



SANTA BARBARA NEWS-PRESS

Wednesday, May 2, 2018

SEARCH


[Home](#) [Local](#) [Sports](#) [Nation/World](#) [Editorials](#) [Opinions-Letters](#) [Obituaries](#) [Real Estate](#) [Classifieds](#) [Special Publications](#) [Archives](#)

News-Press subscribers who reside in evacuated areas can pick up the printed newspaper from our downtown office

Life

Home » Life



Just like dogs

Friendly animals to greet visitors at Goat Fest 2018

By DAVE MASON, NEWS-PRESS STAFF WRITER

May 2, 2018 5:39 AM

Norman jumped up on a table, then quietly sneaked up on Linda Cole as she directed her attention to his brother, Sammy. He started to play with her hair, and the surprised Montecito resident turned around with a smile.

"You're being a bad boy!" Ms. Cole, founder and executive director of local nonprofit African Women Rising, told Norman. He didn't heed her admonishment and started to untie two visitors' shoelaces and pull at one of their coat pockets.

Norman sure is a mischievous kid.

To be more precise, Norman and Sammy are the 9-month-old offspring of Hazel, a mellow goat whose color, of course, is hazel. She ignored the excitement behind her and focused on eating hay in a net hanging from a tree at the home of their owners, Montecito couple Stacy and Mike McCrory.

"They're amazing pets," Mr. McCrory told the News-Press as Norman, who's very friendly, raised his right hoof for a visitor to shake. "They're as good as dogs, and they eat all the weeds."

Sammy, Hazel and five or so other friendly goats will greet people during Goat Fest 2018. (Norman plans to stay at home and chill.)

African Women Rising will host the second annual fundraiser from 2 to 5 p.m. Sunday at Ms. Cole's Montecito home.

Visitors will pet and feed goats in various enclosures; picnic outside; look at baskets, blankets and other goods in an Africa-inspired marketplace; and hear the

Share Story

facebook

Tweet



As Linda Cole pets Sammy at a Montecito home, Norman unexpectedly starts to play with her hair. Ms. Cole has organized Goat Fest 2018, a fundraiser for African Women Rising.

KENNETH SONG/NEWS-PRESS PHOTOS



In addition to goats, the African-themed Goat Fest 2018 will feature beads, baskets, blankets and more.

Translate Website



Select Language

Powered by [Google Translate](#)

Related Stories

- UCSB students find their space at Ventura campus
[ARCHIVE](#) Aug 19, 2001
- Santa Maria Police Department to conduct DUI checkpoint
[ARCHIVE](#) Jan 14, 2012
- Hoffmans file suit over Tea Fire
[ARCHIVE](#) Nov 10, 2010
- Social Security disability benefits
[ARCHIVE](#) Sep 30, 2014
- On your mark, get set, DANCE!
[ARCHIVE](#) Feb 11, 2015
- Former gang member encourages local students
[ARCHIVE](#) Sep 1, 2012
- ASKED AND ANSWERED : Do the religious beliefs of a candidate play a role in whether you vote for that person?
[ARCHIVE](#) Dec 10, 2007
- Letters: Who's having the last laugh?
[ARCHIVE](#) Feb 27, 2015
- MICHAEL ON THEIR MIND
[ARCHIVE](#) Jun 26, 2010
- ON STAGE: Springtime Follies - THE AGES 50-AND-UP PERFORMANCE TROUPE, SANTA BARBARA SILVER FOLLIES, BRINGS ITS SPRING VARIETY SHOW WITH A TRAVELING THEME, 'TRAVEL THE WORLD'
[ARCHIVE](#) Mar 14, 2014

Grammy-nominated San Francisco band Alphabet Rockers.

Festival participants also can buy products that Fillmore-based Chivas Skin Care makes from goat's milk and learn how to craft handmade bracelets from Ugandan beads.

Food will be provided by The Honey B, Oak Bakery, The Welcome Coffee Cart, Papa's Peppers and McConnell's Fine Ice Creams.

Ms. Cole, 45, told the News-Press why she chose a goat theme for her benefit for her nonprofit, which is working with 8,000 women in northern Uganda, one of the areas impacted by African wars.

Africans invest in goats for financial stability, she said. "It's like your retirement insurance. If you get sick and need access to medical care, you can sell a goat. If you're sending your kid to school, you can sell a goat. It's a good investment because they multiply."

"Goats are very important in these communities," Ms. Cole said. "These women have lost everything. They've gone through war, and they've lost their possessions and their homes. Many of them have lost family members.

"Most of the livestock has been killed," she continued. "Rebuilding from that is a very slow process."

About 150 people came last year to the first Goat Fest, which raised \$5,000 for African Women Rising.

"It's not a big fundraising event," Ms. Cole admitted. "It's more of a chance for people to learn about our organization."

The Montecito nonprofit and its 150-employee staff in Uganda are helping women with "micro-financing," which includes training in using capital and savings, and adult literacy. The nonprofit also is working to provide access to primary and secondary education for girls in rural areas.

African Women Rising emphasizes helping women in agriculture.

"Most women have maybe one or two acres to farm. It's important that they farm intensively and productively," Ms. Cole said. "We teach basic methods of soil fertility and water conservation that help people increase their yield."

African Women Rising also helps women to develop small kitchen gardens that provide food during the two or three months between planting their outdoor garden and harvesting it, said Ms. Cole, who has devoted her career to helping Africa.

She assisted communities while living in the 1990s in Guinea-Bissau, Angola and Mozambique.

After that, she moved to Santa Barbara and earned a bachelor's degree in international and global studies, with a minor in women culture and development, at UCSB in 2004.

Ms. Cole lived in Tanzania in 2005.

She returned to the U.S. and received a master's degree in humanitarian assistance at Tufts University in Medford, Mass., in 2006.

The same year, she started African Women Rising.

"I started working in northern Uganda. At that point, they were in the tail end of a 20-year-old conflict, and about 1.8 million people were displaced," Ms. Cole said.

She lived in Uganda until 2010 before moving to Montecito, where she has continued to oversee her dream of helping Africa.

Goats are helping African Women Rising with that dream — and more.



"They're as good as dogs, and they eat all the weeds," said Mike McCrory about his pets, which include the friendly but mischievous Norman.



Hazel eats from a net full of hay. The goat has managed to stay mellow despite her responsibilities as the mother of Norman and Sammy. "Hazel is the coolest mom," Mr. McCrory said. "I don't how she handles it."

Mr. McCrory, co-owner of Norman, Sammy and Hazel and a friend of Ms. Cole, said goats are therapeutic.

"My wife is a therapist. At the end of the day, they save her. She sits with them," Mr. McCrory said, looking at the couple's spectacular view of the Montecito hills.

"They jump up in a chair and watch the sunset."

email: dmason@newspress.com

FYI

African Women Rising will host Goat Fest 2018 from 2 to 5 p.m. Sunday at a Montecito home.

Tickets cost \$25 for adults and \$15 for children.

To purchase, go to www.africanwomenrising.org/2017/04/08/goatfest/.

Home

Local News

Breaking News
Business
Celebrations
Columnists
Life
Sports
Scene

Editorials

Opinions & Letters

Obituaries

Travel

Special Publications

Parade Magazine

Classifieds

Place your Ad
Real Estate
Rentals
Employment
Announcements
Merchandise
Garage Sales
More

Real Estate

Finance
House & Home
Open Home Directory
Commercial Properties
Rentals

Archives

Events Calendar

Site Index

Weather
Traffic
Arrest Logs
RSS Feeds
Gas Prices

Contact Us

Contact News
Pay Your Bill
Advertising Information
Elected Representatives
TV Listings
FAQ
Front Page
Virtual Edition

Follow us on:



Facebook



Twitter