

New Times / Hot Dates



PHOTO BY E.C. MESSER

Seal you on the flipper side

I hope SLO County's anti-nudists don't take offense, because there are a LOT of naked bodies on the beach up at Piedras Blancas right now—naked seal bodies, that is. Approximately 17,000 elephant seals migrate thousands of miles to the Piedras Blancas Rookery from December through early March to breed, birth, nurse, and molt—ALL of which you will witness if you stay more than a few minutes, along with frequent “disagreements” and the kind of guttural noises that can only come from an animal whose weight is calculated in tons. The viewing area, just seven miles north of San Simeon on Highway 1, is wheelchair-accessible, and I saw plenty of folks of all ages in attendance; hope the kiddos aren't scared for life by all that bare sealskin! All kidding aside, it's easy to forget that such an impressive display happens just north of us every year. Don't miss these bathing beauties. To find out more about the seals and about becoming a docent visit the Friends of the Elephant Seal website at elephantseal.org.

—E.C. Messer

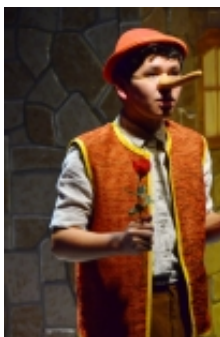


PHOTO BY JAMIE FOSTER

Noses off

The story of an arrogant puppet trying to usurp our humanity is a tale as old as time, but the young performers at SLO Little Theatre's Academy of Creative Theatre are giving it a charming retelling in their production of *Pinocchio*, through Jan. 26. Adapted for the stage from the Carlo Collodi novel, the show brings to life so many of the characters, from the nosy marionette himself to the Blue Fairy, which we remember from picture books and the Disney film. This classic tale doesn't just teach us that all children are liars and all puppets are creepy—it also reminds us to treasure our human souls. *Pinocchio* runs Fridays and Saturdays at 7 p.m. and Saturdays and Sundays at 2 p.m. at the Little Theatre, 888 Morro St. in San Luis Obispo. Call 786-2440 or visit slolittletheatre.org for tickets and more information.

—E.C. Messer