



Paula Nyland

Once a showgirl, always
a showgirl — See page 12

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SBHF NEWS

The Tooth Fairy is Coming to San Benito Health Foundation!

San Benito Health Foundation is hosting their annual “Give Kids a Smile” event on February 28, 2025, from 3 to 7pm. Dental Director, Dr. Edwin Acosta and staff will provide free dental screenings and fluoride treatment for children and teens under 17 years old. There will be fun activities, free dental care kits, and children will be able to have their picture taken with the Tooth Fairy.

SBHF’s Tooth Fairy, Jacqueline Lozano, is a Hollister native who remembers coming to the clinic for her own dental screening when she was 5 years old. Over two decades later, she returned to SBHF and is working as a medical assistant. She enjoys helping patients and making them feel comfortable. And on February 28th, she’s looking forward to putting on her gown & wings and making kids smile.

Give Kids a Smile (GKAS) was created by the American Dentist Association (ADA) as an initiative to give free dental care to children of underserved populations. Since GKAS began in 2003, over six million uninsured children have received free oral health care. SBHF is proud to be a GKAS partner.

Please call (831) 637-5306 to schedule your kid’s free GKAS dental screening.



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A quote for our readers

“This whole
world is wild
at heart and
weird on top.”

David Lynch
1946-2025

Photo: Georges Biard, CC BY-SA 3.0

On the cover

Showgirl Paula Nyland and Karamo of *Queer Eye*. Photo courtesy of Netflix. For more information, see page 12.

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#BOOKWORM

'Tis the season! Spicy audio story apps

By Leanne Oliveira

"Soul meets soul on lovers' lips." - Percy Bysshe Shelley, *Prometheus Unbound*

Happy February to my pup Piper (my Valentine's Day birthday girl) and all who love its cozy chocolaty self-love pampering vibe as much as we do! Be sure to check with your local libraries to see what holiday events are available.



Leanne Oliveira

To spread holiday cheer, I wanted to recommend massively popular spicy audio apps Quinn and Bay Area-based Dipsea featuring fourth wall and second person point-of-view rarely used in traditional audiobooks, which is when the narrator speaks directly to listeners.

More importantly, both apps were created FOR women BY women! This shines brightly through diverse inclusive content including specialized audios to help women with grief, panic attacks, anxiety, insomnia, airplane jitters, audios for couples, relationship wellness, instruction, daily affirmations and even PMS pampering to remove stigma. (Seriously unusual and impressive, right?) Note that users can also enjoy platonic/friendship and male-focused content too.

Quinn collaborates with films (*Bridgerton*), offers binaural audios, and mainstream romance narrators including Shane East, Joe Arden, my longtime favorite Zachary Webber/Jacob Morgan, John York, Zach Cowman, and Eric Nolan - whose character account *The Devil of Dublin* was created by author BB Easton (for her viral book of the same name) who also writes most of his audio scripts!

Of the two apps, I find Dipsea's functionality performance best. It is more user-friendly, stylistically streamlined, cute, and offers more inclusive thoughtful content with easy buttons to select accents, gender, theme, etc. Dipsea also offers

soundscapes, "pillow talks," eBooks, and standard audiobooks (*Pride & Prejudice*) with a little twist.

Dipsea creates content (typically a stand-alone series containing brief chapters over time) which it hires narrators to perform whereas Quinn pays voice actors to create and post their own weekly stand-alone content. Info at TryQuinn.com (\$5/mo) and DipseaStories.com (\$6/mo when paid annually).

Each app has its own appeal, so give their free trials a chance and explore with an open mind. Enjoy!

BIPOC LIVES MATTER

Local non-profit organization BeProximity fosters community with and for people racially classified as Black in America. The group's ED Jeanine Riddle is a fabulously inspiring friend of mine, so please consider attending her annual Gala on 2/1 to kick off Black History month! Info at BeProximity.org.

CLUB #BOOKWORM (est. 2016)

Gilroy author Vanessa Mouzes chose January's Pulitzer-finalist *The Snow Child* by Eowyn Ivey, which was set in 1920s Alaska and reads like a somber fairytale. Our Valentine-Galentine-Furball Birthday Party features our annual "Blind Date with a Book" activity. I let the ladies chose *The Seven Year Slip* by Ashley Poston (unique, unpredictable, poignant) and/or *Hemlock* by Kiersten Modglin (fairly dark love-triangle thriller).

FRIENDS OF THE SBC LIBRARY

Our Used Book Sales have returned! Weather permitting, join us behind the Hollister Library 2/8@9AM-11:30AM and enjoy tea and cookies in our remodeled Bookshed (paint and labor donated by my Pop Carlos Oliveira, painter/handyman extraordinaire!). Bring your used newish book and vinyl donations! Save the date: "Afternoon Tea with Friends" 3/16@2PM-4PM at Ridgemark. Info at SBCFriends.org.



Reminder that not all libraries focus on books! Discovered a "Dog Stick Library" at Marina's Sanctuary Beach Resort as featured on Good Morning America. So cute! These would make a fun DIY project or you can purchase one for \$299 at dog-stick-library.com.

LIBRARY FIX-IT CLINIC

Yet another service facilitated by libraries! Nationwide Right to Repair Acts require manufacturers to provide parts, tools, and documentation to empower folks to repair products and minimize landfill dumping, so libraries are collaborating with Fix-It Clinics. Info: Fix-ItClinic.org.

LITERARY HOLIDAYS

Happy Love Your Library Month! Also: World Read Aloud Day (2/7), Library Lover's Day (2/14). Reading Rainbow Day (2/16), and birthday babies Langston Hughes (2/1/1902 - Joplin, MO), LeVar Burton (2/16/57-Germany), Frederik Douglass (2/14/1818 - Cordova, MD), Toni Morrison (2/18/1931-Lorraine, OH), Amy Tan (2/19/1952, Oakland), Laura Ingalls Wilder (2/7/1867), Judy Blume (2/12/1938), and John Steinbeck (2/17/1902).

LOCAL AUTHOR LOREEN GIBBONS

Congrats to SJB resident Loreen Gibbons whose recent memoir *All Eternity Lies Before Me* is for sale in

18 countries! Info at loreengibbons.com.

LUCK LIBRARY

The Library just held a "book social" and hopes to host similar events this year! Call 831-623-4687 for updates.

ONYX STORM RELEASED

Run to local bookseller Kimberly Hill's shop (bookshop.org/shop/hillsbookstore) for Rebecca Yarros' highly-anticipated romantasy *Onyx Storm* (*Empyrean* #3) which continues the phenomenon Yarros began with *Fourth Wing*.

WATSONVILLE LIBRARY

All branches now open Saturdays. February events include Tech Help Drop-In, Science Nights, Family Movie Night, and Valentine Crafting. Info at watsonville.gov/2327/Library. ■

Leanne Oliveira (MLIS, MA History) is a Reference Librarian at the Watsonville Library, a Board Member of the Friends of the SBC Library, and writes *#TheGoldenAge* senior column for the MVV. Contact: oldfashionedolive@gmail.com.

LIT TECH

Meet 'Bookly Crash Course': The AI-powered channel revolutionizing literature study

Amid a world of exciting tech advancements, here's something that stands out for its meaningful impact: a YouTube channel (<https://www.youtube.com/@BooklyCrashCourse>) that makes literature engaging for students. Bookly Crash Course, created by San Juan Bautista local Luke Kerbs and powered entirely by artificial intelligence, has managed what generations of English teachers have attempted—making Moby Dick sound interesting to teenagers.

The numbers tell an interesting story. In its first year, this automated venture has pulled in 300,000 views and 1,125 subscribers. Not bad for a channel that runs itself though it does, with algorithmic precision, remind viewers to "smash that like button" - proving that even AI knows the importance of digital engagement. The channel has even made it into YouTube's Partner Program, proving that algorithms can master the art of making money just as well as humans.

The man behind the machine

Luke Kerbs, a software engineer and data scientist from San Juan, built this whole operation from scratch. Using the Python programming language and a healthy dose of artificial intelligence, he created a system that turns classic literature into engaging video content and manages the YouTube channel. No small feat, considering most students would rather watch paint dry than read *The Scarlet Letter*. Luke

How the AI Video Generator works

The AI video generation system has four main parts: First, there's the script generator - imagine a very fast, very thorough English teacher who never needs coffee. It reads through classic books, picks out the important bits, and explains them in a way that won't put viewers into a coma.

Next comes the art department. The AI generates custom illustrations

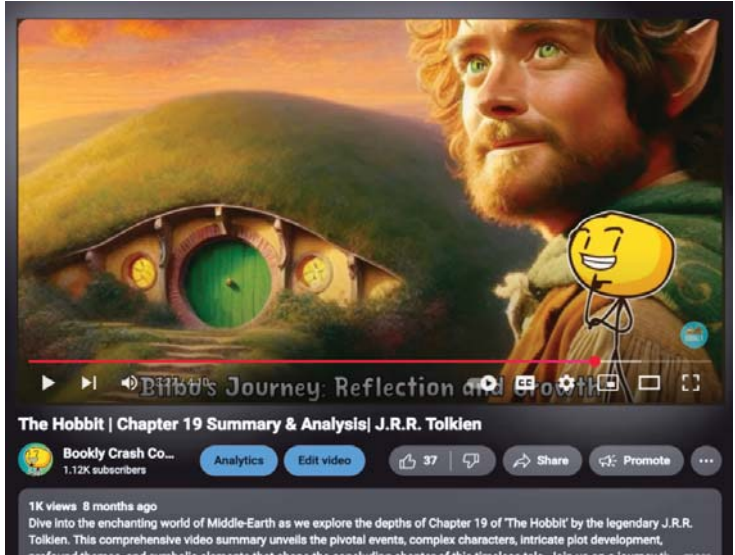
Continued, next page



for each scene from scratch, matching the story's setting and mood. The star of the show is the digital yellow narrator named "Bookly" - an animated character that talks without looking like a broken puppet. The lip movements and gestures sync with the AI generated

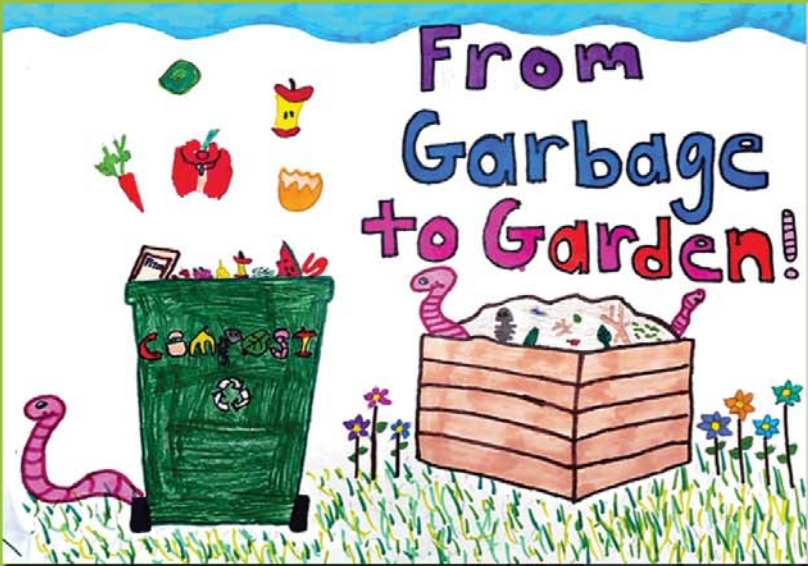
voice perfectly, and the voice sounds natural enough that you might forget it's coming from a computer. It hasn't mastered the teacher's disapproving stare yet, but give it time. Finally, there's the automated video editor, a digital AI maestro

that conducts all these elements into the final edited video. It combines the narration, visuals, and AI animated presenter with the precision in just minutes. This virtual conductor even adds background music and transitions, creating a polished final video that looks like it took a team of professionals to produce - though I suspect most professional editors would rather not dwell on that particular observation. The system handles everything else too - writing video descriptions, making thumbnails, managing the channel. It does all this without ever suggesting a team-building exercise or using the word "synergy." If nothing else, we should be grateful for that. Note: The English teachers among us can rest assured - this



system aims to supplement rather than replace human instruction, though it does grade papers con-

siderably faster, and has yet to develop a preference for particular editions of Shakespeare. ■



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HEALTHCARE

San Benito Health Care District outlines covenants to safeguard local healthcare

In a deal that promises to stabilize the future of healthcare in San Benito County, Hazel Hawkins Memorial Hospital is continuing to perform due diligence on transitioning to new ownership. The transaction is required to have a detailed set of covenants aimed at preserving the hospital's mission of providing quality and accessible care to the community while ensuring financial sustainability. These commitments with the San Benito Health Care District are designed to safeguard local healthcare services for years to come. The community can expect series of commitments under a new agreement with Insight following District Board approval.

For two years, the District and Hazel Hawkins Memorial Hospital (HHMH) leadership, with the support of nationally recognized consultants, conducted an extensive search for a partner or buyer capable of preserving and expanding healthcare services for the residents of San Benito County. The

process was guided by key criteria: any potential buyer needed to pay fair market value for the District's assets, demonstrate the financial stability to both acquire the hospital and maintain current service levels, and show a proven ability to support rural healthcare institutions like HHMH.

After a thorough evaluation, Insight emerged as the organization best equipped to meet these requirements, ensuring a sustainable future for local healthcare.

1. Nonprofit Status and Governance

Insight has committed to maintaining HHMH's status as a nonprofit public benefit corporation under California law through the Insight Health Foundation of California. In addition, the hospital's governing board will include a majority of independent members to ensure impartial oversight and accountability.

2. Continuous Operations and Service Stability

A key priority in the agreement is the uninterrupted operation of the hospital, skilled nursing facilities, clinics and all healthcare services. The hospital will continue to provide essential services, including those for Medicare and Medi-Cal patients, ensuring that local residents retain access to healthcare.

Insight has also pledged to maintain all existing services during the lease period and for at least five years following the full acquisition of the hospital's real estate. This guaran-

tees continuity in critical healthcare offerings, from emergency care to specialized treatments for ten years

3. Financial Assistance and Charity Care

The hospital's longstanding commitment to serving the community's most vulnerable populations will continue under Insight. Insight will maintain charity care and financial assistance policies at or above current levels. These policies will comply with federal standards, ensuring fair billing practices and financial assistance for patients in need.

4. Capital Investment and Modernization

Insight has committed to investing \$50 million over the next decade to improve hospital operations and facilities. This significant capital investment will help modernize infrastructure, upgrade medical equipment, and expand services to meet the evolving health-

care needs of San Benito County's growing population.

5. Workforce Retention

Recognizing the hospital's dedicated workforce as a core strength, Insight will offer employment to at least 90% of the existing staff. This move not only preserves jobs but also ensures continuity of care, leveraging the knowledge and experience of current employees.

6. Branding and Community Identity

The hospital will retain its identity as Hazel Hawkins Memorial Hospital or a similar name, preserving the Hazel Hawkins legacy of the facility that has served the community for decades. This commitment underscores the importance of maintaining a strong connection to the local community.

See COVENANTS, page 9



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SNIPPETS FROM THE MILLIKEN FILES

A well-trained dog

Submitted by Joe Claus & John Grafton

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

Another Frenchman stayed for a few days on his way to the Placieres. He was treated nice, and when he got ready to go on was given an old plug (not very useful horse), too old to use for cattle.

He was so grateful that when he left, he gave his dog to Frank Higuera. This dog understood only French. It was a well-trained dog. The Frenchman showed Frank how to make the dog do what he was told and taught Frank the French commands. There was "Allez chercher" meaning "Go and look for;" "Allez d'hors," "Get out doors;" "Vic," "Come here;" "Allez coucher," "Go and lie down" and "Apportez ici," "Bring it here." The dog knew all these commands and obeyed.

The dog's name was "Touto." He was not a very large dog. He was a French pointer and a well-bred dog. He was black and had large ears. He lived an awful long time.

The children used to play the game "Ante



over." The Ranchito house was a very big house, but it was possible to throw a ball over the house. There were always two sides, and when the children were choosing up sides for the game, the first choice was always "Touto." He would catch the ball on the

first bound, which is allowable in the game and counted the same as a direct catch. A person could give "Touto" one end of a sack, and if the person was strong enough could swing "Touto" around in a circle. He would never let go of the sack. ■

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FINANCIAL FOCUS

Five moves for young investors

If you're just beginning your career, what are your financial priorities?

You might have student loans to deal with. And you may even be thinking about saving for a down payment on a house. These are certainly significant issues, and yet, you shouldn't ignore your long-term goals, such as retirement — which is why you may want to get started as an investor.

And as you invest, consider these suggestions:

1. *Take advantage of your opportunities.* Even while addressing your other concerns, such as loan payments, you may well have space in your life to invest — if you take advantage of the opportunities presented to you. For example, if you work for a business that offers a 401(k) or other retirement plan, try to put in as much as you can afford, or at least enough to earn your employer's matching contribution, if one is offered. And you may find that contributing to a traditional 401(k) or similar plan is more affordable than you think, as your contributions may be deductible, lowering your taxable income.

2. *Think long-term.* Some people make the mistake of seeking short-term gains by trying to "time" the market — that is, they try to "buy low and sell high." While this is a great strategy in theory, it's almost impossible to follow, as no one can really predict market highs and lows. The most successful investors follow a long-term strategy and don't jump in and out of the market.

3. *Know your risk tolerance.* Your investment choices should be based partially on your risk tolerance. Typically, the more investment risk you take on, the greater the potential reward, but it works the other way, too — riskier investments can result in greater losses, at least in the short term. You need to find a risk level with which you are comfortable. Also, your risk tolerance can change over time — when you get close to retirement, for instance, you might want to invest more conservatively than you did when you still had decades ahead of you in the working world.

4. *Diversify your investments.* The financial markets affect different investments in different ways, which means that, at any given

time, some investments will perform better than others. But if you only owned one type of investment or asset class, your portfolio could suffer if a market downturn had a particularly strong effect on that investment or asset. By spreading your investment dollars among a range of investments, you'll have more opportunities for success, and you can help reduce the effects of market volatility on your holdings. Keep in mind, though, that diversification, by itself, can't guarantee profits or protect against all losses.

5. *Prepare for the unexpected.* You don't always know when you'll face a large expense, such as a medical bill or a major

home repair. If you're not prepared, you could be forced to dip into your long-term investments, such as your 401(k), to pay for these costs. To help avoid this problem, you may want to take steps such as keeping a cushion of cash in your portfolio and building an emergency fund containing several months' worth of living expenses, with the money kept in a liquid account.

By putting these moves to work, you can help yourself make progress on an investment journey that could last a lifetime.

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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WILL COOK FOR WINE

Aztec Flourless Chocolate Cake

By Chef Liz

Surprise your sweetie this Valentine's Day with this incredibly fudgy, dense and rich dessert -- with a bit of a spicy kick! Garnish with fresh berries or a dusting of powdered sugar.



Ingredients

- 1/2 cup Unsalted Butter
- 6 oz Ghirardelli 60% Cacao Bittersweet Baking Chips
- 1/2 teaspoon Chipotle Chili Powder
- 1/2 teaspoon Cinnamon
- 1/8 teaspoon Cayenne Pepper
- 1 teaspoon Vanilla Extract
- 1/4 teaspoon Kosher Salt
- 3 Large Eggs (room temperature)
- 1/2 cup Granulated Sugar
- 1/4 cup Cocoa Powder

Method

Preheat oven to 350 F. Coat the inside of a 6-inch cake pan with baking spray. Line the bottom with a parchment circle, then lightly spray the top. Set aside.

Melt the butter and chocolate over a bain marie (a water bath) stirring frequently



until blended and smooth. Remove from heat and stir in chili powder, cinnamon, cayenne pepper, vanilla and salt. Let cool while you whisk the eggs and sugar.

Whisk the eggs and sugar together until pale yellow and double in volume and frothy and fluffy. Fold in half the melted chocolate mixture until mostly incorporated, then fold in the rest along with the cocoa powder.

Stir gently until well combined. Pour into prepared cake pan and bake for 30-35 minutes until the top has a slightly crusty top and the center no longer jiggles.



Let the cake cool for 10-15 minutes, then carefully invert it onto a plate. Invert it back onto a serving plate (so the top is facing back up again). Let cool completely. Before serving dust with powdered sugar. ■

THOMMELIER

Wine in decline

By Thomas Brenner, Sommelier

In recent years, global alcohol consumption has been steadily declining, and wine is no exception. Younger generations, influenced by health trends, the rise of non-alcoholic alternatives, and shifting cultural attitudes are drinking less than their predecessors. Once a centerpiece of meals, celebrations, and social gatherings, wine now competes with canned libations, mocktails, and wellness-focused lifestyles.



Yet, even as interest in wine fades, its enduring cultural, historical, and scientific significance remains undeniable. While drinking less wine may be part of a healthier lifestyle, there's still much to celebrate about what wine represents and the role it plays in history, art, and global economies.

Wine's decline in popularity is a recent phenomenon. For thousands of years, it was a staple of daily life and a symbol of status, spirituality, and connection. Ancient civilizations like the Egyptians and Greeks viewed wine as more than a beverage—it was a link to the divine and a marker of sophistication.

Fast forward to the 20th century, and wine symbolized culture and refinement. However, today's globalized world has seen a shift. Millennials and Gen Z are more likely to prioritize health, wellness, and moderation while climate change and economic challenges have made winemaking more expensive and, at times, inaccessible to younger consumers.

Even in decline, wine offers something other than alcoholic beverages cannot: a deep connection to culture and place. Each bottle tells a story of the land it comes from, whether it's the volcanic soils of Sicily, the chalky terroir of Champagne, or the sun-drenched valleys of California's central coast. Wine embodies the artistry of viticulture, with every vintage reflecting the unique intersection of nature and human ingenuity.

This craftsmanship makes wine a form of edible art. Just as a painter blends colors on a canvas, a winemaker combines grape varieties, fermentation techniques, and aging processes to create a product that is as much about taste as it is about storytelling.

Wine's complexity isn't just poetic—it's scientific. Grapes are packed with compounds like anthocyanins, which contribute to their vibrant color, and polyphenols like



resveratrol, which have been linked to health benefits. Studies suggest that moderate wine consumption—especially red wine—can improve heart health, reduce inflammation, and support gut microbiota. Its natural blood-thinning properties may also lower the risk of blood clots.

However, the emphasis here is on moderation. Excessive consumption negates any potential benefits and can lead to serious health risks. This aligns with modern attitudes toward mindful drinking, where the focus is on quality over quantity.

While fewer people may be drinking wine, its economic importance cannot be understated. Emerging wine-producing regions rely on viticulture to support local farmers and contribute to international trade. These countries are carving out space in the global market, offering wines that challenge traditional powerhouses like France and Italy while promoting economic development.

Wine tourism is another major contributor. Destinations like Bordeaux and the California's wine country attract millions of visitors, greatly boosting local economies. Even as consumption declines, the cultural and economic ecosystem surrounding wine remains robust.

Wine has always been more than a beverage—it's a tradition. Religious ceremonies, from Christian Communion to Jewish Kiddush, use wine as a symbol of connection and celebration. Across cultures, sharing a glass has long been a gesture of trust and hospitality.

Today, wine traditions are evolving to match modern sensibilities. Organic, biodynamic, and low-alcohol wines are gaining traction, allowing consumers to engage with wine in ways that align with their values. Meanwhile, the ritual of opening a bottle and pairing it with food endures, offering a timeless reminder to slow down and savor life's moments.

Wine is not just a drink; it's a bridge between the past and present, an expression of place and craftsmanship, and a quiet reminder of life's richness. ■



COMMUNITY FOUNDATION CFFSBC welcomes Jill Glass Pagaran to its Board of Directors

The Community Foundation for San Benito County is excited to welcome Jill Glass Pagaran as the newest member of our Board of Directors. A native of San Benito County, Jill is well-known in the community for her leadership and unwavering dedication to local causes. With a deep understanding of the needs and opportunities within the region, Jill brings a wealth of experience to the board.

Her extensive volunteerism includes serving for six years on the Hazel Hawkins Hospital Foundation Board. Jill is also the current president of Spirit of San Juan Bautista, a nonprofit organization that promotes economic growth while preserving San Juan Bautista's history and charm. Through these roles, Jill has shown a deep commitment to making a positive impact on her community. The Foundation is grateful to now benefit from her expertise.

In her statement, Jill expressed how honored she felt to join the Foundation's all-volunteer board. "The Foundation touches every member of the community," she said, noting the importance of the organization's wide-ranging support for nonprofits, charitable ventures, and initiatives such as its scholarship program. She emphasized that the Foundation's efforts are instrumental in fostering a thriving community where every-



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one can benefit from the resources and opportunities available.

The Foundation is proud to welcome Jill as part of its team. We look forward to the valuable perspective, leadership, and experience she brings to our work. Her addition strengthens our ability to manage and grow the Foundation and its work, ensuring that we can continue to support San Benito County residents into the future.

For those interested in contributing to our mission, there are many ways to get involved. Whether by joining one of our committees, donating time or resources, or learning more about our over 170 local nonprofits, the Foundation welcomes your participation and generosity. Visit GiveSanBenito.org or call 831-630-1924 to explore how you can help make a difference in your community. ■

Covenants, continued from page 6

7. Right of First Refusal

If Insight decides to sell the hospital's assets in the future, the District will have the right of first refusal to repurchase them. This provision provides a safety net to ensure the hospital remains a community-focused institution.

The agreement between the District and Insight would mark a significant step toward securing the future of healthcare in the region. With clear commitments to community care, service continuity, and financial stability, the hospital is poised to thrive under new leadership. While transitions of this magnitude are never without challenges, the outlined covenants provide a strong framework to ensure that Hazel Hawkins Memorial Hospital remains a trusted healthcare provider for generations to come.

Additionally, San Benito County continues to express interest in being a partner with the District in securing access to healthcare as well as being part of the process to impact the future

of healthcare in the San Benito County. Hospital leadership welcomes the enthusiasm and looks forward to continuing to work together to find solutions especially around mental health and indigent care.

After attending a Board of Supervisors meeting today, Mary Casillas, CEO of Hazel Hawkins Memorial Hospital stated, "We are grateful for a Board of Supervisors that are passionate about healthcare. We look forward to working with the Board as our future begins to take shape."

Bill Johnson, President of the San Benito Health Care District stated, "Regardless of who owns the hospital, there are plenty of opportunities to collaborate with the County and we look forward to exploring those options."

The San Benito Health Care District is an independent organization whose members are elected by the citizens of San Benito County for the purpose of managing the Districts assets including Hazel Hawkins Memorial Hospital. As such all decisions concerning the District are made by this elected board. ■

ANZAR HIGH SCHOOL HONOR ROLL (FALL 2024)

Summa Cum Laude (3.9-4.0+)

Seniors

Marbella Barron Rodriguez
Scarlett Capuano
Kayla Cornejo Juarez

Guadalupe Erape

Victoria Flores

Sofia Jordan

Isaac Kapadia

Clairis Lona

Gianna Melendez Ramirez

Italia Muniz

Gael Perez

Miranda Plascencia Rocha

Jocelynn Reynoso

Piper Shankle

Angelina Tran

Juniors

Arlo Burke Raymond

Oliver Doupnik

Shelbie Freeman

Felix Io

Sophomores

Annaliz Alleman

Taleena Alsheshani

Roslin Garcia

Lydia Houle

Zoe McDougall

Monserat Palomino

Amezcu

Jaden Romero

Kimberly Sanchez-Gonzalez

Londyn Webb

Freshmen

Bella Aguillon

Nayela Reynoso

Odalyss Rincon Ochoa

Tristan Shankle

Magna Cum Laude (3.7-3.89)

Seniors

Santiago Castaneda

Daniela Cruz Serrato

Brayden Hamlin

Marisol Lopez Garcia

Juniors

Ava Kapadia

Sophomores

Aiden Munoz

Johann Pacheco

Abeline Salinas

Coleman Thomas

Katie Wyatt

Freshmen

Kiana Alleman

Jasmine Grio

Jairo Juarez-Quinonez

Amanda Dylan Lamera

Henry Murphy

Camila Santos-Miramontes

Mia Schobert

Cum Laude (3.5-3.69)

Seniors

Ivan Avis

Anthony Concepcion

Jose Garcia

Naya Medina

Isabel Perez

Jasmin Salinas

Sophia Spitzer

Daniel Zapien

Juniors

Zoe Martinez Valenzuela

Sophomores

Evelyn Cuellar

Naia Van Den Bulke

Freshmen

Davin Aguilar

Alexander Caballero

Yaretzi Castro

Nancy Colores Ramos

Janice Cruz Santos

Adan Diaz

Hannah Kapadia

Moises Lopez Garcia

Michael Rozin Jr.

Old Fashioned CRAB CRACK Dinner & Dance SBC Fairgrounds Pavillion

Full bar, silent auction,
and live music by The
Sake Bombs (classic rock).
All-you-can-eat crab,
pasta, salad, bread, &
dessert.

Live Music

Johnny Sanchez

8

The Sake Bombs

Tickets: \$80 or \$750 for a
table of 10. Tickets
available from club
members, online, at
Savage Designs or Postal
Graphics. Proceeds go
toward scholarships and
supporting local nonprofits
in San Benito County that
serve our community's
youth.



EXCHANGE
THE EXCHANGE CLUB OF HOLLISTER, CA

Tickets: www.crabcrack.com

February 15th, 2025

Doors Open at 5:30



Scan Me

VOICING SOME THOUGHTS A real so and so

By Halina Kleinsmith

Years ago, the phrase "You know?" was consistently interjected into ongoing conversations. It became an annoying affectation for the listener, who despite being focused on or in agreement with the orator, seemed constantly solicited for confirmation.

A decade later, the phenomenon of the malapportioned expression "Like..." began dominating daily speech. Age notwithstanding, it was widely accepted to use this word in non-simile fashion. Even screen writers addressed the fad by interjecting it in television and film scripts. But, "Like, you know..." it also lost impact through overuse, making way for today's replacement, the simple "So, ..."

This multi applicable buzzword has reemerged, from its first publishing as a sentence starter in Chaucer's 1380's epic Trojan war poem, *Troilus and Criseyde*.

"So" prevailed in ensuing English and West Germanic writings, for starting a sentence, explaining an action, or making an inquiry.

In verbal and written form, it functions as an adverb, conjunction, pronoun, adjective



or interjection, depending upon the context. As a degree adverb, it modifies adjectives and adverbs, as in "You're so sweet!"

Collectively, respected language experts have published their acknowledgement of our increased reusage of "So,..." to start sentences, making this a designated addition to present day colloquial speech.

A typical example would be an interviewer inquiring of a guest, "When did you discover

the artifact?", with their reply invariably beginning, "So, we were on a dig...", thus exemplifying a filled pause, by using "so" in the same way as "um" or "well".

You might say inquisitively, is that so? To which I'll emphatically answer, yeah, I told you so! Hopefully, it wasn't so much to take in. But, so far so good, as you've made it through this article to the end! So, thank you, so much... ■



COMMUNITY

'Crab Crack' to raise funds for scholarships and local non-profits

The Exchange Club of Hollister is having their "Crab Crack" event on Saturday, February 15, 2025 in the Fairgrounds Pavillion at Bolado Park. Doors open at 5:30pm. The event features a full bar, a silent auction, and live music by The Sake Bombs (classic rock and roll). Music will begin at roughly 8pm. There will be all-you-can-eat crab, pasta, salad, bread, and dessert. Tickets are \$80 or \$750 for a table of 10.

Tickets are available from club members, online at www.crabcrack.com, at Savage Designs at 1700 Lana Way, Hollister or at Postal Graphics at 1760 Airline Hwy, Suite F, Hollister (in the Nob Hill shopping center).

This event would make a nice alternative to fighting the crowds on Friday for Valentine's day.

The Exchange Club of Hollister was established in 1926. The club provides scholarships for San Benito County high school students and essential financial support to many nonprofit organizations in San Benito County that serve our community's youth.

New members are always welcome. We meet at Paines Restaurant on the second and fourth Mondays of each month.

A majority of the Exchange Club's revenue is generated by two events each year, the "Crab Crack Dinner and Dance" typically held in February each year and beer sales at the San Benito County Fair. Your patronage of these events is crucial to help us continue to support organizations doing good work in our county. ■

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NDGW Valentine's Dance

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California Horned Lizard found at Wildfarmers.
Photo by Veronica Stork

Wildfarmers receives grant to support blue oak woodland habitat stewardship

The grant of \$20,000 will further the organization's research and development of techniques to enhance the wildlife and habitat in the blue oak woodlands.

Wildfarmers is a nonprofit dedicated to connecting and strengthening wildlife, wilderness and human communities, through the enhancement of native habitat, aquifers, and forest lands; specifically pertaining to the ancient Blue Oak forests of California and the 2500 species they house.

Wildfarmers is pleased to announce a \$20,000 grant from the Nancy Jane Bletzer Fund for Animal Welfare, a Fund of the Community Foundation for Monterey County.

This grant will significantly support Wildfarmers' ongoing efforts to launch over 20+ years of research and development in techniques aimed at enhancing wildlife and habitat in the imperiled blue oak woodlands of San Benito County. The funds will help us advance the nonprofit's mission to preserve and protect these critical ecosystems and their diverse inhabitants.

"We are thrilled to receive this funding, which will enable us to hire ground personnel and begin the intensive habitat rebuild, including irrigation systems and native understory planting," said Veronica Stork, Executive Director of Wildfarmers. "This support is critical for providing year-round water sources for wildlife and achieving our goals of aquifer recharge and woodland rehabilitation. We are deeply grateful to the Nancy Jane Bletzer Fund for Animal Welfare Fund of the Community Foundation for Monterey County as well as to Tracy Taggart and the Community Foundation for San Benito County for their crucial recommendation."

Wildfarmers has a 20+ year history of working in the blue oak woodlands in San Benito County. The organization's efforts have already yielded over 200 new blue oak saplings and understory plants such as Oak Leaf Cherry dotting the acreage.

Using a 40-acre site as a living laboratory, Wildfarmers employs ancient ecological practices - from prescribed fire to water catchment - to develop restoration techniques that can be replicated across California's 3.3 million acres of blue oak habitat. Their work goes beyond conservation to actively rebuild the complex relationships between oaks, native understory, wildlife, and human communities. This grant will help expand the reach and impact of its Enhancing Blue Oak Woodland Habitat Stewardship Project.

For more information about Wildfarmers and its programs, please visit wildfarmers.org.



Gilroy Assistance League is accepting grant request applications for 2025

Gilroy Assistance League is accepting Grant Request Applications January 6 through February 21, 2025. The organization considers grant requests that directly benefit youth organizations, programs, and schools in Gilroy, San Martin, and Morgan Hill. This year, Gilroy Assistance League is projecting to award approximately \$35,000 in grants. Funds will be awarded in late April 2025.

A formal Grant Request Application must be completed and returned no later than Friday, February 21, 2025. To apply for a grant or learn more about supporting the Gilroy Assistance League grants program, go to GilroyAssistanceLeague.org/grants

Gilroy Assistance League is a non-profit organization that is composed of dedicated female community leaders, whose mission is to promote the welfare and development of youth in South Santa Clara County, exclusive to Gilroy, San Martin, and Morgan Hill. The non-profit organization raises funds primarily through their annual Home + Garden Tour, which is held each spring on the Friday and Saturday of Mother's Day Weekend. This year is the 20th Anniversary of the Home Tour, and the event takes place on May 9th and 10th.

For more information about the grants program, contact Gilroy Assistance League Grants Chair, Paula Goldsmith at paulagoldgilroy@gmail.com.



ANZAR NOTEBOOK

Anzar High School hosts successful College and Career Fair

By Julie Castañeda-Hicks, MAEd, PPSC

On January 16, 2025, Anzar High School held its highly anticipated College and Career Fair in the school gym, welcoming all students from grades 6-12 in the Aromas San Juan Unified School District. The event provided an invaluable opportunity for students to explore a wide range of educational and career paths.

A total of 14 educational institutions were represented, including several community colleges, California State University Monterey Bay, University of California Santa Cruz, and a few private colleges, as well as trade programs and branches of the military. In addition, 29 community partners from industries such as agriculture (Top Flavor Farms), construction (Willis Con-

struction), and health care (x-ray technicians) were on hand to showcase career opportunities. The fair successfully represented all 16 career clusters, giving students exposure to various professions and educational options.

The event gave students the chance to engage with college representatives and industry professionals, helping them make informed decisions about their futures. By connecting directly with experts in both higher education and the work force, students gained valuable insights into career pathways, further education, and skill development. This College and Career Fair was a significant step in empowering students to envision their futures and make thoughtful decisions about their academic and professional goals. ■



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MISSION VILLAGE VOICE Q&A

Paula Nyland, She was a showgirl

By Anne Caetano

From the hay bales of Hollister to the bright lights of Las Vegas and Los Angeles, small town girl Paula Nyland hit the big time and has had a remarkable career in show business. She stars in “She was a Showgirl” on Netflix’ *Queer Eye* (season 9, episode 1) when The Fab Five and a glamorous icon team up to help the retired showgirl-turned-seamstress rediscover her sparkle and make a triumphant return to the stage. *Mission Village Voice* enjoyed re-connecting with Paula and hearing her story. Once a showgirl, always a showgirl.

Follow her at Instagram@Paulanylandvegas, Wandering with Paula YouTube channel (@TripleGProductions) & Rapunzie.com.

MVV: How did your career in dance begin?

PN: I’ve been dancing since I was 5 years old. At age 14, our dance teacher hauled us to Las Vegas for a dance convention, and we went to the Folies Bergère. I was literally on the edge of the stage, my little hand and chin on it, thinking, “I can do that.” That’s the night I knew I was going to be a professional dancer.

What was your first big break?

I got Moulin Rouge in my second audition. I was 24 and had just moved to Las Vegas. Moulin Rouge was “star policy,” meaning every two months a new star would come onto the show—Debbie Reynolds, Jim Nabors, The McGuire Sisters, Suzanne



Somers, Charo, to name a few. I was very lucky. That was my first experience in Las Vegas on the big stage. After that, I got hired to tour with Engelbert Humperdinck.

What was it like touring with Engelbert Humperdinck?

Amazing. We were treated like royalty. We toured the US and Europe on airplanes and tour buses. Signing autographs was special because he was so popular, especially in Germany, where he was #1. We did a few stadium tours in Germany. I toured with him for 13 months.

After Engelbert?

I ended up in Los Angeles, where I went to a lot of auditions. I did Dom DeLuise’s show. I was a cheerleader for a Saturday morning



roller derby TV show. I did commercials, and I went to some of the most advanced dance classes in LA because I could dance with the best of them then.

What did you do after LA?

I moved to Lake Tahoe with my then-husband. I danced in a few shows, and I was a magician’s assistant. Then I started having babies, so I stopped dancing. And then we moved to Las Vegas in 2001.

Now you are a costume seamstress.

Yes, I’ve been sewing since I was a child. My sisters and I all learned from our mother. I was very fortunate. I was called by a friend who said this new show was coming to Planet Hollywood, and they needed seamstresses to sew the costumes. I also dressed the show. This is how I got back into show business.

Later, I was hired to sew costumes for performers on a Japanese cruise ship, and I’m still working for them now. We’re making all these new costumes for the shows, and I take these costumes onto the ship. While it’s cruising, I do alterations. I just came back from cruising around Japan and Korea.

And now you’re on Season 9 episode 1 of Queer Eye on Netflix. How long was the Queer Eye process?

It was almost a year from the time my daughter Briana wrote the letter to Queer

Eye about me. She was up late one night with her new baby, and she saw an audition for Queer Eye in Vegas, so she wrote a letter about her mom. Two weeks later, they contacted Briana and said, “We’re interested in talking to your mom.”

Did you know about this?

No. My daughters and son-in-law Face Timed me and said, “We have to tell you something. We nominated you for Queer Eye, and they want to talk to you.” I just started to cry. I was like, “Wait...what?”

Then, the casting director called me. We had a video call because they wanted to see me—what do I look like? Can I speak? Do I have energy? After that, I started filling out paperwork. I think they already knew they were going for me. I signed documents, went through background checks, and even talked to a psychologist to ensure I wasn’t crazy.

We had to sign off on the house for filming. Every photograph and painting in my house had to be documented and approved—even photos of my late parents.

They also video-interviewed my husband and daughters to know who they were putting on camera. It wasn’t until about a week or two before filming that I even knew I was in it.

How did Netflix tell you you were chosen for Queer Eye?



I had to force their hand because they keep who is cast so secretive. I had been asked to go on a Nicki Minaj tour as a seamstress. I told QE, "I need to know if you're going to cast me. If not, I'm going on tour." That forced them to say, "Yes, you're in, we want you, Paula."

What was filming like?

On Monday, they started us with on-camera interviews with Gregg, Summer, Briana, my grandbabies, and me. We filmed cooking with Antoni at the Fontainebleau.

On Tuesday, the second day of filming, Gregg and I were put up in separate hotels for the next three nights while the house was being renovated. They told us not to speak to anyone.

Were your reactions on camera real?

Yes! Every moment is a surprise. There are two camera operators, and they call it "the dance" because the two of them are pretty much dancing around us to get their shots. It's fascinating seeing them work.

When did you meet the Fab Five?

The second day of filming. They told me I'd be doing sewing shots that day. I thought, "They're coming, aren't they?"

Then there was a knock at the door. Even though I knew it was them, it was still overwhelming. Their energy is off the roof! From that moment on, I was the most important thing in their lives for the next four days, and they made me feel like it.

And your driver, AKA talent coordinator?

Nico was my driver, and he was perfect for me because he let me play loud rock and roll, which helped calm my nerves. He would park a block away from the next destination, and they would let him know when they were ready for me. In the meantime, someone would come to mic me up. You've got to remember that, because if you talk to yourself while wearing the mic, it could be awkward.



Then Nico would drive me to the next spot, and I'd get out of the car and pretend I had just arrived.

Your performance with Dita Von Teese was amazing!

She is exquisite. What you saw on TV is really her—a nice and humble person. She asked me to be in her show. My sisters, Nancy Nyland Tupuivao of Hollister, Barbara Nyland Boyd of San Juan Bautista and Monica Nyland LePiane of Paso Robles, came to watch me perform. Their favorite part was when Dita was on the bronco with the pink chaps.

Did the guys really do the house?

Jeremiah designs it and oversees everything because it's his name. All the guys do their part and have a support team.

What was the most memorable Queer Eye moment?

The day I had my hair done and saw myself. After we wrapped, the crew all came out, started clapping, and chanted my name: "Paula! Paula! Paula!" It took me completely off guard—it was one of the most amazing moments of my filming.

Your home makeover was phenomenal.

They renovated my living room, dining room, kitchen, sewing room, and bathroom. They also cleaned out my backyard and gave me new outdoor furniture.

The whole house was painted, and they brought in all new furniture. Before I left the house on the second day, the producer and I decided what to keep, donate or discard.

And the reveal?

I walked in the door, and there it was—all done. New paint, furniture, rugs, flowers, a stocked refrigerator, a juicer, silverware, bowls, pots and pans. A new refrigerator, new cooktop, new countertop. We are finding new things every day -- even new clothes in my closet.

I enjoyed watching you and Gregg dancing at the end.

That was fun! We laughed because Gregg and I usually don't go out dancing. They literally hired a band and extras at the Fontainebleau nightclub to make it feel lively for filming.

What did you get from this?

They honestly changed my life. I keep my hair up, my home up, and my attitude up. They lifted me, dusted me off, and sent me forward to live and love my life. Every day is a blessing.

Tell me about Rapunzie.com and Wandering with Paula.

Rapunzie.com is our custom T-shirt and baby onesie printing business. Find us also on Amazon or Etsy. On our Wandering with Paula YouTube channel (@TripleGProductions), we share our travels. You can also find me on Instagram (@Paulanylandvegas).

Will you include San Benito County content on your social media?

Yes! We filmed recently in Hollister—my hometown—and San Juan Bautista, to connect with our Breen roots, as we are direct descendants of the Donner Party. In Hollister, we visited Hazel Hawkins Hospital, where I was born, and the schools I attended: Sacred Heart and San Benito High School.

I will always be a Hollister girl at heart. I am still proud to say I'm a Haybaler. ■

Photos courtesy Netflix and Paula Nyland.



BEEN THERE, DONE THAT



Certified businesses & officials at an evening of networking and sustainability at the Green Business Mixer hosted by San Benito County Integrated Waste Management.



Congratulations to Pequeñas Fantasías Daycare for achieving their Green Business Certification!



Vera Powers Amah Mutsun Land Trust volunteer preparing elderberry tree branches to make into clappers.!



Amah Mutsun Land Trust volunteers working at Amah Mutsun Indigenous People Garden at San Juan Bautista State Historic Park.



SBALT volunteers helped paint the barn on the Nyland property on Martin Luther King, Jr., Day of Service.



San Benito County Integrated Waste Management and Recology have been proactively working with Southside School on implementing Organics and improving their Recycling efforts.



Jeff, Julia and Nathaniel enjoy a crisp morning watching otters play in the surf at Asilomar State Beach.

BEEN THERE, DONE THAT



Karen M. Gutfreund, curator and Wendy Ackrell, Artist, at Luna Gallery Mending Together Exhibit.



Jessica Geiger with Me Too & Honey. Yes, the one on the right is real.



Art from the Luna Gallery Mending Together Exhibit. Image by Marie Cameron ("Rainbow Self" - detail).



Jennifer Colby introducing artist. LL- Deborah Wood, art patron & mother of a Mr. Robrock student exhibiting at Luna Gallery.



Installation of Japanese American Citizens League (JACL) officers in local chapters. Catered by Hapa Bros.



Winston Coady (12, above and below left) and his dad Sean ran the Rotary Mission 10 Race together (10 mile run). Winston placed first in the 12 years and under category. Way to go, Winston!



Waltzing Germanic Travelers at SJB Historic Park, Sweet Pea Antiques & Bears Hideaway for beer. See YouTube, The Revival of the Waltzing Germanic Travelers.



Giant crabs invade a "whale fall" in the Monterey Bay Aquarium's Deep Sea exhibit.

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CELESTIAL EVENTS



January 29 - New Moon. 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.

February 12 - Full Moon. 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 13:55

UTC. This full moon was known by early Native American tribes as the Snow Moon because the heaviest snows usually fell during this time of the year. Since hunting is difficult, this moon has also been known by some tribes as the Hunger Moon, since the harsh weather made hunting difficult.

February 28 - New Moon. 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 00:46 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.

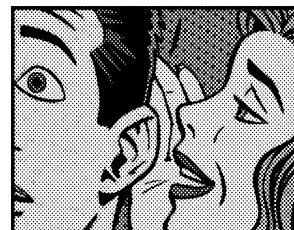


Photo: Ganapathy Kumar (unsplash.com)

The rainbow colors of Mercury in a NASA photo.



March 8 - Mercury at Greatest Eastern Elongation. The planet Mercury reaches greatest eastern elongation of 18.2 degrees from the Sun. This is the best time to view Mercury since it will be at its highest point above the horizon in the evening sky. Look for the planet low in the western sky just after sunset.



MVV ēvz drāp

New Year's Eve at the VFW

Friend: Oh, my god! I like the sparkles on your face.

Other friend: Thanks. It's called unicorn snot.

New Man

Woman: He's a Gemini with an Aries Sun...He's amazing, he killed a mouse for me last night. (*Shows photos to friend*)

Friend: Oh. Your cat. I thought you met someone.



Green Business Tips

San Benito County launches 'Electrification Resources' page

San Benito County now offers a one-stop resource hub for residents and businesses interested in transitioning to clean energy. Whether you're looking to electrify your home, upgrade to energy-efficient appliances, or explore electric vehicles (EVs), this new page has something for everyone.

Save Money and Go Electric!

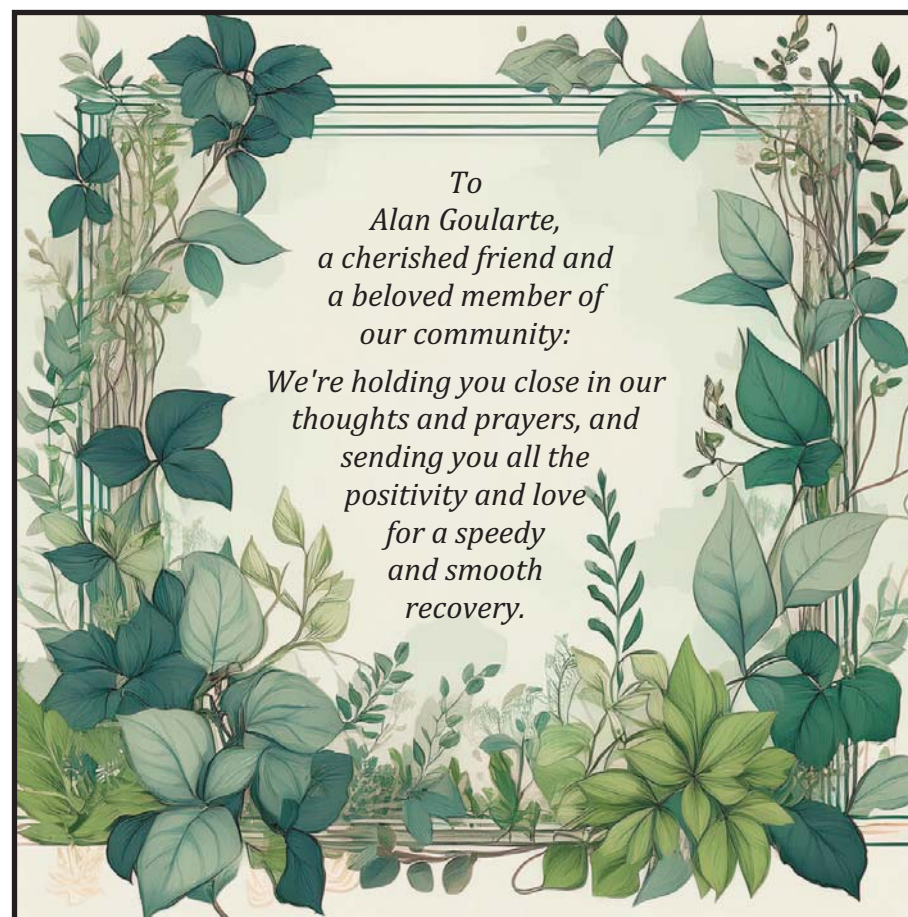
The page includes tools to help you find rebates and incentives for switching to all-electric appliances like heat pumps and water heaters. You'll also find resources to connect with contractors and explore programs offering financial support for building electrification.

Drive Electric and Save Big If you're considering an EV, the page highlights resources to help you find rebates, compare models, and locate charging stations. There's guidance for residents and businesses on installing EV chargers, with options for financial assistance.

Easy access

This new electrification page makes it easy to access local, state, and federal programs designed to save you money and reduce your carbon footprint. Visit www.sanbenitocountyca.gov/services/environment-sustainability/energy to learn more and start your journey toward a greener future.

For more information about resources to help your business go green or make the transition to electric appliances and transportation, contact Bryan Garcia at bgarcia@environmentalin.com. ■



To
Alan Goularte,
a cherished friend and
a beloved member of
our community:

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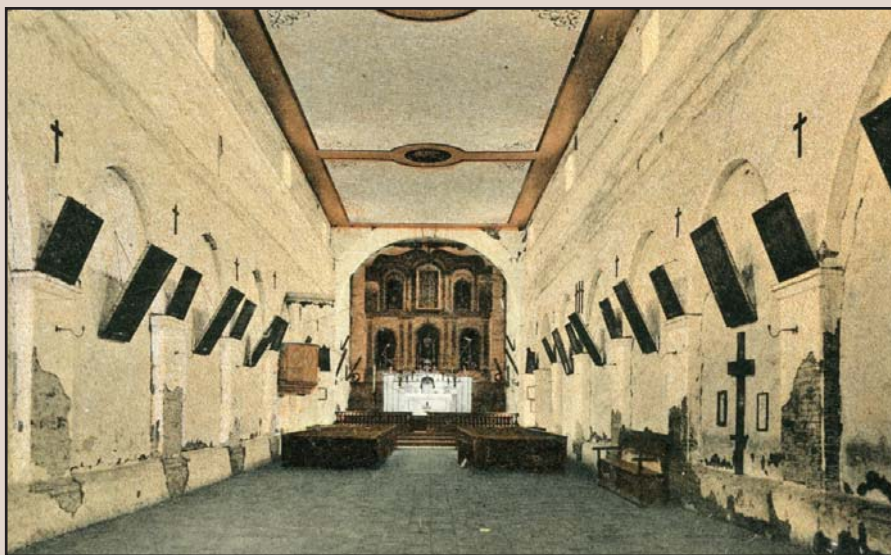
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and *Mission Village Voice* (2014 to-date). www.sanjuanbautistaca.com/art-galleries.



Above left: THEN - Mission interior with arches filled in. Photo credit: SJBHS. Above right: NOW - Mission interior as it appears today. Photo credit: Studio Lovejoy

Then... and Now: A mission possible?

By Wanda Guibert,
San Juan Bautista Historical Society

Beautiful Mission San Juan Bautista, 15th in the chain of Alta California missions, has a number of distinctive character-defining features. Almost since construction was completed in 1812, Mission San Juan Bautista has been known as the "Mission of Music," possibly because of its famed barrel organ built in London around 1737 as well as the fact that Father Pedro Estévan Tápis, composer and musician, joined the mission in 1815. Other unique features are its location on the San Andreas Fault and that this mission boasts the only three-aisle church

among all of the missions. With three naves or aisles, it became the widest of all the mission churches. However, it did not always have three aisles. There is a variety of speculation as to why the arches separating the aisles were filled in, making a single-aisle church. The account rendered by Fr. Zephyrin Engelhardt, O.F.M., known as the "Father of Mission History" who compiled extensive histories of the twenty-one California missions, seems the most authoritative. Engelhardt's work is today considered the standard authority regarding California mission history.

In 1931 Fr. Engelhardt published "Mis-

sion San Juan Bautista: A School of Church Music," in which he addresses the three naves (defined as the place in the church building for the congregation), and their closure included below.

"The year 1809 stands out prominently...The three naves of the temple of Mission San Juan Bautista were also completed this year...The two side naves, mentioned for the first time, must have been an afterthought; for we know that the church for which the cornerstone was blessed and laid measured but ten varas [an old Spanish unit of length, which equals approximately thirty-three and one-third inches in width]. However, in consequence of the change, this Mission ever after could boast of possessing the only church building having three naves, and of being the widest of all the Mission churches in California."

Fr. Englehardt then refers to ..."an inventory drawn up on May 9, 1835, by the two 'comisionados de secularizacion'" which was countersigned by the Rev. Fr. José Antonio Anzar, O.F.M. Here we learn more about how the three naves downsized to one single aisle.

"In the course of time the outer walls of the side aisles or naves, owing to excessive moisture in the ground, became unsafe and eventually collapsed. As the centre nave, due to the decrease of the Indian population, proved roomy, the space between the pillars was filled up with adobe bricks to the width of the pillars, and thus formed a solid wall. When this change took place, we have been unable to discover. It was fortunate, however, because the earthquake of



During 1976 restoration. Photo credit: Smaus, SJBHS.

1906 shattered the pillars completely. Thereafter the arches and the roof rested securely on the adobe bricks filled in between the pillars." And so the single, center nave remained until a major restoration was completed in 1976.

In 1975-1976, the mission underwent restoration and reconstruction which included re-opening the church's side aisles and returning the church to its original three-aisle design; adding a two-tiered campanario with openings for three bells; restoring the kitchen area; adding a museum with artifacts from the mission's history, and recreating the painted interior elements of the church based on fragments of the original paint scheme.

In November 2015, the Mission San Juan Bautista Preservation Fund became a registered 501(c)3 tax deductible organization to raise funds to strengthen, preserve and conserve the architectural and structural integrity of the historical property, the artifacts, and the Mission experience for future generations to enjoy as a part of the rich history of the Mission Period and its place in California history. In 2022, the Mis-



Mission post 1906.



Above: Opening the arches in 1976. Above right: During 1976 restoration. Photo credit: Smaus, SJBHS.



During 2022 restoration. Photo credit: Jewel Gentry

sion completed an emergency roof and wall restoration. Note the before, during and after photos of that restoration.

In 2023 the National Parks Service awarded a \$750,000 Saving America's Treasures matching grant to the non-profit. When the grant is matched, the \$1.5 million total will be used for seismic strengthening and adjacent roof repair of the Mission church's two-story Principal Façade—its front entrance, the baptistry, and the choir loft—the most seismically vulnera-

ble section of the Mission church. Please visit <https://savemissionsjb.org> to learn more and listen to a short video in which Janet Leigh of Vertigo fame discusses the restoration.

From closing off the two side aisles to restoring the original three to a thorough restoration almost 50 years ago to the recent emergency repairs, preserving historic resources such as this mission -- constructed of fired adobe brick -- is an ongoing process in keeping the past present. ■



Before 2022 restoration of north facade of Mission. Credit: Mission SJB



After 2022 restoration of north facade of Mission. Photo credit: Jewel Gentry



ARTS

Art unites the community

By San Benito County Arts Council

Art has always had a unique ability to unite people. During difficult times, whether that be through personal struggles, societal upheavals, or global crises, art is a powerful tool to share our common experiences. It creates space for collective expression, where individuals can find comfort in knowing they are not alone. Art transcends boundaries; cultural, political, and personal, offering a universal language that speaks directly to the human experience.



In bringing creatives together through our Artist Roundtable Series in Hollister and San Juan Bautista, we have discovered powerful insights into the current challenges and opportunities facing artists in our community, as well as key insights into how we can work together more collaboratively. Artists see their role and impact in revitalizing our downtowns, increasing tourism and economic impact, building awareness of local assets, contributing positively to students' education and creating new relationships and partnerships. They also see a lot of opportunity to collaborate on programs, promote each other's events, showcase local talent and attract new funding to our region. In San Juan Bautista, examples of artists working together can be seen in the First Friday events at Vertigo and the Luna Gallery, "Arts in the Parks" with the SJB Library and through last summer's "Play Music on the Porch Day." And more is on the way!

We have also discovered that these artists' work is more than just a creative adventure...for many, it is a lifeline, it is sustenance. It bridges divides and offers a sense of purpose and healing in the face of adversity. Through art, people find the strength to endure and the courage to unite.

To learn more about our Artist Roundtable series, please visit www.sanbenitoarts.org. ■

MISSION VILLAGE VOICE | FEBRUARY 2025

Calendar

SATURDAY FEBRUARY 1

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.regology.com

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

FREE DRAWING CLASS WITH JOHN ROBROCK - ADULTS & TEENS 2pm. Luna Gallery, 107 B The Alameda, SJB. Lunagallery.art

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

SUNDAY FEBRUARY 2

FIGURE DRAWING COLLECTIVE 2-5pm. Intermediate & advanced artists. CuraContemporary.com Morgan Hill.

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

1st Sunday

THURSDAY FEBRUARY 6

POETRY OUT LOUD 6pm. Art Depot 35 5th St., Hollister. Watch local high school students participate in a live poetry recitation contest. Sanbenitoarts.org

FRIDAY FEBRUARY 7

FLORAL FIRST FRIDAY NIGHT MARKET @ VERTIGO & LUNA GALLERY SJB 5-9pm. Local vendors, wine tasting, Vinyl DJ, Hapa Bros. VertigoCoffeeRoasters.com, San Juan Bautista. LunaGallerySJB.com

SYLVIA VALENTINE ARTIST POP-UP 5-9pm. Luna Gallery, San Juan Bautista Lunagallery.art

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

KARAOKE @ DAISY'S SALOON - SAN JUAN BAUTISTA 9:00 pm. Daisy's Saloon San Juan Bautista.

SATURDAY FEBRUARY 8

CARDS FOR YOUR VALENTINE KID'S WORKSHOP 11am-1pm. FREE children's workshop. CuraContemporary.com Morgan Hill.



Saturday, February 8

CARDS FOR YOUR VALENTINE KID'S WORKSHOP 11am-1pm. FREE children's workshop. CuraContemporary.com Morgan Hill.



Friday, February 14

VALENTINES DINNER DANCE - SAN JUAN BAUTISTA Doors 5:30 Dinner 6pm. SJB Fiesta Chicken BBQ, Silent Auction, Photo Booth & Dancing to Rockin Country Spit N Mud. SJB Community Hall. Call 831.801.3490 Tickets @ [Eventbrite](http://Eventbrite.com).

FRIENDS OF THE SBC FREE LIBRARY USED BOOKSALE 9-11:30am. Behind the Hollister Library, weather permitting. Refreshments served. Dog-friendly. Book/vinyl donations accepted. 2nd Saturday of every month.

SUNDAY FEBRUARY 9

HEARTS & KISSES VALENTINES FUN FEST 10am-5pm. 310 Third St., San Juan Bautista

AROMAS COMMUNITY MARKET 9:30am-1pm. Aromas Grange. Aromasgrange.org

THURSDAY FEBRUARY 13

FOR THE LOVE OF ART 5:30-7:30pm. Valentine inspired artist networking event. Porter Building, 280 Main St., Watsonville.

FRIDAY FEBRUARY 14

VALENTINES DINNER DANCE - SAN JUAN BAUTISTA Doors 5:30 Dinner 6pm. SJB Fiesta Chicken BBQ, Silent Auction, Photo Booth & Dancing to Rockin Country Spit N Mud. SJB Community Hall. Call 831.801.3490 Tickets @ [Eventbrite](http://Eventbrite.com).

RANDY TRAVIS Goldenstatetheatre.com Monterey

SATURDAY FEBRUARY 15

AMY GRANT Goldenstatetheatre.com Monterey

OLD FASHIONED CRAB CRACK DINNER & DANCE Doors 5:30pm. Live Music by Johnny Sanchez & The Sake Bombs. San Benito County Fair Grounds Pavillion. Tickets @ Hollisterexchangeclub.com or www.crabcrack.com

ART RECEPTION WITH MUSIC BY "THE DEAD COWBOYS" 5-7pm. Acoustic show and art exhibit. LunaGallery.art San Juan Bautista

AN EVENING OF JAZZ VALENTINE'S PARTY 6-9pm. Delicious food, drinks & music! CuraContemporary.com Morgan Hill.

TRUE ROMANCE MAKERS MARKET 2-6pm. Posada Hotel artsychicaboutique.bigcartel.com

SATURDAY FEBRUARY 15 - SUNDAY FEBRUARY 16

BRAHMS SYMPONY NO.1 Carmel Sunset Center. Sunsetcenter.org

SUNDAY FEBRUARY 16

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

SMOTE THIS A COMEDY Sandboxsandcity.com

WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 19

MIKE MARSHALL & CHORO FAMOSO The finest Brazilian musicians on guitar, percussion & clarinet. Sandboxsandcity.com

EVIL WOMAN: AN AMERICAN ELO-A MULTIMEDIA CONCERT CELEBRATING THE ELECTRIC LIGHT ORCHESTRA Goldenstatetheatre.com Monterey

FRIDAY FEBRUARY 21

BEER PONG TOURNAMENT WITH DJ JAZZY C @ DAISY'S SALOON-SAN JUAN BAUTISTA 9:30 pm. \$10/team of 2. Winners get a cash prize & Daisys merch. Daisy's Saloon San Juan Bautista.

SATURDAY FEBRUARY 22

SPRING DAFFODIL IN WATERCOLOR WORKSHOP 1-4pm. Art Depot, 35 5th St., Suite D Hollister. Sanbenitoarts.com.eventbrite.com

AUCTION/PARTY FOR "LOST AND FOUND: THE ART OF SAN BENITO HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH" 3-6pm. Luna Gallery, 107 B The Alameda, SJB. Lunagallery.art

SJB COMMUNITY CLEAN-UP 9am-12pm. Meet in Luck Park

Continued on next page



Saturday, February 22

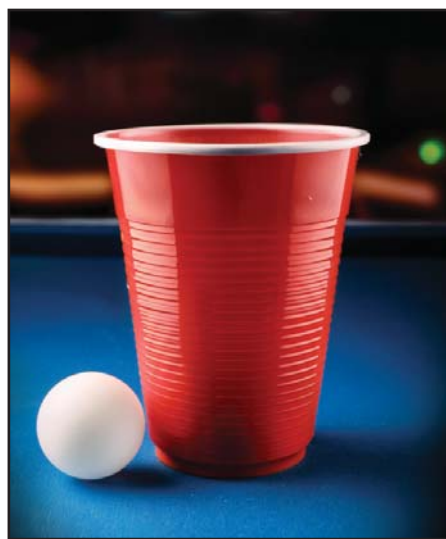
SPRING DAFFODIL IN WATERCOLOR WORKSHOP 1-4pm. Art Depot, 35 5th St., Suite D Hollister. Sanbenitoarts.com.eventbrite.com

MONTEREY COUNTY OFFICE OF EDUCATION ANNUAL JOB FAIR Info jalcones@montereycoe.org

JUILLIARD QUARTET Carmel Sunset Center Sunset-center.org

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



Friday, February 21

BEER PONG TOURNAMENT WITH DJ JAZZY C @ DAISY'S SALOON-SAN JUAN BAUTISTA 9:30 pm. \$10/team of 2. Winners get a cash prize and cool Daisys merch. Daisy's Saloon San Juan Bautista.

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

TUESDAY FEBRUARY 25

AN EVENING WITH LYLE LOVETTE Carmel Sunset Center Sunset Center.org

FRIDAY FEBRUARY 28

FREE DENTAL SCREENINGS & FLOURIDE TREATMENT FOR CHILDREN! 3-7pm. San Benito Health Foundation, 351 Felice Dr., Hollister. Sanbenito-health.org Or 831.637.5306

COMMUNITY RESOURCE FAIR 1-4pm. The Pauline Valdivia Community Center, Hollister. WWWjdase-niors.org or 831.637.9275

KALANI PE'A Carmel Sunset Center Sunsetcenter.org

KARAOKE @ DAISY'S SALOON - SAN JUAN BAUTISTA 9:00 pm. Daisy's Saloon San Juan Bautista.

Every week

TUESDAYS

SENIOR DANCE FOR FITNESS CLASS 10:45-11:30am. SJB Community Hall.

WEDNESDAYS

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

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

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

BASIC POTTERY TECHNIQUES SERIES 10-11:30am. FREE for Seniors. Register @ Mary Velasco Sellen Senior Center @ 12pm Wednesday luncheons @ Casa Maria.

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

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

THURSDAYS

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

FRIDAYS

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

SATURDAYS

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

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

SUNDAYS

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

Save the Date

FRIDAY MARCH 14

NDGW MONTHLY PEDRO PARTY 1pm. \$10 203 4th Street, San Juan Bautista.

SATURDAY MARCH 15

OPENING RECEPTION "BACKYARD DREAMS"-ARTIST SAMANTHA BULLER SOLO EXHIBIT 4-6pm. FREE and open to the public 2/28 - 4/27. CuraContemporary.com Morgan Hill.

SATURDAY MARCH 15

KIRTI BASSENDINE "CONTEMPORARY INDIGENOUS VOICES OF CALIFORNIA'S SOUTH COAST RANGE" 4-6pm. Luna Gallery, San Juan Bautista. Lunagallery.art

SATURDAY MARCH 22 -

SUNDAY MARCH 23

INDOOR PASTEL LANDSCAPE WITH CLARK MITCHELL 9:30am-4:30pm. CuraContemporary.com Morgan Hill.

SATURDAY MARCH 29 -

SUNDAY MARCH 30

SJB ARTS & CRAFTS FESTIVAL DOWNTOWN SJB Williamsld.com



Saturday, February 22

SJB COMMUNITY CLEAN-UP 9am-12pm. Meet in Luck Park

MISSION VILLAGE VOICE Q&A

Frances Cooper, life-journeyer

By Wanda Guibert & Anne Caetano

Over the past few winters, you may have seen a petite woman with short, wispy white hair walking briskly around San Juan Bautista. If you happen to stop and say Hello, you are immediately engaged by her cheerful smile and charming Scottish brogue (think of a five-foot tall, gracious Mrs. Doubtfire). Mission Village Voice recently had a delightful chat with Frances Cooper about what she refers to as her “journey through life.”

MVV: Where were you born?

FC: I was born in Coatbridge, Scotland. I love Scotland. My 2 daughters took me there for my 86th birthday last year, and I got to spend my birthday in the little town I was born in. I saw Scotland like I had never seen it before.

I was a young child during WWII. My parents were wonderful, and I love my family so much. We were all born in a one-bedroom tenement building, with no electricity. We didn't have the things that kids have now. Like I always say, I'm living in a new world I don't understand. Mum had to take all her 5 children under the age of 6 to the air raid shelter, where we sat on benches and wore little gas masks. My youngest brother was born 6 years later.



At 24 I immigrated to Canada, where I met Bill, my husband. I loved him very much. I brought up his 3 children, and together we were blessed with 2, Elizabeth and Marion. It wasn't easy, but we did it. We lived in Ontario, and we built our retirement house in Newfoundland. It was overlooking the ocean. We actually built it ourselves.

You winter in SJB with your daughter Marion Torres and her family. How do you like it here?

I love it. At first, I wasn't sure, and when I started walking, I thought “There's nobody around.” I call it Main St., but I think it's Third St. I would walk there and sometimes wouldn't see anybody, and then I got to know the people that owned the shops; they would talk to me. Eventually, people passing by started talking to me.

Tell us about the time you fell twice on the same day.

I want to mention a woman's name because she really helped me. Her name is Sharon Gerber, who lives down the street from me. I fell twice on the same day, but I was determined to finish my walk. My hand was bleeding, but I thought, “I'm not going to get down about it; I'm going to continue my walk.”

I was walking up the road, and Sharon was coming down. She called me, and by that time, I was crying. She asked what was wrong, and I told her I fell twice. She notified my daughter and walked me home. I will never forget her.

No broken bones?

My daughter took me to the ER, and they



said there were no broken bones. The next day, I went on a walk-a-thon with my granddaughter. I was all excited about it and did it, but when I got home, I really suffered. I had a CAT scan, and they said, “You have 4 broken ribs.” I was in so much pain.

I call this my journey through life, and a lot of things have happened on my journey. My 2 daughters and their husbands have been so good to me. I live on my own in British Columbia, but my daughter lives very close to me and takes care of me. I've got great kids; I've got the best.

What got you into walking?

My daughter Elizabeth was getting married, and I wanted to lose weight. I started to walk—I had 1 year to do it—and I went down to 112 pounds from 165.5.

I usually walk twice a day. If I leave too late in the afternoon, I walk to the school and back. If I leave early, I'll walk twice a day. When I'm home in British Columbia, I walk up 640 stairs every day.

When we were in Scotland for my 86th birthday, we did a day trip to Paris. It was during Fashion Week so there was a lot of traffic, and we were late for the train. I ran to the train in Paris, and we made it.

Do you walk the steep hill to the water tower?

Yes, I go right up to the tower. The homeowners know me now, and they talk to me. A few weeks ago, I had a bad fall. This young guy came—I'll never forget him, his name is Josiah, but they call him Joseph. He lives at the end of Washington Street.

He said, “Can I lift you up?” I remember him crossing the road to get help. A woman—I

don't know her name—came to help too, and she gave us clean cloths for my head. Joseph found my glasses because they had blown off my head. He stayed with me until Marion and Alfredo came. They took me to the hospital because I had a nasty gash.

There are a lot of wonderful people in San Juan.

I've met so many neighbors. My daughter had a little surprise party for me a couple of years ago when I was leaving after the winter. She invited all the people I had told her about, and everyone showed up. It was so nice.

I got to know Chris and Angie, who live by the post office; Yolanda, my daughter's neighbor; Tom and Dee who ride their bikes; Sam and Ray on Sixth St. I met Joe, and Joe is amazing; he lives on Seventh St., and he's 93. And his daughter lives on the same street. Also, Aida and Jim around the corner had a surprise birthday party for me one year. And Mary and Sharon who live on the same street were there.

And young Rachel Gorelik invited me to her wedding. I came back to San Juan early so we could go. I met her father Alex first and then her brother, and they started to talk to me. Then Alex said to me, “Frances, my wife wants to meet you,” and soon after I met Marta Gorelik.

Rachel Gorelik married Eli Monson, and we had a fantastic time. There were all different kinds of people from different countries and from different religions. Oh, we danced all night. I love their family.

There are wonderful people in your little town. At first, I felt there was nothing here. Then I realized I've met beautiful people. I could never mention them all. ■



ARTS UPDATE

Expanding the search

Still seeking Mr. Robrock's SBHS students to reunite them with their artwork

In December, 2024, John Robrock, MFA, began a search for some of his former students in order to return their artwork which they had forgotten to take home from school. In 2018, he retired after 17 years of teaching drawing and painting at San Benito High School (now called Hollister High). He found several boxes in his archives with student drawings and paintings mixed in with his teaching demonstration drawings.

The January 2025 edition of the Mission Village Voice published a list of 70 students which got picked up on social media. People began contacting him immediately from distant states as well as locally, to arrange for mailing or local pickup.

By January 16, he had returned 43 artworks to 27 students in New Mexico, Texas,



As of publication, 31 artists have been found, 45 artworks returned (including 1 with illegible signature), and 12 donated to the auction on Feb. 22.

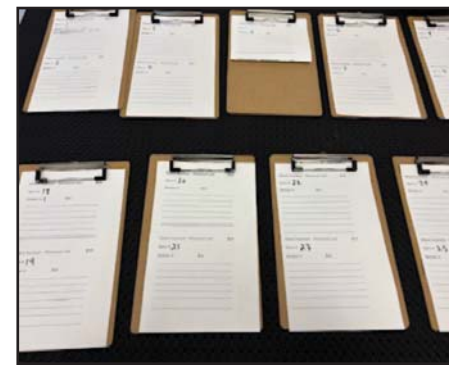
Oregon, and around California.

Five artists offered to donate their works to an exhibit (January 18 to February 23) and fundraiser at the Luna Gallery and Eco-Art Studio at 107 B The Alameda in San Juan Bautista. An auction of unsigned/unclaimed and donated artworks will be held February 22 from 3-6 pm as a benefit for art education activities.

Some students asked to see the artworks with illegible signatures or no signature, in case they could recognize their work. Mr. Robrock posted photos of those artworks on his website <https://johnrobrock.com/>, together with a list of the artists who still

haven't been found.

The following names are in addition to



those posted in the January MVV: Lisa Adamson, Kristin Adamson, Vicky Baitres, William Blasingame, Michael Canales, Aaron Cervantes, Alexandra Chavez, Karen Cruz, Cathy Domingues, Diana Fonseca, Vivian Guillen, Ashley Kim, Mikayla Koehn, Areli Munoz, Marcus Muro, Nissa Noble, Jamie O'Brian, Jesus Ortiz, Alyssa B. Paroche, Crystal Pereira, Angel Perez, Lauren Pesche, Jose Ramirez, Kristen Ramirez, Jose Salazar, J Shingals, and Stephanie Underwood.

Artists, and/or anyone who knows them, please contact Mr. Robrock at mrrobrockmfa@gmail.com or voicemail at 831-630-1736. ■

SBALT NEWS

What are wetlands?

By Candy Coleman
SBALT PR/Events Committee Member

Oh, the joy of jumping in rain puddles and swimming in mountain lakes. We are drawn to wet areas, perhaps because water is necessary for our survival. Wetlands are unique ecosystems where water saturates the soil, either seasonally or year-round. Wetlands are most common in floodplains, along rivers and streams, and in other low-lying areas where groundwater or precipitation sufficiently saturates the soil.

Wetlands are among the most productive habitats on Earth. They provide shelter and nursery areas for fish and shellfish, wintering grounds for migrating birds, and habitats for countless other species, from microbes to mammals. These ecosystems also play a vital role in water purification, flood control, and carbon storage.

Over the past 300 years, however, approximately 87% of the world's wetlands have been lost, with much of this decline occurring after 1900. The interconnectedness of wetlands is an example of the "butterfly effect," where small changes in one part of

San Benito Agricultural



an ecosystem can ripple outward, influencing distant systems. For instance, wetland loss can have cascading effects on global biodiversity and climate regulation.

Soap Lake Ranch, a perennial wetland located adjacent to Highway 152 on a working cattle ranch, is a prime example of the vital role wetlands play. During winter, Soap Lake, aka San Felipe Lake, expands into a large wetland that modulates flooding in the lower Pajaro River while providing an essential stopover for migrating waterfowl, including ducks, geese, and white pelicans. Unfortunately, structures have been built within this flood zone, and many of our community suffer enormous losses during the wet winters when the wetland expands beyond the natural areas into residential and commercial properties. SBALT is working with other organizations to set aside land



During winter, Soap Lake expands into a large wetland that modulates flooding in the lower Pajaro River, while providing an essential stopover for migrating waterfowl.

along the Pajaro River that can absorb water that is currently causing harmful flooding.

This spring, SBALT is partnering with the owners of Soap Lake Ranch to host a special event. For one day, the public will have access to this privately owned ranch to experience its natural beauty and learn about its importance to the Indigenous and European people. Visitors will have the opportunity to birdwatch during the spring migration and

learn how wetlands contribute to biodiversity and ecosystem health.

Wetlands are treasures worth protecting. They support vibrant ecosystems, offer recreational opportunities, and connect us to the broader natural world. We look forward to exploring Soap Lake with you during its seasonal transformation. Visit our website for more information www.sanbenitolandtrust.org. ■

DEARLY DENOTED

The Lovers of Cluj-Napoca

When Archaeologists in Cluj-Napoca, Romania were excavating a 15th century monastery they didn't expect to find the grave of a young couple buried hand in hand.

The male skeleton had a broken sternum from an injury that likely killed him, while the female's skeleton was intact suggesting she died from a heart attack or stroke. The romantic theory is that she was so overcome with grief from her lover's death that she couldn't go on much longer. ■

Excerpt credit: <https://blog.tukios.com/romantic-gravesites>

Image: Image: Wikipedia Commons Adrian Rusu and Institute of Archaeology and Art History



HOME COPROLITES NEWS VIDEOS ABOUT SHOP CONTACT US

World Famous Dinosaur Poop Museum & Gift Shop

RECORD HOLDER

WHAT'S A POOZEUM?!

The Poozeum is an extraordinary FREE museum and gift shop located in the heart of Williams, Arizona - The Gateway to the Grand Canyon! Visitors will immerse themselves in the fascinating world of coprolites, or fossilized poop, while indulging in an experience that goes beyond the ordinary - it's instructive entertainment at its finest, and is suitable for visitors of all ages.

Marvel at the sheer magnitude of thousands of real fossilized feces, including the eye-watering huge "Barium" - the largest ever discovered! Snap up unforgettable selfies next to a 4-foot-wide T-Rex dinosaur poop replica, explore coprolite wonders through vibrant carnival banners, and be awestruck by "The Stinker" - a bronze masterpiece capturing the whimsy of a thoughtful T-Rex perched on a toilet.

The Poozeum - World Famous Dinosaur Poop Museum & Gift Shop

VUE A LA LOO

Poozeum

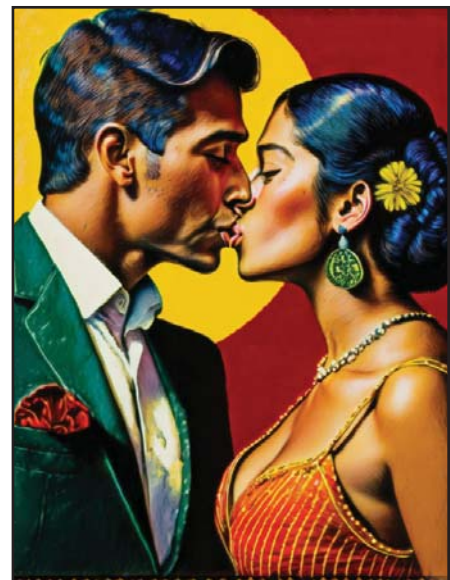
The Poozeum is an extraordinary FREE museum and gift shop located in the heart of Williams, Arizona - "The Gateway to the Grand Canyon!" Visitors can immerse themselves in the fascinating world of coprolites, or fossilized poop, while indulging in an experience that goes beyond the ordinary. It's instructive entertainment at its finest, and is suitable for visitors of all ages. Visit <https://poozeum.com>. ■

id-i-om

El amor es ciego, pero los vecinos no

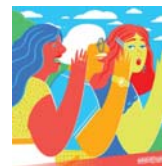
Translation from Spanish: *Love is blind, but not the neighbors.*

This saying plays on the idea that when people are in love, they often overlook flaws or faults in their partner because of their emotional attachment — hence, "love is blind." However, the "neighbors" can clearly see those same flaws because they're not emotionally involved. It suggests that others may have a clearer perspective on the situation, while love sometimes clouds judgment. It's a bit humorous, implying that people in love can be oblivious to things everyone else notices! ■



Normal Gossip

Normal Gossip delivers juicy, strange, funny, and utterly banal gossip about people you'll never know and never meet. Host Rachelle Hampton discusses reader-submitted comedic gossip with guests, diving into the lives and decisions of complete strangers. The second-hand truth really is stranger than fiction. Produced by Se'era Spragley Ricks. Created by Kelsey McKinney and Alex Sujong Laughlin. Show art by Tara Jacoby.



The Allusionist

The Allusionist is a podcast about language by Helen Zaltzman. If you are interested in words, this witty but accessible show will delight you as it charts the evolution of slang, explains euphemisms, and generally celebrates language.



According to *The Guardian*, "the show is filled with good humor and a great deal of levity to make one of the funniest and educational podcasts around."



Flush Toilet Finder

Flush Toilet Finder is the quickest, simplest way of finding a public bathroom or restroom. Simply open the app and it will display the nearest toilets to you. It's free, no in-app purchases and has over 200,000 bathrooms in its database! Find which WC's have disabled access, a fee for usage or require a key; get immediate directions on how to locate them. When you're walking around and need the bathroom, this app will find you a public restroom in minutes.



Flamingo Cards

This game is designed to spark convos that will leave you on the edge of your seat, craving for more! Forget the boring, bland, and weird small talk and introduce flamingo cards to your daily life. The game is filled with cards that will create long-life memories for you and your friends. We created this game because no other game is as interesting and speaks for the modern conversational experience like flamingo cards does.



GOING POSTAL

Love (2025) Forever

Honoring the theme of love with universal symbols and imagery, the Postal Service has released the latest in its popular Love series stamps, featuring the work of iconic graphic artist Keith Haring.

The Love (2025) Forever stamp features an untitled 1985 drawing by Haring that includes two moving figures reaching toward a red heart. It was a theme Haring returned to throughout his career, making several variations, each in his signature style.

"The non-specificity of the figures allows a variety of people to see themselves in this stamp," said Antonio Alcalá, an art director for USPS who selected Haring's work for the stamp design. "Partners getting married, celebrating an anniversary, siblings sending each other a heartfelt greeting, or even



party planners setting a positive tone for their event."

Haring's drawing suggests the figures are dancing in the presence of love. The joyful image allows the viewer to project their own meaning of love in the context of their choosing. The words "FOREVER" and "USA" are separated by a dot and written in black.

The release is a continuation of the popular Love series introduced in 1973 and is now available at Post Office locations nationwide and online at the Postal Store at usps.com/shopstamps.

The Love (2025) stamps will be issued in panes of 20. Forever stamps are always equal in value to the current First-Class Mail 1-ounce price.

Customers may purchase stamps and other philatelic products through the Postal Store at usps.com/shopstamps, by calling 844-737-7826, by mail through USA Philatelic or at Post Office locations nationwide. ■

ARTS

'Benkyodo: The Last Manju Shop in J-Town' film has local roots

Co-directed by San Juan Bautista native Akira Boch

Ricky and Bobby Okamura, the current owners of Benkyodo mochi shop, make a difficult decision to close their family business in the documentary film "Benkyodo: The Last Manju Shop in J-Town." The Japanese pastry shop, a landmark for Japanese Americans and Asian Americans in the Bay Area, is one of two mochi shops currently open in the San Francisco Bay Area.

Currently 115 years old, the business has endured the anti-Asian laws of the early 20th century, Japanese incarceration, redevelopment of the 1960s, and San Francisco's notorious high costs of living. The unsurmountable economic pressure, coupled with the brothers' desire to preserve their Japanese heritage, family business, and community space, create an age-old conflict many children of diaspora face—preserving their culture or submitting to the economic forces of racial capitalism.

The film was directed by San Juan Bautista native Akira Boch and Tadashi Nakamura, the former and current directors of JANM's Frank H. Watase Media Arts Center. ■

Credit: The National Japanese American Museum website: <https://www.janm.org>



SJB native Akira Boch introducing his documentary in January 2025 at the JACL Hall in San Juan Bautista.



Modern signage



"The Last Manju Shop in J-town." An early photo of 115-year-old Benkyodo.

HONORING OUR BEST FRIENDS

Remembering Tedi

In loving memory of Ms. Tedi, the Princess of Bear's Hideaway, (also known affectionally as J-Lo Butt - if you know, you know!)

Tedi crossed the rainbow bridge peacefully on December 24th, 2024 after a long life of fourteen years, where she was always keeping a close eye on and protecting her "Mom" Lori Wilson.

Tedi was most happy when she could visit with her people, the customers of Bear's and was always up for a good butt scratch, "guarding" the front door, and soliciting treats from everyone!

The passing of a loyal companion is never easy, and Tedi now joins her "Brother" Bear (the namesake of Bear's Hideaway) and "Sir Clyde" (the best bar cat ever) and we know they all will be watching over everyone that enjoys stopping in to relax and socialize.



Rest peacefully beautiful Princess; we will all take comfort in the loving memories created while you were with us, and we raise a glass in your honor, Cheers!

Remembering Roxie

Roxie was well known in the community of SJB. She was the greeter at Sweet Pea Antiques. She loved all animals and humans and was very kind. Roxie never entered a bar or restaurant she didn't like. She is off to meet her best friend Jared now. Roxie will be deeply missed. ■

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

An 'unexpected pleasure'

"Hi! I picked up the January 2025 issue at Pizza Factory on a quick overnight stay at Hacienda de Leal. I'm impressed with the liveliness with which the various events and communities are portrayed. I don't know anybody in the area, but felt welcomed and interested after reading about Mike Fisher's journey to his current role, Phil Marquez' amazing life, and the agricultural offerings in the area. Thank you for the unexpected pleasure in this glimpse of San Benito County!"

— Cathy Heppel

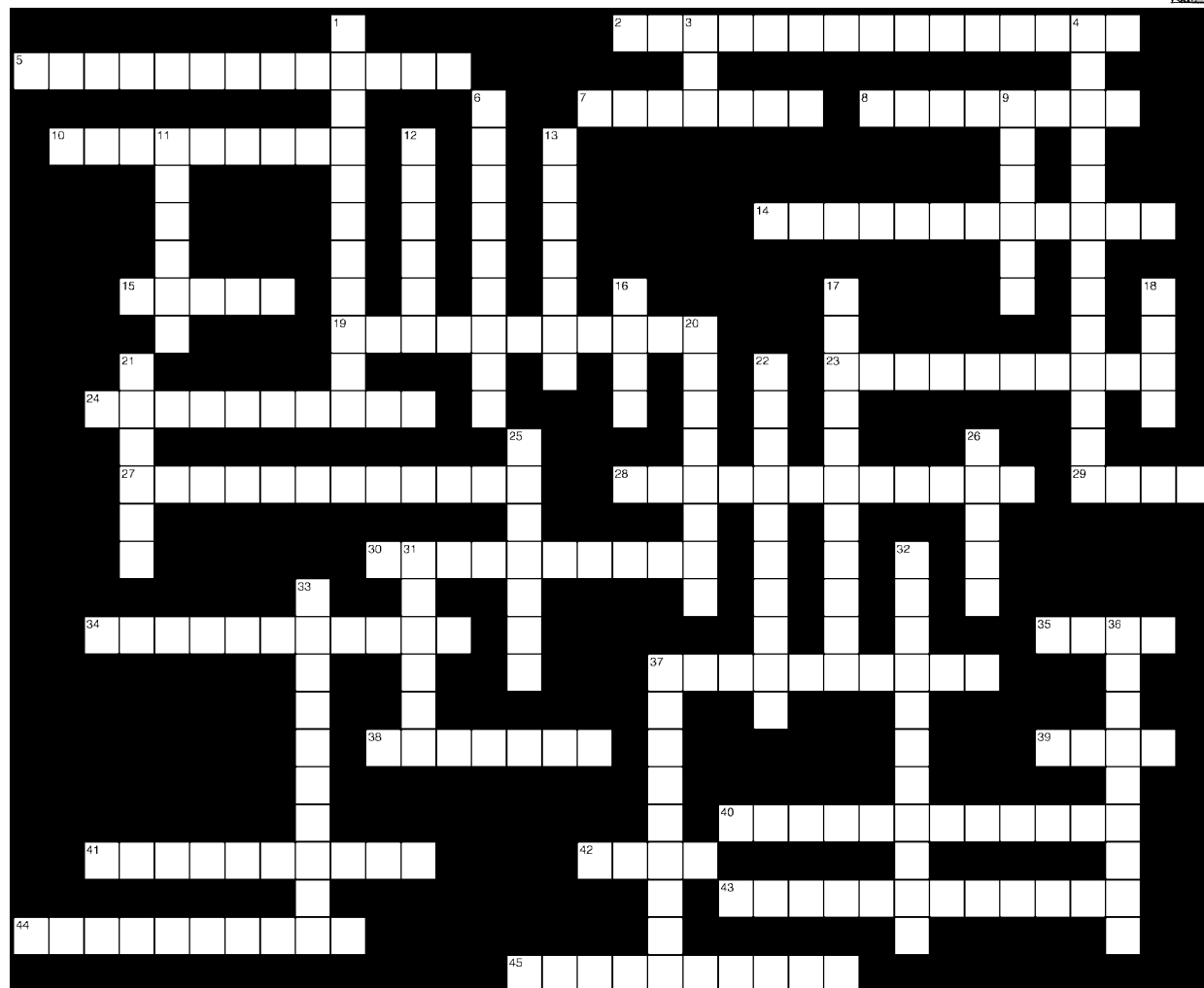
Let us hear from you! Get in touch via our website at missionvillagevoice.com, or email editor Anne Caetano at acaetano@missionvillagevoice.com.



Mission Village **VOICE** PASTIMES



CROSSWORD DATE YOURSELF by Carlinka



ACROSS

- 2 +Dug up bodies for medical students
5 + Used to revive fainting women
7 +Runs articles to all sections of a newspaper
8 +How gentlemen defended their honor
10 +Human alarm clock w/ pea shooter or stick
14 +Using leeches for this purpose
15 Full of spice
19 +Books your trip from start to finish
23 +Ladies in an office tiptapping away
24 +A cage undergarment
27 +No salesmen need lug these around
28 +Removed the ash and soot
29 Daybreak

- 30 +Women astride a horse rode this way
34 +They spun the hour and minute hands
35 Question for a blood donor
37 +Arranges words/letters for printing
38 +For fountain pens or quills
39 When bats come out
40 +Measured your head to gauge intelligence
41 +Superman can no longer change in one
42 Doesn't account for much
43 +Dirty clothes fall through
44 +Small freight elevator to kitchen
45 +Used the currents for riding sawn trees
- DOWN**
1 + Person responsible for

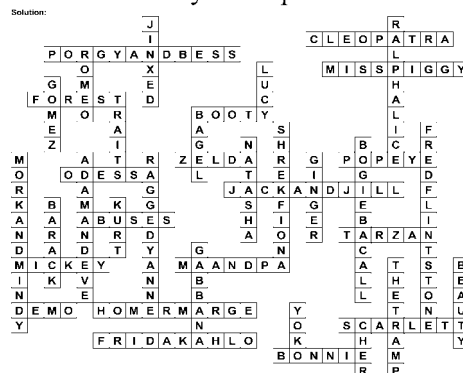
- gas or candle light
3 Pig's home
4 +Worn like suspenders to advertise
6 + They cleared the streets of rodents for money
9 + They read to employees for entertainment
11 +Item to hold in your torso
12 Port city in Ukraine
13 +Delivers cold bottles to your door
16 Basil or rosemary
17 +Contains #'s, letters and holes to dial
18 Ring above an angel
20 +Magazine for program listings
21 +Metrocards replaced these
22 +Metal spinners in subways?

- 25 +Melted blotch on envelope
26 Record holder?
31 +Cut and delivered blocks from frozen rivers and lakes
32 +Phone lines lit this up

- 33 +Machine held voice recordings for typists
36 +Picks up your spares and strikes
37 +Yells public pronouncements

Last month's puzzle solution

++Try a Couple++



HOROSCOPE

FEBRUARY 2025 by Hilda De Anza



ARIES

March 21-April 20

February is excellent for a commitment to a project. This is an extremely hard-working period which you invest emotionally in, but you have grit and determination. This is an important time for mental and spiritual discipline.



TAURUS

April 21-May 21

There may be some unexpected changes in your career. This could be attributed to your own restlessness and need to be involved in something exciting or experimental. February is when people are heavily committed to overcoming a long-term challenge.



GEMINI

May 22-June 21

Early February is a turning point as Jupiter moves direct, and this is an extremely favorable time for expanding your horizons. The more people involved in your professional life over the next few months, the better. Try not to get caught up in a dream or over-expand. Recognize limitations.



CANCER

June 22-July 22

Unexpected circumstances can arise which can destabilize you, so be prepared for rapid change. There is a change of focus after February 19th, which is a time when you extract yourself from stressful circumstances and seek to expand your horizons.



LEO

July 23-August 22

This is a very successful period for group ventures. The full moon on February 12th falls in your sign, and this is a high point in relationships. However, as the Sun and Moon clash with Uranus currently, there are likely to be unexpected changes.

VIRGO

August 23-September 22

The focus in February is on changes and opportunities that are arising because of a transformation taking place in your working life. The month starts with encounters with people who are searching for meaning and who may be inclined to sacrifice themselves for a higher cause.

LIBRA

September 23 - October 22

Socially, February is a month which



SCORPIO

October 23-November 21



The significance of this period is that a transition is on the way, which will change the nature of the work you do. This is a very long-term process, but in essence this is about trying to structure your daily working life so that you lead a healthy existence.

SAGITTARIUS

November 22-December 21



There are some developments in your life in February which emphasize family and partnership. The remedy is to put yourself in the position of other people and help in situations which you are better able to handle.

CAPRICORN

December 22-January 20



There are encouraging financial developments as the month of February begins. Over the next few months, there will be a very fluid situation as regards home, family and roots. There will be changes in 2025 & 2026 which will demand a lot of flexibility as new conditions arise dissolving old foundations without providing certainty about new domestic structures.

AQUARIUS

January 21-February 19



You are now entering a hardworking and productive phase in your daily life. But things are changing, and in a few months' time the focus is on mental development through courses and educational initiatives, and on finding companions on your educational journey. It is through developing your talents that the economy finally stabilizes.



PISCES

February 20-April 19

The first week of the month marks a turning point for you. In February you begin to gain traction, and you can see an end point which will put you in a much stronger position. By early June, the tables are turned, and you will find more to celebrate. ■

#THE GOLDEN AGE

'Tis the (Tax) Season!
Free help for seniors

By Leanne Oliveira

"All my wife wanted for Valentine's Day was a little card—American Express."

- Milton Berle

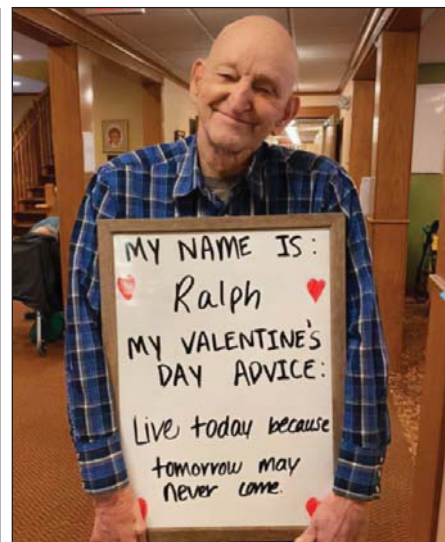
Happy Valentine's Day, Goldens! I love this holiday and take advantage of every pampering opportunity. Celebrate with wellness and self-care activities like a spa day or a hotel staycation, travel up the coast with friends/pets, buy or cook your favorite meal, connect or attend a holiday-themed used book sale with refreshments (2/8@9-11:30AM behind the Hollister Library) featuring large print, audiobooks, and vinyl. Lots of other goodies available this month, folks! Git to Googling.

Good news for Medicare and Medi-Cal recipients: Senior Network Service's Health Insurance Counseling and Advocacy Program is at Hollister's Community Center (330 West Street) every second and fourth Wednesday. Call 831-637-0630 for details

or visit www.seniornetworkservices.org for a list of classes. The Alzheimer's Association (www.Alz.org/CRF) and Del Mar Caregiver (www.delmarcaregiver.org/education) also offer local in-person support groups and workshops. Email me at LeanneO@SeniorsCouncil.org if you would like any of these current programming flyers mailed to your home or inbox.

In SJB, the Mary Velasco Sellen Senior Center (www.mvsseniorcenter.com) is still offering exercise and lunches with guest speakers Wednesdays at Casa Maria at 600 First Street and is planning fun 2025 activities at their Windmill Plaza location. On Thursdays, Jovenes de Antaño (www.jdase-niors.org) serves lunches at the Community Center at 10 San Jose Street.

'Tis the (tax) season! Project SCOUT is a non-profit program assisting seniors in Santa Cruz and San Benito Counties with free tax preparation and enrollments for



Photos courtesy Heritage Woods of Charleston, Illinois

ITINs and CalFresh. If your income is under \$64,000/year, call 831-724-2606.

A great NPR Sunday Story podcast episode recently discussed "Can old age be a new beginning?" Visit www.tinyurl.com/OldAge-NewBeginning. See you next month when I'll be interviewing Corey Schaffer, Program Director of "San Benito County Seniors Con-

nect," the volunteer center that we've needed for years! ■

Leanne Oliveira (MLIS, MA History) coordinates the Aging & Disability Resource Connection (ADRC) for Seniors Council and writes #Bookworm for the MVV. Contact LeanneO@SeniorsCouncil.org or visit www.SanBenitoADRC.org.

Caring for someone with Alzheimer's isn't always easy.
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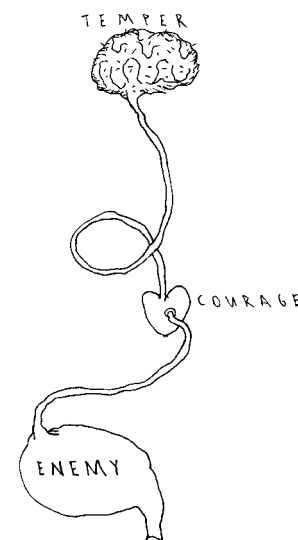
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Connecting People, Creating Change in San Benito County



Visit
www.sbcvolunteers.org

Did you know San Benito County's senior population has surged by 67% since 2010? Many face challenges like social isolation, which poses serious health risks. By volunteering, you can make a meaningful impact in their lives, as well as your own.

While our focus includes supporting seniors, San Benito Connect also highlights opportunities to volunteer in other meaningful ways. For example:

- **Help prepare tax returns for local residents.**
- **Volunteer at the local food bank to support families in need.**
- **Get involved with other community organizations to make an impact across San Benito County.**

www.sbcvolunteers.org | 831-975-2596 ext 204 | coreys@sbcvolunteers.org



Seniors Council and the Community Foundation for San Benito County are partners in local aging initiatives, including San Benito Connect – Neighbor to Neighbor Volunteer Network and the State of California's Local Master Plan for Aging planning and development initiative, working together to address local community aging and disability needs.

Funding for this work has been provided by the California Department of Aging, the State of California, Seniors Council of Santa Cruz & San Benito Counties, and the Community Foundation for San Benito County.