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Six months later, post office repairs complete

By MARY SCHLEY

THE CARMEL post office looks good as new — or at least part of it does — following several weeks of construction and a final inspection this week. The new doors, windows, planter and wall represent a six-month journey from the afternoon a Pebble Beach woman crashed her car into the front of the building.

Rebecca Rousso, 74 at the time, was parked in the handicap stall in the off-street parking lot directly across from the front doors on Fifth Avenue when her Tesla Model S “took off,” sped forward about 40 feet out of control, missed a pedestrian in the crosswalk by approximately 1 foot, and crashed into the front of the post office, causing severe damage to the building and the car, police said at the time of the April 24 crash. The driver wasn’t injured and did not appear to be impaired, while the pedestrian was shaken but also unhurt.



PHOTO/MARY SCHLEY

Hey look, the doors work! There’s no longer any indication that a car ran into the post office in April, thanks to the repairs that wrapped up this week.

Services unavailable

In the weeks and months that followed, the front section of the post office — including the area where customers go for stamps, shipping, money orders and other postal business — was shut off, as it had been declared unsafe by the city’s building official. Residents had to visit the Dutch door in the box lobby to retrieve packages, but all other services were unavailable.

The situation dragged on as the building’s owner, the Bing Sung Trust, and property manager Manco Abbott worked through insurance issues, while city officials repeatedly encouraged them to get a permit application submitted so it could be processed as soon as possible.

In late June, building official Jermel Laurie and building inspector Duane Dauphinee were able to work with the postmaster to shore up the building and install plywood barriers to make the service area available to the public.

And finally, the construction application was submitted Sept. 9, with the permit issued nine days later to Cal Construction to “repair vehicle damage to the front of the building, windows, store front and wood posts. Repair brick flower bed and wood trim around windows. Condition: All exterior work shall match existing colors, materials and finishes.”

Intact again

After paying \$1,731 in city fees and submitting necessary documents, the crew got to work, and last week, the barrier blocking the construction site from view was removed so the planter could be rebuilt. By early this week, everything was intact and functioning as normal. Dauphinee conducted his final inspection Wednesday.

Reviews say Eastwood’s latest is ‘gripping thriller’

■ ‘Juror #2’ opens Friday

PINE CONE STAFF REPORT

AFTER ITS premiere on Sunday at the Chinese Theater in Hollywood, the new film, “Juror #2,” directed by Clint Eastwood, received the kind of acclaim most directors only dream about.

Pete Hammond of Deadline Hollywood said the former mayor of Carmel “has crafted not only a gripping suspense

thriller and poignant family drama, but also a work that delves deeply into themes of moral ambiguity and the profound challenge of confronting one’s conscience.”

According to David Fear of Rolling Stone, Eastwood is guilty of “wanting to entertain you like it’s 1992, definitely — but also of making a movie that tries to examine morality, accountability, and the meaning of justice.”

Serious dilemma

Warner Bros., Eastwood’s longtime production partner, says “Juror #2,” “follows the story of a family man who, while serving as a juror in a high-profile murder trial, finds himself struggling with a serious moral dilemma — one he could use to sway the jury verdict and potentially convict, or free, the wrong killer.” With a screenplay by Jonathan Abrams, “Juror #2” stars Nicholas Hoult, Toni Collette, J.K. Simmons, Chris Messina, Gabriel Basso, Zoey Deutch and Leslie Bibb, not to mention Kiefer Sutherland and Francesca Eastwood. It was filmed earlier this year in Savannah, Ga., and opens Friday at Del Monte Center in Monterey.

Speaking to The Pine Cone from his home in Carmel Valley, the 94-year-old Eastwood, whose numerous awards include Best Picture and Best Director Oscars, was typically modest.

“It was fun to do this one. It was a project I liked very much,” Eastwood said. “We had a good cast and everything fell into place.”

Asked the morning after the premiere if he was already aware how enthusiastic the critics are about his 40th directorial effort, he smilingly said, “That’s what they tell me.”

Hoult gave the AP an interesting angle on how he got the role, which at first he thought was a mistake.

After being told Eastwood wanted to talk to him about starring in his new film, a slow-burn legal thriller about a normal guy



PHOTOS/WARNER BROS., CLAIRE FOLGER

(Top) The jury box in the film, “Juror #2,” with star Nicholas Hoult second from left in the front row. (Above) On location in Savannah, Ga., director Clint Eastwood tells members of the cast what he’s looking for.

‘I thought he was going to shoot me’

■ Witnesses share accounts of fatal shooting near Golden Bough

By MARY SCHLEY

WHILE THE assault-rifle-style gun that James Marshall was brandishing shortly before he was shot and killed by police in Carmel Friday morning turned out to be a BB gun, witnesses who saw it believed it was real, according to their accounts.

Edgar Placencia was one of five painters working at the Golden Bough Playhouse when Marshall, 27, approached them carrying the gun and a 3-foot-long crowbar. He was wearing a helmet and a camouflage tactical vest.

“As I was walking on the west side of the theater up the street, I saw the guy walking toward me, and he said, ‘Hey, come here, Jesus loves you,’” he told The Pine Cone Thursday afternoon. Placencia turned and ran toward the two others who had been working with him outside.

“I told them, ‘Run! The guy’s chasing us!’” he said. “He pointed the gun at me — he was about 10 feet away from me — and I was running away, thinking he was going to shoot me.”

Thoughts of his mom, wife, and 2-year-old son flew through his head. He leapt down a flight of 10 stairs without knowing how he did it. “I jumped all of them — I don’t know how, but I was so scared,” he said.

Thoughts of mom, wife and a 2-year-old son

‘Very scary moment’

Placencia said Marshall followed them down Carmelo Street but then turned back. “I think he saw the police,” he said. “It was a very scary moment for all of us.”

Another painter, Omero Gamez, speaking through an interpreter at The Pine Cone, said Placencia told him, “He’s going to kill me! He’s going to kill me!” Gamez went to see what was happening and saw Marshall “pointing the rifle at anyone who was in front of him.”

Gamez said he was afraid for his life. “The weapon looked very real,” he said.

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Upcoming vote could send gas prices soaring

By CAITLIN CONRAD

JUST THREE days after Tuesday’s election, the California Air Resources Board is set to vote on a policy change that could send average gasoline prices in the state well over the \$5 mark.

The upcoming vote has garnered skepticism from Democrats and Republicans in Sacramento who say the board has not been transparent about how potential changes will affect prices at the pump.

On Nov. 8, the unelected board is planning to decide on proposed changes to the state’s low-carbon fuel standard. When the plan went public last year, the air resources board said it could increase gas prices by 47 cents per gallon in 2025. Members of the board quickly walked those numbers back following public outrage, but energy experts say that number isn’t far off and could even be on the low end.

65 cents-per-gallon increase?

The proposed changes to the low-carbon fuel standard are complicated and will impact the oil and gas industry, hence the increased cost for drivers at the pump. The fuel standard requires the carbon intensity of transportation fuels to decline every year.

To maintain compliance, bulk fuel sellers must either reduce their emissions or buy credits from companies that sell lower-carbon fuels. Those credit prices would go up if the board adopts amendments to the low-carbon fuel standard next month.

According to Danny Cullenward with the Kleinman

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