



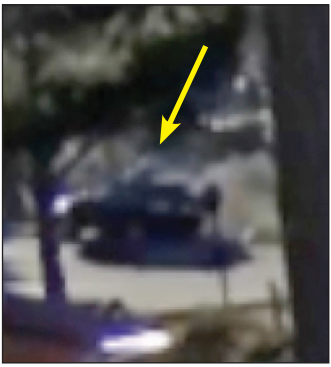
The Carmel Pine Cone

Volume 111 No. 51 <https://carmelpinecone.com> December 19-25, 2025
TRUSTED BY LOCALS AND LOVED BY VISITORS SINCE 1915

Video shows crash that killed 17 Mile Drive bicyclist

By MARY SCHLEY

SOON AFTER the story regarding the tragic death of Cal State University Monterey Bay professor Seth Pollack broke last week, several Pine Cone readers wrote to object to the characterization of the Dec. 5 collision provided by the California Highway Patrol. But the state agency is



SCREENSHOTS FROM SURVEILLANCE VIDEO

Still frames from a video of the Dec. 5 crash that killed Seth Pollack show what happened: In the top photo, Pollack and a dark-colored SUV approach each other on 17 Mile Drive near the Pebble Beach golf course. In the bottom photos, while the bicyclist continues straight ahead, the SUV turns left onto Crespi Lane, striking Pollack, who ends up on the SUV's roof. Pollack was pronounced dead at the scene.

sticking with its original statement.

California Highway Patrol officer Jaskaran Bhaurla reported Pollack, 66, was cycling westbound on Crespi Lane in Pebble Beach as a 62-year-old Pebble Beach resident was turning left onto the street from southbound 17 Mile Drive in her Toyota SUV, and “for reasons still under investigation, the rider of the bicycle crossed into the eastbound lane and crashed into the Toyota SUV.”

But others insist that’s not what occurred — and footage from a nearby video camera appears to prove them right.

“The initial report that Seth ‘crossed into the eastbound lane and crashed into the automobile’ has been modified by CHP. There has been an updated investigation by CHP that finds no blame or error on the part of Seth Pollack and that in fact he was riding on the proper side of 17 Mile Drive when he was struck and killed by the automobile,” Pine Cone reader Mitch Winick wrote several hours after the paper was published Thursday night.

‘Front-page error’

“Your misreporting and mischaracterization of blame is a public demeanment (sic) of Seth Pollack as an experienced and respected bike rider and a beloved member of our community. Your front-page error deserves an equally prominent retraction, correction, and an apology.”

David Awerbuck similarly wrote that Pollack was on 17 Mile Drive, not Crespi, at the time of the crash and was not at fault.

“I realize that you were probably given false information and the blame is not on you, but on the CHP media department or spokesperson who made a gross error,” he said.

Finally, Deborah Hall said she’s aware

See **BICYCLE CRASH** page 23A

Commission: Shucks should identify as restaurant

By MARY SCHLEY

IF IT walks like a duck and quacks like a duck, its city-issued operating permit should identify it as a duck. That’s essentially what the Carmel Planning Commission

decided last week when it said the use permit for A.W. Shucks on Ocean Avenue should be amended to identify it as a restaurant. Currently, it is classified as a bar — one of just three in town.

The owners of A.W. Shucks, Karen and Randy Basi, don’t want to change their permit, and neither does their landlord, John Plastini, and while planning director Anna Ginette said they’re within their rights to continue operating as they are, others disagreed.

The Dec. 10 meeting marked the commission’s second hearing on the topic, following its October discussion of how A.W. Shucks is classified, which has been murky for decades.

Internal conflicts

The current use permit identifies the business — which previously operated under the name Maxwell McFly’s — as a drinking place providing limited food. It was issued in 1993 to Murray Weaver and Paul Elliot, who were planning to buy the bar but wanted to amend the permit “to include a seafood menu to be served at an ‘oyster bar.’”

“The permittee shall not be authorized to establish a full kitchen with stove, grill or oven,” the permit states. “Food service shall be limited to a microwave oven, steamer, soup preparation and refrigeration facilities. No takeout food shall be allowed.”

However, in the years that followed, the city nonetheless approved building permits for outfitting and then renovating a commercial kitchen at A.W. Shucks, which offers an extensive menu and provides takeout. And in 2023, the Basis received a license from the city identifying their business as a “full-line restaurant,” with “drinking

See **RESTAURANT** page 18A

County seeks \$225K more for ‘illegal’ Car Week event

■ Attorney: ‘This has become a crusade’

By KELLY NIX

AN ATTORNEY for the owners of a Carmel Valley home who were forced to pay more than \$750,000 for allegedly violating county vacation-rental rules during Car Week called Monterey County’s pursuit of the fine this week a “crusade” against his clients. His statement was made the same day that a county official demanded an additional \$225,000 from the homeowners.

Monterey County issued the massive citation in August during Car Week after supercar company McLaren held a VIP, invitation-only, weeklong promotional event at a home owned by Fidji Simo, the CEO of applications for OpenAI, and Remy Miralles, who rented it to the car company. County officials said nobody obtained a short-term rental permit for the event on the Scarlett Road property, which McLaren dubbed “Château McLaren,” nor a special event permit, which were required under county rules.

Simo and Miralles were forced to pay the \$761,975 fine before they could appeal it. At a hearing Tuesday conducted by an independent officer, their attorney, Ron Fisher, blasted the county for the “excessive” fine — the largest in county history.

See **HUGE FINE** page 16A



SCREENSHOT FROM COUNTY HEARING

During a Zoom meeting Tuesday, a hearing officer, county officials, and lawyers debated the validity of a huge fine imposed on the owners of Carmel Valley home used for an exclusive Car Week party.

City to post address map

By MARY SCHLEY

WANT TO see what your house number will be? Curious whether the city knows if your corner house faces one street or the other? In its effort to implement a system of standardized street addresses, the City of Carmel will roll out an interactive map next month that allows residents and business owners to glimpse their potential number assignments and provide feedback, assistant city administrator Brandon Swanson said Wednesday.

“We’re trying to warm people up to the idea that it’s going to happen,” Swanson said.

A committee consisting of councilman Bob Delves, administrative analyst Emily Garay and a trio of residents spent months researching how a new address system might be developed and implemented, and the council learned Dec. 2 that a model is ready for testing.

Soft launch

Buildings on the streets’ west and north sides will have odd numbers, while those on the east and south sides will have even numbers, and the numbering will originate at the city’s northern and western boundaries. Each assessor’s parcel number, of which there are around 3,300, will be assigned one number.

Because the blocks running north-south tend to be longer — typically containing 10 lots apiece — their numbers

See **ADDRESS MAP** page 25A

Capitol Access

By CAITLIN CONRAD

will offer up laws to be reviewed. From there, hearings and community meetings will be held, giving Californians an opportunity to provide input. After that, representatives will announce what they learned, and what, if any, changes need to be made.

“Passing laws is only the first step. The real test is ensuring they work. Gone are the days when laws can be

See **SCRUTINY** page 20A

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2A The Carmel Pine Cone December 19, 2025

Sandy Claws

Personality plus

Scout is a toy Australian shepherd, full grown at 12 pounds, who lives in Carmel Valley with a Great Pyrenees-Belgian shepherd mix and a cat. But he's pretty much in charge.

Scout had been gifted to a woman whose circumstances didn't allow her to care for a puppy, so she posted an adoption offer on Nextdoor.

"I saw the post and called the woman before I'd even seen Scout's picture," his person said. "As soon as I met him, I knew he was my little puppy."

Scout, now 3, is a creature of habit. He gets up in the morning and stretches, mimicking his person's husband, with one leg forward and the other back, before rolling around on his back. Then he seeks out the cat for a little morning wrestling time before breakfast. Once finished, he "demands" to sit on the counter while her husband finishes his food. And then they go to work.

"Scout was getting possessive of me," his person said, "so we started sending him to work with my husband, to socialize him, which really helped. Scout chases squirrels outside the office, wearing himself out."

Although the pup has his own bed on the floor at the foot of his couple's, he starts his slumber in their bed and then reluctantly moves into his own.

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By Lisa Crawford Watson



"Scout's a funny little guy who loves watching TV, particularly sports," his person said. "He gets all riled up over football. And we can't take him to my son's baseball games because fetch is his favorite activity. As soon as a ball is hit, he loses his mind. He actually has run onto the field."

The quirky little guy also gets excited about the beach, where he loves to chase and bite the water as it recedes from the shore.

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Daniels calls for all-out STR ban

By CHRIS COUNTS

FRUSTRATED OVER a lawsuit that threatens to upend Monterey County’s recently approved short term rental regulations, 5th District Supervisor Kate Daniels is calling for an all-out ban.

“I will be working through the holiday on a simple proposed ordinance banning short-term rentals throughout the county,” she said.

Daniels’ aggressive stance comes in response to a lawsuit filed last year and amended Nov. 14 by the Monterey County Vacation Rental Alliance against the County of Monterey which contends the

‘We don’t want to risk bankrupting our general fund.’

County takes action

The county responded to the lawsuit last Friday by suspending the two provisions the lawsuit targeted.

“Due to the lawsuit challenging the County of Monterey’s vacation rental/homestay ordinances, the county has suspended from enforcement the two provisions being challenged,” a county spokesman said.

The supervisor agreed the risks of such a lawsuit are simply too great.

“We might not win,” she suggested. “The damages could be in the millions of dollars. We don’t want to risk bankrupting our general fund.”

Daniels told The Pine Cone that during the 14-year effort to create short-term-rental regulations, she had hoped to find a way to make it possible for local residents to host visitors and earn extra income — without opening the floodgates to corporations and real estate trusts that treat

residential homes like hotel rooms.

Now, she said she believes the best path forward is simply banning all short-term rentals.

Can an all-out ban be done?

“Look at the City of Monterey,” Daniels said. “Their ban treats everyone the same.”

Daniels conceded that a ban isn’t what she wanted, but she said it might be the most practical solution. “It’s a remedy,” she said.

‘Bent over backwards’

Daniels said the rules the county adopted regulating short term rentals struck a balance between allowing a reasonable number of STRs, while “protecting coastal resources and our long-term housing supply.”

“We bent over backwards to try and make this work for as many people as we could,” she added. “This is yet another example, like many others in the world today, where corporate profits are valued over the community’s needs.

My resolve to fight for us and for our community is greater than it has ever been.”

Dick Matthews of the Monterey County Vacation Rental Alliance responded to Daniels’ comments.

“It’s another fight we didn’t see coming,” Matthews said. “We thought we would win in the court case or lose the court case.”

In August, the California Coastal Commission approved short term rental rules in the Coastal Zone, effectively banning them in residential neighborhoods in Carmel Highlands and Big Sur unless a host is living on site.

Meanwhile, unhosted vacation stays are allowed in Pebble Beach, but only with a permit.

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Police & Sheriff's Log

A pronounced lack of good cheer

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.

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 30

Carmel-by-the-Sea: Suspicious circumstances at a residence at San Antonio and 12th. No details provided about the nature of the suspicious circumstances.

Pacific Grove: A 42-year-old female was arrested on Junipero Avenue for two outstanding misdemeanor bench warrants and resisting arrest. She was booked into Monterey County Jail for obstruction, battery and elder abuse, and was held on \$17,500 bail.

Carmel area: Found property was recovered on Carmel Rancho Boulevard. The owner of the property was contacted via telephone.

Carmel Valley: Deputies investigated an

MONDAY, DECEMBER 1

Carmel area: Deputies responded to a report of a domestic disturbance on Mesa Drive involving a 54-year-old female suspect and two male victims, ages 66 and 24.

Carmel Valley: Adult Protective Services report of alleged neglect on East Carmel Valley Road.

Carmel area: Alcohol was sold to a minor on Sixth Avenue. A 24-year-old male was arrested.

Carmel-by-the-Sea: Stalking investigation at Monte Verde and Ninth.

Carmel-by-the-Sea: Lost wallet reported at Ocean and Lincoln.

See **POLICE LOG** page 11RE in the Real Estate Section



The gavel falls

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

Nov. 13 — The Hon. Rafael Vazquez held defendants Pedro Nava, Jonathan Cervantes and Angel Evans to answer for multiple crimes relating to homicides in south Monterey County in early 2024. Vazquez issued his holding order after a weeklong preliminary hearing that was heard the week of Oct. 27. At a preliminary hearing, the judge, acting as a magistrate, hears evidence and determines whether there is probable cause to believe that the defendants have committed the charged crimes.

Vazquez held all three defendants to answer for the Feb. 4, 2024, willful, deliberate and premeditated murder of Jack Canchola and Andres Garcia. In that crime, they were also charged with conspiracy to commit murder and shooting at an occupied motor vehicle. In addition, they were charged with

the March 3, 2024, willful, deliberate and premeditated murder of Francisco Aldape Perez, Olivo Pina Perez, Mario Guzman and Alicia Ramirez Aparicio, along with numerous other charges, including street terrorism, robbery and assault.

Vazquez held the defendants to answer for multiple special circumstances on the homicide charges and found probable cause to believe the defendants discharged a firearm during the crimes on Feb. 4, 2024, and March 3, 2024. Further, he found probable cause to believe many of the crimes were committed for the benefit of the Norteño Criminal Street Gang, more specifically, the Tiny Locos faction of the Norteño Criminal Street Gang out of Greenfield.

See **GAVEL** page 35A



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Loose dog bites three in C.V. park

By MARY SCHLEY

A ‘LABRADOR mix” that was off leash in a park in Carmel Valley bit three people Friday afternoon, according to Monterey County Sheriff’s Cmdr. Andy Rosas, and its owner could face criminal charges as a result.

“The dog was loose in the park after a gate was left open” on Camino de Travesia on Dec. 12 at around 12:30 p.m., Rosas said, in the Robles del Rio area of Carmel Valley Village.

The sheriff’s office indicated the victims were three women ages 44, 73 and 75. Rosas didn’t say how they came to be bitten by the dog, which belongs to a 51-year-old man, who was also unnamed.

“Nobody was transported to the hospital,” he said, though if any of them went to the emergency room on her own, Rosas wouldn’t know.

He said the dog’s owner remained onsite and was cooperative with investigators. Monterey County Animal Services took custody of the Lab mix, which Monterey County Health public information officer Karen Smith said this week remains quarantined.

Owner could be charged with failing to control

Any dog that bites a person and causes a less-than-severe injury as defined by state law is also considered potentially dangerous, as is one that has killed, seriously bitten or otherwise inflicted injury on a domestic animal “off the property of the owner or keeper of the dog,” twice in a three-year period.

(Dogs that have seriously injured or killed a person are considered “vicious” and are dealt with differently.)

Hearing

An animal control or law enforcement officer who has investigated an attack like the ones said to have occurred in Carmel Valley and believes the dog is potentially dangerous or vicious can ask the health department to hold an evidence-based hearing to determine the animal’s fate.

“If the hearing officer determines that the dog in question is potentially dangerous or vicious, the hearing officer shall also determine whether the release of the dog would create a significant threat to the public health, safety and welfare,” the code says.

If so, it could be euthanized.

Smith said the dog’s fate has not been determined.

“This case is still ongoing, and so all we will confirm is that the dog involved in the incident is here at Hitchcock Road Animal Services and is under quarantine as prescribed in these cases,” she said. “The outcome of the dog has not yet been determined.”

Same goes for the owner, who has not been named, Rosas said, because he hasn’t been arrested or charged with a crime.

“A report has been forwarded to the district attorney for charges against the owner for failing to control his dog,” he said. Therefore, the case is still “active/open.”

Dangerous or vicious?

The county’s laws state that owners must “at all times prevent their dogs from biting and harassing any person engaged in a lawful act and from interfering with the lawful use of public or private property.”

The code further defines a “potentially dangerous dog” as one that has “engaged in any behavior that requires a defensive action by any person to prevent bodily injury when the person and the dog are off the property of the owner or keeper of the dog” on two occasions within the previous 36 months.



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Dems fight offshore oil drilling plans

By KELLY NIX

CARMEL VALLEY congressman Jimmy Panetta and his Democratic Col-leagues in Congress have formally stated their opposition to President Donald Trump’s plan to drill for oil off the Cali-fornia coast.

A Nov. 20 proposal by the Trump Administration included plans for a half-dozen leases to drill for oil and gas off the coast of California. The portions of coast-line slated for drilling include large areas that were previously protected.

In a letter to Trump and Secretary of the Interior Doug Burgum on Dec. 4, Panetta and more than two dozen other members of Congress again condemned the offshore oil plan, which identifies areas that former President Joe Biden elimi-nated from future leasing. The lawmakers said the new leases would also under-mine state laws that ban new offshore drilling along the coastline.

“We stand united with the overwhelming majority of Californians who fundamentally oppose any proposal that would expand offshore drilling and risk our state’s invaluable, ecologically unique coast,” the letter explained.

Bipartisan support

The plan, along with efforts to reduce federal staffing and government agen-cies, including those that address oil spill responses, “is not only dangerous but out-right reckless,” the politicians maintain.

“As we have repeatedly seen in Califor-nia and other parts of the country, offshore drilling is a ticking time bomb,” the letter said.

Panetta told The Pine Cone this week he’ll continue legislative efforts against the administration’s proposal for the leases

and suggested others are considering court action to halt the plans.

“We have this many protections for our coastline because Democrats and Republi-cans and leaders at all levels have worked with each other to fight against those who desired to drill for oil and gas off the Cali-fornia coast,” he said.

The congressman said he’s also work-ing with a group of Florida Republicans who represent coastal districts and are pushing back on Trump’s offshore oil and gas drilling proposals.

The Bureau of Ocean Energy Manage-ment, he noted, is accepting public com-ments on the proposal until Jan. 23, 2026.

‘Energy dominance’

In announcing a large lease for federal waters in the Gulf of America last week, Burgum reiterated the Trump administration’s rea-sons for pursuing offshore oil drilling, which aligns with the president’s cam-paign promises of cheaper energy.

There are more than 30 million gasoline- and diesel-powered cars and trucks in California — a state where fuel prices are much higher than in most other states.

“President Trump made clear from day one that the United States will no longer be held back by bad policy or foreign depen-dence,” Burgum said Dec. 10. “Today’s lease sale is another major milestone in rebuilding American energy dominance by unlocking investment, strengthening our energy security, creating jobs and ensuring Americans have access to affordable and reliable energy. The Trump administration is delivering results, and the Gulf of Amer-ica is once again leading the way.”

California has about two dozen offshore

See **DRILLING** page 22A

Hilary

Christmas Day, 1941 – May 24, 2006



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Highway 1 could reopen before March

By CHRIS COUNTS

AFTER WORD went out on social media that Highway 1 will reopen at Regent’s Slide in Big Sur sooner than the March 2026 estimate previously made by Caltrans, Kevin Drabinski of the state roads agency confirmed it is possible. That’s great news for businesses like Treebones Resort and Lucia Lodge, which have been isolated by slides in recent years. Highway 1 hasn’t been open for through traffic between Carmel and Cambria since January 2022.

Help wanted soon

Not only did Drabinski say the slide could be cleared earlier than anticipated, he said his agency is sharing the news with Big Sur’s business community so its inns, markets and galleries can prepare for a major boost in business overnight. Many are operating now with lean staffing and will need to hire more workers and stock up on inventory. “We’ve been in contact with the Big Sur business community and stakeholders throughout the closure,” he told The Pine Cone. “They’ve made it clear they need a heads-up to accommodate an influx of visitors.”

One news report suggested that Highway 1 could reopen by the end of the year, but Drabinski said there are too many uncertainties to give an estimate of when the work will be done. He said an early reopening is dependent on good weather — which is no sure thing this time of year. “We’re looking at the forecast, and we see rain off and on” in the coming weeks, he said.

Drabinski said it will be difficult to give the public a lot of advance warning of the reopening. “Construction crews still

need to perform dozens of tasks and may only know the actual date for reopening a day or two beforehand,” he reported. While recent wet winters have caused numerous slides up and down the beleaguered highway, Regent’s Slide has kept it closed since Feb. 9, 2024. Located 4.5 miles south of Esalen Institute, the site experienced “new slide activity and surface cracking in the slope” in August 2024 — making the task of stabilizing the road even more difficult.

Work crews have installed 4,443 60-foot steel dowels to help anchor the slope and reduce movement in the steep hillside that looms over the site. Now they are installing wire mesh to protect motorists from falling rocks.

Caltrans also gave an update on the project this week.

“Crews have continued with debris removal and have now exposed most of the original roadway,” the agency reported. “Field assessments of the roadway condition are underway. Crews are scheduled to begin grinding and paving operations as weather and site conditions allow. Rains forecasted to arrive later this week may interrupt operations for several days.”



PHOTO/CALTRANS

Work crews are installing wire mesh at Regent’s Slide to protect motorists from falling rocks.

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Deputy was negligent in crash, lawsuit says

By KELLY NIX

A WOMAN who claims she was seriously injured earlier this year after a patrol vehicle driven by a sheriff’s deputy collided with her car has filed suit against the Monterey County Sheriff’s Office alleging it was the officer’s

fault. Ashley Tedesco claims in a Dec. 8 complaint that on May 21, while approaching the intersection of South Davis and Blanco roads in Salinas in her 2023 Audi A3 Quattro, she heard a siren, which stopped before she reached the crossing. Tedesco said she reduced her speed.

“Just prior to entering the intersection, Tedesco heard the siren reactivate and saw lights illuminate from the 2023 Dodge Durango patrol vehicle” operated by a sheriff’s deputy with the last name Acosta, Tedesco describes in her lawsuit. “Acosta was stopped at the intersection then drove the Durango into the intersection against a red light.” Tedesco said the Durango struck the left side of her Audi, causing it to spin and collide with a light pole. The accident, she alleges, was the deputy’s fault. “Acosta did not attempt to view or look for eastbound traffic,” according to Tedesco’s complaint. “As a result of Acosta’s failure to look for and determine if eastbound traffic was present, Acosta created a high risk of a collision.”

‘Anxiety’
A California Highway Patrol report on the accident aligns with Tedesco’s version of events and notes that Acosta “proceeded southbound at an unsafe speed as he began to pass the eastbound through lanes” and “failed to clear the eastbound through lanes” before striking Tedesco’s vehicle. The report also indicates that Acosta had his

Victim:
crash caused emotional distress and anxiety

lights and sirens on before turning them off and then on again. The CHP investigator said that Acosta’s vehicle was not equipped with a dashcam. Tedesco’s complaint, filed in Monterey County Superior Court, said she suffered a fractured left clavicle and scapula, and pain to her neck, back and hip. The accident also left her with “extensive emotional distress manifesting in fear, anger and heightened anxiety,” according to the complaint, which alleges negligence on part of the sheriff’s office and Monterey County, which is also a defendant. Tedesco said she racked up more than \$50,000 in medical bills, about \$20,000 of which was paid for by her workers compensation carrier. She’s seeking an unspecified amount in damages for her medical bills, injuries and other losses. County counsel Susan Blitch told The Pine Cone Thursday that her office had not been served with the complaint and that she could not comment.

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FORMER MEMBER LEVIES ACCUSATION AGAINST P.G. CITY COUNCIL

By KELLY NIX

THE DECISION by the Pacific Grove City Council last month to pay a consultant to find ways to collect more taxpayer money is facing a complaint from a resident who alleges the decision could have violated state law.

On Nov. 19, the council voted unanimously to hire Props & Measures to help the city determine what P.G. residents' highest priorities for use of their money are, their "tax tolerance," and how the "projects the council is interested in funding — public safety, council stipends, infrastructure, etc. — stack up versus residents' priorities."

This week, though, former city councilman Luke Coletti filed a complaint with the Fair Political Practices Commission alleging that the council's hiring of Props & Measures potentially amounted to an improper use of campaign funds because taxpayer funds would be spent on "council compensation and ballot measure advocacy."

"The Props & Measures proposal expressly includes council stipends as a subject of taxpayer-funded evaluation," Coletti told the agency.

"Because any increase in council stipends would provide a direct financial benefit to the elected officials who approved the contract, this raises concerns under Government Code 8314, which prohibits the use of public resources for personal or financial benefit."

'Key messages'

Councilmembers' plans to give themselves a 130 percent stipend raise failed earlier this year when Coletti's group, Transparent Pacific Grove, led a successful citizen referendum to challenge the raise. Councilmembers in May also discussed giving themselves medical benefits, an idea that was eventually put off for discussion later.

Coletti said the council's hiring of the consultant could have also violated Government Code 54964, which essentially prohibits spending taxpayer money to support or oppose ballot measures and candidates.

"The Props & Measures proposal describes messaging, positioning, packaging and outreach activities directed at increasing voter support for one or more future city revenue measures," he told the commission. "These activities include 'developing key messages voters need to hear,' positioning a measure 'for success,' and producing professionally designed outreach materials. Such activities raise concerns regarding the use of public funds for ballot-measure advocacy."

Deficit

Coletti lists Mayor Nick Smith and councilmembers Joe Amelio, Cynthia Garfield, Lori McDonnell, Chaps Poduri, Tina Rau and Paul Walkingstick as respondents, or the individuals he said might have violated the law when they approved the contract.

He requested that the Fair Political Practices Commission review the consultant contract, its scope of work, and related expenditures to "determine whether public funds are being used, or are authorized to be used, in a manner inconsistent with the Political Reform Act's treatment of campaign expenditures and FPPC enforcement standards."

The contract could, Coletti said, also have run afoul of the Political Reform Act's campaign expenditure and communication provisions. The commission is tasked with administering and enforcing the PRA.

The council wants to raise revenue and reduce expenses due to what city staffers say are lower-than-expected revenues and projected deficit spending. A ballot measure is one of the tools the city is considering to do that.

The consultant promised to survey residents and conduct a feasibility study on their wants and needs.

"Once we know what a viable, winnable ballot measure looks like, Props & Measures will work with you to develop a revenue measure and qualify for the ballot," the company said.

A city staffer's report to the council in November said that similar public outreach in 2007 and 2016 was "very valuable" in finding what residents' wants and needs.

A message to the city seeking comment was not answered.

Complaint filed after consultant hired to help city raise taxes



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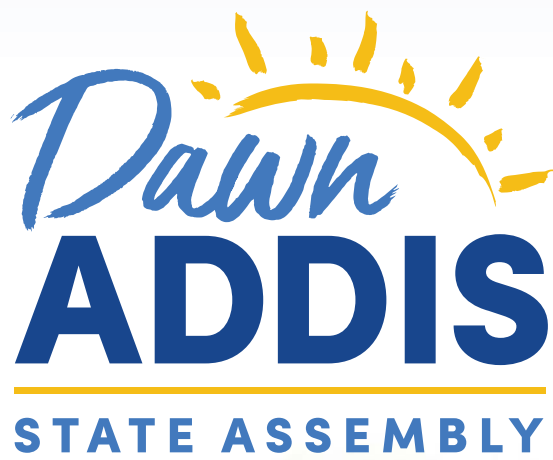
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-Dawn



HUGE FINE

From page 1A

“For whatever reason, this has become a crusade by the county against my clients, and it’s inappropriate,” Fisher told hearing officer Katie Porter during the Zoom hearing.

\$200K more?

But Monterey County demonstrated late in the all-day hearing that it wasn’t finished punishing Fimo and Miralles.

Deputy county counsel Reed Gallogly requested an order for them to fork over an additional \$225,000, which represents the amount the couple charged McLaren for use of their property from Aug. 11-18.

“There has been a payment of a fine, but as far as I understand, Simo and Miralles are keeping the money that they received for the illegal rental, and that’s not permitted under the law,” Gallogly said.

Fisher pushed back on the 11th-hour demand, saying it would amount to a violation of due process because it did not give his clients a meaningful opportunity to contest it.

“It’s clearly an attempt to punish a taxpayer who is doing no more than exercising his lawful right,” Fisher said, adding that the fine is not only excessive, it should have been assessed against McLaren, not his clients.

County officials charged the homeowners a penalty of \$49,218.75 for the first day of the event, which represented 175 percent of the daily rental fee, 275 percent the second day and 375 percent for the six subsequent days. There was also a \$900 charge for administrative costs, including travel time to and from the property, which was billed at \$180 per hour.

Fisher accused Monterey County of trying “make an example” of Simo and Miralles and maintained it did not have the authority to levy the massive fines. Fisher figured the most the county could have penalized his clients was roughly \$10,000.

“They are trying to supersize it any way they can,” the San Francisco attorney said. “They are acting far more like a private civil litigant than a government. This is not what governments should be doing. They should not be stretching and trying to extract maximum dollars.”

‘Misplaced dispute’

Gallogly defended the amount of the county’s fine, saying it was appropriate and legal and that Simo and Miralles are responsible for it. The event, he said, caused significant disruption to the neighborhood.

“Many people made calls, power lines were knocked over when this was being set up and there were road closures and blockages,” Gallogly explained. “This was a major inconvenience to the residential neighborhood.”

The couple’s dispute, he said, should be with McLaren and a local vacation rental company it hired to arrange the rental.

“They don’t get to duck their responsibility as property owners by saying, ‘other people did it and we have no fault,’” Gallogly said. “It’s not consistent with the law.”

Because the county also fined Simo and Miralles for failing to obtain a special event permit, Fisher asked county code compliance inspector Michael Braasch how many people constitute a “special event.” McLaren’s event was slated to have only 40 people on one of the days.

“Isn’t that just the size of someone’s small birthday or retirement party?” Fisher asked.

Responding for Braasch, chief of county building services Josh Bowling said that “extenuating circumstances”

at the McLaren event — not just the number of attendees — prompted the county to issue the citation.

“A private party for 40 people with a birthday is different than this Car Week event that had 40 executives,” said Bowling, who was the official responsible for calculating the amount of the fine. “Roads were blocked and people couldn’t get to their houses. Those were the circumstances that raised it up to a violation, according to the county code.”

But Gallogly conceded that county code, as it pertains to special events, refers only to an “assemblage” of people and not a specific number of guests.

Proof of violation?

Fisher also tried poking holes in the short-term rental violation claims, suggesting that there was no way of knowing for certain whether guests stayed overnight at the Scarlett Road home because McLaren could have decided to terminate the event after the county went to the property and alleged the violations on the first day.


“What evidence, if any, did you rely on to conclude that someone slept at the property overnight?” the attorney asked.

Braasch said he did not witness anyone spending the night and based the violation on the provisions of the contract Simo and Miralles had with McLaren.

Later in the hearing, Gallogly discounted the argument, saying it’s “pretty much unambiguous” that the couple’s rental agreement “violated the short-term vacation rental ordinance” and “arguments to the opposite should be disregarded.”

Fisher said Simo and Miralles had “no knowledge” of the fines until Car Week was over, and that McLaren and

See **RENTAL** page 19A



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RESTAURANT

From page 1A

establishment” as a secondary use, putting it in conflict with its permit’s original terms.

The issue arose after Parker Logan, who owns Sade’s Cocktails, inquired whether A.W. Shucks is operating in compliance with its permit. Logan, who bought Sade’s from Frank Grupe in early 2019, is losing his lease in February 2026 and is searching for ways to keep his establishment going — a difficult problem, since the city won’t allow him to move his business elsewhere unless a bar permit becomes available.

A.W. Shucks has that designation, due to its former life as Maxwell McFly’s. But if it is reclassified as a restaurant, that would free up one of the city’s bar permits, potentially to Logan’s benefit.

Last week, Ginette, the planning director, asked the commission to “consider the potential permit options and deliberate on the permit and operation history of A.W. Shucks Cocktail & Oyster Bar.” She presented five scenarios, which included amending the use permit to eliminate the limitations on food and make “full-line restaurant” the ancillary use — even though food sales account for more than alcohol sales, according to the owners.

Alternatively, the commission could leave the permit unchanged, make the business conform with the requirement of limited food service, or amend the permit “to convert the allowed use from a drinking place to a full-line restaurant.”

That final option “was presented to the commission on Oct. 8 for consideration,” she said, but because Plastini and the Basis don’t want that to happen, “this is not a viable option.”

The Basis again pleaded for the status quo. “We bought it as an oyster bar and grill. We didn’t buy it as a restaurant,” Randy Basi said, arguing that the use permit listing its primary use as a drinking establishment “has a lot of value,” though he didn’t say how it’s valuable.

But they don’t want to be stripped of the ability to

function as a full-line restaurant, either. At the October meeting, Karen Basi told commissioners alcohol sales account for a decreasing chunk of her business, thanks to downward trends in consumption, and that being able to sell food is a key part of A.W. Shucks’ viability. She estimated the ratio of food-to-alcohol sales at 4:1 or 5:1.

“People aren’t drinking the way they were, so it’s going to affect me if I can’t feed them,” she said at that meeting.

Plastini, who has long managed the Doud Arcade in which A.W. Shucks is located, said he and the Basis have “acted in good faith,” and that the only reason the discussion was happening at all was because of Logan’s inquiry. He suggested the commission leave well enough alone.

“I got guarantees that the use would stay with the land,” he said. “The only reason we’re here is someone wants that drinking-establishment use.”

‘Save Sade’s’

Even though the hearing was not about Sade’s, a parade of supporters proclaimed its value to the community, reiterated A.W. Shucks’ identity as a restaurant, and pleaded with the commission to protect the bar.

“Everyone I play golf with goes to Sade’s,” commented a man who said he’s a member of Monterey Peninsula Country Club. “I hope we can keep it part of Carmel.”

Hadley Hargrove asked commissioners to put their heads together to figure out a way to allow Sade’s to continue operating.

“It’s really important for mental health for people to be together,” he said. “And you guys have the power to do something.”

Logan said the Basis knew they were buying a restaurant when they took over A.W. Shucks.

“They are very food-focused, and by law, they have to be,” he said, because of their liquor license.

He also argued Plastini “doesn’t have any right to hold hostage an abandoned use for 30 years.”

“I made a huge investment, too,” he said. “I didn’t know when I bought Sade’s that I couldn’t relocate.”

He wondered if the city fathers who set the three-bar



PHOTO/MARY SCHLEY

With the landlords’ decision not to renew the lease, Sade’s Cocktails will be without a home next year unless a bar permit is freed up.

cap intended that.

“I want help from all of you,” he said. “Because the laws are a little screwy and the permits are a little haywire, and if we put the right permits with the right businesses, we wouldn’t have this problem at all.”

Logan’s attorney, Jason Retterer sent a Dec. 9 letter arguing that A.W. Shucks has lost its right to the bar use.

“We submit that the ‘drinking place’ use is not authorized and has in fact been forfeited and abandoned,” because it has not been operating in a manner consistent with its use permit for nearly 30 years — which voids the use permit, according to the law — and a use that’s not exercised for six months is considered abandoned.

He also argued that Ginette’s suggestion that the planning commission amend the permit to reflect A.W. Shucks’ restaurant operations as an “ancillary use” of 69 percent would be unlawful.

“The code establishes clear standards for full-line restaurants, including the following standard, which is the very first standard: Any sale of alcoholic beverages shall be subordinate to this primary use,” he wrote. “It is unclear how a ‘full-line restaurant’ could ever be considered an ‘ancillary use’ based on this standard.”

He noted the intent of the code “is not to convert an otherwise ancillary use into a second primary use at the same premises,” but to allow accessory uses, which by definition are secondary, such as a clothing store selling souvenirs or a chocolate shop offering coffee drinks.

Commissioner Stephanie Locke said the drinking-establishment permit “is very important to Carmel,” because such places stay open late and therefore give hospitality workers somewhere to wind down after their shifts and provide a venue for tourists after the restaurants close. She said A.W. Shucks’ use permit should reflect its operating as a restaurant, not a drinking establishment.

Commissioner Mel Ahlborn agreed.

Who suffers?

“The use was abandoned — I’m not sure when that occurred,” she said. “And after that, when there’s a change in use, the property must conform to current zoning, and that use cannot be reestablished.”

And if the owners didn’t agree, she suggested, they should be forced to revert to the use permit’s description of their business as primarily a bar with limited food and should obtain the proper type of liquor license to reflect that.

Commissioner Stefan Karapetkov suggested the city help Logan. “We should work with Sade’s to find a new location,” he said.

He also observed that if Logan’s landlords can’t get another properly licensed tenant in the space within six months, the bar use for that location would be abandoned and could be assigned to a different location where Sade’s could reopen.

Chair Michael LePage, who in October blamed criminal behavior on alcohol consumption and suggested Plastini be allowed to continue sitting on the drinking-establishment use without requiring any amendments to Shucks’ permit, changed his thinking and sympathized with Logan.

“We have an operator who’s made the investment and needs to be able to enjoy and expand their business,” he said, while acknowledging “that’s a much bigger issue than we can solve here.”

He suggested stripping A.W. Shucks of its drinking-establishment use wouldn’t negatively affect its bottom line.

“The operator told us at the last meeting that consumption of alcohol is on a decline and if they weren’t able to sell food, they would lose money,” he said. “So, with a use permit as full-line restaurant, it is not going to suffer any damage, and their own testimony supports that.”

Meanwhile, having the bar designation tied up but unused deprives others of a business opportunity and the public of another drinking place.

“I think we only have one option here, and that is they have to come under the full-line restaurant use,” he said.

As for places like Sade’s, LePage said, they serve “a real purpose for people in town.”

“It’s really important that people socialize, and that’s what Sade’s has provided in our community,” he said, and while restaurants also serve that purpose, “it’s incumbent upon us to take an unfair situation and try to make it a little bit fairer.”

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Friends launch fundraiser for violinist

By CHRIS COUNTS

ONE OF Monterey County’s best-loved musicians is facing a tough battle with cancer, and his friends are raising money to help cover his medical expenses. Violinist Edwin Huizinga began a six-month series of chemotherapy treatments in the fall and has had to step back from touring, teaching and making music.

“Our dear friend, Edwin Huizinga — a world-class violinist, professor, artistic director and one of the most generous souls we know — has been diagnosed with Stage 3 Classic Hodgkin’s Lymphoma,” Big Sur resident and musician Deva Munay, who is organizing a gofundme.com campaign, said. “At 41, this 6-foot-5 gentle giant with the biggest spiritual heart is facing a six-month chemotherapy journey, and we’re asking his community to wrap around him with love and practical support.”

A native of Canada who has toured extensively throughout North America, Europe and Asia, Huizinga is a familiar face on stages in Big Sur and the Monterey Peninsula. Besides being a world-class instrumentalist who has performed at the

Carmel Bach Festival many times, he’s the program manager for the festival’s Baroque and Classical Academy.

“For 20-plus years, Edwin has been an integral part of the Carmel Bach Festival, one of the most prestigious early music festivals in the world,” Munay said. “His commitment to this festival mirrors his commitment to everything he does — showing up season after season, bringing excellence and heart, building something enduring and beautiful. Edwin brings full presence, deep artistry and pure joy to everything he touches.”

Grateful for support

Huizinga is also a member of Fire & Grace with Grammy Award-winning Celtic guitarist William Coulter, and he teaches violin at the annual Big Sur Fiddle Camp. He is a member of a baroque ensemble that has recorded 10 albums, and he has performed alongside luminaries like Stevie Wonder, Itzhak Perlman and Yo Yo Ma.

“Help Edwin Heal: A Violinist’s Journey” has so far raised more than \$41,000. The goal is \$75,000. He said he’s very grateful for the community’s help.

RENTAL

From page 16A

and its event manager, BMF Media, did not tell them about it.

“And now the county wants to turn around and fine my clients three-quarters of a million dollars when there’s a corporation that did the bad acts sitting right there,” Fisher said.

Miralles said he “fully” relied on McLaren’s promise to get permission to hold the event.

“They said they would get all the permits,” he said. “I assumed they did that every single year and it would just be a

formality.”

The hearing came after Simo and Miralles filed a lawsuit in November against McLaren and BMF Media, alleging they were responsible for securing the county permits for the shindig.

After the complaint was moved to federal court, the owners added as a defendant a local real estate company they said negotiated the contract with McLaren for the rental of the home.

Porter’s role is to determine whether the county proved that Simo and Miralles violated the law, and whether the massive fine was an appropriate penalty. The hearing officer said it would probably take her longer than 30 days, because of the holidays, to issue a written ruling.

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SCRUTINY
From page 1A

signed and forgotten,” Rivas said in a statement announcing the effort, “The Outcomes Review tool empowers Assembly members to evaluate real-world outcomes, engage directly with residents, and refine our solutions for greater impact. It’s a forward-looking approach to oversight that every 21st century legislature should adopt.”

The move is a shuffle in the right direction, but it would be better if lawmakers weren’t being asked to pick the laws they want under the magnifying glass.

Consequences

California politicians have a history of passing legislation without fully considering the consequences, and oversight to review those consequences has never been baked into the process. It’s a problem gubernatorial candidate Katie Porter hammered home at a forum in San Jose this month.

“I think there’s not been a willingness sometimes in Sacramento from career politicians, people who pass these bills, to go back and look at them and make sure that they’re working effectively,” said Porter.

Yes, oversight hearings exist, but only rarely, and they’re often used to show off what’s been working or to point fingers at those who got something wrong. There’s also a lot of material to review year after year.

In 2025, Gov. Gavin Newsom signed 794 new bills into law. A total of 917 made it to his desk — and that’s after Rivas lowered the number of bills each legislator was allowed to introduce this year from 50 to 35.

Under the program announced by Rivas, about a dozen laws will be up for review in 2026. So far, four have been chosen:

- AB 744, a telehealth law from 2019 written to improve healthcare access.
- AB 488, enacted in 2021 to make

sure charitable donations have their intended impact.

- AB 2011, the Middle-Class Housing Act, passed in 2022 with the goal of making it easier to build affordable housing
- AB 457, a bill that aims to result in more farmworker housing within 15 miles of farms in the Central Valley.

New housing laws are a good place to start the review process. Between 2016 and 2022, more than 100 bills were written with the goal of creating more housing in California. Despite all the legislative activity, the needle hasn’t budged on new housing permits statewide, showing that the laws are not solving the problems their authors targeted.

Rivas deemed 2025 the year of affordability, and a slew of new housing bills were passed in connection, creating plenty of fodder for future reviews. Assemblywoman Dawn Addis is hopeful one of her cost-of-living bills will also be on the list of selected laws.

“Evaluating our progress is not only good governance, but essential for democratic transparency and accountability, so I am grateful to Speaker Rivas for launching the Outcomes Review tool,” said the Morro Bay Democrat. “I have requested study of my AB 2847 on ratepayer transparency for utilities, because this bill is part of my broader effort to bring utility costs down for our constituents who need a more affordable California.”

Addis’ bill created new disclosure requirements for electric and gas utilities when seeking approval for long-term capital spending.

Whoopsies

Past laws in California designed to bring down consumer prices have unfortunately made them go up. One of the most notorious being the 1996 deregulation of California’s electricity market. The reform was supposed to lower prices but instead caused electricity shortages and skyrocketing costs for wholesale power. Utilities

See LAWS next page



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LAWS

From previous page

including Pacific Gas & Electric and Southern California Edison were

Another example of unanticipated costs was the historic expansion of retirement benefits for California public employees with SB 400 in 1999. The law resulted in a massive gap between the state’s obligations to workers and retirees and the funding available to pay them — impacting not only the state, but local governments across California. The law was reformed in 2012, but taxpayers will continue to suffer the financial fallout for decades.

Unpredicted

A more recent example of legislation with an unpredicted outcome was 2019’s AB 218. The bill made it easier to file claims of childhood sexual abuse, opening the door for past survivors to seek justice. As a result, \$3 billion in claims have been filed against school districts across California. Jury verdicts and settlements requiring public schools to fork over tens of millions of dollars have led to skyrocketing insurance premiums for districts, and the payouts have forced some districts to cut programs.

State Sen. John Laird tried to make a legislative fix to that one this year. The senator ended up pulling his bill after facing opposition from Addis over concerns his bill would roll back victim protections.

Rivas’ initiative may also result in the likely intended

SILLY SWEATERS UNITE

CELEBRATING THE silliness of holiday fashion — and capturing the spirit of the season with some fun-filled competition — the Links Club hosts an Ugly Christmas Sweater Party Friday at 6 p.m.

“Join us for a festive night packed with holiday cheer,” announced the downtown sports bar. “Rock your most outrageous sweater and compete for bragging rights and prizes.”

Prizes will be awarded for Ugliest Sweater, Most Creative Sweater and Over-the-Top Sweater.

“Whether you’re coming for the competition, the cocktails, or just the cozy chaos, this is the perfect way to celebrate the season with friends,” the sports bar added.

The Links Club is located in Carmel Plaza at Ocean and Mission. Visit linksclubgolf.com.

consequence of fewer bills being introduced altogether.

The speaker reduced the number of bills coming out of his chamber in an effort to force lawmakers to focus on affordability this year. It sort of worked. Sacramento legislators introduced 2,397 bills in 2025, and only a small fraction related to bringing down the cost of living.

Politicians write bills for many reasons, and among them is the fact that introducing legislation puts the spotlight on them. The process of a bill becoming law involves

media coverage and advocate reaction, and all of that can help someone get reelected. Rivas’ Outcomes Review is designed to replicate that process by offering a similar sequence of public events and attention.

If the speaker wants a reputation for accountability, though, he shouldn’t wait for lawmakers to volunteer their bills moving forward. Instead, his office should be doing the selecting, based on feedback from constituents, otherwise the tool risks becoming a self-congratulatory cycle.



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DRILLING

From page 8A

oil rigs, mostly in Southern California, that produce oil and gas. However, there’s been a prohibition on new leases since the 1980s.

Panetta and his colleagues contend that new oil and gas drilling would have “devastating impacts” on the environment, coastal economy, tourism and recreation industries, and military readiness and defense infrastructure industries. The so-called “marine economy” in California, which includes tourism, fisheries, ports and shipbuilding, amounted to about \$51

billion in gross domestic product and \$26.7 billion in wages. Pollution from offshore drilling, the democrats claim, would “significantly damage the state’s world-leading economy, hurting the entire country.” “The economic well-being of these sectors is dependent upon a healthy and clean coastline,” their letter said. “Further industrialization off our coast will inevitably

pollute our beaches, spelling disaster for California’s economy and detrimentally impacting the rest of the country, which relies on the state as an economic engine.” California began abandoning offshore drilling in 1969 after an oil rig off the coast of Santa Barbara spilled 3 million gallons of crude oil into the ocean, killing thousands of marine mammals and birds.

DA gets \$790K to fight DUIs

PINE CONE STAFF REPORT

THE CALIFORNIA Office of Traffic Safety distributed more than \$140 million in federal taxpayer funds to nearly 500 projects statewide to “increase roadway safety and save lives,” including \$790,000 for the Monterey County District Attorney’s Office’s efforts to crack down on drug-impaired drivers. The programs aim “to improve bicycle and pedestrian safety and provide critical education and enforcement programs that

serve the traffic safety needs of Californians,” according to Gov. Gavin Newsom’s office. “This funding adds to the \$14.6 billion in dedicated state funding for the state’s transportation infrastructure.” Other efforts funded via the grants focus on lifesaving equipment for EMS, pedestrian and bicycle safety, and car seats, as well as several statewide efforts undertaken by the California Highway Patrol, including DUI checkpoints, speed enforcement, education for teen drivers, and reducing the number of illegal sideshows.

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



IN MEMORY OF JOAN KEBETI (KESLER-BELL-TICKTIN) KE-BE-TI 6/21/1931 ♦ 5/19/2015

Joan Kesler was born to Orville Kesler and Virgina South Kesler in Columbus, Ohio. She was a graduate of West High School, Class of 1949. She married Douglas Wyle Bell in 1950 and had two children, Jeffrey D. Bell (Star Valley, AZ) and James W. Bell (Los Angeles, CA). Her grandchildren are Jerimiah Jeffrey Bell (deceased in 2013) and Nicholas James Bell of Diamond Bar, CA. Her only sister, Mary Lou Kesler Barckhoff of Columbus, Ohio, passed away this year. She is also survived by a niece, Linda Merritt of Lancaster, Ohio.

Joan’s career in politics began at the Columbus City Hall as a typist, then to the Ohio State House as Minority Whip Secretary for many years. At The Ohio State House her daily interactions included such notables as A.G. Lancione, Anthony O. Calabrese Sr. and Vern Riffe.

Joan married again in 1967 to Harold Ticktin (Cleveland, Ohio) and moved to Shaker Heights, Ohio. While in Cleveland she served on many Democratic Party events and campaigned for many candidates including John Glenn. Her lifelong friend, Dolly Miller, was a constant ally.

In 1974 she retired to Carmel, CA, where she worked with many businesses ie: Wide World of Golf, Excalibur R.E., Chianti Ristorante and individuals around the town. Her pastimes were taking walks along Scenic Drive, studying Chinese, growing a garden and enjoying coffees at Little Swiss Cafe with Oliver Ray.

This memorium serves as a small testimony to a woman who through wit, strength and fortitude was able to parlay, from small beginnings, a place on Carmel Beach.

Kindly submitted — her humble son
Jeffrey Bell



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21 AND OVER

BICYCLE CRASH

From page 1A

of video evidence that Pollack was struck and killed by the driver — whose name the CHP has still not released — when she turned in front of him.

“The house on the corner of Crespi and 17 has video cameras which captured the accident,” she said. “As I understand it, the CHP have gone back to the family to amend their previous statement. The video footage shows Professor Pollack headed northwest (coming down the hill) on 17 Mile Drive toward the Crespi intersection. It shows the driver coming toward him on the correct side of 17 but then, without slowing, turning to go up Crespi at the exact moment the professor was crossing. You can see the bike fly up into the air. It is very clear what happened.”

‘Did nothing wrong’
Hall went on to describe the grim aftermath, including the fact that workers at a nearby construction site heard the collision and went to search for the victim but couldn’t find him because he was on top of the driver’s car, which was stopped several feet up Crespi.

“I do not know any more than that,” she said. “I just wanted to ensure the professor was not in any way maligned, that people know he did absolutely nothing wrong.”

Hall advised seeking confirmation from the highway patrol.

One of Pollack’s daughters reached out to The Pine Cone after being forwarded an inquiry from Winick, but she did not want to comment.

“I think it would be best for you to get any additional information from the CHP,” she said.

The officer, however, has not amended his description of the accident.

“Upon speaking to the investigating officer, he has not provided me with any additional information regarding this crash,” Bhaurla said Wednesday night.

A public records act request will be filed when the investigation is complete.

“The Pine Cone. Not the only great paper.
Not the only free paper.
But the only great free paper.”
— *unsolicited reader comment*

ELLYN GELSON

Encino, CA
May 2, 1944 - Nov.18, 2025

Prime rib, noodle kugel, lemon squares, chicken in the newspaper, the chicken that Jill doesn’t like; these were the foods she loved to cook. Rummikub, Gin, Farkle, Banangrams: these were the games she loved to play. Sitting in the sun, shopping at Gelson’s, going to the movies, reading the paper, and snuggling with her Pomeranian: these were the things she loved to do.

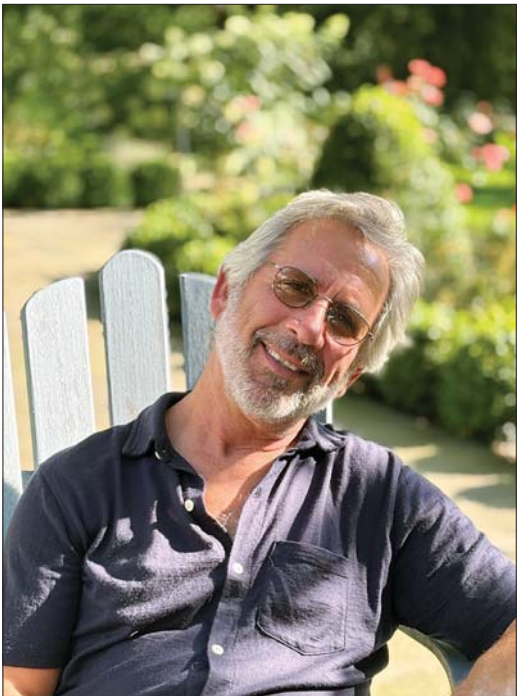
Ellyn (Kaplan-Feinstock-Vickman) Gelson was born in Miami Beach in 1944. She moved to Los Angeles in the 1960s and spent the majority of her life in Beverly Hills, Encino, and in Carmel-by-the-Sea. She also loved to travel and visited all seven continents. Yes, seven!

She was a woman who lit up the room. She was beautiful, stylish, confident, smart as a whip, generous and always on the go. Her greatest achievement was raising three spectacular children, Jill Feinstock (Bee), Joelle Feinstock Mertzels (Flerg), and Jordan Feinstock (Putch). To her grandchildren Aaron, Bridgette, and Trevor, she was Grandma Zippy, who took them to family camp every summer, treated them to don’t-worry-about-what-it-costs shopping trips, and made sure they had the very best education. To her lifelong friends of 70+ years, she was a “force” and always “the fun one.” She was lucky in love, having been the wife of Bob Feinstock, Bernie Gelson, Leon Vickman, and most recently, her late sweetheart Bill Roulette.

Ellyn passed away peacefully at her Encino home on Nov. 18, 2025. She will be missed beyond words.

DR. SETH POLLACK

Dr. Seth Pollack, a fearless champion for social justice and peace for all, died on Friday, Dec. 5, 2025, in Pebble Beach, California. Husband, father, brother, friend, life-long learner, teacher, mentor and ardent cyclist, he seamlessly merged his values into every relationship in his life, whether personal or professional, community-based or academic, local or global. His life can also be read as the story of how relationships lie at the core of every strong community and are the surest way to repair the world.



Seth was born Dec. 20, 1958, in Fresh Meadows, Queens, New York to Abe and Ellie Pollack. His older sister Lee was born one year before him, on the same date. In 1969, his family moved to Boulder, Colorado, and the beauty of this region and the friends that he made there occupied a special place in his heart throughout his life. Seth graduated one semester early from Boulder High School in 1976 and spent the spring of his senior year working on a kibbutz in Israel, providing him with his first taste of the broader world. After a gap year traveling in Europe, which further piqued his interest in other cultures and languages, he returned to enroll at the University of Colorado in Boulder. He left again to spend his junior year at the Institute for European Studies in Vienna, Austria, where he became fluent in German and traveled throughout Europe and the Eastern bloc behind the Iron Curtain. He graduated with a B.A in International Affairs with Honors from CU Boulder in 1982.

Never one to limit his curiosity, Seth then turned his interest to Africa. From 1982 to 1985 he served as a Peace Corps volunteer in Mali, working with women’s groups to develop conservation efforts

in rural communities. He then spent an additional two years there (1985-1987) as the country director for the American Friends Service Committee, working with women’s cooperatives on income-generating activities, health and literacy education. During this time, he created Mali’s first independent women’s non-governmental organization, *FEDEV: Femmes et Development*. In Mali, he also became fluent in both French and Bambara.

Seth often spoke about his years in Mali and how formative they were for him, both personally and professionally. The lessons that he took away from his time there — about how community strength and resilience are founded on relationships and connections — became a textbook for how he viewed the world. Even after Seth left Mali, Mali never left Seth, as he maintained and nurtured the relationships he had made, and continued to embrace the food, music, languages and traditions that he learned there.

After returning to New York City in 1987, Seth began fundraising for an independent documentary film series, *The Quiet Revolution*, and over the next five years he raised \$1.7 million and produced six award-winning films for PBS and international television about sustainable rural development success stories from Bangladesh, Nepal, Honduras, Zimbabwe, India and Arkansas.

And then, in 1988, his world turned over when he met the great love and partner of his life, Naomi. They were married in Bridgehampton, New York in October 1990, and in lieu of a honeymoon they spent six months in India, Bangladesh and Honduras filming *The Quiet Revolution*. After returning to New York City, Seth worked for the New York Association for New Americans, where he taught English to Jewish Russian immigrants, while Naomi worked as a collection curator at the New York Botanical Garden. While in New York, Seth and Naomi continued to nurture their combined relationships and developed a deep connection to their synagogue community of B’nai Jeshurun, which was the site of their first date.

In 1993, Naomi and Seth took their adventure on the road as they headed to California, where Seth had enrolled in Stanford University’s Graduate School of Education. In 1997, he was awarded an M.A in Organizational Sociology and a Ph.D. in International Development Education. While at Stanford they developed many new friendships and created new communities. But most importantly, their Stanford years were book-ended by the births of Naomi and Seth’s two beloved daughters, Alex in 1994, and Maya in 1997.

In 1997, Seth and his family moved to Monterey, where he became the founding director and department chair of the Service Learning Institute at California State University Monterey Bay (CSUMB), a position he occupied throughout his 25-year career; eventually retiring as professor emeritus in 2022. During his time at CSUMB, he was instrumental in embedding experiential service learning across every department and major, advancing his vision of linking higher education to a community’s need for justice, equity and civic responsibility. Under his leadership, CSUMB received multiple national recognitions for its service learning program, including the 2015 Carnegie Community Engagement Elective Classification, the 2013 Higher Education Civic Engagement Award, and the White House President’s Award for Community Service in Higher Education. The lessons that Seth learned in Mali, about the importance of developing local relationships and strengthening local communities through education and service, had now made it half way across the world, to California.

During his time at CSUMB, Seth was also awarded two Fulbright Scholarships to fund sabbaticals at the University of Cape Town, South Africa from 2008 to 2009, and the University of Brighton, United Kingdom and University of Bologna, Italy (2017-2018). While in Italy, he developed a love of all things Italian, to include espresso, grappa, digestivos, cycling in the Dolomites, and the Italian language. With his usual life energy, language lessons and regular trips to Italy, he became fluent in Italian.

Since retiring in 2022, in his usual fashion, Seth pursued his interests through the lens of relationship and community building. He was a huge sports fan and shared in both the victories and the losses of the CU Boulder Buffaloes, the Stanford Cardinal, the CSUMB Otters and the Tour de France sports communities. He loved world music, and especially the music of West Africa, for how it can magically connect people no matter what their native tongue. As a life-long cyclist, he continued to ride daily, and led organized annual cycling tours to Slovenia and Italy. As the J Street liaison for Monterey, Seth advocated for a secure and just future for both Israelis and Palestinians — continuing to be a champion for social justice and peace. And over the past five years, he dove deeply into his Judaica studies, to explore more fully the beauty and mystery of life.

Seth loved to bring people together — to make you a coffee, offer you a drink, make you a meal, engage you in conversation, or bring you into a community project. And though he most certainly loved all of the communities that he belonged to, all of the relationships that he nurtured, and all of his many friends, his greatest love of all was, and forever will be reserved for his wife, Naomi and his two beloved daughters, Alex and Maya.

Seth is survived by Naomi, Maya, Alex, son-in-law Luis, and his sister Lee.

In lieu of flowers donations can be made in Dr. Seth Pollack’s honor to J Street Education Fund, World Central Kitchen, and Breakthrough for Men.

PACKARD FOUNDATION BOOSTS HOUSING EFFORTS

PINE CONE STAFF REPORT

THE MONTEREY Bay Economic Partnership received a two-year, \$450,000 grant from the David and Lucile Packard Foundation this month in support of its efforts to promote stable, affordable housing in Monterey, Santa Cruz and San Benito counties and push policies that support it.

“Adequate and affordable housing is essential to economic development, deeply entwined with economic health and workforce stability,” said Monterey Bay Economic Partnership President & CEO Tahra Goraya. Since 2016, MBEP has been working through policy advocacy, employer engagement, technical support and direct investment via the Monterey Bay Housing Trust to further housing that is attainable and affordable across all

income levels. “Over \$50 million in new investments have been leveraged over a decade to help build affordable homes in the region,” according to the organization. “MBEP works closely with builders, investors, local governments and community members, and has been a leading advocate in the region for projects that support the housing needs of the region’s agricultural, hospitality/tourism and health-care workforce.” Founded in 2015, the group works to improve economic health and quality of life in the region.

MARIE ZENORINI CANEPA

Marie Zenorini Canepa, age 98, of Carmel, CA, passed away on Dec. 12, 2025, surrounded by loving family.

Marie was born at home in 1927 in North Bergen, New Jersey, the daughter of Joseph Zenorini and Catherine Micheletti Zenorini. Marie graduated from Holy Angels High School in 1942 where she was class president all four years and then went on to attend Marymount College and The Catherine Gibbs School for Executive Secretarial Training. After graduation, in addition to working for the Olivetti Corporation as an executive secretary to the president and for Seventeen Magazine, Marie was social secretary to Ambassador Richard C. Patterson, the Chief of Protocol for New York City.

Marie married Michael Canepa in 1985 in New Jersey, with Fr Henry Zenorini officiating. They lived in Concord, MA prior to spending three years in Milan, Italy and in 1993 they settled in Carmel in their contemporary home that faces the ocean. Together they traveled the world, valued family above all and deeply loved and cherished each other. Marie was an award-winning painter, was the family historian, and spent much time volunteering at many local charities. Marie will be remembered as a model of elegance who lived an extraordinary life and was profoundly loved by her family.

Preceding Marie in death are her parents, Joseph and Catherine Zenorini; and brother-in-law, Bertram L. Conn. Remaining to cherish Marie’s memory are her spouse, Michael Canepa and his five children; their spouses and many grandchildren and great-grandchildren; along with sister, Arline Z. Conn; brother, Robert Zenorini, and her eight nieces and nephews, their spouses, children and grandchildren.

The funeral will begin at 9 a.m. Monday, Dec. 22, 2025, at the Carmel Mission, to be followed by a private burial at San Carlos Cemetery.

Memorial donations in Marie’s memory may be directed to The Fund For Homeless Women: <https://www.fundforhomelesswomen.org>



Carolyn Ann Schenk

Carolyn Ann Schenk was born on Oct. 11, 1940. She passed away on Nov. 30, 2025.

A memorial Mass will be celebrated at 10:30 a.m. Jan. 7, 2026, at St. Angela Merici Catholic Church, 362 Lighthouse Ave., Pacific Grove. A reception will follow.

In lieu of flowers, donations in Carolyn’s memory are appreciated to the SPCA of Monterey County.

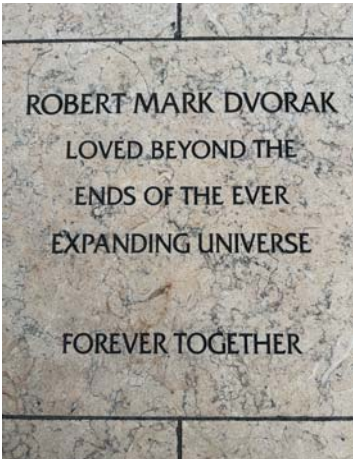


ROBERT MARK DVORAK

December 20, 1943 – November 22, 2020



Happy Birthday, my darling!



It really sinks in
When I see it in stone
You went away
How dare you?
I miss you
They say I’ll be okay
But I’m not going to
Ever
Get over
You

Lyrics to “Over You” By Miranda Lambert & Blake Shelton
copyright 2012

DAVID PRESTON JONES

FEBRUARY 12, 1984 – NOVEMBER 15, 2025

Our beloved son David went home to be with the Lord on Nov. 15, 2025. He was 41 years old. David, whose name means “beloved of God,” shared his middle name with his great-grandfather Preston Black. His early years were spent in Monterey, California where he learned to surf and love the freedom of the ocean. He attended Junipero Serra Elementary and graduated in 2002 from Palma High School. David is preceded in death by grandfathers George Schnarre and Norman Jones and grandmother, Lila Jones. In Monterey, he is survived by his mother, Cynthia Healy (Dan McGilloway); his grandmother, Sylvia Creed and his beloved dog, Sophia.

Later in life, David made his home in Clovis, California, where he met and married Amy, the mother of his three daughters. He made plumbing his career, but if you were to ask him what his greatest accomplishments were you might be compelled to listen, perhaps for hours describing his role as a father to Roxanne, Sabrina and Madelyn — he would tell you they were the greatest joy, love and purpose of his life. To know David was to feel his light. His laugh was contagious, his spirit wild and free, and he had a way of warming a room simply by entering it. He had a rare gift for making others feel good — through his humor, his mischievous grin, and his ability to get everyone laughing. He loved the outdoors and lived for adventure, whether rock climbing, deep-sea fishing, river rafting, or chasing the thrill of something new. He carried excitement with him wherever he went. Then there were his hugs — those unforgettable “David hugs,” the kind that wrapped you up, made you feel safe and lingered in your heart. Children adored him; he was gentle, playful and naturally able to make them smile.

David is also survived by his father, Ronald Jones (Terri) of Georgia; his sister, Rachael Lund (Brian) of Tennessee; and his brother, Michael Jones (Angie) of New Mexico; and five nieces. He is also survived by his Aunt Susie of Colorado and his Uncle George (Melinda) of Idaho.

As his name declares, David was absolutely loved by God, and also by everyone who knew him. His family expresses sincere gratitude to his friends, acquaintances, and those who stood by him on his life journey. As David influenced so many with his humor, his big dreams, and his fun-loving personality, he will never be forgotten.

In his memory, donations should be made to the SPCA of Monterey County, or to the Bloys Campmeeting Association of Jeff Davis County, Texas. Services to honor his life will be private.



ADDRESS MAP

From page 1A

would increase by 100. For instance, houses between Fourth and Fifth avenues would have three-digit addresses starting with 4. After running out of three-digit numbers, the addresses would shift to four digits. Heading from the ocean inland, blocks would increase by increments of 50, since they are shorter.

Diagonal streets will be assigned according to north-south or east-west orientations based on various factors, and

corner houses will have addresses based on where their front doors are located.

In addition, all the addresses along each side of a street will end in the same number, such as on Monte Verde, where each will end in 1 on the west side and 2 on the east side.

Residences in the annexed areas of the city that already have numbers and are not in the 93921 Zip Code will not be affected.

Not yet

In January, after city hall reopens following its holiday closure, Swanson said the map will be brought online “to show the tentative address that you’re going to

get,” and Delves, Garay and Kevin Ruess, who is largely credited with designing the proposed numbering scheme, will hold office hours so people can drop in to chat about it.

“We can answer questions for people and have laptops available for people to access the map in real time,” he said.

Of course, the map will be emblazoned with a disclaimer advising people not to start using their numbers until they are official — a process that’s expected to take several months.

Public officials do not want to hear whether people like their would-be numbers.

They do want to hear about any accuracy issues that arise, such as a residence straddling two APNs being assigned two numbers, or a corner house receiving an address on one street when the home’s front door is on the other.

Swanson speculated the map will go live and council chambers will be open for walk-ins with questions starting the week of Jan. 12 or Jan. 19, 2026.

KATHLEEN MARGUERITE GEISLER

Feb. 17, 1948 ❖ Nov. 30, 2025

With deep love and sorrow, we announce the passing of Kathleen Marguerite Geisler, who departed this life peacefully on the evening of Nov. 30th due to complications from Alzheimer’s. Born on Feb. 17, 1948, in Brussels, Belgium, Kathleen lived a life defined by compassion, dedication and joy.



A proud mother and devoted grandmother, Kathleen’s greatest passion was her family. She is lovingly remembered by her children, Carolyne (Greg), David (Allison), and Jonathan (Sasha); her six cherished grandchildren and her husband, Frank. She also leaves behind her brothers, Marc (Michele) and Serge (Emma), her sister, Danielle (Philippe) and numerous nieces and nephews. Her nurturing spirit and unwavering support were a constant source of strength and warmth in their lives.

Once arrived in Carmel, California in 1981 from Belgium, Kathleen found great fulfillment in her career as a nurse for 22 years at Community Hospital of the Monterey Peninsula.

Driven by a deep sense of service, Kathleen dedicated herself to dozens of humanitarian missions through Rotaplast. She dedicated her time and heart to volunteering alongside medical professionals around the world, providing life-changing plastic surgery for children born with cleft lips and palates. She traveled to underserved communities in remote and developing countries to help restore not only the smiles of these children but also their ability to speak, eat and live with confidence. Working as part of a multidisciplinary team, she supported surgeons, nurses and local healthcare providers, offering



care that transformed lives. Her selfless commitment brought healing, hope, and dignity to families who might otherwise go without access to such vital medical services. She was a member of Carmel-by-the-Sea Rotary Club.

Kathleen was a lifelong lover of the outdoors. Whether hiking through forest trails, walking along a quiet beach, or paddling across still waters in her kayak, she found peace and purpose in nature’s embrace. Her deep connection to the natural world was not only a source of personal joy but a gift she readily shared with those around her.

She will be deeply missed, her enduring spirit reflected in the natural world she loved as well as in her family. Her presence was comforting, her laughter contagious and



her love unwavering.

A celebration of Kathleen’s life will be held at a later date. In lieu of flowers, the family asks that you honor her memory by offering a helping hand, share a warm smile, or simply take the time to truly listen — let it be done with the same quiet grace and generosity that Kathleen gave so freely in life.



CAROLYN SNORF AKCAN

Oct. 11, 1961 – Nov. 18, 2025

Beloved wife, mother, daughter, sister, niece, aunt, cousin and friend, Carolyn Snorf Akcan passed away peacefully on Nov. 18, 2025, at home in Carmel, surrounded by her family. Carolyn will be remembered for her life of inspiration to others to travel, live creatively and kindly, and for her generous and loving spirit toward others. Her laughter, love of life and beauty were gifts to her family and friends. She always looked forward to time spent with family, especially on the Big Island of Hawaii, one of her happy places. As well as being an artist, Carolyn enjoyed finding art and treasures from local boutiques and second-hand shops. She faced her own challenges with an unwavering love of life and always had compassionate and encouraging words for friends and family members; nothing was too big or small to ask, and she would generously be there for them. Carolyn was grateful for a life full of wonderful experiences, and above all, loved her family dearly.

Carolyn was born in Chicago, Illinois, on Oct. 11, 1961, to Bertie and Charlie Snorf. The family moved to California in 1963, and Carolyn was raised in Pebble Beach and Carmel, along with her sisters Susan, Cynthia and Sally Jo. Carolyn attended Carmel River School, Carmel Middle School and graduated from Carmel High School in 1979, where Carolyn was a cheerleader and ran track. She loved spending time with friends, family ski trips and developing her artistic talents. Carolyn earned a B.A. in Fine Arts from UC Berkeley, where she was a member of the Kappa Kappa Gamma Sorority and loved living in Berkeley — riding her bike around campus, going on long runs — a time of her life that she often recalled fondly. In her true adventure style, Carolyn attended the Semester at Sea University program while at Berkeley and the Brooks Institute for Photography in Santa Barbara.

Carolyn met the love of her life, Zekai Akcan of Turkey, in 1996 while he was attending the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey. After a long-distance romance over the next four years, with daily phone calls despite the time difference between California and Turkey, they were married on July 3, 2001, at their home in Carmel. This began a new and profound journey for them in which their commitment and love for each other remained unrelenting. They have two adored children, Rose and Peter Akcan, and have been married for 24 years. Carolyn was a devoted mother to her children, keeping almost all of her children’s art and framing many of their paintings to hang around the house. She volunteered at Bay School and Carmel River School to be involved in their lives. She was so very proud of each of them, and they will never forget the unconditional love she brought to their lives.

Carolyn is survived by husband, Zekai Akcan; children, Rose and Peter; her mother, Bertie Bialek Elliott and sisters, Susan Snorf Lansbury (James) and Cynthia Snorf Livermore (Richard); one niece and nine nephews — Charles (Kat), Robert, Galen (Adrianna), William and Thomas Lansbury; Cadillac (Sanna), Berkshire, Everest (Trish) Zak, and Cascade (Zach) Dewitt; Taha Berk; four great-nieces and nephews; along with mother- and father-in-law Zeynep and Ali Akcan; and sisters-in-law, Zehra (Coşkun) Berk and Banu Akcan. Carolyn was predeceased by her father, Charles Snorf (1930-2020), and sister Sally Jo Snorf (1968-1975).

In her poem “The Summer Day,” Mary Oliver writes:

“Doesn’t everything die at last, and too soon?
Tell me, what is it you plan to do
With your one wild and precious life?”



Editorial

The economy is you

NOTHING IS discussed more than “the economy,” yet no matter how helpless or detached you may feel while government officials, Wall Street executives and media pundits debate stock prices, interest rates, unemployment, inflation and the like, it’s important to remember that everybody plays a vital role.

The economy is often portrayed as a massive, inscrutable machine—unfathomably complex, manipulated by corrupt forces, or beyond anyone’s control. Consider the Trump tax cuts that take effect on January 1. Will they boost wages and spending to help the economy, or trigger inflation and harm it? Opinions abound, but certainty is scarce. Still, at its core, the economy is remarkably straightforward.

Every day, each of us makes countless decisions about how to spend our time and money. Collectively, the choices of more than 340 million Americans — buying, selling, working and creating — form what we call “the economy.” Money circulates in a vast loop. People purchase what they need or desire, while selling their labor, skills, or possessions. Through hard work, talent and creativity, these millions of individuals generate wealth. Corporate CEOs cannot thrive without their employees’ efforts or customers’ support. Blue-collar workers have no jobs without companies to employ them or consumers to buy their products. Everyone relies on everyone else’s participation. It’s no exaggeration to say that the dollar you spend today is the same one that pays you tomorrow.

This delicate interplay was starkly revealed in the aftermath of the 9/11 terror attacks, when Americans collectively paused in shock and grief at the horror unfolding on their soil. For days, the nation was paralyzed by sorrow. The economy screeched to a halt as hundreds of millions of people stopped engaging. The flow of money turned into a nationwide gridlock.

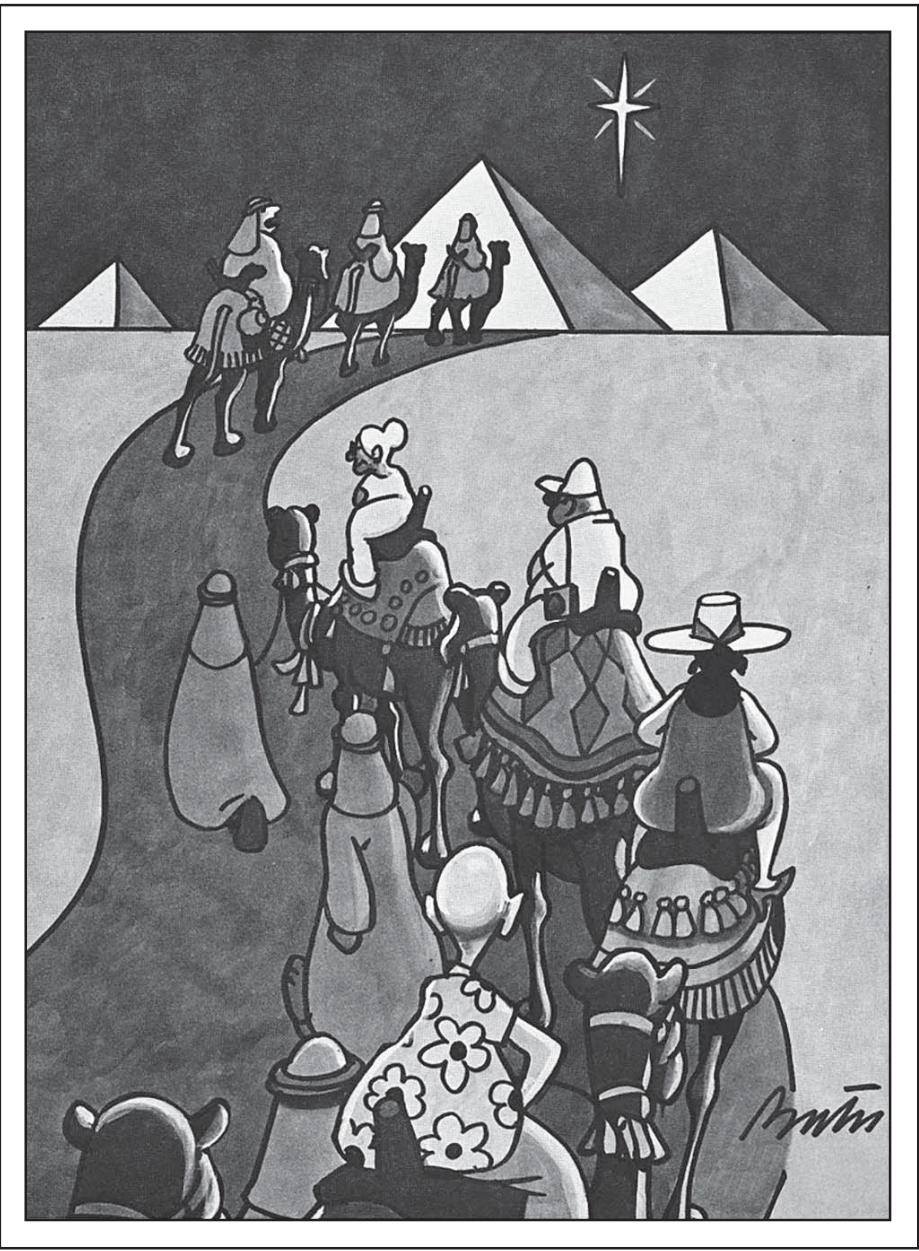
Beyond the directly affected areas, there was no practical reason the economy couldn’t have continued on Sept. 12, 2001, just as it had on Sept. 10. Restaurants, hotels, and shopping centers remained open, and people could have dined, traveled and shopped like they were used to, but they simply weren’t in the right frame of mind. The abrupt slowdown led to hundreds of thousands of people losing their jobs.

Times are different now, with the stock market at record highs and inflation under control. Despite the partisan squabbles in Washington, the economy is thriving — and whether it stays that way depends as much on you as on anyone else.

This principle holds not just nationally. It the very foundation of community vitality. Residents of the Monterey Peninsula, for instance, rightly fret about safeguarding their towns’ livability. But preserving the tranquility and quality of life we all cherish goes beyond attending council meetings and writing letters to the editor. It’s also about where you direct your dollars.

So, with less than a week left in the Christmas shopping season, there’s another lesson about what constitutes the economy and what you can do to help it succeed. Put down your mouse, pick up your wallet, and instead of making Jeff Bezos or Mark Zuckerberg richer than they already are, spend your hard-earned money at the shop around the corner. That way, you’ll not only help the national economy, you’ll be doing a world of good for the town you love.

BEST of BATES



Letters to the Editor

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

Stevenson’s payouts

Dear Editor,

The lawsuit filed by Stevenson School’s former headmaster brings into focus an uncomfortable question about priorities at one of the most expensive private schools in the country.

According to the article, the dispute centers in part on a severance package of \$2 million. For a nonprofit educational institution that regularly asks parents and alumni to give generously, that is an extraordinary figure. It invites a simple question: When Stevenson solicits donations, are families aware that leadership departures can involve payouts measured in millions? Are parents still holding bake sales for arts programs while executives wait for their seven-figure parachutes?

If that number feels startling, it is worth recalling that this is not new. As The Pine Cone previously reported, Stevenson’s former headmaster, Joe Wandke, received a \$6.2 million retirement payout ahead of his 2015 departure. School representatives

justified that payout in part by pointing to the roughly \$60 million Mr. Wandke raised during his tenure. It is fair to ask how a retirement package equal to roughly 10 percent of funds raised was determined, and whether donors understood that connection. Stevenson charges top-tier tuition and is unapologetic about asking for donations. With that privilege comes an obligation for transparency.

Albert Innocenti, Carmel

Juvenile crime

Dear Editor,

Your recent article suggests that California has become “too lenient” on juvenile offenders and that a tougher sentencing approach is needed. This claim overlooks decades of data and a strong body of research showing that harsher punishment does not produce better public-safety outcomes.

First, juvenile crime in California has fallen dramatically. Felony arrests of minors have declined more than 80 percent over the last two decades. Although some recent cases are deeply troubling, they do not reflect a broad surge in youth violence. High-profile incidents often shape public perception, but long-term data tell a different story.

Second, research on juvenile justice consistently finds that longer or more punitive sentences do not significantly reduce reoffending. In fact, youth who are incarcerated often fare worse in adulthood than comparable youth placed in structured community programs or probation.

See LETTERS page 31A

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The Lorax speaks for the trees, but who speaks for the adobes?

THE THING most people want to know about Mimi Sheridan, an architecture and landscape historian and respected cultural preservationist, is whether she can please point them to the nearest bathroom. The question is unavoidable at the Custom House Store, smack-dab between the Portola Hotel and Old Fisherman’s Wharf, where Sheridan volunteers several days each week as shopkeeper. Her consolation is that people who come to Monterey looking for otters, pelicans and equally photogenic scenery often pass through the city’s historic center. Many end up lingering on the Path of History in the sprawling Monterey State Historic Park, which doesn’t surprise her.

‘Their own way in’

Sheridan has a lot of practice with tough crowds, but unlike the many developers and government entities she’s dealt with, tourists don’t seem to mind when some old building gets in the way of their initial plans.

“Even if they don’t care about the dates of the Norman Conquest of England or



Pacific Grove resident Mimi Sheridan, 77, pictured at a favorite historical haunt, the Social Hall at Asilomar.

Since joining the board of the historic park association in 2019 — after two years volunteering with the group — Sheridan has supported the repair and restoration of a dozen 19th century adobes, among them Colton Hall, known as the birthplace of California, and the state’s oldest surviving theater. She is also president of the Alliance of Monterey

See **LIVES** next page

Great Lives

By LILY PATTERSON

whatever, really everyone is interested in history. We try to answer their specific questions, to help people find their own way in,” Sheridan said.

From the mayor’s desk —

One conversation at a time

By DALE BYRNE

EVERY WEEK, ideas and possible solutions to the challenges facing our village find their way to me. Yes, some come through meetings and workshops, but often they arrive through chance encounters and quick conversations. Call it good timing, or the payoff of listening with an open mind, but it happens.

On a recent Sunday morning, I stopped by La Bicyclette for a latte before my KMBY radio broadcast at Little Napoli. Local business owner Judy Ivey waved me over and shared an idea that the vacant Prim’s Hardware building on Carmel Rancho Boulevard could become an indoor pickleball facility. It was the kind of practical suggestion that only surfaces in a person-to-person conversation, and I’m following up on it.

■ The post office, clearing the air

The next day I was at the post office and in line ahead of me was one of the pickleball advocates from a recent city council meeting. After some small talk, she cautiously said, “I guess I’m not one of your favorite people right now.”

I told her honestly I wasn’t sure why she would feel that way. We appreciated

her showing up and sharing her perspective and don’t hold grudges or judge people for being passionate. I like pickleball. The issue the council faced was not the sport, it was the noise and congestion impacts at one specific location and how that affected the neighborhood.

As we talked, I noticed two other advocates in line who had also spoken at the meeting. We discussed that I had publicly committed, in a KSBW interview, to keep working with enthusiasts to find a better location. I invited them to meet me at Carmel Middle School later that week to explore options, and they said they would.

■ The UPS Store, another perspective

My next stop that day was the UPS Store. Standing in line ahead of me were two Forest Hill Park neighbors who had been on the other side of the debate. We had a friendly conversation, and I shared what had just happened at the post office. It was a reminder that these issues are personal, shared, and something we need to address with empathy.

Phoning another advocate, I had a productive discussion and her agreement to

See **MAYOR** page 30A

THE LEGACY OF A CREATIVE COMMUNITY IS ALWAYS ON HIS MIND

PACIFIC GROVE sculptor Peter Partch cannot tell the story of his life and artistic career without introducing the listener to the great and generous people who fortuitously came into his world at opportune times.

They shaped his worldview, taught him the meaning of passion, discipline and cre-

when the teen was in desperate need. “We had a dysfunctional family. My father was an alcoholic and was having trouble maintaining a sensible living standard for all of us,” said Partch, who had two older sisters — Phyllis and Penelope (a talented plein-air artist in Carmel Valley), and big brother Tim, a year-and-a-half older.

Carmel’s Artists

By DENNIS TAYLOR

ativity and showed him what genius looks like.

The Peninsula native and Monterey High product (Class of 1968) guesses he was 12 or 13 years old when he had his “first mystical experience” while walking to school.

“All of a sudden, I had a feeling of oneness with everything. All the plants, the animals, the people ... we were all one thing,” Partch remembered. “At that young age, I believed I had seen the real source of truth in the world, and felt transformed by it.”

‘Can this be real?’

Serendipitous occurrences through the years reinforced a philosophy that all things are connected, as in the summer of ’65, when he convinced his father to drive him into Carmel Valley to meet well-known sculptor Alexander Weygers.

“As we drove onto his property, I remember thinking, ‘Can this be real?’ It was amazing ... magical,” Partch remembered. “Everything I saw was in rounded shapes — nothing was square. I was seeing buildings made entirely from cast-off materials — things that were going to be thrown away or burned by the Cummings brothers at their mill at the mouth of Carmel Valley.”

Partch would come to learn that Weygers and his wife, Marian, were self-styled ecologists — all about sustainability — long before “saving the planet” was a conversation.

After the artist graciously gave the youngster and his father an eye-popping tour of his property, workspace and sculptures, Partch enthusiastically expressed interest in taking a workshop from Weygers.

“Well, I have one rule — you have to be 16 years old,” the sculptor said, leaving 15-year-old Peter with only one reasonable course of action:

“I lied,” Partch confessed — with no hint of remorse — six decades later.

The fib, in fact, was life-changing. The artist not only became his teacher, he also became a mentor and father figure at a time

visualize possibilities,” said Partch, who reflects fondly on the times he had with Weygers, foraging for marble from the Big Sur and Little Sur rivers.

The young student learned at the knee of the master stone- and woodcarver, who also taught him how to make his own carving tools.

Wah Ming Chang

Partch later associated with Wah Ming Chang, a designer, sculptor and artist who gained Hollywood fame for designing props and models for the original “Star Trek” television series, and films that included “The Time Machine,” “Pinocchio,” “Bambi,” “The King and I,” “Cleopatra,” “Planet of the Apes,” “Star Trek V: The Final Frontier,” and many others.

“He was one of the greatest artists

See **ARTIST** page 30A



Pacific Grove sculptor Peter Partch poses with a work in progress, carved from a piece of marble he collected more than 40 years ago.

The Carmel Pine Cone Help Wanted

The Carmel Pine Cone is looking for a full-time sales representative to help expand our business. Experience in print advertising, i.e., magazine or newsprint, is preferred.

A qualified candidate has:

- 2-5 years of experience developing and growing an advertising client base
- A proven record of successful business development
- Excellent communication skills, solid work ethic and a desire to be part of a team
- Familiarity with the business community on the Monterey Peninsula

Responsibilities include selling advertising, finding new clients, maintaining relationships, providing customer service, creating ad campaigns, and working with in-house production staff.

Excellent salary & benefits including medical, profit sharing and 401(k). Partial work from home is an option for a great performer.

Send resume to jackie@carmelpinecone.com No phone calls



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LIVES
From previous page

Preservationists, a 150-member group which mobilizes as needed to petition local boards and appear at public meetings to vouch for cultural assets under threat of demolition or development.

The Cooper-Molera Adobe across from the Monterey-Salinas Transit hub in Monterey is one recent victory. The preservationists alliance advocated for shared use of the 1830s-era property and assisted the Monterey State Historic Park Association in completing the first phase of restoration in time for 2023’s Christmas in the Adobes, its biggest fundraiser of the year. Following a comprehensive restoration that wrapped this summer, Cooper-Molera is historical and profitable — it’s a museum, a venue for weddings and private events, and there’s usually a long line to get inside the main building, where Alta Bakery set up shop in 2019.

History passed down

As a public educator, Sheridan has figured out how to tell old stories in a way that matters to modern people and adds value to their lives, and she relishes the responsibility. She trains docents, programs tours and shares her research with a diverse mix of students. Donations to the Monterey State Historic Park Association, Sheridan noted, support Los Exploradores summer camp and year-round educational programs for elementary-school kids in and outside of Monterey County, even sponsoring bus costs if necessary. Sheridan frequently buses herself to CSU Monterey Bay, where she delivers original talks on neighborhood histories and cultural heritage at OLLI — the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute — a continuing education program for seniors.

As kids, Sheridan and her two brothers had no choice but to enjoy history. Dinner conversations were a steady diet of whatever biography or nonfiction book their father, a lawyer, was reading at the time.

His relationship to the past so impressed Sheridan that majoring in history was the obvious choice when she enrolled at UC Santa Barbara, not far from family in Manhattan Beach. She graduated in 1970, earned a master’s in education administration from the University of Washington, and tried a few careers, eventually settling in for a decade of research — energy conservation, of all things — in 1977.

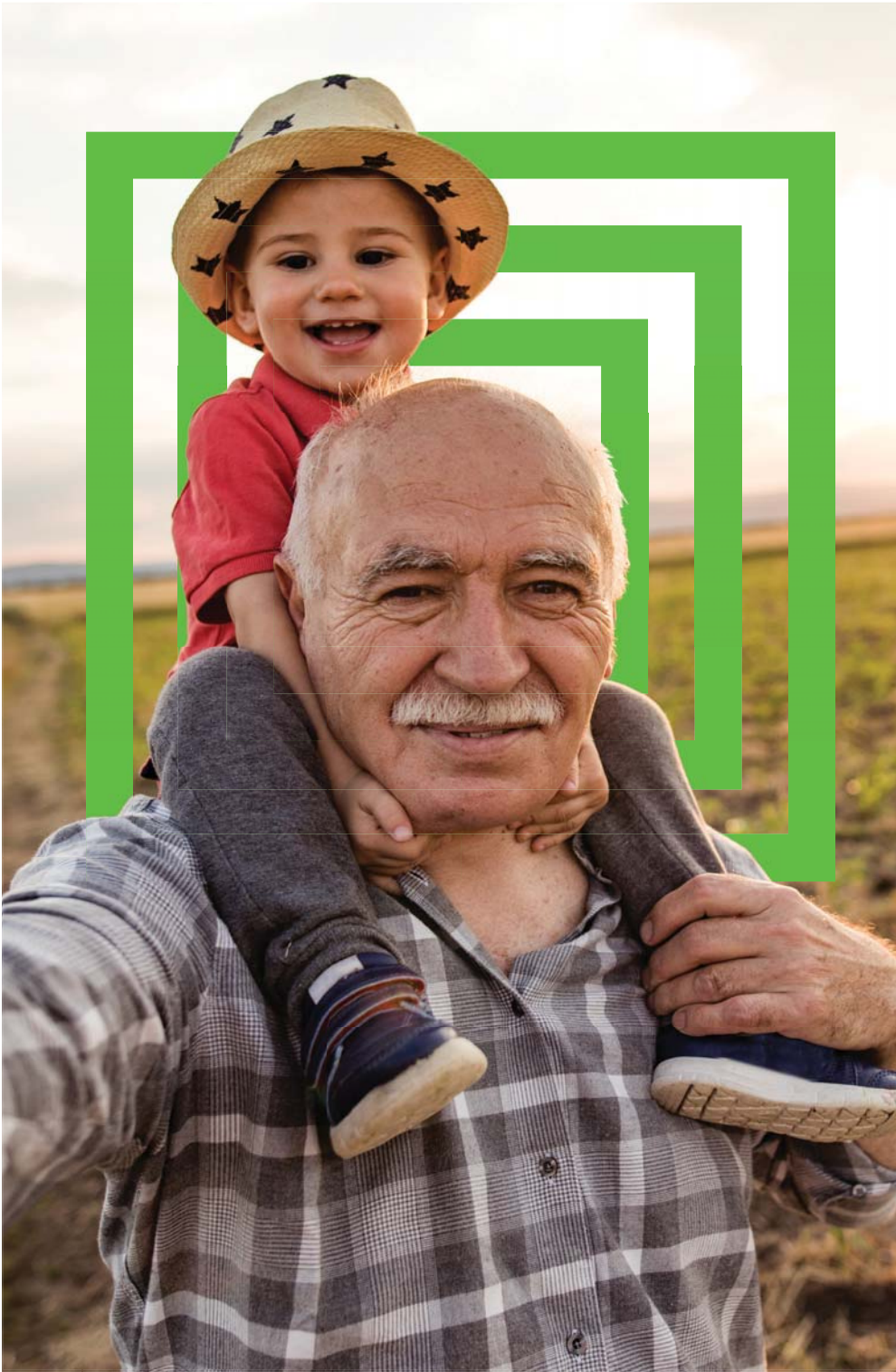
Planning Seattle

She met experts in transportation, waste management and urban development, as well as specialists whose aims occasionally seemed at odds with the rest. They conducted environmental impact reports and historic surveys and asked inconvenient questions, and their successes intrigued her. Here was a serious vocation for a history major. Not only that, Seattle was undergoing such rapid development in the 1990s that once-in-a-career projects would be among Sheridan’s first — including the total renovation of the downtown waterfront, the seawall underneath it, and the new Washington State Highway 99 tunnel below that.

In 1994, Sheridan walked out of the University of Washington with her second master’s degree, this one in urban planning and historic preservation, and went to work for a private firm. Soon she began consulting independently as the Sheridan Group, and the following decades entangled her in some of the city’s most transformative undertakings. Notably, her reports were part of the effort that paved the way for the modern Waterfront District, now home to a 20-acre public park.

Contracted primarily for government work, Sheridan was also recruited by private developers and citizens groups to assess historic neighborhoods — with emphasis on the architectural significance of Fremont and Queen Anne, where she lived — and by the University of Washington to survey every building on campus. She registered 2,000 cultural landmarks

Continues next page



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From previous page

in the state’s public database, opined on a 10-mile extension of the light rail system and helped establish Whidbey Island as a national historic landmark and nature reserve, a beautiful place to admire the skyline across Puget Sound.

‘Layers of history’

Sheridan moved to Pacific Grove in 2017, two decades after her husband died. Whenever she traveled back to California to visit her brothers, she had always made a point of stopping in Monterey and realized the Peninsula checked two boxes — “a place on the coast with layers of history.”

Sheridan believes the past is “a living thing,” an outlook evidenced in her love affair with historic gardens and parks. Landscapes fascinated her in the early days of her career, especially those designed by Frederick Olmsted — noted for his work on New York City’s Central Park — and his sons, Frank and John. By Sheridan’s estimate, Seattle has the most “developed and intact” system of Olmsted parks in the country. They were frequent stops on tours and educational programs she organized.

Frank Olmsted’s supposed involvement in the Memory Garden in Monterey State Historic Park, where she started volunteering in 2017, piqued her curiosity. Based on her experience, she doubted he had designed it, so she pored over old correspondence, “which it seemed no one ever had, because the answer was right there,” she laughed. She learned that while Frank had some input, a local woman, Margaret Jacks — daughter of famous local landowner, developer and businessman David Jacks — was the real architect.

Christmas in the Adobes

“Everybody talks about her father, but Margaret imprinted the family legacy by restoring it,” Sheridan explained of the adobe-walled sanctuary built in 1927. It’s behind the Pacific House Museum, which Jacks and her sisters also restored. Consider Lake El Estero, Jacks Peak Park, Ryan Ranch, Casa del Oro, the site of the Monterey Sports Center, most of the Monterey State Historic Park — all among Margaret’s donations to the city from her family’s landed fortune. Adding the Memory Garden to the list of her contributions was one of Sheridan’s major accomplishments.

Jacks is a recurring figure in Sheridan’s popular history talks (available by request) along with architect Julia Morgan, who designed the Asilomar Hotel and Conference

Grounds in 1913 — as well as a home for William Randolph Hearst a bit farther south.

And in Old Monterey, Christmas in the Adobes is a great opportunity for visitors to relive the past by wandering right through it. This year, as it has for decades, its live musicians, costumed reenactors and performers brought festive crowds for a walking tour of all 12 Monterey Historic Park adobes, all decked out for the holidays. The

park’s biggest fundraiser for 40 years running, Sheridan has helped to organize it since 2017.

Every year, without fail, a few visitors ask how they can get involved. The great thing, Sheridan tells them, is that they have options, from volunteering at the Custom House Store, to organizing hands-on activities for kids, even mending the park’s period-authentic costumes. And helping people find the restrooms.

HB

Heinrich Brooksher

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ARTIST

From page 27A

we’ve ever seen in the Western world, and he was one of my mentors,” Partch said of Chang, who was a Carmel Valley resident from 1970 until 2003, when he died.

“I was peripherally involved with Wah, helping him with bronze casting, mold-making and all the natural processes you acquire as a sculptor.”

Michelangelo’s quarry

Partch also benefited from the generosity of Gordon Newell, a sculptor and painter who welcomed sculpture students into his studio at 444 Cannery Row in the early 1970s.

“Gordon was fantastic, and he changed a lot of people’s lives — mine included,” he said of the artist, whose well-known monarch butterfly sculpture, created in 1964, can be seen in Pacific Grove’s Lovers Point Park.

“I can’t even describe how powerfully focused and gifted he was and how much of himself he gave to other artists, allowing us to come into his studio, hang out and use his hammers and chisels to make things.

“I learned a lot from him — how to articulate stone ... how to bring out the luster, like the brilliant colors you find in alabaster.”

Partch knew he wanted a career as a fine-art sculptor before he left Monterey High. He felt no need to consider college.

His skills have included blacksmithing (learned from Weygers, a master blacksmith), marble, bronze and wood art, and jewelry — work that is mostly privately owned.

He enhanced his abilities with two trips to Pietrasanta, Italy in 2001 and 2003, studying with master sculptors and collecting marble from the same quarry where Michelangelo found his materials.

His wife of 46 years, Penny, a retired Monterey Peninsula College teacher of English as a second language, accompanied him both times.

At 75, Partch is in his 17th year of a battle with Parkinson’s disease — an affliction that, at this point, impacts his vision and causes tremors in his hands.

But he is still carving marble in the backyard of the Pacific Grove home he shares with Penny.

Artist and writer

Their two sons are also artistic: Colin earned two master’s degrees from UC Berkeley, one in creative writing. Scott is a talented graphic artist.

And, like his mentors, Partch gave back to the art form he loves.

“I taught sculpture at MPC for 18 years, and decided I had to stop after I was diagnosed,” he said.

“It was difficult to walk away from teaching, because I loved it — I couldn’t believe they actually paid me to do that,” he said. “But I also believed that I needed to be all there for my students, 100 percent.

“I’m doing pretty well,” Partch said. “Sometimes my mobility is challenged — there are ups and downs — but some days you wouldn’t have a clue that I have Parkinson’s.”

One of Partch’s pieces is on exhibit at the 480 Light-house Gallery in Pacific Grove.

More examples of his art can be viewed on his Facebook page at Peter Partch Sculpture and Tools.

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

MAYOR

From page 27A

meet at the middle school, plus another possible site she had in mind. We all met last Friday for a constructive field trip. As one of the advocates wrote in a follow-up email, “No journey starts without taking the first step.”

These moments are not unusual, especially if you walk the village and engage with the community. They happen because we make space for them, and I suspect they happen for all of our council and commission members. When you keep an open mind, listen to all sides and avoid attaching personal feelings to policy disagreements, solutions have a way of finding you.

■ Beyond pickleball

I have seen this play out in business vitality, beach safety, and community engagement. Meeting a group of young lifeguards on Carmel Beach led to preliminary conversations with State Parks. Visits from communities in Australia and Spain sparked research into sister cities. Looking at the middle school tennis courts opened conversations with the school district about their adjacent vacant lot. Somehow, at the right time and place, the next piece of the puzzle may pop up. Our job is simply to listen, connect the dots and keep moving us forward together. Hope you all have a nice holiday season!

To hear a podcast generated from this column go to cli.re/serendipity.

Dale Byrne is mayor of Carmel-by-the-Sea. His email is dbyrne@cbts.us.



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LETTERS

From page 26A

Adolescents are still developing impulse control and decision-making skills, which is why the justice system has traditionally emphasized rehabilitation — not as leniency, but as the most effective path to safer communities.

Finally, California courts and lawmakers have responded to modern neuroscience and Supreme Court guidance recognizing that juveniles are both less culpable for and more capable of change. This is not ideological softness; it is evidence-based policy.

We should hold young offenders accountable. But accountability is not the same as simply increasing sentence lengths. If our goal is long-term public safety, then interventions that steer youth away from a lifetime of criminal involvement are far more effective than policies that satisfy public frustration in the moment but fail to reduce crime.

Thomas F. Lee, Monterey

Christmas display

Dear Editor,

The depiction of a man holding a gun is not a good image for a Christmas display. “Peace on Earth, Good Will to All” is the original and eternal message of Christmas. Shame on whomever created and promoted that gory and dangerously nihilistic last-century garbage — especially as part of a traditional Christmas display aimed at children. Shame!

Katharina Harlow, Carmel

Display and violence

Dear Editor,

Thank you for the article in the Dec. 12, 2025 issue, “Is it Christmas décor or gun violence?”

When you become an elected official, what you do and how you do it is looked at with a magnifying glass. No matter what, you will always be under a cloud of

scrutiny.

I was quite disappointed to read the details of the article regarding, in my opinion, the inappropriate holiday decor display selected by an elected official who serves as trustee on the Pacific Grove school board.

In a time like today, I feel as a society, we must protect our children from all forms of violence, especially gun violence. We need to continue to send a message that as a community we have zero tolerance for violence.

To that end, displaying a figure totting what was described in the article as a machine gun, with blood spots on the figure’s shirt, by all means did not send the type of holiday cheer that anyone, especially children, would understand, let alone be exposed to.

Thoughtful consideration and responsible context are essential to protect children’s well-being and promote healthy, nonviolent values. Children exposed to casual displays of guns may be prone to imitate gun-related behaviors during play, which possibly could blur the line between playing and real danger.

It is ironic that in this issue of The Pine Cone, front page, there is an article about a CHS graduate waiting to hear whether a 33-minute documentary he helped produce, “All The Empty Rooms,” will receive an Academy Award.

The documentary visits the bedrooms of four of the 70 children who have died in school shootings since 2019 — a small fraction of the 200-plus killed in school shootings since the 1999 Columbine High School massacre.

Shortly after this issue of The Pine Cone was released, there were two mass shootings, one at Brown University and the other at Bondi Beach in Australia.

This form of violence will most likely never go away. It stresses the importance that as adults and parents, we must teach our children and be the example that any form of violence, no matter how it’s

See **MORE LETTERS** page 38A



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MARKET SNAPSHOT

The Holiday Season Slowdown Has Begun

“The market progressed steadily this week with 2 new listings, including one off market in Pebble, and 2 listings coming back to the market after getting pulled from MLS. There are buyers in town that will make the leap, if the house is a perfect fit. There were 3 new escrows in our area and 3 that closed, including one in the Golden Rectangle for \$6.1M. We’re seeing more listings rest off MLS, as is typical this time of year, with 11 houses withdrawing from MLS. You can anticipate a majority of these to come back after the New year.”

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The Carmel Pine Cone

Section 2

Pirates basketball team brings a mix of experience and camaraderie

THE ATHLETIC culture at Stevenson is tight, in no small part because student-athletes are strongly encour-

Peninsula Sports

By DENNIS TAYLOR

aged to participate in a sport in each of the three seasons — fall, winter and spring — and sample a variety of activ-



PHOTO/KERRY BELSER

Stevenson's Logan Lund (black jersey), a cornerback and receiver in football, brings aggression and physicality onto the court.

ities before they graduate. That philosophy builds familiarity, camaraderie, trust and loyalty, which might explain why standout athletes from other sports decided to play basketball this season, when the Pirates hope to improve upon last year's 7-7 record in the Pacific Coast Athletic League's Mission Division, 11-14 overall.

Six returning varsity players have been joined this year by a cavalry that includes 6-foot-6, 225-pound all-league football player Cody Thatcher, 6-5 water polo standout and future college lacrosse player Laird Welch, Calvin Etcheverry, a member of Stevenson's 2024 state championship golf team, and Lyke Yoon, a Central Coast Section singles qualifier in boys tennis.

"Who they are today is not who they're going to be in January and February," predicted Coach Tyler Brown, who plans to integrate those unpolished diamonds into a rotation that already includes three returning starters from last year's CCS Division 4 playoff team.

Top gun

That list includes:

- All-Mission Cooper Olin, a 6-4 senior shooting guard who lit up opponents for 18.3 points per game and average 6.3 rebounds, second-best on the team.
- All-Mission Derek Diniz, a 5-11 point guard who led the team in assists (3.6), ranked second in steals (1.8), and was third in rebounds (4.4), despite being 5 inches shorter than the two teammates who got more — Olin and Kekoa Williams, who improved the school high jump record to 6 feet, 7



PHOTO/KERRY BELSER

Stevenson senior Cooper Olin (black jersey), who averaged 18 points per game a year ago, can expect to attract a crowd of defenders all year long.

inches last spring as a senior. ■ And junior guard Barak De La Rosa, who saw significant floor time at guard as a sophomore, accruing 4.9 points, 1.2 assists (third), and 1.5 steals (third). A key is to develop other scorers to complement Olin, who will figure heavily in the game plan of every opposing coach. "He'll be a target for other teams — they'll all have a plan for him, and he's going to have to navigate that," Brown said. "We're really looking for Cooper to step into a leadership role." Another varsity veteran, 6-1 forward Jack Dalhamer, saw reduced playing time behind Williams in 20 games a

See **SPORTS** next page



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SPORTS

From previous page

year ago, but is likely to step into prominence this year. Dalhamer was a defensive standout on the football team, and played on Stevenson's 2025 baseball team, which won CCS and reached the NorCal D-5 championship game.

"Jack is a glue guy for us — he does a lot of things that don't show up on the stat sheet, but we don't function well without

committee situation," said Brown, whose trainees include Etcheverry, De La Rosa, Olin, Yoon and sophomore Lincoln Clymo, a court-savvy player whose dad, Justin, is Stevenson's athletic director and coaches Stevenson's varsity girls after several years as head coach of the boys team.

"We're just trying to get guys to understand what that point guard position means, because it comes with so much responsibility and leadership," he said.

Yoon, a junior in his final year of athletic eligibility, is 5-10 guard described by his coach as "a high-energy spark plug, who can be a pest on defense." He also is emerging as a capable 3-point shooter.

Muscle under the hoop

Physicality — especially muscle under the basket — should be greatly improved with the addition of Thatcher and Welch, both tall and imposing.

"Laird Welch hasn't played basketball since his freshman year, but he's built like a refrigerator. We watched him grab five rebounds in three minutes of his first game," Brown said of the PCAL's two-time Offensive Player of the Year in water polo, and the first-team All-Gabilan lacrosse standout.

"His attitude was, 'I don't care if I play at all — I just want to be a part of it,'" the coach said. "And

now he's starting for us."

Thacher, another strong rebounder, scored 10 points in eight minutes against San Lorenzo Valley.

"Those two guys are rough around the edges as basketball players, but they compete at a high level, they do the dirty work, and their rebounding abilities are out of



PHOTO/KERRY BELSER

Junior guard Barak De La Rosa (2) got extensive playing time for the Pirates last winter and figures to contribute again this season.

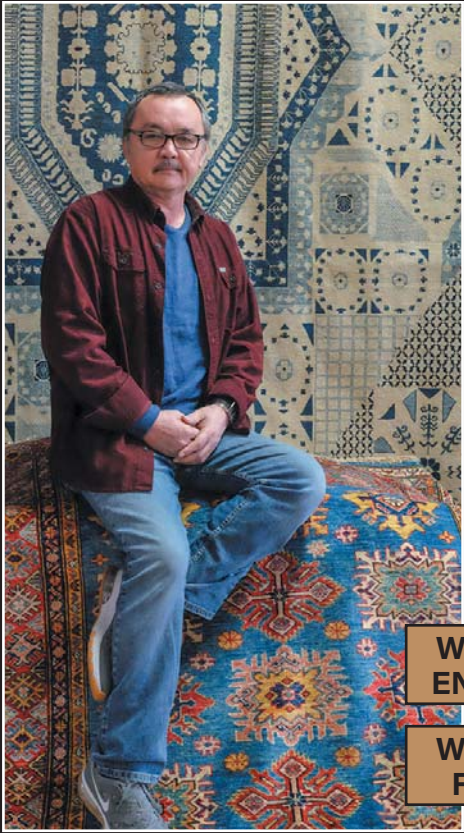
him, and he's playing a lot of minutes," Brown said.

Diniz, a relentless competitor, severely injured a hamstring in the third game of Stevenson's 9-2 football season and is still rehabilitating. He's not expected to play basketball until after the holidays, which leaves the Pirates in search of a playmaker until he returns.

"Right now, we're in a point-guard-by-

See **MORE SPORTS** page 37A

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GAVEL

From page 4A

In January and February of 2024, Evans and other Norteño Gang members stole two vehicles from cities on the Monterey Peninsula. At the time, Evans was participating in the TAILS program at Wonderwood Ranch in Prunedale. The director of the ranch testified at preliminary hearing that Wonderwood Ranch utilized grant money to pay for an apartment for the then 17-year-old on the same road as the ranch. Evans was released from custody in a penal institution into this program. The remote area in which he was provided housing allowed Evans to store the two stolen vehicles near his residence for extended periods of time, possess and secrete multiple firearms, as well as test fire multiple rounds of ammunition at an adjoining property.

On the evening of Feb. 3, 2024, Evans, Cervantes and two uncharged assailants committed an armed robbery at the Big 5 Sporting Goods store at Northridge Mall in Salinas. They utilized one of the two stolen vehicles. The crew stole over \$2,000 of ammunition.

On Feb. 4, 2024, following communication from Pedro Nava, a group of gang members including Evans and Cervantes went searching for rival gang members. Instead, they mistakenly murdered cousins Canchola and Garcia on Los Coches Road in unincorporated Monterey County outside of Soledad. They utilized the same stolen vehicle in this crime. The victims sustained over 40 gunshot wounds combined.

On March 3, 2024, following communication from Nava, a group of gang members including Evans and Cervantes opened fire on a family party in King City. The crew was armed with three firearms, at least one of which had been modified to be fully automatic. They killed Francisco Perez, Olivo Perez, Guzman and Aparicio and inflicted great bodily injury on seven other victims. They utilized the second stolen vehicle in this crime. The deceased victims sustained more than 20 gunshot wounds combined.

The investigation into these crimes remains ongoing. Anyone with information is encouraged to reach out to law enforcement.

Nov. 21 — Pedro Quezada, 55, was sentenced by Judge Rafael Vazquez to 70 years in prison. Quezada was previously found guilty by a Monterey County jury on Oct. 17, 2025, of 11 counts of forcible lewd or lascivious acts on a child under 14. All 11 of the charges are violent felonies and are considered strikes under California’s three strikes law. Quezada was also ordered to register as a sex offender for the rest of his life. Jane Doe disclosed that Quezada, a family member, had molested her on numerous occasions over a seven-year period. Doe was around 4 years old when the molestations began. After the first molestation Quezada told her that it was “their little secret” and that if she told anyone something bad would happen. This kept Doe from disclosing the ongoing abuse for more than 12 years. Doe testified bravely at the jury trial. She stated that she delayed reporting the crime because she was afraid of Quezada. According to research into sexu-

al assault victim behavior, it is very common for victims to delay reporting the sexual abuse, especially when the victim is a minor and has a close relationship with the perpetrator.

This case was investigated by Detective Edwin Cruz and other officers from the Salinas Police Department. District attorney investigator Daisy Gurley also assisted in the investigation. Doe was assisted by district attorney advocates Mayra Sandoval and Kristin Peterson. Court facility support dog Armani provided Doe with much-needed support during her testimony at trial.

Nov. 21 — Robert Carmona, 54, of Salinas, pled guilty to multiple felony counts of welfare fraud and perjury for fraudulently obtaining public assistance benefits for which he was not eligible. The same conduct also constituted a violation of his felony probation in two prior cases.

Carmona will receive a prison sentence of six years and eight months, consisting of two years for the welfare fraud case and four years and eight months for the probation violations. Sentencing is scheduled for Jan. 9, 2026, in Department 2 of the Salinas Courthouse, before the Honorable Andrew G. Liu.

Between December 2023 and January 2025, Carmona resided in residential drug treatment facilities in Salinas — Sun Street Centers and Turning Point of Central California, Inc. — where he was provided three meals a day and housing. This arrangement made him ineligible for CalFresh (food stamp) benefits. In addition, because these facilities did not permit him to live with his minor son, he was also ineligible for CalWORKs (cash aid) benefits on behalf of his son.

Despite this, Carmona submitted multiple false documents to the Monterey County Department of Social Services, claiming that he was homeless and living in his vehicle with his son. As a result of these false representations, Carmona fraudulently obtained \$12,079 in welfare benefits to which he was not entitled.

The case was investigated by District Attorney Investigator Isabelle Rhodes and the Monterey County Welfare Fraud Special Investigations Unit. The Monterey County District Attorney’s Office remains committed to identifying and prosecuting individuals who fraudulently obtain public assistance and defraud the people of the State of California. The public may report suspected fraud to the district attorney’s office by calling the fraud hotline at (831) 755-3224 or via email reportfraud@countyofmonterey.gov.

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The goal of treatment is to offer relief from the problems many experience. Treatment can help a person be healthier and more active. This care should be part of any other care one receives for their health care.



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Reunion gets international motorsports acclaim

By MARY SCHLEY

THE ROLEX Monterey Motorsports Reunion vintage races won Motorsports Event of the Year during the International Historic Motoring Awards at The Peninsula hotel in London last month. The recognitions are considered “the most prestigious global awards in the collector car world, celebrating the achievements of people and organizations worldwide.”

Held for the 51st time at Laguna Seca, the August 2024 Reunion celebrated the 75th anniversary of Formula 1 with 50 historic and modern Formula 1 race cars, and an unprecedented two dozen IROC cars were raced, with more than a few legends behind the wheel.

“Each year, our team invests endless time and energy to make the Rolex Monterey Motorsports Reunion even better than years past, and this year’s event truly set a new bar for excellence,” said Mel Harder, WeatherTech Raceway Laguna Seca’s president and general manager. “We are honored to be

recognized on a global stage and would like to thank the fans, drivers, car owners and sponsors who help make this event possible.”

Second time

The recognition marks a major achievement for the new team at Laguna Seca, which has been managed and operated by the nonprofit Friends of Laguna Seca since August 2024. The group is undertaking significant efforts to raise funds to update the grounds in accordance with the agreement it signed with Monterey County a year earlier, and hired Harder, a veteran in the motorsports industry, in March. April Henderson was promoted to director of motorsports in August and was previously operations director and then vice president of events.

Harder and Henderson attended the IMHA awards, which were held Nov. 14, along with Andy Prill, a member of the Rolex Monterey Motorsports Reunion advisory council. They accepted the award together as the Reunion beat out

the Silverstone Festival, Le Mans Classic and the Pittsburgh Vintage Grand Prix, among others. The honor marks the second time the vintage races have won the accolade, the first being in 2022.

The Reunion was among the winners in 15 categories, including Motoring Event of the Year (Audrain Newport Concours & Motor Week, over a half-dozen other nominees that included The Quail Motorsports Gathering) and Restoration of the Year, which had the Hispano-Suiza H6C “Boulogne” by Jonathan Wood prevailing over six others, among them the Hispano-Suiza H6C Type Sport Torpedo by RM Auto Restoration that won Best of Show at this year’s Pebble Beach Concours d’Elegance.

Each category, except for Lifetime Achievement and Car of the Year, was judged by a panel of experts and prominent figures, including TV stars Wayne Carini and Donald Osborne, Pebble Beach Concours d’Elegance chairman Sandra Button, and Octane Japan editor Shiro Horie.



PHOTO/ROLEX MONTEREY MOTORSPORTS REUNION

Laguna Seca President and GM Mel Harder and April Henderson, director of the Rolex Monterey Motorsports Reunion, received the Motorsports Event of the Year award at the International Historic Motoring Awards in London.

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PUBLIC NOTICES

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No. 20252203
Filing type: ORIGINAL FILING
The following person(s) is (are) doing business as:
SECURE SEAL MOBILE NOTARY, 555 Iverson St. #B, Salinas, CA 93901.
County of Principal Place of Business: MONTEREY
Registered Owner(s): JACQUELINE F. LYNCH, 555 Iverson St. #B, Salinas, CA 93901.
This business is conducted by an individual.
Registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above on Dec. 9, 2025.
S/Jacqueline Lynch
Date signed: Dec. 9 2025
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Monterey County on Dec. 9, 2025.
Publication Dates: Dec. 19, 26, 2025; Jan. 2, 9, 2026 (PC 1218)

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No. 20252195
Filing type: ORIGINAL FILING
The following person(s) is (are) doing business as:
KAAN ROYAL MATCHA & CAFE, 1760 Fremont Blvd., Seaside, CA 93955.
County of Principal Place of Business: MONTEREY

Registered Owner(s): ANGELICA ANAIZ RUIZ, 3135 Seacrest Ave., Apt. D103, Marina, CA 93933.
This business is conducted by an individual.
Registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above on Dec. 8, 2025.

S/Angelica A. Ruiz Leon
Date signed: Dec. 8 2025
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Monterey County on Dec. 8, 2025.
Publication Dates: Dec. 19, 26, 2025; Jan. 2, 9, 2026 (PC 1223)

LIEN SALE AUCTION ADVERTISEMENT
LIEN SALE NOTICE: NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that Pacific Grove Self Storage at 2000 Sunset Drive, Pacific Grove CA 93950 will sell the contents of the storage unit listed below at a public auction to enforce a lien imposed on said property (pursuant to the California Self Storage Facilities Act Business and Professions Code 21700-21716). The sale will take place at the website www.StorageTreasures.com by competitive bidding and end on **January 2nd 2025 at 10am**. Unit will be available for viewing prior to the sale at www.StorageTreasures.com. Contents will be sold for cashier’s check or money order only. A 10-15% buyer’s premium will be charged and possibly a cleaning deposit per unit. All sales are final. Seller reserves the right to withdraw the property at any time before the sale or to refuse any bids. The property to be sold is described as “general household items” unless otherwise noted. **Eren Niazi & Carina Carvahlo** Property to be sold includes: Exercise Equipment, Luggage, Plastic Storage Containers, Furniture, Storage Boxes. Furniture, Artwork, and Kitchen Items.
Publication date: Dec. 19 & 26, 2025 (PC1221)



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MORE SPORTS

From page 34A

this world,” Brown said.

Senior Logan Lund, a rugged receiver and cornerback in football, saw minimal court time in 17 varsity games last year, but figures to bloom this season.

Lund and Divij Anderson-Santabanez, a tireless junior, can impact a game with defense, rebounding and high energy.

Senior Tyler Hwang brings exceptional leadership skills, not only on the campus and court, but also in the locker room.

“He’s one of those kids who holds it all together for us,” Brown said of Hwang, a backstroker and individual medley competitor on the swim team.

Sean Mathieson, a 6-1 shooter who is adjusting to the speed of the varsity level, and searching for his most effective role.

“We know we’re going to see some good teams in the Mission Division again this year,” Brown said. “Hollister will be tough, North Monterey County won the league last year. Alvarez (down from the Gabilan Division) and St. Francis (unbeaten in the Cypress Division last year) are in our league now.

“Our goal is to find our identity and consistently compete every night.”

The Pirates play Seaside at home on Tuesday and travel to Pacific Grove on Thursday. Both games have 7 p.m. starting times.

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



Stevenson coach Tyler Brown (center) believes he has a few uncut diamonds on this year’s roster and expects improved play in January and February.

PHOTO/KERRY BELSER



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PUBLIC NOTICES

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that on **Tuesday, January 13, 2026, at 4:30 p.m.**, the City Council of the City of Carmel-by-the-Sea will hold a Public Hearing via teleconference and in person at the City Hall Council Chambers located on Monte Verde Street between Ocean and Seventh Avenues, Carmel-by-the-Sea.

SUBJECT OF PUBLIC HEARING:

First Reading and Introduction of Ordinance 2026-001 - amending Title 15 (Buildings and Construction) of the Carmel Municipal Code by adopting the 2025 editions of the California Administrative Code, California Building Code (CBC) and appendices, California Residential Code (CRC), California Energy Code (CEnC), California Fire Code (CFC), California Mechanical Code (CMC), California Plumbing Code (CPC), California Electrical Code (CEC), California Green Building Standards Code (CGBSC), Historic Building Code (HBC), Existing Building Code (EBC) and Wildland-Urban Interface Code (WUI) and 2024 International Property Maintenance Codes (IPMC) with local amendments.

Design Traditions 1.5 - Receive a presentation, including feedback from the Planning Commission’s September 18th Special Meeting, on the current draft of the revised Design Guidelines (Design Traditions 1.5) and provide feedback on both the form and function of the documents as well as the overall Design Traditions project.

Receive a presentation on roofing materials, including but not limited, to metal roofs. Consider the recommendations of the Planning Commission and provide direction to staff to return with a draft policy for adoption.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: This meeting will be held via teleconference and in person (“hybrid”) in the City Council Chambers at City Hall located on Monte Verde Street between Ocean and Seventh Avenues, Carmel-by-the-Sea. The public is welcome to attend the meeting in person or remotely via Zoom, however, the meeting will proceed as normal even if there are technical difficulties accessing Zoom. The City will do its best to resolve any technical issues as quickly as possible. To participate via teleconference, click the following link to attend via Zoom (or copy and paste the link into your browser):

<https://ci-carmel-ca-us.zoom.us/j/83138976374>
Webinar ID: 831 3897 6374
Passcode: 862068
Dial-in: (253) 215-8782

The staff report and relevant documents will be available at least 72 hours in advance of the meeting on the City’s website at <http://www.ci.carmel.ca.us>. The Council meeting will be televised live on the City’s website and archived there after the meeting. For more information regarding City Council meetings, please contact the City Clerk’s office at (831) 620-2016.

All interested persons are invited to attend in person or via teleconference at the time and place specified above to give oral or written testimony concerning this matter. Written comments may be submitted to the City Clerk at City Hall located on the east side of Monte Verde Street between Ocean and Seventh Avenues, Carmel-by-the-Sea, California, 93921 or P.O. Box CC, Carmel-by-the-Sea, California, 93921 or by email cityclerk@ci.carmel.ca.us prior to the meeting. With respect to written comments, please submit them at least 2 hours before the meeting in order to ensure they are provided to the legislative body and made part of the record. Comments received after that time and up to the end of the public hearing will be saved as part of the record but may not be provided to the legislative body prior to or during the public hearing.

If you challenge the nature of the proposed action in court, you may be limited to raising only those issues you or someone else raised at the public hearing described in this notice or in written correspondence delivered to the city council at, or prior to, the public hearing.

Nova Romero, MMC
City Clerk

Dated: 12/15/2025

Publish Date: 12/19/2025

Publication dates:

Dec. 19, 2025

(PC1229)



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MORE LETTERS

From page 31A

Sure, the machine gun was replaced with something else; however, the bloodstains are still present. Any real leader would have done the right thing and taken down the inappropriate display.

Carmelita Garcia, Pacific Grove

Please help

Dear Editor,

Driving on Carmel Valley Road is an increasingly stressful experience with numerous speeders and tail-gaters, and delays for PG&E work, tree trimming, and the never-ending construction of the roundabout at Laureles Grade. And if this is not bad enough, the month of December features an inhumane, cruel and sadistic individual who insists on posting a sign near Scarlett Road informing

us of how few days remain until Christmas. Can't something be done to alleviate this dreadful situation?

Robin Clark, Carmel Valley

A fiscal failure

Dear Editor,

The Pacific Grove City Council's spending of \$141,530 of taxpayer funds on a political consultant firm to prepare ballot measure(s) and campaign messages to raise taxes on P.G. residents shows what they think of us — milch cows, raised to be milked. The wealthy city has a spending, not a revenue, problem. They vacuum huge cash bonanzas for the city budget from property tax reassessments every time a home is sold (median home price: \$1.3-\$1.5 million) and from the hotel tax from tourists who visit our famed beaches and aquarium. They don't have to lift a pinky finger to get this kind of revenue. When I was mayor and a council member in Auburn, a city the same geographic and population size as P.G., our sales tax was 7.25 percent (P.G. 9.25 percent), hotel tax 8 per-

cent (P.G. 12 percent), and our homes sold for 50 percent less than P.G. homes. And yet, while I served on the council, we balanced the budget 12 years in a row without raising taxes, with our own fire department and a full range of municipal services. We tightened our belt when revenues slipped, like during the deep recession of 2008-09. We did our job respecting the generosity of our taxpayers, not trying to milk them further. This isn't brain surgery. Just before Thanksgiving Day, the P.G. City Council included in the scope of work for the political consultant firm raising their pay as among the "priorities" in any tax-raising scheme. Marie Antoinette would be proud. Their action comes soon after over 1,600 P.G. residents signed a referendum petition to stop their 130 percent pay increase. P.G. residents didn't behave like a mulch cow. More like a bronco with a kick. P.G. residents and tourists will provide \$35 million in general fund revenue to city this year. If the city council can't

Continues next page



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Dec. 24 — Christmas Eve
4 p.m. Family Service
7 p.m. Choral Eucharist

Dec. 25 — Christmas Morning
9 a.m. A Capella Service

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Christmas

WORSHIP 2025

'For God so loved the world, that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.'



Christmas at The Wayfarer

Monterey Pops Brass & Hartnell Choir
Sunday, Dec. 14 at 3 p.m.

Christmas Carol Sing-Along & Caroling
Sunday, Dec. 21 at 2 p.m.

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service
Wednesday, Dec. 24 at 7 p.m.

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5 p.m. Vigil Mass (Saturday)
8 a.m., 10 a.m. & noon (Sunday)

Wednesday, December 24
Masses on Christmas Eve
4 p.m. — with Children's Nativity
8 p.m. — Mass at Night

Thursday, December 25
Mass on Christmas Day
9 a.m. and 11 a.m.

Thursday, January 1
Solemnity of Mary
Mass at 9 a.m.

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December 24th at 7 p.m.
Seasonal Music beginning at 6:45 p.m.

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From previous page

balance the budget in this wealthy city with this cornucopia of cash, they should be replaced by public servants who can.

Kevin Hanley, Pacific Grove

What socialism is
To the Editor,

In his letter, “Benefits of Socialism,” Geoff Johnston asserts that “publicly funded, collectively provided services are, by definition, forms of socialism.” This conflates two very different concepts. Socialism is a political-economic system defined by collective or state ownership or control of the means of production — capital, labor, land, and enterprise — not by the existence of public services. Police and fire departments, roads, public schools, the FAA, or the FDIC do not replace private ownership, individual agency, or market-based decision-making. They

exist within — and help support — a capitalist economy by addressing public goods, externalities and market failures.

This distinction matters because confusing public infrastructure with socialism obscures real debate. It prevents clear discussion about where markets work well, where they fail, and what role the government should play. The Founding Fathers understood this distinction clearly: they endorsed limited government functions while explicitly protecting private property and individual liberty. Blurring this distinction strips “socialism” of meaning and undermines serious discussion.

Clear definitions matter because they shape how we understand not just economic policy, but the kind of society we choose to live in.

Chris Daniel, Carmel Valley

The Pilgrims
Dear Editor,

Geoff Johnston, in his letter, “Defending fairness,”

should examine the Plymouth experiment a little closer. Sure, these settlers had to deal with bad weather, disease and scarcity, but their starvation was primarily due to their government-imposed socialist economy.

Several years of harsh anti-property rights had reduced the original number of Plymouth colonists to half. They had no private property rights, and everyone had to store their grown food in a community storage shed for shared use. Few wanted to work hard when others simply refused to labor in the fields.

Jamestown suffered from the same collectivist dilemma, where everyone had to store and share their homegrown food in a common storage space. It failed. Of the approximately 500 colonists, 439 died, primarily due to starvation. When the new governor, Dale Smith, arrived, he was horrified. He quickly handed out 3-acre parcels to each family. Now, every colonist could own their own land and farm it as they saw fit. Soon after, Jamestown began to flourish.

Lawrence Samuels, Carmel

Christmas

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WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 24
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COMMUNITY CHRISTMAS CAROLS
8:30 p.m.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 25
CHRISTMAS DAY MASS
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7pm - Blue Christmas Service

December 24
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10pm - Candlelight Worship Service

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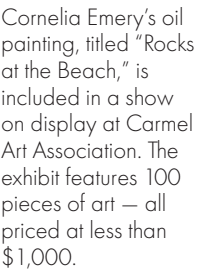
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'Iluminado' lights up Monterey art museum Saturday, poet laureate named

The installation offers viewers an opportunity to make their creative mark on

The museum is located at 559 Pacific St. in Monterey. Its website is montereyart.org

“The poet laureate program is part of our mission to champion the arts to enrich



By CHRIS COUNTS

it. “‘Iluminado’ invites visitors to explore, create and contribute to a collective experience,” according to the museum. “Through art-making and shared storytelling, this evolving work celebrates the transformative power of creativity and community.”

the lives of our community,” the arts council’s executive director Jacquie Atchison said. “Poetry is one of many art forms, and we look forward to the creative energy and community outreach Marie will bring to the roles, especially her focus on connecting us with the natural world and each other.”

The Monterey County Board of Supervisors presented Boucher with a resolution Dec. 10 in Salinas officially recognizing her as the county's poet laureate.

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Carmel Valley native’s film listed as candidate for Oscar nomination

By DENNIS TAYLOR

CARMEL VALLEY native Conall Jones learned Tuesday that a film he helped produce has been shortlisted as a contender for a 2026 Academy Award in the Best Short Documentary category.

“All The Empty Rooms,” a 33-minute documentary available on Netflix, visits the bedrooms of four of the 70 children who have died in school shootings since 2009. Every bedroom has been kept exactly as each child left it.

Jones, a 2001 Carmel High graduate, was a lead producer on the project, one of 15 films (chosen from more than 100 international qualifiers) in the running for an Oscar nomination. The finalists will be announced on Jan. 22, and the 98th Academy Awards, hosted by Conan



PHOTOS/COURTESY CONNALL JONES

Jada Scruggs and pastor Chad Scruggs lost their daughter, Hallie, in a 2023 school shooting at Covenant School in Nashville. The Scruggs family participated in interviews for a 33-minute documentary, “All The Empty Rooms,” a 2026 Oscar contender that was produced by Carmel Valley native Conall Jones.

O’Brien, will be televised live on ABC on March 15 at 4 p.m. Pacific Daylight Time.

“I think we made a great film about an issue that is underappreciated and not covered properly,” Jones told The Pine Cone Tuesday. “I think the lives of these kids and the devastating outcome that their families now live with deserve this attention.

“They’ve been forgotten, so outside of being on Netflix in front of 300 million viewers, I think this shortlist announcement is important,” Jones said. “It prolongs their legacy and their lives as we remember them. I know all of

the parents, who are going to be very happy with this outcome.”

This is the second time in three years that Jones has collaborated with director Josh Seftel on a short documentary that has been an Oscar contender. The duo previously teamed up on 2023’s “Stranger at the Gate,” which vied for a nomination in 2024.

Between now and Jan. 16, when the voting for Oscar nominees concludes, Conall, Seftel and others will embark on a frantic campaign to encourage 100 members of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences to view the film — a major challenge.

Families speak

“Those voters have fewer than 30 days to watch each of the 30 shortlisted docs, all 15 short documentaries and 15 feature-length documentaries,” Jones said. “There is a fear that some of those voters won’t actually watch the shorts, so our big push is to try to get our film in front of those people and make sure they see it before they vote.”

“All The Empty Rooms” was the brainchild of CBS News correspondent Steve Hartman, who had reported on all of the school shootings for CBS, starting with the 1999 Columbine High tragedy in Littleton, Colo.

Hartman conducted on-camera interviews with the families of Dominic Blackwell, who was 14, and Gracie Muehlberger, 15, when both were shot and killed at Saugus High School in Santa Clarita on Nov. 14, 2009, Jackie



Producer Conall Jones (seated), confers with assistant cameraman Trevor Smith during the production of “All The Empty Rooms,” one of 15 films on the Oscars shortlist for “Best Short Documentary.”

Cazares, who died at age 9 on May 24, 2022, at Robb Elementary in Uvalde, Texas, and 9-year-old Hallie Scruggs, who was killed at Covenant School in Nashville on March 27, 2023.

Jones’ other credits as a producer include Michael Moore’s “Fahrenheit 9/11,” Morgan Spurlock’s “Super Size Me 2: Holy Chicken,” and a 2021 TV docuseries called “Worn Stories.”

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12 days of Christmas: Carmel edition

By ELAINE HESSER

‘AND A partridge in a pear tree.” Most people probably don’t even hear the words anymore, the song’s been played so often. The only time the lyrics stand out is when someone rearranges what happens on days 9 through 12, swapping out the lords a-leaping with the ladies dancing. Also, every year there’s someone with a little too much time on his hands who calculates how much it would cost

to buy all the gifts. This year, it’s \$51,476.12, according to business giant PNC Financial Services. Just in case you were wondering. What the song really needs is to shed its dated, corporate agrarian, one-size-fits-all approach to Christmas and join the “shop local” movement. What would the partridge in a pear tree be if it were here? Obviously, it would be a quail in a stately old oak. On the second day, it would be two seats at Dametra. You know how hard those are to get! Day three? Three French horns. They probably have at least that many lying around Sunset Center somewhere. Why was it ever “four calling birds,” anyway? In the shop-local version, it would have to be four calling cards

— from realtors. Five golden rings? Au contraire: Five Golden Pine Cones. Geese a-laying are pretty noisy, not to mention messy, and that would never fly here. How about six chefs a-cooking instead? Normally, The Pine Cone would be in favor of swans a-swimming, but even just seven of them would have a hard go finding a pond big enough to swim in these days — unless someone wants to volunteer a swimming pool. Seven surfers surfing makes so much more sense, and better yet, it’s even more alliterative. Eight maids a-milking sounds like a form of sexism that also marginalizes the working class. It might even be a form of micro-aggression just to mention them. How about eight plein air artists instead? Also sexist are the nine ladies dancing. We’re keeping them, but as nine dancers dancing, and they have to be from one of the local dance groups. Ten lords a-leaping are downright un-American. Ten plaintiffs suing, however, is completely American. Eleven bagpipers are 10 too many unless you’re having a parade or putting on the annual Scottish games. Let’s just stick with that one guy at Spanish Bay. Eleven doctors golfing still brings a touch of St. Andrew’s to the song. However, since it would clearly violate noise ordinances, the 12 drummers drumming are out. Twelve somms a-pouring is much more civilized, particularly with a nice glass from Caraccioli or Bernardus, don’t you think?

So in summary, on day 12, there are now:

Twelve somms a-pouring
Eleven doctors golfing
Ten plaintiffs suing
Nine dancers dancing
Eight plein air artists
Seven surfers surfing
Six chefs a-cooking
Five Golden Pine Cones
Four calling cards
Three French horns
Two seats at Dametra
And a quail in a stately old oak.

Much better. And we bet it costs way more than \$51,476.12, too.

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This Week

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P.G. church celebrates 20th Celtic Christmas, Seagulls land at Golden State

IT'S 1982 all over again at Golden State Theatre in Monterey Friday at 7 p.m. when **A Flock of Seagulls** takes the stage.

Best known for their ethereal vocals, layers of key-

On a High Note

By CHRIS COUNTS

boards, catchy melodies and lead singer **Mike Score's** memorable haircut, A Flock of Seagulls was one of the most successful pop acts of 1982, when the group released a trio of hits that perfectly captured the spirit of early new wave music — "I Ran (So Far Away)," "Wishing (I Had a Photograph of You)" and "Space Age Love Song."

Today, Score remains the band's only original member. Last year, they released their latest album, "Some Dream" — the first in nearly three decades.

Tickets start at \$37.25. The theater is located at 417 Alvarado St. Call (831) 649-1070 or visit goldenstatetheatre.com.

Wild acoustic holiday jam

Showcasing an array of talented local performers, the Center for Spiritual Awakening in

Pacific Grove hosts its 13th annual Enchanted Winter Solstice Concert Friday at 7 p.m.

The lineup includes mandolinist **Dave Holodiloff**, pianist **Michael Martinez**, violinists **Peter Mellinger** and **Elijah McCullar**, singer **Alina Markina**, drummer **Shaun Elley** and others.

According to Holodiloff, the program features "a stirring mix of straight-to-the-heart and inventively re-harmonized, funk-ed-up, jazz-ed-up and mashed-up Christmas favorites." "Get ready for a wild acoustic holiday adventure from bluegrass, to Bach, to the Balkans and back," he suggested. "Enjoy a magical night of quality acoustic music and festive celebration."

A public reception precedes the concert at 6 p.m. Tick-

ets are \$50. The center is located at 522 Central Ave. Visit daveholodiloff.com.

Winterdance in P.G.

St. Mary's by the Sea in Pacific Grove welcomes its 20th Annual Winterdance Celtic Christmas Celebration Friday at 7:30 p.m and Saturday at 3 p.m.

"A joyful and cherished holiday tradition returns," Jackie Pierce of St. Mary's said. "This year's show welcomes back Molly's Revenge fiddler **John Weed**, the soaring vocals of San Francisco's **Amelia Hogan**, the

See MUSIC page 47A



Two members of the Weeds (left) play Friday, 7:30 p.m., and Saturday, 3 p.m., at St. Mary's by the Sea in Pacific Grove, which is presenting its Winterdance Celtic Christmas Celebration. The performers also include two from the San Francisco Bay area — singer Amelia Hogan (center) and guitarist Paul Kotapish (right).

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FOOD & WINE

This Christmas, give yourself a break from cooking and cleanup

HAPPY HOLIDAYS to all! We’ve got a big old roundup of restaurants and take-out options, including everyone’s favorite holiday dessert, the Yule log. Time’s a-wastin’, so let’s get to it.

■ Yule Logs

Bûche de Noël, in French, Yule Logs are traditional Christmas cakes originating in France, Belgium, Luxembourg and Switzerland. Traditionally, they consist of Swiss rolls filled with buttercream and covered in chocolate frosting to look like, well, logs. Sometimes they’re dusted in powdered sugar for a snowy look and decorated with marzipan or meringue mushrooms, while others may be more contemporary-looking.

The pastry honors the tradition of burning a Yule log at Christmastime, symbolizing good luck, prosperity and deliciousness. Luckily, we don’t have to travel far to find one.

There’s a veritable forest at Lafayette Bakery and Café (Barnyard shopping center), in P.G. at Patisserie Bechler (1225 Forest Ave.), and in Monterey at Paris Bakery (271 Bonifacio Place), Alta Bakery

Soup to Nuts

(502 Munras Ave.), and Parker-Lusseau (539 Hartnell St.). Alta’s version is chocolate buttermilk cake rolled with hazelnut-chocolate mousse and decorated with whimsical meringue mushrooms for six to eight people. Order through the 21st at altamonterey.com or in person for pick up on Dec. 23 or 24. Paris Bakery offers cake and filling in mix-and-match flavors of chocolate, vanilla, and mocha, available in-store by the slice, or a whole log for four, six or eight guests. A gluten-free option is available. That order deadline is also Dec. 21.

Parker-Lusseau Pastries has logs in chocolate-and-spice, chocolate-espreso, triple chocolate and more, in six sizes to feed four through 16 people. You can order them through Friday.

Lafayette has gluten-free mango passion almond biscuit, gluten-free pistachio lemon almond biscuit, brownie dark and milk chocolate,

See **YULE LOGS** next page



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FOOD & WINE

YULE LOGS

From previous page

and brownie coffee with mascarpone whipped cream, all for four to five guests. Have a single slice in the bakery, or pre-order a whole cake by Dec. 22.

Patisserie Bechler makes a vanilla cake with coffee buttercream, a chocolate-chocolate number, Grand Marnier or hazelnut/amaretto (vanilla cake with hazelnut buttercream), with some available in the shop, or order by Dec. 21. Three sizes feed from four to 15. Bon appétit and joyeux Noël!

■ Christmas dinner

Out in Carmel Valley, Quail Lodge will serve a three-course prix fixe menu at the Covey Grill for \$84 per person, not including tax and gratuity, on Dec. 24 and 25 from 5 to 9 p.m.

Choose a velvety chestnut soup, scallops or, for something earthier, wine-poached candy-cane beets to start.

As your main course, you might opt for the classic beef Wellington, while seafood lovers might choose halibut with brown-butter beurre blanc and grilled asparagus. There’s also Dungeness crab risotto topped with a light pea sprout salad. The restaurant’s duck breast comes with braised greens, heirloom carrots, persimmon purée and a pan sauce. For a hearty vegetarian option, there’s a roasted root vegetable risotto with Parmigiano-Reggiano.

Dessert selections include a flourless chocolate torte served with passion fruit anglaise and a fresh berry salsa. You can also try a pumpkin spice Paris-Brest — a light pastry ring piped full of spiced pumpkin cream. Or maybe you’d like a dark chocolate panna cotta with cherries and an Italian wedding cookie on the side.

Diners aged 5 to 12 can order an entrée and a dessert from their own special menu for \$29 apiece. If they’re feeling fancy, there’s a junior beef Wellington with mashed potatoes and spinach, or a classic Covey smashed burger with cheddar, lettuce and tomato, served with fries or crisp apple slices. Dessert options include a cast-iron-baked chocolate chip cookie with vanilla ice cream, a chocolate pot de crème with whipped cream, or a scoop of mint chocolate chip ice cream. To reserve, go to quailodge.com/christmas-dinner, or, for parties of five or more, call Covey Grill at (831) 620-8860.

In the Carmel Mission Inn at 3665 Rio Road, Shearwater Tavern is adding a few

Continues next page



The lobby at Quail Lodge is ready for Christmas, and the Covey Grill is cooking up a storm with a three-course prix fixe menu.

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MORE

FOOD & WINE

From previous page

specials to its menu for Dec. 24-27: prime rib with potatoes and haricots verts, as well as wild mushroom ravioli are on offer, along with sides of crispy Brussels sprouts and pancetta, and roasted chestnut bisque. Reserve at [OpenTable.com](https://opentable.com) or call (831) 624-1841 if you'd like more information.

Portola Hotel at the foot of Alvarado Street in Monterey has several events scheduled. You can meet “the Mean Green One” — apparently a cousin of Dr. Seuss’ Grinch — while dining at Peter B’s on Friday from 6 to 8 p.m. or at Jacks on Saturday from 6 to 8 p.m. You can reserve a table at Jacks for any events listed here by calling (831) 649-7870 or emailing jacks@portolahotel.com. Peter B’s listings will be walk-in only.

Leave the white shirt at home on Christmas Eve if you plan on diving into Jacks’ cioppino special with halibut,



The employee gingerbread house competition at Casa Munras Garden Hotel in Monterey is ready for you to come by and cast your vote for the best holiday houses.

calamari, mussels and other seafood served with fresh garlic bread, served between 4 and 10 p.m. Regular dinner and children’s menus will also be available, and carolers will serenade guests from 5 to 8 p.m. Cost is \$48.95 per person, exclusive of an automatic 20 percent gratuity and tax.

Oysters

On Christmas Day, Jacks has a three-course meal served in the restaurant’s festively decorated atrium from 3 to 8 p.m. Choose a starter, entrée and dessert from options like beet salad or lobster bisque, and prime rib, turkey, halibut or a vegetarian “power bowl,” followed by pecan pie or passion fruit crème brûlée. The prix fixe menu is \$65 per person plus a \$10 supplement for the prime rib. Prices exclude tax and gratuity.

For something more casual, drop by Peter B’s between noon and 8 p.m. — with happy hour from 4 to 6 p.m. — to order one of two traditional holiday dinner plates or anything from the brewpub’s regular menu. A turkey dinner is \$37.95 with your favorite sides, while prime rib is \$42.95 with mashed potatoes, green beans and baby carrots. Both come with a choice of Key lime mousse or pecan pie. Order your meal to go at (831) 649-2699.

Oystertown (281 Lighthouse Ave., Monterey) will host its Fisherman’s Feast on Christmas Eve with seatings between 5:30 and 7:30 p.m. The five-course prix fixe dinner is priced at \$115 per person, not including tax or gratuity.

The meal will begin with a baked oyster duo, followed by a choice of yellowtail crudo with pomegranate and basil oil, or the restaurant’s seasonal salad. The second course offers steamed mussels or shrimp-and-saffron risotto.

Entrées include salmon and scallop with pesto mashed potatoes, or rockfish accompanied by cauliflower, string beans and almonds. For dessert, there’s chocolate pudding with a chocolate chip cookie or persimmon cake topped with caramel sauce. Reservations are required; call (831) 312-8150.



PHOTOS/(LEFT) SALLY BAHÖ, (RIGHT) BEN SPUNGIN

Yule Logs — those wonderful rolled cakes with creamy filling and whimsical decorations — can be found all over the Monterey Peninsula. From Parker Lusseau’s elegance (left), to pastry chef Ben Spungin’s mushroom-topped confections at Alta Bakery (right), you’re sure to find something with a pleasing combination of flavors and just the right “look” for your holiday table. Order soon — good things take time.

Looking for something a little different? Estéban Restaurant in the Casa Munras Garden Hotel (700 Munras Ave., Monterey) will serve a three-course prix fixe menu from 4 to 8 p.m. Diners can choose from starters of roasted beet salad with Manchego cheese and caramelized pear, or truffled mushroom bisque with aged sherry vinegar.

Eggnog cheesecake

For the main event, there’s a porcini-crusted prime rib, grilled swordfish with Mediterranean flair — chermoula yogurt (chermoula is a North African condiment with spices and fresh herbs), olive and date tabouli, mint, and pomegranate molasses — or Champagne butter-poached lobster risotto with lobster tail with mascarpone cheese. The vegetarian entrée is grilled avocado with chermoula yogurt, olive and date tabouli, mint, and pomegranate molasses.

End with eggnog Basque cheesecake or chocolate pot de crème. A limited a la carte children’s menu will also be available. Reserve your table at (831) 375-0176 or at estebanrestaurant.com.

While you’re visiting, stop by the hotel’s annual employee gingerbread house contest and vote for your

See **FOOD** next page

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FOOD & WINE

MUSIC

From page 43A

guitar wizardry and singing of East Bay’s **Paul Kotapish**, and the banjo and mandolin artistry of rising artist **Tyler Weed**.”

Irish step dancer **Marisa Gilman** will accompany the musicians.

Tickets are \$44.25 for general admission and \$15 for children. The church is located at 146 12th St. Go to celticsociety.org.

Live music

Dec. 19-25

■ Big Sur

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

Fernwood Resort — **Harry & The Hitmen** (classic Motown and soul, Saturday at 10 p.m.). 47200 Highway 1.

■ Carmel

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

Carmel Mission Inn — **Open Mic Night** (Wednesday at 6 p.m.). In the Shearwater Tavern, 3665 Rio Road.

Crossroads shopping center — **The Peninsula Harmony Company** (strolling Christmas carols, Saturday at noon). Highway 1 and Rio Road.

Hyatt Carmel Highlands — singer and pianist **T.J. Kuenster** (jazz, Friday at 4:45 p.m.), singer **Dino Vera** (jazz, r&b and dance music, Saturday and Thursday at 6 p.m.). 120 Highlands Drive.

Cypress Inn — singer **Dino Vera** (jazz, r&b and dance music, Friday at 6:30 p.m.), pianist **Gennady Loktionov** and singer **Debbie Davis** (cabaret, Saturday at 6:30 p.m.), **The Andrea Carter Trio** (jazz and pop, Sunday at 11 a.m.), **The David Morwood Jazz Band** (Thursday at 6 p.m.).



One of the most popular new wave bands in the early 1980s, A Flock of Seagulls plays Friday in Monterey.

Lincoln and Seventh.

Links Club — **Side Hustle** (rock, Saturday at 7 p.m.). Carmel Plaza, Mission and Ocean.

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

■ Carmel Valley

Bernardus Lodge — pianist **Steve Mann** (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), mando-

See **MORE MUSIC** next page

FOOD

From previous page

favorite, with the winner to be announced Jan. 2. You can stop by and cast your ballot until New Year’s Eve.

■ Take it away

Wanna eat in? As always, Bruno’s Market (Sixth & Junipero) has you covered with high quality meats from a real butcher, Gizdich Ranch pies, Jeffrey’s spiced nuts — a great way to make a salad a little “extra” — Paris Bakery quiches, Baker’s Bacon and so much more. Together with Surf N Sand Liquors next door, it really is one-stop shopping.

That doesn’t mean you shouldn’t visit one of the wine-tasting rooms around town (or in Carmel Valley) to sleuth out exactly the right bottles to accompany your meal. Nor should you skip the Cheese Shop in Carmel Plaza for something special for your charcuterie board, or Nielsen Bros.

Ryan Sanchez and his family at Bruno’s Market almost certainly have everything you need to serve a merry Christmas dinner, including plenty of fresh produce — if you want to make it yourself.



Market (Seventh & San Carlos), with its own selection of festive goodies and fresh organic produce.

Carmel Valley is home not only to Jerome’s Market, with its gourmet and everyday foodie options, but Baum & Blume, with Christmas options to jazz up your table and impress your guests. From frozen and fresh hors d’oeuvres like shrimp skewers with tomato jam or two-layer pimientto cheese dip with smoked almonds, to honey-glazed roast duckling, roast leg of lamb, and even shrimp enchiladas, you can let their cooks make your table shine. Visit baumandblume.com for details.

Elroy’s Fine Foods on Soledad Street in Monterey has a heat-and-eat \$160 braised beef short rib dinner for two. Accomtrements include a mixed endive salad, roasted Brussels sprouts with figs and hazelnuts, carrots and winter squash, scalloped potatoes with pumpkin and white cheddar, and potato rolls. Order at elroys-finefood.com.

Sally Baho and Elaine Hesser contributed to this week’s column.

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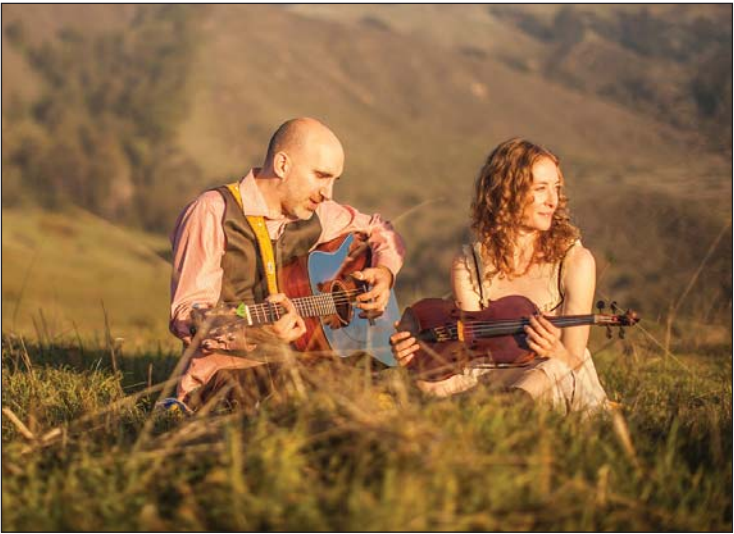
3 Del Fino Place, Carmel Valley Village

MORE MUSIC

From previous page

linist **Dave Holodiloff** (jazz, Thursday at 11 a.m.). 415 Carmel Valley Road.
Big Sur Vineyards Tasting Room — singer and guitarist **Kyle Kovalik** (Sunday at 2 p.m.). 1 Del Fino Place.
Edgar’s Restaurant — **Evergreen** (pop and folk, Friday at 5:30 p.m.). At Quail Lodge, 8205 Valley Greens Drive.
Folktale Winery — singer and guitarist **Trianna Feruza** (Friday at 4 p.m.), singer and guitarist **RJ DeMarco** (Saturday at 4 p.m.), **The Paul Contos Trio** (jazz, Sunday at 4 p.m.), singer and guitarist **Lindsey Wall** (Monday at 4 p.m.). 8940 Carmel Valley Road.
Trailside Cafe — singer and guitarist **Tony Burciaga** (Saturday at 6 p.m.). 3 Del Fino Place.

■ **Monterey**
Albatross Ridge Winery — singer and guitarist **RJ DeMarco** (Friday at 6 p.m.), singer and guitarist **Ryan Sesma** (jazz, 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.
Hyatt Regency Monterey — singer and multi-instrumentalist **Reija Massey** (Saturday at 7 p.m.). 1 Old Golf Course Road.
InterContinental Hotel — guitarist **John Sherry** (rock and blues, Friday and Saturday at 7 p.m.), guitarist **Terrence Farrell** (Spanish, classical and jazz, Sunday at 9 a.m.), guitarist **Glenn**



Singer and instrumentalists Dan Frechette and Laurel Thomsen play Celtic Christmas music Monday at Pop & Hiss in Pacific Grove.



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Bell (jazz, Thursday at 6 p.m.). 750 Cannery Row.
Midici Pizza — singer **Miranda Perl-Astrup**, guitarist **Adam Astrup**, bassist **Joe Dolister** (Sunday at 5 p.m.). 467 Alvarado St.
Monterey County Fairgrounds — **Matt Masih & the Messengers** acoustic trio (funk, soul and groove, Friday at 6 p.m.). In the Jingle Bar, 2004 Fairground Road.
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.), singer and multi-instrumentalist **Alison Sharino** (Monday at 6 p.m.), mandolinist **Dave Holodiloff** (jazz, Tuesday and Wednesday at 6 p.m.), guitarist **John Sherry** (rock and blues, Thursday at 6 p.m.). 400 Cannery Row.
Old Fisherman’s Wharf — The Ninth Annual Christmas on the Wharf celebration includes a free performance by **The Carmel Presbyterian Church Choir** (holiday music, Saturday at 2 p.m.). 1 Old Fisherman’s Wharf.
Pearl Hour — **The Zach Westfall Quartet** (jazz, Sunday at 8 p.m.), **The Ben**

See **LIVE** next page

I'm Going Home for Christmas



Paul Martin

Christmas day is coming, I am happy and I'm humming,
Merry Christmas songs.
Frosty snowflakes are falling, as I spend my time calling,
all my friends back home.

Christmas bells are ringing and the happy children singing,
takes me way back when,
I'd count the days to remind me,
that another day's behind me,
'til I'm home for Christmas once again.

I'm going home for Christmas,
I wish that I were there again.
On top of my Christmas wish list,
is my family and friends.

I know what I am missing, it's the hugging and the kissing,
til I'm home again.
Anxiously I'm waiting, I can't help anticipating,
being home for Christmas once again.

Christmas trees are decorated, I'm impatient and elated,
to be going home.
Frosty snowmen are appearing and I'm happy to be hearing,
Merry Christmas songs.

Christmas cheer is abounding and the carolers are sounding,
just like long lost friends.
I sing along to remind me, that another day's behind me.
'til I'm home for Christmas once again.

I'm going home for Christmas,
I wish that I were there again,
On top of my Christmas wish list,
is my family and friends.

Soon I will be sharing all the happiness and caring,
when I'm home again.
Anxiously I am waiting, I can't help anticipating,
being home for Christmas once again.

By Paul Martin © 2012

I'm Going Home for Christmas www.MyPrayers.net

Music Credits

(P) 2012 Lyrics and music written and performed by Paul Martin.
Produced and arranged by Paul Martin and Daryl Kojak.



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LIVE
From previous page

Pacific Grove

First Baptist Church of Pacific Grove — The Monterey Peninsula Gospel Community Choir presents a free concert, “Joyful & Spirited” (Christmas carols with gospel flava, Sunday at 4 p.m.). 248 Laurel Ave.

Il Vecchio Restaurant — The **Cena Jazz Trio** (Thursday at 6 p.m.). 110 Central 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.

PG’s Meetinghouse — **Open Mic** (Tuesday at 6 p.m., sign up by 5 p.m.). 599 Lighthouse Ave.

Pop & Hiss — holiday family sing-a-long (Saturday at 7 p.m.), singer and pianist **T.J. Kuenster** (“a hometown Hallmark holiday hullabaloo,” Sunday at 7 p.m.), **Dan & Laurel** present a Celtic Christmas celebration (folk, Monday at 7 p.m.). 215 Forest Ave.

Wild Fish — **The Lighthouse Jazz Quartet** (Friday and Saturday at 6:30 p.m.). 545 Lighthouse Ave.

Pebble Beach

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

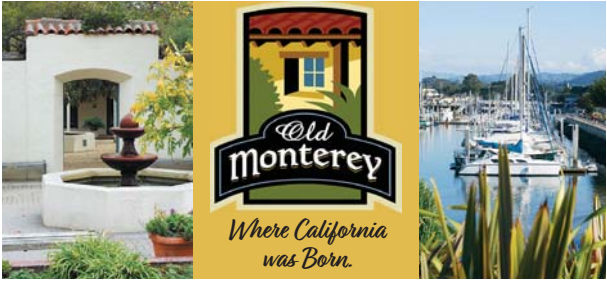
The Lodge at Pebble Beach — singer and guitarist **Zack Freitas** (in the Terrace Lounge, Friday at 5 p.m.), mandolinist **Dave Holodiloff** (jazz, in the Terrace Lounge, Saturday at 5 p.m.), singer and pianist **T.J. Kuenster** and



Based in Santa Cruz, Harry & the Hitmen play classic Motown and soul Saturday at Fernwood Resort in Big Sur.

pianist **Steve Mann** (in the Stillwater Bar & Grill, Thursday at 5 p.m.). In the Terrace Lounge at 1700 17 Mile Drive.

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



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CALENDAR

Fridays – Dino Vera, 6:30 to 9:30 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.

Through Dec. 24 – Finish off your holiday list at Baum & Blume! Find unique gifts, sparkling jewelry, French bath goods, cozy scarves/gloves, men's accessories, children's animal hats, ornaments, cards, gift wrap, gourmet goodies and more! Open Christmas Eve till 5 p.m. Baum & Blume and The Carriage House, 4 El Caminito Road, Carmel Valley (831) 659-0400.

Through Dec. 21 – Don't miss the fun free 9th Annual Christmas on Fisherman's Wharf for three weekends through the end of the year. Enjoy dazzling NEW decorations and a 23 -foot Christmas tree, free Santa visits at his Santa House, talented choirs, singers and other live musicians, dancers, a Salvation Army Toy Barrel plus a hot cocoa and cookies fundraiser for Salvation Army, and much more! Additional information and the entertainment schedule are on montereywharf.com.

Through Dec. 20 – I Cantori di Carmel performs Handel's Messiah. Performance begins 7:30 p.m. at Salinas High School Performing Arts Center. For tickets and details, visit www.icantori.org

Saturdays – Soulful blues with Debbie Davis and Gennady, 6:30 to 9:30 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.

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

New Year's Eve - Wednesday, Dec. 31 – Ring in 2026 with an unforgettable New Year's Eve celebration at Terry's. Final details are still to come, but guests can expect a night of festive dining, music and Carmel charm. Early reservations are highly encouraged.

Jan. 10, 2026 – First Carmel-by-the-Sea 5K at 8:30 a.m. Breathtaking 3.1 mile course starts in downtown Carmel-by-the-Sea, winds its way through neighborhood streets to settle along Scenic Road for views of the coast you won't want to miss. Post-race celebration at the bottom of Ocean Ave. and the beach. USATF Certified course. All levels welcome. Proceeds generated will help the Carmel-based nonprofit, Girls on the Run Central Coast Inc. Register today and be part of this exciting new community event. Visit: www.carmel-by-the-sea-5k.com for more information.

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■ “Thanks for the opportunity to read this wonderful little paper. It is much appreciated.”

■ “We’ve been email subscribers to the Pine Cone for a year now, ever since we bought a house in Carmel (we still live in Minnesota but will be retiring in a few years— can’t wait!) I really enjoy reading about our future home town.”

■ “I’m not asking that this be published, but I want to offer my thanks to you for the insights, intelligence and objectivity offered in your paper. What a contrast to most publications out there.”

■ “How refreshing to have direct, truthful, no nonsense editorials. Unfortunately, this style of writing has been lost in our feel good society. Keep at it.”

■ “I get The Pine Cone every week and enjoy it more than you can know. What a wonderful paper you have. I read every word!”

■ “I just wanted to let you know how truly outstanding The Pine Cone is. The writing equals, if not exceeds, top-notch national papers. You and your staff should be proud. I know I’ve told you before how great I think The Pine Cone is, but it really is a terrific paper.”

■ “Thank you for providing balanced and researched reporting and upbeat articles. I hope we have The Pine Cone around for many years to come. If it gets down to it, I would pay for the subscription to keep the paper viable.”

■ “We poll our ticket-buyers as to where they hear about our concerts. You might be surprised to learn how many of them mention The Pine Cone. Thanks!”

■ “Thanks for the consistently great job you do with your newspaper. I regularly read several newspapers from around the country and yours has the best editorial integrity — bar none. Keep up the good work!”

■ “We love our charming newspaper and the pleasure we get from reading it with our morning coffee every week, hopefully in a cozy cafe in Carmel. Please never stop the paper newspaper.”

■ “The Pine Cone used to be my Friday morning habit, and now it’s my Thursday night habit. I also love the fact I can get the entire paper online when I’m out of town.”

■ “The Carmel Pine Cone is an informative, well written newspaper. Lots of hard work goes into this fine publication. Keep moving forward!”

■ “Last year wasn’t great for my family, but I have to let you know that when I turn on the computer on Friday morning or the weekend and see the Pine Cone, I smile.”

■ “Thank you for your weekly emails. Even though I’ve lived in France since 2008, I read the Carmel Pine Cone almost every week as I still have many friends and some family in the area.”

■ “I love receiving the Carmel Pine Cone through my email. Thanks for the intriguing and interesting information!”

■ “I have been a faithful reader of the Pine Cone (the email version as well as the paper one) ever since we moved to Pebble Beach from Woodside in 2001. You are very informative about whatever happens here. Thank you!”

■ “You have a wonderful publication. We read the online edition every week.”

■ “Tho’ I live 300 miles away and visit the Peninsula only once a year (for the last 35 years), I enjoy your newspaper from the first to the last page every week online and I thank you for that.”

■ “Keep up the great reporting! I like reading the truth without the spin unlike other local papers.”

■ “As a longtime reader of your paper, I want to thank you for the great job you and your team do in covering the area. And I especially like (agree with) your editorial page.”

■ “When in Tucson, I look forward to Friday mornings with great anticipation so I can download the week’s edition of the Pine Cone and read it cover to cover. This helps me feel connected to this very special community. When in our beloved Carmel, each Friday morning I jump in our electric car with our golden retriever, Daisy, by my side and race down to Ocean and Mission to get the newest edition. Daisy insists on carrying it in her mouth the entire way home. We have so much to be proud of in Carmel and the Pine Cone sits near the top of the list.”
- 

“It’s fun to come to work when people think you’re so good”

SOMETHING *exciting* FOR THE NEW YEAR



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