

[.com](http://santamariatimes.com)

Letters to the Editor

22 HOURS AGO

Getting most from Bazaar

The Winter World Bazaar put on by the Valley of Flowers Half Century Club was a success, and the club thanks those who attended.

Twenty-four vendors displayed their wares to the delight of all who attended the Bazaar. Beautiful handcrafts, homemade jellies, homemade chocolates, and even personal safety equipment such as pepper spray were available.

Gail Clark-Savage

Chair of the Winter World Bazaar

Lompoc

Protesting water costs

The cost of water to Nipomo from Santa Maria is going to be very high.

It appears the NCSD does not care about this community, just the development. The NCSD has been handing out will-serve letters like candy. If we are told we are in a drought situation, why are they handing out these letters like this. This means only we do have the water, and we are being misled as to the drought situation.

Also, why hasn't the NCSD invoked some kind of conservation or moratorium to reduce the use of water, if this is really the case?

NCSD services are going to cost each family more than \$300 bi-monthly. This is not a rich community, but then NCSD thinks we can afford it. This is so developers can skate the expensive cost of this project, all for the sake of

the almighty dollar and politics.

Many people will not be able to afford the increased cost of this water. Many could lose their homes because of this. There will also be a sewer rate increase as soon as it is operational.

There are signs all over Nipomo about this rate increase. There are people walking all over Nipomo, passing out printed protest ballots.

Take the time to fill one out and submit it to the NCSD, telling them you don't want this expensive water, out of the same aquifer we now get our water from.

Vince McCarthy

Nipomo

Putting thugs back on street

Sometimes voters get what we ask for.

According to the Associated Press, "California suspects ... are already (being freed) ... as felony charges are reduced to misdemeanors ..." This is to keep 4,000 inmates out of state prison each year and onto our streets.

Drugs are considered to be victim-less crimes, like alcohol — until a death by DUI. MADD should be really mad. But, this trivializing of crime should help the unemployed as, now, crime pays. Just keep it petty.

Our safety is not affected by having these minor offenders back on the streets? The California Sheriffs Association says "one thing ... certain is more crime, less ... in custody, and more victims."

So, again, who wins here?

Donald R. Jones

Santa Maria

Adding city's promo dollars

The Buellton City Council race brought up some important issues, the most critical one being whether Buellton should spend such a large allocation for visitors services, or whether there are more pressing needs.

Buellton is spending way more on marketing than first meets the eye.

Buellton hotels have their own tax they collect and use for marketing; it is called a business improvement district. That tax collected in Buellton was \$211,380 last fiscal year. This was combined with what Solvang, Santa Ynez, Los Olivos and Los Alamos hotels collected. The grand total in 2013-14 was \$650,000.

This money is used to market Buellton and the rest of the Valley. All benefit from this collaborative effort.

The Chamber of Commerce received \$326,000 from the city of Buellton in 2013-14. Along with the Hotel Association's tax, total for marketing Buellton was close to \$1 million with just these two organizations. Other organizations — such as Visit SYV, Vintners Association, Solvang Conference and Visitors Bureau and the casino — advertise the Valley and Buellton as well.

To break even on the funds the city gives the Chamber, would require the bed tax to go up 70 percent, or to \$2,718,904.

The community deserves a complete and thorough analysis to determine how much taxpayer money is needed for visitor's services.

Peggy Brierton

Buellton