

P.G. plane crash devastates business, families

■ NTSB investigating cause

By KELLY NIX

THE THREE men who died in a plane crash in Pacific Grove Saturday night while returning from a scuba diving trip off the coast of Cuba are being remembered this week as adventurous and kind souls who were the heart of the Monterey Peninsula diving community.

Steve Clatterbuck, 60, Jamie Tabscott, 44, and pilot James Vincent Jr., 36, died when the twin-engine Beechcraft Baron carrying them home from the San Francisco Bay area crashed into the ocean near Asilomar State Beach at about 10:30 p.m. July 26. The friends and coworkers were on their way back from a seven-day dive trip to Jardines de la Reina, an archipelago located about 60 miles off the southeastern coast of Cuba.

Cared for everyone

They “were loved so much,” a longtime friend of Vincent’s told The Pine Cone this week. “They were the heart of the diving community on the Monterey Bay.”

The owner of Aquarius Dive Shop in Monterey and a dive shop in San Jose, Vincent was an experienced pilot who was careful, capable and confident, and his friend is certain that he did everything he could to return home safely. He was the

owner of the plane.

“I like to think that in his very last moments, he wasn’t scared for himself, but rather angry that he put the other two people on board in danger,” the friend said, adding

See CRASH page 16A



Jamie Tabscott, Steve Clatterbuck and James Vincent Jr. were returning to the Monterey Peninsula from a trip to Cuba when Vincent’s small plane crashed into the ocean, killing them.

Panetta conducts ‘oversight tour’ at ICE detention center

By KELLY NIX

REP. JIMMY Panetta last week visited California’s largest detention facility for undocumented immigrants to witness firsthand how the 1,600 prisoners are being treated. There, he spoke to ACLU attorneys to ensure detainees were being afforded due process, sat in on a court hearing for a Central American citizen, and was shown where inmates live and what they’re fed. He made no complaints about conditions.

On July 25, the Democratic representative for the 19th Congressional District, which includes the Monterey Peninsula, traveled to the Adelanto ICE Processing Center in San Bernardino County, which is owned and operated by a private company, the GEO Group, under a contract with U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

‘Many of the detainees prison cells had plenty of snacks’

“This is my seventh trip to a detention or border facility during my time in Congress,” Panetta, who was first elected in 2016, told The Pine Cone. “I take these types of visits very seriously as part of my oversight duties.”

His visit comes as President Donald Trump — who campaigned on widespread deportation of illegal immigrants — has started a \$170 billion expansion of enforcement, including \$45 billion to detain people who are in the country illegally. The effort is expected to more than double the nation’s capacity to lock them up.

Similar to jail

GEO Group employees and ICE agents led Panetta on an extensive, two-hour tour through the facility where he saw medical and mental health areas, recreation yards,

See PANETTA page 20A

Staff: Complaints about Pastor project unwarranted

By MARY SCHLEY

IN AN 18-page report, senior planner Evan Kort systematically dismantles each of the arguments made by a group of nearly a dozen residents who filed objections to the Carmel Planning Commission’s April approval of Patrice Pastor’s residential/commercial complex on Dolores south of Seventh.

The city council is set to consider the appeal and render a verdict during a special meeting Aug. 4, with a tour of inspection taking place a few days earlier.

The opponents of the project — a 12,971-square-foot, two-story complex that includes eight upstairs apartments, roughly 5,100 square feet of ground-floor

retail space, and an 852-square-foot basement containing a dozen parking spaces — include former planning commissioners and city council members and a couple of neighbors, among others.

What ‘structure’ means

They contend the JB Pastor Project, named for the owner’s father, is not categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act and that the approval was based on “improper applications of the terms, ‘structure’ and ‘interaccessibility,’” leading to a building with more than 10,000 square feet of floor area, Kort summarizes in

his staff report. They also allege “improper landscaping, parking and open space requirements,” object to allowing Pastor to pay in-lieu fees to compensate for some of the required parking, and say the plans don’t meet demands made by a prior city council regarding preservation of a building and decorative wall behind the Seventh & Dolores Steakhouse.

Kort’s report contains a detailed timeline of the project since Pastor first proposed a residential/commercial

See PASTOR page 18A

Notthoff reappointed to coastal commission

■ Promises ‘housing opportunities for all’

By CHRIS COUNTS

ONE OF two local residents who serve on the California Coastal Commission, Ann Notthoff of Carmel Valley was reappointed to a four-year term July 16.

“Commissioner Notthoff has dedicated her life to protecting California’s vast natural resources, and she has been a devoted and hardworking member of the commission,” Senate President pro tem Mike McGuire said. “California’s coast is one of our most prized possessions — culturally, economically and socially. It’s in good hands with Ann, who has proved to be a trusted leader.”

Notthoff was first appointed to the coastal commission in March 2023.

“Serving on the California Coastal Commission has

been an honor and I’m excited about the work we have in front of us,” Notthoff said.

Her comments also echoed the state’s new emphasis on building housing — something the state agency largely blocked along the coast for decades.

Complete reversal

“I’m grateful that pro tem McGuire and the rules committee have given me the opportunity to continue the important work of preserving our beautiful coast and growing coastal economic and housing opportunities for all.”

Notthoff is serving on the commission at a time when its stance on housing bears little resemblance to what it was just a decade ago. Once firmly committed to resource

See COASTAL page 25A

MENTAL HEALTH IN QUESTION FOR MAN ACCUSED OF STABBING WIFE TO DEATH

By MARY SCHLEY

THE MAN who told a 911 operator early last Thursday morning that he’d just killed his wife of 58 years — and who had apparently tried to commit suicide by stabbing himself — may not be mentally fit to stand trial, a defense attorney argued during 79-year-old Donel Geisen’s arraignment Tuesday.

According to Monterey County Sheriff’s Cmdr. Andy Rosas, Geisen called 911 at 4:20 a.m. July 24 and said he believed he had stabbed his wife to death. Deputies and medics arrived at the couple’s home on Raymond Way in the High Meadows neighborhood off Carpenter Street east of Highway 1 to find the victim, 78-year-old Barbara Lynn Geisen, and her husband in their bedroom. The woman died at

the scene from multiple stab wounds, while her confessed attacker was transported to the hospital for treatment of “life-threatening injuries.”

Rosas said it appeared the man stabbed himself in an apparent suicide attempt. After a few days in medical care, Geisen was booked into Monterey County Jail July 27 on a charge of first-degree premeditated murder with an enhancement for using a knife.

A shocking shift

Less than a year ago, the Geisens were featured in a sports column by Pine Cone writer Dennis Taylor, who focused on Donel Geisen’s ability to shoot his age in golf in an amazing 221 rounds during the course of his life.



Donel Geisen in a police mugshot (left) and pictured with his wife, Barbara, in a photo taken last summer for a Pine Cone story about his excellent golf game.

See GEISEN page 25A