



Mission Village

VOICE

Reaching new heights

Valerie Egland reflects on
her contribution to our
community's health

— See page 22

Water Resources Association Turf Removal Program

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- Low-Water-Use Plants List
- Native Plants List
- Irrigation Assessment and Assistance

*Special rules apply and funding is limited



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Visit www.wrasbc.org to learn more about our rebates and programs.



SBHF NEWS

San Benito Health Foundation is on the Move!

San Benito Health Foundation is excited to announce the arrival of its new and improved mobile health clinic. After nearly a year of remodeling and refurbishment, the mobile clinic is now back to serve the residents of San Benito County, providing medical, dental, vision and nutrition care. The spacious interior is now designed to accommodate treatment in three separate areas, and it is furnished with state-of-the-art medical equipment.

It was the outside of the mobile clinic that took the most consideration. SBHF wanted the wrap to represent its providers and partners and to honor key individuals in memoriam. The faces of Noe and Longina Montoya, Dr. Roberto Dansie and Dr. Armando Ruiz are placed above a quote from Dr. Dansie, "Those who live with the community in their heart, live on in the hearts of the community." On the back of the mobile clinic, a vibrant painting of "La Virgen Campesina" by SBHF Board President, Arcadio Viveros, connects the clinic with the migrant farmworkers that it serves.

SBHF is happy to have its mobile clinic back and looks forward to its mobile outreach services enhancing the access to quality healthcare for everyone. Be on the lookout for it at the Holiday Lights Parade in San Juan Bautista this month.

San Benito Health Foundation offers quality healthcare for all people regardless of their ability to pay. Please call (831) 637-5306 to schedule an appointment.

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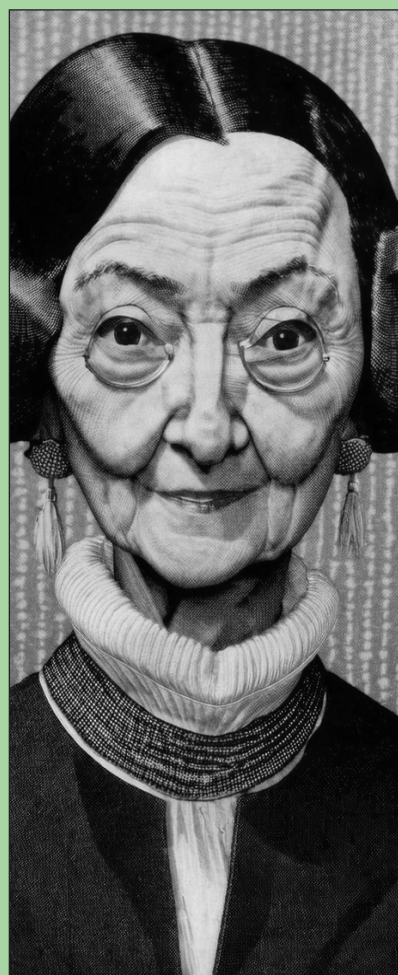
Mission Village Voice Media, LLC.

P.O. Box 999

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A quote for our readers

You don't have
to be born
beautiful to be
wildly attractive.

Diana Vreeland

On the cover

"Bright Future" by cover artist Kimry Jelen. For more information about the artist, see page 16.

New to town

A warm welcome
to San Juan
Bautista, Liz
Roberto and Dave
Rodriguez!



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#BOOKWORM

Winter blessings: New bookstore, old bookstore, bookcraft event

By Leanne Oliveira

"What I say is, a town isn't a town without a bookstore. It may call itself a town, but unless it's got a bookstore, it knows it's not foolin' a soul." - Neil Gaiman

Rejoice! Hill's Bookstore will soon be open for business at 650 San Benito Street #140, next to Hollister Artisans Mercantile. My newest book buddy, Kim Hill has been enlisting book-nerd elves (including myself) to help remodel and you can feel the excitement in the air! Consider: a tea station, a kid's activity area, a lego room (she plans to be a Lego® retailer), a spicy red room for romance novels, and more. Check HillsBookstore.com for updates. Holiday gift cards are also available!

Thinking about a new downtown bookstore has made me nostalgic for the town's



Leanne Oliveira

last bookstore and sad at the recent passing of its owner Elizabeth Gage. The original location was my first job in high school, and I remained once the company moved one block away and was eventually sold. The original storefront is still the cutest shop in town! 217 Fifth Street will always look like a bookstore to me. For a great article on Gage's impressive life, google our mutual friend Jennifer Coile's 2023 BenitoLink article.

I remember the smell of new books and kraft paper as I wrapped holiday gifts and snapped golden rubber bands around opposite corners. I remember walking one block over to "The Elegant Touch" (now Heavenly Bakery) or Cheung Sheung for our takeout during long busy nights during the holidays. I'd walk back under a canopy of dew settling on twinkling lights strung across downtown, inhaling all the nearby fireplaces and the laughter and music spilling out of Johnny's Bar and Whiskey Creek. I'd return to wiggle my cold nose within the warmth of the well-lit bookstore with its rotating tasseled bookmark displays, sweet cat, and scented candles. I still have some of the store's bookmarks and get a little teary eyed every time I find one of those unexpected blessings tucked into the pages of a donated book. If you are a longtime local, consider that trip down memory lane my gift to you. Happy Holidays!

CLUB #BOOKWORM (est. 2016)

This month is our annual holiday potluck to schedule 2025 month hosts and meet some new members. Instead of a book pick, we are discussing our favorite books of the year and bringing some to share.

FRIENDS OF THE SBC LIBRARY

Our Winter/Spring newsletter is out! We

hope you'll visit our decorated tree at Vets Hall, wave to us at the Downtown Parade, or join our "Bubbles & Books" event at Crave Wine Bar on 12/10 at 6-7:30 PM (tickets: sbcfriends.org), which is the brain child of fellow crafty Librarian Laura Moorer. Reminder that our dog-friendly used book sales (normally every second Saturday, 9-11:30 AM) are closed for the colder months of December and January and will reopen - weather permitting - in February when you can visit our remodeled space which our elves will be working hard on over the break. Thanks to all the new and old faces who attended our annual holiday book sale last month!

JOLABOKAFLOD

Consider this your annual reminder about how awesome Iceland is. During its traditional Jolabokaflof ("Christmas Book Flood"), folks open gifts of books on Christmas Eve and retire to bed early to read them. If that wasn't cool (get it?) enough, consider that Iceland publishes more books per capita than any other country in the world!

LITERARY HOLIDAYS

Happy Read a New Book Month, Sherlock Holmes Day (12/1), Short Fiction Day (12/21 is the shortest day of the year) and Jolabokaflof (12/24). Our Birthday Babies are Melville Dewey (12/10), Jane Austen (12/16), and SJB legend Elayne "Bluebird" Reyna (12/21) who now lives in Arizona. (She is a mentor of mine, and I mail her this column every month. Hi Laynee!)

NEW RELEASES

Visit tinyurl.com/BookwormDec24 for more goodies.

SAN BENITO COUNTY FREE LIBRARY

Zip Books are back! Pick up to 5 books (max \$50/ea) every month and have them delivered to your home via Amazon Prime. Return the books to the Library once read so others can enjoy. Visit SBCFL.org for details and holiday programming info.


TOLKIEN POEMS

Fans of the beloved *Lord of the Rings* author can now dig deeper with *The Collected Poems of J.R.R. Tolkien* which contains nearly 250 individual works, many unpublished, spanning over five decades.

Leanne Oliveira (MLIS, MA History) is a Reference Librarian at the Watsonville Library and works for Seniors Council at the Epicenter in Hollister. She also writes #TheGoldenAge for the MVV. Contact oldfashionedolive@gmail.com.




What an exciting month for bookworms! A new bookstore (www.hillsbookstore.com) and a Friends (www.SBCFriends.org) book crafting opportunity this month in downtown Hollister.



Bubbles and Book Art

JOIN THE FRIENDS OF THE SAN BENITO COUNTY FREE LIBRARY FOR AN EVENING OF BOOK FOLDING FUN!





TUESDAY, DECEMBER 10, 2024
6:00-7:30 P.M.

CRAVE WINE COMPANY

PRICE: \$25/PERSON
LIMITED SPOTS, BUY TICKETS EARLY--NO REFUNDS

PURCHASE TICKETS ONLINE ONLY:
WWW.SBCFRIENDS.ORG/





*All materials provided and program instructor led. Drinks available for purchase. The Friends is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization and funds raised go to support programming at the library.

SNIPPETS FROM THE MILLIKEN FILES

Blame it on the ox

Submitted by Joe Claus & John Grafton

The following text is courtesy of the Milliken Museum Society, located in Los Banos, CA.

Two young Californio men are punished for inappropriate behavior. Another snippet from Milliken, as told by Diego Soto.

Pilar Larios was a prominent member of the San Juan community (and its midwife). It seems like she didn't have



much of a sense of humor though, at least when it came to young males misbehaving.

Melicio Soto and Juan Chavaria, son of aunt Pilar, were

having lots of fun riding a bull around the streets of San Juan. Aunt Pilar called them over to her house. "You can't do that kind of business." "Take off your coat." "Kneel down." She took a quirt and gave both a good licking. "Take your coat now," she told Melicio, "and go home." "I should say it hurt," Melicio told Diego years later in telling of the affair.

Melicio was a big strong man weighing 235 pounds. He could give a fellow a slap and knock him down.

There was no celebration at the time. Melicio and Juan had a bottle and were riding a tame ox. They had got together and were having some fun. They had a bottle and were singing as they rode along. Kids were following behind sticking the bull. All were having lots of fun. When aunt Pilar saw them she called them over to her house. ■

ARTS

Recognizing the art of gratitude and giving

By Jennifer Laine, Executive Director

As we dive into the holiday season, we are taking a moment to reflect on our incredible arts & culture community in San Benito County and all the people that make it possible- from our talented artists and teaching artists to our community partners and donors. During the month of December, we encourage readers to attend El Teatro's annual holiday show, La Virgen del Tepeyac, or a winter concert by Oriana Chorale. Donate to your favorite arts organization, such as the San Benito Stage Company, Aromas Hills Artisans or the Rancho Maze Band, or buy local gifts from one of the many artisan markets at Vertigo in San Juan Bautista or Calavera in Hollister.



There are many ways to support local artists, and it's all right here at your door step!

In the spirit of giving, we are also excited to announce the 16 local grantees that were recently awarded funding as part of our 2024 Arts Express Grant Program. Arts Express aims to promote artistic and cultural engagement, accessibility and equity in San Benito County through financial support to local artists, art groups and cultural organizations.

Grantees were awarded general operations and project-based grants, ranging between \$1,500-\$4,000. For a full list of awards, please visit www.sanbenitoarts.org

Finally, we were so grateful to have the opportunity to recognize Rachel Flores at

the 2024 National Philanthropy Day Dinner on November 16th. Rachel, a retired high school teacher who supports local youth through community service opportunities, has been a stout supporter of our annual Farm to Table Dinner, which raises funds for Arts Education. Rachel recruits and coordinates the student servers with such enthusiasm and energy, that it is truly contagious. We recognize her contributions to the arts and the positive impact she has had on youth throughout her entire life in San Benito County!

We know that it takes a community to build community, and in the spirit of gratitude and giving, we encourage readers to support, show up for and invest in the arts during this holiday season. Happy Holidays from the Arts Council! ■



National Philanthropy Day (L-R, Jennifer Colby, Rachel Flores, Kat Soza)

Holiday Collection Schedule

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
12/23 Regular Service	12/24 Regular Service	12/25 No Service Christmas Day, Office Closed	12/26 Service for Wednesday Customers	12/27 Service for Thursday Customers	12/28 Service for Friday Customers
12/30 Regular Service	12/31 Regular Service	1/1 No Service New Year's Day, Office Closed	1/2 Service for Wednesday Customers	1/3 Service for Thursday Customers	1/4 Service for Friday Customers

TREE RECYCLING

Residents can set out holiday trees on their regular collection day. Cut unflocked, undecorated trees into three feet or smaller sections and place in the green cart. Residents may also set out a whole tree, less than six feet, next to their cart. REMOVE STAND COMPLETELY and place the stand in the grey Garbage cart.



Check your collection schedule at Recology.com/SanBenitoCounty.
Para más información visite Recology.com/SanBenitoCounty o llame al 831.636.7500.

COMMUNITY

BenitoLink launches fall fundraiser

By Suzanne Soares
BenitoLink Marketing Intern

BenitoLink hosted its Fall Fundraiser Kickoff event, Vintage 14, at Damm Vineyards in Hollister on Nov. 8 to kick off its fall fundraising season. This campaign is essential for next year's reporting budget and runs from now until the end of the year. About 75 people came out to support San Benito County's nonprofit, community-based newsroom. Guests enjoyed Damm Vineyards wine, Mattia Pizza and tasty thank-you gifts to take home from Marich Pancrafted Chocolates (lemon, toffee, dried fruit and more!)

BenitoLink's Newsmatch opportunity of \$58,150 is good through the end of the year. A successful fundraising campaign will double that figure, bringing in a total of \$116,300 and setting the stage for our 2025

coverage of the county. Newsmatch was started by the Institute for Nonprofit News and offers BenitoLink \$18,150 to double community donations.

BenitoLink is also very fortunate to also have local donors Sallie Calhoun and Matt Christiano, and Randy and Rebecca Wolf, who this year put up \$20,000 each in additional matching funds—for an additional \$40,000.

Again, until Dec. 31, community donations, either one time or monthly will be doubled up to \$58,150.

For the Nov. 5 election, BenitoLink delivered extensive coverage for San Benito County residents, from hosting an Election Forum to producing candidate Q&As. BenitoLink produced extensive election coverage on local measures, San Benito Health Care District Board, campaign funding, local city councils and state government measures. This year, for the first time, we provided live results on national, state, and local races right on BenitoLink's homepage.

Community support means BenitoLink can increase its reporting on local government, current events, countywide sports and uplifting features about our community. In 2025, we will be looking for a full-time editor and covering sports on a regular basis. Let's expand our local news! ■



A beautiful autumn evening at Damm Vineyards for BenitoLink's Vintage 14 fall fundraiser. Photo by Adam Bell.

COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT



Toy Drive

RCS SERVES OVER 1200 LOCAL CHILDREN AND YOUTH THROUGH OUR ANNUAL TOY DRIVE.

HOW YOU CAN HELP:

- Be A Toy Collection Site
- Donate Funds or Toys
- Sponsor a Toy Drive

Drop off toys at San Benito County Chamber Tuesday - Friday 9am-2pm

CONTACT FD@RCSKIDS.ORG TO GET INVOLVED

THANK YOU TO OUR PARTNERS:



This space provided as a community service by Graniterock to highlight nonprofit agencies or individuals who serve our community. To be considered for this spot please contact Anne Caetano at annecaetano@aol.com.

ELECTRIC VEHICLE INCENTIVE PROGRAM

Monterey Bay Air Resources District

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LOW INCOME QUALIFIED APPLICANTS MAY QUALIFY FOR DOUBLE THE SHOWN INCENTIVE AMOUNTS!

Visit our website for more information:
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MONTEREY BAY AIR RESOURCES DISTRICT



DIY Green decor: Shop local for sustainable holiday decor and gifts

This holiday season, make your celebrations greener by choosing DIY decor and gifts from local San Benito County Green Businesses. Create unique decorations and reduce your environmental footprint with a touch of creativity.

Repurpose materials like accessories, rocks, or clothing to craft ornaments, banners, or table runners—perfect for a sustainable festive vibe!

Not feeling crafty? No problem! San Benito's Green Businesses offer an array of zero-waste gifts and eco-friendly decorations, from recycled wrapping paper to ethically sourced accessories. These thoughtful options help you celebrate the season sustainably while giving meaningful, planet-friendly gifts.

Shop sustainably at local favorites like:

- Utopia
- Jan's Rock Shop
- Fools Gold
- Thankful Co
- Mrs. B's Z-Place
- Dalia's Accessories
- Working Man #2
- Noviembre 84
- The Garden Shoppe
- Bene Gifts
- Off the Chain

Make intentional choices this holiday season by supporting Green Businesses. Together, we can create a more sustainable celebration and a lasting positive impact on the planet.

Interested in becoming a Green Business? Contact Bryan Garcia at bgarcia@environmentalin.com to get started today! ■



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FINANCIAL FOCUS

Consider these year-end financial moves

As we enter the holiday season, your life may well become busier. Still, you might want to take the time to consider some financial moves before we turn the calendar to 2025.

Here are a few suggestions:

- **Review your investment portfolio.** As you look at your portfolio, ask these questions: Has its performance met my expectations this year? Does it still reflect my goals, risk tolerance and time horizon? Do I need to rebalance? You might find that working with a financial professional can help you answer these and other questions you may have about your investments.

- **Add to your 401(k) and HSA.** If you can afford it, and your employer allows it, consider putting more money into your 401(k) before the year ends — including “catch-up” contributions if you're 50 or older. You might also want to add to your health savings account (HSA) by the tax-filing deadline in April.

- **Use your FSA dollars.** Unlike an HSA, a flexible spending account (FSA) works on a “use-it-or-lose-it” basis, meaning you lose any

unspent funds at the end of the year. So, if you still have funds left in your account, try to use them up in 2024. (Employers may grant a 2½ month extension, so check with your human resources area to see if this is the case where you work.)

- **Contribute to a 529 plan.** If you haven't opened a 529 education savings plan for your children, think about doing so this year. With a 529 plan, your earnings can grow tax deferred, and your withdrawals are federally tax free when used for qualified education expenses — tuition, fees, books and so on. And if you invest in your own state's 529 plan, you might be able to deduct your contributions from your state income tax or receive a state tax credit.

- **Build your emergency fund.** It's generally a good idea to keep up to six months' worth of living expenses in an emergency fund, with the money held in a liquid, low-risk account. Without such a fund in place, you might be forced to dip into your retirement funds to pay for short-term needs, such as a major car or home repair.

- **Review your estate plans.** If you've ex-

perienced any changes in your family situation this year, such as marriage, remarriage or the birth of a child, you may want to update your estate-planning documents to reflect your new situation. It's also important to look at the beneficiary designations on your investment accounts, retirement plans, IRAs and insurance policies, as these designations can sometimes even supersede the instructions you've left in your will. And if

you haven't started estate planning, there's no time like the present.

- **Take your RMDs.** If you're 73 or older, you will likely need to take withdrawals — called required minimum distributions, or RMDs — from some of your retirement accounts, such as your traditional IRA. If you don't take these withdrawals each year, you could be subject to penalties.

These aren't the only moves you can make, but they may prove helpful not only for 2024 but in the years to come.

This article was written by Edward Jones for use by your local Edward Jones Financial Advisor, Alexis Winder. Edward Jones, Member SIPC

Alexis Winder, AAMS®
Financial Advisor



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MAKING SENSE OF INVESTING

I WILL COOK FOR WINE**Baked Brie en croute****With cherry preserves, rosemary, and pecans**

By Chef Liz

Ingredients

1 thawed sheet of frozen puff pastry
 1 8-12 ounce Brie cheese
 1/3 cup cherry preserves (my favorite is Bonne Maman)
 1/4 cup roughly chopped pecans
 1 tbsp finely chopped fresh rosemary
 1 egg
 Kosher salt

Method

• Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Line baking sheet with parchment paper and set aside.

• Roll out the puff pastry to 10-12" square (about 1/4" thick). Top brie with cherry preserves, chopped nuts, and rosemary.

• In a small bowl, whisk the egg and set aside.

• Place puff pastry over the top of the brie and gently press to form over the sides of the brie. Trim pastry a couple inches larger than your brie and tuck edges under the cheese.

• Brush the top with egg wash and sprinkle lightly with kosher salt

• Bake for 35-40 minutes or until the top is golden brown. Place on plate or charcuterie board and serve with crackers or sliced baguette.



Pastry Chef Liz attended the Culinary Institute of America in Napa Valley in 2003 with an emphasis in Baking & Pastry. She worked at Bouchon Bakery in Yontville, the Wine Spectator Restaurant in St. Helena, and Patisserie Angelica in Sebastopol. In 2006, she moved back to her hometown of Fresno and opened her own bakery where she specialized in fondant embellished special occasion and wedding cakes -- always made from scratch.

After moving to San Juan in 2024, she's excited to bring her experience, joy and passion for all things sweet to the area, where she lives with her husband Dave and 2 dogs, Coco and Juneau. ■

**LUNA GALLERY****Images of the Virgin celebrates 24th annual exhibition**

Art can uplift our spirits, and provide a window into culture and history. The 24th annual Images of the Virgin exhibition at Luna Gallery offers artwork by artists from across the United States that explore the expression of the sacred female, including Our Lady of Guadalupe. The tradition of bringing this exhibit to San Juan Bautista began in 1992 at Galeria Tonantzin, to coincide with El Teatro Campesino's Virgen de Tepeyac play. This year with the return of the play that shares the ap-

paritions of La Virgen to Juan Diego, the art exhibition shares visual images that place the Virgin in contemporary society. The exhibit was juried by local actor/director/writer Isabel Cruz who began her artistic journey at El Teatro Campesino 25 years ago. She now teaches the history of El Teatro Campesino at Gavilan College and theatre courses at UCSC. She selected 25 works for the exhibition that runs through January 12. On December 7 the Virgin Image Conference from 1 - 4 pm will feature Isabel Cruz and other scholars and artists to discuss the history of Guadalupe, the impact of the Virgen de Tepeyac play, and the art work in the exhibit. 5 - 7 pm there will be a public reception.

Visit lunagallery.art to learn more about attending the conference. ■

Pictured: "The Black Madonna and the Alchemy of Love" By Susanne Rather

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 and *Mission Village Voice* (2014 to-date). www.sanjuanbautistaca.com/art-galleries.

COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

Community Foundation welcomes Kathy Johnson as Interim Chief Executive Officer

Kathy Johnson is a distinguished leader with over 30 years of experience in nonprofit management and community service. Recently appointed Interim Chief Executive Officer of the Community Foundation for San Benito County (CFFSBC), she brings a wealth of knowledge in nonprofit leadership and a deep commitment to the local community.



Johnson's career has been marked by a series of crucial roles that have helped shape the nonprofit landscape in the communities she has served. She previously served as CEO of the Shasta Regional Community Foundation in Redding, California, and has held key positions at organizations like the Cele-

Kathy Johnson



bration Foundation in Florida and the Northland Foundation in Minnesota. Additionally, she founded her own consulting firm, Kathy Z. Johnson & Associates, through which she helped individuals and organizations achieve their philanthropic goals.

In San Benito County, Johnson has been a proactive community leader. She has been involved with several local organizations, including the United Way, Hazel Hawkins Foundation, and the San Benito County Chamber of Commerce. As a founding member of the San Benito County Ambassadors, she worked to strengthen the region's social and economic fabric. Her instrumental role in establishing the Leadership San Benito County program, which trained community leaders, earned her recognition as the 28th Assembly District's "Woman of the Year" in 2004.

Her passion for philanthropy and community engagement has made a lasting impact on San Benito County, where she has long been regarded as a dedicated advocate for positive change. As Interim CEO of CFFSBC, Kathy continues to drive the mission of strengthening the local community and enhancing the quality of life for its residents. She will also be a partner to the executive search firm, Kittleman & Associates, LLC, as they continue to recruit a permanent CEO. ■

EDUCATION

Anzar High School adds exciting new course to Hawk Academy: *Theater 3 – El Teatro Campesino*

By Julie Hicks

Anzar High School students now have a unique opportunity to explore the rich cultural history of Chicano theater with the addition of **Theater 3: El Teatro Campesino** to the Hawk Academy, part of the College and Career Access Pathway (CCAP) agreement with Gavilan College.

This new course, set to be offered in the upcoming semester, provides students with the chance to delve deep into the historical, social, and artistic impact of **El Teatro Campesino**—a groundbreaking theater company founded by Luis Valdez in the 1960s that became a voice for the Chicano community and social justice causes across the Americas.

The class is designed to help students understand the powerful intersection of culture, history, and performance. As part of the curriculum, students will:

1. Examine the societal influences behind the historical development of **El Teatro Campesino**, focusing on the struggles of Chicano (Mexican-American) culture in the United States. This includes understanding how theater became a tool for social activism during a period of civil rights struggles and labor movements.

2. Explore the background and impact of Luis Valdez, the visionary writer and director whose works inspired the creation of Chicano Theater and a broader theater of social protest. Students will analyze Valdez's artistic approach and its influence on theater movements in the Americas.

3. Analyze "actos" (short, improvised performances) as a powerful medium for communication. Students will learn how these brief but impactful skits serve to express ideas, feelings, and cultural awareness about social issues, especially through the lens of Chicano identity.

4. View and reflect on live performances and video productions from **El Teatro Campesino**, critically evaluating their cultural significance and the lasting legacy of the com-



pany's work in bringing social issues into the public eye.

Mary Isabel Cruz, the CCAP instructor for **Theater 3: El Teatro Campesino**, shared her excitement for the course, saying, "Our village, county, and state have such a rich history, and this is an opportunity for the students to learn some of the artistic and cultural history of the place where we live. Not only was **El Teatro Campesino** the first Chicano theater company, but it is also one of the longest-surviving community theaters in the country. Chicano Theater is American Theater, and our young people need a sense of belonging and a feeling of connection to our community. When students have a strong sense of where they come from, there is no limit to where they can go."

Through this course, students will gain an appreciation for the role of theater in social change while gaining valuable knowledge about the cultural struggles and artistic expressions of the Chicano community. By participating in this course, students will have the opportunity to enhance their understanding of American history, theater arts, and the importance of cultural representation.

"The addition of **Theater 3: El Teatro Campesino** to Hawk Academy is an exciting step in our ongoing commitment to offering diverse, relevant, and meaningful educational experiences," said Anzar High School Principal, Angela Crawley. "This course allows students to not only engage with theater in a way that speaks to their own identities but also to examine the power of art to challenge societal norms and inspire change."

This course is part of Anzar High School's partnership with Gavilan College, through the College and Career Access Pathway agreement, which gives students the opportunity to earn college credit while still in high school. By completing courses like **Theater 3: El Teatro Campesino**, students can earn transferable college credits and gain a deeper understanding of both their cultural heritage and the potential of artistic expression as a force for social change.

Enrollment for this innovative course is now open to all interested Anzar High School students, and school officials are excited to see how this new addition to the curriculum will inspire the next generation of young artists, thinkers, and change-makers. ■

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MISSIONVILLAGEVOICE Community Bulletin Board



Hazel Hawkins Hospital

Voters approve Measure X paving way for Hazel Hawkins Hospital's bright future

The San Benito Health Care District (the "District") announced today that Measure X has received voter approval, authorizing the District to negotiate a lease-to-own agreement with a qualified healthcare provider. This historic vote paves the way for a revitalized Hazel Hawkins Memorial Hospital, ensuring its long-term stability and expanding healthcare access for the community.

"We are grateful to the residents of San Benito County for their support in securing a brighter future for our community's hospital," said Board President Jerri Hernandez. "With this vote, we can now proceed with negotiations and finalize an agreement with Insight to support a seamless transition and maintain high-quality care for our residents."

The approval of Measure X allows the District to move forward with a sale or lease of its assets to a qualified buyer or partner. The result means that Hazel Hawkins, which has faced serious financial challenges since 2022, will benefit from a significant capital infusion, expansion of healthcare services, and a robust physician recruitment program through its anticipated partnership with Insight. Insight has committed to retaining staff and investing in crucial equipment and facility upgrades, signaling a strong commitment to both the hospital and the community it serves.

Over the next few months, the District and Insight will finalize the terms and transition plans, with updates provided in upcoming public meetings to ensure transparency and community engagement throughout the process.

Insight Health Systems rep talks about Measure X

"Over the past several months, we've had the pleasure of getting to know the San Benito community and many of the wonderful people here who have helped us truly understand their needs, concerns, and the challenges they face gaining access to even the most basic health and wellness services. Seeing the public support for the measure, we're excited to move forward with the San Benito Health Care District and Hazel Hawkins Memorial Hospital and get to work transforming the hospital into a beacon of the community offering patient care second to none for all."

— Dayne Walling, Director of Public Policy and Government Relations, Insight Health Systems

Volunteer: Help seniors build confidence and mobility

Are you concerned about falling or interested in helping older adults improve their mobility? Falls are the leading cause of injury for seniors, but many incidents are preventable. Join the Monterey Bay Falls Prevention Coalition for resources, support, and training to help reduce fall risks and increase strength and balance. Volunteer as a Matter of Balance Coach Help seniors build confidence and mobility! We're seeking volunteer coaches to lead classes, with training and certification provided. Next Coach Trainings: Hollister: Nov 18 & 19 Santa Cruz: Dec 3 & 5 Contact: 831-427-5070 x115 or ares.bartell@scvvolunteercenter.org Email: engagement@scvvolunteercenter.org

Jacob's Heart receives \$10,000 grant from Community Foundation San Benito County to support families facing the challenges of pediatric cancer

Jacob's Heart is honored to be selected as a grant recipient by the Community Foundation for San Benito County. As one of Jacob's Heart's service areas, these funds will support families in the region facing a pediatric cancer diagnosis.

For 26 years, Jacob's Heart has been a lifeline for families across Santa Cruz, Monterey, San Benito, and Santa Clara counties, offering critical support to those facing the challenges of pediatric cancer. In 2024 alone, Jacob's Heart provided no-cost, essential services to nearly 400 families, 109 of those families reside in San Benito County. As Jacob's Heart continues to grow, support from foundations like the Community Foundation San Benito County is vital to sustaining and expanding their reach to families in need.

"Jacob's Heart support was critical during our daughter's treatment. Jacob's Heart always helps us feel that we are not alone in this fight."

— Jacob's Heart Parent

ABOUT JACOB'S HEART

Jacob's Heart Children's Cancer Support Services exists to improve the quality of life for children with cancer by supporting their families in the challenges they face. For 26 years, Jacob's Heart has provided emotional, practical, financial, and peer support to hundreds of local children and teens with cancer and thousands of their family members and accompanied their unique experiences throughout treatment, anticipatory grief, and grieving the loss of a precious child.

The Adventure to the... North Pole

NOV 24th-DEC 22nd
at BOLADO PARK

NORTH POLE

DON'T MISS IT...

Food Vendors
Holiday Craft Vendors
Craft Room for Kids
Dance Performances
Elf Scavenger Hunt
Petting Zoo | Pony Ride
Christmas Story Reading
Matching PJ's Night
Christmas Karaoke Night
Ugly Sweater Night
Christmas Movie Theater
Roller Skating Rink
(...bring your own roller skates)
And so much more!

Take pictures & visit with
Santa & Mrs. Claus!



For tickets go to [Eventbrite.com](https://www.eventbrite.com)

Presented by **APEX Specialty Planning Group**

The Adventure to the North Pole is an indoor/outdoor Christmas/Holiday light display of decorative themed lanes, sections, and rooms using the mixture of lights and mirrors to create a multiple image/infinity effect. It's a walk-thru journey (approximately 300 yds) using all your senses to bring out the inner child in you.

Tickets are \$25 each (this includes all fees). Children 3 and under, and imaginary friends are free. If you look 16 and under you must be accompanied by an adult. There will be a security check point at the gate before entering. Smoking is prohibited, and there is NO outside food or drinks allowed (exceptions may vary, security discretion is advised). Weather conditions vary and may require rescheduling or canceling specific dates. If this occurs detailed information will be given via email, or follow us on Facebook for the latest updates. Parking may be limited so please ride share if you can. You may come before your ticket time to relax in the picnic area, drink vendors will be available there for your drinking pleasures.

There is a FREE theater to watch classic Christmas movies and a skating rink to enjoy but you must bring your own roller skates. If you have any questions, feel free to email us at Letsplan@apexspg.com, please give us at least 24hrs to reply. If you are impatient and need an answer right away you can call or text us at (408) 500-2458 and we'll get back you as soon as we possibly can. Thank you we are looking forward to seeing you there!



BEEN THERE, DONE THAT



Friends of the San Benito County Free Library and DKG's joint project delivering new Teacher Recognition gifts to first year area teachers. Above left: Friend Board Member, Nancy Girton and R.O. Hardin teacher, Anthony Barcellos. Above right: Spring Grove teacher, J.C. Jacobsen and DKG Board Member, Liz Talbert.

Community Foundation board members Phil Fortino and Larry Barr with the CFFSBC's 2024 nominee for National Philanthropy Day, Beverly Meamber.



Girl Scout Troop 20001 Time Capsule, celebrating San Benito County's 150th. Above: SBC Supervisors, Clampers and 3 members of Girl Scout Troop 20001. Above right: Girl Scout Troop 20001 L-R Olivia, Allison & Raegan.

Supervisor Angela Curro and Speaker of the CA State Assembly Robert Rivas unveil Anza Trail signage at the Moonlight Walk.



SJB VFW Post# 6359 November 11, 2024 11am. L-R Auxiliary Pres. Bonnie Campbell, Commander Felipe Galvan, Chaplain Ruben Gutierrez, Mario Garcia, Quartermaster Oscar Inocencio, Manny Hernandez, Fred Galvan. Outside playing Taps in the rain Cuco Chavez.

Supervisor Angela Curro and son at the top of Old Stage Road/ Anza Trail at the R.E.A.C.H/ Benitlink full moon hike.

BEEN THERE, DONE THAT



Anne Warner and her German-bred Fioretto completed the last leg of a big goal at the Osierlea Dressage Show in San Juan Bautista. They earned Anne's final score towards the prestigious USDF Diamond Achievement.



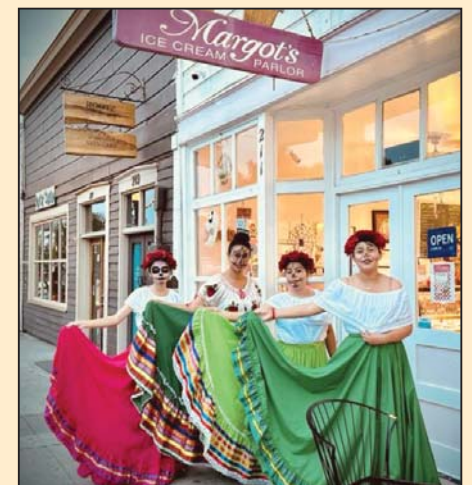
Above: Workshop Instructor Jack Gonzalez and Workshop Coordinator Sydnie Pedemonte block printing on t-shirts during the grand opening of Cura Contemporary in Morgan Hill. Below left: Screenprinting at the grand opening of Cura Contemporary in Morgan Hill. Below: Workshop Coordinator Sydnie Pedemonte block printing a t-shirt with a young artist during the grand opening of Cura Contemporary in Morgan Hill. *Image Credit: Juniper Spring Photography*



Community FoodBank Philanthropy Day honorees Richard Steele, a selfless volunteer, and Kylie Gillio, inspiring Board Chair.



Above and right: Rain or shine, San Benito County Veterans Day Parade 2024!



Dia De Los Muertos in San Juan Bautista!

BEEN THERE, DONE THAT



Guests attending BenitoLink's Vintage 14 event at Damm Vineyards. Photo by Adam Bell.



SBALT Ranch Day L-R Brian Schmidt, Lynn Overtree, Beth Roybal.



Left: BenitoLink board members Phil Esparza and Chang So talking with BenitoLink reporter Robert Eliason. Right: Suzanne Soares and Mo Ismail, BenitoLink's marketing team. Photos by Adam Bell.



SJB represents at Philanthropy day. L-R Sarah Griss, Leslie Jordan, Fran Fitzharris, Wanda Guibert, Honoree Beverly Meamber, Aseneth & Bob Quaid and Catalina Marquez.



You outdid yourselves, Odessa Van Order and Patrick Pascual.



VOICING SOME THOUGHTS

Dill pickle memories

By Halina Kleinsmith

For many who collect or sell vintage items, it's common to encounter a little green plastic pickle, with a plain safety pin back, emblazoned with the name Heinz.

With the look and texture of a vinegar and spiced gherkin, this diminutive item holds a uniquely significant place in American history.

It surfaced in charm form as a premium for visitors to the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition held in Illinois, also known as the Chicago World's Fair.

The event drew massive crowds to see products and innovations, and to sample a huge variety of traditional and newly-debating foods and beverages.

Among these exhibitors was the Heinz Pickle Company, located on the second floor of the far away Agricultural Pavilion.

A challenging locale, it necessitated the company's promotion of a simple and inexpensive gift, to entice patrons to visit their exhibit.

Mr. H.J. Heinz himself brainstormed the creative solution, involving a gutta percha plasticine pickle charm. As soon as they were fabricated, he enlisted the aid of several local boys to distribute printed tickets throughout the Fair, offering 'a free souvenir' when you visited the Heinz company exhibit.

The results were astounding. Thousands of people trekked to the second floor location to claim their premium.

So many fair goers gathered that policemen were called in to control the crowds, who loved the pickle shaped Heinz charms, and immediately hung them on pins or watch chains.

A crafty newspaper advertisement relaying the Heinz hoopla noted, "A man who found himself in a pickle, was saved by one!"

By 1939, both New York's and Treasure Island's World's Fairs featured the charm in pin form, to be discovered for 85 more years in memento boxes from coast to coast.

Now, in 1930s parlance, "That's a Dilly!" ■

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The Best of the Holidays to You and Yours
from the staff of **Mission Village VOICE**

COVER ARTIST

Kimry Jelen

For Kimry, painting is an immersive and transformative process. She likens it to sculpting, as she carefully shapes the essence and character of each subject she portrays. Whether capturing the rugged spirit of the Oregon High Desert, the soulful gaze of a horse, or the vibrant interplay of colors in an abstract piece, her work reflects a profound connection to her subjects. "Each piece has its own story, its own voice," she says. "For me, there's nothing better than hearing that one of my paintings has touched someone's heart or helped them see an animal's personality in a new light."

Kimry's artistic journey is rooted in her love for nature and animals—especially horses. Growing up surrounded by the natural beauty of the Pacific Northwest, she developed an early fascination with mother nature's complimentary color choices, a curiosity that continues to inspire her work today. Horses play a central role in her creative life. As both an artist and an equestrian, she brings a unique perspective to her work, combining firsthand knowledge of these magnificent creatures with her artistic vision.

Her distinctive style is as diverse as her inspirations. From highly textural, abstract works that evoke emotion through vibrant color and movement to representational pieces that capture the intricate details of an animal's expression or the sweeping expanse of a landscape, Kimry's versatility is evident. She allows the subject to guide her, ensuring each painting feels authentic and alive.

But Kimry's art is more than a celebration of nature's beauty—it's a call to reconnect. In a world increasingly distanced from the natural world, her work reminds us of the deep and essential ties we share with the earth and its creatures. "My hope is that my art draws people back to a sense of connection—with nature, with each other, and with them-



selves," she explains. Through her paintings, she invites viewers to pause, reflect, and see the world through a lens of wonder and appreciation.

Kimry's latest project, *The Colors of the Horse*, exemplifies this mission. This ambitious body of work explores our relationship with color but with a twist. Each painting in the series captures not just the physical beauty of horses and their colors, but their spirit and energy. "Horses have taught me so much about patience, presence, and trust," she shares. "This project is my way of honoring them and sharing that connection with others."

Beyond the canvas, Kimry's life is equally shaped by her bond with animals and the land. She lives in a small town in the heart of the Oregon High Desert, where she finds endless inspiration in the rugged landscapes and the creatures she cares for. Her days are a balance of painting, working with horses, and immersing herself in the rhythms of nature. "The desert may seem barren to some, but to me, it's full of life and stories waiting to be told," she says.

Kimry's work has garnered attention for its ability to capture not just the appearance, but the essence of her subjects. Whether in a gallery setting, a large-scale art installation, or through her educational workshops, she is committed to sharing her passion and vision with others.

As an artist, Kimry is continually evolving. She embraces experimentation and sees each painting as an opportunity to grow and explore. "Art is a journey," she says. "It's about staying curious, being open to inspiration, and trusting the process."

Through her art, Kimry hopes to inspire others to look at the world a little differently—to notice small details, honor the natural world, and seek connection in unexpected places. In every brushstroke, she weaves a story of love, respect, and the beauty that surrounds us all.

Pictured at left: "Gratitude" and above: "Mayflowers" by Kimry Jelen.

Reach Kimry Jelen Fine Art online at kimryjelen.com; facebook.com/ArtistKimryJelen; instagram.com/kimryjelen; and twitter.com/kimryjelen ■

CELESTIAL EVENTS



December 1 - New Moon in Sagittarius. The Moon will be located on the same side of the Earth as the Sun and will not be visible in the night sky. This phase occurs at 06:22 UTC. This is the best time of the month to observe faint objects such as galaxies and star clusters because there is no moonlight to interfere.

December 7 - Jupiter at Opposition. The giant planet will be at its closest approach to Earth and its face will be fully illuminated by the Sun. It will be brighter than any other time of the year and will be visible all night long. This is the best time to view and photograph Jupiter and its moons. A medium-sized telescope should be able to show you some of the details in Jupiter's cloud bands. A good pair of binoculars should allow you to see Jupiter's four largest moons, appearing as bright dots on either side of the planet.

December 13, 14 - Geminids Meteor Shower. The Geminids is the king of the meteor showers. It is considered by many to be the best shower in the heavens, producing up to 120 multicolored meteors per hour at its peak. It is produced by debris left behind by an asteroid known as 3200 Phaethon, which was discovered in 1982. The shower runs annually from December 7-17. It peaks this year on the night of the 13th and morning of the 14th. The nearly full moon will block out all but the brightest meteors this year. But if you are patient, you may still be able to catch a few good ones. Best viewing will be from a dark location after midnight. Meteors will radiate from the constellation Gemini, but can appear anywhere in the sky.

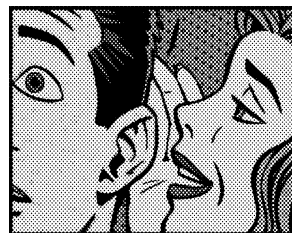
December 15 - Full Moon in Gemini. The Moon will be located on the opposite side of the Earth as the Sun and its face will be fully illuminated. This phase occurs at 09:03 UTC. This full moon was known by early Native American tribes as the Cold Moon because this is the time of year when the cold winter air settles in and the nights become long and dark. This moon has also been known as the Long Nights Moon and the Moon Before Yule.

December 21 - December Solstice. The December solstice occurs at 09:17 UTC. The South Pole of the earth will be tilted toward the Sun, which will have reached its southernmost position in the sky and will be directly over the Tropic of Capricorn at 23.44 degrees south latitude. This is the first day of winter (winter solstice) in the Northern Hemisphere and the first day of summer (summer solstice) in the Southern Hemisphere.

December 21, 22 - Ursids Meteor Shower. The Ursids is a minor meteor shower producing about 5-10 meteors per hour. It is produced by dust grains left behind by comet Tuttle, which was first discovered in 1790. The shower runs annually from December 17-25. It peaks this year on the night of the 21st and morning of the 22nd. The waning gibbous moon will block out many of the fainter meteors this year. If you are patient, you should still be able to catch some of the brighter ones. Best viewing will be just after midnight from a dark location far away from city lights. Meteors will radiate from the constellation Ursa Minor, but can appear anywhere in the sky.

December 25 - Mercury at Greatest Western Elongation. The planet Mercury reaches greatest western elongation of 22 degrees from the Sun. This is the best time to view Mercury since it will be at its highest point above the horizon in the morning sky. Look for the planet low in the eastern sky just before sunrise.

December 30 - New Moon in Capricorn. The Moon will be located on the same side of the Earth as the Sun and will not be visible in the night sky. This phase occurs at 22:28 UTC. This is the best time of the month to observe faint objects such as galaxies and star clusters because there is no moonlight to interfere.



MVV ēvz drāp

Friend 1: You need to book it on OpenTable.

Friend 2: I got booted off of OpenTable.

Friend 1: OMG! What did you do!??

Friend 2: It's a long story.

Older sister: I love to get garlic and rub it on my toast.

Younger sister: Your toes??

Older sister: NO! MY TOAST! ■

NEWS

Cattlemen celebrate 70 years

The San Benito County Cattlemen are celebrating our 70th Anniversary this year. We were formed in 1954 and have a proud history of promoting the Beef Industry. Our membership is comprised of women throughout the county who dedicate their time and energy to educate the public about beef. While our main focus is on promoting beef, we also support our community in several projects and services and provide scholarships to high school graduates.

Each year we focus on new ways to get beef promotion and education out in our community. This year our focus includes the launch of our Welcome banners that feature a scenic picture of cattle grazing along



with our mascot ZIP. Our mascot's name was chosen for its educational message that beef gives you Zinc Iron and Protein.

Please look for our banners when you travel on the San Benito County roadways heading into Hollister on Hwy 25, Hwy 156, Hwy 152, Panoche Rd, and Hwy 146 at the Pinnacles National Park entrance we hope it brings a little smile to your face and a reminder that "BEEF - it's what's for dinner." ■

The Adventure to the North Pole

Bolado Park Nov 24 – Dec 22, 5-10 pm; for tickets go to Eventbrite.com

The Adventure to the North Pole is an indoor/outdoor Christmas/Holiday light display of decorative themed lanes, sections, and rooms using the mixture of lights and mirrors to create a multiple image/infinity effect. It's a walk-thru journey (approximately 300 yds.) using all your senses to bring out the inner child in you. You will see thousands of lights, creative mirrored reflections, homemade props and you will smell various fragrances that reflect each themed section. These unique displays were created to capture emotions of the true meaning of Christmas. Your journey ends



when reaching the North Pole town and all the festivities begin. Go shopping at the Elf's Toy Factory Gift Shop that includes various Holiday Crafts Vendors, promotional items and children craft tables, for coloring and writing letters to Santa, just don't forget to include your Christmas list. Then you can personally deliver your letter into Santa's mailbox outside his cottage. If Santa's home you may visit him, sit on his lap and take unique photos using mirrors that capture the Joy of Christmas. If Mrs. Claus is home you can be sure she will be baking her delicious fresh chocolate chip cookies. The Elves love her cookies and say it's the best cookie ever tasted. There will be various food vendors, picnic tables, a gnome scavenger hunt, a movie theater to enjoy classic Christmas movies, a skating rink (you must bring your own roller skates) and so much more... all while you sit back and take in all the joys this Holiday can bring. ■



Care Giving and Horse Boarding

Looking for a part-time care giver for partially disabled, cognitively sound female in San Juan Bautista. Would be great if person can also do some house cleaning. Need some one who does not hover or talk too much and loves dogs. 2-3 days a week for 3-4 hours.

Also have pasture horse boarding available for one mare or gelding. Grass/alfalfa hay fed twice a day.

Contact Judith:
judith@randomarts.biz
or 408 425-7873



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Above: Third and Mariposa. Photo credit: Heidi Balz. Above right: Holiday Saints in Studio 808. Photo credit: Rotary of San Juan Bautista.

Then... and Now: When the Saints go marching in

By Wanda Guibert,
San Juan Bautista Historical Society

This article was first published in December 2015 and ends with an update.

The Saints” have been a Christmas tradition in San Juan Bautista, City of History, since 1965. You’ll usually see “the saints go marching in” around Thanksgiving and remain until the Epiphany, about two weeks after Christmas. You can spot them on street corners, in front of stores, and along the sidewalk by the State Park orchard. There are forty-four in all, two represent each of California’s 21 Missions, and two represent Father Junípero Serra, founder of the first nine missions and canonized in 2014 as a



Sweet Pea. Photo credit: Heidi Balz

saint. Panels hang back-to-back on downtown lampposts, each adorned by a simple tinsel halo. During the holidays, you can find San Gabriel lingering in front of the Plaza Market, San Miguel hanging around the bakery, and San Carlos on the corner of Jardines. Officially, they’re called the San Juan Bautista Holiday Saints, but locals just call them “The Saints.”

The idea of saints as décor for downtown originated with Jo Shockey, a retired businessman, artist, and then-owner of the historic La Casa Rosa restaurant on Third Street. He presented the idea to the Chamber of Commerce as a way to attract visitors to San Juan during the holidays. Faith (Faye) Dixon was commissioned by the Chamber to paint the first saints in 1964. She created the designs, had blank figures cut from plywood, and hand-painted twenty-one “cutout” figural images, one for each mission in a primitive, folk art style. The Chamber maintained the original saints and displayed them religiously on Third Street every Christmas for nearly twenty years.

In 1983, the original saints had weathered and deteriorated beyond repair. Commissioned by the Chamber for the 200th anniversary of Father Serra’s death, local artist Ursula Hanes Guthrie (a Canadian sculptor), assisted by her partner Donni Reynolds, created a new set of saints in their gallery, the Four Winds Studio, where Mom & Pop’s Saloon was later located [now Trouble Maker Toys and Comics]. Under the leadership of Rebecca McGovern, then Director of the Chamber of Commerce, the old saints were sold to pay the



Downtown lights. Photo credit: Heidi Balz

artist’s commission. The new saints went up in 1984.

The current designs were painted on 2½ x 4 foot panels, which replaced the original “cutouts.” Ursula based her designs on a 21-panel poster painted by the Reverend Michael Buckley, then priest/artist at Immaculate Conception Catholic Church in New Cuyama in Santa Barbara County. Ursula stylized the images, reminiscent of classic Russian Orthodox icons, and placed them in decorative arches. The Buckley posters are available for sale in the gift shop at the St. Francis Retreat Center.

In 2001, the second set had also been destroyed by weather, and local artists Gayle

Sleznick and Norm Scott were asked to restore the entire set. Each year, restoration took between 6-9 months, often long days into the night. 2001 was the only year the saints did not appear for the holidays. Gayle has continued to keep the saints looking their best for the past fifteen years, repainting them as needed in her Studio 808. This year the count is twenty. The paint and wood fatigue was so massive that the majority of them have gone into full restoration. She has been working daily since mid September, right up to the day they take their positions on the lampposts. They are, as Gayle says, “The perfect Christmas decoration and so appropriate for little San Juan Bautista” and refers to them as a “precious entity.”

In 2002 the San Juan Bautista Chamber of Commerce began the Saint Adoption Program to raise money for future restorations and storage. When the Chamber dissolved in 2010, Rotary Club of San Juan Bautista assumed sponsorship of the Saints, continuing the Saint Adoption Program, and displaying the Saints each holiday season to support the traditions of San Juan Bautista. The saints are adopted by individuals or families (often to honor a loved one), local merchants or businesses, and nonprofits. Presently, all the saints have sponsors, and there is a waiting list of potential sponsors if saints become available.

Local videographer Ken Halla produced a video in 2013 about “The Saints” for the SJB Historical Society. The video recounts the history of “The Saints,” shows Gayle at work in her studio, and provides a tour of



Above: The Fr. Buckley Saints painting that Ursula Hanes Guthrie used to create her 1984 saints. Photo courtesy Gayle Sleznik. Original painting, Fr. Michael Buckley.

Third Street as “The Saints” silently announce the holidays and welcome visitors to town. Part of the Historical Society’s *Digital San Juan Bautista Project*, the goal is to capture significant events, celebrations, and ceremonies as they take place in San Juan Bautista and, using digital technology, preserve them for future generations of San Juan residents. Enjoy the video on YouTube in two segments at http://youtu.be/p7iX_vqJ1E4 and <http://youtu.be/MK0pZ2bfqVY>. Thank you, Ken.

UPDATE

Norm Scott was inspired to create notecards, thinking the saints were too beautiful to be seen just once a year. The Norm Scott Saint cards are available for purchase on Rotary’s website: www.rotarysanjuanbautista.com/order-artist-nor

m-scots.html

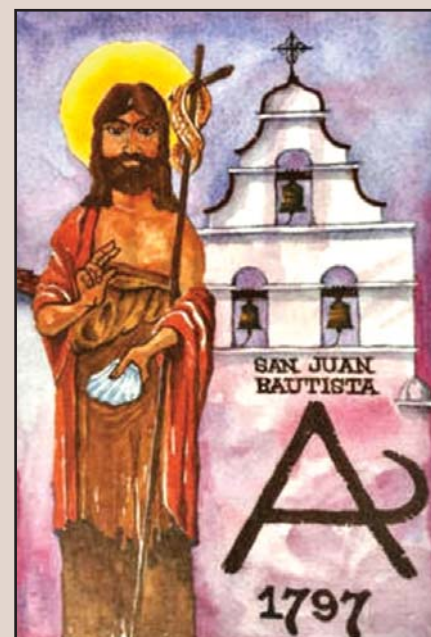
After Norm passed away in 2014, Gayle continued restoring the saints by herself until 2016 when Rotary decided to digitize the images and create vinyl reproductions. Each of the 21 saints was professionally photographed by local Amy Covington, and the digital images were transferred to vinyl by Signs by Van, a full-service sign company — one of the longest-running sign shops on the peninsula. The new durable vinyl reproductions will not fade, peel, crack, or chip and can easily be replaced. Some of the last iteration of saints were auctioned off, and some are still for sale. One complete set will remain.

The saints represent a labor of love and joy, an investment freely made by Gayle,



Then & Now Photos by Larry Gerbrandt.

assisted by Norm — a gift to the community for decades to come. Gayle has a special fondness for crimson-robed San Carlos. Wander downtown over the holidays and discover your favorite. ■



Norm Scott Saint note card



Jardines block. Photo credit: Ken Halla



Three saints and a cactus. Photo credit: Ken Halla



Downtown, decked out for the holidays. Photo credit: Ken Halla

MISSION VILLAGE VOICE | DECEMBER 2024

Calendar

**SUNDAY NOVEMBER 24 -
SUNDAY DECEMBER 22**

THE ADVENTURE TO THE NORTH POLE @ BOLADO PARK Pictures with Santa and Mrs. Claus. Food, crafts, dance performances, elf scavenger hunt, petting zoo, pony rides, Christmas Story reading, roller skating rink, theme nights, and so much more! For Tickets Eventbrite.com

**FRIDAY NOVEMBER 29 -
SUNDAY DECEMBER 22**

EL TEATRO CAMPESINO PRESENTS: LA VIRGEN DEL TEPEYAC El Teatro Campesino Playhouse, San Juan Bautista Visit elteatrocampesino.com

SUNDAY DECEMBER 1

NEW MOON IN SAGITTARIUS

TUESDAY DECEMBER 3

MINIATURE MASTERPIECE - SMALL WORKS FEATURED WORKSHOP Register at eventbrite. Visit Sanbenitoarts.org

FRIDAY DECEMBER 6

ART OF EATING WINTER PICK-UP DINNER Prepared by Chef Becky Herbert of Farmhouse Café. Tickets eventbrite visit sanbenitoarts.org

SMALL WORKS ART SHOW & RAFFLE 6-9pm. Art Depot, 35 5th St., Hollister. Sanbenitoarts.org

FIRST FRIDAY NIGHT MARKET @ VERTIGO 5-9pm. Local vendors, wine tasting, Vinyl DJ, Hapa Bros. Vertigo Coffee Roasters, San Juan Bautista.

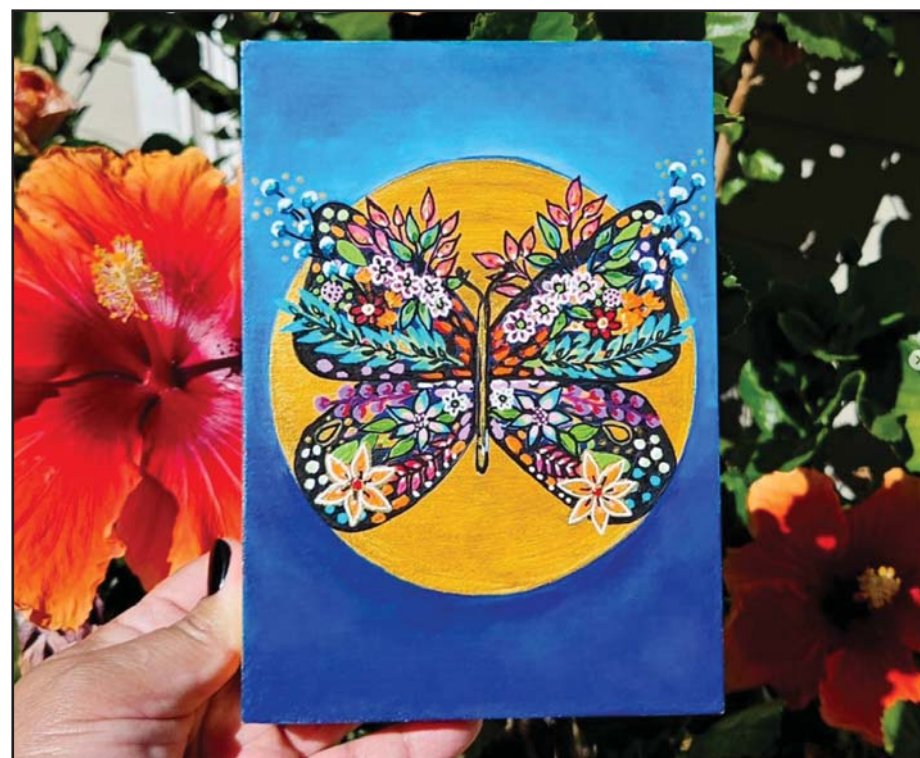
**FRIDAY DECEMBER 6 -
SUNDAY DECEMBER 22**

CHRISTMAS ON THE WHARF Festivities held on weekends. Live entertainment & dazzling decorations on display. Montereywharf.com

SATURDAY DECEMBER 7

SAN JUAN BAUTISTA HOLIDAY OF LIGHTS PARADE 6pm. Parade route down 3rd Street, Historic Downtown San Juan Bautista. Visit rotarysanjuanbautista.com

VIRGIN IMAGE CONFERENCE 1-4pm. Info luna-


Friday, December 6

SMALL WORKS ART SHOW & RAFFLE 6-9pm. Art Depot, 35 5th St., Hollister. Sanbenitoarts.org. Pictured: a small work by artist Donna Lopez. Proceeds from the show and raffle benefit local arts programs. @sanbenitoarts.


Sunday, December 8

33RD ANNUAL BRIGHTEN THE HARBOR LIGHTED BOAT PARADE 5:30-7:30pm. Old Fisherman's Wharf, Monterey. MontereyWharf.com

gallery.art

RECEPTION 24TH ANNUAL "IMAGES OF THE VIRGIN" EXHIBITION 5-7pm. Luna Gallery, 107 B The Alameda, SJB. Lunagallery.art

HOLIDAY TOY DRIVE - POSADA DE SAN JUAN 4pm. Toys, Socks and gently used coats donated to the SJB Community.

HOLIDAY MAKERS MARKET 4-8pm. Posada de San Juan

SJB COMMUNITY CLEAN-UP 9am-12pm. Luck Park, San Juan Bautista

LIVING HISTORY DAYS 11am-4pm. SJB State Historic Park. 1st Saturday.

FLEA MARKET 8am-1pm San Martin Presbyterian Church. 1st Saturdayshadychoo@yahoo.com

**SATURDAY DECEMBER 7 -
SUNDAY DECEMBER 8**

A CHRISTMAS CANTATA - THE BALLAD OF THE BROWN KING Experience this rarely heard inspirational and uplifting gem by Margaret Bonds and Langston Hughes. It is at the heart of our program that captures the generous spirit of the holiday. Sandbox Sand City. Sanboxsandcity.com

**SATURDAY DECEMBER 7 -
SUNDAY DECEMBER 8**

B & R FARMS-HOLIDAYS ON THE FARM VINTAGE MARKET 10am-3pm. Brfarms.com

SUNDAY DECEMBER 8

33RD ANNUAL BRIGHTEN THE HARBOR LIGHTED

BOAT PARADE 5:30-7:30pm. Old Fisherman's Wharf, Monterey. MontereyWharf.com

RANCH DAYS / HIKES ON NYLAND & RANCHO LARIOS PROTECTED LANDS IN SAN JUAN BAUTISTA 9am-12pm. Families welcome! sanbenitolandtrust.org 1st Sunday

MONDAY DECEMBER 9

CASA HOLIDAY PROJECT - GIFT WRAPPING 12-5pm. Epicenter, 440 San Benito St., Hollister RSVP info@casasanbenito.org 831.637.4992

TUESDAY DECEMBER 10

FRIENDS OF THE SBC LIBRARY "BUBBLE & BOOKS" CRAFTING EVENT 6-7:30pm. Crave Wine Bar. For tickets/\$25 call 831.205.1651

CASA CAFÉ PRESENTS JINGLE & MINGLE 4-6pm. Nibbles, drinks, music & wear your ugly sweater. Epicenter 440, San Benito St., Hollister RSVP info@casasanbenito.org or 831.637.4992

JOHN SHIMABUKURO - HOLIDAYS IN HAWAII Golden State Theatre. Monterey. Goldenstatetheatre.com

WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 11

ORIANA CHORALE PRESENTS: A JOYFUL SOUND AROUND THE WORLD 7:30pm Christ Fellowship Church, Hollister. Tickets @ Postal Graphics, Hollister.

SAN BENITO COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY GENERAL MEETING 7pm. Wapple House Museum. Show and Tell by the fireplace. Bring a story or an artifact to share. Refreshments service. Feel free to bring an appetizer to share.

Continued on next page



Saturday, December 14

SOUTH VALLEY SYMPHONY HOLIDAY GIFTS: MASTERPIECES AND MEMORIES 3pm. Advent Lutheran Church, 16870 Murphy Ave., Morgan Hill. Tickets: southvalleysymphony.org

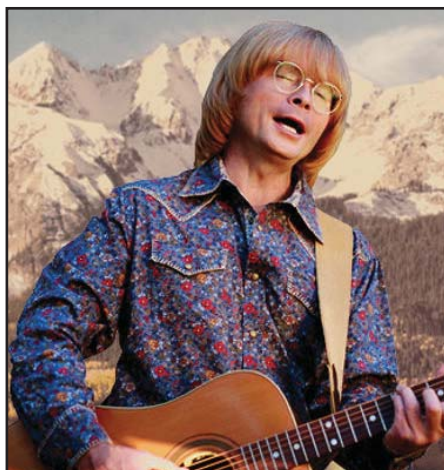
FRIDAY DECEMBER 13

A JOHN DENVER CHRISTMAS STARRING RICK SCHULAR AMERICA'S TOP JOHN DENVER TRIBUTE SHOW Golden State Theatre. Monterey. Goldenstatetheatre.com

ORIANA CHORALE PRESENTS: A JOYFUL SOUND AROUND THE WORLD 7:30pm Mission San Juan Bautista Dec 13th. Tickets @ Postal Graphics, Hollister.

YOSAL WINTER CONCERT - FREE FOR EVERYONE! Doors 6:30 Concert 7pm. Youth Orchestra Salinas Winter Concert at Sherwood Hall. Yosal.org

PEDRO @ NATIVE DAUGHTERS ADOBE 5:30pm. FREE fun night of learning Pedro. 203 4th St., SJB



Friday, December 13

A JOHN DENVER CHRISTMAS STARRING RICK SCHULAR AMERICA'S TOP JOHN DENVER TRIBUTE SHOW. Golden State Theatre, Monterey. Goldenstatetheatre.com

SATURDAY DECEMBER 14

SOUTH VALLEY SYMPHONY HOLIDAY GIFTS: MASTERPIECES AND MEMORIES 3pm. Advent Lutheran Church, 16870 Murphy Ave., Morgan Hill. Tickets southvalleysymphony.org

NATIONAL WREATHS ACROSS AMERICA DAY Sponsor a wreath at wreathsacrossamerica.org

SUNDAY DECEMBER 15

FULL MOON IN GEMINI

ORIANA CHORALE PRESENTS: A JOYFUL SOUND AROUND THE WORLD 7:30pm Christ Fellowship Church, Hollister. Tickets @ Postal Graphics, Hollister.

WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 18

SBC CHAMBER PRESENTS: BINGO NIGHT 5-8:30pm. The Barn, Tres Pinos. RSVP Marketing@sanbenitocountychamber.com

FRIDAY DECEMBER 20

ON A WINTER'S NIGHT - FEATURING CLIFF EBERHARDT, JOHN GORKA, LUCH KAPLANSKY & PATTY LARKIN Carmel Sunset Center. Sunsetcenter.Org

SATURDAY DECEMBER 21

WINTER SOLSTICE OBSERVATION @ MISSION SAN JUAN BAUTISTA Info visit oldmission.org

HOLLISTER VETERANS DECEMBER DINNER WITH SANTA & MRS. CLAUS Hollister Veterans Memorial Building. Info call 831.637.7011

THE POWER PLANT COFFEE + STORE ANTIQUE MARKET 9am-2pm. 3rd Sunday of the month. Thepowerplant.org

SATURDAY DECEMBER 28

MUSTACHE HARBOR - YACHT ROCK FOREVER! Golden State Theatre, Monterey. Goldenstatetheatre.com

Every Week

WEDNESDAYS

LYRICS & LINES OPEN MIC WITH SEJ MILES 6-8pm. Vertigo Coffee Roasters, San Juan Bautista, Vertigo-coffee.com Every Wednesday

GEEKS WHO DRINK - RUNNING ROOSTER TRIVIA NIGHT 6:30pm. Every Wednesday @ Running Rooster, Hollister Runningrooster.com

MARY VELASCO SELLEN SENIOR CENTER LUNCH, CHAIR YOGA & BINGO 11am Chair Yoga, followed by lunch and Bingo. Info Mary Edge 831.262.3484 maryedge@sbcglobal.net.

TRIVIA NIGHT WITH MIGUEL SILVA 6:30-8:30pm. Prizes! Every Wednesday. Vertigo Coffee Roasters, SJB. Vertigocoffee.com

SENIOR LUNCHEONS SJB COMMUNITY CENTER Doors open 10:30am. Every Thursday. Info call Jovenes De Antano 831.637.9275

FRIDAYS

OPEN MIC @ BEARS HIDEAWAY Bear's Hideaway San Juan Bautista

PAINT NIGHT FRIDAYS 6-8pm. 650 San Benito Street #150, Hollister. hollisterartisansmercantile.com

SATURDAYS

SATURDAY MORNING BICYCLE RIDE 8am @ Off the Chain Bikes. A 22 mi. bike ride. Santa Ana Rd thru backroads, moderate-fast. www.offthechainbikes.com

MOSS LANDING CERTIFIED FARMER'S MARKET 9am-2pm. Visit thepowerplant.store/farmers-market

SUNDAYS

FRUITION BREWING LIVE MUSIC ON THE PATIO 3-5pm. Every Sunday. Fruition Brewing, Watsonville Visit Fruition Brewing.com

Save the Date

JANUARY & FEBRUARY

MATTER OF BALANCE CLASSES FREE for Seniors. Register at Mary Velasco Sellen Sr. Center @12pm Wednesday Lucheons @ Casa Maria

SATURDAY JANUARY 25

41ST ANNUAL MISSION 10 RACE Historic San Juan Bautista. Mission10.com

WEDNESDAY JANUARY 22- SATURDAY JANUARY 25

45TH ANNUAL ECOFARM CONFERENCE Connect with 1500+ organic, biodynamic and regenerative farmers, ranchers and industry leaders. Eco-farm.org



Friday, December 20

ON A WINTER'S NIGHT - FEATURING CLIFF EBERHARDT, JOHN GORKA, LUCH KAPLANSKY & PATTY LARKIN Carmel Sunset Center. Sunsetcenter.org

MISSION VILLAGE VOICE Q&A

Valerie Eglund, Outgoing President of R.E.A.C.H.

By Anne Caetano

MVV enjoyed an interesting visit with Valerie Eglund, the outgoing President of R.E.A.C.H., a foundation whose mission is to raise funds and awareness of the health and economic benefits of parks by advocating for new and improved parks and recreation facilities, programs and services throughout San Benito County. While she is soon stepping down from the presidency, she will continue on the Board in another critical role, and they are recruiting new Board members to define their position according to their interests: reach out at info@reachsanbenito.org.

MVV: How did R.E.A.C.H begin?

VE: The first Planning Commission's task was to create a parks plan for San Benito County, and that was done. The plan recommended that a nonprofit be organized to raise funds and support the parks. We started organizing it in 2010/11. The original board was Don Pidd, myself, Robin Pollard and Anita Kane. Paul Rovella did the paperwork, and we were granted nonprofit status as a 501c3 in March 2014 and started working.

This is R.E.A.C.H's 10-year anniversary. Yes, March 2024.

What does R.E.A.C.H stand for?

Recreation Exercise And Community Health.

Is R.E.A.C.H part of a national organization, or is this unique to San Benito County?

Unique to San Benito County. It was Don Kelly who came up with the name. It didn't really speak about parks, so we added parks to it as a DBA.

And in these 10 years you've accomplished a lot.

We joined the COG Bicycle-Pedestrian Committee to promote a bicycle path from San Juan Bautista to Anzar High School with

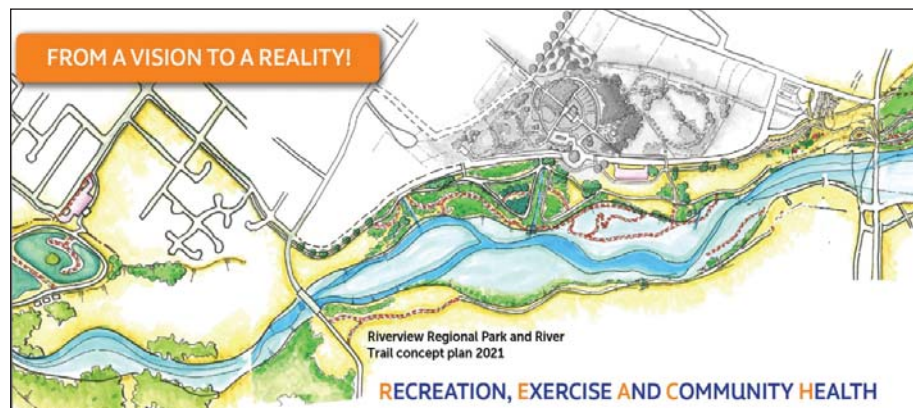
a grant they received. The Bicycle Pedestrian Committee was tasked to create a bicycle plan for the County under Veronica Lezama.

So, it seems like during that time, a lot of different elements were created but let go to the wayside because the County has no money to implement any of this unless a grant is found to pay for it. And that's why it was recommended to create a nonprofit that would find funding and go after grants. Well, you can't go after grants if you have nothing to show. So, we have been building trust and sharing expertise in as many sectors of the community as possible, promoting health and wellness through outdoor activities. We just keep putting our nose under the tent looking for connectivity and consensus.

The County Historical Park, Anza Trail and a few neighborhood parks are San Benito County Parks, and now we've got the developing Riverview Regional Park.

Don Pidd was our connection to the Historical Society and Historical Park until Anita Kane joined the Board, Don moved, and she is now Chair of the County Historical Park Committee.

And that is Anita Kane.



When the bike path to Anzar was established, we created Un Pequeno Paseo en Bicicleta, (a little bike ride), partnering with COG and Safe Kids San Benito. Our goal was to create more enthusiasm for recreational bicycling from San Juan to Anzar High School.

"We can do this, you can do this, and we can do this together!" is a message. It's like the Moonlight Walk: when you encourage people to come out, be accompanied and make it this fun, adventurous group thing.

We are beyond grateful for all that R.E.A.C.H. has done for our beloved Anza Trail.

We have been working closely with RMA Director Steve Loupe since Mike Chambless left. This project that has just happened has been in the planning for over a year. Kim Johnson, R.E.A.C.H. Board Chair of the Anza Trail Committee, has stewarded this project honoring the Old Stage Road History. She and Anita Kane, Landscape Architect, Ret., worked with RMA to accomplish the renovation of the Trail gate entry. Dave Wright, master craftsman, created the framing and installed the Trail interpretive signage that the Board together researched and designed with Eddy Navarro and Gerardo Martinez.

Cost wise, the RMA/Public Works time was scheduled maintenance. The Board of Supervisors provided partial funding for the Trail History Sesquicentennial signage, and R.E.A.C.H. financed the rest from donations.

What accomplishment of R.E.A.C.H are you most proud of?

Sticking it out, keeping it going, coming up with the energy to advocate for more and

better parks, paths and trails for the County as a community — "From the Pajaro to the Pinnacles" and "Off the Couch and Out the Door!"

Joining R.E.A.C.H would be a great way to meet new people, to get involved and learn about San Benito County.

I believe there are new residents here who would like to get involved, but they're not connecting yet. We have gotten matching funding to produce two parks information mailers to 48,000 residents within the past 5 years. People are busy with just living, and 89% of the population believes that parks are a public service.

After 10 years as R.E.A.C.H President, you are retiring and passing the baton.

Yes, I will be 80 in February.

Do you want me to print your age in the paper?

Yes, because it seems reasonable for me to move to the back of the room. Tech is becoming more and more important,

and it's an uphill battle for me. I want to work on compiling information useful for grant applications, and search for them.

Your top priority is recruiting local talent to participate on the R.E.A.C.H. Board?

Right, to find people who want to be involved with the parks, paths and trails. We have made it clear in asking people to join the board that they can define their position according to their interests. Take our current Board:

Anita Kane is also a member of the San Benito County Historical Society and is in charge of the Historical Village.

Robin Pollard is a certified yoga instruc-



tor and has done yoga in a variety of our events. Robin focuses on her longtime interest in Community Gardens and Hollister Parks.

Kim Johnson, as an avid hiker, chairs the Anza Trail Committee. Kim maintains close contact with the County RMA concerning any issues on the Trail and has taken on a lot of the recent improvements.

Amber Cameron is a Parks, Paths and Trails advocate with expertise in procedure and protocols, keeping the Board aware of limitations.

Mel Tungate is a recent advisory board member with soccer league organizing behind him. That experience translates into keen observations during meetings.

Any involvement with Pinnacles?

R.E.A.C.H. has been involved with Pinnacle Gateway Partners, supporting ways to accommodate the needs for tourist support as it connects to our County parks. When Blanca Stransky, Superintendent of Pinnacles National Park, needed the stakeholders brought together, she asked us, and we put it together at the Epicenter.

What's a pump track?

There's going to be a small pump track at the Regional Park, behind the high school in Hollister. They have a nice, big one in Watsonville, and it's a great stress reducer!

When will the pump track be complete?

The first phase will probably be done in 2025. Completing subsequent phases depends on if we get a large grant being submitted currently. Fingers crossed.

Huge grant?

We've been working on the grant, which was submitted as we speak. We were awarded a grant this year to do whatever we wanted with \$24,000, and we decided to invest in a professional who understood nonprofits, granting and local issues. We asked Eddie Navarro who works with Youth Alliance; they have made huge strides and do beautiful work. Eddy has been working with the County Grant Writer & RMA Director Steve Loupe to bring it together.

And Pajaro to Pinnacles.

One of our big deals is the Pajaro to Pinnacles, as a bicycle adventure. It's such a fantastic idea — if we can get connection of properties! We've worked with the

Trust for Public Land, looking at a possible way to find access to the San Benito River. Santa Clara County is waiting for us to connect now that the 25 interchange will have bicycle accommodation. We need to pick up the ball and come along to the Y Road, to San Juan, and from San Juan to Hollister, and connect, connect, connect until we have a fabulous bike road to the Pinnacles from Santa Clara.

Will you remain involved with R.E.A.C.H once you step down as President?

Yes, I'm creating a new position on the R.E.A.C.H Board, and that is going to be historian.

And you will be the historian?

Yes, I'm going to go through all my files and notes and write up a good history because that's important for grant making. To be awarded grants, a non-profit must show their accomplishments, and our accomplishments have been so ephemeral. More like encouraging people, advocating for bicycling and the hiking trails, standing up at the Board of Supervisors and speaking.

And you have been advocating non-stop.

We are working at building a healthier, happier community for our entire County. ■



Ladies in the picture from left to right, Diane, Beverly, Sharon, Whitney, Lisa, Dorian. Quilts of honor ceremony 2024.

SPOTLIGHT

The Pinnacle Quilters of San Benito County

By Whitney Williams

My journey to becoming a quilter started in April 2023. I spotted a post about a free quilting class that was going to happen at the Hollister Library and to give Sharon a call. I got brave and called to ask some questions. I explained I had never touched a sewing machine in my life, but I was really interested in learning. Sharon said that I was the type of student they were looking for. A few weeks later I walked over to the library to start my new adventure.

There were several experienced instructors to help out the class of eager new sewers. The Pinnacle Quilters provided everything that was needed, fabric, thread, sewing machines, and lots of patience. The first class was picking out fabric and getting familiar with all the tools and learning the lingo. We met every other week for 11 weeks; by the end of the sessions, I was completely hooked. I even started to make another quilt at home on my own. By the time October and the fair came around, I had 3 completed quilts and a table runner to enter. At this year's fair, I entered 19 items in a variety of categories, 9 for sewing and quilting.

Since last year, I have joined the Guild and become a board member and was even invited to help teach the future classes. The Pinnacle Quilters have become my second family. You couldn't find a better group of people to know. The mission of the Guide is to teach and share their knowledge and to pass on their skills and techniques to others, to freely encourage and exchange ideas in an encouraging environment, and to



serve the community through charitable activities involving quilting. Pinnacle Quilters donate to many local charities in the San Benito community including Women's Club, Emmanuel's House, Bears and Blankets, Friends of the Library, Sleep in Heavenly Peace, and many others that need items to raffle or auction off. So far this year, the Guild has donated almost 200 quilts valued at over \$10,000. However, Pinnacles Quilters are mostly known for the Quilts of Honor and Hometown Hero quilt ceremony that takes place every year at the San Benito County Fair on the Sunday morning during the fair. Quilts of Honor, started in 2014, recognizes our local veterans and hometown heroes including police, fire, or any front line workers. This ceremony holds a special place for me as my husband received his quilt last year during the ceremony at the fair. This is a way to recognize those who have and continue to sacrifice so much for us.

Pinnacle Quilters meets the 3rd Tuesday of every month at the VFW building in Hollister from 12:30 till 2:30. We always welcome interested potential members. Whether you have little experience or years of experience, you're welcome to come and meet the group, socialize, and share ideas or get advice. Pinnacle Quilters continues to teach classes with a current waiting list for the next session slated to start the end of January. ■

DEARLY DENOTED

The Hardy Tree at St. Pancras Old Church

This tree is named after Thomas Hardy, because before he became the well-known author, he was a young apprentice employed by a local architect. Hardy was directed to remove gravestones to this spot to make room for the construction of a railway line. ■

**BIRTH RIGHT**

Turquoise, a talisman for luck

The December birthstone, turquoise, has long been seen as a talisman for luck and protection. From burial rituals in ancient times to the deep history of turquoise in Native American cultures, there is much to discover about this gemstone.

Turquoise Facts**Where is it found?**

Turquoise is found all around the world, including the United States, Mexico, Middle East, and China. The most valuable and sought-after turquoise comes from the American Southwest and Iran. A variety called "Golden Hills," mined in Kazakhstan, is thought to be the purest in the world.

How is it formed?

It is composed of copper, aluminum, and phosphate. It is formed when water containing copper and aluminum run through phosphate-rich sediment. The copper creates the blue coloring. When you see



turquoise that has more of a greenish hue, that means it contains iron as well. Zinc will cause turquoise to have more of a yellowish hue.

Ancient History

Turquoise has been used for centuries in ceremonies around the world. One of its oldest uses dates to 7,000 BC. It was discovered in burial sites in western Iran.

The Chinese carved turquoise 3,000 years ago. Turquoise was also found in ancient Egyptian tombs dating as far back as 3,000 BC. It was used in pharaoh burial masks, most notably King Tutankhamun's. Native Americans also used turquoise in their burial sites and ceremonies.

Folklore**Increased Accuracy In Battle**

Burial ceremonies were not the only use for this stone in ancient Egypt. It was believed to improve a warrior's accuracy, so it was often attached to swords. Native Americans held a similar belief and placed these stones on bows and firearms.

A Symbol Of Sky And Rain

Turquoise symbolized the god of the sky for many Native American tribes. Some tribes thought that turquoise was formed from the tears of the creator. ■

id·i·om

Hablar sin pelos en la lengua

Translation: "to speak without hairs on your tongue."

In Spanish, "to speak without hairs on your tongue" actually means to speak honestly and frankly, usually without regard for social pressure. Of course, since speaking too frankly can still land someone in very hairy situations, we might not want to take this idiom too far. ■

**Dealcraft**

"Even for those of us who are clumsy and reluctant hagglers, the mechanics of striking a deal can be fascinating," said Jenny McCartney in *The Spectator*. You could start with the "Dealcraft" podcast, hosted by Jim Sebenius, a Harvard Business School professor. His podcast features "interviews with the world's greatest deal-makers" – ranging from Hillary Clinton and the late Henry Kissinger to Michael Jackson's lawyer John Branca – that distill "practical insights for listeners to apply".

**Just One Thing**

"Just One Thing", the late Michael Mosley's hugely popular Radio 4 show and podcast about simple changes to improve your life and health, has long been a "favorite" for me and for people I know, said Patricia Nicol in *The Sunday Times*. The show is a "model of clarity and brevity" – and on BBC Sounds there are more than a hundred episodes for you to try. "Mosley will be greatly missed as a motivational broadcaster, but his positive impact will live on."

**Photomath**

Photomath is known worldwide for helping millions of learners to learn, practice, and understand math – one step at a time. Scan any math problem with the Photomath app to get step-by-step explanations with accurate solutions and a variety of teacher-approved methods. Math is about the process, so Photomath breaks your problem into bite-sized steps to help you understand the "what" and "why" along with the "how." Whether you're learning basic arithmetic or advanced geometry, we'll tackle it together, step by step.

**Blinkist**

Learn something new every day with Blinkist. Get the key ideas from the topbooks, podcasts, and experts in 15 minutes with the Blinkist app. Read & listen to key insights, boost your personal growth with bestsellers and podcasts' summaries, and feed your curiosity. Personal recommendations to dive into 7,500+ titles and hundreds of topics. Learn from experts through step-by-step guides & exclusive insights. It like an expert in your ear!

**GOING POSTAL**

Alzheimer's semipostal stamp

The Alzheimer's Semipostal stamp will be sold for 85 cents. The price includes the first-class single-piece postage rate in effect at the time of purchase plus an amount to fund Alzheimer's research. By law, revenue from sales of the Alzheimer's Semipostal stamp – minus the postage paid and the reimbursement of reasonable costs incurred by the Postal Service – will be distributed to the National Institutes of Health, which is part of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Kathy Siggins of Mount Airy, MD, followed the discretionary semipostal program criteria for submitting the stamp suggestion in 2008. Siggins' husband suc-

cumbed to the disease in 1999.

The artwork is an illustration that first appeared on the 2008 42-cent Alzheimer's Awareness stamp. It shows an older woman in profile with a caring hand on her shoulder with the suggestion of sunlight behind her and clouds in front of and below her. On the 2008 stamp, she was facing left; the artwork for this stamp shows her facing right to help differentiate between the two stamps. Stamp artist Matt Mahurin of Topanga Canyon, CA, worked under the direction of art director Ethel Kessler of Bethesda, MD.

Postal Products

Customers may purchase stamps and other philatelic products through the Postal Store at usps.com/ shopstamps, by calling 844-737-7826, by mail through USA Philatelic or at select Post Office locations nationwide. For officially licensed stamp products, shop the USPS Officially Licensed Collection on Amazon. ■



SBALT NEWS

A year in review

By Lynn Overtree, Executive Director

The San Benito Agricultural Land Trust is excited to share some wonderful news with you. The Breen Family has entrusted SBALT with the permanent protection of their 580-acre working cattle ranch! Thanks to our partner organizations, the sale is in process now. This ranch, along with over 3,600 protected acres at Rancho Larios Open Space, the Nyland property, and Rocks Ranch, contributes to a critical region connecting two mountain ranges and slated for a Caltrans wildlife bridge over Highway 101. Managing this ranch will require ongoing funds. You can support good land stewardship today by donating to SBALT.



We are also incredibly proud that SBALT is sharing our expertise with the local governments, helping with the current San Benito Wildfire Resilience Program and with an Agricultural Element for the County General Plan. We're listening to you, we're incorporating your ideas, and together we're building a stronger, safer, and more sustainable San Benito County. It's because people like you show up. You get involved. Your voice matters.

Our All-In San Benito campaign has already raised an incredible \$419,000, including the generous \$50,000 donation from the Survivor's Trust of Robert and Bev Stratton for restoring the barn on the Ny-



The old barn on the Nyland property.

FUN FACT

What is National Horse Day?

National Horse Day is celebrated every December 13. It's a day to remember the economic, historic, and cultural contributions that horses have made. Equine enthusiasts across the country will get together on December 13 to show their appreciation for these majestic creatures. Whether you're a seasoned rider or have never been on a horse in your life, check out some ways you can recognize the day!

History of National Horse Day

In 2004, Congress designated December 13 as National Horse Day and, since then, Americans have been taking the day to celebrate and appreciate the role of the horse in not only helping our country become what it is today, but also its current role in the modern era.

Horses, in general, contribute roughly \$9.2 billion to the US economy. Whether they're helping plow fields; move food and supplies into rural areas; move livestock in ranches; or just provide sweet, thoughtful equine therapy; horses have woven themselves into the fabric of life in America.

After the primitive Native American horses died out between 13,000 and 11,000 years ago, today's wild-horse species were reintroduced to America by European colonists in the late 1400s. They've since flourished in the great plains and mountainous west, where wild herds' thunderous hooves are still heard to this day. Rodeos are still a vibrant and celebrated part of the culture of the American west, and, in many



rugged and rural areas, horses are still necessary for getting work done.

While the history of horse day may be new to the millennium, horses themselves have always been intrinsic to the lives of many Americans.

National Horse Day Statistics

\$9.2 billion: How much horses contribute to the United States economy. And they don't even get paid!

9.2 million: Conveniently and coincidentally, there's 9.2 million horses in the United States. That means each horse contributes roughly one thousand dollars to the American economy every year and all they ask for are carrots and apples.

600: Roughly 600 feral horses combined live on sparsely populated islands off the coast of Georgia and on North Carolina's Outer Banks islands. Left centuries ago by settlers, these horses have flourished in these desolate lands. ■

land property. Your donation will help us reach our goal of \$600,000!

SBALT continues to host monthly Ranch Days to give you a chance to visit a working ranch, to connect with the land, and to make a difference. Come out on the first Sunday of every month and see firsthand what your support is making possible.

As you think about your year-end giving, please consider a generous donation to your local land trust - SBALT. Together, we're not just protecting land; we're protecting a way of life, a future, and a legacy for all of us. Thank you for being part of something so meaningful. Visit us at sanbenitolandtrust.org. ■



Monterey Bay Air Resources District

Diesel Engine & Equipment Replacement Grant Program

FUNDING AVAILABLE

for off-road/agricultural equipment replacement, marine engine replacement, and agricultural irrigation pump electrification projects.

APPLICATIONS ACCEPTED
OCTOBER 2 - DECEMBER 16, 2024

Contact Person: Ty Bell, Air Quality Planner,
tbell@mbard.org, 831.718.8023

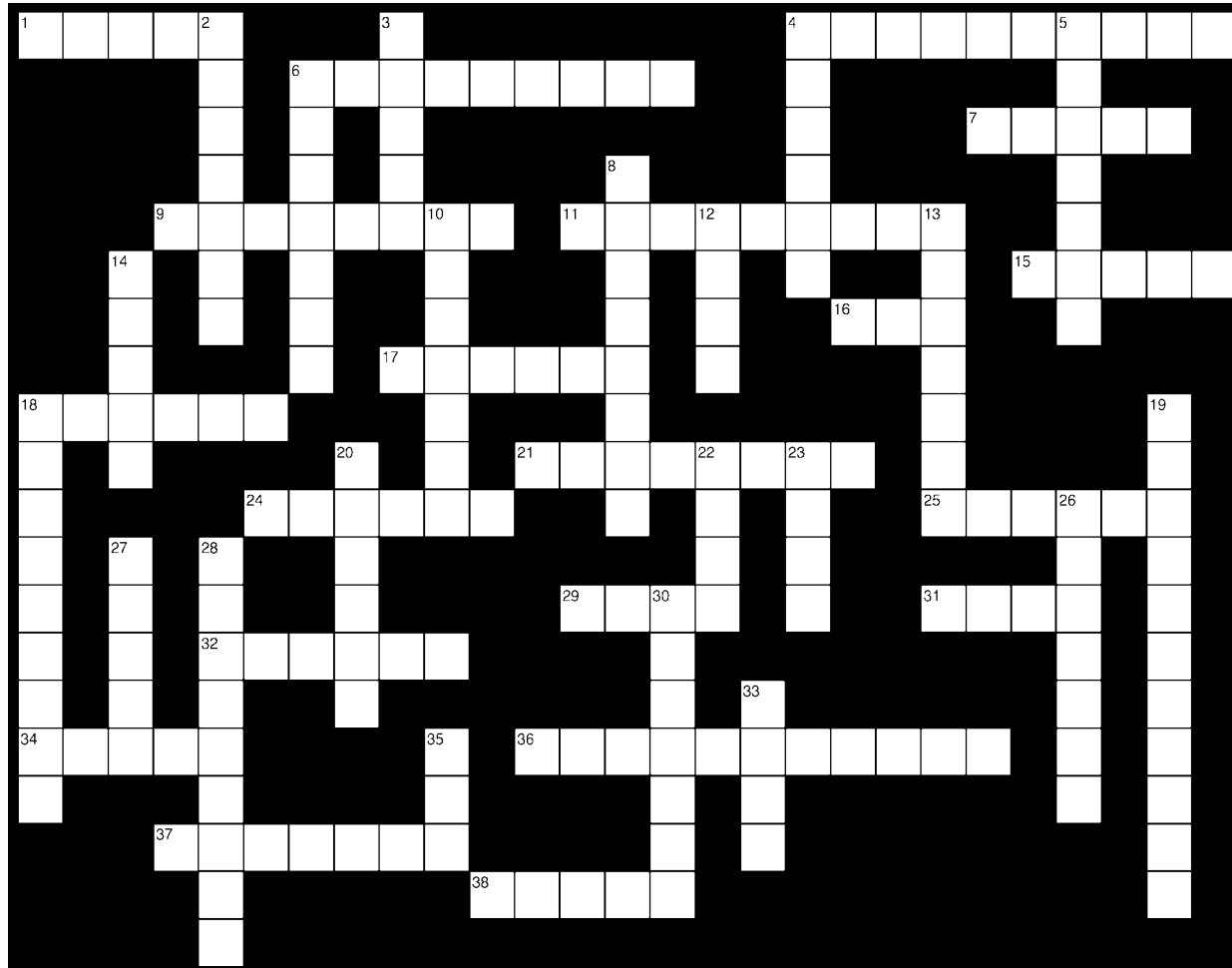
www.mbard.org | 831.647.9411



Mission Village VOICE PASTIMES



CROSSWORD TWO WORDS by Carlinka



ACROSS

- 1 Groom
- 4 +Concert momento
- 6 +Skip school
- 7 +Exhaust
- 9 +Subtly suggested
- 11 +Stirred the pot
- 15 Full of spice
- 16 ___and feather
- 17 +Diet friendly ice cream
- 18 +Type of balloon
- 21 +Johnny Appleseed, e.g.
- 24 Looked into?
- 25 Not out of the

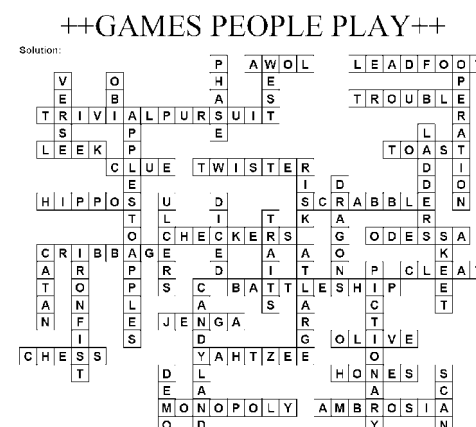
DOWN

- 2 Nervous___ (constant worriers)
- 3 Dieter's order
- 4 Swinger who loves Jane
- 5 Really angry
- 6 Hombre's firearm
- 8 +Story from a fisherman, perhaps
- 10 +"Please, I'll handle that"
- 12 Doesn't continue
- 13 Caressed
- 14 Do axels and camels
- 18 +When to drink for less
- 19 +Eternal
- 20 Ritzy delicacy
- 22 Dance with a wiggle

- 23 Campus military org.
- 26 Halves
- 27 Pantyhose shade
- 28 +Jump in the
- 30 +Causes a ball to dip
- 33 Vintner's valley
- 35 In shape

- 29 Greek cheese
- 31 Chapters in history
- 32 +Ready to be summoned, as a doctor
- 34 In___ (not yet born)
- 36 +Seer may use a
- 37 +"Naked" rodent
- 38 Record holder?

Last month's puzzle solution



HOROSCOPE

DECEMBER 2024 by Hilda De Anza



ARIES March 21-April 20

The month gets off to a great start, perfect for cultural activities, international relationships, and expanding your intellectual horizons. What you start as December begins can bring success well into the future.



TAURUS April 21 -May 21

December begins, and a professional metamorphosis. The future lies in embracing modern trends. In the days up to Christmas you can expect happiness and good fortune. Money comes your way, friendships blossom, and there is a sense that you are appreciated.



GEMINI May 22-June 21

December is an excellent time for reconnecting with people you are close to, especially brothers (and, less likely, sisters) and old friends. Nostalgia rules: old memories are shared, and old activities taken up. This is an excellent time for travel and rendezvous at places treasured in your memory.



CANCER June 22-July 22

To some extent your needs and the needs of partners are poles apart, with your financial goals pulling in opposite directions. Nevertheless, there are strong passions which bring passion and intimacy into your love life. With grit and determination, you will manage fine, ultimately achieving long-term goals.



LEO July 23-August 22

You are likely to feel a strong attraction at this time, but circumstances can mean that you are pulled in different directions. The pull of a past relationship is strong, so there may be some kind of reunion or rekindling of an old flame.

VIRGO

August 23-September 22



There are very interesting trends socially and romantically. The first half of the month is a great time for enjoying the company of colleagues, and an office romance may be rekindled. The period from Christmas to the New Year is characterized by strong partnership and family commitments.



LIBRA September 23 - October 22

There are extremely interesting developments

for you indicating powerful events connected with friendships and romance, which can turn things upside down. An electric attraction comes into the picture, so you could be swept off your feet by a charmer. You may be breaking some rules.

SCORPIO

October 23-November 21



There are significant developments in a key relationship around December 12th, when Venus opposes retrograde Mars. This rare astrological event brings strong attractions and awakens passions. This month you can enjoy prominence and acclaim.

SAGITTARIUS

November 22-December 21



There is a strong focus on communication and international or cultural events, which can be related to people in the neighborhood, friends or siblings. Old fashioned views clash with more modern views, and this is a scenario you and partners will have to navigate without being too alienated.

CAPRICORN

December 22-January 20



Your sign ruler Saturn is in the middle of its journey through the sign of Pisces, which is evoking some uncharacteristic traits in you. So, this is a good time for developing your creative side and for learning the art of living, but not a good time for concrete achievements apart from developing spiritually.

AQUARIUS

January 21-February 19



With Pluto is back in your sign until 2044 intense transformations will arise. You are now at the forefront of important changes that are necessary for society to develop. Relationships are sure to be on the agenda, with powerful passions creating intense attractions and repulsions.

PISCES

February 20-April 19



December highlights efforts by partners and business associates to expand reach and influence. Theoretically conditions are excellent for this purpose, with supportive colleagues and lots of creative ideas. This also applies to the family situation around Christmas. Should you spend time with the partners family or should your partner spend time with your family? If everyone remains flexible, this promises to be a very stimulating Christmas.

#THE GOLDEN AGE

Winter blessings to our Veterans

By Leanne Oliveira

"Any nation that does not honor its heroes will not long endure." - Abraham Lincoln

Happy Winter! I've been doing a lot of outreach lately to veterans including our Veteran Services office, VFW, and The American Legion. Fun fact: ALL of them (and their Auxiliaries) are in the Vets' Building in Hollister!

The American Legion is actively seeking volunteers. They do great work locally, including a Blanket Drive through 12/16 (call 831-637-7011). Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) also does cemetery upkeep; their "Wreaths Across America" program lets you sponsor a wreath placed on a vet's grave this month (\$17/ea, call 831-637-6015). Notice green light bulbs lately? These "Greenlight a Vet" bulbs sold in Sept/Oct (831-637-4846) are meant to be displayed 11/4-11/11 to support veterans. There are

so many great resources that folks are unaware of, like free tickets to sports games (831-637-7011), museums (www.Museums4All.org), or VASH vouchers (831-637-4846) for homeless vets that skip Section 8's current 11-year waitlist. In addition to providing real assistance, veteran groups also help mitigate isolation. Consider being a representative on a local committee such as the Aging & Long-Term Care Commission (info: pmgeiger@alz.org), actively recruiting for veteran spots.

The holidays can be awfully hard for many vets and/or seniors. The free bilingual Crisis Lifeline is available 24/7 by calling 988 or visiting www.988lifeline.org. For some cheer, consider The American Legion's Christmas dinner on 12/21 which is also open to the general public (RSVP: 831-637-7011). Please remember that your efforts to protect this country are appreciated! I wish



Members of Hollister's VFW Post 9242 participate in a Challenger team tournament.

you all the happiest of holidays.

Reminder: Medicare's Enrollment Period ends 12/7. Your existing plans renew by default, so make sure they are well-suited. Call non-profit HICAP (831-462-5510) for free local counseling.

Golden Tip: The Mary Velasco Sellen Senior Center is offering Monday watercolor classes, Tuesday exercise classes, and Wednesday luncheons plus a drive-thru for Christmas and NYE. Info: maryedge@sbc-global.net.

Leanne Oliveira (MLIS, MA History) is a Reference Librarian at the Watsonville Library and works for Seniors Council at the Epicenter in Hollister. She also writes #Bookworm for the MVV. Contact LeanneO@SeniorsCouncil.org. ■

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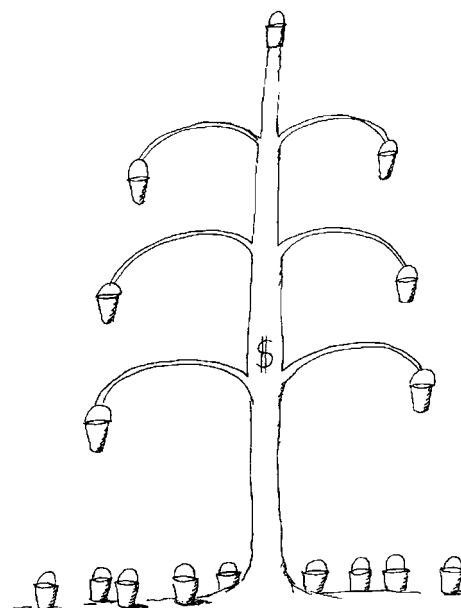
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