

TEN YEARS



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Happy New Year from San Benito Health Foundation Feliz Año Nuevo desde la Fundación de Salud San Benito



San Benito Health Foundation's twinkling mobile clinic along with providers, staff, and family members attending the 2024 San Juan Bautista Holiday Parade of Lights hosted by the SJB Rotary Club.

**Wishing all of you health
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Published Monthly by

Mission Village Voice Media, LLC.

P.O. Box 999

San Juan Bautista, CA 95045

Email: missionvillagevoice@gmail.com

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A note to our readers

Mission Village Voice celebrates ten wonderful years, thanks to YOU—our advertisers, contributors, and readers. We are beyond grateful for all your support. Here's to a decade of stories and a future full of possibilities!

Peace, Love, Joy, and
Abundance be with you all!

*The Mission Village Voice
Family*

On the cover

John "Van" Van de Dusen gifted this Bols Ballerina bottle to Rosemarie "Mim" Caetano in the 1960's. For more information, see page 16.

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Maria and Matias Coria (hiding!) at the SBC Library's recent "Bud Vase Workshop". The Friends of the SBC Library decorated a book-themed tree (featuring holiday books encased within ornaments) for the Lights On Celebration and hosted a holiday "Bubbles & Book Craft" event at Crave whose attendees included Friends Secretary (and craft instructor) Laura Moorers' parents Jane and Dennis Pattison visiting especially for this event from North Carolina.

#BOOKWORM

Spotlight on 'Friends' Library Auxiliaries

By Leanne Oliveira

"To ask why we need libraries at all, when there is so much information available elsewhere, is about as sensible as asking if roadmaps are necessary now that there are so very many roads."

- Jon Bing

Happy 2025! While I've written this column for almost a decade, I've never discussed library auxiliaries (known globally as "Friends" groups) in detail, including their responsibilities and relationship to their affiliate libraries, or explained the often confusing administrative oversight agencies that govern libraries.

First, Friends groups are entirely separate from their libraries. Please reread that. Folks, these are strictly 501(c)(3) fundraising charitable groups that are volunteer-led and have no influence over library actions or policies, so punishing them for any library misdeeds is shameful.

Friends' funds supplement library resources including funding programs, book purchases, staff celebrations, scholarships, and expansions. In turn, Friends are supported by fundraising events, membership dues, bequeathals, grants, community foundations, charity platforms like Mighty Cause,

and more. Worth noting that SJB'S Auxiliary is one of the oldest in the State!

As mentioned, I also wanted to acknowledge the state of our local library systems, which is confusing to many. While we have a "San Benito County Free Library" system (SBCFL.org), it contains only one library branch which is in Hollister and is run by our County's Board of Supervisors (not librarians). That system does not include San Juan Bautista's Carl M Luck Memorial Library (tinyurl.com/SJB-Library), which is run by that City Manager's office (again, not librarians). These City and County admin-

istrators also handle HR and Fiscal, rather than library staff doing so.

Many County Library systems are run by their Board of Supervisors for legislative direction and a County Administrative Officer for administrative direction, who appoints a County Librarian for system leadership. So, lots of cooks in that kitchen and very little actual librarian input. You'd be surprised by how few actual librarians are employed in our libraries! I won't go into details here for a few reasons, but having librarians solely (or mostly) running the show makes a proven quantifiable difference in long-term output. After all, librarians know libraries

best - and we darn well should since the title requires a Masters Degree in Library & Information Science (MLIS)!

COUNTY LIBRARY (HOLLISTER)

Zip book policies have changed: You must now request one book at a time and they must be sold on Amazon from Amazon (not a third party) to qualify. Also, visit their Literary Summit co-hosted by the Office of Education on 1/23. Three (total) stargazing kits are now available to patrons seeking to borrow State Park passes, and enjoy a new Chess Club (adults) Friday mornings and a Game Club (kids) every second Thursday. Info at SBCFL.org.

FRIENDS OF THE SBC LIBRARY (HOLLISTER)

The Winter issue of our Friendly Newsletter is out! Save the Date for our "Tea with Friends" fundraiser in Ridgemark on 3/16. Still taking vinyl and book donations over the annual sale break (next sale is 2/8), so call 831-205-1651 for a pick up. All info at SBCFriends.org.

HIDDEN LIBRARIES

For something fun from our esteemed Publisher Anne Caetano, check out "6 Hidden Libraries Around the World" at <https://interestingfacts.com/hidden-libraries/>

HILLS BOOKSTORE

Now in downtown Hollister! View hours

and updates at HillsBookstore.com.

LITERARY HOLIDAYS

Happy National Braille Literacy Month, National Science Fiction Day (1/2), "Common Sense" Day (Paine's classic was published 1/10/1776), "I'm Afraid I Can't Do That" Day (HAL goes online on 1/12/97 in 2001, A Space Odyssey), Winnie the Pooh Day (1/18), and Burns Supper/Burns Night (1/25). Birthday Babies include Isaac Asimov (1/2/1920), AA Milne (1/18/1882), and Edgar Allen Poe (1/19/1809).

LITTLE FREE LIBRARIES (LFLs)

Hollister is up to a dozen LFLs whereas Prunedale, Watsonville, Royal Oaks, and SJB only have two each. Though these counts reflect only the official charter LFLs listed at littlefreelibrary.org and there are likely many more unofficial spots, it's still pretty darn impressive!

LUCK LIBRARY (SJB)

Swing by for Knitting & Crochet classes every Friday at 2 PM and ESL classes Tues/Wed at 5 PM. For more services and resources, visit tinyurl.com/SJB-Library.

SEEKING LITERARY PICS & EVENTS

Quick reminder that if you have a literary-related image or event that you would like to see featured in this column, please email oldfashionedolive@gmail.com and you just might see it printed. ;)

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



Leanne Oliveira

Environmental Day

Three Free Services for San Benito County Residents!



2025 EVENTS FROM 9AM – 1PM

WHEN: **JANUARY 25**

WHERE: Brigantino Park

2100 San Juan Hollister Rd, Hollister

WHEN: **FEBRUARY 1**

WHERE: San Juan School

100 Nyland Dr., San Juan Bautista

WHAT:



Electronic Waste Recycling (E-waste)

Drop off unwanted e-waste including televisions, computers and accessories, cell phones, laptops, game consoles, radios, stereos, and small electronics with cords. *No large household appliances (stoves, refrigerators, washers, dryers, etc.) will be accepted.*



Secure Document Shredding

Bring up to five full banker boxes (legal size; 24 x 12 x 10) of documents to be confidentially and securely shredded on-site. Paperclips and staples do not need to be removed.



Compost Giveaway

Residents may take up to 32 gallons of compost to use as a soil amendment for gardens and landscaping projects. This compost is from local participation in Recology's Organics program. Please bring your own shovel and container. Limited supply available.

No assistance will be provided. Bring your own shovel and gloves for loading compost.

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ARTS

Kicking off the New Year with artists' predictions for 2025

By Julian Torres, Program Assistant
San Benito County Arts Council

To welcome 2025, we've asked local and regional artists and community members to share their predictions for arts and culture in the coming year. Here's what they had to say:



"In 2025, arts and culture will continue to inspire healing, fuel collaboration, foster connection, and celebrate collective resilience." - **Rosanna Alvarez, Poet, Educator, Artist, Aztec Dancer, and SBC Arts Council Board Member**

"I predict a county that protects the well-being of our farmworker families from the policies of the incoming administration. I also predict better access to cultural and performing arts opportunities for all families as well." - **Alfredo Avila, Filmmaker**

"Focusing on consumerism." - **Sue Everitt, Acrylic Painter**



"The arts are essential for building community and trust." - **Jennifer Colby, Ph.D., President of Luna Gallery and Eco Art Studio and SBC Arts Council Board Member**

"2025 will be a year of youth revival and connection. That our young people will feel more integrated within their community in a healthy way, and that adult leaders will come alongside to help them grow their character as they move forward in life to be wonderful contributors to society." - **Sammy Ramirez, Dancer & Community Leader**

"Embracing diversity, creativity, and collaboration will transform our community." - **Jeanine (Fradieu) Riddle, President/CEO, BeProximity Nonprofit Organization**

"I predict that 2025 will bring a year of activism and action within our community. Whether it be through activism, academics,

or art, I predict that the needs and injustices in our communities here locally, in California and nationwide, will be reflected through local participation and action." - **Andres Rodriguez, Artist and Community Leader**

Let's keep the conversation going! Join us at one of our upcoming Artist Roundtables

in Hollister and San Juan Bautista in January, or come see our new show "In Full Bloom," opening Friday January 24th. We'd love to see you and hear your thoughts! For more information, please visit www.sanbenitoarts.org or email us at info@sanbenitoarts.org. ■

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COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT

**BeProximity's
BLACK HISTORY MONTH
COMMUNITY-WIDE CELEBRATION**

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 1
5-8 PM
Hollister Elks Lodge

Doors will open at 4:45PM with dinner served shortly after.
Semi-Formal Dinner | Live Entertainment
Silent Auction | Ages 15+

Tickets: \$70/person

Community Building with the Black Population of San Benito County through the anthropologic tool of proximity.



Questions?
beproximity@gmail.com
www.beproximity.org



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.

SNIPPETS FROM THE MILLIKEN FILES

Smokin'!

Submitted by Joe Claus & John Grafton

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

Old women smoked cigarets. Also some of the younger married women. Young girls never smoked. The reason was because they did not want people to see them smoking and think they were old.

Mr. Larios' mother smoked cigarets but was not a fiend for them. When Estolano was little, his mother used to send him down to the kitchen to light her cigaret. He had to draw on it occasionally on the long way back to the big room in order to keep the cigaret from going out. In this way he learned to smoke, himself. The kitchen was in the shed part of the house. Only live oak wood was used in the fireplace. There were live coals there all day long. Just stir the ashes, and one would find live coals. Estolano would stick the cigaret in the coals and light it.

Josefa, the oldest of the Higuera girls smoked all the time. She would inhale. Her tongue was as black as jet. She was Jose German's wife. He smoked, and she smoked. She



had a cigaret in her mouth all the time. She would make cigarets out of brown paper with very little tobacco in them. Cigaret paper came in big sheets in those days. It was straw paper. It would be folded up to the right size for cigaret papers and then cut in pieces. The only kind of smoking tobacco was Killic i Nic. This came in small red boxes. This was used to make cigarets. Everybody made their own cigarets.

There was a little fruit store in San Juan where they made cigarets to sell. They would make them up and put twenty-five in

little boxes and sell them for maybe ten cents. Juanito Higuera and Juan Prida ran this store. Prida was a Mexican from Mexico and was Higuera's partner. Manuel Larios never smoked cigarets. He always smoked cigars. He also had a long German porcelain pipe with a big metal cap. Larios would sit in his rocking chair and smoke this pipe. The stem was three or four feet long and the pipe itself rested on the floor. The grandchildren would be running around. He would call them to him, and each child would get a puff. ■



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FINANCIAL FOCUS

Time for New Year's financial resolutions

Now that the calendar has flipped, it's time for some New Year's resolutions. You could decide you're going to exercise more, lose weight, learn a new skill, reconnect with old friends — the possibilities are almost limitless. This year, why not add a few financial resolutions to your list?

Here are a few to consider:

- **Reduce your debts.** It may be easier said than done, but if you can cut down on your debt load, you'll increase your cash flow and have more money available to invest for your future. So, look for ways to lower your expenses and spending. You might find it helpful to use one of the budgeting apps available online.

- **Boost your retirement savings.** Try to put in as much as you can afford to your IRA and your 401(k) or other employer-sponsored retirement plan. If your salary goes up this year, you've got a good opportunity to increase your contributions to these retirement accounts. And once you turn 50, you can make pre-tax catch-up contributions for your 401(k) and traditional IRA. You might also want to

review the investment mix within your 401(k) or similar plan to determine whether it's still providing the growth potential you need, given your risk tolerance and time horizon.

- **Build an emergency fund.** It's generally a good idea to maintain an emergency fund containing up to six months' worth of living expenses, with the money kept in a liquid, low-risk account. Without such a fund, you might be forced to dip into your long-term investments to pay for short-term needs, such as an expensive auto or home repair.

- **Keep funding your non-retirement goals.** Your traditional IRA and 401(k) are good ways to save for retirement — but you likely have other goals, too, and you'll need to save and invest for them. So, for example, if you want your children to go to college or receive some other type of post-secondary training, you might want to invest in a tax-advantaged 529 education savings plan. And if you have short-term goals, such as saving for a wedding or taking an overseas vacation, you might want to put some money away in a liquid account. For a short-term goal, you don't necessarily need to invest aggressively

for growth — you just want the money to be there for you when you need it.

- **Review your estate plans.** If you haven't already created your estate plans, you may want to do so in 2025. Of course, if you're relatively young, you might not think you need to have estate plans in place just yet, but life is unpredictable, and the future is not ours to see. If you have already drawn up estate plans, you may want to review them, espe-

cially if you've recently experienced changes in your life and family situation, such as marriage, remarriage or the addition of a new child. Because estate planning can be complex, you'll want to work with a qualified legal professional.

You may not be able to tackle all these resolutions in 2025. But by addressing as many of them as you can, you may find that, by the end of the year, you have made progress toward your goals and set yourself on a positive course for all 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

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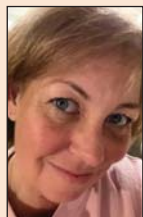
Classic Minestrone Soup

By Chef Liz

If you're anything like me, you made a delicious stock out of your turkey bones from the holidays and popped it in the freezer to be forgotten — out of sight, out of mind. But not this year!

The hustle and bustle of the holidays are over and we all need to get back to our healthy eating. It's cold and dreary outside and a big batch of hearty, nutritious, veggie-filled soup will warm us right up!

And it's so easy! Of course I used that turkey stock and I purchased a wonderful and abundant veggie box from Green Thumb Farms located in San Juan, that had most of the ingredients needed! You can order yours or get more information, by calling Cultiva Restaurant at (831) 593-1016 or online at <https://www.greenthumbgardenfarms.com>



Classic Minestrone Soup adapted from thekitchn.com

Ingredients

- 1 medium yellow onion
- 6 medium stalks celery
- 1 large zucchini
- 3 medium carrots
- 1 small sweet potato
- 2 cloves garlic
- 1 (15-ounce) can white beans, such as cannellini or Great Northern
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 2 teaspoons kosher salt, plus more for seasoning
- 1 (2x3-inch) Parmesan rind
- 1 (28-ounce) can diced tomatoes
- 6 cups vegetable or poultry stock
- 1/2 medium lemon
- 2 tablespoons basil pesto, plus more for serving

4 cups baby spinach or baby kale
Parmesan cheese and crusty bread, for serving

Method

Dice the following (no larger than 1/2-inch), keeping them separate: 1 medium yellow onion (about 1 cup), 6 medium stalks celery (about 2 cups), 1 large zucchini (about 2 cups), 3 peeled medium carrots (about 1 1/4 cups), and 1 peeled small sweet potato (about 2 cups). Finely chop 2 garlic cloves. Drain and rinse 1 can white beans.

Place 2 tablespoons olive oil and 2 tablespoons unsalted butter in a large stockpot or Dutch oven over medium-high heat. Once the butter melts and begins to sizzle, add the onion and 1 teaspoon kosher salt, and sauté until softened but not browned about 3 minutes. Add the carrots and celery and cook until brightened in color, 3 to 5 minutes.

Add the sweet potato and sauté until slightly softened at the edges, about 3 minutes. Stir in the zucchini and garlic, and cook until softened, about 2 minutes.

Add 1 (2x3-inch) Parmesan rind, 1 can diced tomatoes and their juices, 6 cups poultry or vegetable stock, and the beans. Stir to combine and bring to a boil over medium-high heat.

Reduce the heat to medium-low and simmer until the carrots and sweet potato are tender, 20 to 30 minutes.

Remove and discard the Parmesan rind. Squeeze in the juice from 1/2 lemon (about 1 tablespoon). Stir in 2 tablespoons basil pesto and 4 cups baby spinach or baby kale and simmer until combined and the greens wilt. Taste and season with salt as needed.

Ladle the soup into bowls. Thinly shave Parmesan cheese with a Y-peeler and scatter onto the soup, and drizzle with more pesto. Serve with crusty bread. ■

THOMMELIER

Wine's lost years and hidden secrets

By Thomas Brenner, Sommelier

What do Napoleon Bonaparte, Prohibition bootleggers, and a sunken ship off the California coast have in common? Each weaves into wine's most captivating mysteries -- lost vintages, hidden treasures, and an enduring quest to unearth history. Wine, with its tales of place and time, often leaves gaps obscured by war, revolution, or the passing centuries. These voids invite intrigue, inspiring vintners and historians to piece together untold stories.



Infamous vinous legends abound, from Stalin's cellar to counterfeit bottles and Thomas Jefferson's Bordeaux. There's also the mythical vineyard Noah planted on Mount Ararat, said to be the birthplace of *vitis vinifera*, the wine grape. Such tales, as abundant as the wine at Socrates' symposia, offer a bottomless well of intrigue.

But where do we start within wine's 8,000-year history? Let's begin closer to our era, with Napoleon. Exiled to Saint Helena after Waterloo, he drowned his sorrows in Chambertin and Vin de Constance from South Africa. Legend has it the British navy intercepted these shipments, substituting inferior wine. However, some records suggest these lost cases may have been smuggled elsewhere, hidden in secret cellars still undiscovered.

The phenomenon of lost vintages isn't exclusive to Napoleon. Wars have disrupted or erased entire swaths of winemaking history. During World War II, French vineyards were seized, with reserves plundered or destroyed. Risking their lives, some vintners walled up cellars to hide barrels and bottles. Occasionally, these hidden treasures resurface. In one Burgundy estate, a secret compartment revealed bottles so old their labels had dissolved, leaving tasters to identify the vintage by faint engravings and remarkably preserved flavor profiles.

Closer to home, California holds its own stories of wine's lost years. Prohibition (1920-1933) decimated the U.S. wine industry, forcing many vintners to close or produce "sacramental wine" for churches. Bootleggers, however, found other ways, smuggling barrels to speakeasies in cities like San Francisco and Los Angeles. These illicit wines, made from forgotten grape varieties, are only now being rediscovered.



Varieties like Mission and Alicante Bouschet, once relegated to history, are finding renewed appreciation in boutique wineries.

Then there are the literal underwater treasures. In 2011, divers discovered the wreckage of a 19th-century ship off California carrying cases of French wine. Though decades in brine rendered most undrinkable, a few bottles survived intact, offering a glimpse into the flavor profile of that era. Such discoveries not only fascinate but inspire scientific exploration into aging processes and unconventional storage methods, like underwater cellars designed to mimic shipwreck conditions.

Today, vintners on California's Central Coast honor these lost stories by reviving forgotten traditions. Some are planting heirloom grape varieties, while others use amphorae -- ancient clay vessels -- to replicate winemaking methods of civilizations long before stainless steel.

Wine, after all, is more than a drink; it's a time capsule. A living artifact, it carries whispers of land, people, and the moments that shaped it. For every bottle that survives, countless more vanish into history, leaving only tantalizing traces. Whether hidden in wartime France, submerged in a long-lost shipwreck, or illicitly transported during Prohibition, these phantom vintages remind us that wine's greatest allure often lies in the mysteries we may never fully taste.

So, as you uncork your next bottle, pause and consider the stories it carries -- and those it doesn't. The world of wine is as much about mystery as mastery. Cheers to the lost years and the seekers who keep its story alive. This holiday season, let your celebrations create new memories, with or without a glass of history in hand. ■



COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

Apply for scholarships from the Community Foundation for San Benito County

The Community Foundation for San Benito County is offering more than 25 scholarships to local students for the 2025/2026 academic year. Starting on January 7, 2025, applications will be open for a wide range of scholarship opportunities designed to support students from San Benito County in their pursuit of higher education.



Scholarships from the Foundation help reduce the financial burden of college, enabling students to focus on their studies and personal growth. One recipient, **Ricardo Nunez** (pictured), shared his experience of how the scholarship he received changed his life. Nunez, a graduate of Cal Poly San Luis Obispo, explained that the scholarship made his transition to college much easier and allowed him to graduate Cum Laude, debt-free. He is now pursuing a career in accounting, specializing in auditing.

"Supporting organizations that give back to the community, especially to those who are less fortunate, is something that doesn't go overlooked and can truly change lives," said Nunez. "The support I received allowed me to focus on my studies and build meaningful relationships."

The Community Foundation for San Benito County's scholarships are a great way to support your education and ease financial challenges. The scholarships are open to all eligible students residing in San Benito County, and you can apply to one or multiple opportunities that fit your profile.

To learn more and apply, visit GiveSanBenito.org/Scholarships beginning January 7, 2025. The Community Foundation for San Benito County is committed to supporting local students and helping them succeed, just as it has helped countless others like Ricardo Nunez. ■

TRIVIAL PURSUITS The Garnet

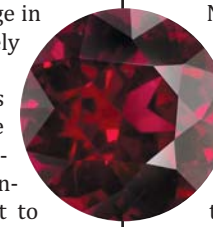
The January birthstone, garnet, is surrounded by folklore and was known for its healing properties. While best known for its deep red hue, garnet naturally occurs in a range of col-

ors, including greens, yellows, and even blues. Garnets can range in appearance from completely opaque to transparent.

Native American healers thought garnet possessed the ability to protect against injury and poison, while in ancient Egypt, it was thought to ward off bad dreams and cure de-

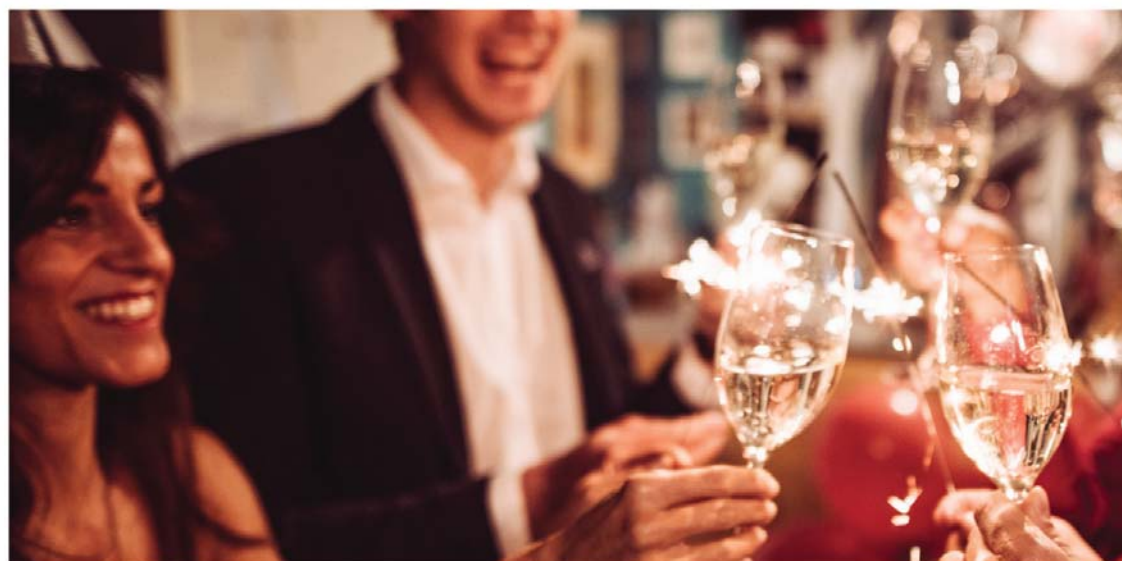
pression. According to biblical legend, Noah is said to have used a garnet gem on the Ark as a source of light.

In more modern times, its suggested garnet provides wearers with loyalty and unchanging affection. It is also thought to encourage success in business. ■



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Cheers to a new year!

As the calendar turns the page, we wish you the very best in the year ahead.



Alexis Winder, CFP®, AAMS™
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VOICING SOME THOUGHTS They say we want a resolution

By Halina Kleinsmith

Flip after calendar flip, the observation of a new year invariably brings with it a new narrative.

Though it may be based on our old one, as we face the start of another 365 day cycle, the efforts we individually make to reassess and readjust our self-tutorials serve to confirm how we are personally evolving.

Describing someone as being resolute is a way of expressing a positive recognition

of their individual determination to be mindful and consistent in pursuing a particular course of action.

Whether this is through a family dynamic or an organizational schematic, those with leadership roles tend to fare better when they behave resolutely, and are able to take the steps necessary to be relevant within their medium.

Resoluteness becomes exemplified through the courage of individuals who work through tough challenges on a daily basis, in confidence that their efforts and the end results which they succeed in producing, are the ultimate goal.

As we each identify and choose the projects and purposes in life that we feel are deserving of the highest esteem, we are artfully demonstrating our determination

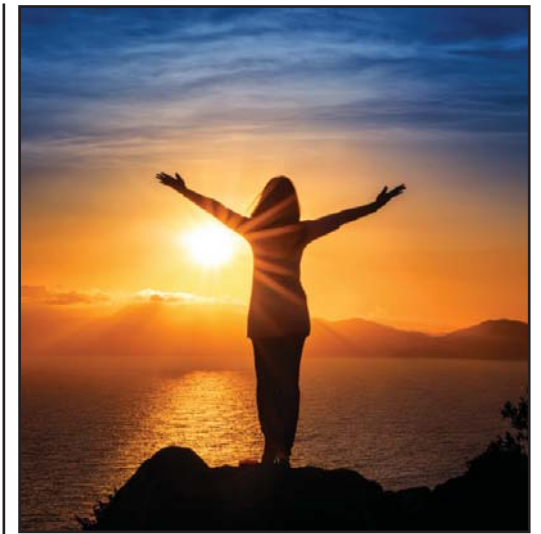
to remain loyal, faithful and steadfast to our select cause celebres.

Such dedication and uniformity mirrors resoluteness. It stresses a continuing firmness of emotional attachment, with a lesser emphasis on ego or the need to be in control.

When the world celebrates a new year's beginning, it prompts feelings of hope even within the challenges we see present.

The inner discussion of how to flourish with our new perspectives provides another opportunity to 're solve' what caused us concern.

If we can remain constant and emerge victorious through the process, the relief, release and answers will pave the way to a Happy New You Year. ■



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.

MISSIONVILLAGEVOICE Community Bulletin Board

ETHERIC NETWORKS provides free internet service to San Juan Bautista Senior Center

Bay Area local internet solutions leader in fiber-optic and high-speed wireless broadband ETHERIC NETWORKS has granted the Mary Velasco Sellen Senior Center with 3 years of free internet service and necessary hardware to maintain wireless service at their office in the Windmill Shopping Center in San Juan Bautista. The newly formed non-profit will be conducting one-on-one and small group internet training for local seniors beginning in 2025. A transformative year for 21-year-old ETHERIC NETWORKS, 2024 brought marked strategic partnerships and infrastructure improvements including an advanced battery back-up system in their Hollister data center serving the greater San Benito County area, becoming the #1 fastest fixed wireless provider in California. This partnership with the Mary Velasco Sellen Senior Center highlights the tremendous generosity that is helping to grow the non-profit which serves seniors of San Juan, Aromas and the surrounding areas.

San Benito Health Care District outlines next steps for Hazel Hawkins Memorial Hospital and Insight as negotiations continue

The San Benito Health Care District (District) announced the next steps in the ongoing process to finalize the lease-to-own transaction between Hazel Hawkins Memorial Hospital (HHMH) and Insight. While significant progress has been made, there is still important work ahead to complete the transaction. The six key steps are set forth below:

Step 1: Finalizing Definitive Agreements

Advisors and staff, acting under the direction of the District Board, are currently negotiating definitive agreements with Insight. These agreements include the asset purchase agreement, the lease, and supporting documents.

Step 2: Filing Applications with the State

Simultaneously, advisors and staff are preparing the necessary filings for the state regulatory approvals. This includes applications related to the change in ownership of hospital assets, such as the hospital license.

Step 3: Presentation of Agreements to the Board

Once draft agreements are finalized, they will be presented to the Board for review, discussion, and approval. This review will take place during a noticed public meeting. Community members are encouraged to attend and comment.

Step 4: Board Approval and Submission of Regulatory Filings

Once the Board approves the agreements, HHMH will execute the agreements and submit the required documents to state regulatory agencies for review.

Step 5: Regulatory Review and Approval

Regulators will review the submitted agreements and filings to ensure compliance and approve the transaction. The review and approval process in similar transactions typically takes between three and four months.

Step 6: Transaction Close and Insight's Management Transition

Upon receiving regulatory approvals, the transaction will be complete, and Insight will officially assume management of HHMH pursuant to the lease.

This structured approach reflects the District's commitment to transparency and collaboration as it works to secure the future of Hazel Hawkins Memorial Hospital. The District remains dedicated to keeping the community informed throughout this process.

COMMUNITY

Alzheimer's Association and Del Mar Caregiver Resource Center to present 'A Conversation On Alzheimer's Care' at the San Juan Bautista Community Center

The Alzheimer's Association and the Del Mar Caregiver Resource Center are presenting "A Conversation on Alzheimer's Care" hosted by the Mary Velasco Sellen Senior Center on Thursday, January 30, 2025, from 5:30 PM to 7:00 PM, with registration starting at 5:00 PM at the San Juan Bautista Community Center, 10 San Jose Street, San Juan Bautista.

In this educational program, Philip M Geiger, Regional Director of the Alzheimer's Association for San Benito, Santa Cruz, and Monterey Counties and Christina E Andrade, Senior Family Consultant with the Health Projects Center - Del Mar Caregiver Resources Center we will discuss Alzheimer's disease risk factors, warning signs, helpful resources for caregivers, and how you can join the fight against Alzheimer's and dementia.

RSVP to Mary Vazquez Edge at (831) 262-3484. Light refreshments offered.

The Alzheimer's Association provides education, support groups, information and referrals, and individualized care planning for San Benito County residents seeking help with Alzheimer's disease and related dementia. Our no-cost offerings are available in English and Spanish for people living with Alzheimer's and dementia, their families, and caregivers. We help people and their loved ones answer the question, "What do we do now?" after receiving a di-



agnosis of Alzheimer's disease or other dementias. For more information call our 24/7 Helpline at (800) 272-3900 or go to: <https://www.alz.org/norcal>.

The Health Projects Center - Del Mar Caregiver Resource Center supports family caregivers to provide and sustain quality care to their loved ones, and to take better care of their own physical and mental health. They host an in-person caregiver support group the fourth Wednesday of the month at the Community Foundation of San Benito County - Epicenter at 440 San Benito Street, Hollister, CA. For more information call (800) 624-8304 or go to: <https://www.hpcn.org/>.

This and other educational programs, support groups, and outreach events help us to better serve the residents of San Benito County affected by this terrible disease," says Alzheimer's Association Regional Director Philip M. Geiger.

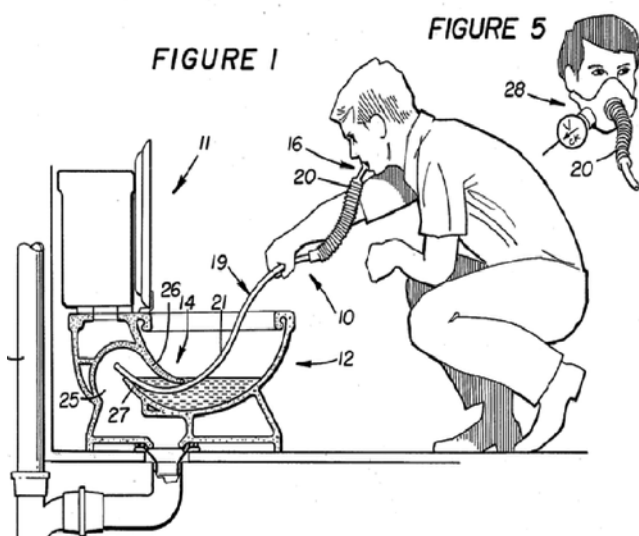
About the Alzheimer's Association

The Alzheimer's Association is the leading voluntary health organization in Alzheimer's care, support and research. Our Vision: A world without Alzheimer's and all other dementia. Our Mission: The Alzheimer's Association leads the way to end Alzheimer's and all other dementia — by accelerating global research, driving risk reduction and early detection, and maximizing quality care and support. ■



VUE A LA LOO The Toilet Snorkel

Toilets take on a lifesaving role in a 1981 patent that proposed the water trap within a basin could give a person trapped in a burning room access to fresh air. The patent claims that if a room is filled with toxic gases, the inhabitants just might survive by inserting a tube through the water and out the other side, sucking on their toilet snorkel until help arrives. ■



You know things have gone south when you're trying to intubate a toilet. Image credit: William O Holmes via Google Patents, Public Domain



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BEEN THERE, DONE THAT



Friends of the Library decoration project, from left: Friend of the Library Debbie Hernandez and Crave Wine Co. owner Mike Kohne, who kindly lent his space for the Library Decoration Project; Friend of the Library Laura Moorer and SBC Free Library, Librarian Austin Curtis; SBCFL staff (L to R) Austin Curtis, Juan Aurelio Perez with Jorge Inojoza

MVV advisory board 10 year celebration at Bear's Hideaway where it all began. L-R Wanda Guibert, Halina Kleinsmith, Anne Caetano, Valerie Egland and Teresa Lavagnino.



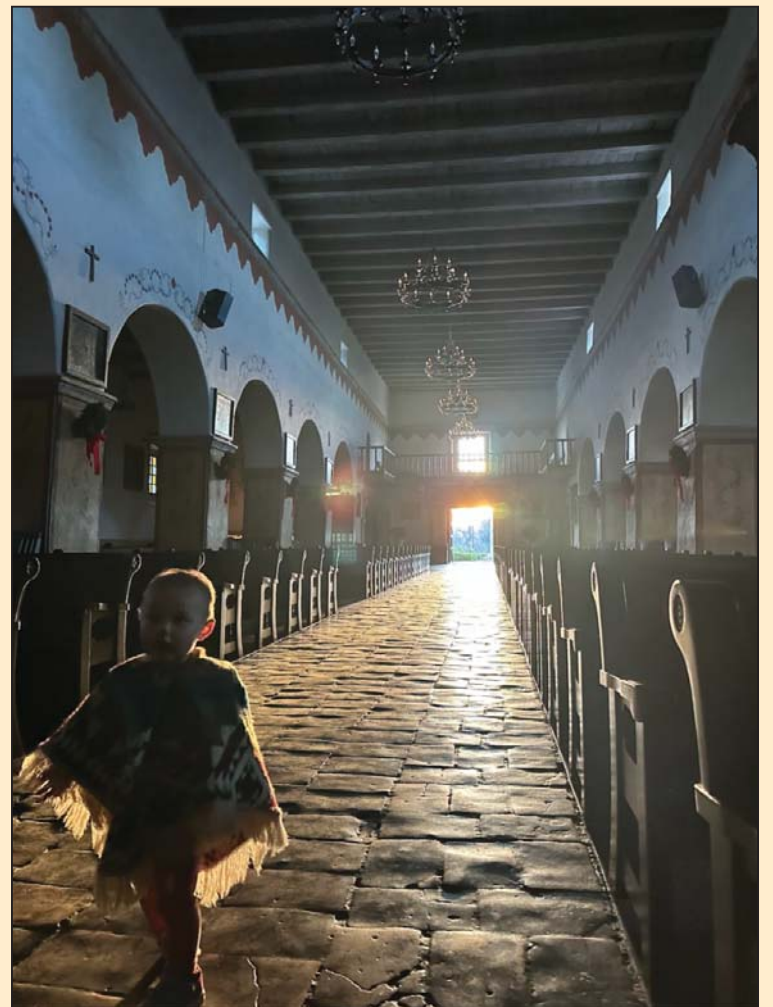
Happy New Year Mr. Blue!



Ernie and Madeline Franco with Loyanne Flinn Master Gardeners toasting after a long day of gardening at SJB State Historic Park. Thank you John Grafton and Bob Cable for sharing the fruits of your labor.



SBALT had a lovely post-Thanksgiving hike.



Mission San Juan Bautista Solstice.

BEEN THERE, DONE THAT



Congratulations to Community Foodbank of SBC, SBCOE's Community December Community Champions. Dr. Guillermo Rodriguez, accepted the award from the SBCOE Board.



Oriana Chorale Holiday Concert at Mission San Juan Bautista.



Eric and Suzanne Magnuson, Rick Holthouse and Carlos Juarez at San Juan Oaks.



Hot Farrier Landon Cox with Judith Ogus checking out his butt.



SJB VFW's Felipe Galvan presenting a check to Gerardo Gallo for helping out the VFW's many projects.



Volunteers collected 800 pounds of litter from Hollister at Integrated Waste Management's community cleanup!



SBC Integrated Waste Management joined the San Benito Resource Conservation District & Point Blue Conservation science STRAW Program in planting native species of plants at World's Finest Farm along the Pajaro River. L-R Esmeralda Gomez, Laurie Tankersley, and Frank Sanchez Jr.



Venecia Prudencio and Rebecca Pearson, San Benito Arts Council Teaching Artists.

BEEN THERE, DONE THAT



Joining together to decorate Glad Tidings Church. Thank you Clampers, Larry Norcross, Eric Chavez and DBA Electric for making this happen!



Daisy's Holiday Party and Santa too!



Alice Oliveira at a Christmas Market in Vienna, Austria.



Francisco Diaz & Celina Stotler recognized for their years of service at the SBC Annual Christmas Luncheon.



Happy 100th Birthday Rosalind Cordal!



SBC Annual Christmas Luncheon. Standing L-R: Cheyenne Wiles, Chau Quijano, Gaby Del Campo; Sitting L-R: Jessica Haro, Jaqueline Taylor, Ana De Castro Marquiz.



Hollister Police guest appearance at San Felipe McDonalds.

EDUCATION**Mike Fisher named San Benito High School District Manager of Nutrition Services**

Hollister High School culinary teacher and chef Mike Fisher has been named San Benito High School District's Manager of Nutrition Services, effective at the start of the new semester in January. Mr. Fisher, a 2003 Baler alumnus, has led the school's culinary program for the past six years, transitioning the program into an active food service operation.

"The students are not only culinary students," he noted. "They play a role in student nutrition, on-campus catering and athletic concessions. The program is driven by high-volume cooking and quality customer service. By the time a student reaches the advanced class, they are certified food handlers with a strong sense of professionalism."

A 'new era of student nutrition'

He said the next step is to bring the school into "the new era of student nutrition. The theme is 'scratch cooking,' in which students are fed real food that is taken from raw to cooked here on campus. I plan on fostering stronger partnerships with local farmers. Scratch cooking will allow us to further educate the students on healthy eating and give them career skills that make them job-ready right out of high school. I envision a student intern program that allows students to have a direct impact on what their peers are eating. We will do this by offering on-campus internships for advanced culinary students."

After graduating from high school, Mr. Fisher thrived as an employee in the hospitality industry. "My immediate plan was to work my way through the ranks of hotels and restaurants around the world, but I looked into culinary schools and found one that was a fit for me: Le Cordon Bleu, Paris, France." After graduating from that prestigious school, Mr. Fisher said he "started at the bottom and moved my way to the top positions in various kitchens," traveling all over the United States and Europe to work for a variety of accomplished chefs. Eventually, he moved home to open his own business, Fisher's restaurant in downtown Hollister.

When the job of culinary instructor opened at his alma mater in 2018, Mr. Fisher jumped at the chance to move to the classroom on a campus where his father and brother were



already teaching.

"The career opportunity that I was given here at Hollister High School inspired me to become the student I was not in my earlier career," he said. "Last year, I completed my bachelors degree and I am currently working on a master's degree. I look back on the student I was at 18 years old. I wasn't ready for the college pathway. It was the skills I learned on the jobsite that made me who I am today. That work experience taught me skills that made me a valuable employee that contributes to society. It gave me a livable wage as I navigated my career. It taught me to become a better student and a better teacher. My goal is to give the same experiences I learned in the field to the students here on campus. I believe my new position will make all this possible."

New role in new Student Union/Cafeteria

John Frusetta, San Benito High School District's Chief Budget Officer, said he is pleased to welcome Mr. Fisher into his new role on campus, particularly with the opening of the new Student Union/Cafeteria in the center of campus scheduled for early January. "With over 3,400 students and staff at Hollister High School relying on nutritious meals every day, Mike's extensive experience in managing high-volume cooking and his dedication to providing fresh, delicious food make him the ideal choice for this role."

Human Resources Director Cindi Peterson said Mr. Fisher is collaborating on recruiting a teacher to take his role to ensure the continued success of Hollister High's high-quality Career Technical Education Culinary program. "He has outlined a plan to actively support the program by engaging intern culinary students and partnering with the CTE Agriculture program to create farm-to-table opportunities," she said.

Mr. Fisher will officially transition to the role of Manager of Nutrition Services at the start of the second semester when students return from Winter break.

San Benito High School District Superintendent Dr. Shawn Tennenbaum said Mr. Fisher bringing his culinary experience into his new role with Nutrition Services is an example that "every day is a great day to be a Baler!" ■

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COVER ARTWORK

Bols Ballerina

John "Van" Van de Dusen gifted this Bols Ballerina bottle to Rosemarie "Mim" Caetano in the 1960's, and it was one of Mim's most cherished possessions. Now this bottle belongs to Mim's daughter Anne, and the ballerina dances on Anne's desk while she works on Mission Village Voice.

The Bols Ballerina Bottle is a unique collectible produced by Lucas Bols, a Dutch distillery known for its liqueurs. This bottle, which was first introduced in the mid-20th century, is notable for its distinctive design



featuring a small figurine of a ballerina inside the bottle. When the bottle is tilted or moved, the ballerina spins gracefully, creating a mesmerizing effect. The bottle includes a music box mechanism built into the base. When wound up, the mechanism plays Johann Strauss - Le bleu Danube. ■

ARTS

Seeking to reunite 2001-2018 SB High School students with their artworks

By Jennifer Coile

John Robrock, MFA, taught Advanced Placement Drawing and Painting at San Benito High School (now Hollister High School) from 2001 until he retired in 2018. Recently, he found 100 drawings that students had forgotten to take home. He seeks to return the artworks to the former students, or, with their permission, donate them to a local non-profit arts organization fundraiser.

Mr. Robrock also discovered 40 drawings with either no signature or a signature that could not be read. They will be displayed and sold from January 18 to February 23, 2025 at the Luna Gallery and Eco-Art Studio in San Juan Bautista: 107 B The Alameda, details at Facebook: Luna Gallery or luna-gallery.art.

If you are one of the following artists or a person that knows them, please contact Mr.

Robrock at mrrobrockmfa@gmail.com or leave a voicemail message at 831-630-1736.

Legible signatures by students include:

Selena Aguajo, Collier B, Jeffrey Barber, Eric V. Betancourt, Jennifer Capese, Mariela P. Carmora, Juan Cerda, Kyle cope, Jericho Coquilla, Cuteril, Isabella Cutillo, Angel Daez, Courtney/Catherin Datilo, Katarina Diaz, Britanni Diehl, Rachel Elstein, Cara Marie Esteban, Kayla Ferriera, Nancy Fiuvet-Veneno, Jazmine Flores, Nancy Flores, Alexandra Garcia, Allison Garcia, Jeff Glass, Elizabeth Goseta, Jeremy Hail, Brooke Harden, Kathryn Jelinek, Eva Jiminez, Jessica Lickenberg, Blanca Lopez, Ana Maldonado, Adriana Mariano, Christiana Matthews, Caitlin Mayer, Emi G. Miskin, Julianna Moreno, Julie Moreno, Marcus Muro, Sheryl Overman, Kelly O'Brien, Arielle Oga, Kaitline O'Keefe, Laura Ornelas, Sue Orozco, Annalisa Ortiz, Sheila Overman, Crystal P. Natasha Parkin, Alyssa B. Penado, George Perez, Connor Pratt, Carina Ramos, Amanda Rangel, Allison Recio, Amairani Resendiz, Adriana Rios, Nathan Robinson, Victoria Saldana-Arevalo, April San Ramon, Katie Sanchez, Rachelle Sanchez, Rochelle Sanchez, Katy Sanchez, Samantha Silva, Jayleen Torval, Jasmine Ulloa, Mary van Urff, Irma Vargas, Josh Vega, Hunter Vicari, Lindsay Wallatka, Alison Whiteside, Chase Wood, Alyssa Yeager, Laura, NB. ■

CELESTIAL EVENTS



January 3, 4 - Quadrantids Meteor Shower. The Quadrantids is an above average shower, with up to 40 meteors per hour at its peak. It is thought to be produced by dust grains left behind by an extinct comet known as 2003 EH1, which was discovered in 2003. The shower runs annually from January 1-5. It peaks this year on the night of the 3rd and morning of the 4th. The crescent moon will set early in the evening, leaving dark skies for what should be an excellent show. Best viewing will be from a dark location after midnight. Meteors will radiate from the constellation Bootes, but can appear anywhere in the sky.

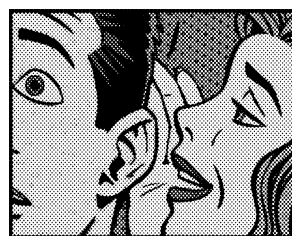


January 10 - Venus at Greatest Eastern Elongation. The planet Venus reaches greatest eastern elongation of 47.2 degrees from the Sun. This is the best time to view Venus since it will be at its highest point above the horizon in the evening sky. Look for the bright planet in the western sky after sunset.

January 13 - Full Moon in Cancer. 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 22:28 UTC. This full moon was known by early Native American tribes as the Wolf Moon because this was the time of year when hungry wolf packs howled outside their camps. This moon has also been known as the Old Moon and the Moon After Yule.

January 16 - Mars at Opposition. The red 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 Mars. A medium-sized telescope will allow you to see some of the dark details on the planet's orange surface.

January 29 - New Moon in Aquarius. 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 12:37 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

Evz Draap Classics with Carla and Anne

Friend: I have a fear that every time I see a cop, they're going to pull me over and imprison me for my thoughts.

Parking at Costco: "Let's park somewhere different, let's just shake it up, let's be reckless!"

Friend: Did you see that Tesla pulling a horse trailer?

Friend: Why would you swallow your gum, YOU DUNCE!

Other Friend: We are going to Costco. I can't chew gum and snack at the same time.



Green Business Tips

Low-flow fixtures can reduce water waste.

Make 2025 the year your business goes green

The new year is the perfect time for businesses to embrace sustainability and make a positive impact in the community. Going green not only benefits the planet but also attracts eco-conscious customers and reduces operating costs. Here are some actionable ways your business can start 2025 with sustainability in mind and overall boost your bottom line:

1. Minimize Waste: Conduct a waste audit to identify areas for improvement. Implement recycling programs, compost organic waste, and switch to digital processes to reduce paper use.

2. Conserve Energy: Upgrade to energy-efficient lighting and equipment, and encourage employees to power down devices when not in use. Consider installing solar panels for a renewable energy boost.

3. Reduce Water Usage: Install low-flow

fixtures, fix leaks promptly, and educate your team on water-saving habits.

4. Support Sustainable Practices: Partner with local suppliers who prioritize sustainability, and choose eco-friendly materials for your products or services.

5. Go Plastic-Free: Transition away from single-use plastics. Opt for reusable, compostable, or recyclable alternatives instead.

6. Encourage Alternative Transportation: Incentivize carpooling, biking, or using public transit for employees. If feasible, install electric vehicle chargers at your business.

The San Benito County Green Business Program can guide you in adopting these practices and achieving official Green Business certification. With tools, resources, and expert assistance, we make sustainability simple and cost-effective.

For more information on how to join the Green Business community and make your resolution to go green a reality, contact Bryan Garcia at bgarcia@environmentalin.com or visit greenbusinessca.org. Together, let's make 2025 a greener year for everyone! ■



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

California Contemporary artist
FUTZIE NUTZLE

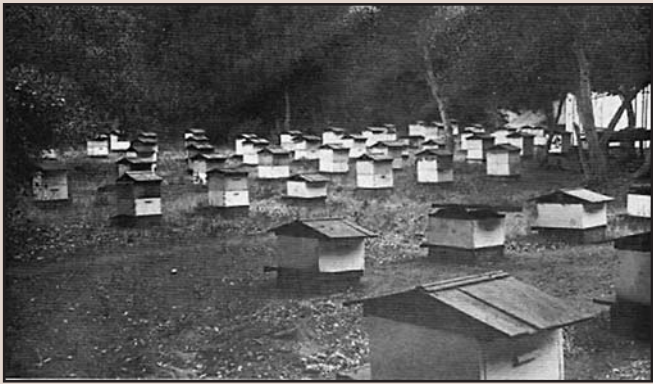
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 and *Mission Village Voice* (2014 to-date). www.sanjuanbautistaca.com/art-galleries.



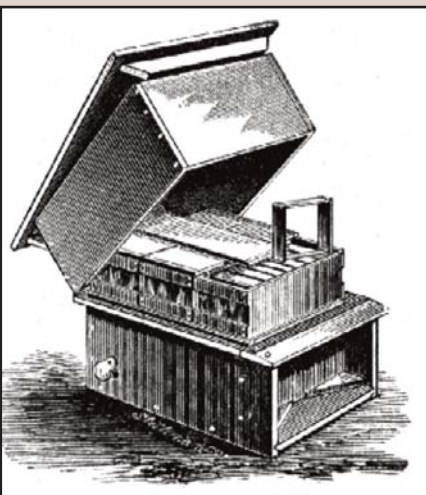
Left: THEN: Bee hives near Rocks Road circa 1920s; Center: NOW: Bee boxes, Popelouchum, December 2023. Right: Bee photograph: Wikipedia Commons

Then... and Now: Bees-iness around San Juan Bautista

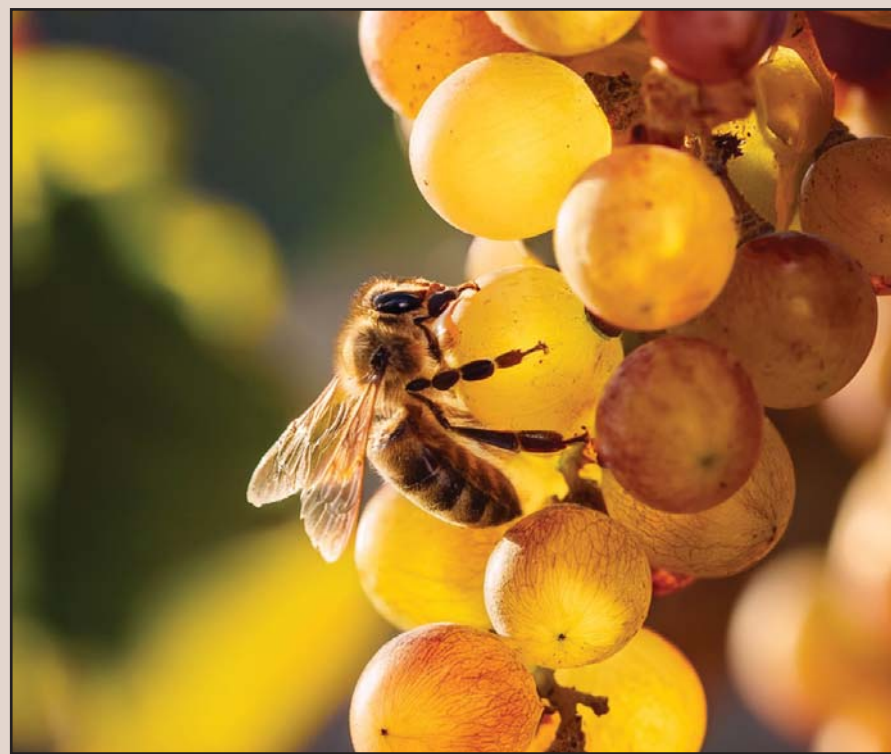
By Wanda Guibert,
San Juan Bautista Historical Society

Now that the holidays and seasonal festivities have passed, here we are in January 2025, getting back to business – or in this case – “bees-ness.” Driving along Mission Vineyard Road in December 2023 to deliver the January 2024 Mission Village Voice issues to St. Francis Retreat, I was intrigued by numerous bee boxes within Popelouchum (pope-loh-SHOOM) Estate Vineyard. I recalled a photo in the 8 September 1967 Vacation Issue of “San Juan Mission News” with the caption: “A BUNCH of bee hives...location unknown...but believed to be in the Rocks area in the 1920s.” Bee boxes in rural agricultural areas such as orchards are common but seeing them in a vineyard was a first for me. This prompted me to explore the benefits of bees in vineyards and the vital role they actually play.

Although beekeeping and domestication of bees dates back thousands of years, Reverend Lorenzo Lorraine Langstroth, a native of Philadelphia, has influenced modern beekeeping practice probably more than



The original Langstroth hive



anyone else and is referred to as the father of American beekeeping. He invented the modern beehive in 1851, enabling a greater production of honey and had numerous US Patents. His book *The Hive and Honey-bee* was published in 1853.

Seeing bee boxes at Popelouchum, a Mutsun word meaning “paradise,” did not surprise me. This 415-acre estate was purchased in 2011 by Randall Graham, “California’s Original Rhône Ranger” and founder of Bonny Doon Vineyard; Graham has been a prominent advocate of terroir (a French term used to describe the environmental factors that affect a crop’s phenotype) wines and biodynamic practice (which aims to improve the health and fertility of a farm or garden).

The home page on the Popelouchum

website (www.popelouchum.com) states, “Always a work in progress, Graham is attempting what no vigneron has ever attempted: to propagate 10,000 new grape varieties, from disease-resistant progenitors, with the aim of a) identifying one or more new “genius” grape varieties, and b) employing a radical new methodology for creating complexity in wine (the elucidation of terroir) by creating a highly diverse population in a vineyard (every variety being genetically distinct from the other).”

In June 2023, Kathleen Willcox published an article in “Wine Enthusiast” titled “The Bee, an Unsung Vineyard Hero, Steps into the Spotlight.” The point of the article is that despite grapevines’ ability to self-pollinate, winegrowers actively attract bees to their vineyards to improve soil health, pro-

mote biodiversity, and support grape development, all while addressing the broader environmental impact of declining bee populations. Here is a summary of her article.

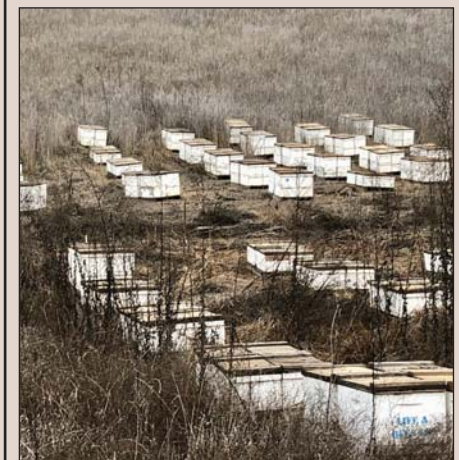
How Bees Benefit Vineyards

1. **Soil Health:** Bees help pollinate cover crops like mustard and clover, which improve soil nutrition, prevent erosion, and enhance moisture retention—critical in regions like drought-stricken California. These crops also foster microbial diversity, benefiting vineyards that rely on monoculture.

[Wanda’s comment: Randal Graham is quoted by Stacy Briscoe in the May 2023 issue of *Wine Enthusiast* “We’re really trying to pay attention to the microbiology of the soil [and] create an emphasis on the sense of place.”]

2. **Attracting Beneficial Insects:** Bees draw other helpful insects like parasitic wasps, which prey on pests such as mealybugs and leafhoppers, harmful to vineyards.

3. **Better Grape Development:** Bees remove protective caps from grape flowers, improving grape growth and reducing



Bee boxes, close up



bunch rot, particularly in varieties like Pinot Noir.

How Vineyards Foster Bees

- Grgich Hills Estate in Napa Valley plants native trees, shrubs, and flowering plants that provide year-round food for bees. They collaborate with nonprofits like Apis Arborea to install beehives in tree trunks.

- Soter Vineyards in Oregon focuses on attracting native bees by planting diverse, bee-friendly crops, including clover, peas, and brassicas, as well as flowers like flax and sunflowers.

The Decline of Bees

Bees are crucial for pollinating about 90% of U.S. food crops. The decline of honeybee populations -- accelerated by factors like pesticides, climate change, and monoculture farming -- threatens food security and biodiversity. Honeybees contribute \$15 billion to the U.S. economy, but 20-45% of native bee species are also at risk of extinction.

Given the importance of bees for agriculture and ecosystems, vineyard managers are increasingly prioritizing their well-being to support biodiversity and sustainable farming practices. If you find an uninvited swarm of bees on your property, please contact a local bee removal expert. The Gilroy Beekeepers Association has members trained in swarm capture, as well as specialists who deal with more complex colony removals. <https://www.gilroybeekeepers.org/category/swarm-removal/> san-benito-county/ ■

THE NEW YEAR

2025: The Year of the Snake

Chinese New Year in 2025 will begin on Saturday, January 25th and will mark the start of the Year of the Snake according to the Chinese zodiac.

Here are some key details about the event:

1. Chinese Zodiac

- 2025 will be the year of the Wood Snake.

The Chinese zodiac is a 12-year cycle, each year associated with an animal sign (Rat, Ox, Tiger, Rabbit, Dragon, Snake, Horse, Sheep, Monkey, Rooster, Dog, and Pig). The Snake is seen as intelligent, wise, and charming but also elusive and mysterious.

2. Festivities

- Chinese New Year, also called the Spring Festival (春节), is the most significant celebration in Chinese culture. It's celebrated with various traditions, including family reunions, feasts, fireworks, and the famous Lion Dance and Dragon Dance.

- The festivities can last for up to 15 days, culminating in the Lantern Festival on the 15th day of the new year, which falls on February 8th, 2025.

- During this period, people engage in activities like giving red envelopes (红包) filled with money for good luck, and cleaning their homes to sweep away bad luck.

3. Preparations and Customs

- Family Reunions: Chinese New Year is a time for families to come together. Many people travel long distances to reunite with loved ones for a special dinner on New Year's Eve, called the Reunion Dinner (团圆饭).

- Decorations: Homes and public places are often decorated with red items, such as lanterns, couplets, and posters with auspicious phrases to attract good fortune.

- Food: Special dishes are prepared, such as dumplings (饺子), fish (for prosperity), and sweet rice balls (汤圆) to symbolize family unity and happiness.

4. Global Celebrations

- Though the festival originates in China, Chinese New Year is celebrated widely in countries with significant Chinese populations, including Singapore, Malaysia, Vietnam (where it's known as Tết), Indonesia, and Chinatown communities around the world.

- Major cities like Beijing, Shanghai, Hong Kong, and Taipei hold spectacular public celebrations, with parades, fireworks, and cultural performances.

Chinese New Year 2025 promises to be an exciting and vibrant event, steeped in centuries-old traditions while continuing to evolve as it's celebrated around the world.

The Year of the Wood Snake (木蛇) in 2025 is one of the 60-year cycles in the Chinese zodiac,



combining the Snake with the Wood element. This unique combination brings specific characteristics to the year and affects people's lives, personalities, and the general atmosphere of the year.

Overview of the Snake in Chinese Zodiac

The Snake is the 6th sign in the Chinese zodiac, and those born in a Snake year are generally seen as:

- Intelligent: Snakes are sharp-witted and analytical.

- Wise: They often have deep insights and a good sense of intuition.

- Charming: People born under this sign tend to be charismatic and appealing.

- Secretive: Snakes are also known to be reserved and sometimes mysterious, preferring to keep their plans and thoughts to themselves.

- Cunning and Resourceful: Snakes have a knack for achieving their goals, often with careful strategy and stealth.

The Wood Element

In Chinese metaphysics, there are five elements—Wood, Fire, Earth, Metal, and Water—and each element interacts with the zodiac animals in specific ways. Wood symbolizes growth, vitality, and expansion, and it is generally associated with creativity, flexibility, and generosity. When paired with the Snake, the Wood Snake is characterized by:

- Growth and Prosperity: The Wood Snake is particularly favorable for personal development, career advancement, and material success.

- Creative and Visionary: The Wood element adds a creative touch to the Snake's normally sharp mind. These individuals can be particularly inspired and innovative.

- Nurturing: Wood also symbolizes growth, meaning that the Wood Snake has a nurturing

side and can be protective of their loved ones or their work.

- Sociable and Persuasive: The Wood element softens the Snake's typically more introverted and secretive traits, making the Wood Snake more sociable and persuasive in relationships and negotiations.

Personality of the Wood Snake

People born in the Year of the Wood Snake (2025) may exhibit these traits:

- Clever and Strategic: With the Snake's natural intelligence and the Wood element's creative influence, those born in this year will likely have strong strategic thinking, be able to make long-term plans, and adapt their approach as necessary.

- Calm and Reflective: While they may not express themselves openly, the Wood Snake is often calm, collected, and reflective. They are careful with their words and actions.

- Flexible but Strong: The flexibility of the Wood element allows them to bend without breaking in challenging situations, yet they maintain an inner strength and resilience.

- Charismatic Leaders: The combination of charm (from the Snake) and the nurturing, visionary aspects of Wood gives these individuals a natural ability to lead and inspire others.

Influences of the Wood Snake Year (2025)

In addition to the personalities of those born in the year, the year itself (2025) under the Wood Snake sign has certain global and cultural implications:

- Opportunities for Growth: The year will likely bring opportunities for growth and development, especially in personal relationships, careers, and ventures. People may feel inspired to take bold steps in their lives.

- Focus on Strategy and Planning: With the Snake's strategic and methodical nature, 2025 is a good year for making long-term plans, setting goals, and focusing on the future.

- Calm but Dynamic Energy: While the year may feel less intense than the previous year of the Wood Horse, the Wood Snake year offers a balance between calmness and the ability to adapt to changing circumstances, making it a good time to lay down foundations for future success.

- Creative Ventures: Given the creative influence of the Wood element, 2025 could see a rise in artistic and innovative projects, as well as new ideas in fields like technology, design, and entertainment.

- Personal Transformation: The Wood Snake year is also a time for personal growth and transformation, encouraging people to reflect on their lives, make necessary changes, and grow in wisdom and strength.

In conclusion

The Wood Snake in 2025 brings an aura of growth, strategic planning, and creative energy, while maintaining the Snake's core traits of intelligence, wisdom, and charm. This combination makes 2025 a year with plenty of potential for personal and professional growth, while encouraging a careful, strategic approach to life's challenges. ■

MISSION VILLAGE VOICE | JANUARY 2025

Calendar

FRIDAY JANUARY 3

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

SATURDAY JANUARY 4

SAN BENITO STAGE 24-HOUR MUSICAL 4:30-6pm. A groundbreaking experience for the first time in our history. For info visit www.sanbenitostage.org

SNOWFLAKE PRINTING WORKSHOP 11am-1pm. Each student will be introduced to the art of printmaking. Cura Contemporary, 17395, Monterey Rd., Morgan Hill. Curacontemporary.com

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

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

SUNDAY JANUARY 5

WHIRLED MUSIC 3-5pm. Promising dancers and emerging choreographers from across the US come together for the Carmel Dance Festival's Fellowship Pro-

gram. Sandboxsandcity.com

FIGURE DRAWING COLLECTIVE 2-5pm. A self-guided figure drawing collective. Cura Contemporary, 17395, Monterey Rd., Morgan Hill. Curacontemporary.com

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

TUESDAY JANUARY 7

NEON CITY LIMITS PRESENTS: NASHVILLE PROS - SOUTHERN ROCK - LIGHT ROCK 9pm-12am. Tempo Kitchen, Gilroy. Neoncitylimits.com

THURSDAY JANUARY 9

DWEEZIL ZAPPA - ROX (POSTROPHY) TOUR Goldenstatetheatre.com

FRIDAY JANUARY 10

LEE FIELDS & MONOPHONICS Goldenstatetheatre.com

FRIDAY JANUARY 10



Sunday, January 5

WHIRLED MUSIC 3-5pm. Promising dancers and emerging choreographers from across the US come together for the Carmel Dance Festival's Fellowship Program. Sandboxsandcity.com.



Saturday, January 11

ALLAN BARNES MEDITATIONS OPENING RECEPTION 4-6pm. Allan Barnes's solo show. A Bay area photographer and educator, specializing in historic photographic processes and portraiture using 19th century cameras and techniques. Cura Contemporary, 17395 Monterey Rd., Morgan Hill. Curacontemporary.com

PEDRO @ NATIVE DAUGHTERS ADOBE 5:30pm. \$10 Fun night of learning Pedro. 203 4th St., SJB. 2nd Friday of every month except for February.

SATURDAY JANUARY 11

ALLAN BARNES MEDITATIONS OPENING RECEPTION 4-6pm. Allan Barnes's solo show. A Bay area photographer and educator, specializing in historic photographic processes and portraiture using 19th century cameras and techniques. Cura Contemporary, 17395 Monterey Rd., Morgan Hill. Curacontemporary.com

ISIDORE QUARTET 7:30pm. Five Pieces for String Quartet. Carmel Sunset Center. Sunsetcener.org

SUNDAY JANUARY 12

AROMAS COMMUNITY MARKET 9:30-1pm. Aromas Grange. Music, delicious food, and peruse all our local vendors have to offer! Visit Aromasgrange.org

MONDAY JANUARY 13

FULL WOLF MOON IN CANCER

WEDNESDAY JANUARY 15

PAJARO VALLEY ARTS #WHATEVER-MEMBERS EXHIBIT 2025 Visit pvalarts.org

SATURDAY JANUARY 18

MENDING TOGETHER: NARRATIVE OF HOPE AND RESILIENCE 4pm Artist talk 5-7pm. Reception. Curated by Karen Gutfreund & Lost and Found: The Art of San Benito High School Youth 2001-2018. From archives of John W. Robrock MFA. Luna Gallery 107 B The Alameda, SJB. Lunagallery.art

PERFORMERS CIRCLE 4:30-7:30pm. Aromas Grange. Aromasgrange.org

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

SUNDAY JANUARY 19

ALCHEMY, AN ARTIST TALK WITH ALLAN BARNES 2-3:30pm. Journey through Allan's decades-long career exploring photography processes and image making. Cura Contemporary, 17395 Monterey Rd., Morgan Hill. Curacontemporary.com

HANS BOEPPLE 3pm. A Steinway International Artist with a distinguished international reputation. Carmel Sunset Center. Sunsetcener.org

WEDNESDAY JANUARY 22

ARTIST ROUNDTABLE - SAN JUAN BAUTISTA 6-7:30pm. Luna Gallery, San Juan Bautista. Sanbenitoarts.org

FRIDAY JANUARY 24

OPENING RECEPTION "IN FULL BLOOM" EXHIBITION 6-8pm. Art Depot, 35 5th St., Hollister. Sanbenitoarts.org

SATURDAY JANUARY 25

RECOLOGY ENVIRONMENTAL DAY - HOLLISTER 9am-1pm. Brigantino Park, 2100 San Juan Hollister Rd., Hollister. Drop off unwanted e-waste, secure document shredding, Compost Giveaway. www.regology.com

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

SUNDAY JANUARY 26

BOOK BINDING WITH HANDMADE DECORATIVE PAPER 10am-5pm. A unique one day workshop you will make a hand bound book with papers designed and printed by you! Use Gelli Printing Plates to design and print your papers. Then needle and thread to stitch the paper together. Cura Contemporary, 17395 Monterey Rd., Morgan Hill. Curacontemporary.com

AROMAS GRANGE PANCAKE BREAKFAST 8-11am. The last Sunday of the month. Aromasgrange.org

Continued on next page



Sunday, January 19

HANS BOEPPLE 3pm. A Steinway International Artist with a distinguished international reputation. Carmel Sunset Center. Sunsetcener.org

WEDNESDAY JANUARY 29

NEW MOON IN AQUARIUS

AARON LEWIS AND THE AMERICAN STATELINERS: AMERICAN AS IT GETS TOUR Goldenstatetheatre.com Monterey

THURSDAY JANUARY 30

A CONVERSATION ON ALZHEIMER'S CARE-EDUCATION & WORKSHOP 5pm Registration. 5:30-7pm Workshop. San Juan Bautista Community Center, 10



Sunday, January 26

AROMAS GRANGE PANCAKE BREAKFAST 8-11am. The last Sunday of the month. Aromasgrange.org

San Jose St., San Juan Bautista. RSVP 831.262.3484

ARTIST ROUNDTABLE - HOLLISTER 6-7:30pm. Art Depot, 35 5th St., Hollister. Sanbenitoarts.org

Every Week

WEDNESDAYS

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

MATTER OF BALANCE CLASSES January/February 2025. FREE for Seniors, register with the Mary Velasco Sellen Senior Center @ our 12 p.m. Wednesday lunches @ Casa Maria

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

THURSDAYS

SENIOR LUNCHESS 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 FruitionBrewing.com

Save the Date

SATURDAY FEBRUARY 1

BEPROXIMITY'S BLACK HISTORY MONTH COMMUNITY-WIDE CELEBRATION 5-8pm. Hollister Elk's Lodge. Semi-Formal Dinner, Live Entertainment, Auction. \$70/person. Visit www.beproximity.org

RECOLOGY ENVIRONMENTAL DAY - SAN JUAN BAUTISTA 9am-1pm. San Juan School, 100 Nyland Dr., San Juan Bautista. Drop off unwanted e-waste, secure document shredding, Compost Giveaway. [www.regol-](http://www.regol-ogy.com)

ogy.com

FREE DRAWING CLASS WITH JOHN ROBROCK 2-4pm. Luna Gallery, 107 B The Alameda, SJB. Luna-gallery.art

FRIDAY FEBRUARY 7

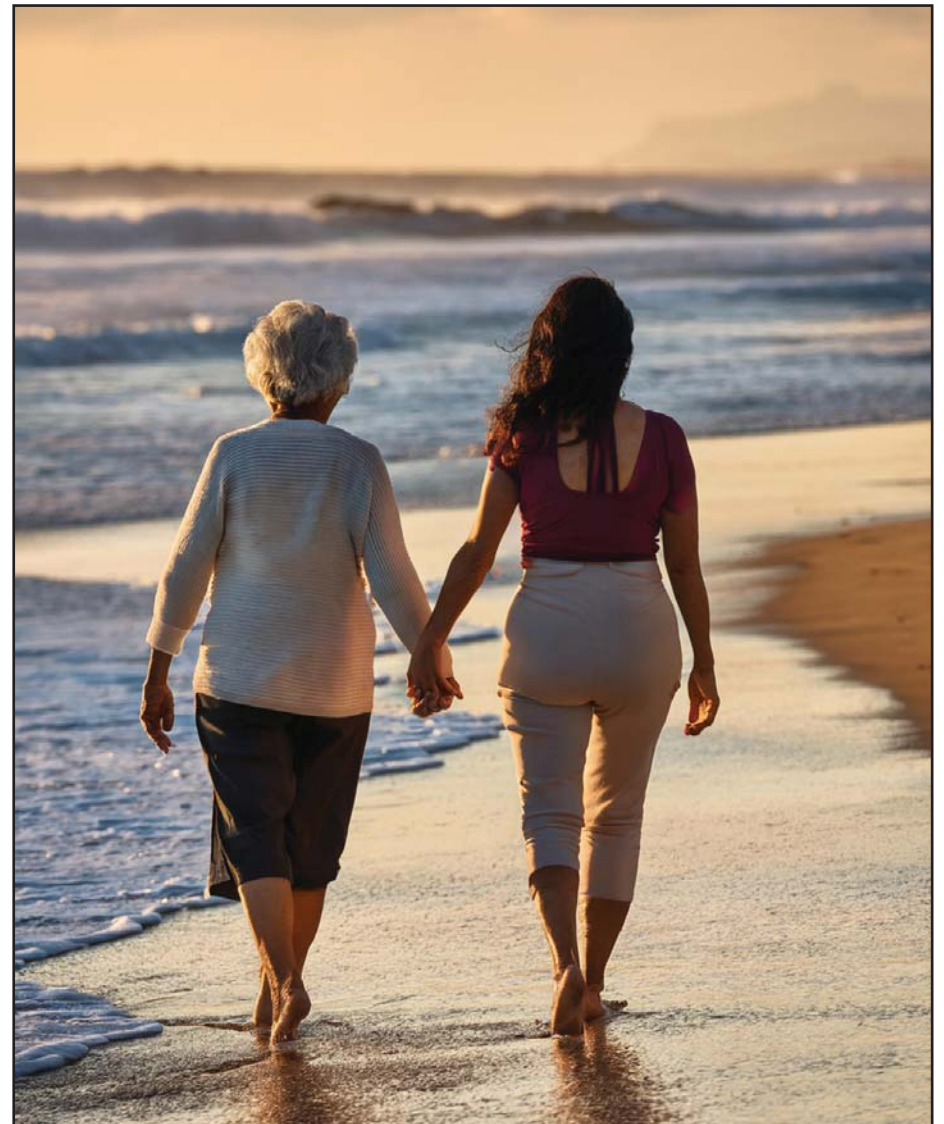
LOVE ME LOVE ME NOT DINNER & DANCE 5-10pm. The Barn, Tres Pinos. Tickets sanbenitocountychamber.com

SATURDAY FEBRUARY 15

DEAD COWBOYS LIVE @ LUNA GALLERY 5-7pm. Acoustic show and art exhibit. Lunagallery.art San Juan Bautista

SUNDAY FEBRUARY 23

RANCHO CIELO CULINARY ROUND UP 4-8pm. Meet and see our culinary students in action. An evening of fun, food and libations with a western flair. Visit ranchocieloyc.org



Thursday, January 30

A CONVERSATION ON ALZHEIMER'S CARE-EDUCATION & WORKSHOP 5pm Registration. 5:30-7pm Workshop. San Juan Bautista Community Center, 10 San Jose St., San Juan Bautista. RSVP 831.262.3484

MISSION VILLAGE VOICE Q&A

Phil Marquez, aka 'Lil Phil'

By Anne Caetano

You've probably seen Phil Marquez, aka Lil Phil, strolling around downtown San Juan Bautista with his walker. A very friendly, approachable person, Phil enjoys conversations with local shopkeepers and everyone he encounters. He was born with Morquio syndrome, a rare genetic condition that causes bone growth abnormalities. While he is short in stature, he has a huge heart and is so likeable as well as inspirational. Having heard so much about him, MVV enjoyed the opportunity to sit down and chat with him. Be sure to say, "Hi, Phil" next time you see him out and about.

MVV: When was your first visit to San Juan?

PM: In 1964 my father was studying to be deacon, and he was going to St. Francis Retreat Center, and he brought me with him. I said, "Let's go home. Let's go back to San Jose. I don't like this town."

Why?

Too small. I was a big city boy. Funny thing is, 40 years later, I moved here.

What brought you back here?

My eyesight. When I went blind, all my friends offered to help me, but I realized all my friends were busy with their families and work.

One of the kids that I coach, his mother is also a good friend of mine and had a room for rent here in San Juan. In 2004 I moved to San Juan Bautista. It was perfect; I didn't have to bother anyone, and I could walk everywhere and be independent.

And now you love it here.

Yes, I have many fond memories here. One of my softball players was visiting and invited me to lunch at Doña's. When I arrived and told the lady I was waiting for a friend, she took me over to a large table with 15 seats. Then my friend walked in and said, "I have a surprise. Some of your team is here!" It was the 25-year anniversary of our Mt. Pleasant High School team; we were undefeated champions. I was so touched and shocked. I hadn't seen them in 25 years.

Where in San Jose did you grow up?

I grew up in East San Jose. I'm not going to lie; I got in a few fights, and I got beat up a couple times.

You were a coach.

I coached Mt. Pleasant High School softball for 13 years until I became partially blind. After that, I was at James Lick High School in East San Jose and walked the softball field. I asked one of the girls playing, "Who's your coach?" and she said, "We don't have a coach; we are doing it ourselves."

James Lick High is Mt. Pleasant's archrival?

Yes, and the next day I went to James Lick High School. I told the secretary I wanted to meet the principal, and added, "I heard you guys need a softball coach." As I was waiting, a tall man came in who was a teacher at Mt. Pleasant and said, "Oh my God, Phil! What are you doing here?"

I told him that I wanted to coach there. And he said, "Phil, let me give you a piece of advice. Leave! This school is nothing but trouble." This man is 6'8" and had played for the Green Bay Packers. He was serious.

After he left the principal came out and said, "Hey, my new softball coach!" And I said, "You haven't even interviewed me yet." And he replied, "Somebody 6'8" said he was going to kick my butt if I didn't hire you." The girls stuck it out, and we won a championship.

Tell me your Olivia Newton John Story.

This was in the 80s, and I went to one of her concerts in Lake Tahoe. I was with my sister and her friends. I had a half dozen red roses to give to Olivia Newton John. The place was packed, and we needed to get seats up front next to the stage so I could give her the roses. My sister and her friends thought I was crazy; we would never get the seats up front. When I told the usher where we wanted to sit, I handed him a \$100 bill and lo and behold, we got the seats up front.

And??

Olivia Newton John saw the roses and said, "Are those for me?" And I said, "Yes," and I told her, "I came to your first concert in the United States -- San Mateo, California at the Circle Star Theater back in the 70s."

What did she say?

"Oh my God! Just for you, I have a song." So, she got off the stage, and the ushers told my sister and her friend to move away from the table. She came next to me, and she sang "I Honestly Love You," and she gave me a kiss.



You had a bad accident in 2015.

I was hit by a car. I had heart surgery one week before I got hit by the car, and the doctor said, "When you go home, do your daily walk." And the first walk I did, I got run over by a car.

Both legs were broken in seven places each. When I woke up in surgery, they told me I was run over by a car. The surgeon said, "I have good news and bad news. The good news is you're going to walk again. The bad news is we can't do this surgery. We have to fly you out of here, and

we only have 5 minutes." That was the Salinas Trauma Center, and they flew me to Stanford University. I was hospitalized for 8 months; I got attached to the nurses who helped me. They really took great care of me.

You are such an inspiration! I had no idea that you are legally blind, Every time I see you in town, you always look me in the eye and say, "Hi."

I've met a lot of people in town. I hang out with the Mary Velasco Sellen Senior Center group at Casa Maria every Thursday. I really enjoy all the people there.

One lady who was my inspiration was

Annabell Ramirez. When I was released from the hospital after being hit by the car, I was like, "All right, I've got to go see Annabelle." We both shared so many stories with each other.

I'm very fortunate. I have a good roommate. We're not boyfriend and girlfriend, but she really helps me a lot; she does my laundry too. Her name is Connie Morales.

You've persevered. Do you have advice for a person that is disabled?

My advice is, "Don't give up. You can do it. Know your ability." That's what I always tell everybody. I knew my ability, and I knew my limits.

What was your favorite part about coaching?

My teams really fought for me, win or lose. They always gave me 100%. And I loved the competition, trying to outsmart the other coach.

I was coaching for 31 years, and it all started when a team didn't have a coach, and I volunteered. And then the same thing happened with the San Jose Police Department. They didn't have a coach, so I stepped into that one too.

I am most thankful to my high school coaches that taught me. When I couldn't play, they allowed me to be the team manager. They're the ones that got me started. ■



NEWS

Mission 10 Race returns for a monumental 41st anniversary event

Race coincides with Rotary Club of Hollister's 100th anniversary

The Rotary Club of Hollister is thrilled to announce the 41st Annual Mission 10 Race, set to take place on January 25, 2025. This year's race is extra special as it coincides with a major milestone—the 100th Anniversary of the Rotary Club of Hollister! Runners and walkers from all over are invited to participate in this exciting event, which offers breathtaking routes through the scenic Anzar hills while supporting local scholarships and charitable programs. Join us in celebrating a century of service and making a lasting impact in our community!

The Mission 10 Race is a beloved tradition on the Central Coast, and this year's edition promises to be one for the books. Participants can once again enjoy the scenic, USATF distance-certified Half Marathon, a favorite

among runners, offering breathtaking views as it winds through the Anzar hills and along the serene Anzar Lake. In addition to the Half Marathon, participants have options for all skill levels, including the 10 Miler, 5k, and the 1 Mile Kids Fun Run.

This event is not just about running—it's about giving back to our community. All proceeds from the race benefit local scholarships and charitable programs, continuing the Rotary Club of Hollister's century-long tradition of service. Last year, the event raised \$30,000 for college scholarships, benefiting local high school students, and this year we aim to raise even more in honor of our 100th year of service.

Event Details

- Location: Mission Plaza, 2nd Street, San Juan Bautista, CA

Race Times:

- Half Marathon: 8:15 AM
- 1 Mile Fun Run: 8:30 AM
- 10 Mile Race: 9:00 AM
- 5 Kilometer Race: 9:15 AM

- Race Day Registration: Begins at 7:15 AM

- Entry Fees: Visit www.mission10.com for current rates

Course Information

- USATF Certified Half Marathon: An extension of the 10-mile course, featuring mostly flat terrain with small hills, passing Anzar Lake.



- 10 Mile Course: Partial loop, generally flat with one hill, 210 feet of elevation gain between miles 3.2 and 4.8.

- 5k Course: Out and back, paved and flat.

All participants will receive a long-sleeve shirt and a finisher medal, and all races (except the Fun Run) will be professionally timed with awards for top performers.

As we celebrate this significant milestone—the Rotary Club of Hollister's 100 years of service—we invite everyone to join in the festivities and help make this event

truly memorable.

For more information, please visit our website at www.mission10.com.

About Rotary International

Rotary International is a global network of volunteer leaders dedicated to addressing the world's most pressing humanitarian challenges. With over 1.2 million members across 34,000 Rotary clubs in more than 200 countries and geographic areas, Rotary's work spans from local community support to global efforts like the drive for a polio-free world. ■

SBALT NEWS

The ever-evolving California citrus industry

By Lorelei Grubinskas,
SBALT Board Member

My friend recalls fond memories of evening walks through the orange groves with her uncle in Redlands. The blossoms' wonderful fragrance was so strong that you could smell them as you approached the town. You likely have similar recollections of California citrus groves.

In 1769, Father Junipero Serra planted the first citrus seeds in California. By 1840, frontiersman William Wolfskill introduced lemon and orange seedlings in what is now downtown Los Angeles, marking the start of California's citrus industry. Since then, the State's citrus business has grown and evolved, becoming a cornerstone of California's agricultural economy.

As of 2024, the total acreage for each citrus variety includes 8,223 acres for grapefruit, 49,770 acres for lemons; 538 acres for limes; 109,461 acres for navel oranges; 25,050 acres for Valencia oranges; 1,136

San Benito Agricultural



acres for pomelos and hybrids, and 64,933 acres for mandarins and mandarin hybrids. California remains the largest citrus-producing state in the U.S., with changes in production driven by evolving consumer preferences.

The California citrus harvest season typically begins in late November and runs through March. While the production of Valencia and Navel oranges has declined, mandarins have surged in popularity. Consumers are increasingly seeking convenient, easy-to-peel fruits, positioning mandarins as a preferred choice for snacking.

Oranges, particularly in the winter months, are a classic go-to for their health benefits, boosting the immune system with



Recipes using lemons for Shopska Salat and Three Bean Salad can be found on our website sanbenitolandtrust.org

their rich Vitamin C content. Their sweet-tart flavor adds brightness to winter salads and other dishes.

Lemons have also seen growing demand, driven by culinary trends that favor fresh, vibrant flavors and health-conscious lifestyles. California produces around 90% of the nation's lemons, with varieties like Eureka and Lisbon leading the market. Lemons are increasingly sought after for their versatility in beverages, cooking, and even in natural cleaning products.

Despite challenges such as pests, diseases, climate change, water scarcity, labor shortages, and overseas competition, the Califor-

nia citrus industry remains poised for the future. Innovation in crop management, expanding export markets, and a rising consumer preference for health-conscious and organic citrus options position California's citrus industry for continued growth and success.

When your friend offers you a bag of lemons, say "Yes!" and then visit us at sanbenitolandtrust.org to explore a variety of delicious recipes, some of which celebrate the zesty flavors of citrus.

Recipes using lemons for Shopska Salat and Three Bean Salad can be found on our website sanbenitolandtrust.org. ■

DEARLY DENOTED

Robert Burns

Robert Burns (25 January 1759 – 21 July 1796), also known familiarly as Rabbie Burns, was a Scottish poet and lyricist. He is widely regarded as the national poet of Scotland and is celebrated worldwide.

Auld Lang Syne, perhaps Burns' most famous work, is one of the most widely sung songs of the English language. The song has crossed borders and oceans and can be heard across the globe on Hogmanay. ■



ARTS

Student work sale to benefit opportunities for youth arts

Beginning January 18th at Luna Gallery a unique collection of student art work will be on display and for sale to benefit continuing opportunities for youth in the arts. John Robrock, MFA, taught Advanced Placement Drawing and Painting at San Benito High School (now Hollister High School) from 2001 until he retired in 2018.

Recently, he found 100 drawings that students had forgotten to take home. He is seeking to return the artworks to the former students. 40 of the drawings have no signatures and will be featured in the "Lost and Found" exhibit and silent auction, a testament to Mr. Robrock's ability to elicit the best out of his students who received awards and college credits.

He will be teaching a free drawing class at Luna Gallery on February 1 at 2 pm for teens and adults interested in the first step to drawing, shapes and shading.

Join us January 18, for an artists' talk at 4 pm for the concurrent exhibit *Mending Together: Narratives of Hope and Resilience* curated by Karen Gutfreund, and a reception for both exhibits 5 – 7 pm. For more information lunagallery.art. ■



id·i·om

卧虎藏龙
wò hǔ cáng lóng

This chengyu was used as the title of the famous Chinese film *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* (2000).

It refers to a place where the people seem normal and unassuming whereas, in fact, they are strong and powerful. ■



2025: Tomorrow, Today

From GeekWire Studios, this new podcast series features in-depth, thought-provoking conversations about the future of work, retail, living and more with top business experts.

Join GeekWire co-founder John Cook and Jordan Voss, Sr. Vice President with wealth management firm Northern Trust, as we explore where and how we'll work, shop and live in the not-too-distant future.



Futures

On this show we meet the scientists, technologists, artists and philosophers working to imagine the sorts of developments that might dramatically alter what it means to be human. Some of their predictions will be preferable, others might seem impossible, but none of them are inevitable.

Join your host, Luke Robert Mason, and explore the multitude of possible tomorrows.



Yuka - Food and Cosmetic Scanner

Yuka is a free mobile app that allows you to scan the barcodes of food and personal care products and instantly see their impact on your health. A rating and detailed information help you understand the analysis of each product.

When a product has a negative impact on your health, Yuka also recommends similar but healthier alternative products.



Think Dirty

Think Dirty is the easiest way to learn about the potentially toxic ingredients in your skincare, cosmetics and personal care products. It's an independent source that allows you to compare products as you shop. Scan the barcode, and Think Dirty will give you easy-to-understand product information. Track harmful chemicals in your cosmetics and personal care products, and find cleaner, safer alternatives to enhance your skincare routine.



GOING POSTAL

Lunar New Year
Year of the Snake

The U.S. Postal Service celebrates the Lunar New Year with the release of the colorful Year of the Snake stamp. The Year of the Snake begins Jan. 29, 2025, and ends Feb. 16, 2026.

The first-day-of-issue event for the Forever stamp will be held in Boston on Jan. 14 at the Boch Center Wang Theatre. In attendance will be Luke Grossmann, chief financial officer and executive vice president, U.S. Postal Service and Isabel Kim, chief financial officer, The Asian American Foundation (TAAF). Attendees are encouraged to register: usps.com/lunarnewyearsnake.

To mark the festive occasion of Lunar New Year, millions of people around the world will host parades and parties, decorate with red and gold lanterns, set off fire-

crackers to ward off evil spirits, and invite family and friends to share traditional foods to welcome the new year. People will write couplets, give gifts and clean their houses to celebrate a time of renewal.

Those born in the Year of the Snake, the sixth sign in the Chinese zodiac, are said to be quiet, wise and deep-thinking, making them proficient musicians, philosophers, writers and teachers. A snake year is sometimes referred to as a "little dragon year" because it follows the dragon on the zodiac. 2025 marks the year of the wood snake. Artist Camille Chew designed the stamp.

Postal Products

Customers may purchase stamps and other philatelic products through the Postal Store at usps.com/shop-stamps, by calling 844-737-

7826, by mail through USA Philatelic or at Post Office locations nationwide. For officially licensed stamp products, shop the USPS Officially Licensed Collection on Amazon. ■



IN MEMORY**Esther Genevieve
Lavagnino****April 11, 1928 – December 4, 2024**

Esther Genevieve Lavagnino, 96, of San Juan Bautista, California, passed away peacefully on December 4, 2024, in Hollister, California, surrounded by the love of her family. Her three children—Kathleen Spano, John Lavagnino, and Mark Lavagnino—were at her side, along with her daughters-in-laws, Lisa and Kim Lavagnino, and her cherished granddaughters, Kelley Wyrick, Gina Lavagnino, and Claire Lavagnino.

Born on April 11, 1928, in Salinas, California, Esther was the daughter of Martin Petersen Andersen and Lillian Hardenburgh. She spent her early years on a dairy farm, immersed in the warmth of an extended family of aunts, uncles, and cousins. During World War II, she moved to San Francisco, where she attended high school at École Notre Dame des Victoires and worked as an elevator operator in a bustling high-rise office building—a glimpse of her adventurous spirit.

After high school and the birth of her daughter, Kathleen, Esther settled in San Juan Bautista, where she met the love of her life, John Frederick Lavagnino. The two were married on November 22, 1947, at Mission San Juan Bautista and shared a beautiful partnership that



spanned 68 years until John's peaceful passing in 2016. Together, they delighted in international travels and hosted countless gatherings for friends and family, creating a lifetime of joyful memories.

Esther's creative talents knew no bounds. An avid knitter, crocheter, needlepointer, and bridge player for over four decades, she was a regular at Naomi's Needlework in San Juan Bautista, where her passion for craftsmanship flourished. Her beautifully made sweaters, stockings, blankets, and pillows are treasured family heirlooms that will carry her love through generations.

In the early 1980s, her impeccable sense of style led her to open a children's clothing boutique, Ginger & Pickles, on Fourth Street, where she brought joy and elegance to her community.

Above all, Esther was a devoted matriarch whose family was her greatest pride. She is survived by her sister, three children, twelve grandchildren, twenty-five great-grandchildren, and one great-great-grandchild—with another blessing on the way.

Esther's life was a testament to love, resilience, and the beauty of family. She will be deeply missed and lovingly remembered by all who had the privilege of knowing her.

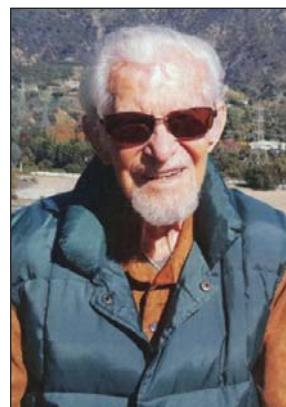
The family extends their deepest gratitude to the dedicated caregivers who provided Esther with exceptional care and compassion, both at home—Karen and Mary—and at Bonita Springs—Cristina and Agnes.

In honor of Esther's memory, contributions may be made to the Mission San Juan Bautista Religious Education Fund, the Mission San Juan Bautista Preservation Fund, or a charity of your choice. ■

**IN MEMORY****Mieczyslaw (Matt)
Marcinkowski**

Mieczyslaw (Matt) Marcinkowski, 98-year-old father of "Then and Now" columnist Wanda Guibert, recently passed after a rich, long life - another member of "The Greatest Generation" gone. Born in Poland, he and his family were evicted by the Nazis during WWII from their urban home to a rural village at the foot of the Carpathian Mountains in southeast Poland. The village was a stronghold of the Home Army - the Polish Underground - which he joined at age 14 to aid Allied forces in sabotaging Nazi efforts.

When the Soviets established communism in Poland at war's end, he escaped to Italy and then settled in London, where he met his future bride Elizabeth, a beautiful Irish lass. He immigrated to Los Angeles, soon joined by his fiancée; they married, became naturalized citizens, and achieved the American dream,



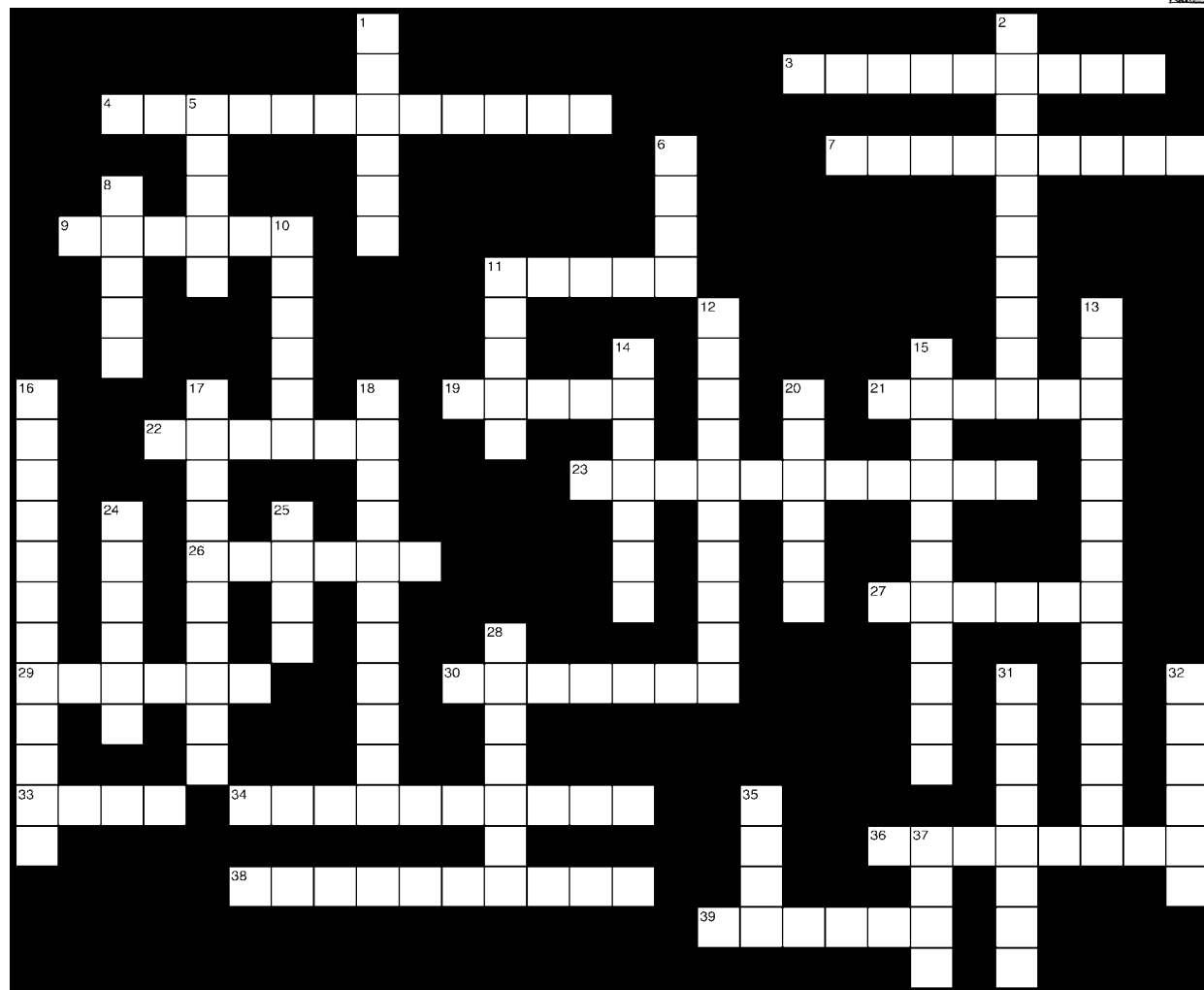
buying a new home in Pasadena, where they raised their two daughters, Wanda and Deirdre.

Matt shared with his girls his love of the mountains, where they hiked and skied; he also enjoyed bow hunting, travel, and music. An avid reader of history and fluent in several languages, he wrote his war memoirs, later published by a Polish university. A highlight of his career as a billboard artist was painting a massive "Young Frankenstein" movie poster on the 8-story Playboy building on Sunset Boulevard, the largest billboard ever to appear on the Sunset Strip. Preceded in death by his wife of 54 years, Matt is survived by his daughters, a son-in-law, three grandchildren and spouses, and six great-grandchildren, who will all miss his joie de vivre. ■

Mission Village VOICE PASTIMES



CROSSWORD TRY A COUPLE by Carlinka



ACROSS

- 3 ++ Marc Antony's queen
- 4 ++ Gershwin folk opera
- 7 ++ Kermit's porcine pick
- 9 Filled with trees
- 11 Pirates loot
- 19 ++ F. Scotts' ___
- 21 ++ Olive's squeeze
- 22 Port city in Russia
- 23 ++ ___ went up a hill
- 26 Mistreats
- 27 ++ Jane went ape
- 29 ++ Minnie's top toon
- 30 ++ Kettle

- 33 Sample recording
- 34 ++ Animated Simpsons
- 36 ++ Rhett's obsession
- 38 ++ Diego's muse and equal
- 39 ++ Clyde's partner in crime

DOWN

- 1 Brought bad luck
- 2 ++ Always Honey-mooners
- 5 ++ Juliet's Shakespearean lover
- 6 ++ Ricky's redhead
- 8 ++ Morticia Addams' husband
- 10 Characteristics

- 11 Bread with a hole
- 12 ++ A couple of Ogres
- 13 ++ Wilma's rock
- 14 ++ Boris and ___
- 15 ++ Big B couple of 1940's screen

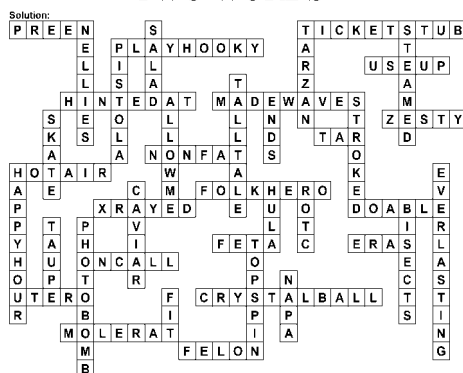
- 16 ++ Sitcom with an alien twist
- 17 ++ Eden's tenants
- 18 ++ Andy's doll
- 20 ++ Fred's dance partner
- 24 ++ Michelle's ex-prez
- 25 ++ Courtney's Cobain

- 28 ++ Dolce's design-ing partner
- 31 ++ This Lady's pooch
- 32 ++ She tamed the

- Beast
- 35 ++ John's one and Ono
- 37 ++ Sonny's tall drink of water

Last month's puzzle solution

+TWO WORDS++



HOROSCOPE 2025 by Hilda De Anza



ARIES

March 21 - April 20

In April 2025 Neptune will enter your sign. This is a long-term influence is about how can you live a rewarding life that goes beyond material concerns. Early 2025 you strive to make a transition into a more creative and expressive period.



TAURUS

April 21 - May 21

Feb through April 2025 are key, as Venus is retrograde in Pisces, which happens every eight years. You can meet someone with whom you feel a strong soul connection. In July, Uranus moves into Gemini, this heralds several years of transformation which will affect your career.



GEMINI

May 22 - June 21

The most significant influence of 2025 is the arrival of Uranus in Gemini for the first time in 84 years. This heralds a 7-year phase of inventiveness, excitement and liberation. Life feels like an electric current bringing high-energy moments. You go out of your comfort zone in the spirit of adventure.



CANCER

June 22 - July 22

2025 is a year of great significance in your professional life. You consider what kind of work would be meaningful for you, what counts is to work on something that stands the test of time and has social benefits. This is an important time of spiritual and intellectual growth.



LEO

July 23 - August 22

2025 is a year when everything feels new, and you have a much more positive attitude. You are emerging from a rather heavy period. By July, you will be relating to a whole bunch of new people, who embrace inspiring philosophies of change. This is a time when you feel connected to the big wide world, and it is exhilarating.

VRIGO

August 23 - September 22



In 2025 March & April are key triggers for change. In June, Jupiter enters Cancer

and this brings a less stressful time n your career and more rewarding relationships. There is a long-term transformation, and it is crucial to get ahead of the curve by embracing new trends.

LIBRA

September 23 - October 22



2025 brings in very fluid situations in relationships, which will be relevant on and off for 14 years into the future. There is no doubt that this represents an epoch-making change in your personal relationships and your engagement in society.

SCORPIO

October 23 - November 21



Circumstances are changing at work creating a very fluid situation. You will want to channel your efforts into meaningful work that accords with your dreams and ideals. This is a great period for expanding your horizons through study and travel.

SAGITTARIUS

November 22 - December 21



2025 begins with the focus on relationships on the one hand and being somewhat outside your comfort zone on the other. In June Jupiter moves to Cancer, and you extract yourself from a weak position into a more robust position.

CAPRICORN

December 22 - January 20



In 2025 you are far more dynamic and goal oriented, focusing on your emotional roots. Your life will become freer, more inspiring and mentally stimulating. Economic changes get turbocharged through new technologies, leading to several years of dramatic advances.

AQUARIUS

January 21 - February 19



Big changes from March – June 2025 when economic issues are highlighted. By June you will experience a dynamic boost of energy, which galvanizes you into activity. The new mental, educational and communication interests, which are born at this time, will become a feature of your life for the rest of the decade.



PISCES

February 20 - April 19

At the end of March, Neptune leaves Pisces (where it has been for 14 years) and enters Aries. This is an extraordinary period of change for you. There will now be a new focus on energetically consolidating some of the ideas and dreams that have been gestating for many years.

www.CrosswordWeaver.com

#THE GOLDEN AGE

Local volunteer and employment opportunities for seniors

By Leanne Oliveira

"Ageism is prejudice against our future selves."
- Ashton Applewhite

Happy 2025! The California Department of Aging has just released new data on its Master Plan for Aging website. As of 2020, 18% of San Benito County's population is aged 60+. By 2040, this population will grow to 29% and, meanwhile, 57% are currently considered "housing cost burdened." (Source: <https://mpa.aging.ca.gov/DashBoard>)

So, how about a New Year's Resolution to earn more income? Your lifelong experience delivers significant benefit to employers who understand and appreciate the value of older talent. EDD/America's Job Center (831-637-5627), grocery stores, and Peninsula Family Services (831-636-5196) are good places to start. These local employers have taken the "AARP Employer Pledge" affirming the value of older workers: McDonald's, H&R Block, Apple (not local but has a shuttle bus to save your commute), Ace,

Chase, ReMax, and Kelly Services.

Reminder that you can still work if you are taking disability benefits! For details, call CCCIL (831-757-2968). If you are hard of hearing, consider DHHSC (831-240-4020), which offers job development and placement. Encountering age discrimination during your search? Call Senior Legal Services (831-426-8824). Old tattoos hindering employment consideration? Catholic Charities' Laser Tattoo Removal Program (831-975-2596x207) might help.

If you prefer volunteering -- perhaps to gain a new skillset or mitigate isolation -- consider the new Volunteer Center of SBC (831-975-2596x204), which is an MPA initiative that places senior volunteers within interested organizations such as AmeriCorps' Foster Grandparent/Senior Companion Program (831-688-0400x112) which also pays a small stipend.

GOLDEN TIP: Del Mar Caregiver's Support Group (RSVP: 800-624-8304) swapped from Jovenes de Antaño to the Epicenter



Infographic courtesy The Arbor Company

with the first half containing an educational component (1/22@1:30PM: "Understanding Dementia") and the second half focusing on the Support Group. Catch Del Mar/Alzheimer's Association at an Educational workshop 1/30@SJB's Sellen Senior Center (RSVP: 831-262-3484) and HICAP's Medicare counseling switched to Wednes-

days at Jovenes de Antaño (Appt Only: 831-462-5510).

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. ■




A Conversation on Alzheimer's Care

EDUCATION WORKSHOP

Thursday, January 30th

Registration at 5:00 P.M.
Workshop from 5:30-7 P.M.

RSVP
(831) 262-3484

**San Juan Bautista
Community Center**
10 San Jose Street
San Juan Bautista



NUTZLE



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we thank you.



Mission Village
VOICE

