

Santa Ynez VALLEY NEWS

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POSTMASTER:
 Address all communications to: P.O. Box 400, Santa Maria, CA, 93456-0400

SUBSCRIPTION RATES
 In Santa Barbara County \$30/year
 Outside Santa Barbara County \$35/year
 Entered as periodicals Dec. 11, 1925, at the Post Office in Solvang, California, under the Act of March 8, 1879.

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Inmate death at Main Jail under investigation

CONTRIBUTED REPORT

An inmate identified as Cecilia Michelle Covarrubias, 41, from Santa Ynez, died at the Main Jail in an apparent suicide after being found unresponsive with a ligature around her neck, according to the Santa Barbara Sheriff's Office.

Covarrubias was booked at the jail on Tuesday, Nov. 8, by the sheriff's office for felonies including assault with a deadly weapon, evading a peace officer with wanton disregard for safety of others, and driving under the influence of drugs, and was being held with a bail of \$75,000.

She was housed in a single-person observation cell within the Inmate Reception Center.

On Wednesday, at approximately 4:50 p.m., custody deputies found Covarrubias unresponsive in the cell.

Custody staff along with WellPath medical staff began life saving measures. County Fire and American Medical Response were summoned and responded to the jail facility where paramedics continued life-saving measures.

The inmate was beyond resuscitation, however, and was pronounced dead approximately 40 minutes later.

Although the death appears to be a suicide, the sheriff's office is conducting an investigation into the circumstances. The coroner's office will conduct further investigation to determine the cause and manner of the death.

Jason Anderson is the Digital Producer for the Santa Maria Times. He can be reached at 805-739-2213

Cachuma

From A1

For those who plan to bring their own boating vessels, due to a 30-day quagga mussel restriction at the lake, boats must be inspected and tagged by Cachuma Lake staff at least 30 days prior to their visit.

Annual passes for U.S. veterans are \$10 and are valid for one year from the date of purchase. The special pass allows veterans access to Cachuma Recreation Area and Jalama Beach county parks during daylight hours.

For boating and other information, visit www.countyofsb.org/639/Boating-Vessel-Requirements. For camping reservations and nature programs, go

Fall events at the lake

The Halloween-inspired Creepy Creatures event returns to Neal Taylor Nature Center at Cachuma Lake on Saturday, Oct. 21, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

The lakeside Hook'd Bar and Grill will present an evening of live music, food and a Halloween costume party, on Saturday, Oct. 28.

[to countyofsb.org](http://www.countyofsb.org)

Lisa Andre covers lifestyle and local news for Santa Ynez Valley News and Lompoc Record, editions of the Santa Maria Times.

Lompoc man arrested for attempted murder following Buellton shooting

LOMPOC RECORD STAFF REPORT

Sergio Martin Lopez Hernandez, 35, of Lompoc, was arrested Friday and booked at the Northern Branch Jail on charges including attempted murder in connection with an earlier shooting in Buellton.

Deputies responded to a reported disturbance on Valley Station Drive Friday at approximately 8:55 p.m., according to Santa Barbara

County Sheriff's Office public information officer Raquel Zick.

Upon arrival, deputies were told a man, later identified as Hernandez, had yelled obscenities at the victim, drew a firearm from his waistband and fired several rounds towards the victim before driving away at a high rate of speed in a black Ford F150. Hernandez and the victim reportedly knew each other.

No one was struck by the rounds, Zick reported.

While deputies investigated the scene, a be-on-the-lookout was broadcast to area units, and at approximately 9:10 p.m., California Highway Patrol officers located Hernandez in his vehicle in the parking lot of the Lompoc Home Depot.

Deputies responded and arrested Hernandez. Inside his vehicle, depu-

ties reportedly discovered a loaded firearm with the serial number filed off.

Additional charges filed against Hernandez were altering identifying marks on a firearm (felony), shooting at an inhabited dwelling (felony), driving under the influence (misdemeanor), and carrying a loaded firearm in public.

He is being held on \$1 million bail.

C.A.R.E.4Paws: A Lifeline for Central Coast families and their pets

Program to treat 20,000 animals in SB and SLO counties in 2024

CONTRIBUTED REPORT

Since 2009, C.A.R.E.4Paws' Mobile Community Medicine & Spay/Neuter Outreach program has provided low-cost and free vaccines, spay/neuter surgeries and other types of medical services to thousands of pets annually.

In 2024 alone, the clinic program will help 20,000 animals in Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo counties, outpacing the 17,000 pets it assisted in 2023 and the 13,000 the year prior.

"The costs of veterinary services are beyond what most low-income families can pay, and it's only getting more expensive," says Dr. Alex Gomes, a C.A.R.E.4Paws clinic veterinarian and board member and a full-time doctor at Main Street Small Animal Hospital in Templeton.

"Here on the Central Coast, C.A.R.E.4Paws is the only group that works directly in the community to care for animals who would otherwise never see a vet, whether they're six months or 12 years old," he said.

Pets are a vital part of human societies. Seven out of 10 U.S. households have at least one pet and 95% of people living with pets consider them family members, recent polls report. Sadly, millions of these bonded families struggle to access veterinary care because of the cost, which can lead to animal suffering and pets being relinquished to shelters.

This is where C.A.R.E.4Paws comes to the rescue. The nonprofit's mobile veterinary units bring affordable wellness services directly to marginalized Central Coast communities to keep cats and dogs healthy, out of shelters and with their families for life.

Beyond financial difficulties to pay for pet services, lack of transportation, distance to care and language barriers are among other challenges families face when it comes to seeking out and receiving veterinary treatment. This is especially true for families experienc-



C.A.R.E.4PAWS PHOTOS, CONTRIBUTED

C.A.R.E.4Paws' partnerships and programs provide a lifeline for many pet families, like Lucia and her beloved service dog, Luckie, a 14-year-old Labrador. Over the last few years, Luckie has received help with pet food, vaccines, exams and dental surgery as well as temporary foster care while Lucia underwent surgery in the spring of 2024.

ing homelessness.

Without access to care, many pets don't get vaccinated or altered, explains Gomes, who heads up the Central Coast chapter of Street Dog Coalition, a C.A.R.E.4Paws partner that provides free veterinary services to unsheltered community members.

As a result, according to Gomes, shelters remain overcrowded, disease runs rampant through pet populations and you see more zoonotic diseases, which are caused by germs spread between animals and people.

"With its mobile clinics, affordable services and bilingual, compassionate clinic team, C.A.R.E.4Paws works at the root of the problem, removing barriers and saving lives every single day!" he said.

C.A.R.E.4Paws' clinic program provides not just vaccines and spay/neuter surgeries at low cost, but medical exams, treatment of skin and ear infections, basic bloodwork as well as dental care and mass removals.

In fact, the clinic team will perform at least 3,300 surgeries this year, compared to about 3,000 in 2023. If a family cannot afford to pay for surgery or other treatment, the nonprofit does



A patient and its human visits C.A.R.E.4Paws for vital pet services.

everything it can to provide the service for free or for a small donation.

The organization also offers critical resources through other programs, such as distribution of pet food and supplies, dog training, grooming for dogs of the unhoused and support for pet families exposed to domestic violence. It co-operates several pet resource centers alongside animal and human welfare partners, where people in need can access dog and cat food and supplies and sign up for wellness services for their companion animals as well as for themselves.

Overall, C.A.R.E.4Paws' partnerships with dozens of animal nonprofits and shelters, vet clinics, pet service providers, businesses, social-welfare groups, community groups and youth organizations help ensure that pets don't go without care due to financial constraints or accessibility challenges.

Taken together, C.A.R.E.4Paws' partnerships and programs provide a lifeline for many pet families, like Lucia and her beloved service dog, Luckie, a 14-year-old Labrador.

"C.A.R.E.4Paws is a very strong support system for us," said Lucia, who struggles with progressing disabilities.

Over the last few years, Luckie has received help with pet food, vaccines, exams and dental surgery as well as temporary foster care while Lucia underwent surgery in the spring of 2024.

"Luckie is my trusted companion and, for us, C.A.R.E.4Paws is family," she said.



A four-legged patient is treated by a C.A.R.E.4Paws technician.

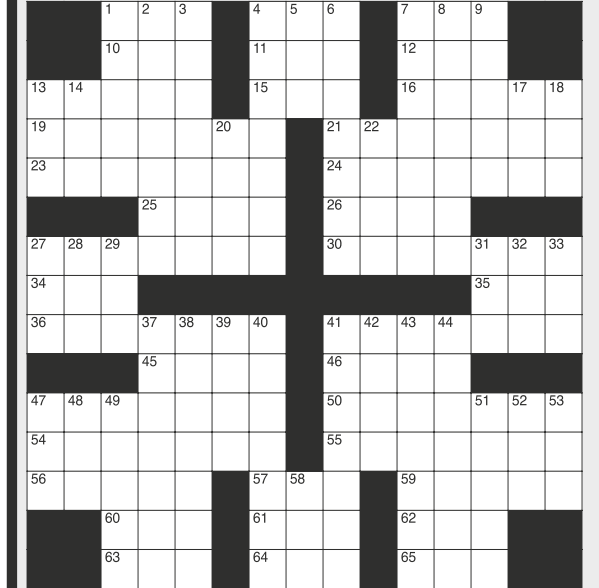
As the need for access to pet care and other resources keeps growing on the Central Coast, C.A.R.E.4Paws is committed to continuing its work and providing services to those who need it the most, said Isabelle Gullö, said agency co-founder and executive director.

"For so many people, a pet represents the brightest part of their world—a source of true love and companionship. We see firsthand what happens when someone can't afford care, and we need to work together as a community to support pet families, increase pet retention and protect the human-animal bond," Gullö said.

To contribute to C.A.R.E.4Paws' Mobile Community Medicine & Spay/Neuter Outreach and other programs that keep pets healthy and with the people who love them, visit care4paws.org.

For assistance with pet care, go to care4paws.org/programs or contact C.A.R.E.4Paws at 805-968-2273 or info@care4paws.org.

Crossword



- ACROSS**
- Defunct airline
 - Beverage container
 - A team's best pitcher
 - Unit of liquid capacity
 - It comes before two
 - Male child
 - Type of wheat
 - One's mother
 - Upper side of an organism
 - United is one
 - Extraction process
 - A being with lesser divine status
 - People living together in a community
 - Luxury automaker
 - This (Spanish)
 - Semitic language
 - Period for a defined purpose
 - Wander aimlessly in search of pleasure
 - Up in the air (abbr.)
 - American marsupial
 - Decadent dessert
 - Aquatic plant
 - About aviation
 - Summer footwear
 - Rugged mountain ranges
 - With tin
 - Cut on the surface of a hard object
 - Wrapped in cloth
 - Defensive nuclear weapon
 - "American Idol" contestant Clay Aiken
 - Midway between east and southeast
 - Court decision "___ v. Wade"
 - Born of
 - Soviet Socialist Republic
 - Actress ___Margaret
 - Not even
- DOWN**
- Heat unit
 - ___ Faulkner, American writer
 - Guatemalan town
 - Of funny things
 - Actress ___ de Armas
 - Agents of one's downfall
 - Takes forcibly
 - Body lice
 - Large nest of a bird of prey
 - Unhappy
 - Popular holiday dessert
 - Habitual drunkard
 - Used of a number or amount not specified
 - Complications
 - Fail to win
 - Before the present
 - Musical genre
 - Flurry
 - 007's creator
 - Indiana Pacer Toppin
 - Midway between north and northeast
 - Feeling
 - Damage another's reputation
 - Mottled citrus fruit
 - Beauty product
 - They man first, second and third
 - Harness
 - Herb
 - Expressed concern
 - Mississippi scientific area (abbr.)
 - Consumed
 - Nostrils
 - Gathered fallen leaves
 - Express good wishes
 - Monetary unit of Brunei
 - Japanese Buddhist festival

OBITUARIES

Philip Thomas Vacca 1964 - 2024



Phil loved his family and involvement in his sons schooling and coaching, Phil also served his community as part of a social and philanthropic organization, The Vikings of Solvang.

Philip was known for his strong will, unwavering determination, and immense love for celebrating with his family and community. Any reason for a party was Phil's attitude in life and his love of gathering was monumental and will be sorely missed.

Phil was preceded in death by his Parents: Philip Albert Vacca and Audrey Louise Vacca. Phil is survived by his dedicated and loving partner, Carol Sanchez, his beloved sons: Vincent, Samuel, and Nicholas Vacca, as well as brothers: Michael, John, Peter, and Mark Vacca.

There will be a celebration of life will be Feb 14-17, 2025. In lieu of flowers, the family asks that you consider a donation to The Vikings of Solvang or your local chapter of the MSA multiple sclerosis foundation.

It is with great sadness that we announce the passing of Philip Thomas Vacca on October 15, 2024, at the age of 60, following an extended illness.

Philip was born on October 2, 1964, in Brockton, Ma., to Phil and Audrey Vacca. Phil struck out to California as a young man in 1983 and settled in Solvang in 1993 where he worked in the family trade of construction until his passing.

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