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SUN



Weddings Issue

A nontraditional transportation option [6], the great wedding favor debate [10], and places to hold a bachelor party [14]

BY SUN STAFF

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ARTS Lumberjacks in Love at the Melodrama [26]

EATS Grover Beach bakery gives back [29]

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FEBRUARY 23 - MARCH 2, 2023 VOL. 23 NO. 52

It's always a beautiful day in one of the state's most iconic destinations, and a wedding set in a vineyard or on the coast will never disappoint. While the location is a large part of planning a wedding, there are a lot of little things that can make or break the big day. For this year's annual Weddings Issue, we talk about some of those details. Staff Writer Taylor O'Connor writes about Jump On The School Bus, a local transportation company that can get your guests to your wedding safely [6]; *New Times* Staff Writer Bulbul Rajagopal speaks with wedding professionals about wedding favors [10]; and *New Times* Assistant Editor Peter Johnson covers where to go to celebrate before the wedding [14].

You can also read about what happened with the 2022 grape harvest [4]; the fun and funny Melodrama production, *Lumberjacks in Love* [26]; and a bakery showing the love to first responders and more [29].

Camillia Lanham
editor



MAKE IT YOUR OWN: Couples can customize Jump On The School Bus rides to display any message they'd like on their wedding day.

Cover photo courtesy of Jump On The School Bus > Cover design by Alex Zuniga

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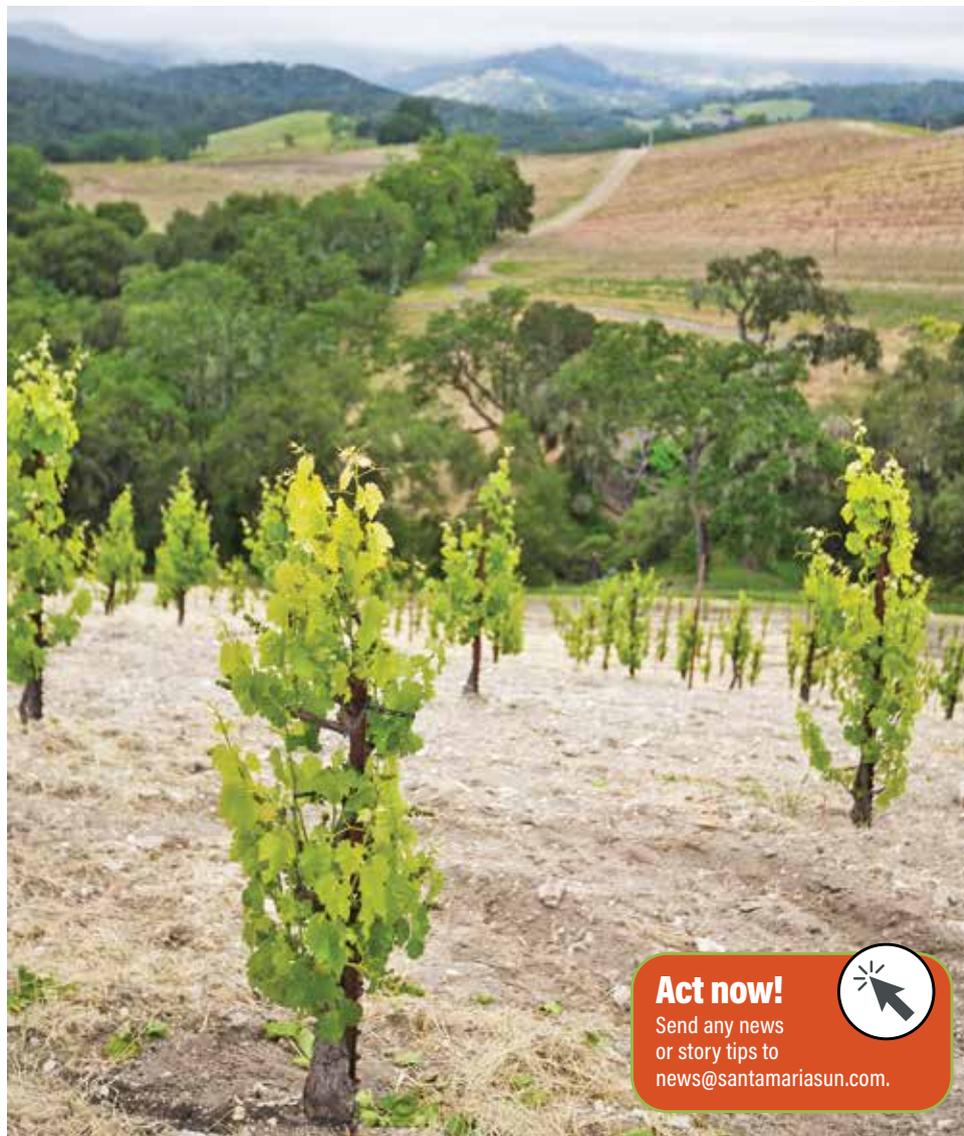


POLITICAL WATCH

• U.S. Sens. **Alex Padilla** (D-California) and **Sheldon Whitehouse** (D-Rhode Island) reintroduced legislation to crack down on Big Oil taking advantage of Americans at the gas pump and provide relief to consumers, according to a Feb. 16 statement from Padilla's office. The Big Oil Windfall Profits Tax Act would require large oil companies that produce or import at least 300,000 barrels of oil per day to pay a per-barrel tax equal to 50 percent of the difference between the current price of a barrel of oil and the average price per barrel between 2015 and 2019, a period when big oil companies were already earning large profits. "While the price of oil is decreasing, Big Oil continues to line its pockets at the expense of Californians, who are paying the price at the pump—that is wholly unacceptable," Padilla said in the statement. "Last year, gas prices in California reached upwards of \$5.75 per gallon, squeezing hardworking families. The Big Oil Windfall Profits Tax Act would hold Big Oil companies accountable and deliver much-needed relief to the American people." Exxon Mobil, Chevron, BP, Shell, and TotalEnergies hauled in pre-tax profits totaling \$264.3 billion in fiscal year 2022. Exxon alone reported \$77.8 billion in profits in 2022, smashing the earnings record of any American or European oil company. Exxon also announced plans to keep oil production flat for the year ahead. Rival oil giant Chevron—with \$49.7 billion in profits—greenlit \$75 billion in stock buybacks in 2023 to benefit its executives and shareholders on Wall Street, according to Padilla's office.

• U.S. Rep. **Salud Carbajal** (D-Santa Barbara) hosted a forum with local economic development organizations, real estate developers, and Central Coast elected officials to discuss the need for additional housing availability in the region to meet the expected demand coming with a growing commercial space industry at Vandenberg Space Force Base, according to a Feb. 15 statement from Carbajal's office. The assembled policymakers and stakeholders discussed the need to improve housing availability and affordability for both service members and civilians working with Vandenberg Space Force Base and in the growing commercial space launch industry, which will bring hundreds of new good-paying jobs to the Central Coast in the next decade, according to the congressman's office. Local officials in attendance included state Sen. **Monique Limón**, Lompoc Mayor **Jenelle Osborne**, Santa Maria Mayor **Alice Patino**, Santa Barbara County Supervisors **Joan Hartmann** and **Bob Nelson**, San Luis Obispo County CEO **Wade Horton**, Santa Barbara County CEO **Mona Miyasato**, and the city managers for Lompoc and Santa Maria. "The shortage of affordable housing—whether a family is renting or hoping to buy—is nothing short of a crisis in our region," Carbajal said in opening remarks at the forum. "But Vandenberg is in a unique position. The U.S. commercial launch industry is on the cusp of a 60 to 100 percent increase in launch rates over the next five years, which will bring economic opportunities to our community but it will also strain our housing supply."

• With more than 1.3 million cubic yards of trash cleared from California highways since 2021, Gov. **Gavin Newsom** is doubling down on his Clean California Initiative by launching a new funding round for \$100 million in grants for local projects, according to a Feb. 15 statement from the governor's office. Clean California funding is part of a multiyear cleanup effort led by Caltrans to remove trash, transform public spaces, and create thousands of jobs. This new round of funding is open to cities, counties, and other government entities that submit applications before 5 p.m. on April 28. "We're cleaning up the streets of California like never before in the history of our state. Already, we've removed enough trash to fill more than 400 Olympic-size swimming pools—and in the spaces we've cleaned, communities are seeing new parklets, neighborhood gateways, and public art that adds to California's beauty. We're not stopping until our streets are cleaner and safer because it's what all Californians deserve," Newsom said in the statement. ○



FILE PHOTO BY KAORI FUNAHASHI

CRUSH CONTROL: A lower crop yield contributed to higher wine prices for grapes in Santa Barbara County and across the state.

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Prices soar for fewer crushed wine grapes in SLO County

California's wine grape crushers squished less and charged more in 2022 compared to the year before.

According to the 2022 preliminary Winegrape Crush Report issued by the state's Department of Food and Agriculture, 3.3 million tons of grapes were crushed for wine last year across the 17 districts in California. That's a 7.8 percent decrease from the 3.6 million tons crushed in 2021.

There was a price hike, too: In 2020 and 2021 the average price per ton in the state was \$677 and \$900, respectively. In 2022, the cost jumped to \$930. While inflation is impacting wineries, Ciatti Global Wine and Grape Brokers spokesperson Todd Azevedo said it hasn't necessarily impacted the price of grapes, which takes a few years to adjust.

Santa Barbara County falls in District 8 with San Luis Obispo County, and they mirrored state trends. The volume of crushed grapes fell by 20 percent in 2022 compared to 2021, while the average price per ton soared to \$1,833—an almost 8 percent increase.

"The last three harvests [2020, 2021, and 2022] have all been short," Azevedo said.

A "short" harvest refers to a yield of grapes that were lower than expected, he added.

"It's hard to say what the average crop would be, but the growth was underwhelming through the seasons the past three years," he said.

Changes to the environment and climate impacted wine grape yields in 2022, something many District 8 winemakers experienced firsthand, said Audra Cooper, the Central Coast grape broker for Turrentine Brokerage.

"The drought specifically and the heat in late

summer were majorly impactful. Had it not been for the late August heat, we would have been closer to an average crop," Cooper said.

Extremely high temperatures can dehydrate grapes, causing them to raisin and leaving them unusable in most cases, but every winery has its parameters on how many raisins they will tolerate in their harvest, she said.

"Going into 2023, we're seeing similar trends in that there's much less available supply in comparison to the past five years," she said.

Often with low supply levels and fewer grapes produced, Santa Barbara County grapes for wines like sauvignon blanc, syrah, chardonnay, pinot noir, and cabernet sauvignon experienced higher demands, Cooper said.

"[With] chardonnay, the District 8 crop was down 29 percent from 2021, and the pinot noir crop was down 22 percent from the 2021 crop. The price on chardonnay, however, was up 10 percent, hitting \$1,627.16, the highest it has been ... since we've been tracking in 2000," she said. "There's a lot of historical numbers when you compare to our 20-plus year history of tracking. It's generally positive for price, but not in all cases, [and] negative as far as crop size."

Moving forward, many wineries started the year with lower available grape inventory for the 2023 vintage than what they've had in more than five years, and Cooper said that will likely continue unless early estimates—which will be ready in May and June—show a better than average crop.

"Our market can flip very easily and quickly, but in 2023 it's unlikely that the market for grapes will change dramatically without having a large crop in combination with good case sales," she said.

—Bulbul Rajagopal and Taylor O'Connor

Solvang's Design Review Committee rejects housing project's modern look

The progress of an upcoming housing development in Solvang was delayed after the city's Design Review Committee unanimously rejected the proposed design.

During the board's Feb. 16 meeting, the main concern echoed by all five committee members about the development—a six-unit multifamily project set to be located on 420 Fifth St.—was that its modern design wouldn't mesh well with surrounding buildings in the area.

One member of the board, Esther Jacobsen Bates, suggested a complete do-over, while Assistant City Attorney Chelsea O'Sullivan advised the committee to provide specific recommendations for staff and the Planning Commission to consider.

"It's very hard to make a specific recommendation beyond the fact that it really needs to kind of start fresh with something that's more suitable for the location, which I know is not what the applicant wants to hear," O'Sullivan said. "To begin to tell you how to redesign this to make it fit on the property is not our skill set or our job, it's kind of above our pay grade, so to speak, here."

Earlier in the meeting, O'Sullivan brought up the Housing Accountability Act and asked the committee to "avoid making recommendations that would create a decrease in density because the Planning Commission will basically just have to reject that."

According to the staff report, the Housing Accountability Act limits the city of Solvang's "ability to impose design criteria that are not objective on housing developments." However, the Design Review Committee can recommend changes to the proposed color, exterior architecture, landscaping, and lighting for the Planning Commission to consider during its review.

Before Planning Manager Sophia Checa's presentation on the Fifth Street project, committee member Christopher Lapp asked, "Where's the Old-World charm in this design?"

"Is there another building in all of Santa Ynez or Solvang that looks like this?" Lapp added.

"There will be," Checa said. "There was a project approved last year on Fir Avenue that is more modern. It was approved by this body and by the Planning Commission."

Checa added that the multifamily development's address is located outside of Solvang's Village District, which is why the project's architect, Avraham Mittelman, did not have Danish style guidelines in mind when developing the project.

"I approached it with a modern design because I was under the impression that, from the beginning, you do not want to see new projects look too much like Danish design," Mittelman said. "And that it actually needs to be distinguished from what Solvang is known for. That's why we chose a more modern approach."

Checa suggested that one or two members of the committee form an ad hoc committee to work with staff and the applicant to add specific changes to the design proposal, in order to "soften" up some aspects of its look, without having the architect start over from scratch.

The project will be brought before the Design Review Committee again on an undetermined date before moving forward to the Planning Commission.

—Caleb Wiseblood

County residents receive food relief after January storms

Santa Barbara County received 1,129 CalFresh food benefit applications from residents claiming

NEWS continued page 5

NEWS from page 4

that they were impacted by the January storms, County Public Information Officer Kelsey Buttitta told the *Sun*.

The California Department of Social Services opened up eligibility for individuals and families affected by the January storms to receive disaster CalFresh food benefits as part of recovery efforts, Buttitta said. Individuals qualified if they lived or worked in Santa Barbara County, spent money because of the storms or related power outages, lost income due to limited or fewer work days, or spent money on household repairs. Individuals also needed to reach certain income thresholds—ranging from \$1,950 per month for one-person households to \$4,768 for eight-person households, according to a California Department of Social Services breakdown.

“A family of four with a monthly income up to \$3,130 per month may be eligible to receive up to \$939 in food benefits through this program,” a county news announcement stated. “Those who already receive regular CalFresh food benefits will not be eligible for Disaster CalFresh.”

Applications were open from Feb. 5 to 15—with the county receiving 80 percent of its applications in the last two days after a social media push. Residents should hear if they qualify by Feb. 24.

Although applications for CalFresh disaster relief closed on Feb. 15, Buttitta encouraged residents to apply for regular CalFresh benefits to see if they’d be eligible for any extra assistance, or visit local nonprofits like the Foodbank of Santa Barbara County.

Foodbank Chief Strategy Officer Nathalie Keller told the *Sun* that the nonprofit worked alongside the Office of Emergency Management call center, helping people 24 hours a day to meet their food needs.

“Collectively, we spent 2,000 hours in the call center, fielding about 1,100 calls, and we saw a

tremendous increase in demand. We had already been seeing an increase with inflation and economic strains,” Keller said.

In the last two months, the Foodbank’s seen about 122 new unduplicated clients, a 30 percent increase from the same period last year, she said. In light of the storms, the nonprofit also delivered 3,000 pounds of food to 12 families in Guadalupe, 900 pounds were transported to the Figueroa Mountain station for residents stranded on Catway Road, and it worked with the Red Cross to distribute food at shelters that were opened during the storms.

“Grappling with repairing their homes and cars and missed work shifts, we anticipate a greater need in the coming weeks,” Keller said.

Countywide, the Foodbank distributes about 1 million pounds of food a month. The pandemic increased the demand as more people lost their jobs or worked limited hours. Although distribution rates are lower than in the peak pandemic years, they’re still higher than pre-pandemic levels.

“Any time workers miss work, we see an increase in demand. People who work in the fields or work outside and can’t work, they can’t get paid. The Foodbank is prepared to meet that increase in demand,” she said.

Specialized staff members are also dedicated to help people fill out CalFresh applications on-site. Keller added that the Foodbank’s working on expanding its CalFresh outreach efforts and ensuring that people are aware of the assistance available.

“It’s important because it gives people the opportunity to shop at places like the farmers’ market or places [where] they accept CalFresh benefits,” she said.

Visit cdss.ca.gov/calfresh to apply for CalFresh benefits, or visit foodbanksbc.org to learn more about the Foodbank’s programs and services. ○

—Taylor O’Connor

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Bus it to the wedding

Santa Barbara County-based Jump On The School Bus offers a fleet of school buses for wedding transportation needs

BY TAYLOR O'CONNOR

Darin Fiechter and Sierra Falso were crushed when the couple lost their Santa Barbara restaurant in 2011, Fiechter said. "It was like losing a child; not that I'd ever had kids, but I could equate it to losing your favorite dog. This was our baby," Fiechter said. "We were the faces of it, we were there every night. When you lose that, you don't know what to do."

After working other jobs to make ends meet, Falso pitched a new business idea out of the blue for the couple to embark on: wine tours in a black school bus, he said.

"We laughed it off, [but] we went home that night, and we're talking the next day and I'm like, 'You know it wasn't that bad of an idea. We could do something like that,'" Fiechter said. "School buses are relatively cheap to buy because [companies] just unload them after they get old, but they run and run. They run forever and are relatively low maintenance."

The couple bought their first school bus with the \$4,000 they got when Falso sold a Rolex she'd received as a gift from an ex-boyfriend. They painted the bus black and got all the licensing and qualifications to drive the bus, he said. The couple used the bus to transport people for their own wedding on Nov. 11, 2011. Six months later, they booked their first wedding party.

Now, Jump On The School Bus has more than 20 black buses, books 200 to 300 weddings a year (making about 3,000 trips), and provides its services across the Central Coast—ranging from Ventura to San Luis Obispo counties, Fiechter said. The majority of the buses are renovated



GETTING TO THE VENUE: Jump On The School Bus founders and owners Darin Fiechter and Sierra Falso launched their transportation company in 2011, and it now serves 200 to 300 weddings a year.

with limo-style seating so guests can face each other, and the couple can create a customized message for the outside of the bus.

"It's a privilege to be a part of people's wedding day. It's a lot of pressure though because if you screw up, you ruin someone's day," he said. "So we're riding the line every day that nothing's going to break down, which luckily they normally don't."

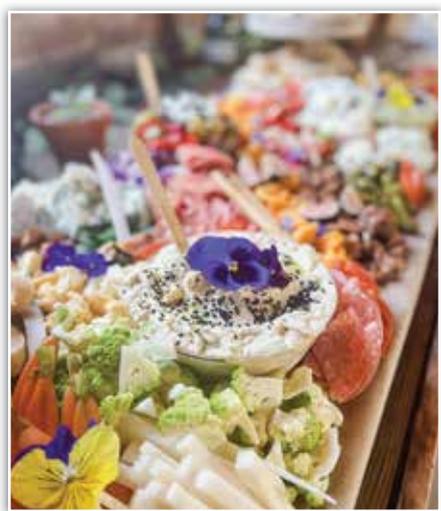
During the off-season, Jump On The School Bus also provides transportation for other events, like wine tastings and birthday parties, and they recently partnered with the Santa Maria-Bonita and Santa Barbara Unified school districts to help with transportation needs during the school year, Fiechter added.

Although the pandemic set the company back slightly and they had to sell 10 buses from their fleet, the company managed since people leaned toward postponing their weddings rather than canceling, Fiechter said.

"We did lose some because some people just eloped and did something smaller," he said. "So we lost about a quarter of them, but three quarters we got back, so we survived."

Normally, wedding parties with 100 to 150 people will take two to three buses on an eight-hour contract. Fiechter estimated that it costs about \$2,200 for each bus, which includes transportation for everyone to and from the wedding and a deposit that acts as a gratuity. All the pickup and drop-off logistics are worked

BUSES continued page 8



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BUSES from page 6

out between Jump On The School Bus and the wedding planner so there are no hiccups on the big day.

"They're supporting a mom-and-pop business, local people that afford to pay the top rate, hourly pay to their staff. That's what they're allowing us to do," Fiechter said.

Many venues on the Central Coast are now requiring wedding parties to book transportation for their guests for safety reasons, he added.

"They don't want any liability of people driving in and out. I'm surprised that there's a few venues that allow people to drive; it doesn't make sense to me," he said. "People are drawn toward buses

because it's efficient and it's fun."

Fiechter and Falso used their own buses again when they celebrated their 11th wedding and company anniversary on Nov. 11,

2022—recalling all of the work they put in to create Jump On The School Bus, Fiechter said.

"If you're into numerology, which I wasn't until [later], 11-11 is like a rebirth and a cleansing, and we had just lost everything at the restaurant," he said. "It saved our lives, the bus business."

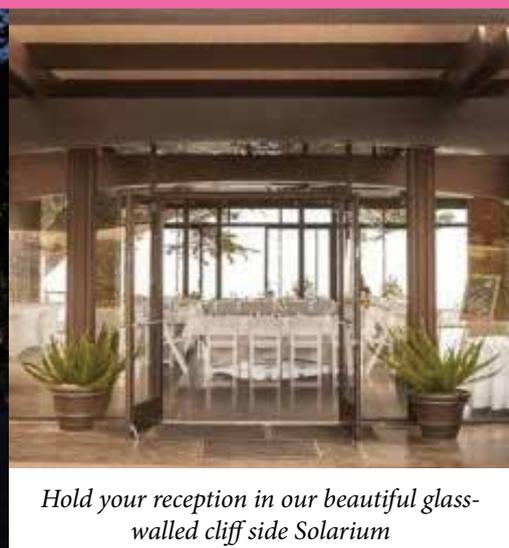
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Reach Staff Writer Taylor O'Connor at toconnor@santamariasun.com.



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Monday – Friday

Do yourself a favor

Keep your cash—skip the wedding favors

BY BULBUL RAJAGOPAL

Wedding favors are something I've thought maybe a little too much about as someone who's never been married and isn't going to get married anytime soon.

For years, my friends and I had a running joke for a take-home gift. I'd have a tattoo artist stationed next to the open bar at my hypothetical wedding reception. They'd only ink one design: a cheesy heart with "Bulbul + Insert Groom's Name" and the wedding date below. It'd make for a horrifying hangover but the best story.

"They still have the choice to go ahead with it!" said Alexandra Wallace, my friend and professional photographer. "I hate wedding favors. They either get left at the table, are useless, or forgotten about."

Wallace has been shooting weddings for a little more than 10

years. She captures pivotal memories for lovebirds around San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, and Los Angeles counties. Over the course of a decade, she's seen the evolution of the wedding favor.

"It used to be the Jordan almond," she explained one February evening. "You have to suck on it for 20 minutes, and it doesn't taste good."

According to Wallace, wedding favors bloat the already-mammoth cost of a wedding, which can run upwards of \$20,000 or \$30,000 including the venue and food costs. People underestimate how expensive a wedding on the Central Coast really is, she told the *Sun*.

"I think it's insane the amount people pay for things. You shouldn't get into it if you aren't in a place in life where it's not painful to do so," Wallace said. "But you do get what you pay for."

She recalled a wedding she photographed last year. The bride's dad and brother owned a memory foam pillow company. Wallace and the guests each went home with a giant pillow worth more than \$200. She whipped out her phone to show me the pillow on the website. Originally \$219.99, the pillow price was now slashed to \$129.99. Lucky future memory foam pillow owners!

"It felt like leaving the *Oprah* show. 'You get a pillow! Memory foam pillows for everybody!' We sleep with it every night now," she admitted.

At another wedding, Wallace saw guests being gifted socks with the bride and groom's names on them.

"Useful, but pretty ugly," she said.

Then came another celebration with 60 people. The couple arranged to have shelves packed with olive oil and wine for guests.

"You took whatever you want off it, like a grocery store," Wallace recalled.



'GROCERY STORE': Professional Central Coast photographer Alexandra Wallace once shot a wedding where the favors were items like wine and olive oil on a shelf that guests could grab as they pleased.

Overall, Wallace said, the average wedding favor is environmentally destructive. Paring down a wedding celebration to the essentials is key. For her own future wedding, she wants to focus on the food and make it a fun experience that's not swayed by Pinterest optics or appearing cool online for the now-strangers that she went to high school with. Unsurprisingly, her guests will be returning home sans wedding favors but with a full belly and a unique memory.

"There's a place called Pioneer Town near Joshua Tree. It was built solely for filming old Westerns," she said, noting that she and her boyfriend have their eye on it as a wedding locale. "Chris and

FAVORS continued page 12



ANOTHER OPTION: Can't avoid wedding favors? Sandcastle Celebrations founder and wedding planner Janet Tacy recommends highlighting a local, consumable product like hot sauce, honey, or cookies.

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FAVORS from page 10

I love it, and we want to take everyone to the middle of the desert!"

For Arroyo Grande-based wedding planner Janet Tacy, if wedding favors are a must-have, she recommends going down the sustainable route. Tacy founded Sandcastle Celebrations 10 years ago and has noticed that wedding favors are falling to the wayside.

"If they're going to have wedding favors, make it something that showcases a local product and that it's consumable," she said. "It's not anything anybody really needs. The guest experience is actually the most important component of a wedding versus having a little takeaway."

Tacy recalled planning a Lego-themed wedding where the bride and groom sent everyone home with little boxes of themselves as Lego figurines.

"I guess it's a cute idea, but I don't know the practicality of what that's ever going to be used for," she said with a laugh.

Tacy told the *Sun* that her primary job is expectation management and making clients understand what they can truly afford. The venue, floral arrangements, and rentals—silverware, glassware, tables, and chairs—eat up most of the wedding budget. Tacking on



DON'T DRINK AND DRIVE: At another wedding Wallace photographed, the married couple gave guests bottles of wine and leather key fobs as favors.

COURTESY PHOTO BY ALEXANDRA WALLACE

wedding favors could add \$1,000 or more, depending on what the object is.

"If somebody does want to do a wedding favor, have it be something that tells the story of the couple," she said. "I had a bride who was marrying someone who took care of bees, so they had honey as little favors."

For her own wedding, Tacy and her husband featured a jazz band. She made her own invitations and grew her own flowers for centerpieces. She also handed out native wildflower seeds as favors.

In Tacy's eyes, an air of nervousness now blankets the 2023

wedding scene. With the economy worse for wear, people are a little skittish about spending more. A budget, especially with hundreds of individual wedding favors in the mix, can make or break partners.

"Wedding planning is a great first exercise for a couple," Tacy said. "You can see how a relationship is going to play out. If you're not able to come to an agreement and compromise, it doesn't bode well." ○

Reach New Times Staff Writer Bulbul Rajagopal, from the *Sun's* sister paper, at brajagopal@newtimeslo.com.

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Before the I dos

Best known for bachelorettes, SLO and Santa Barbara counties can also host memorable bachelor parties

BY PETER JOHNSON

The Central Coast is pretty well-established as a top destination for soon-to-be-brides to hold their bachelorette parties and enjoy some quality wine tasting.

But what about bachelors? San Luis Obispo and northern Santa Barbara counties offer plenty to make for an equally great bachelor party.

Note: These activities by no means have to be gender specific!

Sport fish in Morro Bay

Launch off the coast for a day (or multiple days) of sport fishing in the open ocean. There are several local outfitters that will take your group out to catch rockfish, lingcod, albacore, halibut, and more, but **Virg's Landing** and **Black Pearl Sportfishing** are two trusted choices out of Morro Bay. They offer expeditions ranging from half-day trips to two-day overnight runs.

Camp at Lopez Lake

Enjoy SLO County's outdoors without breaking the bank at **Lopez Lake**. With more than 350 sites to choose from, this county campground is easy to book and doesn't lack for activities. Rent boats or Jet Skis at the marina and spend the day out on the water. Or go zip-lining at the lakeside **Vista Lago Adventure Park**. The lake is also just a short drive from the Village of Arroyo Grande with a variety of restaurants and bars.

FILE PHOTO BY JAYSON MELLOM

Have a casino night

Test your luck with a night out at the **Chumash Casino Resort** in Santa Ynez. With 115,000 square feet of casino space, this is the premier location to gamble on the Central Coast. Use your winnings to buy concert or comedy show tickets and enjoy some delicious food and drinks. If you spend the night, check out the renowned **Alisal Ranch** the next day near Solvang.

Ride on the Oceano Dunes

Enjoy a day carving it up in an ATV on the **Oceano Dunes**, the only beach in California you can still legally drive on. Rent your ATVs in town, buy a day pass at the Oceano Dunes State Vehicular Recreation Area, and enjoy the more than 1,000 acres of curvy dunes. If this activity



PHOTO COURTESY OF VISIT MORRO BAY

BIG CATCH: Sport fishing in Morro Bay is a popular adventure for bachelor parties. Several local outfitters, like Virg's Landing, take private groups out on the ocean to catch rockfish, lingcod, albacore, halibut, and more.

is on your bachelor bucket list, get it done soon: The state plans to ban riding on the dunes in the next few years.

Fun at the shooting range

Find out which of your friends has the best shot and spend an afternoon at the **SLO Sportsmen's Association** public gun range. Located in the heart of the Chorro Valley between SLO and Morro Bay, this local range welcomes beginners and large private groups. It will provide loaner guns, shooting instructions, and even barbecue pits to make it a party.

BACHELORS continued page 16



DUNE DRIVING: A classic activity for a Central Coast-based bachelor party is to go ATV riding on the Oceano Dunes.



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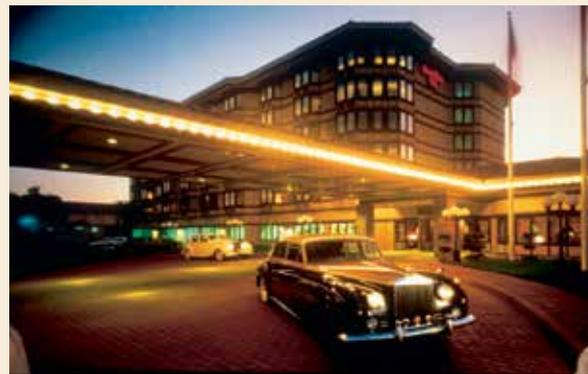
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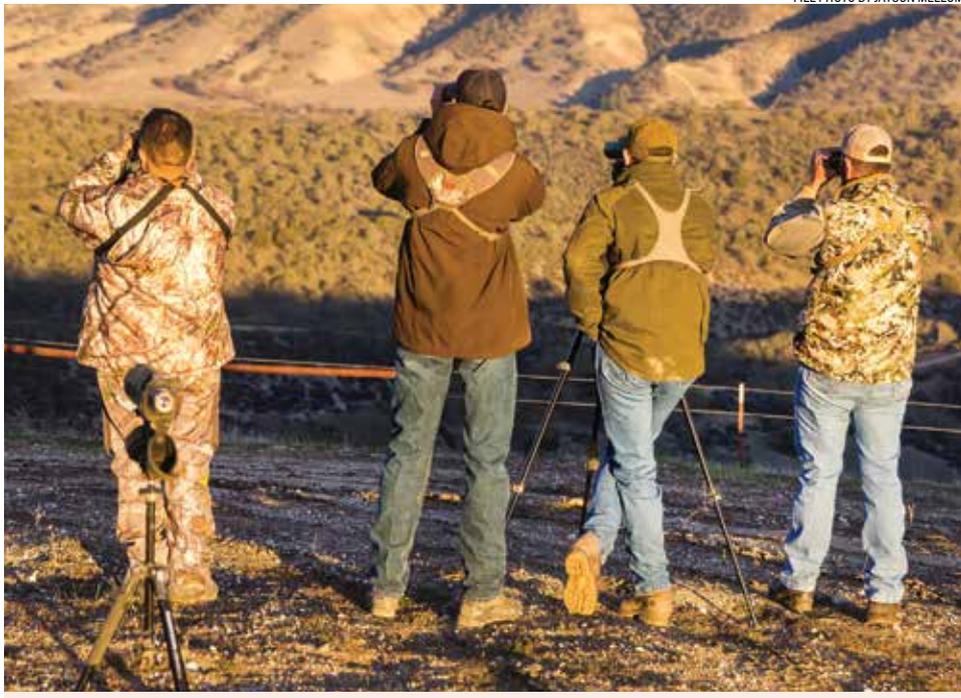
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WILD GAME: Guided hunting trips in northern SLO County also make for epic bachelor parties.

BACHELORS from page 14

Go beer, wine, and spirit tasting

Take the group to **Paso Robles** for a day of beer, wine, and spirit tasting. From cabs, to IPAs, to gins, North SLO County has something of world-class quality for everybody to enjoy. Take a tour of **Firestone Walker Brewery**. Or, if you're looking for an adrenaline rush, up the ante with a scenic helicopter ride around the region starting at **Cass Winery**. You can also sign up at Cass for motorcycle sidecar tours, horseback rides, archery, and more fun activities.

Take a hunting trip

Venture out into the remote ranchland of the Central Coast for a guided hunting trip. Buckle in for as many as five days or as few as one and hunt for quail, turkey, deer, elk, wild pigs, and more. **Oak Stone Outfitters** in Bradley is one local company with a suite of options to meet your group's needs. It also offers taxidermy services so you and your friends can take your trophies home. ○

New Times Assistant Editor Peter Johnson can be reached at pjohnson@newtimeslo.com.

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SHARED EXPERIENCES: Santa Barbara County WomenHeart Champions (left to right) Olivia Rodriguez, Janet Wolf, Marsha Griggs, Evan McCabe, and Lou Ann Topping help women better understand heart disease through monthly meetings and community events.

Inform and support

WomenHeart Champions hosts monthly meetings for Santa Barbara County women facing heart disease

BY TAYLOR O'CONNOR

After being a nurse working in cardiac rehabilitation for 30 years and a cardiac patient herself, Marsha Griggs decided to help other women facing heart disease by becoming a WomenHeart Champion.

"Women tend to have different symptoms than men, and they're more subtle," Griggs said. "They are not diagnosed as easily as men; they're misdiagnosed, or ignored. It's in our head that heart disease is for men, but it's not."

Symptoms in women include fatigue, chest pain radiating up in the shoulders, upper back pain, nausea, cold sweats, or shortness of breath, Griggs said, noting that fatigue is particularly strong in women. Other symptoms can be arm pain, jaw pain that can carry into the ears, or massive headaches.

"Women suffering from depression have more risk of heart disease," she added. "You have a dietary regime; exercise and medications you have to take, but you're likely not going to do all those things to take care of yourself if you're depressed."

WomenHeart Champions was founded in 1998 to help educate women about heart disease and provide a community network with monthly support group sessions. Champions also provide education on heart disease at various events and are available for one-on-one support. Prior to taking on the role, champions are required to go to the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota, to learn about various tests and technology and receive training to hold support group sessions, she said.

"It helps that women are trained in those specifics, making sure they have equal access to testing and treatment. We need the training so we know what we are talking about," Griggs said. "Women have higher rates [of] depression, and depression and heart disease go hand-in-hand. And women speak better with other women."

Griggs now leads monthly meetings for women in Santa Barbara County alongside fellow champion Lou Ann Topping, where they meet with women on Zoom to swap information about heart disease, share their own stories, and hear from fellow group members. Prior to the pandemic shutdown, the women used to meet at Santa Barbara's Sansum Clinic, but the shift to Zoom opened the

meeting up to more women across the county, Topping said.

The champions also attend local events and health fairs, including the Santa Maria Health Fair at Waller Park, to present information about heart disease symptoms, encourage women to see their doctor to learn more, and get the word out about their support groups.

"We educate the women on the spot, and if they have any questions, they are free to ask us. We go off, away from the table, and talk one-on-one," Topping said.

Topping often shares her experience when she had a "massive" heart attack in January 2016 when she was visiting her daughter in Washington state. After initial treatment, she came back to Santa Barbara and had a cardiology appointment where she saw a WomenHeart pamphlet in her exam room, she said. She went to the meetings for almost a year before agreeing to become a champion herself.

"We're there to listen, and we always tell them our story, and I think it's important for them to know that we have stories to tell. We're not just there to support; we know what we're talking about in that sense," Topping said.

"It's important to validate the patient's feelings, and we teach the patient how to live with heart disease, common problems, and how to improve quality of life."

Visit womenheart.org to find more information about the organization, or email whsantabarbara@womenheart.org to find out more about the local chapter.

Highlights

- The Santa Maria-Bonita Office of Family Engagement will be celebrating Black History Month with the NAACP of Santa Maria/Lompoc. On Feb. 25 from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., the two groups will be in Pioneer Park—located at 1150 W. Foster Road—with games, "culturally significant" books to distribute, arts and crafts, dance, poetry, free lunch, and information about school district and NAACP resources. The event will also have a mobile vaccine clinic that will be handing out free Starbucks gift cards to the first 200 people who get vaccinated.

- The Santa Maria Recreation and Parks Department planted 250 trees in city parks and 50 trees along sidewalks and street medians to improve quality of life in the area. The department will plant 235 15-gallon street trees as part of the Cal Fire Urban and Community Forestry Grant. An additional 125 large trees will be planted using the annual street tree budget. The department is also planting trees in front of residences. Call the Recreation and Parks Department at (805) 925-0951, Ext. 2260, if interested in having a tree planted in the easement near a home. ○

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

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Housing the unsheltered

How much does providing shelter to the homeless cost all of us?

BY RON FINK

Now that the “unsheltered” (homeless people) are being provided with what the homeless advocates call adequate temporary housing, how much is it costing? In Lompoc a few months ago, the city decided to “clean up” some property east of the airport so it could be leased to farmers (previously the homeless had trashed the place and ruined farm crops). In the process, 43 homeless individuals were removed from the adjacent riverbed and their trash-strewn encampments removed.

According to a Feb. 7 staff report, the city manager reported that the city estimated it would cost \$100,000 (for the fencing project), however: “The fencing was \$86,351, police staffing for assisting in removal of encampments was approximately \$11,535, dumping fees were \$10,753, solid waste staff \$15,400, and professional cleaning services was \$7,519, for a total \$120,805.”

So, a \$20,000 overrun and two large piles of vegetation remain in the field, and the homeless have returned to the nearby riverbed.

He also said, “There are a number of homeless persons that have relocated within the city that had been identified during the 2018 cleanup. Those individuals are known as ‘services resistant’ and pose a greater health concern and will need additional outreach to find permanent solutions. During the outreach for the parcels east of the airport, there were 43 individuals identified, of which only four, or (9 percent) had ever lived in close proximity to Lompoc.”

The city manager didn’t try to explain how or why the other 39 came here and proposed that “regional jurisdictions need to start looking at the homeless problems in Lompoc differently and transition from emergency sheltering to transitional shelters and provide services to help the homeless find permanent solutions.”

Well, they are trying transitional shelters down in Santa Barbara; a recent news article pointed out their experience and some facts that we should consider. The project in downtown Santa Barbara is far removed from multimillion-dollar homes in the city (we don’t want “those people” in our neighborhood) in a former parking lot and on excess city property; it has space for 234 individuals.

If a project of sufficient size to accommodate the approximately 200 homeless people in our city were built in Lompoc, it would have a sustained cost of \$12 million a year based on the Santa Barbara experience. And I am guessing that there aren’t enough well-heeled people in our town to pay for the tiny shelters.

The project was completed in February 2022, it is fully occupied, and there is a substantial waiting list of needy new residents. There is no indication of how much these temporary, relocatable, code complaint, pre-built shelters cost to build.

According to an article in the *Santa Barbara News-Press* (“A place they can call home,” Feb. 24, 2023), “Neighbors will tell you they notice a visible difference,” Ms. Elizabeth Funk, the CEO of Dignity Moves said. “There are no more people sleeping on the stairs in front of the art museum. The project gets them off the streets and gets them out of survival mode. It is a measurable and visible impact. Most people offered a bed in a group shelter won’t go,” she said. “Nobody has turned this down. It gives us a chance to help them resolve underlying issues.”

These aren’t luxury accommodations; a single is 64 square feet (about the size of a walk-in closet), and they allow

94 square feet for couples (about the size of an office cubicle). There are shared restrooms and shower facilities, a laundry area, and kitchen/dining area.

But it’s safer than the street, warm in winter, cool in summer, and dry year-round.

“The project is paid two-thirds by philanthropy and one-third by the county for the construction,” Funk said.

The county with your tax dollars supports ongoing “services.” Each individual costs \$60,000 per year; to put this in perspective it would cost \$14 million annually to provide ongoing services for the 234 people living in the Santa Barbara project. For reverence, \$60,000 is more than the median income of a large majority of the families who will pay the bill and is equivalent to someone earning \$30 an hour for a full-time job.

Lompoc City Councilman Dirk Starbuck was concerned about the Lompoc Airport fence project cost: “The Lompoc citizens are among the lowest median income throughout the county, and their tax dollars are very limited and should be used for their service levels. This cleanup was, what, approximately \$120,000 split between general fund and airport and all, but irregardless, \$120,000 to help four citizens,” he said.

Councilman Starbuck and the other council members might be more concerned if they considered that if a project of sufficient size to accommodate the approximately 200 homeless people in our city were built in Lompoc, it would have a sustained cost of \$12 million a year based on the Santa Barbara experience. And I am guessing that there aren’t enough well-heeled people in our town to pay for the tiny shelters.

The only obligation a community has is to offer the “unsheltered” a place to stay, then if the person refuses, they can be put on a bus for another place. So, if as the CEO of Dignity Moves says, “Most people offered a bed in a group shelter won’t go,” they should be given a one-way ticket out of town because Lompoc simply can’t afford the sustained cost for services. ○

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

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LETTERS

Thanks, Sun and New Times, for keeping us informed!

I appreciate your continuing to deliver the *New Times* as well as the Santa Maria *Sun* and the Santa Ynez paper to the Village Market in Vandenberg Village. It is good to keep up with southern San Luis Obispo County activities. Once the new Village Inn reopens, please consider including them as well.

I particularly like the “This Modern World” cartoon, which aren’t in the online edition.

I get a kick out of The Shredder and The Canary commentaries.

Several years ago, you included some material on my KCPR efforts (“Support real local radio,” May 18, 2011). At 70-plus, I was probably the oldest working college DJ (aka musical host).

Keep up the great work!

Charles “Charlie B” Blair
Lompoc

'Old-World charm'

Modernity isn't a word anyone would associate with Solvang, and the city's Design Review Committee would like to keep it that way.

The committee, which was revamped a few years ago to allow for more wiggle room when it comes to new building design concepts in the city, was nonplussed with the audacity of a proposed apartment building to be a bit too edgy, let's say.

"Where's the Old-World charm in this design?" committee member Christopher Lapp asked. "Is there another building in all of Santa Ynez or Solvang that looks like this?"

He should have just asked: "For heaven's sake, what about this design screams Copenhagen to you?"

But, alas, the building in question sits just outside of the Denmark design district, aka downtown Solvang. So he couldn't very well ask that, could he?

Project architect Avraham Mittelman said he was under the impression that the city didn't want Danish-style architecture outside of the Solvang Village District. In fact, he said, the city wants new projects to look different than the city's downtown core, which is why he designed the building the way he did.

Well, it's not that they want Danish-style architecture, Mr. Mittelman, because this project is located outside of that particular zoning area. But they do want Danish-style architecture, if you know what they mean.

While the committee members unanimously rejected the boxy, modern, sleek design of the multi-family building on Fifth Street, they didn't give specific direction on what exactly they

would approve. I'll give you one guess: They're looking for storybook

quality design aesthetics with a bucolic European cottage feel.

Get with the times, Solvang. Boxy apartment buildings are definitely a thing, and will be a thing for the future. Square edges without a lot of additional design are also efficient, which makes them cheaper to build—aka, more affordable (something we really want in this state). In the next decade, there will likely be multiple buildings in the Santa Ynez Valley that look just like the one proposed—and according to Planning Manager Sophia Checa, the committee just approved a similarly designed building last year!

So what's the deal with this building? It's on the cusp. It's adjacent to the Solvang Village District, which no one said, but I'm going to say it.

State housing law basically forbids cities from imposing subjective design criteria on housing developments. And the city's assistant attorney warned the committee against making any recommendations that might reduce the density of the proposed housing, because the state doesn't like that either.

Welp. That's going to be a tricky needle to thread, so now we've got an ad hoc committee made up of design committee members to work with the developer and city staff to come up with an "appropriate" design for this six-unit building. Sounds like a lot of effort for such a small thing.

But that's what Solvang is all about! A lot of effort to ensure uniformity and "Old-World charm." It's exhausting. ○

The Canary's wings are very tired. Send airplane tickets to canary@santamariasun.com.



55 Fiction

A brief story, fifty-five words or less, with a headline no longer than seven words.

We accept entries to our annual **55 Fiction** writing contest all year long. Entries submitted by **5pm Monday, June 19, 2023** will be considered for this year's publications which will be out on **July 27, 2023**.

For more details:

bit.ly/55Fiction

NewTimes

Sun

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

BARNUM, JOHN F, 63, of Santa Maria, passed away 2/7/2023 arrangements with Lori Family Mortuary

BOUSE, ROBIN MARIE, 64, of San Luis Obispo passed away 2/9/2023 arrangements with Marshall-Spoo Sunset Funeral Chapel

CHASE, ROBERT A., 62, of Santa Maria passed away 2/13/2023 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

DEAN, KELLY, 64, of Cayucos, passed away 2/13/2023 arrangements with Blue Sky Cremation Service

DIAX MICHAEL L., 58, of Santa Maria passed away 2/16/2023 arrangements with Magner-Maloney Funeral Home & Crematory

DIAZ, KARINA MARIE, 36, of Santa Maria passed away 2/5/2023 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

DUBOIS, JO ANN, 88, of Grover Beach passed away 1/31/2023 arrangements with Marshall-Spoo Sunset Funeral Chapel

ELLIOTT, BRADLEY ROBERT, 27, of Bradley passed away 2/10/2023 arrangements with Marshall-Spoo Sunset Funeral Chapel

FAUBUS, DALTON T., 23, of Santa Maria passed away 2/15/2023 arrangements with Magner-Maloney Funeral Home & Crematory

FIERMAN, LAREY ALAN, 73, of Oceano passed away 2/9/2023 arrangements with Marshall-Spoo Sunset Funeral Chapel

GONZALEZ, NELLIE J., 90, of Santa Maria passed away 2/20/2023 arrangements with Magner-Maloney Funeral Home & Crematory

GUERRERO, RALPH, 96, of Santa Marira passed away 2/10/2023 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

HADSELL, JEAN P., 94, of Santa Maria passed away 2/17/2023 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

HARDCASTLE, MARCIA EMELIA, 77, of Pismo Beach passed away 2/14/2023 arrangements with Marshall-Spoo Sunset Funeral Chapel

HOERIG, BARRY, 65, of Santa Maria passed away 1/25/2023 arrangements with Magner-Maloney Funeral Home & Crematory

HOOVER, PATRICK, 79, of Solvang passed away 2/8/2023 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

HUSTON, JOSHUA RICHARD, 42, of Santa Maria, passed away 2/13/2023 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

JOHNSON, LARRY, 81, of Santa Maria passed away 2/11/2023 arrangements with Magner-Maloney Funeral Home & Crematory

KRISELL, MARY JANE, 72, of Grover Beach passed away 2/6/2023 arrangements with Marshall-Spoo Sunset Funeral Chapel

KURTZE, CAROL ANN, 72, of Santa Maria passed away 2/6/2023 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

LENZ, ETHEL, 88, of Arroyo Grande passed away 2/8/2023 arrangements with Marshall-Spoo Sunset Funeral Chapel

LEON, ESTHER, 83, of Guadalupe passed away 2/12/2023 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

MARTINEZ, CARLITO "LITO" SR., 70, of Santa Maria passed away 2/8/2023 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

MCBRIDE, JOANN, 93, of Santa Maria passed away 2/15/2023 arrangements with Magner-Maloney Funeral Home & Crematory

MCCALLUM, RITA M., 88, of Nipomo passed away 2/16/2023 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

MENDOZA, HORTENSE, 78, of San Miguel passed away 2/8/2023 arrangements with Blue Sky Cremation Service

MONTEZ, RUDOLPH, 73, of Santa Maria, passed away 2/15/2023 arrangements with Magner-Maloney Funeral Home & Crematory

MORENO, ALVINO YRACHETA, 67, of Arroyo Grande passed away 2/5/2023 arrangements with Marshall-Spoo Sunset Funeral Chapel

MOSS, HAROLD C., 92, of Santa Maria passed away 2/10/2023 arrangements with Magner-Maloney Funeral Home & Crematory

NIETMAN, JYTTE "JUNE", 80, of Santa Maria passed away 2/13/2023 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

RANDOLPH, TERRY LEE, 67, of Orcutt passed away 2/11/2023 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

ROWLEY, RICHARD "DICK", 78, of Arroyo Grande passed away 2/8/2023 arrangements with Marshall-Spoo Sunset Funeral Chapel

RUPERT, CLIVE, 61, of Templeton passed away 2/10/2023 arrangements with Blue Sky Cremation Service

SHIROMA, YOSHIKO, 93, of Santa Maria passed away 2/13/2023 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

TEACKER, CODY TYLER, 29, of Santa Maria passed away 2/3/2023 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

THOMPSON, JOAN A., 83, of Santa Maria passed away 2/16/2023 arrangements with Dudley-Hoffman Mortuary, Crematory & Memory Gardens

What's Your Take?

This week's online poll
2/23-3/2

We know you've got an opinion.
Everybody's got one!

What's the most memorable type of wedding favor you've received?

- Customized and homemade household items.
- A whole bottle of wine or beer!
- Other consumable treats—chocolate, tea, coffee.
- I don't keep wedding favors.

Enter your choice online at: SantaMariaSun.com

Sun



BETWEEN THE STRINGS

Festival Mozaic hosts its next Notable Dinner event on Saturday, Feb. 25, from 5:30 to 9:30 p.m., at the DANA Adobe and Cultural Center in Nipomo. Music director and violinist Scott Yoo (pictured) will give a music talk during the event, which will also feature wine and a three-course dinner. Call (805) 781-3009 or visit festivalmozaic.org for more info on the program. The DANA Adobe and Cultural Center is located at 671 S. Oakglen Ave., Nipomo.

—Caleb Wiseblood

FILE COURTESY PHOTO BY BRIAN P. LAWLER

ARTS

SANTA MARIA VALLEY/LOS ALAMOS

THE RIVER BRIDE BY MARISELA

TREVIÑO ORTA Marisela Treviño Orta describes her lyrical play as a "grim latino fairy tale" swimming with mystery, family, true-love, and unexpected visitors. Through March 5 \$49. 805-922-8313. pcpa.org/events/the-river-bride. PCPA: The Pacific Conservatory Theatre, 800 S. College, Santa Maria.

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

CRAFTWORKS: STRING ART Create a one-of-a-kind string art design. This workshop will teach how to create a unique piece of art using corkboard, embroidery floss, and pushpins. Use one of the provided templates or freehand design your own. Registration is required. **Feb. 25**, 10:30 a.m. Free. 805-925-0994. Santa Maria Public Library, 421 S. McClelland St., Santa Maria.

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

LEARN CALIFORNIA'S OFFICIAL DANCE: WEST COAST SWING Learn west coast swing in a casual, friendly environment, taught by Texas state swing champion, Gina Sigman. No partner needed. Tuesdays, 6:30-8:15 p.m. Beginning class is free; \$10 for advanced. 805-344-1630.

Cubanissimo Cuban Coffee House, 4869 S. Bradley Rd., #118, Orcutt.

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/Lessons/lessons.html. Coelho Academy of Music, 325 E. Betteravia Rd., Santa Maria.

ORCUTT CHILDREN'S ARTS FOUNDATION GALA OCAF's annual gala features a live and silent auction, entertainment by Unfinished With The Beatles, and comedian Steve Mittleman who will serve as MOC and auctioneer. **Feb. 25**, 5 p.m. my805tix.com. Radisson Hotel, 3455 Airpark Dr., Santa Maria.

READ ACROSS AMERICA STORY TIME Recognize Read Across America, with a special story time celebrating the privilege and joy of reading. Story time is designed to build literacy skills and school readiness, all while having a great time. **March 2**, 10 a.m. 805-925-0994. engagedpatrons.org. Santa Maria Public Library (Altrusa Theater), 421 S. McClelland St., Santa Maria.

SPRING READING PROGRAM IN-N-OUT COVER TO COVER The popular In-N-Out Reading Program returns. Sign up at any SMPPL location, track books, read, and receive rewards for every five books completed. Final date to redeem is April 29, while supplies last. For ages 4-12. Sponsored and provided by In-N-Out. **March 4-April 15** 805-925-0994. engagedpatrons.org. Santa Maria Public Library (Altrusa Theater), 421 S. McClelland St., Santa Maria.

UCSB: WE DANCE FOR YOU! Under the direction of Delila Moseley, with MC Nathan Burdine-Ortega leading the show, budding artists perform high-energy, entertaining dances from modern dance to hip-hop to swing and folkloric. With awe-inspiring

moves and audience engagement, We Dance for You! is an uplifting performance. **March 4**, 11:30 a.m. 805-925-0994.

engagedpatrons.org. Shepard Hall Art Gallery - Santa Maria Public Library, 421 South 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. anc.apm.activecommunities.com/santamaria/activity/search?activity_keyword=ukulele. Elwin Mussell Senior Center, 510 Park Ave., Santa Maria.

VALENTINE DOLLS, CARDS, AND MEMORABILIA An ongoing exhibit from the Santa Maria Doll Club for month of February. This showcase is one of many the club has provided for the community for more than 10 years. The club was recently awarded the National UFDC Award of Excellence for Display of Dolls. Mondays-Sundays. through March 1 Free. 805-733-1261. ufdc.org. 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.

LEARN CALIFORNIA'S OFFICIAL DANCE: WEST COAST SWING Learn to dance west coast swing in a casual, friendly environment. No partner needed. Taught by Gina Sigman. Thursdays, 6:30-8:15 p.m. Beginning class is free; \$10 for advanced. 805-344-1630. High Roller Tiki Lounge, 433 Alisal Road, Solvang.

SEEING OURSELVES IN COLOR The exhibition, Seeing Ourselves in Colour, showcases Annie Hoffman's innate ability to capture the feelings and emotions of those she paints and brings a whimsy and light to her work. Mondays-Sundays, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. through Feb. 28 Free. 805-688-7517. gallerylosolivos.com. Gallery Los Olivos, 2920 Grand Ave., Los Olivos.

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.

LOMPOC/VANDBERG

PHOTOGRAPHY EXHIBIT BY SUSANNE SCHENCK "The Quest for Hidden Gems in California" at Cypress Gallery by Susanne Schenck. Thursdays-Sundays, 11 a.m.-4 p.m. through Feb. 26 Free. 805-737-1129. Cypress Gallery, 119 E Cypress Ave., Lompoc, lompcart.org.

WATER: THE LOMPOC TEN Featuring a diverse collection of artworks in various media centered on bodies of water from several artists. Through Feb. 28 Grossman Gallery, 501 E. North Ave., Lompoc, 805-875-8775.

SOUTH COAST SLO COUNTY

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

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

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.

ART EXHIBIT: NEEDLING Featuring the Cutting Edge Fiber Art Group. Reception on March 4. Through April 3, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Free. 805-747-4200. artcentralslo.com/gallery/. Art Central, 1329 Monterey St., San Luis Obispo.

ARTIST RIKI SCHUMACHER AT ART CENTRAL GALLERY Schumacher's work is pensive and introspective, inspiring one to take a solitary walk on a cloudy day. Wander in to reflect on her "delicious, wistful landscapes." Mondays-Saturdays, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. and Sundays, 12-4 p.m. Free.

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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.

SUBMIT YOUR EVENTS

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Music	24



Shakti: Embodying the Goddess for Empowered Life Change
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 23
 9th Limb Yoga, Morro Bay



SLO Comedy Festival
 (17 Events)
THURS, FRI, SAT, FEBRUARY 23-25
 Multiple venues: SLO, Avila, Paso



Be Hoppy Tours: Sip of SLO Brewery/Cidery Tours
THURSDAYS & SUNDAYS THRU JUNE 29
 Begins/ends at CC Brewing, SLO



Musica Latina en Vivo: La Marcha Sound
FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 24
 Flower City Ballroom, Lompoc



Be Hoppy Tours: Friday Hoppy Hour Tours
FRIDAYS THRU JUNE 30
 Begins/ends at CC Brewing, SLO



By the Sea Productions: The Psychic
FRI, SAT, SUN, THRU MARCH 12
 545 Shasta Ave, Morro Bay



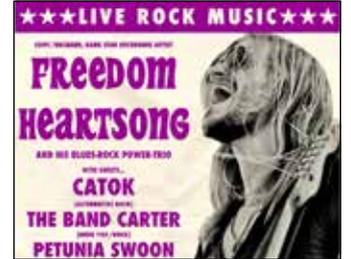
Nature Nights: Immersive Outdoor Holiday Light & Art Exhibition
FRI, SAT, SUN THRU MARCH 19
 SLO Botanical Garden



Point San Luis Lighthouse Tours
SATURDAYS & WEDNESDAYS
 Virtual Tours Available On Demand
 Avila Beach



Orcutt Children's Arts Foundation Gala
SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 25
 Radisson Hotel, Santa Maria



Freedom Heartsong, CatOk, The Band Carter, Petunia Swoon
SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 25
 Flower City Ballroom, Lompoc

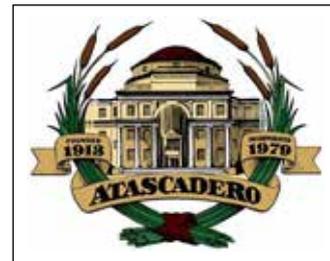


South Bay Seniors: Diggin' Deep Los Osos Disaster Relief
SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 26
 South Bay Community Center, Los Osos



Basin Street Regulars: The Cell Block Seven & Cuesta College Jazz Band
SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 26
 Pismo Beach Veterans' Hall

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info@My805Tix.com



City of Atascadero: Accessibility Training
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 28
 Pavilion on the Lake, Atascadero



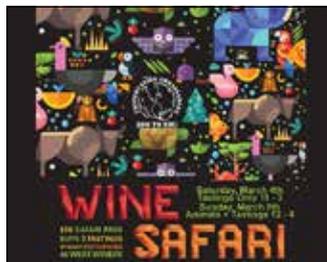
Mo Jazz
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 28
 Harold J. Miossi CPAC, Cuesta College, SLO



City of Atascadero: Disabled Access & Code Changes Forum
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 1
 Pavilion on the Lake, Atascadero



Flannel 101 ('90s Tribute Band)
FRIDAY, MARCH 3
 Flower City Ballroom, Lompoc



46 West Wine Safari Weekend
SAT & SUN, MARCH 4 & 5
 Hwy 46 Wineries, Paso Robles



Anomaly House: Mélange de Funk Deep Funky House Music on Vinyl
SATURDAY, MARCH 4
 Flower City Ballroom, Lompoc



Pilates/Kayak to the Lighthouse
SUNDAY, MARCH 5
 Point San Luis Lighthouse, Avila Beach



AT HER TABLE: Celebrating Women Owned Food & Beverage Businesses
MON-SUN, MARCH 6-12
 Multiple venues across SLO County



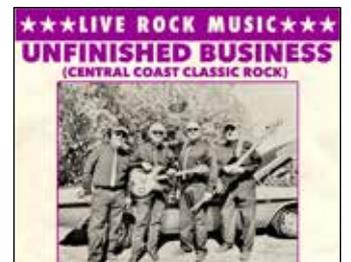
At Her Table: Orange Wine & Chakra Pairing
TUESDAY, MARCH 7
 Timshel Vineyards, Paso Robles



The Gearworx: Goth, Industrial, Darkwave, & More w/ DJ Neon Maniac
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 8
 Flower City Ballroom, Lompoc



Almost, Maine
FRI, SAT, SUN, MARCH 10-26
 Santa Maria Civic Theatre, Santa Maria



Unfinished Business (Central Coast Classic Rock)
FRIDAY, MARCH 10
 Flower City Ballroom, Lompoc

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Scan QR code with camera to sign up for the weekly **Ticket Wire** newsletter and get all the latest events each Wednesday.

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805-747-4200. artcentralslo.com/gallery-artists/. Art Central, 1329 Monterey St., San Luis Obispo.

BANFF MOUNTAIN FILM FESTIVAL Bringing "the World's Best Mountain Film Festival" to San Luis Obispo. Features two movie screening nights. **Feb. 24**, 7-10 p.m. and **Feb. 25**, 7-10 p.m. \$25-\$45. 509-951-6793. livetoplay.com. The Fremont Theater, 1035 Monterey St., San Luis Obispo.

BEACON ART SHOW A juried show held annually. The community is invited to enter up to five pieces of art. The show's opening night will be March 3. This year's theme is Artistic Spectrum. Fridays-Sundays, through April 2 Free. 805-544-4608. San Luis Obispo United Methodist Church, 1515 Fredericks Street, San Luis Obispo.

COLORS OF CONSERVATION: SPRING 2023 ART EXHIBIT San Luis Outdoor Painters for the Environment (SLOPE) and The Land Conservancy of SLO County announce this annual exhibit of original landscape paintings from artist members of SLOPE. **March 3**, 4-7 p.m. and **March 4**, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Free admission. 805-544-9096. slope-painters.com. Octagon Barn Center, 4400 Octagon Way, San Luis Obispo.

COMEDY HOUSE Comedy House features live comedy from improvisers and stand-up comedians followed by a house music after party. These popular events fill up and sell out fast. **Feb. 25**, 7-9 p.m. \$20. centralcoastcomedytheater.com. The Siren at El Chorro, 2990 Dairy Creek Rd., San Luis Obispo, 805-541-1149.

CRITICAL ENCOUNTERS Beginning with monoprints and photography from the 1980s, this exhibition follows the lineage of Nixon Borah's practice towards his recent digital composites. Through April 3, 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Free. 805-543-8562. sloma.org/exhibits/current/. San Luis Obispo Museum of Art, 1010 Broad St., 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.

HOME/WORK Features the work of 14 contemporary artists whose work questions our collective experiences of home: Brandy Eve Allen, Zalika Azim, Kate Barbee, Phoebe Boswell, Andrea Bowers, Allana Clarke, Geoffrey Chadsey, Judy Chicago, Mary Kelly, Emmett Moore, Sophia Narrett, Woody de Othello, Greg Scott, and Chiffon Thomas. Through March 5, 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Free. 805-543-8562. sloma.org/exhibition/home-work/. San Luis Obispo Museum of Art, 1010 Broad St., 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. Discuss color theory, layering paint, and how to use various media. Each student will create a dynamic landscape using a reference image provided by the teacher. Thursdays, 10:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. through March 30 \$35 per class. 559-250-3081. 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.

LIZ MARUSKA'S ART: ENJOYING BIG SUR Wander through Maruska's

spellbinding impressions of this iconic seashore in a euphoric and inspiring display of art rendered in a luminous palette of colors that glows with vitality. **March 3-31** Free. 805-550-3308. SLOProvisions.com. SLO Provisions, 1255 Monterey St., San Luis Obispo.

THE MONDAY CLUBHOUSE CONSERVANCY: 62ND FINE ARTS AWARDS Enjoy an afternoon of music and visual art at the historic Monday Club. Family-friendly entertainment includes performances by talented high school students in jazz and classical music, and visual arts. Features light refreshments. **Feb. 26**, 1:30-4 p.m. Free at the door. 805-441-8572. themondayclubslslo.org. The Monday Club, 1815 Monterey St., San Luis Obispo.

NATURE NIGHTS An immersive exhibition for the entire family featuring Bryn Forbes' large format projections, Michael Reddell's wire sculpture, and Kody Cava's colorfully creative illumination of the garden areas. Food, wine, and beer available for purchase. Fridays, Saturdays, 6-8 p.m. through March 18 \$14.75-\$24.75. 805-541-1400. slobg.org. San Luis Obispo Botanical Garden, 3450 Dairy Creek Rd., 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.

RING OF FIRE: THE MUSIC OF JOHNNY CASH From the songbook of Johnny Cash comes this unique, original musical about love and faith, struggle and success, rowdiness and redemption, and the healing power of home and family. Through March 12 slorep.org. San Luis Obispo Repertory Theatre, 888 Morro St., San Luis Obispo, 805-786-2440.

SLO COMEDY FESTIVAL The festival will host 20 different shows across 10 different venues in SLO. Visit website for more info. **Feb. 23-26** slocomedyfestival.com. San Luis Obispo, Citywide, SLO.

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

NORTH COAST SLO COUNTY

AQUARIUS 2023 CALIFORNIA OPEN WATERMEDIA EXHIBITION Annual juried exhibition presented by Central Coast Watercolor Society, featuring varied watermedia styles and techniques by California artists. Winners and prizes will be awarded at the Feb. 26 reception. **Feb. 23-April 3**, 12-4 p.m. Free. 805-772-2504. ccwsart.com. Art Center Morro Bay, 835 Main St., Morro Bay.

ART AND ABOUT MORRO BAY Join us for Art and About Morro Bay, a self-guided art walk that gives the community an opportunity to experience visual, literary, and performing art in galleries and other venues. Visit site for a map of locations. (Events will not occur on major holidays). Fourth Saturday of every month, 1-4 p.m. Free. 805-544-9251. artsobispo.org/art-and-about. Morro Bay (participating artists), Townwide, Morro Bay.

CALL FOR ARTISTS: CAMBRIA CENTER FOR THE ARTS Seeking art to accompany the gallery's March-April exhibit, Finding the Light, featuring artist Liz Hampton-Derivan. Artists are invited to exhibit in our member's wings. Visit site for online submittals. **Feb. 24**-noon Members: \$5 per submittal. cambriaarts.org/call-artists/. Cambria Center for the Arts, 1350 Main St., Cambria.

COASTAL WINE AND PAINT PARTY Listen to music while enjoying an afternoon of creativity, sipping, and



BORN TO BE WILD

On Thursday, March 2, UCSB professor Peter Alagona will host a talk about his new book, The Accidental Ecosystem: People and Wildlife in American Cities, at St. Mark's-in-the-Valley in Los Olivos. The event will begin at 7 p.m. in Stacy Hall and will also be streamed via Zoom. This program is hosted by the Santa Ynez Valley Natural History Society. Visit syvnature.org for more info on the event.

—C.W.

mingling. Event lasts up to 2 hours. The party includes a complimentary glass of wine and canvas with materials. Saturdays, 12:30-2:30 p.m. \$50. 805-394-5560. coastalwineandpaint.com. Harmony Cafe at the Pewter Plough, 824 Main St., Cambria.

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

COSTA GALLERY SHOWCASES Features works by Ellen Jewett as well as 20 other local artists, and artists from southern and northern California. Jewett's work is also on display at Nautical Bean in Laguna shopping center during February. Thursdays-Saturdays, 11 a.m.-4 p.m. and Sundays, 12-4 p.m. 559-799-9632. costagallery.com. Costa Gallery, 2087 10th St., Los Osos.

FINDING THE LIGHT FEATURING LIZ HAMPTON-DERIVAN Cambria Center for the Arts features artist Liz Hampton-Derivan, an accomplished photographer and internationally shown artist. Liz has begun experimenting with mixed media, hot and cold wax, paints, and pastels to create an exhibit of unexpected and delightful imagery. Fridays-Sundays, 12-4 p.m. through April 30 Free. cambriaarts.org. Cambria Center for the Arts, 1350 Main St., Cambria.

FOREVER STOKED PAINT PARTY Join us at the gallery, for a few hours to travel on a creative paint journey. 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.

FRANK EBER WATERCOLOR DEMO AND LECTURE Frank Eber will present a lecture and watercolor demonstration on finding your style and creativity in your art. Pique your interest for his upcoming workshop in June. Space is limited. **Feb. 25**, 10 a.m.-12:30 p.m. \$25 members; \$30 non-members. cambriaarts.org. Cambria Center for the Arts, 1350 Main St., Cambria.

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

NEW BEGINNINGS A local artists' exhibit of fine arts and crafts featuring oil paintings, watercolors, collage, pottery, and more. Fridays-Sundays, 12-4 p.m. through Feb. 26 Free. cambriaarts.org. Cambria Center for the Arts, 1350 Main St., Cambria.

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. ongoing 805-772-9955. Seven Sisters Gallery, 601 Embarcadero Ste. 8, Morro Bay, sevensistersgalleryca.com.

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. 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.

HOMEWORK HELP: SANTA MARIA PUBLIC LIBRARY Volunteer tutors are

available to help with assignments and work on skills. For children in grades K-6. First come, first served; no sign-ups are required. No events scheduled between April 10 and 13. Mondays-Thursdays, through May 25 Free. 805-925-0994. engagedpatrons.org. Santa Maria Public Library, 421 S. McClelland St., Santa Maria.

LEGO CLUB Stop by the library for an afternoon of Lego madness. Meet with other Lego fans, build together, or build your own creation. **March 1**, 4 p.m. 805-925-0994. engagedpatrons.org. Santa Maria Public Library (Altrusa Theater), 421 S. McClelland St., Santa Maria.

PAWS TO READ: SANTA MARIA PUBLIC LIBRARY Reading aloud to dogs is a wonderful way for children to gain confidence. These dogs love books and are excellent listeners. For ages 6-12. Contact Youth services to register for a 15-minute time slot. **Feb. 28** Free. 805-925-0994. engagedpatrons.org. Santa Maria Public Library, 421 S. McClelland St., Santa Maria.

PRESCHOOL YOGA STORY TIME: SANTA MARIA PUBLIC LIBRARY Come for a morning of yoga, stories, and breathing exercises. Children are introduced to mindfulness and learn exercises to help regulate emotions. Space and supplies are limited. Yoga mats provided, or bring one from home. For ages 3-5. **Feb. 24** Free. 805-925-0994. engagedpatrons.org. Santa Maria Public Library, 421 S. McClelland St., Santa Maria.

SANTA MARIA PUBLIC LIBRARY: IF/ THEN GENDER EQUITY FAMILY STEAM PACKS Packs feature a fun project and highlights a female leader in their STEAM field. This project was supported in whole or in part by the If/Then Initiative, a national effort sponsored by Lyda Hill Philanthropies. **March 4** Free. 805-925-0994. engagedpatrons.org. Santa Maria Public Library, 421 S. McClelland St., Santa Maria.

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

TEEN CANDLE MAKING: SANTA MARIA PUBLIC LIBRARY Teens, learn to make a custom candle. Participants will learn the basics of candle making and can make one to take home. **Feb. 24** Free. 805-925-0994. engagedpatrons.org. Santa Maria Public Library, 421 S. McClelland St., Santa Maria.

TEEN GAMING Teens, come for a

Friday afternoon of gaming. Play to win or sit back and watch the action on a large screen. Light snacks will be provided. **March 3**, 4:30 p.m. 805-925-0994. engagedpatrons.org. Shepard Hall Art Gallery - Santa Maria Public Library, 421 South McClelland St., Santa Maria.

TODDLER TIME: SANTA MARIA PUBLIC LIBRARY High-energy learning experience for toddlers and caregivers. Grow through stories, movement, and music. Tuesdays, Thursdays, through Feb. 23 Free. 805-925-0994. engagedpatrons.org. Santa Maria Public Library, 421 S. McClelland St., Santa Maria.

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

YOUTH CODING AND CULTURE: SANTA MARIA PUBLIC LIBRARY Learn how to code and make a difference through coding, STEM careers, and more. Ages 9-14. Registration required. Thursdays, through Feb. 23 Free. 805-925-0994. engagedpatrons.org. Santa Maria Public Library, 421 S. McClelland St., Santa Maria.

YOUTH FAMILY HISTORY PACK: ALL LOCATIONS Learn and track family history with the Youth Family History Pack. Create a family tree, fill in information on relatives, ask questions, and share stories with loved ones while documenting and learning your family's history. Program funded in part or whole by California State Library. **March 4** 805-925-0994. engagedpatrons.org. Santa Maria Public Library, 421 S. McClelland St., Santa Maria.

LOMPOC/VANDENBERG

SLEEP IN HEAVENLY PEACE: BUILD DAY Volunteers ages 12 and older needed to build 50 beds for local children. No experience necessary. New twin sized bedding can be dropped off during the Build, along with bed-in-a-bag, sheet sets, comforters, pillows, and mattress protectors. Register online. Lunch provided by Coastal Dogg. **Feb. 25**, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. 805-423-1180. shpbeds.org. Lompoc Foursquare Church, 125 North C St. Lompoc, Lompoc.

SOUTH COAST SLO COUNTY

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

FREE SEMINAR: THE TRUTH ABOUT DOWNSIZING AND DECLUTTERING Leave with a simple plan to downsize, organize, and declutter your life. Be prepared for a future move. **March 2**, 10-11:30 a.m. Free. 805-710-2415. Hilton Garden Inn, 601 James Way, 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.

PILATES AND KAYAK TO THE LIGHTHOUSE Paddle a kayak out to the Point San Luis Lighthouse for a one of a kind Pilates session led by Vanessa Dominguez of Tabula Rasa Pilates. **March 5**, 10 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.

WEEKLY WATER SAFETY LESSONS

CULTURE & LIFESTYLE continued page 23

CULTURE & LIFESTYLE from page 22
Facility advertised as open and safe. Give the office a call to register over the phone. Mondays-Fridays \$160-\$190. 805-481-6399. 5 Cities Swim School, 425 Traffic Way, Arroyo Grande, 5citieswimschool.com.

SAN LUIS OBISPO

THE 54TH COAST ARTILLERY REGIMENT: BLACK TROOPS SERVING ON THE CENTRAL COAST DURING WWII Part of the 2023 Speaker Series with authors, historians and veterans. Guest historian Erik Brun shares the story of the Black troops who served on the Central Coast of California during WWII in celebration of Black History Month. **Feb. 28**, 2-3 p.m. Free admission. 805-543-1762. vetmuseum.org/events. Central Coast Veterans Memorial Museum, 801 Grand Ave., suite 102, San Luis Obispo.

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

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

BIRDS AND BOTANY MONTHLY WALK AT SLO BOTANICAL GARDEN The Garden is excited to present a monthly bird walk series on the fourth Thursday of every month which explores the intersection of birds and botany. Fourth Thursday of every month, 8-11 a.m. \$10 for Garden

Members; \$40 for general public. 805-541-1400. slobg.org. San Luis Obispo Botanical Garden, 3450 Dairy Creek Rd., San Luis Obispo.

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

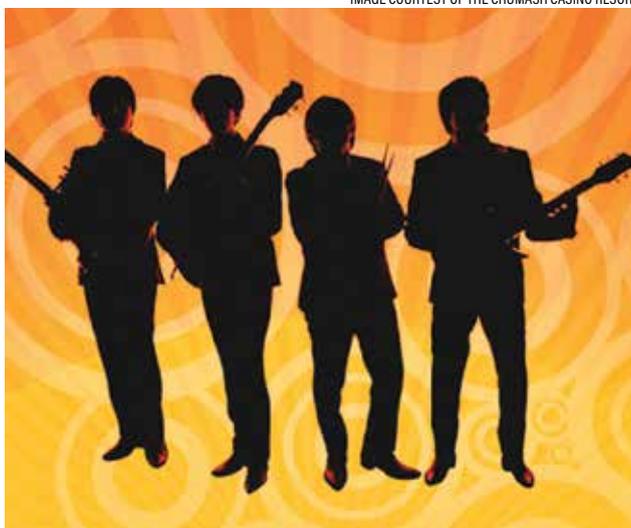
GARDEN FOUNDER WALK AND TALK Walk and talk with Eve Vigil in the Botanical Garden each month on the first Wednesday. Free garden tour with paid admission to the Garden. Free for members. No need to RSVP, just show up and enjoy. First Wednesday of every month, 11 a.m.-noon Free with \$5 Garden Entry. 805-541-1400. slobg.org. San Luis Obispo Botanical Garden, 3450 Dairy Creek Rd., San Luis Obispo.

THE GRIEF RECOVERY METHOD (ZOOM) Part of the Cuesta College Community Educational Series. Call or go online for more details. Tuesdays, 6 a.m.-8 p.m. through March 21 \$150 includes book. 714-273-9014. griefrecoverymethod.com. Online, See website, San Luis Obispo.

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

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

IMAGE COURTESY OF THE CHUMASH CASINO RESORT



RUBBER SOULS

The Chumash Casino Resort presents The Fab Four, an acclaimed Beatles tribute band, in the Samala Showroom on Saturday, Feb. 25. This live concert is scheduled to start at 8 p.m. Admission to the show ranges between \$29 and \$59. For tickets or more info, visit chumashcasino.com. The Chumash Casino Resort is located at 3400 Highway 246, Santa Ynez. —C.W.

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

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.

SOCIAL BRIDGE PLAYERS: FREE LESSONS Reservations required, at BridgeSLO@gmail.com. Proof of vaccination required. No partner needed. **Feb. 27**, 10 a.m.-noon Free. slobridge.com/. San Luis Obispo Senior Center, 1445 Santa Rosa St., San Luis Obispo.

SUNDAY EVENING RAP LGBTQ+ AA GROUP (VIRTUALLY VIA ZOOM) Alcoholics Anonymous is a voluntary, worldwide fellowship of folks from all walks of life who together, attain and maintain sobriety. Requirement for membership is a desire to stop drinking.

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

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

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

NORTH SLO COUNTY

ACCESSIBILITY TRAINING Training is presented by John Caprarello. An extensive training manual with hundreds of photos, illustrations, and examples is included. **Feb. 28**, 8 a.m.-4 p.m. my805tix.com. Pavilion on the Lake, 9315 Pismo Ave., Atascadero.

CENTRAL COAST FORWARDIST MEET AND GREET The Forward Party supports electoral reforms that will allow more than just two political parties to succeed. Here's an informal meet and greet event to learn how to get involved. **Feb. 25**, 1-3 p.m. Free. forwardparty.com/heatherr805/central_coast_forwardist_meet_and_greet. Wild Fields Brewhouse, 6907 El Camino Real, Atascadero.

DISABLED ACCESS AND CODE CHANGES FORUM A free forum for business owners, contractors, designers, and architects. Walk-ins welcome (seating is limited, so registrations recommended). **March 1**

my805tix.com. Pavilion on the Lake, 9315 Pismo Ave., Atascadero.

LIGHT, LOVE, INTUITION 101 The intention of these classes is to provide a beginning; a starting place on your path of connecting, listening, and trusting your own intuitive knowing, allowing you to become "a clearer channel for your own soul's highest good." Wednesdays, 6-7:30 p.m. through March 30 \$33-\$111. 805-464-2838. oracleatascadero.com. Oracle, 6280 Palma Ave., Atascadero.

FOOD & DRINK

SANTA MARIA VALLEY/LOS ALAMOS

COAST TO CUYAMA Venue is partnering with Santa Barbara's La Paloma Cafe for a weekend-long event celebrating the coast and the valley of Santa Barbara County. Embark on a journey through the cuisine, spirits, wines, and beauty of the West Coast. **March 3, March 4 and March 5** Based on room rate. 661-766-2825. cuyamabuckhorn.com. Cuyama Buckhorn, 4923 Primero St, New Cuyama. **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

FOOD & DRINK continued page 24

Santa Maria.
Philharmonic SOCIETY

presents
Breaking Boundaries

Listen Local Live
February 25, 2023 - 7:30pm
at Grace Baptist Church, Santa Maria

Featuring Guest Soloist
Don Foster in
Copland's Clarinet Concerto

**Tickets Available Now at
SMPHILHARMONIC.ORG**



groundbreaking works
from innovators of the 19th & 20th centuries
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STATE OF VANDENBERG SPACE FORCE BASE

MARCH 15 2023 11AM - 1PM



Scan for more info or to register.

FOOD & DRINK from page 23

Winery, 5391 Presqu'île 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/.

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

NOTABLE DINNER: FAURE TRIO Music director and violinist Scott Yoo takes you behind the music of Fauré's Piano Trio in the Dana Adobe Cultural Center in Nipomo. The evening includes a three-course dinner by Chef Michael Zimmerle of Knife + Fork Catering, and features wines from Ancient Peaks winery. **Feb. 25**, 5:30-9:30 p.m. Tickets start at \$200. 805-781-3009. festivalmozaic.org/fauredinner. DANA Adobe Cultural Center, 671 S. Oakglen Ave., Nipomo.

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.

SERATA DELLE DONNE AT FLOUR HOUSE A night dedicated to celebrating women "the Italian way." This private event is at Flour House and will have food, a bar, and a DJ. Visit site for more info and tickets. **Feb. 28**, 6-9:30 p.m. \$35. eventbrite.com. Flour House Pizza Bar & Pastaria, 690 Higuera St., San Luis Obispo, 805-544-5282.

MUSIC

SANTA MARIA VALLEY/LOS ALAMOS

BREAKING BOUNDARIES Presented by the Santa Maria Philharmonic Society. The orchestra and Maestro Michael Nowak will lead the audience through three groundbreaking works from innovators of the 19th and 20th centuries, with works from Beethoven, Copland, and others. **Feb. 25**, 7:30 p.m. 805-925-0412. smphilharmonic.org. Grace Baptist Church, 605 E. McCoy Ln., Santa Maria.

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

MUSIC AT ROSCOE'S KITCHEN Live DJ and karaoke every Friday and Saturday night. Featured acts include Soul Fyah Band, DJ Nasty, DJ Jovas, and more. Fridays, Saturdays, 9 p.m.-2 a.m. Roscoe's Kitchen, 229 Town Center E, Santa Maria, 805-623-8866.

SANTA YNEZ VALLEY

THE FAB FOUR LIVE A tribute to the Beatles. **Feb. 25**, 8 p.m. Chumash Casino Resort, 3400 E. Highway 246, Santa Ynez, 800-248-6274, chumashcasino.com/entertainment.

GEORGE CLINTON LIVE **March 4**, 8 p.m. \$49 and up. Chumash Casino Resort, 3400 E. Highway 246, Santa Ynez,

800-248-6274, chumashcasino.com/entertainment.

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

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

AN EVENING OF DEEP FUNKY HOUSE MUSIC ON VINYL WITH DJ MARTIN Presented by Anomaly House. **March 4**, 8 p.m. my805tix.com. Flower City Ballroom, 110 W. Ocean Ave., Lompoc.

FLANNEL 101 LIVE An evening of alternative rock with the Central Coast's premier '90s tribute act. All ages welcome. **March 3** \$10. my805tix.com. Flower City Ballroom, 110 W. Ocean Ave., Lompoc.

FREEDOM HEARTSONG LIVE An afternoon of live rock music featuring Freedom Heartsong and his blues-rock power trio. This show will also feature CatOK (alternative rock), and The Band Carter (indie pop/rock). Food, drink, beer, wine, and cocktails will be available for purchase. **Feb. 25**, 4 p.m. my805tix.com. Flower City Ballroom, 110 W. Ocean Ave., Lompoc.

LA MARCHA SOUND: LIVE IN CONCERT All ages welcome. Food, beer, wine, and more available for purchase. **Feb. 24**, 8 p.m. \$15. my805tix.com. Flower City Ballroom, 110 W. Ocean Ave., Lompoc.

LOMPOC CONCERT ASSOCIATION: 2022-23 SEASON

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MO JAZZ LIVE An evening celebrating jazz history with a plethora of jazz and R&B. **Feb. 28**, 7:30 p.m. my805tix.com. Cuesta College Cultural and Performing Arts Center, Highway 1, San Luis Obispo.

OPEN MIC NIGHT IN THE TASTING ROOM Kelsey Rae hosts this open mic event for music and comedy in the tasting room. Fourth Thursday of every month, 7-9 p.m. Free show. 805-721-6878. SLO Cider, 3419 Roberto Ct., Suite C, San Luis Obispo.

SHABANG BATTLE OF THE BANDS All ages welcome. **March 2**, 8 p.m. The Fremont Theater, 1035 Monterey St., San Luis Obispo, 805-546-8600, fremontslo.com.

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ARTS BRIEFS

Solvang Theaterfest announces spring concert lineup

PHOTO COURTESY OF SOLVANG THEATERFEST



In mid-February, Solvang Theaterfest released its spring lineup of upcoming outdoor concerts, scheduled to be held at the Solvang Festival Theater between the months of March and May. The concert series will kick off with urban jazz duo Peter White and Richard Elliot, who will perform on March 24, starting at 7 p.m.

White is a British guitarist known for "his lyrical and inventive approach to contemporary jazz and fusion," according to press materials from Solvang Theaterfest. Originally from Scotland, Elliot is an LA-based saxophonist and composer. Together, White and Elliot have released multiple jazz albums, including *Perfect Moment*, *Glow*, *Good Day*, and *Groovin'*.

The next concert in Solvang Theaterfest's spring lineup will be held on April 15, at 7 p.m., with classic rock group Pablo Cruise. The band includes guitarist and vocalist David Jenkins, keyboardist and vocalist Cory Lerios, bassist and vocalist Bud Cockerel, and drummer and percussionist Steve Price. "A Place in the Sun" "Whatcha Gonna Do," and "Love Will Find a Way" are among the group's most popular songs.

On May 3, the spring series will conclude with a performance by Canadian indie pop duo Tegan and Sara (pictured). The concert will start at 7 p.m. Identical twin sisters Tegan Rain Quin and Sara Keirsten Quin are both songwriters and multi-instrumentalists who have released 10 studio albums together. The pair's latest album was *Crybaby*, released during the summer of 2022.

David Silva, chair of the Solvang Theaterfest board of directors, described the spring concert series as one of the organization's efforts to bring "an eclectic mix of genres and artists" to the Solvang Festival Theater, and said the venue plans to continue hosting concerts through the end of the year.

"We are approaching this year with a promise to bring a diversified, interesting, educational set of performances to the theater throughout 2023," Silva said in press materials.

Tickets to all three concerts in Solvang Theaterfest's spring lineup are currently on sale. Tickets can be purchased online in advance at solvangtheaterfest.org.

Orcutt Children's Arts Foundation holds annual gala

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE ORCUTT CHILDREN'S ART FOUNDATION



On Feb. 25, the Orcutt Children's Arts Foundation's 2023 gala will take place at the Radisson Hotel in Santa Maria, starting at 5 p.m. The event will include live and silent auctions, live music, live comedy, and more. Tickets to the event and more info on this year's gala are available at my805tix.com.

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

Chopping and bopping

Lumberjacks in Love is a hilarious musical affair

BY CALEB WISEBLOOD

In this season of submitting income tax returns, the stars of *Lumberjacks in Love* are filing their axes.

The Great American Melodrama's latest production centers on a group of lumberjack bachelors in a small Midwest community, circa 1912.

Hilarity ensues after a bizarre misunderstanding between two of the lumberjacks results in the purchase of a mail-order bride. Antwon Mason plays Minnesota Slim, the reluctant groom-to-be, whose bachelorhood is about to end once his new bride arrives. Mia Mekjian plays Rose, the mysterious bride whose twisty backstory comes to light by the end of the show.

Minnesota Slim and Rose aren't the only two characters in the musical—which is full of catchy songs by composer James Kaplan and lyricist Fred Alley—who keep the audience guessing whether they'll actually pair up.

Sydney Ennis, a PCPA alumna in her debut role with the Great American Melodrama, plays a protagonist simply referred to as The Kid. The other lumberjacks are under the impression that The Kid, who keeps her long hair in a bun hidden under a cap, is a young man—think Roberta, disguised as a cabin boy, in Disney's *Swiss Family Robinson*.

There are hints that one of the lumberjacks, Moonlight (played by Nathan Miklas with dashes of somber subtlety in an otherwise comical romp), could be developing romantic feelings toward The Kid, which leads the woodsman to ponder his sexual orientation.

Meanwhile, The Kid has a crush on Minnesota Slim, so she plots to impersonate the mail-order bride before Rose's expected arrival date.

Shakespearean scheming and "will they, won't they" antics aside, *Lumberjacks in Love*, onstage

Timber dates

The Great American Melodrama presents its production of *Lumberjacks in Love* through March 25. The theater is located at 1863 Front St., Oceano. Call (805) 489-2499 or visit americanmelodrama.com for tickets and more info.

TO BE OR NOT TO BE: Minnesota Slim (Antwon Mason) and Dirty Bob (Toby Tropper) watch as Muskrat (Garrett Haven) verbally reflects on the notions of life and death, and what it is to be "a happy lumberjack."



POST OFFICE PAIRING: Antwon Mason (left) plays Minnesota Slim, and Mia Mekjian plays his mail-order bride, Rose, in the romantic comedy, *Lumberjacks in Love*, at the Great American Melodrama.

Showtime!
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through March 25, fits the Great American Melodrama's prerequisite for the trademark laugh-a-minute, punny humor the venue has become widely known for over the decades.

Some of the show's funniest moments are thanks to one lumberjack in particular: Dirty Bob (Toby Tropper). During the song, "Rub a Dub Dub," the lumberjacks line up, each with an old-fashioned pioneer-esque washtub in hand, which they rest on the stage floor and squat down over for some scrubbing. Just like his name would suggest, Dirty Bob sidesteps showers, and it's apparent from the other lumberjacks' unsurprised reactions that he's been boycotting baths for a while.

I won't give away the tale behind Dirty Bob's refraining from rinsing, except that it has to do with a blue bar of soap that has a Rosebud-esque

impact on his psyche. Dirty Bob leads the show's most memorable musical number, "Someday I Will Be Clean," in which he sings about when he'll finally be able to bathe again.

The way this sequence escalates reminded me of *The Lion King's* "I Just Can't Wait to Be King"—except here, "king" gets swapped with "clean." Throughout the scene, elements like a makeshift crown and robe are added to Dirty Bob's wardrobe to make him appear more king-like.

If there is at least one lesson to be learned from *Lumberjacks in Love*, it's thanks to Dirty Bob: To be clean is to be king. ○

Arts Editor Caleb Wiseblood is on his soapbox. Send soap opera recommendations to cwiseblood@santamariasun.com.



JUST AN OLD-FASHIONED LOVE SONG: The cast of *Lumberjacks in Love*, currently showing at the Great American Melodrama in Oceano, includes Nathan Miklas (left) as Moonlight and Sydney Ennis (right) as The Kid.

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Surface tension

Peyton Reed (*Yes Man*, *The Mandalorian*) directs this next superhero installment about Scott Lang/Ant-Man (Paul Rudd) and Hope Van Dyne/Wasp (Evangeline Lilly), a sequel to Reed's *Ant-Man* (2015) and *Ant-Man and the Wasp* (2018). Scott, Hope, Hope's parents Dr. Hank Pym (Michael Douglas) and Janet Van Dyne (Michelle Pfeiffer), and Scott's daughter, Cassie (Kathryn Newton), are inadvertently sucked into the Quantum Realm, where they discover strange new creatures and a new nemesis, Kang the Conqueror (Jonathan Majors). (125 min.)



FAMILY AFFAIR: Scott Lang (Paul Rudd, right) and his daughter, Cassie (Kathryn Newton), are sucked into the Quantum Realm, in *Ant-Man and the Wasp: Quantumania*, screening in local theaters.

Glen: I'm pretty sure you'll get yet another Ant-Man film in the future—this franchise clearly has legs (pun, sadly, intended). I'm more interested, however, in seeing what Marvel does with Kang the Conqueror. Majors was amazing, and the post credits teaser suggests the Marvel Universe isn't done with him yet. I just wish his film debut (he showed up at the end of the *Loki* TV series) was in a better film. This third Ant-Man is a slog. We also saw the trailer for *The Guardians of the Galaxy Vol. 3*, which is coming out on May 5. I loved the first two, so here's hoping it doesn't suffer from what ailed this film: all gloss and no substance.

Anna: At some point these films run out of steam, and sadly, this may be where Ant-Man did just that. I also really liked Majors as

bad guy Kang. He's a wonderful actor and brings a lot to the role. There are cute/weird/interesting creatures, one of which produces goo that works as a babel fish to translate all the quantum level languages into one we can understand. There is actually a little bit of charm here and there throughout the film, but it doesn't feel very out of the box. They're going to keep making these films as long as they can sell them, so I have no doubt we'll see more of the whole crew on the big screen. ○

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

ANT-MAN AND THE WASP: QUANTUMANIA

What's it rated? **PG-13**
 What's it worth, Glen? **Streaming**
 What's it worth, Anna? **Streaming**
 Where's it showing? **Regal Edwards RPX Santa Maria, Movies Lompoc, Regal Edwards Stadium 10 Arroyo Grande**

such standard-issue, boilerplate comic book fare. There was never a sense of real danger, and the story's outcome was never in doubt. Go for the sights and sounds, the performances, and the humor, but don't expect to be wowed by the story. It's a bit of a snooze.

Anna: As someone who really doesn't get into superhero movies all that much, this was just fine. It looked cool; there was some much-needed comedy; I was given characters to care about, etc. I get that those things don't make it great, but I find most of these Marvel spin-offs to be pretty boring. I like Rudd—that much is evident by the fact I've seen all three of the Ant-Man films. I liked that the atmosphere and the creatures in the quantum realm were blobby sea creature-esque things. If I squinted hard enough, I could just pretend I was looking at a new display at the aquarium. All in all, I'll take an Ant-Man flick over most other Avengers any day.

TV Reviews

THE LAST OF US

What's it rated? **TV-MA** When? **2023**
 Where's it showing? **HBO Max**

We're now halfway through the first season of this video game-based zombie TV series, and if you haven't jumped on the bandwagon yet, what are you waiting for? This very compelling drama has continued to improve exponentially after the first two so-so episodes. By the third, I was hooked, and now I find myself anticipating the next episode every week.

The story follows Joel Miller (Pedro Pascal), a hardened survivor who agrees to transport a feisty young woman—Ellie Williams (Bella Ramsey)—across the zombie- and marauder-infested country to a team of scientists. Ellie is somehow immune to the virus that turns others into zombies, so she just might hold the key to preventing the spread of the disease.

There are heart-pounding moments of zombie action, but what makes the show sing are the small human moments between characters. There's nothing like a zombie apocalypse to separate the good humans from the bad ones, and the antagonist comes in the form of Kathleen (a terrific



WILL TO LIVE: In the midst of a worldwide zombie apocalypse, Joel Miller (Pedro Pascal) must get an uninfected young woman to a team of scientists in the hopes of finding a cure, in *The Last of Us*, streaming on HBO Max.

Melanie Lynskey), who leads an army of bad guys trying to horde all the remaining resources. The stakes feel dire, and we want Joel to succeed. Very compelling stuff! (10 50-min. episodes)

—Glen

BINGEABLE

POKER FACE

What's it rated? **TV-MA** When? **2023**
 Where's it showing? **Peacock**

The concept is no stranger—a human lie detector uses her powers to right wrongs. I think of the show *Lie to Me* from 2009 about the guy who read and analyzed micro expressions. We don't know where Charlie's (Natasha Lyonne) gift comes from exactly—she just knows when people are lying, and it has gotten her in and out of heaps of trouble. She's on the run, and every episode follows a new plot point as she moves around. She's like a white trash Columbo bumbling her way through another mystery.

She's a merch girl for a punk band whose drummer mysteriously dies on stage, a casino cocktail waitress whose coworker turns up dead, a dinner theater waitress who winds up with a dead actor onstage—Charlie has seen it all. Much like Angela Lansbury's Jessica Fletcher in *Murder She Wrote*, Charlie just can't seem to keep away from death for too long.

Lyonne is always stellar, and this role is no exception.

Charlie is sarcastic and funny and clever like a fox, but also vaguely low-rent trashy with zero ambition. This series deals with



SIXTH SENSE? Charlie Cale (Natasha Lyonne) has a very special power—she can tell when people are lying, which makes her a heck of a detective—in *Poker Face*, streaming on Peacock.

the heavy topic of death a lot, but it doesn't take itself too seriously. I'm going all-in on season two! (10 58-min. episodes) ○

—Anna

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

FAMILY AFFAIR: Co-owners Jamie and Lalo Tejada, pictured here in 2017, are the sole staff at Pardon My French Bakery, juggling logistics and custom bakes with family life.

Sweet relief

Pardon My French in Grover Beach continues its long-running mission of giving back to community members in need

BY BULBUL RAJAGOPAL

Twenty days after a string of destructive storms slammed the Central Coast, Pardon My French Bakery decided to add more to its already-brimming plate for the greater good.

"If you donate \$20, we're taking a box of pastries and putting in at least

\$30 worth of pastries in it," said Jamie Tejada, co-owner of the Grover Beach-based bakery. "Then we're delivering it to first responders, hospitals, doctors, nurses, educators, the post office, and the city workers that have all been working in overdrive with the flooding and getting our city back to normal."

Jamie runs Pardon My French with her husband and baker, Lalo. They're

FILE PHOTO COURTESY OF PARDON MY FRENCH



TASTY RAINBOW: Macarons of all flavors and colors beckon at Pardon My French Bakery in Grover Beach.

a two-person business that has been open since 2016. Depending on the number of custom orders he has slotted for the day, Lalo usually comes into the bakery between 3 and 4 a.m. to prepare all the pastries from scratch. The sole baker, he runs the kitchen and front of house until 10 a.m.

That's when Jamie arrives to take over customer orders and logistics. Lalo leaves for home soon after to take care of the couple's two toddlers, and Jamie stays until 3 p.m. or whenever their baked goods sell out. They deliver the aforementioned goodie boxes in their free time.

"We don't have any staff. Usually, I will go deliver [the boxes], or on our days off we'll come in to make the boxes and he'll go take them over," Jamie said.

Called Spread Love boxes, they can contain some of the store's ever-changing desserts, like the seasonal peach cobbler cupcakes, apple caramel scones, and lemon poppy seed muffins, along with breakfast pastries. As of Feb. 9, the Tejadas delivered 10 boxes, and have donations for 40 boxes total so far.

Even without the boxes, the treats fly off the shelves quickly. By the afternoon of Feb. 9, the display contained a few thick slabs of cheesecake topped with lemon curd, a handful of rich slices of flourless



COMMUNITY CARE: Donating \$20 to Pardon My French Bakery for a Spread Love box ensures that a package filled with at least \$30 worth of baked goods will be given to community members working in flood relief.

Treats for all

Indulge your sweet tooth at Pardon My French Bakery, 1544 W. Grand Ave. in Grover Beach. The bakery offers special event and wedding cakes and dessert bars with a wide array of delicacies and customizable options. Visit pardonmyfrenchslo.com/wedding for more information.

Want to donate a Spread Love box? Email the bakery at info@pardonmyfrenchslo.com, or call (805) 481-3255. Keep up with their events on Instagram @pardonmyfrenchslo.

chocolate torte, and a couple of croissants and financiers, among other treats. Most of the goods have French roots—an ode to Lalo's culinary training at Minnesota's Cordon Bleu and work experience at Michelin star restaurants.

Care packages like the Spread Love boxes aren't the first of their kind at Pardon My French. The Tejadas have been looking out for their neighbors since they opened shop.

"We started it during COVID and it took off," Jamie said. "We saw the

slump people were in and felt like we needed to do our part in trying to hold the spirits around here."

Jamie was seven months pregnant when the pandemic hit, and her doctor advised her to not interact with the public. In 2020, she didn't work from March to November, and Lalo took over completely. He juggled serving regular customers with daily baking preparation and orders for custom wedding cakes.

EATS continued page 30

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Eats

FILE PHOTO COURTESY OF PARDON MY FRENCH

EATS from page 29

"The community came in and stepped up," Jamie recalled. "A lot of our regulars knew our story, and they didn't want anything to happen to us."

So, Pardon My French kept going during the thick of the pandemic. They shut down indoor dining and allowed customers in one at a time. The line snaked out the door and threaded through the shopping center. Back then, the bakery was open until 5 p.m. and sold out every day by 1 p.m. The Tejedas also distributed 450 boxes to first responders during COVID-19.

"By donating a box, you helped a small business, and you helped the first responders. You could sit at home, make a phone call to us, pay over the phone and you've helped two people," Jamie said. "That's why we're doing it again."

Pardon My French, like many other businesses, is dealing with the high cost of inflation. Eggs, a bakery staple, ballooned in price. Jamie said that Lalo goes through 200 to 250 eggs every week. They've switched to buying from a local farm in Los Osos for eggs to offset the cost. Some patrons help, too.

"We have a couple of local people who have Meyer lemon trees, and they bring in their lemons for us," she said.

As of Feb. 9, the Tejedas were preparing for Valentine's Day, their busiest day of the year. Lalo



TRULY SCRUMPTIOUS: Pardon My French offers several special event and wedding packages, including custom cakes and dessert bars featuring treats such as cupcakes, cookies, French macarons, cream puffs, mousse, eclairs, cannoli, tarts, and more.

triples his bakes, doling out individual cakes, cupcakes, macarons, and dessert boxes for two. Rose, chocolate, and strawberry flavors are heavy hitters in February, and Jamie hoped that the recent holiday crowd would bring a boost to the Spread Love boxes.

She added that beyond the heart-themed holiday, she's looking forward to continuing to spread the love and revamping the bakery's menu soon.

"The boxes are true to my heart, I'm a giver," she said with a laugh. "We have some exciting plans for the end of the year and want to add more to our French flair." ○

New Times Staff Writer Bulbul Rajagopal, from the Sun's sister paper, will take two chocolate tortes to go. Send more sweets through the editor at clanham@santamariasun.com.

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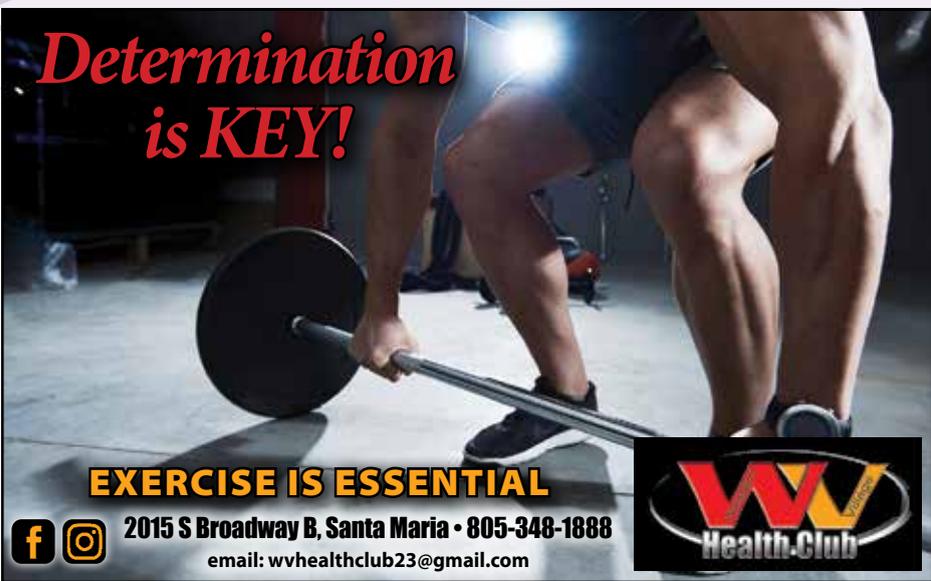
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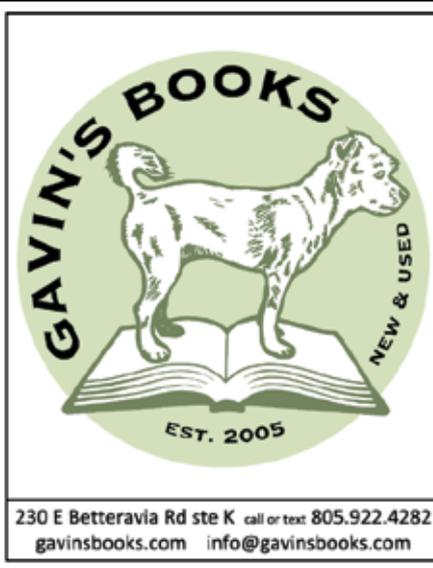
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