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HHM INTERVIEW
**Story-Seeking
Mama**

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BOK! BOK!
Chicken Done
Your Way
PAGE 10

**RENOVATION &
RESTORATION**
Eagle Scout
Gives Back
PAGE 5





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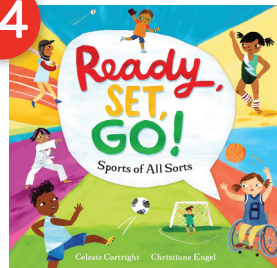
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ON THE COVER: Modern art meets puppy charm. On the cover: Elias, age 10, a talented young artist from the Boys & Girls Club of Kern County, channels the bold, expressive style of Henri Matisse in his original painting *The French Pug*—a featured piece in this year's ArtFest fundraiser. See the full story on page 18. **PHOTOGRAPHY BY ORLANDO TREVINO**

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Vaun Thygerson
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Over the years, I have heard the question: Are you a Type A or Type B mom? I could never quite decide which category I fall into. In some ways, I am Type A. I like a schedule and can be organized (in very specific areas), but on the other hand, I tend to lean more towards Type B parenting, where I'm a bit cluttery and I prefer to make memories over routine. Well, my answer was correct: I am neither Type A nor Type B because I am Type C, where I'm a

little bit of a hot mess but can be structured when I need to be. This realization came to me when I saw an Instagram Reel from one of my favorite content creators, Yuri Lamasbella. She role-played all three versions of Type A, B, and C moms, and I immediately knew that I was a certifiable C parent, a good blend of both. I felt seen! In the Reel, playing the Type C mom, she shows up on the first day of school, telling the teacher the supplies are ordered, but haven't come in yet, and that she's got to make the pick-up fast because she's parked in the loading zone. But the part I related to the most was when she said, "And, I'm not late because it's 3:01." This was me - I would have ordered the supplies a day too late, parked haphazardly, and was always on the verge of being late. However, I was often my kids' Room Mom, and if I oversaw a class party, I would organize it nicely to make it as much fun as possible.

Julie Willis describes a "Type C" parenting moment in her Humor at Home article this month, "**CALM is a State of Mind: Just Be There - with Snacks.**" She writes about how a scheduled trip

to the zoo with her animal-obsessed two-year-old didn't go as planned, so she had to change up her plans. And even though they didn't get to see the Big Horn Sheep they came to visit that day, they left with a plushie of one from the gift shop. To see the big "aha" moment she had about life with a toddler, turn to page 23.

This month's Hello, Happy Mama highlights a community leader of literacy. In the article, "**Hello, Happy (Story-Seeker) Mama: Samantha Saldaña-Avendaño**" on page 12, Callie Collins correlates her passion for books with the September designation of National Literacy Month. She staffs the Shafter Library and Learning Center along with its mobile library, the Scoutmobile.

Special thanks to Zane Smith and MacKenzie Boone of the Boys & Girls Clubs of Kern County (BGCKC) for their help with the article, "**BGCKC Presents Artfest 2025: Inspired by Matisse, Created by Kern's Youth**" on page 18. Please mark your calendars for their annual fundraising event, Artfest, on Friday, October 10. This year features the bold and expressive colors of French visual artist Matisse with unexpected and beautiful creations from the Club Members in the Young Artists' Masterpiece Gallery.

As the weather chills and September makes way for the coziness of Autumn, remember you can't go wrong as a Type A, B, or C parent if you love and care for your children. And as Julie Willis reminds us in her Humor at Home article, always have snacks at the ready!

Happy Autumn!

HELLO HAPPY MAMA CONTEST!

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Ribbon cutting recognition: Eagle Scout Marshall Sanchez, 17, is honored by Kern County leaders for raising \$10,500 to improve the Children's Visitation Center play area—a space where families reconnect and heal. PHOTO COURTESY BIANKA PANTOJA, KCAO

Eagle Scout Marshall Sanchez Recognized for Raising \$10,500 for Children's Visitation Center

The Kern County Board of Supervisors and the Kern County Department of Human Services recently honored 17-year-old Marshall Sanchez for completing a remarkable Boy Scouts of America Eagle Scout community project. He raised \$10,500 to enhance Kern County's Department of Human Services' Children's Visitation Center's (CVC) play area, a vital space where reunifying families can reconnect in a safe and supportive environment.

In 2023, the CVC, located at 150 Tulare Avenue in Bakersfield, supported 430 family reunifications. Now, thanks to Marshall's project, the Center features a brand-new basketball court, a renovated wooden playhouse, soccer gear, benches, and interactive games, all designed to bring joy, comfort, and healing experiences for children and their families.

What began as a simple service project quickly evolved into a mission of compassion. Inspired by a close friendship and a connection to DHS, Marshall witnessed firsthand the challenges faced by children and families and responded with impactful action. His dedication exemplifies how young people can lead with empathy, making a lasting difference in their communities.

The Eagle Scout is the highest rank possible in the Boy Scouts of America, and only four percent of scouts have earned this distinction. Achieving this rank shows a scout's dedication, leadership, and commitment to service, as they have to complete 21 merit badges and a community service project to qualify.

For more information, please visit The Southern Sierra Council's website at www.ssscscouts.org. To hear more of Marshall's story, check out the latest episode of *The HeartBeat of Human Services*, available now on Spotify.

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CSUB Students First Faculty-Led Trip to Dominica

Thirteen CSUB students, along with their faculty advisor, spent two weeks in Dominica to earn college credit and learn more about culture and health on the Caribbean Island. While it was geared to psychology majors, it was open to all students.

During the first faculty-led trip to Dominica, students visited primary and secondary schools, met with an island healer, and visited care facilities for the elderly and children who have been victims of abuse. The goal of the program was to educate students on how cultural and health practices often relate to and inform each other about how cultural factors can have a significant impact on health.

“Their eyes were really opened. They saw things they weren’t expecting to see,” says Assistant Professor of Psychology Dr. Heidi McLaughlin, who led the program. “It was really impactful for them to see the difference how care can differ drastically between public and private institutions. It was interesting for the students to see that while America has disparities, other countries have disparities too.”

For more information, please visit <https://news.csub.edu/a-beautiful-enriching-experience> .



Naomi Rodriguez poses for a photo with students from one of the schools she visited this summer as part of CSUB's first faculty-led trip to Dominica. PHOTO COURTESY CSUB



Bakersfield Community Land Trust to Break Ground on First Affordable Homes

The Bakersfield Community Land Trust (BCLT), in partnership with the City of Bakersfield and Self-Help Enterprises, recently hosted a groundbreaking ceremony to start the construction of 14 affordable homes across sites in Bakersfield. These homes will be sold to first-time, low- and moderate-income buyers through a community land trust model that keeps them affordable for generations. Two homes will be offered through a public lottery, now open through September 10. .

This project marks the launch of a long-term, community-based solution to housing affordability in Bakersfield. The new homes will feature modern, energy-efficient designs and provide access to supportive services for first-time buyers. By separating land and home ownership, the community land trust model ensures permanent affordability while helping families build equity and stability.

For more information, please visit www.bakersfieldclt.org

Kern County Public Works Receives \$22,000 Grant

The Kern Council of Governments awarded the Advanced Planning team with Kern County Public Works' Transportation Division a \$22,000 grant aimed at promoting safer streets for everyone who walks or bikes in Kern County. These vital funds will support a two-year initiative focused on educating residents about bicycle safety, road-sharing etiquette, and the importance of pedestrian awareness.

As part of the campaign, the Public Works' Transportation Division will distribute safety helmets and bicycle maintenance kits to encourage safer riding habits and better preparedness on the road.

To learn more about this campaign and community outreach events, check out their newly launched Instagram page @ kerncountypublicworks.



Kern Medical Receives AHA's Stroke Gold Plus Award

Kern Medical has earned national recognition from the American Heart Association (AHA) for its commitment to high-quality patient care. The hospital received the Get With the Guidelines® - Stroke Gold Plus award, along with inclusion on the Target: Stroke Honor Roll and Target Type 2 Diabetes Honor Roll. This prestigious recognition reflects the hospital's dedication to following the latest evidence-based clinical guidelines to improve outcomes for patients experiencing stroke and managing Type 2 diabetes.

This award also highlights the exceptional work of Kern Medical's clinical teams and reinforces their mission to provide the highest standard of care to every patient.

For more information, please visit www.kernmedical.com.

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Mushrooms: The Underrated Superfood

They may not wear a cape, but mushrooms are true superheroes in the world of nutrition. Used for centuries in both cooking and medicine, these humble fungi are finally getting the spotlight they deserve.

Native to North America and Europe, mushrooms belong to a massive fungal family with over a million estimated species. Only a small fraction are edible—but the ones that are? Packed with powerful benefits.

Here's what makes mushrooms a superfood:

Immune Boosters: Rich in antioxidants and nutrients like selenium and B vitamins, mushrooms help strengthen your body's defenses.

Brain Support: Certain varieties, like lion's mane, may support memory, focus, and cognitive function—making mushrooms a smart choice for growing minds and busy parents alike.

Inflammation Fighters: Mushrooms may help reduce inflammation and support overall wellness.

Flavor Enhancers: Their natural umami adds depth to dishes without extra salt or fat.

Eco-Friendly: Mushrooms require minimal water and land to grow, making them a sustainable choice for planet-conscious families.

Whether sautéed, grilled, or blended into sauces, mushrooms are incredibly versatile—and perfect for sneaking into tacos, pasta, or burgers. Finely chopped, they're nearly invisible to picky eaters but still deliver a nutritional punch. So next time you're planning meals, don't overlook the mushroom. It's not just a tasty addition—it's a brain-loving, immune-boosting, eco-smart superfood that deserves a starring role on your family's plate.

Why Walking Helps You Stay Steady

Did you know that walking isn't just good exercise—it's also a great way to help your body stay balanced? Every time you take a step, your brain gets important messages from different parts of your body that help you stay steady and avoid falling.

Inside your ears are tiny parts that act like balance sensors. They tell your brain when your head moves or tilts, helping you stay upright. Your eyes also help by looking around and giving your brain clues about where you are and what's in front of you—like curbs, stairs, or toys on the floor!

But that's not all. Your muscles and joints have special sensors that let your brain know where your arms and legs are, even when you're not looking. This helps you move smoothly and stay in control. And the bottoms of your feet? They're full of touch receptors that feel the ground and tell your brain if it's bumpy, slippery, or soft.

When you walk often, all these parts get better at working together. Your muscles get stronger, your brain gets quicker at figuring out where you are, and you become more confident in how you move. As ZIBRIO explains, "Walking activates all three sensory systems that contribute to balance: vision, proprioception, and the vestibular system."

You can learn more at [ZIBRIO.com](https://www.zibrio.com).



Expired Drugs: Not Safe, Not Effective

Medication expiration dates are not casual guidelines—they're scientifically backed indicators of safety and effectiveness. According to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), "Drug expiration dates reflect the time period during which the product is known to remain stable, which means it retains its strength, quality,

and purity when stored according to its labeled conditions". Taking expired medication can lead to reduced potency or even harmful side effects. So while it might be tempting to hang onto old prescriptions, it's safer to dispose of them properly and stick to medications within their approved shelf life.

What to Know About Kids and Cholesterol

High cholesterol (hyperlipidemia) affects about 1 in 3 adults, with total cholesterol levels above 200, according to the CDC. It can lead to plaque buildup in arteries, increasing the risk of cardiovascular disease.

Children and teens can also have high cholesterol, often due to genetics, says the Cleveland Clinic. Kids with elevated levels frequently have a parent with high cholesterol or on medication for it. Obesity, diabetes, and certain medications can also contribute.

Because symptoms are rare in youth, pediatricians may order lipid panels starting between ages 9 and 11, with follow-ups every five years, per MedlinePlus. More frequent testing may be needed if there's a family history.

Treatment usually begins with lifestyle changes like diet and exercise. Medication may be considered if LDL exceeds 190, or at lower levels if other



cardiovascular risk factors are present, following guidance from the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute and the American Heart Association.

High cholesterol isn't just an adult issue—kids and teens can be affected too, and treatment depends on individual risk factors and medical advice.

September Shines a Light on Gynecologic Cancer Awareness

This month, we spotlight Gynecologic Cancer Awareness Month by amplifying the mission of the Foundation for Women's Cancer: to educate, empower, and inspire hope. Gynecologic cancers—like cervical, uterine, and vaginal—impact thousands of women each year. Through expanded research, training, and awareness, we can support early detection and better outcomes. Let's break the silence, share knowledge, and stand with every woman facing these diagnoses.

To learn more, explore trusted resources, find specialists, and connect with support services, visit <https://foundationforwomenscancer.org/resources/>

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Winner, Winner, Chicken Dinner – Your Way!



Coconut Joe's Café's Chicken Sourdough Sandwich. PHOTO COURTESY JOE COUGHLIN

CLUCK YEAH, KERN COUNTY! SEPTEMBER IS NATIONAL CHICKEN MONTH, and we're not winging it when we say Kern County knows how to serve up the goods. We asked our readers: **"What's your go-to chicken spot in town? Let's give them a shoutout!"** Whether you like it grilled, fried, or smothered in sauce—Kern County's chicken game is strong, and it's only getting crispier.

"Texas Roadhouse has the best fried chicken!"

Jessica Childress

"We love Salty's BBQ that's definitely our go to place for chicken! Best seasoned chicken."

Valerie Ledesma

"Bucky's. I love their lemon pepper chicken sando!"

Sabrina De La Cruz

"For a special 'sometimes' treat - Raising Cane's!!! YUM! YUM! YUM!"

Susan Holland-Hewitt

"Hodels fried chicken is the best."

Vicki Kramer

"The new Dave's Hot Chicken on Gosford. If you like hot, it's hot!"

Peggy Abrego

Baked, Grilled & BBQ Chicken

Angry Barnyard BBQ:

Must-Try: Big Hoss Sandwich (brisket, pimento cheese, pickles)

Bakersfield Barbecue Co.:

Must-Try: Brisket sandwich with garlic fries

Coconut Joe's: Must-Try:

Sourdough Chicken Sandwich that's juicy, beachy, and packed with flavor

Prime Time BBQ: Must-Try:

Smoked BBQ braised brisket

Salty's BBQ: Must-Try:

Oak-grilled tri-tip & chicken combo

Hot Chicken

Angry Chickz: Must-Try:

Angry Mac – chopped tenders over fries with mac & cheese and secret sauce

Bucky's Hot Chicken: Must-Try:

"Sando" – spicy chicken sandwich with slaw and cukes

Dave's Hot Chicken: Must-Try:

The Reaper Tender (extreme heat)

Houston Hot Chicken:

Must-Try: "Houston We Have a Problem" spicy chicken sandwich

Fast Chicken

Chick-fil-A: Must-Try:

Classic Chicken Sandwich with Waffle Fries

El Pollo Loco: Must-Try:

Citrus-marinated fire-grilled chicken

Kentucky Fried Chicken:

Must-Try: Original Recipe Chicken Bucket

Raising Cane's Chicken

Fingers: Must-Try: Chicken Finger Combo with Cane's Sauce

Lean, Mean, Nutrient Machine

It's packed with immunity-boosting B vitamins and essential minerals like phosphorus. Grilled or baked, it's heart-healthy, versatile, and delicious. So why not try a new chicken dish tonight?

5 Nutritional Facts About Chicken

High in Protein: A 3.5 oz (100g) serving of skinless chicken breast contains about 31g of protein—great for muscle repair and satiety.

Low in Fat (Especially Breast Meat): Skinless chicken breast has only about 3.6g of fat per serving, making it one of the leanest animal proteins.

Rich in B Vitamins:

Chicken is a strong source of niacin (B3) and vitamin B6, which help convert food into energy and support brain health.

Contains Essential

Minerals: Chicken provides phosphorus for bone health and selenium for immune function and antioxidant support.

Versatile for Healthy

Diets: Chicken fits into low-carb, keto, paleo, and heart-healthy diets—especially when grilled, baked, or boiled without added fats.

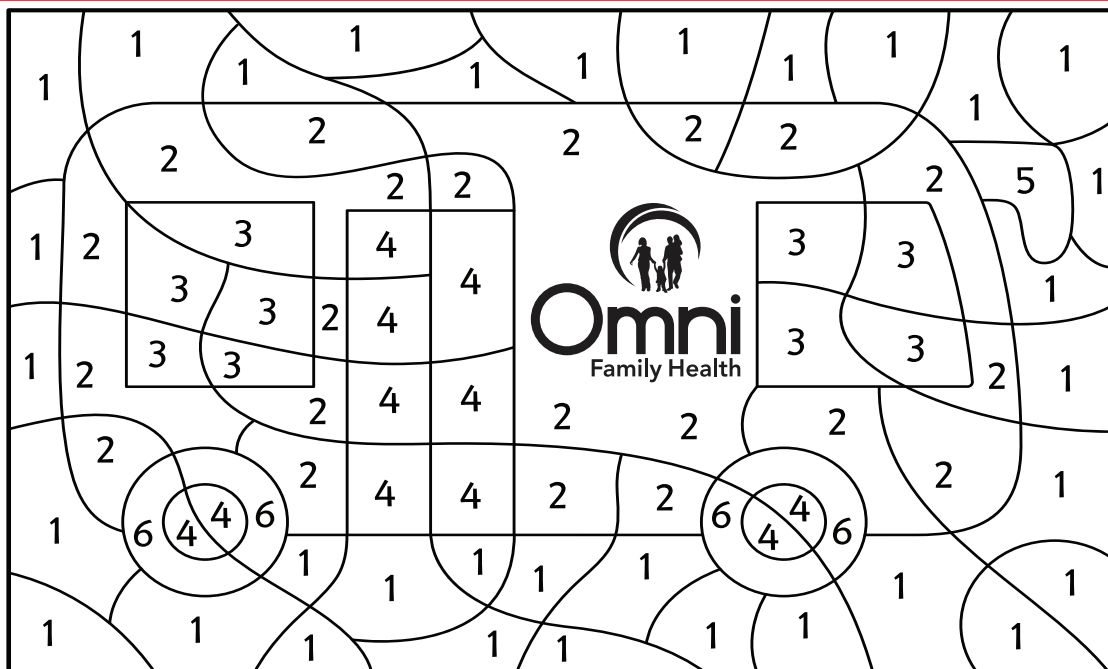
SOURCE: USDA, NIH, HARVARD HEALTH



Hello, neighbor.

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COLOR THE IMAGE ACCORDING TO THE NUMBER CHART



For answers to this month's puzzle, scan the QR code, or go to: omnifamilyhealth.org/puzzle-answer-key/



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Samantha Saldaña-Avedaño poses at the Shafter Library and Learning Center for Shafter City's Saturday Employee Spotlight feature. PHOTO BY NEVEAH CRUZ

HELLO, HAPPY STORY-SEEKER MAMA

Librarian, mother, mentor—**Samantha Saldaña-Avedaño's** journey is a testament to resilience, literacy, and love.

September's designation as National Literacy Month correlates with the life and work of Samantha Saldaña-Avedaño, whose own story has some wonderful twists of fate.

Samantha represents tenacity and the importance of giving back to the community in more ways than one. She staffs the Shafter Library and Learning Center along with its mobile library, the Scoutmobile, in addition to helping area students.

A graduate of Shafter High School, Samantha earned her associate's at Bakersfield College before transferring to California State University, Bakersfield (CSUB).

"My CSUB graduation date was May 18, 2018, but I gave birth to my daughter the night before. Unfortunately, I did not get to walk in my ceremony," she explained. "I went from being a very active and involved student, to a newly graduated, stay-at-home mom."

Her plans changed from academic advising to being more open-ended.

"Originally, I planned to go to grad school in San Diego. In 2020, I was able to return to CSUB for my master's in educational counseling," she explained. "When I got hired here, though, it unlocked a new passion."

Previously a branch location of the Kern County Library, residents rallied to save the library after plans were made to reopen without it following the pandemic. The Shafter Library and Learning Center is a collaboration between the City of Shafter and Bakersfield College. It is now open more hours than any other local library, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 7 p.m.

"One thing I love about my current role is working in the community I grew up in. I love helping people find the perfect book based on their interests and seeing them so excited and eager to read and learn," said Samantha. "Since our bookmobile launched last July, I have also had the privilege to visit areas that the physical library may not be as accessible to."

Samantha still reflects on her time as a single mother as a challenging period.

"I did get diagnosed with postpartum depression a few months after I had my daughter. I believe many factors contributed to that, one of which was the change of direction in my life," she said. "It was lonely and isolating."

Family and mental health support were helpful resources.

"Fortunately, after some group therapy with other moms and with the support of my family, I was able to keep moving forward," said Samantha. "It was overwhelming at times, working full-time and being a full-time student, but I knew I was not alone. Even though I felt I was missing a lot of time with my daughter, it was going to benefit her life in the future."

Samantha's next chapter began when she met Marco Avedaño on March 20, 2021, her late grandmother's birthday. They were married on March 20, 2025.

"I felt like it was somehow my grandma looking out for me," said Samantha. "Marco and I instantly connected on our trials and tribulations as single parents."

Seeing him with his two children showed me he was the perfect fit for mine and my daughter's life. Blending the families came with its challenges, but we worked through every obstacle together and have built a home filled with love and laughter."

The family's children are now 7, 8 and 10. "I am amazed at how all the pieces came together," said Samantha. "I give God all the honor and glory for getting us here because even though I made mistakes along the way, I believe this is exactly where I am meant to be. I would not want to raise my children anywhere else."

Q&A WITH SAMANTHA SALDAÑA-AVENDAÑO

Q. What advice do you have for women going through postpartum life?

If you are at a point where things feel really hard or even impossible, don't lose faith. Be patient and take it all a day at a time, because it does get better. Find your community, whether that is family that you can lean on or other mom friends you make along the way. Do not be scared or too prideful to reach out and ask for help.

Q. What should families in the Kern County area know more about in their community?

Samantha and her family at a local pumpkin patch. TRINITY PENN PHOTOGRAPHY



Fill-in-the-blank questions

Today, the strangest thing in my purse is: A melted chocolate bar.

Favorite restaurant: Buffalo Wild Wings

In my pantry, you will always find: A large Tapatio bottle and a backup.

The best book I've read lately is: "The Mountain is You" by Brianna Wiest

So far, my best life advice is: Don't miss the beauty of today, looking for or worrying about what tomorrow might bring. Enjoy the current phase of life you are in right now, because it won't last long. Before you know it, you'll look back and wonder where the newborn, toddler or little kid days went.

Use your local libraries! There are so many great, free events, programs and resources for all ages.

Shafter Library & Learning Center: <https://www.shafterlearning.com>

Kern County Library System: <https://kerncountylibrary.org>

HELLO HAPPY MAMA CONTEST

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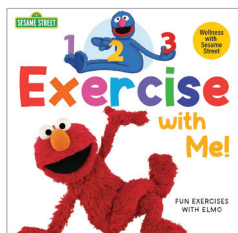
**Enter by midnight
on September 23rd!**

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Fit Lit: Books That Get Families Moving

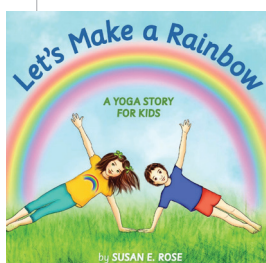
DID YOU KNOW SEPTEMBER 27 is Family Health & Fitness Day? The day is dedicated to promoting physical activity and healthy families and what better way to understand what it takes to be healthy than to read all about it? These books are just a sampling of ways to understand the importance of health and they may just inspire your family to find an activity that you love!



1, 2, 3, Exercise with Me!
By Andrea Posner-Sanchez & Joe Mathieu
\$10.95; Ages 2-5
Publisher: Random

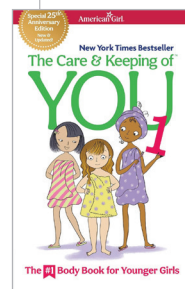
House Books for Young Readers
Amazon.com

Exercise is so much more fun when doing it with Elmo, Grover, Abby, Big Bird and the Sesame Street friends. Even the littlest children will find ways to move their bodies.



Let's Make a Rainbow: A Yoga Story for Kids
By Susan E. Rose
\$16.99; Ages 4-12
Publisher: Susan Rose Yoga
Amazon.com

Characters Lily and Lee are stuck inside on a rainy day, but their yoga poses will take them on adventures throughout the world. Written in rhyme, this books offers 12 yoga pose poems and is the recipient of the Mom's Choice Award.



The Care and Keeping of You 1
By Valorie Schaefer and Cara Natterson
\$9.97; Ages 8-10
Publisher: American Girl Publishing
Amazon.com
This is the 25th anniversary of the nest-selling book for young girls.

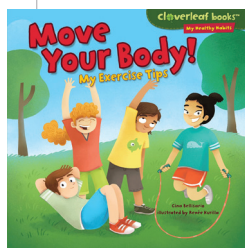
This classic guide is updated with new illustrations and answers questions all girls want to know, from skincare to monthly cycles and more.



Ready, Set, Go! Sports of All Sorts
By Celeste Cortright and Christiane Engel
\$9.99; Ages 3-7
Publisher: Barefoot Books

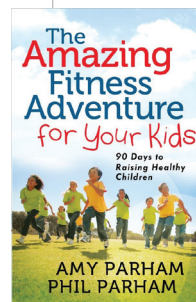
Amazon.com

Kids are fascinated by ways to play and this book gives them the low-down on a variety of sports. From swimming to soccer and everything in between, they'll find the basics of eight popular sports and learn all about teamwork.



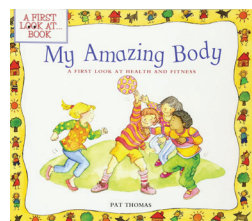
Move Your Body: My Exercise Tips
By Gina Bellisario and Renée Kurilla
\$8.99; Ages 5-8
Publisher: Millbrook Press
Amazon.com

What happens when Field Day rolls around and some of the kids aren't feeling up to it? Their teacher gives them a pep talk—and leads them in some aerobic and anaerobic exercises to get them stretching and ready to take on the relays!



The Amazing Fitness Adventure for Your Kids
By Phil Parham & Amy Parham
\$16.98; Adult
Publisher: Harvest House
Amazon.com
The Parham's were contestants in The Biggest Loser and recorded the

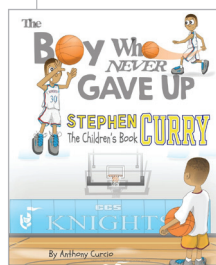
highest percentage of weight loss of any couple. But in "real life", the couple has raised three boys and are well-versed at heading off childhood obesity and diabetes with basic principles to raise fit kids.



My Amazing Body: A First Look at Health & Fitness
By Pat Thomas & Lesley Harker
\$13.95; Ages 4-7

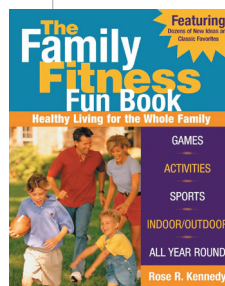
Publisher: Sourcebooks Explore
Amazon.com

Written by a psychotherapist and counselor, kids can learn all about the importance of exercise and a good diet all while caring about themselves and their families.



Stephen Curry: The Boy Who Never Gave Up
By Anthony Curcio
\$9.13; Ages 6-9
Publisher: CreateSpace Independent Publishing
Amazon.com

Young Stephen Curry was considered too short to play high school basketball. He was thought too weak to play college ball and certainly not NBA material. Or was he? Turns out, with determination and a big dream, he was able to become an NBA superstar.



The Family Fitness Fun Book: Healthy Living for the Whole Family
By Rose Kennedy & Lori Baird
\$16.85; Adult
Publisher: Hatherleigh Press
Amazon.com

If you're looking for ways to get your family healthy, this is a great place to start! This guide offers activities for all ages, as well as a searchable chart to help you plan a great event.



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Learn new things about engineering each day

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BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS OF KERN COUNTY

25/26 SCHOOL YEAR

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801 NILES STREET
661-325-3730

STOCKDALE CLUB
5207 YOUNG STREET, SUITE 200
661-663-8733

ENABLE PROGRAM
PROGRAM FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

(KERN REGIONAL CENTER REFERRAL REQUIRED)
ARMSTRONG YOUTH CENTER AND STOCKDALE CLUB
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661-325-3730EXT 253
WWILLIAMS@BGCKC.ORG

BGCKC.ORG/AFTERSCHOOLPROGRAM

HOMESCHOOL ASSISTANCE - PERFORMING ARTS - FINE ARTS - SPORTS - TECH CENTER - SNACKS - FIELD TRIPS - TEEN PROGRAM & MORE




Connect, Learn, and Celebrate Deaf Culture

SEPTEMBER IS DEAF AWARENESS MONTH—a time to celebrate the vibrant culture, language, and contributions of the Deaf and hard-of-hearing community. Whether you're fluent in ASL or just starting out, here are five meaningful ways to join the celebration and foster inclusivity

Learn Basic ASL

1

Even a few signs can spark connection and show respect. Try learning greetings like “hello,” “thank you,” and “how are you?” Attend a local ASL workshop or virtual class and share what you learn to inspire others.

Watch Deaf-Led Films and Shows

2

Representation matters, and Deaf creators are telling powerful stories. Films like *CODA* and *Sound of Metal* offer insight into Deaf experiences. Support Deaf actors and content creators or host a community screening followed by a discussion.

Create Inclusive Spaces at School or Work

3

Small changes make a big impact. Add captions to videos and presentations, invite a Deaf speaker to share their story, or display ASL posters to spark curiosity and learning.

Explore Deaf History and Culture

4

Celebrate the trailblazers who've shaped Deaf advocacy. Learn about figures like Laurent Clerc and Marlee Matlin and highlight milestones like the founding of Gallaudet University. Sharing these stories helps raise awareness and appreciation.

Support Deaf-Owned Businesses and Organizations

5

Shop from Deaf-owned vendors, donate to advocacy groups like the National Association of the Deaf, or volunteer your time to uplift their mission. Locally, don't miss Deaf Community Day hosted by the Independent Living Center of Kern County. It's a free, ASL-accessible event with vendors, entertainment, and resources celebrating Deaf culture.

Deaf Community Day 2025

Held this year on Saturday, September 27, from 11 am-3 pm at Laurel Glen Bible Church Activities Center, 2801 Ashe Road, Bakersfield. This event, vendors, and entertainment will be in ASL.

Open new horizons.

CalPERS members, this Open Enrollment, choose a plan that gives you access to Dignity Health.

Getting where you need to be in life is easier when the path is clear. Open Enrollment is your chance to take control of your health care—by selecting a plan that fits your needs today and into the future. When you choose a health plan that connects you to Dignity Health Medical Group, you gain access to trusted doctors conveniently located throughout Kern County. Whether you prefer virtual visits, same-day care, or secure online messaging, our care team is dedicated to providing personalized, compassionate care, making it easy to get the care you need, when you need it. This fall, open your options. CalPERS Open Enrollment closes October 10. Find out more at DignityHealth.org/Bakersfield/Enroll.

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Medical Foundation





Members of Music Fusion performing a flash mob for Artfest attendees. PHOTOS COURTESY LETTRATTO

BGCKC PRESENTS ARTFEST 2025

INSPIRED BY MATISSE, CREATED BY KERN'S YOUTH

Last year, when the Boys & Girls Clubs of Kern County (BGCKC) rebranded their Farm to Table(aux) fundraising event back to their signature Artfest, they had the most successful one to date. According to Zane Smith, BGCKC's Executive Director, he plans for 2025's Artfest: A Masterpiece in the Making to be even bigger. Held this year on Friday, October 10, from 6-10 pm at the exquisite Vista Del Lago Estate, 15329 South H Street, Bakersfield. Featuring French visual artist Henri Matisse, attendees can expect the unexpected and be transported back to France at the turn of the 20th century.

"Artfest has been held for over 20 years in some form," says Smith. "Every year it's new and exciting with amazing children's art and different elements of surprise. Being inspired by an artist leads to creativity and a whole new way of



Artfest guests, Rick & LJ Radon and Kathie & Nick Kouklis, regularly attend this memorable event.

**"I would like to recapture
that freshness of vision
which is characteristic of
extreme youth when all
the world is new to it."**

HENRI MATISSE

looking at the event. We want to see how we can surprise and share new things with Kern County that they've never seen."

With a nod to Matisse in every aspect of the night's festivities, participants can enjoy a sit-down dinner served in a park-like setting bathed in saturated color and organic shapes. The décor will include many grand-scale art pieces, iconic French imagery, and adult-sized mobiles seemingly suspended in the air. Matisse, who pioneered the Fauvist movement, known for its vibrant, non-naturalistic use of color, found the extraordinary everywhere he looked. He said, "There are always flowers for those who want to see them."

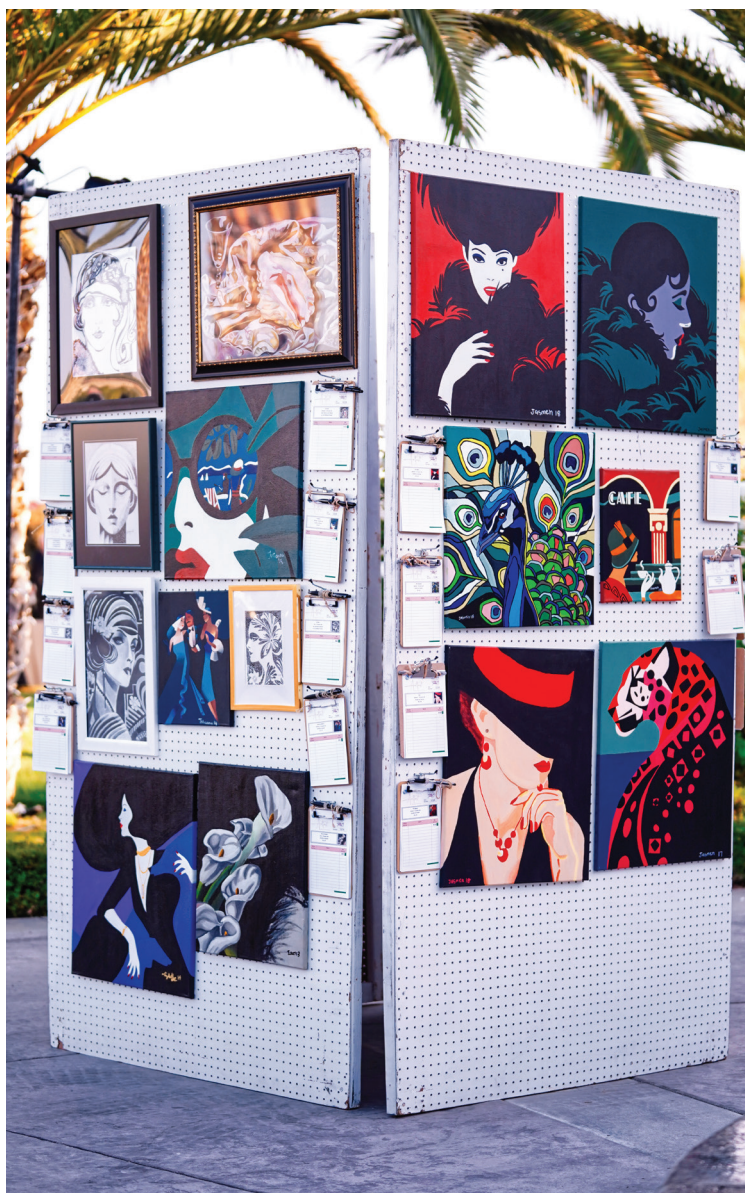
"Each year, the Boys & Girls Clubs of Kern County reimagines Artfest with a fresh new theme, transforming everything from the food and drinks to the featured artists, interactive exhibits, and live entertainment," says MacKenzie Boone, BGCKC Board President. "It's always inspiring to collaborate with the subcommittee and witness creativity and dedication that the staff and community volunteers bring to life. Somehow, even with the same foundational layout, the event feels completely new and unexpected each time. Watching it all come together is truly special."

The evening's menu by Mossman's Catering features French cuisine that's hearty and rustic, but also artistically crafted. "If we're having cheesecake for dessert, it will be Fauvist-decorated cheesecake," Smith says. BGCKC's Music Fusion will keep the party hopping with three performances inspired by Matisse. One of the songs, Carrie by

CONTINUED ON PAGE 20



Artfest attendees perusing the silent auction offerings.



Artfest 2025

When: Friday,
October 10,
from 6-10 p.m.

Where: Vista Del
Lago Estate,
15329 South H
Street, Bakersfield

Parking: Parking
is adjacent with
shuttle service.

Tickets: For tickets
and sponsorship
information, please
visit www.bgckc.org/artfest.

Young artist work
on display as part of
silent auction.



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Bakersfield, CA 93301-3119
661-404-4242



Julianne Finch,
Financial Advisor
3100 19th St Suite 150,
Bakersfield, CA 93301-3119
661-404-4242



Young artist, Brenner, showcasing her art piece during live auction.

CONTINUED FROM **PAGE 19**

Europe, is being parodied to sing "Henri" instead, and is sure to be a showstopper. Guests will also enjoy the night's "Stroll & Savor" with refreshments, silent and live auction bidding, a grand prize raffle, and many bold and joyful photo opportunities.

Matisse's work varied so much throughout his expressive art career. He created sculptures, graphic design, printmaking, and, after an illness left him unable to continue painting, he used his unique perspective to create cut-out paper collages. His range and diversity made him a perfect choice for the BGCKC's Club Members. Using BGCKC's three working art studios and mobile studios, the Club Members, with their instructors' guidance, created several pieces to donate for auction for the night's Young Artists' Masterpiece Gallery.

"The kids unanimously voted on Matisse. Many felt that the diversity of his artwork over the years gave something that every child could emulate. From paper cutting to sculpture to acrylic or watercolors, or modernism or classical, there is a lot the kids can work on," says Smith. "Matisse had a unique lens, and the way he interpreted everyday life is accessible to all. With children, the ease of his work and his style do not intimidate them and give them things to play with. It challenges them to be their authentic self."

"Artfest isn't just a night of fun for the people of Bakersfield; it's also a powerful platform for the young artists within the Boys & Girls Clubs to shine," Boone says. "There's something deeply moving about seeing the full circle in action: raising money through this celebration of art and community, knowing those funds directly support the 70-plus clubs in our area. From art and dance to tutoring and music lessons, the impact is real. Our kids gain a safe space to develop their talents, share their creativity, and even contribute to next year's event, making Artfest a living, growing, celebration of everything we're building together."



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OF KERN COUNTY, INC.
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You Can Do It By KCFM



Family Fiesta for Hispanic Heritage Month

HISPANIC CUISINE IS CELEBRATED around the world, with tacos standing out as one of its most beloved staples. Whether you have cultural ties or simply love the flavors, dishes like Grilled Carne Asada Tacos offer a delicious way to connect with tradition. For a perfect pairing, serve up these easy Grilled Carne Asada Tacos while watching *Coco*, the animated film about a boy who dreams of becoming a musician.

.....



Grilled Carne Asada Tacos

Makes 12 tacos

INGREDIENTS

- | | |
|--|---|
| 3 cloves garlic, minced | 1½ pounds beef skirt or minute steak |
| ½ cup drained, sliced pickled jalapeno peppers | 12 6- to 8-inch flour or corn tortillas |
| ½ cup of teriyaki sauce | 2 limes, each cut into 6 wedges |
| 1 tablespoon minced red bell pepper | Juice of 3 lemons |
| 1 tablespoon granulated sugar | Pico de Gallo, if desired, store bought or homemade |
| 2 teaspoons kosher salt | |

INSTRUCTIONS

1. To make the marinade: In a medium bowl, combine lemon juice, garlic, jalapenos, teriyaki sauce, bell pepper, sugar, and salt until sugar and salt have dissolved.
2. In a large resealable plastic bag, add marinade and meat and seal. Work marinade through meat and seal. Work marinade through meat with your fingers. Refrigerate meat for at least 2 hours or for up to 6 hours.
3. Preheat greased barbecue grill to medium. Remove meat from marinade, discarding marinade. Grill meat for 4 to 5 minutes per side for medium-rare. Remove from grill and let stand for 8 to 10 minutes. Carve meat across the grain into thin slices, then cut into bite-size pieces.
4. To build tacos, warm the tortillas on a skillet, heating each tortilla on each side until soft and pliable. Divide meat equally among tortillas and top with Pico de Gallo. Fold tortillas in half. Serve with a sliced lime.

— Recipe courtesy of Kelley Cleary Coffeen's "200 Easy Mexican Recipes" (Robert Rose)

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WE LOVE IT!

By Lisa Keosouphanh

As the school bells ring and fall routines kick into high gear, busy moms need baby gear that keeps up with the chaos.

1. GoldBug Wet Dry Daycare Essentials Water-Resistant Bags (2-Pack) \$14.93 www.walmart.com **2. GoldBug Monkey Harness Backpack with Removable Tether** \$15.96 www.walmart.com **3. Minee Wipes** starting at \$9.99. <https://mineewipes.com> **4. Comotomo Toddler Tumbler** \$24.99. www.amazon.com **5. Familidoo Q1 Wagon** \$279.99 www.familidoo.com **6. Comotomo Smart Vent Food Containers** (Set of 6 \$31.99 or Set of 3 \$18.99) www.amazon.com **7. Miku Pro Smart Baby Monitor** \$150 <https://mikucare.com>



CALM is a State of Mind

Just Be There — with Snacks

I took my daughter to CALM Zoo in Bakersfield one day when she was two years old. This was a regular thing with us. We had a membership and went every week—at least once. Because if she wasn't BEING a "dolphin wiff a hoit tail" (Winter from Dolphin Tale) or a vegetarian shark (Lenny from Shark Tale) or a dog lifting her leg on strangers at the park (not sure where that one came from. We only had female dogs for pets) ... then she was READING about animals, taking CARE of animals, or WATCHING animals. She was so obsessed with animals that she once had a heart-wrenching sob fest because she did not understand how God didn't know she wanted to be a dog: "Why didn't he make me a dog?" she asked, with wide eyes full of tears, sincerely trying to unravel this mystery of the universe.

So we went to CALM a lot. Also, PetSmart. And the animal hospital where Grandma worked. We had pet snails and worms and lizards. She could catch anything. Especially lizards and chickens. (We didn't have chickens. But if we went somewhere with chickens, it would not take my child more than about a minute to have one in her arms.)

This trip to CALM was supposed to be special. It was the day they were opening the bighorn sheep exhibit. I could imagine no scenario in which Samantha would not want to see the opening day of a new species at her favorite animal in place.

So I made the plans, packed the snacks and diapers and water bottles, and off we went.

A news crew was there and a small crowd. I think there was even a ribbon cutting ceremony.

I say "I think" because I don't actually know. We missed the entire thing. We never even saw a bighorn sheep that day.

That is because Samantha took one split-second glance at the enclosure, saw that there was no animal in it (yet),

and was done. (I will not tell the details of the power struggle that ensued because, without understanding her neurodivergence or strong will, it will just make me look like a parent who could not control her child. Which, in all honesty, maybe I couldn't. Or maybe I just saved my battles for the ones I needed to win. In any case, fast forward past the struggle.)

We saw every other animal in CALM Zoo, ate our snacks by the bears, and played on the playground. By then, I knew the bighorn sheep would be out for visitors to see, and I tried one last time to get her interested in seeing them.

Nope. Not a chance.

We did manage to leave with a bighorn sheep plushie from the gift shop (for me, let's be honest).

And we returned a week later and finally saw the bighorn sheep. Samantha acted like she was impressed. Like she didn't know anything about bighorn sheep. Like she had never heard of such an animal before. Like she had never seen their enclosure. She was spell-bound by these new animals that were called sheep but didn't look like sheep at all, and she wanted to know all about them: where they live, why the boys have big horns, what they eat, how many babies they have, what happens to them if they get a thorn in their "paw," and on and on.

That was the day I realized that instead of trying to control events or understand toddler logic, my job as a parent is just to be there.

With snacks.





KCSOS
College Night
happening
September 8!



SEPTEMBER 1

Labor Day!

SEPTEMBER 2

JUST DANCE: Adult Pop Up Dance Class Series

Lyrical Animation and Krump with Dance Fever. For JUST \$10 a class, adults can dance try various dance styles taught by a variety of dance educators at studios.

5:30 p.m.

Bakersfield High School Dance Room
1241 G Street
Bakersfield, CA
661-491-5376
<https://kerndance.org/JUSTDANCE/>

SEPTEMBER 5

First Friday: ArtWalk Under the Stars

Presented by Arts Council of Kern. Free, Family-friendly community event. Visit with artists and artisan vendors while enjoying the shops and culture of Downtown Bakersfield!

5:30 - 9:30 p.m.

Arts Council of Kern
1020 18th St. (Corner of 18th and N streets)
Bakersfield, CA
661-324-9000
kernarts.org/artwalk

The Bako Market: Night Market

Friday Night Market returns! The plaza will be packed with incredible vendors, delicious food, music, and all the feel-good vibes of a Friday night. From handcrafted treasures to delicious eats, the Bako Market has something for everyone!

5 - 9 p.m.

Centennial Plaza: Dignity Health Arena
1001 Truxtun Avenue
Bakersfield, CA
<https://www.instagram.com/thebakomarket/>

Movies in the Park: Inside Out 2

City of Bakersfield Recreation & Parks FREE Movies in the Park series! Movies will begin at dusk. Make sure to bring your picnic gear, lawn chairs,

blankets, family, and friends!

7 - 10 p.m.

Mesa Marin Sports Complex
10315 CA-178
Bakersfield, CA
661-326-3866
www.bakersfieldparks.us

SEPTEMBER 5 & 6



Arts Council of Kern's Latination.
PHOTO COURTESY BAKERSFIELD
CALIFORNIAN

THE BEST LOCAL CALENDAR OF EVENTS!

Arts Council of Kern's Latination 12

KCFM is a proud media sponsor of this two day event of Latin art, music, food and celebration in downtown Bakersfield! From stunning gallery to live performances and delicious food, Latination 12 is a tribute to the people, pride, and culture that make Kern County shine bright!

Friday: 5 – 10 p.m.

Saturday: 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.

Arts Council of Kern: Downtown Bakersfield
1020 18th Street
Bakersfield, CA
661-324-9000
<https://kernarts.org/>

SEPTEMBER 6

11th Annual Stomp Out Suicide Walk 2025

SALT is having its annual Stomp Out Suicide Walk, honoring those who have been touched by suicide. Basket and 50/50 raffle, vendors from different areas in Kern County, raise \$150.00 and receive a free T-shirt. Pet-friendly, all funds stay in Kern County. Sign up today.

8 a.m. - 12 p.m.

Park at Riverwalk
11200 Stockdale Highway
Bakersfield, CA
661-718-5483
SALTkc.org

2025 Bakersfield Village Fest

Experience over 100 different brews from around 60 breweries, plus 25 Central Coast wineries with over 70 different wines to choose from! Experience four different stages of live music, featuring 12 of Bakersfield's hottest bands, and the all-new DJ dance party in the Neon Plaza, and so much more!

6 p.m.

Kern County Museum
3801 Chester Avenue
Bakersfield, CA
661-852-5000
<https://www.bakersfieldvillagefest.com/>



Annual Cancer Run & Walk Festival is September 20. PHOTO COURTESY KERN COUNTY CANCER FOUNDATION

“Elvis: In Person” Starring Matt Stone & TEC Band

Get ready Elvis fans! The greatest Elvis Concert Experience is coming to ROCK! Internationally recognized by Graceland and the Elvis Presley Estate, the show's star, Matt Stone, performs the closest thing to the King in history!

7 - 9:30 p.m.

The Nile Theater
1721 19th Street
Bakersfield, CA
661-324-1369
tixr.com/groups/thenile/events/elvis-in-person-starring-matt-stone-tec-band-138143

SEPTEMBER 7

National Grandparents Day

SEPTEMBER 8

26th Annual Kern County College Night 2025

The Kern County Superintendent of Schools office, in conjunction with the Kern High School District, California State University, Bakersfield, Taft College, and Bakersfield College, annually host the annual Kern County College Night. Families and students are invited to explore booths

from colleges, universities, and technical or trade programs. Local high school and college counselors will be on hand to answer questions.

5 - 8 p.m.

Dignity Health Arena
1001 Truxtun Avenue
Bakersfield, CA
661-636-4556
<https://kern.org/student-events/future-readiness/kern-county-college-night/>

SEPTEMBER 11



Blue Zone Project's “At Ease: A Veteran Day of Rest and Recharge”

An evening dedicated to restoration, reflection, and resilience. At Ease is a free wellness event designed to support veterans in downshifting and reconnecting with peace. Experience healing and pain-reduction exercises, guided breathing techniques, and a therapeutic

sound bath. Sign up today.

5:30 - 7:30 p.m.

Church of God
100 Oswell Street
Bakersfield, CA
BZPBakersfield@sharecare.com
<https://bakersfield.bluezonesproject.com/events/>

SEPTEMBER 12

Kern Down Syndrome Network Parent & Me Support Group

Bring your little one for a supportive and friendly morning! This group is a safe space to connect, share, and build community with other parents who understand the journey. Free snacks and coffee are provided! Siblings are welcome!

10:30 a.m. - 12 p.m.

New Life Nursery
4201 Stine Road
Bakersfield, CA
661-246-3200
<https://kerndsn.org/>

SEPTEMBER 12 & 13

Friends of the Kern County Library's Used Book Sale

Kern County Library branches and local Friends of the Kern County Library, Inc. offer ongoing used book sales on-site where visitors can purchase titles. Shop books, DVDs & more at bargain prices!

10 a.m. – 4 p.m.

KCL Southwest Branch Library
8301 Ming Avenue
Bakersfield, CA
661-868-0796
<https://kerncountylibrary.org/fol/>

SEPTEMBER 13

Arts Council of Kern's Second Saturday

Held monthly as part of downtown Bakersfield's city-wide celebration of local art and small businesses, this lively vendor fair invites artists and makers to sell, connect, and create live in a festive, pop-up atmosphere, offering Saturday spotlight inside the Arts Council building.

9 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Arts Council of Kern
1020 18th Street
Bakersfield, CA
661-324-9000
<https://kernarts.org/>

SEPTEMBER 17-28

2025 Kern County Fair: "Create Your Moment"

Kern County's biggest event is back. Packed with music, food, entertainment, and tradition. This year's theme celebrates the magic of shared experiences that make lasting memories.

Monday – Thursday: 4 - 11 p.m.

Friday 9/19: 10:30 a.m. - 11 p.m.

Friday 9/26: 3 - 11 p.m.

Saturdays: 12 - 11 p.m.

Sundays: 12 - 10 p.m.

Kern County Fairgrounds
1142 South P Street
Bakersfield, CA
661-833-4900
<https://www.kerncountyfair.com/>

SEPTEMBER 19

Military Family Appreciation Day

SEPTEMBER 20

12th Annual Cancer Run & Walk Festival

Kern County Cancer Foundation's Cancer Run & Walk Festival is now open for registration! Event includes an inspiring morning of movement, music, and community. This exciting challenge allows you to raise funds and awareness for those battling cancer all while having fun! Register today!

8 a.m. – 12 p.m.

Riverwalk Park
11298 Stockdale Highway
Bakersfield, CA
661-862-7136
<https://runsignup.com/Race/CA/Bakersfield/KernCancerRunWalk2022>

Thunder on the Mountain Car & Motorcycle Show 2025

This year, Tehachapi's favorite car show will feature 300 autos, vendors, entertainment, and activities in downtown Tehachapi. Come hear the thunder and drink in the beauty.

9 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Downtown Tehachapi
661-822-4180
<https://thunderonthemountaincarshow.com/>

SEPTEMBER 21

World Alzheimer's Day

SEPTEMBER 21-27



SEPTEMBER 22



SEPTEMBER 23

International Day of Sign Language

SEPTEMBER 26

Lunch & Learn Community Education Series: Joint Pain

Adventist Health Bakersfield invites the public to its Lunch & Learn Community Education Series, with expert insights on key health topics. Lunch will be provided. RSVP is required as space is limited.

12 - 1 p.m.

Adventist Health Bakersfield
1524 27th Street Second Floor,
"Be Brilliant" Conference Room
Bakersfield, CA
661-446-5442
<https://www.adventisthealth.org/bakersfield/events/ahbd-lunch-learn-community-education-series/4-25-25>

SEPTEMBER 27

ILCKC Deaf Community Day 2025

Celebrate Deaf Community Day 2025 with your local Deaf and hard-of-hearing community! An event to promote and celebrate our diverse community! Deaf-owned businesses, organizations, resources, and more! This event, vendors, and entertainment will be in ASL.

11 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Laurelglen Bible Church
Activities Center
2801 Ashe Rd.
Bakersfield, CA
661-325-1063
<https://ilckofkerncounty.org/>

Walk For Alopecia-Bakersfield

The Bakersfield Walk for Alopecia will be a fun, family-oriented event. It is a fantastic opportunity to gather in support and camaraderie for those affected by alopecia areata. Registration is free, and participants who raise \$200 will receive an exclusive Walk For Alopecia T-shirt. Register today!

9 a.m. - 12 p.m.

CSUB Runner Park
9001 Stockdale Highway
Bakersfield, CA
661-364-8915
naaf.donordrive.com/WFABakersfield

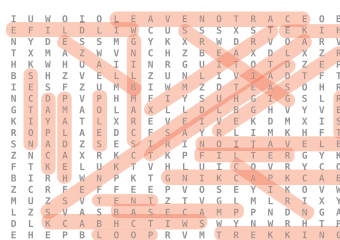
ACTIVITY CORNER ANSWERS

ACTIVITY CORNER: PAGES 30-31

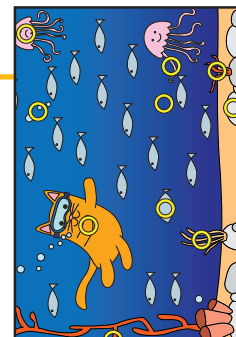
6	7	4	3	2	8	9	5	1
1	8	3	9	5	6	2	7	4
2	5	9	7	4	1	4	1	4
3	1	7	2	9	4	6	8	5
8	2	6	1	3	5	7	4	9
9	4	5	6	8	7	1	2	3
4	9	2	5	7	3	8	1	6
7	6	8	4	1	9	5	3	2
5	3	1	8	4	6	2	7	9

Down
1. Leaves
2. Peekaboo
3. Cooler
6. Email

Across
1. LA
2. Panic
4. Ache
5. Kneel
7. Snob
8. Air
9. School



WORD SEARCH SPONSORED BY:





ONGOING HAPPENINGS

TUESDAYS

GED Testing Lab

Employers' Training Resource offers GED Testing through our GED Pearson-Vue Authorized Testing Center. To take the GED tests, you must first register at www.GED.com

11 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Beale Memorial Library
701 Truxtun Avenue
Bakersfield, CA
661-325-4473
<https://www.employertainingresource.com/job-seekers/resources/ged-testing>

WEDNESDAYS

Veterans Breakfast @ Zingo's Cafe

Join us for Wednesday Veteran's Breakfast, where veterans enjoy breakfast, free coffee, and comradery. All branches welcome. ALL Veteran's, Active Duty, and Reservists are welcome to attend. Representatives from Honor Flight Kern County are in attendance who can get you signed up for Honor Flight Trips.

8 a.m.

Zingo's Cafe
3201 Buck Owens Blvd.
Bakersfield, CA
<https://www.facebook.com/ZingosCafe/>

SATURDAYS

F Street Farmers Market

Bakersfield's longest-running Farmers Market! Accepts cash, card & EBT Snap.

7:45 a.m. - 12 p.m.

2819 F Street
Bakersfield, CA
<https://fstfarmersmarket.com/>

SATURDAYS

RiverLakes Farmers Market

Farm to Table, fresh produce! Our certified farmers bring you the freshest fruits and vegetables.

9 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Centennial High School
8601 Hageman Drive
Bakersfield, CA
https://www.instagram.com/riverlakes_farmers_market/?hl=en

SUNDAYS

Haggin Oaks Farmers Market

Visit over 70 different vendors at the biggest Farmers Market in town.

9 a.m. - 2 p.m.

8800 Ming Avenue
Bakersfield, CA
https://www.instagram.com/hagginoaksfarmers_market/?hl=en

Worship Guide

SPONSORED BY:



September's Invitation: Reconnect with God

September marks a season of transition — summer fades, routines resume, and life regains its familiar pace. School begins, church programs restart, and work responsibilities increase. In this time of renewed structure and focus, let's also make September a month of spiritual recommitment — a time to draw closer to God. Just as we prepare for academic and professional responsibilities, we must intentionally realign our hearts with God's purpose. Begin each day with prayer, seeking His guidance before the busyness sets in. Reengage with Scripture not out of obligation, but out of a desire to know Him more. Reconnect with your church family — serve, worship, and grow together in faith.

September offers a fresh start. It's an opportunity to reset spiritually — to lay down distractions and pick up disciplines that draw us nearer to Christ. Let this month be marked by intentional devotion, deeper trust, and renewed purpose. Let September be more than just the end of summer. Let it be the beginning of a deeper, richer, more committed walk with God. He is always ready to meet you where you are — just take the step.

— By Jon Engen



TRINITY
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www.trinitybakersfield.com

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www.autism-vac.org

K-A-N KERN AUTISM NETWORK, INC.

"Kern Autism Network Inc. provides support, awareness, information and education to families and the public throughout Kern County"

Fall Harvest is Here!

Adults on the Spectrum Gathering: Saturday, September 6th. To register, please contact our office for details.

Parent Support Group Meeting: Wednesday, September 10th @ 6 pm. To register, visit our website www.kernautism.org

Chess Club for Teens Sunday, September 14th from 11 a.m. to noon. To register visit our website www.kernautism.org

Female Support Group Gathering Thursday, September 18th @ 6 pm. To register, please contact our office for details.

Father's Virtual Support Group Meeting: Saturday, September 20th @ 2:30 pm. To register, visit our website www.kernautism.org

6th Annual Autism Gala "Stayin' Alive for Autism" Disco 70's theme-November 1st at Bakersfield Country Club. Buy tickets @ www.kernautism.org

To read more about the organization, follow us on Facebook and Instagram.

EARLY SIGNS OF AUTISM:

- Delayed language development
- Repetitive language
- Little or no eye contact
- Repetitive mannerisms
- Inflexible routines or rituals
- Preoccupation with object parts
- Little interest in friendships

SERVICES OFFERED:

- Monthly Parent Support Groups
- Adults on the Spectrum Support Group
- Law Enforcement Trainings
- Autism/Asperger Workshops-Seminars
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- Camps & Activity Scholarships
- Evening & Weekend Phone support

661-489-3335 • kernautism.org • kernautism@gmail.com
2200 Oak Street, Annex Building

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SPOOKY THINGS AHEAD!

Get ready for thrills, chills, and our Find Jack Contest—you won't want to miss it!

Stay Tuned ... the hunt is coming in October!

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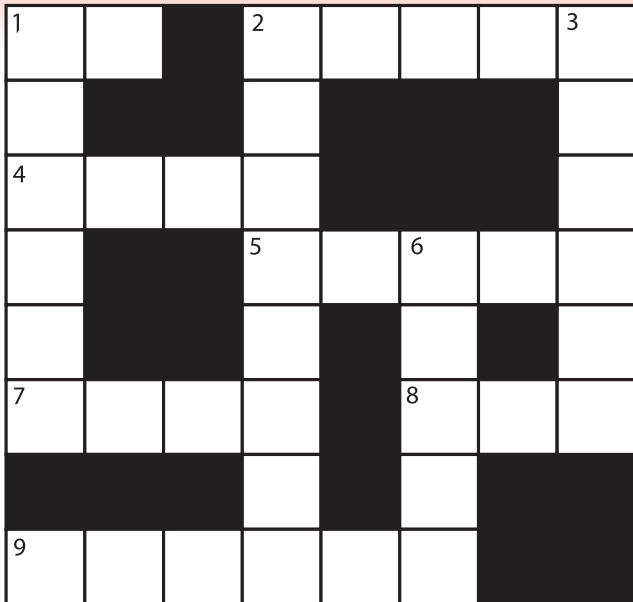
Read Us
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kerncountyfamily.com

SEPTEMBER ACTIVITY CORNER

Crossword



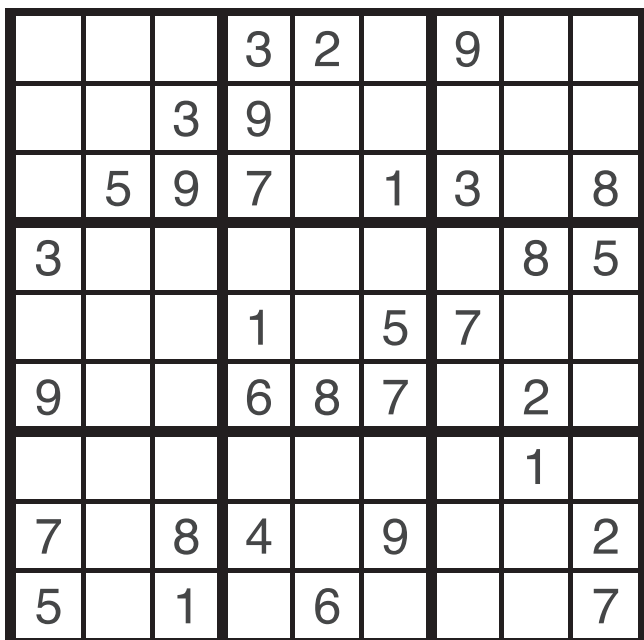
ACROSS

1. California city (abbr.)
2. Sudden fear
4. Dull pain
5. Rest on knees
7. One who feels superior to others
8. We breathe it
9. Place for learning

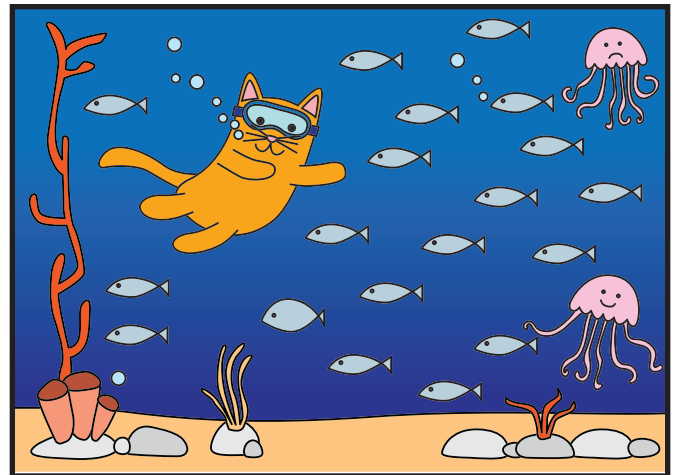
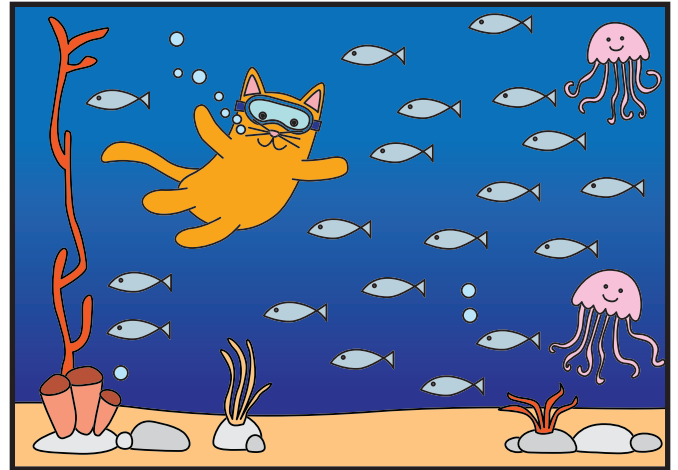
DOWN

1. They grow on trees
2. Game played with a baby
3. Not as hot
6. Digital message

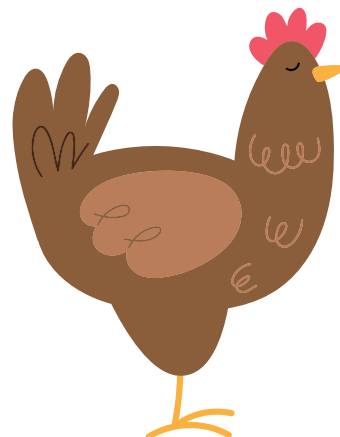
Sudoku



There are 10 differences in the pictures below. Can you find them all?



DID YOU KNOW?



Bok! Bok!
It's National Chicken Month!

Chickens communicate with over 30 different sounds. From warning clucks to happy chirps, chickens have a whole language!



SEPTEMBER 21-27

SEPTEMBER ACTIVITY CORNER

ON THE TRAIL WORD SEARCH

PRESENTED BY PACIFIC AG RENTALS

PUZZLE
ANSWERS
PAGE 26

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

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