

805 LIVING

Give Thanks Give Back



Pulse

TRACKING THE BEAT OF THE 805

By Leslie Dinaberg



FLIGHT PATHS

November is a great month to venture outside and get to know some of the local feathered flock. “You don’t need to be an expert birdwatcher to join our walks,” says **Conejo Valley Audubon Society** (wp.conejovalleyaudubon.org) vice president Richard Armerding, who leads monthly Beginner Bird Walks at Rancho Sierra Vista/Satwiwa. Join him on November 11 to see many of the oak-woodland birds that are common in the Conejo Valley area. You may see a white-crowned sparrow—they migrate from Canada and Alaska this time of year—as well as Western meadowlarks,” Armerding says. Also on the Audubon calendar is an Arroyo Simi Field Trip on November 14. This area of Simi Valley is home to an assortment of shorebirds, ducks, herons, and gulls.

At all events, “We are happy to help people get started and give them tips and pointers,” says Armerding. Because of physical distancing, he notes, his groups are currently limited to 15 people, so reservations are required. “We’re a very welcoming group. We are always excited to see people who are getting newly into the hobby of birding,” he says. Visit wp.conejovalleyaudubon.org/activities/field-trips for information on how to contact field trip leaders to sign up for these and other activities. >



A DRIVE FOR VITAL TRAINING

To honor the memory of Ventura County Sheriff Sgt. Ron Helus, who was killed in the line of duty during the 2018 Thousand Oaks shooting at Borderline Bar and Grill that claimed 12 lives, **Rusnak/Westlake Porsche** (rusnakwestlakeporsche.com), has joined the Ventura



County Sheriff's Foundation on a mission to fund and build a new tactical, live-fire training facility named for the fallen hero. "Community support for the new facility has been overwhelming," says Ventura County Sheriff's Foundation board member Christina Conley. In less than a year, she says, the Foundation has raised half of the \$800,000 needed to fully fund the construction of the state-of-the-art facility, which will better prepare law enforcement officers for modern-day threats, such as maneuvering, coordinating, and securing locations under live-fire conditions.

To help raise awareness for the project, Keith Goldberg, general manager of Rusnak/Westlake Porsche had a vinyl wrap made for a 2020 Porsche 911 that was inspired by Helus/hero badge designs that appear on local sheriff's vehicles. "It really meant a lot to me to do something for the victims," says Goldberg. "It was a great honor not only to bring awareness to what happened but also to do something in Sgt. Helus's memory to fundraise for the Ventura County Sheriff's Foundation." The Hero911 Porsche is now displayed at community events to draw awareness to the fundraising effort to build the Helus Training Facility. For more information or to donate, visit vcsheriffsfoundation.org.

Rusnak/Westlake Porsche outfits a 2020 911 in a vinyl-wrap tribute to fallen hero Sgt. Ron Helus to garner attention for a joint fundraising effort with the Ventura County Sheriff's Foundation toward the new Helus Training Facility.

A FASHION LINE FOR A LIFELINE

Looking to combine her artistic expression with suicide awareness and prevention, 17-year-old Westlake High School junior Morgan Lexi Mitchell designed the **Only Kid** (only-kid.com) fashion line. "I wanted to find a way to support National Suicide Prevention Lifeline," says the Assisteens of Conejo Valley volunteer, who donates 50 percent of the profits from the sales of her colorful stickers, iphone cases, hoodies, and beanies.

"I had been playing around with the idea of Only Kid for some time," Mitchell says. "When the COVID-19 pandemic hit, I had a lot of time on my hands, and that idea became a reality. Quarantine gave me the time I needed to develop designs and products.



"I wanted to make a difference in a way that personally relates to me," she explains. "I have struggled with depression, and I wanted to showcase my art in a way that would raise awareness for suicide prevention, which is often a silent struggle."

Morgan Lexi Mitchell (top, right) donates half of the profits from her Only Kid fashions and accessories to the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline.

CAR: COURTESY OF RUSNAK AUTO GROUP; MITCHELL: TRACIE KARSIK; T.L.K MULTIMEDIA; SWEATSHIRTS: MORGAN LEXI MITCHELL



GYM HANDY

There's no need to miss a workout since **DreamQuest Fitness** (dreamquestfitness.com) launched its mobile gym experience. The brainchild of fitness trainers Jose and Tiffany Fernandez, the fold-out trailer housing all the necessary equipment in a hygienic workout space comes to exercisers' homes and offices in the Conejo Valley, Moorpark, Simi Valley, and Calabasas.

"It wasn't until the pandemic struck that we both realized the necessity for a mobile gym," says Tiffany. "We believe there are a vast number of people, like us, who are fitness-minded and feel uncomfortable with our new normal."

Book a fitness assessment, a one-one-one or group personal-training package, or open workout sessions (from \$12 per hour) for up to 12 participants (face coverings required) via the website.



PEDALING SOURDOUGH

One of Sam DeNicola's goals as the founder of **Bread Bike** (slobreadbike.com), a community-supported bread bakery and delivery service based in San Luis Obispo, is to feed and get to know as many people in the community as possible. "I really like getting to see the people who are going to eat it," DeNicola says of his company's fresh wares. "Just yesterday when I knocked on a door, two little girls squealed, 'Yay, it's the bread guy!'"

Co-owners DeNicola and Mariah Grady bake about 300 loaves a week of 100 percent organic, naturally leavened sourdough bread in various flavors, which are delivered by bicycle to subscribers' homes and pick-up locations, including Whalebird Kombucha and SLO Food Co-op in San Luis Obispo and Etto Pastificio in Paso Robles. In areas from Santa Barbara to Los Osos, loaves are delivered via the Blossom Urban Garden community-supported agriculture program.

Bread Bike co-owners Mariah Grady and Sam DeNicola deliver their freshly baked sourdough loaves via bicycle.

A CUP OF APPRECIATION

Santa Barbara-based **Vega Coffee** (vegacoffee.com) is all about connecting people. Working with craft roasteries in Nicaragua and Colombia, cofounders Rob Terenzi, Noushin Ketabi, and Will DeLuca developed a network of seed-to-cup coffee professionals for their import business, which focused primarily on home deliveries and college customers until the pandemic hit.



When colleges closed due to COVID-19 safety restrictions, the three partners developed the Coffee for Community Heroes Program to offer customers the option to send specially priced coffee care packages to first responders, healthcare workers, grocery store teams, mail carriers, and others to whom they wish to express gratitude. "Orders are going to hospitals, fire departments, nursing homes, to all of the everyday heroes who are keeping our communities safe and strong," says Terenzi. Employers are even getting in on the act by fueling their work-from-home teams with special coffee deliveries.



805 Living readers who'd like to try a cup of community for themselves can use the code 805LIVING to receive 20 percent off all Vega Coffee website purchases.

Vega Coffee works with rural farmers in Central and South America to produce the coffee it delivers to everyday heroes here at home.



GRADY AND DENICOLA: PRESTON RICHARDSON; COFFEE BAG AND FARMER: COURTESY OF VEGA COFFEE

STREAMING CULTURE

Necessity is certainly the mother of invention these days, and performing arts organizations are pivoting in creative ways to bring entertainment directly to home audiences. "Music is the common denominator that brings humans together, no matter the time or the place in history," says **New West Symphony** (newwestsymphony.org/2020-21-virtual-season) CEO Natalia Staneva. With that in mind, Staneva and the symphony's artistic and music director, Michael



A Tour of South Korea is one of eight upcoming virtual New West Symphony concerts featuring global cultures.

Christie, have developed Global Sounds, eight mini music concerts and festivals inspired by cultures from around the world and presented virtually through June 2021.

"We discovered that our community contains a variety of cultures with vibrant musical traditions that have inspired and influenced classical music composers for generations," says Christie. "And thus was born the concept of turning each concert experience into a mini cultural festival." Along with the orchestra performing symphonic works, each concert week will feature in-depth interviews with cultural experts and solo and ensemble performances of orchestra members and guest artists. Visit the website for tickets and more details.

UCSB Arts & Lectures (artsandlectures.ucsb.edu) brings cultural events home with House Calls, an interactive, online series of concerts, conversations, and question-and-answer sessions with musicians like Danish String Quartet and Rhiannon Giddens and authors such as Anne Lamott and Cheryl Strayed.

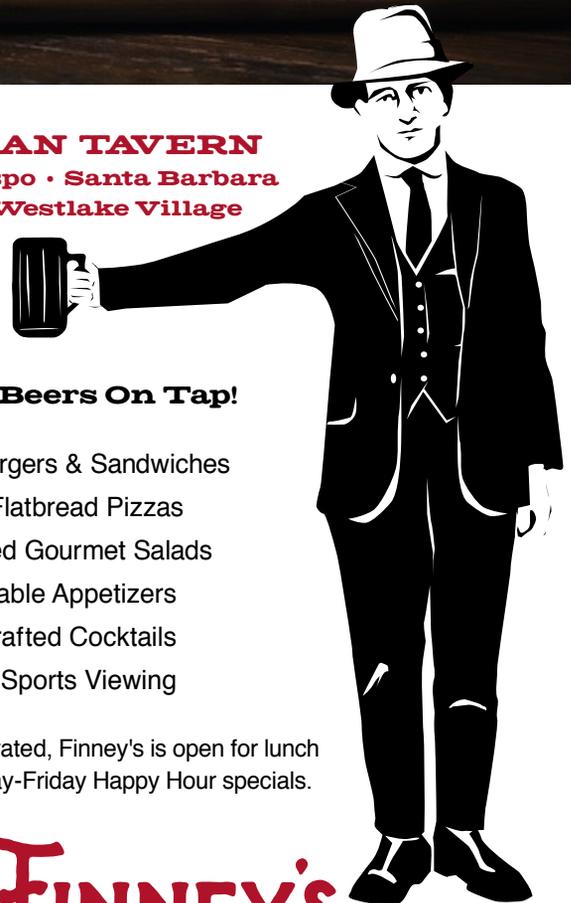
"House Calls is one way that Arts & Lectures is serving our community during a time when people are craving connection," says Celesta M. Billeci, UCSB Arts & Lectures Miller McCune executive director, "to each other as well as to the major issues our nation and our world is facing right now." For more information about individual events or to purchase tickets, visit the website or call 805-893-3535. ♦

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