

# ‘If you don’t love what you do, you shouldn’t do it’

EVERY MORNING, before he begins cooking, chef Moises Muñoz prays, “Please, God, put your hands on my food so everything is good for my patrons.” And every day, he says God shows up, and together they make great food.

At his kitchen at Carmel Valley Athletic Club, Muñoz and his staff assemble a menu of heart-healthy options for club members and guests, using fresh ingredients that are as local as possible. His catering business does special events at the club and for private clients, including barbecues, formal dinners, wine tastings, and Taco Night, for which Muñoz brings out his special taco cart.

“Moises has the skills, dedication and work ethic equal to any chef I have worked with,” said James Kellogg, general manager for CVAC. “And when you look closely, you will find someone with a big heart and a true passion for food.”

## Crossing the border

Muñoz also enjoys his catering work as a personal chef, and for private parties and larger celebrations throughout Monterey County.

“It all started with one person, who told others, and my business grew,” Muñoz said. “I love what I do. I love making real, fresh food for people. If you don’t love what you do, you shouldn’t do it.”



Moises Muñoz

took him to a large nursery, where he got a job picking flowers for long hours and little pay.

“I lived in a small room at the nursery. The restroom was outside, and there was no kitchen,” he said. “I cooked my meals on an electric stove in my room. This was not the California I had envisioned.”

But another friend who worked at a restaurant in Carmel suggested Muñoz come here and get a job washing dishes. It had to be better than picking flowers, he reasoned — and at least it would be in the kitchen.

“I called Flaherty’s on a public phone — I still remember that number,” he said. “I bought a 1975 Chevy Impala for \$400 and got directions to drive to Monterey. In Gilroy, I saw Monterey Street and thought I was there.”

As he drove into Carmel, Muñoz found the beauty he’d pictured, and in 1984, he was hired as a dishwasher at Bud Allen’s pub on Dolores between Fifth and Sixth, working under chef John Money.

Money helped Muñoz learn English, requiring that he ask for his lunch in the language. Every day, Muñoz asked for a Rubeen sandwich since that was all he knew how to say. In addition to expanding his vocabulary, Money also taught him how to cook his recipes, made him a line cook, and eventually promoted him to kitchen supervisor.

Allen also owned La Playa Hotel, where Muñoz made extra money doing laundry. He sent money to Mexico with thoughts of returning to open a business, but never went back, except

to visit. During one trip, he met his wife-to-be, Maria. Later, they had their first daughter, Jennifer.

Muñoz said, “When I told Bud I had to go to the hospital to have a baby, he held out two envelopes, one for a girl and one for a boy. I opened the one for the girl and found \$400. The boy envelope contained \$1,000. Either way, I was grateful, and it was the first of many generosityes.”

Later he had three more daughters and one son, Moises Jr.

## On to the Hog’s Breath

After 15 years working alongside Money, Muñoz was hired as chef at the Hog’s Breath Inn. He went on to work as banquet chef for Carmel Valley Ranch, as kitchen supervisor for Corral de Tierra Country Club, and as kitchen supervisor for Rosewood Sand Hill Hotel, commuting daily to Menlo Park.

“I have appreciated and enjoyed every kitchen I’ve cooked in, but I really enjoy what I’m doing now,” said Muñoz, of his

See **MUÑOZ** page 31A

# IMPRESSIONISM WITH PHOTOGRAPHY

THE HORSES in Mary Aiu’s photographs are “at liberty” — running and frolicking unfettered — bursting with energy, eyes flashing, muscles rippling, manes flying in the wind.

“There are times when I really feel like I’m watching them dance — some are just so showy, so beautiful,” said Aiu, a resident of Carmel (a few blocks southwest of the Mission) and also Suisun Valley, where she

She was equally enamored with art, painting by the numbers and delving into crafts as a child, and gravitating toward art classes throughout high school.

“Dad wanted me to study business in college, but instead I went to art school,” said Aiu, who earned a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from the California College of the Arts in Oakland. “But I figured out pretty early that you have to make money to get by in life, so I also got a teaching degree and taught art in secondary schools for 20-some years.”

The advent of digital photography and the creative possibilities that became a reality through computer-editing applications changed her trajectory, she said.

## Carmel’s Artists

By DENNIS TAYLOR

keeps a quarter horse and a Polish Arabian of her own. “I don’t think they’re necessarily showing off for us, but I believe some of them know they’re pretty. And, of course, a lot of the stallions are trying to be impressive for the mares: ‘Here I am!’”

Her photos — black-and-white and color, some as large as 30 by 40 inches — are showcased through April 23 at the Pacific Grove Art Center (568 Lighthouse Ave.)

Aiu has traveled extensively to capture the images, photographing horses in India, Portugal, France and England, as well as at home. In September, she had booked and paid for a trip to Iceland and Spain, but had to cancel due to ankle surgery.

## Her first ride

As the daughter of a third-generation cattle rancher, Arthur Tooby (who died in 2006), her passion for animals was born early.

“My dad was a smart man,” she remembered with a laugh. “I always wanted my own horse, but was probably 11 before he let me have one ... and the one he gave me couldn’t be ridden very far because she’d go lame and I’d have to bring her back limping.”

## Beyond the camera

“When those digital tools came along, I realized I could move beyond that camera capture and create a narrative of my own,” she said. “By then, I had grown a little bit tired of the one-shot-wonder kinds of photos and decided to create my own bodies of work.”

Through the magic of Photoshop digital editing, Aiu is able to photograph the playful exuberance of a horse in, for example, a dusty arena, then transplant that image (along with others) to another setting — a picturesque meadow, a tree-lined trail or wherever — to create stunning and expressive scenes.

A series of photos in the show, entitled “On The Run,” emphasizes motion, with subdued color. Another series, entitled “Steps In Time,” shows multiple images of the same horse at a trot — an homage to photographer Edward Muybridge, who used multiple cameras and tripwires in 1878 to prove that a trotting horse is often completely airborne — and settle a \$25,000 bet with Leland Stanford, the former governor of California.

“Among The Trees” is a series of impressionistic-type images, shot at slow shutter speeds, of horses running through aspens. “In Memorandum” is composed of shots reminiscent of ancient equine cave paintings. “First Snow” is a series she created by transplanting images of horses to picturesque backdrops she photographed on a snowy day near Bodie, a California ghost town accessible only via a long, gravel road.

“I was all by myself that day, thinking ‘What am I doing here? If I break down, there’s nobody here to help!’” she recollected. “But it was a wonderful day for photography: the clouds, the lighting, the little bits of snow ...”

Her photos depict mul-



PHOTO/ALEX AIU

Fine art photographer Mary Aiu showcases her horse images through April 23 at Pacific Grove Art Center.

See **AIU** page 31A

Don’t miss “Scenic Views” by Jerry Gervase — every week in the Real Estate Section.



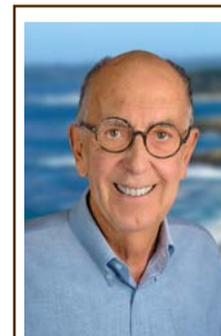
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# ART

From page 25A

Ann Jastrab said she's thrilled to see Sobsey's butterfly swarm brighten up the gallery at Sunset Center.

"We have the honor of exhibiting Leah's timely butterfly swarm, which is flying across our gallery walls until April 5," Jastrab said. "Stop by to see its majesty."

The exhibit also includes cyanotypes by **Paula Riff, Brenton Hamilton, Diana Bloomfield, J.M. Golding, Barbara Hazen, Max Kellenberger, Heidi Kirkpatrick** and **Brian Taylor**, the center's recently retired executive director.

Sunset Center is located at San Carlos and Ninth. Call (831) 625-5181 or visit [photography.org](http://photography.org).

## Art walk set for Saturday

Saturday marks the return of the Carmel Art Walk, when 17 downtown artist-owned galleries will place blue lanterns in their windows and stay open until 9 p.m.

Some artists plan to do demonstrations, including **Mary Titus** of Titus Gallery and **Delia Bradford** of Gallery Delia.

The event is free. Maps are available at participating galleries and at [carmelartwalk.com](http://carmelartwalk.com).

# MUÑOZ

From page 29A

tenure as executive chef for the Carmel Valley Athletic Club Café, from which he also runs his catering company, Forty Love Catering.

"One morning, I was walking into work, and I heard the tennis players say, 'Forty-love,'" he recalled. "I knew I had just heard the name of my catering company."

In August 2019, the Seaside resident became a United States citizen. Sometimes he considers retiring to Mexico — except he never considers retiring.

*Know someone whose life of accomplishment or adventure would make interesting reading? Please suggest them for Great Lives by emailing [elaine@carmelpinecone.com](mailto:elaine@carmelpinecone.com).*

# AIU

From page 29A

tiple breeds, including Merens (native to the Pyrenees Mountains in France), American-bred stonewall sports-horses, Marwaris (found in India, characterized by ears that come together at the tips, outlining a heart shape), Lusitanos (native to Portugal), and gypsy vanners (characterized by a long, free-flying mane, and an abundance of feathery hair flowing from behind the knees and hocks.

"If you're passionate about your subject matter, I feel like it will show through in your work," Aiu said. "I think that pretty much sums up why I started and continue with the horses."

Her body of work also features artistic renditions of sheep, cows, deer, birds, people, landscapes and seascapes,

# PIT

From page 3A

Foundation would manage one apartment in each building as a low-income unit for seniors. The complexes were designed by architect Erik Dyar.

The project began with the 8,000-square-foot property on the corner, where they demolished a commercial building in 2017 to make way for the first phase of the development, called Del Dono Court 1.

When the building to the south came up for sale, the developers bought it and tore it down in early 2018, with plans for another complex, Del Dono Court 2. The new buildings would share an underground parking garage but would otherwise appear to be separate.

### Lawyers and engineers

Construction began and continued, sometimes at a very slow pace, until the slab for the garage was poured. Then work completely stopped a year ago, and the owners had to rebid the project and obtain a construction loan due to its doubling in size.

But that failed to come together, and realtor Tim Allen agreed to work with Leidig and Draper to find a buyer for the eyesore located at a key downtown intersection.

Subsequently, last November, The Carmel Foundation,

koi and dolphins, among other subjects.

"This area is a treasure. I'll go to Point Lobos, and sometimes I'll stay for hours just trying to catch that beautiful moment," said Aiu, who has been a Carmel resident since 2006 with her high school sweetheart and husband of 40 years, Alex.

### On television

Aiu is a member of ImageMakers (a group of about 60 well known fine-art photographers on in the Monterey Bay area), and a volunteer at Carmel's Center for Photographic Art.

She's had solo shows in Benicia, Napa Valley, Fairfield and Vacaville, and was one of three panelists in 2017 on television's West Coast Focus, an episode that can be found online at [AMPMedia.org](http://AMPMedia.org).

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which owns the Haseltine Court senior housing complex to the west, and the Carmel Art Association, which is just to the south, reported finding cracks and other alarming damage in their buildings which may have resulted from the open pit next door.

Holly Zoller, executive director of the foundation, said lawyers and engineers are involved, and presumably, any buyer would have to negotiate with Leidig and Draper regarding which side takes responsibility for the damage and pays for whatever repairs are necessary.

# HISTORY

From page 30A

15, 1952, leaving a large estate to her three children. Her eldest son had moved to Carmel in 1945 and operated Stallings Stamp Shop in one of his mother's buildings.

As for the Dummage cottage, Mabel sold the building in 1957 and it was moved to a lot on San Carlos just north of Ninth. Mabel had a new commercial building built on the corner. Mary Dummage was one of the powerful women that helped build downtown Carmel, and her family stayed involved for several more years.

*Neal Hotelling has been researching and writing about Monterey County history for more than three decades. His email is [nbhotelling@msn.com](mailto:nbhotelling@msn.com).*



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