



# HEALTHYLifestyles

What do a retired pastor, two pools and a bunch of dogs have in common? They'll get you moving ... *Inside this week!*



# The Carmel Pine Cone

Volume 112 No. 5 <https://carmelpinecone.com> January 30-February 5, 2026

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## They're beautiful, make cool sounds — and eat rats



PHOTO/CARMELOWLS.ORG

What kind of home would a great horned owl like? Paul Falworth knows. He designed platforms to attract the beautiful raptors and is in search of the right trees for them.

By MARY SCHLEY

RESIDENTS AND businesses might not want to talk about it, but Carmel has rats. All the shrubbery, vines, wood stacks, sheds and other hiding spots provide ideal rat habitat, and most people have spotted the rodents on more than one occasion. And while cats are good hunters, they might not be the best option for rat control. Neither is poison. But you know what is? Owls.

That's what Carmel resident Paul Falworth says, and he and a group of fellow volunteers are building platforms suitable for nesting great horned owls and are scouting out ideal places to install them. On Saturday, they put them up on a half-dozen trees in town.

"Remember, a nesting pair of great horned owls with fledglings typically eat seven rats or rodents every night," he said.

### Owl hug

Falworth, the instigator of the effort, came up with the idea after participating in demonstrations by master falconer Antonio Balestreri and learning about the four owls he has rescued.

"He brought some great horned owls, and I had one nestled against my cheek," Falworth said.

In subsequent conversations with a few friends, he discovered they, too, love owls and loathe vermin, and they devised a means of boosting the owl population in town.

"Everyone hates rats. And everyone has rats," Falworth said, adding that some residents are paying \$150 per week

*See OWLS page 14A*

## Monte Verde shooting case settled for \$2M

By MARY SCHLEY

ELLEN BARRETT, the mother of the 27-year-old Monte Verde Street resident who was fatally shot during an altercation with police in October 2024, received a \$2 million taxpayer-funded settlement to resolve her lawsuit against the City of Carmel-by-the-Sea and the officers who confronted him.

Barrett's complaint, filed last July in the U.S. District Court's Northern District, alleged police officers, including former Chief Paul Tomasi, violated state and federal laws by using "excessive and unreasonable force" in the shooting of James Marshall near the Golden Bough Theater. She accused the city and officers of negligence,

personal injuries and civil rights violations for their handling of the incident with Marshall, who was seen carrying an assault-rifle-style BB gun and a crowbar, and reportedly threatened people before retreating to the backyard of the home he shared with his mother, where he faced off with police and was eventually shot.

The case went to mediation, and a resolution was reached last December, after which it was dismissed earlier this month. Public officials received the terms of the deal late last week, and city attorney Brian Pierik made the

*See \$2M page 13A*

*See SHUCKS page 20A*

## Fox with painful necklace tricked with sweet bread

By KELLY NIX

A GRAY fox that spent weeks with a corrugated plastic pipe stuck around its neck is now receiving care at the SPCA Monterey County Wildlife Center, thanks to a concerned citizen in the Corral de Tierra area who safely trapped the animal via a tasty treat.

Residents first spotted the fox Jan. 11 and quickly set traps while posting alerts on social media. On Monday, in the early morning hours, it walked into a humane trap baited with syrup-soaked bread on Mesa del Toro Road. The trap had been set by Claire Pendleton.

"I've been working with neighbors every day to catch him and have lost a lot of sleep worrying about him," Pendleton said. After successfully trapping the fox, she immediately transported it to the SPCA Wildlife Center.

### Grateful to neighbors

SPCA wildlife rescuers sedated the young male fox and carefully removed the rugged pipe from his neck, according to spokeswoman Beth Brookhouser.

"We don't know how this little fox ended up with the pipe stuck around his neck, but we are incredibly grateful to caring neighbors like Claire who kept watch over him, worked so diligently to trap him, and brought him to us," Brookhouser told The Pine Cone. "The moment we cut the pipe

away, we knew he would need to stay with us for several weeks to recover."

Although he sustained serious injuries — including

*See FOX page 17A*



PHOTO/SPCA MONTEREY COUNTY

This gray fox somehow managed to get a piece of a corrugated plastic pipe stuck around its neck. The pipe was so tight that it caused several deep wounds. A human came to the rescue by safely trapping the animal and taking it to SPCA Monterey County, where it's being treated.

## FIRST THE COMMONERS, THEN THE BILLIONAIRES

CALIFORNIA'S UBER-ELITE are threatening to follow their less-well-heeled brethren and exit the state, citing the same basic reason: It's just getting too expensive.

For the sixth year in a row, California was in last place on U-Haul's 2025 growth index, meaning the state had more people moving out than moving in. Many point to

## Capitol Access

By CAITLIN CONRAD

the high cost of living as their primary reason, but it's not just the middle class making the move.

Over the last half-decade, hundreds of companies, including major Fortune 500s and their wealthy leaders, have also left — think Oracle, Tesla and Chevron — citing taxes, strict regulations and the high cost of living for employees.

Now, California's remaining billionaire class is

*See BILLIONAIRES page 21A*





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# Sandy Claws

By Lisa Crawford Watson

## Foxy fellow

When Pico was found on the side of a road in Soledad, tucked with his sibling against their weary mother, he weighed just 2.5 pounds.

The tiny brindle animal, with his cunning eyes and pointy little ears, looked more like a fox kit than the Maltese-miniature pinscher-Dachshund-Chihuahua pup a subsequent DNA test revealed.

Having learned about Pico through KSBW's "Pet of the Week" feature, his person rushed over to the SPCA, worried others would find him as appealing as she did, only to find her whole family and golden retriever Cooper had to be vetted before she could take home the little dog. The kids were in school.

Nevertheless, the Monterey family prevailed. While one family member wanted to name him Thomas, the rest preferred Pico, a reference to his tiny stature.

"We actually got Pico to be Cooper's companion, but we all love him," his person said. "He is the cutest little guy, with his sweet face and that one white back paw that looks like a rabbit's foot. He truly has completed our family."

Pico accompanies his person to work at a senior membership organization in Carmel, where he has become an honorary member, bringing joy and companionship to those he meets there daily.



"Pico, who is 16 now, is such a blessing," his person said. "As a senior dog, he invites me to slow down and appreciate the moment and him. I still take him on long walks, but he only walks a short way, and then I carry him the rest of the way in a sling, close to my heart."

Pico has spent a lot of time at Carmel Beach over the years, racing along the shoreline. These days, the stairs have become daunting, so his person carries him and settles him into the sand while she swims.

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# Concrete demolition in pit nearly done

By MARY SCHLEY

AS MANY who live or work nearby can attest, tons upon tons of concrete have been cut into blocks, lifted into waiting trucks and hauled away from the 16,000-square-foot building site at Dolores and Fifth. The demolition of a partially built parking garage installed under the property’s previous ownership is the first step in building Ulrika Plaza, Patrice Pastor’s mixed-use project, and is almost complete.

The property became known as The Pit after Leidig/Draper Properties ran out of money and stopped work in March 2019. The developers ended up selling it to Pastor in 2020 for \$9 million, and, after numerous hearings and redesigns, his local firm, Esperanza Carmel, received approval from the planning commission for Ulrika Plaza in August 2023. A demolition permit was finally issued in August 2025, and in December, the city authorized the contractor — Swenson Builders — to install fencing and block parking spaces for a construction trailer, a portable toilet and other equipment.

**Boom!**

Since then, crews have been dismantling the old structure in accordance with Esperanza’s construction management plan, cutting and removing the concrete slab, columns and perimeter concrete walls and having trucks haul debris out of town along a prescribed path that mostly follows the truck route but includes parts of Fifth, Sixth, Dolores and San Carlos. The chunks are so heavy that buildings a block away shake every time a piece is dropped by an

excavator into a waiting dump truck. The demolition is expected to take up to two months.

“We are very pleased to have started on site on this first of two important projects for Esperanza Carmel in the village. The demolition phase is almost complete,” said



PHOTO/SKY FALWORTH

Excavators lift huge chunks of concrete from he building site at Dolores and Fifth. Demolition of an unfinished garage is almost done.

Chris Mitchell, managing director of Esperanza Carmel. “We are happy with how we are progressing so far and continue to enjoy a good working relationship with the city staff and our neighbors.”

Upcoming phases will be addressed in a separate construction management plan submitted with the full building permit application and include construction of the complex’s superstructure (estimated at four to six months), exterior construction (two to four months), interior buildout (two to four months) and landscaping and site paving (one to two months).

According to the plans approved by the planning commission, the buildings have a total of 22,443 square feet of floor area,

See THE PIT page 20A



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4A      The Carmel Pine Cone      January 30, 2026



**Police & Sheriff's Log**

## Husband drove off before cops arrived

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.

**FRIDAY, JANUARY 9**

**Carmel-by-the-Sea:** No calls to report.  
**Pacific Grove:** Vehicle at Country Club Gate was marked for 72-hour parking.  
**Big Sur:** A female was reported missing by a family member.  
**Pacific Grove:** A juvenile on Forest Lodge Road was placed on a W&I 5150 hold [danger to self or others].

**SATURDAY, JANUARY 10**

**Carmel-by-the-Sea:** Vehicle towed for being parked at San Carlos and Ninth in a temporary tow-away zone.  
**Carmel-by-the-Sea:** A 46-year-old male

DoorDash driver at Rio Road and Highway 1 was cited and released for driving on a suspended license.

**Carmel-by-the-Sea:** A 61-year-old male Pebble Beach resident was arrested at Mission and Seventh for public intoxication. Delay in booking due to a Monterey County Jail clearance needed for the subject because he was not cooperating with a nurse at the jail.

**Pacific Grove:** Lost dog turned in for safekeeping.

**Pebble Beach:** Property report on 17 Mile Drive.

**Pacific Grove:** Officers responded to a domestic violence incident between a married couple at a residence on Asilomar Avenue. The husband, a 49-year-old male, was arrested and transported to Monterey County Jail for spousal battery and making terrorist threats.

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



**The gavel falls**

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

**Jan. 13** — The Monterey County District Attorney's consumer protection unit has resolved a case against Mi Tierra Linda LLC, the owner of an apartment building located at 150 Encinal Road in Soledad. This settlement resolves multiple violations of law, including violations of California's Tenant Protection Act, failure to maintain workers compensation insurance, failure to test for asbestos prior to disturbing potentially asbestos-containing materials, and hiring unlicensed contractors to perform renovation work. As part of the settlement, the landlord will pay \$30,000 in civil penalties and is subject to an injunction prohibiting further violations.

California's Tenant Protection Act creates statewide protections against excessive rent increases and safeguards tenants who have lived in their homes for more than 12 months by requiring landlords to have "just cause" before terminating a lease. The law prohibits evictions intended to unlawfully increase rent beyond legal limits, or based on sham renovation claims, among other things. Landlords and tenants are encouraged to review the Tenant Protection Act to understand what constitutes "just cause," and what does not.

In this case, the district attorney's office received information that the landlord had issued termination notices in February 2025 to tenants at the Soledad complex without just cause. After being contacted by the district attorney's office, the landlord rescinded the notices, allowing tenants to remain in their homes.

This investigation also uncovered additional

*See **GAVEL** page 22A*



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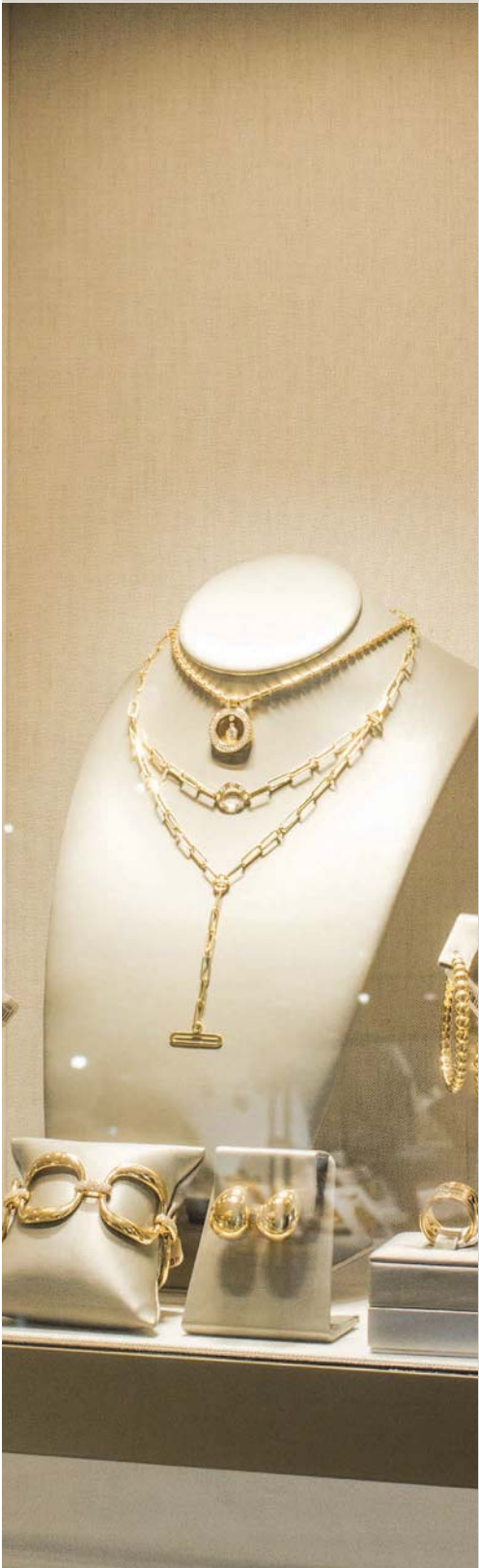




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# Scenic sewer work to start Feb. 17

By MARY SCHLEY

TWO CONSTRUCTION crews will work simultaneously to replace the sewer main along the busy and popular stretch of Scenic Road between Eighth and 13th avenues starting Feb. 17, the Carmel Area Wastewater District announced this week, with hopes of wrapping up that part of the \$5 million project in around five weeks, if the weather cooperates.

The construction is part of CAWD’s larger Scenic Road Sewer Pipeline Replacement Project that officially began in late September 2025 at the south end of town near the Carmel Mission and has worked its way north.

The process includes surveying the lines and using closed-circuit video cameras to assess their condition, along with some required trenching. Most of the replacement will be accomplished through a less invasive process called pipe-bursting in which the old clay pipe is expanded or broken in place as a high-density plastic liner — which the district has described as “semi-flexible but nearly indestructible” — is inserted and pulled through.

Funded via charges on ratepayers’ twice-a-year property tax bills, the sewer district said its decision to employ two construction crews “is a significant additional project investment to reduce the construction timeline.”

### Pedestrians welcome

Work hours are set for 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday, during which Scenic Road will be closed to vehicle traffic, except for residents who need to access their homes.

The street will be open to cars 24/7 on weekends and from evening until morning during the week. The beach bluff pathway

and the beach will remain accessible at all times, as required by the city.

Carmel’s public works department worked with the wastewater district to develop more than 50 special conditions of approval for the required sewer line encroachment permit “to minimize impacts to the community before, during and after construction.”

### Road will be closed to traffic during work hours only

Key among them are providing \$5 million in general liability insurance, ensuring robust public outreach — which is being done through emails, door hangers and social media — establishing a hotline for people with concerns, and coordinating with emergency services and others, such as Green-Waste and delivery companies, to provide access to Scenic during construction.

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

### ‘Smooth process’

CAWD general manager Barbara Bui-kema said the goal is to get the replacement done as quickly as possible and that the agency is working closely with the City of Carmel and staying in touch with the police and fire departments “to ensure a smooth process.”

“We will return later in 2026 to resurface this entire stretch of Scenic Road,” she added.

The work is part of a multiyear, \$75 million effort to overhaul and strengthen the decades-old system, which is vulnerable to cracking.

For updates, go to [cawd.org/scenic-road-pipeline-replacement](http://cawd.org/scenic-road-pipeline-replacement).



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# CSUMB PROF ARRESTED FOR ‘BATTERY’ ON CHILD

By KELLY NIX

A MAN was arrested on suspicion of battery after witnesses saw him knock a hat off a student’s head in front of Pacific Grove Middle School as children were being let out for the day.

On Jan. 15 at about 2:05 p.m., Frederik Vermote, 44, of Marina, confronted a P.G. Middle School student “for throwing books on the ground that came from a free library box located in the front lawn of the school,” police Cmdr. Brian Anderson told The Pine Cone last week. “During the confrontation, Vermote struck the child,” who was not injured.

The incident occurred at the end of the school day as numerous parents and children were at the school. A witness said Vermote, who appeared agitated, abruptly got out of his car on Forest Avenue, stormed toward a group of male students next to the entrance of the middle school, and threw up an arm and hit the hat, which came off the boy’s head.

Several people reported it to school officials, who called police. Investigators talked to Vermote the next day. “Vermote was contacted by officers, interviewed, and released with a criminal citation for battery,” Anderson said. Battery is defined as “willful and unlawful use of force or violence” on another person.

**‘Force’ used**

Vermote is listed as an associate professor of social sciences and global studies at Cal State Monterey Bay. Police did not specify Vermote’s relationship to the student. On Jan. 23, the Monterey County District Attorney’s Office charged Vermote with misdemeanor battery, claiming he used “force and violence upon John Doe while on school property.”

He’s set to be arraigned in March.

Because several students and parents witnessed the confrontation, and many more likely heard about it secondhand, Pacific Grove Middle School issued a notice to parents, saying it wanted to provide “clear, factual information.”

“We are proud of our students for reporting the incident immediately and for acting responsibly, demonstrating our ‘see something, say something’ protocol,” said a portion of the message from the school’s principal, Sean Roach.

# Trial begins for woman almost killed at Point Lobos

By KELLY NIX

A JURY trial began this week in the case of a former Rhode Island politician who filed a lawsuit in 2023 over critical injuries she sustained when she was struck and dragged under an electric vehicle driven by a Point

Lobos worker.

Helen Dooley Anthony, 65, was in a crosswalk “on the entry road into the reserve” on June 10, 2023, when she alleges an electric car driven by Point Lobos worker Jack

See TRIAL page 23A

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# Pickleball madness gets weirder

By MARY SCHLEY

AS THE Carmel City Council quietly voted for final adoption of its ban on pickleball “and other paddle sports” in Forest Hill Park Jan. 13 — with none of the sound and fury from the public that characterized numerous hearings and votes on the subject during prior meetings — someone vandalized the pickleball nets at the park.

“The two remaining nets and frames were destroyed,” Cynthia Vandenberg said last Wednesday. “Players were hoping to try out a new racquet sport using pickleball nets that isn’t noisy, but somebody ruined them.”

While the game she mentioned, called TYPTI, is “new” in that its inaugural world championships are set for this year, it was devised at the Palisades Tennis Center in the late 1990s by Tennis Channel founder Steve Bellamy as a way to help kids learn to play tennis on a shorter court. As more fans of racquet sports were in need of places to play that took up less space than a conventional tennis court, its popularity grew among players of all ages, according to Bellamy.

### Mayor supportive?

Played on a standard pickleball court with 22-inch strung racquets — not paddles — and a 3.5-inch-diameter channeled foam ball, the game is far quieter than the activity that pitted Forest Hill neighbors against players in the years-long battle that led to the city council’s decision to ban the game on the park’s courts.

“Mayor Dale Byrne is supportive of finding a new similar sport that is not noisy

like pickleball” said Vandenberg, who has been heavily critical of the council’s position on the game. “It might all work out.”

Byrne said it was too early to tell, since he’d just heard about the game a day earlier.

Because TYPTI uses racquets instead



PHOTO/CYNTHIA VANDENBERG

Someone destroyed pickleball nets that were purchased by the community and used in Forest Hill until the game was banned there.

of paddles, it appears that it would be allowed in Forest Hill park. The new law approved by the city council specifically refers to “paddle sports.”

The ordinance adds Chapter 12.50 to Title 12 Streets, Sidewalks and Public Places, of the City of Carmel-by-the-Sea Municipal Code to read, “Playing of pickleball and other paddle sports in Forest Hill Park is hereby prohibited. This prohibition does not apply to playing tennis in Forest Hill Park.”

It goes on to say that violations “shall be subject to enforcement by the city pursuant to provisions” of the municipal code, which gives officials the authority to cite violators of various local laws for infractions

See PICKLEBALL page 23A



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# P.G. official fined for late filing

By KELLY NIX

PACIFIC GROVE City Councilwoman Tina Rau — who is under investigation by a state agency for an alleged conflict of interest — was fined last year by the same regulator for failing to disclose her financial investments, as elected officials are required to do, according to documents obtained by The Pine Cone.

The Fair Political Practices Commission concluded in May 2025 that Rau failed to report her ownership of a commercial building on Forest Avenue that houses music venue Pop & Hiss and more than \$100,000 in annual rental income from the business, her \$1 million-plus home on 19th Street, a \$100,000 loan, and other financial interests.

“According to our records, your 2024 statement of economic interests as city/town council member for the City of Pacific Grove was due on Jan. 3, 2025,” an FPPC official told Rau, who kept the fine secret from the public. “It was filed 80 days late.”

### Paid the fine

Rau wrongfully reported to the state in early January 2025 that she did not have any financial interests. On March 24, 2025, though, five days after a council meeting in which she faced scrutiny for voting on a matter some believed amounted to a conflict of interest, she filed a new disclosure form with the state that included her investments.

The FPPC investigator went on to say that state law imposes a fine of \$10 per day, up to a maximum of \$100, for such late filings and that Rau needed to pay

the “amount of \$100 immediately.” Rau responded via email that the check was in the mail.

### Conflict probe

The fine from the FPPC came before the agency in October 2025 announced it had opened another investigation into

Rau, who was elected to the city council in November 2024. The agency is examining conflict-of-interest claims from four people who allege Rau had a duty to recuse herself from a March 19, 2025, discussion on allowing louder amplified entertainment at downtown establishments because she owns the Pop & Hiss building and could possibly financially benefit from the rule.

Moments before the council was set to deliberate on the matter, a resident told the council that Rau should recuse herself, but the councilwoman ignored the advice and voted to change part of the municipal code pertaining to sound amplification, so the decibel level could be increased from 70 to 80 decibels. It passed 4-2. One of the residents who complained about Rau’s potential conflict was Jane Haines, who was informed by FPPC Chief of Enforcement Kendall Bonebrake that the agency would investigate the councilwoman.

“You will next receive notification from us upon final disposition of the case,” Bonebrake told Haines Oct. 7, 2025.

Rau, who advocated for “transparency” in her campaign, did not respond to questions last week from The Pine Cone.



Tina Rau

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# Elephant seal numbers grow, but rising sea imperils breeding beaches

By CHRIS COUNTS

ONE OF the most distinctive of all creatures in Mother Nature’s vast inventory of animals, the massive northern elephant seal — which can be found at Piedras Blancas in San Luis Obispo County and Año Nuevo State Park in San Mateo County — is a conservation success story, despite a life cycle that is often precarious.

While the large sea mammal is beloved by visitors to those areas today, it very nearly went extinct in the late 19th century due to overharvesting.

“They were hunted like whales,” Adam Ratner of the Marine Mammal Center in Sausalito told The Pine Cone. “They were wiped out and thought to be extinct.”

Despite all the adversity, a small number of elephant seals — perhaps as few as 10 — survived on Guadalupe Island off the coast of Mexico. They were discovered in 1892. Mexico protected the small population, and over time, it grew so large that its inhabitants began expanding northward. Conservation measures were also taken north of the border, and eventually, places like Piedras Blancas, Año Nuevo and Point Reyes National Seashore became havens, known as rookeries, for the sea mammals to breed. “Those places were protected, giving elephant seals space

to have their pups and nurse them,” Ratner explained.

The elephant seal population is flourishing, with an estimated 190,000 living along the coast. And that’s not all — their numbers are growing by about 4 percent each year.

So how many elephant seals spend part of the year at Piedras Blancas? According to Kathleen Curtis of the group Friends of the Elephant Seal, a census done last year estimated the population at 19,335 seals. There were also an estimated 4,394 births. The census relied on ground and aerial surveys done by researchers at Cal Poly San Luis Obispo. The population peaks during birthing season from late January through mid-May. Friends of the Elephant Seal partners with Cal Poly to conduct the annual census.

“This just goes to show what can happen when people come together to protect an animal,” Ratner said. “The results can be spectacular.”

### Rising sea poses risks

Despite that success, elephant seals face threats, including rising sea levels, which can inundate the protected beaches that they rely on for breeding.

“The ocean has risen 8 inches over the past 100 years,”



PHOTO/FRIENDS OF PIEDRAS BLANCAS

Roughly 19,000 elephant seals spend part of the year at Piedras Blancas. An adult male can weigh up to 5,000 pounds.

Ratner said. “Water is reaching farther on beaches, making it dangerous to young pups.”

As a result, young elephant seals risk being swept out to sea before they are old enough to swim — or survive. When that happens, sometimes they wash up on other

See **ELEPHANT SEALS** page 20A



## State spends to help make parks accessible

By CHRIS COUNTS

ENCOURAGING MORE people to visit its celebrated parklands, California State Parks is giving \$1.2 million to groups that are making parks more accessible. Recipients include the Ventana Wildlife Society, which is far better known for its success in reviving the local population of wild condors.

Thirty-four groups throughout the state are receiving taxpayer-funded grants. The agency estimates that the effort will encourage an additional 15,000 residents to visit a state park — including many for the very first time.

“The programs span urban, rural and tribal communities and include overnight camping trips, multi-day excursions and recurring day programs designed to reflect community needs and interests,” according to the state. “Transportation solutions feature free round-trip bus service, biking programs, train tickets, gas and ride-share reimbursement options and more.”

### Enduring partnership

The Ventana Wildlife Society is receiving \$15,000 for its Community Hub program, which “expands access to state parks for youth and families from economically disadvantaged areas of North Monterey County.”

“Through recurring outdoor education, family excursions and overnight camping, participants develop a sense of connection to nature,” reads a description of the program. “Co-designed, culturally relevant experiences — supported by free transportation and bilingual staff — foster environmental knowledge, well-being and a lasting sense of belonging outdoors.”

Executive director Kelly Sorenson told The Pine Cone that his group has worked closely with state parks since the early 1990s.

“We started the program after realizing that so many communities don’t have the same kind of access as more privileged communities due to transportation and language barriers and other hurdles,” Sorenson explained. “By providing these safe and structured outings, we can share the outdoors with folks who normally wouldn’t be able to go there.”


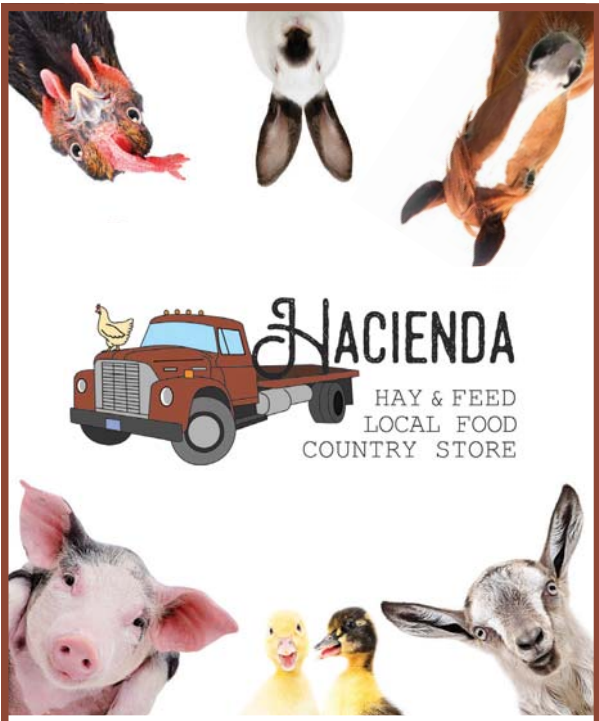
### Making an impact

Last year, the wildlife society offered 550 outings at 15 parks. While most of those visiting were kids, some outings included families.



“We’re affecting so many people every year,” Sorenson said. “Last year, we provided direct services to 1,500 youth and another 650 adults.”

The effort is aided by a fleet of four passenger vans, plus a minivan. A team of educators participates in the program. “We’re picking them up, we’re taking them, we’re teaching a bunch of stuff, and we’re bringing them home safe,” added Sorenson, summarizing the program’s core mission.

Besides the Ventana Wildlife Society, groups receiving grants include River Jim Learning Solutions, which offers free outdoor experiences for youngsters in Glenn and Butte counties; EMDAD, which provides “culturally tailored day trips” to state parks for low-income Afghan immigrants and refugees, and Queer Surf, which offers camping experiences for queer adults from the East Bay. Three Native American tribes are also benefiting from the grants, which will help fund cultural programs in state parks.



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# Panetta tackles military housing mold

By KELLY NIX

DEMOCRATIC REP. Jimmy Panetta and a bipartisan group of lawmakers on Capitol Hill are trying to ensure that military service members and their families don’t suffer health problems from mold in their homes, including homes on the former Fort Ord.

During a Jan. 15 press conference in Washington, D.C., Panetta and other lawmakers announced the rollout of the Military Occupancy Living Defense, or MOLD, Act. If approved, the legislation would require the Pentagon to create humidity and ventilation standards within one year, provide inspections by certified professionals at move-in and move-out dates, provide results of mold tests to tenants, establish a complaint hotline, and require that landlords respond to mold complaints within five days.

“This legislation is our way to ensure that military readiness starts at home,” Panetta told reporters.

According to the lawmakers, who also include U.S. Sen. Richard Shelby, a Republican from Alabama, an estimated 700,000 service members and their families are affected by hazardous conditions in military-provided housing, including prolonged mold exposure, which is associated with elevated risks of respiratory illnesses, neurological symptoms, developmental delays in children, and other deleterious

health effects.

In the 19th Congressional District, which Panetta represents, there are more than 10,000 military members, 25,000 families of service members, and about 3,000 military housing units that were built after Fort Ord closed in 1994.

Numerous military families residing on Fort Ord have filed lawsuits against property managers over mold in their apartments and houses through the years.

### Illnesses

“When I got into Congress, the number one complaint I heard from families of service members was about the conditions of their housing,” Panetta said at the press conference, adding that mold, especially black mold, topped the list of problems.

“People living in those homes will tell you that it just doesn’t affect them at home, it affects them outside of home with the physical and mental illnesses that derive from mold,” he went on to say.

Most military housing in his district is owned and operated by private developers who have long-term contracts with the federal government. Panetta said that while military leaders take seriously reports of mold, the private landlords often do not.

“In their service, our military members and their families sacrifice a great deal,” he said. “The last thing they should have to deal with is shoddy conditions, including mold, in their military housing.”

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# P.G. rec board endorses dog park

By KELLY NIX

THE DEVELOPMENT of a dog park in Pacific Grove — an idea that has been thrown around for years — is gaining traction.

On Jan. 22, four members of the city’s recreation board voted to endorse the concept of a dog park. The panel listened to numerous proponents who envision Arnett Park, just off David near the Lucky supermarket, as its location.

“I think all of us agree a dog park would be wonderful, and we would all benefit from it,” P.G. recreation board chair Jay Tulley said before the vote.

Tulley said the concept has been on the rec board’s list of goals for the past few years.

The difference is that this time, someone is proposing to pay for it. That person, Bob Rivkin, told the board he wants to see the idea come to fruition and would pony up the funds.

“I’ve committed a significant amount of money to support it,” Rivkin said.” I can only say good things about dog parks.”

Dog parks are typically fenced and allow owners to unleash their pets in what is supposed to be a safe environment.

Amy Miller, a new resident with a small dog, spoke in support of the idea, saying

she was surprised there isn’t a dedicated dog park in Pacific Grove. Former Pacific Grove Mayor Carmelita Garcia also backed the idea.

Dog owner Colleen Goldsmith liked the idea of a nearby place to take her pooch to socialize.

“I’ve been to all the dog parks in this area, but unfortunately, you have to drive to them,” Goldsmith said, pointing to those in Carmel Valley and Seaside.

## Popular

Park supporter Steve Hahn said he launched an unofficial survey about the idea on a social media site.

“The response was overwhelming. They thought this was a good idea,” he said.

One of the survey takers, Hahn said, indicated that while she enjoys taking her dog to the Rip Van Winkle open space — a 20-acre swath of land off Congress Avenue for offleash dog walking, hiking and walking — she would support a dedicated and fenced park for dogs.

Resident Mike Gibbs said that if the idea progresses, a much more detailed proposal, including a professional survey of the property boundaries at Arnett Park, will be completed.

See **DOG PARK** page 22A

# Council to talk about parking — again — money, and priorities

By MARY SCHLEY

IN A letter to the editor this week, resident Joe DiNucci urges the Carmel City Council to get busy fixing the town’s pervasive parking problem, specifically by creating more spaces and charging money for them. As if those in charge of agenda management heard his request, the topic — more specifically, an update on the Day-lighting Law that affected many downtown parking spaces, discussion of potentially lowering speed limits, and consideration of whether to spend tax dollars on yet another traffic study — is scheduled for the council’s special meeting Feb. 2.

## Freebies

Also on the agenda that day is a proposed policy to regulate city officials’ acceptance and distribution of event passes so they are not considered reportable gifts under the Political Reform Act “when attendance serves a legitimate

governmental purpose.”

Those items will follow the adoption of the consent calendar, which includes matters of routine city business.

During its regular meeting Feb. 3, the council is set to give a final OK to the adoption of various building codes and receive a presentation from acting city administrator Brandon Swanson on the updated strategic priorities list generated from a five-hour workshop held Jan. 22. Members will then discuss one of councilman Jeff Baron’s favorite topics: the potential of pursuing a proposed increase in the city’s 10 percent transient occupancy tax, which would have to be approved by voters, in the November election.

Monday’s special meeting will begin at 3 p.m., while Tuesday’s will start at 4:30 p.m. Participation is available online or in person at city hall on Monte Verde south of Ocean. For details on how to take part and for complete agendas, visit ci.carmel.ca.us and click on the “meetings” tab.

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# \$2M

From page 1A

agreement available Friday.

The city’s liability-insurance pool, PRISM — which stands for Public Risk Innovation, Solutions and Management — retained the Los Angeles firm of Carpenter, Rothman & Dumont to provide the defense, according to Pierik.

A Monterey County District Attorney’s investigation cleared the officers of any wrongdoing, and as is typical when cases are settled, the city “does not admit any liability on their part or the part of its employees,” Pierik said. The agreement “is the compromise of doubtful and disputed claims and is made solely to avoid the cost and risk of continued litigation.”

In exchange for the \$2 million payout, which was funded via the PRISM pool and also covers legal fees and other costs, Barrett agreed to “waive, release, acquit

and discharge, for all time,” the city and its police department “from any and all claims, demands, causes of action, liabilities, controversies and damages whatsoever” that could be “in any way associated with the alleged incident.”

She also acknowledged the facts might have differed from her understanding of how events unfolded and waived her right under California law to sue again if more information comes to light that “would have materially affected her settlement with the debtor or released party.”

She promised she is Marshall’s only heir and therefore the only person who could claim to be damaged by his death.


**Check cleared**

“Plaintiff expressly acknowledges that the defendant entered into this agreement based on the understanding that there will be no other claims, causes of actions, lawsuits or action against them seeking damages related to the death of James Marshall,” the settlement reads.

A notice filed by the lawyers in federal court Jan. 7 announced they had reached a settlement, and after her lawyer, Dale Galipo, received the check and it cleared, his office provided the draft order stipulating the case will be dismissed with prejudice, meaning Barrett cannot again sue the city over the shooting. U.S. District Judge Edward Davila agreed, signing the order Jan. 13.

Everybody reads The Pine Cone

## PUBLIC NOTICES



**PUBLIC NOTICE**

**NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN** that the Planning Commission of the City of Carmel-by-the-Sea will conduct a **Public Hearing on Wednesday, February 11, 2026, at 4:00 PM**, or as soon thereafter as possible. Immediately prior to the Public Hearing, the Commission will visit some or all the project sites in person as part of a Tour of Inspection. Interested members of the public are invited to attend both the Tour and the Hearing.

**This meeting will be held via teleconference and in person in the City Council Chambers at City Hall** located on Monte Verde Street between Ocean and Seventh Avenues. **To participate via teleconference, use this link:** <https://ci-carmel-ca-us.zoom.us/j/86287177199?pwd=GwHlW4HciBil6Bd8Sbo5RGSTbhf pD.1> **To participate via phone, dial +1 (669) 444-9171.** Webinar ID: 850 7527 4055. Passcode: 001916.

All interested people 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 Community Planning & Building Department 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 emailing [aginette@ci.carmel.ca.us](mailto:aginette@ci.carmel.ca.us) prior to the meeting. With respect to written comments, please submit them at least 2 hours before the meeting 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.

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> and found by clicking on “Government” and then “Meetings.” The Planning Commission meeting will be broadcast live on the City’s website at <https://carmelbytheseaca.portal.civicclerk.com/> and the City’s YouTube Channel at <https://www.youtube.com/c/CityofCarmelbytheSea> and archived there after the meeting. For more information regarding Planning Commission meetings, please contact the Community Planning & Building Department at (831) 620- 2010.

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Ocean Avenue 3 Southwest of San Carlos Street Block 79, Lots 3 and 4  
APN: 010-146-017-000  
Continued from the October 8, 2025, December 10, 2025 and January 21, 2026 Planning Commission hearings, consideration and adoption of a resolution regarding A.W. Shucks Cocktail & Oyster Bar (located on Ocean Avenue 3 Southwest of San Carlos Street, in the Central Commercial (CC) Zoning District) including: (1) a resolution determining and finding that the use as a drinking establishment has been abandoned and the resolution would also amend Use Permit No. UP 93-45 to convert the allowed use from a drinking place to a full line restaurant which amendment would be subject to the written consent of AW Shucks or, in the alternative (2) a resolution directing staff to communicate with AW Shucks regarding an amendment to Use Permit No. UP 93-45 to omit limited food service and add a full line restaurant as an ancillary use that is greater than 10% of the primary use.

**Proposed CEQA Action:** Find that the Planning Commission’s determination is not a project subject to CEQA and assuming it is a project it is exempt under CEQA Guidelines sections 15061(b)(3) (Common Sense Exemption), 15301 (Existing Facilities) and 15305 (Minor Alterations in Land Use Limitations).

**DS 25357 (Krugler)**  
Eric Krugler, Property Owner  
Crespi Avenue 9 southeast of Mountain View Avenue Block 104, Lot 10 & 11  
APN: 010-054-010-000  
Consideration of a Track 1 Design Study Referral for a request to amend the Conditions of Approval with a previously approved Track 2 Design Study Application, DS 21-250 (Krugler), located on Crespi Avenue 9 southeast of Mountain View Avenue in the Single-Family (R- 1) Zoning District.

**Proposed CEQA Action:** Find the project categorically exempt from environmental review pursuant to section 15303 and 15304 of the CEQA Guidelines and that none of the exceptions to the exemptions contained in section 15300.2 can be made in this case.

**UP 25178, UP 25303 & DR 25184 (Great Valley Holdings, LLC & Mama’s Boy)**  
Alissa & Anthony Carnazzo, Business Owners Dolores 2 northeast of 5th Avenue Block 51, Lot 16  
APN: 010-136-011-000  
Consideration of a Use Permit to allow the change of

use to the front building from an office to a deli with no on-site cooking and retail shop (“Mama’s Boy”), a Use Permit to allow the change of use of the rear building from an office to a full-line restaurant focused on lunch and dinner (“Mammone”), and a Track 2 Design Review to allow exterior building modifications and updating the courtyard to allow outdoor seating and access between the two buildings. The property is located on Dolores Street 2 northeast of 5th Avenue in the Service Commercial (SC) Zoning District.

**Proposed CEQA Action:** Find the project categorically exempt from environmental review pursuant to section 15303 and 15304 of the CEQA Guidelines and that none of the exceptions to the exemptions contained in section 15300.2 can be made in this case.

**DS 25139 (Kshire Property Investments LLC)**  
Eric Miller Architects, Architect  
Monte Verde Street 4 southwest of 3rd Avenue Block: II; Lots: 19, 21, 23  
APN: 010-223-009-000  
Consideration of a Concept Design Study, DS 25139 (Kshire Property Investments LLC), for the demolition of an existing 1,248-square-foot, one-story single-family residence and 192-square-foot shed, and the construction of a 3,292-square-foot, one-story single-family residence inclusive of a 449-square-foot attached garage located on Monte Verde Street 4 southwest of 3rd Avenue in the Single-Family Residential (R-1) District and Archaeological Significance (AS) Overlay District. APN: 010-223-009-000. The project additionally includes a detached 800-square-foot accessory dwelling unit.

**Proposed CEQA Action:** Find the consideration of a Concept Review is not a project under CEQA as defined in Public Resources Code Section 21065 and CEQA Guidelines Section 15378

**DS 25272 (Gartner)**  
Carol Brock, Agent  
Dolores Street 2 northwest of 10th Avenue Block: 112; Lot: 15  
APN: 010-157-005-000  
Consideration of a Concept Design Study, DS 25272 (Gartner), for the demolition of an existing 1,718-square-foot, one-story single-family residence, and the construction of a 1,800-square-foot, two-story single-family residence inclusive of a 200-square-foot detached garage within the front setback located on Dolores Street 2 northwest of 10th Avenue in the Single-Family Residential (R-1) District. APN: 010-157-005-000. The project additionally includes an attached 800-square-foot accessory dwelling unit.

**Proposed CEQA Action:** Find the consideration of a Concept Review is not a project under CEQA as defined in Public Resources Code Section 21065 and CEQA Guidelines Section 15378

### Stunning Remodeled Freestanding Unit in Carmel Valley Ranch

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# OWLS

From page 1A

for pest control.

He builds birdhouses and thought owl platforms would be easy to construct, so he got to work designing and building them. The result is a broad platform with an 8-inch lip so the fledglings don’t fall out. Falworth uses TV mounts to support them, “and I do a 200-pound weight test” to make sure it won’t fall.

### Door to door

His group, carmelowls.org, generated some leads for potential locations, and he and his fellow volunteers have been scouting them out.

They also walk door to door and eyeball tall trees that could accommodate the boxes. Critical elements are nearby paved spots that can bear the weight of a cherry-picker and no power lines nearby.

The response has been strong, with more than two dozen residents signing up, hoping trees on their properties will be the right fit.

Falworth said it costs about \$2,000 to install five owl platforms in a day, including materials, labor, and renting a cherry-picker from Home Depot. The organization is accepting donations directly via gofundme.com as well as through Carmel Cares, which is a registered nonprofit.

A pair of great horned owls could take up to a year to occupy a new platform, since they nest in February and typically find sites before then, according to Falworth. Besides rats, they like to dine on mice, voles and other rodents, as well as rabbits, frogs, snakes, and even the occasional skunk.

“Hopefully by putting up these platforms, we give



PHOTOS/CARMELOWLS.ORG

Great horned owls are not only gorgeous, they’re excellent rodent hunters — and sometimes they look a little smug about it (above). Resident Paul Falworth has launched an effort to bring more of the raptors to Carmel and beyond by installing nesting platforms on suitable trees (left).

## PUBLIC NOTICES

**FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT**  
File No. 20260041  
Filing type: ORIGINAL FILING.  
The following person(s) is (are) doing business as:  
**JDS ESTATE JEWELRY, 959 Portola Dr., Monterey, CA 93940.**  
County of Principal Place of Business: MONTEREY  
Name of Corporation or LLC as shown in the Articles of Inc./Org./Reg.:  
JDS ESTATE JEWELRY LLC, P.O. Box 4833, Carmel, CA 93921.  
State of Inc./Org./Reg.: CA  
This business is conducted by a limited liability company  
Registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above on Jan. 1, 2016.  
S/Juan Da Silva, CEO  
Date: Jan. 7, 2026  
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Monterey County on Jan. 7, 2026.  
Publication Dates: Jan. 23, 30, Feb. 6, 13, 2026. (PC 140)

S/Jean Cheng Gorman, Manager  
Date: Jan. 20, 2026  
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Monterey County on Jan. 20, 2026.  
Publication Dates: Jan. 23, 30, Feb. 6, 13, 2026 (PC 146)

**FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT**  
File No. 20260067  
Filing type: ORIGINAL FILING.  
The following person(s) is (are) doing business as: **BAUTISTA'S TILE & STONE, 1755 San Pablo Ave., Seaside, CA 93955.**  
County of Principal Place of Business: MONTEREY  
Registered Owner(s): JURIAS BAUTISTA LUIZ.  
This business is conducted by an individual.  
Registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above on N/A.  
S/Jurias Bautista  
Date signed: Jan. 9, 2026  
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Monterey County on Jan. 9, 2026.  
Publication Dates: Jan. 23, 30, Feb. 6, 13, 2026 (PC 147)

**Lien Sale Auction Advertisement**  
Notice is hereby given that Pursuant to the California Self-Service Storage Facility Act, (B&P Code 21700 et. seq.)  
Auction to be held at 4:00PM on February 17, 2026 at  
www.selfstorageauction.com.  
The property is stored at:  
**Marina U Store Self Storage  
475 Reservation Road  
Marina, CA 93933**  
Zack Durant  
David Bergstrand  
Arzadon Wenceslao  
  
1/30/26  
**CNS-4005286#  
CARMEL PINE CONE**  
Publication Dates: Jan. 30, 2026 (PC 141)

**FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT**  
File No. 20260057  
Filing type: ORIGINAL FILING.  
The following person(s) is (are) doing business as: **AXOLOT T-SHIRT, 499 Calle Principal, Suite A, Monterey, CA 93940.**  
County of Principal Place of Business: MONTEREY  
Registered Owner(s): DANIEL MORALES.  
This business is conducted by an individual.  
Registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above on Sept. 23, 2025.  
S/Daniel Morales  
Date signed: Jan. 8, 2026  
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Monterey County on Jan. 8, 2026.  
Publication Dates: Jan. 23, 30, Feb. 6, 13, 2026 (PC 142)

**FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT**  
File No. 20260124  
Filing type: ORIGINAL FILING.  
The following person(s) is (are) doing business as: **TOP NAILS, 915 Playa Ave. #C, Sand City, CA 93955.**  
County of Principal Place of Business: MONTEREY  
Registered Owner(s): SUSAN TRINH LE, 915 Playa Ave. #C, Sand City, CA 93933.  
This business is conducted by an individual.  
Registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above on Jan. 20, 2026.  
S/Susan Le  
Date signed: Jan. 20, 2026  
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Monterey County on Jan. 20, 2026.  
Publication Dates: Jan. 23, 30, Feb. 6, 13, 2026 (PC 145)

**FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT**  
File No. 20260131  
Filing type: ORIGINAL FILING.  
The following person(s) is (are) doing business as:  
**RGR, LLC, 2814 Raccoon Trail, Pebble Beach, CA 93953.**  
County of Principal Place of Business: MONTEREY  
Name of Corporation or LLC as shown in the Articles of Inc./Org./Reg.:  
ROOTED GROWING RESILIENT, LLC, 680 Lighthouse Avenue, #52055, Pacific Grove, CA 93950.  
State of Inc./Org./Reg.: CA  
This business is conducted by a limited liability company.  
Registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above on Jan. 5, 2026.

Cromer Holdings LLC, 455 Market St Ste 1940 #597990, San Francisco, CA 94105; California  
This business is conducted by a limited liability company  
Registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name listed above on Not Applicable  
S/ Shane Cramer, Managing Member  
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Monterey County on 01/12/2026  
1/30, 2/6, 2/13, 2/20/26  
**CNS-4006344#  
CARMEL PINE CONE**  
Publication Dates: Jan. 30, Feb. 6, 13, 20, 2026. (PC 151)

**FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT**  
File No. 20260089  
The following person(s) is(are) doing business as:  
**Monterey Bay Fiber Arts, 1297 Judson St, Seaside, CA 93955,** County of Monterey  
Registered Owner(s): Patricia Mannion  
This business is conducted by an individual  
Registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name listed above on Not Applicable  
S/ Patricia Mannion  
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Monterey County on 01/13/2026  
1/30, 2/6, 2/13, 2/20/26  
**CNS-4006200#  
CARMEL PINE CONE**  
Publication Dates: Jan. 30, Feb. 6, 13, 20, 2026. (PC 152)

under the fictitious business name or names listed above on Dec. 15, 2025.  
S/John Billman  
Date signed: Dec. 15, 2025  
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Monterey County on Dec. 15, 2025.  
Publication Dates: Jan. 23, 30, Feb. 6, 13, 2026 (PC 155)

**FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT**  
File No. 20260060  
Filing type: ORIGINAL FILING.  
The following person(s) is (are) doing business as:  
**1. CREMA AT LOVERS  
2. LOVERS POINT EVENTS  
631 Ocean View Blvd., Pacific Grove, CA 93950.**  
County of Principal Place of Business: MONTEREY  
Name of Corporation or LLC as shown in the Articles of Inc./Org./Reg.:  
CREMA LOVERS POINT, INC., 631 Ocean View Blvd., Pacific Grove, CA 93950.  
State of Inc./Org./Reg.: CA  
This business is conducted by a corporation.  
Registrant commenced to transact business

under the fictitious business name or names listed above on Jan. 6, 2026.  
S/Tamie Aceves, CEO  
Date: Jan. 7, 2026  
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Monterey County on Jan. 8, 2026.  
Publication Dates: Jan. 30, Feb. 6, 13, 20, 2026 (PC 156)

**FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT**  
File No. 20260183  
Filing type: ORIGINAL FILING.  
The following person(s) is (are) doing business as: **COASTAL POOL & SPA SERVICE, 6 Marquard Rd., Carmel Valley, CA 93924.**  
County of Principal Place of Business: MONTEREY  
Registered Owner(s): IAN BAILEY HUBBARD, 11 Via Contenta, Carmel Valley, CA 93924.  
This business is conducted by an individual.  
Registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above on Jan. 4, 2026.  
S/Ian Hubbard  
Date signed: Jan. 23, 2026  
This statement was filed with the Coun-

ty Clerk of Monterey County on Jan. 23, 2026.  
Publication Dates: Jan. 30, Feb. 6, 13, 20, 2026 (PC 158)

**FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT**  
File No. 20260139  
Filing type: ORIGINAL FILING.  
The following person(s) is (are) doing business as: **SABOR A MI RANCHO, 154 W. Market St., Salinas, CA 93901.**  
County of Principal Place of Business: MONTEREY  
Registered Owner(s): JUAN ANDRADE, 517 Napa Way, Salinas, CA 93906.  
This business is conducted by an individual.  
Registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above on Jan. 20, 2026.  
S/Juan Andrade  
Date signed: Jan. 20, 2026  
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Monterey County on Jan. 20, 2026.  
Publication Dates: Jan. 30, Feb. 6, 13, 20, 2026 (PC 161)

under the fictitious business name or names listed above on Jan. 6, 2026.  
S/Tamie Aceves, CEO  
Date: Jan. 7, 2026  
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Monterey County on Jan. 8, 2026.  
Publication Dates: Jan. 30, Feb. 6, 13, 20, 2026 (PC 156)

**FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT**  
File No. 20260183  
Filing type: ORIGINAL FILING.  
The following person(s) is (are) doing business as: **COASTAL POOL & SPA SERVICE, 6 Marquard Rd., Carmel Valley, CA 93924.**  
County of Principal Place of Business: MONTEREY  
Registered Owner(s): IAN BAILEY HUBBARD, 11 Via Contenta, Carmel Valley, CA 93924.  
This business is conducted by an individual.  
Registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above on Jan. 4, 2026.  
S/Ian Hubbard  
Date signed: Jan. 23, 2026  
This statement was filed with the Coun-

**T.S. No.: 250903748 Notice of Trustee’s Sale**  
Loan No.: 20230917 Order No. 95532256 APN: 006-026-011-000 Property Address: 1046 Balboa Avenue Pacific Grove, CA 93950 You Are In Default Under A Deed Of Trust Dated 9/8/2023. Unless You Take Action To Protect Your Property, It May Be Sold At A Public Sale. If You Need An Explanation Of The Nature Of The Proceeding Against You, You Should Contact A Lawyer. A public auction sale to the highest bidder for cashier’s check drawn on a state or national bank, cashier’s check drawn by a state or federal credit union, or a cashier’s check drawn by a state or federal savings and loan association, or savings association, or savings bank specified in Section 5102 of the Financial Code and authorized to do business in this state will be held by the duly appointed trustee as shown below, of all right, title, and interest conveyed to and now held by the trustee in the hereinafter described property under and pursuant to a Deed of Trust described below. The sale will be made, but without covenant or warranty, expressed or implied, regarding title, possession, or encumbrances, to pay the remaining principal sum of the note(s) secured by the Deed of Trust, with interest and late charges thereon, as provided in the note(s), advances, under the terms of the Deed of Trust, interest thereon, fees, charges and expenses of the Trustee for the total amount (at the time of the initial publication of the Notice of Sale) reasonably estimated to be set forth below. The amount may be greater on the day of sale. No cashier’s checks older than 60 days from the day of sale will be accepted. Trustor: AMAM, LLC, A California Limited Liability Company Duly Appointed Trustee: Yeva, Inc. dba Saxe Mortgage Company Recorded 9/27/2023 as Instrument No. 2023029868 in book , page of Official Records in the office of the Recorder of Monterey County, California, Date of Sale: 2/10/2026 at 10:00 AM Place of Sale: main entrance County Administration Building, 168 West Alisal Street, Salinas, CA Amount of unpaid balance and other charges: \$1,908,060.38 Street Address or other common designation of real property: 1046 Balboa Avenue Pacific Grove, CA 93950 Legal Description: Please See Attached Exhibit “A” The undersigned Trustee disclaims any liability for any incorrectness of the street address or other common designation, if any, shown above. If no street address or other common designation is shown, directions to the location of the property may be obtained by sending a written request to the beneficiary within 10 days of the date of first publication of this Notice of Sale. Notice To Potential Bidders: If you are considering bidding on this property lien, you should understand that there are risks involved in bidding at a trustee auction. You will be bidding on a lien, not on the property itself. Placing the highest bid at a trustee auction does not automatically entitle you to free and clear ownership of the property. You should also be aware that the lien being auctioned off may be a junior lien. If you are the highest bidder at the auction, you are or may be responsible for paying off all liens senior to the lien being auctioned off, before you can receive clear title to the property. You are encouraged to investigate the existence, priority, and size of outstanding liens that may exist on this property by contacting the county recorder’s office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge you a fee for this information. If you consult either of these resources, you should be aware that the same lender may hold more than one mortgage or deed of trust on the property. Notice To Property Owner: The sale date shown on this notice of sale may be postponed one or more times by the mortgagee, beneficiary, trustee, or a court, pursuant to Section 2924g of the California Civil Code. The law requires that information about trustee sale postponements be made available to you and to the public, as a courtesy to those not present at the sale. If you wish to learn whether your sale date has been postponed, and, if applicable, the rescheduled time and date for the sale of this property, you may call (877) 440-4460 or visit this Internet website www.mkconsultantsinc.com, using the file number assigned to this case 250903748. Information about postponements that are very short in duration or that occur close in time to the scheduled sale may not immediately be reflected in the telephone information or on the Internet Web site. The best way to verify postponement information is to attend the scheduled sale. Notice To Tenant: You may have a right to purchase this property after the trustee auction pursuant to Section 2924m of the California Civil Code. If you are an “eligible tenant buyer,” you can purchase the property if you match the last and highest bid placed at the trustee auction. If you are an “eligible bidder,” you may be able to purchase the property if you exceed the last and highest bid placed at the trustee auction. There are three steps to exercising this right of purchase. First, 48 hours after the date of the trustee sale, you can call (877) 440-4460, or visit this internet website www.mkconsultantsinc.com, using the file number assigned to this case 250903748 to find the date on which the trustee’s sale was held, the amount of the last and highest bid, and the address of the trustee. Second, you must send a written notice of intent to place a bid so that the trustee receives it no more than 15 days after the trustee’s sale. Third, you must submit a bid so that the trustee receives it no more than 45 days after the trustee’s sale. When submitting funds for a bid subject to Section 2924m, please make the funds payable to “Total Lender Solutions, Inc. Holding Account”. If you think you may qualify as an “eligible tenant buyer” or “eligible bidder,” you should consider contacting an attorney or appropriate real estate professional immediately for advice regarding this potential right to purchase. Date: 1/8/2026 Yeva, Inc. dba Saxe Mortgage Company by Mortgage Lender Services, as agent 10505 Sorrento Valley Road, Suite 125 San Diego, CA 92121 Phone: 866-535-3736 Sale Line: (877) 440-4460 By: Rachel Seropian, Trustee Sale Officer Exhibit “A” Legal Description Parcel 1: Lot 7, In Block 260, As Shown On The “Map Of Pacific Grove Beach, City Of Pacific Grove, Monterey County, California”, Filed August 7, 1916 In The Office Of The County Recorder Of The County Of Monterey, State Of California, And Now On File In Said Office In Map Book 3, “Cities And Towns”, At Page 6 Therein. Parcel 2: Together With A Right Of Way For Sewer Purposes Over The Easterly 47 Feet On The Southerly 5 Feet And Over The Easterly 5 Feet Of Lot 8, In Block 260, As Shown On The Map Entitled “Map Of Pacific Grove Beach, City Of Pacific Grove, Monterey County, California”, Filed August 7, 1916, In The Office Of The County Recorder Of The County Of Monterey, State Of California, And Now On File In Said Office In Map Book 3, Cities And Towns, At Page 6 Therein.

Publication dates: Jan. 16, 23, 30, 2026 (PC121)

**FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT**  
File No. 20260083  
The following person(s) is(are) doing business as:  
**Mitchell Technologies, 360 Dela Vina Ave Apt. 1, Monterey, CA 93940,** County of Monterey  
Registered Owner(s):

**FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT**  
File No. 20252222  
Filing type: ORIGINAL FILING.  
The following person(s) is (are) doing business as: **CROWN CLEANING, 4737 Seacrest Dr., Seaside, CA 93955.**  
County of Principal Place of Business: MONTEREY  
Registered Owner(s): ANTHONY SAMER NIMRI, 4737 Sea Crest Dr., Seaside, CA 93955.  
JOHN BOWDEN BILLMAN, 1400 Burgundy Way, Gonzales, CA 93926.  
This business is conducted by a general partnership.  
Registrant commenced to transact business

**FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT**  
File No. 20260142  
Filing type: ORIGINAL FILING.  
The following person(s) is (are) doing business as: **MONTEREY TECHNOLOGY SUPPORT, 351 Watson Street, Monterey, CA 93940.**  
County of Principal Place of Business: MONTEREY  
Registered Owner(s): EDREES ROHINA, 351 Watson Street, Monterey, CA 93940.  
This business is conducted by an individual.  
Registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above on July 1, 2025.  
S/Edrees Rohina  
Date signed: Jan. 21, 2026  
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Monterey County on Jan. 21, 2026.  
Publication Dates: Jan. 23, 30, Feb. 6, 13, 2026 (PC 150)

**FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT**  
File No. 20260142  
Filing type: ORIGINAL FILING.  
The following person(s) is (are) doing business as: **MONTEREY TECHNOLOGY SUPPORT, 351 Watson Street, Monterey, CA 93940.**  
County of Principal Place of Business: MONTEREY  
Registered Owner(s): EDREES ROHINA, 351 Watson Street, Monterey, CA 93940.  
This business is conducted by an individual.  
Registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above on Jan. 20, 2026.  
S/Susan Le  
Date signed: Jan. 20, 2026  
This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Monterey County on Jan. 20, 2026.  
Publication Dates: Jan. 23, 30, Feb. 6, 13, 2026 (PC 145)



# CHOMP and insurance company avert coverage loss

By KELLY NIX

MONTAGE HEALTH and Anthem Blue Cross have agreed on a new contract after the insurance giant notified the health system last month that it was terminating their relationship — a move that could have left many Monterey Peninsula residents uninsured at CHOMP and other Montage facilities.

Anthem Blue Cross and Montage Health, parent company of Community Hospital of the Monterey Peninsula, have had a reimbursement relationship for services at the hospital and other Montage-operated clinics for about 20 years. In December, amid an impasse on prices and terms, Anthem notified Montage Health it was ending the contract.

“The potential impact would have been significant,” Montage Health spokeswoman Monica Sciuto told The Pine Cone, adding that Anthem Blue Cross members would have been faced with steep healthcare bills, not only at CHOMP, but at a wide variety of inpatient and outpatient services, including at the Carol Hatton Breast Care Center, the Sleep Center and behavioral health units.

However, Montage and Blue Cross announced Monday they’d broken the stalemate and reached an agreement to provide Blue Cross members with continued in-network access to care at Community Hospital of the Monterey Peninsula, and all Montage Health services in Monterey County.

### ‘Affordability’

Montage said the new accord “strengthens local access to healthcare services, improves affordability, and supports ongoing collaboration to deliver greater value for patients, employers and the community.”

Insurance companies and healthcare providers typically negotiate reimbursement rates for medical services every few years. The contracts determine how much hospitals are reimbursed and what insurance rates will be. Without a contract, hospitals are out of network, and patients usually face much higher costs or no coverage except in emergencies.

Neither Montage nor Anthem provided details of the dispute or what the impact on insurances prices will be. But Montage said that after the company’s notice of termination, “negotiations took place over the following months and were resolved before any change in coverage occurred.”

Sciuto said that Anthem Blue Cross notified its members directly about the potential change in coverage.

“Montage Health communicated with employer groups and physicians and made information available to the public on the Montage Health website, including FAQs, to keep the community informed while negotiations were ongoing,” she said.

The state Office of Healthcare Affordability last year determined that CHOMP was one of seven “high cost” hospitals in the state and said its inpatient prices are nearly six times higher than Medicare rates. The state agency ordered CHOMP to restrict spending growth to 1.8 percent this year, 1.7 percent in 2027 and 2028 and 1.6 percent in 2029.

Montage has disputed the report and points to a December 2025 California Hospital Association letter claiming that CHOMP’s high prices are due to “reimbursement shortfalls, payer mix and the area’s high cost of doing business,” and not a lack of competition, as the Office of Healthcare Affordability found.

### Conundrum

A local insurance agent told The Pine Cone that Blue Cross is the “largest commercial insurer in Monterey County,” and that the resolution between the company and Montage is “a big relief to a lot of people.”

On Jan. 17, before the agreement was announced, a soon-to-be mother and Blue Cross member said she was reluctant to deliver her baby at CHOMP for fear of losing in-network access if the parties couldn’t settle by Feb. 1, when she said her coverage would end.

The woman, whom The Pine Cone is not naming, said her options were to wait for spontaneous labor at CHOMP — risking six-figure debt if delivery occurred in February — or induce labor at nearly 39 weeks to deliver and be discharged before paying out of pocket.

“How devastating is that?” she said.

Montage and Anthem framed the compromise as a way of “improving affordability,” but what that means for patients’ premiums, copays and out-of-pocket costs remains unclear.

Montage Health directed questions on those details to Blue Cross.

“What we can say is that the new agreement preserves in-network access and continuity of care for Blue Cross members,” Sciuto said.

Montage also said it would slow “the growth of healthcare costs.”

“We are grateful we reached an agreement that keeps our community’s care moving forward without interruption,” said Alicia Maitland, Montage Health’s chief



## CORNELIA EMERY

The world is a bit less vibrant with the passing of Cornelia “Posh” Emery on Dec. 3, 2025. Posh loved her family, her dog, making art and being in the company of artists, reading entire books in a day, traveling through France, heated blankets and extra-cold martinis. A Yankee to the core, she loved the ocean, though she secretly believed that the Atlantic was the only ocean worth its salt.

Born in Cambridge, MA, to the late William A. and Kathleen M.H. (Turnbull) Thompson, Cornelia received her B.A. from Smith College and studied at the Philadelphia College of Art (now University of the Arts) and the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts. She was an active member of the Carmel Art Association and a founding member of the Monterey Bay Plein Air Artists Association (MBPAPA). Prior to her life as a working artist in Carmel, Posh worked at Polaroid during its heyday; taught English as a second language; organized poetry and French language groups in Princeton, Philadelphia and Carmel and contributed her illustrations to a number of projects.

She went on her first date with her husband, James, just after returning from a ski trip, arriving with a prominent turtleneck sunburn and a bad cough. He was smitten by her smarts and wit, and remained smitten throughout their nearly 64 years of marriage. They enjoyed traveling together, with extended stays in India, England and France. Cornelia is survived by James; as well as her two daughters, Elizabeth Emery (Evan Wachs) and Victoria Emery (Darren Morgan); her grandson, Griffin Morgan; and her dog, Molly.

**A celebration of Posh's life will be held on Feb. 21st – please reach out to emeryspeaking@gmail.com for details.**

**In lieu of flowers, please consider making a donation to Peace of Mind Dog Rescue.**

financial officer. “It reinforces the trust our patients place in us and helps ensure we can continue providing the reliable, high-quality care they deserve.”

Blue Cross did not respond to questions from The Pine Cone, but its president, Beth Andersen, issued a statement in a joint press release with Montage.

“This agreement reflects Anthem and Montage’s unified approach to improving affordability while meeting the healthcare needs of local families and employers in Monterey County,” Andersen said.



## CHRISTINE K. SEIDEL WILLIAMS

10/1/1951 ♦ 12/22/2025

Chris, whose father served in the U.S. Army, was born in Nuremberg, Germany, on Oct. 1, 1951. She was a steadfast and joyous Christian who lived the last two decades in Browns Valley with her devoted husband of 40 years, Ron Williams. After having a heart attack on Oct. 20, 2025, Chris succumbed to pneumonia at Sutter Santa Rosa Regional Hospital in Santa Rosa on Dec. 22, 2025, three days before the celebrated birth of her Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Chris grew up on the Monterey Peninsula with her six siblings. She graduated from Monterey High School in 1970. After opening and operating her beloved daycare business in her beautiful homes in Fort Ord, Germany and Salinas, she and Ron retired and moved to Yuba County. Chris loved being surrounded by the calm and quiet of nature. She devoted her time to her big garden and yard. She held a special place in her heart for God’s creatures. She took loving care of her goats, chickens, ducks, doves, finches and hummingbirds. She adored her three little dogs, Spencer, Bella and Mia, with whom she would snuggle daily while watching her favorite TV shows and movies. Chris read her Bible every day. She was filled with God’s bright light. You could depend on Chris to bring joy, goofiness and laughter to your day and to the many family gatherings she attended.

Chris is survived by her husband, Ron Williams, who was a totally dedicated, loving and dependable dad and mentor to her two sons, Rick and Rey, from her first marriage, and to his son, Eddie. Chris was a caring mom to Eddie, whom she considered a son. Chris is also survived by those three sons, Rick Ramirez of St. Louis, MO, Reynold Ramirez of Prunedale and Eddie Williams of Idaho Falls, ID; and her six siblings, Linda Brown of Williamsburg, VA, Robert Seidel of Monterey, Theresa Houseman of Pacific Grove, Jinny Meyers of Carmel Valley, Andrea Weaghtington of Salinas and Sam Seidel of Charleroi, PA. She was a much-loved grandmother to Noah, Paige, Reyden, Mason, Emma and Tyler.

**Chris’s friends and family are invited to her memorial service which starts at 2 p.m. on Thursday, Feb. 19, at the California Central Coast Veterans Cemetery, 2900 Parker Flats Road, Seaside; and to her Celebration of Life reception at 3 p.m. at Compass Church, 830 Padre Drive in Salinas.**

**In lieu of flowers, please consider making a donation to Northwest SPCA in Oroville, Hitchcock Animal Shelter in Salinas, or to the Peace of Mind Dog Rescue in Pacific Grove.**

**“We called her Chris. She isn’t gone. Just away for a little while.”**

## MARCELLA KINDRED-DOLHUN

It is with profound sadness that we announce the passing of Marcella Kindred-Dolhun.

She passed peacefully in her Monterey, California home on Christmas Day in the presence of her husband, Wes Dolhun, and her sister, Delmarie Rosseker. Marcella battled cancer for the previous four years, succumbing to her foe in the end. She was 85 years of age.



Marcella is survived by husband Wes, sisters Delmarie, Dodie and Shelley. She also leaves behind numerous nieces, nephews and cousins. She was predeceased by her parents, Andrew and Adelaide Kindred, and her sister Gloria.

Marcella was born in Yorkton, Saskatchewan, Canada. Following graduation from Sacred Heart Academy she attended St. Paul’s School of Nursing in Saskatoon, obtaining her R.N. in 1961. She worked at hospitals in New Westminster, British Columbia and University Hospital in Edmonton, Alberta. In the early 1980s she was offered the opportunity to work at Arkansas Children’s Hospital (ACH) in Little Rock. After several years there she moved to Monterey in 1989 where she worked at the Community Hospital of the Monterey Peninsula (CHOMP) until her retirement in 2010.

In 1992 she met her future husband, Wes Dolhun. They were married in 1999 at Monterey, California.

Marcella believed that family and friends were the most important things in her life — she never forgot a birthday, anniversary, or graduation.

In life and in passing she was never alone, always surrounded by family and friends, whether in California, Canada or abroad.

**Forever remembered.**



# Positivity, talent and experience prepare CHS grad for NFL test

A SUPERPOWER that J.T. Byrne has developed during his five years as a student-athlete at three NCAA Division I universities is the ability to focus intensely on the task at hand.

“Plan A is Plan A — I don’t believe in a Plan B,” said

## Peninsula Sports

By DENNIS TAYLOR

Byrne, who played college football at Oregon State (2021-2022), UC Berkeley (’23-’24), and Georgia Tech last fall. “If something changes, that will be the new Plan A.”

For the Carmel High alumnus, Plan A is to prepare his



PHOTO/COURTESY J.T. BYRNE

Carmel High graduate J.T. Byrne celebrates his 6-yard touchdown reception for Georgia Tech against BYU during the Pop Tarts Bowl in Orlando.

body and mind for the upcoming NFL combine Feb. 23-March 2 in Indianapolis — a week of physical and mental tests designed to help pro scouts determine whether he might be drafted in April, or signed after the draft as a free agent and invited to an NFL training camp in mid-July.

**TD catch in a bowl game**

The 6-foot-5, 265-pound tight end heightened his stock last season by helping Georgia Tech to a 9-4 overall record, culminating with a 25-21 loss to Brigham Young University in the Dec. 27 Pop Tarts Bowl in Orlando, Fla.

Byrne, primarily a blocker throughout his college career, caught his second touchdown pass of the year in the bowl game, which — fun fact — ended with an acrobatic interception in the end zone by BYU cornerback Evan Johnson, an alumnus of Stevenson School in Pebble Beach.

“Evan and I actually went head-to-head against each other five or six times in the game, and I was playfully talking some trash, hoping he’d hear me,” Byrne said of his friend.

“And then he had to break our hearts. When he made that great play to end the game, I thought, ‘Of course, it’s going to be Evan.’”

**Back to Orlando**

Five days later, Byrne returned to Orlando to play in the Hula Bowl senior all-star showcase, where he found himself in the starting lineup and saw extensive action throughout the game.

“Of course, they fly you to the bowl game, but the Atlanta airport was an absolute blood-bath of delayed flights on the day I was supposed to leave,” he said. “So, I finally called them and said, ‘I’m hopping in the car,’ and took a little six-hour, solo road trip to Florida.”

As a late arrival, Byrne missed out on media interviews, meetings with pro scouts, and a battery of physical and mental tests conducted by the NFL.

“I also had missed a bunch of meetings with the coaches, so I woke up the next morning and got the playbook about 20 minutes before we got on the bus to go to practice,” he said.

Byrne, programmed for positivity, took that challenge in stride. “I decided to look at that as



PHOTO/COURTESY J.T. BYRNE

Throwing a great block like this one against Georgia defensive back K.J. Bolden was a job Carmel alum J.T. Byrne grew to love as a tight end at Georgia Tech, Cal and Oregon State.

an opportunity to prove I can learn a playbook really quickly,” he said.

Practice days at the Hula Bowl started with 6 a.m. wakeup calls, followed by play-installation sessions, meetings with position coaches, and a walk-through to familiarize players with plays and formations.

Then came breakfast, a full practice and film sessions.

“Watching film with those coaches taught us so much about the structure of the offenses and defenses they use at the NFL level,” Byrne said.

Evenings brought opportunities for players to be

See **SPORTS** next page

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# SPORTS

From previous page

interviewed by pro scouts in the hotel lobby.

“They wanted to learn about your background and try to get a feel for the kind of person you are,” he said.

Evenings typically ended for the players at around 11 p.m.

Byrne’s chances of being selected in the NFL draft are uncertain. The best-case scenario places him as a fifth- to seventh-round pick on the final day of the three-day draft. If he’s not selected, he could be a priority free-agent signing right after the draft. But projections routinely change — in either direction — and his stock could rise or dip after he participates in next month’s combine, and Georgia Tech’s annual “Pro Day” showcase for NFL scouts in late March.

“The pros come in and watch you do the 40-yard dash, broad jump, vertical leap, bench-press, run your pass routes,” he said. “There also are interview processes, and teams can work you out individually, if they want.”

As a three-sport standout (football, basketball and baseball) at Carmel High, he paid his dues on his way to this moment.

As a 215-pound arrival at Oregon State, he was asked to take a “redshirt” year, which is a season in development,



PHOTO/COURTESY J.T. BYRNE

Byrne (left), who never caught a pass at Oregon State or Cal, snagged six this season from Georgia Tech QB Haynes King — two for TDs, including one against BYU in December’s Pop Tarts Bowl.

# FOX

From page 1A

numerous deep wounds around his neck — he remains energetic, is at a healthy weight, and is eating on his own.

SPCA wildlife staff cleaned the wounds, applied ointment, and then transported him to the Avian and Exotic Clinic of Monterey for surgical treatment to thoroughly clean the wounds, remove debris, and close them with sutures.

“He’s currently eating a varied diet of proteins — mice, rats, fish, eggs — along with fruits and greens,” Brookhouser said. “None of his food is live at this stage; we’re keeping him quiet and indoors during the early phase of recovery.”

Staff are regularly changing his bandages, administering antibiotics and pain medication, and providing meals and fluids.

“Today the fox is very alert and growls when we approach — which is exactly the behavior we want to see,” Brookhouser explained.



PHOTO/SPCA MONTEREY COUNTY

This poor little fox is recovering after SPCA Monterey County workers removed a painful plastic pipe around his neck.

never appearing in a game, thereby saving a year of NCAA eligibility.

In his second year, as a redshirt-freshman, the former Padres playmaker began adjusting to a new role as a 255-pound blocking tight end, with limited playing time.

### Love for blocking

In 2023, he opted to transfer to UC Berkeley — closer to home — where he got bigger and saw more playing time in his sophomore and junior seasons, and earned a bachelor’s degree in political economy in December 2024.

He opted to pursue his master’s degree in business management at Georgia Tech, and cash in his final season of athletic eligibility.

Still primarily a blocking tight end, Byrne — who never caught a pass at Oregon State or Cal — made six receptions for the Yellow Jackets, two for touchdowns.

Catching a pass is rewarding, he said, but he’s grown to

love his job as a blocker.

“I love to put my hand in the dirt and go block people,” he said. “So many one-on-one blocks are super-challenging, and catching a ball wide open is nothing compared to the satisfaction of throwing a good block to help the team’s run game. I feel like I’ve found my identity.”

For the next four weeks, Byrne will be in Atlanta, training and conditioning for the combine, and will continue to work out for another month for “Pro Day” at the university.

Byrne has two classes to complete — both online — to finish his graduate degree at Georgia Tech, but his job hunt is Plan A for another day. For now, that will take a back seat until his football future becomes clear.

“I’ve been an athlete my whole life. It’s become part of my identity, and the NFL always has been the dream,” he said. “I want this to be just the beginning.”

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



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# Editorial

## The truth about taxes

WE'RE SURE you've heard President Donald Trump and members of his administration bragging about the big refunds American workers can expect come April 15.

"Thanks to our tax cuts, millions of Americans will soon receive record-setting refunds, with the average refund expected to be over \$1,000 higher than it has ever been before," Trump said on social media this week.

"Millions of Americans may see the largest tax refunds of their lives, totaling about \$150 billion," echoed Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent.

An analysis by CNBC shows that the percentage of taxpayers receiving refunds is projected to increase to as much as 70 percent in the upcoming filing season, up from about 63 percent in prior years — a shift driven by expanded tax breaks that reduce liabilities for more households.

Key changes in the One Big Beautiful Bill, signed into law in July 2025 and retroactive to Jan. 1, 2025, include a higher standard deduction, new deductions for tips, overtime pay and auto loan interest, as well as a \$6,000 additional deduction for seniors ages 65 and older. The state and local tax deduction cap also rose to \$40,000 from \$10,000, benefiting itemizers in high-tax states like California.

Since the IRS did not update withholding tables for these changes, many workers over-withheld throughout 2025, making refunds swell, according to Bessent.

Any tax cut is something to celebrate, especially with the federal government blatantly and nonchalantly wasting so much of the taxpayers' money. But before everybody gets too dizzy over the idea of big tax refunds, it's important to remember that a refund is a tiny victory compared to the avalanche of taxes we all pay.

From the founding until World War I, the United States got along fine with no income tax at all, and it wasn't until the New Deal that paycheck withholding was invented, turning the federal government into what former NBC newsman David Brinkley called "the world's largest ATM, always ready to dump out millions and billions to anyone who could push the right buttons."

"The withholding tax poured in more money than even Congress could ever have imagined," Brinkley wrote, "because government soon learned what automobile and real estate salesmen already knew: If you talk to the customer about monthly payments, never mentioning the total price, it is much easier to sell a car or a house."

Once the idea of "take-home pay" entered the language, he observed, it became clear the government could take in huge sums without serious complaint as long as it deducted the money before the taxpayer ever saw it.

When the income tax was introduced, it was promised that "only the rich" would pay it.

During the Civil War, Abraham Lincoln's Revenue Act applied a 3 percent tax on incomes over \$600, but it was limited and temporary, and the tax was repealed in 1872.

It was the ratification of the 16th Amendment on Feb. 3, 1913, that granted Congress the power to levy income taxes, paving the way for a permanent federal income tax, but even then, tax rates started at just 1 percent on incomes over \$3,000, rising to a mere 7 percent on higher amounts.

Everything changed in World War II, when massive revenue was needed to finance the war effort. Prior to 1943, income taxes were paid in quarterly installments the year after income was earned, but the Current Tax Payment Act of 1943 mandated regular withholding on wages and salaries to ensure steady government revenue and prevent taxpayers from falling into debt.

This transformed the income tax from a "class tax" (affecting mainly the wealthy) into a "mass tax" that hit everybody. The highest rate, meanwhile, rose to 90 percent, and by 1945, nearly 50 million Americans were having taxes deducted from their paychecks, making collection more efficient but concealing the extent of the full tax burden.

So if you get a sizable refund this year, you might want to pause and ask, "Why am I paying all these taxes in the first place?"

## BEST of BATES



## Letters to the Editor

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

*The Pine Cone only accepts letters to the editor by email. Please submit your letters to [mail@carmelpinecone.com](mailto:mail@carmelpinecone.com)*

### Hotel plans?

**Dear Editor,**

I am a longtime Carmel resident. I am appalled that the mayor is proposing two "high-end" hotels on city properties. If developers want to build new hotels, then buy existing ones and remake them, as Patrice Pastor did with the old Colonial Terrace. Our forebears did not purchase lands for the public to then have them usurped — and forever gone — for private gain.

Mary Condry,  
Carmel

### Not for visitors

**Dear Editor,**

Carmel was intentionally founded as a resident-focused village — small in scale, walkable, and designed around daily life rather than tourism. That balance is not accidental. It is the reason Carmel has remained unique while so many coastal

towns have lost their identities.

Over the past 20 years, however, a series of decisions have steadily shifted Carmel in a more tourist-focused direction. Each decision, on its own, may have seemed manageable, but together they have eroded the resident-first character our codes and founding principles were meant to protect.

Now, with our Mayor Dale Byrne's proposal for large luxury hotels and a town-wide shuttle system, Carmel stands at a clear fork in the road. These are not minor adjustments. They would reorganize the town around visitor volume and tourism infrastructure, fundamentally changing who the town is designed to serve.

People don't come to Carmel to visit a tourist trap. They come for a real town — walkable, resident-centered, and alive with everyday life.

Visitors enjoy our neighborhoods, small businesses, and meeting and interacting with the people who actually live here. When a town stops being built for its residents, it doesn't stay special for visitors either.

I hope fellow residents will pay close attention, ask questions, and make their voices heard — before decisions are made that cannot be undone.

Kristi Reimers,  
Carmel

### It's the residents

**Dear Editor,**

In recent public remarks, Mayor Dale Byrne challenges us to admit that we are no longer primarily a residential community.

See **LETTERS** page 22A

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# The Carmel Pine Cone

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# Hollywood was just the beginning of his showbiz career

THE HISTORY of the variety show is also the story of how America got its sense of humor. Live entertainment that collaged comedy routines, musical numbers, bawdy antics and special guests emerged on vaudeville stages at the turn of the 19th century, before going national on the radio, packing entire families around the set. Then television networks reeled in the stars, poured on the glossy production, and trained cameras on the best in the business as they delivered lines still repeated by people too young to have heard of “Laugh-In.” (How veeery eeenteresting.) “The Ed Sullivan Show” taped its final episode in 1971. Rowan & Martin’s “Laugh-In” ended its run in 1973, “Sonny & Cher” in 1977 and “The Carol Burnett Show” in 1978 — and with them, a brief

## Great Lives

By LILY PATTERSON

but golden era of television came to an end. Shortly after, Tom Parks took his leave. Unsurprising to those who know him, quitting Hollywood and moving to Carmel in 1986 was no early retirement. The show bills speak for themselves: Parks has written, produced and directed more than 26 original plays since then. He’s also volunteered extensively for the Alliance on Aging, the Carmel Public Library Foundation, and served on the board of the Carmel Residents Association, which last year named him Citizen of the Year. Working from his home on Guadalupe, he recently authored a pithy little memoir about working with some of the most famous and funny people ever seen on TV. The book, “A Life Backstage,” begins with an anecdote only he and Lucille Ball would recognize.

### A cast of legends

He was working as a dialogue coach, when, “off camera, Lucy asked me my name. I told her. ‘OK,’ she said. ‘This work will do for now, but there are better things for you to do, Tom. Write a play or something.’ He didn’t need to be told, but how good that advice sounded coming from her. Even if he had never set foot on a studio lot — Parks spent 25 years running lines with Bob Hope, Julie Andrews, Bette Davis, Carol Burnett, Jack Benny, George Burns, Milton Berle, Phyllis Diller, John Wayne, Lily Tomlin and others — he’s certain he would have ended up in show business, owing to his grandparents. For them, Hollywood was a place that the

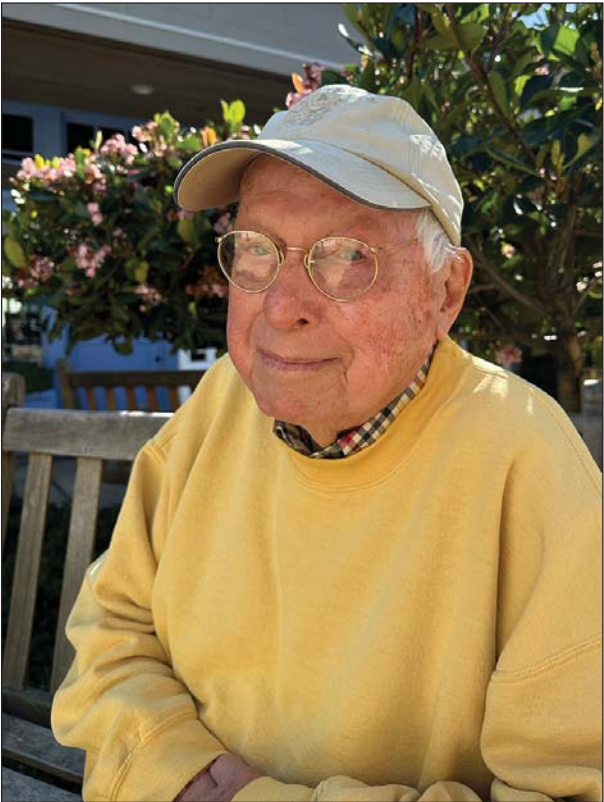
Baltimore-Ohio line didn’t quite reach. His mother’s father was a railroad switchboard operator based in Chicago, a very funny man who regularly prank-called his grandchildren. His mother’s mother was a Danish immigrant who ran a boarding-house out of their home on the South Side. She was also a professional showgoer who “loved all live entertainment. Wrestling, roller derby, it didn’t matter what,” Parks said.

### Chicago to Cal

One fateful family trip — Parks was 8 years old — the two of them absconded to a burlesque show. Coming from the Salinas Valley, where his father was a public relations man for a produce-shipping railroad, it was his first big-city experience. What Parks experienced there changed his life. “I’d never heard live music before. It was in this dinky theater, and even at that age I knew the sets were tatty, that the comedians were off color, but ... the glamour of it!” Parks remembered.

At age 10, he wrote and produced his first show, “Here’s to the USA,” a 1943 patriotic revue which debuted in his family garage. As a teenager, he spent so much on tickets at his local cinema, he should have been given his own chair. In 1952, he and his typewriter enrolled at UC Berkeley, and four years later, he and the Olivetti were drafted. Private Parks served as the company mail clerk, a tutor, and put on at least one show for his fellow servicemembers. After serving his two years, he returned to Berkeley and ran a secondhand bookstore

See LIVES page 23A



PHOTO/LILY PATTERSON

Carmel’s resident playwright, Tom Parks, can’t go out for a cup of coffee without being recognized by a fan or friend around town.

# A colorful world created on the fly

CREATING ART, for Jody Ferguson, is a bit like stepping through the looking glass into a world of Cheshire cats, talking doorknobs, mad hatters, March hares and whatever else her imagination cares to concoct. Wonderland, for the Carmel mosaic artist and watercolorist, is the incomparable view from the studio of her hilltop home, which overlooks Carmel Point and Carmel Bay. She doesn’t dream of solo art shows, museum exhibitions or representation from a fancy gallery. Her museum is the 4,700-square-foot Carmel Views house she shares with her husband of 42 years, Jim Ferguson, where the walls, furniture and floors — indoors and out — are aglow with spectacularly colorful mosaics and flowery watercolors.

### Watercolors on rice paper

The paintings came first, birthed by lessons from Los Angeles-based watercolorist Karen Mills, who taught her to paint on rice paper — a special kind of challenge. “Rice paper is really difficult to work

bag — are part of many of her mosaics, she creates most of her own pieces from items she, or sometimes a friend, buys from thrift stores or garage sales. “I like to reuse stuff — I figure I can always throw it away if it doesn’t work ... but let me try,” she said.

### Pieces of the past

Her studio overflows with small, wildly colorful pieces Ferguson has shaped from particles of beautiful old plates and dishes — even fine china — “crash glass” (safety glass, commonly used for shower doors), a broken perfume bottle and other found items. ■ A large fish mosaic was spontaneously fabricated by Ferguson from chicken wire and thinset (modified mortar designed specifically for tiles). ■ A buoy that washed up on a beach became a large, ornate centerpiece for a patio table. ■ An ordinary tissue box was decorated into a heavy, eye-popping, functional work of art for her kitchen counter.

Ferguson breaks up those materials and uses mosaic “nippers” to snip them into the puzzle pieces she affixes to different kinds of backgrounds, usually wood, depending on whether the art will be displayed inside or outdoors.

“I just come into my studio and play for three or four hours most days,” she said. “It’s a very tactile thing, and for me it’s a lot of fun — it almost feels like playing Barbies or something.”

### Styling the stars

Ferguson had a very tactile career. She spent more than 30 years as a professional hairdresser at a Sherman Oaks salon that frequently attracted celebrity clients, like country singer Glen Campbell, actor Tom Selleck, sportscaster Chick Hearn and Doobie Brothers frontman Michael McDonald, to name a few.

Her own list of regulars included TV journalists Connie Chung, Ann Curry and Paula Zahn. She met one more star, Jim — a 1972 Olympic bronze medalist in water polo — when he came in for a haircut.

The art of styling hair isn’t entirely different from creating a painting or mosaic, she said.

“Doing perms and weaves is very methodical and requires a lot of focus. Clients would tell me what they wanted, and I’d sometimes have to close my eyes and feel it before I could start,” she said.

Ferguson was raised in Wisconsin — the second-youngest among nine kids — in an environment that made her military father delighted to be deployed.

“Our mother was pretty devoted, but with six girls, three boys and two parents

See ARTIST next page

## Carmel’s Artists

By DENNIS TAYLOR

with, because watercolors bleed a lot, so it’s all about water control,” she said. Before her first class, Mills promised that her newest student would leave the studio with a beautiful painting of a peony. “I didn’t think that was even possible for a beginner,” Ferguson recounted, “but I actually painted two that day.” Both paintings hang in her daughter’s home. Her passion in recent years has been creating mosaics that sparkle with originality — and for good reason: She rarely enters her studio with a plan. “My process is organic,” Ferguson said. “Sometimes I’ll have an idea, but I mostly start making it up until it begins to look like something. And then I keep going until I get it right.” She also improvises with materials, preferring to repurpose things rather than purchase prefabricated supplies. While traditional tiles — \$8 for a small



PHOTO/DENNIS TAYLOR

Carmel Views resident Jody Ferguson specializes in stunning mosaics and floral watercolors for the love of creating art, but doesn’t market her work.

Don’t miss “Scenic Views” by Jerry Gervase — every week in the Real Estate Section.



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# ARTIST

From previous page

in a tiny house with one bathroom, my dad was, like, ‘Bye-bye!’ He spent a lot of time on the ship, and I don’t think he minded that,” she said.

“He grew up as an only child, and I don’t think he really liked any of us. As soon as the kids left and he got my mother back ... that’s when he got happy.”

She learned to cut hair at age 15 as an unpaid apprentice at a salon in Wisconsin.

“I liked my boss, but I’m not a very good slave, so I eventually started disliking him — something I didn’t want to do,” Ferguson said. “So I went in one day, said the apprenticeship wasn’t working for me, and told him I was leaving for California to go to beauty school.”

He gave his blessing, lent her the money to pay for school, and 18-year-old Ferguson departed for sunny Los Angeles in midwinter, leaving 30 straight days of subzero weather.

She’s retired from the industry but keeps a professional work station in her Carmel home, where she occasionally trims for friends.

## Not for sale

For Ferguson, the creative process is its own reward, and the business side of the art industry doesn’t interest her. She doesn’t have a website, Instagram gallery, Facebook page or Etsy store because she doesn’t sell her art — even when people express interest in buying.

“We have an Airbnb, where guests see my paintings and ask if I’ll make a print for them. And a lot of people ask if I do commissions. But no, I don’t do commissions,” said Ferguson, who often gives her art to friends and family, including an adult daughter, two sons and four grandchildren.

Husband Jim, the two-time Team USA Olympian (1972 and 1976) and a UCLA Sports Hall of Famer, had a career in sales and marketing, then served as vice president for Superior Industries International, an aluminum wheel manufacturer and supplier.

Jim is still a competitive masters water polo player as he approaches his 77th birthday. Jody works out regularly at Carmel Valley Athletic Club and is politically active, serving as an elected member of the Monterey County Republicans Central Committee since March 2024.

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

# THE PIT

From page 3A

not including basement space, with 28 parking spaces in the garage, 9,000 square feet of retail space divided between 14 shops, and 12 one- and two-bedroom apartments ranging from 622 square feet to 1,863 square feet. The structures will be built in Contemporary, Craftsman, Spanish Colonial Revival and Tudor Revival styles, and the layout includes inter-block walkways, interior courtyards and new sidewalks, curbs and gutters. The landscape plan calls for trees and plants on the property and in the public right-of-way, as well as green roofs.

Renderings and basic specs are posted on the construction fencing surrounding the site.

“As mentioned last time we provided an update, we have had strong interest in both the apartments and the commercial units, both of which are available only for long-term rental,” Mitchell said.

He also mentioned the recent completion of new apartments in the Gran Torino building on San Carlos north of Seventh, which has commercial space on the ground floor that includes architect Adam Jeselnick’s office.

“Here we have provided two brand-new apartments in Carmel, with only one still available,” Mitchell said. “We are very proud of our team and the quality of the finish of these apartments and look forward to adding further apartments for long-term rental in the near future.”

# ELEPHANT SEALS

From page 10A

beaches that are more accessible to people who can rescue them. If they are rescued, they are transported to the Marine Mammal Center for treatment, and, hopefully, eventual re-release.

**Babies galore**

This time of year is particularly risky for elephant seal pups. Not only is it the peak of birthing season, it’s also the time of year when the California coast gets its stormiest weather. The Piedras Blancas rookery, for example, is home to hundreds of young pups that, along with their moms and dads, are putting on a cacophonous show alongside the newly reopened Highway 1 on the way to Cambria, but this year has also seen some significant storms.

Elephant seals are huge, even compared to their sea lion cousins. Ratner said elephant seal pups are 4 feet long and weigh 75 pounds at birth but can grow to 300 pounds in a month drinking nothing but their mother’s milk.

An adult male can measure 15 feet and weigh as much



PHOTO/FRIENDS OF PIEDRAS BLANCAS

Elephant seals crowd together on the beach at Piedras Blancas during birthing season, which runs from late January through mid-May.

as 5,000 pounds. “That’s way more than an entire NFL team’s offense,” Ratner observed.

*Live viewing of the elephant seal colony at Piedra Blancas is available at <https://elephantseal.org/live-view>.*

# SHUCKS

From page 1A

menu. While those changes put the business in conflict with the use permit’s terms, the city did not require the permit to be amended.

Last fall, Shucks’ operations were put under a microscope by Logan, whose landlord decided not to renew his bar’s lease. To keep his establishment alive, Logan would have to find a new location — but wouldn’t be able to take his bar permit with him, because it runs with the land, and the city’s cap on bar permits is three. In the hunt for a new one, he questioned whether A.W. Shucks’ operations mean the bar use there has been abandoned.

At last month’s hearing, Ginette presented several options to the commission, including amending A.W.



PHOTO/MARY SCHLEY

The last night at Sade’s is Friday. Unless the bar can reopen somewhere else in town, its closure will mark the end of an era.

Shucks’ permit “to convert the allowed use from a drinking place to a full-line restaurant.”

But the Basis and their landlord objected to that option, arguing A.W. Shucks should be able to keep its bar permit because it has been operated in good faith based on the city’s past direction.

Representing them, attorney Jeannette Witten said the commission’s plan to deem the bar use abandoned would interfere with their “ability to continue the established businesses in which they have vested rights and would constitute an improper government taking.”

She also accused the planning commission of acting unlawfully by discussing drinking-establishment permits in general and hearing testimony from Logan and numerous Sade’s supporters. Commissioners were “influenced by extensive public comments and discussion of non-agenda items relating to Sade’s Cocktails,” Witten said.

“The commission violated the Brown Act by allowing these discussions in the first place and persists with this violation by now proposing a government taking” of the bar use, Witten warned, adding that her firm sent a separate “cease-and-desist letter under the Brown Act.”

On receiving the lawyer’s letters the day of the Jan. 21 meeting, city attorney Brian Pierik advised commissioners to put off their decision to an undetermined date so the city can review Witten’s allegations.

Logan objected, pointing out the topic has been discussed at length and commissioners had already decided what to do about it.

“We’ve already reviewed decades of business licenses and permits and gathered information, and I think we’re ready to vote on this issue,” he said. “What other secret information is there?”

Commission chair Michael LePage acknowledged the letters offered “new information” but urged Ginette to move quickly.

“There is some concern for immediacy to get this resolved on the part of the public, so I would encourage staff to bring this back as quickly as possible,” he said.

## ‘Meet me at Sade’s’

This week, as Logan prepared for the loss of his livelihood and the last night of business for Sade’s after a century of operation, he remained incredulous.

“I have a hard time understanding why the building owner at A.W. Shucks doesn’t want to help a fellow neighbor and business owner. Absolutely nothing changes for them, and they are not impacted negatively in any shape or form whatsoever,” he said.

If Logan can’t somehow secure a bar permit and a new location, the permanent closure of Sade’s will mark the end of an era.

For many decades, the establishment was located on the south side of Ocean between Lincoln and Monte Verde and served food as well as drinks. Its Carmel Pine Cone ads from the 1950s and 1960s boast that it was “Nationally Famous for Food,” and used the slogan, “Meet me at Sade’s.”

An ad in the Dec. 11, 1941, issue of another newspaper promoted the bar and restaurant. “Meet Me at Sade’s for Cocktails,” it offered. “Nationally known for its true Carmel atmosphere. No Hurry ... Dining Room Open Till 2 a.m.”

Sade’s has seen numerous ownership changes over the years, as well as controversies. In 1977, it was the scene of a drug raid, and at one point, it contained two unlicensed gaming machines and an unpermitted jukebox. In January 1981, after a group that had recently purchased Sade’s received its license to operate, then-city administrator Robert Griggs told one of the new owners that “the coin-operated machine playing music in the lounge

See LAST NIGHT next page

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# BILLIONAIRES

From page 1A

threatening an exodus as well, spurred by a proposed wealth tax unlike anything seen previously in the United States. A proposed ballot initiative from United Healthcare Workers would impose what they call a “one-time tax” amounting to 5 percent of net worth above \$1 billion — a tax that would apply to any billionaire living in the state as of Jan. 1. The tax would nearly quadruple the amount California’s billionaires pay in taxes, a price some of the wealthy say is not worth the pleasure of calling themselves Californians.

“Stupid wealth tax proposals like this make it irresponsible for me not to plan to leave,” said DoorDash co-founder and native Californian Andy Fang on X.

Fang is not the only billionaire calling his real estate agent over the tax proposal. In December, Palantir co-founder Peter Thiel announced his investment firm, Thiel Capital, opened an office in Miami. The mega-donor then went on to give \$3 million to the California Business Roundtable’s PAC, which is opposing the Billionaire’s Tax.

## Dozens of LLCs

Google co-founders Larry Page and Sergey Brin haven’t said they’re moving, but since late last year, they’ve shifted dozens of LLCs and business interests — and all of those entities’ tax revenues — out of California. Which goes to show even the idea of a wealth tax is enough to put downward pressure on the state’s already precarious economy.

Venture capitalist and California resident Chamath Palihapitiya posted what he titled an “Unfortunate Update” on X this month.

“More calls from friends. The total wealth that has left California is now \$1 trillion,” he wrote. “We had \$2 trillion of billionaire wealth just a few weeks ago. Now 50 percent of that wealth has left — taking their income tax revenue, sales tax

revenue, real estate tax revenue and all their staffs (and their salaries and income taxes) with them.”

While Palihapitiya could be full of hot air, even if just a sliver of his post has truth to it, United Healthcare Workers could be creating a bigger hole than they’re looking to patch.

### Health care cuts

The proposed tax would generate an estimated \$100 billion in one-time funds, 90 percent of which would go to paying for Medi-Cal. Proponents of the initiative say it’s a direct response to the billion in health-care and food assistance cuts under President Donald Trump’s Big Beautiful Bill.

State analysts expect approximately 522,000 Californians to lose Medi-Cal coverage in the 2026-2027 fiscal year thanks to the new federal law. The number of people losing coverage is expected to climb in subsequent years to around 1.8 million — unless, of course, the state comes up with the money to keep the benefits in effect.

Central Coast Assemblywoman Dawn Addis chairs the Budget Subcommittee No. 1 on Health and said state lawmakers are looking at a variety of revenue-generating ideas to cover federal cuts, but nothing has gained traction.

“I’m looking at all ideas that come to me and taking very seriously the needs of regular working people and the most vulnerable,” said Addis.

The Morro Bay Democrat hasn’t come out for or against the wealth tax.

“As with all ballot measures, I will support what the voters decide,” said Addis. “It’s clear we have a problem with wealth inequality in our state and nation, and for many, that translates to healthcare inequality.”

California’s healthcare funding woes are not solely rooted in federal cuts. According to the state’s legislative analyst, Gabe Petek, spending on Medi-Cal came in over budget last year, contributing to the current deficit.

California became the first state to

expand healthcare to undocumented residents in 2024. The state loosened eligibility requirements for seniors the same year and stopped counting cars, homes and savings as assets, making income the only measurement needed to determine who qualified for Medi-Cal. The expansions cost a lot more than lawmakers expected.

In a November 2025 report, Petek said baseline spending is the largest driver of cost increases, to the tune of \$12.8 billion, before any state and federal policy changes. Gov. Gavin Newsom’s 2025 budget revision brought a course correction and, starting this year, the state froze new Medi-Cal enrollment for undocumented adults, but the savings won’t be enough to prevent more from losing their coverage because of work requirements or because they can’t afford higher premiums.

### Governor not to the rescue

So far, Newsom isn’t showing signs he’ll ride to the rescue of Medi-Cal. The governor’s budget proposal, released this month, didn’t include money to backfill coverage losses, and he’s certainly not in favor of the proposed wealth tax.

“It’s a badly drafted effort and it’s already had an outsized impact on this state,” said Newsom at a press event in San Francisco.

According to wealth-intelligence firm Altrata, California has about 200

billionaires, but if even a few leave, it could create a doozy of a hole in Newsom’s budget. How big? The Golden State has one of the nation’s highest personal income tax rates on top earners, with the money heading directly into the general fund. In 2023, more than one-sixth of personal income tax revenue came from the state’s top 0.1 percent of earners, which funded a lot of healthcare. In 2025, California spent \$44.9 billion from its general fund on Medi-Cal, an all-time high for the program, accounting for 20 percent of overall general fund spending.

In a letter to attorney general Rob Bonta back in December, Petek — the state’s legislative analyst who never wears rose-colored glasses — predicted California would rake in tens of billions of dollars in one-time gains with a wealth tax, but that it would come at a price. The analyst also forecast such a tax would result in the “likely ongoing decrease in state income tax revenues of hundreds of millions of dollars or more per year” based on what he sees as the high probability of a billionaire exodus.

Polling of likely voters in the state shows the initiative is supported by 48 percent who hear its official title. That support drops to 46 percent when they learn more about it. Voting “yes” on a wealth tax may feel cathartic in the moment, but it may not produce the payout you expect.

# LAST NIGHT

From previous page

is not licensed by the city and should be removed,” according to a Pine Cone article.

In 1989, Frank Grupe bought the business, and five years later, he relocated it to the space on Lincoln Street, where it became a well-known hangout for smoking and day drinking, as well as late-night reveling.

Sade’s has amassed a loyal local following and continues to draw regular visitors from out of town.

Logan worked there for a decade before buying the bar in late 2018, receiving his business license in early 2019 and cleaning up the space, including bringing it into compliance with several city codes. When his landlords told him they were not renewing his lease, he mounted a “Protect Carmel’s Dive Bar Legacy” campaign, which has raised more than \$15,000.

“This fundraiser is for American traditions and travelers and the hardworking, behind-the-scenes service workers of an elite coastal community,” he says. “This fundraiser is for the regular folks, the down-to-earth souls, and appreciators of a good dive.”



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*From page 18A*

The discussion at our city government's strategic planning meeting last week made it clear that there are good options that remain unexplored, ways to tap new sources of revenue that don't undermine our residential core identity. Carmel is a wonderful place to visit, but first and foremost, it is our home, and our leaders should keep that top

**Ian Martin, Carmel**

Scarce parking is the single biggest affliction of our town — and the biggest opportunity to generate much-needed revenue. I don't know if we need another hotel, but we need hundreds more parking spots. Imagine a city not clogged with cars circling. Now, imagine the money those spots will generate, to pay for so many of the things we need, from deferred maintenance to whatever else would improve life here. Mayor Dale Byrne called for a public-private partnership rather than a bond, to build a multi-level parking structure under the Sunset Center north lot. The cars go in, the money flows out, paying back the investors and enriching the city. And then that big asphalt slab can be whatever our leaders decide it should be. And it won't be anything that will diminish Sunset Center.

**Joe DiNucci, *Carmel***

**Sharon Kohlmannslehner, *Pacific Grove***

*From page 12A*

*From page 4A*

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# LIVES

From page 19A

for a short time, until he realized he wasn’t content among the dusty stacks.

“If I wanted to write and be produced, there were two places to go. Frankly, I ended up in L.A. because I could drive there,” Parks said. And he had hardly parked, when a friend of a friend got him an interview.

For a time, not all prompters were teleprompters. And especially on variety shows, where last-minute script changes and surprise guest stars were the norm, professionals handled the lines and helped actors to remember them. From the early 1960s to the mid-1980s, Parks was one of them, a dialogue coach. He was a freelancer, meaning he never signed with a studio or guild. It was a precarious way to make a living, but it meant having the freedom to work on productions for all three major networks, including late-night shows, game shows, and the Academy Awards. But variety was his specialty.

The cue cards alone ran pens dry, but he was also writing more than ever. Comedy skits and television pilots were among the

work he submitted to big-shot producers for consideration. On rare occasions, Parks would watch from between the cameras as one of his ideas played out on national television — uncredited, but it didn’t matter.

Listening to Parks, 92, reminisce on his five short years with “Laugh-In,” his many trips around the sun with Bob Hope — “He never knew my name. It was always, ‘Hey, kid!’” — and the 11 years he spent working with the “genuine, giving, sensitive” Carol Burnett on her show, one is struck by how respectable he makes the notoriously messy business of comedy sound. Maybe it’s his discretion talking, but Parks said he wishes he had a scandal or two in his back pocket. People always seem disappointed by the truth.

**The death of variety**

“I have only admiration for all the actors I’ve worked with. Show business is very, very precise, from arriving on time, to jumping over all the cables on the floor. You had to be professional,” said Parks, who likewise didn’t go unnoticed by his heroes.

Bette Davis once asked him out to drinks, since he’d been the only member of the crew to arrive as early as she did. George Burns invited him in for breakfast,

drove the ban, Vandenberg said, adding that residents in the area “should expect people, kids, movement and sound,” and she criticized the council for ignoring “reasonable compromises.”

After listing several more objections and complaints, Vandenberg wrapped up her arguments with a threat.

“If the council wants to criminalize harmless recreation, voters can and should respond,” she said. “Carmel needs leaders who respect public space and community life. Ban pickleball? Then voters should ban the ban-makers. Pickleball isn’t the problem — government overreach is.”

Carmel Police Chief Todd Trayer said the police department is aware of the vandalism at Forest Hill and is investigating.

and Fred Astaire offered him half a sandwich. Hope’s people called — often — and Parks would be on a plane to New York within the hour. Julie Andrews wanted her own show, and she wanted Parks. And years after she’d guest-starred on Carol Burnett’s program, Betty White recognized Parks at the old Butcher Block steakhouse on Ocean Avenue and asked, “What are you doing in Carmel?”

Variety was dead, but leaving Hollywood in the early ’80s was also a relief to his social life, and his lungs. (That smog!) Something between a dream and a dress rehearsal, a life backstage set the scene for his second act, as Carmel’s resident playwright.

Several of Parks’ musicals salute Broadway, early show tunes and their authors, while others capture “the wit and wisdom” of women like Dorothy Parker, Marlene

# TRIAL

From page 7A

Duncan Arnold struck her. The incident left Anthony, then a member of the Providence, R.I., city council, with devastating injuries that nearly killed her, court documents show.

Anthony, who resigned from the city council last fall, filed the lawsuit against Arnold, the Point Lobos Foundation and California Department of Parks and Recreation in December 2023 for an unspecified amount in monetary damages. The trial began Monday in a Monterey courtroom, with jury selection still occurring Wednesday morning.

**‘Nearly died’**

During a September 2025 deposition by Anthony’s husband, Douglas, the neuropathologist told lawyers that his wife nearly died after the crash. He credited a passerby, a physician, for saving her.

“Had he not stopped and gotten her breathing again, she would have died right

Dietrich, Gertrude Stein and Zelda Fitzgerald, and a few humorize what happens when couples fall apart, then get back together again.

Orchestrated, and occasionally written, with the help of many collaborators and friends, every subsequent production is an excuse for him to keep working.

“I am so middle class, in that way,” Parks laughed.

They’re also an excuse to take over his favorite venue, The Carl Cherry Center for the Arts.

“It’s a perfect bijou of an auditorium. Fifty seats, cozy, and wonderfully located,” he said of the venue for his 27th play. He just finished writing it, with opening night set for May 1. It will run for a month.

A marital drama set in Germany, 1945, it doesn’t sound like it should be funny. Nevertheless, Parks promises laughter.

# PICKLEBALL

From page 8A

or misdemeanors, or to write administrative citations.

**‘Government extremism’**

At the December 2025 meeting in which the council adopted the first reading of the ordinance, Vandenberg argued, “Criminalizing a healthy, community-building activity — played by seniors, families and tourists — is government extremism,” and said no reasonable city would use “police power to stop exercise.”

“A tiny minority living next to the park”



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By Susana DeFatima Silva, MA, Co-Founder/Proprietor/Managing Partner Test of Tyme, LLC and Wendy Brickman, MA/MBA, Brickman Marketing

Once you’ve purchased your home—or chosen to re-imagine your current residence—the next essential step is setting the foundation for a seamless, well-executed remodel. Thoughtful planning and clear communication are key to a successful project, and working with an architect and a seasoned construction team can be immensely rewarding when expectations, roles, and timelines are aligned from the start.

Before meeting with your professionals, clarify your vision. What are your top priorities? Expanding your living space, enhancing architectural flow, updating finish-

es, or integrating custom features? Identifying essentials versus aesthetic preferences allows your team to tailor solutions to your lifestyle and taste.

During your early meetings with your architect and builder, share inspiration images, concept boards, and insights into how you live, i.e. your entertaining style, privacy preferences, and lighting ambiance, for example. The more your team understands your preferences, the more effectively they can design a home that reflects them.

Engaging your general contractor early promotes much better alignment between design and execution. Your builder can evaluate logistics such as building codes, structural elements, and site conditions—avoiding surprises once construction begins. Ask for a timeline overview so you know when key decisions are needed.

Planning ahead for systems is just as critical as choosing finishes. If you’re expanding or reconfiguring your home, now is the time to upgrade plumbing, HVAC, and especially electrical infrastructure. Consider how to integrate smart home systems, home theaters, EV charging stations, or security features while the walls are open which will be far more efficient than retrofitting later.

Don’t overlook the exterior. If your remodel includes a façade update, outdoor kitchen, pool, or patio, ensure that landscaping, hardscaping, and lighting are addressed early.

Establish communication protocols early. Clarify how often you’d like updates, how design changes will be approved, and who the main point of contact is. While much of the day-to-day is handled by your team, your involvement remains essential. Keep written records of design decisions and changes to maintain clarity and momentum.

Visit the site as your schedule allows—not to micro-manage, but to stay connected to progress. If you notice something off, share feedback promptly and constructively. Early conversations prevent missed opportunities later.

Remodeling is not just about changing a structure—it’s about creating a home that enhances how you live. With the right team, clear communication, and thoughtful planning, your vision will become a beautifully realized space that’s uniquely yours.

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# 4Q 2025 | Market Update

## Quail & Santa Lucia Preserve



### Quail:

“Quail was quiet this quarter with no new sales in either Quail Lodge or Quail Meadows. This is a bit of an anomaly for Quail Lodge as we usually see 4-5 sales per quarter, and this is the first time in over 10 years which didn’t have at least one sale. The year as a whole has been strong though, with 14 sales (off just 1 from last year). There are 2 homes currently listed in Quail Lodge, including ours on Poplar Lane, which is almost 4,000 sq.ft. and on the Carmel River. As the market warms back up from the holidays, we anticipate that one moving quickly. There are no homes currently listed in Quail Meadows at this time. We often see an increase in demand in Quail Meadows and Quail Lodge in the spring as families are starting their search prior to summer break.”  
– Jessica Canning

Jessica Canning  
Quail Specialist



### Santa Lucia Preserve:

“The Santa Lucia Preserve continues to function as a low-turnover, legacy-oriented market where transactions occur selectively and pricing discipline remains central.

The fourth quarter accelerated with four home sales (including our off market sale on Mesa) along with one lot sale. Sold properties reflected an average 43% discount from original list price, signaling a continued pricing reset from pandemic-era peaks. In this environment, buyers remain patient and well-informed, while successful sales tend to follow realistic positioning rather than aspirational pricing.

Current offerings include 5 homes, priced from \$3.895M to \$6.59M, and 36 lots, ranging from \$295K to \$8.95M. Lot inventory spans both entry-level sites and premium view parcels, reinforcing the Preserve’s long-term, build-oriented nature rather than short-term resale activity.” – Nic Canning

Nic Canning  
Preserve Specialist



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# HEALTHY

## Lifestyles

It may not look like much, but ‘everything is happening below the surface’

By LILY PATTERSON

A **WORKOUT** that can give a Navy SEAL or prima ballerina a run for their money is also one of the safest for all ages — regardless of physical condition. It’s suitable for pregnant women and even seniors recovering from joint surgery, or who rely on a walker to get around.

If that’s not intriguing enough, it takes place in “the fountain of youth,” as veteran aqua fitness instructor Sheri Bouwens refers to the healing waters of the Monterey Sports Center.

“People see a bunch of old people floating in the pool, but everything is happening below the surface,” said Bouwens, a certified fitness instructor who has been with the Sports Center since 1995 and has taught water workouts for most of that time.

### Strength and bone health

Despite the daunting physics — water is hundreds of times denser than air — she describes the workout as ultra-low impact, heart- and joint-safe, and endlessly customizable. With multiple classes offered at the Sports Center and Carmel Valley Athletic Club, you could dive in tomorrow.

“We’re working on balance, strength, toning and bone health,” said Kimi Hori, CVAC’s fitness director. “It’s great for balance, because the water is constantly moving, and it’s great for sleep, too, because

the water promotes relaxation.”

CVAC offers aqua fitness classes four days a week at 10 a.m. Hori, who teaches at least one of them, said as many as 30 people show up in summer. Even during winter rains, there are at least 10 “water warriors” she can count on.

Water aerobics has been around since the 1950s, and clearly they’re effective. Even though the moves are familiar, they feel radically different underwater.

“It’s just so cool to see someone come in on a walker or with a cane, and in the water they’re able to jump and run. It gives them a new lease on life,” said Hori.

Bouwens has been doing “water ballet” since high school, when her dance instructor had students perform all the moves they did on land, except in the pool.

“In the water, everyone can be Baryshnikov. You recruit muscles you really don’t use anywhere except ballet, that really open up the arms and shoulders,” said Bouwens, who choreographs each of her classes to a playlist ranging from country to show tunes to 1940s swing. (The Sports Center and CVAC also offer dedicated Aqua Zumba classes, an energetic Latin-based “dance” workout set to international music.)

Students of all ages show up to Bouwens’ Deep Water Workout. The classroom is approximately 82 degrees Fahrenheit



The Monterey Sports Center offers aqua fitness classes nearly every day of the week, including private and group swims, water aerobics (above), and creative variations on Zumba, yoga and tai chi.

and up to 12ft feet deep — daunting on the surface — but a turnout of up to 40 students, 25 to 95 years old, is proof of how adaptable the workout is, she said.

### Added challenges

Pool noodles, flotation belts and floating water dumbbells are used for support. Exercisers looking for an added challenge, on the other hand, can strap on foam ankle floats. The idea is, rather than lifting weights, you’re pushing to keep moving below the surface.

Said Bouwens, “The hardest thing is teaching people not to swim, but to stay upright. Traditional swim strokes try to escape or lessen water resistance through horizontal movement, but in aqua aerobics, we stay vertical and use the resistance to our advantage.

“What you put in is what you get out.”

Staple exercises in her class include jumping jacks, jogging, and arm exercises in choreographed sets. Two of her aqua

**WATER** *con’t. page 27A*

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HEALTHYLIFESTYLES

Let the energy flow and find balance — but don’t look for a fight

By DENNIS TAYLOR

A POWERFUL energy in our universe will flow through the body by invitation, asserts Seaside resident Heihachiro “Hei” Takarabe. He is an 87-year-old master trainer of tai chi — a gentle, kinetic exercise for relaxation, meditation, self-awareness, balance and mental, physical, and emotional health.

The concept of a fundamental life force, or vital energy, known as qi or ch’i (pronounced “chee”), is based on Asian philosophies that include Taoism, Confucianism and Buddhism, Takarabe explained.

The theory of tai chi, connected to the philosophical concept of yin and yang — opposing and complementary forces — is that universal energy enters the body from the ground through the left foot, Takarabe said. He explained that it flows gently through the back, travels throughout the body, exits through the right foot, then resumes its journey in the opposite direction, all through a series of precise, deliberate movements devised more than 1,300 years ago by the Chinese. It was created first as a martial art and later became a health practice.

“Tai chi is for health, not for fighting,” Takarabe declared.

‘Open your body’

“Tai chi trains us to relax our joints,” said the longtime instructor at the Oldemeyer Center in Seaside, which offers Tuesday and Thursday classes weekly.

“If you open your body through your joints, the energy will come in and go all through your body. I usually do mine for an hour at 6 in the morning and feel energized for the rest of the day,” he said.

The practice of tai chi has been validated by numerous medical research organizations for positive effects on conditions that

include knee osteoarthritis, cardiovascular disease, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, high blood pressure, low-back pain, fibromyalgia, Parkinson’s disease, as well as improving cognitive capacity, and some cancer-related symptoms.

Harvard University Medical School has a tai chi division. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has recommended the practice for health, especially for seniors.

“I have a bit of inflammation in my shoulder right now, but I feel no pain while I’m doing tai chi,” Takarabe said. “By allowing the energy to pass through you, you’re relaxing. That, I think, is why it works.”

From pre-med to ministry

Takarabe was born in Manchuria and grew up in Japan, where he was baptized as a Christian.

In 1957, at 19, he came to the United States and enrolled at Pasadena City College, then transferred to UCLA as a pre-med student, earning a bachelor’s degree in chemistry in 1961.

He subsequently enrolled at the San Francisco Theological Seminary, graduated in 1967, and became a Presbyterian minister, serving 17 years at Parkview Church in Sacramento, then 21 at El Estero Church in Monterey.

He retired at the end of 2003, when he lost his wife of 37 years, Gloria Ishida Takarabe, to pancreatic cancer. He met Gloria — a farmer’s daughter who became a registered nurse — while preaching at a church in Strathmore.

As a clergyman, Takarabe attended a three-day conference at Asilomar in November 1985. Between classes, he noticed a man exercising, moving his body, legs



PHOTO/KERRY BELSER

Seaside resident Heihachiro “Hei” Takarabe (front), a master trainer, leads fellow tai chi instructors Patricia Nofziger (left), Wayne Marien and Karen Stafford during a class at Oldemeyer Center.

and arms in slow, gentle, gracefully flowing ways.

“After watching him for 5-10 minutes, I just knew it was for me,” said Takarabe, who got his first lesson in tai chi that day from Harry Chuck, director of Cameron House, a center dedicated to empowering San Francisco’s Chinese community.

“He taught me two or three forms, but then the conference was over,” he said. “I knew I couldn’t wait another year to learn more, so I got a book.” (In tai chi, a form is a choreographed sequence of connected, flowing movements performed continuously from start to finish.)

Over the next six months, he taught

himself 24 different forms of tai chi, committing each one to memory, then practiced on his own for the next 10 years.

Two other master trainers, Paul Lam of Sydney, Australia, and Stephanie Taylor of Carmel — both medical doctors — took him to new levels.

“Dr. Lam was leading a seven-day workshop at Asilomar. I didn’t know anything about him, but I signed up for that, and it was one of the best decisions of my life. I take his workshop every year.”

Taylor, a gynecologist and obstetrician, invited him to help with her tai chi classes

TAI CHI *con’t.* page 29A

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HEALTHY

WATER from page 25A

fitness mentors were former ballet dancers, one of whom was recruited by an Australian pro rugby player to teach classes for his teammates as a form of cross-training.

“You’re really upping the game when you take the bottom away. It kicked his butt!” said Bouwens — who has put together deep-water classes for Navy SEALs. She teaches several days weekly in the Sports Center’s big pool and also coaches Aqua Splash, which is similar but takes place in the warm, shallow pool, and emphasizes balance and stability. Heated to 92 degrees, it’s a great option for arthritis sufferers, Parkinson’s patients, and anyone wary of the deep end. The Sports Center also offers Aqua Yoga — “for anyone who feels limited in a traditional yoga class,” said fitness supervisor Lauri Ataide — and Ai Chi, a tai chi-inspired water workout that falls on the therapeutic end of the spectrum. That’s not to say it’s easy.

“Between the movement of your muscles and the resistance of the water, the kind of workout you do in an hour on the machines, you can get in 30 minutes in the pool,” Bouwens said. She explained most people don’t realize they’re working hard, because water pressure improves circulation by compressing and supporting limbs, thus moving blood more efficiently to the heart and lungs.

“Water workouts are just so joint-friendly. Coming back from knee surgery, you can’t run on the treadmill, but you can run in water,” noted Hori, who started studying kinesiology at 16, has coached group exercise for 30 years, and specialized to support “active aging” and those with neurological disorders.

Questions welcome

Now, this is the point in the story where readers should be warned of the risks associated with any form of exercise — but water aerobics classes make that somewhat unnecessary. They’re incredibly low-impact, and even non-swimmers can do them with flotation devices.

“As with any exercise program, you want to make sure you’ve spoken with your doctor and everything is good. That’s a given,” said Ataide, who suggested newcomers may want to observe a workout — especially deep-water sessions — before jumping in.

Two to three sessions a week is a great goal for beginners, Bouwens added. She’s had many students with limited swimming skills join her Aqua Splash classes in the

POOL cont. page 30A

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HEALTHYLIFESTYLES

# Family member, therapist and exercise coach — all in one adorable package

By LISA CRAWFORD WATSON

**CARMEL VALLEY** Manor resident Laura Pasten has a sign in her home that says, “Dogs are not our whole life, but they make our lives whole.”

The retired veterinarian’s dog is not “just a pet.” Millie, a Cairn terrier-Scotty mix, is Pasten’s companion, confidant, exercise partner, protector, a family member, best friend, and the most precious thing in her life.

“The saying, ‘A dog is man’s best friend,’ could easily be restated as ‘A dog is Laura’s best friend,’” said Pasten. “I am convinced that if a person is reunited with loved ones in heaven, then my bond with Millie (and previous dogs) would unite me with her in heaven as well.”

Most senior residences allow pets — usually dogs, cats, and birds — Pasten said, because the health benefits are widely recognized. And, she added, since 64 percent of people own dogs and approximately 30 percent own cats, many will not move to a facility that won’t allow them to have pets. It’s simply non-negotiable.

“Research says 70.6 percent of assisted living communities allow pets,” Pasten noted, “while 68.8 percent of memory care communities allow them, as do 90.6 percent of independent living communities and 79.1 percent of senior apartments. There is a reason for this. Companionship fosters well-being.”

### Two dog parks

While Pasten said the canine-to-feline ratio varies, approximately one-third to half of the residents at Carmel Valley Manor have a dog or cat. The property provides two dog parks where canines can cavort off leash, and their people can stroll the landscape or sit and socialize with other pet people.

The Manor also hosts activities like “doggy costume shows” where most residents know the names of one another’s dogs and their favorite treats, Pasten said — and that benefits everyone.

“Pets increase social interaction. They are an invitation to conversation. They reduce loneliness and encourage social interaction. When you are walking your dog, people ask his or her name or, in my case, what breed of dog I have. My Millie is a Cairn terrier — as in ‘The Wizard of Oz’ — crossed with a Scottish terrier.”

### Finding family

Everyone loves to see the wagging tail, enthusiastic wiggles and sparkle in a dog’s eyes, said Pasten. Even the most hardened souls can’t seem to help but smile.

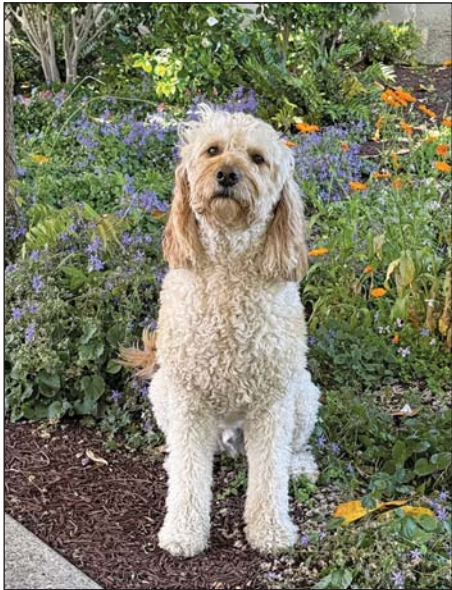
A Manor staff member rescued an abandoned little terrier mix cowering in a crate, and Benji now welcomes the chance to sit on laps and go for walks with residents. They delight in the normalcy of caring for a pet, said the facility’s health services administrator, Chris Regan.

“We also have Holly at the health center, a communal cat we welcomed during the Christmas season some seven years ago,” said Regan. “She’s a delight and adds such comfort and joy to staff, residents and their families.”

Holly is rather rotund, said Pasten, since everyone seems to give her treats. “And all insist they are Holly’s favorite. She makes the rounds with the residents, receiving routine affection and adoration.”

These aren’t the only four-legged inhabitants of Camel Valley Manor. For example, Jerry and Sally Flanzer, who have always had dogs and raised them alongside

**PUPS** *con’t. page 31A*



The dogs of Carmel Valley Manor include (clockwise from top left) Bailey, Ozzie, Thally and Millie.



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# HEALTHY LIFESTYLES

## TAI CHI from page 26A

and became his mentor in the art. She also recommended him to the Oldemeyer Center as an instructor. As he approaches his 88th birthday, Takarabe declares himself to be in good health. “I take pills for my cholesterol, and also Flomax (a medication for prostate health), but that’s really all,” he said.

### Meditation, too

Takarabe also is a devotee of Zen meditation, devoting time every day to the practice, and travels to Texas each year to participate in a silent retreat. “We do eight days, starting each day at 6:30 in the morning, going till 9 o’clock at night,” he said. “It’s tiring, because you’re sitting in one position the entire time, and your knees and back begin to hurt. You’re also hungry. The first two days are difficult, but the third, fourth and fifth days, you begin to have good days.”

Takarabe has a daughter — Jennifer, a middle school math teacher — and his son, Nathan, is an IT specialist for Cisco Systems. He’s also a grandfather. As a master trainer, he is “transitioning toward retirement,” Takarabe said. “I’m training three people to become master trainers at the Oldemeyer Center. They teach the first two classes of the day, then I teach the trainers in the third class.” Classes cost about \$20 a month and are open to anyone 18 or older, but most of Takarabe’s students range in age from 40 to their mid-70s. “Tai chi helps you to slow down in this busy world,” he said. For more information about tai chi classes at the Oldemeyer Center at 986 Hilby Ave. in Seaside, call (831) 899-6800. *Dennis Taylor is a professional freelance writer in Monterey County. Contact him at scribelau-reate@gmail.com.*



PHOTO/KERRY BELSER

As he approaches his 88th birthday, Hei Takarabe (center) pronounces himself in excellent health, a blessing he attributes largely to daily tai chi and meditation.



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T H E K I T C H E N

Spring vegetable salad with yogurt dressing

Chef Brandon Miller, Paella LLC

**CHEF BRANDON** Miller, owner of Paella LLC — a mobile paella catering service — has a recipe for salad that captures the taste of spring using ingredients available year-round. It’s crunchy and holds up well, thanks to cabbage and Brussels sprouts, but for the best flavor and texture, make it the day you plan to serve it.

Where the ingredients list says “shaved,” Miller means “on a mandoline” — one of those simple countertop slicers that some cooks swear by. Others

find them intimidating, but there’s a simple alternative, which you’ll see in a moment.

If you own a mandoline, use the thinnest setting — and for heaven’s sake, use the hand guard. Yes, you’ll end up with little “heels” of cabbage and onion, but your fingers will remain intact. The chef recommends rinsing the shaved onion in cold water, but if it’s still too strong, soak the slices in cold water for 10-15 minutes and drain them thoroughly before using.

The hand guard probably won’t work

with Brussels sprouts unless they’re quite large. To stay safer, or if you don’t own a mandoline, slice everything as thinly as possible with a sharp knife.

A food processor with a slicing blade would work, too, but the pieces will be thicker.

“Squaring” a carrot means trimming thin slices off four sides so it stays stable on the cutting board. Plenty of YouTube videos demonstrate how to julienne vegetables. Can you substitute a bag of shred-

ded carrots? Yes, but the texture will differ significantly.

If you’re watching your salt intake, low-sodium canned garbanzos are easy to find. Reduced-sodium feta is harder to come by, though fat-free versions are plentiful. (One online source suggests soaking a block of feta in milk or fresh water for several hours to draw out some salt, but we haven’t tested it.)

Finally, for a slightly less tart dressing, use a Meyer lemon.



INGREDIENTS

(Serves 4-6)

- 1 pound Brussels sprouts, shaved (see notes)
- 1/2 red onion, shaved and rinsed with cold water
- 3 carrots, squared and julienned
- 1/4 head red cabbage, shaved
- 1/2 15.5-ounce can garbanzo beans (chickpeas), drained
- 2 hard-boiled eggs, quartered
- 1/2 cup kalamata olives, pitted
- 1 cup mixed cherry tomatoes, halved
- 4 ounces (by weight) low-fat feta cheese or queso fresco

DRESSING

- 1/4 cup apple cider vinegar
- 1 lemon, juiced
- 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
- 1/2 cup low-fat Greek yogurt
- Salt and pepper to taste

INSTRUCTIONS

In a large bowl combine Brussels sprouts, red onion, carrots and red cabbage. Combine vinegar, lemon juice, Dijon mustard, yogurt and salt and pepper in a glass jar. Put the lid on the jar and shake until combined.

Toss vegetables with 3/4 of the dressing and divide on serving plates. Garnish with the rest of the ingredients. Season with fresh cracked pepper, drizzle with more dressing and serve.

Chef Bio



CHEF BRANDON

Miller is a familiar face to local foodies. The proud owner of Paella LLC, a mobile catering operation specializing in his signature Spanish dish, Miller previously helmed kitchens at the former Mundaka in Carmel, a previous incarnation of Stokes Adobe, and Alvarado Street Brewery, to name a few. You can often find him doing cooking demos at local events, where you begin to see he’s as much showman as chef.

Miller has been working in kitchens for more than 30 years. He started as a kid, cracking crabs on San Francisco’s Fisherman’s Wharf as a summer job, and at 20 took over the oyster bar at Pacific Heights Bar and Grill. By the time he’d moved on to the city’s famous Fog City Diner — first in the pantry and then as sous chef — he said, “I knew this was the natural thing for me to do.”

His culinary education included stints in Amsterdam and France, and he said he “ate his way through Italy.” In his spare time, Miller grows some of his own food, makes a little homebrew, and enjoys spending time with his wife, Marci Bracco, and their French bulldogs.

Camellia Health

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POOL from page 27A

shallow end. CVAC and the Sports Center also offer private swim lessons for adults looking to build their skills or experts who would like to nail that butterfly stroke. On the other hand, you can get your heart going simply by walking in the water.

“I’m always hearing people say, ‘I did my water walk today!’” said Ataide. “They use the shallow end of the big pool, and the cool water helps to get their heart going.”

In Bouwens’ experience, water workouts are the key — “the hidden secret” — to longevity and healing. “The hardest part

is going from the locker room to the pool,” she said.

“For years I taught a gentleman with COPD. When he started taking my class, he was told he had one year to live, and he took my class for 12 years,” Bouwens said. She said she can’t count the number of students who “started because they were told they had to have surgery or knee replacement, who no longer had to,” or whose doctors recommended her class for post-op physical therapy. For her part, she taught throughout her pregnancy, with her

SPLASH cont. page 31A

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# HEALTHY LIFESTYLES

**PUPS** *from page 28A*

their children, were excited about abandoning their empty nest in favor of travel. Then a friend offered them a goldendoodle puppy.

Ozzie, now nearly 6, has thrived in the constant attention of this community, resulting in a sweet, loving, curious nature.

“Having a dog at the Manor is mostly about not being allowed to become an isolated hermit, because you have a dog who needs to be walked,” said Sally. “Along the way, you meet people who greet the dog first and then get to know you. There’s no need to feel lonely on this active campus, but when you have a dog, it’s a little extra entrée to creating community.”

Manor resident Connie Reeves agreed. Shifting from a married life of raising kids and canine companions over the years, she had ushered her children into their adult lives but mourned the passing of her Labradoodle, Bogey. Soon after, she lost her husband of 60 years. The month before he died, the couple had brought her “comfort and joy,” 8-week-old Bailey, to their home, where residents ushered him into the community and nicknamed him “The Mayor of the Manor.”

“While Bailey spends most Sundays running along the shore at Carmel Beach with my son, he also accompanies me to exercise class on the Manor putting green

and sits there, watching and waiting for his treat,” Reeves said. “This is our life together. Bailey is my friend and my companion. He fills so many spaces in my life, and the lives of other residents.”

Pasten said spending time with a dog or cat has been shown to lower levels of cortisol — the hormone associated with stress — and increase production of oxytocin, a “feel-good” hormone.

### Blood pressure

“Petting a dog or cat lowers blood pressure and heart rate, promoting relaxation and reducing stress,” she said. “Caring for a pet also gives us a sense of responsibility, self-worth and fulfillment — something often lacking after retirement, and our services are no longer worth getting paid for.

“Moreover, when older people who awaken with aches, pains, or sadness see their pets the first thing in the morning, the animals’ excitement that we are awake makes us want to get up. And it has been proven that interacting with dogs stimulates the mind and keeps it active, which helps reduce the risk of cognitive decline and improves memory and cognitive function.”

Life, says Pasten, is simply better with a dog by your side. “If you’re lucky enough to have a furry friend in your life, be sure to cherish every moment with them. I know I will.”

**SPLASH** *from page 30A*

doctor’s support.


Both Hori and Bouwens agreed the water helps more than the physical body.

“It’s such an inclusive group,” said Hori, whose core aqua-cisers have been coming to her classes so long that, years ago, they started organizing an annual Christmas party.

“It’s an important component of aging,


to find a friend group,” she said. “CVAC is a private club, so everyone knows each other, but these aqua classes have a different dynamic.”

At the Sports Center, Bouwens affectionately calls her social swimmers the “bob-and-gab” group. “There are people who come to exercise, and people who come to move and socialize. They tend to hang out in the back of the group and chat, but they never stop moving!” she said.



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# This Week

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## Golden State welcomes Eagles, Cream and Grateful Dead tributes

CELEBRATING THE music of a band that rode the country-rock wave to become pop music superstars, **Take It to the Limit** pays tribute to the Eagles Monday, 7 p.m., at Golden State Theatre in Monterey. Billed as the “Ulti-

Tickets start at \$53. The theater is located at 417 Alvarado St.

### Heavy blues rock rules

**Sons of Cream** carry on the legacy of the rock band Cream Saturday at 7 p.m. at Golden State. Two members of Sons of Cream — bassist **Malcolm Bruce** and drummer **Kofi Baker** — are sons of Cream members Jack Bruce and Ginger Baker. They’re joined by guitarist Rob Johnson, a distant cousin of Baker’s.

“Their live shows stay true to Cream’s music even down to the heavy duty improvising of the performance of the songs that the original Cream was noted for throughout its too-brief career,” according to a description of the band. “It’s a concert of classic, blistering blues-rock performed by the true inheritors of this unique and unparalleled tradition and legacy.”

Cream, which also featured guitarist Eric Clapton, rose to fame in the late 1960s with a heavy blues-rock sound and hits like “White Room,” “Sunshine of Your Love” and “Badge.”

Tickets start at \$43.

### And that’s not all

The **Ten Tenors** play Tuesday at 7 p.m. (Tickets start at \$34), while the **Dark Star Orchestra** takes the stage Thursday at 6:30 p.m. (Tickets start at \$63). The former is a high-energy Australian vocal ensemble known for their 10-part harmonies, while



Featuring bassist Malcolm Bruce (above), Sons of Cream carry on the legacy of the Cream Saturday at Golden State Theater in Monterey.

## On a High Note

By CHRIS COUNTS

mate Eagles tribute” and named after one of their most popular songs, the Canadian group plays all the Eagles’ hits, including “Take it Easy,” “Desperado,” “Hotel California” and “Life in the Fast Lane.”



A high-energy Australian vocal ensemble known for their 10-part harmonies, the Ten Tenors perform Tuesday at Golden State Theatre in Monterey.

the latter is arguably the most beloved of all the many Grateful Dead tribute bands.

Call (831) 649-1070 or visit [goldenstatetheatre.com](http://goldenstatetheatre.com).

### ■ All that jazz

Backed by three jazz musicians, guitarist and composer **John Morris** plays all original music at Wave Street Studios in Monterey Friday at 7 p.m. The ensemble includes saxophonist **Jeff Meyer**, double bassist **Patrice Wallace** and drummer **Kevin Di Noto**.

See MUSIC page 36A

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# Big hearts in the kitchen, the dining room and the vineyard

NEWS OF Mary Chamberlin’s death on New Year’s Eve was as jarring as a tray of drinks crashing to the floor. Hospitality folks are often among the warmest and most generous you’ll meet, and Chamberlin, 91, a grand dame of the Peninsula’s culinary scene, was a fine example.

Drawing on her Cordon Bleu training as she toured the world with her late husband, pilot Roy Chamberlin, she charmed chefs out of their recipes, tested measurements and ingredients, and wrote delightful volumes like “The Traveling Soup Pot,” which is equal parts travelogue, cookbook and photo album.

## Without pretense

Chamberlin, who had befriended Michel Escoffier — great-grandson of legendary French chef Auguste Escoffier — brought him and chapters of his professional cooking societies, Disciples d’Escoffier International and Les Dames d’Escoffier, to the Monterey Peninsula.

Chamberlin supported numerous charitable endeavors, most notably Meals on Wheels and Rancho Cielo. She frequently held court in her Carmel Knolls home, too. The Provençal-style kitchen was lovely and eminently practical, and her expansive dining table was always set for the season. To be invited to an event there was to experience

a place that felt like home, with food that tasted like it came from a Michelin-starred kitchen. There was no snobbery, just a good meal — whether it was a bowl of tomato soup or a French dish that required three hours of prep time.

Always impeccably dressed, she swooped into conversations and dropped names — like Julia Child and Charles de Gaulle — without pretense as she recounted her intriguing adventures.

Her obituary in last week’s Pine Cone is on page 15A at [carmelpinecone.com/260123PC.pdf](http://carmelpinecone.com/260123PC.pdf), and a Great Lives column based on an interview at her home is on 21A at [carmelpinecone.com/190315PC.pdf](http://carmelpinecone.com/190315PC.pdf).

She will be greatly missed, but it’s likely that after one last toast, she’d insist on getting on with the important stuff — tasty food, good wine and steadfast friendships.

## ■ Pigskin and romance

Looking for a Super Bowl watch party? Check out Edgar’s in the clubhouse at Quail

Lodge on Feb. 8 at 3 p.m. In addition to full dinner service, there will be themed appetizers and raffles, and you can watch the game on multiple screens indoors and out. Reservations are recommended and can be made by calling (831) 629-8910 or visiting OpenTable.com.

Valentine’s Day dinner will be served Feb. 13 and 14 from 5 to 9 p.m. at the Covey Grill in Quail Lodge. A three-course prix fixe menu is priced at \$108 per person plus tax and tip, and it begins with an amuse bouche of either ahi tuna tartare with citrus, pink peppercorn and black sesame seeds, or heirloom beet tartare.

Dive into a decadent first course — butter-poached lobster bisque, or goat cheese and gruyere bread pudding — if you like. Or, choose a somewhat more virtuous salad of winter’s bitter greens — endive, radicchio and fri-see — complemented by sweet berries, poached pear and toasted hazelnuts.

One entrée choice — gnocchi — can be ordered in vegetarian mushroom broth with black truffle or in beef broth with braised short rib. Pan-seared halibut with carrots, and



If you’re looking for a place to dine on Valentine’s Day, you have a lot of options. Quail Lodge’s Covey Grill, for example, is offering a three-course prix fixe menu in a welcoming setting.

a grilled strip loin with potatoes, baked tomato, bordelaise sauce and bone marrow are also on offer.

And what is a sweetheart meal without a sweet ending? There’s a dark chocolate torte with cherry and passion fruit accents and pistachio brittle, or a three-sorbet option with dark chocolate, pomegranate and hibiscus, and blackberry with flavors of crème de cassis liqueur.

For more information, call (831) 620-8860, and to reserve, visit OpenTable.com.

## ■ Silvestris honored

In addition to his outstanding work as a Grammy- and Emmy-award-winning composer of memorable film scores, including those for the “Back to the Future” trilogy, “Forrest Gump” and “The Polar Express,” Alan Silvestri is also known for his Carmel Valley vineyards and his namesake wines and tasting room on Seventh Avenue

See **HONORED** next page



Whether it’s a new romance or an epic marriage, sharing a Valentine’s meal at the Covey Grill with someone special is a treat. You don’t have to let them try your chocolate torte, but you probably ought to.



# Valentine's Dinner

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Yum! Such a quick and easy stop for water, snacks, and food if you’re staying nearby. They have a full deli with DELICIOUS sandwiches and some sides as well (veggies, macaroni salad, etc.). I also recommend the seeded French roll like a few others. The sandwiches are packed very well so it’s easy to take them to the beach or down to Point Lobos or Big Sur for a picnic. They also seem to have “pop-ups” (not sure what to call these) on a rotating basis — for example, a burrito cart on Wednesday. It was very popular! - Tushita H., Long Beach, CA

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## FOOD & WINE

### HONORED

*From previous page*

between Dolores and San Carlos streets.

What is less well known is the time and work he and his wife, Sandra, have dedicated to supporting those with Type-1 diabetes. The Northern California chapter of Breakthrough T1D (formerly the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation) will honor



Alan and Sandra Silvestri will be honored at a San Francisco gala on Feb. 28 for their longtime work supporting a regional diabetes nonprofit.

them for their efforts at a San Francisco gala on Feb. 28. In its announcement of the award, representatives of the nonprofit said that in 1992, the Silvestris' 2-year-old son, Joey, was diagnosed with Type-1 diabetes, which destroys the cells that produce insulin. Those who have it must take daily insulin injections or use an insulin pump to manage their blood sugar, and there is

no cure.

Sandra became involved with a juvenile diabetes fundraising walk and has served on the organization's board of directors and in many other capacities. She founded and served as president of the Monterey branch of the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation, which raised \$6 million over 20 years, the group said.

Sandra also launched a program that brings young people affected by the disease to Washington, D.C., to speak directly with lawmakers about diabetes. Alan has composed music for the group and has hosted many events for the Breakthrough T1D community at Silvestri Vineyards. To purchase tickets to the gala in the San Francisco City Hall rotunda, visit [breakthrough1d.org/northerncasfgala2026](http://breakthrough1d.org/northerncasfgala2026).

### ■ Margaritas at Terry's

Terry's Restaurant + Lounge in the Cypress Inn is celebrating National Margarita Day. (Of course there's a National Margarita Day.) There's some controversy around who invented the cocktail and who or what it's named for, but nobody's arguing about its main ingredient: tequila. The city of Tequila in Jalisco, Mexico, and the region around it are home to blue agave, the plant from which genuine tequila is made. Mezcal, which is very similar, is made from other types of agave. It's like the whole Champagne vs. sparkling wine thing.

Knowing where tequila comes from isn't required to celebrate at the Cypress Inn, but it does explain why one of the day's two signature drinks is named Take Me to Jalisco. It's a refreshing-sounding blend of Tres Generaciones Blanco Tequila, pomegranate liqueur, fresh lemon juice, fresh cucumber and agave nectar.

The Honeybee, made with Amarás Mezcal, chile liqueur, honey syrup, pine-

*See DRINKS next page*



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FOOD & WINE

DRINKS

From previous page

apple juice and fresh lime juice, is also available.

The Cypress Inn is on the corner of Lincoln Street and Seventh Avenue, across from the Church of the Wayfarer. Terry’s Lounge is open from 11:30 a.m. to 9 p.m. Monday through Thursday, 11:30 a.m. to 9:45 p.m. Friday and Saturday, and 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. Sunday. For restaurant hours and menus, visit [cypress-inn.com](http://cypress-inn.com).

Winner, winner mushroom dinner

Another Fungus Face-Off has made its way into the annals of Big Sur Foragers Festival history. The friendly competition is always a popular part of the annual fundraiser for Big Sur Health Center, and the 2026 winners have claimed their bragging rights. Winner of best overall dish was chef Carlos Rene Esparza of Deetjen’s Big Sur Inn, who impressed the judges with short ribs with enoki mushrooms, porcini, pickled onion, micro cilantro and cheesy polenta. Chef Pamela Burns from Wild Plum Café took best use of foraged ingredients with a wild mushroom medley with garlic over polenta, while most creative went to chef Adan Chavez of Big Sur River Inn for a chanterelle tamale with mushroom mole. Terry’s Restaurant + Lounge

brought home the people’s choice award, thanks to chef Luis Reyes’ fried oyster mushroom bites over cheesy polenta. The real winners, of course, were the helpful and caring folks at the Big Sur Health Center, whose mission is “to provide accessible, affordable and high-quality health care to the residents, workforce and visitors of the Big Sur coast.” Elaine Hesser wrote this week’s column.



The Big Sur Health Center (top) was the biggest winner of the annual Big Sur Forager’s Festival a few weeks ago, but some local chefs received awards for dishes highlighting some of the region’s bountiful mushrooms in the Fungus Face-Off, too.

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# Museums explore driftwood art, delve into ‘Spirit and Memory’

NEW AT the Pacific Grove Museum of Natural History, “Tethered Light” is an exhibit that explores the fine art of driftwood sculpture. The work was created by Raphaele Cohen-Bacry, a French-born artist who lives in Los Angeles and works in a variety of media. The show will be on display through April 26.

Bacry — who presents a talk about the show Feb. 22 at noon — called the exhibit “a meditation on resilience and regeneration.”

“Rooted in the landscapes and histories of California’s shores, ‘Tethered Light’ transforms weathered, fire-

## Art Roundup

By CHRIS COUNTS

marked and ocean-worn wood into expressive sculptural forms that speak to environmental change, endurance and renewal,” according to the museum. “Many of the materials used in the exhibition were collected from beaches where wildfire-scarred trees met the sea, carrying visible traces of both destruction and survival.”

Some works hang in the air like mobiles. “Several pieces in the exhibition are suspended, appearing to hover and sway in space,” the museum added. “These floating forms suggest motion, balance and the shifting relationship between land and sea — a reminder that California’s coastline remains in constant dialogue with wind, water and time.”

The museum is located at 165 Forest Ave.

### ■ “Landscape Reenvisioned”

Two new shows open this weekend at the Monterey Museum of Art, including “Landscape Reenvisioned,” a group display that explores the use of experimental techniques in landscape photography. Included are images by photographers Debra Achen, Tony Bellaver, Adrienne Defendi, Charlotte Schmid-Maybach, Brian Taylor and Vincent James Waring.

“Expanding upon traditional reflections of nature, each artist’s work ranges from depictions of natural beauty to expressions of environmental activism,” the museum said. “This exhibition encourages a deeper appreciation of life’s resiliency, presenting works that reflect both the beauty

and the fragility of the natural world.”

Also new at the museum is an exhibit, “Spirit and Memory,” that showcases the creations of local ceramicist and longtime Hartnell College educator Pam Murakami. “Weaving together aspects of Chinese pottery, Japanese tea ceremony, mythic entities, household items and more, Murakami’s work combines traditional ceramics with her own personal history and beliefs,” the museum added.

Both shows continue through April 26. The museum is located at 559 Pacific St.

### ■ Local art during WWII

Also opening recently at the Monterey Museum of Art is an exhibit, “Celebrating California Art: Artistic Alliance in Monterey: 1942–1946,” which delves into artwork created on the Peninsula during World War II. The art comes from the museum’s permanent collection.

The impact of the war on the Monterey Peninsula was profound. Not only did many young men who grew up in Carmel, Pacific Grove, Monterey and other local towns die in battle, but some residents, mostly Japanese but also many Italians, lost their homes due to forced relocation.

The show features a mix of art by some of the region’s



Capturing a colorful scene that depicts the local fishing industry in the early 1940s, painter Sam Colburn’s “Net Menders” is included in a new show at the Monterey Museum of Art.

most respected artists, including Sam Colburn, Henrietta Shore, Armin Hansen, Francis McComas and Edward Weston. Some used their art to comment on the displacement of Japanese-Americans, while others captured ordinary scenes that seem a world apart from the war raging on the other side of the globe.

“This exhibition explores what Monterey artists chose to express during and immediately following WWII,” according to the museum.

## MUSIC

From page 32A

“This outstanding jazz quartet will also play with notes of swing, samba and even post-bop, as they bring Morris’ works to life,” a preview of the show suggests. “Swoon over jazz ballads that give hints of Michael Franks. Take note of the serious jazz compositions that look up to Miles Davis. Get up out of your chair to what might feel like the joy of the Stray Cats.”

Opening the show will be a local jazz duo, singer **Miranda Perl** and guitarist **Adam Astrup**.

Tickets are \$25. The venue is located at 774 Wave St. For tickets, visit [wavestreetlive774.com](http://wavestreetlive774.com).

### Live music Jan. 20 – Feb. 5

#### ■ Big Sur

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

#### ■ Carmel

**Barmel** — singer and guitarist **Tony Burciaga** (Thursday 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.

**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.). Lincoln and Seventh.

**Links Club** — **Wharf Rats** (rock, Friday at 6 p.m.), **Moondance** (pop and rock, Saturday at 6 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.

**Yoga Shala by-the-Sea — Steve Loeb’s & The Living Drums**, along with others, present a family-friendly celebration of drumming and dancing (Friday at 4:30 p.m.). In Sunset Center at San Carlos and Ninth.

#### ■ Carmel Valley

**Bernardus Lodge** — pianist **Joe Indence** (jazz, Friday at 6 p.m.), **Andrea’s Fault** (jazz and pop, Saturday at 4 p.m.), singer and pianist **T.J. Kuenster** (jazz, Saturday at 6 p.m.), guitarist **John Sherry** (rock and blues, Sunday at noon). 415 W. Carmel Valley Road.



Joined by keyboardist T.J. Kuenster, jazz singer Janice Perl plays Sunday at Midici Pizza in Monterey.

**Edgar’s Restaurant** — singer and guitarist **RJ Demarco** (Friday at 5:30 p.m.). 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.). 8940 Carmel Valley Road.

**Trailside Cafe** — singer and guitarist **John Dally** (Saturday at 6 p.m.). 3 Del Fino Place.

#### ■ Monterey

**Albatross Ridge Winery** — **The Landing Trio** (Americana, Friday at 6 p.m.), singer and guitarist **Maya Rayburn** (Saturday at 6 p.m.). 316 Alvarado St.

**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 guitarist **Zack Freitas** (Friday at 6 p.m.), singer and guitarist **Scott Slaughter** (Saturday at 6 p.m.). 1 Old Golf Course Road.

**InterContinental Hotel** — guitarist **John Sherry**

CALENDAR

**Feb. 2 – “Driving into the Future,” Recruitment and Outreach Manager Susan Elwood** will speak about the mission and breadth of **Meals on Wheels**. CWC will take this time to also celebrate the life of **Jackie Craighead** and her dedication to spearheading this program and so much more. Wear your favorite hat in Jackie’s honor! 2 p.m. Carmel Woman’s Club, San Carlos and Ninth, Carmel. Open to the public. \$10/guests/members free.

**Feb. 4 – Carmel Public Library Foundation** presents Community Night with the Library, **The Language of Architecture: Decoding Built Messages**, with architectural preservationist **Elisabeth Cannell**, Carpenter Hall, Sunset Center. Register on our website: [carmelpubliclibraryfoundation.org](http://carmelpubliclibraryfoundation.org). Questions: (831) 624-2811

**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.

**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

**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.

**Feb. 13 – Poetry reading: Andrew Schelling** will read from his new volume of poetry, **“Forests, Temples, Glacial Rivers,”** and a just-released book of translations of the Sanskrit poems of Vidyā (ca. 7th-9th century), **Old Time Love Song Magic**. 7 p.m. at Tor House, 26304 Ocean View Ave., Carmel, CA 93923. Admission: \$15. Reservations (required) at [www.torhouse.org](http://www.torhouse.org). Seating limited. Reception to follow. For more information: (831) 624-1813.

**Feb. 14 – “That’s Amoré! ~ Baum & Blume’s “Flavors of Italy” Valentine dinner!** Celebrate with someone special at this delightful, delicious 4-course dinner served in Baum & Blume’s cozy boutique café! View menu @ [www.baumandblume.com](http://www.baumandblume.com). Seatings @ 5:15 & 7:30pm Call ASAP to reserve. (831) 659-0400. 4 El Caminito Road, Carmel Valley.

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# Carmel Valley native’s film nominated for Oscar

By DENNIS TAYLOR

A 33-MINUTE film produced by Carmel Valley native Conall Jones is one of five that were nominated for an Academy Award on Jan. 22 in the Best Documentary Short category.

Jones, 43, was the lead producer for “All The Empty Rooms,” an intimate profile of the families of four of the 70 children who died in school shootings between 2009 and 2023.

The film tells the story by visiting their now-vacant bedrooms, all of which were kept exactly as they were when the children left for school on the day they died.

“Everyone who worked on this production watched the nominations together, via Zoom, live at 5:30 a.m. Pacific time, along with one set of parents who we interviewed for the film,” said Jones, referring to Cindy and Bryan Muehlenberger, whose 15-year-old daughter, Gracie, was one of two fatalities in a 2019 shooting at Saugus High School in Santa Clarita.

“There was a brief moment of celebration — some clapping and cheering, along with some tears of joy,” he said. “But there were other tears, too, because we all wished Gracie could have been part of that moment.



PHOTO/COURTESY CONNALL JONES.

Conall Jone (in chair) on location for “All The Empty Rooms,” which has been nominated for an Oscar.

“We talked briefly with her parents afterward, and their comment was that Gracie is dancing in heaven right now.”

See OSCAR page 39A

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### SAVE THE DATES

**TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 10**  
Putts for Paws Mini Golf Tournament  
12:00pm – Tee Off  
Devendorf Park, Ocean & Mission

**TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 10**  
Chamber Pro Am Mixer with  
Mission Bistro & De Tierra Vineyards  
4:00pm – 6:00pm  
Mission Bistro  
Mission btwn Ocean & 7th

**FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 27**  
State of the City Breakfast  
9:00am – 10:00am (doors open 8:30am)  
Carmel Youth Center  
4th & Torres

**WEDNESDAY, MARCH 11**  
Chamber Non-Profit Mixer  
5:00pm – 7:00pm  
Carmel Woman’s Club  
9th & San Carlos

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**Tuesday, February 10, 2026**  
12:00 PM Tee-Off (subject to change)  
Devendorf Park | Carmel-by-the-Sea

**Teams & Entry**  
Two-Player Teams (Limited to 50 teams)  
\$150 Chamber Members | \$200 Non-Members

Spectators welcome (no dogs permitted in the park).  
A portion of the proceeds benefits  
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SECTION RE ■ January 30-February 5, 2026

Open Houses on page 10RE

## The Carmel Pine Cone

# Real Estate



RANDAZZO

■ This week's cover, located in Carmel-by-the-Sea, is presented by  
Kathleen Randazzo  
of Sotheby's International Realty. (See Page 2 RE)

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About the Cover

The Carmel Pine Cone

Real Estate

January 30-February 5, 2026



OPEN SATURDAY 11-1

0 San Antonio 3 SE Ocean, Carmel-by-the-Sea

Welcome to Landfall, a true Carmel cottage with all the warmth and delights of a home much loved. With its roomy living/dining space complete with open ceiling, original white oak floors, and brick fireplace you can easily imagine the joys of friendship and family shared here. This 3 bedroom, 2 bathroom home located in a prime location just off Ocean Ave and less than two blocks to the beach offers perfect proximity to the magic of early morning beach strolls and the awe of Carmel sunsets. Open the windows and listen to the crashing waves or relax in the sun on the large upstairs deck. Make your way to the lovely back garden with some of the biggest hydrangea blooms in town and gather with friends around the stone fireplace on those chilly summer evenings. Landfall is everything Carmel is meant to be.

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Real Estate Sales  
Jan. 18 - 24

Escrows closed: 20  
Total value: \$31,411,500

Carmel Valley

146 Calle del la Ventana — \$1,100,000

Joseph and Arlyn Knapic to Luis Castillo and Frances Atkins  
APN: 189-364-003

25874 Carmel Knolls Drive — \$1,999,000

Richard Morf to Efrain and Rosalbo Lugo  
APN: 015-302-014

3575 Edgefield Place — \$1,999,000

Alison Murray and Gonzales Trust to Barbara Bright  
APN: 015-451-035

9524 Bay Court — \$2,240,000

Keith and Carol Kimmick to Tracy Chivetta  
APN: 416-531-013

Highway 68

714 Monterey-Salinas Highway — \$1,685,000

Ronni Sweet and Ward Trust to Ben and Lurie Trainer  
APN: 161-251-018

See HOME SALES page 4RE



218 14th Street, Pacific Grove — \$1,175,000

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# HOME SALES

From page 2RE

## Highway 68 (cont'd)

**25320 Boots Road — \$2,075,000**  
Maureen Vieth to Clayton Hall  
APN: 416-194-017

## Marina

**312 Sirena del Mar — \$949,000**  
Erwin Concepcion to Albert Ison and Andrea Blanco  
APN: 032-543-018

**2731 Bungalow Drive — \$1,085,000**  
Kaiqi Hua and Heather Borgard to Marcus Deranieri  
APN: 031-254-030

**137 10th Street — \$1,148,500**  
Shea Homes LP to Tyler Pirro  
APN: 031-296-021



3575 Edgefield Place, Carmel Valley — \$1,999,000



1062 Marchetta Lane, Pebble Beach — \$3,051,000

## Monterey

**451 Dela Vina Avenue unit 405 — \$555,000**  
Dale and Carol Nelson to Matthew Buggert  
APN: 013-331-039

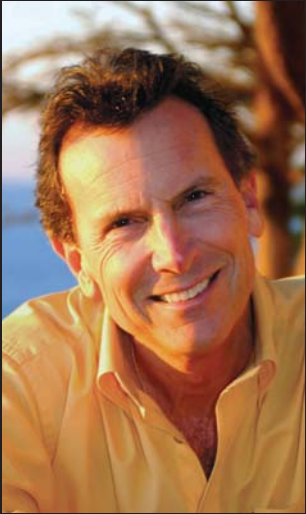
**250 Forest Ridge Road unit 27 — \$725,000**  
Roseanne Ruccello to Dale and Carol Nelson  
APN: 014-141-027

See **ESCROWS** page 14RE

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# A guide to why we’d rather be wrong than admit we’re wrong

A COLLEGE professor once told our class something that stuck with me like gum on a shoe: “When people are confronted with overwhelming evidence that disproves a cherished belief, they’ll almost always choose the belief over the evidence.”

At the time, I thought he was being cynical. Turns out, he was being optimistic. He underestimated how creatively we defend our nonsense.

Take the Mozart Effect, a lovely bit of pseudoscience that convinced an entire generation of anxious parents that blasting classical music at their infants would turn them into tiny Einsteins. The whole thing started with a 1993 study showing that college students — not babies — performed slightly better on spatial reasoning tasks after listening to Mozart. And even then, the effect lasted about 15 minutes, roughly the same duration as a good cup of coffee’s impact on my own intelligence.

This did not stop marketers from selling “Baby Einstein” products, or parents from strapping headphones to

pregnant bellies. Even after researchers explicitly stated, “Hey, this doesn’t work on babies,” the belief marched on like a determined toddler heading toward a mud puddle. Scientists published follow-up studies. They held press conferences. It didn’t matter. The myth had already moved in, hung pictures, and refused to leave.

The Mozart Effect offered something irresistible — effortless improvement. Just press play and watch your child’s IQ soar. No flashcards, no expensive tutors, no actual parenting required, just some powdered wigs and a harpsichord. Who wouldn’t want to believe that?

Then there’s the myth that we use only 10 percent of

our brains. In reality, scientists say we use our entire brain every day. Mila Halgren, a graduate student in neuroscience, puts it bluntly: “All of our brain is constantly in use and consumes a tremendous amount of energy. Despite making up only 2 percent of our body weight, it devours 20 percent of our calories. Even while we sleep, our entire brain remains intensely active.”

Yet the myth persists in movies, self-help seminars, and phishing emails promising to unlock your hidden potential — just enter your billing information. The appeal is obvious: If we’re only using 10 percent of our brains, that means 90 percent is just sitting there like an unused gym membership, waiting to transform us into superhumans. Never mind that evolution doesn’t tend to build expensive, energy-hogging organs and then leave 90 percent of them idle. I’ve never heard anyone who suffered brain damage say, “Thank goodness! That was the 90 percent I wasn’t using anyway.”

### Carrots and eyesight

My personal favorite is the carrot-vision connection. During World War II, the British fabricated a story that their pilots had exceptional night vision because they ate lots of carrots. The real reason? Radar technology they wanted to keep secret from the Germans. The propaganda was so brilliant that, 80 years later, parents still tell their kids that carrots will help them see in the dark.

Carrots do contain vitamin A, which is necessary for eye health. But eating them doesn’t give you night vision any more than eating a Louisville Slugger makes you Babe Ruth. The myth endures partly because it’s harmless — nobody ever suffered from excessive carrot consumption. My parents cajoled me to eat my carrots so I could see better. Today’s parents say, “Eat your carrots so you can see your video games better.”

These examples reveal something simultaneously humbling and hilarious about human nature: We’re not rational creatures who occasionally make mistakes. We’re rationalizing creatures who occasionally stumble into being correct. Our brains aren’t designed to seek truth: they’re designed to seek comfort, meaning, and a good story we can tell at parties.

### Our own fault

The evidence doesn’t matter as much as the narrative. We’ll choose a beautiful lie over an ugly truth almost every time, especially if that lie makes us feel hopeful, special, or like we’re doing something productive while actually doing nothing at all.

This is a feature of human psychology, not a bug. Throughout most of human history, belonging to your tribe and maintaining its beliefs was more important for survival than being technically correct about how vision works. The people who said, “Actually, I’ve analyzed the data, and our rain dance doesn’t cause rain,” probably didn’t get invited to many rain dances.

The problem is that we now live in a world where being wrong about things can have actual consequences — yet we’re still operating with the same embedded software that helped us survive on the savanna. We have smartphones in our pockets and Stone Age brains in our skulls.

My professor was right, though I wish he’d been wrong. So the next time you catch yourself clinging to a belief despite the evidence, ask yourself, is this belief a comfort, or is it a danger waiting to happen? The cost of being wrong isn’t just personal, it’s collective. When myths shape policy, health, or education, the consequences ripple far beyond our individual lives. Yet I know for certain that if I wash my car, it will rain. And that’s the paradox. We’re all complicit in the very irrationality we critique.

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POLICE LOG  
From page 4A

SATURDAY, JANUARY 10

**Pacific Grove:** Subject on Central Avenue was placed on a 5150 W&I hold [danger to self or others].

**Pacific Grove:** Violation of a restraining order on Eighth Street. The 92-year-old female was arrested for disobeying a court order.

**Pacific Grove:** Abandoned vehicle on Spazier Avenue.

**Pacific Grove:** Verbal domestic dispute at a Dennett Street residence investigated. No crime occurred.

**Big Sur:** Deputies received a report of a possible verbal domestic.

**Carmel area:** A male on Lower Trail was placed on a W&I 5150 hold.

**Carmel area:** A male on Highway 1 was

placed on a 72-hour mental health evaluation.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 11

**Carmel-by-the-Sea:** Theft of property at San Carlos and Seventh. No suspect information.

**Pacific Grove:** Officers responded to a domestic disturbance between a husband and wife at a residence on Laurel Avenue. The husband drove off before police arrived. Upon arrival, officers spoke with the wife and determined no domestic violence occurred. The husband drove back home while officers were on scene. The 51-year-old male displayed objective symptoms of intoxication and was arrested on suspicion of DUI.

MONDAY, JANUARY 12

**Pacific Grove:** An Adult Protective Services report involving a 17th Street resident was reviewed.

**Pacific Grove:** Subject on Locust Street

received a suspicious photo from an anonymous person.

**Carmel-by-the-Sea:** Found cell phone, ID and credit card at Scenic and Ocean.

**Carmel Valley:** Report of financial abuse involving a victim on Rancho San Carlos Road.

TUESDAY, JANUARY 13

**Carmel-by-the-Sea:** Subject at Santa Fe and Fifth was contacted regarding suspicious financial transactions via a phone app.

**Carmel-by-the-Sea:** A 37-year-old female at San Carlos and 10th was cited and released for an out-of-county warrant.

**Pacific Grove:** Keys found on Sunset Drive were turned in at the police department and are being held for safekeeping.

**Pacific Grove:** Check fraud on Light-house Avenue.

**Carmel area:** Deputies performed a welfare check at a residence on Rio Road.

**Carmel Valley:** Online report by a Wawo-

na Road resident regarding an online scam.

**Carmel Valley:** Fraud reported on Holt Road.

**Carmel Valley:** Adult Protective Services report of possible neglect at a Carmel Valley Road residence.

**Carmel Valley:** Adult Protective Services report of possible financial abuse and neglect at a Garzas Road residence.

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 14

**Carmel-by-the-Sea:** Embezzlement at a business at Mission and Ocean.

**Carmel-by-the-Sea:** Informational Adult Protective Services report involving a resident at Dolores and Fifth.

**Carmel-by-the-Sea:** Loose dog found at San Carlos and Santa Lucia and brought to the station to check for a microchip. No microchip located. Owner picked up the dog

See SHERIFF next page

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Carmel-by-the-Sea  
Real Estate Activity This Week:

Status	Address	List Price	Sale Price	DOM
New Listing	SE Corner 2nd & Guadalupe	\$1,750,000	---	5
New Listing	SW Corner San Carlos & 10th	\$2,599,000	---	5
Contingent	SE Corner of Monte Verde & 10th	\$4,999,950	---	99

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# SHERIFF

From previous page

from the station.

**Pacific Grove:** Vehicle on Spruce Avenue was marked for 72-hour parking.

**Pacific Grove:** Adult Protective Services report regarding an East Franklin Street resident being a victim of identity theft.

**Pacific Grove:** Suspicious circumstances on Shafter Avenue.

**Pacific Grove:** Vehicle towed from Pine Avenue for expired registration over six months.

## THURSDAY, JANUARY 15

**Carmel-by-the-Sea:** Information only — assisted fire department at Mission and 11th.

**Carmel-by-the-Sea:** Traffic stop at Carpenter and Highway 1 at 2238 hours for several vehicle code violations. The 33-year-old female Salinas resident failed to yield and was subsequently arrested for DUI with blood alcohol nearly three times the legal limit. Driver lodged at Monterey County Jail, and her vehicle was stored.

**Pacific Grove:** Report of battery on a person on school property and child abuse with possible injury or death on Forest Avenue. A 44-year-old male was arrested.

**Carmel Valley:** Tierra Grande resident filed an online report of fraud.

**Pebble Beach:** Adult Protective Services report at a Los Altos Drive residence.

**Carmel area:** Juvenile issue on Handley Drive.

**Carmel area:** An adult male was given a no-trespassing admonishment at the Cross-roads shopping center.

**Pebble Beach:** Deputies responded to reported fraud on 17 Mile Drive involving a 75-year-old male victim.

**Carmel Valley:** A pet was reported stolen from a 55-year-old East Carmel Valley Road resident.

**Seaside:** At around 2100 hours, a road-rage incident occurred in a neighboring city. Thinking quickly, the young lady who was the victim of the road rage decided to drive into Seaside, directly in the back lot of the police department. The suspect who was driving erratically while chasing her followed her -to the P.D. With minimal effort, officers quickly intervened to ensure the young lady was safe. The suspect, a 25-year-old male, was under the influence of alcohol and became physical with officers. He was quickly apprehended and escorted a few feet away to the Seaside jail. To make things even more surprising, he had 4 ounces of marijuana in his vehicle and numerous open containers. He was arrested for DUI and other charged related to the above details.

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Continues on next page

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Pacific Grove

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Carmel Valley



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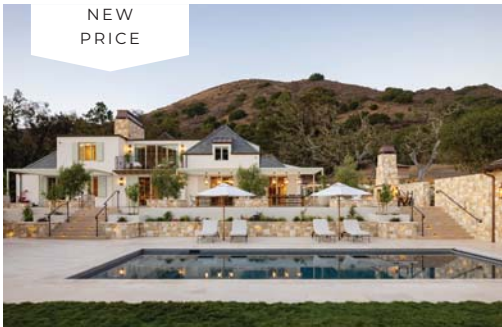
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