

The Carmel Pine Cone

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September 12-18, 2025

TRUSTED BY LOCALS AND LOVED BY VISITORS SINCE 1915

Long-awaited foundation work begins in The Pit

By MARY SCHLEY

EFFORTS TO shore up the land supporting an apartment complex at Lincoln and Fifth began this week, when Ausonio Construction, on behalf of the nonprofit Carmel



PHOTO/MARY SCHLEY

After years of nothing happening in The Pit, construction workers this week began efforts to shore up the sagging apartment complex next to it.

Foundation, got to work preparing the site at Dolores and Fifth that’s come to be known as The Pit.

One apartment at the foundation’s senior housing complex, Haseltine Court, has been uninhabitable ever since work on a subsequently abandoned project behind it caused damage that left the unit unsafe and forced its tenant out, according to executive director Kim Stemler. An ongoing battle with an insurance company has stuck the nonprofit with the bill, at least for now.

Long time coming

The 16,000-square-foot property bordered by the apartment building to the west and the Carmel Art Association to the south earned “The Pit” moniker after its former owner, Leidig/Draper Properties, undertook major excavation to build a parking garage as part of a large mixed-use project but then ran out of money. Activity stopped there in March 2019, and later that year, foundation and art association representatives reported the digging had damaged their buildings.

While the Lincoln Street complex, which houses low-income seniors, suffered cracking and settling — with some sections dropping about 6 inches — the art association reported cracks in its gallery floors and ceilings. At the time, Leidig/

See PIT page 23A

District, agency heads are raking in the dough

State releases latest report on salaries

By KELLY NIX

THE PAYCHECKS and benefits of local government agency management and employees have climbed significantly in the past decade — with two top officials making nearly \$500,000 per year — according to newly released data by the California Controller.

On Sept. 2, Controller Malia M. Cohen published 2024 payroll data for special districts, which include agencies such as Monterey-Salinas Transit, Monterey One Water, Carmel Area Wastewater District, some fire departments and numerous others. The districts self-report the data to the state.

“The Government Compensation in California website is a critical accountability tool that helps taxpayers, policymakers and local leaders track spending, evaluate

priorities and ensure that public resources are being used responsibly,” Cohen said when she released the data.

\$500K sewer GM

Many of the CEOs, general managers and chiefs of local districts receive generous salaries and benefits, and many of their employees are also well compensated. Of course, boards of directors are responsible for deciding how taxpayers’ dollars are spent, including how much the heads of their agencies should earn in salary and benefits.

Special districts are governmental entities created by residents of a community to deliver specialized services.

Several local special district heads were paid \$100,000

See DOUGH page 25A

Reps on opposite sides of child sex abuse bill

STATE SEN. John Laird pulled a centerpiece of his legislative agenda this week, thanks in no small part to an unlikely opponent, Assemblymember Dawn Addis.

Both Democratic lawmakers represent the Monterey Peninsula in Sacramento, but in an unusual turn of events, the two found themselves at odds over legislation Laird co-authored this session. His bill, SB 577, was an attempt

Capitol Access

By CAITLIN CONRAD

to stem the tide of sex abuse claims school districts and counties are facing across California by making it harder for victims to file lawsuits.

‘Access to justice’

“I am disappointed that SB 577 will not be advancing this year. I had hoped to protect survivors’ access to justice while providing some fiscal relief to local governments,” said Laird on Wednesday.

His legislation would have rolled back protections in a bill Addis authored in 2024 — hence her determination to

See ACCESS page 19A

Pastor mum as council kicks project back to planning commission

By MARY SCHLEY

AS EXPECTED, the Carmel City Council on Monday voted 3-0 to send Patrice Pastor’s plans for a mixed-use complex on Dolores south of Seventh back to the planning commission for a redo, demanding that plans be changed to include more parking and move the landscaping to ground level.

Pastor’s managing director of Esperanza Carmel, Chris Mitchell, said Thursday that neither he nor Pastor wanted to comment on the decision. Last week, they reiterated their disappointment with the planning process, which for this project has gone on for six years and included five redesigns, and their belief that they’re being singled out for mistreatment by decision-makers.

After getting unanimous approval from the planning commission in April, the project was appealed to the council by 11 residents on multiple grounds, and while the council agreed with the opponents regarding parking and planting, it rejected their claims that the project needs an EIR, has too much floor area, and would negatively impact the architecturally significant former bank complex next door.

After a six-year process, council says parking and landscaping must be changed

Dozens of supporters

Last month, after Mayor Dale Byrne and councilman Bob Delves recused themselves due to what the city attorney said were potential conflicts of interest, the remainder of the council spent more than six hours considering and debating those issues. This week’s meeting ran a little over half that time.

Dozens of supporters of Pastor and his various Esperanza Carmel projects, including the redo of the Colonial Terrace Inn as the Carmel Beach Hotel, his purchase and preservation of the Frank Lloyd Wright house on Scenic, the minor updates he’s made to other commercial buildings, and his recently approved plans for renovating and upgrading two historic buildings and an apartment complex on Lincoln Street, sent letters and spoke at the hearing. Several extolled his community contributions in general and pleaded with him to not give up on Carmel.

See PASTOR page 22A

Caregiver nabbed in rape case faced prior accusations

By KELLY NIX

A MALE certified nursing assistant charged last month with sexually assaulting three patients at a Pacific Grove senior facility last year had been accused of a half-dozen other assaults of other elderly women going back two decades. Each time, though, he denied wrongdoing, the cases were closed, and he wasn’t criminally charged.

Held on \$2.7M bail

Paul Nkoy Lumbi Jr., 60, was arrested Aug. 12 and charged with felony forcible rape, lewd acts on a dependent adult and other charges that police say stem from his former employment at Forest Hill Manor in Pacific Grove. All three alleged victims were 82 years old. Lumbi has pleaded not guilty to the crimes, and he’s being held in Monterey County Jail on \$2.7 million bail.

A court document filed last week by California Attorney General Rob Bonta, who is prosecuting Lumbi, indicates that beginning in 2005, Lumbi faced six complaints by patients at nursing homes in Monterey and Salinas.

See CHARGES page 18A

WHEN WILL THIS VIEW BE OPEN TO THE PUBLIC?



PHOTO/BIG SUR LAND TRUST

More than 20 years after two local parks were purchased with the public’s money, thousands of acres remain off-limits, and some hikers want to know what’s taking so long to open them. See page 12A.



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Sandy Claws

Coveted Cavapoo

What might one name a head-turning adorable, honey-colored Cavapoo puppy, her fetching features the result of blending a Cavalier King Charles spaniel with a miniature or toy poodle?

Why not something as equally coveted as the legendary mother of all “it” accessories, the Birkin bag, co-designed by Hermes (1984) and made famous by the beguiling and beautiful actress, Jane Birkin?

Hence, “Birkin” or “Birkie” to her people — sometimes “Birks” for short — is a 5-year-old Cavapoo who lives in Pebble Beach but has been designated the unofficial mayor of Carmel.

“My mother, a fashionista, has a couple of Birkin bags — one of which I hope to inherit,” Birkie’s person said. “But my husband came up with the name, and it just seems to fit. The nicknames are adorable.”

Birkie loves Carmel Beach, where she will splash right into the water up to her chest. And she’s happy to play fetch across the sand until she gets tired or distracted. Yet her absolute favorite things about the beach are the people parked in the sand or wandering the shore, each of whom she feels compelled to greet.

“As social as Birkie is,” said her person, “she always seems to worry about where I am, so I never have to worry about where she is. When I’m out walking with



my friend, Birkie always looks to make sure the ‘pack’ is together — not in a working-dog way, just a glance.”

Birkin seems to be living up to her name, said her person, since everyone who meets her wants one just like her. “It might be the way she wags her tail and makes deep eye contact with everyone she meets, which is the best kind of love-bombing, because she just wants to give and receive love.”

The 2025 Golden Pine Cones



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Stolen checks washed, forged and cashed

By MARY SCHLEY

THE THEFT of checks that had been mailed by two Carmel residents is raising questions about security at the Fifth Avenue post office, even after the U.S. Postal Service installed a new streetside mailbox that’s said to be more secure.

In the first instance, resident Shana Walker said she’d had two checks stolen from the box on the sidewalk sometime the week of Aug. 15.

“The thief was caught last night in Salinas and is currently in jail. One of the checks she washed was cashed,” she posted online. “The deputy sheriff said she had over 20 checks in her purse when she was found, including one of mine that she hadn’t yet cashed.”

Check washing involves using chemicals to erase names and amounts on stolen checks so they can be altered and cashed. Preventive measures — other than opting for electronic payments — include using indelible ink, filling in all the blanks on a check and carefully monitoring bank activity for any signs of nefarious activity.

Stolen en route

Since that incident, the postal service installed the new box, which is no longer reachable from a driver’s side window for many motorists but which is certainly more theft-proof.

But dropping checks in the mail inside the post office might not be all that safe, either.

On Aug. 22, Carmel P.D. received a report from a resident who’d dropped envelopes containing checks through the indoor mail slot, only to have them taken before they could reach their intended recipients.

“Thieves have been known for stealing mail that has been placed in a public street mailbox waiting to get picked up,” Sgt. Gerald Maldonado said. “In this instance, the victim was aware of this and mailed



PHOTO/MARY SCHLEY

In response to mail thefts, the U.S. Postal Service replaced a streetside mailbox with a more secure one. It’s harder to reach from a car, though.



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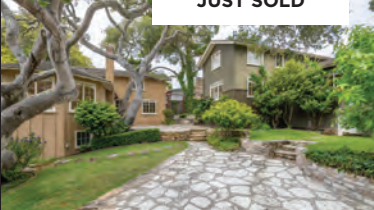


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Police & Sheriff’s Log

Serial thief targets donation box

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, AUGUST 20

Carmel-by-the-Sea: No calls to report.
Pacific Grove: Pacific Grove Police Department was notified regarding a verbal altercation at Union and Caledonia streets which turned physical.
Pacific Grove: Vehicles on Jewell Avenue, Sinex Avenue and Asilomar Boulevard were marked for 72- hour parking.
Carmel Valley: Coroner case involving a deceased person at a residence on Carmel Valley Road.
Pebble Beach: Burglary at a residence on Bird Rock Road in Pebble Beach.
Seaside: Officers intervened in a situation involving a suspicious occupied car in

the 700 block of Palm Avenue, leading to the discovery of approximately 9 grams of methamphetamine in the possession of two adults. The 41-year-old male and 49-year-old female were taken into custody and transported to Monterey County Jail.

THURSDAY, AUGUST 21

Carmel-by-the-Seaw: No calls to report.
Pacific Grove: Theft reported on the 600 block of Sinex Avenue.
Pacific Grove: Vandalism of vehicle on Forest Avenue.
Pacific Grove: Vehicles on 10th Street and Eardley Avenue marked for 72-hour parking.
Pacific Grove: Physical domestic dispute on Arkwright Court. One half denied the incident and the other half left the scene prior to police arrival.

See **POLICE LOG** page 7*RE* in the Real Estate Section

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ACCEPTING
NEW CLIENTS



The gavel falls

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

July 2 — A jury found Erik Sanchez, 52, of Greenfield, guilty of battery. After the jury returned a guilty verdict, Sanchez pleaded no contest to two other open cases for violating the terms of a protective order, vandalism and resisting arrest. He also admitted a violation of his terms of probation in another case.
On May 19, 2025, Sanchez was taken to the Monterey County Jail for booking following his violation of a protective order. While being held for booking, Sanchez attacked another person in the holding cell, grabbing and punching the victim. The entire incident was captured on surveillance video.
Sanchez faces a maximum sentence of just under three years on all cases.
July 2 — A jury found Valentin Gasca Mendoza, 31, of Salinas, guilty of felony resisting an officer with force or violence, mis-

demeanor resisting an officer, and possession of drug paraphernalia.
On March 29, 2025, Mendoza was tampering with a visibly damaged fence surrounding Alisal Community School in Salinas. School was not in session at the time. Salinas Police Department Officer Ziebell, who was on patrol, observed Mendoza and pulled over to ask him what he was doing. Mendoza admitted to being on school property and having a backpack on the other side of the fence. Officer Ziebell informed Mendoza that he was detained.
Mendoza attempted to walk away and became visibly agitated and aggressive. Ziebell asked Mendoza to stop and sit down. Mendoza approached Ziebell, got in his face, and

See **GAVEL** page 36A



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Complaint paints grim picture of sheriff’s office workplace culture

By KELLY NIX

A FEMALE deputy at the Monterey County Sheriff’s Office alleges that a hostile work environment led to years of sexual harassment and discrimination by a supervisor and others, and that the behavior was sometimes overlooked, made light of and even condoned by top brass, according to a lawsuit she filed last week.

The female employee — who calls herself Jane Doe in the Sept. 5 lawsuit — contends that in 2019, after being promoted to rank of detective, her supervisor, Michael Smith, began sexually harassing her. The behavior, she said, began with him calling her “sweetheart” and “dear,” but escalated to “blatant, severe sexual harassment and overt gender discrimination.”

Smith “routinely objectified and sexualized Doe and spoke about her physical appearance,” according to the 35-page complaint, which adds that he openly mentioned her breasts and genitalia, made vulgar remarks while she was pregnant, and suggested she fondle him. Many of the allegations are too graphic to print.

‘Overt discrimination’

Doe said Smith called her a ‘whore’ and said the language was acceptable “because all women are whores, just some more than others.” While she initially responded to the comments with insults and disgust, she said the harassment continued.

“Doe was concerned that Smith’s inappropriate sexual interest and his sexist and discriminatory attitude would harm her professional development and be a detriment to her career,” she said. “Furthermore,

she was afraid that reporting him would cause severe retaliation and that nothing would change at the sheriff’s office if she did report him.”

In 2020, Doe — who had once been selected “deputy of the year” — said Smith’s wife, Rebecca Smith, a commander at the sheriff’s office, also began harassing her by calling her names, making snide remarks and denying her job advancement opportunities, including a position for which she was the only candidate.

“Doe’s stellar career at the Monterey County Sheriff’s Office was derailed after she became the target of Mike Smith’s desire and then Mike Smith and Rebecca Smith’s hostility,” her complaint says.

‘Condoned’

The lawsuit, filed in Monterey County Superior Court, asserts that the sheriff’s office, which has been led by Tina Nieto since December 2022, and previously by Steve Bernal from 2015 to 2022, fostered a culture that was hostile to female employees because it overlooked “inappropriate behavior by male employees, particularly those highest in the chain of command,” her suit says.

Furthermore, Doe alleges that inappropriate behavior by male employees was often “overlooked, made light of and even condoned,” while complaints against coworkers and superiors were “discouraged and disregarded, and those who complained were often subject to direct and indirect retaliation,” Doe said.

When Doe met with Nieto to discuss

See **HOSTILE** page 23A

Complaints of harassment were ignored, deputy says



CARMEL HERITAGE SOCIETY
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AIA Monterey Bay

31st Annual Carmel House Tour

Wednesday, September 20 • Noon - 4pm

Presented by Carmel Heritage Society and American Institute of Architects Monterey Bay

This year’s tour will feature an exclusive selection of private residences, each with its own story, design inspiration, and connection to the community.

Guests are invited to attend a special fundraiser in support of the event. The evening promises cocktails, delicious bites, and lively company.

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SAVE TARPY FLATS!

HWY 68 CANNOT HANDLE A CATASTROPHIC INCREASE IN DAILY TRAFFIC!

Tarpy Flats is the unspoiled mix of fields and woods across from the airport, running along the south side of HWY 68 from Olmsted Road (where the airport is) to Canyon Del Rey (where Tarpy’s Roadhouse and the 7-11 are). If you commute on HWY 68, you pass it every day.

Do any of us who live on the Monterey Peninsula or in Salinas want to see the traffic on HWY 68 go from bad to worse? Does anybody who commutes daily want to face a far greater burden of traffic congestion than they endure already? And do any of us want the scenic beauty and wildlife habitats of our incredible community to be sacrificed for ill-advised development and personal profit? Once it’s gone, it’s gone forever.

At this very moment developer Bradley Slama, in partnership with the Saucito Land Company, is seeking permits to turn Tarpy Flats into a sprawling housing development. They want to jam as many as up to 1,300 homes, condos, and apartments into this beautiful and irreplaceable wilderness habitat. The Monterey City Council and the Monterey County Supervisors are doing nothing to stop this...in fact, shockingly, they have so far voted in its favor.

Nobody argues against the need for additional housing on the Monterey Peninsula. *But we strongly argue that Tarpy Flats is by far the worst possible place for it.* Here’s why:

Consider: HWY 68 is one lane in each direction. It is the only commuting corridor between the Monterey Peninsula and Salinas. HWY 68 was designed to handle 16,000 vehicles a day. It currently handles about 25,000 vehicles a day. *This proposed development would burden HWY 68 with thousands of more vehicles a day.* (One estimate suggests a total over 30,000 vehicles a day.) This increase would have a disastrous effect on our community’s ability to function, for locals who depend on that commuting corridor and for visitors to the Monterey Peninsula. It would also interfere with access to our airport, interfere with access to medical and other facilities at Ryan Ranch, and severely impede needed emergency and other services along Hwy 68.

Consider: The HWY 68 corridor is at severe risk from wildfires. Adding any housing development along 68 will only increase that risk to potentially catastrophic levels. Again, consider thousands of extra cars in this area. If an evacuation is called for due to wildfire, do we want to see traffic absolutely gridlocked with cars trying to leave the danger zone as happened in Southern California recently, where countless cars were abandoned to burn and then became a significant obstacle to fire trucks and other emergency vehicles seeking access to the fire areas?

Consider: There is no infrastructure for such a development. No existing utilities. No sewer infrastructure. Even worse, *there is no water for any development of Tarpy Flats, let alone a possible 1,300 dwellings.* We all know that water access is a serious issue on the Monterey Peninsula, it is the most precious diminishing resource we have. Where do these developers and our local government officials expect the water to come from?

Consider: The Tarpy Flats site fails to meet California’s own guidelines for RHNA (Regional Housing Needs Assessment) use. Development would violate Federal regulations protecting land such as this. Yet these developers are still trying to push this plan through, and our local government representatives are helping!

Consider: Tarpy Flats is an unspoiled nature habitat. Wildlife of all sorts depend upon it for their very existence. Anybody who cares about our local wildlife and the irreplaceable natural beauty of this incredible community we are all blessed to call home will surely agree that developing this land would be a tragic and disastrous mistake.

IF YOU AGREE, PLEASE MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD:

- 1 Go to our website **SaveTarpyFlats.org** and sign our petition. Add your name to the growing list of local residents who demand that Tarpy Flats be permanently removed from consideration for any future development. This land should be deeded in its entirety to the Big Sur Land Trust and officially designated a protected wildlife sanctuary. Our website will also give you more detailed information about Tarpy Flats, the disastrous effects of any proposed development, and the legal battle we’re facing to stop it.
- 2 Write polite but firm letters to local and State government representatives voicing your opposition to any development of Tarpy Flats. Our website will provide those names and addresses. Hold them responsible!
- 3 DONATE! We need your help to pay necessary legal expenses to fight this development. So far only a handful of local families have contributed financially. Now we need everyone’s help in order to succeed.

THANK YOU ALL for listening and considering our position.

TOUR OF NOTEWORTHY HOUSES OFFERS TAKES YOU BEHIND CLOSED DOORS

By MARY SCHLEY

THE CARMEL Heritage Society and the Monterey Bay Chapter of the American Institute of Architects are collaborating on the 31st Annual Carmel House Tour, a key fundraiser for both organizations, on Sept. 20, with six stops on the list.

The self-guided journey runs from noon to 4 p.m., with a reception at the heritage society’s headquarters, the First Murphy House at Lincoln and Sixth, from 3 to 5 p.m. First Murphy will also be the site for ticket sales the day of the tour.

Old and new

■ Banyan House — the first Carmel home designed by architect Mark Mills, who apprenticed under Frank Lloyd Wright from 1944 to 1948 — was financed by Della Walker, who commissioned Wright to build her Scenic Road home known as Cabin on the Rocks. Mills lived in the home, which was bought by his father, from 1954 to 1957.

The AIA describes it as “a significant example of Wrightian principles of organic architecture combining the use of ‘desert masonry’ with local building materials.”

“Mills’ imaginative skill at successfully integrating such an abstract plan comfortably into its landscape setting is in keeping

with the Carmel tradition,” organizers say. “With gorgeous woodwork and interesting details around every corner, this architectural innovation is a work of art.”

■ Pine Gates is described as “a charming chalet-style cottage” that was built around 1929 and first served as the site of Ella’s Southern Kitchen, a restaurant in the business district. The building was reportedly moved intact to its site in 1941 by using logs to roll it up the hill “from the heart of downtown Carmel.”

“As you step inside, imagine the cottage’s former life as a bustling eatery. Today, it showcases an eclectic collection of art and personal treasures — including playful nods to Santa Claus,” the AIA says. “The owner, a longtime Carmel resident, has brought joy to many holiday events in full Santa attire and has even authored a book about his experiences as the jolly figure.”

■ Skysweep, built in 1946, with a guesthouse and an art studio added later, sits on a 1.6-acre property with sweeping views of Point Lobos, Carmel Bay and the Santa Lucia Mountains. Landscape architect Bernard Trainor and his family remodeled the house and created a new garden — of course — and the property is a work in progress, tapping into the skills of local artisans and builders.



PHOTO/COURTESY AIA

(Clockwise from top left) The Carmel House Tour includes the city’s first brick house, thoughtfully restored and expanded; Mark Mills’ inaugural Carmel effort; Vista Lobos, a contemporary Dyar Architecture project; and Pine Gates, which was a restaurant in its early life.

The garden was designed to showcase “climate-appropriate planting and hard-scape materials,” includes “research and development opportunities that inform

other landscape design,” and is inspired by Trainor’s fine art.

See **TOUR** page 30A

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Scenic sewer replacement to start

By MARY SCHLEY

THE CARMEL Area Wastewater District will begin replacing nearly eight-decade-old sewer lines on Scenic Road and on Carmel Point at the end of this month, and the work is expected to run through next summer. The project calls for installing 2 miles of new line and will cost around \$5 million, and while the work will require intermittent road closures, district officials promised the Carmel City Council in March that pedestrian access along the beachfront footpath would not be impeded.

Crews will start near Carmel Mission at Dolores Street and Lasuen Drive, initially surveying the lines and using closed-circuit video cameras to assess their condition, according to the sewer district, which is paying for the work with money collected on property tax bills. While some trenching will be required, most of the replacement will be accomplished through a process called pipe-bursting in which the old clay pipe is expanded or broken in place as a high-density plastic liner — which the district described as “semi-flexible but nearly indestructible” — is inserted and pulled through.

Won’t be so bad

The work on the busy beachside road between Eighth and 13th avenues is scheduled to be underway during the slower season, January and February 2026, with a break for the AT&T Pebble Beach Pro-Am, according to CAWD.

People will be able to walk along the pathway — a condition required in the permit and environmental study — and full closures of the road will be avoided whenever possible. Regardless, residents will still be able to get to and leave their homes, and work will be done a block at a time.

The city’s public works project manager, Javier Hernandez, worked with CAWD to develop more than 50 special conditions of approval for the required

encroachment permit “to minimize impacts to the community before, during and after construction.”

Key among them are a \$5 million insurance policy to cover any damage to private property, robust public outreach, a 24/7 hotline for concerns, and coordination with emergency services, trash pickup and package delivery companies to provide access during construction.

Replacing the lines will require 235 lateral reconnections, and residents will be asked not to flush their toilets or use their sinks or showers when that particular work is being done, for obvious reasons.

Community meeting

Meanwhile, the replacement of sewer lines and laterals in the northeast area of Carmel that got underway in July continues, with completion expected toward the end of October and road resurfacing to follow. “There will be a couple of months of overlap for the two projects,” a CAWD spokesman said this week.

The work is part of a multiyear, \$75 million effort to overhaul the system.

“Our board of directors and staff have been preparing for the start of this project for several years,” board president and former Carmel Mayor Ken White said in a statement Wednesday. “This section of Carmel is special to residents and visitors, and it’s important that the current 75-year-old sewer mains be replaced to greatly reduce or eliminate leaks and spills while increasing the effectiveness of this vital public service.”

The roads will be resurfaced after the new lines are installed.

Residents will be informed through mail, email and doorhangers of the exact dates of street closures, and a community meeting will be held at The Carmel Foundation at Lincoln and Eighth on Oct. 15 at 5:30 p.m. in person and via Zoom.

More information can be found at cawd.org/scenic-road-pipeline-replacement.

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Council OKs ambulance contract with Monterey

By MARY SCHLEY

THE CARMEL City Council on Tuesday approved a five-year contract with Monterey to take over its ambulance service starting Oct. 1. The deal, which the Monterey City Council OK'd in June, adds staffing and managing the ambulance — which will remain in the Sixth Avenue firehouse — to Monterey's public safety responsibilities. Carmel has contracted with Monterey for fire service



PHOTO/COURTESY CITY OF MONTEREY

Carmel Fire Ambulance firefighter-paramedic Matt Nitenson (left) and Monterey firefighter Ross Pounds are ready to join forces in running Carmel's ambulance.

since 2012. Throwing the ambulance into the mix brings the total estimated cost to \$5,557,952 per year, according to the budget presented to the council Sept. 9. Of that, ambulance services are expected to run \$2,140,068, most of it spent on staffing. It also includes a 16 percent fee of \$295,182 to help offset indirect administration costs, including fire administration personnel, human resources, finance/payroll, risk, and other administrative services.

No more worries

In addition, the agreement outlines the process for shifting the ambulance workers from Carmel's payroll to Monterey's, and at the end of each year, a reconciliation will be done to assure neither city is bearing more of the costs than it should. Carmel will retain control of its 911

dispatching and ambulance billing. "We'll have 24/7 service. We don't have to worry about staffing issues anymore," assistant city administrator Brandon Swanson said. "The ambulance still lives in our firehouse," and the workers who staff it will remain "the people you know and trust."

"We're going to get even better service than we had before," he said. In response to sky-high overtime costs and chronic understaffing that had taken the ambulance out of service for 30 days during a 12-month period — which threatened the city's rights to operate it — the Carmel council in May unanimously decided that Monterey should take charge.

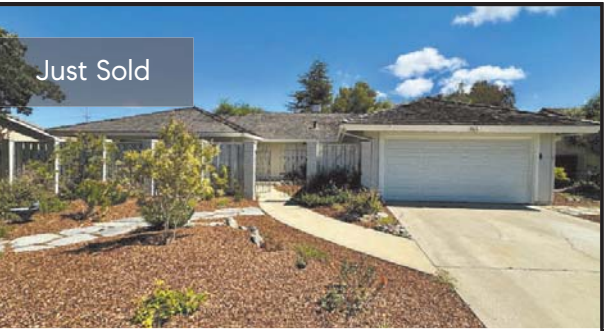
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A man with a beard and glasses, wearing an orange hoodie, is smiling and holding the handlebars of a bicycle. A young child wearing a white helmet and an orange hoodie is sitting on the bicycle, also smiling. They are outdoors on a grassy area.

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There’s a lot of public land people can’t visit at Palo Corona, new state park

By CHRIS COUNTS

A LOCAL hiker, Susi Diallo of Salinas, wants to know why the backcountry of Palo Corona Regional Park — which totals 3,800 acres — isn’t open to the public. Purchased more than two decades ago by taxpayers as part of a \$32 million deal, the land has been mostly off-limits since. Only a limited number of guided group hikes are offered.

Diallo recently joined one of the group hikes and was astonished by what she saw.

“I was truly amazed and actually shocked to discover just how much more public land exists beyond what’s currently accessible,” she wrote in a letter to the Monterey Peninsula Regional Park District, which owns and manages the park. “There were huge redwoods, majestic fairy rings, thriving native plants, a vibrant creek and more — all cared for by your agency but, for the most part, closed off to the public.”

Diallo, who also voiced her concerns at the park district’s Sept. 3 board meeting, wants to visit the Palo Corona backcountry, but she wants to go solo, which currently she isn’t allowed to do. She insists she’s a responsible hiker.

“I want to go by myself,” she told The Pine Cone. “Some people enjoy solitude. I should be able to do that. Let me ramble back there and be on the edge of something wild.”

Solo permits considered

In response, general manager Eric Morgan said the park district is “open to considering” allowing solo hikers to obtain permits to access the backcountry. “I think it’s not too far off,” he said.

But Morgan said the park district has no immediate plans to open up the backcountry of Palo Corona to general day use, mostly because its staff and resources are tied up in completing the ambitious Rancho Cañada Floodplain Restoration Project. The \$37 million effort involves converting 40 acres of a former golf course into a riparian habitat, excavating 650,000 cubic yards of sediment, planting 175,000 native plants and creating a slew of trails. The effort is expected to take another two years to complete. He described it as “the largest restoration project” in the park district’s history.

Once the floodplain project is done, “phased access” to Palo Corona’s “remote regions” can start, Morgan said. But he

also noted that before the Palo Corona backcountry can be opened to general day use, “a whole lot of permitting still needs to happen.”

The general manager also cited the risk of wildlife as a major concern, also, there are few places on Earth where homes are so valuable and the threat of them burning down is so high. “Neighbors are notably very worried about public access contributing to the wildfire hazards,” he explained.

If you’re interested in joining a guided group hike to the Palo Corona backcountry, the next opportunity Oct. 31 at 9 a.m. You can find details about it at mprpd.org/let-s-go-outdoors-upcoming-events.

Also offering group hikes of the Palo Corona backcountry is the Big Sur Land Trust, although none are scheduled in the next couple months. The tours are led by volunteers and introduce people to many issues involved in preserving parkland and using it responsibly.

Telling a story

“We do tours with elected officials so we can tell the story of how this landscape has been conserved and protected as a public benefit,” land trust president Jeannette Tuitele-Lewis said. “We’re responsible for everyone who’s out there that day — the tours provide the opportunity for people to enjoy these spaces.”

The local group played a huge role in the creation of Palo Corona by bringing all the stakeholders together and partnering with Nature Conservancy to raise the money to buy the land. “It was the largest conservation deal in the county’s history,” Tuitele-Lewis noted.



PHOTO/BRADLEY DUNBAUGH

A Big Sur Land Trust-led group hike meanders through a field of poppies in Ishxenta State Park, formerly known as Point Lobos Ranch.

While Diallo’s comments were directed at Palo Corona Regional Park, nearby, 1,300-acre Ishxenta State Park, formerly known as Point Lobos Ranch, also isn’t fully open to the public — more than two decades after it was bought with public money.

The land for the park was acquired by the Big Sur Land Trust in 1993 and later sold to California State Parks for \$4 million, which was funded by the taxpayers with \$3 million from Proposition 117 and a \$1 million grant from the California Coastal Conservancy.

But aside from periodic guided group hikes, the park isn’t open to the public, and it could be a while before it is.

State Parks still hasn’t determined if the park will be the site of a parking lot — the idea has previously been discussed. A plan, created by Cal Poly students decades ago, envisioned a tunnel running underneath Highway 1 that connects the parking lot with the park to the west.

According to California State Parks

See **LAND** page 19A



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Horse-drawn carriages draw complaint

By CHRIS COUNTS

AFTER A complaint was made by a horse enthusiast about people driving horse-drawn carriages along a mile-long stretch of the River Trail in Garland Ranch Regional Park, carriage drivers showed up at the Sept. 3 Monterey Peninsula Regional Park District board meeting to defend their activity.

Members of the nearby Carmel Valley Trail & Saddle Club, only three of the riders regularly drive their carriages in the park. But their arguments must have been pretty persuasive, because by the end of the hearing, board member Monta Potter — who represents the district where the trail is located — raised the idea of officially enshrining carriage-riding as an allowed use.

The equestrian who made the complaint didn’t attend the hearing. But according to supervising ranger Cane Camarillo, the

rider had safety concerns about the carriage drivers.

“The complainant suggested that the width of horse-drawn carriages created a hazard when passing fellow equestrian riders,” Camarillo said. “Further, the individual suggested that the size of horse-drawn carriages may frighten saddled equine, potentially creating a hazard for their riders.”

Sharing the trail

A carriage-riding enthusiast, Judy Leavelle urged the board to preserve the activity, which has become a passion for the few who engage in it.

“With all the trails that the park has available to everybody, the River Trail is the only trail we have ever used because it is wide enough for folks to pass, has a long range of visibility, is short and has no steep hills,” Leavelle wrote in a letter. “Please work out a compromise that will allow us to share this trail like we have been for so many years.”

Leavelle also spoke during Wednesday’s hearing. “We have been driving in the park for many, many years, always displaying outstanding trail etiquette and manners toward all other trail users,” she told the board.

Ultimately, the board didn’t vote on the future of the activity but instead directed the park district’s staff to investigate the equestrian’s concerns and make a recommendation, but only if it is necessary. Signage will also be considered.

Board member Kathleen Lee told The Pine Cone that she wasn’t aware of any problems regarding carriage use until the recent complaint. “We haven’t had any negative interactions,” Lee said.

Camarillo also spoke at the meeting but didn’t offer a recommendation. “We want to speak to our park users to determine what their level of comfort is” with carriage riding in the park, he added.



PHOTO/COURTESY JUDY LEAVELLE

Judy Leavelle drives her carriage along River Road at Garland Ranch Regional Park.

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Roundabout shortcuts only for locals

By CHRIS COUNTS

AFTER complaints from residents about motorists who are cutting through their neighborhood to avoid traffic delays caused by the construction of a roundabout at Carmel Valley Road and Laureles Grade, Monterey County officials have posted signs temporarily closing Miramonte and Los Robles roads to all but residents of the immediate area and people who are working or making deliveries on those streets.

According to Monterey County Public Works Chief Enrique Saavedra, the two residential streets are not designed for through traffic. “These specific roads were closed because people were using these narrow roads to avoid the construction site, and these roads are not designed for that,” he explained.

In one case, a large truck taking the shortcut hit some low-hanging tree limbs.

Resident Jim King told The Pine Cone that some drivers are ignoring the signs. King estimated that the detour saves each motorist about seven minutes. He noted that traffic has never been this heavy along Miramonte Road.

Driveway block

“On a road that usually has 90 cars in one or two days, the county counted 90 in 30 minutes between 4 and 5 p.m.,” King said. “My home is on the corner, and during that time I have to wait in line to turn into my driveway.”

King suggested that allowing so much traffic on such a narrow residential road is dangerous. He would like to see the

scofflaws cited. “This is upsetting to Miramonte residents with constant car traffic ignoring the law,” he added.

The closure of the two roads marks the latest effort by the county to move traffic past the construction site more efficiently. After work began in late June, motorists soon complained about lengthy delays at the intersection. In response, county workers made changes to the timing intervals for the light that regulates traffic at the site. Other improvements, such as a dedicated left-turn lane for motorists driving westbound along Carmel Valley Road, are also being explored.

Former county supervisor Mary Adams raised the idea of building a roundabout at the site in 2022 to address safety concerns. While some argued the worries were overblown, others noted that “a three-axle truck hauling a load of sod and a forklift” lost control and crashed — as did a cement truck that lost its brakes in 2004.

Done before March?

Construction on the roundabout began in late June. It’s expected to cost taxpayers about \$3.8 million, with the money coming from Carmel Valley traffic mitigation fees, a grant from Monterey Bay Air Resources District and Measure X funds.

Monterey County 5th District Supervisor Kate Daniels, meanwhile, suggested the job could be finished earlier than anticipated. “Hopefully, it won’t it take until March,” she added.

The contractor is Teichert Construction of Pleasanton.

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PANETTA CO-AUTHORS BILL TO BOOST POPULATION OF ICONIC BUTTERFLIES

By CHRIS COUNTS

As A \$125 million bill co-authored by Congressman Jimmy Panetta to help boost the population of monarch butterflies moves forward, the Santa Lucia Conservancy — which manages 18,000 acres just southeast of Carmel — is urging people to support the legislation.

“If passed, this would direct \$62.5 million over five years toward restoring native milkweed and protecting the vital overwintering sites that endangered monarchs rely upon,” said the reserve’s executive director, Jamison Watts. “This proposed federal action offers a large-scale, long-term commitment to monarch recovery — and an encouraging signal of growing support for pollinator conservation.”

Restoring habitat

Last fall — to create better conditions for monarchs — the conservancy planted about 3,000 native milkweed seedlings, along with a new 5,000-gallon water tank to support the effort. “This infrastructure ensures our seedlings, and other pollinators, have the moisture and nectar they need to flourish,” Watts added.

Besides restoring milkweed, the bill would provide \$62.5 million from U.S. taxpayers for the implementation of the Western Monarch Butterfly Conservation Plan, which was created in 2019.

After a similar bill he co-authored in 2023 didn’t move forward, Panetta

developed the Monarch Act of 2025, which was introduced in June. The bill is shared by Rep. Salud Carbajal of Santa Barbara and Sen. Jeff Merkley of Oregon.

According to monarch advocates, the population of the iconic orange and black butterfly is facing a steep decline. They report that the entire population of western monarch butterflies reached its second lowest tally ever in 2024, with less than



PHOTO/SUSAN LAMBERT

A bill co-authored by Democratic Rep. Jimmy Panetta is aimed at increasing Monarch habitat.

10,000 butterflies recorded.

“Since the 1980s, the population of the western monarch has plummeted by over 99 percent, with only 9,119 butterflies recorded across 256 sites during the 2024 overwintering season,” according to Panetta’s office. “Despite community efforts,

See **BUTTERFLIES** page 30A



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Poison blamed for turning wild pigs blue

By CHRIS COUNTS

THE WIDESPREAD use of poison to kill rats has taken a toll on wildlife, including bobcats, coyotes and mountain lions. But can the poison, which is generally used on rodents, turn wild pigs blue? Apparently, yes.

The blue pigs have been found in the Salinas River corridor south of Soledad and east toward the foothills of the Gabilan Range.

“In March, I responded to several reports of wild pigs with abnormal, blue-colored flesh,” reported Zach Mills, a biologist with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife who works in Monterey County. “Those reports first came from an urban trapper, but I also had reports from hunters in the same general area.”

Later that month, testing of a wild pig carcass at the UC Davis laboratory confirmed it had been poisoned with diphacinone, a rodenticide. It was found in the animal’s stomach and liver.

“As part of the investigation at UC Davis, tissue samples were analyzed for eight different agents commonly used in rodenticides,” Mills explained. “Diphacinone was the only contaminant of concern that was identified.”

It’s not surprising wild pigs have ingested the poison — they’re known for eating just about anything, and there’s

an all-out effort to cull their numbers due to the massive damage they inflict on agriculture. “Unfortunately, rodenticides sometimes spill over into non-targeted wildlife like carnivores, raptors and scavengers that may consume the poisoned bait directly, which is the case with the wild pigs,” he explained.

Blue like blueberries

Wild pigs aren’t just turning slightly blue — they’re turning a “shockingly bright” shade of blue, Mills said, comparing the color to the shade of blueberries. Under no circumstances should people eat blue pigs.

“Commercial rodenticides are formulated with dyes which are usually blue or green to clearly mark both the bait, and the affected tissue,” he said. “That should be a clear signal to the harvester that meat should not be consumed.”

Mills asked that anyone who encounters a blue wild pig report it to state fish and wildlife. He also urged people to “deploy rodenticides safely, responsibly and only in alignment with local guidelines and regulations.” He expressed concerns that some users aren’t doing this. “Proper use helps prevent unintended exposure of non-targeted species, including wildlife and game animals, while still supporting rodent management objectives,” he added.

A STEAK FEAST FOR A GREAT CAUSE

By LILY PATTERSON

TICKETS ARE available for this Saturday’s fundraiser barbecue in memory of Ross Tarp-Braasch, a young Salinas native whose mechanical skills and passion for off-road adventures inspired his grandparents, Brad and Rosemary Tarp, to establish Live for Ross: A Fund for Safety Awareness and Vocational Education.

A steak lunch, wine & beer tasting, an auction and live music will take place on Saturday, Sept. 13, 1-5 p.m., at the Monterey County Swiss Rifle Club. The Tarps are grateful to the historic club for offering their outdoor space at 34241 Gloria Road in Gonzales.

Since 2022, the memorial fund has donated hundreds of dollars in safety gear and awarded over \$15,000 to aspiring tradesmen and women throughout south Monterey County, several who graduated from the same welding



PHOTO/COURTESY ROSEMARY TARP

At 25 years old, Ross Tarp-Braasch was a well-known help to his valley community — as well as an avid dirtbiker, pictured here on his family’s ranch.

programs at Salinas Union High and Mission Trails ROP that benefited Ross in his short lifetime. The Tarps have also donated helmets and other protective equipment to local skateboard and bike parks.

The ultimate aim of their nonprofit is to partner with all Monterey County technical schools to award scholarships — \$500 to Barnes Welding Supply in Salinas, for tools and safety equipment — to as many deserving students as possible, in tribute to their grandson’s spirit.

Helping hands

Ross was 25 when he died on April 16, 2022, by that time a talented and prolific welder and mechanic. Yet his family had no idea what he was capable of, until they organized a celebration of his life just weeks after the fatal car crash.

“Three-hundred people showed up and shared stories we didn’t even know about. We found out Ross would go and help people late at night, after work. He was always tired, so that explained a lot,” said Rosemary of her grandson — who, when he wasn’t repairing fences and trucks, loved to ride dirtbikes with friends on the property he helped his family maintain, Pine Canyon Ranch.

“He was always willing to help you, whether it was 2 a.m. or noon on a Saturday. That mindset, being so open to work on whatever, whenever, has helped me throughout my career,” said Jack Freese, a professional racecar mechanic and one of Tarp’s childhood friends, who helped his family create a 40-minute road-safety documentary available on liveforross.org.

Visit that website to learn more. There, you’ll also find a link to buy tickets for the fundraiser, which are \$55, on eventbrite.com.

‘Power of Language’

PINE CONE STAFF REPORT

THE LIVES of Alice MacGowan and her sister, Grace MacGowan Cook, will be the topic of a talk hosted by the Carmel Public Library Foundation in Carpenter Hall at Sunset Center Sept. 17 at 7 p.m. The sisters were “two professional writers who played a key role in establishing the artists’ colony and enriching the cultural fabric of Carmel-by-the-Sea,” according to the foundation, and the talk is the first in the latest Henry Meade Williams Local History Lecture Series, which is titled “The Power of Language.”

Author and journalist Joy Lanzendorfer will discuss the sisters’ arrival in 1908 “and their unerring work ethic and willingness to collaborate,” which “put them among the most successful novelists in the area.” The duo proved themselves as writers even as they “survived failed marriages, burning buildings, and even an attempted murder.”

Visit carmelpubliclibraryfoundation.org. Carpenter Hall is located at Sunset and Ninth.



Thinking ahead to the Holidays?



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WHO'S WHO IN LUXURY REAL ESTATE

FOUR PLAYS FOR ONE PRICE

By CHRIS COUNTS

SERVING UP four one-act comedies in one evening, Soapbox Stageworks kicks off a run of “September Sizzlers” Thursday, 7 p.m., at the Carl Cherry Center for the Arts.

“We are so excited to present these four incredible, spicy and diverse plays,” announced the theater company.

First up is “Amusing Willie” by Donald Loftus, which offers “a clever interpretation of the creative writing process and its surprising collaborators.”

Next is “Ramifications” by Alex Bernstein, “where a young man seeks direction from an unusual source.”

The third play is “Rubbish” by Earl Crittendon, which is set at a rummage sale, where the story “spirals into a hilarious yet thought-provoking tug-of-war over history, legacy, and identity.” The last play is “Maltese Monkey” by Margie Semilof, which delves into a legal battle between two warring adult children over a precious family jewel.

“September Sizzlers” returns to the Cherry Center Sept. 19-20 and Sept. 26-27. Showtime is 7 p.m.

The cast includes Karen Devaney — who directs two of the plays — Martha Wingfield, Eva Sonette, Emily Evers, Gilbert Wright, Carlos Melendez, Toby Rowland Jones, Mike Polyard, Nick Villareal, Tom Cohen and Jonathan Bangs.

Devaney founded Soapbox Stageworks 14 years ago in Philadelphia. Three years ago, she moved the theater company to Carmel with the goal of establishing “a brick-and-mortar” home here — along with bringing “diverse audiences together to explore and experience the magic of theater.” “Soapbox Stageworks is a thriving local theatre company that believes our passion for diverse storytelling will ultimately give us deeper understanding of our world and others,” she added.

Tickets are \$35. The Cherry Center is located at Fourth and Guadalupe. For tickets, visit soapboxstageworks.org.

Big Sur crowns softball champs



For the 24th time since official play began in 1976, the Outlaws were crowned champions of Big Sur Softball Aug. 26 after sweeping the Grangers in a doubleheader at Pfeiffer-Big Sur State Park.



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CHARGES

From page 1A

The circumstances bear striking similarities: Women told police and ombudsmen that Lumbi fondled, kissed, digitally penetrated them and committed other inappropriate acts. Lumbi denied wrongdoing, and the cases, investigated by those cities’ police departments, were closed due to “insufficient evidence.”

The absence of criminal charges and any public record of the allegations allowed the caregiver to continue working with elderly patients, some of whom had Alzheimer’s disease and other age-related mental health challenges.

The 12-page document that Bonta’s office filed Sept. 4 in Monterey County Superior Court requesting that Lumbi be kept behind bars until his trial contains

chilling accounts from the three women he was entrusted to care for.

On March 15, 2024, a Pacific Grove patient with a history of stroke, seizures and heart failure, was rushed to Community Hospital of the Monterey Peninsula after she had “acted erratically” toward a caregiver and showed signs of an “altered mental state.”

“Upon arrival, hospital staff obtained a urine analysis which showed signs of seminal fluid,” the AG’s office said. “Hospital staff called Forest Hill and learned that she was not sexually active and did not have male visitors.”

DNA tests

Suspecting she’d been assaulted, the hospital that night reported the results of the test to Monterey County Adult Protective Services and Pacific Grove Police. However, the first of two urine samples containing semen was destroyed by

hospital staff before police could collect it.

An officer who interviewed the woman said she reported that she had been “physically attacked by two men days earlier” and that “they bit her right breast and choked and punched her.” The resident, who had bruising and cuts on various parts of her body, also suffered from dementia and was intermittently confused, police noted.

A detective who determined later that Lumbi had been on duty the days before the woman was taken to the hospital asked six male Forest Hill workers to voluntarily provide a sample of their DNA to rule them out as suspects. Only two of the employees agreed.

In late May 2024, the California Department of Justice obtained a search warrant for a sample of Lumbi’s DNA. The results, according to a senior criminalist with the agency, “provided very strong support that he is a contributor to the DNA mixtures that were previously detected for the vulvar, perianal and vestibular swabs. Semen was detected on each of the swabs.”

Last month, special agents with the state Division of Medi-Cal Fraud and Elder Abuse arrested Lumbi, who waived his Miranda rights. At the time, he was working at Cypress Ridge Care Center.

“The agents presented a ruse that Lumbi’s DNA was located inside the woman’s vagina,” the AG’s office said.

Lumbi denied penetrating the woman but “admitted seeing her naked and becoming aroused.” He also claimed that she “touched his groin area” and leaned back at the edge of her bed with her legs up, to suggest she was interested in having sex with him, the attorney general said.

Lumbi said that while he thought about having sexual intercourse with her, he decided instead to fondle himself. His semen, he claimed, “landed on” the elderly woman’s vagina.

On July 10, 2024, Pacific Grove Police launched an investigation after a woman, who did not have memory or mental health issues, reported that a caregiver matching Lumbi’s description penetrated her private parts with his fingers “in a rough

manner,” three days prior, the AG’s office said. However, Lumbi told the officer that he “slightly penetrated” the woman while cleaning her.

On July 30, 2024, P.G. Police investigated a complaint against a caregiver matching Lumbi’s description. The female Forest Hill woman, who also did not have mental health or memory issues, told police that the man massaged her legs before providing perianal care. She also said he moved “his hands higher” to her inner thighs, which made her feel uncomfortable and her body. The caregiver ended the massage.

“Facility staff told the officer that massages were normally provided by masseuses and not CNAs,” the AG’s office said.

Pacific Grove Police did not question Lumbi, according to the AG’s office, which does not speculate why officers did not interview him.

Helped father

While Lumbi did not have any previous criminal convictions, the attorney general said there is a record for an October 2016 arrest, detention and citation by Monterey Police for “sexual penetration with force.” Like the other cases, it was dismissed for lack of sufficient evidence.

As of Sept. 3, the state Department of Public Health listed Lumbi’s nursing assistant certificate as “suspended, not employable.”

His father, Paul Nganda Lumbi, is listed as a licensee and administrator at Green Pines Residential Care Home, a facility in Salinas licensed to provide care for six elderly patients, where the younger Lumbi and his sister had recently worked to help their father, who had been hospitalized, the attorney general said.

Lumbi also faces numerous special allegations, which could mean greater penalties if he’s convicted, including violent crime on the vulnerable, having multiple victims, use of force, violence, duress, menace and fear of immediate and unlawful boldly injury on one of his victims.



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we will remember 9/11 and the freedom we defend.
America, America, God shed His grace on thee.
And crown thy good with brotherhood and our Sweet Liberty.*

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ACCESS

From page 1A

see Laird’s effort defeated.

“I am heartened that SB 577 will not be advancing this year,” Addis said Wednesday. “While the bill sought to balance the needs of institutions and survivors, it unfortunately would have had reverberating consequences for survivors of sexual assault.”

Avalanche of abuse cases

California schools are facing an avalanche of sex abuse claims, and Laird’s bill was an attempt at a legislative fix.

The claims stem not from Addis’ legislation, but from a bill enacted in 2020. AB 218 established a three-year “lookback window” eliminating the statute of limitations for sex abuse cases, letting victims sue for damages no matter when the abuse happened.

According to a state report, at least 1,000 lawsuits have been filed since AB 218 became law, seeking about \$3 billion from school districts across California. Jury verdicts and settlements requiring public schools to fork over tens of millions of dollars have also led to skyrocketing insurance premiums for districts. The payouts have pushed some districts into insolvency and forced them to cut programs to pay for past misconduct.

Laird wrote SB 577 in the hopes of easing these financial burdens, but he failed to bring his Monterey Peninsula counterpart on board.

Because of the high number of lawsuits filed, Addis said she can understand why some lawmakers may regret voting for AB 218, but her ire over Laird’s legislation was rooted in how his bill would have undermined her legislation, the Justice for Victims Act.

While AB 218 dealt with cases of the past, Addis’ law provided protections for the future. Her law eliminated the statute of limitations for sex abuse cases beginning in 2024 — meaning anyone who was a minor on Jan. 1, 2024, and was abused could file a case at any point during

LAND

From page 12A

maintenance chief John Hiles, his agency has no immediate plans to open the park, in part because it is focused on establishing a shuttle and reservation system for Point Lobos State Reserve. Plans for the system have been submitted to Monterey County.

“Once we get the shuttle up and running, we will be able to focus more on access issues and the feasibility of ideas we’ve discussed,” he explained.

Hiles said it’s not practical to open the park yet because more planning needs to be done. “We want to avoid creating additional congestion and traffic hazards along the highway, and avoid degrading our cultural and natural resources, which are significant,” he explained.

Guided hikes

If hikers want to visit the park, they’ll have to join a guided hike.

“We offer public tours throughout the month,” Hiles said. “Some are free, and some have a small fee.”

A free 3-mile guided hike along the park’s San Jose Creek is planned for Sept. 20 at 9:30 a.m. The trek will be led by state parks staff. The same hike will be done Oct. 17 and Nov. 15 at the same time. “It’s very beautiful in the springtime,” Saunders added. “The wildflowers will knock your socks off.”

To participate in group hikes or other activities at Palo Corona and Ishxenta parks, visit mprpd.org/let-s-go-outdoors-upcoming-events.

their lifetime, regardless of their age or date of the crime.

“While we may need to talk about damages to schools, it is absolutely unethical to fix it on the backs of survivors into the future,” said Addis about Laird’s bill, which would have reinstated a statute of limitations for people over 40, requiring them to provide a certificate of merit — a document that certifies a qualified expert has reviewed the facts and concluded the case has a valid basis — the same day they file a claim.

SB 577 would have also increased the legal standards from negligence to gross negligence for public institutions that failed to protect the children in their care.

“The gross negligence standard makes it substantially more difficult for older survivors to hold public institutions accountable, effectively creating protection for defendants at the expense of justice,” wrote San Luis Obispo County District Attorney Dan Dow in an op-ed this week.

Dow also submitted a formal letter of opposition to Laird’s bill, alongside a number of survivors’ rights groups.

Long waits for claims

Coming forward to report abuse that occurred during childhood often takes people decades. According to Child USA, more than half of survivors first disclose their abuse at age 50 or older, making the changes in Laird’s bill unacceptable to many survivor groups.

“It is particularly unfair to older survivors, those who

were abused decades ago, who may face additional barriers to coming forward, especially after being dismissed or disbelieved by institutions,” said Lumina Foundation chief executive, Jennifer Adams.

The tabling of SB 577 leaves many school districts and public entities worrying about how to pay for damages in sex abuse cases. In addition to making it harder to file lawsuits, the bill would have also made it easier for districts to sell bonds to pay off settlements, but would not have capped attorneys fees or settlements for victims.

The bill had the support of the counties of Los Angeles and Monterey, and the California Alliance for Children and Family Services.

In addition to targeting school districts, many of the cases cleared to advance under AB 218 were aimed at youth detention facilities, leaving counties on the hook to pay settlements as well.

The Alliance, a lobbying group, said mounting liability exposure threatens public entities’ ability to fund core services and risks contracts with organizations like itself.

“Without this bill and others like it, rising liability risks could lead to reduced service availability, workforce cuts or contract terminations,” the group said.

SB 577 is one of many bills that failed to cross the finish line in Sacramento this week. Laird said he is holding out hope he’ll be able to find a better balance between financial relief for public institutions and protecting the rights of survivors in the next legislative session.

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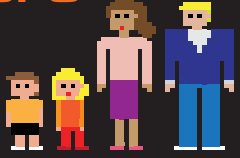
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Recusals demanded in Pastor battle

■ Byrne lashes out

By MARY SCHLEY

WHILE CARMEL City Councilman Bob Delves opted to recuse himself from the hearings in August and this month involving Patrice Pastor’s project at Dolores and Seventh, citing a campaign donation from restaurateur and appellant Rich Pepe that exceeded \$500, Mayor Dale Byrne was told by the city attorney that he, too, should step down because 18 months ago Pastor gave a sizable donation to the nonprofit Byrne founded, Carmel Cares.

Meanwhile, Pastor’s attorney, Jeremiah Reynolds, demanded that Byrne be reinstated and that councilman Hans Buder and councilwoman Alissandra Dramov be forced to step down — Buder because of his “self-determination that he should recuse and his known conflicts of interest, including with respect to his advocacy for affordable housing on sites in competition with Esperanza Carmel,” and Dramov “because of her prior advocacy against the JB Pastor project and her bias against Esperanza Carmel.”

In August, Buder explained that he, too, had been given a generous campaign event by Pepe but that he’d returned enough money to eliminate the conflict. He had planned to recuse himself anyway, he said, but after city attorney Brian Pierik advised Byrne to step down, he stayed so the council would have a quorum.

Pierik also supported Dramov’s decision to remain at the dais.

‘Weaponizing’ service

At the Sept. 8 special meeting, before leaving the room, Byrne lashed out at Pastor’s opponents and their attorney for demanding his recusal.

“Friends of mine, who know I am an ethical and fair person because I have

served with them on city workgroups, have assisted them in solving their longstanding neighborhood water incursion issues, and have frequented their retail store for years, have sought to disparage me and petition for my recusal in this matter,” he said in a statement. “The reason? My unpaid role as a volunteer executive director of Carmel Cares and a donation Esperanza Carmel made to that 501(c)3 nonprofit a year-and-a-half ago — long before I ever considered running for mayor.”

When someone supports Carmel Cares and its “mission to keep our village beautiful, safe, and inviting, they are supporting Carmel itself,” he continued. “Yet suddenly, a charitable gift aimed at improving Forest Theater and beautifying our downtown is framed as binding me personally. By that logic, nearly anyone involved in our nonprofit network — and there are hundreds of donors and volunteers — could be accused of bias in city matters someday because a group wants to remove their voice from proceedings like this.”

Ripple effect?

He worried the decision to deprive him of his decision-making role because of the donation would discourage others from supporting charities, volunteering, or serving in public office.

“When involvement or donations are twisted into accusations, it discourages the very things that make our village thrive,” he said. “Why would volunteers step forward, or thoughtful people run for office, if every civic connection can be turned into a weapon?”

He called Pierik’s decision to disqualify him from the Pastor project appeal “ridiculous.”

“We can and will disagree about projects, zoning and buildings,” he said. “But weaponizing community service, philanthropy, and the city’s planning process harms everyone.”

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AMBULANCE

From page 11A

The new setup will also assure that every time a fire engine leaves the station, one of the people on it will be a paramedic who can provide advanced medical care, Monterey Fire Chief Andrew Miller said.

“That’s a really important piece of this contract,” he said. “We’re building our cadre of paramedic-firefighters.”

Councilman Hans Buder wondered if there’s a way to better offset the expense of operating the ambulance, and Miller said he’s working on “some revenue enhancements that I think will really help the city recover costs.”

Resident Nancy Twomey took the opportunity to thank the firefighters and medics for their professionalism and high level of service.

“It can’t go underacknowledged,” she said.

The council unanimously approved the contract, which takes effect Oct. 1 and expires Sept. 30, 2030, unless it’s renewed by both cities.

Committed

After the vote, the City of Monterey announced the new arrangement.

“Building on more than a decade of collaboration and shared commitment to public safety, this expanded agreement reflects the cities’ joint efforts to enhance service delivery, improve operational efficiency and maintain high standards of emergency medical care,” Miller said in the statement, describing the contract as “a natural extension” of the cities’ 13-year partnership.

“We are committed to providing professional, compassionate and reliable emergency medical services to all residents and visitors in Carmel, just as we do in Monterey,” he said.

The transition has already begun and should go smoothly. Ideally, the only thing that will change — other than lower overtime costs and more reliable staffing — will be the patches on the paramedics’ uniforms.

“Residents can expect no interruption in service,” Miller said.



JW Winslow

JW Winslow, beloved author, artist and longtime resident of Monterey, passed away peacefully on Aug. 18, 2025, in Fresno. She was born on March 22, 1943, in Los Angeles, the “City of Angels.”

A graduate of Vacaville High School in Vacaville, JW went on to leave her own indelible mark through creativity, community and storytelling. She authored the six-book series, “Mystic Adventures in Big Sur,” weaving her love for the California coast into words that captivated and inspired readers. She also shared her passion for art and culture as the host of WinslowArt, a local television show enjoyed by many in the Monterey community.

For nearly four decades, JW called Monterey home. She was a familiar, welcoming presence walking through local neighborhoods and along the beaches she cherished. Her deep appreciation for the natural beauty of the coast and her artistic spirit touched all who knew her.

She is lovingly survived by her brother, Chris Curry, who carries forward her memory with the same strength and warmth that defined her life.

She will be dearly missed and fondly remembered for her creativity, kindness, and enduring love of the Monterey community.

In honor of her legacy, a local non-profit is being created for those who wish to contribute in her memory. Private remembrance services will be held.

Donations in her name be sent to Ihelpmontereybay.org

BRUCE TIEN MARCUS

Bruce Tien Marcus, 89, passed away on Aug. 20, 2025, peacefully at his home in Belvedere, California. A lengthy battle with ailments, both Parkinson’s and cancer, only shortened his truly remarkable life but had not lessened it. He had his chin up and offered a smile in the hardest times of his struggle and never lost his taste for chocolate.

The apple of his eye, Kim Law, a good friend dating back to high school in Grand Rapids, Michigan, met Bruce again around their 25th reunion in 1979. Both won the prize in finding each other. Bruce moved to Tiburon and true love ensued. They married and enjoyed an active life of skiing, golf, world travel and events with friends and family for 46 years. They shared time in fabulous homes in Tiburon, Carmel, Carmel Valley, Sun Valley and back to Belvedere. A happier man could not be found, and he was always so outwardly gracious and appreciative of their wonderful life. A truly modest, innately moral man who showed generosity and kindness to all persons, Bruce was admired by many for these traits and will be remembered for them.

He grew up a Midwestern rascal son of a brilliant theologian minister, Maurice, with a stoic, determined and loving mother, Geneva, as well as a lovingly annoying, barely older brother, Maury. Bruce and Maury had the sweetest sister, Marlene, who lived with lupus her whole life, but she knew she had caring parents and brothers. Drs. Maury and Arlene Marcus of Berkeley visited Bruce often during his fight.

Bruce had a flair for theatrics and theater and working with his hands with old school tools. He enjoyed anything mechanical he could take apart and reassemble. He enjoyed life drawing and drawing inventions. He modeled clay horses and built a 16-foot wooden boat. He did everything well. He played Henry Higgins in “Pygmalion” and performed other leading roles in high school plays which may have contributed to his full scholarship at Oberlin College. Or, it may have been his notable success in varsity football. “I was fearless on the field!” he exclaimed, a variant on his modesty.

At Oberlin College Bruce majored in mathematics and physics, interests he kept up on his whole life. As a thespian he had lead roles in drama productions and attained an honorable academic record. Maury was attending Oberlin as well, so to not let Bruce out of his sight, and he kept up on the brotherly pressure to compete. They both played football for Oberlin. Bruce was also co-captain of the lacrosse team and a skilled midfielder.

At Oberlin, Bruce had the distinction of being the master of ceremonies for a visit to the college by The Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. in 1957. He had become involved in civil rights activism early, just before it had taken hold of the attention of the entire nation.

In 1958 Bruce was awarded a Rhodes Scholarship to study at Oxford. Thirty-two other American recipients boarded the QE1 in New York City, and by the time they crossed the Atlantic they were fast friends and colleagues. This was an outstanding period of his life studying philosophy, political science and economics. His favorite activity was rowing competitively as a member of the First and Third Trinity Boat Club. Many of the gentlemen of the Rhodes class of his year became lifelong friends. Some of his colleagues became persons of merit in government, business, law, academia and entertainment. Name-dropping was not braggadocio among his generation; it was fashionable. Bruce shared his remarkable friendships with most everyone. The Rhodes group met every year on New Year’s Eve from the early 1970s to the present, albeit in declining numbers. Life’s as fragile as morning dew on the grass.

Oxford degree in hand, Bruce returned stateside for the first time in three years, a newfound debonair Anglophile, arrived home with more than just his trunk. He had found love and had married a Scottish widow, Louise Gowans, who had an extraordinary 2-year-old child, Tania, whom Bruce was delighted by. A year or so later in 1962, Safia was born and it was firecracker pandemonium.

A successful businessperson using his advanced degrees, Bruce was an executive at Kaiser Aluminum in Oakland, providing solutions in research and production. He moved onto banking as a senior vice president at Bank of America in San Francisco, where he was instrumental in the formation of Visa International and developing the Visa card. His claim of coining the name Visa has been corroborated. It is hard to say that is boastful when its true. Later in his career Bruce was involved in the earliest trade and development deals in China as part of the One Country, Two Systems economy, and China opening to the West in the early 1980s. Career was important to Bruce, but not his most important concern.

His daughters were. Tania and Safia were everything to him and he was everything to them. The stories of their childhoods are fascinating tales of living in Europe and skiing in the Alps, and time spent at the family cabin at Bear Valley where Bruce taught them to ski. Both of his girls were shown the world and provided every opportunity for their success. Safia has a son, Maclane, who inherited the unmistakably clever and mischievous Bruce traits. Tania precedes him in death after her battle with cancer in 2017. She had survived, like Bruce had survived for many years. In her struggle, Bruce must have learned from Tania quintessential positivity that was for her inherent. Stories like Tania hitting a moose in a Volkswagen and her walking away with the moose sprawled out on the roof amplified her strength. Not from either Bruce or Tania, in the hardest of times, did you ever hear a single complaint.

He is survived by his nephews, Alexander Marcus, Dr. Gregory Marcus and Jenny; grandson, Maclane; grandnieces, Adriella and Desmina. On Kim’s side, he is survived by Susan and Gary, Jon David, Damon; grandchildren, Maxine, Louka, Emily, Paige, Olivier; and great-grandchild, Wilhelmina. Bruce loved the family golden retrievers, Golden Bear and Roosevelt. All the above pepper the family photos going back four decades to coveted printed photos, that fill family albums and then the terabytes of digital pics from the past decade or so. Bruce is always offering a smile from the center of his universe among his family. The photos chronicle the many wonderful adventures Kim and Bruce Marcus shared during their fabulously romantic life that has been something to brag about and prove they were both once young.

Donations to Parkinson’s and or cancer research would be in line with his wishes.

Or contact safiakeller62@gmail.com for information regarding a scholarship fund in both Bruce and Tania’s name.

We welcome your favorite Bruce pics and story. Please send to klmarcus@att.net

ENJOY A CHOCOLATE IN HIS MEMORY!

PASTOR

From page 1A

“It is well known that the majority of the community is very upset about the resistance to Mr. Pastor and his project and that the project, after six years of negotiations, has already been approved,” wrote Big Sur River Inn owner and general manager Alan Perlmutter. “Furthermore, there has clearly been an inconsistent application of the city’s codes and procedures for this applicant.”

Historic wall?

Developer Fred Kern, who formerly had a stake in the Seventh & Dolores property with Jeff Peterson, told the council he changed and rebuilt part of the pebble wall that was deemed historic and which the JB Pastor plans were required to leave intact and protect via a “preservation buffer.”

“This thing about the wall being historic is impossible, because I built half of it,” he said. “This project has been delayed for ridiculous reasons. I’m not a big fan of the design, but I am a fan of following the rules, and he followed the rules.”

Joe DiNucci, echoing the sentiments of a letter sent by Pastor’s attorney, Jeremiah Reynolds, said Byrne’s “recusal was a serious mistake.”

John Goode agreed, saying he was “aghast, appalled and dismayed” by Byrne’s having to step down.

“Support your planning commission, support your staff and support this project,” said architect Henry Ruhnke, who designed Pastor’s mixed-use complex at The Pit that was approved in 2023.

Resident Karyl Hall said any confusion about the city’s regulations should be resolved by fixing them, not by thwarting someone who acted on good faith on the direction he received from the planning department.

“Let’s not punish an applicant for trying to meet those codes with the OK of the planning commission and the planning department,” she said.

Some letter-writers criticized the project and supported the effort to get its approval overturned, and several of the appellants testified, as well.

“I can’t think of a time in history when 11 civic-minded residents decided to appeal” a project, Mike Brown said, stating that in Carmel, it can be difficult to get 11 people to agree on anything.

“The intent of our appeal was not personal, it did not consider wealth, it was focused solely on the misinterpretations of our general plan, municipal code and other civic regulations,” Cindy Lloyd said, adding that they were “written to preserve Carmel.”

Contrary to what some have suggested, Kristi Reimers, whose family owns the building east of the Seventh & Dolores site, and who has strenuously fought against

proposed development there, arguing it would ruin her view, light and privacy, said she would embrace a project that complies with the code.

Vinz Koller said the historic assessment of the revised project that was included in a city council resolution in 2023 and relied upon by the planning commission in its decision “does not meet the legal or professional threshold.”

“We appreciate your commitment to following the law without fear or favor,” he said, and asked the council to order a new analysis of potential impacts on the historic bank complex next to Pastor’s project.

‘Hot-button issue’

“This has become a hot-button issue,” observed councilman Hans Buder when it was time for the council to deliberate. “It’s emotional for people.”

He acknowledged dealing with the planning process can be frustrating — as he has experienced firsthand — and contradictory, such as allowing one person to have a metal roof while forbidding another down the street from doing the same.

While Buder advocated for a “top-to-bottom scrub” of the rules and regulations to resolve issues that are unclear or ambiguous, he said the council had to “operate within the confines of the existing laws and the existing process.”

He said he likes a lot about the project but nonetheless found it failed to meet requirements for parking and landscaping. In analyzing the program that allows developers to pay fees in lieu of providing the required number of parking spaces, Buder argued Pastor’s project doesn’t meet the standards to qualify and suggested it could be reconfigured to provide the proper number of spaces. He also opposed using car lifts to accommodate more vehicles.

“We are applying objective criteria set forth in the code,” he said.

As for the proposed landscaping, Buder said, “We have a situation where we’re putting the landscaping on the roof because staff had misinterpreted this requirement and fed it to the planning commission.” The plantings must be “visually accessible” by the public, he said.

Changes demanded

Councilwoman Alissandra Dramov and councilman Jeff Baron — who was running the meeting because the mayor and vice mayor recused themselves — agreed, and the three voted unanimously on a resolution to remand the project back to the planning commission with direction to remedy those shortcomings.

Reading a statement, Dramov — who sided with the appellants on every point — said that “decisions should not be based on personality, the applicant or public pressure.”

“This is about the law and applying the law to the applicant regardless of who you are and how much money you have,” she said, before accusing Pastor and his team of using their resources “to threaten and bully the city.”

Baron observed that while many of the comments were about Pastor and the city’s process, “this isn’t a hearing about that.”

“This is a hearing about the planning commission’s approval of the JB Pastor building,” he said.

After voting 2-1, with Dramov dissenting, that Pastor’s project is exempt from further environmental review, complies with historic preservation rules, and is two structures, the council voted 3-0 to require Pastor to redesign the project again and submit it to the planning commission for another review.

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MICHAEL WAHL

Michael Wahl, age 69, passed away on Aug. 18, 2025. He was born in the old Monterey Hospital on Nov. 26, 1955, to Joan and Bob Wahl, who preceded him in death. Michael was a lifelong resident of Carmel. He is survived by his siblings, Kevin (Nina) of Santa Cruz, Brendan of Big Sur and Beth and Mary of Carmel. Mike is also survived by nieces, Esme and Lucia Wahl and nephews, Weston and Eric Wahl, as well as his cousins, John Plaggmier, Pam Villa, Melissa Ribley and Jennifer Plaggmier.

Michael’s passion was plants and gardening. For many years he ran a landscape maintenance business in Carmel, bestowing special attention on his many elderly clients. He was also interested in finance and investing, learning from his grandmother, Josephine Johnson. His free time was spent hiking at Garland Park and walking his dogs at Carmel Beach or Mission Trail Park.

In lieu of flowers please consider donations to the SPCA of Monterey County. Michael loved animals and cared for many of our family dogs.



Lynn Bomberger

Pacific Grove, California – Lynn Bomberger, born in Modesto, was grateful for her friends and for having a good life. She died in July at the age of 80.

Lynn’s main interest was always nature. While being a camper and eventually a leader at Camp Jack Hazard in the High Sierra, she fell in love with mountain trails and wilderness. As an adult, she enjoyed sharing information with others who also loved nature. She volunteered with the Monterey branches of the Sierra Club and the California Native Plant Society (CNPS). She led hikes with the Sierra Club, led CNPS field trips for 12 years, and composed the local CNPS newsletter for a decade.

Throughout her life, she took more than 30 nature focused trips around the globe. She also enjoyed sewing, created numerous oil paintings, enjoyed horseback trail riding and parading (1975 state champion), along with many other interests. Her career was primarily teaching at Caswell Elementary in Ceres, Fitch Middle School in Fort Ord and Clovis West High School in Clovis.

Facing cognitive problems, she chose to peacefully end her life to avoid advanced dementia. Lynn is survived by her sister, Judie Bomberger. She requested not to have a memorial service.

Jack Lestrade, 93, Acclaimed Watercolor Artist

Jack Lestrade, a French-born painter celebrated for his luminous watercolor landscapes, died on Aug. 6, 2025, at his home in southwest France. He was 93.

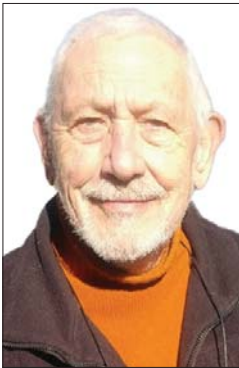
Born March 27, 1932, in southwestern France, Lestrade began a life of adventure and artistry at 15 when he joined the Merchant Marine. He later lived in Canada, working in advertising, before settling in Southern California in 1960. In 1972, he moved to Carmel, California, where he devoted himself fully to fine art. His delicately rendered scenes of coastlines, villages, and countryside earned him recognition both in the U.S. and abroad.

In 1994, he returned to France with his wife, Judy, where he continued painting until his passing.

He was previously married to Germaine Floch. Their daughter, Sylvie, passed away in December 2024.

Lestrade is survived by his wife, Judy, his brother, Pierrot and his grandson, Gavin Niebel.

Private services will be held.



PIT

From page 1A

Draper denied the art association was experiencing any issues related to the construction project and blamed a contractor for damaging Haseltine Court.

The developers ended up selling the property to Patrice Pastor for \$9 million in 2020, and his local firm, Esperanza Carmel, has been trying to get a new mixed-use project going there ever since. After multiple attempts and redesigns, he and his team obtained planning commission approval of their project, called Ulrika Plaza, in August 2023, and a demolition permit was finally issued last month.

Rising costs

Before Esperanza Carmel’s work can begin, however, Stemler said the shoring up of Haseltine has to be done. The foundation hired Ausonio for the job, and she said Tuesday that while working with the city and Esperanza to coordinate the effort has been great, trying to get money from Leidig/Draper’s insurance company to cover the costs has not. As a consequence, the foundation is moving ahead on its own dime.

“Hopefully we’ll get there,” Stemler said, referring to obtaining insurance dollars. “Otherwise, everybody’s being cooperative.”

Stemler estimated the project will take about two months and said the costs will run around \$800,000, including lost income due to the unusable apartment, legal fees, engineering and other expenses.

“Every kind of hard material has gone up in price, so even just the quote in April for the piers has gone up \$11,000,” she added.

Stemler said she’s looking forward to seeing the work done and Pastor’s efforts to develop The Pit finally getting underway — though even that is in doubt, because of Pastor’s dispute with the city over permits for a project at Dolores and Seventh.

Regarding Haseltine Court, plans to renovate the damaged apartment and other parts of the property will be devised after the shoring is finished and the area is deemed safe.

HOSTILE

From page 6A

a work-related issue involving Rebecca Smith, Doe said the sheriff dismissed the concerns, saying she didn’t want to “hear any of that drama” nor spend time resolving her disputes with employees.

“Doe felt devastated that Nieto was reinforcing Rebecca and Mike Smith’s retaliatory behavior,” the complaint says.

In early 2024, Doe said she was assigned to the county jail under Rebecca Smith’s supervision. “Nervous and fearful” of her new boss, she informed an administrative chief about the Smiths’ alleged behavior. In response, the chief said Rebecca “probably didn’t like her because she was an attractive female.”

“This made Doe uncomfortable and like” the chief “thought that excused Rebecca Smith’s behavior,” she said.

No comment

She alleges intentional infliction of emotional distress, retaliation, sex discrimination and harassment and other causes of action. Doe said she’s suffered lost wages, future earnings, emotional distress, mental anguish, humiliation and other damages, and is seeking an undisclosed amount in monetary damages, including punitive damages, exceeding \$35,000.

County spokeswoman Maia Carroll said the county has been served with the lawsuit, but that it doesn’t comment on litigation. Michael Smith, she said, was hired in 1995 and his last day of employment was Oct. 19, 2024. It’s not clear why he left the sheriff’s office. Rebecca Smith was hired in 2002 and is still employed.

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IN LOVING MEMORY SANDRA JEAN (WURTS) LINDSEY BORN OCT. 29, 1935 — ASCENDED AUG. 29, 2025

Sandra (Sandy) Jean Lindsey, 40-year resident of Carmel, California, beloved wife of Robert Lindsey for nearly 70 years, cherished mother of Susan and Steven, adored grandmother of Erin, Ryan, Adrian and Jessie, transitioned peacefully with her family at her bedside at Carmel Valley Manor where she and her husband lived for more than 25 very active and happy years.

Sandra met her soul mate Bob during San Jose State freshman orientation camp at Asilomar. Together, they made a beautiful life together, beyond anything they could have imagined at ages 20 and 21 when they married. They were true partners in every way. When her husband started writing books, she was editor and advisor, and she transcribed interviews for the memoirs of Reagan and Brando. They traveled the world making friends everywhere. She came home from those travels with deliciously adventurous recipes and inspired decorating ideas. She created beauty everywhere.

Sandra was an extremely loyal friend and for years stayed in close touch with dear friends from high school, college and beyond. She radiated a positive life force through her beautiful smile and presence. She was an excellent listener and would spend hours on the phone counseling friends and family members. She had a wonderful infectious laugh, often laughing at herself, which was so endearing. She was generous, intuitive, curious and wise. She was self reflective and resilient, funny and kind. She loved us unconditionally. Mom, we love you and miss you so much.

We are deeply grateful to the incredible staff of Carmel Valley Manor who consistently demonstrated their care and compassion for both Sandra and Bob over the years and especially during this time. The family is grateful beyond measure that this last chapter of Sandra’s life in the CVM Health Center was filled surrounded by caring individuals who did everything within their power to make her as comfortable as possible. Sandra loved her family fiercely and unconditionally. We all have felt so loved and cared for by her. We will always feel that. She will always be with us. But oh how we miss her presence.

www.dignitymemorial.com/obituaries/pacific-grove-ca/sandra-lindsey-12507001
Comments and remembrances welcomed at url above. Thank you.



JAMES LYNN STRAIT 1940-2025

Lynn Strait passed away Sept. 5, 2025, due to complications from Alzheimer’s Disease. Lynn was a native of Ohio and though he lived most of his life in California, he always identified with everything related to Ohio. It was his greatest pride and joy to have had the opportunity to be recruited to OSU to play football under the coaching of Woody Hayes. Near the end of his second year, he suffered a knee injury that kept him from being able to continue playing. Before signing with OSU, Lynn had decided he wanted to be a physician. At risk of losing his scholarship, Woody Hayes was good on his promise and made it possible for Lynn to realize his dream of medical school.

Lynn had a successful medical practice as an orthopedic surgeon for eight years with the U.S. Army, serving for one year in Saigon, Viet Nam; and then for decades in private practice in Santa Barbara, California. His gentle demeanor made his patients feel calm and secure in knowing that he would take good care of them.

Lynn acquired his instrument-rated pilot’s license and enjoyed flying across the country to visit his family in Ohio and to ski in Utah, Colorado, Wyoming and Idaho.

He was a natural and gifted athlete who enjoyed tennis, rock climbing, skiing and running until the physical toll on his knees sidelined him. Fortunately, golf became his sport of choice. He was a former member of La Cumbre Country Club in Santa Barbara, and later The Valley Club of Montecito. In Carmel, he enjoyed playing golf at Quail Lodge and Golf Club. He was a past president of the international MacKenzie Society. Golf took him all over the world enjoying the many courses and the many friendships that revolve around the game. While playing at Lahinch in Ireland, Lynn had his eighth hole-in-one on the eighth hole, hitting with his eight iron!

While his family is proud of all his amazing accomplishments, they are the proudest of the husband, father and grandfather he was. Lynn is survived by his wife, Cheryl Carter; his two daughters, Julie Ann Strait and Jennie Elizabeth Strait, both of Santa Barbara; stepchildren, Kacey Meredith, Chris Barron and John Barron (Brittany); and seven grandchildren, Charlotte Meredith, Camille Meredith, Arabella Barron, Indy Barron, Sunday Barron, River Barron and Marigold Barron. He was preceded in death by his son, James Lynn Strait, II.

The family would like to thank Ivy Park at Salinas and Hospice of Santa Cruz County for their excellent care and compassion. In lieu of flowers, the family would appreciate memorial donations to the charity of the donor’s choice.

Lynn was a quiet, strong and elegant gentleman who walked softly on this planet. As per his wishes, no services are planned.



Water polo foes prep for battle with travels abroad, discipline at home

THE ULTIMATE destination lies somewhere beyond a gauntlet of ambushes for the Stevenson Pirates and Carmel Padres, who plan to be thoroughly battle-scarred by the time the brackets are built for the 2025 Central Coast Section boys water polo playoffs.

Peninsula Sports

By DENNIS TAYLOR

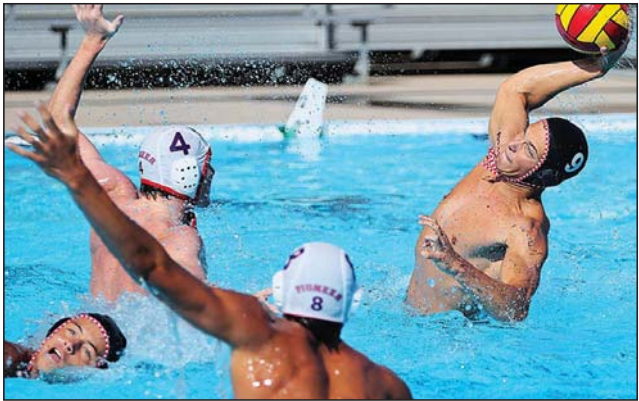
A major speedbump along that path figures to be their head-on collision at Stevenson School on Sept. 24 — the only regular-season meeting between the Pacific Coast Athletic League titans, who probably will engage again in the finals of this year’s league tournament.

Both rosters are dripping with talent, and their rivalry is scintillating.

Seven-year streak

The last time the Pirates lost a regular-season league match to anybody was Oct. 23, 2018 — a 15-11 setback to Gabilan Division champ Soquel. Since then, Stevenson is 42-0 in the PCAL.

But here’s the fun part. Stevenson’s 7-0 league record last year included a 12-11 victory at Carmel during the regular season — then a 12-8 loss to the Padres in the PCAL tournament semifinals.



PHOTO/KERRY BELSER

Carmel senior Jack Balas, a prolific scorer, also ranked among the PCAL’s leaders in steals and assists last season. His coach predicts he’ll be the league’s best player this year.

That postseason victory and the narrow regular-season loss are seared into the memories of Carmel’s eight varsity lettermen, including first-team All-PCAL Jack Balas, second teamers Landon Onitsuka and Marc Kalman-Zulik — all seniors — and high-scoring sophomore Sam Balas, Jack’s little brother. They’re eager to play the Pirates again.

Stevenson will be waiting with deep respect from six 2024 letter-winners, a list topped by two-time PCAL Offensive Player of the Year Laird Welch, and second-team all-leaguers Alan Qian and Matias Higgins, all seniors.

Both teams also boast a startling influx of young talent.

“We’re fortunate to have one of the deepest teams we’ve had in years,” said Brooke Higgins, who begins his fourth year as Stevenson’s head coach, after an 11-year stint as an assistant to Jim Fannin and Frank Reynolds. “We had a talented group last year, and you ride your horses as far as you can, but there were times that we ran out of gas.”

Case in point was a 15-13 overtime loss at Valley Christian, a pre-CCS game the Pirates led until they wore out with the clock ticking down. Valley Christian went on to win the CCS Division 2 crown.

“As a coach, I’m challenged this year with choosing the right combinations of athletes at any given time to give some guys the rest they need, while also keeping guys in the water who are doing the job for us,” Higgins said.

Croatia trip

Senior Josh Palshaw, junior Finn Reilly, and sophomore Ozaze Djehuti will compete for playing time in a lineup bolstered by varsity-ready freshmen Brooks Honegger, Reed Czerny, and Hudson Kresl, plus transfer students Hezzy Horvath and Alex Tay (a boarding student from Singapore), both juniors.

Preseason preparation for Stevenson included a school-sponsored trip to water polo-crazy Croatia, where much of the team trained with world-class coaches and professional players, and competed against strong Croatian teams.

They’ll test those techniques with a rugged regular-season schedule loaded with some of California’s top high school teams, a list that includes Junipero Serra,

Valley Christian, Los Gatos, Northgate, Aptos, Leland, as well as Southern California teams to be announced.

Carmel, under second-year coach Jerry Smith, has an equally bruising list of opponents that opened with con-



PHOTO/KERRY BELSER

Stevenson’s Laird Welch (with ball) is a fourth-year starter who shared Offensive Player of the Year honors in the PCAL for the second-straight year last fall.

secutive games against Junipero Serra, Valley Christian, and Pioneer, plus Leland, Soquel, Northgate, and formidable tournaments like the Vintage Valley in Napa, the Padre Invitational at Serra, and the traditional Monterey Bay Invitational.

“That level of competition will be a great learning opportunity and a big contrast from last year, when I accepted some less-challenging non-league games to fill out our schedule,” Smith said. “Next thing you know, we’re 11-0, right out of the gate, and everybody thought we were the best thing since sliced bread. In reality, we hadn’t yet played a lot of competitive water polo.”

This year’s varsity roster — just 10 deep (six fewer than 2024) — reflects what the coach calls “a cultural shift” that includes a firm mandate for dedication.

“We’ve changed our expectations, mainly around commitment, and intellectual aspects of the game,” Smith said.

See **SPORTS** next page



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DOUGH

From page 1A

more in salary and benefits annually than they were just a decade ago, the data show.

David Sargenti, fire chief for Monterey County Regional Fire Protection District, was the top earner, with a hefty \$524,059 in 2024, according to the controller’s office. Sargenti heads a department that had payroll last year of \$15.1 million. Just 10 years ago, the highest paid position at the department was Fire Chief II, who received \$311,996, when the agency had 13 fewer employees and a payroll of only \$7.8 million.

The fire district had 86 employees last year, dozens of whom were paid more than \$200,000.

In contrast, the chief for the North County Fire Protection District — which has about 30 fewer workers — earned \$253,174 in 2024, while the district’s payroll was about \$5.7 million.

The second highest paid agency head was Monterey One Water general manager Paul Sciuto, who in 2024 was paid \$489,903, which included a \$363,891 salary and \$126,012 in retirement and health contributions. In 2014, the job paid a total of \$307,548. The second highest paid employee last year at the sewer agency was assistant general manager Tamsen McNarie, who earned \$323,719.

Most of Monterey One’s 129 employees earned more than \$100,000 per year in 2024, with several dozen taking in more than \$200,000, the data show. For instance, its spokesperson made \$191,662 last year, while its customer service supervisor received \$230,692.

The agency spent \$18.4 million on wages and benefits in 2024 compared to \$10.4 million a decade ago, when it had 26 fewer employees.

Bus service and air pollution

Many local districts have more employees now than they did 10 years ago, though some have eliminated positions over the years in favor of using outside contractors to reduce salary and pension costs.

Monterey-Salinas Transit’s CEO, Carl Sedoryk, was paid \$366,209 in 2024, compared to \$271,558 in 2014, a difference of nearly \$95,000. The transit agency’s payroll and benefits for its employees, which number 301, was \$27.8 million last year versus \$17.7 million in 2014, when it had 30 fewer workers.

In the past decade, Monterey Peninsula Water Management District Dave Stoldt’s pay increased by more than \$100,000, going from \$239,473 in 2014 to \$354,023 in 2024. The water district had a payroll of \$3.9 million in wages and benefits for its 37 employees in 2024 versus just under \$3 million in 2014, when it had 11 more workers.

Richard Stedman, the air pollution control officer at Monterey Bay Air Resources District, made \$321,568 last year compared to the \$214,502 he did in 2014. Nearly all the air district’s full-time workers were paid more than \$100,000, including an office assistant who was paid \$111,000. The district had 43 employees in 2024.

Some district heads have not received the large pay hikes that their counterparts have over the last 10 years.

Longtime Carmel Area Wastewater District general manager Barbara Buikema received \$290,372 last year

compared to \$235,407 a decade ago, though its staff increased from 32 in 2014 to 50 in 2024, when payroll was nearly \$4.6 million.

Monterey Peninsula Airport District executive director Michael La Pier, who retired in June at the age of 66, earned \$273,934 in 2024 versus \$211,852 in 2014. Last year, the airport district had a payroll of about \$3.2 million for its 36 employees. The figure was about \$3.5 million in 2014, when it had 51 people.

Transportation Agency for Monterey County executive director Todd Muck earned \$292,318 in wages and benefits last year. In 2014, the position paid \$223,962. The agency’s payroll in 2024 was \$2.6 million, which represents more than a \$1 million increase over its 2014 payroll of \$1.5 million, when it had almost the same number of workers.

Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments head Maura Twomey was paid \$277,284 in wages and benefits in 2024. Its payroll was roughly \$2.3 million last year

SPORTS

From previous page

“That includes showing up on time for morning workouts and film sessions, training rain or shine, being on the pool deck to watch practice even if you’re injured.

“Some players really embraced those things. Others didn’t, and we were sorry to see those boys go,” he said.

All of Carmel’s 10 varsity players participated in summer water polo, and nine faced high-level competition at the National Junior Olympics as members of Monterey Bay United club teams.

Smith’s returning starters already are well-known in the PCAL.

Jack Balas earned first-team all-league plaudits after a junior season in which he scored 84 goals, with 41 steals, and 30 assists.

“Jack is somebody who will play collegiately, and I think he’s the best all-around water polo player in our league,” his coach said.

The “setup guy,” as Smith called him, is Landon Onitsuka, whose 57 assists led the entire CCS in 2024. He also ranked among PCAL leaders with 42 steals.

Marc Kalman-Zulik added 71 goals and 24 assists to the attack, and stole the ball 34 times, and Sam Balas scored 44 times, with 19 assists and 32 steals.

“Sam was part of a really strong freshman class and

compared to \$1.65 million a decade ago.

The Monterey Peninsula Regional Park District — which made news in The Pine Cone about 15 years ago when it paid its then-head nearly \$350,000 annually for managing a staff of only 16 — paid its GM about \$257,000 last year.

The Resource Conservation District of Monterey County — which states its mission is to “conserve and improve our natural resources” — has grown significantly since 2014, when the Salinas agency had 15 employees and a payroll of \$314,879. In 2024, it had 30 workers and a payroll of more than \$1.3 million. Its GM, Paul Robins, made \$167,106 last year versus the \$112,688 he earned in 2014.

In 2014, when it had 14 workers and a payroll of \$470,013, the Monterey County Mosquito Abatement District paid its manager/biologist \$127,781. In 2024, its payroll for 17 employees climbed to more than \$1 million, and its manager earned \$280,260 — more than twice the amount the position paid a decade before.

Go to publicpay.ca.gov for more information.

was the only one who played meaningful varsity minutes for us,” Smith said. “But the others got a lot of time on our varsity practice squad and helped our JVs become one of the most successful teams around. Those guys were beating opponents by 15 to 20 goals.”

That group includes center defenders Hamish Forsythe and Callan Tescher, right-handed attacker Oliver Cogley, and first-year varsity goalkeeper August Hohman.

Untapped talent

The team’s “Swiss army knife,” said Smith, is senior Anthony Sandoval, a physical presence who can play center defender or back up Hohman at goalie.

The team’s only junior, center defender David Bogart, has good size and untapped natural talent, and also ranks among the most dedicated players on the team, the coach said.

Stevenson travels Tuesday to play Salinas in a 5 p.m. match at Hartnell College, then returns home Sept. 24 for the Carmel showdown.

The Padres travel Monday to Monterey, then return home Wednesday to play Pacific Grove, both with 5 p.m. starts.

They will play Sept. 19 and 20 at the Vintage Valley tourney in Napa before facing Stevenson in their PCAL match on Sept. 24.

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



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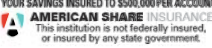
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Editorial

How great is California?

THIS WEEK marks the 175th anniversary of California's admission as the 31st state, putting it ahead of virtually every other state west of the Mississippi River. Why did California leapfrog over Minnesota, Oregon, Kansas, Nevada, Nebraska, Colorado, North Dakota, South Dakota, Montana, Washington, Idaho, Wyoming, Utah, Oklahoma, New Mexico and Arizona? Because it was more valuable — and not just because of the Gold Rush. In addition to gold, it had vast natural resources like timber, fertile land suitable for farming, a moderate climate and scenic wonders as impressive as any place on the planet. Its coastal location was strategically important and promised long-term trade opportunities. And it was already politically mature, having adopted a state constitution in 1849. It also had a lot of people in 1850 — almost 100,000, when Colorado had just 30,000 residents and Oregon had a mere 12,000.

Yes, California was a great place when it was admitted to the union. And in his State of the State message this week, Gov. Gavin Newsom said California is still a place of wonders.



The United States in 1850, when California became the 31st state.

“Our economy now exceeds \$4.1 trillion, powered by a culture that rewards risk, attracts capital and welcomes new ideas,” Newsom said. “We lead the nation in startups, venture capital, IPOs and manufacturing output, and we have more AI companies, more space technology and more green innovation than any place on Earth.”

A few weeks ago, Newsom posted on X that California is No. 1 in the United States for “agriculture, manufacturing, Fortune 500 companies, small business starts and tourism spending.”

But as Rep. Kevin Kiley, whose district stretches from Lake Tahoe to Death Valley, points out, California is only No. 1 in all those things because it has so many people. “Per capita,” Kiley said, “we aren’t in the Top 10 in any of them.”

Where California is really No. 1, according to Kiley, is in “homelessness, unemployment, poverty, gas prices, illiteracy, retail crime and outmigration.”

It also has very high income and sales taxes, housing prices that are through the roof, wildfires that wreak unprecedented levels of death and destruction, electricity rates and insurance costs that punish homeowners and business owners alike, tens of thousands of high school students who can barely read or do basic math, and extensive traffic congestion that makes life miserable in big cities.

The outmigration Kiley talked about cost the state a congressional seat and a vote in the electoral college after the 2000 census, and, as Caitlin Conrad reported last week, it's very likely to lose even more in 2030 as people seek better lives in other places.

Mother Nature made California a place of great beauty and opportunity, and its early residents seemed to do a pretty good job managing both. While its scenery and climate are still extraordinary, everything in the political realm is a mess — and getting worse.

BEST of BATES



“History of Carmel? I haven’t got a clue ... didn’t get here until 1912.”

Letters to the Editor

The Pine Cone encourages submission of letters which address issues of public importance. Letters cannot exceed 350 words, and must include the author's name and home town. We reserve the right to determine which letters are suitable for publication and to edit for length and clarity.

The Pine Cone only accepts letters to the editor by email. Please submit your letters to mail@carmelpinecone.com

Consumer power
Dear Editor,

In a city where change occurs at a glacial pace (arguing over house numbers for 100 years) and business competition is feared by the conservative status quo establishment, it should come as no surprise that a fierce, self-interested gang of 11 residents and business owners can upend the approval of the city council regarding the J.B. Pastor Project, thwart the will of the majority of residents and sabotage the best interests of our townspeople.

What can be done about this, other than write scathing letters to The Pine Cone?venting our frustration? We can use our consumer power and vote with our wallets by refusing to support businesses that are associated with the gang of 11. When the rules of fair practice and treatment are thrown out the window, we can actively choose to withhold our money and our

votes from the offending business owners and politicians.

Chris Winslow, *Carmel*

Taking the time
Dear Editor,

I would like to thank the Carmel City Council for taking the time to understand the complexities of the Seventh and Dolores Esperanza project. In our town, small renovations can take a couple of years and new builds longer. This project is a new build impacting historical resources and complicated parking and use permits for the existing restaurant.

I would also like to address the often-repeated argument that Esperanza is being singled out and not treated fairly on this particular project.

A previous owner of the involved lots submitted three sets of plans. First, requesting the removal of the community room. These plans were not approved. Second, moving the community room to the back of the lot. These plans were not approved. Third, the use of a car elevator to access an underground parking lot. Again, these plans were not approved. Indeed, this is very frustrating for the property owner and builder. So much so that they split and sold the property.

This has been proved to be a very difficult and frustrating project. It is only right that the city continue to uphold and enforce current building regulations set by the city and state.

Courtney Kramer,
Carmel

See **LETTERS** *page 28A*

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It’s hard to describe what love is, so she rounded up examples

A NEW book, “The Love Project,” features the sort of dedication that would warm any parent’s heart.

“This book is dedicated to you, dear Mum. I hope it’ll be a soothing balm in these troubled times, a gentle reminder

letter to you and to Scotland, my beloved homeland, as well as to my new home here in California. I hope you feel its warm embrace, like a hug that stretches across the miles, over the Sierra and the Rockies, and across the Atlantic Ocean.”

Carmel author Alison van Diggelen said she was inspired by her mother, now in her early 90s and still living in Scotland, who, once widowed, got a second chance at love.

“It’s really transformed her,” commented van Diggelen. “She’s happier, more mellow. They met when she was in her late 80s — people’s faces light up when they hear that. It’s inspirational to think of my mum’s story of love. She was really my muse.”

In 293 pages — and without veering into triteness or treacle — van Diggelen reflects on various types of love she found among her Carmel neighbors. More than two dozen of them agreed to have their stories published, and she did in-depth interviews with each of them. Turns out that put them in pretty heady company, which we’ll come to shortly.

A new homeland

Born in Scotland, van Diggelen was the second of three sisters in her Glasgow family. She said her mother was a nurse and midwife who helped bring “hundreds of babies” into the world. Her late father was an ophthalmic technician



PHOTO/COURTESY ALISON VAN DIGGELEN

Alison van Diggelen dedicated her book, “The Love Project” to her mother (right), whose late-life romance inspired it.

See **LIVES** next page

From the mayor’s desk — The little village that could

By DALE BYRNE

“I THINK I can, I think I can, I think I can.” We all remember the children’s story of the little engine that refused to give up, chugging steadily up a steep hill while others said it couldn’t be done. In many ways, that’s been Carmel-by-the-Sea’s story this year — a small village tackling big challenges with determination, teamwork and an unwavering belief that we could climb hills others thought too steep.

For years, certain challenges felt like steep grades that slowed our progress. Our ambulance service struggled with rising costs, staffing shortages and complex county reporting. Streets and sidewalks crumbled under constant use while repair costs climbed. Our police and public works buildings, despite previous thoughtful efforts to replace them, remained outdated and inadequate. State housing mandates loomed like a mountain peak without a clear route to the summit.

But this week’s city council meeting showed what happens when a village builds on every lesson learned and refuses to accept “it can’t be done.” We approved a partnership with Monterey Fire for ambulance service, securing advanced paramedic services on every fire engine. Serendipitously, we’ll also have brand-new emergency equipment arriving in just a few months.

Our \$2.7 million street improvement program represents our most comprehensive repair effort in years, moving forward with smart partnerships with Monterey County and TAMC that brought us in \$600,000 under budget. The police and public works facility replacement project gained momentum through our workgroup’s rightsized, value-engineered approach that incorporated useful insights from earlier community planning efforts.

See **MAYOR** page 30A

TO FIND CREATIVITY, FOLLOW THE SIGNS

RULE NO. 1 in the artist instruction manual — “be original” — is an edict Brian Rutana follows each time he dips a brush into his paint, which isn’t acrylic, oil or watercolor.

Rutana’s portfolio includes wildlife, nauticals, occasional landscapes and seascapes, and — a specialty — rustic, Amer-

He’s been dabbling in fine art for roughly 35 years, but dialed up that part of his self-expression around 2020, when he retired.

Now, he’s shopping for a fine-art gallery for his impressionist-style slice-of-life scenes: vintage vehicles, some gleaming, others grimy and distressed, usually in rural settings, parked in weed fields, alongside weather-flogged buildings, antique gas pumps — sometimes with an old Route 66 emblem — or aging signage, including peeling billboards

hawking Bubble Up Soda, Genesee Beer (“5 cents per glass!”), and other relics.

Rutana, self-taught, dares not compare himself to the array of accomplished artists he admires on the Monterey Peninsula. He paints for the joy, urging himself to spend an hour each day in his studio, mixing in a retired man’s schedule of tennis and golf.

“That hour usually turns into two, three, four, five hours,” he said. “Once in a while, I work all night on whatever I feel like painting. Sometimes, I’m just in there thinking, coming up with ideas, making little thumbnail sketches.”

He pulled all-nighters now and then as a sign painter, too, meditative and happy.

A souped-up tricycle

Rutana grew up in the south-central Massachusetts town of Northbridge, where, “I was a punk kid, like a lot of my friends — we got into a lot of trouble,” he reminisced with a grin. “Mom would say, ‘Go out and play!’ and we’d be off into the woods, or riding our bikes all day long.”

Once they found an old Big Wheel tricycle, customized the front end with high-rise handlebars, then took turns riding at breakneck speeds down a steep road.

“My dad is 98 and still lives there,” said Rutana, whose high school graduating class had just 100 kids. “There’s so much traffic now that you can’t even go for a walk on that road anymore.”

At 13, Rutana was wrenching on cars at his father’s service station instead of playing sports with his friends.

“I wanted to play basketball and football, but Dad would say, ‘Nope, I need you,’” he said. “I have zero regrets. I learned my work ethic from my dad. I learned to be reliable and how to deal with customers. Those things stuck with me throughout my life.”

Great guys

Rutana was taught to paint signs for businesses in the 1970s, when everything was hand-rendered. He went to work in San Rafael for one of the better-known companies.

“I learned from the best at Guthrie Signs. Doc Guthrie and his crew were great guys,” said Rutana, who quickly established himself as one of the go-to painters

See **ARTIST** page 43A

Carmel’s Artists

By DENNIS TAYLOR

icana-style scenes he creates with sign-painter enamels. Who else does that?

“Sign-painter enamels are the medium I’m familiar and comfortable with, because I’ve been using them for decades,” he said. “I like the glossy finish, and I love that it dries quickly, so I can work over it within hours.”

Leftover paint, reclaimed wood

Equally odd, Rutana uses latex house-paint to coat his painting boards and for mixing the washes he applies to a finished painting to give it a distressed or aged feel.

“I like to be resourceful and use leftover paints and reclaimed wood for my panels,” he reasoned.

The backdrops for a few of his pieces are, quite literally, the palettes upon which he mixed his colors for other paintings.

Some of his brushes are 12 years old. Others wear out more quickly because he often paints on rough-surfaced, recycled wood.

None of that is his suggestion or recommendation. It’s just the way he has worked since, well, forever.

“I’ve been a sign painter my whole life,” said Rutana, whose quirky, picturesque, hand-painted, hand-lettered signs — a blast from the past — are on display on the Carmel Valley Art Association’s patio.



PHOTO/SHELLEY ALIOTTI

P.G. artist Brian Rutana poses with his colorful, Peninsula-themed tabletop at the Carmel Valley Art Association. A sign painter by profession, Rutana, 65, is focused on fine art in retirement, specializing in rustic, Americana-style paintings.



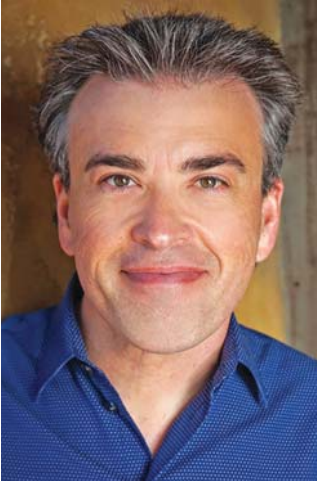
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LIVES

From previous page

— someone who assists an eye doctor.

After high school, van Diggelen attended a local college and earned her bachelor’s degree in the economics of land use.

At Cambridge University, she pursued the same field to obtain a Master of Science degree. In 1989, while digging into her graduate studies, she met another student, Frank van Diggelen. They wed three years later, but in the interim, she finished her master’s degree and got her dream job.

More accurately, she said, it was a job in her dream place — a London company with a Paris office. Alison van Diggelen worked in commercial real estate, lived in a company apartment and was courted by Frank with the dreamiest of backdrops — the City of Light.

“He proposed to me on a freezing evening in February on the banks of the Seine,” she recalled.

Covert agent

He completed his Ph.D. in engineering in 1992 and took a job in a startup near Colorado Springs. While Van Diggelen was waiting for a U.S. work permit, she volunteered at the city’s visitors center.

It was a good fit — she’s friendly and articulate. But there’s no hiding that brogue. “People would say, ‘You’re not from here,’” she said. Although she enthusiastically pointed out her favorite Colorado Springs attractions on a map for travelers, she also often talked about her homeland.

“I was an unpaid covert employee of Scottish tourism,” she said, laughing.

A couple years later, Frank landed a job in Silicon Valley. At some point, the couple visited Carmel, where, she said, they were “wowed.”

“It’s quaint and charming and the beach is so pristine,” she noted.

They brought their two young children and a beloved 16-year-old dog, Mookie,

who she said was “at death’s door” when they decided to relocate.

“He lived to enjoy the coast and Carmel. We got two bonus years,” she remembered. “At 18, he’d prance all the way up the hill to the house.”

Becoming a journalist

For someone who loved to write journals and long missives to her parents in Scotland, becoming a self-taught reporter seemed natural. “I was just following my curiosity,” she said.

By then, van Diggelen had obtained her green card and became a freelance columnist for The San Jose Mercury News. She completed an internship at KQED public broadcasting, where she met Michael Krasny, a multi-award-winning radio host. He encouraged her to pursue her dream of having a talk show like his, where she could interview interesting people.

Her podcast, “Fresh Dialogues,” launched in 2008, focuses on “green business issues, entrepreneurs and inspiring women.”

In addition, she has contributed to the BBC, Public Radio International, NPR, and the Huffington Post. Her podcast’s website notes that she “is a regular guest on BBC World Service” and has appeared on NBC Bay Area’s weekly public affairs program, “Press Here.” Her work has appeared in the Silicon Valley Business Journal and San Jose Magazine, as well as The Glasgow Herald.

Interviewed Elon

Among many others, van Diggelen has spoken with Pulitzer Prize-winning New York Times columnist Thomas Friedman, multiple Oscar honoree Meryl Streep, and Emmy winner Martin Sheen. And, always asking herself, “What else could I do?” she landed what turned out to be a live, wide-ranging sit-down with Elon Musk.

She explained that they knew some people in common, and in 2013, she got him onstage in Mountain View for nearly 80 minutes for the Computer History Museum’s “Revolutionaries” series.

Find it on YouTube to hear about how Musk was inspired by sci-fi novelist Douglas Adams’ “Hitchhiker’s Guide to the Galaxy,” and the time he tried to purchase two intercontinental ballistic missiles — sans warheads — from Russia.

There are others she’d love to talk to — former Mayor Clint Eastwood among them — and in her spare time, she volunteers at alternative high school Rancho Cielo’s Drummond Culinary Academy.

But right now, “The Love Project” is foremost in her mind. She planned to hand-deliver a printout of it to her mother this week.

It’s not only about traditional romantic love, though that’s certainly a theme, but also fondness for a particular place and

devotion to community. Her interview subjects range from recognizable names — Robinson Jeffers’ grandson, Lindsay, for instance — to a Peruvian-born house cleaner. Each has their own tale to tell. Taken together, they form a lovely mosaic of local and universal themes.

Van Diggelen used her powers of observation and precise word choices to animate her accounts of their discussions, as if she wants to become the microphone and video camera for her readers.

It’s due to come out on Oct. 1, with a book signing scheduled for Nov. 7 at 6 p.m. at Pilgrim’s Way bookstore.

And when van Diggelen shares it with her mother, she hopes it will bring her a smile.

LETTERS

From page 26A

‘Incredibly frightening’

Dear Editor,

As a new resident of Carmel-by-the Sea and a small business owner within the village, I have followed the projects of Patrice Pastor closely. In the beginning, I was skeptical of the motives and reasoning behind his proposed plans. Why this little coastal gem? Carmel is charming, picturesque and nothing short of magical. The locals are friendly, welcoming and tolerant of the incredible number of visitors that are in awe of just spending a weekend in this spectacular spot. It is a place that lucky residents call home.

I don’t believe that Pastor’s project or his person is being discriminated against, I do believe he represents change, and change is incredibly frightening to the longtime residents and members of the city council who are trying to protect and preserve the image of a small coastal city that they know and love. It’s becoming increasingly apparent that Carmel is needing more

attention and preservation that only comes with significant cost.

The incredible hoops Pastor has jumped through in project redesign speaks volumes of his commitment to the city and his character as a person. I hope he gets the opportunity to infuse new energy and opportunity so that Carmel will remain one of the best places to live/visit along the California coast .

Kelly Morgan-Sassman, Carmel

‘Trusted and beloved’

Dear Editor,

Important history lesson for relatively new arrivals who are keen to make impactful changes in our village:

In 2013, Barbara Livingston, our esteemed council member, convinced other voting members that the old Palo Alto Savings Building, on the corner of Seventh and Dolores, was historic and deserving of preservation.

Livingston saw the value in the bank building, designed by Walter Burde, as a rare example of mid-century architecture in town.

See MORE LETTERS next page



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Practicing physician: Jagroop Singh MD

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MORE LETTERS

From previous page

At the time, local developer John Mandurrago had bought the property with plans to raze it and build housing, retail and underground parking in its place. Mandurago gave up after an eight-year battle to try to get approval for his project.

Livingston had a lot of pull. She had attended every council meeting for 30 years, was founding president of Friends of the Carmel Forest, led the Carmel Residents Association for 10 years, served on the boards of the Carl Cherry Foundation and Carmel Preservation Foundation.

She was trusted and beloved because she was in it for public service, not to profit from Camel real estate. Barbara did not pander to anyone. She was loved in Carmel for her authenticity, her talent with design and her mission to protect village character.

Fortunately, there are enough old-timers still around to carry the torch. Barbara would be proud of everyone who has advocated for preservation of the property at Seventh and Dolores, and of Carmel at large.

No one should be crying about the strict standards we have for this village. The urgency to quickly build and remodel is not compatible with Carmel-by-the-Sea. It’s nothing personal, just the way things are, and should be, done here.

Cynthia Vandenberg,
Carmel

Pickleball community

Dear Editor,

I am a 27-year resident of Carmel-by-the-Sea and, now retired, a senior citizen who enjoys playing pickleball at Forest Hill Park. I am writing to express my concern regarding the new restrictions on the use of the tennis/pickleball courts at Forest Hill Park.

Our pickleball community has made significant efforts to comply with all the current restrictions. However, it appears these limitations are being driven by a few neighbors who have a difficult time accepting that they purchased a home adjacent to a public park. The sound of play is well within our current noise ordinances, and we consistently make an effort to be good neighbors. This includes cleaning up after ourselves, as well as others, and being courteous with our parking. When parking issues are brought to our attention, we make proper adjustments immediately.

Pickleball is a beneficial activity for our community, offering a joyful and social outlet for residents and visitors. It also provides a valuable draw for tourists, which contributes to local tax revenue. Continued support for the sport ensures that Forest Hill Park is utilized to its highest and best use for the entire community.

I am aware that some neighbors are confronting players and wish that they could do so with calm and kind tones. I urge the city council to reconsider these restrictions and support the continued enjoyment of this sport for both residents and visitors.

Judi Clayton, Carmel

‘Immeasurable joy’

Dear Editor,

Twelve years ago my husband and I were introduced to the game with the funny name of pickleball. At that time the courts were in terrible shape. My husband asked the council to consider renovating the existing tennis courts. They agreed, and a few of us began playing pickleball over the tennis nets and taped off the courts for pickleball. More people showed up and we always had extra paddles and balls. We formed the Monterey Bay Pickleball Club, held meetings, elected officers and continued to form friendships that grew in our small community.

A few years ago, my husband passed away, and I can honestly say the pickleball group with the social and physical joy that it has given me is immeasurable. I’m in my 80s and feel fortunate that I can continue to be a part of this wonderful group.

The popularity of this game continues to grow and it saddens me that a few disgruntled neighbors want to deny the joy of so many of the residents. The city has taken away two courts and limited play to a few hours three days a week.

Hopefully, the city council will consider the will of the majority of Carmel residents and let pickleball continue at Forest Hill Park.

Esta Holden, Carmel

Temporary speed bumps

Dear Editor,

I think all the residents of the Peninsula are sadly attuned to the crush of cars during Concours Week. Stock up, hunker down and hope time passes quickly. What no one signed up for are the “hot wheels” that turn every straightaway into Daytona. Munras, Pescadero, Iris Canyon are just a few.

We are told by the organizers that we should be grateful that this circus comes to town and, by way of proof, say they make charitable donations. It seems that their “charity” is the Pebble Beach Foundation, which is hugely endowed already. (It must do excellent work, as there are no homeless along 17 Mile Drive.)

I suggest a much better use of those funds. Hire law enforcement professionals, paid for by the Concours for the week, so that reckless driving can be contained.

Additionally, putting temporary speed bumps along the stretches of acceleration would also help. Small measures, to be sure, but it would reduce the noise and injuries.

Jim Lauderdale, Monterey

No charges?

Dear Editor,

I read with interest the arrest of Norberto Alaniz after a car collision in Pacific Grove. According to The Pine Cone article, at the time of the arrest, Alaniz was in possession of a handgun and four different types of illegal drugs for sale. Alaniz also has a previous felony conviction for an unspecified act. After the crash, he was treated for injuries and, as reported, released a short time later and not charged with a crime.

Hmmm? You are arrested after a crash, you have a felony record, you are in the possession of illegal drugs and an unregistered gun and get off scot free?

Thank you, Pacific Grove Police Department, for doing your job.

Jill Kleiss, Carmel

The way to fix housing

Dear Editor,

The City of Gonzales has taken an impressive step by approving nearly 3,500 new homes in the Vista Lucia project — complete with schools, parks, trails and community spaces. In a region where affordable housing is desperately needed, Gonzales is showing true leadership.

By contrast, Carmel has been mandated by the state to plan for 349 new housing units by 2031, with 231 designated as affordable. But just because your doctor says you need more apples doesn’t mean there’s room in the orchard. Exactly who will build those homes and where they will go is still uncertain. What is certain is that the affordability crisis continues to worsen, pushing out workers, families, and even longtime residents who can no longer afford to live here.

The crisis won’t be solved by the timid. It will only be solved by communities willing to take bold steps, like Gonzales just did. The only way to fix housing is to build more homes. And while we’re at it, the same goes for parking.

Albert Innocenti, Carmel

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MAYOR

From page 27A

■ Engine room heroes

None of this happens without exceptional city staff and the help of so many

volunteers from the community. After 12 years of hard work by many, Fire Chief Andrew Miller’s leadership, working alongside both cities’ contract teams and councils, made the complex ambulance transition possible. Public works director Ken Wysocki and senior project manager Javier Hernandez masterfully coordinated four engineering firms while implementing

resident John Comer’s brilliant suggestion to partner with the county on Ocean Avenue road improvements. Principal planner Marnie Waffle is performing a remarkable juggling act — bringing our updated equal housing access policy across the finish line, teeing up the objective design and development guidelines project for next month’s approval, and fine-tuning our housing element updates. Together with dedicated staff throughout city hall, they’re transforming yesterday’s challenges into today’s achievements.

■ Mountain views ahead

Like the little engine in the story, we can see even more challenging grades ahead. Some we’ve already seen and our workgroups will be delivering their achievements before year end. But others are quickly emerging right in front of us, and we’ll be talking about them in future columns. Some of those peaks may require us to think bigger — perhaps a more powerful engine, expanded resources or partnerships

we haven’t yet imagined. The difference is our growing confidence. Where we once wondered, “Can we?”, we now ask, “How will we?” Where others see insurmountable barriers, we see worthwhile climbs that build community strength.

■ I think we can

Each success builds momentum for the next challenge. Our village succeeds because we’ve learned that steady progress, exceptional staff, genuine community collaboration and determined persistence really can move mountains — or at least conquer the hills that once seemed too steep for a little village by the sea. The little village that could is chugging confidently toward whatever summit awaits, and the view from up here keeps getting better. To hear a podcast generated from this column go to cli.re/engine. Dale Byrne is Mayor of Carmel-by-the-Sea. His email is dbyrne@cbs.us

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TOUR

From page 8A

■ The Benjamin Turner House — the first brick house in the city and one of the earliest homes built here — was constructed in 1898 by Turner for himself and his family. A native of England and a mason by trade, Turner moved to San Francisco in the 1860s and worked on notable structures, including the first Palace Hotel, before moving to Carmel. In 2020, Dyar Architecture and De Franco Construction restored the historic section of the home and built an addition behind the original that is practically hidden from the street and includes an open kitchen and family room with divided-light glass windows opening to a south-facing courtyard.

“The design aims to set an example of how to maintain the historic integrity of a small cottage while adding a complementary addition that makes the home exceptionally functional for contemporary living,” organizers say. ■ A new Dyar Architecture project, Carmelo House, “was inspired by the many significant modernist homes in the city.” “While the rational plan and flat roof plane of the design recall Carmel’s mid-century heritage, the materiality of the board-and-batten wood siding links the home in a visceral way to the similarly clad, single-wall wood cottages of early Carmel,” the AIA observes. “The contrast between the home’s traditional materiality and its formal modernity creates a complementary and harmonious dialogue between past and present.” Reflecting the architecture, the interior finishes and furnishings are heavily influenced by mid-century Modern design. ■ Vista Lobos isn’t *that* Vista Lobos — the city-owned building and parking

lot near the police station. Another Dyar Architecture project, this Vista Lobos “is an extensive transformation of what was once a rather awkward-looking, ill-proportioned mid-century house.” Much of the home’s original L-shaped configuration was retained, with the side entry and a large courtyard allowing for “true indoor-outdoor living.” Tour tickets cost \$50 for Carmel Heritage Society and AIA Monterey Bay members, general admission is \$60, and tickets the day of the tour are \$70. The ticket includes the reception at First Murphy, a digital map and access guide, and photos and inside stories at each stop. Go to aia-montereybay.org.

BUTTERFLIES

From page 15A

threats from climate change, pesticide use and habitat loss continue to push this iconic species toward extinction.” Panetta explained that the population decline threatens “our environment and our agriculture. Protecting pollinators is a matter of environmental responsibility and agricultural resilience, and I’m committed to ensuring we do our part to save these species so central to the history and character of our home,” he said. High summer temperatures in recent years have taken a toll on monarch butterflies. “The western monarch population crashed by 96 percent from 2024 to 2025,” according to a report cited by the City of Pacific Grove, which manages the Monarch Grove Sanctuary — one of the state’s top sites for seeing the butterflies. “The consensus in the western monarch conservation community is that the main cause of the population crash was weather related, especially the record heatwaves across the breeding grounds.”



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- **Patients Top Choice** – Press Ganey Patient Satisfaction Scores (Florida)
- **Best Family Doctor** – The Lebanon Reporter, Boone County, Indiana 2016
- **Favorite Family Physician** – Sonoma Family Life Magazine, Sonoma County 2012

Additionally, she has previous training in Radiation Oncology from U. of Texas, Houston.

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This Week

Live Music,
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One-time teen idol, now 82, kicks off Sunset Center's 2024-25 season

A SINGER best known for the mega-hit singles “Venus” and “Why” — and selling more records than any other recording artist in 1959 and 1960 — **Frankie Avalon** kicks off Sunset Center's new season Saturday at 7:30 p.m. “Three generations ago, Frankie Avalon stole America's heart as a

Theater.

The concert will be a “sparkling celebration of Paris and the unforgettable music it has inspired,” the symphony said, promising a “passport to a Parisian dreamscape that is romantic, nostalgic and utterly enchanting.”

The performance will showcase singers **Malinda**

DeRouen, Bernard Holcom and **Leberta Lorál**. The music includes Édith Piaf classics like “La Foule” and “La Vie En Rose,” and songs from films, including “The Beauty and the Beast,” “Ratatouille” and “Amélie.”

Tickets are \$57 with discounts for students, teachers and active military. Forest Theater is located at Santa Rita and Mountain View. For tickets, call (831) 646-8511.



Violist Meena Bhasin (left) and pianist Elizabeth Joy Roe (above) kick off the 2025-26 season Monday at the Sand Box in Sand City.

On a High Note

By CHRIS COUNTS

teen idol and never let go,” Sunset Center said.

In the two years that followed Elvis Presley's induction in the U.S. Army in 1958, Avalon dominated the pop charts. He also found success on the silver screen, starring alongside actors like John Wayne and Alan Ladd in Western films, and with fellow teen idol Annette Funicello in a series of “beach party” movies. The 82-year-old singer is “still one of the busiest live performers in the country and brings his signature voice, style, and energy to every stage,” Sunset Center said.

Tickets start at \$65. The theater is located at San Carlos and Ninth. sunset-center.org.

■ Another ‘Love Letter’ arrives

The latest in its series of “Love Letter” concerts — and an ode to the City of Light — **Monterey Symphony** presents “Love Letter to Paris” Sept. 16-17 at the Forest

■ Guitar legend plays Tuesday

A Grammy Award-winning jazz guitarist whose music deeply influenced a generation of rock guitarists, **Al Di Meola** performs Tuesday, 8 p.m., at Golden State Theatre in Monterey.

Known for both his technical mastery of his instrument and breaking down

the boundaries between musical genres, Di Meola has recorded 27 studio albums since launching a solo career in 1976, including his latest LP, “Twentyfour,” which came out last year.

Tickets start at \$39. The theater is located at 417 Alvarado St. Call (831) 649-1070 or visit goldenstatetheatre.com.

Also playing at Golden State is **Queen Nation**, which pays tribute to the rock band

Queen Friday at 8 p.m. Tickets start at \$35.

Live music Sept. 12-18

■ Big Sur

Big Sur River Inn — singer and guitarist **Rick Chelew** (folk, Saturday at 12:30

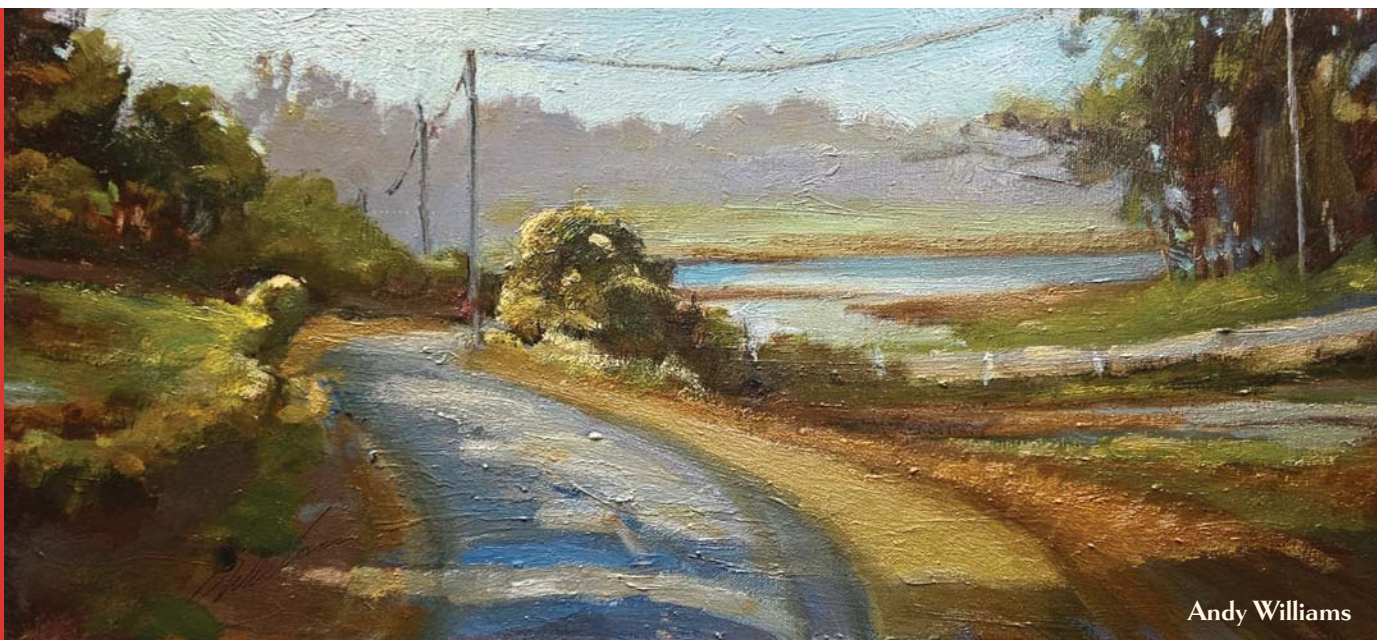
See **MUSIC** page 37A

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FOOD & WINE

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PENINSULA SUMMER is in full swing. Sunset Center’s launching its fall season with a concert by Frankie Avalon, who’s aged like a fine wine, vintners are

Soup to Nuts

starting to talk seriously about the harvest, and tomato dishes are popping up on menus all over the place. We’re also starting to get emails urging everyone to think now about reserving spots in local eateries for holiday parties.

Holiday parties? As Charlie Brown

would say, “Good grief.”
Anyway — this week, we’ve got mixologists gripping shakers in yet another round of the Links Club’s entertaining bartender battle saga. Alvarado Street Brewery’s throwing a really big Oktoberfest party, the Monterey Bay Chinese Association is getting prepped for its annual festival at Custom House Plaza, and there’s some pizza that might just ease a necessary drive to Salinas.
Oh, and did you know that now friendship bracelets are part of football season? Read on to find out why, and try not to hate.

Bartender battle continues

Mixologists of Monterey are facing off in the next round of the Links Club’s Battle of the Bartenders, which kicked off this week with Josh Perry at Cella competing against Andrew Weld from the Salty Seal. The featured liquor was Herradura Blanco Tequila, and Weld emerged victorious.
In the coming weeks on Monday nights, bartenders from a number of Monterey establishments, including Stokes Adobe, Lalla Grill, Hotel 1110, Hula’s, Kona and the C Bar at the Inter-Continental Hotel, will go head to head behind the bar at the Links Club. Each competitor gets to make a signature cocktail and then faces a couple of challenges, including using the evening’s featured spirit. While a panel



Brewmaster J.C. Hill, co-founder of Alvarado Street Brewery, said his experience learning the fine points of beer-making in Munich led him to envision a full-scale Oktoberfest. The family-friendly event is scheduled for Sept. 20, with more than 30 beers on tap — and some great food.

of judges chooses a favorite, so does the audience.
“Attendees will not only enjoy the six featured cocktails but also have the opportunity to vote for their favorite drink,” organizer April Montgomery said.
In addition to bragging rights, bartenders are competing for cash prizes, with \$500 going to the “city champion” and \$1,000 going to the overall champ at the end of the year.
After the Monterey round ends, Links Club will host a Pebble Beach/Pacific Grove round, and then the four regional champions will compete in semifinals and finals for the ultimate title. Felicia Gonzalez-Acosta, who presides over the diminutive bar at the two-Michelin-starred Aubergine restaurant in L’Auberge Car-

mel on Monte Verde Street won the Carmel-by-the-Sea round in April, and Renee Balducci from Honey & Rose mobile bartending took the crown at the end of the Carmel and Beyond round that followed.
Tickets are available at linksclub.com for \$35 or for \$45 at the door, and the Monterey Round runs through Oct. 20. The Links Club is located in the lower level of Carmel Plaza at Ocean and Mission.

Oktoberfest in September

Get out your lederhosen and dig out the dirndls. Alvarado Street Brewery will host its first large-scale Oktoberfest celebration Saturday, Sept. 20, from 1 to 5 p.m.

See OKTOBERFEST next page

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FOOD & WINE

OKTOBERFEST

From previous page

on the lawn at historic Colton Hall in Old Monterey.

The event marks a milestone for the brewery, whose leadership has long embraced Bavarian beer culture. Co-founder and brewmaster J.C. Hill studied beer-making in Munich at the Doemens Academy and earned his Master Brewer certificate. His experience with European traditions shaped Alvarado Street’s approach to lagers, and he envisioned an Oktoberfest celebration of this scale since returning from Munich last summer.

Marketing director Brock Bill, who has

German heritage, has also played a role in bringing Oktoberfest traditions to Monterey. For years, Hill, Bill and their partners, families and friends have celebrated the season in traditional attire. Organizers say this year’s event is a natural progression for the brewery.

There will be more than 30 taps from more than 20 lager-focused breweries nationwide, along with six German-style lagers from Alvarado Street, including Festbier, Märzen, Rauchbier, Schwarzbier and Radler.

Family-friendly

Food will be provided by The Meater, the outstanding Seaside butcher and sandwich shop run by Todd and Ada Fisher. They’ll supply house-made sausages and Bavarian-inspired specialties such as ASB Hoppy Bratwurst, giant Bavarian pretzels, Käsekrainer (a brat with cheese) and caramel apple strudel.

They’re also going to serve Knack-Chos — knackwurst meets nachos with beef & garlic sausage, potato chips, caramelized kraut, beer cheese, and truffle mayo/aioli sauce.

The event is presented in partnership with the Monterey Firefighters Community Foundation, and proceeds will support its community service efforts.

The festival will include traditional contests and games such as stein-holding, sack races, tug-of-war and Bavarian lawn games. Entertainment will be provided by DJBadDJ, who will blend classic Oktoberfest music with contemporary sounds. Local artisans and community partners will host booths, and the event is family-friendly, with free admission

for children under 12 accompanied by an adult.

Participating breweries include Ghost Town Brewing, North Park Beer Company, Fruition Brewing, Highland Park Brewery, There Does Not Exist, Heater Allen, Gold Dot, Other Brother Beer Co., Hops and Fog Brewing Co., Living Häus, Peter B’s, Wondrous Brewing, Green Cheek Beer Co., Everywhere, and Firestone Walker.

Tickets are available on Eventbrite. General admission is \$50, which includes a gold-rimmed half-liter tankard and four beer tokens. Designated driver or non-drinker tickets are \$15. Additional beer tokens can be purchased at the event for \$4 each.

Can’t get there? Check out ASB’s Carmel Bistro in Carmel Plaza, the flagship location at 426 Alvarado in Monterey, Old-

town Salinas Taproom at 301 Main St. or the tasting room in the company’s production facility at 1315 Dayton St. in Salinas. Or, visit [asb.beer](#).

■ Swifties, Chiefs and suds

The gang at Peter B’s in the Portola Plaza say they’re “adding a little sparkle” to football season with a friendship bracelet-making station during every Kansas City Chiefs game.

You might as well ask (as we did), “Why on Earth would anyone want to make friendship bracelets at a sports bar?” Well, the answer is Taylor Swift. The pop superstar famously got engaged to Travis Kelce, a tight end for the Chiefs, and broke

See **SWIFTIES** next page



Andrew Weld, from the Salty Seal pub on Cannery Row, won the latest round of the Links Club’s Battle of the Bartenders. The competition continues until they find the best of the best.

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GAVEL

From page 4A

started yelling. Mendoza and Ziebell got into a physical fight where Mendoza tried to take Ziebell to the ground, kicked at him, and grabbed onto his uniform. An unknown civilian walking in the area saw the struggle and offered to assist Ziebell.

The civilian held Mendoza’s feet down as Ziebell continued his attempts to control Mendoza. A second officer arrived, and they were able to place Mendoza in handcuffs and formally arrest him. Ziebell found drug paraphernalia on Mendoza when he was searched.

Mendoza faces a maximum sentence of three years.

July 11 — Judge Pamela L. Butler sentenced Emiliano Gomez, 45, a resident of Salinas, to four years in the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation following a court trial in which Gomez was found guilty of stalking his ex-wife, making criminal threats, possession of ammunition by a prohibited person, failure to register as a sex offender, and violation of a criminal

protective order. This conviction constitutes a strike conviction under California’s three strikes law.

On Oct. 26, 2022, Jane Doe reported to Monterey County Sheriff deputies that her estranged husband, Gomez, had been sending her threatening messages and photographs, including a photograph of the outside of her residence and a threat to kill Doe. Gomez had previously been convicted of a felony for assaulting Doe while armed with a knife. She feared for her safety and the safety of her children, one of whom she shares with Gomez.

During the course of the investigation, Monterey County Sheriff detectives discovered that he was a convicted sex offender and was required to register pursuant to Penal Code 290, but was not complying with his sex offender registration requirements.

Search warrants were issued for Gomez’s residence, and Gomez was found to be in possession of a number of modified BB guns made to look like legitimate rifles and a flare gun. Gomez was also found in possession of ammunition. Due to his prior felony conviction, Gomez was not authorized to possess ammunition.

SWIFTIES

From previous page

the news cycle when they announced it on Aug. 26 with a photo and caption that read, “Your English teacher and your gym teacher are getting married.”

“Even though we’re in 49ers territory, Peter B’s is leaning into the Swift of it all, inviting football fans and Swifties alike to create their own bracelets while cheering on their favorite team,” said a hotel representative. Peter B’s is open Saturday and Sunday 9:30 a.m. to 10 p.m., and Monday, Thursday and Friday from 4 to 10 p.m.

Salinas pit stop

It’s a sunny autumn afternoon and you have to run to the county offices at the other end of Highway 68 to do some business. While nearby Main Street has no shortage of restaurants, from inexpensive Mexican to craveable Italian, you might enjoy a stop at the Windmill Market at 115 Monterey-Salinas Highway.

In addition to a nice selection of organic produce, wine, pantry items fit for a chef, and bakery and pastry goodies, on Sept. 26, from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., you can also get a fresh, hot pizza.

“Chef Alessio Giannuzzi will be firing

up his delicious artisan pizzas right out front. Stop by, grab a whole pie, and enjoy fresh-made flavors that are perfect for a fall Friday.”

Giannuzzi, whose resume includes Il Fornaio, the former Giorgio’s at 201 Main in Salinas and serving as executive chef for Apple computers in Cupertino, has always stayed true to his Italian roots, so the pizza should be pretty terrific. A little patience can help you avoid the traditional searing of the roof of the mouth.

Chinese Cultural Festival

On Sept. 21, the Monterey Bay Chinese Association’s Chinese Cultural Festival returns to Custom House Plaza from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

There will be dancing demonstrations, including the Lion Dance, along with folk songs, art, crafts and of course, authentic food — spring rolls, sesame balls, Chinese noodles and more, made by a local Chinese restaurant.

The event will be a “special Chinese Cultural Festival featuring traditional music, dance food and family activities,” organizers said, and will offer a chance to “experience the beauty of Chinese heritage through live performances, and cultural exhibits.”

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

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



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MUSIC

From page 33A

p.m.), mandolinist **Dave Holodiloff** (jazz, Sunday at 1 p.m.). 46800 Highway 1.
Fernwood Resort — Big Search (indie-pop, Saturday at 10 p.m.). 47200 Highway 1.

Carmel

Barmel — singer and guitarist **Ryan Sesma** (Sunday at 7 p.m.), **Jazville** (Sunday at 7 p.m.). Carmel Square on San Carlos north of Seventh.
Carmel Mission Inn — guitarist **Daniel Cortes** (American roots and traditional Mexican, Tuesday at 6 p.m.). In the Dog Bar at 3665 Rio Road. Dogs are invited.
Hyatt Carmel Highlands — singer and pianist **T.J. Kuenster** (jazz, Friday at 5 p.m.), mandolinist **Dave Holodiloff** (jazz, Saturday at 5 p.m.), singer and guitarist **Casey Frazier** (Thursday at 5 p.m.). 120 Highlands Drive.
Cypress Inn — 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.), **The David Morwood Jazz Band** (Thursday at 6 p.m.). Lincoln and Seventh.
La Playa Hotel — **The David Morwood Jazz Band** (Sunday at 5 p.m.), guitarist **Glenn Bell** (jazz, Tuesday at 5 p.m.). Camino Real and Eighth.
Links Club — **The Chuck Brewer Band** (rock and

blues, 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.

Carmel Valley

Baja Cantina — **The Money Band** (pop and rock, Thursday at 6 p.m.). 7166 Carmel Valley Road.
Bernardus Lodge — pianist **Michael Culver** (jazz, Friday at 6 p.m.), **Andrea’s Fault** (jazz and pop, Saturday at noon), singer and pianist **T.J. Kuenster** (jazz, Saturday at 6 p.m.), guitarist **John Sherry** (rock and blues, Sunday at noon), singer and guitarist **Paul Behan** (Tuesday at 4

CALENDAR

Through Sept. 13 – Joining Hands Benefit Shop 15 Year Anniversary Celebration. Sales events features weekly drawings and themes. Store hours are 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Saturday at 26358 Carmel Rancho Lane, Ste. 1, Carmel. Details: joininghandsbenefitshops.org or (831) 293-8410.

Sundays – Jazz brunch with the Andrea Carter Trio, 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., at Terry’s Restaurant + Lounge, inside Cypress Inn, Lincoln and Seventh, Carmel-by-the-Sea. For more information, please contact Cypress Inn, (831) 624-3871.

Sept. 17 – Henry Meade Williams Local History Lecture Series presents: In Their Own Words: The MacGowan Sisters’ Literary Legacy in Carmel with author and journalist **Joy Lanzendorfer**. 7 p.m. at Carpenter Hall, Sunset Center. Registration required on our website: www.carmelpubliclibraryfoundation.org. Hosted by the Carmel Public Library Foundation. Cost: free; \$10 suggested contribution. Questions? info@carmelpubliclibraryfoundation.org or (831) 624-2811.

Sept. 20 – Carmel Valley Lodge Mosaic Class with Didier Guedj, 4 to 7 p.m. \$80 all supplies included, snacks and beverages. (831) 659-2261 to book your spot. Limited seating, please book early!

Sept. 20 – All are invited to the Carmel Woman’s Club Centennial Celebration, “Journey Through Time.” Enjoy live music, local bites, historical exhibits, family fun and a Centennial birthday cake. Noon to 4 p.m. at the club, Ninth at San Carlos, Carmel-by-the Sea. Tickets are \$10 at the door or at carmelwomensclub.ticketspice.com/cwc. Children under 12 free with paying adult.

Now through October – Baum & Blume’s secluded patio now available for summer fêtes! Intimate wedding rehearsal dinner? Birthday party? Social club meet-up? Afternoon tea? Wine dinner group? Our chefs plan and prepare your menu, you just come and party! Baum & Blume Café and Catering, 4 El Caminito Road, Carmel Valley (831) 659-0400.

Sept. 22 – Join us for the Gen Giammanco Foundation Charity Golf Tournament at Corral de Tierra Country Club. The foundation’s mission is to provide scholarships to Monterey County college-bound student athletes. For inquiries, donations, or sponsorships, contact Annie Giammanco at (831) 915-1005 or gensfoundation@gmail.com. For golf tournament registration or to join the event reception, visit <https://gengiammancofoundation.org/golf-tournament>

Sept. 26 – World Affairs Council of the Monterey Bay Area (WACMB) will present a lecture / luncheon 11:30 a.m. at the Ferrante’s Room of the Monterey Marriott. Our speaker will be **Professor Avner Cohen**, senior fellow, James Martin Center for Nonproliferation Studies at MIIS, whose topic will be **“Reflections About Israel, Iran and the Gaza War.”** Please visit www.wacmb.org for event registration and information.

Oct. 3-5 – Tor House Fall Festival: 5-7 p.m. Fri. **sunset celebration** at Tor House. Music, poetry reading, wine and cheese. \$35. 9 a.m. to 3:45 p.m. Sat., **talks, panel discussion, poetry reading.** Free admission. 5 to 8 p.m. Sat. **reception and banquet** at Monterey Conference Center. Speakers: **Sam Farr and Aengus Jeffers**. \$80. 2 to 5 p.m. Sun. **Tour of Point Sur Lighthouse with poetry.** \$25 Reservations: www.torhouse.org/events. Info: (831) 624-1813.

Oct. 18 – Monterey Firefighters Charity Ball comes to The Inn at Spanish Bay. Black-tie elegance meets community spirit! Enjoy gourmet dining, thrilling auctions, and a lively dance floor – all to benefit local causes and outreach programs led by the Monterey Firefighters Community Foundation. Tickets \$250: www.montereyfirefighterfoundation.org

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p.m.), multi-instrumentalist **Gary Regina** (jazz, Wednesday at 4 p.m.). 415 W. Carmel Valley Road.
Folktales Winery — singer and guitarist **Jacob Chase** (Saturday at 5 p.m.), **Monterey Jazz Regional All-Star Combos** (Sunday at 11 a.m.), guitarist **Daniel Cortes** (American roots and traditional Mexican, Monday at 5 p.m.), singer and multi-instrumentalist **Rory Lynch** (Tuesday at 5 p.m.), singer and guitarist **Tim Brady**

See LIVE page 39A

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LIVE

From page 37A

(Wednesday at 2 p.m.), singer and guitarist **Trianna Feruza** (Thursday at 2 p.m.). 8940 Carmel Valley Road.

Scratch Wines Tasting Room — **Pattie Gilbert & The Wanderlust** (pop and rock, Sunday at 3 p.m.). 1 E. Carmel Valley Road.

Trailside Cafe — singer and guitarist **Dave D’oh** (Saturday at 6 p.m.). 3 Del Fino Place.

Monterey

Albatross Ridge Winery — 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 (Thursday at 7 p.m.). 794 Light-house Ave.

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

Estéban Restaurant — guitarist Cath-

erine Broz (Spanish and classical, Thurs-day at 5 p.m.). Casa Munras Hotel, 700 Munras Ave.

Hyatt Regency Monterey — singer and multi-instrumentalist **Meredith McHenry** (Friday at 7 p.m.), guitarist **Adam Astrup** (jazz, Saturday at 7 p.m.). 1 Old Golf Course Road.

InterContinental Hotel — mando-linist **Dave Holodiloff** (jazz, Friday at 7 p.m.), guitarist **John Sherry** (rock and blues, Saturday at 7 p.m.), guitarist **Ter-rance Farrell** (Spanish, classical and jazz, Sunday at 9 a.m.). 750 Cannery Row.

Jack’s Monterey — singer and gui-tarist **Zack Freitas** (Friday at 6 p.m.), multi-instrumentalist **Paul Contos & friends** (jazz, Thursday 6 p.m.). At Portola Hotel, 2 Portola Plaza.

Midici Pizza — singer **Janice Perl**, pianist **T.J. Kuenster**, bassist **Joe Dolis-ter** (jazz, Sunday at 5 p.m.), singer **Akina Miyata**, guitarist **Sam Nilsson**, pianist **Bill Spencer** (jazz, Thursday at 6 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, Satur-day at 6 p.m.), pianist **Steve Mann** (jazz,

Sunday at 6 p.m.). 400 Cannery Row.

Peter B’s — singer and guitarist **Scott Slaughter** (Thursday at 6 p.m.). At Portola Hotel, 2 Portola Plaza.

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

214 Lighthouse Ave.

Sardine Factory — singer and guitar-ist **David Conley** (Tuesday through Satur-day at 7:30 p.m.). 701 Wave St.

Sly McFly’s — **Everyday People**

See CONCERT page 41A



Paying tribute to the band led by the late Freddie Mercury, Queen Nation plays Friday, 8 p.m., at Golden State Theatre in Monterey.

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Wildlife, creativity come together, fundraiser offers auction, raffle

BRINGING TOGETHER six artists — Jennifer Anderson, Christine Crozier, Andrea Johnson, Sibyl Johnson, Carol Parker and Pamela Takigawa — a new show on display at the Carmel Art Association explores the connection between wildlife and creativity. The display is titled, “In the Company of Creatures.” “In this exhibition, six artist members of the Carmel Art Association bring you face-to-face with the animals that stir their imaginations and anchor them to the earth,” the gallery’s Lily Mendez said.

According to Mendez, animals have a way of capturing our attention and touching something deep inside of us.

“When we hear the rustle of wings overhead or meet the steady gaze of an animal in the wild or at home, we



Painter Andy Williams’ “The Path to the Beach” is included in a new show at Carmel Art Association.

are drawn in,” she said. “Creatures have a way of pulling us out of ourselves, of connecting us to something larger, something timeless.”

Also new at the gallery is a display of paintings, “From the Valley to the Sea — Living in Monterey County,” by award-winning landscape artist Andy Williams. He captures scenes in Elkhorn Slough, Point Lobos, Rocky Point, and Salinas Valley. “His primary medium is now oil on canvas, and in recent years he has concentrated on plein air painting in the Early California style, studying with noted California painters such as William Rushton and Randal Sexton,” Mendez said.

The gallery — which is located on Dolores between Fourth and Fifth — hosts a reception for the artists Saturday at 4 p.m., which offers a chance to “stroll through the gallery and garden, sip wine, savor light bites, and enjoy live jazz by the Rick Forschino Combo,” Mendez added.

The shows will be on display through Oct. 6.

■ ‘Cheaper than a burrito’

Featuring images by more than 150 established and emerging artists, the Center for Photographic Art welcomes its latest 8x10 Fundraising Exhibition Saturday with a reception at 4 p.m.

Executive director Ann Jastrab called the event “our most exciting and import-

ant fundraiser of the year.”

“Our gallery will be filled with a wide-ranging selection of small-framed works of art generously donated by our talented community of photographers,” Jastrab explained. “We have works by both legendary photographers and rising stars, from California and beyond.”

Represented in the show will be photos by John Chiara, Linda Connor, Roman Loranc, Jerry Takigawa, Brian Taylor, Binh Danh, the late Ansel Adams, and many others.

While the photos will be auctioned off online at igave-lauctions.com, there will also be a raffle. “You might just pick up a really nice Ansel Adams photograph for the price of a \$10 raffle ticket,” Jastrab added. “That’s cheaper than a burrito these days.”

The show is on display through Sept. 30. The gallery is located in Sunset Center at San Carlos and Ninth. photography.org.

■ The art of Big Sur

Two shows that opened this week at the Monterey Museum of Art — “A Sense of Wonder” and “A World Apart” — delve into Big Sur’s rich artistic past, capturing its creative spirit during the mid-20th century. The two exhibits are part of a series of four shows at the museum that celebrate Big Sur’s colorful art scene.

“A Sense of Wonder” explores how the opening of Highway 1 gave photographers their first glimpse of Big Sur. It’s on display through Jan. 18. “A World Apart” examines how Highway 1, the environment and spirituality shaped the artists who made Big Sur their home. The show continues through Nov. 30.

The museum is at 559 Pacific St. montereyart.org.

PUBLIC NOTICES

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No. 20251612
Filing type: ORIGINAL FILING.
The following person(s) is (are) doing business as: **LOVE + LAVENDER FARM, 388A Corral de Tierra Rd., Salinas, CA 93908.**
County of Principal Place of Business: MONTEREY
Registered Owner(s): GABRIELLA SANDOVAL PAROLA, 388A Corral de Tierra Rd., Salinas, CA 93908. This business is conducted by an individual. Registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above on Aug. 25, 2025.
S/Gabriella Parola
Date signed: Sept. 3, 2025
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Monterey County on Sept. 3, 2025.
Publication Dates: Sept. 12, 19, 26, Oct. 3, 2025 (PC 928)

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No. 20251571
Filing type: RENEWAL FILING - filed within 40 days of the expiration date and no CHANGES(S) from the previous filing
The following person(s) is (are) doing business as: **PROGRESSIVE MORTGAGE SOLUTIONS, 2872 Forest Lodge Road,**

Pebble Beach, CA 93953.
County of Principal Place of Business: MONTEREY
Registered Owner(s): JEFFERY ALLEN DAVIES.
This business is conducted by an individual. Registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above on Aug. 25, 2025.
S/Jeffery A. Davies
Date signed: Aug. 25, 2025
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Monterey County on Aug. 28, 2025.
Publication Dates: Sept. 12, 19, 26, Oct. 3, 2025 (PC 929)

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No. 20251570
Filing type: ORIGINAL FILING.
The following person(s) is (are) doing business as: **VALLEY ARMORY & GUNSMITHING, 28 Quail Run Circle, STE. F, Salinas, CA 93907.**
County of Principal Place of Business: MONTEREY
Registered Owner(s): RAYMOND MARTIN PARGA, 28 Quail Run Circle, STE. F, Salinas, CA 93907. This business is conducted by an individual. Registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name or names

listed above on Aug. 28, 2025.
S/Raymond Parga
Date signed: Aug. 28, 2025
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Monterey County on Aug. 28, 2025.
Publication Dates: Sept. 12, 19, 26, Oct. 3, 2025 (PC 930)

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No. 20251621
Filing type: ORIGINAL FILING.
The following person(s) is (are) doing business as: **BROS AUTO GROUP, 1935 Princeton Ct., Salinas, CA 93906.**
County of Principal Place of Business: MONTEREY
Name of Corporation or LLC as shown in the Articles of Inc./Org./Reg.: BROS AUTO GROUP LLC, 1935 Princeton ct., Salinas, CA 93906.

State of Inc./Org./Reg.: CA
This business is conducted by a limited liability company.
Registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above on Sept. 4, 2025.
S/Alfredo Soto, CEO
Date: Sept. 4, 2025
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Monterey County on Sept. 4, 2025.
Publication Dates: Sept. 12, 19, 26, Oct. 3, 2025. (PC 932)

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No. 20251636
Filing type: ORIGINAL FILING.
The following person(s) is (are) doing business as: **INDUS, 110 General Stilwell, Suite 1104, Marina, CA 93933.**
County of Principal Place of Business:

MONTEREY
Name of Corporation or LLC as shown in the Articles of Inc./Org./Reg.: OCEAN SPICE LLC, 3690 The Barnyard, Carmel, CA 93923.
State of Inc./Org./Reg.: CA
This business is conducted by a limited liability company.
Registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name or names

listed above on Sept. 8, 2025.
S/BD Singh, Member
Date: Sept. 8, 2025
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Monterey County on Sept. 8, 2025.
Publication Dates: Sept. 12, 19, 26, Oct. 3, 2025. (PC 933)

NOTICE OF PETITION TO ADMINISTER ESTATE RUTH G. WATSON aka RUTH GOMPERTZ WATSON CASE NO. 25PR000458

To all heirs, beneficiaries, creditors, contingent creditors, and persons who may otherwise be interested in the will or estate, or both, of RUTH G. WATSON aka RUTH GOMPERTZ WATSON.

A PETITION FOR PROBATE has been filed by 17TH AND PERALTA, LLC in the Superior Court of California, County of MONTEREY.

The Petition for Probate requests that LAUREN WATSON CESARE be appointed as personal representative to administer the estate of the decedent.

The petition requests authority to administer the estate under the Independent Administration of Estates Act. (This authority will allow the personal representative to take many actions without obtaining court approval. Before taking certain very important actions, however, the personal representative will be required to give notice to interested persons unless they have waived notice or consented to the proposed action.) The independent administration authority will be granted unless an interested person files an objection to the petition and shows good cause why the court should not grant the authority.

A hearing on the petition will be held in this court as follows:

Date: Oct. 1, 2025
Time: 9:00 a.m.
Dept.: 13
Address: Superior Court of California, County of Monterey, 1200 Aguajito Road, Monterey, CA 93940.

If you object to the granting of the petition, you should appear at the hearing and state your objections or file written objections

with the court before the hearing. Your appearance may be in person or by your attorney.

If you are a creditor or a contingent creditor of the decedent, you must file your claim with the court and mail a copy to the personal representative appointed by the court within the **later** of either (1) **four months** from the date of first issuance of letters to a general personal representative, as defined in section 58(b) of the California Probate Code, or (2) **60 days** from the date of mailing or personal delivery to you of a notice under section 9052 of the California Probate Code. **Other California statutes and legal authority may affect your rights as a creditor. You may want to consult with an attorney knowledgeable in California law.**

You may examine the file kept by the court. If you are a person interested in the estate, you may file with the court a Request for Special Notice (form DE-154) of the filing of an inventory and appraisal of estate assets or of any petition or account as provided in Probate Code section 1250. A Request for Special Notice form is available from the court clerk.

Attorney for Petitioner: THOMAS B. WORTH Friedman McCubbin Law Group LLP
425 California St., 25th Fl., San Francisco, CA 94104 (415) 434-2226

This statement was filed by Superior Court of California, County of Monterey on Aug. 26, 2025.

Publication dates: Publication dates: Sept. 5, 12, 19, 2025. (PC910)

NOTICE OF PETITION TO ADMINISTER ESTATE ANN P. CLEARY CASE NO. 25PR000457

To all heirs, beneficiaries, creditors, contingent creditors, and persons who may otherwise be interested in the will or estate, or both, of ANN P. CLEARY.

A PETITION FOR PROBATE has been filed by CHARLES M. CLEARY in the Superior Court of California, County of MONTEREY.

The Petition for Probate requests that CHARLES M. CLEARY be appointed as personal representative to administer the estate of the decedent.

The petition requests the decedent’s will and codicils, if any, be admitted to probate. The will and any codicils are available for examination in the file kept by the court.

The petition requests authority to administer the estate under the Independent Administration of Estates Act. (This authority will allow the personal representative to take many actions without obtaining court approval. Before taking certain very important actions, however, the personal representative will be required to give notice to interested persons unless they have waived notice or consented to the proposed action.) The independent administration authority will be granted unless an interested person files an objection to the petition and shows good cause why the court should not grant the authority.

A hearing on the petition will be held in this court as follows:

Date: Oct. 1, 2025
Time: 9:00 a.m.
Dept: 13
Address: Superior Court of California, County of Monterey, 1200 Aguajito Road, Monterey, CA 93940.

This statement was filed with the Superior Court of California County of Monterey on August 26th, 2025..

Publication dates: Sept. 12, 19, 26, Oct. 3, 2025. (PC923)

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CYPRESS FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING FINAL BUDGET FISCAL YEAR 2025-26

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that on Thursday, September 25, 2025 at 2:00 p.m. the Cypress Fire Protection District, Board of Directors will meet at the District’s fire station located at 3775 Rio Road, Carmel to consider adoption of the final budget for fiscal year 2025-26 that ends on June 30, 2026.

NOTICE IS FURTHER GIVEN that the preliminary budget was adopted May 22, 2025 and is available for inspection at the District’s fire station located at 3775 Rio Road, Carmel between the hours of 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

NOTICE IS FURTHER GIVEN that any District resident may appear and be heard regarding the increase, decrease, or omission of any item on the budget or for the inclusion of any additional items.

DATED: September 2, 2025
Leslie Baek, Secretary of the Board

Publication dates: Sept. 12 & 19, 2025 (PC916)

CARMEL HIGHLANDS FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING FINAL BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2025-26

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that on Wednesday, September 17, 2025 at 12:30 p.m. The Carmel Highlands Fire Protection District, Board of Directors will meet at the district’s fire station located at 73 Fern Canyon Road, Carmel to consider adoption of the final budget for fiscal year 2025-26 that ends on June 30, 2026.

NOTICE IS FURTHER GIVEN, that the preliminary budget was adopted May 21, 2025 and is available for inspection at the District’s fire station located at 73 Fern Canyon Road, Carmel between the hours of 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

NOTICE IS FURTHER GIVEN that any District resident may appear and be heard regarding the increase, decrease, or omission of any item on the budget or for the inclusion of any additional items.

Dated: September 2, 2025
Leslie Baek, Secretary of the Board

Publication dates: Sept. 5 & 12, 2025 (PC917)

Notice is hereby given that sealed proposals will be received by the District Board, Carmel Area Wastewater District, at the District office, 3945 Rio Road, Carmel, CA. 93923, until

3:00 P.M., Monday, September 22nd, 2025

at which time they will be publicly opened and read for performing the work as follows:

Electric Yard Tractor Equipment Purchase

The results of the bidding will be reported to the District Board within forty-five (45) days of the date of the bid opening at which time if bids are found to be acceptable by the District Board, written notice of award will be given to the lowest responsive and responsible Bidder. However, said District Board reserves its right to reject any or all bids, to waive irregularities of any bids or to re-advertise for all or any part of the equipment contemplated.

No bidder shall withdraw his bid for a period of sixty (60) calendar days after the date set by the Board for the opening thereof.

Specifications and proposal forms may be secured at no charge by emailing the District’s Facilities Manager foley@cawd.org and requesting the documents.

Publication dates: Sept. 12 & 19, 2025 (PC921)

CONCERT

From page 39A

(“classic Latin rock with an old-school funk twist,”), Friday at 9 p.m.), **Phil ’n’ The Blanks** (classic rock, Saturday at 9 p.m.). 700 Cannery Row.

Pacific Grove

Asilomar Conference Grounds — singer and multi-instrumentalist **Casey Wickstrom** (rock & blues, Saturday at 4 p.m.). 800 Asilomar Ave.
Il Vecchio Restaurant — **The Cena Jazz Trio** (Thursday at 6 p.m.). 110 Central Ave.
Lucy’s on Lighthouse — **The Transducers** (rock and funk, Saturday at 2 p.m.), **The Lighthouse Band** (rock and soul, Sunday at 2 p.m.). 1120 Lighthouse Ave.
Julia’s Vegetarian Restaurant — singer and guitarist **Rags Rosenberg** (Friday at 7 p.m.), singer and guitarist **Kevin Smith** (Saturday at 6 p.m.). 1180 Forest Ave.
Pacific Grove Art Center — **Hootenanny** (“bi-monthly community sing-along and open jam,” Saturday at 7 p.m.). 568 Lighthouse Ave.
PG’s Meetinghouse — **The New Wave Band** (rock, Friday at 6:30 p.m.), singer **Janice Perl** and pianist **Jon Dryden** (jazz, Saturday at 6:30 p.m.), pianist **Kevin McCullough** (jazz, Sunday at 11 a.m.), **Open Mic** (Tuesday at 6 p.m., sign up by 5 p.m.). 599 Lighthouse Ave.
Pop ’n’ Hiss — **Jazz Organ Trio** (Saturday at 6 p.m.), **Open Mic** (Sunday at 6 p.m.), **Nice Device** (rock, Thursday at 6 p.m.). 215 Forest Ave.
Puma Road Winery at Portola Plaza — singer and guitarist **RJ DeMarco** (Friday at 6 p.m.), singer and guitarist **Kito Rayburn** (Saturday at 6 p.m.), **The Smoky Vegas Project** (“classic lounge,” Sunday at 5 p.m.). 281 Alvarado St.

Pebble Beach

The Inn at Spanish Bay — **The Andy Weis Trio** (jazz, Friday, Saturday and Thursday at 7 p.m.), 2700 17 Mile Drive.

Sand City

The Sand Box — pianist **Elizabeth Joy Roe** and violist **Meena Bhasin** kick off the season at the Sand Box



A singer and actor who rose to fame in the late 1950s, Frankie Avalon performs Saturday at 7 p.m.

(classical, Monday at 7 p.m.). Tickets start at \$30. 440 Ortiz Ave. sandboxsandcity.com

Seaside

Deja Blue — **The Al James Band** (r&b, Saturday at

5 p.m.), singer **Minor Williams** (r&b, Sunday at 4 p.m.). 500 Broadway.

To update these listings, email chris@carmelpinecone.com.

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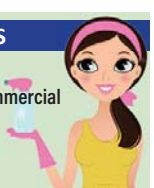
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Continues on next page

Police Log: Pacific Grove, Nov. 30

A

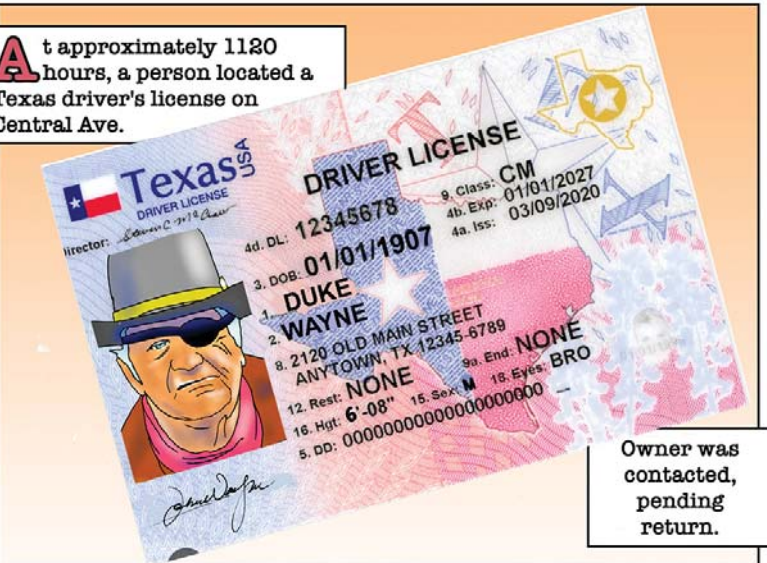
surfboard found at Asilomar State Beach was brought into the station.



No owner information is known.

A

t approximately 1120 hours, a person located a Texas driver's license on Central Ave.



Owner was contacted, pending return.

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ARTIST

From page 27A

in Northern California’s boatyards.

“Some of that work could be boring, like painting weight-load limit numbers on a barge,” he said. “Other times, I might be painting a luxury yacht,” said Rutana, who lettered the bow of the Ida Mae, once owned by Stan Laurel (of Laurel and Hardy fame), and Humphrey Bogart’s onetime pleasure vessel, Santana. He also applied his artistry to well-known fireboats like Sea Fox in Oakland, the Liberty in Sausalito, Phoenix and Guardian in San Francisco, Monterey Bay Aquarium’s research boat, and an America’s Cup racing yacht.

Memorable was the week Guthrie Signs dispatched him to Petaluma and the set of “Inventing the Abbotts,” a 1997 movie with Jennifer Connelly, Joaquin Phoenix, Liv Tyler and Michael Keaton.

“That was hectic,” he recalled. “They’d say, ‘Hey, we need some restaurant signs — hamburgers, 25 cents —

stuff like that!’ Then they’d yell, ‘Forget that — go over there and paint us a newspaper stand!’”

Rutana was tasked with reimagining an entire block, replacing multiple real signs with fakes. After the movie wrapped, he repainted the originals. He said he saw “Inventing the Abbotts” a year-and-a-half later. None of his work was in it.

The digital age arrives

As digital art evolved, Rutana — an independent contractor by then — began to wind down his business.

“Eight years ago, Betsy retired and said, ‘I want to travel to Italy. If you’re not coming, I’ll find somebody else,’” he joked of his wife of 34 years. “So, five years ago, I retired, too.”

At 65, Rutana paints his signs “to satisfy my soul,” he said, and frequently for charity.

“Every year I go to Point Richmond to re-letter the Lovely Martha, one of the last remaining wood charter boats. Last year was the 34th straight year that I’ve done it,” he said of a gig that takes two-and-a-half days and requires him to paint the name in three colors on three

sides of the vessel.

“That boat was built in 1959, the same year I was. I’m always asking the owner (Frank Recino), ‘Who’s gonna go first, me or the boat?’”

Other Northern California commercial charter boats wearing his lettering include Salty Lady, Wacky Jacky, Chucky’s Pride, and Bass Tub.

On Nov. 8, at 1150 Pico Ave. in Pacific Grove, Rutana will be among 15-20 artists who will show their wares at the 13th annual Asilomar Neighborhood Arts and Crafts Faire, a fundraiser for Hitchcock Road Animal Services near Salinas. The event, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., will be held the following day in the event of a rainout.

Rutana’s Americana-style paintings can be viewed online at thefountainartscenter.org/rutana.html.

Visit the patio at Carmel Valley Art Association (8 Del Fino Place, Carmel Valley Village), where his artistic signage is on exhibit, along with the ornate, Peninsula-inspired tabletop he made from reclaimed wood.

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

SERVICE DIRECTORY

Continues from previous page

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WOMEN IN BUSINESS

LOCAL WOMEN – REAL SUCCESS

The art of a home that fits in but still stands out

By LISA LAPIN

IN THE upper-floor offices of Studio Schicketanz in the Barnyard shopping center, a cadre of interior designers and specialized architects sit at high-tech workstations. Countertops are stacked with architecture magazines and coffee-table books featuring some of the studio's vaunted residential works: A long, low-slung home built into a high ocean bluff near Mal Paso Canyon. An updated cabin with an outdoor stone living room in the redwoods of Big Sur.

Inside the PAV Design Studio in downtown Carmel, a small office is a showcase, from the massive custom steel-and-wood-table for spreading out plans, to artful squares of concrete infused with swirls of sand, and contrasting paint colors, including a soft charcoal with hints of warm green.

Their chosen home

Both firms are operated by award-winning architects who have made their marks transforming properties in Carmel, Carmel Valley, Pebble Beach and Big Sur, and who are making their names known far beyond, in Montana and Colorado, Hawaii and Ohio.

Patricia Arpini Velho of PAV Design Studio studied urban development and architecture in her native Brazil. Mary Ann Schicketanz was an engineer in her native Austria. Both are now contemporary



PHOTOS/(LEFT) STUDIO SCHICKETANZ, (RIGHT) BOB CANFIELD

Architect Mary Ann Schicketanz doesn't try to compete with the exceptional landscapes at many local homes, but her designs complement them beautifully.

residential architects who have practiced for decades in their chosen home of Carmel and all along the Monterey County coast, where they find inspiration in the shoreline and mountains, the terrain, topography, native vegetation and vast open spaces.

"I take into consideration the whole

environment and how a home will interact with its surroundings," said Velho. "The combination of that vision with what the owner is seeking and the complexity of form and function results in the art."

"It doesn't matter what kind of property it is, I always try to unlock the highest

potential of the site while being highly sensitive to the views and having the least environmental impact on the land," said Schicketanz. "Ultimately, you want to sensitively create a home where the owners

ARCHITECTS *cont. page 17W*

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W O M E N I N B U S I N E S S

Sometimes you just need to escape. No, really.

By ELAINE HESSER

A FAMILY of four enters a specially decorated room — a classic vampire motif, a holiday dining scene, or something reminiscent of a favorite movie. Parents and kids alike can pick the props up and handle them. In fact, they’ll have to.

The door closes behind them, and a 60-minute timer starts. A mystery is introduced and the story is revealed through a series of puzzles. Everyone works together, starting with finding the first clue — perhaps going through the pockets of an old smoking jacket and discovering a key that opens a padlocked box containing the next cryptic piece of the tale. If they can follow the trail successfully within the allotted hour — using deduction, problem-solving skills, or, occasionally, trial and error — they’ll learn the full story and earn their “freedom” from the escape room.

‘So much fun’

Christina Riddoch owns 831 Escape Rooms in Monterey on Lighthouse Avenue, Wave Street and Cannery Row, plus Oscar’s Playground in the building that once housed Oscar Hossenfelder’s Edgewater Packing Co., a beloved Monterey attraction with an indoor carousel. Riddoch decided to open her first escape room after she and her family, including her 9-year-old granddaughter, visited one in Kansas City.

“It was so much fun,” she recalled. “I wondered why Monterey didn’t have one.”

By then, Riddoch was no stranger to retail or Cannery Row, and the life that

brought her there had ignited her curiosity and sense of adventure.

She traveled the world with her father — a linguist in the Peace Corps — and her mother, who was born in East Germany. They lived in Monterey when Riddoch’s dad had a job at the Defense Language Institute, and her mother was a German instructor there.

Riddoch graduated from an American high school in a rural area outside of Munich. She said it was the kind of place you could hear herds of cows coming and going with their bells on.

She landed a position with a relocation

firm that helped international businesses’ employees to find housing, complete paperwork and get settled into workplaces on foreign soil.

Candles and cars

After becoming a single parent, Riddoch said, “I was not sure where I belonged — Germany or America — I had the best of both worlds.” She decided to return to Monterey.

It was tough at first — she cleaned hotel rooms while taking classes at Monterey Peninsula College, including some in interior design and accounting. She said she

“just made it work.” But she made friends and soon started keeping books for small businesses.

An interior design and custom ceramics company was expanding, and Riddoch joined the firm at its location in the Monterey Plaza hotel. She married Barrie Riddoch, and they bought two businesses on Cannery Row — a shop called Candles and Clay, and Monterey Roadster, a vintage-car rental company.

During the 2008 recession, they sold both businesses and took a break from

UNLOCKED cont. page 24W



Christina Riddoch (left) and her husband, Barrie, brought escape rooms to the Monterey Peninsula after discovering firsthand what a great family activity they are. Grownups and kids alike enjoy puzzling out the clues and following them to a satisfactory ending.

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W O M E N I N B U S I N E S S

Selling flowers out of the back of a truck wasn't bad — for a while

By DENNIS TAYLOR

PURSUIT OF happiness is a risk worth taking for Lauren Walsh and her husband, Ethan, a wildly artistic local couple who have been building their business dream on the Monterey Peninsula in calculated, colorful steps since 2018, especially over the past four years.

He's an oil painter — self-taught — so talented that his plein air landscapes and seascapes were juried into the Carmel Art Association early this year. He also specializes in portraits.

She's a floral-design artist — self-taught — who, in 2021, converted a 1980 Ford Courier into a charming flower truck. She painted it “Monterey Bay blue,” named it “Juni,” and began selling her own dazzling arrangements to a steady stream of passersby at Lovers Point and other Peninsula venues.

Leaps of faith

In 2023, when their son, Nico, was 6, and their daughter, Mila, was 4, they boldly merged their passions into Gallery Nila, renting a too-large space on Lighthouse Avenue in Pacific Grove.

For the next two years, Ethan sold his art, and Lauren expanded her client base and taught floral-design workshops in their brick-and-mortar showroom.

Year One was busy. Year Two, not so much. So, this month, amid Year Three, they downsized to 225 Forest Ave. (cozier, prettier, lower rent), between Pacific Grove Hardware and Grooms by the Bay.

It hasn't been easy, nor have they salied forth with lockstep philosophies.

“Her leaps of faith are always braver than mine,” he said. “She has this amazing



Floral designer Lauren Walsh and painter Ethan Walsh combined the names of their daughter, Mila, and their son, Nico, to name Gallery Nila, their Pacific Grove business.



work ethic, self-confidence and positivity. Those things, I think, make her pretty fearless about taking risks. I'm very fearful.”

Lauren's family, she said, is populated with workaholics, including her mom, who placed a high value on financial security.

“My mom just worked nonstop without really getting a lot out of it, and I kind of learned from her mistake, I guess,” said Lauren, who, after performing in the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade in New York City, aspired to become a dancer.

When her mother sternly nixed that not-so-pragmatic plan, Lauren earned her college degree in communications psychology.

Then she indulged her adventurous

spirit and moved to New York, where she found a public relations job.

“We did a lot of big events, which was fun, but I knew that's not what I wanted to do for the rest of my life, so I moved to Boston and went back to school,” she said. “My mom wasn't too happy when I quit.”

Good mixes

While working toward her master's degree at Lesley University in Cambridge, she paid her bills with two — sometimes three — bartending jobs.

She was mixing drinks the day she met an artist — “love at first sight,” she said — stalked him to the other side of the bar, and began picking his artistic brain about color

theory. Lauren Richards married Ethan Walsh at Harvard Square in Cambridge, Mass., in 2013.

She became licensed in Massachusetts as an expressive art therapist. That's “a therapist who uses the arts for healing,” she explained. Then, she moved with her husband to San Diego and continued her career in California.

“I was written up in the San Diego Union Tribune for combining art therapy with yoga,” she said.

As a mental health therapist, Lauren worked extensively with people afflicted with schizophrenia, a challenge she

FLOWERS cont. page 19W



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W O M E N I N B U S I N E S S

She puts classic cars on the road again — and again

By LISA CRAWFORD WATSON

IN THE legendary 1955 film, “To Catch a Thief,” Grace Kelly’s character drives a Sunbeam Alpine convertible along the dramatic Big Sur coastline. In “Play Misty for Me,” Clint Eastwood’s character heads down the coast in a dark green Jaguar convertible. And, in the opening scenes of the recent series, “Big Little Lies,” Nicole Kidman’s character drives what appears to be a Porsche Cayenne across Bixby Bridge.

Imagine the feeling when luxury meets landscape, as Hollywood sends actors down the coast in a classic car. Only this time, you’re at the wheel. Thanks to an idea that others may have imagined, but Heather Gardner put into gear, you can.

Monterey Touring Vehicles, which Gardner established in 2018, is the only car-rental company in Monterey County — or in the country, she believes — that gives customers the opportunity to rent classic and vintage cars for a two- or four-hour drive through some of the most exceptional scenery in the world.

Picture it

Gardner’s first love was a 1978 VW Beetle, which she drove for some 18 years. Now it mostly sits in the garage, waiting for the family’s daily drivers to break down so it can “roll in,” save the day, and hit the road again. Her second car was a ’69 Cougar her family drove to Big Sur for Thanksgiving festivities, and she still remembers that as the most fun holiday ever.

“This sparked something in me,” Gardner said. “I thought, ‘What if we were to buy a small fleet of classic cars and then rent them out for a drive in a community



After a long-term love affair with a VW Beetle, Heather Gardner turned her delight in old autos into an unusual business.

legendary for its scenic routes?’”

The Mecum Auction in Kansas City is typically the first weekend in December, and Gardner was ready, drinking coffee in her bedroom, shopping — and buying — online.

“I bought five cars, including a DeLo-rean,” she said. “Then I talked to a lawyer, created a contract, found a company that

would insure my business, formed an LLC and Monterey Touring Vehicles was born.”

After all, why should Hollywood actors and actresses have all the driving fun? Imagine being legendary automotive designer and race car driver Carroll Shelby taking down the convertible top of a name-sake 1965 Ford Shelby Cobra to sightsee along 17 Mile Drive. Or perhaps you’d

prefer to head to Carmel Valley or along the Salinas Valley’s rustic River Road in a ’57 Porsche Speedster to sip, savor and socialize, tasting world-class wines. Or maybe you’ve always wanted to hug the Monterey Bay coastline in a 1955 Ford T-Bird and pause for a bite to eat or tour

CARS cont. page 16W



Allison Barrientos, CFP®, CPA,
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‘The average dog is just a bundle of unrealized potential’

By LILY PATTERSON

THERE ARE a few hundred Carmel residents who can hardly wait for school to start again, whenever their owners are ready. Local dog trainer Andee Burleigh wishes more would embrace continuing education for canines of a certain age.

“I want more people to embrace the idea of creating good habits, because it’s a true joy to live better together, especially in one of the most dog-centric communities in the United States,” said Burleigh.

“The average dog is just a bundle of unrealized potential. I always find it sad when someone says ‘My dog isn’t so bright.’ Granted, just like humans, some are geniuses and others maybe less so, but they all have a tremendous capacity to learn.”

Enjoying it

Dogs, too, enjoy their little indiscretions — counter-surfing, obnoxious barking, leaping onto unsuspecting house guests — which are liable to become full-size problems once they reach adulthood, age 3 for most breeds.

Other more serious issues can turn Carmel Beach regulars into homebodies, for fear of getting dragged down Scenic, or sued, or worse.

Bad behavior, Burleigh believes, is what occurs when understanding fails.

“We’re constantly telling our dogs to stop being dogs. Training is an attempt to help them understand us crazy humans and our expectations. You’re building a communication loop with a totally different species.”

Whether she’s meeting a bouncing baby ’doodle for the first time, or leveling with an 8-year-old schnauzer, her approach

begins in the family room.

“You have to look at the whole family system when you walk in the door of the house. I want to see how the dog is in their comfort zone, how the owners and dog are communicating,” said Burleigh.

She then shared an essential insight for modern-day dog owners. “There’s so much more anxiety in dogs than when I started my work,” she said. “A lot of people don’t recognize what anxiety looks like. It’s not just the tail tucked between the legs. And it’s not easy for people to live with.”

It wears familiar disguises — most commonly, excessive barking, jumping, and leash-pulling — and causes are many, according to Burleigh.

A dog may be responding directly to its stressed-out owner. Many shelter pets suffer from under-socialization and improper handling, while even pedigreed breeds may have trademark behaviors that are ill-suited to their living situations.

At the extreme, she said trendy “commodity breeds,” if irresponsibly bred, can emerge from the womb with issues, that stem from stress hormones absorbed in utero.

“I don’t work with a lot of dogs that need medications, though there are some,” she said. For that, she recommends taking the time to seek out a behavioral specialist.

Positive approach

If her name rings familiar, Burleigh ran a popular puppy school for nearly 20 years at the Raw Connection — formerly located in the Carmel Rancho Shopping Center — which earned her a devoted following. Some clients go back decades, having raised several family dogs with her help.



Andee Burleigh has been training dogs for decades and says that with patience and consistency, you can teach an old dog new tricks.

A few live as far afield as Texas and travel with their dogs in hopes of squeezing in a session while they’re visiting town.

Burleigh doesn’t advertise or post on social media. She doesn’t even have a website, but word of her positive philosophy has spread.

“I prefer to teach a dog what we want, versus punishing bad behavior. It’s always

a case-by-case protocol, though the foundations and principle of positive reinforcement are all the same,” said Burleigh, who lives near Hacienda Carmel with her four Dobermans.

They’re a perfect example.

“I have Dobermans, which are a

PUPS *cont. page 22W*

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Her style is a blend of her global adventures! She's explored the interiors and architecture of Africa, Asia, South America, Australia, and Europe, adding a unique twist to her staging and design work.

What's her professional background?

Roseanne has a solid background in finance from her time at Charles Schwab & Co., giving her an edge in understanding the dollars and cents behind property staging. She has earned a BA in Political Science and Psychology and an MA in Liberal Arts.

How does she support her local community?

Roseanne is all about supporting local arts and education! She has served on the boards and chaired events for the Pacific Repertory Theatre, Monterey Museum of Art, and Santa Catalina School.

What does Roseanne love to do for fun?

She enjoys spending time with her family, traveling the world, playing tennis, fly fishing, and hitting the slopes for some exciting skiing adventures.



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W O M E N I N B U S I N E S S

Consigning \$100k worth of clothing to the landfill makes zero sense

By LILY PATTERSON

“**I LIKE** my money right where I can see it, hanging in my closet,” drolled Carrie Bradshaw, the brazen shopaholic played by Sarah Jessica Parker in the HBO television series, “Sex and the City.”

A consignment shop located in Mid Valley Center stocks several of the high-end designers beloved by the fictional Bradshaw — Burberry, Hermes, Dior, Missoni — and co-owners Lisa Leo and Angee Morriss may have taken a page from her personal wealth philosophy. They’ve helped hundreds of women get their valuables out of the closet and onto racks at Manifest Consignment, making extra cash and new friendships in the process.

The shop has been open for just over a year, and the owners estimate it has “put \$100,000 back into the pockets of local consignors, not to mention diverted thousands of items from the landfill,” according to Leo.

Vintage 2005

The two-woman team organizes shopping events and offers white-glove estate sale services, part of their mission “to inspire conscious consumption.”

Close as they are, Manifest emerged from a rub between friends. A few summers ago, Morriss wore an embroidered denim jacket that Leo immediately loved. Some time later, Morriss mentioned she had listed some clothing for sale online, the jacket included.

Leo was annoyed. Why sell to a stranger when Morriss had one guaranteed customer, her best friend, living a few minutes away in Pacific Grove?

Morriss, who teaches at Carmel Middle School, and Leo, whose degree in environmental policy sent her to work for the United Nations in the 1990s and later for the City of Carmel as a project manager, saw an opportunity to rival resale websites like The RealReal by establishing a local option in Carmel Valley.

Manifest stocks all sizes of clothing and shoes, plus bags and accessories priced \$25 and up. The hand-picked selection includes items from Morriss’ favorite designers, at handsome discounts, and the hand-tooled cowboy boots and vintage kimonos Leo prefers.

“Vintage” refers to garments and accessories more than

20 years old, while the legal definition of “antique” means items 100 years and older.

Both make shopping feel more virtuous, even edifying, if you ask Jordan and Andrew Chugg of Wally’s, the buzzy men’s clothing store on San Carlos between Fifth and Sixth.

“The 1950s to the year 2000 is our sweet spot, though 2005 is an interesting year — exactly 20 years ago, but also when some trade agreements expired, and a lot of domestic manufacturing went overseas,” said Andrew, who sources most of what you’ll find on Wally’s shelves.

Much like costume designer Patricia Field, famous for styling “Sex and the City,” the Chuggs’ perspective gives Wally’s personality. They’ll happily explain to you why \$30 for a 30-year-old T-shirt may, in fact, be a steal.

“There are other ways ‘in’ to vintage — sports history, regional history, manufacturing and economic history — and that’s almost the more interesting part to me. I’m not out to convert anyone who doesn’t feel comfortable wearing secondhand clothes, but it’s always very rewarding to have those conversations,” said Andrew. Off the top of his head, the oldest item he’s ever sold at Wally’s was from the 1890s — a “Sgt. Pepper-looking jacket.”

Family operation

The Chuggs pack a variety of men’s clothing into the 650-square-foot shop. Many items fall easily into the unisex category, and the couple plans to expand the “modest”



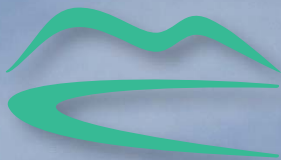
Lisa Leo, co-owner of Manifest in Carmel Valley, said the whole thing started with jean-jacket envy. Her business partner, Angee Morriss, was off this week on her honeymoon.

ladies’ section. Presently, it’s just them and their dog — the namesake Wally — running the shop, across the street from where Jordan’s sister, Alyssa, operates The Station-aery restaurant with her husband, Anthony.

CLOTHING *cont.* page 21W

PORTRAITS & AUTOMOTIVE • PEBBLE BEACH

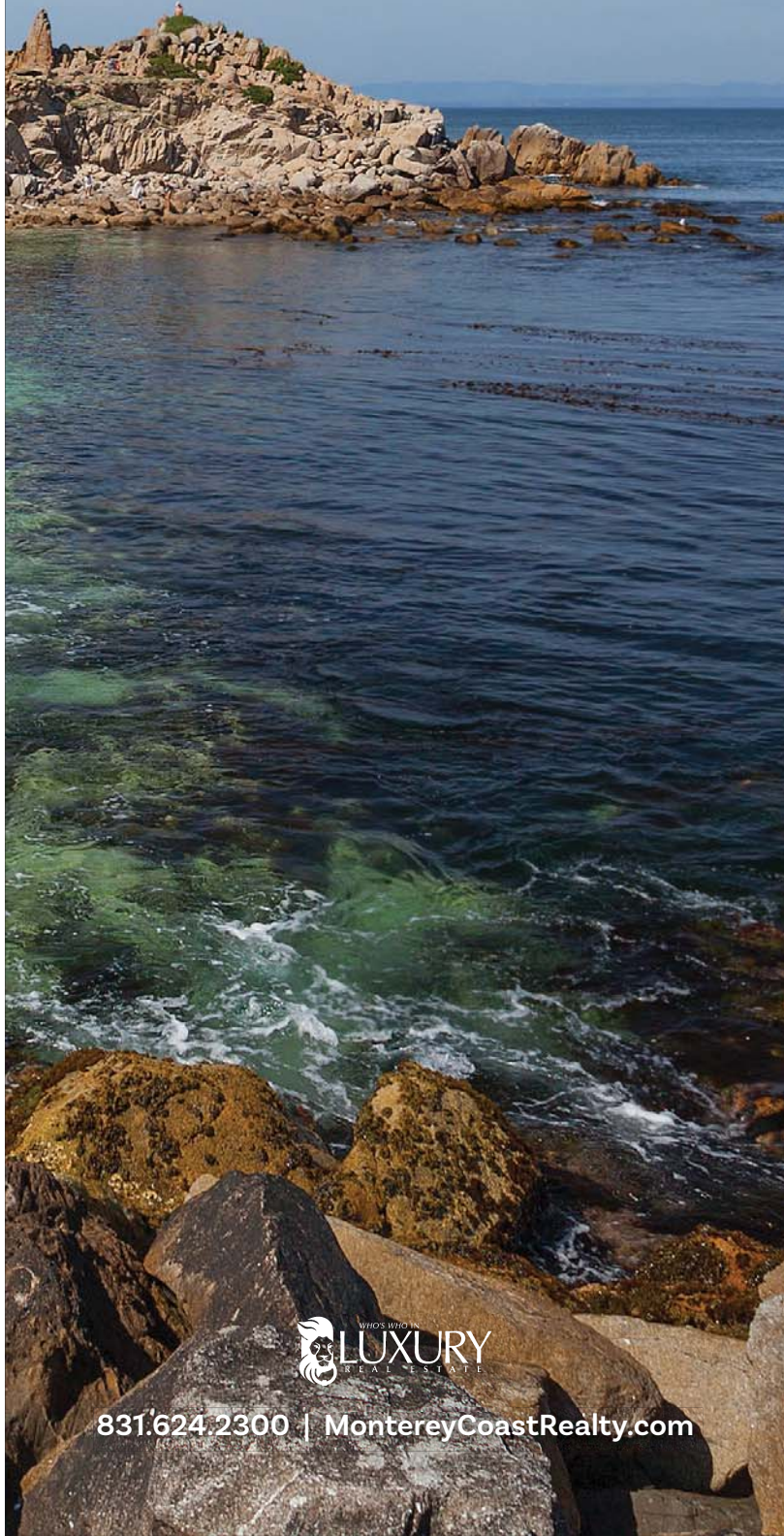




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W O M E N I N B U S I N E S S

CARS from page 8W

the historic sites of Old Monterey, Fisherman’s Wharf, and Cannery Row. Perhaps you’ll head down the Big Sur coastline in a pale pink ’61 Cadillac.

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rental cars — all with power steering and power brakes, and most with automatic transmissions — and reserve it for a specific timeframe, for a minimum of two hours. They can collect the car and then return it to the company or, for an additional fee, they can have it delivered and picked up at the end of their rental period. Once customers

complete a 15-minute orientation, they’re on their way. “Everyone, as they return their car, shares a story about their experience in that car and who they were for the day,” said Gardner. “One woman said, ‘I had no idea how much fun this would be; everyone along the way kept asking me if I was a movie star.’”

The route to classic cars

Gardner graduated from UC Davis with a bachelor’s degree in biochemistry. Always a math-and-science gal throughout her schooling, she went on to the University of Pennsylvania and earned a Ph.D. in cellular and molecular biology. Although she enjoyed the career that came from that education, she’s having more fun with classic cars. “People who own and drive classic cars are emotional about them,” she said. “You can’t be, in the same way, when others are driving them. So many people have told me a man would never let people take off in his collector cars. The whole point is to share this experience, to make people happy. And this does.”

Gardner paused for a moment and then admitted, “I never understood the joy of driving until I formed this company and came to understand it is the experience of the route, not the destination that gives us joy.”

For more information about Gardner’s company — or just to enjoy the eye candy — visit montereytouringvehicles.com.

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ARCHITECTS from page 1W

can go to recuperate and thrive and relax. That is our job.”

Vistas carefully framed by towering ceilings and glass walls, expansive open rooms, natural surfaces of stone and wood, and detailed attention to interior as well as exterior designs characterize the work of both women.

Indoors and out

While many architects simply design buildings and then turn them over to someone else for interior work, Velho and Schicketanz provide the services themselves, incorporating interior design and landscape architecture. They share a philosophy that all indoor and outdoor details should be considered simultaneously and incorporated into home design to assure the most cohesive, positive and seamless

BUILDINGS cont. next page



Patricia Arpini Velho (above) designs homes that combine an owner’s vision with the environment.



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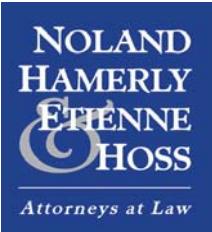
“I’ve now had the pleasure of working with Julie and Carmel Coast Realty on two purchases and one sale in Carmel. It is easy for me to write a glowing recommendation as we had amazing outcomes on all three and Julie is an **absolute gem** to work with.”

“Julie Kavanaugh is an excellent Realtor for the Monterey Peninsula and beyond. She exceeded our home-listing expectations, guiding us with recommendations, open house prep, obtaining 3-buyers in 2-days (all over asking price), negotiations, and an 8-day close. Wow! Julie is **reliable**, managing her contractors, and keeping in touch throughout the process. We highly recommend Julie for your real estate needs.”

“We were fortunate to meet Julie when first starting our home search. She knows all areas of the peninsula well and is tireless in her efforts to identify the best fit, including suggesting when to pass on certain homes. Julie provides so much more than home buying support, she offers **valuable** recommendations on financing, insurance, service providers, etc. We truly believe Julie is the reason we found our ideal home in Monterey.”

“I recommend Julie Kavanaugh with all my heart. She is incredibly **knowledgeable** and does not give up until she finds the perfect opportunity. I was a challenging buyer in this marketplace. 99% of the opportunities were out of my price range but she was patient, supportive and protective of my dream of home ownership. She did not give up even when I did.”

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Originally from Malaysia grew up in Australia , Jarilyn holds a degree from La Trobe University . She took over Mission Jewelry in Carmel and rebranded it as Jarilyn Jewelry, infusing the business with her distinctive artistic vision . Each of her creations is custom-made and meticulously handcrafted, reflecting her dedication to quality and individuality .

Jarilyn’s designs have garnered attention from prestigious publications such as British Vogue, Elle UK, and Vanity Fair London . Her boutique in Carmel has become a destination for those seeking unique, heirloom-quality jewelry that tells a personal story.

Jarilyn designs press achievements include Esquire, Elle, Bazaar, Tatler, Vanity Fair, House of Coco and Instore. In addition, Jarilyn designs were selected to be exhibited at Milan Jewelry Show 2024.

To explore her latest collections or inquire about custom designs, visit her boutique shop at
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BUILDINGS *from previous page*

living experience.
“Proportion and layout and color are important in both an exterior and interior, in how they flow, and how they then transect into light,” Schicketanz explained. “We call

it the neuro-architecture field. It’s how someone experiences the total space and what it does to their health and well being. It’s a new frontier.”
“I see architecture as the complete picture, envisioning the entire space, from how the furniture is going to be placed, to where the eye is going to go, to the feeling you

get when you enter,” Velho said. “Everything has to be in sync, the furniture, the cabinets, the planter boxes outside, the driveway and entry. It all contributes to how it feels to be there.”
Studio Schicketanz takes on large-scale, ground-up residential and commercial projects, as well as historic remodels. “About 40 percent of our work is remodeling existing, historic structures,” Schicketanz said, noting that the Carmel area is filled with midcentury masterpieces.
“We have these amazing midcentury homes here, from architects like Henry Hill and Mark Mills, and they all need updating. They need new mechanical and electrical. But you also want to retain the proportion and lightness of the original structures,” said Schicketanz, who is working on two local Mark Mills homes, one facing the ocean in Carmel Highlands and one in Carmel Valley.
Environmental stewardship is a key element of her work, as well. Studio Schicketanz built the first LEED-certified homes in Carmel and Big Sur, meaning the houses met the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design standards for sustainability, energy and water efficiency, materials, site selection and indoor environmental quality.
“Now we have moved way beyond LEED. Those principles are very important to us,” said Schicketanz, who was recognized last year as one of the nation’s top 200 residential architects by Forbes. The magazine noted how her Big Sur modern cabin “nestled into the forest” with a remarkably low visual impact.

‘Be bold’

Both Velho and Schicketanz worked for many years with partners before striking out and opening their own studios. Schicketanz began hers in 2014 and now employs 23 people. Velho has an all-women team of three who work closely together.
Their advice to other women thinking about creating their own businesses? “Be fearless,” Velho said. “If you love it, you have to give it a try. Follow your passion, be persistent and stick with it.”
“Be bold,” Schicketanz said. “And if it’s architecture, you need a lot of stamina. You need to be good at land use planning for the beginning of a project. And then, two years later, you need the stamina to still care about a door-knob. Those details are important to me. That’s what the client feels and touches every day.”
The two say business is on the upswing in the Monterey

DESIGN *cont. page 25W*

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CARMEL

Could a simple cookie change the course of someone’s day – or their life?

From innkeeper and chef to cookbook author, vacation rental company owner, and boutique shopkeeper, Annee Martin has made it her life’s mission to nurture others with what she calls “hospitality for the soul.” Now, Annee invites you to join her in creating a collection of treasured chocolate chip cookie recipes alongside the deeply personal stories that give them meaning.

These are recipes, passed down through generations, baked during life’s hardest moments, and shared during life’s sweetest – and will become her next book released Fall 2026. A portion of the proceeds will benefit Monterey County nonprofits that serve and uplift the community. Be part of it!

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W O M E N I N B U S I N E S S

FLOWERS from page 6W

welcomed.

“We were like a hospital without walls, a seven-person team,” she said. “It could be hard, but it was really great work. I saw people get better, not from medication, but from quality of life.” She mentioned that they frequently handled crisis lines, too.

Nico, their son, was born in 2017, the family moved to Pacific Grove in 2018, Mila came along in 2019, and Lauren traded her mental health career for motherhood.

When their kids were 4 and 2, Ethan was making money with his art and feeling financially stable, and Lauren was confident that she had safety nets in place if she needed them: Her reputation as a licensed mental health professional was sterling, and, well, she still knew how to tend bar.

Learning on the fly

A well-established San Diego florist taught her about flower arrangements over

Zoom during the pandemic, and she learned the rest on the fly. At 40, she started rolling out Juni, the flower truck, on weekends.

“Your skills grow pretty fast when a bunch of people are waiting beside your truck when the weather is wet, windy and cold,” she said. “It was similar to the feeling you get when you’re bartending for a big crowd. There’s a certain adrenaline rush that you kind of enjoy.”

Floral workshops

Lauren designed her truck as a “stem bar,” providing patrons the option to create their own bouquets. “It was a great business — crazy and popular. I sold out every weekend,” she said.

But the learning curve included hard lessons about inventory that is perishable. Wilting flowers are money lost.

“They just die all of a sudden, and there’s a lot of stress involved with that,” she said.

The profit margin can be tough, too. When her business was six months old, she took three truckloads to a large weekend event, sold out — “epic success,” she called it — and came away with just \$500 for her creative efforts plus two long days of work and driving.

Operating a mobile business also could be physically challenging.

“At times I’d be exhausted, wondering, ‘Why am I doing manual labor? I have a master’s degree!’” she said with a laugh.

In 2023, when

the Walshes created Gallery Nila (the name merges Nico with Mila) on Lighthouse, Lauren stopped selling on location.

With a brick-and-mortar spot, she also created a system of subscriptions for clients who order bouquets every month, which allows her to avoid ordering more flowers than she needs.

Lauren offers a stem bar for visitors to the gallery and teaches multiple floral design workshops each year, usually in advance of traditional holidays like Valentine’s Day and Mother’s Day.

For more about her floral-design services and to see images of Ethan’s paintings, visit gallerynila.com.

Additional information about Ethan’s art can be found on the Carmel Art Association website at carmelart.org.

Ethan Walsh’s artistic journey was featured in the Aug. 19, 2022 edition of The



Lauren Walsh’s 1980 Ford truck, aka “Juni,” is a mobile flower shop.

Pine Cone, which can be found in the archives at carmelpinecone.com.

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



Lauren and Ethan Walsh at Gallery Nila in Pacific Grove.

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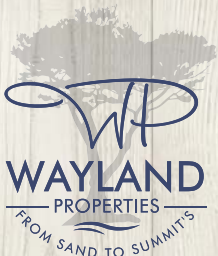
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W O M E N I N B U S I N E S S

A heritage of strength from family and community

By ELAINE HESSER

REALTOR DEBBY Beck, a Pacific Grove native, is every bit as vivacious and positive as she looks. She recently joined Compass Real Estate, bringing with her nearly 20 highly successful years in the community.

According to her bio on Compass’ website, she’s had \$400 million in sales. But what’s behind that — what’s closest to her heart — is family, with generations of strong women dedicated to lifting each other up.

Beck’s maternal grandparents were Italian and lived in P.G. To this day, she remains a bit in awe of those immigrant ancestors, especially her grandmother, whom she referred to as her Nana.

After leaving Italy in 1917, “she never saw her mother or siblings again,” Beck said. Contemplating the weight of that loss and the courage it must have taken her Nana to leave everyone and everything she knew still moves her.

Her grandparents taught her the value

of land and home ownership. “Put your money in the dirt,” they told her. Her grandmother ran P.G.’s former Willson Hotel on 19th Street, and the couple bought and sold real estate. They passed the love of that business on to their granddaughter.

“In my heart, I always wanted to be in real estate,” she said, crediting the late realtor Maureen Mason as her mentor. There were no benefits or guaranteed income, but the fact that the career path was “scary” at first didn’t stop her.

“It made me work harder,” recalled Beck. “I was very fortunate to have that work ethic.”

Seven-day workweeks weren’t unusual. She readily volunteered to do other agents’ open houses — often four in a weekend. “I wanted to learn more about the community, so I put myself in front of them at open houses,” she explained.

Moving forward

Beck raised three children, and, in 2022, her eldest daughter, Jennifer Jeska, a longtime teacher, joined her in the real estate business. “She was a rising star,” Beck said.

That November, Beck — who cares deeply for her community — was elected to a four-year term on Pacific Grove’s city council. She kept doing what she always did — she worked hard, looked after her family and took care of herself, including regular checkups. In November 2023, following a routine mammogram, doctors found what she described as a “very aggressive” form of breast cancer.

“We had no family history of cancer,” she said, so it caught her completely off guard. Lengthy treatment sessions went on for months. At some point, her doctor asked, to Beck’s surprise, if she was ready to go back to her job.

“I didn’t realize I wasn’t supposed to be working. I had to keep my mind moving



Realtor Debby Beck says she owes a lot to her Italian grandparents.

forward,” she said.

Meanwhile, Jeska began having lower back pain, and while trying to figure out how to fix the problem, which persisted, she got the opportunity to travel to Maui and invited Beck along. She said she almost turned her daughter down, but they hadn’t vacationed together in years, so she went. In hindsight, Beck noted, spending time with loved ones is always a good decision. “None of us ever knows what’s going to happen.”

Jeska developed other symptoms, and it took a while to get the correct diagnosis — esophageal cancer that had spread rapidly. Beck said that on April 14, 2024, seven weeks after that diagnosis, Jeska died.

“Nothing hits you like losing a child,” Beck said. She spoke about her daughter’s death in a way that’s reminiscent of the courage and sadness her Nana must have felt, leaving her family on a distant shore.

‘A blessing’

Many of Beck’s clients have told her they’ve had cancer tests after seeing what she went through. “If my story can help one person, it’s worth telling,” she said.

She also speaks with gratitude of the time she and her daughter had together. “It was such a blessing,”



Debby Beck’s late daughter, Jennifer Jeska.

BECK cont. page 22W

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SUSAN BROWNLIE
REALTOR

Raised in Pacific Grove and Pebble Beach, Susan grew up in a large family with three sisters, fostering deep-rooted connections to the Monterey Peninsula. She began her real estate career in 1989 as a licensed Realtor with Coldwell Banker/GD Inc. and has been a top-producing agent throughout her 35+ year career.

Susan’s local expertise and extensive market knowledge allow her to navigate all price ranges and cities with ease, ensuring her clients receive exceptional guidance tailored to their unique needs.

A dedicated advocate for professionalism and integrity in real estate, Susan has served as a Monterey County Association of Realtors Ethics Advocate and a member of the Professional Standards Hearing Committee for over 15 years.

Whether assisting first-time buyers, seasoned investors, or luxury home clients, Susan brings experience, dedication, and a deep passion for helping people find their perfect home on the beautiful Central Coast.

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W O M E N I N B U S I N E S S

CLOTHING from page 12W

“If I’m looking out our front door, Foxy Couture is to the left, Communitie and Vivim to our right, Malbon across the street. We lucked out in this cool epicenter of Carmel,” said Jordan.

“We weren’t even here when we signed the lease. Alyssa took a video and we were like, ‘That’s it!’” Andrew said of the shotgun space, which gives the impression of an, indeed, very cool walk-in closet.

Nor are they far from home, which is close enough to the Forest Theater that they can hear hits from “Annie” — to the thrill of their preschool-age daughter.

Baseball cards

The entrepreneurial couple met in New York while working in media. Two years ago, Andrew had just sold the audio business he’d founded, and the Chuggs moved to be closer to Jordan’s family. She and Alyssa grew up in Salinas.

Opening a physical retail space was born from “a major desire to get off the computer, after spending so much of our work lives on email,” according to Jordan.

Besides their personal preferences for vintage clothing, there was a decision the couple made before the big move: “If we’re going to move here, we want to really live here and meet people, be a part of the community,” she recalled.

Andrew suspects the vintage trade has “been in me for a long time,” as a kid growing up in Vermont, selling old baseball cards from his youth.

He hunts up and down the West Coast for treasures and is understandably tight-lipped about a few “trusted sources” he consigns from.

“The one thing we always find funny is peoples’ reactions to our pricing. Some are floored by how expensive one item might be,” while others are thrilled when they compare prices with stores in L.A. and New York.

“The margins have to be appropriate — we clean everything really well and do a lot of research to make sure the prices reflect the garment,” said Jordan.

Over at Manifest, Leo and Morriss just celebrated a milestone: 300 registered consignors, all of whom earn 40 to 60 percent of the selling price of their garments. And stock moves quickly.

“People come in two, three times a month, because it’s practically a different store every week,” said Leo.

Their marketing is hard to resist. New items are posted daily on social media, and loyal customers get text updates and earn points-for-cash for their purchases.

After two months, items may be discounted up to 50 percent. At 90 days, they’re reduced by 75 percent or donated to support nonprofits, including the SPCA and Healing Partners of the Central Coast.

Leo’s oldest daughter is responsible for Manifest’s website, where consignors can log in to check whether their items have sold. Potential sellers can register online for a consignment appointment, the first step in bringing their under-loved garments to Manifest’s shelves.

Consignors get 10 percent off purchases the day of their appointment, so they can shop around while Leo and Morriss appraise their garments using price-matching software to see how similar items have sold online.

“A year in, we’re so happy,” said Leo of the duo’s weekend gig, organizing estate sales throughout the Peninsula. So far, they’re averaging two per month, handling everything from marketing to setup, breakdown, and bookkeeping. Style is personal, and Leo said she just wants people “to find joy” in giving clothing a second life.

When her mother passed at 90, Leo decided to bring to Manifest what she and her two daughters didn’t keep of the extensive jewelry collection.

VINTAGE cont. page 23W



PHOTO/AMI SIOUX

The Chuggs own Wally’s on San Carlos, a new spot for covetable — and rare — closet essentials.



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PUPS *cont. from page 10W*

guardian breed. Most people get a specific breed because they’re attracted to the look, and don’t pay attention to genetics. And if you want a Doberman that doesn’t bark,

well, you shouldn’t get a Doberman.
So I have a three-bark rule — if they just sound off once in a while, that’s OK. But if it’s ongoing, I’m going to manage the situation. It’s about honoring the breed, what’s fair to the dog. And what I do with a handler who is

80 versus 18 is going to be different, but as long as someone has the willingness, they’re going to make progress,” said Burleigh.

Just say yes

Excessive barking is among the top reasons she’s called to someone’s home. Dogs may bark to demand attention, at prey like deer and squirrels, to defend their territory, or because they’re trying to play.

“It’s such a DNA-driven behavior. But you can teach them to bark less,” said Burleigh.

Her recommendation is simple. Grab their favorite treat and ask them to come to you. When they do, give the “reward marker.” (She likes the word, “Yes.”) The idea is to direct their attention to a more interesting source — that’s you, with their favorite treat.

For dogs who bark when their owners aren’t home, or just can’t handle your Amazon delivery habit, Burleigh recommends a common-sense solution: Close the blinds to the offending sight, which cuts noise and visual stimulation at once.

In tandem with barking, Burleigh has some thoughts on another too-prevalent issue.

“I can’t tell you how often I get this, ‘I don’t mind if the dog jumps on me, I just don’t want them to jump on my guests, or grandkids.’ The hard part is we love the fanfare, we feel like we’re adored.”

The fix is straightforward, though “not everyone’s favorite,” said Burleigh.

“It can be asking a lot of dogs to sit when you come in, but the important thing is they don’t jump. People tend to greet dogs with high-pitched voices and lots of eye contact, which can cause an adrenaline frenzy. The approach is to ignore them until they come down.”

Once they’re calm, she said, your affection is the ultimate reward.

She said it’s particularly difficult to make exceptions to the no-jumping rule. So, if an owner can’t live without their customary greeting, they simply “cannot have the dog off-leash when a guest comes in,” said Burleigh.

Tenderness helps

She finally addressed the inevitable question: how do I get my dog to stop pulling on the leash?

To start, try a little tenderness.

“You would be amazed how many people are the pullers on the leash, not the dog, because they’re afraid of a loose leash.” She recommends practicing the “art of tension” by walking in small loops or turns, which discourages yanking from either end. “Yes!” and treats should be deployed when the dog hits the sweet spot.

“You won’t necessarily cover a lot of ground, at first, so let go of getting any exercise for you. Train your dog, then take yourself on a walk,” said Burleigh.

She also addressed a common misconception.

“We think dogs should stay by our side, because

TRAINER *cont. page 25W*



Regular leash training turns harrowing walks into happy ones.

BECK *from page 20W*

she said.

She resigned from city council at the end of last year, citing a desire to spend more time with family. She has also served on the board of Shelter Outreach Plus, now Community Homeless Solutions, and spent two years on the Monterey County Civil Grand Jury.

Despite all she’s been through — not to mention professional survival through the downturn of 2008 and the Covid pandemic — some things haven’t changed. Beck attributes her success to integrity, customer service skills and doing everything possible for her clients. In fact, she still stages homes herself, something she’s done from the beginning.

While her priorities remain constant, she said her perspective on life is a little different.

“I take things lightly now — I don’t stress. It’s not worth it.”

Artisana Gallery

Adrienne Jonson and Sandy Hamm are the dynamic duo behind Artisana Gallery in Pacific Grove! Since March 2008, their gallery has been a vibrant hub of creativity, showcasing both renowned and emerging artists. As founders of First Friday Pacific Grove, they’ve brought even more excitement to the local art scene and downtown Pacific Grove. Adrienne, a talented photographer and jewelry designer, also serves as Board Chair of the Pacific Grove Chamber of Commerce. Sandy, an acclaimed jade sculptor and carver, presents her stunning creations at the gallery and is a featured artist in the “Jade Beneath The Sea” Exhibition at the Pacific Grove Museum of Natural History. Open seven days a week, Artisana invites you to explore a lively collection of local, independent, and fair trade art.

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WOMEN IN BUSINESS

VINTAGE from page 21W

“You know, I was sad to let it go, but that changed as soon as I saw people wearing it,” she said.
New neighbors keep things interesting, too.
The Chuggs just signed a lease for space for an extension of Wally’s in Mid Valley Center, where they plan to take

more consignment appointments and offer rare garments for sale.
“It’ll be a bit of a showroom, somewhere we can take measurements, too. We got a lot of interest in personal styling services this Car Week,” said Andrew.
Wally’s is located at San Carlos between Fifth and Sixth Ave. Find Manifest at 308 Mid Valley Center and at manifestcarmel.com.



PHOTO/JAYDEN SAMUELS

New kids, old looks: Wally’s caters to those who shop for quality clothes with stories to tell.

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W O M E N I N B U S I N E S S

UNLOCKED from page 4W

running their own enterprises. Then came that trip to Kansas City, followed by an escape room conference in Niagara Falls. There, Riddoch said she became more convinced that a business like that could succeed here.

“There were a lot of couples running them,” she said, and within the year, she and her husband had opened one over the Whaling Station restaurant in Monterey. She said that one family arrived “dragging” their teenage daughter along, but when they left, her whole demeanor had changed.

Riddoch attributed it to the way interactions change when a group faces a puzzling situation together. Instead of being rule makers and enforcers, parents ask their kids, “Hey, what do you think?” about the clues.

Don’t stay stuck

To answer some of the usual questions: They don’t literally lock you in — the fire department frowns on that — anyone



Escape rooms bring smiles to whole families.

can leave any time. And these rooms “are family-friendly adventures, not haunted houses,” says the company’s website (escaperoom831.com), which draws a line between “spooky” and “scary.” The former’s OK, the latter, not so much.

Cost is \$30 to \$45 per person, and group sizes can range from two to eight people. You’re not thrown in with strangers — just the folks on your team.

The puzzles are challenging, but, said Riddoch, “We always tell people, ‘We’re overthinkers.’ It has nothing to do with being smart. Kids go with their guts,” and are often correct, while adults second-guess themselves.

Also, “It’s all about communication and working together as a team. Everybody’s thought process is a little different,” bringing a variety of perspectives to each clue or puzzle. That makes the activity a popular team-building exercise for local companies.

If you don’t finish in an hour, you can ask to see the solution or reserve the room (and pay again) to give it another try.

Stuck on a clue? You can ask for — and get — helpful hints from the scenario’s “Game Master.”

Creating the rooms is more complex than solving them, Riddoch said. They have to appeal to different age groups, and they must require effort but still be solvable. She and her husband initially found building their own to be difficult and time-consuming.

“As the business grew, we met a wonderful gentleman from Denver who



Oscar’s Playground is home to an eclectic selection of games from electronics, to pinball.

ships the rooms in a container and then builds them in two weeks,” she said. Ideally, themes are swapped out every two or three years, although some have been kept around longer and still do well.

Clean fun

A slightly different family venture, Oscar’s Playground, is on Cannery Row with views of Monterey Bay. It’s a place folks can take a break but stay near the shops and restaurants, which makes sense for the community-minded Riddoch, who’s also a Cannery Row Business Association board member and president of Monterey’s Lighthouse District.

“The more I talked to people, the more I realized they just wanted a place to sit and veg,” she said, from grandparents who spend three hours on their feet at the aquarium, to parents and kids who need a little unstructured time.

Customers buy arcade game cards — a minimum purchase of \$10 per person — and gain access to a lounge with comfy couches, TVs, nonalcoholic beverages,

snacks and beer. A gaming area offers dozens of pinball machines and contemporary and classic video games, a photo booth, Skee-Ball and other distractions. The location also has three escape rooms.

Oscar’s Playground can be reserved for private parties of as many as 100 people and is booked solid with birthday celebrations every weekend. “People come from Monterey, Pacific Grove — even Salinas,” she said.

The venue’s always clean and it attracts locals along with tourists — both points of pride for Riddoch. “We’re always wiping down the games and vacuuming. The bathrooms are cleaned every 10 minutes,” she said. It’s not just her belief — many online reviews mention the spotless environment.

Riddoch said they like to give back to the community, offering Oscar’s Playground to nonprofits for events. She noted that local venues can be expensive, especially for smaller groups.

And when they vacation, her clan still loves to try other escape rooms, bringing a whole new meaning to a family getaway.

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WOMEN IN BUSINESS

TRAINER *cont. from page 22W*

that’s what we do when we walk with our friends, except that’s not natural to them. They either lead or follow.”

Follow, in her experience, is the easiest configuration to teach, since “in the heel position, it’s ‘I just have to pay attention to my human’s legs,’” said Burleigh.

According to Burleigh, who encourages independent study, “It’s no different than playing guitar or learning a language. You have to be willing to practice.

“It can take a little longer to turn around a dog that’s practiced pulling for its entire life, but it’s amazing what they can learn if someone is willing to teach them.”

You’ll need fifteen minutes, good snacks, and a properly fitted harness, head

halter, or collar — whatever keeps the both of you comfortable, safe, and ready to learn.

“You don’t have to go outside for a half an hour a day and run drills. A few minutes here and there is great. But if you’re letting the dog pull you down the street the rest of the day, it’s going to take a lot longer to see results,” she cautioned.

And if your patience is wearing — or perhaps your best friend requires some personalized attention — you can always call Burleigh. She may not be online, but she is more than willing to sit, walk, hike, and share 30 years’ worth of wisdom with dog lovers, most of whom read this very paper.

Andee Burleigh can be reached at (831) 214-4163.

DESIGN *from page 18W*

Peninsula area, and that clients largely come from referrals, or from seeing their work on Instagram or in a book or magazine. They strictly limit the number of jobs they take on in order to give each their detailed attention.

Neither will discuss a favorite project. “My favorite project is always the one I am working on,” Schicketanz said.

“I design the best possible houses for

the people who will live there,” Velho said, noting that for one couple seeking more openness within the limited square footage allowed in Carmel, she designed a floating concrete staircase to reduce the mass. For another client, she designed a hidden cat box cabinet in the primary bath.

“The best architecture, you can’t explain why you like it,” Velho said. “Everything is peaceful, in the right place, and captures the light. It feels well balanced, so the person living in it feels well balanced.”



Patricia Velho pays as much attention to the interiors as she does the outsides of homes she designs.

Art Abilities

FOSTERING CREATIVITY & CONNECTIONS

What began as one woman’s passion for art and inclusion has grown into a thriving nonprofit making a lasting impact across Monterey County. Founded by **Ritika Kumar**, Art Abilities is dedicated to empowering adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities through the transformative power of art.

At our Pacific Grove studio, we provide adaptive and personalized art classes that unlock creativity, build confidence, and bring hidden talents to light. Students don’t just create — they showcase their work at community exhibitions, local galleries, and public events, where their voices are celebrated and their art is sold, fostering both independence and recognition.

From small classes to county-wide collaborations, Art Abilities has become a vibrant hub of creativity and belonging. What started as a dream is now shaping lives, sparking joy, and proving that art truly has the power to connect us all.

Join us in celebrating abilities through art. Visit us at
220 Country Club Gate Center, Suite 10, Pacific Grove or learn more at **www.artabilities.org**.

A portrait of Ritika Kumar, the founder of Art Abilities. She is a woman with dark hair, wearing a pink top, smiling at the camera. In the background, there are colorful abstract paintings on the wall.

Get your complete Pine Cone every Thursday night by email — free subscriptions at www.carmelpinecone.com

The logo for Positive Parlor Salon & Boutique. It features the word "Positive" in a large, stylized font with a hairbrush icon integrated into the letter "i". Below it, the word "Parlor" is in a similar font, and "SALON & BOUTIQUE" is in a smaller, sans-serif font below that.

We are excited to introduce our talented Positive Parlor Stylists!

A circular portrait of Sophia, a woman with long dark hair, smiling.

Sophia

born and raised in Monterey, is a seasoned stylist with a passion for the art of hair. Her dedication to her craft is evident in her meticulous attention to detail, ensuring each client leaves with a personalized and stunning transformation. Sophia has a genuine joy in enhancing the beauty of others.

A circular portrait of Dina, a woman with blonde hair, smiling.

Dina

is a new stylist in her first year and thrilled to bring her passion for blonding, highlights, dimensional color, and natural beauty care to the Positive Parlor team. As an associate stylist, Dina is dedicated to continuously growing her artistry and ensuring every guest leaves feeling confident and beautiful.

A circular portrait of Alize, a woman with dark hair, smiling.

Alize

is a talented hair stylist making her mark in the beauty industry for over 5 years. She specializes in haircuts, hair color & styling. Her goal is to not only transform how her clients look but also how they feel. With her bright and lively personality, you’re guaranteed to have a great time in her chair!

Positive Parlor
715 Lighthouse Ave, Pacific Grove, CA
831- 717-7939 | www.positiveparlor.com

The Aveda logo, featuring the word "AVEDA" in a bold, sans-serif font, with the tagline "THE ART AND SCIENCE OF PURE FLOWER AND PLANT ESSENCES" in smaller text below it.

TRACY DELANEY ODLE

owner of

Augustina’s and Augustina’s Designer Boutique, has devoted more than 38 years to luxury fashion in Carmel-by-the-Sea. Over the course of her career she has established a curated shopping experience that reflects her commitment to timeless elegance and refined style. She has cultivated a culture that empowers women and fosters a supportive, collaborative environment.

HER BOUTIQUES FEATURE many renowned designers, including Oscar de la Renta and Carolina Herrera, offering clients the latest in high fashion and luxury. Her jewelry selection includes exquisite pieces by celebrated designers such as Paul Morelli and Sylva & Cie, emphasizing craftsmanship and quality.

A CORNERSTONE OF AUGUSTINA’S SUCCESS is Tracy’s women-led team. Many members-buyers, stylists, sales associates and managers are women who bring diverse perspectives, deep product knowledge and strong client relationships to her boutiques. Tracy mentors and champions their professional growth through hands on training. The emphasis on advancement and collaboration creates a workplace where creativity, confidence and leadership flourish.

THROUGH HER LEADERSHIP AND DEDICATION, Tracy continues to elevate Augustina’s as a premier destination on the Monterey Peninsula for discerning shoppers seeking style, craftsmanship and exceptional service.

The logo for Augustina's Designer Boutique. It features a stylized outline of the state of California with the text "Augustina's" and "Carmel-by-the-Sea" below it.

Augustina’s
Designer Boutique
San Carlos & 6th | Carmel-by-the-Sea
(831) 626-6353
Open Daily 9:30am - 5:30pm
augustinasdesignerboutique.com

Augustina’s
Ocean Avenue | Carmel-by-the-Sea
(831) 624-2403
Open Daily 9:30am - 5:30pm
augustinaleathers.com

Celebrating over 37 years on the Peninsula

WOMEN IN BUSINESS PROFILES

BROOK SHADWELL THE CARMEL HAT COMPANY



Brook is the proud owner of The Carmel Hat Company, located in the heart of picturesque Carmel-by-the-Sea. She purchased the business in February 2022 and has since poured her heart into creating a welcoming and stylish space for hat lovers from around the globe. Brook has a passion for fashion and a keen eye for detail, which she uses to help each customer find the perfect hat to complement their unique style. She loves meeting her beautiful customers, hearing their stories, and helping them walk away feeling confident and chic. For Brook, it's more than hats—it's connection.



The Carmel Hat Company
104 Doud Arcade, Carmel-by-the-Sea
@thecarmelhatcompany

JANICE TORELLI CARPETS AND FLOORS



We're proud to have Janice Torelli as an integral part of the Carpets and Floors team. Since joining us, Janice has brought a fresh design perspective and a strong foundation in project coordination, enhancing the way we support our clients and their creative goals.

Janice's background is rooted in San Francisco's luxury design community, where she spent years managing projects within high-end showrooms. Her experience spans collaboration with interior designers, architects, contractors, and artisans, ensuring that each project is executed with precision and style. Known for her warm, upbeat energy and collaborative nature, she brings clarity and ease to every interaction, making her a trusted resource and a pleasure to work with.

We invite you to visit us at Carpets and Floors and discover how Janice's experience can support and enhance your next project.



Carpets and Floors
471 Lighthouse Ave | Monterey | CA 93940
(831) 372-2300 | www.carpetsandfloorsmonterey.com

SHELLY M. DEVINE DEVINE & CO. PRIVATE JEWELER



Shelly Devine, GIA Graduate Gemologist and Certified Master Appraiser, operates Devine & Co. Private Jeweler in Carmel-by-the-Sea. With over two decades of experience, she provides certified jewelry appraisals for insurance and estate purposes, as well as custom design services. Devine works exclusively by private appointment, offering clients a secure and comfortable office where expertise meets personal service. Her approach emphasizes accuracy, integrity, and professionalism, from evaluating estate collections to creating meaningful custom pieces. Devine is dedicated to ensuring clients feel confident and supported in every step of their jewelry journey.



DEVINE & CO.
(831) 200-8100 | www.DevineJeweler.com

CHRISTY O'CONNOR DIGGIDY DOG



As a lover of dogs since before she could walk, Christy wanted nothing more than to spend her time with dogs and the people who love them. A successful corporate attorney with a notable career spanning over 25 years in 2024 and 2025, she was awarded the Top 10 Chief Legal Officers in the United States and Top 50 Chief Legal Officers worldwide by WomenWe Admire. In June 2021, she relocated her life to the Monterey Peninsula and lived out her lifelong dream and bought Diggidy Dog. Her love of dogs can be seen in every aspect of the boutique as she has remodeled and reimagined the store, geared toward our love of our best friends and making sure that they are happy, healthy, and dressed to the nines!

In the words of her Father, renowned photographer Nicholas Trofimuk: "You made the jump. Never look back or down. I am so proud of your courage. You will be successful but most of all you will be happy."

No truer words have ever been spoken.



(831) 625-1585 | DiggidyDog.com
NE Corner of Ocean Ave & Monte Verde St,
Carmel-by-the-Sea

KIM ENGLAND FLEURS DU SOLEIL



For as long as Kim can remember, her love for floral design has been inherent. After graduating from the University of California, Berkeley she spent a year abroad in Paris which further ignited her passion for floral design. Soon after, she gifted her sister with her wedding florals and it was then she went abroad to the South of France, where she studied floral technique. Upon returning, she opened the doors to her flower atelier, Fleurs du Soleil. Her extraordinary floral designs at weddings, events and resort venues have created a highly sought after service in an area where spectacular events demand spectacular floral designs.

In 2017 Kim expanded her business by taking over the remodeled Myrick's building next to El Estero Car Wash at 598 Fremont St. in Monterey. Her vision of expansion has encompassed a European-Urban style retail floral and lifestyle store featuring grab & go arrangements & wraps, contemporary gifts, home goods, one of a kind furniture and daily deliveries.

Winner of the '22, '23, '24
Golden Pine Cones for
BEST FLORIST

598 Fremont Street, Monterey, CA 93940
(831) 656-0455
www.FleursduSoleil.com

RANDI ANDREWS AVANT GARDEN AND HOME



Randi Andrews owner of Avant Garden and Home in Carmel Valley Village. Avant Garden and Home became a reality, over 20 years ago. A gift shop for your home, your garden and yourself. She created a store that was inviting and whimsical, filled with the unexpected. Shop for clothing, jewelry, furniture, art and more. Randi loves being a shopkeeper and being part of this community. Representing many local artist and artisans. "I love supporting businesses even smaller than my own". Stop by and meet this cute little boy, Gus. Well, he's not quite this little anymore.

Avant Garden and Home
13766 Center Street, Center Street Marketplace
Carmel Valley Village
(831) 659-9899
www.avantgardenandhome.com

DR. KRISTINA MONTELLESE, DC, CPT DOCTOR OF CHIROPRACTIC & PELVIC FLOOR PHYSIOTHERAPY



Dr. Kristina has effectively combined the unique treatments of gentle Chiropractic Therapy & Pelvic Floor Rehabilitative Therapy, for over 19 years.

She helps patients with rehab and pain management for sports injuries, prenatal care, and also treats patients with Pelvic Floor Dysfunctions.

Pelvic Floor Rehab is treatment for Women and Men, with Pelvic/Lumbar pain, incontinence or leaking urine, Bladder pain, painful intercourse, prolapse, symptoms following prostate surgery or pelvic surgeries. Dr. Kristina uses gentle physiotherapy and the use of EMG/Biofeedback, a highly specialized diagnostic tool for pelvic floor dysfunctions.

Patients with Neck, Low back pain or Pelvic floor dysfunction are referred to Dr. Kristina by local Orthos, Urologists, OBGYNs and Midwives.

Dr. Kristina enjoys her free time with her 3 boys, biking, surfing and hiking with their Great Dane and Bull Dogs!



Montellese Family Chiropractic & Pelvic Rehab Clinic
(831) 655-3255

Monterey location: 550 Camino El Estero, Suite 103
Carmel location: 301 Mid Valley Center
www.MontelleseFamily.com

VIVI FENWICK



After more than a decade building my career at established companies, I launched Vivi Fenwick Consulting LLC to provide guidance, coaching and expertise across the full range of Human Resources disciplines. Whether a company needs an HR health-check, guidance/support/advice on employee relations issues, program & policy design and development, training or recruiting, my goal is to help you stay true to your organization's culture, mission and values while navigating the local, state and federal requirements. I have more than 25 years of experience serving diverse small-to-medium sized business spanning non-profit and for-profit, from start-ups to established. Bottom line, I help you take care of your human assets so you can focus on your core business.

(831) 262-4237
vivi@vivifenwickconsulting.com | www.vivifenwickconsulting.com

WOMEN IN BUSINESS PROFILES

KRISTA SNELLING CHAIRMAN AND CEO



Krista Snelling joined West Coast Community Bank in 2021, bringing more than 27 years of experience in banking, finance and leadership. Krista serves on boards and committees of the Monterey Bay Economic Partnership, California Bankers Association, Community Foundation of Santa Cruz County and on the Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco’s Community Depository Institutions Advisory Council.

Krista has been recognized for her leadership throughout her career, most recently in the Silicon Valley Business Journal’s 2025 Power 100 List, for the third year, and American Banker Magazine’s Most Powerful Women in Banking and Finance Watch List for 2024, for the second year.



75 River Street | Santa Cruz
(831) 457-5000 | wccb.com
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PATTY LEONARD ENTREPRENEUR & BUSINESS STRATEGIST



Patty Leonard is a seasoned entrepreneur and Business Strategist with a track record of six company builds and four successful exits. For the past three decades, she has launched and scaled brands across consumer products and multimedia platforms, generating over \$1.9 billion in combined revenue. She has partnered with Fortune 500 companies, like ESPN, Avon, Time Life, American Express and others both large and small....

Patty fell in love with Carmel @ the age of 16 when living with her family in Carmel Meadows in the early 70’s.

She would love to help local businesses Get Started/ Pivot and/or Expand. She is definitely one of a kind and eager to help our community. She is available for short term project consulting and mentoring.

No project too small. Initial Consultation Complimentary.

(310) 560-4053
pattyleonardbiz@gmail.com

KATIE AUSTIN VP OF OPERATIONAL DEVELOPMENT



Katie Austin joined West Coast Community Bank in 2021, bringing 10 years of experience in banking operations, client service and relationship management. She was born and raised in Monterey County. Katie’s focus on operational excellence, outstanding client experience and team development and growth make her a key asset to the Bank.

Katie actively supports and volunteers for Marina Youth Baseball and Softball, Monterey Firefighters Community Foundation and United Way Monterey County, where she is a member of their Emerging Leaders Society.



300 Bonifacio Place | Monterey
(831) 457-5000 | wccb.com
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PENNY MORRIS VP DEPOSIT RELATIONSHIP MANAGER



Penny Morris joined West Coast Community Bank in 2011, bringing more than 50 years of banking experience in operations, commercial and consumer lending, business development, shareholder relations and client relationship management. Penny volunteers for United Way Monterey County, actively supports Community Partnership for Youth and serves on the National Philanthropy Day awards selection committee. Since 1985, Penny has led a partnership between the Monterey Herald and Salvation Army for the annual Operation Christmas Cheer campaign. She previously volunteered for 29 years at the AT&T Pebble Beach National Pro-Am Golf Tournament and has served on numerous local nonprofit boards.



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(831) 457-5000 | wccb.com
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LILLIAN MULVEY AVP LOAN PORTFOLIO MANAGER



Lillian Mulvey joined West Coast Community Bank in 2017, bringing decades of banking experience in retail banking, credit and lending services and branch management. As a loan portfolio manager, Lillian provides a deep understanding of community-based relationships and exceptional client service.

Lillian is a proud and active member of the Salinas community. She volunteers for a variety of organizations and events, including the Salinas Valley Fair, Rancho Cielo’s veggie-packing initiative, Festa Italia and the Salinas Air Show. Her deep-rooted commitment to service also includes eight years of dedicated leadership as a school board member for her local school district.



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(831) 457-5000 | wccb.com
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SUN SHINE HOHMAN VP DEPOSIT RELATIONSHIP MANAGER



Sun Shine Hohman joined West Coast Community Bank in 2024, bringing 25 years of banking experience in lending, operations, investment banking and internal auditing before moving into treasury management. She has lived on the Monterey Peninsula since 1996.

Sun Shine serves on the board of directors of the Hospice Giving Foundation, Monterey Commercial Property Owners and actively supports and volunteers for the Monterey Civic Club, Carmel Unified School District, Junior Achievement of Northern California, United Way of Monterey County and many other local nonprofit groups.



300 Bonifacio Place | Monterey
(831) 457-5000 | wccb.com
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NATALIE HARRIS GIBSON AXIOM HOME TECH



Natalie Harris Gibson is Co-Owner of Axiom Home Tech, which offers bespoke lighting, shading, audio and video solutions for residential and commercial spaces. An alumna of both Stanford University and Columbia University, Natalie’s determination and motivation have led her down many successful paths. Leading in the male-dominated contracting industry can be challenging and Natalie leads a team of experienced, accomplished custom installers with vigor and enthusiasm. Her caring nature and desire to provide service and value to her clients translates to smooth projects, amazing outcomes, and satisfied customers.

Being a part of a company that designs the entertainment and comfort features of a home is a lot of fun. Natalie spends her free time with her husband, 2 kids and their gregarious golden retriever exploring Monterey County and watching movies in their home theater!



501 Lighthouse Ave, Ste 300 Monterey
natalie@axiomhometech.com | www.axiomhometech.com
(831) 645-9900

KARIN E. RICHARDS, ESQ. ESTATE PLANNING



Karin Richards is a seasoned and trusted attorney who has been representing clients in estate planning and probate on the Central Coast for over two decades.

■ Trust and will preparation	■ Probate administration
■ Revocable living trusts	■ Health care directives
■ Special needs trusts	■ Power of attorney (financial/health)
■ Spendthrift trusts	■ Asset protection
■ Trust administration	



JRG Attorneys at Law
400 Camino Aguajito, Suite 100, Monterey
318 Cayuga Street, Salinas
530 San Benito Street, Suite 202, Hollister
(831) 269 7086

WOMEN IN BUSINESS PROFILES

ALLY WIELAND THE VAGUE COLLECTION



Ally Wieland is the owner and heart behind The Vague Collection, a women’s clothing studio filled with seasonless, everyday styles meant to be worn on repeat. With a background in marketing, retail and personal styling, Ally has always believed fashion should feel effortless. She carefully selects each collection with versatility and quality in mind, bringing in new arrivals every week and featuring other local woman owned businesses. Outside the studio, Ally loves trying new restaurants, traveling with her husband, Bryce, and spending time with their three pups. For her, The Vague Collection is more than a shop—it’s about community and connection.



705 Lighthouse Ave., Pacific Grove
(831) 324-8776
www.thevaguecollection.com

JENNIFER L. WILLIAMS-CARPENTER NATIVIDAD MEDICAL FOUNDATION



Jennifer L. Williams-Carpenter, M.A., CFRE has devoted her career to transforming health care into healing at Natividad Medical Foundation. Beginning as a hospital volunteer at 15, she has spent the last 25 years championing equity, compassion, and access for Monterey County’s most vulnerable. Through collaboration with more than 125 foundations and generous partners, she has helped secure vital resources for lifesaving programs at Natividad. A summa cum laude graduate with advanced degrees in science and theology, Jennifer leads with both wisdom and heart. She serves on multiple local boards and believes deeply in the power of women leading with purpose to strengthen communities.



PRESIDENT & CEO
NATIVIDAD MEDICAL FOUNDATION
(831) 755-4187 | jennifer@natividadfoundation.org
www.natividadfoundation.org

ANNE SIMONSEN, DMD CARMEL FAMILY DENTIST



Dr. Anne Simonsen is a family and cosmetic dentist, as well as a proud wife and mother of two. She owns and operates Carmel Family Dental, located in the heart of Carmel-by-the-Sea, where she resides with her family. Dr. Simonsen is deeply committed to health, wellness, and delivering high-quality care. She is known for providing compassionate, personalized treatment in a safe, welcoming environment that puts patients at ease. Driven by a passion for excellence, Dr. Simonsen has completed hundreds of hours of continuing education, staying current with the latest advancements in dental research and technology. She leads an exceptional team that shares her commitment to patient-centered care and clinical excellence



(831) 622-7100
carmelfamilydental.com

JEN COSMAS, PSY.D COSMAS NEUROTHERAPIES



Dr. Jen Cosmas holds a master’s and doctorate in psychology and integrates neuroscience with spiritual practice to support people of all ages. Her neurofeedback work helps improve focus, resilience, and mood, while her certifications in Buddhist Mysticism and authorization to teach Dr. Joe Dispenza’s quantum-based methods offer tools for meditation and cognitive growth. She designs customized practices that blend science and spirit, guiding clients toward greater balance, healing, and clarity. Her mission is to make transformation both measurable and meaningful at Cosmas Neurotherapies.

Jen Cosmas, Psy.D
www.neurotherapies.org
brainpaint.com
(408) 898-6685

AMANDA BAKER FLOOR STORE USA



Amanda brings over 40 years of combined design expertise to the Monterey Peninsula, with 20 years at the prestigious San Francisco Design Center and 20 years serving the local community. Having worked in some of San Francisco’s most respected showrooms, she developed a strong foundation in collaborating with top designers, architects, and trade professionals. Today, Amanda specializes in flooring, offering a curated selection of wool, sisal, rugs, and more. Her passion lies in helping both homeowners and professionals transform spaces with timeless style, drawing on decades of knowledge to deliver inspired, elevated design solutions.



1666 Contra Costa St. Sand City, CA 93955
(831) 583-9124
www.flooringamericamonterey.com

MEGAN MERZ FRSTEAM FABRIC & CONTENTS RESTORATION



Megan is a proud CSUMB graduate and the Business Development Director for the Ream Companies, including Disaster Kleenup Specialists, Floor Store USA’s Flooring America, Cypress Cabinets, and FRSTeam. With experience in the restoration industry, Megan is passionate about helping people recover what matters most after disasters caused by water, smoke, fire, or environmental damage—whether electronics, textiles, or hard contents. Through FRSTeam, she connects homeowners and businesses with expert content restoration, emergency delivery of essential items, secure storage, and seamless coordination with insurance providers. Megan thrives on building relationships and guiding clients through every step of the restoration process with care and professionalism.



560 Redwood Ave. Sand City, CA 93955
(831) 200-1910
www.frsteamcali.com

WENDI KIRBY MUSIC



Wendi Kirby is a pianist, composer, and educator. She has received national recognition for her contributions in music education. Wendi has released two albums of her own original music on Pastiche Records (Bloom and Wings) and performs on stages throughout the US and Europe. Wendi shares her passion for music and creativity with the community at her space at 550 Hartnell Street, Suite F in the heart of Old Monterey. This beautiful space hosts all things creative - concerts, events, celebrations, creative team building, music lessons and workshops for all ages. Space rental is available, please contact for more details.



(831) 597-1121
info@wendikirbymusic.com
https://www.wendikirbymusic.com/

NICOLE CROMWELL GALLERY



Nicole Cromwell uniquely blends her talents as an artist and a nurse, tapping into the healing power of art. Drawing from her nursing background, she creates acrylic paintings that embody calm and rejuvenation, reflecting the natural world’s grace and complexity. Her artwork is designed to bring tranquility, inspire creativity, and offer new perspectives, showcasing the impactful role of art in improving well-being. Whether through landscapes, seascapes, or abstract florals, Nicole aims to fill spaces with beauty, wonder, and positivity, offering comfort and joy to viewers. She’s dedicated to making art that not only pleases but also supports and uplifts others.

(831) 200-1836
nicolecromwellart.com
Thurs.-Sun. 11-5, Mon. 10-2 & by appointment
Dolores btw 5th & 6th, Su Vecino Courtyard