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SANTA MARIA GAINS NATIONAL ACCLAIM AS IT MAKES TOP 20 LIST FOR “THE GREATEST PLACES TO LIVE THE WEST”

***American Cowboy* Magazine Touts Santa Maria’s Climate and Cowboy Culture in its May Issue**

Santa Maria, CA—Santa Maria gets star treatment in the April/May 2010 issue of *American Cowboy* magazine as one of the top 20 spots chosen as “The Greatest Places to Live the West.”

To meet its criteria, the magazine sought out places with Old West charm, open rangeland and outdoor activities. The Santa Maria Valley Chamber of Commerce and Visitor & Convention Bureau supplied the magazine with information about the area. The resulting article’s section on Santa Maria touts the city’s mild climate, wineries, Santa Maria Style Barbecue, Elks Rodeo and status as an All-American City. Other California cities included in the top 20 list are Salinas, Brawley, Chico and Sacramento,

Launched in 1994 as a Western lifestyle magazine, *American Cowboy* is a bi-monthly publication distributed to more than 95,000 subscribers nationwide. Owners Active Interest Media say that “*American Cowboy* is the cultural chronicler of the American West, covering every aspect of the lifestyle including personalities and legends, history and heritage, travel and events, art and entertainment, sports, food, and fashion.”

“These types of high-profile media coverage really reinforce the Santa Maria Valley as a distinctive place to visit and live,” said Gina Keough, manager of the Santa Maria Valley Visitor & Convention Bureau. “People are seeking authenticity, and a sense of place and heritage, which are things we have in abundance in the Santa Maria Valley.”

For more information about Santa Maria Valley, visit www.SantaMaria.com or call the Santa Maria Valley Chamber of Commerce and Visitor & Convention Bureau at (800) 331-3779.

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