

## HE IS THE EGGMAN

Highland High student, 16, is building small-business empire

BY STEVEN MAYER  
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**H**ighland High School student Ayden Gartenlaub just turned 16, but he may already be contributing to his retirement nest egg.

The soon-to-be high school junior started his business two years ago as a freshman with 12 chickens and a few small coops on his school farm. Now he has 350 hens and is selling an average of 75 to 90 dozen eggs every Saturday at the East Hills Farmers Market in north-east Bakersfield.

The name of his business is Ayden's Eggs. And the secret to his success? A ton of hard work, love for his chickens, and the eggs — which come in several colors — are just plain better, noticeably better, than store-bought eggs.

"It's the freshness," Ayden said as he showed a reporter around at Highland's Agricultural Center across the street from the northeast Bakersfield campus.

Store-bought eggs may be 30 days old before you buy them, he said. Ayden's are usually less than a week old.

"I can definitely tell the difference. They're really good," said customer Lori Clemmons, who said she also likes the idea of supporting a budding young entrepreneur who puts so much work and pride into what he does.

How much work? Every week, Sunday through Thursday, Ayden spends two hours a day feeding, watering, gathering eggs and checking the wellness of his flock, said Ayden's dad, Lyle Gartenlaub.

Every Friday, he spends five to six hours washing, sorting and packaging eggs. In fact, Friday is such a busy day, Ayden needs help from his entire family.

And on the seventh day — you guessed it — he works.

Saturday is farmers market day, when the young farmer transforms into the salesman, engaging with customers, telling the story of why these eggs are not only white and brown, but robin's-egg blue, light green, copper-colored and occasionally, even a blush-rose shade.

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ALEX HORVATH / THE CALIFORNIAN

**Ayden Gartenlaub shares some of his favorite hens; this one is a Polish variety and even though it does not produce as many eggs as other breeds, he stills likes the variety. As he heads into his junior year, Gartenlaub gathers an average of 75 to 90 dozen eggs a week. With a little help from his family, he washes, packages and labels them to sell at the East Hills Farmers Market every Saturday.**



**Cleaned, packaged and labeled, Ayden's Eggs are ready for market. At \$7 a dozen and \$4 a dozen for smaller pullet eggs, the product is significantly more expensive than store-bought eggs. But the high quality and superior texture and flavor keep customers coming back. "I can definitely tell the difference," said return customer Lori Clemmons. "They're really good."**

Please see **CSUB | A3**

### RECREATION

## New park for off-roading in the works

State awards \$380,000 grant to Kern County to scout location

BY SAM MORGEN  
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Off-highway vehicle enthusiasts in Kern County may soon have something to cheer about after years of stagnation.

Kern County officials announced Wednesday the General Services Department had been awarded a \$380,000 grant to begin searching for a location for a new OHV park.

"This is a great opportunity, and it's something that I think a lot of people are really happy and excited for after all this time," said David Walker, a local proponent who helped lead the push for the park. "It's been a long time, but now there's finally movement. It's going in the right direction."

For years, local drivers of dirt bikes and ATVs have said that no legal place to drive the vehicles exists within close proximity to Bakersfield.

While some parks exist in Tulare County and on the edges of Kern, OHV drivers have

Please see **OFF-ROADING | A3**

## Family of girl bit by dog at school is suing BCSD

BY MAUREN STRODE  
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The law firm Chain Cohn Stiles has filed a lawsuit against the Bakersfield City School District on behalf of an 8-year-old girl who was bit on the face by a dog May 9 in her second-grade classroom, leaving her with scars on her face.

Leilani Rivera suffered severe lacerations and tearing to her face when she was attacked by one of two large dogs visiting her classroom at Wayside Elementary School, according to the lawsuit. The dogs belonged to Ann Ardell and Jeffrey Jones, two volunteers with the Community Reading Project, who came into the classroom to read to the students, the lawsuit says.

After the reading was done, the children were allowed to pet the dogs. Leilani went in to give one of the dogs a hug, she said, and the dog bit her in the face, splitting her bottom lip and cutting her right cheek.

The lawsuit, filed Aug. 2, alleges the school district; Dylan Capilla, principal at Wayside Elementary School; Kern County Superintendent

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### BACK TO SCHOOL

**BCSD wellness centers provide free services to students**

**LOCAL | A4**

### POLITICS

**Dems now outnumber GOP registered voters in Orange Co.**

**NATION & WORLD | A6**

### PASSING

**Legendary Wasco, BCHS coach, teacher Frank Thiessen dies at 81**

**SPORTS | B1**

## New CSUB students get first glimpse at college life during orientation

BY EMA SASIC  
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While seeing a rubber chicken fly through the air might not be a typical college campus sighting, it was one of the many activities incoming Cal State Bakersfield students participated in Wednesday to ease their college worries.

Starting college can be an intimidating task for new students. Trying not to get lost on the first day (Aug. 26), meeting

new friends and the pressure of classes and majors are all stressors incoming students face. But CSUB has tried to ease those worries by holding six new student orientations throughout the summer that cover various facets of college life. About 2,200 to 2,300 students have participated in the mandatory orientation.

The day started early at 8 a.m. with a welcome from student leaders, such as Associated Stu-

dent, Incorporated President Aaron Wan, who gave out his cell-phone number to all incoming students, before freshmen and transfers dispersed to different workshops. Students must attend at least four workshops to receive credit for attending.

One of those workshops covered fraternity and sorority life. Current students in Greek life



**Transfer student Fernanda Aguilar, left, and freshman Diana Flores learn about sororities available at Cal State Bakersfield on Wednesday during a new student orientation.**

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### OUTSIDE TODAY

YOUR COMPLETE FORECAST | **B4**



HIGH **96** LOW **66**  
AIR QUALITY **97** | Moderate

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PRICE: \$1



**LOCAL**

**PUBLIC SAFETY**

# Coroner's office: Man found dead in Shafter silo was smothered

THE BAKERSFIELD CALIFORNIAN

The man found dead inside a silo in Shafter June 5 was smothered to death, according to the Kern County coroner's office.

Allen Jeffrey Stracener, 26, of Bakersfield was found in the 18000 block of Zerker Road. The coroner could not determine the manner of Stracener's death.

The time and date of the incident that led to Stracener's death are still unknown by investigators.

**A man died Tuesday after he lost control of his motorcycle.**

At approximately 12:10 p.m., the California Highway Patrol responded to reports of a collision on Bernard Street, west of Cunha Street. A man was riding his mo-

torcycle heading west on Bernard Street at a high speed. CHP said the man was unable to handle a curve due to his speed, causing him to hit a concrete curb, lose control of his motorcycle and hit a chain-link fence.

The man was taken to Kern Medical Center, where he succumbed to his injuries.

The man's identity will be released pending family notification.

**The Kern County Sheriff's Office arrested a man in Barstow on Tuesday who has been wanted for his alleged connection to an April 2018 murder in Rosamond.**

The Sheriff's Office received information that the suspect,

Esteban Briseno, 27, was possibly in Barstow. With the assistance of the Barstow Police Department, Briseno was arrested on suspicion of first degree murder and conspiracy to commit a crime. He remains in custody at the Kern County Jail pending court proceedings.

On April 14, 2018, the Sheriff's Office began to investigate the death of Kyle Ramirez, 31, in Rosamond. Deputies found Ramirez with signs of trauma, dead inside his residence, at the 2000 block of Alexander Avenue.

Jaime Briseno Perez was arrested at the scene and formally charged with murder. He is in custody at the Kern County Jail and is being held on \$1 million bail pending court proceedings.



**The Bakersfield Police Department is asking for the community's assistance in finding a grand theft suspect.**

The incident occurred July 3 at about 10:35 a.m. in the parking lot of 3400 Panama Lane.

Police described the suspect as a 25- to 40-year-old man with a medium build and short dark hair.

Anyone with information is urged to contact Detective Dunn at 326-3876 or the BPD at 327-7111.

**The Bakersfield Police Department is looking for a grand theft suspect. The incident occurred July 3 in the parking lot of 3400 Panama Lane.** CONTRIBUTED



ALEX HORVATH / THE CALIFORNIAN

**A decorated trailer helps draw attention to Ayden's Eggs. The 16-year-old's father, Lyle Gartenlaub, helps with the business. But the Highland High students works every day. See more photos at Bakersfield.com.**

**EGGS**

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After the market closes at 2 p.m., 90 minutes more of feeding and watering rounds out Ayden's Saturdays.

And another seven-day workweek is complete. Until Sunday.

"We just finished incubating 150 chickens," Ayden's dad said with a chuckle. "My wife wasn't too happy having a huge incubator in the living room."

Ayden is not sure exactly how many varieties of chickens he has, but they include americana, leghorns, Rhode Island reds, buckeye reds, sebrights and many others.

"This guy is Freddie. He's the rooster I showed at the Kern County Fair last year," Ayden said of a handsome buckeye.

He won first place in "the perfect egg" category that year.

As an A-student, a sousaphone player in marching band and a defensive lineman for the Scots football team, something had to give.

After the demands of his business became too much, Ayden decided he had to drop out of football.

"He's a hoot," his dad says of Ayden. "He's funny, silly, smart, articulate. He's a great kid."

Amber Carter, an FFA adviser and ag teacher at Highland, said Ayden's project has been an inspiration for other students.

"A lot of students don't think they have



**Highland High School student Ayden Gartenlaub raises 18 different varieties of hens at the school's agricultural center.**

anything to offer in ag. Ayden's project shows them what can be done.

"This is his life," Carter said. "He's extremely passionate about doing this, and he's really good at it."

Ayden's mom, Marianne, said she's impressed that, even after the newness and novelty have worn off, her son continues to want to commit to his business.

"He loves his chickens," Marianne said. And it's a darned good thing he does.

Steven Mayer can be reached at 661-395-7353. Follow him on Facebook and on Twitter: @semayerTBC.



**Cleaned, packaged and labeled, these cartons of Ayden's Eggs are ready for market.**

**CSUB**

Continued from **PAGE A1**

organizations led the workshop, which focused on what exactly fraternities and sororities are, which ones are available on campus and their philanthropic missions. Students also played ice breakers, which included flinging rubber chickens in the air and catching them in a bucket.

Fernanda Aguilar, a transfer student majoring in sociology, and Diana Flores, a freshman majoring in criminal justice, said they were interested in joining a sorority because they want to meet people they would not meet in their major alone.

"I transferred from a tech college, and I would just go to class and go home and I never really met anyone," Aguilar said. "I want to meet new friends and I want to do some community service. I've been looking for ways to get involved with that."

Attending an orientation before school begins Aug. 26 was helpful, but both are still experiencing the usual butterflies.

"It's not the same school that I'm used to," said Flores, who graduated from Robert F. Kennedy High School in Delano this spring. "I'm excited, but I don't know what to expect."

"My sister came here and it was different from community college," Aguilar added. "Though I have some college experience, it's bigger here, and the classes are different."

Those looking to stay active explored the Student Recreation Center and learned about various fitness classes and facilities on campus. Director Mary O'Mahoney explained the center will have different trips and activities — beach days, Yosemite National Park, Kern River, horseback riding, bungee jumping — planned for students this year. Students could barely contain their excitement when they toured the grounds and saw a high ropes challenge course and rock climbing wall are on campus.

"I'm looking forward to all the different adventures," said Grace Bola, a freshman biology major.

But it won't be all fun and games once classes start. Bola and other students realize a new school year means new responsibilities will be on their shoulders.

"I'll have to make so many decisions on everything, and every single one has repercussions," she said. "It's kind of scary," but making new friends and possibly studying abroad during her time at CSUB help ease those worries.

In addition to taking students across campus and leading workshops, current CSUB students were on hand to offer advice. Student Recreation Center marketing assistant Nico Salum said students should strive to get connected with others in their majors and departments and join student organizations because "they have given me the resources I needed and they helped me with my social life."

But the biggest tip he could offer to students is it's OK to ask for help.

"They get intimidated, especially freshmen," he said, "but there are resources for whatever the issue is, and there are other students who might be experiencing that same problem."

There are 10,839 students enrolled as of Aug. 1, but the total student count will change as the school year progresses.

**OFF-ROADING**

Continued from **PAGE A1**

been known to illegally trespass on public and private land to take part in their hobby.

"What (the park) is going to do, is it will relieve tensions of people that are riding out in the foothills where they shouldn't be riding," said James Robertson, sales manager for Fred Cummings Motorsports. "Hopefully it will be family oriented, and at least be close by. So within 10 or 15 minutes you can be out and having a good time with your family."

The grant will allow the county to hire a

consultant to find a potential location for the park.

At first, land that is already owned by the county will be considered, with officials only looking beyond if the search yields no results.

"There's going to be a lot of different groups that have different opinions so we want to make sure that we use an expert," said Carl Brewer, Senior CAO Manager for the General Services Division.

The grant requires that the location be within 100 miles of Bakersfield, but OHV advocates hope for it to be much closer.

"It's got to be close enough that you can get to it, and it's got to be far enough away

that it's not going to be a nuisance," Walker said.

Efforts to create a park have started and stopped with little success for at least 15 years. In 2006, county officials approved an 11,000-acre location at Wofford Ranch north of Bakersfield for an OHV park only to have the state kill the project after the property's soil was determined to be likely contaminated with valley fever spores and other issues were discovered.

Environmentalist groups opposed the 2006 park location, citing concerns over air quality and potential damage to nearby Poso Creek.

The new location could inflame similar

concerns.

The county hopes to find the new location by the end of the year, and the state's grant will cover the environmental impact report for the new site.

If the environmental report indicates few issues with the area, the county will pursue another grant from the state to build the park itself.

"I think it's a big win for the community," Brewer said. "The OHV community has been fighting for this for a long time."

Sam Morgen can be reached at 661-395-7415. Follow him on Twitter: @smorgenTBC.

**DOG BITE**

Continued from **PAGE A1**

dent of Schools; and the Kern County Office of Education were negligent in allowing Leilani to come into contact with the dogs and consequently get bit by one of them. The lawsuit also alleges the school district was negligent in allowing Ardell and Jones to bring the dogs into the school.

The lawsuit is seeking coverage of Lei-

lani's medical bills and other damages, but does not specify a dollar amount except that it is more than \$25,000.

"This little girl is scared to go back to school," attorney Matthew Clark said. "It's the last thing you want to see in your kid," especially someone who "admittedly loved" going to school, Clark added.

The scars on her face are noticeable, Clark said. He added Leilani will have to deal with people asking her what happened to cause those scars.

"That's making her have to relive what she went through every day," Clark said. "That's tough."

Irma Cervantes, BCSD's public information officer, declined to comment on the case Wednesday.

Clark also said the two dogs, named Fred and Barney, were either Akitas or Chows. They should have never been allowed into a classroom due to their "vicious propensity to attack members of the general public," the lawsuit alleges.

"How that happened, I don't know," Clark said. "Somebody had to see them bringing the dogs on campus."

A case management conference is scheduled for January, and Clark estimates the trial may be scheduled to begin in the later months of 2020 or early months of 2021. BCSD did not respond to a claim previously filed on behalf of Leilani, allowing the lawsuit to now be filed.

"We think the system is going to do this young woman justice," Clark said.