A downtown shopping expedition, unexpected gift finds, a new game and our holiday calendar, of events ... inside this week!

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e Carmel Pine Cone

'Anti-corporate' commission pans inn's choice of roof color

By MARY SCHLEY

THE OWNER of the Comfort Inn at Ocean and Torres can't reroof the hotel with charcoal black shingles, the Carmel Planning Commission decided Nov. 13 at the end of a nearly five-hour meeting.

Representing owner Nilam Patel, John Roach had submitted an over-the-counter application to replace the inn's roof with new composite shingles, but assistant planner Jacob Olander kicked the request up to the commission because the proposed color scheme "has not been found to meet the Carmel Design Guidelines at previous planning commission meetings."

He said the municipal code requires roofing materials to be consistent with the design characteristics of the building, and the relevant design guidelines state that "building materials and colors should respect the traditions already established in the commercial district," and encourage "the use of richly detailed wood, tile, moldings, corbels, brick and stone, as well as landscaping."

Company-wide look

A representative who did not give his name explained that the "charcoal black" asphalt shingles made by Certainteed would lighten over time and that his company has installed the same color on other buildings in town. He pointed out the nearby Stilwell Hotel at Fifth and San Carlos has similarly dark shingles, as does the Bayview Inn.

When commissioner Erin Allen asked why Patel wants that particular color, he explained that the chain has been shifting to a different palette.

One rescued at Bird Rock



PHOIO/DAVID APPLING

A fire crew in Pebble Beach on Saturday safely extricated the driver of this Honda SUV after it overturned near Bird Rock, according to eyewitness David Appling, who was playing golf when he heard the crash and called 911. "The driver was trapped upside down with his feet tangled in the steering wheel, but he was lucid and just wanted to get out."

"Oh, are you talking about Comfort Inn as a company?" she asked.

"That's why the owner is persistent in this," he explained.

"The company is trying to get a consistent image?" chair Michael LePage reiterated, and after receiving affirmation — which prompted an "uh-oh" from Allen — he remarked, "Yeah, we don't like that in Carmel."

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YIMBY'S TAKE HOUSING AGENDA TO WASHINGTON

By CAITLIN CONRAD

A GROUP of California lawmakers is bringing Golden State-style YIMBYism to Washington D.C. This week, a cohort of House representatives launched a firstof-its-kind bipartisan caucus aimed at increasing America's housing supply. It's called the YIMBY Caucus, of course.

Rep. Robert Garcia, a Long Beach Democrat, announced the formation of the caucus this week on Capitol Hill, calling the national housing shortage the "single largest issue" facing the United States today.

'Bold, bipartisan'

"We need to reform zoning and build more housing. That's why we're launching the YIMBY Caucus. Democrats and Republicans can work together to tackle the housing crisis," wrote Garcia on social media platform X

this week.

The move is being cheered by national affordable housing advocates.

"Following an election where housing was at the forefront of conversation, now is the time for bold, bipartisan action," said Bob Pinnegar, president of the National Apartment Association.

Garcia will co-chair the caucus along with seven other lawmakers, four of whom are Republicans. The other 19 members of the caucus are almost all Democrats, with just one other Republican signing on, but they are united in the idea that the solution to the housing crisis is to build more. Garcia offered some insight on the route the caucus might take to do it in an interview with television news station KTLA this week.

"Housing is overregulated, we make it too hard to

See **YIMBYs** page 30A

Stoldt: 'Free' water coming to thirsty cities

By KELLY NIX

THE HEAD of the Monterey Peninsula Water Management District said the agency will be able to free up enough water next year to allow homeowners in Carmel, Pacific Grove and other Peninsula cities to install additional faucets, toilets and other water fixtures. But they won't be able to build homes on lots of record until the state lifts its ban on new water meters.

In the process, though, P.G. could lose millions of dollars of water revenue.

On Nov. 20, water district general manager Dave Stoldt gave the P.G. City Council an overview of how water will be allocated to Peninsula cities starting in late 2025 when an expansion of the Pure Water Monterey wastewater reclamation facility in Marina is expected to be complete and ready to start producing

potable water.

Pure Water processes 3,500 acre-feet of purified drinking water annually for the Peninsula, and the expansion will add 2,250 acre-feet.

Stoldt explained that the allotment of the recycled water to cities will operate sort of like a bank account.

'We put a credit into your account, and you release water for projects'

"We put a credit into your account, and then you will release water for projects," he said. "As projects get built and your account starts heading toward zero, cities come back to the water district, or some other jurisdiction will come back to us, and say, 'We need more water because we are growing faster than we expected or growing as expected.""

While P.G. residents who need water for home improvement projects will still have to pay for it on their monthly bills, they will no longer have to pay for the privilege of getting an allotment.

No new homes — yet

The water district has proposed setting aside 32 acrefeet of water, more than 10 million gallons, for Pacific Grove, while Carmel could get 14 acre-feet, or about 4.5 million gallons, Stoldt said.

However, the allocations will only allow limited development and not the construction of new homes or affordable housing until state officials end a longstanding State Water Resources Control Board order that prohibits the installation of new water meters for Cal Am customers.

Ouintessential gentleman Walt DeFaria dies at 98

A PLAYWRIGHT, producer and director who played a huge role in the local theater scene over the past three decades, Walt DeFaria died Nov. 24. He was 98.

"Rest in peace to the great Walt DeFaria," the Forest Theater Guild said on Monday. "Not only did he direct and produce many productions, he taught us all so much. He helped guide the Forest Theater Guild through many things and selflessly gave us his wisdom and art. Here's to an amazing and talented friend who will always be remembered."

Tributes pour in

Also chiming in was Pacific Repertory Theatre. "Along with the rest of the theatrical community, PacRep mourns the loss of Walt DeFaria, who brought so much joy."

Through his efforts in the local theater community, DeFaria

touched countless people, including actor Reg Huston, who called his friend "the quintessential gentleman."

"He never raised his voice, and he was so eloquent," Huston told The Pine Cone. "He always saw the good in people. He was

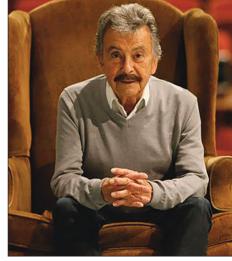
always helpful. Anybody who spent any time with him became a friend and a heartfelt devotee of his spirit."

Huston said DeFaria had an extraordinary ability and commitment to fostering a love of the arts among young people. "He saw that they were the future," he said.

Lanier Fairchild first worked with DeFaria as a youngster.

"He was my first director in Carmel at age 12 for 'The Wizard of Oz,'" Fairchild said. "He was so proud to see me come full circle as the stage manager for the same show 28 years later on the same stage. His legacy lives on inside anyone who was lucky enough to have worked with him."

Also paying tribute to DeFaria was Felicia Afifi, who suggested



PHOTO/FACEBOOK

See DEFARIA page 20A

Longtime playwright, director and producer Walt DeFaria died Nov. 24 at 98.

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'He selflessly gave us his wisdom and art'

By CHRIS COUNTS