

THE SAINT JOSEPH'S
Chronicle

"We write frankly and fearlessly but then we 'modify' before we print". - Mark Twain



Life
On
The
Farm

by Robert Bobb

Featured on page 12

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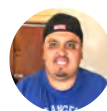
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Photo by Larry Martel

MEET THE PRESS



STEVE SALUTAN

"My name is Steve. One of the things that I like to do is run the sound system at my church. I am a friendly guy with a good attitude. I have family in Guadalupe, Santa Maria, and Lompoc. I enjoy BBQ'ing with my family, occasionally we cook a pig. I love to ride my bike. I ride it anywhere! I really like working on cars. I am a Chevy guy. I have a Camaro that is a Father/Son project with my Dad. I am handy and like to fix things. I like using power tools. My favorite power tool is...all of them!"



ROBERT BOBB

"I play golf. I can hit up to 55 yards on the driving range. I am pretty good at golf. I made four birdies in a row! I am a wrestling fan, I have all the movies at home. I have met Stone Cold Steve Austin. He gave me a t-shirt with his autograph, but I won't wear it at Oak Creek Farm because I don't want it to get dirty. I am a good guy and I like to help people. I do a lot of things with my church. I enjoy volunteering. When I was in ROTC in school, I shook President Reagan's hand and we played golf together. He had his own golf course. I like coming out to Oak Creek Farm, and I keep an eye out for everyone there. I want everyone to read my article and get a kick out of it."



SAVANNAH ANDERSON

"I do sports. I play Golf and Bocce Ball. I like to hang with my friends. I like to take care of my Mom. I grew up in Santa Maria. I have cousins that live in Orcutt. I like working at Oak Creek Farm with my friends. I like to open the door for people when they need help."



ANTOINETTE ELLIS

"I was born in California. I like to cook and I like to make things. I like to learn new things. I like goats and chickens and cats. My favorite goat is named Hans. I have nice friends. I like to do things with my friends and family. My best friend is funny. My favorite food is pizza."



JACOB DOLAN

"I grew up in Santa Maria. I am very hardworking and I get the job done! I enjoy working with my hands. I am going to work on my old truck, it is a working project that I want to go to school to learn more about. I definitely love to cook. I am also a nice and kind person."



OSCAR MAYER

"I am 11 years old and I was born some where in California. I live with my mama on the Central Coast. I like to eat, sunbathe, go gopher hunting. Chasing things. Car rides, playing at the park and most of all sleeping."



KEVIN DONAGHEY

" I am 55 and 2 month. I have general education requirements completed. I am pursuing a major in language and arithmetic. My hobbies are horticulture and animal care. I am single. I like to keep busy with my schedule, work is a big benefit in my opinion. I am a Lompoc native. I choose to commute for environmental benefits. I appreciate renewing the arts. I keep entertained."



PJ ARADANAS

"I enjoy listening to classic rock music, and collecting brochures from car dealers. I'm writing a column about the freeways that we travel and the attractions I like to visit!"



CORY CULMER

"My name is Cory Culmer. I was born here in Santa Maria. I am a red belt in Taekwondo. I like to help my classmates at Taekdondo. I like going different places. My wife and I go together to the movies. I enjoy getting out and meeting new people in our community."



JEANNIE MATTER

"My name is Jeannie. I grew up in Santa Maria. I am hardworking. I recently retired and now have more time to be an Explorer. I am a good friend and I like animals. I have always been The Chronicle's #1 Fan."

The Great OUTDOORS *with Jake*



On Fridays, we will take a hike and find a spot to have a picnic. What makes a good picnic spot is where people can be in different spots, but still sit together. We found a nice flat spot to sit in the sun for our picnic. We sit on the grass, but some people like to bring a blanket to sit on. In the morning it started out cloudy. When the clouds are gone, the sun comes through and the wind will pick up a little bit. The sun makes for a great picnic, not the wind so much. We see horses at some point on our picnic. We do eat lunch and some people like to lay on their blanket a get their sun bathing on! We walk back to the restroom area after lunch and then we go back to Oak Creek Farm.



Jacob Dolan
Santa Maria Explorer
& Columnist





AND TalkRADIO 1440 and I Radio station 95.7 The Beat AND PJ ALSO LIKES TO GO THE CAR DEALERS SANTA MARIA and They Have KSMA NewsRadio 1240 PJ LIKES TO GO TO SANTA MARIA MALL A LOT AND PJ LIKES TO PARK IN THE 2ND FLOOR AT HIS FAVORITE PARK LOT NUMBER #21 AND PJs HANGOUT IN SPENCER'S SEARS IN THE LADIES AND MEN'S CLOTHING and Macy's IN THE LADIES AND MEN'S CLOTHING AND PJ LIKES TO GO MARIAN Regional Medical Center, Santa Maria Superior COURT, Waller Park Yes Cook Street Elementary School Passed AWAY SURVIVORS include PJ Other Santa Maria Schools William Laird Adam Elementary School Santa Maria High School and Allan Hancock COLLEGE PJ ALSO LIKES TO ATTEND BEST BUY WALMART AND OTHERS IN SHOPPING MERCHANTS and I RETIRED 2004 on Wednesday June 15 AT THE AGE OF 45 YEARS



PJ Aradanas
Columnist



Life On The Farm

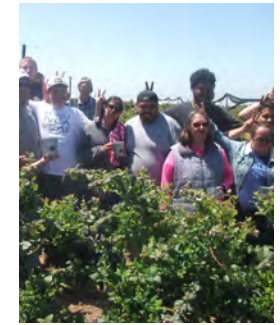
by Robert Bobb



"Daddy King Thumper. That is a pretty picture of Thumper."



"Kevin is getting his garden box together. I like Kevin, he is a good guy."



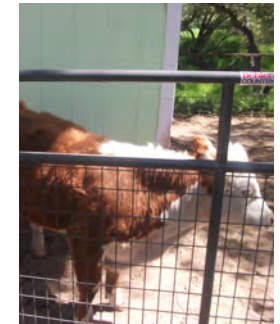
"We went to the blueberry field. I don't know what these guys are doing! A peace sign or something."



"Our sheep got sheared."



"We have Tilly out there at the Farm. She is a good pig and we call her Til Til."



"We got a cow named Duke. He likes to play basketball like Michael Jordan. He has a basketball out there. We should put a hoop out there too!"



Robert Bobb
Santa Maria Explorer
& Photographer

Just Ask Oscar?

The Dog who can give you advice on your life and will answer your questions!



Q My Mom and Dad are thinking about getting another dog. I am excited, but very nervous to have a new brother or sister! Do you have any advice for my parents about adopting a new dog and how to make sure it is a good fit for our family?

-Wesley

A Dear Wesley, I would ask your mom and dad to take you along with them after they find a dog they like, to see if you get along with your friend. That way they will know if you two are getting along. If you don't get along with your friend then your mom and dad can start looking until they find the right friend for you and your family.

Sincerely,
Oscar



Send your questions to "Just Ask Oscar"
TheChronicle@StJosephSLS.com

Q Dear Oscar,
Fleas are driving me nuts!
What can my Mom do to help keep me flea and tick free with the summer coming?

-Pickles

A Dear Pickles,
You might want to have your mom ask your doctor. There are collars, pills, and maybe other things out there that might help you. I always get a pill called Comfortis. It helps me quite a bit and you will only have to take it once a month... I do think it would be best for your mom to ask your doctor though.

Sincerely,
Oscar



Oscar Meyer Jose Cuervo Robinson
Columnist

The Inside Scoop

with Kevin Donaghey (subbing in for Cory Culmer)

interview with: **Carol Mahoney, Owner U-Pick Blueberries**



Hi Carol. I am Kevin for the article of interviewing businesses at The Saint Joseph's Chronicle. I am filling in for Cory Culmer. My name is Kevin Donaghey and I would like to ask you a dozen questions this morning. I have been out to visit the blueberry rows and it was nice. I am really enjoying being involved in this!



Can you tell me how long U-Pick Blueberries has been operating in the Santa Maria Valley?

We have been here doing the "U-Pick" for about eight to ten years. We bought this property in 2004 and actually only planted blueberries in a very small plot. We planted broccoli and some other interesting things, but then the blueberries caught on! They were so popular and are so good for you that we just expanded and focused on the blueberries. No more broccoli! Now it's all about blueberries....



What made your family decide to focus on blueberries and not another type of fruit?

Well my husband is a fourth generation farmer in this valley and he has always grown broccoli, lettuce, cauliflower...all those row type of crops. As we got older, he started looking toward the future and retirement. He knew that he didn't want to grow row crops for ever, so we bought this property. Then he investigated!



Photo by Larry Martel

We didn't buy this property with the intent of doing blueberries, but then he read and studied about the benefit of blueberries to your body, health, and well being. The benefits were hard to overlook! My husband researched where to get the best plants and we bought our first batch. Planting blueberries is not like conventional farming where you plant a seed and you bring that to fruition and then you harvest it. Blueberries are called high bush berries and they don't have thorns. They are just a fun plant to work with! It just felt like a good thing to do. So, we started with just a small plot and we grew.



What makes U-Pick Blueberries so special? It sounds like LOVE. With the fulfillment there, or "Fruit-fulfillment"!

Yes that is right, "Fruit-fulfillment"! We have had customers say that it is healing and meditative to come out to the fields and pick blueberries. There is something about being out in the plants, snacking on blueberries, and listening to the birds. It is quiet and peaceful in a beautiful surrounding.



The U-Pick was born because we had so much left over. We pick for Driscoll Farms. We use to hire expensive labor to pick blueberries and then the market for blueberries would run out. It is all about supply and demand. We weren't able to make enough money to pay the pickers, so we would cut off our sales to Driscoll. After we quit selling to Driscoll, we would look out on the bushes and see all the amazing fruit that was left. So, our daughter who has five children said, "You know what Dad, my friends would come out here and pick these blueberries and they would probably pay you for the buckets that they haul out of here."....And that is how U-Pick Blueberries was born!





Are blueberries native to North America both on the Eastern Seaboard and the West Coast?

I don't know that they are native here. When you think of blueberries, you think of Maine, Michigan, and the East Coast. I get a lot of people out here with fond childhood memories of going out in those areas and picking wild blueberries. They come out and are very discerning about the flavor! They have their favorites. I have a lady that will taste a specific blueberry and it takes her right back to her childhood. There is a variation of flavors because we have several varieties. What we understood when we bought our first plants is that they were bred for this area, meaning they are more tolerant of the climate that we have here. We buy our plants from a big nursery called Fall Creek in Oregon. Blueberries are also native to that area. I think that our area supports them well, even though they are not necessarily native.



Why should people get blueberries from U Pick Blueberries instead of the grocery store?

Because they are so fresh! There is a big difference. In fact, I have had several people say, "I don't really care for blueberries." That is actually how I felt! They were just kind of bland to me. I never really liked blueberries back in the day. When we started growing them, I started eating them because they were so healthy. I couldn't believe how flavorful they were. I think people change their mind about our blueberries because they are so fresh. They also last a long time. Before blueberries in our area become ripe, they are brought in from South America and from Mexico. We typically buy blueberries at the store that have been stored for a long time, so they taste kind of flat. If you come out here and pick blueberries, you are getting them right off the bush and they are fresh.



Do you grow anything besides blueberries?

Well actually now we are growing "Albion" strawberries! We also started growing a variety of blackberries called "Freedom" and they are thornless. Recently we planted lavender and would love to be able to offer people the chance to pick their own fresh lavender bouquet.



We decided last year to give apricots a shot. Our strawberries and blackberries are very sweet, there is a lot of sugar in those. Sugar tends to not transport well for growers, so it starts breaking down quickly. We carry varieties of strawberries and blackberries that are not typically found in the grocery store because they don't ship well with the sugar content. The harvest time for blackberries is typically in June. The major harvest time for blueberries is the first week in July. Strawberries produce all throughout the season. The weather has been crazy this last year. It was warm in November and December and the plants thought it was time to bear their fruit. It is going to be an interesting year, since the majority of our bushes are still coming!



Is U-Pick Blueberries a seasonal Farm, meaning are there certain times of the year that you are closed?

Yes! Once the blueberries are finished up, we close. We usually close later in the summer. We have gone as late as the end of July. But, this year could be completely different because of the weather. It is better for the plants if we end right after the Fourth of July, because then we start pruning them all back. The pruning process is important for the plants. The trunk of the bush that is coming up gets thicker and thicker over time. After the plant is about six years old, you go in with big loppers and cut out the oldest wood at the very bottom of the bush. Once the old thick wood has been removed, the bush will push out new growth. The bush will keep regenerating if properly pruned. It is a lot of work! Once we do our yearly pruning it will look like nothing is left, but in about a month the bushes will be full with new green growth.





Can you explain to me a little bit about how you know when a blueberry is ready to pick?

Blueberries need to be a really, really dark purple color. You can tell as you are pulling blueberries off the stem. If the blueberries are a little hard to pull, then the sugar is not quite there and the blueberries might be a little too tart. If the blueberry just falls right off the stem, then there is a lot of sugar and the blueberry will be very sweet. Everybody has their own personal preference. They just need to be dark. You can also take blueberries that are not quite ripe and put them in your windowsill and they will continue to ripen.



Do you instruct people on how to pick blueberries when they arrive at the Farm?

No, I say go out there and have fun!!! Once you start picking blueberries and eating them, you figure it out. I like to pick my blueberries individually and throw them in my bucket. During certain parts of the summer there will be big clusters of blueberries. Sometimes you can just put your bucket under the cluster and they fall right off!



Is there a prize winning blueberry?

We have seen huge ones! We actually have a group that comes out here every summer and has a contest on who can pick the biggest blueberry. We have had our "Emerald" variety produce blueberries that were larger than a quarter! You can find blueberry varieties based on the color of the post at the end of the blueberry rows. The yellow posts are the "Snow Chaser" variety and the white posts are the "Spring High" variety. We have so many of the "Emerald" variety that those posts are not painted.



What are the hours of operation for U-Pick Blueberries?

We are open from 9:00am to 4:00pm, Wednesday through Sunday. We are always closed on Mondays and Tuesdays.





Photo by Larry Martel



FARM COOKING

with Jeannie

I picked blueberries and put them in a bucket with my friends. In a pan, we put blueberries, sugar, and pepper. It bubbled and was sticky! We cooked the chicken and moved it up and down on the BBQ. We halved the oranges, grapes, bananas, kiwi, and strawberries. We used a spoon to mix the fruit up. Eric cut the onion for me. It was making me cry! I really liked the chicken and the blueberry BBQ sauce.



Jeannie Matter
Santa Maria Explorer
& Columnist

Chicken with Blueberry BBQ Sauce, Fruit and Green Salad

Ingredients:

- 2 Cups Fresh Blueberries
- 3/4 Cup Ketchup
- 1/2 Cup Apple Cider Vinegar
- 1/2 Cup Splenda Brown Sugar
- 1 Tbs. Light Molasses
- 1 Tsp. Chili Powder
- 1 Tsp. Ground Black Pepper

Fruit Salad

- 2 Cups strawberries, sliced
- 3 Kiwi, peeled and sliced
- 3 Bananas, sliced
- 2 Cuties, peeled and sliced
- 1 Cup seedless grapes
- 2 Cups blueberries

Green Salad

- Red Leaf Lettuce, chopped
- Green Leaf Lettuce, chopped
- Romaine Lettuce, chopped
- Red Onion, sliced
- Cucumber, sliced
- Red Bell Pepper, sliced
- Tomato, sliced

Directions:

Combine blueberries, ketchup, vinegar, Splenda, molasses, chili powder, and black pepper in a medium saucepan. Stir in 1/2 cup water. Bring the mixture to a boil over high heat, stirring constantly. Reduce heat to low and simmer, stirring occasionally until sauce is slightly thickened and chunky. Pour sauce over BBQ chicken and serve.



Let's Talk Painting!

by Antoinette Ellis



I used the colors green, black, and yellow. My Koala Bear is cute. He looks like Stitch from the movie *Lilo and Stitch*! I hung my painting in my room. I had fun painting. Josiah helped me with my painting. I wore my apron with Frozen characters on it when I painting. Elsa is on my painting apron!



Antoinette Ellis
Santa Maria Explorer
& Columnist



The final product of the chairs turned out great! I am happy of the results. The reason why I chose the colors black and silver is because I like the Raider's football team. I put three stickers on my chair. I put the clear coat paint on the chair so everything would stay on the chair. Everything is my favorite with this project! Now I have my chair on my patio. When football season starts, I will be watching the game in my chair.



Steve Salutan
Santa Maria Explorer and
Columnist



Photo by Larry Martel




Photo by Larry Martel



Photo by Larry Martel



Photo by Larry Martel

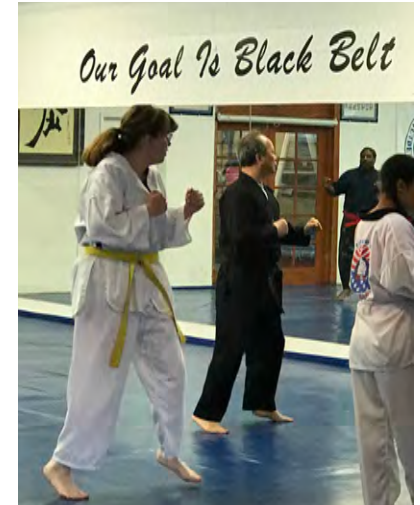


Inside The Dojang with Savannah Anderson

I am very proud of doing my sparring and my form. Clara helped me remember the names: Sparring techniques number three and number four and Kychohyngllbo Form. Before we start, we do stretching. That seems cool. I did one of my moves for sparring. I did a good job punching. When I did my form I was twisting. I used turning. I turned by body and used my arms. It is a lot of fun.



Savannah Anderson
Santa Maria Explorer and Columnist





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