

# THE SALINAS Weekend Californian

WEEKEND, FEBRUARY 5-FEBRUARY 6, 2022 | THECALIFORNIAN.COM

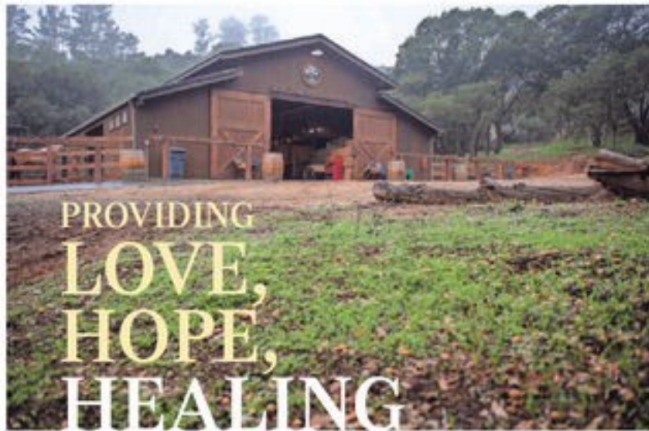
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## Pro-Am Community Day delivers laughs, fun

SPORTS, 1B

"What we do matters. A kid is surviving here. They're making it and what we have done here has helped them to take a next step, to move forward and know they're not alone. There's hope."

Marlo Schalesky, owner, Wonder Wood Ranch



### Wonder Wood Ranch offers treatment for youth grief, trauma

Jocelyn Ortega Salinas Californian | USA TODAY NETWORK

Before getting out of bed, Marlo Schalesky thinks of the new and returning children who will soon visit her at Wonder Wood Ranch. • Outside, the animals are hungry, but first she prays. • She prays for her own six kids, whom she'll soon get ready for school. But she also prays for the dozens of at-risk children that will trickle into her ranch, one by one, after school. • Wonder Wood Ranch is one of few hands-on treatment programs in Monterey County for youth experiencing grief and trauma. Here, the children learn basic cleaning and animal care, archery and horse riding. The idea is that they use the space to practice life skills while having fun.

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Above, the Wonder Wood Ranch barn in Salinas is seen in the early morning of Nov. 4, 2021. At right, Marlo Schalesky stands with one of her rescue horses. PHOTOS BY DAVID RODRIGUEZ / THE SALINAS CALIFORNIAN

## Available visas create opportunity

### Strained US hospitals seek foreign nurses

Amy Taxin  
ASSOCIATED PRESS

With American hospitals facing a dire shortage of nurses amid a slogging pandemic, many are looking abroad for health care workers.

And it could be just in time.

There's an unusually high number of green cards available this year for foreign professionals, including nurses, who want to move to the United States — twice as many as just a few years ago. That's because U.S. consulates shut down during the coronavirus pandemic weren't issuing visas to relatives of American citizens, and, by law, these unused slots now get transferred to eligible workers.

Amy L. Erlacher-Anderson, an immigration attorney in Omaha, Nebraska, said she has seen more demand for foreign nurses in two years than the rest of her 18-year career. And this year, she said, it's more likely they'll get approved to come, so long as U.S. consular offices can process all the applications.

"We have double the number of visas we've had available for decades," she said. "That is kind of temporarily creating a very open situation."

U.S. hospitals are struggling with a shortage of nurses that worsened as pandemic burnout led many to retire or leave their jobs. Meanwhile, coronavirus cases continue to rise and fall, placing tremendous pressure on the health care system. In California alone, there's an estimated gap of 40,000 nurses, or 14% of the workforce, according to a recent report by the University of California, San Francisco.

Hospitals are filling the gap by

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'A story behind every brew'

Former Salinas educator opens brewery. Local & State, 4A

Weather

High 69° & Low 40°  
Sunny. Forecast, 9B

Volume 161 | No. 15  
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