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AT THE MOVIES
White Noise: Strange but good [19]

SUN



Parks needed

Santa Maria increases developer fees to help pay for the recreation opportunities city residents are missing [6]

BY CAMILLIA LANHAM

NEWS Annexing county land for homes [4]

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EATS Confections from Orcutt [20]

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JANUARY 5 - JANUARY 12, 2023 VOL. 23 NO. 45

Aquistapace Park was added to Santa Maria's park inventory in 2021, bringing the city's accessible acres of parks and open space to 243, short of the 345 acres it needs. With the cost of land and construction increasing, officials with the city Recreation and Parks Department said they need more money from developers to fund park creation. The City Council recently voted to increase one of the city's development fees that funds parks and set the stage to change the formula in the near future [6].

You can also read about developers' plans to annex county property to Santa Maria for future development [4]; swing dancing in Orcutt [18]; and a cottage bakery that brings confections to your home [20].

Camillia Lanham
editor



ADDRESSING LEISURE NEEDS: Santa Maria residents need and want more parks and open spaces in the city, but the Recreation and Parks Department needs more cash from developers to make it happen.

Cover photo by Caleb Wiseblood > Cover design by Alex Zuniga

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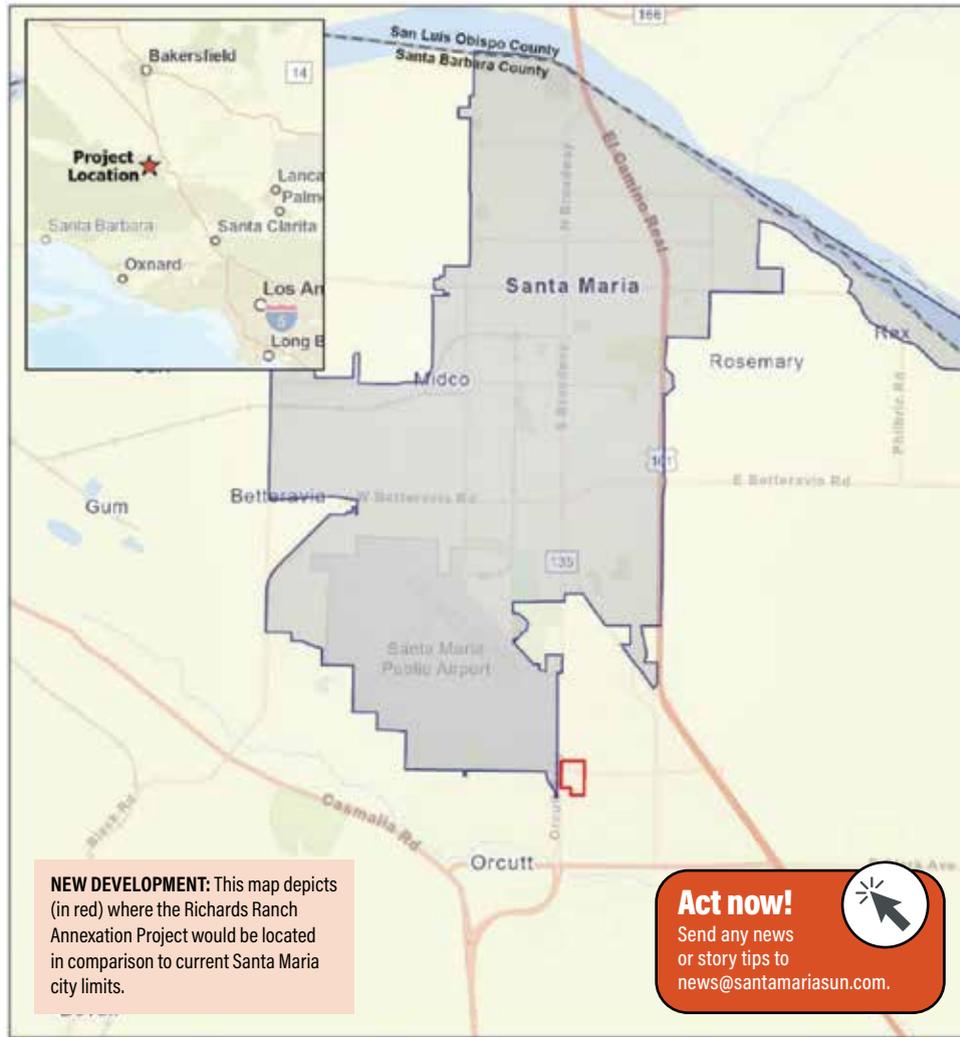
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Political Watch

On Dec. 23, President **Joe Biden** signed legislation inspired by the 2019 *Conception* boat fire near Santa Barbara. The Small Passenger Vessel Liability Act proposed by U.S. Rep. **Salud Carbajal** (D-Santa Barbara) and Sen. **Dianne Feinstein** (D-California) changes an 1851 law that can prevent victims of maritime accidents from receiving compensation from those responsible for the accident. The new law requires small passenger vessel owners to be held legally responsible for damages in future boating accidents and incidents and also increases the period of time during which victims can file a claim from six months to two years. "This is an important change, inspired by the families of the 34 precious lives lost on the *Conception* in 2019, that will ensure families of future maritime disasters do not face the same antiquated laws when seeking the support they deserve," Carbajal said in a statement. The measure was part of the final fiscal year 2023 defense policy bill, which Congress passed in December.

In 2022, law enforcement with the help of the California National Guard seized 28,765 pounds of fentanyl across the state, an estimated value of more than \$230 million, according to a press release from the governor's office. That's 594 percent more seized in 2022 than in 2021. "California is cracking down on the fentanyl crisis—increasing seizures, making resources more available to Californians, and ensuring communities have what they need to combat the immeasurable harm opioids have caused our society, our communities, and our loved ones," Gov. **Gavin Newsom** said in the release. The administration has invested more than \$1 billion to address the opioid crisis since 2019, according to the release, including hiring, training and imbedding 166 new California National Guard members in 2023 to support Newsom's initiative to reduce fentanyl in communities. On Dec. 20, the Department of Health Care Services announced that millions of dollars in new grants are available to tackle youth opioid use, including for schools and nonprofits.

Congress passed the Electoral Count Reform and Presidential Transition Improvement Act of 2022 as part of the omnibus spending package for 2023, which President **Joe Biden** signed into law prior to the end of the year. The act co-sponsored by Sen. **Alex Padilla** (D-California) modernizes the Electoral Count Act of 1887 to ensure that the electoral vote tallied by Congress accurately reflects each state's vote for president. It also helps promote the orderly transfer of power by providing clear guidelines for when eligible candidates for president or vice president may receive federal resources to support their transition into office. Padilla said the act strengthens the foundation of our democracy and the peaceful transfer of power. "Free and fair elections are the bedrock of our democracy. ... This bill reaffirms the power of the people and their right to a representative government by ensuring we count every single vote cast by an eligible voter," Padilla said in a statement after the Senate passed the package. "The Electoral Count Reform Act will update our election laws to ensure the partisan power grab we witnessed on Jan. 6 no longer threatens our democracy. No individual, party, or state government should have the power to override the will of the people, and this bill represents a strong step toward restoring Americans' faith in our elections." ○



Housing development project wants Santa Maria to annex county land

A project proposal to add Santa Barbara County property to Santa Maria for residential and commercial development could help local leaders meet state housing requirements, but the development has some residents concerned about density and consistency with the surrounding areas. Richards Ranch Annexation Project requested that the city annex a 43-acre county property southeast of the city limits near the Santa Maria Airport in order to develop 400 apartments, 95 townhomes, and a new retail commercial center, Santa Maria Community Development Department Planning Manager Dana Eady told the *Sun* via email. As a result of the application, the city created a draft environmental impact report to understand the impacts the city could experience if it adds this property. "If the property is ultimately annexed from the county into the city, the property will be within the city of Santa Maria limits and will be developed under city policies and review procedures," Eady said.

The application came in August 2021 from Michael Stotley—founder of SLO-based real estate investment and development firm MD3 Investments—and the environmental review process began in early 2022, she said. Right now, the property falls under the Orcutt Community Plan's Key Site 26 and is primarily undeveloped. As it stands in the community plan, Key Site 26 could develop 12 single family homes, 83 senior units, and 23 townhomes along with professional offices and a designated public open space.

A resident from a neighborhood adjacent to the land said she's concerned about the housing density if the property is annexed, and for residents' isolation from their representatives. "It's more dense than anything in the area," said the resident, who requested anonymity until the project develops more. "The plot is surrounded by the county to the north, south,

and east. To the west is highway 135 and the other side is the city. It's virtually an island they are trying to annex."

In letters to her county representative, 4th District Supervisor Bob Nelson, and to the developer, she pointed out that other Orcutt community projects have better matched the surrounding areas and provided enhancements like trails, gardens, and protected green space. "There's nothing at all to enhance our neighborhood, and it's just an exploitation of the neighborhood," the resident said.

However, the area's density will have to increase with or without the proposal to keep up with state housing development requirements. Key Site 26 was highlighted in the county's 2023-31 housing element update as a potential site to increase housing density in order to help meet state Regional Housing Needs Allocation requirements, according to the county website. The county needed to develop 661 units in the unincorporated area by 2023. The 2023-31 state housing requirements bump that number up more than eight times higher, to 5,664.

Urban Planning Concepts Land Use Planner Laurie Tamura, who works with MD3 Investments, said this project serves as an infill development, which rededicates land to more development, and it will help the county meet its housing goals.

"From a planning perspective, infill development, particularly for housing, is really important right now based on California state law," Tamura said. "This particular site has access to water, sewer, and all the infrastructure. This is a good site for higher density."

Now, the Richards Ranch Draft Environmental Impact Report will go through a public comment period that will last until Feb. 6. There is also a public meeting scheduled to receive comments on the report on Jan. 17 at 3:30 p.m. at the Santa Maria Public Library, Learning Center Room.

The comments received will be reviewed and addressed in the final report. The next steps will include public hearings at the Santa Maria

Planning Commission and City Council, and then a review by the Santa Barbara County Local Agency Formation Commission. No hearing dates are scheduled yet.

Send comments to deady@cityofsantamaria.org, or mail them to the city of Santa Maria Community Development Department at 110 South Pine St., room 101.

—Taylor O'Connor

Orcutt Branch Library gets \$2 million for new facility

With the new year comes new possibilities for the Orcutt Branch Library, which received \$2 million in federal funds near the end of 2022.

On Dec. 23, U.S. Rep Salud Carbajal (D-Santa Barbara) announced that \$16.5 million in direct federal funding would be used to support various community projects in Santa Barbara County. One of these is to secure a permanent facility for the Orcutt Branch Library, which rents its current space.

"We're excited for the county and seeing this project move forward. We're looking forward to continuing to work with them on it," Dawn Jackson, library director for the city of Santa Maria, said. "We're appreciative to the county for their efforts."

The Orcutt Branch Library is one of five library sites operated by the Santa Maria Public Library, which plans to use the funding to purchase a new facility in Orcutt, and in turn, increase on-site programming, including family and youth-gearred events, Jackson said.

"The goal is always to be able to increase programs," said Jackson, who has worked for the Santa Maria Public Library in multiple roles since 2013 and became library director in 2022.

Jackson said that finding a new Orcutt facility has been a goal of the library for a couple of years now.

"There's a growing population in Orcutt, and the Orcutt Library, although a very nice facility, is a little small for the growing population's needs," said Jackson, who added that the library wants to move its Orcutt branch to a permanent facility rather than rent again, as "it's much preferable to have an owned space for funding purposes."

Jackson thanked county 4th District Supervisor Bob Nelson for working with Carbajal and the county to secure the new funding for the Orcutt Branch Library.

"Bob Nelson has been really championing this project and has been working with us, as well as the Friends of the Orcutt Library, on this project," Jackson said. "He's been really instrumental in moving this forward."

The next step is to select a site for the new facility, Jackson said, which has not yet been determined.

"We need to work with the county to try to find a suitable location," Jackson said. "There are certain library standards that we try to follow for library service and how big a building should be to serve populations of various sizes."

Jackson said the Santa Maria Public Library has a long-term goal of securing a permanent, city- or county-owned facility for its Guadalupe branch as well.

The Orcutt and Guadalupe branches currently rent their spaces, while the Cuyama branch's building is county-owned, and the Los Alamos branch leases its building through an arrangement with the Orcutt Union High School District.

"For Los Alamos, currently our focus is to expand operating hours and hire more staff to do that," Jackson said, while commenting on additional goals the city of Santa Maria Public Library has for 2023. "We also have been increasing programming at the Cuyama location; look for more of that in the coming year as well." ○

—Caleb Wiseblood

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NEWEST PARK: Acquistapace Park, which opened in 2021, is the most recent park facility to get added to the city's acreage of parks and open space. It was funded with the help of subdivision in-lieu fees paid by developers of new residential housing units.

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Paying for parks

Fees levied against housing developers to fund new parks aren't accumulating enough for Santa Maria to purchase land

BY CAMILLIA LANHAM

Santa Maria is about 100 acres shy of meeting its parks-to-residents ratio—3 acres of accessible park or open space land for every 1,000 residents—but officials said the city needs more cash from developers to hit the target.

Typically, fees levied against new housing developments fund Santa Maria Recreation and Parks' purchasing power. Developers either build a park that fills the recreational needs of each project's future residents or pay the city in-lieu funds. Recreation and Parks Director Alex Posada said that the formulas that have worked in the past are no longer sufficient.

"Theoretically, that money is supposed to be enough to acquire the land and build a park, but it never is," Posada told the *Sun*. "Land has a value to it, and that's usually the biggest component of each project's cost."

In the last Santa Maria City Council meeting of 2022, council members set a path to potentially change the formula for one of the three fees it charges developers for parks development—the subdivision in-lieu fee. During that Dec. 20 meeting, the council voted 3-1, with Mayor Alice Patino absent and new City Councilmember Maribel Aguilera-Hernandez opposed, to increase the fee by 16.2 percent and have staff come back in the future with recommendations for further increasing revenue from the fee.

While Aguilera-Hernandez felt it would be prudent to get the information they need before changing anything, Councilmember Gloria Soto said it would be better to move forward with a fee increase immediately before the city gets even further behind. Councilmember Mike Cordero agreed.

"Ms. Soto's motion puts us in the driving seat sooner, gets us going sooner, and we can make up this deficit, hopefully in a timely manner," Cordero said at the meeting. "My aim would be to make sure there's additional dialogue with developers and we can get this going as quickly as possible."

That vote increased the subdivision in-lieu fee from \$2,379 per unit to \$2,764—a percentage that's equal to the changes in the

Construction Cost Index from 2019 to 2021. The vote also set the value of a developable acre of land to \$390,000 and increased the minimum dedication of prime park land for developers from 3 acres per 1,000 future residents to 5 acres.

The value of a developable acre of land, the number of acres required per 1,000 residents, and the average number of residents per unit all go into the formula the city uses to charge developers the subdivision in-lieu fee. Aguilera-Hernandez said the state's average number of residents per unit—3.7—doesn't work for Santa Maria.

"The number of people per Santa Maria household is higher than the state average," she said at the meeting. "We have more people living in one-bedroom apartments."

City Attorney Thomas Watson advised the council that the city could set the fee based on local conditions, including things like the cost of land and the average number of residents per household. Everyone on the City Council agreed that the city needed to do more research to determine what Santa Maria's actual average household size is.

Laurie Tamura with Urban Planning Concepts disagreed with the city's assessment of its parks deficit. During public comment, she said that the city needed to stop and take a breath to look at the cumulative impact of fee increases on developers and future housing affordability.

"The city of Santa Maria has been very successful in development and growth of the city in providing the matching funds to build all of the infrastructure that has been built over the course of the last 20 years," Tamura said, adding that the city's Los Flores Ranch Park isn't included in Santa Maria's park acreage. "You have a resource that is highly used by the city of Santa Maria and that is not included in these numbers ... and it should be included in these numbers because the city residents benefit from that."

Rec and Parks Director Posada told the *Sun* that parks and open space acreage needs to be accessible to residents, which is why Los Flores' 1,800 acres weren't included in the numbers presented at the meeting.

"If it's 12 miles away, then it's not close to the

neighborhood," Posada said. "The requirement is that the land be accessible."

Recreation space should be within 10 walkable minutes of residents, Posada said, adding that the 2019 Leisure Needs Assessment showed that city residents' most desired amenities are trails/pathways, community/neighborhood parks, and athletic fields.

When developers don't build parks as part of their development plans, the city does its best to build parks that are close to new developments. Acquistapace Park, the city's newest park, opened in 2021 and was built to service the recreation needs of Harvest Glen residents. The city spent \$700,000 on construction, part of which came from the subdivision in-lieu fund. Posada said that fund helps build new parks and/or update facilities in the city's existing 28 parks, which total 243 acres.

Although the city used to share property with schools, that access is now fenced off due to school security needs, so the recreation space—sports fields and playgrounds—is no longer accessible.

Santa Maria Recreation and Parks is trying to address some of residents' leisure needs with a 19.2-acre sports facility on Depot Street between Battles and Stowell roads. Rec and Parks is also adding to the Santa Maria River Trail with 250 acres of open space the city now owns near the end of North Broadway and building pocket parks.

The city is still negotiating the sports park property purchase with the developer, Posada said, but will be paying for it with the help of a \$6.5 million state grant, \$1.5 million from Santa Barbara County, and about \$1 million either from the city's subdivision in-lieu fee fund or growth mitigation fund.

Posada said that the city wants to incorporate its 250 acres of open space along the river into its outdoor education program because it's a wildlife corridor with lots of birds and animals moving up and down the river.

A 6,000- to 7,000-square-foot empty lot on north Dejoy Street that once held a pump station will become a pocket park in 2023, Posada said. The city designed it with neighborhood input and is aiming to do the same where north Miller Street dead ends.

"That's the plan for trying to address some of the northside neighborhoods that don't have parks close by," Posada said. "It's basically so people have a place to go to be outside and so the kids don't have to play in the street." ◉

Reach Editor Camillia Lanham at clanham@santamariasun.com.

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Santa Maria Joint Union High School District
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805-922-4573 ext. 4311



Access the coast

PG&E grant enables State Parks to pay for class field trips to coastal landmarks

BY PETER JOHNSON

For thousands of school-age kids, the San Luis Obispo County coastline is a premier destination for epic field trips.

The Central Coast State Parks Association plays an important role in that. The nonprofit arm of State Parks routinely offers educational field trip tours at local landmarks like the Oceano Dunes, the Morro Bay Museum of Natural History, the Pismo Beach Monarch Butterfly Grove, and others.

And its programs don't just serve SLO County students. Schools from Santa Maria to King City and from Paso Robles to the Central Valley send classes to the coast to experience and learn from the unique environment.

"Some of these kids tell us that if they didn't have these opportunities, they wouldn't set foot on a beach," said Kristin Howland, executive director of the Central Coast State Parks Association. "They get to touch, feel, and learn, which is probably one of the most memorable things, and what really grows an environmental steward."

But getting out to the coast isn't easy for everyone. Whether it's a school in Orcutt or one in Bakersfield, districts need to pay for bus transportation—which is becoming more and more of a challenge since COVID-19.

Between the high cost of gas, a shortage of bus drivers, and other budgetary challenges, fewer schools are sending classes out to the local state parks in the wake of the pandemic.

"We saw a huge drop after COVID," Howland said. "Unfortunately, we're not always reaching the audience we want to and who really need it."

Thankfully, the nonprofit recently received a much-needed boost in funding specifically to subsidize schools' transportation to state parks. The PG&E Corporation Foundation awarded the group a \$100,000 grant as part of its Better Together Nature Positive Innovation program.

Howland said she was pleasantly surprised to see her organization win the grant—as it was one of only five doled out by PG&E across the state. She said it will go toward establishing a new fund to help Title I underserved schools get their classes out to the coast.

"We're looking at potentially over 100 schools, or field trips, that we'll be able to serve," she said.

Underscoring how expensive it is to charter a bus for students, Howland said that she is budgeting each trip at \$1,000—with actual travel costs dependent on factors like how far the school is from the park.

"Some of those may have

school bus drivers that would make that cheaper. And some charters will be less expensive," she added.

Howland is expecting the PG&E grant to last through the end of the 2023-24 school year. Will the State Parks Association be able to find another grant to refill it in the future? Howland isn't counting on it, but she emphasized that the funds are most needed right now.

"It probably won't happen again, but we feel blessed," she said. "We were really looking at ways we could increase attendance."

School districts interested in applying for transportation funding can visit centralcoastparks.org.

Highlights

- Planning a wedding, quinceañera, or other formal event? The city of Santa Maria is inviting locals to a 2023 Santa Maria Wedding/Quince Expo on Saturday, Jan. 7, and Sunday, Jan. 8, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Veterans' Memorial Center. "The community is encouraged to meet local businesses that offer services to help create a spectacular event," according to the city. Vendors attending include florists, photographers, DJs, venue managers, event planners, caterers, and more. Entry to the event is free.

- Santa Barbara County has a new agriculture commissioner. County supervisors appointed Jose Chang to replace Cathy Fisher, who's retiring after 12 years at the helm. Chang, who last worked as assistant agriculture commissioner in Monterey County, starts his new job on Jan. 23. "Mr. Chang is a wonderful addition to the county of Santa Barbara," Board of Supervisors Chair Joan Hartmann said in a press release. "With Jose's background in other California counties that focus on agriculture and his familiarity with our top crops, he has a good understanding of just how important the work he will be doing is for our whole community."

- The second of four scheduled 4,000-pound rainbow trout releases happened in December in Cachuma Lake. The fish, which come from Mt. Lassen Trout Farms in Paynes Creek, range in size from half-pound "catchables" to 8-pound trophies. "These trout are double and triple the size of store-bought trout," local angler Rich Tauber said in a press release. "Cachuma Lake is one of the very

few lakes that continues to have large trout plants." ○

New Times Assistant Editor Peter Johnson wrote this week's Spotlight. Reach him at pjohnson@newtimeslo.com.

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1/5 -
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How do you feel about the proposal to annex land to Santa Maria for housing development?

- Great. Our community needs more housing, and this provides a solid solution.
- It's necessary since the state is requiring more development.
- I wish they would look in other areas and leave Orcutt alone.
- I am not happy about the proposal

Enter your choice online at:
SantaMariaSun.com



DEATH NOTICES

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

BAUSKE, PAMELA GAY, 75, of Oceano passed away 12/9/2022 arrangements with Marshall-Spoo Sunset Funeral Chapel

BAXTER, ANTONIA, 93, of Paso Robles passed away 12/87/2022 arrangements with Blue Sky Cremation Service

BOLIVAR, JOSEFA "JOSIE", 87, of Grover Beach passed away 12/26/2022 arrangements with Marshall-Spoo Sunset Funeral Chapel

BOYER, WANDA LEE, 97, of Grover Beach passed away 12/21/2022 arrangements with Marshall-Spoo Sunset Funeral Chapel

CAROTENUTI, CAROLYN R., 82, of San Luis Obispo passed away 12/14/2022 arrangements with Reis Family Mortuary

CHAVES, MELBA, 84, of Pismo Beach passed away 12/15/2022 arrangements with Blue Sky Cremation Service

FREEMAN, GLORIA MENDOZA, 88, of Santa Maria passed away 12/24/2022 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

FROELICH, THOMAS SR., 74, of Solvang, passed away 12/23/2022 arrangements with Magner-Maloney Funeral Home & Crematory

GAETA, LARRY ORTEGA JR., 75, of Cayucos, passed away 12/7/2022 arrangements with Reis Family Mortuary

GARCIA, ELENA DELEON, 25, of Santa Maria passed away 12/16/2022 arrangements with Magner-Maloney Funeral Home & Crematory

GEIB, JOYCE, 76, of Atascadero passed away 12/24/2022 arrangements with Blue Sky Cremation Service

GIBEAUT, ROBERT, 75, of San Luis Obispo passed away 12/13/2022 arrangements with Blue Sky Cremation Service

GOMEZ, MARICELA CUEVAS, 66, of Santa Maria passed away 12/31/2022 arrangements with Magner-Maloney Funeral Home & Crematory

GOWGANI, GEORGE G., 88, of San Luis Obispo passed away 12/13/2022 arrangements with Reis Family Mortuary

HAUSER, SALLIE, 70, of Cambria passed away 12/7/2022 arrangements with Blue Sky Cremation Service

HILLEBRECHT, JOHN, 71, of Atascadero passed away 12/15/2022 arrangements with Blue Sky Cremation Service

JAMISON, ROBERT, 93, of Morro Bay passed away 12/23/2022 arrangements with Blue Sky Cremation Service

JENNINGS, AMANDA MARIE, 37, of Templeton passed away 12/19/2022 arrangements with Chapel of the Roses

KIRK, LEONARD, 70, of Oceano passed away 12/26/2022 arrangements with Marshall-Spoo Sunset Funeral Chapel

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NEVILLE, CAROL, 97, of Paso Robles passed away 12/15/2022 arrangements with Blue Sky Cremation Service

OTTO, GEORGE, 93, of Pismo Beach passed away 12/27/2022 arrangements with Marshall-Spoo Sunset Funeral Chapel

OZZIMO, MARGARET "MARG", 98, of Santa Maria passed away 1/2/2023 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

RADCLIFF-BRUTON, SHIRLEY LEE, 78, of Paso Robles passed away 12/17/2022 arrangements with Chapel of the Roses

RICHARDSON, MARGARET L., 86, of Santa Maria passed away 12/20/2022 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

RODRIGUEZ, SANDRA, 50, of Santa Maria passed away 12/24/2022 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

ROSA, PRISCILLA, 93, of Santa Maria passed away 01/01/2023 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

RUFINO, RICHARD VINCENT "RICK", 29, of Santa Maria passed away 12/26/2022 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

STERLING, GARY, 75, of Paso Robles passed away 12/10/2022 arrangements with Blue Sky Cremation Service

TORRES, ROSEMARY, 61, of Santa Maria passed away 12/29/2022 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

WOOD, JOYCE E., 84, of Santa Maria passed away 12/31/2022 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens



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ONLINE POLL

What do you think about the progress of Nipomo's skate park?

- 60% We've waited so long, skaters can hold off for a bit more.
- 20% I'm just excited to finally get a skatepark.
- 20% Um, can we get a rec center instead?
- 0% Let skaters skate when they want to!

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

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Free speech and the left

The metamorphosis of Elon Musk and the left

BY JOHN DONEGAN

If you thought that the transformation of Jeff Goldblum from a bookish scientist into a fly in the 1986 movie *The Fly* was a dramatic metamorphosis, just consider the sudden conversion of Elon Musk from liberal hero to hated nemesis. And a transmogrifier wasn't even necessary!

It seems like just yesterday that Musk was the belle of the ball at the liberal cotillion, having seemingly single-handedly established the electric car industry, which is going to save us from a planetary sauna. Environmentalists beamed. Affluent liberals scrambled to buy a Tesla to park in their driveway to let their neighbors know just who the most conscious people on their block were. His boring company promised to speed the construction of public transit. Musk's antics, like smoking pot on a podcast, thrilled his young fans. Liberals cooed in adoration.

What did he do to incur liberal wrath? He staked out a position as a free speech absolutist, criticizing Twitter's decision to bar Donald Trump and his often colorful tweets that sent lefties into a conniption fit and occasionally embarrassed moderate Republicans. Liberal reverence for free expression comes with some major exceptions.

In April 2022, Musk agreed to buy Twitter,

and the left went apeshit. *The New York Times* pronounced that Musk was "dangerous" to the entire world, while another publication shrieked that he "put free expression in danger." The fact that we had somehow survived more than 200 years of free speech before the labels "misinformation" and "hate speech" started getting flung around reassured no one.

After Musk consummated his purchase in October, the attacks intensified. Every setback at any of his companies was gleefully detailed. Reports that Twitter employees were informed that they would be expected to change out of their pajamas and come into work shocked a generation that had decided that they preferred working from home.

Musk is not the only one who has metamorphosed. The left, the media, and academia have transformed dramatically as well. These institutions, which previously had professed a role as the fiery champions of free speech, have now embraced censorship and become ideological filters.

The free speech movement wasn't all that long ago, so this turn-around is quite a shock. The idea that the left, instead of the right, might be the ones seeking to censor speech was only predicted by old, paranoid Cold Warriors. What happened? Well, the left has become "the establishment,"

which seeks to protect its hegemony and requires at least an ostensible show of fealty to the progressive creed. Government, educational, and corporate institutions are expected to be supportive. These days, what large institution doesn't have an office of "diversity, equity, and inclusion" and doesn't espouse "green" values?

Do we truly need to be protected from "toxic" ideas? Aren't adults capable of sifting through the clamor of voices in the public discourse and deciding for themselves? It is curious to hear liberals, who are quick to dismiss the suggestion that social contagion might account for the astounding increase in teenagers who suddenly believe that they are misgendered, yet who also believe that the public is so susceptible to influence that just hearing an Alex Jones podcast will send them charging into the street in violent insurrection.

Previously, the one point of agreement between the right and the left was that each side was entitled to be heard, no matter how obnoxious their opinions. The ACLU once felt so strongly about the principle of free speech that they even supported the right of neo-Nazis, a repellant group, to march in Skokie, Illinois. The idea that anyone might be attacked for being a "free speech absolutist" would have been preposterous, and yet, here we are. ○

John Donegan is a retired attorney in Pismo Beach who is so supportive of free speech that he just won't shut up. Send a response to letters@santamariasun.com.

LETTERS

Rallying for America

At breakfast I read with interest a letter to the editor in the *Sun*. Entitled "Rallying for President Trump" (Dec. 22), it made an enthusiastic case for continuing to fully support him. The unflinchingly ardent argument by the writer was more bracing than two cups of my morning java.

The public airing of all types of political beliefs is a fundamental strength of America. To further inform discussions, we now have the report of the Select Committee to Investigate the Jan. 6 Attack on the United States Capitol. This bipartisan effort drew

largely on testimony and documents from Trump backers and officials he himself had appointed.

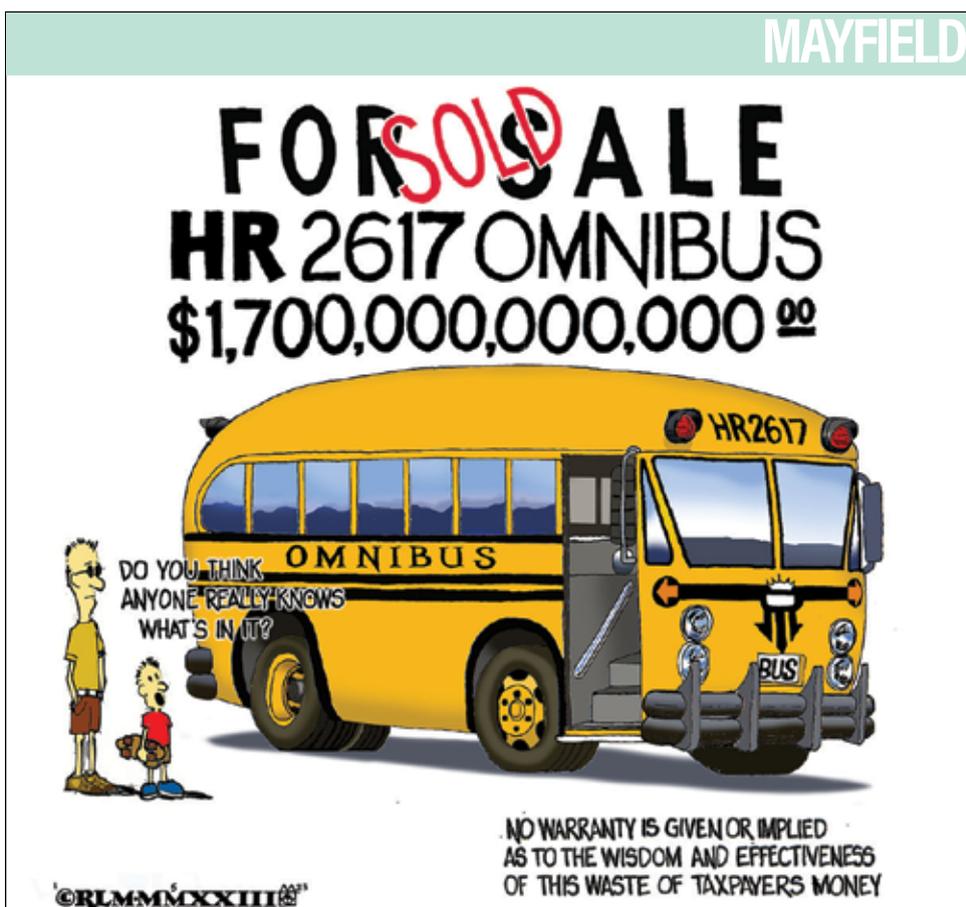
The writer blames "paid rogue infiltrators" for the violence at the Capitol. Now, it should be clear to all that when President Trump exhorted his followers to "Be there, will be wild!" and then welcomed those who were armed with weapons, he was not acting in the public interest, but in his own. And, of course, with a measure of satisfaction, he watched the brutality, mayhem, and desecration continue for more than three hours before asking his supporters to step back.

A sign of responsible citizenship

is the willingness to reassess one's position based on new information. Fortunately, there is now the select committee's report.

Seth Steiner
Los Alamos

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Unnamed Animal Services employee has dubious experience

I was disappointed by part of a recent story about crowding at the Santa Maria Animal Center ("More adoption needed with overcrowding concerns at Animal Services," Dec. 15).

The end of the pandemic and inflation have resulted in animal shelters flooded with homeless animals. We are seeing our share here, although not nearly as badly as places like Kern County. A recent call for community support resulted in over 30 animals going home, making space for more.

Your reporter cited an unnamed employee who claims the shelter is overcrowded, has too much disease, etc. Since the employee was unnamed, we have no way of verifying the claims made. How long has this person worked for Animal Services? How much experience do they actually have?

The shelters are not overcrowded—they are not doubling and tripling dogs in kennels, which we used to see regularly. Proactive community outreach has prevented this. The employee claimed that an unusually large number of animals have parasites due to crowding: But what is that number? Is it unusual relative to the number of animals, or just to the experience of an employee used to the empty shelter of 2020? Someone with limited experience, judging matters from just before the pandemic into 2021, would not know what "normal" is.

I have been volunteering for Animal Services since 1998. I have seen massively overcrowded shelters. As for parasites: I foster dogs and cats for many municipalities, and it is standard for parasites to spread in shelters. Fortunately, giardia and coccidia are easily treated and not a risk for most animals, other than very young puppies and kittens—who are placed in foster care.

If we are to trust the information in a story, we need to know if the source is truly qualified to provide it.

Lee Heller
Santa Barbara

Fees needed

It's 2023. And with that big bad announcement, I've got another thing in store for you: **Santa Barbara County** needs to facilitate the building of more than 5,000 housing units by 2031. And that's just in the unincorporated areas of the county.

Santa Maria needs to coax developers to erect more than 5,400. **Santa Barbara:** 8,000. In total, the county needs to see more than 24,000 housing units constructed in the next eight years, according to the state's **Regional Housing Needs Allocation**—that's more than twice that of the last assessment cycle of 11,000 units.

But we've got a problem. People in single-family zoned neighborhoods don't like dense housing to move in as their neighbors. Let's take a current example: **The Richards Ranch Annexation Project**, which is asking the city of Santa Maria to annex county land so it can build 400 apartments and 95 townhomes. That's 495 housing units.



THE CANARY

Right now, the county would only allow 118 units to be built on the project site.

"It's more dense than anything in the area," said one **neighboring resident**, who called the project "an exploitation of the neighborhood."

What she seems to not understand is that all signs point to more density in her future. Whether she likes it or not, there are more neighbors on the way because people who aren't already her neighbors need a place to live, and there are currently no options—therefore it needs to be built.

But she makes a good point about the enhancements needed to match the surrounding areas—trails, green space, and parks. Apparently this project doesn't call for it. And, as **Laurie Tamura** from **Urban Planning Concepts** knows all too well, housing developments also require recreational amenities, especially if they're in Santa Maria.

The city just upped the recreational requirement ante on developers, too. Prior to Dec. 20, developers needed to make room for or pay the city for 3 acres of parkland per 1,000 future residents. Now, it's 5 acres. So, if Richards Ranch is building 495 units with the state average of 3.7 residents per household, then it needs between 9 and 10 acres of park acreage within 10 minutes of the townhomes and apartments it's building.

I guess the developer can either do that *or* pay the city a subdivision in-lieu fee of \$2,764 per unit—\$1.37 million for the development. Tamura was complaining about the fee at Santa Maria's Dec. 20 **City Council** meeting, when council members increased the fee from \$2,379 per acre to \$2,764. She also complained about all of the other development fees charged to build out city infrastructure that can serve the residents who are either buying or renting all of those new housing units. I guess if it was up to her, residents would pay for everything and developers would pay for nothing—which is what ends up happening anyway!

Tamura was also complaining that the city didn't include **Los Flores Ranch Park** in its parks numbers—the 1,800-acre park is 12 miles from the city. So if you don't have a car, which a lot of folks in Santa Maria don't, it would take all day to walk to, and Tamura is just fine with that! And I wouldn't bet on public transit.

Comments like hers are exactly why we have regulations. ○

The Canary is fed up with complainers. Send yours to canary@santamariasun.com.



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PAW PRINTS
The Wildling Museum of Art and Nature is currently displaying a collection of photos by wildlife photographer Roy Dunn, who will be leading an artist talk at the venue on Sunday, Jan. 22, from 4 to 5 p.m. Pre-registration for the event is open, with admission ranging from \$5 to \$10. Dunn will be discussing his work in camera trapping and ethical wildlife photography during the talk. Visit wildlingmuseum.org for more info. The museum is located at 1511 Mission Drive, unit B, Solvang.
 —Caleb Wiseblood

COURTESY PHOTO BY ROY DUNN

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CRAFTWORKS: DIY TABLETOP ZEN GARDEN Bring a sense of calm, relaxation, and beauty to any space by creating your very own tabletop zen garden. All materials will be provided at the workshop. **Jan. 7, 10:30 a.m.** Free. 805-925-0994 ext. 8562.

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.

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

NEXT CHAPTER BOOK CLUB: ORCUTT BRANCH LIBRARY Youth are invited to a special book club, recommended for ages 8 to 12. Copies of the book will be provided on a first come, first served basis. Supported in whole or in part by the Central Coast Literacy Council. **Jan. 11** Free. 805-925-0994. engagedpatrons.org. Orcutt Library, 175 S. Broadway, Orcutt.

THE RED VELVET CAKE WAR The three Verdeen cousins—Gaynelle, Peaches, and

Jimmie Wyvette—could not have picked a worse time to throw their family reunion. Presented by SMCT. Fridays, Saturdays, 7 p.m. and **Jan. 15-29, 1:30 p.m.** through Jan. 28 smct.org/show/the-red-velvet-cake-war/. Santa Maria Civic Theatre, 1660 N. McClelland St., Santa Maria.

UKULELE LESSONS For individuals 50 years and up, at no charge. Participants will learn to play chords, melodies, and familiar songs. Five baritone ukuleles are available to borrow, or class members may bring one of their own. Mondays, Wednesdays, 10:30-11:30 a.m. cityofsantamaria.org/register. Elwin Mussell Senior Center, 510 Park Ave., Santa Maria.

VALLEY READS BOOK CLUB Second Saturday of every month, 2 p.m. Free. 805-925-0994. cityofsantamaria.org/city-government/departments/library. Santa Maria Public Library, 421 S. McClelland St., Santa Maria.

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

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

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

LOMPOC/VANDENBERG

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

SOUTH COAST SLO COUNTY

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/. Lila 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/. Lila 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/. Lila 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/. Lila Creative Community, 1147 East Grand Ave. suite 101, Arroyo Grande.

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. Lila 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/. Lila 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/. Lila Creative Community, 1147 East Grand Ave. suite 101, Arroyo Grande.

PLAY, EXPLORE, CREATE 1 (AGES 3 AND 4) Enjoy the opportunity to explore drawing, painting, collage, sculpture, and mixed media. Each week a new adventure awaits. Thursdays, 2-3 p.m. and Fridays, 9-10 a.m. \$25. 805-668-2125. lila.community/. 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. actorsedge.com. Online, See website, San Luis Obispo.

ALL LEVELS POTTERY CLASSES Anam Cre is a pottery studio in SLO that offers a variety of classes. This 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 AND ABOUT SLO Join us for Art and About SLO, a self-guided art walk that gives the community an opportunity to experience visual, literary, and performing art in galleries and other venues. Visit site for an updated map of locations. Events will not occur on major holidays. First Friday of every month, 5-8 p.m. Free. 805-544-9251. artsobispo.org/art-and-about. San Luis Obispo, Citywide, SLO.

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. Free. artcentralslo.com/gallery-artists/. 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. hmcruceceramics.com/. Online, See website, San Luis Obispo.

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.

DEAR RIDER: SCREENING AND FILMMAKER Q-AND-A For the first time on Central Coast, Central Coast Film Society and Red Bull Media are presenting a special screening of *Dear Rider, The Jake Burton Story*. **Jan. 14, 7:30 p.m.** my805tix.com. Palm Theatre, 817 Palm St, San Luis Obispo.

HILDA KILPATRICK-FREYRE: ART SHOW Hilda is influenced by California paintings, as well as impressionists. Her work is vibrant and she paints local nature scenes. Through Feb. 14 805-545-5401. bigskycycafe.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.

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, Beginners welcomed. ongoing 805-835-

ARTS continued page 13



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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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. 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. 805-242-1076. themondayclubso.org. See website, San Luis Obispo.

OPEN MIC COMEDY Sign-ups at 6:30 p.m. Hosted by Aidan Candelario. Mondays, 7-9 p.m. 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 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.

CARD CARRYING

Los Angeles-based Americana artist Pi Jacobs is among several musicians set to perform during an upcoming Dolly Parton and Willie Nelson tribute concert, scheduled to take place on Saturday, Jan. 14, at 2 p.m., at Unity of Santa Maria. Other artists in the lineup include Aireene Espiritu, Taylor C. Lewis, Ricky Berger, Chris Mariscal, and more. Tickets to the show, presented by Songwriters at Play, are available in advance at my805tix.com. Unity of Santa Maria is located at 1165 Stubblefield Road, Santa Maria.

—C.W.



FILE PHOTO COURTESY OF PI JACOBS

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.

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 an ongoing 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.

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

START THE NEW YEAR WITH LARRY LE BRANE'S BEGINNING FUSED GLASS CLASS No previous art skills needed to make fused glass home-garden décor, gifts, dishware, and jewelry. Class size is 4 to 6 students. Safety mask and vaccination required, please. No drop-ins. Must attend all classes. Jan. 14, 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. \$150 for three weeks. 805-748-6935. Central Coast Glass Blowing and Fusing, 1279 2nd Street, Los Osos, RodBakerGlass.com.

HOT STUFF continued page 14

NORTH COAST SLO COUNTY

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

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. 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.

THE CRUCIBLE Arthur Miller's riveting tale of the 1692 Salem Witch Trials, where religion, personal grudges, and fear clash, with deadly results. Jan. 13-15 my805tix.com. By The Sea Productions, 545 Shasta Ave., 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.

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 seniors 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.

SLO NIGHTWRITERS: A COMMUNITY OF WRITERS SLO NightWriters supports local writers with monthly presentations, critique groups, contests, and other events. Second Tuesday of every month, 6:30-8 p.m. Free. 805-703-3132.

slonightwriters.org. Online, See website, 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. artcentralslo.com/workshops-events/. Art Central, 1329 Monterey St., San Luis Obispo.

WALT WHITMAN GAY MEN'S BOOK CLUB
This club reads, studies and discusses books chosen by the group which relate to their lives as gay men. All are welcome. Second Monday of every month, 7-9:30 p.m. Free. galacc.org/events/. Online, See website, San Luis Obispo.

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HOT STUFF from page 13

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. ongoing partnersincaring.org. Santa Maria, Citywide, Santa Maria.

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

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

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

FIRST FRIDAY First Friday of every month facebook.com/firstfridayoldtownorcutt/. Historic Old Town Orcutt, S. Broadway and Union 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.

JOURNALING FOR TEENS AND TWEENS: SANTA MARIA PUBLIC LIBRARY Come to the library to learn about the many ways people journal. Create, customize, and build a personal journal to keep. Jan. 5 Free. 805-925-0994. cityofsantamaria.org. Santa Maria Public Library, 421 S. McClelland St., Santa Maria.

LET'S BLOW OFF SOME STEAM: SANTA MARIA PUBLIC LIBRARY Curious

preschoolers and caregivers, come to a special story time filled with exploration and discovery. Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math themes will be explored through stories and discovered through hands-on activities. Come dressed for mess. For ages 3 to 5. Jan. 13 Free. 805-925-0994. engagedpatrons.org. Santa Maria Public Library, 421 S. McClelland St., Santa Maria.

LIGHT UP ROBOT CRAFT PACKS: SANTA MARIA PUBLIC LIBRARY Use a few simple supplies to make an awesome light up robot paper craft. Learn about open and closed circuits and simple electricity. For ages 6 to 12. Jan. 14 Free. 805-925-0994. engagedpatrons.org. Santa Maria Public Library, 421 S. McClelland St., Santa Maria.

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

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. Second Saturday of every month, 12-4 p.m. smvrhm.com. Santa Maria Transit Center, Miller and Boone Streets, Santa Maria.

SENSORY BIN CREATION STATION: SANTA MARIA PUBLIC LIBRARY Preschoolers and caregivers, learn how to create your own sensory bin. Sensory bins allow children to explore, discover, imagine, create, and learn while engaging their senses. For ages 3-5; adult assistance is required to assemble sensory bins. Registration is required. Jan. 9 Free. 805-925-0994. engagedpatrons.org. Santa Maria Public Library, 421 S. McClelland St., Santa Maria.

TEEN ANIME NIGHT: SANTA MARIA PUBLIC LIBRARY When the Library closes, the fun begins. Enjoy dinner, crafts, games, and a movie with

other teen anime fans. Registration is required. Jan. 6 Free. 805-925-0994. engagedpatrons.org. Santa Maria Public Library, 421 S. McClelland St., Santa Maria.

TEEN GAMING: SANTA MARIA PUBLIC LIBRARY Teens, come hang out for a Friday afternoon of gaming. Play to win or sit back and watch the action on our large screen. Light snacks will be provided. Jan. 13 Free. 805-925-0994. engagedpatrons.org. Santa Maria Public Library, 421 S. McClelland St., Santa Maria.

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

SOUTH COAST SLO COUNTY

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

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

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF WATCH AND CLOCK COLLECTORS, CHPT. 52 Come join a friendly meeting of watch and clock collectors. Members bring watches and clocks to show, plus there are discussions of all things horological. Second Sunday of every month, 1:30-3 p.m. 805-547-1715. new.nawcc.org/index.



FILE COURTESY IMAGE BY STEVIE CHUN

CIRCLE GAMES

Gallery at Marina Square in Morro Bay will hold a joint reception for its three January exhibitions on Saturday, Jan. 14, from 3 to 5 p.m. Throughout the month of January, the gallery is showcasing mixed media works by Stevie Chun, sculptures by Jarien De Ham, and a group photography display. Call (805) 772-1068 or visit galleryatmarinasquare.com for more info. Gallery at Marina Square is located at 601 Embarcadero, suite 10, Morro Bay.

—C.W.

php/chapter-52-los-padres. Central Coast Senior Center, 1580 Railroad St., Oceano.

PILATES AND HIKE TO THE LIGHTHOUSE Hike to the Point San Luis Lighthouse for a one of a kind Pilates session led by Vanessa Dominguez of Tabula Rasa Pilates. Jan. 8, 9 a.m.-1:30 p.m. my805tix.com. Point San Luis Lighthouse, 1 Lighthouse Rd., Avila Beach.

POINT SAN LUIS LIGHTHOUSE TOURS Tours will give you a glimpse into the lives

of Lighthouse Keepers and their families, while helping keep our jewel of the Central Coast preserved and protected. Check website for more details. Wednesdays, Saturdays pointsanluislighthouse.org/. Point San Luis Lighthouse, 1 Lighthouse Rd., Avila Beach.

SOCIAL GROUP FOR WIDOWS AND WIDOWERS Call for more details. Second Saturday of every month, 10 a.m. 805-904-6615. Oak Park Christian Church, 386 N Oak Park Blvd., Grover Beach.

SAN LUIS OBISPO

AGILITY CLINIC Agility (AKA parkour) offers a path to social confidence. No experience is necessary, so come transform from timid to triumphant. Ages 5 to 17 welcome. Jan. 14, 1:15-3:15 p.m. \$25 for first child; \$10 per additional sibling. 805-547-1496. performanceathleticsllo.com/events. Performance Athletics Gymnastics, 4484 Broad St., 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.

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.

FREE GUIDED MEDITATION GROUP A free guided meditation group held every Friday morning. Call for more info. Fridays, 10:10-10:45 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. 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, San Luis Obispo, 805-270-3346.

CULTURE & LIFESTYLE continued page 15

Advertisement for 'VOLUNTEERS' featuring a background image of hands clasped together and a group of people cheering. Text includes 'SPECIAL PUBLICATION', 'BOOK YOUR AD BY: January 6', 'PUBLICATION DATE: January 12', and 'If your business is community-minded, you'll want to reach thousands of locals in this special issue dedicated to volunteering. Showcase how your business lends a helping hand.' Logos for Sun and Northern Santa Barbara County are at the bottom.

Advertisement for 'DEAR RIDER: THE JAKE BURTON STORY' featuring a poster for the HBO original film. Text includes 'MY 805 TIX', 'ALL TICKETS. ONE PLACE.', 'ON SALE NOW!', 'Sat, January 14 • 7:30pm', 'The Palm Theater, San Luis Obispo', and 'Presented by: CENTRAL COAST FILM SOCIETY'. Ticket information is provided at the bottom.

Advertisement for 'ORCUTT CHILDREN'S ARTS FOUNDATION GALA' featuring a photo of a child playing a trumpet. Text includes 'MY 805 TIX', 'ALL TICKETS. ONE PLACE.', 'ON SALE NOW!', 'Sat, February 25 • 5pm', 'Radisson Hotel, Santa Maria', and 'Presented by: ORCUTT CHILDREN'S ARTS FOUNDATION'. Ticket information is provided at the bottom.

CULTURE & LIFESTYLE from page 14

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

OPEN MIC COMEDY NIGHT Come on over to the tasting room for some laugh out loud fun at Open Mic Comedy Night with many delicious ciders on tap. Second 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.

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, Online, Inquire for Zoom ID.

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

SLO 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 aarapgroup@gmail.com for password access. Sundays, 7-8 p.m. No fee. galacc.org/events/. Online, See website, San Luis Obispo.

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

TECH BREW MEETUP Tech Brew is a free networking event where people interested

in technology can hang out in an informal environment with a small TEDtalk-like presentation from an interesting speaker. Learn more online. Second Monday of every month, 5-7 p.m. 805-323-6706. meetup.com/softtecl. StoryLabs, 102 Cross St, Suite 220, 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. Second Tuesday of every month, 6-8 p.m. Free. GALA Pride and Diversity Center, 1060 Palm Street, San Luis Obispo, 805-541-4252.

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.

FULL MOON CEREMONY AND 2023 INTENTION SETTING Manifest your most heartfelt desires in 2023. Jan. 5, 5-7 p.m. my805tix.com. 9th Limb Yoga, 845 Napa Ave., Morro Bay, 415-852-1787.

KIDS WINTER CAMP Offered in both the winter and the summer, kids camp is a place for third through sixth graders to play games, make friends, catch frogs, and experience God through teachings and creation. Jan. 13 \$225. 805-238-3582. facebook.com/OutsiderCamp. Granite Ridge Christian Camp, 4850 Coyote Creek Lane, Creston.

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.

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/.

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.



GOAL MINE
Artist and designer Breann DeLisle will lead a journaling workshop at Oracle in Atascadero on Wednesday, Jan. 11, from 6 to 8 p.m. Attendees of the class will create their own vision boards, with collages of images, words, and other elements. Admission is \$45. Call (805) 464-2838 or visit oracleatascadero.com to find out more. Oracle is located at 6280 Palma Ave., Atascadero.
—C.W.

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.

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. 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 Pizza Co., Chef Ricks, and more. Call venue for monthly schedules. Fridays 805-922-1468. costadeorowines.com. Costa De Oro Winery, 1331 S. Nicholson Ave., Santa Maria.

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

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

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

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

SANTA YNEZ VALLEY

SECOND SATURDAY OPEN AIR MARKET: LOS OLIVOS A carefully curated open air artisan and farm market. Features great vintage finds, handwoven and hand dyed textiles, hand-spun yarn, organic body care products, and locally grown organic eats. Second Saturday of every month, 11 a.m.-4 p.m. Free. 805-722-4338. Sisters Gifts and Home, 349 Bell Street, Los Alamos.

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

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

TRIVIA NIGHT Join BrainStew Trivia for a hilariously witty evening of trivia in Pismo. Teams of 1 to 4 people. Prizes awarded to the first and second place teams. Kitchen is open until 7:30 p.m. for brain fuel. Beer, cider, wine, and non-alcoholic options available. First Thursday of every month, 6:30-8 p.m. Free to play. 805-295-6171. kulturhausbrewing.com. Kulturhaus Brewing Company, 779 Price St., Pismo Beach.

SAN LUIS OBISPO

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

HOMESHARE SLO COFFEE CHAT Join a chat about home sharing and learn about being either a provider or affordable housing options. Jan. 11, 10:30 a.m. and Second Wednesday of every month, 10:30 a.m. No cost. smartsharehousingolutions.org. Coastal Peaks Coffee, 3566 S. Higuera St., San Luis Obispo.

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

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

NORTH SLO COUNTY

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

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.

TRIBUTE TO DOLLY AND WILLIE IN SANTA MARIA Songwriters at Play presents local and touring artists covering Dolly Parton and Willie Nelson songs. Jan. 14, 2-4:30 p.m. \$20. 805-204-6821. stevekey.com/events. Unity Chapel of Light Church, 1165 Stubblefield Rd., Orcutt.

SANTA YNEZ VALLEY

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

MUSIC continued page 16

CLARK CENTER
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2022-2023 SEASON
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DRUMLine LIVE!
Jan 16 at 3pm & 7:30pm

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.

Sponsored by Myraline Morris Whitaker

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!

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)

Sponsored by Coast Hills Credit Union Arroyo Grande

Islands in the Stream
Feb 4 at 7:30pm

In addition to their own hits, Kenny Rogers and Dolly Parton together are best known for their 1983 duet. In this loving tribute, Dave Karl and Karen Hester (from Legends in Concert) capture all the magic of these two country music icons.

Sponsored by Five Cities Men's Club

Get Your Tickets Today!
(805) 489-9444
www.clarkcenter.org

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PAUL ANKA

FEBRUARY 11 | SATURDAY | 8PM



AIR SUPPLY

FEBRUARY 17 | FRIDAY | 8PM



THE FAB FOUR

FEBRUARY 25 | SATURDAY | 8PM



GEORGE CLINTON

MARCH 4 | SATURDAY | 8PM
ON SALE JANUARY 13

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Hot Stuff

MUSIC from page 15

LOS ANGELES REED QUINTET LIVE LARQ's concerts feature music spanning hundreds of years from Baroque pieces to 21st century compositions. Their concerts bring audiences on a delightful musical journey. **Jan. 13**, 7 p.m. smitv.org/syv-concert-series.html. St. Mark's in the Valley Episcopal Church, 2901 Nojoqui Ave., Los Olivos.

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 smitv.org/syv-concert-series.html. St. Mark's in the Valley Episcopal Church, 2901 Nojoqui Ave., Los Olivos.

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

LOMPOC/VANDENBERG

805 CALI TEJANOS: LIVE IN CONCERT With DJs El Rey Liotta and Frank the Tank. **Jan. 6**, 8 p.m. my805tix.com. Flower City Ballroom, 110 W. Ocean Ave., Lompoc.

THE DEVEROS, HOSTILE TAKEDOWN, DIRT FIGHT, AND RADIATION INVASION: LIVE IN CONCERT Presented by Cheap Shows 805. **Jan. 14**, 8 p.m. my805tix.com. Flower City Ballroom, 110 W. Ocean Ave., Lompoc.

FRIDAY THE 13TH TECHNO MASSACRE RAVE Presented by Anomaly House. **Jan. 13**, 8 p.m. my805tix.com. Flower City Ballroom, 110 W. Ocean Ave., Lompoc.

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

SOUTH COAST SLO COUNTY

DANA HUBBARD LIVE Winner of the Telluride Blues and Brews Festival Acoustic Blues Competition and the Indie International Songwriting Contest for Folk/Acoustic, as well as the American River Music Festival Musician Showcase. **Jan. 14**, 7-9 a.m. \$20-\$35. myListeningRoomNetwork.com. Tunes On Mentone, 1901 Mentone Ave., Grover Beach, 805-441-5868.

JAZZ JUBILEE BY THE SEA Three full days of traditional jazz, vintage jazz, New Orleans, Cajun, Dixieland, Western Swing, and big bands. **Jan. 12-15** my805tix.com. Pismo Beach Veterans Memorial Hall, 780 Bello St., Pismo Beach.

SAN LUIS OBISPO

DIRT MONKEY X JANTSEN: FULL CIRCLE TOUR **Jan. 12**, 8 p.m. The Fremont Theater, 1035 Monterey St., San Luis Obispo, 805-546-8600, fremontslo.com.

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

EASTON EVERETT An artist known for a guitar-woven sound that spreads across "the American music story." **Jan. 5**, 5-7 p.m. Free. eastoneverett.com/. Mulligans Bar and Grill, 6460 Ana Bay Rd, Avila, (805) 595-4000.

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.

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.

STEEL PANTHER LIVE **Jan. 7**, 8 p.m. The Fremont Theater, 1035 Monterey St., San Luis Obispo, 805-546-8600, fremontslo.com.

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.

W. TERENCE SPILLER PIANO RECITAL Pianist and Cal Poly Professor Emeritus W. Terrence Spiller will perform works by Frédéric Chopin, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Sergei Prokofieff, and Maurice Ravel. **Jan. 13**, 7:30 p.m. \$20 general; \$10 students. 805-756-4849. music.calpoly.edu/calendar. Spanos Theatre, Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo.

NORTH COAST SLO COUNTY

EASTON EVERETT LIVE Easton Everett writes "compelling music outside the pop mainstream in distinctive stylistic shapes," according to marketing materials. **Jan. 7**, 6:30-9:30 p.m. Free. eastoneverett.com/. The Savory Palette (formerly Morro Bay Wine Seller), 601 Embarcadero, Morro Bay, (805) 679-3326 / (805) 858-8440.

MICHAEL AHERN AND THE ROCKMAKERS A 5-piece rock and roll cover band drawing from a catalog of 50 years of rock and roll music. **Jan. 7**, 2:30-5:30 & 8-10:30 p.m. The Siren, 900 Main St., Morro Bay, 805-225-1312, thesirenmorrobay.com/.

THE STORYTELLERS LIVE A progressive bluegrass ensemble whose repertoire represents a unique blend of roots-rock, Americana, country-blues, folk, and more. **Jan. 13**, 7:30-10 p.m. The Siren, 900 Main St., Morro Bay, 805-225-1312, thesirenmorrobay.com/.



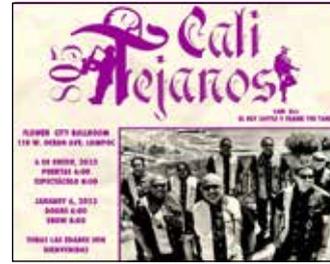
Nature Nights: Immersive Outdoor Holiday Light & Art Exhibition
THURS, JAN. 5 – SUN, MARCH 19
SLO Botanical Garden



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



Full Moon Ceremony & 2023 Intention Setting
THURSDAY, JANUARY 5
9th Limb Yoga, Morro Bay



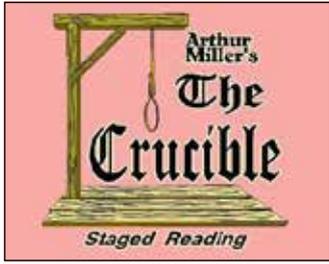
805 Cali Tejanos with guest DJs El Rey Liotta and Frank the Tank
FRIDAY, JANUARY 6
Flower City Ballroom, Lompoc



Pilates/Hike to the Lighthouse
SATURDAY, JANUARY 8
Point San Luis Lighthouse, Avila Beach



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



By the Sea Productions: The Crucible
FRI, SAT, SUN, JANUARY 13, 14, 15
545 Shasta Ave, Morro Bay



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



Dear Rider: The Jake Burton Story Screening and Filmmaker Q&A
SATURDAY, JANUARY 14
Palm Theatre, San Luis Obispo



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

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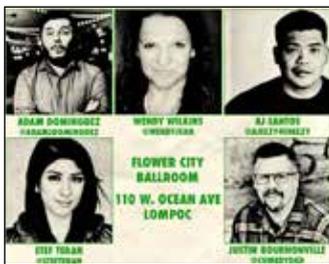
Symphony of the Vines: Classical Artistry
SUNDAY, JANUARY 15
Mission San Miguel Arcángel



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



Wiire SLO: Norma Rapko: You're A Creative Genius Start Acting Like One!
FRIDAY, JANUARY 20
Saints Barrel, San Luis Obispo



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



Yoga/Hike to the Lighthouse
SUNDAY, JANUARY 22
Point San Luis Lighthouse, Avila Beach



Anomaly House: Liminal Space, Showcase of Outsider Art
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 25
Flower City Ballroom, Lompoc



Studio 110: An Evening of Disco-Infused House Music on Vinyl
FRIDAY, JANUARY 27
Flower City Ballroom, Lompoc



SLO Funny Comedy Show
SATURDAY, JANUARY 28
Veterans Memorial Building, Morro Bay



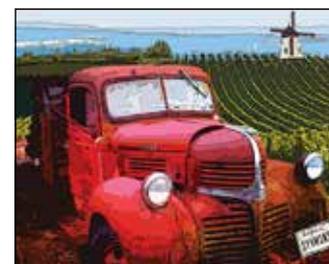
Hexenghul, Disrupted Euphoria, Sinsation, and Pentacaustic
SATURDAY, JANUARY 28
Flower City Ballroom, Lompoc



SLO Funny Comedy Show
SUNDAY, JANUARY 29
Veterans Memorial Building, Morro Bay



Cupid Paws Doggie Parade
SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 4
Front Street, Avila Beach



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COURTESY PHOTOS BY BARRY SIGMAN

Arts Briefs

Los Angeles Reed Quintet to perform in Los Olivos

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE SANTA YNEZ VALLEY CONCERT SERIES



The Santa Ynez Valley Concert Series presents the Los Angeles Reed Quintet, live in concert, at St. Mark's-in-the-Valley Episcopal Church in Los Olivos on Friday, Jan. 13, at 7 p.m. The ensemble regularly performs a wide variety of music selections, including Baroque pieces, 21st century compositions, and other songs.

The quintet's oboist is Claire Brazeau (pictured), an active soloist and chamber musician. Brazeau was a finalist in the 2017 International Gillet-Fox Oboe Competition, and is also the principal oboist of the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra.

Donald T. Foster is the quintet's clarinetist. According to press materials, Foster is famed film composer John Williams' principal clarinetist. Foster also frequently plays with the Santa Barbara Symphony, Pasadena Symphony, and the Los Angeles Opera Orchestra.

Anthony Parnter, a featured performer on several film soundtracks, plays bassoon for the quintet. Throughout his career, Parnter has played for the Los Angeles Opera Orchestra, San Diego Symphony, Joffrey Ballet, and other groups.

Multi-instrumentalist Patrick Posey is the quintet's saxophonist. A founding member of the New York City-based contemporary collective Le Train Bleu, Posey also regularly performs with the Los Angeles Philharmonic and the San Francisco Symphony.

Prolific musician Brian Walsh plays bass clarinet for the quintet. Walsh specializes in contemporary classical music, jazz, and world music. Some of the groups Walsh has performed with in the past include the Brad Dutz Quartet, Brightwork New Music, and his own group, the Walsh Set Trio.

For more info on the Los Angeles Reed Quintet, or more details about the group's upcoming concert in Los Olivos and other programs slated in the Santa Ynez Valley Concert Series, visit smitv.org/syv-concert-series. The St. Mark's-in-the-Valley Episcopal Church is located at 2901 Nojoqui Ave., Los Olivos.

SMCT presents *The Red Velvet Cake War*

FILE PHOTO BY JAYSON MELLOM



The Santa Maria Civic Theatre's (SMCT) upcoming production of *The Red Velvet Cake War* is scheduled to premiere on Friday, Jan. 13. Performances of the show are slated to run through Sunday, Jan. 29.

This Texas-based comedy follows three cousins who "could not have picked a worse time to throw a family reunion," according to a synopsis in press materials. The show is described as a "fast-paced romp" that "barrels toward its uproarious climax."

Tickets to *The Red Velvet Cake War* are available in advance at my805tix.com. Visit smct.org for more info. SMCT is located at 1660 N. McClelland St., Santa Maria. ☪

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



Showtime!

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



SCORE A DANCE FLOOR: Regardless of skill level, the public is invited to join local dance instructor Gina Sigman's swing dancing classes (for beginners and intermediate dancers) at Cubanissimo Cafe in Orcutt. Walk-ins are always welcome to the weekly event.

Swing is in the air

Cubanissimo Cafe in Orcutt holds weekly swing dance classes

BY CALEB WISEBLOOD

Every Tuesday night, there's a coffee house in Orcutt that transforms into a popping dance hub for a couple of hours.

Local instructor Gina Sigman's intro to swing dancing class, held once a week at Cubanissimo Cafe, is open to walk-ins and is free to join. The class is followed by an intermediate course, with a \$10 entry fee, which Sigman suggests her beginners stay to observe with the hope of joining in someday.

"I encourage my intro students to stay and watch that because I tell them this is where they're going to be," said Sigman, a dancer since youth and a near decade-long Orcutt resident. "I tell students, the more classes you do, the more you practice, the better you're going to get."

"I try to encourage my students to take some private lessons too, because that's how you get really good," Sigman added. "You go from zero to 60 with private lessons. There's a reward when you keep doing something consistently. That's how you get better."

Sigman moved to Orcutt about nine years ago and grew up in Houston, Texas—a city where it's hard to find someone who doesn't dance regularly, indoors at least, she explained.

"It's too hot to do anything outside, so everybody dances. People either go to the gym or they dance," Sigman said. "It's either raining, hot, or freezing cold in Houston."

Cubanissimo Cafe in Orcutt was the ideal choice for Sigman to hold her indoor dance classes because of its spacious setting and community-minded staff, the local dance teacher said.

"It's a great little place; they've got a nice cafe, delicious coffee," Sigman said. "The classes are good for their business too, because my students get thirsty, right? They've got to get their coffees and teas."

Sigman said she has several regulars who consistently attend her dance classes at the cafe, in both the intro and intermediate tiers. But the teacher sees at least a few brand new people almost every week.

"Sometimes someone at a table will sit and watch and wonder what's going



THIS MUST BE THE PLACE: Of all the possible Orcutt venues Gina Sigman considered for holding her ongoing swing dance class, she described Cubanissimo Cafe as an ideal choice, with a spacious setting, community-minded staff, and delicious menu offerings (for students to enjoy before or after class).

on, and the next thing you know, I've got another student," said Sigman, whose Tuesday sessions start at 6:30 p.m. with the intro class, followed by the intermediate class at 7 p.m.

The first swing dance pattern Sigman goes over is the sugar push, a beginner-level pattern, she said. Sigman also serves as DJ during her classes, with a selection of dozens of songs at her disposal.

"I've got like 74 songs on my DJ list," Sigman said. "For my beginning students, I can't throw anything fast at them. So I have a little section of songs that are slow enough for them to practice so they won't get frustrated."

The songs Sigman picks for the intro segment are about 80 beats per minute, while her intermediate selections are about 120 beats per minute. Attendees of the classes can expect to hear an eclectic range of songs from several groups—including Tom Waits, Christina Aguilera, Michael Jackson, and other artists.

But not all music genres, including one of Sigman's personal favorites, blend well with swing dancing, the instructor said.

"There's some classic rock songs from the '70s that I think, 'Oh I'd like to dance to that,'" Sigman said. "But then I'll listen to it again and go, 'Nope, doesn't swing.'"

Throughout her swing sessions, Sigman is available to answer questions, and she closely observes those on the dance floor, ready to jump in if anyone's having trouble or seems bummed out.

"I always want to see how they're doing, if they're enjoying themselves. Because to me, if they're not enjoying themselves, then what am I doing here? You know?" Sigman said. "This is supposed to be fun."

Sigman revealed one of the telltale signs she looks for if she suspects someone isn't having a good time.

"I can always look at eyebrows, and when I see eyebrows coming together, I kind of go over there to see what's happening," Sigman said. "I want it to be a good experience for them." ☪

Arts Editor Caleb Wiseblood is eyeing his inbox. Send comments to cwiseblood@santamariasun.com.



RADIO HEAD: Dance teacher Gina Sigman also serves as DJ during her swing classes. The songs Sigman picks for her intro segment are about 80 beats per minute, while her intermediate selections are about 120 beats per minute.

High anxiety

Writer-director Noah Baumbach (*Frances Ha*, *The Squid and the Whale*, *Marriage Story*) brings author Don DeLillo's 1985 satirical postmodern novel to the big screen. Jack Gladney (*Adam Driver*) is a college professor who's pioneered the niche academic pursuit of Hitler studies. He's married to Babette (*Greta Gerwig*), and together they raise a large brood of children and stepchildren and frequently fret about death. After an accident causes a chemical spill that releases a noxious cloud over their area, the family takes to the road in their station wagon to escape, but Jack fears he's been exposed and will die. Meanwhile, he discovers Babette may have an addiction problem. (136 min.)

Glen: This Reagan-era absurdist comedy does a pretty good job covering DeLillo's main themes of his novel: skewering the pretentiousness of academe, thanatophobia (fear of death), consumerism, and contemporary life's general feeling of anxiety and the cornucopia of pharmaceutical avenues we take to treat it. Considering the novel has been called "unfilmable," I'd argue Baumbach has succeeded, though the 38 percent Rotten Tomatoes audience score would beg to differ. OK, so it's not for everybody, but if you like Wes Anderson films, you'll probably dig this. Anderson and Baumbach co-wrote *Fantastic Mr. Fox* and *The Life Aquatic with Steve*

WHITE NOISE

What's it rated? **R**
 What's it worth, Glen? **Full price**
 What's it worth, Anna? **Full price**
 Where's it showing? **Netflix**

Zissou, and this film is filled with quirky characters playing it deadpan in absurd moments, for instance when Jack and his colleague Murray Jay Siskind (Don Cheadle) offer a deeply ironic joint lecture juxtaposing the lives of Adolf Hitler and Elvis Presley. Surrender to its weirdness and *White Noise* will pay off. **Anna:** Perhaps *White Noise* is too quirky for some, too consumed in the minutiae of the dialogue. For me, this sort of film hits a sweet spot. It helps that I love both Driver and Gerwig as much as I love this style of campy filmmaking. Odd yet ordinary, the Gladney family ponders the mysteries of death over chile fried chicken and corn niblets at the dinner table. Jack and Babette seem made for each other, both on their fourth go-round with marriage. But as close as the partners may be, there are still secrets lurking. Babette's daughter, Denise, sees her mother hide an empty prescription bottle deep in the trash, but when Denise consults her trusty encyclopedia of medications,

the mysterious pill cannot be found. Does this explain Babette's lapse in memory lately, her vacant moments? Then the family is outrunning the mysterious noxious gas cloud and seeking refuge at an emergency shelter, desperate for news. What is the substance? What are the consequences? It all is very strange, very mysterious. **Glen:** If you're looking for neat, tidy answers, this film (and DeLillo's novel) will not provide them, and the film's ending is a weird cherry on top of the story's "what the heck?" cake. However, in light of the pandemic and its effects on



LIFE, DEATH, AND CONSUMERISM: Jack Gladney (Adam Driver), his wife Babette (Greta Gerwig), and Jack's college professor colleague Murray Jay Siskind (Don Cheadle) navigate the absurdities of modern life, in *White Noise*, streaming on Netflix.

society, the story feels very timely. It also boasts a Danny Elfman score, and LCD Soundsystem recorded its first new music in five years for the Devo-esque track "New Body Rhumba," which perfectly captures the film's '80s milieu. The acting is spectacular, too, especially the three principals. Netflix strikes again! **Anna:** I'm sure this sort of ambivalent storyline can drive some people bonkers, but I'm OK with a bit of absurdity and unknowing. The music and costuming were on point, the storyline weird and interesting. I'm betting I

could happily watch this film again and find pieces of dialogue or small moments that I missed the first time around, and as someone who loves a repeat movie, I appreciate that. I liked Baumbach's work with Anderson, and I like this film as well, so whatever he puts out next I will be sure to watch. I dig his weirdness. **O**

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

Film Reviews

BEST SELLERS

What's it rated? **PG-13**
 When? **2021**
 Where's it showing? **Rent on Amazon Prime, Redbox, Vudu, and Apple TV**
 Lucy (Aubrey Plaza) inherited her book publication business from her father, whose skillful editing and salesman smarts led to Harris Shaw's (Michael Caine) hit novel way long ago. Unfortunately, the world of publishing has changed and Lucy can't seem to produce a hit—in fact, she is faced with selling off the company to slimy guy Jack Sinclair (Scott Speedman). Cue harebrained scheme to save her business by digging out Shaw's old contract with her father—a contract that requires another manuscript from the aging hermit.
 He's gruff and unhelpful and totally not interested in helping Lucy out. However, the two end up out on the road on a book tour together. While Lucy tries everything from booking bars to selling merch to make money, Harris causes trouble and gets drunk. Caine is terrific here—a



STRANGE BEDFELLOWS: Lucy (Aubrey Plaza) must convince famed but notoriously cranky author Harris Shaw (Michael Caine) to release one more novel, in the dramedy *Best Sellers*, rentable on streaming platforms.

roguish malcontent hiding a heart of gold. The two are meant to be in each other's lives, and soon a reluctant friendship forms between the two as they work to make Shaw's newest book a hit. Sweet and funny, if *Best Sellers* comes across your streaming service, it's worth a rental to watch at home. (102 min.)
 —Anna **New Flicks**

PHOTO COURTESY OF ITEM 7 AND WISHING TREE PRODUCTIONS

BABYLON

What's it rated? **R**
 When? **2022**
 Where's it showing? **Movies Lompoc, Regal Edwards Arroyo Grande, Regal Edwards RPX Santa Maria**
 "Excessive" is probably the best word to describe *Babylon*, writer-director Damien Chazelle's (*Whiplash*, *La La Land*) new film—an often gross and graphic exploration of Hollywood's pre-code nascent days, its transition from silent films to talkies, and the industry's ease with which it sucks in and grinds up those involved. In the first few minutes, you'll see an elephant defecate all over someone, and not long after, you'll watch a little person ("midget" in the vernacular of the era) wield a giant phallus and testicles and spray a group of partygoers with mock ejaculate. Some viewers might not find it as hilarious as I did.
 The story focuses on Manny Torres (Diego Calva), a Mexican worker who dreams of being part of filmmaking magic but instead is relegated to cleaning up other people's messes until he has a chance meeting with party crasher Nellie LeRoy (Margot Robbie), who wants to be a movie star and gets her big break after being noticed by a producer. Brad Pitt stars

PHOTO COURTESY OF PARAMOUNT PICTURES, C2 MOTION PICTURE GROUP, AND MARC PLATT PRODUCTIONS



TOO MUCH? *Babylon* takes on Hollywood excess, the transition from silence to sound, and the allure of fame through the eyes of wannabe star Nellie LeRoy (Margot Robbie, center), screening in local theaters.

as Hollywood leading man Jack Conrad, whose career is derailed by sound films, and Jean Smart stars as gossip columnist Elinor St. John.
 Is it too much? Absolutely! Is it too long? By an hour! Is it amazing? Hell yes! (189 min.) **O**

—Glen

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PHOTOS COURTESY OF JACQUELINE RUBIO



FRESH OUT OF THE OVEN: When it comes to ranking her own cookies, cottage industry baker Jacqueline Rubio can't decide which one takes the top spot. It's a close tie between her sprinkled sugar cookies and chocolate chip cookies, she said.



MEET YOUR BAKER: Orcutt local Jacqueline Rubio has worked as a vendor—serving items from her new cottage industry bakery, Jackie's Treats to Sea—at a few farmers market events and pop-ups on the Central Coast since the summer of 2022.

Home sweet home

New cottage style bakery stems from a local confectioner's lifelong hobby

BY CALEB WISEBLOOD

Muffins. Cookies. Cupcakes. No matter which of her baked goods is up for review, Jacqueline Rubio never gets tired of hearing “nostalgia-inducing” and similar adjectives as feedback from her customers. “I love when someone tells me it reminds them of a specific time or memory after they taste a certain treat,” said Rubio, the founder of Jackie's Treats to Sea, an Orcutt-based cottage bakery. Rubio started her business during the summer of 2022. Since then, she's offered deliveries of her baked creations to residents of cities in Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo counties and has worked as a vendor at a handful of farmers market events along the Central Coast.

While her ingredients and recipes vary from

treat to treat, Rubio's goal is consistent with each of her confections: to transport tasters to a fond place or memorable moment in their lives. Rubio described her aim with baking as an attempt to “bottle up a feeling or memory,” similar to a candle with a scent that reminds someone of home, she said as an example. She hopes this feeling comes across in not only her baked goods' taste, but their appearance as well. “I am an artist in many media, such as painting, and I feel like that also shows through my baking. I try to make each treat I create look beautiful,” Rubio said. “I was thrilled to start this business because I love trying new things and being creative.” Rubio, who works as a full-time teacher in Santa Maria, has enjoyed baking as a hobby for nearly as long as she can remember. “I have been passionate about it since I was

Sea for yourself

Find out more about Jackie's Treats to Sea on the cottage bakery's Instagram page, @treatstosea, or Facebook page, facebook.com/treatstosea. Baker and founder Jacqueline Rubio offers delivery options to residents in Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo counties.

really young,” Rubio said. “I would often bake for family and friends, and I would bake with my grandparents sometimes.” She continued to bake for fun in adulthood, and her ever-expanding reach has extended to friends of friends of friends and beyond simply through good word of mouth. “Everybody would always ask, ‘Oh can you bake this for our party?’ or, ‘Could you bake this for my birthday?’” Rubio said. “That's kind of where I got started with it, baking for family and friends. And I would constantly find new things to bake for them. After a while, they started telling people or would take it to a party. It kind of got around that way.” Rubio said she had dreamed of running her own cottage bakery for a long time, before

EATS continued page 22



AN APPLE A DAY: Among her current offerings at Jackie's Treats to Sea, baker Jacqueline Rubio's personal favorite of her muffin options is the apple cinnamon muffin.



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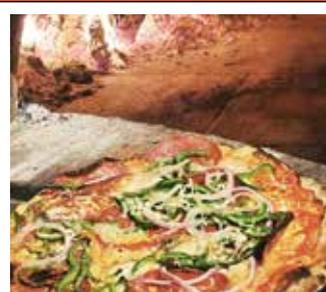
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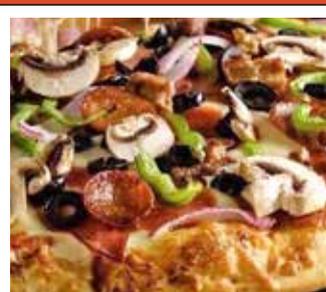
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Eats

PHOTO COURTESY OF JACQUELINE RUBIO

EATS from page 20

taking a leap of faith, shortly after her first son was born in May.

"I've been wanting to do it for a while. I just kind of felt like I really didn't have a lot of time," said Rubio, who decided to start the bakery while on maternity leave from her teaching job. "I had a lot of downtime. I was like, 'You know what, I'm going to try this and see how it works out.' So far, it's been really good for me."

Once Rubio started an Instagram page for Jackie's Treats to Sea, her clientele gradually grew in size. Many of her orders are placed through direct messaging on the app, and her followers have a big say in what she bakes, as she frequently posts polls for the public to vote on new kinds of items she should add to her selection. The baker's personal favorite items in her current offerings include apple cinnamon muffins, sprinkled sugar cookies, and chocolate chip cookies.

When Rubio returns to teaching, she plans to continue running the cottage bakery, she said. "As far as when I go



WHAT DOES THE BOX SAY? Since starting her cottage bakery in the summer of 2022, Jackie's Treats to Sea founder Jacqueline Rubio has delivered her baked goods to residents of Orcutt, Lompoc, San Luis Obispo, Morro Bay, and other cities along the Central Coast.

back, I feel like I will be able to balance it out," Rubio said. "Most likely I'll just bake either early in the morning—because sometimes it doesn't take me too long if it's a small order—or after school hours." ○

Arts Editor Caleb Wiseblood is too cool for school, but never too cool for raw cookie dough. Send comments to cwiseblood@santamariasun.com.

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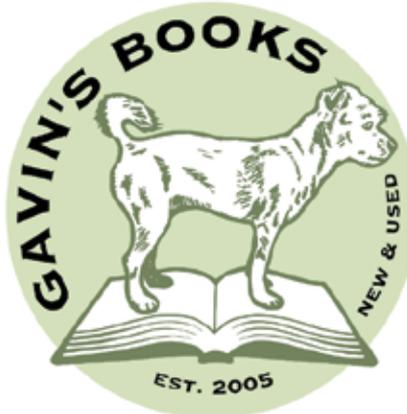
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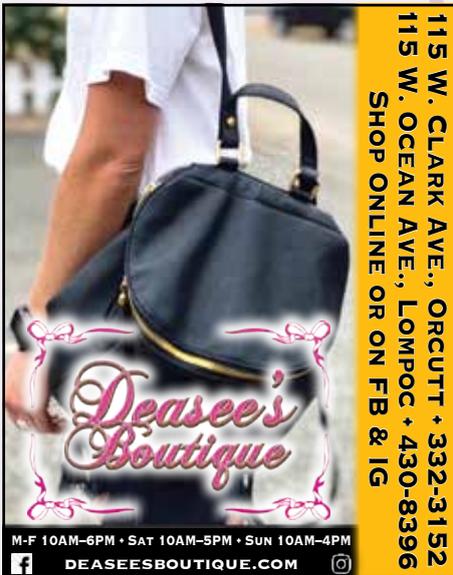
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