

# MANY GRATEFUL FOR LOMA VISTA RETURN



PHOTOS BY RICH FREEDMAN — TIMES-HERALD

Mason Curtola, 5, peeks to see Angel the bunny while his brother, Milo, 3, looks on Friday afternoon at Loma Vista Farm.

## Pandemic time 'like a ghost town'

By Richard Freedman  
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Loma Vista Farm, as it turns out, is more than an animal sanctuary. It's also a human sanctuary.

The 5-acre home to horses, cows, pigs, chickens, sheep, alpacas, goats and bunnies in north Vallejo re-opened this past Thursday, roughly 16 months after the pandemic shut out inquisitive kids and nostalgic grown-ups.

Nobody is happier than "Farmer" Rita LeRoy, the farm's fixture since she was a wide-eyed college student in 1990 and who has become as recognizable at Loma Vista as the Pope is at the Vatican.

Perhaps fitting, since several visitors Friday afternoon believe the school district-owned

farm has ties to the heavens.

"These are all God's creatures," said Kim Curtola, grandma to farm first-timers Mason, 5, and Milo, 3.

It's about the kids learning to respect and appreciate the animals and yes, "a little nostalgia," Curtola said.

"I used to come and bring their dad when he was little," she said, grateful "that there are still good people who want good things for Vallejo and people who care about the animals. And if you care about the animals, you're good people. I do wish more people would come out and help and donate. It's a beautiful place for children."

If kids are raised with animals, "they respect animals," Curtola said. "And this is a good place for them to start.



'Farmer' Rita LeRoy, in her 30th year at Loma Vista Farm, points out the new alpaca barn expected to be completed in the next week.

Kids need to learn to be kind to nature, be kind to plants, be kind to animals."

No disagreement from Ash-

ley Magee, bringing her kids ages 3 and 4 to the farm for the first time while recalling

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