

15 MINUTES

Creating wonder

Oscar Magaña Jr. knows Hollywood. He worked there for four years as a regular extra in television and film series (e.g., *Bones*, *Iron Man 3*). The Biggs native has been back in Butte County for several years, but for the past 2 1/2 has been working on the next chapter of his career: as the owner, producer and director of Wunderworks Multimedia & Hispanic Marketing. He creates and edits photo and video for businesses and special events, such as weddings, as well as for budding performers, actors and those seeking athletic scholarships. Magaña continues to act in local theater productions as well. For examples of his work or to inquire about the services he offers, find him on Facebook @WunderworksMultimedia or email wunderworkscalifornia@gmail.com.

How did you come up with your business name?

It's an homage to *Willy Wonka & the Chocolate Factory* and *Mr. Magorium's Wonder Emporium*. I think of a giant toy factory, but instead of just making toys we make all things wonderful. Things that wouldn't normally happen on the outside world happen inside Wunderworks Multimedia studios.

What sets you apart?

What I'm offering is \$150 [per hour] packages. In the session, you get the photos—I have a white, black and green [screen]—but you're also going to get video if you want a reel. And you get the basic directorial coaching from me. I'm teaching you what to expect, so that you're ready and you kind of get over the fear of the camera, too.

Why do this in Butte County?

[Butte County] is home. I knew that I had this talent pool that nobody else is using [outside of theater]. I lived inside the Emerald City for years. Now I'm coming back and I'm saying, "Hey, guys, let me show you what I learned." I felt like if I did that, then we would have this base of Chico people and we could all take control of our own careers and we make

PHOTO BY ASHIAH SCHARAGA



the shows, we don't let Hollywood dictate. Like me: "You're too tall. And you're Mexican? Oh, no, we can't use you." 'Cause in their world, Mexicans don't look like me. That's tough. I felt like if I was ever going to make a breakthrough that I needed to take some control. It's like, OK, so then, I guess I gotta make my own show. We get people to invest in us, talent-wise. Those people down there are not any more talented than people here.

What's your goal?

Someday I just hope to go and make TV shows and movies. But right now, Wunderworks is the bigger picture. I want to ... collaborate with people ... and maybe get a creation space. [It] would be great to have a studio or stages where not only we're producing stuff, but they're [also] for rent. If you're a member, you can go in and use the green screen anytime you want, use the audio booth and the recording rooms for bands. I think that would help people do more stuff: You build a playground, someone's going to come play.

—ASHIAH SCHARAGA
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THE GOODS

Wine Week preview



by
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I try to take advantage of any opportunity I can to get out of Chico and explore some of the smaller nearby cities and towns and discover new getaways. So, a couple of weeks ago, I jumped at the chance to head south for the **North Sierra Wine Trail**.

As I'd traveled the trail before—some five or so years ago—as well as the **Sierra Oro Farm Trail**, which includes some of the same stops, I already was somewhat familiar with a few of the wineries taking part in the festivities. So, in planning my adventure, I chose to start in Oregon House, at the **Frenchtown Inn**—one of the farthest locations on the trail and one I'd never been to.

Turns out, the inn was a good place to begin, as multiple area wineries were pouring there, including my favorite of the day, **Renaissance Vineyard & Winery**. (All of their selections were top-notch, but the best—and the one I purchased—was a 2012 Cabernet reserve.) The folks pouring expounded on the terroir in Renaissance wines. That's partially due to the Sierra foothills winery's low-yield farming practices that infuse the grapes with the flavor and nutrients from the earth.

My other purchase of the day happened at the inn as well, as the fabulous **Apollo Olive Oil** folks were also on-hand. The oils have a similarly distinct terroir—they also are farmed at the Renaissance estate—but I'd been craving Apollo's sweet yet full-bodied Balsamic Condiment. It's sweet, tangy and truly unique—and only available directly through the company (apollooliveoil.com).

From there, I visited a few additional locations—**Lucero Vineyards & Winery** in Dobbins, and **Bangor Ranch Vineyard and Winery** and **Spencer-Shirey Wines** in Bangor. I was disappointed to learn that several spots on the map, including the Renaissance estate, weren't actually open that weekend and instead were pouring elsewhere. That, plus an infuriating drive through Dobbins due to my GPS sending me to the wrong place, rendered me out of time to hit any other spots.

Lucero was notable for its tasting-room food and delightful covered patio, Spencer-Shirey for its wine-food pairings, and Bangor Ranch for its impressive grounds. They're all worth a visit—and they've all been invited to participate in **Butte County Wine Week** next month, June 7-16. Speaking of, any area wineries, restaurants, bars and retailers that wish to list an event in the Chico News & Review's Wine Week calendar should go to buttecountywineweek.com for more info. Hope to see all you wine lovers then!

EXPANSION TIME One of Chico's biggest companies, **Lulus**, is getting even bigger. The online fashion retailer announced last month that it's opening a 250,000-square-foot warehouse in Palmer Township, Penn. It plans to hire hundreds of employees at the new facility, which will help improve shipping times to customers on the East Coast. Congrats!

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