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Cover Story and Photo by Caroline Harrah

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A WINNING SEASON

In the September issue, we are excited to announce a “win” for Santa Barbara! Hope Ranch resident Sheralyn Baltes is working with legendary gaming and sports innovator Peter Moore to bring a United Soccer League, League One Expansion franchise to Santa Barbara. The team will be called Santa Barbara Sky, FC, and will feature both a women’s and men’s team.

For our Sponsor Spotlight, we are highlighting two exceptionally skilled, dedicated, and attentive employees at the Mesa branch of **Montecito Bank & Trust**. Both Jennifer Oakley, the Mesa Branch Manager, and Sarah McLelland, Business Client Service Advisor, uphold the mission of **Montecito Bank & Trust** to make the communities they serve better places to live and work.

Other features this month include local Santa Barbara residents Shaun Tomson and Noah benShea’s new book, ***The Surfer and the Sage***, which debuted in June. Shaun and Noah share their wisdom on riding and surviving life’s waves. In our regular columns, Trudi Carey shares ideas on how to stay warm and to create inviting outside entertaining as the weather gets cooler with custom firepits. In a Kinder World of Commerce, Monica Lenches and Claudia Rucker interview Kerri Berns, who is the very compassionate CEO of Santa Barbara Humane. Kerri has taken the organization to the next level of care for animal welfare by being champions for the animals in their care.

Lara Hove, the new owner of **San Ysidro Pharmacy** since 2021, is reaching out to the Santa Barbara community to let people know about all the services offered. San Ysidro Pharmacy is the only pharmacy in the area to offer customized compounded medicines for both people and their pets!

Speaking of pets, in the September issue, we are happy to introduce you to Ashley and Tim Snider’s inseparable pair, Lady Violet and Toby. They are two dogs with big personalities!

Also, don’t forget to check out the great photos from the Hope Ranch Campout! A big thank the incredible team that made sure the campout would happen this year, including Burleigh Skidmore, Ron Gillio (Campout Co-Chairs), Jill Van Zeebroeck (HOA General Manager), HOA Board President Marco del Campo, and other HOA Board members and staff.



As always, thanks to all of our sponsors who make *Stroll Hope Ranch* (formerly Hope Ranch Living) possible.

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Cindy



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Hope Ranch Home Owners

Informational Evening

Limited Space Available

Please join us for an exclusive Hope Ranch Home Owner event. Learn from industry experts about moving your property base (Prop 19), preparing your estate and home for the future, understanding capital gains, home market trends and predictions and so much more. Experts will be available to answer all of your questions regarding one of the most important investments, your home!

Date: Thursday, Sept. 29

Time: 4pm-7pm

Where: La Cumbre Country Club

RSVP Required: To RSVP please contact Jessika at 805-563-4052 or jessika@santabarbarahomes.com



you're invited

Women's Fund of Santa Barbara

Get Together in Hope Ranch



Longtime Hope Ranch resident and Women's Fund member Stina Hans and Stroll Hope Ranch (formerly Hope Ranch Living) are hosting a get-together for all current Women's Fund of Santa Barbara members. All current Hope Ranch members are invited as well as prospective members who would like to learn more about this incredible organization that brings women together to help our greater Santa Barbara community!

Date: Tuesday, Oct. 11t

Time: 5 – 7 p.m.

Location: 4490 Via Alegre

RSVP: Please contact Stina Hans at 805.451.5677 or stinahans@icloud.com.



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Mesa Branch of Montecito Bank & Trust located on Cliff Drive

Montecito Bank & Trust

Is Making the Community A Better Place to Live and Work

As the largest locally owned community bank on the Central Coast, Montecito Bank & Trust has one mission: “To make the communities we serve better places to live and work.” They have done just that with the establishment of their Mesa branch.

Montecito Bank & Trust is a long-standing bank and an asset to the community. Dating back to 1975, this local bank was formed by a group of local businessmen, including Founder Michael Towbes. Although Michael has since passed on in 2017, this prominent philanthropist has left a legacy. This community bank has grown to 14 locations, with its most recent location opening in Mesa.



Jennifer Oakley, Mesa Branch Manager

Meet the Mesa Branch Manager

Jennifer Oakley, the Mesa Branch Manager, has been with Montecito Bank & Trust since 2017. She has been in the banking industry since 1990 and genuinely loves her job.

“I like getting to know the different customers, and working with the team is the most fun. I love learning about my customers’ different

business ventures. My favorite thing to do is help them with financing,” explains Jennifer. “We do a lot of home loans, equity lines, and business loans.”

The professionals at Montecito Bank & Trust are dedicated to creating a world-class experience for their community, their customers, their associates, and their shareholders through integrity, innovation, and teamwork. Jennifer and her team are very friendly and ready to help their customers.

Not only does Jennifer make sure that the branch runs smoothly, but she also assists clients who call and come in and who open new accounts. In addition, she introduces clients to her banking partners, including Sarah McLelland.



Sarah McLelland, Business Client Service Advisor at the Mesa Branch

Meet the Business Client Service Advisor

Sarah McLelland, the Business Client Service Advisor at Montecito Bank & Trust, has been working at the bank for 10 years in the commercial lending division. She comments, “I oversee 10 branches.”

As a relationship manager, she moves new commercial clients into the bank and manages

the relationship. Sarah explains, “Once they are banking with us, I’m another person our client can reach out to. I work a lot with the branch manager and have her join in meetings when our big clients come on for additional support.”

Creating a seamless customer experience for commercial clients is what it is all about for Sarah. She is happy to help with any questions or concerns that might arise. “I used to be a branch manager, so I know what commercial clients need,” says Sarah. She has a total of 21 years in the banking industry. “I started out as an intern in high school as a teller and moved up here for college. I stayed because I liked it so much. I found myself working at a couple of different banks. Once I found Montecito Bank, I loved it,” she says. Montecito Bank & Trust is proud to be a six-time winner of the “Best Place to Work” by *Pacific Coast Business Times*.

When Sarah isn’t working, she likes volunteering at local nonprofits, giving five to six hours a month of her time to worthy causes that are near and dear to her heart. Jennifer also lends a helping hand to the community. Prior to Covid, she participated in a move-a-thon with Monroe Elementary School.

A Trusted Team

Jennifer and Sarah are a talented team and enjoy working together. “Jen is great,” says Sarah. “She’s very knowledgeable and extremely helpful. She’s always in a good mood with a smile on her face and is very welcoming. I couldn’t ask for a better partner, and she has the perfect personality for the Mesa location.” The relaxed, low-key vibe at the Mesa location suits Jennifer.

Jennifer comments, “Sarah and I work together with our business clients. She’s great and used to be a branch manager, so she knows both worlds – the lending side and the branch side. I always have extreme confidence when I bring her in to work with one of my clients.”

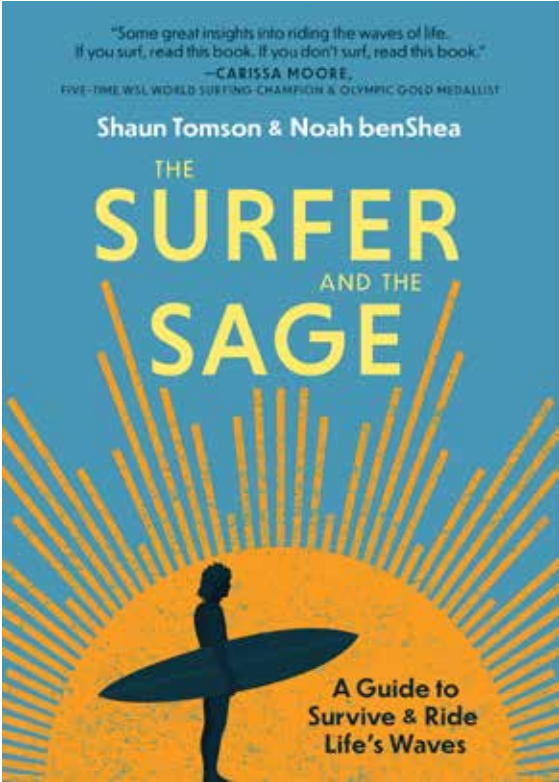
Community Focused

Montecito Bank & Trust is very community focused and is accessible to its customers. One of their highlights was facilitating over \$205 million in Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) funding to local businesses and nonprofits needing Coronavirus financial aid, making a difference in the process.

“We are also very involved in community events,” explains Jennifer. “We donate over \$1.6 million to our local communities annually.” Sarah adds, “In 2021, 83 of our Bank Associates volunteered over 5,000 hours for over 150 nonprofit organizations.”

We are honored to feature Montecito Bank & Trust in this month’s issue. They are proud to serve the community and make it a better place!

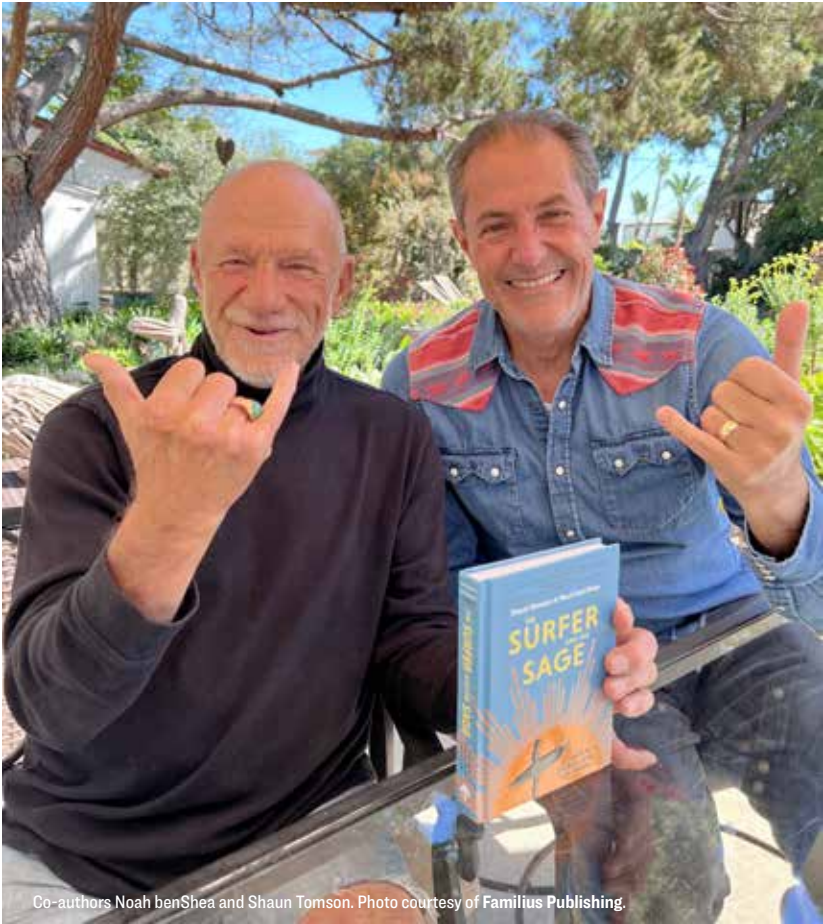
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THE SURFER AND THE SAGE

by Shaun Tomson and Noah benShea

A Guide to Survive and Ride Life's Waves



Co-authors Noah benShea and Shaun Tomson. Photo courtesy of Familius Publishing.

By Cindy Feinberg

As Covid affected our lives, it seemed as though the average individual's mental health started to change for the worse. Legendary world champion surfer, leadership mentor, entrepreneur, environmentalist, actor, best-selling author, and local Montecito resident Shaun Tomson is no stranger to depression. After losing his son, Tomson walked the bitter road of loss and crossed from darkness into the light. His latest book, *The Surfer and the Sage*, written with fellow Santa Barbara resident and Noble Prize nominated and internationally acclaimed poet-philosopher Noah benShea, addresses the eighteen relentless breaking waves of life, from loss and aging to relationships and depression, and guides you to transformation.

Life is all about connections, and after Tomson and benShea met for lunch in Santa Barbara with a mutual friend, both men realized they shared beliefs on the resiliency of the human spirit. Noah suggested they write a book together and Shaun was instantly in agreement.

The book starts out with a quote from Shaun and Noah which sets the stage for their narrative, "This World is too often too broken for too many. So we're here to help make a few repairs. And help you make a few of your own."

“This World is too often too broken for too many. So we're here to help make a few repairs. And help you make a few of your own.”

No matter where you are in life, this beautifully-penned book, with exquisite photos by legendary surfing photographer Dan Merkel, will inspire you and provide comfort and clarity. Shaun shares his main message of “connecting people to their purpose” and key ideas from his Code Method that he has created after years of soul-searching and finding the light after the loss of his son, Mathew. The Code is based on these two lines, “I will be better” and “I will help others be better.” The most powerful lines in *The Code* are “I will forgive” and “I will forgive myself.” In their book, Shaun and Noah share their wisdom on how one can accomplish these goals. So, is there an ending? As Noah benShea explains, “There is no finality. Only continuance. No wave is final.”

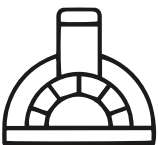
The book is available locally at Tecolote Book Shop in Montecito and at Chaucer's Books in Loreto Plaza.



Legendary surfer Shaun Tomson riding a wave. Photo by Dan Merkel.



Never-ending wave. Photo by Dan Merkel.


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Thinking of getting a firepit this fall?

After extensive research and checking in once again with Tim Laber of our local Aqua-Flo Supply (they sell fire pits too) ... here is what I learned.



By **Trudi Carey**, a Hope Ranch resident since 1978 and a licensed architect, real estate broker and general contractor. She specializes in new home trends, Hope Ranch real estate and self-storage services. Email trudi@careygroupinc.com or visit www.careygroupinc.com or www.pattersonselfstorage.com.

The outdoor family room is in more than ever

From firepits to ping pong tables and outdoor TVs, outdoor living is in. Creating a feeling of camping with the family, complete with a fire and comfortable chairs, is the number one feature when it comes to outdoor living at home. Firepits also keep mosquitos away, keep you warm, and, per REALTORS® can increase your property value. And yes, gas firepits can also be used for toasting marshmallows (if you do not want to burn wood)!

Think safety first

Do you have a location in mind that is away from overhanging trees, shrubs, building overhangs, cars, and flammable decks? There are building codes regarding setbacks, so you will want to double-check those. Manufacturers recommend 10-25,' but each jurisdiction varies. Use heavy chairs, set back from the pit to avoid guests tumbling in when standing up too close to the pit. You can also buy folding glass guards to help keep children and pets safe and also protect the fire from wind. If you have synthetic turf, it is generally not flammable, but it will melt (use a gas pit to avoid flying embers and leave at least 12” of nonflammable material around the pit).

Wood burning vs. natural gas or propane

Wood burning will give off an aroma based on the type of wood you burn, but it will also produce smoke, which is not good for your lungs or the environment as the smoke puts small particles into the air. Also, a wood fire is not as safe as gas – beware of sparks flying and make sure the fire and embers are put out properly. For a wood-burning pit, they suggest crushed rock, brick, or sand around the pit in case of an ember. If you decide to burn wood, it should be seasoned for at least six months. Never burn plywood, construction materials, or composite wood, as the fumes are toxic.



Firepit with a wide safety edge



Fire water feature



Elongated coffee table with extra area for appetizers

A gas pit is much safer. With gas, you can have lava rocks, glass rocks for the jewel look, or imitation concrete logs. There is less cleaning involved, and you can control the flame and intensity easily. Plus, there are no embers or smoke to worry about. It is also much easier to operate on windy nights. Using a standard propane tank allows you to move the pit around as it has no connections, and the tank is hidden inside the pit. A standard 20-pound propane tank will burn for about three to six hours. For natural gas, you will need to plumb to a location so it will not be as mobile as a propane tank, but you don’t have the chore of refilling the propane tank, and it will be less expensive to run. A gas pit should be kept dry, if possible, with a cover as water in the pit can make it harder to light and it can rust the components. It can be a soft cover, or there are hard covers available also that make it look like a table.

Design

Firepits have become so popular that there are now a lot of options to choose from in all price ranges. The most common materials are concrete, glass fiber reinforced cement, steel, and copper. There are various colors to pick from as well. Shapes and styles include dining room fire tables, coffee tables, bowl shapes, square, rectangular, bar height, and many more shapes and heights. They can be quite small to 10 feet or more in length, depending on how



Fire bowl

many chairs you want to pull up! They even have firepit water features that spill into your pool. (Seems like a Roman thing!) We looked at many manufacturers but could not find a modern design we liked. Tim pointed us to Prism Hardscapes, which is one of the lines Aqua-Flo carries that offers modern designs. Tim said he just put one in his yard – so it must be a good product!

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- Erin Brockovich

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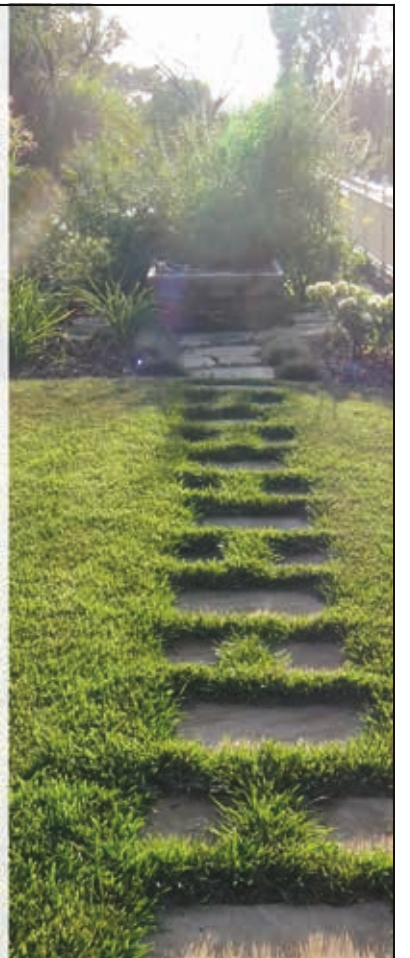
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By Caroline Harrah, Writer

SANTA BARBARA SKY FC:

Sheralyn Baltes and Peter Moore bring Pro Soccer to Santa Barbara



From left, Peter Moore, Sheralyn Baltes, and SB Mayor Randy Rowse at Santa Barbara Sky FC launch event. Photo by Caroline Harrah.

It's been 30 years since Mia Hamm, Julie Foudy, Brandi Chastain, and the first U.S. women's national soccer team defied the odds and emerged victorious in their epic battle against Norway during the inaugural FIFA Women's World Cup in 1991. The team earned two Olympic gold medals (in 1996, the first year women's soccer competed in the Olympics, and 2004) and another World Cup victory in 1999. During their storied 17 years of competition, the so-called '91ers created a worldwide sensation and forever transformed the landscape of women's soccer. Hope Ranch resident Sheralyn Baltes recalled, "I remember being at that World Cup game. It was the first time I had witnessed that level of play from a women's soccer team. I was blown away. The '91ers blazed a trail for women's professional sports and inspired girls like me to believe they too could make their mark." Years later, Sheralyn hopes to do just that, working with legendary gaming and sports innovator Peter Moore to launch a United Soccer League (USL) League One expansion franchise, Santa Barbara Sky FC. Moore is a founding investor in the club, which will include women's and men's professional soccer and begin play in 2024. Games will be broadcast nationally on ESPN+; home field location and other partnership details are currently being finalized.

"This opportunity means everything to me," said Baltes, whose passion for soccer began at 4, inspired by her mother's love of the game. Raised outside Federal Way, WA, Sheralyn fondly recalled childhood memories of her mother playing and coaching soccer. "She didn't have anyone to babysit me during her games, so I just tagged along to practices. Soon enough, I jumped in and started playing." At 5, Sheralyn played on her first soccer team, the "Orange Crush," naturally, with her mom as the coach. The experience eventually paved the way for more competitive club soccer for the FC Royals. "I grew up in a family that didn't have the means to pay tuition for club soccer and the travel expenses associated with it. I was fortunate to receive a scholarship, similar to what Santa Barbara Soccer Club offers here in town." Sheralyn, who currently serves on the Board of Santa Barbara Soccer Club, has made it her mission to "give back to something that has given me so much."

Indeed, competitive soccer provided opportunities Sheralyn never imagined. She played for the Washington State Olympic Development team and attended U.S. Olympic regional ID camps. She eventually competed on a Division 1 soccer team at the University of Montana, where she was team captain for two years and earned the Golden Boot award for most goals and assists scored in a single season. Entering college just as newly adopted Title IX requirements demanded that funds allocated to athletic scholarships be proportionate to the participation of male and female athletes at the institution, Sheralyn was able to secure a full-ride scholarship. "Had I not received a scholarship, I would not have been able to afford to go to college, so for me, it was a life changer. Before 1992, there were a limited number of collegiate D1 women's college programs in the U.S. Title IX opened the door for collegiate women's soccer, and the number of teams and scholarship opportunities exploded." However, "the top of the playing pyramid, that



Sheralyn playing soccer for the University of Montana. Photo courtesy of Sheralyn Baltes.

'professional pathway' for women's soccer, just wasn't there at the time." And so, after college, she only briefly dabbled in semi-professional leagues, all of which struggled to get off the ground. "We were riding off the coattails of the women's 1999 World Cup victory. And that was very exciting. But even the MLS, which had only recently formed in 1993, hadn't yet taken off ... and that's just men." So, she headed to Silicon Valley, earning a master's degree in information systems, ultimately thriving in a corporate career at Oracle and other technology startups, and eventually meeting her husband, Chris Baltes.

Today, Sheralyn, her husband Chris, who owns a private equity firm, and their three sons, Jackson (16), Bridger (14), and Colter (12), enjoy a busy and fulfilling life in Hope Ranch, where they relocated in 2019. They appreciate the "tight-knit Hope Ranch community." Bonus: Their house backs up to the athletic fields at Laguna Blanca. "Our kids jump the fence and walk to school. As a family, we also like to kick the ball around at Laguna or run on the track with our dog, Echo." Added Sheralyn, "Our boys have very different interests. Jackson loves world history and the ocean, Bridger is a soccer fanatic, and Colter loves science. The great thing about living in Santa Barbara is that you can be who you are, find your place, and it's all good." To be sure, one of the reasons the family moved to Santa Barbara was to offer

their son, Bridger, the opportunity to participate in the MLS NEXT Academy, an elite training program that “prepares the most talented youth soccer players to reach the highest levels of professional and collegiate competition in the sport.” As her mom did, Sheralyn introduced her son to soccer at 4; he hasn’t stopped playing since. “It’s his passion. He loves it. And it’s shaping him into the human being, the leader, and the young man he’s becoming.” Although her boys keep her busy, she knew she had to say “yes” when Peter Moore asked her to help him launch Santa Barbara Sky FC.

Montecito resident and Santa Barbara Sky FC founding investor Peter Moore is an irrefutable legend in gaming and sports, but his success was hardly predictable. Born into a working-class family in Liverpool, he relishes the re-telling of his favorite childhood memory: surrendering half a crown to his brother for the chance to attend a Liverpool FC game with his father as a little boy. His lifelong love affair with the game began here and then. After later earning a degree in education, he went on to teach PE, inspired by his idol, “someone who had integrity ... authority ... and was caring,” attributes he aspired to possess. After a stint playing and coaching soccer, he moved to Southern California for graduate school; he began working as a shoe salesman for the sportswear brand Patrick, working his way up to president. His career skyrocketed from there.

Throughout his career, Moore has traveled the globe, working to define, launch, and grow the global athletic shoe and gaming industries as SVP, Global Sports Marketing for Reebok, President of Sega, Corporate VP of Microsoft Interactive Entertainment (Xbox and Xbox 360), and COO of Electronic Arts’ EA Sports, including the wildly popular *FIFA* and *Madden NFL* video game series. Moore most recently served as Liverpool Futbol Club’s chief executive (2017 to 2020), fulfilling a childhood dream. He credits his success to hard work, making the “right decisions at the right times and situations.” His superpower? His Liverpudlian grit.

United Soccer League (USL) Chief Operating Officer Justin Papadakis appears sold: “Peter Moore is one of the world’s top sports executives. If you’re going to start a soccer club, you engage the best ... you engage Peter Moore.” Touted as “the largest and fastest-growing professional soccer organization in North America and first and only soccer organization in the United States to build a youth-to-professional pathway for both women and men within one ecosystem,” the USL views Santa Barbara as an ideal market for its formula. Said Papadakis, “When we look at expansion markets, we consider

the supporter base, an ownership group that cares about their community and wants to invest in bringing a first-class fan experience for both men’s and women’s soccer to their community, and a supportive local government and business community. In Santa Barbara, you have all three elements.” But organizers agree that there is still more work to do.

The fee to secure a USL franchise is reportedly \$5 million or more, with an additional \$10 million or more required in startup costs. Moore and the management team will be working to secure capital from a founding ownership group in the months ahead. Baltes, serving as Santa Barbara Sky’s VP of Technology and Business Operations, has analyzed the business model, including diverse revenue streams from ticketing, merchandise, special events, and corporate sponsorships. She believes the team could break even within a few years after launch.

Santa Barbara Sky FC expects to recruit players from local and regional talent, which, based on current statistics, currently exceeds the number of professional opportunities, especially for women. Sheralyn believes that Santa Barbara Sky has the potential to help narrow this opportunity gap “while fueling aspirations of girls and boys in Santa Barbara and beyond.” Moore concurs and is excited about all the club can offer area youth who might be encouraged to believe that “if they train hard and put in the extra work, they, too, can play in front of friends and family under the lights in Santa Barbara.”

What does success look like as Baltes contemplates the future of Santa Barbara Sky? “It’s important for me to make sure girls and young women have the same opportunities as men to pursue a career in professional soccer. Success would mean witnessing what we are already seeing at the national level ... an explosion of professional women’s teams and players in Santa Barbara. I hope Santa Barbara Sky will contribute to that.”

To learn more about Santa Barbara Sky FC, purchase merchandise, and reserve a spot on the waitlist for season tickets, go to santabarbaraskyfc.com. Follow on Facebook and Instagram @santabarbaraskyfc and Twitter @SBSKYFC.



Sheralyn and son, Bridger. Photo by Caroline Harrah.



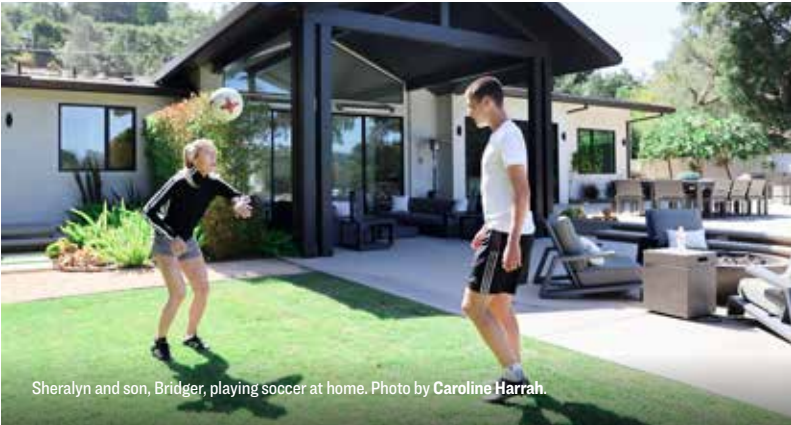
The Baltes family: Bridger (14), Sheralyn, Colter (12), Chris, and Jackson (16). Photo courtesy of Sheralyn Baltes.



Bridger Baltes playing soccer at age 4. Photo courtesy of Sheralyn Baltes.




Vamos: Sheralyn wearing Santa Barbara Sky FC merchandise. Crest inspired by the region’s namesake, Saint Barbara – a symbol of protection, strength, and beauty. Photo courtesy of Sheralyn Baltes.




Sheralyn and son, Bridger, playing soccer at home. Photo by Caroline Harrah.



Sheralyn, age 8, playing on her first soccer team, Orange Crush. Photo courtesy of Sheralyn Baltes.



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recipe of the month

The Salade Niçoise never fails to bring the Mediterranean to the table. This classic salad of Nice, France, typically includes haricot verts – slender green beans, along with boiled potatoes, tomatoes, hard-cooked eggs, and lettuce. The classic version includes canned olive oil, packed tuna and Niçoise olives. All of these ingredients can be found at the local Bristol Farms, just around the corner from Hope Ranch.



Bon appetit!
Wendy Gronsky

Classic Salade Niçoise

Brought to you by Bristol Farms and Wendy Gronsky, Resident Writer

Serves four

Ingredients:

- 1 lb. red-skinned potatoes, sliced 1/3 inch thick
- 2 tbsp. dry white wine
- 10 oz. haricot verts or thin green beans, trimmed
- 4 large eggs
- 1/4 cup white wine vinegar
- Kosher salt
- 1/2 shallot, minced (about 2 tbsp.)
- 2 tbsp. Dijon mustard
- 1 tbsp. chopped fresh thyme
- Freshly ground pepper
- 3/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil
- 8 cherry tomatoes, halved or quartered
- 1 head butter lettuce, leaves separated
- 6 radishes, trimmed and quartered
- 2 cans Bristol Farms tuna, drained
- 1/2 cup niçoise olives

Directions:

1. Put potatoes in a saucepan; cover with cold water and season with salt. Bring to a simmer over medium-high heat and cook until fork-tender, about five minutes. Drain and drizzle with wine and let cool.

2. Bring a separate saucepan of salted water to a boil. Add the green beans to the boiling water; cook until crisp-tender and bright green, two to four minutes. Drain and immediately plunge into ice water to cool; drain and pat dry.

3. Place the eggs in a saucepan and cover with cold water by about one inch. Bring to a simmer over medium-high heat, then cover, remove from the heat and let stand for ten to twelve minutes. Drain, then run under cold water to cool. Peel under cold running water.

4. Whisk together vinegar, shallot, mustard, thyme, 1/2 tsp. salt, and pepper to taste in a bowl. Whisk in the olive oil in a slow, steady stream until emulsified.

5. Toss the tomatoes in a small bowl with salt and pepper to taste. Add about 1/4 cup of dressing to the potatoes and toss. Quarter the hard-boiled eggs.

6. Divide the lettuce among four plates. Arrange the potatoes, green beans, radishes, hard-boiled eggs, and tuna on top. Pour any juices from the tomatoes into the dressing, then add the tomatoes to the plates. Drizzle with the dressing and top with olives.



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Santa Barbara Humane: A Kinder Treatment of Animals



A Conversation between Monica Lenches, REALTOR®, and Claudia Rucker, Business Owner, and Kerri Burns, CEO of Santa Barbara Humane

Five minutes into meeting Kerri Burns for the first time, I knew I was speaking to someone who was genuinely passionate about what she does. I had so many questions for her about all the different animal agencies in Santa Barbara, and her kind and patient demeanor made it feel like a real opportunity to learn more about this part of our community. What really endeared her to me was the way in which she handled a rather touchy subject (see below). She was not only

unflappable, but she seemed genuinely interested in helping me understand. In fact, her eyes would light up every time I lobbed a question her way. The more time I spent with her, the clearer it became that Santa Barbara has ended up with a jewel of a leader at the helm of Santa Barbara Humane, previously known as the Santa Barbara Humane Society.

ML: I understand you recently stepped into the leadership role as CEO at Santa Barbara Humane (SBH). How did that opportunity find you?

KB: I am so fortunate to do what I love. I have been in animal welfare for over 23 years and have assisted groups across the U.S., Canada, Mexico, and Australia. Prior to SBH, I had worked as an interim Executive Director for a cat shelter in Chicago, and when that contract was ending, my recruiters said, “where do you want to go next?” I responded: a place where I can make a difference and has the ocean and mountains. Two weeks later, I had an interview with SBH, and the rest is history.

ML: I've heard that there has been a lot of change at SBH over the last few years. Can you share with us what's new and different?

KB: I have been with SBH for just over four years, and in that time, we have taken the organization to the next level of animal welfare. We merged with Santa Maria Valley Humane Society to expand our reach county-wide and re-branded with a new name, new look, and new logo. We designed a new website that is bi-lingual and developed programs to better serve our communities, such as increased access to low-cost pet spay-neuter and veterinary care, affordable dog training classes, and animal rehoming services. We collaborate with and assist other local organizations and even transfer animals in from overcrowded shelters throughout California. Basically, we started working outside our walls and strategically thinking from the paws up.

ML: Over the years, from time to time, I've heard some negative remarks about euthanasia at SBH. Can you set the record straight and help us better understand SBH's mission?

KB: SBH's mission is to be champions for animals and the people who love them. To this end, we accept every animal in need and, through our hard work and donor support, are able to save 96%, including those requiring extensive medical care and behavior rehabilitation. As for euthanasia, this is always a heartbreaking topic because no one wants to think about ending an animal's life. As a Socially Conscious Shelter (visit sbhumane.org/ socially-conscious-sheltering for more information on this topic), we go to great lengths to make responsible and compassionate decisions around euthanasia to prevent the suffering of animals and keep our community safe.

ML: What are the values that guide your organization's decision-making as it relates to fulfilling your mission?

KB: Our values are Work Together, Think Big, and Care Deeply.

ML: How do you operationalize those values on a daily basis?

KB: Work Together means our teams provide the best possible care for our shelter animals and also look for ways we can go beyond our campuses to our communities and other animal welfare organizations that may need help. Think Big is about envisioning safe, humane communities and creating options that help keep pets in homes, like affordable and even free veterinary care, behavior advice, and emergency boarding. We Care Deeply by actively seeking out opportunities to say ‘yes’ to helping an animal or pet owner in need. Our commitment to these values allows us to stay focused on our mission every day.

ML: Is there anything else you would like our readers to know about SBH?

KB: SBH started in 1887 and is one of the oldest humane organizations in the U.S. We are not funded or controlled

by any governmental or national animal welfare groups. We have been around for over 135 years, thanks to our donors right here in SB County. When you give local, it stays local.

We are so much more than an animal shelter. We provide veterinary services, dog training classes, free cat trap-neuter-return, disaster response sheltering, and so much more. Our comprehensive website lists all of our programs and services, and our volunteer program will be relaunched this fall, so keep an eye out for that.

We are a resource for people and their pets through all life stages. Thanks to our community's support, working together we make a difference in the lives of pets.

To learn more about Santa Barbara Humane, visit www.sbhumane.org or give us a call at 805-964-4777.

To enjoy the full video interview, visit www.monicalenchesre.com/community-matters.



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Meet Toby and Lady Violet



Toby relaxing at the Fess Parker Winery. Photo by Greer Shull.

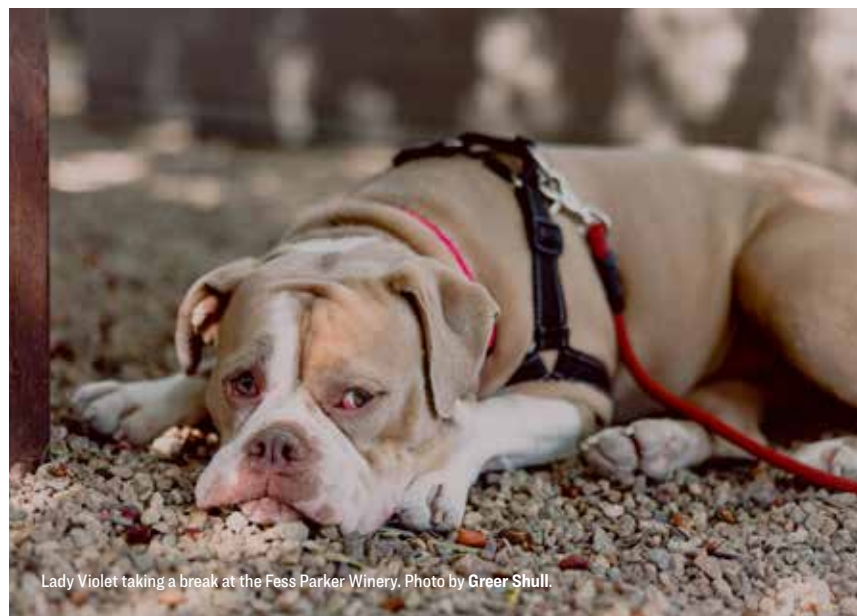


Best friends!

Toby and “Lady” Violet are the family dogs of Ashley Parker and her family, including her three children and her husband, Tim. Ashley and Tim run Fess Parker Winery, Epiphany, and The Bubble Back Shack in Los Olivos.

Two-year-old Violet, named after Maggie Smith’s character in *Downtown Abbey*, is an interesting breed called an Olde English Bulldogge: half English bulldog with mixes of American bulldog, pit bull, and mastiff. Her legs and nose are longer than that of an English bulldog, but she weighs over 50 pounds! She is very fast, giving her the nickname “the Meat Missile!” Ten-year-old Toby also has an interesting combination of breeds, mixed with pit bull, Rottweiler, and Labrador. Ashley says that “he looks a little pitty from the front and Rottweiler from the side,” with a “total Labrador personality.”

Toby and his littermates were rescued by Ashley’s nieces off of a ranch in New Mexico, while Violet was a “pandemic puppy” bought from a breeder in Arizona. Both dogs are a bit like drama queens in their own sense. Violet is a diva, pretending to be small enough to be a lap dog so she can be the center of attention.



Lady Violet taking a break at the Fess Parker Winery. Photo by Greer Shull.



Lady Violet with her big brother Walter

Her ecstatic energy is shown when she destroys her toys and wrestles with her brother, Walter, who lives on the mesa. “She still beats up on him pretty good,” claims Ashley.

Every morning, Violet runs to the sound of the refrigerator opening in hopes of getting a taste of Ashley’s almond milk for her coffee. Violet used to have goat’s milk with the puppy chow when she was little to gain some strength, going crazy after lapping it all up. “My husband called it her ‘jet fuel.’” according to Ashley. Although it’s been a while since Violet drank some of her “fuel,” she still hopes for some every morning.

Less of a diva and more of a big baby, Toby’s most defining trait would be his sensitivity. He leaves the room when there is any sort of tension or loud cheering for sports on television, but he will be right by your side when feeling sick or down. He’s not a big fan of fetching but still always manages to find the biggest stick in sight and carry it for miles. His favorite activity is finding a “dogcuzzi,” a shallow tidepool to lay in at the beach.

Toby’s labrador personality blossomed one time when he attended a fiesta at his neighbor’s house. “One of the little kids dropped an enchilada in the gravel,” said Ashley, “and Toby, being one-third Labrador, was all over it.” Unfortunately, he lapped up 10 rocks along with the enchilada. He looked like a “piggy bank” in his stomach x-ray.

These two mischievous dogs, with their own obsession with people food, resort to a milk bone treat in the morning and lots of love from their companions.



Lady Violet, the lap dog, with Tim Snider



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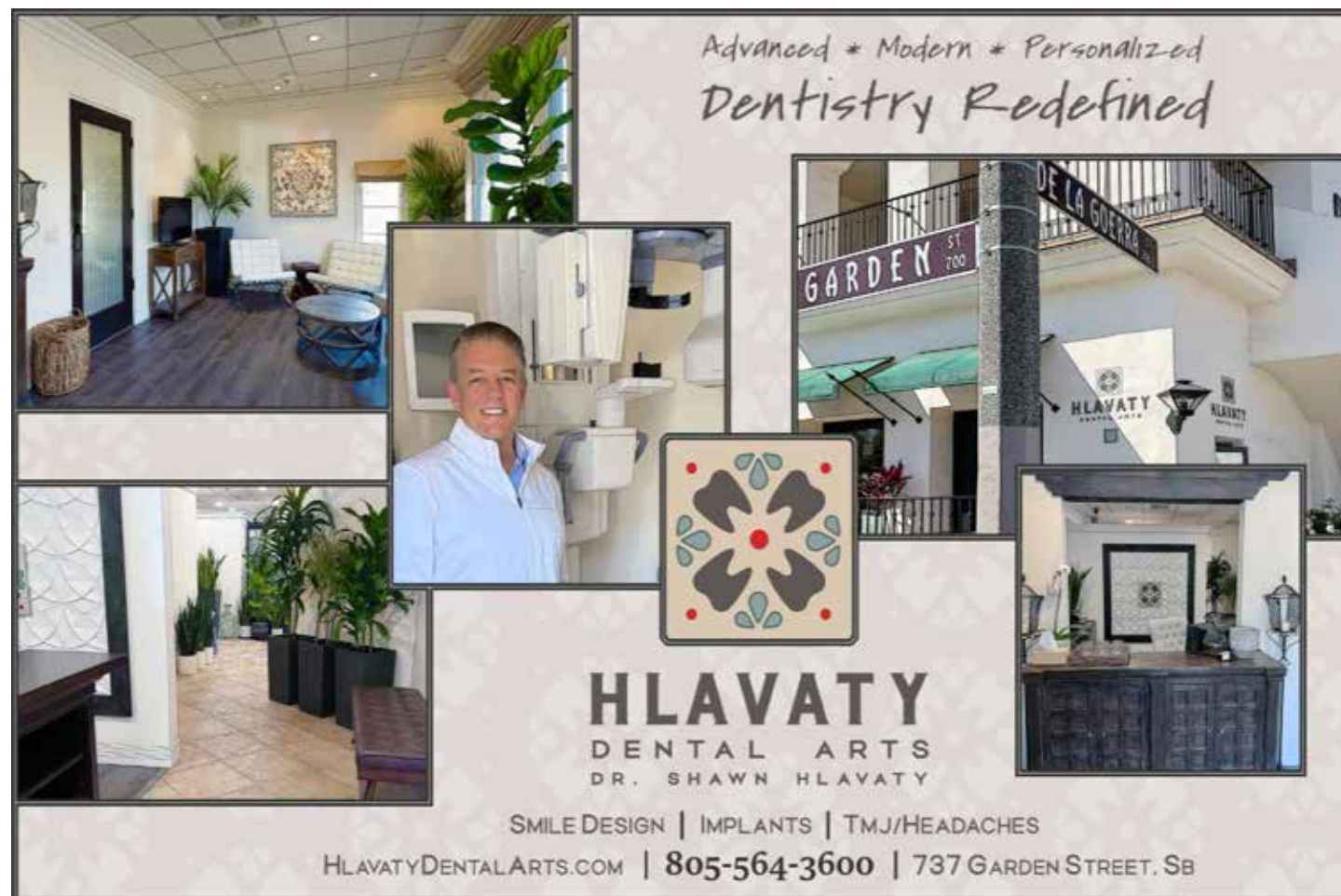
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2022 BEACH CAMPOUT A HUGE SUCCESS



By **Jill Van Zeebroeck**, General Manager of the Hope Ranch Park Homes Association

They say a picture is worth a thousand words – well, check out these from the beach campout! Participants gathered in the picnic area to enjoy barbecue and s’mores under the stars with the sounds of the ocean close by. Saturday morning, a robust pancake breakfast was provided with Chefs Marco Del Chiaro (HR President) and Wendy Gronsky (Vice President) assisting me at the grill. Tony Bohnett (Building Supervisor) was the logistics coordinator, and Frank Mendoza (HR Patrol) assisted with syrup and chocolate sauce pouring. Campout co-chair Ron Gillio and his wife Sun Yan served up the fruit and juice, and Adrienne Schuele, on behalf of HRRTA, provided coffee for the grownups.

Other campout co-chair Burleigh Skidmore and his wife Lauren welcomed guests and provided all paper goods, party supplies, and tables. New Patrol hire, Geno Leches, showed up with a few horses for the kids to enjoy as well.

If the tides do not cooperate next year, it is nice to know we can pivot and have just as much fun on higher ground!



Geno Leches and Frank Mendoza (HR Patrol) with Easy (a friendly horse for the kids to ride). Photo courtesy of Jill VanZeebroeck.



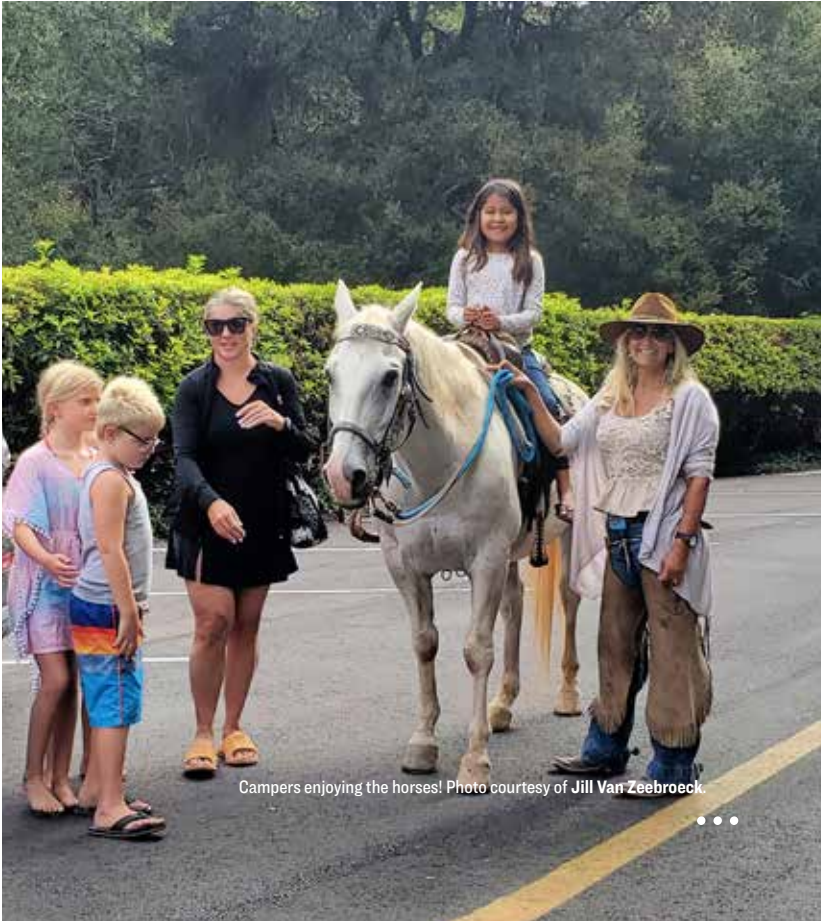
Kids ready for the campout! Photo by Ron Williams.



From left, Tony Bohnett (HOA Building Supervisor), Jill Van Zeebroeck (HOA General Manager), and Marco Del Chiaro (HOA Board President). Photo courtesy of Jill Van Zeebroeck.



Hope Ranch residents enjoying the campout. Photo by Ron Williams.



Campers enjoying the horses! Photo courtesy of Jill Van Zeebroeck.



Enjoying s'mores by the campfire! Photo by Ron Williams.



Carrie and David Zimmerman (HOA Board Member and Treasurer) enjoying a game of cards with his wife Carrie. Photo by Ron Williams.



Chef Wendy Gronsky (HOA VP) and Frank Mendoza (HR Patrol). Photo by Ron Williams.

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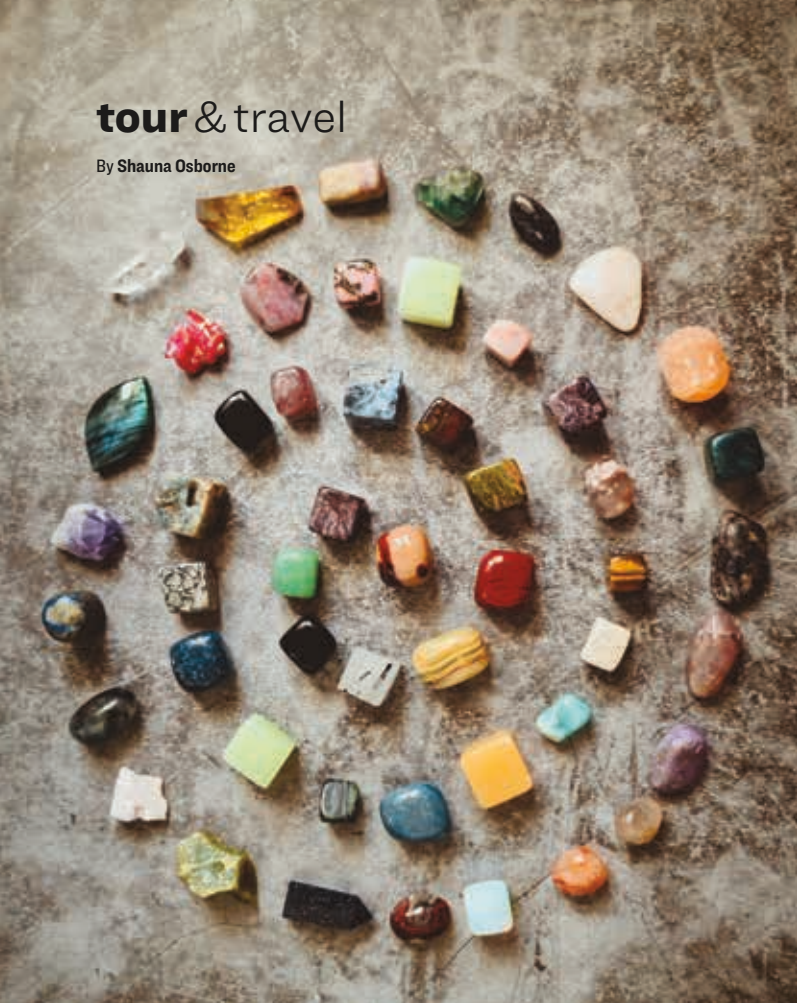
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By Shauna Osborne



Crater of Diamonds State Park

“Treasure Hunter Unearths 2.38-Carat Diamond” ...
“Lucky Visitor Finds Massive Yellow Diamond.”

Headlines like these are certainly enough to pique any traveler’s interest in Crater of Diamonds State Park, a 911-acre state park tucked away in the southwestern corner of Arkansas. The park’s main attraction is a 37-acre plowed field situated on an ancient volcanic crater, making the area rich in rock, mineral, and gemstone treasures. In fact, the largest diamond ever discovered in the United States was found here in 1924, weighing a whopping 40.23 carats. Ready for a lucrative game of “Finders, Keepers”? Dig in!

THE CRATER OF DIAMONDS

Crater of Diamonds State Park is the only public, diamond-producing site in the world where visitors can search for these precious stones in their original (volcanic) source. Begin at the park’s Diamond Discovery Center to learn more about the rocks and minerals found at the park and techniques for searching. According to park officials, visitors find an average of one to two diamonds daily. Mining tools are available for rent or purchase at the park, and happily, any rock or mineral you find here is yours to keep!

ACCOMMODATIONS

Crater of Diamonds State Park offers rustic lodging at modest rates, featuring a tree-shaded campground comprised of 47 campsites (with water/electric/sewer hookups). The campground includes tent pads for most camping sites and two modern bathhouses with hot water. If tent camping isn’t quite your speed, a number of homey cottages and Airbnbs are available in Murfreesboro and surrounding towns.

OTHER PARK AMENITIES

While diamond digging is the main attraction here, the park also offers fishing, walking/hiking trails, a gift shop/information center, and Diamond Springs Water Park, a mining-themed aquatic playground featuring a large wading pool with spray geysers and water jets.



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healthy living

By Sue Kidd and Shauna Osborne

LIVING & LOVING THE MEDITERRANEAN DIET

Goodbye, unhealthy habits, and hello to making redeeming nutritional choices. According to U.S. News and World Report's team of expert panelists, the Mediterranean diet is the top diet for Americans in terms of health benefits, ease, and weight-loss potential. Let's delve more into the details of this nourishing diet.

The Mediterranean diet pyramid is an excellent place to start. The pyramid features fruits, vegetables, whole grains, beans, nuts, legumes and seeds, herbs and spices, and olive oil as the foundational elements upon which every meal should be built. Beyond those key ingredients, fish and seafood should be consumed at least twice weekly and poultry, eggs, cheese, and yogurt in moderation. Save sweets, white rice and pasta, butter, and red meat for special occasions. Feel free to enjoy a glass or two of quality red wine daily, as long as

your doctor is on board; moderate wine drinking can increase longevity and reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease.

Most importantly, the Mediterranean diet is about more than just food; it's a lifestyle, a mindset shift. Beyond healthy eating, it encourages people to be more active every day and to enjoy food to its fullest in the company of friends and family. Taking time to savor meals allows you to appreciate your food and its flavors and origins deeply and tune in to the body's fullness cues.

With noteworthy health benefits like increased lifespan, improved brain function, decreased risk of obesity, heart disease, and diabetes, lower blood pressure and LDL cholesterol, and better fertility — not to mention, more flavorful and satisfying meals — adopting Mediterranean diet principles can offer quite a payoff!

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