

Samarkand residents collect 45 bags full of bags



SANTA BARBARA — Residents at Covenant Living at the Samarkand have collected 45 large bags, each one full of bags, for recycling.

They will be recycled by Ablitt's Fine Cleaners, a Santa Barbara business that collects plastic film, which is manufactured into decks, playgrounds, chairs and other items.

With congregate dining closed at Samarkand due to the pandemic, residents began receiving two meals a day delivered to their doors in plastic bags. The recycling committee took notice of the number of plastic bags going to waste and decided it was time to do something about it.

For nearly a year, the committee has collected plastic bags and estimates that in a year's time, more than 100,000 plastic bags were used to deliver meals two times a day.

While these bags would have normally ended up in a landfill, they will be used to create new, durable objects through Ablitt's Fine Cleaners recycling program.

"They (residents) just want to make a difference in helping to keep the earth clean and free from a bunch of plastic trash," Randy Eilts, director of public relations and communications for Covenant Living, told the News-Press.

— *Madison Hirneise*



At top left, Allan Anderson, a resident of Covenant Living at the Samarkand, sits surrounded by a busload of bags as it is delivered to Ablitt's Fine Cleaners for recycling. At left, members of Covenant's recycling committee pose with their collection of bags.