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C.V. man arrested for crashing someone else's Ferrari

By MARY SCHLEY

A MAN with a history of public intoxication and speeding in expensive sportscars was driving drunk and crashed an expensive Ferrari into a tree next to the Spanish Bay golf course Saturday afternoon — and the car wasn't even his, according to law enforcement.

California Highway Patrol officer Ruben Gonzales said

Brent Verwey, 34, of Carmel Valley, actually crashed the 2018 Ferrari 812 Superfast twice in Pebble Beach Saturday before being arrested for DUI, hit-and-run and driving without insurance. The car retailed for about \$340,000 without any extras that could easily add another \$100,000 to its price tag.

On Jan. 15 around 2:45 p.m., Verwey hit a fence on Portola Road west of Forest Lake Road but fled, according to Gonzales. "Mr. Verwey crashed again on Stevenson Drive north of Spyglass Hill Road, where CHP officer Kevin Sease arrested him on suspicion of DUI," he said. "Both crashes were property damage only."

Witnesses placed Verwey at the scene of each crash, Gonzales said. "And also there was physical evidence of Ferrari parts at the fence site and fence parts in the Ferrari at the second site."

A witness to the second

See **CRASH** page 19A



PHOTOS/KEVIN GORMICAN

The front end of a \$340,000 Ferrari was smashed to bits when the car collided with a tree near the Spanish Bay golf course Saturday afternoon. The alleged driver, Brent Verwey (at right, talking to a CHP officer), was arrested for DUI and other charges.

Dick Ferris, 85, was co-chair of Pebble Beach Co.

PINE CONE STAFF REPORT

DICK FERRIS — longtime co-chairman of the Pebble Beach Company and the man who purchased the company from a Japanese firm 23 years ago with the help of business partner Peter Ueberroth and former Carmel mayor Clint Eastwood — died Jan. 16, the company said this week.

Ferris, 85, who passed away after a three-year battle with ALS, was a "legend" in the business and golf worlds, and his impact and vision will continue to be felt for many years to come, the Pebble Beach Company said this week.

"I liked him very much," Eastwood told the Pine Cone Thursday from his home in the Monterey Peninsula. "He had a terrific sense of humor and ran things in a way that made everybody feel at home, but he was also efficient and got a lot done."



Dick Ferris in 2012

Former Pebble Beach Company CEO Bill Perocchi said the company and the golf world were heartbroken by the news of Ferris' death, and noted he had a unique ability to connect with employees.

"Dick's eye for details was legendary, whether he was touring our golf courses, inspecting rooms or reviewing the latest rollout of our bell staff uniforms," Perocchi said. "We have lost a true icon in the hospitality industry. We will miss him dearly."

Landmark sale

Ferris, Ueberroth, Eastwood, Perocchi, golf legend Arnold Palmer and a host of smaller investors bought the P.B. Co. in 1999 from Japanese golf resort company Taiheiyo Club, Inc., which had owned it since 1992. The

See **FERRIS** page 17A

CHOMP nears ICU capacity, postpones some surgeries

Record-breaking Covid cases?

By KELLY NIX

THE MONTEREY County Health Department this week reported what it said was a record number of new Covid-19 cases in the county, exceeding a previous high in January 2021. The surge has forced Community Hospital of the Monterey Peninsula to postpone some surgeries and caused its intensive care unit to be near capacity.

County health epidemiologist Kristy Michie said Wednesday that Monterey County had reached an "all time high" case rate for the pandemic.

According to data compiled by The Pine Cone, however, the county had 3,804 new cases during the week ending Tuesday, which pushed the county's case rate per day per 100,000 residents to 118.6, just shy of the record of 122.3 one year ago.

Highly prevalent

The numbers show that Monterey County is going through a significant surge of coronavirus due to the highly infectious but less dangerous omicron strain.

"I think this really reflects how prevalent Covid-19 is in our communities right now and how efficiently the omicron virus is transmitting among the population," Michie told news reporters.

Although hospitalizations are about half of what they

See **CASES** page 18A

Cases jump at schools, too

By KELLY NIX

THE NUMBER of new Covid-19 cases among students and staff in Carmel schools more than quadrupled since the first week of January, while cases in Pacific Grove schools tripled, according to data compiled by the districts.

On Thursday, Carmel Unified School District reported a total of 175 cases — 149 among students and 26 among staff members. On Jan. 4, the total was 41 cases.

While increased testing could be a factor in the jump, most of the increase is probably due to the spread of the

See **SCHOOLS** page 13A

Scenic Road in the headlines: If it isn't the benches, it's the trees

Tree-planting group wants neighbor input

By MARY SCHLEY

FOR AS long as people have owned houses on Scenic Road — and especially since they started paying millions of dollars for them — they have tried to keep more trees from being planted along the beachfront road. At last Thursday's forest and beach commission meeting, Jeb Bailey from the Friends of Carmel Forest, a tree-advocacy group, suggested establishing a "community panel consisting of homeowners along Scenic to assist in determining tree placement."

"We believe that increased stakeholder involvement might mitigate some of the negative response," to his group's effort to plant more trees along a road which boasts some of the greatest ocean views in the world.

Specifically, Bailey said, the forest friends group is planting new cypress trees

along Scenic to replace the older trees as they die but has received some pushback from homeowners there.

"The issue is many of our iconic trees are nearing the end of their natural lives," he said. "If we do not reforest, we stand to lose one of Carmel's most iconic and beautiful symbols."

'Certain individuals'

Along with being beautiful, he said, cypress trees provide shade, as well as habitat for animals.

"We have been made aware of complaints, however, from homeowners along Scenic about the reforestation," he told commissioners Jan. 13. "The issue seems to be that certain individuals are concerned about young trees blocking their views."

The forest group, which plants trees after getting authorization for the location and species from city forester Sara Davis, seeks to put them where they'll thrive, according to Bailey.

See **CYPRESS** page 19A

Commission backs down on bench plan

By MARY SCHLEY

THE PLANNING commission followed all the procedures when it approved locations for 16 future benches along Scenic Road last October, and no one asked the city council to overturn it. But following the hue and cry from volunteers who maintain the pathway and others who strenuously object to the new benches, commissioners last Wednesday agreed to reconsider their decision and get more feedback from the forest and beach commission, too.

"There was nothing done that was illegal or outside the requirements

of code — everything was done above board," planning director Brandon Swanson told commissioners Jan. 12. "This is an effort to give those who felt they didn't have an opportunity to voice their concerns the first time around an option to speak

See **BENCHES** page 15A



PHOTO/MICHAEL TROUTMAN, DMT IMAGING

More trees but no more benches? Or fewer trees and more benches? Or? Opinions run deep when it comes to Scenic Road.