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*Parallel Mothers:*  
Stirring connection [18]

# SUN



## Limitations

*Santa Barbara County's Main Jail continues to have issues with the level of mental health care services it provides to inmates [6]*

BY TAYLOR O'CONNOR

**NEWS** Santa Barbara County goes electric [4]

**ARTS** Lompoc singer/songwriter Erika Slikker [16]

**EATS** Peasants FEAST opens a deli [19]

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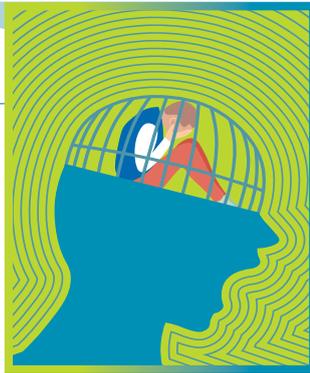
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# Contents

FEBRUARY 3 - FEBRUARY 10, 2022 VOL. 22 NO. 49



**IMPRISONED:** Santa Barbara County's Main Jail inmates don't have access to the mental health care services they should, according to advocates.

**A** January death in the Santa Barbara County Main Jail returned the spotlight to the mental health services it provides to inmates. Questions about the jail's level of care have plagued the Main Jail, something a 2020 lawsuit settlement aimed to remedy and something a recently released grand jury report criticizes. But short staffing and COVID-19 have hindered the jail's progress on expanding mental health care services for inmates. This week, Staff Writer Taylor O'Connor speaks with public defenders, mental health care providers, and advocates [6].

You can also read about the county's first electric bus [4]; a Lompoc singer/songwriter who began performing right before the pandemic started [16]; and what peasants FEAST is doing with a new deli and market in Solvang [19].

Camillia Lanham  
*editor*

Cover image from Deposit Photos > Cover design by Alex Zuniga

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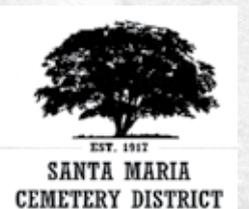


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## The Santa Maria Cemetery District will begin its next cleanup of the cemetery grounds Monday, February 7th

Cleaning continues through Friday, February 11th. All items will be discarded. Authorized flowers and decorations can be returned starting February 12th. If anyone desires to keep any current item, please make arrangements to have your item removed prior to Sunday, February 6th.





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## Political Watch

Gov. Gavin Newsom, First Partner Jennifer Siebel Newsom, and the California Department of Human Resources announced the signing of the California Equal Pay Pledge, an initiative launched to close the gender pay gap, according to a Jan. 27 statement. Gov. Newsom also announced the creation of a new chief equity officer position to lead efforts in improving state hiring and other procedures with an equity focus, including efforts to achieve pay parity among the state government workforce. "I'm proud to announce that California has signed the Equal Pay Pledge to advance pay equity in our workforce," Newsom said in a statement. "Signing the pledge and establishing a chief equity officer position are just the latest examples of our continued commitment to ensuring our state government workforce practices reflect the highest standards of economic, gender, and racial equity." This announcement follows the unveiling of the California Blueprint, which includes a \$1.4 million package to improve awareness of state pay equity rights, and inform enforcement efforts against those who violate equal pay laws. More than 60 major California employers—including Airbnb, Apple, Gap Inc., Intel, and Twitter—have signed the pledge, and agree to conduct an annual, company-wide gender pay analysis, review hiring and promotion procedures, and promote best practices to close the pay gap.

U.S. Sen. Alex Padilla (D-California) joined Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-New York) and 80 other Senate and House colleagues who called on the Biden administration to release the Department of Education's memo outlining the administration's legal authority to cancel federal student loan debt and cancel up to \$50,000 of debt for federal student loan borrowers, according to a Jan. 27 statement. "In light of high COVID-19 case counts and corresponding economic disruptions, restarting student loan payments without this broad cancellation would be disastrous for millions of borrowers and their families," the memo stated. While the lawmakers applauded President Biden's decision to extend the federal student loan payment pause as the omicron variant spreads, they urged the president to do more to provide permanent relief for millions of borrowers and help families avoid financial hardship as the economy recovers. "Publicly releasing the memo outlining your existing authority on canceling student debt and broadly doing so is crucial to making a meaningful difference in the lives of current students, borrowers, and their families. It has been widely reported that the Department of Education has had this memo since April 5, 2021, after being directed to draft it," the lawmakers wrote. Canceling student debt could help nearly 4 million Californians.

Santa Barbara County is launching two new planning efforts—Environmental Justice and Housing—under the One Climate Initiative in order to address climate change, according to a Jan. 25 statement. The environmental justice element is a new initiative to identify strategies to reduce pollution exposure; improve air quality; promote access to public facilities, healthy foods, and safe and sanitary homes; and promote civic engagement in the decision-making process. "The One Climate Initiative highlights the broad range of important community issues the county is leading through a lens of climate change," 3rd District Supervisor Joan Hartmann said in a statement. "Community participation is vital as these plans will shape our region's future to be more equitable, more resilient, and environmentally conscious." The second element will assess the county's housing inventory of undeveloped parcels, and update zoning policies and housing programs to ensure the county can meet future regional housing needs for residents of all income levels. Throughout 2022, there will be a variety of opportunities to engage with these projects. The public is encouraged to learn more about the One Climate Initiative and the various projects by visiting [countyofsb.org/oneclimate](http://countyofsb.org/oneclimate) and by signing up for the One Climate newsletter. ○



COURTESY PHOTO BY LAUREN BIANCHI KLEMMANN

**CLEAN ENERGY:** Congressman Salud Carbajal (D-Santa Barbara) spoke at a ceremony celebrating the county's first electric bus, which he said continues his goals to reduce the county's carbon footprint and improve the transit system.

## Santa Barbara County debuts its first all-electric bus

The Clean Air Express has a new 45-foot fully electric, inter-city commuter bus—the third electric commuter bus in the nation—that will begin weekday routes between Santa Maria and Lompoc and routes to employment locations in South Santa Barbara County.

The bus made its debut with a ribbon cutting ceremony and guest speakers U.S. Rep. Salud Carbajal (D-Santa Barbara), state Sen. Monique Limón (D-Santa Barbara), Santa Barbara County 1st District Supervisor Das Williams, 2nd District Supervisor Gregg Hart, and Lompoc Mayor Jenelle Osborne on Jan. 29.

Williams also serves as the Santa Barbara County Association of Governments' (SBCAG) board of directors chair and oversaw the partnership with Caltrans that helped purchase the bus.

"We know that transportation is one of the largest contributors to greenhouse gas emissions in the United States. A switch to cleaner, quieter, and smoother public transit options is a switch in the right direction, one that is imperative for our future—for our children and neighbors," Williams said at the ceremony.

The Clean Air Express battery features a 220-mile range and will serve more than 7,000 passengers per month with nine weekday roundtrips. It weighs the same as a diesel bus and has a 12-year battery warranty, making it a good investment for communities, he said.

"Today we see just how the zero-emission vehicle industry's evolving technology is changing the game for long-range transportation options, improving the efficiency, experience, and commuter benefits to save energy and the environment," Williams said.

The Santa Barbara Air Pollution Control District created the Clean Air Express in 1990 as a way to improve regional air quality by reducing the number of single commuters. SBCAG took over the program in 2001 and expanded it with new buses, added payment flexibility, and installed wireless internet on all the buses, SBCAG Public Information Officer Lauren Bianchi Klemann said in an email.

"The all-electric bus combined with the replacement of a diesel bus eliminates 450 tons of CO2 annually, equivalent to CO2 emissions from more than 80 residential homes' electricity use for one year," she added.

The bus costs \$850,000. Caltrans provided

\$500,000 in SB 1 funds from the State Rail Assistance Program. SB 1—a California fuel tax—provides \$5 billion in transportation funding, which is split between state and local agencies. The electric bus service is operated by SBCAG and funded by Santa Barbara County's transportation sales tax measure, Measure A, Bianchi Klemann said.

During the ceremony, Sen. Limón reflected on the 2017 vote for SB 1—also known as the gas tax—and how it enables the state to invest in road safety and better vehicles for the community.

"What we do to reduce the number of cars on the road is part of how we maintain safety. To be able to have this bus take the place of multiple cars is really important," Limón said.

Limón said she believes that this will establish strong infrastructure in Santa Barbara County, and act as a model for others to follow suit.

"For the state of California—the fifth largest economy—a transportation system is unbelievably important to the health of our economy, but sometimes it's that same transportation system that causes concern to the health of the individual constituents," Limón said. "I am proud that Santa Barbara County is among the first communities in the nation to provide an all-electric commuter bus as California transitions to zero-emission public transportation vehicles."

—Taylor O'Connor

## Sheriff's Office new rates draw negative feedback from four cities

Buellton, Solvang, Goleta, and Carpinteria oppose the Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Office proposal to increase its rates for continuing to provide contracted public safety services to the cities.

Although their stances align, each of the four contracted cities is required to draft their own individual complaints to the Sheriff's Office. After voting unanimously, the Carpinteria City Council was the first of the four to authorize its city manager, Dave Durlinger, to sign and submit their notice of dispute on Jan. 24.

"Each city has an individual contract, so each city will be considering their own letter that must be issued separately. With that said, we're working closely together," Durlinger said during the Carpinteria City Council's Jan. 24 meeting. "We've been meeting together as a group. ... We are working together closely in coordinating a

response."

The Solvang City Council also unanimously voted to send a letter of dispute during its Jan. 24 meeting. The Buellton City Council followed suit at its Jan. 27 meeting, and the topic was agendaized for the Goleta City Council's first meeting in February.

The four cities jointly hired consultant Russ Branson to review the sheriff's proposed cost sheet for 2022-23, in which he and staff from each city "found considerable cause for concern regarding the methodology used for developing the most recent rates," according to Buellton's staff report.

After hearing a presentation from Branson, Buellton Vice Mayor David King raised concerns about the city's contract with the Sheriff's Office that went beyond increased rates.

"The sheriff's department is giving us a fixed cost of \$331,000 regardless of whether they have anybody come up here and do any [narcotics] investigations or not ... and that's troubling to me," King said during the Jan. 27 Buellton City Council meeting. "You know, I could buy a nice house in Bakersfield for that much money."

King brought up the department's fixed rates on narcotics investigations and other special services as an example, stating it wouldn't be fair for Buellton to pay those rates if, throughout the year, it turns out "nobody does any narcotics investigations, maybe it's just done by our patrol deputies."

Buellton City Attorney Greg Murphy said that although those sections of the cost sheet are "consistent with the contract," King's points should be considered after "the dispute is finished, and we begin working on a new long-term contract."

Before the Buellton City Council voted unanimously to submit its formal complaint to the Sheriff's Office, City Manager Scott Wolfe requested the freedom to draft the letter "in a very broad fashion," without addressing particular issues in the cost sheet.

"There are still things that we have questions about that have not yet been answered, and we would like to reserve the right to dispute those as well," Wolfe said.

—Caleb Wiseblood

## Lompoc teacher's union declares impasse in salary talks

After nearly 100 hours of negotiations over salaries, the Lompoc Union School District decided it can't give its teachers more than a 1.25 percent ongoing raise and \$1,000 one-time payment.

The Lompoc Federation of Teachers, the teachers union, has been pushing for raises to attract new employees to what it calls an "isolated" district and to keep up with the cost of living due to high inflation rates. The district's decision led the union to file for an impasse, federation President Skyler Andersen said.

"Filing for impasse means that we have recognized we are at a standstill in negotiations that we believe we won't be able to get out of without outside assistance," Andersen explained.

The decision followed several union discussions to ensure everyone understood what an impasse entails, and about 87 percent of members voted in favor, Andersen said. The last time the union went to an impasse was in the 1970s, she said.

"We felt it was a mandate from our members, and it motivated us to make the decision," Andersen said. "We didn't have to go this route. We think it's awful we have to resort to this, but we are hopeful it will result in a better outcome than what the district offered us at the bargaining table."

NEWS from page 4

The union and the district used to have a very collaborative partnership, she said, but the past year has really soured their relationship due to the district's decision to get rid of its negotiations facilitator as well as other disciplinary issues.

"There's been a lot of pressure related to COVID. ... I would say COVID's been a driving factor, but there have been other things in the relationship that led to its worsening," she said.

Another motivating factor was that the other district union—the California School Employees Association, which represents all classified employees like secretaries and custodians—received a 2.875 percent ongoing salary raise, which is more than double the teacher's union raise, Andersen said.

"Our members are not happy about that. It's not because they aren't worthy of that raise, but our anger stems from the fact that we believe our members are worthy of that, too," she added.

Over the past year, teachers had to work through online and hybrid learning, increased behavioral issues as students returned to the classroom, higher absence rates, and a substitute teacher shortage, putting a lot of pressure on the classroom leaders, Andersen said.

"Every member in our union has definitely been impacted by this year, [which] has not relented at all since we got back full time in the classroom," she said.

Lompoc Unified School District (LUSD) officials said it's one of the few districts without a general obligation bond—a community tax that helps fund school district projects—and therefore, the majority of the district's general fund must go toward maintaining facilities.

"Additionally, the needs of our district continue to increase while a decline in enrollment places significant constraints on our budget. It is within this challenging budgeting context that LUSD continues to negotiate in good faith with its bargaining units," district officials said in a statement.

The school district met with the teachers union to negotiate salaries on Oct. 1, Oct. 8, Nov. 17, Dec. 17, and Jan. 28, during which the union turned down several offers, including a one-time 3.75 percent increase—near equivalent to the California School Employees Association increase—according to the district's statement.

Andersen confirmed the union rejected this proposal because it puts teachers at a disadvantage; with more members and higher wages, it will result in a smaller pay increase, she said.

"I like to explain it as if we have two equal-sized pizzas, but one split between four people is going to have bigger slices than if it were to be shared between 10 people," she continued.

With an impasse filed, the Public Employment Relations Board—a state administrative agency—will send a mediator to help work out an agreement between the two parties. The mediator helps make a process for both sides to come into agreement, which Andersen said she hopes will result in higher wages.

"A raise would mean the district sees the hard work and recognizes it in a very tangible way.

That simple recognition carries a lot more weight, especially in this critical moment we are in during the pandemic," Andersen said.

—Taylor O'Connor

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# A waiting game

*Santa Barbara County stopped allowing mental health evaluators to enter the Main Jail, pausing services for inmates*

BY TAYLOR O'CONNOR

The Santa Maria Police Department arrested Jonathan Paul Thomas on suspicion of domestic violence and false imprisonment on Jan. 11 at 9:32 p.m. They transported him to the Santa Barbara County Main Jail, where the 45-year-old made statements about suicide and was escorted to a single-occupant safety cell, according to the Sheriff's Office.

Deputies found Thomas dead on Jan. 12 at 2:03 a.m.

"What is clear so far in the investigation is that once inside the safety cell, custody deputies removed Thomas' clothing, he was placed face down onto the floor of the cell, his handcuffs were removed, and the custody deputies exited the cell. Minutes later, custody deputies noticed that Thomas was not moving," sheriff's officials said in a statement.

Custody deputies performed CPR and requested emergency medical response, but these measures were unsuccessful. An autopsy was scheduled for Jan. 13, but Sheriff's Office Public Information Officer Raquel Zick told the *Sun* that the cause of death remains unknown.

## In limbo

Often those who are booked into the jail with mental health issues get worse if they don't get formalized treatment, according to county Assistant Public Defender La Mer Kyle-Griffiths.

These kinds of mental health issues have plagued the Main Jail's history, something a 2020 lawsuit settlement aimed to remedy. But short staffing and COVID-19's restrictive policies have limited the jail's mental health care expansion—as well as inmates' access to services, local psychologist Susan Ferrant said. This includes mental health forensic evaluations.

"A forensic evaluation provides the court [with] specialized information that can only be provided by a psychologist, and the specialized information can be critical to the kinds of judicial decisions that judges have to make," Ferrant said.

Ferrant works on a panel of alienists: a group of neutral, certified psychologists who are selected by the court to perform forensic evaluations—an hour-long conversation to understand whether a person's mental illness undermines their ability to think clearly and act intentionally. Evaluations are required by

law when an attorney questions the defendant's ability to understand trial procedures or if the crime could have been caused by mental health-related issues, she said.

"They have to have a rational and factual understanding of the facts of their case, and a lot of things interfere with that," she said. "This is a task of how clearly you can think; it sounds simple, but it's not that simple."

Ferrant had three clients to visit in December but couldn't enter the Main Jail due to COVID-19 visitor restrictions, making it impossible for her to complete her evaluations and meet her deadlines; thus their respective trials couldn't continue, she said.

Sheriff's Office Public Information Officer Zick told the *Sun* that evaluations have been performed using video conferencing and are facilitated when staff is notified.

Ferrant said scheduling virtual meetings has also been difficult and limits the time she can spend on the evaluations. She's since stopped taking meetings at the jail, she added.

"The system is already jammed up, but this adds to the jam-up; it backs everything up. ... I understand—especially with COVID—that we're all working in a difficult, backed-up system. ... However, it can become very frustrating when alienists are not given the support they need to do their job," she said.

There are currently 33 people in the jail who have been found incompetent to stand trial and are waiting for placement in restoration programs in a mental health facility, said Aaron Fischer, an attorney with King and Spalding.

"That's almost 5 percent of the jail population that is in limbo. And there's more than that because there are people waiting for their evaluation," he said.

Fischer worked on the 2017 *Murray v. County of Santa Barbara* lawsuit, which addressed conditions at the jail. He now receives weekly data about the jail's progress toward improvement, which is monitored by court-appointed experts, he said.

"The Murray case requires a significant expansion of mental health services for people

who are incarcerated and in need of care. That expansion has not occurred. The staff had planned for creation of enhanced mental health programming, but due in part to COVID, lack of staffing, and resources, that programming has not gotten off the ground," he said.

## Impediments or excuses?

The Santa Barbara County grand jury also investigated mental health services at the jail after an inmate suicide in early 2021—the fourth inmate to commit suicide in less than three years, the report stated.

"The jury's investigation revealed that process improvements were needed in the areas of communication between deputies and medical professionals, training in the identification of potential suicidal ideation when it's not openly stated, the application of 'urgent need for medical care,' and the availability of appropriate mental health professionals on a 24/7 basis," the report said.

The grand jury believes future changes and improvements are needed with around-the-clock coverage by on-site medical professionals, improved communication between deputies and mental health professionals, and improved training, the report stated.

**'We all want people to be safer, and we also want people in the jail to be safer, but we aren't giving the most vulnerable people the chance to be released and get the services they need.'**

—La Mer Kyle-Griffiths, assistant public defender

Mental health forensic exams are one tool that can be used to discover whether a person has mental health-related issues that need attention. Granting doctors access can allow inmates to receive resources faster, Public Defender Kyle-Griffiths said.

Since early December, doctors have reached out to Kyle-Griffiths because they weren't allowed into the jail—regardless of their vaccination status—and weren't able to complete their evaluations.

"One doctor personally said she had 12 cases pending because she was not allowed to get into the jail. There's a larger number, but I can only speak to those we are representing," Kyle-Griffiths said.

Attorneys normally aren't involved in the court-mandated process, but she and her fellow attorneys at the Public Defender's Office created

a list of their clients with mental health-related concerns in order to get the jail's cooperation. However, she said, they're still having difficulties with doctors showing up to meet with inmates and getting turned away.

"The real problem and issue—and it's so stark here—is so many other communities have figured out ways to do this, where as long as you bring in proof of vaccination you can come and set up meetings," Kyle-Griffiths said. "That piece has been particularly problematic because here, there are folks just sitting, including those needing evaluation and those needing treatment or intensive services."

She'd like to see more collaboration between the elected county district attorney, the sheriff, and the Public Health Department for proactive responses and robust collaboration to get out of "crisis mode."

"We all want people to be safer, and we also want people in the jail to be safer, but we aren't giving the most vulnerable people the chance to be released and get the services they need. COVID has almost become an excuse rather than a real impediment," she said.

## Positive steps

Although the Santa Barbara County Main Jail has a long way to go, attorney Fischer said there have been some positive actions.

"The jail within the last year-and-a-half began their competency treatment program that serves 10 people, roughly a quarter of the need. It's not getting the county where they need to be, but it's a step in the right direction," Fischer said.

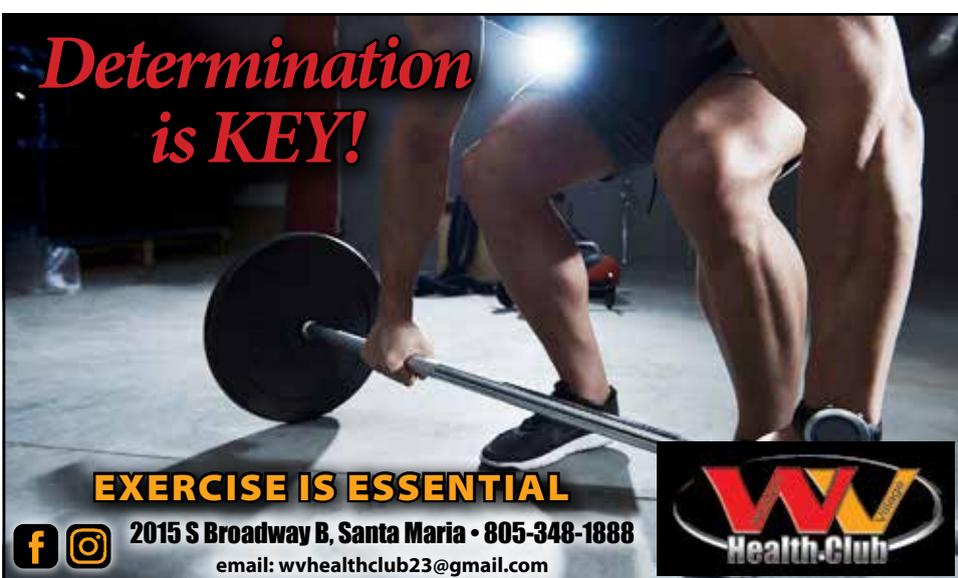
The county grand jury report also noted improvements for inmates' mental well-being with the Main Jail's National Commission on Correctional Health Care accreditation, ensuring that it's in compliance with these standards and had established a risk mitigation committee. The jail increased daily yard time, and computer tablets, art supplies, and journals became available to inmates.

The Northern Branch Jail, which recently opened, is another solution with operational features designed to help those with mental health issues, the grand jury's report stated.

The sooner these resolutions are implemented, the better it will be for patients, the community, and the entire court system, Fischer said.

"There is a staggeringly high amount of people with mental health needs in the jail right now, and delays serve nobody. It overworks employees, bottlenecks the court system, and delays mental health services," Fischer said. "Longer incarceration and delayed mental health services certainly don't serve the community, not fiscally and not for public safety." ○

Reach Staff Writer Taylor O'Connor at [toconnor@santamariasun.com](mailto:toconnor@santamariasun.com).



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## The Santa Maria Joint Union High School District Special Education - Child Find

The Santa Maria Joint Union High School District (SMJUHS) seeks to identify, locate, and evaluate high school age students suspected of having a disability who may be eligible for special education services designed to meet their educational needs at no cost to families. This includes students that are highly mobile, migrant, experiencing homelessness, students that are wards of the state, and students attending private schools located within SMJUHS boundaries. If you suspect your child has a disability, contact the school special education department or district office Special Education Department.

SPANISH TRANSLATION

## El Distrito Escolar de las Escuelas Preparatorias de Santa Maria Educación Especial - Búsqueda de Estudiantes

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Staff | Special Education

Santa Maria Joint Union High School District

[smjuhsd.k12.ca.us](http://smjuhsd.k12.ca.us)



**OPPORTUNITY:** The Mayor's Youth Task Force offers pop-up activities for teens throughout Santa Maria in addition to job training programs at the Abel Maldonado Community Youth Center. Pictured here, Mayor Alice Patino helps inaugurate the youth center into the National Safe Place Network on Jan. 6, 2020.

## Free fun

### Santa Maria Mayor's Youth Task Force offers new activities for February

BY TAYLOR O'CONNOR

After Santa Maria experienced a series of violent incidents a few years ago, Mayor Alice Patino called parents and businesses together to brainstorm a way to combat the youth-on-youth violence and alarming rates of teen murders.

Santa Maria saw 21 homicides in 14 months in 2016, a rate 80 percent higher than the national average, according to the Mayor's Task Force executive summary. The first aggravated assault case of 2017 was between two minors, ages 15 and 16, who each had stab wounds and other serious injuries, according to previous *Sun* reporting.

These meetings resulted in forming the Mayor's Task Force on Youth Safety, a program that provides free, safe after school and weekend pop-up activities across the city, Task Force Coordinator David Rodriguez said.

"A lot of the focus was to deter students [from] turning to gang involvement and drug use. We wanted to provide opportunities for professional development; there's a programming specialist and a coordinator with boots on the ground outreach to get them involved in healthy activities that could prevent them from participating in misconduct or criminal activity," Rodriguez said.

For a long time, Youth Task Force programming was based out of the Abel Maldonado Community Youth Center—until Rodriguez and his team realized students didn't have transportation to get there. The task force began planning pop-up events where they took recreation equipment and coordinated at two different locations per month.

The recent surge in COVID-19 caused staff to make sure that all February pop-ups—including a cornhole competition, a water bottle rocket experiment, and planter pot painting—included a focus on student safety, he added.

"A lot of the ideas come from the mayor's teen council with groups at Pioneer and Santa Maria High School where we meet monthly to [discuss]. They act as ambassadors for their peers to Mayor Patino," Rodriguez said.

The teen council's ideas helped expand the program to provide three regional and overnight experiences for their peers, including local hikes to Montaña de Oro, kayaking excursions, a Monterey Bay Aquarium visit, and overnight university tours to UC Berkeley, UCLA, and UC Irvine, he said.

"We have a liaison with the school district; we want our school officials to know so they

can help us promote our regional programming as well. It's good to connect with them because they need to know our policies," Rodriguez continued.

The task force covers activity fees and food costs for those who participate in local and regional excursions. Funding comes from the Youth General Fund and Measure U funds—a general tax that can be used for any municipal purposes. Students involved in the program also receive free Santa Maria Regional Transit passes and professional development opportunities, he said.

"We provide job training and provide students the opportunity to obtain employment that requires previous experience," Rodriguez said.

Through the McClelland Street Market, which opened in August, the task force offers a 12-week training where students can get their food handler certification, learn about inventory and merchandising, and receive a mentor for the application and interview process, he said.

In addition to job training, the task force focuses on collaboration with other agencies, nonprofits, and businesses for teen resources.

"We act as a bridge to connect students to resources they might need—whether they are teen parents or have basic needs, we can connect them to the right agency for the things they might need," Rodriguez said.

Any youth in crisis can go to the Abel Maldonado Community Youth Center—which is part of the National Safe Place Network—for further resources and help in what they might be going through, he added.

"We want a space where teens can be teens, where they can't be coerced into engaging in misconduct. Not only do we provide a one- to two-hour distraction, we hope they eventually engage with our task force, engage in the program, and make new friends," Rodriguez said.

February pop-up activities will be located at the Newlove Community Center—1619 South Thornburg St.—every Thursday from 2 to 4 p.m. For more information, call the Recreation and Parks Department at (805) 925-0951, Ext. 2260.

### Highlight

The Santa Maria Public Library announced the return of the Zip Book Program to the main library and all branch locations. The Zip Book Program allows patrons to request a book, large print book, or an audiobook that's not available through the Santa Maria Public Library and have it delivered to their home, free of charge. Patrons return the book to any branch when they're finished, and they may select another Zip Book. To order a book from the Zip Book Program, visit [cityofsantamaria.org/library](http://cityofsantamaria.org/library) or call the library's information desk at (805) 925-0994, Ext. 8562. ☉

Taylor O'Connor wrote this week's Spotlight. You can reach her at [tocomnor@santamariasun.com](mailto:tocomnor@santamariasun.com).

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# DEATH NOTICES

**ABELOE, CARL "TOOTIE" SR.**, 85, of Los Alamos passed away 1/20/2022 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

**ALLARD, WAYNE G.**, 72, of Grover Beach passed away 12/27/2022 arrangements with Marshall Spoo Sunset Funeral Chapel

**ALLDREDGE, JUNE ROSE**, 96, of Santa Maria passed away 1/28/2022 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

**ALLEN, JOHN L.**, 67, of Santa Maria passed away 1/26/2022 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

**CARMACK, CHERYL RAE**, 77, of Atascadero passed away 1/19/2022 arrangements with Chapel of the Roses

**CHUDOBA, RUBY ANN**, 78, of Santa Maria passed away on 1/30/2022 arrangements with Magner Maloney Funeral Home

**CORONADO, SERGIO "BIG SERGE,"** 60, of Santa Maria passed away 1/25/2022 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

**CRAIG, WILLIAM BRIGHT**, 90, of Santa Maria passed away 1/20/2022 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

**DOMINGO, ARMANDO TIMOTEO**, 85, of Santa Maria passed away 1/24/2022 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

**FOUT, TIMOTHY RAY "TR"**, 62, of Orcutt passed away 1/22/2022 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

**GOMEZ, REYNALDO ALBERT**, 67, of Atascadero passed away 1/13/2022 arrangements with Chapel of the Roses

**HOLT, WILLIAM VADEN**, 81, of Paso Robles passed away 1/22/2022 arrangements with Chapel of the Roses

**LEBLANC, ELIZABETH "BETTY,"** 76, of Nipomo passed away 1/24/2022 arrangements with Magner Maloney Funeral Home

**MADDUX, LELEN CLARK**, 90, of Santa Margarita passed away on 1/29/2022 arrangements with Marshall Spoo Sunset Funeral Chapel

**NETHER, ROGER PAUL**, 73, of Santa Maria passed away 1/25/2022 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

**PADILLA, JOHN GUS**, 62, of Guadalupe passed away 1/21/2022 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

**PEREZ, LUIS HERNANDEZ**, 84, of Santa Maria passed away 1/27/2022 arrangements with Magner Maloney Funeral Home

**RAVELING, CAROLE ANN**, 74, of Santa Maria passed away 1/30/2022 arrangements with Magner Maloney Funeral Home

**RICHARDS, RITA ALINE**, 87, of Atascadero passed away 1/21/2022 arrangements with Chapel of the Roses

**ROSAS, SANTOS**, 72, of Santa Maria passed away 1/27/2022 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

**SABO, LINDA A.**, 79, of Santa Maria passed away 1/27/2022 arrangements with Magner Maloney Funeral Home

**SANI, CHAD**, 65, of San Luis Obispo, passed away 1/22/2022 arrangements with Blue Sky Cremation Service

**SCHMITZ, MONA KHOURY**, 96, of Atascadero passed away 1/24/2022 arrangements with Chapel of the Roses

**STEWART, SYLVIA**, 89, of Atascadero passed away 1/12/2022 arrangements with Blue Sky Cremation Service

**SUTTERFIELD, CHERYL ANN**, 66, of Atascadero passed away 1/25/2022 arrangements with Chapel of the Roses

**TAVITIAN, BRIAN WEBSTER**, 46, of Atascadero passed away 12/28/2021 arrangements with Chapel of the Roses

**TRETTER, IRNEST**, 74, of Atascadero passed away 1/21/2022 arrangements with Blue Sky Cremation Service

**ULLMER, JAMES LEE**, 91, of Santa Maria passed away 1/25/2022 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

**WALTERS, DONALD**, 78, of Arroyo Grande passed away 1/12/2022 arrangements with Marshall Spoo Sunset Funeral Chapel

**ZUNIGA, JESUS**, 92, of Oceano passed away 1/23/2022 arrangements with Marshall Spoo Sunset Funeral Chapel

## ATTENTION all former SMJUHS Special Education Students born 1996 and 1997!

All records for any Special Education student that was born within 1996 -1997 and attended a Santa Maria Joint Union High School District school, your physical special education records are available for pick up at no charge from the District Office. All Records not picked up by June 1, 2022 will be destroyed.

*If you have any questions, or to arrange a pickup date/time, contact:*

Sandra Hernandez / Special Education Dept.  
Santa Maria Joint Union High School District  
2560 Skyway Dr.  
Santa Maria, CA 93455  
805-922-457 ext. 4311

SPANISH TRANSLATION

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*Si tiene alguna pregunta, o para programar una fecha/hora de recogida, comuníquense con:*

Sandra Hernandez / Dept. de Educacion Especial  
Santa Maria Joint Union High School District  
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Santa Maria, CA 93455  
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- It's a worthwhile county investment! I plan on using the bus to get to my job.
- It's great for our environment and a step in the right direction.
- It's smart, but not enough people use public transportation for it to make an impact.
- It's a waste of taxpayer money, and we shouldn't have bought the bus in the first place.

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

**Sun**

### Online Poll

#### What do you do for your own well-being?

- 50% I try to do what I can to take care of myself, but there's not enough time in the day.
- 16.6% I exercise every day and try to eat healthily.
- 16.6% I like to meditate and practice mindfulness.
- 16.6% I don't do any of these because I am a very healthy individual.

6 Votes

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We welcome submissions. Please accompany them with a self-addressed, stamped envelope. All letters to the editor become the property of the Sun.

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

### It's not too late for Santa Maria leaders to save homelessness project

It saddens me to see some members of the City Council reject funding from the county to house the homeless. They complain about riverbed encampments, then refuse money that could house people who live there. Around the country, cities have found that housing the homeless is key to their success as people. Once housed they can receive counseling and services hard to provide on the run.

But Etta Waterfield and Alice Patino are openly against it. They believe that punishing the homeless is more important than housing them because it's their fault they don't have a home. They argue it would cost the city tax dollars to turn a motel into permanent housing units. How much does it cost to clean the riverbeds?

We need to call upon Gloria Soto, Carlos Escobedo, and Mike Cordero to redirect the conversation to how we can make this project work. Those three leaders have the power to save this project. Will they use it? Write to them and encourage them to do just that.

Gale McNeeley  
Santa Maria

### Federal legalization is necessary to understand health benefits of cannabis

I just read about the research study from Oregon State University, which found that consuming two cannabinoids (called cannabigerolic acid, or CBGA,

and cannabidiolic acid, or CBDA) could prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Awesome! But the study falls short.

CBG-A and CBD-A are both derived from hemp (i.e., part of the cannabis sativa species, but without the psychoactive component, tetrahydrocannabinol, or THC). Both CBG and CBD have an abundance of cannabidiolic acid, which has the potential to bind onto COVID spike proteins and prevent further infection. THC-A also has this acid (and in abundance!). However, researchers cannot study THC because it is still federally classified as a Schedule 1 drug and it would violate OSU's policy.

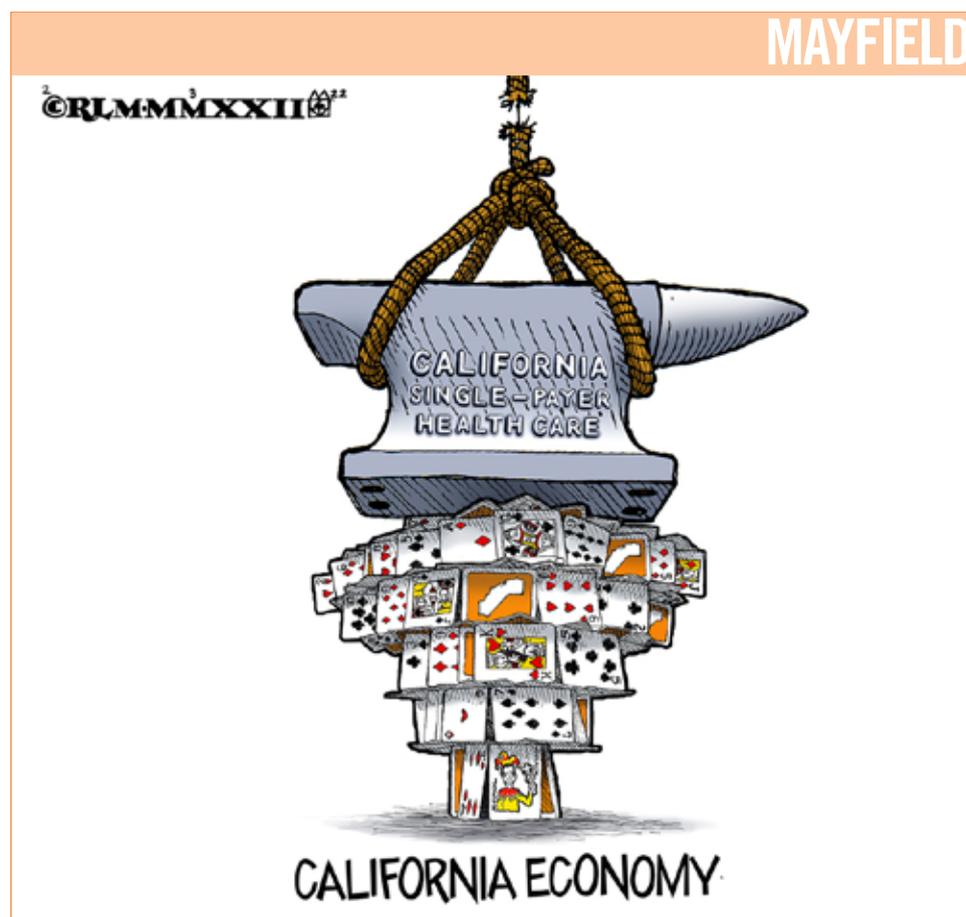
This is a huge shortcoming, and it serves as another reminder that we are overdue for legalizing marijuana federally.

Currently, 36 states have legalized medical marijuana. The CDC estimates 48.2 million people in the U.S. (of a 329.5 million population) consume marijuana. That means approximately 82 percent of the population is missing out on cannabis's health benefits, such as the potential to prevent COVID-19. If more clinical studies were allowed to study THC, there would be more information about cannabis's effect on our health. And with more information it's likely that nonrecreational consumers will be more willing to try cannabis for its specific health benefits.

I say this because I was a nonrecreational consumer who only turned to cannabis out of sheer desperation. I was diagnosed with Crohn's disease in 2014 after 11 years of repeated misdiagnosis and consistently debilitating health. I tried a myriad of Western medicines, but cannabis was the only remedy that brought me back to a state of normalcy and stabilized my quality of life. The benefits were so significant that I started cultivating my own cannabis so that I could ensure a sufficient supply of high quality (organic) cannabis.

There are many similar stories to mine, and probably many more with 82 percent of the population not realizing the health potential. If cannabis remains federally illegal, we are inhibiting research and delaying major discoveries on its health benefits.

Sara Rotman  
president, New Brand/ Busy Bee's Organics and co-founder of Good Farmers Great Neighbors  
Buellton



### Nonprofits stand in solidarity against vandalism of the arts, cultural center

The undersigned arts and cultural organizations from around the Tri-County area are appalled by the recent Jan. 18 vandalism and racist stereotypes against Corazon del Pueblo in Santa Maria. We are writing this on Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s holiday and were reminded of this quote of his, "Every man must decide whether he will walk in the light of creative altruism or in the darkness of destructive selfishness."

As nonprofits we are all dedicated to serving our communities, and that also means supporting each other. The vandalism and racism directed towards Corazon del Pueblo is an act of hate that we condemn, and one we hope the entire community rejects. We feel we must declare our support because, as King also said, "We will remember not the words of our enemies, but the silence of our friends."

We, the undersigned, will not be silent and will continue our own work to be allies for each other and all parts of our community, knowing that working together for positive change is the only sustainable path forward.

In peace and solidarity,

- Stacey Otte-Demangate, executive director, Wildling Museum of Art and Nature
- Lisa Potter, director of operations, Goleta Valley Historical Society
- Greg Gorga, executive director, Santa Barbara Maritime Museum
- Esther Jacobsen Bates, executive director, Elverhøj Museum of History & Art
- Marco Pinter, executive director, Museum of Sensory & Movement Experiences
- Judy Larson, executive director, Westmont Ridley-Tree Museum of Art
- Lisa Renken, director, Lompoc Museum
- Gabriel Ritter, executive director, Art, Design and Architecture Museum at UCSB
- John Connelly, director, Atkinson Gallery, Santa Barbara City College
- Steve Windhager, executive director, Santa Barbara Botanic Garden
- Alexandra Terry, chief curator, Museum of Contemporary Art Santa Barbara
- Michael Shanklin, executive director, kidSTREAM
- Larry Feinberg, Robert and Mercedes Eichholz, director and CEO, Santa Barbara Museum of Art
- Adri Howe, executive director, Channel Islands Maritime Museum
- Robin Gose, president and CEO, MOXI, The Wolf Museum of Exploration + Innovation
- Luke Swetland, president and CEO, Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History
- Anne Peterson, executive director, Santa Barbara Trust for Historic Preservation
- Dacia Harwood, executive director, Santa Barbara Historical Museum
- Monica Orozco, executive director, Old Mission Santa Barbara and Santa Bárbara Mission Archive-Library
- Laura-Susan Thomas, director, Foxworthy Gallery, Alan Hancock College
- Alexis Elias, interim executive director, Guadalupe-Nipomo Dunes Center
- Rebecca Anderson, executive director, Ganna Walska Lotusland
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**Speak up!**

Send us your views and opinion to [letters@santamariasun.com](mailto:letters@santamariasun.com).



# Excuses, excuses

COVID-19's such a little devil. As of Feb. 1, this thing ain't over yet, according to the **Santa Barbara County Public Health Department**, which once again extended the indoor mask mandate for yet another month.

Community transmission is still considered "high," the department stated.

The county had 4,330 active cases with 108 in the hospital, 12 in the ICU, and one more death.

Have I ever complained about the COVID-19 dashboard? It gives me stress tics, because it's so full of poorly displayed, convoluted information. All I wanted to know was how many of our hospitalized cases have been vaccinated versus unvaccinated. Could I find it? Nope.

It seems like a number that should be readily available, since the county is still pushing vaccinations as a good solution to help prevent the spread of the virus and prevent serious symptoms if you're one of the sad saps who's vaxxed and still gets the virus.

On **SLO County's** COVID-19 dashboard, that number's pretty easy to find. Since June 15, 2021, 78.5 percent of the folks hospitalized with COVID-19 weren't fully vaccinated. In 74.8 percent of SLO County's COVID-19 deaths, the resident wasn't fully vaxxed.

And I went through all of that, just so I could tell you this:

You know how much it costs to take a little lie-down attached to a ventilator in the hospital? If you're uninsured, the average charge (which is basically a starting price that can be negotiated down, thanks to America's stellar health care

system) for all of that save-your-life-from-COVID-19 care is \$460,000. If you're insured? Between you and your insurance company, it's an average of \$127,000, according to a recent study from **FAIR Health**.

Ouch.

And even if you die while you're in the hospital, somebody still has to pay your medical bill. You know how much a vaccine costs you? It's free!

Go get one, and save yourself money in the long run, if a \$250 gift card from Allan Hancock College or saving the life of your grandpa with multiple co-morbidities like heart disease and diabetes isn't enough of an incentive for you to get the jab(s).

You know who else wants to save money in the long run? **Buellton, Solvang, Goleta, and Carpinteria**, which are all protesting a rate increase from the **Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Office**, which provides contracted public safety services to the cities. For the 2022-23 fiscal year, the sheriff is proposing and 11.2 percent increase in the cost of its services, according to a Buellton city staff report. Last year, it proposed a 48 percent increase for Buellton! What???

What's happening with the sheriff that it would cost so much more to patrol, arrest people, and do investigations?

I can tell you what the Sheriff's Office isn't doing with its money: Providing adequate mental health services at the **Main Jail**. Just ask the **Assistant Public Defender's Office**, which is concerned about clients who are waiting to get access to the things they need, such as mental health evaluations.

"COVID has almost become an excuse rather than a real impediment," Assistant Public Defender La Mer Kyle-Griffiths said. ○

*The Canary only hears excuses. Send comments to canary@santamariasun.com.*



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<p><b>A Special Valentine Winemaker Dinner</b> SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 13 Cass Winery, Paso Robles</p>	<p><b>In-Person Tours WED &amp; SAT Virtual Tours ON DEMAND</b> Point San Luis Lighthouse, Avila Beach</p>	<p><b>Valentine's Day Livestream: From Brynn &amp; Jody with Love</b> MONDAY, FEBRUARY 14 Online at BigBigSLO.com</p>
<p><b>Ted's Estate Beef Winemaker Dinner: Osso Buco</b> FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 18 Cass Winery, Paso Robles</p>	<p><b>The Full Monty: The Musical</b> FEBRUARY 18-MARCH 5 Santa Maria Civic Theatre, Santa Maria</p>	<p><b>Barrel Room Concert: Carbon City Lights</b> SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 20 Cass Winery, Paso Robles</p>
<p><b>8th Annual Garagiste Southern Exposure Wine Festival</b> FRI &amp; SAT, FEBRUARY 25 &amp; 26 Solvang Veterans Memorial Hall</p>	<p><b>Barrel Room Concert: Damon Castillo</b> SUNDAY, MARCH 6 Cass Winery, Paso Robles</p>	<p><b>46 West Safari Sunday!</b> SUNDAY, MARCH 6 Various Wineries, Paso Robles</p>
<p><b>Wednesdays Around the World Winemaker Dinner: Ireland</b> WEDNESDAY, MARCH 9 Cass Winery, Paso Robles</p>	<p><b>Spring Release Weekend Sunset Social</b> FRIDAY, MARCH 18 Cass Winery, Paso Robles</p>	<p><b>Symphony of the Vines: Gallant Guitar</b> SUNDAY, MARCH 20 Cass Winery, Paso Robles</p>

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# HOT STUFF

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

## ARTS

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

### LOMPOC/VANDENBERG

**COCKTAILS, KISSES, AND CABARET** Come join us for a Valentine's show that you won't soon forget. Cocktails, kisses, and cabaret is an AIDS/LifeCycle Fundraiser featuring live performances in song, dance, and comedy. **Feb. 12**, 8-10:30 p.m. \$30. 805-588-5863. Johnny's Bar and Grill, 321 W. Ocean Ave., Lompoc.

### SANTA MARIA VALLEY/LOS ALAMOS

**2022 POETRY OUT LOUD FINALS** Join us for the annual Poetry Out Loud competition. Accepting registration through Feb. 4 for students to submit a recorded poem from the Poetry Out Loud anthology. Finalists will recite their poems on Feb. 10. **Feb. 10**, 7-8 p.m. Free. 209-312-8653. [tinyurl.com/SBPOLfinals22](http://tinyurl.com/SBPOLfinals22). Corazon del Pueblo, 124 W. Main Street, Santa Maria.

### LOCAL AND FEATURED ARTIST EXHIBITS

Valley Art Gallery, located in the SM Airport, exhibits local and featured artist work. New exhibits are mounted the first Tuesday of even-numbered months. Wide variety of art available for purchase. ongoing, 8 a.m.-10 p.m. Free. 805-925-0663. Santa Maria Airport, 3249 Terminal Dr., Santa Maria.

### ORIGAMI VALENTINE WORKSHOP

Join Library staff for a Valentine's Day-themed origami workshop. Learn how to make origami hearts, heart shaped envelopes, and heart shaped boxes. Registration required. **Feb. 12**, 12-12:30 p.m. Free. 805-925-0994. [cityofsantamaria.org/city-government/departments/library](http://cityofsantamaria.org/city-government/departments/library). Santa Maria Public Library, 421 S. McClelland St., 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](http://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.

**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](http://varies.wineanddesign.com/orcutt). Wine and Design, 3420 Orcutt Road, suite 105, Orcutt.

### SOUTH COAST SLO COUNTY

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

**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. LiA Creative Community, 1147 East Grand Ave. suite 101, Arroyo Grande.

**THE PEKING ACROBATS** Known for their countless television appearances and decades of live touring on stages around the world, The Peking Acrobats have redefined the ancient arts of Chinese acrobatics. Their athleticism and pageantry "create a one-of-a-kind experience that leaves the audience in awe." **Feb. 5**, 7:30-9:30 p.m. \$35-\$50. 805-489-9444. [clarkcenter.org/shows/the-peking-acrobats/](http://clarkcenter.org/shows/the-peking-acrobats/). Clark Center for the Performing Arts, 487 Fair Oaks Ave., 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.

### SAN LUIS OBISPO

**11 YEARS OF LOVE** Stay tuned for more information about this annual anniversary event. Visit site for more. **Feb. 6** [artcentral.slo.com](http://artcentral.slo.com). Art Central, 1329 Monterey St., San Luis Obispo, 805-747-4200.

**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](http://actorsedge.com). Online, See website, San Luis Obispo.

**ART AND ABOUT** Join SLOMA and GALA to celebrate the work of William Brickel. Sip wine and listen to music from a live DJ all while you explore his work. Also exhibiting, "In the Moment" by members of The Painters Group and, "Touchy Touchy", by Marrin Lee Martinez. **Feb. 4**, 5-8 p.m. Free. 805-543-8562. [sloma.org/events/second-saturdays/](http://sloma.org/events/second-saturdays/). San Luis Obispo Museum of Art, 1010 Broad St., San Luis Obispo.

**ART AND ABOUT SLO** Join us for Art and About SLO, a self-guided art walk that gives the community an opportunity to experience visual, literary, and performing art in galleries and other venues. Visit site for an updated map of locations. Events will not occur on major holidays. First Friday of every month, 5-8 p.m. Free. 805-544-9251. [artsobispo.org/art-and-about](http://artsobispo.org/art-and-about). Citywide, 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/](http://3cps.org/3cps-online-show/). Online, See website, San Luis Obispo.

**CAMBRIA FILM FESTIVAL** A showcase of independent feature and short films from around the

### MONSTER MASH

The Brick Barn Wine Estate in Buellton presents Ghost/ Monster live in concert on Sunday, Feb. 13, from 1 to 5 p.m. Reservations to this outdoor event are recommended but not required. Wine will be available for purchase throughout the show. For more info on the concert and other upcoming musical acts hosted by the Brick Barn Wine Estate, call (805) 686-1208 or visit [brickbarnwineestate.com](http://brickbarnwineestate.com). The winery is located at 795 W. Highway 246, Buellton.

—Caleb Wiseblood

FILE COURTESY PHOTO BY ANNIE WALD PHOTOGRAPHY

SUBMIT YOUR EVENTS

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

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world. The focus is on romance, romantic comedy, and the complexities of love. The 2022 Festival includes virtual screenings only. **Feb. 3**, 10:30 a.m.-9 p.m., **Feb. 4**, 10:30 a.m.-9 p.m. and **Feb. 5-6**, 10:30 a.m.-9 p.m. Varies. 805-927-8190. [cambriafilmfestival.com/](http://cambriafilmfestival.com/). 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. 805-835-5893. [hmcruceceramics.com/](http://hmcruceceramics.com/). Online, See website, San Luis Obispo.

**FAIG AHMED: COLLISION** SLOMA is pleased to present a solo exhibition of prolific contemporary artist Faig Ahmed. From his studio in Baku, Azerbaijan, Ahmed creates textile works that transcend and transform the history of carpet making in the region. **Feb. 12-May 15**, 11 a.m.-5 p.m. 805-543-8562. San Luis Obispo Museum of Art, 1010 Broad St., San Luis Obispo, [sloma.org/](http://sloma.org/).

**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](http://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/](http://sloma.org/) visit/. San Luis Obispo Museum of Art, 1010 Broad St., San Luis Obispo.

**IN THE MOMENT** An exhibition featuring members of The Painters Group. These paintings represent specific moments that at first glance appear mundane but in actuality reflect profound realities of the artist's lives. Reception held during Art and About, on Feb. 4. **Feb. 4-March 27** Free. 805-543-8562. [sloma.org/exhibition/tpg-2022/](http://sloma.org/exhibition/tpg-2022/). San Luis Obispo Museum of Art, 1010 Broad St., San Luis Obispo.

**LEARN TO WEAVE MONDAYS** An opportunity to learn how a four-shaft loom works. You will get acquainted as a new weaver or as a refresher with lots of tips and tricks. This class includes getting to know a loom, how to prepare/dress a loom, and much much more. Mondays, 1-4 p.m. \$75 monthly. 805-441-8257. Patricia Martin: [Whispering Vista Studios](http://WhisperingVistaStudios.com), 224 Squire Canyon Rd, San Luis Obispo, [patriciamartinartist.com](http://patriciamartinartist.com).

**MASK MAKING AND HAT MAKING** Geared for children and adults. ongoing Spirits of Africa Gallery, 570 Higuera St., San Luis Obispo, [spiritsofafricagallery.com/](http://spiritsofafricagallery.com/).

**NOBLES AMONG US: MATERIAL THOUGHTS ON A POETIC ECOLOGY** A solo exhibition of artwork by Sommer Roman, whose work aims to evoke a sense of wonder about life and our relationship to "other," and

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furthermore, recalls the essential mutuality between plant, animal, and human that is core to our aliveness.  
**Feb. 9, 4:30-7:30 p.m.** and Mondays-Fridays, 11 a.m.-4 p.m. through April 1 Free. 805-546-3202. [cuesta.edu/student/campuslife/artgallery/](http://cuesta.edu/student/campuslife/artgallery/). Harold J. Miossi Gallery, Highway 1, San Luis Obispo.

**PAINTING CLASSES** Easels, brushes, and canvases provided. Limited to 20 students. ongoing Spirits of Africa Gallery, 570 Higuera St., San Luis Obispo, [spiritsofamericagallery.com/](http://spiritsofamericagallery.com/).

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

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

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

artist Allison Reimus: Opening reception is from 5 to 7 p.m. ongoing 805-305-9292. [leftfieldslo.com](http://leftfieldslo.com). Left Field Gallery, 1036 Los Osos Valley Road, Los Osos.

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

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

**FOR THE BIRDS EXHIBIT** During this exhibit, you'll find bird related fine art paintings, photography and three dimensional art to include pottery, sculpture, jewelry, glass, and more. Don't miss this exciting exhibit and artist reception featuring live birds. This event is free and open to the public. Through Feb. 21, 12-4 p.m. Free. 805-772-2504. [artcentermorroby.org](http://artcentermorroby.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 creative paint journey guided by a member of the fun loving FS crew. You will receive as much or as little instruction as you prefer. No artistic experience is necessary. Saturdays, 7-9 p.m. \$45. 805-772-9095. Forever Stoked, 1164 Quintana Rd., Morro Bay.

FILE PHOTO COURTESY OF JUDY LINDQUIST



### LOVELY HEARTS CLUB BAND

The Santa Maria Valley Senior Club presents its Valentine's Dance, featuring live music from the Riptide Big Band, at the Elwin Mussell Senior Center on Sunday, Feb. 13, from 1:30 to 4 p.m. The band will be accompanied by guest vocalist Bob Nations. Admission to the dance is free, thanks to funding from the Community Foundation of SLO County. Call (805) 925-0951 or visit [riptidebb.com](http://riptidebb.com) for more info. The venue is located at 510 Park Ave., Santa Maria. —C.W.

**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/](http://slo.ma.org/exhibition/touchy-touchy/). San Luis Obispo Museum of Art, 1010 Broad St., San Luis Obispo.

### NORTH SLO COUNTY

**ART AND ABOUT PASO** Join us for Art and About Paso, a self-guided art walk that gives the community an opportunity to experience visual, literary, and performing art in galleries and other venues. Visit site for an updated map of locations. Events will not occur on major holidays. First Saturday of every month, 5-9 p.m. Free. 805-544-9251. [artsobispo.org/art-and-about](http://artsobispo.org/art-and-about). Participating locations, Paso Robles, City-wide.

**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. [DepriseBrescia.com](http://DepriseBrescia.com). Deprise Brescia Art Gallery, 829 10th St., Paso Robles, 310-621-7543.

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

### NORTH COAST SLO COUNTY

**ALLISON REIMUS: FEELINGS IN A FAMILIAR FRAMEWORK** New paintings by New Jersey-based

**MASTER MOSAICS** Learn mosaic basics to create a one-of-a-kind project. Choose a project to make your heart sing while learning mosaic basics to complete your project. You have many colors, baubles, and beads to choose from. Preregistration required. Feb. 6, 10 a.m.-1 p.m. Various. 805-286-5993. [CreativeMeTime.com](http://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/](http://artcentermorroby.org/index.php/workshops/). Art Center Morro Bay, 835 Main St., Morro Bay.

**ROAD TO MASTERY DRAWING CLASS** With Marie Ramey. Six session class. This is a foundational beginning drawing class designed to teach basic drawing skills and on which more advanced skills can be developed. Mondays, Tuesdays, Fridays, 10 a.m.-1 p.m. through Feb. 18 \$130 per member and \$140 per non-member. 805-772-2504. [artcentermorroby.org](http://artcentermorroby.org). Art Center Morro Bay, 835 Main St., Morro Bay.

**SEA GLASS 3D JEWELRY** Create a gorgeous sea glass necklace using a super easy technique to adhere sea glass to a metal shape. Everything is provided to complete the projects from local sea glass (choose brown, white, or green in class). Preregistration required. Feb. 5, 1-2:30 p.m. \$25. 805-286-5993. [CreativeMeTime.com](http://CreativeMeTime.com). Art Center Morro Bay, 835 Main St., Morro Bay.

**SUCCULENT HEART WREATH** Enjoy a relaxing morning creating with succulents to make a gorgeous, lush wreath.

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Preregister to join. All supplies provided. **Feb. 5**, 10 a.m.-noon Various. 805-238-6300. 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](http://partnersincaring.org). Citywide, Santa Maria.

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

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

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

**LOW VISION WORKSHOP** Please join Library staff for a Low Vision Workshop. Patrons will learn about Library materials and resources available to those living with low vision. Topics covered will include large print materials, audiobooks, Braille books, and databases with accessibility features. Library tour included. **Feb. 5**, 10:30-11:30 a.m. Free. 805-925-0994. [cityofsamantaria.org/city-government/departments/library](http://cityofsamantaria.org/city-government/departments/library). Santa Maria Public Library, 421 S. McClelland St., Santa Maria.

**ONLINE JOB SEARCHING** Learn how to locate jobs on the web and submit applications through online portals. Participants will gain hands-on experience to jumpstart their job search. Registration required. **Feb. 5**, 12:1-3:30 p.m. 805-925-0994. [cityofsamantaria.org/city-government/departments/library](http://cityofsamantaria.org/city-government/departments/library). Santa Maria Public Library, 421 S. McClelland St., Santa Maria.

**ORCUTT MINERAL SOCIETY** Second Tuesday of every month Oasis Center, 420 Soares Ave., Orcutt, 805-937-9750.

**VIRTUAL WORKSHOPS OVER ZOOM** Visit site or call to learn about various virtual workshop offerings. ongoing Varies. Unwind Studio, 130 N. Broadway, suite B, Santa Maria, 805-748-2539, [unwindsantamaria.com](http://unwindsantamaria.com).

### 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/](http://pointsanluislighthouse.org/). Point San Luis Lighthouse, 1 Lighthouse Rd., Avila Beach.

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

### SAN LUIS OBISPO

**BENEDICT'S DHARMA: BUDDHISTS REFLECT ON THE RULE OF ST. BENEDICT** A spiritual conversation and book discussion on Zoom. Tuesdays, 10:15-11:45 a.m. through March 1 Free. 805-528-0654. [stbensosos.org](http://stbensosos.org). Online, See website, 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. Mondays-Sundays, 5:30-6:30 p.m. Sliding scale. 559-905-9274. [theartofsilence.net](http://theartofsilence.net). Online, See website, San Luis Obispo.

**CAL HOPE SLO GROUPS AT TMHA** Visit website for full list of weekly Zoom groups available. Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, Fridays [calhopecoconnect.org](http://calhopecoconnect.org). Transitions Mental Health Warehouse, 784 High Street, San Luis Obispo, 805-270-3346.

**CAL POLY BASKETBALL VS. CSUN** Come watch the Mustangs take on CSUN in a Big West Conference game. **Feb. 10**, 7-9 p.m. [gopoly.com/](http://gopoly.com/). Mott Athletics Center, 1 Grand Ave., San Luis Obispo, 805-756-7297.

**CAL POLY WOMEN'S BASKETBALL VS. LONG BEACH STATE** Celebrating National Girls and Women In Sports; there will be pregame activities for girls, and free shirts for the first 500 fans. **Feb. 5**, 2-4 p.m. [gopoly.com](http://gopoly.com). Mott Athletics Center, 1 Grand Ave., San Luis Obispo, 805-756-7297.

**CITY FARM SLO'S YOUTH EMPOWERMENT PROGRAM** Check site for more info on programming and summer camps. ongoing [cityfarmslo.org](http://cityfarmslo.org). San Luis Obispo, Citywide, SLO.

**COLLABORATING ON FOOD SYSTEM CHANGE** A lively workshop to inform Food System Coalition strategic planning efforts and provide an opportunity for



### THE FUN IN FUNDRAISER

*The Central Coast Follies presents its 19th annual fundraiser production, A Whole Lot of Nonsense, at the Clark Center for Performing Arts on Sunday, Feb. 13, and Sunday, Feb. 20, from 3 to 5 p.m. both days. Proceeds from the show benefit Parkinson's disease research. To date, the local group of singers and dancers has raised nearly \$400,000 since their first fundraiser in 2003. Tickets range from \$20 to \$45. Call (805) 489-9444 or visit [clarkcenter.org](http://clarkcenter.org) for more info. The venue is located at 487 Fair Oaks Ave., Arroyo Grande.*

—C.W.

cross-sector collaboration and discussion. Help identify the important work that should be addressed in 2022 and beyond. **Feb. 8**, 9-10:30 a.m. Free. [bit.ly/fscfeb2022](http://bit.ly/fscfeb2022). Online, See website, San Luis Obispo.

**DANCE CLUB: DANCE FITNESS CLASS WITH CHRISTIANA** A mood-elevating, dance-centric dance fitness class that enables you to live out your back-up dancer dreams. The choreography is curated to a culturally diverse playlist that is equal parts sassy and empowering. Tuesdays, 7:15-8:15 p.m. through Feb. 15 \$15 per class (discounted multi-class package available). 805-305-5609. [DanceClubSLO](http://DanceClubSLO), 3422 Miguelito Ct. Studio 3, San Luis Obispo, ChristianaEnriquez.Zumba.com.

**FREE DAY AT THE GARDEN** Join the SLOBG for this free admission day. **Feb. 12**, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. San Luis Obispo Botanical Garden, 3450 Dairy Creek Rd., 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.

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

[griefrecoverymethod.com/grms/rev-diann-davison](http://griefrecoverymethod.com/grms/rev-diann-davison). 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/](http://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 CLASSICAL ACADEMY'S SNEAK PEEK** SLOCA welcomes curious prospective preschool to eighth grade families to meet teachers/staff, tour campus, and learn about unique education opportunities. No commitment required. **Feb. 7**, 4:30-6:30 p.m. 805-548-8700. [sloclassical.org/event/sneak-peek-3/](http://sloclassical.org/event/sneak-peek-3/). SLO Classical Academy, 165 Grand Ave., 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](mailto:aarapgroup@gmail.com) for password access. Sundays, 7-8 p.m. No fee. [galacc.org/events/](http://galacc.org/events/). Online, See website, San Luis Obispo.

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### VALENTINE VIEWS

*Between Friday, Feb. 11, and Monday, Feb. 14, the Vespera Resort in Pismo Beach will be offering a special Valentine's Day-themed dinner. The resort's executive chef, Frank Barajas, and his team at Somerset Grill have prepared a three-course meal. Guests can look forward to romantic panoramic ocean views, optional wine pairings, and more. Admission is \$89 per person. Visit [somerseattrillpismo.com](http://somerseattrillpismo.com) for more info. The resort is located at 147 Stimson Ave., Pismo Beach.*

—C.W.

**GROUP FOR CAREGIVERS OF PERSONS WITH FTD (FRONTOTEMPORAL DEMENTIA)** A welcoming meeting providing information and support for caregivers of people with Frontotemporal Dementia (FTD). FTD is a dementia that affects younger people and is very difficult for families. This is an open group. Caregivers can drop in for information, supportive discussion, and caregiving tips. Second Saturday of every month, 2:30-4 p.m. through Jan. 14 805-471-8102. [calpoly.zoom.us/j/83141446835](http://calpoly.zoom.us/j/83141446835). Online, See website, San Luis Obispo.

**TOASTMASTERS ANNUAL AREA SPEECH CONTEST: REACH FOR THE GOLD** Watch

Toastmasters contestants compete for their Area Gold over Zoom. Contestants span the beautiful California Central Coast from Paso Robles to Lompoc. **Feb. 12**, 9 a.m.-noon Free. [toastmastersdivision01.wordpress.com/](http://toastmastersdivision01.wordpress.com/). 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](mailto: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.

**TRANS\* YOUTH PEER SUPPORT GROUP** This group is a safe place for trans\* and gender non-conforming people, as well as those questioning, from ages of 11 to 18. A facilitated emotional support group to be heard, share your story, and hear stories that may sound surprisingly like your own. Second Tuesday of every month, 6-8 p.m. Free. GALA Pride and Diversity Center, 1060 Palm Street, San Luis Obispo, 805-541-4252.

**WRITE TO FIND YOUR INNER AHA!** Reach your own inner truth and wisdom through a writing practice. Talk through the process of journaling to tap into your personal power. A Zoom series of three small-group sessions. Email to join: [leanjacobsen@gmail.com](mailto:leanjacobsen@gmail.com). **Feb. 6**, 3-4 p.m. and **Feb. 13**, 3-4 p.m. \$55. 515-707-1557. [leanjacobsen.com](http://leanjacobsen.com). Online, See website, San Luis Obispo.

## FOOD & DRINK

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**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](http://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/](http://presquilewine.com/club/). Presqu'ile Winery, 5391 Presqu'ile Dr., Santa Maria, 805-937-8110.

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

### SOUTH COAST SLO COUNTY

**PISMO BEACH FARMERS MARKET** Features various vendors selling their goods. Wednesdays, 4-7 p.m. Pismo Beach Farmers Market, Pismo Pier, 805. 773.4382.

### SAN LUIS OBISPO

**TWIRL AND SWIRL VIRTUAL VALENTINE WINE TASTING EVENT** A music and wine virtual pairing in honor of Valentine's Day. Sarah Farley, will be teaming up with Kala Maxym from Five Senses Tastings to curate wine and music pairings and artisanal chocolates. **Feb. 12**, 3-4 p.m. \$59; or \$89 for 2. 805-434-5607. [onxwines.com](http://onxwines.com). Online, See website, San Luis Obispo.

## MUSIC

### SANTA YNEZ VALLEY

**ABOUT TIME LIVE Feb. 13**, noon Maverick Saloon, 3687 Sagunto St., Santa Ynez, 805-686-4785, [mavericksaloon.org](http://mavericksaloon.org).

**FLANNEL 101 LIVE Feb. 5**, 9 p.m. Maverick Saloon, 3687 Sagunto St., Santa Ynez, 805-686-4785, [mavericksaloon.org](http://mavericksaloon.org).

**LIVE MUSIC SUNDAYS** Sundays, 2-5 p.m. Brick Barn Wine Estate, 795 W. Hwy 246, Buellton, 805-686-1208, [brickbarnwineestate.com](http://brickbarnwineestate.com).

**THE MOLLY RINGWALD PROJECT LIVE Feb. 4**, 9 p.m. Maverick Saloon, 3687 Sagunto St., Santa Ynez, 805-686-4785, [mavericksaloon.org](http://mavericksaloon.org).

**PULL THE TRIGGER LIVE Feb. 12**, 8:30 p.m. Maverick Saloon, 3687 Sagunto St., Santa Ynez, 805-686-4785, [mavericksaloon.org](http://mavericksaloon.org).

**THE REGULARS LIVE Feb. 6**, 12-4 p.m. Maverick Saloon, 3687 Sagunto St., Santa Ynez, 805-686-4785, [mavericksaloon.org](http://mavericksaloon.org).

MUSIC continued page 15

**THE RONDALES LIVE Feb. 12**, 1 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.

**SANTA MARIA VALLEY/LOS ALAMOS**

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

**VALENTINE'S DANCE** Santa Maria Recreation and Parks and the Santa Maria Valley Senior Club presents this Valentine's Dance, featuring Riptide Big Band with vocalist Bob Nations. Funded by the Community Foundation of San Luis Obispo County. **Feb. 13**, 1:30-4 p.m. Free. 775-813-5186. RiptideBB.com. Elwin Mussell Senior Center, 510 Park Ave., Santa Maria.

**SOUTH COAST SLO COUNTY**

**ARIELLE SILVER LIVE Feb. 6**, 5 p.m. Puffers of Pismo, 781 Price St., Pismo Beach, puffersofpismo.com.

**DJ DRUMS** Fridays, 9-10 p.m. Mongo's Saloon, 359 W. Grand Ave., Grover Beach, 805-489-3639.

**FIRST FRIDAY LIVE** For those over age 55 or so, the James Way Band leads you on a cruise down Memory Lane that includes classic country music, the great old Gospel hymns and favorites, and some classic rock as well. You'll enjoy a concert of nostalgic, inspiring, entertainment. **Feb. 4**, 7:30-9:30 p.m. Free. 805-489-9444. clarkcenter.org/shows/first-friday-live-free-event-816-797-843/. Clark Center for the Performing Arts, 487 Fair Oaks Ave., Arroyo Grande.

**THE KINGSTON TRIO** Presented by Long Man Productions. In celebration of their nationwide 65th anniversary tour, the iconic folk group performs their best-loved songs. **Feb. 12**, 7:30-9:30 p.m. \$22-\$56. 805-489-9444. clarkcenter.org/shows/kingston-trio/. Clark Center for the Performing Arts, 487 Fair Oaks Ave., Arroyo Grande.

**RAY CHANG BAND** Features Jake Hammer, Jacob O'Dell, Noah Galambos, Aaron Kroeger, and Ray Chang. **Feb. 6**, 5:30-8 p.m. Puffers of Pismo, 781 Price St., Pismo Beach, puffersofpismo.com.

**A WHOLE LOT OF NONSENSE: PRESENTED BY THE CENTRAL COAST FOLLIES** This is the 19th annual fundraising event to benefit Parkinson's Disease research. Central Coast Follies has donated nearly \$400,000 since their first performances in 2003. This volunteer group is made up of dedicated dancers and singers. **Feb. 13**, 3-5 p.m. \$20-\$45. 805-489-9444. clarkcenter.org/shows/a-whole-lot-of-nonsense/. Clark Center for the Performing Arts, 487 Fair Oaks Ave., Arroyo Grande.

**SAN LUIS OBISPO**

**BUMPIN' UGLIES LIVE** With Joey Harkum. **Feb. 3**, 7 p.m. SLO Brew Rock, 855 Aerovista Pl., San Luis Obispo, 805-543-1843, slobrew.com.

**DRUM CIRCLE SING-A-LONG** Limited to 20 drummers. Learn African music through drumming and song. ongoing Spirits of Africa Gallery, 570 Higuera St., San Luis Obispo, spiritsofafricagallery.com/.

**FOURTH ANNUAL BOB MARLEY DAY** Featuring Resination, True Zion, and Das Danny. **Feb. 4**, 7 p.m. SLO Brew Rock, 855 Aerovista Pl., San Luis Obispo, 805-543-1843, slobrew.com.

**THE GREEN LIVE Feb. 6**, 7 p.m. The Fremont Theater, 1035 Monterey St., San Luis Obispo, 805-546-8600, fremontslo.com.

**JON FOREMAN AND PHILLIP PHILLIPS Feb. 8**, 8 p.m. The Fremont Theater, 1035 Monterey St., San Luis Obispo, 805-546-8600, fremontslo.com.

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

**STEEL PULSE LIVE Feb. 3**, 7:30 p.m. The Fremont Theater, 1035 Monterey St., San Luis Obispo, 805-546-8600, fremontslo.com.

**TY SEGALL AND FREEDOM BAND LIVE Feb. 9**, 7 p.m. SLO Brew Rock, 855 Aerovista Pl., San Luis Obispo, 805-543-1843, slobrew.com. ☺

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## Arts Briefs

### PCPA brings *As You Like It* to the Marian Theatre

COURTESY PHOTO BY LUIS ESCOBAR REFLECTIONS PHOTOGRAPHY STUDIO



Tickets are now available for the Pacific Conservatory Theatre's (PCPA) upcoming production of William Shakespeare's *As You Like It*, which is scheduled to open on Thursday, Feb. 17, and run through Sunday, March 6, at the Marian Theatre in Santa Maria.

Described as a timeless comedic love story, *As You Like It* follows cousins Rosalind (Jennie Greenberry, pictured, bottom) and Celia (Christen Celaya, pictured, top) during their retreat into the forest of Arden, where they encounter a band of forest dwellers, including Orlando (Yusef SeEVERS). A romance between Rosalind and Orlando blossoms during the classic play, which PCPA refers to as "one of Shakespeare's most musical of masterpieces" in press materials.

Director Emily Trask helms this iteration of *As You Like It*, which features musical direction by Michale Wilkins, set design by Jason Bolen, costumes by Sara Curran Ice, lighting by Jennifer Zornow, sound design by Lindsay Putnam, and fight choreography by Mark Booher (who also plays Jaques in the show). Joining Greenberry, Celaya, SeEVERS, and Booher are fellow cast members Kieran Flanagan, Gracie Jurczyk, Polly Firestone Walker, Kitty Balay, Michael Tremblay, George Walker, Emma LeFever, and others.

Before entry, audience members over age 18 will be required to show proof of a full COVID-19 vaccination or a negative PCR test taken within 72 hours of the performance date. For more info on the production and its admission policies, call (805) 922-8313 or visit [pcpa.org](http://pcpa.org). The Marian Theatre is located at 800 S. College Drive, Santa Maria.

### Oceano's Great American Melodrama presents *Muskie Love*

The Great American Melodrama's latest production, *Muskie Love*, is described as a modern take on William Shakespeare's *Much Ado About Nothing*. The show premiered at the end of January and is scheduled to run through Saturday, March 12. Performances are held every Wednesday through Sunday at various times.

*Muskie Love* marks the Melodrama's first production of 2022. The plot follows two Wisconsin residents who mutually spend their time fishing on the shores of Lake Michigan. Although they don't get along well, their friends become hell-bent on bringing them together romantically. The show features songs by composer Paul Libman and lyricist Dave Hudson.

The theater's COVID-19 policies adhere to the most current health and safety guidelines set out by the CDC and the state of California, according to the Melodrama's website. All attendees over the age of 2 are required to wear masks while inside the theater, except when actively eating or drinking. Every member of the Melodrama's staff and all performers are fully vaccinated, and hand sanitizer is readily available throughout the theater.

For more up-to-date protocol details or tickets to the show, call (805) 489-2499 or visit [americanmelodrama.com](http://americanmelodrama.com). The Great American Melodrama is located at 1863 Front St., Oceano. ○

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



#### Showtime!

Send gallery, stage, and cultural festivities to [cwiseblood@santamariasun.com](mailto:cwiseblood@santamariasun.com).



**MICS WIDE OPEN:** Eye on I in Lompoc is one of local singer-songwriter Erika Slikker's favorite places to perform live gigs. Throughout 2021 and into 2022, the singer has performed at several venues in both Lompoc and Solvang.

## Muses and lyrics

Singer-songwriter Erika Slikker opens up about releasing her first single, performing locally, and more

### BY CALEB WISEBLOOD

Although her first public performance was more than two years ago, the anxiety that singer Erika Slikker felt that night remains fresh in her mind.

"I went out there and did something scary that I was nervous about, but I just felt the calling to share my art," said the Lompoc local, who ventured south to Santa Barbara for her inaugural open mic at Whiskey Richards on State Street during the summer of 2019.

From then on, Slikker began bouncing between open mics at Whiskey Richards and the Uptown Lounge, also in Santa Barbara, until the COVID-19 crisis put a halt to in-person performances.

"I just barely caught my last opportunity before the pandemic," said Slikker, who returned to the live music scene once local venues warmed back up to it.

Throughout 2021 and into 2022, Slikker found herself performing her original songs at spots in Lompoc—including Eye on I, Southside Coffee, and Tap & Cork—and Solvang, where her next live gig takes place on Friday, Feb. 4., at the High Roller Tiki Lounge.

This show marks Slikker's second time performing at the lounge, which she described as a unique destination, based on her perception of nightlife in downtown Solvang.

"It seems like Solvang pretty much closes down pretty early," said Slikker, who joked that residents must be surprised to hear live music coming from anywhere in town after 6 p.m.

From Slikker's experiences so far,

### Roll with it

Lompoc-based singer-songwriter Erika Slikker will perform at the High Roller Tiki Lounge in Solvang on Friday, Feb. 4, from 6 to 9 p.m. For more info on the show and other upcoming gigs, follow Slikker on Instagram, @erika\_slikker.

local venues have been extremely generous to her and usually offer perks like complimentary food or drinks.

"They kind of get lucky with me because I don't drink. So they'll usually ask me if I want a drink and I'm like, 'Do you have hot water? I brought a tea bag,'" Slikker said. "I drink a lot of hot liquids, which really helps with singing too."

If Slikker were ever to lose her voice right before a gig, she has an emergency backup plan in place.

"I danced flamenco for five years, so I might be



**LOCAL AND VOCAL:** Erika Slikker (pictured) entered the live music scene by bouncing between different open mic nights at venues in Santa Barbara during the summer of 2019. After a break from in-person events due to the pandemic, Slikker returned to performing, now more frequently and at venues closer to her home in Lompoc.

able to pull off a little bit of a show," said the singer, who enjoyed dancing and writing poetry at an early age. The latter was her gateway to becoming a lyricist.

"I wrote poems and I started to sing them," Slikker said. "I actually have a diary from—I think it starts in first grade and goes to third grade—where I started writing my first song."

Slikker said it's fun to look back at her early poems and songs from childhood. Many of them were about matters of the heart, which she still writes about.

"They were always about love, one of them was about birds being in love," recalled Slikker, who was born and raised in Lompoc.

Around kindergarten, Slikker's family moved to Texas, but they returned to Lompoc before her teen years, making the 29-year-old nearly a lifelong resident.

In September of 2021, Slikker released her first recorded single, "My Kinda Place," which she wrote to express her love of the ocean.

"We live on Earth, what is in space? Possibilities, what is my place? These are the questions that go through my head/ This I am thinking while I am in bed," Slikker's lyrics read. "And, here you are. Limitless, raw, and pure/ All that I strive to be, as I lay upon the shore."

When Slikker isn't rehearsing for a gig, learning guitar, or taking care of her plants, you'll probably find her at Surf Beach with her three dogs. Upon the release of "My Kinda Place," Slikker partly used the single to promote 2021's California Coastal Cleanup Day—held every third Saturday of September—which she participated in.

"Out there to explore, out there to explore/ You're my kinda place, the kind where I go to clear my mind/ And hear the moon speak as it shines," Slikker sings at the end of her oceanic tribute. "You're my kinda place, the kind where I go to be free." ○

Arts Editor Caleb Wiseblood wants to know where you go to be free. Send your favorite escape routes to [cwiseblood@santamariasun.com](mailto:cwiseblood@santamariasun.com).



**MAY THE CORK BE WITH YOU:** Tap & Cork is one of the various spots in Lompoc that has hosted singer-songwriter Erika Slikker's live performances, alongside Southside Coffee, Eye on I, and other venues.



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## Soft strength

**W**riter-director Pedro Almodóvar (*Women on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown*, *All About My Mother*, *The Skin I Live In*) helms this story about two mothers—Janis (Penélope Cruz) and Ana (Milena Smit)—who give birth on the same day. (in Spanish; 123 min.)

**Glen:** If you're an Almodóvar fan, he's serving up more of what he's known for: melodrama, colorful sets and costumes, and surprising twists and turns. Janis is a successful commercial photographer living in a posh apartment in Madrid. During a fling with one of her subjects, forensic archaeologist Arturo (Israel Elejalde), she becomes pregnant. Almost 40 and feeling her chance at motherhood slipping away, she decides to keep the baby despite married Arturo's objections. Her roommate at the maternity ward, 17-year-old Ana, isn't as excited about the prospect of impending single motherhood, but the two bond as they simultaneously give birth, creating an intimate connection between the two women. There are surprises ahead, but they're too good to ruin with a spoiler. What I can add is that Almodóvar also has politics in mind. Janis' village was the site of a Spanish Civil War massacre, and her great-grandfather is buried in a mass grave there. She hopes Arturo will convince the government to open the grave, identify the 10 bodies, and allow their families to properly inter them. Part of what the film explores is the deep generational connections between Spanish women affected by war atrocities. The politics are

essentially bookends at the beginning and ending of the film, bringing their own emotional wallop to an emotionally potent core created between Janis and Ana.

**Anna:** There's a lot to talk about with this film, but as you said, it's pretty much impossible to stay spoiler-free in a lot of those elements, and the surprise is worth the payoff, so we won't ruin it for you here. These characters are complicated and all tortured in their individual ways. Ana's parents are too self-involved to spend much physical, let alone emotional, time with their young daughter who is just navigating the beginning stages of motherhood. Janis has a strong pull to be a mother; at nearly 40 she didn't think it was going to happen. She clearly has true feelings for Arturo but decides they must take their lives in separate directions after he expresses his wish for her to not have the child. The connection between Ana and Janis is an interesting one—strangers thrown together by circumstance and magnetically pulled to each other over time and space. Janis' desire to bring closure to her family's grief over losing her great-grandfather to the tragedies of war is such a wonderful emotional journey for the audience to embark on. I found this film pretty fascinating.

**Glen:** This is the eighth collaboration between Almodóvar and Cruz, and they certainly bring out the best in one another. Cruz is the muse who coaxes complex female characters out of Almodóvar, and he's the one guiding her through a full range of emotions. Janis, for all her confidence, is adrift as she faces unforeseen challenges beyond motherhood. Both she and Ana traverse unfamiliar emotional ground together, learning from their pitfalls. Almodóvar

### PARALLEL MOTHERS

What's it rated? **R**  
 What's it worth, Anna? **Full price**  
 What's it worth, Glen? **Full price**  
 Where's it showing? **Regal Edwards Santa Maria & RPX**

also taps other frequent collaborators. The always welcome Rossy de Palma (*Women on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown* and *Tie Me Up! Tie Me Down!*) shows up as Janis' friend Elena. She's such a striking presence! Ana's mom, the self-involved theater actress, Teresa (Aitana Sánchez-Gijón), is another complex female character given a chance to grow. Yes, there's a lot of melodrama afoot, but these characters feel like real people with real emotions. Finally, Almodóvar taps another artist he's worked with before, composer Alberto Iglesias, who creates a haunting score that reminded me of Bernard Herrmann, a favorite of Alfred Hitchcock. This is a meaty, affecting film, and it's only out in theaters. Well worth a watch.

**Anna:** *Parallel Mothers* feels like it may be an easy film to skip. It's a Spanish film with a bit of a mysterious plot line, trailers that don't give a whole lot away, and only a limited release in theaters (and who's hitting the theater these days?), but it's well worth the price of a ticket and the time it takes to watch. Subtlety is key here,



**CONNECTED:** Janis (Penélope Cruz, right) and Ana (Milena Smit) star as two mothers who give birth on the same day, and through a twist of fate find their lives irrevocably entwined, in auteur Pedro Almodóvar's *Parallel Mothers*.

and Almodóvar knows how to elicit a lot with very small movements. Cruz is a striking actress, both beautiful and fierce—able to be vulnerable and hardheaded and all intricacies in between. De Palma is such a force herself, unforgettable on-screen. Smit, Sánchez-Gijón, and Elejalde are wonderful castings as well. These actors know how to build a story bigger than themselves. Catch this one while you can in theaters. If you're like me, you won't be able to take your eyes off of it. ○

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

## TV & Film Reviews

### CHEER

What's it rated? **TV-MA**  
 When? **2020-present**  
 Where's it showing? **Netflix**

**BINGEABLE**

Released in early 2020, *Cheer* quickly became one of the famed pandemic megahits with households worldwide binge-watching Navarro College train and compete to win their division in Daytona. Season 2 is back with plenty more driven athletes, gravity-defying stunts, and inside drama as the world of cheerleading tries to navigate its way through a pandemic.

Head Coach Monica Aldama is once again at the helm, and right away addresses the arrest and controversy around breakout star Jerry Harris, who faces charges of sexual misconduct with minors. Harris appears in the first half of the second season as he was a returning athlete on the team, but the filmmakers dedicate the fifth episode to interviewing Harris' coaches and fellow athletes, and most importantly some of his victims. After that episode, Jerry is out of the picture.

Another controversy came about after the first season when viewers were shocked at the number of injuries the athletes suffered and the way they were forced to work through the pain.



PHOTO COURTESY OF BOARDWALK PICTURES

Season 2 pulls back focus from this element, instead bringing Trinity Valley Community College (TVCC), Navarro's rival, into the spotlight as well. Tired of losing out to Navarro, TVCC is stepping up their game by bringing in new choreographers, team members, and stunts.

One thing is for sure through all of this—these athletes have some serious skill and strength, and you can't help but fall for most of the characters at least a little bit. *Cheer* continues to inspire and entertain. (15 57- to 62-min. episodes)

—Anna

### NIGHT HUNTER

What's it rated? **R**  
 When? **2018**  
 Where's it showing? **Amazon Prime, Apple TV, Vudu, and YouTube**



If you're like me, you probably missed the Canadian crime thriller *Night Hunter* when it premiered at the LA Film Festival in 2018 under the name *Nomis*. Written and directed by David Raymond (*The Other Man*), the film had a very limited theatrical release in 2019 and only grossed a little more than \$1 million. It's now available for free with your Amazon Prime subscription or for a fee on other streaming services, and while it's not amazing, it's certainly a lot better than the poor reviews it received.

The story centers on detective Walter Marshall (Henry Cavill) and vigilante Michael Cooper (Ben Kingsley), who become entwined in a dangerous game involving Simon Stulls (a very effective Brendan Fletcher)—recently arrested and linked to a number of female abductions and murders. The stellar (and somewhat underused) cast also includes Alexandra Daddario as psychologist Rachel Chase, who's trying to get Simon to open up about what he's done; Stanley Tucci as Commissioner Harper, Walter's boss; Minka Kelly as Angie, Walter's ex-wife; and Nathan Fillion as Matthew Quinn, Walter's co-worker.



PHOTO COURTESY OF ARCOLA ENTERTAINMENT AND ARISE PICTURES

Also caught up in the action is Walter's underage daughter Faye (Emma Tremblay), and Lara (Eilana Jones), who vigilante Cooper uses as bait to trap sex predators.

Filled with twists, turns, and gritty action, it's a serviceable thriller that becomes somewhat convoluted plot-wise, but it pays off with an effective conclusion. With nods to *The Silence of the Lambs* (1991) and *Se7en* (1995), it aspires beyond what it reaches, but if you've got a hankering for a twisty thriller, it fits the bill. (98 min.) ○

—Glen

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### Map to the market

For more info on peasants DELI & MARKET, visit [peasantsdeli.com](http://peasantsdeli.com). The new eatery celebrated its grand opening at the end of January and is located at 473 Atterdag Road, Solvang.



**PLEASANT PAIR:** Husband and wife Michael and Sarah Cherney celebrated the grand opening of their new Solvang eatery, peasants DELI & MARKET, at the end of January. The couple also owns peasants FEAST, which they opened in 2020.



**AN OFFER YOU CAN'T REFUSE:** Sarah Cherney's personal favorite sandwich offered at peasants DELI & MARKET so far is the Godfather, an Italian sandwich with barolo salami, sopressa salami, coppa, prosciutto, smoked provolone, sweet and spicy pepper relish, and more.

## Ham haven

Michael and Sarah Cherney emphasize the deli in delicious with new Solvang venture, peasants DELI & MARKET

BY CALEB WISEBLOOD

Revenge is a dish best served cold—or in chef Michael Cherney's case, a dish best served cured. The co-owner of peasants DELI & MARKET explained why he considers his Cinco Jotas Jamón sandwich—made with a rarely found, imported cured ham from Spain—such a tasty reprisal.

“When I worked for Robuchon in Las Vegas for three years, it was every new cooks' nightmare. We could never get it 'right,’” Michael said, referring to the intricacies of the jamón carving station. “Plus, we were on display in front of all the guests in a Michelin star restaurant. The stakes were high. We didn't have YouTube videos to watch that taught us

how to do it, where they slice an entire jamón in one 20-minute video.

“It was difficult,” Michael continued. “Each section of the jamón is different, not to mention there are bones and knuckles.”

The chef recalled an instance when his superior at the time threw his knife into a trash can “because I wasn't slicing it correctly,” Michael said. “Having the jamón at the deli is my revenge.”

The vengeful ham is just one of several artisanal meat options available at peasants DELI & MARKET, which celebrated its grand opening to the public at the end of January. Michael co-owns the Solvang eatery with his wife, Sarah Cherney. The duo also runs peasants FEAST, which they opened in 2020 and is within walking distance of their newest venture.

“When we opened peasants FEAST, we had our eye on a couple of places in town and said to ourselves that as soon as one of those spots were vacant, we'd open a deli in it,” Sarah said. “We wanted to keep the deli close by, so that we could continue to run both businesses and be involved with both ourselves.”

The drive to open a deli specifically came from Michael, Sarah said, who described their new

project as the manifestation of her husband's connection to his father.

Most of Michael's childhood memories of his dad, who passed away about two decades ago, revolve around food, specifically the times he'd take him out to hole-in-the-wall delis throughout Los Angeles County. Upon Googling his favorite delis from that time, Michael was saddened to find out that some have either permanently closed, or, hopefully, are still around but don't have an internet presence.

“One of the delis I can think of, that is still around, is Brent's Deli in the San Fernando Valley. Hot pastrami on rye is still the best I've ever had,” Michael said. “We did a little road trip down to LA a few months back when we were planning the deli. I ordered one, and it is just as good as I remember.”

Before opening peasants DELI & MARKET, Michael and Sarah decided to host some pop-up



**IN A GALAXY NOT SO FAR AWAY:** “When we opened peasants FEAST, we had our eye on a couple of places in town and said to ourselves that as soon as one of those spots were vacant, we'd open a deli in it,” co-owner Sarah Cherney said. “We wanted to keep the deli close by, so that we could continue to run both businesses and be involved with both ourselves.”

events in Solvang to give the community a teaser of what they had in mind for the deli.

“Pop-ups are the best. They're so much fun. A lot

EATS continued page 20



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**EATS**

**EATS** from page 19

of pressure, but still fun. It's good to get out of your comfort zone and try something new. Not knowing if anyone will show up, or in these days, if your product is going to show up," Michael said, referring to the unpredictability that comes with working in the food industry during the ongoing pandemic. "It's scary. But totally worth it."

Michael described public feedback to the duo's pre-deli pop-up events with one word: unreal. "People went crazy over these sandwiches. We couldn't believe it. We sold out in about an hour each time," Michael said. "For weeks after, we'd have people at the main restaurant [peasants FEAST] asking how they could get their hands on one of the pop-up sandwiches."

Based on her experience working the counter and casually conversing with customers during these pop-up events, Sarah said she expects the deli to provide a refreshingly intimate setting for its patrons, especially when compared to the hustle and bustle of peasants FEAST.

"Working the deli gives me the opportunity to interact with every customer who walks through the door, as opposed to working peasants FEAST, where we're all sharing duties and all over the floor," Sarah said. "The one-on-one time and connection with each deli customer allows us to tell the story about both places, peasants DELI and peasants FEAST."

Sarah's personal favorite sandwich offered at peasants DELI & MARKET so far is the Godfather, an Italian sandwich with barolo salami, sopressa salami, coppa, prosciutto, smoked provolone, sweet and spicy pepper relish, and more.

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COURTESY PHOTO BY LENA BRITT PHOTOGRAPHY



**CARVING CORNER:** A large leg of rarely found, imported cured ham from Spain sits front and center at chef and co-owner Michael Cherney's carving station, near the front entrance of peasants DELI & MARKET.

Contrary to what many readers could assume, this mafia-sounding sub wasn't named after the classic Francis Ford Coppola film.

"When I was a teenager, I started a car crew—just to be clear, it was nothing special, couple Civics, a BMW M3, it was around the time we turned 16 and *The Fast and the Furious* had just come out—and that car crew was named 'Godfather Inc.," said Michael, who dubbed the sandwich Godfather as a loving nod to his youth.

Although Michael exclusively ate roast beef and turkey sandwiches as a kid, Italian sandwiches became his favorite as he got older.

"While I am still a huge fan of roast beef and turkey, I have fallen in love with the Italian. It's what I use to measure how good a deli or sandwich shop is," Michael said. "Note that I cook—and eat—as a career, so I try anything. But nothing takes me home like the Italian." ○

Country roads take Arts Editor Caleb Wiseblood home. Send comments to [cwiseblood@santamariasun.com](mailto:cwiseblood@santamariasun.com).

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