

Attachment D

Carina Dee Velazquez is our first born child. She was born at Cottage Hospital on March 28, 1999. We raised her in Santa Ynez her whole life. She grew up a regular, happy little girl. The oldest of three, she enjoyed her time playing with her brother, sister and outside with her pets. Carina loved animals like her dog and parakeets, but had an extreme love for cats. She could tell you the differences in most of the breeds.

Carina started her school career as a "Bobcat" at the Santa Ynez College school, k-8 and then moved on to the S.Y. Union Valley High School as a "Pirate", like her Grandparents ,classes of '70-'71 and us (her parents) classes of '92-'93. Carina would have been class of 2018.

On March 26, 2015 Carina was walking home from a F F A meeting at the high school and was struck by a car driven by a woman returning home to Lompoc from the Chumash casino, on the corner of Hwy 246 and Refugio Rd. The driver did not see her. She was taken to S B Cottage Hospital. After what seemed like forever her mother and I had to make the worst decisions of our lives and take her off life support. She passed away minutes later as we held her hand , having never woken up from her coma. She died 1 day before her 16th birthday. Her request was to go camping with friends and family for her party. We were already packing for the trip and she had planned her menu which we now have cooked, on her birthday, every year since we lost her.

I guess what saddens me the most is that at the time of her death she was just beginning to blossom and come out of her shell. She was always good at home and with friends but a bit shy with strangers and new situations. She was in her first year in high school, making new friends, joining clubs and starting to express herself more and more. As a parent you are supposed to teach your kids, but in the months prior to her passing I felt I was learning from her. The best way to sum her up, I feel, is ironically in her own words. When her class was asked to answer a question...

Q - " If I die tomorrow, how do you want to be remembered?"

A - " If I die tomorrow, how I what to be remembered is, to my parents, a loving daughter, to my siblings, an equal sister and to my friends, a friend"

-Carina

It has been 8+ years since we have lost our daughter and we have been missing a piece of our hearts every day. My hope is that the path will be a safe place for people to walk and ride bikes , away from traffic and that no other families have to suffer the loss of a family member in this way. I / we would like to have Carina's name on the path so that she is not forgotten! Hopefully putting her name on it will increase awareness of the hazards of walking on the road and will make it more real as to what can happen in a flash if you let your guard down. The high school has forever had student athletes run laps on the roads and streets around the neighborhoods close to the school and so many residents also walk dogs, jog, bike,ect. The path is just a simple, long overdue step toward safety that most people didn't even know they needed or wanted, including drivers that often go into the oncoming lane to avoid people on the shoulder. There have been many people hit if not killed in close proximity of the school over the 49 years I have lived in the valley including a boy I went to school with, that got his leg broke, getting hit by a car crossing to the market at lunch and a man not too many years ago was killed, early morning jogging, by a newspaper delivery person.

- Joe Velazquez
9-8-23

So on a related side note, if anyone reading this has any power to ,knows someone with the power to, or needs a pet project in the Santa Ynez Valley, more safety measures need to be taken around the highschool. In the past 8+ years the only thing that has been done is the speed limit has been reduced by 10 mph. The valley has grown so much and now with the Casino literally down the street, traffic has increased dramatically. I and I'm sure many of the residents would greatly appreciate it if someone, anyone would check into the possibility of adding digital radar speed signs as a visual reminder for drivers, flashing lights at the cross walks for increased visibility or even some type of posts/barriers on the corners of the intersection for pedestrians to have more piece of mind while waiting to cross the street. A signal light and crosswalk directly in front of the market to the back parking lot of the school, that would also help with the morning drop off and afternoon pick up of students. Also a path from the YMCA to downtown Santa Ynez (no walkable path exists right now, just a narrow shoulder). I realize some of these things would be a big ask and would take time and a lot of money, but hopefully we can get the ball rolling on something.

I thank you for your time and especially thank any of you that affect any real increased safety and upgrades to our little part of this county. I'm sure the residents of the surrounding cities whose children / grandchildren are or will attend the SYUVHS would very much appreciate a timely solution.

Sincerely
Jose Velazquez Jr
(Carina's father)
8-19-23