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AT THE MOVIES

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Avenue for change

*Santa Barbara County
supervisors want to turn
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BY TAYLOR O'CONNOR



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DECEMBER 22 - DECEMBER 29, 2022 VOL. 23 NO. 43

After a project to convert a Santa Maria Motel 6 into a homeless shelter faced outcry from elected officials and community members, Santa Barbara County looked for other options to address North County's homelessness crisis. Now, the county is proposing to turn an existing vacant lot near the Betteravia Government Center into 90 units of temporary housing that will be similar to existing facilities in Santa Barbara and Lompoc. Staff Writer Taylor O'Connor speaks with local elected officials and others about the proposal [6].

You can also read about the project proposed in Los Padres National Forest facing pushback from local environmental organizations [4]; a riveting set of short historical stories about the Point San Luis lighthouse [20]; and one woman's journey to starting her own winery [24].

Camillia Lanham
editor



BUILDING SHELTER: Santa Barbara County could erect 90 units of temporary housing in Santa Maria, similar to an existing facility in Santa Barbara.

Courtesy cover image by Alex Siegel > Cover design by Alex Zuniga

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Political Watch

U.S. Sen. **Alex Padilla** (D-California) introduced legislation to close the gaps in our health care system that “have left behind” minorities and underserved communities by incentivizing increased health provider participation in disadvantaged areas, according to a Dec. 19 statement. The Health Enterprise Zones Act would direct the Health and Human Services Secretary to accept applications and designate Health Enterprise Zones in areas with measurable and documented health disparities and poor health outcomes. “The COVID-19 pandemic shined a spotlight on the severity of the inequities in our nation’s health care system,” Padilla said in a statement. “But inequitable access to quality, affordable health care long predates the pandemic. Centuries of structural and systemic racism continue to result in poorer health outcomes in communities of color. That is why our bill would incentivize health care providers to bring more services to structurally disadvantaged areas.”

After a nationwide search, the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors approved the appointment of **Mouhanad Hammami** as the new Public Health Director, according to a Dec. 13 statement from the county. His first day will be Jan. 23, 2023. Dr. Hammami will assume the duties from Interim Public Health Director **Daniel Nielson**, who was appointed to the interim position following the departure of **Van Do-Reynoso** in July 2022. Nielson will continue to lead the Santa Barbara County Social Services Department. Hammami has more than 20 years of experience in public government administration and health care. During the COVID-19 pandemic, he served as the chief health strategist for Wayne County, Michigan. There, he assembled the COVID Command Center and team to address the county’s pandemic preparedness efforts, expanded testing, and established and implemented a successful vaccination plan. “I am so excited to be joining the public health team at Santa Barbara County and grateful for the trust of County Executive [Mona] Miyasato and the Board of Supervisors have placed in me to lead the department. This is such an important time for public health as we are recovering from a pandemic that reaffirmed the importance of public health,” Hammami said in a statement.

Gov. **Gavin Newsom** issued a statement after the vast majority of countries in the world signed a United Nations agreement to protect 30 percent of Earth’s lands and oceans by 2030, according to a Dec. 19 statement from the governor’s office. “Two years ago, California made history as the first state in the nation to set a goal to conserve 30 percent of our beautiful land and coastal waters by 2030—a model for global action to protect our planet,” Newsom said. “With the agreement signed in Canada, the rest of the world joins our pledge in one of the most transformative moments of human progress we’ve witnessed in our lifetimes.” In April, Newsom released the Pathways to 30-by-30: Accelerating Conservation of California’s Nature, which outlines how to achieve the state’s first-in-the-nation goal to conserve 30 percent of California’s lands and coastal waters by 2030 in order to protect biodiversity, expand access to nature, and tackle climate change. The strategy followed the governor’s executive order in October 2020, establishing the 30-by-30 goal. California has conserved 24 percent of its land and 16 percent of coastal waters. To reach 30 percent by 2030, the state’s strategy lays out several concurrent pathways, including accelerating regionally led conservation, buying strategic lands for conservation and access, expanding voluntary conservation easements, and aligning investments to maximize conservation benefits. ○

Los Padres ForestWatch files lawsuit against U.S. Forest Service

The U.S. Forest Service faces litigation after it failed to provide public documents about a fire mitigation project proposal that would impact more than 235,000 acres of land in Santa Barbara, SLO, and Ventura counties.

Los Padres ForestWatch Director of Conservation and Research Bryant Baker said the agency missed several deadlines to turn the information over to the environmental nonprofit.

“So many things happened over the last few months,” Baker said. “We filed a lawsuit because we are unsure when we are going to receive these documents [or] if we are going to receive them at all.”

Along with getting all of the information, the lawsuit also asks for an investigation regarding prolonged delays and issues with requests, Baker said.

“There’s a pattern that’s really emerged over the last several years, mostly with these logging and vegetation removal projects,” he said. “We are asking that special counsel look into this and make a determination about what steps they can [take] to remediate this issue and break this pattern of noncompliance.”

The Ecological Restoration Project is one of the largest projects proposed in Los Padres that ForestWatch has seen, Baker said. Once the Forest Service issued the proposal in July, it kicked off a 30-day comment period during which ForestWatch immediately filed a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request for any and all information that wasn’t made initially available.

“We do this for every project, so the Forest Service is very familiar that we ask for more information and ask for expedited processing,” Baker said. “Normally it’s a 20-day period the agency has to respond to your request and give a determination on how they will process your request.”

In September—two months after the Ecological Restoration Project’s comment period—the Forest Service missed several deadlines before releasing only 18 pages of documents, stating that the request wasn’t “specific enough,” he said.

“You don’t have to be specific about what you are looking for,” Baker said. “When you file a FOIA request, you don’t know what documents the agency has. Asking for all records related is completely permissible.”

The local office directed ForestWatch to file any follow-up requests with the Washington, D.C., office, which receives more requests and already has a backlog, he said.

After submitting a second, more detailed request to the Washington, D.C., office, ForestWatch heard back from the service in November, saying they located 3,726 pages of documents related to the Ecological Restoration Project.

“To wrap up this timeline, nothing has changed after we filed our lawsuit. Those 3,000-plus documents the Forest Service said they located, that [request] was on Nov. 9 and we still have not received them,” Baker said on Dec. 19.

Attorney Maya Kane, who represents ForestWatch and helps with FOIA requests, said there are seven outstanding requests to the Los Padres National Forest—including one from 2019, one from July that’s 141 days overdue, and three that are 70 days overdue—and this is the second time litigation came into play regarding legal access to information.

“When you get a [FOIA] request and if those records are public, you are required to provide records within a statutory timeframe,” Kane said. “Litigation is not the answer. We should not



PHOTO COURTESY OF LOS PADRES FORESTWATCH

NO INFORMATION: The Los Padres ForestWatch filed a lawsuit against the U.S. Forest Service for not releasing public records about the Ecological Restoration Project—a fire mitigation proposal that will impact roughly 235,495 acres of land.

have to litigate to obtain records that should be provided to the public.”

Requiring requests to go to the Washington, D.C., office, not assigning a required tracking number, and responses asking for descriptions of documents have all been tactics Kane said she’s seen the Forest Service use to delay releasing information when a project’s comment deadlines are passing.

“Without response records, [ForestWatch] is not able to meaningfully engage. The ForestWatch can’t do their job and that’s why we were forced into this position,” she said. “These agencies work for us. They are protecting federal public land, and sharing what they are doing and being transparent is in everybody’s best interest.”

The U.S. Forest Service said it does not comment on pending litigation. The agency has 30 days to file a response in court.

—Taylor O’Connor

Santa Maria finally begins to realize vision for downtown redo

As a longtime plan to revitalize downtown Santa Maria starts to solidify into project proposals, city decision-makers asked the developer to make sure the overall design

captures traditional mission-style architecture with a contemporary twist.

That was the main crux of a joint meeting between members of the Downtown Revitalization Committee, Planning Commission, and City Council

on Dec. 15, Mayor Alice Patino told the *Sun*.

“We have to preserve what Santa Maria looks like. We have a beautiful City Hall building. We have a beautiful church across the street,” Patino said. “I think they figured out pretty much what we want.”

The Vernon Property Group has the keys to a handful of surplus city properties downtown (mostly parking lots), as well as the old Mervyn’s building in Town Center West, with projects on seven lots inching toward the planning process. RRM Design Group is working with Vernon to design mixed-use buildings—commercial

storefronts with residential units above them—that are consistent with the updated Downtown Specific Plan and Santa Maria’s longtime vision to breathe life back into its downtown.

“We’ve been talking about the downtown, even before I got on the City Council, and we’ve been in the process of doing something about it for the last 15 years,” said Patino, who was first elected to the council in 2002. “It’s doable. It’s just that we need to figure out how to do it in Santa Maria.”

Patino said it’s going to take more than just above-ground construction to realize the city’s vision. The city is applying for a grant that would help redo older infrastructure such as sewer pipes along the corners of Main Street and Broadway—a necessity for the city to handle the projected increase of residential units in the area.

“It can’t move fast enough for me,” Patino said. “Once one thing gets done, I sort of think everything will fall into place.”

Community Development Director Chuen Ng told the *Sun* that tentative plans for the parcels pencil in 575 apartment

units with ground-floor commercial retail, open spaces, plazas, and other gathering spaces, as well as landscaping that creates a more inviting, pedestrian-friendly place. A quarter of the residential units will be affordable housing.

“The goal is to revitalize the downtown area to bring new visitors, and so we are applying really careful attention to all of these other details of what happens on the ground. It’s placemaking,” he said. “There’s going to be a densification of downtown with these residential developments. We do want to bring back elements of that downtown, with walkability and storefronts.”

At least two of the Vernon Group’s projects have come before decision-making bodies.

In July, the Downtown Revitalization Committee heard about the proposal for the old Mervyn’s/Fallas building, which would turn a big empty box store into three stories with 104 apartments, a rooftop deck, and downstairs shopping. In August, the City Council adopted a development agreement for the parking lot on the southeast corner of Main and Broadway, which could hold a five-story building with 88 residential units, a rooftop deck, outdoor seating area, and street-side storefronts in the future.

Both projects are in the preliminary stages of planning. But not everyone is gung-ho about the concept. Councilmember Mike Cordero questioned the wisdom of the five-story project

“I just think that it just doesn’t fit,” he said during the Aug. 16 meeting. “Why are you putting homes in a parking lot?”

Brad Vernon addressed Cordero’s question during the Vernon Group’s presentation.

“I had the exact same concern a couple of years ago. I have since built infill projects on parking lots,” he said.

As people graduate from universities, he added, they want amenities and services around them. Vernon said that it’s a different concept for areas that are used to single-family housing developments, so it does take a leap of faith, but he’s had success building similar projects in places like Orcutt and Walnut Creek.

“It’s one that as developers, we’ve seen that

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NEWS from page 4

shift happen over the last 10 or 15 years, and there's very huge demand," Vernon said. "We're all-in on this type of housing. It's been hugely successful."

—Camillia Lanham

Guadalupe declares impasse on Fire Department wage agreement

The Guadalupe Fire Department hasn't seen a wage increase in 20 years, doesn't have a full-time fire chief, and only has six full-time staff members, Fire Capt. Ryan Danger Mack said.

"We realized we didn't have any rights because we didn't have an MOU [memorandum of understanding] agreement, and it became a huge priority for us to make an agreement," Danger Mack said.

A memorandum of understanding would establish a wage increase, overtime regulations, and pay incentives with the Fire Department's union and Guadalupe City Council. After a year of negotiating, both parties couldn't come to an agreement and declared an impasse on Nov. 22.

"The general consensus was they got sticker shock and immediately regretted it," he said.

In 2021, City Council pulled back on an original proposal with increases that Danger Mack said he felt optimistic about and could make improvements to the department.

When the city came back to the table, it provided a best and final offer that included a 2 percent wage increase, a uniform maintenance allowance, a reduction in overtime hours, and incentive pay for special assignments like haz-mat officer, investigator, or field training officer positions, according to city documents.

However, the proposed raises and incentives were lower than the Fire Department needed and didn't address hiring new leadership, Danger Mack said.

"They are going to take away various things that we deserve," he said. "It's rough because with inflation it's already challenging, but that's life. As a supervisor, I want to protect my guys and make sure they aren't being taken advantage of."

In the meantime, one firefighter quit and an engineer just resigned, he added.

"We can go back to the negotiating table in January or when they want to restart, but we have no leverage so I don't foresee any negotiating," Danger Mack said. "They just don't support the Fire Department."

Mayor Ariston Julian said the initial proposal would have put the city over its public safety budget, citing overtime as a major contributing factor, so Guadalupe had to make amendments to the MOU.

"We're looking at what's financially viable for the city. If you don't have it you can't purchase it; we're tight when it comes to the budget," Julian said. "We rely on a lot of property tax, and the new housing development hasn't moved forward with restrictions to the railroad. Cannabis hasn't come to fruition. Other businesses are coming in, [but] we have to look at our budget."

He said the city agreed to look into hiring a battalion chief and to make adjustments for training incentives, but no decisions have been made. There's no date set for any follow-up discussion.

"There was a gap between what they wanted and what we could afford," Julian said. "They're stepping up to what the community needs and we appreciate that. That's why we need to get them back at the table to find a happy medium between the city's budget and the Fire Department." ○

—Taylor O'Connor

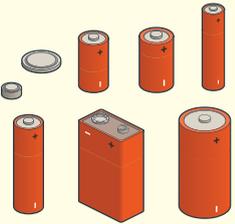
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A NEW SPACE: The Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors proposed a temporary housing facility on county property in Santa Maria, similar to the Dignity Moves location in Santa Barbara (pictured), in order to address the needs of the homeless population in the area.

Perfect enough

Supervisors propose temporary housing on county property in Santa Maria to address the homelessness crisis

BY TAYLOR O'CONNOR

There never seems to be a perfect place for a homeless shelter, Santa Barbara County 5th District Supervisor Steve Lavagnino said.

"There's no golden choice, it's not one [location] is better than the other, but I can't live with the status quo," Lavagnino told the *Sun* in February.

More recently, Lavagnino said he felt like he had to look at new location options after the controversial proposal to renovate Santa Maria's Motel 6 to a permanent housing facility failed to move forward due to several disagreements with city officials and public outcry.

"My goal is not to build a homeless shelter that draws homeless people to a certain area, my goal is to build something where there's already a lot of homeless people sleeping behind businesses," he said. "I want to take them out of that situation and provide an avenue to get them out of the life they are in."

Lavagnino and 4th District Supervisor Bob Nelson eventually proposed a spot on a county-owned piece of vacant land near the Board of Supervisors' Santa Maria office to open a 90-unit temporary housing facility with Dignity Moves. It would provide a short-term living facility where people can get adequate medical and mental health attention, and gather any necessary documents or information to eventually find permanent housing, Lavagnino said.

"The reason we came up with the idea is because everybody said, 'Oh I don't want it around me,'" he said. "So I said, 'Put it next to us.' It's right next to mental health, it's next to probation, it's next to social services."

At the proposed Santa Maria location, 30 units will be for people coming out of Dignity Health hospital care, 10 will be for youth ages 18 to 24 who have aged out of the foster care program, and the remaining 50 will be for any Santa Maria Valley residents experiencing homelessness.

He estimated that the project will cost about \$1.2 million to \$1.5 million to

operate annually with supportive services—which will be funded by American Rescue Plan Act funds from the county, private donations, and Dignity Health.

"I'm not giving up on these folks at this point," Lavagnino said. "If you give people a place where they can lay their head, lock their door, and feel safe, that's when you can start treating them."

The proposal is still in its early stages, and county supervisors are supposed to discuss the proposal on Jan. 24 at the Santa Maria hearing room. The county and its partners will also conduct public outreach at the beginning of 2023 with public meetings for neighbors, businesses, and city officials to address concerns and hopefully get the city on board, he said.

"I'm not guaranteeing it will work, but I have to make tough decisions that I feel are the right things to do," Lavagnino said. "If it doesn't, it's on me to see what's working elsewhere. I see this working in Santa Barbara right now and [I'm] trying to see why we wouldn't try this."

A little more than 450 people experiencing homelessness reside in Santa Maria, according to the 2022 Homeless Point-In-Time Count, and there's a need for 133 emergency shelter beds in the area.

Elizabeth Funk, the founder and CEO of Dignity Moves, said she hopes the project—similar to one currently operating and seeing success in Santa Barbara—will help fill that need.

"The beautiful thing we did there [in Santa Barbara] is prioritizing people sleeping in the immediate area," Funk said. "The homelessness in the five-block radius is gone. It's because Good Sam went to the people on the streets, and that neighborhood gets to benefit, and there's a visible difference."

The homes are made by an LA-based company. She said the steel frames the company uses make them thicker and more durable than

structures made by Pallet—another temporary home manufacturing company. Plus, the homes are designed to match Santa Barbara's aesthetic, with Spanish-style terra cotta arches and

furnished with home decor, decks, and an outdoor garden—making it feel less like a shelter and more like a home, she added.

"If we can build something attractive enough [for people] to come, we have a much higher chance of people resolving their problems and going back into self-sufficiency," Funk said.

The community of 35 tiny homes overseen by Good Samaritan Shelter in Santa Barbara functions as a temporary site for people to transition into permanent housing. In three to five years, the homes will move to a new location, and a permanent supportive housing project will take their place, Funk said.

"This is not intended to be a permanent home, but if we build enough interim housing, it takes pressure off the system and frees the resources to get people into interim housing early," she said, "and they are much more likely to become self-sufficient."

Although no specific data is available at this time, Funk said anecdotally there's been a reduction in hospital visits and police calls, and some people who lived in the facility moved on to get permanent housing, jobs, and connection to mental health care.

The remaining challenge is changing the community's perception of adding a homeless shelter to their neighborhoods.

"It's going to save money in the long run. It's well run, it's dignified. It's just explaining [the goal] because people's knee-jerk reaction is 'no shelter in my neighborhood,' when you do want this in your neighborhood badly," she said.

Santa Maria Mayor Alice Patino toured Dignity Moves' Santa Barbara facility and said she thinks it could be a better option for her city than the Motel 6 proposal.

"The Motel 6 project was not well thought out at all," Patino said. "I think this will be an improvement because I think people will be in a contained environment, and they will have services to transition to permanent housing. If that's the objective, I think it's a great idea."

However, she said, she wants to make sure that the city is involved in future conversations and that the county receives community input before moving forward.

"I'm going to reserve my opinions until I hear others' opinions, and I certainly want other members of the council to voice their opinion on this," Patino said. "We'll be having more conversations, and it should be collaborative definitely. I think there should be open forums and public outreach so the public gets a chance to speak." ○

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

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CARING HANDS: Volunteers with C.A.R.E.4Paws provide animals in need with necessary vaccines and care—and the organization is currently fundraising for a larger mobile clinic to bring vets to the animals.

Paws on Wheels

C.A.R.E.4Paws is fundraising to expand care for pet owners in need

BY SHWETHA SUNDARRAJAN

Forget making a trip to the veterinarian's office—animal care organization C.A.R.E.4Paws is fundraising for a larger mobile vet clinic that'll come to you.

The organization provides affordable veterinary services to low-income, senior, disabled, and homeless pet owners in Santa Barbara County. However, its recent expansion of services to SLO County in February 2022 and the number of residents seeking affordable veterinary care since the pandemic have put a significant strain on C.A.R.E.4Paws, which is why the organization is looking to raise money for a larger, brand new mobile vet clinic.

"We used to help about 7,000 pet families every year before the pandemic, and now we're helping more than 20,000. And that's just in Santa Barbara County alone," said Isabelle Gullo, C.A.R.E.4Paws executive director and co-founder.

The larger, 37-foot mobile vet clinic would help with handling C.A.R.E.4Paws' newest program, Snip & Chip SLO, which was developed in partnership with nonprofits such as the Animals in Need Fund and Animal Shelter Adoption Partners.

"One thing we're struggling with right now is that there's a huge demand for spaying and neutering and other services for large dogs, but we can only accommodate so many per clinic day because of our current setup," Gullo said.

So far, the organization has raised \$252,000 but needs \$100,000 more to meet the fundraising goal.

"Our goal is to reach \$350,000 by March because we were picking the unit up in April," Gullo said.

The two current mobile clinics that C.A.R.E.4Paws uses are 26 feet long, but they're as capable of providing similar services as a stationary vet clinic.

"You'd be surprised how many people we can fit in there," Gullo said.

However, the current mobile clinics lack the space to provide certain services like X-rays, so C.A.R.E.4Paws has partnered with several local veterinarians and animal clinics for those services that the nonprofit can't provide inside its mobile clinics.

"We always work with the clients and figure out what they can do, and if we can get discounts from the vet clinics that we work with, [to] pitch in a little bit of money," Gullo said.

Aside from their mobile vet clinic services, C.A.R.E.4Paws offers a variety of programs, such as the Companion Pet Assistance program, where pet owners can pick up emergency food and supplies and sign up for critical mobile clinic services. For those facing domestic violence situations, C.A.R.E.4Paws has a program dedicated to providing a safe haven for pets so their owners can leave an abusive partner without fearing for the well-being of their pet.

In addition to monetary donations toward the fundraising goal, community members can also drop off dry and canned pet food at various locations throughout Santa Barbara County. Want to contribute with a hands-on approach? C.A.R.E.4Paws offers multiple volunteer opportunities to those looking to lend a helping hand.

"For me, it's just really wonderful to see how the organization is able to grow, and that's just because of the community support," Gullo said. "We have a really wonderful team that I would say, no pun intended, really goes the extra mile to help families in need."

To find out more ways to help or for a comprehensive schedule of upcoming pet wellness clinics, visit the C.A.R.E.4Paws' website at care4paws.org.

Highlight

- The SLO Food Co-Op has donated \$2,400 to the SLO Noor Foundation, an organization that provides free medical, dental, and vision care to uninsured adults in Santa Barbara and SLO counties. Learn more about the foundation and its services in northern Santa Barbara County at slonoorfoundation.org.

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Contact New Times Staff
Writer Shwetha Sundarajan at
shwetha@newtimeslo.com.

DEATH NOTICES

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

ASISTIN, WILLIE, 80, of Santa Maria passed away 12/11/2022 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

CARAMELLI, ELAIN F, 96, of Tucson, AZ. passed away 12/5/2022 arrangements with Los Osos Valley Mortuary

COBB, ALLEN HARRISON, 89, of Arroyo Grande passed away 12/7/2022 arrangements with Marshall-Spoo Sunset Funeral Chapel

COUTO, MARY, 88, of Grover Beach passed away 12/7/2022 arrangements with Marshall-Spoo Sunset Funeral Chapel

COWAN, EVANS, 72, of Atascadero passed away 11/15/2022 arrangements with Los Osos Valley Mortuary

DOOLAN, LYNDA LEE, 80, of Paso Robles passed away 12/12/2022 arrangements with Chapel of the Roses

DRAKE, RONALD, 71, of Arroyo Grande passed away 12/10/2022 arrangements with Marshall-Spoo Sunset Funeral Chapel

EDWARDS, RANDAL D., 68, of Santa Maria passed away 12/14/2022 arrangements with Magner-Maloney Funeral Home & Crematory

GORDON, JOHNNIE LEO, 68, of Arroyo Grande passed away 12/5/2022 arrangements with Marshall-Spoo Sunset Funeral Chapel

HAMPL, CODIE RAY, 16, of Atascadero passed away 12/10/2022 arrangements with Chapel of the Roses

HARTMAN, CHERYL IRENE, 75, of Atascadero passed away 12/14/2022 arrangements with Chapel of the Roses

HILL, MARY CATHERINE, 84, of Los Osos passed away 12/1/2022 arrangements with Los Osos Valley Mortuary

JULIAN, REMY, 79, of Santa Maria passed away 12/9/2022 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

KUHNLE, HELEN LOUIS, 91, of Carrisa Plains passed away 12/6/2022 arrangements with Chapel of the Roses

LEFEVRE, DORIS MARIA, 87, of Atascadero passed away 12/01/2022 arrangements with Chapel of the Roses

LORD, WALTER "HAP" VINCENT, 93, of Paso Robles passed away 12/8/2022 arrangements with Chapel of the Roses

LOTZ, CRAIG JOHN, 75, of Los Osos passed away 11/24/2022 arrangements with Los Osos Valley Mortuary

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

MARTIN, PATRICIA CATHRYN, 90, of Atascadero passed away 12/8/2022 arrangements with Chapel of the Roses

MCLEAN, JUDY, 78, of Nipomo passed away 12/11/2022 arrangements with Marshall-Spoo Sunset Funeral Chapel

MILLER, JAMES WAYLAND, 88, of Arroyo Grande passed away 12/9/2022 arrangements with Marshall-Spoo Sunset Funeral Chapel

MILLER, ROBERT BRUCE, 98, of Oceano passed away 12/2/2022 arrangements with Los Osos Valley Mortuary

MONTGOMERY, RUTH ARDELLA, 99, of Los Osos passed away 12/10/2022 arrangements with Los Osos Valley Mortuary

MORRIS, LINDSAY JANE, 20, of Atascadero passed away 12/04/2022 arrangements with Chapel of the Roses

MURRAY, ELINOR, 89, of Arroyo Grande passed away 12/10/2022 arrangements with Marshall-Spoo Sunset Funeral Chapel

NEWMAN, STEVEN ARTHUR, 71, of Los Osos passed away 11/29/2022 arrangements with Los Osos Valley Mortuary

PARK, KEUM SEON, 86, of Nipomo passed away 12/9/2022 arrangements with Los Osos Valley Mortuary

RAMIREZ, MARIA DEJESUS, 70, of Grover Beach, passed away 11/26/2022 arrangements with Los Osos Valley Mortuary

RITTER, VIOLA K., 73, of Arroyo Grande passed away 12/14/2022 arrangements with Marshall-Spoo Sunset Funeral Chapel

RUBIO, ANNA E., 61, of Santa Maria passed away 11/23/2022 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

STILTS, SONDRAL LEE, 83, of Los Osos, passed away 11/22/2022 arrangements with Los Osos Valley Mortuary

THATCHER, MOSES "SPENCER", 88, of Arroyo Grande passed away 12/7/2022 arrangements with Marshall-Spoo Sunset Funeral Chapel

VEDDER, BRIGITTE, 93, of Arroyo Grande passed away 12/13/2022 arrangements with Marshall-Spoo Sunset Funeral Chapel

WEBER, SYLVIA, 89, of Los Angeles, passed away 11/29/2022 arrangements with Chapel of the Roses

WHITE, SHIRLEY MAE, 88, of Santa Margarita passed away 12/02/2022 arrangements with Chapel of the Roses

WILLIAMS, DEENA MARIE, 59, of Nipmo passed away 12/7/2022 arrangements with Marshall-Spoo Sunset Funeral Chapel

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Online Poll

How should more funds be raised to help provide mental health services to first responders?

- 80% The county and One805 could host an event with all proceeds going toward funding.
- 20% The county and One805 could host a donation challenge where different businesses compete to raise funds.
- 0% One805 could add a donation page specifically for first responders' mental health services.
- 0% One805 could have a monthly donation drive for monthly and one-time donations.

5 Votes

Vote online at www.santamariasun.com.

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Help potential pets

There are several ways you can keep adoptable animals safe this winter

BY LEE HELLER

It always happens when the economy is in trouble—animal shelters fill up as people face a financial crunch. The current inflationary period, plus all those pandemic pets whose owners can no longer keep them, is just the latest example. And the Santa Maria Animal Center on Foster Road is no exception. On Saturday, Dec. 3, at the start of the business day, it was full.

We've been lucky compared to other places. Kern County, just a few hours north, is already euthanizing hundreds of dogs (including cute healthy puppies) each month, as they face far more animals than they can care for. We aren't there—yet. And we can avoid most of that, but only if the community steps up and helps out. Otherwise, healthy, friendly animals will die simply because we don't have the resources to care for them all.

What can we do? The recent team response at the Animal Center is one solution: staff, volunteers, and community members working together to save animals. By the end of the day, 14 dogs had gone to foster or adoptive homes, creating room and breathing space for the next wave of arriving animals.

But that wave will come. It will take ongoing community commitment to avoid unnecessary killing. Here are some key ways to avert that nightmare:

- **Adopt.** If you have been thinking about getting a pet, now is the time! County Animal Services has dogs, cats, bunnies, and more at both its Goleta campus at 5470 Overpass Road and at 548 Foster Road in Santa Maria. (Info about adopting is here: countyofsb.org/1386/adoption-procedures.) You'll get a vaccinated, spayed/neutered, microchipped loving companion for far less than you

would pay at a store or from a breeder (\$30 for rabbits, \$75 for cats, \$110 for dogs), and you may well be saving a life!

- **Foster.** We can ease overcrowding by fostering animals,

opening up cage space as new animals come in. The animal gets to live a quality life, and the shelter learns about its personality traits, which means much easier adoption placement. And you can do it from home—in fact, you have to!

There's an example sleeping at my feet right now: Dundee, a middle-aged red heeler who'd been at the county shelter for several months. At the shelter, Dundee was cranky with his kennel neighbors, so it was assumed he couldn't be around other dogs. Here, he's living with several other dogs (although he can still be a bit grumpy about it!). We now also know that he's housebroken, good on leash, likes car rides, does well at restaurants and cafes, and is a cuddler. Also, not good with cats! (For more on fostering, email sbcasfosters@gmail.com.)

- **Volunteer.** Volunteers can vastly improve quality of life for sheltered animals—giving them exercise and enrichment. Longer term shelter life is like a prison, wearing down an animal's spirit and physical health. Enriched animals can hang in there longer, giving them more of a chance to find a home. This is true for most of the species at the shelter, and even more so for dogs. Volunteers who take dogs on outings also get a chance to know them better, while giving the dog a break and a chance at normal life. And you'd be amazed how many adoptions come out of chance encounters!

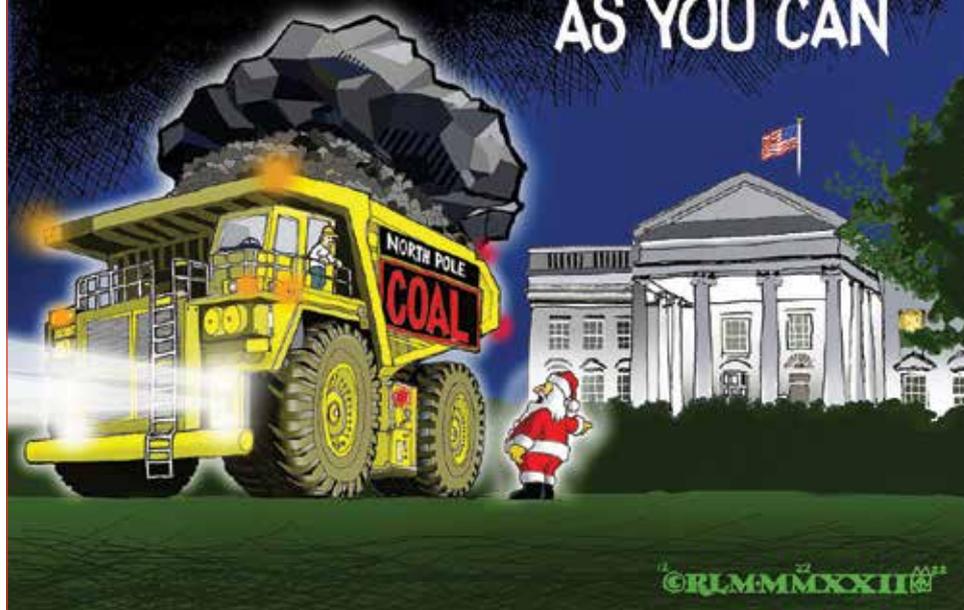
Volunteers can also join teams created to help promote especially needy animals. Case in point: A few weeks ago, the Animal Services director alerted us to a long-term resident, a German Shepherd named Mushu who was clearly deteriorating. She pretty much said, either we come up with a plan for him, or it would be both necessary and humane to end his life. Team Mushu was quickly formed: Volunteers agreed to give him more enrichment in the shelter, spend

Speak up!

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more time with him, and promote him more on social media. Ten days later, Mushu was out of the shelter and in his new home. (To volunteer, email phdanimalservicesoutreach@sbcphd.org.)

- **Spread the word.** We've learned from the social media explosion how much can depend on a chance online encounter. If you can't volunteer at the shelter (too busy, too heartbreaking), you can sign up to help promote animals widely—getting the word out, increasing the chance that someone looking for that kind of dog, cat, or rabbit will learn about it and adopt. (Email the same address as for volunteers, to get involved.)

- **Support programs that keep pets in homes.** Local nonprofit C.A.R.E.4Paws and county Animal Services host pet resource pantries throughout the county, providing resources (from free food to low-cost vet care) that help people to keep their pets. They also host low-cost or free vaccine clinics. Donations are essential to this: visit care4paws.org.

There may come a day when we cannot humanely house all the dogs, cats, rabbits, etc., that end up at our shelters. But we can try our best not to kill animals if we, as a community, commit to doing everything in our power to provide viable alternatives. ○

Lee Heller writes from Santa Barbara. Send a letter for publication to letters@santamariasun.com.

LETTERS

Rallying for President Trump

We must continue to support President Trump now as we have for the past four years. He had every right to encourage his supporters to rally peacefully before Congress to support and promote important Republican issues now.

When the president was at Walter Reed Army hospital to treat his case of COVID-19, his supporters rallied peacefully for three days while he was being treated. In the past four years, millions of us American patriots all over the U.S. have rallied for President Trump on local street corners, on boats, on cars, on trucks, on motorcycles, and at the airports where the president arrived in Air Force One.

None of these rallies were anything but peaceful and well run as were the Tea Party rallies before them. At times, we were challenged by rogue agitators but we always maintained our calm. In the past year we have seen local peaceful rallies and demonstrations for various causes turned into riots by imported and paid agitators to impose chaos on all aspects of the scenes and cause millions of dollars of damage to property and loss of lives.

Now this is just what happened in Washington, D.C. We citizens are peaceful and respectful. But our rally was usurped by these paid rogue infiltrators who formed a chaotic scene, and the media and Democrats tried to blame it all on President Trump. This is not his doing. His rally a mile away from the Capitol ended peacefully, and all departed peacefully as urged by the president.

The president is a true American patriot and has done more in four years to improve the lives of the average American citizens and to stabilize the foreign world than any president before him. He is the political "Einstein" of the business and financial world.

He deserves our support and praise and not mean actions by Congress for something he did not inspire or had any control over. Even the Capitol Police were surprised.

But to all of our detriment, the seldom seen and uninformed American voters have elected a political "Humpty Dumpty" and animal of the deep swamp in Washington, the very senior 80-year-old Joe Biden with growing dementia.

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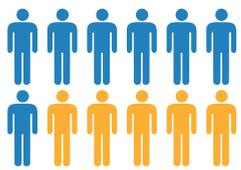
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THE CANARY

OPINION

Starting place

It's refreshing to see a county leader putting on the YIMBY hat and walking the talk. That's "yes in my backyard," as opposed to the more popular naysayers' NIMBY acronym.

Fifth District Supervisor Steve Lavagnino has been wearing his thinking cap since last January's proposal to accept state money and turn a **Motel 6** in Santa Maria into temporary homeless housing. He and the rest of the supervisors voted to get something on paper by their Jan. 31 deadline and receive Project Homekey funds. It was needed money for a needed project, but a lot of feathers got ruffled.

"There's no golden choice, it's not one [location] is better than the other, but I can't live with the status quo," Lavagnino told us in February.

Santa Maria City Council officials and community members raised such a loud outcry that the county heard it, scuttled that project location, and has now found another location—this one on the county's own property.

Lavagnino and fellow **North County Supe Bob Nelson** recently proposed a spot on a county-owned piece of vacant land near the Board of Supervisors' Santa Maria office. If all goes well, **Dignity Moves** would open a 90-unit temporary housing facility where people could get adequate medical and mental health attention, and help finding permanent housing.

"The reason we came up with the idea is because everybody said, 'Oh I don't want it around me.' So I said, 'Put it next to us.'"

This project and its location sound pretty darn good—good enough, at least. We can't afford to wait for perfect. Plus, the supes have a successful Dignity Moves project in Santa Barbara to point to. Those 35 tiny homes have already made a "visible difference" in that neighborhood, according to **Elizabeth Funk**, Dignity Moves CEO.

But there's a long road ahead, filled with the necessary and good opportunities for study and input—the exact kind of input that Santa Maria leaders and residents didn't get to share about the Motel 6 project ahead of time.

Santa Maria Mayor Alice Patino has already toured the Santa Barbara tiny homes and had positive things to say.

"I think this will be an improvement because I think people will be in a contained environment, and they will have services to transition to permanent housing. If that's the objective, I think it's a great idea."

However, the county must gather community input.

"We'll be having more conversations, and it should be collaborative definitely," the mayor said. "I think there should be open forums and public outreach so the public gets a chance to speak."

Hear that, community? Now's your chance. Get some info. Do some research. Take a look around and recognize that there is a very real need for a very real solution.

"It's going to save money in the long run. It's well run, it's dignified," Dignity Moves' CEO Funk said. "It's just explaining [the goal] because people's knee-jerk reaction is 'no shelter in my neighborhood,' when you do want this in your neighborhood badly." ☉

The Canary is a NIMBY, nest in my backyard. Send feathers to canary@santamariasun.com.

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The Cuyama Buckhorn hosts its New Year's Eve dinner event, *A Night Under the Stars*, on Saturday, Dec. 31, at 7 p.m. Visiting chefs Tiffani Ortiz and Andy Doubrava, co-founders of Slow Burn, will be preparing dishes over an open fire in the event's party space. Call (661) 766-2825 or visit cuyamabuckhorn.com for more info. The Cuyama Buckhorn is located at 4923 Primero St., New Cuyama.

—Caleb Wiseblood



FILE COURTESY PHOTO BY STEPHANIE RUSSO

ARTS

SANTA MARIA VALLEY/LOS ALAMOS

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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/cinderella. 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, ukelele, or violin, or take vocal lessons. 805-925-0464. coelhomusic.com. Coelho Academy of Music, 325 E. Betteravia Rd., Santa Maria.

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WINE AND DESIGN CLASSES Check Wine and Design's Orcutt website for the complete list of classes, for various ages. ongoing Varies. wineanddesign.com/orcutt. Wine and Design, 3420 Orcutt Road, suite 105, Orcutt.

SANTA YNEZ VALLEY

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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.

LAUGH THERAPY HOLIDAY EXTRAVAGANZA Wrap 2022 on a bright note with a session of Laugh Therapy. Headliner Jeff Applebaum has worked alongside comic legends Mort Sahl and Robin Williams. Feature Rachael Berman sold out her one-woman show. Co-Feature Nick Malizia tops the SLO comedy scene. **Dec. 28**, 8-10 a.m. \$20. 773-401-2998. Maverick Saloon, 3687 Sagunto St., Santa Ynez, mavericksaloon.org.

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. Through March 6, 2023 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

BEFORE THE BALL DROPS DRAG SHOW Hosted by Pandora Mystere, this show will be packed with amazing performances by local queens and some surprise dance and musical performances. **Dec. 30**, 8 p.m. my805tix.com. Flower City Ballroom, 110 W. Ocean Ave., Lompoc.

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 cityoflomdoc.com. Lompoc City Hall, 100 City Hall Dr., Lompoc.

NEW YEAR'S EVE BLACK TIE MASQUERADE BALL Enjoy live music and more to ring in the new year. Food, drink, beer, wine, and cocktails will be available for purchase. **Dec. 31**, 7 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.

BE PART OF ART There will be a different art activity each month. Bring the whole family to see the beauty in creating together and how easy it can be to bring art into your home. Last Saturday of every month, 1:30-3 p.m. Free. 805-668-2125. lila.community. LiIA Creative Community, 1147 East Grand Ave. suite 101, Arroyo Grande.

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. and Saturdays, 2-5 p.m. through Dec. 31 \$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). Mondays, 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

ARTS continued page 14

SUBMIT YOUR EVENTS

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

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a.m. \$25. 805-668-2125. lila.community. LiLA 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. actoredge.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 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.

ART EXPLORATION FOR KIDS In this class series, students learn about drawing and acrylic painting. In each class, students will recreate a famous piece of art from history. Thursdays, 2-3 p.m. through Dec. 29 \$28 per session; \$100 for 5 classes; \$180 for 10 classes. 805-747-4200. artcentralslo.com/workshops-events/. Art Central, 1329 Monterey St., San Luis Obispo.

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. and Sundays, 12-4 p.m. 805-747-4200. artcentralslo.com/gallery-artists/. Art Central, 1329 Monterey St., San Luis Obispo.

BEGINNING DRAWING FOR KIDS WITH SPENCER COLLINS This class is designed to teach young students the important basic building blocks of drawing. Students learn about various drawing techniques and materials such as graphite, charcoal, and paint pens. For kids ages 8-13. Thursdays, 3:30-5 p.m. through Dec. 29 \$28 per session; \$100 for 5 classes; \$180 for 10 classes. 805-747-4200. artcentralslo.com/workshops-events/. Art Central, 1329 Monterey St., San Luis Obispo.

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



HOT STUFF
DEC. 22 - DEC. 29
2022

SALOON LOONS

The Maverick Saloon in Santa Ynez hosts its next Laugh Therapy stand-up comedy event on Wednesday, Dec. 28, from 8 to 10 p.m. New York-based comedian Jeff Applebaum will headline the show, which also features sets from Rachael Berman, Nick Malizia, and Sal España. Doors open at 7:30 p.m. Tickets are available in advance at my805tix.com. The Maverick Saloon is located at 3687 Sagunto St., Santa Ynez.

—C.W.

DATE NIGHT POTTERY Looking for a fun date night? Head to Anam Cre Pottery Studio and play with clay. Couples will learn how to throw a pot on the wheel and make a cheeseboard. Fridays, Saturdays, 6-8 p.m. \$140. Anam Cre Pottery Studio, 1243 Monterey St., San Luis Obispo, anamcre.com.

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.

INTERMEDIATE OIL PAINTING: ADULT ART CLASS This class is for students who may have tried oil painting in the past but are looking to advance their skill levels. Color theory and proportion study will be a

focus in the class. Mondays, 2-5 p.m. \$30 per student or \$75 for 3 classes. 805-747-4200. artcentralslo.com/workshops-events/. Art Central, 1329 Monterey St., 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 painting with 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.

KIDS POTTERY CLASSES Enjoy making animal sculptures, bowls, plates, etc. Please arrive on time, not early, as venue uses the transition time between classes to sanitize. Designed to sign up on a weekly basis. Thursdays, 1:30-2:30 p.m. \$40. anamcre.com. Anam Cre Pottery Studio, 1243 Monterey St., San Luis Obispo.

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

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.

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. themondayclubslo.org. Online, See website, San Luis Obispo.

OPEN MIC COMEDY Sign-ups at 6:30 p.m. Hosted by Aidan Candelario. Mondays, 7-9 p.m. Free. 805-540-8300. saintsbarrel.com/event-calendar. Saints Barrel Wine Bar, 1021 Higuera St., San Luis Obispo.

PLEIN AIR PAINTERS OF THE CENTRAL COAST A self-directed fun group of dynamic artists who enjoy painting and sketching outdoors. Artists meet on site at various locations. Weekly plein air destinations are provided by Kirsti Wothe via email (mrswothe@yahoo.com). Wednesdays, 9 a.m.-noon SLO County, Various locations, San Luis Obispo.

POTTERY: BEGINNING WHEEL CLASS This series is a great intro to the pottery wheel. Students learn to

ARTS continued page 16



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Bird and Botany Walk
THURSDAY,
DECEMBER 22
SLO Botanical Garden



Nature Nights: Immersive Outdoor Holiday Light & Art Exhibition
THURS, DEC. 22 – SUN, JAN. 8
SLO Botanical Garden



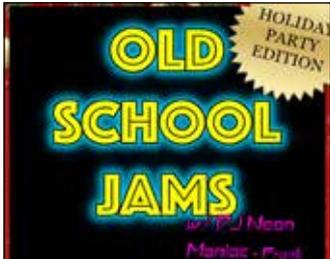
Point San Luis Lighthouse Tours
In-Person WED & SAT
Virtual ON DEMAND
Avila Beach



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DAILY AT 9AM
Sycamore Mineral Springs Resort & Spa, Avila Beach Drive, SLO



Yoga on the Terrace with Cheryl Wakefield
SATURDAYS: DEC. 24 – FEB. 25
SLO Botanical Garden



Old School Jams (Holiday Edition) w/ DJs Neon Maniac & Frank the Tank
FRIDAY, DECEMBER 23
Flower City Ballroom, Lompoc



Storytime in the Garden!
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 27
SLO Botanical Garden, San Luis Obispo



Laugh Therapy Stand-Up Comedy Show
WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 28
Maverick Saloon, Santa Ynez



Before the Ball Drops Drag Show
FRIDAY, DECEMBER 30
Flower City Ballroom, Lompoc



'60s Rock and Roll New Year's Eve Bash w/ Unfinished Business
SATURDAY, DECEMBER 31
Camp Arroyo Grande



New Year's Eve Bash Centennial Celebration
SATURDAY, DECEMBER 31
SpringHill Suites, Atascadero



SLO Funny New Year's Eve Comedy Show
SATURDAY, DECEMBER 31
Veterans Memorial Bldg, Morro Bay



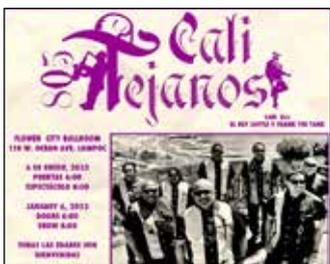
It's free! Contact us for more info:
805-546-8208
info@My805Tix.com



New Year's Eve Black Tie Masquerade Ball
SATURDAY, DECEMBER 31
Flower City Ballroom, Lompoc



2022 New Year's Eve CASSino Party!
SATURDAY, DECEMBER 31
Cass Winery, Paso Robles



805 Cali Tejanos with guest DJs El Rey Liotta and Frank the Tank
FRIDAY, JANUARY 6
Flower City Ballroom, Lompoc



Basin Street Regulars: Jazz Jubilee by the Sea
THURS-SUN, JANUARY 12-15
Pismo Beach / Grover Beach



Santa Maria Civic Theatre: The Red Velvet Cake War
FRI, SAT, SUN, JANUARY 13-29
1660 N. McClelland, Santa Maria



Anomaly House Presents: Friday the 13th Techno Massacre Rave
FRIDAY, JANUARY 13
Flower City Ballroom, Lompoc



Songwriters At Play: Dolly Parton and Willie Nelson Tribute
SATURDAY, JANUARY 14
Unity of Santa Maria



The Deveros, Hostile Takedown, Dirt Fight, Radiation Invasion
SATURDAY, JANUARY 14
Flower City Ballroom, Lompoc



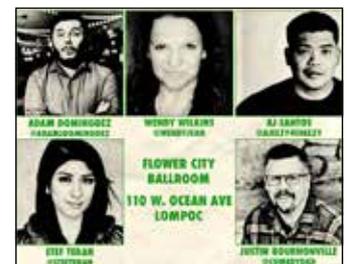
Symphony of the Vines: Classical Artistry
SUNDAY, JANUARY 15
Mission San Miguel Arcángel



Songwriters At Play: Severin Browne
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 18
Moonstone Cellars, Cambria



The PACE of Nature Retreat and Workshop
SATURDAY, JANUARY 21
SLO Botanical Garden



Stand-Up Comedy hosted by Justin Bournonville
SATURDAY, JANUARY 21
Flower City Ballroom, Lompoc

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throw various shapes, surface decorate, and glaze. Clay and firing included with admission. Thursdays, 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. \$180. anamcre.com. Anam Cre Pottery Studio, 1243 Monterey St., San Luis Obispo.

SCULPTURE CLASS WITH ROD PEREZ This weekly sculpture drop-in class gives an opportunity for potters to take on new projects and learn new techniques relating to sculptural work. Additionally, every first Friday of the month, a new project will be taught by Rod Perez for beginners. Fridays, 10 a.m.-noon \$40. anamcre.com. Anam Cre Pottery Studio, 1243 Monterey St., San Luis Obispo.

SENIOR CLAY CLASS Offered to the senior community as an outlet to explore the beauty of clay. For ages 60 and over. Caretakers welcome for an additional \$20. Fridays, 10 a.m.-noon \$40. anamcre.com. Anam Cre Pottery Studio, 1243 Monterey St., San Luis Obispo.

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: vbmack@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 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. ongoing 805-772-9955. 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.

SLOFUNNY NEW YEAR'S EVE COMEDY SHOW This New Year's Eve, join the SLOfunny Comedy Show for the last laugh with host Thomas Connolly and comedians Ron Swallow, Jonas Gavin, Jen Murphy, and headliner Adam Yenser. Dec. 31, 6:30-8 & 9-10:30 p.m. \$30. 805-534-3129. facebook.com/slofunny. Morro Bay Veterans Memorial Building, 209 Surf St., 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.

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.

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. ongoing 805-343-2455. dunescenter.org. Guadalupe-Nipomo Dunes Center, 1065 Guadalupe St., Guadalupe.

NOON-YEAR'S EVE PARTY: SANTA MARIA PUBLIC LIBRARY

Celebrate New Year's Eve at noon to ring in the 2023 year. Can't stay up until midnight? Come count down the New Year with us. Make sparkly crafts, hear popping stories, and enjoy delicious refreshments. Festive attire is welcome. Dec. 31 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. 27 Free. 805-925-0994. cityofsantamaria.org. Santa Maria Public Library, 421 S. McClelland St., 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.

TEEN NOON YEAR PARTY Dec. 31, 11 a.m.-1 p.m. activekids.com/santa-maria-ca. Maldonado Community Youth Center, 600 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.

CULTURE & LIFESTYLE continued page 18

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Christmas Tree Collection

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■ Discarded Christmas trees will be collected at no charge from the curb on your scheduled trash collection day during the week of **JANUARY 9, 2023–JANUARY 13, 2023**, on residential trash collection routes. (Charges apply after January 13.)

■ Place your Christmas tree on the curb, at least **three feet** away from your trash container, on your scheduled collection day. Trees must be free of all stands, tinsel, and ornaments. **Flocked trees or artificial trees are not accepted.**

■ Cut-up trees can also be placed in organics containers.



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For Martin Luther King Day, a thrilling spectacle paying homage to the show-style marching popularized at historically black colleges and universities, and a soul-stirring revue of some of America's favorite music.

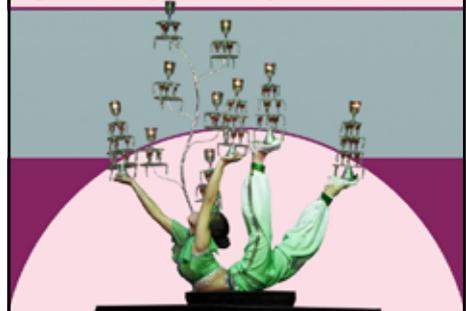
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Live from Laurel Canyon
Jan 21 at 7:30pm

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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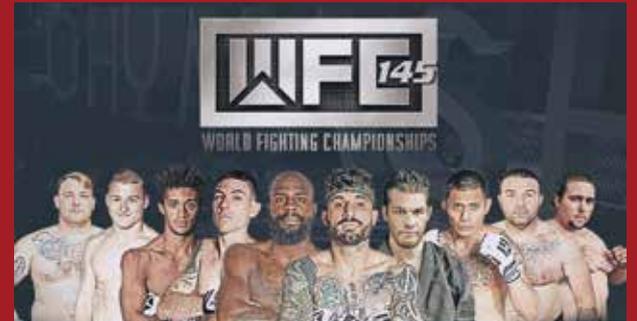
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WFC 144

JANUARY 13 | FRIDAY | 7PM



WFC 145

JANUARY 14 | SATURDAY | 7PM



GERARDO ORTIZ

JANUARY 27 | FRIDAY | 8PM



PAUL ANKA

FEBRUARY 11 | SATURDAY | 8PM

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Call us today! Deals this good don't last forever.

SOUTH COAST SLO COUNTY

AVILA BEACH POLAR BEAR PLUNGE A celebration of fitness, nature, a New Year, camaraderie, and still having dessert. Dessert can be a cup of coffee or something to eat at one of the local Avila Beach establishments after the plunge. **Jan. 1**, noon slolug.com/polar. Avila Beach Promenade, 404 Front St., Avila Beach.

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.

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 pointsanlighthouse.org/. Point San Luis Lighthouse, 1 Lighthouse Rd., Avila Beach.

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

CITY FARM SLO'S YOUTH EMPOWERMENT PROGRAM Check site for more info on programming and summer camps. ongoing cityfarm slo.org. San Luis Obispo, Citywide, SLO.

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.

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.

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 and art exhibition. Features large format light projections, illuminated sculptures, and artistic lighting



HOP ON POPS

The San Luis Obispo Symphony presents its New Year's Eve pops concert, Come Together, at the Performing Arts Center (PAC) on Saturday, Dec. 31, from 7:30 to 9 p.m. The show's song selection includes hits from the '80s, '90s, and '00s. Call (805) 756-4849 or visit slosymphony.org to find out more about the concert. The PAC is located at 1 Grand Ave., San Luis Obispo.

—C.W.

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. Free. galacc.org/events/. Online, See website, San Luis Obispo.

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

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 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, 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 TABLE TENNIS The club is open to all skill levels. There are many tables available to play casual and competitive games. Sundays, 4-7 p.m. and Tuesdays, Thursdays, 7-10 p.m. through Jan. 31 Free. 805-540-0470. Ludwick Community Center, 864 Santa Rosa, 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.

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 aaragroup@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.

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

WINTER GYMNASTICS CAMP Gain extra time to rejuvenate, while your child enjoys hours of active fitness and gymnastics fun. For ages 4 to 13. **Dec. 27**, 9:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m., **Dec. 28**, 9:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m. and **Dec. 29**, 9:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m. \$55-\$135 depending on which days/options chosen. 805-547-1496. performanceathleticslo.com/camps. Performance Athletics Gymnastics, 4484 Broad St., San Luis Obispo.

NORTH COAST SLO COUNTY

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

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, sttimothymorrobay.org/index.html.

FESTIVAL EUCHARIST The church is decorated with candles, flowers, and greenery. Enjoy carols and worship, in person or virtually on Facebook. **Dec. 24**, 7:45-8:30 p.m. Free. 805-528-0654. stbenslososos.org. St. Benedict's Church, 2220 Snowy Egret Ln., Los Osos.

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.

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/.

STAY YOUNG WITH QI GONG Qi gong offers great anti-aging benefits, providing a comprehensive system for improving physical, mental and emotional health. Its roots date back thousands of years in China. Learn with certified instructor Devin Wallace. Call first. Thursdays, 10-11 a.m. \$10. 805-709-2227. Hardie Park, Ash Ave. and B St., Cayucos.

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

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

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

WEEKLY QIGONG PRACTICE AT FITNESSWORKS MORRO BAY Calm your mind and nourish your joints with a weekly Qigong practice led by Mike Raynor of Tai Chi Rejuvenation. The practice is rooted in Qigong fundamentals, and standing/moving meditations. Forms include: Eight Brocades, Five Elements, Shibashi 18, and Tai chi 24. Saturdays, 10:45-11:45 a.m. Members free; non-members \$8-\$10. 805-772-7466. fitnessworksb.com. FitnessWorks, 500 Quintana Rd., Morro Bay.

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

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 Pizzeria 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/.

NEW YEAR'S EVE: A NIGHT UNDER THE STARS There will be drinks, live music from the Paypals, stargazing, and plenty of food and drink. Admission to the party is free and open to all. Acclaimed Chefs Andy Doubrava and Tiffani Ortiz of Slow Burn are taking over the kitchen. **Dec. 31**, 7 p.m.-1 a.m. Free. 661-766-2825. cuyamabuckhorn.com. Cuyama Buckhorn, 4923 Primero St, New Cuyama.

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/.

SANTA YNEZ VALLEY

NEW YEAR'S EVE RACLETTE PARTY Features dinner. Visit site for more info. **Dec. 31**, 6-7 p.m. caillouxcheeseshop.com. Cailloux Cheese Shop, 1623 Mission Drive, Solvang.

FOOD & DRINK continued page 19

Spread the word!

Send event information to calendar@santamariasun.com.



NYE PARTY FUNDRAISER FOR ANIMALS ASIA

Enjoy an evening of fun and laughter at Arrowsmith's beautiful European bar. Cover includes buffet as well as a free glass of Prosecco for the East Coast 9 p.m. NYE toast. Call for tickets. **Dec. 31**, 7-11 p.m. \$25. 805-626-9126. arrowsmithswine.com. Arrowsmith's, 1539 Mission Drive, Solvang.

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, 805-773-4382.

SAN LUIS OBISPO

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

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

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.

NOON YEAR'S EVE DANCE The Santa Maria Valley Senior Citizens Club presents a Noon Year's Dance with the Riptide Big Band, vocalists Bob Nations, Mitch Latting, and guest vocalist Liz Douglas. Grant funded by Community Foundation of San Luis Obispo County. **Dec. 31**, 11 a.m.-1 p.m. Free. 775-813-5186. RiptideBB.com. Elwin Mussell Senior Center, 510 Park Ave., Santa Maria.

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.

JEFF PINE PLAYS Pine entertains with his repertoire of more than 600 covers that he can bring to mind at any one time. For ages 21 and over. **Dec. 24** Free. 805-686-9126. arrowsmithswine.com. Arrowsmith's, 1539 Mission Drive, Solvang.

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

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 Nojqui 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.

YOUTH OPEN MIC NIGHT A fun, welcoming environment for first time performers and an opportunity for kids and teens to showcase their talent. Prizes awarded every month for Outstanding Performer. Last Friday of every month, 6-8 p.m. certainsparks.com/. Certain Sparks Music, 107 S. H St., Lompoc.

SOUTH COAST SLO COUNTY

'60S ROCK AND ROLL NEW YEAR'S EVE BASH

All tickets include live music, dancing, a Mexican buffet dinner, a cash no-host bar service, party favors, and free parking. Benefits the 17 Strong Foundation. **Dec. 31**, 6 p.m. my805tix.com. Camp Arroyo Grande, 250 Wesley St., Arroyo Grande, 805-249-9517.

SAN LUIS OBISPO

COME TOGETHER: NEW YEARS EVE POPS CONCERT WITH THE SLO SYMPHONY

Ring in the New Year with Come Together, a pops concert created by Canadian-based symphonic rock group Jeans 'n Classics celebrating the hits of the '80s, '90s and '00s. **Dec. 31**, 7:30-9 p.m. \$100. 805-756-4849. sloSymphony.org/new-years-eve-pops-concert/. Performing Arts Center, 1 Grand Ave., San Luis Obispo.

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., 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.

FORBES ORGAN SERIES: AN EVENING WITH KAREN SLACK AND ALAN MORRISON

Rising Metropolitan Opera star and renowned soprano Karen Slack, is paired with one of America's premier concert organists, Alan Morrison, for a moving performance of dynamic musical synergy rarely seen on the Central Coast. **Jan. 2**, 7:30-9 p.m. \$35-\$55. 805-756-6556. Performing Arts Center, 1 Grand Ave., San Luis Obispo, pacslo.org.

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.

NYE AT THE ROCK: MOONSHINER COLLECTIVE, L'ECLAIR, TROPO, DANTE MARSH, MOTHER CORN SHUCKERS

Hosting the best local bands in town for NYE, with a full property take over and 6 different acts to choose from. The theme is "Space Cowboy," so come dressed to boogie. **Dec. 31**, 8:30 p.m.-1 a.m. \$100. 415-509-0069. slobrew.com/live. SLO Brew Rock, 855 Aerovista Pl., 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.

NORTH COAST SLO COUNTY

CAROLS AND COMMUNION AROUND THE CRECHE

The church is decorated with candles, flowers, and greenery. Enjoy carols and worship, in person or virtually on Facebook. **Dec. 24**, 4:30-5:30 p.m. Free. 805-528-0654. stbenslososos.org. St. Benedict's Church, 2220 Snowy Egret Ln., Los Osos.

LISTENING AS RITUAL Group listening sessions with musician/musicologist Ben Gerstein. Explore remarkable recordings of world music, nature field recording, western classical and contemporary, and jazz, sharing and discussing inspiration and perspectives on the expressive power of peoples, cultures, animals and habitats through sonic experience. Every other Monday, 7-8:15 p.m. \$10-\$15 donation. 805-305-1229. leftcoaststartstudio.com/. Left Coast Art Studio, 1188 Los Osos Valley Rd., Los Osos.

LIVE MUSIC WITH GUITAR WIZ AT LUNADA GARDEN BISTRO

"Guitar Wizard" Billy Foppiano plays a wide range of music, including blues, R&B, classic rock, and more. Fourth Sunday of every month, 11 a.m.-2 p.m. 805-900-5444. Lunada Garden Bistro, 78 N. Ocean Ave., Cayucos.

SONGWRITERS AT PLAY HOSTS SONG CONTEST AT SCHOONERS

Three judges award three prizes. Up to 10 contestants play 2 original songs each. \$5 entry fee. Advance signups only, apply at stevekey57@gmail.com. Note: December event moved to Dec. 20. Last Tuesday of every month, 6:30-9 p.m. through Feb. 28 Free. 805-204-6821. stevekey.com/events. Schooners, 171 North Ocean Ave, Cayucos. ☐



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BOOK COVER COURTESY OF THE UNITED STATES LIGHTHOUSE SOCIETY

Arts Briefs

Righetti High School student recognized in statewide choir programs

Righetti High School student Jady Voss (pictured, right) is the sole student singer in Santa Barbara County to be accepted into this year's California All-State Choir, according to the Santa Maria Joint Union High School District. Voss, a junior at Righetti and member of the school's Varsity Choir, was notified about the selection in mid-December.

PHOTO COURTESY OF KENNY KLEIN



In February, Voss will join other selected student vocalists from around the state at the California Music Educators Conference in Fresno. The California All-State Choir consists of the top 100 regional choir students ranging from Eureka to San Diego, according to the district.

"I am extremely proud of Jady for her hard work and dedication," Matthew Ringer, a choir teacher at Righetti High School, said in a statement. "She has represented Righetti and Santa Barbara County well."

Voss is also the only Santa Barbara County-based student to be accepted into the High School Coastal Honor Choir and was recognized for the achievement during a ceremony at the Performing Arts Center in San Luis Obispo in November.

"It was such a surreal experience," Voss said in the statement. "It was amazing meeting students from all over California."

Wildling Museum hosts talk with wildlife photographer Roy Dunn

Pre-registration is open for an upcoming artist talk, Capturing Imagery of Our Wild Neighbors, with wildlife photographer and cinematographer Roy Dunn (pictured), which will take place at the Wildling Museum of Art and Nature in Solvang on Sunday, Jan. 22, from 4 to 5 p.m. Admission to the

PHOTO COURTESY OF ROY DUNN



event is \$5 for museum members and \$10 for nonmembers.

According to press materials, Dunn's presentation will cover his work in camera trapping and ethical wildlife photography. Dunn will also discuss some of the stories behind his featured works currently on display at the Wildling Museum, accompanying artist Hilary Baker's main floor exhibition, Wildlife on the Edge.

Dunn's lifelong passion for photography has led him to coordinate various workshops and research projects for Canon and host presentations for multiple natural history and photography organizations over the years. To find out more about Dunn's photography and cinematography work, visit humanstohummingbirds.com.

For more details on the upcoming talk at the Wildling Museum of Art and Nature, and other events scheduled at the museum, call (805) 688-1082 or visit wildlingmuseum.org. The museum is located at 1511 Mission Drive, unit B, Solvang. ○

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

Into the past

Local author Kathy Mastako's new book celebrates the Point San Luis Lighthouse

BY GLEN STARKEY

Unless you take a guided tour or happen to arrive at Avila Beach from the north by sea, you might never see the collection of structures that make up one of our very few local lighthouses. It's a relic of the past, first becoming operational in 1890 and eventually becoming automated in the 1970s.

These days, modern electronic aids to navigation have made lighthouses generally obsolete, but at one time, the Point San Luis Lighthouse was essential. Now, the people who lived in the remote location are given their due in Kathy Mastako's exhilarating and painstakingly researched new book *The Lighthouse at Point San Luis*.

"It has been my passion project for the last six years!" explained the author, who took on the project without any compensation. "All the proceeds are split 50/50 between the United States Lighthouse Society and the Point San Luis Lighthouse Keepers—two nonprofit organizations dedicated to preserving lighthouse history."

After retirement from Cal Poly's Landscape Architecture Department as administrative support coordinator, Mastako began volunteering at the lighthouse and trained as a docent. Fascinated by the light station's rich history, she soon began researching in earnest everything she could find about the lighthouse and its past inhabitants.

If you're thinking, "Yawn, another boring history book," think again. Mastako's writing is lucid and lively, and the subject matter is deeply fascinating if you have even a passing interest in local history.

"I did a lot of research for this book, but the goal was to make it a readable book rather than something dry and scholarly," Mastako said. "I wanted to contribute to local history, but also to tell stories about the people who made the lighthouse's history come alive. One of the great joys of my research was connecting with the direct descendants of the lighthouse keepers, both civilian and military. One of the great frustrations was hitting brick walls—like not finding Henry Young's three sons."

Henry Wilson Young was the station's first principal keeper from 1890 to 1905, chronicled in Chapter 3. To get a little taste of Mastako's writing

style, this is how the chapter opens:

"On a cool, cloudless afternoon in late winter, I sit on the steps outside the keeper's dwelling at the lighthouse at Point San Luis. The tours for the day are over,

and I watch from a distance as the last visitors climb aboard the shuttle bus. The bus will wind its way along the one-lane lighthouse road down the bluff to the beach where the current year is in full swing. For a moment, I am content to remain behind in 1890. As I study the sky, the bay, and the lines of pelicans gliding by, there is nothing within my gaze to suggest it is not that year."

You will absolutely feel transported to this earlier time. Mastako clearly loves the old lighthouse and its history, and she poured a lot of herself into the book.

"I'm especially proud of these first few paragraphs, mainly because it took so very long for me to write them, to try to set the mood," she explained. "Also, Henry Young's story was the first story I wrote about the lighthouse's history."

Her research was driven by the limited history docents were told about the lighthouse.

"When I went through docent training and starting leading tours at the Point San Luis Lighthouse in 2016, the stories we shared with guests about its history and the people who lived and worked there centered mostly around the Moorefield family," Mastako explained. "Moorefield was a keeper there from 1926 until his 1947 retirement. In 1929, Moorefield married Elizabeth Studle, who was living in the city of San Luis Obispo with her parents and daughter. The daughter, Lucy, age 7 at the time, moved to the lighthouse after her mother's wedding and took the Moorefield name. She came back to the lighthouse during the years when the light station was being restored and shared her memories of what it was like to live there in the 1930s. However, since the light station's period of historic significance is 1890 to 1940, I thought it might be nice to have stories to tell our guests that dated from its earlier years of operation."

That's when she really dug into the past.

"In a nutshell, I try very hard not to leave a stone unturned. Of course, I am not always successful.

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE WALLACE FAMILY



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BYGONE ERA: *The Lighthouse at Point San Luis* is filled with historic photos such as this circa 1905 image of Christmas dinner inside the keeper's dwelling at Point Sur. Although not taken at Point San Luis, the photo offers a rare glimpse of a keeper's family celebrating Christmas at a West Coast light station.

The Lighthouse at Point San Luis

A collection of short (true) stories



Kathy Mastako

THE DEFINITIVE VOLUME: *The Lighthouse at Point San Luis* by Kathy Mastako highlights the rich history of this local landmark from its construction, through its various operators, until its turnover to the U.S. Coast Guard and eventual automation.

Regarding sources, the National Archives is an excellent source. Then, of course, there's the internet and subscription sites like ancestry.com, the California Digital Newspaper Collection, newspapers.com, newsbank.com, genealogybank.com, fold3.com, etc.

"I spent tons of time in the research room at the SLO County History Center, and volunteer History Center researchers like Allan Ochs were of enormous help. Various state and county historical and genealogical societies were helpful, too. The endnotes in each chapter give more information on the various sources I used.

"And sometimes one just stumbles onto something, often when least expected."

There are so many fascinating nuggets, like a documented argument between the keeper Henry Wilson Young and his assistant, Antonio Souza, that's almost soap-operaesque. The entire last chapter on the Coast Guard assuming responsibility for the lighthouse was gripping.

"The most important part of the lighthouse's history isn't documented in the book," Mastako admitted. "It's the period after the lighthouse was abandoned. There are around 35 years, between 1975 and when restoration was complete, that the book doesn't cover. And these are crucial years. Many, many people were involved in ensuring the preservation and restoration of this historic site. I cannot even begin to name them or describe their selfless contributions to 'saving' this site for the public's enjoyment.

"As I write at the end of the last chapter, it's thanks to the herculean efforts of a deeply dedicated corps of volunteers and visionaries that the Point San Luis Lighthouse sits as it is today—a precious gem of the Central Coast," she said.

"The story of the restoration of Point San Luis is well worth a book of its own." ○

Contact New Times Senior Staff Writer Glen Starkey at gstarkey@newtimeslo.com.

Perfect for history buffs

The Lighthouse at Point San Luis is available at a variety of Central Coast booksellers and natural history museums, including Santa Barbara's Maritime Museum, Arroyo Grande's South County Historical Society, Morro Bay's Coalesce Bookstore and the Maritime Museum, and SLO's History Center of San Luis Obispo County. You can also find the book at the Point San Luis Lighthouse gift shop and online at amazon.com.

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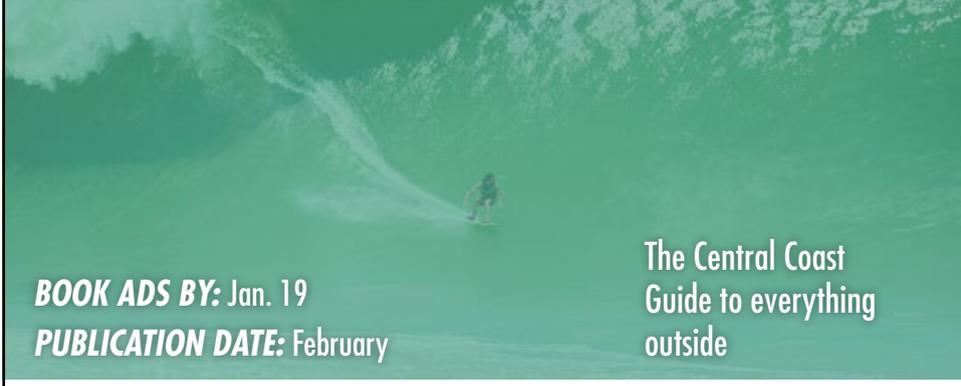


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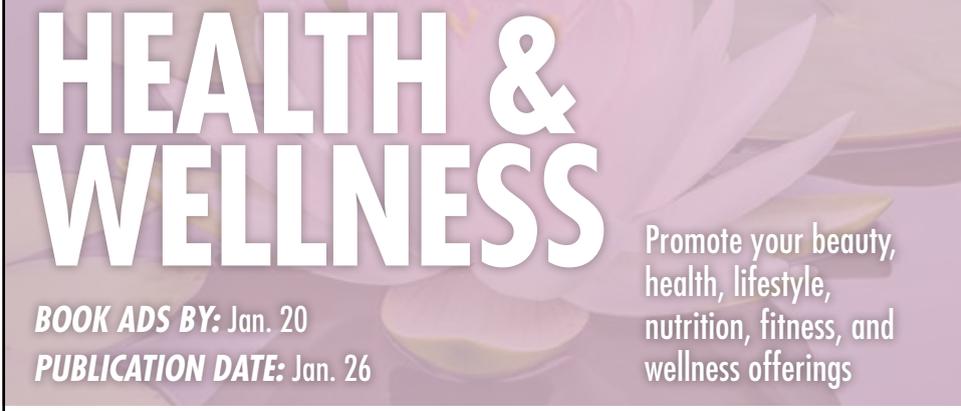


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Editor's note: *New Times Staff Writer Bulbul Rajagopal and Arts Editor Caleb Wiseblood wrote Sun Screen this week while Glen and Anna Starkey went on holiday.*

Guillermo del Toro's *Pinocchio* breathes new life into the children's tale as the namesake enchanted wooden puppet travels through Italy to find the true meaning behind being a real boy. (114 min.)

Caleb: I couldn't quite place the voice of Geppetto in *Guillermo del Toro's Pinocchio* in time to guess the actor before the film's end credits rolled. Now I know why he sounded familiar. It's David Bradley, probably—no, definitely—best known for his role as Hogwarts' cranky caretaker Argus Filch in the Harry Potter series. Bradley's Geppetto has got nothing on Filch in terms of curmudgeonliness, but don't expect the kindly carpenter from past *Pinocchio* iterations during this unique, dark, but ultimately heartwarming reimagining from del Toro (*Pan's Labyrinth*, *The Shape of Water*) and co-director Mark Gustafson, in his directorial debut. The duo's decision to use stop-motion animation—shooting puppets with movable joints one frame at a time—works as a clever nod to the iconic story's puppet protagonist and lends itself to the film's most surreal and beautifully eerie sequences. Gregory Mann voices the lumber-laden lad in this version, set mostly in Italy during World War II. The film

GUILLERMO DEL TORO'S PINOCCHIO

What's it rated? **PG**
 What's it worth, Bulbul? **Full price**
 What's it worth, Caleb? **Full price**
 Where's it showing? **Netflix**

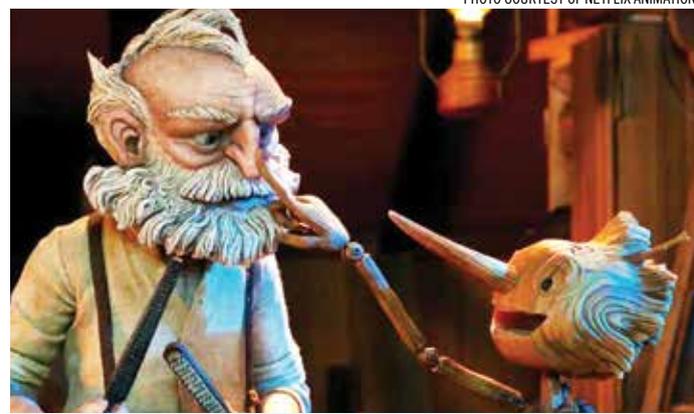
opens during World War I, however. After Geppetto's son—also voiced by Mann—is tragically killed in the aftermath of a bombing raid, the mourning carver spends his days endlessly drinking and visiting his son's grave near a growing pine tree, which illustrates the passing of several years as it gradually stretches closer to the sky. By the time the second Great War starts, Geppetto's grief is far from subsided. After drinking heavily one night, he manically decides to chop down the pine tree and use its wood to fashion himself a new son to replace the one he lost. Little did he know it'd actually work.

Bulbul: I haven't been moved by an animated film in a long time, and I'm all the richer for this touching plot. Del Toro's iteration of *Pinocchio* is a wealth of philosophy, political history, religion, mortality, and elusively simple human connection. The creators of *Pinocchio* don't shy away from symbolism and address the setting of fascist Italy and everything that comes with it head-on. The townsfolk don't take kindly to the rambunctious wooden boy, especially when he's in awe of the proceedings at Sunday mass. Later, *Pinocchio* pointed to the statue of Christ, carved and hung by Geppetto above the altar. "Everybody likes *him*," *Pinocchio* said. "He's made of wood too." *Pinocchio*'s whirlwind life brings him up close to the Podesta (the fascist Italian militant), a villainous puppeteer, Benito Mussolini, and even the afterlife. His travels are set against the backdrop of Geppetto's own journey of grieving his son, finding *Pinocchio*, and accepting that the two boys

aren't the same, for better or worse. *Pinocchio* can be enjoyed by children and adults. It's a piece of art that's intelligent enough to acknowledge the flaws of fatherhood, and compassionate enough to embrace them.

Caleb: There's a lot to admire about this take on *Pinocchio* in both its screenplay—which touches on themes of mortality in profound, unexpected, and occasionally humorous ways—and production design. So much of the film's imagery screams del Toro, especially the look of each character. The Wood Sprite, voiced by Tilda Swinton, who brings *Pinocchio* to life, reminded me more of the Faun in *Pan's Labyrinth* than a traditional fairy. I loved Swinton's dual role as Death, the Wood Sprite's sister, who *Pinocchio* encounters in the afterlife sequences Bulbul alluded to. Other memorable voices in the film include those of Christoph Waltz, Ewan McGregor, Ron Perlman, and Finn Wolfhard. Waltz is so good as Count Volpe, the slimy, conniving puppet master who convinces *Pinocchio* to be the star of his traveling show. You'll love to hate him. This is definitely one of the best animated films I've seen in a while. Feel free to observe my stagnant nose if you don't believe me.

Bulbul: Breathing life into art is the basis of the *Pinocchio* story, and the making of this film is a layered homage to that idea. Netflix released a handy 30-minute behind-the-scenes segment



NO NOSE GOES: David Bradley and Gregory Mann voice Geppetto and Pinocchio, respectively, in the new animated Netflix film, *Guillermo del Toro's Pinocchio*.

called *Guillermo del Toro's Pinocchio: Handcarved Cinema*, where viewers get an in-depth look into the painstaking art of stop-motion animation. "Normally, film captures reality. Animation creates it and has to simulate the capture. You give life to it, and that's the highest art form," del Toro explained in it. As a character, *Pinocchio* is new to the concept of living. Many think he's naive and foolish. But the film shows that, perhaps, he understood relishing the ups and downs of life best, even when he has to make the ultimate sacrifice to uphold it. *Pinocchio* will stay with me for a long time, and I'm definitely going to rewatch it. Like any good book or movie, it's something you can keep going back to and uncover new significance with every revisit. ○

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

Film & TV Reviews

A.I. ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

What's it rated? **PG-13**
 When? **2001**
 Where's it showing? **Paramount Plus**
 Seeing *Guillermo del Toro's Pinocchio* made me think about other cinematic retellings or reimaginings of the timeless puppet fable. When it comes to my own personal favorites, Steven Spielberg's sci-fi epic *A.I. Artificial Intelligence* will always top that list.

Haley Joel Osment plays David, an android designed to resemble a human boy sold to a couple grieving the loss of their child, who appears to be in a hopeless coma. The goal of David's creators was to replicate a human child as flawlessly as possible, with real human emotions. And once one of these robots imprints itself onto one or both of its designated parents, the feeling of unconditional love toward them is irreversible.

The only other thing I'll give away about the plot is that David is forced to go on a journey of sorts, in search of "the Blue Fairy," who he believes will have the power to turn him



MAKE ME REAL: David (Haley Joel Osment) is an android who longs to become human, in Steven Spielberg's 2001 masterpiece, *A.I. Artificial Intelligence*, currently streaming on Paramount Plus.

into a real boy. I promise I'm not exaggerating when I say this is one of the most haunting, heart-wrenching, and visually stunning films I've ever seen. Just don't watch it on Mother's Day, unless you want to bawl your eyes out. (146 min.)

—Caleb

GOSSIP GIRL

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

The scourge of New York City is back! Do I mean the infamous anonymous social media sensation that calls itself "Gossip Girl" while airing high society's dirty laundry, or the bratty pack of rich heirs, heiresses, and socialites who find themselves in her grimy spotlight? Tune in to HBO Max to find out.

Set about a decade after the mid-2000s *Gossip Girl* series ended and still in the same universe, *Gossip Girl* (2021) emerges from the digital ashes of its predecessor who used to gossip (duh) using a blog. Now, the new *Gossip Girl* (voiced both times by Kristen Bell) plagues New York's rich and famous through Instagram. Unlike the original series that took six seasons and five years to reveal who was behind the account, the new version lets you know who it is from the get-go. But chaos is never far behind, especially with the release of season 2 this month. (10 roughly 40-min. episodes released every Thursday). ○



—Bulbul

PHOTO COURTESY OF HBO MAX



GIFT OF GAB: Almost 10 years after the original series, *Gossip Girl* (2021) tracks a new entourage of elite high schoolers as they navigate New York City glitterati under the watchful and scathing eye of a mysterious social media presence.

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From Ward Four to wine country

Total devotion to her craft and colleagues sets local winemaker Justin Trabue on a path to icon status

BY CHERISH WHYTE

Justin Trabue has wine in her veins. She was born and raised in Washington, D.C., but California beckoned since birth, with her namesake being Justin Vineyards and Winery in Paso Robles.

"This was my initial spark connector to this region," she said.

While in high school, her wine enthusiast parents invited a Black sommelier to her home: "That skyrocketed my interest in wine," she said, further cementing her future career and destiny in California.

She moved to San Luis Obispo in 2013, obtained a degree in wine and viticulture with a focus on wine business from Cal Poly, then proceeded to work 14 vintages around the world, including New Zealand and South Africa, with harvests and production ranging from 500 to 100,000 cases.

And now, at the age of 27, she is ringing in the new year with the release of her own vintage under her new label, Ward Four Wines.

"I grew up in the Fourth Ward of Washington, D.C.; I come from a family of four; and I am a fourth-generation Washington native," she said.

Ward is also her mother's maiden name.

"My mom is the one who found Cal Poly, brought me out for college visits, and ensured my passions are always my own," Trabue said. "She came to visit for Mother's Day in 2018. We went to Alta Colina [in Paso Robles] and fell in love with their viognier. I decided my first-ever vintage had to come from them."

In addition to her Alta Colina viognier, Trabue

will be releasing Zachariah's Block barbera from Mendocino, Grist Vineyard petite sirah from Dry Creek Valley, and Cecchini Family Vineyard muscat and Del Barba Vineyard mourvèdre from Contra Costa County.

She only produced one barrel, or 300 bottles, of each for a total of 125 cases.

Starting in late spring, the winemaker said locals can get these wines direct-to-consumer through her forthcoming website.

"I will also have a few select bottles at retail shops and restaurants," she added.

Trabue has high hopes for her debut wines, which were sourced from four American Viticultural Areas along the California coastline over the course of 30 days in late summer, she said.

"This was a grueling and educational vintage with both heat waves and unexpected rainstorms," she explained. "The fruit turned out incredible, and I had the opportunity to play around with skin contact ferments on my white wines, and cool temperature fermentation for my reds."

The team at Alta Colina is excited to see the end result.

"It has been a real pleasure to watch [Trabue] grow in the wine business," said proprietor Bob Tillman. "[She] brings extraordinary talent and energy to everything she does. We are happy to help launch this young woman's wine brand and anticipate great things from our viognier fruit in her hands."

Trabue's long trail of admirers, supporters, and benefactors bely her young age. In fact, her impact on colleagues is as much a story as her winemaking skills.

One of her mentors, Nipomo resident Lane Tanner, partner and winemaker at Lumen Wines in Los Alamos, said she has "no doubt that [Trabue] will become a fellow icon by the time she is old and gray like me."

Tanner recruited Trabue as an intern via Cal Poly's wine program. They worked together for five years, with Trabue rising to the ranks of assistant winemaker before departing in 2021. Tanner said she was looking for someone strong and smart to intern for her, and one of the applicants was Trabue.

"I thought she was male because of the name," Tanner said. "I checked with the head of the program to get a better view of Justin before I interviewed her. Rave review. That is also when I found out Justin was female."

They first met during a meeting for all the wineries and potential interns.

"I hear this booming voice call my name and I turn around to find this Amazonian warrior woman striding toward me. I was in love at first sight," Tanner said. "She was not afraid to get dirty, and believe it or not, male or female, it is hard to find someone with that quality. We worked well together."

As Trabue grew from youth to adulthood, Tanner said, she had winemaking abilities and goals, so eventually she left Lumen.

"Which is what she should have done. Lumen is a small winery, and Justin is a big personality," Tanner added. "She would have stagnated if she had stayed. Still, it was hard to see her leave."

Other Trabue fans include budding winemakers who have benefited from her commitment to providing financial backing for minorities.

According to *The Wine Industry Advisor* and *Wines Vines Analytics*, fewer than 1 percent of the country's 11,000-plus wineries



GRIT AND GRACE: Justin Trabue's first vintage under her recently launched Ward Four Wines label was "hard and heavy." Her goals are to craft wines with "no fuss, all joy," while also spearheading charitable endeavors to increase industry diversity.

are Black-owned, even though more than 10 percent of American wine consumers are Black. Experts state that financial capital is their primary business roadblock.

"My greatest joy since joining the wine industry has been helping to set up a scholarship program at my alma mater for BIPOC [Black, Indigenous, and people of color] individuals interested in pursuing a career in wine," Trabue said.

From there she assisted in creating the nonprofit organization Natural Action, "which pushes natural winemaking practices to the forefront while immersing BIPOC individuals in the world of wine," she added.

She said she wouldn't have made it this far without her own support network, including Lift Collective, Courier Fresh Fund, Obsidian Wine Co., and The Roots Fund.

"Without these groups I would not have the funding that I do to make these wines," she explained.

Presently, she is a one-woman enterprise and roving winemaker, splitting her time between homes in SLO and Napa. She specializes in minimal intervention practices and sources from vineyards statewide that follow ethical labor guidelines and sustainable farming methods.

Her inaugural lineup honors the wine region that shaped her career, as well as her parents, "who pushed me to make my dreams reality," she said. "Each offering will pay tribute to my family dynamics, showing how wine evokes emotions and how moments in time can be captured in one of life's simplest pleasures, a bottle of wine." ○

Contributor Cherish Whyte is all aboard the Trabue fan train and eagerly awaits her first release. Reach her at cwhyte@newtimesslo.com.

Get the juice on Justin

Reach Justin Trabue at justin@wardfourwines.com, on Instagram @wardfourwines, or at her soon-to-be-released website wardfourwines.com.

PHOTO COURTESY OF WARD FOUR WINES



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LESSONS IN LEES: Justin Trabue has traveled throughout the world honing her craft. In March 2022 she learned the importance of lees, or residual yeast, integration while working at Almenkerk Wine Estate in Elgin, South Africa.



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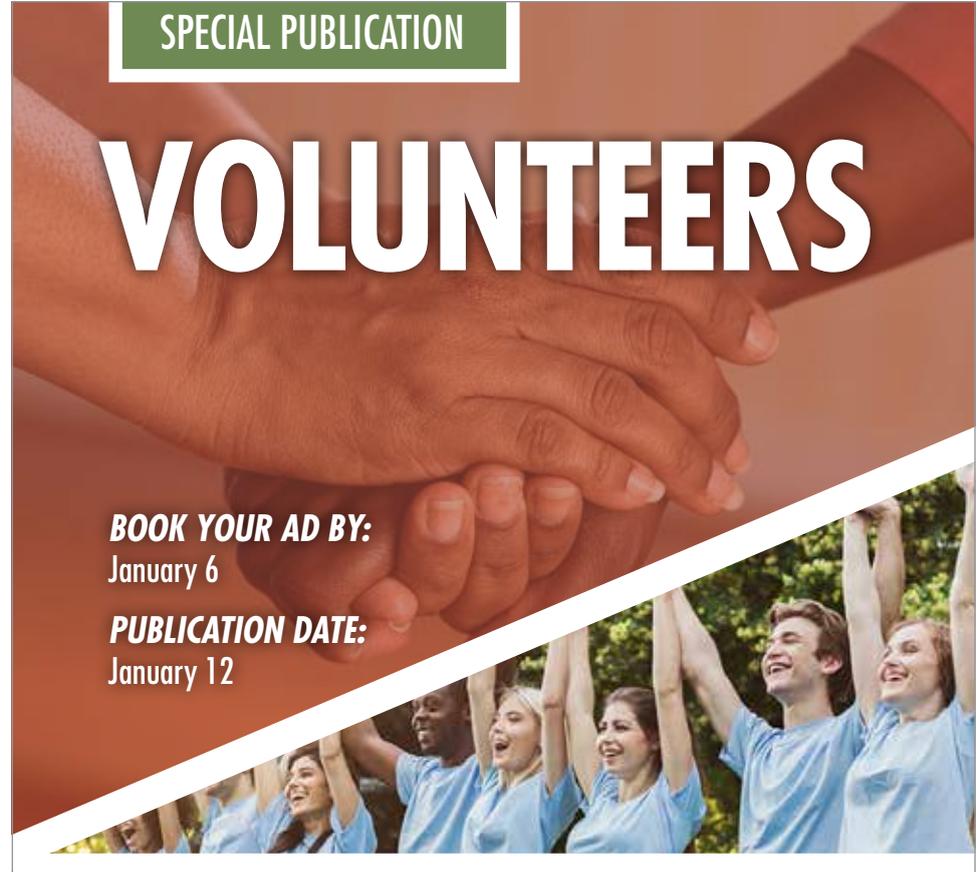
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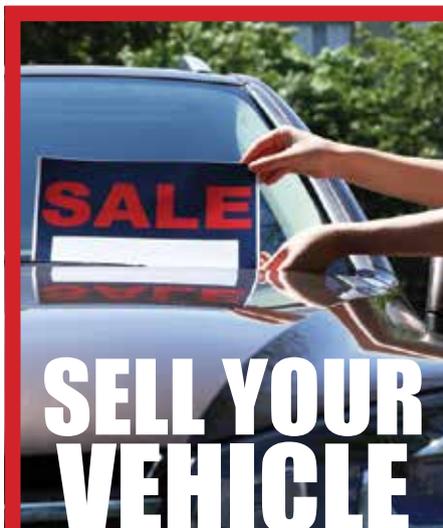
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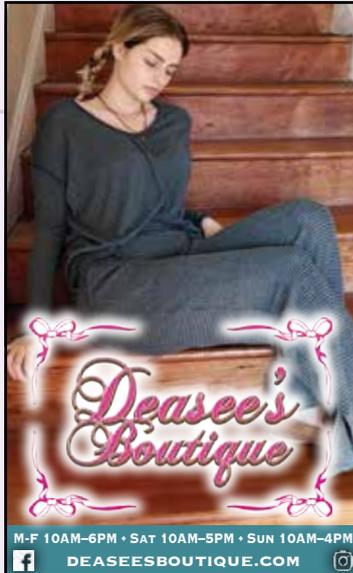
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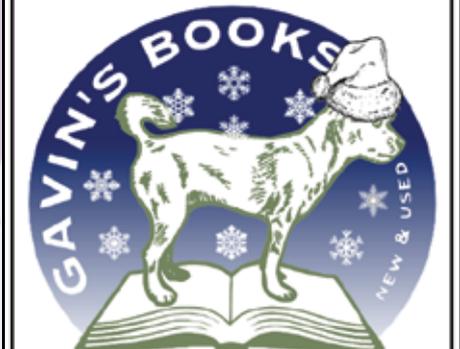
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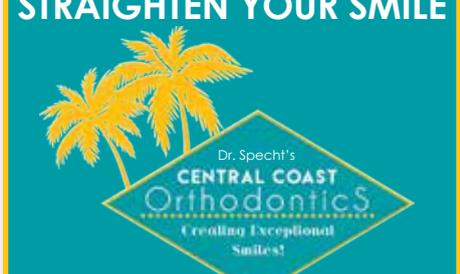
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