

## LOMA VISTA

## Comics, musicians band together for Loma Vista Farm

GoFundMe closing in on \$20,000

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The vicious attack by two dogs that killed three alpacas at Loma Vista Farm in north Vallejo was traumatic for staff, volunteers and, assuredly, the remaining animals.

But the Feb. 8 tragedy also sparked significant support, both emotionally and financially. With a GoFundMe campaign closing in on \$20,000, a sold-out pasta feed fundraiser this Saturday expecting to net another \$5,000, and an April 1 "Music & Mirth" benefit at the Empress Theatre in downtown Vallejo, Loma Vista Farm board president Julia Allen is grateful.

Also, Mayor Bob Sampayan presented a proclamation this week to Allen acknowledging the farm's importance to the entire county and beyond.

The support, Allen said, "has been nothing short of phenomenal."

Longtime volunteer and Loma Vista Farm board member Arlene Hoffmann concurred.

"So many people stepping up, it is truly wonderful to see the support and concern," Hoffmann said.

Equally positive is the status of the animals injured in the attack, including a goat and a sheep.

The prognosis is "excellent" for the injured animals, said Dr. Claudia Sonder, the Loma Vista Farm veterinarian from Napa Valley Equine.

Though it was touch-and-go on a goat, "Dedee," and a sheep, "Lucy," "the injured animals are doing really well. They're healing great," said Sonder.

Hoffmann said the community response to the tragedy "has been outstanding."

Hoffmann's husband, John, helped build the Loma Vista chicken coops in 1988 and the couple became full-fledged volunteers in 1993. Arlene's been a board member since 2006.

When she got word of the dog attack, "it was devastating," she said. "Such beautiful and peaceful animals to be taken so cruelly and not be able to do anything is a terrible feeling."

Two of the performers in the April 1 fundraiser, stand-up comic Johnny Steele and percussionist Jeff Campitelli, took an hour-long tour of Loma Vista last week.

Steele said news of the alpaca deaths "was pretty depressing."

"Loma Vista is a sanctuary, a place for animals to live without having to fear for their lives," Steele said. "This kind of thing is something that just isn't supposed to happen. My first thought was that they were likely going to be hit with a bunch of vet bills and other expenses and that we should come together and help out with a night of entertainment."

As a vegetarian or vegan since 1984, Steele considers himself a devoted animal rights activist.

"Earth is a livings hell for



RICH FREEDMAN — TIMES-HERALD

Benicia drummer Jeff Campitelli is thrilled with the progress of Dedee, a pygmy goat injured in the Feb. 8 dog attack at Loma Vista Farm. Campitelli is one of the performers at an April 1 fund-raiser for the farm at the Empress Theatre.

most animals, certainly for livestock, billions of whom live miserable, short lives," Steele said. "Animals have a wide range of emotions and a great deal of intelligence. Certainly more than most of my family members."

When Campitelli heard of the dog attack, "Of course, I thought it was horrible."

The April 1 event also includes the comedy of Joe Klocek and Will Durst of San Francisco and music

by The Foxcatchers — Fairfield's Chris Cole and Jeff Tameller of Antioch. Vallejo Times-Herald Community Editor Richard Freedman hosts.

"It's a terrible thing to have happened," noted Klocek. "I hope we can bring some awareness and lighten the grief with some laughs."

"I think it's important to give back...especially if it's for a cause where you can actually see a result," Cole

said. "It has to be something I believe in."

The Empress show is sponsored by the Times-Herald, Napa River Realty, and Victory Stores and includes a raffle for two tickets to the sold-out BottleRock music festival in Napa.

Steele said anyone in the area with or without children should visit Loma Vista.

"What a great little place," he said. "I'm think-

ing of moving in. The way Bay Area home prices are going, I may end up rooming with one of the new alpacas."

For more information about the April 1 fundraiser, visit [empresstheatre.org](http://empresstheatre.org). To contribute to the GoFundMe campaign, visit [gofundme.com/loma-vista-farm](http://gofundme.com/loma-vista-farm).

Contact reporter Richard Freedman at 707-553-6820.

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