

The Carmel Pine Cone

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PGA stars take center stage at revamped pro-am



The world's No. 1 player, Scottie Scheffler (left), just back on the PGA Tour from a serious hand injury, was one of the stars playing Spyglass Thursday in the opening round of the 2025 AT&T Pebble Beach Pro-Am. Jordan Spieth (above) was also at Spyglass, where his playing partner was former Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice. Despite gray skies, there were spectacular views at Pebble Beach, where Taylor Pendrith (above left) played his approach to 18. For complete coverage, see our special section.

PHOTOS/(TOP LEFT) MICHAEL TROUTMAN - DMT IMAGING; (LEFT AND ABOVE) KERRY BELSER

Addis wants battery storage sites to be under local control

■ No more ‘opt-in’ permits?

By CAITLIN CONRAD

STANDING ACROSS the street from the smoldering remains of Vistra Energy’s battery storage facility in Moss Landing, Assemblymember Dawn Addis last week introduced a bill written to restore local oversight for energy storage facilities in California. The legislation responds directly to communities demanding tougher regulation and more control over what’s built near their homes. However, pushing the bill across the finish line in Sacramento, where renewable energy rules, is going to be an uphill battle for the Central Coast Democrat.

The Jan. 16 fire destroyed a 300-megawatt array of lithium-ion batteries inside Vistra Energy’s 750-megawatt energy storage facility. The cause of the fire hasn’t been determined, but the blaze has put the local community on edge as concerns over safety and environmental impacts mount.

‘Normal process’

“AB 303 is a proactive measure that will ensure companies like Vistra go through the normal, local, regulatory process — designed to build trust, increase safety and give communities a choice by restoring local community processes for permitting these projects,” said Addis.

Under current law, energy storage facilities and other clean energy projects are permitted via the California

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MAN FACES CHARGES FOR TRYING TO KILL MOTHER

■ Del Mesa was locked down for hours

By MARY SCHLEY

THE CARMEL Valley man accused of trying to stab his mother to death in their home Saturday morning — prompting an hours-long lockdown of the senior community where the attack occurred — pleaded not-guilty in a Salinas courtroom Monday. William Darpinian, 34, remained in Monterey County Jail this week on \$1,015,000 bail after turning himself in early Sunday morning.



William Darpinian

around 10:15 a.m. Jan. 25 and rushed to help her after she emerged from her home, bleeding.

Pine Cone columnist Jerry Gervase, who lives at Del Mesa and was kept away from his condo during the lockdown, said he talked to the neighbor as they both sheltered at the clubhouse, and she told him what had transpired.

“She told me she lives in the unit next door, and

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Rental registry is gathering facts — but what do they mean?

By MARY SCHLEY

A YEAR after the City of Monterey started requiring landlords to register their units and tell how much rent they charge, the city’s housing manager, Anastacia Wyatt, says the data show that tenants need more legal safeguards, and she’s asking the city to impose additional disclosure requirements to bolster the case.

But some questioned whether such conclusions could be reached based on less than a year’s worth of information from the rental registry, which went online in January 2024 and is intended to provide data the city says “will assist council goals and objectives to address the city’s housing needs.”

Staff wants landlords to face more rules, pay higher fees

many units there are and the number of bedrooms, bathrooms and square footage each rental contains. Occupancy status and reasons for vacancy must be given, along with the amount and date of monthly rent and whether the total includes utilities or fees. Changes in ownership or management, rents and occupancy status must be reported

Share details

The registry requires landlords to share contact details about themselves and property managers, their rentals’ street addresses or assessor’s parcel numbers, dates of construction, how



PHOTO/PINE CONE FILE

A Vistra employee gives a tour of one of the company’s massive battery storage facilities in Moss Landing during dedication ceremonies in 2021. The facility was built under a state fast-track permit program for renewable energy.

Heavy metals found in soil after power plant fire

By KELLY NIX

UNIVERSITY RESEARCHERS this week announced they’d found unusually high levels of heavy metals in marsh soil at Elkhorn Slough Reserve following the Jan. 16 fire at the Vistra Energy battery plant, while Monterey County officials have conducted their own tests and are awaiting results.

Scientists at San Jose State University’s Moss Landing Marine Laboratories said they detected the high concentrations of heavy metals as part of a decade-long monitoring program of Elkhorn Slough, which is adjacent to the Vistra Energy storage facility.

The heavy metals are used to make lithium-ion

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