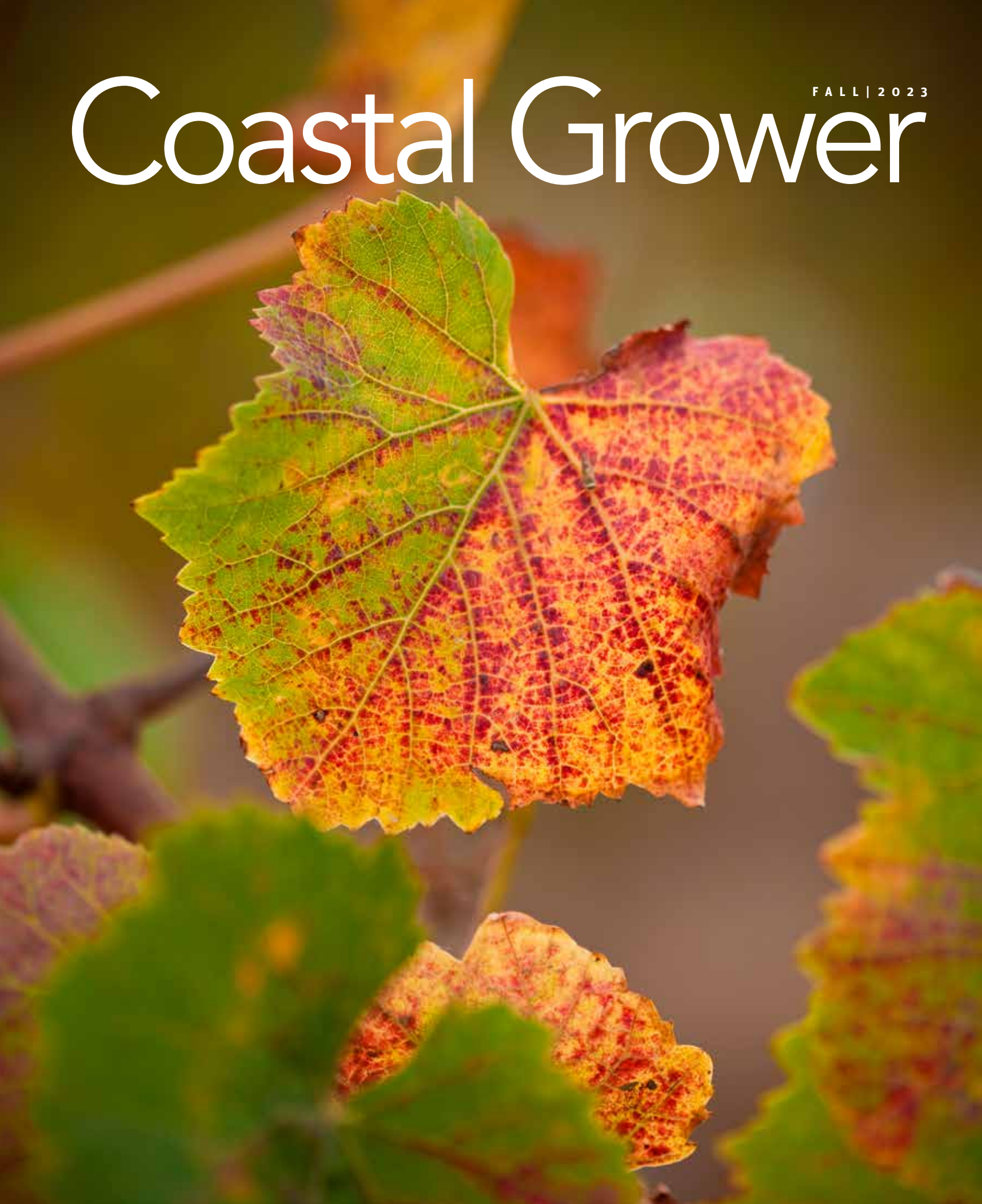


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# Features

## 5 PUBLISHER'S NOTES

## 6 CONTRIBUTORS

## 10 GIVING BACK

Hospitality Serves the Community Through Rancho Cielo Support

## 12 FOOD SAFETY

A New Collaboration on Food Safety

## 14 LOCAL

E-bikes Put the Beauty and Diversity of the Monterey Peninsula Within Reach



## 32 HOME SHOWCASE

A Home of Warmth and Grandeur

## 16 INVESTMENT

Don't Always Follow Your Gut Feeling

## 18 YOUTH

A Beacon of Hope for Every Child Who Loves to Play

## 20 AG FINANCE

Tips For Farmers to Maximize Profits With Sound Financial Planning

## 24 PHILANTHROPY

Building for Recovery

## 28 DESIGN

Bring Beauty, Whimsy and Gratitude to Your Fall Décor

## 42 NUTRITION

A Lesson in Diabetes Etiquette

## 44 LAW

Mandatory Residential Rental Unit Registration Programs in Salinas and Monterey

## 46 NORTH

Viva la Vino! Interview with John Bargetto

## 50 WELLNESS

Fall Skincare

## 52 SOUTH

The City of Gonzales is Getting Closer to Building a Major Community Center

## 54 VINE

An Elevated Vineyard Experience in the Air and on the Ground

## 56 RECIPE

Cauliflower and Garbanzo Bean Curry with Homemade Flat Bread

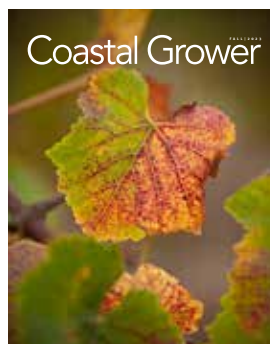
# Community

58 Boots, Bottles & BBQ

60 California Rodeo Salinas 2023

62 Carmel Plaza Raises Money and Awareness for Local Nonprofits

64 Relay for Life



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# Learning Lessons

I recently had the pleasure of attending an event at California State University, Monterey Bay (CSUMB) co-sponsored by the Grower Shipper Foundation, Hartnell College and the Western Growers Association. The seminar was titled: Ag Jobs: Bringing A Greater Vision and focused on innovations in agriculture and, particularly, the role Artificial Intelligence will play in the industry's future. The event concluded with an inspirational keynote from Karen Ross, Secretary of the California Department of Food and Agriculture. Over 300 students attended the event in person or via live stream. A career and internship fair followed outside the Otter Student Union.

Now in its 17th year, this seminar is just one of several events that demonstrate the public and private partnerships the agriculture industry shares with our local learning institutions. It got me thinking about how fortunate we are to not only live and operate in this Central Coast region but be surrounded by educators and learning institutions dedicated to informing and inspiring the industry's future workforce.

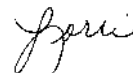
Historically it's been a challenge to get kids excited to work "on the farm." First, it's hard work—a 24/7 industry filled with challenges—some more predictable and controllable than others. Secondly, it often has the perception of being an old-fashioned, hands-on type of business. Events like the one held at CSUMB allow industry leaders to show agriculture is a fast-paced, dynamic essential industry that provides affordable, abundant, and healthy food to millions of people. Kids interested in agriculture are first introduced to it at a young age, through organizations like 4-H or school gardens on some campuses. In high school the Future Farmers of America provide learning and leadership opportunities.

Locally we are fortunate to have schools like Rancho Cielo Youth Campus, an alternative learning school with an ag tech vocational focus and programs in welding and diesel/mechanic repair. Rancho Cielo leaders don't design these programs in a vacuum. They partner with industry experts and ask: What skills do you need? What should we be teaching these kids? They then provide certifiable skills and show the kids there are local, good paying jobs here. There are businesses here that need and want you to work for them.

Similar collaborative tactics are applied at Hartnell Community College, where a myriad of degrees are offered in areas such as ag business technology and ag production. Their satellite campus model helps provide access to students who may have transportation challenges or work/life/school challenges. From Castroville in North Monterey County to King City in the South, Hartnell is another shining example of an educational institution focused on real-world workforce development for local businesses. Ag leaders are engaged and provide guidance, tours, internships, and funding.

Back out at CSUMB, both the College of Business and the College of Science have advisory committees comprised of local business operators and leaders. There is a constant dialogue between the university and industries about what skill sets are needed and where their curriculum should be focused. There are mentorship programs, internship opportunities and private funding. I have had the pleasure of serving on the advisory committee for the College of Business and being a guest lecturer.

I reflect on this, again, because the recent event at CSUMB helped me realize our Central Coast agriculture industry is blessed to operate in a bountiful region—but not only bountiful for local crop production—but for future leaders learning from the best.



# Contributors



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Bill is the managing partner of Hastie Financial Group (HFG), a registered investment advisory firm. He earned a B.S. in Economics from Cal Poly, an M.B.A. in Financial Planning from Golden Gate University, and holds the Certified Investment Management Analyst® (CIMA®) and Accredited Investment Fiduciary Analyst® (AIFA®) designations.



## 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.



## STEPHANIE BOUQUET

Stephanie is a registered dietitian and owner of SB Nutrition Consulting. She holds a B.S. in nutritional science from Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo and an M.S. 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](http://www.sbnutrition.net).



## KRISTIN HORTON

Kristin is a Salinas native with over twenty-five years' experience in marketing, wine and tourism. She currently serves as the Executive Director for the Monterey County Hospitality Association, in addition to promoting wine brands and tourism destinations as an Account Strategist through Solterra Strategies. When Kristin isn't sipping her favorite local wine, she can be found gardening or hiking with her dog Miles. With a love for travel and exploring new places with family and friends, she always has a trip on the books to share.



## DANNY LITTLE

Attorney Danny Little is a shareholder with Noland, Hamerly, Etienne & Hoss in Salinas and Monterey. His practice is focused on business and real estate matters. He serves as Board Secretary for CASA of Monterey County and is Chair of California Rodeo Salinas' Carnival Committee as well as serving on the Rodeo's Announcing Committee. He is a member of Downtown Salinas Rotary and is a graduate of the Grower Shipper Association's AgKnowledge program.



## MAC MACDONALD

Mac McDonald was a reporter, columnist and editor of the GO! weekly entertainment and dining section for the Monterey County Herald for 22 years. He was also Managing Editor of the Carmel Pine Cone for seven years. He is currently a freelance writer and editor writing about virtually every subject under the sun, from music, art, food and sports to marketing and public relations.





**NORM GROOT**

Norm Groot is the Executive Director of Monterey County Farm Bureau. He started his agricultural career in a family horticultural business with work experience that includes finance, technology, logistics, and production planning. Community involvement includes Chamber boards and committees, Central Coast Community Energy’s Community Advisory Council, Transportation Agency of Monterey County’s Transportation Safety & Investment Plan Oversight Committee, and the Monterey County Convention and Visitors Bureau Board. Norm received the Ag Leader Award from the National Steinbeck Center and the Agricultural Leadership Award from the Salinas Valley Chamber of Commerce.



**MIKE HALE**

Salinas native Mike Hale is a freelance writer who spent a long career in local journalism, working in various stints as both an editor and writer with the Salinas Californian, Santa Cruz Sentinel and the Monterey Herald. In 2014 he helped jumpstart KRML radio (94.7 FM) in Carmel, creating community-based programming for the “Locals Station for the Monterey Bay.” He is now semi-retired, enjoying traveling abroad and discovering new adventures along the way.



**JACQUELYN KASBERGEN**

Jacquelyn Kasbergen is a territory sales manager for Nutrien Financial. She provides financing expertise to growers across California to increase their buying power and maximize every opportunity for success. Learn more at [nutrienfinancial.com](http://nutrienfinancial.com).



**DR. CHRISTINA BOLANTE**

An active member of the American Academy of Dermatology and the American Society for Dermatologic Surgery, Dr. Christina Bolante graduated from the University of Washington School of Medicine, and completed her residency in dermatology at the University of Pittsburgh. She founded Parasol Dermatology in 2022 with a mission to help patients of all ages achieve healthy, beautiful skin through the latest and most advanced treatments available. Raised in the small farming community of Lynden, Wash., Dr. Bolante grew up playing sports and picking strawberries. Today she lives in Pebble Beach with her husband Javier and their two sons Jasper and Jordan.



**ROBERT RAPP**

Rob is the Development Director for Sun Street Centers, a Salinas-based non-profit organization focused on preventing and treating alcohol and drug addiction. He holds a B.A. in Psychology from Cornell College in Mt. Vernon, Iowa, and an M.A. in History from California State East Bay. Rob has over 20 years of experience in non-profit development in Monterey County. In his free time, Rob enjoys exploring the California Coast with his wife Serena and his five-year-old son John, and four-year-old daughter Fiona.



**ANNEE MARTIN**

Annee’s background includes being a therapist, professional chef, inn owner, cookbook author, interior designer, real estate consultant, professional stager, boutique owner and occasional artist/writer (her passion). Annee took her love and passion for creating beautiful, nurturing spaces and founded Sanctuary Vacation Rentals, which allows Annee to use many of her talents and interests. She also owns a small lifestyle boutique called [AmiCarmel.com](http://AmiCarmel.com). She lives with her husband David Martin and rescue dog Gracee . She wants to make the world a more beautiful place to live in.

# Contributors



## DIANE GSELL

Diane Gsell is a Monterey-based food stylist and lifestyle writer. Dartmouth College taught her how to write, and her mother and the culinarily-gifted Golden State taught her how to cook.



## PATRICK TREGENZA

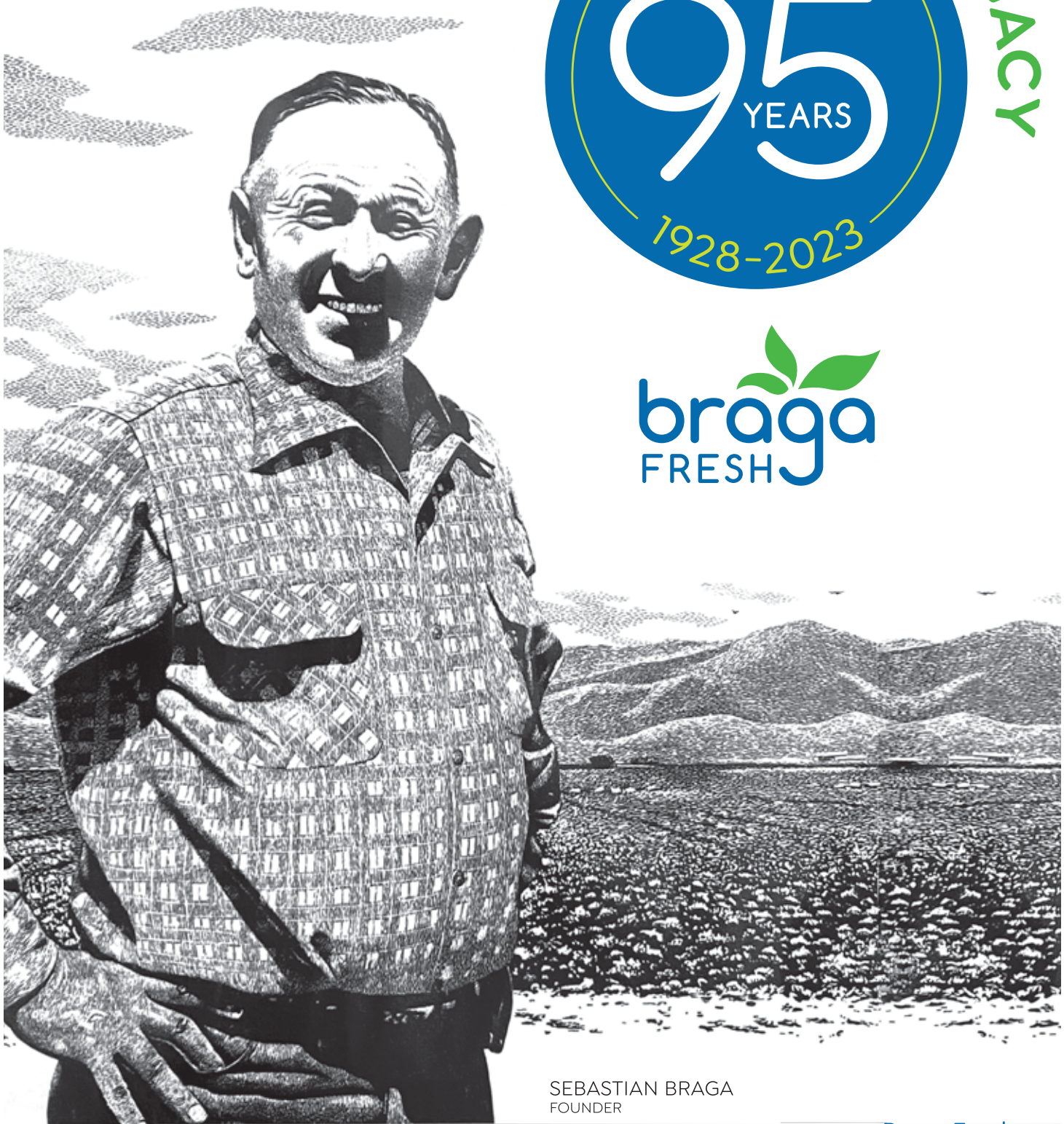
Oh Salinas. It's given us Steinbeck, salad, Rodeo pronounced right, and, well, Patrick Tregenza. Having found out early on that jazz drumming may not be the most secure way to make a living he shifted his focus to commercial photography. His bread-and-butter jobs are sometimes literally bread and butter (or meat and potatoes) but are most often foods we were told to eat as kids. Salinas is still the lettuce center of the universe as it has been since Cal and Aron fought for their father's good graces and Patrick still does his best to entice us all to eat healthier.



## IRWIN SPIZER

Irwin is a freelance writer, communication consultant and conference programmer with a specialty in finance. He is a long-time resident of the Monterey Peninsula and a former business editor of The Fresno Bee, where he managed that newspaper's agriculture coverage. His writing has been widely published in newspapers, magazines and web sites. Irwin also works as a writer and communications consultant with Armanasco Public Relations in Monterey.

*Coastal Grower values the contributions of all our writers. Contributors wishing to be recognized are listed here. In some cases contributors prefer to remain unrecognized with a bio and photo, or prefer complete anonymity. In those instances articles are published with no recognition or attribution.*



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# Hospitality Serves the Community Through Rancho Cielo Support

By Kristin Horton



On Friday evenings from late October through May, the dining room at Rancho Cielo's Drummond Culinary Academy buzzes with energy. Students at the Salinas-area venue prepare ingredients, present beautifully plated meals, and practice valuable customer service skills as they interact with guests.

The culinary trainees, ranging in age from 16 to 24, have faced plenty of challenges. Rancho Cielo provides these at-risk and underserved youth with the classroom education, industry mentorship, work experiences, and transferrable skills to turn their lives around. Whether they join the culinary academy or enroll in vocational training centered on ag technology, auto repair, construction, or other fields, hardworking students here discover their true potential.

"Many of these students just need some extra stability, guidance and support. Rancho Cielo provides that structure," says Rancho Cielo CEO Chris Devers. "We also encourage them to set big goals and be engaged community members. By giving

students professional experience, personal connections and permission to dream, we position them for long-term success. We're grateful to the local businesses who help make it happen."

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***Consistent encouragement and support from the hospitality industry, and from professionals in agriculture, construction and other fields, empowers Rancho Cielo students to transform their lives.***

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## A History of Hospitality Involvement

During his years on the bench, now-retired Monterey County Superior Court Judge John Phillips often interacted with young people on troubled paths. Some were repeat offenders, and others faced incarceration. Judge Phillips and his wife, Patti, envisioned an alternative. With the help of local hospitality, construction, agriculture, and

business leaders, along with several county agencies and community groups, they transformed the abandoned Natividad Boys' Ranch near Salinas. Rancho Cielo opened its doors in October 2004.

Members of the Monterey County Hospitality Association (MCHA) have supported Rancho Cielo from the start. Executives from Quail Lodge, the Monterey Plaza Hotel & Spa, Cannery Row Company and elsewhere got behind early planning and fundraising efforts. That industry involvement continues decades later. For example, today MCHA's Rancho Cielo Committee builds connections between members and the school. Janine Chicourrat, a past MCHA board chair and managing director at the Portola Hotel & Spa, currently chairs the Rancho Cielo board. She also co-chairs the Culinary Round Up, an event that raises hundreds of thousands of dollars for Rancho Cielo every year, with Chef Bert Cutino.

Cutino, a Cannery Row partner and Sardine Factory co-founder, is an enthusiastic Drummond Culinary Academy supporter. He has mentored many students, and he helped establish MCHA's Rancho Cielo White Tablecloth dinners. Participants sample dining experience at places like Pebble Beach Resorts and Bernardus Lodge, while also touring kitchens and connecting with culinary professionals.

"It's so important for us to be mentors to those who have an interest. We need them. The future doesn't look so great if we don't have new talent, and demand in the hospitality business always evolves," he says.

## Outlining New Opportunities

MCHA's long-term commitment to Rancho Cielo includes countless donations of time, money and expertise. Local chefs, human resources professionals and hospitality executives offer one-on-one mentorship

and job shadowing opportunities for students. They also teach classes and supervise internships. WeatherTech Raceway Laguna Seca President and General Manager John Narigi, a longtime Rancho Cielo supporter and past board chair, has welcomed and worked with interns over the years and emphasizes the importance of time management, goal setting, resilience and respect.

“When students explore their interests and understand their own self-worth, it helps build happiness,” Narigi says. “They understand that there is a better life for them, but they have to work at it.”

Hospitality professionals also prepare Rancho Cielo students for success through career coaching sessions, resume reviews and practice interviews. During the annual MCHA Clothing Drive and Career Day, volunteers distribute donated professional attire to Rancho Cielo students and assist with fittings and tailoring. MCHA hosts a hospitality career fair, too. The 2023 event drew more than 20 local employers



representing culinary roles, as well as golf, equestrian, security, valet, IT, audiovisual, housekeeping and administrative opportunities. This year, MCHA also expanded the job fair to welcome students from other Monterey County hospitality and culinary programs.

#### Educating a Diverse Workforce

While many Rancho Cielo culinary graduates work with Monterey Peninsula hospitality businesses, other campus programs prepare students for county-wide careers. At the Ted Taylor Ag Vocational Center, which opened in 2019, students train for highly skilled, living-wage jobs in ag technology and mechatronics, auto and diesel repair, welding and fabrication, and sustainable construction.

Ag technology students might focus on food safety practices or factory line electronics as they learn to repair equipment that keeps local businesses running smoothly. They also tour Salinas Valley agricultural facilities, meet industry leaders, and complete projects that solve real-life challenges. This year, some ag tech students built a compact, commercial-grade refrigeration unit for a local organic farmer.

Similarly, Rancho Cielo’s auto repair classes teach the basics of everything from engines and power trains to exhaust and electrical systems. As they help construct a 200-kilowatt solar installation on the

Rancho Cielo campus, other students are learning about clean energy careers. Construction academy participants built an innovative, energy-efficient tiny house to enter in the 2023 Orange County Sustainable Decathlon, as well.

Consistent encouragement and support from the hospitality industry, and from professionals in agriculture, construction and other fields, empowers Rancho Cielo students to transform their lives. ☞

#### LEAN MORE

*To learn more about Rancho Cielo, make Drummond Culinary Academy dining reservations, or support campus programs, please visit [www.ranchocieloyc.org](http://www.ranchocieloyc.org).*

*For information on the Monterey County Hospitality Association’s advocacy, education and employee recognition programs, please visit [www.mcha.net](http://www.mcha.net).*



# A New Collaboration on Food Safety

By Norm Groot



There's a lot of attention to food safety practices, particularly for fresh food crops like lettuce, spinach, romaine, and other vegetables. Growers, harvesters, processors, and shippers are all working together to ensure that all food products are handled safely during the supply chain transfer, ensuring that what arrives at your local supermarket is safe to consume fresh.

This is particularly true for leafy greens, and growers, harvesters, and processors who manage these products are constantly inspecting fields and equipment for any indication of food safety risk. Strict rules for processing facilities make certain that what goes into a bag of leafy greens is properly washed and free from foreign matter.

Enacted in 2008 as part of the food safety ramp-up after a major contamination issue, the industry sets standards and practices for all who participate in the Leafy Greens Marketing Agreement. This includes stringent production practices, water quality testing,

inspections, as well as audits of compliance.

With heightened awareness of food safety due to improved science, media attention,

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***With heightened awareness of food safety due to improved science, media attention, and regulatory requirements, growers are stepping up to manage their fields in new and better ways to protect their crops from accidental adulteration.***

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and regulatory requirements, growers are stepping up to manage their fields in new and better ways to protect their crops from accidental adulteration.

A new component of this collaboration is bringing together segments of agriculture

that normally don't have much interaction with each other: farmers and ranchers. In 2021, in partnership with the California Department of Food & Agriculture and Monterey County Farm Bureau, a new initiative named California Agricultural Neighbors (known as CAN) started a dialogue between farmers and ranchers. Why? To find out what practices take place when cultivated farm fields are adjacent to rangeland and where intersections of those practices might be cause for food safety risks.

The CAN initiative is focusing on the Salinas Valley, primarily due to the intense concentration of fresh crop production and proximity to extensive rangelands.

The process first started by mapping out agricultural practices by month for both farmland and rangeland; this helped to focus on areas of concern, such as when harvest may occur in proximity of grazing activities. In addition, it focused the need to engage both sides of the fence in a dialogue on what occurs and when.

This led to a document in June 2021 that outlined four strategic initiatives that CAN is pursuing, along with an extensive list of stakeholder participants:

- Foster Neighbor-to-Neighbor Interactions and Conversations: Building a collaborative network necessary for collective input and impact, including the research capacity essential for continuous learning and focused local action.
- Build a Research Roadmap for the Salinas Valley: CAN established a foundation of information that is available, and recognition of information that is needed, in key areas, creating a research roadmap.
- Create a Quantitative Microbial Risk Assessment (QMRA) Framework: Utilization of a QMRA framework to support future directions; a framework such as QMRA allows organization of data in such a way that data gaps become evident.

- Build and Maintain Capacity to Transfer Knowledge from Research into Applied Practice: This includes support and (or) development of research programs and teams in the multiple disciplines needed for effective produce safety research, as well as encouraging relationships with research-sponsoring organizations.

**Consumers can enjoy fresh leafy greens and vegetables knowing that the entire supply chain is focusing on food safety and improving practices as the science evolves.**

With strong support from agencies like the U.S. Food & Drug Administration, University of California Cooperative Extension, and organizations like Western Growers and Center for Produce Safety, the collaborative efforts have moved the needle in finding new ways to develop enhanced science that supports the prevention of food adulteration from contaminants like e.coli. Working towards research that supports prevention is far more productive than reacting to a food adulteration event in hind sight.

Work product so far includes a template for farmers and ranchers, as neighbors, to use when speaking about food safety and rangeland management; while rangeland and wild animals are a source of e.coli themselves, this does not readily translate into a risk simply by proximation to production fields. But safe operating practices by both sides of the fence will go a long way to ensuring that this paradigm doesn't change.

Farmers, and now ranchers, are taking food safety of fresh crops seriously. No one wants to be responsible for a food borne contaminate that causes illnesses; the financial liability is too great and the reputation of any brand can be ruined overnight due to a food contamination recall or supply chain disruption.

We all have learned from the incidents of the past, both consumers and farmers and their neighboring ranchers. Great strides are being made with cooperative initiatives like CAN and industry-led practices like the Leafy Greens Marketing Agreement.

As the CAN Report notes, "The Salinas Valley has a diversity of crops produced, beyond leafy green crops, and the proximity of different agricultural land uses to each other is one factor that may account for the history of produce safety outcomes. There is a long-standing spirit of neighborly cooperation in the Salinas Valley evidenced by the strong family farm and ranch traditions spanning multiple generations. The Salinas Valley is known as a leader in food safety efforts related to leafy green

production; providing this opportunity for dialogue and collaboration bridged the informational gap between various facets of production agriculture." The full CAN Report can be found at [www.montereycfb.com](http://www.montereycfb.com) under the food safety tab.

Consumers can enjoy fresh leafy greens and vegetables knowing that the entire supply chain is focusing on food safety and improving practices as the science evolves. **es**



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# E-bikes Put the Beauty and Diversity of the Monterey Peninsula Within Reach

By Mike Hale



In March of 2020, a global pandemic altered lives and lifestyles to an unprecedented degree. While it brought quarantines, mask mandates, product shortages, business closures and financial pressures, it also led to a widespread change in personal priorities.

Heightened anxiety over public transportation and a surge in exercise meant that more and more people turned to the most basic forms of mobility, leading to a remarkable “bike boom.”

A few years before this boom, Jennifer Blevins founded a novel electric bicycle shop called Mad Dogs & Englishmen in Carmel-by-the-Sea in 2018. The following year she took a bold leap of faith and opened a second location in the Mill Valley Lumber Yard just north of San Francisco and the Golden Gate Bridge.

Even during the height of the pandemic, demand for fun and unique transporta-

tion soared. According to the Light Electric Vehicle Association, e-bike sales in the U.S. are outpacing electric and hybrid cars combined. In 2021, more than 880,000

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***E-bikes have become increasingly popular due to the convenience they offer, their eco-friendly nature, and the social and recreational benefits they provide.***

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e-bikes were sold in the U.S., compared with 608,000 electric cars and trucks. That rose from 450,000 e-bike sales in 2020, with cities, counties, and states implementing e-bike rebate programs to respond to growing demand.

In January of 2021, Blevins opened a third location on the ground floor of Monterey

Plaza Hotel and Spa near the Monterey Bay Aquarium. And just one month later a fourth shop opened on Coast Village Road in Montecito in Santa Barbara County. In June of the same year, she expanded the Carmel to two floors facing Ocean Avenue, on the corner of Ocean and Mission. The business also offers electric bike guided tours along visually appealing roads such as 17 Mile Drive in Pebble Beach.

Along the Monterey Peninsula, both locals and tourists have clamored for accessible and fun modes of transportation to easily tour what has long been called “the world’s greatest meeting of land and sea.”

E-bikes have become increasingly popular due to the convenience they offer, their eco-friendly nature, and the social and recreational benefits they provide. By incorporating an electric motor, e-bikes make cycling more accessible to a wider range of people, including those who may have difficulty with traditional bikes.

With relaxed pedaling, most e-bikes can venture up to 50 miles or more on a single charge, with range impacted by the battery capacity, the hills, the wind and a rider’s size and weight. Blevins, for example, offers bikes with varying battery capacity, to take riders on both on and off road experiences.

On the Monterey Peninsula, there are no fewer than 15 businesses selling or renting e-bikes or booking e-bike tours, appealing to both tourists and locals. For enthusiasts that means an easy jaunt along the famous 18-mile long Coastal Rec Trail, or to Carmel to visit its famous white-sand beach, wine tasting rooms, restaurants and historical sites.

Many e-bikes retailers offer varied options, with bikes for kids and accessories to accommodate furry friends (after all, Carmel has been named the most dog-



friendly town in the U.S.).

While popularity of e-bikes has surged over the last five years, the first pedal-assist pedelec actually arrived on the market in the 1990s, and the first U.S. patent was awarded to Ogden Bolton Jr., way back in 1895 (that is not a misprint!). His battery-powered bicycle had its hub motor mounted inside the rear wheel and a battery sitting inside the main triangle of the frame.

The idea took a while to really take off, but for outdoor enthusiasts who crave wind in their hair but are intimidated by steep hills and long distances, electric bikes are very appealing. The electric component is meant to augment human power, not completely replace it. It makes obstacles like hills and headwind more manageable, meaning a workout is achievable while reaching greater distances.

In the end, Blevins shares the same passion shown by the rising number of e-bike enthusiasts.

“Our driving force is the opportunity to share the latest and greatest in cycling with our customers, in some of the most scenic cycling destinations on the West Coast,” she said. ☺



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# Don't Always Follow Your Gut Feeling

By Bill Hastie



Managing an investment portfolio can be a challenge for many investors even in the best of market conditions. But when the markets are moving with every inflation report, every meeting of the Federal Reserve and every corporate earnings report, the challenge of management becomes that much more difficult.

The field of behavioral finance reveals that investors are inherently prone to making poor decisions due to certain biases and beliefs. While many biases have been identified, one bias that affects a great deal of investors is referred to as loss aversion. Loss aversion occurs when an investor suffers more pain from portfolio losses than the feeling of the pleasure they get with portfolio gains. In other words, the investor is much more likely to make a greater effort to avoid losses than they would for making investment gains.

The effort to avoid portfolio losses often leads the investor to trade their investments far more often than they otherwise would,

even to selling all the portfolio holdings and “sit on the sidelines” in cash. This can be, unfortunately, a costly mistake. Research from Bloomberg and the Wells Fargo Investment

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***Managing an investment portfolio can be a challenge for many investors even in the best of market conditions. Recognizing and overcoming one's investment behavioral biases can often help the investor in making better investment decisions.***

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Institute suggests that missing even a handful of the best days in the market over long periods of time can dramatically reduce the rate of return an investor can gain by holding their investments during periods of market decline. Their research suggests that over the

past 30 years, missing the market's best 20 days reduced the average annual rate of return from 7.8 percent to 3.2 percent. Over the same period, an investor missing the best 40 days in the market reduced their average annual rate of return to 0.3 percent.

Other studies show the potential downside of attempting to time the market (trying to move into and out of the market at just the right time) in an effort to avoid loss go back even further. Perhaps one of the most quoted studies appeared in the January-February 1995 issue of *Financial Analysts Journal* which was authored by Gary Brinson, Randolph Hood and Gilbert Beebower. The stated goal of the study was to determine, from historical investment data on 91 large U.S. corporate pension plans from 1973 to 1985, which investment decisions had the greatest impact on the magnitude of total return (and the variability of those returns). The investment decisions are those that compose the investment management process – investment policy (also known as asset allocation), market timing and individual investment selection. The results of the study have shaped the investment management process ever since. To the surprise of many, investment policy (asset allocation) accounted for an average of 93.6 percent of a portfolio's long-term total return. Individual investment selection, what so many investors focus on, accounted for

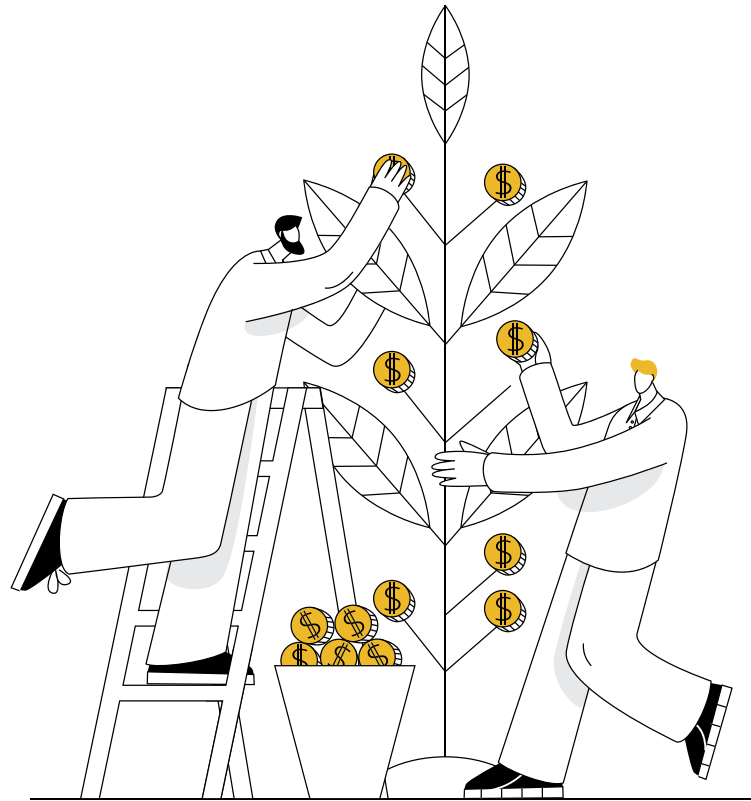


4.2 percent of a portfolio's long-term return. Market timing accounted for only 1.7 percent — the investment decision in the investment management process that had the least to do with long-term return.

So how does this help the individual investor? This demonstrates that the most important decision in the investment management process is to determine which asset classes to include in a portfolio, and which to exclude from the portfolio. Next, decide on the normal, or long-term, weights of each of the asset classes in the portfolio. These two steps make up the investment policy (asset allocation) decision part of the process. The final two steps relate more to investment strategy, and according to the Brinson, Hood and Beebower study, are far less important than investment policy. First, to select individual securities within each asset class that are believed to have the potential to achieve superior returns relative to its respective asset class (security selection). Finally, to strategically alter the investment mix weights from their normal level in an attempt to capture excess returns from short-term fluctuations in asset class prices (market timing).

The study did conclude, however, that the combination of investment policy and investment selection accounted for the highest percentage – 97.8 percent - of long-term portfolio total return. This implies that while investment policy is the most important, adding prudent investment selection is most likely worth the effort.

Recognizing and overcoming one's investment behavioral biases can often help the investor in making better investment decisions. Consulting an advisor trained in behavioral finance may be a great place to begin that journey towards avoiding decisions based on feelings and more focused on a disciplined approach to investment management. ☞



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# A Beacon of Hope for Every Child Who Loves to Play

By Mac MacDonald



There are few things more joyful than the sights and sounds of children at play. Such engagement is key to their growth and development, serving as the foundation for problem solving, collaboration, creativity, relationship building and the ability to find meaning in a world that has grown more and more unpredictable.

While playgrounds have long served as ideal places for children to experience this rite of passage, few of them cultivate accessible, inclusive play while accommodating every child's ability.

For 10 years, Tatum's Garden in Salinas has served as a beacon of hope for families who long for safe and stimulating spaces for ALL children who seek to explore their own natural tendencies, and interact with a broader range of their peers.

The Tatum's Garden Foundation exists to create such an environment at the well-loved park at 1 Maryal Dr., in North Salinas.

Founded by Shawn and Amanda Bakker in tribute to their youngest child Tatum, who was born with spina bifida (profoundly affecting her spinal cord and nervous system), the

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***For 10 years, Tatum's Garden in Salinas has served as a beacon of hope for families who long for safe and stimulating spaces for ALL children who seek to explore their own natural tendencies, and interact with a broader range of their peers.***

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park provides joy and respite to children and families everywhere.

It's been quite a journey for the Bakkers. With two healthy children (Olivia and Wyatt)

at home, it had never occurred to them that their new baby girl would have significant special needs. During her first few months she underwent several surgeries and the family adapted to caring for her.

"So much has improved and changed for Tatum's prognosis, and we have grown as a family right alongside her," said Amanda Bakker, who credits her family, friends and a generous community in offering so much support and hope.

From the beginning, the playground has relied on community support. The Foundation is a private nonprofit 501(c)3 that fully manages the facility. Park upkeep, cleaning, security and equipment replacement is funded through donations from families and businesses throughout the Central Coast.

Following a decade of gleeful and vigorous play, the much-used playground needs another community embrace to help fund longer lasting repairs and replacements while adding new features and structures. The Foundation has announced a series of fundraising events to help the board reach its goal to renovate a park that began with a profound idea during the Bakker family's summer vacation back in 2011.

While driving to visit grandparents at their cabin near Yellowstone Park, the Bakkers made an unplanned pitstop in Pocatello, Idaho. They ended up stopping at Brooklyn's Playground, a fully-accessible park inspired by Brooklyn Fisher, who like Tatum was born with spina bifida. Amanda and Shawn Bakker watched in awe as Tatum played side-by-side with her siblings and others — her spirit shining bright.

"It was unlike any park we'd ever seen before," said Amanda Bakker. "All-inclusive, and fully accessible to every child ... a place for children to play side-by-side with their friends, whether they are able-bodied or need things like walkers or wheelchairs to move about."



The Bakkers saw the playground through the eyes of parents with a child who is unable to move on her own. “To take this all in was a bit overwhelming, and we found an adaptive swing to push Tatum in for a while, as our other children played.”

The couple knew at that moment that they

needed to build an accessible playground in their own hometown. Employing the same community build model that gave life to Brooklyn’s Playground, they connected with the park designer Leathers & Associates. Following a fundraising drive and working with the city to secure a location, Tatum’s Garden began to sprout as community members from all walks of life pitched in to help.

Constructed in 2013 as the first fully accessible playground in the tri-county area, Tatum’s Garden has become a sought-after destination for children and their families

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***From the beginning, the playground has relied on community support.***

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who celebrate occasions or simply the joy of play. Through the years it has inspired other communities to foster abundant activity for children with varying needs and abilities.

As it celebrates its 10th year, the Foundation has launched a renovation campaign, with the following fundraising events planned through 2023:

- October 27th — Halloween-themed Golf Tournament at Corral de Tierra Golf Course, with games, lunch and prizes.
- December 8th (6-9 p.m.) — Wreath Making with Polenta and Stew Dinner, with music, food, libations, wreaths, silent auction and more.
- December 9 (10 a.m.-2 p.m) — 10-year Anniversary Celebration at Tatum’s Garden.

To find out more about Tatum’s Garden, seek volunteer opportunities or to donate, visit [www.tatumsgarden.org](http://www.tatumsgarden.org)



# Tips For Farmers to Maximize Profits with Sound Financial Planning

*How California farmers can increase profitability and prepare for next season*

By Jacquelyn Kasbergen



California growers contend with a unique set of challenges all year, but profitability is critical this time of year as we look to harvest season. Topping the list of concerns for 2023: uncertainties surrounding commodity pricing, interest rates, and production costs, including crop nutrition and protection products.

Strategic financial planning offers growers a way to navigate these hurdles and improve their chances of earning a profit. Fall is a great time to check in on your finances, look for opportunities to save on production costs for next season, and make preparations to help protect your profitability ahead of harvest. Here are some tips to help assess your financial position in 2023 and beyond:

## **Get ahead on planning for 2024 before harvest ends**

It may be tempting to wait and see how your

2023 harvest turns out before looking ahead to next year, but that wait may have opportunity costs when it comes to saving money.

This is particularly important when looking at financing programs for next years' production needs. We're experiencing some of the highest interest rates we've seen in many years – significantly higher than the recent era where many growers were able to lock in zero percent programs. Interest rates can dramatically impact your cost equation.

For example, assume a grower is managing a 30-acre strawberry operation. With a borrowing rate of Prime plus 1 percent in February 2021, their interest rate would be 4.25 percent. Assuming their purchases are financed from March until the final round of harvest in October, the interest expense on input spending of \$150,000 comes in around \$3,912. In that same scenario playing out this year, the grower would spend more than

double – or \$8,515 – in interest at the 9.25 percent rate.

We can't predict with certainty where rates will be, but it's advantageous to start researching your options early. Look for fixed-rate programs that can help improve profitability by controlling one more variable in your budget. Make sure your financial plan considers the most economical way to pay for nutrition and protection products you'll need in 2024. The sooner you factor in the cost of interest on those purchases, the greater your opportunity for cost savings.

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***California growers contend with a unique set of challenges all year, but profitability is critical this time of year as we look to harvest season.***

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## **Understand how your payment methods affect profitability**

The cost to borrow money has gone up considerably in the last year, which can eat into profits if you aren't mindful about your financing. Growers have many options to pay for nutrition and protection products, but they are not all equal when you factor in overall costs. Whether it's an operating line from a bank, or independent financing – such as co-ops, input retailers and credit cards – individual factors impact your interest costs, which in turn impact your profitability. To find the best financing, review the terms, rates and incentives closely, and research to understand the total cost of your purchase, which includes the cost of money used to pay for the products you need.

Interest rate percentages aren't the only

factor to consider. The way your interest accrues – daily or monthly – as well as payment terms (e.g., whether you're charged interest on your first and last month) can also save money. You can protect your profits by factoring in all these details to see the total cost associated with borrowing money.

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***Just as you're making shifts to your crop plan because of the weather, or commodity pricing, you should also be carrying those changes through to your financial plan.***

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Strengthen your financial plan  
Successful farmers need to be adaptable. Getting your finances in a position that helps you respond to uncertainty can be difficult, but it's a worthwhile endeavor to maximize your profits.

Once you've pinpointed the challenges and opportunities of your unique situation, you can assess your financial options to determine what will make the biggest impact. Financial experts can help you make a plan, identify peak cash flow periods and determine the most economical payment terms to benefit your bottom line.

Make sure your financial plan has cash flow mechanisms and sound money management strategies in place so you can make adjustments as you need to. Remember that effective financial planning requires constant adjustment. Just as you're making shifts to your crop plan because of the weather, or commodity pricing, you should also be carrying those changes through to your financial plan. **CG**



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# Building for Recovery

By Robert Rapp



Sun Street Centers' mission, for over 55 years now, is to prevent alcohol and drug addiction through prevention, treatment, and recovery services and to help individuals and families regardless of income. This self-help, social model of recovery program, was founded by Martin and Nancy Dodd at an abandoned labor camp in Salinas, at 8 Sun Street, in 1968. Initially, the program consisted of a small fellowship of men in early recovery from alcoholism. Now, over half a century later, the need for these services is more apparent than ever.

Reb JH Close, MD, Medical Director for Montage Health's Prescribe Safe Program, discussed the impact of fentanyl on our local communities. "The need for substance use services in Monterey County is huge. In the last several years, counterfeit medications have entered the market, many with a toxic or lethal dose of fentanyl, causing a staggering increase in opioid-related overdoses and deaths."

Sun Street Centers and their 11 sites, scattered throughout three counties, are

expanding their Salinas campus to provide hope and services to more youth and families than ever before. In 18 months, their Building for Recovery campaign has raised

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***As is often the case, our local Ag community was one of the driving forces behind this project.***

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over 70 percent of the \$4.4 million cost to build a new Recovery Center adjacent to their headquarters on Sun Street in Salinas. A main focus of the Center will be on teens who are looking for and need help with substance abuse.

"Our County does not have adequate support for teens who are using alcohol, cannabis, and harder drugs. We have resources for mental health and runaways, but when it comes to drug addiction treatment, our kids are being sent out of County," said Sun Street CEO, Anna Foglia.

The new 8000 sq ft, two-story building

will house counseling and education rooms downstairs for youth outpatient and diversion programs, and for Family Empowerment and aftercare programs. The second floor will have four transitional housing apartments for men, women, and families, after they complete a 90-day treatment program.

Sun Street Centers is well-versed in opening new programs to fight the drug epidemic, having opened multiple Outpatient Counseling and Residential Treatment programs in the past three years. Valerie Smith, Sun Street Centers' Board President, echoed the sentiments of many when discussing the need for more substance abuse programs. "In local communities across the region, we are seeing an alarming increase in overdoses from fentanyl and earlier initiation into drug use through alcohol and cannabis. Our teens are in jeopardy of losing their future and falling into an abyss of unrealized goals. We need to provide all the opportunities we can in this beautiful area to help our kids stay on the road to success. After this project is



Photos clockwise from top left: 1.) Rendering of Recovery Center on Calle Cebu and Sun St. in Salinas. 2.) Kick Butts Day, an annual teen-led anti-tobacco use campaign. 3.) Woman gets her key to her new shared rental house.

completed, the Board of Directors strategic plan calls for development of an in-patient residential drug rehab for youth.”

Sun Street Centers has already raised \$3.2 million thanks to local support from generous sponsors like the Sally Hughes Church Foundation, Harden Foundation, Monterey Peninsula Foundation, Lou and Roberta Huntington, Martin and Nancy Dodd Foundation of the Community Foundation for Monterey County, California Water Service Co., Andrew and Phyllis D’Arrigo Charitable Foundation, and Monterey County Behavioral Health.

Said CEO Foglia, “As is often the case, our local Ag community was one of the driving forces behind this project. Louis and Roberta Huntington and the Andrew and Phyllis D’Arrigo Charitable Foundation were two of our earliest donors and Louis has sat on our campaign committee and invested a lot of time and made a lot of phone calls on our

behalf. We truly could not have made this project work without his help.”

Sun Street Centers is close to their campaign goal and is planning to break ground in January of 2024 and begin

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***Sun Street Centers’ mission, for over 55 years now, is to prevent alcohol and drug addiction through prevention, treatment, and recovery services and to help individuals and families regardless of income.***

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providing services in 2025. “We have been fortunate to have the support of many individuals throughout Monterey County that realize the need for local substance

abuse services, especially those focusing on youth” said Board President Smith. “But we still need to raise a little over \$1.2 million to make this Recovery Center a reality. We need the community to come together and help build something that will save lives and families for generations to come.”

If you or someone you know is struggling with drug or alcohol addiction or you would like to support our mission, please call Sun Street Centers at (831) 753-5144 or email [info@sunstreet.org](mailto:info@sunstreet.org) to get or give help today. ☎





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# Bring Beauty, Whimsy and Gratitude to Your Fall Décor

By Annee Martin



Fall is in the air, the nights are getting longer, the days are getting shorter, and, for many, this means the warm days of summer are over. For us on the Monterey Peninsula, we experience some of our best weather with 70-degree days, blue skies, and crisp cool evenings.

While other parts of the state and country are watching leaves on the trees turn from green to gold, yellow, orange, or red, signifying autumn has arrived, we can still find ways to create fall in our home and outside living areas.

Many believe fall starts the beginning of September or as soon as the first pumpkins appear at the farmstands or neighborhood grocery stores. For others, the autumn equinox occurs somewhere between September 21 and September 24, denoting the first official day of autumn.

Fall décor centers around making your home feel warm and inviting. Certain smells such as pumpkin spice, mulled apple cider conjure up memories of feeling cozy inside as the days get cooler.

Creating fall can easily be done by following Mother Nature's color palate naturally occurring outside in the trees and foliage, such as crimson red, burnt orange, brown rusts and sienna yellow. By bringing in contrasting colors with deep blues, hunter green and eggplant purple, you can add both warmth and vibrancy. For a more subtle

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***We are very fortunate to live in an agricultural area that grows many types of unique pumpkins.***

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sophisticated look, use white, blue green, and tan-orange against a neutral background such as cream or beige.

It is possible to create a sophisticated tasteful look other than the typical orange and black colors seen in jack-o'-lanterns or porcelain turkeys that are representative of the two major fall events — Halloween and Thanksgiving. Faux pumpkins in neutral

colors are easily found and add the perfect touch for those who do not wish to add bright colors into their home or make their home feel too commercial.

We are very fortunate to live in an agricultural area that grows many types of unique pumpkins. Besides the classic jack-o-lantern style orange pumpkin, we also have the Cinderella and fairytale pumpkins, in shades of white, blue, tan and sometimes purple, along with interesting gourds of various shapes and colors.

Beginning with the front porch, you can create your very own pumpkin patch by purchasing pumpkins and gourds using all the different colors and varieties available.

Find a small vintage wagon and place seasonal mums inside the wagon to give you a focal point that defines your autumnscape. Use existing baskets to hide the black plastic containers or try carving a decorative pumpkin and placing the mum inside. If there is enough room, add a hay bale to provide visual height and interest. The same concept can be applied if you have a backyard where you hang out or entertain.

When Halloween arrives, you can add a spiderweb and scary tarantula to the scene as well as throw in some carved pumpkins with battery-operated lights. Afterward, you can easily remove the Halloween decorations and prepare for Thanksgiving with a sign with the word "Thankful" written on it.

Whole pumpkins last about two to three months in cooler temperatures if they are covered and protected from the sun and rain. Carved pumpkins last approximately seven to 10 days. Try using Mod Podge (decoupage glue) to help seal and give them a longer life.

In the last five years we have seen an abundant supply of faux pumpkins that look very real. Try mixing them with purchased ones to save costs from having to buy every year as well as to display in uncovered areas.

Lining your steps with faux pumpkins and mums can transform your walkway. LED-lighted pumpkins on a timer add a special touch, especially at Halloween.

To finish the front porch, find a fall-themed doormat with seasonal phrases and hang a seasonal wreath on the door. For those who love to be creative with their hands, craft stores have an abundant supply of faux leaves, pumpkins and grapevines. You can take a walk in the woods and find moss-covered materials, pine cones and dry branches. Dried sunflowers and hydrangea add a beautiful touch.

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***What better way to welcome the fall than to embrace it with touches of beauty, whimsy and gratitude?***

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As you move into the interior of your home, think about how to add texture, autumn colors, warmth and cozy touches. You can easily swap out summer-themed accessories such as art, rugs, pillows, and throws. Woven baskets and trays can be paired with cashmere or woolen throws, velvet pillow can provide a rich element to the space. Plaid patterns can be used for both pillows and throws. Using pillow covers that you can pull out of storage and put over the existing pillows make it easy and is a space-saver.

Adding warm light is essential to your overall fall décor, such as using candles and votives and tapers that are either battery-operated or use real flame.

Mercury glass pumpkins in various sizes and shapes with fairy lights inside are both beautiful and functional by utilizing LED technology and can be placed in the entrance foyer or in other areas of the house to provide warmth and light.

In the living room, the fireplace is the perfect spot to showcase autumn. Simple branches, faux or dried, can line the mantle, with twinkle lights and small pumpkins. For a simple elegant look, add some dried hydrangeas, sunflowers and persimmons.

Fall is a time to gather and give thanks, especially as we celebrate Thanksgiving.



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Change out your summer runners, napkins and centerpiece that were light and colorful to richer, earthier colors such as rust, mustard and burgundy.

Centerpieces can be made from faux fall leaves, snipped branches, and autumn flowers such as chrysanthemums and sunflowers. You can also use pom poms, anemones and thistles that are all easily found in local stores.

Simple metal or wood signs with the words “Thankful” or “Grateful” can be placed on the dining buffet to remind us of how blessed we are.

For the bedroom, you can switch out shams, duvet covers and even sheets to bring in fall colors.

Velvet pumpkins in rich autumn colors look great carefully placed on a book or side table by your bed.

Like the spring, autumn marks a point of transition. It is a shift away from growth and renewal, light and warmth toward introspection, change and return to darkness and cold. What better way to welcome the fall than to embrace it with touches of beauty, whimsy and gratitude? ☁



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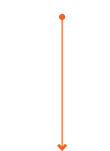
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| HOME SHOWCASE

# A Home of Warmth and Grandeur

*By Diane Gsell, Photography by Patrick Tregenza*







When Monterey County native Garth Young chose the site of his dream home, he crossed paths with another local boy, though their journeys were separated by more than half a century. It was at the base of Castle Rock that a young John Steinbeck played with his sister, inspiring the setting for the tales of *The Pastures of Heaven*. The rock created a natural fence of sorts, a defining boarder for an area that would become Corral de Tierra, or “pen of earth.”

Born just across the way in Fort Ord, Bonnie Young agreed that snapping up one of the last two buildable lots in this idyllic landscape made a lot of sense as their two boys’ academic paths were leading them to Salinas’ Palma School. With both a commute and a climate of the much milder sort, their new home base was part of a natural progression from their Oldtown Monterey early years.

Garth’s expertise as an established building contractor is on full display throughout the bright, spacious home. While many would be satisfied with a basic pitched design, he knew that a distinctive barreled ceiling feature would elevate the living area beyond the expected. Expansive views of the lush golf course and, if the timing’s right, a seasonal stream are enjoyed through large picture windows that echo the arched design of the ceiling. What an unexpected delight when the pond, around which the views were framed, grew three times the original size to accommodate an elegant lighted fountain. Insightful touches, like a lower railing on the deck below, allow for unobstructed views that don’t include a neighboring dwelling or wall, but do include the top of the infamously challenging “corkscrew” at world-renown Laguna Seca Raceway.



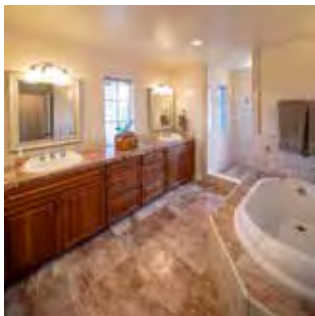






Though many animals such as deer, turkey, rabbits, quail, bobcats, and endless species of birds drop into the grounds from time to time, the only official four-legged resident is Sydney, a beautiful Australian Shepherd whose cream and burnt sienna coloring matches the warm palette of the home. Sydney especially appreciates the walking culture of the neighborhood, which allows all of the residents to know each other despite the well-spaced, ample lots.

Garth and Bonnie's home became the go-to location for extended family gatherings because of the sunny weather and the inviting indoor-outdoor opportunities offered by the large patio featuring a fireplace, gourmet barbecue, and a granite bar overlooking the links below. The home might continue to be such a place if not for the fact that their Palma boys have grown and moved down south. The magnetic pull of their five grandchildren has convinced Garth and Bonnie that it may be time to follow suit and allow their dream home to fulfill another family's dream.



The next owners will surely enjoy the warm weather as well as the warm palette of the earth tone décor. Plaster walls throughout provide both a visual boost as well as ample insulation to facilitate temperature control. And lest you think that the heat will be too much for the landscape, Garth installed a thoughtful gray-water retrieval system that repurposes and diverts washing machine and bath water to the grounds, just another touch that reflects these two locals' respect for the land that they've been grateful to call their home.

Should they miss their Corral de Tierra gem, they have a collection of rather special photographs to remember her by. Since one of their sons chose the country club at the other side of the pond as his wedding venue, many of the photographs from that day feature the family home standing tall and proud in the distance, as if she were a stately member of the wedding party.







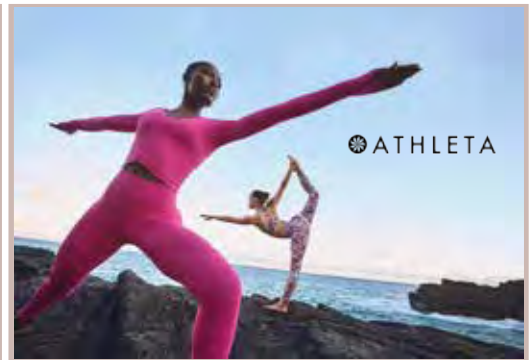


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Dog Friendly

# A Lesson in Diabetes Etiquette

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



November is National Diabetes Awareness Month. According to the most recent statistics from the Centers for Disease and Prevention (CDC), there are 37.3 million people in the United States who have been diagnosed with diabetes and another 96 million who fall into the prediabetes state (defined as having a blood glucose level in the bloodstream that is higher than normal but not high enough to be classified as diabetes). Unfortunately, these numbers continue to increase yearly and medical complications stemming from this disease are numerous.

I suspect most have at least one person in their lives affected by diabetes. My husband has been living with diabetes for over 25 years. I still vividly remember the day the diagnosis came. As a dietitian working in the diabetes field, it seemed unimaginable that I missed key red flags such as increased thirst, weight loss, and fatigue. Funny, at the time I chalked most of his symptoms up to being a new parent and caring for our infant son. As he began his diabetes journey, well-intentioned friends and family offered

“knowledge” and recommendations. I never knew there were so many diabetes experts in the world! Although he was appreciative and comforted that he was not going through this alone, it also added to the anxiety of learning to live in a new way.

Multiple dietary and lifestyle behaviors can help manage this disease, but to truly provide support for a loved one, keep these rules of etiquette in mind:

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**...there are 37.3 million people in the United States who have been diagnosed with diabetes and another 96 million who fall into the prediabetes state.**

---

- **Separate the Person from the Disease:**

I guarantee you that no one asks to have diabetes. Referring to someone as “diabetic” is inferring that the disease is a personal characteristic trait. It seems odd to me that this is the only disease where this labeling

occurs. You wouldn’t call someone battling cancer a “canceretic”, would you?

- **Relinquish Ownership:** It seems rational to tell someone who is living with diabetes what they “should or shouldn’t eat,” but it isn’t your job. Don’t be the food police! Respect that it is the individual’s body living with the disease, not yours. They must navigate the course (even if that means making mistakes).

---

***Living with diabetes can be extremely challenging. No one can manage diabetes perfectly all the time.***

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- **Learn “To Be”:** We can all benefit from a different viewpoint at times to make decisions. If invited, it is fine to suggest tips to help improve lifestyle habits. Otherwise, provide support just by being there.
- **Stay out of the Numbers Game:** Monitoring blood sugar is a great tool to see the effect of foods consumed or exercise performed. The goal is to collect data and then make decisions. How would it help to make someone feel “bad” because they experienced an elevated number? Numbers do not define the person!
- **Do as I Say, and I Will too:** It is well known that adopting a healthy lifestyle can improve living with diabetes. If you have thoughts or advice on eating better or exercising more, make sure you also follow your own words. How would it appear if you kept cookies hidden away (or worse yet in plain sight) and expected your friend or family member not to indulge?

Living with diabetes can be extremely challenging. No one can manage diabetes perfectly all the time. Learn to recognize these times and show a little extra love, humor, and compassion. ☺

# THANK YOU!



Natividad Foundation and Natividad's patients thank the family farmers, companies and individual members of The Agricultural Leadership Council (TALC) for their continued philanthropic support. Together they are changing and saving the lives of agricultural workers and their families with 2023 collective donations of \$350,000. Since 2010, TALC has donated \$4,519,200 to fund essential services at Natividad, including Spiritual Care, Indigenous Interpreting+, and diabetes management and prevention education. In addition, TALC has purchased 680 pieces of specialized and life-saving medical equipment to provide the best care for critically ill babies to victims of trauma in need of highly complex, advanced surgical procedures.

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# Mandatory Residential Rental Unit Registration Programs in Salinas and Monterey

By Danny Little, Attorney, Noland, Hamerly, Etienne & Hoss



The City of Salinas recently adopted a mandatory residential rental registration program and the City of Monterey appears to be on the verge of doing the same (calling theirs a “rental inventory”). The stated purpose of the two programs is generally the same: by gathering information about the residential properties that are available for rent within city limits, the respective city councils can make better and more informed decisions to make housing more affordable. Many observers have speculated that the registration programs are the first steps towards further local regulation of the residential rental market, e.g., rent control ordinance or a residential unit inspection program, but for now, the core components of the two programs are the same: certain information about the units must be provided and a fee must be paid.

Under both programs, “landlords” (a defined term that includes owners, sublessors, their agents, and in Salinas only, property

managers) are to annually report the following information for their residential rental units: (i) name and contact information for the landlord, (ii) the address or APN of the property, (iii) the number of bedrooms and bathrooms in the unit, and (iv) the unit’s square footage.

In Salinas, landlords are additionally required to report their business license number, and the name and contact information of the property manager. Salinas landlords will be asked, but not required, to provide monthly rent, whether utilities are included, whether the unit is occupied, and whether rent is subsidized.

In Monterey, landlords will be required to provide the year the unit was built, the occupancy status of the unit with the reason for vacancy if applicable, monthly rent, whether utilities are included, HOA fees, and any other information deemed necessary by the Community Development Director.

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**... much remains unknown about the impact these programs will have and what additional local regulations will follow.**

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The cities plan to do different things with the information reported to them. In Salinas, the City will keep the rental information in a secured database that can be used to generate reports about the City-wide rental market. However, individual landlord and unit information is to be kept confidential. In Monterey, the City plans to make much of the individual unit information public. There, the plan is to obligate the Community Development Director to create a publicly accessible database that makes available the following information for each rental unit: address and/or APN, the year the unit was built, the number of bedrooms and bathrooms, the square footage of the unit, whether the unit is occupied

or vacant and the current monthly rent. All other information reported is to be kept confidential (and not subject to Public Records Act requests), unless otherwise legally required or if public interest in disclosure would clearly outweigh the public interest in nondisclosure.

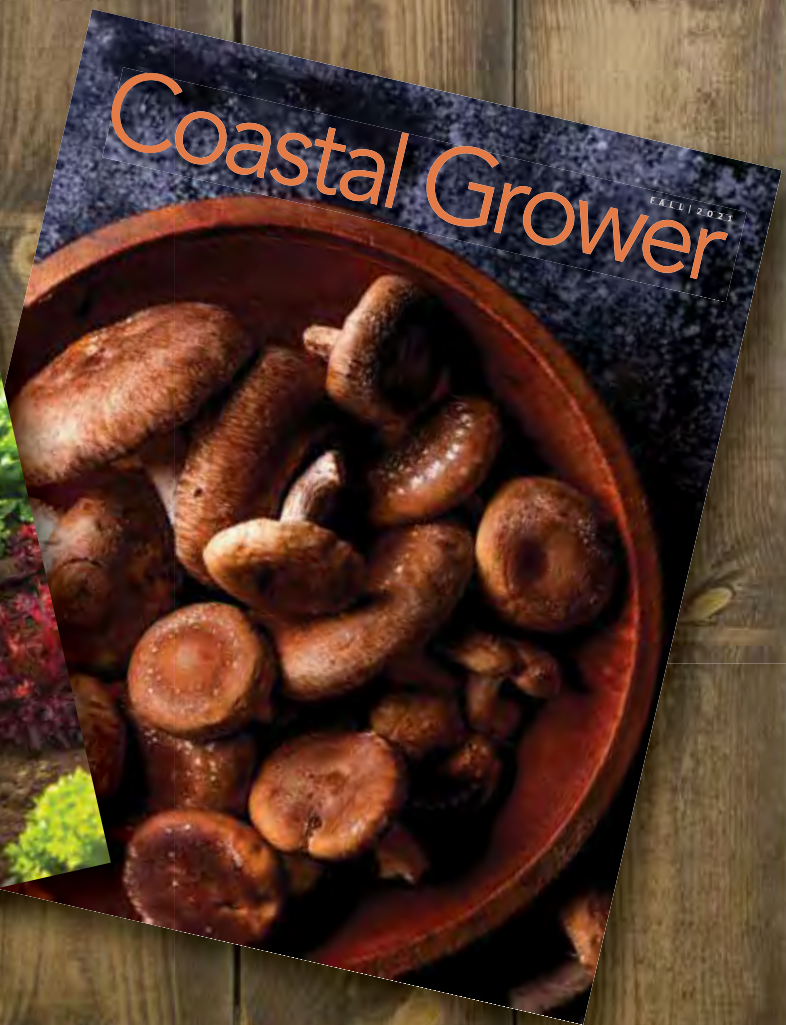
Additionally, both ordinances require landlords to pay fees to help defray the cost of operating and maintaining the registry. The annual fees in Salinas range from \$20 to \$350, depending on the number of units; the annual fees in Monterey are expected to be similar (as of the date of drafting this article, a fee schedule was not yet adopted). Salinas does not allow these fees to be passed on to tenants; Monterey plans to permit 50 percent of the fee to be passed through to tenants. These fees are in addition to any amounts owed by landlords for business licenses to the respective cities. Finally, both cities are authorized to levy additional fees for noncompliance with the programs.

As noted above, much remains unknown about the impact these programs will have and what additional local regulations will follow. It seems likely that other local governments may follow suit, instituting their own residential rental registration programs, particularly if the Monterey or Salinas city governments are able to make a noticeable impact on housing affordability or they are able to generate funding from the program sufficient to offset operating costs and generate additional revenue. Further, these programs could be laying the foundation for city-wide rent stabilization or rent control program in their cities, similar to those in San Jose and San Francisco.

This article is intended to address topics of general interest and should not be construed as legal advice. © 2023 Noland, Hamerly, Etienne & Hoss.

*...Note that this article was written and submitted in mid-September. As of mid-October, the City of Monterey’s final ordinance was still being determined.* ☞

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# Viva la Vino!

Interview with John Bargetto, Owner, Regan Vineyards Winery

By Jess Brown



JESS: The Bargetto family has been in the winemaking business for over 100 years, why did they settle in Soquel?

JOHN: Yes, my great-grandfather arrived with his son Filippo (my great uncle and future Bargetto Winery co-founder) in 1890 to work in the California wine industry. Soquel was an old lumber town, so it's not surprising that lumber was what brought the family here to Soquel. Filippo's sister was married to a lumber man, and they were living in Soquel adjacent to the future Bargetto Winery property.

JESS: How did the business survive during prohibition?

JOHN: By the time Prohibition arrived (1919-1933) the family had closed down the first winery in San Francisco, which was

called The South Montebello Vineyard and Wine company. By 1920 they had already purchased the four-acre parcel along the Soquel creek which would later become Bargetto winery property with future family residences. By 1921 they purchased the 52 acre "Bargetto Ranch" on Glen Haven Road where they planted primarily fruit trees. They expanded their income to survive by serving wine at dinners to mostly local dignitaries who enjoyed authentic Italian food. The best family Prohibition story is captured in my short story, *The Great Prohibition Caper/ Bootlegging in Soquel*. It can be purchased at Bargetto Winery in Soquel or Bargetto Tasting Room on Cannery Row.

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## ***I was born into a large, loving and rambunctious Italian family with 15 Bargettos growing up on the same property***

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JESS: How would you describe your childhood?

JOHN: I would describe it as unique, especially as I look back. I was born into a large, loving and rambunctious Italian family with 15 Bargettos growing up on the same property...10 cousins and five in my immediate family. The winery was located in the middle of the property and operated seven days a week. Our grandparent's Italianate home was located next to the winery. As one might imagine, there never was a dull moment. We all went to parochial school and church on Sundays. Adventures in the creek were never ending, too. I enjoyed working in the winery, especially construction during the summers.

JESS: How old were you when you first started helping the family?

JOHN: My first job was the summer of fourth grade. I literally dug ditches in back of the winery for a new drainage system. George Barrington, a highly intelligent "winery engineer" was my boss and for decades to follow took me under his wing. I worked for fifty cents per hour and thought I was the richest kid around. I learned from early age that work can be both fun and adventurous, and profitable.

JESS: As a child, did you have an interest in doing something other than the wine business?

JOHN: As a young person my interest ranged from being a garbage man, wide receiver in football, engineer and I finally considered medical school. If I was not to be a winemaker, I would have enjoyed being a history professor at the university level. I taught my kids to strive to understand history.

JESS: Being part of an Italian winemaking family, how old were you when you started having wine at the dinner table?





JOHN: As in the Italian tradition, wine is just part of the meal. In high school I started working in the tasting room on weekends, and each employee enjoyed a glass of wine at the end of the day with my father “The Boss”, Lawrence. At 13 I started with something sweet, but quickly fell in love with Petite Sirah!

JESS: Why did the Bargetto Family never grow their own grapes?

JOHN: It seemed that at every major dinner party at home, the conversation would always turn to... “When are we going to get a vineyard.” The original Bargetto ranch had been sold unfortunately in 1941. My father planted three small vineyards in Soquel in the 1970s. But, unfortunately, due to various reasons, they were all lost. Yet, my father always dreamt of a sizable vineyard. That



dream would be completed decades later in an episode of providence, but that’s another story.

JESS: Where did you go to college and what was your major?

JOHN: I started my higher education at

*Photos clockwise from top left: 1.) John at Regan Vineyards. 2.) Brad Brisk, owner of Home Restaurant, with John Bargetto at a recent Farm to Table dinner. 3.) Johns kids, left to right Kevin Elisa and Gianna on new Regan tractor, 1998. Kevin and Elisa have gone on to study winemaking at University level. 4.) The third gen emerges, Beverly (left) along with (left to right) Martin, John (winemaker), Tom, Loretta, Paul Bargetto, 1985.*

Cabrillo and look back very fondly on my time there to this day. Then onto UC Davis to study winemaking (enology). A few years later I stretched my legs and travelled to the far off land of Indiana to study at the University of Notre Dame and get an MBA/marketing (and there was a woman involved). To this day I bleed blue and gold, especially during football season.

JESS: When did you make the decision to start your own winery, Regan Vineyards Winery?

JOHN: Ten years ago I had the dream to build a new winery in Regan Vineyards in Corralitos. The cost of construction and heavy regulation of fire road codes and stormwater requirements forced me to re-think the vision. As the winemaker and winegrower in the family, I wanted to share the uniqueness of Regan with wine lovers and a chance to experience what I have for 32 years: majestic views, beautiful vineyard, wine tasting of Regan brand wines in our gazebo and just relax a while in a fast-paced modern life. People love the experience by making reservations at [reganwinery.com](http://reganwinery.com). Sundays only.

JESS: Why is the vineyard called Regan?

JOHN: I named it after my mother, Beverly Regan Bargetto. She was from San Francisco and was 100 percent Irish. She was my co-general partner and co-visionary. The amazing story about the property was that once we were in Escrow to purchase the land, the owner Mr. Conde, informed us that this very piece of land was nearly purchased by my father in 1973, unbeknownst to us. Do you believe in Providence?

JESS: How and where do you market Regan wines?

JOHN: The marketing plan for the new Regan Vineyards Winery brand is mostly through direct sales in vineyard tastings and our quickly growing wine club. We do tastings on Sunday via reservations, [reganwinery.com](http://reganwinery.com). We sell in a few accounts like Deluxe Foods, Seascape Resort, Persephone and Churchills in Aptos.

JESS: What do you consider Regan’s finest wine?

JOHN: I consider our Regan Pinot Noir to be our real specialty, but we just released a new Nebbiolo wine that we call The Big Fog. The wine consists of a very unconventional blend with 16 percent Cabernet Sauvignon, thus we introduce new concept...” power Piemonte”.



*Regan Vineyards gazebo at dusk*

JESS: Define the Santa Cruz Mountains appellation.

JOHN: The SCM appellation was the first federal winegrowing region to be defined by a mountain range. We have the unique combo of mountains and coastal climate. Above 400 feet on the west face, it runs from Mt Madonna in the south up to Half Moon Bay in the north. The region has just 1,500 acres of grapes, but the wines are led by Pinot Noir, Chardonnay, and Cabernet Sauvignon...the three biggies of the world!

JESS: If you could tell consumers one thing about local wines, what would it be?

JOHN: One thing?? That our local wines are produced by such hardworking winegrowers and winemakers and that the wines are of such exquisite quality given the unique location of the Santa Cruz Mountains. Then I would probably quote the old Persian poet Omar Khayyam, "What is it that the winemaker buys half as precious as what he (or she) sells."

JESS: What is the biggest challenge for winemakers in this region?

JOHN: Farming is always challenging and always will be for winegrowers as well. With 5,000 wineries in California alone, and

wineries from around the world shipping wines to the U. S. number one wine market in the world, you can imagine the competition. Thus, the marketing challenge is how to get the due attention in San Francisco, Chicago and New York. The local businesses in general give tremendous support to local vintners.

JESS: What is the most significant thing that's happened to you in your lifetime?

JOHN: Getting married and having three wonderful kids and all the fun, challenge and adventure that comes from raising kids will always be the greatest blessing. A distant second, would me having the opportunity to live and study in another part of the nation and having my eyes opened up...it's a big country outside of Soquel, ha!

JESS: If you could have dinner with three people, dead or alive, who would they be?

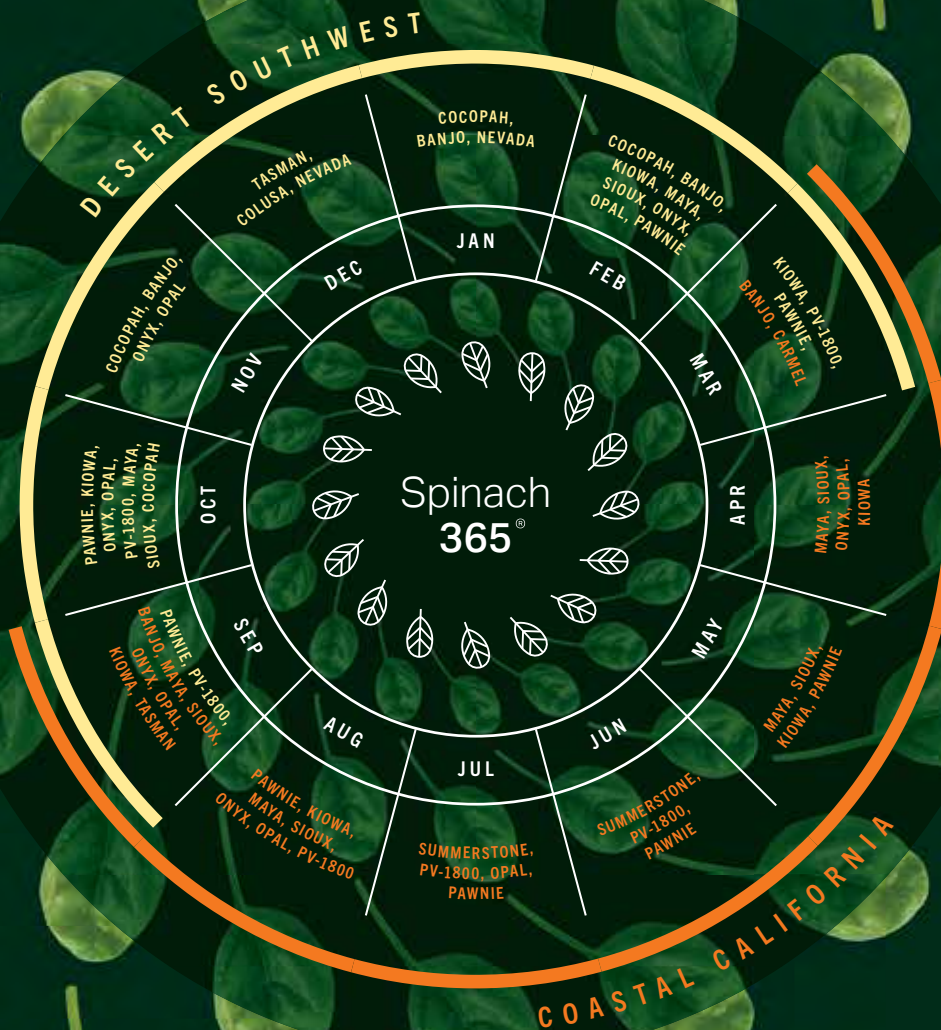
JOHN: Just three?? Cleopatra (she must have been charming and beautiful), Benjamin Franklin (a genius with a sense of humor) and Jesus Christ (would be nice to compare notes on winemaking among a few other things).

JESS: In 20 years, what will the Regan Vineyards business look like?

JOHN: I hope I'm alive!! If so, I hope that one or more of the three kids might be working with Dad in the winery and vineyard. They all express interest in the family business in the future, but none is ready to return at this time. I hope to have the vineyard to be carbon neutral long before that, with much more solar energy. And I hope I will be working less and sharing more stories with our wine loving customers. Maybe that new winery will be on Regan by then.


JESS: Where do we see John Bargetto in five years?

JOHN: Hopefully happily re-married (yes, I'm single), working with one or more of my kids, and taking two trips per year, and continuing to produce exquisite wines that can enrich people's lives. ☺




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# Fall Skin

By Dr. Christina Bolante



Fall is a great time to reset our skincare routines that may have been abandoned during the more lackadaisical summer months. Here are some tips for falling back into your skincare routine.

Moisturizing the skin with a thicker, heavier cream is recommended as the cool weather approaches. Facial moisturizers receive a lot of attention, but do not forget about your legs. Skin on the lower legs (below the knees) tends to dry out before other parts of the body. Lower temperatures often leave the legs covered in clothing and ignored. The dryness may progress during the colder months resulting in intensely itchy skin dubbed “winter itch.” Getting in the habit of using moisturizer on the lower legs now can help offset dry skin in the winter months to come. Moisturizing the skin is more than improving the cosmetic appearance, it enhances its function. Keep in mind that drinking water and staying hydrated improve the turgor and appearance of the skin, but our skin uses lipids (fats) to maintain its barrier function and some lipids even have antibacterial properties. Look for moisturizing creams that contain

ceramides and, if your skin is thinning, alpha hydroxy acids such as glycolic or lactic acid that help increase the thickness of the skin.

Fall is the time of year when certain skin diseases such as atopic dermatitis (eczema) and psoriasis may start to flare and may be a time to alter treatment regimens. Medications that were used in the warmer spring and summer months to keep skin diseases

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***Fall is a great time to reset our skincare routines that may have been abandoned during the more lackadaisical summer months.***

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controlled may not have the same efficacy in the Fall. If you are finding that your atopic dermatitis or psoriasis is not responding to previous treatments, now is a great time to see your board certified dermatologist to determine what treatments are recommended. For individuals with psoriasis, pay attention if you start to notice joint stiffness or

joint pains. Often excused for changes in barometric pressure that happens more in the Fall, joint stiffness that is worse in the morning, but improves throughout the day may be indicative of psoriatic arthritis. For those with psoriatic arthritis, an increase in your symptoms may be a flare of the arthritis as opposed to a change in weather.

Fall is also the time of year when routines for school aged children and college bound adults are reset and a great time to address common skin ailments such as acne. Acne is very common and while its effects in the skin—painful skin lesions that can lead to permanent scarring—are well touted, the psychological and social impacts can lead to depression and anxiety. If the acne is mild, start with an over the counter salicylic acid containing cleanser morning and night, spot treatment to the affected areas with benzoyl peroxide in the morning and adapalene 0.1 percent gel to the entire face at night. If acne affects the chest or back, use the cleanser on the areas with every shower and apply the adapalene 0.1 percent gel to the areas once or twice per week. Note that benzoyl peroxide will bleach towels, linens, clothing, etc. so change to white towels and bathmats or look for benzoyl peroxide resistant bath linens. If the acne is moderate to severe, seek the care of a board certified dermatologist for prescription strength medications.

Lastly, the Fall is a great time to undergo treatments that require sun avoidance. Treatments for actinic keratoses (pre-cancerous spots that dermatologists often freeze), cosmetic procedures such as deep chemical peels, laser procedures and topical treatments for sun freckles and melasma all are best done in the months with shorter days and cooler temperatures. ☁

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# The City of Gonzales is Getting Closer to Building a Major Community Center

*The project will benefit the entire community and will be an asset for the Salinas Valley region*

By Irwin Speizer



After years of research and planning, a major new community complex that will offer a comprehensive set of services and opportunities to Gonzales-area residents, particularly its youth, is moving closer to reality, with plans to break ground in early 2024.

On June 6, the city selected a design/build contractor for the project and the design of the entire facility began in July. The city has also chosen a name for the complex that honors an important local family.

Millions of dollars in public and private funds have already been secured for the estimated \$34.8 million price tag, including \$6.5 million in donations toward an ongoing \$10 million capital campaign.

The complex is envisioned as a multi-generational facility, offering access to resources and support for mental and physical health, exercise, counseling, and educational classes. It will include a large community hall with a supporting commercial kitchen that will double as a “cooking and nutritional learning kitchen.”

Other components include a teen innovation center, County library branch, a fitness room, restrooms, staff offices, meeting rooms, and an outdoor amphitheater. The community hall and courtyard amphitheater will provide year-round opportunities for local and regional residents to celebrate heritage, art, and bring together multi-generations to share cultural traditions to benefit the health and quality of life for residents across all ages.

The center will be constructed on a city-owned parcel at 5th Street and Gabilan Court and the entire project will be approximately 13,000 square feet.

## **Naming the Complex**

The Gonzales community center will be named after Dennis and Janice Caprara. Dennis attended Gonzales schools and was a proud Gonzales High School graduate. He was active in 4-H and Future Farmers of America, where he found his passion for agriculture. Janice, a farmer’s daughter also grew up in South County. In 1971 the Capraras founded Gonzales’ RC Farms and in 1986 RC Packing.

Dennis was a highly respected industry leader in the Salinas Valley. He passed away suddenly in 2021. Janice continues to be actively involved in the family ag business and has taken on a leadership role in the Community Center’s capital campaign on behalf of her and her husband as she feels that his legacy of giving back to the community of Gonzales will live on through the realization of the Gonzales Community Center.

## **Community Center Background**

The City of Gonzales has a population of about 8,500. Thirty-six percent of the population is under the age of 18 and about 11 percent of residents are under age five. Gonzales prides itself on having “small town” family values and the town character is best summed up by a saying that is often heard in town: The Gonzales Way. For years the community has yearned for a facility which would allow for family and greater community celebrations, cultural and musical events.

The city’s youth got the ball rolling in 2017 when the Gonzales Youth Council, in partnership with city leadership, began working on the idea of creating a dedicated space for teens to flourish. That work continued for several years.

In 2020 city voters passed Measure X, an additional tax to be used for Gonzales projects. With the new source of revenue, the city began work on a larger community complex that would incorporate the Youth Council’s ideas. City leaders conducted extensive community outreach to solicit feedback from residents on what they would like to see included in a potential community center, possible uses for the center and activities to offer.

After thorough due diligence and community input, the City Council was

presented with a concept design for what will be the new community center complex.

**About the Community Center Complex**

The project envisions several components to serve the needs of the local residents.

**Community Recreation Hall:** The 3,500 square foot community hall will serve as a large, publicly accessible indoor space that can accommodate a variety of activities year-round. The hall will provide a space for fitness and recreation classes and programs. It will also be a space to hold cultural and community celebrations and educational workshops for youth, families, and seniors.

**The Teen Innovation Center:** The Gonzales Youth Council spent three years planning the 4,000 square foot space. The teens wanted to create a safe and resourceful place where they can take academics beyond the classroom immersing themselves into programs and activities to promote college and career readiness, academic success, entrepreneurship, and most importantly to spark innovation. They envisioned an area that will include a teen lounge and a makerspace that will offer 3-D printing, digital arts, robotics, and other leading technologies to support creative career opportunities. In addition, the center will have a homework

area for both individual and group study, online and in person tutoring, and indoor and outdoor teen lounge areas.

**Courtyard Amphitheatre:** The amphitheater will be approximately 3,000 square feet and will provide a space for cultural performances, concerts, theater performances, educational seminars, holiday celebrations and community events.

**Library:** The current library in Gonzales is in a leased space in the Gonzales Shopping Center. Its capacity and use are limited because of its location. The new location is next to Fairview Middle School and La Gloria Elementary School, and across the street from Gonzales High School, which will dramatically increase access and use of the library. The library will be part of a hub that includes the teen innovation center and an outdoor library courtyard, with a reading lounge area and more space for library programs. The new 4,000 square foot library will have a technology room, group study room, and expanded resources.

The City has outlined a phased approach to building the Community Center Complex. Phase 1 includes the library, Teen Innovation Center, restrooms, office, courtyard, lounge area, amphitheater, and parking lot improvements and phase 2 includes the

community hall, meeting rooms, commercial kitchen, fitness center, and remainder of additional parking.

**Financing and Capital Campaign**

In addition to city tax funds and several grants received, \$5 million dollars in state funding for the teen center was secured by state Senator Anna Caballero.

The city launched a capital campaign in 2022 with a goal to raise \$10 million dollars. The city partnered with the Community Foundation for Monterey County to set up a fund specifically for the capital campaign. Several Salinas Valley ag leaders have generously contributed to the campaign and to date over \$6.5 million has been raised. For more information about the community center complex or to contribute to the capital campaign visit [www.cfmco.org/GonzalesCommunityCenter](http://www.cfmco.org/GonzalesCommunityCenter) or scan the QR code. <sup>es</sup>



# An Elevated Vineyard Experience in the Air and on the Ground

By Mike Hale



If Michele Wilkinson learned anything over her many decades in customer service, it's to always engage in active listening.

Wilkinson has had a long and rewarding career in the aviation and transportation industry with major projects of transporting passengers and cargo throughout the world. For nearly three decades she owned her own air charter companies: Tailwind International and Cherry Air Charters, managing hundreds of private flights to many continents while navigating the globe with its countless cultures, languages, and challenges.

She continued with perseverance, grit, passion, and pride in her workmanship, aside with a genuine respect for cultures. Getting

business acumen took years, but that keen ear to listening took precedence.

So, it's no surprise that a tourist's casual remark on the streets of Carmel-by-the-Sea did not escape her ear. The man wondered aloud why it wasn't easier to gain access to

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***Her idea would allow people to connect with the agriculture, the terroir, and the winemakers...***

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famed California vineyards to better explore and experience their methods and properties together with their wines.

Wilkinson calls it an important light

bulb moment during a lifetime of leaving herself open to such inspiration. "I thought, why don't I offer helicopter journeys into vineyards and lay out a white tablecloth experience, with full VIP treatment, so people can better explore, collect, compare, taste superior wine, have wine paired with gourmet chef-prepared menus and experience what a vineyard is all about" "But landing by a helicopter into a vineyard, must be like nothing you have ever experienced" she thought.

This led to the formation of Wine Flights VIP, a curated customer experience that literally and figuratively elevates a "wine flight" experience; learning about wine culture and what it means to collect and develop new senses to wine and food and



an appreciation for the vineyard architects. Taking that experience first from the air and then from the ground.

Her idea would allow people to connect with the agriculture, the terroir, and the winemakers, understand, learn and taste the fruit from the vine or even learn about the variety of barrels used in the making and to enjoy it all firsthand from the experts themselves.

Wilkinson came to live in Carmel in 2017 as a widow after years in Dallas, Texas, building a life with her late husband Dallas Sherman, a former US Air Force fighter jet pilot and later as vice president for American Airlines, cargo division and a California boy. As car collectors, the couple escaped the Texas heat by making yearly pilgrimages to the Monterey Peninsula during the annual Concours D' elegance.

"It was a special place and time for us," said Wilkinson, whose husband was an avid collector of vintage Fords. "So, when he died it was a natural progression for me to return to the magic place of Carmel-by-the-Sea. We had made many friends over the years and loved cars and art — this quintessential place for both."

It was a perfect fit. Anchored in Carmel, she once again began to channel her enterprising spirit and went to work conducting research. While having spent much of her life in Texas, Wilkinson had limited her wine tasting and experience to Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot. She knew little about California varietals such as pinot noir or the idea of tasting rooms, extremely limited to Texas at the time, but had never even visited a vineyard.

So, she called local vineyard owners, arranged visits and ran her idea by them. "To my surprise they all loved the idea," she said.

She applied her newfound vineyard intel with her coordination and transportation ability, tapped into her enterprising spirit, put the pieces together, securing vineyard clients, private chefs and transportation that included not only helicopters but also classic and private luxury cars and drivers, ATVs and electric bikes. Shortly after, creating itineraries throughout California's vineyards.

She does mention that not everyone is

comfortable with a helicopter. Each new client has become a lesson in bespoke curation. There are customers who want to explore the vineyards on foot, try e-bikes or ATVs in certain vineyards or just want a casual picnic lunch, while others want privacy during their tastings with a customized menu. Others want to enter vineyard caves, and taste wine that's maturing in the barrel. Still others are avid collectors who seek out exclusive boutiques and special vintages to bring home for their own private cellars.

Vineyard locations vary from her home base of Monterey County, to Napa, Sonoma, Healdsburg, Paso Robles and Santa Barbara. "There are over 4,000 vineyards in California, and we are certain to please," she said.

She recently had clients ask her to put them on a yacht in Santa Barbara and arrange a dinner for 20 in a restaurant. "It doesn't stop with helicopter journeys," said Wilkinson,

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***This led to the formation of Wine Flights VIP, a curated customer experience that literally and figuratively elevates a "wine flight" experience.***

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who is also building itineraries for business retreats and private jets from Texas to California or to play golf in Cabo San Lucas, Mexico, to include villas and resorts. "It's a lot of work and coordination," she said, but what a thrill when you achieve that utopia for your client!"

"I ask leading questions to better gain an understanding. While we have standard packages, before suggesting that, it's best to know specifically what my clients are interested in and put them into an area they will feel good and enjoy, which is my goal too," she said. "Finding the best combination to help make them happy."

Some of her clients are celebrating a special day, an anniversary, birthday, or perhaps a secret proposal. In fact, she recalls a young man from the Sacramento area who called and wanted to get engaged and take the helicopter/vineyard journey. "He didn't have

the budget, but he also didn't call in time, as the weekend he wanted had every single private transportation company sold out." Wilkinson refused to dampen the proposal.

"I decided I couldn't turn them down," she said. "I would drive my new BMW, function as their chauffeur and take them to the beautiful Stonepine Estates beyond Carmel Valley Village."

She set them up for a special lunch, provided a secret photographer, who surreptitiously followed them around and the proposal ended with a tearful, but beautiful smile and a happy "yes", and photos to prove it.

That's what Wilkinson works hard to accomplish ... saying yes to special requests and finding the pathway by managing all available logistics.

Her thriving business has expanded beyond the vineyard journeys. She offers private jet travel with concierge planning to California for your choice of golf, wine tasting, boating expeditions and exploration or just choosing to fly private jets out-of-country for luxury travel experiences, sightseeing, and resort stays.

"I'm like a mother hen with all my projects, ensuring communication and problem solving while accomplishing success and enjoyment for our customers. My only regret is that my husband did not see Wine Flights VIP come to pass. He would have enjoyed this immensely and the very least, watching me work hard!" ☞

# Cauliflower and Garbanzo Bean Curry with Homemade Flat Bread

*Courtesy of Cafe Carmel*

## INGREDIENTS:

- 1 tablespoon canola oil
- 1 Tablespoon butter
- 2 teaspoons curry powder
- 1 teaspoon mustard seeds
- 1 onion finely sliced.
- 5 garlic cloves, crushed.
- 2 cm piece of ginger, finely chopped.
- 1 cauliflower, broken into florets
- 1 teaspoon sugar
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon pepper
- 1 can garbanzo beans (chick peas)
- 1 can coconut milk (400 ml)
- Juice ½ lemon
- Cilantro – bunch

1. Put a pan on the stove and on a moderate heat add the curry powder for about 30 seconds.
2. Melt the butter and heat the oil in the pan. Add the onion, garlic and ginger and mustard seeds cook until the onions are softened and the mustard seeds start popping.
3. Add the cauliflower florets. Drain the garbanzo beans and add to the pan. Stir fry for 5 minutes then add the coconut milk. Continue to simmer with the lid on the pan until the cauliflower starts to soften.
4. Leave the pan with the lid on for 5 minutes. Add the juice of half a lemon.
5. Serve with fresh cilantro as a garnish.

## FLATBREADS:

- 3 cups of all-purpose flour
- 2 teaspoons of baking powder
- 1 1/2 teaspoons salt
- 3 tablespoons olive or vegetable oil
- 1 cup ice water
- 2-3 tablespoon vegetable oil for frying



1. Combine the flour, baking powder and salt in a large mixing bowl.
2. Add the ice water and oil and mix to a moist dough adding extra flour or water to achieve this.
3. Cover with plastic wrap for 10-15 minutes to rest.
4. Pre-heat a heavy bottomed skillet and add a tablespoon of oil.
5. Divide the dough into 10 equal pieces the size of an egg. Either shape and flatten in floured hands or roll into a circle ¼ inch thick.
6. Fry in batches for 2 minutes on each side until golden brown. Cool slightly before serving with the curry. ☺

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# Boots, Bottles & BBQ

The First Tee – Monterey County Boots, Bottles & BBQ (or BBB as it's affectionately known) has grown into one of Monterey County's most beloved events with huge support from our ag community. The BBB features fantastic food and luxury California wines along with great entertainment. Guests were treated to a hilarious and fast paced auction with Steve John, David Gill, and celebrity auctioneer, SJ Sharks announcer Randy Hahn. The auction featured some of the world's most collectible wines, unique VIP experience only available through the BBB, and spectacular once-in-a-lifetime trips. Our community leaders raised their paddles high and proud to ensure the youth in Monterey County have the support and resources they need to reach their fullest potential.

The 2023 BBB featured an amazing performance by rising star Mikayla Phillips and the Highwayman Band.

Thanks to Presenting Sponsors – Chevron and 49ers – and all of our loyal sponsors, the board of directors, incredible auction donors and bidders, and generous fund the need donors, the 12th Annual Boots, Bottles & BBQ raised over \$1.23m for 10,000 deserving youth of Monterey County including over \$300k for new programs in King City.



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- 5.) David Gill presenting the Screaming Eagle lot to Michelle Story of Taylor Farms.



# California Rodeo Salinas 2023

The 113th celebration of the California Rodeo Salinas was an exciting week. It started with the Big Week Kick Off Concert featuring Little Big Town and rolled into the Kiddie Kapers Parade, Larry Balentine Memorial Cowboy Shoot Out, Hall of Fame Induction, horse parades, Big Week Bull Riding, and California Rodeo Salinas performances. The Big Week Bull Riding on Wednesday night and the Friday night Rodeo performance sold out. The Rodeo saw record attendance as fans enjoyed trick riding, mutton busting, a giant American flag being parachuted into the venue, and world-class competition featuring some of the best rodeo athletes on the professional circuit. There was a salute to the Military on Saturday honoring 103-year-old and purple heart-holding Veteran David Perez who rode in a vintage military jeep during the Grand Entry. Sunday's performance was not only the Day of Champions but also the first Golden Circle of Champions Day where over \$6,000 was raised for pediatric cancer awareness.

Altogether, the California Rodeo Association proudly donated over \$771,000 to local non-profit, community, and western groups this past year. The funds were earned during events held throughout the year at the Salinas Sports Complex, with many groups performing vital tasks, receiving donations from tip jars, or youth sports teams receiving discounted field and facility rentals.



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- 1.) Saddle Bronc Riding (Photo by Phil Doyle).
- 2.) 2023 Donation Check (Photo by Mag One Media).
- 3.) 2023 Hall of Fame Inductees (Photo by Mag One Media).
- 4.) Little Big Town (Photo by Mag One Media)



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# Carmel Plaza Raises Money and Awareness for Local Nonprofits

This past July, Carmel Plaza invited the community to enjoy free live music, sip premier local wines and experience samplings of savory appetizers from local restaurants at their popular Summer Live Music Series. For the second year in a row there was an opportunity for attendees to give back to local non-profits—10 percent of every food and beverage ticket sold each Friday was donated to that afternoon’s nonprofit partner.

“What a beautiful combination, celebrating and supporting local businesses and nonprofits in Monterey County in a fun and festive environment. Thank you, Carmel Plaza, for recognizing how important it is to support positive mental health and well-being through the work that Harmony At Home is doing throughout Monterey County.” Said Julianne Leavy, President/CEO Harmony At Home

New this year were the inspiring performances at intermission by the talented dancers of Carmel Dance Festival.

“It was electrifying for Carmel Dance Festival’s Guest Artists and Summer Program participants to perform at Carmel Plaza for such a massive and enthusiastic crowd. There’s nothing quite like live music and dance to bring people together and provoke joy.” Shared Lillian Barbeito, Carmel Dance Festival Co-Founder.

Carmel Plaza was pleased to donate, in total, \$1,654 from food and drink ticket sales alone to the following nonprofits: Max’s Helping Paws Foundation, Animal Friends Rescue Project, Meals on Wheels Salinas and Meals on Wheels Monterey, All-In Monterey, Harmony at Home and Kindness Monterey.

The series lasted for a total of five evenings, and on each of those evenings, Carmel Plaza was bursting with individuals dancing to popular local bands while sipping on some of the best local wines and enjoying tasty appetizers, all while having the opportunity to give back to local charities.

“Being able to blend an established event with a fundraising opportunity just makes sense and we are pleased we have been able to do just that,” says Kristin Torrice, Carmel Plaza General Manager.

Carmel Plaza is already working on Summer Live Music 2024. Mark your calendars for five Fridays this coming summer starting with June 28th and running consecutively through July 26th. If you are interested in sponsoring the Summer Live Music Series, please get in touch with the Plaza team at 831.624.0138.

- 1.) Performers from the Carmel Dance Festival entertaining guests at intermission
- 2.) Scheid pouring wine at opening night.
- 3.) The crowd for the Chicano All Stars.
- 4.) Dancing to the Chicano All Stars
- 5.) Links Club serving mole tostadas







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# Relay for Life

By Athena Tracey, Photos by Juan Avila Photography

If you were in Salinas City Center Saturday, September 23, you were in good company as the 26th Annual Relay for Life of the Salinas Valley took over downtown Salinas. Relay for Life is the largest fundraiser in the fight against cancer worldwide providing research funding and a variety of services for patients. In the last 25 years the Salinas Relay has raised over \$16MM and this year is number one in the state!

According to Nancy Valdez, event staff at the American Cancer Society, “The Salinas Relay was a key premier event for the American Cancer Society and was attended this year by national members due to the premier designation.” Athena Tracey, co-chair, said, “We’re honored to dedicate this year’s Relay to Sam Linder, former resident and car dealer, the reason Relay is in Salinas.”

“Over \$424,000 has been raised to date, exceeding the goal of \$400,000 thanks to the contributions of 150 teams and many sponsors”, said Julie Laughton, Team Lead. The Del Grande Dealer Group, Salinas Honda, has been donating a car to be raffled for over 25 years, and this tradition continued leading up to the event. Families and large businesses formed teams and tirelessly fundraised for the event. Tiffany DiTullio, Sponsorship Chair said, “Tanimura & Antle, Taylor Farms, Braga Fresh, Santa Fe Foods, Salinas Valley Health, and Montage Health were some of the primary sponsors”.

Mark Kennedy event co-chair said, “This year’s event is the second year we’ve been in the Salinas City Center where we hope to stay for many years.” Downtown Salinas radiated purple lights, the official Relay color, and light posts held banners honoring and remembering those that have fought cancer. The evening kicked off with cancer survivor Rita Pina cutting the ribbon to begin the first lap honoring cancer survivors and caregivers led by Silvia Rivera, torch bearer, and followed by teams participating in the event. Throughout the night team members from each team and the community, continued to walk the track while being entertained by bands and dance acts. At the end of the night the track was lined with luminary candle bags decorated with the names of those that are still fighting against cancer and remembering those that have been lost.

Prisca Segovia, co-chair, added, “We could not have done this without the support of our fantastic committee and hundreds of volunteers.”

To learn more about Relay For Life of The Salinas Valley, email Nancy Valdez at [nancy.valdez@cancer.org](mailto:nancy.valdez@cancer.org).

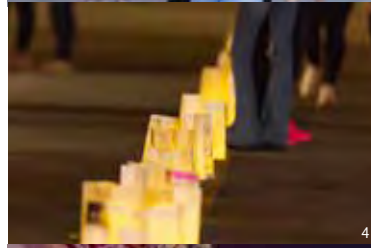


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1.) Cal Fire Team. 2.) Julie Laughton, Team Lead. 3.) Sylvia Rivera and Rita Pina, Torch Bearer and Ribbon Cutter. 4.) Luminary Ceremony. 5.) Survivors Lap. 6.) Team Laps with Salinas Arch Lit Purple.





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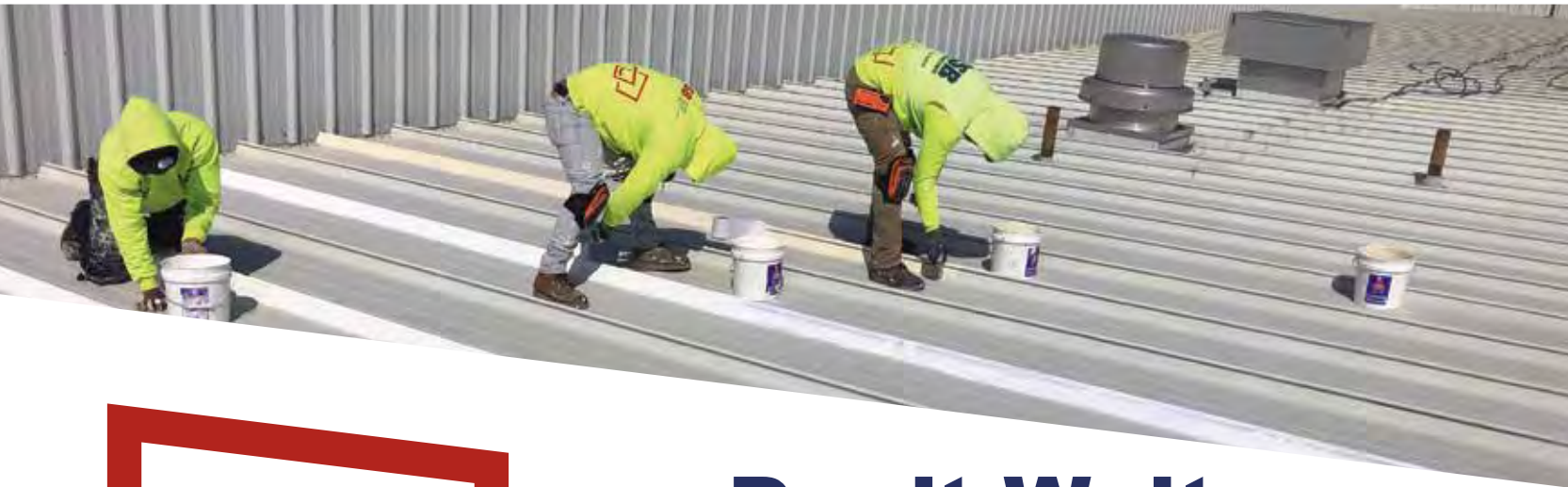
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