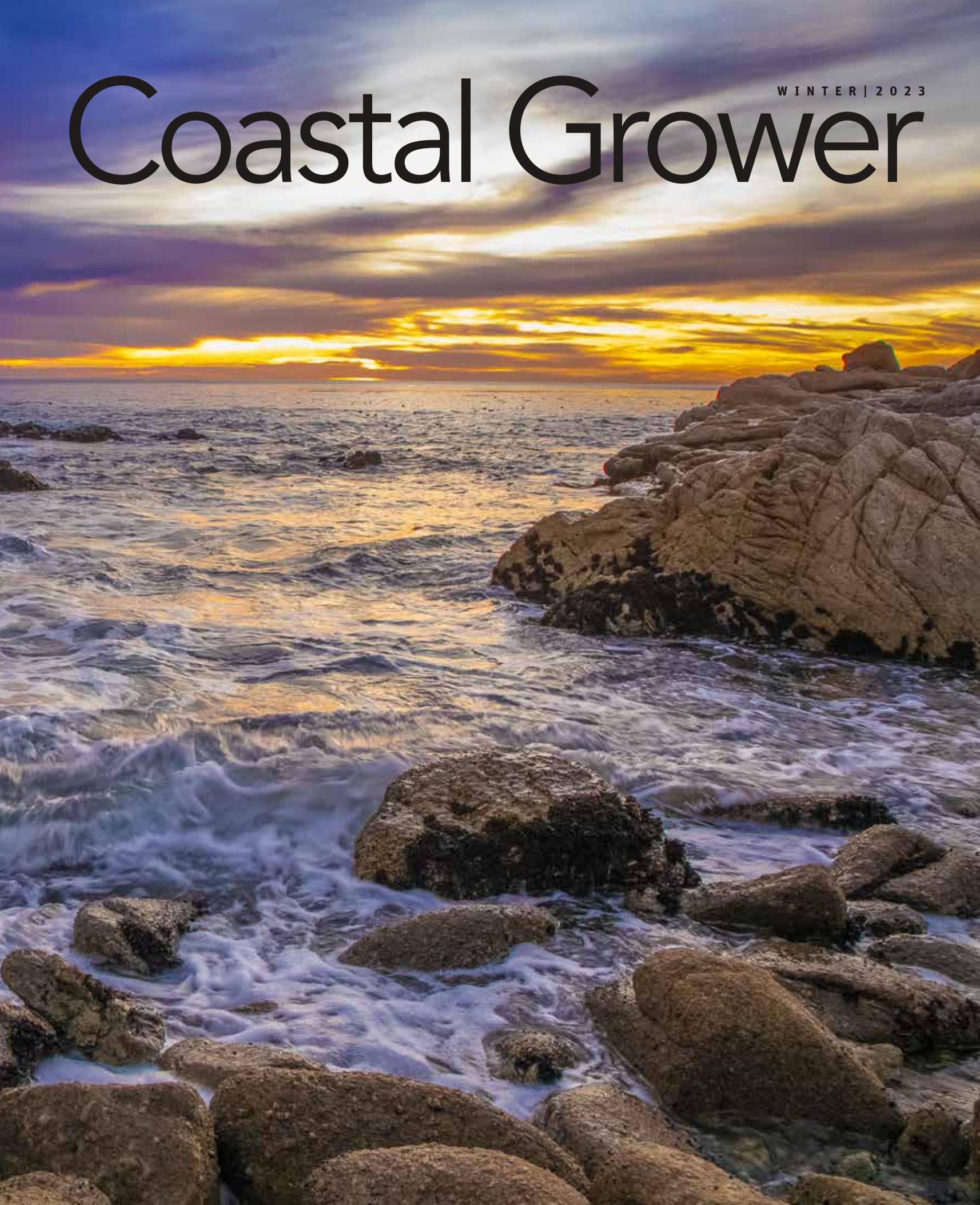


# Coastal Grower

WINTER | 2023







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*Mylene Peralta, RN*

Breast Cancer Survivor



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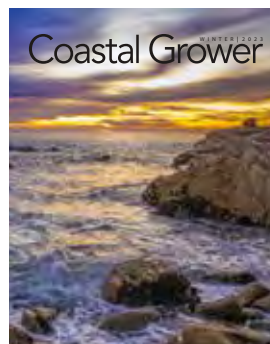
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# Mario and Kim

I realize some readers of this magazine are not familiar with the neighborhood where I live, but some of you are. Even if you are not familiar, I think you will appreciate my reflection on Mario and his wife, Kim, who have operated the gas station and flower shop on the corner for 40 years (30 of which I have had the pleasure of knowing them).

Every neighborhood should have a Mario and Kim. Industrious, independent, caring and kind. Mario knows everyone's name and would happily pump your gas and clean your windows when he was able. Kim always had the most beautiful flower arrangements and would caringly wrap them in colorful tissue and tie them with a nice ribbon for you. Whenever you needed to fill up the tank, purchase that last-minute gift or grab a hot cup of coffee, you knew where to go.

Mario was the unofficial Mayor of the neighborhood. Every morning a group of local retirees would venture down to the gas station/shop, grab a cup of coffee, and hold their "official town meetings." There was even reserved parking for them. Whenever I drove home and sat at the light waiting to turn there was a sense of comfort seeing Mario and Kim going about their business...always happy to share a smile and wave as you drove by.

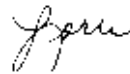
While my hometown has grown considerably over the years, I have grown to appreciate the benefits of being able to support businesses that give back to the community and know who you are. At times growing up I wished I could be a little more anonymous but when I left for college, I remember the shock factor when I arrived at a much larger school (granted it was in a small town) where no one knew who I was or where I came from.

It is nice to shop at my local, independent grocery store where I know everyone by name and they know me (especially the time I forgot my wallet and they told me not to worry about it, just come in the next day and pay—which I did, of course). Or the local florist where I have an old-fashioned house charge account or the salad shop where the owner instinctively hands me the right size cup for my fountain drink since I've been eating there for 20-plus years, and he knows my order.

After 40 years Mario and Kim have retired. The neighborhood gave them a warm farewell celebration. It is the end of an era. While their retirement is well-deserved and timely, I sit at the light now in my car and feel a bit of emptiness as I look over at the closed gas station and flower shop. There is no one to smile and wave to as I drive by...the unofficial town council is going to have to plan their meetings elsewhere.

I will have to plan my flower and gift purchases better and make sure there's enough gas in the tank to make it into town. This world and neighborhoods everywhere need more people like Mario and Kim—with self-service kiosks, self-checkout stations and big box home deliveries...small, independent business proprietors are becoming a lost breed weakening the fabric of a neighborhood.

I do not so much wish to be anonymous anymore. Sometimes you want to go where everybody knows your name, and they're always glad you came.



# Contributors



## BILL HASTIE

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).



## 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.



## 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.



## 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.





### **BRIAN MILNE**

Brian Milne is a former journalist who has worked in agriculture on the Central Coast since 2010, primarily focused on agriculture, in-field technology and sustainable soil management solutions. He is currently the Vice President of Marketing and Communications for Holloway, which provides soil amendments, agronomy and redevelopment services to California growers. Learn more at [HollowayAg.com](http://HollowayAg.com).



### **EMILY BASANESE**

Emily is the Social Media Manager and Head of Community at Strock Real Estate in Aptos. At Strock, she loves writing the community newsletter, spotlighting local businesses on social media, and collaborating with community members. Emily has lived in San Benito County her entire life and currently lives within walking distance to downtown San Juan Bautista with her husband Josh. Outside of work, she enjoys thrifting furniture, wine tasting, and reading with her cat Archie on the window seat at home.



### **DOUG LARSON**

With a Bachelor of Science degree in Agricultural Education from Colorado State University and over forty years of experience in the Industry of Agriculture, Doug Larson maintains both a California Pest Control Advisor and Qualified Applicators License.

Through his years as a 4th generation Colorado Farmer and Rancher, Agricultural Educator, Manager, Director, Vice President, Partner, President & CEO, Mr. Larson has developed a unique set of skills and experiences focusing on the use of precision irrigation systems to better manage critical water resources in today's regenerative production agriculture climate.



### **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.



### **JILL ALLEN**

In the last 20 years, Jill has provided management services to the public benefit sector, specializing fund development and strategic planning. Jill has advocated for the chronically homeless for the last 12 years at Dorothy's Place in Salinas, and has served the last five as executive director. She led Dorothy's Place through the development of the Chinatown Health Services Center, and introduced intensive case management for chronically unsheltered people. They have proven that chronically unsheltered people can be successfully housed by assisting 102 high-barrier clients into permanent sustainable housing. Jill also served for 20 years in the United States Air Force.

*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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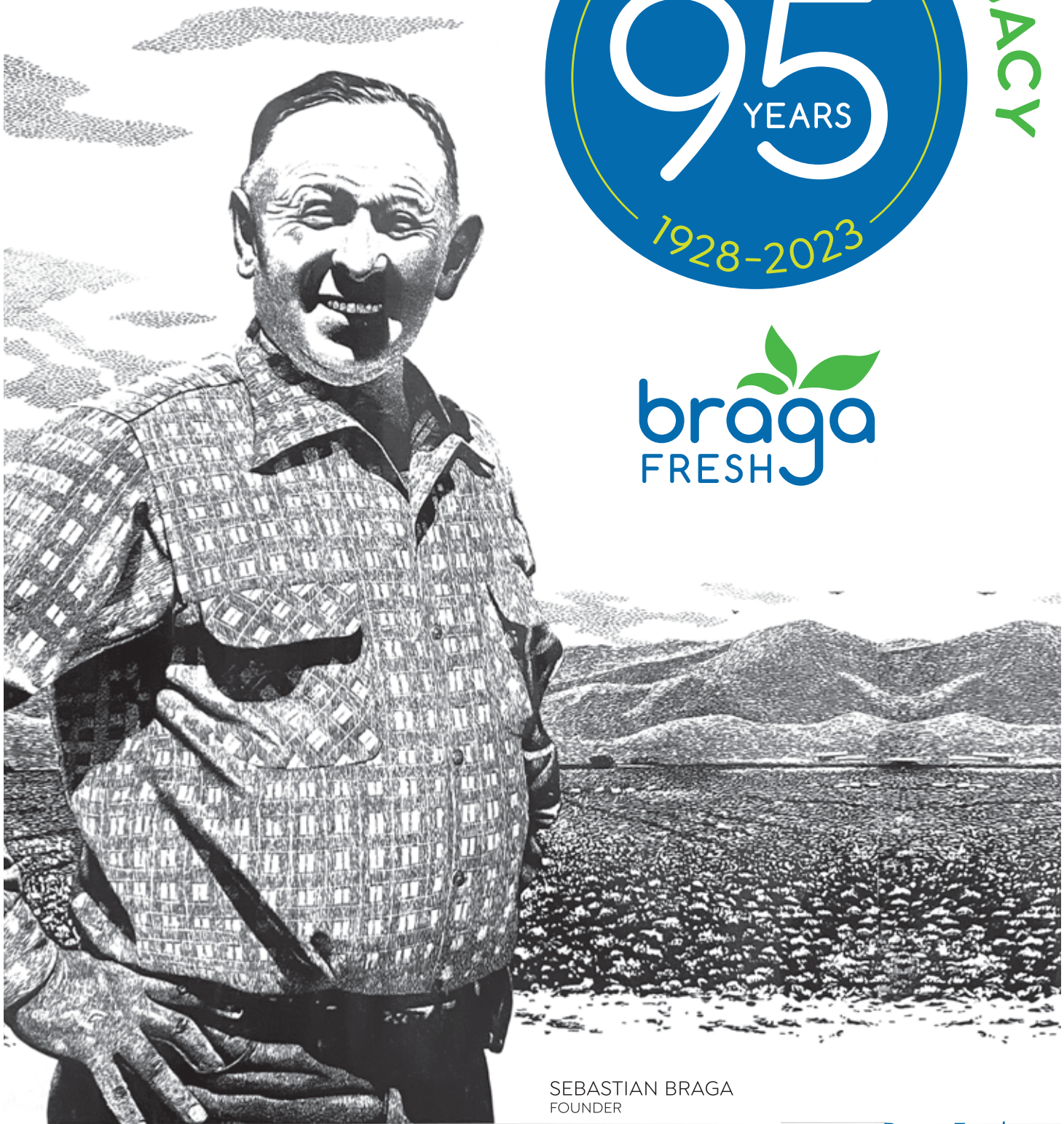


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# Rewarding Resolutions

*Creative Ways to Give Back in 2024*

By Emily Basanese



The new year harkens a renewed slew of resolutions - many of them focused on health and self improvement. Alongside those goals to stretch yourself personally, how about adding a resolution to give back this year? And there are tons of opportunities besides packing lunches at the food bank or giving monetarily (although, those are fantastic ways to support your community)! Put your skills and time to good use through these incredible nonprofits, unique to our counties.

We'll start with an easy volunteer opportunity: eating delicious food. Yep, that's all you have to do to support this first nonprofit in Monterey County. The Drummond Culinary Academy at Rancho Cielo Youth Campus supports underserved youth in Monterey County - and they also serve a pretty mean dinner. Fall through spring, come to one of Rancho's Friday

night dinners and enjoy a three course, prix fixe meal for \$50. What makes this experience unique is that you will enjoy your meal on the 100-acre campus, tucked into the beautiful foothills, and you will be served by the Rancho students themselves. Be prepared for stunning views of Salinas Valley and the twinkling city lights served as a side with every plate.

Another way to serve in Monterey County is to volunteer at the Golden Oldies Cat Rescue. Kittens are always the first to be adopted from a shelter, so this rescue focuses on felines in their sunset years (six years and older). And to tell you the truth, cats stay plenty spry well into their golden years. Opt to foster one of these kitties until they find their forever home, or adopt and skip the litter box training and late night zoomies you're more likely to experience with younger cats; make retirement their best years yet!

---

## ***Alongside those goals to stretch yourself personally, how about adding a resolution to give back this year?***

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You may have visited the Steinbeck Center in Downtown Salinas, but did you know that this nonprofit has many volunteer opportunities? In addition to positions like Docent Tour Guide, Exhibit Technician, or Archives Assistant Researcher, you could volunteer your skills and become a Steinbeck Young Authors Writing Coach. The Steinbeck Young Authors program takes middle school students on a journey through Steinbeck's literary works, then challenges them to write their own pieces. If you have a talent for writing and want to encourage students

to pursue this skill in light of their local history, the Steinbeck Center is always recruiting Writing Coaches!

San Benito County also has a host of ways to give back to your community. Monkeytail Ranch may sound like a haven for endangered baboons, but it actually benefits another tailed creature: dogs. This program trains service dogs for children and families with special needs. You can participate in a training internship, assist with fundraising, or even raise one of the puppies yourself! You could also offer your skills in grant writing, public relations, or social media management to help generate awareness (and funds) for Monkeytail Ranch. It doesn't get any better than fostering a puppy for a good cause!

If you're more focused on preserving the incredible ecosystem of our counties, the Pinnacles National Park Foundation is the nonprofit for you. This park is home to the endangered California Condor - and you can actually "adopt" one of these birds in an effort to protect the species. While you can't take one of these home like you can







with the cuddly puppies of Monkeytail Ranch, you will receive a photo, biography, and three updates regarding the health of your adopted bird, all thanks to the GPS tags that 22 of the 45 Condors wear. Other volunteer opportunities for the Foundation include Information Table Staffing, Board of Directors positions, and Event Help.

***With options like fostering puppies, guiding young writers, or supporting environmental change through the power of the bike ride, volunteering has never been so fun.***

To dig into volunteering in Santa Cruz County, look no further than the Homeless Garden Project. As homelessness becomes more acute in Santa Cruz, many locals are seeking creative solutions. The Homeless Garden Project provides opportunities to unhoused patrons at Natural Bridges Farm, where they will receive transitional employment and job training while working in the healing environment of a garden. Volunteers can donate their time at The Farm Kitchen, where program participants can get a hot and ready meal. There are also opportunities to volunteer in the garden,

at special awareness-building events, and at the storefront in Downtown Santa Cruz.

Another Santa Cruz-based nonprofit is Ecology Action, whose goal is to attack climate change by empowering patrons to live environmentally friendly lifestyles. One of the simplest (and fun!) ways to reduce the harmful effect of emissions on the environment? Advocate for alternative modes of transportation! You can volunteer to teach students about safe biking, promote sustainable transportation to Santa Cruz

County adults, advocate for electric vehicles, or volunteer at one of Ecology Action's community events! Each one of these opportunities supports the overall goal of making Santa Cruz County and beyond more sustainable for our future.

Are you inspired to add "Giving Back" to your list of New Year's Resolutions? With options like fostering puppies, guiding young writers, or supporting environmental change through the power of the bike ride, volunteering has never been so fun. ☺



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# Thank You to All of Our Farmers and Ag Workers

By Brian Milne, Holloway Agriculture



What a season.

**T**he 2023 growing season was another rollercoaster ride for California farmers.

I'd say it was the craziest year I can remember in commercial agriculture, but that might be recency bias given the industry is still recovering from past seasons plagued by supply chain and shipping issues, droughts, wildfires and, oh yeah, a pandemic.

That said, this season was a chaotic one, largely because of Mother Nature.

While we weren't expecting a severely wet winter, California got battered by more than two dozen atmospheric rivers, flooding, snow, hailstorms, ill-timed frost spells and even a late-season hurricane and storm that tore through the Golden State right as harvest was heating up.

And despite a reprieve from the drought and water challenges that crippled

California farmers in recent years, they still had to overcome the soaring costs of their other inputs such as fuel, chemicals, fertilizers and labor.

## **Thank You To All Our Ag Workers**

As we turn the page on harvest and look ahead to the much-needed holiday season and farming "offseason" (farming really never stops in California), we'd like to take a moment and thank all of the farmers and ag workers who made harvest a success this season.

---

***The 2023 growing season was another rollercoaster ride for California farmers.***

---

It wasn't an easy year, and we're all appreciative of all the hard work you put in

to help put food on our tables.

From August to October, more than 450,000 farm employees work California's harvest season, and every one of them is an essential part of our nation's food supply chain.

The holiday season is a wonderful time to enjoy the fruits of our labor, but also thank those farmers and ag workers who help put food on our tables.

---

***It wasn't an easy year, and we're all appreciative of all the hard work you put in to help put food on our tables.***

---

## **Looking Ahead to Next Season**

If recent years are any indicator, extreme weather is the new norm for California, whether it comes in the form of droughts, or floods, snow or hurricanes, and we have to prepare for those weather swings the best we can.

Speaking for a company that's been in business for more than 90 years in California, we've started to see a real push for growers to get back to the basics this winter.

As harvest winds down, more and more growers are quickly putting on soil amendments and redeveloping orchards or vineyards to get ready for next season while the weather is mild. Sitting by the sidelines and neglecting our soils has backfired for many operations in recent years, hit hard by flooding, standing water issues, damaged crops and erosion when Mother Nature opens up.

Healthy soils can't fix all of the challenges our industry is faced with today, but it's





where optimal crop health starts.

We need healthy soils to have optimal water retention, unlock nutrients, build healthy root systems and productive crops, and we need to take advantage of mild weather conditions and get into the field and spread amendments, redevelop unproductive fields, and take care of the post-season cultural practices needed for a successful 2024 season.

Because the rains will come again soon enough, and who knows what Mother Nature has in store for 2024.

In the meantime, thank you to all of the farmers and ag workers who made this past season a success, and here's hoping there's fewer ups and downs in seasons to come. Happy Holidays! ☺

*Brian Milne is a Vice President for The Holloway Group. Learn more about Holloway's products and services at [HollowayAg.com](http://HollowayAg.com).*



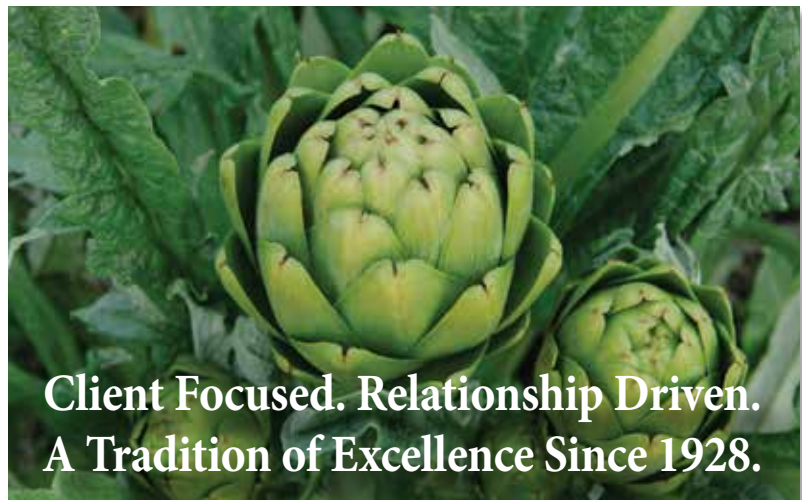

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# Mini Vacay Wines

*Reimagining the Packaging and Portability of Quality Wine*

By Mike Hale



**T**amara Francioni grew up with her hands in the dirt, the daughter of a farmer in rural North Dakota. A strong work ethic gave her an appreciation of miracles that come from cultivation of that soil.

How that young girl came to study classical piano, ballet and opera — and later to become a sommelier and high-end wine broker curating private cellars around the world — is testament to parents encouraging her to write her own story.

Francioni's tale is still evolving, but it continues to include soil, wine grapes, the arts and an ongoing celebration of life around her own boutique wine company she calls Mini Vacay Wines.

Her big city journey began in 2008 in the Big Apple. While performing in musical theater productions, she fell in love with the world of wine and hospitality, taking courses at the American Sommelier Association.

“To me, wine allowed a person to travel the world with one sip, offering the best expression of a specific terroir,” she said.

Francioni spent many challenging yet exhilarating years at the top levels of the hospitality world, working many dinners with notable winemakers and Master Sommeliers, including twice at

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***It's made to taste great for sipping anywhere you want to enjoy a good, refreshing glass of wine***

---

the renowned La Paulée, a series of events celebrating the wines and winemakers of Burgundy. Guiding presidential families, celebrities and luxury diners through the world of wine at places such as The New York Palace Hotel in Midtown Manhattan and renowned chef Michael Mina's flagship

restaurant in downtown San Francisco, Francioni has come full circle.

Now a mom living the rural life in the Salinas Valley and married to vigneron Adam Francioni in the Santa Lucia Highlands, Tamara is telling new stories through the sustainably slanted, convenience-minded Mini Vacay Wines — reimagining the packaging and portability of the popular beverage.

“Through my husband and his family, I am constantly learning more about premium viticulture and the painstaking care it takes to grow the best grapes possible,” she said.

Stepping against tradition, her product comes packaged in a slender and sultry can — a reminder to the consumer to take a moment and treat themselves well.

Francioni has capitalized on a rising demand for convenient, portable and single-serve beverages, but she strays far from the popular canned wine spritzers that are too often overly sweet and caloric.

Sourcing high-quality rosé grapes from SIP-Certified Sustainable and Organic Vineyards within the Central Coast AVA, Francioni blends the wine into a personal expression — a story, if you will.

The result is a signature-style, dry, food-friendly rosé with a bit more personality than a typical pink wine from Provence, offering notes of tangerine zest, rose petals, and ripe strawberries. Each slim can contains a little more than 1.5 servings.

“It's made to taste great for sipping anywhere you want to enjoy a good, refreshing glass of wine — the patio, the pool, the golf course, a glass with dinner, or splitting a can with someone at the end of the day,” she said.

The brand's slogan is “take a moment,” something supported by the product's packaging.



Offering portability, convenience and ease of portion control, aluminum cans are ultra-light, infinitely recyclable and super space-efficient — making them not only lighter in the hand but on the planet as well.

“With my brand, I want to encourage the consumer to take time for self care, whether with friends, family, or just with themselves,” said Franscioni, who insists that a mini vacay can be as little as one special hour. “I want to share a high quality product that is accessible and welcoming to most any wine lover.”

The story behind Mini Vacay Wines resonates within a wide spectrum of wine drinkers.

“As my husband and I started a family, it was time for a new way of enjoying wine that fit my evolving lifestyle,” she said. “I desired a wine that prizes quality, convenience, moderation, sustainability, and community involvement. After studying the

market, I decided to make my own brand that reflects these values. It’s been a joy to discover that many wine lovers connect with Mini Vacay’s ethos.”

Franscioni put together the idea in 2019, and founded the company in 2020 at the height of the pandemic — when her son was only six weeks old.

“I was imagining a wine I’d like to drink ... high quality, but a smaller portion than a bottle, and in a more sustainable package than glass,” she said.

But more than that, she wanted to stitch into the brand her own story as well. Known as someone joyful and fun with a love of her community (a small portion of profits go to programs for early childhood education), Franscioni creates a duality of high culture and literally “of the earth” groundedness that has defined her life.

“What a funny full circle, that after big city life, I marry a farmer and move to the country,” she said. “Now that we have a



family, I take more time to enjoy simply being — especially with our kids.”

Outside of wine, Franscioni remains involved with the arts, practicing modern dance and singing in local holiday shows.

“And although we love opportunities to drink fine wines from around the world at our house, truthfully, I’m not that interested in seeing photos of the fancy bottles someone drank last night,” she said. “I’m interested in the stories shared, and new perspectives learned.”

For more on Mini Vacay Wines, visit [www.minivacayrose.com](http://www.minivacayrose.com). 



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# Aguas!!

By Doug Larson



Growing up in San Diego County's former farming community of Otay Mesa, just a few hundred yards North of the Mexico border, life was simple. Although our home and greenhouses were a short 20-minute car ride from town, it seemed like we were a world away. We rode our bikes across endless miles of dirt roads and routinely found our way to the former Naval Auxiliary Air Station commonly referred to as Brown Field Airport, where we would buy a soda when we had a couple of dimes in our pockets.

Today, most of those farms are mere memories gone by as much of the area has given way to an endless sea of industrial warehouses and border related businesses serving the Otay Mesa and San Ysidro border crossings, which today comprises the busiest land border crossing in the world.

Our daily school bus ride took us from The Mesa, down the winding canyon road to San Ysidro, a border community where we

attended elementary school and developed rudimentary Spanish language skills. I even acquired a Spanish nickname as the name "Doug" was difficult for Spanish speakers to pronounce, often sounding more like Duck

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***Watch out for water. Watch out to assure that we expand our water security infrastructure to provide future generations with this most basic, yet most limiting human need...clean, fresh water.***

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than Doug. Soon, my little league coach began calling me "Patito" (little duck) as a term of endearment, a moniker that stuck.

In elementary school, a few other non-native Spanish speakers and I were provided extra classes to help us become proficient in

this second language. We were taught basic words and pronunciations, lessons I still draw on to this day. Of course, the Spanish word for water (agua) was one of those elemental words.

Yet, it wasn't until my mid-thirties that I learned what the word "Aguas" meant. I was loading a truckload of irrigation pipe when one of my employees (Peter) yelled out "Aguas!! Aguas!!" The load had shifted, and it appeared as though I might be in some danger.

After completing our work, I asked Peter what he meant when he blurted out the word "Aguas". He explained that it was a slang term in Spanish, a warning of "watch out". He wasn't aware of the term's origins, but assured me that it was a commonly used warning. Later, I discovered that the jargon's origination may have been related to the days when the locals did not have indoor plumbing. Before throwing a wash bin or pot full of dirty water out onto the street through an open door or window, the resident would yell "Aguas".

I have reflected on this term countless times over the years, thinking that it was such a fitting way to state "watch out". After all, what could be more important than for us to watch out for water.

Referencing water in a previous article, I wrote about the tremendous changes in the 2023 allocation of Ag surface water for California producers. We had gone from a zero-water allocation as the year began to that of a 100 percent allocation in a few short months. In response to that article, I received a call from a reader who wanted to address the need for water storage, as I hadn't gone into that facet of the issue. Although I returned his call, we never had the opportunity to have that conversation.

Still, that unrealized conversation was an important one. "Aguas" continues to play



over and over in my mind. “Watch out”... watch out for water. Care for it. Utilize it. Manage it. Conserve it. And of course, store it. Which brings to mind our own water infrastructure and supply.

Several years ago, while working on fresh-water solutions for a small village near the Somalian border, I found that many children in that community spent their days hauling water. The water was pumped from a nearby river, which due to the heavy sediment load, looked more like flowing chocolate milk. That muddy water then made its way through a dirt ditch into an earthen settling pond. At last, the water was pumped into 55-gallon plastic drums atop two wheeled carts powered by donkeys.

Each donkey was then led by an adolescent boy as he delivered his mirky, sediment rich water to compounds throughout the village...transferring the water to each family's personal water drum. All the while, water for farming was no longer flowing due to their canal delivery system having been overcome by the same sedimentation. The entire process was disheartening to witness and far removed from our own water infrastructure back in the states. An imperfect system, yet generations ahead of this remote region of Africa and much of the world.

Throughout California, we are far removed from the days when we each hauled our own water by hand. Yet, we do need long-term solutions to water availability and sustainability. Those of us



who have roots in this state each have our own personal memories of extreme drought and its impact. There are many facets to this dilemma, but the hope is that we can agree on maximizing our water efficiencies, have long-term sustainability as a goal and expand our water supplies, which must certainly include water storage both above and below ground.

Watch out for water. Watch out to assure that we expand our water security infrastructure to provide future generations with this most basic, yet most limiting human need...clean, fresh water.

According to the US Census Bureau California's population has increased by approximately 65 percent over the last 40 years. Most certainly, this has created greater stress on our water supplies. Although the state's growth rate percentage has slowed in recent years, the population continues to grow and the demand for water will follow suit. Yet, we know that it can take decades to get reservoir projects approved and completed in this state, so there is no time like the present to act.

Meanwhile, California agriculture has been making intentional strides towards water efficiency and sustainability for many decades. In fact, the Golden State currently has more drip and micro-irrigation acres in production than the entire rest of the nation combined. These highly efficient irrigation systems provide for precision applications of water directly to the desired root zone, reducing application rates, soil erosion, evaporation, energy and more.

Yet, the agriculture industry is keenly aware that it remains an easy target for water grabs. We get it, we are big users, so we carry big bullseyes on our backs. To some, drying up or fallowing 500,000 to 1,000,000 acres of California's irrigation land may look to be the easiest solution, while others see this as a band-aid maneuver. Producers fear that it would only be the beginning. That the state would likely keep returning to the proverbial well of irrigation water every few years to capture more.

Regions like the San Joaquin Valley, with



its more than three billion dollars in gross Ag revenue and more than 10 percent of the 31st states population, would most certainly feel the heavy economic burden of these water grabs. Individual farmers and their employees could be devastated. Communities would be impacted by the reduction in property tax revenue from lands no longer assessed as irrigated acres. While reduced stream flows, infrastructure, and land-use changes, along with loss of employment would have a rippling affect across the valley and beyond.

Perhaps all Californians should be shouting Aguas!! Watch out!! Watch out for water. Watch out to assure that we expand our water security infrastructure to provide future generations with this most basic, yet most limiting human need...clean, fresh water. ☺

*Clockwise from top left: 1.) Drinking water pumped into donkey carts - Africa. 2.) Effecient citrus irrigation - Central Valley. 3.) River water pumped for drinking - Africa*

# Eat to Lose

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



It's that time of year again. The time when resolutions are formulated for losing extra pounds accumulated throughout the cold winter months and holiday festivities. If you find yourself in this predicament yearly, here are a few strategies to set you up for permanent success:

## **Eat Enough:**

Eat enough calories daily to sustain minimum body needs. It's important not to reduce dietary intake under what the body uses for everyday activities (like breathing and thinking) or it will turn on the "starvation mode" switch. This switch reduces metabolic output and stores calories for future use. During starvation, the body will pull primarily from muscle

(not fat) tissues to get the energy it needs. What does that mean? The more active muscle tissues in your body are reduced while fat tissues remain intact requiring less calories. In addition, the stomach hormone, leptin, which provides a feeling of fullness after a meal, reduces with weight loss. Restrictive eating and fast weight loss show a larger hormonal drop. Unfortunately, if weight regain occurs when returning to normal eating patterns, the level of leptin doesn't increase back to its previous level.

## **Enable Your Body To Lose Weight:**

Not everyone has access to high tech equipment for determining exact personal calorie needs, but a simple calculation will give you an estimation. Take your current weight and add a "zero" onto the end of it. For example, if you weigh 150 pounds, your minimum estimated caloric intake is 1500 calories. This means if you weigh 200 pounds and are trying to lose weight on 1500 calories you are restricting your intake too low. You will probably see initial weight loss of water and fluid, but it will stop working when the body pushes the "starvation mode" button. Keep in mind that base caloric needs change alongside weight and body composition.

## ***Eat enough calories daily to sustain minimum body needs.***

## **Keep Moving:**

We need to move. We need to move a lot! We utilize calories when we are exercising as well as for many hours afterwards. Exercise regimens need to include aerobic activities (like running, walking, or swimming) and weight training. The body adapts to exercise quickly and efficiently

utilizing the least amount of energy to sustain the activity. That means we must trick it and change the intensity of activities frequently. The next time you are out taking a walk, choose a different or more challenging path, create intervals of faster steps intermixed with your usual walking pace or swing light dumbbell weights in your hands.

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## ***We utilize calories when we are exercising as well as for many hours afterwards.***

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## **Look At What You Are Eating (or Not Eating):**

There is no miracle food or nutrient. Each macronutrient (carbohydrates, fat, and protein) has a role in the diet. There isn't one that leads to more weight loss or creates bigger muscles. Our need for each of these nutrients changes daily depending on the amount and type of exercise we are doing. Keep in mind that the body registers liquid calories (think sodas, coffee drinks, alcohol) differently than solid foods and provide less satisfaction to our tummies. Most importantly, stay off the bandwagon of eliminating whole food groups. There are no bad foods, just bad habits.

Before embarking on making permanent changes, ask yourself: "Is this an eating style or lifestyle behavior I can do for the rest of my life?". If the answer is "no", then don't buy in for the short term. You will manipulate the way your body functions which will continue the weight battle for years to come. ☺



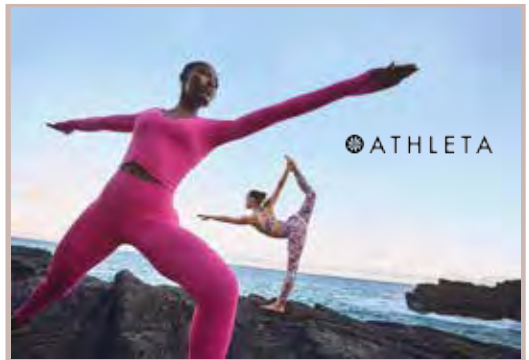


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# Tap Truck Monterey

By Mac MacDonald



Combining a passion for hospitality, a love for family and the romance behind a 1956 Ford Panel Truck, Alexia Galakatos has become a mobile bar boss.

Designed to kick up a party a notch or three, her new venture is called Tap Truck Monterey. A one-stop shop for a complete celebration on wheels, the vintage truck is equipped with five taps and room for five 15-gallon kegs filled with beer, wine or countless other craft beverages.

Tap Truck can also dispense tapped drinking water, a sustainable solution to using environmentally unfriendly plastic bottles at events.

“What makes us unique is that we are a woman-owned company, but the whole family contributes something special,” Alexia said. “This allows us to provide multiple packages to our clients.”

While Alexia runs the day-to-day business operations, working closely with clients to create a personalized beverage

experience, a strong family team stands behind her.

Her husband Rick is known for bringing life to any party and will provide the entertainment for each curated event. Whether it’s putting together a playlist, emceeing or performing unique vocal impersonations (think Elvis, Dean Martin, Neil Diamond and the like), he creates the beat behind any gathering.

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***Combining a passion for hospitality, a love for family and the romance behind a 1956 Ford Panel Truck, Alexia Galakatos has become a mobile bar boss.***

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The bar manager is Alexia’s oldest son Aristotle — an apt name in light of the fact that the best bartenders are seen as

modern-day philosophers. Known as Aris for short, the 23-year-old will manage the drink inventory and behind-the-scenes work while creating delicious food to pair with his cocktails (including mocktails).

The couple’s youngest son Engeda, 18, will help prepare and clean the beloved truck for events. Aristotle’s best friend

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***In addition to the 1956 Ford Panel Truck, the team has added a horse trailer that has been converted into a bar.***

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Matin (“like a third son to us,” said Alexia) will handle photography and media — an integral part of the company’s branding. Matin loves being on the service side of the business as well.

Aristotle’s girlfriend Emily is a chef as well, and will help provide culinary delights to each event. She also manages the social media side of things along with being one of the main bartenders.

When factoring in each team member’s talents, Tap Truck Monterey will launch as a full-service beverage, catering and entertainment business.

Tap Truck Monterey is part of a parent company Tap Truck USA, launched in San Diego back in 2016 and expanding into 15 states. But Alexia sees her business expanding into unique and exciting directions.

“Many people think it is a franchise, but you actually purchase a license agreement from Tap Truck USA,” Alexia said. “There are several guidelines you need to follow but for the most part you have complete autonomy to create your own business.”

Alexia said that when the couple found out that Tap Truck Monterey was for sale, it






didn't take much convincing before they put in an offer.

"We were instantly intrigued," she said. "Rick grew up in the restaurant and bar industry and loves to entertain people. I like the behind-the-scenes aspect of business. It is a perfect business for our family to work together."

The couple promises to create a vibe that is "classy but fun." They especially love weddings and private parties because they are able to connect with the client family-to-family. Their ultimate goal is to work with corporations to bring a personal, more intimate, touch to large company events throughout Monterey and San Benito counties.

"We want to convey to vendors and businesses that we can serve a full range of venues and personalities catered directly to what the client needs," Alexia said.

In addition to the 1956 Ford Panel Truck, the team has added a horse trailer that has been converted into a bar. The trailer will be used for events when a client doesn't need a full tap truck but wants to provide unique beverage options.

Additional information can be found at [taptruckmonterey.com](http://taptruckmonterey.com). 



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# Turning Obstacles into Spectacular Achievements

By Mike Hale

Carmela Cantisani entered the world an hour before midnight on New Year's Eve 1950, born inside a remote two-room farmhouse with no electricity or running water in the high hills of the Basilicata region of Southern Italy.

Carmela's fate would soon be revealed: She had a hereditary disease called Retinitis Pigmentosa, putting in her path even more daunting obstacles as she navigated the world as a blind woman.

When Carmela's father registered her birth, he entered the date January 1, 1951, not wanting his daughter to be a year older on paper. That act represented a rare forward push in life; everything else she had to fight for.

The disease would take her sight, but not her resolve. The years that followed revealed a fiercely determined and independent woman who became a teacher, an accomplished pianist, a food entrepreneur

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## *The disease would take her sight, but not her resolve.*

---

and a world-champion alpine skier.

Today, Cantisani is an active and spirited 72-year-old enjoying global travel and semi-retirement. She lives in Carmel-by-the-Sea with her husband Dr. Gilbert Converset and her Standard Poodle guide dog Seymour.

Once convinced she had nothing of value to say, Carmela has recounted her extraordinary life in her 2022 memoir "I Can See the Moon, But Not the Stars." Thanks to relentless encouragement from her husband and close friends, she began work on the memoir in 2008 following the death of her father.

The thrilling and insightful 392-page book spans three generations, chronicling two world wars, daily struggles for survival, and the life-altering diagnoses of hereditary

blindness for Carmela and two of her brothers.

"My mother always thought we were cursed," said Carmela. "She put in a lot of years of unnecessary suffering. She was nearly illiterate, but I got a lot of my common sense and drive and resilience to go forward from her."

When Carmela was just five years old, her parents seized an opportunity to send her to a school for the blind that provided Braille-focused educational services.

"My parents had hope for their children," she said. "They always thought a miracle was just around the corner."



When Carmela was quite young, her parents saw her pointing at the moon. Her father took it as a sign of hope that his child could see more than anyone realized, but her mother didn't share his optimism: "She can see the moon, but she'll never be able to see the stars," she said.

Knowing that family anecdote well, Carmela made it the title of her memoir describing a life well lived, even though she once believed that her life wasn't all that compelling.

The book also depicts her spectacular triumphs, including every second of her gold medal-winning ski races representing the United States in the World Disabled Ski Championships in 1986, and her two bronze medals in the 1988 Winter Paralympics wearing the colors of her native Italy.

"The seed for the book began when I started skiing in my late 20s," she said. "A friend commented, 'I think your attitude is different than other blind people, and you should share your story. 'At the time, I didn't think I had much to say.'"

It was not until her father died and her mother's well being shifted that Carmela began to collect her thoughts, recall stories and reach out to relatives. She began writing her first draft in Braille and then dictated it to her husband who entered it on the computer and read it back to her.

"A dear friend, after reading the first few pages, said 'you just started your book and you have no excuses not to finish,' " said Carmela, who still believed it was beyond her abilities.

It wasn't, of course, just like every other achievement that defines Carmela's colorful life.

"When it comes to spunk, I don't always have it, but when I do, I'm like a bulldozer," she said. "I try to always be optimistic, and open to everything in life."

Carmela and her family emigrated to the United States in the mid-1960s in search



of better opportunities. Seeking a college education that would suit her growing interest in world travel and exploration, Carmela studied languages, enrolling at the Monterey Institute of International Studies.

In 1982, Carmela became a teacher of Italian at the Defense Language Institute, where she met her husband, a teacher of French.

Carmela first tried to ski in 1976, when her blind roommate invited her to give it a try at a Tahoe ski resort, as part of the adaptive P.E. program at Monterey Peninsula College. In 1986 Carmela won three gold medals for the U.S. at the Winter World Championship for the Disabled, before winning two bronze medals at the 1988 Winter Paralympics for her native Italy.

In 1996 she launched her own line of salad dressings under the Carmela's Gourmet brand, chosen as one of "The 15 Most Interesting Products of 1997" by Food Processing Magazine.

Carmela's Gourmet product line received rave reviews for both quality and a unique packaging feature: All the dressing bottle labels were partially printed in Braille.

These days, Carmela stays busy exploring numerous opportunities, particularly in inspirational public speaking. She enjoys cooking, fine dining, outdoor activities, travel, learning technology, and filling her home with music by playing classical piano pieces. *cs*



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| HOME SHOWCASE

# A Driving Force in Artful Living

*By Diane Gsell, Photography by Patrick Tregenza*





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*Despite all of the visual treats inside the home, the world just beyond the walls is what elevates the residence to world-class status.*

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“If it’s possible to be in love with your house, that’s me,” confesses Everett Anton Singer. This architectural love of his life didn’t come easy, but rather was a romance decades in the making.

Having blended his professional legacy in his family printing business with his passion for automobiles, Mr. Singer had been travelling from Long Island’s North Shore to the Monterey Peninsula’s “Car Week” for years. This annual immersion into his auto collector community would bring him notoriety as a master collector and dealer in fine automotive poster art.

When presented with a rare reason to visit the area on a non-car week, he was finally able to see the community for what it truly was, a region of stunning geography, gentle climate, and artful individuals. He immediately instructed his realtor to show him only homes within Carmel Valley and took his time perfecting what was, at the time, his dream home.

But dreams evolve over time and looming twilight years can turn multi-level ideals into potential nightmares. And so, the search began again.

Fortunately, Mr. Singer was in no hurry as his health was as good as his tastes particular. Finding his single-story forever home with a view took nearly a decade. At a certain point he thought that perhaps developing a parcel of land was the only way to go. And he most likely would have gone in that direction had someone not done it for him.

A beautiful due-west parcel he’d had his eye on was in the process of being developed for the builder himself when a change of heart allowed Mr. Singer to snap up the home at a stage of 97 percent completion. Thankful that the builder had made nearly all of the decisions that would undoubtedly have sent Mr. Singer down the













rabbit hole of choices, he welcomed the fact that “he saved me from myself.”

Set on 10 stunning acres, the home has a stately presence with magnificent valley and ocean views from nearly every room, high ceilings, copious amount of light, and thoughtful details throughout. With such a grand home setting the stage, Mr. Singer went about decorating the set in great style with a collection of items that truly represents his artful passions.

An accomplished painter in his own right, Mr. Singer has ample wall space to showcase some of his own works while also displaying gems he’s collected from artists and artisans near and far. Of course, there are plenty of automobile-themed art pieces on display, from prints to signs, sculpture, paintings, and vintage scarves. Other artful accents include magnificent geode slabs, awe-inspiring glass art, family heirloom antiques, and, joyfully, an occasional teddy bear, because he “just loves ‘em.”

Driven by aesthetics his whole life, Mr. Singer epitomizes a collector so happily confident in his tastes that eclectic has never looked so unified. Somehow he manages to blend eras and styles with ease to achieve magnificent results. His living room displays both custom cabinets of his own design to house a retro audiophile sound system from the 60’s and two turn-of-the-century ribbon display cases that hold empty wine bottles of significant vintages. While the master bedroom boasts an exquisitely carved French bedframe from the mid 1800’s, another room displays a dresser that Mr. Singer commissioned to cleverly convert a font case artifact from the printing factory.

At this stage of the game, Mr. Singer is very happy with how his life has evolved and how he’s fashioned his home to reflect his passions. He credits both his personal successes as well as his achievements with his home to being prepared. Luck and determination go far, he maintains, but simply being ready when opportunities arise is the most important thing. A principle in his life of “why go to the candy store without money in your pocket?” reflects his ability to wait and be ready to act when good things come along. An antique light fixture that his mother had kept from generations before her was subsequently saved by Mr. Singer for over 30 years before he found the perfect place for it over the tub in his stunning master bath.





Despite all of the visual treats inside the home, the world just beyond the walls is what elevates the residence to world-class status. The atmospheric perspective achieved as dusk settles in layers within the hills is as stunning as any artwork. A quiet peacefulness anchored by a distance view of the sea helps to achieve a sense of harmony between wildlife and resident humans. When Mr. Singer designed his patio to be inviting, little did he know that the sentiment would extend to creatures as lovely as a bobcat enjoying a morning drink from his birdbath. If that bobcat had been able to talk, he'd likely echo the words of praise that Mr. Singer had for the developer responsible for conceptualizing and implementing the creation of nearly all of the home. "Such a lovely job had been done...I wouldn't change a thing." ☺





# USDA Ribbon-Cutting Ceremony for Sam Farr

## *United States Crop Improvement and Protection Research Center*



The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Agricultural Research Service (ARS) held a ribbon-cutting ceremony today for the opening of the newly constructed Sam Farr United States Crop Improvement and Protection Research Center in Salinas, California.

The over 117,000-square-foot research center features state-of-the-art laboratories, greenhouses, and the capacity for additional scientists. It expands on the current ARS Crop Improvement and Protection Research Laboratory, which has been located at the site since the end of World War II, and will house employees from ARS, USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, and the University of California, Davis.

During the ceremony, attendees celebrated the past, present and future of fruit and vegetable research between USDA

and research partners in California and throughout the United States.

"This research center is on the cutting edge of technology and within its walls are solutions to address viral, fungal and bacterial diseases impacting our nation's fruit and vegetable industries," said USDA Chief Scientist and Under Secretary for Research, Education and Economics Dr. Chavonda Jacobs-Young. "This expansion is part of USDA's commitment to support innovative crop research that will best serve our customers, stakeholders and the scientific community."

The research center is dedicated to retired Representative Sam Farr, who represented California's Central Coast in the United States House of Representatives for more than 23 years until his retirement from office in 2016. Farr also served six years as

a member of the Monterey County Board of Supervisors and 12 years in the California State Assembly. Farr led the charge for the new research facilities.

Other leaders who spoke at the dedication and ribbon-cutting ceremony included:

- Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack (provided virtual remarks)
- Former U.S. Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta
- Rep. Zoe Lofgren (D-CA, 18th)
- Rep. Jimmy Panetta (D-CA, 19th)
- Former Rep. Jack Kingston
- Dr. Simon Liu, ARS Administrator
- Dr. Bill Wintermantel, Research Leader and Location Coordinator of the Sam Farr United States Crop Improvement and Protection Research Center



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# Ohana's New Campus Inspires Hope and Healing

By Monica Sciuto



Monterey County children and families have a new reason to be proud and celebrate – thanks to the Fall 2023 opening of Ohana, Montage Health and Community Hospital of the Monterey Peninsula's innovative youth mental health program.

“The opening of Ohana’s campus is an extension of our decades-long commitment to providing exceptional health and wellness services in a healing environment that matches the beauty of Monterey County,” says Steven Packer, MD, President and CEO of Community Hospital and Montage Health. “Ohana meets a critical need for mental health services, from the peninsula to the valley, and beyond. This is one more way we can help all residents live their healthiest and happiest lives.”

Named after the Hawaiian word for “family,” the Ohana campus broke ground in 2019 thanks to a landmark gift from local resident and philanthropist Bertie Bialek

Elliott. Since then, a beautiful 55,60-square-foot building surrounded by healing gardens and plants, walking paths, and even an amphitheater, is taking shape amid the hills and oak trees at Ryan Ranch in Monterey. The campus design and views evoke a spirit of soaring possibilities in the effort to change the trajectory of the youth mental health crisis blanketing the United States. And, true to Ohana’s name and approach, family members play a central role in a child’s mental fitness journey.

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***The Ohana campus was designed to nurture hope, healing, and resilience.***

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#### **Ohana is hope**

“Hope is the foundation of Ohana’s work,” says Susan Swick, MD, MPH, Executive Director of Ohana. “Hope is essential to the treatment of illness and to the work of

building mental health and resilience. And it inspires others in our community to join our efforts. As we like to say, Ohana is ‘Where Hope Grows.’”

The new campus builds on the clinical expertise and integrated, family-centered care that Swick and the Ohana team have delivered from a temporary location on Upper Ragsdale Drive since 2020 with more than 18,000 patient visits in 2022. With the new campus, on-site outpatient care will continue at the new campus this fall and residential services will open spring 2024.

Ohana is built on a breakthrough idea: mental illness is always treatable and can often be prevented, and mental fitness — like physical fitness — can be developed and sustained. Ohana already offers a variety of free resources through its website and in-person classes that are available to all families in the community. These community programs will expand when the new campus is open.





This is hopeful news for the estimated one-in-five Monterey County adolescents who are suffering from mental health challenges, and for their families whose options are hampered by a lack of clinicians and beds. With a shortage of youth mental health professionals and no residential child psychiatry units in Monterey County, Ohana fills a critical gap in adolescent mental healthcare for the community.

### **Ohana is nurturing**

The Ohana campus was designed to nurture hope, healing, and resilience. The project's architect, NBBJ, received a national award for the innovative, neuroscience-informed design. An on-site fitness area includes a basketball court and other options for “play,” while the gardens feature healing plants like lavender and chamomile, providing quiet corners for peaceful contemplation. Specially commissioned art, many from local artists, uplifts spirits, instills wonder, and inspires curiosity. Staff well-being is also nurtured with dedicated spaces including outdoor patios, quiet zones, and break rooms.

Locally, the opening of Ohana's campus is an important milestone for the health and well-being of Monterey County residents. Nationally, it is the rare hopeful story in the field of youth mental health, with potential to bring tangible change that might in turn be useful to other communities. Ohana means family in the broadest sense, and it is that collective impact from physicians, therapists, community partners, and most importantly, families, that will be the catalyst to building healthier futures for our youth. For more information, visit [montagehealth.org/ohana](http://montagehealth.org/ohana) ☞



# Retirement Plans Can Grow as a Company Grows

By Bill Hastie



A qualified retirement plan is one of the best benefits a company owner can offer their employees. While defined benefit pension plans are rare, the 401k has by far become the most popular retirement plan for almost any size company. And as a company grows, a well-designed retirement plan can grow as well, offering increasing benefits based on the company's ability to make larger and larger contributions. While plans must be tested annually for non-discrimination of benefits, certain plan types and designs can favor company owners and key employees.

When a company is new and cash flow is limited, a deferral-only 401k plan is a great basic benefit and is relatively low cost. This is a retirement plan that allows employees to defer a portion of their compensation on a pre-tax basis and can be designed to also offer a Roth "element" for after-tax contributions. At this stage of the company's growth, the employer does not make contributions to the plan, but typically pays

for the annual administration of the plan.

As the company grows and cash flow increases, the employer can make contributions to the plan in several different ways. The most common is a matching contribution based on the deferral made by the employee. A very common matching contribution might be \$0.50 to every dollar deferred by the employee to a maximum of 6 percent of the employee's compensation. So, the maximum employer contribution is 3 percent when the employee defers 6 percent.

There are two tests that make certain highly compensated employees (HCEs) do not defer too much based on established non-discrimination rules. If a 401k plan fails these tests, a certain amount must be refunded to those who contributed

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***A qualified retirement plan is one of the best benefits a company owner can offer their employees.***

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too much. These refunds, referred to as corrective distributions, can be a frustration to those who receive them. As the company continues to grow and cash flow is most abundant, the company can make certain levels of contribution that qualify the plan as a "safe harbor" plan. This means that everyone in the plan can defer as much as they choose up to the limits announced annually by the IRS. For 2024, the most an employee under age 50 can defer to the plan is \$23,000, and \$30,500 if the employee is age 50 or older.

The next step in the evolution of the retirement plan is to offer profit sharing contributions in addition to the safe harbor contributions. In its most basic form, a profit-sharing contribution is made on a pro rata basis, i.e., all participants get the same percentage. If the employer wished to skew

the benefits to themselves or key employees, the plan can use the "new comparability" calculation which shifts the lion's share of the total profit-sharing contribution to the owners and/or key employees. Using this calculation is one of the easiest ways to reach the maximum that can be added to a participant's account in 2024 (referred to as the Section 415 limit) of \$69,000, or \$76,500 if age 50 or older.

The final step in the evolution of the qualified retirement plan can be the most expensive and provide substantially greater contributions to the plan. This plan, referred to as a cash balance plan, requires an actuary to calculate the amount of contributions that can be made to the plan for each participant. Unlike the 401k profit sharing plan, the cash balance plan needs only to cover 40 percent of the eligible participants, and the company owner gets to decide which employees will be included in that 40 percent. These plans are relatively rare because the funding levels are extremely high, so it takes a company with substantial available cash flow.

Plan design at every step in the evolution of the retirement plan is critical. Retirement plans are also often used as recruiting tools, especially in industries that must compete for top talent. The plan design process begins with an in-depth analysis of what the intent is for having a retirement plan, available cash flow, employee demographics and wishes of the owners. This process can be revisited annually to ensure the plan is accomplishing its intended goals.

Beyond qualified retirement plans that involve non-discrimination rules and testing, are non-qualified retirement plans which are most often used to benefit key employees and can be done so on a discriminatory basis. This type of retirement plan can be quite complex and is typically designed to provide retirement benefits far in excess of qualified plan limits. ☞



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# Veni, Vidi, Vici (“I came, I saw, I conquered”)

*Interview with Silvia Prevedelli, Owner, Prevedelli Farms*

*By Jess Brown*



JESS: Where were you born and raised?

SILVIA: I was born in a small town in northern Italy called Cloz, located in the Dolomites, about three hours north of Milan. The region is well known for skiing and the beautiful mountains, and they grow apples.

JESS: What did your parents do for a living?

SILVIA: They owned a couple of butcher shops that are well known in the region. They make the best prosciutto, salami and other delicious meats. It is still being run by my brothers, nephews and nieces.

JESS: As a child did you ever dream of living in the United States?

SILVIA: I never thought about coming to the US.

JESS: Where was your husband born and raised?

SILVIA: My husband was the first generation, born in Warm Springs, California. His parents were born in Italy. He moved to Santa Cruz in the 1930's and finally settled in Watsonville in 1945 and went to Watsonville High School and graduated in 1949.

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***We need to continue to have small to midsize farms producing locally grown food that feeds our community.***

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JESS: How did you meet your husband?

SILVIA: We met in Italy, while he was visiting relatives. We corresponded for a year, then he came back to Italy so we could marry. We got married the 5th of May 1966 in a beautiful wedding. He returned to California, but it took me five months to have the paperwork done for me to come to America.

JESS: Besides his love, what else excited you about coming to the United States?

SILVIA: I was excited to build a new life in California and to be with Frank. Frank promised me when I get to America that money grows on trees, little did I know I would be farming apples trees, and not picking money from the trees.

JESS: What did you expect your life to be as a farmer's wife?

SILVIA: I expected to be home and take care of the family. Early on, I asked him to

teach me how to drive, and of course I could not wait for him, so I ended up taking his truck that was in the garage. But instead of putting it into reverse, I put his truck into forward and ended up pushing the back wall out of the garage. He came out to the garage to find his truck in the wall of the garage. He did not say anything. He was a patient man. I also wanted to help him on the ranch, so he taught me how to drive the tractor, where there were similar driving mishaps. That is part of being a farmer's wife that I was not expecting. Never a dull moment.

JESS: Why did your farm start selling to the public?

SILVIA: We originally started as a grower packer and shipper. We started selling at the ranch to consumers. We then started selling at local farmers markets, and realized it was better to sell at farmers markets than wholesale. This was a way we could make a connection to our customers to explain what we grow and educate consumers on what we had.

JESS: How important are farmers markets to your business?

SILVIA: Very important to us, it's the connection we have with our customer. We have a loyal customer base that realize to get fresh produce, they can come to the farmer's market. Consumers who care want to know where their food is grown and what is happening at the farm.

JESS: How does your farm interact with young students?

*Clockwise from top left: 1.) In 2016, Silvia was named Farmer of the Year. 2.) Santa Cruz County Farm Bureau. 3.) Silvia and Frank Prevedelli. 4.) Silvia and Frank with their family. 5.) Silvia, four years old, in Italy.*



SILVIA: In many ways. One of the things we do is to always hire local students in the Bay Area to work with us at farmer's markets. This gives them a chance to work and learn about farming. We also offer tours in the fall that show kids where food comes from and educate them and their families about farming.

JESS: Why did you decide to be involved in the community, in organizations like Santa Cruz County Farm Bureau and Sons of Italy?

SILVIA: Because my family in Italy always was involved in their community, which showed me the importance of being involved. Being part of Santa Cruz Farm Bureau is a good organization that supports our local farmers, by being aware of what is going on in the area, because of the different regulations and supports to protect the farmland. Being part of Sons of Italy is part of my roots, we meet monthly, to preserve the Italian heritage. Our club has been very involved, by giving scholarship to local students and donating to local organization.



JESS: How important is the preservation of farmland?

SILVIA: It is very important. We need to continue to have small to midsize farms producing locally grown food that feeds our community.

JESS: Why is the Pajaro Valley a good place to create and operate businesses?

SILVIA: It's a wonderful community that supports one another. They support local

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***Consumers who care want to know where their food is grown and what is happening at the farm.***

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farms. It is a small town feel and everyone knows each other. People have been here for multiple generations, and it has ideal weather to grow great tasting produce.

JESS: Are you excited about your children continuing your business?



SILVIA: I'm very excited to have my children to preserve our land and our business. With new ideas and forward thinking.

JESS: Tell us about your husband, Frank.

SILVIA: He was one of a kind, who loved his family, providing for his family, very hard working and was very caring for all. He loved farming, traveling and fishing. He was always a happy guy. Frank has always been a quiet person. He always said, "One talker in the family is enough of a talker." I remember a time when he was driving, and I was talking with him, and I asked him if he heard me. He asked me who was I talking with (There was nobody else in the car).





JESS: How often do you go back to Italy?

SILVIA: I was there this year; I try to go every three years.

JESS: Is food in Italy as good as they say?

SILVIA: Yes, the food is very good, because it is being made with natural ingredients and cooked fresh.

JESS: If you could have dinner with three people (alive or deceased), who would you invite?

SILVIA: Andrea Bocelli, Pope John II, and Sophia Loren

JESS: Wow, that's the ultimate Italian dinner!

JESS: You now have a scholarship in his memory, why did you decide to establish that?

SILVIA: Frank loved farming and was happy to see young people passionate about farming and was willing to help them. He would love that there is now a scholarship to help young farmers get an education.

JESS: Who has been the most influential person in your life?

SILVIA: My mother, who was an amazing person. Always positive, happy, and always trying to make everyone's life better.

JESS: What does Silvia do for fun?

SILVIA: Shopping and going out with friends, being involved in the community and attending local community events.

JESS: What is something about Silvia Prevedelli that most people don't know?

SILVIA: She wants to own a flower shop when she retires.

JESS: How did you balance your family life while running a farm?

SILVIA: Incorporating the family and farm into one. There have been many times where family life and the farm conflict with each other. We were going to a wedding, and we were running late, because we had to finish something at the farm. I was so mad at Frank because I had to paint my nails in the car on our way to the wedding. So, I was telling him, "You and your farm". That is how we incorporated together.

JESS: Where do you see Prevedelli Farms in 10 years?

SILVIA: Continuing the farm with the younger generation and their new ideas and for them to be proud of their family's farm. ☺

*Clockwise from top left: 1.) Silvia marketing her products. 2.) Silvia checking the apple crop.*





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# Navigating California's Housing Conundrum

## *Pioneering Interim Housing Solutions*

By Jill Allen



In California, the term “housing crisis” has become so ubiquitous that it elicits little more than a resigned nod from residents. Characterized by soaring home prices and a scarcity of affordable housing, this crisis is a complex web of factors. It results from an ever-increasing demand for housing due to population growth, restricted housing supply exacerbated by zoning regulations, stringent building codes, and the NIMBY (Not In My Backyard) opposition to new housing developments. Escalating construction costs, in tandem with surging land prices, have made the creation of affordable housing units an arduous task. Furthermore, income inequality and stagnant wages have compounded the burden, leaving a substantial portion of the population grappling with housing insecurity, homelessness, or the weight of exorbitant housing costs.

In the realm of homeless services, our

primary focus gravitates towards those who are or will soon be homeless. At Dorothy's Place, we narrow our lens to those who confront us daily - the individuals camped on the side of the highway or pushing

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***Interim housing stands as a commonsense, adaptable, portable, and cost-effective solution that acknowledges the fundamental challenges faced by chronically unsheltered individuals.***

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shopping carts brimming with found items down Main Street. These are individuals bearing the heavy weight of trauma and unique needs. Our mission is to provide them with the safety and security they need to engage with service providers, enabling

their successful transition into permanent and sustainable housing. However, one pressing question persists: where is the safe, low-cost housing? It is imperative that we engage in a pragmatic discussion and identify common-sense solutions.

Enter the concept of interim housing, an innovative solution poised to redefine the landscape of homeless services. Interim housing, while not a novel term, has remained somewhat elusive, lacking a universally accepted definition. For our purposes, we define interim housing as a short-term housing alternative, distinct from emergency shelters and permanent housing structures. This housing model offers a rapid path to secure, safe housing compared to conventional construction, with just a fraction of the costs. It provides a critical space for individuals to stabilize and heal from the traumas of homelessness before transitioning into permanent housing.

Housing First, a nationally recognized best practice, prioritizes permanent housing over other needs, such as income and substance use issues, in assisting individuals out of homelessness. We echo the sentiment that every person deserves the security of a permanent home and appreciate the shift in focus among service providers and funding organizations. However, our experience underscores the significance of the duration of time spent on the streets in affecting the difficulty of transitioning back to independent housing. It is often an arduous process, and some individuals may not be prepared for the swiftness required to reacquire independent living skills, such as self-care routines, bill payments, and time management. Some who have endured years of unsheltered living may require permanent



supportive or government-funded housing. Nevertheless, not all unsheltered individuals necessitate this level of housing, and research suggests that many can “self-resolve” when given the opportunity. The logistical challenges faced by homeless individuals are immense. To reach an appointment while camping, without running water, internet access, or transportation, and with the need to bring all camping gear and personal belongings, is a formidable task. As a result, many of our clients miss scheduled appointments due to these overwhelming barriers. Congregate shelters, while an option, are available for specific hours and often lack secure storage facilities. Many individuals refuse shelter stays due to concerns about personal safety, the inability to keep a pet, or a general lack of privacy.

Interim housing effectively addresses these issues by providing a blend of stability and support that aids individuals in recovering from the trauma of homelessness. It offers a flexible length of stay with a focus on progression towards permanent housing, ensuring private personal spaces with locking doors and community guidelines that prioritize safety over arbitrary rules, such as curfews. We advocate for the creation of small, compassionate interim housing communities, where each individual is enveloped by expert assistance within a safe and supportive environment.

One compelling aspect of interim housing is its cost-effectiveness. In contrast to the staggering average cost of \$650,000 to build a single unit of permanent supportive



housing, interim housing units typically cost \$50,000-\$70,000 to construct. Moreover, interim housing communities can be established within 6-8 months, as witnessed in cities across California, including Santa Barbara, San Francisco, Alameda, and Rohnert Park. While they have a 20-year life expectancy, these units can be dismantled and reassembled as per community needs, offering an agile solution. Interim housing may not be the panacea for homelessness, but it effectively complements prevention strategies and permanent housing solutions. It bridges the gap while we wait for more permanent housing and reduces inhumane and costly homelessness, and the public dollars that burden every taxpayer.

Dorothy's Place boasts a commendable history of providing transitional housing, featuring 26 secure single-bedroom units with communal dining, restrooms, and recreation areas. Residents benefit from dedicated support, including expert case managers, healthcare coordinators, and housing navigators. They find the support of their neighbors valuable, comfortable sharing their past barriers with people that have similar lived experience. Our remarkable 74 percent success rate in transitioning residents to permanent housing is fortified by offering a year of

ongoing support after securing permanent housing.

Interim housing stands as a commonsense, adaptable, portable, and cost-effective solution that acknowledges the fundamental challenges faced by chronically unsheltered individuals. It fills the crucial gap for the next decade while affordable permanent housing projects are realized, offering a beacon of hope for those grappling with housing insecurity and homelessness.

#### **Citations:**

The Role of Interim Housing as a Homelessness Response by Ken Kirkey, Chief Partnership Officer, All Home, posted October 5, 2022.

#### **Reimagining Interim Housing:**

Transforming our Approaches to Sheltering People, The Framework for an Equitable Homelessness Response Project. ☞



# 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

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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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with helicopter journeys," said Wilkinson, 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!" ☺

# Pasta Fagioli

Courtesy of Chef Brandon Miller



## INGREDIENTS

- 12 ounces loose Italian sausage or diced pancetta
- 2 small onions, diced
- 3 ribs celery, diced (reserve leaves)
- 3 medium carrots, diced
- 1 tablespoon fresh thyme
- 1 tablespoon dried oregano
- 1 tablespoon chili flakes (or to taste)
- 3 large cloves of garlic, diced
- 3 bay leaves
- 1/4 cup tomato paste
- 1/2 cup white wine
- 1 28-ounce can San Marzano tomatoes
- 2 cups of cooked beans of your choice  
*(Chef's favorite is Cannelloni Bean)*
- 8 ounces cooked macaroni pasta
- Salt and Freshly Ground Pepper to Taste
- Extra Virgin Olive Oil Drizzled on Top
- Parmesan Cheese Grated to Taste

## INSTRUCTIONS

1. In a medium saucepan over medium heat, sauté the sausage until evenly browned.
2. Add diced onions, celery, and carrots. Reduce heat to low and simmer until the vegetables release their juices and become tender.
3. Add fresh thyme, bay leaves, and dried oregano. Stir well.
4. Incorporate diced garlic and simmer for an additional 5 minutes over medium heat.
5. Stir in tomato paste and continue to cook for another 5 minutes, stirring occasionally.
6. Pour in white wine and cook for an additional 5 minutes to allow the alcohol to evaporate.
7. Add the canned San Marzano tomatoes, crushing them with your hands. Stir well.
8. Allow the mixture to simmer until it starts bubbling.
9. Add beans simmer for 30 minutes.
10. Season with salt and pepper
11. Finish with Italian Parsley
12. Put a handful of pasta in each serving bowl and top with soup
13. Drizzle with Olive Oil
14. Parmesan Cheese Grated to Taste

Enjoy your delicious Pasta Fagioli! ☺



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# Grower-Shipper Foundation Celebrates 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

*Raising community awareness of the positive impact agriculture makes in our lives!*



The Grower-Shipper Foundation founded in 2003, is a not-for-profit organization whose mission is “Raising community awareness of the positive impact agriculture makes in our lives” is celebrating its 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary this year with a new logo. Proudly serving Monterey, Santa Cruz and San Benito Counties along California’s Central Coast.

“We are very excited to mark the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Grower-Shipper Foundation. This is our opportunity to celebrate the programs we deliver educating about our local agricultural industry,” said Lorri Koster, President of the Grower-Shipper Foundation Board. To enable this vision, Grower-Shipper Foundation focuses heavily on educating career professionals, local college students and the community to be successful leaders in the agricultural industry by providing leadership, career possibilities, hands-on volunteer opportunities and honoring women that have made a difference in furthering the good work of agriculture in the community through the annual Ag Woman of the Year Award. The goal is to educate, inspire and make an impact.

## Grower-Shipper Foundation Programs

### AgKnowledge™

AgKnowledge gives local community leaders a unique, hands-on experience to see the inner workings of the agriculture industry. Program Fellows commit to nine months encompassing nine-day long sessions. These intensive sessions provide Fellows with a broad understanding of the produce industry and its local, national and global impact. Experts within both agricultural industry and outside speak to a wide range of topics and current affairs. This broad-spectrum approach ensures a balanced and informed educational experience so participants may gain a solid foundation on the key issues facing the agriculture industry. Our key sponsor is the Monterey County Ag Commissioner’s Office. To date, we have graduated 330 policy leaders in Monterey County.

### Ag Against Hunger™

Ag Against Hunger partners with local growers, processors, and shippers to help end hunger by gleaning fresh, healthy surplus fruits and vegetables to food banks and schools. The program enlists volunteers to glean in the fields and provide fresh produce to the community.

We look at gleaning as a way to reduce food waste while providing healthy food to the local food banks. We host the annual Ag Woman of Year Award Luncheon, which celebrates a local woman that contributes to the Ag Industry as innovative leaders, now in its 28<sup>th</sup> year. We collaborate with the California Rodeo Salinas on the Ag Industry Mascots for a Race with proceeds that benefit the foundation. During Covid 19, we partnered with the USDA Farmers to Families Food Box program. We coordinated getting Food Boxes to farmworker families. We collaborated with Grower-Shipper Association members to provide over 100,000 Food Boxes directly to Ag companies for distribution to their workers.

### Ag Jobs: Bringing a Greater Vision

The Ag Jobs: Bringing a Greater Vision Program started in 2006 as a forum designed for the community, students, faculty and members of the produce industry. It is a collaboration between the Grower-Shipper Foundation and California State University Monterey Bay (CSUMB) and live-streamed at local community colleges. This highly informational series explores important topics and issues affecting the agriculture industry and the larger community in which we all live. The event includes a Career & Internship Fair that serves to enroll the next generation into local agricultural careers.

The 17<sup>th</sup> Annual Greater Vision 2023 theme: Innovation in Ag: The Future in Now featured panels on Automated Intelligence and Skills needed in Ag, with a special keynote with Karen Ross, Secretary of California Department of Food & Agriculture. We had 325 attendees and hosted an in-person Career & Internship Fair with 20 Ag Industry companies seeking new talent. Proud to partner with both the College of Business and the College of Science at CSUMB and Hartnell College with participation from Cabrillo Community College, Gabilan College and Monterey Peninsula College.

*1.) Ag Against Hunger Gleaning – CSUMB Service Learning Class 2023 at the Food Bank for Monterey County. 2.) Ag Woman of the Year, Candi DePauw at Paraiso Vineyards 3.) Ag Jobs - Bringing a Greater Vision 2023 – partnership with CSUMB and Hartnell College. 4.) AgKnowledge Class XV at Dorrance Ranch*







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# Key for a Cure Foundation's Golf Tournament Benefiting St. Jude Children's Research Hospital

Key for a Cure Foundation's third annual Golf Tournament benefiting St. Jude Children's Research Hospital on October 2<sup>nd</sup> raised more than \$65,000 to support pediatric cancer research.

The tournament, held at Corral de Tierra Country Club in Salinas, was part of the nonprofit organization's ongoing mission to raise funds for pediatric cancer research, which will directly benefit the work of St. Jude.

Last year, proceeds from the tournament, through on-course fundraising competition, post-tourney reception, and live auction, raised \$46,365 in net revenue, and after this year's \$65,210, Key for a Cure has raised more than \$975,000 towards this ground-breaking research and has helped local children diagnosed with cancer who need services such as in-home medical care, rides to and from medical appointments and delivery of nutritious meals.

"We are extremely grateful and humbled by the support we've received from our community. We raised almost \$20,000 more than last year, which blows my mind at how generous our supporters have been," said Liz Grijalva, foundation president. "We'd like to thank everyone who participated, from the golfers to sponsors to everyone who donated and volunteered, our board of directors worked extra hard on this one and it was a really special day. I hope the kids of St. Jude feel all of the love."

For children, cancer can be especially heartbreaking and despite advances in how childhood cancer is treated, the reality is one in five children will not survive cancer. St. Jude Children's Hospital stands on the front line of this battle, working tirelessly against children's catastrophic diseases, particularly leukemia and other cancers.

Operating this pediatric treatment and research facility costs nearly \$3 million each day — a daunting figure when you realize that patients are never charged for their care.

To donate to Key for a Cure Foundation, go to: [keyforcure.org/donate/](https://keyforcure.org/donate/).

## About Key For A Cure Foundation

Key for a Cure Foundation was formed in 2015 to support pediatric cancer research. The mission of the foundation is to raise funds to directly support innovative pediatric cancer research that will lead to more effective treatments for children with cancer.

Key for a Cure Foundation is committed to fighting pediatric cancer. The foundation is currently working to raise funds for T cell-based Immunotherapy research being conducted at St. Jude Children's Research Hospital. The foundation has raised more than \$975,000 for this innovative research protocol.

Key for a Cure is operated by volunteers and has a low operating expense of 4 percent. The board is dedicated to making a significant difference with a commitment that all funds raised by Key for a Cure go directly into supporting its mission.



1.) Matt Pridey looks over his shot before teeing off. 2.) Matching Ladies Group. 3.) Aaron Johnson accepts award. 4.) Justin Murphy taking a break between shots.

### Key For A Cure Foundation

Raising Funds for Pediatric Cancer Research to Save Lives  
820 Park Row #588  
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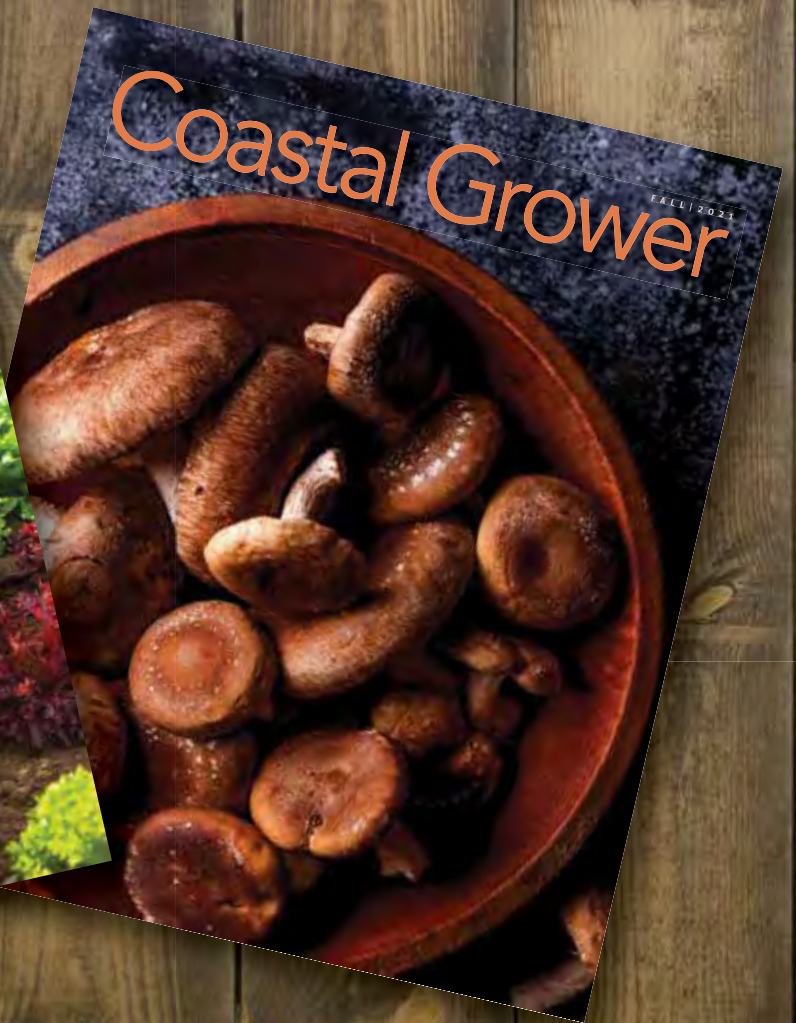
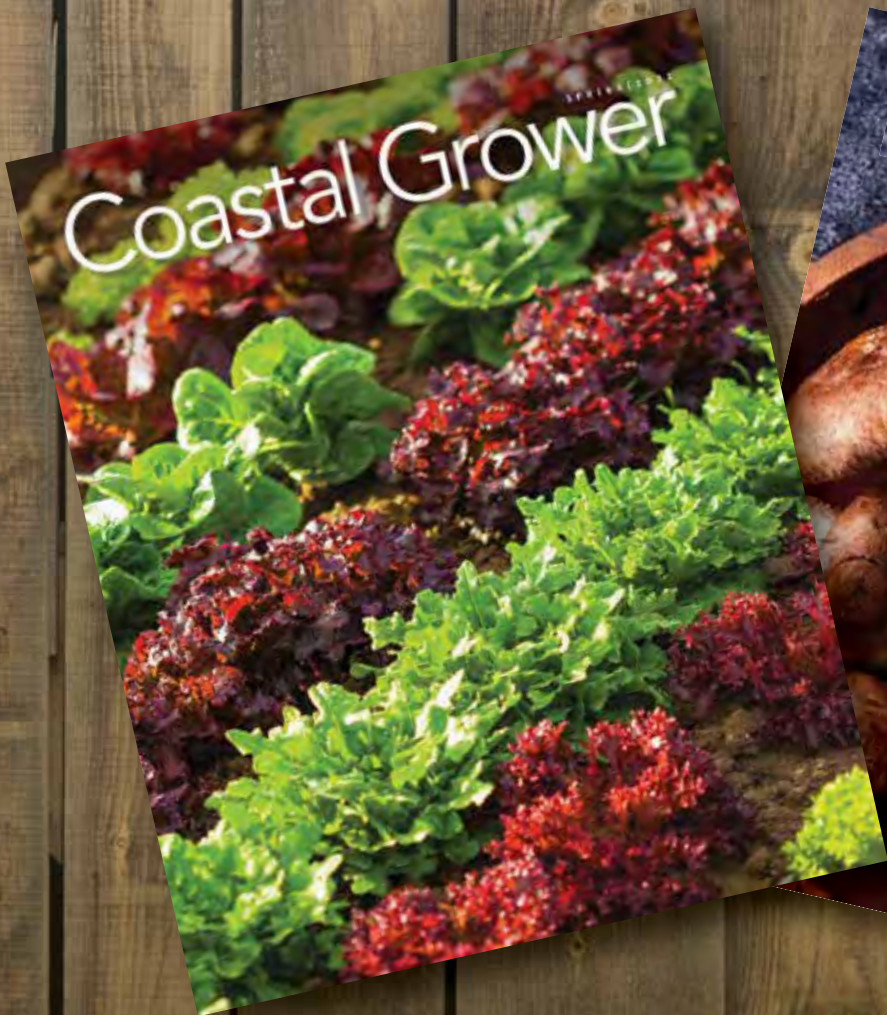
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Our goal is simple: To constantly evolve as a Multiple Employer Plan (MEP) and enhance the appropriate retirement plan options. Our partnership with NWPS and Charles Schwab allows us to add investment options and expand flexibility in the plan's design.

NWPS is the largest Multiple Employer Third Party Administrator in the country with a wealth of experience and tenure among their ownership and employees, and they offer a diverse range of Qualified and Non-Qualified plans with highly competitive fee structures.

Charles Schwab, the largest custodian in the retirement industry, brings substantial market expertise, cutting-edge technology, unmatched investment options, and favorable fees and expenses.

Together, their unparalleled benefits will allow us to meet your investment needs and ensure the retirement security of your employees.

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[www.westerngrowersrsp.com](http://www.westerngrowersrsp.com)



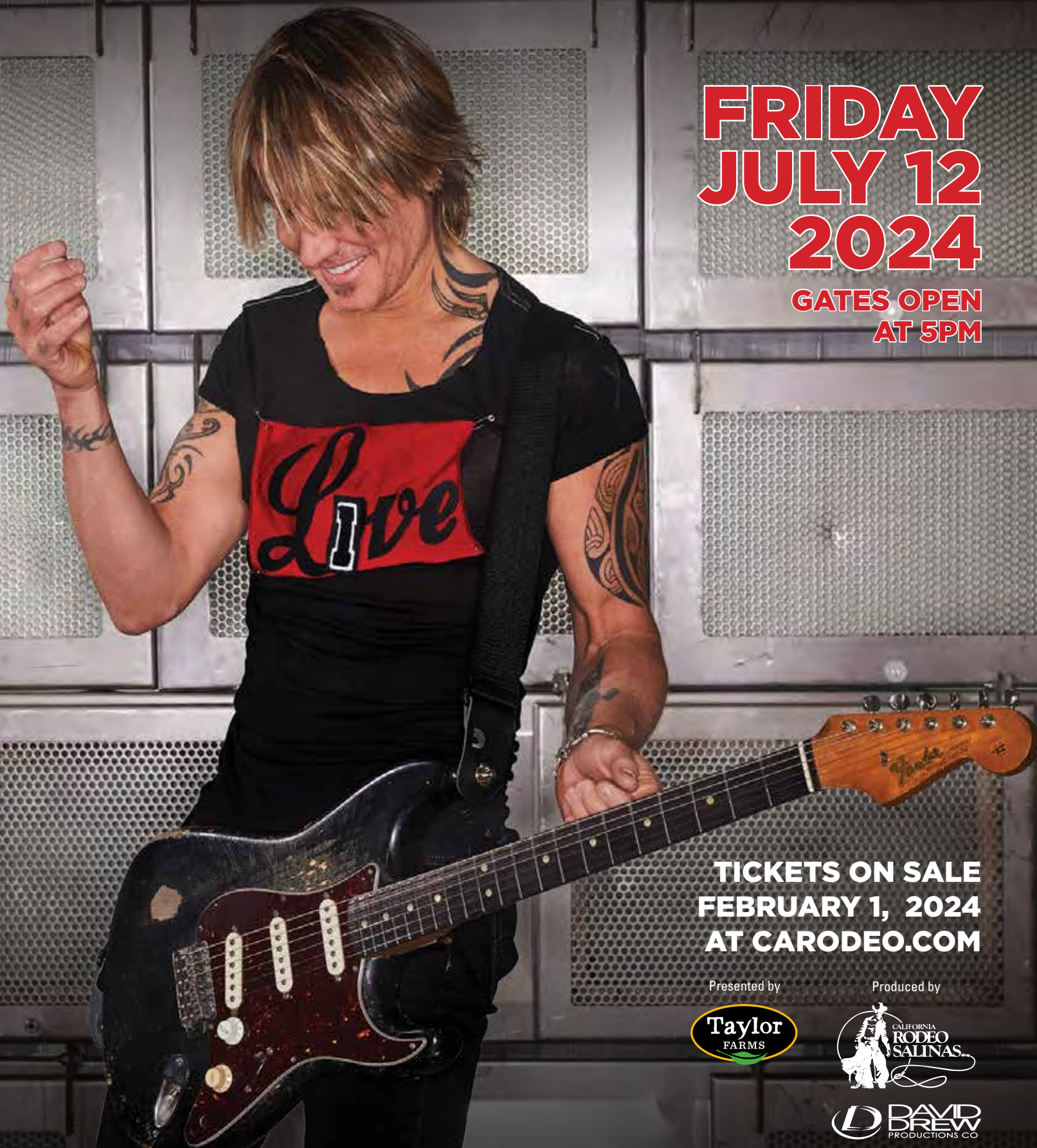
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