

## People &amp; Places

## Making cheese with a small footprint

By JULIA HOLLISTER  
For the Capital Press

WILLITS, Calif. — Shamrock Artisan cheese-makers Gilbert and Ana Cox have been practicing their art of cheese making for over 37 years.

It all began with their daughter's 4-H project goat named "Manna Bitsy."

They have been raising dairy goats since 1972 and in the cheese and dairy business since 1985, originally in Carmel Valley as Carmel Valley Chevre, she said.

"We moved our business to Mendocino County in 2001," Ana said. "Mendocino County is a wonderful pro-agriculture county that has welcomed our business with open arms and great enthusiasm."

The herd of 164 Alpine, La Macha and Nubian goats graze on 130 acres. The goats are fed hay grown on the ranch and are milked twice a day.

"Every batch of cheese is made with top-quality milk," Cox said.

The array of cheese is made entirely on the farm. The menu includes Plain Chevre, Basil Chevre Feta, Shamrock Bouchon, Garlic Chevre, Chive Chevre, Ashed Tomette, Dill Chevre, Jalapeno Chevre and Tome du Mendocino.

"We are a farmstead operation," she said. "We produce the milk, and the cheese is made in our creamery. We are environmentally friendly and the cheese mirrors that."

The cheeses are hand-made and hand-packaged, she said.

The goats are fed the whey that is left over from



Gilbert Cox  
**California Assemblyman Jim Wood, D-Santa Rosa, visits Shamrock Artisan Cheese owner Ana Cox at the farm in Willits.**

the cheese making.

"They love it, it's also good for them, and it means we don't have to dispose of it," she said. "All our cheeses are made with vegetable rennet and not from animal sources."

The farm also recycles the water used in manufacturing, she said. "In short, we leave as small a carbon footprint as possible," Cox said.

The farm even has fans in the state Capitol.

"One of the most fun parts of my job as a California Assembly member is traveling throughout Assembly District 2, which spans five counties and runs from Santa Rosa to the Oregon border," said Assembly

member Jim Wood, D-Santa Rosa.

"A while back, I visited Shamrock Artisan Goat Cheese in Willits, where they create awesome farmstead cheeses, hand-crafted in the heart of beautiful Mendocino County. I met with Ana Cox, who with her husband Gilbert operates the farm."

Small farms play a big role in his district, he said.

"Small businesses are the bedrock of the counties I have the honor to represent, and I'm always so impressed with the dedication and quality these businesses bring to our communities and, in this case, while preserving family farming," he said.

Shamrock Artisan sells its cheese at many regional markets, including local health food stores and co-ops.



**Western  
Innovator**

**ANA COX**

**Hometown:** Willits, Calif.

**Occupation:** Rancher and dairy woman, Shamrock Artisan Goat Cheese

**Family:** Husband, Gilbert Cox, who is also the cheesemaker, and two adult children,

**Quote:** "We at Shamrock Artisan Goat Cheese are committed to maintaining a family farm and producing high-quality artisan cheese."

member Jim Wood, D-Santa Rosa.

"A while back, I visited Shamrock Artisan Goat Cheese in Willits, where they create awesome farmstead cheeses, hand-crafted in the heart of beautiful Mendocino County. I met with Ana Cox, who with her husband Gilbert operates the farm."

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## Farmer-photographer shuttles from Oregon hazelnut orchard to war zone near Ukraine

By CRAIG REED  
For the Capital Press

ELKTON, Ore. — When Robin Loznak is not in his quiet hazelnut orchard along the Umpqua River, he might be found in a totally different environment.

Loznak's side job as a photojournalist has taken him to areas devastated by earthquakes, hurricanes, oil spills, tornados, wildfires and war. As an independent contractor, he's made several trips with Heart to Heart International teams, most recently in mid-March and in early May to eastern European countries that border Ukraine, a country that has been at war since Russia invaded it in late February.

"I specialize as a photographer, videographer and communicator," said Loznak. "My job is to show how Heart to Heart International is responding — to get photos and videos pushed out to the media and to social media so Heart to Heart stakeholders, donors and partners can see what is happening on the ground."

Heart to Heart International was founded in 1992 and is a global humanitarian organization based in

Lenexa, Kan. According to its website, the organization's mission is "to improve healthcare access around the world by ensuring quality care is provided equitably in medically under-resourced communities in disaster situations."

Loznak explained that Heart to Heart typically doesn't respond to conflicts, but did in this case with a goal of helping Ukraine refugees as they arrived in neighboring countries. During the March trip, the team visited a border crossing in Romania and a crossing in Moldova. At both sites, Ukraine refugees were being given hot food, drinks and access to medical services.

Heart to Heart had a \$19 million shipment of medical supplies shipped to Romania and then HOPE Worldwide, another international nonprofit, figured out the logistics and transportation for getting the supplies to refugees or to those in need in Ukraine. HOPE Worldwide's mission is serving the poor and needy around the world.

Loznak took photos and videos of refugees coming across the border and receiving



Courtesy of Robin Loznak  
**A shipment of medical supplies by Heart to Heart International is unloaded near a Ukrainian border crossing. The supplies are intended to help Ukrainian refugees who are fleeing a war zone.**

ing services.

After a week's visit, the Heart to Heart team drove to Poland for its scheduled trip back to the U.S., but Loznak, who was vaccinated, tested positive for COVID. He had to quarantine in a motel room for seven days before receiving a doctor's approval to fly home.

Loznak was able to get on a tractor and mow grass down the rows of his hazelnut orchard before flying out to Slovakia, another country that borders Ukraine, on

May 4. The purpose of this trip for the Heart to Heart team was to meet with The Gorta Group, an Irish nonprofit that specializes in providing medical and humanitarian supplies into conflict zones.

Although the Heart to Heart team did not intend to enter Ukraine during this trip, on short notice the three members did drive 5 miles over the border to Uzhhorod to meet with Gorta officials. This area had had no previous war activities, but then air raid

sirens went off during the meeting.

The team and others moved to a bomb shelter below a restaurant, continuing their meeting, before the all-clear signal was given 90 minutes later. No bombs fell and the Heart to Heart team returned to Slovakia where a \$16 million shipment of medical supplies was documented and transferred to Gorta for delivery into Ukraine.

The team returned home May 10.

"My past experience as a news photographer really helps with my ability to be quick in getting information out from disaster zones," said Loznak. "I spent 20 years documenting small community events and now I want to be there and to document important events around the world."

"I feel using my photographic skills is helpful," he added. "I believe what Heart to Heart is doing is valuable and important. My photographs and videos are showing the world what is going on and allows people to open their hearts to help Heart to Heart provide even more care. I seriously do feel good about what we're doing and that documenting it is important."

## CALENDAR

Submit upcoming ag-related events on [www.capitalpress.com](http://www.capitalpress.com) or by email to [newsroom@capitalpress.com](mailto:newsroom@capitalpress.com).

**SUNDAY-TUESDAY JUNE 26-28**

**Western Governors' Association Annual Meeting:** Coeur d'Alene, Idaho. The meeting will focus on public conversations about the most significant issues facing the region. Website: <https://www.westgov.org>

**TUESDAY JUNE 28**

**What is Shelf Life and Shelf Life Extensions (online)?** 2-3 p.m. Food Manufacturing Specialist Catherine Cantley of TechHelp and the University of Idaho will host a free one-hour webinar on Shelf Life. Website: <https://www.techhelp.org/event/shelf-life/> Contact: 208-863-4259

**WEDNESDAY JUNE 29**

**Caneberry Field Day:** 1 p.m. North Willamette Research & Extension Center, 15210 NE Miley Road, Aurora, Ore. Sponsored by the Oregon Raspberry and Blackberry Commission and the Oregon State University Extension.

tion. Meet at the Columbia Star research plot (directly south of the main building; follow signs). Come early to have time to pick up handouts. Contact: Darcy Kochis, 503-208-5589, [darcy@oregon-berries.com](mailto:darcy@oregon-berries.com) Website: <http://extension.oregonstate.edu/NWREC/>

**WEDNESDAY-SATURDAY JULY 6-9**

**National Onion Association Summer Convention:** Grove Hotel, 245 S. Capitol Blvd., Boise. Discussion topics to include updates to food-safety guidelines for dry bulb onions, immigration reform, USDA National Potato and Onion Report methodology. Industry facility tours planned. Registration price to increase after June 15. Website: <https://bitly/3M8SgH7>

**JULY 15-31**

**California State Fair & Food Festival:** Cal Expo, 1600 Exposition Blvd., Sacramento, Calif. The California State Fair is dedicated as a place to celebrate the best the state has to offer in agriculture, technology, and the diversity of its people, traditions, and trends that shape the Golden State's future. Website: <https://calexpostatefair.com/>

**TUESDAY JULY 19**

**Transitioning Your Ag Business to the Next Chapter:** 9:30 a.m.-1 p.m. City of Vale Library, Vale, Ore. Attorney Maria Schmidtkofer will present on the topics of succession and estate planning, and how to prepare your operation to be resilient for future generations. She will review the steps of estate and succession planning, how to address taxes and corporate farm structuring, and more. Easement specialist Marc Hudson will answer your questions about working lands conservation easements — what they are, what they aren't, and how they may be helpful in executing your agricultural business plans. These in-person events are part of a free 6-workshop series in Lake, Harney and Malheur counties. All are welcome, and the events are free. RSVP for these or any of OAT's other events and refer any questions about the event to [diane@oregonagtrust.org](mailto:diane@oregonagtrust.org) 503-858-2683

**Intro to Good Manufacturing Practices (online):** 8 a.m.-noon. Dr. Janna Hamlett & Catherine Cantley of TechHelp and the U of I will help participants learn and understand the revised current Good Manufacturing Practices

or cGMPs according to the final rule for FSMA's Preventive Controls for Human Food. Contact: 208-736-3610 Website: <https://bit.ly/3y3SNq9>

**WEDNESDAY, JULY 20**

**Blueberry Field Day:** 1 p.m. North Willamette Research & Extension Center, 15210 NE Miley Road, Aurora, Ore. This annual field day will inform participants about the latest research in blueberry propagation and breeding. Contact: Amanda Davis, (971)-801-0394 or [amanda.davis@oregonstate.edu](mailto:amanda.davis@oregonstate.edu) Website: <http://extension.oregonstate.edu/NWREC/>

**SATURDAY-SUNDAY**

**JULY 30-31**

**Great Oregon Steam-Up:** 7 a.m.-6 p.m., Powerland Heritage Park, 3995 Brooklake Road NE, Brooks, Ore. Enjoy a steam-powered day with train and trolley rides, a parade, steam sawmilling, traditional tractor pulling, machinery demos, threshing, flour milling, fire apparatus demos, museum tours, kids pedal tractor pulling and a youth passport program. Website: [www.antiquepowerland.com/steam-up](http://www.antiquepowerland.com/steam-up) Phone: 503-393-2424



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