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Sun

AT THE MOVIES



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Handling trauma

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A \$144,000 grant will help Santa Barbara County firefighters access the mental health services they need to deal with the trauma of doing their jobs, responding to natural disasters such as the Thomas Fire and the Montecito debris flow that followed and daily helping people who are experiencing what could be the worst moments of their lives. It takes a toll on first responders, which is why it's important for them to be able to process that trauma. The funding will help provide free care to those responders for a year. Staff Writer Taylor O'Connor speaks with firefighters, counselors, and others about the program and its uncertain future [8].

You can also read about the high number of pets being dropped off at Animal Services [4]; a Winter Salon showcasing all kinds of art in Los Olivos [24]; and peasants FEAST gets an award from Michelin [28].



MANAGING TRAUMA: International nonprofit Direct Relief allocated \$144,000 to cover a year of mental health services for Santa Barbara County first responders to help cope with traumatic events, like wildfires.

Camillia Lanham
editor

Cover image courtesy of One805 > Cover design by Alex Zuniga

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Political Watch

- The U.S. House of Representatives approved the Protect Patriot Parents Act, a measure authored by Rep. **Salud Carbajal** (D-Santa Barbara) that would make parents of U.S. military service members eligible for lawful permanent resident status, preventing potential deportation or separation of military families, according to a Dec. 8 statement from the congressman's office. "I am proud that this measure is now headed to the Senate for its consideration, and I strongly urge my colleagues to act on this and other critical commonsense immigration reforms before the end of this Congress," Carbajal said in the statement. Carbajal's measure is inspired by the story of the Flores family from Goleta, where the mother of Sgt. **Cesar Flores** was deported despite having lived in the U.S. for 30 years and having a child serve his country in the U.S. Air Force. **Juana Flores** was deported in 2019 but was allowed to return to the U.S. after public outcry and lobbying from Carbajal and other community leaders. "As a veteran and immigrant myself, I find it unconscionable that someone could step up to voluntarily serve in the military and be willing to sacrifice their life for our country only to have their family torn apart," he added.

- U.S. Sen. **Alex Padilla** (D-California) joined a bipartisan group of 14 Western senators in sending a letter urging the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) to ensure that its programs are funded and administered to more effectively address the dire drought conditions throughout the West, according to a Dec. 8 statement from the senator's office. The agency's programs often do not translate well to the needs of Western growers and communities. The senators asked the agency to ensure improvements to existing authorities, new funding for projects and practices that conserve water, and collaboration with state, local, and tribal governments. In the letter, the senators urged the USDA to support the efforts of Western farmers and ranchers to conserve water, improve water infrastructure and efficiency, reduce erosion, and provide technical assistance for growers in regions affected by drought. "The American West is in crisis. Across the major basins of the American West—including the Colorado River Basin, the Rio Grande Basin, the Great Basin, the Sacramento-San Joaquin River Basin, the Columbia River Basin, and the Arkansas-White-Red Basin—farm and ranch families hang in the balance as they grapple with a 22-year mega-drought," the letter said. "The acute shortage of water for Western growers threatens productive farmland across our states, which are both a pillar of our rural economies and drivers of America's food production."

- Gov. **Gavin Newsom** announced \$480.5 million in awards for 54 projects to improve California's behavioral health infrastructure for children and youth, according to a Dec. 7 statement from the governor's office. As part of Newsom's Master Plan for Kids' Mental Health, this investment provides grant funding to construct new facilities and expand existing facilities that help children, youth, transition-age youth, and perinatal individuals with a mental health and/or substance use disorder. "We're overhauling our mental health system to connect young Californians with the care and support they need," Newsom said in the statement. "Too many Californians are struggling with mental illness and substance abuse. This funding will support critical mental health and substance use disorder treatment facilities that have committed to serving the diverse range of children and youth covered by Medi-Cal." In California, the rates of serious mental illness and substance use disorders are highest for individuals from 18 to 25 years old, and rates of children and youth experiencing behavioral health conditions, youth emergency department visits for mental health concerns, and youth suicides continue to rise. Also, in California, 13 percent of children from 3 to 17 years of age reported having at least one mental, emotional, developmental, or behavioral health problem, and 8 percent of children have a serious emotional disturbance that limits participation in daily activities. ○

More adoption needed with overcrowding concerns at Animal Services

Calls for adoption and fostering rang out from Santa Barbara County Animal Services after its kennels recently reached capacity.

"We see an increase in adoptions and fostering as well as people bringing in surrenders because the holidays bring many things for many people," said Sarah Aguilar, the director of Animal Services. "The holidays may bring challenges for people, but at the same time many families are bringing new pets into their home and adopting."

By Dec. 3, the county was completely out of kennels with 85 dogs in the Santa Maria shelter and 42 in Santa Barbara, prompting employees to send out messages on social media asking people to help. By the next day, 33 animals left with new families, she said.

"People in the community came, they fostered, and adopted," Aguilar said. "They understand and value that life in a kennel is not ideal, and they certainly don't want to see us in a position with two or three dogs in a kennel or make decisions of euthanizing for space."

As of Dec. 12, the North County shelter had 64 dogs, 33 cats, seven rabbits, two parrots, and a lizard—reaching about 50 to 60 percent of what Animal Services can house, she added. However, this hasn't stopped the county's calls for help as major weather events, like California's recent storms, often cause an increase in stray animals.

"There's been times in our history when there's major crises going on and maybe we can make accommodations to house twice that number if we needed to, but it's just not ideal," Aguilar said. "If there were some type of emergency, we could adapt to make sure pets receive the care they need."

While staffing shortages have challenged Animal Services since the start of the pandemic, Aguilar said the county approved hiring its first county veterinarian in 2021 and is set to hire an additional six staff members this month to manage workloads and make sure all the pet needs are met.

"There's never enough staff in the government. You are always trying to be fiscally responsible for your taxpayers," Aguilar said. "We've also seen a giant explosion of volunteer hours at both facilities. We have 1,000 more volunteer hours than we had at the same time last year; that's like eight to 10 additional staff members."

Others aren't so optimistic about the county's ability to manage the crowding rate. A Santa Barbara County employee told the *Sun* that many employees are experiencing burnout and extreme stress due to the workloads, prompting some staff—including one registered veterinary technician (RVT)—to quit.

"I can see in their faces how stressed out they are. County jobs are really good; they pay well and



PHOTO BY TAYLOR O'CONNOR

HELP NEEDED: Santa Barbara County Animal Services recently sent out calls for adoption and fostering as shelters reached their capacity, but employees say more is needed to be done to help the animals.

have good benefits. They don't want to leave that job, but they are so burned out and not doing well emotionally," said the employee, who requested anonymity out of concern for his job.

Higher numbers of animals in the shelter can also lead to more disease outbreaks among the pets, the employee added, causing an already short and stressed veterinary staff to react and treat a higher number of animals to prevent further spread.

"We've seen an outbreak of gastrointestinal parasites. Part of that was the crowding issue, and the staff weren't keeping their kennels as sanitary," the employee said. "I have never seen that many animals come down with giardia at one time. ... The RVTs have it handled, but now it's up to staff to clean everything. If your numbers are too high than what you can realistically handle, you are going to have disease outbreaks."

County Animal Services officials told the *Sun* in an email that it currently has 11 dogs on antibiotics, and six cats are being treated for a cold. There are no active upper respiratory infections among dogs and no signs of the influenza virus that has impacted other shelters in Texas and Illinois.

Although the county employee understood Director Aguilar's positive outlook regarding animals getting adopted and hiring an adequate number of staff, they said there should be a more honest response to the situation.

"Part of addressing the problem is being transparent that there is one," the employee said. "I appreciate the optimism, but I'd like people to be transparent about what's happening."

—Taylor O'Connor

County's low-income communities still need infrastructure help

Almost 3,000 Santa Barbara County residents live in areas officially labeled as "disadvantaged unincorporated communities."

Casmalia, Garey, Sisquoc, Los Alamos, New Cuyama, Cuyama, and Ventucopa first received the label in 2015—and not much has changed since then.

"There haven't been any improvements," county Senior Planner Zoe Carlson told the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors on Dec. 13.

Cuyama and Garey still don't have public water service; Ventucopa, Cuyama, Sisquoc, Garey, and Casmalia still don't have public wastewater treatment service; and none of them have stormwater infrastructure.

However, Carlson said, New Cuyama did build a fire station in the last eight years, but only one engine serves New Cuyama, Cuyama, and Ventucopa.

"It continues to be a challenge to respond to structural fires in that area," she said.

State law defines disadvantaged unincorporated communities as geographically isolated with 10 or more dwellings in close proximity to one another. The areas have been inhabited for 50-plus years, are outside of a city's sphere of influence, and the

median household income is less than \$62,938 per year.

The update Carlson presented to the board on Dec. 13 fulfills a state mandate to identify these communities and their needs as part of county land use and housing element updates and identify potential funding mechanisms to meet those needs, including state and federal grants.

County 3rd District Supervisor Joan Hartmann asked how supervisors could ensure that the county is actually pursuing grants that could pay for some of the infrastructure projects. For instance, she said, Los Alamos has really serious flooding issues that don't fall under the local community services district's purview but need to be addressed.

"I'm just eager to see that we have more energetic participation and prioritization," Hartmann said. "Otherwise it just kind of disappears into the air. I'll be interested to see how we track this."

Ultimately, it's up to each of the county's districts to pursue grants for projects within their boundaries, county Planning and Development Director Lisa Plowman said, acknowledging that it's a challenge to figure out how to provide services in those areas.

County 4th District Supervisor Bob Nelson said he'd like to see the county conduct the same infrastructure needs analysis in unincorporated communities that aren't considered to be disadvantaged. The state doesn't consider Rolling Hills outside of Orcutt to be disadvantaged because it doesn't meet the household median income threshold, but Nelson said the community is definitely disadvantaged. He added

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NEWS from page 4

that the community didn't have potable water for six months in 2021.

"We did have to access grants to get them water last year," Nelson said. "Just because some of the communities don't meet those income guidelines, those needs are out there."

—Camillia Lanham

Santa Barbara County certifies election results

There are no more ballots to count, no more campaign flyers filling mailboxes, and no more candidate debates being held as the Santa Barbara County Clerk-Recorder's Office certified the 2022 election on Dec. 7, allowing the new or returning elected officials to step into their roles.

In Santa Maria, Gloria Soto—the incumbent for the City Council's 3rd District—won her race against Steven Funkhouser by 41 votes. She garnered 50.44 percent of the votes (1,730 total) and Funkhouser received 49.24 percent (1,689 total), according to the county's certified results.

Certified results also showed that attorney Maribel Aguilera-Hernandez kept her lead against obstetrician-gynecologist Carol Karamitsos during the 4th District City Council race to win her election. Karamitsos had 2,668, and Aguilera-Hernandez won with 3,175 votes—she will now be the new face on the dais as Etta Waterfield retires and moves to Montana.

In Lompoc, Jenelle Osborne will continue leading as mayor after fending off a challenge from former City Councilmember Jim Mosby.

She received 4,838 votes (about 53 percent) and Mosby had 4,077 (about 45 percent).

Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors candidates ran unopposed in 2022, and Laura Capps stepped into her role early as the 2nd District's new supervisor with an approval from Gov. Gavin Newsom, since Gregg Hart had to begin his work as the new 37th District state Assembly member. Capps was sworn in on Dec. 6, and there will be an official ceremony on Jan. 10, 2023, when her four-year term begins.

"Thanks to Gov. Newsom we are not skipping a beat between Supervisor Hart's effective service to the county and the beginning of mine," Capps said in a statement. "I'm honored to have the opportunity to make progress on the urgent challenges our county faces, predominantly housing, poverty, drought, climate change, economic recovery, and mental and public health."

New Assemblymember Hart has already begun working in Sacramento, representing all of Santa Barbara and parts of SLO County. Unofficial results from the secretary of state show Hart in the lead with 58 percent of the votes and challenger Mike Stoker with 42 percent.

At the federal level, U.S. Rep. Salud Carbajal led with 60.6 percent of the votes (159,019 total) to represent the 24th District, which encompasses SLO, Santa Barbara, and Ventura counties. His opponent, Brad Allen, had 39.4 percent of the votes (103,533), as of press time.

The secretary of state planned to certify state and federal election results on Dec. 16, after the *Sun* went to press. ○

—Taylor O'Connor

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Sustaining help

Santa Barbara County Fire received a \$144,000 grant to support mental health services, but firefighters and nonprofit leaders worry about the program's sustainability

BY TAYLOR O'CONNOR

Sam Dudley replayed the Montecito debris flow over and over in his head driving to and from work for months after the 2018 disaster. "A lot of things really stacked up that made that experience really hard," the Santa Barbara County firefighter said. "Finding children severely injured, and specifically we found one child deceased. That really stuck with me, and I carried this guilt of 'could I have done more?'"

Dudley said that he realized he needed more help to cope with the effects of this disaster, which killed 23 people and injured 165. He then connected with an LA Fire captain who acted as a peer supporter to provide confidential, mental health help to fellow first responders.

He spoke about his feelings and his experience, which prompted the captain to encourage Dudley to see a therapist, he said.

"I met with a counselor . . . and we went through from start to finish what I was struggling with from the debris flow. We did the therapy and it was very helpful and just an incredible experience," Dudley said. "The peer supporter recognized that I needed a professional's help. We're kind of the bridge between the professional and the person who may or may not be intimidated from getting help."

After his positive experience with the peer support team and trauma-informed therapy, Dudley went through training to become a peer supporter himself. He's worked for the past two years as a handler for the department's emotional support canine, Rhonda, to help other first responders get mental health care.

Rhonda is trained to interrupt behaviors like crying or yelling by jumping on to them and showing people affection, and she works as "the world's best ice breaker" to get emotional conversations started. Dudley can then give his fellow firefighters the guidance they need for mental health help without an awkward initiation.

"With this career and life in general, we just don't know what comes next and getting help before the next thing comes is important," he said. "The community relies on us in their darkest days; as first responders, we need to be that glimmer of hope. But we can't help people if we aren't at our best—meaning physically fit and mentally fit to perform our job."

According to a 2018 Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration report, 37 percent of fire and emergency medical service professionals have contemplated suicide, nearly 10 times the rate of American adults. Due to the traumatic events, natural disasters, and hazards they are exposed to at their jobs, first responders are also more likely to experience behavioral health issues like depression, anxiety, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

To combat this and the stigma connected with seeking help, county nonprofit One805 received a \$144,000 grant from the international organization Direct Relief to fund one full year of mental health services that will provide culturally competent care to first responders for free.

However, nonprofit officials and firefighters are concerned about what happens once the funding is exhausted.

"The fact we were able to secure this funding is amazing; a stronger fire department means a stronger community," Dudley said. "We do need financial support for this and it's extremely important moving forward, but I do have a lot of faith in the community and people care."

County Fire and first responders use Counseling Team International (CTI), a private company that has clinicians with backgrounds in trauma or an understanding of first responders' experiences and lifestyles, said Alana Negroni, the executive director for CTI.

"Nonculturally competent clinicians have done great work, but whatever populations you serve, you have to understand what they are struggling with and what they are going through," Negroni said. "You have to hold time for that responder. You have to listen to the details of the story in whatever way they express that, and you have to manage that and the results of that trauma."

First responders have come in for services in the past after having a previous clinician cry because of the experiences the responders shared, jading their opinion about seeking help, she said.

"First responders tend to be very cynical; 90 percent of their day is dealing with the really crummy 10 percent of the world. They are constantly being flooded with what you or myself experience once in a lifetime," Negroni said. "When you have a clinician that doesn't understand, you can almost do a disservice because you start to isolate the individual."

Along with culturally competent clinicians, CTI provides crisis intervention counselors to debrief traumatic events immediately after they happen, training and certifications, and an inpatient/outpatient substance use and post traumatic stress disorder care center specifically for first responders, she said.

This program is also completely separate from insurance policies and county funding, making it more appealing for first responders to seek help, Santa Barbara County Peer Support Team Regional Coordinator Tony Pighetti said.

Many first responders don't want the tie back to the agency or a record stating they've sought care because of the historical stigma surrounding mental health issues within the industry or for fear that they would be deemed unfit for duty, Pighetti said. Through the program, someone could go to a clinician, get help, and no one would ever know, making it easier for first responders to seek help and encouraging them to talk to someone.

Eighty of the 172 county firefighters are peer support team members, he said. About 25 percent of county firefighters are reaching out to peer support for help during the year and 10 percent of them see a clinician at least once, Pighetti said, citing a report conducted by One805—where he volunteers as an executive board member.

"We are now in the middle of a generation trying to be more proactive than reactive," he said. "There's still the stigma, we have a long way to go. There's the saying that it's OK to not be OK, but we're trying



A HELPING PAW: Rhonda, an emotional support canine, is trained to help first responders and civilians during or after traumatic events to cope with mental health issues.

to add that it's not OK to not do anything about it."

The \$144,000 ensures there will be some continued care, but there's nothing to ensure the program's long-term stability, Pighetti said.

"I stress everyday about the sustainability of the program. Getting a grant from an organization like Direct Relief International that is giving us that one year funding really relieves the pressure so I can focus on the work we are doing," he said. "Now, I'm realizing that we're here in December and we're already a couple of months into this, and I'm thinking about funding for the next cycle."

Relying on donations as a main funding source concerns Pighetti because the competition for funding is "as hard as it's ever been," he said. However, the program received support from top to bottom in first responding agencies and from the general public, keeping him optimistic about its future.

"We've always been able to make it work, so let's just keep the momentum going," Pighetti said. "We are doing things we couldn't do three, four, five years ago. I'm super proud of how far we've come and can't wait to see where we go." ○

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

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NORTHERN SANTA BARBARA COUNTY
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PHOTO COURTESY OF THE SANTA MARIA RECREATION AND PARKS DEPARTMENT



CREATIVE EXPRESSION: Through the Santa Maria City Art Master Plan, community youth can participate in mural painting and other arts education programs to learn about art technique and creative thinking.

Embracing creative thinking

Santa Maria teens are invited to help paint the city's next mural

BY TAYLOR O'CONNOR

Young artists in Santa Maria will have the chance to dip their paintbrushes and leave their mark on the community as the city seeks help from its youth to work on a new mural that will be displayed at the city's civic center.

"We really hope the teens take the opportunity to learn not just about the styles and techniques, but how creativity is such an important part of life," said Dennis Smitherman from the Recreation and Parks Department. "Creativity is about alternative thinking and how to problem-solve creatively. Those are the takeaways we hope teens take away from this program and the many art programs we have in this city."

To incorporate art into the city, Santa Maria added an Art Master Plan in 2015 outlining several goals to make the city more walkable, include more artwork throughout the downtown area and having youth help create the pieces, Smitherman said.

"We like to include teens with many aspects of the Parks and Recreation Department, and art is no different," he said. "It creates opportunities to participate in positive experiences and encourages them to be creative. Creativity is a real boost in helping teens through life; we try to include them in most of our projects."

For this project, teens will get to participate in three workshops from Jan. 5 to 7 (times vary) led by artists Kym Cochran and Jonathan Smith. Cochran works with theme parks, and her work is featured at Disney's Cars Land in Anaheim, Disney's Star Wars: Rise of the Resistance in Anaheim, and the Wizarding World of Harry Potter in Orlando, Florida, Smitherman said. Smith specializes in projection and light art, with his work featured at music festivals Coachella and the Electric Daisy Carnival, as well as Santa Barbara's Sea Center at Stearns Wharf.

During the three-day workshop, teens will learn about technology and scaling up art for large murals, learn about different painting techniques, and put their skills to action as they apply base colors to a few of the panels that will make up the mural. Once completed, hopefully by some time in February, the mural will be 16 feet high by 32 feet long and made up of smaller panels that will depict Santa Maria's past, present, and future.

Although she couldn't go into specific details, Cochran told the *Sun* that agriculture and its development throughout history with the assistance of new technology will play a major part in the mural. It will

have an "amazing" level of detail, and it's "very stylistic," she said.

Other than working on the mural itself, Cochran said she's very excited to conduct the workshops. Originally, they weren't going to hold the workshops because of the short time frame, but she advocated for the community's involvement.

"For me ... arts education is very important. It's not about teaching them to become artists but teaching creative thinking and collaboration. Those are things people need in any industry," Cochran said.

She wants the youth in her workshops to learn to think outside of the box and take the time to self-reflect. There's this notion that the first application of paint has to be perfect, and that's not what art, or life, is about, she said. At the end of the day, she hopes the kids will leave with a feeling of accomplishment.

"It's allowing yourself the time to make mistakes, it's the third or fourth or hundredth time you go over it. It's those final touches," Cochran said. "Don't worry about pure perfection, and don't worry about if it's not exactly what you're envisioning your first time around."

Visit santamaria.org/art to find more information, sign up for the three-day workshop series, or learn more about the city's other art programs. Direct questions to (805) 925-0951, Ext. 2260.

Highlight

• Santa Maria Regional Transit (SMRT) announced that its ridership is up 31 percent for 2022 when compared to the same period last year. The increase is attributed to several factors, including pandemic normalization, higher cost of living, and the route improvements initiated in January. Route 2 with service to Pioneer Valley High School is now the city's most popular route, with Routes 1 and 11 on Broadway as the second and third most popular routes, respectively. According to the city, other factors that helped increase the use of public transportation include temporarily reducing the cost of the monthly pass to \$31, introducing the new \$3 unlimited ride One-Day Pass and \$12 unlimited ride Seven-Day Pass, and introducing a mobile ticketing option via the SMRTpay app. ○

Staff Writer Taylor O'Connor wrote this week's Spotlight. Reach her at toconnor@santamariasun.com.

Promote!

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DEATH NOTICES

For Obituary info call (805) 347-1968 or email obituaries@newtimeslo.com

ALLEN, THOMAS EDWARD, 71, of Santa Maria passed away 11/30/2022 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

BARRIOS, MICHAEL, 69, of the Central Coast passed away 11/30/2022 arrangements with Blue Sky Cremation Service

BILODEAU, GORDON, 83, of Santa Maria passed away 11/30/2022 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

CARLSON-STANHOPE, JULIE, 65, of Templeton, passed away 11/16/2022 arrangements with Blue Sky Cremation Service

CARROLL, JOANNE, 73, of Pismo Beach passed away 11/30/2022 arrangements with Marshall-Spoo Sunset Funeral Chapel

CHILDRESS, GISELA MARGARET, 92, of Santa Maria passed away 11/18/2022 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

COX, WALLACE "WALLY", 93, of Arroyo Grande passed away 11/27/2022 arrangements with Marshall-Spoo Sunset Funeral Chapel

CUDLIP, ELIZABETH, 35, of Arroyo Grande passed away 11/19/2022 arrangements with Lady Family Mortuary

DELGADILLO, HENRIETTA FLORES, 88, of Santa Maria passed away 11/28/2022 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

DOMINGUEZ, LUCILLE ANN, 71, of Santa Maria passed away 11/30/2022 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

FELIX, NANCY, 73, of Arroyo Grande passed away 11/29/2022 arrangements with Marshall-Spoo Sunset Funeral Chapel

FERRER, YUVIARLETTE "YUVIS", 33, of Santa Maria passed away 11/24/2022 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

FORRESTER, ELOISE "GENIE", 94, of Grover Beach passed away 11/22/2022 arrangements with Marshall-Spoo Sunset Funeral Chapel

GALSIM, ROSE, 52, of Paso Robles passed away 12/2/2022 arrangements with Marshall-Spoo Sunset Funeral Chapel

GOMEZ, CARLOS FLAVIANO, 48, of Santa Maria passed away 11/22/2022 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

GOULD, JESSE LEE, 33, of Santa Maria passed away 11/29/2022 arrangements with Magner-Maloney Funeral Home & Crematory

KISER, FRANK, 70, of Santa Maria passed away 12/3/2022 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

KRALLMAN, GENE, 62, of Paso Robles passed away 11/24/2022 arrangements with Blue Sky Cremation Service

LAMBERT, AMANDA, 94, of Arroyo Grande passed away 11/29/2022 arrangements with Marshall-Spoo Sunset Funeral Chapel

LEICH, J. SUSAN, 82, of El Sobrante, Ca passed away 11/27/2022 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

LILLY, LINDA, 79, of Nipomo passed away 12/1/2022 arrangements with Marshall-Spoo Sunset Funeral Chapel

MAFFIOLO, CAROLYN "CARY", 65, of Los Osos passed away 11/21/2022 arrangements with Reis Family Mortuary

MANCHESTER, BETTY RAE, 95, of Santa Maria passed away 12/6/2022 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

MILLER, ARLOA, 83, of Arroyo Grande passed away 12/3/2022 arrangements with Marshall-Spoo Sunset Funeral Chapel

NAILOR, EDWIN S. JR., 97, of Santa Maria passed away 11/26/2022 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

ORTIZ, EILEEN, 53, of Guadalupe passed away 12/1/2022 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

PORTER, BRUCE A., 81, of Santa Maria passed away 12/6/2022 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

SIMAS, JOHNNY MARVIN, 91, of Orcutt passed away 11/28/2022 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

SOHN, JACQUELINE, 90, of Morro Bay passed away 11/23/2022 arrangements with Blue Sky Cremation Service

SOUZA, VIRGINIA ELIZABETH, 98, of Santa Maria passed away 11/23/2022 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

STABLEIN, FREDERICK, 86, of Paso Robles passed away 11/21/2022 arrangements with Blue Sky Cremation Service

STRONG, OLGA, 84, of Paso Robles passed away 11/27/2022 arrangements with Blue Sky Cremation Service

WATKINS, ROBERT EARL, 89, of Orcutt passed away 12/2/2022 arrangements with Magner-Maloney Funeral Home & Crematory

WILSON, ZACHARY J., 34, of Arroyo Grande passed away 11/20/2022 arrangements with Marshall-Spoo Sunset Funeral Chapel

WOODS, TOMMY, 80, of Paso Robles passed away 12/5/2022 arrangements with Blue Sky Cremation Service

WRIGHT, DORIS JEAN, 91, of Santa Maria passed away 12/5/2022 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

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Groomers Assistants: Brandi Janke & Ryleigh MacLean

Online Poll

What do you plan to give your friends and family for the holidays this year?

- 43% Not sure yet, but I'm planning to shop locally regardless.
- 36% Something I can shop for online, from the comfort of my home.
- 21% We'll share an experience and do something together.
- 0% A wine gift package!

14 Votes

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Not the answer

It will take something more than a fence to keep trespassing homeless individuals out of private property in Lompoc

BY RON FINK

For several decades, a homeless encampment has existed near and under the H Street bridge on the north end of Lompoc. Until the last five years or so, the homeless largely stayed to themselves and didn't bother anyone.

Now they are everywhere, including the shopping center that occupies the northeast intersection of Central Avenue and H Street. And, in the last couple of years, the once docile homeless population has become emboldened, and they have become a menace to shoppers and business owners in the shopping center.

Not only have they harassed customers, damaged shop owners' properties, shoplifted, and generally trashed the alleyway behind the center, they also damaged the crops of a farmer who had leased some property from the city across from the airport.

Perhaps it is because of actions by federal courts to allow "camping" in public places and state law changes that encourage people to steal \$900 worth of merchandise any time they feel like it. Or is it because of their altered state caused by prolonged drug/alcohol use?

Several shop owners have complained to the City Council, and the farmer stopped leasing the property; something had to be done!

So, the staff and council, unlike the current administration in Washington, D.C., decided that they needed to build a fence to "protect city property." The theory was that it would allow the farmer to start farming again and hinder the homeless from easy access to the shopping center. No one knows how much the fence cost.

One issue they had to deal

with first was the eviction of the homeless. In California an "inhabited dwelling house" can be anything including the makeshift shelters used by the homeless. Originally this definition was applied to burglaries in recreational campgrounds; however, it now includes search warrants and other legal

definitions, including evictions of the homeless even though the people occupying the camps don't pay rent and don't have ownership rights.

I am told that one of these camps even had a concrete floor, solar power, and potable water storage. This camp was constructed of a good grade of materials, and whoever built it had good construction skills.

The police used up to five officers for several days between Aug. 4 and Sept. 6 to contact and evict 14 homeless people from the riverbed. According to police, most waited until the last possible minute to leave, then they and their belongings were all "relocated" to the homeless camp on Sweeny Road. City solid waste crews and a vegetation clearance contractor spent several days removing tons of trash and vegetation.

The fencing contractor worked for more than a week installing the fence, but it didn't take long for some upset river camp inhabitants to react to the attempt to exclude them from their river-view homesteads.

Before the fence was complete, someone cut down several of the support poles; just when the damage was done and who did it remain a mystery, but the damage was substantial. And later, others cut holes in the fence to allow them access to the path leading to their campsites. Other "campers" simply moved across H Street to the west, and within a couple of days some started reestablishing their camps where the old ones were once located.

And did the farmer renew his lease to farm the area? Well, no, because the city left large piles of cleanup residue within the fenced area, thus preventing the use of the property for agriculture. And the homeless somehow figured out how to deposit more trash on

the property, which is clearly visible from H Street as motorists enter and leave the city. Meanwhile the Fire Department is still responding to numerous encampment fires in the same area.

So, while a fence with sophisticated electronic surveillance systems and several hundred border patrol officers might be effective at the southern border, a simple fence to keep a few homeless misfits out of a farmer's field and a commercial shopping center in Lompoc isn't working at all.

Oh well, keep trying. Eventually through trial and error, you'll come up with a more effective solution. ○

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

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 (1-805-546-8641) or e-mail it (letters@santamariasun.com). All letters must include a name, address, and phone number for verification purposes; may be edited for space or clarity; and will be posted to santamariasun.com.

LETTERS

Los Olivos' sewage treatment plan is a problem, not a solution

Los Olivos is a small, dusty, Western town, while Washington, D.C., is a former swamp in north Virginia. Unlike Washington, Los Olivos neither needs nor wants a big government "solution" in search of a problem.

The Los Olivos Community Services District board is ignoring its original plan, endorsed by voters and county regulators, for a small-scale, phased sewage treatment solution serving and located in downtown Los Olivos. Instead, the board has been pursuing a sewage plant that can process two-and-one-half times more effluent on a site three times as large as the original plan. In violation of state law and county planning requirements, the large, centralized plant would be located outside the district's boundaries on scenic, protected, agricultural land at the gateway to Los Olivos, and that land would be seized from its longtime owner through eminent domain.

This is a big government "solution" to a problem that might not exist or might be the responsibility of someone other than district residents. Despite having spent more than four years and well over a million dollars, the board has no idea as to the existence, extent, or source of our groundwater problem.

Relentlessly pursuing the largest possible system, the district has done no groundwater testing and has relied on a single problematic result from one test well drilled nearly 50 years ago. That report stated that activities north of the district could be impairing the groundwater quality, which would make it the responsibility of someone other than district taxpayers! Even with this knowledge, the board ignored the advice of its engineering firm and decided not to drill the advised test wells.

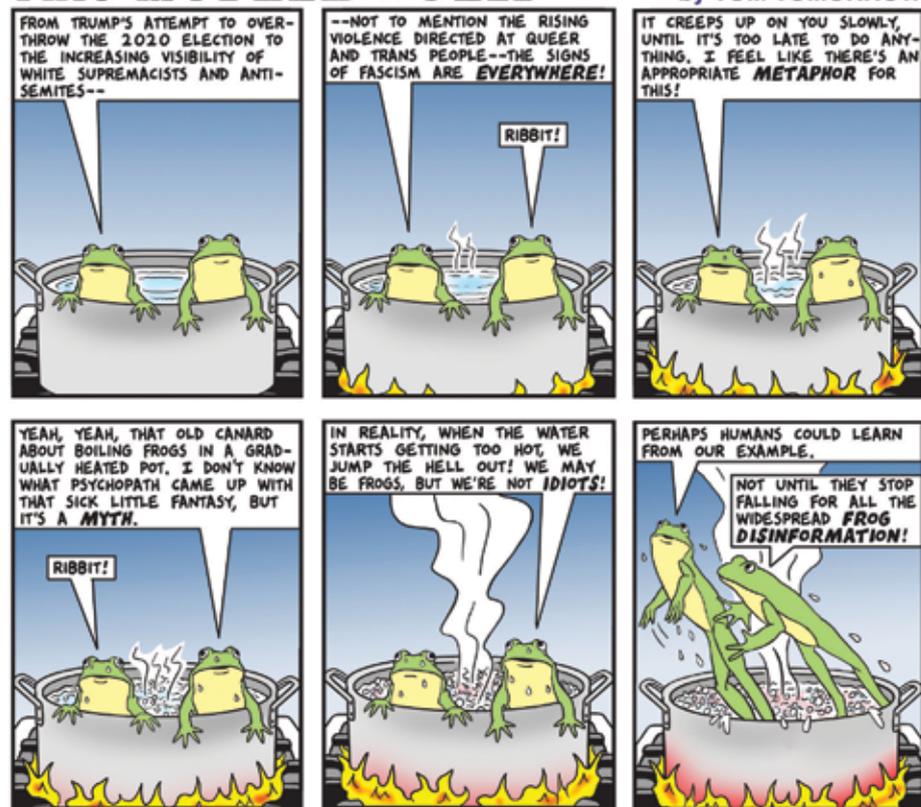
Spending tens of millions of dollars, seizing property, tearing up the downtown business district, building a large-scale system that will require an expensive, permanent bureaucracy to operate and maintain—makes absolutely no sense. As President Reagan, a man who knew and loved this valley, warned us: "Government is not the solution; government is the problem."

The board must stop wasting limited resources on grandiose solutions to undefined problems. Los Olivos needs to be the priority, not big-government South County elites.

Paul Rohrer
Ballard Adobes, Los Olivos

THIS MODERN WORLD

by TOM TOMORROW



Disadvantaged advantage

What's the advantage of being labeled a disadvantaged unincorporated community? You might get a new fire station, but if you're looking for water or sewer service, you might be out of luck. And if you desperately need flood control help, well, bonne chance!

While the county is required to catalog infrastructure deficiencies in certain unincorporated areas—and is also required to catalog funding sources that could potentially help address said deficiencies—the state doesn't actually require them to be fixed.

And, according to the state-required update to the disadvantaged unincorporated communities list, **Santa Barbara County** has basically followed the letter of the law and done no more, no less. Meanwhile, unincorporated areas that aren't necessarily "disadvantaged" are struggling with basic infrastructure as well.

County **4th District Supervisor Bob Nelson** brought up **Rolling Hills**, which apparently went without potable water for six months in 2021! But median household income in the area is more than \$62,938 per year, so the county isn't required to acknowledge the community's lack of infrastructure.

I guess you can't see what you don't catalog? And even if you can see it, you can pretend you don't? Is that what's happening at **Santa Barbara County Animal Services**?

An Animal Services employee told the *Sun* that the department isn't necessarily being transparent about some of the issues it's facing, including staff burnout and stress due to workloads caused by both a staffing shortage and its kennels reaching capacity. The number of residents who dropped unwanted

pets off at Animal Services in the run-up to the holidays maxed out its capacity—bringing with it an opportunity for others in the community to step up, which they did. The county put out a call to action, and by the next day 33 animals had new forever homes!

Nice! Teamwork!

"People in the community came, they fostered, and adopted." **Animal Services Director Sarah Aguilar** said.

There's more good news on the horizon, potentially. Animal services has had 1,000 more volunteer hours this year than last and could soon be hiring an additional six staffers.

However, the employee who spoke to the *Sun* anonymously said the overcrowding in recent weeks led to a giardia outbreak.

"If your numbers are too high than what you can realistically handle, you are going to have disease outbreak," the employee said.

True. Hopefully the run on surrendering animals to the county is over—and people will be adopting more pets as surprise holiday gifts (there are 64 dogs, 33 cats, seven rabbits, two parrots, and a lizard available in North County).

You know what else is a great surprise holiday gift? A certified election. At least if you won. After weeks of waiting, we now know for certain: **Jim Mosby** doesn't get to have another shot at screwing up the **Lompoc City Council** budget or bringing his laborious drama to the public!

Jenelle Osborne will continue as mayor in her cool, calm, and collected way of being—behavior that I can get behind, regardless of political ideology or affiliations. ○

The Canary is craving collaboration. Send tips to canary@santamariasun.com.



Pfizer Covid Vaccine Now Available for Children 5 and Over



Pediatric Medical Group wants to ensure all newborns, infants, children and adolescents are up-to-date on their comprehensive well-child care, inclusive of appropriate screenings, complete physical exam, laboratory exams, fluoride varnish and vaccines.

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SWINGING LOUD FOR ALL TO HEAR

Central City Swing will present its live Christmas Jazz Concert on Tuesday, Dec. 20, from 7:30 to 9 p.m., at the Maramonte Park Community Center in Santa Maria. This family-friendly concert will include an assortment of jazz, swing, and holiday song selections. Guests are encouraged to make a \$5 donation at the door. Call (805) 264-1023 for more details. The Maramonte Park Community Center is located at 620 E. Sunrise Drive, Santa Maria.

—Caleb Wiseblood

FILE PHOTO COURTESY OF SEAN LANDERS

ARTS

SANTA MARIA VALLEY/LOS ALAMOS

BALLROOM, LATIN, AND SWING DANCE CLASSES Social ballroom, Latin, and swing lessons for all ages on Tuesdays and Wednesdays. Beginner and advance classes. Tuesdays, Wednesdays, 7-9 p.m. \$45-\$55. 805-928-7799. kleindancesarts.com. KleinDance Arts, 3558 Skyway Drive, suite A, Santa Maria.

CINDERELLA Last seen at PCPA in 2015 and back by popular demand for the whole family, the Broadway adaption of Rodgers and Hammerstein's beloved musical. This fresh, contemporary take on the classic tale is full of new surprises, familiar friends, and Rodgers and Hammerstein's unforgettable music. Through Dec. 23 \$25-\$59. 805-922-8313. pcpa.org/events/. PCPA: The Pacific Conservatory Theatre, 800 S. College, Santa Maria.

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

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. Through Dec. 31 Free admission (works available for sale). Santa Maria Airport, 3249 Terminal Dr., Santa Maria.

MUSIC LESSONS AT COELHO ACADEMY Learn to play piano, drums, guitar, base, ukulele, or violin, or take vocal lessons. 805-925-0464. coelhomusic.com. Coelho Academy of Music, 325 E. Betteravia Rd., Santa Maria.

SATURDAY CRAFTERNOON: GNOME WINE BOTTLE Add some joy to your house with this fun craft using a recycled wine bottle, some paint and fabric, and turn it into a cheerful gnome. Dec. 17, 2:30 p.m. Free. 805-925-0994 ext. 8562. cityofsantamaria.org/city-government/departments/library. Santa Maria Public Library, 421 S. McClelland St., Santa Maria.

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. Mondays, Wednesdays, 10:30-11:30 a.m. cityofsantamaria.org/register. Elwin Mussell Senior Center, 510 Park Ave., Santa Maria.

WINE AND DESIGN CLASSES Check Wine and Design's Orcutt website for the complete list of classes,

for various ages. ongoing. wineanddesign.com/orcutt. Wine and Design, 3420 Orcutt Road, suite 105, Orcutt.

SANTA YNEZ VALLEY

DUNES: VISIONS OF SAND, LIGHT, AND SHADOW Traverse the sand dunes with Central Coast photographer Bob Canepa in the Wildling Museum's new Valley Oak Gallery exhibition. Receptions: Sept. 11 and Oct. 9. Through March 23, 2023, 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Wildling Museum of Art and Nature, 1511-B Mission Dr., Solvang, 805-688-1082, wildlingmuseum.org.

THE INAUGURAL ENCHANTED GARDEN HOLIDAY LIGHTS FESTIVAL Stroll the Santa Ynez Valley Botanic Garden through a maze of holiday lights. Through Dec. 18 santaynezvalleybotanicgarden.org. Santa Ynez Botanic Garden, 151 Sycamore Drive, Buellton.

WILDLIFE ON THE EDGE: HILARY BAKER New and recent acrylic paintings from Baker's Predators series alongside a new series of animal portraits on birch wood. From a group of common pigeons to an elusive cougar, Baker's subjects make themselves at home in urban locales. Wildling Museum of Art and Nature, 1511-B Mission Dr., Solvang, 805-688-1082, wildlingmuseum.org.

WINTER SALON In honor of the holiday season and celebration of the gallery's 30th anniversary. All fine art media hung "salon style", floor to ceiling. Mondays, Thursdays-Sundays, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. through Jan. 30 805-688-7517. GalleryLosOlivos.com. Gallery Los Olivos, 2920 Grand Ave., Los Olivos.

LOMPOC/VANDENBERG

CHRISTMAS LIGHT EXCHANGE PROGRAM Exchange your old Christmas lights for new, energy-saving LED lights. Participants entered in a raffle for a chance to win LED Christmas yard decorations and other items. Mondays-Fridays, 9 a.m.-5 p.m. through Jan. 27 cityoflompo.com. Lompoc City Hall, 100 City Hall Dr., Lompoc.

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

LIVE STAND-UP COMEDY AT FLOWER CITY BALLROOM A night of hilarious stand-up comedy with professional touring comedians Clay Newman, Kiki Anderson, Bob Fernandez, Chad Denick, and host Justin Bournonville. Dec. 17, 8 p.m. my805tix.com. Flower City Ballroom, 110 W. Ocean Ave., Lompoc.

SOUTH COAST SLO COUNTY

ARTWORK BY STEVE ANDREWS On display throughout November and December. Through Dec. 31 Clark Center for the Performing Arts, 487 Fair Oaks Ave., Arroyo Grande, 805-489-9444, clarkcenter.org.

HOLIDAY EXTRAVAGANZA: A CHRISTMAS CAROL Visited by the ghosts of Past, Present, and Future, Ebenezer Scrooge must find it in his heart to change or face a bleak and lonely future. No show on Christmas day. Wednesdays-Saturdays, 7-10 p.m., Saturdays, 2-5 p.m. and Sundays, 6-9 p.m. through Dec. 18 \$36-\$40. 805-489-2499. americanmelodrama.com. Great American Melodrama, 1863 Front St., Oceano.

MIXED MEDIA (ADULTS) Each week, attendees will combine two or more media in several pieces, while working with watercolor, acrylic, ink, pastels, charcoal as well as various printmaking techniques in the course of a month. Enjoy discovering new ways to work with traditional and nontraditional materials. Mondays, 1-3 p.m. \$35. 805-668-2125. lila.community/. LiIA Creative Community, 1147 East Grand Ave. suite 101, Arroyo Grande.

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

MIXED MEDIA FOR AGES 5-7 Each week students will have the opportunity to explore and combine various mediums like pastels with tempera, watercolors and collage, or clay and wood and so much more. Mondays, 3:30-4:45 p.m. \$25. 805-668-2125. lila.community/. LiIA Creative Community, 1147 East Grand Ave. suite 101, Arroyo Grande.

MIXED MEDIA WORKSHOP (AGES 7-12) Come explore mixed media with an emphasis on the Elements of Art and the Principles of Design. Each week, students will have the opportunity to use various media. Tuesdays, 3:30-4:45 p.m. \$25. 805-668-2125. lila.community/. LiIA Creative Community, 1147 East Grand Ave. suite 101, Arroyo Grande.

MOVIE NIGHT AT THE CLIFFS Enjoy a screening of the classic Christmas comedy, *Elf*, in the Cliffs ballroom. Dec. 22, 6 p.m. 805-773-5000. cliffshotelandspa.com/cliffsmas/. The Cliffs Hotel and Spa, 2757 Shell Beach Rd, Pismo Beach.

OPEN STUDIO (AGES 7-12) Guests can explore a variety of media and techniques while focusing on their own subject matter. Whether they come with a project in mind, or find their way as they play, this class offers a chance for independent learning in a supportive environment. Thursdays, 3:45-4:45 p.m. \$25. 805-668-2125. lila.community/all-workshops/open-studio. LiIA Creative Community, 1147 East Grand Ave. suite 101, Arroyo Grande.

OPEN STUDIO FOR ADULTS Guests can come in and decide what materials they would like to work with and create freely. Share your creative process with others and see how your work will flourish. Tuesdays, 6-9 p.m. and Wednesdays, 12:30-3:30 p.m. \$40. 805-668-2125. lila.community/. LiIA Creative Community, 1147 East Grand Ave. suite 101, Arroyo Grande.

PLAY, EXPLORE, CREATE (AGES 5-7) Young artists will play at various stations, exploring games, and mixed media. There will be a new activity each week. Wonderful opportunities for drawing, painting, and sculpture. Tuesdays, 9-10 a.m. \$25. 805-668-2125. lila.community/. LiIA Creative Community, 1147 East Grand Ave. suite 101, Arroyo Grande.

PLAY, EXPLORE, CREATE 1 (AGES 3 AND 4) Enjoy the opportunity to explore drawing, painting, collage, sculpture, and mixed media. Each week a new adventure awaits. Thursdays, 2-3 p.m. and Fridays, 9-10 a.m. \$25. 805-668-2125. lila.community/. LiIA Creative Community, 1147 East Grand Ave. suite 101, Arroyo Grande.

SAN LUIS OBISPO

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

ALL LEVELS POTTERY CLASSES Anam Cre is a pottery studio in SLO that offers a variety of classes. This

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SUBMIT YOUR EVENTS

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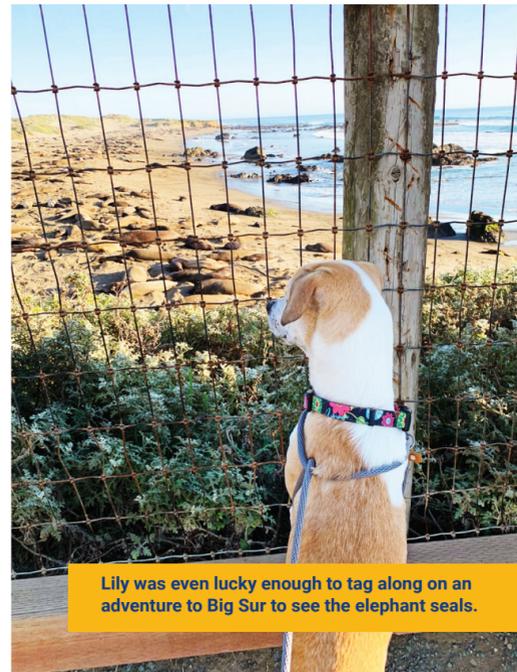
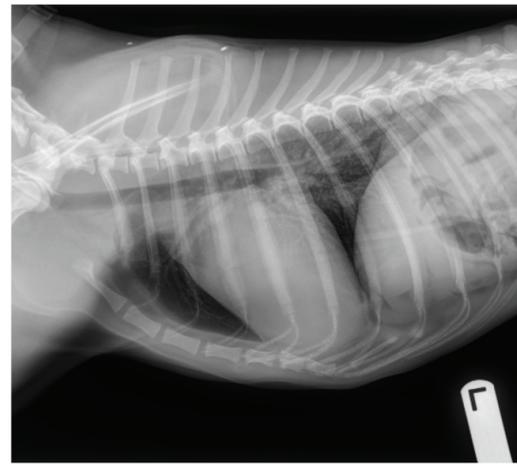
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Your Support Makes a Difference

FOR THOUSANDS OF ANIMALS, AND THE PEOPLE WHO LOVE THEM



Your Community Pet Resource
sbhumane.org



Lily was even lucky enough to tag along on an adventure to Big Sur to see the elephant seals.

**TEAMWORK
MAKES A WORLD
OF DIFFERENCE
FOR DOGS LIKE**

Lily

A one-year-old Chihuahua Whippet mix named Lily is the embodiment of resilience. During Lily's medical intake exam, our veterinary team discovered a loud heart murmur and an abnormal chest wall. X-rays and testing at the Santa Barbara Campus revealed the most alarming results! This was particularly surprising for such a young, energetic dog. Because of donor support, Santa Barbara Humane was able to care for sweet Lily while we searched for answers.

Lily went to a cardiology specialist who identified *FOUR* heart abnormalities. She would need to take four different

medications for the rest of her life, and there would still always be a chance she could experience sudden cardiac distress.

It was time to rally. Two dedicated staff members took turns fostering Lily while the medications were slowly introduced. Once she was stable, Lily was finally able to find a home to call her own. She was adopted into a happy home in Carpinteria where she is flourishing! Her understanding new owner is able to administer her daily medications, arrange her cardiology follow-up visits, and diligently monitor her health.

WHILE ADOPTION IS AT OUR CORE, WE DO SO MUCH MORE AT SANTA BARBARA HUMANE.

**Animal Adoptions • Low-cost Veterinary Care
Affordable Dog Training • Pet Supplies & Resources**

Frito & Dorito

LEARNED TO TRUST, TO PLAY, AND TO LOVE

The most timid animals—like Frito and Dorito—usually benefit from space, time, and support to let their personalities shine.

When these three-year-old orange tabby kitties were brought to the shelter, they were as cute as can be, but incredibly shy and shut down. In fact, when one expert volunteer went to meet them, she was alarmed that she could only find one cat. She looked closer and discovered that Dorito was huddled underneath Frito, terrified, trying to hide.

The duo slowly became more outgoing over time—but only when people weren't around. After hours, the kitties seemed to "party"! The shelter team laughed each morning when they discovered toys, beds, and blankets scattered across the room as evidence that Frito and Dorito had emerged from their hiding spot to play when the lights were out.

Everyone saw glimpses of their playful personalities and knew that if they developed a sense of security in a nurturing environment, these bonded brothers would blossom into happy, social cats. The pair eventually started to stir up mischief, getting their paws on all kinds of toys and bravely setting out to acquire more treats. When they were moved to a bigger room after a few weeks, they began to explore, climb, and watch their surroundings through the windows.

After nearly four months of waiting for a family to call their own, they were adopted into a loving home together. The safety of the shelter, the enrichment of their environment, and the dedication of staff and volunteers they came to adore had made all the difference.



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*2022 Best of Santa Barbara Winner

specific class is open to any level. Teachers are present for questions, but the class feels more like an open studio time for potters. Thursdays, 6-8 p.m. \$40. Anam Cre Pottery Studio, 1243 Monterey St., San Luis Obispo, anamcre.com.

ARTIST RIKI SCHUMACHER AT ART CENTRAL GALLERY Schumacher's work is pensive and introspective, inspiring one to take a solitary walk on a cloudy day. Wander in to reflect on her "delicious, wistful landscapes." Mondays-Saturdays, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Sundays, 12-4 p.m. 805-747-4200. artcentralslo.com/gallery-artists/. Art Central, 1329 Monterey St., San Luis Obispo.

A CHRISTMAS STORY The holiday classic about young Ralphie Parker and his quest for a genuine Red Ryder BB Gun. Saturdays, Sundays, 2 p.m., Wednesdays-Saturdays, 7 p.m. and **Dec. 18**, 2 p.m. through Dec. 17 \$20-\$28. 805-786-2440. slorep.org/shows/a-christmas-story-2022/. San Luis Obispo Repertory Theatre, 888 Morro St., San Luis Obispo.

HILDA KILPATRICK-FREYRE: ART SHOW Hilda is influenced by California paintings, as well as impressionists. Her work is vibrant and she paints local nature scenes. Through Feb. 14, 2023 805-545-5401. bigskycafe.com. Big Sky Cafe, 1121 Broad Street, San Luis Obispo.

INTRO TO OIL PAINTING WITH SPENCER COLLINS The perfect class for those wanting to try oil painting for the first time. Guests discuss color theory, layering paint, and how to use various media. For ages 16 and over. Thursdays, 10 a.m.-1 p.m. \$30 per class or \$100 for 4 classes. 805-747-4200. artcentralslo.com/workshops-events/. Art Central, 1329 Monterey St., San Luis Obispo.

INTRODUCTION TO OIL PAINTING The perfect class for those wanting to try oil painting for the first time. Hosts discuss color theory, layering paint, and how to use various media. Each student will create a dynamic landscape using a reference photo. Thursdays, 10 a.m.-1 p.m. through Dec. 29 \$100 for 4 classes. 805-747-4200. artcentralslo.com/workshops-events/. Art Central, 1329 Monterey St., San Luis Obispo.

LITTLE TREASURES HOLIDAY EXHIBIT Artwork in this exhibit is priced \$100 or less. Everything is handcrafted and made with love by local artists. Find that one-of-a-kind gift for that special someone. Artist reception is Dec. 3, from 4 to 7 p.m. Mondays-Fridays, 10 a.m.-6 p.m., Saturdays, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. and Sundays, 12-4 p.m. through Jan. 30 Free. 805-747-4200. artcentralslo.com. Art Central, 1329 Monterey St., San Luis Obispo.

MINI MELODIES HOLIDAY SEMESTER Come sing, dance, and play to the music of Christmas, Hanukkah, and Kwanza for the first three weeks of December. Grown up participation class for ages 0 to 5. Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Fridays, 10-10:45 a.m. through Dec. 21 \$70. minimelodies.com. Changes locations periodically (SLO County), Call or check site for details, County-wide.

THE MONDAY CLUBHOUSE CONSERVANCY FINE ARTS AWARDS APPLICATIONS Open to high school juniors and seniors. Categories: classical music, jazz music, and visual art. Submit online application. Finalists in all categories compete in a live competition at The Monday Club on Feb. 26. Through Jan. 30, 2023 Free. 805-242-1076. themondayclubsllo.org. See website, San Luis Obispo.

THE TWELVE DAYS OF CHRISTMAS Ballet Theatre SLO presents this heartwarming original ballet. Come see each of the 12 days come alive on stage through dance. **Dec. 16**, 7-9 p.m., **Dec. 17**, 7-9 p.m. and **Dec. 18**, 2-4 p.m. \$28-\$48. Spanos Theatre, Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo, 805-756-7113.

VIRGINIA MACK: BEGINNING WATERCOLOR This is a watercolor class designed to let you jump in and try out this engaging medium through experimentation. It's designed for beginners and those with watercolor experience who wish to expand their knowledge of painting in watercolors. To enroll please contact Mack via email: vmack@charter.net Wednesdays, 1:30-3:30 p.m. \$35. 805-747-4200. artcentralslo.com/workshops-events/. Art Central, 1329 Monterey St., San Luis Obispo.

NORTH COAST SLO COUNTY

ANNUAL WINTER FAIRE AND CRAFT EXHIBIT This special holiday event offers a collection of exceptional paintings, photography, and fine crafts, spanning a variety of artistic media from traditional to contemporary. Crafts include fiber, wood, glass, sculpture, pottery, jewelry, and more. Through Jan. 1, 2023, 12-4 p.m. Free. 805-772-2504. artcentermorrobay.org/. Art Center Morro Bay, 835 Main St., Morro Bay.

ART AND ABOUT MORRO BAY Join us for Art and About Morro Bay, a self-guided art walk that gives the community an opportunity to experience visual, literary, and performing art in galleries and other venues. Visit site for a map of locations. (Events will not occur on major holidays). Fourth Saturday of every month, 1-4 p.m. Free.

805-544-9251. artsobispo.org/art-and-about. Morro Bay (participating artists), Townwide, Morro Bay.

COLLAGES AND PHOTOGRAPHS OF LOS OSOS Collages and photographs featuring Sweet Springs Nature Preserve and the Elfin Forest by Los Osos photographer Kelly Hayes are for sale online and on display at Los Osos Pop-up Gallery (1056 Los Osos Valley Road). Photo prints on metal, paper, acrylic, and greeting cards. ongoing Free. centralcoasty.com. Los Osos, Townwide, Los Osos.

COSTA GALLERY: ELLEN JEWETT Gallery hours are expected to be extended beginning in October or November for the holidays. Thursdays-Saturdays, 11 a.m.-4 p.m. and Sundays, 12-4 p.m. Costa Gallery, 2087 10th St., Los Osos, 559-799-9632.

COSTA GALLERY HOLIDAY SEASON: GIFTY UNDER FIFTY

Costa Gallery will feature Holiday gifts \$50 and under by more than 20 regional artists. Explore affordable original art cards, fiber art, glass, jewelry, paintings, photography, prints, and sculpture. Mondays, Thursdays-Sundays. through Dec. 30 Free admission. 559-799-9632. Browse and buy unique art, fine craft, and affordable gifts from more than 20 local artists. Through Dec. 31 559-799-9632. Costagallery.com. Costa Gallery, 2087 10th St., Los Osos.

FINE ART JEWELRY AND CRAFTS BY LISA KANOFKY: GALLERY AT MARINA SQUARE Lisa's jewelry encompasses a mix of pendants and beaded necklaces with a variety of metals and other textures. Her small creative abstract paintings feature various paints and inks to form incredible shapes and textures. Through Dec. 29, 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Free. 805-772-1068. galleryatmarinasquare.com. Gallery at Marina Square, 601 Embarcadero suite 10, Morro Bay.

FOREVER STOKED HOLIDAY ART SHOW A celebration of Central Coast-inspired artworks. Featuring original paintings from Charlie Clingman, Chris Pedersen, Peter Pierce, Ken Christensen, and more. **Dec. 17**, 12-8 p.m. Free. 805-772-9095. foreverstoked.com. Forever Stoked, 1164 Quintana Rd., 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.

METAL ART BY TRUDI GILLIAM Gilliam creates her sculptures using copper, brass, nickel/silver, and found objects. This new series of whales and birds uses copper and sea glass. Seven Sisters Gallery, 601 Embarcadero Ste. 8, Morro Bay, sevensistersgalleryca.com.

MORRO BAY ART CENTER WINTER MARKET A special holiday shopping experience. Enjoy music and treats as you peruse a diverse collection of paintings, photography and fine crafts by local artists including ceramics, fiber, wood, glass, jewelry, and more. **Dec. 24**, 12-4 p.m. Free. 805-772-2504. artcentermorrobay.org. Art Center Morro Bay, 835 Main St., Morro Bay.

MORRO MORNING: WATERCOLOR SHOW OF PAINTINGS (PERFECT FOR GIFTS) Featuring paintings of landscapes and seascapes that fill the Lower Gallery show walls with wonderful scenes painted of Central coastal areas. Through Dec. 29, 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Free. 805-772-1068. galleryatmarinasquare.com. Gallery at Marina Square, 601 Embarcadero suite 10, 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. artcentermorrobay.org/index.php/workshops/. Art Center Morro Bay, 835 Main St., Morro Bay.

THE PLEIN AIR TEAM Acrylic artist, Nancy Lynn, and husband, watercolorist, Robert Fleming, have a show of originals and giclee prints of Morro Bay and local birds. 805-772-9955. Seven Sisters Gallery, 601 Embarcadero Ste. 8, Morro Bay, sevensistersgalleryca.com.

SUITE SURRENDER Mistaken identities, overblown egos, double entendres, and a lap dog named Mr. Boodles round out this hilarious riot of a love note to the classic farces of the 30s and 40s. Through Dec. 18 my805tix.com. By The Sea Productions, 545 Shasta Ave., Morro Bay.

WINTER SUNSET: A GROUP PHOTO SHOW OF ARTWORKS FOR GIFTING Showcases photographs of countrysides and seascapes with wonderful sunsets, golden hours, twilights, and more. Through Dec. 29, 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Free. 805-772-1068. galleryatmarinasquare.com. Gallery at Marina Square, 601 Embarcadero suite 10, Morro Bay.

HOT STUFF continued page 20

Happy Holidays

Our offices will be closed Friday and Monday, December 23 and 26.

Reserve ad space by December 22 for the December 29 papers.

We will also be closed Monday, January 2.

New Times **Sun**

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SIT DOWN FOR STAND-UP

Flower City Ballroom in Lompoc hosts its next live stand-up comedy showcase on Saturday, Dec. 17, starting at 8 p.m. The show is hosted by Justin Bournonville and will feature sets from participating comedians Clay Newman, Kiki Anderson, Bob Fernandez, and Chad Denick. Tickets are \$15 and available in advance at my805tix.com. Visit feballroom.com for more info. Flower City Ballroom is located at 110 W. Ocean Ave., Lompoc. —C.W.

HOT STUFF from page 19
CULTURE & LIFESTYLE

SANTA MARIA VALLEY/LOS ALAMOS

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

CHRISTMAS IN THE COUNTRY Visitors embark on a magical holiday light drive-through experience at the Elks Event Center with displays presented by local businesses and families. Through Dec. 24 \$55. 805-925-4125. elksrec.com. Elks Event Center, 4040 Highway 101, Santa Maria.

FAMILY BUILD AND PLAY: SANTA MARIA PUBLIC LIBRARY Meet up for a fun afternoon at the library with family or friends. Register to help build a Lego set to display in the library or stop by and play a board game. **Dec. 19.** 805-925-0994. engagedpatrons.org. Santa Maria Public Library, 421 S. McClelland St., Santa Maria.

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

GROUP WALKS AND HIKES Check website for the remainder of this year's group hike dates and private hike offerings. 805-343-2455. dunescenter.org. Guadalupe-Nipomo Dunes Center, 1065 Guadalupe St., Guadalupe.

NEXT CHAPTER BOOK CLUB: SANTA MARIA PUBLIC LIBRARY Each month will feature a new chapter book. Copies of the book will be provided on a first come, first served basis. For ages 8 to 12. **Dec. 21** Free. 805-925-0994. engagedpatrons.org. Santa Maria Public Library, 421 S. McClelland St., Santa Maria.

PAWS TO READ: SANTA MARIA PUBLIC LIBRARY Reading to dogs is a wonderful way for children to gain confidence while reading aloud. For ages 6 to 12. Call or visit Youth services to register your child for a 15-minute time slot. **Dec. 20** Free. 805-925-0994. cityofsantamaria.org. Santa Maria Public Library, 421 S. McClelland St., Santa Maria.

SANTA MARIA COIN CLUB: MONTHLY MEETING Coin collectors of all ages invited. Bring coins for free appraisals. Third Wednesday of every month, 7 p.m. Yearly membership: \$20-\$25. 805-937-3158. Elwin Mussell Senior Center, 510 Park Ave., Santa Maria.

SANTA MARIA VALLEY RAILWAY HISTORICAL MUSEUM TOURS The collection includes late 1800's-early 1900's Engine used by the Betteravia Union Sugar Company, a 1930's Sacramento Northern box car, and more. Fourth Saturday of every month, 12-4 p.m. smvrhm.com. Santa Maria Transit Center, Miller and Boone Streets, Santa Maria.

SMVGS MEETING Visitors welcome. Contact smvgs.org for program and location info. Third Thursday of every month, 2:15-4 p.m. smvgs.org. Santa Maria Valley Genealogical Society, 908 Sierra Madre, Santa Maria.

TECH MADE EASY WORKSHOP Covers mobile devices and simple operations of iPhone and Android phones. Apple users session at 10:30 a.m., Android users welcome at noon. Registration is required. **Dec. 17** Free. 805-925-0994 ext. 8562. cityofsantamaria.org. Santa Maria Public Library, 421 S. McClelland St., Santa Maria.

TEEN ANIME CLUB: SANTA MARIA PUBLIC LIBRARY Teens who are interested in anime or manga; come to Anime Club. Hang out with other fans, eat Japanese snacks, and do fun activities. New members are always welcome. **Dec. 16** Free. 805-925-0994. engagedpatrons.org. Santa Maria Public Library, 421 S. McClelland St., Santa Maria.

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

LOMPOC/VANDENBERG

16TH ANNUAL BRICE FABING MEMORIAL BIKE AND HELMET DRIVE Distributing brand new bicycles to needy children in the Lompoc community since 2006. New bike and helmet donations will be accepted between Dec. 1 and Dec. 15. Call for more details. Through Dec. 15 805-735-6350. Bike and Helmet Drive location, 1341 Marigold Way, Lompoc.

LAS POSADAS Join costumed docents as they lead the Las Posadas procession though the mission grounds with songs in Spanish and English. The tradition dates back more than 400 years in Mexico. **Dec. 18,** 2 p.m. lapurisimamission.org. La Purisima Mission, 2295 Purisima Mission, Lompoc.

SOUTH COAST SLO COUNTY

BEGINNER GROUP SURF LESSONS AND SURF CAMPS Lessons and camp packages available daily. All equipment included. ongoing Starts at \$70. 805-835-7873. sandbarsurf.com/. Sandbar Surf School Meetup Spot, 110 Park Ave., Pismo Beach.

FREE YOGA FOR FIRST RESPONDERS, EMS,

AND COMMUNITY CARETAKERS Join for some well-deserved self-care. Anyone including fire, EMS, police, hospital workers, medical staff, assisted living caretakers, etc. is welcome. All yoga abilities are encouraged to attend. Please email empoweryoga805@gmail.com in advance to enroll. Thursdays, 6-7 p.m. 805-619-0989. Empower Yoga Studio and Community Boutique, 775 W. Grand Ave., Grover Beach, empoweryoga805.com.

HOLIDAY STORIES AT THE CLIFFS Enjoy hearing some holiday stories by the fire in The Cliffs lobby. **Dec. 16,** 5:30 p.m. 805-773-5000. cliffshotelandspa.com/cliffsmas/. The Cliffs Hotel and Spa, 2757 Shell Beach Rd, Pismo Beach.

MONDAY NIGHT FOOTBALL AT THE CLIFFS Join for Monday Night Football and an ugly sweater contest. Mondays, 5:15 p.m. through Dec. 26 Free. 805-773-5000. cliffshotelandspa.com/cliffsmas/. The Cliffs Hotel and Spa, 2757 Shell Beach Rd, Pismo Beach.

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. Check website for more details. Wednesdays, Saturdays pointsanluislighthouse.org/. Point San Luis Lighthouse, 1 Lighthouse Rd., Avila Beach.

SALT AND SUNDRY SPA OPEN HOUSE AT THE CLIFFS Explore spa offerings at The Cliffs and enjoy some complimentary treats. **Dec. 15,** 5-7 p.m. 805-773-5000. cliffshotelandspa.com/cliffsmas/. The Cliffs Hotel and Spa, 2757 Shell Beach Rd, Pismo Beach.

STORYTIME WITH SANTA Join for holiday stories and treats. Santa will read "The Night Before Christmas," take photos, and visit with the kids. Bring your cameras and take candid photos your family will love. **Dec. 19,** 10:30-11 a.m. Free to attend. 805-481-4131. GroverBeachLibrary.org. Grover Beach Community Library, 240 N 9th St., Grover Beach.

THIRD ANNUAL HOLIDAY LIGHTS CRUISE AND GIFT DRIVE To support Nipomo families in need. **Dec. 17,** 6-9 p.m. \$5 donation; or an Amazon registry purchase. Nipomo Costa Pacifica Estates, Vista del Rio and Hutton Road, Nipomo.

WEEKLY WATER SAFETY LESSONS Facility advertised as open and safe. Give the office a call to register over the phone. Mondays-Fridays \$160-\$190. 805-481-6399. 5 Cities Swim School, 425 Traffic Way, Arroyo Grande, 5citieswimschool.com.

SAN LUIS OBISPO

BDSM 101 This monthly class from the Central Coast Kink Community provides a basic overview of kink, consent, rules, and information to help practitioners be successful and safe. Attendees must be 18+ years of age. Virtually meets via Zoom. Fourth Friday of every month, 6-8 p.m. No admission. galacc.org/events/. 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. Online, See website, San Luis Obispo.

BIRDS AND BOTANY MONTHLY WALK AT SLO BOTANICAL GARDEN The Garden is excited to present a monthly bird walk series on the fourth Thursday of every month which explores the intersection of birds and botany. Fourth Thursday of every month, 8-11 a.m. \$10 for Garden Members; \$40 for general public. 805-541-1400. slobg.org. San Luis Obispo Botanical Garden, 3450 Dairy Creek Rd., San Luis Obispo.

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

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

FREE GUIDED MEDITATION GROUP A free guided meditation group held every Friday morning. Call for more info. Fridays, 10-10:45 a.m. through Jan. 27 Free. 805-439-2757. RuthCherryPhD.com. Online, See website, San Luis Obispo.

GALA PRIDE AND DIVERSITY CENTER BOARD MEETING (VIA ZOOM) Monthly meeting of the Gala Pride and Diversity Center Board of Directors. Meets virtually via Zoom and is open to members of the public. Visit galacc.org/events to fill out the form to request meeting access. Third Tuesday of every month, 6-8 p.m. Free. galacc.org. Online, See website, San Luis Obispo.

HEALING DEPRESSION SUPPORT GROUP A safe place for anyone suffering from the pain of depression. We do not criticize but do share our journey, feelings, and what works for us. We can meet in person or use Zoom if needed. Mondays, 6-7 p.m. Free. 805-528-3194. Hope House Wellness Center, 1306 Nipomo St., San Luis Obispo.

LEARN TO SQUARE DANCE: A NEW DANCER CLASS Have fun dancing to a wide variety of music. No experience necessary. No dress code. Partners welcome (no partner needed). 12 weeks of instruction begins Sept. 15. Thursdays, 7:30-9:30 p.m. through Dec. 15 \$50 for the entire class. 805-221-5437. squaredancecentralcoast.com. SLO Guild Hall, 2880 Broad St., San Luis Obispo.

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

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

NATURE NIGHTS An immersive outdoor holiday light

CULTURE & LIFESTYLE continued page 22

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Jan 16 at 3pm & 7:30pm

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Live from Laurel Canyon
Jan 21 at 7:30pm

Songs and stories of The Mamas and The Papas, The Byrds, The Doors, The Eagles; Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young; James Taylor, Carole King, Joni Mitchell, Jackson Browne, Linda Ronstadt, America and more - all of whom resided in the Hollywood Hills' Laurel Canyon from 1965-1976.

Sponsored by Jack & Jayne Smith



Peking Acrobats + Shanghai Circus
Jan 28 at 7:30pm

Featuring gravity defying feats that "reach breathtaking heights of skill" (New York Times) and are "pushing the envelope of human possibility" (New York Post). "Fantastic!" (CBS News)

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WFC 144

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WFC 145

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What's Your Take?

This week's online poll
12/15-12/22

We know you've got an opinion.
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How should more funds be raised to help provide mental health services to first responders?

- The county and One805 could host an event with all proceeds going toward funding.
- One805 could add a donation page specifically for first responders' mental health services.
- The county and One805 could host a donation challenge where different businesses compete to raise funds.
- One805 could have a monthly donation drive for monthly and one-time donations.

Enter your choice online at: SantaMariaSun.com



and art exhibition. Features large format light projections, illuminated sculptures, and artistic lighting of garden areas throughout the garden. Closed on Thanksgiving and Christmas. Thursdays-Sundays, 5, 6 & 7 p.m. through Jan. 8 my805tix.com. San Luis Obispo Botanical Garden, 3450 Dairy Creek Rd., San Luis Obispo, 8055411400.

OPEN MIC COMEDY NIGHT Come on over to the tasting room for some laugh out loud fun at Open Mic Comedy Night with many delicious ciders on tap. Fourth Thursday of every month, 7 p.m. Free show. SLO Cider, 3419 Roberto Ct., Suite C, San Luis Obispo.

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

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

SECOND ANNUAL SENIOR SANTA EVENT Community members are encouraged to adopt a wish list for a senior to help ensure they have a happy holiday. Hosted by the Senior Angels of the Central Coast. Through Jan. 1, 2023 seniorangelsofthecentralcoast.org. Online, See website, San Luis Obispo.

SLO BOTANICAL GARDEN PRESENTS YOGA ON THE TERRACE WITH CHERYL WAKEFIELD An immersive yoga experience led by Cheryl Wakefield, a yoga instructor of 15 years. The event will take place on the terrace in a serene outdoor setting that promotes a relaxed and tranquil mind. Saturdays. through Jan. 29 San Luis Obispo Botanical Garden, 3450 Dairy Creek Rd., San Luis Obispo, 8055411400.

SLO CHESS CLUB All skill levels welcome. Feel free to come by and check it out. Tuesdays, 6-9 p.m. through Feb. 28 Free. 805-540-0470. Whole Foods Market, 1531 Froom, San Luis Obispo.

SLO LEZ B FRIENDS (VIRTUALLY VIA ZOOM) A good core group of friends who gather to discuss topics we love/ care about from movies, outings, music, or being new to the area. We come from all walks of life and most importantly support each other. Transgender and Nonbinary folks welcome. Third Friday of every month,

6:30-9 p.m. Free. sloqueer.groups.io/g/lezbfriends. Online, See website, San Luis Obispo.

SLO MENORAH LIGHTING In celebration of Hanukkah, Dec. 19 through Dec. 26. Check bethdavidslo.org or jccslo.com for event updates. Dec. 21, 5 p.m. Mission Plaza, Downtown, San Luis Obispo.

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

SLO RAM RETIRED ACTIVE MEN COFFEE CABINET Weekly Coffee Cabinet meeting of the SLO RAM Active Retired Men, a local men's social club. Click 'Contact' on website for invite. Thursdays, 8-9:30 a.m. \$10. retiredactivemen.org. Madonna Inn Garden Room, 100 Madonna Road, San Luis Obispo.

SLO RETIRED ACTIVE MEN MONTHLY LUNCHEON San Luis Obispo Retired Active Men (SLO RAM) is a group of retirees that get together just for fun, fellowship, and to enjoy programs which enhance the enjoyment, dignity, and independence of retirement. Third Tuesday of every month, 11 a.m.-1 p.m. \$28. retiredactivemen.org/. Madonna Inn Garden Room, 100 Madonna Road, San Luis Obispo.

STAY YOUNG WITH QI GONG Qi Gong boosts energy and vitality, reduces stress, improves balance and flexibility, and, best of all, is fun. Join instructor Devin Wallace for this outdoor class which is held in a beautiful setting. Call or email before attending. Tuesdays, 10-11 a.m. \$10. 805-709-2227. Crows End Retreat Center, 6340 Squire Ct., San Luis Obispo.

STORYTIME IN THE GARDEN Stop by the Garden on alternating Tuesdays for Storytime in the Garden. For questions and more information, or if you are interested in being a reader, contact Millie by calling 805-541-1400, ext. 302 or emailing millie@slobg.org. Dec. 20, 10-11 a.m. my805tix.com. San Luis Obispo Botanical Garden, 3450 Dairy Creek Rd., San Luis Obispo, 8055411400.

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

TRANS* TUESDAY A safe space providing peer-to-peer

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

NORTH COAST SLO COUNTY

BLUE CHRISTMAS If the holiday season brings up memories of the past, of loved ones lost, or if there are reasons why this year is not especially bright, please join this short simple service which acknowledges that Christmas can be a difficult time for many. Dec. 20, 5:30-6:30 p.m. Free. 805-528-0654. stbenslososos.org. St. Benedict's Church, 2220 Snowy Egret Ln., Los Osos.

BREATHE BALANCE AND STRETCH Be prepared to get down to the floor and up again. Breath practice is sustained throughout the session, which is filled with accessible movements that will create and enhance flexibility and balance. Shoe-less environment. Please bring a mat. Every other Monday, 9-9:45 a.m. \$10. 415-516-5214. Bayside Martial Arts, 1200 2nd St., Los Osos.

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

CENTRAL COAST WOOD CARVERS Learn the art of wood carving or wood burning. Join Central Coast Wood Carvers in Morro Bay at St. Timothy's. Open for beginners, intermediate, or advance. Learn a wide range of techniques and skills. Mask Required. Tuesdays, 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Free. St. Timothy's Catholic Church, 962 Piney Way, Morro Bay, 805-772-2840, sttimothymorrobbay.org/index.html.

CO-DEPENDENTS ANONYMOUS MEETING Co-Dependents Anonymous (CoDA) is a Twelve Step recovery program for anyone who desires to have healthy and loving relationships with themselves and others. Meeting is hybrid (both in person and on Zoom). For information, call 805-900-5237. Saturdays, 1-2:15 p.m. Free. thecambriacconnection.org/. Cambria Connection, 1069 Main St., Cambria, (805) 927-1654.

MORRO BAY MIXED MARTIAL ARTS Disciplines include advanced athletic performance fitness training,

Thai kickboxing, and more. Beginners to advanced students welcome. Day and evening classes offered. Mondays-Saturdays, 8 a.m.-6 p.m. Call for more info. 805-701-7397. charvetmartialarts.com. Morro Bay Martial Arts, 850 Shasta, Morro Bay.

QUIET CHRISTMAS SERVICE AT ST. BENEDICT'S A quiet Communion service with carols. Followed by a light brunch. Dec. 25, 10:30-11:45 a.m. Free. 805-528-0654. stbenslososos.org. St. Benedict's Church, 2220 Snowy Egret Ln., Los Osos.

A SEASONAL CELEBRATION: SUCCULENT PLANTS AND POTTERY SALE (PLUS HANDCRAFTED GIFT MARKET) Features four local plant vendors and a potter, plus a special handcrafted gift market with four artists. Dec. 17, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. and Dec. 18, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Free. Steve Super Gardens, 2016 9th St., Los Osos, 805-602-7817.

SOCRATES: DISCUSSION GROUP Group members present interesting and thought provoking topics of all sorts. Topics are selected in advance and moderated by volunteers. Vaccinations are necessary. Enter through wooden gate to garden area. Wednesdays, 10 a.m. 805-528-7111. Coalesce Bookstore, 845 Main St., Morro Bay, coalescebookstore.com/.

FOOD & DRINK

SANTA MARIA VALLEY/LOS ALAMOS

FOOD TRUCK FRIDAYS AT COSTA DE ORO Featured vendors in the series include Cali Coast Tacos, Cubanissimo, Danny's Pizza Co., Chef Ricks, and more. Call venue for monthly schedules. Fridays 805-922-1468. costadeorowines.com. Costa De Oro Winery, 1331 S. Nicholson Ave., Santa Maria.

FOOD TRUCK FRIDAYS AT WINE STONE INN Fridays, 5-8 p.m. Wine Stone Inn, 255 W. Clark Ave., Orcutt, 805-332-3532, winestoneinn.com/.

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

TACO TUESDAY Tuesdays, 5-8 p.m. Wine Stone Inn, 255 W. Clark Ave., Orcutt, 805-332-3532, winestoneinn.com/.

FOOD & DRINK continued page 23

SPECIAL PUBLICATION

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LOMPOC/VANDENBERG

HEAD GAMES TRIVIA AND TACO TUESDAYS CLASH Don't miss Head Games Trivia at COLD Coast Brewing Company every Tuesday night. Teams can be up to 6 members. Earn prizes and bragging rights. Kekas will be serving their delicious local fare. Fun for all ages. Tuesdays, 7-9 p.m. Free. 805-819-0723. coldcoastbrewing.com. COLD Coast Brewing Company, 118 W Ocean Ave, Lompoc.

SOUTH COAST SLO COUNTY

CLIFFSMAS: HOLIDAY BRUNCH AT MARISOL Enjoy a holiday brunch at Marisol with specialties including lobster benedict, hot chocolate French toast, and much more. Saturdays, Sundays. through Dec. 31 805-773-5000. cliffshotelandspa.com/cliffsmas/. The Cliffs Hotel and Spa, 2757 Shell Beach Rd, Pismo Beach.

HOLIDAY COCKTAILS This weekly event features a signature holiday cocktail, available every Wednesday in December. Wednesdays, 11 a.m.-9 p.m. through Dec. 28 805-773-5000. cliffshotelandspa.com/cliffsmas/. The Cliffs Hotel and Spa, 2757 Shell Beach Rd, Pismo Beach.

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

SAN LUIS OBISPO

COOKIES WITH SANTA Get your tickets for a special holiday event at the Apple Farm Marketplace and Cellar, with cookies and Santa Claus. **Dec. 17**, 3-6 p.m. \$50. 805-544-6100. applefarm.com. Apple Farm, 2015 Monterey St., San Luis Obispo.

DOWNTOWN SLO FARMERS MARKET Thursdays, 6-9 p.m. Downtown SLO, San Luis Obispo.

HOLIDAY VIRTUAL COOKIE DECORATING WORKSHOP A hands-on cookie decorating class from the comfort of your home. Arty McGoo will lead you in a step by step class on how to beautifully decorate 3 different holiday-themed cookies. **Dec. 20**, 6 p.m. \$85 per person or \$65 per Collective member. 805-434-5607. onxwines.com. Online, See website, San Luis Obispo.

SEASONS GREEKINGS: HOLIDAY POP CULTURE QUIZ A special holiday trivia event that is sure to grow your brain and test your holiday pop culture knowledge. Prizes for the winning teams. **Dec. 22**, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Free. 805-439-2529. Oak and Otter Brewing, 181 Tank Farm Road, suite 110, San Luis Obispo.

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

WEDNESDAY NIGHT PUB TRIVIA Bring your thinking cap as questions vary from pop culture, geography, to sports. There is a little for everyone. Prizes for the winning teams. Wednesdays, 6:30-8:30 p.m. Free. 805-439-2529. Oak and Otter Brewing, 181 Tank Farm Road, suite 110, San Luis Obispo.

MUSIC

SANTA MARIA VALLEY/LOS ALAMOS

CCS BAND PERFORMS CHRISTMAS JAZZ CONCERT A family-friendly Christmas concert of assorted holiday jazz/swing music featuring Central City Swing, a professional 17-piece big band. Seating limited. Donations accepted at the door. **Dec. 20**, 7:30-9 p.m. Suggested \$5 donation. 805-264-1023. Maramonte Park Community Center, 620 E. Sunrise Drive, Santa Maria.

THE HOMESTEAD: LIVE MUSIC ON THE PATIO Check the Homestead's Facebook page for details on live music events. Fridays, Saturdays The Homestead, 105 W. Clark Ave, Old Orcutt, 805-287-9891, thehomesteadoldorcutt.com.

SANTA YNEZ VALLEY

THE '90S BABIEZ TRIBUTE BAND LIVE Dec. 24, 9 p.m. Maverick Saloon, 3687 Sagunto St., Santa Ynez, 805-686-4785, mavericksaloon.org.

DO NO HARM LIVE Dec. 16, 8:30 p.m. Maverick Saloon, 3687 Sagunto St., Santa Ynez, 805-686-4785, mavericksaloon.org.

LIVE MUSIC SUNDAYS Sundays, 2-6 p.m. Brick Barn Wine Estate, 795 W. Hwy 246, Buellton, 805-686-1208, brickbarnwineestate.com.

PULL THE TRIGGER LIVE Dec. 17, 8:30 p.m. Maverick Saloon, 3687 Sagunto St., Santa Ynez, 805-686-4785, mavericksaloon.org.

THE ROBERT HEFT BAND LIVE Dec. 23, 8:30 p.m. Maverick Saloon, 3687 Sagunto St., Santa Ynez, 805-686-4785, mavericksaloon.org.

SANTA YNEZ VALLEY CONCERT SERIES: 42ND SEASON The SYV Concert Series' 2022-23 season

includes five upcoming concerts, between October and May. Through May 13, 2023 smitv.org/syv-concert-series.html. St. Mark's in the Valley Episcopal Church, 2901 Nojoqui Ave., Los Olivos.

WINE DOWN WEDNESDAYS Wednesdays, 4:30-5:30 p.m. Brick Barn Wine Estate, 795 W. Hwy 246, Buellton, 805-686-1208, brickbarnwineestate.com.

LOMPOC/VANDENBERG

LOMPOC CONCERT ASSOCIATION: 2022-23 SEASON Visit website for full list of the Lompoc Concert Association's 2022-23 programming. Through March 18, 2023 lompoconcert.org. First United Methodist Church, 925 North F St., Lompoc.

OLD SCHOOL JAMS: HOLIDAY EDITION With DJs Neon "Santa" Maniac and Frank the "Elf" Tank. Come celebrate the holidays and get down to some funk, soul, R&B, electro, and more. **Dec. 23**, 8 p.m. my805tix.com. Flower City Ballroom, 110 W. Ocean Ave., Lompoc.

A VERY SPECIAL FUNDRAISER FOR THE FAMILIES OF DOROTHY GUTHRIE AND JENNA TWOMEY With DJ sets by DJ BHB (Jerry Twomey), Brooklyn Basement, O.con, and Seanathan. Food, drink, beer, wine, and cocktails will be available for purchase. **Dec. 16**, 8 p.m. my805tix.com. Flower City Ballroom, 110 W. Ocean Ave., Lompoc.

SOUTH COAST SLO COUNTY

BSR: HOLIDAY PARTY The Friendly Neighborhood Band will play for your listening and dancing pleasure. The opening band is Three Martini Lunch. **Dec. 18**, 11:30 a.m.-4 p.m. my805tix.com. Pismo Beach Veterans Memorial Hall, 780 Bello St., Pismo Beach.

CHRISTMAS CHOIR Sing your way into the new year. Bring your choir binders (new members will have binders provided) Some new original tunes and some standard Christmas Songs will be included in this years program. Contact for end date. Tuesdays, 7-8:30 p.m. through Dec. 20 Free. Richard Inman, Private Home TBA, Arroyo Grande, 805-937-4413.

SAN LUIS OBISPO

CUESTA CHOIRS HOLIDAY CONCERT Celebrate the joy, the mysticism, and the spirit of the holidays through nostalgic carols, some holiday chestnuts, songs

of solstice and more. **Dec. 16**, 7:30 p.m. General admission \$15; \$10 for students with ID. Cuesta College Cultural and Performing Arts Center, Highway 1, San Luis Obispo, cuesta.edu.

DJ B.TRU An evening DJ set featuring Mushroom Jazz and Roots Reggae and delicious ciders on tap. Held in the tasting room and patio. Saturdays, 5-8 p.m. 805-721-6878. SLO Cider, 3419 Roberto Ct., Suite C, San Luis Obispo.

EASTON EVERETT SOLO Enjoy some indie-acoustic, live music. Thursdays, 5:30-7:30 p.m. eastoneverett.com. Big Sky Cafe, 1121 Broad Street, San Luis Obispo, 805-545-5401.

JD MCPHERSON: A ROCK N' ROLL CHRISTMAS TOUR Dec. 16, 7 p.m. SLO Brew, 736 Higuera St., San Luis Obispo, 805-543-1843, slobrew.com.

LIVE MUSIC AT RAGTAG WINE CO. Enjoy live music by local favorites. Wine available by the flight, glass, or bottle. Thursdays-Saturdays, 6-9 p.m. Ragtag Wine Co., 779 Higuera St., San Luis Obispo, 805-439-0774, ragtagwineco.com.

LIVE MUSIC FROM GUITAR WIZ BILLY FOPPIANO AND MAD DOG Join "Guitar Wiz" Billy Foppiano and his trusty side kick Mad Dog for a mix of blues, R&B, and more. Saturdays, 11 a.m.-1 p.m. 805-544-2100. Bon Temps Creole Cafe, 1819 Osos Street, San Luis Obispo, bontempscreolecafe.com/index.htm.

NOCHE DE VERANO SIN TI (BAD BUNNY NIGHT) Dance party for ages 21 and over. **Dec. 17**, 9 p.m. The Fremont Theater, 1035 Monterey St., San Luis Obispo, 805-546-8600, fremontslo.com.

SLO MASTER CHORALE: HOLIDAY FESTIVAL AND SING-ALONG Featuring soloist Paul Woodring on the Forbes Pipe Organ. Enjoy a sing along with the Master Chorale, plus traditional carols and holiday arrangements for chorus, organ, and orchestra. **Dec. 17**, 7:30-9:15 p.m. \$10-\$25. 805-756-4849. pac slo.org. Performing Arts Center, 1 Grand Ave., San Luis Obispo.

SUNDAY MUSIC AT RAGTAG WINE CO. Enjoy live music by local favorites. Wine available by the flight, glass, or bottle. Sundays, 4-7 p.m. Ragtag Wine Co., 779 Higuera St., San Luis Obispo, 805-439-0774, ragtagwineco.com. ○



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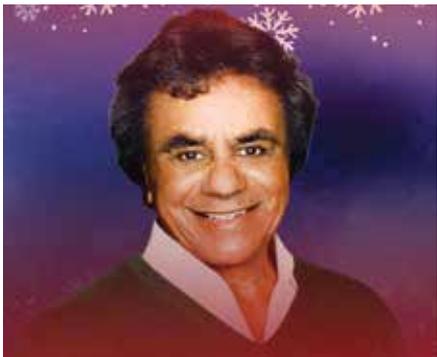
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Arts Briefs

Johnny Mathis brings Christmas concert to Santa Ynez

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE CHUMASH CASINO RESORT



The Chumash Casino Resort presents Grammy Award-winning singer and songwriter Johnny Mathis live in concert on Friday, Dec. 16, at 8 p.m. The legendary musician will be performing a variety of Christmas songs during the upcoming show.

Mathis is best known for "It's Not for Me to Say," "Too Much, Too Little, Too Late," "Misty," and other hits throughout his music career, which stretches more than 60 years. One of his earliest successes was his 1957 appearance on *The Ed Sullivan Show*. He soon became a household name after his 1958 single "Chances Are" sold more than a million copies.

In 2003, Mathis received the Grammy Lifetime Achievement Award. He continues to be Columbia Records' longest-signed recording artist. His compilation album, *Johnny's Greatest Hits*, spent 490 continuous weeks—nearly a decade—on the Billboard 200, according to press materials.

Tickets to Mathis' upcoming concert range between \$69 and \$109. Call (805) 686-0855 or visit chumashcasino.com for more info on the concert and other upcoming events hosted at the Chumash Casino Resort. The casino is located at 3400 Highway 246, Santa Ynez.

Great American Melodrama holds annual holiday production

IMAGE COURTESY OF THE GREAT AMERICAN MELODRAMA



The Great American Melodrama's 2022 iteration of *The Holiday Extravaganza* debuted in mid-November and is scheduled to run through Saturday, Dec. 31. The three-act show includes the venue's traditional retelling of *A Christmas Carol*, a fairy-tale spoof segment, and a reindeer-themed vaudeville act.

During *A Christmas Carol*, miser Ebenezer Scrooge is visited by the ghosts of Christmas past, present, and future on Christmas Eve. The Charles Dickens classic is followed by the Great American Melodrama's fractured fairy-tale opera parody, which features various stories and songs.

Each performance of *The Holiday Extravaganza* concludes with a vaudeville-style variety show led by a group of rapping and dancing reindeer. The show's cast includes Sydni Abenido, Natalie Mara, Antwon Mason, Toby Tropper, Meggie Siegrist, Michael Wells, Billy Breed, Mike Fiore, and Rachel Tietz.

The venue's popular snack bar opens 30 minutes before each performance and reopens during the intermission breaks between each act. Tickets to *The Holiday Extravaganza* start at \$36. Check americanmelodrama.com for availability and reservations. Discounts for seniors, students, and children are available. Performances of the show run Wednesday through Sunday, except on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day.

For more details, call the Great American Melodrama's box office at (805) 489-2499. 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.



PHOTO COURTESY OF PATTI ROBBINS

ECLECTIC SHOWCASE: Gallery Los Olivos' annual Winter Salon exhibition features a diverse collection of artworks created by several participating artists.

Gallant grouping

Gallery Los Olivos' 2022 Winter Salon showcases landscapes, portraits, still life paintings, and more

BY CALEB WISEBLOOD

Last year marked artist Ginny Speirs' first year of membership with Gallery Los Olivos, where she recently joined two of her peers to co-organize the venue's latest group exhibition.

"I embraced the opportunity to get to know my fellow artists better," said Speirs, who jumped at the chance to help hang the featured artworks in Gallery Los Olivos' annual Winter Salon, which premiered in early December and is scheduled to remain on display through the end of January.

This year's iteration of the exhibit was managed by Speirs and local artists Linda Mutti and Renée Kelleher. All three artists also have their own artworks featured in the showcase, which includes a collection of abstracts, still lifes, landscapes, and intimate portraits. Alongside the show's several paintings, there are also photographs, ceramics, and assemblage pieces on display.

"We made a great team as we agreed on hanging based on color and themes," Speirs said. "In the beginning, we were a bit overwhelmed by the amount of artwork and larger sizes we were to install. ... Hanging a salon-style show can be

challenging, as it is important to give each work the proper attention and enough space to be viewed."

The trio's color-based arrangements begin near the front doors of the gallery, where they decided to start with a collection of artworks that all share a pink tint.

"This panel has a common theme of the color pink, as we chose a photograph of a pink car, a painting of a floral landscape, and a portrait of a young girl adorned in pink," said Speirs, a Santa Barbara-based artist who mainly paints floral still life pieces.

Born in Birmingham, Alabama, Speirs' passion for art began with self-portraits she would complete in crayon at age 7. She's lived in Santa Barbara with her husband, Garrett, also an artist, for about two decades.

Speirs' two paintings in Winter Salon are *Nightbloomer*, which depicts a blooming cactus flower against a dark background, and *Profile*, a closeup still of a sunflower.

"I feel like a common theme in the works from this show is the natural beauty that we are surrounded by in this region of California," Speirs said. "All in all, we felt we had accomplished a

COURTESY IMAGE BY LINDA MUTTI



MAJESTIC MORNING: *Dawn's Early Light* is one of two landscapes by artist Linda Mutti currently on display at Gallery Los Olivos, as part of the venue's Winter Salon exhibit.



COURTESY IMAGE BY GINNY SPEIRS

FLOWER POWER: Santa Barbara-based artist Ginny Speirs mainly paints floral still life pieces, including *Profile*.

Seasonal salon

Gallery Los Olivos presents its annual group exhibition, Winter Salon, through the end of January. The gallery is located at 2920 Grand Ave., Los Olivos. Call (805) 688-7517 or visit gallerylosolivos.com for more info.

balanced-looking show."

Most of the landscapes featured in Winter Salon capture locales along the Central Coast, said Mutti, a local pastelist and oil painter with memberships to the Pastel Society of the West Coast, the Pastel Society of America, the OAK Group, Santa Barbara Art Association, and Southern California Artists Painting for the Environment (SCAPE).

"We had a lot of fun hanging the show," Mutti said. "There was so much diversity in the work."

Mutti has two of her own landscapes included in the showcase: a pastel piece titled *Dawn's Early Light* and an oil painting called *Coastal Sunset*.

One factor Mutti has noticed spanning the various pieces is that each artists' enthusiasm for their respective medium and subject matter seems to be apparent through their works.

"The common thread I see," Mutti said, "is the artists' passion for what they do." ○

Start a thread with Arts Editor Caleb Wiseblood at cwiseblood@santamariasun.com.

COURTESY IMAGE BY GINNY SPEIRS



ROOM TO BLOOM: One of featured artist Ginny Speirs' still life pieces included in Gallery Los Olivos' Winter Salon is *Nightbloomer*.



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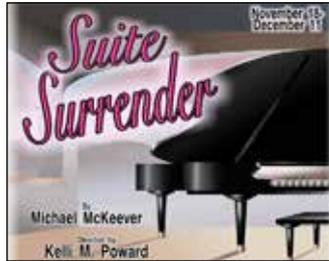
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FRIDAY, DECEMBER 16
Cass Winery, Paso Robles



Symphony of the Vines: Holiday Brass at the Mission
FRIDAY, DECEMBER 16
Mission San Miguel Arcángel



Fundraiser for the Families of Dorothy Guthrie & Jenna Twomey
FRIDAY, DECEMBER 16
Flower City Ballroom, Lompoc



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SATURDAY, DECEMBER 17
Park Ballroom, Paso Robles



Paso Robles Toy Drive Wine Walk
SATURDAY, DECEMBER 17
Downtown Paso Robles



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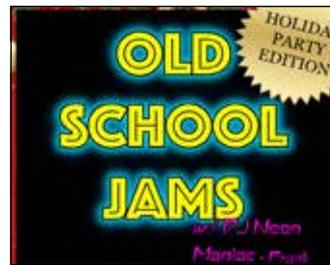
Christmas Carols at St. Benedict's
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St. Benedict's Episcopal, Los Osos



Symphony of the Vines: Brilliant Brass
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Wreck the halls

Editor's note: *New Times* Staff Writer Bulbul Rajagopal and Arts Editor Caleb Wiseblood wrote *Sun Screen* this week while Glen and Anna Starkey went on holiday.

Far from a saint, Santa Claus (David Harbour) finds himself in the thick of a hostage situation when an elite team of mercenaries breaks into a wealthy family's compound on Christmas Eve. (112 min.)

Bulbul: It's obvious *Violent Night* director Tommy Wirkola (*Hansel & Gretel: Witch Hunters*) is a *Die Hard* fan. The parallels are immediate. David Harbour plays a cranky, alcohol-fueled, real-deal Santa Claus who drunkenly steers his flying reindeer and magical sleigh across the skies to deliver gifts and coal alike. His global assignment gets cut short when a group of murderous terrorists led by a man named "Mr. Scrooge" (John Leguizamo) breaks into the estate Santa's arrived at to leave gifts. Santa is begrudgingly left to single-handedly John McClane his way through the Nakatomi Plaza of an East Coast mansion. It's an original take on the St. Nick lore, what with the storyline deepening his past with hints of Santa once being a Nordic warrior. *Violent Night* also breathes fresh life into saccharine holiday movies. It appears to be Wirkola's rubber stamp of approval for *Die Hard* as a Christmas flick, and it definitely delivers on its name. There's plenty of stomach-turning violence and lots of classic bare feet shots a la *Die Hard*. Just don't watch it on a full stomach like we did.

VIOLENT NIGHT

What's it rated? **R**
 What's it worth, Bulbul? **Stream it**
 What's it worth, Caleb? **Matinee**
 Where's it showing? **Regal Edwards RPX Santa Maria, Movies Lompoc, Regal Edwards Arroyo Grande**

Caleb: I concur. Do yourself a favor and see this before dinner, lunch, breakfast, or Christmas cookies rather than after. The gore is grisly enough to leave a permanent blood stain on Santa Harbour's grizzly beard for the majority of the film. I didn't watch any trailers for *Violent Night* before seeing the movie and was pleasantly surprised that it wasn't about a serial killer in a Santa suit, along the lines of *Silent Night*, *Deadly Night* and similar slashers. *Violent Night* won me over almost immediately, as soon as I realized this was about the one true Santa—from the North Pole, married to Mrs. Claus, employer of elves, etc.—becoming an action hero to protect a wealthy family from a team of thugs pulling off a heist, like Bulbul said, *Die Hard*-style. And the Christmas movie references don't stop there. The matriarch of the extravagant household under attack is Gertrude Lightstone, played by Beverly D'Angelo, who invites her son, daughter, in-laws, and grandchildren over for Christmas Eve festivities. D'Angelo's casting has to be a nod to her role in *National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation*. Once Mr. Scrooge and his crew take control of the mansion, one of Lightstone's grandchildren, Trudy (Leah Brady), performs some heroics of her own to thwart the villains in *Home Alone*-esque fashion—but with R-rated gruesomeness. The consequences of Trudy's homemade booby traps are more than enough to warrant *Violent Night*'s rating, independent of Harbour's blood-soaked shenanigans.

Bulbul: Yeah, as fun as this movie was to watch, the gore might have been too much for me to handle in a theater. I'd recommend streaming this at home with a group of friends. You can quickly skip over



SLEIGH-RIDING SLAYER: Santa Claus (David Harbour) goes into combat-ready mode when a group of thieves infiltrate a mansion he's delivering presents to, in *Violent Night*.

all the messy scenes that get gratuitously violent. I get it. It's right there in the name, what did I expect? I love action movies, but *Violent Night*'s action felt like a lot. The four people in our theater (including Caleb and me) winced our way hard through most of it. But the overall story is creative, and I wish I got to know more about Santa's past life. I liked that there wasn't a ham-fisted holiday romance in *Violent Night*. But I heard there's a sequel on the way with Mrs. Claus in it. So, maybe I'll get both!

Caleb: Another sequel rumor going around is that there's an entire *Violent Night* cinematic universe in the works, akin to Marvel's shared movie continuity, with other holiday mascots and magical entities set to make appearances in future films. Harbour playfully suggested the casting of Pedro Pascal as the Easter Bunny and Oscar Isaac as the Tooth Fairy

during a recent interview. If that's the case, take my money now! I'd be on board for any sequel as long as Harbour is still the one filling Santa's boots. What I really enjoyed about his performance is he's definitely world-weary, but not in an overly grumpy way. He's got a dark past and seems reluctant, even confused and mystified at times, about his dutiful role as St. Nick, as if it might have been a curse placed upon him. But he's still the optimistic, greeting-card version of Santa when it comes to interacting with kids. He only goes full *Gran Torino* on the film's big baddies. I wouldn't want to be on this Santa's naughty list. ○

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

PHOTO COURTESY OF DISNEY

Film Reviews

DISENCHANTED

What's it rated? **PG**
 When? **2022**
 Where's it showing? **Disney Plus**

New Flicks

Set 15 years after the events of *Enchanted*, former princess-turned-New Yorker Giselle (Amy Adams) returns to the screen with a full family in tow. She misses the easy, uncomplicated charm of her old life in fairy tale land and moves her husband (Patrick Dempsey), baby, and teen stepdaughter to suburbia. But Giselle's world turns upside down again when a magic wishing wand gives her more power than she can afford.

Disenchanted is more musical than its predecessor, sometimes annoyingly so, but it's still delightful enough to enjoy this holiday season. Watch out for cast members old—Ildina Menzel and James Marsden—and new, like Maya Rudolph. (120 min.)

—Bulbul



HELLA ENCHANTED: Amy Adams (left) revisits her *Enchanted* role as Giselle in the long-awaited sequel *Disenchanted*, with cast newcomer Maya Rudolph (right) as Malvina.

PHOTO COURTESY OF RKO RADIO PICTURES

IT'S A WONDERFUL LIFE

What's it rated? **PG**
 When? **1946**
 Where's it showing? **Downtown Centre in SLO (Sunday, Dec. 18, at 7 p.m.), Amazon Prime**

BLAST FROM THE PAST

I can't be the only millennial whose introduction to *It's A Wonderful Life* was through *Batman: The Animated Series*. During the show's special Christmas episode, Robin tries to convince Batman to take Christmas Eve off from crime fighting and stay in to enjoy a televised screening of the classic Frank Capra film.

For anyone who still uses cable, it's nearly impossible to not land on at least one showing of the 1946 Christmas masterpiece while channel surfing during the holiday season. To see the film on a big screen, however, is a rare opportunity. Forget the moon, Jimmy Stewart, I would prefer if you'd lasso up some tickets to the Downtown Centre's one-night screening of *It's A Wonderful Life* for me instead.



SOME KIND OF WONDERFUL: James Stewart (center) plays one of cinema's most iconic family patriarchs, George Bailey, in the 1946 classic, *It's A Wonderful Life*.

The SLO theater will screen the film on Sunday, Dec. 18, at 7 p.m. (130 min.) ○

—Caleb

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CA zip codes turn up gold for residents

Contents inside sealed Vault Bricks reveal old U.S. coins with added 24 Karat Gold Layering minted nearly 100 years ago are actually being handed over to California residents who find their zip code below; but only those who beat the 48 hour deadline are getting them at just state minimum

"If you live in the state of California you need to find the first three digits of your zip code listed in today's newspaper announcement and call immediately," said Laura A. Lynne, Director of Coin and Currency for National Mint and Treasury.

That's because California residents can really cash in for the next 48 hours. Here's why. Non-state residents and those who miss the 48-hour deadline must pay \$8 per coin, but California residents who take the Vault Bricks cover just the \$4 per coin state minimum. That means California residents get all 125 coins with rare 24 Karat Gold Layering for just \$500 which is a real steal since non-state residents must pay over \$1,000 for each Vault Brick. And it gets even better for those claiming the Jumbo Gold Vault Bricks.

This is all happening because thousands of U.S. residents stand to miss the deadline to claim the gold. Now any resident who finds the first three digits of their zip code listed in today's publication and calls to verify it gets to claim the Gold Vault Bricks for themselves and keep all the valuable gold found inside.

And here's the best part. California residents who find the first three digits of their zip code listed in today's publication are getting Sealed Vault Bricks containing the only California State Gold Bank Rolls known to exist with the exclusive State Restricted Design and each loaded with rarely seen U.S. Gov't issued Buffalo Nickels layered in valuable 24 Karat Gold by National Mint and Treasury.

"As Director of Coin and Currency for National Mint and Treasury, one of my jobs is to deliver breaking news. And today's announcement confirming the release of Sealed Gold Vault Bricks to residents of the state of California is as big as it gets," Lynne said.

"So my advice is this, anyone who gets an opportunity to get their hands on one of

these Gold Vault Bricks full of coins issued by the U.S. Gov't nearly 100 years ago with rare 24 Karat Gold layering from the National Mint and Treasury better jump at the chance while they still can," Lynne said.

"These Gold Vault Bricks make the most impressive gifts for Christmas, birthdays, graduations, weddings, and any other occasion, especially for that hard-to-buy-for person," Lynne said.

According to Ms. Lynne, since thousands of U.S. residents stand to miss the deadline to claim the gold, today and tomorrow are intended as a "special 48 hour release" for the benefit of California residents. This gives them a fair chance to claim the Sealed Gold Vault Bricks and all the valuable gold loaded inside for themselves.

But, Ms. Lynne added, "The Sealed Gold Vault Bricks are only available as inventory permits during the special 48 hour release so please do not miss the deadline." The director added, "We have no power to stop coin dealers, resellers or collectors buying up all the Gold Vault Bricks they can get their hands on," Lynne said.

"We already know the phones will be ringing off the hook. That's why hundreds of agents are standing by to answer the phones beginning at 8:30am this morning. We're going to do our best, but with just 48 hours to answer all the calls it won't be easy. So make sure to tell everyone to keep calling if all lines are busy. We'll do our best to answer them all," Lynne said.

"That's why National Mint and Treasury set up the State Distribution Hotlines in order to make sure residents of California can get them now," Lynne said.

The only thing readers of today's newspaper publication need to do is make sure they live in one of the zip codes listed and call the State Distribution Hotlines before the special 48 hour deadline ends midnight tomorrow. ■



■ **FLYING OUT THE DOOR:** Lucky California residents are hoping to find their zip code listed in today's publication, but not everybody will. That's why those who do need to immediately call the State Distribution Hotlines. Everyone who does is authorized to claim sealed Vault Bricks loaded with the only California State Gold Bank Rolls known to exist for the lowest ever \$4 per coin minimum set for California residents - non-state residents and those who miss the 48 hour deadline must pay \$8 per coin, if any remain.

CALIFORNIA RESIDENTS: IF YOU FIND THE FIRST THREE DIGITS OF YOUR ZIP CODE BELOW CALL: 1-800-280-4564 EXT: GNH1432

900	905	911	916	921	926	932	937	942	947	952	957
901	906	912	917	922	927	933	938	943	948	953	958
902	907	913	918	923	928	934	939	944	949	954	959
903	908	914	919	924	930	935	940	945	950	955	960
904	910	915	920	925	931	936	941	946	951	956	961



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■ **VALUABLE:** RARE 24 KARAT GOLD LAYERING

Answering Your Questions

Q: How much are the Gold Vault Bricks worth?

A: It's impossible to say, but these Buffalos date clear back to the early 1900's and are not ordinary U.S. coins. That's because only an extremely low percentage of Buffalos were then commissioned by National Mint and Treasury to be covered with rarely seen 24 Karat Gold Layering, then sealed and protected in brilliant collector condition inside special 25 count California Bank Rolls. That's why you better hurry if you want to get your hands on them. Collector values always fluctuate and there are never any guarantees. But we do know they are the only California State Bank Rolls known to exist. So anyone lucky enough to get their hands on these sealed Vault Bricks should hold onto them because there's no telling how much they could be worth in collector value someday.

Q: Why are so many California residents calling to get them?

A: Because they are the only California State Bank Rolls known to exist we're bracing for the flood of calls. These are not ordinary Bank Rolls. These are full Bank Rolls containing 25 Buffalos dating clear back to the early 1900's. Best of all each Buffalo is layered in 24 Karat Gold and the state minimum set by National Mint and Treasury is restricted to California residents who find the first three digits of their zip code listed in today's publication and beat the deadline only. That means California residents cover only \$4 per Buffalo when they claim the Gold Vault Bricks, which is just \$500 for the next 2 days.

Q: How do I get the Gold Vault Bricks?

A: The only thing California residents need to do is find the first three digits of their zip code in today's publication and call the State Toll-Free Hotline at 1-800-280-4564 Ext. GNH1432 before the deadline ends. Everyone who does is getting the Bank Rolls for just the state minimum. That's a sealed Gold Vault Brick containing the only California State Bank Rolls known to exist each loaded with the rarely seen U.S. Gov't issued Buffalo Nickels layered in valuable 24 Karat Gold for just the \$4 per coin state minimum set by the National Mint and Treasury, which totals just \$500 for the full sealed Gold Vault Brick. That's a real steal because state residents and non-state residents who miss the deadline must pay \$1,000 for each sealed Gold Vault Brick if any remain.



■ **FIRST LOOK INSIDE GOLD VAULT BRICKS:** Shown above is a sneak peak inside the Gold Vault Bricks. The Gold Vault Bricks are loaded with California State Gold Bank Rolls containing U.S. Buffalos each layered in 24 Karat Gold. The phone lines will be ringing off the hook beginning at precisely 8:30 am this morning. That's because California residents can really cash in for the next 48 hours. Here's why. Non-state residents and those who miss the 48-hour deadline must pay \$8 per coin, but California residents who take the Gold Vault Bricks pictured above cover just the \$4 per coin state minimum. That means California residents get all 125 coins with rare 24 Karat Gold Layering for just \$500 which is a real steal since non-state residents must pay over \$1,000 for each Gold Vault Brick. And it gets even better for those claiming the Jumbo Gold Vault Bricks.

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COURTESY PHOTO BY BRI BURKETT



Share tasty tips!
Send tidbits on everything food and drink to cwiseblood@santamariasun.com.

BRING YOUR BIB: Located in Solvang, peasants FEAST is one of 15 California recipients of the Michelin Guide's 2022 Bib Gourmand award. This year's recipients were announced at the end of November.



BEST THING SINCE SLICED BREAD: The menu at peasants FEAST includes a broad selection of sandwiches to choose from, including BLTs with heirloom tomatoes and thick-cut pork belly (pictured), pastrami smoked salmon, grilled cheese, and hot chicken sandwiches.

Appetizing accolade

Solvang restaurateurs celebrate Bib Gourmand win for peasants FEAST

BY CALEB WISEBLOOD

When local chef Michael Cherney found out one of his restaurant ventures had received the Michelin Bib Gourmand Award, he felt like waiting for Ashton Kutcher to come around the corner to tell him he'd been *Punk'd*.

"I seriously thought it was one of my friends or employees playing a joke on me," said Cherney, co-owner of Solvang's peasants FEAST, about getting the email from Michelin.

Cherney learned that his eatery was one of Michelin's 15 new California-based Bib Gourmand recipients at the end of November.

"I was in bed, I had just woken up, checking emails and social media. I saw that something had come in from Michelin. I immediately forwarded it to a few people who've had experiences

with Michelin in the past, to make sure it wasn't a hoax," Cherney told the *Sun* via email. "But even once I figured out it was a real email, I couldn't believe it. I thought they had made a mistake. ... We are the only new Michelin Bib Gourmand between Santa Barbara and San Francisco. I still can't wrap my head around that. ... I don't think it's really sunk in yet."

Cherney described his reaction to the news as pure shock, and the achievement as "something that we never imagined would happen for our labor-of-love restaurant."

He and his wife, Sarah, founded peasants FEAST in 2020, and the Solvang restaurant's menu is composed of sandwiches, soups, salads, and similar familiar diner favorites that check off the Michelin Guide's list of desired traits to achieve Bib Gourmand

Atterdag siblings

To find out more about peasants FEAST, visit peasantsfeast.com. The Bib Gourmand-winning eatery is located at 487 Atterdag Road, Solvang. For more info on peasants DELI & MARKET, visit peasantsdeli.com. The deli is located at 473 Atterdag Road, Solvang.

status: recognizable, easy-to-eat, and reasonably priced. The Michelin website describes the honor as a "value-for-money" award.

"We put everything we had into opening this restaurant," said Cherney, whose eatery kicked off with patio-style dining and takeout orders in the midst of its mid-pandemic grand opening. "We did it for the community, to show our appreciation and support of other 'peasants'—the working class, the agricultural community, the people who grow our food.

"Never did we imagine we'd be recognized in return by receiving this huge honor from the Michelin Guide."

Cherney said he and his wife share this honor with each and every one of the restaurant's staff members.

"We are super thankful for our

COURTESY PHOTO BY BRI BURKETT

team. They deserve all the praise," Cherney said. "They work their butts off keeping this place running. We owe everything to our crew. Without them, we'd have nothing."

For patrons visiting peasants FEAST during the month of December, Cherney recommends keeping an eye on the center of the menu for seasonal specials, although the restaurant mainly sticks to its usual offerings during the holiday season, with occasional exceptions.

"We don't have anything special planned, as we are closed on most major holidays so our hard-working staff can be with their families. However, we've been doing a seasonal fig grilled cheese at the restaurant and people really seem to enjoy it," said Cherney, who recommends pairing the sandwich with a bowl of cauliflower soup.

As the new year approaches,

Cherney said the recent Bib Gourmand win isn't the only achievement he and his wife are celebrating.

January will mark the first anniversary of peasants DELI & MARKET, the couple's second food venture in Solvang, located within walking distance of peasants FEAST. Currently, the Cherney duo is in the process of expanding the deli by adding on a curated arcade in an adjoining space.

"At peasants DELI, just surviving the first year is a huge accomplishment," Cherney said, noting that his signature hot pastrami has been a constant best seller. "We can't keep it stocked. It takes us two weeks and two days to make, and we usually sell out every day that we have it on offer." ○

Arts Editor Caleb Wiseblood is stoked for the arcade. Send comments to cwiseblood@santamariasun.com.

COURTESY PHOTO BY BRI BURKETT



HOT OFF THE PRESS: In early 2022, the Cherneys opened their second Solvang venture, peasants MARKET & DELI, within walking distance of peasants FEAST. The deli's most popular item, according to chef and co-owner Michael Cherney, is hot pastrami.



HAVE A SEAT: Husband and wife Michael and Sarah Cherney co-founded peasants FEAST in 2020, in the heart of downtown Solvang. The eatery's warm, welcoming indoor seating area wasn't available during the early stages of opening mid-pandemic, when the restaurant relied on patio-style dining and takeout.

The magic of
CHRISTMAS

Sunday, December 25th
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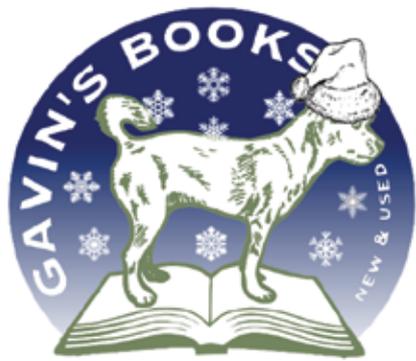
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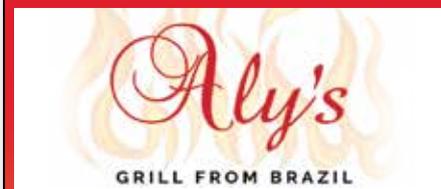


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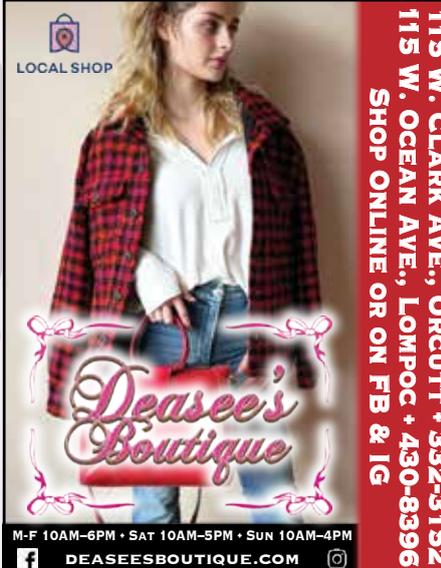
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