

Tank rules bring end to familiar gas station

■ City’s share dwindles to one

By MARY SCHLEY

AFTER MORE than 75 years of selling gas in Carmel, Andy Hill’s family business at Junipero and Fourth will pivot to focus entirely on his towing company, he said Thursday, as crews used a large crane to remove old fuel tanks in time to meet an end-of-the-year deadline mandated by state law. The closure leaves the Shell-turned-Chevron at San Carlos and Fifth as the only gas station within the city limits.

“Our family has been selling gasoline in Carmel since 1943,” Hill said Thursday. “I will miss the gas station and the fantastic customers. My focus now is 100 percent on towing.

“I can tell you Carmel Towing is as strong as ever,” he continued. “I’ve increased to nine trucks with seven amazing drivers and Karen Christie, who has been with me for 26 fantastic years.” (Christie handles dispatching.)

Hill said the independent garage next door will continue operating, too.

“The project is going much faster than I anticipated, and the mechanics should be back on property as soon as the cement dries,” he said.

Big bill

Hill said his decision to shutter the gas business was driven by the cost of replacing the tanks. While George Giem owns the property and applied for the demolition permit to remove

them, the business belongs to Hill, so he’s footing the bill.

“Because I own everything privately, it would cost \$1.5 million to redo the tanks and meet the standards of the EPA,” he said. Demolishing the underground storage, cleaning up the site, filling in the holes and pouring new cement will cost around \$180,000, Hill estimated.

The tank removal is being driven by a Senate bill that

See STATION page 18A



PHOTO/MARY SCHLEY

Many a local has filled up at Andy Hill’s station, but the cost of installing new tanks is bringing an end to his family’s decades-old fuel business.

Trial date set in fatal stabbing near high school

By MARY SCHLEY

A JURY trial has been ordered for Donel Geisen, who will turn 80 Oct. 1, in the stabbing death of his wife nearly two months ago, according to Monterey County Superior Court documents.

Geisen, who reportedly told a 911 operator that he’d just killed his wife of 58 years — and who had apparently tried to commit suicide by stabbing himself — has been held in Monterey County Jail on more than \$1 million bail since he was released from a hospital a couple of days after the fatal attack.

Telephone call

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

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

Shortly after he was charged with second-degree premeditated murder with an enhancement for using a knife, Geisen was subjected to a mental-health evaluation when his public defender suggested he might not be competent to stand trial, but Monterey County Superior Court Judge Pamela Butler later deemed him mentally fit.

During a preliminary hearing Aug. 27, deputy district attorney Rebecca Garcia presented evidence backing the charges against Geisen, including testimony from investigating officer Rodrigo Lopez and deputies Matthew Bradford and Josue Ramirez, according to court records.

See TRIAL page 18A

‘Year of affordability’ falls short in Sacramento

IN DECEMBER, politicians in Sacramento promised 2025 would be the “year of affordability” in the Golden State, but nine months later, it’s questionable when or if their efforts will actually lower the cost of living. Still, that hasn’t stopped the governor and leaders in the state Legislature from declaring victory.

Capitol Access

By CAITLIN CONRAD

“We went big. We produced results. We delivered historic progress,” said Assembly Speaker Robert Rivas on Sunday, calling 2025 the most productive year in a generation for the Legislature.

Making the state a more affordable place to live was a lofty goal. California earned its nickname during the Gold Rush — but the moniker still fits, as it remains the most expensive in the nation to live, with median home prices

See PRICES page 17A

Amazon building colossal Salinas Valley warehouse

By KELLY NIX

THE AMAZON distribution center being built in Salinas won’t be open for business anytime soon, but work on the massive facility — which is adjacent to agricultural row crops — is taking shape.

The online retail giant in late 2024 broke ground on the five-story, 3 million-square-foot building on Harris Road and Abbott Street which is described as an “advanced robotics fulfillment center.”

While not long ago only the skeletal framing and support structures of the building were evident, crews have installed most of the façade facing Abbott Street. Along with work trucks, cranes and other heavy machinery staged around the perimeter of the building, dozens of construction employees were working on the structure this week, as they have for months.

Same-day deliveries?

The warehouse will bring jobs, sales and property tax revenues, and allow for other improvements, the City of Salinas has said.

“It will be an advanced robotics fulfillment center that is projected to bring hundreds of jobs or more to our community,” Salinas said. “In addition to job creation and offsite improvements, other economic benefits to Salinas include sales and property tax revenues.”

Will the innovative new fulfillment center mean even faster deliveries for Monterey County Amazon customers, who currently get their

Commission: New water should go to housing, commercial, public projects

By MARY SCHLEY

THE 14 acre-feet of new water destined for Carmel-by-the-Sea when an expansion of a wastewater-recycling project comes online at the end of the year should be earmarked for housing of all types, commercial uses and municipal projects, the planning commission unanimously decided last week. A city staffer had recommended leaving the bulk of it in “unallocated reserves.”

The new water will bring the city’s total supply to 16.661 acre-feet, or 5.4 million gallons, per year, according to principal planner Marnie Waffle.

The city’s “water management program” requires that at least 10 percent be reserved for projects that will create affordable housing “and that water is reserved for anticipated projects serving coastal recreation, access and essential public services,” she told the commission Sept. 10, adding that those requirements implement policies in the general plan and local coastal program.

Waffle also estimated that if the additional 349 residential units of various types, as envisioned in the city’s housing element, become a reality, they’ll require 32 acre-feet of water.

Resolution needed

In May, the city council discussed the incoming bounty and decided 3 acre-feet should be moved into the category for low- and very-low-income housing, but did nothing with the rest, leaving 12.29 acre-feet in the unallocated category.

But planning commissioners had other ideas. Chair Michael LePage said sticking most of the water in unallocated reserves “really bothers me,” and commissioner Stephanie Locke, who has worked for the Monterey Peninsula Water Management District for 37 years, presented a different strategy.

See WATER page 16A

packages from facilities in Hollister and elsewhere? A company spokesman Tuesday wouldn’t answer that question — and others from The Pine Cone — but Amazon has said similar centers, including a new facility in Shreveport, La., are aimed at getting orders to customers more quickly and that processing times have been reduced by as much as 25 percent.

As inventory and packages move through the warehouse, “an AI-powered trio of robotic arms sorts, stacks and consolidates millions of items and customer orders

See AMAZON page 18A



PHOTO/KELLY NIX

Robots will be used to sort and stack products inside the mammoth Amazon warehouse going up near Spreckels, the company said.

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Sandy Claws

Healing hearts

When a dearly devoted dog crosses the rainbow bridge, it's hard to decide whether getting another will hurt or heal. At first, most likely both. Yet, once you feel ready to have a new companion at home, you must remind yourself that your new dog doesn't replace the previous pet, but helps heal the hole in your heart.

After grieving the loss of the Shi Tsu she'd loved for 16 years, what helped the Monterey resident feel ready to bring home another dog was Tessa Maya, the 9-year-old Shi Tsu she saw on the Peace of Mind Dog Rescue website.

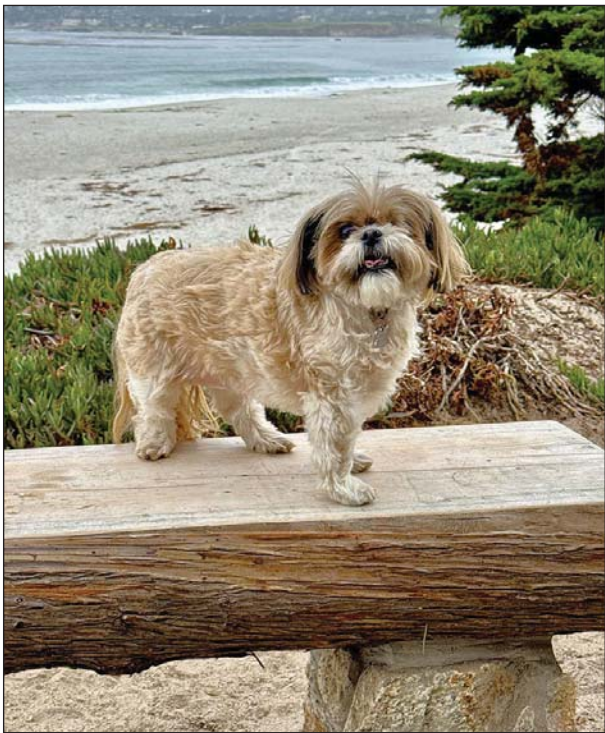
Tessa, who'd been brought home as a puppy, had grown up in the care of a grandmother who'd passed away, leaving her with a collegiate granddaughter who couldn't care for her. It turned out Tessa was accident prone.

"The granddaughter told me the little pup had a tendency to 'parkour' off ledges and other heights and had once fallen and injured her eye, which, because she also had glaucoma, meant she had to lose it," her person recalled.

But, like "The Velveteen Rabbit," those things don't matter when you are really loved.

Tessa's resilience was evident during her first visit to the beach at Seal Rock in Pebble Beach, where she

By Lisa Crawford Watson



had to learn to navigate the sand. Since then, despite her handicap, she seems to have adapted well to her person's active outdoor lifestyle.

"The first time I took her camping in Big Sur," her person said, "I kept her in a sling since she seemed scared. The next time, she didn't need it. And the first time took her to the river, she started swimming in my arms, with her paws in the air, before she'd even hit the water."

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Darpinian sentenced for stabbing mother in her Del Mesa home

By MARY SCHLEY

THE CARMEL Valley man who admitted to trying to kill his mother in their Del Mesa Carmel home in January was sentenced to 10 years and six months in state prison, according to a final judgment filed in Monterey County Superior Court Sept. 2.

William Darpinian, 34, was transferred to Wasco State Prison last week.

In the Jan. 25 attack in one of the units in the retirement community, Darpinian repeatedly stabbed his mother while they were in the kitchen and dining room of the home they shared, according to court testimony.

Played dead

She tried to escape after playing dead and finally got out of the house, where neighbors rushed to her and dialed 911.

Monterey County Sheriff’s deputies locked down the complex for several hours as they searched unsuccessfully for Darpinian, while his 60-year-old mother was taken to Natividad Medical Center for treatment of multiple stab wounds, including deep lacerations to her neck and to her hands.

He turned himself in early the next morning and was lodged in the Monterey County Jail until his transfer to state prison.

Darpinian had been charged with “attempted willful, deliberate and pre-meditated murder,” with enhancements for using a knife and causing great bodily injury, attempted voluntary manslaughter, with the same enhancements, and assault with a deadly weapon.

In a July 16 court hearing, he pleaded guilty to the lesser charges of attempted voluntary manslaughter and assault with a deadly weapon.

Vulnerable victim

In the “advisement of rights, waiver and plea form” he filed with the court, Darpinian also admitted the aggravating factors that “the victim was particularly vulnerable” and that he “took advantage of a position of trust or confidence to commit the offense.”

Monterey County Superior Court Judge Pamela Butler sentenced him Aug. 20 to 10 years and six months in prison, with credit for time served of 207 days plus 31 days for good/work time, and said he would be ordered to pay restitution to his mother “in an amount and manner to be determined.”

He was also ordered to pay various other fines and fees. While the final abstract of judgment had him being sent to North Kern State Prison, state records show he was taken to Wasco Sept. 11.



William Darpinian

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



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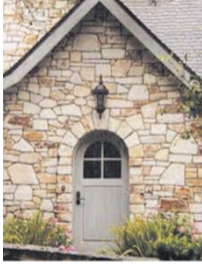
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Police & Sheriff's Log

Trees threatened, usual objections

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.

TUESDAY, AUGUST 26

Carmel Valley: Adult Protective Services report alleging physical and financial abuse of a Carmel Valley Road resident.

Big Sur: Online report regarding lost or stolen property from room at Big Sur Lodge.

Pebble Beach: Adult Protective Services report alleging financial abuse at a residence on Portola Road.

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 27

Seaside: Animal control officer got a report that kids were getting stung by bees on their way to middle school. He tracked down the hive near Military Avenue and Paralata

and is working on capturing and relocating them so students don't have to make a mad dash to school.

Carmel-by-the-Sea: Petty theft and trespass warning at Ocean and San Carlos.

Pacific Grove: Person on Grand Avenue reported a possible scam.

Pacific Grove: Report of a solo vehicle collision at Forest and Bishop. The 25-year-old male driver was arrested and booked at Monterey County Jail for multiple narcotics and firearm charges, including possession of a controlled substance without a prescription, possession of narcotics for sale, transportation of drugs for sale, possession of a controlled substance while armed, carrying a loaded firearm without a permit, possession of a firearm that's not registered, being a felon and addict in possession of a firearm and unlawful possession of ammunition.

See **POLICE LOG** page 8RE
in the Real Estate Section



The gavel falls

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

July 22 — A jury convicted defendant Mario Thomas Garcia, 40, of Salinas, of second-degree murder in connection with the fatal shooting of Gabriel Gutierrez outside Jaime's Lounge on April 5, 2024.

At approximately 11:37 p.m. on the night of the incident, Salinas Police officers responded to a shooting in front of Jaime's Lounge. Upon arrival, they located Gabriel Gutierrez suffering from a single gunshot wound to the abdomen. He later succumbed to his injuries. No cooperative witnesses were present at the scene.

However, surveillance footage recovered from Jaime's Lounge and nearby businesses captured the defendant's actions leading up to the shooting. The video evidence ultimately proved that Garcia was responsible for Gutierrez's death. Garcia fled the country

following the shooting and was later apprehended in Mexico before being extradited to the United States to face murder charges.

The investigation revealed that the motive for the killing stemmed from a separate incident that occurred approximately 30 minutes earlier at a different bar. Notably, Gutierrez was not involved in that prior altercation.

After deliberations, the jury found Garcia guilty of second-degree murder and found true an enhancement that he personally discharged a firearm, causing death. He was also convicted of being a felon in possession of both a firearm and ammunition. Garcia faces a maximum sentence of life in state prison.

This case was investigated by Salinas Police Department detectives Gansen and Richardson. District attorney investigator Alicia Cox assisted in trial preparation.

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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.

Sampognaro guilty, gets 23 years

By MARY SCHLEY

AFTER SUCCESSFULLY fighting his murder conviction and getting his case kicked back to the Monterey County Superior Court, Joseph Sampognaro, 37, last month pleaded guilty to lesser charges and was immediately sentenced to 23 years in state prison as part of the deal. He is already incarcerated at Salinas Valley Prison, where he was sent following his initial conviction.

Sampognaro had been found guilty by a jury in April 2021 of first-degree murder and several other crimes following the Sept. 12, 2020, shooting death of his father in a barn off Laureles Grade during a dispute over a Corvette. He was arrested after leading police on a dangerous car chase that ended when he crashed the Corvette in the Carmel Highlands.

During a sentencing hearing in July 2022, his defense attorney, Tara Higgins, provided letters from Sampognaro's aunts conveying the tragedy and trauma of his childhood, including drug use and abuse by his father and being abandoned by his mother. She described the shooting as "more of a crime of passion."

Admonishment

But Monterey County Superior Court Judge Mark Hood was mostly unmoved, handing down a sentence of 47 years to life in state prison and offering advice and admonishment as he did so.

"Mr. Sampognaro, we've known each other for quite some time, from this case

and other cases. You frankly have done enough to play this court and play games with this court and play games before trial and during trial and after trial," Hood said at the time. "You've been given a lot of opportunities, and you've squandered those opportunities."

The judge told him his "performance" in Monterey County Jail "has been poor," and that he should seek opportunities in state prison to earn money and improve himself.

"I agree with your family. You're very smart. You know what to do and you know how to do it," Hood said. "You just need to re-focus on where to do that."

Ineffective counsel

Sampognaro's attorney later filed an appeal arguing the conviction should be overturned based on allegations that jurors slept during his trial and one of his attorneys had a brief affair with the courtroom's bailiff. Sampognaro also alleged his trial lawyers

"were ineffective for failing to object to prejudicial character evidence" that led the jury to find him guilty of murder.

In November 2024, a California Appeals Court panel that included 6th Appellate District judges Adrienne Grover — a former Monterey County Counsel and Superior Court judge — vacated the jury's guilty verdicts of first-degree murder and being a felon in possession of a firearm, along with the "true findings" that he used a firearm in the commission of a felony and that he caused great bodily injury with a

See **GUILTY** page 24A



Joseph Sampognaro



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CUSD test scores show progress since Covid

By LILY PATTERSON

ADMINISTRATORS AND school board members seem happy, generally, with student performance throughout Carmel Unified School District, now that results from the 2024-2025 California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress testing cycle are in.

California’s standardized test docket includes “Smarter Balanced” assessments, which measure the literacy and math skills of students in grades three through eight, and 11th graders. The California Science Test, added on in 2019, is administered in fifth, eighth and 11th grades.

“The biggest takeaway is that our students are doing very well,” said Andrew Rodriguez, a curriculum and assessment coordinator with CUSD who presented the report to the education board last Wednesday.

Comparing scores from 2022-2023 through 2024-2025, Rodriguez said students have “pretty much maintained excellence” in the post-pandemic years.

District-wide, 73 percent of Carmel students are meeting or exceeding state literacy standards for their grade levels, according to their Smarter Balanced scores. Sixty-six percent are achieving math standards, a 3 percent improvement since the 2022-2023 testing cycle.

Great by comparison

Sixty percent of students are meeting science standards, up 2 percent over that same period. Unlike its math and literacy counterparts, the California Science Test is cumulative, so students can be tested on science curriculum from any previous year.

CUSD students report significantly higher standardized test scores than many others in California, with a shocking drop-off in nearby Monterey Unified School District. In 2023-2024, only 39 percent and 24 percent of Monterey students achieved passing scores in literacy and math, respectively — which is dismal even compared to the average student in California, who scored 47 percent and 36 percent on the same tests.

Superintendent Sharon Ofek commended Rodriguez and his colleagues, saying more data — or, at least, better access to it — is linked to overall improvement in student performance.

“When I first arrived here in 2022, there had not been a data presentation, or review of data, since maybe 2017 or 2018. To help rebuild the data muscle, our curriculum and assessment team has really done a tremendous job meeting with teachers, working with staff and administrators,

helping get data into the hands of folks,” Ofek said. “You can see the benefit and the impact of that. No matter how minimal or large the outcome is, we are still trending in the right direction in terms of student performance.”

While the numbers had one member of the board “jumping for joy,” another was underwhelmed, given “a lot of expectation in this district,” and name-dropping

See **SCHOOLS** page 26A

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FEDS TAKE AIM AT ‘ROADLESS RULE,’ PANETTA PUSHES FOR PROTECTIONS

By CHRIS COUNTS

THE PUBLIC comment period ends Friday for the Trump administration’s effort to rescind the 2001 Roadless Area Conservation Rule, which bans timber harvesting and roadbuilding on 45 million acres of national forests and grasslands — including 27,830 acres in Monterey County.

While the Trump administration has launched an aggressive agenda to promote economic growth, the U.S. Department of Agriculture contends rescinding the roadless rule is also needed to combat the growing risk of wildfires, particularly in states like Utah and Montana, where the majority of public land is restricted from road development. The feds also say that more than half the land targeted by the action experiences a high or very high risk of wildfire.

According to Secretary of Agriculture Brooke Rollins, the action “marks a critical step forward” in the administration’s efforts “to restore local decision-making to federal land managers to empower them to do what’s necessary to protect America’s forests and communities from devastating destruction from fires.”

Economic growth

“This administration is dedicated to removing burdensome, outdated, one-size-fits-all regulations that not only put people and livelihoods at risk but also stifle economic

growth in rural America,” Rollins said. “It is vital that we properly manage our federal lands to create healthy, resilient, and productive forests for generations to come.”

But Bryant Baker of Los Padres Forest Watch called it a “farce” that the administration is claiming to rescind the rule in response to wildfires. While he said there will likely be another opportunity for public comment, Baker urged people to voice their views on the proposal.

“It is transparently about opening new areas of our public lands to large-scale logging and other damaging activities that require permanent roads,” said Baker. “The public has just a few days left to weigh in, and it is critical that every voice is heard.”

The 27,830 acres in Monterey County that could be affected by the new rule are on U.S. Forest Service land. Los Padres Forest Watch shared a map that shows seven distinct locations — most of them very remote, although some of the land is near Tassajara Hot Springs and Arroyo Seco Campground. “They are kind of on the fringes of existing wilderness areas,” Baker observed.

Logging on the land seems unlikely, in part due to rough terrain, but Baker said some pines exist there. However, that’s not his greatest fear. “Rescinding the roadless rule may increase the likelihood for more drilling and mining,” he warned.

Baker is also asking people to support the Roadless Area Conservation Act of 2025, a piece of legislation co-sponsored by Congressman Jimmy Panetta, who called



PHOTO/LOS PADRES FOREST WATCH

More than 4 million acres throughout California, including the land shown here, could be impacted by the rescinding of the Roadless Rule.

the rollback of protections for roadless areas “a serious threat to our environment and wildfire resilience.”

Ventana alliance

The Ventana Wilderness Alliance also urged its members to voice support for maintaining the roadless rule.

“The roadless rule is under threat, and with it, protections for national forests,” the group, which protects federal land in Monterey County, said on X. “If eliminated, wild areas in national forests across the nation — including those in Los Padres National Forest — could face roadbuilding and logging.” The group urged the public to submit comments that emphasize how the roadless rule “protects watersheds and wildlife habitat, limits wildfire risk and provides opportunities for recreation.”

To make a comment, visit [federalregister.gov](https://www.federalregister.gov) and search for roadless rule public comment.



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‘Animus, disdain’ toward White employees sparks lawsuit

By KELLY NIX

A LONGTIME employee of a national security company on the Monterey Peninsula claims senior managers at the business made a concerted effort to push out older White male workers in favor of non-White worker, and that he was fired for that reason.

Erik Gregory, 55, says in a lawsuit filed Aug. 20 in Monterey County Superior Court that there was a calculated practice by management of Peraton, a large corporation with an office in Seaside, to push out older White male employees. Gregory worked at the company for 21 years. Peraton purchased Northrop Grumman’s IT and support services for \$3.4 billion in 2021.

In 2019, Gregory said that two female supervisors “openly expressed their animus and general disdain toward White male interview candidates,” and that a change in management in 2020 prompted a shift in working conditions.

“Specifically, Gregory began to witness concerted efforts by management to push out White male employees over the age of 40, only to subsequently replace them with less-experienced non-White employees under the age of 40,” he claims.

‘Disparate treatment’

In late 2023, he said he was “removed” from a project he’d worked on for nine years and that managers put a “far less seasoned female in her early 30s” in the role to replace him.

“Gregory complained about this disparate treatment,” but the manager “failed to take any action to address or otherwise investigate this complaint.”

A year later, he said, he was notified his job position was being eliminated and that his last day would be Sept. 25, 2024, but that he was directed to train the younger female worker on his work responsibilities. After superiors falsely accused him of having a second job toward the end of his

stint at the company, he complained to an administrator about the “ongoing harassment,” but nobody was held responsible, according to the suit filed on his behalf by Los Angeles law firm Shegarian & Associates.

He also alleges that when he went on medical leave in 2021, his manager “frequently bombarded” him with work-related job requests, which he said also amounted to harassment.

Emotional distress

Gregory, who additionally names Northrop Grumman, three female Peraton employees and Veritas Capital Fund Management, LLC, as defendants, alleges wrongful termination, discrimination based on his race, age and sex, hostile work environment, retaliation, failure to accommodate his disability and other claims.

He said he’s suffered humiliation, emotional distress, mental and physical anguish, and loss of income, and is seeking an undisclosed amount in damages, including punitive damages, exceeding \$35,000.

A spokeswoman for the Virginia-based Peraton told The Pine Cone via email this week that the company does not comment on litigation but that it is “committed to providing a workplace that is inclusive, respectful, and compliant with all applicable laws.”

The case is set for a Jan. 6, 2026 case management conference in Monterey.

‘A concerted effort to push out White male employees over the age of 40’

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Film festival puts focus on bringing more Hollywood to county

By CHRIS COUNTS

JUST MONTHS after Gov. Gavin Newsom signed a bill to boost film and television production in California, the Carmel International Film Festival is hosting a panel talk Oct. 5 at the Circle Theatre on how tax incentives can lure Hollywood to Monterey County.

The festival, which debuted last year under the leadership of Lawrence Roeck and Annette Anderson, is set for Oct. 2-5.

Titled “Preserving the Industry in California,” the talk features Kerri Wood Einertson from the California Film Commission. She will be interviewed by Roeck and Anderson. The talk centers around bringing more movie and TV studio production to the county.

Anderson, a television professional with more than two decades of experience in film development, production and marketing, told The Pine Cone the local area offers an extraordinary setting for film and television productions. “Knowing what goes into choosing locations, there’s no place that looks like the Monterey Peninsula,” she said.

Anderson also sees potential in creating a tax incentive program at a county level and encouraging hotels and restaurants to offer discounts to attract the industry.

“That can have a significant impact on film budgets,” she said. “That can create a significant savings.”

Tax breaks

The benefits to the local economy could be major, she suggested. She noted that when Roeck filmed “The Forger” in Carmel in 2009, the production injected \$2 million into the local economy. She also observed that when Roeck filmed “Diablo” in Canada in 2015, he received a 30 percent tax rebate.

In June, Newsom signed the Film & Television Tax Credit Program, which will spend \$750 million annually for five years to attract film and television production clients. “California’s iconic entertainment industry drives economic growth in communities all across our state,” Newsom said. The California Film Commission, which administers the program, said the spending could create as many as 5,500 jobs.

Two months after Newsom signed the bill, the film commission reported that 22 television projects “are set to generate an estimated \$1.1 billion in economic activity and employ 6,500 cast and crew across California.”

Meanwhile, the Carmel film festival is seeking

volunteers and offering an enticing perk — if you work a three-hour shift, you get an all-access pass to the festival for the day. Workers are needed to staff concession stands, work as ushers and the like. To volunteer, visit ciffest.com and follow the link in the upper left corner.

Board member resigns, district seeks replacement

By KELLY NIX

AMY ANDERSON, who since 2020 has served on the Monterey Peninsula Water Management District board of directors, has stepped down to focus on her health.

At Monday’s water district meeting, general manager Dave Stoldt said that Anderson, who served Division 5, would not be returning to her position. Anderson informed the agency Sept. 12 of her resignation. She explained to The Pine Cone why she stepped down.

“I resigned because for the last 11 months I’ve been in cancer treatment — surgery, chemo and radiation,” Anderson said.

Besides having to attend a lot of doctors’ appointments, Anderson said the treatments have made her tired and that keeping up with the demands of the water district board was difficult.

“I thought it needed someone’s full attention, and I couldn’t give it that,” she said.

Anderson said that when she ran for a second term last fall, she had not yet been diagnosed.

Working with the water district has been “fantastic” and a great experience, she said.

“I was very impressed with the senior management and all the staff I interacted with,” Anderson explained. “It was also a lot of work. I liked working with my board colleagues and regret that I had to leave.”



Amy Anderson

Anderson said she’s still an ardent supporter of Public Water Now, the group that has long advocated for a government-owned and operated Monterey Peninsula water system. She voted with her colleagues in October 2023 to move ahead with the acquisition of Peninsula utility California American Water, a private company, through eminent domain.

Stoldt praised Anderson’s time on the water district panel.

“Amy was a great asset to our board,” Stoldt told The Pine Cone. “As both a trained scientist and an accomplished musician, she brought a keen mind and a broad set of skills to understand and act upon our Monterey Peninsula water challenges.”

Anderson was elected in 2020 and reelected in 2024, and her term was to end in 2028.

The water district said it will accept letters of interest and statements of qualifications from residents of Division 5 until Friday, Oct. 10, at 5 p.m. If the district gets qualified candidates, the board is expected to decide on an appointee at the Oct. 20

board meeting, or it may call a special board meeting to fill the seat.

Division 5 includes Carmel, Carmel Valley, Laureles Grade, Monterra, Tehama and Carmel Highlands.

Board chairman George Riley said Anderson was a “valuable and trusted voice of reason” on the panel and was “well prepared to participate in all the issues facing the board. Her positive attitude and representation of Carmel Valley will be missed.”

The person selected to replace Anderson for Division 5 “may choose to run in the Nov. 3, 2026, general election for the then-remaining two years of the term,” the district said.

Interested candidates are asked to submit letters of interest and statements of qualifications via email to sara@mpwmd.net or drop off their credentials at the district’s offices at 5 Harris Court, Bldg. G, in Ryan Ranch.

Nicole Eileen Chrislock, daughter of Ronald and Pamela (Furman) Chrislock of Pacific Grove, wed **Rodd Joseph Hiserman**, son of Jerry and Debbie (Glenn) Hiserman of Prunedale, on **September 19th, 2024, in San Juan Bautista.**

This week, they celebrate their one-year wedding anniversary.

The wedding, which took place in the garden at Jardines de San Juan, was a lovely late-summer affair. The couple's wedding colors were marigold, honey, and saffron. The reception was decorated with zinnias, feverfew, yarrow and dahlias. Dinner and dancing was held outside under the rising full moon. The bride was escorted down the aisle by her mother. The bridal party consisted of Mrs. Sara (Ziel) Reid, Mrs. Carli (Cullen) Silva, Mrs. Lauren Mazza, Ms. Kristin Scheidt, Ms. Haley Meyn, and Ms. Kari Scheidt. The bride honored her late best friend, Ms. Kelly Mayone, who was named her heavenly maid of honor. The groomsmen consisted of Chad Burkleo, Dalton Irmimi, Thomas Foster, Michael Bailey, Cody Dillard, and Daniel Anguilm.

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P.G. council spends more on roundabout

By KELLY NIX

THE PACIFIC Grove City Council Wednesday night approved the pursuit of more money for a proposed roundabout.

The council voted to direct city staffers to begin working with the Transportation Agency for Monterey County to increase funding in preconstruction costs by \$137,961 for the so-called Cedar, Sunset and Congress Intersection Project. The extra funds will be used to continue preparing a design engineering evaluation report for the roundabout and improvements to nearby streets.

The council also decided to discuss at a future meeting a request by the consultant GHD for an additional \$340,000.

Councilmen Paul Walkingstick and Joe Amelio were absent from the meeting and did not vote.

While the roundabout has its supporters, only opponents addressed the council Wednesday.

Resident and former city councilman Dan Miller said the consultant’s analysis should include more information, including how much it could cost taxpayers to purchase private property through eminent domain for the roundabout. GHD has

identified 20 stakeholders.

Andy Kubica also had questions about potential costs and asked why the city did not have a timeline to start and complete the project. “Is it two years or five years before we start cutting dirt?” he asked.

Longterm effort

Councilman Chaps Poduri responded to citizens’ concerns that the roundabout is many years off.

“Any infrastructure project is a long-term endeavor to begin with,” Poduri said, noting that some of the preliminary work is undergoing a streamlined Caltrans process that will save time and money. “I’ve seen many that have been going on for decades now.”

He also asked public works superintendent Daniel Gho if the consultant would “ask for more money” for future work.

“There will be more asks for money,” including for the next phase of the project, Gho said.

The council, in a 4-3 vote in July 2024, OK’d a roundabout at the intersection, a project estimated to cost at least \$8 million. Of the \$5 million allocated via a 2016 ballot measure, about \$1 million has already been spent.



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Laguna Seca gets more time for master plan

By MARY SCHLEY

THE FRIENDS of Laguna Seca — the nonprofit that took over management and operations of the raceway and the surrounding recreation area in August 2024 — received permission from the Monterey County Board of Supervisors Tuesday to spend another year developing its facility master plan and business plan for the 552-acre property.

According to the concession agreement signed by the Friends group and the county in July 2023, the nonprofit was required to present a facility master plan within a year of the contract becoming operational, a deadline that arrived on Aug. 1, 2024. The master plan is “intended to reflect the contractor’s long-term vision for alterations, additions and improvements” to the premises and to include a short-term capital improvement program to be completed over a five-year period.

The group is also compelled to undertake a sound study, which is underway.

‘Multiple challenges’

“Friends of Laguna Seca has faced multiple challenges since taking over that have delayed completion of the required update, plan and study,” Monterey County Parks Chief Bryan Flores said in his report for the board Sept. 16. “Entering into the operational phase of the agreement in the middle of the major event season, having multiple management and staffing changes, completion of urgent repair projects, and discovery of unknown deficiencies and issues with infrastructure have all impacted the completion of the facility master plan.”

He said the Friends group is assessing significant long-term infrastructure needs, developing the branding and aesthetic that will help Laguna “stand out in the highly competitive event and destination market,” and determining ways to maximize revenues for continuing success.

The meeting also served as the nonprofit’s required annual update. Ross Merrill, president of the Friends of Laguna Seca’s board of directors, said after completing the transfer of power from the county and former GM John Nari-gi’s group, “we hit the ground running and doing all the things a proper business does.”

Among them was hiring motorsports veteran Mel Harder as president and CEO of Laguna Seca.

At the meeting, Harder outlined the infrastructure work and aesthetic improvements that have been undertaken so far, including new asphalt in key corners to improve drainage, new fencing and updated safety barriers.

“Our first mission was to protect the race-track,” he said. “We added a lot of asphalt, repainted the circuit, restored barriers and added better protection for these cars that are traveling over 200 mph.”

Other improvements include upgrades to the restrooms, suites and garages, new landscaping, and a \$1 million overhaul of the scoring tower to show video feeds and other information. All told, the group has spent \$3.2 million on capital work so far.

“While we’ve been doing restoration projects, there’s discovery and evaluation, and we’re also operating the track on a daily basis,” he said. When the raceway isn’t hosting major events, it’s used for track days, and the surrounding recreation area, including campgrounds and shooting ranges, are always busy with cycling, hiking, events and other activities.

See **TRACK** page 27A



PHOTO/FLS

There may be no more famous turn in motorsports than Laguna Seca’s signature Corkscrew, which received a layer of asphalt over the formerly dirt shoulder as part of recent track improvements.



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Painting stolen right off the wall at Deetjen’s restaurant in Big Sur

By CHRIS COUNTS

A BELOVED painting that was long displayed in Deetjen’s Big Sur Inn has been stolen, not only triggering an effort to recover it, but bringing attention to the mysterious artist who made it.

The theft happened after closing Saturday and before the inn’s restaurant opened for breakfast Sunday.

The painting, which hung in the dining room for decades, depicts an old red barn perched on a hillside of golden grass with a rickety old fence in the foreground. Unfortunately, nobody has turned up a good image of it, in part because the low lighting in the restaurant isn’t very good for photos.

While many extraordinary artists have lived in Big Sur over the past century, arguably none is more highly regarded by locals today than George Choley. A gifted painter who shunned fame and fortune, Choley lived in Big Sur for decades before passing away in 1998 at 74. He left behind a treasure trove of paintings — along with few details about his life besides the joy he brought people through his art.

‘Most loved

“It’s probably safe to say that he is the most loved Big Sur artist of all,” said Magnus Toren, director of the Henry Miller Library and a longtime friend and neighbor of Choley’s.

Sula Nichols said Choley first came to Big Sur in the 1960s before settling there part-time in the 1980s, when he was gifted a small cabin on Partington Ridge so he could have “a free place to do his art,” she said. “He came to Big Sur as young man, fell in love with it and later came back.”

Nichols said he battled mental health challenges, and he discovered art brought him peace. “He found art was his savior,” she added.

Hard work

Many locals knew Choley through his landscaping work, not his creative talent. He seemed to prefer manual labor to the business of art because he was often busy with the former, despite the opportunity of the latter to provide much greater compensation. He could often be found clearing brush or unclogging culverts — despite his age. This no doubt puzzled many of his friends and neighbors, some of whom painted and recognized his immense tal-

ent as an artist.

The inn’s CEO, Matt Glazer, told The Pine Cone that the theft shook employees. He also noted that nothing else was stolen.

“It was the only thing out of place,” he reported.

In response to the theft, Deetjen’s is “having conversations” about beefing up its security, Glazer said. The restaurant’s walls are filled with art, antiques and mementos from Big Sur’s past — including two other paintings by Choley. It’s fair to say the dining room is part restaurant and part museum.

Glazer said the painting was gifted by Choley to the inn’s founder, the late Helmuth Deetjen. He added that the restaurant plans to reach out to the public with news of the stolen painting. The theft was reported to the Monterey County Sheriff’s Office.

“More than anything, we’re interested in getting it back and putting it back on display,” he said.

‘More than anything, we want to put it back on display’



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Council OKs big street paving contract

By MARY SCHLEY

DRIVERS WORRIED about losing their transmissions as they enter town via the pothole-laden section of Ocean Avenue owned by Monterey County will be happy to hear the Carmel City Council last week approved a contract with Coastal Paving & Excavating Inc. for nearly \$2.8 million worth of sidewalk and road repairs, including that section.

The county and the Transportation Agency for Monterey County will reimburse the city for the segment running from Carpenter Street to Highway 1, according to a cost-sharing agreement signed by city and county officials in June. The county committed to chipping in \$400,000, with the balance of \$243,705 coming from the county transportation agency in a deal approved by its board of directors Aug. 27, project manager Javier Hernandez said Sept. 9.

“This collaboration underscores the city’s leadership in regional infrastructure planning and reaffirms its commitment to delivering high-quality, community-focused transportation improvements,” he said.

Long list

The winning contractor among the five that submitted bids — which ranged from Coastal Paving’s low of \$2,315,315 to Monterey Peninsula Engineering’s high of \$3,256,386 — has a lot of work to do.

Among the streets set to be repaved are Santa Lucia between Dolores and Rio, Sixth between Guadalupe and Carpenter, Monte Verde between Fourth and Ocean, Torres between Second and Fourth, and

San Antonio between Fourth and Eighth, including the busy intersection at Ocean and San Antonio.

Many more are slated for the less expensive process of micro-surfacing, including segments of Dolores, Monte Verde, Sixth, Flanders Way, Guadalupe, Santa Fe and others.

‘Spend it all’

Pedestrians familiar with Carmel’s tricky sidewalks might be glad to know some of them are on the over-haul list, too, like the west side of Junipero between Sixth and Ocean, the north side of Sixth between Lincoln and Dolores, the south side of Sixth between Mission and Junipero, and a couple of corners.

“We’re asking for a 20 percent contingency due to the magnitude of the project and potential added scope, since we have a need for additional streets to be paved,” Hernandez told the council. “The total for this contract would be \$2,778,000.”

The work is anticipated to take about four months.

Hernandez also acknowledged that a lot of the city’s sidewalks need work and said a full inventory of the trouble spots will be completed soon.

No one objected to the scope or the spending.

“I want you to spend the whole budget,” councilman Bob Delves commented.

Former councilwoman Karen Ferlito said she is pleased to see such improvements on the horizon and suggested visitors be advised and residents be reminded of how much better the city’s streets are

See **STREETS** page 26A



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Vistra battery tests ‘reassuring’

■ Removal of damaged batteries about to begin

By KELLY NIX

TESTING OF soils around the Moss Landing power plant, where a large fire occurred Jan. 16 at the Vistra Energy battery storage facility, indicates there has been no widespread contamination from the disaster, an official for the county said this week during a meeting that also addressed the sensitive process of removing the batteries damaged in the blaze.

At the Monterey County Board of Supervisors meeting Tuesday, county environmental health official Nicki Fowler said Phase 1 of a Moss Landing community sampling plan is complete. A consultant, Terraphase, collected 108 soil samples from 27 locations near the facility and analyzed them for metals associated with battery fires, including lithium, cobalt and nickel.

Fowler called the results “reassuring.”

“The preliminary sampling that has been completed has not showed indication of widespread contamination,” Fowler told the supervisors.

Terraphase also conducted “split sampling,” meaning it tested soil samples and had another company’s lab test the same samples. Fowler said officials reviewed the results and found only slight differences.

The results of the second phase of community sampling, which tested water and sediment, is expected to be released in October. The results of both phases will be included in a preliminary report on the risks to humans and the environment that’s set to be released later this year. The document is expected to say whether further mitigation measures or additional sampling are necessary.

Air monitoring in the Moss Landing area has been continuous, but the highly toxic hydrogen fluoride has not been detected

since shortly after the January fire, Fowler said.

Many people who live and work near the Vistra plant had complained of health issues. Several lawsuits have been filed against the Texas-based energy company and other parties.

Hazmat suits

Meanwhile, Lynn Keller with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, which is managing Vistra’s battery removal, went over the process of extricating batteries from the burned building, which was heavily damaged and housed 100,000 battery modules, each of which weighs about 200 pounds.

The integrity of the batteries themselves is also a concern, she said.

“They have structural engineers on site to make sure they can get the batteries out safely,” Keller said.

It will likely take to the end of 2026 to

See **VISTRA** page 26A



PHOTO/EPA

This twisted debris is the result of a large fire that occurred in January at a Moss Landing battery storage facility.

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WATER

From page 1A

“I want to encourage the planning commission to recommend a revised proposal that will allow our village to beautify and meet the various needs of property owners,” she said, adding that the district, which is overseeing the Pure Water Monterey project and its expansion, has already said it will allocate even more water to any jurisdiction that needs it.

“I strongly support providing water for people to do projects that support the general plan and the local coastal program, and that includes various residential projects, minor commercial projects and municipal projects such as the police department remodel and public restroom expansions,” she said.

“There is no reason to hold back and call water ‘a great restraint’ at this point,” she added.

In fact, the only real constraint is a state-imposed moratorium on new Cal Am Water hookups that prevents people from having meters installed, according to Locke, and the agency is working to get that restriction lifted.

“The water district will be filing in the next month to have that moratorium lifted with the state,” she said. “We expect a decision in early 2026.”

‘Live happily’

As an aside, she mentioned that people who purchased water from Clint Eastwood’s Mal Paso allocation were exempt from the moratorium, which is why several houses have been built on vacant lots that were formerly waterless.

The city’s water, however, is not available for purchase, it’s only for distribution as decision-makers see fit.

“We need to be able to live happily in our homes, not

just to plan for housing that will never occur,” she said, referring to the priority given to projects that solely include deed-restricted low-income units.

“I see no reason to be conservative, and I would like to allocate all the water,” commissioner Erin Allen agreed.

“What bothered me about this resolution was arbitrarily allocating 3 acre-feet to a very specific category which is problematic because it has deed restrictions,” LePage said.

As a result, the planning commission voted 4-0 to recommend the city council add 3 acre-feet to the category for low-income and very-low-income housing, earmark 6 acre-feet for a new category combining single-family and multifamily housing, allocate 2 acre-feet for commercial uses, and designate the remaining 3 acre-feet for municipal projects.

The commission also said the allocations should be reviewed annually and changed if needed. Commissioner Stefan Karapetkov was absent.

Augustina’s fined for selling illegal fur

PINE CONE STAFF REPORT

TRACY ODLE, owner of Augustina’s in downtown Carmel, has been fined \$150,000 for selling new fur products, a violation of the California Fish and Game Code, Monterey County Chief Deputy District Attorney Emily Hickok said Wednesday. The investigation began after someone filed a consumer complaint with the state.

The law was enacted in response to concerns about animal cruelty in the fur industry and took effect on Jan. 1, 2023. It contains some exemptions, including for religious, tribal and cultural items.

“Even despite her actual knowledge of the ban, Odle continued to advertise and profit off of her sale of new fur products such as coats and hats made of fox, mink, sable and beaver,” in her stores and online, Hickok said.

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PRICES

From page 1A

twice what they are in the country. The state also has the highest income and sales taxes in the nation, the most expensive gasoline and skyrocketing electricity rates.

All that is to say there were a lot of areas for Sacramento lawmakers to target if they wanted to bring down Californians’ cost of living. But of the 2,350 bills introduced this session, only a small fraction dealt directly with the issue of affordability, and lobbyists say some legislation could drive prices up instead of down.

Thumbs down from grocers

“There was a call for affordability at the beginning of this session, and unfortunately, some lawmakers didn’t quite get that memo,” said Grace Becker, a spokesperson for the California Grocers Association.

California has the highest grocery prices in the continental United States, and this year the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reports those prices went up 3.4 percent. Becker said if some lawmakers had had their way this session, prices could have gone even higher in the new year.

The lobbyist pointed to two pieces of legislation, one



Gavin Newsom Robert Rivas

that would have added staffing requirements and restrictions to self-checkout statewide and another that would have eliminated store loyalty programs that offer customers discounted prices. Both bills moved pretty far along in the process before failing to cross the finish line.

The grocery business is tough, with store owners realizing an average profit of 1.6 percent on food sales. In order to drive prices down at the checkout counter — or even stabilize them — grocers need the cost of doing business to drop. Labor is the biggest expense, with fuel and energy prices a close second.

Eleventh-hour energy deal

Lowering prices at the pump and curbing escalating electricity rates were priorities for lawmakers this session, although those issues arose at the last minute.

Last Tuesday, with just days to go before the Friday deadline to pass laws for the year, Rivas held a closed-door meeting with State Senate Pro Tem Mike McGuire and Newsom to hash out a set of proposals to address rising energy costs. They didn’t reach an agreement until the wee hours last Wednesday, passing the six-bill deal on Saturday after lawmakers extended their session by an extra day to get it through.

The bill package marks an easing of the crackdown on gasoline refiners and allows for a lot more oil production in California — a major shift for the governor, signaling admission that decades of overregulation have contributed to soaring gasoline prices.

California drivers fill up on the most expensive gasoline in the country, paying 43 percent more than the national average, and prices are set to go higher over the next year as refiners make good on their promises to leave.

Two refineries, Phillips 66 in Southern California and Valero in the San Francisco Bay area, have already announced closure plans within the year. Sacramento insiders say the energy deal won’t be enough to keep refineries that already made closure plans but could help California retain its remaining producers.

While fuel costs are certainly part of the affordability crisis, impacting everything from food prices to fillups, the energy package does more to stop future bleeding than provide immediate relief at the pump.

Electricity rebates

One change Californians will see right away is a change on their electricity bills. The state has led the nation in rate hikes and has the highest rates in the lower 48 states.

As part of the energy package, California is integrating its power grid with those of other Western States to mitigate power shortages and bring down costs. The package also provides an extra \$3 billion in climate credits, which consumers will see on their bills as rebates.

The rebates are expected to go up by \$10 to \$30 a month when customers use the most electricity. That may not sound like much, but it’s something in a state that has the nation’s highest “supplemental” rate of poverty. That rate, according to the U.S. Census Bureau, shows that when you factor in living costs, California has the

highest population of impoverished people. The latest data, released last week, show nearly 7 million Californians are living in poverty.

Taxes and fees

Lawmakers are celebrating the fact that they did not add any new taxes on individuals and families this session as another example of living up to their affordability pledge.

What they’re not mentioning is that members introduced legislation this year that would have added \$16 billion in annual taxes and fees in other areas.

Not all of those bills passed, but the ones that do become law will make life more expensive.

“Ultimately, the consumer pays more anytime there are fees being passed down,” said David Kline, spokesperson for the California Tax Foundation, which conducts annual reports on bills that impose new taxes and fees.

Over the last nine months, there have been bills to authorize everything from increased sales taxes in several major areas of the state — including Monterey County — to adding new fees for plasma donation sites and data

centers.

The hallmark of the year of affordability was the overhaul of the California Environmental Quality Act, or CEQA, something former Gov. Jerry Brown once described as “the Lord’s work” but never managed to achieve.

In June, legislators made it happen, enacting laws to exempt urban infill housing from CEQA and limiting the use of the environmental law in litigation to stop or slow housing development.

It’s a huge change for the state and one pro-housing YIMBY groups say is long overdue. But seeing the results from the overhaul in the form of lower housing costs will likely take years, and for current homeowners, it won’t do anything to bring down their monthly expenses.

Polling was a big factor in making 2025 the year of affordability. The results of the presidential election told Democrats that cost of living was a make-or-break issue.

While it’s unlikely Democrats will lose their supermajority in Sacramento if their promises don’t materialize, Newsom’s presidential hopes could hinge on being able to say he made the Golden State affordable again.



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STATION

From page 1A

took effect in September 2014 which, to protect aquifers, neighborhoods and wildlife from being contaminated, requires owners and operators of gas stations to permanently close any underground storage tanks with single-walled components. It set a Dec. 31, 2025, deadline.

Leak detection

“Underground storage tank systems which do not have secondary containment and a continuous leak-detection system that have not been permanently closed by the regulatory due date are out of compliance, cannot be operated and could be red-tagged by the Unified Program Agency

or the State Water Resources Control Board, preventing fuel deliveries and dispensing,” the board says. “Penalties for systems out of compliance are \$500 to \$5,000 per day per underground storage tank.”

The work was briefly halted by the city due to the lack of a permit, but building official Jermel Laurie said everything was cleared up to ensure the work would be done in time.

“The county health department had issued a permit for the removal of the gas tanks that the state mandated, and Andy had reached out to the building department in good faith before starting the work,” Laurie explained. “Unfortunately, he and I never got to connect.”

After speaking with Hill and his contractor, the stop-work order was lifted and the building permit was issued.

“The mandate from the state to remove the tanks before the end of the year, the possibility of rain — although low

— and the necessity to remove any possible ground contamination were several factors for expediting the permit,” he explained. “The contractor that was hired specializes in the removal of these types of tanks.”

Laurie said his department’s main concerns were documenting the type of fill that will be used and obtaining documentation of the removal of any contaminated soils.

“Carmel is designated as an area of special biological significance by the state,” he said.

“The designation carries stricter regulations to ensure protection of the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary. Although redundant, I wanted to ensure that the city has the same records as the county due to the sensitivity of the environmental factors.”

According to Giem’s permit application, the project involves removing and recycling 90,000 pounds of concrete.

TRIAL

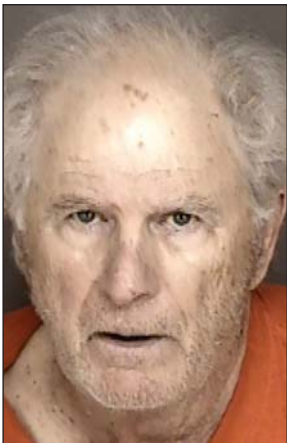
From page 1A

Public defender Jigar Patel did not offer any evidence on behalf of Geisen, and Butler ruled that there is “sufficient cause to believe the defendant has committed the offenses charged.”

In court again Sept. 10, Geisen re-entered his plea of not guilty to the charge of “willful deliberate and premeditated murder,” and denied the enhancement of using a knife — which, in the event of a guilty verdict, could add time to his sentence — and Butler notified him and the attorneys that the case must go to trial by Nov. 10, since Geisen opted not to waive the time limits imposed on criminal proceedings.

She scheduled a pretrial hearing for Oct. 8, with a jury calendar call set for Oct. 29 and the trial to begin Nov. 3.

Geisen remains in Monterey County Jail on \$1,015,000 bail. Meanwhile, Monterey County Sheriff’s records indicate the Geisens’ home has been burglarized twice.



Donel Geisen

AMAZON

From page 1A

remarkable precision,” Amazon’s website states.

Its first fully autonomous mobile robot “effortlessly navigates carts of packages to our outbound dock so they can be loaded into trucks, while safely moving around employees in open spaces,” the business said.

A developer sold the property, a former agricultural field, to Amazon for \$40 million.

Upgrades to roads

One of the routes to get to Highway 101 southbound from the Monterey Peninsula is to travel through Spreckels from Highway 68, then to Harris Road and Abbott Street, where the freeway on-ramp is located.

But the warehouse will also likely mean a steady stream of delivery trucks in that area, which could exacerbate traffic impacts. Salinas has said Amazon is paying for improvements intended to mitigate problems for motorists.

The company “will be required to fund the improvement to convert the Highway 68 westbound ramps and Spreckels Boulevard intersection to an all-way stop,” the city said. “This improvement will be completed before the warehouse and distribution facility can be opened.”

Harris Road and Abbott Street will be widened, there will be traffic signal upgrades, utilities will be buried, and new sewer, water and storm drain lines will be installed along Harris. A metering signal on the southbound Abbott Street on-ramp to Highway 101 will be installed to control the rate at which vehicles enter the freeway.

“All of these conditions are intended to help prevent traffic impacts on neighboring businesses and industries, particularly the neighboring agricultural businesses, as a means to avoid congestion and disruption to the flow of traffic” in the area, Salinas said.



PHOTO/AMAZON.COM

These bright green robots, which look like large Roombas, help fulfill orders at an Amazon warehouse. The technology could be used at a new Salinas facility.

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Horse dies after rodeo mishap at fair

By KELLY NIX

OFFICIALS HAVE confirmed that a horse died during a Mexican-style rodeo at the Monterey County Fair late last month. The death of the gelding occurred following an Aug. 31 accident at a performance by Fiesta Del Charro, a competition with charros, or traditional Mexican horseman, at the fairgrounds. “During the Fiesta Del Charro event at the Monterey County Fair, a horse slipped and fell,” a Monterey County Fair official told The Pine Cone. “The arena safety crew quickly and carefully restrained and moved the horse into the livestock care

unit to transport for further examination. Unfortunately, the horse succumbed to his injuries.” The event was held by Flying U Rodeo, which is a “contracted partner” of the fair and a separate entity from the Monterey County Fair & Event Center, the official explained. The Marysville-based Flying U Rodeo company is a family-operated business that “has been the heart and soul of Cotton Rosser and his family for more than 60 years,” according to an online description. “A Flying U Rodeo is more than just timed events or roughstock events, it is entertainment at its best,” the business said.

Carmel Reads The Pine Cone

SUSAN ‘SUSIE’ MARY BLANDIN MONTGOMERY

Susan “Susie” Mary Blandin Montgomery took off on her next big adventure early Wednesday morning, Aug. 8, 2025, right after hearing her favorite song, “San Francisco” by Scott McKenzie. She was peacefully surrounded by her loving family.



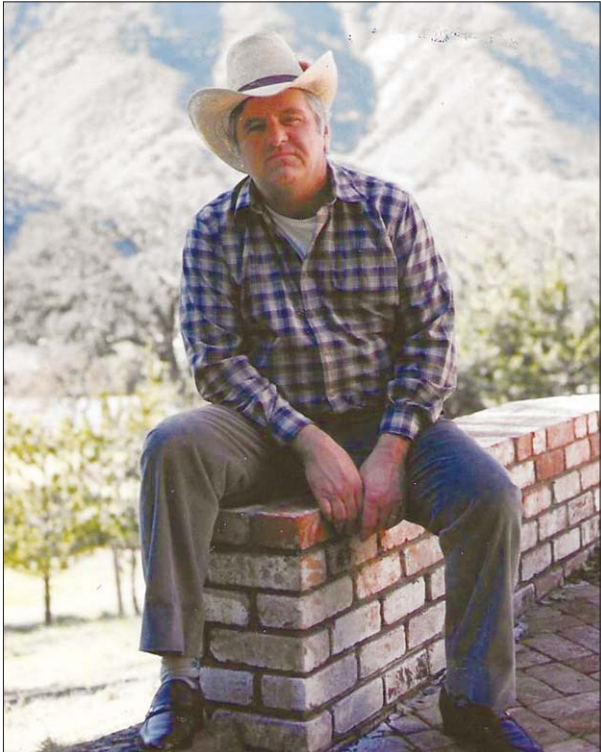
She faced her greatest fear — early-onset Alzheimer’s — with grit, grace and her signature sharp wit. While the rest of us said it “wasn’t fair,” Susie never did. That just was not her style. Gifted with a sense of adventure, a love of people, and an indomitable spirit, you never really knew what to expect from Susie. And that’s just the way she wanted it. Born in Atlanta, Georgia on June 2, 1952, to Capt. Sherman W. Blandin, USN (Ret.), and Virginia (Jorgenson) Blandin, Susie proudly earned the title “Navy brat,” much to her beloved parents’ chagrin. When her father retired from active duty in 1967, the family eagerly returned to Monterey — a place where their hearts had quietly belonged since one of her father’s earliest academic assignments at the Naval Postgraduate School. The late ‘60s and early ‘70s were a time of exploration for Susie. There is most likely an FBI file with her name on it. Her children definitely found short shorts in her closet and plenty of photos flashing the peace sign. Around this time while cruising Alvarado Street, Susie met her future husband, John Montgomery. Always up for adventure, Susie tackled motherhood in the ‘80s with the same passion she brought to every part of life. As a mom, Susie was devoted, occasionally chaotic and absolutely unforgettable. She nurtured her children’s every step and advocated for them fiercely. Her kids’ friends called her their second mom. Her nieces and nephews adored her. If you needed someone in your corner, Susie was there — armed with snacks, sass and unsolicited advice. While wearing many hats, Susie took pride in working hand-in-hand with her husband building custom homes. As life grew, so did Susie. She explored organized religion. When she realized that her path might be different, she segued into love and acceptance, always guided by her own convictions and deep compassion for others. Her final career was owning an antique store, though the real treasure was always her ability to connect with people ... knowing people, understanding people and helping people. Her garage is still full of treasures, and her heart was always full of hope. Her famous quote, “everyone is just being the best person they can be” will always irritate her children ... even if they know she was probably right. Susie’s most cherished role was being “Mimi” to her beloved granddaughters, Charley and Harper. She was their partner in mischief — buying them wetsuits at age 5 so they could “surf” Lovers Point, or hopping the Monterey trolley just because it was free and they liked to wave at strangers. Susie wanted her granddaughters to have her adventurous spirit. Enjoying every moment was a rare gift that she encompassed with every step. Susie didn’t teach Charley and Harper to be bold and curious — she showed them.

Susie leaves behind her cherished husband of 48 years, John Montgomery; her son, Jason Montgomery; her daughter, Jenna Larkin; and without a doubt her favorite child (son-in-law) “honey” Jake Larkin. Susie’s “daughter of her heart” Melanie Sheriff and grandson Chase Sheriff held a special place in her heart, as did her BFF, Sandy French. Susie adored and was so proud of each of her nieces and nephews. Left to continue the family legacy are sisters, Laurie Blandin and Sara Boyns (Casey), with whom she shared a lifelong, unbreakable bond — part sisterhood, part best friendship and all heart. She also leaves her brother, Jim Blandin, who, along with her sisters, will carry on the Blandin traditions and keep the family close.

Please honor Susie by smiling when you think of her. Share a story with a stranger. Pet a dog. Say yes to a spontaneous adventure.

VFR SEL — Clear

A celebration of life is set for 2 to 4 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 20 at the large barbecue area at Carmel Valley Community Park, 25 Ford Road. No tears, just great stories, champagne and dessert!



JAMES (JIM) SHAKAL

James (Big Jim) Shakal, 89, of Carmel Valley, California, passed away at his home Sunday, Sept. 7, 2025.

Jim was born in a small house on Mother’s Day, May 10, 1936, in Salinas. At the time, this part of East Salinas was called “Little Oklahoma” although his parents were from Wisconsin. He was the fourth son of Joseph T. and Martha Shakal.

In 1937 the family moved to a 750-acre ranch in Doyle. Unfortunately, Jim’s mother passed in 1942 due to complications from a pregnancy.

In 1944, Jim’s father decided to take a job on an oil rig in Venezuela and put his three sons in a welfare home in Salinas. Jim’s oldest brother, Buddy, had already passed at the age of 5 from a scorpion bite in 1929 on land in Arizona they were homesteading.

In 1948 Joe moved his family back to the family farm in Edson, Wisconsin and he married Christa Eslinger in 1949.

Jim joined the National Guard when he was just 15. After getting kicked out of high school for bringing alcohol to a school dance, he joined the Air Force where he was stationed in England and Germany. And as he would tell you, “The girls in England spoke English but the beer in Germany was cold.”

After being discharged from the Air Force in 1958 he made his way out to Seaside in 1959.

He lived “the good life” with his buddy, Amos Eslinger, racing his ‘57 T-bird at the Salinas Airport and getting flipped out of his 16-ft. Javelin boat.

In 1963 Amos and Jim took a road trip in his T-bird to Hollywood to visit distant relatives, Barbara Endvick and Brenda Eslinger. Brenda had just arrived in Hollywood after receiving luggage as a high school graduation gift from her parents. As the story goes, the first words Brenda heard Jim say were: “Where’s the God damn beer?” It wasn’t exactly love at first sight. But in 1964 Jim offered Brenda a ride back to Wisconsin for Christmas. Before heading East, they stopped in Monterey to visit friends and Brenda never went back to live in Hollywood.

They were married June 12, 1965, at Sacred Heart Catholic Church in Edson, Wisconsin.

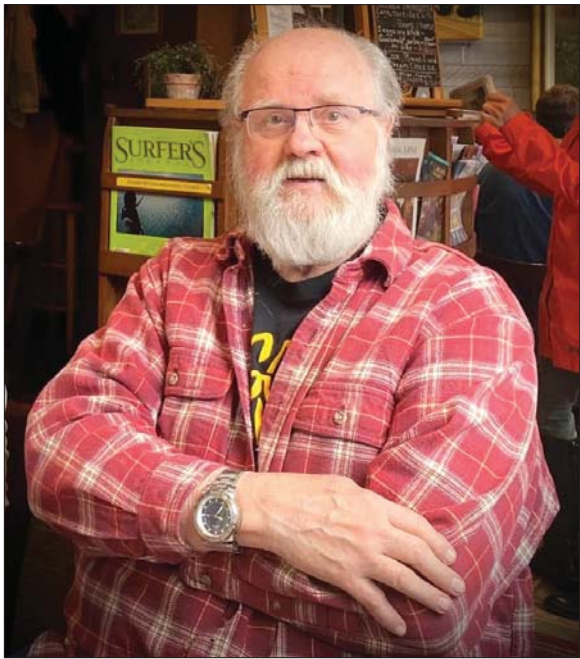
They moved to Carmel Valley in 1967 where they raised their three boys, Trampas, Joe and Kurt. When the boys were adults they found out they had a sister named Cori who lives in Reno. Cori became a major part of their family along with her three sons.

In the mid-’70s Jim became active with Carmel Valley Little League and became president for several years. At some point they decided to build a second field and this was named after him. This was not without some controversy as Jim was arrested for dumping cement blocks into the river behind the field in order to avoid future flooding. The original Jim Shakal field sign is now located on the southwest wall at the Carmel Valley Historical Society building.

A lifelong mechanic and owner of several shops on the Monterey Peninsula, Jim retired in 2003. Soon thereafter he became a member and president of the Carmel Valley Kiwanis, receiving the honorable “Double Yolk” award this past year. During his tenure he helped build and maintain the Kiwanis train which was a fixture at the Carmel Valley Fiesta for many years.

Jim was predeceased by his wife, Brenda Kay (Eslinger) Shakal; parents, Joseph Terrence and Martha A. (Neisius) Shakal; brothers, Joseph (Buddy) Terrence Shakal, Jr. and Donald Terrence Shakal. He is survived by his brother, Glenn Thomas Shakal and sister-in-law, Winnifred (Pfaff) Shakal; his four children, Corrine Dunn, James Trampas Shakal, Joseph Howard Shakal, Kurt Charles Shakal and five grandsons, James (Jimmy) Allen Dunn, Jack Gerard Dunn, Jay Alexander Dunn, Aiden James Shakal and Wesley James Shakal.

The family requests that all flowers and notes be sent to 53 La Rancheria, Carmel Valley. A Catholic Mass will be recited for Jim at 10 a.m. Saturday, Sept. 27 at Our Lady of Mount Carmel, with a celebration of life immediately following.



DAVID HUSBY

Aug. 18, 1943 – Jan. 8, 2025

David Husby was born in Tacoma, Wash. to Arlee and Gorden Husby. David’s parents divorced and remarried when David was just a young boy. Soon David began spending his summers in Stanwood, Wash. with his stepmom, Winnie, and his dad, while school years were spent in Tacoma with his mother and stepdad John. David’s immediate family grew to include two younger brothers living in the two respective households. David was very proud of his Finnish and Norwegian heritage. Great-grandparents from Norway were early homesteaders in his hometown of Stanwood.

David was a natural athlete who loved playing basketball and baseball. He played high school and college basketball in Tacoma, Bellingham and Seattle, Wash. David’s passion for sports was matched with his brilliant and curious mind. After pursuing a B.S. degree in physical oceanography, David went to work with the U.S. Coast Guard oceanographic unit in Washington, D.C. The Coast Guard asked David Husby to speak at the International Symposium on Oceanography in Hawaii in 1968. Husby served as field party chief on an oceanography study in the Bering Sea for the Coast Guard. Husby returned to University of Washington, a married man and father of two young daughters, and earned his M.S. degree in physical oceanography. The young Husby soon welcomed his son, born in Seattle in 1971.

It was in 1972 that David Husby, his wife and three young children moved to the Monterey Peninsula. Husby began his career of more than 25 years with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and the Pacific Fisheries Environmental Group (PFEG) in Monterey and Pacific Grove. Among countless PFEG projects, he focused on California’s El Niño and the influences on nearshore oceanography and neritic fish populations. Husby’s productive scientific career took him around the globe and included research in air-sea interactions and ecosystems studies from the Arctic to the Antarctic. Though California became his forever home, he had deep roots in the Pacific Northwest. He cherished his many trips to Washington to connect with family and lifelong friends.

David Husby embraced living on the Monterey Peninsula, raising his young family and volunteering for local non-profits and service organizations. David was a longtime member of the Carmel Mission Kiwanis. He volunteered and delivered meals for Meals On Wheels Monterey Peninsula for more than 40 years! David was an avid outdoorsman who spent many summers camping and fishing with his children. David eventually relocated to Pacific Grove, after his divorce. David found love with Barbara Hamilton and the two married and lived happily together with their many beloved pets. After retiring, Husby set up a woodworking shop in the couple’s home. David could often be found at the weekly P.G. Farmer’s Market selling his lathe-turned exotic wood pens and other handmade wares. Full of life, with a hungry mind — David was happiest engaged in his various hobbies: watching sports, reading four-five books at a time or cooking big pots of hearty soups for his family. At the time of his death, David was surrounded by his loving family.

David is survived by his wife, Barbara Hamilton; daughter, Lisa Husby (John Chappell); son, Jon Husby (Suzanne Husby); brothers, Gordon Husby (Kimberly Husby) and Rick Barello (Sherry Barello); granddaughter, Ellis Solon-Husby and many cousins, nieces and nephews. David was predeceased by his youngest daughter, Laurie Solon-Husby.

There is no memorial service planned. Donations can be made to World Central Kitchen, a favorite charity of David Husby.



Pool party to raise \$\$ for CHS students to attend film contest

By CHRIS COUNTS

TO RAISE money for 14 members of the Carmel High School Film Club to attend a film and broadcasting contest in Tampa Bay, Fla., in February, 2026, the Carmel Valley Youth Community Center will be the setting for a pool party Saturday at 5:30 p.m.

The money raised will help pay for transportation, food and lodging, Carmel High teacher Brian Granbery said.

“We need to raise about \$14,000,” said Granbery, who teaches film broadcasting and video production. “The sooner we raise the funds, the cheaper it will be for our flights, and the easier it will be to book our lodging.”

Food from Teriyaki Madness will be a highlight, along with music from, Controlled Burn, a rock band that features Cachagua firefighters.. “It will be a great way to close the summer,” Granbery said.

The cost is \$15 for students and \$25 for others.

Part of what’s known as the 2026 Student Television Network Convention, the

film contest challenges student teams from more than 150 schools in the United States and beyond to produce a news broadcast or music video under a very tight deadline.

Stiff competition

“It’s a really cool opportunity,” Granbery said. “They work together as a team, and they really bond during the experience. They must move quickly, and the adrenaline gets pumping — it’s exciting. The competition is very stiff and gets tougher every year.”

Besides competing against students from other schools, the Carmel High kids will attend workshops and seminars. When the contest is done, all the students will gather for a glitzy awards ceremony.

Carmel High’s film club has participated in the national convention annually since it was formed five years ago. Each of the 14 students attending the convention is taking advanced film and broadcasting classes.

Carmel Valley Youth Community Center is located at 25 Ford Road.



JODEE KREBS

March 25, 1931 to Sept. 2, 2025
Pacific Grove
94 years

JoDee Halbersleben was born in Provo, Utah and enjoyed a childhood riding horses with her best friend, Suzie. She lived with her parents, Joseph Carl and Susan Verona, along with her siblings, Bob and Helen. She moved to California to attend San Jose State University where she majored in mathematics and met her future husband, Bill Krebs.

JoDee and Bill Krebs lived a good life together on the Monterey Peninsula. They raised four children: Steve, Cal, Karen and Jeff and were dedicated grandparents to Lindsay, Roy, Stephanie, Kaitlin, Emma, Owen, Cy and Will. JoDee was happy to love her great-grandchildren, Sloane, London, Truman, Hayden and Holly and to know that baby Tenaya is on her way to join the family later this year.

Many of you knew her as your elementary school teacher. She was fun and fair. She and Anna Panetta taught together for decades and had a most amazing professional and personal partnership — a true sisterhood. We’d like to think they are sharing some more time together now, laughing and full of joy.

She was a patient wife, supportive mother, dedicated grandmother and a selfless, giving friend who had an amazingly consistent positive outlook on life.

Bill and JoDee asked that their ashes be commingled and then released in Monterey Bay near Lovers Point.

We will meet at Lover’s Point to celebrate their lives.
Please join us at 1 p.m. on Saturday, Oct. 25
at Lovers Point and then from
1:30 to 4 p.m. for a reception
at 700 Jewel Ave., Pacific Grove.

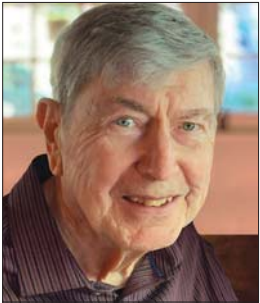
If JoDee was your kindergarten teacher, neighbor,
favorite aunt, or just that really nice person you knew,
we would love to share some stories with you!

The Carmel Pine Cone

Letters to the Editor

Letters to the editor are only accepted by email and should be sent to
mail@carmelpinecone.com

CHARLES THERRIEN



Known as “Charlie” to many friends and loved ones, Charlie passed away on Sept. 12, 2025, at the age of 82. He is survived by and missed dearly by his wife of 57 years, Judy; and daughters, Kristen and Lara. He was preceded in death by his infant daughter, Keri, in 1976.

Charlie was born in 1943 in Pittsfield, MA and completed his bachelor’s and master’s (1965) and his Ph.D.

in electrical engineering at MIT (1969). He pursued a career teaching and advising graduate students at the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey from 1981 to 2007. Charlie was a gifted musician who played bass trombone, tuba and guitar. He was also a skilled photographer and writer. Charlie published three textbooks on statistical and digital signal processing and served on the leadership of the Asilomar conference on “Signals, Systems and Computers.”

Charlie lived his last six years with Parkinson’s disease, but even so, over the last two years he attended more classical and bluegrass music performances than one can count.

In lieu of flowers, memorial gifts in his name can be made to the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.



CRISTINA A. BIEGEL

With deep sadness, we announce the sudden passing of Cristina A. Biegel on Aug. 28, 2025, after a life rich in professional accomplishments, community activities and the profound joy she found in her roles as daughter, sister, wife, mother and grandmother. Her unexpected death sent shock waves through the Monterey County legal community.

Cristina Almada was born on Christmas Day in Los Angeles, the daughter of Lou Almada — affectionally known to all as “Papa Lou” — and Ligia Davila Almada, lovingly called “Mia” by family and friends. From her earliest years, Cristina was known as “Tina” and her boundless energy and excitement about life was infectious to her many schoolmates and friends — first in grammar school at Saints Felicitas and Perpetua Catholic School in San Marino, and later at the Ramona Convent Secondary School in Alhambra. Tina has remained in contact with many of these friends sharing special moments and reunions throughout the years.

Tina began her college studies at Santa Clara University and, after one year, transferred to Mount St. Mary’s University Los Angeles, where she earned a bachelor’s degree in English. She later completed a second bachelor’s degree, in psychology, at UC Santa Cruz, before beginning graduate studies at the University of Michigan. Though her interests were wide-ranging, Tina always returned to her love of English literature and language. She spent a lifetime writing and journaling her thoughts and experiences.

In the early 1970s, while working as a social worker for Los Angeles County and caring for her 20-month-old son, Brandon, Tina met a young public defender whom she often recalled was “interesting.” That young attorney, Larry Biegel, fell in love with both Tina and Brandon. Through a series of serendipitous events, the couple decided in 1975 to marry, leave Southern California, and settle in Carmel where they would go on to share 50 years of an amazing marriage, which included the birth of a second son, Jacob.

After both children had grown and gone off to college, Tina embarked on a second career: to become a lawyer — and a terrific lawyer she became. In 1998, she and Larry established a legal partnership, the Biegel Law Firm in Monterey, representing clients in both civil and criminal litigation.

As Tina matured in her profession, she chose to focus exclusively on criminal law. In doing so, she embraced a deeply humanistic approach — one she likely cultivated during her time as a social worker in Los Angeles. She saw the good in each of her clients, regardless of the charges they faced, and spent countless hours seeking a positive outcome for them. Whether it was helping someone enter a drug or alcohol rehabilitation program or advocating for psychological counseling, Tina was unwavering in her belief in second chances. This steadfast support and faith in her clients often became a powerful motivator, encouraging many to make the issue they faced in the criminal justice system their last. As one former client wrote after learning of her passing, “She played such a crucial role for me during a very difficult time in my life. Meeting Tina was the silver lining to an awful set of circumstances.”

Her personal life was defined by her deep commitment to her children and grandchildren. Her sons, Brandon and Jacob, married remarkable women, both of whom Tina embraced as daughters. Brandon’s two children, Riley and Olivia, were constantly in her sights, whether she was cheering Riley on his budding tennis career or watching Olivia grow into a lovely 12-year-old, with whom she shared a love of shopping adventures. Carrying on the family tradition of nicknames, they both addressed her as “Pony.”

Tina was an avid tennis player, a devoted walker and hiker, an amazing gardener, a talented cook and someone with a keen eye for style — both in dress and in decorating. This creativity extended beyond the home which she and Larry built, and into her writing life. In the last three years, alongside her ongoing law practice, Tina joined two fellow fiction writers in a collaborative effort to support one another’s work. During this time, she worked tirelessly on her debut novel, “Passing Through.” On the morning of her death, Tina called out to Larry as he was leaving for work: “I just finished the novel — all 260 pages of it!” As a tribute to Tina’s creative spirit, Larry, along with her writing partners Joyce Sherry and Nikki Erhlich, plan to ensure that the book is published.

Tina is survived by her husband of 50 years, Larry Biegel; her sons, Brandon Kirsch of Carmel (Jenny) and Jacob Biegel of Oakland (Anna); two grandchildren, Riley Kirsch and Olivia Kirsch; Tina’s beloved brother, Charles Almada of Seal Beach (Beatriz); and her especially loved nephews, Anthony Almada of San Clemente and Andy Almada of Temecula (Carolyn) along with their children, Ava Almada, Alexa Bearce, Taylor Almada and a cousin, Carol Davila of San Diego, with whom she maintained a lifelong relationship.

A Mass of Christian burial will be celebrated to honor Tina at the Carmel Mission at 10 a.m. on Monday, Sept. 29, 2025. In lieu of flowers, the family asks that contributions in Tina’s name be made to Rancho Cielo, 710 Old Stage Road, Salinas, CA 93908.





Obituary Notices

Let us help you pay tribute to your loved one with an affordable obituary in The Carmel Pine Cone.
You'll be surprised at how low our rates are.

For more information please contact:
Anne Papineau (831) 274-8654 • anne@carmelpinecone.com



Celebrating Rita T.

9/21/1943 - 1/18/2023

Editorial

The vagueness doctrine

WE ALL grew up hearing the old saw that “ignorance of the law is no excuse,” but not too long ago, the Supreme Court held just a few years ago that nobody can be punished for not following a law that isn’t easy to understand.

Writing in 2019 for the majority in *Johnson v. United States*, Supreme Court Justice Neil Gorsuch observed that “a vague law is no law at all,” and emphasized that criminal laws must be written with “sufficient definiteness that ordinary people can understand what conduct is prohibited.”

The law in question in that case was a federal statute that defined a “crime of violence” as “an offense involving a substantial risk that physical force against a person or property of another may be used in the course of committing the offense” — language that failed to provide clear guidance on what people weren’t allowed to do, the Supreme Court said. According to Gorsuch, such vagueness violated due process because it left ordinary people unable to understand what behavior could lead to enhanced criminal penalties, thereby inviting arbitrary enforcement by judges, prosecutors and juries.

No similar ruling has been made in land use cases, but it sure ought to be. As many people who have waded into the permit process in California have learned at the pain of great expense and mental anguish, the incomprehensible complexity and inherent vagueness of state laws like CEQA and the Coastal Act make them impossible to follow. And when you layer on top of them the myriad rules imposed in many cities and towns to protect vague concepts like “community character” and “historic integrity,” while avoiding significant impacts to everything from aesthetics and biological resources to public services and recreation, you have a situation where, as we have pointed out before, not even the greatest team of well-intentioned experts operating with an unlimited budget would be able to design a project guaranteed to get a permit — not even for a single-family home, or a small or mixed-use or commercial building. In some towns, it can be a nightmare to hang a sign or replace a window.

To make the situation much worse, even when you’ve gone to all the trouble to submit a set of plans for approval that you and your experts believe conform to all applicable laws, it can take years to find out if you’re right.

Which brings us to Patrice Pastor. After six years in the permit process and multiple revisions to a mixed-use project he wants to build at Seventh and Dolores, last week Pastor was sent back to the drawing board by the city council with instructions to revise his plans to, as reported by our Mary Schley, “include more parking and move the landscaping to ground level.”

During numerous earlier reviews and approvals of his proposals by the city’s planning staff and planning commission, the council said, Pastor had been told the wrong things.

City councilmember Hans Buder said there was a lot he liked about Pastor’s 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 said Pastor’s project doesn’t meet the standards to qualify and suggested his plans could be reconfigured to provide the required number of spaces.

And 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” to the public, Buder said.

But if all those things are true, why weren’t Pastor and his architect told about them six years ago? Obviously, parking and landscaping aren’t subjects that defy objectivity, and except for gross indifference at city hall, there’s no reason that parking and landscaping rules can’t be written, as Gorsuch said, with “sufficient definiteness that ordinary people can understand what conduct is required.”

Meanwhile, efficiency, not to mention basic fairness, requires that important decisions be made by the person with the power to make them — not an underling with no authority or credibility. And if the underling who isn’t trusted to make important decisions is nonetheless authorized to make them, his decisions should stand unless there is some overwhelming need to overturn them.

How much, after all, should a poor bastard seeking a permit have to suffer just because the people at city hall can’t agree what they’re doing?

In Pastor’s case, no such necessity exists. If he built his project just the way it stands now, would Carmel be ruined or its future citizens suffer because he didn’t quite have the parking or landscaping on his property “right”?

We hardly think so. After all, many buildings in downtown Carmel — including quite a few considered to be irreplaceable parts of the town’s character — have no landscaping or parking at all.

BEST of BATES



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

Time for a recall
Dear Editor,

In my last letter to the editor, I said that members of the Carmel City Council have lost touch with the needs of its residents and businesses. They’ve made it extremely challenging and expensive to do business with the town, from simple tasks, to complex projects.

Alissandra Dramov has proved that she is no longer in touch with Carmel’s needs nor its residents. Her votes at the recent special council meeting reflects that observation. She is the member I feel should face a recall vote.

I do recognize that this individual is passionate about the city. The issue I see is currency with the direction and pulse of the village at this place in time.

The pulse of the community, regarding her treatment of Patrice Pastor, was shamelessly ignored at the recent meeting when she again voted against every aspect of

measures in front of her. At least one could argue Hans Buder, and less so Jeff Baron, was aware of, and took into account, some level of the community’s wishes. Not so with Dramov.

A recall is one way to give a tangible voice to the residents.

How does one do it? The state guidelines are as follows: File a “Notice of Intention” to circulate a recall petition. Have 30 proponents support said notice. Submit/serve/file and garner approval of the notice. Gather valid signatures of registered Carmel voters (25 percent of 2800 voters or about 700). Do all this in 60 days from the date of the acceptance of the valid number of signatories.

I’m committed to making a change ... are you? I think it is time.

Tom Dunham, Carmel

‘Stubborn things’
Dear Editor,

It’s disheartening to see Carmel getting dragged into the “choose your own adventure” approach to facts that has so degraded civic life at the national level.

Parking is just one example, raised during the recent appeal of the JB Pastor project on Dolores Street near Seventh Avenue. Contrary to the misinformation being spread, the bar for a project to avoid providing on-site parking is extremely high. In fact, no project has qualified for the “in lieu” parking fee alternative in over 22 years.

The municipal code is clear: to be exempt from providing on-site parking, a

See LETTERS page 26A

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An expert in making ‘the best’ of the clothes on our backs

WHEN PACIFIC Grove Cleaners closed after 97 years, Sue Baek, who owns DiMaggio’s Classic Cleaners with her husband, Steve, said she felt the loss personally.

“We were technically competitors, but we helped as much as he needed. It was only two employees, plus Randy, who is just the kindest man,” said Baek who, a

motherhood. The new parents had two sons, James, then 6 months, and Denny, 4 years, when they took over DiMaggio’s.

Steve, who had run a liquor store for some time, “decided to do something he could be proud of. And the hours were so long, and we both wanted a business where we could spend time with our family,” said Baek.

Great Lives

By LILY PATTERSON

few years ago, noticed clothing had begun to pile up in the windows of the dry cleaning business Randy Uchida’s family had owned for nearly a century. She and Steve offered to lighten his load.

When Uchida closed the business in 2023, he approached the couple with an offer that was more like a gift.

“Randy said, ‘I have a lot of longtime customers, and I’m sending them to you now. I know you’ll do a good job,’” she said. “Now, they have become our loyal customers, and their families and spouses.”

Surprisingly, fewer than 10 dry cleaners still serve the Monterey Peninsula. Many have closed over the past decade, according to Baek, since “nowadays, more people wear casual clothes.”

‘Bright future’

Neon signs in the window indicate that DiMaggio’s offers the holy trinity — dry cleaning, alterations, wash-and-fold — right off Central Avenue in Pacific Grove, with the spacious American Tin Cannery parking lot at customers’ disposal. The only convenience lacking is a drop-box, which Baek has never seriously considered. It would be just too impersonal, after more than 20 years of service.

“Most of our customers have become our friends. We discuss our kids, our families, and share our lives, good and bad. We have clients who come in every week just to talk. I sometimes feel like their daughter, or granddaughter,” said Baek.

In 2001, the Baeks purchased DiMaggio’s, with no experience in the trade. They moved to P.G. from nearby Santa Cruz, where they met and married after Baek had followed her older sister from Seoul, South Korea.

“My plan was to attend school in Santa Cruz, like my sister. She’s five years older, and she saw the bright future in this country. As kids, we didn’t get fancy clothes or anything, but my parents always said, ‘You have to get a good education,’” recalled Baek.

Her mom worried “a lot” — not least when Baek sacrificed her student ambitions for

It was an admittedly uncomfortable point in her life — she was a stay-at-home mom who couldn’t drive or speak English — but the small community offered immediate comforts.

Intimate stuff

During her oldest son’s kindergarten orientation at Robert Down Elementary, a teacher named Mr. Williams asked for parent volunteers to help in the classroom a few hours per week.

“I was so nervous, but I approached him and said, ‘Mr. Williams? Me, cut, glue,’” Baek laughed, miming cutting a sheaf of paper with scissors.

“It became the best thing for learning English,” she said, adding that it was another way to be a good parent and get to know her neighbors. Her earliest English practice partner, another Robert Down mom, is still her best friend.

Meanwhile, the Baeks were learning the business. Cleaning the impossible messes of other people and making their pants fit properly is intimate stuff.

“Trying our best, that’s the key to our success,” she said. They know that things can go wrong — but making them right is what counts.

Steve began courting hospitality

See **LIVES** next page



Sue and Steve Baek run DiMaggio’s Cleaners, a 2024 Golden Pine Cone Winner known for outstanding customer service.

A PLUNGE INTO A POOL OF SERENITY YIELDS A CREATIVE SPLASH

ART IS the portal Lori Z. Bala enters when she needs to find serenity and security and turn down the noise in her head. It’s a healing space, the place she goes to expel the darkness.

When her inspiration spills out, it can be haunting and mysterious, or alluring and seductive. Some of her work evokes tranquility, like her photograph of a curious young horse gazing into a pond at its own reflection.

Bala is a mixed-media artist — a fine-art photographer and a painter (often painting on her photographs). She’s a maker of masks: Halloween-esque, animals, skulls — intriguing disguises royals and nobles wore to 15th-century masquerade balls.

She’s also an imaginative artist who does portraits of people and animals. And she’s learning to be a filmmaker, most recently collaborating on videos with local musician El Kallpa.

“Making art stops my mind from racing toward places that I guess are not so good, and it helps me learn more about myself,” said Bala, whose work is part of an exhibition that runs through Nov. 6 at the Walter Avery Gallery at Seaside City Hall. The artist reception for that curated show is Friday from 7 to 8:30 p.m. in the gallery at 440 Harcourt Ave.

Surreal

“I tended to worry — especially when I was younger — about things that might happen, imagine things in my mind that weren’t there and create trauma in my head for no reason,” said Bala, a Seaside resident. “But making art calms my mind, takes me to a place that feels safer. It gives me an outlet for some of the darkness.”

“Seek,” a photo illustration featured in the recent Biennial Exhibition at Monterey Museum of Art, is a surrealistic rendering of a figure in a hooded sweatshirt sinking into dark pool of water between stone walls. Above the white-foam surface, a shadowy seabird glides over a bloom of orange wildflowers.

“It’s a self-portrait but representative of

■ A woman in a white gown, surrounded in fog, fingers a flower adorning her long hair, observed ominously by a disembodied skull floating above her.

■ A dark-eyed female, wearing a skull-like mask, inhales a bouquet of roses as spiderwebs cling to her burnt-orange costume.

■ Same dark-eyed woman, same mask, wearing a black gown and a crucifix necklace. Multiple red roses and a small white skull are affixed to a black veil on her head. A dozen frightening skeletons stare over her shoulders.

Fantastical dreams

“I used to have really vivid dreams — fantastical stuff, some very scary,” she recalled.

“I always felt an unusual connection to death and life, maybe because of darkness that was around me at the time,” Bala



“Love in Life and Death,” is a self-portrait by Seaside-based multi-media artist Lori Bala, who explores her own feelings and emotions in many of her pieces.

shared without elaboration. “I probably didn’t think too deeply about those things as a child, but I think about them now.”

Bala and her sister grew up on a remote landscape in South Monterey County’s Arroyo Seco area, where some of her earliest memories are of communing with nature and painting rocks she found.

Her mom, Kathy, was talented at crafts and embroidery. Her dad, Joe, who died in 2008, was a photographer and writer for EasyRiders, a magazine that covers the biker community, of which he was a part.

“He was an educated man — a good writer and storyteller. The way he told stories with his photographs greatly influenced my own interest,” said Bala, who worked alongside her father at the Hollister Motorcycle Rally. Some of her photos were published in Easyriders with an article written by her

See **ARTIST** next page

Carmel’s Artists

By DENNIS TAYLOR

anyone,” she said.

Several of her surreal pieces feature skulls and skeletons — images that sometimes haunted her youthful dreams.

■ A contemplative person in a red parka slumps pensively atop a giant skull floating in the ocean. Beneath the water’s surface, an identical figure is chained to ruins that are speckled with white bones.

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LIVES

From previous page

businesses early on, and DiMaggio’s remains the offsite solution for guests at Carmel Valley Ranch and local Marriott hotels.

“Steve is working all the time. He made himself our delivery person, because if there’s even a small issue, he wants to be there to fix it,” she said.

Wanting to add to their list of services, Baek began teaching herself a notoriously fastidious trade: tailoring.

“I adapted and, slowly, I got there,” she said. Her first wedding gown was a “huge achievement” that opened the door for a steady bridal business.

GUILTY

From page 6A

gun. They also ordered the trial court to re-sentence Sampognaro on the felony convictions they let stand for evading police and driving in the wrong direction while doing so, and allowed the Monterey County District Attorney’s Office to retry him on the other charges.

Premeditation?

“With respect to the charged homicide and the question of its degree, the descriptions of defendant’s violent tendencies may have led jurors to conclude that he acted in keeping with those tendencies by shooting and killing his father with premeditation,” the judges said. “We agree that the evidence of defendant’s involvement in the shooting is very strong. But the evidence of premeditation was not overwhelming.”

The judges said they “consider it possible that at least one juror” might have doubted Sampognaro shot his father or might have only found him guilty of lesser charges if the jury hadn’t heard “inflammatory character evidence.”

With six employees to support cleaning, Baek handles nearly all the alterations. “People who care about their clothing are very particular, and if I meet their standards, they become very loyal,” Baek smiled.

‘You made this mess for me?’

On a deadline, she works late into the night. Sometimes she’ll hear a knock on the window and see a familiar face — someone bringing a serving of pasta from Il Vecchio down the block or telling her to go home, already.

She’s also a keeper of secrets — literally, seeing everyone’s dirty laundry — and a friend in hard times, who won’t charge a client for clothes they plan to wear to a funeral.

“Those little things are touching,” but

“Considering all these possibilities, we see a reasonable probability of a different verdict,” they wrote in a decision filed with the Superior Court in January.

Credit for 1,789 days

The DA’s office subsequently amended the charges to include voluntary manslaughter, and in court Aug. 5, Sampognaro pleaded guilty to that felony charge, with the enhancement that he used a gun to commit the crime, and to being a felon in possession of a firearm, while the court dismissed the first-degree murder charge and other enhancements.

Both sides waived his right to a future sentencing date, and Hood handed down the stipulated sentence of 23 years in state prison.

He was given credit for serving 1,789 days in jail, with further credit coming from the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation’s calculation of additional good/work time days.

After Sampognaro is released from prison, he’ll be on parole for three years. The judge also ordered him to pay various fines and restitution. The final abstract of judgment outlining the pleas and punishments was filed Tuesday.

she remains overwhelmed by the kindnesses her clients show. During the pandemic, Steve drove his daily rounds to near-vacant hotels, and she was in the shop sewing masks. “It was the only thing I could do,” she said, until clients started bringing in linens, curtains, comforters, blankets... “I kept joking ‘You made this mess for me?’ They wanted us to survive so we could serve the community after that harsh time,” she said.

It moves her that so many customers ask after her family. Lately, her oldest son, Denny, a York School alum and aspiring lawyer, is a topic of conversation.

“We have lawyer clients, and they’ve become my counselors as well. They tell me, ‘If your son wants to get some

ARTIST

From previous page

dad.

“There was a humanity in his work — a search for beauty in the ugliness.”

A self-described quiet kid, Bala attended Greenfield schools before enrolling at North Salinas High, where, she said, she felt rudderless.

“I didn’t believe I was smart enough to go to college and didn’t have a good counselor there to tell me anything different,” she said.

“So I wound up at Hartnell College, which was great, because that’s where I started doing photography,” she added.

Scholarship in Spain

She received good instruction at Hartnell, earning a scholarship to study in Spain. Bala then moved on to Monterey Peninsula College, where she graduated in 2007. There, she was taught by Peninsula luminary Martha Casanave and took a class in experimental photography that significantly impacted her artistic future. She learned to mix her photos with painting.

Bala went on to CSU Monterey Bay, earning a degree in 2011 in integrated studies with a special major she entitled, “multimedia storytelling in service of multicultural outcomes.”

experience or have a consultation or needs advice on programs” she smiled.

Denny is currently a paralegal at a labor law firm in Los Angeles, part of his plan to gain experience before choosing a law school. He’s told his mom he gets frustrated when “million-dollar cases” are prioritized over less lucrative ones that can nevertheless make a significant difference for wage earners and small-business owners, like his parents.

To that end, Baek said, he hopes to open his own firm one day.

He’s finally started those school applications — and recently proposed to his girlfriend. Baek has her fingers crossed, as moms do, hoping their bright future holds a wedding close to home.

“I think art became a tool that allowed me to process hard-to-understand things and make some sense out of the senseless,” said Bala. In recent years, she has taught workshops through CSUMB service learning at places like Monterey County Juvenile Hall, Monterey’s Youth Arts Collective, and Ladies First, a Seaside youth program.

“I want to inspire others to question, think and feel,” she said.

‘Ugly reality’

Bala believes darkness comes out in her work because, “It’s an ugly reality that is there, but I don’t believe that’s where we are supposed to stay as humans,” she said.

“I feel like our job, as artists, is to show all sides of humanity.”

She and her husband, Jason, have a 17-year-old son, Nico, a multimedia artist who works primarily with 3D and 2D animations and graphite sketches as a student at the Youth Arts Collective.

“I home-schooled Nico, and we did a lot of different types of art,” she said.

In addition to the exhibition at Seaside City Hall, Bala and Nico will have an art booth at the fourth annual Sacred Hallows Halloween Comic Con, scheduled Oct. 18-19 and 19, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Red Lion Inn at 1425 Munras Ave. in Monterey.

Visit lzbala3.wixsite.com/lzbphotoart to see images of Bala’s work.

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Cherry Center exhibits jazzy photos

AS PART of a month-long celebration of jazz and art, the Cherry Center for the Arts hosts a reception Sunday at 2 p.m. for “Monterey Jazz — A Visual Legacy,” an exhibit of photos that will be on display through Oct. 4.

According to the Cherry Center, the show honors “the rich and enduring heritage of jazz” on the Monterey Peninsula and includes “a curated collection of iconic and rarely seen images” from the Monterey Jazz Festival and Kuumbwa Jazz Center in Santa Cruz. Included are photos of



Grammy Award-winning singer India Arie performing at the Monterey Jazz Festival in 2011.

memorable performers like Dizzy Gillespie, David Brubeck, Betty Carter, Zakir Hussain, Charles Lloyd, Wynton Marsalis and others.

Speaking at the reception will be flutist Tim Jackson, the Monterey Jazz Festival’s longtime artistic director, and founder of Kuumbwa Jazz Center. Also on hand will be photographers Craig Lovell, Ron Jones, Patrick Tregenza and Rick Swig.

“These artists capture the intimacy, energy and artistry of some of the world’s most legendary jazz performers — as well as the unmistakable spirit of Monterey’s storied jazz scene,” said Cherry Center

board member Richard Cannon. Another board member, Ken Parker, described Lovell and the others as “world-class photographers.” The show coincides with the 68th

Art Roundup

By CHRIS COUNTS

annual Monterey Jazz Festival, which is set for Sept. 26-28. The Cherry Center is located at Fourth and Guadalupe.

■ Creativity and Buddhism

A show opening Monday at the Monterey Museum of Art, “Human/Nature” explores the connection between creativity and Zen Buddhism through the works of 20 California artists. According to the museum, Eastern aesthetics profoundly influenced Western artists in the 20th century. That influence is particularly evident in the abstract expressionism done by artists living in Big Sur and the San Francisco Bay area. Curated by writer **David Keaton**, the show will be on display through Jan. 25. The museum is located at 559 Pacific St.

■ Creative tails

Bringing together two popular local passions Tuesday starting at 5 p.m., the Dog Bar in Carmel Mission Inn’s Shearwater Tavern will showcase the creations of four local artists, including illustrator **Lisa Romias** and glass artist **Christine Hallett**. Besides art, there’s a happy hour menu featuring short rib, calamari, wings and more — along with special goodies for dogs. The inn is located at 3665 Rio Road.

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LETTERS

From page 22A

project must meet one of the following three criteria:

- The lot must be 5,000 square feet or less and have under 50 feet of street frontage. The Pastor site is nearly 12,000 square feet with 80 feet of frontage.
- Driveway construction must result in excessive loss of on-street parking. Not applicable — the property already has two driveways.
- The site’s topography, shape, or development must make on-site parking impractical. Again, not the case. The lot is flat, regularly shaped, and one of the largest commercial parcels in town.

Even more troubling is the developer’s claim that constructing a sufficiently large underground parking garage is not economically feasible. However, nearly 25 percent of the underground space in the design is allocated to storage, a bathroom, and an electrical room — all of which could reasonably be relocated above ground to prioritize

VISTRA

From page 15A

perform the work.

“They are doing a surgical demolition to slowly access these battery rooms, going with the worst battery rooms first,” she said.

Workers accessing the building wear Tyvek full body suits. Batteries will be HEPA vacuumed and wiped down before they are taken out.

Dust suppression measures, including using a dust cannon that sprays a fine water mist to control particles, are employed, while water trucks keep the ground hydrated and street sweepers do their thing twice daily.

SCHOOLS

From page 7A

several “comparable” San Francisco Bay area districts as the gold standard for student achievement.

“I’m happy to see that we’re trending in the right direction. However, I must admit that I am still concerned about the scores in Carmel against scores from our comparable schools. We were with Palo Alto and Los Gatos and Mountain View and Fremont, right there with them pre-2019,” said trustee Rita Patel.

“I understand that we took a big hit with Covid, and we haven’t had the regular monitoring and the reports, but hopefully we can get back to where we were. There’s a lot of expectation in this district, especially with our budget and the number of students here.”

High percentages

For the 2018-2019 school year, numbers available on caaspp-elpac.org indicate that nearly 80 percent of Carmel Unified students met or exceeded grade-appropriate literacy standards. Nearly 70 percent were on par in math. In the same year, Palo Alto Unified School District — likewise a district that receives very little state money — saw nearly 82 percent of its students score at or above proficiency in literacy and math.

“We’re making strides toward Palo Alto, though there’s still some ways to go,” said Rodriguez. “In English and language arts, for example, our writing pieces showed some dramatic growth.”

He said “comparable” districts are grouped together

parking. Carmel already faces a significant parking shortage, and Pastor’s economic considerations should not take precedence over the city’s broader needs. This is not a matter of opinion. The current proposal simply does not comply with the municipal code.

As John Adams once said, “Facts are stubborn things.” And the facts in this case speak for themselves.

Rich Pepe, Carmel

Short-term rentals

Dear Editor,

I was disheartened by a recent letter mischaracterizing short-term rentals in the Carmel Highlands as “party houses” straining septic systems. As a longtime homeowner and host on Yankee Point, I feel compelled to share a different perspective. My two-bedroom home, managed with my mother, welcomes respectful guests who hike, watch wildlife, and enjoy the Pacific’s tranquility — in line with the Coastal Act’s promise of public access. These visitors are personally vetted by me and often seek an intimate alternative to hotels. I’ve also hosted guests battling health conditions, including those undergoing chemotherapy, who require quiet, private accommodations.

In August, the California Coastal Commission held a hearing in Los Angeles that certified a complete ban on Highlands vacation rentals. A clear summary of actual transient occupancy tax collections was not provided, despite being raised as a point of interest. Each quarter, I pay 10.5 percent TOT, contributing to millions in county revenue. If rentals are “illegal,” why accept this revenue? It suggests the county is having it both ways. Scheduling such a critical decision hours away, where local hosts couldn’t share perspectives in person, also raised questions of fairness. Accurate data and transparency are essential to informed decisions.

The claim that vacation rentals overburden septic systems is misleading. Unlike full-time households, short-term rentals often operate fewer days per month, placing less strain on infrastructure. Our own system, with routine maintenance, has required no major pumping in 15

based on “a number of different metrics,” including per-pupil spending. Last year, Carmel Unified spent approximately \$88 million to provide schooling for 2,159 students, or \$40,760 apiece.

Rodriguez said the California Department of Education will release a more detailed breakdown of students’ scores in September.

“There are additional metrics that can give us even more data to make sure that students are placed in correct interventions and getting all the support that they need,” specifically ESL learners and students with disabilities, said Rodriguez.

Sara Hinds, whose children attend Carmel schools, said she appreciates “incremental progress” and cautioned her fellow board members to be “realistic.”

“I know that all of us want to see great big percentage increases, but I think there is room for incremental progress. And I think that’s positive,” she said.

She was supported by board member Jake Odello, a CUSD alum. “I was jumping for joy because this is such good information. We are on the right track,” he said.

Student representative Juliet Norman, a senior at Carmel High, said, “As someone who’s taken all the tests in this district from third grade on, I think it’s really important to highlight the teachers and the administrators and how well they do to prepare students.”

‘Data-informed decisions’

No public or parent comments were offered following the presentation. Patel, whose children attended Carmel schools, emphasized her support for “data-informed decision-making” and said she has “pie-in-the-sky goals” for what Carmel schools can achieve.

years. Yet septic was cited as a leading factor in Supervisor Daniels’ position. If septic is a legitimate concern, then all homes should be evaluated under the same standard.

Carmel Highlands lots are large, ensuring privacy. Well-managed rentals support our community, creating jobs and bolstering the local economy. Many other coastal areas successfully balance vacation rentals with public access — why can’t we? We need fair, balanced regulation based on accurate data, not a sweeping ban rooted in mischaracterization. For nearly 50 years, the Coastal Act has guaranteed that California’s coastline remains open and accessible to everyone. That promise — the coast belongs to all — is a defining value of our state.

Margot Thomas, Carmel Highlands

Old virtues

Dear Editor,

Only fools worship the rugged survival demands such as those our ancestors experienced. But the wise do treasure the old virtues of a less materialistic time. Which brings us to Carmel and its early creation.

People settled here because of the incomparable natural beauty of the pine forest by the sea and the quality of the society of fellows who joined this community. The names of those folks make up a “Who’s Who” of the artistic and intellectual luminaries of the time, and one doubts that they were deluded in their desire to be here.

Maybe the point comes down to this. People of judgment and perception look for thoughtful, aesthetic, spiritual content in their lives. Not sprawling estates, not conspicuous consumption, not false society, not anything artificial in skill, achievement, relationship or soul.

So, those old early Carmelites who embraced the above might be forgiven for a supposed less “practical” approach to life. Forgiven for being all tangled up in the “tried and true” of long ago, the values of which could point us toward a very happy sunrise. Simple living and high thinking.

Jackson Smith, Carmel

“I don’t mean to come off critical or negative. I just want all our students to be able to dream big and pursue whatever they want to pursue in their lives, whether it’s trade schools or college. And I want to make sure we prepare them for that time,” Patel said.

STREETS

From page 14A

than the county’s.

“A small sign that says, ‘Now entering Carmel-by-the-Sea’ would let people know that what they just came through, which was bumpy and full of potholes, was in the county,” she said. “They might appreciate the fact that Carmel’s pavement, on the whole, is better than what you see in the county.”

Frequent complaints

Indeed, the demarcation point on Camino del Monte at the northern entrance to the city is significant, with far better asphalt starting near the Junipero intersection and running south.

Councilmembers said they frequently hear complaints from constituents regarding the streets and sidewalks and questions about when conditions might improve. They unanimously supported the contract.

Mayor Dale Byrne also encouraged residents who live on smaller streets that might not have been resurfaced in many years to contact the city and request they be added to the to-do list for the future.

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TRACK

From page 12A

Among its successes, the Friends group grabbed new sponsorships from Porsche as the official car of Laguna Seca, Tire Rack and Java House.

To improve the guest experience, the main entrance on South Boundary was resurfaced, processes were improved, and trams were added to help people get around when they don't want to walk.

All those efforts have garnered compliments, according to Harder, including from IndyCar multiyear champion Alex Palou, who told Racer magazine, "You can see that they've done an amazing job on promoting the race. I think Mel is doing a great job as well on keeping this track in the best shape as it's ever been. You could feel it."

Coincidentally, IndyCar announced this week that after two years occupying a different spot in the series' 17-race schedule, Laguna will once again host the season finale in September 2026.

With everything that's going on, the Friends need more time to complete the master plan and asked the supervisors to extend the due date to fall 2026.

"It takes longer than 15 months to plan these events, and planning for new events takes time as well. With the staff and resources we have, we're trying to move forward as best we can," Harder explained, but "we don't want to rush."

Noise on track days

That time will also allow for more data collection for the extensive sound study being undertaken by a local firm, Sonics, as the concession agreement requires. The lead consultant, Jim Baranth, said equipment was set up throughout the circuit to measure noise during more than 100 track days and major events. After collecting enough information, Sonics will develop recommendations for noise mitigation. In general, he said, options include natural

and topographical changes like berms and more trees, sound barriers and building modifications.

Public works chief Randy Ishii agreed the Friends group "remains committed to fulfilling the terms of the agreement."

"They have invested their own funds into the facility and have kept Laguna Seca going as a world-class raceway for the public," he said. "We continue to have a good working relationship with our concessionaire."

He recommended the board grant the request.

During a brief period of public comment, speakers urged the board and the Friends to pursue sound-mitigation measures, including barriers and trees, and perennial Laguna Seca critic Michael Weaver complained that a request to the county for attendance figures since the transition to FLS went unfulfilled.

"I hope I'm expressing my frustration at this," he said. (Later in the meeting, Harder said he could provide the figures.)

"I think having a racetrack is not a good idea for Monterey," one speaker said, though the track has existed since 1957.

Pasadera homeowners association board member Chris Ottenweller said the housing development, which was established on land adjacent to the raceway 25 years ago, is the "most affected by noise-generating activities at the track" and wants a say in the potential solutions.

Fifth District Supervisor Kate Daniels, who represents the county on the Friends' board, said she's pleased with the progress — even if fast cars on racetracks really aren't her thing — and noted the track was built "well before I was born."

"I got a spin around the track in a Ferrari and I almost threw up," she shared.

Daniels said she appreciates the efforts that have gone into improving traffic, aesthetics and operations. "It's so obvious to see that Laguna Seca is being loved," she said.

District 2 Supervisor Glenn Church observed that not long ago, the county was using tax dollars to fund the track and

recreation area, and said the new management should be given the time to develop its plans properly.

"I think it was probably ambitious of us to think we could do this in one year," he said. "The county has master plans, but they take up to two years to do. This is not something you want to rush into."

'Critical asset'

Supervisor Luis Alejo, who represents the 1st District, called Laguna Seca a "critical asset."

"We are the only county in the United States that owns a world-class racetrack," he said. "We just have to remind ourselves the track has been there since 1957. The neighbors moved in afterward."

He likened those who live nearby and complain to those who move next to an agricultural field and then want the farming to stop, "or move next to an airport and then want to shut down the airport," or move in near a stadium and then decry the crowds.

Fourth District Supervisor Wendy Root

Askew, who has been less enthusiastic about Laguna Seca and often opposed funding requests made by prior management, encouraged the group to find better ways for the facility to serve local families.

She recalled the track being used for high school graduations during Covid and hearing that many of the students had never been there or known about the facility's existence.

She also called for documentation of the group's spending and asked legal counsel to review the concession agreement to ensure no other aspects of it are affected by the time extension.

Chair Chris Lopez, representing District 3, thanked the Friends for the work done so far and noted Laguna Seca "keeps us a destination for people from all over the world."

"I am supportive of granting the extension that's being requested, knowing that I'm already seeing the work being accomplished," he said.

And with that, the board unanimously OK'd the request for more time.

PUBLIC NOTICES



County of Monterey Fish & Game Propagation Grant Program

Apply now for this limited funding opportunity!



The County of Monterey is soliciting grant applications for eligible projects for Fiscal Year 2025-26 Fish and Game Propagation Grant Program. The deadline for submitting applications is November 7, 2026, 5 p.m.

Fish and Game Propagation Grant Funds are intended to provide financial resources to qualified agencies, organizations, and individuals working to protect, preserve, enhance, and promote fish and wildlife resources in Monterey County, including education on habitat conservation, wildlife resources, and outdoor activities.

Application packets and additional information regarding the grant funds and application process are available on the County website at: <https://www.countyofmonterey.gov/government/departments-i-z/public-works-facilities-parks/committees-hearings-agendas/fish-game-advisory>. Alternatively, you may contact the County of Monterey Parks and Lakes Division to request an application packet at (831)755-4895.

The County Board of Supervisors has charged the Monterey County Fish and Game Advisory Commission with reviewing all grant applications and making a funding award recommendation to the Board for approval

Publication dates: Sept. 19 - Oct. 31, 2025 (PC950)

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The Carmel Pine Cone

Section 2

Girls water polo teams holding their breath as new season begins

THE STEVENSON Pirates have reached the mountaintop of Northern California water polo three years in a row and stood alone at the summit in 2023, when they became Monterey County’s first NorCal champions, male or female.

Five starters from that girls team graduated last fall.

Peninsula Sports

By DENNIS TAYLOR

Three are playing NCAA Division I water polo as college freshman: Miranda Salinger and Emmerson Ferreira at UC Santa Barbara, and Sienna Cimoli at San Jose State.

Another, goalie Anna Mitchell, is in Denmark, taking a year off from the sport but may resurface as a college player next season. The fifth, Arielle Dale, is a biology and biology sciences major at UC Irvine, prioritizing her pre-med studies.



PHOTO/KERRY BELSER

High-scoring Santa Catalina senior Quinn Connolly, who frequently attracts a crowd of defenders, will play water polo next fall at UC Davis.

They were what people like to call “a generational team” — no question.

But Coach Jon Burke, who won 10 consecutive Central Coast Section championships at Sacred Heart Prep before coming to Stevenson — where he’s added two more — believes another one might be incubating this very minute.

Meanwhile, at Santa Catalina, seven varsity players return from a team that qualified for CCS in 2024 for the second consecutive year. The Cougars are hopeful for a deeper playoff run this season.

And at Carmel High, first-year head coach Frances Atkins is drawing a blueprint for a program she hopes will become a post-season fixture in the not-too-distant future.

Powers, Morrow led RLS

Despite those heavy graduation losses, the cupboard at Stevenson isn’t exactly bare.

Burke’s two returning starters, senior Jacqui Powers and junior Charlotte Morrow, were second-team All-Pacific Coast Athletic League selections on the 2024 team, which advanced all the way to the NorCal Division 2 championship game, where the Pirates lost a 12-10 heartbreaker to San Ramon Valley.

Powers and Morrow were also starters during the historic previous year, when Stevenson won that NorCal crown, capturing the Division 3 title.

And Powers was a freshman in 2022, when the Pirates were NorCal Division 3 finalists against Woodcreek, losing 11-10 in the championship match.

Last fall, Powers scored 46 goals, dealt 40 assists, and stole the ball 20 times, while Morrow contributed 31 goals, 17 assists and 17 steals.

The first two players into the pool when somebody needed a breather, sophomore Kate Solomon (26 goals,



PHOTO/KERRY BELSER

Jacqui Powers, a fourth-year varsity stalwart, scored 46 goals with 40 assists and 20 steals last fall for Stevenson’s NorCal finals team.

12 assists, 9 steals) and junior Collette Duarte (4 goals, 14 assists), also are back, along with senior Hanna Rhodes (15 goals in 10 games) and sophomore Emile Lee (6 goals, 9 assists in 10 games).

And newcomer Anna Bates, who played with Monterey Bay United at the National Junior Olympics two summers ago, has cracked Stevenson’s 2025 starting lineup as a freshman.

Sharing goalkeeping duties so far this season have been sophomore Adi Smith, last year’s varsity backup, and junior Makayla Schnitzer.

“We’re fast, we’ve got a bunch of kids who can score, and we’ve got kids who have played at the highest level

See **SPORTS** next page



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SPORTS

From previous page

of our sport in high school,” Burke said. “Now it’s just about creating the synergy we need to get the most out of our team.”

If that happens, the Pirates can be expected to hang a sixth-straight PCAL championship banner.

Burke-coached teams are 30-0 in the PCAL since 2021, including this year’s victories over Monterey and Salinas, and Stevenson’s league winning streak is 41 in a row, dating back to previous coach Jim Fannin.

“Our goals, as always, are to win our league and make a strong run in the postseason,” said Burke, who prepped his team with six weeks of summer training capped by a challenging tournament in Orange County.

The education will continue with a rugged schedule that includes an eight-school tournament Sept. 26-27 at Aptos, a 48-team, three-bracket extravaganza Oct. 2-4 at Arroya Grande featuring virtually every top-ranked team in Northern California, among others, and head-to-head non-league showdowns with St. Ignatius, Los Gatos, Soquel, and Aptos — all high-caliber NorCal programs.

Although this year’s Pirates might be hard-pressed to equal the achievements of teams that went to the NorCal finals in the three previous postseasons, Burke sees the same kind of long-term potential.

“I’m as excited about the current group as I’ve been about any bunch I’ve had here,” he said. “I’m really looking forward to building upon the legacy of the seniors who left.”

Connolly leads Catalina
Santa Catalina’s top returning player, Quinn Connolly, carpet-bombed opponents with 129 goals as a junior — more than twice as many as her nearest teammate — during a 13-9 season that included a CCS playoff game.

Connolly, who will play next fall at UC Davis, already has scored 31 times, with five assists and 13 steals, in the Cougars’ first six games of 2025.

“Quinn is a strong returner for us — one of four seniors who have been with me all four years,” Coach Kendra Klein said of Connolly, who earned first-team All-PCAL honors as a 2-meter player on both offense and defense. “Three of those seniors are captains, which provides us with some great leadership.”

One of her co-captains, Georgia Morrison — another year-round swimmer with Marin’s Sleepy Hollow Aquatics Club — was second-team All-PCAL as an attacker and driver, scoring 32 goals and leading the team with 40 assists.

The third captain, Eva Bradley, a swift swimmer, is a versatile player who can fill virtually any role and a mentor to younger players.



PHOTO/KERRY BELSER

Players who are part of a rebuilding season at Carmel High are (from left) Merielle Flagg, Eda Karavelioglu, Ava Waroff, Blake Marzoni, Joya Besler, and Cecilia Sauliner. Behind them are head coach Frances Atkins (left), assistant coach Casey Goldberg (right) and volunteer assistant Miles Tarsitano (center).

omore Reagan Brooks and freshman Avani Singh, both first-year varsity players.

Catalina is 2-0 in PCAL games — victories over Carmel and Hollister — after going 0-4 in a challenging season-opening tournament in Hollister.

Carmel’s new head coach, Frances Atkins, an assistant last season, was a synchronized swim standout whose ability to skyrocket out of the water proved valuable at Carmel High (Class of 2011), where she played goalie for the Padres.

Atkins earned second-team all-conference plaudits as a club player at Cornell University. She’s a civil engineer today.

“This is a rebuilding season at Carmel High — it took a lot of effort to get enough girls for a team this year,” said the coach.

“Our approach this year is to avoid looking at the scoreboard and dedicate ourselves to showing up for every practice, every game, and focus on improving as individuals and at a team level,” Atkins said. “We’ve got a great bunch of girls, and we’re making little improvements as we go, which is all I can ask.”

Starting lineup

Among those evolving into leadership roles on the 12-girl roster are juniors Ava Woroff and Charlotte Lawson, the Padres’ only club players.

Waroff is a driver who leads the team in scoring and a 2-meter defender. Lawson plays the crucial hole set position, the hub of the offense.

The starting lineup also includes Celine Karavelioglu, a driver, Merielle Flagg, a sprinter and the team’s fastest swimmer and Imogen Nicholson, a hard-working speedster, as well as second-year goalie Rainn Nachbar. All are seniors.

First-year player Blake Marzoni, a sophomore, is an impressive defender, the coach said, and senior Jaya Champagne and sophomore Cecilia Sauliner are varsity veterans in reserve roles.



PHOTO/KERRY BELSER

Junior Charlotte Morrow contributed 30 goals, 17 assists and 17 steals to a powerhouse Stevenson team in 2024, earning second-team All-PCAL recognition.

Competing for playing time are sophomores Eda Karavelioglu, who played club water polo with her big sister when they were younger, Kinsley Bernahl, and Joya Besler, who is splitting time between water polo and flag football this fall.

Casey Goldberg, who helps coach the swim team in the spring, is Atkins’ assistant, and Miles Tarsitano, who grew up playing club water polo in Palm Springs, is a volunteer assistant.

The Padres play a tournament at Watsonville Friday and Saturday. Santa Catalina hosts Monterey at 4 p.m. Tuesday.

Stevenson is at the St. Francis Autumn Invitational this weekend and returns home to play Carmel at 7 p.m. Sept. 24.

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

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This Week

Live Music,
Clubs and Events

Sunset kicks off another free concert series, Stanton Center hosts Beatles tribute

SERVING UP a series of free outdoor concerts, Sunset Center’s Terrace Hour is back with a show by local singer and guitarist **Frank Weckerle** Friday at 6 p.m.

“Frank performs original music with a singular purpose: to tell a great story,” Sunset Center said. “Inspired by the soundtrack of his childhood and his father’s extensive

The series continues through Oct. 10. Sunset Center is located at San Carlos and Ninth.

■ Fab Four fundraiser

Raising money for the Monterey History and Art Association, a collection of local musicians pay tribute to The Beatles at the Stanton Center in Monterey Friday at 6 p.m.

The lineup for “Beatles’ Night” includes singer **Alina Markina**, mandolinist **Dave Holodiloff**, singer and guitarist **Dan Frechette**, keyboardist **Juneau Rowe** and percussionist **Shaun Elley**.

“We’re so excited to be bringing ‘Beatles Night’ to life — not just as a concert, but as a full-on British experience,” explained **Dot Findlater**, proprietor of local specialty caterer Rosemary & Thyme High Teas, which is presenting the event. “Whether you’re a lifelong Beatles fan or just fancy a great night in Monterey, you will enjoy an event full of heart, humor and a little magic.”

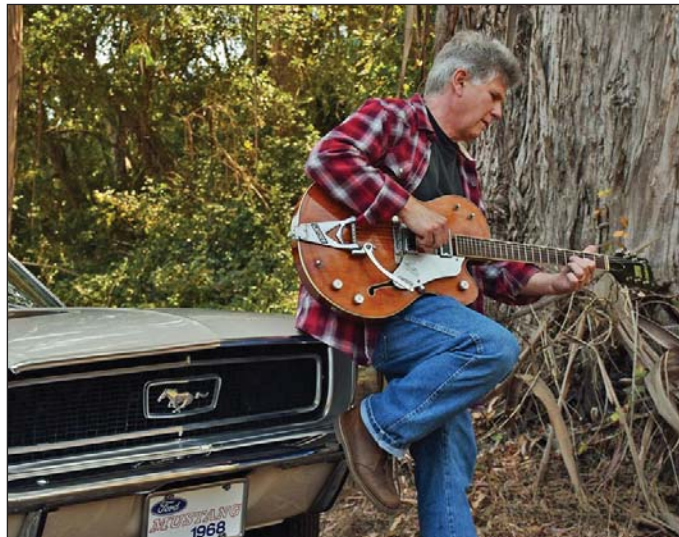
A silent auction features a trove of Beatles’ memorabilia. Tickets start at \$95. The center is located at 5 Custom House Plaza. rosemaryandthyme-highteas.com.

■ Blues never tasted better

One of Monterey County’s most popular and enduring homegrown bands, **Red Beans & Rice** rocks Wave Street Studios in Monterey Friday at 7 p.m. Singer and guitarist **Rags Rosenberg** opens the show.

Led by singer **Gil Rubio**, the band has been playing on local stages since 1993, playing a dance-friendly mix of “New Orleans-influenced, blues-inspired party music.”

“They’re just a high-energy band that’s a lot of fun,” their manager, **Steve Vagnini**, told The Pine Cone. “They’re exciting and well-rehearsed, and they’re one of



Singer and guitarist Frank Weckerle kicks off Sunset Center’s latest free outdoor concert series Friday.

the few bands here that plays original music. They just keep getting better and better.”

Tickets are \$25. The venue is located at 774 Wave St.

Live music Sept. 19-25

■ Big Sur

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

Fernwood Resort — **Toro y Moi** (indie-pop, Friday and Saturday at 10 p.m.). 47200 Highway 1.

See MUSIC page 35A

On a High Note

By CHRIS COUNTS

vinyl collection, he blends genres seamlessly and plays a variety of stringed instruments like ukulele and mandolin, led by his signature finger-style acoustic guitar.”

People are welcome to bring outside food and non-alcoholic drinks, but alcohol must be purchased at Sunset’s bar, which serves beer, wine and canned spirits. Casas de Humo BBQ will also be on site.



Singer and guitarist Rags Rosenberg opens for Red Beans & Rice Friday at Wave Street Studios in Monterey.

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Hoist a stein, taste the town, and celebrate the start of grape harvest

MONDAY IS the autumnal equinox, and while signs point to yet another year of pumpkin-spiced everything, local restaurateurs have so far exercised restraint. There's nothing wrong with a dusting of cinnamon, nutmeg and clove, but does anyone really need pumpkin-spiced-graham Goldfish crackers? Or harvest-scented goats-milk lattes for dogs? It boggles the mind.

Soup to Nuts

Meanwhile, there are lots of opportunities for “Ein Prosit der Gemütlichkeit” — a German toast to fellowship and fun — and the spirit of Oktoberfest.

The winery harvest parties have begun, too, and some college students got a lesson in sustainability. The Last Hometown is going to be dining out in a big way, and new tapas are hitting plates in Monterey. Read on, and have a tasty week.

■ Trailside's Oktoberfest is back

Trailside Cafe's annual Oktoberfest celebration kicks off Saturday and runs daily through Oct. 5, with 10-plus



Peter B's in the Portola Hotel is celebrating Oktoberfest with a special "Peterhosen" beer. The brewpub produces a variety of craft beers that are available on tap, and you can purchase a tasting flight of four for \$12.

German beers on draft and food to match, live music and lots of fun.

Festival specials include draft beers available in 1-liter mugs for \$14, with customers invited to chip in another \$10 to keep it and enjoy \$10 refills throughout Oktoberfest. In addition, those who try six different drafts during the festival will receive a free half-liter mug.

Food specials include jäger schnitzel (tenderized and breaded pork loin pan fried and served with mushroom gravy, traditional warm German potato salad and sautéed vegetables) and “The Wurst” — a Stone Brewing/Silva Beer bratwurst and a Corralitos Cheesy Bavarian sausage served with kraut, a Bavarian-style pretzel and two mustards.

Pretzels with house-made cheese sauce, bratwurst with sauerkraut, and, for kids, a frankfurter with fries, are available too.

To celebrate the opening of this year's festival, Tony B. will perform live at 6 p.m. on Sept. 20. Oh, and those who don their dirndls and lederhosen will receive discounts.

The cafe is located at 3 Del Fino Place in Carmel Valley Village. Visit trailsidecafevcv.com.

■ Party in the vineyard

Steve McIntyre and the team at the winery that bears his name are hosting their annual harvest party Sunday, Oct. 12, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., with tours, small bites and pours of premium wines.

Planted in 1973, McIntyre's 60 acres of vines include some of the oldest pinot noir and chardonnay in the highly acclaimed Santa Lucia Highlands AVA, and the winery produces several different bottlings from there and from its



Greg Ahn guides visiting CSUMB students through the grounds at Folkale Winery. The group's visit is part of their program in sustainable hospitality and tourism management, and it gave the students an opportunity to see the principles they'd been studying put into action.

sister estate, the 81-acre Kimberly Vineyard in Arroyo Seco. As owner and operator of Monterey Pacific, which farms 17,000 acres of vines within and beyond the county, Steve McIntyre is said to be “one of the most knowledgeable viticulturists in California.”

At the party, guests will enjoy front-row seats for the harvest. After getting a taste of wine and a snack at the start, they'll continue sampling McIntyre wines paired with appetizers from Ardent Culinaire Catering.

Bocce, cornhole, music and a game called Guess That Grape, in which guests taste grapes and try to determine the varietals, will be on offer, with the winner taking home a large-format bottle. A falconer will demonstrate how pests are controlled in the vineyard.

Tickets are \$80 per person and can be ordered at exploretock.com by searching under McIntyre Family Wines. The winery is located at 31901 Sanchez Road in Soledad.

Continues next page

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FOOD & WINE

From previous page

CSUMB students in Folktale contest

Students enrolled in Cal State Monterey Bay’s sustainable hospitality and tourism management program spent a recent day at Folktale in Carmel Valley sampling some of the harvest’s first grapes, touring the winery and vineyard, and engaging in a friendly culinary competition.

“The immersive visit introduced students to Folktale’s commitment to organic and sustainable farming practices, vineyard stewardship and a guest experience rooted in care for both people and the land,” a spokesperson said.

Folktale founders and CEOs Greg and Madigan Ahn and their management team, including vice president John Fitzgerald, discussed their sustainable practices in viticulture and hospitality, “giving students a firsthand look at how values-driven practices translate into award-winning wine and guest experiences.”

Pac-Man on board

Their day included lunch and wrapped up with a Lord of the Board contest in which student teams assembled charcuterie boards using locally sourced ingredients and had their creations judged by the winery’s culinary team. Entries included a Pac-Man-inspired cheese presentation and florets of cured meats.

The day at Folktale “brought our classroom lessons to life,” according to Paige

Viren, the CSUMB program’s executive director, and she praised the Ahns’ visionary leadership and generous philanthropy. Both serve on boards supporting CSUMB, Viren said, and they “consistently give back — creating opportunities like this for our students to learn, connect and be inspired.”

Hometown celebration

The P. G. Chamber of Commerce’s 13th Annual Flavors of Pacific Grove is Thursday, Sept. 25, from 5:30 to 8 p.m.

More than two dozen restaurants, breweries and wineries will offer tastings, drinks and desserts, all served up along Lighthouse Avenue. That way you can walk off some of the treats as you go, right?

Five local bands will perform at various locations throughout the evening.

Participating restaurants, breweries and venues include: Beach House at Lovers Point, Colette’s Ice Cream, Fandango, Fishwife, Hops & Fog Brewing Company, Il Vecchio, International Cuisine, Julia’s Vegetarian Restaurant, La Piccolo Pizza, Love Thai Cuisine, Mezzaluna Pasteria, Passionfish, Petra, Pizza My Way, Pop & Hiss, Red House Cafe, Spotted Duck Restaurant, The French Baker, Monarch Pub, newcomer The Perfect Crumb, Vivo-lo’s Chowder House, Wild Fish Restaurant, the spiffed-up Lighthouse Cinemas & Event Center, and Trader Joe’s.

Wineries will include Comanche



Students from CSUMB were guests at Folktale winery recently. In addition to learning about sustainable vineyard practices, they participated in a competition to see whose charcuterie presentation would earn them the title of “Lord of the Board.”

Cellars, Conrado Oak View Vineyards, I.Brand Winery, Riboli Family Wines and Scheid Vineyards.

Organizers encourage attendees to “come hungry, leave inspired.” Tickets are \$75 per person and can be purchased at

pacificgrove.org or by calling (831) 373-3304. Organizers recommend purchasing tickets early, as the event has sold out in previous years.

See **FOOD** next page



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FOOD & WINE

FOOD

From previous page

Estéban’s new happy hour menu

Estéban Restaurant in the Casa Munras Garden Hotel (700 Munras Ave., Monterey) has launched a new Tapas Happy Hour, available nightly from 4:30 to 6 p.m. Guests are welcome to enjoy the restaurant’s offerings on the outdoor patio (with plenty of ways to keep warm, should summer come to a foggy end) or in the dining room. The updated menu features new items like a pintxos (finger food) board with Marcona almonds, olives and pickled vegetables, or a helping of blistered shishito peppers served with romesco — a roasted red pepper sauce — plus vinegar and the flavorful Middle Eastern spice blend, za’atar. Or, try the pepperoni pizza with San Marzano sauce and provolone, mozzarella and Parmesan cheeses. Chef Steven’s pork and veal meatballs with sauce

and Manchego cheese are on offer, along with delicious empanadas filled with braised pork shoulder, feta and salsa verde. Signature drinks include the Four-Eyed Bike Ride, made with Sauza tequila, Aperol, guava, lime and Tajin (chili-lime salt); Get Figgy With It, crafted with Jim Beam bourbon, amaro, fig jam, black walnut bitters and maple syrup, and Too Cool For School, which blends Outer Banks gin, Cherry Bark vanilla bitters, watermelon, mint and soda. Do try the house-made sangria in red or rosé, available by the glass or pitcher — it’s refreshing and delightful to share. Weekly specials, which you can view on the restaurant’s website at hotecasamunras.com by selecting “Dining,” and then “Seasonal Specials,” include Shucking Social Sundays with \$1 oysters and half-priced bottles of wine, \$5 empanadas on Mondays, Date Night Tuesdays with a four-course prix-fixe dinner including dessert and sangria, and Wednesday Burger Nights. Reservations are recommended. To book a table, call 831-375-0176 or email info@estebanrestaurant.com.

Peterhosen?

Peter B’s will host its annual Oktoberfest celebration from Sept. 20 to Oct. 5, offering guests a taste of Germany with traditional fare and specialty beers. The event features an exclusive Oktoberfest lager crafted by the brewpub’s team. Called “Peterhosen,” it will be available throughout the festival for \$8 a pint. The menu includes smokey beef sausage from Corralitos Sausage Company, served with a Bavarian pretzel, Dijon mustard and house-made beer cheese sauce for \$16. Guests can also enjoy grilled bratwurst with mashed potatoes, sauerkraut and grain mustard for \$14. Nobody celebrates carbs like the Germans. In keeping with the festive spirit, guests who arrive clad in lederhosen or dirndls will receive a 15 percent discount on food purchases. Peter B’s is located inside the Portola Hotel, which is at the intersection of Alvarado Street and Del Monte Avenue in Monterey. Mary Schley and Elaine Hesser contributed to this week’s column.


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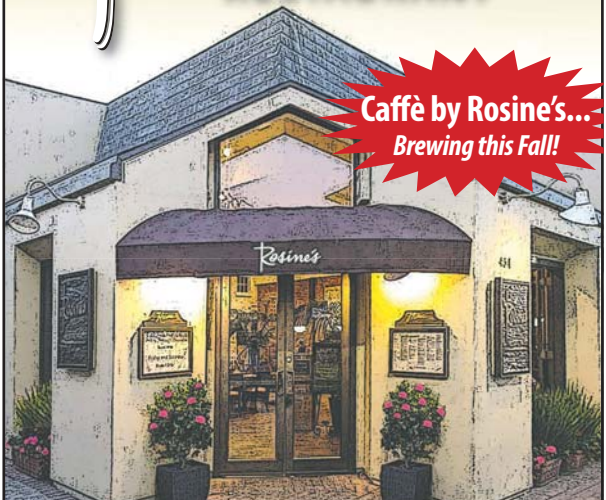
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CALENDAR

Sept. 19 & 20 – 2 DAYS ONLY! “End of Summer Sale” at Baum & Blume and The Carriage House! 11:30 a.m.-7 p.m. 20 percent off everything in the Boutique! Summer hats, clothing and scarves! Tabletop, books, children’s gifts, bath products and more. We’re making space for new holiday merchandise! 4 El Caminito Road, Carmel Valley (831) 659-0400.

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 – Meet the artists: Lori Poncsak and Mary Titus at Popup Gallery Reception, 4 to 7 p.m. Free raffle for original painting, at The Crossroads Shopping Center, Rio Road off Highway 1, Carmel. Details: (831) 402-1955

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.

Sundays – Live music 5 to 7 p.m. at Woody’s at Del Mesa. Musical guests **Brice and Nina** deliver an eclectic mix of jazz, rock and reggae, 500 Del Mesa Carmel. (831) 624-1854

Thursdays – Live jazz with The David Morwood Jazz Band, 6 to 9 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. 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** at Carmel Woman’s Club. 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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MUSIC

From page 31

Henry Miller Library — singer and guitarist **Blake Mills** and bassist **Pino Palladino** (Wednesday at 6 p.m.). 48603 Highway 1. Visit henrymiller.org for more info.

Carmel

Barmel — singer and guitarist **Ryan Sesma** (Sunday at 7 p.m.), singer and guitarist **Kyle Kovalik** (Thursday at 7 p.m.). Carmel Square on San Carlos north of Seventh.

Edgar’s Restaurant — singer and multi-instrumentalist **Reija Massey** (Friday at 5:30 p.m.). 8205 Valley Greens Drive.

Golden Bough Playhouse — singer and guitarist **Lauren Monroe**, drummer **Rick Allen** and others play a benefit concert for the Raven Drum Foundation. Tickets start at \$50. On Monte Verde between Eighth and Ninth. For more details, visit PacRep.org.

Hyatt Carmel Highlands — singer and pianist **T.J. Kuenster** (jazz, Friday at 5 p.m.), singer and guitarist **Fred McCarty** (Saturday at 5 p.m.), singer **Dino Vera** (Thursday at 6 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.), singer and guitarist **Peter Barnes Martin** (jazz, Tuesday at 5 p.m.). Camino Real and Eighth.

Links Club — **The Transducers Band** (rock and funk, 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 **Maddalaine 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 — **Scarlet** (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 **Casey Frazier** (Tuesday at 4 p.m.), singer and guitarist **Adrea Castiano** (Wednesday at 4 p.m.). 415 W. Carmel Valley Road.

Folktale Winery — singer and guitarist **Kito Rayburn** (Friday at 5 p.m.), singer and multi-instrumentalist **Casey Wickstrom** (rock and blues, Saturday at 5 p.m.), **Monterey Jazz Regional All-Star Combos** (Sunday at 11 a.m.), singer and guitarist **Lindsey Wall** (Monday at 5 p.m.), singer and guitarist **R.J. DeMarco** (Wednesday at

See **LIVE** page 37A



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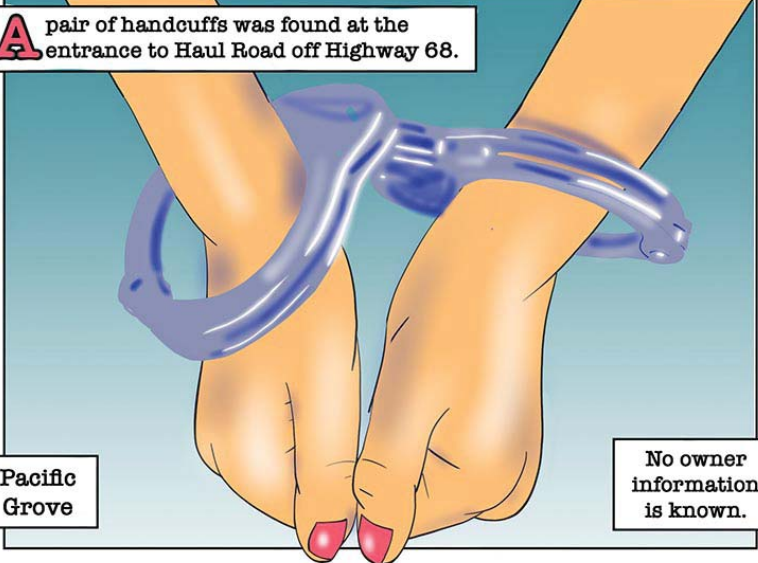
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Carmel area

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LIVE

From page 35A

5 p.m.), singer and guitarist **Sabelle** (Thursday at 2 p.m.), **The Monterey String Quartet** (Beatles tribute, Thursday at 8 p.m.). 8940 Carmel Valley Road.

Trailside Cafe — singer and guitarist **Tony Burciaga** (Oktoberfest celebration, Saturday at 5 p.m.). 3 Del Fino Place.

Monterey

Albatross Ridge Winery — singer and guitarist **Ryan Sesma** (Friday at 6 p.m.), singers and guitarists **Keith Rayburn** and **Rick Chelew** and singer **Eliza James** (Saturday at 6 p.m.). 316 Alvarado St.

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

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

Estéban Restaurant — guitarist **Catherine Broz** (Spanish and classical, Thursday at 5 p.m.). Casa Munras Hotel, 700 Munras Ave.

Golden State Theatre — **Straight Tequila Night** (country covers, Friday at 7:15 p.m.), singer and guitarist **Fred Armisen** (music and comedy, Saturday at 6 p.m.). 417 Alvarado St., goldenstatetheatre.com.

Hyatt Regency Monterey — **Andrea’s Fault** (jazz and pop, Friday at 7 p.m.), singer and guitarist **Scott Slaughter** (Saturday at 7 p.m.). 1 Old Golf Course Road.

InterContinental Hotel — guitarist **John Sherry** (rock and blues, Friday at 7 p.m.), singer and guitarist **Sabelle** (Saturday at 7 p.m.), guitarist **Terrance Farrell** (Spanish, classical and jazz, Sunday at 9 a.m.). 750 Cannery Row.

Jack’s Monterey — singer and multi-instrumentalist **Rory Lynch** (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 Dolister** (jazz, Sunday at 5 p.m.), singer **Akina Miyata**, guitarist **Sam Nilsson**, pianist **Bill Spen-**

cer (jazz, Thursday at 6 p.m.). 467 Alvarado St.

Monterey Plaza Hotel — pianist **Gary Meek** (jazz, Friday at 6 p.m.), singer and pianist **Scott Brown** (jazz and pop, Saturday at 6 p.m.), pianist **Steve Mann** (jazz, Sunday at 6 p.m.). 400 Cannery Row.

Peter B’s — **The Money Band Duo** (pop and rock, 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.

Puma Road Winery at Portola Plaza — singer and guitarist **Blaise DiGirolamo** (Friday at 6 p.m.), singer and guitarist **Adam Behan** (Saturday at 6 p.m.), singer and guitarist **Peter Barnes Martin** (jazz, Sunday at 5 p.m.). 281 Alvarado St.

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

Sly McFly’s — **The Hackjammers** (pop and rock, Friday at 9 p.m.), **Back Together Again** (pop and rock, Saturday at 9 p.m.), **Victory Lane** (classic rock, Monday at

See TUNES next page

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TUNES

From previous page

8:30 p.m.), **Blue Fire** (classic rock, Tuesday at 8:30 p.m.), **5 Star** (Wednesday at 8:30 p.m.), **Bobby & Friends** (pop, soul and r&b, Thursday at 8:30 p.m.). 700 Cannery Row.

■ Pacific Grove

Asilomar Conference Grounds — singer and multi-instrumentalist **Reija Massey** (Saturday at 4 p.m.), guitarist **Adam Astrup** (jazz, Thursday 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 Broken Shades** (rock and blues, Saturday at 2 p.m.), **The Edge Band** (rock and country, 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.), **Andrea’s Fault Duo** (jazz and pop, Monday at 6 p.m.), singer and guitarist **Holysea** (Tuesday at 6:30 p.m.), singer and guitarist **Rick Chelew** (Thursday at 6 p.m.). 1180 Forest Ave.

Pop ’n’ Hiss — **Ricketts Folly** (jazz, Thursday at 6 p.m.). 215 Forest Ave.

■ Pebble Beach

The Inn at Spanish Bay — **The Andy Weis Trio** (jazz, Friday, Saturday and Thursday at 7 p.m.), **The Al James Band** (r&b, Saturday at 5 p.m.). 2700 17 Mile Drive.

PUBLIC NOTICES

Lien Sale Auction Advertisement

Notice is hereby given that Pursuant to the California Self-Service Storage Facility Act, (B&P Code 21700 et. seq.)

Auction to be held on
October 8, 2025 at 4:00PM at
www.selfstorageauction.com.

The property is stored at:
Marina U Store Self Storage
475 Reservation Road
Marina, CA 93933
Quintonia Anderson

9/19/25
CNS-3967305#
CARMEL PINE CONE
Publication Dates: Sept. 19, 2025 (PC 935)

Lien Sale Auction Advertisement

City of Monterey Harbor, 250 Figueroa Street, Monterey, 10-01-2025 @ 11:00AM
CA HUNTER HIN# HUN34801K485

9/19/25
CNS-3967307#
CARMEL PINE CONE
Publication Dates: Sept. 19, 2025 (PC 936)

Lien Sale Auction Advertisement

Notice is hereby given that Pursuant to the California Self-Service Storage Facility Act, (B&P Code 21700 et. Seq.), the undersigned will sell at public auction; personal property including but not limited to furniture, tools, and /or other misc. items.

Auction to be held at
4:00 pm on October 8, 2025:
The property is stored at:
StoragePRO of Carmel
9640 Carmel Valley Rd.,
Carmel, CA 93923

Name of Tenants
Laura Poncabore
Justis Andrew Daniels

9/19/25
CNS-3967303#
CARMEL PINE CONE
Publication Dates: Sept. 19, 2025 (PC 937)

**SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA
COUNTY OF MONTEREY**

**ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE
FOR CHANGE OF NAME**

Case No. 25CV004602

TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS: Petitioner, LETICIA RUIZ-RODRIGUEZ, filed a petition with this court for a decree changing names as follows:

A Present name:
LETICIA RUIZ-RODRIGUEZ
aka LETICIA RUIZ RODRIGUEZ
aka LETICIA AYALA RUIZ

Proposed name:
LETICIA RUIZ PULIDO

THE COURT ORDERS that all persons interested in this matter appear before this court at the hearing indicated below to show cause, if any, why the petition for change of name should not be granted. Any person objecting to the name changes described above must file a written objection that includes the reasons for the objection at least two court days before the matter is scheduled to be heard and must appear at the hearing to show cause why the petition should not be granted. If no written objection is timely filed, the court may grant the petition without a hearing.

NOTICE OF HEARING:
DATE: Nov. 4, 2025
TIME: 10:00 a.m.
DEPT: 14

The address of the court is 1200 Agua-jito Road, Monterey, CA 93940.
Date filed: Sept. 10, 2025
(s) Hon. Thomas W. Wills
Judge of the Superior Court
Date: Sept. 10, 2025

**FICTITIOUS BUSINESS
NAME STATEMENT**

File No. 20251410

Filing type: ORIGINAL FILING.

The following person(s) is (are) doing business as: **SNAP STUDIO 360, 15015 Charter Oak Blvd., Salinas, CA 93907.**

County of Principal Place of Business: MONTEREY

Registered Owner(s):
FAVIOLA CHAVEZ
SANDY PAULINA CHAVEZ

This business is conducted by a general partnership.

Registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above on March 26, 2025.

S/Faviola Chavez

This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Monterey County on Aug. 5, 2025.

Publication Dates: Sept. 19, 26, Oct. 3, 10, 2025 (PC 940)

**FICTITIOUS BUSINESS
NAME STATEMENT**

File No. 20251649

Filing type: ORIGINAL FILING.

The following person(s) is (are) doing business as: **PORCH PERFECTED, 655 Jewell Ave., Pacific Grove, CA 93950.**

County of Principal Place of Business: MONTEREY

Name of Corporation or LLC as shown in the Articles of Inc./Org./Reg.:
ENGELMAX LLC, 655 Jewell Ave., Pacific Grove, CA 93950.

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. 9, 2025.

S/Bryan Maxson, Member

Date: Sept. 9, 2025

This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Monterey County on Sept. 9, 2025.

Publication Dates: Sept. 19, 26, Oct. 3, 10, 2025. (PC 941)

**SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA
COUNTY OF MONTEREY**

**ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE
FOR CHANGE OF NAME**

Case No. 25CV004035

TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS: Petitioner, KEVIN PATRICK BERRY, filed a petition with this court for a decree changing

Publication Dates: Sept. 19, 26, Oct. 3, 10, 2025. (PC 938)

**FICTITIOUS BUSINESS
NAME STATEMENT**

File No. 20251561

Filing type: NEW FILING - with CHANGE(S) from the previous filing.

The following person(s) is (are) doing business as: **PEACEFUL PLANET PROGRAMS, 24544 Camino Del Monte, Carmel, CA 93923.**

County of Principal Place of Business: MONTEREY

Name of Corporation or LLC as shown in the Articles of Inc./Org./Reg.:
PEACEFUL PLANET PROGRAMS.

State of Inc./Org./Reg.: California

This business is conducted by a corporation.

Registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above on Jan. 1, 2009.

S/Elizabeth Hills, President

Date: July 15, 2025

This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Monterey County on Aug. 26, 2025.

Publication Dates: Sept. 19, 26, Oct. 3, 10, 2025. (PC 939)

**FICTITIOUS BUSINESS
NAME STATEMENT**

File No. 20251410

Filing type: ORIGINAL FILING.

The following person(s) is (are) doing business as: **SNAP STUDIO 360, 15015 Charter Oak Blvd., Salinas, CA 93907.**

County of Principal Place of Business: MONTEREY

Registered Owner(s):
FAVIOLA CHAVEZ
SANDY PAULINA CHAVEZ

This business is conducted by a general partnership.

Registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above on March 26, 2025.

S/Faviola Chavez

This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Monterey County on Aug. 5, 2025.

Publication Dates: Sept. 19, 26, Oct. 3, 10, 2025 (PC 940)

**FICTITIOUS BUSINESS
NAME STATEMENT**

File No. 20251649

Filing type: ORIGINAL FILING.

The following person(s) is (are) doing business as: **PORCH PERFECTED, 655 Jewell Ave., Pacific Grove, CA 93950.**

County of Principal Place of Business: MONTEREY

Name of Corporation or LLC as shown in the Articles of Inc./Org./Reg.:
ENGELMAX LLC, 655 Jewell Ave., Pacific Grove, CA 93950.

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. 9, 2025.

S/Bryan Maxson, Member

Date: Sept. 9, 2025

This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Monterey County on Sept. 9, 2025.

Publication Dates: Sept. 19, 26, Oct. 3, 10, 2025. (PC 941)

**SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA
COUNTY OF MONTEREY**

**ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE
FOR CHANGE OF NAME**

Case No. 25CV004035

TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS: Petitioner, KEVIN PATRICK BERRY, filed a petition with this court for a decree changing

names as follows:

A Present name:
SOPHIA VIRGINIA BERRY

Proposed name:
SOPHIA VIRGINIA GAUTIER

THE COURT ORDERS that all persons interested in this matter appear before this court at the hearing indicated below to show cause, if any, why the petition for change of name should not be granted. Any person objecting to the name changes described above must file a written objection that includes the reasons for the objection at least two court days before the matter is scheduled to be heard and must appear at the hearing to show cause why the petition should not be granted. If no written objection is timely filed, the court may grant the petition without a hearing.

NOTICE OF HEARING:
DATE: Oct. 21, 2025
TIME: 10:00 a.m.
DEPT: 15

The address of the court is 1200 Agua-jito Road, Monterey, CA 93940.
Date filed: Aug. 11, 2025
(s) Hon. Thomas W. Wills
Judge of the Superior Court

Publication Dates: Sept. 19, 26, Oct. 3, 10, 2025. (PC 942)

Lien Sale Auction Advertisement

Notice is hereby given that Pursuant to the California Self-Service Storage Facility Act, (B&P Code 21700 et. Seq.), the undersigned will sell at public auction; personal property including but not limited to furniture, tools, and /or other misc. items.

Auction to be held at
4:00 pm on October 8th, 2025:
www.selfstorageauction.com

The property is stored at:
Rossi Self Storage
10 Rossi Cr., Salinas, CA 93907

Name of Tenants
David Rodriguez
David Rodriguez
Lori Willingham
Filimon Garcia
Rivera Tile & Marble
Juan Blanco Martinez
Jorge Lopez Gonzalez
Paul Rivera
Paul Anthony JR Rivera

9/19/25
CNS-3967760#
CARMEL PINE CONE
Publication Dates: Sept. 19, 2025 (PC 943)

**ABANDONED PROPERTY
AUCTION**

Notice is hereby given that the undersigned intends to sell the abandoned personal property described below pursuant to Sections 1983 and 1988 of the California Civil Code. The undersigned will sell at public sale by competitive bidding on OCTOBER 8, 2025 at 4:00 pm, on the premises where said property has been stored and which

**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 Agua-jito 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

are located at ROSSI Self Storage, WWW.SELFSTORAGEAUCTION.COM, California the following described goods:
LORI WILLINGHAM #300 - MISC. GOODS
Purchases must be paid for at the time of purchase in cash only. All purchased items sold as is where is and must be removed at the time of sale. Sole subject to cancellation in the event of settlement between owner and obligated party.
9/19, 9/26/25
CNS-3967761#
CARMEL PINE CONE
Publication Dates: Sept. 19, 26, 2025. (PC 944)

**FICTITIOUS BUSINESS
NAME STATEMENT**

File No. 20251601

The following person(s) is(are) doing business as: **FRANKENFRAU, 254 MODERN LN, MARINA, CA 93933,** County of MONTEREY

Registered Owner(s):
WALKER PACIFIC INDUSTRIES LIMITED LIABILITY COMPANY, 254 MODERN LANE, MARINA, CA 93933, CALIFORNIA

This business is conducted by A LIMITED LIABILITY COMPANY

Registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name listed above on NOT APPLICABLE

S/ CAMI WALKER, MANAGING MEMBER

This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Monterey County on 09/02/2025 9/19, 9/26, 10/3, 10/10/25

CNS-3962185#
CARMEL PINE CONE
Publication Dates: Sept. 19, 26, Oct. 3, 10, 2025. (PC 945)

**FICTITIOUS BUSINESS
NAME STATEMENT**

File No. 20251670

Filing type: ORIGINAL FILING.

The following person(s) is (are) doing business as:

1. RAT-RACE
2. RAT RACE SPRAY
255 Watson St., Monterey, CA 93940.

County of Principal Place of Business: MONTEREY

Name of Corporation or LLC as shown in the Articles of Inc./Org./Reg.:
RAT RACE SPRAY LLC.

State of Inc./Org./Reg.: California

This business is conducted by a limited liability company.

Registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above on Aug. 18, 2025.

S/Nathaniel Martin, Managing Member

Date: Sept. 3, 2025

This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Monterey County on Sept. 11, 2025.

Publication Dates: Sept. 19, 26, Oct. 3, 10, 2025. (PC 946)

■ Seaside

Deja Blue — **Wrockinfoose** (r&b and soul, Sunday at 4 p.m.). 500 Broadway.

Palenke Arts — **Los Tangueros del Oeste** (hip-hop, electronica & flamenco, Saturday at 6:30 p.m.). 1713 Broadway.

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

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**FICTITIOUS BUSINESS
NAME STATEMENT**

File No. 20251679

Filing type: ORIGINAL FILING.

The following person(s) is (are) doing business as: **PACIFIC EDUCATIONAL SERVICES, 170 Hayes Rd., Royal Oaks, CA 95076.**

County of Principal Place of Business: MONTEREY

Registered Owner(s):
BARBARA THERESE BROWN

This business is conducted by an individual.

Registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above on N/A.

S/Barbara Brown

Date signed: Sept. 12, 2025

This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Monterey County on Sept. 12, 2025.

Publication Dates: Sept. 19, 26, Oct. 3, 10, 2025 (PC 947)

**FICTITIOUS BUSINESS
NAME STATEMENT**

File No. 20251654

Filing type: ORIGINAL FILING.

The following person(s) is (are) doing business as: **CENTRAL COAST RUSH LUBE, 1301 Old Stage Rd., Salinas, CA 93908.**

County of Principal Place of Business: MONTEREY

Registered Owner(s):
ALEXANDER RAMIREZ, 1301 Old Stage 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 N/A.

**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)

**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 Agua-jito Road, Monterey, CA 93940.

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

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:
Michael Kennedy
5886 Wyadotte St. E. Windsor, Ontario, Canada N8S 1M8
(519) 252-3888

The petition 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)

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)

**LEGALS DEADLINE:
Tuesday 3:00 pm
legals@carmelpinecone.com**

Se Habla Espanol

PUBLIC NOTICES

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No. 20251463
The following person(s) is(are) doing business as:
WEDGEWOOD WEDDING & BANQUET CENTER, 4860 CARMEL VALLEY ROAD, CARMEL, CA 93923, County of MONTEREY
Registered Owner(s):
WEDGEWOOD BEVERAGE, INC., 43385 BUSINESS PARK DRIVE, SUITE 120, TEMECULA, CA 92590This business is conducted by A CORPORATION
STATE OF INCORPORATION: CALIFORNIA
Registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name listed above on 11/01/2025
S/ WILLIAM ZARUKA
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Monterey County on 08/12/2025 8/29, 9/5, 9/12, 9/19/25
CNS-3959617#
CARMEL PINE CONE
Publication Dates: Aug. 29, Sept. 5, 12, 19, 2025. (PC 855)

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No. 20251464
The following person(s) is(are) doing business as:
WEDGEWOOD WEDDING & BANQUET CENTER, 4860 CARMEL VALLEY ROAD, CARMEL, CA 93923, County of MONTEREY
Registered Owner(s):
Z GOLF FOOD & BEVERAGE SERVICES, LLC, 43385 BUSINESS PARK DRIVE, SUITE 120, TEMECULA, CA 92590
This business is conducted by A LIMITED LIABILITY COMPANY
STATE OF ORGANIZATION: CALIFORNIA
Registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name listed above on 11/01/2021
S/ WILLIAM ZARUKA - CEO
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Monterey County on 08/12/2025 8/29, 9/5, 9/12, 9/19/25
CNS-3959611#
CARMEL PINE CONE
Publication Dates: Aug. 29, Sept. 5, 12, 19, 2025. (PC 856)

SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA COUNTY OF MONTEREY

ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE FOR CHANGE OF NAME
Case No. 25CV004057
TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS: Petitioner, ANNABEL FAULKNER DE LUCA, filed a petition with this court for a decree changing names as follows:
A Present name: ANNABEL FAULKNER DE LUCA
Proposed name: DAISY FAULKNER DE LUCA
THE COURT ORDERS that all persons interested in this matter appear before this court at the hearing indicated below to show cause, if any, why the petition for change of name should not be granted. Any person objecting to the name changes described above must file a written objection that includes the reasons for the objection at least two court days before the matter is scheduled to be heard and must appear at the hearing to show cause why the petition should not be granted. If no written objection is timely filed, the court may grant the petition without a hearing.
NOTICE OF HEARING:
DATE: Oct. 7, 2025
TIME: 10:00 a.m.
DEPT: 13
The address of the court is 1200 Aguajito Road, Monterey, CA 93940.
Date filed: Aug. 12, 2025
(s) Hon. Thomas W. Wills
Judge of the Superior Court
Date: Aug. 12, 2025
Publication Dates: Aug. 29, Sept. 5, 12, 19, 2025. (PC 857)

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No. 20251509
Filing type: ORIGINAL FILING.
The following person(s) is (are) doing business as: **LUPITA'S SERVICE, 766 El-kington Ave., front house, Salinas, CA 93905**.
County of Principal Place of Business: MONTEREY
Registered Owner(s):
MARIA GUADALUPE HERNANDEZ GUTIERREZ.
This business is conducted by an individual.
Registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above on N/A.
S/Maria Guadalupe Hernandez Gutierrez
Date signed: Aug. 14, 2025
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Monterey County on Aug. 20, 2025.
Publication Dates: Aug. 29, Sept. 5, 12, 19, 2025 (PC 858)

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No. 20251534
Filing type: ORIGINAL FILING.
The following person(s) is (are) doing business as: **COMMUNITY FITCAMP, 1207 Forest Avenue, Apt. 1, Pacific Grove, CA 93950**.
County of Principal Place of Business: MONTEREY
COMMUNITY FITCAMP, LLC, P.O. Box 158, Pacific Grove, CA 93950
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 N/A.
S/Alfred Soto, Member
Date signed: Aug. 22, 2025
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Monterey County on Aug. 22, 2025.
Publication Dates: Aug. 29, Sept. 5, 12, 19, 2025. (PC 859)

STATEMENT OF ABANDONMENT OF USE OF FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME
File No. 20251543
Filing type: ABANDONMENT:
County of Filing: Monterey
Date of Original Filing: March 15, 2022
File No.: 20220567
The following person(s) is(are) doing business as: **PRONTO INCOME TAX SERVICES, 600 E. Market Street #100, Salinas, CA 93905**.
Registered Owner(s):
FERNANDO SAMAYOA, 17591 Pesante Rd., Salinas, CA 93907.
This business is conducted by an individual.
S/Fernando Samayoa
Aug. 22, 2025
This statement was filed with the County

Clerk of Monterey County on Aug. 22, 2025.
Publication Dates: Aug. 29, Sept. 5, 12, 19, 2025. (PC860)

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No. 20251542
Filing type: ORIGINAL FILING.
The following person(s) is (are) doing business as: **PRONTO INCOME TAX SERVICES, 600 E. Market St., Ste. #100, Salinas, CA 93905**.
County of Principal Place of Business: MONTEREY
Registered Owner(s):
ROSAURA MEDINA FRIAS, 600 E. Market St., Ste. #100, Salinas, CA 93905.
This business is conducted by an individual.
Registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above on N/A.
S/Rosaura Medina Frias
Date signed: Aug. 22, 2025
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Monterey County on Aug. 22, 2025.
Publication Dates: Aug. 29, Sept. 5, 12, 19, 2025 (PC 861)

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No. 20251550
Filing type: ORIGINAL FILING.
The following person(s) is (are) doing business as: **HICKS PAINTING, 5 Verde Way, Royal Oaks, California 95076**.
County of Principal Place of Business: MONTEREY
Registered Owner(s):
DARREN ADAM HICKS, 5 Verde Way, Royal Oaks, California 95076.
This business is conducted by an individual.
Registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above on N/A.
S/Darren Hicks
Date signed: Aug. 25, 2025
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Monterey County on Aug. 25, 2025.
Publication Dates: Aug. 29, Sept. 5, 12, 19, 2025 (PC 862)

SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA COUNTY OF MONTEREY

ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE FOR CHANGE OF NAME
Case No. 25CV004284
TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS: Petitioner, MARIA LOURDES MANZANO, filed a petition with this court for a decree changing names as follows:
A Present name: MARIA LOURDES MANZANO
Proposed name: LOURDES MANZANO
THE COURT ORDERS that all persons interested in this matter appear before this court at the hearing indicated below to show cause, if any, why the petition for change of name should not be granted. Any person objecting to the name changes described above must file a written objection that includes the reasons for the objection at least two court days before the matter is scheduled to be heard and must appear at the hearing to show cause why the petition should not be granted. If no written objection is timely filed, the court may grant the petition without a hearing.
NOTICE OF HEARING:
DATE: Oct. 21, 2025
TIME: 10:00 a.m.
DEPT: 15
The address of the court is 1200 Aguajito Road, Monterey, CA 93940.
A copy of this Order to Show Cause shall be published at least once each week for four successive weeks prior to the date set for hearing on the petition in the following newspaper of general circulation, printed in this county: The Carmel Pine Cone.
(s) Thomas W. Wills
Judge of the Superior Court
Date filed: Aug. 22, 2025
Publication Dates: Aug. 29, Sept. 5, 12, 19, 2025. (PC 863)

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No. 20251430
The following person(s) is (are) doing business as:
JM Equipment Co., Inc., 1360 Burton Avenue, Salinas, CA 93901
County of MONTEREY
Registrant(s):
North Coast Lift Truck, Inc., 3000 Town Center, Suite 2700, Southfield, MI 48075
This business is conducted by a Corporation
Registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above on N/A.
North Coast Lift Truck, Inc.
S/ James Wiese, President
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Monterey County on 08/08/2025. 9/5, 9/12, 9/19, 9/26/25
CNS-3961630#
CARMEL PINE CONE
Publication Dates: Aug. 29, Sept. 5, 12, 19, 2025. (PC 901)

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No. 20251512
The following person(s) is(are) doing business as:
Farmwise, 150 Main Street, Suite 400, Salinas, CA 93901, County of Monterey
Registered Owner(s):
Taylor Agriculture Services LLC, State of Inc./ Org./Reg.: Delaware
This business is conducted by a limited Liability company
Registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name listed above on 04/03/2025
S/ John Mazzei, Secretary
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Monterey County on 08/20/2025 9/5, 9/12, 9/19, 9/26/25
CNS-3960753#
CARMEL PINE CONE
Publication Dates: Sept. 5, 12, 19, 26, 2025. (PC 903)

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No. 20251513
The following person(s) is(are) doing business as:
PEBL, 250 Cambridge Avenue, Suite 201, Palo Alto, CA 94306, County of Santa Clara
Registered Owner(s):
VELOCITY GLOBAL, LLC, 3790 El Camino Real, Palo Alto, CA 94306;
State of Inc./Org./Reg.: COLORADO
This business is conducted by a limited liability company
Registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name listed above on N/A

S/ Shawn McIntire, MANAGER
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Monterey County on 08/20/2025 9/5, 9/12, 9/19, 9/26/25
CNS-3960682#
CARMEL PINE CONE
Publication Dates: Sept. 5, 12, 19, 26, 2025. (PC 904)

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No. 20251566
Filing type: ORIGINAL FILING.
The following person(s) is (are) doing business as: **E&C KEYS, 259 Pacifico Place, Soledad, CA 93960**.
County of Principal Place of Business: MONTEREY
Registered Owner(s):
EDUARDO GARCIA CORNEJO, 259 Pacifico Place, Soledad, CA 93960.
This business is conducted by an individual.
Registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above on N/A.
S/Eduardo G. Cornejo
Date signed: Aug. 27, 2025
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Monterey County on Aug. 27, 2025.
Publication Dates: Sept. 5, 12, 19, 26, 2025 (PC 908)

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No. 20251569
Filing type: ORIGINAL FILING.
The following person(s) is (are) doing business as: **PACIFIC GROVE ADVANCED CHIROPRACTIC, 718 Lighthouse Ave., Pacific Grove, CA 93950**.
County of Principal Place of Business: MONTEREY
Registered Owner(s):
STEVEN NEIL MACDONALD.
This business is conducted by an individual.
Registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above on N/A.
S/Steven N. MacDonald
Date signed: Aug. 27, 2025
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Monterey County on Aug. 27, 2025.
Publication Dates: Sept. 5, 12, 19, 26, 2025 (PC 909)

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No. 20251522
Filing type: ORIGINAL FILING.
The following person(s) is (are) doing business as: **THE WRITE INVITE, 553 Lighthouse Ave., Pacific Grove, CA 93950**.
County of Principal Place of Business: MONTEREY
Registered Owner(s):
MARIAN JEAN SOSNICK, 23755 Spectacular Bid Lane, Monterey, CA 93940.
This business is conducted by an individual.
Registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above on Aug. 16, 2025.
S/Marian Jean Sosnick
Date signed: Aug. 16, 2025
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Monterey County on Aug. 20, 2025.
Publication Dates: Sept. 5, 12, 19, 26, 2025 (PC 911)

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No. 20251521
The following person(s) is(are) doing business as:
MP CONSTRUCTION, 3008 KING CIR, MARINA, CA 93933, County of MONTEREY
Registered Owner(s):
MONTEREY PENINSULA CONSTRUCTION INC., 3008 KING CIR, MARINA, CA 93933; CA
This business is conducted by A CORPORATION
Registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name listed above on 02/02/2008
S/ MATTHEW PALADY, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Monterey County on 08/20/2025 9/5, 9/12, 9/19, 9/26/25
CNS-3963202#
CARMEL PINE CONE
Publication Dates: Sept. 5, 12, 19, 26, 2025. (PC 912)

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No. 20251565
Filing type: ORIGINAL FILING.
The following person(s) is (are) doing business as: **QB CONSULTING, 10250 Golden Meadow Circle, Salinas, CA 93907**.
County of Principal Place of Business: MONTEREY
Registered Owner(s):
JEANNE EMILIE BACON, 10250 Golden Meadow Circle, 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. 26, 2025.
S/Jeanne E. Bacon
Date signed: Aug. 26, 2025
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Monterey County on Aug. 26, 2025.
Publication Dates: Sept. 5, 12, 19, 26, 2025 (PC 914)

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No. 20251527
Filing type: ORIGINAL FILING.
The following person(s) is (are) doing business as: **HATCH, 3658 The Barnyard, Unit D-11, Carmel, CA 93923**.
County of Principal Place of Business: MONTEREY
KSJ HATCH INC, P.O. Box 5066, Carmel, CA 93921
State of Inc./Org./Reg.: CA
This business is conducted by a corporation.
Registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above on Aug. 21, 2025.
S/Kristen Ridout, Secretary/Treasurer
Date signed: Aug. 21, 2025
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Monterey County on Aug. 21, 2025.
Publication Dates: Sept. 5, 12, 19, 26, 2025. (PC 919)

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No. 20251548
Filing type: ORIGINAL FILING
The following person(s) is (are) doing business as: **CYPRESS + SAGE BOOKKEEPING CO., 8250 El Camino Estrada, Carmel, CA 93923**.
County of Principal Place of Business:

MONTEREY
Registered Owner(s):
MEAGAN A. ALVAREZ.
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/Meagan Alvarez
Date signed: Aug. 25, 2025
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Monterey County on Aug. 25, 2025.
Publication Dates: Sept. 12, 19, 26, Oct. 3, 2025 (PC 920)

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No. 20251614
Filing type: ORIGINAL FILING.
The following person(s) is (are) doing business as: **CURRY LEAF COCKTAILS & SHISHA, 220 Olivier St., Monterey, CA 93940**.
County of Principal Place of Business: MONTEREY
Name of Corporation or LLC as shown in the Articles of Inc./Org./Reg.:
INDIAN SUMMER, 2601 Bluewater Ct., Marina, CA 93933.
State of Inc./Org./Reg.: CA
This business is conducted by a corporation.
Registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above on Sept. 4, 2020.
S/Navin Thappa, CEO
Date: Sept. 4, 2020
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 922)

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No. 20251547
The following person(s) is (are) doing business as: **LAMPLIGHTER SALINAS, 255 E BOLIVAR STREET, SALINAS, CA 93906**
County of MONTEREY
Registrant(s):
LAMPLIGHTER, LLC, 3491 Concours St., Suite 204, Ontario, CA 91764
This business is conducted by a limited liability company
Registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above on N/A.
LAMPLIGHTER, LLC
S/Lori carraway, VICE PRESIDENT ,
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Monterey County on 08/22/2025. 9/12, 9/19, 9/26, 10/3/25
CNS-3956530#
CARMEL PINE CONE
Publication Dates: Sept. 12, 19, 26, Oct. 3, 2025. (PC 924)

Lien Sale Auction Advertisement
Notice is hereby given that Pursuant to the California Self-Service Storage Facility Act (B&P Code 21700 et. Seq.), the undersigned will sell at public auction; personal property including but not limited to furniture, tools, and /or other misc. items.
Auction to be held at 4:00 pm on
October 8th, 2025:
www.selfstorageauction.com
The property is stored at:
Coastal Storage
575 California Ave,
Sand City, Ca. 93955
Name of Tenants
Maria Anahi Cardenas Vasquez
Murphy Seifert
Marc Rede

9/19/25
CNS-3965101#
CARMEL PINE CONE
Publication Dates: Sept. 19, 2025 (PC 925)

ABANDONED PROPERTY AUCTION
Notice is hereby given that the undersigned intends to sell the abandoned personal property described below pursuant to Sections 1983 and 1988 of the California Civil Code.
The undersigned will sell at public sale by competitive bidding on OCTOBER 8, 2025 at 4:00 p.m. on the premises where said property has been stored and which are located at Leonard's Lockers Self Storage, WWW.SELFSTORAGEAUCTION.COM, the following described goods:
DESIRAY DAVIS - A37 - Misc. Goods
Purchases must be paid for at the time of purchase in cash only. All purchased items sold as is where is and must be removed at the time of sale. Sale subject to cancellation in the event of settlement between owner and obligated party.

9/12, 9/19/25
CNS-3965102#
CARMEL PINE CONE
Publication Dates: Sept. 12, 19, 2025. (PC 926)

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No. 20251574
Filing type: ORIGINAL FILING.
The following person(s) is (are) doing business as: **AROMAS CONSTRUCTION, 575 Carpenteria Rd., Aromas, CA 95004**.
County of Principal Place of Business: MONTEREY
Registered Owner(s):
THOMAS STEVEN SOUZA, 575 Carpenteria Rd., Aromas, CA 95004.
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/Thomas Souza
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 927)

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. 20251582
The following person(s) is(are) doing business as:
1. POP ITS, 2. POP ITS INTERNATIONAL, 10838 OCEAN MIST PARKWAY, CAS-

TROVILLE, CA 95012, County of MONTEREY
Registered Owner(s):
MASTRONARDI PRODUCE WEST, LLC.
STATE OF INC./ORG./REG. DELAWARE
This business is conducted by A LIMITED LIABILITY COMPANY
Registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name listed above on NOT APPLICABLE
S/ DAVID EINSTANDING, SECRETARY
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Monterey County on 08/28/2025 9/19, 9/26, 10/3, 10/10/25
CNS-3966408#
CARMEL PINE CONE
Publication Dates: Sept. 19, 26, Oct. 3, 10, 2025. (PC 931)

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 Shilwell, 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)

Lien Sale Auction Advertisement
Notice is hereby given that, Pursuant to the California Self-Service Storage Facility Act (B&P Code 21700 et Seq.), the undersigned will sell at public auction personal property, including but not limited to furniture, clothing, tools, and /or other misc. items.
Auction to be held at 4:00 pm on
October 8, 2025, at
www.selfstorageauction.com
The property is stored at:
Leonard's Lockers Self Storage,
816 Elvee Drive, Salinas, CA 93901
Tenant Name:
Arnulfo Bernal Amezcua
Desiray Davis
Paul Michael Michael Frede
Arnulfo Bernal Amezcua
Frances Toni Alicia Morales
Gabriel Martinez
Adan Belman Gutierrez
Esther Campa
Eliazor Caldera Reyes
9/19/25
CNS-3966824#
CARMEL PINE CONE
Publication Dates: Sept. 19, 2025 (PC 934)

LEGALS DEADLINE:
Tuesday 3:00 pm

Call Irma
(831) 274-8645
legals@carmelpinecone.com
Se Habla Espanol

NOTICE OF TRUSTEE'S SALE. YOU ARE IN DEFAULT UNDER A NOTICE OF DELINQUENT ASSESSMENT. UNLESS YOU TAKE ACTION TO PROTECT YOUR PROPERTY, IT MAY BE SOLD AT A PUBLIC SALE. IF YOU NEED AN EXPLANATION OF THE NATURE OF THE PROCEEDINGS AGAINST YOU, YOU SHOULD CONTACT A LAWYER. Date of Sale: **09/25/2025 at 9:00 AM**. Place of Sale: **At the main entrance to the County Administration Building at 168 West Alisal Street, Salinas, CA 93901**. NOTICE is hereby given that First American Title Insurance Company, a Nebraska Corporation, 1 First American Way, Santa Ana, CA in care of: 400 S. Rampart Blvd, #290 Las Vegas, NV 89145 – Phone: **(702) 304-7509**, duly appointed Trustee under Notice of Delinquent Assessment (“NDA”), and pursuant to Notice of Default and Election to Sell (“NOD”), **will sell at public auction** for cash, lawful money of the United States of America, (a cashier's check payable to said Trustee drawn on a state or national bank, a state or federal credit union, or a state or federal savings and loan association, or savings bank as specified in section 5102 of the Financial Code and authorized to do business in this state) **all right, title and interest** now held under said **NDA**, to wit: Multiple Timeshare Estates as shown on **Exhibit “A-1”** (as described in the Declaration recorded on **06/21/2002 as Document No. 2002058802** as amended) located at **120 Highlands Drive, Carmel, CA, 93923** with APN shown herein. The Trustee disclaims any liability for any incorrectness of the street address shown herein. All recording references contained herein and on **Schedule “1” attached hereto** are in the County of **Monterey**, California. Said sale will be made, without covenant or warranty, expressed or implied, as to title, possession, or encumbrances, to pay the remaining principal sum due under said NDA, plus accrued interest thereon to the date of sale, estimated fees, charges, as shown in sum due on **Schedule “1”** together with estimated expenses of the Trustee in the amount of **\$475.00**. The claimant, **H.I. Resort Condominium Association, Inc., a nonprofit mutual benefit California corporation**, under NDA delivered to Trustee a written Declaration of Default and Demand for Sale, and a written Notice of Default and Election to Sell. The undersigned caused said Notice of Default and Election to Sell to be recorded in the county where the real property is located, and more than three months have elapsed since such recordation. **First American Title Insurance Company, a Nebraska Corporation. APN: 241-351-004-000. Batch ID: Foreclosure HOA 151979-HVC77-HOA. Schedule “1”:** Contract No., Owner(s), Lien Recording Date and Reference, NOD Recording Date and Reference, Sum Due; 800000603, Susan Marie Babbitt and Donald Lee Babbitt, 05/01/2025 Inst: 2025014038, 06/02/2025 2025017922, \$6,367.85; 800000759, William M. Curran, III and Mary M. Curran, Trustees of the Curran Family 1999 Trust, Dated October 28, 1999, 05/01/2025 Inst: 2025014038, 06/02/2025 2025017922, \$6,515.86; 800002655, Lorna Johns Schmidt, Successor Trustee of the Schmidt 2003 Trust, 05/01/2025 Inst: 2025014038, 06/02/2025 2025017922, \$6,421.55; 800002787, Neal R. Doty and Jean A. Doty, Trustees of the Neal R. Doty and Jean A. Doty Declaration of trust dated June 2, 1992, 05/01/2025 Inst: 2025014038, 06/02/2025 2025017922, \$3,858.69; 800002913, John H. Moore and Barbara A. Moore, 05/01/2025 Inst: 2025014038, 06/02/2025 2025017922, \$6,421.55; 800003771, John Alvin Bischoff and Stacy Reese Bischoff, 05/01/2025 Inst: 2025014039, 06/02/2025 2025017922, \$10,442.41; 800004268, Unknown Trustee, Trustee of the William Coats Revocable Trust Dated May 31, 2002, 05/01/2025 Inst: 2025014038, 06/02/2025 2025017922, \$6,632.21; 800004772, Roland Gerald Fuette and Mary Lou Fuette, 06/28/2024 Inst: 2024022614, 09/23/2024 2024033999, \$6,616.22; 800007846, John Alvin Bischoff and Stacy Reese Bischoff, 05/01/2025 Inst: 2025014039, 06/02/2025 2025017922, \$9,900.64. **Exhibit “A-1”:** Contract No., Undivided Interest, Unit No., Fixed Week No., Frequency; 800000603, 1/51, 46, 6, annual; 800000759, 1/51, 90, 4, annual; 800002655, 1/51, 11, 4, annual; 800002787, 1/102, 65, 9, even year; 800002913, 1/51, 35, 15, annual; 800003771, 1/51, 26, 8, annual; 800004268, 1/51, 87, 35, annual; 800004772, 1/51, 52, 19, annual; 800007846, 1/51, 81, 44, annual.



DRIVE CARMEL IN HYBRID LUXURY.

Discover the perfect balance of performance, efficiency, and elegance in the **2025 Lexus NX 350h PREMIUM AWD** – a luxury crossover designed for life on the Peninsula and beyond.

With refined craftsmanship, intuitive technology, and the confidence of all-wheel drive, the NX 350h offers more than just comfort – it offers peace of mind and presence on every journey.

2025 **NX 350h** Premium AWD

Lease for just

\$559

/mo. for
36 months

A white Lexus NX 350h Premium AWD is shown from a front-three-quarter view, parked on a white background. The car is positioned in front of a dark background that features a faint, stylized image of the car's interior dashboard and steering wheel. The car's sleek design and large grille are prominent features.

Experience amazing – only at Lexus Monterey Peninsula.

\$3,999 due at signing. Security deposit waived. Lease excludes tax, title, license, and dealer options and charges. 10,000 miles/year. Offer expires 09/30/2025.

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COME ON BY. 1721 Del Monte Blvd.
Seaside, CA 93955

SECTION RE ■ September 19-25, 2025

Open houses on page 10RE

The Carmel Pine Cone

Real Estate



■ This week's cover property, located in Carmel Highlands,
is presented by Jonathan Spencer of Compass.
(See Page 2 RE)



JONATHAN SPENCER

COMPASS

About the Cover

The Carmel Pine Cone

Real Estate

September 19-25, 2025



31453 Highway 1, Carmel Highlands
5 Beds, 6 Baths, 8,855 SqFt, 6.5 Acres
\$14,500,000

Set between the dramatic Carmel coastline and the Santa Lucia Mountains lies a private retreat in perfect balance with land and sea. Stone steps lead to the entry of this five-bedroom, six-bath contemporary coastal chalet, with a tiled foyer and vaulted ceilings. The grand living room is anchored by a striking stone fireplace and soaring beams. Expansive windows flood the space with light, offering ocean views. The kitchen, with custom cabinetry, central island, and breakfast bar, flows to the dining room, bar, and outdoor BBQ. The primary suite offers breathtaking views, fireplace, terrace access, and a luxurious bath with generous closet. Four additional bedrooms provide comfort for family and guests. Outside, landscaped grounds feature a pool, hot tub, pizza oven, grill, and firepit terrace. Located within gated Victorine Ranch — home to just six residences — this estate is ten minutes from Carmel and stands at the gateway to Big Sur.

31453HighwayOne.com



Jonathan Spencer
831.238.7420
jonathan.spencer@compass.com
JonathanSpencerProperties.com
DRE#: 01916757

COMPASS



OPEN SATURDAY 1 - 3

31499 Via Las Rosas
Carmel Valley



Offered at \$3,300,000

4 BEDS | 2.5 BATHS | 2,826 SQ.FT
PRIVATE RESIDENCE ON 2.61 ACRE LOT

Set on 2.61 acres with breathtaking views, Via Las Rosas is an updated 4-bedroom, 2.5-bath home offering privacy and style. Enjoy a sparkling pool, spacious, lit patios, and outdoor space ideal for entertaining or even stargazing!



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Real Estate Sales Sept. 7 - 13

Escrows closed: 32
Total value: \$63,148,864

Carmel

24558 Camino del Monte — \$1,699,000
Frank Bottero to Todd and Erin Anderson
APN: 009-092-004

Lobos Street, 3 SW of Third Avenue — \$2,650,000
Terence O'Toole and Diana Jackson to William Raisan
APN: 010-014-003

See **HOME SALES** page 13RE

STORYBOOK CARMEL-BY-THE-SEA COTTAGE

2 beds, 2 baths ♦ \$2,695,000 ♦ [SWCornerCaminoRealAnd4th.com](#)

OPEN HOUSE FRI 3-5PM, SAT 1-3PM & SUN 2-4PM
SW Corner of Camino Real & 4th Avenue



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OPEN HOUSE SUNDAY 2:30-4:30
CARMEL VALLEY | 77 PASO HONDO #A
[PASOHONDO.COM](#)
OFFERED AT \$1,595,000



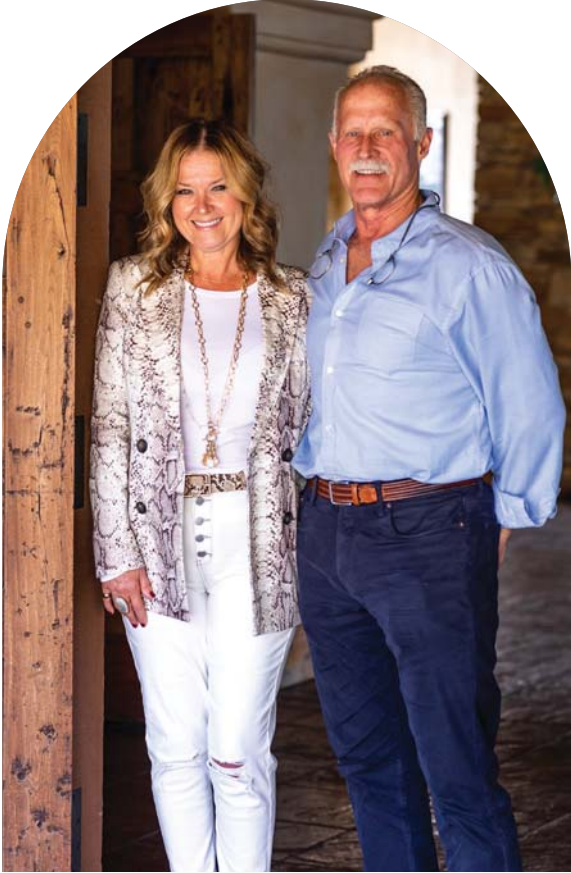
OPEN SUNDAY 12-3
CARMEL | 27180 LOS ARBOLES DRIVE
[27180LOSARBOLESDRIVE.COM](#)
OFFERED AT \$1,550,000



OPEN SATURDAY 2:30-4:30
CARMEL VALLEY | 9365 LOS PRADOS
[9365LOSPRADOS.COM](#)
OFFERED AT \$1,295,000



CALL FOR AN APPOINTMENT
MONTEREY | 1270 6TH STREET
[1270SIXTHSTREET.COM](#)
OFFERED AT \$1,150,000



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Lisa 831.277.2070
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OPEN SUN 12PM-2PM
San Antonio 2 NW of 7th

Carmel-by-the-Sea ■ 3 beds, 3 baths ■ \$7,950,000 ■ www.PetiteMaisonCarmel.com



Monterey ■ 4 beds, 4.5 baths ■ \$5,695,000 ■ www.7595PaseoVista.com



Pebble Beach ■ 3 beds, 3 baths ■ \$5,500,000 ■ www.1488Bonifacio.com



Carmel-by-the-Sea ■ 2 beds, 2 baths ■ \$3,500,000 ■ www.PardonMyTree.com



Pebble Beach ■ 4 beds, 3 baths ■ \$3,495,000 ■ www.1268ViscainoRoad.com



Pebble Beach ■ 3 beds, 3.5 baths ■ \$3,450,000 ■ www.1424Oleada.com



Carmel ■ 3 beds, 2 baths ■ \$2,575,000 ■ www.CanadaDriveCarmel.com



OPEN SUN 1PM-4PM
799 Grace Street

Monterey ■ 3 beds, 1 bath ■ \$1,139,000 ■ www.799GraceStreet.com



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Pebble Beach ♦ \$7,350,000 ♦ 3937RondaRoad.com



Modern Style, Mesmerizing Ocean & Forest Views Throughout
Carmel ♦ \$4,650,000 ♦ 24497SanMateo.com



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I DIDN'T notice the piece of paper in my shopping cart until I was well inside the supermarket, and I was about to toss it when I saw it was a grocery list someone had left. Curiosity made me look at what they were buying: sourdough bread, Dungeness crab, Anchor Steam beer, avocados, onions, cilantro, limes, jalapenos, garlic, N.Y. strip steaks, Champagne, caviar, and a reminder to "pick up paint for Eddie and Bertha's Oct. 17 celebration." It was certainly different than my eggs, bread, milk, hamburger and toilet paper.

The note was written in legible, forceful cursive with what looked like a fountain pen. I thought I was the only one who used a fountain pen for such mundane tasks. The items were listed 1, 2, 3, except for the paint. That was underlined. Since the list was already in the cart, I figured it wasn't lost, just forgotten. The shopper had already left Safeway and probably gone to Ace Hardware for the paint.

I picked up my mail before going home. Browsing through the collection of bills and fliers, my interest was piqued by a notice from San Francisco's Legion of Honor Museum for a forthcoming exhibition of the works of

By JERRY GERVASE

Édouard Manet and Berthe Morisot. Morisot's "Summer Day" is one of my favorite paintings. The museum flier said: *This Legion of Honor exhibition delves into the creative back-and-forth between Manet and Morisot, two key figures in impressionism. Rather than represent Morisot as Manet's muse, it examines how their 15-year friendship*

I hurried to the closet and pulled the list from my jacket pocket. “Pick up the paint for Eddie and Bertha’s Oct. 17 celebration.” The Legion of Honor exhibit was running from Oct. 11, 2025, to March 1, 2026. Suddenly there was something off about the grocery list. Maybe it wasn’t just an artifact of someone else’s life. Eddie and Bertha were too close to Édouard and Berthe to be a coincidence. And the first three items — sourdough, Dungeness crab, Anchor Steam beer — were definitely references to San

See GERVASE page 8RE

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3116 Bird Rock Road, Pebble Beach
4 BD | 3.5 BA | 3,615± SQ. FT. | 0.26± ACRES
\$4,795,000
3116BirdRockRoad.com
Debora Sanders 831.620.2936
License# 01966114



OPEN SUN 1-3 PM



OPEN SAT & SUN 11-1 PM
San Antonio 3 SE Ocean, Carmel

3 BD | 2 BA | 1,615± SQ. FT. | 4,000± SQ. FT. LOT
\$3,999,500
LandFallCarmel.com
Gladney Randazzo Team 831.622.4850
License# 01507458 & 01895649



OPEN SAT 11-2 & SUN 1-3
3045 Stevenson Drive, Pebble Beach

3 BD | 3.5 BA | 4,638± SQ. FT. | 0.33± ACRES
\$3,699,000
3045StevensonDrive.com
Ryan Willis 404.401.8647
License# 02137084

89 Robley Road, Corral De Tierra
3 BD | 3.5 BA | 3,735± SQ. FT. | 6.44± ACRES
\$3,250,000
89RobleyRoad.com
Steve Hunt 831.601.2200
License# 01953808



OPEN SUN 1-4 PM



OPEN SUN 1-3 PM
382 Spruce Ave, Pacific Grove

2 BD | 2 BA | 2,390± SQ. FT. | 5,400± SQ. FT. LOT
\$2,868,000
382SpruceAve.com
Kirk Probasco 831.238.1893
License# 01806198



OPEN SAT 1-3 PM
25940 Colt Lane, Carmel Valley

4 BD | 2.5 BA | 3,597± SQ. FT. | 2.78± ACRES LOT
\$1,995,000
RyanMelcher.com
Ryan Melcher 831.521.5024
License# 01897036

27 Del Mesa Carmel, Carmel
2 BD | 2 BA | 1,507± SQ. FT. | \$1,150,000
27DelMesaCarmel.com
Claudia Mccotter 831.293.3391
License# 01982938



OPEN SAT 1-3



OPEN SAT 1-4 & SUN 2-4
250 Forest Ridge Road, #45, Monterey

2 BD | 1 BA | 1,039± SQ. FT.
\$670,000
250ForestRidge45.com
Sandra Schirmer 831.869.2424
License# 01419062

GERVASE

From page 6RE

San Francisco. My cluttered mind started racing: What if this isn't random? There were some odd coincidences there.

I went to the museum's website. I found the usual information: address, directions to the museum, hours Tuesday to Sunday, 9:30 a.m. to 5:15 p.m. Closed Monday. Could it be? I went to my calendar. Oct. 17 is a Monday. This was beyond coincidence. Someone might be planning an art heist at the Legion of Honor — *maybe even someone from my neighborhood* — on a day when the museum was closed.

I looked at the grocery list again. Steaks, Champagne, caviar — expensive stuff. Maybe somebody who had such expensive tastes in food had expensive tastes in art. Or maybe those items were meant for the party after the paintings were stolen. The list specifically mentioned the word, "celebration."

Paranoia started to settle in. Was I second-guessing

everything, connecting dots that weren't there? This is exactly the kind of overthinking that makes me rewrite my columns until sometimes I have to tear them up and start over. Then I remembered a detail. The handwriting was firm and decisive with a certain forcefulness to it. People don't usually write grocery lists with that kind of intensity unless ... unless it's not really a grocery list.

What to do?

My newspaper instincts kicked in. "This is *THE* story!": "How I Uncovered an Art Heist Through a Grocery List." It would go viral, win awards, maybe a Pulitzer.

But what if I'm wrong? I'd look like a paranoid fool. Should I call the police? "*Officer, I found a suspicious grocery list.*" They'd think I was crazy. Call museum security? Same problem. But what if real crimes were being planned and my inaction enabled them?

I was reaching for my phone to contact the police when I noticed a text message from my friend, Sam.

"Hey, I'm reminding you of the celebration for Ed and Bertie's anniversary. I got everything for your guac recipe. I got those jalapeños and good limes you like. We're

having steak, Champagne and caviar. I painted a 'Happy 50th Anniversary' banner. See you on the 17th."

Sam, who'd rather have a motorcycle than a Morisot, had left his grocery list in the cart. My art heist theory crumbled like the brittle pages of one of my old columns. Sometimes a grocery list is just a grocery list. Hello guacamole. Goodbye Pulitzer.

Contact Jerry at jerrygervase@yahoo.com.

POLICE LOG

From page 4A

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 27

Pacific Grove: Barking dog complaint on Fourth Street.

Pacific Grove: Child Protective Services report involving a Grand Avenue resident.

Carmel Valley: Resident on Flight Road reported a theft.

Pacific Grove: Vehicle on Ransford was marked for 72-hour parking.

Pacific Grove: Person on Pine Avenue reported custody issues.

THURSDAY, AUGUST 28

Carmel-by-the-Sea: A found purse at Ocean and Monte Verde was turned in with all of its contents, and the owner was contacted to pick it up.

Carmel-by-the-Sea: Traffic stop at Sixth and San Carlos for several vehicle code violations resulted in the 20-year-old male construction worker from Watsonville being arrested for unlawful possession of a "ghost" handgun, possession of drug paraphernalia, and an outstanding \$5,000 warrant.

Pacific Grove: Welfare check on Jewell Avenue resulted in a 5150 W&I hold.

Pacific Grove: Vandalism on Pine Avenue. No suspect information.

Pacific Grove: Vehicle on Lobos marked for 72-hour parking.

Carmel area: Deputies responded to a report of vandalism on Rio Road.

Carmel Valley: Welfare check conducted on Via Milpitas.

FRIDAY, AUGUST 29

Carmel-by-the-Sea: A wallet found at Ocean and Lincoln was turned in for safekeeping. Pending owner contact.

Pacific Grove: Report of battery at Mermaid and Ocean View.

Pacific Grove: Vandalism on Sunset Drive. No suspect information.

Pacific Grove: Vehicle at Prescott and Seaview marked for 72-hour parking.

Pacific Grove: Deceased cat on Spruce was returned to its owner.

Pacific Grove: Stolen personal property on Arkwright Court. Possible suspect information.

Carmel Valley: Adult Protective Services report of financial abuse on Kincannon Road.

See **SHERIFF** page 12RE



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\$2,150,000

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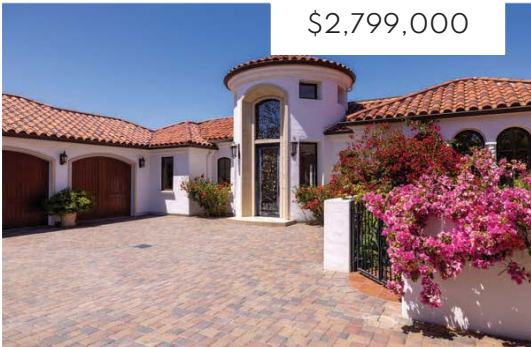
Ashley Ortiz



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\$3,864,000 • 3 BEDS • 2.5 BATHS • 2,105 SQ.FT

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4 BEDS | 3 BATHS | 3,607 SQ.FT

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3370 RIO RD, CARMEL

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PETE RUIZ | DRE#01974535 | 831.277.8712



\$2,395,000

THE HOLMAN 301, PG

2 BEDS | 2.5 BATHS | 2,014 SQ.FT

PETE RUIZ | DRE#01974535 | 831.277.8712



\$2,785,000

155 12TH ST, PG

3 BEDS | 2 BATHS | 2,019 SQ.FT.

THE JACOBS TEAM | DRE#01455081 | 831.620.2243



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13399 MID. CANYON RD, CV

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PETE RUIZ | DRE#01974535 | 831.277.8712



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SHERIFF

From page 8RE

Carmel area: Child Protective Services report of neglect on Grey Goose Gulch Road.

Carmel Valley: Deputies took a report for a suspicious circumstance on Valle Vista.

Big Sur: Highway 1 resident reported a dispute with a neighbor who is threatening to clear out trees.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 30

Carmel-by-the-Sea: Cyber scam/crypto fraud at Torres and Fifth.

Carmel area: Deputies responded to a report of a suicide attempt on Garrapatos Road. Subject was placed on an emergency mental health evaluation hold.

Pacific Grove: Welfare check of a subject on Pine. Subject had been reported missing previously by another agency.

Seaside: Seaside officers received notification of multiple gunshots in the 1300 block of Luzern Street via the shot detection system. This incident may be connected to a large altercation that occurred at the Monterey County Fairgrounds earlier in the evening. No individuals have been reported injured by gunfire.

SUNDAY, AUGUST 31

Carmel-by-the-Sea: Probation violation/felon in possession of ammunition at Scenic and Santa Lucia Avenue. A 30-year-old male Salinas resident was arrested for possession of burglary tools, violation of probation, being a felon in possession of ammunition and DUI. He was booked into Monterey County Jail on \$30,000 bail.

Carmel-by-the-Sea: Attempted shoplifting at Junipero and Sixth. No prosecution. Suspect warned about trespassing at businesses.

Pacific Grove: Report of a secured electrical box at a business on Forest Avenue that was broken into, and the front door and door jamb to the business were also damaged. Unknown if cameras had power prior to the incident to capture the perpetrator(s). This report is for documentation and information.

Pacific Grove: Subject on Ocean View

Boulevard was determined to be in violation of probation terms. The 20-year-old male was cited and released.

Carmel area: Verbal domestic dispute in a vehicle at Valley and Monterey.

Big Sur: Deputies responded to a report of domestic violence on Highway 1. A 39-year-old male was arrested.

Carmel Valley: Deputies responded to a report of a deceased individual at a residence on Poppy Tree Lane.

Carmel Valley: Deputies responded to a plane crash on Laurel Springs Road. Both occupants survived and were transported to a local hospital.

Carmel area: Deputies responded to a missing, at-risk, elderly subject. Subject was located and transported home to a residence on Fairfield Place.

LABOR DAY

Carmel-by-the-Sea: Jewelry found at San Antonio and Fourth was turned in for safekeeping.

Pacific Grove: Vehicles on Sunset and on Olmsted marked for 72-hour parking.

Carmel-by-the-Sea: A person fell on city property at Eighth and San Carlos and was transported to the hospital.

Carmel-by-the-Sea: Report of elder abuse and theft by a caregiver at a Ladera Drive residence. Under investigation.

Carmel-by-the-Sea: Diamond bracelet reported lost or stolen.

Pacific Grove: Officers responded to a complaint of an aggressive dog at David and Patterson.

Pacific Grove: Vehicle towed from Central and Grand for parking at a no-parking sign.

Pacific Grove: Subject at Ocean View and Forest was found to be in possession of suspected narcotics and drug paraphernalia, and in violation of probation terms. Report to be sent to district attorney’s office for charges.

Carmel area: Deputies responded to a report of a scammer. Incident documented.

Carmel area: A business on Carmel Rancho Boulevard reported their website was cloned.

Carmel Valley: Deputies responded to a report of a verbal argument on Cachagua Road. Incident was documented.

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25540ViaMalpaso.com



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PaseoVistaMonterra.com

*Co-Listed with Shelly Mitchell Lynch DRE#01217466 & Courtney Jones DRE#01806907



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Indoor, outdoor living
Close to town | \$2,390,000



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CARMEL VALLEY
2 beds, 1.5 baths | Incredible Views
Built by stone, Post & Flower
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Carmel-by-the-Sea Real Estate Activity This Week:

Status	Address	List Price	Sale Price	DOM
New Active	Mission 5 NW of Sant Lucia	\$4,750,000	---	5
Contingent	Corner of Carmelo & 12th	\$5,750,000	---	14
Pending	Forest 5 SW of 7th	\$3,199,000	---	125
Sold	7th 2 SW of Forest	\$3,925,000	\$3,850,000	39

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(Data from MLSListings Inc)



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HOME SALES

From page 2RE

Carmel (con't.)

Seventh Avenue, 2 SW of Forest Road — \$3,850,000
Sallie Walker to Lindsey and Cary Zimmerman
APN: 010-042-017

Carmel Valley

27965 Dorris Drive — \$1,801,500
Mark and Bridget Howard to Curtis Myers and Jennifer Nuckton
APN: 169-233-009

Cachagua Road — \$1,950,000
Baylaurel Corporation to Stone Walker Holdings
APN: 417-062-044

Wolters Farm Road — \$2,000,000
Wolter Farm Development to Michael Spanos
APN: 169-431-001

Wolters Farm Road — \$2,000,000
Wolter Farm Development to Michael Spanos
APN: 169-431-002

Wolters Farm Road — \$2,000,000
Wolter Farm Development to Michael Spanos
APN: 169-431-003

Wolters Farm Road — \$4,000,000
Wolter Farm Development to Michael Spanos
APN: 169-431-011

Highway 68

22318 Capote Drive — \$1,000,000
Lena Estrada to Lee and Juliana Ochoa
APN: 161-352-007

25387 Markham Lane — \$1,225,000
Karolyn Stone and Wilson Trust to Rebecca and Jonathan Unwer
APN: 161-553-023

22820 Bravo Place — \$1,495,000
Wael Jihad Matar and Rouwalda Mahmoud to Seang Yong Chau
APN: 161-421-014

Marina

451 Weldon Way unit A — \$380,000
The Sea Haven LLC to Linda Macias and Erik Castillo
APN: 031-293-022

451 Weldon Way unit B — \$380,000
The Sea Haven LLC to Maritza Cruz
APN: 031-293-023

2999 Minaret Way — \$380,000
The Sea Haven LLC to Timothy and Taylor Hlebo
APN: 031-293-033

Maritime Street — \$1,020,500
Shea Homes LP to Timothy and Stefanie Cooke
APN: 031-283-022

Ninth Street — \$1,287,500
Shea Homes LP to Harshadray and Harshita Patel
APN: 031-283-035

3050 El Capitan Drive — \$1,400,000
The Sea Haven LLC to William and Sheree Coutts
APN: 031-313-017

See ESCROWS next page



24 Pinehill Way, Monterey — \$1,435,000

just sold | represented seller trustee

26217ATHERTONPLACECARMEL.COM | LP/SP \$2.5M

“As Trustee of a Carmel property, I worked with Judy Tollner. Above and beyond any expectations...she was hands on the entire time... We could not have had the positive experience we had without her.”
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SOLD

53810 Highway 1, Big Sur

REPRESENTED SELLERS & BUYERS
LAST ASKING \$21,500,000

SOLD

2932 Cuesta Way, Carmel

REPRESENTED SELLERS
LAST ASKING \$8,200,000

SOLD

46304 Pfeiffer Ridge, Big Sur

REPRESENTED SELLERS & BUYERS
LAST ASKING \$5,500,000

ACTIVE

4038 Sunridge Road, Pebble Beach

4038SUNRIDGEROAD.COM
OFFERED AT \$8,500,000

SOLD

7th 2 SW of Forest, Carmel-by-the-Sea

REPRESENTED SELLERS
LAST ASKING \$3,925,000

SOLD

2715 Ribera Road, Carmel

REPRESENTED BUYERS
LAST ASKING \$9,300,000

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116 Monterey Dunes Way, Moss Landing — \$2,250,000



1028 Franklin Street, Monterey — \$1,425,000



225 Carmel Avenue, Marina — \$1,665,000

ESCROWS

From page 13RE

Marina (con't.)

225 Carmel Avenue — \$1,665,000

Tommy Bolea to Sabu Shake Jr.
APN: 032-192-013

Maritime Street — \$1,674,000

Shea Homes LP to Mindy Tankel and Adam Gillman
APN: 031-283-022

Monterey

7 Via Joaquin unit 10 — \$1,050,000

Dwight and Adrienne Shimoda to Sallie Walker
APN: 001-604-010

419 Wave Street — \$1,281,364

Fabrice Rondia and WT Capital Lender Services to Hiex
Cannery Row LLC
APN: 001-026-011

1028 Franklin Street — \$1,425,000

Christopher Harvie and Marina Udowenko to David Hoag
APN: 001-243-006

24 Pinehill Way — \$1,435,000

Mitchell and Cindy McCarthy to Robert Petit
APN: 014-091-024

499 Alvarado Street — \$2,550,000

Jerry Abbanat, William Finn and Vincent Cardinale to Davi

Real Estate LLC and It's Hot Outside LLC
APN: 001-574-012

Moss Landing

116 Monterey Dunes Way — \$2,250,000

Kevin and Lyssa Vanderbeek to Seang and
Sinuon Chau
APN: 229-081-023


Pacific Grove

221 3rd Street — \$1,200,000

Steven and Kiyoko Uichida to Douglas Thompson and
Loan Tran
APN: 006-241-025

See **MORE SALES** next page

HOUSE OF THE WEEK



San Antonio 2 NW of 7th, Carmel-by-the-Sea

3 Beds, 3 Baths | 1,587 Sq. Ft. | \$7,950,000

Located in Carmel-by-the-Sea's coveted Golden Rectangle, this refined coastal retreat blends timeless design with modern luxury. Remodeled in 2014, every element of the home reflects thoughtful craftsmanship and elevated beachside living. Expansive sliding doors dissolve the boundary between indoors and out, leading to multiple outdoor living spaces designed for both relaxation and entertaining. The main level hosts two bedrooms, including the serene primary suite, both with a Scandinavian-inspired fireplace. The primary's spa-like bathroom features a freestanding soaking tub with tranquil garden views and ocean peeks. Upstairs, a sunlit guest suite is surrounded by windows that capture sweeping vistas and opens directly onto the rooftop deck. Ideal as a beach getaway or full-time retreat, this home captures the essence of Carmel living.

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DRE#01806907



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CARMEL - beach front, 2bd/2ba, beautiful, historic, close in. See website: firstcarmelbeachcottage.com

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3301 17 Mile Drive, Pebble Beach — \$12,900,000



27965 Dorris Drive, Carmel Valley — \$1,801,500



22820 Bravo Place, Highway 68 — \$1,495,000

MORE SALES

From previous page

Pebble Beach

1025 Hopi Road — \$2,095,000
Thomas and Leslie Ward to Emin Ablyatipov and Victoria Sliusenco
APN: 007-194-005

3301 17 Mile Drive — \$12,900,000
2514 San Antonio LLC to Stillwater Beach LLC
APN: 008-551-013

Seaside

465 Harcourt Avenue — \$775,000
Jon Chezem to Elizabeth MacDonald and Junior Dorismond
APN: 011-345-015

2065 Hacienda Street — \$1,005,000

John and Elizabeth Knights to Erasmo Aiello
APN: 011-472-018

4276 Bay Crest Circle — \$1,325,000
Harry and Marisa Jang to David and Marilyn Tagliareni
APN: 031-242-049

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171 Hacienda Carmel, Carmel
2 beds, 2 baths • \$850,000 • www.171HaciendaCarmel.com

911 Saint Ann Drive, Paso Robles
3 beds, 2.5 baths • \$825,000 • www.911SaintAnn.com

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NEW
LISTING

CARMEL

www.CarmelCoastalCharm.com | **\$4,750,000**

This newly built Carmel-by-the-Sea home blends timeless craftsmanship with modern design, offering floor-to-ceiling windows, refined finishes, and an open layout. Located near both the beach and town, it features luxury details and views of the Mal Paso hills and Carmel’s historic water tower.



NEW
PRICE

SANTA CRUZ

www.SantaCruzMasterpiece.com
\$13,995,000

This one-of-a-kind contemporary oceanfront home set on over 500 feet of beachfront enjoys stunning 240° views through floor-to-ceiling windows.



PEBBLE BEACH

www.PebbleBeachManor.com
\$10,675,000

Set on 2.38 acres, Miraflores is a Mediterranean coastal retreat with beautiful views that encapsulates the classic 1920s Pebble Beach essence.



PEBBLE BEACH

www.PebbleBeachDream.com
\$3,450,000

This exceptional, forested 0.98 acre parcel bordering the 12th hole of Spyglass Golf Course offers a rare opportunity to build your dream home.



NEW
PRICE

PEBBLE BEACH

www.PebbleBeach.life
\$3,150,000

Located near the 9th hole of the Dunes course in the highly coveted MPCC West neighborhood, this gorgeous modern home was recently remodeled.



NEW
PRICE

MONTEREY

www.MontereyVistas.com
\$2,250,000

Nestled at the end of a quiet cul-de-sac in the coveted Skyline Forest, this custom home offers peaceful forest living with filtered bay and mountain views.



NEW
LISTING

CARMEL

www.CarmelRetreat.com
\$1,950,000

This beautifully renovated single-level home nestled at the end of a tranquil cul-de-sac in Mission Fields is set on a 6,800 sq ft lot with a fenced backyard.