

Yacht runs aground in Stillwater Cove



PHOTO/PAULA HAZDOVAC

It’s not every day you find a 50-foot yacht on the beach at Stillwater Cove. The boat ran aground early Wednesday morning, and it’s been a major undertaking to remove it.

‘Higher standards’ for battery storage safety

By CAITLIN CONRAD

STATE SEN. John Laird has introduced legislation in response to January’s massive battery fire in Moss Landing. The Clean Energy and Safety Act, SB 283, would mandate new facilities be built to a higher standard of safety and that construction involve oversight by local firefighters.

“SB 283 ensures that future battery energy storage facilities adhere to the highest fire safety standards, protecting first responders, local communities and the integrity of our renewable energy transition,” said Laird.

Fire officials

Under the new bill, battery storage developers would be required to engage local fire authorities prior to getting building approvals. Those authorities would address the facility’s design and assess potential risks before energy companies’ projects could get a green light, either in a local approval process or from the California Energy Commission.

See **BATTERIES** page 19A

P.B. makeover spurs debate over ocean views

By CHRIS COUNTS

THE OWNER of a high-profile mansion on 17 Mile Drive wants to make improvements to the property, including building a 1,171-square-foot non-habitable structure described as “a pavilion.”

But Monterey County planning staff contends that a permit for the pavilion should be denied because it would block a view of the ocean from the famous road that runs past it. That set up a clash when the planning commission met considered the permit on Wednesday.

The owner of the impressive, Spanish-style, 8,700-square-foot home, Riley Bechtel, whose family has had it since the 1960s, plans to do exterior modifications, including the construction of a 182-square-foot

See **VIEWS** page 15A

By MARY SCHLEY

THE CAREFUL process of removing a yacht that ran aground near the Pebble Beach Golf Links early Wednesday morning continued Thursday, with efforts underway to ensure fuel and other contaminants didn’t end up in the bay, according to officials at the scene. Meanwhile, the cause of the accident — whether some type of mechanical failure or negligence by the people on board — remains under investigation.

Sometime around 4 a.m. March 26, Cal Fire received a call that a vessel was in distress in Stillwater Cove, and firefighters arrived to discover a 50-foot motor yacht had run aground, becoming stranded on the beach. The occupants had contacted the U.S. Coast Guard, according to Battalion Chief Curtis Rhodes, which in turn alerted the fire agency, since it’s responsible for the shoreline.

Waiting for high tide

The two people aboard managed to reach the beach on their own, Rhodes said, and throughout the morning Wednesday, emergency responders, including divers, worked to free the yacht from the shore so it could be towed back to the Monterey Harbor. But receding tides made the task impossible, and plans were made to remove its batteries, fuel and any other hazardous substances before they could leak into the protected bay waters.

Observing that high tide would not return until around 10 p.m., one of the people in charge of the effort commented over the radio, “I’m not going to work in the dark.” He said he would return to Breakwater Cove and let the boat’s owner, who has not been named, know the status of the recovery effort.

In the parking lot of the Beach & Tennis Club Thursday

See **YACHT** page 28A

HOUSING PLAN COULD RELY ON HOTEL CONVERSIONS

■ ‘Live/work’ spaces and more

By MARY SCHLEY

WILL THE owners of “underperforming” hotels be willing to convert them into affordable housing and sell or move their room rights? Will downtown landlords allow live/work arrangements in their vacant commercial spaces? Will property owners build granny units and then deed-restrict them as low-cost housing in exchange for water credits or reduced permit fees? Are churches likely to build onsite housing?

Some of those concepts debuted at a special Carmel Planning Commission workshop Tuesday night, and questions about their viability will need to be answered, at least theoretically, if the state is going to accept them as possible responses to the requirement that the city identify potential sites for 149 affordable units as part of its mandated housing element. The plan, which the California Department of Housing and Community Development certified last year, outlines ways to facilitate 349 new residences through 2031 — including placing income-restricted housing on public parking lots at Sunset Center and Vista Lobos.

Land is scarce

But some residents vocally opposed using those sites for apartment buildings, and the city council soon after gave them the go-ahead to come up with other solutions. As a result, a group including city councilman Hans Buder and members of the Carmel Residents Association, calling itself Affordable Housing Alternatives was formed. Last fall, the city signed a \$59,999 contract with consultant Veronica Tam & Associates to assist it.

The AHA group has been meeting weekly, sometimes more frequently, and working with city staff, the consultant, the state and others with the

45 mph speed limit coming to Highway 1

By CHRIS COUNTS

TO COMPLY with what it says are state and federal safety regulations, Caltrans intends to lower speed limits on Highway 1 in Big Sur. The state roads agency says it will also remove a slew of road signs along the scenic route and put up new ones in some places.

The California Coastal Commission unanimously approved the plan at its March 12 meeting in Santa Cruz, despite opposition from some locals, including former Congressman Sam Farr.

While some of the new signs will post revised speed limits, others will alert drivers to curves. The measure lowers the speed limit from 55 mph to 40 or 45 mph along much of the highway between Point Sur and the Monterey County line — a distance of 54 miles.

Caltrans reports the changes must be done to comply with “state and federal highway safety standards.”

Outcry from locals

Initially, Caltrans proposed installing more than 900 signs along the world-famous scenic highway. But due to viewshed concerns, coastal commission official Eric Stevens reported that Caltrans and his agency worked together to come up with an alternate plan to eliminate “all but the most necessary signs, replacing signs where feasible and removing as many existing signs as possible.”

“There would be a net reduction of 27 signs in the affected corridor,” Stevens said. “The visual impacts of signs have been reduced as far as they can be.”

The vote came despite an outcry from some residents,

See **SPEED** page 18A

goals of preserving “scarce public land,” distributing housing throughout the city rather than in concentrated, high-density developments, and following traditional land use patterns. Doing so, its members argue, will help replace a “shrinking population” to “bring back locals: teachers, nurses, firefighters and service professionals,” representatives said at the March 25 session.

How many will be built?

One prong of the solution is granny units — officially known as accessory dwelling units — CRA board member Nancy Twomey explained. Based on permit trends, the group proposes increasing the estimated number that could be built during the life of the plan from 34 to 60 and then adding another 15 that might result from incentives like water credits and fee discounts if the owners are willing to deed-restrict them as affordable rentals.

See **HOUSING** page 17A

Controlled burn in Hatton Canyon



PHOTO/MICHAEL TROUTMAN, DMT IMAGING

Dead wood and debris burn under close supervision in Hatton Canyon Tuesday, part of an effort to reduce the risk of a dangerous wildfire in the area. See page 3A.



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Sandy Claws

Committed to Coco

She is many things, owing to her mysterious background, her flair for the dramatic, and her commitment to wearing only black and white, which earned her the name Coco, as in Chanel. This little dog has a bit of a peculiar pedigree, likely Jack Russell and Papillon, plus some kind of breed that makes her look like a puppy, even at 9 years old.

When her Pacific Grove people met her at the SPCA, she had the biggest ears they'd ever seen on a 3-month-old dog. Still prominent, they seem to fit her a lot better now.

Coco had been in a cage with her brother, an apparent dachshund who didn't look anything like her. But after running roughshod over other puppies, proving she had to be the dominant dog, she earned a private room — which is where she lifted her head toward the couple and gazed directly into their eyes as if to say, "You found me."

"Coco was just so darned cute, we had to have her," her person said, "But she'd already been spoken for. Undaunted, we called every day for a week or two until finally, they said she was available. I told them to hold her for me and not to show her to anyone else. I was on my way."

Coco's people took her many times to Asilomar



Beach, where she loved chasing the ball. After a few retrievals, she'd sink into the water to cool off. Yet one day, she went too far into the waves and was sucked into the undertow. Her person quickly disrobed, dove into the water, and swam as far and as fast as he could to collect his little Coco.

"My heart was in my throat, watching my husband risk his life to save Coco," her person said. "Fortunately, it wasn't their time to go."

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Controlled burn in Hatton Canyon

By MICHAEL TROUTMAN

DANGEROUS FUEL loads in Hatton Canyon were reduced through three days of prescribed burning of piles of deadwood this week after extensive interagency planning and preparation over a year in the making. Numerous dead pines toppled by high winds in the recent harsh winters were clogging the canyon in addition to decades of dead vegetation building up, a situation unmitigated for many decades by naturally occurring fires.

This prescribed burning was part of a broader strategic effort by Cal Fire, California State Parks, Caltrans, the Cypress Fire Protection District and the High Meadows Homeowners Association.

Battalion Chief Brice Muenzer, incident

there,” Muenzer said, adding that keeping the process under control and keeping impacts on the surrounding community as low as possible were top priorities. “We have air monitoring at the high school along with personnel along the highway monitoring it,” he said.

A drone patrolled overhead with an infrared camera able to see through the smoke, providing images and information to the chief officers in the command center. Environmental scientists on the ground were assessing the ecological impacts, and a few concerned residents were having a look as well.

3,400 acres

“All these projects are thought out years in advance, and it’s not only the safety of the public, it’s also the whole ecological impact,” noted Muenzer. “We coordinate with multiple groups, so there is a lot of thought behind it and a lot of preparation. This project was physically started over a year ago, but we pushed the timing back to make people more comfortable with it.”

So far, 3,400 acres within the San Benito-Monterey unit have been burned since July 1, 2024. “It’s not a new thing we’re doing here,” he said. “The new part is putting pile burning this close into Carmel.”

John Trenner, a retired fire chief, has been working on fuel management locally for more than seven years. “Bringing fire to the districts is such a great way to thin out and help clean up the forest, and it’s healthy for the environment,” he said.

See **BURN** page 22A



PHOTO/MICHAEL TROUTMAN, DMT IMAGING

Fire crews spray surrounding vegetation during a controlled burn in the Hatton Canyon area.

commander on the High Meadows burn, said when they first went into the canyon over a year ago, there were so many dead and downed trees that they “had to climb over everything.”

“This has been a high-priority project, since there is so much fuel loading in



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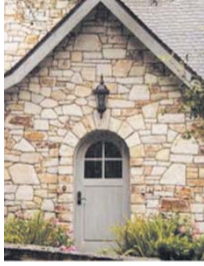
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Police & Sheriff's Log

Taken from a 91-year-old's purse

HERE'S A look at some of the significant calls logged by the Carmel-by-the-Sea Police Department and the Monterey County Sheriff's Office last week. This week's log was compiled by Mary Schley.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 12

Carmel-by-the-Sea: Grand theft from a vehicle on Monte Verde north of 10th. No suspect information.

Carmel-by-the-Sea: Fall on city property at Junipero and Fourth.

Carmel-by-the-Sea: Female lost a wallet while visiting Carmel Beach. She wished to make a report in case the wallet was located and turned in to the department.

Pacific Grove: Battery reported on Montecito.

Pacific Grove: Domestic violence incident on Pacific Grove Lane.

Carmel area: Online report of vandalism on Aurora del Mar.

Carmel area: Financial abuse on Dolores Street.

Carmel Valley: Emotional abuse alleged involving a Carmel Valley Road resident.

Pebble Beach: Financial abuse involving a Crespi Lane resident.

THURSDAY, MARCH 13

Carmel-by-the-Sea: Domestic violence on Carpenter north of Second that occurred two years ago.

Carmel-by-the-Sea: Request to document fraud on Mission north of Sixth.

Carmel-by-the-Sea: DUI arrest at Ocean and Hatton at 2353 hours. A 56-year-old male resident of Pacific Grove was released with a citation to appear in court.

Pacific Grove: Adult Protective Services report for an elderly female on Pine Avenue.

See **POLICE LOG** page 9RE
in the Real Estate Section



The gavel falls

Verdicts, pleas and sentencings announced by
Monterey County District Attorney Jeannine Pacioni

Feb. 20 — Robert John Lanoue, 72, of Reno, Nevada, has pleaded guilty to first-degree murder, kidnapping, committing a forcible lewd act on a child under 14, forcible rape and forcible sodomy for the January 1982 abduction and murder of 5-year-old Anne Pham of Seaside. Lanoue will receive a sentence of 25 years to life in prison plus 31 additional years.

Pham disappeared while walking to her kindergarten class at Highland Elementary School on Jan. 21, 1982. She was never seen alive again. On Jan. 23, 1982, her remains were discovered on the former Fort Ord. She had been sexually assaulted and strangled to death. The initial investigation did not result in any arrests, and Pham's murder went unsolved for more than 40 years.

In 2020, investigators with the Monterey

County District Attorney's Office Cold Case Task Force worked collaboratively with the Seaside Police Department to reopen Pham's case and submit items of evidence from the case for DNA testing. Lanoue was identified as a suspect after DNA testing was performed on a rootless pubic hair found on Pham's remains.

Astrea Forensics of Santa Cruz performed whole-genome sequencing on the hair that resulted in a DNA profile capable of being used to search genetic genealogical databases. A forensic genetic genealogist with Parabon NanoLabs identified "Lanoue" as a possible last name of the suspect. Further research by members of the Cold Case Task Force identified Robert John Lanoue as the

See **GAVEL** page 31A

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Local community leaders and public officials were on hand to cheer on Anthony Balesteri of Balesteri Construction during the groundbreaking of a long-anticipated upgrade to the Good Samaritan Center, scheduled for completion in April of 2025.

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Ashley Koebel, Captain
Monterey Peninsula Corps Officer, The Salvation Army

"This remodel which was years in planning provides a welcoming atmosphere in addition to expanding and improving essential services."

Devin McGilloway CPA/PFS, Past Salvation Army Board Member

"The Monterey Peninsula Salvation Army is blessed to have the generous support of our community and the help of tremendous staff that is making it possible for us to provide even better support and services for those in our community who need our help."

Bob Jensen, Salvation Army Board Member

"We are all blessed to be part of the much-needed rehab of the good Sam Center."

Dan Silverie, III Salvation Army Board Member & Construction Manager



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Numerous cockfighting roosters dead

By KELLY NIX

A COCKFIGHTING operation in South Monterey County last week was broken up by police, but five roosters perished due to injuries sustained in the bloodsport, officials said.

Greenfield Police said that on March 21 about 11 p.m., an officer on patrol came across a large gathering of people in a vine-

County, which helped law enforcement investigate the incident, told The Pine Cone this week that several other roosters had to be put down because of injuries.

“There was one deceased rooster and four severely injured roosters that needed to be euthanized to end their suffering,” Beth Brookhouser said Tuesday.

She added that “cockfighting is horrific, illegal and inhumane,” and urged the public to “call 911 if you hear about a cockfight so we can end this vicious activity in Monterey County.”



PHOTO/GREENFIELD POLICE

An SPCA employee holds a rooster rescued from an illegal cockfighting operation in South Monterey County.

yard on Elm Avenue, adjacent to Patriot Park. About 40 people scattered and fled in vehicles when the officer arrived.

Inside a corrugated building he found a makeshift cockfighting arena built with panels of pressboard placed on a tarp. Also found were 14 roosters, including one that was dead inside the pen.

A spokeswoman for SPCA Monterey

‘Animal cruelty’

Greenfield Police turned the case over to the Monterey County Sheriff’s Office and the SPCA’s Humane Investigations. Police urged those with information about the cockfighting operation to contact either of the agencies.

“Together, we can help protect our community and stand against animal cruelty,” Greenfield Police said.

In 2022, animal welfare organizations the Humane Farming Association and Showing Animals Respect and Kindness, sued two Monterey County residents over a cockfighting operation in Salinas. The case was later dismissed, court records show.

In July 2024, the Monterey County Board of Supervisors rejected an appeal by an Aromas man to raise five or more chickens and roosters — including the same variety of roosters used in the bloodsport — without a permit. A county inspection of the man’s property found restraints and boxes for roosters associated with cockfighting and only a few hens on site. He denied he wanted to raise the fowl for that purpose.



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P.G. leaders mute on conflict claims

By KELLY NIX

PACIFIC GROVE officials are mum one week after a member of the city council voted on a new city rule that some residents say amounted to a conflict of interest.

At the March 19 council meeting, councilman Joe Amelio proposed an ordinance to allow louder music at downtown businesses and restaurants. The revised noise law would benefit several establishments that host live and recorded music, including a venue called Pop & Hiss at 215 Forest Ave.

But just before the council was to deliberate on the proposal, a resident said during the public comment period that councilwoman Tina Rau should recuse herself from the discussion since she owns

the building that Pop & Hiss occupies. Rau did not do that, and neither she nor the other five council members addressed the issue. Minutes later, Rau made a motion to allow louder music. The city council passed the measure 4-2. Councilwoman Cynthia Garfield was absent.

Questions about a council member’s vote on noise law

Disqualifying?

The state’s Fair Political Practices Commission, which regulates campaign financing, conflicts of interest, lobbying, and ethics, states that a “public official

has a disqualifying conflict of interest in a governmental decision if it is foreseeable that the decision will have a financial impact on his or her personal finances or other financial interests,” FPPC spokeswoman

See CONFLICT page 23A

City rules silent on firearm shops

By MARY SCHLEY

WHILE ELECTED officials in Monterey enacted a temporary ban on gun stores last month after a couple received a business license to open one in the neighborhood near the Naval Postgraduate School — and some expressed shock that such an enterprise could operate in the city’s commercial areas without special scrutiny and public hearings — the same is true in the City of Carmel, according to senior planner Evan Kort.

“This would be a permitted use in the central commercial and service commercial zoning districts and fall under the land use classification as ‘retail,’” he explained. “More specifically, this use falls under the sub-classification of a sporting goods store.”

The North American Industry Classification System classifies business establishments by type and is used by governments and businesses in Canada, Mexico and the United States, including Carmel-by-the-Sea.

‘Index entry’

“Gun stores are included as both an illustrative example and index entry to the industry classification for a sporting goods store,” Kort explained. “As a permitted use, only a business license would be required from the planning department.”

Businesses selling sporting goods, bicycles, hobbies, toys and games are required to keep their merchandise indoors, according to the city’s municipal code. But no

See GUN page 29A

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Chip reunites long lost cat with family

By KELLY NIX

A SALINAS family that was holding on to hope that their beloved cat would return home after going missing for more than three months recently got the news the pet had been found.

One day last November, Buttons, a female cat owned by Salinas residents Theresa Lusky and Manuel Rodriguez, did not return home. As the days and weeks went by, they still held out some hope that she would be found safe.

“My sisters told me that ‘some people have found their pets two or three years later,’” Lusky said. “And I was hoping I was going to be one of those people.”

SPCA spokeswoman Beth Brookhouser told The Pine Cone this week that the owners “searched and searched and did all the right things, but they couldn’t find Buttons anywhere.”

Not a stray

Three-and-a-half months later, though, some good Samaritans turned the wayward feline in to SPCA Monterey County.

“A community member brought Buttons to us as a friendly stray cat they wanted to keep,” Brookhouser explained. But when the cat was scanned for a microchip, it was revealed that Buttons was not a stray but belonged to Lusky and Rodriquez.

In a reunion last month, an SPCA



PHOTO/SPCA MONTEREY COUNTY

Buttons went missing from his home for three months but is back home after the SPCA scanned

worker brought out Buttons in a pet carrier to be returned to her family.

“Buttons!” the owners said to their cat at the SPCA, to which the cat responded with several enthusiastic meows.

“Thankfully, Buttons was micro-chipped, so we were able to facilitate a happy reunion,” Brookhouser said. “Buttons was found about 3 miles from her home. If only cats could talk to tell us what happened.”

‘Good Eggs’ to be honored Sunday

PINE CONE STAFF REPORT

FOR ALL the time they’ve donated to their community, six Carmel Valley residents will be honored with Good Egg awards Sunday, 5 p.m., at Hidden Valley Music Seminars. The awards have been handed out annually since 1953.

This year’s recipients include Mark

Spindler, Ed Lake, Kristen Rianda, Dan Loberg, Carla Basaldua and Ruben Delgadillo. Also, Charlene Randazzo, Gene Erner and Jim Shakal will be presented with Double Yolk awards

Tickets are \$50 per person. Hidden Valley is located at Carmel Valley and Ford roads. To RSVP, send an email to: cvgoodegg@gmail.com.

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MONTEREY REQUIRES ALL RENTAL OWNERS TO REGISTER

By MARY SCHLEY

OWNERS OF previously exempt small rentals in Monterey — even granny units — will be subject to scrutiny under the city's rental inventory program after the Monterey City Council narrowly voted last week to extend the reach of the program. The council also decided to forbid landlords to pass any of the \$50-per-unit fee to tenants.

The registry, which was approved in 2023 and took effect in early January 2024, requires owners to share contact details for themselves and property managers, their rentals' street addresses or assessor's parcel numbers, dates of construction, how 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 within 30 days. Much of that information is available to the public in a database accessible from the city's website.

Since its inception last year, landlords with fewer than four rentals were exempt

from the registry and its \$50-per-unit annual fee, but had to file for exemptions.

At the council's March 18 meeting, "management analyst" Mark Ackerman recommended requiring all landlords to register — but allowing the small "mom-and-pop" owners to avoid the fees — and no longer allowing landlords to pass half of their per-unit fees on to tenants.

More data needed

Despite an estimated 75 percent compliance among landowners in the city who have rentals — including exemptions filed by owners of three or fewer units — the data collected “only reflects 51.6 percent of the rental market,” Ackerman said, “so we’re missing almost half.” He estimated the city contains 8,130 rentals.

The council had no logical reason for excluding smaller landowners, he argued.

“There’s no methodology _____ used to determine three or fewer is the ideal number for this,” he said.

Ackerman also suggested the 50 percent pass-through of registration fees to tenants has “a larger impact on renters than

on landlords," which provided all the justification needed for property owners to be required to absorb them.

“Property owners receive rent from these tenants, and they accrue equity through the properties,” he said in his report. “They would likely be able to make up the cost in other areas.” For now, rents also aren’t regulated, which means landlords can pass on anything they want to their tenants, who always have the option of moving.

Ackerman revealed the program cost \$243,354 in its first year — \$196,931 of which was recovered through fees paid by landlords — but is estimated to cost \$290,000 in Year 2 due to increased enforcement efforts.

Of the dozen speakers at the meeting and online, along with several more who sent letters, just a couple defended the program.

Adam Pinterits, who handles government affairs for the Monterey County Association of Realtors, said his organization continues to oppose it. "We have an inventory problem, and we can't regulate our way out of an inventory problem," he said, adding that collecting data for the sake of collecting data accomplishes little.

He also noted that Salinas and other communities that have implemented registries, and then rent control, have seen landlords selling their rentals at an increased rate.

Resident Mark Peterson expressed similar concerns. “Unfortunately, the proposed expansion could jeopardize the willingness of many small, local landlords to continue renting their properties,” he said. “Invading their privacy and imposing additional regulations will only discourage these mom-and-pop landlords from participating in the rental market, leading them to

conclude that managing their properties is more trouble than it's worth."

Susi Allen described the inventory as “governmental overreach at the expense of landlords and taxpayers.”

“The city has gathered the data it originally sought — what further purpose does this program serve? Rent control?” she asked. “You have your ‘snapshot.’ Now, this program must be abolished.”

Former city councilman Alan Haffa, who initially supported the registry, questioned the need for accumulating more data from smaller landlords and said efforts should be made to reduce the costs of managing the inventory.

“My question is, what exactly are you looking to find that you can’t already see very clearly in the first year’s data?” he said.

Invasion of privacy

Jonina Meyers, however, agreed with staff that all property owners, regardless of size, should be required to provide information for the database. “It seems only fair that all housing providers, whether large or small, take responsibility for their fair share,” she said. She also agreed that those who own three or fewer units shouldn’t have to pay fees.

But landlords should be able to pass half of the registration fee on to their tenants, she said.

Councilman Ed Smith, who has opposed the rental registry since the outset, argued for learning from the data it has gathered so far and ending the program.

"I don't get why we continue with having a public policy that is so divisive," he said, and that offers "no clarity on what the desired outcome is."

But councilman Gino Garcia said the registry is capturing important information that will help decision-makers craft future policy.

“This is not a program that’s going to increase our housing or reduce our rents,” countered recently elected councilwoman

See **RENTALS** page 23A

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one type of asset and that asset was affected by a market downturn.

You can even diversify within individual assets. For example, you can find several different types of stocks, including domestic, international, large company and small company. And you can diversify your bonds by owning long-term and short-term ones.

How you diversify your portfolio will depend on your own risk tolerance, time horizon and financial goals — but however you do it, diversification should always be a driving force behind your investment strategy.

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Motorsports veteran to run Laguna

By MARY SCHLEY

THE FRIENDS of Laguna Seca, the nonprofit that signed a contract with Monterey County in summer 2023 to provide “an independent, privately funded operating solution” for the world-famous track, campgrounds and other facilities at the county-owned recreation area, announced last Thursday it has hired Mel Harder as president and general manager of WeatherTech Raceway Laguna Seca.

Harder is replacing GM John Narigi, who in a joint announcement with the Friends last November said he would be stepping down at the end of the year. Narigi, a former longtime hotel executive, had overseen management and operations at Laguna since the county hired him and his firm in 2019 and he assumed the role in 2020.

Unlike Narigi — who was new to racing when he took over — Harder has built a lengthy career in the industry. Most recently, he spent nearly eight years as team manager at Chip Ganassi Racing, which competes in the IndyCar series, the IMSA SportsCar Championship and the FIA World Endurance Championship.

Years at Indy

As far as raceway management goes, Harder served for two-and-a-half years as senior vice president and general manager of Circuit of the Americas, which was built in Austin, Texas, in 2012. Prior to that, he was senior vice president of operations for the storied Indianapolis Motor Speedway. He was at Indy for almost 23 years, having started there shortly after graduating from Indiana University Bloomington with a bachelor’s degree in management.

“Harder’s experience provides him with an extensive background in hosting international, world-class events and facility

management,” the Friends group said. Friends of Laguna Seca CEO Lauri Eberhart said Harder is “uniquely qualified” for the job and that his “insight and operational expertise will play a pivotal role in facilitating our long-term commitment to the local and motorsports communities, our partners and dedicated fans, and



PHOTO/COURTESY FLS

Mel Harder, who’s worked in motorsports for his entire career, is the new president and GM at Laguna Seca.

our efforts to revitalize Laguna Seca for generations to come.”

FLS has a lot of work ahead. Its concession agreement took effect last August after the group raised \$6 million, shifting all responsibility for operations, maintenance and capital work from the county to the nonprofit. The deal runs for 55 years and entails a \$50 million-plus investment in the property.

In May 2024, the group hired Eberhart, who also has a lengthy career in the industry, including overseeing day-to-day operations of Charlotte Motor Speedway, serving as general counsel of Speedway Motorsports and the track, and founding Apollo Sports and Entertainment Law Group. In his new role, Harder will collaborate closely with Eberhart to implement the nonprofit’s business model, FLS said.

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Future of Los Padres dam in doubt

By CHRIS COUNTS

AMERICAN RIVERS, an environmental group that wants dams removed, is celebrating the teardown of 108 of them in 27 states last year. While Los Padres Dam isn't on the removal list, it could be there soon.



PHOTO/PINE CONE FILE

Officials continue to weigh proposals for removing Los Padres Dam or expanding its storage capacity.

Nearly two years after a proposal to remove Los Padres Dam went public, Monterey Peninsula Water Management

District general manager Dave Stoldt told The Pine Cone more questions need to be answered before it can be determined if removing the dam or simply leaving it in place is the best plan. While some contend removing it and restoring the river to its natural state would benefit steelhead, others are concerned the fish could be vulnerable to droughts if water can't be released from the reservoir during the dry months. And of course, the reservoir only exists because of the dam.

Many studies

Four studies on the dam's viability are underway, according to Josh Stratton of Cal Am. One deals with the stability of the spillway, while another is investigating the safety of the dam itself. The third will evaluate potential flooding effects of the removal, while another study will delve into how the dam's removal would impact cultural resources like burial sites.

See **DAM** page 18A

Time running out to comment on regional tourism plan

By MARY SCHLEY

WHILE SOME complain that the Monterey Peninsula, especially Carmel and Big Sur, are already over-marketed to visitors, a plan developed by the state's tourism agency, Visit California, and a global consulting firm says the Central Coast — defined as extending from Morgan Hill and Gilroy to Oxnard and Camarillo — should do more to enhance and sustain the tourism industry. Alongside plans for 11 other regions, the draft was released March 3, and public comments are due March 31.

Based on a two-year process that included extensive analysis of events, destinations and other tourism drivers, numerous stakeholder interviews and committee meetings, reviews of dozens of environmental plans, 75 site visits and other efforts, Visit California and consultant Jones Lang LaSalle developed the Central Coast plan.

Their research "analyzed nearly 4,000 tourism-related data points across 68 indicators," and evaluated products, events, activities, experiences and other attractions using various tools that indicate 42 percent

of them generate regional or national demand.

"Notably, 17 attractions and experiences are identified as national or worldwide demand-drivers," including Highway 1 — which is at the top of the list — whale watching, Hearst Castle, Pebble Beach, Laguna Seca, Point Lobos and Bixby Bridge.

To-do list

The results led to the development of five "strategic priorities" to "drive sustainable tourism growth while managing the tourism ecosystem to balance resident and visitor needs" in the area.

Local tourism group See Monterey, formerly the Monterey County Convention & Visitors Bureau, announced last week that the document seeks to "help businesses and communities navigate challenges, seize opportunities and build long-term resilience," and that the deadline to comment is approaching.

See Monterey President and CEO Rob O'Keefe was a member of the advisory committee, along with Visit Carmel

See **TOURISM** page 22A

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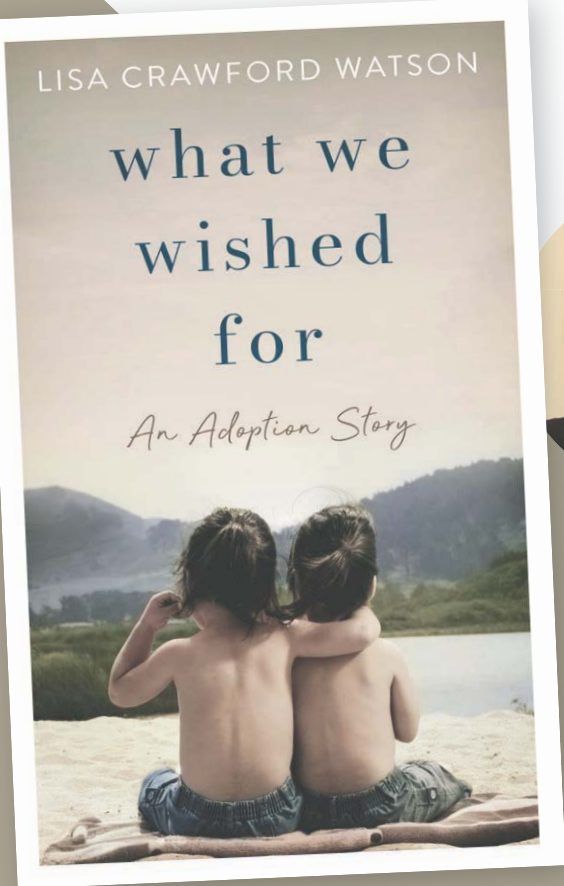
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Seaside takes HOA to court over trees, lights

By KELLY NIX

THE CITY of Seaside is suing a homeowners’ association, alleging its failure to maintain trees in the large development it oversees has caused damage to public property.

In a Feb. 21 lawsuit filed in Monterey County Superior Court, Seaside contends that the Seaside Highlands Owners’ Association, an HOA that represents homeowners in the 380-unit Seaside Highlands subdivision, failed to properly maintain trees adjacent to public sidewalks, which caused roots to damage them. It also claims the HOA did not maintain streetlights.

By failing to maintain the lights and trees, the city argues the HOA has created a condition “that is harmful to the health and safety of the public and obstructs the free use of public sidewalks, thereby interfering with the comfortable enjoyment of life and property of the surrounding community.”

Offending roots

Seaside said it told the HOA to correct the root problems, repair the public sidewalks and submit a tree removal and replacement plan for every tree that caused uplift and damage to a sidewalk.

“The defendants shall also submit a reconstruction plan to restore the sidewalks and any related infrastructure,” including storm drains “damaged by the offending tree roots,” the suit says.

The city claims the association is obligated to do the maintenance, but the group claims “it has no such duty or responsibility.”

Seaside also said it gave the HOA “reasonable time” to fix the problems but that it refused to do so.

The city alleges breach of contract and public nuisance and is asking for a court order requiring the HOA to do the maintenance on the trees, lights and other infrastructure.

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Despite deficit, Newsom says he won’t trim healthcare for undocumented

By CAITLIN CONRAD

CALIFORNIA IS short \$6.2 billion for its Medicaid services, mostly because of the high cost of offering free coverage for all low-income residents, including those who are in the country illegally.

In 2024 the state expanded its Medicaid program, known as Medi-Cal, and it is costing billions more than predicted, creating a new budget problem in a lean year. To make ends meet, Gov. Gavin Newsom borrowed \$3.4 billion from the state’s general fund earlier this month, and last week he requested state lawmakers approve a \$2.8 billion loan to keep Medi-Cal funded through June.

Despite the shortfall, Newsom indicated he had no plans to roll back the program for the undocumented.

“Not on my docket,” the governor told reporters at the state Capitol last week.

\$9.5 billion and counting

Roughly 15 million Californians rely on Medi-Cal for their healthcare, and about 1.6 million of them are immigrants without legal status. Initially the state estimated it would spend \$6 billion this year on healthcare for those here illegally.

To date, it’s spent \$8.4 billion, and the price tag is expected to swell to \$9.5 billion by the end of the fiscal year in July.

California first extended Medi-Cal to undocumented low-income children in 2015, later adding to that coverage, including free dental and vision for young adults and people over 50. It was extended to low-income undocumented people ages 26 to 49 in 2024. The state predicted that last

expansion would add 700,000 to the system, but more people signed up.

“Medi-Cal is supposed to protect our most vulnerable, but the governor’s decision to expand the program to illegal immigrants has added costs that are just unsustainable,” said Assemblymember James Gallagher, a Yuba City Republican.

In response to the funding problems, Gallagher and fellow Republicans are calling for a federal audit of the state’s Medi-Cal spending.

“Hospitals and providers are struggling to keep their doors open, patients can’t get in to see a doctor, and the state needs billions more just to keep the program running,” said Gallagher.

Medi-Cal spending

Medi-Cal costs taxpayers a lot, and it’s been running over budget. For this fiscal year, the program was budgeted for \$161 billion but the state expects to spend \$174 billion. To cover the rising costs, the state has been increasing spending on Medi-Cal from its general fund, which mostly comes from individual income taxes.

Over the last year, Medi-Cal accounted for 17 percent of California’s general fund spending, and that percentage is expected to go up.

In November, the state legislative analyst’s office predicted general fund support for Medi-Cal would rise at a rate of 8.6 percent annually. Analysts blamed the increase on the rising number of people joining Medi-Cal and the increasing rates providers are charging.

In addition to adding undocumented

See MEDICAID page 20A

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VIEWS

From page 1A

second-story deck, an outdoor seating area, and replacement patios and drive-ways. Plans also call for the conversion of a caretaker's unit into a 1,103-square-foot accessory dwelling unit with minor exterior modifications, and construction of the pavilion.

The Del Monte Forest Land Use Advisory Committee voted unanimously in October 2024 to recommend approval of the plan.

Despite the committee's thumbs-up, county planner Fiona Jensen told the planning commission that the pavilion "would block some of the only remaining open-ocean and filtered-ocean views along this section of 17 Mile Drive."

"Public views, including ocean views, and views of the forest, are extremely protected under the Del Monte Forest Land Use Plan," Jensen explained.

Also, Jensen noted, a county report suggests that the "color and materials and siting of the structure detract from the scenic values of the ocean."



PHOTO/PINE CONE FILE

A Pebble Beach resident wants to build what's described as a pavilion, but the county contends it will block public ocean views.

According to the county, the applicant "rejected staff's encouragement to modify the project's scope to be compatible with the property's ESHA and visual resources."

But is the county's stance an overreach? Representing Bechtel, consultant Eric Lundquist pushed back against the idea that the pavilion can't be built because it blocks public views of the ocean. Lundquist said the Del Monte Forest Land Use Plan is clear that the impacts of development on the view must be "significant," which he contends they won't be.

Lundquist also noted that many properties in the neighborhood have undergone similar recent development that block ocean views from the road. He cited several legal cases that went against the California Coastal Commission when the watchdog agency tried to enforce viewshed prohibitions on development that resembles Bechtel's plan.

Legal concerns raised

Lundquist, a former Monterey County director of housing and community development, said the county's stance on the project's viewshed issues is merely an administrative interpretation. "It's unlawful to base the findings of this planning commission on that administrative interpretation," he told the planning commission.

Lundquist contended the impacts on views would be less than significant, and he accused county staff of taking a stance "that an open ocean view is considered a significant impact on the visual access or public access." "That's not correct," he insisted.

After a brief discussion, the planning commission voted unanimously to continue the hearing. "Given what I would refer to as a barrage of errors that we've had raised, and significant

legal concerns, there appears to be no way to go forward anytime in the near future," said planning commissioner Martha Diehl, who represents Pebble Beach.

The buildings on the property were

designed by noted architect Lewis P. Hobart and built in 1919, but remodeling in the 1970s removed "any historical significance" they had, according to a county report.



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HOUSING

From page 1A

Owners could work with the nonprofit Carmel Foundation, an organization serving residents 55 and older, to find tenants for their low-income rentals, she said. And those with second homes might want to build accessory units to accommodate full-time residents on their lots.

The city could also provide amnesty to any granny units that have been built without permits, the group suggested.

“People have the right to do with their property what they want to do with their property — we cannot force them to rent their units,” she acknowledged. “We just want to provide services and incentives that would move them down that path.”

Twomey’s husband and fellow CRA board member, Tim, described how hotel conversions might work. He said the city used TOT data to identify “379 underperforming hotel rooms across 15 hotel properties” — though specifics like names and locations were kept confidential — where owners might be enticed to convert rooms into living space and then sell the room

rights to other hotel operators to develop elsewhere in the city.

The group said the idea has generated “strong interest” among developers, and that advocates convinced the state housing agency to allow such conversions on properties smaller than the previously stated half-acre minimum.

“The HCD has been very receptive to working with us to find programs that work for our village,” including smaller sites, he said, adding that housing projects could be accomplished entirely through private funding, with no public subsidies or tax credits.

“We’re trying to nail down the incentives and processes,” he said.

Downtown living

Buder said the AHA group broke new ground in researching options for downtown.

“We went out and did something that I don’t think any community in California has ever done in this process,” he said, explaining that volunteers spent hundreds of hours combing through all the nooks and crannies of the commercial districts to create a database of more than 1,000 spaces that could be used for housing. They also

created an iPhone app to catalog them.

Their efforts revealed numerous underutilized and vacant spots on side streets and in courtyards and interblock walkways, Buder said, and inspired the development of two new potential programs.

One would have small off-street and upstairs commercial spaces split to have a business aspect in front and a small residential use at the rear — essentially a live/work arrangement.

“Originally, it sounded crazy, but what we found was you as a property owner could rent out deed-restricted affordable live/work space for more money” than what would be earned from a straight commercial space, he said. “The concept is basically to reactivate these off-the-beaten-path spaces that are vacant.”

The other program identifies 8,000-square-foot properties that could accommodate mixed-income housing. At higher densities than are currently allowed, landowners could build 75 percent market-rate and 25 percent affordable housing so their developments would be financially feasible, Buder suggested.

“If you’re only allowed to build deed-restricted affordable, nobody’s going to do it,” he said. “It doesn’t pencil.”

And finally, Victoria Beach talked about the potential of churches incorporating housing on their properties. The city contains five — accounting for 15.6 acres of land — and she said the state wants to support religious institutions in their efforts to provide places for people to live.

“As attendance is declining, this is a way churches connect with their communities,” she said.

She suggested churches could seek donations and solicit architects to volunteer their services, and said The Carmel Foundation could be asked to manage rental units.

Planning commissioner Erin Allen described the group’s plan as “fantastic.”

“I love how creative it is, and that it’s

unique and customized to our town,” she said.

Chair Michael LePage described the city — which had just over 4,000 residents in 2021 but had 3,122 as of last year, according to figures provided in a recent financial audit — as “a dying community,” where the median age is 65, but the proposed housing concepts could help reverse that trend.

Commissioner Stephanie Locke, who works for the Monterey Peninsula Water Management District, said such projects are now in reach, thanks to the impending expansion of Pure Water Monterey that will boost the city’s water allocation to 14 acre-feet.

“They are still subject to the meter moratorium that Cal Am has, and there may be some pushback in converting commercial use to residential use,” she warned, but nonetheless, “water shouldn’t be an issue.”

“That 14 acre-feet should be enough to meet all of our housing needs over the next 20 years or more,” she said. “It’s a lot.”

She also observed that ADUs and small apartments use very little water.

Successful collaboration

Locke suggested transportation and parking be addressed in the plan and noted that convincing property owners to voluntarily deed-restrict affordable rentals “is extremely difficult.”

In wrapping up the AHA group’s presentation, Beach characterized the collaboration between it and the city as successful and said members are confident they will meet their goal of finding alternative sites for the plan’s 149 affordable units.

“I think it will be an example for the state, possibly for the nation, to come up with tailored solutions,” that fit the city, she said.

Of course, a lot of work remains, including drafting the amendments to the housing element, putting them through the public approval process, and getting them certified by the state.

City’s Rotary Club lights 75 candles

PINE CONE STAFF REPORT

A PROCLAMATION from the Carmel City Council earlier this month and a gala at Quail Lodge set for March 29 are marking the 75th anniversary of the Rotary Club of Carmel-by-the-Sea, which has raised more than \$4 million since its founding to spend on “initiatives that uplift and enrich the lives of those in need” in the community.

Read by councilman Jeff Baron and signed by Mayor Byrne at the council’s March 4 meeting, the proclamation notes

that the club “was founded in 1950 with a mission to serve the community through philanthropy, volunteerism and leadership, embodying the core values of Rotary International.”

Rotarian Graeme Robertson thanked the council and acknowledged their service to the community, too, when he accepted the proclamation.

“It has been 75 years that our club has been in existence, and it truly is a community effort for all of us to be part of Carmel-by-the-Sea and do all the good work that we do,” he said.

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From page 1A

Farr said Caltrans is ignoring previously established "sign criteria and prohibitions."

Before the vote to approve the proposal, Farr urged the coastal commission to better scrutinize it.

signage on the state's world-recognized scenic highway," he said. "No other entity can ask Caltrans to rethink its 'one-size-fits-all' signage proposal."

Also speaking out against the plan was resident Trey Kropp, who contends that the idea of lowering speed limits to improve safety “is simply not based in reality” and does not reflect “real-world driving conditions.”

“No one is driving 55 miles per hour through tight curves,” Kropp wrote to the coastal watchdog agency. “The natural design of Highway 1 forces drivers to adjust their speeds accordingly. The people who will be most affected by this reduction are not reckless drivers, but local residents and the workers who commute here daily. These individuals rely on Highway 1 as their primary route, and unnecessarily lowering speed limits will increase travel times and daily frustrations.”

Another resident, Magnus Toren, is encouraged by efforts to remove at least

"I salute the effort to reduce signage as much as possible along the Big Sur stretch of Highway 1," Toren told the coastal commission. "Almost 100 percent of the visitors express great gratitude for the wild and rural appearance of the coast."

The cost of the project to taxpayers wasn't identified or discussed at the hearing. Construction is expected to start by the end of the year.

Big Sur locals — as they have done before — complained that the coastal commission is ignoring the local land use advisory committee process, which makes it possible for residents to learn about projects and comment on them before they are approved. The coastal commission conceded at the March 12 hearing that the Big

From page 12A

The last two aren't expected to be completed until the end of 2026.

A feasibility study for the dam's removal was done in 2023, at a cost to ratepayers of more than \$1 million.

Stoldt said state and federal wildlife officials have held lengthy talks on the topic "over what is best for the fish." Should there be a regulated reservoir with water flowing longer throughout the year or a completely unregulated river?

He also noted that there are residents in the Cachagua and Jamesburg areas who say the reservoir provides an invaluable water source for firefighters.

In a letter to The Pine Cone last month, Hans Haselbach, a board member for the Robles Firewise Group, reported that helicopters have successfully used the reservoir as a water source to fight wildfires.

"I trust fire safety issues for the Carmel River area will be considered in light of recent events in Los Angeles," Haselbach said. "Los Padres Reservoir is a large source of water. Because of its size, more than one helicopter can refill its bucket safely and quickly — we need the Los Padres Reservoir."

The Carmel River Watershed Council supports taking down the dam. According to Lorin Letendre, the removal of the dam will benefit steelhead by "opening up the river to its natural functions." Letendre contends the removal would cost far less than the alternative, which requires

“This project should have had more airing in Big Sur,” Big Sur LUAC member Steve Beck wrote to the coastal commission. “The public had little chance to provide input and feedback.”

Beck suggested there was ample opportunity to inform locals about the project.

“It could have been agendized and given a full hearing at a Big Sur Multi-Agency Advisory Council meeting, or emailed out, or mailed out, or a community meeting could have been called at the Big Sur Grange Hall,” he added. “Certainly, it should have been an item on the Big Sur LUAC agenda. None of that happened. Those of us that heard about it, heard at the last minute.”

dredging the reservoir. He also noted that it will result in more water percolating in the ground.

The Carmel River Steelhead Association hasn't endorsed the dam's removal because its members are concerned about the lower portion of the river going dry during drought years.

“During the last drought, the flow coming into Los Padres in the middle of the summer was not even 1 cubic foot per second,” the group’s Frank Emerson said. “We’re not sure how the dam’s removal will affect the fish. We’re reserving judgment until we see the analysis.”

While the steelhead group has concerns about tearing down Los Padres, its members are generally supportive of removing dams. Emerson called the removal of the San Clemente Dam “a huge success” which has “greatly improved” steelhead habitat.

Two years ago, the cost of removing the dam was estimated to be \$94.7 million, while the price tag for dredging and expanding the existing reservoir would be \$183.4 million, along with \$82.1 million for fish passage improvements.

It's been about nine years since the much-smaller San Clemente Dam, also on the Carmel River, was removed at a cost of about \$83 million.

Los Padres Dam was built in 1948 “with mules and one bulldozer,” according to the Carmel Valley Association. It held 3,030 acre-feet of water when it was built in 1949, but due to accumulated silt, the capacity had fallen to 1,775 acre-feet by 2008, and it is no longer an important part of the Monterey Peninsula’s water supply.



Motorists driving along Highway 1 in Big Sur will soon need to watch their speedometers after the California Coastal Commission OK'd a Caltrans request to lower speed limits.




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From page 1A

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Major growth

Laird's new bill has the backing of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers and the California Professional Firefighters.



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Norma J. Walch

Norma J. Walch passed away on Jan. 29, 2025, at age 79 in Monterey, CA. Born on June 19, 1945, in Bridgeport, CT to Raymond and Edith Meyer, Norma graduated from Misericordia University in Dallas, PA with a degree in English.

Mrs. Walch’s teaching career started at San Roque School in Santa Barbara. After meeting and marrying Robert Walch, they moved to Monterey when Mr. Walch got a teaching job at Carmel High School. After a number of years raising their daughters, Mrs. Walch joined Mr. Walch in teaching English at Carmel High School.



Remembered fondly by her students, her work as a teacher was remarkable. She held her students to a high standard, but did so with humor and kindness. The impact she made on the many lives she touched is immeasurable.

After retirement, Mrs. Walch grew orchids, made stained glass sun catchers and watched San Francisco Giants games with her cat, Torby.

Mrs. Walch is greatly loved and missed by her daughters, Heather Collins and her husband, John, and Jessica Maguire and her husband, John; sister-in-law, Judy Walch Preuss and three grandchildren. She is preceded in death by her husband, Robert F. Walch.

Contributions in Mrs. Walch’s name can be made to the SPCA Monterey County, P.O. Box 3058, Monterey, CA 93942-3058.

ROSETTA FRIEDMAN

Our cherished Rosetta Friedman passed away on March 20th at the age of 93, surrounded by her loving family. Rosetta was a dedicated mother, grandmother, artist and teacher who saw the world in vibrant color and forgiving shades of gray.

Rosetta was born in Indianapolis, IN and upon graduating Indiana University with B.A. in education and a minor



in art, she moved to New York to be with her husband and pursue a career in art. Rosetta worked for Butterick Patterns, sketching designs for their clothing pattern company. She also worked at L. Strauss & Co., illustrating items in department stores in pen and ink for newspaper advertising.

She later received her M.A. in education and art history from Queen’s College, NY and exhibited her works of art at Indiana University, Manhattan School of Music and the Huntington Art League as well as receiving 1st place for her mixed media work in the Oyster Bay Art Exhibition in 2018.

Rosetta has held teaching positions in the Plainview/Old Bethpage School District, at both the elementary and secondary levels, and provided art instruction to children and adults for more than 50 years.

Rosetta deeply valued her family, friends, art, dance and music. She was generous, and possessed an ironic sense of humor. Her presence could be felt as she entered any room with her graceful stature and elegant style. She inspired everyone around her and was truly interested in benefiting others with her wisdom and experience. She was a person of integrity and held herself and others to the highest standard. Rosetta had many close friends and made many new ones in Carmel and Monterey in her final chapter.

Rosetta is survived by her three children, Alexandra, Alison and Mark; her grandchildren, Charlie, Briggs, Hudson, David, Rachel and Hannah and her two great-grandchildren, Lilly and Kalvin.

In honor of her generous spirit and her love of our library, the family asks that donations be made to the Carmel Public Library Foundation.

MEDICAID

From page 14A

immigrants to the list of those who qualify for Medi-Cal, California loosened eligibility requirements for adults by no longer counting cars, homes and savings as assets, making income the only eligibility criterion.

More than half of California children are on Medi-Cal. The government-funded healthcare plan is available to households making as much as 138 percent of the federal poverty level for adult coverage, and up to 266 percent of the federal poverty level for child coverage.

The legislative analyst’s office reports provider rates keep going up, too, rising about 3 to 5 percent a year. That said, Medi-Cal does not reimburse providers for the full cost of care, which has led to another problem — doctors limiting the number of Medi-Cal patients they’ll see.

Speaking to reporters last week following his loan request the Governor said he did not plan to halt coverage

for the undocumented but did need to balance the budget. Unlike Washington, Sacramento cannot run deficits.

“The realities are you have to balance budgets. We balance our budget, revenue is holding up,” said Newsom.

The governor also attempted to paint a rosier picture of the current budget shortfall.

“The good news is that you’ve seen the revenues to the state that we are collecting are above projections. The economy continues to be remarkably resilient,” he said.

State revenues may be on the rise, but California still receives 50 percent of its funding for Medi-Cal from the federal government. But the amount it receives could be changing. House Republicans recently voted to advance a proposal to cut \$880 billion in Medicaid spending over the next 10 years. According to estimates from the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, California could be facing cuts in the neighborhood of \$10 to \$20 billion a year.

How the state will react to those potential cuts remains unclear. California is already forecasting \$188.1 billion in Medi-Cal spending for 2025-2026 fiscal year if the program continues with its the current eligibility rules.

LUCILLE ANN EGGERMAN

Lucille Ann Eggerman, age 97, of Monterey, California, passed away on Dec. 27, 2024. Lucille was born in 1927. She grew up on the southeast side of Chicago, in the Brighton Park district, a working-class area with a big Polish-American community at the time. She was the eldest of three children raised by her parents, John and Anna Grubensky. Lucille graduated from Thomas Kelly High School in 1946, joined the workforce, and took classes at Loyola University.



In 1951 she married another Kelly High grad, Bernard Joseph Eggerman, and worked as a telephone exchange operator at AT&T. They subsequently moved to El Paso, Texas, where Bernie had re-enlisted in the U.S. military, this time as a practicing dentist at Fort Bliss. In 1959 they took their young family to Dhahran, Saudi Arabia, where they lived a full and fruitful life for the next three decades. Bernie practiced dentistry, eventually becoming director of dental services for the Arabian American Oil Company. Lucille raised four children, and worked as a medical supply clerk, an assistant dietician, and a secretary in a petroleum engineering department.

Lucille and Bernie retired to the Monterey/Salinas area, first living in a home they had designed and built on Calera Canyon Road. After Bernie passed in 2001, Lucille subsequently moved to Carmel, and then Monterey. She was a volunteer worker at the gift shop in the Community Hospital of the Monterey Peninsula (CHOMP) for more than 20 years, and a member of both St. Joseph’s Parish in Spreckels, and, more recently, Carmel Mission.

Lucille is survived by her four children and six grandchildren, to whom she has left a legacy of nearly a century of steadfast optimism, persistence in love, and a belief that no matter what befalls you in life, it will all come to some form of good in the end. And ... she taught all her kids how to swim as well!

Lucille’s memorial service will begin at 10 a.m. April 1, 2025, at the Carmel Mission Basilica. In lieu of flowers, the family suggests memorial contributions to the Community Hospital of the Monterey Peninsula or a charity of your choice.



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May 10, 2025

1 p.m. at Carmel Valley Community Park
29 Ford Road, Carmel Valley,
near the historical museum.



Motorist dies after driving off cliff

PINE CONE STAFF REPORT

A MOTORIST lost his life March 20 when the BMW he was driving went off a cliff near Julia Pfeiffer Burns State Park in Big Sur. The incident happened around noon, and no other cars were involved.

The driver was identified as 36-year-old Charlie Phuc Ngo of San Lorenzo, according to the Monterey County Sheriff’s

Office.

For reasons unknown, Ngo’s car tumbled off the highway and landed about 400 feet below it.

Big Sur Fire soon arrived on scene, along with a California Highway Patrol helicopter. Rescue workers hiked down to the vehicle, where they found the driver deceased, according to Big Sur Fire Chief Matt Harris.

MARIA JUDITE GONSALVES

April 8, 1944 ❖ March 10, 2025

Maria Judite Gonsalves (néeVieiraAlvares Coelho) passed away peacefully at home on March 10, 2025, after a prolonged illness, her family at her side. She was 80 years old.

Born on the island of Terceira in the Açores, Portugal, Judite was the youngest of seven sisters and one of 11 children. Life in the post-war Açores was beautiful but difficult, with modern conveniences scarce and every child contributing to the household. A childhood marked by illness and adversity, Judite suffered life-threatening injuries as a toddler after falling from a second-story balcony, and later, as a pre-teen, endured a difficult and lengthy treatment for tuberculosis. Yet despite these hardships, Judite’s early years were filled with love, a deep connection to her family, and a steadfast appreciation for life’s simple joys.



Even as a child, Judite’s energy and joyful spirit were unmistakable and infectious. She had a deep and abiding love for books, animals, nature, and especially music — with her melodic, vibrant voice often wafting through the family home while doing her chores. As a teenager, Judite sang with an instrumental trio and would go on to have her songs played on a local radio station.

It was during the annual Carnaval festival when a 16-year-old Judite met the love of her life, Tony Gonsalves, who was from California and in Terceira visiting family. Their connection was instant and eventually deepened through the exchange of letters over the next three years. In 1964, Tony returned to Terceira to marry her, missing his high school graduation ceremony to do so.

At 19, Judite left her homeland behind to begin a new life in Pacific Grove, California. Adjusting to a new country was challenging, but Judite faced it with her characteristic determination and grace. Together, Judite and Tony created a loving home life, raised two daughters, and helped several of Judite’s siblings and mother immigrate to California. An indomitable spirit, Judite also taught herself to speak, read and write English. Though she missed her homeland, Judite embraced her new life in America with gratitude and enthusiasm, never taking anything for granted.

To know Judite was to know she was a force of nature — compassionate, energetic, and strikingly beautiful, inside and out. Although religious and deeply spiritual, she was never judgmental or sanctimonious. Her striking presence always turned heads, but it was her generosity, selflessness, and raucous laugh that made her unforgettable. Whether through her radiant joie de vivre, playful sense of humor, or boundless compassion, people were naturally drawn to her.

Judite had a deep appreciation for nature and saw beauty everywhere. She was endlessly creative and resourceful, with a talent for turning the ordinary into the extraordinary. Whether it was painting a landscape, refinishing an old piece of furniture, sewing a new dress for one of her girls, or designing and planting a garden, Judite poured herself into everything she did and could do anything she put her mind to. She even painted the family home, inside and outside, alone and without complaint.

With many years spent working in retail, Judite’s warmth and charisma made her beloved by colleagues and customers alike. So impressed were her supervisors at the Pebble Beach Company, her employer for many years, that she was awarded employee of the year and gifted with a trip to Japan.

Judite had many interests, but more than anything, she loved children — all children. She had an innate ability to connect with them, to make them feel cherished, heard and protected. One of the greatest joys of Judite’s life was becoming a grandmother. Without hesitation, she left her job in retail to help raise her grandchildren, pouring love, energy and creativity into their lives while shaping their childhoods with laughter, wisdom and a sense of wonder.

Judite was preceded in death by her parents, João Domingos Coelho and Isaura de Jesus Coelho; and several siblings. She is survived by her loving husband, Tony; daughters, Deborah Gonçalves and Michelle Gonsalves (Michael Kirch); grandchildren, Preston Kirch and Grace Kirch; siblings, Conceição Bettencourt, Isaura Rodrigues, and Agnelo Alvares; and many extended family members and dear friends.

A private ceremony will be held at a later date.

For a more detailed tribute and to sign her guestbook, go to Legacy.com.



RICHARD MASON LUNDY

Please join us at 2 p.m. on Saturday, March 29 at Veteran’s Memorial Park, Skyline Drive & Jefferson Street, Monterey, CA 93940.

We will share stories and recollections, and celebrate the ways that Rich Lundy touched all of our lives.

Barbara Silva

1926 to 2025

With family by her side Barbara Silva died on March 12. Her passing was two weeks and one day shy of her 99th birthday.

Barbara (Bobbie) Grace Mapes was born in Sacramento, CA on March 27, 1926, to George and Vada (Mackey) Mapes. She married her husband, Carlo (Carl) Silva, in 1946. Barbara lived on the Monterey Peninsula for the past 67 years.



Barbara was a lifetime member of the California Parent-Teacher Association and was actively involved in her children’s Monterey schools: Thomas O. Larkin Elementary, Walter Colton Jr. High and Monterey High. In 1963 she received special recognition from the Boy Scouts of America for her years of service as a Cub Scout den mother. She was a longtime volunteer for Meals on Wheels of the Monterey Peninsula, Big Sur Marathon and Monterey Bay Aquarium. Barbara was an early member of Monterey Bay Hot Jazz Society and

worked many years organizing volunteers for the Dixieland Monterey Festival, now known as Jazz Bash By the Bay Monterey.

Barbara’s professional career was at Thomas H. Hayes Elementary School on the former Fort Ord military base where she managed the library. She shared with the students her love for the written and spoken word, and enjoyed introducing teachers to different authors and books. She was a gifted and animated story-time reader. In her tenure at Hayes her library was an inspiration for MPUSD librarians and administrators.

In 1981, shortly after retirement, Barbara and Carl headed off on a one-year road trip around the United States and Canada. They traveled 6,895 miles in a Toyota long-bed pickup pulling a small utility trailer. They wandered the country, visiting our national parks and enjoying the diverse cultures of the people of the U.S.A. and our Canadian neighbors.

To begin their next adventure they graduated from sleeping in the back of the pickup to towing a small Burro trailer and enjoyed trips to Baja, Mexico and one adventurous trek to Alaska. They volunteered for eight summers at Lassen Volcanic National Park.

In her early 70s Barbara enrolled in an MPC Gentrain class that took her on her first international trip, a tour of London studying the plays of Shakespeare. She continued to enjoy world travel. Barbara was an avid GS Warriors fan: with family and friends she loved to cheer on her team.

Barbara was preceded in death by her husband of 52 years, Carl; and sons, Mark and Keith. She is survived by children, David (Linda Spangler), Stephen, Vincent (Debbie), Grace Silva-Santella (Ray); daughter-in-law, Deb Urban; grandchildren, Kendra and Vince; great-grandchildren, lara and Trent and brother, Bill (Judy) Mapes.

Barbara was blessed to enjoy many longtime deep-rooted friendships. She was incredibly kind and thoughtful and took time to get to know those she interacted with. She was deeply loved by Ivy Park staff, where she spent her last three years.

The family suggests any memorial donations be made to Monterey Public Library Friends and Foundation, PO Box 267, Monterey, 93942-267, investinmpl.org.
There will be a gathering for Barbara at a future date.

TOURISM

From page 12A

executive director Amy Herzog, Portola Hotel managing director Janine Chicourrat, and representatives of the Monterey Bay Aquarium, Pebble Beach Co. and other businesses and organizations, that participated in the effort to create it.

Locally, tourism generates \$3 billion annually, making it “the top economic driver in the Monterey Peninsula and significant for the entire county’s prosperity,” according to See Monterey.

Group effort

The regional plan states local governments, agencies, organizations and businesses should develop more reasons for leisure travelers to come here, including focusing on agritourism, outdoor recreation, cultural tourism, and events and festivals, especially during less busy times of the year.

And to sustain an increased number of visitors, they should improve tourism-related transportation infrastructure, including shuttle services, better parking management — especially on Highway 1 south of Carmel and through Big Sur — and bike-sharing.

Stakeholders should support tourism-industry workforce development by better using apprenticeship programs

and collaborating with educational institutions for tailored training programs. Cal State Monterey Bay, for instance, has a sustainable hospitality management program.

Sustainability and resiliency efforts should be bolstered by implementing reservation systems for popular parks, according to the plan, while the region’s inland areas should be better marketed as visitor destinations.

“There is an opportunity to highlight this subregion as part of experiencing the Central Coast,” according to the plan.

Balancing act

“These opportunities align with the broader state-wide goals and Visit California’s focus on sustainable tourism development, economic growth and enhancing visitor experiences while preserving natural and cultural resources,” Visit California and JLL said, and their implementation will rely on ongoing efforts by destination management and marketing groups, local businesses and community organizations. “The strategic plan emphasizes the importance of balancing tourism growth with community needs and environmental preservation.”

Funded by tax dollars from the U.S. Economic Development Administration’s travel, tourism and outdoor recreation program, the regional plans, “represent the first project in the nation of this scale to examine the range of tourism dynamics, from destination brand perceptions to housing imbalances, environmental challenges, workforce development, public safety issues and infrastructure

priorities,” according to the state.

The program is using federal funds appropriated by the American Rescue Plan Act “to support states and communities whose tourism economy was damaged by the Covid-19 pandemic,” and while most of that money went directly to tourism marketing efforts, a portion “was directed to the development of these plans, which are designed to build a more resilient travel and tourism sector in California.”

To read the document, visit travelmattersca.com/issues-insights/regional-strategic-tourism-plans. To submit comments, email regionalplans@visitcalifornia.com.

BURN


From page 11A

Robert Talbott, a local since 1950 and resident above Hatton Canyon for more than four years, is a volunteer for the Via Mar Monte Homeowners Association “Over a hundred trees have been lost to wind or have otherwise died in this area. We’ve had an essentially unmanaged forest for years and it’s incredibly dangerous. We need to manage it better and we need more prescribed burns.” Talbott continued, “For all of us, our goal is to reduce excessive dead vegetation, and burn piles are a great way to do it.”

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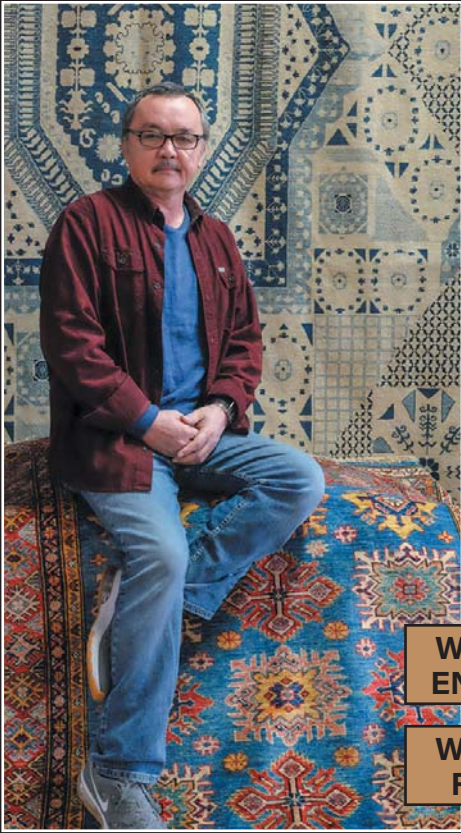
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CONFLICT

From page 8A

Shery Yang told The Pine Cone Thursday. Some residents said they believe Rau should have not participated in the discussion. Others have come to her defense. While there may be a logical explanation as to why Rau did not recuse herself and voted on the matter, city officials aren't helping to clear up the confusion.

A Pine Cone reporter sent questions to city attorney Brian Pierik, Mayor Nick Smith, and P.G. city manager Matt Mogensen asking, among other things, if someone had determined before last week's discussion that Rau's participation would not violate state conflict-of-interest laws. They did not respond. Rau, who in her 2024 political campaign said she would "commit to explaining every vote I cast," also did not respond. The state's 1974 Political Reform Act, which the FPPC administers and enforces, outlines five types of interests that may be disqualifying, including a business entity in which an official has a direct or indirect investment worth at least \$2,000, and real property in which an official has an interest worth \$2,000 or more. Rau purchased the building via an LLC in June 2023, records show.

More money

Amelio suggested at the meeting that having louder music at downtown P.G. restaurants would amount to more sales for establishments. Rau concurred. "I do agree with Amelio about the

revenue" Rau remarked, adding that "it's just so great to see our young people staying in our town instead" of going to "Monterey or Seaside or wherever else." Amelio, Rau, Smith and councilman Chaps Poduri directed Pierik to write an ordinance to modify the city codes that pertain to noise. Councilwoman Lori McDonnell and councilman Paul Walkingstick, who presented a well-researched rebuttal to Amelio's proposal which included a list of sound level limits in other cities, voted against it.

Not included

The FPPC requires all elected officials and public employees "who make or influence governmental decisions" to submit a "Statement of Economic Interest." The document, called a Form 700, is intended to provide the public with information about an official's personal financial interests to ensure they "are making decisions in the best interest of the public and not enhancing their personal finances." According to the city's website, Rau did not disclose on the Form 700 she filed Jan. 6 that she owns the 215 Forest Ave. building where Pop & Hiss operates. She ticked the box indicating "no reportable interests." The FPPC states that individuals "must verify the Form 700s content under penalty of perjury. Therefore, every effort must be made to understand what the form requires." Rau had brushes with politics before being elected to the council in November 2024. She ran unsuccessfully for a council seat in 2022 and served as the chair of the P.G. DEI Task Force.

RENTALS

From page 10A

Jean Rasch. She said the program invades people's privacy and might be encouraging landlords to get rid of their rentals. "I'm very afraid we're going to drive people out of the market," she said. "I think they will sell." She suggested the city use its funds for rental assistance and dealing with slumlords instead of managing a rental inventory. Mayor Tyller Williamson, however, said the goal of the registry is "a deeper

understanding of what's going on with the market," and transparency for tenants. "I support it," he said. After a couple of failed motions, including one made by Smith to eliminate the program, Garcia moved approval of Ackerman's recommendations, and it was approved 3-2, with Smith and Rasch dissenting. Assuming the city council adopts the final version of the revised ordinance next month, rental registration opens again May 1, and all property owners must provide the required information about their units by July 1. Enforcement efforts will begin Aug. 15, according to Ackerman.

Women in BUSINESS ~ APRIL 4

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Coach says that new ballplayers bring ‘fresh outlook’ to the Padres

THE FIRST thing to understand about the Carmel Padres baseball team is that nine key players are missing from a 2024 squad that won the Pacific Coast Athletic League Gabilan Division championship — the 35th league

Peninsula Sports

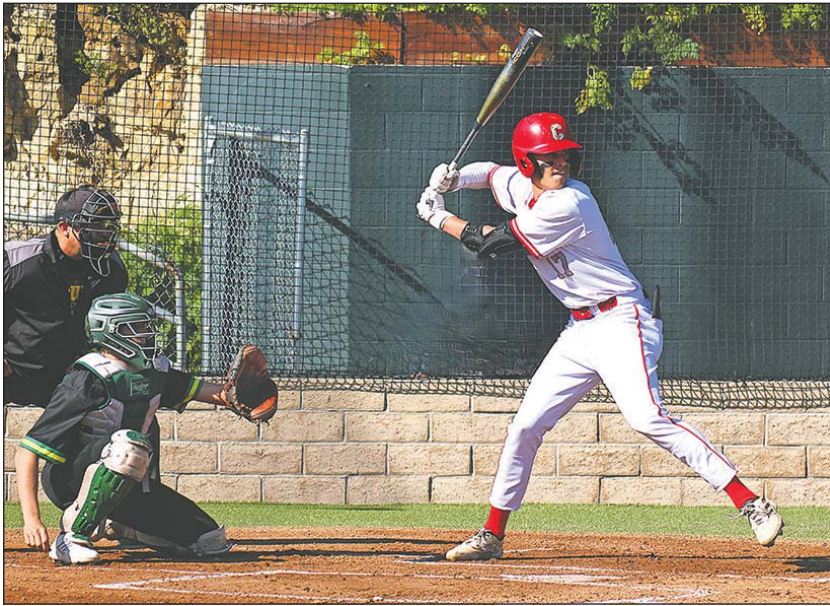
By DENNIS TAYLOR

crown since 1971 — and went all the way to the NorCal regional playoffs.

Seven who contributed heavily to the Padres’ 23-7 overall record (19-2 in Gabilan) graduated. Two others (juniors last year) have opted not to play this spring, and one more, NCAA Division I football recruit Jackson Lloyd, got his diploma just after Christmas and left town in January to join his new teammates at the University of Alabama.

The second thing to know is that the next wave of talented Padres has rolled in to ease the pain.

Through Tuesday, Carmel was off to a 7-2 start — 3-0



PHOTO/KERRY BELSER

Matt Maxon, a junior, already has a baseball scholarship waiting at Stanford as a right-handed pitcher, but he also is a slugger, a speedster and a talented defender at first base and center field for the Padres.

in Gabilan games — with a roster loaded with a dozen varsity newcomers, including three freshmen and five sophomores.

“We graduated some seniors who were very, very good, and I think our league is going to be very tough, as always,” said Coach Mike Kelly. “But we have a roster full of guys with a fresh outlook. Some of them played varsity football (Gabilan, NorCal and state champions), and some were on the varsity basketball roster (division champs, CCS finalists, NorCal qualifiers). Competing in the Gabilan Division is no big deal to these guys. They’re not intimidated.

“As a group, they’re unproven, but they’re hungry, they’re eager to learn, and they’re working extremely hard to become successful.”

Maxon is a rare talent

They’re also surrounded by steely-eyed veterans, beginning with Matt Maxon, a junior pitcher/center fielder/first baseman who already has committed to play at Stanford two years from now.

Last spring, Maxon shared the Gabilan’s Most Valuable Player award with teammate J.J. Sanchez (now a redshirt freshman at Loyola Marymount).

As a 10th grader, Maxon was 7-3 on the mound with a 2.46 ERA and 75 strikeouts in 59.2 innings.

“He throws a fastball pretty damn hard — in the 90s, for sure — and he’s also got a slider and a split-finger fastball,” Kelly said of his right-handed ace.

Additional leadership comes from senior shortstop Ty Arnold, a fourth-year varsity letterman, and second baseman Sean Carr, a junior. Both were varsity cogs on Carmel’s powerhouse football and basketball teams.

The third baseman, Kaleb Herro, appeared in 16 games last season without an error and had a .364 on-base percentage in a dozen late appearances.

The rest are essentially varsity rookies.

Maxon, the team’s only



PHOTO/KERRY BELSER

Kaleb Herro, fearless at third base, committed just one error in 16 games last year as a sophomore. He hits in the middle of Carmel’s lineup this season.

experienced pitcher, is joined in the starting rotation by freshman Kenny Sanchez (J.J.’s brother) and sophomore Lucas Rocha.

All-new bullpen crew

The bullpen is manned by sophomore Jesse Watts, who also catches, and David Spencer, sophomore Carter Lloyd (Jackson’s brother), juniors Michael Melnick and Car, the middle infielder, and senior Dario Melicia. All are right-handers.

As a staff, they have combined for a 1.81 ERA in their first nine games, allowing just 43 hits in 58 innings.

Sharing catching duties with Watts, a left-handed hitter is freshman Dean Briant.

“They’re both incredible receivers and great blockers behind the plate. They can throw, and they swing the bat,” Kelly said. “Catcher is going to be a position of strength for us over the next three or four years.”

Melnick and Sanchez will share first-base duties with

See **SPORTS** next page



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SPORTS

From page 24A

Maxon, sophomore Alex Hirschfield and Carr will play second, and Luke Stiver, a junior, will back up Arnold at shortstop.

Herro is a hardnosed defender at third base and also figures to hit in the middle of the batting order.

The outfield will be patrolled by senior Bo Lewis, junior plus Rocha, John Beretta, Skylar Brown, Carr and Maxon — all juniors.

Boys volleyball

Veteran squad for Padres: First-year head coach Leslie Vitiello has 11 veteran players back from a Carmel team that was runner-up to Monterey in the PCAL Gabilan Division with an 8-2 record in 2024 and a 19-12 overall mark that included a quarterfinal victory in the CCS Division 2 playoffs.

Included among those returning lettermen is most of last year’s starting lineup and key subs, including the Gabilan’s Defensive Player of the Year.

That player, Nico Vitiello (the coach’s son), is a team captain and floor leader who will man the libero position again this season if he solves the mysterious shoulder

ailment that had relegated him to the sidelines as this week began.

A fourth-year starter, Vitiello was the PCAL’s third-leading defender as a junior with 146 digs, and figures to be a crucial component on a roster loaded with firepower.

Zach Speakman, a 6-foot-3 leaper, returns for his senior season after ranking third in the PCAL in kills, fifth in assists and seventh in blocks a year ago.

Speakman is skilled as an outside hitter and a setter, and figures to be the primary setter in Carmel’s 5-1 and 6-2 offensive schemes this season.

In a 6-2 offense, the other setter will be Chase Ford, a junior.

Rejoining Speakman on the front row will be 6-foot-3 senior Nate Campbell, an intimidating middle blocker, and junior Tristan Henderson, an all-around player who compiled 26 kills as an outside hitter and 17 digs as a back-row defender.

Versatile roster

“The nice thing is we have a lot of players who can play several positions,” the coach said. “When we have players who are injured, or absent for some reason, we’re very capable of shifting to a different lineup.”

Joining Speakman, Campbell and Henderson at the net will be beach volleyball veteran Jaden Bajari (the team’s



PHOTO/KERRY BELSER

Setter and outside hitter Zach Speakman, 10, and middle blocker Nate Campbell, 8, are key players on an experienced and explosive front row for the Padres.

See **MORE SPORTS** page 28A



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Editorial

Understanding tariffs

IT DOESN'T take a Ph.D. in economics to understand why tariffs — taxes on imported products — usually aren't a good idea. Any open-minded person already knows, and history certainly teaches, that free-market capitalism, in which people trade goods and services at mutually agreeable prices, is the best way to create prosperity, health and happiness for the greatest number of people, and that the government's role is to get out of the way while creative and hardworking people do their thing. This principle applies internationally every bit as much as it does domestically.

But how should a country respond when another country imposes high tariffs on its goods, while products going the other way are subject to little or no import taxes? Where the United States is concerned, there are a great many examples of this phenomenon in the world.

■ Canadian tariffs on U.S. dairy and eggs are through the roof — 241 percent on milk, 245 percent on cheese, almost 300 percent on butter and 160 percent on eggs, while the U.S. has been charging between zero and four percent for imports of these products from Canada.

■ The European Union imposes a 10 percent tariff on cars imported from the U.S., while this country has charged just 2.5 percent for cars from Europe. And the E.U. can export shellfish tax-free to America, while it has an outright ban on shellfish from 48 of our states. As a result, according to the White House, in 2023 the U.S. imported \$274 million in shellfish from the EU but exported only \$38 million in the other direction.

■ India applies a 60 percent tariff on imported motorcycles like Harley-Davidson and hits agricultural products like almonds or apples from this country with import taxes of up to 50 percent, depending on the item. The U.S., by contrast, has been charging an average of about 2.5 percent on motorcycles and often zero or single-digit tariffs on agricultural goods from India.

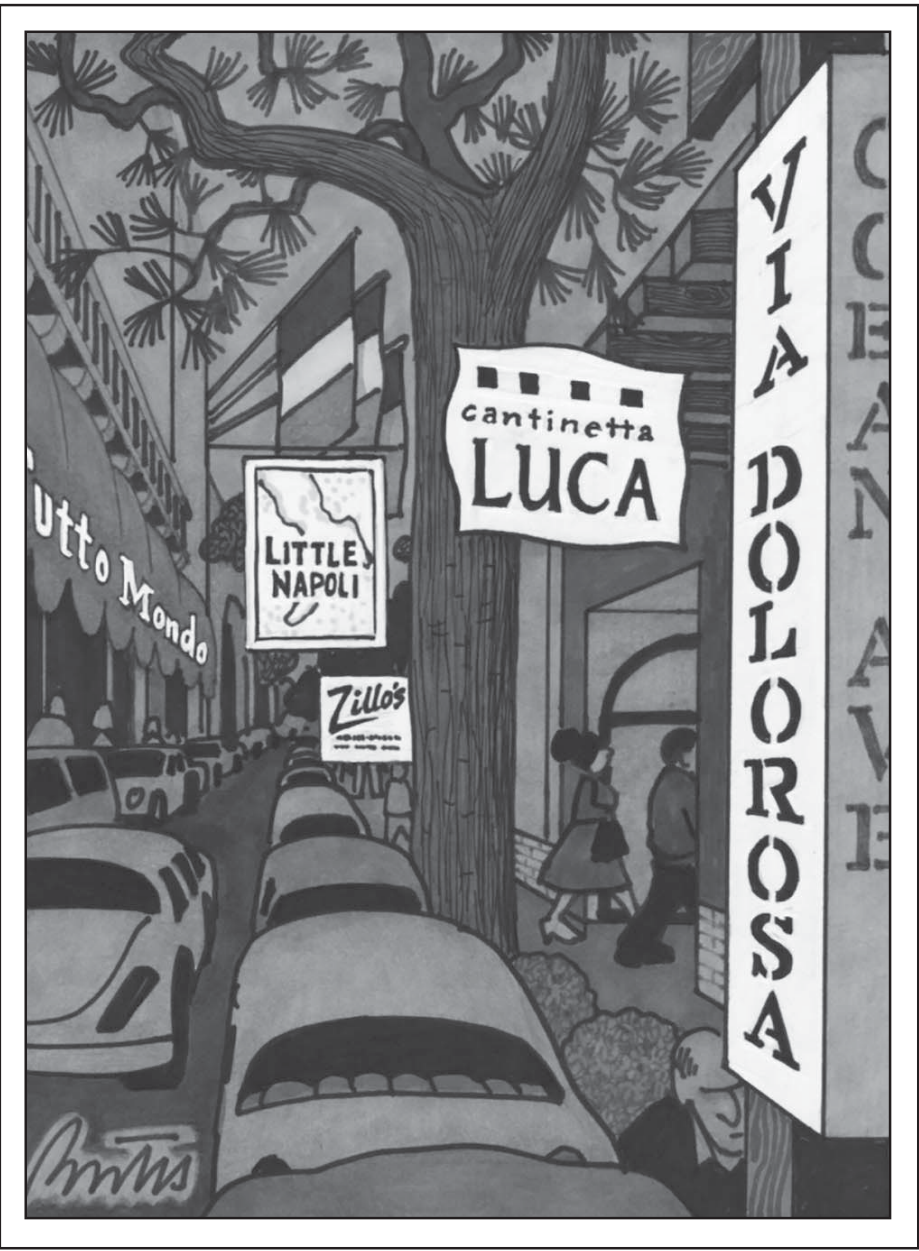
It's almost like we've been running an import/export charity around the globe that's helped make other countries rich at our expense — something that may have made sense when our economy was generating more wealth than we knew what to do with, but which is extremely foolish when our government is running colossal deficits just to pay for things we need right here at home.

Recognizing this, President Trump has been trying to level the import-export playing field by raising duties on products coming into this country to match what other countries charge us. Unfortunately, he's been doing it in such a haphazard way — announced new tariffs one day, only to rescind them the next — that significant economic uncertainty and unease, and collapsing prices on Wall Street, have been the result.

The goal should not only be to make tariffs equal among all trading partners, but to make them as close to zero as possible.

Your average college sophomore may have no idea where the clothes on his back, the food he eats, the home he lives in, or the smartphone he can't live without come from, but the adults in the room know better. The global economy depends on the efforts of billions of people striving around the globe every day to invent and produce, and the fewer restraints on their efforts, the better — for everybody.

BEST of BATES



Letters to the Editor

Parking ideas Dear Editor,

Carmel needs a big parking lot today. The number of cars traveling around the city looking for places to park has exploded, and some people are parking “creatively or illegally” and damaging city and private properties. So let's get smart about this issue.

■ Maybe the city could persuade Patrice Pastor to convert The Pit into a parking structure and charge for parking. Pastor likes to hold and rent properties, so maybe he'd be willing to earn money through parking fees.

■ Another thought: Would the churches allow their parking lots to be used especially on non-church days? Again, the lots could earn some money for the churches.

■ Could the parking sites under Nielsen's and in Carmel Plaza be used for employee parking?

I'm throwing these ideas out and hoping others will come up with even better ones. The sooner the better.

Carol Kahn, Carmel

Concerned about modern homes Dear Editor,

In response to Carolyn White's letter in the March 21 edition:

We are in complete agreement. My husband has been coming here (as a visitor, then homeowner) since the 1950s, and is appalled at the modern, square homes being built. Case in point: 26306 Isabella Ave. We were told by Monterey County planning that it is “fitting in the neighborhood” though it is surrounded by single-story original Carmel cottages. We were also told that the ADU attached does not count in the square footage of the house. So, we are stuck with a 2,500-square-foot, modern, two-story, square house on a 3,300-square-foot lot. Ridiculous.

Larry and Katie Kelly, Carmel

Poop problem Dear Editor,

Your cover story about the pickleball noise controversy made me smile as I recalled one of Dave Barry's year-in-review columns in which he referred to 2023 as “a year in which humanity finally began to understand that it faces an existential threat, a threat unlike any we have ever faced before, a threat that will wreak havoc on our fragile planet if we fail to stop it — and it may already be too late. I am referring, of course, to pickleball.”

On a more local level, I'd like to suggest an existential threat facing Carmel. No, not house numbers, architectural styles, or Patrice Pastor. It's dog poop. Dog owners regularly either (a) leave their dogs' poop in our plantings for us to clean up or (b) bag the poop, but then dump those untied bags in our garbage bin so I can then spend

See **LETTERS** page 48A

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WAITING FOR THE DAY WHEN HE COULD FINALLY START GIVING BACK

MARK SHUMAN was born and raised in Oildale, a small town on the outskirts of Bakersfield, in 1966. His dad was an oil field worker and his mom an accountant.

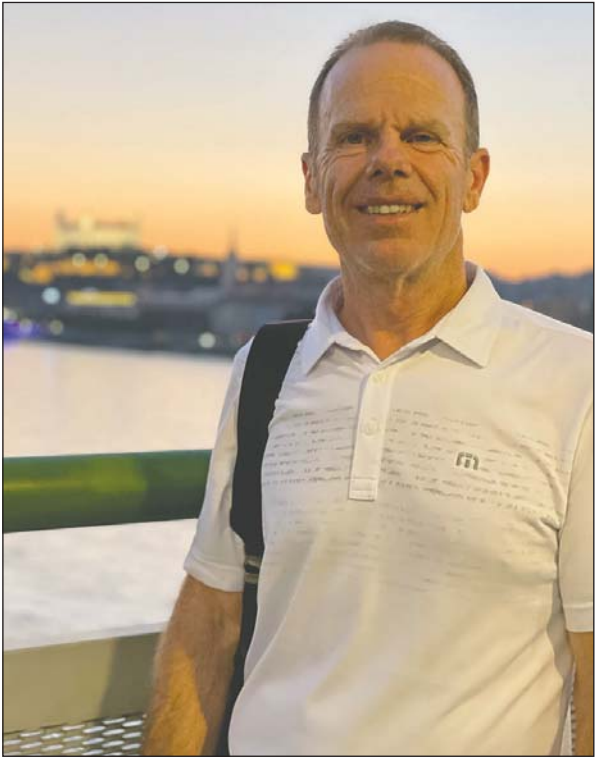
“I was witness to a lot of things when I was young,” because the area where he lived was populated by low-income workers, Shuman explained — something that planted the seed to give back when he eventually could.

He attended Cal Poly in San Luis Obispo and majored in urban planning and construction.

“I went back to Bakersfield after graduating and started a construction company with a best friend. Neither of us had any money and it was difficult to find lenders,” he recalled. But they did, and with persistence and hard work, their business took off. They specialized in building homes and developing land in Bakersfield, San Luis Obispo, Santa Maria and Paso Robles. In 2006, a national builder bought the company, “which was great timing for us,” Shuman said.

“We had grown the thing from the ground up, and it was really a mom-and-pop business. We made sure they kept all our

friends,” he said. The partners even started a car wash business in 2008 and now have about 50 of them in the Western United



PHOTO/COURTESY MARK SHUMAN

Builder and philanthropist Mark Shuman said he knew the importance of safe homes, so he gives to help the unhoused.

States. Shuman still works in land development, too.

In 2003, a woman named Adriana was visiting a friend in Bakersfield, and met Shuman through his mother. Three years later, they were married in Montecito, and the following year they welcomed a daughter, Summer, and decided to live in Montecito.

A few years later, when Summer was 5, the family moved to Carmel, Shuman said,

See **LIVES** page 30A

Great Lives

By **SALLY BAHO**

employees.”

After they sold, he started building apartments and commercial properties. “That same best friend and I have multiple companies together, and we’re still best

From the mayor’s desk — Honest conversations about future

By **DALE BYRNE**

CARMEL-BY-the-Sea stands at a pivotal moment. Our village was shaped by visionary founders and nurtured by generations of passionate residents. From cottages with names instead of numbers, to a Monterey pine forest with trees in unexpected places, we’ve long balanced charm with spirited debate — remember when paving Ocean Avenue stirred controversy?

Today, we face similar crossroads. As the world evolves, so must we, but without losing what makes Carmel special. Three issues — our address system, architectural styles and even pickleball — highlight this tension. More importantly, they show how vital it is to work through thorny topics with patience, respect and honest conversation.

The address debate

Carmel’s landmark-based address system is part of our charm. But in a digital, service-driven world, this tradition can be

a challenge. Emergency responders, delivery drivers and service providers often struggle to navigate it.

Supporters of standardization point to safety and efficiency. Others worry about losing what makes Carmel feel private, serene and distinctive. The real question isn’t just about mail or GPS — it’s about how we adapt. Can we improve function without compromising character?

To answer that, we need thoughtful, inclusive dialogue. No solution will please everyone, but respectful, open-minded discussion can help us move forward.

Architecture is also sparking passionate debate. Often, it centers on traditional versus modern styles. But it’s more than aesthetics — state mandates on accessory dwelling units, fire code updates, insurance shifts, and outdated design guidelines add complexity.

Carmel has long valued a design

See **MAYOR** next page

She’s got mail — and paints it

PENINSULA ARTIST Marcia McGinnis Shortt, born into what American journalist Tom Brokaw called The Greatest Generation, sees great beauty in the way things used to be.

Her current passion — a loving homage to the art and craftsmanship of simpler times — is creating intricately detailed watercolor renderings of vintage mail she originally spotted in a flea market in Rome.

Each piece is inscribed with somebody’s unique penmanship, carefully

A few strides from her back door is a pathway leading to Stewart’s Beach, where she and Paul Shortt installed a bench memorializing her parents, Bob and Gert, and her younger brother, Bob Jr., all deceased.

Beneath the bench, the Shortts included a “mailbox,” that passersby — tourists and locals — fill with journals.

“If it rains too much, the door to the mailbox has a tendency to pop open, and some of the journals get ruined, so Paul and I started taking them out after a while,” she said. “We probably have 30 or 40 of them, and we’re planning to give those to the library.”

The McGinnis family, and the home where Marcia and her brother grew up are notable parts of the history of Carmel-by-the-Sea. Bob McGinnis, a former Chicago broadcaster, served in the U.S. Army under Gen. Joseph Stillwell in China, Burma and India. He married Gert Nolte, a Fresno farm girl who longed to live near the ocean. That brought the couple to Carmel.

“The story was that my dad just walked into the chamber of commerce here and asked, ‘What kind of business do you need here,’” Marcia said. “And they said, ‘Well, we only have one travel agency here.’ So my father and another guy, Dick Phinney, opened Phinney-McGinnis Travel in the Casa Munras Hotel in Monterey,” she said.

Their partnership was short-lived. The agency still exists in Carmel as Bob McGinnis Travel, but under different ownership.

The Cypress House

Bob and Gert lived first in Del Monte Forest, but in 1952 they purchased The Cypress House, a classic cottage surrounded by cypress trees on Valley View Avenue, overlooking Carmel Point.

“It was a wonderful redwood house, but it was just a shell when my parents bought it,” remembered Marcia, a fifth grader when her family moved in and began renovating the home.

Bob and Gert both died in their 50s, willing the home to their son. When Bob Jr. also died young, the Shortts — full-time Cincinnati residents at the time — purchased and restored it as a second residence.

The master bedroom was Marcia’s sanctuary in her youth.

“It was my bedroom,” she said. “I listened to jazz. I drew. I made a lot of stuff. I covered every square inch of the walls. I think I was a little smartass as a kid. I got in trouble because I talked too much in class and doodled more than I studied.”

Marcia remembers enjoying her time at Carmel High, where she made a lot of close friends — still a tightknit group 65 years later.

“Paul and I actually

See **ARTIST** page 47A

Carmel’s Artists

By **DENNIS TAYLOR**

folded into its original travel-scarred envelope, adorned with multicolored, canceled postage from a long-gone era, tagged with one — or several — round postmarks that trace and time-stamp the journey it took so many decades ago.

Some of the mail Shortt paints was carefully bundled by its collector with other keepsake correspondences and bound with decorative twine or colorful ribbons.

Mysterious fragments

“I eventually decided that painting fruits and vegetables wasn’t my thing. I wanted to go back to typography and beautiful paper and wonderful stamps,” she said. “And I still prefer sending handwritten letters and notes to people. That seems like a lost art.”

An irony might be that Shortt (Carmel High School Class of 1960) creates her vintage-correspondence paintings on a flat table next to a window in her home that overlooks Carmel Point’s dazzling seascape — a vista that inspires artists and tourists from all over the world.

The scenery, of course, is inspiring, but every old letter represents a mysterious fragment of someone’s life story.




PHOTO/DENNIS TAYLOR

Carmel Point artist Marcia McGinnis Shortt, whose professional career was in graphic design, paints highly detailed watercolors of colorful vintage mail she’s collected through her travels.



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MAYOR

From previous page

philosophy rooted in community character. That doesn’t mean rejecting all change — it means guiding it intentionally, with input from residents and a shared commitment

YACHT

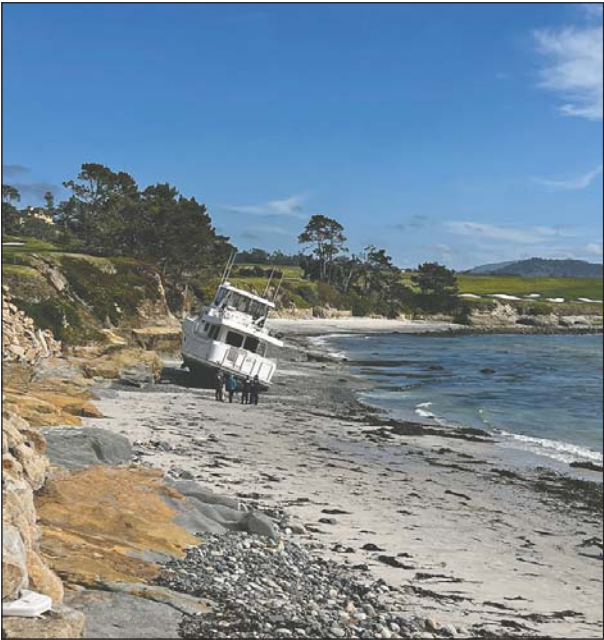
From page 1A

morning, Lindsey Saum, senior environmental scientist with the California Department of Fish & Wildlife Office of Spill Prevention and Response, said the U.S. Coast Guard is investigating the wreck and that several other agencies, including the National Marine Fisheries Service and the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary, are involved.

She said efforts to get fuel and other potential contaminants off the boat ceased late Wednesday when the tide rose, and would resume Thursday when it was safe to do so, as they’re a major concern. A company called Global Diving & Salvage was hired to handle the task.

Meanwhile, a small crowd of onlookers lingered on the Stillwater Cove pier to watch the boat rock in the surf.

How exactly it got there appears to be up for debate. Rhodes told The Pine Cone the boat “was not functioning properly and had to beach itself,” while another firefighter who had responded to the incident said later on Cal Fire’s social media page that he still didn’t know what caused the yacht to run aground. In response, a woman posted that it had been “tied to a buoy which didn’t hold, and this was the end result.”



PHOTO/CYNTHIA CIARDELLA

After the tide receded on Wednesday, a yacht that ran aground at Stillwater Cove was completely beached.

to our values.
This isn’t about choosing sides. It’s about shaping a future that honors our past while adapting wisely to new realities.

Pickleball: a sound of change

Pickleball’s rise has brought many residents joy and connection. But its distinctive sound has raised concerns among those who cherish peace and quiet.

This isn’t about right or wrong — it’s a case of competing goods: recreation vs. rest. Exploring solutions like sound barriers, adjusted hours, or alternate locations requires empathy and a willingness to evolve.

Handled thoughtfully, this issue can be a model for how Carmel balances liveliness and serenity through collaboration and, done properly, can bring many visitors to town.

Whether we’re talking about addresses, architecture, or pickleball, the deeper issue is the same: who we are and how we move forward together.

Carmel thrives when we engage rather than entrench —when we listen generously, speak with humility, and remember that good people can disagree. Let’s foster a

MORE SPORTS

From page 25A

only sophomore), and juniors Jacob Peterson (a lefty), first-year volleyballer Anthony Sandoval, and twin brothers Jacob and Nick Tonini — all outside hitters.

Nick Tonini and another junior, Jonas Buran, are likely to back up Campbell in the middle.

Consistency from the back row will be crucial for the Padres, the coach said.

Ball control is crucial

“We really have to focus on our ball control,” Vitiello emphasized. “If we control the ball, we’re going to have a lot of offensive options.”

If Nico Vitiello is unable to play, the libero position will go to defensive standout Drew Galy.

Carmel’s talented trove of defenders also includes seniors Eugene Tupino, Ethan Pugh (who might double as a serving specialist), Hiroki Cole and Chase Gilman.

“Monterey is definitely the team to beat again, with a talented crew of seniors who play volleyball together all the time. Hollister should also be very strong,” Vitiello said of the Gabilan Division competition.

“We can’t take any opponent for granted in this league — we have to stay focused for every single match.

CHS Athlete sets world record: Carmel High junior Logan Hawker established a world powerlifting record in his age group and weight division on March 15 in Monterey with a 336-pound bench press.

Hawker, 16 years old and 198 pounds, set the record at Bodyworx Martial Arts, where he eclipsed the California state record, previously 282 pounds, earlier the same day with a lift of 314 pounds, then boosted the existing world record (324) with a lift of 325 before hoisting 336 on his final attempt.

culture where respect and cooperation are the norm, where we value compromise over conflict and conversation over division.

Preserving and strengthening Carmel isn’t just about policies or plans — it’s about people. All of us are bound by a shared love for this rare and beautiful place. It means recognizing that while we may not always agree, we belong to one another in a community that’s more than the sum of its cottages and trees.

We’ll face hard choices. But the answer isn’t polarization — it’s connection. It’s listening, even when it’s hard, and working together, even when it’s slow. If we lead with empathy, creativity and respect, we won’t just solve today’s problems — we’ll build a stronger, more resilient Carmel for tomorrow.

Let’s rise to this moment not as opponents, but as neighbors linked by history, hope, and the quiet truth that Carmel is worth the effort. I believe in us. I believe in Carmel.

To hear a podcast on this column go to cli.re/bridge.
Dale Byrne is Mayor of Carmel-by-the-Sea. His email is dbyrne@cbts.us.

Hawker has been training for the past eight months with Monterey native Matt Lamarque, a 12-time world champion who has set multiple world records in the bench press since 2004.

Dennis Taylor is a professional freelance writer in Monterey County. Contact him at scribelaureate@gmail.com.



PHOTO/KERRY BELSER

Slick-fielding shortstop, senior Ty Arnold, is a fourth-year letterman, and a key player in Carmel’s batting order again this season.



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GUN

From page 8A

additional restrictions on sporting goods stores exist, other than for bike shops like Mad Dogs & Englishmen.

“Uses that include motorized bicycles, mopeds or motorcycles are not allowed in buildings fronting on Ocean Avenue or within 300 feet” of the single-family-residential district, according to the code, and businesses offering bicycle rentals must be approved by the planning commission.

More scrutiny

That higher standard of review, in which planning commissioners are asked to approve a “conditional use permit,” applies to several types of retail businesses that decision-makers have targeted over the years, including winetasting rooms, skincare boutiques, gas stations, liquor stores, markets, restaurants and “sales by public outcry” — also known as auctions.

Last month, after residents in the Oak Grove neighborhood bordered by Lake El Estero and the Naval Postgraduate School showed up at a Monterey City Council meeting to protest the impending opening of L&B Firearm Solutions, planning director Kimberly Cole recommended the council adopt an emergency ordinance prohibiting the issuance of any more business licenses to gun stores.

Cole said the issue qualified as urgent “because an unlimited number of firearm and ammunition sales businesses may locate almost anywhere in the city without regulation,” though federal and state laws highly regulate firearms sales.

Five businesses in Monterey deal with firearms and/or ammunition in some respect, including three that obtained business licenses in 2024. In addition to L&B, Gallagher Ammunition on Alice Street obtained a license last September, and Triggered Ammo & Apparel received its business license in last April. The others are JC Firearms & Ammo on Harris Court and Big 5 on North Fremont.

“Incompatible uses can lead to disputes and quality of life impacts,” Cole told the council at that meeting and suggested prohibiting similar businesses “until staff can research appropriate buffers from sensitive uses and research other regulations.”

Due back April 1

A future ordinance, she said at the Feb. 18 meeting, could require gun dealers to hold additional insurance, confine them to commercially zoned areas, and require that they be located away from residential areas, schools, liquor stores, bars “and any other use that we might think would be incompatible.” She also said the city could prohibit anyone under the age of 18 from entering a gun store without an adult.

Following extensive public comments and a lengthy discussion, the council unanimously OK’d the temporary ban, which took effect immediately and must be approved again at the April 1 meeting to be extended. Urgency ordinances can run for as long as two years.

Meet Cody and Kiki

Cody, a handsome 5 1/2-year-old Siamese boy, came to us with 9-year-old Kiki, a shy but loving tabby girl with a unique ear. These poor cats barely made it out of the shelter where their previous owner, who was moving, requested their euthanasia. Kiki is in perfect health but understandably a bit stressed right now. Cody is a chill champ when treated for his manageable eye condition. Kiki and Cody are not bonded. Be an angel and give one or both a safe haven!

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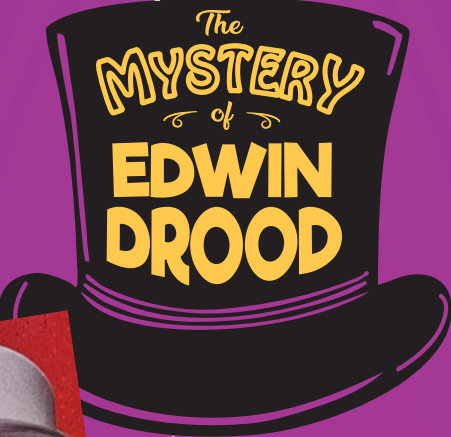
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PacRep’s ‘Edwin Drood’ gets audience involved

By CHRIS COUNTS

FILLED WITH a cast of eccentric characters — along with catchy tunes and clever plot twists — a PacRep production of the Tony award-winning musical, “The Mystery of Edwin Drood,” opens Saturday at the Golden Bough Playhouse.

Pac Rep calls the story “unpredictable” and “unforgettable.” It’s also interactive.

“In this refreshingly innovative production, the audience is empowered to steer the narrative,” PacRep said. “As the clues pile up and suspects abound, audiences will have the chance to vote and ultimately decide how the story ends — choosing from multiple possible outcomes that keep every performance uniquely thrilling.”

Won five Tonys in ’85

The musical is directed by Lara Devlin, with choreography by Nicole Cofresi and musical direction by Michael Blackburn. The cast includes Kelsey Woods, Jennifer Newman, Robert Devlin, Adam Saucedo and Christiana Meeks — each of whom plays more than one character.

Based on an unfinished novel by Charles Dickens, the musical was written by Rupert Holmes. It debuted on Broadway in 1985 and won five Tony Awards, including Best Musical.

The show continues Thursdays and Fridays at 7:30 p.m., and Saturdays and Sundays at 2 p.m. and 7:30 p.m., through April 19. For tickets, go to pacrep.org.

LIVES

From page 27A

adding that had visited frequently, and he was happy to be able to relocate here. They settled on a lot in the Santa Lucia Preserve and, since he was a builder, they designed their new home and he said he oversaw the construction, completed by contracting firm Stocker and Allaire.

Waitlist of hundreds

After the move, Shuman realized it was time to start giving back and began digging around for nonprofits to support. “Being a builder for most of my life, I saw how important having a home and a place to sleep at night are. It just always felt so important to me,” Shuman said. His philosophy is that it’s great to do well in life, but giving back is a big part of that.

“I have always focused on women and children, the most vulnerable in the population,” he said. He found that there were no women’s shelters on the Peninsula, but he discovered Gathering for Women and quickly got involved. The group offers resources for emergency services, social services, substance abuse recovery, education, employment and much more.

“The only thing that bothered me was that the women came and got services — which was great — but the end of the day would come, and they would have to find someplace to sleep,” he said. At the time, Casa de Noche Buena, a shelter in Seaside, was undergoing a transition and the county gave it to the nonprofit Community Human Services in partnership with Gathering for Women.

It is the first homeless shelter for women and families with children on the Monterey Peninsula. It filled up

immediately after opening, and there was a waitlist of hundreds. Shuman began searching for more space.

“It took me a couple years. I kept looking for buildings and property,” Shuman said. The main obstacles were that it had to be zoned appropriately and, of course, it needed to have enough water. Shuman finally found a building on Franklin Street, a onetime icehouse that had been converted to a ballet studio. It fit the bill, and there was room for growth. Shuman bought it.

From his work with Casa de Noche Buena, he was already familiar with the folks at Community Human Services, which aims to provide “high-quality mental health, substance abuse, and homelessness services to middle and low-income individuals and families in Monterey County,” according to its website. He approached the group about running the shelter, and its board agreed.

“It did take a lot more time, attorneys and all that fun stuff,” Shuman said. He redesigned the building himself, and the Shuman Heart House opened its doors in November 2023 as Monterey’s first shelter for women and families with children.

Moving out

People can stay as long as 90 days, although there are provisions if they need more time. While they’re there, Community Human Services provides programs and facilitators to help them refine resumes, get jobs and find other resources.

“Last I talked to them, they had a 70 percent conversion ratio,” Shuman said, meaning that those clients went on to permanent housing, which is the goal for everyone by the time they leave.

Shuman and his wife are empty nesters, with Summer off studying psychology at Santa Clara University. He still works and devotes about 20 percent of his time to philanthropy.

“I play golf at the Preserve as much as I can,” he said. He’s also a woodworker, enjoying his at-home workshop. And of course, he loves living here.

“Carmel is an incredible community, seems to be something that never changes, the people here are great, it’s a wonderful bubble to be in,” he said.



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GAVEL

From page 4A

likely suspect.

Lanoue was 29 years old at the time of the homicide. He was in the United States Army and was stationed at Fort Ord, where Pham’s body was found. Lanoue lived on Luzern Street in Seaside, which was 0.1 miles away from the Pham family residence.

One of Lanoue’s children also attended Highland Elementary School along with Pham, though there is no indication that the families knew each other.

When interviewed by an investigator with the Cold Case Task Force on July 6, 2022, Lanoue admitted to picking up Pham as she was walking to school. He claimed not to remember killing her, but he acknowledged that he may have blocked it out of his memory to protect himself. He admitted that he had a history of sexually assaulting young girls.

Further analysis by Dr. Richard Green of UC Santa Cruz and Parabon NanoLabs provided strong evidentiary support that Lanoue was the source of the hair found on Pham’s body.

The case was investigated by the Monterey County District Attorney’s Office Cold Case Task Force, the Seaside Police Department, the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the U.S. Army Criminal Investigation Division, with the valuable assistance of Astrea Forensics, Dr. Richard Green of UC Santa Cruz, Parabon NanoLabs, the Serological Research Institute, the Nevada State Police Division of Parole and Probation, the Reno Police Department and the Regional Sex Offender Notification Unit.



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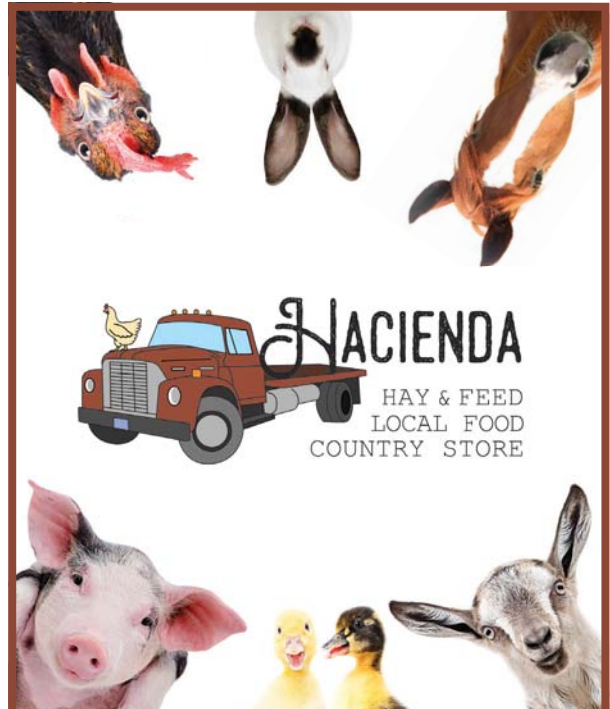
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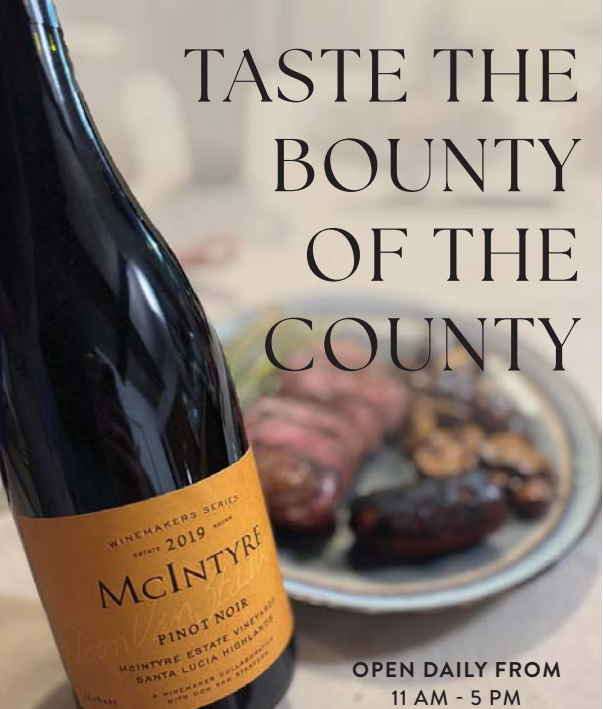


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HEALTHY *Lifestyles*

A personal mission that began 30 years and 22 countries ago

By ELAINE HESSER

YOU’VE PROBABLY seen fundraising campaigns with dramatic before-and-after photos of children who have had surgeries to correct cleft lips, cleft palates, or both.

Monterey plastic surgeon David Morwood has been helping kids with those issues and others for nearly 30 years in approximately 22 countries (he said he may have lost count). In fact, the interview for this story was conducted while he was in Cebu, Philippines. He participates in surgical missions twice annually for 10 to 14 days each time and is planning to go to East Africa later this year. Like other professionals who donate their services, this is often in lieu of conventional vacations.

Morwood’s Philippines trip is supported by Rotaplast International, a group sponsored by Rotary International. He’s also worked with San Francisco-based Alliance for Smiles and with MissionPlasticos, founded by Larry Nichter, a plastic surgeon from Orange County.

As many Pine Cone readers know, Morwood is a jazz drummer who can often be found at La Playa Hotel and at the Hyatt Regency’s late-night jam sessions during the Monterey Jazz Festival. Some of his “gig money” goes to help fund the trips, and he said they’ve been supported locally by generous donors, as well.

The missions started for Morwood when Dr. Angelo Capozzi, founder of Rotaplast, asked him to be a surgeon on the first one, sponsored by Rotary International. “We went to Antofagasta and La Serena, Chile. We had no idea if that would be the only mission or if we would ever go back,” Morwood recalled.

He still enjoys volunteering his time.

“Basically, I get to practice my craft, for which I trained for years — essentially, it’s why I went to medical school.

There are no insurance companies, very little paperwork, no dictation, no worries about getting paid or thoughts about money. Almost all the families say ‘thank you,’ and the children get better so fast,” he said.

The problem

Cleft lip and cleft palate are birth defects. A child may have a split in the upper lip that’s relatively small, or it may extend all the way to the nose. Cleft palate is a split in the hard — or, less commonly, soft — palate in the roof of the mouth. There’s no single known cause, but there is a genetic component. And, said Morwood, there is a misconception that the deformities only occur in developing nations.

“The reason you do not see children walking around Ocean Avenue or Alvarado Street with an unrepaired cleft lip or palate is because we fix them early — the scars tend to fade,” he explained.

He continued, “Other countries and societies are not so blessed and lucky. They lack enough properly trained plastic surgeons. They are short on supplies and operating room time.”

Morwood said that about one in 1,200 children in the United States, Canada and Europe is born with a cleft lip (with or without cleft palate) annually. It’s less common in Africa, at about 1 in 2,000 children, but much more prevalent outside of Shanghai, China, and parts of South America.



Monterey plastic surgeon David Morwood operates on a child during a medical mission trip to the Philippines.

CLEFTS *con’t. page 35A*

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HEALTHY LIFESTYLES

For them, seeing a dentist isn’t inconvenient. It’s nearly impossible.

By LILY PATTERSON

THE TEAM from International Health Emissaries brings “family practice” wherever they go, from their offices on El Dorado Street in Monterey, to a mobile dental clinic in Belize.

On March 10, volunteers gathered in the one-room library of a government school located in a rural village in the Cayo district. Over three days, from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m., they provided comprehensive dental exams to more than 300 schoolchildren and approximately 40 adults, many of whom had traveled and waited hours outside the clinic until all the kids had their turns.

Among the team members was local dentist Emma Bhaskar, who began volunteering alongside her parents and older siblings at 13. The Stevenson alum practices at Monterey Peninsula Dental Group, just across the street from her father, Philip Bhaskar, who took the week off from Monterey Oral Surgery to lead this year’s Belize mission.

“It’s so special to provide care that would be otherwise unattainable,” Emma reflected. “But it’s challenging. It’s uncomfortable — family vacation taken to a whole different level.”

If one thing is true of all family vacations, it’s that nobody likes to be left out. Especially not the youngest.

This trip included four of five Bhaskars, including Emma’s mother, Brenda, and older sister, Elizabeth, as well as local pediatric specialist Mark Bayless, who co-founded International Health Emissaries with Jack Faia, also a pediatric dentist on the Peninsula. Bayless and Faia were veteran volunteers with Los Medicos Voladores, The Flying Doctors, who spent years treating poor communities in Mexico before co-founding International Health Emissaries in 1990.

Jack, Bayless’s son, practices alongside his father at Monterey Pediatric Dentistry. He, too, has volunteered with IHE since he was a kid.

“Jack first went to Guatemala when he was 7 years old. His brother, Beau, was 5,” remembered Mark Bayless. “I started bringing them when they were little, to show them that the rest of the world is not like Carmel.”

For more than 30 years, International Health Emissaries teams have provided free oral healthcare around the world, coordinating with local schools and non govern-



Smiles on site in Belize: Mark Bayless (third from bottom left) is the co-founder of IHE, pictured with trip lead Philip Bhaskar (center).

mental organizations to identify rural communities in need of intervention. The nonprofit is supported by donations, and commits 97 percent of them directly to patient care.

Not old enough

Philip Bhaskar, an oral surgeon, recalls his first mission to Ecuador 18 years ago. It was especially memorable because it was the first time family members were permitted in the clinic.

“Emma was 13 years old,” Philip recalled. “You had to be 16 to participate, which both her older siblings were. Emma was quick to point out the injustice of such a rule.


“I think this exclusion may have been what first sparked her interest in dentistry.”

“I was so jealous!” Emma agreed, “I was playing with the kids outside, but I wanted to be in the mix.”




While English is spoken by about 60 percent of the population of Belize, Cambodia was a different story. For that trip, International Health Emissaries relied on an interpreter. It was a few years after the Ecuador mission, and Emma was finally allowed to assist her father in the clinic. She remembers feeling “amazed” at how little translation was needed. Communication could be so simple as pointing to a tooth — and a post-op smile.

“I was teaching oral hygiene to the kids and assisting my dad with suction,” she remembered. “During one

DENTISTS *con’t. page 39A*



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HEALTHY LIFESTYLES

CLEFTS from page 33A

In addition to potential emotional and psychological damage, clefts cause physical problems. The Mayo Clinic lists several, including trouble nursing and getting proper nutrition, increased risks of ear infections and hearing loss, dental problems, interruptions in speech development, and more.

Being able to correct and prevent those things has been a great source of satisfaction for Morwood and a huge relief for anxious moms and dads.

“Parents are the same the world over,” he observed. “They just yearn for their children to be able to grow up without a stigma, fit in, speak well and live to their full potential. A mother in Guatemala told me she got on her knees and prayed every

day” for her son. “She told me her prayers were answered when our team arrived, and during triage, we told her we could help her child.”

The organizations Morwood volunteers with set up the missions and announce the doctors’ visits. He said that sometimes, more than 100 families will show up and the teams have to sort out which children have problems they can fix and are healthy enough to undergo the procedures.

It’s not always kids, either. “We also on occasion see adults with unrepaired cleft lips,” Morwood reported. “In Colombia, we operated on a 50-year-old man who had an unrepaired cleft lip. After his operation he went home and, he later told us, he kissed his wife for the first time in their

SMILES *cont. page 37A*



Dr. Morwood and his staff have documented dozens, if not hundreds, of life-changing surgeries.



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CARMEL VALLEY MANOR



HEALTHY LIFESTYLES

Dancing and thank-you notes

By ELAINE HESSER

HEY, HERE’S a vacation idea. Visit a tropical country, but instead of lounging on a beach, work at your regular job for free in conditions considerably worse than what you’re used to. And pay your own way.

A group of professionals from Natividad Medical Center in Salinas recently traveled to El Salvador to do exactly that. Dr. Valerie Vigil, who works in emergency medicine and is in the midst of a term as chief of Natividad’s medical staff, said this was her fourth consecutive year.

From Jan. 26 to Feb. 2, the doctor and three scribes who shared their experiences with The Pine Cone were part of a larger team that treated people needing medical care in impoverished rural areas. Vigil explained that a scribe documents all aspects of a patient’s visit, improving efficiency and allowing the provider to spend more time with patients.

Rosie Toledo was taking part in her second trip, while Xochil Garcia and Natalie Mandujano were first-timers. All are bilingual English/Spanish speakers and helped to interpret, as well.

They volunteered with the nonprofit Castañeda Kids Foundation, a group whose website says it “strives to feed families, provide medical care and provide educational opportunities to children in impoverished areas of El Salvador.” The organization took more than 71 health-



Part of the team that traveled to El Salvador to provide medical care: Dr. Vigil (in gray) and three scribes are on the right.

care providers from several facilities on its annual mission, where they saw approximately 3,000 patients.

They spent two or three days each at different sites — the group goes to the same ones every year — and Vigil said there were about a dozen doctors supported by at least 20 nurses as well as paramed-

MISSION *cont. page 40A*



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Riddle of the Month: What has a mouth but cannot speak, but tells a story?

HEALTHY LIFESTYLES

SMILES from page 35A

marriage.”

Host organizations find lodging for the medical professionals. “I have stayed in army barracks, a convent, a monastery, many different hotels and host family’s homes,” said Morwood. During the long workdays — eight to 10 hours, and, on his most recent mission, one that stretched from 7:15 a.m. to 9:30 p.m. — food is sometimes brought to the team, or they’re invited to people’s homes, but usually, they purchase their own meals.

Blackouts, water shortages

Equipment and supplies are also provided, although a doctors might order and purchase an instrument if it’s necessary and unavailable locally.

The hospitals where they work have running water and electricity, although their availability might be a little hit-or-miss.

“I have been on missions where the water is shut off for certain periods during the day, where we have brownouts and blackouts, and limited resources,” he said. Precarious infrastructure and political instability have occasionally led to situations like a broken-down bus in East Africa and being uncomfortably close to a demonstration that turned violent in Venezuela.

At the same time, the groups’ work can bring people together in surprising ways. “In Bangladesh, I remember seeing many different families waiting in line to be evaluated at our triage clinic,” the surgeon said. “Standing side by side, waiting patiently, were Christians, Muslims and Hindus,” whose children had a range of problems including “congenital deformities such as cleft lip and palate, as



Repairing a cleft lip can transform a child’s entire life.

well as hand problems and burns. If it were not for waiting to be evaluated by the American team, they would probably never tolerate being in such close proximity,” he said.

For care after surgery, pediatricians and nurses come along, and the team works with local “caretakers, nurses and pediatricians who can help look after the children,

take out sutures, etc., after we leave.”

For all of the challenges, Morwood wouldn’t give it up. “In some ways, I feel an obligation to share the knowledge and training the United States system has allowed me. It does not feel like a burden. These surgical missions are a very rewarding, important part of my professional life.”



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T H E K I T C H E N

Roasted salmon with blackberry and roasted pepper salsa

Courtesy Camilla M. Mann, Culinary Cam

WHO DOESN'T love salmon? Camilla Mann — aka Culinary Cam — provided this month's recipe and wanted to remind everyone that it's "fresh, delicious and beneficial." Referring to the fatty acids the fish has in abundance, she said, "Salmon is high in omega-3s, which makes it heart healthy, while olive oil has anti-inflammatory and antioxidant compounds."

Salmon is also easy to prepare and doesn't need a lot of help to make it delicious or beautiful, as Mann's dish demonstrates. While the directions call for roasting, you could also fire up the grill or cook it in a pan on the stovetop. Roasting's a little simpler and doesn't require as much attention.

All the oils and vinegars in the recipe can be purchased from The Quail & Olive in Carmel Valley, but, said Mann, "feel free to use whatever you have on hand or is available in your favorite shops."

Likewise, if you can't find red dandelion greens, green ones will do just fine. Arugula would probably work as well.

Now, the inclusion of freshly ground salt among the ingredients led us down a rabbit hole. Who knew this was a topic that inspired serious foodie debates? There were extended online discussions about whether buying a salt mill was worthwhile, and the answer is a firm, "it depends." Grinding salt yourself affects texture since you can choose the coarseness. As far as flavor, many cooks point out that by roughly grinding the larger chunks, you'll get large, uneven surface areas that facilitate more contact with the tongue, or much finer grinds that can be distributed more evenly. Either can make the salt seem salti-

er. But if you don't have a grinder, you can simply use whatever you have on hand.

Finally, Mann recommended, "When purchasing salmon, or any other seafood, opt for environmentally sustainable choices." And while you're at the store, you could pick up a little asparagus and make it a real springtime treat. Oh, and maybe get some strawberries for dessert.

INGREDIENTS

(Serves 4)

Roasted salmon:
1 pound salmon, cut into 4-ounce fillets
Freshly ground salt
Freshly ground pepper
Picual olive oil
Blackberry & roasted pepper vinegar
Lemon olive oil

Blackberry and roasted pepper salsa:
1/3 cup shallots, peeled and thinly sliced
3 tablespoons blackberry-roasted pepper vinegar
2 tablespoons chopped fresh mint
2 tablespoons chopped red dandelion greens
5 tablespoons olive oil
Freshly ground salt
Freshly ground pepper
1/3 cup fresh blackberries, quartered
1/3 cup roasted red peppers, roughly chopped the same size as the blackberry quarters
Lemon slices and fresh mint for garnish (optional)

First, make the salsa. In a small mixing bowl, combine the onions and vinegar and let stand for 10 to 15 minutes to soften. Stir in the greens and olive oil. Add a few grinds of salt and pepper. Just before serving, fold in the blackberries and red peppers. Taste, and adjust seasonings if needed.

Preheat the oven to 425 degrees. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper and place fillets on the parchment. Sprinkle

with salt and pepper and drizzle with olive oil and vinegar. Roast for 10 to 12 minutes, depending on the size or thickness of the slices. You want them opaque and cooked through, but not dry.

Transfer salmon to a serving platter. Spoon salsa over the top. Sprinkle with more salt and pepper, if desired. Garnish with fresh mint leaves and lemon slices. Serve immediately.



Chef Bio



CAMILLA MANN has had an assortment of experiences, from waitress, to scuba divemaster, to au pair. When her adventures took her on a 13-month sojourn to Rome, she said, "I learned to cook, visiting the markets, talking to farmers and fishmongers, and pestering them on how to prepare this and that."

She started a blog about 10 years ago to share recipes and techniques, and has expanded her work across several social media platforms.

As a mom, she said, "I was determined grow conscientious, creative kids with fearless palates! Now that they are off at college, they have taken on that mantle of making their friends

and housemates eat vegetables and other new-to-them ingredients."

Her mission these days is "culinary inspiration." On her website, culinary-cam.com, she wrote, "By sharing the processes behind recipes, I want to inspire people to get into their kitchens and cook fearlessly."

One of Mann's gigs is working with Annelise Gerome, owner of The Quail & Olive at 14 Del Fino Place in Carmel Valley (quailandolive.com), a great spot for finding quality olive oils and vinegars in a wide range of flavors. You can taste before you buy, and the shop also carries other culinary products and gift items.

Mann provides free recipe cards using the shop's products and does cooking demonstrations. She said, "By learning a recipe, you can create one dish. When you learn the culinary process behind that recipe, the dishes you can create are limited only by your imagination."

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HEALTHY LIFESTYLES

DENTISTS from page 34A

procedure, I watched him remove a tooth that was crumbling to pieces. I witnessed someone in suffering experience almost immediate relief. That moment, I think, drew me to dentistry. Some problems are so fixable.”

30 years of service

Inside the library room, a visit to the dentist excluded many perks that American kids take for granted. Each volunteer hauled an extra suitcase of tools and sterile supplies on flights they paid for out-of-pocket. To power their dental instruments, the team hooked up a compressor to the side of the building.

“It’s a pop-up clinic,” said Mark Bayless. “The structure is built with cinder blocks, with bars on the windows and a corrugated roof. When it rains, it pounds.”

While the eighth graders may recognize familiar faces among the International Health Emissaries, many of the preschoolers had never seen a dentist. Somewhere in those suitcases, the team squeezed colorful toothbrushes, floss and toys, books and clothes for the kids — tokens of bravery, considering some required multiple fillings, deep gum cleanings and extractions.

Along with Bayless and the Bhaskars, the 2025 Belize team included several family volunteers, retired dentist Tony Cava, local prosthodontist Sunderpal Dail and his wife, Rajneesh, a pediatric dentist. Emma noted that the Dails brought along their daughter, who is considering a future in medicine.

Bayless said it’s been amazing to watch the organization grow over 30 years. “We have a network of professionals who join us every year, but we always need family and friends to help, from assisting and sterilizing, to holding hands and reassuring patients.” The organization is planning missions to Peru in May, Ecuador in August and Guatemala in November.

This recent mission was Emma’s third to Belize, her second as a treating dentist,



Dr. Emma Bhaskar with two brave patients.

since graduating from the University of the Pacific’s school of dentistry in 2021.

“Before I knew it, the roles were reversed,” remarked Philip Bhaskar. “It’s a wonderful feeling as a parent, to watch her work with such confidence.”

Brighter smiles weren’t the only changes they noted. A routine checkup can be as rewarding as a life-altering extraction, Emma explained. “Something that feels so menial, a tooth-cleaning or dispensing fluoride, you appreciate differently.”

“The rates we’ve seen of local kids pursuing higher education have risen since our first mission,” she continued, attributing the positive change to healthier kids and families with one fewer painful mouth to worry about. Part of the International Health Emissaries’ mission includes supporting educational initiatives in host countries, through partnerships with local schools and nonprofits.

Generations

For three generations, the Bhaskars have transformed their share of smiles. They’ve also shared a commitment to service, starting with Philip’s father, Surindar Bhaskar (1923-2016). A renowned oral pa-

TEETH cont. page 40A



Volunteer dentists stacked four or five plastic chairs to get the lift they needed to work on patients.



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HEALTHY LIFESTYLES

MISSION cont. from page 36A

ics, firefighters and three pharmacists. She noted that they dealt with emergencies, including heart attacks, and sent several people to hospitals.

The group stayed in the capital city, San Salvador. A typical day began with breakfast between 4:30 and 5:30 a.m., followed by a long ride in an air-conditioned bus — a luxury in the hot and humid region — arriving at the site by 7:30 a.m. and starting to work with patients a half-hour later. They kept going until everyone was seen, some time between 4 and 7 p.m., then climbed on the bus for the return trip. It’s hard work, and everyone mentioned a “bug problem” along with the muggy climate. It was more of an observation than a complaint, though.

Many of the families live in shacks they built by hand from scrap metal or whatever else was available, and, if they have jobs, their pay is minimal.

They queued up outside a registration tent, standing in line for hours. Chairs, when there were any, were set up in the dirt. The clinics were held in whatever structures were available, including schools, and Mandujano said that their hosts reserved bathrooms with flush toilets for the team’s exclusive use. “They offered us the best they had,” she said.

Burning trash

Toledo was involved in patient education and said she was taken aback at first by how little people understood about their illnesses. She added that the Salvadorans also got to know the team members, asking them personal questions and sharing things about their own lives. “They were so kind and sweet,” she said.

Garcia was assigned to the pharmacy and said she wants to return next year, if she can. “Despite being out there in the heat — it was exhausting — I still wanted to keep doing it. Everyone is so ap-



Dr. Valerie Vigil is shown with one of her patients. At right, a corrugated metal shack shows the conditions in which many patients live.



preciative. They shook my hand and said, ‘Thank you so much,’ even after waiting for hours.”

In addition to diabetes, likely a product of poor diet, they treated a lot of people for high blood pressure and for issues caused or exacerbated by living conditions.

“There’s a lot of eye pain,” Mandujano said, caused by people burning their trash in the open countryside. “You can see the smoke,” she said.

“There’s also chronic abdominal distress” brought on by a lack of clean water. Malnutrition is a problem, although she said the government distributes high-protein rice to try to help.

Garcia mentioned that the pharmacists had to ration medications. Metformin, a common diabetes prescription that’s readily available in the United States, “runs out quick,” she said. Many people had problems made worse throughout the year by

limited availability of drugs like blood pressure medications that people in this country take for granted.

Vigil and Mandujano said one highlight was discovering a Dollar General store around the corner from their motel. “We could buy toys for the kids and get candy to hand out,” they noted.

Many of the healthcare professionals made personal connections with the patients. Vigil said that some returning providers had a practice of taking the same pictures with the same kids year after year, documenting their growth.

Most supplies and equipment were provided, but Vigil said she wanted to thank Natividad Medical Foundation for sending supplies along, too.

At least one El Salvadoran doctor accompanied the team at each site so that there could be some follow-up.

After returning home, they said there

was a time of “dysphoria.” Said Vigil, “You feel a little sad and frustrated at how much waste and excess there is here.”

Mandujano wants to become a physician assistant, while Toledo and Garcia are working on getting into medical school. All said the experience had deeply affected them, as did Vigil.

“It made me appreciate the privilege we have here,” said Garcia. “Nobody is ever turned away from an emergency room. Everyone has access.” She paused thoughtfully for a moment and said, “I have clean water.”

While nobody gets paid, each of the women mentioned a ceremony held on their last day there. “The kids made thank-you cards by hand,” said Mandujano. “Then they sing a song and do a dance — it’s the same song every year.”

“They wear their very best clothing,” added Vigil.



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TEETH cont. from page 39A

thologist, periodontist and author of four dental textbooks, Bhaskar was born in the Indian state of Punjab. He pursued dental studies in the United States and joined the Army Dental Corps in 1955. An advocate for improved care for service members, he became the first Asian-born major general (two stars) and served as Chief of the U.S. Army Dental Corps from 1975 to 1979.

He was also the first Bhaskar to join the Monterey Peninsula Dental Group, though he wouldn’t be the last. Philip Bhaskar treated his first patients alongside his father before opening his Monterey Oral Surgery practice in 1989. Soon, Emma’s older

brother, Brian, will be back in the mix. In his sixth year of residency at the University of Washington, he will join his father’s oral and maxillofacial surgery practice this fall.

Philip said he’s already looking forward to his next mission. It’ll be a full-circle moment, assisting Emma and Brian as they provide vital care for kids in need.

“We hope the organization continues to grow with young dentists interested in serving the world’s dental needs, and that those young practitioners eventually take leadership roles,” said Bhaskar, a board member with the organization.

To learn more about the International Health Emissaries, visit internationalhealthemissaries.org.



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Woody’s meets CVAC, Tira Nanza parties, and a night of tequila

CHEF TIM Wood, owner of Woody’s at the Airport and Woody’s at Del Mesa, has opened Woody’s café at Carmel Valley Athletic Club. And while the club is open only to members, and its Refuge day spa requires a fee, the café is open to all.

Wood, a CVAC member himself, said management at the club asked him to take over its grill.

“I do everything that feels like it’s right or it’s good. In each of these projects, it’s not anything to do with ego or trying to get rich or anything,” he said. “Del Mesa was something I thought I could bring to the valley, and I think we have a fun little hideaway for locals to get a reprieve from the hustle-bustle of our towns. CVAC is the same kind of opportunity. They needed my help, I like opportunities, and it felt right. That’s why we went in.”

The café had its grand opening over the weekend and serves salads, wraps, sandwiches and snacks featuring local ingredients. It also has a full bar that turns out specialty cocktails, local wines from Bernardus and Scheid, beers from Alvarado Street Brewery and Other Brother (both local), “and for the health-conscious day drinker, we have Athletic Brewing Company nonalcoholic as well as



Longtime local chef Tim Wood (left), who made the Monterey Peninsula Airport into a nationally known dining destination with the original Woody’s restaurant, is following his expansion into Del Mesa with a third outlet at Carmel Valley Athletic Club. The club’s other facilities are open only to members, but anyone can dine in the café.

Soup to Nuts

Heineken 0.0, never mind our signature, Mr. Westover’s Library Fair Lemonade.”

He noted the café has something for everyone, whether the diner is looking for great food and drinks in a beautiful environment, a post-workout treat, snacks for the kids, or something healthy.

Operating hours are initially focused on midday — 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., closed Wednesdays — but they’ll likely expand as demand increases. “With support, we’re going to continue to open those hours more and more,” he said.

And while “good ingredients cost money,” Wood is trying to keep prices reasonable. Whether they’re dining at

the airport, Del Mesa, CVAC or at one of the many gigs Woody’s caters, guests “like our food because it’s consistently approachable, and we try to make it accessible,” he said.

He’s also hoping that the popularity that his airport and Del Mesa venues have gained over the years will reach CVAC.

“The fun part about Woody’s is to sit back and watch it grow,” he said.

Carmel Valley Athletic Club is located at 27300 Rancho San Carlos Road. Customers who are not members can check in at reception to be let into the café.

Estéban’s new chef

The restaurant named for Don Estéban Munras, the Spanish diplomat who built his hacienda in 1824 on the site that is now Casa Munras Garden Hotel, has a new chef. Steven Patlan arrived in January, bringing 17 years of experience with him to the Spanish-style eatery, with its popular tapas menu and recently refurbished outdoor dining area.

Patlan grew up in a small community called Firebaugh, about 45 minutes west of Fresno in the Central Valley, where cotton and melon were major crops. He also recalls blazing hot summers, when helping his mother cook indoors, where there was air conditioning, was far preferable the 110-degree heat. “I weaseled my way out of yard work,” he said.

Cruising Lake Mead

More importantly, though, “I’ve always loved my mother’s cooking. It was classic Mexican, but there was American fare, too, like meat loaf and fried chicken.” After high school, he continued the education that began by his mother’s side, at the Institute of Technology in Clovis.

He’s worked in Santa Cruz at Solaire restaurant in Hotel Paradox, a onetime Holiday Inn that’s now a boutique Marriott property. And while working for Silverton Casino Lodge in Las Vegas, he catered private events on the owner’s private yacht, The Triple Deuce, on nearby Lake Mead. He said the craft would cruise through can-

See **FOOD** next page



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FOOD & WINE

FOOD

From previous page

yons and that cooking on board wasn’t difficult — unless you forgot an ingredient or two back in port.

Around here, he’s been in kitchens that include those at Spanish Bay, Quail Lodge, Ventana, Alvarado Street Brewery, and the Sardine Factory. In about three years at that



venerable Monterey establishment, Patlan said he learned a lot from co-founder and hospitality veteran Bert Cutino about calculating costs and working with numbers in the business. Cutino also introduced Patlan to Rancho Cielo, the alternative high school in Salinas founded by retired Monterey County Superior Court Judge John Phillips more than two decades ago. Since learning about the place, Patlan has directed some charitable work to the school, as well as supporting Meals on Wheels.

Oysters

As someone who loves cooking seafood, Patlan is excited about continuing to work with the fresh fish and other products found in the Monterey Bay. A related innovation — a weekly “shucking social” — debuted last Sunday. He said during Estéban’s normal dinner hours of 4:30 to 8:30 p.m., there will be a rotating selection of West Coast oysters for \$1 apiece, and bottles of wine will be sold at half price. Don’t be misled by the name — the oysters will come to the table already opened.

Patlan also loves the restaurant’s Spanish cuisine. “Spain has a lot of different regions with different styles of cooking,” he said, and he loves the challenge and variety that presents.

See **WINE** next page



Estéban, the Spanish-themed restaurant inside Casa Munras Garden Hotel in Monterey, recently welcomed new executive chef Steven Patlan. With 17 years of experience, Patlan is bringing his enthusiasm for seafood and Spanish cooking to the kitchen. Last week, he kicked off Sunday Shucking Socials, with oysters and wine specials.



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FOOD & WINE

WINE

From previous page

Estéban is open for dinner from 4:30 to 8:30 p.m. Sunday through Thursday and 4:30 to 9 p.m. Friday and Saturday nights. For breakfast and brunch hours, or to peruse a menu, visit hotelcasamunras.com and select Dining from the pop-down menu in the upper left corner.

Noche de Tequila

Bud's at La Playa Hotel at Camino Real and Eighth in Carmel will celebrate Lalo tequila during a special dinner Wednesday, April 9, from 6 to 9 p.m. Each of the five courses will be served with a cocktail featuring Lalo Blanco.

Lalo was founded by childhood friends Eduardo "Lalo" González and David "R" Carballido, who grew up near each other in Guadalajara, the capital of Mexico's Jalisco region, the birthplace of tequila. González' father and grandfather were highly regarded tequila makers, and Carballido made a career working with the country's top producers.

The duo collaborated "to create the purest expression of tequila and share it with the world," an

unaged tequila blanco crafted from three ingredients: pure well water, champagne yeast and agave.

Noche de Tequila is set to begin with house-fried tortillas topped with chorizo, cheese, pickled chiles, pineapple salsa, street corn and salsa, paired with Como la Flor (Lalo Blanco, Campari, Aperol and

See TEQUILA next page



Bud's at La Playa Hotel is planning a special dinner featuring cocktails made with renowned Lalo brand tequila. They'll be paired with an assortment of creative, Mexican-inspired food for a memorable evening.

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F O O D & W I N E

TEQUILA

From previous page

blood orange). Next, hamachi crudo will be served with a cocktail of Lalo Blanco, mezcal, rum, passionfruit foam, orgeat (almond syrup), pineapple, lime and ginger.

Seared scallops will accompany Tranquilo (high-proof Lalo, matcha agave, yuzu, Ancho Reyes verde — a chile liqueur — and grapefruit), followed by chile-espresso-rubbed skirt steak with Fumar Papi, a concoction containing Lalo Blanco, a smoky spice blend, jalapeño, gentian liqueur, lime and agave.

The evening will conclude with tres leches, traditionally a cake made with three kinds of milk, and a cocktail of Lalo Blanco, Licor 43, espresso and citrus.

Tickets are \$168 and can be purchased through eventbrite.com. For more information, visit laplayahotel.com.

Spring release party

Tira Nanza, the Cachagua winery formerly owned by the Galantes, will host a Spring Release Party April 12 from 2 to 6 p.m.

The couple who own Tira Nanza dry-farm their vineyards — as opposed to irrigating them regularly — as much as possible, which is said to produce fruit that is more complex and concentrated. They also “rely on natural solutions to get the most out of our vineyards,” including counting on owls and hawks for pest control, using cattle to keep vegetation down between the rows, and spraying only organic and biodynamic products.

“Every vine at Tira Nanza is hand-pruned and hand-harvested by the same hands that make the wines,” they say.

Their spring celebration will feature live music, small bites, and tours of the winery, along with tastes of the new 2024 malbec rosé, 2024 viognier, 2024 “Offshoot” vermentino, 2022 “Offshoot” cabernet sauvignon and 2021 cabernet sauvignon.

Tickets are \$50 per person — but free for wine club members if they email sydney@tirananza.com to RSVP. Tira Nanza is located at 18181 Cachagua Road. Visit tirananza.com.

Mary Schley and Elaine Hesser contributed to this week’s column.

MUSIC

From page 41A

Rendezvous.”

“Travel to the South of France as we celebrate our stunning Impressionist concert repertoire in true French style,” the choral group said. “Indulge in tasty gourmandises while swaying to chansons performed by our favorite duo, **Dave Dally** and **Mike Marotta**.”

Tickets are \$60. The Woman’s Club is located at Ninth and San Carlos. icanтори.org.

Red Beans for lunch

One of the Monterey Peninsula’s most beloved and enduring musical acts, **Red Beans and Rice**, plays a free show Saturday, 12:30 p.m., at the Marina Library.

Led by co-founding singer and guitarist **Gil Rubio**, the band serves up a tasty mix of New Orleans-influenced and blues-inspired roots rock.

All ages are welcome. The library is located at 190 Seaside Circle in Marina.

Live music March 28-April 3

Big Sur

Big Sur River Inn — singer and guitarist **Rick Chelew** (folk, Saturday at 12:30 p.m.). 46800 Highway 1.

Fernwood Resort in Big Sur — **Bois Rouge**, singer and guitarist **Richard Gans** (Americana, Saturday at 10 p.m.). 47200 Highway 1.

Carmel

Barmel — singer and guitarist **Ryan Sesma** (Sunday at 6 p.m.), singer and guitarist **Chris Jamez** (Thursday at 6 p.m.). In Carmel Square on San Carlos north of Seventh.

Cypress Inn — singer and pianist **Dino Vera** (jazz, blues and r&b, Friday at 7 p.m.), pianist **Gennady Loktionov** and singer **Debbie Davis** (cabaret, Saturday at 6:30 p.m.), **The Andrea Carter Trio** (jazz and pop, Sunday at 11 a.m.), guitarist **Richard Devinck** (classical, Sunday at 6 p.m.), singer **Lee Durley** and pianist **Joe Indence** (jazz, Thursday at 6 p.m.). Lincoln and Seventh.

De Tierra Vineyards — singer and guitarist **Michael Gaither** (Sunday at 5 p.m.). Mission and Fifth.

Hyatt Carmel Highlands — singer and pianist **Dino Vera** (jazz, blues and r&b, Saturday and Thursday, both at 6 p.m.). 120 Highlands Drive.

La Playa Hotel — guitarist **Glenn Bell** (jazz, Tuesday at 5 p.m.). Camino Real and Eighth.

The Links Club — **Victory Lane** (classic rock, Friday



Singer Tanya Fitzgerald joins the monthly jazz jam Sunday at Embassy Suites in Seaside.

at 7:30 p.m.), **The New Wave Band** (rock, Saturday at 7:30 p.m.), **Songwriters Showcase** (Tuesday at 7:30 p.m., sign-ups start at 6:30 p.m.). Carmel Plaza, Mission and Ocean.

Mission Ranch — singer and pianist **Maddaline Edstrom** (jazz, Friday through Sunday at 5 p.m.), pianist **Gennady Loktionov** (jazz, Monday through Thursday at 5 p.m.). 26270 Dolores St.

See **LIVE** next page

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MUSIC IN THE LIBRARY

APRIL 4 – Opening Reception of Padre Trails Camera Club’s “The Monterey Peninsula, Naturally”, a print exhibition. Professional nature photographer and author David Gubernick will share how his love for the natural beauty of the Peninsula has inspired his photographic work, and how he hopes that work may inspire others. 5:30pm

APRIL 11 - You are invited to join the inimitable Barbara Mossberg for a dramatic (and humorous) reading of the newly published “Clown Cantos, Everything is Alive in its Own Way, Singing” (yes, there will be cake). Mossberg’s new book is illustrated by local fine-art painter and illustrator Christine Crozier. 5:30pm

APRIL 12 – Transformational Memoir Writing Workshop with Barbara Mossberg at the Little House in Jewell Park next to the PG Library. Space is limited. Registration required. 10am-3pm

APRIL 12 - The Monterey Bay Poetry Consortium welcomes you to celebrate National Poetry Month with an evening of poetry featuring Watsonville Poet Laureate Victoria Bañales, poet, educator and writer. She will be joined by Watsonville Youth Poet Laureates Rachel Huerta and Eva Martinez. 5:30pm

APRIL 19 – Live music for all ages. Join us for “Rhythms & Reads” featuring Charged Particles. The trio’s funky Latin jazz repertoire, blending in elements of classical music, mixes complex orchestration with freewheeling improvisation. “Rhythms & Reads” is a new monthly concert series at the PG Library. 5:30pm

APRIL 26 – Join Daniel B. Summerhill for “Praying for Rain, A Centennial Celebration of James Baldwin”. The inaugural Poet Laureate of Monterey County, Summerhill is a writer, scholar and Professor of Poetry at Santa Clara University. He is the author of two collections of poems, Divine, Divine, Divine and Mausoleum of Flowers. 5:30pm

For more information, visit the library, phone (831) 648-5762 or email referencedesk@cityofpacificgrove.org. All events are FREE.

Sponsored by Pacific Grove Public Library Friends and Foundation, the Whitney Latham-Lechich Poetry Trust and Monterey County Gives! 2024 donors.

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LIVE

From previous page

Carmel Valley

Bernardus Lodge — pianist **Michael Culver** (jazz, Friday at 6 p.m.), singer and guitarist **Kevin Pfeffer** (Saturday at noon), singer and pianist **TJ Kuenster** (jazz, Saturday at 6 p.m.), guitarist **John Sherry** (rock and blues, Sunday at 11 a.m.). 415 W. Carmel Valley Road.

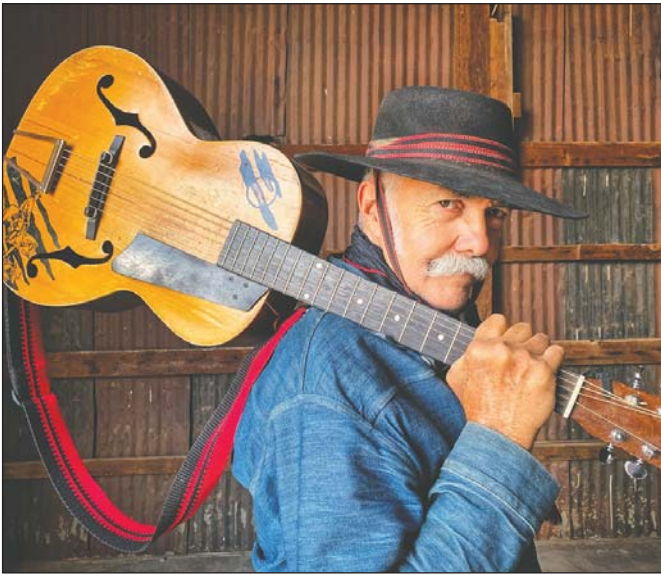
Folktale Winery — singer and guitarist

Benny Bassett (Friday at 4 p.m.), singer and guitarist **Kito Rayburn** (Saturday at 2 p.m.), **The Paul Contos Trio** (Sunday at 2 p.m.). 8940 Carmel Valley Road.

Massa Tasting Room — singer and guitarist **Rick Chelew** (folk, Sunday at noon). 69 W. Carmel Valley Road.

The Running Iron in Carmel Valley — **Open Mic Night** (Sunday at 8 p.m.). 24 E. Carmel Valley Road.

Trailside Cafe in Carmel Valley — singer and guitarist **Cisco Jim** (cowboy music, Saturday at 6 p.m.). 3 Del Fino Place.



On Saturday at 6 p.m., at the Trailside Cafe in Carmel Valley, singer and guitarist Cisco Jim will play cowboy music.

Monterey

Albatross Ridge Winery and Kitchen — singer and guitarist **Ryan Sesma** (Friday at 6 p.m.), singer and guitarist **RJ DeMarco** (Saturday at 6 p.m.). 316 Alvarado St.

Bon Ton LeRoy's Smokehouse — **Open Mic Night** (Thursday at 7 p.m.). 794 Lighthouse Ave.

Bulldog Sports Pub — **Tribe in the Sky** presents a weekly Community Jam (Tuesday at 6:30 p.m.). 611 Lighthouse Ave.

Cibo — **The Dave Holodiloff Duo** (jazz, Sunday at 6 p.m.), singer **Lee Durley** and pianist **Bill Spencer** (jazz, Tuesday at 7 p.m.), singer **Miranda Perl** and guitarist **Adam Astrup** (jazz and swing, Wednesday at 7 p.m.). 301 Alvarado St.

InterContinental Hotel — guitarist **John Sherry** (rock and blues, Friday and Saturday at 7 p.m.), singer and guitarist **Zack Freitas** (Saturday at 9 a.m.), guitarist **Terrence Farrell** (Latin music, Sunday at 9 a.m.). 750 Cannery Row.

Melville Tavern — **Shilstone & Wilson** (rock, Tuesday at 6 p.m.). 484 Washington St., Ste. A.

Midici Pizza — Janice's Jazz Jam keyboardist **Gary Meek**, bassist **Joe Dolister** and drummer **Andy Weis** (Sunday at 5 p.m.), singer **Miranda Perl** and guitarist **Adam Astrup** (jazz, Thursday at 5 p.m.). 467 Alvarado St.

Monterey Plaza Hotel — pianist **Joe Indence** (jazz, Friday at 6 p.m.), singer and pianist **Scott Brown** (jazz and pop, Saturday at 6 p.m.), pianist **Steve Mann** (jazz, Sunday at 6 p.m.), singer and multi-instrumentalist **Reija Massey** (pop, rock and country, Monday at 6 p.m.). 400 Cannery Row.

Pearl Hour — **The Zach Westfall Group** (jazz, Sunday at 8 p.m.), **The Ben Herod Trio** (jazz, Wednesday at 8 p.m.). 214 Lighthouse Ave.

Puma Road at Portola Plaza — singer and guitarist **Kito Rayburn** (Friday at 5 p.m.), **Songbird Meadow** ("a sweet fusion of melodies with hints of alternative, pop, blues and Latin," Saturday at 5 p.m.), singer and guitarist **Casey Frazier** (Sunday at 4 p.m.). 281 Alvarado St.

Salty Seal Pub — singer and guitarist **Kyle Kovalik** (Thursday at 8 p.m.). 653 Cannery Row.

The Sardine Factory — singer and guitarist **David Conley** (Friday and Saturday, Tuesday through Thursday at 7:30 p.m.). 701 Wave St.

Sly McFly's — **Mad About You** ('80s & '90s hits, Saturday at 9 p.m.), **The Joint Chiefs** (funk and r&b, Monday at 8:30 p.m.). 700 Cannery Row.

See **PERFORM** page 49A



Singer and guitarist Benny Bassett plays Friday, 4 p.m., at Folktale Winery in Carmel Valley.



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ARTIST

From page 27A

went on dental trips to Guatemala, Peru and Argentina with (Peninsula dentist) Ronnie Faia and his wife, Susie,” she said of the humanitarian excursions. “Paul learned how to clean the instruments, and they trained me to help out as a dental hygienist.”

After graduating high school, Marcia Shortt moved on to Monterey Peninsula College — and her first friend there was Susan Manchester, now a well-known Carmel artist and art educator — then enrolled at San Jose State to pursue a degree in fine arts.

As a student at SJSU, Shortt won a national competition to become one of 20 guest editors for a month at Mademoiselle magazine in New York City.

“They flew us to New York and put us up in the Barbizon Hotel,” she remembered. “We got to interview people like writer and publisher Bennett Cerf, Adlai Stevenson, Carol Channing, civil rights activist James Farmer, Women’s Day editor John Fairchild ... Then, they flew us to Europe for a week, and paid for everything.”

Graphic design at Yale

The prestigious internship, she believes, was a big reason she was accepted for graduate studies at Yale University, where she spent two years studying under famed graphic designer Paul Rand and legendary photojournalist Walker Evans.

It’s also where she met Paul Shortt, a design student in Yale’s drama school.

“The drama school was next door. Paul was designing a piece of scenery for a play, needed a poster, and came into our class one day,” she recounted. A classmate’s artwork was chosen for the poster, but Marcia won the Paul Shortt sweepstakes.

He continued his studies at the University of Michigan, where he became a stage designer, which led to a lengthy career designing sets for operas and other theater productions.

She, meanwhile, boldly walked into Boston’s city hall, asked for a job in the architecture department and spent the next two-and-a-half years designing civic exhibits, city signage, logos and city police cars.

“Paul, at the time, was teaching at Cornell University,” Marcia Shortt remembered. “The Vietnam War was going on, and he got drafted, but Cornell wouldn’t give him a teaching deferment.”

Friends from the University of Michigan offered him a job — with a draft deferment — in Cincinnati, where they owned an opera theater.

“That’s how we ended up moving there,” she said.

Coming home, traveling abroad

While mothering their two young daughters, Shortt continued her graphic design career in Cincinnati — freelance and as a city employee — for more than 30 years, frequently working late into the night.

“I did brochures, banners, signage for buildings and parking garages. I created maps to help people get around the city. I also designed the city’s police cars, as I had in Boston,” she said.

She retired after her profession morphed into a computer-dominated occupation, and the creative process became digital. That’s when the couple moved to Carmel-by-the-Sea, reclaiming and restoring the McGinnis family home. Their adult daughters, Lucy and Nori, and their three grandchildren, still live in Cincinnati, where the Shortts keep another residence.

Paul, retired from set design, continues to feed his artistic appetite as a poet and playwright. The Shortts vacation frequently in England, where they enjoy visiting museums and sipping coffee in sidewalk cafes.

Dennis Taylor is a professional freelance writer in Monterey County. Contact him at scribelaureate@gmail.com.

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LETTERS

From page 26A

time re-bagging said bags so Greenwaste will take them. These miscreants shouldn't own dogs; they should own stuffed animals that don't require adult supervision.

When we moved here, our realtor explained to us that Carmel values trees, dogs and people, roughly in that order. OK, we were forewarned. But if you make the decision to have a dog, then "own" your dog-related responsibilities and don't share them with me. Carry your dog poop home or give your dog to someone responsible enough to care for it while respecting the rights, property and time of others.

Chuck McKenzie, Carmel

Threatened pines

Dear Editor,

Your editorial included misleading statements about the conservation status of the Monterey pine (*Pinus radiata*) and Monterey pine forest habitat. In 2000, the California Native Plant Society submitted a petition to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife to list the Monterey pine as a threatened species. This petition pertained to native Monterey pines, which have only three native pop-

ulations in California. Indeed, genetically altered *Pinus radiata* stock is planted in vast monoculture plantations around the world. However, these tree "crops" are not even referred to as Monterey pines. Plantation managers worldwide remain extremely concerned about virulent pathogens, like pitch canker, and continue to look to native pines for resistant genes. In its limited native range, the native plant society considers *Pinus radiata* to be a rare species, threatened or endangered.

In 2000, the department of fish and wildlife was inundated and overwhelmed by supportive, as well as hostile information regarding the CNPS listing petition, and requested that CNPS withdraw their request without prejudice, rather than risk having the petition denied due to the lack of adequate agency analysis during the mandated, limited review period.

Monterey pines are the keystone species for unique forested habitats that occur nowhere else in the world except three small areas of our state. These trees and the forests they support are worthy of our most stringent protections.

Brian LeNeve,
CNPS Monterey Bay Chapter
President

Libraries in danger?

Dear Editor,

President Trump's March 14 executive order has tar-

geted the Institute of Museum and Library Services. Without this important federal funding, access to information, books, technology and literacy will shrink, and our libraries will no longer be the robust community hubs with services for all that they have been.

If you share my concern, please let your senators and Congress member know that funding for the Institute of Museum and Library Services should be restored.

Nancy Harray,
Monterey

Space for progressives

Dear Editor,

The Progressive Democrats of America Club, Monterey Area, has assumed the lease at 1238 Fremont, Seaside, formerly the Center for Change. In these troubled times, the Monterey progressive club felt it imperative to have a space for people and the community to organize. The building is now called the Peoples' Center for Progressive Change, is supported and run by the PDA club, and we invite progressives throughout Monterey County to attend our open house, Saturday, March 29, 3-6 p.m. There will be music, refreshments, and the opportunity to connect. The space is available for community groups and progressive organizations to organize, plan, play and work.

Alan Haffa,
Monterey

MARCH
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Continues on next page

Police Log: Carmel-by-the-Sea, March 27


Officer responded to request for help



A bat was inside a house at San Carlos and First.



The bat was captured and taken to Monterey County Animal Services for testing.



We pay for news photos!

The Carmel Pine Cone will pay up to \$50 for photos of newsworthy events around the Monterey Peninsula.

Submit yours to news@carmelpinecone.com

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PHOTO CONTEST WINNERS HONORED SATURDAY

NARROWING THE field of entries from more than 2,400 to just 45, the Center for Photographic Arts unveils its annual Members’ Juried Exhibition Saturday with a public reception at 4 p.m.

The images — which come from as far away as Sweden and South Africa — include landscapes, portraits, photographs created with historic processes, still lifes and

Art Roundup

By CHRIS COUNTS

street photography — along with an assortment of “wild experiments in mixed media.”

“This is a great survey of photography from our beloved members, many of whom will be in attendance on opening night,” executive director Ann Jastrab said. “Without them, we couldn’t keep our doors open, so we are thrilled to honor them with our annual members show, and we

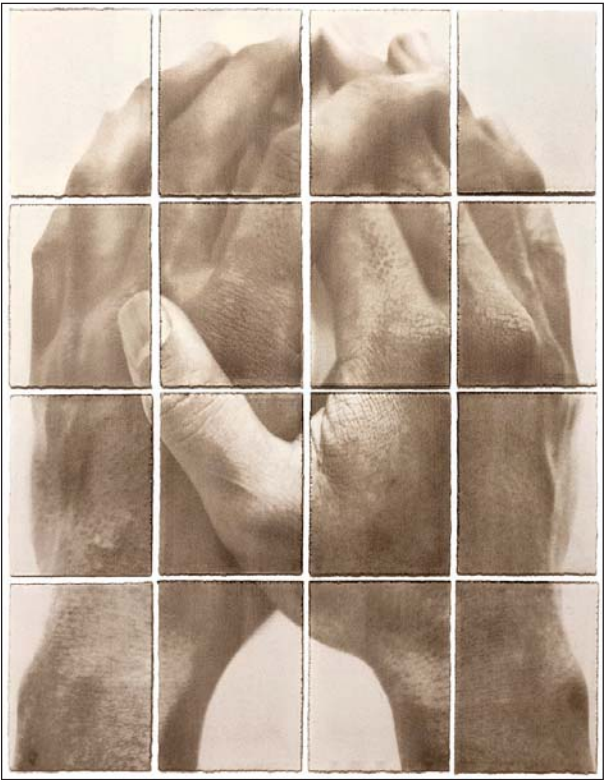
invite the public to stop by and vote for their favorites in the People’s Choice Award.”

What is ‘Photo Carmel?’

One of a series of events that make up the inaugural month-long Photo Carmel festival, the show was juried by Allie Haeusslein, who is the director of Pier 24 Photography in San Francisco. Haeusslein will announce the winners of cash prizes during Saturday’s reception. Among the prizes, the winner of Best of Show will take home \$1,000.

The show will be on display through May 4. The center is located in Sunset Center at San Carlos and Ninth.

Featuring a series of events, exhibits and workshops, talks, book signings and receptions spread out over five weeks, Photo Carmel seeks to foster “a deeper appreciation and understanding of photography as an art form and its place in today’s culture.” The festival will be hosted by a variety of venues, some on the Monterey Peninsula — like the Center for Photographic and the Monterey Museum of Art — and others as far away as San Francisco. For more details, visit photography.org.



Christian Tan’s image, “I Love you More than My Own Skin,” is included in a new show at the Center for Photographic Art.

The Pine Cone has been a member of the Carmel Chamber of Commerce for more than 100 years.

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Continues from previous page

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SUNDAY
APRIL 13, 2025
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