

**Baja Montecito** – There's a new cap in town and it can be found at Terry Pillow's Homer, P.8

**Hooray to Amy** – Cold Springs' Amy Alzina is awarded Superintendent of the Year, P.12

**The Giving List**



**Running The Fund for Santa Barbara**, page 29

# Montecito

SERVING MONTECITO AND SOUTHERN SANTA BARBARA

4 – 11 JULY 2024 | VOL 30 ISS 27 | [www.montecitjournal.net](http://www.montecitjournal.net)

## The First Fiesta



It's been 100 years of Old Spanish Days, but what was the first Fiesta like? There were surely costumes, music, and dance... what about aerial acrobats? Maybe. But certainly not greased pig races? You'll have to find out inside (Story starts on page 5)

F. A. PAWLA

## Real Estate Guide Inside!



PHOTO: KATE PILLARD LARK, COURTESY OF THE REALTOR GROUP VILLAGE PROPERTIES

INSIDE THIS ISSUE: MID-YEAR UPDATE: P. 10 A GUIDE TO MONTECITO'S MANY NEIGHBORHOODS: P. 21 A LITTLE HOME RENOVATION GOES A LONG WAY: P. 25

The MJ's annual Real Estate Special Edition is here! Explore mid-year stats, property insurance tips, turning your house into a home, and more (find the 76-page insert within)

## BRUNCH AND BUBBLY

INDULGE IN A TY BELLINI OR A MIMOSA ON THE OCEAN VIEW TERRACE AT THE STONEHOUSE

EVERY SUNDAY 10AM-2PM

SAN YSIDRO RANCH

RESERVATIONS 805.504.1961



# The Giving List

## The Fund for Santa Barbara

by Steven Libowitz

The Fund for Santa Barbara was founded way back in 1980 as a means to support local organizations working for progressive social change. Nearly 45 years later, while the issues, its methods and organization might have grown, that purpose has not been altered at all: The Fund remains dedicated to helping to find solutions to both current and emerging social problems from the perspective that change happens most dramatically when those who have been denied power and justice lead on their own behalf.

Unlike some of the major foundations, as a community foundation The Fund puts its dollars into largely grassroots nonprofits, organizations and groups working to not only alleviate injustices in areas of economic, environmental, political and racial inequality, but also confront and alter the underlying conditions and circumstances that cause and sustain them.

The Fund's unique model calls for the grants to be generated not by the organization's board or management team, but rather a committee composed of leaders, activists, and other people who represent a diversity of communities, and have their collective finger on the pulse of community need. Often the dollars are relatively small, but the impact can be exponential.

Which is why the organization's catchphrase, "Change, not charity," continues to endure.

That was certainly the case for The Fund for Santa Barbara's new executive director **Eder Gaona-Macedo**, who first experienced The Fund as a 15-year-old student, raised on Santa Barbara's west side, who approached the organization for a grant for Future Leaders of America (FLA), which provides leadership and education experiences to Latinx youth in California.

"I was nervous, but it was a life-changing experience, because I got introduced to philanthropy and the impact that storytelling makes," Gaona-Macedo said.

A decade later, when he returned to FLA as Executive Director of the organization, his grassroots organizing efforts included additional grants from The Fund, which he put to good use. Under his stewardship, FLA increased its budget from \$150,000 to more than \$2 million per year.



The Fund for Santa Barbara is all about "Change, not charity" (courtesy photo)

Now at the helm of The Fund, Gaona-Macedo has spent the last six months on an extended listening tour, assessing the organization and learning about its constituency.

"I've met with our grant-making committee members, our donors, and even our youth Making Change students, which have been great for grounding myself in the work that we do," he said. "I've been really heartened by the ongoing commitment to advance social change in the county. Even with everything that's been happening at a national level, we're still very much grounded in community and wanting to have our communities thrive. The Fund is as relevant as it was in 1980."

Indeed, among its recent grants just in the last 12 months are \$2,500 to the Friends of Carpinteria Library Family Arts & Literacy Program to support Summer Mariachi Classes this July and August, covering instructors and instrument rentals so that the classes are free for students who will learn about Hispanic cultural traditions and the folkloric music from Mexico, as well as develop music and performance skills. A \$5,000 grant to Pacific Pride Foundation supports 222 risk prevention and awareness training for the staff for assessment and developing a communications and crisis plan to equip the organization to identify, address, and recover from oppositional attacks. Color Bloq received \$5,000 toward creating a community-driven safe LGBTQ+ housing list through engaging LGBTQ+ people on peer-based housing solutions amid systemic failure to address a key component of mental health. A total of \$7,500 went to the Black Student Union at San Marcos, Dos Pueblos and Santa Barbara High Schools for members to attend a leadership development conference and then share the knowledge and skills to help advocate for social justice locally. And Quail Springs

**The Giving List Page 37** ▶

# Ten Amazing Flower Walks

## Santa Barbara to San Francisco

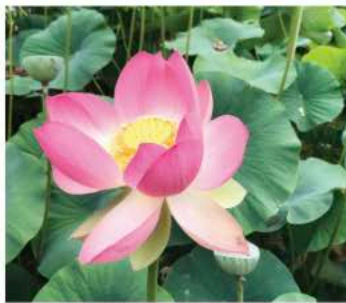
by Dina Saalisi

One of the things I love most about living in California is the diversity and abundance of floral life throughout the year. Taking road trips is a hobby of mine, and I especially adore the drive from Santa Barbara to San Francisco Bay. I've compiled a list of 10 amazing flower walks that can be enjoyed during any season.

### Santa Barbara

#### 1. Lotusland

A private botanical garden set on 37 acres, this eclectic sanctuary of rare flora was designed and developed by Polish opera singer Mme. Ganna Walska from 1941-1984. There are 14 gardens sprawled throughout, including a surreal "Blue Garden" and a towering "Cactus Garden." Everything – from the iconic pink walls to the newly redesigned Japanese garden – is sheer splendor to experience. Non-members can reserve a spot on their guided tour, which offers the rich history of the place and insight into Mme. Walska's visionary landscape design through a blissful two-hour walk. A must for any flower and plant connoisseur.



#### 2. Alice Keck-Park Memorial Garden

In 1975, Alice Keck-Park – the daughter of a California oil baron – anonymously donated this prime square city block of real estate to the city of Santa Barbara. Her identity wasn't known until her death in 1977. This public drought-tolerant garden in the middle of town hosts a multitude of old-growth specimens, a large central turtle and koi pond, a sensory garden for the visually impaired, and several gorgeous spaces for picnics and gatherings. I like to stroll the paths regularly to see what's in bloom or sit and reflect quietly under one of the magnificent trees, or near the lavish hibiscus bushes.



#### 3. Mission Rose Garden

This massive rose garden adjacent to the Santa Barbara Mission fills the surrounding area with a wafting fragrance, and a visual spectacle that sets the soul ablaze. With over 1,500 species of rose and a large grassy meadow with a view to the ocean, this special spot is a favorite with couples, friends, and families. Amid the rows of larger-than-life blooms, one can find liveliness or respite any day of the week.

### Monterey

#### 4. Jack's Peak County Park

Named for Scottish developer David Jack, the amazing views of the bay from this highest point on the Monterey Peninsula, are the focus of the many trails within the 500-acre park. A rare stand of native Monterey Pine, as well as a variety of wildflowers in bloom right up through the fall months, is a draw among local hikers and travelers alike. Sagebrush, ceanothus, sticky monkeyflower, and yarrow are a few of the indigenous blossoms that can be found at this lofty spot.

#### 5. Fort Ord National Monument

Every year in early spring I make a pilgrimage here to witness the unique wildflowers that prosper. A defunct army base, this 14,000-acre reserve, with nearly 100 miles of useable trails, is home to some of the rarest native wildflowers I've ever encountered. Shooting star, fairy lantern, mallow, pretty face, rock rose, lupine, centaury, red chestnut, all contribute their essence to the vast energy of this sanctuary. There's enough space for all who tread the paths – be they hiker, jogger, or nature-lover, the awe-inspiring views offer a sense of the omnipotence of nature.

**Flower Walks Page 31** ▶

◀ **Flower Walks** (Continued from 29)



preserve, you're greeted by a charming antique farmhouse, which holds a small visitor's center. The bucolic air can be felt throughout the land, as the scenery harkens back to a time of long ago. If you visit in the spring/summer months, you'll see a magnificent display of bleeding heart at the front entry. Beyond the house, the trails split off into different directions, leading to a placid pond, wildflower meadows or sandy back country. Giant oaks, sprawling lupine, and perhaps a rare monkeyflower will grace your path. Whether you only have time for a short stroll, or decide to make an afternoon of it, your soul will find joy in this historic "farmland." And if you're lucky you'll spot a family of quail waddling by.

**Santa Cruz**

**6. Arboretum at the University of California, Santa Cruz**

This small, beautifully laid out botanical garden is believed to be home to the largest Australian plant collection outside of Australia. Grass and dirt paths lead to year-round blooms, making it easy to find respite within the gardens. There's an impressive display of South African protea, as well as a noteworthy collection of conifers. The arboretum even boasts an aroma garden where one can experience the luscious fragrances of a selection of drought-tolerant native California blossoms.

**7. Quail Hollow Ranch County Park**

Driving up into the hills of Felton, once you enter the 300-acre nature



**San Francisco**



**8. Golden Gate Park: Japanese Tea Garden; San Francisco Botanical Garden; Conservatory of Flowers**

Golden Gate Park is itself a wondrous world of pathways leading to numerous gardens, a few lakes, and many a secret spot. One could spend days exploring this surreal city park of over 1,000 acres. Some of my favorite spots are the Japanese Tea Garden, SF Botanical Garden, and Conservatory of Flowers, and you can conveniently buy a daily Garden Pass for access to all three. The Tea Garden sits on a mere five acres, yet is packed with the voluptuous beauty of Asian specimen plants, beautiful buildings with hand-painted florals, a lovely flowing koi pond, and the giant Buddha statue which graces the

front of the picturesque arched bridge. Plan a visit during cherry blossom season in early spring for a special treat. There's even a delightful tea house that serves refreshments. When you're done with your mochi, head across the road to the SF Botanical Garden to stroll the naturalized pathways that span 55 acres, filled with a variety of over 8,000 plants, including unusual specimens such as the turquoise puja flower and Himalayan blue poppy. Then top off the day with the current botanical offering at the Conservatory of Flowers, which boasts an impressive permanent collection of rare orchids, bromeliads and the "Giant Water Lily." The enormous glass greenhouse is divided into different botanical galleries, which sometimes hold special exhibits.

**East Bay**

**9. University of California Botanical Garden at Berkeley**

This is one of the best gardens I've ever experienced, and as is the case with gardens, each time I go, it's filled with new surprises. Set on a lavish 34 acres, with over 10,000 native, Australasian, and South African specimens, this botanical haven is home to many rare and endangered plants. I especially love the "Ethnobotanical Collections," comprised of Chinese and native medicinal herb gardens, unique crops from around the world, and an old growth rose garden. The



Dina Saalisi, author of several books including *The Art of Flower Therapy*, speaks this Wednesday, July 10, at Lotusland

life force energy is quite potent here, with well-kept trails that lead to spectacular views overlooking the San Francisco Bay.

**10. Berkeley Rose Garden**

This small sanctuary within the city of Berkeley is easily accessible yet feels worlds away. Growing up in New Jersey and living in California for nearly 30-years, I'm still in awe of flowers blooming throughout the seasons. Experiencing roses in the winter months will never get old. I've spent many an afternoon sitting serenely among the over 100 terraced rose bushes, drinking in their delightful scents, and admiring their beauty. A perfect respite for journaling, this lovely spot allows for deep inner-reflection and a profound sense of peace.

Want to learn more about the power of flowers? Join Dina Saalisi at Lotusland on Wednesday, July 10, from 11:30 am to 12:30 pm for *Strengthen Your Intuition with Flowers and Sound*, where the audience will learn how to engage with nature and experience the garden with a fresh perspective. 🌸

*Dina Saalisi, author of several books including The Art of Flower Therapy, suffered adult depression and left behind a career in entertainment to find healing answers in flower energy. She's since dedicated herself to helping others use this simple and powerful method and works with clients in private practice in Napa and Los Angeles, as well as teaching at Canyon Ranch and Insight Timer.*

**CASH ON THE SPOT**  
**CLASSIC CARS**  
**RV'S • CARS**  
**SUV • TRUCKS**  
**MOTORHOMES** *We come to you!*  
**702-210-7725**

**WENDY GRAGG**  
**805. 453. 3371**  
*Luxury Real Estate Specialist for Over 20 Years*  
**DISTINCTIVE REAL ESTATE**  
Lic #01304471