUSTRIES AND BLUEGRASS FILMS



To deflect from a sex scandal, President Orleans finally acknowledges the meteor and launches a mission to destroy it... until tech billionaire and major donor Peter Isherwell (Mark Rylance) discovers it's loaded with rare-earth elements worth billions more (yes, think Elon Musk). Many have complained the film lacks subtlety, but satire isn't supposed to be subtle. When Jonathan Swift suggested eating babies in "A Modest Proposal" as a solution to the Irish famine in 1729, was subtlety his goal? It's also worth noting this film pulls off an amazing final act tonal shift that will stick with you after the credits roll. (145 min.)

—Glen

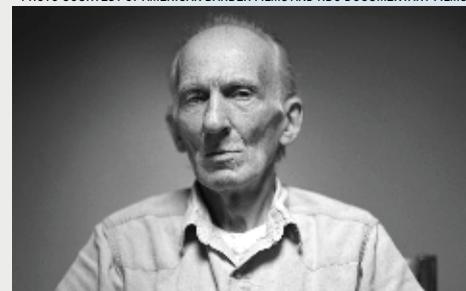
THE MURDERS AT STARVED ROCK

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

BINGEABLE

True crime aficionados are likely familiar with the story at Starved Rock, where in 1961 three women were brutally murdered while out on a nature walk during a vacation. Subsequently, Chester Weger, then 22 and a dishwasher at the lodge where the women were staying, was arrested and convicted of the crime and sentenced to life in prison. The twist here is David Raccuglia, the son of the prosecutor at Weger's trial. He's obsessed over the case and Weger in particular, convinced at a young age that Weger was indeed a boogeyman who would come after his family for his father's role in his trial. Now as an adult, he seems to hold a soft spot for the man, unsure if justice was served. As with every sensational true crime case, there are zealots on both sides: Weger supporters who think it's impossible that the slight young man could have subdued and killed three women; and those who have no doubt that Weger is guilty of everything and more. It's one of those messy, don't-get-any-real-answers series, which, while a bit frustrating, is also compelling.

PHOTO COURTESY OF AMERICAN BARBER FILMS AND HBO DOCUMENTARY FILMS



Some people hate being left without a solid conclusion, but with true crime stories that's very much the norm. Weger confessed—why would he do that if he wasn't guilty? Well, perhaps the "interrogation" techniques the police performed were less than scrupulous. This series dives into it all and gives us glimpses into the opinions of people on all sides, including Weger himself, his family, and the families of the victims. If murder documentaries are your thing, this is well done, albeit infuriating. (three 58-min. episodes) ○

—Anna

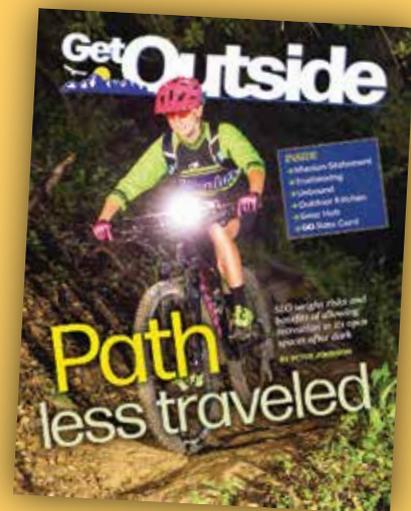
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COFFEE COMPETITOR: Upon opening Fire and Vice, owner and founder Aaron Running (pictured) sought to rectify a trend he noticed in Santa Maria—the only coffee shop options for hopeful loungers happen to be Starbucks. Alongside its various coffee options, Running’s eclectic new restaurant has a beer and pizza menu as well.

Burnin’ for you

For more info on Fire and Vice, call (805) 287-9725 or visit firevice.com. Fire and Vice is located at 3580 Skyway Drive, Santa Maria.



VICE ON ICE: Fire and Vice has a plethora of espresso concoctions—americanos, cappuccinos, cortados, lattes, macchiatos—alongside its teas, frappes, and other coffee shop staples.



DOG DAYS AREN'T OVER: In his free time, prolific restaurateur Aaron Running—who owns Fire and Vice, the Copenhagen Sausage Garden, and the SB Biergarten—enjoys golfing, cycling, and hanging out with his dog, Duke.

The vice is right

Fire and Vice dishes out an eclectic menu of coffee, beer, pizza, and more in Santa Maria

BY CALEB WISEBLOOD

Move over Starbucks and Little Caesars, there’s a new coffee and pizza joint in Santa Maria, with an average wait time that’s on par with both corporate competitors, if not less.

Fire and Vice owner Aaron Running described his new venture as a cozy coffee shop and lunch spot by day, and a booming bar and pizza kitchen by night. One thing that remains consistent, regardless of natural sunlight, is the restaurant’s fast-paced drive-through, for those looking to take their coffee, breakfast burrito, pizza, burger, hot dog, or salad on the go.

But for those looking to stick around rather than make a quick getaway, there’s plenty of space at Fire and Vice for patrons to lounge in.

“I personally like to go to a coffee shop, flip open my laptop,

and work for hours on end,” said Running, who sought to rectify a trend he noticed in Santa Maria—the only coffee shop options for students, workers, or any hopeful loungers to camp for the day all happen to be Starbucks.

Running also aimed to provide a higher grade of specialty coffee when he opened the doors of Fire and Vice in October of 2021.

“I wanted to compete against Starbucks, with better coffee,” Running said. “Everyone kind of gravitates toward Starbucks because that’s what they know—you gotta grab those people and get them out of their routine to bring them over. Starbucks, as far as quality, is a lower grade of coffee. They kind of over-roast their stuff.”

Fire and Vice has a plethora of espresso concoctions—americanos, cappuccinos, cortados, lattes, macchiatos—alongside its teas, frappes, and other coffee shop staples.

“I usually get a chai tea, but our Frappuccinos are pretty amazing too. Well, they’re not Frappuccinos, because that would be a Starbucks thing,” Running amended. “Our frappes!”

There’s always room for customization when it comes to these drinks, and Running expects to add even more options in upcoming months.

“We have tons of cool syrups and stuff, so we can do a lot of cool mixes. We’re gonna do a cereal line soon, with ones that’ll taste like Cocoa Pebbles, Cap’n Crunch, Froot Loops,” Running listed.

Running’s inspiration to make Fire and Vice a spot for both coffee and beer came from New York’s gastropubs, where patrons can find coffee in the morning and beer at night.

While Running considers coffee and beer to be the vices his restaurant’s name refers to, the fire alludes to the venue’s wood-fired pizza oven. Running, who also owns the Copenhagen Sausage Garden in Solvang and the SB Biergarten in Santa Barbara, has dealt with pizza before, but never with a drive-through format—a feat pizza places rarely attempt.

“We can get a pizza out in three minutes, from start to finish,” Running said. “Because we’re using a wood fire oven, we’re cooking at 725 to 730 degrees. Once it’s in the oven, it’s like two minutes or less cook time. Couple minutes to top it, couple minutes to cook



TRAILBLAZER: “We can get a pizza out in three minutes, from start to finish,” Aaron Running said, whose restaurant, Fire and Vice, has a speedy drive-through for those looking to take their pizza on the go.

it, and you’re done. We really practice that, and we have it down pretty well.”

The wood-fired pizzas available at Fire and Vice include classic pepperoni, supreme, Margherita, spicy Hawaiian, veggie, barbecue chicken, and Running’s personal favorite: the fig-buck-goat, aka the FBG, which features dried figs, goat cheese, mozzarella, garlic oil, green onion, buckboard bacon.

“When we were designing our menu, I was like, this is one [the FBG] that *has* to be on there,” Running said.

As if pairing a pizza parlor with a coffee shop wasn’t eclectic enough, Fire and Vice also has a specialty sausage menu as well, which includes bratwurst, kielbasa, currywurst, bockwurst, and other offerings.

“It’s really hard to get sick of the food here since you have so many choices,” Running said. ○

Send your favorite vices to Arts Editor Caleb Wiseblood at cwiseblood@santamariasun.com.

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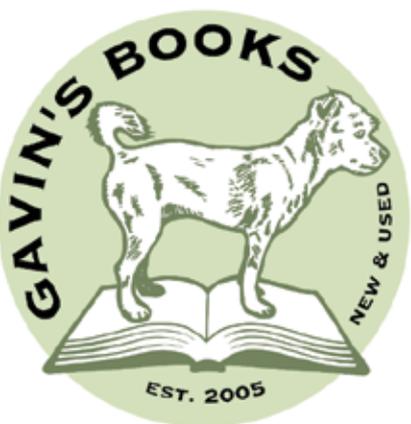
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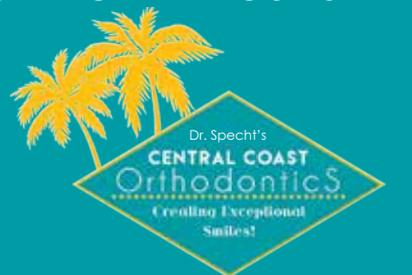
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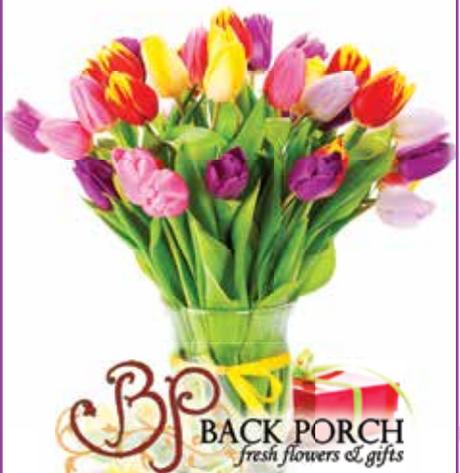


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