

County historical society gets Hathaway photos

■ ‘Too important to stay locked up’

By CHRIS COUNTS

ON THE day before the first anniversary of Pat Hathaway’s death, the Monterey County Historical Society



PHOTO/PAT HATHAWAY COLLECTION

This 1880 image of a badly run-down Carmel Mission is part of an extensive group of photos donated to the Monterey County Historical Society.

announced it has been given his massive collection of historical photos. Hathaway, who lived in Pacific Grove, died last January at 72.

The collection, which includes a trove of photos that capture people and places throughout Monterey County in the 19th and 20th centuries, includes more than 80,000 images that date to the 1840s.

The historical society plans to make the archive accessible through the internet. According to James Perry, the society’s executive director, the collection is “way too important to stay locked up in a vault.”

‘All the bells and whistles’

“It will take several months to organize the collection for the public to access it, but we look forward to sharing this historic treasure with our local community and beyond,” Perry said. “All I truly hoped for was that Mr. Hathaway’s collection would remain in Monterey County but still be accessible to visitors.

Historian Kent Seavey told The Pine Cone that the historical society’s facility at 333 Boronda Road in Salinas is ideal for the collection.

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P.G. council approves hotel for ATC site

By KELLY NIX

FOLLOWING A six-hour meeting that ended early Thursday morning, the Pacific Grove City Council voted 6-1 to approve a 225-room hotel where an underused outlet mall known as the American Tin Cannery now stands.

The council heard from dozens of people in support of and opposed to the project before council members voted to certify the hotel’s environmental impact report and approve its permit. The hotel is planned to include restaurants, bars, a spa, pools, retail stores, meeting rooms and parking for 290 vehicles. Proponents contend it will revitalize the oceanfront and bring much needed tax revenue to P.G.

‘Revitalization’

Former P.G. City Councilman Robert Huitt said the project has been “thoroughly vetted and improved,” and was developed in accordance with zoning regulations, the

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Omicron causing shortage of healthcare workers

By KELLY NIX

AS MONTEREY County hospitals grapple with staffing shortages due to employees being infected with Covid-19, the number of people who need to be hospitalized for the disease continues to climb, though officials say it’s not nearly as critical it was during the same time last year.

The county’s Covid hospitalization rate has been on a steady increase for a couple of weeks due to the highly infectious omicron strain. On Thursday, the county reported 68 people were in the hospital with the virus, up sharply from Jan. 1, when there were 29. At the same time, Community Hospital of the Monterey Peninsula and Salinas Valley Memorial Healthcare System told The Pine Cone that dozens of employees are unable to go to work each day because of illness.

Better than state

“The number fluctuates daily, but over the last week we had around 60 employees out of work each day for Covid-19,” Community Hospital spokeswoman Monica

Sciuto told The Pine Cone. “That number represents about 2 percent of our Montage Health workforce.”

At Salinas Valley Memorial Hospital Tuesday, 74 employees were out sick, with most of them absent because they tested positive for Covid-19.

The figure represents about 3.5 percent of the hospital’s 2,100-strong workforce, spokeswoman Karina Rusk said.

Monterey County’s case rate Thursday was 85.3, compared to the state’s rate of 200 new cases per day per 100,000 people. County health officer Dr. Ed Moreno said he doesn’t know why Monterey County has a much lower case rate than the state, but said it could be due to

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PHOTO/KELLY NIX

This former can manufacturing plant and outlet mall could soon be converted to a luxury, 225-room hotel.

Monterey County sued over STR enforcement

By CHRIS COUNTS

A LAWSUIT was filed this week to stop Monterey County from cracking down on short-term rentals along the coast. The suit, filed in Monterey County Superior Court Jan. 7, says the county needs the approval of the California Coastal Commission to do that.

The individual or group behind the suit is something of a mystery. A “Committee for Fair and Affordable Housing on the Central Coast” is the plaintiff, but Michael Berolzheimer, a Silicon Valley entrepreneur who has owned property in the county since at least the 1990s, is the only individual associated with it.

His attorneys are Shaun Murphy and Charles Gallagher of Palm Springs. They argue that the county has tried to “unlawfully regulate and restrict short-term vacation rentals” in the coastal zone — an effort they claim would “immediately eliminate short-term rentals” along the Monterey County coast. The lawsuit notes that “the county tried” to enact such an ordinance in 1997, “but its plan did not receive California Coastal Commission approval.”

‘Much needed accommodation’

The plaintiff contends a plan to regulate rentals approved last month by the supervisors “is essentially the same unlawful plan” that was not approved two decades ago.

Defending its industry, the group declares that vacation rentals “are a much needed form of accommodation within the Coastal Zone for families and small groups from diverse demographic and socio-economic sectors.”

“Californians have an affinity for the coast, but issues of access remain a problem, particularly for low-income communities and communities of color around the state,” the lawsuit reads.

Murphy told The Pine Cone that the county’s permit process for short-term rentals is “too burdensome,” and

the cost of getting a permit is “exorbitant.” He urged county officials to find a compromise.

“The people I represent are not opposed to regulating short-term rentals,” he said. “It’s difficult for me to comprehend that the county has not been able to come up with an ordinance that’s acceptable to both sides.”

County officials have confirmed that more than 600

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Janice O’Brien dies at 100

By CHRIS COUNTS

BEST KNOWN locally for her environmental activism and for living in a one-of-a-kind oceanfront house, Janice O’Brien of Pebble Beach died Jan. 7 at 100.



Janice O’Brien

A close friend, county supervisor Mary Adams, told The Pine Cone O’Brien was a remarkable woman who fought fiercely to protect the local environment. She often battled with the Pebble Beach Company over its development plans. “She brought clarity and intelligence, style, dedication, experience and an absolute determination to protect the environment of the Monterey Peninsula,” Adams said.

O’Brien’s daughter, Meghan O’Brien, said her mom was dedicated to protecting the Del Monte Forest. “She always insisted that residents had the responsibility and the right to preserve healthy forests for the good of all

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CITY HALL LOOKING TO FILL 20 MORE JOBS

By MARY SCHLEY

DURING A typical year, the city would hire a half-dozen people to replace employees who retired or left to work elsewhere, city administrator Chip Rerig said last week. But maintaining a workforce has become significantly more challenging during the pandemic, and while a dozen positions across several different departments have been filled with new hires since July 1, 2021, 20 additional jobs remain available.

The most recent vacancy occurred last week, when after spending nine years here in a couple of different roles, budgets and contracts director Sharon Friedrichsen left to work for the City of Berkeley.

A dozen already

“We usually have six recruitments a year,” he said. “This fiscal year so far, we have done twice that.”

Interim city clerk Yashin Abbas started last week, Rerig

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