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plus:

hello, happy mama: Amy Baldovinos on faith, family, & community *pg 7*
effects of noise on children *pg 8* local non profit helping kern families read *pg 12*

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dear reader



Vaun Thygerson,
Contributing Writer

I feel like I am living a typically Augusty, Back-to-School month during the wrong time of year. My boys, in their freshman and junior years at Liberty High School (LHS), recently went back to campus for school and resumed their sports. I have done something I have never done before – I went to LHS football games in April. It was weird, like “Twilight Zone” weird. There are some advantages to having sports in the spring that are typically in the fall, but I really do like the crisper, colder air that signals the start of football season. I am thankful to the coaches and parents who worked so hard to make sure the boys, especially the seniors, were given a chance to play. They even had pictures and put out one program for a keepsake.

Back-to-school does look different – some kids have chosen to continue with Zoom, so it’s not as crowded. Teachers have really had to step up their routines and make so many accommodations. I have to give a shout out to the LHS teachers who have really gone the extra mile this year for my boys. It has not been an easy year to engage these teen minds, but so many teachers have done it seamlessly.

The Kern High School District came up with unique ways to ensure the students adhere to the school’s mask and COVID 19 rules. In fact, Golden Valley’s English teacher Cory Olague made up a mnemonic to help the students wear their masks. The campaign is MASK up and it stands for the following: M = Morning Assessment; A = Arrive Early; S = Social Distancing; and K = Keep Masks On. I know masks can be annoying, but it’s fun to see everyone doing their part. LHS came out with unique school-themed masks and most of the high school sports teams have their own variation. Masks have become a way to make a fashion statement and become part of your outfit, but I admit that I will be happy when we can walk around without a mask like it’s 2019!

Teachers deserve so much appreciation, not just during the pandemic, but also because they are the ones who made sure our kids gave us handmade Mother’s Day gifts! And one thing that hasn’t changed is that May is the month to celebrate mothers! But what’s better than just celebrating for one month? In the article, *11 Ways to Celebrate Mother’s Day All Month Long*, Callie Collins gives creative ways to appreciate the mother figures in your lives all year. Some of the suggestions include writing a letter, sending flowers, and framing a picture. To read all 11 ideas, turn to page 10.

Special thanks to **Amy Baldovinos** for sharing her talents and her commitment to the community in the Hello, Happy Mama article written by Callie Collins on page 18. Amy works at The Mission at Kern County with her husband Carlos, the executive director. They’ve been married 22 years and have two teenage sons, Samuel and Jacob. Check out this article to learn more about her personal life and the powerful transformation The Mission at Kern has made in countless lives.

In this month’s feature article, *Generations of Readers: Local Non-Profit Helps Families Learn, Read, and Lead*, on page 12 you’ll learn about the Kern Literacy Council and its executive director, Laura Lollar Wolfe. Callie Collins writes about how a culture of literacy in the home can affect generations. She also says that volunteering for two hours a week can really make a difference to those the non-profit serves.

As you enjoy this Augusty May and maybe attend a sport outside of its usual season, try not to be too weirded out, and just enjoy a little bit of normalcy after more than a year in quarantine. After all, we have learned that we are resilient and there are many people who have helped us navigate this pandemic, from healthcare workers to teachers to essential workers to so many more. Some of the biggest helping hands out there are those amazing mother figures in our lives!

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Readers Respond:

Community Support & All That We Love in Kern County

Recently, we asked our readers a simple question: **What do you love about Kern County?** The variety of answers surprised us, and it just may surprise you, too.

At Kern County Family Magazine, we are always looking for community good. If you know of an event that should be on our community calendar or an extraordinary way friends and neighbors are helping one another, please email our publisher, LJ Radon, at lj@kerncountyfamily.com.

Our community is amazing. How have you seen our people and places come together for the common good?

I love the sense of community and the willingness of strangers helping others. I belong to a garden group. We swap, barter, and trade endlessly. - Ellyn Dagostino



Our agricultural farm workers because they literally feed most of the US. These people need to be appreciated more for their hard work. They are essential and need to be paid a fair wage. That is one thing everyone should be proud of. - Edith Duran

After leaving my hometown more than 16 years ago, my husband and I moved to Kern County to start our life. We were able to purchase a home and raise our two daughters. We have begun careers as well as made lifelong friends here. I love that Kern County is central and close enough to various places if we need to get away for a quick weekend trip. Many people complain about the heat, but I love actually having four seasons. Kern County has been extremely good to me and my family. - Christina Lopez



The people and businesses of Kern County are resilient and committed to the safety and well-being of all. We care about each other. That is what makes this such a wonderful place to live. - Chrystal Sheppard



I have been proud of the schools coming together during this time!

Helping kids with lunches and making sure every kid has a great experience during the pandemic. - Brittany Billington

I love that we are a giving community. We won't let our neighbors fail or give up without a fight. I've seen people from all walks of life come together throughout this pandemic, whether it be offering an extra mask to enter a building or shopping and delivering groceries to a senior in need. We have become a stronger and better community by just wanting to be good and do good. - NaTasha Johnson



I love how many people have helped support local businesses, keeping them open through these difficult times. - Rachel Harris

My friend, Francine, has a community garden and giving bench and books to read in her front yard for anyone. - Nicole Taylor



Kern County is so giving. Everyone pulls together in a time of need. - Amanda Aguirre



The Effects of Noise On Children

Hearing is easy to take for granted. Many people are born and grow up without ever experiencing compromised hearing. But that does not mean people, including children, don't routinely engage in activities that could adversely affect their hearing.

According to the Environmental Protection Agency, children are no strangers to recreational activities that can harm their hearing. Children who attend sporting events, musical concerts and even holiday celebrations like fireworks shows may be at risk of losing their hearing. Parents who are careful and cognizant of the many ways noise poses a threat to children, potentially affecting both their physical and psychological health, can put themselves in better position to protect their youngsters from noise-related damage.



What is noise?

The EPA defines noise as any unwanted or disagreeable sound. Noise is sound that can become harmful and interfere with a child's normal activities. For example, noise can interfere with a child's ability to sleep and diminish youngsters' quality of life.

How common are hearing problems among children?

Hearing problems in children may be more common than some parents recognize. The American Academy of Otolaryngology reports that three million children under the age of 18 have some kind of hearing difficulty.

How does noise threaten children?

The EPA notes that noise can affect kids in some surprising ways.

- **Noise can affect kids' development.** Repeated exposure to noise during certain developmental periods can affect a child's ability to acquire language-related skills like reading and listening. In addition, noisy environments, such as noisy homes, can make it hard for children to learn.
- **Noise can affect the cardiovascular system.** The EPA reports that children who are chronically exposed to loud noise may suffer from elevated blood pressure and other cardiovascular ailments.

How can parents protect kids from noise?

Though noise can affect youngsters' overall health, the experts at Johns Hopkins Medicine note that parents can try various strategies to prevent noise-induced hearing loss.

- **Wear earplugs or ear muffs when around loud noise.** Earplugs fit into the outer ear and ear muffs fit over the entire outside of the ear. The EPA advises parents to ensure that children wear child-sized earplugs or ear muffs when engaging in or being around noisy activities or events.
- **Reduce the amount of time spent on noisy activities.**
- **Teach kids to walk away from sources of loud noises.** Children should be instructed to stand far back from the stage and away from amplifiers when attending concerts. Failure to do so can contribute to tinnitus, a ringing or buzzing sound in the ear that is associated with hearing loss.

Noise induced hearing loss is preventable. Recognizing the threat noise poses to youngsters' health is a great first step for parents.

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11 Ways to Celebrate Mother's Day All Month Long

Mother's Day is Sunday, May 9th. Celebrating mothers everywhere takes many forms with one common theme: recognizing the bonds of caring. Just as there are many ways to be a mother, there are celebrations for every personality and relationship. Grandmothers, foster mothers, and those who fill a caring role may be the people with whom you celebrate. Taking the day to honor special women who have cared is what the day is all about.

What works for your family might be a long-established tradition, but if you're looking for something different this year, a new activity could be worth trying, together.

Best advice? Make it more than just the day. Celebrate throughout the month. Trying to pack it all into Sunday can be stressful. No matter when you celebrate, we wish you a happy Mother's Day.

Here are 11 ways to honor Mom:

- 1. Go traditional with brunch:** Make a reservation or plan a brunch at home. Let her favorite food choice guide the day. If restaurants are already booked for May 9, choose to spend the day differently and reserve for another date.
- 2. Choose a personalized gift:** Select a gift based on a meaningful experience or date.
- 3. Send flowers:** A surprise at the door can be an ideal solution for social distancing and add something pretty that lasts longer than a day.
- 4. Mail a card:** Mother's Day cards are beautiful, but they can sometimes get lost in the excitement of the day. Receiving a card in the mail on an ordinary day might be even more meaningful.
- 5. Make something:** Grandchildren's crafts, handmade items, homemade food — there are many ways to show we care. Maybe because of all they have made and done in their lifetimes, mothers have a way of seeing the effort, even if the end result does not reflect it.
- 6. Add a beauty appointment:** Choose a favorite salon and book for a hair or nail appointment. Even if you don't live in the same state, she could enjoy the occasion in her area any day.
- 7. Frame a photo:** A simple snapshot of a life well lived can be a beautiful addition to the wall of your mother's home. It doesn't have to be a portrait from a special occasion. Just an image that matters to you both can be perfect. If you frame a copy for your house, too, that connection point can add joy to your day every time you look at it.
- 8. Start a memory book:** Online options to collaborate with family members are an excellent way to create a virtual scrapbook. Work on it together with other relatives.
- 9. Write a letter:** Put your feelings into words and, instead of sending a card, put the emphasis on sharing a message that can matter for years to come.
- 10. Reconnect through a favorite activity:** Bring out a game from childhood or revisit a place that mattered to you both. Spend the day and make plans to return.
- 11. Spend time together:** Plan an intentional series of activities or visits.

Life and Love: Inspirational Art and Quotes from Local Author By Vaun Thygerson

As life begins to take on a more normal routine similar to our pre-pandemic life, I have been drawn back into car pools and sports schedules, and I have a lot more demands for my time. I was feeling a little overwhelmed when I started to review Aliza McCracken's new book, "Life and Love," and boy was it what I needed to help myself slow down and re-focus on what is important.

This book would be the perfect gift for Mother's Day to encourage the women in your lives to stop and smell the proverbial flowers, or beautifully painted ones in this case. "Mother's Day offers such a wonderful opportunity to express your love and appreciation for her tender care. And I hope that my new book, "Life and Love" will truly inspire you to honor and celebrate all of the amazing women in your lives," says Aliza McCracken.

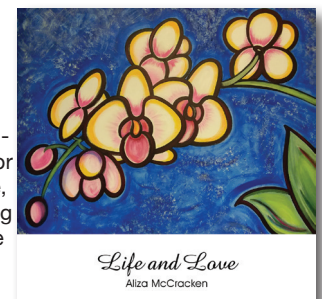
As the author and artist, Aliza McCracken draws the reader into a calmer more serene world with her inspirational art and accompanying reflections. This new book captures the creative essence of love and life during these

challenging times, while giving the readers a bit of hope and renewed sense of purpose.

One of the pages that caught my attention was a beautiful, ethereal angel with a whimsical pink body and yellow wings. The quote for this piece of art read, "Share the gifts of love, hope, and faith." I imagined this angel sharing her spirituality with me and her peaceful face and closed eyes really aroused my curiosity.

Another quote from the book that resonates with my heart reads, "Live in the precious moment." I need to remember this and take the time to appreciate what is happening in real time rather than planning or worrying for the future. This book really provides a treasure of inspirational art and writing to enrich your lives.

"Life and Love" is available online through <https://Aliza-McCracken.square.site>. To learn more about Aliza McCracken's artistry, please visit www.alizamccracken.com.



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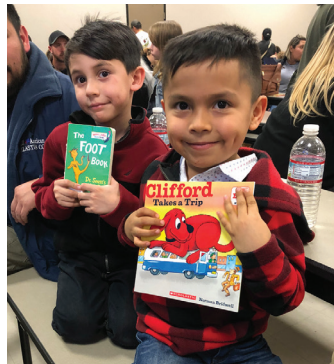


Photo credit: Kern Literacy Council

lower skill levels for students set to return to in-person classes next year. While the effects of the pandemic are yet to be seen, knowing where tutors are available and how to help students will doubtlessly be more important than ever.

Founded in 1966, Kern Literacy Council is a non-profit organization that has met learners where they are to help them prepare for continued education, job opportunities, citizenship, and the attainment of other important goals. Services are provided without charge. Classes and tutoring sessions are open to the differentiated needs of learners ranging from children to adults.

"Two to two-and-a-half hours per week can really change someone's life," said Executive Director Laura Lollar Wolfe, who has served in her role for more than five years. "Families learn better and do better with a culture of literacy in the home."

Multiple studies over the past 20 years have confirmed that the number of books in a household positively correlates with exposure to books, more minutes per day reading and higher levels of literacy overall for its members, even those not yet old enough to read independently.

Kern County residents can receive free tutoring, with all materials provided, including the opportunity to take home more books to read and share. Teaching parents how to pass along a love of reading to their children is also part of what Kern Literacy Council cultivates in many ways, including through its Family Literacy Program aimed at English Language Learners (ELL).

Developing literacy skills throughout early childhood is essential for future success. Although Kern Literacy Council sees many adults who are making progress with their own skills, trying to reach mothers with children under age 10 helps curb cyclical learning issues, as women in particular tend to study and read with children after becoming more aware of how and why. Families are given books each month and asked to fill out reading diaries.

"Reading on grade level by third grade goes from learning to read to reading to learn," said Lollar Wolfe. Frustration for children who do not read well compounds around that time and it's easy to get left behind if the supposition at school is that a child can already read.

ReadAloud.org, a national literacy advocacy organization, asserts that "reading aloud is the single most important thing you can do to help a child prepare for reading and learning." The organization confirms that language acquisition, increased vocabulary, better grammar, understanding of phonics, the role of illustration, syntax and plot, reading comprehension and overall success in school are bolstered by being read aloud to from a young age.

Babies, toddlers, and young children benefit from hearing stories and other printed material long before they are able to read, and evidence suggests a child's brain does not process words

Generations of Readers: Local Non-Profit Helps Families Learn, Read, and Lead

Kern Literacy Council is dedicated to learners of all ages throughout our community. The organization's mission is "to empower individuals to improve the quality of their lives through literacy education." Its vision is "transforming lives through literacy" and that's exactly what happens, with the effort of three full-time staffers and scores of volunteers. Helping people learn to read is just one of the services offered that enriches lives in our community.

California State University, Bakersfield (CSUB) students are some of the volunteers; others are in high school, while senior citizens on the other end of the life phase spectrum round out those who choose to selflessly share their time, knowledge, and skills.

According to The Literacy Project statistics, 45 million Americans are considered functionally illiterate, with one in six California residents unable to read at or above a fifth grade reading level.

That lack of preparation often carries over into college for those who do attend; last year, 44% of students entering California state colleges needed remediation in core subjects.

The dropout rate for the 2019-2020 school year in Kern County was 8.2% for the 2019-2020 school year, a statistic just under the average reported by the California Department of Education. "Students who dropped out of high school are more likely to make \$30,000 less per year in

middle adulthood compared to students from the same socioeconomic status that graduated" reports EducationData.org.

Lack of literacy skills and graduation rates both correlate with lower earning potential, the possibility of experiencing homelessness and higher rates of substance abuse disorders.

Generational poverty and affluence also tie closely with levels of academic attainment. National statistics from the National Institute of

Multiple studies over the past 20 years have confirmed that the number of books in a household positively correlates with exposure to books, more minutes per day reading and higher levels of literacy overall for its members, even those not yet old enough to read independently.

Corrections indicate that three out five inmates in the prison systems are also illiterate.

Lack of continuity throughout the pandemic, in addition to access issues, may contribute to

from television, a tablet, or other electronic device in the same way. Creating a positive bonding experience through the joy of a shared story during read-aloud sessions is also part of positive socio-emotional connections essential to forming pathways in the brain before age 3, the period of with the fastest neurological development. Just 15 minutes each day is enough to spark interest in the world, create a love of reading and pass along all the inherent benefits of early literacy.

This summer, Books in Motion will return for its fifth season, a partnership between Kern Literacy Council, Kern County Library and Kern Dance Alliance open to the community. Participation is free. Its goal is to inspire children to read through dance by incorporating movement through a choreographed dance they can learn, narration and performance of a children's book, a related craft, and a copy of the selected title as a gift to round out families' growing book collections. Presented last year in a virtual format, this year's events will also likely take place through digital media. Find more information here at the start of the summer: <https://www.kernliteracy.org/events.html>.

While literacy provides invaluable skills and an undeniable foundation for learners, other services also take place through Kern Literacy Council. Help with numeracy and math skills, GED and citizenship test preparation, and teaching English as a second language are also available.

Two bilingual staff members also speak Spanish to better aid some of the students, parents, and individuals seeking services.

Private sources and non-governmental entities serve as primary funders. Some county funding is allocated to Kern Literacy Council, but overall, less than five percent comes from sources other than private support.

Virtual tutoring sessions have continued throughout the pandemic.

"In order to better serve the whole county, we pivoted to Zoom after initially closing for two months," said Lollar Wolfe. "It has been 100% Zoom for months now and although we are hoping to resume in-person sessions in August, we may also stick with Zoom because we can reach so many more people."

Working with the technology has actually proven to be a positive learning experience for some of the volunteers who were less familiar with Zoom and related remote learning tools before the pandemic.

"We had an 80-year-old tutor learn Zoom. He was able to make the shift and he's already helped one student pass a math GED," she explained.

Even through COVID, services have seen a consistent rate of participation. Lollar Wolfe estimates that about 125 students per month and 65 tutors participated before the pandemic. Over the past year, that number continues to be at about 75 students per month with 45 tutors despite the change in format and other challenges that could prevent participation. Total logged tutoring hours range from 12,000 to 15,000 per year.

"We want to take away as many barriers as possible so people can persist," said Lollar Wolfe.

Build Your Own Path, for example, is a program that puts Dress for Success Bakersfield participants in contact with wraparound services so they can benefit from the best of both community resources. A computer lab on-site allows participants to prepare resumes, tutoring can hone skills, and child care is available during certain in-person programs. They can also network and form community with other participants who may be on a similar path of upward mobility.

Reading, learning, and progress are open to all. The work of Kern Literacy staff and volunteers will continue to improve lives for present and future generations, one book, one individual, one opportunity at a time.

Find more information at www.kernliteracy.org.

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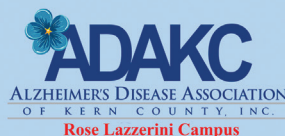
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'**Toddler Classes**' feature singing, moving to music, finger games, playing with rhythm instruments, activities with balls, scarves and hoops, and piano introduction. For ages 16m-3 years, with parents.

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'**Intro to Piano**' kids try our piano program with just 4 classes. No home instrument required. Book/CD included. For ages 4-12 years.

'**Summer Piano Course**' - our 9 week beginning piano program for children age K-12 yrs, plus a course for teens/adults.

Taft College Community STEM & CTE Summer Camps

Online via Zoom
661-763-7744
<https://forms.gle/18iRXRCHPCzhJBFx8>



Career Discovery Camp- Discover career pathways.

Robotics Coding Camp- Learn HTML coding.

Energy Camp- Learn about solar, wind, gas/oil, and water with hands-on activities and guest speakers!

Tinker Camp-Build helicopters and press drills, and discover how mechanical drives work.

Entrepreneurship Camp-Develop a business plan, and pitch your ideas to experts.



STEMCITE
Community Summer Camp
2021



TAFT COLLEGE

Grade 7th-12th
-Career Discovery- June 15th -17th
-Coding and Robots- July 13th-23rd
-Entrepreneurship- Aug. 10th-13th

Grade 5th-9th
-Energy- July 27th -30th
 Grade 3rd-6th
-Tinker- Aug. 3rd-6th

Taft College's virtual summer camps offer enrichment for 3rd-12th students. In our camps, you'll learn and have fun. Don't miss out! Sign up for our interest list TODAY!



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FOR AGES 5-17

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801 Niles Street
Bakersfield, CA 93305
661-325-3730

Stockdale Club
5207 Young St, ste 200
Bakersfield, CA 93311
661-663-8733

Lamont Club
8301 Segrue Rd.
Lamont, CA 93241
661-845-4253

ACTIVITIES:
PERFORMING ARTS, SPORTS, FIELD TRIPS, FINE ART, STEM ACTIVITIES & MORE

WWW.BGCLUBSOFKERNCOUNTY.ORG

Top 10 Things You Never Knew About Camp

By American Camp Association



Camp has become a staple of the summer season. Each year, millions of children, youth, and adults head to the hills, lakes, valleys, and parks to participate in the time-honored tradition of camp. And, while most people easily conjure up images of campfires and canoes, there is a lot more to the camp experience. Here are ten of the things you may not have known about the camp experience.

- 10. Camp is older than dirt, almost literally.** Started in 1861, the camp experience turned an impressive 150 years young in 2011.
- 9. Camp is worth its weight in gold, and then some!** The camp experience is life-changing – developing friendships and memories that last well beyond the final campfire. And, there is a camp for literally every budget.
- 8. Green is “zen.”** Research shows that first-hand experience with nature, like those at camp, reduce stress in children and help them better handle stress in the future. In addition to teaching children how to be good stewards of the environment, camps are teaching children how to enjoy the world around them and take a minute to breathe deep and feel the nature.
- 7. Mommies and Daddies do it too.** Camp is not just for children and youth. There are family camp experiences, and camps for single adults, senior adults, and any adult that wants to relax and enjoy all camp has to offer. Camp is an excellent vacation option, allowing adults to try a variety of new activities in a safe and fun environment.
- 6. Camp is a great place to try new activities and hobbies.** Afraid of rock walls? According to ACA research, 74 percent of campers reported that they tried new activities at camp that they were afraid to do at first.
- 5. Manners matter, and often linger.** The camp experience is made of teachable moments, and perhaps one of the biggest is how to live with a group of people. Campers learn to pick up after themselves, respect each other’s property, and to say “Please” and “Thank You.”
- 4. Veggies taste better with friends.** Hollywood and fictional novels may have given camp food a bad reputation, but in truth, camps are constantly exploring healthy food options, and often are at the forefront of things like allergy specific diets, healthy snack options, and vegetarian meals.
- 3. If everyone else went to camp, maybe there’s something to it!** Camp has played an important role in the lives of some of the most talented people in history. ACA’s family resource site offers a list of notable campers – including business professionals, celebrities, artists, and great thinkers.
- 2. Camp gets those neurons pumping!** Education reform debate and concern over summer learning loss have pushed academic achievement into the spotlight. Research shows that participation in intentional programs, like camp, during summer months helps stem summer learning loss. In addition, camp provides ample opportunity for developmental growth, which is a precursor to academic achievement.
- 1. Camp builds leaders for the 21st century and beyond!** Independence, resiliency, teamwork, problem-solving skills, and the ability to relate to other people — these are the skills that tomorrow’s leaders will need, and the skills camp has been adept at building for 150 years.

For more information on preparing your child for an independent, fun-filled summer, visit ACAamps.org.

you can do it

Berry Special S'mores

Recipe courtesy California Strawberry Commission

Classic S'mores are taken to a whole new level by adding roasted strawberries. This is the perfect summertime treat! To make them an anytime treat, try oven-toasting the marshmallows!



Oven-Roasted Strawberry S'mores

PREP TIME: 20 minutes | COOK TIME: 30 minutes

TOTAL TIME: 50 minutes

YIELD: 8 S'mores | CALORIES: 246kcal



INGREDIENTS

- 1 lb strawberries, hulled and quartered
- 2-3 Tbsp honey
- ½ vanilla bean, seeds removed or 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 8 large marshmallows
- 4 (1.55 ounce each) milk chocolate bars, halved
- 8 honey Graham cracker sheets, broken in half into 8 squares

INSTRUCTIONS

Make The Roasted Strawberries:

1. Preheat oven to 450°F and line a baking sheet with a silicone mat or parchment paper. Using a silicone mat helps you slide the berries off into the jar when done.
2. In a large bowl, combine strawberries, honey, and vanilla bean seeds (or vanilla extract). Transfer strawberry mixture to the lined baking sheet.
3. Bake for 20-25 minutes, remove from oven, and allow berries to cool to room temperature. Once cooled, transfer roasted berries to a glass jar.

Assemble S'mores:

1. Toast marshmallows until golden and gooey. Place a piece of chocolate onto the Graham cracker, top with gooey marshmallow, drizzle with roasted berries (at room temperature not chilled), and top with another Graham cracker.



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PARENT INFO NIGHT

SUNDAY, MAY 23rd, 2021 at 6PM
DISCIPLES CHURCH
4500 ROSEDALE LANE
BAKERSFIELD, CA 93314



www.BakersfieldClassical.com



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hello, happy mama

Faithful

Hello, Happy^Mama

Amy Baldovinos Shares Her Optimism in Community

For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, to give you a future and a hope. — Jeremiah 29:11, a favorite verse of Amy Baldovinos



Amy Baldovinos is a woman of faith. Her beliefs and character buoy the commitment to the community we share in the ways she is known for personally and professionally, specifically through her job with The Mission at Kern County. At work and at home, Amy believes all things are possible with God.

“When God calls you somewhere, you keep going,” said Amy. “I really feel this is where we’re called to be ministering right now.”

Amy’s husband, Carlos, is the executive director of The Mission at Kern County. Married for 22 years, they are the parents of two teenage sons. Samuel, 18, is a senior at Bakersfield Christian High School. Beginning in August, he will attend Vanguard University in Costa Mesa. Jacob, 13, is currently in seventh grade at Country Christian School. He enjoys basketball and playing in local tournaments the family attends.

“Jacob’s passion with basketball takes our family to a lot of games in support of that. We also love to watch sports on TV. Our family visits the ocean

every time we get a chance, and we also have our family serve together at The Mission,” said Amy. “It is really important to us.”

A local 501(c)3 non-profit organization, The Mission at Kern County in Bakersfield changes local lives by assisting with meals, shelter, and educational opportunities for those in need. Physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being are part of the charity’s focus. Services also include an 18-month discipleship program focused on recovery from substance abuse, job readiness, and life skills like budgeting.

Amy has worn many professional hats throughout her five years at The Mission. A teacher by training, she has assisted with administration, but she has also helped with The Mission’s store and donation center downtown, known as Encore, in addition to teaching women in the recovery program.

“Seeing people come into us who are broken and get to know the Lord, then watching them move forward and succeed is what motivates me,” said Amy. “So often, we do see them get their children back and gain employment and stability. With the hope of the Lord, we see how their lives are forever changed.”

She credits the Christ-centered theme of the recovery program as its key to success. The program is offered without charge and is made possible through the generosity of local donors.

“We are so grateful for the donors who make our program possible. The majority of the people we serve, many of whom are women and children, would not be able to afford a program. Christ has to be at the center of our program. Some participants have gone through other programs, but all things are possible through Christ. They have to figure out what has caused them to be in their addiction and work through that.”

Trauma, abuse, homelessness, and poverty are all issues staffers at The Mission face with individuals seeking services, who are respectfully referred to as “guests.”

The Mission currently operates the Women and Children’s Recovery Home as part of the program, which is not a shelter setting but part of the residential program. Transitional housing for its graduates is also set to open later this summer, with the ultimate objective of breaking the cycle of addiction as children see different life patterns. Eliminating generational substance abuse also impacts local poverty rates.

“So many people have no place to go next. Oftentimes, the trajectory of a life is changed when there is a next phase without addiction, and the women I work with are able to get a driver’s license and a job and move on with life. We are so thankful for all of our supporters who are so generous and faithful to give toward the work that we do.”

Staying healthy at home and keeping positive have been issues for so many families during the pandemic, but working through community issues as one’s day job





would be particularly challenging at this time.

“This time has been challenging, but good has come out of it,” said Amy. “Work-wise, it has been busier than usual. I try to talk with my kids each day about the positive and how to use this challenging time to grow and think outside the box. After all, through new circumstances and being out of our comfort zone really is how we grow as people. Serving others and seeing beyond yourself and how to serve those around you can help you feel more connected to others.”

The Mission is an ideal place to make a difference. Volunteering is encouraged later this year, a possibility that can soon resume with help from the public, as California moves to the phase orange tier and opens to families with older children. Amy suggests age 12 and up as an ideal life phase to start better understanding issues that contribute to the circumstances and situations surrounding those in need of help. Depending on where families’ interests lie with specific tasks, there is work open for different ages and abilities. Opportunities on-site, like groundskeeping activities such as planting flowers, could be a fun family project.

Amy finds comfort and renewal in a variety of ways. She also credits her mother, Sharon, who moved in with the family more than two years ago, with helping provide help and respite.

“What I do every day is get up early before everyone else is up and I spend that time praying, studying God’s word, and setting the pace for the day by making sure my heart’s in the right place,” said Amy.

She also recommends taking at least 30 minutes each day to exercise and care for yourself. Cardio activities like cycling and walking are some of her favorites. Amy is currently reading “Winning the War in Your Mind” by Pastor Craig Groeschel.

While the Baldovinos children have been raised around social issues, Amy recognizes that many children are unfamiliar with the concepts of homelessness, hunger, and need.

“What we remember at The Mission and often tell our children is that every person out there is a human being. They are loved and belong to a family. They are someone’s son or daughter,” said Amy. “Whether it’s choices they’ve made or people being down on their luck, every person has a story, so it’s hard to stereotype. What we care about is people’s futures. Our doors are wide open to those willing to get help.”

“What we remember at The Mission and often tell our children is that every person out there is a human being. They are loved and belong to a family. They are someone’s son or daughter... What we care about is people’s futures. Our doors are wide open to those willing to get help.” - Amy Baldovinos

The Mission also serves as a reputable way families can help those in need.

“Feel free to give to The Mission if you want to help those in need, because you know exactly where your money is going: meals, beds, and helping people get on a path where they can become a functioning member of society again,” said Amy. “Our goal is to see what’s going on, understand what caused it, and go from there so everyone benefits from a healthier community.”

Donations of food, diapers, personal hygiene items, and clothing are also accepted. Find out more about how to donate material items at <https://the-brm.org/goods/>.

If you or someone you care about needs recovery program services, please call 661-325-0863 to receive priority assistance.

Find out more about The Mission and upcoming events at <https://the-brm.org/events/>.

Hello, Happy Mama MAY CONTEST

You could win American Girl 2021 Doll of the Year Kira Bailey™

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Kira is a passionate animal lover who travels to an Australian wildlife sanctuary, where she learns the importance of protecting animals and the planet. The 18-inch Kira doll features green eyes and long, wavy blonde hair; her outfit is a tie-dye tank, sporty skirt, and lace-up boots. Includes the **Kira Down Under** paperback.



The True Test of Parenthood: Sixth Grade Math

My sixth-grader hates math.

"Hates" is a nice, polite way of describing the depth of her aversion and abhorrence of math. It's more like the ninth level in Dante's inferno. (I don't actually remember how many layers there were in "The Inferno," but whatever the worst one was starts to scratch the surface of the depth of agony she apparently suffers when doing math. At least, that's how she makes it seem.)

And I just have to wonder, since I'm the one teaching her math, why does she hate me?

I know there are kids out there who struggle with math. (And oh, Mommas, I am so sorry!)

That is not my child.

My child can do math. But she seems to deliberately sabotage math by making silly errors. She is on a covert mission to come up with wrong answers to throw off whatever poor soul is trying to decipher her work. Her papers remind me of the strings going all over the place in that movie "A Beautiful Mind." Only she can make sense of it. Plus, she will not condescend to write down steps of a problem if she can do said steps in her head. Recipe for Disaster.

Solving for surface area? She will forget to add one of the faces.

There's a dot in a problem? When she copies the problem, she won't remember if it's a multiplication sign or a decimal point.

Changing an improper fraction to a mixed number? She'll put the numerator down for the denominator.

Also, there are the days when she says that four times three is seven. (And no, it doesn't help when I have her little sister correct her work. She has no shame. She can get mad pretty fast, though.)

She is doing multi-step word problems without frustration. She knows all the steps. But she may or may not remember that the absolute value of 1 is... uh... 1.



One entire school day recently consisted of 12 math problems (of which, she got 11 wrong), a few brain breaks, and an hour of exercise. It took all day. As in All Day. Hours and hours. And tears. And tears. And rolling on the floor moaning. Also more tears.

I can't help but to think that she would like math a whole lot more if she just paid attention to what she was doing, so she wouldn't have to redo 91.67% of her work.

My husband and I tell her every time we use math, to try to get her to see how important it is. She just looks at us with an expression of immense patience with our inability to understand her. I hope she has that kind of patience with me when I get dementia at the age of 50.

We showed her "Hidden Figures." She said, "I want to learn how to do THAT kind of math," but she won't pay attention for the five seconds it takes to check her work. I tell her you can't send someone into space if you can't remember whether you're adding or multiplying.

I now offer her a tic tac for every problem she gets right. And she can trade up for something better. Nine tic tacs equal a mentos. I don't take credit for this brilliant act of bribery; it was all Daddy's idea.

This is my life now. It is Me v. The Math Hater. I'm going to need some better strategies than tic tacs. Someone, please, throw me a life preserver before she turns into a math-hating teenager with hormones and moods.

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KERN COUNTY FAMILY MAGAZINE *daily happenings*

THE **BEST** LOCAL CALENDAR OF EVENTS!

Our printed version of the calendar has been edited for space. For more details about these events or activities not listed please visit www.kerncountyfamily.com

Every Friday – Sunday in May

Spring Eats Curbside Drive-Thru

Swing into Spring with Kern County Teen Challenge as we return with our Spring Eats Curbside Drive-Thru!
Kern County Teen Challenge
 301 E. Roberts Lane,
 Bakersfield, CA 93308
 (661) 243-9524
 Time: 11am – 8pm
[tcspringeats.eventbrite.com](https://www.tcspringeats.eventbrite.com)

Every Saturday in May

F St Farmers Market

Bakersfield's Longest Running Certified Farmer's Market featuring Fresh Fruits & Vegetables, Pork, Honey, Handmade Soaps, Baked Goods, Jams, Jellies & More!!

Accepts cash, card & EBT. Social distancing practiced throughout the market. Come and meet your local Farmers and Craftsmen and buy local, buy fresh! Chat with the people who grow your food and the craftsmen who hand make their products while supporting local businesses.

City Center
 3201 F St, Bakersfield – Parking Lot
 Bakersfield, CA
 (661) 342-4671
 Time: 7:45am – 12pm
<https://www.visitbakersfield.com/events-calendar/valley-farmers-market>

Lakeshore Farmer's Market-Wofford Heights

We have some great farmer's markets in Kern County, and this is another one. Give your whole family the gift of fresh fruits, vegetables, and homemade goodies. Drive up the hill for some amazing finds on Saturdays.

7466 Wofford Blvd
Wofford Heights CA 93285
 (760) 417-9575
 Time: 9am – 1pm

Ongoing Each Monday

Hoffmann Hospice Grief Support HEALING HEARTS

(Parents that have lost children)
 This is a particularly difficult time to experience the death of a loved one. Hoffmann Hospice Grief Support groups are led by trained grief counselors. The meetings are free and open to all. You

do not need to have a loved one on our service to attend.

Space is limited, reservation required for all groups. Please call (661) 410-1010 to schedule.

ZOOM (online group)
Bakersfield, CA
 (661) 410-1010
 Time: 5:30-6:30pm
<https://www.hoffmannhospice.org/grief-support-groups/>

May 1-31

BBQ Tour of Kern County

Celebrate National BBQ Month in the BBQ Capital of California, Kern County. Your favorite local BBQ restaurants are hosting the inaugural BBQ Tour of Kern County!

Complete the tour of all the participating BBQ joints and receive a free tour of BBQ T-shirt. Shirts will be available for purchase as well. But we suggest you earn one.

Our goal is to encourage the great people of Kern County to check out this year's BBQ Restaurants on the tour. Check out our Facebook page for more information!

<https://www.facebook.com/bbqtou-rofkerncounty>

May 1

CASA Boot Scootin' Derby Livestream

In 2021, Churchill Downs will still meet good ol' Kern County roots at the Boot Scootin' Derby but it will transpire in the comfort of many homes to create one powerful voice!

Get ready for "the fastest two minutes in sports" and enjoy a 'CASA Party' of 8 with a sumptuous dinner, libations galore, unique live and silent auction items, and a chance to be a part of CASA's unwavering impact. Join us virtually on May 1, 2021 as we celebrate the prestigious Kentucky Derby in order to empower and amplify the voices of hundreds of children and youth in foster care across our communities.

Virtual Livestream
Bakersfield, CA
 (661) 631-2272
 Time: 6pm
www.kerncasa.org/derby

National NURSES WEEK

May 6-12



May 3, 5, 7, 8, 13, 15, 16

Bakersfield Condors Game

Watch the Condors game on AHLTV (AHLTV.com) or listen on Fox Sports 970 (foxsports970AM.com) or through the iHeartRadio App.

Home and Away Games

661-324-7825
 Time: Various
<https://www.bakersfieldcondors.com/schedule/2021-03/>

MAKE Bakersfield's Kids Summer Workshops'

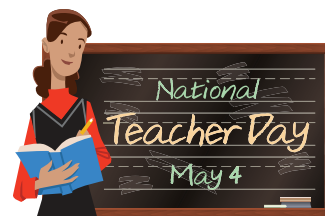
Also Held May 25

Summer workshops for ages 6-12 take place on select Tuesday afternoons at Bakersfield Racquet Club. Each session presents a material and/or process that encourage students to explore, experiment and form these outcomes into a finished work of art.

Classes are held upstairs in the Lovelace Room at Bakersfield Racquet Club. Tuition is \$20 per child and includes materials. Enrollment is currently limited to 10 students per session. Pre-registration is required as class-size is limited.

Contact info@makebakersfield.com for questions regarding workshops.
Bakersfield Racquet Club
 1660 Pine St.
 Bakersfield, CA 93301
 Time: 3pm – 5pm

May 4



Give Big Kern 2021

Observed on the first Tuesday in May, Give Big Kern is a dynamic and fun day of giving hosted by Kern Community Foundation to foster local philanthropy in support of 501(c)(3) charitable organizations in Kern County. The effort allows participating agencies to gain visibility as they engage the entire community in "One day to celebrate the giving spirit of Kern County!"

Participants can raise unrestricted dollars and collect volunteer pledges to help with any current needs--including pressing COVID-19 needs--while vying for additional cash prizes courtesy of the Foundation's generous sponsors. Because it is an online effort, Give Big Kern is a safe, social-distancing-compliant way to fundraise.

Online
Bakersfield, CA
info@givebigkern.org

May 5



Cinco De Mayo!

May 8

Second Saturday

It's time for a Saturday full of festivities in downtown Bakersfield - both downtown + within the comfort of home via Instagram Live! Here's how to join in - stop by downtown safely or watch a live Instagram takeover on Second Saturday! Bakersfield Second Saturday is a program of The Hub of Bakersfield.

Downtown Bakersfield & Online

Time: 7am - 8pm

www.bakersfieldsecondsaturday.com

Bike Swap Meet

Join us at Cafe Smitten Downtown for Second Saturday for a community swap meet! Set up your own table, gear, and parts to sell or trade. Followed by a community cruise through downtown.

Cafe Smitten

**909 18th St,
Bakersfield, CA 93301**

Time: 10am - 3pm

<https://www.facebook.com/events/487733225586509>

For more info: email asha@bikebakersfield.org

May 9

Price and Mozart Concert

Join the Bakersfield Symphony for an evening of beautiful music. The performance will be broadcast on KERO-23 ABC TV. The concert opens with Florence Price's Andante Moderato, an enchanting movement of her string quartet in G major. The performance closes with Mozart's Serenade No. 10, more commonly known as the Gran Partita.

Broadcast on KERO-23 ABC TV

Time: 2:30- 3:30 PM



May 15 & 16

May Madness Boat Race

The National Jet Boat Association is an organization to promote the sport of drag boat racing. Over the past four decades the club has had an enormous following and dedication for the purpose of advancing the sport on the liquid quarter mile. Bring your coolers, chairs and easy-ups.

\$10.00 Entry fee | Kids 12 and under FREE | Free

Parking

Lake Ming

12768 Lake Ming Road

Bakersfield, CA

Time: 8am-5pm

May 21

Bike to Work Day

Ride to work or before you log into your Zoom meetings for Bike to Work Day 2021! Join Bike Bakersfield, local bike shops, and cycling clubs on the Kern River Parkway throughout town for refreshments to make your morning ride more enjoyable.

Kern River Parkway Trail

Time: 6am - 9am

<https://www.facebook.com/events/161997239105043>

May 22

Downtown Bako Alley Cat/On Bike Scavenger Hunt

Join us for Bike Bakersfields AlleyCat Race! Rush through the streets, reach the checkpoints, and speed back to Snider's Cyclery to cross the finish line! Our checkpoints will feature Downtown Bakersfield and the Kern River Parkway. We are hoping to have categories for both road and fixed gear, and a BMX jam with food trucks at the last checkpoint.

Bike Bakersfield

**1708 Chester Avenue
Bakersfield , California, 93301**

Time: 11am - 2:30pm

www.simpletix.com/e/bike-bakersfield-alley-cat-tickets-66577

May 26

Full Moon Ride

Meet us at Beach Park for a community sunset cruise down the Kern River Parkway to Lengthwise Brewing at the Marketplace!

Beach Park

3400 21st Street, Bakersfield, CA

(661) 321-9247

Time: 7pm-9pm

<http://bikebakersfield.org/portfolio/full-moon-ride/>

May 31



MEMORIAL DAY

DO YOU HAVE A LOCAL EVENT TO SHARE?

Our Happenings section is dedicated to bringing the most current events to you, but we need your help! You can submit your calendar events at

kerncountyfamily.com

"Submit Calendar Event" can be found under the Calendar tab. Please submit calendar events by the 10th of each month prior to ensure we have enough time to consider your event.

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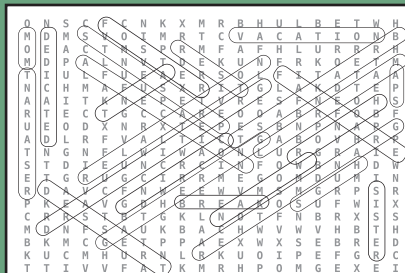
ACTIVITY CORNER ANSWERS

PAGES 26-27

SUDOKU

6	3	5	1	4	7	8	9	2
4	7	9	8	2	5	1	6	3
1	2	8	9	3	7	4	5	6
1	4	2	6	5	7	9	3	8
9	6	7	4	3	8	1	2	5
8	5	3	2	1	4	7	9	6
5	9	1	8	3	2	4	7	6
3	7	2	6	4	5	1	9	8
2	8	1	9	7	6	8	2	5

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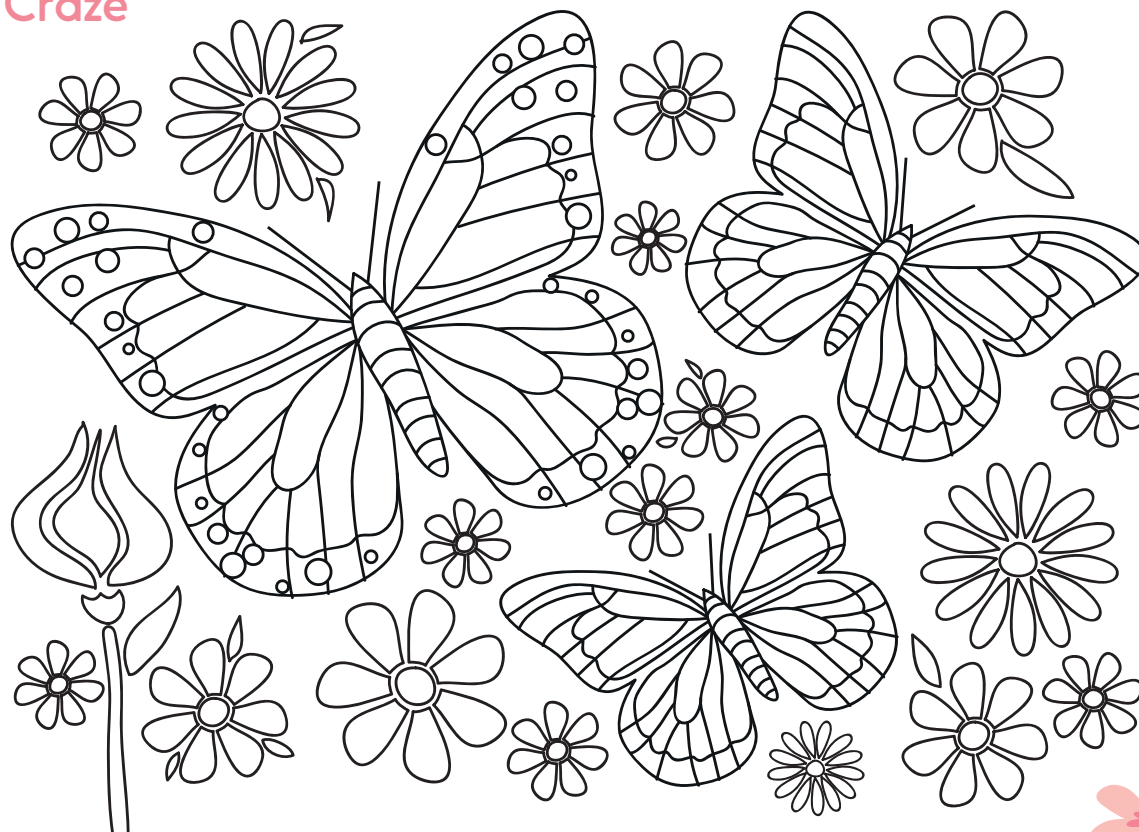
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	4			9				
				4	5	1	9	3
9			2	8			7	5
								9
		5		3			6	
8		9	7	5		2		
4	5			6		8		1
3	6				8	9	4	
2		8	4	7	1		3	

Level: Beginner

Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve: the number 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. Figure out the order the numbers will appear by using the clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets!

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 T I U L F U E A E R S O L F I T A T A A
 N C H M A F U S X R I T G L A K D T E P
 A A I T K N E P E T V R E S F N E O H S
 R T E C T G C C A R E O O A B R F O B F
 U E O D X N R X T E P E S B N P N A P G
 A D L R F V A L T I C T G A B O V H R P
 T N G N F L W I W A O N L U R G R A I E
 S T D I E U N C R C I N F O W B N H D W
 E T G R U G C I R R M E G O M D U M I N
 R D A V C F N W E E W V M S M G R P S R
 P K E A V G D H B R E A K O S U F W I X
 C R R S T B T G K L N O T F N B R X S S
 M D N F S A U K B A C H W V W V H B T H
 B K M C G E T P P A E X W X S E B R E D
 K U C M H U R N L R K U O I P E F G R C
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