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Tuesday, October 13

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Saturday, October 24

11am–2pm; Taylor Farms Family
Health & Wellness Center
850 5th Street, GONZALES

FREE
FLU
SHOTS



Salinas Valley Memorial Healthcare System

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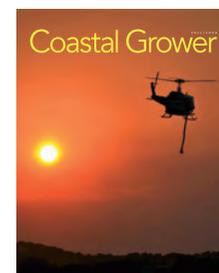
Grilled Stone Fruit, Ricotta Cheese, Saba,
Lemon Oil, Arugula, Toasted Almonds

Community

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in the Library'

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COVER PHOTO

Photo credit: Daniel Gearhart.

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The photograph was taken on the evening of
August 16, 2020, from Berry Road, Salinas, CA.
The helicopter is CAL Fire Copter 406 based on
Highway 25 in San Benito County.

"As best as I could tell, the helicopter had just
drafted water into its tank from the pond at
Indian Springs Road and Murietta Road."



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Furioso

What else do you got 2020? Seriously, what else you got? It was supposed to be 15 days....15 DAYS to flatten the curve. It's now been over six months. Kids are not back in school, people still can't go to church. One of my sons said to me as we got out of the car: "This mask must be yours mom, it has lipstick on it." Not exactly something I thought I would hear in this lifetime.

Don't take my frustration the wrong way. A pandemic is serious and there has been serious loss of life and economic devastation. Those facts are not lost on me. I do think we have unjustifiably lost some civil liberties and at the very least, when this is all over, there better be a massive debrief and analysis. The only thing that could be worse than this pandemic is not learning from it.

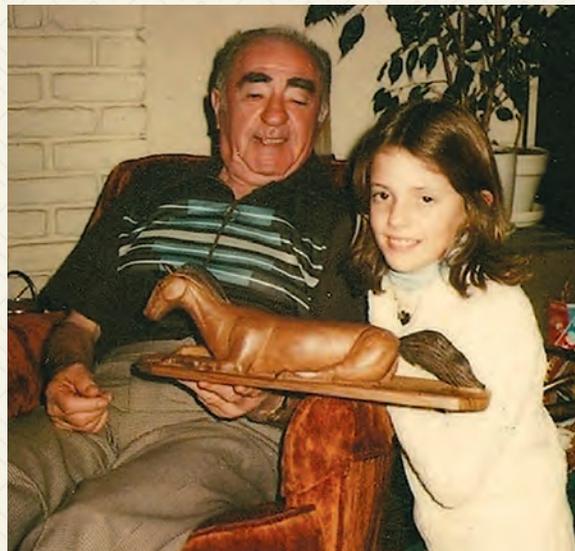
What else you got 2020? You've got wildfires burning across the West, several of which impacted me and my neighborhood personally. It was mid-August and a rare lightning storm ignited fires in Carmel Valley and on the mountain ridges above River Road in Salinas. My son and I watched from our kitchen window as we saw the flume of smoke across the canyons grow and grow and grow.

Our evacuation warning soon became an order. Like many of you I've asked myself: in such a situation what would you grab if you had to leave? Fortunately, we had time to empty the safe of valuable documents and gather family photos, but at the top of my "what would you grab" list was always my Furioso.

Furioso is the name of a wood carving my Italian grandfather (Nonno) made for me when I was 10 years old. I have a life-long love affair with horses. Knowing this, with his own hands, he carved this just for me.

Nonno was a talented and accomplished artist. All of his pieces were done by hand, down in the basement where his workbench stored his chisels, files and sanding paper. He logged how many hours he would spend carving these treasures. From a bust of Ronald Reagan that resided in the late President's Santa Barbara ranch home, to toys and dollhouses for his grandkids, Nonno's attention to detail and appreciation for all things "wood" is one of my fondest memories. I remember Nonno taking us for walks outside our cabin in the Santa Cruz mountains...always stopping to pick up a thick branch or tree stump. He would hold the piece of wood in his hands, caress it and try to envision what he could turn it into. When others saw logs, he saw art.

Our evacuation was not without complications as we were in the process of moving. Much of our belongings



were boxed up and in storage. When the warning went out I tried to dig through the boxes to find Furioso, but to no avail. We had left the neighborhood when the warning became an order. While the smoke was still far away my heart was heavy because Furioso wasn't with me. Sensing this, my son drove back and dug through the boxes one more time. I will never forget the relief I felt when I received his text: I have Furioso.

While I have always been a supporter and defender of first responders, the sense of gratitude and appreciation you feel when it impacts you so personally can become overwhelming. The bravery, skill and resources deployed to fight the fires and save so many animals and homes are heroic. People came from all over the state to protect our neighborhoods and keep them safe. I will forever be grateful.

I'm also proud of my neighbors! We all kept our cool and really came together during this crisis. Technology played a huge role for all of us during this time. From the official text alerts from Cal Fire to the neighborhood forums...it was a source of useful and inspiring information.

So, 2020, what else you got? While it's easy to get down in the dumps with pandemics and politics...it's important to remind yourself there is still a lot of good in this world. Brave first responders, neighbors helping neighbors, smoke clearing to blue skies—and a son that goes back to find Furioso for his mom.

Nonno would be proud.

Jeri

Contributors



Brian Milne

Brian Milne is a former journalist and sustainable agtech advocate who has worked in agtech since 2011. He currently provides business development for Fieldin, which won the 2019 AgFunder Innovation Award in Farm Tech for its smart harvesting and spraying technology. Fieldin is a member of the Western Growers Center for Innovation and Technology in Salinas. To learn more about its smart farming control center for commercial agriculture, visit Fieldin at www.fieldintech.com.



Any Wu

Any Wu is the Founder and Chief Content Director of “From Farms to Incubators,” a multimedia content company that focuses on telling the stories of minority women entrepreneurs in agtech. Wu is a veteran journalist with significant international reporting and teaching experience, having worked at Time magazine, the Rochester Democrat & Chronicle, for the USA Today Network; and has written for The New York Times, HuffPost and Wall Street Journal. She earned her master’s degree in journalism from Columbia University, and speaks fluent Mandarin Chinese.



Alex Mitchell

Alex Mitchell is passionate about customers, John Deere machines, and RDO Equipment Co. As a Consumer Products Sales Account Manager, Alex enjoys educating potential customers on what John Deere equipment can deliver and he especially loves showing them they can turn their dreams of owning a Deere into reality.



Steve McShane

Steve McShane is Owner and General Manager of McShane’s Landscape Supply in Salinas, California. He has a B.S. in Soil Science from Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo and an M.B.A. from Santa Clara. He serves on the Salinas City Council. When not working, he loves hiking, traveling to far reaches of the planet and experimenting with exotic fruits. He can be reached at steve@mcshaneslandscape.com or (831) 455-1369.



Annee Martin

Annee Marin is the co-founder of Kindness Monterey and founder of Sanctuary Vacation Rentals. Her background includes being a therapist, professional chef, inn owner, cookbook author, interior designer, real estate consultant, professional stager and occasional artist — her passion.

Before moving to California in 2004 she was an innkeeper and professional chef for over 20 years and founder of Cooking from the Heart Catering. She co-authored a cookbook with Anne Marie Defreest called “Recipes and Reflections: A Journey Of Food and Friendship from The Inn at the Round Barn Farm.”



Jenna Hanson Abramson

Jenna grew up in Salinas and returned in 2007 after receiving her B.A. in Mass Communications and Journalism from CSU, Fresno. In 2013, she founded the lifestyle website, Mavelle Style, to inspire other food loving, fashionistas and in 2016 she expanded her brand and developed Mavelle Media, a marketing communications boutique consultancy. When Jenna is not working on creative campaigns or blogging about being a stylish business owner, she can be found hiking, cooking, dabbling in photography or enjoying the Monterey County food and wine scene with her husband.



Jess Brown

Jess serves as executive director of the Santa Cruz County Farm Bureau and the educational organization Agri-Culture. His community activities include past president of the Cultural Council of Santa Cruz County, Monterey Museum of Art, Cabrillo College Foundation and Community Foundation of Santa Cruz County. Jess served as chairman of Goodwill Industries for Santa Cruz, Monterey and San Luis Obispo counties. He served as commissioner of the Santa Cruz County Parks and Recreation Department. Currently, Jess serves on the board for Leadership Santa Cruz County, Santa Cruz Area Chamber of Commerce and chair of the Tannery Arts Center.



Michael Hartmeier

Michael is a 5th generation Monterey County resident and a descendent of Salinas Valley pioneer ranching families. He earned a B.S. in Viticulture & Enology and a Minor in History from the University of California, Davis and currently resides in Monterey. Michael works in winery operations for Constellation Brands, Inc. in Gonzales. He is also the grandson of Burton Anderson, an agricultural consultant, author and historian of the Central Coast who served as the staff historian of the Coastal Grower for over 30 years and was Michael's main inspiration to study history and contribute to its preservation.



Emily Basanese

Emily Basanese is the Marketing Coordinator at Leal Vineyards where she manages the social media presence, photographs the various properties, and sips the occasional glass of wine. Outside of working you will find Emily outside hiking, stalking Google Flights for the next best deal (most likely to Hawaii), or reading Sunset Magazine in her favorite window seat at home.



Lara Grossman

Lara has worked in the produce industry for over 20 years. Originally from Phoenix, Arizona, she and her husband moved to the Salinas Valley in the 1990s. She works for Ippolito International, where she manages the company's marketing and product development. Her hobbies include hiking, running, reading and spending time with her family. Lara has an undergraduate degree from the University of Arizona and an MBA from Golden Gate University.



Bill Hastie

Bill is the founder of Hastie Financial Group (HFG), a registered investment advisory firm serving the Central Coast since 1985. HFG provides comprehensive wealth management services, including investment management and retirement planning, and serves as a fiduciary investment manager for 401(k) retirement plans. Over the years, HFG has received recognitions from Barron's, 401(k)Wire and LPL Financial as a top financial advisory team. Bill earned a B.S. in economics from Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo, an M.B.A. in financial planning from Golden Gate University, San Francisco, and holds an Accredited Investment Fiduciary Analyst (AIFA®) designation.



Matt Pridey

Matt Pridey is a Professional Golfer residing on the Monterey Peninsula. He plays on several professional tours, trying to make his way onto the PGA Tour. Through the help of his generous sponsors, Matt is able to play golf full time and travel to tournaments. He is originally from South Dakota, and played collegiate golf in both South Dakota and Arizona. He turned pro after college and eventually moved west to the home of his wife, Whitney. He won the 2018 Monterey Open, earning him an exemption into the 2018 TaylorMade Pebble Beach Invitational. Matt qualified for the 2019 Kern Ferry Tour event, The Colorado Championship.

Contributors



Stephanie Bouquet

Stephanie is a registered dietitian and owner of SB Nutrition Consulting. She holds a BS in nutritional science from Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo and an MS in dietetics with a dietetic internship from Cal State University, Northridge. Since 1993, Stephanie has practiced in the field of nutrition with specialized board certifications in weight management, diabetes and sports nutrition. She offers individualized nutrition consultations, group style classes, athletic team presentations and wellness coaching services. As a native of Salinas, Stephanie returned to the area to raise her own family. For more information visit www.sbnutrition.net.



Valorie Sherman Sill

Valorie Sherman Sill is the Communications and Engagement Manager at Grimmway Farms. From agronomists to food safety specialists, she works with contributors in every division at Grimmway to tell the story behind their fresh produce and sustainable farming practices and to help maintain strong positioning for their brands in the marketplace. She manages press, social media, website and customer service strategy and loves working with a team that's passionate about growing high quality, healthy food. Valorie is also a freelance copywriter and an avid hiker.



Stephen Pearson

Stephen Pearson, an attorney with Noland, Hamerly, Etienne & Hoss, focuses his practice on the resolution of complex business, trusts, construction, and real estate disputes. He has represented clients in complex family business dissolutions and restructurings, trust and estate disputes, real and personal property, and secured transactional disputes. Mr. Pearson has litigated in both state and federal court and has extensive experience in the mediation and arbitration of disputes. In addition, he represents several large local non-profit enterprises in their business and development matters, and assists them in resolving disputes focusing on the special needs and concerns of non-profit boards.



Abby Taylor Silva

Abby Taylor-Silva is the Vice President of Policy and Communications at the Grower-Shipper Association of Central California. A native of Monterey and San Benito counties, her family farmed in Monterey County for over 50 years. As a graduate of UC Davis, she has proudly worked on behalf of Central Coast agriculture for more than 20 years. Abby lives in Salinas with her husband Paul and daughters Olivia and Noelle.



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A (Partial) Local Buyer's Guide

By Emily Basanese

The current climate has been a test for everyone, especially budding small businesses in the food and beverage industry. Our counties have countless incredible entrepreneurship that flavor the communities we call home. Here are a few selections (that are just a handful of many phenomenal properties!) that we have been enjoying during this quarantine-S.I.P.-Social-distancing season.

A new cluster of coffee shops has cropped up in San Benito County to come alongside crowd favorite, Vertigo Coffee. Calavera Coffee has been documenting its journey from humble coffee cart beginnings to its first brick and mortar in Hollister. Evan Morris is the founder and visionary at Calavera, gifted at concocting creatively flavored simple syrups that have garnered a cult following (cue lavender latte) coupled with some classic staples. Located at 1709-M Airline Highway, make sure to stop by the shop, follow along virtually @calavaracoffee, or pick out some cool merchandise online to support this up and coming coffeehouse.

The current climate has been a test for everyone, especially budding small businesses in the food and beverage industry.

To bookend your day with coffee then drinks, head over to Pour Decisions, a plucky pour house that made its debut in downtown Hollister in the midst of quarantine. Pour Decisions specializes in craft brews, beer flights, kombucha, and a funky atmosphere. For these three friends, S.I.P took on a whole new meaning as Jon Cuilla, Joe Nguyen, and Nick Donaldson discussed their vision



of bringing more vibrancy to the downtown Hollister scene. Follow their journey on Instagram at @pourdecisionstaproom or taste for yourself by visiting their outpost at 650 San Benito Street.

Santa Cruz County has experienced a boom in new enterprises, and not just in the metropolis of Santa Cruz proper. Sweep your gaze a little further south along Highway 1 and you will come to the smaller, spunkier town of Watsonville. If you want to support local business, look no further than The Hangar. Yep, it's at the Watsonville Municipal Airport, and if you haven't experienced this industrial airplane hangar turned commercial space, put it at the top of your list. The Beer Mule, Zameen, and Mr. Z's Crepes and Tras provide plenty of options for food and drink. If you want to work that off, sign up for a spin workout at Ritual Ride. This new cycle studio is now meeting outside to maintain social distancing regulations.

Remember to shop local whenever possible to support these friends and neighbors who make up the growing, evolving part of our community.

Just a touch north from Watsonville brings you to the seaside community of Aptos. Instead of heading towards the ocean, go back up Freedom Boulevard to Nicholson Vineyards for a hidden treasure. After S.I.P. earlier this year, we all need some sips of a great vintage. One of the best things about this winery is its gorgeous park-like setting, complete with vineyard views and tastings starting at \$12 per flight. Pack a picnic to enjoy under the oak trees and bring your dog along to the al fresco vineyard setting. Come for the beautiful views, savor delicious wine, and stay for the incredible service.

In Monterey County Alvarado Street is no stranger to new businesses. Just a couple streets over from this main drag you will find Captain + Stoker, a bike themed coffee shop that has firmly secured a place in the hearts of Monterey residents. Recently, they added a

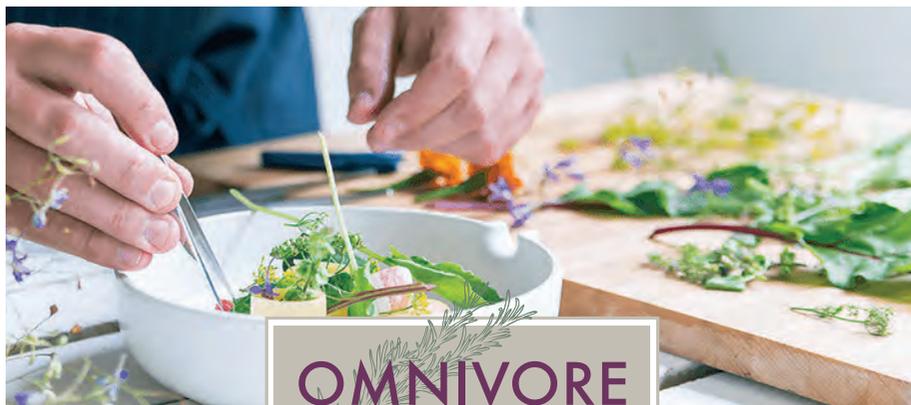


new pop-up location in Carmel-By-the-Sea, in the Rise + Roam complex. Show the newest location some love with a visit, and meander through the rest of Carmel's charming

streets while you're at it; small businesses are wedged into nooks of every street.

Also in Monterey County, Paprika Café is a hole in the wall Mediterranean restaurant on Lighthouse that is a family owned establishment. With an unassuming façade, this restaurant may be easy to miss upon first glance, but a very prestigious team recently made a point of visiting. A Michelin Star scout walked through the restaurant doors in 2019 and awarded the shop an honorable mention. For good reason too: incredible homemade dishes and family recipes fill the menu. Favorites include the dolmas, shawarma pita wrap, and house made falafel. If you are lucky enough to catch the owner, Christophe Hamade, he just might give you some baklava for the road.

Remember to shop local whenever possible to support these friends and neighbors who make up the growing, evolving part of our community. With small, everyday choices, we can have a lasting impact on local businesses around us. **cc**



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Kindness Monterey

By Annee Martin, Co-Founder Kindness Monterey



The campaign for Kindness Monterey began the way many worthy projects begin, with two good friends sharing an idea for a worthwhile cause.

My friend Maren Elwood and I were talking about how we missed going out to our favorite restaurants and how we could support them during the pandemic-induced closings and reduced operations.

We believe strongly that our small cafes, restaurants, bakeries, coffeehouses, wineries and food trucks are the anchor and fabric of our community and provide so much more than just food and drink. These are the places where we meet to celebrate, share our human connections and live life to its fullest.

I grew up in the restaurant business and was trained as a professional chef for 25 years, so I felt the emotional and economic pain that the Covid-19 pandemic was having on restaurant owners, many of whom are friends.

I knew that everything that was being asked of the restaurants to serve customers

was not sustainable. I felt sadness as I read some of the signs posted on their windows and messages on their websites to their staff and patrons.

We believe strongly that our small cafes, restaurants, bakeries, coffeehouses, wineries and food trucks are the anchor and fabric of our community and provide so much more than just food and drink.

Maren, who is a visual anthropologist and small business owner herself, also felt the pangs of her customers, many who also were being challenged financially and emotionally.

During the Shelter in Place, we both found comfort in leaving small gifts of cheer, such as a nice card or home-baked good to help brighten someone's day. We saw that these small acts of kindness really made a differ-

ence, but we still wanted to do something more to help our larger community.

I learned from Executive Director Moe Ammar, that the Pacific Grove Chamber of Commerce had purchased 25 gift certificates from their restaurant members and delivered them to 25 chamber business members who were experiencing hardship. Moe told me that it really lifted their spirits and that he was going to purchase another 25 the following week and deliver them.

I was so inspired that I decided to purchase gift cards on my own and gave them to my church to be distributed anonymously to members in need. I continued to purchase gift cards for friends and businesses that were in need of support and cheer.

Those small but meaningful actions inspired the two of us to start a campaign to purchase gift cards from restaurants and distribute them to those most in need. In that way it would help both restaurants and the recipients of the gift cards, a win-win for everyone. We chose the name Kindness Monterey because we wanted everyone to spread kindness and pay it forward.

I decided to adopt one of my favorite local restaurants, Mezzaluna Pasteria & Mozzarella Bar in Pacific Grove, and began ordering take-out for my family and friends. I would leave words of encouragement for the owners Amy and Soerke, but knew something more was needed. Since tourists had not been able to visit the area, and with so many local people now on unemployment, I understood that ordering from a restaurant was something people felt they could no longer afford.

I mentioned to Maren that in Santa Cruz County I had discovered that there were two websites that had a similar idea involving gift cards. One was called "Riding Out the Waves," which had been hugely successful in raising over \$500,000 to help small businesses including restaurants and small retail and service providers under the leadership of Doug Erickson from Santa Cruz Works. The second website called "Covid-Meals", under

the leadership of Liz Picco, was partnering restaurants with feeding health workers. Both of these individuals were extremely generous with their time and information when I spoke with them.

I firmly believe that not only are we helping restaurants stay alive and letting them know they are loved and supported by their community, but by paying it forward, we are lifting the spirits and hopes of our entire community.

So we decided to take a hybrid approach and we began reaching out to Monterey County restaurants and the community at large to provide a central platform for gift card giving and information. I then reached out to Marci Bracco Cain of Chatterbox Public Relations for help in bringing together a team to develop a logo and website and use social media as a platform to spread the word and find sponsors.

Thus we created the Kindness Monterey website (www.kindnessmonterey.com), and launched it on July 8, 2020. Since then, we have continued to grow and expand with the love and support of the community. Some of the plans that are either in place or will soon be underway:

- Provide gift cards weekly to the Food Bank for Monterey County to distribute them to those most in need.
- An Adopt-A-Restaurant campaign to help

support customers' favorite restaurants through social media.

- Supporting the Boys & Girls Clubs of Monterey County (BGCMC): For every \$1,000 raised, \$50 will be donated to the

Boys & Girls Clubs to provide weekend grab-and-go meals for six children.

- Adding more individual and business supporters to help sponsor this campaign and to provide matching funds to drive gift card sales. I plan to purchase gift cards and place one in each of my Sanctuary Vacation Rentals' homes for visitors and am hoping to encourage others to pay it forward.
- Launched a GoFundMe page at: www.Gofundme.com/manage/kindness-monterey.
- Partnering with a CSUMB initiative called GetVirtual.org. GetVirtual gives local businesses affected by COVID-19 the tools to adapt to the virtual landscape and extend their businesses online. Their program pairs local businesses such as our restaurants, who need help with online tools like gift cards, with college students who are tech-savvy and want business experience. It's a win-win. Restaurants get help for free and the students get college credit.
- Launching an online music event called Care-A-Thon to be aired on Sunday, Aug. 23 and another one in the fall/winter, produced by local musician and concert promoter Kiki Wow, hosted and produced by Destination 831, the first one showcasing nine local musicians, short video interviews with local restaurant owners, and a call-out to donate to the GoFundMe campaign. The goal is to help musicians as well to raise money for the restaurant gift card campaign and provide an evening of wonderful music for our community.
- Teamed up with The American Institute of Wine & Food (AIWF), Monterey Bay



Kiki Wow

Chapter (www.aiwfm.org), which has agreed to be the campaign's 501(c)3 non-profit fiscal sponsor. Kindness Monterey can now accept donations of \$250 or more from corporate sponsors or individuals through their fiscal sponsor — AIWF-Monterey Bay Chapter, and those donating at that level or higher will then be able to get a tax write off.

- Teamed up with marketing and PR professional, Wendy Brickman who will reach out to local businesses and individuals to secure sponsorships to help fund the campaign and raise money to buy gift cards for those in need. (www.brickmanmarketing.com).

Kindness Monterey will continue to provide as long as there is a need in our community. I firmly believe that not only are we helping restaurants stay alive and letting them know they are loved and supported by their community, but by paying it forward, we are lifting the spirits and hopes of our entire community.

For more information, email info@kindnessmonterey.com, like Kindness Monterey on Facebook or call Annee Martin at 831-236-5618; Maren Elwood at 831-238-5503; or Kiki Wow at 831-235-7662. Or, go to the website at: kindnessmonterey.com. 



Annee Martin

'THANK YOU!' to All of our Essential Workers

By Brian Milne, Fieldin



Every night at 8 o'clock sharp, my kids run like a whirlwind through the kitchen and scrounge up every pan and spoon in sight.

After grabbing the largest, loudest "instruments" they can find, they run to the balcony to put on a show — banging away on pans, screaming and waving to neighborhood friends they miss from school, and thanking

ness, so we've been fortunate to operate as "business as usual." But there's nothing "usual" about business today. The number of precautions we take in the already strictly-regulated ag and food industries are higher than ever, as we continue to take the needed protections to keep our workers and the public safe during the pandemic. And there are a lot of people to protect and provide for.

In the agriculture and food industries, we're fortunate to be seen as essential business, so we've been fortunate to operate as "business as usual." But there's nothing "usual" about business today.

every essential worker within earshot. They end their daily, five-minute parade with the same two words every night: "THANKYOU!" The past few months have been crazy to the say the least, and while we're starting to call our remote, socially distanced way of life "the new normal," our family is still adamant about thanking our essential workers regularly. Those who go to work every day and, in some cases, put themselves in harm's way so we can keep on living.

In the agriculture and food industries, we're fortunate to be seen as essential busi-

In Monterey County alone, the \$4.4 billion agriculture industry supports 76,000 jobs and provides income to one in five households here. The county also produces a majority of the nation's lettuce, spinach, celery, broccoli and cauliflower, so it's essential that we keep on producing for the country at-large.

The fall harvest season is always a wonderful time to thank those who help put food on our table, but it's tough to recall a time when it was this important to appreciate and support the agriculture and food workers who keep our food supply plentiful.

We've been fortunate during the first few months of the pandemic to continue sourcing food for retail outlets at a steady pace, yet, we've already seen the impacts of COVID-19 at our local restaurants and across much of the service industry. We're also starting to see the shortfalls hit on our local farms, where a

The fall harvest season is always a wonderful time to thank those who help put food on our table, but it's tough to recall a time when it was this important to appreciate and support the agriculture and food workers who keep our food supply plentiful.

lack of demand has left some crops plowed over or abandoned in the field.

This will likely create a ripple effect down the supply chain as planting schedules, staffing and budgets suffer from market-driven challenges as the pandemic wears on.

That said, our farms and ranches continue to produce during these challenging times. And our essential workers at every step of the supply chain continue to harvest and pack, ship and stock the food our families depend on.

"THANKYOU!" to everyone who helps put food on our tables. All 76,000 off you. If you can hear it, this banging pan is for you. **CG**



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Exhibition: Highlighting Women Leaders in Ag and Agtech

This fall the National Steinbeck Center in Salinas hosts a special exhibition and film festival

By Amy Wu



This autumn the National Steinbeck Center in Salinas, California is hosting a special exhibition “From Farms to Incubators: Spotighting women leaders in food, farming and agtech.” The exhibition is the brainchild of Amy Wu, an award-winning journalist and writer for the women’s ag and agtech movement. Wu was previously a reporter for The Salinas Californian where she reported on local government and agriculture.

The exhibition will include photos, art pieces, sculptures and film that celebrate women innovators in agriculture and agtech. It is set to launch in mid-November and run through January 2021. There is a virtual launch event planned for November to be hosted by the National Steinbeck Center.

The exhibition will be held inside a gallery in the Steinbeck Center and will also include a film series, which will run alongside the exhibition. The series includes Fear No

Fruit: The Frieda Caplan Documentary, Dolores, Seed Savers, East of Salinas and Wu’s documentary short “From Farms to Incubators.”

The exhibition will include photos, art pieces, sculptures and film that celebrate women innovators in agriculture and agtech.

The exhibition and film festival were inspired by a book that she is completing that is a collection of portraits of women innovators and entrepreneurs in agtech, many of them with a connection to agriculture in California. The book is scheduled to be published by California-based publisher Linden Books in 2021.

“Women for centuries have played a vital role in farm operations across the country and globally. The National Steinbeck Center is honored to present this timely and eye-opening exhibition and are thrilled Amy Wu has chosen the Center to continue to tell the stones of minority women entrepreneurs in Agtech in the Salinas Valley and beyond,” says Michele Speich, executive director of the National Steinbeck Center.

The project also brings together local artists and photographers, which was part of Wu’s vision. Contributors include renowned Salinas artist, educator and farmer JC Gonzalez and photographer Dexter Farm.

“This was an incredible opportunity to meet and photograph leading women in the agriculture technology and agri-business industry. Innovation and technologies from these women show a glimpse of how farming is changing and the people behind it,” says Dexter Farm, one of the lead photographers on the exhibition and book.

While the exhibition and book are new, they are actually a continuation of a special project that started in 2016 when Wu was a local government reporter for The Salinas





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Californian. She became fascinated with the under-told stories of women, especially women of color, who are creating the technologies to help solve some of the biggest challenges that growers are facing.

“My passion to unearth underreported stories and amplify new voices is what led me to highlight the stories of emerging communities in agriculture,” Wu says.

“Ultimately, I hope the exhibition, film series and book serves as vehicles to inspire youth – especially those from rural or underserved communities — to consider that agriculture extends far beyond tractors and overalls and it is a sector that offers an amazing range of opportunities that involve innovation.”

After the exhibition closes in Salinas, it is expected to go to Gonzales, Sacramento and Merced where events and book signings are planned.

Amy Wu is the founder of From Farms to Incubators. For updates about the exhibition please go to @farmstoincubators on Facebook. **CG**



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Proposition 15: A Costly Experiment in “Social Engineering”

By Stephen Pearson, Attorney, Noland, Hamerly, Etienne & Hoss



Proposition 15 has now qualified to be on the California ballot for the November 2020 election. If passed, it will result in dramatic increases in real property tax for many commercial property owners. Passage of Proposition 15 would revoke part of Proposition 13 (Jarvis) which now protects property owners from reassessment of property unless there is a change in ownership. Not only will property owners see their costs jump, but also consumers will be penalized by higher prices from the flow through of higher property taxes.

Proposition 13 was passed by the voters in 1978 to limit tax increases and bring certainty to the valuation of property for tax purposes. It limits property tax to 1 percent of the purchase price of real property; and more importantly, it limits increases in assessed value to 2 percent a year, thus giving predictability to future tax increases by freeing the valuation process from helter-skelter revaluations to “fair market value” by

county tax assessors.

Proposition 15 is the so-called “split roll” initiative. That’s because it would separate the property tax rolls into two separate parts or “tax rolls”. Commercial and industrial property would be reassessed by the county tax assessor to current fair market value every two years, up to fair market value, starting in 2022. This would mean that commercial and business property, which has been protected from reassessment to current fair market value, suddenly would be taxed based on the present fair market value of the property. For property that has not recently sold or transferred, and especially that property which has been owned by the same owners prior to 1978 when the Jarvis Amendment passed, owners will see dramatic increases in their assessed value, and consequently their real estate taxes.

Unless real estate is specifically exempted from reassessment (see next page) it will be reassessed starting in 2022. While there are some “ease in” provisions, the counties will

certainly move as quickly as possible to reap the harvest of new property tax revenue. Thus, office buildings, factories, hotels, grocery stores, manufacturing facilities, automobile dealerships, clubs, food processing facilities, wineries, warehouses, shopping centers, retail and wholesale stores and outlets will all be reassessed, and their owners will be subject to increased real property taxation at 1 percent of the current fair market value.

The split roll initiative proposition is receiving major funding from Facebook billionaire Mark Zuckerberg and his wife and is endorsed by various unions, including the California Teachers Union. The initiative, known as “The California Schools and Local

If passed, it will result in dramatic increases in real property tax for many commercial property owners.

Communities Funding Action of 2020”, purports to eliminate what the proponents call “under assessment” of commercial and industrial property. They argue that the current system of real property taxation is “unfair”, “anticompetitive”, “distorts business competition” and “disadvantages business startups”.

Buried in the “findings” is one of the real issues that Silicon Valley billionaires find “unfair” about the current taxation system: start-ups and new commercial and industrial properties are already being assessed at their current market value because they are buying real estate and building “campuses” to house their burgeoning businesses. While Silicon Valley contributes tremendously to California’s economy, some of its biggest names apparently believe that they are

“disadvantaged” because other parts of California don’t pay taxes at the same rate on their real estate. They argue that lower property taxes enjoyed by commercial and industrial property owners in other parts of the state unfairly disadvantage them because their property tax bills are higher than similar property elsewhere.

The proponents also conveniently ignore the fact that every time real estate changes hands, it is now reassessed to its current fair market value. Thus, the idea that the current system is “unfair” because a commercial and industrial property isn’t reassessed is muddy thinking at best. Not only is commercial and industrial property reassessed on change of ownership, but also any kind of real estate (residential, multiple family residential, and agricultural production properties) moves up to full fair market value on sale or transfer. Are there exemptions to the proposed reassessment scheme? Yes, but they will be small comfort to many property owners and to their tenants.

Not only will property owners see their costs jump, but also consumers will be penalized by higher prices from the flow through of higher property taxes.

What is exempt?

- 1. Residential Property.** Residential property, including single-family houses and multi-unit structures, would be exempt from Proposition 15. Thus, all homeowners and residential multi-family property landlords would not face reassessment if this initiative passes.
- 2. Agricultural Property.** Agricultural property “used for producing commercial agricultural commodities” would be exempt. Thus, farms, ranches, vineyards and orchards would remain under the protection of the Jarvis Amendment. However, facilities used to process, pack and distribute agricultural products, warehouses, office facilities used by agricultural producers, growers and shippers, wineries, trans-



portation companies and ancillary uses would not be exempt from reassessment. In addition, there is a material question of whether vineyards and orchards would be exempt since the vines and trees may not be treated as “land” but rather constitute improvements to agricultural property.

3. Property Valued Under \$3 Million.

Commercial and industrial property with a fair market value of \$3 million or less would be exempt. However, if a property owner has more than one parcel of commercial or industrial property, all that owner’s property would be re-assessed. Moreover, to obtain this exemption, the property owner would need to file an annual certification under penalty of perjury that his or her property is worth less than \$3 million and that he or she does not own multiple commercial properties. The exemption claim is subject to audit.

4. Underused Property.

Property zoned commercial or industrial used for housing would be exempt. If a property is zoned for commercial or industrial use, it would not be subject to reassessment under Proposition 15, so long as it is used as “long term residential property”. Thus, such property would not be re-valued to the highest and best use of that particular property. “Long term residential property” is not defined; and more importantly, the

initiative puts in the Legislature’s hands the administration of this exemption.

- 5. “Mixed Use” Property.** If commercial or industrial property is partially used for residential purposes, the Legislature is to “ensure” that only the non-residential portion of the property is subject to reassessment. The Legislature may, but is not required to, free from reassessment any commercial and industrial property which is more than 75 percent residential (by square footage).

The So-called “Small Business Exemption”:

Although the proponents make much of what they call protections for “small businesses”, this “exemption” really amounts only to a delay in reassessment. The “exemption” is illusory and mere window dressing. All commercial and industrial property with 50 percent or more of its square footage leased to “small businesses” would be exempt from reassessment until 2025, allegedly to allow “small businesses” and their landlords to “make adjustments” to the new reality of higher taxes.

- What is a small business?
 - One with fewer than 50 employees
 - The small business is “independently owned and operated”

- iii. The small business owns other real property in California
- b. Annual certifications under penalty of perjury are required of the owner to obtain the delay in reassessment.
- c. Personal Property Tax relief is provided in the form of a \$500,000 exclusion from personal property taxes. That figure is not adjusted for inflation and will, over the years, become less and less valuable.

The Opposition:

Proposition 15 is opposed by the California Business Roundtable, the California Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, the California Hotel and Lodging Association, the California Conference of the NAACP, Western Growers Association and the California Wine Institute, the California State Club Association, and many local business and commercial property associations, local and regional Chambers of Commerce and farm bureaus.

The Economic Consequences:

- 1. Substantial real estate tax increases will occur throughout the State in a time of unprecedented economic uncertainty in California.
- 2. Tenants who are obligated under their leases to pay the real estate taxes on their leased property will see their annual costs accelerate, in some cases dramatically.
- 3. Landlords who retain the obligation to pay property taxes for tenant-occupied property will see their net revenue decrease or disappear, and in a long-term lease setting this will permanently

- dislocate landlord/tenant economic relationships.
- 4. The cost of the tax increase will almost certainly be passed on to consumers of retail and wholesale goods and services, increasing the cost of living at a time of economic dislocation in the State of California.
- 5. Tax increases will be passed on to commercial and industrial tenants in new lease arrangements, either by increased rent or forced transfer of the obligation to pay real property taxes as part of the lease arrangement.
- 6. The cost of administering an entirely revised tax system will be paid by the taxpayers, including the costs of reassessment and the inevitable appeals, and litigation which will come in the wake of property tax increases. There are no limits on the costs and they will be substantial. The California Association of Assessors (which opposes Proposition 15) estimates California's counties' administrative costs to implement the mandates of Proposition 15 would reach \$1 billion "with no guarantee it would generate a fraction of the promised \$12.5 billion in new property tax revenue".
- 7. Business and Industry will suffer another negative impact to doing business in California, which, when added to the AB5 independent contractor legislation, imposes increased costs and greater disincentive to locate businesses in the state.
- 8. While more money will be poured into

California's school systems, there is little to no incentive to use the new-found source of revenue in a meaningful and effective way.

The Non-Economic Consequences:

- 1. Confusion and uncertainty will reign in the 58 assessors' offices in California for years to come as local assessors attempt to revalue property and make the myriad of distinctions and decisions about which property may be reassessed and which is exempt from reassessment. The California Assessors Association states that passage of Proposition 15 would result in "administrative chaos for property tax administrators".
- 2. The Legislature will have the opportunity to get its hands on the reassessment process.
- 3. The door to further erosion of the protections of Proposition 13 is opened.

Conclusion:

Proposition 15 is bad for business and bad for consumers. It destabilizes economic relationships and upends decades of certainty for property owners and tenants. It would lead to chaos in the administration of California's real property tax system. And there is no assurance that it would improve California's schools. Social experiments at the expense of all Californians are the last thing this state needs as it works its way through the economic and social disruption of the COVID-19 pandemic.

*This article is intended to address topics of general interest and should not be construed as legal advice. **CG***

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FFA: Agriculture Students Lead The Way

By Lara Grossman



Taylor Sollecito

Senior year of high school. What would you choose, if you could go back for one day? For most of us, we'd opt for the obvious, fun stuff. The basketball game that went into overtime, cheering our team towards a decisive, game-winning free throw; senior prom, dressed to impress, in the limo with our closest friends and significant other; the first road trip with friends, finally on our own for a weekend. We'd probably not choose to relive the all-nighter prepping for our AP U.S. Government exam, those awkward moments at our first part-time job, or the sickening seconds pulling up the driveway in the newly dented family car! High school is full of extremes: high-intensity peaks and monumental, ego-shattering lows. It is exactly this combination of highs and lows that make this chapter of our lives so meaningful.

It goes without saying that COVID has left a gap in everybody's lives this year. For the Salinas High Future Farmers of America

It goes without saying that COVID has left a gap in everybody's lives this year. For the Salinas High Future Farmers of America (FFA) students and teachers, the reality has hit especially hard.

(FFA) students and teachers, the reality has hit especially hard; it has meant cancelled fairs, no conferences or competitions, and a stark lack of in-person coursework. Students

whose calendars were built around their FFA activities had to instantly adjust, abandon expectations and settle in to a dramatically subdued pace — and with no real playbook to do so. For example, many of these students had worked hundreds of after-school hours tending their livestock. Suddenly, it seemed that the end game, the Salinas Valley Fair, and the hard-earned reward — that hefty selling price of a carefully nurtured hog or steer — might not materialize. Others had dedicated time and focus towards preparing for speaking contests, or pursuing leadership roles within the chapter or beyond. For any high school student, navigating through all of this has been confusing, and frustrating. Given the circumstances, shutting down, giving up and doing the bare minimum would be, well... almost forgivable. Or at least understandable.

As an instructor, this is particularly tough. Again, in times like this, there is no playbook. Agricultural education is a hands-on, learn-by-doing curriculum. Both agriculture teachers, Rachel Dalton (formerly Martinez) and Chris Evans have been a constant presence in their students' lives. Not surprisingly during the past year, SAEs (Supervised Agricultural Experiences) have been on Zoom and FaceTime more frequently than conducted in-person, making things a little patchy at times. Typically, an advisor teaches their normal curriculum in the classroom, but also spends their year coaching, traveling with students, participating in conferences, and getting ready for the fair.

Rachel, who took a few days off from school for her wedding in the spring, came back from an abbreviated honeymoon to cancelled classes. She regrets not being able to officially say 'goodbye' to her students, but found a way to offer support to her students through regular, socially distant visits to the school farm. There, FFA kids were kept mindful of the distance requirement, but still attended to their project animals, in the hopes that they'd have a chance to sell them at the upcoming fair. Mikey Gutierrez, senior, knew that he couldn't let up on caretaking for



2020 State Officer Team (Maico Ortiz, Sentinel; Taylor Sollecito, Reporter; Emma Thorpe, Vice President; Mia Arisman, Secretary; Reese Gonsalves, Treasurer; Dean Hill, President).jpg

his hog. "Over the years in FFA, I've learned that if you want something to succeed, you really need to be responsible, and constantly work and focus on that particular thing," he mentioned. "Due to COVID, this year was very different, and difficult. I ran into many problems; the feed stores were shut down, for example. I didn't know if I would ever be able to sell my pig!"

Another student, Emileigh Clinton,

Salinas High School class of 2020, regretted not having the buildup of energy and rapid pulse moments leading up to the fair. As a senior, this was a pivotal year for her, and she knew that the fair was far more than just the experience of showing her hog. "I missed the butterflies-in-my-stomach moment, just before going into the show ring. I missed seeing the other amazing kids I've made friends with over the years. I even missed the greasy corn dogs!" Emileigh said.

Throughout it all, the FFA students doubled down by keeping calm, staying focused, and not letting up on their projects; they continued to work as though everything was normal. And fortunately, that strategy panned out. The Salinas Valley Fair was able to conduct the auctions online, keeping the faith for 4H and FFA students in the region. And the students as a whole did well, with most participants at least breaking even on their livestock projects. (In fact, the virtual approach worked so well that the Monterey County Fair, set for September 3-6, has planned its auctions online also).

When she considers how the past spring and summer have impacted her and the agriculture students, Rachel is firm in her belief that "the time spent sheltering in place absolutely proved my commitment to FFA. It also gave me a lot more conviction towards supporting students with their commitments. The things we do as FFA members is a huge



Emileigh Clinton



Mikey Gutierrez Salinas Valley Fair 2020 market hog.

part of our lives; for years, as a teacher, my students have been practically my extended family.”

So it seems that, in spite of some setbacks, the Salinas High School FFA has a lot to brag about.

The most remarkable news of all is that a 2020 Salinas High School graduate, Taylor Sollecito, has been elected to the California State FFA Officer Team. Sollecito, born and raised in Spreckels, has had a passion for agriculture throughout her life. “Salinas has many facets of agriculture. From lettuce to strawberries, beef cattle and hay, this area has some of the most successful and prominent agricultural businesses in the country,” Taylor remarks. For a local, Taylor is refreshingly appreciative about her hometown, and seems to have an outsider’s awe towards the Salinas Valley.

Taylor’s energy and drive was evident as early as freshman year. She was willing to do the work, and put in the hours, which meant tirelessly rehearsing answers to interview questions, memorizing speeches, and, importantly, finding time to lead and support other FFA students. With this commitment and

drive, Taylor found success at chapter officer positions. And she represented locally as the Monterey Bay Section President in 2018-2019. Even so, she found it hard to go the final distance with her attempt at FFA South Coast Regional office elections, running for Vice President to represent the Monterey Bay

Throughout it all, the FFA students doubled down by keeping calm, staying focused, and not letting up on their projects; they continued to work as though everything was normal.

Section, in 2018. She was not elected, and that loss was devastating. Taylor attempted again in 2019. “She practiced her questions and her speech like crazy. I knew she would nail it. And she did!” commented Rachel. Yet, unbelievably, she lost again. After two back-to-back losses, Taylor was discouraged.

When it was time, in late 2019, to

submit applications for State office, Taylor was determined. As it was her third time attempting an office beyond the Salinas High School FFA Chapter, this time, the emotional and mental stakes were high. “I took the influence to heart of some individuals I had met on the 2018 – 2019 State Officer Team, who encouraged me. Ultimately I stepped into it with the mindset that all things happen for a reason. Whether I win or lose didn’t matter as much as the fact that I put forth my whole and true self,” says Taylor. It was a hopeful and positive sign when she learned she had made the first cut. Then the next, and the next. The process was long, and grueling. The application site provides a lot of information about what to expect. In fact, there is a State Officer Candidate handbook, which describes the officer role as being a full time job. It is, after all, a position that requires a dedicated year in between college and high school. The position requires a commitment to continuous improvement, time management, fulfilling the needs of stakeholders, and even ‘virtuous behavior’, such as keeping promises, dealing constructively with others, and treating others equally, all while maintaining the dignity expected of an officer. The selection process is rigorous, because the commitment is significant.

The California State FFA Officer election results were announced on May 1st. Because of COVID, the announcement was online. As Taylor was watching, so was her FFA advisor. Immediately after the announcement, Rachel drove to Taylor’s house to congratulate her in person. “I cried, because Taylor deserves it more than anyone knows. Taylor’s achievement has been the highest point of my FFA Advisor career, and to say that I’m proud is a complete understatement — it doesn’t begin to express how I feel about her success!” Indeed, this is a big deal, not only for Taylor, but for the entire Salinas High School FFA program. The last time a Salinas High School student won an office to the California FFA State Officer team was over sixty years ago, back in 1956-57, when Mr. Claude Ponting was elected to State Secretary, and prior to him, Mr. Dale Terry, who, in 1951-52, served as State Reporter. **CG**



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Don't Let Your Emotions Manage Your Investments

By Bill Hastie



We are emotional beings, there is no way around it. We love, we laugh, we cry — how and what we do is very often dictated by our emotions or by what we think or believe about something. Herein lies the collision of human nature and technical investment management, and the outcome is rarely as intended.

Modern Portfolio Theory was the product of Harry Markowitz developed in 1952 and remains today as the foundation of many principals in investment management. Behavioral finance, the study of the thoughts, emotions and beliefs that often drive financial decisions, did not appear on the scene until decades later. One of the recognized flaws of traditional finance is the belief that investors make completely rational decisions, but as we will see, this is not always the case.

Behavioral finance cites two types of biases that drive irrational decisions — emotional

and cognitive. Simply put, emotional biases are a result of attitudes and feelings that cause the decision to deviate from the rational decisions of traditional finance. Cognitive biases, on the other hand, are more basic statistical, information processing and memory errors that cause the decision to deviate from rationality. Here are a few of the most common biases that seem to affect investors the most.

Successful investing is a long-term process that will involve both gains and losses along the way.

Loss Aversion

This is an emotional bias that effects how an investor sees potential investment loss

very differently than potential investment gain. A number of studies of loss aversion have concluded that the possibility of loss is, on average, twice as powerful a motivator as the possibility of making a gain. For example, a risk averse person might demand a \$2 gain for every \$1 placed at risk. In this scenario, risks that do not “pay double” are not acceptable.

Loss aversion can also keep some investors from making prudent decisions about which investment to hold in a portfolio and which to sell. When an investor has experienced a substantial loss in an investment, the loss averse investor may tend to hold on to the investment waiting for it to “come back” even if all indications are that it will not.

Illusion of Control

This is a cognitive bias that describes the tendency of investors to believe that they can control or at least influence investment outcomes when they obviously cannot. When studied, some casino patrons swear that they are able to impact random outcomes such as the roll of a dice. The belief is often that they are “better guessers” and therefore pursue the opportunity to win more often, not always with the desired result. The illusion of control bias can often display itself as the emotional bias of overconfidence.

Excessive investment trading can be a sign of an investor with an illusion of control. Although many studies have shown that there is no correlation between a high volume of trading and investment results, these investors often use one of the many online trading sites that offer inexpensive trading to virtually become day traders. This can often drive the investor away from a prudent investment strategy to little more than speculation — which rarely turns out well.

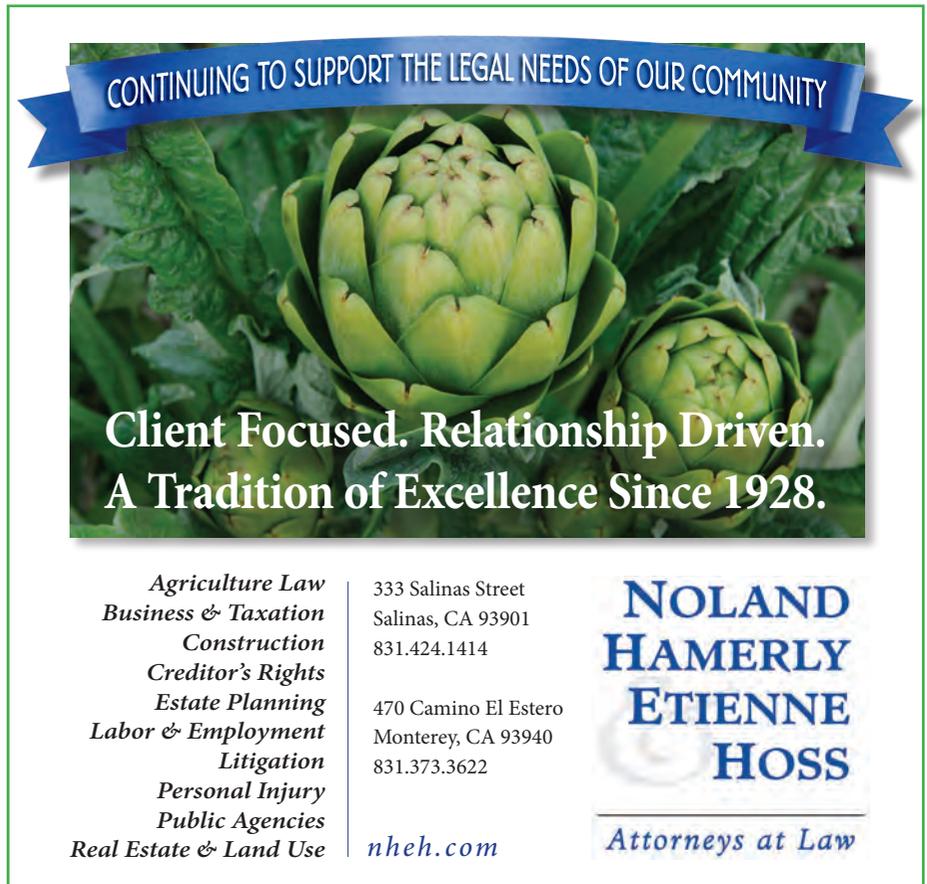
Outcome Bias

Another cognitive bias which refers to the tendency of investors to decide to do something — such as invest in a particular investment — based solely on, for example, the outcome of past performance. This bias can lead the investor to ignore the management process or other factors that might have been involved in generating the superior return. The only basis on which an investment is judged is the number in the five-year (or other time period) return column.

Ignoring investment risk may be the cause of the greatest “injury” to this type of investor. When this investor ignores the risk inherent in an investment, the tendency is to gravitate to investments taking highest risks in order to achieve the higher returns. In times of rapid decline, such as February 19 – March 23, 2020, this investor is likely to experience volatility far out of their comfort level with outcomes they never expected.

Who Can Help?

An experienced investment advisor should be able to help an investor in two very important ways. First, an advisor can help the investor “flat line emotions” — not getting too upset with losses and not too excited about gains. Successful investing is a long-term process that will involve both gains and losses along the way. Second, to recognize the particular bias affecting the investor and help them make prudent, rational investment decisions. **CG**



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Grimmway Gives Back Through the Rod and Bob Grimm Memorial Scholarship Program

By Valorie Sherman Sill



Grimmway Farms started as a roadside produce stand opened by brothers Rod and Bob Grimm in the early 1960s. Today Grimmway leads the fresh produce industry as the world's largest producer of carrots and the nation's largest producer of organic vegetables. Even as the size and scope of Grimmway's business continue to grow, the company remains committed to empowering its employees and their families through benefits like the Rod and Bob Grimm Memorial Scholarship program, which was established in 1997. Named for the company's founders, the program recognizes the superior academic performance of students who have a parent or guardian employed at Grimmway.

"The opportunity to show appreciation for our employees by providing their children with educational support is truly its own

"The opportunity to show appreciation for our employees by providing their children with educational support is truly its own reward."

reward," said Brandon Grimm, Grower Relations Manager at Grimmway Farms

and son of co-founder Bob Grimm. "We are inspired by these hardworking students and proud to help them succeed in their studies and beyond."

This year, Grimmway awarded 64 college scholarships to recent high school graduates through the program and the company has provided more than 740 scholarships totaling over \$2.15 million in funds since the program launched.

"We value the importance of education and are humbled to support these outstanding students," said Barbara Grimm Marshall.

"It is a privilege to continue our 23-year tradition of offering college scholarships to our employees' children. We value the importance of education and are humbled



to support these outstanding students in their college endeavors," said Barbara Grimm Marshall, Founder and CEO of the Grimm Family Education Foundation and co-owner of Grimmway Farms.

Renewable for four years, the scholarships

are granted based on academic achievement and provide financial support for students attending two and four-year colleges and universities. As an added benefit, applicants who exceed a grade point average of 3.5 receive a MacBook Pro laptop in addition to

“We value the importance of education and are humbled to support these outstanding students.”

renewable scholarship funds.

The 2020 Rod and Bob Grimm Memorial Scholarship recipients will attend a range of top-ranked schools, including Cal Poly Pomona, Cal Poly San Luis Obispo, Colgate University, Fresno State, UC Davis and UC Santa Barbara. Previous recipients have attended UC Berkeley, UC Los Angeles, the University of Oregon, the United States Naval Academy and Westmont College.

Grimmway continues to expand the reach of support through the program, this year awarding scholarships to California students in Kern, Riverside and Santa Barbara counties and a student in Washington.

“We have a responsibility to honor and invest in our most critical asset, our workforce,” noted Sara Oliver.

“As one of the largest private employers in Kern County, we have a responsibility to honor and invest in our most critical asset, our workforce,” noted Sara Oliver, Vice President of Human Resources at Grimmway. “Agricultural innovation and evolving technologies will require new skill sets from tomorrow’s workers. We want to make sure we are preparing our community’s youth for future career opportunities by helping them achieve their educational goals.”

For more information about Grimmway Farms, visit www.grimmway.com or call 1-800-301-3101. **CG**



Did You Know? Four Tasks You Can Do With a Sub-Compact Tractor

By Alex Mitchell



When caring for a property it doesn't matter if it's one acre or 10. All property owners need productive machines to help them care for the land.

Sub-compact tractors are a great option that provides more capabilities than a riding lawn mower, yet without the price tag and footprint of a larger tractor.

Why Use a Sub-Compact and Compact Tractor for Yard Work?

Depending on manufacturer, tractors in the sub-compact category typically are less than 40-horsepower. Not far from that, compact tractors are slightly larger but also a great

option, especially for those with larger properties to maintain.

Though small in size, compact utility tractors (CUTs) are mighty in performance. Best of all, they're compatible with several attachments, giving them the versatility to accomplish numerous tasks around a property.

Here are four of the most popular applications and attachments for CUTs.

1. Mowing

A CUT can be used to mow. Did you know that mowing, arguably the most common yard work task, can be done with a sub-compact or compact tractor? With a mower

attachment, the tractor quickly turns into a finish mower to tackle clean, close cuttings of common lawn grass.

For those with larger properties that include pastures and rocky terrain, the rotary cutter attachment is an option for grooming and maintaining. Pulled behind the tractor, this attachment trims long, thicker grass, and is built to withstand gravel or larger rocks that may damage a finish mower.

2. Gardening

A CUT can be used for gardening. Did you know that gardening tasks can be done with a sub-compact or compact tractor? Among the most popular chore is tillage, including

seedbed prep and weed control. Mounted on the back of the tractor, the hydraulic tiller attachment can handle this gardening task quickly and effectively.

Other gardening attachments include box scrapers, blades, and cultivators, offering plenty of options to maintain everything from small backyard gardens to larger, multi-crop plots.

3. Landscaping

A CUT can be used for landscaping. Did you know that landscaping projects can be done with a sub-compact or compact tractor? The loader attachment, the most popular tractor attachment sold at most RDO Equipment Co. stores, is commonly used for earthmoving and transport of heavy landscape materials. It's very rare to see a tractor sold without the loader as part of the final package.

From spreaders to sprayers, and aerators to

utility carts, dozens of landscape attachments are offered for tractors, turning this already versatile machine into a multi-purpose landscaping tool.

4. Animal Management

A CUT can be used for animal management tasks. Did you know that necessary work for taking care of animals can be done with a sub-compact or compact tractor?

In addition to more acreage than most property owners, rural property owners often also have animals to care for. Going back to the loader, the most popular attachment also is a great tool for animal management tasks, everything from moving feed to cleaning manure. Deere offers additional attachments like manure forks and grinder-mixers, specifically designed for livestock and equine management.

An added bonus that comes with using a sub-compact tractor for this type of work is the machine's ideal size. It's large enough to work with the attachments needed for this work and powerful enough to handle the tasks, while being compact enough to fit between gates, stalls, and pens, and maneuver through tight, confined areas in barns or other buildings.

Small in size yet mighty in versatility, power, and performance, CUTs can take on several tasks, from the most common to more specialized. Mow, landscape, garden, or all of the above – what do you want your tractor to do?

*RDO Equipment Co. has local stores in Salinas and Watsonville. Visit www.RDOequipment.com to learn more about compact tractor packages. **CG***



Lee & Nicole Ramsayer

By Jenna Hanson Abramson





Pulling up to the Ramsayer home I immediately felt like I had arrived at a contemporary haven nestled amongst the Carmel Highlands trees. Here you are away from it all yet in the heart of it all. Less than a 10 minute drive from the center of the world-renowned European-inspired Carmel-By-The-Sea Village and just three short minutes from the notable Point Lobos State Park is this gem of a home; a contemporary yet warm and inviting space, effortlessly decorated to match the surrounding environment.

The bicoastal homeowners, she from Fresno and he from the East Coast, were looking for a place to settle down together. Nicole, with fond memories of escaping the Central Valley heat to the Central Coast and Lee, being a golf enthusiast, found Carmel to be the perfect location for the couple to build their life together. Once they had the locale pinned down, it didn't take long to fall in love with the house they have called home for the past two and a half years.

As soon as the agent showed them this newly remodeled Carmel Highlands home, Nicole fell in love, and they weren't even finished painting the walls. She recalls that there was a calming effect throughout the home. It was a place the couple could not only live in but they could relax and entertain in as well. The architecture is contemporary with clean lines and plenty of open space. The décor, with the help of Nicole's interior designer friend from Fresno, Stephanie Catron Designs, is "coastal warmth" as described by Nicole. Inspired by the views and the white oak floors, Stephanie decorated the interior of the home using a neutral palette, creams and greys, with just the right amount of yellow and blue tones, Nicole's two favorite colors.

Upon entering the home, you are greeted by the staircase curving up to the second and third levels. This is the first of many "WOW" moments you will have in the home and is also one of the features that first caught the couple's eye. If you look closely, the oak wood railing has a soft hint of blue, bringing in an unexpected yet welcomed touch of color.

The second level of the home is where you will find the guest bedrooms with a shared balcony and serene views of Point Lobos. As you head up to the third level, you are greeted by a landing that is used as Nicole's home office. From her desk she enjoys views of Point Lobos and directly behind her is the Pacific Ocean





and a fantastic statement chandelier, not a bad backdrop for Zoom meetings. Directly off to the side of Nicole's home office is the master suite. With floor to ceiling windows and glass doors, natural light pours in and welcomes the views from both directions. On one side of the master suite there is a sunny, spacious, glass balcony with ocean views, the perfect location for yoga with friends, and on the other side you get the feeling of being up in a tree house; what better place to enjoy a cup of tea and a book. From the master suite one can enjoy everything from squirrels and deer to whale sightings.

Back down on the main level of the house there are the kitchen, living and dining areas in one large open space. A combination of metals and other materials were used when decorating this area. Throughout, you will find cloth and leather, wood and stone, gold and black metal fixtures, as well as a combination of East and West Coast photography. The two stone fireplaces and stone back wall of the den were untouched





during the 2018 remodel, leaving behind a subtle reminder that this now modern-day home also has a past.

Just outside the kitchen is one of the couple's favorite parts of the whole house, the low maintenance, and butterfly, bee and hummingbird friendly backyard. Equipped with both an outdoor kitchen and fire pit, this space is perfect for entertaining or simply just relaxing after a long days work.

From practicing yoga with whales in the background, sipping wine as the deer stroll by, entertaining guests amongst the humming birds, unwinding with an ocean view soak in the master suit tub or simply cozying up on the couch in front of the stone fireplace, the couple's vision for creating a relaxing and comfortable home that embraces both indoor and outdoor living has undeniably been achieved in this Carmel Highlands home. **ce**





The Key to Effortless Power

By Matt Pridey, Professional Golfer



Every player wants to be able to hit the ball farther. The only issue is that more times than not they go about it all wrong. Before you give up all hope and adopt the “grip it and rip it” mentality, allow me to share a few simple thoughts that just might help you not only to hit it farther, but make better contact and increase consistency at the same time.

Golf is a game that is performed based on the unique abilities of the individual; take what you do well and build on it!

The Hazard of the Internet

The Internet has quickly become the recreational golfers’ worst enemy. Articles often preach about a “quick fix” when the reality is there isn’t much that is quick when it comes to the process of shaping a golf swing. It takes time, repetition, and more

importantly, understanding what you as an individual do wrong and how to fix it. It’s important to keep in mind that every “fix” you read about or see on Instagram, YouTube, or TV, although potentially valuable, is not tailored specifically to you. Golf is a game that is performed based on the unique abilities of the individual; take what you do well and build on it! At times it’s easy to get lost in the complexity of the golf swing and forget simply to do just that, swing.

Creating Effortless Power: Ease the Tension!

Set aside the idea that harder equals farther. The reality is that generally speaking, if you try to swing “harder” the only place you’re going to hit it is farther in the wrong direction! The first important concept to understand is that generating speed and power in the golf swing results from proper sequencing of your hips, arms, and shoulders. Each piece needs the other to create effortless power, and ultimately improve contact and distance. Most people try to swing harder by

using their arms. This is where the problems generally begin. If the arms start to do all the work, they leave the rest of your body (hips, shoulders) behind leading to a loss of power and often times poor contact, again contributing to lost distance. Next time you watch golf on television or at a PGA Tour event, pay close attention to the rhythm the PGA Tour players have. You will have a difficult time finding a player that looks like he swings at a speed that is not in control. Ok ok, we all know that Bryson is an exception to the rule. Watch closely and you will notice that the speed in the swing doesn’t start from the top of the backswing; it is created near the ball as the hips rotate and drive the hands

Most people try to swing harder by using their arms. This is where the problems generally begin.

and arms through the shot. Swinging harder from the top of the swing creates tension primarily throughout the arms and wrists. This is detrimental to creating and more importantly, repeating good contact. Tension leads to limited mobility and if the body is not able to function normally it will lead to poor timing and once again, poor contact. Remember, find a swing speed that you can repeat that creates consistent contact. It’s true that increased club head speed contributes to further drives, but if the speed isn’t created in the right way, it’s done for nothing.

Make Good Contact

You may begin to see a theme forming here: good contact is crucial to gaining distance. A common misconception in the golf swing is that your swing speed directly relates to how far you can or will hit the golf ball.

While this is true in the grand scheme of things, the deciding factor is actually ball speed. And how do you increase ball speed? The answer remains simple, good contact. A player that swings with no sense of balance and rhythm will often times mishit their tee shot. A study done by Golf Digest found that with a driver, a ball mishit only 1 inch away from the center of the clubface lost roughly 30 yards in distance! That's a substantial loss in distance for something that sounds as simple as making good contact. Take a moment to think about your time spent on the driving range when you hit balls. What happens when you make a practice swing? It's likely that you swing with great balance and tempo and don't even know it. Add a ball into the equation and what happens? The natural instinct is to react to the ball and increase tension throughout the body, swing out of balance and even out of tempo. Not exactly a great recipe for good ball striking! The next time you practice or play, make a

practice swing at a smooth pace with no golf ball then repeat that same smooth swing as you hit a golf ball. If this is done correctly you will likely notice that your tempo, balance, and contact improved leading to increased distance!

A common misconception in the golf swing is that your swing speed directly relates to how far you can or will hit the golf ball.

Create Consistent Impact

One of the greatest challenges amateurs face when trying to find good impact consistently is that they don't know what it feels like in the first place. Players generally battle the same issues in the swing year after year because they never focus on improving their impact position! Over the years, teaching

has been geared toward creating the perfect backswing before you even learn how to hit the ball. The truth is, consistent golf shots start with consistent impact, not a great backswing! The pros are the best in the world at creating consistent impact position because they know what it looks like and how to get there. Next time you watch them swing, don't pay so much attention to the backswing, but instead watch the position that the body and club are in when the club returns to the ball. This is the impact position, and the key to creating consistent contact and distance control. Once you can learn what it feels like to create consistent impact, you will start to results and added distance! **ce**



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Economic Impacts of Proposed Order Are Significant

By Abby Taylor-Silva, Grower-Shipper Association of Central California



The Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (Regional Board) is considering a new regulation to address water quality and agricultural lands on the Central Coast. Numerous agricultural partners came together to respond collectively to the first draft of this order. We were unable to support the draft order due to the considerable economic impact of the proposed regulation.

We knew the economic implications of the proposed order would be substantial, and asked ERA Economics (ERA) to provide an analysis. They found the economic cost of the proposed nitrogen discharge limits alone (for lettuce in Monterey County) would be over \$683 million annually. This, coupled with mandatory riparian and operational setbacks, ranch level monitoring, other prescriptive requirements related to

sediment and erosion management and increased reporting, as well as a deficient Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR), cemented our decision to oppose the draft order.

ERA was asked to conduct two separate analyses within the comment deadline. The first analysis looked broadly at the impacts of the proposed order. The study found that the substantial expansion of requirements in this regulation, as compared to the previous versions, will impose significant new costs on growers. Some regulatory components, such as proposed nitrogen discharge limits, may make current rotation systems economically or agronomically infeasible. It's expected that this regulation would result in substantial economic impacts in various forms, including precipitous drops in land values and property taxes.

The DEIR did not adequately analyze the

impacts of meeting the nitrogen discharge limits, which would require reducing applied nitrogen and/or incurring substantial new management costs as well as opportunity costs related to transitioning staff and consultant time. New costs included additional compliance paperwork, training and administration. All of these would result in potential changes to crop yield, quality, and costs that would affect the mix and number of crops that can be grown in the region, leading to land being idled and/or permanently removed from production.

This economic analysis also highlights the realities of a new regulatory cost, and how that affects the competitiveness of California agriculture. Complimenting a study published in 2018, in which researchers at Cal Poly San Luis Obispo revisited the regulatory costs borne by a Central Coast lettuce grower over a decade, ERA reiterated

that regulatory costs are cumulative, and that Central Coast agriculture is managing implementation of a suite of regulations. Incredibly, the Cal Poly study (Hamilton and McCullough, 2018) found that in the past decade, regulatory compliance costs have increased 795 percent for a typical leafy greens grower.

ERA then conducted a deeper-dive look at nitrogen discharge limits in a second memorandum, and the findings were staggering. If only this portion of the regulation is adopted, it's expected that the gross value of lettuce production in Monterey County will decrease by \$119.4 million annually by 2030 and by \$683 million by 2050. Additionally, total job losses in those periods are estimated at 1,985 lost due when the regulatory limits change in 2030 and 11,340 when the regulations hit their final limit requirement in 2050. That's incredibly significant when you consider that in Monterey County we have 63,921 agricultural jobs, including 57,503 direct employees and 6,417 additional jobs attributable to multiple affects (Economic Contributions of Monterey County Agriculture, 2020). This would represent almost 18 percent of all local ag jobs, lost due to one element of this regulation, on one commodity, in one county alone.

Agriculture on the Central Coast is critical, not just because of the food we produce for the nation and our world, but because of the considerable economic benefit of having so much of our nation's supply of lettuces, artichokes, strawberries, wine grapes and much more produced here.

The Grower-Shipper Association of Central California, Monterey County Farm Bureau, Western Growers, the Grower-Shipper Association of Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo Counties, and Western Plan Health Association have brought forward a comprehensive, legally and technically defensible proposal and we will provide a reasonable path forward toward a common goal of protecting and improving water quality. In September 2020 the Regional Board will meet to discuss and ERA Economics' two analyses will be one of many highlights of our presentation. Feel free to reach out for a copy. **ce**



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Avocados in California

By Michael Hartmeier

In April 2013 Lieutenant Governor Gavin Newsom issued a proclamation declaring the Avocado to be the official fruit of the State of California, in addition to a few other newly recognized state symbols. Why did this happen? Well, under the California Constitution, the powers of the Governor fall to the Lieutenant Governor when the former is not physically within the State of California. In April 2013, Governor Brown was on an official visit to China, leaving then-Lt. Governor Gavin Newsom the executive of California. During such times, the Lt. Governor has full gubernatorial powers, including signing or vetoing laws, declaring emergencies, etc. The proclamation was apparently only effective until the end of 2013, but, more to the point, was still a significant nod to a fruit that is a major part of the agricultural economy as well as the culture of California.

Originally planted in the United States in Florida, California now produces over 90 percent of the avocados grown in the United States, and the fruit has grown to be strongly associated with the Golden State over the last century.

The Avocado (*Persea americana*) is a New World plant, believed to have originated in southern Mexico and Central America. From the Incans to the Aztecs, there is evidence of pre-Columbian communities using the domesticated avocado. Indeed, they were given to European Explorers as early as the 1520s, who corrupted the native word for the fruit into the Spanish aguacate. Although the



first use of the term “Avocado” to describe the fruit came from an Irish naturalist in 1696, who likely either corrupted or Anglicized the Spanish term, “Avocado” did not become the mainstream English name for the fruit until it was adopted and marketed as such by the California Avocado Association in 1915. Prior to that, it was known as several similar versions of the Spanish and native names for the fruit, as well as the straightforward (though clever) “Alligator Pear”. In any case, according to the University of California Agriculture and Natural Resources, the fruit was introduced to California from Nicaragua in the mid-1800s. Around the turn of the 19th Century to the 20th Century, the plant slowly took hold as a regular crop in Santa Barbara and other parts of southern California.

Originally planted in the United States in Florida, California now produces over 90 percent of the avocados grown in the United States, and the fruit has grown to be strongly associated with the Golden State over the last century. California farms about 52,000 acres of Avocados, producing anywhere from 150,000-200,000 tons each year at a value of \$300-400 million. A warmer climate plant, most avocados are grown in Ventura and San Diego counties, with only 225 acres farmed in Monterey County in 2019, about 4,200 acres in San Luis Obispo County, and around 5,000 acres in Santa Barbara County. Avocados grow on trees, which reach about 20 plus feet in height for the Hass cultivar and have a commercially productive lifespan of 20-35 years. The Hass cultivar was the result of postman Rudolph Hass planting a new seedling from avocado grower A.R. Rideout in his backyard in Los Angeles County in the 1920s. Hass kept the tree at the behest of his children, and later patented the variety in 1935. Today the variety accounts for 95 percent of all avocados grown in the United States and about 80 percent of avocados consumed worldwide (according to the California Avocado Commission). The Hass cultivar of the fruit has a shape similar to a symmetrical pear, with dark, thick, bumpy skin. Botanically the avocado is actually a berry due to its fleshy endocarp, a part of the ovary that protects the seed in fruit. Conversely, in drupes (stone fruits), the endocarp is thicker and tougher, such as that

found on peach pits.

Nationally, avocado consumption has grown dramatically since the 1990s due to the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), which allowed the fruit to be imported from Mexico. From 1914-1997, avocados from Mexico could not be imported to the contiguous United States over fear of pests, among other economic concerns. At first, when the ban was lifted in 1997, no avocados could be imported to California. Although Mexican avocados can now be found throughout the United States year-round, California still produces a considerable portion (15-25 percent) of the avocados consumed in the United States each year. California avocados ripen in the spring and summer and go to market during those

Whatever your favorite dish, the avocado is a versatile and mainstay agricultural product of California, and one that will surely continue to showcase California’s bounty on tables throughout the United States for years to come.

seasons. Since the 1990s, consumption in the United States has nearly tripled to about seven pounds per person per year, an increase attributed both to NAFTA and the rising Latino population in the United States, which has nearly doubled as a percentage of total population since 1990.

The increase in national availability and consumption of the fruit has showcased many of the avocado’s favorable health benefits. The nutrient-dense fruit is high in monounsaturated fats (the “good” fats) and is naturally free of salt, sugar, and cholesterol. The health focus and expanded availability have also contributed to the use of the fruit in a wide variety of cooking capacities, including pastries, soups, creams, cooking oils, and as a spread on toast. Avocado oil is used in a variety of cosmetic products, but has recently gained popularity as a cooking oil, as it is

similar to olive oil and has a higher smoke point. The favorable nature of avocado oil has seen a spike in demand in-line with that of avocado fruit, though a recent study from the University of California, Davis cautioned that 82 percent of avocado oils available at local stores and online were rancid or mixed with other oils contrary to labelling.

On the finished-foods menu, “Avocado Toast” has actually been around since the late 1800s, but blossomed into a major food trend of the mid 2010s, likely aided by social media users posting their unique and/or picturesque dishes on Instagram and other platforms. Avocado toast, which can be as simple as spreading mashed avocado on toast or as complex as a gourmet meal on bread, is sometimes seen as an alternative to buttered toast, given the more favorable fats found in avocados. Toast aside, perhaps the most popular and well-known dish that utilizes the avocado is guacamole. Some version of guacamole was enjoyed by Native Americans, and the word even derives from a word used by the Nahua people native to central Mexico that meant “avocado sauce”. Guacamole grew in popularity in the United States in the 1970s, perhaps a result of marketing campaigns from the California Avocado Advisory Board and magazines featuring recipes. Typical ingredients of guacamole include mashed avocados, salt, lime juice, and peppers, though many people have their own special recipes that feature other ingredients. My grandmother, for example, learned her recipe which featured garlic and tomatoes, among other ingredients, from a local market in Mexicali in the 1960s.

Whatever your favorite dish, the avocado is a versatile and mainstay agricultural product of California, and one that will surely continue to showcase California’s bounty on tables throughout the United States for years to come. Perhaps someday this “good fat” and nutrient rich berry will find its way into permanent standing as the official state fruit. **ce**

Air Quality and Grant Funding

By Steve McShane



Here along the Central Coast, we enjoy some of the cleanest air in the nation. Our climate is the envy of world and there's an important agency that plays a key role in looking after it. This agency is the Monterey Bay Air Resources District (MBARD). While most growers and shippers know MBARD for its regulatory role, it also administers funding to assist with the purchase of less polluting agricultural equipment as well.

The mission of the Monterey Bay Air Resources District is to protect public health and the environment from the effects of air pollution. This is made possible through education, regulating local sources of air pollution and enforcement. MBARD is also responsible for air monitoring, permitting, source testing and long-range air quality planning related to clean air. The District permits and inspects more than 2,000 stationary sources of air pollution. This includes oil fields, manufacturers, power plants, gasoline stations, auto body shops,

dry cleaners, and standby generators.

MBARD is funded by both fees and grants. The two largest sources of funding come from vehicle registration fees and annual permit fees paid by businesses and industries

The mission of the Monterey Bay Air Resources District is to protect public health and the environment from the effects of air pollution. This is made possible through education, regulating local sources of air pollution and enforcement.

that emit pollutants. Other funding sources include State and federal grants, fines for violations, and contributions from local cities and counties in the service area.

MBARD is governed by an 11-member Board of Directors appointed from the elected

governing bodies of the local jurisdictions. Six Board members are county supervisors, five are mayors or city council members. The Air Pollution Control Officer is appointed by the Board and serves as Executive Director of the District. I am proud to say that I have been Chair of this board for the past two years.

The District's planning ensures that our region meets State and federal air quality standards. One of our most important roles is to provide education to inform the general public about local air quality issues and about steps we can take to reduce air pollution. The District operates a monitoring network to determine compliance with State and federal air quality standards. The network provides real-time data based on the Air Quality Index (AQI) that is available on the District's website montereybaycleanair.org.

The District also provides grants to local agencies and local businesses to reduce emissions. One of our most impactful programs is the Diesel Engine and Equipment Replacement (DEER) Program. This program provides millions of dollars each year to assist with the purchase and operation of cleaner vehicles and equipment that produce less air pollution.

MBARD also administers the Carl Moyer Grant Program. The Moyer program provides funding to encourage replacement of older



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heavy-duty motors/engines. In 2018, MBARD received additional grant funding from the Air Resources Board for the Funding Agricultural Replacement Measures for Emission Reductions (FARMER), Community Air Protection Incentives, and NOx Remediation Measure programs. The types of equipment funded include irrigation pump engines, mobile agricultural equipment, commercial marine vessels, and construction equipment.

MBARD also has an incentive program that is open to the general public for the purchase and or lease of electric vehicles. Typical incentive amounts range from \$2,000 to \$4,000, depending on your income status. In addition, MBARD has been funding and overseeing the installation of electric vehicle charging stations throughout its three county jurisdiction. For example, through a partnership with Caltrans, MBARD established two of the first solar-powered electric vehicle charging stations in the nation.

MBARD is committed to working with the community and industry in an effort to maintain clean air alongside a healthy environment. Air quality is especially important during the pandemic since impaired air quality can exacerbate COVID-19 health effects. If you want to know more about MBARD and the work that they do, please check out our website at www.mbard.org.

*Steve McShane is Owner and General Manager of McShane's Landscape Supply in Salinas. He can be reached at steve@mcshaneslandscape.com. **CG***

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# Having a Place at the Table COVID-19 Task Force

*Interview of Tom Broz, Tom Am Rhein and Nishan Moutafian*

By Jess Brown



**T**he Santa Cruz County Farm Bureau formed a task force to work with the County on COVID-19 as it pertains to agriculture. The Task Force is composed of Tom Am Rhein, Chair, and Vice President at Naturipe Berry Growers; Nishan Moutafian, Driscoll's, Inc. District Manager, Watsonville/Salinas; Tom Broz, Owner, Live Earth Farms.

**JESS:** Why was the Santa Cruz County Farm Bureau COVID-19 Task Force formed?

**TOM AM RHEIN:** We realized early on that the Health Department really needed a proactive, collaborative, broad based, direct and transparent line of communication with the farmers in Santa Cruz County. The Farm Bureau was uniquely suited to provide that.

**NISHAN:** Agriculture is a vital part of this community and our local economy, and California agriculture at large plays a big role in our nation's food supply. It is critical that we all work together to keep our community healthy and keep grocery shelves stocked.

The COVID-19 Task Force enables the Farm Bureau to better support these goals through staying engaged with County leadership, staying informed of new developments, providing advocacy for solutions, and quickly disseminating information and best practices.

**TOM BROZ:** The task force plays an important role to coordinate and communicate the agricultural realities and needs of Santa Cruz County's principal industry and makes sure not only resources are fairly allocated but messaging to the media and public at large are not misleading or end up misrepresenting the reality on the ground.

**JESS:** When did you first realize that COVID-19 was a major issue?

**TOM AM RHEIN:** I have cousins in Germany who farm berries. We had planned that they would visit us in early February and March. We were planning to meet them at San Francisco Airport when they called and said they were at the airport in Frankfurt ready to board and they were told their return tickets had been cancelled, so they did not get on the plane. That was the first time that COVID touched our lives in a way that made us realize we were in for a long ordeal.

**TOM BROZ:** When the virus started spreading into Europe — especially Italy. We were witnessing an entire country/continent starting to shut down.

**JESS:** When did you first implement protocol changes on the farms that you represent due to the pandemic?

**NISHAN:** Because production started later in this area than in Southern California or Mexico, we had the opportunity to

learn from regions that were in full swing when the pandemic started, and translate their learnings into additional safety measures. Growers have been in constant communication across the state, sharing their best practices on how to modify field activities to enable social distancing, reduce crew sizes, provide education, and intensify preexisting hygiene and sanitizing protocols, among other changes. As best practices emerge, growers have been quick to communicate and adopt what works.

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**I'm not sure that people who are not close to agriculture understand the many measures agricultural operations already had in place to ensure both a safe work environment and that safe foods are brought to market.**

---

**JESS:** What protocols were in place prior to this pandemic that makes our food safe and protects farmworkers and what further protocols were implemented after the pandemic?

**TOM AM RHEIN:** Our food safety program is quite comprehensive, especially in regards to hand washing and disinfecting of commonly touched surfaces. So, we added facemask policies and social distancing policies. We added more hand wash stations but reduced the number of faucets at each one. We added fully paid time to each break period in order to allow more time for hand washing and the daily health check routine. We also added procedures so that trays were not passed directly from pickers to loaders,

and there is a physical barrier between pickers and the quality control inspector.

**NISHAN:** All of our independent growers must comply with the rigorous food safety and employment regulations that exist in the fresh produce industry to ensure safe food is brought to market. Workplace safety, worker hygiene and proper handwashing protocols have always been required in Standard Operating Procedures. We supported efforts throughout our enterprise to convert in-field hand washing stations to hands-free activation. We are pleased to see that cloth face coverings, in particular bandanas and procedural masks, and social distancing practices are widely in use throughout our enterprise to help prevent the spread of the virus.

**JESS:** What is the biggest misperception about farming and COVID-19?

**TOM AM RHEIN:** I think the biggest misperception is that farm workers are getting COVID at the farm and they need outside “community” organizations to “help” them. People do not understand that farmers and farm workers know that neither one will survive if they don’t cooperate with each other to keep the industry moving ahead. Farmers and farm workers are working together to prevent COVID spread. I have often heard folks say they are thankful to be able to go work every day on the farm when so many others have been unemployed and sheltered in place.

**NISHAN:** I’m not sure that people who are not close to agriculture understand the many

measures agricultural operations already had in place to ensure both a safe work environment and that safe foods are brought to market. The existing health and safety measures have served as a strong foundation to build upon in response to COVID-19. I have been really impressed by the response I have seen by Driscoll’s and its independent growers, and throughout the industry at large. Above all, I see growers empowering all employees to be a part of the solution; creating a safe environment to continue to produce fresh berries requires great focus and the contribution of every person involved in the operation.

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**I hope that this experience brings the nation’s attention to the importance of agriculture and an appreciation for all the people, science, and resources it takes to keep safe and healthy foods in grocery stores 365 days a year.**

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**JESS:** What are the challenges that small farms have in dealing with the pandemic compared with larger farming operations?

**TOM BROZ:** Although smaller farms don’t have to manage a large number of workers and can avoid overcrowded conditions and are probably nimbler to adapt to the challenges in the marketplace, they often lack

the resources to implement costly practices, make infrastructural adjustments and meet sudden regulatory requirements. A small farm that needs to shut down in the height of the season will have difficulty surviving financially.

**JESS:** In this pandemic, how does farming differ from other types of business?

**TOM AM RHEIN:** I think the basic difference is that we are outside, and at least in the berry industry, we can maintain social distancing at all points in the production chain. I also believe that our structure of crews is similar to a sports team. So, we have team captains, special coaches, head coaches and team managers in the form of foremen and women, GAP inspectors, QC checkers, HR and then the farm owner. The crews expect and deserve leadership, training and guidance when someone does get COVID. I think they expect to get that leadership directly from “the Boss” or head coach or team manager in a way that may not be how a corporate retail store, for example would operate. Video conferences and training on Zoom do not cut it at the farm.

**JESS:** The Task Force has had weekly meetings with officials from the County Health Office. Has that been helpful?

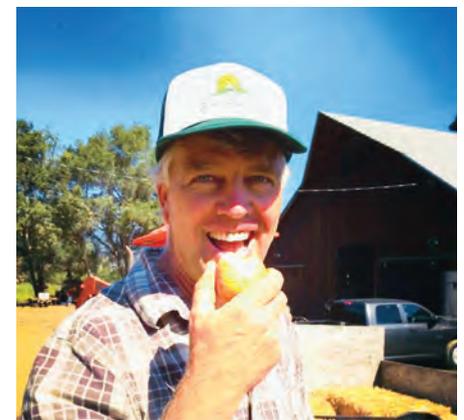
**TOM AM RHEIN:** Absolutely. We have been able to inform the Health Department on how things actually work in the field. We have offered help on how to better communicate with farm workers. We provided translation services for some of the guidelines we have helped the County develop. We have been



Tom Am Rhein



Nishan Moutafian



Tom Broz

able to provide valuable insight as to how Santa Cruz County Agriculture differs from other coastal counties and what that means in terms of interpreting data and creating policy. We are also working to help the county assure sufficient isolation housing is available when needed.

**NISHAN:** I have really appreciated the ongoing engagement with the County Health Office. It has helped us to stay informed on key developments, share perspective,

contribute to solutions for the issues and opportunities that arise, and represent the work that is being done in the fields to keep farm workers safe.

**JESS:** At this point and time, the County is identifying a few of the occupations, such as farm workers, in their data. Does that give a clear picture of how the virus is spreading?

**TOM AM RHEIN:** If you really want to understand what drives COVID spread in

the coastal counties of California, looking at occupational data, especially for farm workers, is not the place to start. The data is clear that looking at discreet geographic areas, such as zip codes, and then looking at characteristics in those areas such as housing density and age of the population will really tell the story. It is also a mistake to use the category of “farm workers” as a proxy for “Hispanics”, or vice versa, which seems to be a direction some want to go.

**TOM BROZ:** In my opinion virus transmission is still not entirely understood. It seems misleading to identify only a few industries, a particular group people or workers living in our community.

**JESS:** In the future, if another pandemic occurs, what should we have learned from this experience?

**TOM AM RHEIN:** First of all, we need to fight for local control. The statewide shut down and shelter in place applied broadly in my opinion did more harm than good in our farm worker communities. Families living in high-density conditions could not even take their kids to the local community park. Then I heard some complain that the people just wouldn’t listen and stay locked up. If we want to change behavior in our workforce, we shouldn’t begin with mandates and decrees. We need to educate the workforce, seek input and discuss and then let them decide they need to do certain things because it’s good for them to do it. Several of the best changes we made in our processes came from the crews, not the CDC. We have to trust and empower our people to create solutions.

**NISHAN:** I hope that this experience brings the nation’s attention to the importance of agriculture and an appreciation for all the people, science, and resources it takes to keep safe and healthy foods in grocery stores 365 days a year.

**TOM BROZ:** We need coherent and robust leadership at all levels of government where the safety and health measures are not politicized but enforced convincingly and fairly to all. **CG**

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# Eating for Immunity

By Stephanie Bouquet, MS, RD, CSSD, CDE, SB Nutrition Consulting

**A**s daily information unfolds about the coronavirus, there is no better time to think about keeping your body as healthy as it can be. Thankfully, we each have an intricate network of cells, tissues, and organs (known as the immune system) to fight off disease. It is comprised of two main parts, a portion we are born with (innate) and another portion that develops each time the body is exposed to outside invaders (like bacteria, viruses, or toxins). There is no ideal way to protect the body from disease development, but it appears healthy lifestyle habits can play a key role in strengthening the body's ability to fight off harmful pathogens.

Following general healthy habits (like getting enough sleep, reducing stress levels, and partaking in regular physical activity) are the best steps you can take toward naturally keeping your immune system strong and healthy. The foods you eat just might be the most powerful ally available for prevention and treatment.

Make sure your diet includes the following key nutrients:

## **Probiotics:**

Probiotics, often called "good" living organisms, reside naturally in foods. The body also houses a multitude of these "helpful" bacterial strains that need to remain in balance for optimal health and immunity. A daily dose of an unsweetened live cultured yogurt or a fermented food (like kefir, kombucha, sauerkraut, miso or tempeh) has shown promise as one of the best prophylactic measures to keep digestive and urinary systems disease free.

## **Fiber:**

Foods containing dietary fiber (primarily fruits, vegetables, nuts, and whole grains) have been found to promote an optimal



environment (or microbiome) in the gut. Fiber is considered the fertilizer (or prebiotic) that feeds the healthy bacteria to fight off disease-causing organisms. There are two main forms of fiber (soluble and insoluble), which work together, as well as separately in disease prevention. For example, the soluble (or dissolvable) fiber type works directly on the removal of dietary fat and cholesterol from the body before injury to blood vessels occur. Foods containing insoluble fiber, like whole grain cereals and breads, mimic the action of a broom sweeping the gastrointestinal tract of toxins, possible carcinogens, and other unwanted waste products. Collectively, both forms of fiber promote a steady blood sugar level leading to satiety after meals and subsequent weight maintenance.

### **Phytochemicals:**

Plant (“phyto”) based foods contain hundreds (or possibly thousands) of natural chemicals. The compounds, polyphenols (high doses found in berries, pomegranates and spinach), isothiocyanates (found in cruciferous vegetables like broccoli and cauliflower) and anthocyanins (the main contributor of the deep red color in beets) are the most highly studied phytochemicals to date. These compounds work to neutralize or block harmful substances from damaging body cells. By incorporating the recommended five to nine servings of colorful fruits and vegetables daily ensures the right mix of phytochemicals for battling disease development.

### **Healthy Fats:**

Liquid or unsaturated fats are considered healthy fats to eat. More specifically, omega-3 fatty acids (found in fatty, cold water fish like salmon, mackerel, anchovies, sardines, and tuna) are essential to the human body but cannot be internally manufactured. A diet rich in omega-3 fatty acids has been linked to reducing blood clotting, lowering triglycerides (a type of fat in the blood) and minimizing inflammation (“oxidative” damage) leading to reduced incidence of heart disease, cancer and cognitive impairment. Ingestion of eicosapentaenoic acid (EPA) and docosahexaenoic acid (DHA) are the main

two fish oils linked to cardiovascular benefits and reductions in cell oxidation. Alpha-Linolenic Acid (ALA), is the omega-3 fatty acid housed in plant foods (like dark leafy vegetables, canola oil, walnuts, and flaxseeds), but it does not provide the same potency or functionality as the fish sources. The American Heart Association recommends consuming 1 gram (or 1000 mg) of omega-3 fatty acids per day or in larger therapeutic quantities with known cognitive or heart conditions. As little as 3-4 ounces of salmon (the size of a deck of playing cards) will provide this daily recommendation. Many fish oil supplements are available on the market, but it is important that the EPA and DHA oils contribute the 1 gram (or as close as possible) in the supplement.

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**There is no ideal way to protect the body from disease development, but it appears healthy lifestyle habits can play a key role in strengthening the body's ability to fight off harmful pathogens.**

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### **Vitamins and Minerals:**

Foods rich in vitamins and minerals work synergistically to promote important body functions. Green leafy vegetables are good examples of foods that naturally contain a combination of calcium, magnesium, and potassium. These minerals promote optimal blood pressure and heart function. High concentrations of vitamin C and potassium have elevated blueberries into a “superfood” classification due to their superior antioxidant and body fluid balance properties.

New research is underway to determine if Vitamin D deficiency may correlate to serious respiratory infection development. Vitamin D does play an important role in bone health, cell growth and immune function. It is known as the “sunshine vitamin” as it is synthesized within the body when ultraviolet rays from the sun strike human skin. Because Vitamin D is naturally occurring in a limited number of foods (salmon, swordfish, cod liver oil, egg



yolks), foods fortified with the vitamin (such as milk, yogurts, cheeses, and cereals) provide the highest percentage to the American diet. Older adults, individuals with limited sun exposure and darker skinned individuals are at greatest risk for vitamin D deficiency.

Although many of the mentioned substances are available in pill or supplement form for consumption, it is best to first eat food sources (fruits, vegetables, whole grains, healthy fats, and lean proteins) to obtain these disease-fighting compounds. Nature knows just the right amounts the body needs. **cc**

*Montrio Bistro's Local Farmers Market Recipe*

# Grilled Stone Fruit, Ricotta Cheese, Saba, Lemon Oil, Arugula, Toasted Almonds

Courtesy of Chef Justin Robarge

## Ingredients

- 1 each peach (any kind will work)
- 1 each nectarine
- 1 each pluot or Aprium or Plumcot
- 1 each Shallot, sliced
- 2T. Olive oil
- 1T. Sherry Vinegar
- 1T Fresh Basil (3-4 leaves, cut in thin strips)

## Procedure

Slice each fruit in half and remove the pit. Place all halves in a bowl and toss with Shallots, oil, vinegar, salt, and pepper. Place cut side down on a pre-heated grill for 2-3 minutes. Allow to cool and cut into cubes. Place back in bowl, toss with basil and set aside.

## Ricotta Cheese

- ½ gallon Whole Milk
- 1/3 Cup distilled White Vinegar
- 1/3 Cup Fresh Lemon Juice
- 1 tsp. Kosher Salt

## Procedure

Heat Milk to 185-195 Degrees F. Let it warm gradually. Add vinegar and lemon juice and stir in gently. Turn off the heat and allow to sit undisturbed for 20 minutes. Place a strainer in a bowl with cheese cloth and manually take out large curds with a slotted spoon and place in the strainer. Pour the remaining liquid and curds in the strainer. Let sit for 10-15 minutes.

## Final Presentation

This is where the fun lies! Be creative, conjure up your inner chef and have fun! Place the arugula in a bowl or on a plate and top with the fruit mixture and ricotta. The Saba and the lemon oil (ratio of 1 part Saba to 2 parts oil) can be drizzled all over or just tossed in with the Arugula. Sprinkle the toasted almonds all around or use your tweezer tongs to perfectly place them. I would love to see what you come up with!

Bon Appetit 



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# Hartnell College Foundation's 'Party in the Library'

**H**artnell College Foundation raised \$400,000 with an 80-minute 'Party in the Library' via ZOOM, when COVID-19 forced cancellation of Hartnell's most important yearly fundraiser, Party in the Library.

The winning fundraising formula was developed by a volunteer committee working with the foundation staff and fundraising consultant Alla Zeltser.

Jackie Cruz, VP of Advancement/ED Foundation, opened the evening with thanks to all involved. "We're super and amazingly grateful for you, for our students, for our community's strength and for Hartnell's 100 years."

Board President Judith Sulsona acknowledged the imagination and hard work of the staff and volunteers who pivoted to execute the event, and of the "creativity and leadership" of the planning committee's co-chairs, Susan Gill, Alfred Diaz-Infante and Kurt Gollnick, all members of the Foundation board.

Aurelio Salazar Jr., president of the Hartnell Community College District Governing Board, was joined at the event by the board's vice president, Pat Donohue, and trustees Erica Padilla-Chavez, Candi DePauw and Manuel Osorio.

A "live" auction was hosted by Butch Lindley. A surprise gift of \$10,000 from Chevron was announced by Andrea Bailey.

The evening also featured the presentation of an annual Leadership Award, presented to Anne Secker, attorney and community leader and two-time past President of the Foundation board.

"Party" co-chair Susan Gill of King City underscored the significance of the event's success saying, "Our sponsors, donors and committee members stuck by us and continued to support us with their dollars, leadership, time and a range of resources so that others would be inspired to support students at this time of transition."

2019-20 student body president and student trustee Samantha Saldana, reflected that, "It's just such a hard time for us right now because everything in our lives is telling us that pursuing an education is going to be the least easy thing to do...I'm grateful for Hartnell because of their response to this crisis. They worked so quickly to make sure that every single student is equipped with everything they need to succeed. And as the student body president, on behalf of all our Hartnell students, I'd like to say thank you!"



1) Party in the Library committee and sponsors in position to launch the virtual event. 2) Hartnell College Foundation President, Judy Sulsona. 3) Honoree and recipient of the Hartnell College Leadership Award - Anne Secker. 4) Party in the Library Co-Chair Susan Gill with David Gill. 5) Hartnell College student Jenel Fraij shows her love for Hartnell.



  
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# Women's Education and Leadership Institute (WELI)

**W**omen's Education and Leadership Institute (WELI) was founded in early 2011 by community leaders who saw a need to advance the education and economic status of women and families in Monterey County. WELI provides the four keys to success: resources, education, social support, and mentorship.

The WELI program consists of summer leadership training, an on-campus, student-lead WELI club, a powerful mentorship with community leaders and a \$2,000 financial award per student, making this a life-changing experience.

Since its inception in 2011, the WELI program has graduated more than 200 scholars and granted approximately \$400,000 in scholarships.

WELI serves women who are socio-economically disadvantaged. Despite the life challenges that WELI scholars face, they have been able to achieve outstanding outcomes through the support of the program and its members.

Of the students, 97 percent achieve their personal academic goals, and 72 percent of WELI scholars have graduated with a certificate or degree, versus 41 percent of women with the same GPA who were not in WELI.

In terms of transfer, WELI scholars transfer at a 65 percent rate overall, versus 38 percent when compared with other female students who are enrolled in at least nine units with at least a 2.5 grade point average.

## Significance

Statistics support that a college-educated woman is more likely to become financially self-sufficient and pursue a meaningful career. The education level of a mother is a strong indicator of the success her daughters and sons will have as adults.

## WELI Forum

The now annual WELI Forum brings together business and community leaders to support the Women's Education and Leadership Institute. The Forum promotes the economic prosperity of women through higher education. This important event funds the WELI endowment, ensuring that the valuable support offered through this program is available to the women of this community for generations to come. Our 2020 Forum will be rescheduled in early 2021, details to be announced! [www.hartnellfoundation.org](http://www.hartnellfoundation.org)

1) Salinas Valley Promise Coordinator, Chynna Obana with Former WELI Scholars attending WELI Forum 2019 (left to right) Adriana Gonzalez Sebastian, Stephanie Fierro, and Ana Ibarra. 2) WELI Forum Committee chairs and Forum Producer enjoy WELI Forum 2019, (left to right) Alla Zeltser (Alla and Co.), Karen Fanoie and Sharon Dilbeck (Dilbeck and Sons). 3) WELI Forum 2019 Panelists (left to right) Adrienne Laurent (SVMH) and Andrea Bailey (Chevron U.S.A., Inc.) respond to questions by moderator and Vice President of Advancement at Hartnell College, Jackie Cruz. 4) WELI scholar directs questions toward Forum panelists. 5) Women of WELI enjoying the reception at Tehama.





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# The Future Citizens Foundation

**T**he **Future Citizens Foundation** has impacted more than 80,000 of our youth throughout Monterey County since 2004. Our mission is to offer young people of Monterey County opportunities for a better future. Three distinct programs further our mission:

The **First Tee of Monterey County (FTMC)** was founded in 2004 and is the largest youth-serving nonprofit organization in Monterey County, impacting the lives of over 70,000 young people since its inception.

FTMC teaches young people between the ages of 7 and 17 valuable life skills and core values through the game of golf. Golf and Life Skills Experience classes are conducted throughout the county, including its 9-hole campus in Salinas, King City Golf Course, and at 23 Elementary schools. Through active partnerships with six school districts, FTMC serves over 9,000 youth annually.

In 2020 FTMC was awarded the prestigious Monterey County School Boards Association's Excellence in Education Award.

Through private funds, the **Pay It Forward Scholarship and Mentoring Program** provides a \$20,000 a four-year scholarship at CSU, Monterey Bay, to local Monterey County students who are first generation college students. Each scholarship recipient is mentored for four years by a community leader. The Scholar must maintain a four-year graduation track and must mentor a participant at the First Tee for five hours each month. Over \$2.4 million in scholarships have been awarded and 54 percent of our scholars graduate with honors.

The **Taylor Farms Center for Learning** is outfitted with the latest technology designed for stimulated learning. The Center will provide a continuum of services for the youth that we serve helping. The continuum touches each part of their life from elementary school through college. The Center offers programs in three primary focus areas of: Academia, STEAM, and Life Exploration and Preparation.

**Boots, Bottles & BBQ (BBB)** is our annual fundraiser, raising over \$625,000 in 2019. What began as a casual BBQ has grown into one of Salinas Valley's most beloved events. This year, the BBB will go virtual on September 12. The BBB has always featured fantastic BBQ, spectacular California wines, and great entertainment. Sponsors will receive amazing benefits including BBQ delivery, wine tasting, and entertainment!



1) First Tee Monterey County. 2) Pay it Forward. 3) Thank you for Supporting Us! 4) Girls Time Only. 5) Taylor Farms Center For Learning.



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